



*A scenic drive following Forbes Road ...*

*Historic Hanna's Town  
to Fort Ligonier*

*... for a driver and a navigator*



***At a minimum, a driver and a navigator are required for a Ramble!  
Drive safely and observe all traffic rules. Route information is provided  
only as a suggestion for a scenic drive.***

## ***Enjoy this Westmoreland Ramble!***



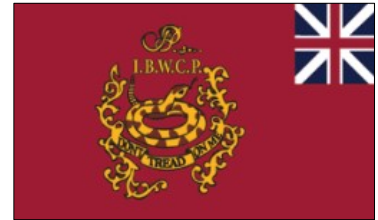
### **Following the First Forbes Road: Hanna's Town to Fort Ligonier**



**Duration: 53 minutes / Length: 23.5 miles**

***The Westmoreland Land Trust (WLT) celebrates Westmoreland County and Hempfield Township's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversaries by following the original 1758 Forbes Road with this year's Westmoreland Ramble, and also by conserving 250 acres of land as the Saint Xavier Nature Preserve in Latrobe.***

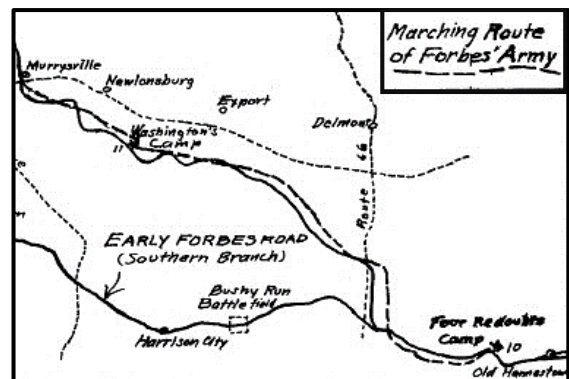
**Historic Hanna's Town** was founded along Forbes Road in 1773 and named for Robert Hanna, an early settler whose tavern hosted the first English courts west of the Allegheny Mountains. It served as Westmoreland County's seat of government until the end of Revolutionary War, with the first English courts west of the Allegheny Mountains. Despite its location on the western frontier, Hanna's Town played a significant role in the Revolutionary War. After the battles of Lexington and Concord, the inhabitants of Hanna's Town adopted a series of Resolves in 1775 declaring their willingness to take up arms against Great Britain to defend their rights. The sheriff of Hanna's Town, John Proctor, established a militia (the Independent Battalion of Westmoreland County) whose flag, featuring a rattlesnake and the words "Don't Tread on Me," is now the official flag of Westmoreland County.



**Fort Ligonier** was built in 1758 as part of the first Forbes Road campaign. It was named for John Ligonier, the British Field Marshal who oversaw the Seven Years War (also known as the French and Indian War in North America). The name of the settlement that developed around the fort was eventually shortened to Ligonier.

These two communities lie along the original route of Forbes Road, blazed in 1758 by British and American forces under the leadership of Brigadier General John Forbes and Colonel Henry Bouquet. Many traces of this road can be seen in Westmoreland County, although some parts were obscured by later road construction. This Ramble will follow the first Forbes Road wherever feasible.

Something you will notice throughout the Ramble is that the 1758 version of Forbes Road follows high ridges with commanding views of the countryside. This route was chosen to avoid ambushes by French and Indian raiding parties. As time went on, the original Forbes Road was found to be too hilly for merchants and ordinary citizens to travel. Starting in 1763, an easier southern route for Forbes Road was established through Westmoreland County, following Route 993 past Bushy Run Battlefield and then Route 130 from Harrison City to Trafford.



**0 Start at the Hempfield Indoor Athletic Complex (shown here) in Hempfield Park located at 220 Forbes Trail Rd, Greensburg, PA 15601.**

Like Westmoreland County, Hempfield Township celebrates its 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. This 93-acre township park offers trails, playgrounds, sports fields, a dog park, and summer concerts.



