



THE BLUES

The Delta Blues has its roots in Bolivar County, along fabled Highway 61 and in unique towns like Merigold, Rosedale, Mound Bayou and Cleveland — where W.C. Handy, after listening to a local string band play, declared, “tonight an American composer was born.”

The early 1900s saw an influx of migrant workers in the Delta. Aspiring musicians gravitated to the Cleveland area because Charley Patton called it home. More specifically, he called Will Dockery’s Plantation home.

Dockery Plantation is a fabulous place to feel the spirit of the Blues.

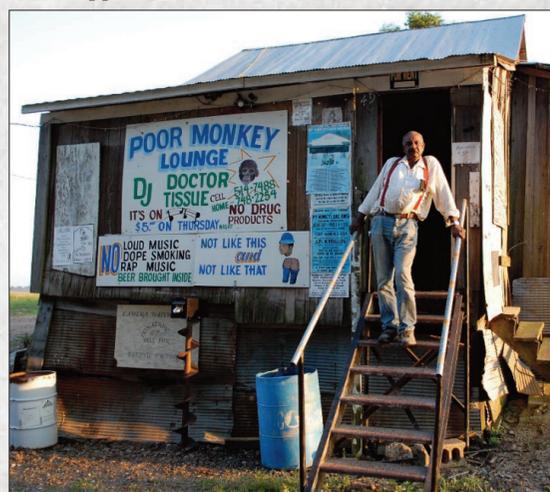
Dockery Plantation was established in 1895 and provided a key asset to the Blues movement — the Peavine Railroad, which connected the Plantation to Rosedale and Cleveland.

There are 13 blues markers that stretch from the Mississippi River Road Highway 1, to the Blues Highway 61. Visit the places where the blues were sung, created, danced to and are still enjoyed today. For a complete driving map of Bolivar County markers, visit www.visitclevelandms.com, or www.msbluestrail.org, where there are also smart phone apps that can be downloaded.



The Delta Center for Culture and Learning is instrumental in chronicling the Delta. The Center, located on the Delta State campus, strives to promote a broader understanding of the history and culture of the Mississippi Delta. The Delta Center is an excellent source to learn more about the history of the Delta. Visit their website for more information: www.deltacenterforcultureandlearning.com

For the adventurous, drop by Merigold’s famed Po’ Monkeys on Thursday nights to enjoy the blues at one of the last remaining authentic juke joints in the Mississippi Delta



THE FOOD



Cleveland satisfies famished guests with a variety of dining atmospheres. Whether you choose fine dining, soul food, crawfish, hot tamales, barbeque or burgers, we’re sure to entice your palate. With award-winning lunch and dining options, you can’t go wrong.

Also, several restaurants offer live music during the weekends to make an evening out in Cleveland even more enjoyable.



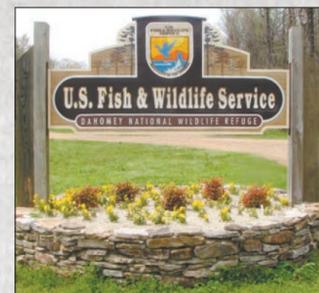
THE OUTDOORS

In addition to hunting and fishing, Bolivar County offers a variety of outdoor activities, including bird watching, boating and hiking.

The Mississippi flyway provides a natural setting for more than 200 species of birds, and the Dahomey National Waterfowl Refuge in Bolivar County is the perfect venue for sighting these beautiful creatures. Dahomey also provides seasonal hunting opportunities for deer, duck, turkey and wild hog.

Those looking for outdoor recreational activities can visit Perry Martin Lake, where bass, white perch and catfish abound. Visitors can navigate the lake in paddleboats or hike the nature trail through lush woodlands teeming with deer, turkey, a variety of birds and other wildlife.

Bolivar County is home numerous great fishing spots and lakes for bird watching and recreational activities that offer visitors and locals enjoyment year-round.



Cleveland-Bolivar County BLUES DRIVING TOUR



Cleveland-Bolivar County and surrounding areas make up an important region in the geography of the Mississippi Delta Blues. The following sites, within a 30-mile radius of Cleveland, should be of particular interest for tourists with a love of Southern Culture.



Cleveland-Bolivar County
Chamber of Commerce/Tourism
662-843-2712 or 1-800-295-7473
www.visitclevelandms.com



Blues Driving Tour

1. Martin & Sue King Railroad Heritage Museum

This museum houses and displays many railroad artifact that capture the history of railroading and it's significance in the Mississippi Delta. It features a Model train that delights all ages.

