

## **Standard Oil Service Station**

Standard Oil Gas Stations were iconic in the 1930s/1940s. Many have been added to the National Register of Historic Places and the National Park Service. While some mimic the “house with canopy” style of gas station (demonstrated by the building that currently houses CK Morgan & Company) this station has more of the art deco styling with straight and clean lines. The “house with canopy” style was created to establish a feeling of trust and comfort with customers that would associate with home. This particular building originally had two bay doors that allowed for it to also service cars. The third door (at the end of the building) was added after the 1950s.

Originally a Californian based company, Standard Oil stretched its base after the first World War. As the expanding highway system encouraged longer car trips during the 1920s and 1930s, Standard service stations attracted motorists by adding such amenities as clean, well-appointed rest rooms and drinking fountains. With the introduction of Standard Lubrication System, as well as Atlas tires, headlight build and standardized battery service, the stations offered a complete one-stop service. Just like the Toccoa community, Standard Oil played a vital role in WWII by establishing itself as the key supplier for crude oil to the Allies in the Pacific. Their expansion and help in the war allowed for U.S. Navy submarines to triple their cruising range. It was not until the expansion in 1961, however, that the company was able to branch out its product to Southeastern states by establishing a refinery in Mississippi. This particular branch of the business was unique and was brought to Toccoa by an independent owner who built the structure.

The building sat vacant for a period of time after it operated as an alternator repair shop, until Steve and Kelly Shirley decided to give it much needed repair. The Shirleys recreated lettering for their business, Toccoa Tileworks, from the historic photo shown below. By working with the HPC and Preservationist Chip Wright, they repainted the awnings in alignment with the historic characteristic of the canopy; repaired the bay doors and installed faux/stationary doors instead; restored plate glass windows, keeping the aluminum framing, and repaired other structural needs. The building received Best Historic Renovation in 2011 from the Main Street Program, honoring the efforts from Mr. & Mrs. Shirley. In 2012, their daughter, Ms. Megan McAvoy established a full service florist boutique and her business has blossomed.



When the building was known as the Standard Oil Service Station, in late 1950s/early 1960s. The Shirley's great uncle is featured in this photo. Also notice the two bay doors, instead of the three existing today.



The building today, as a full florist shop, Downtown Flowers.

### **SNAPSHOTS OF TOCCOA'S HISTORY**

