



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

## **Narrative Section of a Successful Application**

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the Preservation and Access Programs application guidelines at <http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/pag.html> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Preservation and Access Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Mississippi Delta Collaborative Emergency Preparedness Project

Institution: Sunflower County Library, Mississippi Delta Collaborative Emergency Preparedness Project

Project Director: Jennifer Delaney Rose

Grant Program: Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions

## Mississippi Delta Collaborative for Heritage Preservation Grant Proposal

### 1. Project Narrative

#### A. What activity would the grant support?

The Sunflower County Library System is applying for funding on behalf of five Mississippi Delta historical and cultural heritage institutions. These institutions include the Sunflower County Library System, the B. B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center, Delta State University's Charles W. Capps Archives and Museum, the Delta Blues Museum, and Cottonlandia Museum. The Mississippi Delta is geographically located in the 100-year floodplain, is susceptible to frequent tornados, and affected earthquakes occurring along the New Madrid Seismic Zone that can result in soil liquefaction. Grant funding is sought for collaborative training in emergency response procedures and for the purchase of salvage supplies to be shared by the five cultural repositories for emergency response in the event of a disaster.

As a result of a preservation consultation funded by a NEH preservation grant conducted by Randy Silverman, the Sunflower County Library System has taken the initiative to collaborate with other Mississippi Delta cultural and historical repositories to create an emergency protocol covering the entire Delta.

Discussions have focused on each institution's emergency preparedness needs and priorities. Most members have little preparation with emergency plans designating only response to personnel and local facilities. Only one member has a written disaster plan for collections and extremely modest response supplies. All are physically isolated and are best positioned to come to each others aid in times of disaster. The collaboration's goal is to protect the historic and cultural heritage of the Mississippi Delta by coordinating emergency preparedness planning and response activities among these five partners. This will be accomplished by:

1. Each institution drafting and implementing an emergency response plan for collections.
2. Establishing a distributed model for storage of disaster supplies so each institution houses materials and is able to provide assistance in an emergency when called upon.
3. Keeping current in emergency response procedures through collective on-going meetings, programming and training.
4. Networking with colleagues and specialist to share knowledge.

#### B. What are the content and size of the humanities collections that are the focus of the project?

The Sunflower County History Room and Archive holds 1300 genealogical reference books and journals, 25 books by local authors and 13 rare manuscripts. Archival resources consist of all materials relating to local towns and communities including, but not limited to, 20 cubic ft. of newspapers, dating from 1921 to present; 8 cubic feet of local social and civic organization's yearbooks, scrapbooks, minutes and ephemera dating from 1938 to the present; 4 cubic ft. of agricultural ledgers and daybooks dated from 1923 to 1966; 4 cubic ft. of WWII

scrapbooks; 138 rolls of microfilm; 60 one-of-a-kind oral history tapes; 225 Blues and Gospel recordings and 30 cubic feet of unprocessed material. The B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in Indianola, Mississippi houses Mr. King's personal papers, materials, and objects from his life and work, along with cutting-edge, multi-media and film. These help visitors experience chronologically the periods in B.B. King's life in the larger context of a changing world, moving through an interactive environment that is visually stimulating and full of music. These materials range from Lucille guitars, stage outfits worn in the 1960s, historic photographs and original contracts. Delta State University's Charles W. Capps Archives and Museum documents the history of the University from its beginnings in the mid 1920s to the present day. Included in the collections are oral histories documenting German POWs incarcerated in the Mississippi Delta during the WWII years (1942-1945), Chinese families living in the Mississippi Delta, African-American farmers, Civil Rights participants, and over 400 oral history interviews covering a wide range of subjects concerning the history and culture of the Mississippi Delta. The Delta Blues Museum is housed in the historic Clarksdale freight depot, built in 1918 for the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Railroad. The building was designated a Mississippi Landmark Property in 1996. The former freight area, about five thousand square feet of ground floor space, is devoted to permanent and traveling exhibits related to the numerous groundbreaking blues artists hailing from this region. Cottonlandia focuses on art, archaeology, agriculture, and wildlife of the Mississippi Delta. The Museum houses materials of Mississippi Delta history from Native American materials dated 1400-1600 A.D. to recent Mississippi Delta works of art.

