

A vintage black and white photograph of a street scene in downtown Toccoa, Georgia. A dark vintage car with a convertible top is parked on the street in the foreground. The background features a large, multi-story brick building with a prominent cornice and a storefront with a display window. A barber pole is visible in the window. A dark blue graphic overlay with a white dotted border and arrow-shaped ends is centered over the image, containing the title and subtitle.

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HISTORIC DOWNTOWN TOCCOA

A TOUR
OF THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS
IN DOWNTOWN TOCCOA

— x x x —

***Take a guided tour through
Toccoa's historic downtown
and discover thirty
Historic Plaques honoring
downtown's rich history.***



Map of Downtown in Center Fold



Main Street Toccoa's *Historic Downtown* walking tour provides fun and interesting information about Toccoa's historic buildings in the downtown area.

The tour begins at the Currahee Military Museum (160 N. Alexander St.), circles through downtown, and ends at the Schaefer Center, just across the street from the Currahee Military Museum.

The mile-and-a-half route is paved and mostly flat.

***Have questions or need help?
Call 706.282.3232***

1. TRAIN DEPOT

Originally, tracks were built to incorporate Toccoa as a stop along the Atlanta & Richmond Air-Line Railway. The existing Train Depot was built in 1915, as Toccoa grew, to allow for a proper facility along the Southern Railroad. Prior to its renovation, it was uniquely sheathed with heart pine weatherboard siding. Most famously,



has served as a “whistle stop” for two presidents, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who stopped in 1936 while on the way to Warm Springs, and George H. W. Bush in 1992. Presently, the Depot serves two functions: as an Amtrak station for the Amtrak (formerly Southern) Crescent, and also as a museum intended to educate attendees about various aspects of Toccoa, such as famous Toccoa citizens, or the nearby Camp Toccoa, made famous by HBO’s miniseries, *Band of Brothers*.

2. ROTHELL BUILDING



Constructed in the late 19th century, the Rothell Building has held many businesses over the years. In 1897, Mr. Barton C. Rothell, with his son, Lewis, started a business, B.C. Rothell and Son, which served as a livery stable that rented horses, buggies, hacks, and surries. As the horse and buggy eventually made way to the technological

might of the motor vehicle, the livery stable gave way to Rothell’s Feed Store, which operated under Purina Feed Company. Later on, the store became Rothell’s Garden Shop and Florist, and later served many businesses, such as an antique shop and even a mini-mall. The store eventually became Captain Billy’s Fish House from 1996 to 1999 when the restaurant closed. Currently, the building is owned as a radio station by Tugart Properties, functioning under the direction of Georgia-Carolina Radiocasting, owners of AM630 WNEG. Rhythm Academy Dance Company is also housed in this building.

3. GEORGIA POWER

This building originally housed Georgia Power, which was located here the longest, but it was also home to Western Auto Store, a hardware store, a variety store, a Tae Kwon Do studio, and Whiten's Shoe Store. Currently, it houses Details Salon 73. After the Bluebird Cab Company next door was torn down, this building became the western-most commercial structure on Doyle Street. The building was designed in the classical revival-style, with a pair of central doorways flanked by large plate glass windows. The building itself has been owned by the Terrell family for many years, and looks much as it did when the building was built in 1936.



4. THE TOCCOA RECORD

The oldest business in Toccoa, The Toccoa Record was started in 1873. Originally founded as The Northeast Georgia Herald by two men, Mr. Mills and Mr. McJunkin, The Record was renamed The Toccoa Herald a year later in 1874. It was not until the mid-1890s, when the Southern Publishing Company purchased The Toccoa Herald that it garnered the name it holds to this day. In 1906 The Toccoa Record began operating out of 67 West Doyle Street, the location in which it continues to operate. The Toccoa Record was one of the first newspapers in Georgia to use Goss press units. By the 1970s, it became the first weekly newspaper in the state of Georgia to incorporate the use of offset printing. By the 1980s, The Toccoa Record was the first newspaper in the state to convert to an all computerized newsroom. Ever the innovator, The Toccoa Record was also the first business in downtown Toccoa to renovate its façade following the removal of the concrete canopies that once made downtown an outdoor mall.

5. STAR THEATER

The bidding process for this historic “moving picture theater” began in 1919. Construction concluded around 1925 and the Star Theater, operated by Affiliated Theaters, opened its doors soon thereafter as a vernacular Art Deco-style movie theater with seating for 150 people. The building was noted for its elaborate pressed-tin ceilings and molded glass chandeliers. The building was the smaller of the two theaters in Toccoa, operating in competition with the Ritz located right down the street.



