

Hamlet:
The Little Town that Does!

Tucked into the heart of the North Carolina Sandhills, Hamlet was incorporated in 1897. Its growth began when John Shortridge enticed the railroad to lay tracks through the heart of this community by selling them land for only one dollar!

This influence was destined to shape the fabric of the town. By 1900, the Seaboard Airline Railroad had named Hamlet the division headquarters, moved the switch yard and railroad maintenance shops to the community, and built a beautiful Queen Anne Victorian Train Station to serve train passengers and railroad workers alike.

Railroad facilities brought industry and enterprises to Hamlet, making it a small, but prosperous town. Today, that heritage can be explored in the town's museum or simply by walking down the street.

Unravel Hamlet's rich railroad heritage one step at a time, all the while enjoying lovely scenery, mild climate, and charming small town Southern Life. Please enjoy your time in Hamlet, The Little Town that Does!



Unraveling history
one step at a time.

**For further information on
Hamlet, North Carolina**

Hamlet Depot & Museums
2 W. Main Street
www.hamlethistoricdepot.org
(910) 582-0603

Hamlet City Hall
201 W. Main Street
www.hamletnc.us
(910) 582-2651

Hamlet Public Library
302 Main Street
www.srls.info
(910) 582-3477

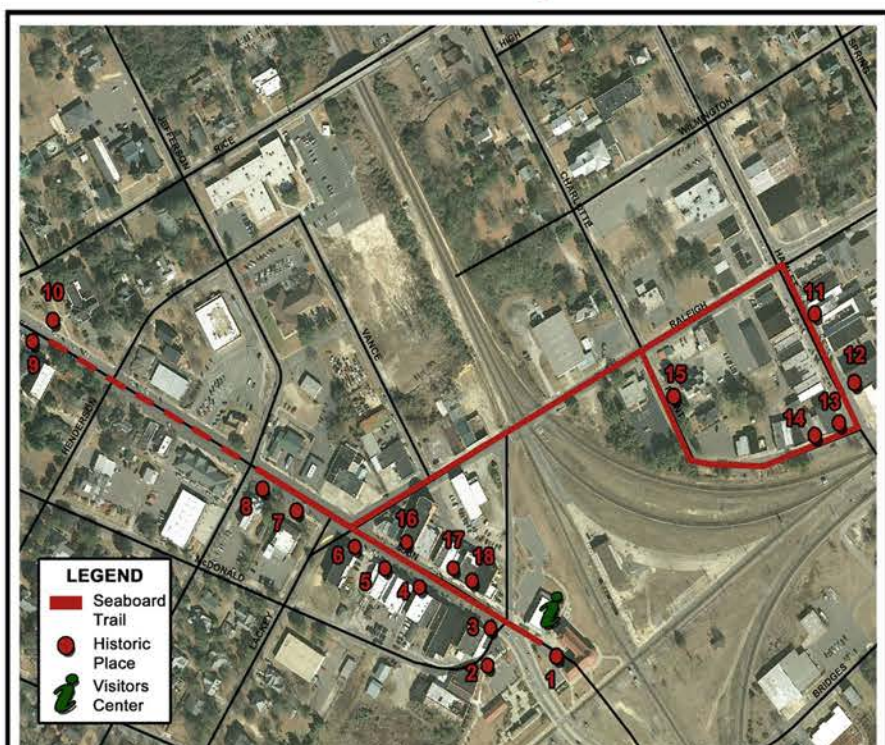


Hamlet, N.C. Seaboard Trail



Hamlet...
Unraveling history
one step at a time.

Seaboard Trail



Travel back in time during
Hamlet's heyday as
"Hub of the Seaboard."

Founded in 1897 at the crossing of two tracks, Hamlet functioned as division headquarters for the Seaboard Airline Railroad. Upwards of thirty passenger trains daily passed through Hamlet. Downtown boomed with travelers and workers of the railroad. Hotels, shops, and restaurants served this thriving community.

As you walk through Hamlet's historic downtown district, see local landmarks that were shaped by the town's rich railroad legacy. Merely follow the dotted red line on the sidewalk. At every circle, see historic sites and read the brochure to discover the importance of each location!

Seaboard Trail

Hamlet, N.C.

1. HAMLET DEPOT

Built in 1900, this Queen Anne Victorian Train Station is the only one left in the state of NC. It is on the National Register of Historic Places and home to the Hamlet Depot & Museums.