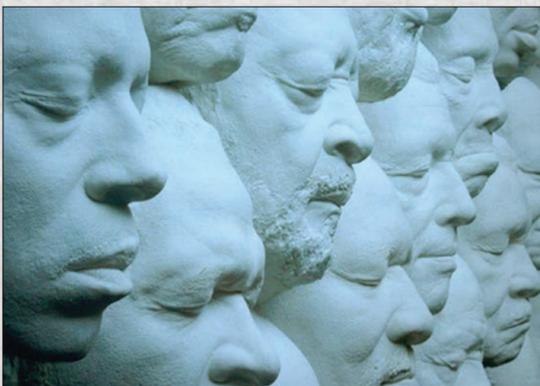


2. Bolivar County Courthouse

According to W.C. Handy in his autobiography, while leading his orchestra at a dance in the Cleveland Courthouse in 1905, he did not know how to perform requested Blues numbers. A local black trio stepped in and stole the show. Handy is quoted as saying, "My enlightenment came in Cleveland, MS; that night an American composer was born". It is highly likely that Charley Patton and Willie Brown were in this trio of musicians.

3. A Cast of Blues Masks

Located in the Ewing Hall, North lobby alcove, at Delta State University. This is a collection of over 50 sculptural life masks of blues performers cast directly from their faces. This is the work of blind sculptor, Sharon McConnell. While you are there, stop in the office of The Delta Center for Culture & Learning and pick up a Blues poster in Ewing Hall.



Mississippi Blues Trail

4. Po Monkey's Juke Joint Marker

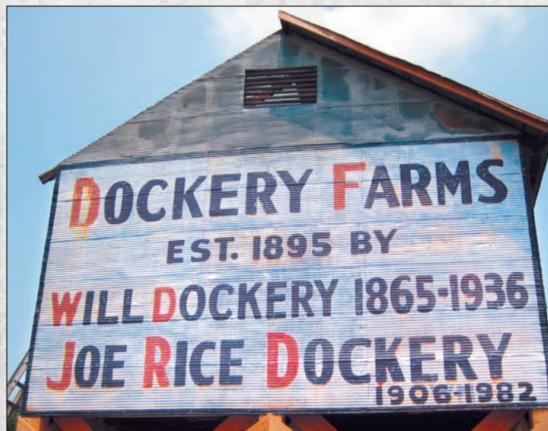
Open for business on Thursday night and located near Merigold, MS, this is one of the last remaining authentic rural Juke Joints in the Delta. The rural juke joint played an integral role in the development of the blues. It offered a distinctly secular space for people to socialize, dance and forget their everyday troubles. Many juke joints were dotted across the fields of the Delta countryside when cotton was king.

5. Mound Bayou Blues Marker

Music has been one of the many facets of African American culture. Their cast of performers both formally schooled and self-taught, has included the pioneer King of Delta Blues, Charley Patton, fiddler Henry "Son" Sims, singers Nellie "tiger" Travis and Sir Lattimore Brown, and guitarist Eddie El.

6. Dockery Farms

Dockery Farms, which lies east of Cleveland on Hwy 8, accounts for the region's relative importance in Blues culture. Dockery farms was home base for a family of Blues musicians unmatched in significance. The founder and father of this group was the Blues Pioneer,

