



John G. Coleman Collection
Fishing, rowboating and canoeing have always been popular activities on Hamlin Lake.



Hamlin Park is a popular destination for picnicing. R.C. Gleason Collection 1895

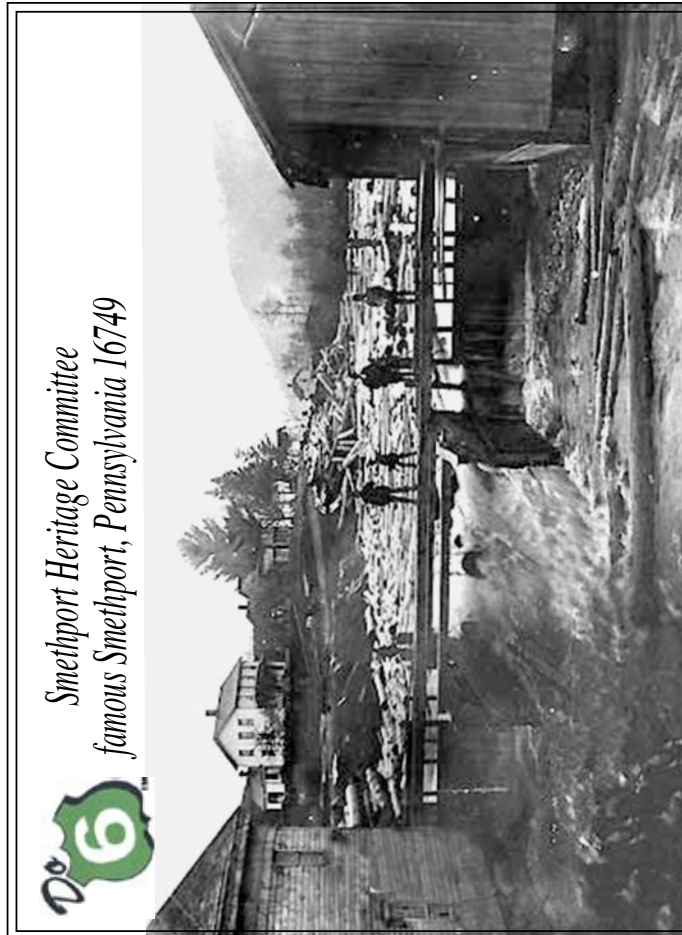


R.C. Gleason Collection 1895
In 1895 we swam in Hamlin Lake. Today there is only swimming in the Park's pool.

For more information go to the "Planet Smethport" website: <http://www.smethporthistory.org>



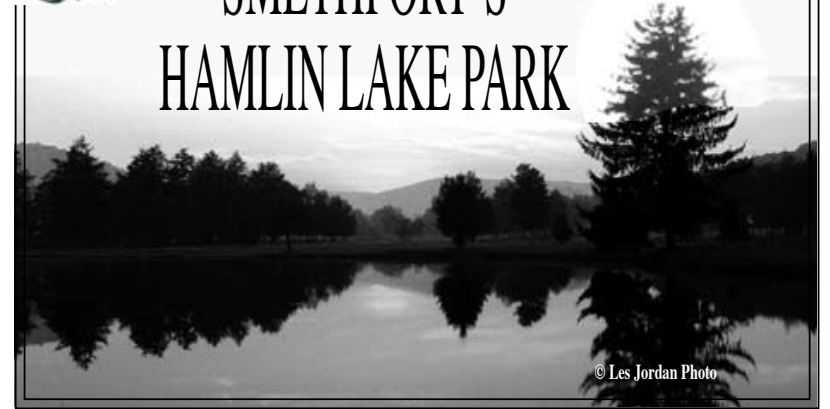
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Hamlin Millpond as it looked in 1895. Originally, Hamlin Lake was a commercial center of Smethport. Smethport's first industry, the Applebee Grismill, built in 1822, was followed quickly by Applebee's sawmill. The mill pond provided both a power source and a storage facility. photo credit: R.C. Gleason Collection



