



Contact: Sandy Bynum, Tourism Division  
[sbynum@mississippi.org](mailto:sbynum@mississippi.org)

601.359.3297

## **BLUES TRAIL TO FEATURE OLDEST AFRICAN-AMERICAN NEIGHBORHOOD IN GREENWOOD**

Jackson, Mississippi (July 13, 2009) – Baptist Town, established in the 1800s in tandem with the growth of the local cotton industry and one of Greenwood’s oldest African American neighborhoods, is the site of the newest marker dedication on the Mississippi Blues Trail. Ceremonies will be held at 10 a.m. Tuesday at 200 Short Street in Greenwood.

"Every marker placed along our Blues Trail is another reminder that Mississippi is the birthplace of America's music, the place where the unique sounds of the blues first emerged. This new marker gives visitors and music lovers from around the world another opportunity to connect with the culture that gave rise to the single most important source of modern popular music," Governor Haley Barbour said.

In blues lore Baptist Town is best known through the reminiscences of blues singer David "Honeyboy" Edwards, who identified it as the final residence of the legendary "king of the Delta blues singers," Robert Johnson. Johnson, who died just outside Greenwood in 1938, and Edwards both stayed in houses on Young Street. Baptist Town was also once the home of noted actor Morgan Freeman and of blues musicians Harvie Cook, John William "Man" Hurt, and others.

The blues trail marker also honors musicians and singers from other communities in and around Greenwood, including Tommy McClennan, Robert "Dr. Feelgood" Potts, Sheba Potts-Wright, Willie Cobbs, Guitar Slim, Furry Lewis, and Betty Everett. The marker will be placed near the McKinney Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, which has been the anchor of the community for over 100 years.

Mississippi is 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. Since December 11, 2006, the Mississippi Blues Commission and the Mississippi Development Authority have erected and celebrated the heritage of over 80 sites around the state.

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

For further information on the Mississippi Blues Trail, go to [www.msbluestrail.org](http://www.msbluestrail.org) or visitor information at the official tourism website [www.visitmississippi.org](http://www.visitmississippi.org).

###