

### *Cycling through Lebanon Valley Vistas*

This scenic route takes cyclists through Myerstown and Fredericksburg which were established in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century and past Amish farms where families maintain much of the life style of past generations. Six miles into the ride, you may observe children at school, farmers in their fields, or horse drawn buggies carrying families to church service or weekend social gatherings. Also, you'll pass by Amish farms during your last several miles of cycling in the valley's farmland.



*Coming home from Sunday services*



*Amish farm at Strack Dr. & Houtztown Rd.*

The uniqueness of this route, however, is that you will climb to view the Lebanon Valley with the Blue Mountains to the north and silos dotting the landscape. Then upon your descent, you'll cycle through the valley to the farms that edge the foothills of the Blue Mountains. Upon your return to Myerstown, you will again climb the ridgeline to view the other side of the Lebanon Valley with the South Mountains in the background. You will enjoy a great downhill to cycle through this "vista" for several miles. Country roads pass through rich farmland and go by centuries-old brick and limestone farmsteads.



*Lebanon Valley Vista in the Spring –Silos & Blue Mountains*

The Myerstown area was referred to by the native Indians as Turpy Hochen which means “land of the turtles”. Early 18<sup>th</sup> century settlers, many of whom were Germans who had migrated from New York colony, named the area Tulpehocken. Valentine Hergelrode was one of these settlers. Issac Meier married Valentine’s daughter Catharine and purchased his father-in-law’s home in 1757. He plotted Tulpehockentown and became the magistrate. His life was cut short when he was assassinated in 1770. After his death, the town became known as Meier’s Town. His home was also referred to as “the old fort” because settlers had sought refuge here when Indians attacked during the French and Indian War.



*Isacc Meier's home*

Issac Meier’s home is at the start point on the route. Meier built additions to both sides of the original limestone house which was part of a plantation. There are two walk –in fireplaces in the kitchen. The home is open to the public on special occasions including an annual event the last weekend in September.

Myerstown benefited from the Union Canal (1837-1885); however, in 1793, there was a riot in the town between the construction workers and residents. Governor Mifflin had to send troops to quell the disturbance. The first canal boat, “Alpha”, was built in Myerstown.

The Myerstown section of the route passes by the Evangelical Theological Seminary which was initially Albright College from 1897-1929. On West Main Street there are many historical buildings including the Bahney Furniture store. It is the two story log house of Isaac Noecker, an early 19<sup>th</sup> century cabinet maker, whose son-in-law, Adam Bahney, joined the business. Today Bahney’s Furniture is operated by the 6<sup>th</sup> generation. In the same block is the Schulze home (113 W. Main St.). In 1804, John Schulze established a mercantile business at this location and was elected governor in 1822. William Ney, a prominent coverlet weaver, made his home at 131 W. Main St. for much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

At the SW corner of West Main and North Locust is the 1849 Bassler home built by Peter Stoudt. It has had several purposes including being the Bowman General Store.



*1849 Bassler home which also served as a general store*

The nearby former German Reformed Church was also built by Stoudt in the 1850s. Pillars added in the 1950s lessens the original Germanic architecture.

Just past the Jackson Elementary School and beyond a field is the Johannes and Barbara Immel Farm which was built in 1759 in a Rhineland style. It is situated on the Tulpahocken Creek. There are remains of a canal lock on the other side of S. Ramona.



*Immel Farm, 1759*

Unfortunately, due to the road configurations at SR422 and Ramona Road, there is no safe way for cyclists to reach Tulpahocken Manor and the Ley complex which are a short distance away on the south side of SR422. This 18<sup>th</sup> century plantation hosted George Washington when he inspected canal locks that had been dug on their property in 1793.

There are other historic sections of Myerstown which can be enjoyed upon your return by cycling or walking. You may also want to go off route a short distance on S. Race Street to view a lovely farmstead and Union Canal lock.



*Farm homestead and Union Canal Lock on S. Race Street in Myerstown*

The website, <http://www.geocities.com/myerstownpa/index.htm> offers additional information about Myerstown.

Fredericksburg was started in 1761 by a former merchant from Schaefferstown. The town square is broad as was the custom in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1827, fire ravaged Fredericksburg and many historic buildings were destroyed. Today, Fredericksburg has several chicken processing plants which can emanate a telltale odor. The town has an annual *hincklefest* weekend in September at Fireman's Park.

In order to visit several unique monuments in the 1869 Cedar Hill Cemetery, you can take a ½ mile out and back. On the cemetery hillside rises a monument to those who served and died in the Civil War. There is the unique Lick family mausoleum, and most impressive is the Lick Monument erected by John Lick to honor his grandfather, William Luck (Lick) who was a Revolutionary War hero. John's father James, who was born in Fredericksburg, was a California financier and philanthropist.

*Monuments at the Cedar Hill Cemetery, Fredericksburg*



As a pictorial footnote to this scenic ride, you will, at times, have to cycle by stretches of housing, but hopefully, the countryside and more rural roadways will compensate!