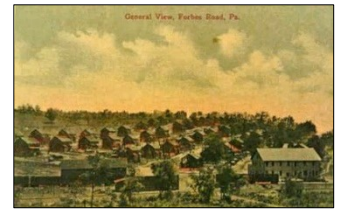
**0 IMPORTANT! . . . Set your Trip Odometer to “Zero” near the Athletic Complex sign. Exit the parking lot by turning L onto the park access road to Stop, then R onto Forbes Trail Road. Note that the speed limit on this section of Forbes Trail Road is 25 mph.**

Forbes Trail Road is named for its connection to Brigadier General John Forbes. British and colonial forces under his command constructed the original Forbes Road here in November 1758 on their way to assault Fort Duquesne in Pittsburgh. West of this park, the army’s marching route followed Route 66 north toward Murrysville where forces under the command of George Washington camped for three days near the site of historic Staymates Cabin.



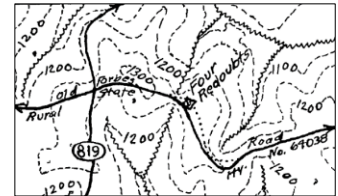
**1.5 Stop at Harvey Avenue (Route 819). Note that opposing traffic does not stop.**

A village called Forbes Road is located about a mile north of this intersection. It was common for different units of Forbes’ Army to take divergent routes as they constructed their road through the virgin forests of the Allegheny Plateau. That may have been the case here, but it is more likely that this coal mining ‘patch’ town (shown here in an old post card) simply adopted its name from the nearby road. Mining operations removed over 600,000 tons of coal in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century before shutting down at the end of World War II.



**1.9 Pass by Miller’s Paws and Claws Boarding facility 0.4 miles east of Harvey Avenue.**

Forbes Trail Road curves south here, following the flat top of the ridge. This has been identified by Professor Harold Thomas<sup>1</sup> as the location of the “Four Redoubts” encampment (also known as Armstrong’s Camp) where George Washington’s forces camped on November 18, 1758.



**3.0 Turn L into the parking lot for Historic Hanna’s Town (sign on the right).**

In 1969, Westmoreland County and the Westmoreland Historical Society worked together to purchase this 180-acre property in order to preserve and share the story of Hanna’s Town. The Westmoreland Historical Society subsequently reconstructed several historic structures here, including Hanna’s Tavern, three re-located log houses, a Revolutionary War era fort, and a wagon shed that houses an authentic late 18<sup>th</sup> century Conestoga wagon. If you wish, you may pause the Ramble to visit this interesting site.



**3.0 Turn around and exit by turning L onto Forbes Trail Road.**

<sup>1</sup> “The Sites of Forbes’ Last Three Breastworks” by Harold A. Thomas. The Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine, Volume 47, Number 1, January 1964, pages 55-66

### 3.1 Four-way stop at Hannastown Road. Continue straight on Forbes Trail Road.

Half a mile north of this intersection lies the 242-acre Hannastown Farm National Historic District, also known as the William Steel Farm. The red brick mansion house was built in 1866-67 along with an overseer's house, kitchen house, bank barn and various farm sheds. The property also contains a prehistoric archaeological site.



### 3.4 Turn L at New Alexandria Road (Route 119).

### 3.9 Turn R onto Calvary Hill Road.

The marching route of Forbes' original road cut as directly east-west across the Allegheny Plateau as the topography allowed. Calvary Hill Road follows its route, sticking to high slopes with clear views of the countryside rather than the tree-filled stream valley followed by Bovard-Luxor Road to the south. Before the hillsides were cleared of trees, stream valleys in the Appalachian Mountains were often choked by vegetation, giving rise to names like Brush Creek and Crabtree Creek



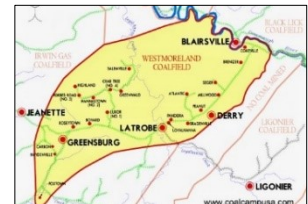
### 5.3 Turn R onto Cemetery Road.

Jamison Farm, known for providing high-quality grass-fed lamb to prestigious restaurants around the world, is located a half mile east of this intersection. The 212-acre farm no longer raises sheep commercially but continues to practice regenerative agriculture and hold occasional farm events.



### 6.0 Turn L on Bovard-Luxor Road.

Like the village of Forbes Road, Bovard and Luxor were originally built as 'coal-patches' or 'coal camps'. The region known as the Westmoreland Coal Field (right) contains numerous coal seams including the famous Pittsburgh Seam which could be as much as 12 feet thick. These deposits were extensively mined in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and traces of historic mining can still be seen around the area, particularly where the orange-red colors of AMD (Abandoned Mine Drainage) stain many local streams.



