

Gold Hill Rail Trail NW Entrance

Gold Hill, NC: Historic Rail-Trail and Related Features



GPS coordinates of trailhead parking lot:
35.510208 N, 80.346287W

Map created by Dilys Bowman for North Carolina Rail-Trails.
For more on Gold Hill: see www.historicgoldhill.com
For more on NC rail-trails: see www.ncrailtrails.org

Visit our website for more history and additional info:
www.historicgoldhill.com



A hike along the Gold Hill Rail-Trail through this historic gold mining village will transport you back to a time when North Carolina was one of the country's largest gold-producing states. Signs posted every few hundred feet along the two mile-long dirt and gravel path detail the history of mining in the state.

While gold was unofficially discovered in America 1799 by a 12-year-old boy in

nearby Midland, NC (Reed Gold Mine, now a NC State Historic Site), in its glory days Gold Hill was known as the richest mining property east of the Mississippi. The first gold discovery at Gold Hill was 1824. By the mid 1850's it's fame and riches were widespread, so much so, that the then Mayor of Charlotte, NC had hopes that, *"Charlotte will one day be a big and prosperous as Gold Hill."*

The trail begins about 100 yards past the junction of St. Stephens Church Road and Baptist Church Road at Miner's Field. Turn in at the marquee. Parking for the trail is here at Miner's Field (softball field). The marquee will describe all there is to see along the green-way (developed along the 19th century mining roads), including the Powder House dynamite storage facility, Gold Hill Pond, Randolph Gold Mine and more. Railroad spur lines ran off of the main line to the smelters and gold ore processing plants in this region. Follow the signs and Rail Trail arrows. The trail forms a loop and brings you back almost to the starting point at St. Stephens Church Road. Just before the highway, take a right on the gravel path and cross the footbridge. This scenic wooded trail parallels the original rail line passing by six mine shafts, an 1880's Stationery Steam Engine and Boiler and the Randolph Gold Mine's main shaft. You can go inside the fence that surrounds the Randolph Mine. Enter at the gate and walk onto the encased steel bridge to stand over the 850ft shaft. To the left of the gate you'll see the raised rock wall for the railroad spur line that backed cars up to the Randolph Mine Smelter. Continue on the trail toward the village. At the far end of the Church parking lot find the village marquee at the concrete sidewalk. The Rail Trail crosses the highway here passing through the woods by the Barnhardt Gold Mine and continues southwest.

Across from the church parking lot is the 19th century Gold Hill Jail and English Dry Stack Rock Wall. There are lots to explore in this area. Along with the Jail, find the Miller Gold Mine, The Johnson Mine Shaft and the Chilean Ore Mill. There's another marquee (Trail Head) located behind Mauney's Store just beyond the Barnhardt marquee. Continue following the trail for one mile from this point. It crosses Old Beatty Ford Road and crosses back over St. Stephens Church Road where it continues into Cabarrus County. Much of the onward trail passes through forest, so keep watch for wildlife, such as deer, wild turkey and broad -wing hawks. There are a few swampy patches; be prepared for a muddy trek if you visit following a rainstorm.

The trail ends at the old Union Gold and Copper Mine site in Cabarrus County. Hikers must stay on the trail so as not to trespass on private property. The marquee describes the mining operations in the area.

The railroad extended beyond here about six more miles into Cabarrus County but the public trail ends here. Return to the village of Gold Hill, backtracking the same way you came in. At St. Stephens Church Road, cross back over and take the green-way path to the left toward the four-way-stop light and follow St Stephens Church Rd back to the village of Gold Hill.

Take time to visit the shops in the village of Gold Hill. Mauney's 1840 Store and the E.H. Montgomery General Store are original to the site, both having been built in 1840. Bathroom facilities are located behind the Texaco Artisan Shop. Snacks, sodas and other refreshments are available at Montgomery General Store. After visiting, browsing and shopping, head back to your car at Miners Field. You'll have a chance to see the Post Office Museum and the Assay Office Museum, where miners staked their claims and weighed their gold. Both are located across from the Old Stone Jail and English Dry-Stacked rock wall built c. 1845.

Historic Gold Hill, North Carolina

Home of Gold Hill Mines Historic Park and The Gold Hill Rail Trail

735 St. Stephens Church Road

Gold Hill, NC 28071

www.HistoricGoldHill.com

Tours and General Info: 704.267.9439