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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT PRESENTATION ON May 19 AT NOON
THE MUSIC OF THE BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT'S MINES, RAILROADS, AND MILLS
PRESENTED BY KAREN R. UTZ**

Montgomery, AL (5/4/16) - *Food for Thought* continues another year of fascinating and informative lunchtime lectures on the rich history of Alabama at the **Alabama Department of Archives and History** on **Thursday, May 19 at noon**. Curator and historian Karen R. Utz will present *The Music of the Birmingham District's Mines, Railroads, and Mills*.

In the decades after the Civil War, Birmingham's industrial district became the largest iron and steel producer in the southern United States. Migrants poured into the area from the cotton fields of the Mississippi Delta and the hills of Appalachia, carrying with them distinct styles of music and unique traditions. In her presentation, Utz will share history through music, introducing the audience to ballads, fiddle music, mining blues, and other labor-related music of the period. Her talk will include personal recollections from the musicians and their families and provide a social context for the music they made.

Karen R. Utz is the curator and historian of Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark in Birmingham, Alabama. She is also an adjunct history instructor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham where she teaches undergraduate courses pertaining to southern industry, African American studies, and 20th century American history. Utz is a contributor to *Work, Family, Faith: Rural Southern Women in the Twentieth Century*, *Man Food: Recipes from the Iron Trade*, and *Iron & Steel: A Guide to Birmingham Area Industrial Heritage Sites*.

Food for Thought is made possible by the Friends of the Alabama Archives and a grant from the Alabama Humanities Foundation, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The public is invited to bring a brown bag lunch. Complimentary beverages are provided. **Admission to *Food for Thought* is always FREE.**

The Alabama Department of Archives and History is located in downtown Montgomery, directly across the street from the State Capitol. It is the state's government records repository, special collections library and research facility, and is home to the Museum of Alabama, the state history museum. The Archives and Museum are open Monday through Saturday, 8:30 to 4:30. To learn more, visit www.archives.alabama.gov or call (334) 242-4364.

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