

THE MOST SOUTHERN PLACE ON EARTH

JUNE 2017



Table of Contents

Welcome to the Delta

Director's Note	4
Opening Reception	8



Driving Tour of Mound Bayou	43
Po' Monkeys	44
Charles McLaurin: SNCC & Freedom Summer	45
Emmett Till Panel	46
The Emmett Till Intrepid Center	48
Bryant's Grocery	49
Robert Johnson's Grave	50

4

1	Introductions	11
	Senator's Place	12
	Lalee's Kin	14
	Reggie Barnes	16
	The Traveling Classroom	17
	The River	18
	Airport Grocery	20



Clarksdale Greyhound Station	53
Cotton Museum	54
STAX Museum of American Soul Music	55
National Civil Rights Museum	56
Peabody Hotel	58

5



2	Greenville's Live Oak Cemetery	23
	Chinese Heritage in the Delta	24
	Greenville Synagogue	26
	1927 Flood Museum	28
	Charles Reagan Wilson: Religion in the South	29
	Bill Abel: History of the Blues	30



Dr. John Strait: The Delta in Diaspora	61
Make Your Own Mojo	62
Saying Goodbye	64

6

3	The Crossroads	33
	Dockery Farms	34
	Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Garden	36
	BB King Museum	38
	Dr. Edgar Smith	40
	Dr. David Evans	41



Yearbook
66



Evaluations
68



Meet our Team
70



About the Delta Center
71



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dr. Rolando Herts

“The Most Southern Place on Earth’ NEH workshop is an extraordinarily well-organized, information-packed program that deals with a multitude of social, historical, political, economic, and environmental forces and artistic creativity in the Mississippi Delta. In one week, the workshop weaves all these threads to create a complex tapestry of the importance of this region. The workshop leaves one with a deep appreciation of the Delta’s struggles and triumphs, and the many influences it has had throughout the country.”

“There is power in place-based education. The Mississippi Delta holds significant historical and narrative power. . . . I did not realize the profound richness of the area. There is something magical and haunting about ‘The Most Southern Place on Earth.’ . . . I cannot think of a more significant site from which to host this level of experiential learning.”
 “The “Most Southern Place on Earth” workshop was

one of the best professional development programs and learning opportunities that I have had as a teacher. The workshop was engaging, eye-opening, and stereotype-breaking.”

“I honestly cannot stress how amazing and important I found the information gathered over the past week in the Mississippi Delta. As a teacher of History and Human Geography, the information gained will only help to bolster my knowledge and allow me to become a more effective instructor.”

“This workshop was outstanding. Learning about and experiencing the music, culture and history of the Mississippi Delta first hand is going to allow me to make this topic come alive in my classes next year.”

**Comments from evaluations
 2017 NEH “Most Southern” Workshops**

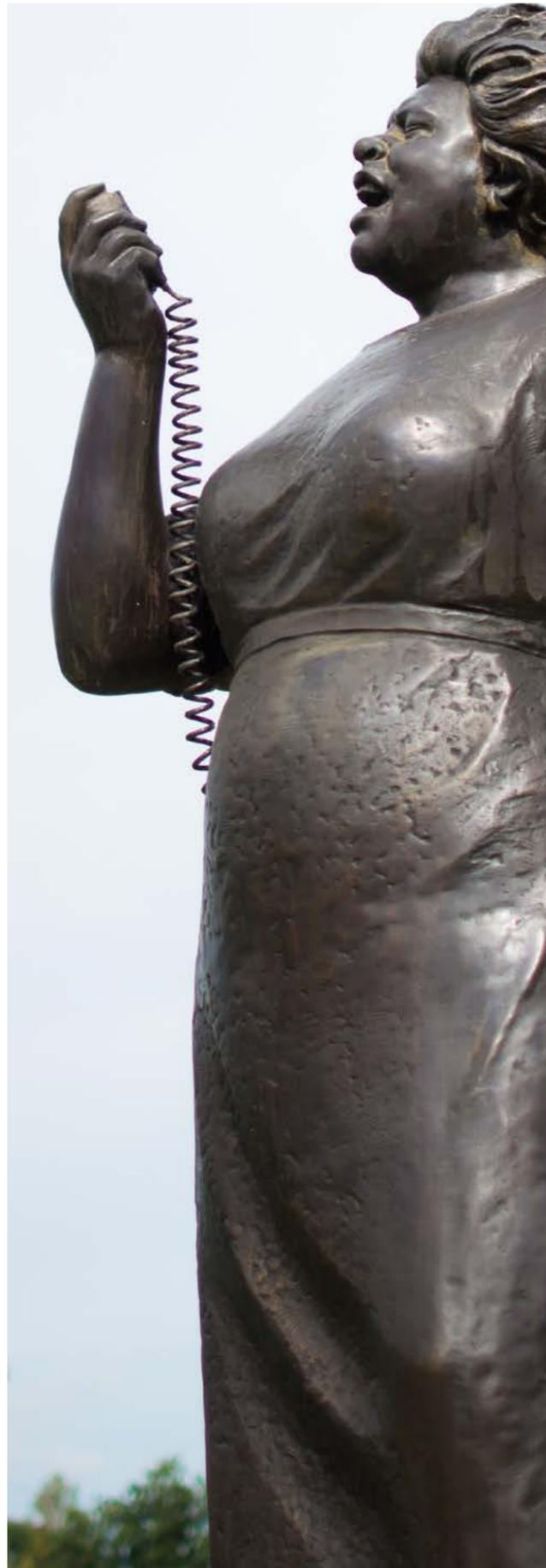
The Delta Center for Culture and Learning is honored to have presented for an eighth year “The Most Southern Place on Earth” workshops through generous support from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

As the workshop participant evaluation comments above attest, these powerful summer workshops offer experiences that are intellectually enriching and personal; experiences that provoke deep thought, that inspire a desire to engage with and express authentic feeling, and that engender a passion to imbibe local knowledge and share lessons learned from the region that the National Park Service calls “the cradle of American culture.”

Being immersed in primary source material regarding the paradoxical, contrasting nature of the Mississippi Delta figures prominently in the “Most Southern” workshop. Arguably, this is a key ingredient in the mystical formula that leaves participants transformed and even transfixed to such a degree that they find themselves returning to the region again and again.

During the workshop, participants visit one of the legendary crossroads where Robert Johnson may or may not have sold his soul to the devil, as well as one of the gravesites where he may or may not have been laid to rest. They go to Ruleville, the home of voting rights and racial integration icon Fannie Lou Hamer who lived a mere five miles from her archenemy, the staunch segregationist Senator James O. Eastland, their two social milieu totally different and separate yet entirely co-dependent.





They engage in a life-altering panel discussion at Tallahatchie County Courthouse, the site of fourteen-year-old Emmett Till's murder trial and learn firsthand how Till's tragic death sparked the Civil Rights Movement. They learn how the Mississippi River created the Delta and how the Great Flood of 1927 destroyed it, as well as launched the Great Migration of African Americans to Chicago and other urban centers in the North.

Another key ingredient is the Delta's creativity, as well as the region's cultural diversity. Participants learn why the Mississippi Delta is known as "The Birthplace of America's Music" and the home of the Blues, entering places where innovators Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Charley Patton, Ike Turner, B. B. King, and Bessie Smith once were. They hear directly from descendants of Jewish and Chinese immigrants who came to the Delta, experiencing vestiges of their influence, as well as understanding the influence of Lebanese, Italians, Native Americans, African Americans, and others by reading the "invisible landscape."

They learn stories of historic Mound Bayou, a black town founded by former slaves and hailed by President Teddy Roosevelt as "The Jewel of the Delta." They visit renowned museums that pay homage to the region's enduring creativity and cultural diversity, including the National Civil Rights Museum, the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, and the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center.

Perhaps the most powerful ingredient of all is the strong bond that participants forge with each other, with presenters, and with The Delta Center. They are encouraged to experience the Delta and the workshop as a multifaceted, interactive text through readings, music, food, film screenings, oral histories, the built environment, and interactions in the field and the "mobile classroom" that travels Blues Highway 61 and the Emmett Till Memorial Highway, among other storied Delta roads.

Participants also are challenged to assume a critical intersectional lens as they engage, learning how socially constructed human identities have coalesced to shape systems of power, privilege, and oppression in the past and in the present, in the Delta and in their own communities. To quote James Cobb, author of *The Most Southern Place on Earth*, "As socioeconomic disparity and indifference to human suffering become increasingly prominent features of American life, it seems reasonable to inquire whether the same economic, political, and emotional forces that helped to forge and sustain the Delta's image as the South writ small may one day transform an entire nation into the Delta writ large."

I invite you to continue to explore the NEH "Most Southern" workshop website to learn more and to view portfolios like this one from our past workshops. In addition, our series of blog posts containing images and documentary-based participant reflections have enhanced our efforts to provide and preserve educational resources for our participants, as well

as to continue The Delta Center's legacy of stimulating and engaging creativity, learning, and reflection in and about the Mississippi Delta region.

Many thanks to our gifted and highly dedicated team members – co-director Lee Aylward; administrative assistant Pat Webster; and media team members Will Jacks with our brilliant Robertson Scholars Cara Price and Peter Andringa – for making this another great "Most Southern Place" summer!



Rolando Herts, Ph.D.

Director

**The Delta Center for
Culture and Learning
Delta State University**

OPENING RECEPTION

The workshop opened with a reception at the Martin & Sue King Railroad Heritage Museum in downtown Cleveland. Over the course of the evening, the Delta Center welcomed teachers from every region of the country, while participants mingled and chatted about the upcoming week.