6. H.O. TROUP’S CAMERA SHOP & WOODRUFF BUILDING

Constructed around 1920, this building served as a focal point of business for Mr. H.O. Troup, owner of Troup’s Studio. This building itself is known for its large rectangular transom windows composed of multiple 4x4 inch leaded glass, and also a unique herringbone masonry design in the upper façade. Modified in the late 1950s, the façade now contains enameled steel panels. This building, originally a camera shop, is now owned by Willie Woodruff, an attorney-at-law.

7. CITIZENS BANK



Originally constructed between 1950 and 1951 by the Yow family for The Citizens Bank of Toccoa, this operation later expanded to include both a law firm and the Boilermaker's and Blacksmith Political Action Committee. Ownership transferred at times from the 1950s to 1990s, and the bank later made way for a men's retail store, a vacuum store, and other businesses. The basement of the building has also been used for various purposes, including a video store and a saddle shop. Currently, the building is owned by Mr. Jon C. West and holds an appraisal and accounting office.

8. HARPER'S 5 AND 10 CENT STORE

Constructed around 1910, Harper's Store served as the primary five and dime store in the Toccoa vicinity for over 50 years. For generations, residents have frequented the building and, to this day, continue to tell stories of the candy counter, pressed tin ceiling, rows of clothing, and other fond memories. In 2013, the storefront was renovated to invoke the old time feel of the original Harper's Row. Consequently, repair work done to this building sparked a renewed interest in the history and investment efforts of downtown. Currently, this building is occupied by the probation office and development authority and provides new uses for a historic property, encouraging growth and expansion.



9. HARPER'S 5 AND 10 CENT TOY STORE EXTENSION

Built in 1925, this building served as the first location of Franklin Discount Company Loans. Franklin Discount Company began in 1941 as a loan investment company by Mr. Ben F. Cheek, Jr., and Mr. J.B. McMurray. Harper's 5 and 10 Cent Store was originally located on Doyle Street, and served this location for more than 30 years. This building was an extension of that store, and served as the location for its toy department. While there is no joined access any longer, this structure was included in the façade renovation for Harper's Row. When the concrete canopies came down much of the original details were revealed upon reconstruction, such as the original side entrance to the second story, and the bulkheads and storefront windows. Today, the location for Harper's 5 and 10 Cent Store stands as a testament to stores all across small-town America, when times were simpler.



10. ALLGOOD AUTO SUPPLY

This building was constructed in 1946 as a result of the post-World War II boom. Engineered in the international-style common after soldiers returned home, this building was originally Allgood's Auto Supply Store. Mr. Larry L. Allgood, Jr., better known as "Bull," began his business December 9, 1951, and remained in business for over 50 years. Upstairs housed a CPA, dentist, and grocery store. This building was notable in Toccoa history for serving as a fallout shelter during the Cold War, as three-fourths of the basement is underground.



11. ARMY SURPLUS STORE



State Farm Insurance and continues to operate two insurance agencies, State Farm and Metro Insurance Company, from this historic building.

12. SMITH'S DRUGS

Built circa 1911, the space occupied by Smith's Drug Store has been used in past years as a furniture store, a music store, a brick warehouse, and an office building for the Toccoa Banking Company. In 1933, the building was purchased by J.B. McMurry to be used as a general "junk" and miscellaneous wares store. In 1956, Mr. McMurry sold the building to Fred L. Hayes,

who also owned the department store next door. By 1961, the building was owned by Mr. Charles W. Smith, who opened Smith's Drugs with his wife, Mary, for over 20 years. In 1986, the business became Stewart's Downtown Discount Drugs and moved next door. In 1991, Carolyn Henson purchased the property and used it as a retail sporting goods store, which also offered services in embroidery and screen printing services. Currently, Threads Sports has continued the business under management from Carolyn's son, Chris Henson.



13. HAYES DEPARTMENT STORE

Built around 1911 as the Fred L. Hayes Department Store, this building has been known as a quality shopping location for decades. Mr. Fred L. Hayes and his wife Betty created a high quality store for Northeast Georgia that became a local institution. In 1987, after many successful years of business, the Hayes Department Store was renovated and Stewart's Downtown Discount Drugs moved in from next door. Stewart's Drugs, first established in 1961

by Charles W. Smith, was originally known as Smith's Discount Drugs. In 1979, Mr. Frank Stewart joined the company and purchased it a year later, naming it Stewart's Downtown Discount Drugs. Mr. Stewart might best be known for adding downtown's first one-hour film processing lab to his business. Unfortunately, after moving into the Hayes building, the lab caused an electrical short, burning most of the interior. The dedicated staff continued to work from the back porch of the building and, having since recovered, is now familiar in Downtown Toccoa as Stewart's Downtown Discount Drugs.

