

## The Routes

Stanly County provides almost ideal conditions for bicycling. Miles and miles of quiet two-lane roads wind their way over gently rolling hillsides. Grazing cows, fields of corn, wheat, and cotton, and, stands of tall oaks and pines dot the landscape. Quiet towns and rural crossroads provide inviting places to stop for a refreshing break. Tying this all together is the 187-mile system of bicycle routes highlighted on the map on the reverse.



There are four signed bicycle routes, which total 153 miles; a loop around the perimeter of the county, two north/south routes, and an east/west portion of the cross-state

Piedmont Spur. These routes are marked with signs like the one shown to above.

In addition, 34 miles of unsigned connector routes are marked on the map to show "short-cuts" between routes and more good places to ride.

The descriptions below will help you plan your trip. Information on the length and special features of each route, and the towns and points of interest they connect is provided. Refer to the Points of Interest section on the reverse for more detailed information on what to see and do in these areas.

### Route 1: 20 miles

This north/south route connects Badin, Albemarle, and Aquadale, intersecting with Route 2 at both ends and with Routes 3 and 6 in the Albemarle area. Most of the route is along lightly traveled country roads. *Extra caution is recommended around Badin and Albemarle, where traffic is somewhat heavier.*

Just north of where this route begins is a recreation area on Badin Lake, a good place to start or end your trip. Picnic tables and a swimming beach invite you to linger. You may also want to take time to explore the town of Badin and enjoy the charming French Colonial architecture.

After a short ride through scenic countryside, you will reach Albemarle. Check out the local points of interest; follow the self-guided Historic Downtown Walking Tour; sit awhile at Courthouse Square Park and watch the world go by; or, head to a local restaurant for a bite to eat.

The route ends in Aquadale, originally established in 1913 as a resort area called Rocky River Springs. Health seekers from around the state arrived by train to drink the healing waters.

### Route 2: 84 miles

This is a perimeter route connecting Misenheimer, New London, Badin, Morrow Mountain State Park, Norwood, Aquadale, Oakboro, Stanfield, and Locust. This long winding route takes you through farmland and forests, past cotton fields, through quiet towns and crossroads communities, past historic country churches and cemeteries, and along the shaded shoreline of Lake Tillery. Route 2 intersects with the other three signed routes and several unsigned connectors providing many opportunities to create shorter rides and more direct connections to your destinations.

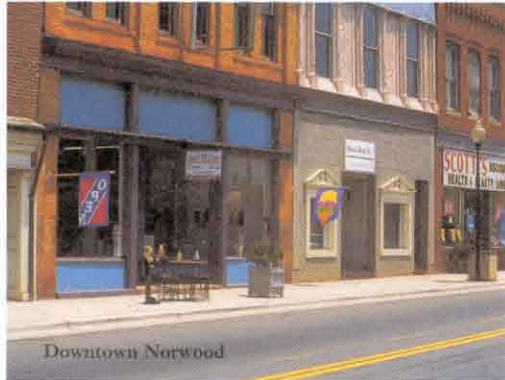
Starting near the top of the loop, the route passes through Misenheimer, home to picturesque Pfeiffer University. At the turn of the 20th century, vacationers arrived here by train to visit nearby Misenheimer Springs, known for its healing waters.

Heading south, you reach New London, once a thriving gold mining town. Not too far away, at the Cotton Patch Gold Mine, you can try your hand at panning for gold. The next stop is Badin, established in 1913 by the owners of the French company, L'Aluminium Francaise. Take a break in this quaint town or head to Badin Lake, an inviting place to have a picnic or take a swim. South of Badin is Morrow Mountain State Park, 1.5 miles off the route. Spend a few hours or spend the night. There's camping, swimming, hiking, fishing and other recreational facilities in the park as well as the historic Kron House.

