

**BLUE RIDGE HISTORY:
DOWNTOWN BLUE RIDGE
HISTORIC WALKING TOUR**

- 1** Baugh House
- 2** Blue Ridge Inn
- 3** L & L Beanery
- 4** Coldwell Banker High Country Realty
- 5** Blue Ridge United Methodist Church
- 6** Historic Fannin County Courthouse
- 7** The Blue Ridge Depot
- 8** Blue Ridge City Park
- 9** Blue Ridge Pharmacy
- 10** The Little Shop Hallmark
- 11** Love Dogs and Cats
- 12** Old Rexall Pharmacy
- 13** Blue Ridge Antiques
- 14** Main Street Antiques
- 15** Moose Hollow
- 16** Blue Ridge Fly Fishing

 Welcome Center



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BLUE RIDGE HISTORY: DOWNTOWN BLUE RIDGE HISTORIC WALKING TOUR

The town of Blue Ridge was once considered an elite health resort because of its pure mineral waters. Tourists would ride the train to town, eat dinner at the Blue Ridge Hotel, and take a leisurely walk to the mineral springs after dinner. Today, tourists can still ride the train and take a leisurely walk along Main Street and the other quaint streets of downtown, enjoying the antique and specialty shops, galleries, restaurants and small town atmosphere of Blue Ridge.

Blue Ridge was founded in 1886 as a result of the arrival of the Marietta and North Georgia Railroad. Because of the railroad, Blue Ridge developed as a center of business and in 1895 the county seat was moved from Morganton to Blue Ridge. In the early years, at different times, there were five hotels and several boarding houses in downtown Blue Ridge.

West First Street

1 Baugh House

Baugh House, located at 411 West First Street, is owned by the Fannin County Heritage Foundation. It is open to the public on Friday and Saturday from 10:00 to 3:00. Those interested in genealogy will find lots of helpful information inside. The home was built by pioneer John W. Baugh for his son James in 1890. The house was built from bricks manufactured at the Baugh Brick Co. in Mineral Bluff. For more information, call 706-258-2645.

2 Blue Ridge Inn

477 West First Street. The Blue Ridge Inn (Kincaid House) is a beautifully restored Victorian home built in 1890. It has 14 rooms, 8 fireplaces, 12-foot ceilings, original carved woodwork, heartpine floors and clawfoot tubs.

West Main Street

3 L & L Beanery

260 West Main Street. The People's Bank building was built around 1926. It features Doric pilasters, a glass block transom and elaborate cornice. Today it is the home of L & L Beanery, Blue Ridge's favorite coffee shop. Relax with a coffee and check your e-mail. Also, take a look at the original bank vault.

4 Coldwell Banker High Country Realty

247 West Main Street. The Haight Building, completed in 1895, originally housed the Fannin County Bank and Blue Ridge Pharmacy. The building originally had three floors. It was renovated by Coldwell Banker in 2006. Peek inside to see the original brick walls and architectural detail.

5 Blue Ridge United Methodist Church

322 West Main St. The first Methodist Church in Blue Ridge dates back to 1877. This gothic church building was constructed in the mid 1900's. Listen for the church bells ringing on the hour.

6 Historic Fannin County Courthouse

420 West Main Street. The historic Fannin County Courthouse was built in 1937 after the previous courthouse burned in 1936. The courthouse is now the home of the Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Association. See the original courtroom, and be sure to visit the art gallery shop and enjoy the work of local artists. On the grounds of the courthouse is a historic marker describing the founding of Fannin County. The "Statue of Liberty" was presented to Blue Ridge by Fannin County vets.

Depot Street

7 The Blue Ridge Depot

Although the first depot burned, the present station celebrated its 100th birthday in 2006. The railroad was, and continues to be, the central focus of downtown Blue Ridge. Quoted from In Touch with the Past: "The noon train from Knoxville stopped for 20 minutes for lunch. You could get dinner at the hotel or buy a dinner through the window for 25 cents. The morning train took four hours to get to Atlanta."

The depot is owned by the City of Blue Ridge and leased to the Northeast Georgia Railroad, which started the Blue Ridge Scenic Railway in 1998. Since that time, more than 500,000 people have enjoyed a nostalgic ride on the train from Blue Ridge to McCaysville.

8 Blue Ridge City Park

Blue Ridge City Park is the heart of downtown Blue Ridge. The park encompasses two blocks and is a popular place for picnics, community gatherings and festivals. The monument in the park was dedicated on October 21, 1937, to honor deceased "War Dead."

East Main Street

9 Blue Ridge Pharmacy

793 East Main St. Blue Ridge Pharmacy was founded in around 1900 and moved to the East Main Street location in the early 1920's. Its current ownership dates from 1947.

10 The Little Shop Hallmark

781 East Main St. Both the Little Shop and Love Dogs & Cats (#11) buildings are circa 1906. Once adjacent to the Royal Theater, during the 1940's the Hall family owned a men's clothing store and "The Little Shop," a women's dress shop.

11 Love Dogs and Cats

777 East Main St.

12 Old Rexall Pharmacy

771 East Main St. Built in 1912, the building has been attractively renovated. Details of the original construction can be seen upstairs. In the 1940's the building was the home of Rexall Pharmacy, with curb service ice cream delivery.

13 Blue Ridge Antiques

733 East Main St. The building was once the Blue Ridge Hotel, owned by Annie Gartrell. Upstairs, you can get a glimpse of the building's earlier use, while shopping for antiques in the old hotel rooms. A 1936 advertisement stated: "The Blue Ride Hotel, one of the most up-to-date hotels in North Georgia, has generous accommodations and modern conveniences, and an excellent menu with well-prepared food."

14 Main Street Antiques

East Main and Carter St. Built in 1920-30. Upstairs is a loft apartment with attractive courtyard garden below.

15 Moose Hollow – Blue Ridge

530 East Main St. Built in 1900 and one of the oldest buildings in Blue Ridge, the building was originally known as "Granny Black Stock's." She and her sister ran a store and rented out cots to CCC boys at 50 cents a night during the early to mid 1930's. It has been a wholesale tobacco business since 1971.

16 Blue Ridge Fly Fishing

490 East Main Street. This small commercial building was built between 1915 and 1925. Be sure and look at the old Coca Cola sign on the side of the building.

Sources: In Touch With the Past, Blue Ridge 2007 Historical Calendar, Facets of Fannin.



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