

RIDING THROUGH HISTORY

The Warren County Bikeway: Mile by mile

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Bikeway rules: No motor vehicles, no littering, keep right at all times, do not park on bike path, no dogs permitted on bikeway.

Historical source: Historical information taken from signs erected along the bikeway by the Warren County Historical Society and installed by Boy Scout Troop 6 of the Twin Rivers Council.

Mileage note: Distances measured beginning at the southern tip of the bikeway at Platt Street in Glens Falls.

FIRST MILE

Difficulty: Easy pedaling on level pavement.

Route: *Start* - Paved off-street trail begins where old freight railroad tracks end on Platt Street in Glens Falls and crosses McDonald, Orchard and Prospect streets; *0.26 miles* - off-street trail ends. Proceed north on Leonard Street and cross Lawrence Street; *0.45 miles* - off-street trail resumes at bikeway parking lot on Leonard Street with first heritage sign and a covered map of bikeway; *0.56 miles* - cross Cooper Street (watch for delivery trucks exiting and entering businesses); *0.75 miles* cross Walnut Street, then, just after, cross busy Dix Avenue (a yield-to-pedestrian sign in the crosswalk often brings cars to a stop); *0.93 miles* - cross Hunter Street.

What's nearby: A small Price Chopper supermarket is just off trail at 0.67 miles; just north of Dix Avenue is Cooper's Cave Ale Co., which has an ice cream window with nine picnic tables on the bikeway side, and a pub on the Sagamore Street side.

Locking up: Bike rack at Cooper's Cave Ale Co.

History: *0.26 miles* - an old, shuttered train tower on Leonard Street is reminder of bikeway's railroad origins; *0.45 miles* - first bikeway heritage sign shows map of the village of Glens Falls, circa 1874, and tells about development that started as Wing's Falls in recognition of Abraham Wing, its Quaker founder. (Wing transferred most of the falls to John Glen Jr., who had rebuilt mills after the American Revolution.); *0.75 miles* - heritage sign mentions a rail freight depot that was once located where The Post-Star buildings now stand at Cooper and Lawrence streets, and notes that a passenger line once traveled north from this location. "From here to Lake George, the bikeway almost entirely follows the railroad branch built in 1882," the sign states. "Vacationers boarding trains in New York City and Albany could relax by day's end."

Notes: Bikeway between Leonard and Cooper streets travels in back of The Post-Star and next to a structure that houses soil used in the annual Adirondack Stampede Charity Rodeo at the Glens Falls Civic Center. Sign at Platt Street states that no dogs are allowed on bikeway, but an adjacent sign offers a seemingly conflicting statement: "Clean up after your dog, it's the law." To access the Feeder Canal Trail and continue to bike or walk to Hudson Falls and Fort Edward, go south on Platt Street, proceed east on Warren Street and turn south onto Shermantown Road. Crowds often gather on bikeway near the Cooper's Cave ice cream windows. Use caution when approaching on bikes.



SECOND MILE

Difficulty: For the most part, easy pedaling on level pavement. There is a gradual downgrade between Lexington Avenue and Bay Road.

Route: *1.07 miles* - cross Ridge and Sanford streets; *1.3 miles* - cross Lexington Avenue; *1.68 miles* - cross Bay Road (a flashing red light and sign alerts cyclists to stop for cars); *1.82 miles* - bikeway goes through middle of C.R. Bard medical device manufacturing campus (signs ask cyclists to stay on trail) and there are two all-way stops for cyclists and cars at interior road intersections.

What's nearby: A Stewart's Shop is just north of the Ridge and Sanford streets intersection. To reach Cool Beans coffee shop at Quaker Road and Everts Avenue, leave the bikeway and go east on Lexington Avenue a short distance and then proceed north on Everts Avenue for a half-mile.

History: At *1.5 miles*, heritage sign explains that the location is on the southern boundary line of the town of Queensbury, from which Glens Falls was taken in 1908. The Queensbury patent of 23,000 acres was granted to land prospectors in 1762, named in honor of the wife of King George III, who was then reigning. In 1788, Queensbury, then part of Washington County, included all of the territory of today's Warren County.

