

Silos, Spires and Soaring Birds – a Lebanon Valley Skyline

Two scenic rides start from the Visitors Center at the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area. For cyclists who want to pedal more miles, it is possible to combine both rides and enjoy 50 miles of bicycling. Visiting the Pennsylvania Game Commission's exhibits, hiking and "bird watching" are activities available at Middle Creek. For additional information visit www.pgc.state.pa.us

This scenic route is a countryside ride that skirts the towns. Silos of diverse ages and sizes denote the significance of the Lebanon Valley's family dairy farms. Cyclists pedal by thousands of acres of corn, soybeans and alfalfa. Amish are an integral part of the communities. In summer months, white egrets and blue heron stalk their prey along the creeks that you cycle by. Migrating Canadian and snow geese, ducks and trumpeter swans rely on farmers' fields for sustenance during their stopovers at Middle Creek. If you cycle in this area in the Fall or late Winter, you can enjoy the sights and sounds of these birds as they soar above you. Make this destination for cycling a year round choice.



View from the Visitors Center



View from Millbach Road



View from Stricklerstown Road

There can be no cycling in Lebanon County without discovering historical sites; on this ride, 18th and early 19th century cemeteries, churches and homesteads will compose part of the scenery and provide opportunities to dismount and explore.



Heinrich Zeller house, known as Fort Zeller, was built in 1723 and revised in 1743. Zeller was from the Alsatian region of France, and the home reflects an Alsatian/Swiss appearance. It served as a “fort” during Indian raids.



Tulpehocken Cemetery

Caspar Wistar in 1727 provided 100 acres for the church, and the price was an annual red rose for Wistar’s descendents.



Tulpehocken Church

Millbach is a lovely area along the Millbach (Millcreek) with 18th and early 19th century homes. St. Paul’s United Church of Christ was built in 1790. From 1747, prior places of worship at this site were constructed of log and frame.



Millbach church and cemetery

The House of the Miller was built in 1752 of limestone and sandstone. In 1784, the son attached a stone grist mill to the house. Several rooms were removed in 1927 to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The furnishings showed a strong German influence.



Home of the Miller, Millbach

The Illick home is a Georgian structure with an outstanding bank barn. Capt. Batdorf married Emma Illick. Upon his return after the Civil War, he added columns similar to those he had seen on significant southern homes.

While you cycle this scenic route, you may come upon Amish families at work in their fields, their businesses, and at their homes. Their lifestyle enables you to have a momentary feeling of having slipped into the distant past.



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Descriptive Cue Sheet

Distance: 27.4 miles

Climb Elevation: 1580 feet

Ride Start: Visitors Center, Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area - www.pgc.state.pa.us

Located on Hopeland Road, two miles south of Kleinfeltersville (SR897)

The Visitors Center is open from February 1 until Thanksgiving, Tuesday through Saturday, 8 AM to 4 PM and Sunday noon to 5 PM. Bathroom facilities are available. The parking lot is open throughout the year.

Dist.	Cum.	Dir.	Road/Description
0	0		Start from Visitors Center parking lot
0.2	0.2	L	Kleinfeltersville Road/Hopeland Road
0.9	1.1	R	T307(not marked) <i>For the next 2.5 miles you will bicycle through the Middle Creek area that is only open from mid March through mid September due to the migratory seasons.*</i>
0.5	1.6	R	Chapel Road (unmarked)
0.2	1.8	ST	becomes Pin Tail Drive (unmarked)
0.7	2.5	R	Furnace Road
1.2	3.7	L	Shenks Mill Road
0.5	4.2	L	Cocalico Road
0.7	4.9	L	SR 897 Be alert for traffic on this road. <i>On your left you are often skirting the Wildlife Management Area.</i>
2.5	7.4	R	Mountain Road <i>An Amish home is on this turn.</i>
0.7	8.1	R	Chapel Road
.0	8.1	L	Hackman Road
0.6	8.7	L	Stricklerstown Road <i>Immediately upon your turn, there is a grand view of a portion of the Lebanon Valley with the Blue Mountains in the background. Stricklerstown Road does have a bend so be sure to stay on the route. Amish and Mennonite farms are within view in this area.</i>
3.2	11.9	L	Ft. Zellers Road (unmarked) <i>Where Ft. Zellers intersects with SR419, exercise caution due to traffic. Newmanstown is to your right; there is a restaurant. After crossing SR419, you can turn right on to an alley to visit a cemetery/church. The church spire is visible from Ft. Zellers Road.</i>
	12.4		<i>1745 Heinrich Zeller house and fort</i>
1.4	13.3	L	Sheridan Road <i>This area was the site of the Kauffman & Hunter Iron Furnace which commenced operations in the 1860s. In the 1940s, the furnaces were the world's leading producer of manganese iron. By 1970, the furnaces were closed. Note the triple arches through which a road and Millbach Creek pass.</i>
0.9	14.2	R	Sonnen Road (unmarked) Be careful crossing the railroad tracks. This is windy country road.
1.0	15.2	ST	Becomes Hickory Road <i>After passing a housing development, countryside views with glimpses of church spires from each side of the road reinsures that lovely rural scenery will return.</i>
0.9	16.1	L	Bollinger Road <i>If you want to visit a charming church and cemetery in Berks County, turn right, cross the narrow bridge; the cemetery and church are on your right. Return to the route.</i>

			<i>This is a pleasant ride alongside Tulpehocken Creek where the Union Canal followed the stream's course.</i>
0.5	16.6	R	Reilly Road <i>Cross the Tulpehocken on a narrow stone bridge.</i>
0.2	19.1	L	Tulpehocken Road <i>On your right is Tulpehocken Church with the cemetery on your left.</i>
0.7	17.5	L	Flanagan Road <i>More country scenery but to your right is ELK, a major manufacturer of roofing shingles.</i>
	18.1		<i>a triple arched bridge is to your left; easy to miss!</i>
1.4	18.9	R	Elm Street
0.2	19.1	L	Royers Road <i>cemetery with interesting tombstones</i>
0.8	19.9	L	Elco Drive which becomes Linden Street
	20.4		<i>1813 Abraham Zug home While on Linden Street, you are in Richland borough which was Isaac Weigley's farm until the railroad arrived.</i>
0.3	20.7	R	Poplar Street
0.2	20.9	L	Millbach Road <i>great down hill but take time to view the farmland scenery with the South Mountains in the background</i>
1.5	22.4	R	SR 419 Watch for traffic; you have an immediate left turn.
0.1	22.5	L	Church Street <i>You have reached the Millbach area. On your right, St. Paul's United Church of Christ and Cemetery</i>
0.1	22.6	R	Millbach Road <i>Home of the Miller and Jonathan Illick home to your left and then your right.</i>
	24.5		To your right on the hillside is Albright Chapel; if you choose to continue to cycle the second scenic route, turn right on Albright Road from SR897. This route passes by the Chapel.
2.3	24.9	R	SR 897 Kleinfeltersville Watch for traffic; you have an immediate left turn.
0.1	25.0	L	Hopeland/Kleinfeltersville Road <i>After passing by an Amish home and business, you will be reentering Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area.</i>
2.2	27.2	R	Museum Road
0.2	27.4		Finish

*If at 1.1 mile, T307 (unmarked) is closed due to the Game Commission's protection of the migratory birds, the alternative route is to continue on Hopeland Road 1.3 miles to SR 897 in Kleinfeltersville. Exercise extreme caution as you turn right on to SR 897, continue for .2 of a mile and turn left on to Mountain Road. You will now be on the regular route.