

Gumbeaux's

When you look at the top of the building that now houses Gumbeaux's Cajun Café, you may notice the name Hutcheson and wonder "who is that?" If you found yourself asking that question, then you came to the right place. I'm Steve Jones from Community Relations and I'm here with Rylee Govoreau from the Conference Center and Tourism Department. We have a lot more history to share with you on our Audio Tour, so stay tuned while we tell you more on your tour to Discover Douglasville.

Rylee: Hey Steve! I'm looking forward to learning more. So, who is Hutcheson and why is their name on the building?

Steve: That's a great question. The building that is now occupied by Gumbeaux's Cajun Café was built in 1915 and once housed Hutcheson's Law Firm and even the U.S. Postal Service. From 1908-1910, Robert Hutcheson was the Mayor of Douglasville. During his time in office, he was actually able to bring electricity to certain areas of town. Robert Hutcheson was very supportive of different aspects of Douglasville. There were plenty of ads in the Douglas County Sentinel, a local paper, showcasing Hutcheson's Law Firm offering loans to farms when Hutcheson was a lawyer.

Rylee: Wow. Hutcheson does seem to have been helpful. What else did he accomplish?

Steve: I am glad you asked! Perhaps Hutcheson's most lasting accomplishment is the fact that he saw a need in education. Even after he served as Mayor, he did not stop helping others and he assisted in reestablishing the Douglasville library. He also saw that many African Americans were not given the equal opportunity in education, and because of this, he founded

Hutcheson High School, which was one of the few African American schools in Douglas County.

Rylee: Wow! That is surely a lasting accomplishment worth appreciating.

Steve: It sure is. After Hutcheson's Law Firm, the building was still used for a purpose that helped others, the U.S. Postal Service. Although many of us are now used to connecting with family and friends through social media, the postal service was the way people kept in touch with loved ones in the 1900's. One of the systems that was used to get mail from one town to another was called the railway mail service. This service would sort all the mail for each town, while at the same time moving on the railway. The workers had to be quick in order to get all the mail correct. Once everything was organized in the mail bag, the bag would be thrown out the train car door. While at the same time, postal workers would retrieve an empty bag that was put on a post right beside the train tracks. Can you believe all of this was happening while the train was moving? For many this was a perfect past time to watch!

Rylee: That is impressive. I feel like I learned so much that I've worked up an appetite. Want to eat at Gumbeaux's? I love their Creole Egg Roll appetizer.

Steve: Sure thing. Let's let the good times roll, or as they say in French, laissez le bon temps rouler! There's a lot of rich history in this area and more to still learn, so if you haven't listened to the whole Audio Tour yet, stay tuned and head to the next stop!