

MISSISSIPPI HISTORY NEWSLETTER

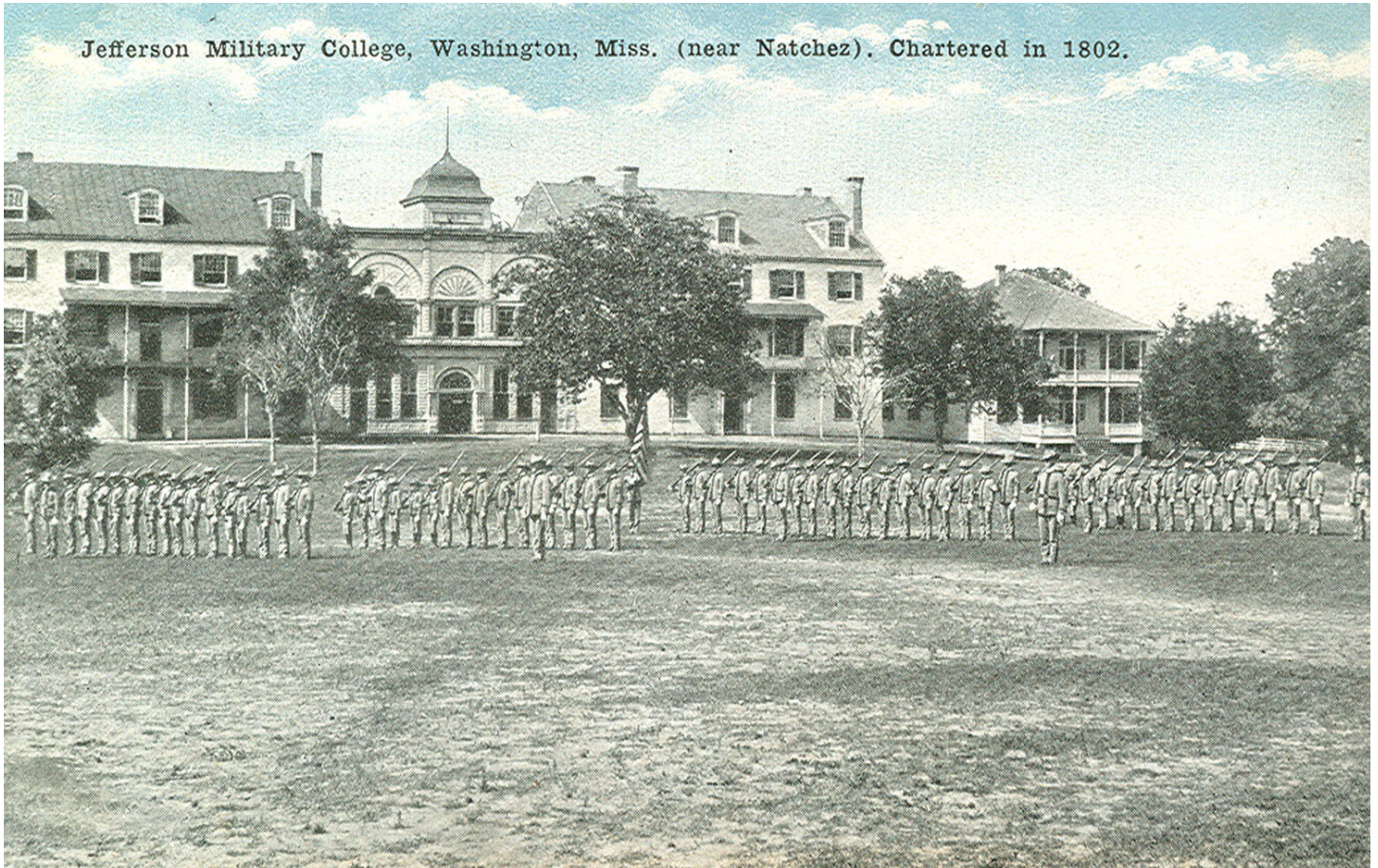
MDAH
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

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Jefferson Military College, Washington, Miss. (near Natchez). Chartered in 1802.



Entergy MS Donates to Historic Jefferson College Field School

Page 3

Inside This Issue

Page 4

**School Field Trips Funded by
Endowment, Private Support**

More than 15,400 students visited the Two Mississippi Museums last school year.

Page 6

**MDAH's Inaugural Paid Internship
Program Proved Successful**

Seventeen interns spent time working in various divisions at MDAH this summer delving into an array of projects.