7am	9am	11am	1pm	3pm	5pm	7pm	9pm
	Introduction	Lunch	Movie: Lalee's Kin	Discussion with Reggie Barnes	Visit to a Levee Break Site	Catfish supper	

DAY 1: THE RIVER

June 19, 2017

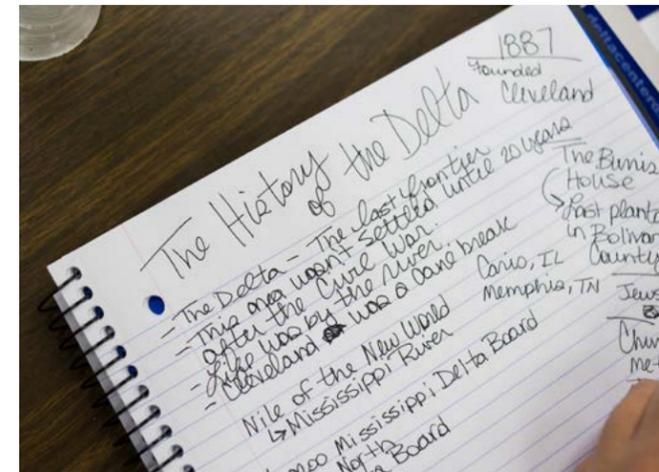


INTRODUCTIONS

The first day of the workshop introduced participants to each other and to the Delta itself. In the opening session, workshop directors Lee Aylward and Dr. Rolando Herts of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning laid the logistical and intellectual foundation for the week. Lee outlined the history of the Delta, beginning with its status as the nation's inhospitable "last frontier" and touching on its role in the civil rights movement and the development of blues music. Meanwhile, Dr. Herts encouraged participants to see "place as text," specifically through an intersectional lens.

Seeing place as text involves treating landscapes, artifacts, and even speakers as primary sources to learn about history and culture. It requires understanding people and places not only intellectually, but also personally, through first-hand experience - putting knowledge into the context of life. A key part of this mindset is intersectionality, which Dr. Herts defines as the conjunction of multiple identity markers such as race, class, and gender. As the week progresses, the group should think critically about how multiple identities impact the experiences of those living in the Delta. Additionally, Dr. Herts challenged the teachers to consider how their own backgrounds inform their perceptions of the region.

After the opening presentation, participants split into pairs and took turns introducing each other the rest of the group. The workshop attracted educators from across the country with a range of interests and experiences.

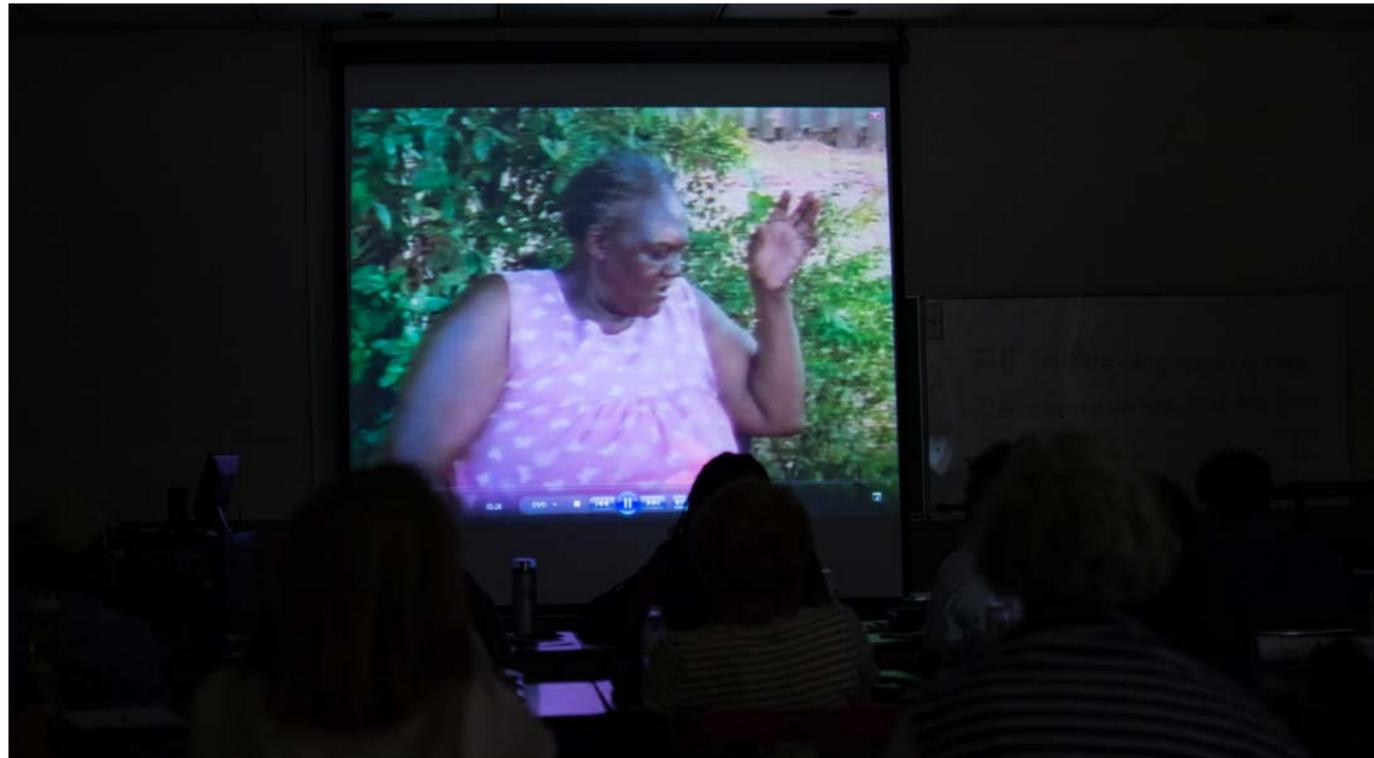


SENATOR'S PLACE



Lunch at the Senator's Place gave participants their first true taste of soul food: grits, greens, and chicken, coupled with good conversation. Owned by Mississippi State Senator Willie Simmons, the buffet serves locals and tourists alike.

LALEE'S KIN



After lunch, the group watched *Lalee's Kin: The Legacy of Cotton*, an Oscar-nominated film documenting poverty, race, and education from the perspective of one poor Delta family. The matriarch of this family, Lalee, runs her household and takes care of dozens of grandchildren. The documentary paints a bleak picture of impoverished childhood in the Delta, showing what Senator Robert Kennedy once described as America's Third World.

The documentary also follows Reggie Barnes, superintendent of West Tallahatchie School District, as he attempts to give his students the best education possible and avoid a state takeover.

Inspired by the film, Ben Bacon of California and Bobby Harley of South Carolina decided to compose "Lalee's Blues," an original song that combines rap with Delta blues. The lyrics focus on the injustices of the sharecropping system as well as the legacy of racism in the south (see facing page for the full lyrics).

Ben and Bobby sat down with the Delta Center's staff to record their song at the Delta Music Institute. To watch the song on video, find it on the "Photos, Portfolios, and Videos" page on the Delta Center's website at <http://deltacenterdsu.com/photos-portfolio-and-videos>.



LALEE'S BLUES

By Ben Bacon and Bobby Harley

Chorus

*We just wanna be like Miss Lalee,
Taking care of my kin,
Making something out of nothing.
Poverty is a disease.
They said, if you work hard,
You'll be rewarded*

Verse

*I just wanna be like Miss Lalee,
Taking care of my kin,
Making something out of nothing.
Poverty is a disease.
They said, if you work hard,
You shall be rewarded,
But I feel I'm being punished.
Years of sharecropping,
Picking cotton in the sun
300 pounds a day,
But I don't feel accomplished.*

*Somebody tell King Cotton,
He's no longer needed.
I declare my independence
And don't plan on returning.
I just wanna be,
Give my poor heart ease,
But the powers that be
Say they'd rather see my suffering.
I just wanna be like Miss Lorelee,
Taking care of my kin,
Making something out of nothing.*

Chorus

*We just wanna be like Miss Lalee,
Taking care of my kin,
Making something out of nothing.
Poverty is a disease,
And I can't give my poor heart ease.
And we just wanna be like Miss
Lalee.*



REGGIE BARNES

Following the screening, Reggie Barnes, the now-retired superintendent featured in *Lalee's Kin*, visited the workshop to discuss his experiences fighting for the schools and confronting cyclical poverty. Although sixteen years have passed since the release of *Lalee's Kin*, the issues it depicts – such as illiteracy and adolescent pregnancy – continue to plague the Delta. As teachers, the participants connected personally to his anecdotes; one cited parallels between her school in DC and Reggie's in Mississippi. The comment sparked a discussion of the differences between rural and urban poverty, and more generally about how place and privilege shape opportunity.

THE TRAVELING CLASSROOM

In the spirit of treating place as text, participants travel to sites around the Delta aboard a bus called the “traveling classroom.” Every moment serves as an opportunity for learning and growth. Documentaries and music contextualize the sites on the itinerary; Lee and local guests describe the passing scenery, sprinkling in anecdotes about their own experiences; and in their free time, participants discuss their thoughts and stare at long stretches of Delta land. In the midst of a busy week, time aboard the traveling classroom gives participants a chance to catch their breath, bond with each other, and digest what they have learned.





THE RIVER

As participants arrived at the Mississippi River, some glimpsed its waters for the first time, while others saw it from a new perspective. On the bus ride over, Lee had given participants a brief overview of the Flood of 1929, and explained that the place they would visit was the infamous site at which the levee first broke.

Upon arriving at Mounds Landing, participants were met with a starkly different scene than it looked in 1929 – the levee was large and grassy, speckled with grazing cattle and donkeys. As participants stepped off the bus and walked towards the river, they encountered two constants of the Mississippi summer, heat and humidity, with a warm breeze off the calm river.

Participants discussed their own experiences with the Mississippi, from Minnesota to Illinois to Mississippi, and voiced surprise at the sheer scale and power of the river. As they watched, a large tugboat floated past, pushing more than 40 barges downriver, showing the economic and political importance of the River and its power.

After squinting into the bright sun for a few minutes, participants eventually made their way back to the bus, where Lee explained simultaneous reliance on and fear of the river: even today, it's never a question of if the levee will break, but when.





AIRPORT GROCERY

The evening concluded at Airport Grocery, a local restaurant known for its barbecue and fried catfish. The latter dish acted as the workshop's first Taste of the Day, while hush puppies, coleslaw, and green beans completed the meal. The food and hospitality provided by Airport Grocery immersed the group in Southern culture.

