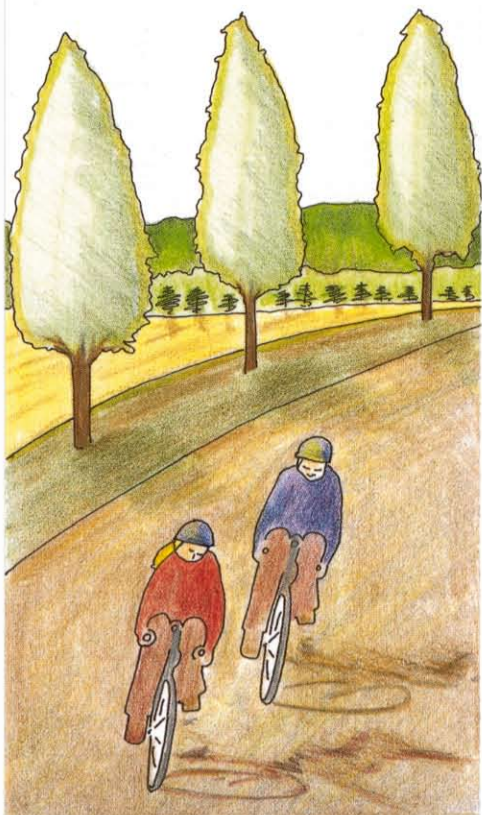


ALAMANCE COUNTY Bicycle Routes



Welcome to Alamance County

Alamance County, located in the central piedmont of North Carolina, sits an equal distance between the gracious old mountains of the Appalachian Range, and the wide sandy beaches of the Atlantic coast. The 428 square miles of gently rolling hills between the Stoney Creek and Cane Creek "mountains" cradle the quiet farm lands of the Haw River and stand guard over the historical remnants of Native American and colonial settlements along its tributaries. Meandering and crisscrossing the fertile green bottom lands of the county by bicycle is an historical journey through some of the South's most beautiful landscapes.

Alamance County is easily accessible by car today from all directions via Interstates 85 and 40. Two airports are within 45 minutes drive. Accommodations are plentiful in the major towns. Country stores in more rural areas are indicated on these maps.

Alamance County enjoys a mild climate year round, yet has four distinct seasons. Fall and Spring are the most scenic times to tour these back roads, although bicycling is a year-round sport in these parts. Fall is the driest season of the year, with clear, warm days and cool evenings extending into November. After November a pattern of passing storms followed by colder winter temperatures dominates the weather. July is normally the hottest and the wettest month of the year with an average maximum temperature of 87 degrees, although temperatures in the upper 90's are not uncommon. Hot, humid days punctuated by occasional afternoon thunderstorms can be expected in July and August.

An abundance of lightly travelled state maintained roads has made the creation of these 150 miles of bicycle routes possible, while some of the most scenic vistas of back country North Carolina make the adventure an opportunity not to be missed.



Illustration by Mark Smith

FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Alamance County
Recreation and Parks Department**
217 College St.
Graham, NC 27253
(919) 570-6780

**City of Burlington
Recreation and Parks Department**
1333 Overbrook Drive
Burlington, NC
(919) 222-5130

**The Burlington/Alamance
County Convention and Visitors Bureau**
P.O. Box 519
Burlington, NC 27216-0519
(919) 570-1444, (919) 570-1444

**Alamance
Battleground State Historic Site**
Hwy. 62 South
(919) 227-4785

Sword of Peace Outdoor Drama
Snow Camp, NC
Hwy. 87 South
(919) 376-6948

**Alamance County
Historical Museum**
L. Banks Holt House
Hwy. 62 South
(919) 226-8254

**The Southern Railway Depot
and Amphitheater**
200 S. Main St.
Burlington, NC (919) 222-5137

Bicycle Laws and Safety Tips

The bicycle has been legally considered a vehicle in North Carolina since 1937. Thus the bicyclist has full rights and responsibilities on the roadway and are subject to the regulations governing the operation of a motor vehicle, where applicable. North Carolina traffic laws require the rider of a bicycle to:

- Ride on the right, in the same direction as other moving traffic
- Obey all traffic signs and signals, including stop and yield signs and one-way directional signs
- Use signals to communicate intended movements
- Yield to pedestrians and emergency vehicles
- Equip the bicycle with a front lamp visible from 300 feet and a rear reflector which is visible from a distance of 200 feet at night

To insure a safe trip along the roads of Alamance County, follow the tips listed below:

- Always wear a bicycle helmet
- Use a backpack or bicycle bag to carry goods
- Avoid biking at night
- When riding with a group, ride single file
- Wear bright clothing to increase visibility
- Be sure your bicycle is the right size for you and keep it in good repair, checking for loose or worn parts regularly

Remember, the bicyclist always loses in a conflict with a motor vehicle. Ride defensively and in a predictable manner to avoid accidents. Be courteous to other drivers. Keep traffic flowing by helping motorists pass you in a safe manner.

Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation
North Carolina Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 25201
Raleigh, North Carolina
(919) 733-2804

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A History of Alamance County

Early Settlements

The rich bottom lands of the Haw River and its tributaries have, for centuries, attracted human settlement and sustained Native American and European populations. The Indian Trading Path, described by early explorers and traders, extended from Virginia to South Carolina; entering Alamance County in the northeast, near what is now the town of Mebane, and crossing the Haw River near Swepsonville. At Swepsonville, where Great Alamance Creek and the Haw River meet, the Path forked. Both trails continued west, one traveling down through the Cane Creek Mountains, and one crossing through the fertile bottom lands between Great Alamance creek and Stinking Quarter creek. The trail was used both by Native Americans and Virginia traders who traveled south to trade with the Catawba Nation.

The largest of the Native American settlements, the Sissipahaw, farmed the fertile lands but relied mainly on wild game for food. Plentiful deer, quail, rabbit, turkey, and an occasional buffalo sustained these early Native American settlements between the Haw and Eno Rivers.

Native Americans had migrated out of the area by the 1720's when the first permanent European settlers began to arrive, attracted by cheap, fertile land, and an absence of hostile tribes. Linked by religion, proximity, and ethnicity, small groups of families began settling in the Cane Creek Valley in 1750. The Quakers who established themselves at Snow Camp in the Cane Creek Valley were Irish and English in origin. The Hawfields area in eastern Alamance County attracted Scotch Irish Presbyterians, who developed their own community. German families of the Lutheran or Reformed faiths settled along the Stinking Quarter and Alamance creeks in the western tributaries of the Haw River.

Early Immigrants

Many of the pioneers who arrived in the 1700's were the newly arrived immigrants traveling south down the Great Wagon Road from Pennsylvania. Turning east off the Wagon Road into the Carolina back country, families found rich lands waiting to be farmed.

But settlers to the area found that although the lands they had found were fertile and cheap, local representatives of the owners in England were corrupt, inefficient and distant. Taxes were high, and it was difficult to secure land titles. In the Spring of 1771 William Tryon, the Royal Governor, was forced to raise an army to fight what became The War of Regulation. Small groups of angry colonial farmers organized to join the Regulator cause against eastern aristocratic colonial administrators who represented the interests of England. Although the Regulators were defeated at the Battle of Alamance, it illustrated that colonial settlers were capable of armed conflict with the local and provincial governments. When the present day county boundaries were established in 1849, the name Alamance was chosen for the new county to commemorate the Battle of Alamance.

Today visitors can see the preserved battleground and learn more about the area's history at the **Alamance Battlefield and Museum** off Highway 62, on bicycle Route 74.

The American Revolution became a partisan battle with loyalties divided locally between the Whigs and Tories, fought fiercely by both sides across the county. When Lord Cornwallis and his army entered North Carolina in the Fall of 1780 to recruit loyalists soldiers, he was able to raise three or four thousand men for his army but faced skirmish after skirmish with local militia. Following his success at the Battle of Guilford County, Cornwallis and his forces were forced to retreat south through Snow Camp toward Wilmington.

In the four-hour Battle of Lindley's Mill Whig and Tory armies left 150 dead and wounded for the Quaker community of Cane Creek to bury as the Revolution dragged on.