### 6.9 Turn L at stop sign to stay on Bovard-Luxor Road (aka Mellon School Road / Twin Lakes Road).

To the southwest of this intersection is Westmoreland County's Twin Lakes Park. Since 2021, the Westmoreland Land Trust (WLT) has maintained a 17-acre pilot wildflower meadow at the park's Peach Plaza Expansion Area. Native wildflowers and grasses provide valuable habitat for native bees, monarch butterflies, and other pollinators. Walking trails have been mowed throughout the meadow and visitors are welcome.



### 7.3 Turn R on Latrobe-Crabtree Road.

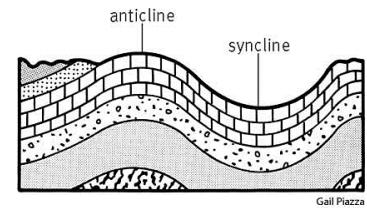
The hills west of Latrobe known as Dry Ridge are underlain by the Pennsylvanian age Conemaugh Group. These thick layers of sandstone, shale, coal, and limestone were formed by rivers running off the rising Appalachian Mountains and forming deltas where they met a shallow inland sea.

GROUP	FORMATION	MARKER BEDS
Monongahela	Uniontown	Waynesburg coal
	Pittsburgh	Benwood carbonate Pittsburgh coal
Conemaugh	Casselman	Morgantown SS Birmingham shale Anna limestone Pittsburgh reds
	Glenshaw	Pine Creek LS Upper Freeport coal
Allegheny	Freeport	



### 7.9 Bear R at the Y-intersection onto Saxman Road.

The road here crosses the center of the Fayette Anticline. Pennsylvania's underground rock layers have been folded into synclines and anticlines by the same tectonic forces that built the Appalachian Mountains: the collision of North America with the supercontinent of Gondwana. The rock layers arch upward, bringing the older beds of the Pennsylvanian-age Allegheny Formation to the surface. This geologic structure is a smaller version of Chestnut Ridge to the east, but with less extreme topography.



### 8.7 Four-way stop at Donohoe Road. Continue straight onto McCullough Road / Monastery Drive.

### 9.6 Passing by the grounds of Unity Cemetery on the right.

Unity Cemetery was established in 1774, with a grant of land from Thomas and John Penn, grandsons of William Penn. Many of the area's early settlers, including John Proctor, are buried here in unmarked graves. It is also the final resting place of Fred Rogers ("Mr. Rogers") who is buried in a family mausoleum along with his father James Hillis Rogers (president of the McFeely Brick Company) and his mother Nancy McFeely (who knit all the sweaters Fred wore on television).



### 9.8 Passing by Unity Meeting House Chapel on the right.

Unity Meeting House was built along Forbes Road, perhaps as early as 1776 and certainly by 1790. The location of the first log church, which was destroyed by fire in 1830, is not known. The 1874 red-brick chapel was restored with donations of funds and stained-glass windows by Thomas Mellon. Unity Chapel continues to be used for worship and funeral services.



### 10.0 Turn L on Unity Cemetery Road.

As you drive east on this portion of the original Forbes Road, you will see the Saint Vincent Basilica in the distance with Chestnut Ridge rising behind it. Commanding views like these are why the British and colonial army chose higher elevations for their route.



### 10.4 Turn R on Monastery Drive.

Monastery Drive derives its name from the nearby Saint Vincent Archabbey. Founded in 1846 by Abbot Boniface Wimmer, this was the very first Benedictine monastery in the United States. Saint Vincent College began as a seminary for training priests but also offered courses in classics and commercial degrees. In 1870, Saint Vincent was empowered by the Pennsylvania State legislature to grant academic degrees like any other college or university which it continues to do today.



### 10.5 Passing over the main east-west line of the Norfolk-Southern Railroad.

This railroad was built by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1852. The initials PA RR can still be seen in many older railroad tunnels and bridge embankments throughout Westmoreland County. The "mainline" linked the productive coal mines of Westmoreland County and steel mills of Pittsburgh and Latrobe with the growing cities of the East Coast throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.



### 11.1 Passing by Saint Vincent Lake on the right.

Beyond Saint Vincent Lake lies a series of wetlands and ponds filled with orange and yellow water. This is the Monastery Run Improvement Project – a passive treatment system designed to remove abandoned mine drainage (AMD) discharge from Fourmile Run, Monastery Run, and Loyalhanna Creek. Installed in 1993, the wetland now serves as an environmental classroom and community resource.



