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 is not clear how it was done or what replaced it.

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*Center for Archival Collections, pUA 0795 f.*
fame is the whole world o'er Rah! Rah! So shouting defiance. We have re-
see them break up that line, Rah! Rah! A touchdown we're making. Their men are

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li-ance, winning a great big score. Rah! Rah! Dear Alma Mater staunch and
shaking, Or-ange and Brown float high Rah! Rah!

true we pledge out heart and hand for you. Our loyalty to you we're deeding. And

here's to you al-ways lead-ing. Dear Alma Mater staunch and true we pledge our heart and hand for
you—— No oth-er school so grand has e'er been seen as Nor-mal Col-lege Bowl-ing Green.
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

To thee, Our College—Bowling Green, we lift our hearts in praise.

The name that thrills our very souls, that gladdens college days:

To thee, Oh Alma Mater, dear, we pledge true loyalty.

Our preparation—our success—we trust it all to thee.

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
1934  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*. 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.

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*BG News 10/31/1934.*
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater, Bowling Green, thy name we revere; Ever new, yet never changing, in the search for spark of virtue.

Bright the scenes, and green the memories Raising as we sing thy praise; Leading forward, upward, onward, Guide for age and earnest youth.

Guided by thy earnest counsel, Linked in friendship's golden chain, Seed of knowledge, freely given, In our lives, fair fruit may bear.

We whose lives have felt thy leading True and constant will remain, We who reap the wealth of being Now in tune thy tribute share.
1956—Alma Mater, hear us

Words and Music by
Edith M. Ludwig, B.A., B.S. in Ed., '51
(Mrs. Herbert Bell)
1957—Fair Bowling Green

Fair Bowling Green, thy spirit surrounds us ever
Where soar the fighting Falcons what ever be the

high, with in thy bounds and far beyond the rim of sea and
game, our voices rise in song and shout a tumult of a-

sky. We bear within our being the mask of days with
claim! What future days will bring us cannot be known or

thee; our lives reflect thy light of truth, thy wisdom vast and free
seen, but thru them all our faith and love, shall turn to Bowling
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.
Bou-ling Green, Bou-ling Green, Oh may thy Fal-con soon. To

guide thee and de-fend thee for now and ev-er more.
1959—Bowling Green we raise thy name

Verse One Bowling Green we raise thy name and in thine honor

Verse Two 'Til our hearts, in joy recall the many treasured

stand. Thy growth and merit to proclaim and spread throughout the
spots, where vol - on ch - oad down the hall re - sk - o in our

land. The knowledge, truth, and which we have sought to
thoughts, and . . . fellowship

find. With - in thy walls, oh Bowling Green, left be - hind.
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.
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.

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.