

HISTORICAL MARKERS

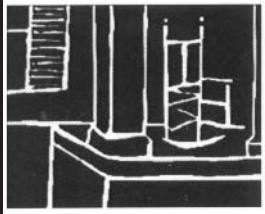
With funding provided by the Oxford Tourism Council, the Heritage Foundation has completed the project of designing and having installed three historical markers. One at the Hilgard Cut just west of the bridge acknowledges work done in preparation for the railroad coming to Oxford and the achievements of Eugene W. Hilgard. One at the Burns "Belfry" calls attention to the first African American church in Oxford. The other recognizes the work of artist Theora Hamblett, who lived at 619 Van Buren from 1939 until 1977. There were unveiling ceremonies at the Belfry and the Theora Hamblett home on Sunday, May 20.

The Oxford-Lafayette County Heritage Foundation is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and stewardship of the Oxford-Lafayette County historic environment, both natural and manmade. The environment includes historic and important buildings, cemeteries, personal property, and other culturally significant sites and byways.

OXFORD-LAFAYETTE COUNTY

Heritage Foundation

Box 622
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OXFORD-LAFAYETTE COUNTY

Heritage Foundation Newsletter

FALL 2001

University, Local Community Receive

\$800,000 MDOT Grant

to Save Depot

The once bustling Oxford Depot again will serve as an important center for the community, thanks to an \$800,000 grant from the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) to help with preservation and restoration.

When the project is complete in approximately two years, the depot—located just off Jackson Avenue, behind the Ford Center for the Performing Arts construction site—is expected to become an educational and cultural center for the University of Mississippi and Oxford community.

The City of Oxford and Ole Miss jointly submitted the grant application to MDOT, with the university also providing the \$200,000 matching credit through the parking area and other land purchased from the railroad. After refurbishing, the local depot will provide much-needed space for meetings, exhibitions, university continuing education programs, receptions, and dinners, said Gloria Kellum, vice chancellor for University Relations.

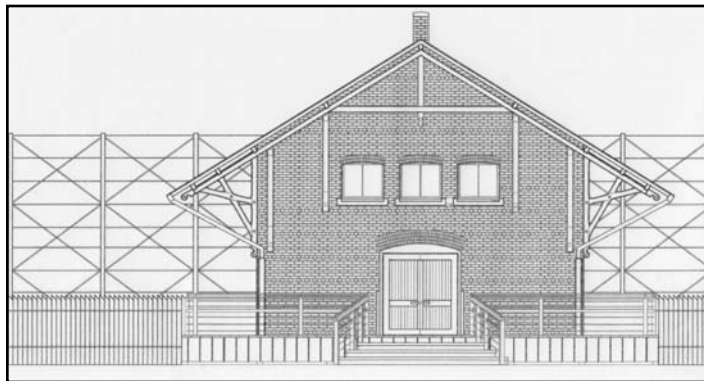
“This is a marvelous example of how local citizens, including members of the Oxford-Lafayette County Heritage Foundation, worked with the university to plan this project and to encourage us to find a way to preserve this treasure,” Kellum said. “In addition to saving a landmark, the project will provide much-needed flexible space with abundant parking.”

Belinda Stewart Architects, P.A. of Eupora, which has overseen similar exterior restoration and interior renovation projects on the depots in Canton and Flora and is starting another one in Europa, has been selected as the architect for the Oxford Depot.

The MDOT grant requires a rigorous approval process, said architect Belinda Stewart, lengthening the time line on the project. Each step of the project is sent to the regional MDOT office in Oxford, then moves on to the state MDOT office. At this point, all applicable departments review plans, which then go to the Federal Highway Administration. Also included in the

approval process is review by Mississippi Department of Archives and History, as the building is a historic landmark.

Stewart praised the grant funds made possible by the Transportation Enhancement Act of the 21st century, emphasizing that many depots throughout the nation are being saved. Work on the Oxford Depot, thought to be around 129 years old, is not a simple task. “I think one of the biggest challenges is incorporating current technologies into a historic building without disturbing the significance of the building,” Stewart said.



A preliminary view of the entrance of the renovated Depot. (The southern view with the new trellis and fence behind.)

One outstanding feature of the Oxford Depot is the brick masonry—load-bearing brick walls visible on the exterior and also on the interior walls. Stewart’s architectural drawings for the Oxford Depot call for a kitchen, storage, and public restrooms to be constructed in the space without covering any of this masonry and without extending all the way to the ceiling.

Three-fourths of the depot was a freight room, which Stewart described as an “extraordinary space.” The architect, who devotes at least 75 percent of her work to historic buildings and the other 25 percent to incorporating new construction into established neighborhoods, said she wants people utilizing the depot to be able to feel the “volume of the building.”