Contents

Page 2

Message from Director

Page 3

Entergy Mississippi Donates \$250K for Historic Jefferson College

Grant will support the restoration to house a field school and interpretive center.

Page 4

Field Trips Funded by Endowment, Private Foundation Support

More than 15,400 students visited the Two Mississippi Museums last year.

NEH Grant to Fund MDAH Teacher Workshops in Summer 2024

Page 5

Program Highlights

Page 6

Internship Program Successful

Seventeen students worked across all five MDAH divisions.

Three Sites and Districts Added to National Register of Historic Places

Page 7

From the Digital Archives

Photo of Winter Building dedication

From the Collection

Oak chair crafted by Black artisan

From the Archives

“Slave births” list from Mound Plantation in Jefferson County

Page 8

In Memoriam

New Park to Enhance Museums

We have more exciting news to share here at MDAH.

As some of you may know, the condition of the Eudora Welty Library building on State Street has been declining for many years, and the City of Jackson has agreed that the best solution is to demolish the current building and relocate the library.

MDAH is working with the city to acquire the property. Plans are to replace the building with a new public park and green space that will serve as an anchor for the northeast corner of downtown Jackson, much like the Mississippi Museum of Art and its Art Garden anchor the southwest corner.

The plans for this project align with the original layout for Jackson from 1822, which included public green spaces on alternating blocks. There are currently only two: the Old Capitol Green and Smith Park.

We’re working with a national firm that specializes in park design to create a spectacular vista between the Two Mississippi Museums and State Street, which will connect to the Museum Trail and provide an important improvement to the visitor experience.

The first \$1 million for the project was donated by retired businessman Noble T. Crigler and the park will be named after his late wife, Margaret Ann Crigler. The Criglers were personal and professional partners for more than sixty years. Together, they traveled the world, supported humanitarian causes, and met people in many circles who became their friends. Among those friends were Aaron Henry, Thad Cochran, and Mike and Portia Espy, who introduced Noble to us at MDAH. Throughout her life Margaret had a special love for children and others less fortunate than herself. Her passion for providing for others will continue in the park and through its programs. The Mississippi Legislature has generously supported this project, and we’ll raise additional funds to complete it.

We at MDAH understand the importance of having a flagship Eudora Welty Library in downtown Jackson and will work with the City of Jackson and the Jackson/Hinds Library System to find a new location and make sure the books are preserved safely until they can be relocated.

We’ll keep you posted on the progress of the Margaret Ann Crigler Park.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Blount".

Katie Blount
Director
Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Entergy Mississippi Donates \$250K to Natchez Center for American History at Historic Jefferson College

Entergy Mississippi's grant of \$250,000 to the Foundation for Mississippi History will support the restoration of Raymond Hall as part of a new initiative by MDAH on the campus of Historic Jefferson College (HJC) in Washington.

MDAH is developing the Natchez Center for American History (NCAH) at HJC. The \$20 million project will include two components: a preservation field school and an interpretive center.

Restoration efforts will soon begin at Raymond Hall on the HJC campus thanks to a National Park Service Save America's Treasures grant that will provide a combined \$600,000 in competitive and congressionally directed awards.

Raymond Hall will be restored and equipped with modern building systems to provide classroom space and housing for what will become the region's first preservation field school. MDAH preservation professionals and faculty from regional universities will provide hands-on learning to develop new, local talent for the preservation workforce.

"The restoration project at Historic Jefferson College is a prime example of Mississippians working to better our communities and create opportunities for the next generation," said Haley Fisackerly, president and CEO of Entergy Mississippi.

"We're thrilled to partner with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History to develop an institution that will prepare Mississippians for employment in a sector that is woefully short of meeting demand," said Fisackerly (pictured third from right). "Not only is it a beautiful site that will play an important role in southwest Mississippi's tourism, but this effort will also cultivate a strong workforce with diverse skills critical to helping Mississippi's economy thrive."

The campus is an 80-acre site with eight main buildings and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural significance. The first building at the college was completed in 1820 as the cotton economy built on slavery was expanding and generating vast wealth.

Restoration and development of Historic Jefferson College are key components of MDAH's strategic plan for southwest Mississippi, where it operates two other historic sites—the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians in Natchez and Windsor Ruins near Port Gibson.