**C. How are the humanities collections used?**

The Sunflower County History Room and Archive and Delta State University's Charles W. Capps Archives and Museum are singular resources for historians of Southern History. Numerous university students from Mississippi Valley State University (Itta Bena, MS), Alcorn State University (Vicksburg, MS), Mississippi State University (Starkville, MS), and University of Mississippi (Oxford, MS) working on their BA, MA and PhD degrees have utilized the repositories' materials. Examples of the fruits of this research include publications by J. Todd Moyer, *Let the People Decide: Black Freedom and White Resistance Movements in Sunflower County, Mississippi, 1945-1986* (2004), and *Boo: A Life in Baseball, Well-Lived* (2008) by Rick Cleveland. In addition to academic research and general education, the Sunflower County History Room and Archive receives an impressive amount of visitation from genealogists. Of the 700 individuals served, 50% are conducting genealogical research. In all institutions local students utilize materials for school research pertaining to outstanding community members such as Minnie Cox, Boo Ferriss, Big George Brock and Senator James Oliver Eastland (1904-1986). The origins of the blues genre of music originate in the Mississippi Delta, generating internationally known musicians such as B. B. King, Charlie Patton and Muddy Waters. In the last two decades agribusiness has altered its focus from cotton to rice, to catfish, to soybeans, and presently focuses on corn production. Sunflower County lies in the heart of some of the nation's

richest farmland and documentation about the region's agribusiness enterprises is fundamental to understanding the local history and its influences on the nation. Both the B. B. King Museum and Delta Blues Museum are dedicated to creating a place where visitors find meaning, value and perspective by exploring the history and heritage of the unique American musical art form of the blues. The Delta Blues Museum, Cottonlandia Museum, and B. B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center provide fascinating, inspirational and engaging museum experiences to thousands of visitors annually, as well as providing research assistance to serious researchers.

**D. What is the nature and mission of your institution?**

The purpose of the Sunflower County Library System is to provide a variety of resources, services, and programs to stimulate ideas, promote education, and enhance the personal development of our communities' citizens. In FY2009, Sunflower County Library System had an operating budget of \$483,678.00 and employed six full-time and seven part-time employees. The B. B. King Museum employees six full-time and five part-time employees, the Delta Blues Museum employees four full-time employees, Cottonlandia three full-time and one part-time employee and Delta State University Capps Archives and Museum employees 2 full-time employees. All five institutions are dedicated to the preservation of Mississippi Delta history. The B.B. King Museum and the Delta Blues Museum achieve this goal by highlighting music and the community, while Cottonlandia focuses on art, archaeology, agriculture, and wildlife of the Mississippi Delta and the Sunflower County History Room and Delta State University Capps Archives and Museum's specific goal is to process and preserve primary materials to facilitate research and original scholarship.

**E. Has your institution ever had a preservation or conservation assessment or consultation?**

A presentation consultation was conducted for the Sunflower County Library System on March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The consultation was performed by Randy Silverman, Associate Preservation Librarian at the University of Utah, Marriott Library, Salt Lake City, UT. Mr. Silverman's recommendations – which are gradually being implemented – include emergency response training. In 2008, Delta State University Capps Archives and Museum were awarded a disaster planning consultation as part of Heritage Preservation's "Risk Evaluation and Planning Program." The present proposal builds on Delta State University having developed an institutional disaster plan they now want to expand to become a more inclusive, cooperative plan.

