

# **Bike Rides Out of Pittsburgh**

**over 400 bicycle rides  
from .6 to 110 miles  
richly illustrated  
includes maps**

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**Preliminary Revised Edition**

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# Bike Rides Out of Pittsburgh

## Disclaimer

This guide, primarily for the road cyclist, is offered as is, and is to be used at the user's own risk. The user of this book assumes all responsibility for riding safely, in accordance with the law and common sense, and taking into account local conditions, which are constantly changing, and which may differ from those described here.



*The law-abiding author.*

## Acknowledgements

For the first few years I was in Pittsburgh, I kept to the colored Beltways and the standard ways back home. Little by little, I started to explore and started to feel more and more like Christopher Columbus. In this endeavor I was encouraged by many people who knew the roads and the territory better than I did, obviously Dan Chew and Oscar Rattenborg, later Bud Harris, Eric Schaffer, and many others. At a certain point, I felt confident enough to strike out on my own, armed with a general orientation of where I was, and with an idea of where the roads would lead. I've ridden all the rides described here, and I try to do them all in a two-year cycle. Some of the photographs in this book are by Louis Fineberg, who encouraged me to take a camera on rides; most of the rest are mine. The purpose of some of them are to document that I really have been someplace (like East Liverpool, Ohio). But most are of objects that for one reason or another struck my fancy.

## Using this Guide

It is inherently difficult to write and to follow someone else's bike-route directions, so be patient and tolerant. The better you get to know Pittsburgh, the easier it will be to follow the rides described here. This is not a completely independent guide, but a list of suggestions. Get some maps (or look it up at *Yahoo!* or *Google*) and look up each ride before you try it. Visualize it and ask directions along the way. Once on a ride, the route will almost certainly unfold logically. Start with shorter rides and work up to the bigger ones. On the one hand, don't ride over your head; on the other hand, be bold and strike out on your own. How far can you go wrong on a bike? Ha.

## Pittsburgh Area Cycling

The purpose of this collection of rides is a) to document some of the better area roads for cycling, without attempting any kind of complete catalogue (which would be impossible); b) to provide a manual of common routes for use by group rides, in the interest of keeping such rides more or less on track and together; c) to preserve ride memory from one generation of Pittsburgh cyclists to another; and d) to encourage further exploration of the area around Pittsburgh through the investigation of roads and routes not listed, of which there are many.



*These annoying signs have appeared everywhere recently. It's hard not to take them personally.*

People from elsewhere have trouble imagining this, but in a lot of ways Pittsburgh is like a little village. Get beyond the city limits, and you're in cornfields and cow

pastures (although more and more frequently in little patches of awful McMansions). I have cycled in most parts of this country and extensively in Europe, and I can say without exaggeration that Western Pennsylvania has some of the best and most variegated cycling available anywhere. It's not too rough, and it's not too tame, and it's in easy reach of the city without having to get in a car. There's an unlimited selection of paved secondary roads. It's perfectly feasible, in a full spring, summer, and fall of daily riding, never to repeat the same ride twice. This manual helps show you how, by giving ride suggestions on which you can elaborate as you become familiar with the general Pittsburgh area and the territory near where you do most of your riding.



*Bicycle-ride spectators at alpaca farm on Deer Creek Rd.*

The area covered by this guide is roughly that bounded by a line running through Butler in the north, the Ohio-West-Virginia border to the west, State Route 981 in the east, and Interstate 70 (or, to be generous, US40) in the south, including all of Allegheny County, and parts of Butler, Beaver, Fayette, Washington, Westmoreland, Armstrong, and Indiana counties, edging at points into Ohio and West Virginia. This territory contains some of the best bicycle riding in the United States.

In order to keep the list of rides to a manageable number, maximum length has been set at around 100 miles round trip (although one ride goes for as far as 125 miles). Anyone who routinely takes longer rides than 100 miles doesn't need the help of this guide. Most rides are in the 35-65 mile range. This manual assumes that you are an experienced cyclist, used to riding on public roads, have a road bicycle weighing 25 pounds or less, and thin tires, either 700C clinchers or tubulars (sew-ups). Ride good

tires, and keep them pumped up to full pressure or even slightly higher. Don't bite off more than you can chew. Work up from shorter rides to longer ones, depending on your condition. You will get where you are going if you a) allow lots of time; b) ride small gears, smaller than you think you should; c) keep stops short and to a minimum; d) if you can, ride with someone else with similar riding habits.



*A useless sign. If there's a hill, what are you going to do about it?*

In all, well over something like 400 rides are listed, not counting variations on the same basic ride. All complete one or another kind of circuit. Well, with maybe one or two exceptions, no simple out-and-back rides are included. All have been personally tested, have made an indelible impression, and have been found to be worth repeating. Most have a logical flow, and so can be easily remembered once ridden. Even if a ride doesn't seem logical from its description, an actual ride will verify its sense. I have tried to take account of rides that exist in the cycling folklore of the area, having been passed from one cyclist to another. Whenever possible I attribute rides to individuals who have "discovered" them, or at least who I have learned them from. Funny enough, different people and generations of cyclists keep independently discovering the same classic rides: a good example being *Potato Garden Run Rd.*. Certain areas, more familiar to me, have been treated in greater detail. Other parts are described more schematically.

Trips are arranged geographically clockwise, according to the usual exit taken out of the East End of Pittsburgh. I begin with the Highland Park Bridge, because many of the rides listed there are short and within the capabilities of a wide range of rider. Also,

more rides depart this way than any other. Obviously, different rides and ways out of town are better or worse according to the time of day and day of the week. Some roads are barely safe during the morning or afternoon rush hours but are almost deserted on Sunday. While any ride can be ridden in either direction, usually the described direction, whether for reasons of traffic patterns, terrain, or psychology, is the more logical of the two options.

I do not always ride with a cyclo-computer or odometer, or even a watch, much less a heart monitor, nor do I much see the need to do any of this. More indicative of a ride is its difficulty and the time needed to accomplish it which, of course, can vary from time to time and rider to rider. I look at the clock at home before and after a ride. The approximate length of a ride has been obtained by multiplying the typical time required to ride it times 15 mph (a decent average speed for a cyclist in good condition, riding alone and steadily on a road bike, over varying terrain). Thus, a ride listed as '45 miles' takes me around three hours to do, or maybe a little longer, to count for a rest stop and traffic lights. This figure will be accurate to within +/- 5 actual miles. It may take you more or less time, depending on such factors as conditioning, weather, your response to hills, and whether you ride alone or in a group. A group ride can easily speed up a ride by 3 mph. I have resisted breaking down rides into subsegments with mileage listed, because that's not how I or anyone I know ride(s).



*Pittsburgh Hills. From the the 2003 Dirty Dozen ride. Photo by the Tribune Review.*

## Hills

This is Western Pennsylvania, for heaven's sake. Almost any ride you take is going to have hills. The length of a ride is usually a much better indicator of difficulty than the number of hills on it. If you try to avoid one hill, chances are you will run into an even bigger one. I experimented for a while with a 1-to-10 system based on how many times I heard complaints from a particular bellwether rider, but I wasn't able to take him on all of these rides before he left town, and there were some rides he refused to go on. Expect to find a judicious mixture of hills and flats on any ride. Look at the narratives for more information.

## Inaccuracies

The author apologizes for all mistakes, of which he is sure there are many. Use care and common sense, and plan your rides in advance, in conjunction with a good map. If you are like me, you will not take a map on most rides, but will make a habit of going over where you are going beforehand and where you have been as soon as you get home.



*Take signs with a grain of salt.*

## Three-Star Rides

Slightly more than two dozen rides in this collection have been selected as representing a combination of inherent interest and a good introduction to the territory around Pittsburgh. These rides are marked with three stars (\*\*\*), and can also be found so listed in the Index. If you have done all of them, you will be able to say with some degree of authority that you "know" the cycling territory around Pittsburgh, although I would bet that no one knows it perfectly. There is just too much of it.

## Maps

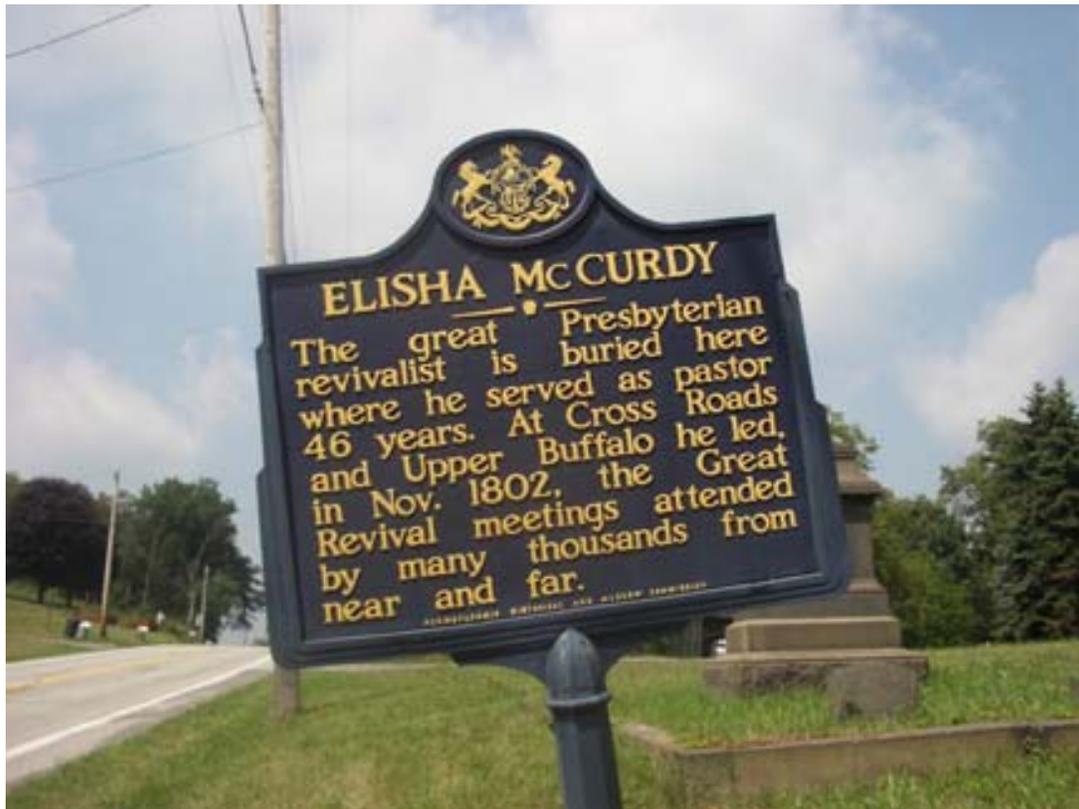
This book is designed to be used in conjunction with an independent map or maps of the greater Pittsburgh area. The maps that accompany this book are pretty good, but they indicate only major roads referred to in ride descriptions and provide, therefore, only a general orientation. A number of routes pass outside the territory covered by these maps. Previous editions of this book have included a detailed annotated bibliography of most available area maps. However, I decided that too many maps of the area appear and go out of print for this to be feasible. Most maps are just not very good: they aren't readable, they don't list road names and, in any case, for the most part they have been outmoded by on-line maps, like *Yahoo!* and *Google*.



*Seasonally decorated houses are a special feature of the outlying countryside.*

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has good maps of individual counties, with SR (State Route) and T (Township) numbers accurately indicated; local road-names tend to be missing. These maps may be purchased from the state government or ordered through a local map store. Townships often have excellent maps of the township available for purchase at the township administration building. Township maps are the proper authority for the accurate names of roads under their jurisdiction.

The most detailed maps of the area are those of the *US. Geological Survey*, on which details theoretically extend to individual buildings. While these maps are the final arbiter on questions of detail, the magnified scale is such that they are of limited usefulness for planning bicycle rides. Also, they don't give road names. The USGS maps may be examined in the map room in the basement of the University of Pittsburgh. Some of the relevant ones for Western Pennsylvania can be purchased at the Pitt Book Center. A guide to Pennsylvania's bike trails, part of the national Rails-to-Trails network, can be purchased from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, Pennsylvania Chapter, 209 Senate Ave., Suite 670, Camp Hill, PA 17011.



*Real bike riders don't read historical markers.*

### **Sight-Seeing**

Real bike-riders never sight-see, even if occasionally they might accidentally see something of historical or pictorial interest. Close your eyes and keep on riding. I find most interesting the way people in the country seasonally decorate their houses: now

for Halloween, now for Easter, for the 4th of July; and so on. For historical information on many of the sights you will encounter on your rides around Pittsburgh, you may want to purchase *A Guidebook to Historic Western Pennsylvania* by Helen Smith and George Swetnam (Univ. of Pgh. Press, 1991). These authors have the kind of perspective on noteworthy objects that appeals to the casual traveler through Western Pennsylvania.

### **How Many Bikes?**

This question often occurs in household with joint bank accounts. A cyclist needs a state-of-the-art racing bike, a spare back-up and foul-weather training bike, a go-to-work bike, a mountain bike, a track bike (fixed wheel, no brakes), a single-speed street bike (like the foregoing, but with brakes, and maybe with bull-horn handlebars), a dedicated time-trial bike, and possibly a bike set up just for your set of rollers. Thrifty cyclists will buy either a trail bike or a cyclo-cross bike. You really don't need both. So nine bikes is a reasonable number, although you'll also probably want to maintain a vintage roadbike to take to the coffee shop on Saturday mornings. Oh, yes: cyclotourists will want to have a dedicated touring bike, with braze-ons for attaching racks and stuff to; so that makes ten. Many cyclists also have in their barn a 1950s-style balloon-tire cruiser for going to the post-office.



*Start with the basics and work up from there. Everybody needs a single-speed fixed-wheel street bike with bull-horn handlebars. Sew-up tires, as here, are optional.*

## Tools and Spare Equipment

I suppose the days have passed when all you needed was a hammer, pliers, and a cold chisel. Still, no portable tool kit can prepare you for all eventualities. Once I needed a 17mm crank tool; incredibly, I encountered someone on the road (Jerry Kraynick) with a 16mm crank tool, but that didn't help, did it. See to it that your equipment is relatively new and in good working condition, and avoid antique or gimmicky equipment (or cheerfully face the consequences). Obviously, if you are riding with several people, it's enough for at least someone to have an item like a hex wrench set. Here is the minimum tool kit recommended for long single-day rides when riding alone. Most of this stuff has to do with responding to tire and wheel troubles.

§ Obviously, a PUMP: a good, solid frame pump, able to withstand use as a defensive weapon against dogs. The old-style Silca Campagnolo brass-headed pumps are the best. Some pumps like Zefal are good for tires, but don't last for more than one or two dogs.

§ MONEY: at least \$10 in bills (these days, maybe \$20), plus maybe a phone card; IDENTIFICATION, and a medical insurance card; possibly a credit card to buy a tire or a new wheel with (though good luck breaking down within distance of a bike shop). Carry money in a plastic zip-loc bag; that way people don't cringe when taking payment.



*Don't throw away your old bikes. Give them to Free Ride.*

§ TIRE LEVERS, and make sure you know how to use them to change a tube. Metal tire levers have a tendency to pinch holes in the tube; better to use plastic.

Clincher tires are generally recommended over sew-ups (does anyone remember them?), because flats can be repaired on the road using an ordinary automotive cold-patch kit. Be sure to find the reason for the leak and respond to it appropriately (i.e., take the tack, splinter, or glass shard out of the casing). Since I often break ordinary plastic tire levers, but am wary of metal ones, I have taken to carrying something called QuikStik, a heavy-duty plastic shop lever that can usually take a tire off all by itself.

§ At least two INNER TUBES (or spare tubulars), so that you're not left without a spare after your first flat.

§ A TUBE-PATCH KIT, for when you get three flats. Add to the kit a stiff-edge razor for cutting adhesive tape and for other eventualities. Be warned that the new instant patch kits, which work without rubber cement, are less reliable and less easy to re-do. With the instant patch kits, don't test the tube before installing it, or the leak is liable to work its way out to the edge of the patch. Replace the patch with a normal one when you get home, because the air will eventually find a way out anyway.

§ A CASING PATCH. Use an old, good, light piece of tire casing, about 2 1/2" long, from which you have peeled off the tread. Some people use cutouts from plastic milk cartons. In an emergency, you can also use dollar bills (Steve Loevner claims that \$100s work best) or Power-Bar wrappers.

§ A Presta-to-Schraeder VALVE ADAPTER. If your pump breaks, as sometimes happens, with an adapter you can get a tire pumped up at a gas station or at a house in the country that happens to have a regular bike or car pump.

§ A SPOKE WRENCH for on-the-road true-ups. Don't leave home without one, and make sure it fits your spoke nipples. I have seen lots of people stranded by wheel incidents which can only be addressed with a few turns of a spoke wrench. Learn the basic principles of wheel-truing; e.g., if you tighten up one side, loosen the other.

§ A couple of SPARE SPOKES with nipples. Form them into a loop and they'll fit into your saddle bag. It's annoying not to have a spare spoke when you truly need one. Make sure it has a nipple, because if an old spoke breaks at the nipple, there will be no way to re-use it. I have a tool for undoing the cassette on the road, for cassette-side spoke replacements (see further below), but I generally prefer to limp home and work on the bike there.

§ Some sealed TOILETTE WIPES for cleaning up after roadside repairs. You'll really impress your ride-mates when you pull them out. These can also be good for cleaning abrasions you might incur; or for sterilizing a dog bite, as happened once with Adam Pollock.

§ A WRENCH KIT to fit your stem, saddle, brakes, derailleur, and pedal clips. Some combination tools meet most eventualities. In general, it's not a good idea to be adjusting things on the road. You might break something, and then no tool is going to help. To tell the truth, I often leave this kit behind.

§ I have been stranded when a CHAIN TOOL would have helped, but I often forget to carry one. In a true emergency, you can usually borrow a hammer, a nail or a

punch, and a pair of pliers from a sympathetic homeowner. I have had occasion to do this at least twice. Recently I splurged and got a wrench-set with chain-tool attached.

§ I once had a nifty tool called a Pamir cassette lock-ring cracker, for taking off cassettes for on-the-road cassette-side spoke replacements, but I lost it, and they stopped making it. I have improvized with the two-piece toolset in the picture below, which is only for multi-day tours when you're dependent on what you bring along.



*The lock-ring tool is pounded into any cheap flat-wrench. The length of chain has a loop made out of a spoke which grabs onto a spoke in your wheel and holds the cassette tight while you loosen the lock-ring.*

§ You might want to include a BOLT FOR YOUR SHOE CLEAT, which can sometimes come unscrewed and lost.

§ A roll of heavy-duty cotton ADHESIVE TAPE. Some people carry duct/duck tape, but I find it less manageable and versatile. Duct tape gums up and sticks to itself, and it has fewer uses. One advantage of adhesive tape is that it can be unraveled into string for tying things down; and it can be easily sized for use as emergency rim strip. Next to spare tubes, tire levers, and a spoke wrench, adhesive tape is the single most important piece of spare equipment to carry. Here are the main uses I have found for adhesive tape:

§ If you run over a sharp rock or piece of glass, or in any other way get a casing break, and don't have a casing patch, fashion an inside casing patch out of several layers of adhesive tape. Otherwise, tire pressure will blow your inner tube through the side of the tire. Use your razor blade to cut and trim the patch. The inconvenient alternative is to carry a spare fold-up tire. Even a small casing break will chafe the tube

so you may eventually get a flat in any case, whether or not your tube blows out through it, so check the tire after all flats, and use the adhesive tape as an inside band-aid on all inner roughnesses.

§ On a worn tire, the casing may start to show through the tread. Use adhesive tape as a temporary outside bandage until you can get home to change the tire.

§ Should you accidentally tear your rim strip replacing a spoke, or should your tire pressure blow through one of the spoke holes, a few layers of adhesive tape over the hole will be needed to hold the air pressure.

§ A stripped or loose pump or water-bottle bracket can be taped fast to the frame; or a bottle that likes to bounce out on rough roads can be fastened down.

§ A snapped stem or handlebar bolt is pretty much debilitating, but if you are still around after this happens, you can wrap layers of tape around the joint and make a repair that will last at least until you get slowly home. Similarly, snapped saddle bolts can be repaired enough to hold the saddle in place to ride slowly onward; and brakes with snapped bolts can be tied in place for further cautious riding. If none of this has happened to you, you just haven't ridden enough.

§ A broken down-tube (from metal fatigue on an older metal-frame bike) happens more or less all at once, and takes you by surprise. If this happens, and if you survive, you can splint the tube well enough with tape to get home on it, carefully. If you are near an auto-parts store, see if they have some radiator hose clamps that will fit.

§ All manner of provisional roadside helmet, glove, shoe, pedal-strap, clothing, pump, and handlebar-tape repairs can be made with adhesive tape.

§ If you are in a group, and someone falls far behind, you can tape directional arrows to the road at important turns. If you need to do this a lot, it's better to carry a surveyor's yellow grease crayon; or choose different ride partners.

§ Adhesive tape is great for tying onto your frame various kinds of neat stuff you find along the road. Use your water bottle cages to fit or attach stuff in or to (put your bottle in your jersey pocket), and then fasten it down with adhesive tape.

§ Adhesive tape also occasionally comes in handy for bodily first aid. As noted, you might want to include a handwipe and a sterile gauze pad in your kit, but don't bandage a wound unless you are able to clean it out thoroughly. It's usually best just to leave it oozing in the open air until you are able to take care of it properly.

## **Food**

Most people think too much about eating and drinking on rides. Forget Power Bars and fancy electrolyte replacement drinks (although Power Bar wrappers are strong and can be used for emergency casing repairs). Weak tea is good for putting a clean taste in your mouth. A bagel and water are good things to carry. Or just bring along a sandwich or a cold hamburger. On a hot day, you might want to replace salt. Peanut-butter crackers, available virtually anywhere for almost nothing, may be the best energy dose for the money, and they replace salt and iron. Replenish liquids at convenience stores, although anyone should be able to go for three or four hours on

nothing but two bottles of water in all but the hottest and most humid weather. Strawberry milk, available at most convenience stores, is food of the gods, although it is seriously challenged by raspberry iced tea.



*Rest stop and (lower right) tire repair by Doug Williamson.*

## **Clothing**

Specifically cycling wear has a lot to recommend it. Good bike shorts, that don't ride down (I'm partial to shorts with straps, i.e. bib-shorts), are pretty much a necessity for comfort, and bike jerseys are just plain convenient, because of the pockets. Too bad they don't make breast pockets in jerseys any longer, because they used to be handy for sandwiches: another concession to cheapness and advertising. Nice clothing promotes a better image of cycling, so try to look sharp for this reason alone. Heavy bike gloves protect you from road shock and, when you fall down, they protect your palms. Avoid sleeveless jerseys: they're useless in a fall, and they look raunchy, as do jerseys which ride up over your shorts and expose your rear end. If you don't use bike shoes with cleats, you're wasting a lot of energy. Clipless pedals and the special shoes they require are a nuisance if you break down and have to walk a distance, but this problem is outweighed by their efficiency and encouragement of correct pedaling technique. Still, when casually touring from place to place, I use traditional toe clips and firm-soled shoes.



