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1927 Flood Museum coordinator Mike Bostick, left, talks Tuesday about the origin of borrow pits and their importance to developing the levee system to teachers learning about the Delta's culture and history through a workshop hosted by Delta State University.

Teachers from across country experience Delta's rich culture

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A group of 32 teachers from across the country had the opportunity to experience the culture of the Delta this week through a workshop at Delta State University.

The workshop, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, explores topics such as the Civil Rights Movement and the development of the blues. Thus, the title of the workshop, "The Most Southern Place on Earth: Music, History and Culture of the Missis-

sippi Delta," is quite fitting.

And, one cannot study the blues or music without stopping in Greenville. The seven-day workshop began Sunday and since then, the group has attended the levee break site, the Hebrew Union Temple and the 1927 Flood Museum, among other places. Throughout the rest of the week, they will be traveling to the B.B. King Museum, Mount Bayou and the Sumner Courthouse for a panel discussion with the cousins of Emmett Till and

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the FBI. They will be going to Memphis, Tenn., for the Civil Rights Museum and other notable places throughout the Delta.

“This is our 14th time to present this workshop. So we have an alumni group now of more than 500 teachers spread throughout the United States, who are teaching the Delta story and they are bringing their classes back into the Delta. So we feel like we are creating ambassadors of the Delta Region,” said Lee Aylward, DSU program associate for education and community outreach and leader of the

group of teachers.

Aylward this year’s group includes teachers from 22 different states, including Kentucky, Washington, California, New York, Minnesota and Ohio.

“Most of them are in the dorm at Delta State,” she said, noting the workshop is through the Delta Center for Culture and Learning Center at DSU.

One teacher, who will be an alumni of workshop after this week, was Kevin Mears. The history teacher from Brooklyn, N.Y., said he was excited to experience the culture of

the Delta and has enjoyed it so far.

“We get the whole week to sort of explore the cultural aspects of the region. From the food and music to history and the religious and ethnic experiences in the area. As a history teacher that is like my meat and gravy,” Mears said.

Aylward said the workshop was created by former director Dr. Luther Brown, who retired last year.

The workshop was offered twice this year, once in June and once in July.
