

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

Community Store

Local Historic Landmark #5
626 S. Main St., Winston-Salem
(Original Salem Lot 63)
Construction Date: 1775
Restoration Date: 1954
Landmark Designation Date:
10/04/1976

The Community Store in Salem was a leading commercial center for the entire region. Salem's first store opened in 1772, in the "Two-Story House" (also known as the Second House), in what is today the 400 block of S. Main Street. The store was first occupied by Traugott Bagge, who had moved to Salem from Bethabara to serve as the shopkeeper. While technically in the name of the operating merchant, the store was actually a monopoly by the Moravian Church. In 1773, it was decided to proceed with construction of the store on its current lot, which had been set aside in 1768 for that purpose. By May 1775, the new store opened for business. The Community Store served as a retail center for both local and imported goods and was one of five businesses that produced income for the Church. Other income producers were the pottery, tavern, mill, and tannery. The building's two entrances reflect the combined use of the structure as both a residence and commercial operation. Bagge and his family lived in the south end, with the store operating in the north room and part of the cellar. The store



was a success and remained in Bagge's hands until his death in 1800.

Conrad Kreuser operated the store for the Church until 1816, followed by Jacob Blum, who purchased the store from the Church in 1837. After Blum's death in 1847, there were a series of store owners. According to Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, the building functioned as a dwelling and grocery from 1895-1907; by 1912, the structure was in use solely as a residence.

The Community Store is a 1½-story building with a full cellar. The stuccoed walls are constructed of stone rubble and red clay mortar. Masons scored the stucco and filled the incisions with lime to simulate cut stone. The doors and windows are set into elliptical arches. This was the first building in Salem to be constructed entirely of masonry. While the Moravian Church retains ownership of the property, Old Salem, Inc. restored the building in 1954 to its 1775 appearance, removing the second story as part of the restoration.

Today the Community Store is leased from the Church by Old Salem Museums and Gardens, which operates it as a retail shop.



T. Bagge Community Store in Salem, 1895
Courtesy of Old Salem Museums and Gardens



This information is also available
at the Forsyth County
Historic Resources Commission's web site:
<http://www.ForsythCountyHRC.org>