

Conococheague Institute's Biking and Driving Tour of French & Indian War Sites in Southwest Franklin County, Pennsylvania

BIKING AND DRIVING TOUR OF FRENCH & INDIAN WAR SITES IN SOUTHWEST FRANKLIN COUNTY

The biking/driving tour will lead you on winding, rural roads across rolling hills and streams. Be alert for farm equipment. The circuit is about 30 miles. Take water and food as needed. Binoculars will also be useful. Parking is available at Stops 4 and 5.

You will travel through fertile farmland where the early settlers were on constant alert for Indian attacks from the mountains to the west. You will pass by the sites of Indian attacks, scalpings, and hostage-takings during the period of 1756 to 1758. At this time frontier defenses against the Indians were weak and mainly left to the local settlers to organize.

Even though the military combat of this war was conducted west of the mountain ridges, much human tragedy occurred here in a region completely separate from the actions of the imperial armies. With the British defeat in July 1755 at the Battle of the Monongahela in western Pennsylvania, the colonial frontier in what is now Franklin County was laid open to invasion. Raiding parties of western Lenape (Delaware), Shawnee, Mingo and French staged quick-hitting strikes against frontier settlements. Pennsylvania was ill prepared to provide protection, lacking both fortifications and a standing

The Great Cove (McConnellsburg) Massacre of November 1, 1755 began a two-year campaign of bloody incursions and reprisals in the Tuscarora region. The mayhem brought on by these raids caused four of every five families to abandon the frontier. For those families that remained, survival depended on security and force of arms. Pennsylvania's response to the attacks were twofold: organize a string of private forts anchored by provincial fortifications (Fort Loudoun), and form local militias to patrol and secure the countryside. Private forts sprang up every three to four miles as safe houses. They contained few if any permanent troops and were manned by roving companies of militia.

The forts at that time were made of log without foundations. Though none have survived to the present, what does remain is the rural nature of the countryside, which 250 years ago was largely forested. Settlers first arrived in what is today southwest Franklin County in the 1730s. Clearing the woods for crops was a slow process using the hand tools of the period.

The driving/biking tour includes six fort sites, two covered bridges, the outdoor history trail at Conococheague Institute's Rock Hill farm, the historic town of Mercersburg, numerous villages and a number of dwellings related to the period. You will be crossing the west branch of the Conococheague Creek several times. You can use Mt. Parnell for orientation, which on a clear day stands out prominently in the Tuscarora mountain range to the northwest.

(1) Pawling's Tavern



The tour begins 2.7 miles south of Greencastle on the west side of the intersection of Route 63 (Greencastle-Williamsport Pike) and Milnor Road.

An important site of early commerce, Pawling's Tavern functioned as a point for resting horses. With no passable roads to the west, products destined for western points had to be switched

mostly to pack horses. Often these packhorses were organized into trains and could number as many as 50 horses in length. Just west of the intersection was the inn run by three generations of men named Henry Pawling. By the 1750s, the tavern business was very brisk. Wagons were able to travel south on the Great Valley trail from Harris's Ferry on the Susquehanna, to this point, where the road continued to the Potomac and intersected with the Great Wagon Road from Philadelphia and Lancaster.

Pawling's Tavern had special significance in the French and Indian War. After their defeat by the French and Indian allies at the Monongahela, Braddock's retreating forces of 1,000 men, led by Col. Thomas Dunbar, stopped here on or about August 11 and 12, 1755. (At this time Chambersburg was a small settlement composed of Benjamin Chamber's Fort, Chambers Mill and the Falling Spring Presbyterian Church. Greencastle was not yet laid out, having only a Presbyterian Church at Moss Springs and a settlement along the east branch of the Conococheague Creek.)

You will note that no road now exists going west from here. In the 1750s, there was a trail that passed to the west, fording the Conococheague Creek near Martin's Mill Covered Bridge. Just south stands a stone house which belonged to Doctor Robert Johnson, who hosted George Washington as a luncheon guest in 1794. Washington was returning from leading forces to quell the Whiskey Rebellion, which marked the only time that a sitting president personally led American troops. Dr. Johnson became wealthy by shipping local ginseng to China.

