



**For Immediate Release
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**Contact: Erica Luke, Executive Director
erica@southcountyhistorycenter.org
401-783-1328**

Center Announces Acceptance of the Kenneth T. Mars, Jr. Photograph Collection
History in Focus Campaign Continues to Raise Support for Collection's Preservation

Kingston, RI- The South County History Center is pleased to announce that it has accepted the Kenneth T. Mars, Jr. Photograph Collection thanks to generous community support. The Mars Collection, given as a donation, contains more than 25,000 photographs documenting everyday life in South County.

Kenneth T. Mars, Jr., was a member of the Narragansett Indian Tribe, an inductee into the University of Rhode Island's Lifetime Service Society and an usher at the Peace Dale First Church of God. For more than forty years, Ken walked the streets of South Kingstown photographing everything he saw. He touched the lives of many throughout our community prior to his passing in 2011, and for his beloved hometown, Ken has left a wonderful legacy: more than 25,000 photographs that have been saved by family members and the Collection's donor, John Peterson.

In August 2017, the Center announced its History in Focus Campaign with the goal of raising \$45,000 to support many critical projects, including the digitization, processing and preservation of the Mars Collection, the expansion of archival storage space at the Center's headquarters, and the preservation of the Allen Collection of glass plate negatives. To date, more than \$15,000 has been donated toward the campaign, allowing the Center to accept the Mars Collection this month.

In addition to a many donations from generous individuals, major grants supporting the campaign have been awarded by the Heritage Harbor Foundation, The Mary LeMoine Potter Fund at the Rhode Island Foundation, and Historic New England. For a full list of campaign donors, please visit SouthCountyHistoryCenter.org/HistoryinFocus.

The History in Focus Campaign will continue through 2018 as the Center seeks to raise the additional funds necessary for critical archival projects, including the digitization and preservation of the Mars Collection. The Center will be announcing opportunities for the public to view portions of the Mars Collection this spring, and History in Focus Campaign donors and South County History Center members will have special access to preview the collection.

The Center would like to thank the many generous donors who have made this first goal of accepting the Mars Collection possible. Further details about the Kenneth T. Mars, Jr. Photograph Collection and a selection of photographs can be found at SouthCountyHistoryCenter.org/Mars-Photograph-Collection. To learn more about the History in Focus Campaign, visit SouthCountyHistoryCenter.org/HistoryinFocus or call 401-783-1328.

About the South County History Center

The South County History Center's mission is to lead the discovery and stewardship of South County's unique historic resources through meaningful and enriching learning opportunities. To achieve this goal, the Center preserves and interprets the material culture of South County through exhibits and study of archival, library and artifact collections. For more information, please visit SouthCountyHistoryCenter.org.