

Tri-County Triangle Trail Cookie Ride Rider's Digest

The purpose of this digest is to inform you of historic or interesting sites and details as you enjoy the ride!

A big thank you to Julia Schmitt, Digest writer for the 2012 Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure, for information about Frankfort, Washington Court House, Greenfield and South Salem.

FRANKFORT (0.0 miles) START/FINISH

Frankfort was originally named Chillicothe, one of five early Chillicothe's in Ohio. The word is from the language of the Shawnee Indians. It was the name of one of their clans. The principal leader of the Shawnees could only come from the Chillicothe clan. When a village was called Chillicothe it meant that it was home to the principal leader. It was the capital city of the Shawnees until the death of that person. Then the capitol would move to the home village of the next person selected to lead. That village would then become Chillicothe. Today Frankfort is a small friendly town of approximately 1,000 people that celebrates the International Sunflower Festival held on the first weekend of September.

As you leave Brad Lightle Park in Frankfort you will be riding on the old Dayton and Southeastern Railroad completed in November of 1877. Colonel S. N. Yeoman of Washington Court House formed the Dayton & Southeastern on December 16, 1871. The Railroad connected Dayton to the coal fields of southeastern Ohio. Along this trail you may see fox, deer, squirrels, chipmunks and many colorful birds including Indigo Buntings, Goldfinchs, Blue Herrons, Mallards, Red-Winged Blackbirds and many more!

The Toledo, Delphos & Burlington took control of the Dayton & Southeastern Railroad in February 1881 and was ultimately sold to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad which then became the CSX Railroad. The last CSX train traveled the track between Chillicothe and Washington Court House in the early 1970's.

As you approach Fairview Rd at 9 miles you will notice ahead the top of a tower above the trees. This tower was used to fill steam locomotives with the water needed for the boiler. Those riding the 21 mile route will turn right onto Fairview Road for the return trip to Frankfort. The route follows scenic Plano Road with wonderful vistas and mostly downhill riding back to the trail.

At the end of the Tri-County Trail you will pass the Shaw Wetland (14.6 miles). This 10 acre wetland is the only public wetland in Fayette County which was donated by the Shaw family to the county in 2006. In the summer of 2011 fifteen volunteers with grants for materials from Fayette Travel and Tourism and the Eyman Trust completed a 640 foot long boardwalk for the public to enjoy this unique nature site featuring birds, plants and wildlife. There is a large parking area at the trail head should you return to ride the trail in the future

You can take a walk on a raised boardwalk through the wetland and visit an observation stand that overlooks a vernal pond. Vernal pools, also called vernal ponds or ephemeral pools, are seasonal pools of water that provide habitat for distinctive plants and animals. They are considered to be a unique type of [wetland](#) usually devoid of fish, and thus allow the safe development of natal amphibian and insect species unable to withstand competition or predation by fish. Certain [tropical](#) fish lineages (such as [killifishes](#)) have however, [adapted](#) to this [habitat](#) specifically.

Vernal pools are a type of wetland. They can be surrounded by many communities/species, including deciduous forest, grassland, lodgepole pine forest, blue oak woodland, sagebrush steppe, succulent coastal scrub and prairie. These pools are characteristic of [Mediterranean climates](#), but occur in many other ecosystems.

WASHINGTON COURT HOUSE (18.3 miles)

As you turn left off Old Chillicothe Road at 17.2 miles onto city trail and cross a narrow slat bridge you will notice the Washington cemetery on your right. If you turn right (off the route) and enter the cemetery bearing right then on your left you will find a beautifully restored fountain. Records indicate that this fountain was erected in 1892. Originally it was situated on Section 4 where it could be seen by all entering the front gate of the cemetery. In 1904 it was moved to the lake area in the center of the cemetery. Here the fountain was surrounded by gardens and walkways. It became the center for many activities including memorial celebrations and family outings.

Over the years the pump wore out, the lake was filled in to save money in maintenance, and the fountain fell into disrepair. The three cherubs which graced the second tier of the fountain disappeared and urns situated on the basin were broken or missing. In short the once proud fountain fell into miserable disrepair.

