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MDAH

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

**2021
ANNUAL REPORT**



State Leaders Raise New Flag at State Capitol

On January 11, Governor Tate Reeves signed the bill ratifying the newly adopted state flag at the Two Mississippi Museums. Afterwards, Governor Reeves joined Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann and House Speaker Philip Gunn to lead a flag raising ceremony on the grounds of the Mississippi State Capitol.

Legislators retired the 1994 flag last summer and created the Commission to Redesign the Mississippi State Flag to select a new banner to represent the state. The commission solicited ideas from the public, held open meetings at the Two Mississippi Museums, and conducted polls before selecting a design to place-

on the ballot for voters.

To mark this occasion, Lieutenant Governor Hosemann said, "In ratifying the peoples vote and in raising this new banner, we are signaling to the rest of the world we are ready to realize this potential, we are open for business, and we are living up to our welcoming reputation of hospitality. Today, we take a great step toward making Mississippi an even better place for our children and grandchildren, and for this I could not be any more proud."

Nissan Sponsors Free Weekends at State History, Civil Rights Museums

Nissan sponsored free admission to the Museum of Mississippi History and Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in February. "We are thankful to Nissan for their continued support," said Katie Blount, director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. "Their generosity allows us to invite the public to safely celebrate Black History Month at the Two Mississippi Museums." Safety precautions at the museums included all visitors to wear masks and observe social distancing guidelines.



MDAH Launches *Speaking of Mississippi* Podcast Series

MDAH has launched a new podcast featuring authors and experts discussing the state's landmark moments and overlooked stories. *Speaking of Mississippi* will explore the Civil War Siege of Jackson, the state's 1878 yellow fever epidemic, the desegregation of the capital city's public swimming pools, the Jackson State shootings, and more during its first season. "We've spoken with distinguished scholars from in-state and across the country who have conducted original research on the people, places, and events that continue to shape Mississippi," said MDAH director Katie Blount. The opening music in the six-episode first season is taken from a 1942 recording by Sid Hemphill, the most storied Black musician in the Mississippi hills in the early twentieth. The closing music was recorded in 1939 by Tishomingo County fiddler John Hatcher. The *Speaking of Mississippi* is a production of MDAH made possible by the Community Foundation for Mississippi through its John and Lucy Shackelford Charitable Fund.

MDAH Completes Largest Repatriation of Native American Ancestors in State History

MDAH has transferred the remains of four hundred and three Native Americans and eighty-three lots of burial objects to the Chickasaw Nation. This is the largest return of human remains in Mississippi history, and the first for MDAH. Since the nineteenth century, archaeological excavations have unearthed hundreds of the ancestral remains of people who once inhabited the state and whose cultures continue today. The passage of the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) gave Native populations the right to claim ancestors and cultural objects in the care of institutions receiving federal funds.

Working closely with the Tribal representatives and the National NAGPRA Program, the transfer of these human remains took place over the course of more than two years. "The Chickasaw Nation has developed a strong working relationship with MDAH as a result of this repatriation," said Amber Hood, Director of Historic Preservation Repatriation, The Chickasaw Nation. "Caring for our ancestors is extremely important to us, and we appreciate the dedication and transparency their staff has shown throughout the consultation process."

MDAH is thankful for its volunteers, who hand-sewed muslin bags that were used to carefully wrap each individual with their belongings. This material was purchased partly with funds from a National NAGRA Program grant.



1856 Map of Natchez Slave Market Now Online

A hand-drawn 1856 map of the second largest slave market in the United States during the nineteenth century is now available on the MDAH Digital Archives. Shown to the left, is the Forks of the Road site at the intersection of what was then Washington Road and Old Courthouse Road in Natchez. The image is part of Series 2015: Natchez Municipal Records, 1795-1982.

The map, drawn by Natchez city surveyor Thomas Kenny, shows the city of Natchez corporation line and the names of the slave market buildings: Elam, James, O. Ferrall, Kent, and McCabe. The back of the map reads "Survey of St. Catherine St. at Forks of the Road Aug. 1, 1856."

Natchez was the most active slave trading city in the state and the fourth richest city in the United States. Nevertheless, evidence shows the enslaved people in Natchez engaged in countless acts of resistance to their conditions. After achieving freedom in Natchez in July 1863, hundreds of formerly enslaved African Americans sought refuge at the Forks of the Road. The United States Colored Troops established a camp at the site in 1863.

Today, the Forks of the Road site is located at the intersection of Liberty Road, St. Catherine Street, and Devereaux Street in Natchez, tell the story of the slave trade and the men, women, and children bought and sold there. Learn more about the Forks of the Road on the Mississippi History Now website.