*What's wrong with this picture? If you guessed Doug Williamson's white shorts, then you are right. They display every kind of stain.*

Most serious cyclists wear protective glasses against rocks, insects, lawnmowers throwing wood chips, leaf-cutters, and long-term damage from road glare. After years of riding without glasses, I too have begun to do this. Wear a helmet; it keeps people from hollering at you for not wearing one, protects you from things thrown out of cars, and may be of actual help in an accident. In the past half-dozen years I have landed hard on my head in accidents twice, and in both instances I have to credit the helmet for absorbing a lot of the damage. Other people will tell you similar stories.

It's always best to overdress. Ask yourself how many times you have felt too hot instead of too cold because of your clothing. Above 65 degrees, you can wear shorts and a short-sleeved jersey. Between 60 and 65 degrees, wear light lycra tights and a long-sleeve jersey or arm warmers. You might carry along a wind-breaker against a change downward in the weather. Between 50 and 60 degrees, put on light tights, a heavier wind-breaker, wear a turtleneck under your jersey, and put on polypropylene shoe socks. Between 40 and 50, wear heavy tights, add an outer wool sweater, light long-fingered gloves, some kind of ear covering, and cold-weather booties. In the upper 40s, you can get by with cut-out heavy socks over your shoes instead of booties.



*David Petrou illustrates the principle of comfort over fashion. Photo by John Griffin.*

I stuff a few pages of newspaper under my jersey as I start out on a chilly morning; it's surprisingly good insulation, and it cuts the wind. Below 40 degrees add more layers, and ride faster and shorter. Feet are the big problem. You might try wearing polypropylene shoe socks together with booties over shoe covers, and then a second pair of booties over this. I try not to ride when it's below freezing or raining, so I don't have any advice on that. These temperatures are guidelines for around Pittsburgh, where high humidity tends to make the cold more piercing.

Having tried out all the 'modern' fabrics, I can state unequivocally that nothing beats wool in all but the hottest weather, and possibly even then, too. Hi-tech synthetic fabrics don't "wick" moisture away from the body any better. This notion is a creation of advertising. It seems to me that they hold moisture more than wool. The only thing they're better than is cotton. They don't provide the same warmth as wool, yet wool is not hot in warm weather either, as long as you keep moving. Most hi-tech fabrics stain more easily, are harder to get spots out of, and, mainly, stink horribly after just one wearing. It's true that wool requires more care to clean, but you don't have to clean it nearly as often. I recently spent six weeks cycling in Poland, and I never once felt the need to wash the single wool jersey I had, while I was washing my other stuff every day to get the smell out.

## Rain

No one likes to ride in the rain, and neither do I. This is a good reason to ride in the morning, with no set schedule. That way you can take shelter under in a barn or under a gas-station roof for a half-hour or so, until the thunderstorm passes. I've found that usually they do pass.

## Pavement Types



*North Flaughtery Run Rd. Don't cross off a road just because it's dirt, but ride really rough roads with a partner, just in case.*

Unless specifically stated otherwise, all roads described here are smoothly paved and rideable with normal lightweight tires. A few roads may contain cinder or gravel stretches. Don't be afraid of such roads; slow down and enjoy them.

COBBLESTONE properly refers to unshaped rocks used as a crude road surface, virtually unrideable for a bicycle. You have probably never seen a true example, as there are none around Pittsburgh. For real cobblestones, you'll have to go to Europe, where they are disappearing fast. In the city one often encounters either BRICK PAVEMENT or so-called BELGIUM BLOCK, even the worst of which may be ridden with no trouble, although it is slippery when wet and in corners.

METAL-GRATE BRIDGES are numerous and dangerous; even the most careful and experienced of cyclists can fall on them. When such a bridge is wet, you should dismount and walk across it or, if possible, ride on a sidewalk. When such a bridge is

dry, ride straight, slowly, smoothly, in a smallish gear, not coasting. Or get off and walk. When riding over other bridges, watch out for jagged-tooth

EXPANSION PLATES into which your wheel can slip. Be prepared to put one leg down and push your bike across larger seams in the road. The same goes for slanted railroad crossings.

Townships are apt to TAR AND CHIP a perfectly good road at any time without notice. It may take half a year or more for the gravel to get ground into the tar. Until then, it's best to find an alternative route.



*A sign bike-riders dread: Fresh Oil and Chips. The job here essentially cuts off rides to Lake Arthur for the rest of the summer.*

SLANTED RAILROAD CROSSINGS, some of which can be quite treacherous, and harmful to wheels. Try not to go over railroad tracks with automobile traffic; and don't go over them at a slant. The margin between being safe and having a serious fall is very slim. I can't count the number of times I've seen people fall on them.

In the city, SEWER GRATES are a big problem, because traffic often forces you to ride over them. The ones with the slanted grates are the scariest. I try to ride across them at a safe angle. The most dangerous aspect of sewer grates comes from their not fitting tightly, leaving a gaping crack into which your wheel can fit, causing your wheel to collapse, and you to fly over the bars. Don't ride through the city with bravado; it's foolish. Take it slow.

Watch out for WIDE-SWINGING CAR DOORS, sometimes from stopped traffic letting out passengers.

Oh, and did we mention POTHOLEs? Here's a tip: when riding at speed over a very rough road surface, if you feel you have to, keep your hands away from the brakes. Hitting a pothole fast with your hands draped over the brakes can cause you to seize the brakes and send you cartwheeling end over end, with bad consequences for your state of body.



*These BicyclePA signs, indicating more-or-less safe and flat roads for long-distance bicycle travel, have appeared in the last few years across the state.*

## **Road Designations**

Pennsylvania State Route numbers often provide a clue to the rideability of a road. Single and double-digit route numbers (for example, SR8, SR51, SR19, and so on) tend to be major arteries and should usually be avoided. Three-digit numbers (for example, SR136, SR356, SR910, and so on) are secondary arteries. They are often rideable but can be less enjoyable because of traffic. They may have a rideable shoulder, but they may not. Four-digit routes (SR4018, SR3006, etc.), and township roads (T385, T507, etc.) are usually the most appropriate for bicycling. Remember that conditions can change drastically according to the time of day and day of the week. If you are able to ride in the mid-morning, there is often a lull in the traffic around then.

The name of a road sometimes provides a hint as to what lies ahead. According to local custom, a 'road' usually actually leads somewhere, whereas 'streets', 'lanes',

'courts', and even 'avenues' often don't. Boulevards do tend to lead someplace, but they are often main thoroughfares (for example, Washington Blvd., Ardmore Blvd., or Babcock Blvd.). It sometimes seems that half the roads in the area are called this or that 'Run Road'. A 'run' is a creek or creek bed; the road paralleling it will be either uphill or downhill, following the course of the run, and it will almost always connect with some other road. Similarly, 'hollow road' or 'valley road', as in Spook Hollow Rd., Turner Valley Rd., and so on, are good bets.

A 'pike' is usually what is left of a former major thoroughfare, now probably serving as intermittent frontage to some major highway. 'Pikes' can be good roads, but they often peter out, as do roads called 'old this or that highway or route', or 'this or that route extension.' Some 'pikes' are narrow, twisty, and hilly, and wild, for example, the intermittent stretches of Northern Pike.

A 'road' more often than not leads to, or used to lead to, what it is named after. But don't expect to get to Brownsville, for example, by following Brownsville Rd. Maybe you once could, but no longer. Roads between towns are often called after both towns on maps, but in either of the towns concerned they will be named after the other one. Hardly any people out in the country use or even know the four-digit number of the route they may live on.



*The Red Belt outside Tarentum.*

## The Colored Beltways

Pittsburgh is circled by a system of colored beltways (Blue, Green, Yellow, Orange, Red), indicating major secondary routes around the outskirts of the city, to a distance of around 25 miles. A Purple Belt inside downtown has also been added, but what is really needed is an additional "Black" Belt out beyond the Red Belt. The system is most complete in the north. The Blue, Yellow, and Orange Belts circle the south of the city as well. The beltways are a great help for orienting oneself in unfamiliar territory. Most of the northern connections with the beltways are described under *Highland Park Bridge* and *62nd Street Bridge*. Good maps for viewing the Beltways are the AAA Map of Pittsburgh and Vicinity, the Rand McNally Pittsburgh Metro Map, and the Rand McNally Pittsburgh Streetfinder. Most stretches of the beltways are bicycle friendly, considerably less so in the South Hills and near the airport. Southern parts of the Blue, Yellow, and Orange Belts are fairly nasty in parts. The Orange Belt should be avoided in the vicinity of the Pittsburgh International Airport, where bicycle traffic may be illegal and is in any case totally impractical.



*A hopeful sign along Wildlife Lodge Rd. outside New Kensington*

## Coexisting with Auto Traffic

Ride confidently, but don't ride with a chip on your shoulder; you'll have needless aggravation. You have the right to be on the road, but give traffic a wide berth anyway, and don't hesitate to pull over to the side and signal to let traffic pass. Be alert. Use hand signals. The best thing to do to a rude motorist is either ignore him/her or wave. Express appreciation to motorists who give you a break. Before being overtaken on a

road, try to look back at the overtaking vehicle, to convey the idea that you're aware of it and doing your best to keep out of its way.

Much by way of enhancing public awareness needs to be done before most motorists become convinced of the legitimacy of bicycle traffic. It's worse in some parts of the Pittsburgh area than in others. Sometimes even the rudest and most abusive motorist will turn into an ordinary person if approached for directions, say, in their own front yard. A helpful thing PennDOT could do would be to post Bicycles-Have-Equal-Privileges signs at regular intervals along secondary and rural roads. This is being done to a slight and insignificant extent. Much more helpful is the drive to retrofit country roads with paved shoulders. Because of this program, over the past few years many formerly dangerous narrow roads with heavy truck traffic have become much safer, for example, SR228 in the north.



*Not just playing possum.*

### **Avoiding Accidents**

The most frequent car-related bicycle accidents are caused by doors being opened from parked cars and, occasionally, from doors opened from cars stopped in traffic. Give parked cars a fairly wide berth, and always look to see whether there is someone in the driver's seat. Ride slowly past stopped or creeping automobile traffic, and watch out for cars turning to the right in front of you without signaling: you may be riding in their blind spot, or they may just not be paying attention. Pay special attention to large

trucks taking a turn across your bow: the driver may not be aware where his rear wheel is tracking.

Another common source of accident is bike-rider daydreaming, resulting in running into logs, large rocks, or even into the back of parked vehicles (the "drafting a parked car phenomenon"). I once ran smack into a large white highly visible barricade newly placed across a road I commonly ride. I didn't see it in my memory, so I didn't see it in fact. Be alert to the road at all times, and expect the worst. Don't practice your rapid-descending technique by yourself on an unknown road far from home. Don't go fast on a blind downhill just because you know the road from last year. Road conditions get worse and worse all the time. If you run into an unexpected and unavoidable pothole, don't brake or you'll risk a somersault. Just ride through it, and you'll probably come out all right on the other side.

The worst accidents are usually due to equipment failure. Things like bars and stems are critical. You should use race-tested equipment produced by well-known manufacturers, and even then be alert to the possibility of manufacturing defects and failure. Tighten bolts, but don't over-tighten them, just to the point where they safely hold. Test your equipment out before racing or riding on it. Keep your pedal cleats in good condition.

## **Dogs**

Some of my best friends are dogs, but some rural canines take bike riders for fair game. Dogs are one of the reasons I carry an extra-heavy pump. A bonk on the head won't harm a dog, and the dog may think twice next time it attacks a bike rider. Most dogs will desist if you slow down or stop and confront them person to person, so if you have time, try this. I've never actually been bitten, but I have been on rides when this has happened to others. I have been knocked over by a charging dog. Occasionally you will encounter a nice bored dog in the open country that just wants to run with you for fun, and you've got to encourage him.



*Egregious social blunder: Eric Schaffer checks his e-mail on his Mulberry at a rest stop.*

### **Ride Etiquette**

It's almost always more enjoyable to ride in a group, although around Pittsburgh groups larger than a dozen or so can be hard to manage in traffic. Obviously, people of completely different riding profiles (speaking figuratively) don't necessarily mix on the same ride, and probably shouldn't start out together. However, with a little consideration (stops at regular intervals, letting people know what's happening), riders of widely different abilities and fitness levels can ride together and have good rides. If you start out in a big group that has trouble sticking together, consider splitting into two smaller groups after 10-15 miles or so, by common sense, mutual consent, and understanding. The main point is: a rider has to be able to ride tight in a group on the flats at the pace a group naturally sets for itself; otherwise, he or she should be on a different ride. Given this, a ride that starts out together should finish together, whatever happens in between. Hammer, blast up hills, and sprint after garbage trucks and city-limit signs, but wait up at major intersections and at other points agreed on. Don't ride ahead when some people are staying behind to wait for others. Wait for people with flats or other mechanical troubles: someday it will be you. Pay attention and don't leave someone alone or, if you absolutely have to, make sure they know how to return.



*Double-points sprint sign.*

Riders in back depend on the good sense of the riders up front. Still, Pittsburgh cyclists tend to exaggerate in the use of hand signals, alerting other riders to minor deformities in the pavement, which typically occur every foot or so. The sensible thing to do is to ride rugged wheels and tires, hang back on bad roads, and save hand signals for pointing out genuine potholes and other dangers, like oncoming joggers on the wrong side of the road. It's always better to swerve than to brake, but it's best not to do either. Always swerve minimally, and signal if you have time to. In a tight paceline, ride over manhole covers rather than swerving to avoid them. Always signal a slow-down or stop by putting your hand down and back. As a general principle, yell "tracks" to warn of RR tracks, "gravel" on loose turns, and "car up" or "car back" to warn of an up-coming car on a narrow or twisty road. Remember there are people in back of you. Riders in front should signal major right- or left-hand turns. Never ever brake and swerve without warning, especially on a downhill. Help cars get around you by telling riders up front to form up single-file.

### **Local Riding Culture**

Every locality has its own riding (and racing) culture, and if you want to enjoy yourself in that culture, you have to abide by it. It's bigger than you are, and you'll just end up by annoying people by trying to reform it. I have heard that there are places in the west where riders religiously stop at all stop signs and wait at all stoplights. That isn't Pittsburgh, where riders tend to make a common-sense assessment of the situation and act accordingly, taking care not to annoy or impede automobile traffic or

endanger fellow riders. I was once driven crazy on a cycling vacation in Wyoming by riders insisting on signalling right-hand turns by cocking up their left hand as if out of a car window, instead of using their right hand, as any sensible person would do.



*You'll want to choose your riding partners more carefully than this.*

Pittsburgh riders wear helmets on group rides; don't try to buck the custom, or you'll create resentment. For the most part, pleasant social rides in Pittsburgh are for the coffee-klatsch set. Local riders have no idea what it means to "ride tempo," which means to ride at a brisk and even pace which the entire group can keep up with for miles and miles. They insist on trying to show that they, on this given day, and on this given stretch of road, are stronger than you are, or can beat you up this particular upward declivity in the road. On a rolling hill, they will kill themselves demonstrating their breakaway skill. So riders end up scattered all over the landscape, necessitating constant regrouping, but that's the way Pittsburgh riding is; get used to it. Inconsistently, local riders are only somewhat combative over sprints to town and county limit signs, and festival banners hanging over roads. If you want to be happy when group-cycling in Pittsburgh, go with the flow.

### **Places to Drive to Ride to**

Perhaps not everyone wants to brave the sometimes heavy traffic on many of the ways out of Pittsburgh; or some people may have family members not up to the challenge. By all means, pack your bike in your car and drive someplace, like to the head of the

Youghiogheny Trail in Boston. But don't go south to Ohiopyle or north to Presque Isle (for some reason, favorite destinations of Pittsburgh week-end cyclists). There are plenty of peaceful country roads in the immediate vicinity of Pittsburgh. On a bicycle, every bump in the road, stray cat, dilapidated farmhouse, roadside stand, piece of road-kill, or front-yard pottery or gnome display is just as sight-worthy as more conventional, picture-book scenery. Because of the major rivers and highways, the land around Pittsburgh divides up into a number of pockets, each with its own unique characteristics, waiting to be explored.



*So many places to go, and so little time to do it in.*

If you really have to get in your car and drive somewhere to ride, go to Washington, PA and head south into lower Washington and Greene counties. That's where the truly beautiful unspoiled riding is around here. I suppose it's legitimate to drive to the start of the Youghiogheny Trail in Boston, because it's pretty far away, and the intervening scenery isn't that great.



*The Boston Bridge, beneath which the Youghiogheny Trail begins. Photo by Louis Fineberg.*

# Highland Park Bridge

The Highland Park Bridge is usually approached either by riding down the Zoo Hill (now carrying the corny name One Wild Road) or from Washington Blvd. to Allegheny River Blvd., then left and right across the bridge. Usually, exit on the first off-ramp to the right, into Aspinwall on what we will refer to as (Old) Freeport Rd., although the next exit can be used to Sharpsburg, in the opposite direction. Rides across the Highland Park Bridge generally head northeast on Freeport Rd., peeling off to the left at various places.



*Freeport Rd. in Aspinwall. Watch out for the little gray-haired old lady. Photo by Louis Fineberg,*

## Freeport Rd.

The road from the Highland Park Bridge to Freeport on Freeport Rd. is mentioned more often than any other road in this guide. It goes through a lot of small towns, but it provides some of the best flat riding in the area. At Tarentum, Freeport Rd. goes left up a short hill and then continues right, all the way to Freeport. An alternative flat road (River Rd.) sticks next to the river for another several miles. There are four bridges along Freeport Road over the Allegheny River worth mentioning: the Hulton Bridge at Oakmont; the New Kensington Bridge; the Tarentum Bridge; and the Garvers Ferry Bridge out of Freeport on SR356.

**Squaw Run Rd.** Turn left off Freeport Rd. on Fox Chapel Rd. (the Green Belt); fork left on Squaw Run Rd. (along which Teresa Heinz supposedly lives). Take this up to

Dorseyville Rd. (left). Left on Kittanning Pike into Sharpsburg. Return over the Highland Park Bridge. [15 miles]

**Fox Chapel.** Take Fox Chapel Rd. (the Green Belt) left off Freeport Rd. and follow it over three hills. While going downhill before the third hill on this ride, bear left on Old Mill Rd., then right on Fairview Rd. to Dorseyville Rd. Turn right on Dorseyville Rd. to Saxonburg Blvd., left to Etna. [25 miles].

**Hunt Rd.** For a quick winter's ride, start out as under *Squaw Run*. From Squaw Run Rd., turn left on Hunt Rd., and follow it uphill to Sharpsburg-Kitanning Rd. (left), which takes you down the chilly descent into Sharpsburg. [10 miles}. You can also run into Hunt Rd. by following the *Guyastua Rd.* ride up Center Ave. and taking the first left from Guyasuta Rd., on Buckingham Rd., which runs into Hunt Rd. (left).

**Old Mill Rd.** Begin as under *Squaw Run Rd.* From Squaw Run Rd. turn right on Old Mill Rd.. Go left on the Green Belt (Fox Chapel Rd.) to Dorseyville Rd. (left) and return as under *Fox Chapel*. [20 miles].



*Very steep Powers Run Rd. as seen from Freeport Rd.*

**Guyasuta Rd.** The roads in and around Fox Chapel provide infinite variety for short, pretty, and hilly rides, too numerous to mention, but try this: just after the turn off the Highland Park Bridge to Aspinwall, and at the second light take Center Ave. left up a dramatically steep hill to Guyasuta Rd. (right), leading up and eventually past the Green Belt, becoming Field Club Rd. Follow this to Powers Run Rd. Go left on

Powers Run Rd., becoming Fox Chapel Rd. and follow *Fox Chapel* [30 miles]. Powers Run Rd., leading up from Freeport Rd., is commonly considered too steep; try it some time.

**Space Warp.** This ride invariably tricks me into messing up directions. Start out as under *Guyasuta Rv.* Take Field Club Rd. (the extension of Guyasuta Rd.) past Powers Run Rd., and follow the main road, eventually Highland Rd., to the Green Belt. Turn right on the Green Belt and follow it left at Fox Chapel Rd. As the road starts to go downhill, look for a left onto Old Mill Rd., and follow it back to Squaw Run Rd. Left back to Aspinwall, past a crossing with Guyasuta Rd. from the other direction than I think I'm heading. [25 miles]

**RIDC Park.** This industrial park straddles SR28 just before Blawnox, with an entrance from Freeport Rd. on Alpha Drive. There is a gently rolling closed circuit of about [1.5 miles], usually wind-swept. Although somewhat boring, this is a loop one can safely take family members to.



*Approach to the Guys Run climb.*

**Guys Run.\*\*\*** A good shorter ride for evening training, considered a local classic. Take Freeport Rd. past the Hulton Bridge. Just short of the Yellow Belt, at the Eat 'n Park restaurant, take Guys Run to the left (a great climb). Follow the Green Belt to Dorseyville Rd., then back as described above under *Fox Chapel*. [30 miles]. Toward

the top of Guys Run Rd., Locust Hill Rd. goes off to the right over to SR910 for a connection to *Rich Hill Rd.*

**Indianola.** Also a classic evening training ride. Turn left from Freeport Rd. onto the Yellow Belt (SR910) and up and over the hill. Somewhat past the bottom, turn left on Indianola Rd. (a uniquely tough, lung-searing climb). Eventually, turn right on Dorseyville Rd. to Saxonburg Blvd. (left), back through Etna. [30 miles].

**Mill Dam Rd.** Continue past Indianola on SR910. Right on Cove Run Rd., left on Mill Dam Rd., a really good long climb. Left on Rich Hill Rd. to Michaels Rd. (right), right on Little Pine Creek Rd. to Feeport Rd. and return [35 miles].

**Locust Hill.** Locust Hill Rd. cuts *Indianola* slightly short, but is also very tough. Instead of descending on the other side of the SR910 climb, turn left on Locust Hill Rd. (more climbing) and join Guy's Run Rd. toward the top of the Guy's Run climb. Continue as per *Guys Run*. [30 miles].

**Rich Hill Rd.** Take *Guys Run Rd.* to toward the top of the climb, turning right on Locust Hill Rd. at SR910 jog right and then left on Rich Hill Rd. and do a descent. Going straight will eventually take you on Jacoby and Nixon Rds. over to Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. Instead, go left up a steep short climb, still Rich Hill Rd., to a left at a T. Rich Hill Rd. winds to the Orange Belt and Saxonburg Blvd., on which you return via Etna. [30 miles].