(2) Cross' Fort

From Stop 1, go south 0.4 mile on Route 63 and turn right onto East Weaver Road. Go 1.0 mile to the intersection of Grant Shook Road. (If touring by bike, you have the option of going straight ahead down a steep slope to Martins Mill Covered Bridge, 0.6 mile. After crossing the bridge continue on West Weaver Road and turn left onto Worleytown Road. Continue on Worleytown 2.5 miles until it intersects with Coseytown Road. Turn right onto Coseytown for 0.2 mile) If touring by car, turn left onto Grant Shook Road for 1.5 mile where it intersects with Worleytown Road. Continue on Worleytown for 0.4 mile, then right onto Coseytown Road for

Located nearby on Rush Run, a tributary of the Conococheague Creek, Cross' Fort was used as a refuge when Indian raiding parties were in the area. Two McColloh boys, John and James, were taken hostage on July 26,

1757 by six Indians and one Frenchman. Further details of their capture and life with the Indians are noted in a published narrative by John McColloh

A month before the McCollohs' capture, John Kennedy was wounded during a raid, but was able to escape to the fort. In mid August 1757, William Manson and his son were killed near Cross' Fort, and in the following month James Watson was killed while working in the fields and James Mullen was taken prisoner.

(3) SENECA CAMP GROUNDS



From Stop 2, retrace your route to Worleytown Road and continue on Worleytown for 0.5 mile then left onto Bino Road for 0.3 mile. Stop 3 is immediately after crossing the West Branch of the Conococheague Creek.

Turning west on Bino Road, you will be at the original site of the farm of John Kennedy who was wounded. There is also a report that on July 6, 1757, two boys were abducted near Kennedy's farm.

The Seneca Indians had occupied the area

just north of the junction of the two branches of the Conococheague Creek. They camped here from about 1700 to 1720, and were still coming here in the winters, apparently holding title to the land, in the 1740s and 1750s. They used this site in late fall and early winter as a camp for hunting deer. In March, they went to the mountainous region near Burnt Cabins to tap the maples for sugar.



From Stop 3, continue on Bino Road for 1.7 miles. Turn right onto Long Road and go 1.5 miles to the intersection with Route 416 (Mercersburg Road). Turn right onto 416 and go 0.5 mile to the Village of Welsh Run.

Just east of Welsh Run on March 6, 1756, Heinrich Studebaker was in the fields with his oldest son clearing stumps

for spring planting. Indians surprised them, scalping him and capturing his son. A second group of Indians took Studebaker's pregnant wife and younger children hostage. The wife and a child in her arms were killed by the Indians on the forced march. At the time of the attack, the older daughter, Susannah, was visiting her uncle, Allen Killough, at his "fort" on the Conococheague, two miles south across the Maryland border. Susannah later recognized one of her brothers and reclaimed him when there was a prisoner release in Lancaster in 1764.

Built in 1871, the Robert Kennedy Memorial Presbyterian Church occupies the foundation of an older log church, circa 1768. An even earlier log meetinghouse was located about one mile north of this intersection on the west bank of the Conococheague Creek. This Presbyterian congregation was established in 1741 after splitting from the Church Hill or Upper West Conococheague Church (Old Side), which was located 4 miles north. The "New Lights" or Lower West Conococheague Church was built on a well established Indian path.

As you proceed to the next stop, note on the left before Bain Road, the stone Church of the Brethren, with its original section built about 1820. Once you turn onto Bain Road, the Welsh Run parallels the road on the west flowing north from Kasie's Knob to the Conococheague.

(5) ROCK HILL FARM



From Stop 4, turn left onto Route 995 for 0.9 mile. Turn left onto Bain Road and go 1.0 mile to STOP 5. Parking is available at the second entrance on the right at the site of the Welsh Barrens Cultural Center.

Run was initially settled by Welsh colonists. The Rock Hill site of 889 acres, home of Conococheague Institute, was settled by John Davies (later Davis) in 1736 and the tract to the

south of 1050 acres was settled by Philip Davis. The east half of the Rock Hill house (Davis-Chambers), the stuccoed part, was built in the early 1750s. The house is open for docent tours from noon to 3:00 PM on Saturdays and Sundays from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Just to the south is the visitor center, a corner-post log house that was moved to the site. Its location at Rock Hill is on land that was part of the Philip Davis tract. Below the four-square garden, the small log house dates to circa 1810. It was used by Eliab Negley and his wife, while their eldest son and family resided in the original farmhouse. Below the Negley cabin, an interpretive nature trail leads to the old Welsh Run cemetery that Philip Davis designated in his will of 1760.