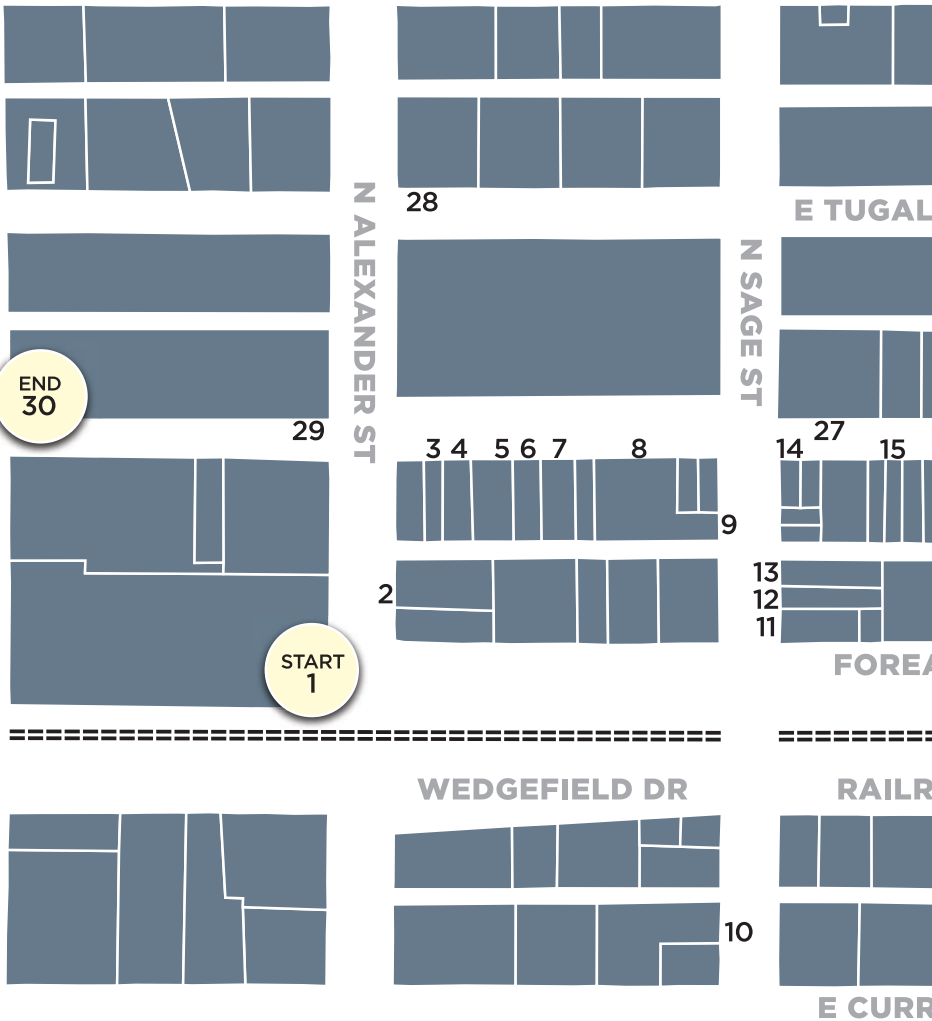


14. BANK OF TOCCOA

This building might best be known for serving as a centerpiece in historical Toccoa photographs emphasizing small town business and citizen involvement. Home to a variety of drug stores, including Toccoa, Sorrells, and Smith-Maddox, as well as several clothing stores, a hair salon, and a jewelry store, this building was the original

home of the Bank of Toccoa, now known as First Citizens Bank. The design of this building exhibits unique arts and crafts-style masonry and stands out as one of the more unique historic downtown commercial buildings, displaying windows defined by a series of soldier courses with sandstone corner accents. The building is now owned by Rick and Letha Phillips and is home to a retail business, and upper story residential living.