New Garden Audio Tour & Exhibit Opens at Eudora Welty House

The Eudora Welty House & Garden will launch a new audio tour in April, in recognition of Eudora Welty's birthday. The Welty Garden Audio Tour interprets the history of Welty's garden and its influence of her writing.

"We are excited to offer our visitors an audio tour of the Welty garden," said director Katie Blount. "To hear Mary Alice Welty White read her aunt's words about the flowers she and her mother nurtured adds an intimacy to the garden tour, which is closer now to the experience of walking through her house."

The twenty-minute tour includes music, nature sounds, and narration read by retired Welty Garden curator Susan Haltom.

The new exhibit, *A Parade of Bloom: Stories From the Welty Garden*, is now open to visitors at the Eudora Welty House & Garden Visitor Center and highlights the importance of gardening in Eudora Welty's family and social life as well as her literature. The exhibit includes photographs of Welty's family in the garden, artifacts, garden maps, flower sketches, and journals.



State History, Civil Rights Museums to Host Veterans Day Ceremony

MDAH partnered with the Daughters of the American Revolution, Mississippi Veterans Affairs, and Mississippi War Veterans Memorial Commission to honor Mississippians who serve and have served in the United States Armed Forces.

"Mississippi's extraordinary record of military service is one of the most inspiring stories that we share in the Two Mississippi Museums," said MDAH director Katie Blount. "We are pleased to join with our military service organizations to pay special tribute to all the many Mississippians who have served our country."

The program included a performance by the 41st Army Band, a moment of silence, recognition of the veterans in attendance, memorial volley, wreath laying, and a keynote speech delivered by Major General Janson D. Boyles-the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard. The museums offered free admission to those currently serving in the military, veterans, and a family member of a veteran.



Mississippi Distilled Special Exhibit at the Two Mississippi Museums Wins 2021 AASLH Award of Excellence

The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) has awarded the MDAH its Award of Excellence for the *Mississippi Distilled: Prohibition, Piety, and Politics* special exhibit at the Two Mississippi Museums. The AASLH Leadership in History Awards is the most prestigious recognition achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history.

Mississippi Distilled Prohibition, Piety, and Politics is an immersive exhibition exploring the state's tumultuous relationship with alcohol from the colonial period to today. It features fascinating artifacts, enticing stories, and surprising images that take visitors on a journey that begins with ancient alcohols and the science of spirits through the social problems that led to the upheaval of the temperance movement and its impact on voting rights, lynching, child labor laws, and domestic violence.

"Mississippi Burning" Case Files Open at State Archives

Case files, photographs, and other records documenting the 1964 murders of civil rights activists James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner are now available to researchers at MDAH. The materials were gathered and compiled by the Mississippi Attorney General's office in its 2004 reopening of the Mississippi Burning (code name MiBurn) case and investigation, which culminated in the June 2005 trial and conviction of Edgar Ray Killen. Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood officially closed the investigation in 2016, and the files were transferred to MDAH in the spring of 2019.

The materials, dating from 1964 to 2007, include case files, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) memoranda, research notes, photographs of the exhumation of the victims' bodies and subsequent autopsies, aerial photographs of the burial site, federal informant reports, and witness testimonies.

Goodman and Schwerner were two of the hundreds of volunteers who joined Mississippi Freedom Summer in 1964. The primary goals of the project were to register voters, conduct Freedom Schools, and promote civil rights. Schwerner and his wife, Rita, joined Freedom Summer in January 1964 and worked with Meridian native James Chaney, an experienced Congress of Racial Equality organizer. Chaney and Schwerner worked with the congregation at Mount Zion Methodist Church in rural Neshoba County to organize a Freedom School. In June of 1964, a delegation of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan burned Mt. Zion Church. Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner were abducted and killed on June 21st and buried in an earthen dam, after investigating the burning. The bodies of the civil rights workers were found on August 4, 1964. In October 1967, the federal government charged eighteen men with conspiracy, including Edgar Ray Killen.

There are three catalog records for the collection: the Attorney General's research files are Series 2870, the FBI Memos are Series 2902, and the photographs are Series 2903. Each catalog record includes a box-level description.



Anderson to Retire from MDAH Board, Flatgard Elected Next Board President



Reuben Anderson (left) is pictured with Spence Flatgard after the April 16, MDAH board meeting, which was held in the Two Mississippi Museums.

In April, Ruben Anderson announced his retirement to the Board of Trustees of the MDAH. Spence Flatgard of Ridgeland was elected to serve as board president in October. "Mississippi has been uplifted by Justice Anderson's leadership, character, and grace," said Flatgard.