visit SMETHPORT'S scenic HAMLIN LAKE PARK



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RARE DIAMOND HIDDEN IN THE CENTER OF OUR SCENIC HILLS

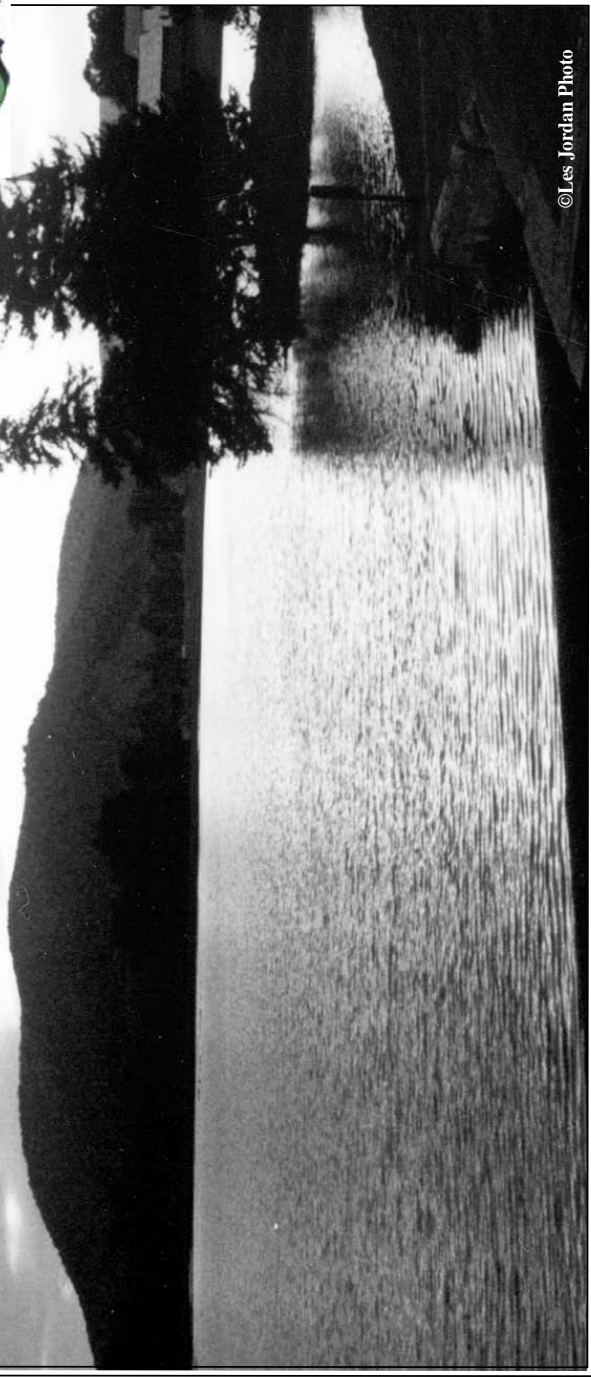
Nestled in the center of historic Smethport and framed and by the dramatically forested Allegheny Mountain lies the spectacular and unique Hamlin Lake. Today Hamlin Lake is the center of recreation including fishing, boating, tennis, a swimming pool, athletic contests at nearby, connected, fields, picnicing and socialization.

Since Smethport's earliest days she has been blessed with the stunning beauty of picturesque Hamlin Lake. For over 180 years Hamlin Lake has been a cultural and recreational center for townspeople and visitors. Originally built as a mill pond to provide water power to drive the economy it has always also provided a festive location for variety of social activities.



Originally donated as a park by the Hamlin family in 1929, massive renovations were finished in 1978 to create the park that we know today. photo credit: Warren Semmel Collection

