



The Vintage Rabun Quarterly

The Anchor of South Main Street



The Clayton Hotel shown here, circa 1910

Through fires, economic depression, and many ownership changes, the Clayton Hotel has anchored South Main Street in Clayton for more than one hundred years.

James Ira Langston bought Lot Eleven on South Main at the corner of Derrick Street in 1888. The Langston family soon built a large two-story white home on the property. After the railroad was extended to Clayton in June of 1904, Clayton's tourism traffic expanded tremendously. Visitors now found travel from Atlanta and points south to be easy, and the mountain weather and attractions beckoned. Sometime in this first decade of the twentieth century, the Langstons decided to cash in and began taking in visitors to what was now a boarding house. By 1918, the hotel boasted twenty-two rooms, but the Langston family had sold out and moved on to become hotel owners in Montana.

Several proprietors followed the Langstons, including Colonel Dozier who owned the hotel across Main Street. The Holdens, the Greens and Louise Dillard Coldren were among the owners in later decades. The hotel's name also changed over the years, from the Clayton Hotel to the Dillard Motor Lodge to the Old Clayton Inn.



This photograph is a view of the Clayton Hotel from the rear. Across the street is the Dozier Hotel, later known as the Green Hotel, and Clayton Methodist Church



In 1929, a brick veneer and six columns were added to the front of the building, along with steam heat and a "cooling system." Owners Ed and Nora Holden announced that this updating would "meet the demands of modern hotels." They also added a "splendid tennis court" for guests behind the building.



A devastating fire in January of 1946 completely destroyed the hotel and its contents.



For a while, during the 1970s, this version of the inn was known as the Dillard Motor Lodge.



The Clayton Hotel company rebuilt an “ultra-modern” structure of steel, concrete and glass which would accommodate 150 guests in its spacious dining room. The formal opening was in October of 1947.



Exterior embellishments were added later in the twentieth century, which completely altered the hotel's appearance.



South Main Street has held a wide assortment of businesses over the years, including a drugstore, movie theater, post office, grocery store, bank, barbershop, and dime store. Meanwhile the hotel on the corner carries on its century-old legacy of welcoming visitors to Clayton. The most extensive remodel yet, the Bridge Creek Inn, is scheduled to open Labor Day of 2023.

Rabun County Historical Society Membership

We have revised our membership levels and dues. Our basic dues have never increased, though our operating costs have increased significantly. Previous Benefactors will remain Benefactors with a life membership. Previous Supporting Members with a life membership will become Patrons and retain their life memberships. New Patrons and Friends and Family will be asked to renew their memberships annually on June 30. We deeply appreciate all of our members and their contributions to our mission of preserving and promoting Rabun County's fascinating history. If you find any errors in the list, please notify us by email at rabuncountyhistory@gmail.com.

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- Please visit our museum and research library on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 11:00 until 3:00.
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New! ***Mountains, Moonshine and a Railroad*** tells the always colorful, occasionally contentious and frequently humorous history of Rabun County and surrounding area of northeast Georgia. Author: Richard G. Cinquina

Sketches of Rabun County History, a reprint of Dr. Andrew Ritchie's comprehensive area history, first published in 1948. This work focuses in particular on the original settler families, their origins and early histories.

Pictorial History of Rabun County, an overview published in 2003. This book contains hundreds of the Society's photos and reviews many subjects important to the county's development, such as the Tallulah Falls Railroad, the Georgia Power dams, agriculture, and logging.

Postcard History Series Rabun County, published in 2012, is a visual journey documenting the history of Rabun County through vintage souvenir postcards collected by George and Vickie Prater.