

# Library trail imbues walker with civic pride

By Katherine R. Dougan

One recent Saturday morning, I decided to take a nature walk and learn about Clintonians who have accomplished great things, bringing honor and recognition to our city.

The trail is named the Walk of Honorees, and it winds among the woods encircling Quisenberry Library. The trail was constructed with assistance from the Federal Highway Administration's Recreational Trails Program, which is administered by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and matching funds from the city of Clinton. However, as with many things in our city, Clinton has used the trail not only for recreation, but also to honor our citizens, and installed additional posts from which to mount bronze markers to honor additional citizens.

A bronze plaque honoring **Wyatt Waters** is located at the top of the white gravel trail. A native Clintonian, Wyatt has his gallery at 307 Jefferson Street, where he displays and sells his watercolor paintings and gifts. He is an esteemed and renowned local artist, who is humble and always ready to engage in conversation. His work has been featured in magazines and galleries, and he has collaborated with restaurateur Robert St. John on several books. The duo have a public television show, *Palette and Palate*. Waters was awarded the Mississippi Arts Commission Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 2010.

**James Schlater's** plaque is just around the bend in the trail from Water's plaque. Schlater is a gifted composer, excellent pianist and clarinetist, and award-winning Mississippi College professor. He taught for forty years at MC, mentoring many students and guiding them to successful careers in music. He was inducted into the Mississippi Music Hall of Fame in 2014, and the annu-

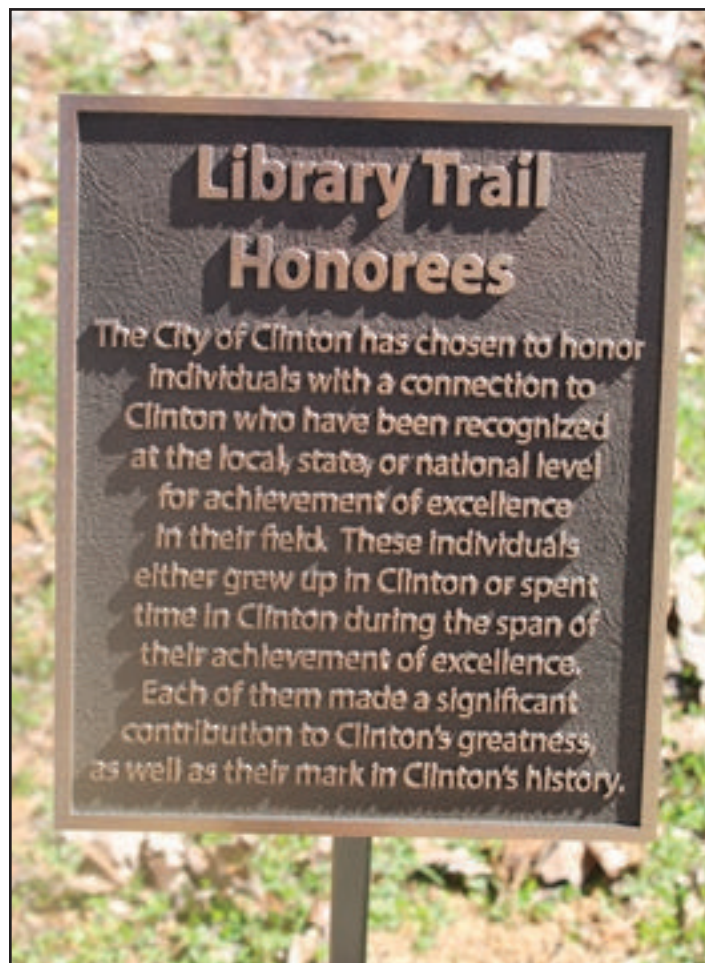


Photo by Doris Bynum

al Schlater Chamber Music Series at MC is named in his honor.

An Olympic athlete named **Larry Myricks** graces the trail. A Clinton native, he was a four-time Mississippi College All American track star, winning the NCAA long jump title in 1976, 1978 and 1979. He won the NCAA 200-meters championship in 1978, setting an NCAA record. In 1979, he won the U.S. National and World Cup long jump titles and was ranked first in the world. In 1988, Myricks won the Olympic bronze medal at the Seoul Olympics and was on the 1976, 1980 and 1984 Olympic teams.

At this point in this story, I must confess that I had a little trouble following the hand-drawn map I

got from the library desk. I followed a trail that went deep into the woods, reasoning that the rocks on the trail were likely white rocks at one time. After walking deeper into the woods, where the sounds of the roadways were muffled, then disappeared, and seeing no markers, I realized I had taken a wrong turn. However, I discovered that there are lots of winding trails on the Quisenberry Library grounds. When I heard a rustling sound and saw something that looked like a snake (it could have been a stick), I high-tailed it back the way I came until I found white rocks on the trail again.

I followed the white rock trail, which brought me nearer the library, and I saw a marker. It was Barry Hannah's marker. I never got to meet Barry; however, I devoured his books and was lucky enough to become friends with Barry's best friend in Clinton, the late Wyatt Newman, who was a delightful man that regaled me with Barry stories. Barry's plaque faces toward the back of the library, towards two dumpsters. That would make Barry laugh, I am sure. He was a renowned writer, who wrote eight novels and five short story collections, and also received a Guggenheim Fellowship and the PEN/Malamud Prize for excellence in short fiction. He taught

creative writing and was the director of the MFA program at Ole Miss. He was very funny and irreverent. Sure wish I had known him.

**Samuel Marshall Gore's** plaque is near Barry Hannah's plaque. Gore, it goes without saying, touched many lives in Clinton. He was an internationally celebrated sculptor, painter, educator and mentor to many artists. He founded the Mississippi College Art Department in the 1950s, where he worked for more than 60 years. His work can be found at the MC Clinton campus and the MC School of Law in downtown Jackson, at the Clinton Visitor Center, and in the Gore Galleries in Clinton.

Just down the trail from Samuel Gore are a couple of World Wrestling Entertainment superstars, a son and his father. **Ted DiBiase Jr.**, who graduated from MC, was a two-time World Tag Team Champion. He starred in the movie, *The Marine 2*. After his wrestling career was over, he became VP of Business Development for One Life America, while also serving in the Heart of David Ministries. He is a certified life coach and leadership trainer, and he loves Jesus with all his heart.

An odd observation from me: The bowling pin atop Indian Lanes in Clinton is visible through the trees just beyond Ted DiBiase Junior's plaque.

It is apparent from **Ted DiBiase, Sr.'s** plaque that the wrestling "apple" didn't fall far from the tree. Ted Sr. was best known for his role as the villainous "Million Dollar Man" of the World Wrestling Federation. Ted Sr. has wrestled in some of the largest venues in the world, including Madison Square Garden, The Superdome, The Skydome, The Tokyo Dome and Wembley Stadium. After retiring from wrestling, he wrote a book about his life titled, *Every Man Has His Price*. He later became a full-time evangelist and motivational speaker.



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