Upcountry South Carolina is a historical Mecca for the Blues. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the streets of Laurens County, Greenville, Spartanburg, and Anderson reverberated with the music of bluesmen/street-preachers as they were strolling with their tin cups extended. Many of these musicians became famous on the streets of New York City in the folk revival of the 50s and 60s. It is this tradition that is celebrated each February at the Hagood Mill Historic Site.

The Hagood Mill is proud to present this year’s headliner – Chuck Beattie (aka Dr. Blues) is a long-time blues aficionado and music historian. Dr. Blues has long been a fixture in the blues scenes of North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia, as well as international venues in Europe, the United Kingdom, and Central America. His experience spans over half a century and is reminiscent of past giants like Muddy Waters and Howlin’ Wolf. His truly unique, but authentic musical style is influenced by a life lived in the root’s music of gospel, rhythm and blues, and soul of eastern North Carolina.

This year’s lineup also features Freddie Vanderford, Steve McGaha, J. Michael King, and David Donar. Freddie Vanderford is a Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award winner and bluesman. By age 12, Vanderford played the guitar and sang well enough that he performed on television programs in Asheville, NC and Spartanburg, SC. At age 16, he befriended the legendary Peg Leg Sam (Arthur Jackson), who taught Vanderford to play the Piedmont blues on harmonica. Vanderford joined the Mountain Ashe Band in 1974 and in the late 1970s formed the country-rock group Bighorn, which evolved into the Shades; this group backed Nappy Brown in the early 1990s. Vanderford and Little Pink Anderson teamed as the Legacy Duo in 1997; in time Vanderford and Brandon Turner established the New Legacy Duo.

Steve McGaha is a traditional musician who plays multiple instruments—guitar, slide resonator guitar, fiddle, claw hammer banjo, mandolin, harmonica. Steve learned to play by ear as a young man from his own dad. He and his dad won the Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award and performed on the floor of the SC House Chambers. He has been involved in bands, primarily old-time, mountain music and blues. He’s also made several CDs with these same groups. Not only is he an extremely talented musician, but he also researches old-time folk music and shares this knowledge with his audiences. For over 9 years he has been a lead instructor for the YAMs who are taught the traditional music of southeastern US. He teaches in the After-school program, Evening Program, at the YAM Camp and has been the band leader/instructor of the YAM performing band, Sweet Potato Pie Kids.

Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award Winner Michael King is a composer, writer, and accomplished Piedmont blues musician with an insatiable love of traditional South Carolina music. He plays in the time-honored style of bluesman Reverend Gary Davis, a Laurens County native who played throughout Greenville and Spartanburg counties during the 1930s and ‘40s. Michael King has devoted his life to the Piedmont blues. The music has been his primary passion and endeavor—truly his livelihood. King is respected by his fellow musicians as both an excellent musician and an outstanding ambassador for South Carolina Piedmont blues.

David Donar is a country bluesman, finger style picker that plays some red-hot tunes! Inspired by the various musical styles of Louisiana from Creole, Cajun, Swamp Pop, Blues and New Orleans Jazz, his primary instrument is the Cajun Box and the Piano Accordion, and he performs both solo and with his band.
BLACKSMITHING 101
w/ Instructor Kevin Thompson
January 13, 2024
9 AM to 4 PM
$125 per person

BLACKSMITHING 102
w/ Instructor Kevin Thompson
January 15, 2024
$125 per person
WWW.HAGOODMILLHISTORICSITE.COM

NEW
BLACKSMITHING 103
w/ Instructor Kevin Thompson
January 20, 2024
$125
WWW.HAGOODMILLHISTORICSITE.COM

Hearth Cooking: Chicken on a Stick
w/ Kim Cleveenger
January 20, 2024
9 am - 2 pm
$60

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For more information on the classes offered at the Hagood Mill Historic Site, please visit our website and click on the Education tab!