



Press Release

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Contact: Georgia Ann Conner
Communications Officer
334.353.3312

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY ANNOUNCES CONSTRUCTION OF ALABAMA VOICES EXHIBITION

Construction has commenced on *Alabama Voices*, the highly anticipated permanent exhibition and centerpiece of the Museum of Alabama at the state's Department of Archives and History. *Alabama Voices* will tell the story of Alabama from 1700 to the turn of the 21st century through the voices of the people who shaped its history. Taken from diaries, letters, speeches, songs, and other sources, these voices will provide context for more than 800 artifacts and hundreds of images that will be included in the exhibit. Representing Alabamians from every walk of life, *Alabama Voices* will be an inclusive overview of our past, a full telling of the struggle, achievement, conflict and cooperation that created the Alabama we know today.

The exhibition will be the product of a collaboration involving Archives and History staff, a panel of historical and archaeological advisers, and a host of designers, fabricators, artisans, and artists. "This project brings together a terrific team of national talent and in-state expertise," said Steve Murray, director of the Department of Archives and History. "Our goal is to tell the story of Alabama in a compelling and beautiful way. We believe the end result will be a cultural and historical resource of which all Alabamians will be proud."

Exhibit design is by The PRD Group, Ltd., of Chantilly, VA, which also designed two smaller exhibitions in the museum that opened to wide acclaim in 2011. Guided by a team of agency employees and scholar advisers, PRD developed a content plan that takes advantage of the Archives' rich collections of artifacts and records.

"Because our collections include a wide variety of types of materials," said Murray, "we are able to present the experiences of Alabamians in multiple ways--through public records, private manuscripts, photographs, maps, and more, in addition to the artifacts that visitors expect to see in a museum."

PRD's previous projects include state history museums in Texas and Virginia, the American Civil War Center, and numerous projects for the Smithsonian Institution.

Engineering and construction of exhibit cases, lighting systems, graphics, and other components are being provided by Design and Production, Inc. (D&P), of Lorton, VA, one of the leading exhibit fabrication firms in the country. D&P recently completed installation of the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum and is also working on the 9/11 Memorial in New York.

Twenty-two audiovisual programs are in development by the hybrid team of Donna Lawrence Productions and Videobred, Inc., both of Louisville, KY. Their previous clients in museum and media production include Monticello, the New York Historical Society, the U.S. Capitol Visitors Center, and the National World War I Museum. The end result of their efforts will be films, video albums, audio programs, and touch-screen interactives that will enrich visitors' experiences in a beautiful and informative way.

Alabama artists contributing to the project include Robin Wade, a furniture maker in Florence, and photographer Mark Gooch of Birmingham.

Funding for the project is provided by the Alabama Archives and History Foundation, a 501(c)3 auxiliary to the Department of Archives and History. Led by a volunteer board of directors, the Foundation is nearing the completion of a \$7 million capital campaign.

Construction of *Alabama Voices* is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2013. Plans for a Grand Opening will be announced in coming months.

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Alabama Department of Archives & History
624 Washington Ave.
P.O. Box 300100
Montgomery, AL 36130
www.archives.alabama.gov