2. TORNADO BUILDING

This early 20th century building has been the location of many area businesses. The sidewalk along the left side of the building was once railroad tracks, which allowed items to be loaded directly onto boxcars from the building. Today, it houses the 1892 replica of the Tornado Steam Engine.



3. E.A. LACKEY BUILDING I

Built in 1901 by E.A. Lackey, this site has been home to Birmingham Drug since 1933! During World War II, the second story served as a place of rest and entertainment for troops passing through Hamlet on the trains.



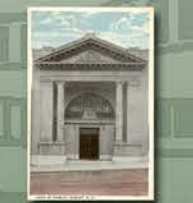
4. E.A. LACKEY BUILDING II

A mirror to the first Lackey building, this one was completed in 1902. It served as the first location for Hamlet Coca Cola Bottling Company. Mabry's Drug has been here since the 1940's.



5. 2nd BANK OF HAMLET

Built in 1912, the 2nd Bank of Hamlet was built after the merger of Citizen Bank of Hamlet and Bank of Hamlet in the same year. Enterprise and industry flourished because of the railroad. Seaboard jobs also created a strong middle class. As a result, the Bank of Hamlet was successful until its collapse during the Great Depression.



6. CENTRAL HOTEL

Completed in 1910 by E.A. Lackey, the Central Hotel was one of seven that catered to travelers passing through Hamlet on the trains. It later served as the dormitory for the Hamlet School of Nursing.



7. HAMLET POST OFFICE

Completed in 1941, the post office was originally closer to the railroad tracks as much of the mail came into Hamlet via the trains. Frank Shortridge, son of John Shortridge, was the first postmaster.



8. E.A. LACKEY HOUSE

Built in 1901, the home of E.A. Lackey originally sat in the center of Main Street. It was moved in 1916 to accommodate the growth of Hamlet's thriving downtown district.



9. 1st SAINT JAMES CHURCH

Built in 1910, St. James Catholic Church serves as an example of places of worship at the turn of the 20th century. Prior to Hamlet's incorporation in 1897, approximately four churches were serving the community.



10. HAMLET LIBRARY

The Hamlet Library originated with donated books from the Seaboard Airline Railroad. WPA funds and land donated by W.H. Bagwell secured a permanent location for the library in 1937.



11. HAMLET HARDWARE

This site serves as an example of the bustling downtown businesses on Hamlet Avenue. Within easy walking distance to the train station and local neighborhoods, stores catered to both locals and travelers alike. This specific spot has served as a hardware store for over 60 years.



12. W.R. LAND BUILDING

Circa 1925, this building was home to W.R. Land Company, a department store that drew people from adjacent counties in NC and SC. It later became a Belk Department Store. Today, it houses a community organization that assists people in need.



13. FRONT ST CORNER BUILDING

Front Street functioned as a vibrant retail district to both locals and visitors. This prime business location once housed a store owned by the Levine family. The next generation would move to Charlotte, eventually establishing Family Dollar Stores, Inc.



14. 1st BANK OF HAMLET

Built in 1902, the original Bank of Hamlet was located on Front Street. Like many other local enterprises, the Bank of Hamlet catered to the railroad and its employees, hence its close location to the Depot.



15. GOODWIN HOUSE

Built in 1910 as the home of O.T. and Clara Goodwin, this site reflects the entrepreneurial spirit of the community as well as the comfortable middle class lifestyle afforded by successful local businessmen and railroad salaries. Goodwin, a prominent citizen, owned Hamlet Grocery Company with H.E. Gibbons.



16. OPERA HOUSE

Built in 1912 by E.A. Lackey, the Hamlet Opera House was the cultural center of the community for much of the 20th century. It hosted plays and performers, such as Enrico Caruso. Remodeled in 1926, it served as a movie theatre until its closure in the 1970's.



17. MAIN STREET STORE FRONT

Main Street stores, such as this one, catered to visitors and locals alike. In the heyday as "Hub of the Seaboard," Hamlet had one passenger train every hour! Passengers would often have time to eat, shop, or even stay overnight before continuing on their journey.



18. Y.M.C.A.

By looking closely, the engraved steps to the Y.M.C.A. become apparent. The Hamlet Y.M.C.A. was sponsored by the Seaboard Airline Railroad. During World War II, the Y.M.C.A. also served as a location for troops to rest, eat, and be entertained.

