

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Official Robert Johnson Centennial Celebration scheduled for Greenwood, May 5-8, 2011.

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Robert Johnson, the bluesman, lived for twenty-seven years and recorded twenty-nine songs that changed music forever. May 8, 2011 marks what would have been his 100th birthday. The Greenwood Convention & Visitors Bureau with generous support from Mississippi Development Authority Heritage & History Grant program is developing a series of events to commemorate Robert Johnson through art and music to ensure that his legacy last for another century for music lovers.

"This event would not have been possible without the generous support from the Mississippi Development Authority Heritage & History Grant program. The whole weekend is dedicated to the Blues and we encourage local businesses to join in the fun with blues themed specials," said Paige Hunt, Executive Director of the Greenwood Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The event has the support of Robert Johnson's living grandson, Steven Johnson, who will be the opening act on Saturday night. Johnson along with the Robert Johnson Blues Foundation will be attending events throughout the weekend.

A Robert Johnson Exposed art exhibit will open the weekend of events on Thursday night and will include historical background on Robert Johnson for the new fan and never before seen family pictures for the avid blues historian. "Robert Johnson Exposed will be an exhibition of artwork celebrating this renowned blues artist from the collection of Steve LaVere" said Cheryl Taylor, Executive Director of Cottonlandia Museum. "We love the balance of art and education that will be in this exhibit. Robert Johnson has a fascinating global legacy and we are excited to explore his life with this exhibit that will remain open throughout the summer."

The cornerstone of the celebration will be live music in Greenwood on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Beginning on Thursday night, The Alluvian Hotel Happy Hour will feature a blues musician.

Friday night will launch two nights of free music in Whittington Park. "It was really important for us to create an opportunity for people to come out and enjoy free live

music. What a great way to commemorate and celebrate one of Mississippi's most famous musicians – Robert Johnson," said Hunt.

At press time, Jay Lang and the Devils Due and Bobby Rush are playing Friday night and Honeyboy Edwards, Kenny Brown Band, Alvin Youngblood Hart, Keb' Mo' and The Warren Haynes Band will be playing on Saturday night. "We are thrilled that all of these great musicians will be playing in Greenwood!" says Ms. Hunt.

Honeyboy Edwards was with Robert Johnson on the night he was poisoned and had known him through the blues circuit. Warren Haynes is also in the band Gov't Mule that played at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony for Robert Johnson. Haynes was also a member of the Allman Brothers Band.

"We encourage people to check our website for additions to the musical line-up and other events for the weekend," said Hunt. That website is www.greenwoodms.org/robertjohnson.

During the day on Saturday there are a number of events currently scheduled. For the blues enthusiasts, there will be an expert panel on Robert Johnson's Life & Legacy moderated by Jim O'Neal, Research Director of the Mississippi Blues Trail. Guided tours with Delta Blues Legends will be given of historic blues locations around Greenwood and Leflore County. For the food lover, The Viking Cooking School will offer a Delta Dinner cooking class featuring the best of Delta cuisine.

At press time, The Official Robert Johnson Centennial Celebration will include the following events:

Robert Johnson Exposed: History and art exhibit at Cottonlandia Museum: Opening Thursday, May 5th:

Open to the public, the art show will detail Robert Johnson's life. The exhibit will include never before seen original album art, family pictures, and artistic interpretations of the legend created in the years after his untimely death. The exhibit will remain open throughout the summer.

Alluvian Happy Hour: Thursday Night, May 5th:
Live blues music and specialty cocktails.

Delta Blues Legend Tours: Friday, May 6th and Saturday, May 7th:
Guided tours through Baptist Town and historic blues locations. Advance reservations required.

The Official Robert Johnson Centennial Concert: Friday night, May 6th, Whittington Park:

A free concert with local blues greats: Jay Lang and the Devils Due, Bobby Rush and more to welcome travelers to town and celebrate the guitar legacy of the blues.

Robert Johnson Life & Legacy Expert Panel: Saturday morning, May 7th

A line up of known blues experts moderated by Jim O'Neal, Research Director of the Mississippi Blues Trail, will engage all aspects of the blues world to discuss Johnson's music and legacy. Panelists to include Scott Baretta and Steve LaVere.

Alluvian Spa Specials: Thursday, May 5th - Sunday, May 8th: The Alluvian Spa will offer a 60 minute Soulful Massage for \$100 and their Bluesberry Spa services, including facials, body scrub and wrap and a mani/pedi. Advance reservations required.

Delta Dinner Class at The Viking Cooking School: Saturday, May 7th: Viking Cooking School will offer a Delta Dinner class. The menu includes Delta hot tamales, catfish, mile high coconut meringue pie, fried dill pickles and sweet tea. Advance reservations required.

The Official Robert Johnson Centennial Concert: Saturday night, May 7th, Whittington Park:

A free concert with blues and rock n' roll greats. Honeyboy Edwards, Kenny Brown Band, Alvin Youngblood Hart, RJG – Robert Johnson Grandson Band, Keb' Mo' and The Warren Haynes Band along with other world famous blues acts will take the stage to honor Johnson's legacy.

Community Church Service at Little Zion M.B. Church: Sunday morning, May 8th:

On Robert Johnson's actual birthday, an open church service will be held to commemorate Robert Johnson and his legacy with Steven Johnson as guest preacher.

For questions, please contact the Greenwood Convention & Visitors Bureau at 662-453-9197.