Anderson joined the board in 2007 and was elected president in 2020. After becoming the first Black student to graduate from the University of Mississippi School of Law, Anderson began his career during the 1960s as a civil rights attorney with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense Fund. In 1977, Anderson became the first African American to be appointed a county court judge in Mississippi. In 1982, he became the state's first African American circuit court judge, and he became the first African American to serve on the Mississippi Supreme Court in 1985.

Anderson was instrumental in the creation of the Museum of Mississippi History and Mississippi Civil Rights Museum, helping to raise \$20 million for its construction. Most recently, Anderson served as chair of the commission to Redesign the Mississippi State Flag.

Flatgard began his career as Senator Roger Wicker's first Legislative Director and has served as State Bond Attorney for both Governors Barbour & Bryant. He is now a government affairs attorney and partner at Watkins & Eager, PLLC, located two blocks from the Two Mississippi Museums. "Spence brings a wide range of skills and professional experience to MDAH. He is passionate about the work we do and has built strong relationships with the staff. We look forward to continuing to expand our audience and strengthen our impact under his leadership," said Blount.

MDAH Receives \$458K NEH Grants for State History, Civil Rights Museums



The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has awarded a \$458,007 grant to MDAH for the Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan (SHARP) program. The SHARP grant was created to help cultural and educational institutions recover from the economic impact of the pandemic. Funding for this grant is used to retain and rehire workers and reopen sites, facilities, and programs.

"The American Rescue Plan recognizes that the cultural and educational sectors are essential components of the United States economy and civic life, vital to the health and resilience of American communities," said NEH Acting Chairman Adam Wolfson. "These new grants will provide a lifeline to the country's colleges and universities museums, libraries, archives, historical sites, and societies, save thousands of jobs in the humanities placed at risk by the pandemic, and help bring economic recovery to cultural and educational institutions and those they serve."

MDAH plans to use the funding from the SHARP grant to cover operating cost at the Museum of Mississippi History and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum as well as expand its digital engagement initiative. "We are grateful to our state's congressional delegation and the Mississippi Humanities Council for their help and support during the pandemic," said MDAH director Katie Blount. "These funds will help us expand our public programs and outreach as well emerge from covid."

MDAH Launches Family Genealogy Fellowships

MDAH will award fellowships of up to \$2,000 to support individuals hoping to locate information related to their family history using resources available at MDAH. The fellowships are part of a year-long initiative in 2022 to expand understanding of the Great Migration and its impact on Mississippi and the Nation.

"The Great Migration is the largest internal migration of people in U.S. history. Many families who left Mississippi still feel a close connection to our state. We're glad to be able to help them come back to Mississippi and research their roots," said MDAH director Katie Blount.

Ten research stipends of up to \$2,000 will be awarded to ten researchers to travel to Jackson, MS, and conduct three consecutive days of research at MDAH. Selected applicants may schedule their fellowships during the months of February, April, May, June, and July 2022. The stipend may be used to cover travel, accommodations, and other expenses accrued during the researcher's time at MDAH such as the cost of copies.

The Great Migration Initiative is a partnership between MDAH and the Mississippi Museum of Art (MMA). Additional programs and events include the exhibitions "A Movement in Every Direction: Legacies of the Great Migration at MMA," "The Negro Motorist Green Book Guide," at MDAH, a joint teacher workshop, and other programs related to art and history.



Mississippi Governor's Mansion Reopens for Tours

In April, the historic section of the Mississippi Governor's Mansion will reopen to the public for guided tours. Free guided tours will be offered Tuesday through Thursday at 9:30 a.m., & 10 a.m. Reservations are mandatory and must be made at least seventy-two hours in advance.

"After a long year filled with many challenges, we are so excited to resume tours at the Governor's Mansion," said First Lady Elee Reeves. "We look forward to seeing everyone who comes to visit Mississippi's home! It is our hope that each of you will come learn more about his historic home, and grow to love it as much as we do."

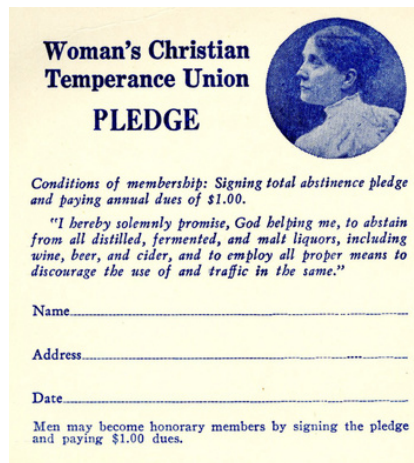
The Mississippi Governor's Mansion, a National Historic Landmark, is administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. First Occupied in 1842, the Governor's Mansion is the second-oldest continuously occupied governor's residence in the United States. The Greek Revival building was designed by William Nichols, an English-born architect who also designed the Old Capitol. The mansion was renovated in 1908-09, then underwent a renovation and restoration in the 1970s that included the acquisition of appropriate antique furniture and accessories to furnish the historic interior.



