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“A Tribute to the King” *The B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center, City of Indianola, and the Indianola Chamber Main Street to host 35th annual B.B. King Homecoming Festival*

(INDIANOLA, MS - May 18, 2015) The B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in Indianola, Mississippi, will be the site of the 35th annual B.B. King Homecoming Festival on May 24th. The theme for this year’s festival, which was chosen months ago, is “A Tribute to the King.” At that time it was intended to honor Mr. King, but since his passing it will now become a memorial celebration.

“This is our first Homecoming without B.B. so it’s a tough time for all of us, but we are left with priceless memories,” said Bill McPherson, chairman of the Museum board. “We are forever grateful for the many years he took time away from his schedule to perform for free and visit with anyone and everyone who wanted to greet him, especially the children he enjoyed welcoming up on the stage with him,” McPherson added. Dion Brown, executive director of the Museum, said, “Our thoughts and prayers remain with Mr. King’s family and legions of fans as they mourn his loss. We certainly will miss his infectious smile and warmth this year, but we have no doubt he would want us to carry on with this tradition.”

This is a free event, and activities will begin at noon with food and art vendors on site; the musical entertainment begins at 2 p.m. Three-time GRAMMY®-nominated North MS Allstars are headlining the event, and other acts include the B.B. King Children’s Choir; Jimmy “Duck” Holmes, with his brand of Bentonia Blues; David Dunavent and Elov; Delta native Eden Brent; the Allstar Tribute Band featuring Alphonso Sanders; the Marquise Knox Band; and Lil Ray Neal Band. The B.B. King Children’s Choir can be heard on the Museum’s memorial page (<http://www.bbkingmuseum.org/in-memori-am>) singing “Take My Hand, Precious Lord.” The group re-recorded it in 2014, taking the song from King’s 1959 album “B.B. Sings Spirituals.”

Immediately following the festival, at approximately 10 p.m., an intimate show with Nashville’s Pat McLaughlin and his son Jamie will take place at historic Club Ebony. They are returning by popular demand after a standing ovation at the end of last year’s performance. Tickets are needed for this performance and can be purchased at the B.B. King Museum.

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A new addition to the weekend will be BB's Bikes, Blues & BBQ Blowout. Held the day before the Homecoming Festival, this event is sponsored by the Museum and hosted by the United Ryders motorcycle club. Visitors are invited to gather behind the Museum with their grills, tents and coolers and listen to music by Jake and the Pearl Street Jumpers and The Big Tyme Blues Band. Juke joint music will be provided by DJ triple X. Gates open at noon and show time is from 2 - 6 p.m. There is a \$5 admission fee and a \$3 bike contest fee, with a trophy awarded in four categories.

Also on May 23rd is the Fourth Annual Blue Biscuit Festival, which takes place across the street from the Museum at 501 Second Street. Free live music will begin at 11 a.m. and continue until dark. Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, but coolers are not allowed. Acts will include Zach Day, Jack McWilliams, Alanna Mosely, On the Run, Gary Vincent, Christopher Polk, Sweet Tea Jubilee, R.L. Boyce, Candice Moore, David Dunavent, Delta Crossin, Alan Jones, Ralph Sandidge, Libby Rae Watson and Wes Lee. After dark, there is a cover charge inside the Blue Biscuit to hear Mississippi Delta Blues Challenge Winner Libby Rae Watson with Wes Lee and The Beat Daddys.

Located at 400 Second Street, the B.B. King Museum and Delta Cultural Center incorporates a restored 1920s brick cotton gin where King worked as a young man to tell the story of not only a great man and musician, but the history of the place that helped shape him.

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