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Clayton's Main Street Gas Stations

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the city of Clayton went through a period of growth beginning when the Tallulah Falls Railroad arrived in Clayton in 1904. The railroad opened the way for tourism, and hotels and boarding houses soon lined Clayton's Main Street.

Development continued when automobiles began to appear on the streets of town. At that time, Main Street was the main north-south highway through the county. For decades there were several gasoline filling stations up and down Main Street. When the new Highway 441 was built in 1960-61, the new route bypassed downtown Clayton. Though an extension of East Savannah Street was built to connect it with the new highway, the major flow of tourist traffic no longer traveled on Main Street. Modern gas stations opened on the new highway, but some of the Main Street stations remained open for years, catering to local customers.

All of the Main Street service stations are now closed. The Historical Society museum has copies of photographs of seven of the old stations. Some of them have been renovated and repurposed into thriving businesses, while others are standing vacant. We are sharing what we know about them in this newsletter. Please let us know if you can expand on our knowledge.

If you have historical photographs of Rabun County, we encourage you to share them with us. We can scan them and return them to you. It is our mission to preserve our area's fascinating history and make it available for future generations to appreciate.

Historical Society Board of Directors

2023-2024

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www.rabunhistory.org

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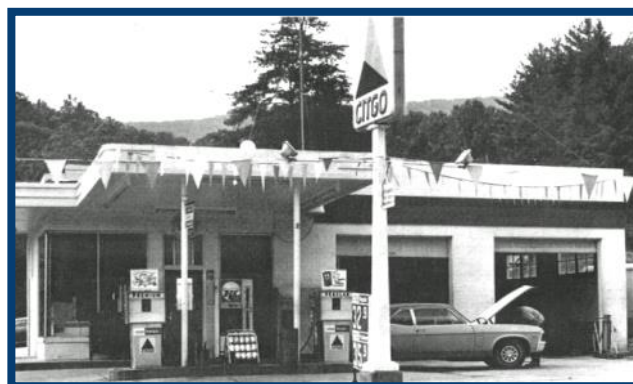
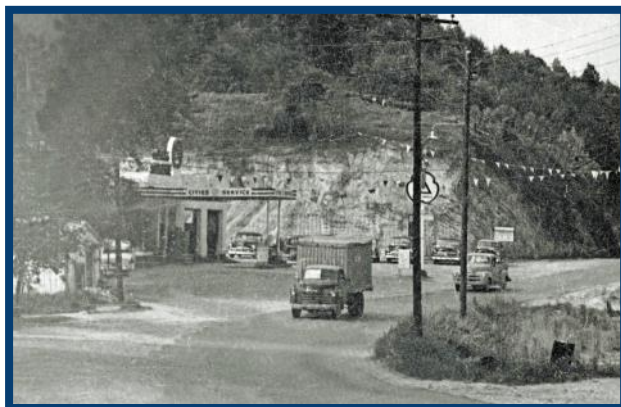
In 1927 Fred and Claude Derrick, both professional baseball players, opened Derrick's Garage and Standard Oil Station on North Main Street. The station closed in the 1970s and was vacant until 1986 when George and Vickie Prater bought it. They renovated and expanded the building to house their business, Prater Books, and later, Prater Collectibles.



Roy Jones Texaco station on the west side of North Main Street next to the Clayton Post Office was built in the 1960s on the site of a former station. New owners have repurposed the old building, and it now serves as the Universal Joint, a popular restaurant.



In 1938, Russell Ivie constructed this building for his Standard Oil Black Rock Service Station on North Main Street. The building is now Black Rock Station, 19 unique stores in one location, and the Pontiac dealership is Friends Restaurant with a rooftop bar.



A mid-1950s photo on the left shows a Cities Service Station on the north edge of Clayton. It was later known as Don's Citgo and then Tom's Citgo, shown in the 1975 photo on the right. The building is now home to Salon 259.

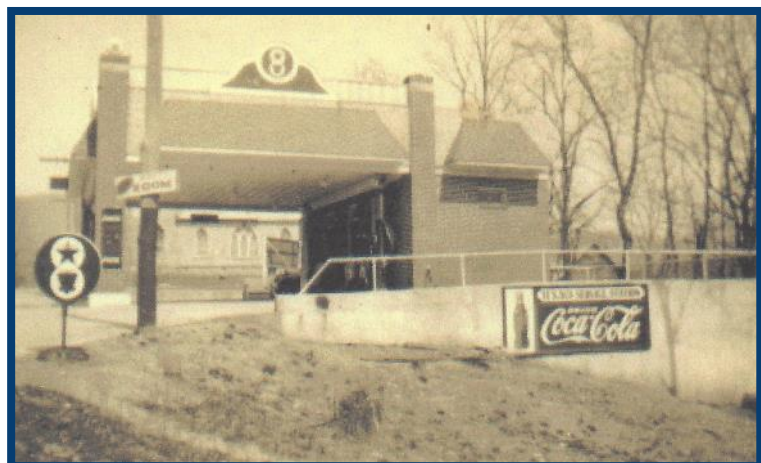


Sam Jones Pure Station and Plymouth dealership once occupied this elegant Tudor style building on South Main Street. The automobile bays are now glassed in, and the Pure sign replaced with one for Harry Norman Realtors.

Ramey's Super Gas Station opened on South Main Street in January 1950. Clyde and Robert Ramey operated the station for 14 years. No business is carried on at that location now.



This Texaco station was on South Main Street next to Clayton Methodist Church, which is visible in the background. The building was later replaced with a more modern Gulf station known as Lovell's Service Center that is now vacant.



Rabun County Historical Society
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Historical Society Membership Updates

Welcome to our members who have joined or upgraded their memberships since June 2023.

Benefactor
Dr. Butch & Wanda
Scaggs Findley

Business Partner
Greg & Tammy Shumate-
Capital City Home Loans

Friend
Al Fuller
Lou MacNaughton
Scott Means
Diane Monroe
Keith Ruddick
Juanita Shope
Mildred Tice

Upgrade to Family
Garey, Cindy & Will Butler

Upgrade to Patron
Wanda Davis

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- Please visit our museum and research library on Wednesday through Saturday from 11:00 until 3:00.
- Group tours by appointment