Continuing south, Route 2 intersects with Route 6 at Highway 27/24/73. *Extra caution is required on this busy 1-mile section of the route.* Leaving the cars behind, you soon reach the shores of Lake Tillery and the town of Norwood. Charming Main Street provides a good rest stop as does Norwood Park, a few blocks away.



Whitley Mill



Downtown Norwood

Leaving Norwood, the route bends west, taking you to Aquadale, Oakboro and Stanfield, then north to Locust. All

four towns offer good rest stops. Further north just past the intersection of Route 2 and Route 6 is Whitley Mill. This is the only remaining intact 19th century water-powered mill in the county. The last leg of the route takes you back to the Misenheimer area. *A short section of the route along Highway 49 requires extra caution.*

A bike ride along Route 2 provides a unique perspective on Stanly County's past and present.

### Route 3: 25 miles

This north/south route connects Richfield, Albemarle and Oakboro, traveling through beautifully wooded areas and rolling farmland. It intersects with Route 2 at both ends and with Routes 1 and 6 in Albemarle. Short portions of the route through Albemarle are along busier roads and require special caution.

Albemarle provides a good rest stop half way along the route. *Take some time to explore the history of the town, enjoy a meal or relax at one of the many parks in the area.*

### Route 6: 24 miles

Route 6 through Stanly County follows a portion of the cross-state Piedmont Spur, a 200-mile route from Morganton in the west to Snow Camp in southern Alamance County. This west to east route traverses gently rolling terrain with an occasional steep hill.

The halfway point on this route is Albemarle. Interesting historic sites, shady parks and good places to eat make this an ideal place to stop for a break.

Maps of the complete Piedmont Spur route and other cross-state and local routes are available from the Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, PO Box 25201, Raleigh, N.C. 27611, (919) 733-2804.

## The Uwharries

### Ancient Mountains

Five hundred million years ago, Stanly County and the nearby Uwharrie Forest area were part of a great sea containing numerous undersea volcanoes. These volcanoes erupted and brought forth tons of lava that piled onto the ocean floor and eventually rose above the ocean creating a series of islands.

The beautiful blue stone now dominating the geological profile of the area resulted from the volcanic ash forming muddy sediments in the quiet bay areas surrounding the volcanic islands. During the latter part of this era, still millions of years before the Age of the Dinosaurs, the pressures and shifting from inside the earth began to cause folding and uplifting to occur. This resulted in a mountain range believed by some to have been even more magnificent and towering than the great Rocky Mountains.

Over time, the sea disappeared, and the lofty mountains originally created by those undersea volcanoes weathered. Today there are a few remaining peaks to remind us of what was once here. All the peaks are under a 1,000 feet and covered with rhyolite, an extremely hard and smooth volcanic product. Cone-shaped mountains protected by rock, like Morrow Mountain and others in the Uwharries, are called monadnocks.

The rhyolite on these monadnocks originally occurred as massive chunks and boulders, but for thousands of years, the Native Americans who traveled through the area chipped away at these boulders in order to get rhyolite to make arrowheads and stone tools. Archaeological evidence has established that Native Americans inhabited this area from 12,000 BC.

What was once a towering mountain range is now a tranquil series of low hills, falling to fertile farmland. Rising above the Yadkin River, the Uwharries create a striking backdrop for the bike routes that follow the quiet country lanes through the area.

## Bicycle Laws

In North Carolina, the bicycle has the legal status of a vehicle. This means that bicyclists have full rights and responsibilities on the roadway and are subject to the regulations governing the operation of a motor vehicle. North Carolina traffic laws require bicyclists to:

- Ride on the right in the same direction as other traffic
- Obey all traffic signs and signals
- Use hand signals to communicate intended movements
- Equip your bicycle with a front lamp visible from 300 ft. and a rear reflector which is visible from a distance of 200 ft. when riding at night

