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NEWS RELEASE

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FILM SCREENING - *THE JEFFERSON COUNTY SOUND:* *ALABAMA'S BLACK GOSPEL QUARTETS* BY ROBERT CLEM AT THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Join us at **noon** on **Thursday, November 3, 2011**, for the screening of the film ***The Jefferson County Sound: Alabama's Black Gospel Quartets*** by **Robert Clem**. This informative presentation will be held at the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

Many music historians agree that the African American gospel quartets that began recording and traveling in the 1920s and 30s laid the groundwork for musical forms such as rhythm and blues, doo-wop, Motown and soul. Jefferson County's gospel quartets played a major role in this history, as did many other black performers from the state, including the Grammy Award-winning quartets the Blind Boys of Alabama and the Mighty Clouds of Joy.

The Jefferson County Sound profiles five Alabama quartets who are still performing today: The Blind Boys of Alabama, the Fairfield Four (based in Nashville but led by Jefferson County native Isaac Freeman), the Four Eagles, the Delta-Aires, and the Birmingham Sunlights. The film explores the difficult road many of these groups traveled -- carried along by faith, sometime sleeping in cars and eating out of paper sacks, but always ready for the next performance. This screening will be the Alabama premier of Robert Clem's latest film documentary.

Robert Clem graduated from Anniston High School and Birmingham-Southern College and later received an M.F.A. from NYU Graduate Film School. He has been a fellow at the Sundance Institute writer/director's lab and his films include *Company K*; *Big Jim Folsom: The Two Faces of Populism*; *Eugene Walter: Last of the Bohemians*; *Malbis Plantation: From Greece to America*; and *In the Wake of the Assassins*. Bob is currently producing a film which combines a documentary on Mobile author Augusta Evans Wilson and a dramatization of her 1866 novel *St. Elmo*, the best selling novel of the nineteenth century after *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

The public is invited to bring a sack lunch and enjoy a bit of Alabama history, free. Coffee and tea will be provided by the Friends of the Alabama Archives. For more information, call (334) 353-4726.

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