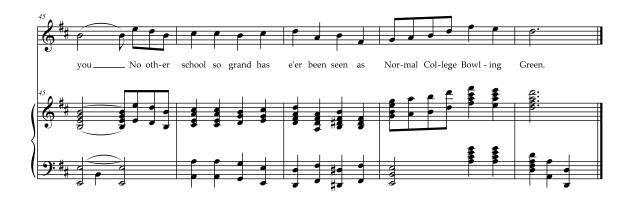
Songs of BGSU Alma Maters

1915 Ernest Hesser composed the first "School Song" We hail you, Dear Normal College. It served as the Alma Mater from 1915 to 1934. The dedication reads: "To Our First and Honored President Homer B. Williams." The word Normal was dropped in 1929 when the Normal College became Bowling Green State College, but it not clear how it was done or what replaced it.



Center for Archival Collections, pUA 0795 f.





1927 *College Hymn*. Words and Music by Mr. and Mrs. W.C. Jordan. This does not seem to have been an alma mater, although it certainly is in the style of one.

College Hymn

Words and Music by Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Jordan

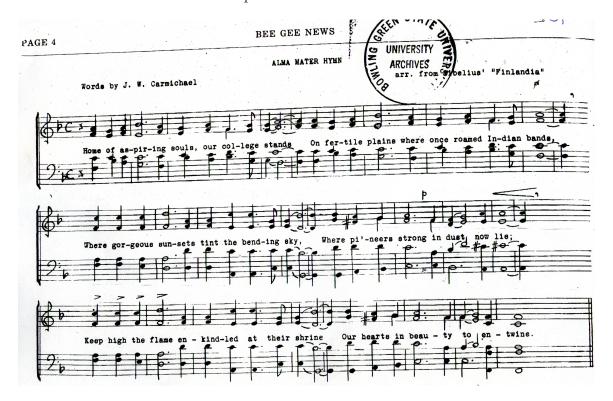


We hail thee for such spirit bright That keeps our hearts aglow; We love thee for real helpfulness—A guide as storm-winds blow. We honor thee—so firm for right, Not popularity.

Yea, for ideals that touch the sky, We almost worship thee. Then, as our thoughts return again To thee, through mist of years, We'll ne'er forget our college days, Their pleasures and their tears. And as we near life's journey's end With mind still young and keen, We'll pray for heaven's blessings on Our College—Bowling Green.

Copyright, 1927, by Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Jordan

In 1934, We Hail Thee, was replaced by the Alma Mater Hymn Home of Aspiring Souls, with words by J. W. Carmichael; the music is that of Finlandia.² It was intended at the outset to replace the original alma mater. Beginning with this piece, the composition of the music to the Alma Mater fell out of the hands of the music faculty. Composition of the alma mater became a matter of a competition in the 1950s



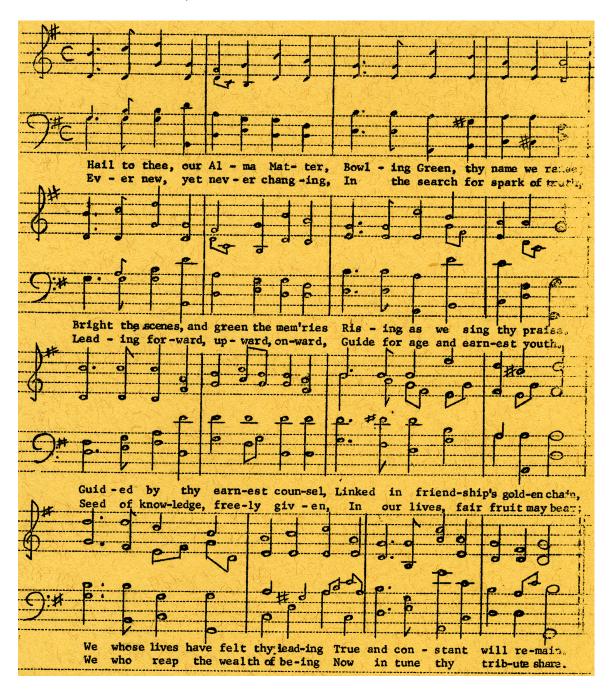
1950s—The Alma Mater Contest

In anticipation of the 50th anniversary of the University, a contest was held between 1955 and 1959 to provide a new alma mater. The contest was open to alumni; no music faculty member appears to have participated. There were five submissions, one for each year. All of the following material is part of the Center for Archival Collections.