*The Cheswick elephant, Freeport Rd.*

**Hill Heaven.** Take *Guys Run*, but turn right off Guys Run Rd. on Locust Hill Rd. Right and left at SR910 on Rich Hill Rd., becoming Jacoby Rd., becoming Nixon Rd., to Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. Cross this and head straight, down an unpromising entry to SR28. Keep right and it will lead you through Cheswick to Tawney Run Rd., which will roll up to Butler-Logan Rd. Continue straight, into Creighton on Murray Hill Rd. (steep downhill) just short of where the Orange Belt comes into Freeport Rd. Turn left and then left on Clarks Pike, and climb it up to Butler-Logan Rd. (right). Left on Log Cabin Rd. Cross Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. and climb Lafever Hill. Keep right on Rich Hill Rd., left on Mill Dam Rd., left up Cove Run Rd. (very steep), left on Rich Hill Rd. to SR910 (left). Return on Freeport Rd. [40 miles].



*Honking tunnel on Little Deer Creek Rd.*

**Yellow and Green Belts.** Follow the Yellow Belt off Freeport Rd. all the way over to the Ohio River at Glenfield, then left on Ohio River Blvd. to the Green Belt, returning all the way to Aspinwall (with the opportunity to cut short at various points, e.g. Rochester Rd., Babcock Blvd., Mt. Royal Blvd., Middle Rd., Saxonburg Blvd.) Up to [55 miles].

**Tour of East Deer.** Begin as under *Hill Heaven*. In Cheswick turn left on Yutes Run Rd. and take it up hill to Butler-Logan Rd. (left). Quickly turn right down Clarks Pike (Run) Rd., taking you to Crawford Rd., that is, the Orange Belt running between SR28 and Russellton. Turn left and go up the Orange Belt climb, then turn right on Russellton Airport Rd., then right again up Baileys Run Rd. Look for a left on

Fairfield Rd., which will take you up to just past the climb coming out of Deer Lakes Park, on Days Run Rd. Left through Deer Lakes Park to Russellton; take Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. to Freeport Rd. (right) and return [40 miles].

**Log Cabin Rd.** Take SR910 (the Yellow Belt) left off Freeport Rd., at the top of the climb go right on Nixon Rd., left up Rich Hill Rd. At a T, bear right down LaFever Rd. hill (be careful; it's steep). Cross Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. on what is now Log Cabin Rd., a long, gradual climb up to Butler-Logan Rd. (right). After crossing over SR28, turn left and then right down Riddle Run Rd., right back to Pittsburgh on Freeport Rd. [35 miles].

### **Little Deer Creek Valley Rd.**

Although Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. intersects with Freeport Rd., the usual access to it is to turn left off Freeport Rd. on the Yellow Belt (SR910), then immediately right and up past the U-PARC (the old Gulf Research Center); then left on Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. (by the Syria Mosque), which runs through Rural Ridge, through the "honking tunnel" and then Russellton. This road provides access to more good intermediate-length rides than any other road in the Pittsburgh area. Almost any turnoff from this road leads somewhere interesting. The main rides are covered here.



*The approach to the dreaded LaFever Hill climb, off Little Deer Creek Valley Rd.*

**Lafever Hill.** An early-season ride. Left off Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. at the Lafever Hill sign; there's a bus shed at the intersection. Log Cabin Rd. is on the right. At the top, take Rich Hill Rd. left and then all the way to SR910. Jog right and then left and proceed as per *Locust Hill*. [30 miles].

**Russellton-Campbell Rd.** Follow the Orange Belt out of Russellton left, over the first two stair-step hills (Starr Rd.). Turn left at the T-intersection, and follow the road past the East Union Presbyterian Church. Take the first main right down Russellton Rd. to Saxonburg Blvd. Continue across on Campbell Rd. to SR910 (right). Follow to Middle Rd. (left) and return through Etna [40 miles].

**Cove Run Rd.** A billygoat's dream. Leave Russellton as under *Russellton-Campbell Rd.* After the church, don't take the first main right (Russellton Rd.) but the next one down Mill Dam Rd. brings you to a left turn at the bottom of Cove Run Rd. hill. You will need a lower gear than you probably have. At the top of the climb, keep to the right (Rich Hill Rd.) and follow to the bottom of a short steep descent. Right to SR910. Right and then left up Locust Hill Rd. to Guy's Run Rd. Follow *Guy's Run* from there. [45 miles].



*The Rural Ridge Post Office, on Little Deer Creek Rd.*

**Russellton-Saxonburg Blvd.** Take Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. to the Orange Belt. Left on the Orange Belt (Starr Rd.) over the stair-step hills. Follow the Orange Belt right to Saxonburg Blvd. (left). Return to Etna via Saxonburg Blvd. For a hillier ending, near Hartwood Acres go left from Saxonburg Blvd. up Dorseyville Rd., returning to Sharpsburg via Kitanning Pike. [40 miles].



*This nice connector trail through Hartwood Acres Regional Park links Middle Rd. and Saxonburg Blvd.*

**Russellton-Orange Belt-Middle Rd.** Do as under *Russellton-Saxonburg Blvd.*, but follow the Orange Belt all the way to SR910. Right, then left on Middle Rd. and back to Etna. [40 miles].

**Michaels Rd.** Follow Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. to just short of Russellton, and turn left on Michaels Rd. and climb over to Saxonburg Blvd. Left and back through Etna [30 miles].

**Tour of West Deer.** From Russellton, take McRell (McKrell) Rd. to the left from Russellton, just past where the Orange Belt crosses Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. Follow this to Saxonburg Blvd., then briefly right and left, on Logan Rd. to the Red Belt. Left and then right on Rittman Rd., leading into Kyle Rd. Left on Sandy Hill Rd. to a left on Glasgow Rd. back to the Red Belt. Right and then left on Shephard Rd. which you take to the left as the main road changes its name to McIntyre Rd. Right on Middle Rd. Ext., then left on Lick Rd. Right on Bairdford Rd., then left on Kaufman Rd., which takes you to Curtisville on Saxonburg Blvd. Return via Etna. [50 miles].



*Popeye's classic garage, gas station, and rest stop at Culmerville, on the Red Belt and Saxonburg Blvd. It's for sale, if you want to buy it.*

**Culmerville.** Go north on the main road through Russellton past the Orange Belt, bearing left outside town, still on Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. Intersect with Saxonburg Blvd. at Culmerville, just past where the Red Belt comes in from the right. Either return (left) on Saxonburg Blvd. or follow the Red Belt to Bairdford Rd. (left). Return either by going right on Middle Rd. Ext. and Middle Rd. or take Bairdford Rd. straight. If you take Bairdford Rd., here is one way to proceed. Take the main road into Bairdford and go across the Orange Belt on what is now Bryson Rd. Take Dawson Rd. left to Starz Rd. (right), to Campbell Rd. Left and then right on Saxonburg Blvd., which takes you to Etna. [40 miles].

**Cherry Valley Rd.** At Culmerville (see *Culmerville*) go right (north) on Saxonburg Blvd., then soon left on Cherry Valley Rd., and then left at the point that this road turns into Leslie Rd. This road (Deer Creek Rd.) runs you into Bairdford Rd. at the Red Belt. Cross the Red Belt, turn right on Middle Rd. Ext. to SR910 Right and left and return on Middle Rd. to Etna. [45 miles].

**Leslie Rd.** A nice extension to *Cherry Valley Rd.* Across Deer Creek Rd. Cherry Valley Rd. becomes Leslie Rd. Take this all the way to to SR8, then jog left and right on Old SR8 to a left on State Rd. Up and down across the Red Belt. At the orange Belt jog left and right. Eventually join Hardies Rd. to the Yellow Belt.

**SR908 Ext.** Go through Russellton past the intersection with the Orange Belt, bearing right outside town on SR908 Ext. Turn left at Tarentum-Culmerville Rd. and follow it

to the Red Belt just before Culmerville. Return on Saxonburg Blvd. as under *Culmerville*. Or turn right on Tarentum-Culmerville Rd. to Dellenbaugh Rd. (right), to Days Run Rd. (left) to Freeport Rd. and return. [45 miles].

**Sun Mine Rd.\*\*\*** Here is the full version. Begin as under *SR908 Ext.* past Tarentum-Culmerville Rd. At a T, briefly left to Millerstown and Culmerville Rd. (SR1028). Cross this and soon take a right up Sun Mine Rd., becoming Westminster Rd. Many shorter hills follow on the way to SR228. Turn left on SR228, and another left past the school on the hill past the BP station. This leads across Saxonburg Blvd. on McKay Rd. Cross Monks Rd., left on Sandy Hill Rd., right on Leslie Rd. to SR8. Left, then right on old SR8, bear left and left again. You are on State Rd., also featured on *Glade Mills*. See there for the return, eventually on Mt. Royal Blvd. [65 miles].

**Millerstown Climb.** Instead of taking Sun Mine Rd. as under *Westminster Rd.*, turn right on Millerstown and Culmerville Rd., a good hilly way to get over to Freeport Rd. above the long sweeping descent into Freeport. Right to a left on Oak Manor Dr. Right on River Rd. to Tarentum. Return on Freeport Rd. [45 miles].



*Broken home: a house torn in two by a flood at the base of the Sun Mine Rd. climb.*

**Crawford Run Rd.** Once this was Angelo Cialone's favorite evening ride. Take Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. to Crawford Run Rd. (it turns right before the tunnel) and up a fairly long climb. Right turn at the top on Butler-Logan Rd. After crossing over SR28, take a left and then a right on Riddle Run Rd. (a long gradual downhill into Springdale, and an opportunity to unleash your biggest gear). Return on Freeport Rd. [35 miles].



*Approaching the summit of the infamous Deer Lakes "wall"*

**Deer Lakes Park.** In the running for Three-Star status, this ride incorporates a favorite race loop. Take Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. to the Orange Belt. Right, but soon left through Deer Lakes Park on Mahaffey (Kern) Rd. (steep, two-stage climb). Right turn after the descent along a long slightly downhill stretch (Days Run Rd.). Right turn at a T intersection. Follow the winding uphill road (Baileys Run Rd.) back to the Orange Belt and into Russellton. Return as you came or, for additional distance, tack on any of the many variations out of Russellton. [45 miles] or more.

**Orange Belt off Freeport Rd.** The Orange Belt intersects with Freeport Rd. between the New Kensington Bridge and Tarentum. The climb to the left is worth doing; it's comparable to Guy's Run. At the top, go straight and descend on Crawford Run Rd. to Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. Left to Freeport Rd. and back [25 miles]. Or follow the Orange Belt to Russellton. From Russellton the ride can proceed in any number of directions. The Orange Belt can be followed to the west all the way past SR8, where it becomes too trafficky to be pleasant. The best choice is to take the Orange Belt through Bairdford to SR910, right and then left and back on Middle Rd. [40 miles].



*Lots of the rides in this section return on Saxonburg Blvd. up so-called Gravity Hill, which doesn't look very steep but leaves your bike stopped stone cold. There's another hill like it outside Herminie.*

**Riddle Run Rd.** From Freeport Rd between Springdale and the New Kensington Bridge, take Riddle Run Rd. left, up a nice hill. At the top go left and join (right) with Butler-Logan Rd. At Crawford Run Rd. go left, downhill, and return (left) on Little Deer Creek Rd. and Freeport Rd. [30 miles].

**Marshall Hill.** From Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. turn left up Marshall Hill Rd., a nice long dirt climb. Left on Rich Hill Rd., and follow it when it goes right. A long, rolling descent merges you with Cove Run Rd. and brings you to Nixon Rd. (right). At SR910 go briefly right, then left on Locust Hill Rd. to Guys Run Rd. (right). Follow the Green Belt back to Fox Chapel, returning over the Highland Park Bridge [40 miles].

**Days Run Rd.** Days Run Rd. leaves Freeport Rd. to the left past where the Orange Belt does, opposite the entrance to the PPG plant, usually being picketed. Take this pleasant, slightly uphill road all the way to Tarentum-Culmerville Rd. Left to Culmerville and return on Saxonburg Blvd. [40 miles].

**Tarentum-Culmerville Rd.** This rarely cycled but attractive road leads up a climb from Freeport Rd. on Ross St. out of Tarentum and eventually to Culmerville, returning on Saxonburg Blvd. through Etna. [40 miles].



*Bell Haven. A roadside attraction consisting of a collection of bells of various sizes, on the Red Belt, near the intersection with Tarentum-Culmerville Rd.*

### **Red Belt off Freeport Rd.**

The Red Belt intersects with Freeport Rd. at Tarentum, where it is called Bull Creek Rd. The Red Belt is a well-used bicycle route. It can be ridden in a big arch above Pittsburgh all the way to Ambridge on the Ohio River, with intermediate rides heading south at any number of places (Saxonburg Blvd., Middle Rd., Meridian Rd., State Rd., Babcock Blvd., Mingo Rd., and others).

**Red Belt-Middle Rd.\*\*\*** This is probably the most frequently ridden Red-Belt option. Ride to Tarentum on Freeport Rd., then follow the Red Belt left to Bairdford Rd. (left), then right on Middle Rd. Ext. and return on Middle Rd. through Etna. [50 miles].

**Howes Run Rd.** This attractive road departs from the Red Belt out of Tarentum to the right, about halfway between Tarentum and Millerstown. It leads uphill across Millerstown-Freeport Rd. to Ekastown Rd. close to Ekastown. Left and then left again on Goldscheiter Rd. bearing right on Stark Rd. to Lardintown Rd., then right and left on Anderson Rd. to Saxonburg Blvd., which will take you to Etna for a return on the 62nd St. Bridge. [45 miles].



*This house on the Red Belt outside Tarentum was cut in half by a flash flood, but it still flies the American flag (until it was finally demolished).*

**Ridge Rd./Burtner Rd.** Ridge Rd. (one of very many local roads with this name) departs from the Red Belt to the right just outside Tarentum, past SR28. After a while, past a school on the left, take Burtner Rd. right, a fast descent down to and across SR28. The Burtner House, a pretty 1821 stone farmhouse built by the first white settlers in the area, is on the left just past SR28. Go right on Pleasantville Rd., eventually cross Freeport Rd., and bear to the right, descending to the Allegheny River on Mile Lock Rd. Take River Rd. to the right to the Tarentum Bridge. Return on Freeport Rd. This ride is also good in the opposite direction [50 miles].

**Fawn.** Take Little Deer Creek Valley Rd., SR908 Ext. to the Red Belt, right toward Tarentum. Left on Howes Run Rd., right on Millerstown and Culmerville Rd. Right on Ridge Rd., and a whooshing descent back to the Red Belt. Left to Tarentum and return on Freeport Rd. [50 miles].

**Tour-Ed Mine.** Basically, the same as *Fawn*. Just off Ridge Rd. near the Red Belt, the Tour-Ed mine is a good place to take your children to some summer day. Turn in the entrance and go through the venue, exiting through the vintage PA Turnpike tollgate down to the Red Belt.



*Partially restored PA Turnpike tollgate at Tour-Ed Mine, near Tarentum.*

**Metz Rd./Donnel(y)ville Rd.** For a real treat, instead of climbing Ridge Rd. as under *Ridge Rd./Burtner Rd.*, instead climb small, narrow, pot-holed Metz Rd., a bit farther along the Red Belt, which takes you up to Ridge Rd. Left to an intersection with Donnelville Rd., the site of a prominent shooting incident of not too long ago. Left on Donnelville Rd. to Howes Run Rd., right to Millerstown Rd., left to the Red Belt at Millerstown. Return on SR908 Ext. through Russellton [45 miles].

**Red Belt-Sewickley.** The Red Belt ends at the Ohio River at Fair Oaks, just outside Ambridge. Take Ohio River Blvd. into Sewickley. From Sewickley, follow the Orange Belt (Blackburn Rd.) back into the hills, eventually to Chesterfield Rd. (right). See *Sewickley-Rochester Rd.* for returns. [75 miles]. There are a number of other good climbs out of the Sewickley area, for example, Little Sewickley Creek Rd., Camp Meeting Rd., Glenn Mitchell Rd. or Red Gate Rd. (a real climb) to Merriman Rd.

**Red Belt-Coraopolis.** Begin as per *Red Belt-Sewickley*, but take the Orange Belt out of Sewickley across the Sewickley Bridge to Coraopolis, then left over to Neville Island, which provides a flat, usually wind-aided stretch into McKees Rocks on SR51, which runs into Carson St. and leads to the South Side. Return via Smithfield, 10th St., or Brady Street (Birmingham) Bridges. [70 miles].

**Mt. Nebo.** A variation on the return from Sewickley. Take Blackburn Rd. to the right where the Orange Belt turns left, and follow it to Mt. Nebo Rd., which eventually crosses I279 and becomes Lowries Run and Mt. Nebo Rd. Take Lowries Run Rd. (the Yellow Belt) east to Rochester Rd. and Babcock Blvd. and back through Millvale [60 miles].



*Burtner House on Burtner Rd., a polling place in the 1864 elections (see Ridge Rd./Burtner Rd.)*

**Mingo Rd.** Go north to the Red Belt on Middle Rd., Saxonburg Blvd., or through Tarentum, and head west. Mingo Rd. goes south (left) from the Red Belt past I79, leading past SR910 and the Orange Belt and joining with Brandt School Rd., which intersects with the Yellow Belt (Ingomar Rd.) going east to Middle Rd. [50-70 miles].

## **SR228**

Nice, mainly flat rides can be found by taking SR228, arching over the north of Pittsburgh, as though it were the next beltway beyond the Red Belt. The road has been recently provided with shoulders, making it much more rideable. Take Old Freeport Rd. to Tarentum, then River Rd. along the river to Spring Hill Rd. (left, and a climb back up to Freeport Rd.) Right at the top. Continue to a left on Fuhrer/Saxonburg Rd. at a stop light (Czekalski Real Estate on the left). This becomes Ekastown Rd., which joins SR228 in Sarverville. Keep straight. SR228 eventually intersects with SR8 at Glade Mills. Beyond this, SR228 goes south for a while and then heads west to Mars, beyond which the traffic is too heavy for comfortable riding. Many roads lead south toward Pittsburgh at varying distances: Millerstown and Culmerville Rd., Sarver Rd., Lardintown Rd., Westminster Rd., Saxonburg Blvd., Sandy Hill Rd. Across SR228 head south on McFann Rd., Forsythe Rd., State Rd. SR228 to Saxonburg Blvd. and return through Etna.

**Millerstown and Culmerville.** A favorite loop is to take Freeport Rd. past Tarentum to just past the top of the hill leading down to Freeport. Turn left on Millerstown and Culmerville Rd. and take this up and down road as far as the Red Belt. Left and then right on SR908ext into Russellton and return via Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. to Freeport Rd. [50 miles].

**Sarverville.** A nice rolling ride. Start out as under SR228. In Sarverville, at the point where Ekastown Rd. joins SR228 (at the GP station), go left on W. Sarver Rd. This cuts an attractive swath over to Saxonburg Blvd. via Lardintown, Westminster, and Brewer Rds. Left on Saxonburg Blvd. to Culmerville. At Culmerville head left over the railroad bridge, then right and down into Russellton to Freeport Rd. [55 miles].

**Rainbow (All-Belt) Ride:** This used to be my favorite longer ride, but due to increased traffic on the latter parts, it isn't what it used to be. Take Freeport Rd. to the Red Belt at Tarentum. The point is: to start this ride at the periphery of the beltways and then spiral back to town. Take the Red Belt to Ambridge-Sewickley, joining the Orange Belt on the bridge over the Ohio River to Coraopolis. Go through town and join the Yellow Belt. Follow the Yellow Belt south (major climb) to SR60, and stay on the Yellow Belt through Carnegie and Mt. Lebanon. Left on Washington Rd.=West Liberty Ave. to the Blue Belt (right). Follow the Blue Belt along McNeilly Rd., Library Rd., Maytide St., Brownsville Rd., Becks Run Rd., to Carson St. (right). Take the Blue Belt into Homestead. Leave it at the Homestead High Level Bridge, and join the Green Belt into Rankin across the Rankin Bridge. Leave the Green Belt at Braddock Ave., which will take you to Forbes Ave. (left) and Squirrel Hill. [100 miles].



*Dan Chew leading the Dirty Dozen ride up Logan St. in Millvale.*

**Dirty Dozen.** This ride, designed by Dan and Tom Chew, has been ridden (usually in a cold rain or slushy snow) nearly every year in November or December for the past eighteen or so years. It circles Pittsburgh, taking in the most challenging climbs near the city, as determined by consulting a topographical map. Like most of Dan's rides, this one is quirky and complicated, and should probably not be attempted alone the first time. Leave Squirrel Hill and ride to the Highland Park Bridge, turning right in Aspinwall on Old Freeport Rd., then left on 1: Center Ave., continuing the climb up Guyasuta Rd. Left on Buckingham; then Hunt Rd., Maurers Ln., Kittanning Pike, Canal St.; right on 6th St. in Etna to 2: Ravine St. and Sharps Hill Rd., then Dorseyville Rd., left down Browns Hill Rd. across Saxonburg Blvd. up 3: Berryhill Rd. Left on Middle Rd. to SR8, Butler St. in Etna, right on 4: High St. to Seavey Rd., left on Evergreen Rd., briefly right on Ohio St. to 5: Logan St. in Millvale. Left on Pittview St., then down and back up on 6: Rialto St. (Pig Hill), left on Lowrie St. to Troy Hill Rd., right on Madison Ave.-East St., left on 7: Suffolk St., continuing up Hazelton St. and Burgess St. Left on Perrysville Ave., right on Federal St. around Allegheny Center Mall, across the 6th St. bridge. Market St. and Blvd. of the Allies to the Smithfield St. Bridge. Left on Carson St. to a right and a right to 8: E. Sycamore St. Right on Wyoming Ave., left on Grandview Ave., left on Merrimac St., then Woodruff St., left on Saw Mill Run Blvd., right on Crane Ave., left on Banksville Rd., then left on Coast St. to 9: Canton Ave. (half the field falls down here), retracing to Banksville Rd. Left on Wenzell Ave., left on 10: Boustead St., right on Pauline Ave., left on W. Liberty Ave. through the Liberty Tunnel (prime sprint at the end). Right on the P.J. McArdle Rdwy., right on 10th St., up and back on 11: Welsh Way. Return to Sarah St., Jane St. Right on S 20th St., then 12a: Berry St., Holt St. (these streets are not on most maps), left on 12b: Eleanor St. Right on Arlington Ave., left on Sprint St.-Mountain Ave., Wagner Rd., left on Becks Run Rd., right on Carson St., joining SR837 to the Glenwood Bridge. 2nd Ave. through Hazelwood to 13a: Flowers Ave. (right), continuing left on 13b: Tesla St. (you are finished). Right on Harlem St., right on Hazelwood Ave., left on Murray Ave. and Squirrel Hill. Around [55 miles], if you go back to Highland Park.