The fountain was originally purchased from the J.W. Fiske Company, perhaps after Washington residents saw a similar fountain in Lancaster. The Lancaster fountain - a zinc structure was purchased for a cost of \$3,215. It was installed and dedicated in the Lancaster community square in 1890. According to reports the old fountain is a replica of a fountain in Etain, France. Another copy is in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. It was installed and named the Diamond Jubilee Fountain in honor of the years of Queen Victoria's rule in Halifax.

It is believed that the two bottom statues represent women who are 'mourning in grief' for the loss of friends and relatives. The three cherubs on the second level are the angels who are the messengers between the Lord and the women in mourning. The lady on the top of the fountain is soothing the pain of the women on the bottom by pouring or sprinkling water on them. The lady can also be the 'Lady of the Healing Water'. The water is healing the wounds of the body and soul and nurtures the soul and the spirit of man."

Very few of these early Fiske fountains are known to have survived to this day. In fact the Karkadoulis Bronze Art Company, which specializes in restoration of these fountains, has acknowledged their awareness of only 5 similar fountains. The Karkadoulis Company restored the fountain in Lancaster in 1986, and has the molds and specifications of the Washington Fountain, which enabled the company to renovate the fountain to its original elegance. The fountain was removed June 2, 2002 and transported to Cincinnati, where it was rebuilt and refurbished on the inside as well as on the outside and returned to the site in 2003.

As you approach Washington Court House and ride into Chrisman Park on the trail along Paint Creek you will see the Court House tower above the trees in the distance. The city has an unusual street grid layout. Typically, street grids are arranged east-west and north-south, especially in the Midwest. In this case, the streets in the downtown area, centering on the courthouse building, are arranged northeast-southwest and northwest-southeast. This was done so that all four sides of the courthouse building would receive some sunlight every day of the year. In the traditional grid system, the north side of a building never receives direct sunlight during the fall and winter months.

Washington Court House is the county seat of Fayette County, Ohio. Benjamin Temple established the town in 1810. Residents named the community in honor of former President of the United States George Washington. Washington Court House has served as the county seat since the founding of Fayette County in 1810.

The town was originally named Washington but there was already another Washington in Ohio. It's been a controversial name over the years but in 1911 the citizens voted to keep the full name which makes the cities name the longest in the country. It is also traditional in Virginia to have court house as part of a town's name.

Washington Court House remained small for its first several decades of existence. In 1846, only ninety-seven homes existed in the town. The village also contained two churches, eight stores, two newspaper offices, two woolen mills, two grist mills, and a saw mill. Most businesses existed to meet the needs of farm families in the surrounding countryside. By 1880, the county seat had grown dramatically, claiming a population of 3,798 people. In 1886, three

newspapers, three banks, and seven churches served the community. Local businesses produced soap, doors, blinds, shoes, cream, and machinery, among other items.

You will be turning left onto Greenfield Sabina Rd. at mile 29.8. There is a convenience market/gas station on your left just after the turn where you can get something to eat/drink. Indoor tables are available.

GREENFIELD (50 miles)

Twentieth Century Greenfield had an unbelievable amount of manufacturing that was run primarily by the Waddell and McClain families. The Waddells made products from wood such as coffee grinders, mouse traps, show cases and anything else they could design and manufacture.

As you approach the downtown area you will see on your left the McClain High School. Edward and Lulu McClain gave \$900,000 to the town to build this school in 1914. It has one of the first indoor pools installed in Ohio. There are sculptures, Rookwood tiles and other period works of art. The building's centerpiece is a set of marble steps that are off limits for day-today use, but seniors walk down them during graduation ceremonies.

The American Pad and Textile Co. (Tapatco) was McClain's company and his hinged and shaped horse collar was his first successful product. When the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against a patent that McClain had for his hook design for a horse collar, he prevailed by buying out his competitors. The Spanish-American War created a demand for horse and mule accessories and McClain won the contract to outfit the U.S. Army.

When automobiles took over as the primary mode of transportation, McClain changed with the times and started producing cushions for the automobile industry. Tapatco continued to produce items for the US military, e.g., lifejackets and they got into manufacturing goods for sportsmen. McClain had a great diversity of business interests: coal mining in Wellston, Ohio, Sun Novelty Works in conjunction with the Waddells, Crescent Manufacturing in Louisville, Ky. that made showcases. He designed and patented a machine for the foundry business and started a company in Cleveland to manufacture it, to just name a few of them.