## Safety Tips

- Ride defensively and in a predictable manner
- Wear a bicycle helmet every time you ride your bike
- Avoid riding at night
- When riding in a group, ride single file
- Wear bright clothing to increase visibility
- Be courteous to other drivers
- Keep traffic flowing by helping motorists pass safely

## Resources

**Albemarle Parks and Recreation Department**  
PO Box 190  
Albemarle, NC 28002  
(704) 984-9560

**Stanly County Chamber of Commerce**  
116 E. North Street  
Albemarle, North Carolina 28001  
(704) 982-8116

**Stanly County Museum Visitor Center**  
245 E. Main Street  
Albemarle, North Carolina 28001  
(704) 986-3777

**Morrow Mountain State Park**  
49104 Morrow Mountain Road  
Albemarle, North Carolina 28001  
(704) 982-4402

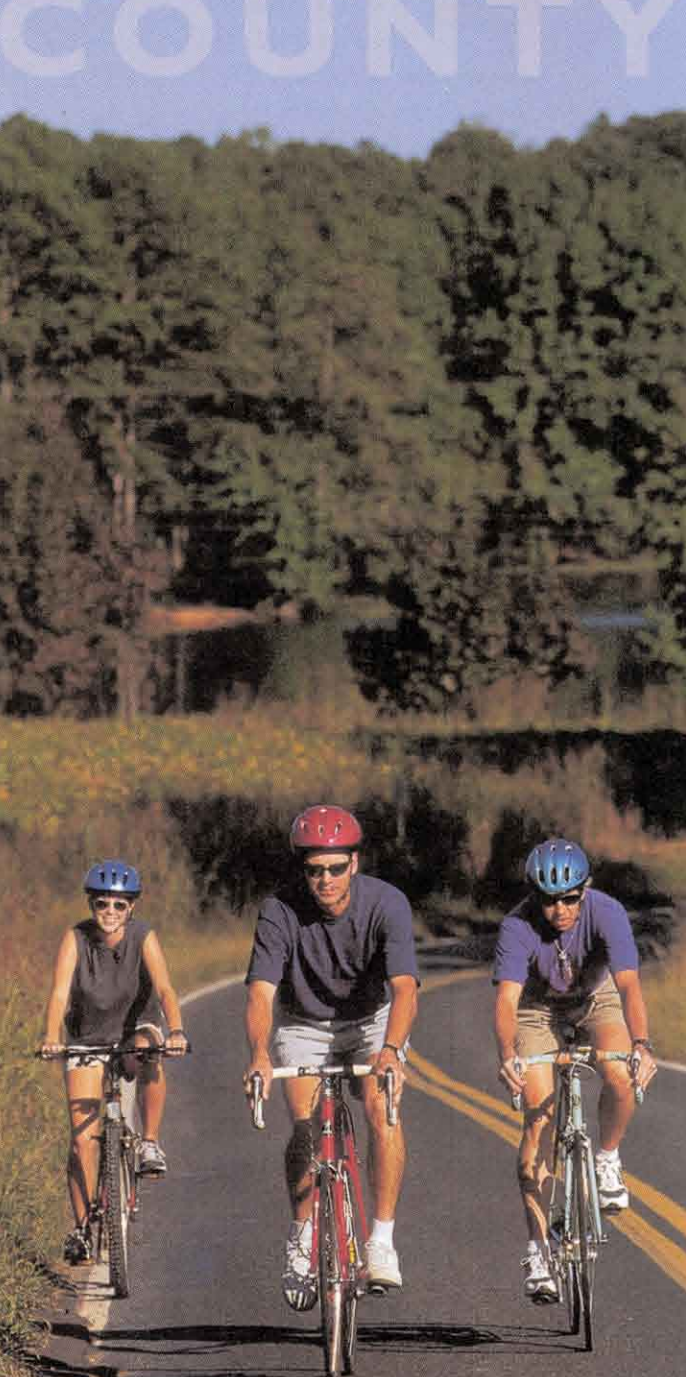
**Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project**  
48 Falls Road  
PO Box 338  
Badin, NC 28009  
(704) 422-3215

**Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation**  
PO Box 25201  
Raleigh, NC 27611  
Phone: (919) 733-2804  
Fax: (919) 715-4422  
Email: bikeped-transportation@mail.dot.state.nc.us

Contact the Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation for maps of cross-state, regional and local bicycle routes, additional information on laws and safety tips, an annual calendar of bicycle events and listings of North Carolina bicycle shops and clubs.

