



Picturesque Cook Park is the backdrop for community celebrations, concerts and festivals throughout the year.

Maintaining What We Love

As Todd moves forward, residents strive to build on what's been started while honoring the history and natural beauty that make it so unique. Efforts have been under way for more than a year to establish a community water and sewer service to allow the reopening of other downtown buildings. A planned greenway along with New River from Todd to Boone – about 11 miles away – is anticipated to boost the eco-tourism sector of Todd's economy.

McGuire says, "Our greatest challenge ahead will be to continue the preservation and protection of all the things in this community that we love and that make Todd what it is today, while still managing the changes of progress that will always be at our doorstep."

Promoted as the "Queen City of the Mountains" a century ago, Todd never became the bustling urban center that timber barons envisioned. Instead, it has evolved into a close-knit community where artisans thrive, the natural landscape is celebrated and residents continue to work hard toward building a sustainable community.

Todd General Store, opened in 1914, remains Todd's most notable landmark through a century of change.



If you're coming to Todd, you don't want to miss what makes it so special:

Historic District: Stop by the Mercantile Building and pick up an Historic District Walking Trail Guide and meander through the downtown area as you read about the role the buildings in town played in the boomtown of the 1920s and their purposes today.

Walter and Annie Cook Memorial Park:

Situated in the heart of the community, the park is the setting for community celebrations, summer afternoon concerts and many a family picnic. Jump in the adjacent



Bicyclists, daytrippers, anglers and bikers all find a place to play in Todd.

creek to cool off or join in a game of frisbee.

South Fork of the New River:

Grab a fishing pole and head on

down to the river or stop by RiverGirl Fishing Co. to catch the next kayak shuttle, either way you can't visit Todd without taking some time to enjoy the New. Said to be more than 300 million years old, the river's headwaters is only 20 miles upstream and in many ways is the lifeblood of Todd.



Todd Island Park:

Established in 2001, the 10-acre park embodies very much of what makes Todd important.



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SMALL TOWN
REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

NORTH CAROLINA

Established

1915

TODD

ARTISANS THRIVE AMIDST NATURAL BEAUTY,

Where Everything is Possible

TODD
at a Glance

Population (July, 2009):
613
(-0.4% since 2000)

Median Age:
49.1 years

Median Household
Income (2009):
\$54,124

Median House/Condo
Value (2009):
\$122,100

Cost of Living Index (Dec. 2009):
XX
(U.S. average is 100)

Zip Code: 28684



Haskell McGuire, whose family settled in Todd five generations ago, says there's something special about the people and the place. "It was only after leaving Todd and experiencing many other places in the world that I could fully appreciate the uniqueness and spirit that seems to have always been here. Jack Rielly first discovered Todd when he rented a vacation house overlooking the New River a decade ago. He quickly fell in love with the community and eventually made Todd his hometown. He explains to those who've never been there that, "Todd is more than a zip code. It's a state of mind."

To understand the state of mind, you have to know the history.

Todd was established in the early 1800s at the crossroads of two early wagon roads that traversed the mountains of northwest North Carolina. Selected as the terminus of the Virginia Carolina Railway in 1910, Todd soon rose to prominence as a timber boomtown. The railroad brought prosperity and hotels, stores and doctor's offices were built in the bustling valley along the New River. Model T Fords were shipped in from Detroit for final assembly and sale. Mica mines dotted



Todd (circa 1954) was a booming town before the Great Depression and afterward lay somewhat dormant until the 1990s.

the hillsides. Dynamos were built on the creeks to usher in electricity. Children gathered on Friday afternoons to meet the special ice cream shipment on the train.