### 11.2 Follow Monastery Drive around traffic circle and continue straight on Saint Vincent Drive.

Just west of this traffic circle is the historic Saint Vincent College Grist Mill. Constructed by the Benedictine monks in 1854, the grist mill was an important resource for local farmers throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continues to operate today. Since 2001, a general store and museum have been added to allow visitors to watch the monks make flour using the original 1-ton flint grindstones brought over from France. The grist mill also houses the Saint Vincent Environmental Center.



### 11.8 Passing by the west entrance to the Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve.

Winnie Palmer, wife of renowned golfer Arnold Palmer, loved the view of Saint Vincent College with its beautiful Basilica that could be seen from Latrobe. As commercial activity increased along the Route 30 corridor in the 1990's, she began a project to protect the meadows and farm fields along Monastery Run from development. Winnie passed away before her vision was realized, but her family continued her work and in 2000 founded the 50-acre Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve to honor her memory. Today, the nature reserve holds a Learning Barn for environmental education along with gardens and trails for the public.



Inside the nature reserve, the Blockhouse Trail leads to another remnant of the original Forbes Road: the Lochry Blockhouse. When the Revolutionary War began, Archibald Lochry was appointed as the County Lieutenant. He built this sturdy log blockhouse in 1780-81 to protect his ammunition and weapons, but was killed shortly afterward. The blockhouse later became a residence and its history was almost forgotten. In 1999, it was discovered by local historian Floyd Eiseman, who was researching the history of Forbes Road. The blockhouse remains at its original location, but has been reconstructed back to what it would have looked like during Revolutionary War times.



### 12.3 Turn L at the stop light and merge into the right-hand lane of Route 30.

At the top of the hill west of this intersection once stood the Saint Xavier Academy, a Catholic boarding school run by the Sisters of Mercy. Built in 1847, it was the first institution founded by this order of Irish nuns in the United States. They went on to establish many other schools and hospitals, including both Carlow College and Mercy Hospital in Pittsburgh.



Saint Xavier Academy and its adjoining Convent unfortunately burned down in 1972. Only one structure remains – a Civil-war era guesthouse known as Bellbrook. In 2018, the Sisters of Mercy began working with the Westmoreland Land Trust (WLT) to conserve the property. In September 2023 (Westmoreland County's 250th Anniversary Year), WLT opened this 250-acre property to the public as the St. Xavier Nature Preserve. The former farm fields are currently being converted to native grass and wildflower meadows, and riparian buffers strengthened with extensive tree and shrub planting.

**12.9 Turn R at the stop light onto Lloyd Avenue (Route 981).**

Arnold Palmer Regional Airport can be seen immediately to the right of Route 981. The first flights in this area took off in 1924 when it was known as the Longview Flying Field. It became J.D. Hill Airport in 1928, Latrobe Airport in 1935 and Westmoreland County Airport in 1978. The name was changed to Arnold Palmer Regional Airport in 1999 to honor the golfer who grew up less than a mile away and later learned to fly himself.



**13.1 Turn L at the stop light onto Arnold Palmer Drive.**

Forbes Road originally continued straight west through this intersection, running across Westmoreland airport property to the stream then known as Twelve Mile Run (now Monastery Run). George Washington and his colonial forces camped near here in 1758 prior to marching to Four Redoubts Camp. The land was later granted to John Proctor, the first Sheriff of Westmoreland County. He constructed a log cabin in the 1760's which became a frequent rest stop for travelers along the early Forbes Road. During the summer of 1774, Proctor erected a log stockade structure called Fort Shippen to protect settlers in the area. Each summer, the Compass Inn Museum in Laughlintown presents a Living History Weekend at which military reenactors show how Proctor's Revolutionary Militia trained for battle with muskets and cannons.



**14.2 Passing by Latrobe Country Club on the right.**

Latrobe Country Club was founded in 1920 near what was then the route of Lincoln Highway (Route 30). One young worker on the golf course went on to become its superintendent - Deacon (Deke) Palmer. His son, Arnold, learned to play here as a child when his family lived in a home beside the course's present fifth tee. Arnold Palmer went on to become one of the most successful professional golfers of his time, winning 92 championships. He returned to Latrobe in later life and purchased the country club where his father still worked as the superintendent.