**Saturday Quartet.** A low-gear ride incorporating selected hills of *Pittsburgh's Dirty Dozen*. Go toward downtown on Butler St., merging with Liberty Ave. Get over to Penn Ave. and merge with Grant St. downtown. Toward the river bear right and cross the Smithfield St. Bridge to the South Side. Take the first right and the first right after that up the famous Sycamore St. climb, bearing right to Grandview Ave. At the top of McArdle Roadway turn left down Merrimac St. to Woodruff to Saw Mill Run Blvd. (left). Right up Crane Ave. to US19 (left). Left on Coal St. and then left and try to go up and down cobbled, slippery, and very steep Canton Ave. Returning to US19, go left and then go left on Wenzell St., then left up Boustead St. Left on Broadway to Beechview Ave. (left), right back down Crane Ave. to Saw Mill Run Blvd. (right). Left on Ravine St. to Warrington Ave., to Arlington Ave. (right). Left on Rupp Way and

right on Josephine St., right on 27th St. to Carson St. (right), then left across the Hot Metal Bridge to 2nd Ave. (right). Follow 2nd Ave. under the overpass and right into Hazelwood. Left on Flowers Ave. and left on Tesla St. Right on Hazelwood Ave. to Murray Ave. in Squirrel Hill. Only [30 miles]



*South Side church, with downtown in the distance, seen from McArdle Roadway.*

**Pittsburgh Bridges.** A ride with a theme, the idea being to cross all rideable bridges leading from and back to Pittsburgh. Ride via Washington Blvd. to 1: Highland Park Bridge. Through Sharpsburg to 2: 62nd St. (Fleming) Bridge. Butler St. to 3: 40th St. Bridge. Right and another right into the boathouse area to catch the start of the North Shore Bike Trail. Ride under and then circle around and cross 4: 31st St. Bridge. Penn Ave. to 5: 16th St. Bridge. Right past the old Heinz plant and another right to River Rd. and Gen. Robinson St. to 6: 9th St. Bridge to 7: 7th St. Bridge to 8: 6th St. Bridge. Ride to Point State Park and, using the bikeway, cross 9: Fort Duquesne Bridge. North Shore Ave. and Ridge Ave. to 10: West End Bridge. Carson St. to 11: Smithfield St. Bridge. 2nd Ave. downtown to 12: 10th St. Bridge. Cross Carson St. and go right on McArdle Roadway to to 13: Fort Pitt Bridge. Forbes Ave. to 14: Birmingham (Brady St.) Bridge. Carson St. to 15: Hot Metal Bridge. Right on 2nd Ave. and follow it through Hazelwood across 16: Glenwood Bridge. Follow SR837 to Homestead and up 17: Homestead High Level (Pittsburgh Grays) Bridge, the only climb on the ride, to Beechwood Blvd. and the end of Murray Ave. in Squirrel Hill. [40 miles].



*Geese against the background of the Fort Duquesne Bridge.*

### **Past Tarentum to Freeport and Beyond**

If you are going beyond Tarentum, it's best to leave Freeport Rd. for a while by taking a hard right at the Tarentum Bridge intersection, keeping to the right of the bridge. Follow the road into lower Tarentum along the river (River Rd.). There are four main ways to get off this road, all by climbing left, back up to Freeport Rd. The first climb is on Mile Lock Way, where River Rd. comes to an end at part of Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corp. The next, and most obvious climb will lead you back to Freeport Rd. (right) in time to take Furer/Saxonburg Rd. to the left and join the SR228 ride. Going farther on the road next to the river (now Karns Rd.) will lead to two more climbs. The first (Burtner Rd.) leads to a crossing of Freeport Rd. and, later, SR28, leading up to Ridge Rd. and Culmerville-Millerstown Rd. The next and best climb (Oak Manor Dr.) joins Freeport Rd. near the crest of the hill before the straight, long, hair-raising descent into Freeport. Instead of descending, just past the summit you can go left at a flashing yellow light on Culmerville-Millerstown Rd., which eventually runs into the Red Belt. On the other side of Freeport, what was Freeport Rd. becomes SR128, which keeps heading north along the river, to Ford City and Kitanning.



*Bottom of the scary Freeport descent.*

**Boggsville.** North of Freeport, Old SR28 turns into SR128, a winding, hilly rural road, eventually leading to Ford City, just south of Kittanning (see *Ford City*). A number of attractive roads lead to the left (west) toward Saxonburg. Here is one example. Past Freeport and after the climb out of town, leave SR128 by bearing left on Freeport-Kittanning Rd., to a left on Furnace Run Rd. to Boggsville; left on Sarver Rd. Go left briefly on SR356 to join SR228 to the right. Take SR228 to Ekastown Rd. (left) to Howes Run Rd. (right), which ends at Bull Creek Rd. (the Red Belt), leading left to Tarentum. Return on Freeport Rd. [70 miles].

**Freeport-Butler Trail.** The entrance at Laneville near Freeport is unimproved and very near unrideable on a road bike. Instead, at the top of the steep hill into Freeport, go left on Millerstown & Culmerville Rd. Just before SR28 turn right on Silverville Rd. toward Evangel Hts., crossing under SR28, turning right and proceeding to SR356 (carefully left). Turn right at Kepple Rd. (possibly not marked). Look for the trail just past a bicycle sign. In a bit you'll see the beginning of the hard-packed limestone trail ahead. This is a beautiful trail. After the halfway point, past Cabot and Marwood, it turns more to open fields. At various places it threatens to peter out, until finally it does peter out at Herman. Go a ways toward Butler on Butler-Herman Rd., then left on Simon Dr. across SR356; left then right on Blakely Rd. becoming pretty Rockdale Rd. Left on Dinnerbell Rd. and right on Morgan Rd., forking left on Anderson Rd., becoming Spring Valley Rd. Left on SR228 to Saxonburg Blvd. Return through Etna. [75 miles].



*Car sandwich at junkyard along River Rd. outside Tarentum.*

**Butler via the Trail.** Take *Freeport-Butler Trail* to the end at Herman. Herman Rd. leads to Butler on Zeigler St. Left on SR456 out of town, turning right at the top of the hill on Sqaxonburg Rd.. Quickly take Bull Creek Rd. right, later right on Patterson Rd., into Frazer Rd., briefly right on Dinnerbell Rd. under an overpass to a left on Victory Rd., which leads into Saxonburg Blvd. going back to Etna. [95 miles].

**Iron Bridge Rd.** The new bridge is made of reinforced concrete. Take SR128 out of Freeport. Where SR128 goes north to Ford City, turn left on Horseshoe Rd. Take Horseshoe Rd. to Iron Bridge Rd. (left), to Sarver Rd. (left), to SR 356 (left and then right on SR228). At Saxonburg Rd. turn briefly left and then right on Goldscheiter Rd. to Lardintown Rd. (left), to the Red Belt (right). Left on Dellenbaugh Rd. (a ghost Rd.). Follow to Days Run Rd. (right and then left on Kerr Rd., over through and out Deer Lakes Park). Return through Russellton, Gulf Lab Rd., Freeport Rd., Highland Park Bridge [70 miles].

**Leasureville.** Start as under *Iron Bridge*. Leasureville is where Kepple Rd. runs into Sarver Rd., across which the road changes names to Leasureville Rd., which takes you all the way to Cabot at Winfield-Cabot Rd. Left into the edge of Saxonburg, out on Rebecca St.=Saxonburg Rd. to SR228, right then left on Lardintown Rd. to the Red Belt (Bull Cr. Rd.), from where you can find your way home. [75 miles].

**Saxonburg via the Trail.** Start out as under *Butler-Freeport Trail*. Take the trail to Cabot. Left on Cabot-Winfield Rd., becoming Alwine Rd. across SR356. Left on Neupert Rd. into Saxonburg. Follow the signs to Knoch High School and leave town on Knoch School Rd. going south. Right on Saxonburg Blvd. to SR228, joining up with Saxonburg Blvd. going south in about a mile. Return on Saxonburg Blvd. [65 miles].



*Toward Herman, the Butler-Freeport Trail peters out into a single-track.*

**Cabot-Winfield.** Take SR128 out of Freeport, but go straight when SR128 goes right to Ford City. Pass through Slate Lick and continue straight on the next small road (past the quaint convenience store with the seasonal tableaux in the window). It ends in a nice wooded descent and joins up with Cabot-Winfield Rd. (left) up a long straight ascent. Cabot-Winfield Rd. leads to Saxonburg. For an attractive detour, take Cornplanter Rd. left, right on Leisureville Rd. turning into Stoney Hollow Rd., rejoining Cabot-Winfield Rd. at Cabot. Left to Saxonburg, then left out of town on Freeport Rd. to SR228, right and then left on Lardintown Rd., with return as described under *Saxonburg Blvd.* [75 miles].

**Star Grille Rd.** A way to Butler. Follow *Cabot-Winfield* to Cabot-Winfield Rd. Take this to Bear Creek Rd. Turn right on Bear Creek Rd., observing the nifty bear sculpture on the right at the corner. At Marwood Rd. jog right and left onto Star Grille Rd., eventually becoming Schnur Rd., to a left on Herman Rd. (large convent turned into reform school on your right), which takes you into Butler on Zeigler St. Left on SR356 and up the hill. Right on Saxonburg Rd. and another right on Bull Creek Rd., then several miles to a left on Frazier Rd. At Dinnerbell Rd. turn briefly right, then left

on Victory Rd. which, if you follow it to SR228, becomes Saxonburg Rd., which you take back to Pittsburgh [90 pretty easy miles].



*Baby bear sculpture at corner of Bear Creek and Winfield Rds.*

**Clearfield Rd.** Another pretty way to end up in Butler. Follow *Cabot-Winfield* to the bottom of the Cabot-Winfield Rd. hill. Instead of turning left up the hill, go straight. This is or becomes Clearfield Rd. At Herman Rd. turn left and go through Herman. See *Star Grille Rd.* for the way to Butler and return. [90 miles].

**Marwood.** Take Freeport Rd. to Days Run Rd., then right on 908Ext. to and T. Left to the Red Belt. Briefly right and then left on Lardintown Rd. Cross Millersburg and Freeport Rd. Turn right on Goldscheiter Rd. to Ekastown Rd. Briefly left to SR228, then right to SR356. Left and then right on Sarver Rd. In Sarver turn left on Bear Creek Rd., a long flat road which eventually ends in a T at Marwood Rd. Go left at the T on Marwood Rd., and cross SR356 on Neupert Rd., leading into Saxonburg. Left on Rebecca St. to SR228 and return (see *SR228*). [65 miles].

**Saxonburg and Back.** Travel to Saxonburg via Saxonburg Blvd. (at SR228, turn right, then left). Take Main St.=Dinner Bell Rd. west out of town. Just outside town fork left on Golden City Rd., eventually left on Morgan Rd., becoming Logan Rd. to SR228. Right, then left on Browners Rd, becoming Overbrook Rd., then left on Brownhill Rd. Right on Sandy Hill Rd., left on Glasgow Rd. to the Red Belt. Right and then left on Shepard Rd. Follow Shepard Rd., McIntyre Rd., becoming Turner

Rd. across SR910. Left on Hardies Rd. to Middle Rd. Extension. Turn right and return through Etna on Middle Rd. [65 miles].



*Replica of the Brooklyn Bridge in Saxonburg, next to the J. Roebling Museum.*

**Ford City.\*\*\*** This highly recommended ride represents more or less the northeastern-most limit of the Freeport Rd. option. In Freeport, SR28 (Freeport Rd.) turns into SR128, a winding country road leading into Ford City. Sadly, the long dangerous open-grate bridge into Ford City over the Allegheny River has been replaced with a modern bridge. After the bridge you are met on the left by a nice section of the Armstrong Bike Trail, which allows you to bypass most of Ford City. Keep to the left of the main road out of town. Stock up on supplies before leaving town, because it's a desert for the next 20-30 miles. Past Manorville, with SR28 high overhead, turn right on Garretts Run Rd., and follow it for nearly 20 miles. The terrain over to Shay, Brick Church, and Spring Church is radically up and down, isolated, and pretty. Spring Church deposits you on SR56, a too-heavily traveled road which will take you into Apollo, with return as per *Strongland* . [95 miles].

### **Armstrong Trail**

Here's a potentially great trail that's frustratingly hard to get to, which so far is O.K., because it has a nearly unrideable surface, consisting of dirt and sharp railroad ballast. It runs across the Allegheny River from Freeport from Schenley north through Ford City and Kittaning all the way to Brady's Bend. The problem is that the Freeport

Bridge leaves you on the wrong side of the Kiskiminetas River from Schenley, and there's no way to cross until Leechburg. Best not to try this trail until you hear the surface has been updated.



*View onto the Allegheny through the trees from the Armstrong Trail*

**Garvers Ferry.**\*\*\* I know this ride from Oscar Rattenborg. Take Freeport Rd. to the Yellow Belt, then U-PARC (Gulf Research Center) Rd. to Little Deer Creek Valley Rd. North through Russellton to Millerstown, then take the Millerstown-Culmerville Rd. back to Freeport Rd. at the top of the long downgrade into Freeport. Of course, you can follow Freeport Rd. north all the way to this point, but the way described is the real ride. At the bottom of the descent, keep left and circle around across the Garver's Ferry Bridge, following signs to SR356 and Leechburg. Past the climb, take the next through road to the right, past a regional theater on the left. At the next intersection, turn right. This is Garver's Ferry Rd., leading to Lower Burrell-New Kensington (with many little hills and a hard climb just before Lower Burrell). Cross SR366 on what is also called Freeport Rd. Go left at the T, then right, again on SR366, eventually running into the Orange Belt. Continue straight where the Orange Belt goes left, on Oakmont and Logans Ferry (=Coxcomb) Rd. This is now the *Coxcomb Hill* ride), eventually joining the Yellow Belt into Oakmont. Return via Allegheny River Blvd. [55 miles].

**Shearersburg.** Once across the bridge at Freeport, there are almost no flat parts to this largely rural ride. Follow the *Garver's Ferry* ride to SR356. Ride past the turnoffs mentioned there, past the gas station on the left, and up and down the next hill on

SR356. Soon you will see a narrow inviting road leading to the right (Armstrong Rd.), which will lead to a larger road leading left to Shearersburg and through Markle to SR780. Take SR780 left until Merwin Rd. (right), which leads to SR366. Briefly right and then left up Drennen Rd., which turns into Renton Rd. across Sardis Rd. and eventually joins the Orange Belt at New Texas. Right and then left on Old Leechburg Rd. Follow this to the right, eventually under the Turnpike and a railroad overpass. Left after the overpass on Leechburg Rd., which leads up to Saltsburg Rd. (right). Take Saltsburg Rd. across Frankstown Rd. and Sandy Creek Rd. This is now Verona Rd. and the Green Belt, which will take you into Wilkinsburg via Robinson Blvd. [65 miles].



*Lonely rest stop on the Garvers Ferry ride, at the intersection of Garvers Ferry and Spooky Hollow Rd. It used to be called Kapustnik's market.*

**Strongland.** Strongland is a chamber-of-commerce designation for an area along the Kiskiminetas River incorporating parts of Armstrong and Westmoreland counties. Start out as under *Garver's Ferry*. Continue straight on SR356 and the climb. Well past the top, look for a promising left-hand road (Piper Rd.), taking you down a narrow descent into West Leechburg. Keep basically straight till you get to the road going across the bridge to Leechburg (left). Cross the bridge into Leechburg and turn right. Follow SR66 south along the Kiskiminetas River to North Vandergrift. Turn left up SR66 Alt. Look for Garver's Ferry Rd. (not to be confused with other roads by that name) to your right (you can't miss it, and you'll need your lowest gear). Follow this winding road over to SR56 (right) and fall back down to Apollo. You can avoid all this climbing by going from North Vandergrift straight into Apollo, but the Garver's Ferry hill is worth doing. At Apollo, take the sidewalk next to the metal-grate bridge over the Kiskiminetas river (a new bridge is currently being built). Left and then sharp right up the hill to Oklahoma. Straight through the intersection at the top to a junction

with SR356. Left and then right across SR356. Take the next right turn and follow the road through Northmoreland Park to Markle. Straight through Markle, then keep right to the first main road (Melwood Park Rd.), which you take left. Follow this across the junction with SR56 on Spooky Hollow Rd., eventually joining the road going into Lower Burrell (at the little market). Left to Lower Burrell via the climb that is even tougher if you stop at the market for refreshment. Return as under *Garver's Ferry*. [75 miles].



*Kiskiminetas River as seen from the Apollo Bridge.*

**Dime.** Get somehow to Leechburg. I'd recommend going to the Garvers Ferry Bridge at Freeport and following SR356 to a left down the hill into town. Across the bridge go straight on SR66, but bear right on Raymond Rd./Evergreen Rd., eventually coming back into SR66. Right on Myers Rd., then right on Alt. SR66 to a right at the village of Dime on Hungry Hollow Rd. up and down to SR66. Left to Apollo. Across the Kiskiminetas River, go right on Orr Rd. up through Oklahoma, then left and right at SR356 onto Markle Rd. Left on Rich Hill Rd. to Milligantown Rd. Cross SR56 on what is now Wildlife Lodge Rd. to Leechburg Rd. (left) to a right on SR366 across the Tarentum Bridge. Return on Old Freeport Rd. [80 miles].

### **Beyond Leechburg**

There is a dense network of nice roads beyond Leechburg, not documented here, because by the time one gets to Leechburg, it is usually time to start heading back. If you live out this way, you are in luck. Many of the towns have picturesque names:

Dime, Hicksville, Equitable, Whiskey Run, Riggles Crossroads, Old Gum Tree, Girty, Idaho, Tunnelville, and others. Sometimes it seems the inhabitants don't speak English, but it turns out to be a local dialect.



*Pennsylvania wildlife: cheesy animal display along River Rd. between Leechburg and N. Vandergrift, across from Uncle Charley's Sausage Co. (below).*



# New Kensington Bridge.



The bridge to New Kensington is often used as a way to get back to the Pittsburgh side of the Allegheny River from Freeport Rd. Lots of rides head up into the hills outside New Kensington, others go over the Logans Ferry or Coxcomb Hill climbs, and others head out SR366, with multiple possibilities of going either right (west) or left (east), all of them hilly.

**Logans Ferry.**\*\*\* The Three-Star designation refers to the full up-and-down ride, all the way to Pitcairn-Turtle Creek and then up Greensburg Pike. Start by taking Freeport Rd. north to the Orange Belt, and take the bridge to New Kensington. Follow the Orange Belt out of town up one of the best classical climbs in the area (Logans Ferry Rd.). Just past the summit, the Orange Belt turns right, but you go straight, on Sardis Rd. (it's often called other things on maps). Continue straight across both SR380 and SR286, where the road is now called Logan Ferry Rd., which winds pleasantly in and out of residential sections above SR286 on the right. At New Texas Rd. go right and quickly left, up a sharp hill. The road eventually joins McClure Rd. and crosses US22, climbs a hill (Cavitt Rd.), and finally comes down out of a residential section to Alpine Park behind Monroeville (left). After an underpass under the Turnpike take Saunders Station Rd. to the left and downhill. Follow Saunders Sta. Rd. as it leaves the main road (right) down a hill and up again to SR130 just past

Level Green. Return on SR130 through Pitcairn-Turtle Creek. In Turtle Creek, turn right up Greensburg Pike to Penn Ave. Left to Wilkinsburg. [50 miles].

**Browntown Rd.** Vary *Logans Ferry* by substituting the Browntown Rd. climb for the Orange Belt climb. Namely, just before the Orange Belt climb, turn left on Entrance Rd., leading to Memorial Ave., to Browntown Rd., which will pass the International Teleport and leave you near the top of the Orange Belt climb. Continue as per Logans Ferry. [50 miles].



*Oaks Theater in Oakmont playing the "Creature from the Black Lagoon".*

**Logans Ferry-Oakmont.** There are many shorter ways to complete the Logans Ferry ride. The shortest is: follow the Orange Belt on Logan's Ferry Rd. a mile or so past the summit to a right on Shearer Rd, then left on Milltown Rd., then back to the Yellow Belt (right). Proceed to Oakmont on the Yellow Belt, and return via Allegheny River Blvd. [35 miles]. Or follow the Yellow Belt to the left (Hulton Rd.), then right on Indiana Rd., joining Hulton Rd. into Penn Hills. Take a right on Saltsburg Rd., cross Sandy Hill Rd. on what becomes the Green Belt (Verona Rd., Robinson Blvd.) [40 miles].

**Logans Ferry-Monroeville.** Begin as under *Logans Ferry*. Follow the Orange Belt past Plum into the outskirts of Monroeville, a sharp right onto Old Frankstown Rd. into Universal, then Universal Rd. (right) to Lime Hollow Rd. (nice descent), right on Sandy Creek Rd., left at the Green Belt and follow it into Wilkinsburg on Robinson Blvd. Or follow the Orange Belt past Boyce Park all the way to US22 Business. Turn

right on US22 and, just past Ralph's Army Surplus (on the left), there will be a turnoff to the right (Northern Pike), which will lead you into Turtle Creek and the Yellow Belt. Return through Wilkinsburg or Braddock. [45 miles].

**Logans Ferry-Sardis Rd.** The Logans Ferry climb feeds logically into the *Sardis Rd.* ride, described under Lincoln Avenue. [55 miles].

**Aluminum City.** A winter's ride to see if you still have what it takes. Take the New Kensington Bridge (SR56) and follow SR56 right and then left to SR366 (left). Right on Oates Blvd., right on Vogel Way, the left up (and I do mean up) on Boundary Way. One wonders how the pavement sticks to the slope. Boundary Way leads through an interesting 1950s development to show the uses of aluminum, and eventually to SR780 (left). Skip Dutchman(s) (Run) Rd. and Myers Rd. (Drive), both possible ways down to SR366. Instead, take Menk(s) Rd., a nice wooded road leading into Myers Rd. at the bottom. Cross SR366 and ascend on Old Leechburg Rd. Cross Sardis Rd., go right at Ross Run Rd. into Plum. Right and then left on Old Leechburg Rd. which you follow to Saltsburg Rd. and return on Lincoln Rd. [45 miles].



*Row houses in Aluminum City.*

**Orange Belt West.** The Orange Belt may be ridden from New Kensington through Monroeville to various distances: to McKeesport, Elizabeth, Finleyville, even as far as Bridgeville and beyond (but you'll need to skirt the airport area some other way). Although traced on some maps, the Orange Belt is not marked from SR88 east to SR51 (and just as well; there are better ways of going across this territory). Gives [60, 70, 80, 90, 100-mile], or even longer rides.

