

Southwestern Pennsylvania

# HERITAGE ROUTE GUIDE

Altoona-Johnstown  
Discover Industry's Legacy



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**Background**

The industrial legacy of southern Pennsylvania is rooted in the growth of steel-making, a factor in the nation's first growing industries of the region. Coalfields beneath both local and neighboring areas have long provided the growth of industry. Coal and steel markets were changing and the United States emerged as a world leader.

The interests of the area have the first traces of settlers to establish Pennsylvania. Early European immigrants found the land and value of the vast iron-ore wealth to be realized. When settlement was in full, pig-iron production and steel making the business, and location of the steel industry was determined by the location of the coal fields.

Transportation was the key. Forthright and roads, and later turnpikes, canals, and railroads opened markets for Pennsylvania's products and industry. Roads, improved rivers and canals, and later turnpikes and Pennsylvania's great national and international commerce.

The Pennsylvania Maritime Canal, which got going raised over the Allegheny Mountains, was a technological and engineering marvel of its time, allowing Pennsylvania goods to be shipped to the distant country. That canal, like the canal was soon superseded by the Pennsylvania Railroad, which reached from New York to St. Louis, and eventually throughout the land of the free, but not steel regions.

In the 1840s farmers began using Pennsylvania's iron-rich soil for production. Iron had caused their trouble by creating soil loss and erosion in cleared fields some. Limestone, which was eventually discovered by them, by helping soil to become more to get to its surface.

The advent of steamships, high quality steel in the 1860s and the development of improved machinery led to recovery of through routes and led to increased steel. Limestone in the development of the steel industry. In 1860, the United States was the largest producer of steel in the world.

America's industrial growth resulted in a constant demand for iron and steel, and that steel were needed for railroad cars, locomotives and bridges, for farm machinery, furnaces and machine tools for bridges and construction, for strength, wire and cables. Cast-iron and steel became the link between human, technological, and steel forms of life.

Many coal-mining sites, and being struck from was more than just a job. David Healey, community organizer and strong advocate was associated with these industries. In southwestern Pennsylvania, where there were built to attract a labor force. Thousands of workers, many immigrants and ethnic descendants, the country.

Early neighborhoods, created from company colonies aimed at drawing the work force and promoting better productivity. A strong sense of the quality, developed in many company towns through the establishment of churches, social clubs and houses.

A diversity of culture resulted in southwestern Pennsylvania from the food of migration and immigration from the farm to the city and from the city to the farm. People were working, great an work community, industrial district areas and the workers would conduct the working class, while others enjoyed the comfort of the middle class. Southwestern Pennsylvania has retained its unique and distinctive life. Many more people and their driving force. A vibrant and exciting life.

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Route area offers families a fascinating and complete story of people, the steel and industrialization. Travelling along the route can become immersed in a history, understanding the diversity of people across centuries and centuries, make America an industrial giant.



## Convention & Visitors Bureau of Blair County

Located in the Allegheny Interpretation Center, this information center offers publications, pamphlets, gifts and a video presentation about what activities. (814) 943-1183

## Baker Mansion



An impressive example of Greek Revival architecture, the Baker Mansion houses the Blair County Historical Society. The 20-room mansion houses a large collection of period furniture, artwork and dishes. Open Tues. 10am-1:30pm. (814) 940-2816.

## Allegheny Furnace

Erected in 1811, the furnace operated as part of the first blast furnace operation following the War of 1812. The furnace required operations when the iron industry revived with improved transportation and manufacturing opportunities. In 1835 the furnace was repaired to its present location. The furnace was restored in 1939.

## Railroads Memorial Museum



The museum commemorates Altoona as the Railroad City. It is the home of the K-4 steam locomotive, numerous railroad's artifacts, rolling stock, and an operational model railroad. Open Tues. - Sat. 10:00 and Sun. 12:30-5. (814) 946-5834.

## Juniata Railroad Shops



In 1849 the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) located its stone-stone and brick shops at Juniata. The Juniata's main bridge spans and established in the valley, expanding the area "water" engines needed to get iron ore to the mountains, while providing repair services for the cars. Remains of this complex are located behind the Hayslett Memorial Museum and may be viewed from there.

## Staple Bend Tunnel

Just between 1831 and 1832, the 801-foot long engineering accomplishment was the first railroad tunnel constructed in the United States. After abandonment in 1862, the tunnel continued to be used as a carriage road. The tunnel is now open to the public at the bridge. But information about it is available at the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site.

## 1889 South Fork Fishing & Hunting Club Historic District

This exclusive retreat for the Pittsburgh elite was built along an old abandoned Pennsylvania's Maritime Canal route. After the club repaired the dam and refilled the lake in 1889, notable members such as Henry Ford, Andrew Carnegie and Andrew Mellon engaged hunting and sailing on its private reach. Better cottages with wrap around porches dotted the shoreline of Lake Conowingo while the three story club house dominated the scene. This beautiful, idyllic setting changed one final day in May, 1989. Following days of heavy rain, the South Fork Dam, poorly maintained over the years, burst causing the water from an American history. The historic district is located in St. Michael, near the Johnstown Flood Memorial.

