The Collection

The Delta Blues Museum has a large collection of artifacts, including musical instruments, recordings, sheet music, posters, photographs, costumes, folk art, paintings, and other memorabilia. Among the highlights:

- Muddy Waters Addition: This new gallery was opened in 2013. It houses the Muddy Waters cabin, once located on Stovall Farms, outside Clarksdale. The dwelling was saved and donated to the museum in 2001. On display is a life-sized statue of Waters, dressed in a bluesman suit and holding a replica of his 50s electric guitar. Photographs of Waters are on view on the cabin’s walls and throughout the gallery. The exhibit includes a vintage Stella guitar played by Waters; an historic Stovall Farms sign; and the “Muddywood” guitar, made of wood salvaged from the cabin, given by Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top. The addition also houses a model of the 1936 Ford Deluxe driven by folklorist Alan Lomax when he visited Clarksdale to record Waters for the Library of Congress in 1942.

- Big Mama Thornton: A display case is devoted to the life and career of the pioneering blues singer, the vocalist on the original versions of “Hound Dog” and “Ball and Chain.”

- Charlie Musselwhite: The piano, shoes, harmonica (signed) and other memorabilia of the harp master, longtime companion of John Lee Hooker and Chicago blues scene veteran, are on display.

- Three Forks Sign: The original sign from one of the reputed crossroads joints where Robert Johnson was allegedly poisoned at his last gig.

- Clack Grocery Sign: This sign is from the store and train stop on old Highway 41 in Tunica County where Alan Lomax recorded Son House for the Library of Congress in 1941.

- Big Joe Williams Guitar: A classic example of the traveling country bluesman, Williams played this customized, nine-string version of the instrument.

- Johnny Burns: This contemporary Delta musician, one of the many who settled in Chicago, is represented by one of his earliest guitars.

- Stella guitars: Early Stella guitars (made in New Jersey by the Oscar Schmidt company) were favored by classic Delta blues musicians like Charlie Patton, Willie Brown, Skip James and a host of others.

- Son Thomas: His much-used electric guitar and several glossy folk art sculptures (“Woman in Cotton,” a skull) display the artist’s dual interests.

John Lee Hooker, Clarksdale Born Blues Master

Muddywood Guitar