

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Archiving Day to Preserve Englewood's History on May 17

MCPL's Midwest Genealogy Center Partners with Friends of Englewood Theater for Special Collection Event

Independence, MO -- On **Saturday, May 17, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**, Mid-Continent Public Library's Midwest Genealogy Center and the Friends of Englewood Theater will host a special community archiving event at the Englewood Arts Center in Independence. The free event will celebrate the rich history of Independence's Englewood Theater, the K.C. Opry, and the Ben Franklin Store, giving community members the opportunity to contribute to a digital archive of these beloved historic venues.

"This collaborative event allows us to capture and preserve important pieces of our local history directly from those who experienced it," said Katie Smith, Midwest Genealogy Center Manager. "By collecting these personal stories and memorabilia, we're creating a lasting digital archive that will help future generations understand the cultural significance these venues hold in our community."

Participants are invited to bring up to five items related to these historic venues—such as photographs, playbills, ticket stubs, or other memorabilia—to be professionally scanned on-site. All contributors will receive digital copies of their scanned materials on a complimentary flash drive (while supplies last). Additionally, attendees can share their memories by recording 15-minute oral histories about their experiences at these iconic Independence locations.



"Whether you performed at the K.C. Opry, worked at the Englewood Theater or Ben Franklin Store, or simply have memorable experiences at these locations, we invite you to come and tell your story," said Brent Schondelmeyer, representative of the Friends of Englewood Theater. "These firsthand accounts and artifacts are invaluable in preserving the cultural heritage of the Englewood district."

The event particularly welcomes former employees, performers, and regular patrons who can provide unique perspectives on these historic establishments. While walk-ins are allowed for scanning services, registration is strongly encouraged, especially for those wishing to record oral histories.

Registration for this free, in-person event can be found at [mymcpl.org/CommunityArchive].

Photo courtesy of the Jackson County Historical Society.

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About the Midwest Genealogy Center

The [Midwest Genealogy Center](#) is one of the nation's largest free-standing public genealogy libraries, offering access to almost three-quarters of a million on-site materials. MGC provides resources and expertise for genealogists of all skill levels, from beginners to experienced researchers. Connect with MGC on [Facebook](#).

Access Your World

Founded in 1965, [Mid-Continent Public Library](#) is the largest library system in the Kansas City metropolitan area, operating 34 branches and two Library-To-Go locations and serving nearly 850,000 people in Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. MCPL is an award-winning library system that strives to enrich citizens and communities through expanding access to innovation, information, ideas, and inspiration. Connect with the Library on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

About Friends of Englewood Theater

The Friends of Englewood Theater is a community organization dedicated to the preservation and celebration of the historic Englewood Theater and the cultural heritage of Independence's Englewood district. The organization works to maintain the historical significance of the area while promoting community involvement and arts education.