

In 1978, the Stayton Mail did a retrospective on Stayton, with a newspaper spread of old photos of buildings. My grandmother saved them and they're now in my "Basl scrapbook." The attachment is a very poor copy of a 35 year old newsclipping but it shows the original Star Theater (the arched entrance on the left with numerous steps leading up to it) with the Stayton Hotel next door to the south, both facing west onto Third Street. The current entrance of the Star Theater is about where the old entrance was, so the Hotel would have stood on the northeast corner of Third and Ida, where City Hall and Cammack Insurance now stand.

A little more about the Star Theater. My dad "mixed mud" for Joe VanHandel when he did the brick/stone work on the Star Theater expansion about 1949. According to Dad, when Marcel VanDriesche retired from teaching at Stayton High School, he went into partnership on the theater with Lawrence Spraker, editor of the Stayton Mail. At that time, the entry of the theater was about where it is now, but the theater auditorium was much smaller and ran east/west, i.e. from the 3rd Street entrance straight back toward the alley. After Mr. Spraker retired, Mr. VanDriesche expanded the theater, running it north/south from its 3rd Street entrance (along behind the present City Hall and Cammack Insurance office) toward Ida Street.

The Stayton Hotel must have been torn down before this time because Dad remembers that Karl Kreitzer had a gas station on that same corner for many years, which Karl later converted into a men's clothing store. Karl later moved his business across the street (into the space where Baldwin's used to have a clothing store) and expanded it. His old store eventually became Davis Darley Insurance and now Cammack Insurance.

Sharon Barnes, Stayton, 2011