

Mississippi History

MDAH

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NEWSLETTER

MHS Annual Meeting: Outstanding Scholars To Focus on Environment



MHS president Martha Swain

Mississippi Historical Society president Martha Swain, Starkville, announces that two outstanding scholars of the American South will address members at the Society's annual meeting in Natchez March 2-4. The theme of the meeting will be **Mississippi's Landscapes: An Environmental History**.

The **Friday night dinner speaker** will be **James C. Cobb**, author of the McLemore Prize-winning *The Most Southern Place on Earth: The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity* (1992). He will speak on the topic "**The Hereditary Environment: Space, Place, and Southern Identity**." Cobb, the B. Phinizy Spalding Distinguished Professor of History at the University of Georgia, has written and lectured widely on the interaction of economy, society, and culture in the South. His other books include *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development, 1936-1990* (1993) and *Away*

Down South: A History of Southern Identity (2005).

Pete Daniel, president of the Southern Historical Association, will speak at the **Friday luncheon**. Daniel is currently curator in the division of industry and transportation at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History. He specializes in the twentieth-century South, in particular agriculture, labor, culture, and civil rights.

The annual **Federation of Mississippi Historical Societies Workshop**, titled "Conservation: Do It Yourself vs. the Pros," will be held at the Historic Natchez Foundation on Thursday. A tour of the William Johnson House, Natchez National Historical Park, will be offered on Friday afternoon. The President's Reception will honor president Martha Swain Friday evening before the banquet.



Historians James C. Cobb (left) and Pete Daniel

The **Thursday Welcoming Reception** will be held at **Rosalie**, a National Historic Landmark and house museum operated by the Mississippi State Society of the DAR. Distinguished speakers are scheduled for MHS sessions, which include Mississippi towns and how they shape the landscape and community, Mississippi River control and flood relief, and Mississippi's natural history.

Registration for MHS members is \$15 for individuals, \$20 couples; for nonmembers \$40, individuals, \$55 couples (includes membership). Federation of Mississippi Historical Societies Workshop registration is \$35 for members, \$40 for nonmembers (includes lunch).

MHS members receive a program by mail. Others interested in receiving a program and registration information can call

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601-576-6849. Meal reservations must be made by February 23. A block of rooms is reserved at the Eola Hotel (1-866-445-3652; 601-445-6000) until February 15; specify MHS rate (\$85 plus tax).

History Is Lunch

James G. Hollandsworth, Jr., former professor at the University of Southern Mississippi, will present a brown bag program at the William F. Winter Building in the *History Is Lunch Series* on **Wednesday, January 11**, from noon until 1 p.m. His topic is "**Fighting for the Right to Fight: African Americans in the Union Army**." Hollandsworth has been working with the Alfred Holt Stone Collection in the MDAH library and has creating an index to the collection, which includes almost 3,000 pamphlets on black history. For more information, please call 601-576-6857.

News from the Old Capitol Museum

Progress Report

Almost all of the artifacts have been removed from the damaged Old Capitol and deposited in the Capers Building, which offers better museum storage conditions. Disassembly of the permanent exhibit fabrications continues. Staff continues planning for the new Museum of Mississippi History with Communication Arts Company of Jackson and working with architect Robert Parker Adams on preplanning for the Old Capitol restoration.

Traveling Exhibits

Since the Old Capitol Museum closed, the MDAH museum division has revamped its traveling exhibits program. **The following seven exhibits are now available** to schools, libraries, and other venues, and other outreach programs are in development:

A River Unleashed: The 1927 Mississippi River Flood, focus-

ing on one of the nation's worst natural disasters; *Welty*, featuring photographs of Mississippi subjects by writer/photographer Eudora Welty; *Eudora Welty: Other Places*, featuring photographs taken by Eudora Welty outside Mississippi; *Leaving Mississippi*, a photographic exhibit on life in Mississippi during the 1950s, featuring poems by James Autry; *If it Ain't Seasoned, It Ain't Much of Anything*, featuring photographs exploring the diverse ethnicity of Mississippi; *Putting De Soto in His Place*, an exhibit on Hernando De Soto's path through Mississippi; and *From Monuments to Mufflers*, exploring Mississippi's various outdoor sculptures, from the whimsical to the inspirational.

Traveling exhibits in development include *Mississippi's Greatest Treasure: The Old Capitol*; and *Influential Mississippi Women*.