As they ate, participants also enjoyed a performance by Keith Johnson, the Delta Center's resident blues musician and great-nephew of Muddy Waters.



7am 9am 11am 1pm 3pm 5pm 7pm 9pm

Chinese Graveyard	Black Graveyard	Delta Jews	Flood of 1927 Museum	Lunch	Charles Wilson: The Religious South	Dinner	Bill Abel: Blues History
-------------------	-----------------	------------	----------------------	-------	-------------------------------------	--------	--------------------------

DAY 2: DISCOVERING DIVERSITY

Tuesday, June 20, 2017



GREENVILLE'S LIVE OAK CEMETERY

A slim dirt street separates Greenville's Chinese cemetery from its neighbor, Live Oak, the local black cemetery. Participants wandered through overgrown grass and crooked headstones to find the most famous grave in the lot: the final resting place of Holt Collier, a renowned bear hunter and sportsman.

Holt Collier was born a slave around 1846 on the Plum Ridge Plantation in Mississippi. After killing his first bear at age 10, Collier went on to kill over 3,000 bears in his lifetime - more than Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone combined.

When President Theodore Roosevelt traveled to the area in 1902, Major George M. Helm selected Collier, who already possessed a strong reputation for hunting, to assist with the president's famous Mississippi Bear Hunt. Collier captured a bear and tied it to a tree, setting the stage



for President Roosevelt to arrive and kill the beast. However, the president refused to shoot the helpless bear. The incident reached the press, which erroneously portrayed the bear as a cub. When toy companies capitalized on this mistake, dubbing their stuffed animals "teddy bears," a national craze began.

Participants visited Collier's grave at Live Oak cemetery in Greenville, walking through the tall, wet grass to appreciate the many historic headstones dating back to the 1860's. Lee explained that participants should look for inscriptions like that on Collier's grave, which indicated a person's rank and unit in a war. Collier himself fought for the 9th Texas Cavalry in the Civil War (for the "Confederate States of America", or CSA), an interesting case of a black man being forced to fight for a cause he disagreed with.



CHINESE HERITAGE IN THE DELTA

The Delta's diversity extends beyond black and white, encompassing a rich history of immigration. In response to the Emancipation Proclamation, some farms looked abroad for labor. Opportunities in agriculture brought Chinese immigrants to the region. Despite the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Delta's Chinese population grew from 183 in 1900 to 1,200 in 1960. These immigrants developed a unique role in Delta society, opening grocery stores and restaurants. In the small city of Greenville, nearly 50 Chinese-owned grocery stores once lined the streets. Following *Gong v. Lum*, a landmark Supreme Court case from Rosedale, many Chinese immigrants responded to the ruling that they too could be excluded from white schools by opening their own "mission schools."

When the group arrived in Greenville, Raymond Wong boarded the traveling



Raymond Wong tells his story to participants on the traveling classroom.

classroom to share his experience as one of the few remaining Chinese Americans in the Delta. The discussion ranged from the social to the personal as Raymond described not only the complex status of Asian Americans in a largely black-and-white culture, but also his own family, health, and career. His parents were grocers and eventually restaurateurs. Their children have scattered across America. Meanwhile, Raymond pursued a career in broadcast journalism here in the Delta and contributed to Delta State's Chinese Heritage Museum, which was featured by NPR this spring.

After sharing his story, Raymond led the group into Greenville's Chinese Cemetery. In 1913, Wong Yen and Joe King purchased a one-acre tract from the owner of the Wells Funeral Home to serve as a Chinese burial ground.



The cemetery is still in use today; it doubles as a final resting place and a well-kept cultural landmark. As the group wandered among the gravestones, most of which were covered in Chinese characters, Raymond continued to provide personal insight into the experience.





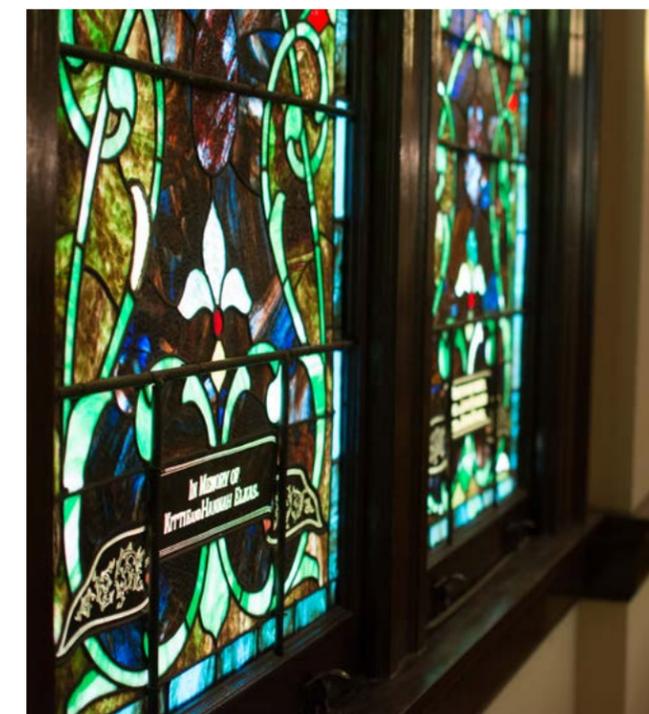
On the ride to Greenville, participants watched *Delta Jews*, a documentary that introduced them to the Delta’s religious diversity. At the Hebrew Union Temple, the group learned more about the space Delta Jews occupy in the region’s history and culture. Temple Vice President Benjy Nelken explained the general principles of Reformed Judaism, then delved into the reality of being a southern Jew.

Most Jewish people in Mississippi immigrated from Eastern Europe. They eventually found a home in the Delta, where they worked as store owners and local government officials. During the Civil Rights Movement, some feared disrupting the Southern “way of life” and provoking rising anti-semitic sentiments.

This intersection of identities – white, southern, Jewish – provoked thought and discussion in the synagogue as Nelken and participants traded stories. Following the discussion, the group explored the temple’s museum. The



museum houses artifacts that tell the story of Jewish history and heritage in the Delta. Some items included a Torah from the Holocaust, photos of Jewish families in the region, and t-shirts that embrace the Southern Jewish heritage through the phrase, “Shalom y’all”.



“I feel like the stereotypes I had about the South are breaking down and changing... I grew up in suburban Detroit, where there’s a substantial Jewish population, and yet this man in the Delta experienced less antisemitism than I did.”

Rick Rosenberg

1927 FLOOD MUSEUM



Adjacent to the temple, participants wandered through a museum documenting the 1927 flood. The exhibit covered the science behind the levee breach, while newspaper clippings, historical artifacts, and quotes from survivors added a human element to the disaster.

The Great Flood of 1927 was one of the defining moments in the Delta's history. When the levee broke, water stretched from south of Cleveland all the way to

Vicksburg. Those living in the disaster's path scrambled to recover their livelihood.

The flood complicated race relations in the region. Many African-Americans who worked on plantations viewed the Flood as a sign from God that their freedom had finally come. They began to migrate out of the region, sparking the Great Migration. Some wrote blues songs inspired by the experience.



Charles Regan Wilson: RELIGION IN THE SOUTH

After returning from lunch, participants delved into the history of religion in the Delta and how religion has influenced the evolution of rock and blues. Guest scholar Dr. Charles Wilson, former professor at the University of Mississippi and former Director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, discussed how evangelism dominated southern culture. He went on to describe how evangelicalism values conversion and religious experience. This emphasis on conversion resulted in the common occurrence of Bible verses “transcending the church doors and being found on the kitchen table.” Gospel bled into many cultural realms, especially into gospel music, which later influenced the blues. In the literary world, William Faulkner, who famously wrote about the Delta, infused biblical characters into his writing - not because he was religious, but because this pervasive religious culture “was just there”; another writer, Reynolds

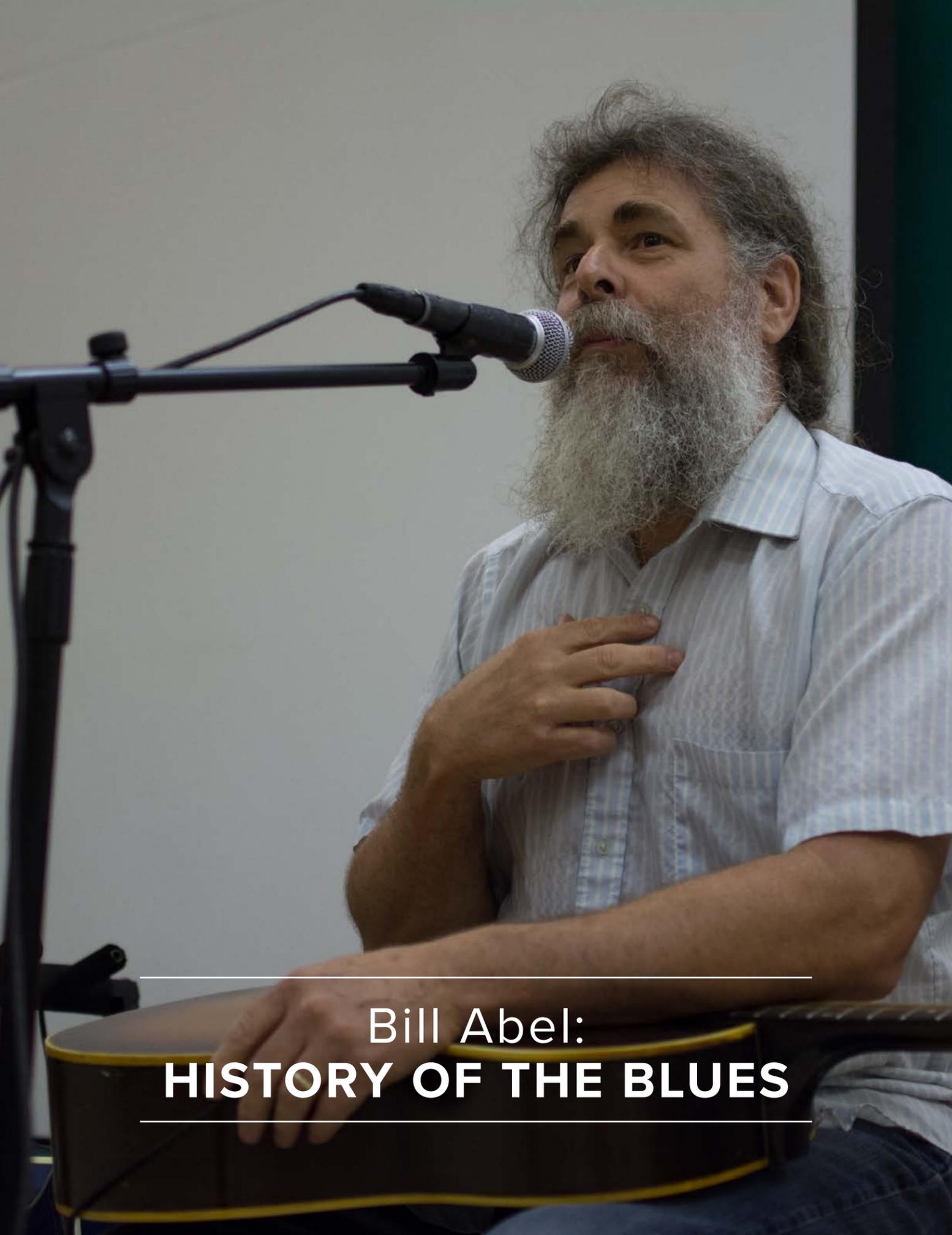


Price, called life in the South “bittersweet marination in religion.”

