



Thomson-McDuffie

— COUNTY, GA —
Convention & Visitors Bureau

Elizabeth Vance - Executive Director

111 Railroad Street
Thomson, GA 30824
706-597-1000
www.thomson-mcduffie.net
evance@thomson-mcduffie.net

Singin' the Blues



Mavis Staples performs at the 2008 Blind Willie McTell Blues Festival

Named a Top 20 Event for May 2008 by Southeast Tourism Society

Blind Willie McTell, one of the true pioneers and all-time greats of country blues guitar, was born south of Thomson, Georgia, in the area known as Happy Valley in McDuffie County. One of his most famous songs, "*Statesboro Blues*", has been covered by artists such as **Taj Mahal** and **The Allman Brothers Band**. Many musicians consider McTell an influence, including **Jack White** of **The White Stripes**, **Kurt Cobain** of **Nirvana**, and **Bob Dylan**, who paid tribute to McTell with his song "*Blind Willie McTell*". Blind Willie died in 1959, and was inducted posthumously into the **Georgia Music Hall of Fame** in 1990.

The Thomson-McDuffie County Tourism Board hosted the 1st **Blind Willie McTell Blues Festival** in October of 1993. Approaching its 16th year, the festival has continued to grow with normal attendance in the 2,000 plus range. An array of talent from around the U.S. make the trek to east Georgia each year to play the festival.

2008 Performers:

Mavis Staples - Headliner

Anson Funderburgh and the Rockets, featuring Darrell Nulisch
Duke Robillard
Mike Farris
Mary Flower
Geoff Acheson
Crosstie Walkers

16th Annual Blind Willie McTell Blues Festival

When: Saturday, May 9, 2009

Where: Stagecoach Rd., just off Highway 78. North of Thomson, GA.

Tickets: Tickets go on sale April 1, 2008
Advanced tickets are \$20.

Tickets at the gate are \$25.

Children 12 and under get in free.

to purchase tickets call the Thomson-McDuffie Chamber of Commerce at 706-597-1000 or purchase online at www.blindwillie.com

The Festival is "Rain or Shine."

Attendance: 2,000+ annually

Food Court: Restaurants such as Sticky Fingers and French Market Grill are staples at the Festival. Be sure to arrive hungry!

What To Bring: All seating is lawn seating, so bring a blanket or low-back beach chair. Still camera (no video). Sunscreen.