**14.5 Arnold Palmer Drive becomes Main Street in Youngstown. Continue straight. Note 25 mph speed limit here.**

**14.6 Four way stop at Mill Street. Continue straight on Main Street into Youngstown.**

**14.7 Cross Latrobe Street (Rt. 982) at the stop light. Continue straight on Main Street.**

In the early 1800's, Youngstown became an important rest stop for travelers along Forbes Road, with taverns, inns, blacksmiths, and wagon makers all setting up shop here. Federal troops were quartered here in 1794, on their way west to quell the tax insurrection known as the Whiskey Rebellion. President George Washington himself rode at the head of the militia force, but the rebels all went home before the arrival of the army, and there was no confrontation.



**14.8 Stop at Y-intersection in front of Sacred Heart Catholic Church. Bear R onto Youngstown Ridge Road.**



### 15.3 Bear L at Y-intersection near log cabin to continue on Youngstown Ridge Road.

Youngstown Ridge Road heads directly up the 900-foot-high western flank of Chestnut Ridge, the first visible fold of the Appalachian Mountains. The rock layers here have been pushed upward into an arch shape or anticline by the force of North America colliding with the supercontinent of Gondwana.



Chestnut Ridge stands high about the surrounding region due to its capping layer of hard sandstone known as the Pottsville Formation. This sandstone layer resists erosion and protects the rock layers below it, except for the places where streams like the Loyalhanna and Conemaugh cut gorges or 'water gaps' through it.



### 16.9 You have reached the crest of Chestnut Ridge, near Jamisa Road.

Youngstown Ridge Road follows the route of Forbes Road across Chestnut Ridge so closely that in places, the water-filled track gouged out of the Pottsville sandstone by Conestoga wagon wheels can still be seen alongside it. Being in constant danger of enemy attacks, General Forbes was determined to march his army across the highest possible ground. The boulder-strewn and tree-choked valley of the Loyalhanna Gorge, which is the route followed by present-day Route 30, would have been much too hazardous for a military road in 1758. Instead, the army blazed a path straight over the ridge top, a high and dry route that allowed them to travel quickly and avoid ambushes.



### 17.7 Laurel Ridge can be seen to the east behind the tree line.

Laurel Ridge, like Chestnut Ridge, is an upward arching anticline created by the collision of North America and Gondwana. At an elevation of 2,759 ft, it is almost as high as the Allegheny Front and much higher than Chestnut Ridge (1020 ft).

### 19.4 Turn L on Darlington Road.

After descending the east flank of Chestnut Ridge, the original Forbes Road followed Four Mile Run northeast, taking advantage of the relatively flat topography of the Ligonier Valley.

### 20.1 Turn R onto Idlewild Hill Road.

The Ligonier Valley Railroad Museum preserves the history of the Ligonier Valley Railroad, a 10-mile rail line that connected Ligonier to the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad near Latrobe. Constructed in the late 1800's by Judge Thomas Mellon and his sons Andrew and Richard, the LVRR carried coal and coke to the busy steel mills of Latrobe and Pittsburgh, and also ran daily passenger trains known as Doodlebugs.



### 20.5 Turn R onto Route 30 / Lincoln Highway.

Idlewild Park lies to the south of Route 30 which here follows the original route of the Ligonier Valley Railroad. Originally known as Idle Park, this picnic ground was created by the Mellons in 1878 to increase passenger traffic on their Ligonier Valley Railroad during the hot summer months when steel mills often shut down. Since 1973, the amusement park has also been the site of the Ligonier Highland Games which promote the appreciation of Scottish heritage, arts, and culture.

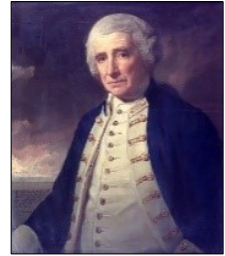




**23.1 Continue straight on Route 30 through first stop light. Merge into the left lane.**

**23.5 Turn L at the second stop light onto South Market Street / Route 711.**

Like General Edward Braddock, who built Braddock's Road, before him, British General John Forbes faced the daunting task of transporting an army and artillery through a wilderness previously traveled only by natives, fur traders, and packhorses. Unlike Braddock, Forbes realized the importance of supply lines and fortifications, and so he built his road at a slow, deliberate pace, constructing strongholds at regular intervals.