**Tour of Monroeville.** Start out as under *Logans Ferry Rd*, taking the Orange Belt toward Monroeville. Leave the Orange Belt when it crosses SR380 by staying on New Texas Rd. Turn right down Lindsay Ln. Head up Hochberg Rd. (an apt name, as it turns out) and take this to College Park Dr., then right to Beatty Rd. Follow Beatty Rd. when it turns left, crossing Haymaker Rd. (the Orange Belt), left briefly on Monroeville Trestle Rd. to Old Wm. Penn Hwy. (right). Left on Jefferson Heights Rd. Follow this briefly to Dunbar Rd. to Kingston Rd. and across US22 Bus. (at the Sears Shopping Center) and connect with Penn Center Blvd. to Old Rodi Rd. into Turtle Creek (left). Going right on Jefferson Heights Rd. will lead to Jefferson Rd. and a return on Frankstown Rd. Going even farther on Old Wm. Penn Hwy. will lead to a left at Lougeay Rd., left again at S. Rodi Rd., right on Larimer Ave. into Turtle Creek, right on Twinboro Expwy. Return on Ardmore Blvd. (right) to Wilkinsburg [45 miles]. This whole area is complicated, but a good place to ride.



*View of Springdale and the Allegheny River from the Coxcomb Hill summit.*

**Coxcomb Hill.** A climb to be done at least once a season. Start out as under *Logan's Ferry Rd.*, crossing the bridge into New Kensington on the Orange Belt. Leave the Orange Belt by going straight at the base of the Logans Ferry Rd. climb, substituting for it a shorter, steeper climb over Coxcomb Hill on Oakmont and Logans Ferry Rd. to the Yellow Belt (right), with return through Oakmont and Allegheny River Blvd. [40 miles]. Coxcomb Hill is not recommended in the reverse direction, as the hill is too steep downhill, the road too narrow, and the traffic too heavy, this being a major

dump-truck route. Some local cyclists (not me) use this descent for maximum speed attempts (55-65 mph is easily attained, but forget it).

**Turkey Ridge Rd.** Ride out Freeport Rd. and over the New Kensington Bridge. Right and then left on 7th St. (SR56) which takes you across SR366, on what is now 7th St. Rd., a hill. Keep straight on 7th St. Rd. Ext., which leads back to 7th St. Rd. (SR780), going right. Just before the descent down SR780 to SR380, turn right into the Westmoreland County Industrial Park and connect with Camp Nancy Rd. After a downhill, turn right on Turkey Ridge Rd. (intersecting with Merwin Rd. (left) just before SR356. Left and right up Beighley Rd. to Hankey Church Rd. (right), right on Sardis Rd. to the Orange Belt (left), right on Shearer Rd., left on Milltown Rd. to Hulton Rd. (right) to Oakmont, returning on Allegheny River Blvd. [50 miles].

### **SR366 out of New Kensington and West**



*Someday it will occur to someone to pave and fix the shoulder on heavily traveled SR366 out of New Kensington, but it hasn't happened in the last 40 years.*

Reach New Kensington by taking Freeport Rd. to the Orange Belt and crossing the bridge to New Kensington. Follow the Orange Belt to where it turns right (toward Oakmont), but go briefly left and then right, on SR366 (Old Greensburg Rd.). This is a busy road, and it has a lousy shoulder, but it is a good way to connect to any of six outstanding climbs to the right (west) to Sardis Rd.: via Webster Rd.=Polecat Hollow

Rd., Wright Rd., Old Leechburg Rd., Drennen Rd., Beighley Rd., or Hankey Church Rd. There are other climbs further along, but SR366 loses its shoulder after SR380, and is dangerous. All six climbs are different, and they all suggest different possibilities for continuation. A few are described below.

**Polecat Hollow.** From SR366 out of New Kensington, take Webster Rd.=Polecat Hollow Rd. (right). A longish hill leads to the Orange Belt coming over the hill from New Kensington. Follow the Orange Belt straight, until a right on Shearer Rd. Take this to Milltown, then Hulton Rd. (right) to Oakmont. [40 miles].

**International Teleport.** As under *Polecat Hollow*, take Webster Rd.=Polecat Hollow Rd. right. Fork right up very steep Wright Rd. (a ghost road). Eventually you will come upon what looks like a space station, an assortment of gigantic TV relay dishes facing in all directions, at the Pittsburgh International Teleport. Turn right down Browntown Rd., joining with Memorial Ave., left on Entrance Rd. to the Orange Belt (left). Check where you come out, so you can make this climb some time from the New Kensington side. See *Coxcomb Hill* for the return. [40 miles]. Turning left on Browntown Rd. at the space station leads into the Orange Belt almost at the top of the Logans Ferry climb (see *Logans Ferry*).



*Intergalactic relay station on Browntown Rd. near top of Logans Ferry climb (International Teleport ride).*

**Old Leechburg Rd.** From SR366 out of New Kensington, go right up Old Leechburg Rd., crossing Sardis Rd., taking you into Unity. Bear right, go under a trestle, then turn left on Leechburg Rd. to Saltsburg Rd. (right). Follow Saltsburg Rd. across Frankstown Rd. and Sandy Hill Rd. Right up Lincoln Rd., past Nadine Rd., becoming Lincoln Ave. through the Lincoln-Lemington part of town. [40 miles].

**Drennen Rd.** From SR366 out of New Kensington, go right up Drennen Rd., becoming Renton Rd. to the Orange Belt at New Texas. Right, then left on Center New Texas Rd. to SR380 (Saltsburg Rd.). Right and then left on Monroeville Trestle Rd. Right on Old Frankstown Rd., becoming Lott Rd. Left on Universal Rd. to Frankstown Rd. (left) to Pittsburgh. [45 miles].

**Beighley Rd.** Has to be done at least once a season. Go right up Beighley Rd. (recently repaved, sort of) just past Drennen Rd. An unforgettable climb. Right at the top (Hankey Church Rd.) to the Orange Belt. Left in Plum on Old Leechburg Rd. See *Old Leechburg Rd.* for continuation. [45 miles].



*Hankey Church Cemetery, site of a notorious bike-throwing incident a number of years ago.*

**Hankey Church Rd.** This is probably the mildest of the SR366-and-west options. Hankey Church Rd. (there's a cemetery, but the church seems to have been replaced by a golf course) leads right from SR366 after Beighley Rd. and before Silvis Hollow Rd. It joins Beighley Rd. at the top and eventually leads to Sardis Rd. Go left on Sardis Rd. and follow the *Logans Ferry* ride. [50 miles].

**Silvis Hollow.** Also known as 366-286-380. Take SR366 out of New Kensington and take it past SR380, where it becomes very busy. Go right on Silvis Hollow Rd., which leads to SR286 (right). Take this to SR380 (left), and follow SR380 all the way back into Pittsburgh on Frankstown Ave. [50 miles].

### **SR366 out of New Kensington and East**

Another option from SR366 out of New Kensington is to go left (east), for example on Dutchman(s) (Run) Rd., Myers Rd., Menk(s) Rd., Merwin Rd., Whitten Hollow Rd. (gravel). All of these lead to SR780, from where you may go either right to North Washington; left back toward New Kensington; or forge more or less straight, into Strongland territory. Most of these roads can be reached equally well by going east through Penn Hills, climbing to the Orange Belt, and connecting with Sardis Rd., with descents to SR366 on Polecat Hollow Rd., Old Leechburg Rd., Drennen Rd., or Hankey Church Rd.

**Dutchmans Run Rd.** Climb challenging Dutchmans Run Rd. to the left out of New Kensington. Go right on SR780 to Myers or Menks Rd. (right). Descend to SR366 and climb up Old Leechburg Rd., finishing as under *Old Leechburg Rd.* [40 miles].



*Tarentum Bridge*

**Tarentum Bridge.** At Tarentum, follow the bridge over the Allegheny River on SR366. Right at a stoplight on what is called Freeport Rd. and finish through New Kensington as under *Garvers Ferry*. [40 miles].

**Wildlife Lodge.** Begin as under *Tarentum Bridge*, but turn left on Leechburg Rd. to Wildlife Lodge Rd. (right). Follow this across SR56, bearing right until SR780 (left). Right on Myers Rd. Cross SR366 and climb up Old Leechburg Rd. See *Old Leechburg Rd.* for the return. [45 miles].



*Natural spring along Milltown Rd. Dan Chew keeps a list of all natural springs in his riding territory. He thinks this one may be polluted.*

**Falcons Park Rd.** A superb climb. Like *Wildlife Lodge*, but turn right off Leechburg Rd. sooner, on Craig Dell Rd., becoming Falcon(s) Park Rd. beyond SR56. This takes you up to SR780 (left). Right on Dutchmans Run Rd. (nice descent), left on SR366 to Webster Rd. (right, nice ascent), encountering the Orange Belt at the top (straight). Right on Shearer Rd., left on Milltown Rd., right on the Yellow Belt into Oakmont, returning on Allegheny River Blvd. [45 miles].

# Allegheny River Blvd.

Accessed from the bottom of Washington Blvd., this road east to Verona and Oakmont is heavily traveled by rude traffic, and has a lot of gravel and brush on it, but there are shoulders, and it is an alternative to the Highland Park Bridge. The climb up Nadine Rd. just outside town leads into the exit from town via Lincoln Ave., if you are concerned about avoiding that part of town. If you turn right on the Yellow Belt (Hulton Rd.) in Oakmont instead of going left over the Hulton Bridge, the road takes you up a steep but not very long hill to a number of shorter, mostly hilly rides. Most of these rides may be more easily reached via the Lincoln Ave. way out of town, and are described there.



*The Hulton Bridge from Freeport Rd. to Oakmont.*

**Hulton Bridge.** A short and flat ride is to take Allegheny River Blvd. to the Hulton Bridge and then back on Freeport Rd.; or the reverse. [15 miles].

**Hunter Rd.** A short loop, with some great climbing. Hunter Rd. leaves Allegheny River Blvd. between Verona and Oakmont just past Daily's Juice Co. (it's called Plum St. at the bottom), and leads into Penn Hills. You'll be surprised to find a hill this long so close to town. Follow the road to Hamill Rd., then left to Indiana Rd. (right), joining Hulton Rd. (right), returning on Saltsburg Rd. and Lincoln Rd. and Ave. [25 miles].

**Coxcomb Hill Summit.** The hill without the scary descent. Follow the Yellow Belt up the hill out of Oakmont, but leave it when it turns right. Continue up Coxcomb Hill, turning right past the top on Kerr Rd., becoming Milltown Rd. Ride through Milltown and rejoin the Yellow Belt and return through Oakmont or Penn Hills. [25 miles].

**Boyce Park Wave Pool.** Take Allegheny River Blvd to the end in Oakmont, then right up the hill, right on Hulton Rd. to Leechburg Rd. and follow it around left under the Turnpike. In Plum, turn right on the Orange Belt and follow it all the way past SR380. Before meeting SR286 take a right down Lindsay Ln. Right on Old Frankstown Rd. past the Boyce Park Wave Pool. Once again at the Orange Belt, turn left and then right on Old Frankstown Rd., becoming Lott Rd. At Main St. in Universal go more or less straight, on Universal Rd., which takes you to the Yellow Belt and Frankstown Rd. Right and then left on Lime Hollow Rd. to Sandy Creek Rd. (SR130). Right and then left on Verona Rd. (The Green Belt), and follow this into Wilkinsburg [40 miles].



*Copeland Rd. on the White Cloud ride is in slight need of repair as of this writing.*

**White Cloud Rd.** Great ride, lots of little twisty hilly roads. As under *Boyce Wave Pool*, turn up the hill out of Oakmont with continuation to the Orange Belt, but left on Ross Hollow Rd. in Plum, left on Old Leechburg Rd., right on Sardis Rd. to Renton Rd. (left), and down to SR366. Right and then left on Renton Rd., fork left and then right on Lower Drennen Rd. Across SR780 on Manchester Hill Rd. to Milligantown Rd. (left), right on Schafer Rd., joining Markle Rd. (left) to Melwood (Park) Rd. (left), to a right on Copeland Rd. to a left on White Cloud Rd. After the overpass over SR56,

take the first left (Lynch Rd.), left on Hulton Rd. to a right on Spooky Hollow Rd. If Copeland road (see below) is still washed out, then turn right on Markle Rd. to Markle, then left on White Cloud Rd. [55 miles].



*Scenic marker, Milligantown Rd.*

# Lincoln Avenue



*The Under-rated Lincoln Avenue Way Out of Town. Photo by Louis Fineberg.*

Lincoln Ave./Rd. is an under-used way out of town, best accessed by going down Washington Blvd. from 5th Ave., turning left after the hospital, then right, and following Lincoln Ave. up and out through the picturesque Lincoln-Lemington area, often featured on the evening news for drive-by shootings. It passes Nadine Rd. on the left, and ends at Verona Rd. at a junkyard with two real junkyard dogs. Go left and across Sandy Creek Rd. and, usually, up Saltsburg Rd. For an alternative climb, go briefly right on Sandy Creek Rd., then left on Lime Hollow Rd. to Frankstown Ave., then left to the Yellow Belt and Hulton Rd. A recently discovered alternative is to take Washington Blvd. or Dallas Ave. to Bennett Ave. (right), then left on Blackadore to Mt. Carmel Rd. (right), and left on Verona Rd. down to Sandy Creek Rd. The Lincoln Ave. exit links up with the Yellow and Orange Belts, and with many rides described elsewhere. It is an appropriate way to begin the following rides:

**Hulton Rd.-Oakmont.** Cross Sandy Creek Rd. and take Saltsburg Rd. up the climb, joining up with the Yellow Belt (Hulton Rd.) to the left, where Frankstown Rd. ends. Follow the Yellow Belt down hill, then left and into Oakmont. Return on Allegheny River Blvd. [25 miles].



*Milltown Rd. underpass beneath the PA Turnpike.*

**Milltown.** At the bottom of the Hulton Rd. descent out of the East Hills (see *Hulton Rd.-Oakmont*), follow the Yellow Belt for just a bit, but bear right on a mostly hidden turn into Milltown (a few houses and a church), and take Milltown Rd. across a recently cemented metal-grate bridge, under the Turnpike, and up a few stair-step hills. On the left you will notice a natural spring coming out of a plastic pipe. Bear this in mind for longer rides coming back in the opposite direction. Go right on Shearer Rd. up to the Orange Belt, with access to many further rides. Follow the Orange Belt to the right, and then take Leechburg Rd. to the right in Plum. Follow the main road back in a big loop to rejoin the Yellow Belt where you left it. Or follow the Yellow Best left into Oakmont, and return on Allegheny River Blvd. [35 miles].

**Descent into New Kensington.** Begin as under *Milltown*. At the top of Shearer Rd., take the Orange Belt to the left to New Kensington, descending the swishy Logans Ferry hill. Follow the Orange Belt across the New Kensington Bridge and return on Freeport Rd. I once took someone on this ride who wanted to get an idea of simple and short rides around Pittsburgh. He never came back. [40 miles].

**Bagdad.** There are two Bagdads, one on either side of the Kiskiminetas River north of Leechburg, no bridge between them. This ride visits the one on the west side of the river. Take *Milltown* to the intersection of Garvers Ferry Rd., Sardis Rd., and Polecat Hollow Rd. Take Polecat Hollow Rd. down to SR366, then left to a right up

Dutchmans Run Rd., about a one-mile climb. Left on SR780 to Wildlife Lodge Rd. (right), then descend to and cross SR56, still on Wildlife Lodge Rd. It will eventually take you down a steep descent into some woods and a connection with Braeburn Rd. Follow this along the river. It culminates in a neat one-mile-plus climb. Left on Garvers Ferry Rd. and follow it all the way to SR356. Cross SR356 on what is now Bagdad Rd. Bagdad is the settlement on the side of the hill. Descend all the way through the woods to the railroad tracks at the bottom. You will notice that you have run out of pavement. Right and up on Indian Hill Rd., a gravel climb, soon turning to pavement again. Back at SR356, turn briefly right, then left on Armstrong Rd., becoming Hulton Rd. which eventually joins Spooky Hollow Rd. All of this is very pretty country. Continue as under *Spooky Hollow* [65 miles].

**Sardis Rd.** An oft-ridden classic. As under *Garver's Ferry* get to the junction of Logans Ferry Rd. and Sardis Rd. Take Sardis Rd. for a nice winding romp through the countryside, as far as SR380, by which time the road has changed names back to Logans Ferry Rd. Left to the junction with SR286, then take SR286 a short distance to (another) Sardis Rd. (right). A pleasant, nearly six-mile downhill takes you to Murrysville at US22. Cross US22 and bear right at the fork on Meadowbrook Rd. Look for a left-hand turn on the first main road that goes through; Ivy Lane works (left, right, right, right), to Trafford Rd. (right), becoming Murrysville-Trafford Rd., which leads to SR130 near Level Green (right) and takes you back to Pittsburgh via Pitcairn-Turtle Creek. See Braddock Ave. for suggested completions. [50 miles].



*2003 Murrysville Classic road race. Photo by James Moro.*

**Tour of Murrysville.** This pretty ride incorporates one of the routes of the Murrysville Classic Road Race. Start out as under *Sardis Rd.* Before going too far along Sardis Rd. past the junction of SR380 and SR286, take Bulltown Rd. right past a farm raising some dwarf Skye Island Cattle. Bulltown Rd. eventually runs back into Sardis Rd. (left). Go past the municipal building on your left, turning right on Mamont Rd. Right (straight, really) on Steele Rd. to Hilty Rd. (right). Bear right on what is now Wiestertown Rd. through some pretty farmland. As you get back into some subdivisions, turn right up Hills Church Rd. Left past the top on Cherry Lane, then right on School Rd. back to Sardis Rd., near where you began this 10-mile loop. Turn left on Sardis Rd. and return through Level Green as described under *Sardis Rd.* [60 miles].

**Climber's Delight** This ride takes advantage of Sardis Rd. running along a ridge above SR366 (Greensburg Rd.) coming from New Kensington. Get to the beginning of Sardis Rd. (Logans Ferry Rd.) at the Orange Belt, at the top of Polecat Hollow (Webster) Rd. Go down Polecat Hollow (right on SR366), then right up Old Leechburg Rd. (left on Sardis Rd.), then left down Drennen Rd. (right on SR366), then right up Beighley Rd. Turn right on Hankey Church Rd. to Sardis Rd. (left) to SR380 (right), and follow SR380 back to Pittsburgh. [55 miles]. It doesn't take much imagination to see how this ride could be doubled by taking advantage of the hills on the other side of SR366.



*Natural spring along Milligantown Rd., and a chance to fill up your water bottle.*

**Milligantown.**\*\*\* A name mangled on various maps to Millisantown, Millantown, Millington, and others. Begin as under *Sardis Rd.* From Sardis Rd., take Drennen Rd. (it's Renton Rd. to the right) left down to SR366. Right and then left on Merwin Rd. (multi-stage 2-mile climb). At SR780 turn right and ride to just short of SR380. Left on North Washington Rd. then quickly fork left on Pine Run Rd., following it where it turns left. Later, turn left on Watson Rd. (nice climb through some woods), becoming Oak Lake Rd. Continue on Milligantown Rd. (SR4077, SR4081). Just past Bair Rd. is a natural spring on the right, if you want to fill your bottle. Before hitting SR56, go left up Wildlife Lodge Rd. to SR780, and turn right. Bear left off SR780 where the road forks, with a convenience store on the left. Follow this street right to a downhill to SR56. Cross SR56 and go to the New Kensington Bridge, returning on Freeport Rd. [55 miles].



*1940s Dodge behind shed along Oak Lake Rd. (Milligantown ride).*

**Beaver Run Reservoir.** A bit longer than the foregoing, but just as nice. Start out as under *Milligantown.* Keep on N. Washington Rd. instead of forking left. Cross SR66 on what is now Beaver Run Rd., which leads to SR380 at the Beaver Run Reservoir (right). Left soon on Perrysville Rd., the left on Muffley Hollow Rd., which leads to SR819 (left). After a long swooping descent into Apollo, turn briefly right, the fork left up Orr Rd. to Oklahoma. At SR356, jog left and right on Pine Run Rd., right on Markle Rd. In Westmoreland Park, left up Willowbrook Rd., ride through the country club by that name, left at the T to Watson Rd. (right), becoming Oak Lake Rd., becoming Milligantown Rd. Cross SR56, left on Leechburg Rd., which eventually

deposits you at the top of the Tarentum Bridge. But go straight to a stoplight at the top of Arnold, then right all the way down to the truck route (left), to the New Kensington Bridge. Return on Freeport Rd. [65 miles].

**Beaver Run-Salina.** For a more ambitious ride than the foregoing, follow *Beaver Run Reservoir* to Perrysville Rd. and take this straight at Salina. Leave SR819 when it turns left. Left into Salina and across the bridge into some very pretty countryside. See *Strongland* for how to return through Apollo, Oklahoma, Markle, and so on. [75 miles].



*Bridge over the Kiskiminetas River at Salina.*

**Horrible Hills of the East.** Not as bad as implied, but somehow the name has caught on. Take Lincoln Ave., Saltsburg Rd., Hulton Rd., Milltown Rd. (see *Milltown*). From Milltown Rd., take Barnes Rd. to the right, up to Flicker Rd. (left), to Logans Ferry Rd. (the Orange Belt, right). Left from the Orange Belt on Ross Hollow Rd., Left on Harris Rd. up to Sardis Rd. (right). Left on Old Leechburg Rd., Cross SR366 on Myers Rd., but quickly right on Menk Rd., right on Pleasant Valley Rd. (not marked), a longish gravelly road leading to Upper Drennen Rd. (right), back down to SR366 (left), to Beighley Rd. (right, neat climb) to Hankey Church Rd. (right), then left on Sardis Rd. to SR380 (right). Meet the Orange Belt and take it through Boyce Park to Monroeville to Evergreen Rd. to Old Wm. Penn Hwy. (right), to Lougeay Rd. (left), left again at S. Rodi Rd., right on Larimer Ave. into Turtle Creek (right on Twinboro Expwy. Return on Saltsburg Pike to Penn Ave. (left) to Wilkinsburg. [45 miles].

