

TOWN & COUNTRY DRIVING TOUR



Mercer County Town & Country Driving Tour
(Estimated tour time, without side trips, is 4 to 5 hours.)
(This tour begins in the Borough of Grove City.)

Do you remember sitting in the back seat of the family car, riding aimlessly along shady roads, and maybe seeing some deer or other wildlife on a Sunday afternoon? Isn't it time to make some memories for your children, or maybe just for yourself?

Mercer County is a blend of town and country—you can be in an urban area and within ten minutes be in a rural setting. If you are taking a break from an urban area, Mercer County has country lanes, farms, villages, lakes, rivers, streams, woods, state parks and game lands.

The Town and Country Tour is a "Driver's" driving tour, set up differently from the other two tours, which are set up to see individual sites and offer recreational suggestions. This tour will consider the towns as sites and offer suggestions, while the highways and byways are for scenic and educational opportunities, enjoyed during the drive. The tour is a leisurely drive in the country. To fully enjoy this tour, avoid schedules and take side trips. Many small roads have big surprises on their paths.

There are a number of small towns and boroughs to explore and enjoy. Here are some suggestions of what to visit and sites to see. There are many more roads and sites to see, as our editors pointed out. The routes listed below are a few of our favorites. This tour is a template, which you can customize for your unique Mercer County experience. Do not feel compelled to follow this route—meandering through the countryside might be more enjoyable.



Stop #1: Grove City:

The Grove City Historical Society is located at 111 College Avenue between Center and Broad Streets. It is home to a gift shop, a small research library, and display areas (allow 1 to 2 hours to tour this facility. While at the historical society, ask about the Arthur Armour Hand Wrought Aluminum Workshop Project). At the end of College Avenue is the lower campus of Grove City College—the upper campus is located across Wolf Creek. Please enjoy a stroll on this campus and across the Rainbow Bridge. Founded by Isaac Kettler as the Pine Grove Normal Academy in 1876, it became Grove City College in late 1884. Native Mercer County citizens, the Pew family, under J. Howard (Sun Oil Corporation), supported Grove City College. Today it is a private liberal arts college that does not accept government funding. Wendell August Forge, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is located on Madison Avenue. It is one of the last remaining forges in the United States offering hand wrought metal giftware. In addition to the gift shop and museum, tours are available. Memorial Park is located on Route 58 and offers recreational opportunities.



WHILE YOU ARE

HERE:

Why not visit the specialty shops along Broad, Center, and Main Streets? Or check out Prime Outlets at Grove City, over 140 brand name stores just west of town at the junction of Route 208 and Interstate 79. Nearby is the Slovak Folk Crafts store, offering the largest selection of Slovak folk crafts in the United States.



WHILE YOU ARE HERE: Please note the variety and quality of architectural styles in all of our communities and along our rural roads.



Proceed on Route 173 toward Sandy Lake. On the left and about three miles outside Grove City is Bison Haven Ranch. Several miles further on, Kilgore Road crosses Route 173. Turn right and drive about three miles on Kilgore Road to the Bugle Point Elk Ranch (on the left). Continuing on Route 173, at the intersection of Route 965 turn right and continue to the village of Hendersonville. Turn left onto Hendersonville Road and follow into Sandy Lake. (Alternate: follow Route 965 until it intersects with Route 62 and turn left. Follow Route 62 into Sandy Lake. You will find State Game Land 130 along both Routes 62 and 965.)

Stop #2: Sandy Lake:



WHILE YOU ARE HERE: Farrell's Browse Shop and other small shops are available.



Proceed north on Route 173.