1. Train Depot
2. Rothell Building (WNEG Radio)
3. Georgia Power (Details Salon 73)
4. Toccoa Record
5. Star Theater
6. H.O. Troup's Camera Shop (Willie Woodruff, Attorney)
7. Citizens Bank (Jon C. West; Max Brock)
8. Harper's 5 and 10 Cent Store (Stephens County Development Authority)
9. Harper's 5 and 10 Cent Toy Store Extension
10. Allgood Auto Supply (The Urban Barn)
11. Army Surplus Store (State Farm)
12. Smith's Drugs (Threads)
13. Hayes Department Store (Stewart's Downtown Discount Drugs)
14. Bank of Toccoa (All Things Currahee)
15. Nickel Back (Spa & Salon Anastasia)



16. Grooh's Department Store ([ash-ling] booksellers)
17. Troup's Studio (Hallmark Gold Crown Store)
18. McBath Home (Family Eye Care)
19. Johnson & Fields
20. Harper Home (Dan Pressley Law)
21. Simmons General Store (1st Franklin Financial)
22. Addy Building (CK Morgan & Company)
23. Standard Oil Service Station (Downtown Flowers)
24. Toccoa Bakery (Raybon OB-GYN)
25. Western Auto Associate Store (Raybon OB-GYN)
26. Acree Mitchell Grocery Store (The Studio)
27. Belk-Gallant Building (Whistle Stop Antique Market)
28. Simmons-Bond Inn
29. Toccoa City Hall
30. Ritz Theater (Schaefer Center)

15. NICKEL BACK

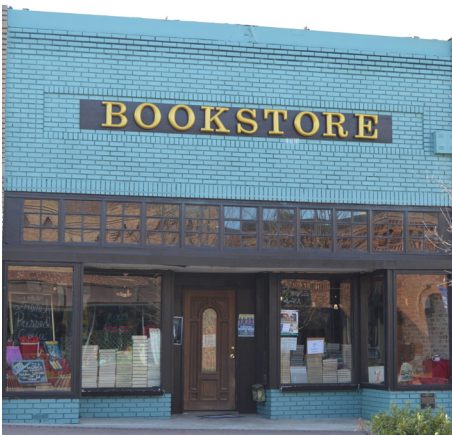


Known as the Nickel Back Shoe Store for over 20 years, this building was first owned by the Collins family from southern Toccoa. After Nickel Back closed, it became home to two other businesses in the 1990s: Flower & Candy Basket and Falling Water Bakery and Café. The building was purchased in 2002 by Jimmy and Cheri Harris, who opened Harris Commu-

nications. Later, his daughter, Rebekah Harris Gailer, opened Spa and Salon Anastasia. A historic staple of downtown Toccoa, the building has been renovated diligently by the Harris family. Efforts to restore historical integrity include the gold lettering Nickel Back marquis above the door and the gold grates on the façade. Additionally, the structure retains its original wooden floors and bricks produced in the city of Toccoa's brickyard.

16. GROOH'S DEPARTMENT STORE

Built around 1920, the architectural style of this building is considered higher end, due to construction and materials. Perhaps best known in the early 1940s as Grooh's Department Store, this building stands as a pinnacle of the classical style of architecture known throughout the early twentieth century. Historically, the building and walls flanking and joining it on either side are indicative of past small town initiatives where buildings were constructed in pairs, sponsored by local developers or bankers. After Grooh's closed in 1950, John and Hazel Mullinax opened the Gem Jewelry Company of Toc-



coa. The business and building were later sold by Mr. John Mullinax to his son, Johnny, who changed the name to Mullinax Jewelers. The building survived a fire in the early 1990s. Today, the building is home to [ash-ling] Booksellers, a recognized Toccoa business which has helped restore the façade and interior. The original windows for the building are still preserved and faintly show the Grooh's Department Store lettering.

17. TROUP'S STUDIO

Constructed prior to 1932, Troup's Studio is one of Toccoa's oldest downtown businesses to carry the same name it did when it was constructed. Founded during the Great Depression by H.O. and Addie Lee Troup under the name Troup's Photo Service Inc., the business was located in an



upstairs studio in a different building on Doyle Street. With successful entrepreneurial business practices, Mr. Troup turned his studio into a nation-wide photo-finishing operation: taking in, processing, and sending out between 400 to 700 rolls of film. The business was relocated here in 1945, diversifying the business and increasing the prominence of Troup's. After the passing of H.O., Robert Troup continued the family business with his wife, Betty. In 1994, Troup's expanded further and renovated the adjacent building to accommodate gift line growth. Under the ownership of Patti Troup Joiner and Harry Joiner, Troup's has developed into a third-generation family business. In addition to the studio, they have a Hallmark Gold Crown Store.

