

HISTORIC RESOURCES WITHIN MUNICIPAL LIMITS

JUN 2 1988

#7

OF FAIRHOPE, AL.
(Multiple Resource)

Owner: W. Guy Bagley
3228 Brookwood Road
Birmingham, Al. 35223

Historic name: Carl L. Bloxham Building
Common name: Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce

Location: 327 Fairhope Avenue

Verbal boundary description:

Begin at a point 283.85 feet west of the NW corner Fairhope Avenue and Section Street, thence run west 26.48 feet to a point, thence north 125 feet to a point, thence east 26.48 feet to a point, thence south 125 feet to the point of beginning.

Acreage: Less than one

UTM: A-16/413/260/3376/920

Date of Construction: 1932

Architect/Builder: M. Dyson & Co.

Statement of Significance

Period of Significance: 1932-1946

Criterion C-Architecture:

The Bloxham Building is significant as a rare Baldwin County example of the Art Deco style of architecture constructed by the prominent local contractor M. Dyson and Company. Built in two phases (1932 and 1946) as a real estate and insurance office, the Bloxham Building reflects the Art Deco style in its use of geometric florals, fluting, zig-zag motif along the roof line and smooth wall surface.

Integrity:

The Bloxham Building retains its integrity of location, design and materials. The building was constructed at two different times: the east half in 1946 and the west half in 1932. The exterior changes have been limited to new front doors and metal awnings (1986), both of which are sympathetic. New carpet, wallpaper and dropped ceilings are recent additions. Several interior doors are original and retain their hardware.

Description:

The Bloxham Building is located on the north side of Fairhope Avenue, in the middle of the block between North Church Street and North Section Street, in the commercial sector. Holland Pharmacy is stepped out to the east and the Courier Building is stepped back to the west. Pear trees and modern streetlights line the sidewalk and a modern kiosk sits at the west front. The Bloxham Building is a one story stucco on tile structure two bays wide with a flat roof. The facade has two glass windows with transoms and two front doors with transoms, all shaded by cut metal awnings over wood bracing. There is an additional entrance on the west side where the building is stepped out from the Courier office. This wooden door with window, transom and awning retains its original hardware. The west side and the center of the facade between the

plate glass windows, are fluted with a carved geometric floral above. There is a zig-zag motif along the roof line and "Carl L. Bloxham" is cut in the facade. A single shaft brick chimney is at the rear. The Bloxham Building is only two rooms deep and the Courier and the Pharmacy buildings extend well beyond its rear. The resulting space behind the Bloxham Building is occupied by a tiny courtyard and shed roof parking area.

The Bloxham Building has a simple plan of four rooms with no interior passageways. Each of the two front rooms has its own entrance and picture window. There is a brick fireplace at the west rear wall as well as a closet and rear exit. All rooms have wall to wall carpet, wallpaper and dropped ceilings.

Historical Summary:

By 1930 Fairhope was well established. The census for that year recorded 1540 people in the small community, up from 853 ten years before. The town had incorporated in 1908 and a gradual drift between the Single-Taxers and the city government continued, though relations were always cordial. In 1932 the Single-Tax Corporation turned over all the public parkland in Fairhope to the city government for maintenance and care. The rude frame stores in the commercial section of town were steadily replaced throughout the 1920s and 1930s by more substantial masonry structures including the two story brick Gaston Building (1924), one story stone Fairhope Post Office (1932), two story clay tile and stucco Bank of Fairhope (1928). It is within this context of more substantial masonry architecture that the Bloxham Building was constructed in 1932. Carl L. Bloxham came to Fairhope in 1923 and made his living selling bonds, real estate and insurance for which purpose he constructed the building. He also served as president of the Golf, Gun and Country Club during the 1930s. His office was built in the Art Deco style, the first in Fairhope to utilize this new style. In 1935 a hardware store followed suit on the same block. Though still extant, unsympathetic changes have severely compromised this structure. In 1946 the Bloxham Building was expanded with the addition of two rooms on the east side. The match is so close that without prior knowledge a single construction date seems obvious. Bloxham retired in 1953 and the building subsequently housed a variety of offices. Today it serves as the headquarters of the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce.



SECTION STREET

#7 Bloxham Building
#8 Postoffice-Courier Building
Fairhope, Alabama