Dr. Wilson displayed his collection of church fans and explained how these were jointly used for businesses to advertise their goods.

Drawing upon the strong oral traditions and call-and-response traditions in Southern Baptist churches, Wilson explained how this region contributed largely to the prominent civil rights activists, entertainers, politicians, and lawyers that came out of the south. Churches also often served as the only places that African Americans could be treated like first class citizens. Whites made sure to segregate churches, because the last thing the powerful elite wanted was for poor White and Black Baptists to get together and vote. This resulted in all black churches, which ironically allowed leadership qualities to have an institutional place to thrive.





Bill Abel:
HISTORY OF THE BLUES

After dinner, participants returned to Delta State's campus for an evening with local blues musician Bill Abel. Growing up in the Delta gave Abel a unique perspective on the Delta Blues. He says that he is not a blues scholar but instead "a guy who grew up here in the Delta," learning about the music from local radio and playing the Blues as a teenager. Nevertheless, direct experience is its own kind of scholarship.

Abel's presentation integrated performance with history. While describing the development of the Blues, he did not ignore its connection to slavery and sharecropping. Despite its beauty, the genre originated from turmoil and suffering. He also examined how he personally fits into this legacy as a white man playing a traditionally black style.

Over the course of the evening, Abel and his friend, Jonathan Popper, played selections from a variety of blues musicians, including Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters. In addition to entertaining the group, these songs gave Abel an opportunity to discuss the musical qualities of the blues and how the genre evolved over time, as well as to honor the lives of individual bluesmen.

Abel's own creations - from his album, *Celestial Train*, to homemade guitars crafted from Mississippi River driftwood- added a personal dimension to the presentation.



7am 9am 11am 1pm 3pm 5pm 7pm 9pm

Dockery Farms

Fannie Lou Hamer Garden

BB King Museum

Lunch

David Evans: Origins of the Blues

Dinner

DAY 3: THE BLUES

Wednesday, June 21, 2017



THE CROSSROADS

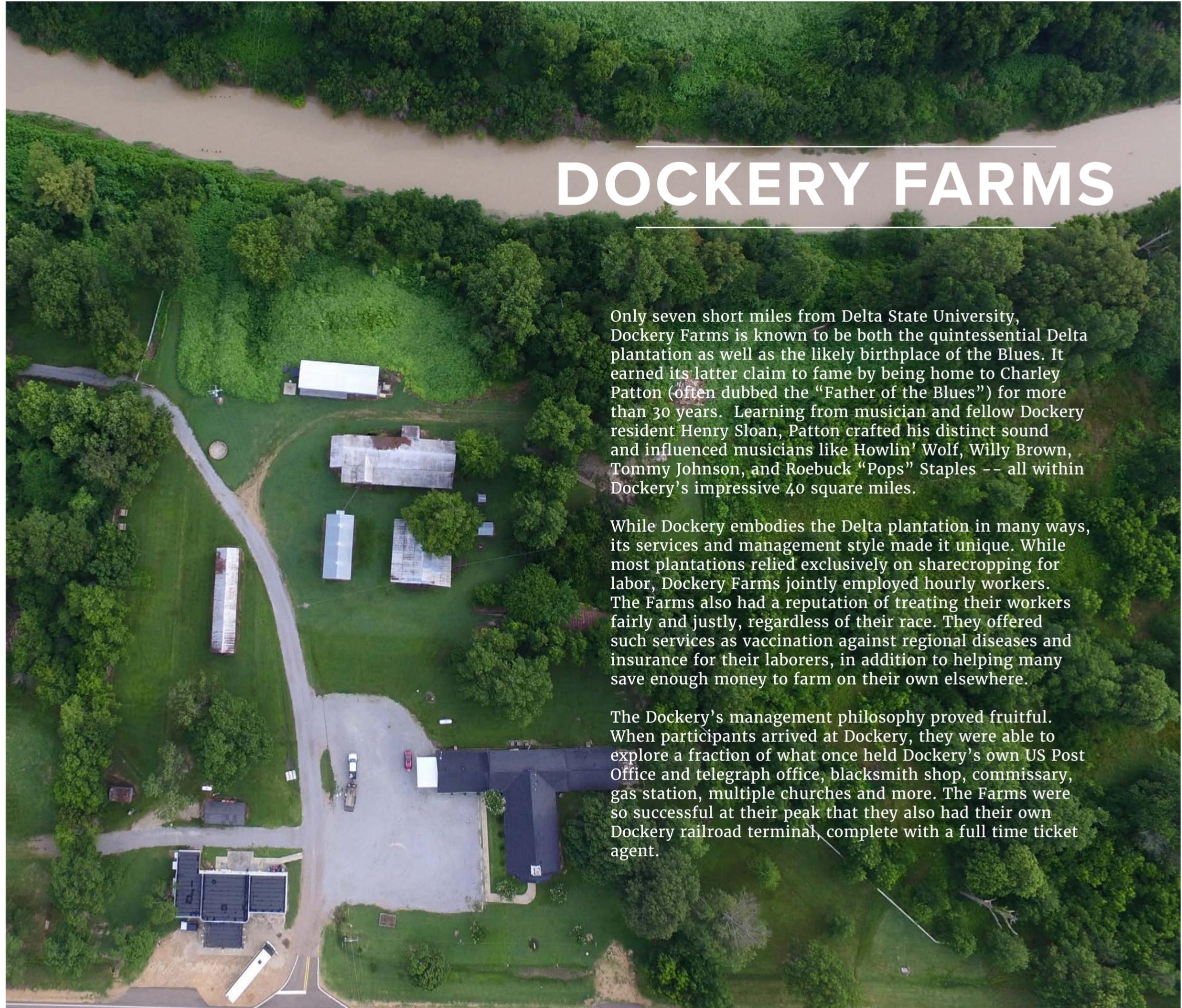


On Wednesday morning, the traveling classroom stopped at a crossroads near Dockery Farms. The surrounding landscape looks as it does alongside any other Delta road, with four wide streaks of dirt cutting through the fields and meeting at a point; nothing indicated that the spot was out of the ordinary.

Yet it's normalcy that makes the crossroads so interesting. As Lee explained to the group, this could be the mysterious crossroads where Robert Johnson sold his soul to the devil.

Robert Johnson did not always have the talent that made him a blues icon. Legend has it that the aspiring musician ventured to a crossroads to wait for the devil -- or, some say, the African trickster god Legba. At midnight, the devil appeared and offered him a deal: his soul in exchange for unparalleled mastery of the guitar. Johnson agreed. Although he died at 27, he is counted among the most influential blues musicians and guitarists of all time. Asked about his success, Johnson never denied the tale of the crossroads.

Lee warned participants that several teenagers tried to recreate the scene and met a different sort of devil: mosquitoes. Perhaps they just need to find the right crossroads.



DOCKERY FARMS

Only seven short miles from Delta State University, Dockery Farms is known to be both the quintessential Delta plantation as well as the likely birthplace of the Blues. It earned its latter claim to fame by being home to Charley Patton (often dubbed the “Father of the Blues”) for more than 30 years. Learning from musician and fellow Dockery resident Henry Sloan, Patton crafted his distinct sound and influenced musicians like Howlin’ Wolf, Willy Brown, Tommy Johnson, and Roebuck “Pops” Staples -- all within Dockery’s impressive 40 square miles.

While Dockery embodies the Delta plantation in many ways, its services and management style made it unique. While most plantations relied exclusively on sharecropping for labor, Dockery Farms jointly employed hourly workers. The Farms also had a reputation of treating their workers fairly and justly, regardless of their race. They offered such services as vaccination against regional diseases and insurance for their laborers, in addition to helping many save enough money to farm on their own elsewhere.

The Dockery’s management philosophy proved fruitful. When participants arrived at Dockery, they were able to explore a fraction of what once held Dockery’s own US Post Office and telegraph office, blacksmith shop, commissary, gas station, multiple churches and more. The Farms were so successful at their peak that they also had their own Dockery railroad terminal, complete with a full time ticket agent.

FANNIE LOU HAMER MEMORIAL GARDEN



Next, participants made their way to Ruleville, Mississippi, home of famed civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer.

Born and raised as a sharecropper on the nearby Marlow Plantation, Hamer only discovered that she had a constitutional right to vote after she became an adult. After attempting to register to vote in 1962 and consequently being evicted from her home by the plantation manager, Hamer became an outspoken civil rights activist. It was this event that drove Hamer to completely devote herself to civil rights activism, later becoming a distinguished member in

the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee as well as in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

On the bus ride to the Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Garden, participants watched the broadcast that grabbed the attention of the nation as Fannie Lou Hamer spoke to millions at the 1964 National Democratic Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey. She represented the integrated Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party urging the segregated Democratic Party to racially integrate. While Hamer's bid was initially unsuccessful, Fannie Lou Hamer's work eventually led to the

integration of the Democratic Party and ultimately precipitated the Voting Rights Act of 1964.