This map was produced in conjunction with the Albemarle Parks and Recreation Department. Funding for this Enhancement Project was provided through the NC DOT Transportation Improvement Program. 2,000 copies of the map were printed on recycled paper at \$.49 a copy and are distributed free of charge. Published January 2000.

# BICYCLING



North Carolina Department of Transportation  
Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

## Stanly County: Land Between the Rivers

Rich with resources and natural beauty, this region was known as the "land between the rivers" by early inhabitants. When Stanly County was carved out of Montgomery County in 1841, these rivers provided natural boundaries. Flowing south through the Uwharrie Mountains, the Yadkin joins the Pee Dee to form the county's eastern border while the southern border is outlined by the shallow Rocky River. Together with other primary creeks and streams that flow through the gently rolling farmland of the region, these beautiful waterways have set the pace of life and development in the area.

Archaeological excavations show that Native Americans settled the area near the Yadkin River Narrows in north-eastern Stanly County as early as 12,000 BC. These Indian peoples were hunter-gatherers who traveled widely following the herds of animals they hunted. They stopped at what is known today as the Hardaway site, which was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1991. High above the Yadkin River, this site provided a natural defense position to a succession of Siouxan Indian tribes who came for the abundant fish and game as well as the rhyolite rock used to make tools and weapons. The earliest farmers in the region were the Woodland Indians. From approximately 500 AD to 1550 AD, they lived in permanent villages along the river making pottery and hunting with bows and arrows. By the early 1700's, most Native American peoples were gone from the area. Factors that led to this rapid decline were migration, both voluntary and forced; warfare; and diseases brought by Europeans, against which Native Americans had no defenses.

European settlers first came to this area in large numbers around 1750. Many of them were German and Scotch-Irish immigrants who left Pennsylvania and came south in search of better farmland. Others arrived from the eastern Carolinas, the Chesapeake region and neighboring Anson and Mecklenburg Counties. Most of them settled along the county's rivers and creeks where the well-drained alluvial soil provided fertile land, and the rivers provided a ready supply of fresh water for drinking, watering livestock, and irrigating their crops. In this frontier region, where there were few roads, the rivers also supplied a means of transportation. By the late 1700's, ferrymen using poles to steer

flat-bottom boats against the current were a common sight on the Pee Dee River. Dozens of water-powered mills were built along the abundant waterways to process lumber and to grind wheat and corn into feed and flour.

During the late 1700's and early 1800's several roads were built through the area: the King's Highway, from Salisbury, through Stanly County, to the port city of Charleston; the Old Stagecoach Road from Charlotte to Hillsborough; and, the Market Road from Salisbury to Fayetteville. Small settlements grew up where these roads intersected with the ferry crossings of the Pee Dee River.

Throughout the history of Stanly County, the waterways have not only defined the county, they also served to isolate it from much of the industrial development in surrounding counties. From approximately 1750 through 1890, subsistence farming dominated the economy. Living close to the land, farm families relied on nature to provide their daily sustenance, for building materials, and even for the fibers and dyes they used to make clothing. Not until the development of the textile industry and the coming of the railroad in the late 1800's did these patterns begin to change. Consequently, until the early 1900's, the county was still dominated by family farms and small rural industries.

Today, Stanly County has a good balance of commerce, agriculture and industry. Numerous family farms, some of which have been in continuous family ownership for five generations, still dot the countryside. The textile industry continues to be a major employer. The Aluminum Company of America still operates a plant at the Yadkin River Narrows, as it has since 1915.

