

Hattiesburg Area Historical Society

HAHS MUSEUM
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IF YOU'D ONLY THOUGHT TO ASK!

It is not uncommon for the HAHS to receive questions about the past. New people, who move into town, want to know about buildings and locations. Researchers want to learn about area's history and development. Lifelong residents, who see programs on the History channel that stir memories, call for help filling in the gaps. The Museum Staff does its best to provide the requested information.

Sometimes the answer is close at hand, but often research is needed. There are questions for which no answer can be found. Then there are others whose answers turn up unexpectedly months later. Today, we'd like to share some of the answers with you.

There have been several who inquired, **"What role did Hattiesburg play in the Civil War?"** Those asking have been surprised to learn that there was no Hattiesburg during that war. Hardy may have thought about a rail line before then, but he didn't complete his preliminary survey until 1872. The people living in the area before then were family farmers, backwoodsmen, trappers, traders, surveyors, and Indians.

"Where was Hattie's house?" some have asked. The easy answer is in Meridian, Mississippi. Hattie Lott met Captain Hardy at a benefit fair in Mobile, Alabama. His wife had died eight months earlier leaving him with six children. About seven months later the couple married and made their home in Meridian. Hattie died in 1895 without ever making the trip to the town named for her. A grieving Hardy moved to Hattiesburg in 1899.

"What kind of bulb was in the Hub Sign?" The Hub Sign, which stood fifty feet above the Ross Building was lighted by 1,400 Westinghouse 5 watt / 7 ½ volt Mazda Lamps. The three-colored sign was first lit on Thanksgiving Day 1912. The only bulb still known to exist was given to the HAHS by Nell B. Horlock. It was found in her Uncle Bill's garage after his death. William Wells worked for the power company and serviced the Hub Sign for many years. The bulb may be viewed in the HAHS museum.



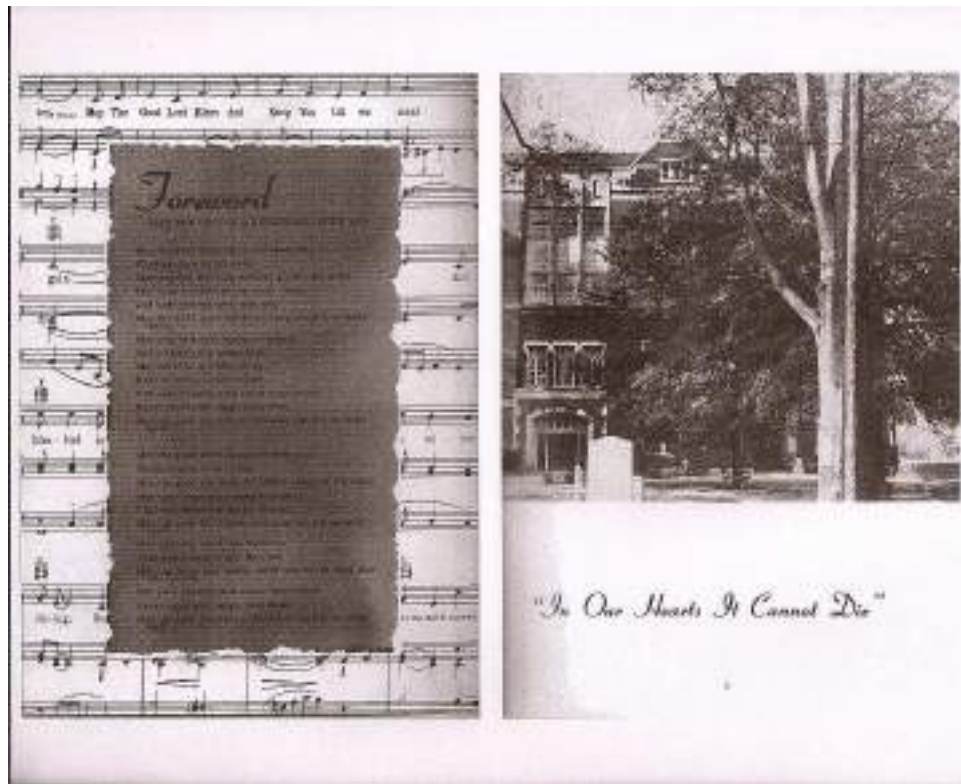
A recent query came by email. **"Where was the Woolworth store in 1964?"** The F. W. Woolworth Co. Department Store was located at 110-116 East Pine Street (where the Forrest County Tax Services building now stands) just across the street from Belk-Whitley Department Store (currently the site of a parking lot). One Hattiesburg native watched a TV program showing someone trying to sell WWII Ration Stamps and began to think about using them. **"How and where did we get our Ration Stamps?"** was the question that arose. We knew that in May of 1942, the U.S. Office of Price Administration (OPA) froze prices on practically all everyday goods. War ration books were issued to each family. The first ration book was issued to civilians through schoolteachers, PTA groups, and other volunteers. Later the work of issuing ration books was handled by local ration boards of mostly volunteer workers selected by local officials. To get a classification and a book of rationing stamps, one had to appear before the local rationing board. Each person in a household received a ration book, including babies and children.

That took care of how one got the stamps, and a look through the city directories soon gave the answer to where. The local ration board #18 was located in the back room of the Masonic Temple at 700 Main Street. The chief clerk was Everett T. Batten.

One question that escaped an answer until recently was, “**What is the music for the Hattiesburg Alma Mater?**” Although we knew the words and could hum the tune (somewhat off key), we did not have a copy of the music. First, we asked former band members who had played it. Some former Band Directors were even consulted. The answer that came back was music that did not match the words or the song in our memories.

After consulting graduates of the 1930’s and annuals dating back to 1913, we learned that the current Alma Mater first appeared in the 1950 annual. Until then the senior class had a class song or there was a school loyalty song. Still, no one knew which tune was used for the Alma Mater.

Months later, while looking for something else, we opened the 1953 annual. On the third page below a photograph of the Main Street school building were the words, “In Our Hearts It Cannot Die.” On the opposite page was the answer. Written as the annual’s foreword over its musical score were the words to *May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You*. That tune is the one to which many HHS graduates have sung, “There’s a school we’ll hold forever; In our hearts it cannot die; And no hand on earth can sever our love for Hattiesburg High.”



These are things you’d probably like to know if you had only thought to ask. If you have additional information on these questions or other interesting historical facts, please contact the HAHS Museum. Inquiring minds will want to know!

NEW ORNAMENT



Trinity Episcopal Church, 509 West Pine Street, is marking their Centennial in 2012. The building is the second home of Hattiesburg Episcopalians, who have had a presence in Downtown Hattiesburg since the late 1800s.

Rev. William Atmore, then priest of Trinity Parish and an expert in ecclesiastical architecture, designed the sanctuary in a Medieval Gothic style reminiscent of a Knights Templar church in London. From regional clay, a local brick company made the 400,000 bricks found in the walls, and a parishioner laid them as his gift to the church. The timbers in the building were harvested from area forests. The building was formally dedicated on December 20, 1912.

Other ornaments are available from previous years except 2004 – The Depot. All ornaments are \$16.00.