

WHEELHOUSE

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The restaurant stands on what was known as “the Donaldson Block,” as the block was owned by leading Opp businessman M.E. Donaldson. On November 8, 1923, M.E. started building the Donaldson Hotel, where the restaurant currently resides. It was built by T.P. Winston, owner of Opp Building Supply, who was a 3-term mayor of Opp and who also built First Methodist Church, First Baptist Church, the original Church of Christ, as well as the Dean’s Pharmacy Building.

According to local newspapers and historical documents, there is no date on when the Donaldson Hotel opened, but on January 31, 1924 Opp Weekly had a headline “NEW DONALDSON HOTEL OVERFLOWING”, “45 Register Tuesday Night” and how customers were being turned away, as the 30 bedroom hotel was full every night.

The Donaldson Hotel also housed Opp’s first beauty parlor and was the site for the South Alabama Dental Association meetings which included several banquets and even an orchestra and gained fame for serving 4 course dinners.

Sadly, on December 30, 1930, fire destroyed the Donaldson Block, which included the Hotel Barber Shop, Bowling Alley, Ward Hardware and Finley & Company Warehouse. No guests were in the hotel as it had been closed recently.

Several months later M.E. Donaldson received a contract to build Opp’s new Post Office in place of where the Donaldson Hotel stood. It was completed on July 1, 1931 according to Opp Postmaster A.R. Woodham, who was Palmer and Davis Nelson’s Grandfather, which is who the Wheelhouse purchased the building from.

On May 19, 1932 the Scofield Bakery was purchased by R.A. McLean and was moved into the Donaldson Building beside the post office where the former Spuds Café was located. J.D. Scofield was the former owner of the bakery and remained as manager and later relocated the bakery to Main Street.

Eventually in 1940 the post office and shops were relocated to make room for the peanut butter plant owned by Paulk Products Inc and the announcement was made by I.J. King who was the plant manager and H.B. Paulk, of Paulk grocery Company would head the company and began operation on June 3, 1940.

A few years later, on April 17, 1943, Paulk Products sold to Blue Plate Foods, Inc and Blue Plate moved its Mississippi Peanut Butter Plant to Opp, which doubled the capacity of Opp and occupied the entire Donaldson Building.

Fast forward to April 17, 2019, exactly 76 years when the two childhood

friends, Merrill Culverhouse and Jon Gibson came up with a concept and started discussing the layout, menu and name.

Culverhouse had the original idea back in his college days and always wanting to open a restaurant, but the dream started to take shape in 2017 when Opp’s Mayor Becky Bracke held a town hall type meeting of concerned citizens about ways to improve Opp and get it back on track for a prosperous future. Culverhouse left the meeting he felt like it was time for him to act. He discussed the idea with his wife Susan and after considerable debate, she agreed, but under one condition. That’s only if Chef Jon Gibson would agree to partner up with them. He contacted Chef Jon and after several months of discussions, Chef Jon agreed to come on board.

“Two Coats, One Vision”

While each wears a different “style” of coat, they each have vision. Culverhouse wears a pharmacist lab coat and Gibson wears a Chef coat.

Culverhouse and Jon grew up in the same neighborhood, went to church and school together and he is an accomplished Chef. Gibson brings with him years of culinary experience from all parts of the United States and Europe and has the credentials and celebrity status to attract patrons from all over the United States.

After of few weeks of trying to agree on a name, they finally agreed upon “Wheelhouse”. Why “Wheelhouse”? Gibson came up with three reasons for the name. Opp was founded because of the railroad and “wheelhouse” in railroad terms means a device which allows train cars or wagons to turn around or switch tracks...which is the focus of Opp’s administration and the DRA (Downtown Redevelopment Authority) to turn Opp around and make it a better place to live, work, play and raise a family. Then Gibson’s several years of preparing seafood and fishing on the east, west and Gulf coast. Wheelhouse meaning part of the boat serving as shelter for the person at the wheel. Finally, wheelhouse referring to a batter’s strike zone most likely to produce a homerun.

With the opening of “Wheelhouse”, Culverhouse and Gibson want to offer an option to keep Opp residents dining in Opp, but also attract people from surrounding areas and making Opp a location destination.

Wheelhouse Mission Statement: To be one of South Alabama’s restaurants of choice for our guests and to be the employer of choice for employees. We want to share in the benefits we receive by giving back to our local community and people.

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SPECIALTY DRINK

BLOOD ORANGE MARGARITA - \$12

Two Fingers Tequila/Triple Sec/Blood Orange
Puree/Lime Juice

STRAWBERRY MOJITO - \$11

Captain Morgan White Rum/Strawberry Puree/
Lime Juice/Honey/Fresh Mint/Club Soda/
Sugar Stick

MOONSHINE MULE - \$11

Ole Smokey Moonshine/Ginger Beer/Lime
Juice

FUZZY PEACH SOUR - \$10

Kentucky Whiskey/Peach Puree/Lemon Juice/
Peach Liqueur/Sweet & Sour

WHISKEY-RITA - \$9

Kentucky Whiskey/Lime Juice/Honey/Sweet &
Sour

KEYS RATTLESNAKE JUICE - \$12

Blue Chair Bay Coconut Rum/Blue Curacao/
New Amsterdam Gin/New Amsterdam Vodka/
Pineapple Juice/Orange Juice/Sprite

SKI-DADDLE - \$9

Apple Pucker/New Amsterdam Vodka/Ama-
retto/Strawberry Puree/Cherry Juice/Lemon
Juice/Lime Juice/Orange Juice

