

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
P.O. Box 300100
624 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130-0100

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Sherrie Hamil
334-353-4726
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BOOK TALK AT THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY *DECORATION DAY AND THE SHAPING OF RURAL SOUTHERN CEMETERIES* PRESENTED BY ALAN AND KAREN JABBOUR

Join us at **noon** on **Tuesday, April 30, 2013**, as **Alan and Karen Jabbour** present ***Decoration Day and the Shaping of Rural Southern Cemeteries***. This informative talk will be held at the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

Decoration Day is a southern cemetery custom. In this talk, the Jabbours will share and reflect on some of the varied and fascinating features of rural cemeteries, such as mounded graves, bare-earth treatment, shell decoration, grave shelters, and unusual horizontal forms such as rock cairns and tent graves. All of these features and many others found in Alabama and throughout the South will be discussed and are portrayed in the Jabbours' slide presentation.

In 2004, Alan and Karen Jabbour undertook research on the southern cultural custom of Decoration Day, as a component of the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed North Shore Road in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The Jabbours' report led eventually to a longer book, *Decoration Day in the Mountains* (2010). Now they are researching more broadly the cultural features of rural southern cemeteries.

Alan Jabbour is a folklorist who has spent most of his career in Washington, D.C. After receiving his Ph.D. at Duke University, he taught for a year at UCLA, and then became head of the Archives of Folk Song at the Library of Congress, founding director of the Folk Arts Program at the National Endowment for the Arts, and founding director of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. Since his retirement, he tours performing on the fiddle and teaching Appalachian fiddle. His cemetery research is a joint venture with his wife, Karen Singer Jabbour. Her photographs are a major component of their book *Decoration Day in the Mountains* (2010). The Jabbours are recent recipients of a research grant from the "Joyce Cauthen Fellowship Fund" of the Alabama Folklife Association.

This program is co-sponsored by the Alabama Folklife Association, Alabama State Council on the Arts and Friends of the Alabama Archives. The event is free and open to the public. Books will be available for purchase. For more information visit the website at www.archives.alabama.gov, or (334) 353-4726.

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