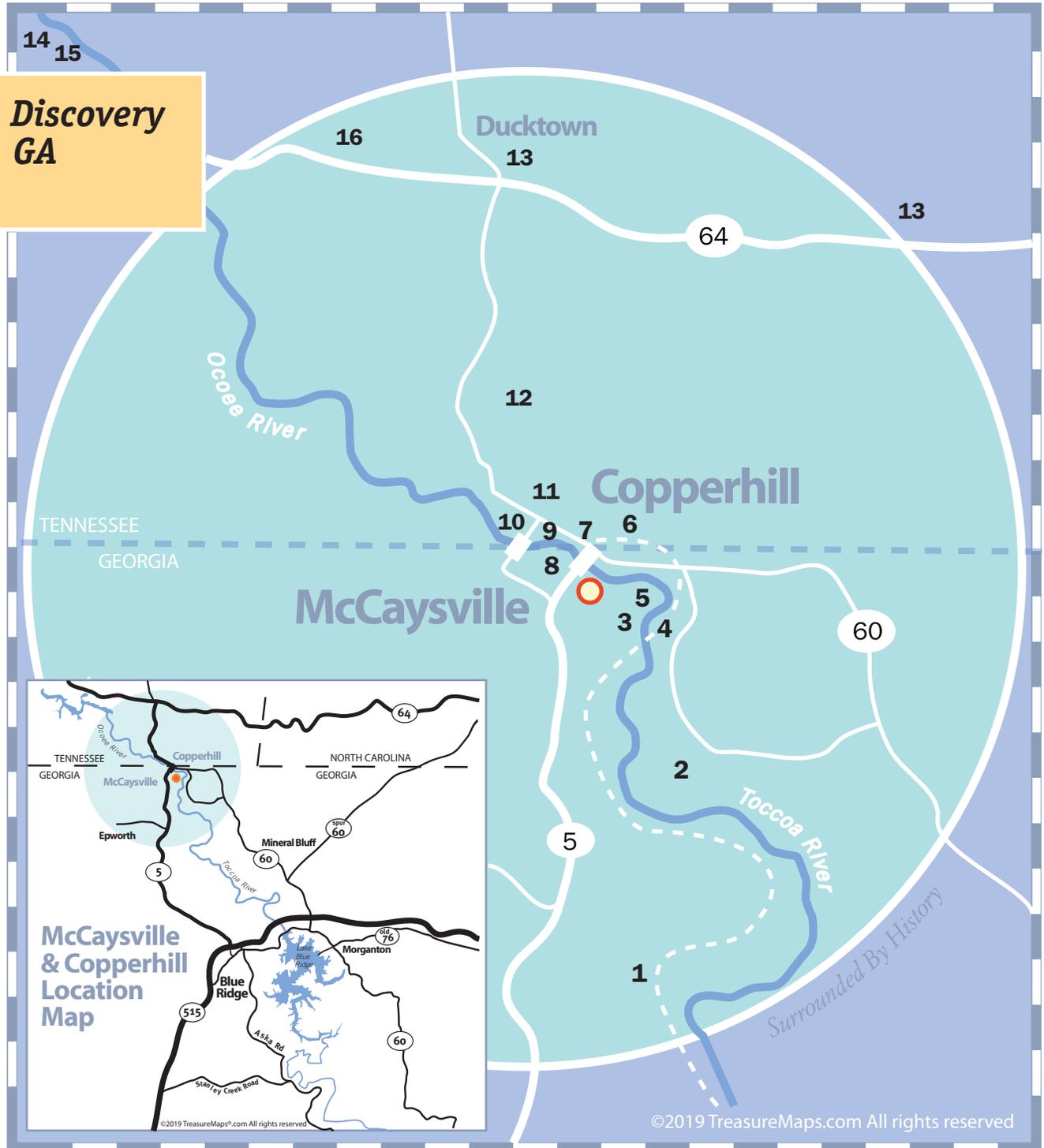


# #16

## Twin City Historic Discovery Tour: McCaysville, GA & Copperhill, TN

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#16

## Twin City Historic Discovery Tour: McCaysville, GA & Copperhill, TN

McCaysville, chartered in 1904, is located on the Georgia-Tennessee state line adjacent to Copperhill, Tennessee, its twin city. You can actually have one foot in Georgia and one foot in Tennessee when you cross the Blue Line marking the place where the states meet. Toccoa Avenue (Georgia) turns into Ocoee Street (Tennessee) while the Toccoa River becomes the Ocoee River under an old iron bridge built in 1911 and still standing.

Actually, Copperhill was originally called McCays and McCaysville was Hawkinsville! H.T. McCay bought a farm on the Copperhill side of the river and Aaron Matthews bought a farm on the McCaysville side. They built a ferry where the old river bridge is now and one operated it for one month and then the other.

**1 Blue Ridge Scenic Railway Line** The Blue Ridge Scenic Railway begins its journey at the Blue Ridge Depot and runs along the scenic Toccoa River to McCaysville. The rail line is more than 100 years old, but the last passenger train ran in 1960. The scenic railway began in 1998, and has since drawn more than 700,000 riders to the Blue Ridge/McCaysville area.