BOURBON SMASH - \$10

Early Times/Raspberry Jam/Lemon Juice/
Splash of Soda

STRAWBERRY LIMEADE COLLINS - \$11

New Amsterdam Gin/Strawberry Puree/Lime
Juice/Lemon Juice/Sprite

PINK STARBURST PUNCH - \$10

Captain Morgan White Rum/Lemon Juice/
Strawberry Puree/Muddled Lemons/Pineapple
Juice

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REDS

	GLASS	BOTTLE
2018 The Federalist, Honest Red Blend (North Coast) - California	Bottle Only	\$59
Full bodied blend of Merlot and Zinfandel that is spicy, smooth and oaky with influences of ripe raspberry and cherry. Notes of maple and brown sugar with an aroma of bourbon.		
2018 Educated Guess, Cabernet Sauvignon (North Coast) - California	\$12	\$50
Deep and dark tones of blackberry and black cherry gives this wine a good concentration of color, flavor with light tannins with a thick texture.		
2016 Seven Falls, Merlot - Washington	\$8	\$45
Complex and layered with black cherry, black currant, and herbs. This is a juicy full bodied wine with subtle hints of cocoa and softer tannins which enhance flavors of any food.		
2018 Chateau Souverain, Cabernet Sauvignon - California	\$7	\$34
This wine exudes jammy aromas and soft tannins that boost rich berry and fruit flavors. This is a perfect house wine because of how straightforward it drinks.		
2017 Cline Ancient Vines, Zinfandel - California	\$8	\$39
Spicy bright strawberry, coffee, and chocolate character. Ripe fruit and soft tannins make this a rich vintage. Aged in new and used oak brings out a subtle vanilla quality.		
2019 Firesteed, Willamette Valley, Pinot Noir - Oregon	\$7	\$34
Aroma of red cherries and chocolate with some hints of maple syrup, gives this wine a bright acidity and very pronounced red cherry, strawberry on the nose.		

WHITES

	GLASS	BOTTLE
2017 Landmark Vineyards, Chardonnay Overlook - Californi	Bottle Only	\$68
Full bodied wine with hints of ripe lemon, peach, butterscotch and salted caramel. The finish has an attractive mineral texture with tropical fruit notes.		
2019 Sileni Estates, Sauvignon Blanc Straits Reserve - New Zealand	\$7	\$34
Strong aromas of grapefruit and tropical fruit with a lively freshness that lends to this well balanced wine that will go excellent with grilled fish or soft cheese.		
2019 Benvolio, Pinot Grigio Italy	\$7	\$34
This is a dry, low acidic wine that showcases flavors of honeysuckle, citrus, pear and almond. This wine Paris very well with grilled pork, chicken or any seafood dish.		
2019 St. Urbans-HOF, Riesling "Nik Weis Selection" Germany	\$7	\$34
A fresh wine with great acidity for food pairing from anything off the grill, to spicy foods. Aromas of raspberry and strawberry jam makes this the ultimate wine for any occasion.		
2019 A to Z, Chardonnay Oregon	\$9	\$34
Aromas of lemon, lime zest, peach and melon. Hints of green apple and citrus fruits. Rich and balanced with a grapefruit pith note, along with minerality that carries through to finish.		

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SPARKLING / ROSE / PORT

	GLASS	BOTTLE
2020 Mercat, Cava Brut Camino Calixo - Spain Complex aromas of pear and brioche with zesty minerality. Hints of stone fruit like apricots and nectarine with a structure of acidity that makes the perfect Mimosa.	\$6	\$29
2018 Copain, Rosé "Tous Ensemble" - California Gorgeous pale salmon color that leaps out of the glass with a delicate bouquet of white flowers and crisp red fruits. Flavors of honeydew and fresh wild strawberries with light acidity.	\$9	\$44
2017 Quinta do Portal, Fine Ruby Port - Portugal This dark purple wine has incredible fruit intensity. Aged for three years in large wooden vats this wine exudes dark plum, cherry and black currant that pairs well with cheese or chocolate.	\$9	Glass Only

BEER

BOTTLE

Bud Light - \$4.50	ABV 4.2% - IBU 6
Coors Light - \$4.00	ABV 4.2% - IBU 10
Miller Light - \$4.00	ABV 4.2% - IBU 10
Michelob Ultra - \$5.00	ABV 4.2% - IBU 10
Yuengling - \$4.50	ABV 4.4% - IBU 16
Estrella Jalisco - \$5.50	ABV 4.5% - IBU 16
Modelo Especial - \$5.50	ABV 4.5% - IBU 18
Shiner Bock - \$5.50	ABV 4.4% - IBU 13
Guinness Extra Stout - \$5.50	ABV 7.5% - IBU 47

TAP

Kona Longboard Ale - \$7.50	ABV 4.6% - IBU 20
Goat Island Blood Orange - \$8.00	ABV 5.5% - IBU 5
Oyster City Hooter Brown - \$8.50	ABV 8.5% - IBU N/A
Folklore Grateful Red - \$7.50	ABV 6.0% - IBU 18

CRAFT IN CAN

(Ask your Server for selections)



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NON-ALCOHOLIC

Coke - \$2.50

Diet Coke - \$2.50

Coke Zero - \$2.50

Dr. Pepper - \$2.50

Diet Dr. Pepper - \$2.50

Sprite - \$2.50

Lemonade - \$2.50

Powerade - \$2.50

Sweet/Unsweet Tea - \$2.50

Hot Tea - \$2.95

Dublin Root Beer Bottle - \$2.95

Buffalo Rock Ginger Ale Can - \$2.75

San Pellegrino Sparkling Water - \$5

Acqua Panna Still Water - \$5

