

Historic Natchez Foundation
P. O. Box 1761
Natchez, Mississippi 39121

Annual Meeting

Thursday, January 22, 2015
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Cocktail Reception

honoring

Hank Holmes and Katie Blount
Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Elms Court
542 John R. Junkin Drive

The public is invited. Bring a friend.

Historic Natchez Foundation
2014 Awards

George and Ethel Kelly
Restoration Award

Tim Blalock
900 Main Street

Mac and Meg Hazlip
612 Washington Street
403 Madison Street

Holy Family Catholic Church
28 St. Catherine Street

Pat and Lisa Miller
719 North Union Street

Mary Postlethwaite
History Award

Jim Barnett
Natchez Indians

Special Merit Award

Dr. David and Dr. Julie Mermilliod
509 South Commerce Street

Community Alliance
Bandstand, Bluff Park



The small cottage at 403 Madison Street appeared on the city’s demolition list, and HNF requested a “stay of execution.” Mac and Meg Hazlip stepped forward, acquired it, and restored it. Now it is one of the most attractive small cottages in downtown Natchez. The house dates to the antebellum period, but its gallery millwork and shingled gable date to the late 19th century.

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Volume 1

December 2014

HNF hosts Annual Meeting on January 22



Past, future, and present directors of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History: (left to right) Elbert R. Hilliard, Katherine “Katie” Blount, and H. T. “Hank” Holmes.



Historic Natchez Foundation
Annual Meeting

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Elms Court
Cocktail Reception
Honoring

H. T. Holmes and Katherine Blount
Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Reception 5:30 p.m. Awards & Elections 6:30 p.m.

The Historic Natchez Foundation will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, January 22, 2015, at 5:30 p.m. at Elms Court, 542 John R. Junkin Drive.

This year’s annual meeting and cocktail reception will honor Hank Holmes, retiring Director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and Katie Blount, who will assume the director’s position on February 1.

This is an opportunity for the Natchez community to thank Hank for his service and to meet Katie and wish her well in her new position. Also attending will be Elbert R. Hilliard who served as

department director for 31 years and has many friends in the Natchez area.

The foundation also looks forward to introducing the Natchez community to Lance Harris, the new Site Director of the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, a historic site administered by the Department of Archives and History.

Following a time-honored foundation tradition, the cocktail reception will be followed by a short business meeting at 6:30 to introduce special guests, present awards, and elect new board members.

Holmes retires after 42 years

Hank Holmes has had a long and distinguished career with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH). After serving as an intern in 1969, he joined the department in 1973 and served as Director of the Archives and Records Services Division from 1988 to 2004.

During his tenure as division director, Holmes directed the release of the records of the Sovereignty Commission, a state segregationist spy agency. He was also heavily involved in the design of the new William F. Winter Archives and History Building, a state-of-the-art archives facility.

Holmes became executive director in 2005, the same year that Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast. Holmes immediately dispatched MDAH employees and directed a historic preservation

grant program that distributed \$26 million and saved many historic buildings thought to be beyond hope.

Katrina also caused inland damage and forced the closure of the Old Capitol Museum, home to the state’s history museum. Holmes oversaw its restoration and development as a museum of state government reflecting its role as state capitol from 1839 to 1903.

The most visible legacy of the tenure of Hank Holmes are state museums now under construction in Jackson. The Museum of Mississippi History and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum will open in 2017 in conjunction with the celebration of the state’s bicentennial.



Katie Blount takes charge of Archives and History



On February 1, Katie Blount takes charge of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, a state agency with 122 employees and current budget of \$10.1 million. None who know her doubt that she can handle the job as the seventh director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, founded in 1902.

Blount began working at the department in 1994 and most recently served as Deputy Director/Communications. She has a degree in English and history from the University of Michigan and a master’s degree in Southern studies from the University of Mississippi. Archives and History describes itself as a “comprehensive historical agency” that “collects, preserves, and provides access to the archival resources of the state, administers museums and historic sites, and oversees statewide programs for historic preservation, government records management, and publication.”

The Department of Archives and History is divided into divisions that include the (1) Archives and Records Services Division, (2) Historic Preservation Division, and (3) Museum Division. The Museum Division operates two Natchez museum sites, the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians and Historic Jefferson College.

Archives and History has long played a pivotal role in the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and sites in the Natchez area. The department is also the major source of grant funding for historic preservation projects in Natchez.

Decorative Arts Trust holds symposium in Natchez

The Historic Natchez Foundation hosted the fall symposium of the Decorative Arts Trust October 23-26, 2014. The organization, which is based in the Philadelphia area, has a national membership. Participation was limited to 100 and the symposium sold out soon after it was advertised.

Matthew Thurlow, executive director, posted an online review that was headlined “Natchez Charms Symposium Participants.” Thurlow wrote, “Most of the houses visited were impressive time capsules of 19th-century taste, with furnishings, lighting fixtures, window treatments, and carpeting preserved for our delectation.”

Thurlow also noted the cooperation of the garden clubs, Historic Natchez Foundation, and the National Park Service who “maintain a unified purpose and support network that not only ensured the high caliber of our visit, but the ongoing vibrancy of the preservation effort in this important town.”

The symposium consisted of scholarly

lectures on historic preservation and decorative arts, as well as tours of historic sites. All houses selected for touring had participated in a summer cataloguing program sponsored by the Classical Institute of the South with partial funding by the Decorative Arts Trust.

The Classical Institute’s Gulf South Field Survey Project began in 2011 and seeks to record and share information about fine and decorative arts with provenance in the Gulf South.

Partner organizations include the Historic New Orleans Collection, Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans Museum of Art, Louisiana State University Museum, and the Historic Natchez Foundation.

Natchez historic houses that have been catalogued include Auburn, Elms Court, Green Leaves, William Johnson House, Lansdowne, Longwood, Melrose, Richmond, and Stanton Hall. More Natchez houses will be catalogued in summer 2015.



100 members of the Decorative Arts Trust toured Longwood on October 24.



HNF members (left to right) Makalah Brown, Catherine Ratcliffe, Roanne Bland, Missy Brown, Shields Brown and Dan Bland look on as Everette Ratcliffe examines a spinning wheel on the green in New Castle, Delaware.

HNF travels to Brandywine River Valley

The Historic Natchez Foundation followed up its Hudson River Valley 2013 fall tour with a 2014 spring tour to the Brandywine River Valley, May 13-18.

HNF members toured museums (Winterthur, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Barnes Foundation, and Brandywine River Museum); historic houses (Mount Pleasant, Cedar Grove, and Nemours); Longwood Gardens; Hagley—the du Pont family homestead and gunpowder works; Amish country; and New Castle, the colonial capital of Delaware.



Anne MacNeil and Beth Boggess browse in the Downton Abbey exhibit at the Winterthur Museum.

Below is a list of members and donors who joined or donated in 2014 or whose memberships expired in 2014. Please contact the Historic Natchez Foundation office (601-442-2500) if you have any questions or find errors in the membership listings.

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