

MONTEVALLO Main Street *Memories*

Red Mahan's Barber Shop

by Clay Nordan – Montevallo Historical Society



Stanley M. “Red” Mahan opened his barber and beauty shop in 1927 in the space next door to Mrs. Watson’s Strand Theatre. Red’s wife Ethel operated the beauty shop in the back of the building and the barber shop was in the front. In the late 1920’s and early 1930’s, the women’s “bob” hairstyle was all the rage, so Red started calling his business “Red’s Bobber & Beauty Shoppe.” The ad you see here for the Bobber Shoppe is from a 1930 edition of the *Alabamian*, the Alabama College campus news magazine.

For a number of years a sturdy wooden bench on the sidewalk under the awning gave a group of elderly gentlemen a shady place to gather each day to escape their own households and enjoy each other’s company.



Red Mahan's Barber Shop looking good after a fresh coat of brick red paint in the early 1960's.

We Make Loveliness Lovelier Red's Bobber & Beauty Shoppe

EXPERT IN ALL LINES OF BEAUTY
CULTURE

Phone 110

Montevallo, Ala.

Red was active in the early days of the Montevallo Volunteer Fire Department and also served on the City Council. In the days when the town had police coverage only during the daytime, a hired “nightwatchman” would position himself either on the bench or in Red’s padded barber chair in the shop with the lights out and spend the night monitoring any kind of breach of the peace that might arise in town before dawn. From this vantage point, the watchman had a nearly complete view of everything going on up and down Main Street.

As a young man Red developed a reputation for being quite a dancer and he was also well-known locally as a gifted square-dance caller. His shop on Main Street was a Montevallo institution for nearly 50 years.

**Veterans Wreaths will be laid this year at Montevallo City Cemetery on December 14, 2024.
Order your wreaths now for \$17 each at WWW.HISTORICMONTEVALLO.ORG**

Montevallo
Historical Society

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MONTEVALLO MAIN STREET MEMORIES is adapted from the series, **THROWBACK THURSDAY**, a **Montevallo Historical Society** and **Montevallo Main Street** partnership started in 2018. Each installment revisits commercial and residential life on Main Street and in the downtown area in the early to mid-twentieth century. The series remains available online and may be viewed at www.historicmontevallo.org under “Local History”.