Notes: Exercise caution at Bay Road crossing, which has offset guardrails to prevent cyclists from riding directly across the road without stopping or at least slowing. From the Ridge Street crossing, Rick's Bike Shop is 0.8 miles north on Ridge Street/Ridge Road. From the Bay Road crossing, the Inside Edge bike and ski shop is 0.6 miles west using nearby Garrison Road.



THIRD MILE

Difficulty: Easy pedaling on level pavement, with the exception of the bikeway bridge over Quaker Road in Queensbury, which has steep approaches that force some cyclists to walk bikes to the top.

Route: *2.11 miles* - Bikeway bridge takes cyclists and pedestrians over four lanes of Quaker Road traffic; *2.27 miles* - three-way stop for motorists at north end of bikeway bridge at Glenwood Avenue and Woodvale Road (cyclists have their own stop signs at this intersection); *2.48 miles* - cross Country Club Road; *2.54 miles* - entrance to Country Club Road bikeway parking lot; *2.83 miles* - cross Sweet Road.

What's nearby: At *2.02 miles*, there is a short dirt path leading from the bikeway to the parking lot of a Hannaford supermarket. A short distance north near the bikeway bridge, there is easy access across some grass to an Aldi grocery store. At north end of bikeway bridge, Sprinkles Ice Cream Shoppe is immediately to the west on Glenwood Avenue. The Country Club Road bikeway parking lot has a portable restroom on site, as well as a picnic table. At *2.83 miles*, ambitious cyclists could opt to go west on Sweet Road to find restaurants and stores on Route 9, but only if they are willing to pedal up a steep, mile-long Sweet Road (it is sweet when you reach the top). Route 9 can also be reached from the bikeway north of Sweet Road by way of Wincrest Drive and connecting roads (distance to Route 9: about 1.4 miles).

Locking up: Two U-shaped bike racks are at southern base of bikeway bridge. Racks also located at the Hannaford store south of bridge and at Sprinkles Ice Cream Shoppe north of bridge. The Country Club Road bikeway parking lot has two U-shaped bike racks.

History: The Gerald B. Solomon Bikeway Bridge crosses Halfway Brook, and a heritage sign on the bridge notes that the stream runs easterly from the mountains of Lake Luzerne to Wood Creek in Fort Ann. The brook was named for its location about midway between the military posts at Fort Edward and Lake George. In 1755, during the French and Indian War, the English built a blockade on the north bank called Seven-Mile Pass, representing its distance from each of the two forts. Some Colonial soldiers called the stream Blood Brook in recollection of the skirmishes there, including an attack by 600 Canadians and Indians on a baggage and provision train in 1756. "In its day, because of the ample supply of pure water, the site was one of the best known stopping places along the northern frontier," the sign states. A heritage sign in the Country



THIRD MILE

History continued: Club Road parking lot states that Blind Rock, a large rock now “hidden in the sod” to the west of the bikeway, is reputedly the site of an Indian ritual that involved torture and “blinding of unfortunate victims.” The rock is on private property. At 2.83 miles, heritage sign explains that Miller Hill to the west of the bikeway was named for Samuel Miller, a native of Ireland who built his Queensbury house of hand-made bricks from England.

