

Hattiesburg Area Historical Society

HAHS MUSEUM
Hattiesburg Cultural Center
723 Main Street
Mailing: P.O. Box 1573
Hattiesburg, MS 39403-1773
Web Site: www.hahsmuseum.org
E-mail:
hahsmuseum@megagate.com

Hidden Treasures Found in Banker's Memorabilia

Most of us have heard proverbs saying that history repeats itself, that there is nothing new, or that the more things change the more they remain the same. We often wave it off with a smile. After all, it is now six years past Katrina, the most costly hurricane in US history (\$107 Billion) and our country is in the middle of a major financial crisis. Surely this can't be a repeat! Then retired Vice Chairman and Cashier Doyle Downs arrived at the HAHS museum with a large box of banking memorabilia and, in the words of Yogi Berra, it was "déjà vu all over again."



35 year banker Doyle Downs presents HAHS Vice President Ursula Jones with his memorabilia and the J.P. Carter check at left.



He removed the lid and produced embossing stamps, a coin counter, bank bags, photographs, desk supplies, a model T bank with the "First National Bank of Hattiesburg" logo, a lighted magnifying glass for examining the stamps on the back of checks, and numerous documents including a check signed by J.P. Carter, the bank's second president.

Tucked away among the papers was a November 1966 edition of *First Line*, a publication by First National Bank of Hattiesburg. The cover photo showed the lobby of FNB around 1907 (below left). An inside article featured photos of the bank's six presidents to that date and a brief history tracing the bank from its 1895 beginning as "Bank of Commerce" through its conversion into "National Bank of Commerce" (below right) in 1899 to its merger with First National Bank to become "First National Bank of Commerce" in 1908 and finally its name change in 1919 to "First National Bank of Hattiesburg." Photos were included.



Pictured at left 1900 Bank Staff: Left to right: Calloway Bennett, Director; F. w. Foote, Vice President; George J. Hauenstein, Assistant Cashier; Jim Harper, Employee; Fred Powell, Employee; Ashby Foote, Employee; Bill McLeod, Employee; James F. Bennett, Employee; J. P. Carter, President; and R. C. Hauenstein, Cashier.

Most interesting of all were the excerpts from F. W. Foote's **Report To Shareholders In January, 1913**. Mr. Foote, the bank's third president wrote:

"September 2, 1895, this bank opened for business in a small place, furnished with home-made furniture, built by local workmen, and it has continuously since that day been doing things for Hattiesburg and South Mississippi..."

“The bank’s record is one of success. At no time in its history has there been a season where it was not succeeding... After the calamitous storm of September 1906 [unnamed hurricane that hit Pascagoula], the hardest trial Hattiesburg had, which destroyed some \$10,000,000 worth of timber in this section, Hattiesburg took a stand to fight for what she had—to hold her own, harvest her resources and not give back to nature all that which she had wrestled from her.

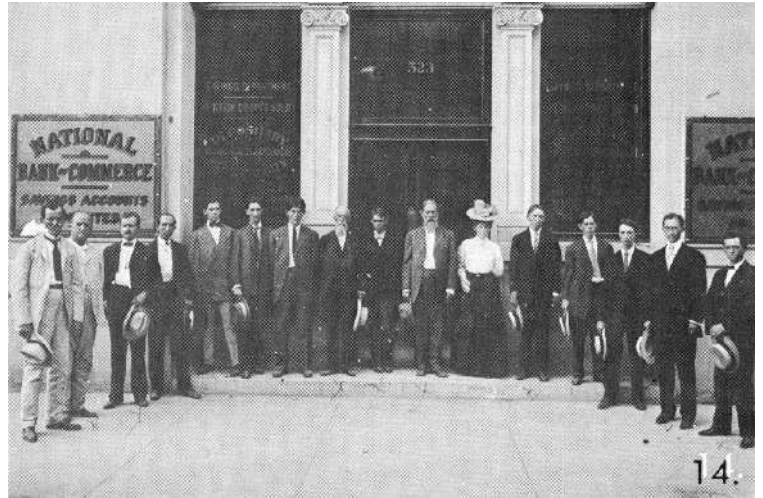
“Scarcely had the work of saving and marketing such down timber as was possible been accomplished before the fearful panic of 1907 fell upon us with a fury that threatened the very foundations of the financial existence of this section. The panic was a terrible blow, and it took the heart out of many, and caused some to fall by the wayside.

