



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 Toccoa expanded.

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 Hartley. The Studio is also home to the Currahee Artists Guild, where quarterly art shows and demonstrations occur.



Snapshots of Toccoa's History



114–118 N. Sage Street

By 1956, the building was also home to State Farm Insurance Company, headed by agents Miles C. Davis and Robert W. Service, in addition to Teasley's company. Its primary business, Stephens Federal Savings & Loan, was still in operation out of this location in 1956 before moving to the corner of Pond Street and Doyle Street in 1958. W. Truman Blasingame was the Executive Vice President of Stephens Federal Savings & Loan while operating out of this location.

In 1959, once Stephens Federal Savings & Loan moved to its new location, the business opened up to serve as the side entrance to the Andrews/Hamby Men's Store, with Mr. James A. Andrews as the President, and Mr. Earl H. Freeman as the Vice President. In the same storefront housing Mr. Teasley's business was Gulf Life Insurance Company, and State Mutual Insurance Company. By 1962, Carolina Life Insurance Company had also opened in the same storefront housing Gulf Life Insurance.

By 1968, the Andrews/Hamby Men's Store entrance closed and Carolina Life Insurance was gone, with Georgia Finance Corporation opening in its place. In 1971, Georgia Finance was gone, replaced by Landmark Finance Company. By 1973, State Farm Insurance moved out of this location, and later moved just down the street.

The architecture of 114/118 North Sage Street is consistent with that of the early- to mid-century Commercial style that populates the majority of Historic Downtown Toccoa. Large bay windows frame a singular transom window, allowing for maximum view into the storefront's interior on the left storefront, while the right storefront is slightly modernized, featuring stylized closed transoms framing the entry space. All brickwork is original to the structure.

Presently, this building houses two downtown businesses on the first floor: Russell's Tax Service, a CPA firm, which has been operating since at least 1982 (operating previously as James Russell Income Tax & Bookkeeping), and Angel Oak Home, a design consultant and home renovation storefront. The second floor of the building is occupied by fully renovated and expansive luxury loft apartments.

-Historical information has been provided with the invaluable assistance of Steven Gilmer and Stan Smith.

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