Mississippi Distilled: Prohibition, Piety, and Politics Wins SEMC Gold Award

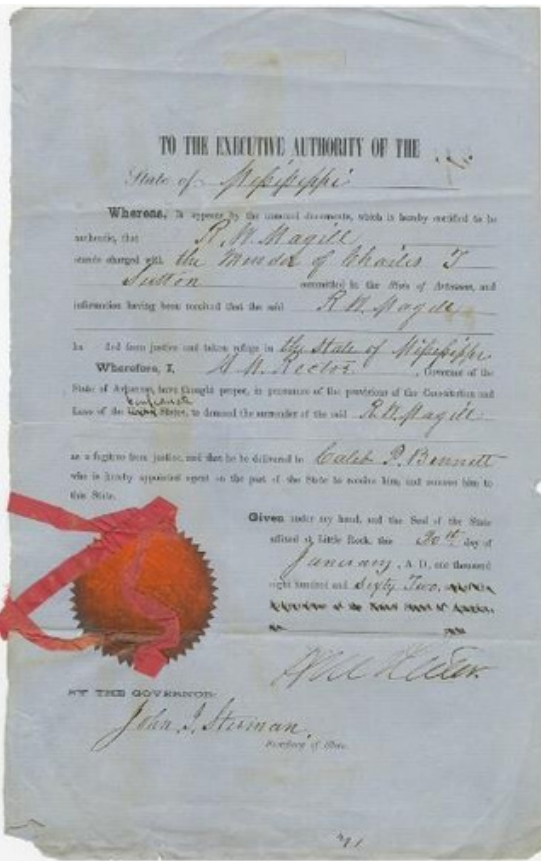
In addition to receiving the 2021 AASLH Award of Excellence, the *Mississippi Distilled: Prohibition, Piety, and Politics* received the Southern Museums Conference's Gold Award. The Gold Award was presented in the over \$100,000 budget category and recognizes museums that showcase exhibitions of merit that are well designed, have educational value and treat the objects with care and respect. Exhibitions were judged by an appointed jury of museum professionals across the region who specialize in curatorial studies and exhibition design.

Mississippi Distilled was an immersive exhibit that explored the state's tumultuous relationship with alcohol from the colonial period to today. It featured fascinating artifacts, enticing stories, and surprising images that took visitors on a journey. The exhibition ran from July 7, 2020, through June 26, 2021. Award winners were celebrated at SEMC's 2021 annual meeting in Chattanooga, Tennessee.



Old Capitol Museum Repairs

The Old Capitol Museum window repair project has been completed. Interior windows have been repainted; all damaged exterior window panes were replaced and windows re-caulked and painted. Scaffolding was installed in several areas inside the building to provide access to areas that have been completed. Scaffolding was also erected on the Old Capitol roof to allow repair and reroofing of the dome lantern and dome. The copper lantern roof and decorative top element were removed and replaced. The uppermost scaffolding was then removed to access the dome roof. The old copper dome roof has been removed, and weather-proof material installed. New copper panels will be fabricated off-site. The dome lantern windows were inspected, caulked, and painted. Interior plaster repairs and painting from the first list have been completed. An additional list of interior repairs was approved with work now underway. Exhibits and collections staff members provided assistance in removing additional portraits and reproduction draperies, and moving and covering objects. Lastly, the Old Capitol's historic marker was damaged by workmen, repaired, and reinstalled.



Civil War & Reconstruction Governors of Mississippi Project

Archives and Record Services continued to work on the Civil War and Reconstruction Governors of Mississippi (CWRGM) project, a collaboration between MDAH, the Mississippi Digital Library, and the University of Southern Mississippi. The project seeks to create and facilitate an open-access digitization effort to help researchers better understand the Civil War and Reconstruction era of Mississippi history. Staff created over 4,000 digital images of governors' papers from MDAH collections for the project during the reporting period, bringing the total to over 47,000. Project staff at USM and the Mississippi Digital Library placed additional sample images and educator resources, including lesson plans, on the project website and continued directing the creation of metadata by students.