18. MCBATH HOME



A beautiful example of quaint, early 1900s architecture, Dr. McBeth bought this home around 1922 from Mrs. A. J. Hogsed when he moved from Avalon to Toccoa to continue to expand his medicine practice. Dr. and Mrs. McBeth, Ella Davis, along with their family, lived upstairs while he practiced medicine in the basement. After Dr. McBeth

died, his wife stayed in the home until she passed away in 1948. The house was left to their stepchildren, Ruth and Ralph, who turned it into a boarding house for teachers. The house was owned by the McBeth Family until 1995. As of 2007, the house is used for medicine again, consisting of Family Eye Care headed by Dr. Kay Royal, and as a personal residence located upstairs.

19. JOHNSON & FIELDS

Constructed in 1918, this home served as a private residence for almost 50 years. The home retains most of its original architecture, but has had some renovation done on the exterior. The home might be best known as carrying the last of the popular craftsman-style residential architecture popular from 1901-1918 in the City of Toccoa. In 1972, Amidec, Inc. bought the historic property from Mrs. A.O. Teasley, and proceeded to convert the home to an office space for Mr. Julius M. Johnson and his accounting firm. The firm, originally founded in 1964, was the first certified public accountings firm in Toccoa. The firm has changed names since and is now operated by Mr. Johnson's son, Sam, and business partner, Mrs. Lee Ellen Fields, yet has continued to operate out of this beautiful historic home for over 40 years.



20. HARPER HOME



Now a modern office setting, the building served as a home for the Harper family sisters in 1937. The Harper family is perhaps best known in Toccoa for their 5 and 10 Cent Store based in downtown for over 30 years. The Harper family home also served as a bed & breakfast for approximately 15 years, known for serving delicious food on Sundays. A prime example of the California

Arts & Crafts style of architecture, also known as the American Craftsman-style bungalow (popular from 1910-1925), the Harper Home was an attempt to steer away from Victorian-style architecture and focus on raw materials, simplicity in design, and visibility of handcraft. Unique to the home is its use of locally handcrafted wood, glass, and stone. Currently, the fold-in style doors from the bed & breakfast are still intact, as well as the original crystal doorknobs. The offices of attorney Dan Pressley held residence in the Harper Home for seventeen years.

21. SIMMONS GENERAL STORE



Also constructed following Toccoa's post-World War II boom, Simmons General Store was built around 1946 to provide various odds and ends for residents of Toccoa. However, this store might perhaps be best known for housing Gower Furniture, and then Hudgins Furniture, for 63 years of Toccoa's history. The building was sold in

2003 by Mr. J.B. and Mrs. Elaine Hudgins to 1st Franklin Financial Corporation. 1st Franklin's marketing, branch operations, and human resources departments are located in this East Doyle Street location.

22. ADDY BUILDING

Constructed around 1950, the property upon which the Addy Building is located has been in the Addy family estate since 1938. The building survived the urban renewal project in Toccoa around the 1970s that demolished twenty-two structures along Tugalo and Foreacre Streets. Recognized as one of four gas service stations at the intersection where pump service was still available, the Addy Building, in tandem with the block of buildings nearby, once housed Liberty TV Cable, Ideal Cleaners, Stewarts Banker, GA Pool Company, an ice cream parlor, and even a funeral home. Today, the building is home to CK Morgan & Company, a retail store.



23. STANDARD OIL SERVICE STATION

This gas station was brought to Toccoa by an independent owner, who also built the structure. Unlike most stations, which mimic the “house with canopy” style intended to establish trust and the coziness of home (demonstrated by the building that houses CK Morgan & Company), this particular station was influenced by the straight and clean lines of early Art Deco architecture.



After closing down as a gas station, this building sat vacant before operating as an alternator repair shop until Mr. Steve and Mrs. Kelly Shirley began restorative work. Working with the Historic Preservation Commission, they repainted the awnings in alignment with historic characteristics of the canopy, repaired the bay doors with faux doors, and restored the plate glass windows. In 2012, their daughter, Mrs. Megan McAvory established a blossoming full service florist boutique, Downtown Flowers.

24. TOCCOA BAKERY



Constructed in the late 1930s, this structure has served as a bakery and sandwich shop for much of its tenure owned by various owners, Dale and Cynthia Williams, and then later Guy and Jeanette Mougel. Constructed with central entry alcoves and a trio of transom windows in the classical revival-style,

Cups & Cones is currently based in the front of this building. The rest of the building houses office space for Raybon OB-GYN. Current property owners are Dr. Brian and Joann Raybon. Be sure to view the beautiful architectural features such as medallions in the upper façade as well as the preservation of the storefront entrances.