**F. What is the importance of this project to the institutions?**

Of the five institutions applying for the grant, only Delta State University Capps Archives and Museum has developed a disaster plan and extremely modest response supplies. None of the other institutions have disaster plans or supplies for responding to emergencies impacting their collections. In light of the severe natural disasters that have occurred recently in the Southeastern portion of the

nation, institutions in the Mississippi Delta are becoming increasingly wary sensitized to the importance of disaster preparedness. Unfortunately, all the institutions employ small staffs, are located in isolated, rural areas, and have limited funding for appropriate supplies to respond to emergencies affecting their collections. Therefore, the Collaborative for Heritage Preservation was formed to achieve a higher standard of disaster preparedness and information networking by working collectively. This grant will help provide training and emergency supplies to assist the Collaborative initiate this plan so that each member can share the benefits.

**G. What are the names and qualifications of the consultant(s) and staff involved in the project?**

Consultant:

The Sunflower County Library System has selected Randy Silverman as a consultant for this project. Mr. Silverman is Associate Preservation Librarian at the University of Utah, Marriott Library, Salt Lake City, UT. He is also an adjunct faculty member for the School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University and the University of Arizona. Since 1986, he has conducted 59 collection wide preservation surveys, including Delta State University Archives and Museum, Cleveland, MS (2008); Idaho State Historical Society Library and Archives, Boise, ID (2007); Arizona Historical Foundation, Tempe, AZ (2007); National Library of Trinidad and Tobago, Port of Spain, Trinidad (2005); Pratt Institute Libraries, Brooklyn, NY (2005); and University of Montana, Missoula, MT (2004). His 76 professional publications include "BAN Twenty Years On: Lessons learned from the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences Fire," *International Preservation News* 45 (August 2008); (with M. Bliss, H. Erickson, et al. ), "Comparing Mass Drying and Sterilization Protocols for Water-Damaged Books," *International Preservation News* 42 (October 2007); (with G. Frost) "Disaster Recovery in the Artifact Fields-Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina," *International Preservation News* 37 (December 2005); and (with C. Baker) "Misperceptions about White Gloves," *International Preservation News* (December 2005). Mr. Silverman is a Professional Associate of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works and a member of its Emergency Committee.

Key Staff:

The Sunflower County Library System: Kay Slater, Interim Director and Jennifer D. Rose, Public History Coordinator

Delta State University's Charles W. Capps Archives and Museum: Emily Erwin, University Archivist

B. B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center: Jack Williams, Technical and Facility Supervisor

Delta Blues Museum: Shelley Ritter, Director

Cottonlandia Museum: Cheryl A. Taylor, Executive Director and Jennifer Whites, Education and Arts Coordinator

**H. What is the plan of work for the project?**

January, 2011 – Receive approval from NEH to begin Mississippi Delta Collaborative for Heritage Preservation Emergency Preparedness consultation.

January, 2011 – Telephone discussion with consultant to initiate the purchase of emergency supplies and scheduling the three-day onsite training.

March, 2011 – On-site visit by consultant.

Tuesday

Building Risk Assessments (walk through one facility with local Fire Department)  
Hands-on fire Extinguisher Staff Training (with local Fire Department)  
{Slide Show} “Disasters that Can Happen After the Disaster”  
{Slide Show} “The Day the University Changed”  
{Power Point} “Disaster Recovery of Books Since Florence”  
Summarize the Day-Define Next Steps

Wednesday

Begin drafting disaster plans using Pocket Planner template  
Regional Risk Assessment- Meet with local emergency planner (MEMA)  
Environmental Scan/Mitigation Options/Collection Recovery Priorities/Insurance  
Hands-on Recovery Exercise: Wet books, Documents, Maps, Photographs, Paintings, and Textiles, etc.  
Summarize the Day-Define Next Steps

Thursday

Review Plans-Clarify, Simplify and Modify  
Tabletop Exercise-Planning Group + Recovery Team + Administration  
Implement Regional Mitigation Strategy-1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Year  
Create RFP's to Pre-approve Commercial Disaster Recovery Firm/Conservation Experts  
Finalize Plan-Clarify, Simplify and Correct  
Closure-Define Next Steps

April, 2011 – First monthly meeting (in person or a conference call with the consultant, as possible) of the five-member Collaboration to review institutional disaster preparedness plans and discuss future cooperative actions.

September, 2011 – Final report to NEH.