Hamer's grave is now surrounded by a memorial garden that encloses a gazebo and a life-sized bronze statue paying tribute to Hamer's activism on behalf of the black community. When the statue was unveiled in October 2012, the monument was one of only four life-sized statues of black American women in the United States.



“You hear about these things, and you read about them in textbooks, but it’s quite another thing to see it for yourself, to stand in the spot and walk in their footsteps. It takes on a completely different meaning.”

Nikysha Gilliam

BB KING MUSEUM

The next stop was Indianola, Mississippi, hometown of the King of the Blues. The traveling classroom journeyed to the B. B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center to learn more about the life and legacy of the late bluesman. The museum's introductory film put B. B.'s music into the context of his background, emphasizing that the blues are born from lived experiences - struggle and triumph.

The museum began with the early life of Riley King, who lost his mother at a young age and spent his childhood in the sharecropping system. Later exhibits tracked how "Blues Boy" or "B. B." King initially gained popularity on the "Chitlin circuit", a series of music venues that were safe for Black artists and musicians.

His appeal soon spread beyond the circuit. B. B. King became a worldwide icon, earning Grammy awards, Lifetime Achievement Awards, and honorary doctorates. Despite his success, B.B. King's dedication to his fans never wavered. He was generous with his time, performing at hundreds of concerts each year. He also worked to improve music education in underprivileged schools, support prison reform, and raise awareness of diabetes. When praising B. B. King, friends and fans alike cited not only his music, but also his character. Together, these two attributes led Eric Clapton to call him "the best ambassador for Blue music and Black music."

After exploring the museum, participants paid their respects to the late bluesman at his memorial site located on the museum grounds. B. B. King passed away in 2015, a great loss to music, the Delta, and the world.





DR. EDGAR SMITH

Throughout the day, Dr. Edgar Smith offered a personal take on the people and places discussed. Born in the Delta, he divided his childhood between school and the cotton fields. As the traveling classroom drove past long stretches of farmland, Dr. Smith described the physical experience of picking cotton – the pricks to his fingers, the weight of the sack – and shared his faith in the power of education. His schooling empowered him to request fair payment from his boss and earn the older man’s respect.

Dr. Smith attended college and graduate school, eventually becoming a biochemist and serving as the Vice President of Academic Affairs for the University of

Massachusetts system. His teachers’ encouragement played a major role in his achievements; Dr. Smith thanked the workshop participants for the important work they do.

Beyond his professional life, Dr. Smith and his wife, Inez, engage with culture and social issues. The couple counted both B.B. King and Fannie Lou Hamer among their friends, and they shared firsthand experiences – from a letter Fannie Lou Hamer sent them to their role in the development of the B. B. King Museum – with the group. They remain active today; Dr. Smith recently wrote a blues song drawing attention to the plight of the uninsured.

DR. DAVID EVANS

When participants returned from lunch, they were greeted by Dr. David Evans, a well-known ethnomusicologist from the University of Memphis. He began his musical lecture by explaining the social and historical context in which the blues emerged. According to Evans, Jim Crow racism and violence drove black Americans to develop a new spirit of individualism, because some felt major social institutions such as family and church were not as strong. As an individualized response to oppression, the lyrics of the Blues focus on deeply personal experiences such as romance and heartbreak, labor and exhaustion, and migration and poverty.

Evans also explained the Blues’ connection to gospel and crossover genres such as jazz and soul Blues, actually showing them with examples on his instruments. Participants watched as he interwove speech and music throughout his lecture. He also engaged the audience by showing them examples of famous songs by Delta Blues legends such as Robert Johnson, Charley Patton, Son House, and more. He illustrated distinctive characteristics that differ between artists as well as between regions, finishing his lecture by tracking the evolution of blues along the diasporic lines that brought the Blues into cities like Chicago.



7am	9am	11am	1pm	3pm	5pm	7pm	9pm
Mound Bayou Tour	Charles McLaurin	Lunch	Bus to Sumner	Emmett Till Panel Discussion	Emmett Till Intrepid Center	Robert Johnson Gravesite	Dinner



DAY 4: CIVIL RIGHTS & EMMETT TILL

Thursday, June 22, 2017

DRIVING TOUR OF MOUND BAYOU

The morning began with a trip to Mound Bayou, a historic all-black settlement not far from Cleveland. Founded by ex-slaves in 1887, the town strove to embody the utopian ideals of Robert Owens by developing self-reliance and a high standard of living. Without racial divisions, residents could pursue their full potential relatively uninhibited by the tension that dominated the rest of Mississippi. At its peak, Mound Bayou was a thriving hub of black culture and business.

Participants stopped at the Taborian Hospital, which provided quality healthcare to black patients from around the Delta. In keeping with the principles of Mound Bayou, all of its employees were black.

The Taborian Hospital's first chief surgeon, T.R.M. Howard, was a civil rights leader who mentored Medgar Evers and Fannie Lou Hamer. After leaving the hospital, the group visited a Mississippi Freedom Trail marker devoted to Howard's life.



Charles McLaurin: SNCC & FREEDOM SUMMER

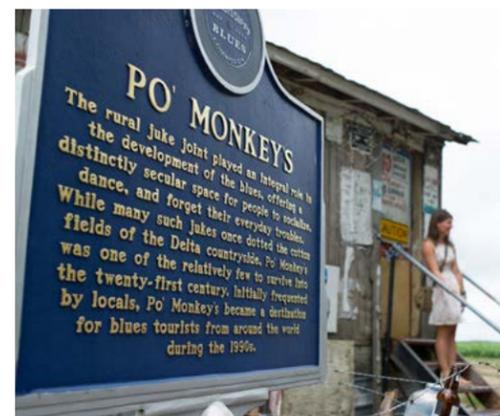


For decades, locals and tourists alike flocked to a shack at the edge of a cotton field. This shack was Po' Monkey's Lounge: a rural juke joint where they could be guaranteed blues music and good company every Thursday night.

Juke joints originated in sharecropping communities. Because laborers had no way to travel from the cotton plantations where they lived and worked into town centers, they adapted, developing their own entertainment. Some sharecroppers opened their shacks to the community. Although initially called "jook" houses after a West African word for "wicked,"

these establishments were far from evil; rather, they were home to flowing alcohol, decreased inhibitions, and lots of dancing.

Po' Monkey's has been closed since Po' Monkey himself, Mr. Willie Seaberry, tragically passed away last July. With his colorful suits, good business sense, and friendly attitude, Mr. Seaberry gave the joint its soul. The crowd that gathered in his home each Thursday came not merely for the music but for the community. As the participants circled the lounge, hand-painted signs and stuffed monkeys offered a glimpse into Mr. Seaberry's unique legacy.



In 1961, Charles McLaurin attended a mass meeting at the Masonic Temple in Jackson to see and hear a speech by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Inspired by Dr. King, the next day McLaurin joined the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, and took part in boycotts, sit-ins, picket demonstrations and voter registration drives in Jackson, Mississippi. Early in 1962, McLaurin was recruited to participate in an intensive training program preparing for a massive voter registration campaign in the Mississippi Delta. McLaurin and two other SNCC organizers, Landy McNair and Charlie Cobb, came to Ruleville to mobilize black leadership, hold meetings on voter registration, lead groups to the courthouse in Indianola to attempt to register.

In 1963, McLaurin served as campaign manager for Fannie Lou Hamer in her bid for Congress. In 1964 McLaurin was a Mississippi Freedom Democratic



Party Delegate from the Delta to the National Democratic Party Convention in Atlantic City. McLaurin also directed the 1964 Freedom Summer Project in Sunflower County. During the Freedom Summer Project, McLaurin and Mrs. Hamer became close friends and worked together, until her death in 1977, on many social and political projects in Mississippi.

After more than 20 years on the front of the Civil Rights movement, McLaurin now makes his home in Indianola, currently employed as Assistant Public Works Director for the City of Indianola. He spoke to participants about his involvement in the movement and discussed the importance of nonviolence while recognizing its limits as a strategy for effective change. He spoke about other issues such as contemporary voting rights, black pride, and the need for continued action in civil rights.





EMMETT TILL PANEL

Emmett Till, a fourteen-year-old from Chicago, was visiting family in the Mississippi Delta during the summer of 1955 when he, ignorant of race relations in the Jim Crow South, whistled at a white woman named Carolyn Bryant. Soon after, he was kidnapped by Carolyn's husband, Roy Bryant, along with her brother-in-law, J.W. Milam, and a suspected six other men. After beating and torturing the boy, the men shot him in the head and dumped his body into the Tallahatchie River. The body was found and a murder trial ensued, where Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam were tried by an all-white jury and found to be not guilty. Many historians view

the Emmett Till trial as central to the genesis of the Civil Rights Movement.

Workshop participants were able to listen to a panel of speakers including Wheeler Parker, Emmett Till's cousin who was with him the night he was abducted; Carolyn Webb, a former member of the Emmett Till Commission; Patrick Weems, director of the Emmett Till Interpretive Center; and Keith Beauchamp, a filmmaker who directed "The Untold Story of Emmett Till."

In addition to discussing the facts and history of the case, the panel

also discussed current events like the Trayvon Martin shooting that seem to be echoes of the original Emmett Till Story. The panel also challenged teachers to teach the story of Emmett Till to their students and to remember that education is one of the most important tools for social change in this country.



Top: From left to right, panelists **Patrick Weems**, **Keith Beauchamp**, **Carolyn Webb**, and **Wheeler Parker** discuss the Emmett Till case at the Sumner courthouse.

Left: Rev. **Wheeler Parker** answers a question.
Bottom: A participant asks the panel a question.



EMMETT TILL INTREPID CENTER

What was once an old cotton gin has now been converted into a memorial museum that has a variety of exhibits conveying the Town of Glendora and its connection to the horrific kidnapping, murder, and unfair trial of 14 year old Emmett Till. The museum is the centerpiece of Glendora's cultural tourism, housing a comprehensive history of the area as well as critical events in the civil rights movement that occurred there.

