

RELEASE: Historic Homestead Life Presented Next Saturday

BARTH, MS – The general public is invited to a community event and presentation next Saturday, April 2, entitled “Homestead Life.” The event will be held at the Shaw Homestead property, a historic log cabin near the Wolf River in southeast Pearl River County. Subsistence gardens and food harvesting and preservation will be discussed, as well as the design and construction of the cabin itself.

The Shaw Homestead is a 120-year-old log cabin built entirely from longleaf pine. The Shaw family lived in the house until Hurricane Camille in 1969. In 2006, the family donated the property to the Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain, in Biloxi, MS. The Land Trust has partially restored the property to its historic condition.

The Land Trust and Mississippi State University’s Gulf Coast Community Design Studio are working together to host a series of these community events at the Shaw property. The first event was held last Saturday, March 19th, and centered around the Piney Woods timber industry and railroads. One more event will be held in late April. Funding for the project comes from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The event will begin at 10:00 AM on Saturday, April 2, 2011, with participants planting fruit and nut trees and shrubs along the historic fencelines of the property. Any plant donations of shrubs or trees will be welcomed by the Land Trust, and can be planted the day of. A traditionally-prepared lunch will be served at 12:00 – visitors are encouraged to bring along traditional fruit desserts like pies, or any traditional family recipes, to share in potluck style. At 1:00 PM a presentation is planned on vegetable gardening, food harvesting and preservation, and the construction of the log cabin itself. In addition, several domestic artifacts and narratives will be on display in the cabin’s dogtrot porch space for visitors to examine. All are welcome to join in and speak with local community members. In the event of rain, the event will be held on Sunday, April 3rd at the same time.

In 1950, before the cabin had electricity and refrigeration, the Shaw family had to prepare and store food very differently than in modern times. Canning fruits and vegetables, smoking pork and beef, and root cellaring potatoes are all traditional methods of preserving the harvest to last throughout the year. In addition, before the mid-century transition to a cash economy, the family would only be able to eat what they themselves had grown. Other food traditions like winter hog butcherings and autumn cane syrup sopping will be discussed as well.

Further detailed information, including historic photographs, diagrams, and narratives, will be presented to guests next Saturday at the event.

One final upcoming event is also scheduled: Saturday, April 30th, the Homestead will host a demonstrative sheep shearing and a presentation on Livestock and the Open Range. All are welcome at this upcoming event as well.

TO GET THERE:

Take Highway 53 North towards Poplarville. After crossing into Hancock County, take a right onto Crane Creek Road. At the four-way stop sign in Barth, take a right onto Barth Rd. The Homestead property is approximately 3.5 miles on the right.

DONATIONS OF SHRUBS, TREES, AND PIES WELCOMED

CONTACT:

Kristen Zeiber, Gulf Coast Community Design Studio
228-436-4661
kzeiber@gccds.msstate.edu

For more information on the Land Trust:

<http://www.ltmcp.org/>

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