**Upper and Lower Burrell.** A pretty, hilly, rural, and not-too-long ride circling around Milligantown, incorporating three different Leechburg Rds. Take the usual Lincoln Ave.-Saltsburg Rd.-Hulton Rd. way out of the East Hills. At the bottom of the Hulton Rd. descent, where the Yellow Belt goes left, turn right and ride to Leechburg Rd. #1 (left), leading to a little settlement confusingly called Leechburg, bearing no relation to the real Leechburg in Armstrong County. Right at the Orange Belt and then left on Ross Hollow Rd., merging with (Old) Leechburg Rd. #2, which leads over the hill and down to SR366. Cross this on the small road, forking immediately right on Menk(s) Rd., a nice, wooded, moderate climb up to SR780 (right-and-left jog). Cross SR780 on the little road which, at Milligantown Rd. (right-and-left jog), becomes Shaffer Rd., which runs into Markle Rd. to the east of Markle. Straight to Melwood Park Rd., then left. For one continuation, see under *Strongland*. Instead, go left up Watters Rd. Turn right on Puckety Church Rd. when Watters Rd. turns small (some other time, follow it through some hills back to Milligantown Rd.). Take Puckety Church Rd. across SR56 to join Leechburg Rd. #3 (left). Turn right on SR366 and cross the bridge to Tarentum; return on Freeport Rd. [50 miles].



*There's always a bright golden haze on the meadow in Oklahoma Boro.*

**North Washington.** Start out as under *Milligantown Rd.*, all the way to North Washington Rd., but stay right instead of taking Pine Run Rd. to the left. Eventually cross SR66 at North Washington (Sportsman Rd.), follow this until it recrosses SR66. Right on Pine Run Rd. to the sign to Northmoreland Park. Left to Markle, and return as under *Strongland*. [55 miles].

**Hulton Rd.-Leechburg Rd. Loop.** At the bottom of the hill on Hulton Rd., turn right, leaving the Yellow Belt. Go to Leechburg Rd. (just before the railroad overpass) and turn right, leading to Saltsburg Rd., returning you to the point where Frankstown Rd. becomes Hulton Rd. Return the way you came. [15 miles].

**Hulton Rd.-Universal Rd. Loop.** Much the same idea as the preceding ride. Go past Leechburg Rd. under the trestle to Universal Rd. (right), which joins Rodi Rd. just short of Frankstown Rd. Go right on Frankstown Rd., then left on Lime Hollow Rd. Right, then left on Verona Rd. to Lincoln Rd. [20 miles].



*Spooky Hollow Rd. really is pretty spooky.*

**Spooky Hollow.** A road featured as a return on various rides to the east, for example, *Strongland*. Follow the *Puckety Church* ride to SR780, Hartge Rd., Bair Rd. Turn right on Watters Rd., which takes you over to Melwood Park Rd. (not marked as such, but it is a main road). Left and across SR56 to join Spook Hollow Rd. (left), and follow this to Ally's Market on Edgecliff (left), becoming Leechburg Rd. in Lower Burrell. Right on SR366 over the bridge to Tarentum and return on Freeport Rd. [45 miles].

**Puckety Church.** I think 'Puckety' must be the same same, originally, as 'Pocketa'. What either of them means, I cannot say. Take Lincoln Rd. to Sandy Creek Rd., then right and left on Lime Hollow Rd. (up) to Frankstown Rd. Right and then left (a hard left) on Universal Rd. to Universal. Left on Main St. to SR380, which you take right to Center (at the Orange Belt). Straight and then immediately left on Center New Texas

Rd. to New Texas Rd. and the Orange Belt again. Right and then left on Renton Rd. through Renton, across Sardis Rd. and down Drennen Rd. (try not to wipe out on the descent). Left on SR366 (Greensburg Rd.) to a right opposite Old Leechburg Rd. on Myers Rd. Climb to SR780, then left. Turn right on Hartge Rd., a narrow lightly blacktopped road that leads to Milligantown Rd. Left and then immediately right on Bair Rd., which joins Puckety Church Rd. (right), which takes you to Puckety Church and Cemetery. Follow this left to SR56, which you take left carefully to the first intersection left. This is Wildlife Lodge Rd. Bear right back up to SR780. Left to Dutchman(s) (Run) Rd. (right), cross SR366, ascend Old Leechburg Rd., crossing Sardis Rd. and bearing right on Ross Hollow Rd. Right-and-left jog on Leechburg Rd. Turn left at Universal to a right on Universal Rd., and return the way you came. [50 miles].

**Markle.** The inspiration for the song "Moon over Markle." Take Lincoln Ave., Saltsburg Rd., Hulton Rd. out of town. At the bottom of Hulton Rd., turn right on the Yellow Belt and follow around into Plum Boro. Turn right on the Orange Belt and immediately left, up a gradual ascent (Ross Run Rd.) eventually merging with Old Leechburg Rd., which leads to Sardis Rd. = Webster School Rd. Go right, then left on Drennen Rd. Right at the bottom on Greensburg Rd. (SR366), then immediately left on Merwin Rd. Up to here, the ride is like *North Washington*. But turn left at the top of Merwin Rd., at SR780, then right just past the Alcoa Research Center, following the sign to Markle. Left at the Markle intersection. Take this road to Melwood Park Rd. (left), and continue as under *Spook Hollow*. [50 miles].



*Just when you think you have escaped civilization, you come around a corner and see people putting around on golf carts (Willowbrook Golf Club, next to Northmoreland Park outside Markle).*

**Markle-Shearersburg.** Extend the above ride by going straight through Markle to Shearersburg, over many shorter hills, eventually joining Garver's Ferry Rd. (left) for a return through New Kensington, Tarentum or, for the brave, via Coxcomb hill through Oakmont. (see *Garver's Ferry Rd.*). A very pretty, hard, up-and-down ride. [60 miles].



*Roadside memorials like this one on Coxcomb Rd. outside Oakmont morbidly punctuate the landscape.*

# Frankstown Road.



Frankstown Ave. (SR380), later becoming Frankstown Rd., accessed from Washington Blvd. and Bennett St. east, is a possible way out of town, but it is long and usually trafficky, and it does not lead anywhere not covered equally well under Lincoln Ave. or Penn Ave.-Wilkinsburg. I occasionally like to go on Frankstown to a left on Blackadore Rd. up to Mt. Carmel Rd., leading to Verona Rd. (the Green Belt). Robinson Blvd. in Wilkinsburg (to the left from Penn Ave. at the base of the Penn Ave. Hill) is another way to meet up with Frankstown Rd. Laketon Rd. out of Wilkinsburg also leads there, up a nice long brick-paved hill. If you take Frankstown Rd. far enough, it runs into the Yellow Belt (Hulton Rd.) at Saltsburg Rd. Some shortish rides are the following:

**Oakmont.** Follow Frankstown Rd. until it becomes the Yellow Belt (Hulton Rd.), and follow this out of Penn Hills and around to Oakmont, returning on Allegheny River Blvd. [20 miles]. For a variation, from Hulton Rd. turn left on Indiana Rd., then left on Hamill Rd. to a right on Hunter Rd. and descend to between Oakmont and Verona onto Allegheny River Blvd. [15 miles].

**Saltsburg Rd. Loop.** Leave town on Frankstown Ave., going as far as Saltsburg Rd. Take a left down the hill, crossing Sandy Creek Rd. Right up the hill and back into Pittsburgh on Lincoln Rd. and Ave. Slightly more than [10 miles].



*Town of Verona, ancestral home of Romeo and Juliet. The stones from the old Roman amphitheater were used to build the Giant Eagle just outside town.*

**Verona.** Take Frankstown Rd. past the intersection where it turns into Hulton Rd. (the Yellow Belt), then turn left off the Yellow Belt at the first main intersection, then left again on Shannon Rd., which takes you into Verona at Allegheny River Blvd. Left to Pittsburgh [15 miles].

**Jefferson Rd.** Turn right off Frankstown Rd. on Rodi Rd. (the Yellow Belt), but immediately follow the Yellow Belt (Jefferson Rd.) across I376 to Old Wm. Penn Hwy. (right). Left at Lougeay Rd., left again at S. Rodi Rd., right on Larimer Ave. into Turtle Creek (right on Twinboro Expwy. Return on Saltsburg Pike to Penn Ave. (left) to Wilksburg. [15 miles].

**Forest Hills.** Take either Frankstown Rd. or Laketon Rd. northeast from Swissvale Ave. in Wilksburg to Graham Blvd., then right on this as far as Churchill, across Wm. Penn Hwy., joining briefly Greensburg Pike. Right on Braddock Rd., leading across US30. Right on Brinton Rd., running into Maple Ave. which, to the right, goes into Edgewood and rejoins Swissvale Ave. on the other side of the train tracks. [10 miles].

**Unity.** Take Universal Rd. to the right off Frankstown Rd. by turning right at Rodi Rd. and keeping far left. Take this to Monroeville-Trestle Rd. (right and then left on SR380), and take this into Unity to Leechburg Rd. (left), which you follow back to Saltsburg Rd. just before the Yellow Belt on Frankstown Rd. Return on Saltsburg Rd. and Lincoln Ave. [25 miles].



*This no-sweat sign along Leechburg Rd. always elicits guffaws.*

**Boyce Park.** Turn right off Frankstown Rd. on Rodi Rd., then immediately left on Universal Rd. In Universal, just past where Thompson Run Rd. joins from the right, take Lott Rd. up the hill to join Old Frankstown Rd. Left on Monroeville-Trestle Rd. (the Orange Belt), which takes you along the west side of Boyce Park. At New Texas take the Orange Belt right and then leave it to the left on Unity Trestle Rd. to Unity, catching Leechburg Rd. to the left, which you follow to Saltsburg Rd. (right), returning on Lincoln Rd. and Ave. [35 miles].

**Frankstown-Monroeville Loop.** Follow Frankstown Rd. and then SR380 as it leads past the Alcoma Golf Course to the Orange Belt (right). Right at Beatty Rd. to Evergreen Dr. to Old Wm. Penn Hwy., then right on Jefferson Rd. (good climb) back to Frankstown Rd. (left and return). [35 miles].

## Penn Avenue-Wilkinsburg



*Abraham Lincoln statue at base of Penn Ave. climb.*

Penn Ave. east through Wilkinsburg takes you up a fairly good hill, but it is a simple and quick way out of town. I find myself using it a lot in the winter, because it leads to rides that keep fairly close to town. Before the hill, by turning left on the Green Belt at Swissvale Ave. on Montier St. you can join Robinson Ave., which goes up a not very big hill, crosses Frankstown Ave., and becomes Verona Rd., leading down to the intersection of Sandy Hill Rd. and Saltsburg Rd. (see under Lincoln Ave.). But, usually, follow Penn Ave. all the way up the hill outside Wilkinsburg. Taking a right turn on Greensburg Pike beyond the top of the hill gives an alternative and shorter way (than Braddock Ave.) of getting into Turtle Creek and for pursuing any of the rides described under Braddock Ave. By going past the turnoff onto Greensburg Pike you will come to Beulah Rd. (SR130) which, with a jog to the right and left, will join you with Churchill Rd. and is a good way to connect to the Old Wm. Penn Hwy. parallel to US22. Here are some rides which join logically with the Penn Ave. way out of town.

**Ardmore Blvd.** Take Greensburg Pike to the bottom of the hill outside Turtle Creek. Right turn to Ardmore Blvd., returning to Wilkinsburg through Forest Hills. Another ride with the same general idea but with a hillier return is not to turn right on Ardmore Blvd. but to go over the hill toward Braddock and turn right under the underpass on Ravine St. Take this up into East Pittsburgh to Brinton Ave. (left). Left on Pallas St. to Wolf St., becoming Brinton Rd., turning into Maple St. in Edgewood. [15 miles].

**Trafficky Trifecta.** This blue-collar ride takes in three run-down towns along the Monongahela. Start out as under *Ardmore Blvd.* At the bottom of Greensburg Pike turn right to Braddock. In Braddock, over the Rankin Bridge and right to Homestead. Through Homestead to the Glenwood Bridge, returning through Hazelwood on 2nd Ave. [20 miles]. Instead of the Glenwood Bridge, extend the ride a bit by following the signs to Carson St. Come and coming back over the Hot Metal Bridge.



*Pittsburgh's only Hungarian restaurant, in Hazelwood.*

**Greensburg Pike Sec. 2.** Short and hilly. As above, take Greensburg Pike to the bottom of the hill outside Turtle Creek. Turn left, and then right to get over to what may be Airbrake Ave. (left). Quickly turn right up over a bridge on what is called Greensburg Pike Sec. 2. This nasty hill takes you over to US 30 near the Yellow Belt (SR148). Cross US30 and turn left to Washington Ave. (right), descending to SR148 (right). Right on Westinghouse Ave. up a steep hill, joining East Pittsburgh & McKeesport Blvd., eventually taking you to the top of Braddock Ave. (left) outside Turtle Creek. Return through Braddock and Swissvale. [25 miles].

**Universal\*\*\*.** This is a short ride suitable for winter training. I find myself doing it as a default when I don't have any other ideas. Follow Penn Ave. and Greensburg Pike into Turtle Creek. Take the Yellow Belt (Larimer Ave.) to the left out of Turtle Creek, but leave it when it goes left to Churchill. Instead, follow the small winding road to the

right (Thompson Run Rd.), eventually becoming Northern Pike, for up a nice climb into Monroeville. When you come back into the Wm. Penn Highway, take the sidewalk a hundred yards or so to the left, then turn left at Chi-Chi's restaurant down the hill. Right on Old Wm. Penn Hwy., then left on Monroeville-Trestle Rd, which becomes the Orange Belt. Take this to a left on Old Frankstown Rd., becoming Lott into Universal. Right on Main St., then left on Saltsburg Rd. (SR380), leaving SR380 at Frankstown Rd. You are still on Saltsburg Rd., which becomes Verona Rd. and the Green Belt across Sandy Creek Rd. Right on Lincoln Rd., becoming Lincoln Ave. to Washington Blvd. Alternatively, go straight on Verona Rd. across Frankstown Rd. down into Wilkinsburg and return on Penn Ave. [35 miles].

**Northern Pike-New Kensington.** Similar to Universal up to the Orange Belt. I've done this ride to show an out-of-towner what Pittsburgh riding looks like. Follow the Orange Belt all the way through New Kensington to the other side of the Allegheny River and return on Freeport Rd. [45 miles].

**Northern Pike.** Start out as per *Northern Pike-New Kensington*. Follow Northern Pike across US22 Bus. Somehow finesse the crossing through a parking lot (Rudy's Subs) over to Monroeville Blvd. Take Monroeville Blvd. left to Moss Side Blvd., across which the road again becomes Northern Pike. After a very steep descent, turn right toward Monroeville (Alpine) Park and continue as if on the end of *Sardis Rd.*, returning on SR130 through Pittcairn and Turtle Creek. [40 miles].



*Thrifty Stegasaurus greets visitors to Wilkinsburg at the corner of Penn and Braddock Aves.*

**Monroeville Mall.** A chance to ride Monroeville Ave., Rd., and Blvd. all in one ride. Follow Penn Ave. and Greensburg Pike into Turtle Creek. Take the next road left past the Yellow Belt (Grant St., running into Monroeville Ave.) When Monroeville Ave. peters out toward the top, turn briefly right to Maple St. (left), then left on Oak St. to Monroeville Rd. (left and up), eventually merging with Monroeville Blvd. along the northern perimeter of Monroeville Mall. Left on Northern Pike. At the Yellow Belt, turn right and join the *Lougeay Rd.* ride back through Penn Hills [25 miles].

**Pitcairn.** As under *Monroeville Mall*, join Monroeville Rd., but veer right on Township Rd. Continue uphill on Mt. Pleasant Rd., following signs at the top left to Friendship Park. Take the paved path to the left around the park over to the next street (Poplar Ave.), and turn right, joining Rosecrest Dr., which becomes School St., a steep descent to Wall Ave. in Pitcairn (left). Toward the top of the long climb that Wall Ave. becomes turn sharply right on Tilbrook Rd., a longish road along a ridge leading to Center St. and back down into Pitcairn. Right on SR130, and follow SR130 when it turns right and becomes Beulah Rd. Left at Penn Ave. back through Wilkinsburg. [30 miles]. Much more exciting alternative: instead of descending on Rosecrest Ave. and School St., go right at the top of Mt. Pleasant Rd. to Johnson Dr., then left on Johnson Ave., and portage past the barrier at the road closed sign. This becomes a steep, overgrown, long-abandoned "ghost road" which also takes you down to Wall Ave.

**Lougeay Rd.** A winter's hour-plus ride when it's cold and you don't want to get too far out of town. Start out as under *Northern Pike*, but instead of going right on Thompson Run Rd., follow the Yellow Belt (Old Rodi Rd.) where it turns left toward US22 Bus. Near US22 Bus. bear right, crossing under the highway and crossing Old Wm. Penn Hwy. on what is now Lougeay Rd. This eventually leads to Jefferson Rd. near a big concrete water tower. Left takes you to an intersection with Frankstown Rd. (left) back to Pittsburgh [15 miles].

**Old Wm. Penn Hwy.** Take Penn Ave. out of Wilkinsburg and past Greensburg Pike and Graham Blvd. At Beulah Rd. (SR130) turn right and then left on Churchill Rd. At Nottingham Rd. turn left, down to a crossing of US22. Right on McReady Rd., which becomes Old Wm. Penn Hwy. which goes for quite a way, and ends at US22. Carefully left along the shoulder for a mile, past the turnoff to SR286, then take the first right, then a left on Abers Creek Rd. Right on Cavitt Rd., left on Saunders Sta. Rd. Watch for the downhill right that Saunders Sta. Rd. takes to join SR130 back through Trafford, Pitcairn, Turtle Creek. [40 miles].

**Evergreen Rd.** Follow the *Old Wm. Penn Hwy.* ride past the crossing with Thompson Run Rd. Left on Evergreen Rd., joining Beatty Rd. (straight). Where Beatty Rd. goes right, continue straight on Cooper Rd. to Old Frankstown Rd. (left).

Follow Old Frankstown Rd., Lott Rd., Universal Rd. to Frankstown Rd. Left to Pittsburgh through the East Hills. [25 miles].

**Pierson Run Rd.** Follow *Old Wm. Penn Hwy.* to Cooper Rd. At Old Frankstown Rd. turn right and then left on Spring Miller Rd., joining Pierson Run Rd., which eventually ends at the Orange Belt (SR380, Saltsburg Rd.). Briefly right and then left on Unity Center Rd. to Leechburg Rd. (left). Left after the underpass, still on Leechburg Rd., back to Saltsburg Rd. where Frankstown Rd. becomes Hulton Rd. (the Yellow Belt). Follow Saltsburgh Rd. to Verona Rd., leading in to Wilkinsburg. [30 miles].

**Murrysville.** Follow the *Old Wm. Penn Hwy.* ride to Old Wm. Penn Hwy. Not long after passing Thompson Run Rd., take Evergreen Rd. to the left; it will leave you at the beginning of Beatty Rd. (straight). When Beatty Rd. goes right, keep straight on Cooper Rd. Right on Old Frankstown Rd. Across SR286 this becomes Sagamore Hill Rd. Join New Texas Rd. right, joining Logans Ferry Rd. (right), which takes you down into Murrysville at Sardis Rd. (right). Cross US22, bearing right on Meadowbrook Rd. Left on either McWilliams Rd. or Ivy Ln. Left on Meyer Dr., but then make right turns through suburban streets until Trafford Rd. (right), becoming Murrysville Rd. Right at SR130 through Level Green, Trafford, and back through Pittcairn, Turtle Creek, and Braddock. [40 miles].



*160-year-old corn crib on the Stein family farm, on SR819 near Congruity*

**US22 Frontage.** Follow *Murrysville* to Murrysville where, next to US22, will be Old US 22. Follow this through Murrysville, Export, Delmont, Five Points, Congruity. Between Delmont and Five Points, there is a stretch of real US22 you'll have to

follow. At Congruity, turn north on Congruity Rd. and follow it to SR819 (right). At Slickville, turn right on County Rd. See *Slickville* for continuation. [70 miles].

**Beulah Rd.** Arrive in Turtle Creek on Greensburg Pike (left). Turn quickly left on SR130 (Beulah Rd.), which goes for several miles gradually uphill to the end of Penn Ave. at a historic church (left). Return through Wilkinsburg for around [15 miles]. Or continue on SR130 to Frankstown Rd. and return on it. Or, at Frankstown Rd., turn right and then left on Coal Hollow Rd., becoming Sandy Creek Rd., and follow it to Allegheny River Blvd. [25 miles].



*The Ghostbikes project installs white bicycles at sites of major bicycle accidents. While most are dismantled by the authorities after a week or two, this one has lasted quite a while at the corner of Allegheny River Blvd and Sandy Hill Rd.*

# Braddock Avenue



*The Westinghouse Bridge, just beyond Braddock.*

Braddock Ave., departing from Pittsburgh through Swissvale, Rankin, Braddock, Turtle Creek, provides access to a large number of excellent rides of all distances. Most start out by connecting Braddock Ave. with SR130 in Turtle Creek. There are several better ways of reaching the town of Braddock than simply riding out Braddock Ave. One is to take Forward Ave., changing to Commercial Ave., down from Beechwood Blvd. in Squirrel Hill, continuing straight, left, and into Swissvale on Church St., right on Monongahela Ave., which naturally leads down streets (Harriet St., 3rd Ave.) that eventually join Braddock Ave. near the Rankin Bridge (see under that heading for additional rides in this general direction). The same Monongahela Ave. can be reached by turning right from Braddock Ave. just after crossing under the Parkway East, then right toward the top of the hill and left onto Monongahela Ave. Follow this to the end of Braddock Ave. at the Rankin Bridge.

Another choice is to go left from Braddock Ave. in Regent Square on Hutchinson St., right at the end, then left under the viaduct, right, then left on Maple Ave. in Edgewood, turning into Brinton Rd. through Braddock Hills. It turns to Wolf St. in East Pittsburgh, and then briefly into Pallas St. From Pallas St. turn right on Brinton Ave., all the way to the bottom, circling around to join Braddock Ave. on the other

side of Braddock, just before the climb into Turtle Creek. Or, in East Pittsburgh go left one street past Center St. (wrong-way street), then left at the end, which will take you straight down into Turtle Creek.

Westinghouse bridge is kind of scary in the downhill (western) direction, but the way east is good most times of day, and gets you quickly to McKeesport. From Center Street in East Pittsburgh, turn right on US30 onto the Westinghouse Bridge. Right at the first light, then wind left over to East Pgh-McKeesport Blvd., following it right past the defunct New Eastland Mall into McKeesport. Here is my secret way to get on the Westinghouse Bridge. Take Braddock Ave. to Swissvale, then get over one street to the right on Woodstock Ave., crossing Braddock Ave. on what becomes Hawkins Ave. Right on Library St. two streets to Bell Ave. (left), which become Center St. leading to the bridge.

