



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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BETTER THAN THEM: THE UNMAKING OF AN ALABAMA RACIST
PRESENTED BY S. M. "MAC" OTTS ON AUGUST 26 at NOON
CO-SPONSORED BY NEWSOUTH BOOKS

Montgomery, AL (8/24/15) - On Wednesday, **August 26, 2015 at noon**, the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) will present a book talk by S. M. "Mac" Otts entitled *Better Than Them: The Unmaking of An Alabama Racist*. This presentation is co-sponsored by NewSouth Books.

"You are better than them. Don't forget it," a grandmother whispers to her grandson. The year is 1965, and eighteen-year-old Mac Otts stands curbside in his Black Belt hometown—weapon in hand—defiant before a peaceful civil rights demonstration. Violent pandemonium follows the quiet moment. For the rest of Otts' life, his grandmother's words haunt him and inspire the writing of his powerful memoir, *Better Than Them: The Unmaking of an Alabama Racist*.

Better Than Them is not a standard memoir. Rather, it is a quest for answers. With honesty and humility, the author uses that memorable day in 1965 as a lens through which to examine the events that shaped his life. With retrospection he comes away with perspective altered and new conclusions reached, including some unanticipated, making this a memoir about Otts's life and experiences in a racially divided world, but also about how a life is lived and celebrated and understood.

Otts is a graduate of the University of Alabama. He was a counselor and then director of three private child welfare agencies as well as a state membership association of such agencies. He received governors' appointments for several terms on the board of the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and the State Children's Policy Council. Today, in addition to writing, Otts is a part-time child-welfare consultant. He and his wife, Carol, live in Mobile.

This presentation is **FREE** to the public. The ADAH is located in downtown Montgomery across the street from the State Capitol on Washington Avenue. For more information visit www.archives.alabama.gov or call (334) 353-3312.

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