Also on the tract of Philip Davis stood a private log fort where patrols of militias stopped on their rounds of area forts. Enjoy the outdoor exhibits pertaining to the site including the French and Indian War era.

Conococheague Institute was incorporated in 1994 as a public nonprofit educational and research center to preserve Rock Hill farm and the adjoining West Conococheague-Welsh Run region. Since its founding, the institute has undertaken research on the property's Welsh, English and Pennsylvania German settlements. The institute now serves as a regional center dedicated to creating an awareness, understanding and stewardship of the cultural and natural history of Rock Hill Farm and the neighboring area, with a special interest in the colonial and agricultural history of this region. In addition to the land and buildings, the institute maintains a library of 6,000 books, local genealogy and other resource materials with a special focus on the French and Indian War.

(6) FORT PHILIP DAVIS

From Stop 5, continue on Bain Road for 0.6 mile, turn right onto Royer Road for 0.7 miles. At the intersection of Route 75 (Ft. Loudon Road), turn *left and go 0.5 mile to STOP 6.*

You should be at the point where the Welsh Run stream flows under Route 75 which follows the Tuscarora Trail used by the militia on patrol. On the hill to the east stood the log Fort Philip Davis, known locally as the "Fort House." It was taken down in 1933 and replaced by the present house. Fort Philip Davis was the southernmost of the private Pennsylvania forts within a mile of the Mason-Dixon Line. During the French and Indian War, the border between the colonies of Pennsylvania and Maryland was known as the "temporary line." The Englishmen Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon did not complete their survey here until 1767. The Mason-Dixon line settled the dispute between the Penns and Calverts, the proprietors of the two colonies, which had been in the English courts since 1735.

From Stop 6, follow 75 north for 2.2 miles then turn left onto Clay Lick Road. Stop 7 is 2.1 miles ahead on Claylick at the intersection with Blairs

Fort Marshall stood to the left or south a short distance. It was one of the forts included in the circuit under patrol by the local militia that began at Fort McDowell and ranged south as far as Fort Philip Davis.

From Stop 7, turn right at Blairs Valley Road and, just after you cross the bridge, turn left onto Pittman Road and go 0.9 mile to Corner Road. Turn left onto Corner for 0.1 mile then right onto Blue Spring Road. The area you are traveling through had a number of early Welsh settlers, such as Powell and Evans. About one mile north is a stone house sitting in a hollow to the west, which was built prior to the Revolution by one of the early settlers, John Work. Once on Blue Spring Road, in the distance vou will see the Chapel with its carillon tower on the Mercersburg Academy campus. Continue on Blue Spring for 2.2 miles then turn left onto Corner Road. Go north on Corner (later becomes Park) for 2.2 miles arriving on Main Street (Routes 16, 75 and 416) one block north of Mercersburg's

The town retains many historic buildings. In the 1750s, the part of Mercersburg along the creek was owned by James Black, who had a trading post, tannery and mill. In 1759, William Smith, Sr. acquired the land from Black and it became Smith's Town. William Smith, Jr. laid out the town and renamed it Mercersburg in honor of Col. Hugh Mercer.

N.B. You may shorten the tour at Main Street (Route 16) and continue through the traffic light to Oregon Street. You will proceed east (Oregon becomes Churchill Road), crossing the Conococheague Creek in 1.7 miles and reaching Stop #10, the site of Steel's Meetinghouse. Otherwise, you may wish to linger and read the historic markers, get some refreshments, or tour the Academy before leaving the town on Route 16 west and turning right on Route 416.

(9) FORT McDowell

From Mercersburg, go north on the combined Routes 75 and 416, bearing right onto 416 for 3.7 miles. STOP 9 is west of the intersection with Lemar Road.

