

Asheville & Technology Timeline

1804: World's first steam-powered locomotive railway journey took place in Wales on February 21st.

Either 1826 or 1834 (sources differ): First commercial gas stove patented but would not take hold in U.S. until much later. Gas stoves with thermostats were developed in 1915.

1833: Metal washboard invented by Stephen Rust.

1871: Sad iron invented. Sold in sets of 3 so one could heat two irons on a hot stovetop while using the third.

1876: Alexander Graham Bell is awarded the first U.S. patent for his recently invented telephone. Bell would go on to help found the American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T) company in 1885.

1880: The Western North Carolina Railroad (WNCRR) reaches the village of Best (present-day Biltmore Village) on October 3rd, officially opening the Asheville vicinity to railroad traffic.

1881: Modern incandescent "Edison" light bulb patented. Electricity quickly begins to spread through American cities.

1885 or 1886: First modern automobile invented by Karl Friedrich Benz.

1887: First record player patented on November 8th by Emile Berliner.

1890: By this point Asheville has electric lighting for downtown city streets, public water, public sewage, and an electric trolley system.

1892: First electric stove invented. Lack of infrastructure in homes made it slow to catch on.

1895: Premier of first motion pictures on screen.

1898: Telephone service brought to Asheville by Proctor Telephone Co.

1900: First reported automobile sighting in Asheville.

1901: First known "motion pictures" in Asheville are advertised on September 12th at the Riverside Casino.

1903: The Wright brothers launch first successful airplane flight in Kittyhawk, NC on December 17th.

1914: Modern radio developed. Public broadcasting began in 1920.

Late 1910s: First modern electric refrigerators developed.

1919: Earliest found mention of any commercial air service in Asheville.

1920s: Electric washing machine available for mass-production/consumption.

1925: Reliable electric iron developed and mass-produced.

1927: First electronic television successfully demonstrated on September 7th. Full scale programming began in 1947.

1928: Penicillin, the first true antibiotic, is discovered by Alexander Fleming. It would reach full commercial production in March 1945.

c.1930: Beaucatcher Tunnel in Asheville opened to the public.

1930s: Electric Trolley service in Asheville declines with increase in bus service and private automobile usage.

1950s: The Blue Ridge Parkway makes its way through Asheville.

1967: First access to Interstate highways for Asheville. A stretch of Interstate 40 opens from State Route 191 (Brevard Rd./Exit 47), through Biltmore Estate to US-25 (Hendersonville Rd./Exit 50).