The Oxford Depot project will require extensive work, but Stewart described the building as well-built and substantial, as well as “elegant, sophisticated, and beautiful.” The architect studied early photos of the depot to plan the building’s restoration, such as replicating the decorative brackets used on the original roof line.

The University’s Institute for Continuing Studies will manage the Oxford Depot once work is finished. “The depot will be a great addition to our conference facilities,” said Tim Angle, the institute’s director.

TINA HAHN



SUN DIAL MEMORIAL

The Oxford chapter of the Colonial Dames of America installed a sun dial on the University of Mississippi campus in 1922. It serves as a memorial to the students who lost their lives during World War I. In a short ceremony this spring, on May 20, members of the Heritage Foundation and other participants who gathered at the memorial heard passages from the 1922 speakers' comments and repeated some of the rituals used in the original dedication. Major Vicki Beyer of the University's Aerospace Studies Program provided an abbreviated color guard and music.

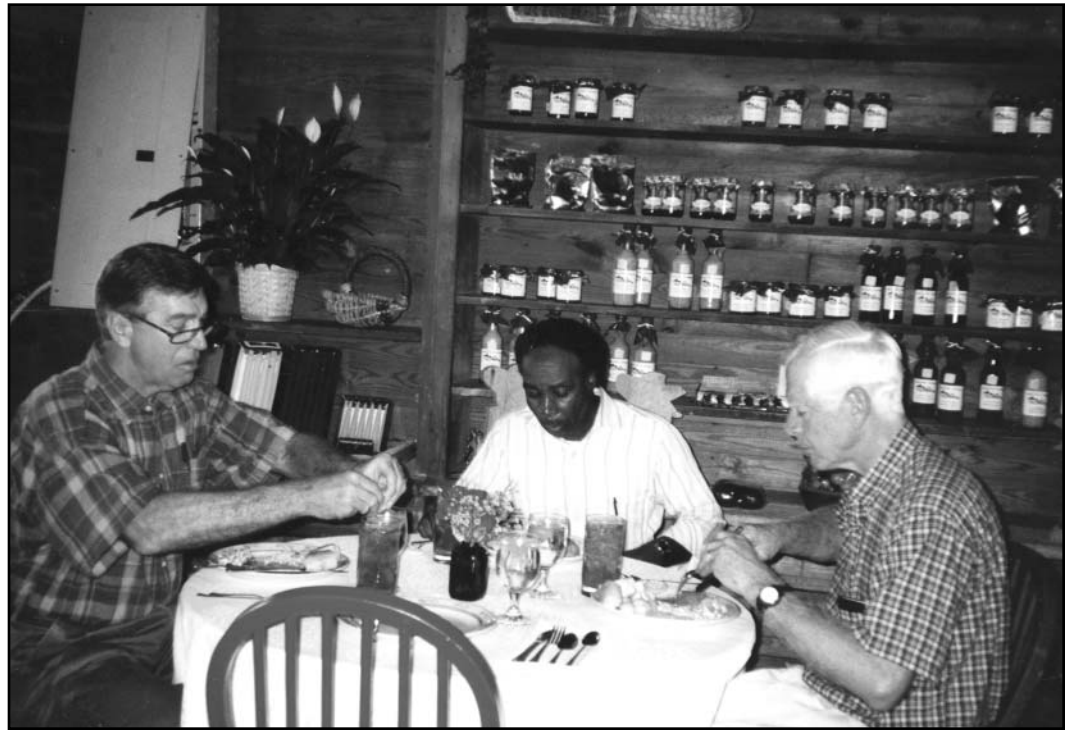
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ANNUAL MEETING

Each year OLCHE has a general meeting for all members. The most recent annual meeting was held at Off Square Books on January 10. The speaker was Todd Sanders, of the Department of Archives and History in Jackson. He gave a most interesting slide presentation on courthouses in Mississippi.



Heritage Foundation members enjoying lunch at the newly refurbished College Hill Store are, from left, Pat Tatum, Lelon Davidson, and Joe Willis.

COLLEGE HILL STORE

One of Lafayette County's treasures is being preserved and restored thanks to the Heritage Foundation and the generous efforts of many lovers of our historical past.

The College Hill Store is well over 100 years old and could its walls talk would tell fascinating stories. It is easy to visualize the leaders of College Hill in the old days gathered around the potbellied stove in the back of the store discussing events of the day and making plans for the future of their community. The store had only a few owners. It was first owned by a Mr. Gillespie and next by the Shaw family, who sold it to Mr. Galloway; upon his death it was run by his daughter, Pearl. "Miss Pearl" was keeping the store open well into the 1980s when her health failed and she went into a nursing home. She sold it to Jimmy and Betty White, and he used it for woodworking and made beautiful furniture there. When Jimmy died, Betty donated the store to Ole Miss and in turn it was given to the Heritage Foundation, which has undertaken the task of preserving it.