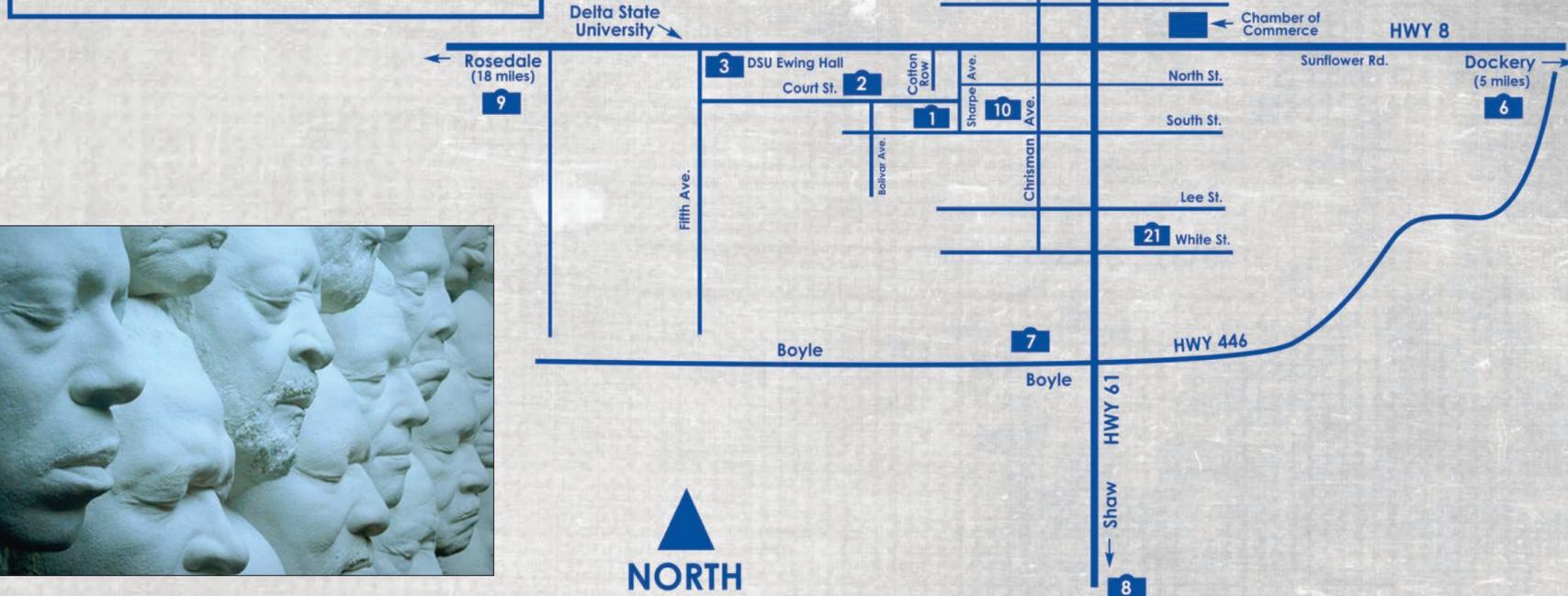
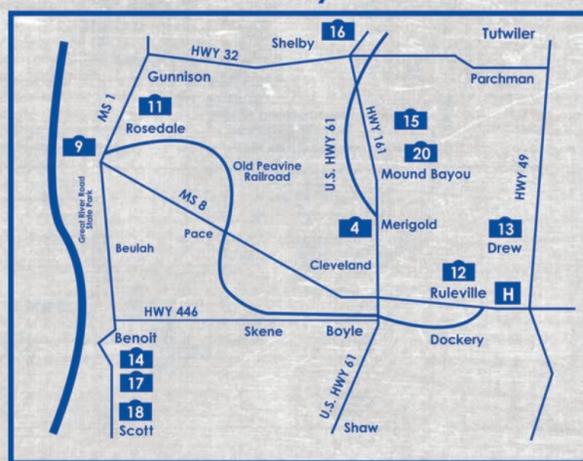


Charly Patton. Patton's style had a major influence on the music of Willie Brown, Son house, Howlin' Wolf, and many others. B.B. King is quoted as saying that if you had to name one location where it all started, it would have to be at Dockery Farms.

7. Boyle/Peavine Railroad Blues Trail Marker

Located in Boyle, MS, this is an interpretive marker relating the part this railroad played in the Delta Blues history. Charley Patton wrote "Pea Vine Blues". He could ride this train from Dockery to the riverside and beyond spreading his style of "playing the Blues."

Bolivar County Overview



8. Honey Boy Edwards Blues Trail Marker

Shaw is the birthplace of this famous blues man. Along the path to success in his field, Edwards developed relationships with other musicians such as Robert Johnson, Charley Patton, Big Joe Williams, Sonny Boy Williamson, Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, etc.

9. Rosedale Blues Trail Marker

Rosedale, Mississippi, inspired work by prominent blues artists. Both Muddy Waters and Robert Johnson wrote songs about Rosedale. In "Traveling Riverside Blues" you hear, "Be sure when you go, you take your rider by your side. And yes, you can still barrelhouse, baby, cause it's on the Riverside." Another Rosedale attraction is The White Front Cafe. The Great River Road State Park is



located on the Mississippi River. It offers fishing, hiking, bathrooms, a play area, and nature trails.

