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PELAHATCHIE NATIVE TO BE HONORED ON THE MISSISSIPPI BLUES TRAIL

Jackson, Mississippi (January 12, 2009) – Governor Haley Barbour today announced that a new Mississippi Blues Trail Marker will honor Pelahatchie native Rubin “Rube” Lacy.

The Mississippi Development Authority Tourism Division Heritage Trails Program, the Mississippi Blues Commission and the Town of Pelahatchie will hold dedication ceremonies Friday, February 13, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. The marker is located at 716 Second Street.

“Although Pelahatchie native Rube Lacy recorded only a handful of blues songs, he played a very important role in the formative years of Mississippi blues,” Governor Haley Barbour said. “Mississippi’s blues heritage was influenced by his legacy.”

In the Jackson area, Lacy became known as the “blues king,” and played in an elite circle that included Tommy Johnson. He later moved to the Delta, where he formed his own group, performed with Charley Patton, and inspired artists including Son House, Tommy McClennan, and Honeyboy Edwards.

In 1928 Lacy recorded his only released single, but the two songs are considered such prime examples of Mississippi blues that both have been re-issued around the world. In the early 1930s Lacy became a minister after a near fatal train-related accident, and eventually moved to California.

He was one of a number of blues performers born in Rankin County. Others included Luther and Percy Huff, Shirley Griffith, John Henry “Bubba” Brown, Tommy Lee Thompson, Othar Turner, Elmore James, Jessie “Little Howlin’ Wolf” Sanders, and Pelahatchie native Lefty “Leroy” Bates.

Mississippi is well known as a destination for music lovers. Gov. Haley Barbour created the Mississippi Blues Trail to recognize the talents of the state’s countless musicians in the Birthplace of America’s Music. When completed more than 100 sites will offer an unforgettable journey into Blues history.

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With over 60 markers scattered statewide, the Mississippi Blues Trail is concentrated in the heart of the Delta. The Mississippi River carved the flatlands of northwest Mississippi through generations of floods. That left fertile ground for farming and the Blues. The trail starts at the first official marker in Holly Ridge, the resting place of the blues guitarist Charley Patton. The trail then winds its way to sites honoring B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Son House and more.

The Mississippi Blues Trail markers are funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and by support from the Rankin County Chamber, the Mississippi Department of Transportation, Delta State University and the Mississippi Development Authority.

For more information, visit the Mississippi Blues Trail on the web at msbluestrail.org or the official MDA Tourism site visitmississippi.org. To contact the Mississippi Blues Trail office in Jackson, contact Alex Thomas (601-359-3297, athomas@mississippi.org) or Leigh Portwood (601-359-3061, lportwood@mississippi.org).

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