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FOR RELEASE December 10, 2008

**Ridgeland Dedicates Historical Markers for Old Agency Road
*Portrayal of Feud between Andrew Jackson and Silas Dinsmoor Featured***

Ridgeland, Miss. – Historical markers for Old Agency Road in Ridgeland, Mississippi were unveiled on December 10 in a public dedication ceremony attended by local and state elected officials, residents of Old Agency Road, City of Ridgeland staff and many others. City of Ridgeland staff placed an order for two historical markers through the Mississippi Department of Archives and History who ensures the historic accuracy of the marker text and maintains consistent design of markers throughout the State of Mississippi. The attractive and durable signs have a magnolia at the top signifying the Mississippi State Flower.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places as well as being designated as a Mississippi Landmark, Old Agency Road is a portion of the Old Natchez Trace pathway system linking Nashville to Natchez. Significant to national transportation, exploration and settlement as early as 1750, the Natchez Trace was also used by Native Americans before recorded history.

The Choctaw Indian Agency was located along this section of the roadway. Silas Dinsmoor served as the Choctaw Agent in the Mississippi Territory from 1807 until the 1820s. This road was frequently traveled by Andrew Jackson in the early 1800s prior to his Presidency. A quarrel is recorded to have taken place between Dinsmoor and Jackson on Old Agency Road in front of the Choctaw Agency.

Center Players Community Theatre wrote, directed and performed a play for the event, *Dinsmoor's Last Stand*, written by Katrina Byrd. Under the direction of Dianne Brown, the play was performed by the following actors: John Read as Andrew Jackson, J.C. Patterson as Silas Dinsmoor, Brent Hearn as Deputy Warren, B.J. Johnston as Harrison, James Wood as Robert Green and Jeff Murphy as George. The Center Players performed the play near the spot where the recorded altercation took place approximately 200 years ago.

The historic markers are installed at two locations on either end of Old Agency Road. One is placed near Livingston Road and one is placed near Highland Colony Parkway. The ceremony participants met at St. Andrew's Episcopal School campus for the play and the dedication of the markers.

The Old Agency historical markers read: *Named for the Choctaw Indian Agency once located in this area, Old Agency Road is a portion of the original road system that formed the old Natchez Trace. Its sunken roadbed and high earthen banks are evocative of the narrow road that linked Natchez to Nashville during the early days of our nation. Once traveled by many early Americans, including such notables as Andrew Jackson, Old Agency Road is listed as a Mississippi Landmark and in the National Register of Historic Places.* Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 2008

"The City is pleased to provide historical markers for the residents of Ridgeland. It is important to be reminded every day of the wonderful history of this road and the part it played in Ridgeland's beginning," said Mayor Gene McGee. Several residents of Ridgeland who live on or near Old Agency Road have been advocates for the historical designation of the road. Their remarks on this occasion follow.

Hugo Newcomb said, "Unveiling this historical marker sign marks a great day for all the number of supporters in the many various efforts through many years to save, protect and preserve Old Agency Road as a living, working portion of the Real Natchez Trace. This sign will announce to all who pause and read the historical significance of this little part of Mississippi history running through the heart of our hometown, Ridgeland."

"The Mayor and Board of Aldermen deserve a great pat on the back for their commitment and perseverance over the many years to help bring this great event to reality."

Nancy Batson said, "As a resident of the Old Agency Road historical district and one who loves the natural beauty and historical relevance of Old Agency Road, I commend the Mayor and Board of Alderman for recognizing and identifying Old Agency Road as a Mississippi landmark so that everyone who travels the road will respect, preserve and understand the ordinances which protect this historical site."

Sandra Vance said, "The markers that are being unveiled today commemorate the historical importance of Old Agency Road as an authentic portion of the original Natchez Trace. The markers document the significance of the road in our nation's history and serve as a fitting tribute to Old Agency Road for those who travel it today and for generations to come."