Stop #3: Milledgeville & Custaloga Town:

Just outside the small town of Milledgeville is Custaloga Town, a Boy Scout Camp. Just before you reach the village of Milledgeville, turn right on West Creek Road—a note of caution, this road is rough and

in part, dirt. Take Creek Road straight and follow the signs and arrows to the camp (on the left four miles from Route 173). The Mercer County Historical Society Indian Cemetery, maintained by the Boy Scouts and sanctified by both Christian and Seneca peoples, is located here. The Indian Graveyard is the alleged burial place of Seneca chief Guyasutha. Other reports have Guyasutha's buried in two other locations in Western Pennsylvania. In old Pennsylvania history books, Pontiac's Rebellion is "Guyasutha and Pontiac's Rebellion." George Washington allegedly passed through Cuscutoga Town on his first trip through this region in 1753 to urge the French to leave English lands prior to the French and Indian War (Seven Year War).



WHILE YOU ARE HERE: Look over the Boy Scout Camp, but remember this is private property and the Scouts may be camping. Gingersnap Junction, a quaint gift shop, is located nearby in New Lebanon.



Return to Sandy Lake on Route 173. (Alternate: just before entering downtown Sandy Lake you can turn right and follow signs to Lake Wilhelm and Goddard State Park.) Follow Route 62 through Sandy Lake—it will "Y" to the right and, at the intersection of Routes 62 and 845, turn right.



Stop #4: Stoneboro:

A DISCUSSION OF STONEBORO CAN BE FOUND IN THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SECTION OF THIS BROCHURE.



Follow Route 845 through Stoneboro, enjoying the small shops and stopping by the Stoneboro Historical Society, located in a caboose beside the former Kish Hotel (allow ½ hour). Consider boating or swimming at Lakeside Park (fee required) on Sandy Lake, a glacial "kettle" lake. Continue on Route 845 until it ends at Route 358.



WHILE YOU ARE HERE: One mile to the right on Route 358 is McKeever Environmental Center. This educational and retreat center is administered by Slippery Rock University. Year-round programs and four miles of hiking trails attract the public. One trail connects McKeever to Lake Wilhelm near the dam.



You can follow two routes from the intersection of Routes 845 and 358:

The first route will take you through an area of Amish country in Mercer County to Route 19—a note of caution, these roads are rough and, in part, dirt. At the intersection of Routes 845 and 358 turn left. Cross over Interstate 79 and turn left onto Slater Road just before Carpenters Corners Country Gift Shop. (Just beyond Slater Road, Carpenters Corners Road veers to the right. Follow the signs to the Wilhelm Winery for a tour or a peek at the Antique Winemaking Museum.) Follow Slater Road and turn right at the first stop sign onto District Road. At the next crossroads turn left onto Vernon Road (this road is unmarked). Turn right onto Stoneboro Road (also unmarked). At the “T,” turn left onto Airport Road. Turn right onto Palmer Road (second crossroads on right, but marked). Turn left onto Tait Road (unmarked). This road will end at Route 19. Turn right and proceed to District Road (about four miles), turning left onto District. Along this route, you will see a variety of Amish and “English” farms.



The second route follows Lake Wilhelm and ends at Sheakyleville on Route 19. At the intersection of Routes 845 and 358, turn right on Route 358, proceed to Lake Hill Road (the first road) and turn left. Lake Hill Road turns into Haun Road, which will go straight—do not veer to the right. Haun Road is unpaved and dirt, complete with grass growing in the center of the road—a note of caution, this road is rough. Haun Road turns into Creek Road and follows Lake Wilhelm (named after late County Commissioner Lawrence Wilhelm) along the south shore of the lake. The Sandy Creek Conservancy helped pave the way for both the McKeever Environmental Center and the M. K. Goddard State Park, especially the dam and Lake Wilhelm. George Washington noted in reports the stream that feeds Lake Wilhelm, Sandy Creek, in 1753. Creek Road is in the process of designation as a Pennsylvania Scenic Byway. At the intersection of Creek and Lake Wilhelm Roads, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources marina and boat launch where you can rent boats and bicycles—there is a wonderful bike trail looping the lake and the fishing is excellent. (If you turn right on Lake Wilhelm Road, you can explore the north shore of the lake.) Continuing straight on Creek Road, you will pass through Pennsylvania Game Lands 270. Eventually Creek Road turns into Bachop Road and terminates at Route 19 in Sheakyleville. Originally known as Georgetown in 1822—named after George Sheakley—the name changed to Sheakyleville in 1851. A historical marker in the center of the village notes that George's nephew, James, was born here and appointed the first governor of Alaska in 1893. Turn left on Route 19, proceed to District Road, and turn right. Take advantage of the recreational opportunities along this route.

