

# Hattiesburg Area Historical Society

HAHS MUSEUM  
127 W FRONT STREET  
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HATTIESBURG MS  
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601 545-4582

## Book Update . . .

- ◆ December 1997, a contract was signed with Geiger Printing Company – a local business – to print *The History of Forrest County, Mississippi*. Acid-free paper will be used.
- ◆ Pre-publication sales paid the first payment. The second payment is due "Thanks-giving" when the book goes to the printer.  
**BOOK PRICE WILL INCREASE TO \$70.00 NOVEMBER 1ST.**
- ◆ Dianne and Tommy Seller's time and expertise on the computer are invaluable. Thanks goes to Diane and the many faithful

volunteers.

- ◆ A miniature sample page is on the back of this newsletter.

## The Signing



Left to right: S. Barefield, S. Riggs, E Roseberry, E. Herring, T. Cress, J. Jones, L. Cartledge

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *List of recent acquisitions by the Historic Society*
- *Photograph of raising the United States and Mississippi flags given to Hawkins Junior High School JAC club through our efforts with the Adopt-a-School program.*

## Dues . . .

### Please pay your 1998 HAHS dues!

HAHS fiscal year is with the calendar – January 1 thru December 31.

Nominal dues, memorials and donations fund HAHS projects, activities

and mailings. Please support this important organization as it teaches the past applied to the present and future.

A card and preaddressed envelope are enclosed for your convenience.

# From the President . . .

Publishing the first comprehensive history of Forrest County is a tremendous undertaking. HAHS volunteers take seriously. Participation has been open to all. The work is interesting, enjoyable, and tedious! The final check of reproducing contributor's stories accurately is most important and the most difficult and the slowest.

Your Hattiesburg Area Historical Society continues to fulfill its role of providing a historical repository and museum, programs, demonstrations, and tours for education, research, and entertainment. Some activities and actions this year include:

## PRESERVATION

- 1 Display and continuous upgrading composite pictures of HHS graduating classes.
- 2 Providing more than 50 research hours to match funds for North Main Historic Neighborhood's marker in front of The Old High School.
- 3 Nominating this largest and best example of Jacobethan architecture to be recognized by the Mississippi Heritage Trust as one of Mississippi 10 Most Endangered Places
- 4 Actively pushing for best public use of the Main Street Library building; meeting with USM president; serving on new city committee. HAHS believes there should be a



local historical museum and downtown Hattiesburg in a historical building is the place for it.

- 5 Supporting Saenger safety and maintenance improvements, city management, and retaining building integrity; serving on Saenger Advisory Committee.
- 6 Contributing time and information for Forrest County's 90th Anniversary.

## PROMOTION OF AREA

- 1 Tourism conference
- 2 Information, research, entertainment, and education center for locals and tourists, media and businesses. In the last few weeks HAHS has provided help to Jitney Premier; Sandstones, LLC; UPS; and The Clarion Ledger.
- 3 Promoting a program for Mississippi Department of Archives and History's new facilities and legislation that passed.

## PARTICIPATION

- 1 Old Time Festival.
- 2 Adopt-a-School/Junior American Citizens Club at Hawkins Junior High School included presentation of a flag of Mississippi by Honorable Percy Watson and a United States flag by Honorable Gene Taylor.
- 3 Hattiesburg Veterans Committee.

### HAHS OFFICERS

President	Mrs. Jacq P. Jones	Treasurer	Mr. A J Jones
Vice President	Dr. Emmit Herring	Assistant	Mrs. Barbara O. Cloy
Recording Secretary	Miss Earline Roseberry	Corresponding Secretary	Mrs. Davie H. Griffith
Assistant	Mrs Jeanne H. Herring	Assistant	Mrs. Peggie R. Bowles
	Historian/Parliamentarian		Mrs. Patricia M. Sheppard



- 4 Camp Shelby Museum ground breaking.
- 5 ADP, Downtown Association, Mississippi Heritage Trust.
- 6 National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- 7 John Rolfe, Norvell Robertson, and 20th Star DAR chapters promoting Constitution Week and exhibit at Hattiesburg Public Library,

**EDUCATION**

- 1 Current HAHS MUSEUM exhibit – “Communicating History” - displays various ways HAHS uses to teach history
- 2 Helping individual students and others with research.
- 3 Mississippi State University Special Information Technology Survey.

**ACQUISITIONS**

- 1 Some genealogy books from L W Anderson Library.
- 2 Child’s desk made by Buschman.
- 3 Sword from the Spanish-American War; 1898.
- 4 New 1884 US flag — the year Hattiesburg was incorporated .
- 5 Replica of Choctaw hieroglyphics sign from Bernard Romaine collection.
- 6 Robert Saul’s slide collection.
- 7 Three local Soap Box Derby cars.
- 8 1883 “Joshua” Oxford English University Press

Jacq Jones, President

<p>HAHS gives <b>SPECIAL THANKS</b> to the Hattiesburg High School Class of 1939 for their continuous monetary contributions in memory of their classmates</p>	<p><b>Thank You!</b> <b>HHS Class of 1939</b></p>
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**HAHS BOARD MEMBERS**

- |                      |                      |                        |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Mr. Bill Bush        | Mrs. Eloise W. Jones | Mrs. Betty T. Steadman |
| Mrs. Lorraine S. Ott | Mr. Paul Hughes      | Mr. Charles Scruggs    |
| Mrs. Sara B. Riggs   | Dr. Ann Georgian     | Mrs. Dixie S. Brock    |



Dr. Nollie C. Felts (1905 - 1974) All-American fullback Tulane University, 1931

nurse was **Miriam Dalsheimer Barron**, who later became superintendent of nurses when Forrest General Hospital opened in 1952. He was the first chief of staff at that hospital -- and continued to practice there and at the Methodist Hospital for his entire career. He also served as team physician at USM for many years; his fondest activity was caring for these varied athletes; he of course insisted on no financial recompense.