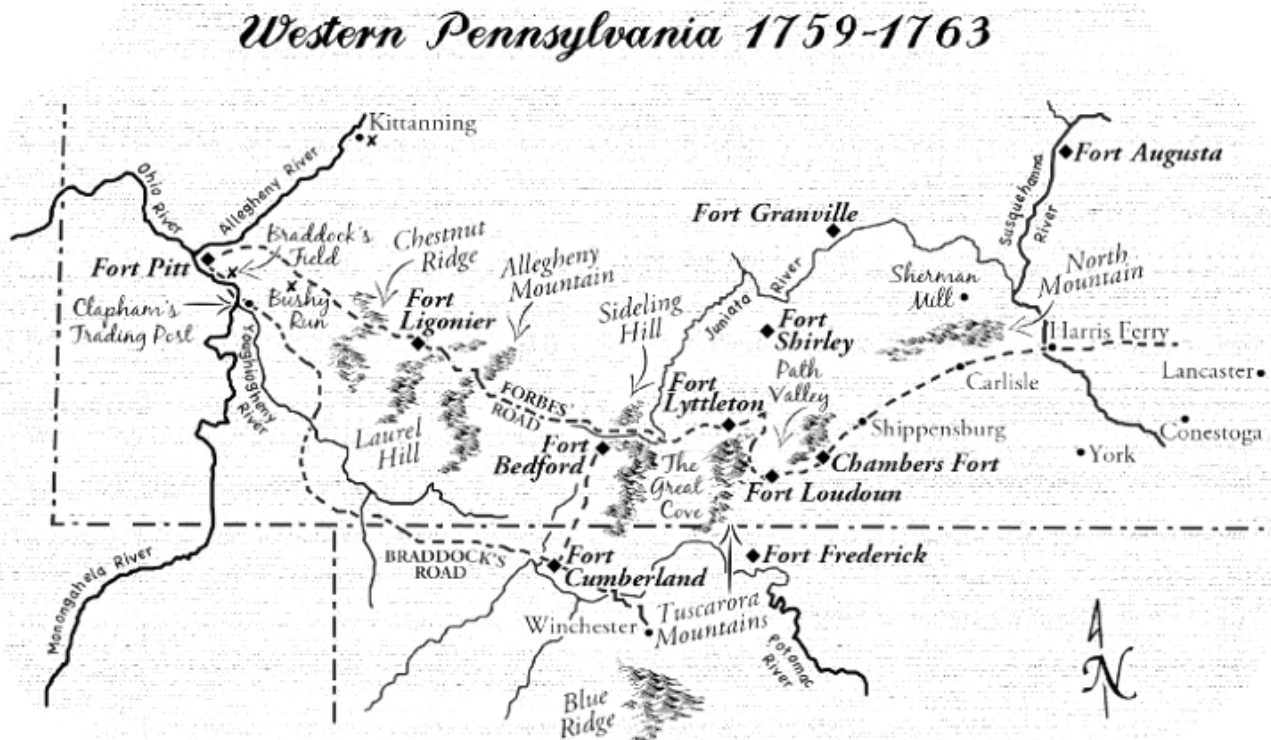


The last of these strongholds was Fort Ligonier, and here Forbes' caution was proved to be well-founded. On the night of October 12, 1758, an expedition of French and native forces from Fort Duquesne attacked Fort Ligonier. Several guards were killed, and many horses were stolen, but the well-built stockade fort with its cannons was able to repulse the attacks. It was to be the last major battle of the Forbes campaign.