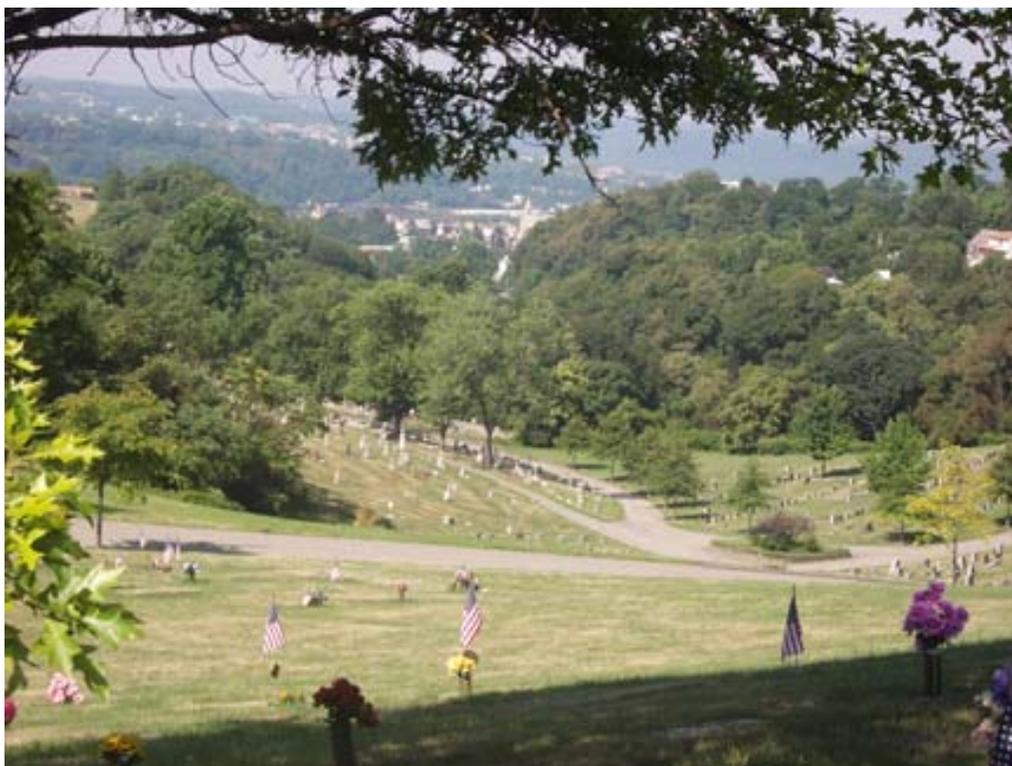


*The defunct New Eastland Mall, which you pass if you take the Westinghouse Bridge.*

### **Returning on SR130**

Rides returning on SR130 through Pitcairn and Turtle Creek have many options for getting back to Pittsburgh, the best being a) Braddock Ave. through Braddock and Swissvale; b) Center St. through East Pittsburgh to a right on Brinton Rd.; c) Ardmore Blvd. through Forest Hills to Wilkinsburg; d) Greensburg Pike through Wilkinsburg; e) Beulah Rd. (SR130) to Penn Ave. outside Wilkinsburg; f) 4th St. out of Braddock up through the Monongahela Cemetery to Brinton Rd. (referred to as "Alpe d'Huez" because of its many switchbacks); g) Ravine St. to Brinton Rd.

**Earl St./Alpe d'Huez.** Among one of the steepest climbs around, this ride doesn't even get you past Braddock. Shown to me by Dan Chew, who fell over trying to climb it the time I went with him, as did I. Tom Chew made it. From Hawkins Ave. in N. Braddock (see above), turn left on Earl St. to the top. It's brick on two sides, with Belgium block in the middle, and goes up in four stages. Left at the top over to the Monongahela Cemetery. Go up through the nice switchbacks (Alpe d'Huez) through the cemetery to Brinton Rd. Left on Brinton Rd., becoming Maple Ave. in Edgewood. Right on Edgewood Ave., then left under the underpass, then right on Swissvale Ave. to Hutchinson St. Left to Braddock Ave. in Regent Square. [10 miles]. One street farther than Earl St., called Coalmont St., does the job almost as well.



*The Alpe d'Huez Cemetery is not only a great climb but affords a nice panoramic view of the Monongahela Valley.*

**Wilkins Ave.** A winter's after-work ride. Along Hawkins Ave. (see the intro. to this section above), catch Wilkins Ave. heading off to the left. This is a good climb up to Brinton Rd. (left), back through Edgewood [10 miles].

**Sixth St.** Equally as good as *Wilkins Ave.* is the climb reached by turning left off Hawkins Ave. on Middle St. (left) to 6th St. (right), also climbing to Brinton Rd. (left), back through Edgewood [10 miles].

**Ravine St.** In the same vein as the foregoing two rides, just outside Braddock on Braddock Ave., take Ravine St. to the left up to Brinton Rd., left into Edgewood. for

conclusion. Ravine St. is often used as an alternative to Braddock Ave. for rides returning through Braddock. [15 miles].

**Pitcairn Rd.** Take Wall Ave. left in Pitcairn. This turns into Pitcairn Rd., which leads to Monroeville Blvd., then right to the Orange Belt (Moss Side Blvd. and SR48). Turn right and then fork left on Haymaker Rd., which takes you back to SR130 outside Trafford. Return on SR130 through Turtle Creek, then Braddock Ave. through Braddock [25 miles].



*Some of the area's best belgium-block climbs are to be found in the hills behind Braddock.*

**Moss Side Blvd.** Following the departure from Pitcairn on SR130, take a left on the Orange Belt (Moss Side Blvd. and SR48), and ride the gradual uphill stretch into Monroeville. Continue on the Orange Belt across Wm. Penn Hwy. Left on Old Frankstown Rd. becoming Lott Rd., returning via Universal Rd., Saltsburg Rd., Sandy Creek Rd., Allegheny River Blvd. [35 miles].

**Long Run Rd.** A sort of symmetrical alternative to *Moss Side Blvd.* If you turn right on SR48 from SR130 out of Pitcairn (the Orange Belt), this road (Jacks Run Rd.) becomes Long Run Rd., somewhat too heavily traveled most times of the day. A long climb leads up and over to the other side of McKeesport, to SR148 (right). Follow SR148 to the Yellow Belt (right), then left (off the Yellow Belt) over the McKeesport Bridge, returning along SR837 and the Rankin or Homestead Bridge. [35 miles].

**Saunders Station Rd.** Take SR130 out of Pitcairn through Trafford on SR130. In Trafford, turn right on SR993 to where the climb out of town begins. Left on First Street, which turns into a neat climb. Left at the top, still on First St., running into SR130 at Level Green. Left on SR130 and then soon right on Saunders Sta. Rd. Left at the top of the dip. Follow Saunders Station Rd. for quite a way, eventually up a hard climb to join Haymaker Rd. Right to Moss Side Blvd. (SR48), then left on Monroeville Blvd. to a left on Pitcairn Rd. and return via SR130. [35 miles].



*The USS Edgar Thompson steel works, still alive in Braddock.*

**Old Ramsey Rd.** I missed spotting this climb for years, but apparently it's well known to runners. Take SR130 out of Pitcairn, turning left on Old Forbes Rd., passing Haymaker Rd. on the left. (Old) Ramsey Rd. departs left in a mile or so. It's a long, moderately hard climb that takes you into Haymaker Rd., after which you can return as under *Saunders Station Rd.* [30 miles].

**Meadowbrook Rd.** When someone asks you whether there are any hills on this ride, you are supposed to answer 'oh, just a couple of rollers'. Take *Old Ramsey Rd.* to Haymaker Rd. to a right on Saunders Sta. Rd. down a swooping hill and up again, left on Meadowbrook Rd. (this is where some riders will turn around in protest). Continue to SR130 (left) to Harbison Rd. (left), to Pleasant Valley Rd. (left), up and over into Murrysville, and back as under *Pleasant Valley Rd.* [50 miles].

**Boxcartown Rd.** Start out as under *Saunders Station Rd.* above, i.e. take SR130 through Trafford. A couple of miles past Level Green on the left will be an inconspicuous road where Paintertown Rd. meets SR130 from the right. This is Harbison Rd. Take it left to Pleasant Valley Rd. Go briefly left on Pleasant Valley Rd. and then right at the first opportunity, on Snyder Rd., a good hill. This becomes Boxcartown Rd. and then School Rd. to the right. Past Holland Rd. it becomes Sarver Rd. Left on Denmark Manor Rd., past Claridge-Export Rd. and continue on Frye Rd., becoming Bo(u)quet Rd., keeping left along the edge of the golf course. This will cross US22 into the edge of Delmont. Turn left on Manor Rd., right on Wilson Rd., which leads to Old Wm. Penn Hwy. (left). Finish as under *Bushy Run.* [65 miles].

**Export.** A variation of *Boxcartown Rd.* Start out as under *Paintertown Rd.*, i.e. on SR993 to Irwin. At Irwin take Paintertown Rd. left-and-right to SR130, cross it, and take Harbison Rd. to Pleasant Valley Rd. Left and right up Snyder Rd. Then right on School Rd., but soon left on a short downhill gravelly road (Holland Rd.) to what becomes Claridge-Export Rd. Take this toward US22, forking right and under US22 into Export. Take the main road left to a right on Hills Church Rd. just outside town, following it left when it goes left. This runs into Wiestertown Rd., which heads north to Hilty Rd. and SR286 (left). Like many other roads in this area. Wiestertown provides an object lesson in encroaching suburbia, with old farms alternating with tacky new subdivisions. Return as under *Washington Township* below [60 miles].



*Someone in Export keeps a caboose and a railway car in his back yard.*

**Washington Township.** Lower Washington Twp. past Murrysville, bounded by US22 on the south SR66 on the east, SR366 on the north, and SR286 on the west, has a lot of nice riding. Here is a sampler. Somehow, get to Export (for example, by the ride of that name.) Go right on Pittsburgh St. to Borland Farm Rd (left), then left on Italy Rd. Where Italy Rd. goes left, go instead straight down a small road joining with Kemerer Hollow Rd. (right), which soon turns to Hilty Rd. Left on Steele Rd., right on Christy Rd. to SR286, which to the left will eventually lead to a junction with SR380. Take SR380 briefly until a right onto what is marked as Logans Ferry Rd., eventually running into the Orange Belt at the top of Polecat Hollow Rd. Left to Shearer Rd. (right), left on Milltown Rd. to the Yellow Belt, returning through Penn Hills on Saltsburg Rd. and Lincoln Rd. [65 miles]

**Jeannette.** Bud Harris' classic ride. Take SR130 from Pitcairn to Trafford. In Trafford, turn right on SR993, and follow it to Irwin. Go up the hill into Irwin, leaving SR993 through town, and turn left, toward Penn Glyn, Straw Pump, Adamsburg. Turn left on Adamsburg Rd. (SR3077). Join up with SR130 just short of Jeannette, and return through Harrison City on SR130. [45 miles].

**Harrison City.** For a shorter ride than *Jeannette*, take SR993 out of Irwin and intersect with SR130 at Harrison City, returning via SR130. [40 miles].



*If you like cows and corn, Westmoreland County is the place for you. Picture taken on Quarry Rd. off Hannastown Rd., above Greensburg.*

**Greensburg.** SR130 goes through Jeannette to Greensburg, the Westmoreland County seat, over a road that becomes a divided highway, but with a shoulder that is safe enough to ride on. Take SR819 north out of Greensburg to Forbes Rd. (SR1032). Left and follow the beginning of the *Forbes Rd.* ride in reverse, joining SR993 back through Irwin and Trafford. [55 miles].

**Tastyland.** Tastyland is a small, old-fashioned soft ice cream shop that stands like an oasis in the desert north of Greensburg, where Old SR66 joins the new toll road 66. Follow SR993 from Irwin to SR66, cross it, turn right, and continue a mile or so until the road comes to an end, again at SR66 and Tastyland. The return road, Locust Valley Rd., just to the right of the shop, intersects with SR130 at the edge of Jeannette. Return via SR130 through Harrison City, Trafford, Pitcairn, Turtle Creek, Braddock [55 miles].



*Tastyland has 44 flavors in stock at all times.*

**Paintertown.** A number of nice roads connect SR993 with SR130, making loops of various lengths similar to *Harrison City*, for example Pine Hollow Rd. or *Baker School Rd.* Probably the nicest is Paintertown Rd., which departs to the left from SR993 at the bottom of the hill into Irwin (take a left under an underpass, then a hard right). Paintertown Rd. meets SR130 just beyond Level Green. When you get to the Paintertown hill, you can avoid it by going right, on Old Farm Rd., which also takes you to SR130 and a return. Around [35 miles].

**Haywood Hill.** Take someone on this ride when you notice they have only a 19 or 21-tooth cog on the back for a low gear. Haywood Rd. goes off to the left from SR993

just past Ardara. Cross Baker School Rd. The resulting hill is the more challenging in that you don't expect it. Make left turns or keep straight, and you'll run into Paintertown Rd. (left, then left at SR130, and back through Turtle Creek [35 miles]).



*Very many rides to the south and south-east pass through Trafford out SR993.*

**Mahaffey Hill.** Another ride to surprise your undergeared friends with. Go through Trafford toward Irwin on SR993. Just after the hill outside Trafford, go right and dog-leg back over Brush Creek. This is Mahaffey Hill Rd., the centerpiece of the ride. At the top, continue leftish-straight on Baird Rd., becoming Ardara Rd., which deposits you downhill at the foot of Leger Rd. Either go straight up Leger Rd. and do the reverse of *White Oak Park* [40 miles]; or go left to SR993. Briefly right and then bear left on Haywood Hill (see the ride by that name) [40 miles].

**Three Neat Hills.** From SR993 going toward Irwin, follow *Haywood Hill* (first neat hill). Take Paintertown Rd. to SR130 (left). Turn right onto Meadowbrook Rd. Follow Meadowbrook Rd. (second neat hill) to Saunders Station Rd. Turn right and follow Saunders Station Rd. (neat hill #3) to Haymaker Rd. Turn right on Haymaker Rd. and join Moss Side Blvd. just before Monroeville Blvd.=Northern Pike. Turn left on Monroeville Blvd.=Northern Pike and, at the bottom of the first downhill, turn left on Pittcairn Rd., which will lead back to Pittcairn. Right on SR130 to Turtle Creek and return. [45 miles].

**Pleasant Valley.**\*\*\* Some people might consider the name 'pleasant' misleading. We once lost a visiting cyclist here who had the injudiciousness to bring only a 21-tooth rear cog. His car was still there the next morning, and he was never heard from again. Begin as under *Harrison City*, but at Westmoreland City, after the underpass, turn left and climb up to SR130 (Sandy Hill Rd.). Cross SR130 and keep going (Pleasant Valley Rd.). There is a really steep climb and a steep descent going up and over into Murrysville at US22. In Murrysville, keep going, across US22, on Sardis Rd. Left on SR286, right on Logans Ferry Rd. to the Orange Belt (left). Right on Shearer Rd., Left on Milltown Rd., right on Hulton Rd. (Yellow Belt) to Oakmont, returning on Allegheny River Blvd. [65 miles].

**Camp Jo-Ann.** Camp Jo-Ann is an unrecognizable place at the intersection of SR380 and SR366 in the middle of nowhere. Follow *Pleasant Valley Rd.* to Murrysville, becoming Sardis Rd., which you take to Sardis, also unrecognizable. Left on SR286, quickly right on SR380 down a swooping hill to a BP station on the right, just past "Camp Jo-Ann". Continue on SR380 a mile or so until Camp Jo-Ann Rd. (carefully left). Soon left on *Turkey Ridge Rd.*, and finish as under the ride by that name [55 miles].

**Alpine Park.** From SR130 toward the top of the climb to Level Green, turn left down, and then up, Saunders Station Rd. Fork left and follow Saunders Station Rd., turning right off it partway up a climb to go through Alpine Park (on Cavitt Rd.). Left on Abers Rd. Just before SR22, the road takes a left turn up a steep climb (Northern Pike). Follow this up and across Moss Side Blvd. At Rudy's Subs on the right, hop over the curb and cross US22 Bus. to the continuation of Northern Pike into Turtle Creek. [35 miles].

**New Texas.** Begin as under *Alpine Park*. In Alpine Park, keep right and follow Cavitt Rd. up a hill through a housing development to US22. Cross US22 on what is now McClure Rd., which takes a left at a fork, running into New Texas Rd. (left). Cross US286. New Texas Rd. becomes the Orange Belt at SR380, which you take to Leechburg Rd. at Plum Boro and then leave it to the left. In Unity after the underpass take a left still on Leechburg Rd. up to the intersection with Frankstown Rd. and Saltsburg Rd. Take Saltsburg Rd. back to town via Lincoln Ave. [40 miles].



*Geodesic dome house on SR993 on the way to Bushy Run.*

**Bushy Run.**\*\*\* Follow SR993 out of Irwin to Harrison City. In Harrison City, turn right with SR993 and follow it left and up a couple of hills to Bushy Run State Park, marking the site of a victory of the British over a 1763 Indian rebellion. Well past the park turn left on Baughman Rd., right on Dutch Hollow Rd. past Lux Rd. on the right. Cross Boquet Rd. up a short steep hill on Ader Rd., which changes names to Claridge-Export Rd. as it crosses under US22 into Export. Watch for the nearly invisible stop-sign at the intersection with Mellon Rd. In Export, follow the road (Pittsburgh St.) left to Murrysville at the same point where the *Pleasant Valley* and *Sardis Rd.* rides meet US22. Cross US22, fork right on Meadowbrook Rd., and finish through Level Green (see the end of *Sardis Rd.*). [55 miles].

**Hills Church Rd.** Vary and lengthen *Bushy Run* by turning right on Hills Church Rd. outside Export, running into Kemmerer Hollow and then Hilty Rds., eventually running into SR286 (left). Return on SR286 and follow the opposite direction of *Sardis Rd.* [65 miles].

**Claridge.** A slightly shorter and possibly nicer version of *Bushy Run*. In Harrison City, take the first left off SR993 (Harrison City-Export Rd.) and follow it out of town. Take the first main right (Watt Rd.) and follow it through Claridge, an example of what is meant by a patch (old mining town). Keep straight along rolling Dutch Hollow Rd. which eventually loops to the north and then northwest up a short steep climb (Lux Rd.). You are now heading into Murrysville on the end of the *Bushy Run* ride, [55 miles].

**Drop to Jeannette.** A nice way to get to Jeannette. Start out as under *Bushy Run*. Before SR66 go south (right) to Jeannette on various roads: Claridge-Jeannette Rd., Dry Dam Rd., Ridge Rd.-Southerland St.-SR766, all taking you to SR130 (right). Return on SR130 through Turtle Creek and Wilkinsburg. [45 miles].

**Penn.** Similar to *Drop to Jeannette*, but just past Bushy Run State Park turn right on Chestnut Lane and follow its extensions (Blieburg Rd. across SR130, Richmond La., Kings Rd., Railroad St.) to Penn Ave. in Penn, which is an appendage to the west of Jeannette. Lots of choices from here, the simplest being to turn right on Penn Ave. to Manor, under the underpass, left on Sandy Hill Rd. to SR130 (left), then back through Turtle Creek. [45 miles].



*Haunted house at the base of the hill to Oklahoma.*

**Forbes Road.\*\*\*** One of the better longer-distance rides around. Follow SR993 out of Trafford through Irwin, Westmoreland City, Harrison City, Bushy Run State Park, all the way until it ends at SR66. Cross SR66, forking first right, then taking the first left (McIlvaine Rd.). At the next T intersection turn right (Salver Rd.), and turn right at the next opportunity (Shutt Rd.). Follow this road to Old Forbes Rd. (left). Take Old Forbes Rd. through the village of Forbes Road to SR819 (left). A very long and pretty stretch of SR819, with many moderate-to-hard climbs, leads across US22, SR286, and SR380. Follow SR819 to its end outside Apollo. Turn briefly right onto SR56-66 Alt. and then left up the hill to Oklahoma (Orr Rd.). Return via Markle-Lower Burrell-New Kensington, as described under *Strongland*. [85 miles].



*Natural spring just across the bridge in Salina.*

**Salina.** We're not in Kansas anymore. Salina may be the largest settlement in the entire state without any food or convenience store. Follow *Forbes Rd.* Leave SR819 by going straight to Salina. Take a left across a narrow bridge and into some truly beautiful climbing and scenery. Take the first left and follow the obvious path, on Beulah Church Rd., right on twisty Brownstown Rd., later Jackson Rd., finally left on Old State Rd. to Apollo. From Apollo, cross the river and return as described under *Forbes Rd.* [85 miles].

**West Leechburg.** Like Salina, but go right in Apollo to Leechburg. Cross the river and turn right to West Leechburg about halfway up the hill, and at every intersection keep choosing the uphill alternative all the way over the hill. You will eventually join Piper Rd., which leads up to SR356 (right). Quickly left on Pleasant Hill Rd., and follow this to Melwood Park Rd. Go right and finish as under *Spook Hollow* [95 miles].



*The Piper family cabin along Piper Rd. (Strongland or West Leechburg rides).*

**Slickville.** A shorter version of *Forbes Rd.*. Take SR819 north only as far as Slickville, beyond US22. In Slickville turn left on County Rd.=Slickville Rd. Before reaching SR66 turn right on Thorne Run Rd., taking you to SR66. Jog right on the shoulder and then left on Silvis Rd.. Here follows some attractive scenery: tumble-down farms alternating with new suburban housing. Right on Hilty Rd., left on Bolinger Rd., becoming Evans Rd., right on Christy Rd., left on Mamont Rd. to Sardis Rd., then right to SR286. See *Pleasant Valley* for the return [75 miles].

**Delmont.** See *Forbes Rd.* for the beginning. Cross SR66. Instead of turning right on on Shutt Rd., keep straight on the narrow little road (Salver Rd., I think) and take it to a left on Sleepy Hollow Rd., to another left on Beaver Run Rd. to a quick right past a small bridge on Jobes Rd. Left on Wilson Rd., becoming Rock Springs Rd. across SR66. At Old Wm. Penn Hwy. turn left into the attractive town of Delmont, birthplace of Glen Snyder. Follow Old Wm. Penn Hwy. (Pittsburgh Rd.) to Export, Murrysville, right on Sardis Rd. then quickly left on Logans Ferry Rd. Take the next left and connect with Old Frankstown Rd., Universal Rd., Frankstown Rd [70 miles].

**Saltsburg.** This is not the way you'd go if you commuted to and from Saltsburg. If that's your aim, then there's a road called Saltsburg Rd. that runs almost all the way between the two places. On the present ride, from Slickville (see the ride by that name) take the main road (County Rd.) east. This leads into a valley, then up on the other side to SR286 in Kiski, just outside Saltsburg (right). Before descending into to Saltsburg (who wanted to see it anyway), turn left on SR981 (long hill) to Salina, then continue as per *Salina* [90 miles].