**2 Horseshoe Bend Park** A beautiful park with good trout fishing on the Toccoa River. From Blue Ridge take Highway 5 into McCaysville. Turn right onto Highway 60 then drive a short distance and turn right on River Road. The park has a playground, picnic pavilions and restrooms. Location for Pickin in the Park acoustic jam sessions on Thursday evenings, May through Sept. N 34°58.368' W084°21.566'

**3 Old Railway Bridge** As the Scenic Railway arrives in McCaysville, it crosses an old iron bridge over the Toccoa River on Old River Road near Horseshoe Bend Park. The riveted Baltimore truss bridge was built in 1926 by the L & N Railroad and later acquired by CSX and Georgia Northeastern Railroad. N 34°58'36", W84°21'34"

**4 Toccoa and Ocoee River Outfitters** Whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River is world class. Floating is cool fun. For a full current listing of whitewater outfitters see our website info: <https://www.blueridgemountains.com/things-to-do/outdoors/water-sports/>

**5 McCaysville City Park** McCaysville City Park at the edge of the Toccoa River is a great place for the kids to play and feed the ducks. Take Hwy 5 north to McCaysville. Turn right at the police station before the Toccoa River bridge and park is 2 blocks down on left.

**6 Railway Station** The Blue Ridge Scenic Railway arrives at the station from March to December, allowing time most days for passengers to enjoy lunch and shopping. Adjacent to the station is the Railway Gift Shop, also open seasonally. Ticket information, see [www.brscenic.com](http://www.brscenic.com) or call 706-632-8724.

**7 The Blue Line** The state line between McCaysville, GA (population 996) and Copperhill, Tenn. (population 511) has been in dispute for years, and even the blue painted line through the town is not definitive. However, the blue line is a great place to get your picture taken with one foot in Georgia and the other in Tennessee. It is located near the corner of Toccoa Avenue and Blue Ridge Drive and runs through the IGA parking lot.

**8 Concrete and Steel Bridges** The concrete bridge on Blue Ridge Drive, which leads to McCaysville shops and restaurants along the Toccoa River, was built in 1936. The Old Steel Bridge on Grande Avenue, crossing the Tennessee side over the Ocoee River, was built in 1911 on the site of an old ferry.

**9 Maloof Building** The Maloof Building stands at the corner of Grande Avenue & Ocoee Street in Copperhill. Once the home of Jones Drug & Confectionary Company's Ice Cream & Candy Parlor, this building has seen a number of occupants through the years.

**10 The Abernathy Building** The current location of El Rio Mexican Restaurant is called the Abernathy Building, built on the site of an earlier building that was destroyed by fire in 1916. The Abernathy family building housed a furniture store on the first and second floor in 1925 where they also sold hardware, dynamite, caps and fuses. On the top floor Luther Abernathy had a funeral parlor.

**11 Copperhill City Hall** Copperhill City Hall, built in the 1920's, is located on the corner of Grande Avenue and Ryder Street. City Hall is also the location of a landing for the Hiwassee River Rail Adventure passenger train, which runs from Etowah, Tenn. along the Hiwassee River, River Gorge and Rail Loop. For ticket information, call 877-510-5765.

**12 Tennessee Copper Company** Discovery of copper occurred in 1843 in an area now known as Ducktown. By 1847, it is recorded that 90 cakes of ore were transported over poor trails to the railroad at Dalton. In the spring of 1899 the Tennessee Copper Company began smelting works near McCays (Copperhill) and the town grew rapidly. Open smelting and close cutting of timber for fueling, together with harmful gases released, denuded the hills around Copperhill, making the area resemble a moonscape. In 1939, TVA and the Tennessee Copper Company began a long term reforestation project which helped restore the area. The Tennessee Copper Company plant area offers a sample of the way the Copper Basin was ravaged during the mining days.

**13 Ducktown Museum and Burra Burra Mine** Tour the grounds of this historic copper mine on Highway 68 in Ducktown and see exhibits depicting the mining heritage of the Tennessee Copper Basin. Call 423-296-5778 or on web [www.ducktownbasinmuseum.com](http://www.ducktownbasinmuseum.com)

**14 Ocoee Whitewater Rafting** The Ocoee has become one of the most popular rafting rivers in the country. Dam controlled water release means there will be enough water during times of drought and the Ocoee is just great fun. Dropping over 260 feet in five miles, there is little flat water on the whole river meaning nonstop action. With 14 rapids rated Class III-IV on the Middle Section. Outfitters on the Ocoee River put a guide in each raft making it suitable for beginners. Also, the State of Tennessee requires that each participant be 12 years old or older. Outfitters supply all necessary equipment, do a pre trip orientation and provide transportation to the river and back. However, you need to make a reservation as trips do fill up especially on weekends and during the summer. Many outfitters operate here, just go to [www.blueridgemountains.com](http://www.blueridgemountains.com) and see "Whitewater Rafting" for info.

**15 Ocoee Whitewater Center** The Ocoee Whitewater Center (OWC) site was constructed for the purpose of holding the 1996 Olympic Canoe and Kayak Slalom competitions. As part of the National Forest system, the Ocoee Whitewater Center is managed by the Forest Service as a multiple use recreational and educational complex. Consisting of a four-acre recreation area, the OWC offers water play, picnicking, hiking, biking, a nature-oriented gift shop, environmental education programs, a 7,200 sq. ft. visitors center, year-round special events, and provides the playground for whitewater rafting and kayaking. With a 30-mile hiking/biking trail system the OWC is quickly earning a reputation as having one of the premier mountain biking trail systems in the southeastern USA for both leisurely rides on a level double-track trail or a blistering high-speed race down a single-track trail. [www.fs.fed.us/r8/ocoeef/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/ocoeef/) N 35°03.961' W084°27.678'

**16 Ocoee Scenic Byway (Hwy 64/FS77)** Brilliant in the fall, the winding Ocoee Scenic Byway follows the Ocoee River past historic Ocoee flume lines and powerhouses to Cleveland, Tennessee.

**Main Welcome Center:** 152A Orvin Lance Drive, Blue Ridge, GA 30513 1-800-899-MTNS

**Caboose Visitor Center:** 230 Roberts Way, Blue Ridge

**Downtown McCaysville Visitor Center:** 53 East Market St.

[www.BlueRidgeMountains.com](http://www.BlueRidgeMountains.com)  
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