

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

(Former) Wachovia Bank & Trust Company Building

Local Historic Landmark #118

8 W. Third St., Winston-Salem

Construction Date: 1911

Rehabilitation Date: 1983

Landmark Designation Date: 08/07/2006

The (former) Wachovia Bank & Trust Company Building was constructed in 1911 for the newly merged Wachovia National Bank and the Wachovia Loan and Trust Company. The building served as the corporate headquarters for the Wachovia Bank & Trust Company from 1911 until 1966, when operations were moved into the Wachovia Building (Local Historic Landmark #116), located at 301 N. Main Street. For 55 years, the building served as the offices for the bank, which emerged as a leading financial institution in the South and one of the largest in the nation.



Courtesy of Heather Fearnbach

The bank is associated with the careers of a number of distinguished and prominent businessmen and industrialists who served as officers and directors of the institution. Among them were Francis H. Fries (president of the bank when the building opened), Henry Fries Shaffner, James A. Gray, and James A. Gray, Jr.

The bank was designed by the architectural firm of Milburn, Heister & Company, whose principal, Frank Pierce Milburn, was one of the most prominent and prolific architects in the South. When completed, the bank was the third high-rise steel frame building to be erected in North Carolina. Additionally, at seven stories, it was the tallest building to be constructed in Winston. However, that honor was short-lived, as steel frame construction had initiated a "skyscraper war." The eight-story O'Hanlon Building was completed in 1915, but Wachovia was not to be outdone. Therefore, in 1918, an eighth story was added to the bank and the width was expanded by one bay. The resulting building embodied the distinctive characteristics of the Chicago School of skyscraper architecture and the Renaissance Revival architectural style. The building is distinguished by its symmetrical elevations and an unusually handsome and elaborate limestone and terra cotta entablature. "Wachovia Bank and Trust Co." was spelled out in applied letters in the center of the frieze on each elevation. There were two entrances into the building on W. Third Street and one entry on the N. Main Street elevation.

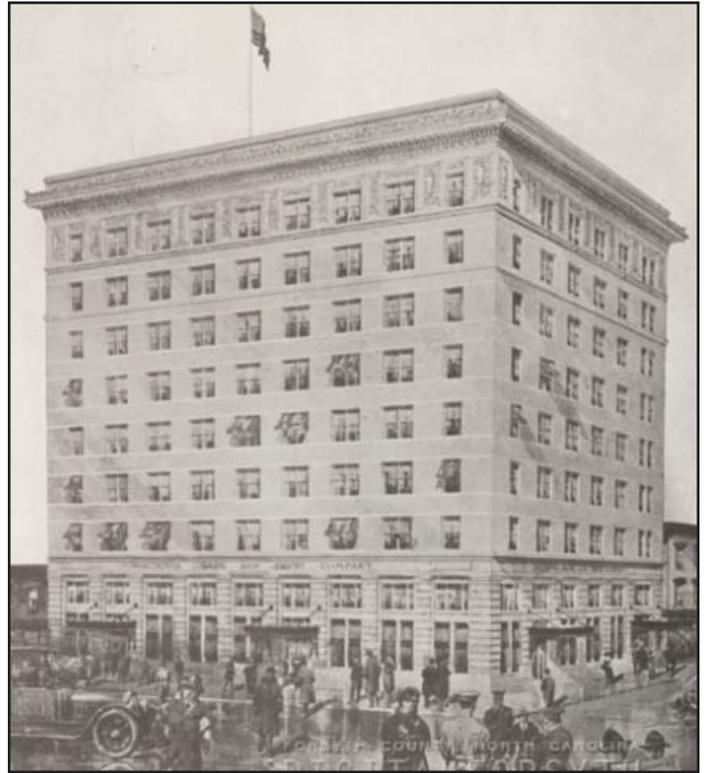
The entrances were protected by metal canopies supported by decorative iron brackets and iron chains.

In 1983, the building was rehabilitated, which in large part, restored the exterior to its 1918 appearance.

Today the (former) Wachovia Bank & Trust Company Building houses commercial uses, with street-level retail space.



Group of businesses in the block of West Third Street at Liberty Street, across from the Forsyth County Courthouse, 1961 (Wachovia Building is tallest building in photograph)
Courtesy of Forsyth County Public Library Photograph Collection



Wachovia Bank and Trust Company, 1918
Courtesy of Forsyth County Public Library Photograph Collection via Digital Forsyth (<http://www.digitalforsyth.org>)

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

(Former) Wachovia Bank and Trust Company Building
National Register Nomination

<http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/FY2163.pdf>

http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/nc_post&CISOPTR=3077&CISOBX=1&REC=4

http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/nc_post&CISOPTR=5426&CISOBX=1&REC=8



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