But the boom brought the inevitable bust in the 1930s when the timber ran out, the railroad stopped service and the Great Depression settled in. Many families left

and those that stayed sustained themselves by returning to farming. What had been the community's commercial hub went silent. Todd returned to

a primarily agricultural economy and most residents took on "public jobs" in nearby towns to sustain their way of

Volunteers and local officials dedicated a self-guided walking trail created in the Todd Rural Historic District.



life. The town's charter was

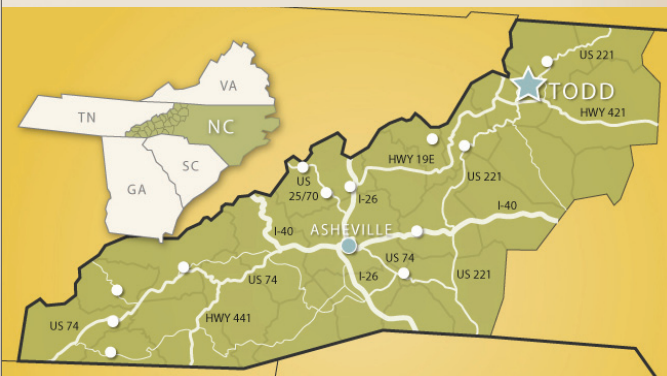
revoked in 1971 and the school was shuttered a few years later as the community dwindled in size.

Discovered Again

In the early 1990s, Todd was discovered again. This time, not for its raw timber or minerals, but instead for its natural beauty and rural character.

Together, a band of residents organized a festival that took place on a Saturday in October 1994 in what up until then was an overgrown field in the heart of town. Current and former residents turned out in force as did first-time visitors. The festival grew, spurring the creation of the Todd Ruritan Club in 1994 and the Todd Community Preservation Organization in 1999. Numerous enhancement projects followed as residents banded together to preserve the community's past and build a sustainable future.

During the initial community efforts, residents met leaders from The Conservation Fund and Handmade in America, with whom a fast and lasting partnership was



Visitors listen as an actor portraying Capt. J.W. Todd explains the community's history.

formed, said Beth Morrison, former TCPO president. "From that beginning flowed almost all of Todd's improvements and special projects: Todd Ruritan Club, the Todd Tribune, the Rural Historic District, TCPO, the Island Park, the old-time music jam and the



Whether a monthly RiverGirl river cleanup or the annual Elkland Art Center Liberty Parade, there's plenty of community spirit in Todd.



Summer Music Series, Cook Memorial Park, the walking trail around the historic district, and numerous beautification projects," Morrison explained.

A Community Renewal

The briars which once graced the town's crossroads have been cleared away and the entrance landscaped. The downtown area is on the National Register of Historic Places. The overgrown field which was home to that first festival has become the community's park and hosts concerts, festivals and special community events. A 10-acre island in the middle of the South Fork of the New River has been purchased by the community and features walking trails and river access.

On the retail side, the General Store, one of the oldest continuously operating general store's in North Carolina, hosts weekly storytelling, Friday night music, book

Accomplishments: Todd renewal since 1998

Building Renovations:

Three buildings have been renovated and three building facades have been refurbished.

New Businesses:

108 new businesses and 207 jobs created

Volunteer Time & Jobs Created:

More than 20,000 volunteer hours invested in Todd and a net of 17 new jobs created.

Public Areas & Facilities:

- Established the Todd Rural Historic District and placed it on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Created the Walter and Annie Cook Memorial Park which includes James "Crow" Parsons covered stage, native landscaping and fencing.
- Purchased a 10-acre tract on the South Fork of the New River and established the Todd Island Park with a canoe takeout, arched pedestrian bridge over the river and a ½ mile walking trail around the perimeter of the island.

Investments:

In private funding, \$229,358; in public money, \$93,890

For further information:

Contact the Todd Community Preservation Organization phone #336-877-5401, website – toddnc.org, or email: info@toddnc.org



The Liberty Parade brings a vibrant celebration each Fourth of July with a message that resonates with the community's focus on sustainability and preservation.

signings and other special events. The Todd Mercantile, used for decades as a warehouse, has been converted into a bakery, art gallery and office spaces occupied by the TCPO and a real estate company. The gallery regularly hosts contra-dancing and is utilized as a community meeting space.

Likewise, the old train depot has been renovated and is home to RiverGirl Fishing which offers tubing, kayaking and fishing services. The once abandoned community school building is now home to Elkland Art Center, a nonprofit educational organization which produces community events throughout the year, and Elkland Handwerke, a sculptural furniture business.

"Our greatest challenge ahead will be to continue the preservation and protection of all the things in this community that we love..."

- Haskell McGuire, Fifth Generation Todd Resident



Elkland Handwerke specializes in making custom furniture and decor - such as these hand carved pine trees.