*Hergelrode Drive*



*E. Kercher Avenue*

**CYCLING THROUGH LEBANON VALLEY VISTAS**

Descriptive Cue Sheet

Distance: 35.7 + Side Trips

Elevation Climb: 2035 feet

Ride Start: Myerstown Park is located on S. College Avenue (SR 501) and W. Richland Avenue. To reach the park from SR422, turn on College Avenue, pass through Main Street and continue to the parking lot just south of the Meier House. The park has seasonal bathrooms available at the swimming pool facility.

Dist.	Cum.	Dir.	Road/Description
0.0	0.0	R	S. College Avenue from Parking lot south of Meier House <i>Evangelical Theological Seminary on your left</i>
0.5	0.5	L	W. Main Street <i>Several historical buildings on your right</i> <i>At Locust St. is the Bassler House &amp; former German Reformed Church</i> <i>Side trip to Union Canal Lock: in .3mile turn left on S. Race St. for .3 mile.</i> <i>Return to route.</i>
1.6	2.1	R	Ramona Road (Cross SR422 at traffic light)
0.6	2.7	L	E. Kercher Ave. <i>In .3 mile, cycle through farmland</i>
1.4	4.1	R	Halfway Drive ( <i>Side trip to 1774 stone cabin at Tice homestead, 1806 bank barn and 1821 limestone home approximately .4 mile left, then return</i> )
0.7	4.8	R	Strack Drive
1.2	6.0	R	Strack's Dam Road ( <i>Amish farms for the next mile</i> )
0.2	6.2	L	E. Strack Drive ( <i>At the ridgeline, vista of the Lebanon Valley</i> )
0.9	7.1	L	Houtztown Road
0.8	7.9	L	Pleasant Drive ( <i>Vista of the Lebanon Valley to the Blue Mountains</i> )
1.2	9.1	R	Long Road ( <i>This becomes a great down hill into the valley.</i> )
1.6	10.7	L	Greble Road and cross the Little Swatara Creek. <i>You are now pedaling through countryside that you observed from the ridgeline.</i>
1.0	11.7	R	Mt. Zion Road
1.4	13.1	L	Chestnut Hill Road, village of Hamlin
1.3	14.4	R	Blue Mountain Road ( <i>Take care crossing SR22; Esther's Restaurant &amp; Redner's Grocery Store at this intersection</i> )
0.3	14.7	ST	becomes Blue Mountain View Drive (Cycle under I-78)
0.3	15.0	BL	Market Drive ( <i>For the next several miles you will often cycle by farms that edge the foothills of the Blue Mountains.</i> )
0.6	15.6	R	Pine Grove Road
0.2	15.8	L	Maple Drive
0.7	16.5	L	Mountain Drive (parallels the mountain ridge)
2.4	18.9	L	Sugar Drive (cross under I-78)
1.8	20.7	L	Main Street takes you into Fredericksburg
0.5	21.2	R	Center Street which crosses SR22 ( <i>Walled cemetery on left after the stream</i> ) <i>Side trip of .5 mile to Cedar Hill Cemetery &amp; monuments: Continue on Main St for .1 mile &amp; turn left on to Pine Grove Road which becomes Sherwin Williams Drive. Cemetery is on your left. Return to Main St. &amp; turn left on to Center Street to rejoin route.</i>
1.2	22.4	L	Shirksville Road Exercise caution when crossing SR343 /Pine Grove Road <i>Both Shirksville Road and Union Road pass through significant farmland.</i>
1.7	24.1	R	Union Road <i>Note the many silos at the farm on your right.</i> <i>On Union Road, there will be a cemetery at the intersection of Greble Road, a miniature horse farm and Zoar's Lutheran Church as you reach Freeport Road.</i>
2.7	26.8	L	Freeport Road
0.1	26.9	R	Mt. Zion Road You continue your climb to the ridgeline.

0.5	17.4	L	Prescott Drive <i>After more climbing, you'll descend to the valley below. Take time to view the expansive Lebanon Valley with the South Mountains in the background.</i>
2.7	30.1	ST	Cross SR422 at traffic signal and continue on Prescott Road.
1.2	31.3	L	Jackson Road <i>An Amish farm is on your right as you turn on to Jackson. For the next several miles as you make your way back to Myerstown, you will cycle through the rich, productive lands that you viewed from the ridgeline. Pass by centuries old brick and limestone farm homes. Note the summer house next to the main farmstead before turning on S. Ramona Road.</i>
1.1	32.4	R	Ramona Road
0.5	32.9	L	Krall Road <i>(one room school house at this intersection)</i>
0.9	33.8	L	Hergelrode Drive <i>(Amish schoolhouse at this intersection)</i>
1.0	34.8	R	King Street
0.7	35.5	L	S. College Street/SR501 Exercise caution; this is a busy road.
0.2	35.7	Finish	