To the left stood McDowell's Mill, which was

converted into a fort and used to garrison and supply the militias. The road marker stands on the northwest corner of this intersection. The mill was difficult to fortify and was repeatedly attacked by the Indians, whose trail from their western village of Kittanning crossed the mountains at Burnt Cabins allowing them to approach the mill from Path Valley to the north of

In April 1755, William McDowell was driven from his home several times and his house was burned and several neighbors were taken captive. On July 19, while soldiers under Capt. John Steel guarded harvesters near McDowell's Mill, an Indian raiding party killed one man and took two prisoners. On August 5, two soldiers were killed and another wounded within two miles of Fort McDowell. In response, Lieut. Colonel John Armstrong sent more soldiers to guard the provincial garrison, and soon Ft. London was built to replace Ft. McDowell. On November 9, 1757, the settlement around McDowell's Mill was attacked again by Delawares. John Woods, his wife and mother-in-law were killed and four children were taken hostage.

(10) FORT AT STEELE'S MEETINGHOUSE

From Stop 9, turn right onto Lemar Road for 1.2 miles. Turn right on Steele Avenue and go 1.5 miles to STOP 10. Along the north wall of the cemetery

stood the log Presbyterian church that was fortified by Rev. John Steel as a private fort. Appointed Captain in the Penn-

sylvania militia, Steel describes the 11 foot high stockade as using 14 foot

logs pointed above and placed three feet deep in the ground.

Of the fort sites seen so far, one was a converted home, two were hastily built as small forts, one was a converted mill, and this one was a stockaded

(11) MERCER SPRINGHOUSE

From Stop 10, bear left onto Kings Lane and go 1.4 miles to Lemar Road. Turn right onto Lemar for 0.1 mile to Renninger Road. Turn right on Renninger and go 1.0 mile to Hissong Road. Turn left onto Hissong and continue 1.5 miles to Stop 11.

This is the remaining stone half

of the Hugh Mercer home when he was a physician in this area prior to the French and Indian War. Mercer was a Scotsman who had emigrated following the disastrous battle of Culloden in 1746. He settled here shortly after arriving in Philadelphia, being the only medical man in the area. The north (right half) of the building, built of log, has disintegrated. However, this design was common in the area. An identical styled house can be seen along Welsh Run Road one mile east of Route 16.

(12) IRWINTON

From Stop 11, continue on Hissong Road for 0.4 mile to the intersection with Route 16 (careful of heavy traffic). Turn right on 16 for 0.5 mile and then left onto Anderson Road. Continue on Anderson for 0.8 mile to Stop

This tract was settled by Archibald Irwin and his wife Jean McDowell, and is called Irwinton Mills, for the grist mill on the left, now called Anderson Mill. The mill equipment is intact and occasionally is demonstrated

On the right, is Irwin's stone house where the marriage of his granddaughter Jane to William Henry Harrison, Jr. took place in 1824. She served as White House hostess for her father-in-law, who served as the ninth President. Her sister, Elizabeth Irwin, married John Scott Harrison and became the mother of Benjamin Harrison, who was the 23rd President.

(13) First Meetinghouse LOWER WEST CONOCOCHEAGUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

From Stop 12, continue on Anderson for 1.3 miles (Anderson takes a

sharp left turn just after crossing the stone bridge) going through Hayes Covered Bridge as it crosses Licking Creek to Route 416. Turn left onto 416 for 0.3 mile then turn left onto Garnes Road and continue 0.5 mile to

As you proceed to Stop 13, the white house with double porches on Route 416 at the intersection with Garnes Road was the former Green Tree Tavern, a stagecoach stop after the road was constructed in the 1790s.

The first log church of the Lower West Conococheague Presbyterian Church stood on the south side of this west branch of the creek from 1741 until 1760 when it was burned by Indians. With only an old Indian path as access, a new log church was built on the site of the present Robert Kennedy Memorial Presbyterian Church in the village of Welsh Run. The original church site lies on private property and is not accessible to the public.

(14) FORT MAXWELL

From Stop 13, continue on Garnes for 1.0 mile. Stop 14 is on the right,

On the right is a ravine that drains south into the Conococheague Creek. In this area was a mill owned by William Maxwell who built a fort near the Conococheague in 1755. Fort Maxwell was part of the chain of forts patrolled by the militia. On April 23, 1757, the fort was attacked and John Martin and William Blair were killed. Patrick McClellan died later of shoulder

(15) WILLIAM MAXWELL HOUSE

From Stop 14, continue 0.1 mile to Montgomery Church Road. Turn right onto Montgomery Church and go 0.3 mile to Stop 15. (This is the final stop on your tour. To return to Welsh Run, continue east on Montgomery Church Road to Route 995. Turn right and go 2.4 miles.)