Other Outreach Programs

Mississippi Hands-on History: A Traveling Trunk Program is available to schools, and the following programs are available to schools or the general public: *Archaeo Road Show, Daisy-- Who Is She? First Mississippians, Frontier Life*, and *Mississippi:1500-1800*. To order, call 601-576-6920.

Exhibit Hangs in Winter Building

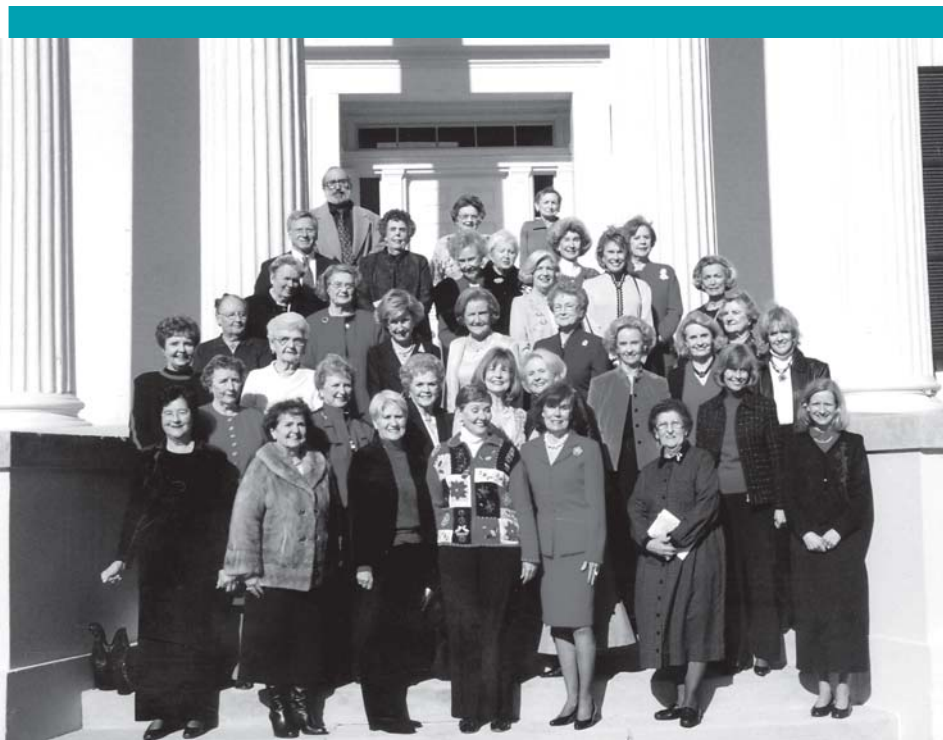
Putting De Soto in His Place, an exhibit displayed previously in the Old Capitol Museum, has been converted into a traveling exhibit and will debut in its new form in the lobby of the William F. Winter Building January 9 through March 5. The exhibit tells of Hernando de Soto's earlier expeditions, Spain's interest in the New World, and the impact of his expedition on Native Americans in this area.

Genealogical Seminar January 21

Charles Sherrill, director of the Brentwood Library near Nashville, Tennessee, will be the speaker at the January 21 annual genealogical seminar sponsored by MDAH and the Mississippi Genealogical Society. It will be held at the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, 1152 Lakeland Drive, Jackson. Sessions topics will include "Military Pension Record Research," "Finding Genealogical Treasures in Manuscript Collections," and "Tennessee Records."

The cost of the seminar is \$30—\$42 with a box lunch (please order lunch before January 12). There is a \$2 discount for MGS members.

To register, send a check made payable to Mississippi Genealogical Society to MGS, P.O. Box 5301, Jackson, MS 39296-5301. For more information, call 601-924-9346.



Governor's Mansion Docent Luncheon, December 5, 2005

At the recent Governor's Mansion Docent Luncheon, retiring Mansion docent Dot Fowler (second from left, row five) was recognized for her thirteen years of service. Front row (l-r): Sarah Flanagan, Shirlee Lawson, Andi McDaniel, Lynn Stuart, Ruby McLemore, Mary Louise Nosser, Mansion curator Mary Lohrenz; second row: Annette Redden, Ruth Tant, Doris Brickell, Jane Jones, Alice Carol Perry, Betty Lake, Lois Russell, MDAH Museum Division director Lucy Allen, Melanie McKinley; third row: Dot Ward, Sylvia Walker, Ruth Byars, Earline Raines, Sally Carmichael, Barbara Bell, Charlotte Turner, Carol Robertson; fourth row: MDAH Board member and Mansion Committee chair Lynn Gammill, Clytice Gardner, Lucy Bishop, Sue

McRoberts; fifth row: MDAH Board and Mansion Committee member Jack Garner, Dot Fowler, Martha Ball, Buena Lee Huff, Sister Simmons, Babs Sevier; back row: MDAH director H. T. Holmes, Frances VanZant, Betty Douglass. Not pictured: Jane Baird, Tom Bowen, Frances Kees, Lounette Maxwell, Eula Stanley, Charlotte Wallace.