HAMLIN LAKE PARK: SMETHPORT'S CROWN JEWEL



©Les Jordan Photo

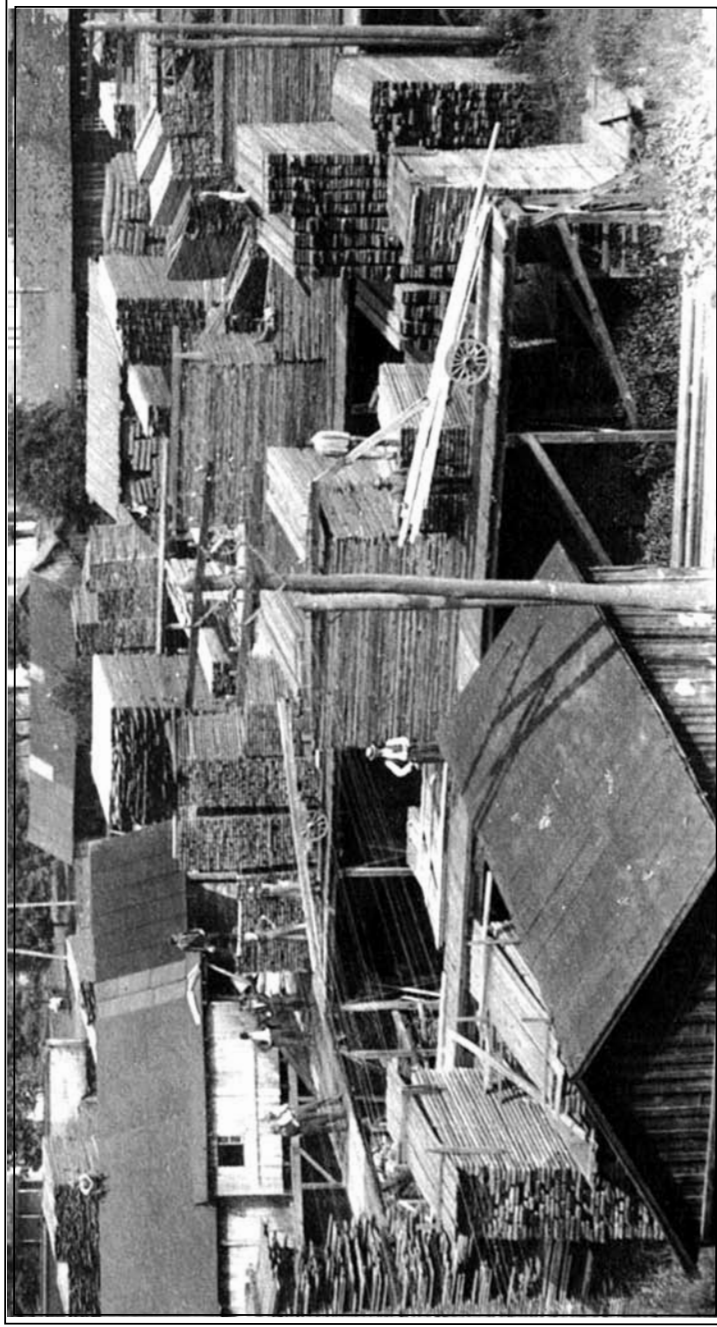
Created in 1822, Hamlin Lake is Smethport's Oldest Human Landmark

For almost as long as there has been settlement in the Potato Creek-Marvin Creek Valley there has been a lake reflecting back the beauty of the surrounding hills. In 1822 John Applebee dammed the Marvin Creek on the west side of Mechanic Street and created the lake at the very center of Smethport. Originally dammed to support a gristmill to grind grain a water-powered sawmill quickly followed. Hamlin Lake would witness huge industrial growth as larger and larger saw mills were built on its west end to supply lumber to the expanding nation during the 1800s and 1900s. The mill pond was filled with floating logs that waited to be milled for the growing Victorian era construction projects.

In 1929 the Hamlin family, the owners at that time, gave the lake and surrounding lands to the Borough of Smethport. "The park and lake when completed, will add a beauty spot to the town, a shady park, where a small lake will furnish swimming and boating facilities, and will add to the pleasure of life in Smethport, and also prove a great attraction to outsiders. We wish that the Borough would build a footbridge over to the island and also one thence over to the lands, on opposite bank of creek belonging to McCoy Field. Birds, game, trees, shrubs and flowers are to be carefully guarded...."

Hamlin Lake Renaissance

Although remaining a recreational area, the lake gradually slid into an overgrown and swampy marsh. Hamlin Lake and Smethport were transformed beginning in 1975, when work commenced to convert the neglected shores and inlets of the lake into the scenic 32-acre community and recreational center. The Hamlin Lake Authority was created as an entity of the McKean County Redevelopment Authority, with Edward R. Husted serving as the Authority's dedicated and creative Executive Director. In addition to Mr. Husted, much of the credit for the execution and of the Hamlin Lake Project was given to Joe Gigliotti, Assistant Director of the Redevelopment and to James Duffy, owner of Delta Timber Company, "who always produced the right equipment at the right time". Taylor & Armstrong Contractors were also hired for the construction of sanitary facilities, picnic shelters, foot bridge, pavement, and parking. The project was dedicated August 18, 1978.



Mechanic Street end of Hamlin Lake was the site of the huge S.J. Gifford lumber mill during the 1890s. In three years the mill processed 16 million feet of lumber for H.F. Goodyear Lumber Company. The vast quantity of money generated from the logging industry created wealth and helped drive the Smethport economy. This rooftop photo was taken looking north toward Water Street. (Today's Smethport Collision would later be located at the center of this photo.) R.C. Gleason Collection