The museum tells Emmett Till's story from the start of his trip to Mississippi, and ending to his funeral in Chicago and the effects that rippled across the nation. One display even exhibited a replica of Till's funeral, complete with casket and mangled mannequin.

Afterwards, the Mayor of Glendora, Johnny B. Thomas (right), stepped onto

the bus to thank the participants for their visit and express his passion for sharing the Emmett Till story.

On the bus ride home, participants were somber, reflecting on the heavy discussions of the past few hours. Some used the opportunity to share on the open mic, while others took time to process the day's events on their own.



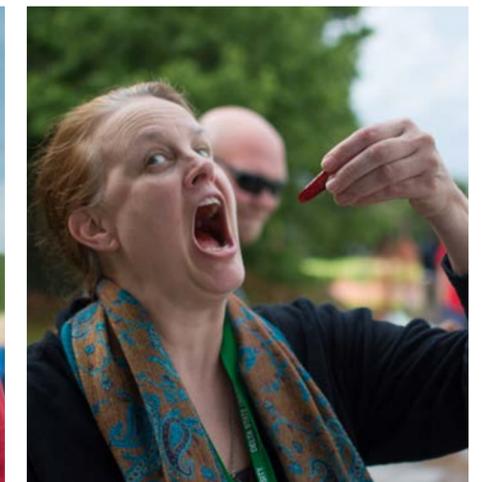
BRYANT'S GROCERY

Following the Emmett Till Historic Intrepid Center, participants stopped at the original site of the Bryant's Grocery. Although now overgrown with kudzu, the site once held the store that sparked a chain of events leading to the brutal killing of Emmett Till. Participants walked around the store, observing the now-crumbling walls, and noticed the recently vandalized historic marker. Shortly after their visit, this vandalism would receive national media attention as a symbol of ongoing racism in the Delta.

Participants then stopped to enjoy the Taste of the Day, koolickles (pickles soaked in kool-aid), a unique Delta treat that would have been served at Bryant's grocery in the era of Emmett Till. Participants expressed mixed reactions to the snack; some loved the combination of sweet and salty flavors, while others objected to the slimy texture and cherry flavoring. Nonetheless, all the participants agreed that the treat was a good way to restore a little lightness to an otherwise emotional day.



(From left to right) Participants **Jerri Emrick**, **Charlie McCain**, and **Anita Anderson-Cooper** taste the Koolickles.



ROBERT JOHNSON'S GRAVE

On the way home, participants stopped at the Little Zion Church in Greenwood, Mississippi, where Robert Johnson's grave sits in a small copse of trees, covered in trinkets. Bottles of liquor, placed on the headstone by Blues pilgrims from around the world, dominate the clutter of offerings. Although three separate sites have been reported to hold the famous Bluesman's grave, most academics now believe the site at Little Zion to be his true place of rest. According to Lee, several members of the church's congregation dislike the large number of visitors and litter the grave attracts, and in response to the need for constant cleanup, the church has placed an offering box near the grave. Despite these objections, the Little Zion Church itself has seen its fair share of fame: the building was featured in the 2011 movie "The Help."



7am	9am	11am	1pm	3pm	5pm	7pm	9pm
Clarksdale Bus Station	Cotton Museum	Civil Rights Museum Archives	Lunch	National Civil Rights Museum	Peabody Hotel		

DAY 5: MEMPHIS

Friday, June 23, 2017



CLARKSDALE GREYHOUND STATION



On the road to Memphis, the group stopped at the Clarksdale Greyhound Station. There they found a breakfast of donuts - and an architectural remnant of Jim Crow. Inside the station, participants witnessed the division between what once served as “white” and “colored” waiting rooms. The two rooms reflect the unequal reality of segregation.

Mac Crank, Economic Development Coordinator and former mayor of Clarksdale, welcomed the group to town. He discussed how Clarksdale has changed in the past few decades, touching on its involvement with the blues tourism industry. Crank also described future plans for the Greyhound Station, which currently acts as a Visitors’ Center.

THE COTTON MUSEUM

After another hour on the road, the Traveling Classroom arrived in Memphis. Participants disembarked at the Cotton Museum, which is located on the historic trading floor of the Mississippi Cotton Exchange.

In the South, “cotton was king.” From the sharecropping system to *débutante* balls, it determined the region’s social structure and supported its economy. Life on cotton plantations was difficult. Plantation owners devised an exploitative arrangement whereby sharecroppers struggled to survive – going into debt to acquire equipment, food, and clothing, without ever owning the land they farmed – but could not leave to find work elsewhere. The museum not only documented this struggle, but also demonstrated how plantation life contributed to the development of the blues. Meanwhile, those who profited from the cotton trade existed in another social sphere; contrast *débutante* balls with juke joints.

In addition to offering a historical perspective, the museum showcased cotton’s evolving role. New technologies for harvesting and producing cotton transformed the South as a whole. Much of the production process has become automated. Although the exploitative sharecropping system no longer exists, Southerners must confront new economic obstacles, such as unemployment. Interactive exhibits gave participants a direct look at these revolutionary technologies.



STAX MUSEUM



The next stop of the day was the Stax Museum, which tracks the rise and fall of Stax Records, as well as the development of Southern soul music. Founded in 1959, Stax Records offered not only a platform for up-and-coming soul artists, but also a racially integrated environment where black and white musicians played together. Although the record label closed long

ago, the museum and music school that opened in its place continue its legacy.

Unfortunately, a power outage forced the museum to close on Friday, so the group was not able to enter. Later, they watched a documentary about Stax Records on the way back to Cleveland, and some participants returned to the museum before leaving the Delta.

NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM AT THE LORRAINE MOTEL

Disappointed by the power outage, participants nevertheless found a silver lining in the increased time they could spend at the National Civil Rights Museum. The museum is housed in the Lorraine Motel, where Martin Luther King was assassinated. The facade looks as it did in 1968, with the exception of a memorial commemorating the life of Reverend King.

Once inside, the group had the unique opportunity to take a behind-the-scenes tour of the museum's collections. Raka Nandi, a curator, described some of the challenges involved in coordinating an exhibit, from remaining tasteful to accurately representing multiple perspectives.

The museum itself demonstrated the power of thoughtful curation. Its exhibits progressed chronologically, beginning with the origins of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and continuing through the Civil Rights movement. From well-known figures like Rosa Parks and MLK, to the everyday achievements of ordinary African-Americans pursuing integration and freedom, the people whose narratives lined the halls inspired and challenged the group.

The museum culminates at the site of Rooms 306 and 307, where Reverend

King was assassinated. A model of the original room offers a glimpse into the civil rights icon's final hours. It is an emotional spot, and several participants shed tears while paying their respects to the man and his legacy. Down the hall, King's final speech plays:

"[God's] allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!"

Workshop participant Evelina Despaigne of Elizabeth, NJ, felt personally connected to the exhibit. Although her family had permission to immigrate from Cuba to the United States, they delayed the move following King's assassination, fearing the prejudice they might face as Afro-Cubans in the US. She recalled her grandmother's stories of admiration for civil rights activists, coupled with fear and pain at their losses. Standing at Room 306 "moved me to tears," said Evelina. "It makes it personal; it makes it tangible; it solidifies why my family came here to begin with. And this workshop made me feel that there is a personal connection, that we're all connected to history and to each other."





PEABODY HOTEL

The economic and geographical pinnacle of the Delta, which is said to stretch from “the lobby of the Peabody Hotel in Memphis to Catfish Row in Vicksburg,” the Peabody Hotel was the last stop in Memphis and the last outing of the workshop. Swarms of people crowded the lobby of the hotel, waiting anxiously for the March of the Peabody Ducks. Once participants squeezed their way to the balcony in hopes of getting a better view, the clock finally reached 5:00 PM and participants were welcomed to the hotel with a booming, “Ladies and gentlemen...” The room became focused on everyone’s favorite tradition: the March of the Peabody Ducks.

The tradition dates to 1933, when General Manager Frank Schutt returned from a weekend hunting trip in Arkansas and placed three duck decoys in the lobby. Guests responded enthusiastically, and the hotel replaced the decoys with four real mallard ducks. In 1940, a volunteer named Edward Pembroke volunteered to act as the ducks’ caretaker. Dubbed the “Duckmaster,” he trained the ducks to march from their penthouse home on the Plantation Roof to the lobby fountain via the elevator.

The ducks still draw large crowds to the Peabody every day – specifically around 11:00 AM and 5:00 PM, when they are escorted to and from the lobby. Following the march, participants boarded the Traveling Classroom to head back to Cleveland after a long day of learning about Southern society, music, and activism.

