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Southern Cultural Heritage
FOUNDATION

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Mississippi Blues Commission: Promoting and Supporting the Blues”
Presented by DR. EDGAR SMITH

(VICKSBURG, MS): The Southern Cultural Heritage Foundation (SCHF) is honored to host Dr. Edgar Smith as he discusses the Mississippi Blues Commission and how we can help promote and support the blues, on Monday, July 27th at 6:00 p.m. in the SCHF Convent Chapel.

Edgar E. Smith, Ph.D., was born in Hollandale, Mississippi. In 1951, he graduated from Bowman High School, Vicksburg, Mississippi. His post secondary education includes a B.S. degree (1955) from Tougaloo College, Tougaloo, Mississippi; and M.S. (1957) and Ph.D. degrees in Biochemistry (1959) from Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana.

Dr. Smith has had a very impressive career in Biochemistry. His research was in the areas of cancer biochemistry and sickle cell anemia, the results of which have been published in several professional journals. He is a member of the Mississippi Blues Commission and the former member of the board of Directors of the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center. He has been married to the former Inez Oree' Wiley for the past 60 years and they are the proud parents of four sons.

Many of the most important historical sites associated with the blues are located in Mississippi, and the state's Blues Trail, established in 2005, has to date erected nearly 200 markers documenting this cultural significance. "If you actually experience going around [to] some of these communities," says Dr. Edgar Smith, "you see that there are a number of these musicians who are really in bad shape financially. And we decided that we needed to do something in Mississippi somewhat similar to what's done in Memphis [with] the Blues Foundation. We felt that Mississippi, being the 'home of the blues', should have something of that nature to support its musicians. So [in 2010, the Mississippi Blues Commission] set up a committee, and I was asked to be chairman of the committee." This committee created the Blues Musicians Benevolent Fund which is supported primarily by the sale of Mississippi Blues Trail license plates, a \$10,000 yearly gift from the Mississippi Blues Marathon, and private donations.

So come and meet Dr. Edgar Smith and learn more about our blues musicians in Mississippi. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, please call the SCHF office at 601.631.2997, or email info@southernculture.org.

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