

Monroe County

HISTORY MUSEUM

Forsyth, Georgia

From the arrival of the "Ocmulgee" in 1838 to the last stop of the "Nancy Hanks" in 1971, railroads have played a critical role in the history of Forsyth and Monroe County. Today, the Monroe County Historical Society celebrates that heritage with its museum and archives located in two historic depots.

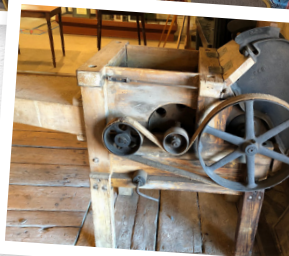
The earlier depot, made of stone and constructed in 1858, was the disembarking point for wounded and sick soldiers brought to the Confederate hospitals in Forsyth. In the building with its freight scales, bales of cotton were sent to national and international markets in the 19th century. Through its doors later came raw materials for Forsyth's nearby textile industries.

The second depot, constructed of brick under court order after Forsyth citizens sued the railroad, was finished in 1899. The Victorian Depot was designed by Bruce and Morgan, the celebrated Atlanta architectural firm, who also designed the Monroe County Courthouse.



In addition, a baggage room was constructed in 1917 to handle the luggage of the many passengers who came to and left from Forsyth for all parts of the United States. In the early 20th century, about 25 passenger and freight trains passed through Forsyth daily. Today, Norfolk Southern freight trains frequently pass but do not stop.

After the railroad no longer used it, the Forsyth Women's Club secured a lease on the brick depot. The Depot Players, a community theater group, used the building for such plays as "Wait Until Dark" and "Our Town." With the organization of the Monroe County Historical Society in 1975, the building became the home for its archival and artifact collections. Collections range from prehistoric and Native American artifacts to civil rights memorabilia to current events.



Today, visitors can explore this brick depot's exhibits reflecting the history of Forsyth and Monroe County. The society's archival collection is open to researchers interested in Monroe County and local family history.

The stone depot provides a meeting place for the Historical Society and various other groups. It also houses a display of memorabilia reflecting Bessie Tift College for women, that was across the railroad tracks from the depots under multiple names from 1849 until its closure in 1987.



MUSEUM ADDRESS

126 E. Johnston St.
Forsyth, GA 31029

MUSEUM HOURS

Wednesday through Friday:
9:00 AM until 4:00 PM, or
call 478.994.5070 or email
oldtrain.mchs@gmail.com
for appointments.

There is no charge to see the exhibits or to use the research materials. Donations are always appreciated.

mchsga.org

To learn more about Forsyth & Monroe County:
www.visitforsythga.com