“Hattiesburg again took her stand and fought to defend home and fireside, capital and business, and while the weary days passed into weeks, months and years, not once did the community fail in its duty. In time after so much patience and effort, the cloud began to break, and Hattiesburg again came into her own.

“During all these turmoils, trials and tribulations this bank was the financial backbone of this section of Mississippi. Its ability to carry its customers through and make them additional advances, give courage to its distressed customers, with the assurance that it could and would see them through, is largely what held Hattiesburg and the surrounding country together... The bank had more than selfish responsibility—it had the interests of the entire community to safeguard.”

Today only the front façade and an open courtyard remain at the original Main Street location and the bank operates under the BancorpSouth name from a building located at the intersection Hardy and Pine Streets.

Mr. Foote’s words should be taken to heart now. Hopefully Hattiesburg will maintain the same attitude and emerge triumphantly from the current crisis.



Above: FNB Lobby circa 1907. To right: Staff Around 1907 (Note First Lady Employee) Left to right: R. C. Hauenstein, William Conner, F. W. Foote, George J. Hauenstein, Everett J. Tucker, C. Mack Sigler, James Cloy, Captain J. P. Carter, W. P. Jones, John S. Turner, Lena Blalock, Secretary; Houston Breland, Jim E. Heidelberg, George W. Currie, John L. Mixon, and Ashby Foote.



First Six Bank Presidents from Bank of Commerce to First National Bank before moving to the Hardy Street location.

Above left to right: G.L. Hawkins, 1895-1897; Capt. J. P. Carter, 1897-1924; F. W. Foote, 1924-1947; George J. Hauenstein, 1947-1951; Lawrence Y. Foote, 1951-1965; and Paul W. McMullan, 1965-

Far left: 1945 Bank Staff on Main Street

Near left: Bank Façade as it stands on Main Street today.

GIFTS TO THE SOCIETY

June 1, 2011 –October 31, 2011

- Book: Autographed copy of Jane L. Greenwood's "Tell About That time" c. 1965 and "In Memoriam" and assorted signs –Lake Douglas/Martha Polk Douglas Estate.
- Booklet Jane L. Greenwood 1880-1978 (obituary and family memories); and Book: 1965 USM Drawl – Ursula Ruth Jones
- Assorted Girl Scout items c1975 – Alesia Valentine
- Book: The Complete Book of Lamar County Cemeteries by Bullock and Arnold- Laurie Crowson
- World War I Camp Shelby Hospital Complex photo; WWI Medical Staff photo; WWI Camp Shelby Hospital photo; May 27th Souvenir and Farewell Programme (US Army Base Hospital Enlisted Men) and WWI Bauer & Black Adhesive Powder can – Scott Clarkson
- DVD Interview with Vera Anderson McDonald – MS Armed Forces Museum
- DVD Tally House Remembrance as told by Red Bailey 1987 – Harry C. Ward
- Book: Prize Country Quilts by Mary Elizabeth Johnson – Mrs. Montee Smith
- Binder: Dowst Magazine Binder; Publication "Mississippi Central Round Table (Dec. 1926 – June 1931) – Charles & Helen Cullifer.
- DVD Norvell Robertson Chapter NSDAR "Women in American History" Dee Elizabeth Thornton Abbott plus WDAM segment "Pride of the Pinebelt" on Mrs. Abbott – Joanne Giles.
- Mississippi Woman's College Handbook 1924-25; "Lil Mill" Hattiesburg High School Annual 1943; State Teacher's College Annual (USM) 1939; Pictorial History 37th Division US Army 1940-41; Doherty Genealogy; 4 copies Hattiesburg Police Force Pictures; CD of Hattiesburg Post Cards; Picture of the residence of Sallye Harwell (1941-1960 at 598 Concart St. – Robert Doherty.
- 23 slides of Smith Bakery 1956 – Ron Bufkin.
- Paperweight with early scene of Gordon's Creek with Hattiesburg, Miss. At top of paper insert – Jim Freeman in memory of Jimmy Honea by Dewey DeLee.
- Photos of George A. Linton (1855-1922); Martha Missouri Hollensed Linton (1858-1930, m. 1882), and an unidentified lady with baby – John Floyd
- Book: One Man's Message, Autobiography of LTC A. Hudson McDonald – Barbara Phillips
- Booklet: "Methodist Hospital School of Medical Technology" and picture of 2008 Award Ceremony and certificate awarded to Eleanor Durgee – Eleanor Dean Hickman Durgee.
- Plate: "History of Hospitals in Hattiesburg" in recognition of Doctor's Day March 30, 1987 – Jeanne Herring.
- Aerial photo of the Hercules Plant c1960s – Betsy Gardner Tannehill
- Assorted Girl Scout Items including Troop 20 Flag – Nancy McMillan