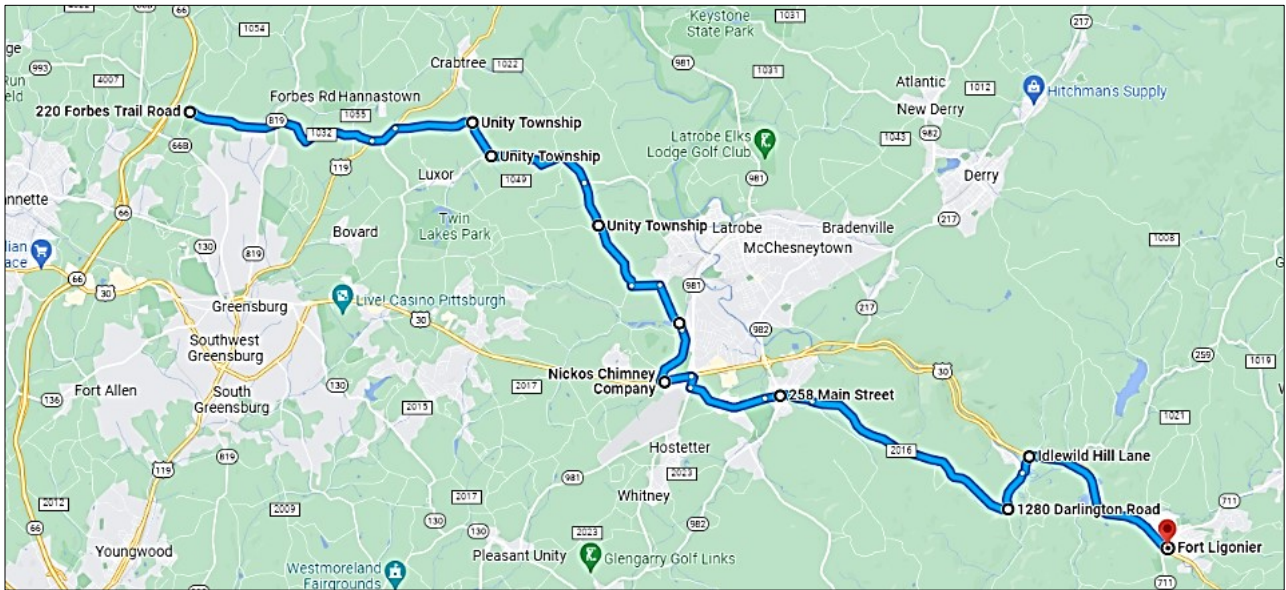


**23.5 Turn R into parking lot for Fort Ligonier. End of Ramble.**

*Note - If you have time, you can extend your trip along Route 30 east to Laughlintown and visit the Compass Inn Museum. If you return home via Route 30 through the Loyahanna Gorge, you can visit the Lincoln Highway Experience Museum, located at the intersection of Route 30 and Route 217.*



## 2023 Westmoreland Ramble Road Map and Simplified Directions



- 0 Start at the Hempfield Indoor Athletic Complex in Hempfield Park.
- 1.5 Stop at Harvey Avenue (Route 819). Note that opposing traffic does not stop.
- 3.0 Turn L into the parking lot for Historic Hanna's Town.
- 3.0 Exit the parking lot by turning L onto Forbes Trail Road.
- 3.1 Four-way stop at Hannastown Road. Continue straight on Forbes Trail Road.
- 3.4 Turn L at New Alexandria Road (Route 119).
- 3.9 Turn R onto Calvary Hill Road.
- 5.3 Turn R onto Cemetery Road.
- 7.9 Bear R at the Y-intersection onto Saxman Road.
- 8.7 Stop at Donohoe Road. Continue straight onto McCullough Road / Monastery Drive.
- 10.0 Turn L on Unity Cemetery Road.
- 10.4 Turn R on Monastery Drive.
- 11.2 Follow Monastery Drive around traffic circle and continue on Saint Vincent Drive.
- 12.3 Turn L at the stop light and merge into the right-hand lane of Lincoln Highway (Rt 30).
- 12.9 Turn R at the stop light onto Lloyd Avenue (Route 981).
- 13.1 Turn L at the stop light onto Arnold Palmer Drive.
- 14.6 Four way stop at Mill Street. Continue straight on Main Street into Youngstown.
- 14.7 Cross Latrobe Street (Rt. 982) at the stop light. Continue straight on Main Street.
- 14.8 Stop at Y-intersection near Sacred Heart Church. Bear R onto Youngstown Ridge Road.
- 15.3 Bear L at Y-intersection near log cabin to continue on Youngstown Ridge Road.
- 19.4 Turn L on Darlington Road.
- 20.1 Turn R onto Idlewild Hill Road.
- 20.5 Turn R onto Route 30 / Lincoln Highway.
- 23.1 Continue straight on Route 30 through first stop light. Merge into left-hand lane.
- 23.5 Turn L at the second stop light onto South Market Street / Route 711.
- 23.5 Turn R into parking lot for Fort Ligonier. End of Ramble.

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