MDAH Digitizing Projects

Electronic Archives section staff completed the initial backup of core archival data to Dell's Mississippi Hybrid Cloud storage for redundancy, bringing the total transfer to approximately 20 terabytes. Section staff provided digital access to over 650 files, including enrolled bills of the 2021 legislative session transferred by the Secretary of State. Additionally, the staff identified current ANSI/AIIM/ISO reformatting standards for archival materials and drafted revisions to the MDAH reformatting standards document.

The Archival Reformatting section digitized 6,744 items, including negatives from the Woodrow W. Ogden photograph collection; MDOT bridge and railroad crossing negatives; photographic negatives from the Eudora Welty Collection and the Florence Mars Collection; correspondence, papers, and executive journals of Mississippi Governors John J. Pettus, Charles Clark, Benjamin Humphreys, William Sharkey, and John M. Stone; posters for the upcoming 2MM exhibit *The World of Marty Stuart*; and State Auditor Series 2327: Capitol Repairs and Expenses. The section continued work on the inspection and preliminary processing of U-Matic tapes received from Jackson television station WLBT, including working with vendor Specs Brothers to conserve and digitize select highly used tapes.

Preservation Grants

At a regular meeting on January 22, the Board of Trustees of the MDAH awarded nearly \$3 million on behalf of the Community Heritage Preservation Grant program to eighteen preservation and restoration projects from across the state. The Community Heritage Preservation Grant program, authorized and funded by the Mississippi Legislature, helps preserve and restore historic courthouses and schools in Certified Local Government communities and other historic properties.

"The Legislature has saved hundreds of significant Mississippi properties through this program," said MDAH director Katie Blount. "The Department of Archives and History is grateful for the Legislature's support and pleased to be able to help preserve these local treasures."

The grant awards are as follows:

House on Ellicott's Hill, Natchez, Adams County—\$210,400

For restoration of the front gallery of the building.

Natchez City Hall, Natchez, Adams County—\$157,056

For replacement of the roof.

Corinth Coliseum Theater, Corinth, Alcorn County—\$236,234

For replacement of the roof and ADA upgrades.

Chickasaw County Courthouse, Huston, Chickasaw County—\$226,677

For repairs to the roof and other interior repairs.

G.L. Hawkins Elementary, Hattiesburg, Forrest County—\$35,200

For roof repairs.

Franklin County Courthouse, Meadville, Franklin County—\$144,388

For window and masonry restoration, and reroofing of the jail.

Wechsler School, Meridian, Lauderdale County—\$277,154

For interior and exterior rehabilitation.

(Old) Monticello Elementary, Monticello, Lawrence County—\$40,000

For structures repairs and asbestos report and abatement.

Stephen D. Lee House, Columbus, Lowndes County—\$25,600

For front porch roof replacement.

Tennessee Williams House, Columbus, Lowndes County—\$35,000

For rebuild of the front porch.

Old Madison County Jail, Canton, Madison County—\$250,250

For rear wall repair and roofing.

Marion County Courthouse, Columbia, Marion County—\$225,940

For window restoration.

Isaac Chapel (Rosenwald School), Byhalia, Marshall County—\$268,744

For interior and exterior restoration.

Noxubee County Library, Macon, Noxubee County—\$200,044

For clay tile roof replacement and exterior restoration.

Pontotoc County Courthouse, Pontotoc, Pontotoc County—\$239,753
For window and masonry restoration.

Quitman County Courthouse, Marks, Quitman County—\$184,792
For exterior and interior rehabilitation.

(Old) Vicksburg Library, Vicksburg, Warren County—\$103,370
For electrical upgrades, window and door restoration, and boiler removal.

Southern Cultural Heritage Foundation, Vicksburg, Warren County—\$89,056
For repair to the auditorium's south wall.

MDAH Volunteers

During 2021, MDAH volunteers served a total of **3,352** total hours. The labor value of this service is **\$95,666.08**, based upon the Independent Sector's current value placed on a volunteer hour of \$28.54. There were a total of **74** individual volunteers and **1** Service Group. MDAH's volunteer service is still recovering from the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic.

Volunteers served within two divisions of the department:

Historic Preservation: 160 hours

Museum: 3, 192 hours

MDAH Division Statistics

Archives and Record Services Division

Onsite patrons: 1,425

Offsite inquiries answered: 12,175

Attendees at public programs: 652

Items digitized: 31,625

Electronic assets processed (gigabytes): 123,593

Museum Division

Eudora Welty House & Garden: 3,459

Governor's Mansion: 280

Grand Village of the Natchez Indians: 12,817

Old Capitol Museum: 219

Two Mississippi Museum: 35,701