The first antislavery sermon delivered west of the Appalachians was in Greenfield. Eliza Jane Harris (of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" fame) and Frederic Douglass both were given sanctuary here. Many of Greenfield's homes were active stations on the Underground Railroad. The Patterson Car Co. was the only automobile manufacturer in the U.S. owned and operated by an African-American, C.R. Patterson. Sunday, 1 of 4 In the Greenfield area there was a farmer, Alexander Beatty, who schemed along with a former slave, Augustus West to take advantage of slavery system to make extra money. They traveled to the South where Beatty sold West back into slavery. He would then help West escape and they would split their profits. They did this a documented three times.

West used his money to buy property in Fayette County. Some distance from the road he built a nice house and he named the road to the house, Abolition Lane. Over the years at least 12 cabins were built on West's property to house other runaway slaves. Most continued North but a few chose to stay there and settled.

The story of Greenfield is many-layered. You can find out more while spending time with members of the Greenfield Historical Society. I did manage to have a number of meals in Greenfield, but the restaurants, other than the fast food choices, are closed on Sundays. I did enjoy more than one meal at 'Calhouns on Jefferson.'

On the left as you leave town at the intersection of N. McArthur Way you will notice a stone building known as the Smith Tannery (48.4 miles). Revolutionary War veteran, William Smith and his son, Samuel, built the Smith Tannery in 1821. It was used as the family's home with the tannery in the basement. The Smith family were active members of the Abolition Society of Paint Valley and continued their membership when it became the Greenfield Anti-Slavery Society. Samuel Smith's sons went on to positions of prominence. Samuel Mitchell Smith became a teacher at and trustee of Starling Medical College of Columbus, Ohio, and he was also the Surgeon General of Ohio during the Civil

War. William Robinson Smith was a civic and religious leader of Highland County and was appointed postmaster of Hillsboro by President Abraham Lincoln.

On the right at the corner of S. McArthur Way is the Traveller's Rest (48.4 miles): Built by Noble Crawford in 1812 on the old College Township Road, it provided travelers with food and lodging. Originally on the northeast corner of Jefferson and Second streets, it was moved to the present site in 1972 to make way for a gas station. It is now owned by the Greenfield Historical Society and is used as a museum, research library and meeting rooms.

SOUTH SALEM (56.5 miles)

Just as you enter South Salem you cross the 1873 Buckskin Covered Bridge over Buckskin Creek. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is the last covered bridge in Ross County. **PLEASE DISMOUNT YOUR BICYCLE AND WALK THROUGH THE BRIDGE!** The slats run long ways and can easily wreck you and your wheels. If you are into this sort of thing, it is a Smith Truss, a design patented by Ohioan, Robert Smith.

As you enter South Salem there is a circa 1842, limestone, Federal-style Salem Academy building is here and is located behind the Buckskin Elementary School at the Church Street intersection. The local Presbyterian minister recognized a pressing need for education so he got the Salem Academy established. The village grew around the Academy. Many students left in the 1860s to fight in the Civil War and there was competition from other, newer schools so the Academy closed in 1907. The most well known student to attend was Joseph Foraker, Civil War veteran and governor of Ohio from 1885 to 1889. He also served Ohio as a senator, but lost his third bid for the senate when he ran against Warren G. Harding. Today the academy building serves as a community building.

Also behind the Buckskin Elementary School on Church Street is the South Salem Cemetery. Folklore has it that Queen Victoria's half sister, Mary Morter, is buried in this cemetery. She would have been the daughter of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and his first wife. His second wife bore Princess Alexandria Victoria of Kent, who later became Queen Victoria. Mary would have been in line for the British throne but she married Blythe Morter, a stone mason and a commoner.

Her family ostracized her because of this and the Morters decided to move to America. Blythe moved to America first, where he settled in South Salem. It took him a long time to earn enough money to start building a house. Eventually he got it started, and then he sent for Mary and their six children. In the meanwhile, Mary had gotten worried since she hadn't heard from Blythe for such a long time. She and the children sailed for America. At that same time, Blythe sailed for England to find them. Mary and the children arrived in New York with no one to meet them. She supported their family by sewing and tutoring until her husband returned. Finally they were all able to travel to South Salem in 1851 to a rough and unfinished home. Mary contracted tuberculosis and died the following year.

Hope you enjoyed the ride and return to visit and enjoy the history and people of the area! See you next year!