7am 9am 11am 1pm 3pm 5pm 7pm 9pm

Dr. John Strait:
Delta in Diaspora

Lunch

Make your
own Mojo

Wrap Up



DAY 6: DIASPORA

Saturday, June 24, 2017

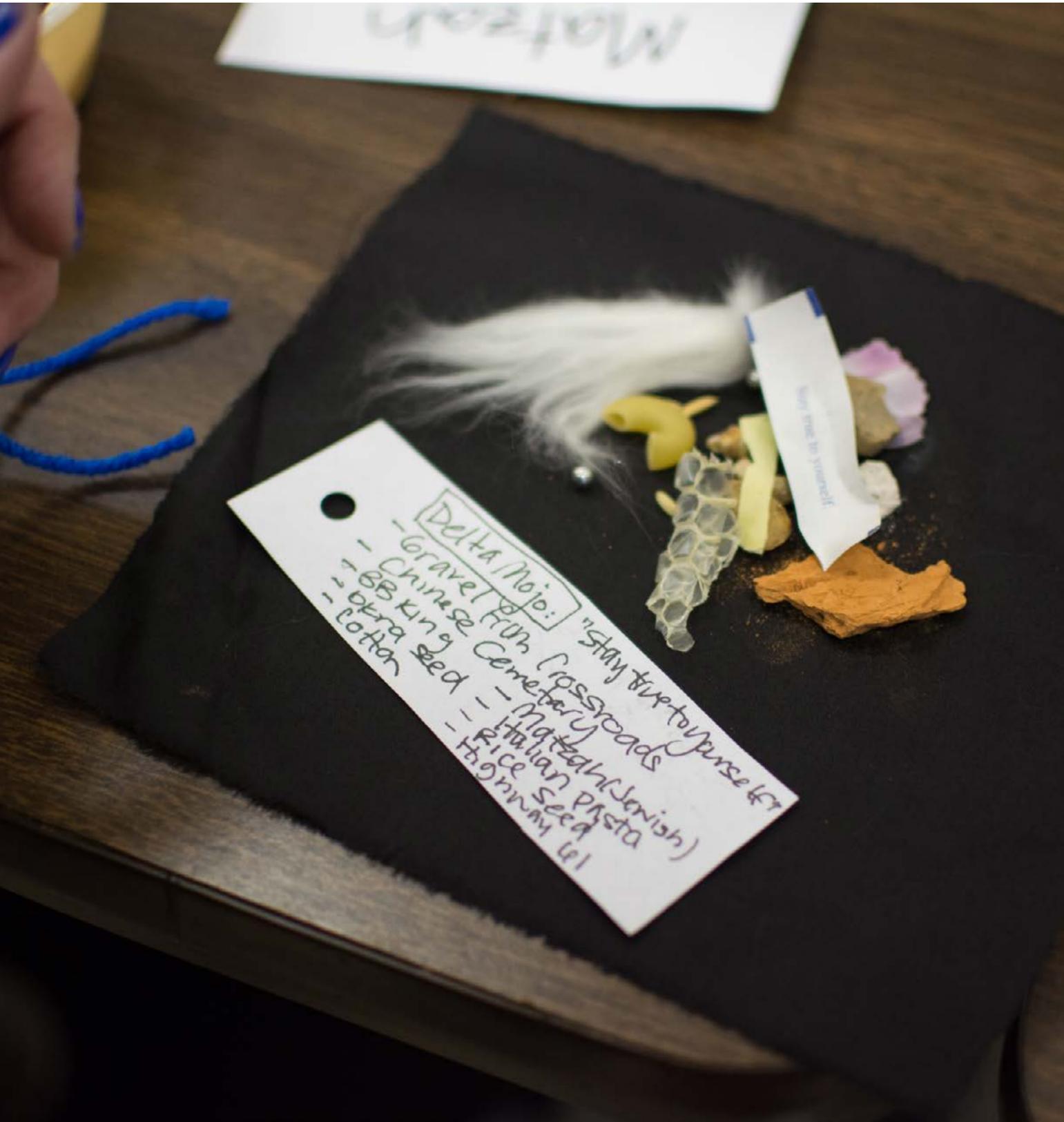


DR. JOHN STRAIT: THE DELTA IN DIASPORA

The final lecture of the workshop was delivered by Dr. John Strait, a scholar of geography at Sam Houston State University. His lecture discussed how the Blues and culture from the Delta dispersed throughout the rest of the country and the world. This dispersion of culture began in the early twentieth century at the time of the Great Migration. From 1910 to 1970, around six million African-Americans moved from the agrarian South to large cities in the West, Midwest, and North, namely, Chicago. This migration

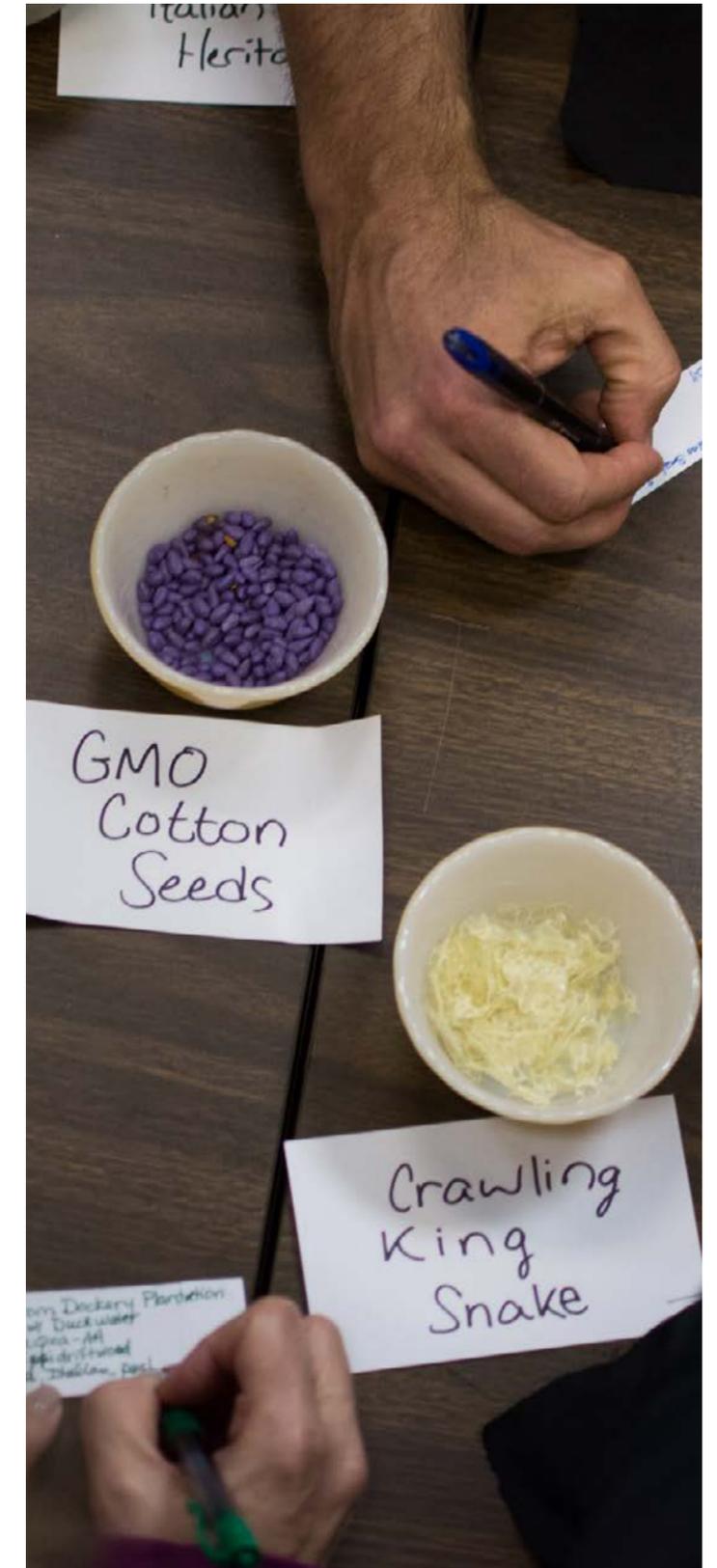
changed the social, political, and cultural landscape of the country.

Dr. Strait went on to discuss specifically how religion and blues and soul music were different in the South and North and the cultural exchange that happened between the two regions. He explained that the American story is a story of people migrating and this story is reflected in the Great Migration and the spread of Delta culture throughout America.



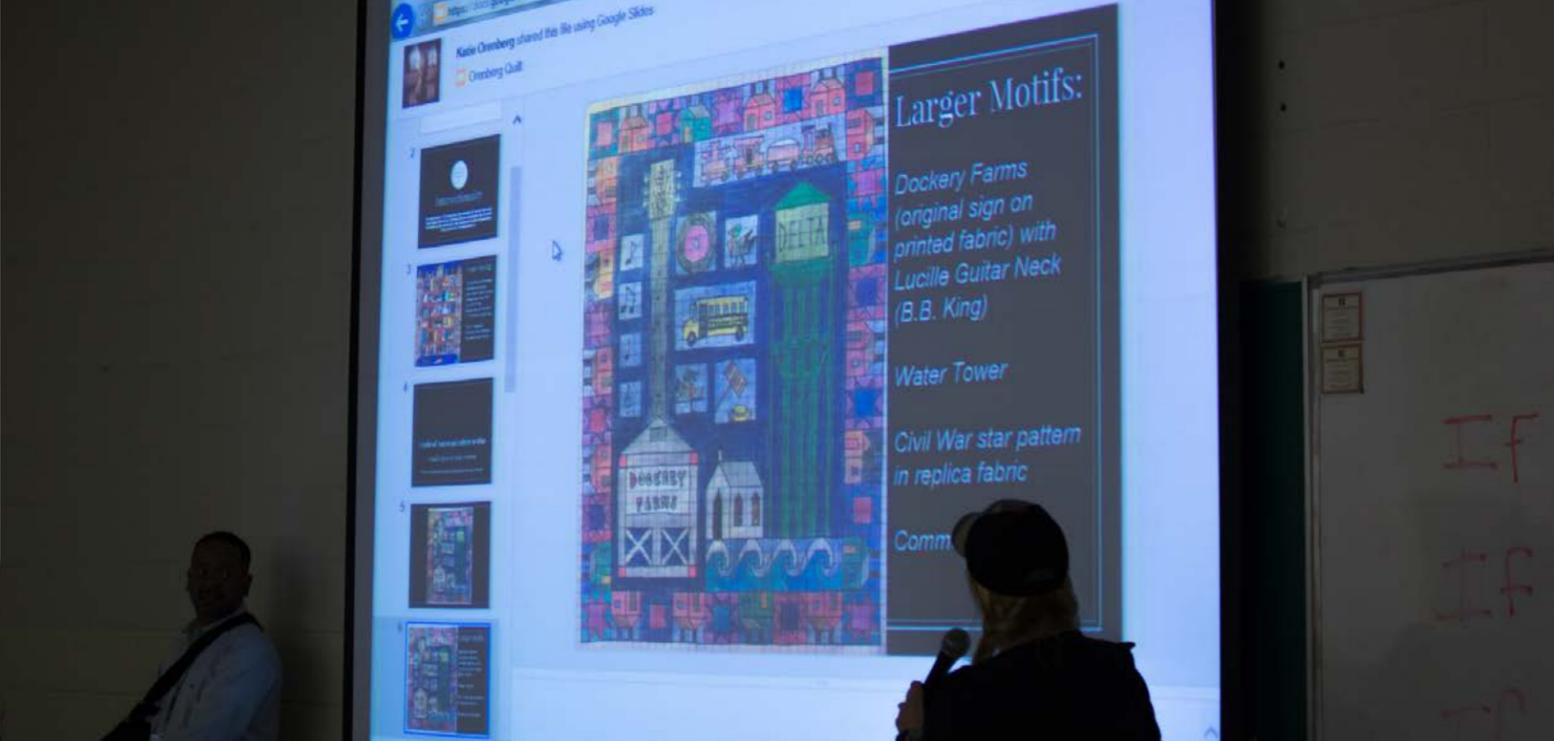
MAKE YOUR OWN MOJO

The "Mojo" is a type of talisman that finds its origins in the folk magic of the Hoodoo spiritual tradition. The mojo exercise was to help participants remember their special week in the Mississippi Delta. Gathering various ingredients from the sites visited and discussions held during the workshop, participants wrapped them up into a small black bag. Participants wrote down all of the ingredients inside so that they would remember once the bag was tied with a blue piece of yarn representing the Blues and the Mississippi River. Teachers were instructed to leave the "mojos" on their desks back home so that each time a student asks what is in the bag, the teacher will once again be reminded of his or her magical experience in the Mississippi Delta.





