

Howard House's first memory of Arkansas is a license plate he read in Kentucky. The license plate proclaimed Arkansas as "The Land of Opportunity," and "I wish it were still on our license plate because I believe it is still a land of opportunity," he said.

A U.S. Navy Air Corps veteran of World War II, House received an L.L.B. degree from Cumberland School of Law at Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee. House saw the "Land of Opportunity" as just that – a place for him to make a life for himself and his family. Thus, in 1953 they moved to Batesville, Arkansas from Kentucky in order to establish a mining facility to process and sell manganese to the U.S. Government Strategic Materials Stockpile Program.

Two years later his brother joined him and they entered into the construction business. The company expanded into highway construction in 1968 and introduced the hot mix asphalt industry to the Batesville area. They also established reliable concrete and stone aggregate production facilities.

The brothers' business was comprised of several different corporations including White River Bituminous in Batesville, White River Materials in Batesville, Atlas Asphalt in Jonesboro, Searcy Asphalt and Materials and Wynne Asphalt. The locations enabled their organizations to be successful acquiring both state and private contracts in northeast and north central Arkansas that were important to the area's progress. These projects included the four lane projects on Highway 167 between Bald Knob and Batesville that were deemed vital to Independence and surrounding counties and the widening of Highway 167 and Highway 69 through Batesville were important steps in maintaining the progressive nature of the city.

The approaches to the new White River Bridge were constructed by White River Materials in the late 1970's and replaced the "old viaduct" that was not only a bottleneck for traffic, but a real safety issue as well. Additionally, there were numerous maintenance projects that included numerous overlays through the years that were completed by White River Bituminous.

House has provided numerous opportunities for others in Batesville in addition to the numerous construction projects that House was involved with over the years and providing opportunities for others is the achievement for which he derives the most satisfaction. He remembers what it was like to struggle to create and maintain a new business. From his own humble beginnings, he has identified with many young people in the Batesville area and he has given assistance to them in many forms. Without a doubt, many businesses in Batesville trace their beginnings to him and they have learned from him the lesson that hard work and sacrifice breed success.

Mr. House's friendship with the late J.K. Southerland enabled the City of Batesville to construct, on a limited budget, one of Arkansas' first public golf facilities. His leadership was also instrumental in developing the baseball facility at Lyon College as well as the dirt track at Locust Grove that provided a springboard for professional racers Mark Martin, Billy Moyer and Wendall Wallace. The acquisition by White River Bituminous

of several hundred acres of land in the vicinity of Lock and Dam 1 enabled the company to donate to the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission a public boat launch facility along the White River. House has also worn several “civic” hats including serving as a director of the Arkansas Chapter of the Associated General Contractors and the Batesville Area Chamber of Commerce.

House’s interest in aviation and love of flying made him a lifelong supporter of the Batesville Regional Airport. A former chairman of the Batesville Airport Commission, the airport has become recognized as a premiere facility designed to accommodate corporate aircraft. This is a very important component of economic development of Independence County and the surrounding area. His love for aviation also led him to be a governor appointee and former vice chairman of the Arkansas Aerospace Commission.

Mr. House sees opportunities in Batesville as well as in Arkansas. As a result of his success at seizing these opportunities he was awarded the 2000 Community Development Award in recognition of the betterment, enhancement and development of Batesville.

After retiring from the construction business, he and his partners were instrumental in developing the Oaks II theatre complex, Eagle Mountain Properties, Eagle Mountain Shopping Center and an 18-hole championship golf course on 500 acres at Eagle Mountain.

House attends First United Methodist Church in Batesville. He has two daughters, Penny and Dianne, four grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.