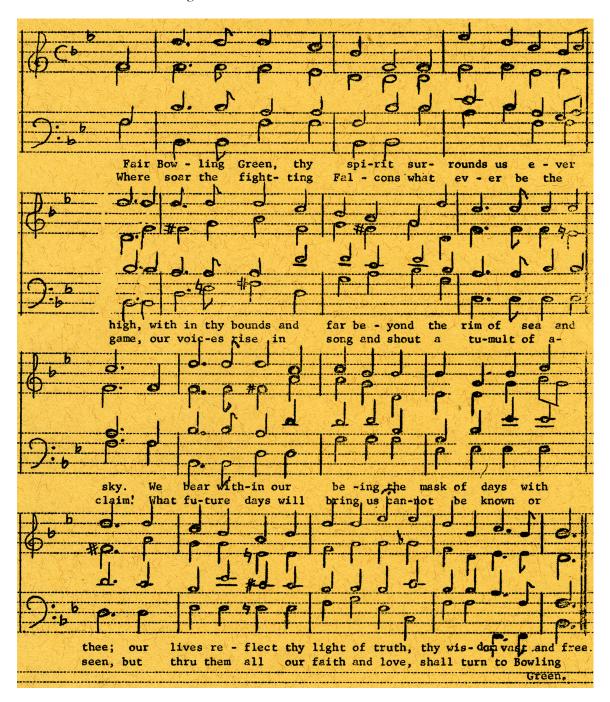
² BG News 10/31/1934.

The Submissions

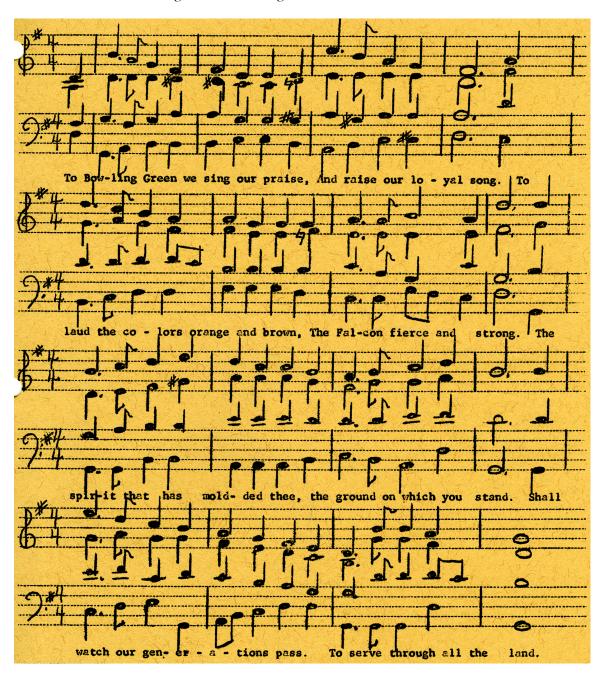
1955—Hail to thee, our Alma Mater





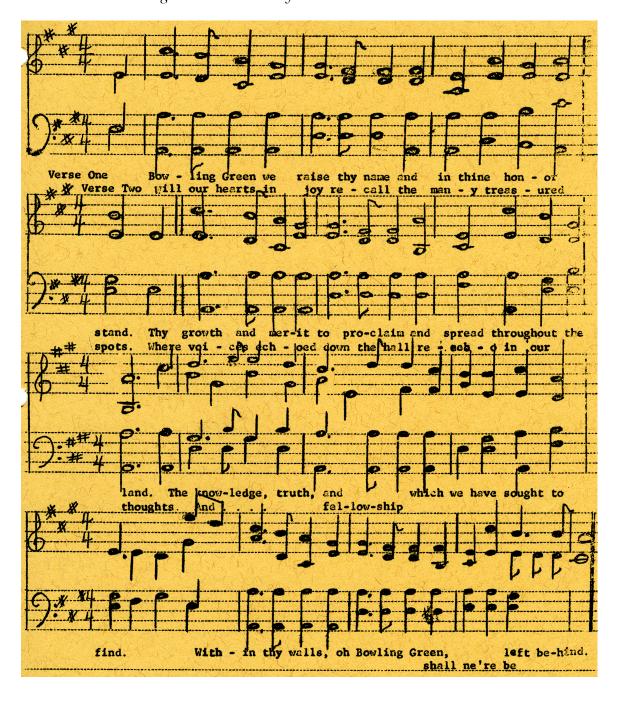


1958—To Bowling Green We Sing Our Praises





1959—Bowling Green we raise thy name



The Deliberations

A 30-member committee was given the task of selecting the winner, and the record of its deliberations still exists in the Archives, along with someone's marginal notes.

ALMA MATER - 1755

Hail to thee, our Alma Mater, Bowling Green, thy name e raise; Bright the scenes and green the mem'ries Rising as we sing thy praise. Guided by thy earnest counsel, Linked in friendship's golden chain, We whose lives have felt thy leading, True and consent will remain.

Ever new, yet never changing, In the search for spark of truth, Leading forward, upward, onward, Guide for age and earnest youth. Seed of knowledge, freely given, In our lives, fair fruit may bear; We who reap the wealth of being, Now in tune thy tribute share.

ALMA MATER - (1956)

Alma Mater, hear us, As we praise thy name, Make us worthy sons and daughters, Adding to thy fame.

CHORUS:

From your halls of ivy, To the campus scene, Chimes ring out with gladness, For our dear Bowling Green When all is just a mem'ry, Of the bygone days, Hear our hymn dear Alma Mater, As thy name we praise.

VERSE 2:

Time will treat you kindly, Years from now you'll be be been dearer in our hearts, our University.

ALMA MATER - 1957

Fair Bowling Green, the spirit surrounds us ever high, With in the bounds and far beyond the rim of sea and sky. We bear within our being the mask of days with thee; Our lives reflect the light of truth, the wisdom wast and free.

Where soar the fighting Falcone what ever be the game, Our voices rise in song and shout a tumult of aclaim! What future days will bring us cannot be known or seen, But thru them all our faith and love, shall turn to Bowling Green.

ALMA MATER - 1958

To Bowling Green we sing our praise, And raise our loyal song, To laud the colors orange and brown, The Falcon fierce and strong. The spirit that has molded thee, The ground on which you stand. Shall watch our generations pass, To serve through all the land.

CHORUS:

Bowling Green our Bowling Green, Oh may thy Falcon soar. To guide thee and defend thee, For now and ever more.

carrider Best

Denon Mar. Deleg 55

Winner

ALMA MATER - 1959

Bowling Green we raise thy name and in thine konor stand.

Thy growth and merit to proclaim and spread throughout the land.

The knowledge, truth, and fellowship which we have sought to find,

Within thy walls, Oh Bowling Green, shall ne're be left behind.

Long will our hearts in joy recall the many treasured spots, Where voices echoed down the hall re-echo in our thoughts. And knowledge, truth, and fellowship which we have sought to find, Within thy walls, Oh Bowling Green, shall ne're be left behind.

PRESENT ALMA MATER

Home of aspiring souls, our college stands
On fertile plains where once roamed Indian bands,
Where gorgeous sunsets tint the bending sky,
Where pioneers strong in dust now lie.
Keep high the flame enkindled at their shrine,
Our hearts in beauty to entwine.

Sing we thy praise, our Alma Mater true;
Anthems we raise, our pledge of faith renew,
Thy Brown and Gold unfurling to the sky
Flames forth thy name, thy fame ne'er to die.
Hail! Bowling Green! Thy sons shall ever love thee.
Thy glory, hail! All honor to thee.

Tollet.

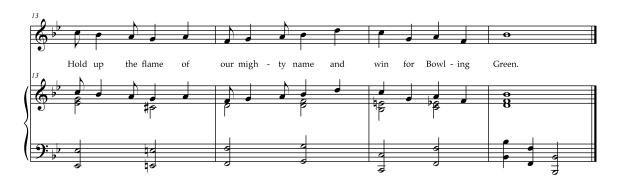
It shows that submissions from 1955, 1957, and 1959 were eliminated by general agreement, and that the contest was really between submissions from 1956 and 1958. The directive at the end, "Do by ballot," shows that the decision could not be reached by consensus. The result of the ballot was that the 1956 submission by Edith M. Ludwig (B.A., B.S. in Ed., 1951) was "publicly presented as The Alma Mater of Bowling Green State at the Golden Anniversary Convocation, May 19, 1960."

Fight Songs

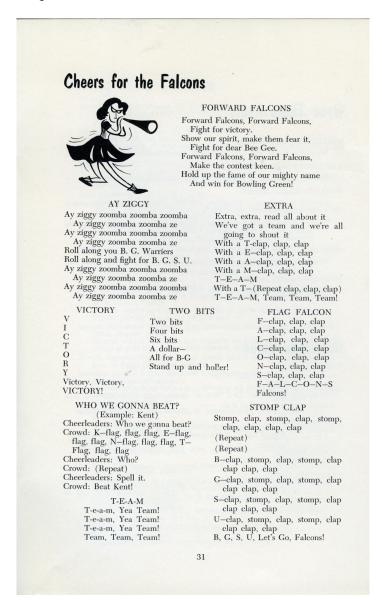
- 1946—Ay Ziggy Zoomba was the unofficial fight song of the athletic teams. In 1946, Gilbert Fox, a WWII Army Air Corps Bombardier who served in Italy, brought back to Bowling Green his interpretation of a Zulu chant. The piece is still familiar to Bowling Green audiences. CD BGSU 68495
- 1949—Forward Falcons. Wayne Bohrnstedt. In 1949, the newly hired Wayne Bohrnstedt was asked if he could provide a fight song for the institution. The result was Forward Falcons.³



³ Bohrnstedt's autograph piano/vocal score is in the Center for Archival Collections pUA 1902.



The texts to both pieces were included in a list of fight songs and cheerleader chants published in the BG News in 1958.



2010—Sounds of the Centennial. Ryan Nowlin (2000; 2004). Winner of BGSU Centennial Fanfare Competition.