Nikysha Gilliam, Lindsey Herting, and Kensell Batty share a laugh and their final taste of the day: fried chicken and sponge cake.



Katie Orenberg of San Francisco explains a quilt design she created based on her experiences in the Delta. She plans to sew one block at a time, updating the rest of the group on her progress.

SAYING GOODBYE

Lee and Dr. Herts accept the group's parting gift: a commemorative brick at the Civil Rights Museum honoring the Delta Center.



Lindsey Herting and Michelle Mar hug as they prepare to say goodbye to each other and to the most Southern place on Earth.



PARTICIPANT YEARBOOK



CRYSTAL A'HEARN
Montclair, NJ



CHELSEA AMS
Ann Arbor, MI



NANCY AMS
Great Falls, VA



ANITA ANDERSON-COOPER
Amherst, MA



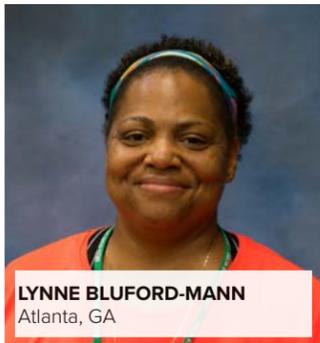
BEN BACON
Santa Rosa, CA



KENSELL BATTY
Vicksburg, MS



STACY BENDER
Gresham, OR



LYNNE BLUFORD-MANN
Atlanta, GA



DUSTIN BRANNON
Murfreesboro, TN



RUTH BREWINGTON
Metairie, LA



STEVEN BRYANT
Fort Lauderdale, FL



MAYA CUNNINGHAM
Takoma Park, MD



EVELINA DESPAIGNE
Elizabeth, NJ



JERRI EMRICK
Ozark, AR



NIKKI GILLIAM
Los Angeles, CA



JENNIFER GRUCA
Plainfield, IL



CATHERINE HACKNEY
Acworth, GA



PAMELA HAMMAN
Shawnee, OK



BOBBY HARLEY
Union, SC



LINDSEY HERTING
Lincoln, NE



SHAWN HORNUNG
Manhattan, KS



BREANN JOHNSTON
Hot Springs, AR



MICHELLE MAR
Pembroke Pines, FL



CHARLIE MCCOON
Portland, TN



JERRY MILLEVOI
Doylestown, PA



NIKKI MILLS
Washington DC



RODRIGO MONTEIRO
Guatemala City, Guatemala



JASON OLSON
Hutchinson, MN



KATIE ORENBERG
Dublin, CA



KAY PETRINI
San Francisco, CA



CLAY PURVIS
Pearl, MS



ROBERT ROGERS
Benicia, CA



RICK ROSENBERG
Skokie, IL



KEN VANDERFORD
Sacramento, CA



BRANDON WESTLAKE
St. Peters, MO



BROOKE WILLIS
Reidsville, NC

EVALUATIONS

ACTIVITY	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Reception at the Railroad Museum	0	0	3	12	19	4.47
Introduction	0	0	0	13	23	4.64
Discussion session	0	0	1	13	22	4.58
<i>LaLee's Kin: The Legacy of Cotton</i>	0	0	0	5	31	4.86
Discussion led by Reggie Barns	0	0	0	6	29	4.83
Levee Break site/Delta and Pine Land	0	0	2	8	26	4.67
Airport Grocery dinner	0	0	1	4	31	4.83
Discussion of the Delta Chinese	0	1	0	9	26	4.67
Discussion of the Delta Jews	0	1	0	6	28	4.74
Greenville's Black graveyard	1	0	3	10	22	4.44
Guest Scholar: Dr. Charles Wilson	0	0	4	10	22	4.50
Bill Abel, History of the Blues	0	0	1	9	26	4.69
Dockery Farms and the Crossroads	0	0	0	2	34	4.94
Fannie Lou Hamer's Gravesite	0	0	0	1	35	4.97
B. B. King Museum	0	0	0	4	32	4.89
Guest Scholar: Dr. Edgar Smith	0	0	0	6	29	4.83
Guest Scholar: Dr. David Evans	0	4	7	10	15	4.00
Tour of Mound Bayou	0	0	1	7	28	4.75
Charles McLaurin	0	0	1	3	32	4.86
Panel discussion of Till case	0	0	0	3	33	4.92
Emmett Till Intrepid Center	0	0	2	12	21	4.54
Bus Ride to Memphis	0	0	2	10	24	4.61
Cotton Museum	0	2	2	16	16	4.28
Lunch at Central Barbecue	0	0	2	4	29	4.77
National Civil Rights Museum	0	0	0	0	36	5.00
Lobby of the Peabody	2	3	3	11	17	4.06
Bus ride home (Stax movie)	0	0	0	8	28	4.78
Guest Scholar: Dr. John B. Strait	0	1	1	11	23	4.56
Mojo making	0	1	2	0	33	4.81

“I really appreciated how the schedule was so thoughtfully set – from learning about and actually seeing the river on Day 1 to finishing in Memphis and bringing it all back, full circle.”

“Bill Abel, John Popper, and especially Charles McLaurin are incredible – I am thrilled just to have met them. Everyone who talked with us was knowledgeable, charismatic, and well-prepared.”

“The strands of the complex fabric of the Delta were teased out, examined, and then woven back into the whole. I leave with a much richer and deeper understanding of our country. ”

“This is a great group of people, doing great things, in a great place! I love how there was a human element as well as a strong academic element. ”

“I had read reviews by previous participants and they said ‘it will change your life.’ I admit, I was not sure it would. It did, and it will touch all of my students as well. Incredible.”

“The workshop definitely inspired me to incorporate civil rights in every level of American history that I teach and to bring it in and to make it relevant to the lives of my students.”

“As a history teacher, the last two days of the workshop were most powerful for my teaching, but the exposure to the food, music, and traditions of the Delta impacted me most personally. What an education!”

“We did so many meaningful things! Everything had a purpose in helping us grow.”

“It’s important for all teachers to have this kind of interaction with other parts of the country and other parts of the world because it opens our eyes and, by extension, it opens our students’ eyes.”

“This is a truly special place that calls to all of our souls, as Americans, but as humans as well. Culture is significant and important but I never thought it’d touch me the way it did. Thank you!”

THANKS TO OUR TEAM

Dr. Rolando Herts
Director,
Delta Center
rherts@deltastate.edu



Lee Aylward
Co-Director,
“Most Southern”
Workshop
laylward@deltastate.edu



Will Jacks
Media & Communications
Specialist



Peter Andringa
Workshop Documentarian



Cara Price
Workshop Documentarian

GUEST SPEAKERS

Bill Abel
Reggie Barnes
Keith Beauchamp
Dr. David Evans
Keith Johnson
Charles McLaurin
Raka Nandi
Benjy Nelken

Rev. Wheeler Parker
Jonathan Popper
Dr. Edgar Smith
Dr. John Strait
Carolyn Webb
Patrick Weems
Charles Reagan Wilson
Raymond Wong

SPONSORS



ABOUT THE DELTA CENTER

The mission of The Delta Center for Culture and Learning is to promote greater understanding of Mississippi Delta’s culture and history and its significance to the world through education, partnerships, and community engagement.

The Delta Center is an interdisciplinary program that focuses on the humanities and social sciences as they relate to the Delta. This advances Delta State University’s participation in promoting and celebrating the unique heritage of the Delta while also addressing the longstanding social, economic, and cultural challenges that inhibit regional advancement. The Delta Center has fulfilled this role since its inception and continues to do so by:

- Serving as management entity for the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area, a cultural heritage and economic development partnership between the people of the Mississippi Delta and the National Park Service;
- Housing the International Delta Blues Project, which comprises the International Conference on the Blues, a Blues Studies program, and a Blues Leadership Incubator promoting economic development and entrepreneurship related to Blues tourism and the creative economy;
- Hosting “The Most Southern Place on Earth: Music, Culture and History of the Mississippi Delta,” a Landmarks of American History and Culture workshop funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities which brings K-12 educators to the Delta for a week-long educational and cultural immersion experience; and
- Working throughout the Delta region and nationally with cultural, educational and tourism organizations, local, state and federal agencies, and visiting college classes and groups from around the country and the world, providing information, expertise, and experiential learning and partnership development opportunities.

The Delta Center is located in Ewing Hall, Suite 130, at Delta State University. We welcome visitors regularly and enthusiastically... come by and see us!

As a part of this workshop, all participants were required to create lesson plans or other reflection materials based on the workshop course content. These materials have been uploaded at the workshop website page: <http://deltacenterdsu.com/lesson-plans/july-2017/>

For more information, please visit the Most Southern Place on Earth website: <http://deltacenterdsu.com/southern-place-workshop/>

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed on this website do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Delta Center for Culture & Learning

130 Ewing Hall, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS