

Hayes Department Store

Built circa 1911, this building stood as the Fred L. Hayes Department Store for decades. Well known to locals as a quality retail store with a beauty shop on the second floor, Hayes Department Store is a familiar piece of history for downtown. Mr. Fred L. Hayes was a prominent figure in Toccoa who served a term as the President for the Toccoa Kiwanis Club, through which he met his life-long wife Betty.

Together, the couple helped run the department store and involved themselves in many other community affairs. Mrs. Hayes' prominent standing as a businesswoman during a pre-war era distinguished her in the garment industry and helped her make friends and connections all the way up to New York. It was understood that, "...she with her husband created a high quality store for Northeast Georgia that became a local institution." The Toccoa Record was even quoted, in an article written by Ella Cooper Garner, "that going into Hayes' Department Store was more like going into someone's home rather than a business."

In 1987, the Hayes Department Store building was renovated and Stewart's Downtown Discount Drugs moved in from next door. Stewart's Drugs was first established in 1961 by Charles W. Smith and was originally located next door as Smith's Discount Drugs. In 1979 Mr. Frank Stewart joined Smith's Drugs and a year later Mr. Stewart bought Smith's Drugs, eventually changing the name to Stewart's Downtown Discount Drugs. Mr. Stewart added downtown's first one-hour film processing lab to his business and when the drugstore moved into the Hayes building, the lab eventually caused an electrical short, burning most of the interior. The dedicated staff continued to work from the back porch of the building, earning the business a spotlight in a national pharmacy publication. The building recovered from the fire and has since been the new familiar for downtown as Stewart's Downtown Discount Drugs.



Stewart's Drugs

SNAPSHOTS OF TOCCOA'S HISTORY

