

Oxford Living

grove memories



The crowds on Game Days have reached 60,000 at times.

Alumnus captures the spirit of UM football, Oxford

BY ALYSSA SCHNUGG
Staff Writer

William H. Morris isn't a professional photographer. He's just a man with a camera and a knack for taking pictures that capture the spirit of his alma mater, the University of Mississippi, Oxford and the people who call it home.

"When people have young children, they tend to take a lot more photographs," Morris said. "I had two daughters and we began to attend the football games at Ole Miss in the mid- to late-1980s and I began to marvel at the scenes around Oxford ... I began to photograph all of that. I'd walk the entire town photographing everyone and everything."

Those 20 years of photographs are what fills Morris' coffee-table book, "Ole Miss at Oxford." The self-published hardcover book contains 300 full-color photographs on 232 pages.

Morris, founder and president of The William Morris Group P.A. in Jackson, attended Ole Miss from 1960-64.

"I realized then that Oxford and Ole Miss would always be a place that is very special in my heart," Morris said.

The Eli years

A native Jacksonian, Morris' only family member who attended Ole Miss was his uncle, Jimmy Love, who would toss silver dollars to anyone in the family who said Ole Miss would win the Sugar Bowl that year.

During his many trips to Oxford in the 1980s and 1990s, Morris found himself with literally thousands of photographs. But when Eli Manning attended Ole Miss and started as the quarterback for the Rebels, Morris' camera became even busier, especially after he promised Eli's parents, Archie and Olivia, he was going to do a picture album of Eli's years at Ole Miss.

"I got busy and every time I'd see them, I would be more embarrassed I hadn't gotten it done," Morris said.

Morris discovered software that would allow him to create more than a photo album; he created a booklet for the Mannings that he presented to them during a fundraising event for the Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children, which Eli supports.

Morris made 10 copies of the book and showed it to some folks at the Lemuria Book Store in Jackson who suggested Morris contact University Press.



Morris



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William H. Morris

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) Coach Johnny Vaught with the 1962 Sugar Bowl trophy and his undefeated teams behind him. Dressing up for Ole Miss games took on a whole new meaning for this fan. Possible future Rebels practice some tosses in the Grove.

Memories: Photos, book show passion for Ole Miss football

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"They told me I should do a book with photos from Oxford and Ole Miss," Morris said. "I worked day and night and took time to find the right printer. I wanted the book to be high quality."

The book was finished in October 2009, a week past his deadline.

"I told my editor if I had to choose between quality and making a deadline, I'd miss the deadline," he said.

Stories behind photos

Many of the photos are of local residents and alumni. Some are of the various football players who have graced Vaught-Hemingway Stadium and many are shots from Game Days during the past 20 years.

"People who buy this book have a lot of passion for Ole Miss," Morris said. "People spend a whole day cherishing the photos which bring memories to people in various ways I never knew about before."

In one of the pictures, there are children in a wagon from about 12 years ago.

"Their aunt came in to a signing one day and bought 11 copies," Morris said.

Another one of his favorite shots is of two young ladies wearing the same dress.

"I thought they were twins," he said. "They looked so much alike."

One of the girls' mother also came to a book signing and told Morris the two girls didn't even know each other but had bumped into each other at the Grove and started talking about their dresses.

"I don't think they were happy about that," Morris said with a chuckle. "Not about me taking the picture, but them wearing the same dress."

The book is on sale at various book stores around Oxford or online at www.heartandsoul-publications.com.

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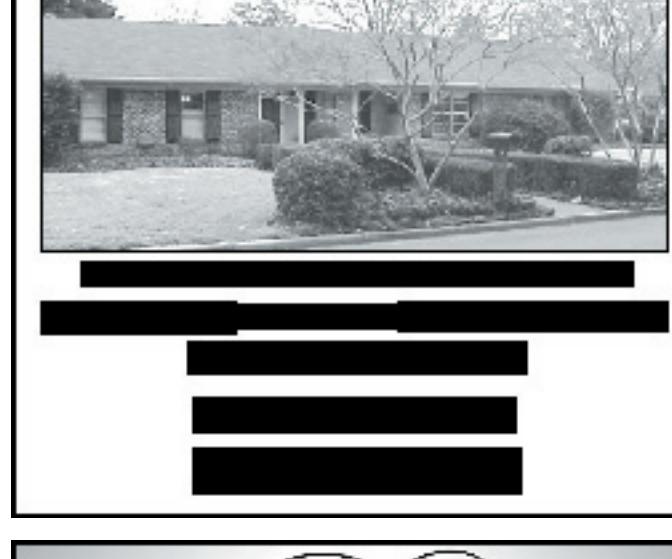
WILLIAM H. MORRIS

Standing room only at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium during a home game.



WILLIAM H. MORRIS

(TOP) This large centerpiece made the Rebels' colors known throughout the Grove. These children's aunt bought 11 books earlier this year. This picture is about 12 years old.

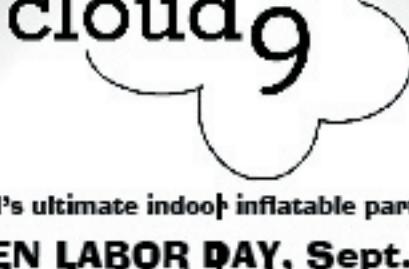


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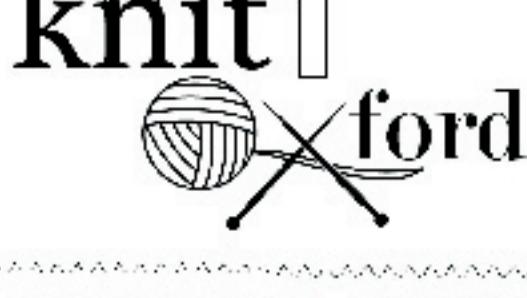
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WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Friday

- 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Exhibit: Teacher and Student: 'Abstract Works of Marie Hull and Andrew Bucci'. University Museum
10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Exhibit: Mitchell Wright: the reconstruction. University Museum
3:30 p.m.
Triplett Alumni Center Re-dedication Ceremony. Reception to follow in Stark Family Garden. Triplett Alumni Center
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Football Friday Music Series: Tate Moore. Stark Family Garden, The Inn at Ole Miss
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
L-O-U Ole Miss Club Kick-Off Event. Chuck Rounsville of the Ole

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