Charming towns, abundant recreational opportunities and friendly people combine to make this area a special place to live and visit. Traveling by bicycle along the quiet back roads affords an opportunity to experience the best of what Stanly County has to offer.

## Points of Interest

### Albemarle

In 1841, Albemarle was established as the county seat of Stanly County and was incorporated as a town in 1857. Throughout most of the 19th century, Albemarle provided valuable services to the surrounding rural communities: blacksmith and saddle making shops, food and dry good stores, doctors, and lawyers.

In the late 1800's, the rail lines came into Albemarle, bringing with them the opportunity for industrialization, more specifically, the textile industry. Today, you can catch a glimpse of a turn of the century mill village in the Wiscasset Mills Complex and Eflord Manufacturing Company Mill Village areas along Franklin, North First and North Depot Streets. Here you will see the well-kept bungalows built for the mill workers, the more imposing homes of the superintendents, the church that served the mill community, the site of the old Wiscasset School, and Cannon Park, the recreation area built for the mill workers. This historically preserved area is an outstanding example of the paternalistic social structure common to North Carolina textile communities in the early 1900's. This area, as well as other interesting sites, is detailed in the brochure "Historic Downtown Walking Tour," available at the Visitor Center (see below).

*The restoration of the historic rail depot in Albemarle is presently under way and will include a bicycle center with information and facilities for cyclists.*

### Stanly County Museum Visitor Center

At the bottom of the hill on Main Street in downtown Albemarle you'll find the Stanly County Museum Visitor Center run by the County Historic Preservation Commission. The museum houses a permanent exhibit detailing the economic and social development of the county; artifacts from Native American sites and the Revolutionary and Civil Wars; period household and commercial items; a research room; and, a gift shop.

The Historic Preservation Commission has renovated two historic homes in Albemarle: the Snuggs and Marks homes (see below). Both are open to the public free of charge.

*Staff members from the Museum are available year round Tuesdays through Fridays to take visitors on tours. Both homes are within a short walking distance from the Visitor Center at 245 E. Main Street, Albemarle 28001, (704) 983-7316. Please call ahead to arrange group tours.*

### The Snuggs House

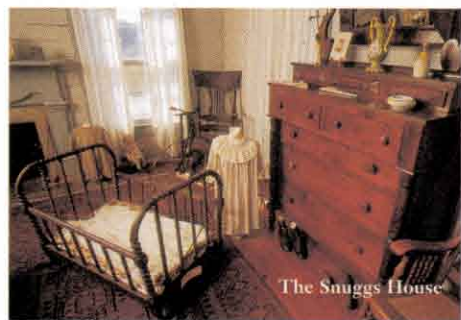
The **Snuggs House** was the first home opened by the Stanly County Historic Preservation Commission. Once owned by Stanly County's ninth sheriff, Isaiah Wilson (Buck) Snuggs (1846-1904), the home contains both relics from Albemarle's past, and household items once belonging to the Snuggs family, as well as a furnished Victorian parlor and bedroom complete with period and regional costumes.

*This house was preserved as a model of life in Stanly County in the late 1800's.*

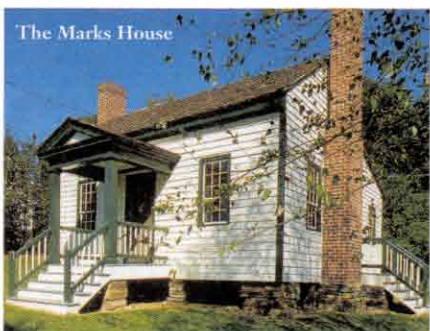
### The Marks House

The **Marks House** is Albemarle's oldest existing home. The first owner was Daniel Freeman, a local merchant. James Marshall McCorkle later owned the house. McCorkle was a lawyer who used the building as both a law office and residence from 1850-1861.