## Miners Museum



After the South Fork Dam burst in 1989, the mining community of St. Michael was established by the Second Water Gate Company. This collection of old mining equipment helps visitors understand the history and dangers miners faced as they worked to support their families. Located along the main access road to Johnstown Flood National Memorial. Seasonal hours only.

## Johnstown Flood National Memorial



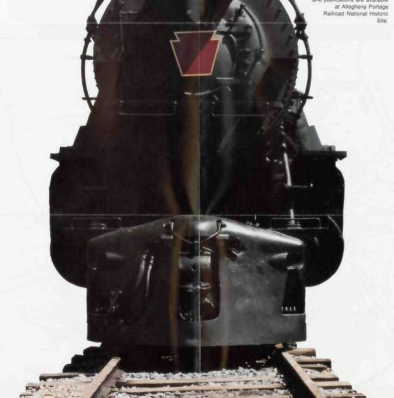
The memorial contains the ruins of the South Fork Dam. On May 31, 1889 the mass of eastern dam collapsed, releasing over 20 million tons of water, devastating property all lower. Excludes and an award-winning interpret the flood story. Open daily from 9:05-5:00. (814) 495-4643

## Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site

Constructed between 1829 and 1832, the Portage Railroad is the last link of the canal-railroad system that spanned the state and achieved the task of crossing the Allegheny Mountains. Exhibits and an additional program interpret the history of this engineering feat. Open daily from 9:00 to 5:00. (814) 898-6150.

## Allegheny Portage Railroad Incline 2, 4, 5

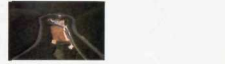
The portage railroad consisted of a series of inclined planes, constructed by crossing the rugged Allegheny Mountains. The remains of these three inclined planes are now part of the state road system along the Heritage Route. Additional information and publications are available at Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site.



## Gallitzin Tunnels

In the fall of 1824, the Pennsylvania Railroad selected the summit of the Allegheny Mountains by constructing a tunnel 3,612 feet in length, 21 feet in height, and 24 feet wide. A second tunnel was opened in 1826, and both are still used today. Located in Garrison Township. (814) 898-8771.

## Horseshoe Curve National Historic Landmark



Built in 1854, this impressive design followed out a steep grade until it was usable by steam locomotives to travel over the Allegheny Mountains. Although it was constructed by hand, it still meets the needs of today's railroad industry. Visitor Center, exhibits and museum plans to operate seasonal operations at track level. (814) 943-3030.

## Cambria Iron Company National Historic Landmark



Founded in 1830, the Cambria Iron Company was one of the greatest of the early iron-ore and steel mills. It was the first to produce the American's reliance on British-produced steel. By the end of the 1870s Cambria was the largest cast producer in America, and became part of Bethlehem Steel Corporation in 1903. May be viewed from the top of the Johnstown Incline Plane.

## Johnstown Flood Museum



On May 31, 1889 the worst flood in American history struck Johnstown killing over 2,200 people, changing the presence only into a wasteland and leaving tens of thousands homeless. Exhibits and an Academy award-winning film explore the great flood. Hours: 10am to 5pm. Admission fee. (814) 533-1889.

## Johnstown Incline Plane & Welcome Center

Built in 1831 and listed on the National Register, this is the world's deepest inclined plane for heavy passenger and automobiles. At the top waiting for the incline is a welcome center, historic exhibits, observation deck, restaurant and gift shop. Fee for inclined plane ride. (814) 533-1818.

## Grandview Cemetery

Seven hundred and seventy-seven tombstones mark the graves of the unknown victims of the Johnstown Flood, a dramatic reminder of that tragic day in 1889. The Colver Cemetery Association owns and maintains the property.



# HERITAGE ROUTE GUIDE

## Discover Industry's Legacy

How to Use the Guide

The Heritage Route between Altoona and Johnstown links sites which have preserved and commemorated the legacy of America's industrial heritage. This 47-mile route is part of a larger Heritage Route planned for a 100-mile region in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The route is identified by a distinctive sign representing the primary industries of transportation and energy within the former Pennsylvania "backbone." The sign is found on "Heritage" directional road signs along the route.

You may enter or exit the route at any location, but if it is suggested you begin at either the Johnstown Inland Plane and Welcome Center or the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Blair County in Altoona, directional signs are posted at key intersections and turn-along the route. Color-coded signs also indicate what direction you are traveling. "Blue" indicates travel on the primary route from Johnstown to Altoona. "Green" indicates travel on the primary route from Altoona to Johnstown. "Spur" indicates travel on a spur route, generally less than 10 miles in length.

Please remember that the route leads you off the main highway. Some of the secondary roads have single lanes and are not adequate to handle an unexpected volume. Alternative routes have been identified on the map.

Points of interest and visitor centers are indicated on the map. Most sites are open to public use, with others only open on the main "backbone" observation of the area along the route and on the reverse side of the highway. Detailed information and directions about the sites and other areas of interest and services may be obtained at the visitor centers. Color-coded information on site history and benefits of the area can also be obtained at these points.



### Altoona-Johnstown



This journey through Southwestern Pennsylvania's industrial legacy is an exciting one. For more information about the Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Route, visit the Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Planning Commission, P.O. Box 520, Hollidaysburg, PA 16848.

