

# LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

## P.H. Hanes Knitting Company – Knitting Building

**Local Historic Landmark #121**

**675 N. Main St., Winston-Salem**

**Construction Date: 1920**

**Adaptive Rehabilitation Date: 2009**

**Landmark Designation Date: 05/07/07**

In 1872, Pleasant Henderson Hanes and his brother, John Wesley Hanes, came to what was then the town of Winston from Davie County, North Carolina. Together, the brothers first established a tobacco manufacturing enterprise. However, they sold the business in 1900 to the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company; the brothers then separately went into the textile business. John Wesley Hanes went into the manufacturing of stockings in 1901 (City of Winston-Salem Historic Marker #20, Shamrock Mills), while his brother opened an underwear manufacturing business in 1902 under the name P.H. Hanes Knitting Company.

Three buildings from the company's downtown Winston-Salem complex remain and are an important piece of the city's industrial heritage. They are among the few industrial buildings left in the downtown area from Winston-Salem's period of intense industrial growth. While there were hundreds of industrial buildings in the eastern blocks of downtown during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, now only a handful remain. The tobacco industry made up the largest part of the city's industrial production, but textiles were an important factor in the economy, as well.

The earliest of the three buildings comprising the complex is the Knitting Building, which was constructed in 1920. It was followed, in 1928, by the Mill Building (Local Historic Landmark #122). The third building remaining in the complex is the Warehouse & Shipping Building (Local Historic Landmark #119), constructed in 1940. These structures were built during a period of textile expansion in North Carolina that culminated in the explosive postwar growth of the company, when Hanes became a nationally-recognized brand.

One of the most architecturally-refined industrial buildings in Winston-Salem, the Knitting Building displays Beaux-Arts style details unusual among the city's industrial



*Knitting Building following rehabilitation*



*Knitting Building and water tank following rehabilitation*

Photographs courtesy of Heather Fearnbach

architecture. The six-story, flat-roof building is set back from N. Main Street and is constructed of reinforced concrete with brick curtain walls. The building is rectangular in shape and is stuccoed (unpainted on the upper portion of the north and east elevations) with bays marked by stuccoed pilasters. There are four bays along the north and south elevations, and eleven bays on the east and west elevations. The building features a molded, stuccoed cornice on the north, west, and east elevations; stepped parapets are found in three locations above this cornice. Cartouches exist at the northeast and southeast parapets. These emblems are marked with large "H" motifs. The north façade is the most decorative of the building. Here,

the stucco at the base of the building is formed into an ashlar design with horizontal bands and deeply incised horizontal joints. Above this base level is a narrow, molded band or belt. Also on the north elevation is an original entry. The entry is marked with an architrave supported by large, curved consoles.

In October of 1965, it was announced that the Hanes downtown plants would close at the end of the year. The closure of Hanes Knitting's downtown facilities was part of a national trend for removing industry from the city center in keeping with modern theories on efficient manufacturing practices. The Brown Rogers Dixon Company acquired the building from Hanes, and it was subsequently used by the company for warehousing and distribution of appliances throughout the Southeast.

In 2007, BRD Building, LLC, acquired the building and completed a sensitive adaptive reuse rehabilitation project in 2009, naming the building the "Winston Factory Lofts."

Today the Knitting Building houses upscale apartment units.



*Knitting Building prior to rehabilitation*  
Courtesy of Heather Fearnbach



## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

**P.H. Hanes Knitting Company**  
**National Register Nomination**  
<http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/FY3152.pdf>

<http://www.textilehistory.org/PHHanesCompany.html>

<http://www.hanesbrands.com/HBI/flash/hbi%20timeline%208.25.06.swf>

[http://www.flickr.com/photos/vintage\\_halloweencollector/2811758093/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/vintage_halloweencollector/2811758093/)



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