25. WESTERN AUTO ASSOCIATE STORE



Originally built around 1940, Deluxe Tire, a franchise of the famous Western Auto, called this classical revival-style structure home. Owned and modified in the 1950s by the Clyde Murray family, this store later switched from selling auto parts and services to men's clothing and accessories. Scarborough's Men's Store, owned by Dean Scarborough served Toccoa's gentry for 17 years, until it

was bought by Dr. and Mrs. Brian Raybon in 2007. It is now home to Dr. Raybon's obstetrics and gynecology practice.

26. ACREE MITCHELL GROCERY STORE

Originally built circa 1857 when Stephens County was still a part of Habersham County, The Studio is the oldest building in downtown Toccoa. The Studio was originally a free-standing building constructed in the style of the times with hand-made bricks. The staircase to the upstairs was outside the building and was moved inside as downtown was built up. Most popularly known as the location for the Acree Mitchell Grocery Store, the building was later used to house a Masonic Lodge and is currently an art gallery. The upstairs wood floors are made of wide plank oak and pine. The fireplace was torn down when renovations were made to the interior of the building however the bricks were saved and used under the upstairs windows. Beaded board ceilings have also been retained upstairs, where art lessons are taught by owner Deborah Hartely. The Studio is also home to the Currahee Artists Guild, where quarterly art shows and demonstrations occur.



27. BELK-GALLANT BUILDING



One of the most historic buildings in downtown Toccoa, the Belk-Gallant Building has long been an anchor of downtown shopping and business. Located at the corner of Doyle and Sage Streets, this beautiful property has held a bank as well as a Belk department store and Antique Market. In 1937, the tenth Belk store to open in the nation located in downtown Toccoa. After Belk left downtown in 1995,

city officials negotiated with Belk corporate office to have the building gifted to the City of Toccoa. After five years of renovation, the building was sold to Mr. James Vander Woude, who worked hard to restore the façade of the building to its former style and integrity. The careful renovation of the building allowed for reestablishment of 36,000 square feet of viable business space along two downtown Toccoa streets. Currently, it houses the Whistle Stop Antique Market, which features three floors of antiques, furniture, and collectibles, Cornerstone Restaurant, and a bakery.

28. SIMMONS-BOND INN

Constructed in 1903 by Mr. Levi Prater for Mr. James Bollinger Simmons, this house serves as an excellent example of the asymmetrical Victorian-style seen in the early 1900s. Mr. Simmons himself might be best known for pioneering the furniture industry in Toccoa. Throughout time, however,



this house has maintained its iconic columns and white banisters. The house is known for its exceptional glass work, such as the front door, which is leaded cut glass, along with both parlor and foyer windows. The dining room is known for its stained glass windows, and there are four oval “spider web” leaded glass windows upstairs. Perhaps most beautifully, there is a seven-foot stained

glass window that lights the grand staircase. This house was the first in Toccoa to have running water and plumbing, and may be considered one of the most outstanding homes in the city. Presently, it serves as the Simmons-Bond Inn, a bed and breakfast, owned by Todd and Joy Cusato.

29. TOCCOA CITY HALL



Built in 1932 as a one-and-a-half story Neo-Classical Revival brick structure, this building originally served as the Toccoa Post Office before the post office moved following the end of World War II, when an economic boom began pulling businesses to expand. After a period of renovation and vacancy, the City

moved into the old Post Office, originally offering services in police work, bill payments, municipal court, and jail. Additionally, during the Cold War, the basement of City Hall served as one of two fallout shelters in Toccoa.

30. RITZ THEATER

Constructed circa 1939, the 400-seat Ritz Theater was intended to bring a Hollywood-style professional movie theater to North Georgia. Over the course of many successful years, the Ritz Theater served as a movie theater, drawing thousands of Toccoa residents over the years. After closing its doors in 1985, the Ritz Theatre became the Schaefer Center, home to Toccoa's Community Theater. In 2014 the Currahee Arts Council donated the Schaefer Center to the City of Toccoa. The city has renovated both the interior and exterior to bring back the historic Art-Deco appearance. The Schaefer Center serves as a cornerstone for Toccoa events, community plays, and musical presentations.



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by strengthening downtown's role as the
heart of the community.

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