Early Communities

With the end of the Revolution and years of civil and partisan warfare, the families of the area were able to finally concentrate on developing communities and cultivating their farmlands. Cotton, grains, tobacco, pork and beef were raised for local consumption as transportation barriers made large scale production and regional distribution of these goods difficult.

Whereas the rich bottom lands along the Haw River and its tributaries attracted the area's first permanent settlers, the rolling terrain along the river and its tributaries provided ample dam sites for water power necessary for the construction of saw mills and grist mills as communities grew.

The population of the area continued to grow in the 1800's, and in 1849 the new county of Alamance was created. Local officials were elected and 75 acres were purchased to begin building a courthouse and jail for the new county seat. In January of 1851 Graham became the first incorporated town in Alamance county.

Today the Graham Historic District, centered around the original courthouse square, includes interesting examples of the town's antebellum buildings and well-preserved residences from the late 19th century.

The Early Textile Industry

The first cotton mill was built in 1832 by John Trolinger on the site of his grandfather's grist mill on the Haw River, and the family began selling coarse yarn to local weavers. By 1837 the Holt mill was built on Alamance Creek, a tributary of the Haw. By 1847 the mill was producing cotton cloth. In 1853 the mill began producing commercially dyed cotton plaids after a destitute but skilled Frenchman arrived in the area. For room and board plus one hundred dollars, the Frenchman taught Thomas Holt, future governor of North Carolina, how to dye cotton yarn.

The present day textile industry of North Carolina, still the backbone of local economies, continued to grow in the years before the Civil War as textile families added new technologies, merged, expanded and continued to build new mills.

Today's bicycle routes pass a number of mill village sites on the National Register of Historic Places, including Altamahaw Mill Office, Glencoe Historic District, and Belmont Historic District. All are shown as Points of Interest on the Alamance County bicycle map.

The Railroad Years

The building of a railroad between Charlotte and Goldsboro in 1855 bisected Alamance county east to west. Burlington, now the county's largest city, was built on land west of the town of Graham by the railroad for company housing and railroad maintenance operations. The extensive building program for what was originally called Company Shops included roads and houses, a foundry, a dry kiln and blacksmith shop, and a carpenter shop, all designed to be part of a new self contained community for employees, typical of company towns in the 19th century.

The restored Southern Railway Passenger Depot, now maintained by the Burlington Recreation Department, continues to offer visitors a reminder of the important role railroads played in the development of the area.

Bicycling into the 20th Century

Will Holt, son of the textile mill family of Holts, was known better as an avid sports enthusiast than as heir to the family's booming textile businesses. In 1891 he had brought the first "safety" bicycle to Graham, which he rode far and wide across the countryside. Later that year he pedaled his new bicycle eighty miles between Graham and Fayetteville, on the Old Plank Road. His enthusiasm later led him to ride to Philadelphia and New York city.

Truly Alamance County's first bicyclist, Will Holt and his bicycle foreshadowed a future in which cyclists are able to spend many pleasurable hours pedaling the back roads of the county, experiencing the rural beauty of piedmont, North Carolina.



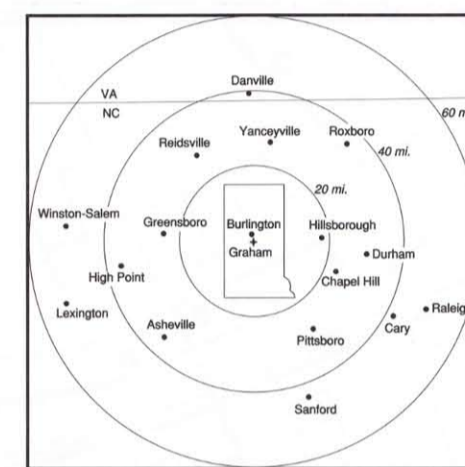
About the Routes

Today, getting around by bicycle is relatively easy compared to the undertakings of Will Holt. Smooth paved roads connect communities and points of interest throughout the county, and Alamance County's gently rolling terrain and scenic vistas across rural farmlands invite exploration by bicycle.