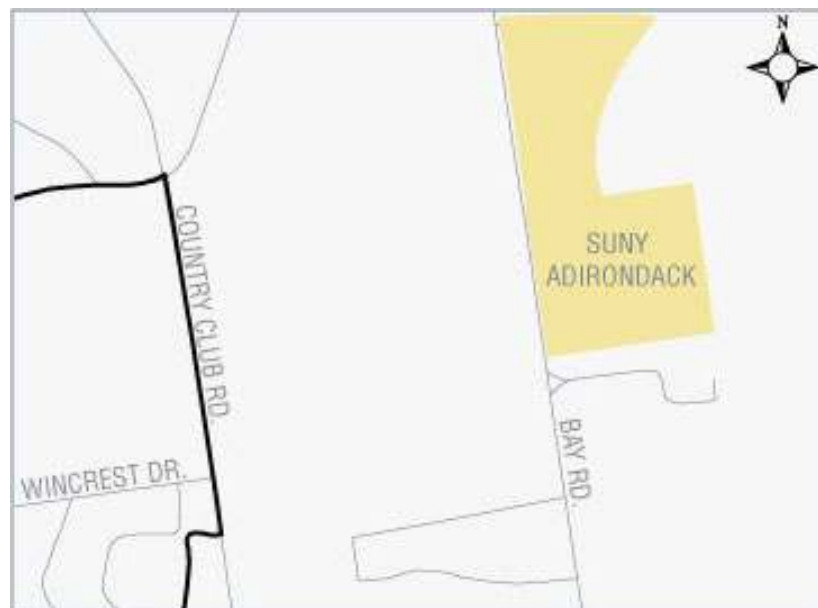
Notes: The rusty appearance of the bikeway bridge was planned in its design and is cosmetic only. The three-way stop (for motorists) at Glenwood Avenue and Woodvale Road, as well as stop signs instructing cyclists to stop at that intersection, are often ignored. Use caution. The Aldi and Hannaford parking lots are places for cyclists to park their motor vehicles while they go riding. There is also ample parking in the lot across from Sprinkles Ice Cream Shoppe. The Gerald B. Solomon Bikeway Bridge, named after the late veteran congressman from Queensbury, was dedicated in June 2000.

FOURTH MILE

Difficulty: Easy pedaling on southern end and a long downgrade along Blind Rock Road to the north.

Route: 3.3 miles - off-road bikeway ends when it briefly turns east and connects with Country Club Road. Cyclists begin riding on marked shoulders of the road for 1.6 miles; 3.83 miles - after stopping at all-way stop signs at intersection of Blind Rock Road and Mannis Road, proceed west on Blind Rock Road past Glens Falls Country Club.

Notes: Watch for golf carts crossing bikeway along Blind Rock Road, which runs through the middle of the Glens Falls Country Club.



FIFTH MILE

Difficulty: Steep hill on Birdsall Road, and another steep section between Birdsall Road and the bikeway bridge over the inlet to Glen Lake.

Route: *4.5 miles* - Round Pond parking area; *4.7 miles* - turn north from Round Pond Road onto the dead-end Birdsall Road; *4.9 miles* - resume off-road riding on a short hill on the south side and a longer hill on the north side.

What's nearby: Ride west from Round Pond parking area along Round Pond Road for 0.6 miles to reach Martha's Dandee Crème and Great Escape amusement park.

History: Heritage sign states that Round Pond was once a magnet for Glens Falls residents who took a trolley to the location on Sunday afternoons to make use of a large bathing pavilion and a casino on the west side. The pond is located on the west side of the Glens Falls Country Club.

Notes: Traffic on Birdsall Road has increased in recent years with the addition of new homes on the road. The road is in back of Great Escape amusement park. The Round Pond parking lot along Round Pond Road and the bikeway is open to the public, but the pond is private property and is fenced and posted.



SIXTH MILE

Difficulty: Easy pedaling on level pavement until long hill on the north side of Glen Lake Road.

Route: *5.18 miles* - cross narrow bridge over inlet to Glen Lake. Watch out for utility poles in center of bikeway and keep an eye on distracted fishermen and their lines and tackle boxes on both sides of this narrow span; *5.23 miles* - intersect with Ash Drive and proceed northwesterly on road for a short distance; *5.34 miles* - off-road riding resumes; *5.63 miles* - cross Glen Lake Road (sign urges cyclists to stop and walk bikes across), then begin long, gradual climb to the Route 149 bikeway bridge; *5.93 miles* - a short path on west side of bikeway offers access to a brook with tree cover and some stones to sit on.

History: A heritage sign notes that the Warren County Municipal Center to the west of the trail was built in 1963. Previous to that year, county offices had been in Glens Falls and Lake George. Another sign, at *5.2 miles*, discusses Meadow Run, the name of the brook near what was a large beaver meadow in the 19th century. It was “one of the few natural clearings that gave settlers a place to obtain hay for their cattle.” The site was later developed for the Storytown USA/Great Escape amusement park. Also at *5.2 miles*, the history of Glen Lake to the east is recounted. The lake was once referred to as Big Pond, Round Pond and Valentine’s Pond. The outlet to the east furnished power to a half-dozen mills in the early days of the settlement on the lake. A summer post office once operated on the lake.