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Community Heritage Grant Awards

Eleven preservation and restoration projects from Corinth to the Gulf Coast have been awarded a total of \$2,948,000 in the fourth year of a grant program administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The Community Heritage Preservation grant program, authorized and funded by the Mississippi Legislature, helps preserve and restore historic courthouses and schools and, in Certified Local Government communities, other historic properties.

The Department of Archives and History received seventy-five applications requesting nearly \$21 million. Over the life of the program the department has awarded more than \$18 million in Community Heritage Preservation grants to eighty-nine projects. Ten of the eleven properties receiving grants in this round are listed on or have been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, and two are also National Historic Landmarks—Beauvoir, in Biloxi, and the L.Q.C. Lamar House, in Oxford. Properties affected by Hurricane Katrina—Beauvoir, the Ocean Springs Community Center, and the Old Hattiesburg High School—were the recipients of \$900,000 in grants.

“This program has been crucial in preserving historic structures across the state, and we are grateful to the Legislature for continuing to fund it,” said H.T. Holmes, director of the Department of Archives and History. “The response from the public has been overwhelming, and we only regret that we could not have funded more of these worthy projects.”

The grant awards are as follows:

Alcorn County Courthouse, Corinth—\$80,000. Applicant: Alcorn County Board of Supervisors. For exterior restoration and repair to the second-floor interior.

Mary Ricks Thornton Cultural Center, Kosciusko—\$113,000. Applicant: Kosciusko-Attala Historical Society. For exterior and interior restoration, including painting, window, electrical, and lighting repair.

Copiah County Courthouse, Hazlehurst—\$475,000. Applicant: Copiah County Board of Supervisors. For exterior and interior restoration, including the restoration of the courtroom and rotunda and replacement of non-historic windows.

Old Hattiesburg High School, Hattiesburg—\$400,000. Applicant: City of Hattiesburg. For exterior repairs and stabilization, including roof repair.

Beauvoir, Biloxi—\$300,000. Applicant: Mississippi Division of the United Sons of Confederate Veterans. For exterior repairs, including roof and gallery repairs.

Flannigan-Lowry House, Jackson—\$150,000. Applicant: Mississippi Heritage Trust and the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center. For structure relocation and stabilization, including a new foundation and electrical work.

Ocean Springs Community Center, Ocean Springs—\$200,000. Applicant: City of Ocean Springs. For interior restoration, including conservation of the Walter Anderson murals.

L. Q. C. Lamar House, Oxford—\$390,000. Applicant: Oxford-Lafayette County Heritage Foundation. For exterior and interior restoration, including roof, wood, masonry, window, and door repair.

Monroe County Courthouse, Aberdeen—\$420,000. Applicant: Monroe County Board of Supervisors. For exterior restoration, including courtroom restoration, masonry, window, and door repairs, and electrical and mechanical upgrades.

Old Tippah County Jail, Ripley—\$115,000. Applicant: Tippah County Board of Supervisors. For exterior and interior

restoration, including roof and window repair.

Afro-American Sons and Daughters Hospital, Yazoo City—\$300,000. Applicant: Afro-American Sons and Daughters Hospital Foundation. For exterior and interior restoration.

The Board of Trustees of the Department of Archives and History determined the grant recipients at a special meeting on December 9. In evaluating the grants the board attempted to balance the geographical distribution of the awards. Grant awards are paid on a reimbursable basis upon the successful completion of the entire project or at the time of the completion of pre-established phases of the project. A cash match of at least 20 percent must be provided, and prior to application all buildings must have been designated Mississippi Landmarks under the provisions of the State Antiquities Law. For more information call 601-576-6850 or visit the MDAH site, mdah.state.ms.us.