Tying together the tobacco farms of the north, the dairy lands of the south, the historic mill villages along the Haw River and the growing communities of the central urbanized area, these routes provide a wonderful back roads glimpse of the beauty of Alamance County.

The maps and information in this brochure provide everything you need to know to plan your trip. Included on these maps are the highlighted routes, locations of major points of interest such as recreational areas and historic sites, and the locations of country stores and camping areas. In addition, busier portions of the routes where special care should be taken are indicated with asterisks. Communities where additional services such as restaurants and grocery stores are indicated with a star. Enlargements are provided to help you find your way through the more urbanized areas. A chart showing the distances between towns and major points of interest, via the routes, is also provided.

The six bicycle routes, which cover more than 150 miles of the county are marked with green and white numbered bike route signs, as shown above. "Share the Road" signs have also been placed in areas where motor vehicle traffic is heavier than desirable. These warning signs are meant to alert motorists to the presence of bicyclists and to remind drivers that bicyclists have a legal right to ride on the road. Cyclists should remember to be courteous to drivers and not to block the road by riding side by side along these routes.



For information on local bicycle activities contact:
Burlington Bicycle Advisory Commission
C/O Burlington Planning Department
P.O. Box 1358
Burlington, NC 27216
(919) 222-5110

For safety information and detailed maps of these and other cross-state, local and regional bicycle routes contact:
North Carolina Department of Transportation
Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation
P.O. Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611
(919) 733-2804



Graham Historic District

⑥ This historic district reflects the origins and development of the town of Graham as a courthouse town of the mid-19th century. The square includes a Neoclassical courthouse built in the 1820's, on the site of the original 1848 brick courthouse. Graham's courthouse square is ringed by late 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings characterized by their ornamental brickwork. A small number of antebellum domestic buildings and elaborately adorned residences date from the late 19th century. To the west of the district center is an intact area of well-preserved, 19th century houses, along W. Elm St.

Graham Municipal Park

⑦ This park provides athletic fields, picnic shelters, a playground, a basketball court, tennis courts, log cabin and a walking trail. Call (919) 227-9109 or 228-8362 for information.

Points of Interest

Elton College Historic District

① The historic core of Elton College campus contains some of the oldest remaining campus buildings from 1923-1927. The district contains brick constructed college buildings of Colonial and Georgian Revival design. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Burlington Historic District

② The architecture of the West Davis Street-Fountain Place District is a superb display of the variety of building types and styles that characterize Burlington's residential neighborhoods from the late 19th century through the 1930's. The approximately 160 primary structures in the district range from traditional vernacular one-story frame cottages to some of the town's finest examples of Queen Anne and early period revival styles through a strong collection of bungalows and "period houses."

Downtown Burlington Historic District

③ This area encompasses what is the historical nucleus of Burlington's central business district since the town's founding as a railroad repair depot and planned community at the end of the 19th century. The oldest building dates from 1885. The district is anchored to the north by the **Southern Railway Passenger Station**, built in 1892. In the south the district includes the Rath Hosiery Mill, a remaining example of the town's once prolific textile mills and evidence of the town's rise as one of the preeminent textile producing communities in the country.

The Historic District provides examples of vernacular architecture styles common to the central business districts of North Carolina communities like Burlington. Building styles include Neo-Gothic Revival, Classical Revival, Art Deco, and Moderne.

Burlington City Park

④ This fifty-six acre city park includes athletic fields, pool, miniature train, picnic shelter, concessions and historic carousel. The Dentzel Menagerie Carousel is the park's centerpiece. The Carousel has 46 hand-carved animals, and no two are alike. Now on the National Register of Historic Places, it is only one of four remaining carousels of its kind in the world. Hours vary. For more information call the Burlington Recreation and Parks office at (919) 222-5030.

Southern Railway Depot

⑤ The Southern Railway Passenger Depot, now operated by the Burlington Recreation and Parks Department, remains a reminder of the important role the railroads played in the development of the area. The Depot is now operated as an art gallery and civic center. Call (919) 222-5132 for more information.