Because funds for this purpose were not ample, it was decided to lease the store to someone for a designated length of time rent free if they would restore it. The best offer came from the Durham family, who wanted to use it as a tea room/antique and gift shop. It was a mammoth undertaking to repair and replace and solidify the building while maintaining its charm and originality. Under the leadership of Connie Durham Alford and her sister and brothers, the impossible has been accomplished and the building is ready for use. The grounds have been beautifully landscaped, and a heating and cooling and septic system have been added. Going inside is like taking a step back in time. It is authentic. This project has been a true labor of love for the Durham family and those of us who have known this store for so many years owe them much gratitude.

My mother and father used the store for shopping needs when they were boarding students before World War I at the Lafayette County Agricultural High School adjacent to the store and my mother and Miss Pearl were best friends. The youngest son of the Galloway family, David, and I were classmates in high school and college. He lives in Texas and on a recent visit back to College Hill could not believe the wonderful restoration. Early on Dave made a seed money donation for the preservation of his family's store that held so many childhood memories for him.

Connie Alford says immediate plans for the store include private parties, receptions, and meetings with catering available. And perhaps later on it will be open daily.

This little building is a fine example of an early American country store that sold everything from penny candy to yard goods for a Sunday dress.

MARALYN BULLION

TOBY TUBBY

The Oxford Rotary Club and the Heritage Foundation are jointly conducting a study of Toby Tubby, with plans to install a historical marker. Toby Tubby was a Chickasaw Indian chief in the 19th century. He owned and operated a ferry across the Tallahatchie on the old Oxford-College Hill-Memphis road. He owned a great deal of land, and deeds show that he transferred much of it to early settlers. If readers have any information about Toby Tubby, they are encouraged to share it with Gerald Walton or other members of the Board of Directors.

OXFORD PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Goodloe Lewis, a member of our Heritage Foundation Board, has been appointed chairman of the City of Oxford Preservation Commission. Serving with him are Dale Abadie, Louise Avent, Sarah Davidson, Teresa Flautt, Susie Marshall, Judy Riddell, and Phyllis Yarborough. To them we offer our interest, encouragement, and thanks for their willingness to serve.

Lewis succeeds Bill Gurley, also a member of our Board. We all, members of the Foundation, express sincere appreciation to Gurley for his service to our city in the cause of preservation.

Commission meetings are on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at the City Hall and are open to the public. Our attendance is encouraged. The Preservation Ordinance is on file at the City Hall and also available to the public.

MARY ROSE WILDS

O-LCHF MISSION

The Oxford-Lafayette County Heritage Foundation, a nonprofit membership organization, is dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and stewardship of the Oxford-Lafayette County historic environment, both natural and manmade. This environment includes historic and important buildings, cemeteries, personal property, and other culturally significant sites and byways.

The purpose of the Oxford-Lafayette County Heritage Foundation is to provide

—An open forum for ALL people of the Oxford and Lafayette County community to preserve their region's historic character and quality of life.

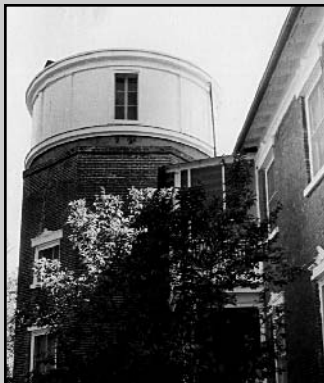
—An organization to facilitate the stewardship and care for the Oxford-Lafayette County historic and important buildings, sites, and personal property.

—Education of the general public to develop support for the preservation of the Oxford-Lafayette County heritage. —Encouragement for the incorporation of historic preservation into city and county planning at all levels. —A voice for preservation and history-related issues in the Oxford-Lafayette County community.

—Sponsorship of public workshops, technical seminars, and programs dealing with relevant, specific city and county preservation issues.

—A volunteer corps to facilitate the creation of historic districts, markers, and National Register nominations for the Oxford-Lafayette County community.

And this is from the first paragraph of our by-laws: "It shall be the purpose of this Foundation to do all in its power to foster, encourage and engage in the preservation, restoration, and development of historic or important buildings, sites and personal property."



Barnard Observatory

EARLY BUILDINGS ON CAMPUS

"The buildings at Ole Miss are now in better condition than they have ever been," a long-time faculty member at the University recently remarked. Indeed, we are fortunate that a combination of federal, state, and private funding has made possible the renovation and restoration of the oldest buildings on the campus. A state appropriation of \$11 million made possible the renovation of the Lyceum, completed in April. The Y Building, or Old Chapel, now houses the Croft International Studies Program; it was renovated recently with funding from the Bancroft Foundation. Barnard Observatory was renovated ten years ago with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities matched by state and private contributions. The renovation of The Old Geology Building (Ventress Hall) was completed three years ago.



The Croft Building



The Lyceum