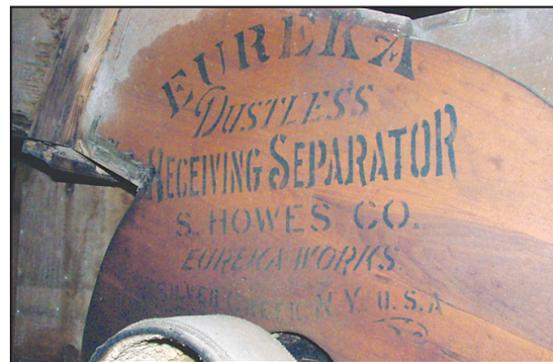


The Braselton News Features

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The former Enterprise Flour and Grist Mill is located at the intersection of Ga. Hwy. 53 and Frances Street in downtown Braselton. The building is about a century old and no one in the town knows how to use the mill equipment inside the building. Photos by Kerri Testement

Inside This Old Mill

Braselton building reveals hidden treasures

By Kerri Testement
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It's been quietly sitting in the heart of downtown Braselton for probably a century — but little is known about the former state-of-the-art mill.

Located at the intersection of Ga. Hwy. 53 and Frances Street — across from Northeast Georgia Bank — the Enterprise Flour and Grist Mill in Braselton was once considered one of the most modern operations for converting grain into flour.

While no one knows for certain when the three-story wooden building was constructed, writing from an old photo says the roller mill was built around 1900. Most likely, it was one of several businesses started around the turn of the 20th century by the town's founding brothers — the "3Bs" — who established the Braselton Brothers Store, just one block from the mill. It survived a tornado that hit the town in 1920, but destroyed the first Braselton High School a block away.

An article from *The Atlanta News* in 1907 describes the first full roller process flouring mill in Northeast Georgia.

"Their complete Murray ginning system is up to date and has a fine patronage, ginning from 800 to 1,000 bags every season," according to the article. "It is always a place of push and system and it infuses new life in one to visit there and see the wonderful accomplishments of these young men in the past few years."

A 1939 article from *The Jackson Herald* said the building contained "a wheat mill with the latest and best machinery that money can buy."

Herbert B. "Kit" Braselton, 89, remembers installing equipment in the roller mill — where self-rising flour was produced. "That was unusual for a rural



mill to make self-rising flour," he said.

The Braselton mill produced two brands, "Three Bs" and "Fast Flyer."

"People came from great distances for their wheat that they ground," Kit Braselton said.

The mill had a daily capacity of 50-70 barrels of flour and 300 bushels of meal, according to the 1907 *The Atlanta News* article.

Today, nobody in the town knows how the equipment in the Braselton mill was operated, said town manager Jennifer Dees.

Robbie Bettis, who has written a book about the history of Braselton and Hoschton, said it is believed to be the last mill in Georgia to make self-rising flour. The mill probably stopped operation in the 1950s.

"It's really in excellent shape for something as old as it is," she said.

Inside, it looks as though the old mill could start running again — the equipment remains virtually untouched, the belts appear strong and wheat dust from the last run decades ago is scattered throughout the building.

It is believed that John Braselton, who once lived in the residence that is now town hall, was the last person to operate the mill.

A tour of the building reveals

memorabilia of the decades from Braselton.

There's graffiti with a Bible verse written on a wall with a date of 1943.

Food boxes from the former Dado's Foods restaurant, which was demolished in 2004 to make way for a new Northeast Georgia Bank branch, litter the interior near a few windows.

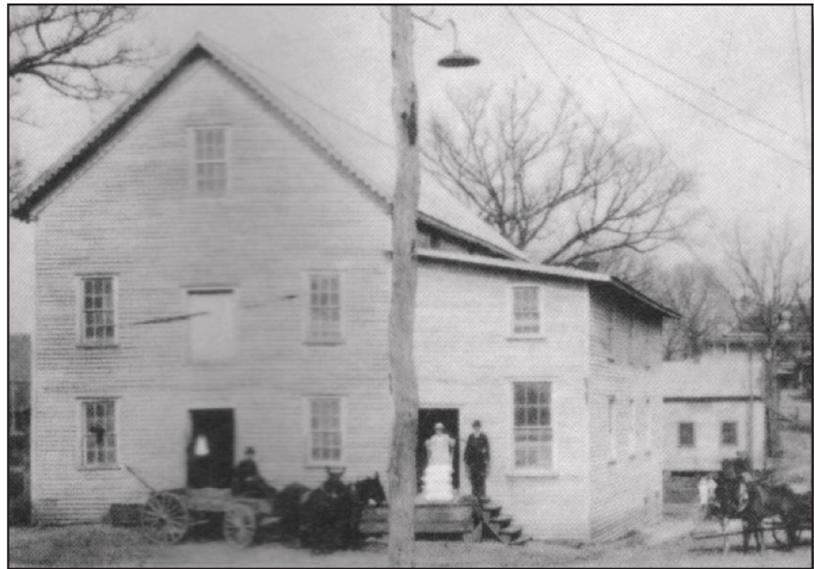
And there's plenty of beer cans from brands once popular in the 1970s.

For now, town officials plan to spend 2010 stabilizing the building and weatherizing it. The roof was replaced several years ago. The building won't be affected by the upcoming realignment of Ga. Hwy. 124 behind the Braselton Brothers Store, although an old telephone building near the structures will be relocated.

The town now owns the building, but officials haven't decided what — if anything — to do with the interior of the old mill.

"The exterior is relatively easy, but we've got to figure out what to do with the interior," said town manager Dees.

Another — and more well known — grist mill, Sells Mill, was opened in 1914. Jackson County bought the mill's property located on Jackson Trail Road in Hoschton in 2000 for a park and renovated the mill in 2005.



A Look Into Braselton's Past

This undated photo shows the Enterprise Flour and Grist Mill in Braselton. Writing on the photo says the mill was built around 1900. Notice the horse-drawn buggies and the man in the doorway with several bags of flour. The photo also shows the building before it was expanded on the left side.



Equipment from the former Enterprise Flour and Grist Mill remains unused in a Braselton mill (left photo), while a view from a staircase in the building shows Ga. Hwy. 53 and the former Braselton Brothers Store in the background (right photo).



Empty Chairs
Old office chairs sit empty in the former mill in Braselton. The mill was one of several businesses once operated by the town's founding brothers.



These small cups (left photo) are located on moving belts in chutes between floors of the old mill. There's also a room in the building that was apparently used to repair items in the mill, including plenty of additional cups.