Notes: Walking bikes across Glen Lake Road is strongly advised because of speed of traffic around approaching bends in the road. Bikeway from Ash Drive to Route 149 bikeway bridge travels behind the Million Dollar Half-Mile outlet stores. The climb to the bikeway bridge is challenging, but this is the last uphill battle on the way north. The bubbling brook that parallels the bikeway and shade trees near the top offer some comfort. Watch for fast-moving southbound cyclists traveling down the hill at about 25 mph (it’s a good ride).



SEVENTH MILE

Difficulty: Smooth traveling and coasting north after the Route 149 bikeway bridge.

Route: *6.24 miles* - bikeway bridge over Route 149; *6.82 miles* - access to Col. Ephraim Williams monument.

What's nearby: Food and bathrooms available in outlet shopping plazas just west of the Route 149 bikeway bridge.

Locking up: Bike rack at access point to Col. Ephraim Williams monument.

History: At *6.0 miles*, heritage sign states that the settlement of French Mountain was once located to the west of the bikeway. (The actual mountain is to the east of the trail.) Also nearby was George Brown's Halfway House, a popular stopping place and location of early Warren County fairs, west of the Route 149 and Route 9 intersection. At *6.29 miles*, a heritage sign notes that the bikeway north of the intersection of Route 149 and Route 9 follows a centuries-old travel corridor that was a foot-path during the French and Indian War and a plank toll road for stagecoaches after that time. An electric trolley line and a highway preceded the current Route 9, as did a railroad. Power lines just west of the bikeway follow the former electric railway. On an embankment a few feet further west is the bed of the highway that preceded the existing Route 9. The bikeway between the Route 149 bridge and the bikeway picnic area to the north is on an old railroad line.

Notes: To access Million Dollar Half-Mile outlet stores, use turn-offs on either end of the Route 140 bikeway bridge. Because of heavy traffic in the area and some uneven terrain on the shoulders, cyclists should walk their bikes to the parking lot of the first outlet plaza. The walking trail from the bikeway to the Col. Ephraim Williams monument is longer and steeper than many assume. You will be leaving your bicycle far behind to get to the fenced-in white monument as you follow a winding trail. The marble monument, erected in 1854 by alumni of Williams College, marks the spot where Williams died in "bloody combat" on Sept. 8, 1755, while "defending the frontiers of his native state" of Massachusetts in the French and Indian War. The old electric trolley line route is evident when climbing the trail to the Williams monument, as is the highway that preceded the current Route 9. The Williams monument has separate viewing areas with historical information. One is on the bikeway side and the other is accessed from Route 9.



EIGHTH MILE

Difficulty: Easy pedaling on level pavement.

Route: *7.36 miles* - bikeway picnic area, with two picnic tables and space for large groups of bicyclists to stop in one location; *7.5 miles* - watch for frost heaves in pavement; *7.97 miles* - bikeway begins to parallel Route 9, separated by a guardrail.

What's nearby: At *7.97 miles*, in front of the Lyn Aire Motel, a water and soda machine and two large benches just off the bikeway offer refreshment and a place to rest for bikeway users.

History: At *7.18 miles*, a heritage sign notes that the first engagement of the Battle of Lake George of the French and Indian War took place on Sept. 8, 1755, between Colonial troops and their Mohawk Indian allies and the French in this area. The Colonial army marched into a trap by the French. At *7.7 miles*, a heritage sign states that Bloody Pond, near this spot, got its name after the third engagement of the Battle of Lake George, on Sept. 8, 1755. The body of water was “named for the color of its water after the bodies of more than 200 retreating French soldiers and Indians were killed and thrown into this pond.”

Notes: Watch for mailboxes jutting into the bikeway in the section that parallels Route 9. North of the bikeway picnic area, Wild West Stables and its horse trails are viewable to the east.