When I joined him in general practice in 1954 we moved to the Medical Arts Bldg. (now part of Hattiesburg Clinic), and joyfully practiced together for 18 years; he suffered a disabling stroke in 1972. I had been graduated from HHS in 1944, then from Tulane (M.D.) in 1949 at age 21 -- a rather rapid education in those WWII years. I interned at Charity Hospital in New Orleans, then took a 2 yr. residency in general practice at Charity Hospital, Monroe, LA. I then joined the US Air Force for 2 years of active duty during the Korean Conflict.

After my father's stroke, **Dr. E. G. Duck** (formerly of Purvis, MS) joined me in practice at the same location. After enjoying a fine partnership for 18 years, we semi-retired with a part-time contract with Hattiesburg Clinic; I retired completely 2 years later in Dec. 1992.

My mother, **Louise Johnston Felts**, was a bright, beautiful, and admirably busy young lady; she taught school in New Orleans while my father was medical student. She was a homemaker during my younger years back in Hattiesburg. But she returned to teaching at Petal High School during the 1940's when I was away at Tulane. She too suffered a stroke in 1981 and died on 29 July, 1982. Both are buried at Roseland Park Cemetery in

Hattiesburg; my father died on 1 Nov. 1974. In 1973 the "Nollie C. Felts Recreational Center" was dedicated to him in McLaurin, MS (his original coaching job); it consists of renovated gym, park, playing areas, and a USM scholarship in his name.

One interesting vignette: while coaching his small, rural McLaurin High School football team, a benefit game was proposed -- to hopefully purchase needed athletic equipment. This game was played at the USM stadium, pitting the USM varsity against "McLaurin High School Plus Coach" -- my father playing fullback with his diminutive team. Having been a star at USM the previous year, it was a fairly publicized little local event. And, ironically, McLaurin won the game (I don't recall his considerable rushing yardage) and made enough money to buy equipment and possibly even pay the coach's salary.

by Nollie C. Felts, Jr. M.D.

picture: vertical 8 x 9 1/2  
Nollie C. Felts, SR. MD All American  
Fullback Tulane U. 1931



William Ashford Ferguson, Sr. (1890-1963), Irene (Ashford) Ferguson (1861-1939), Frances Collins Ferguson (1893-1981).

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## FERGUSON, THOMAS MARTIN and IRENE ASHFORD

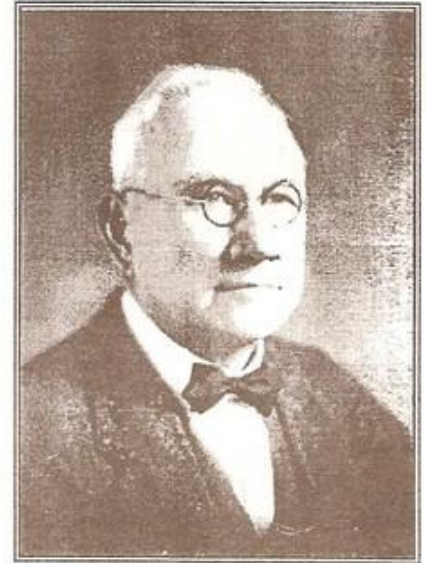
1896

**Thomas Martin Ferguson**, wife, **Irene Ashford** and small son, **William Ashford**, moved to Hattiesburg in 1896 from Meridian, MS. **Thomas** had learned telephone technology by working in Meridian on their city's installation. He then came to Hattiesburg to build the original phone system. It was a small sawmill community then. They were quick to embrace the helpful and friendly people and to recognize the many business opportunities. After completing the phone company installation, the family decided to stay



Thomas M. Ferguson Home. This home was located on N. Main St., 900 block, East side. (Former owner was T. A. Hightower).

and call Hattiesburg "home." He sold the phone company to the Bell System.



Thomas Martin Ferguson (1855-1935) at age 70 taken in 1925.

**Thomas's** next venture was trading and developing land in town and surrounding forests. This proved very profitable, and he stayed in this business until a stroke left him partially paralyzed in 1931. He wrote and published a book in 1906, Ferguson's Lessons, that dealt with land measures, the Mississippi Codes as of 1906 that affected land, sample legal documents, and business and personal advice (lessons). His book stated the population to be 22,000 as of 1906.

**Mr. Ferguson** played a significant role in boosting the early development and fortunes of Hattiesburg. One early project was to develop a whole community around a huge artesian well in north Hattiesburg. Other developments were Yellow Pine Park, Mayflower Park and the sixteenth section lands. He founded Bassfield and developed Silver Creek and Wanilla. He conducted all-day excursion trips to these areas. There would be a picnic on the grounds, followed in the afternoon with an auction of