*The house has been restored as a combination residence and law office from the mid 1800's.*



The Snuggs House



The Marks House

### Badin

In 1913, a French company, L'Aluminium Francaise, began work on a dam at the narrows of the Yadkin River to provide power for a smelter. A small town was built nearby to house the company's workers. The town and the lake, created by the dam, were both named Badin, after the company president Adrien Badin.

During World War I, the company's credit lines were redirected toward the war effort, ending the project at Badin. In 1915, the Mellon Company of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with its aluminum monopoly, the Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA), purchased the half-finished company town and moved in.

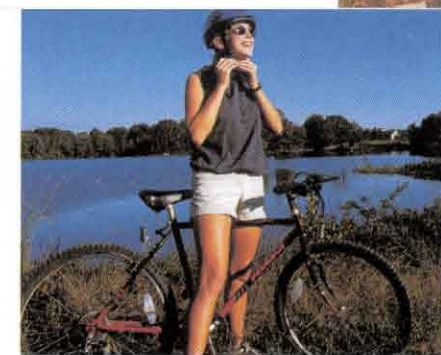
By 1917, Badin had a hospital, a 20-room school, large theatre, and several brick commercial buildings. In 1983, the Town of Badin was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The French-built plant, clubhouse, plant managers' residence, town houses and single family residences remain intact. This unique village offers not only a glimpse of a company town, but also the blending of traditional French and American culture.

Nearby Badin Lake provides ample recreational opportunities: swimming, picnicking and fishing. Herons and an occasional bald eagle can be spotted in the area.

### Morrow Mountain State Park

One of North Carolina's best kept secrets, Morrow Mountain State Park, is an outdoor-lovers paradise. Located in the Uwharrie Mountains just six miles east of Albemarle, the park, with over 4,600 acres of Uwharrie landscape, offers a wide variety of facilities and recreation opportunities. There are hiking trails, bridle trails, a campground, boating along the Yadkin and Pee Dee Rivers, fishing, swimming in the park's pool, and educational programs. The Kron House, also in the park, is a replica of the 1880's home, doctor's office and infirmary once owned by Dr. Francis Kron, the first medical doctor to settle and practice in the southern piedmont of North Carolina.

If you like the outdoors, but don't care much for camping, Morrow Mountain also offers six rustic family vacation



cabins, each with two bedrooms, bathroom, living room, fireplace, kitchen and dining area. The cabins are fully equipped and can be rented by the week during the summer months and in the spring and fall for a minimum of two nights.

Whether you hike or bike, a trip to the top of Morrow Mountain affords a spectacular panoramic view of the surrounding countryside. Bicyclists are welcome in this park, but mountain biking is not allowed on the hiking trails.

*For more information and/or reservations, contact Morrow Mountain State Park, (704) 982-4402.*

### Cotton Patch Gold Mine

Stanly County's only significant industry during the early 1800's, other than farming, was gold mining. Until the California gold rush in 1848, North Carolina was the country's leading gold producer. Gold was first discovered in the United States on John Reed's Cabarrus County farm in 1799. In 1825 gold was discovered in Stanly County at the Barringer Mine near Misenheimer. The county's largest gold mine was the Parker Mine, west of New London. At one time there were 21 active mines in Stanly County. From 1804 until 1828 all domestic gold coined by the U.S. Mint came from North Carolina.

During that time, miners were busy throughout Stanly County and central and western North Carolina panning in the hopes of recovering gold from placer material. Some struck it rich while others only managed to pay for their provisions.

Take a moment to dip back into history and pan for gold. Try your luck at the Cotton Patch Gold Mine, located in the northern portion of Stanly County, near New London. It is open to the public for panning and mineral collecting.

*For a small fee, you can get washed ore, panning equipment and instructions on how to pan and what to look for. The mine is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 9am- 5pm, February 1st through December 15th. (704) 463-5797.*