"Historic Jefferson College will one day be a gateway for visitors, sharing the powerful stories of the Native American experience, conflicts among colonial powers, westward expansion, statehood, slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction," said Katie Blount, director of MDAH. "We will bring visitors to Jefferson College and then send them out across the region to see the places where history happened."

Historic Jefferson College was Mississippi's first institution of higher learning and the birthplace of statehood, where delegates gathered to write the state's first constitution. Jefferson College operated for many years as a preparatory school and later as Jefferson Military College.

It served briefly as a Freedmen's Bureau after the Civil War. In addition to the grant from Entergy Mississippi and federal funds, MDAH has secured support for the NCAH from the Mississippi Legislature. The Foundation for Mississippi History will continue to seek private support.

Entergy Mississippi has generously supported other MDAH projects including the Two Mississippi Museums and the William and Elise Winter Education Endowment.





School Field Trips Funded by Endowment, Private Foundation Support

The Two Mississippi Museums' galleries pulse with energy every weekday as school children on field trips learn the history of the place they call home.

Since opening the Museum of Mississippi History and Mississippi Civil Rights Museum six years ago, MDAH has worked with the Winter family to raise more than \$5 million for the William and Elise Winter Education Endowment to make school visits *free*.

Proceeds from the endowment paired with operating support from funders who make annual gifts covered the costs for 15,400 students during the 2022-23 school year. Because the museums cover the cost of admission, travel, and on-site lunches, all students—those from far-flung places and those who attend Title 1 schools—have opportunities to visit.

Among the foundations and corporate supporters that have stepped up to make sure all Mississippi students have the chance to visit the museums before they graduate are W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Phil Hardin Foundation, Nissan Foundation, and Cline Tours.

If you want to give to the William and Elise Winter Education Endowment, contact Laney McDonald, MDAH development director, at 601-576-6767 or lmcdonald@mdah.ms.gov.

To learn more about bringing students, contact Stephanie King, group tours coordinator, at 601-576-6795 or twommgroupstours@mdah.ms.gov.

NEH Grant to Fund MDAH Teacher Workshops in Summer 2024

MDAH has been awarded \$187,059 by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to present two workshops on teaching civil rights history.

This MDAH project was awarded as part of the NEH Landmarks of History and Culture grant program, and it will mark the 60th anniversary of a pivotal event in American history, 1964's Freedom Summer.

Seventy teachers from across the nation will have the opportunity to attend one of two weeklong workshops.

Teachers will learn about the civil rights events in 1964 that changed Mississippi and the nation. The July 2024 workshops will bring two different groups of K-12 teachers to the Two Mississippi Museums and the MDAH archives to interact with historians, Civil Rights Movement veterans, educators, and museum professionals.

Teachers will collaborate to develop inquiry-based classroom activities and lessons about Freedom Summer using primary sources found in MDAH's archives and experiential, site-based learning at the Two Mississippi Museums and key civil rights sites across Mississippi.



Program Highlights



Visitors attend a screening of *The Harvest* at the Two Mississippi Museums.



Chef Nick Wallace demonstrates his techniques during *Community Solidarity Day* at the Two Mississippi Museums.



Rebekah Scott teaches visitors how to make grape dumplings at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians.



Author Ron Rash signs books at the Eudora Welty House & Garden.



Visitors learn about Mississippi's medical history during a *History Happy Hour* tour at the Two Mississippi Museums.



JSU archivist Angela Stewart discusses the Phillis Wheatley Poetry Festival during *History Is Lunch*.

MDAH's Inaugural Paid Summer Internship Program Proved a Major Success

This summer MDAH welcomed seventeen undergraduate and graduate student interns selected from a pool of ninety-five applicants from across the United States.

MDAH internships were designed to create an engaging and valuable experience for the interns while also aligning with MDAH's mission.

MDAH offered hands-on experience in a professional setting to equip students with skills to prepare them for entry into a competitive job market.

From archives and archaeology to museums and historic preservation, interns had the chance to work in one of five MDAH divisions, delving into an array of projects under mentor staff, with additional professional development workshops and tours of MDAH sites.

These experiences provided valuable insights, networking opportunities, a deeper understanding of the practical applications of the work, and a broader perspective on career possibilities.



Interns contributed to MDAH projects, including improving audience engagement and accessibility through the development of educational materials, developing two gallery guides, cataloging Welty books, rehousing artifacts at the Old Capitol Museum, assisting with the installation of temporary exhibits, and many other projects.