*Old Canadian traveling show wagon at trailer graveyard at corner of Jobs and Wilson Rds. (Delmont ride). This wagon carried wrestling equipment.*

**Twin Valley Memorial Park.** On the edge of Delmont, there is a striking large cemetery complex where the grave markers are vases filled with artificial or cut flowers. Start like *Delmont*, but go right on Wilson Rd., left fork on Sauls Rd. to US22, right to a rest stop at Five Points. Across US22, take Trees Mill Rd. and look for an unmarked left on Pump Station Rd., becoming Church Rd. as it passes the "memorial park," to Delmont (left). Right on Delmont-Manor Rd. past Glenn Snyder's boyhood home, right on Wilson Rd. to Old US22 (left), all the way to Murrys ville. Left on Meadowbrook Rd., and finish as under *Sardis Rd.* A long [65 miles].

**Historic Hannastown.** Hannastown was the historic Westmoreland County seat, burned to the ground in 1782 by the British and Indians. Start out as under *Forbes Rd.* At the intersection of Old Forbes Rd. and SR819, continue straight, to Historic Hannastown (a few restored log buildings). Left (north) and follow the main road (striking Albert Steel farmhouse on the left, dated 1900). Carefully cross US22 to Old Wm. Penn Hwy. (left), observing the historic old Congruity Tavern down to the right. In Congruity, Old Wm. Penn Hwy. gives out, so you'll have to turn right on Congruity Rd. to SR819. You'll want to turn left on SR819, because there's a rest stop at Five Points (BP Station) on US22. Finish as under *Twin Valley Memorial Park.* [70 miles].



*Restored log building and stocks in Historic Hannastown.*

**Keystone State Park.** For me this ride was an excuse to ride through the ancient Egyptian city of Luxor. Go straight through Hannastown (*Historic Hannastown*), cross Hannastown Rd., and join US119 (left). Quickly right on SR1053. Left at the next opportunity to and through Luxor (SR1026), which is located near Twin Lakes County Park east of Greensburg. Left to Old Crabtree, then right on township roads (they change numbers at every township border and aren't well marked in any case) to SR981 (left), which runs next to Keystone State Park. Take SR981 north to Saltsburg, and return on Saltsburg Rd. (SR286 to Sardis, SR380 to Frankstown Rd., Saltsburg Rd. to Verona Rd. to Robinson Blvd. to Wilkinsburg. [90 miles].

**Blairsville.** This ride runs east of my usual territory, but it is interesting. It is also a good way to get to Latrobe. Take *Historic Hannastown* through Hannastown to US119. Left, then right on SR1053. Follow SR1053 south until SR1026 (left). Ride through Donohoe to Latrobe and SR981 (left). Fork right on SR1020 outside Latrobe, which will T into SR217 (left). Ride through Derry and take SR217 north through Blairsville. The road is flat and fast. Across US22, look for signs to Saltsburg: 12 miles. At one unmarked fork, keep right; otherwise, the road to Saltsburg is well marked. Return to Pittsburgh as described under *Keystone State Park*. [100 miles].

**Sutersville.\*\*\*** Start out toward Irwin on SR130 and SR993. Before getting to Irwin on SR993, turn right just past the metal-spanned bridge. Take the next left up the hill (eventually, Skellytown Rd.) and turn right at the top, to US30. Cross US30 and, in a

block, turn left in front of a funeral home (Clay Pike Rd., later Irwin-Herminie Rd.). Ride south for several miles, taking a right (west) toward Sutersville at Rillton, on Mars Hill Rd. (a sign directs you to Sutersville Lumber). An up-and-down stretch of road eventually leads down into the sleepy town of Sutersville. Cross the Youghiogheny River and bear right on Scott Haven Rd., keeping along the main road which eventually ends in a climb. Continue the climb around the golf course and keep right, for a nice winding stretch of several miles through Greenock, Buena Vista, Boston (cross the bridge to the right), and onto the Orange Belt for just a stretch (SR48, turning into SR148 after the Orange Belt), leading to McKeesport. Take SR148 out of McKeesport, keeping your eyes peeled in a mile or so for a sharp uphill to the left (Westinghouse Ave.), which you take. This road leads up to East Pittsburgh-McKeesport Blvd., a long downhill descent to the top of Braddock Ave., beneath the Westinghouse Bridge on US30. Return to Pittsburgh through Braddock or Wilkinsburg. [55 miles].



*Sign-cluttered entry to Sutersville.*

## Youghiogheny River Trail

A major portion of the Rails-to-Trails network has been completed between Boston (near North Versailles), Sutersville, West Newton, Smithton, Perryopolis, and beyond. Eventually you will be able to go all the way to Washington D.C. The pavement is firm crushed limestone, and the road is completely flat. It's nice to incorporate the stretch from Sutersville to Boston into the *Sutersville* ride. It's longer, but it takes out all of the climbing. The entrance is just across the river from Sutersville, and it takes you to the Boston-North Versailles Bridge at the Orange Belt. [60] miles. You may just want to drive to the beginning of the trail in Boston, park, and ride to Sutersville-West Newton-Cedar Creek Park, for a 20-40-mile round trip. The entrance at Boston is just across the North Versailles-Boston bridge on the Orange Belt. Make two sharp rights just past the bridge and you're there.



*View from the Youghiogheny Trail. Photo by Louis Fineberg.*

**Turnpike.** Start out as under *Sutersville*. Instead of turning toward Sutersville on Mars Hill Rd at Rillton, continue toward Herminie. Then follow the signs to Madison. Turn right into Madison and then head left (east) out of town on the only road going that way (SR3016). This road crosses the Turnpike south of Arona. Follow it (Clay Pike) left (north), paralleling the Turnpike back through Arona to Irwin. You will need to finesse a crossing of US30 by riding to the left on US30 for a bit, then turning right off it at the first opportunity. Go toward Irwin and turn right into Irwin and retrace the route back to Pittsburgh on SR993 to Trafford and SR130 to Pitcairn and Turtle Creek. [55 miles].

**West Newton.** A round-about way of getting to West Newton. Start out as per *Turnpike*, but from Herminie go south (on West Newton Rd.) to SR136. Take SR136 right (west) through West Newton, crossing SR51, down a hill eventually to the Monongahela River (right). When you reach the SR136 bridge, return on one side of the Monongahela or the other - either through McKeesport or Kennywood. [65 miles]. The rough reverse of this ride, starting out through McKeesport, along the Monongahela river on what is called the Two Rivers Scenic Highway, is also nice.



*Bells Mills Covered Bridge, the only original covered bridge still left in Westmoreland County, of SR136 outside West Newton.*

**Bells Mills.** Do the reverse of *West Newton*; i.e., ride from McKeesport, Glassport, and Elizabeth to SR136 through West Newton, and follow SR136 out of town. Right and then left at the sign to Bells Mill and over the 104 ft. covered bridge, dated 1850, the only original covered bridge left in Westmoreland county (Allegheny County has no original covered bridges). Follow the road past the Sewickly Presbyterian Church (est. 1776) toward Wyano. Just outside Wyano turn left (north) to Madison. Follow SR136 out of Madison, eventually across the Turnpike at Arona, and return as under *Turnpike*. [65 miles].

**Brush Creek Cemetery\*\*\*.** A good Halloween ride. To get in the mood, take Brinton Rd. out of town by following Maple St. out of Edgewood through Braddock Hills, dropping down to Braddock Ave. by forking right on Ravine St. Left on Braddock Ave. up the hill, right past the Westinghouse Bridge on East Pittsburgh-

McKeesport Blvd., forking left past the largely defunct Eastland Mall down Westinghouse Ave. to SR48 and the Yellow Belt, which you cross and head unpromisingly up the very steep hill. Curve right on Public Rd. or, for a much better and dirt climb, continue straight. At the top, turn right and zig-zag over to Lincoln Way (left). Continue on Lincoln Way past the Orange Belt (SR48), and take the next left (McClintock Rd.) toward White Oak Park, up a hill. This road, taken straight, becomes Muse Lane and then Carpenter Lane, crosses US30, and becomes Leger Rd. (keep left), more or less the centerpiece of the ride, and later the haunted Old Brush Creek Cemetery, overgrown with day-lilies and poison ivy. After a steep and narrow descent, you have the option of turning right over the trestle to Ardara on SR993 (left) and returning through Trafford and Turtle Creek. Instead, be tough, keep straight, and ride up and down some more hills, eventually taking Mahaffey Hill down to SR993 (left to SR130 and back through Turtle Creek and Braddock) [40 miles]. Recent runnings of this ride have gone to Ardara and taken in the end of *Haywood Hill*.



*Cyclist's rest home, on Dixon Ave. fronting East Pittsburgh-McKeesport Blvd.*

**New Stanton.** Get to Bells Mill by doing the ride of that name. Take Yukon Rd. north out of town, but quickly turn left and then right on some township roads (T534, T529), then right on and left off Waltz Mill Rd., now on SR3014. Left on T539 into New Stanton. Cross the Turnpike and return as described under *Ruffsedale*. [70 miles]. This is all nice country.

**Turner Valley.\*\*\*** Equivalent rides would be *West Newton*, *Bells Mills*, *Lowber*, *Turnpike*, but this one is judged best. Take Lincoln Way out of McKeesport, as

described under *Brush Creek Cemetery*. Past White Oak Park turn right on Coulterville Rd. to Turner Valley Rd. (a beautiful stretch following the screaming descent, including one major low-gear climb), then Guffey Rd., crossing Mars Hill Rd., ending in Lowber Rd. Left to Herminie. Go into town and take Sewickley Ave. out of town. This will eventually run into SR136 and lead across the Turnpike at Arona. Pass through Arona, i.e. don't turn left. From SR136, turn left on Edna Rd. to Adamsburg across US30. Left to Straw Pump, then right to Westmoreland City, returning on SR993 through Trafford, SR130 through Turtle Creek, Braddock Ave. through Braddock. [55 miles].



*Every settlement, however small, it seems, has a war memorial. This one at Shaner contains a surprisingly large number of names of servicemen from Shaner and Guffey.*

**Shaner War Memorial.** Where Steve Loevner almost ended up. After the descent after the huge climb under *Turner Valley*, dog-leg right to Shaner, down to the bottom of a lonesome holler. Left at the war memorial, then straight, bearing right at a fork to Mars Hill Rd. Right and then left at the first opportunity. This leads to a wonderful descent to just outside Lowber. Left to Herminie and follow *Turner Valley* [55 miles].

**Lowber.** Start out as under *Turner Valley Rd.* For variety, go as far as you can on Lincoln Way. It's called Maus Rd. just before it runs into Clay Pike in Norwin. Follow Clay Pike South for a bit, then right on Guffey Rd., which leads into the

*Turner Valley* ride and to Lowber Rd. outside Herminie. Turn right to Lowber instead of left to Herminie. This attractive road leads through Lowber to Gratztown, a point halfway between Sutersville to the right and West Newton to the left. West Newton is the best choice. From West Newton, take SR136 west (right) down (at first, somewhat up) to the Monongahela River, and return to McKeesport on the right of the river. See *Sutersville* for returns from McKeesport. [65 miles].



*Beer distributor in McKeesport. It's good it's open to the public. It would be a shame if they kept all that beer to themselves.*

**Arona.** This is Eric Schaffer's version of *Lowber*. Start out as if on the reverse of *Turnpike*, to Irwin. From Irwin, take Pennsylvania Ave. to just before US 30. Cross US30 on Black's Hill Rd. to Wendel Rd. to Arona Rd. (left). Right at Arona across the Turnpike through Hermine and Lowber. Finish as under *Lowber* [60 miles].

**Madison.** The same idea as *Lowber*, but a longer swath to the south. Go one crossing of the Turnpike farther south on Arona Rd. and cross the Turnpike on Youngwood Rd., becoming W. Newton Rd. through Madison, where you join SR136 to West Newton. From West Newton, return through Sutersville, Blythesdale, Buena Vista, Boston. McKeesport [65 miles].

**Adamsburg.** Start out like *Arona*, but follow Pennsylvania Ave. from Irwin to where it becomes Main St. in Adamsburg. Right on Penn-Adamsburg Rd. across US30 to Edna Rd. Head South to SR136 (right). Right on Cribb Station Rd. to Middletown Rd. (right), becoming Youngwood Rd., following it across the Turnpike. where it becomes West Newton Rd. (which, if you want, will take you to West Newton).

Instead, in Madison, take Madison Rd. (right) to Herminie and join the *Lowber* ride [75 miles]. You may want to try sometime Monkey Wrench Rd. or Senchur Rds. to the right off Edna Rd., both good climbs which take you over to Arona Rd.



*Adamsburg (above) and Herminie (below) are good examples of "patch" towns, having grown up nest to mines. The remains of strip mines outside Adamsburg in this picture are slowly being covered over by greenery.*



# Rankin Bridge



*Rankin Bridge*

The Rankin Bridge crosses the Monongahela River a little north of the Homestead Bridge. The Braddock Ave. exit (see below) passes by the Rankin Bridge on the Pittsburgh side, so see there for instructions on how to get there. Any rides over the Rankin Bridge can also be reached instead by the Homestead High-Level Bridge, so see that heading as well. Since the building of Waterfront in Homestead, most people prefer to go over the Homestead Bridge and ride through that to just short of the Rankin Bridge; but that mainly works on Sundays. Here are a few rides that depart logically over the Rankin Bridge.

**Rankin-Homestead Bridge Loop.** For a short ride, go right after the Rankin Bridge until the Homestead Bridge (right). Ride up the hill to Beechwood Blvd. in Squirrel Hill. [5 miles].

**McKeesport.** The usual use of the Rankin bridge is to go to McKeesport. Left on Kennywood Blvd. to the McKeesport Bridge and cross it. Go left out of town on SR148 (the Yellow Belt, for a while), and take Westinghouse Ave. up to E. Pittsburgh McKeesport Blvd. Left for a return through Braddock. [15 miles].

**Wilmerding.** The home of the (defunct) Westinghouse Air Brake Company. After the McKeesport Bridge go left on SR148, the Yellow Belt. Up a hill to a crossing of US30 at Wilmerding, then down a nice hill, and a right turn to the Tri-Boro

Expressway (then left, still following the Yellow Belt). Leave the Yellow Belt in Turtle Creek and return through Braddock. [25 miles].

**Norwin.** Go over the McKeesport Bridge and left on SR148 to Lincoln Way (right). Follow this to Norwin (a corruption of North Huntingdon and Irwin), then left at Clay Pike across US30, left at the first opportunity (Brownstown Rd.), then right at the bottom of the descent. Left on SR993 to Trafford; return on SR130 through Pitcairn, Turtle Creek, Braddock [35 miles].

**Mt. Pleasant.** There are at least two Mt. Pleasants south of Pittsburgh. This one is below Greensburg, the center of a major berry-growing industry. Begin as under *Norwin*, but go south on Clay Pike to Herminie. Straight through town to Madison (right on Main St.). Leave Madison due south on what becomes Mengers Rd. to Mendon on SR31 (left). Take SR31 to Mt. Pleasant. Turn north to Greensburg on Mt. Pleasant-Greensburg Rd., being careful to keep on it toward the left as you cross Kecksburg Rd. Go through downtown Greensburg and connect with SR130 leading through Jeannette. In Harrison City, turn left on SR993 through Irwin and Trafford, rejoining SR130 outside Trafford. [65 miles].

**Ruffsdale.** A slightly longer version of *Mt. Pleasant*, starting out in a slightly different way. Begin as under *Round Hill Park*. Where Long Hollow Rd. joins SR136, take it left to and through West Newton. Take the right fork on SR31 out of town, which will eventually lead through Wyano to Ruffsdale. Turn north on the road to New Stanton, cross the Turnpike, and ride parallel to it (on Clay Pike) back to Irwin, as under *Turnpike*. [70 miles].

**Donegal.** This is about as far southeast as one would want to go in a day, and still come back (Somerset is in the same direction, but that would add about 40 miles to an already sizable undertaking). It is a hard ride, with a certain amount of mountain climbing, or at least as close to it as one will find near Pittsburgh. Begin as under *Mt. Pleasant*, but ride through Mt. Pleasant and follow SR31 to Donegal. Between Mt. Pleasant and Donegal is Three Mile Hill. From the edge of Donegal head northeast on SR711 until SR130 in Stahlstown (left). A comparable but much prettier three-mile climb awaits you coming back through the woods on SR130 toward Lycippus. Take SR130 all the way back through Greensburg and Jeannette into Pittsburgh. [105 miles].

## SR130

SR130 goes from Braddock through Jeannette and Greensburg, and ends at SR381 near the Turnpike past Donegal. It is rideable the entire distance, but there is moderately heavy traffic most of the way. Outside Greensburg the road becomes more

rural. Beyond Lycippus to the end near Donegal, it becomes a downright attractive, wooded country and mountain road.

**Rust Belt (Mon Valley)\*\*\*.** After the Rankin Bridge, go left on Kennywood Blvd. Ride past Kennywood Park on SR837 to the McKeesport Bridge, cross it, turn right into McKeesport, and ride to Elizabeth (see *Tour of the Mon*). Right over the Elizabeth Bridge (SR51) and back north on SR837. [35 miles]. This basic ride has at its disposal a number of different bridges, giving rides of varying length, all the way to 100: the Glassport, Dravosburg, Elizabeth, Donora, Monessen, and Brownsville Bridges are the most important. The architectural capital of the Rust-Belt is Monessen, which still has some inactive steel mills standing.



*Danceland, near the SR136 bridge to Monongahela. It's currently for sale.*

**Mon Valley Century.** This ride incorporates the rolling 70-mile loop of the Mon Valley Century ride sponsored in the late summer, formerly by the Pittsburgh AYH, now by an amateur radio club. Add to that the 30+ miles that it takes to get to and from Elizabeth, and you have more than a century. Follow *Rust Belt* to Elizabeth, and continue south next to the Monongahela River through Bunola, Elkhorn, and East Monongahela, to the bridge at SR136. Cross to Monongahela, right and then soon left on Park Ave. (SR481), but soon bear right on SR2023, which eventually is marked as Bentleyville Rd. Cross under the awful Mon Valley Expressway. Pass through Hazelkirk, Cracker Jack, and Sudan. Go right on SR2044 just short of I70, and follow this (right) into Bentleyville. Bear left on SR2041 up a mile-long hill, and follow SR2041 (with giant paw-prints painted on the pavement) a number of miles through

Beallsville to a steep downhill and a left at Clarksville along Ten Mile Run into SR88 (left). After a few miles veer right off SR88 onto Old SR88, keeping close to the river, to the historic bridge to Brownsville (it is supposedly the first cast-iron bridge ever built). Right over the bridge to Brownsville and left on SR4003. This involves keeping left along the river. The hill out of Brownsville is a whopper. Left on SR201 through Fayette City, then left on SR906 through Monessen ("Essen on the Mon"). Meet SR136 and follow it along the river to the bridge you've already crossed once. Cross it again, turn right, and follow SR837 back into Pittsburgh via Kennywood and Homestead. Something like [105 miles].



*Layer-cake house in Beallsville. Wood siding on logs, on brick, on two layers of stone, on concrete.*

**Pigeon Creek.** This ride combines elements of various other rides, but it has its own logic. Begin as under *Mon Valley Century*. It turns out Bentleyville Rd. goes along Pigeon Creek, hence the name given it by Eric Schaffer. Toward Bentleyville, turn right on SR519 (Pittsburgh Rd.) to a crossing with I70. Left on Carlton Rd., a long frontage along I70. Don't be tempted to turn right up many promising-looking roads: most dead-end into SR136 along one of its worst stretches. Eventually right (north) on Brownlee Rd., cross SR136, later right on Thomas-84 Rd., becoming Linden Rd. (bear right). In Thomas, go left on Thomas Rd. to McMurray Rd. (right). Right on Bethel Church Rd. to SR88 (left). In Castle Shannon go left on Castle Shannon Blvd., becoming Scott Rd. Right on West Liberty Ave, (US19). Right on Saw Mill Run Blvd. and soon left on Bausman St. and follow it to the top. Turn left on Brownsville

Rd. to S.18th St. and a descent into the South Side and Carson St. Return over the Hot Metal Bridge [75 miles].



*Multi-Billion-dollar boondoggle, the Mon Valley Expressway ruins the sight line almost everywhere you look on the left side of the Mon River. The bases of the columns are magnets for graffiti.*

## **SR837**

This road, listed as a default return route on many rides ending up south of Pittsburgh and east of the Monongahela River, is narrow and, during the week, trafficky, and uninspiring, as it passes much of the Mon Valley's rusting industrial heritage. For variety, from Dravosburg you can get on Skyline Drive or Pennsylvania Ave. (right), leading to Homeville Rd. (left), then Commonwealth Ave. (right), which deposits you back on SR837 in Duquesne near Kennywood. Or turn left on Commonwealth Ave. to Homestead-Duquesne Rd. (right), which becomes Ravine St. and leaves you on SR837 in Homestead. Or, from Clairton/Coal Valley, take New England Rd. up to the Century III Mall, cross SR885 to Reigs Ave. (right) to Lebanon Church Rd. (right), left on Delwar Rd. to Streets Run Rd. and the Glenwood Bridge. The problem is: by the time a ride gets to SR837, one is usually too tired to think about anything else.



*Desidero Memorial Park and the elusive Clairton missile.*

**Clairton Missile.** Take SR837 To Clairton, just short of the bridge to Elizabeth. Take St. Claire Ave. uphill to 7th St. or Desidero Ave. (left to war memoiral and missile monument). Take Woodland Ave. out of town, becoming Ridge Rd., which crosses SR51 and eventually ends at Gill Hall Rd. (right). See *Gill Hall* for completion. [45 miles].

**Mingo Creek.**\*\*\* There are many ways to connect with picturesque Mingo Creek Rd. in Mingo Creek State Park south of Finleyville (two original covered bridges, so it must be Washington County). Here is the ride from the Rankin Bridge. The first third of the ride is like *Tour of the Mon.*, through Elizabeth. As there, cross the river on SR136 to Monongahela and head north on SR88/837, through New Eagle. North of Monongahela, take SR88 to the left. In a couple of miles, turn left to Mingo Creek State Park. Follow Mingo Creek Rd. through the park to Sugar Run Rd. (right), which leads up and down to Venetia Rd. west of Finleyville. Right through Finleyville. In Gastonville, make a left down a short hill and under a viaduct. This road, after a couple of hills, becomes Gill Hall Rd. Finish the ride as under *Gill Hall* [65 miles]. Mingo Creek can also be approached through the South Hills, on McMurray Rd., Thomas Rd., left on Finleyville Rd., right on Sugar Run Rd.

