

Quilt: #207 Railroad Quilt

Quilter: Diane Schonauer

Sponsor: Pickens County Accommodations Tax Commission

The Railroad quilt panel on the Upstate Heritage Quilt Trail is located at Custom Cleaners, 214 NW Main Street in downtown Easley. Diane Schonauer of Anderson made the original fabric quilt this panel replicates. She named the quilt "Ode to Dave" in honor of her husband, David Schonauer. Her story about this quilt can be found with Quilt number 193 at www.uhqt.org. This hand painted quilt panel was funded through a grant provided by the Pickens County ATAX Commission to the Upstate Heritage Quilt Trail.

Trains have played a very important factor in the town of Easley's development. Easley's namesake was William King Easley who was born in Pickens County in 1825. After the civil war Easley became a local attorney and lived in the Pickensville area. He persuaded the Atlanta and Charlotte Air Line Railway to be established through Pickensville by raising \$100,000 to invest in the railroad. The foundering members of the community knew transportation was key to the development of their town. William Easley swayed the railroad company to lay a track through Pickensville. The town of Pickensville became known as Easley and was chartered in 1873.

Robert Elliott Holcombe became a co-founder of the town by starting off as a farmer and timber mill owner in the area. His farming ventures enabled him to establish the storeroom in 1845 as the first business in the area. He became the first mayor of Easley, financed and built the first depot in town. The railroad transformed Easley into an industrious and thriving textile town. The Easley Textile Company, later known as Swirl Inc., came to Easley in 1953. The construction of U.S. Route 123 helped establish retail and new business to Easley.

The Cities of Easley and Pickens formed a partnership to build a rails-to-trails multi-use project, The Doodle Trail. The trail is open, dawn till dusk, for biking, walking, running and rollerblading. The Doodle Rail Trail connects the towns of Easley and Pickens in the northwestern corner of South Carolina. The paved trail follows the former Doodle Line railroad for just over 7 miles and includes two wooden bridges. The railway began passenger and freight service in 1898 and was called the "Doodle" because it ran backwards like a doodlebug between Pickens and Easley due to its inability to turn around.

A trailhead is provided at each end of the trail with parking and portable toilets. In Pickens, the trailhead is located at State 8 and East Cedar Rock Road, just a block from downtown. It sits where the Pickens Depot once stood and, in the future, may include an information center, railroad museum, and plaza. In Easley, the trailhead is located at Fleetwood Drive, about a half mile from downtown. The trailhead includes a park and picnic area. The story about the Doodle Train can be found with additional information about this quilt at www.uhqt.org.

Custom Cleaners has been owned by Mr. O'Shields for thirty years. This building has functioned as a cleaners/laundry for over 70 years. Originally, the building was a livery and cotton gin, then was transformed into a bus terminal. Prior to Mr. O'Shields owning it, the Washette was housed in the building from 1947 through 1955. A photo of the building from that era is proudly displayed, along with other vintage photos, in the front entrance of Custom Cleaners.

Additional information about the City of Easley can be found at <http://www.cityofeasley.com/>.