Each intern received a \$2,000 stipend for 140 hours of work. One intern is now a fulltime employee at MDAH.



Mississippi Sites and Districts Added to National Register of Historic Places

Three sites and two historic districts in Mississippi have joined the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The NRHP is the official list of national historic places worthy of preservation.

- Lamar Elementary School (originally known as Kingston School) in Laurel was designed by Meridian architect Penn Jeffries Krouse and completed in 1912.

- Mendenhall Hotel and Revolving Tables Restaurant (pictured). The simple two-story, wood frame and brick hotel was built in two stages in 1915 and 1926-27.

- Holiday Inn Southwest is a former motel located in southwest Jackson. It opened in 1962 and had doubled in size by 1968.

- Expansion to Smith Park Architectural District boundary. This Jackson district was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976, one of the first historic districts listed in the state.

- Baptist Ville Historic District in Aberdeen was a predominantly segregated, working-class African American community. It was centered around the First Baptist Church (present Baptist Missionary Church), formed in 1867.



From the Digital Archives

This photograph was taken November 7, 2003, at the dedication of the William F. Winter Archives & History Building. Then Gov. Ronnie Musgrove (third from left) and former Gov. William F. Winter (fourth from left) led other state officials in cutting a ribbon. *From Series 2459: Photographs, Negatives, and Related Materials, 2000-2004, of the Governor's Office: Administration of Ronnie Musgrove.* See more at da.mdah.ms.gov.

From the Collection

This oak chair was hand crafted in the 1970s by Black artisan Richard Thompson of Wilkinson County. Part of a Mississippi folk art collection curated by noted photographer and cultural documentarian Roland Freeman, it was donated this year by the Kohler Foundation.



Martha's daughter Hetty was born 17th October 1841
Martha's daughter, Lucy was born, in the first or second
week in January 1844
Martha's daughter Laura was born, some time in
Sarah's son Taylor was born, in March 1847
Sarah's daughter Jenny was born June or July
Sarah's son Leff, was born, March 5th 1853
Kinola's son Ben was born May 3rd 1853
Lucy's son Bob was born October 17th 1854
Savannah's daughter Francis was born Jan^{ry}
Lydia's son Henderson was born June 29th
Malifa's daughter, Ann was born Jan^{ry}
Lydia's son Armstrong, was born May 9th 1855
Prucilla's daughter Minda was born June
Savannah's son Wentley was born November 2nd
Malifa's son Hinds, was born April 22nd 1858
Little Lucy's son, Lucian, was born Sunday, August
Savannah's daughter, Betty, was born Wednesday
Lydia's son, George, was born Saturday May
Lera's child born March 6th 1864

From the Archives

A list titled "Slave births" includes the names of twenty-five children born between October 1841 and September 1864 to enslaved families on the Mound Plantation in Jefferson County. Notes in pencil show that someone calculated ages of the children in 1864. The list includes names of mothers and children, which can be helpful to families working on genealogies. *From the Chamberlain Family Papers (Z/2355).*

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Sarah Campbell, editor

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Contents © 2023 Mississippi Department of Archives and History
Katie Blount, director

In This Issue

- Entergy Donates \$250K
- School Field Trip Program Thrives
- New National Register Sites

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In Memoriam

Roland Freeman, 1936–2023, photographer and cultural documentarian of African American life

Charles Sullivan, 1942–2023, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College professor, former president of the Mississippi Historical Society, archivist, and author

Martha Swain, 1929–2023, Mississippi State University professor, former president of the Mississippi Historical Society, conducted extensive research on women and politics in Mississippi

Hollis Watkins, 1941–2023, civil rights activist, chair of Veterans of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement, former field secretary of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, organized voter registration drives and direct action campaigns

Mark Your Calendar

Christmas by Candlelight Tour

Friday, December 1, 2023, 4–8 p.m.

Celebrate the holiday season with a tour of MDAH's sites in downtown Jackson.

Mose Allison: Ever Since I Stole the Blues Sunday Screening

Sunday, December 10, 2023, 2 p.m.

John Allison will discuss his father's journey from Tippo, Mississippi, to playing jazz and blues music on the world stage.

MLK Weekend Celebration

Saturday–Monday, January 13–15, 2024

Enjoy free admission to the Two Mississippi Museums sponsored by FedEx.

MLK Night of Culture

Monday, January 15, 2024, 6 p.m.

Artists will present original works centered on freedom, voting rights, and education during this night of celebration.