Henry Lee Hayes (1928-2004) was born in Hermanville, Mississippi, where he quit school to work when he was nine years old. He married Mary C. Echoles in 1949, and together they raised seven children: Mildred, James, Mary Alice, Henry Lee Jr., Sherri, Brenda, and Louise.

In 1956, they moved from Sunflower, Mississippi, to Winslow, where Hayes worked for the Nagel and Duke City Lumber Companies. Over the years he also worked for the State Highway Department, the City of Winslow, and for Goodwill Industries in Flagstaff. He retired from the Postal Service in 1990 after twenty-five years as a Star Route Mail Carrier (now Contract Delivery Service).

Daughters Mary Alice Hayes and Brenda Hayes Graham are well-known gospel singers in Northern Arizona. The Hayes Sisters have performed at special events throughout the region, including backing Diana Ross as members of the World Choir during the 1996 Super Bowl halftime show in Tempe.

Winslow artist Tina Mion was a featured artist in the Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery’s Portraiture Now exhibition, which included her portrait of the Hayes Sisters entitled Glory (2004). At left, Brenda and Mary Alice are seen singing I Believe I Can Fly at the opening of the exhibition on June 23, 2006. Mion submitted the painting because she wanted to see the sisters “alongside America's icons . . . representing generosity and kindness, unsung and unselfish.”

The Hayes Sisters sing regularly at the Faith Temple Church of God in Christ. At right, Mary Alice and Brenda are seen performing with Tommy Dukes at the Winslow Chapter of the NAACP’s Martin Luther King Day Celebration in 2018.