

Colonel C.P. Quattlebaum Office

903 Third Avenue
Conway, South Carolina 29526

The Colonel C.P. Quattlebaum Office is believed to have been built in 1860 for Dr. Joseph M. Harrell. It was originally located on Main Street. In 1876 it became the Conway law office of C.P. Quattlebaum who partnered with the law firm of W.D. Johnson and J. Monroe Johnson of Marion. In 1882 Col. Cephas Perry Quattlebaum purchased the building from Dr. Harrell.

On August 1, 1891 the first bank in Horry County, the Conway branch of the Bank of the Carolinas, which was based in Florence, SC, is thought to have opened "for the transaction of ordinary banking business" in the front room of Quattlebaum's law office. On May, 3 1893 a national financial crash began which is known as the Panic of 1893. As a result, on May 16, 1893 the doors of the Bank of the Carolinas and its branches were shut and never reopened. However, local oral history has it that the Conway branch never actually failed.

On May 26, 1893 the first locally owned bank in Horry County, the Bank of Conway, was formally organized in Conway. It was chartered on May 29, 1893 and began business on June 12, 1893 and was also located in the front room of Quattlebaum's law office. Col. Quattlebaum continued his law practice out of the rear office. This arrangement continued until 1899 when the Bank of Conway relocated to a new building on Main Street.

In 1898, Col. Quattlebaum became the first mayor, or Intendant, of the Town of Conway when it was incorporated. The Quattlebaum Office was moved to Third Avenue sometime around 1900 where it continued to be the law office of Col. C.P. Quattlebaum until his death in 1929. It then became the office of his son, Paul Quattlebaum. Paul Quattlebaum is responsible for first bringing electric lights to Conway in 1908. His company was later called the Quattlebaum Light & Ice Company and was located nearby on Kingston Street. Paul Quattlebaum's daughter, Laura Quattlebaum Jordan, bequeathed the building and the property that it was located on to the Horry County Historical Society in her Will in 1995. The property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In August 2002 the Horry County Historical Society began restoring the Quattlebaum Office with financial help from the City of Conway, The Conway National Bank and a matching grant from the U.S. Dept. of Interior. Every effort was made to stay true to the building's architectural integrity. It is significant locally as the only surviving example of downtown Conway's antebellum wood frame buildings, as the building which housed the first and second banks in Horry County from 1891 until 1899, and for its association with the Quattlebaum family from 1876 until 1995. Restoration was completed in July 2003. On August 1, 2003 the building was reopened as the Conway Visitors Center.

Ben Burroughs
September 6, 2003

Sources:

The Independent Republic Quarterly

National Register Nomination Form for the Col. C.P. Quattlebaum Office

So Much To Be Thankful For, The Conway National Bank and the Economic History of Horry County, by Dr. Roy Talbert, Jr.