

Big 40 Ft. Roadside Sign (Hwy. 33, South of Tazewell)



Sign on Highway 33, Tazewell, Tennessee, near New Hope exit.

The huge sign shines like a beacon on a beautiful hillside on Hwy. 33 heading south from Tazewell, Tn. toward Knoxville, Tn. This particular sign is made up of four panels, each 10' long and 4' high. The letters measure 3' high. The words painted on ribbed aluminum are: "GET RIGHT WITH GOD." These letters are painted black on a white background. The sign is nailed to a wooden frame that is on the back side of the sign.

This sign is located along a stretch of the old Hwy. 33 that has now been widened. The sign can be seen from the newly widened highway. This sign is off the main highway, so one must exit on the New Hope Exit. After the New Hope exit, then bear to the right and the sign is in good view. Daddy Mayes knew just "where" and "how" to put up his special signs throughout the United States.

I must tell you a secret about the big sign below Tazewell. It was put up about 1978. Clyde, Harrison's youngest son, helped Daddy Mayes put up this sign. As Daddy Mayes would say many times, "You've got the wheels," meaning Clyde could do the driving; Harrison could do anything else that had to be done to get those signs erected. Now, to my secret! There was a very small personal sign attached to the big sign. It was not noticed from the highway. Daddy Mayes used a thin white aluminum cross that measured 12" long and 9" across the arm of the cross to write out his personal message. In his personal message he was paying a "touching tribute

and honor" to his grandparents. The small cross was nailed to a thick wooden square that measured 12"x12". These words were printed in green.



Grandparents' honor sign attached to post of the highway sign (sign has been preserved by Clyde)

Our grandparents
Grandfather Johnson Mayes
Born: Apr. 21,1817
Died: Apr. 22,1900
Grandmother Born Feb. 22, 1814
Died Sept. 20, 1887
This sign in honor of you two.

With the years of weathering the small sign was beginning to deteriorate. As Clyde and I were out doing our "scouting" and "picture taking," we walked up to the big aluminum sign again. Clyde noticed the bad condition of the little attached sign and decided to remove it before it fell off. We have the small sign in our collection and will give it very good care. For family history's sake, it is something to always treasure. Sure, it's just a little bit of metal and wood, but the feeling he must have felt as he nailed the tiny cross to the huge 40' long sign. How wonderful that he thought of that - now, it can be passed on to his younger family.

The big aluminum sign is in excellent condition, according to Clyde who has a very good eye for things like that.

This large roadside sign (40 ft.) is the last sign that Harrison erected. With failing health and much determination, he climbed around on that hillside giving directions and setting the poles in just the right way so it would be strong. He wanted to put this particular sign as close to his "old homeplace" and near a state highway. He was given permission to put this sign up by a friend, Max Cupp, now deceased. They planned this sign - just right!

A Coal Miner's Simple Message



The smile of a satisfied man.

Photo 1952

Henry Harrison Mayes (1898-1986) Middlesboro, Kentucky, devoted his life to making and erecting many thousands of religious signs. A variety of his wonderful signs were placed coast to coast in the United States, foreign nations and major waterways.

by Catherine Mayes

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