

Building was modernized home for Garland Auto

Written by Chris Lee

It stood at the corner of West Denver and North Baxter for just over 81 years. The Spanish design was never redone or covered up, and the building looked just the same when it came down as it did over 80 years ago when it was built.

Tuesday, Dec. 21, 2010 was a day that drew the attention of many around Holyoke as they watched the old Baldwin building come tumbling down. A crew with Doug Sessions Construction of Wray was hired to remove the building and the adjoining buildings to the east.



A crew with Doug Sessions Construction of Wray began the demolition of the Baldwin building Tuesday, Dec. 21. The 1929 building, along with the buildings to the east, came tumbling down in less than two days. —Enterprise photo

Building first housed Garland Auto Company

In the summer of 1888, George W. Garland arrived in Holyoke from Chariton, Iowa and opened a small blacksmith shop. It was located on the lot to the north of where the Baldwin building stood. A couple years later he bought the lots where the power plant stands and built a shop

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there. In that shop, he went into manufacturing and turned out rod breaking plows. He later produced wagons and buggies.

On the corner where the Baldwin building stood, there was the Clemons eating house. It was used as the courthouse for many years and was later purchased by Garland where he worked on cars. Numerous cars were beginning to come into town, and Garland had a big business both locally and from those who traveled by car.

In a story focusing on Garland, published in the Sept. 9, 1929 issue of the Enterprise, it was reported when he began to work on vehicles, R.N. White bought a "Red Devil," R.C. Clark a Buick and C.E. Paul an Overland and were the first three cars in Holyoke.

H.L. Carpenter purchased the first Ford in the county from Garland and Miss May Mowry the first Dodge.

The business soon singled down to Dodge and Buick sales. Garland's son, George F. Garland and George B. Heginbotham purchased the business in 1920.

In February 1929, it was reported a small fire broke out in the Garland building on a sub-zero day. Although their hoses continuously froze while fighting the blaze, firefighters managed to contain the damage to the partition walls and the roof.

It was announced four months later in June that the Garland building would be razed to allow room for a brand new one to be built.

Anticipation was high for the new structure. "The plans call for a building 75x125 feet in size," an article in the June 3, 1929 issue of the paper said. "An attractive "drive-in" filling station will be situated on the southwest corner."

It also mentioned the building would be one of the most up-to-date garages in Colorado outside of Denver. "No other town in eastern Colorado has anything that will begin to compare with it."

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The cost of the razing and construction was estimated at \$16,000.

After its completion, the Spanish design of the structure drew the attention of people for miles and miles.



This photo, of the newly constructed building, appeared on the front page of the Sept. 9, 1929 issue of the Enterprise.

The Enterprise outlined the new building in the Sept. 9, 1929 issue and said, "Complete from one end to the other, and a revelation in every detail it tells the story of the completion of the most modern show room service station to be found anywhere in this section of the country regardless of the size of town.

"Even at a distance, the Spanish design attracts the eye, and at night it is a real attention compeller. The lighting effects are wonderful with the indirect lighting system employed both without and within.

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“Huge colored flood lights play upon the cars in the show room until there is offered the most unique and most elaborate demonstration of lighting effects ever staged in Holyoke by any business firm.”

Only four months after construction began, an informal opening was held, Sept. 14, 1929 to celebrate the new building.

It was reported thousands turned out to tour the facility. Over 2,000 balloons were given to children and flowers were handed out to the ladies. Over a thousand ice cream cones were served and a concert was held that evening.

One of the favorite parts for the kids was the electric fish pond. It was reported Dr. D.H. Montgomery arrived to the celebration from Denver with three speckled fish fresh from the mountain streams to put into the pond.

The pond had nothing to do with vehicles but added to the building’s already impressive decor. The same article outlining the new structure said, “Here again, the hand of a skilled electrician has played its part with a very striking result. While fish and rocks have but little to do with efficiency of automotive achievement, yet the fish and rocks contained in the electric pool are attracting about as much attention as any one feature about the entire building.”



Foy O’Neal and John Baldwin purchased the Garland Auto Company in 1951 and

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renamed it

O'Neal-Baldwin Chevrolet Company. O'Neal left three years later and the name changed to

John Baldwin Chevrolet Buick Company.

Baldwin Motors

John Baldwin and Foy O'Neal took possession of the dealership Sept. 1, 1951 and named the business O'Neal-Baldwin Chevrolet Company. O'Neal was a Chevrolet dealer from Oklahoma and Baldwin, an automobile expert from Denver.

Three years later in 1954, O'Neal left the business and Baldwin renamed it John Baldwin Chevrolet Buick Company.

The dealership was housed in the building until 1988 when Baldwin announced he had acquired the old Bugs Supply Building, currently housing Hassler Crop Insurance, just east of Holyoke. He stated space availability was a key factor in the move. An open house was held Dec. 2, 1988 at the new location.

Building sits vacant until demolition

The Baldwin building stood vacant from the time the dealership moved to the time current owners Paul and Teresa Mailander had it removed. Mailanders purchased the building in 1989.

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In the Nov. 8, 1962 issue of the Enterprise it was noted Holyoke Bakery moved to the building adjoining the Baldwin Motor Co. on the east. The portion to the east also housed Suhr Implement Co. and later, a recreation parlor and tavern. Baldwin also used it for storage.

Ray and Velma Swedlund purchased the buildings connected to the east of the Baldwin building in 1978 and owned them until 2006 when the Mailanders assumed ownership.

Over the years, numerous other businesses occupied the portion directly to the east of the Baldwin building. Businesses including NAPA, Woody's Pivot Service, Nelda O'Neal's antique store, Chamber of Commerce and Boyce's Custom Matting and Framing were a few. Deaver Hardware also used a portion as a shop and Dale Reimer had an office in the location.

The historic Baldwin building stood at the corner of West Denver and North Baxter for years, catching the eyes of those passing through Holyoke. The noticeable absence will linger until something new takes its place, although nothing is in the works as of yet, according to the Mailanders.