The stone house on the right was built by the same William Maxwell after the war, when he had become a judge.

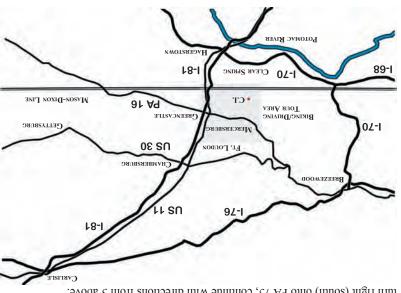
Although few remnants remain from the French and Indian War era, we hope the sites of this tour have provided a better understanding of the colonial frontier and its dangers. There is a wide selection of accommodations in Mercersburg and Greencastle and you are welcome to attend the meetings, lectures and events presented by Conococheague Institute.

Original artwork created by Kevin Rice for Conococheague Institute.



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turn right (south) onto PA 75; continue with directions from 3 above. 7. From I-76: Take I-76 Breezewood Exit 161; take US 30 south to Fort Loudon,

then right onto broadioteing koad; continue with difections from 2 above. Spring; continue straight through the traffic light at the intersection with US 40; 6. From I-70: Take I-70 Exit 18 at Clear Spring; turn right onto MD 68 to Clear

5. From I-81 going north: Take I-81 north from Hagerstown into Pennsylvania to

4. From I-81 going south: Take I-81 south past Greencastle, PA to Exit 3; take US

the tour, stood on the northeast corner of the intersection. sects with the Greencastle-Williamsport Pike (PA 63). Pawling's Tavern, stop # 1 of

11 south 0.9 mile to Milnor Road; turn right onto Milnor for 1.8 miles until it inter

416. Fort McDowell, stop #9 of the tour, stood to the southwest of the Lemar and MIES TO LEMAT KOAD; TUTH LEIT ONTO LEMAT TOT 1.1 MILES TO THE INTERSECTION WITH PA 3. From US 30: Take US 30 to Fort Loudon, turn right (south) onto PA 75 for 2.4

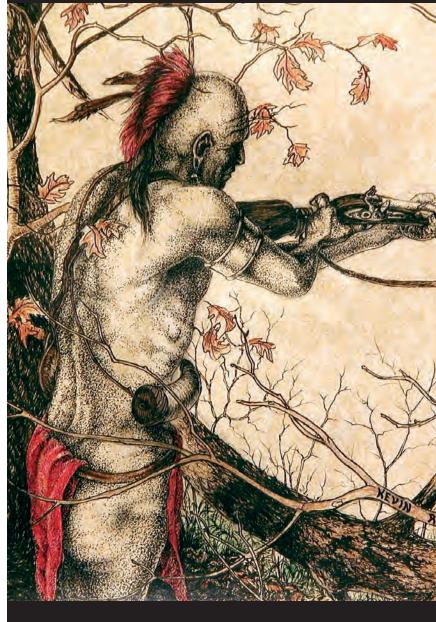
Fort Philip Davis is stop #6 of the tour. end turn left onto PA 75 for 0.9 mile to the Two Top Church parking lot on the left. Valley Road for 0.4 mile; turn right onto Mercersburg Road for 4.2 miles; at dead 3roadfording Road; continue on Broadfording for 1.3 miles; turn left onto Blairs Boyd Road; take Boyd north to Clear Spring; continue straight crossing US 40 to 2. From the C&O Canal at Big Pool and Fort Frederick: Take Big Pool Road east to

tour, is believed to have stood on the hill just to the east of 73 above the Welsh Kun. 1.0 mile to the Two Top Church parking lot on the left. Fort Philip Davis, stop #6 of the crossing the Mason-Dixon Line MD 494 becomes PA 75); continue north on 75 for on Sprecker Road for 4.0 miles to MD 494; turn left onto 494 and continue west (after Pineburg take Ridge Road north for 2 miles to Wilson; cross US 40 and continue north 1. From the C&O Canal, Williamsport, MD: Take Bottom Road west to Pineburg; at

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