Rednecks, Redeemers, and Race: Mississippi After Reconstruction, 1877—1917

by Stephen Cresswell

Third Volume, Heritage of Mississippi Series

**April 2006
University Press
of Mississippi for
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NLCC Focus: Southern Food and Drink

The 17th Annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration will be held February 23–26, with headquarters at the Natchez Convention Center. This year’s theme is “Biscuits, Gumbo, Sweet Tea, and Bourbon Balls: Southern Food and Drink in History, Literature, and Film.” Presenters include southern writers/food enthusiasts John T. Edge, John Egerton, Kenneth Holditch, and Robert St. John; and famous southern cooks Gayden Metcalfe, Charlotte Hays, and Martha Foose. A panel of seasoned experts will discuss “Drinks in the American South,” and winners of this year’s Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards and Horton Foote Screenplay Writing Award will be celebrated.

Confessions of a Nightingale, by Tennessee Williams, will be presented, and three films, *King Cake*, *Fried Green Tomatoes*, and *Miss Firecracker*, will be shown. Novelist Ellen Douglas will conduct writing workshops, and music, receptions, and meals are scheduled.

Most sessions are free, but some events require tickets. For a full schedule and registration form, visit www.colin.edu/nlcc or email nlcctickets@colin.edu. MDAH is a cosponsor of this event.

Eudora Welty House: In Progress

While the Eudora Welty House is being repaired, take an **online tour of the house at <http://mdah.state.ms.us>**. See the rooms where Welty lived and worked for over sixty years. The tour also offers informative text and many photographs of the writer and her family and friends.

Prominent Archaeologists Featured at Grand Village

The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians' Archaeology Program Series continues in 2006 with a slide talk by **Ian W. Brown** on Thursday evening, January 5, at 6:30 p.m. in the auditorium at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians. Admission is free and seating is limited. Brown's talk will be on "**Social Patterns in Alabama Cemeteries**" and will draw from his long-term study of the historic cemeteries in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, known as the "Marking Graves Project."

Ian Brown is best known to area residents for his longtime association with a group of archaeologists known as the "Lower Mississippi Survey," which conducted extensive studies of the prehistoric and early historic Indian tribes in the Lower Mississippi River Valley. He is professor of anthropology at the University of Alabama and curator of Gulf Coast archaeology at the Alabama Museum. Prior to joining the faculty of the University of Alabama in 1991, Brown served as assistant director of Harvard's Peabody Museum.

Brown specializes in the Indians of the Southeastern United States, historical archaeology, ethnohistory, and acculturation theory, and he has published widely on these subjects. In recent years, he conducted archaeological excavations at the original Tabasco factory on Avery Island, Louisiana, and participated in a study of the prehistoric salt industry in the Three Gorges region of China. Brown is currently conducting a study of historic and prehistoric salt production in England.

Vincas Steponaitis, also a prominent archaeologist of the Southeast, will be featured in the Archaeology Program Series in February (details to follow).

Light refreshments will be served. Guests are invited to bring artifacts for identification and display. The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians is located at the east end of Jefferson Davis Boulevard and is administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Call 601-446-6502 for information.

Resolution #1 for 2006: Join the Mississippi Historical Society and get the *Journal of Mississippi History* and a discount at the Old Capitol Shop!

Mississippi History NOW

This month, *Mississippi History NOW*, the Mississippi Historical Society's online publication, features **L.Q.C. Lamar**. William "Brother" Rogers writes that Lamar is perhaps Mississippi's greatest nineteenth-century statesman. "He was the first person, and one of only two in American history, to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, as a member of the President's Cabinet, and as a justice on the U.S. Supreme Court. Lamar is one of only eight leaders featured in John F. Kennedy's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Profiles in Courage*." Archived from last month is Hunter Cole's "Hollingsworth: An Artist of Joy and Sadness." All previously published articles are archived for the use of students, teachers, and interested individuals. Visit *Mississippi History NOW* at <http://mshistory.k12.ms.us/>.

Congratulations

Columbus has been designated a *Preserve America* community, making it eligible for grants for heritage tourism and for innovative use of historic properties. *Preserve America* is a White House initiative in cooperation with other agencies.

Henry J. Kirksey, 1915-2005

Tupelo native Henry J. Kirksey, one of the first African Americans elected to the Mississippi state Senate after Reconstruction and civil rights activist for most of his life, died December 11.

Kirksey attended North Carolina Central University in Durham and served in the U. S. Army during World War II. He pursued careers in printing and journalism in other parts of the country before returning to Mississippi in 1962. Kirksey filed legal suits against the city of Jackson and the state, challenging the status quo in government in efforts to give blacks a fair share of political representation. He was instrumental in Jackson's change from the commission form of government to its present mayor-council government.

Kirksey was one of the individuals who sued to make public the records of the state's Sovereignty Commission, which were opened in 1998, 2000, and 2002.

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