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**DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO PRESENT “FREEDOM RIDERS”
DOCUMENTARY AND DISCUSSION IN APRIL AS PART OF THE CREATED
EQUAL INITIATIVE**

DETROIT - The Detroit Historical Society is hosting two screenings of the film “**Freedom Riders**,” the third in a series featured as part of the *Created Equal Initiative*, on **Saturday and Sunday, April 12 and 13** at 1 p.m. at the Detroit Historical Museum. The Society’s monthly Scholar Series event follows on **Wednesday, April 16** at 6 p.m. and will feature former Freedom Rider, **John W. Hardy**, now of Detroit. Admission is free for both the Film Series and Scholar Series events.

“Freedom Riders” tells the terrifying, moving, and suspenseful story of a time when white and black volunteers riding a bus into the Deep South risked being jailed, beaten, or killed, as white local and state authorities ignored or encouraged violent attacks. The film includes previously unseen amateur 8mm footage of the burning bus on which some Freedom Riders were temporarily trapped, taken by a local 12 year-old and held as evidence since 1961 by the FBI.

As part of the Scholar Series, Hardy will use excerpts from the film "Freedom Riders," provide historical context, and share his own experience as a Freedom Rider and SNCC field representative to lead a discussion about the Freedom Rides of 1961 and their impact on the Civil Rights movement. Hardy's own Civil Rights involvement started in Nashville, TN from 1958 until 1963 and included lunch counter sit-ins, protest marches, and boycotts before joining the Freedom Rider movement. Hardy is an active member of the Society’s Black Historic Sites Committee and now shares his story with others as a reminder to never take freedom for granted.

In honor of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation last year, the Detroit Historical Society was one of 473 communities chosen to be a part of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) special initiative, *Created Equal: America’s Civil Rights Struggle*.

Created Equal uses the power of documentary films to spark public conversations about the changing meanings of freedom and equality in America. Four outstanding documentaries, spanning the periods from the 1830s to the 1960s, are the centerpiece for the project. Each of the four films was supported by the NEH and tells the remarkable stories of individuals who challenged the social and legal status quo of the deeply rooted institutions, from slavery to segregation. The Society is showing the films in their entirety each month as part of their Film Series presentations, and excerpts of each film will also be shown during the Scholar Series, followed by a facilitated group discussion.

The final film in the series, “The Loving Story,” will be shown at the Museum on May 10 and May 11 at 1 p.m. The film will also be accompanied by a Scholar Series event on May 14 from 6-8 p.m.

The Detroit Historical Museum, located at 5401 Woodward Ave. (NW corner of Kirby) in Midtown Detroit, is open to the public Tuesday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free for all, all the time. Parking in the Museum's lot is \$5 at all times. Group tour pricing and information is available by calling 313.833.7979. Permanent exhibits include the famous Streets of Old Detroit, the Allesee Gallery of Culture, Kid Rock Music Lab, Doorway to Freedom: Detroit and the Underground Railroad, Detroit: The "Arsenal of Democracy," the Gallery of Innovation, Frontiers to Factories, America's Motor City, and The Glancy Trains. For more information, call the Museum at 313.833.1805 or check out our website at detroithistorical.org.

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