10. Chrisman St. Blues Trail Marker

210 South Chrisman Street. During the segregation era many towns in Mississippi had a particular street that served as the center of African American business and social life, catering not only to townfolk but to farm hands and sharecroppers from the countryside who came to shop and celebrate on weekends. Cleveland's major black thoroughfare, South Chrisman Street, was lined with nightclubs, cafes, hotels, churches and stores.

11. Otis Clay

One of America's premier singers of soul and gospel music. Otis was born in Waxhaw. He got his start in music through his family's gospel singing.

12. Fannie Lou Hamer's Memorial Park

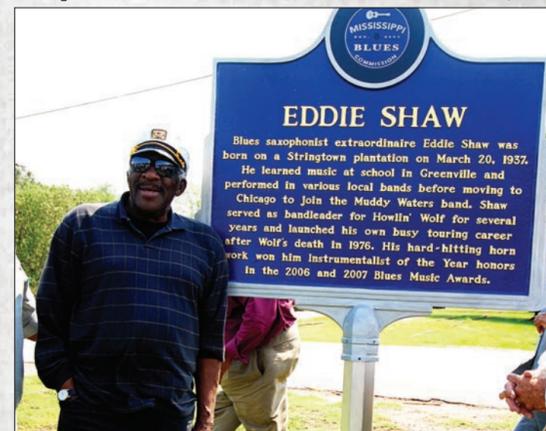
Located in Ruleville, MS, Mrs. Hamer was a famous Civil Rights figure during the 1960's. Her famous quote was, "I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired". Greasy Street, downtown Ruleville, was a popular spot for Blues men to congregate.

13. Pop Staples Park

Located in Drew, MS, this park honors the Pop Staple Singers and their significance to the Delta Blues. Drew and Ruleville, were heavy blues territory in the 1920's. Charley Patton, Willie Brown and the other Dockery-based musicians played often in Jukes, at house parties, and on corners in these nearby towns. Tommy Johnson moved to Drew as a young man and developed his Delta-style of music. Howlin' Wolf also lived in the area where he learned his style

14. Eddie Shaw

Shaw was born in Stringtown, MS in 1937. As a young teenager, he played in a jam session with Ike Turner's band. He played with Muddy Waters before joining the Howlin' Wolf gang. He is a Chicago blues tenor saxophonist. His marker can be viewed in Beniot, Ms.



15. The Harlem Inn

Winstonville, MS, The Harlem Inn, known as "The Showplace of the South", was once the Deltas most important venue for touring national blues performers. This list of performers included Ray Charles, B.B. King, Bobby "Blue" Bland, T-Bone Walker, Howlin' Wolf, Little Milton and the Ike & Tina Revue. The club opened in 1939. It burned in 1989.

16. Henry Townsend

Shelby, MS, Henry Townsend, the only blues artist to have recorded during every decade from the 1920's to the 2000's. Townsend, a master guitarist and pianist, played an integral role in the vital St. Louis Blues scene. He received a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1985, and he was awarded a posthumous Grammy for his participation on the album Last of the Great Mississippi Delta Bluesmen - Live in Dallas.

17. Eddie Taylor

Benoit, MS, Benoit native Eddie Taylor, an architect of the post- World War II Chicago blues genre, is one of the most influential guitarist in Chicago blues history. In the 1940's he moved to Memphis and then to Chicago, where he helped pioneer the city's new electric blues style. During the 1950s and the '60s Taylor and Jimmy Reed collaborated to create many of Reed's hits.

18. MS River Blues

Scott, MS, Big Bill Broonzy was one of the many African American singers who documented the Mississippi River floods in story and song. The flood of 1927 broke the levee near his hometown of Scott. He tells the story of the devastation and physical destruction and human loss wrought by the flood

19. Alligator

Honored Bluesman: Johnny Drummer, Big George Johnson, and Robert "Bilbo" Walker



Mississippi Freedom Trail

20. Mound Bayou

Theodore Roosevelt Mason Howard, businessman and physician founded the Mississippi civil rights organization, the Regional Council of Negro Leadership in the 1950's.

21. Cleveland

Amzie Moore was the principle architect of early civil rights activities as a founding member of the Mississippi NAACP. He planned and led voter registration projects. It was his idea to recruit students to stage Freedom Summer 1960.

Follow the Mississippi Blues Trail

www.msbluestrail.org

Web sites for more information

www.blueshighway.com
www.visitthedelta.com