

The History of Our Office

by Mark O'Brien, November 2009

I just read/listened to [Sarah's great post](#) about the soundscape of the Newfangled office and got inspired to write down a few things I've recently learned about our historic digs. When we had our last front porch social with BlogAds (our upstairs neighbors) the mayor showed up, and he told me the history of our building.

Our building was actually the first public building in [Carrboro](#). It was built because the train tracks happened to end at this location. They were supposed to continue on a half mile into Chapel Hill, but they ran out of funding so they stopped where they happened to leave off. The original use for the rail line was as a drop-off point for the local farmers to bring their cotton and tobacco. The man that happened to own the few hundred acre farm that abutted the tracks decided to build a building (our glorious office) to hold the offloaded wares overnight. Before long, he decided to outfit the building with the area's first steam engine. This was first used to power a cotton gin and later a grist mill--both of which resided inside the building. At some point between then and now more funding was acquired and today the rail continues on that half mile to a plant that powers UNC. The line is mostly used for coal transport to that plant.

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