Recent Monetary Contributions

June 1, 2011-October 31, 2011

LIFE MEMBERS

Susan & Gibson Smith

DONORS

Barbara A. Curry

Lavonna S. Currie

Albert C. Jones

Dee Thornton Abbott

A J Jones

John Papadakis

Joanne R. Newcomb

Norvell Robertson Chapter DAR

Nancy McMillan

Billie C. Spell

Amelia t. McIntyre

George H. Carter

Dorothy B. Terry

Eleanor H. Durgee

Tom Phillips III

HONORARIUMS

A J Jones

Ursula Ruth Jones

Laurie Crowson

MEMORIAMS

Dr. Gerald Belue

Lori Dews

Jack Ross

Allen Hale

Dr. & Mrs. Orange

Helen L. Spell

Howard Myrick

Virginia Kelly

Willis Terry

Joe G. Spell

Hershel Peddicord

HAHS MUSEUM
Post Office Box 1573
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39403-1573



MUSEUM HOURS
Mon., Tues., Thurs.
2:00 - 4:30 p.m.
Or by Appointment
Call 601-582-5460

Located in the
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Center
723 Main Street
Downtown
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Web site:
www.hahsmuseum.org

Email: hahsmuseum@megagate.com

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THE REST OF THE STORY

We knew the large green box on the back shelf had been an HRD playground first aid kit until the 1980's, but had thought little about it until Nancy McMillan walked in with an almost identical one.

They obviously had been made at the same time by the same people, but the empty one we had was marked HRD on the outside and Nancy's, marked Girl Scouts, was fully packed. The insides of both lids were marked "made by Girl Scout Troop 20."

Best of all, the new box included "The Rest of the Story"—an April 29, 1959 *Hattiesburg American* article "Girls Scouts Provide First Aid Boxes for HRD Playgrounds."

"Intermediate Girl Scout Troop 20 has made and equipped for the Hattiesburg Recreation Department ten first aid boxes, which will be placed at the various playgrounds in the city.

Willis Terry, HRD director, furnished materials for the project; and Scouts secured the services of John J. deVink and R. J. Elfert for construction, free of charge. Mr. deVink has a daughter in Troop 20 and Mr. Elfert formerly had a granddaughter in the group.

Scouts did the painting, shopped for supplies, and assembled the items in each box. Troop 20 also expressed appreciation to Ted Schroeder of the Medical Arts Pharmacy for furnishing supplies at wholesale prices and Bob Waller for photography work....

In connection with the project, Troop 20 scouts achieved the first aid badge and completed a portion of first class rank. Members of the troop are: Basha Bass, Judy Hathorn, Dorothy Koch, Jolie McGowin, Nancy McMillan, Roblyn Rollins, Helen Robertson, Carole Wentworth, Helen Wellborn, Julia Welborn, Helen Virginia Lopez, Gail McCoy, Mary deVink, Alice Eure, Kay freeman and Becky Markette.

Mrs. H. W. McMillan is leader and Mrs. John deVink is assistant leader."



First Aid Boxes Supplied—Girl Scouts Mary deVink (left) and Nancy McMillan of Troop 20 turn over to Dr. Lloyd Milam, chairman of the Hattiesburg Recreation Department board of directors, first aid boxes made and equipped by the troop for use on playgrounds in the city. (Photo by Bob Waller.

Please check your mailing label to see year paid. If you do not have a 2012 or an "L" (for life member) your dues are due. Thank you!