



Mast General Store

The store that has everything gets everything it needs from SkyLine/SkyBest



Original Mast General Store, located in Valle Crucis.

“If you can’t buy it here, you don’t need it.” This popular saying can be traced back to the Mast General Store, which tried to carry everything local residents might need — from cradles to caskets. Henry Taylor built the first of the store’s many rooms in 1882 in Valle Crucis, North Carolina, and the store opened for business in 1883. In 1897, half interest in the store was sold to W.W. Mast, and it was known as the Taylor and Mast General Store until 1913, when the remaining half of the enterprise was purchased by Mast.

For the next 60 years, the store was owned and managed by the Mast family. Operation of the store was passed from W.W. Mast to his son Howard, who passed it along to his son, “H.” The Mast family sold the store in 1973 to a doctor in Atlanta and a professor at Appalachian State University. Around that same time, the site was named to the National Register of Historic Places as one of the finest remaining examples of an old country general store.

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- Sheri Moretz, Community Relations Manager, Mast General Store

In November of 1977, the doors were closed presumably just for the winter season with hopes of reopening in April of 1978. However, plans did not pan out. Many residents of Valle Crucis banded together in an effort to save the old store and Exxon even helped with the drive to preserve the landmark. John and Faye Cooper purchased the Mast Store and reopened it in June of 1980. Since that time, the store has regained its reputation as “the store that has everything,” and there are now six retail locations besides the Original Mast General Store in Valle Crucis.

SkyLine/SkyBest has provided communications solutions to the Valle Crucis store since 1980. The Boone store will soon be added to the mix with SkyBest telephone service for its Norstar business system and other business lines, as well as high-speed broadband connectivity.

Sheri Moretz, Community Relations Manager of Mast General Store, is impressed with the customer service they receive from SkyLine/SkyBest. She says, “They’ve always been very responsive to our needs and find solutions to whatever situations we face — like linking together three of our locations that are separated by two miles so we can operate on the same phone system. Any request or problem that we’ve had has received prompt attention and resolution from SkyLine/SkyBest. I appreciate their personal service.”

Brent Keith, SkyLine/SkyBest Business Sales Executive, adds, “Now that the Mast General Store in Boone has added SkyBest fiber to their business, the possibilities are endless.” As endless, perhaps, as the variety of inventory you’ll find at the Mast General Store.

The Gathering Place

In times past, the general store was always the hub of the community. Residents would stop by to pick up the mail, chat around the stove, buy a few things for home and maybe barter some eggs or chickens. It was where people learned what was happening in the community— who was ill, who died, or who welcomed a new addition to their family through marriage or birth.

The Original Mast Store in Valle Crucis still serves as the post office for the Valle Crucis community. (This was one of the first things that residents asked for when John and Faye Cooper re-opened the store in 1980. When a community loses its post office, it’s not long until it loses its identity and spot on the map.) Today, there are about 200 P.O. boxes in the front room of the Original Mast Store where locals stop by daily to pick up their mail. Many stay to have a 5¢ cup of coffee, paid for on the honor system, or come at lunchtime for a “slug of bologna” and a Yoo-hoo drink. It’s also common for locals to bring their visitors from “off the mountain” to see the store and enjoy live music on the weekends, play a game of bottle cap checkers by the potbellied stove, or just browse the store’s vast number of items and see the memorabilia displayed on the walls.



Laurel Ridge makes a splash with campers.