He arrived safe in the interior



Proceed on District Road until it comes to a "T." At the junction of District Road and Route 58, turn left.

**Stop #5: Mercer County Historical Society
Caldwell One-Room School:**

About midway between Greenville and Mercer is the Caldwell One-Room School. This site represents the 300+ one-room schools that at one time educated the majority of children in Mercer County. The Teachers Garden, surrounding the school, celebrates the educators of Mercer County.



Continue on Route 58 to Munnell Run Farm.

**Stop #6: Munnell Run Farm, Mercer County
Conservation District, and the Mercer County Historical
Society Rural Life Museum:**

On the grounds of the old Mercer County Home is the headquarters of the Mercer County Conservation District. This is the Munnell Run Farm, an educational site well worth the time spent exploring. Munnell Run Farm is a working farm that educates the public on modern agricultural and ecological problems and practices. The Rural Life Museum, operated by the Mercer County Historical Society, explores country life in rural Mercer County and America. For all of Mercer County's history, agriculture and farm life have dominated the county's social and economic life.



Stop #7: Mercer:

The Mercer County Historical Society is located on South Pitt Street. It includes the Helen Black Miller Memorial Chapel, the Thomas McClain Print Shop, and the James K. Sewall Genealogical Library. The museum features permanent and changing displays such as artifacts from the John Goodsell North Pole expedition, a military gallery, and a display of Mercer County's industrial history (allow 2 to 3 hours to tour this facility). Visitors can find two walking tours of the borough at the Mercer County Historical Society. Several buildings on these tours, including the Mercer County Courthouse, are listed or seeking listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Enjoy the variety of shops and restaurants found in and around Mercer.

A DISCUSSION OF MERCER BOROUGH CAN BE FOUND IN THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SECTION OF THIS BROCHURE.



WHILE YOU ARE HERE:

There are several interesting sites near Mercer. Discussion of Leesburg Falls, White Chapel, and another Amish area can be found in the Underground Railroad section of this brochure.



Proceed on Route 62 toward Hermitage and Sharon. About one and a half miles outside Mercer veer to the left on Bestwick Road. About one-tenth mile later, veer to the right onto the Old Sharon Road—also known as Hell's Hollow Road. (Local rumor has an Indian named Hathegig murdered in this area. Another local tradition has a French fort built, a treasure buried, and a massacre.) As you follow Old Sharon Road, turn right onto Stone Base Road (Swingle Hill Road) and right onto Route 62. Almost immediately, turn left onto Valley Road.



A DISCUSSION OF BIG BEND AND NEW HAMBURG CAN BE FOUND IN THE SHENANGO RIVER CORRIDOR SECTION OF THIS BROCHURE. If you wish to see these areas, proceed straight ahead for two miles at the junction of Route 258 and Valley Road.



To proceed to the Golden Run Wildlife Viewing Area at Neshannock Road, turn left at the junction of Route 258 and Valley Road. Turn right after about three miles at the entrance to Golden Run—a note of caution, this road is rough and, in part, dirt. This area along the Shenango River Lake features viewing areas of the lake and a beaver pond, a boat launch, and a walking or biking road.



Proceed along Route 258 to the Clark Recreation Area, featuring picnicking and boat launch facilities.

Route 258 ends at Route 18. This would be a good place to add a few sites from the Shenango River Corridor tour. Turn right to go to Greenville and Jamestown. Turn left to go to Sharpsville, Sharon, Farrell, Hermitage, and West Middlesex. If you would like another scenic drive from Greenville to Sharpsville, take Route 846 to Buckeye Drive near Sharpsville and make a left at the blinking light.

This is the end of the Mercer County Town & Country Driving Tour.