NINTH MILE

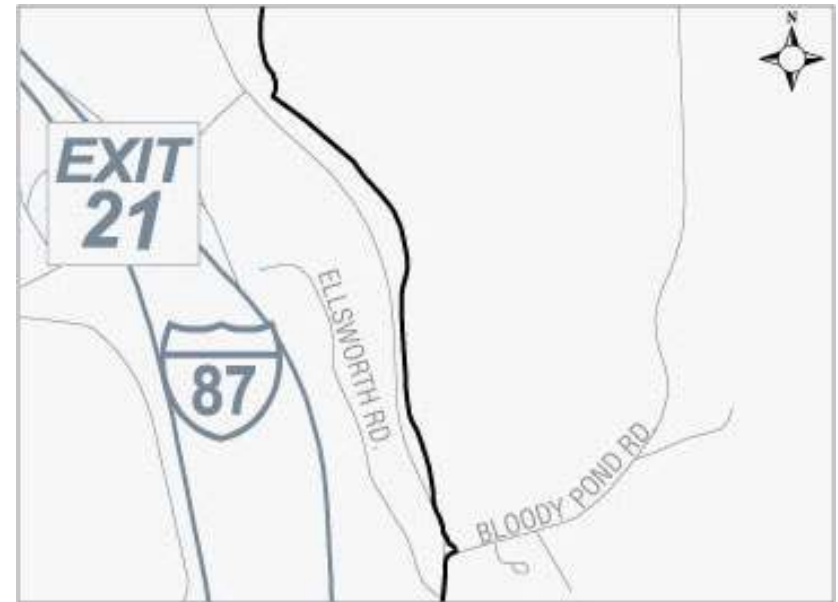
Difficulty: A glorious downhill ride (with a few level sections) to Battlefield Park in the village of Lake George. Returning south from the village can be a long, challenging uphill ride for the uninitiated.

Route: *8.06 miles* - all-way stop signs at new Route 9 entrance to Wild West Stables; *8.14 miles* - cross Bloody Pond Road (busy intersection); *8.2 miles* - cross in front of Magic Forest amusement park and begin downhill ride to village of Lake George; *8.35 miles* - steep part of bikeway levels off some; *8.6 miles* - trail flattens out; *8.9 miles* - trail enters short section of Old Military Road, a residential area, for some on-road riding; *8.96 miles* - off-road riding resumes.

What's nearby: Leaving the bikeway and pedaling a short section of Old Military Road west to Route 9 leads to restaurants and amusements.

History: At *8.7 miles*, heritage sign notes that Old Military Road parallels the general route of the historic military road between Fort Edward and Lake George. “Built in three days in 1755, the highway was used by French, English, Indian and American warriors during 18th-century conflicts.” At *8.99 miles*, a heritage sign explains that the location was part of the Knox Trail, named after Henry Knox, an American general whose men “labored through this location” to move 59 captured artillery pieces “across lakes, rivers and mountains” from Fort Ticonderoga to the Boston area, from December 1775 through February 1776, “to support the American effort to retake Boston from the British” in the Revolutionary War.

Notes: Magic Forest’s safari trail is viewable down a hill to the east of the bikeway just north of the amusement park. Recorded jungle sounds can often be heard from the bikeway. Watch for struggling cyclists using the entirety of the bikeway to climb the steep portion near Magic Forest.



TENTH MILE

Route: *9.12 miles* - cross private drive (all-way stop signs); *9.39 miles* - cross bikeway bridge over East Shore Drive; *9.86 miles* - arrive at the northern terminus of the bikeway in Battlefield Park overlooking “The Queen of American Lakes.”

What’s nearby: Leaving the bikeway at the bridge over East Shore Drive and following the road west for *0.2 miles* is another way to get to Route 9 businesses, including a Rite Aid.

History: At *9.39 miles*, a heritage sign states that the second engagement of the Battle of Lake George, on Sept. 8, 1755, involved the French advancing toward the Colonials under Gen. William Johnson. The battle represented the first time an army of Colonialists stood up to and defeated a European-trained professional army. At *9.86 miles*, a heritage sign notes that the Delaware and Hudson Railroad had a side track nicknamed the “submarine railway,” which sloped into Lake George. The track extended about 200 feet into the lake, ending about 15 feet below the surface. “Rail cars linked to a steel cable were lowered into the water to a depth where boats could float free of their cradles. ... The unique track provided nearly 40 years of service before its retirement and partial removal in 1950.” A portion of the track is preserved underwater.



Notes: Beach Road Bait & Tackle near the Holiday Inn Resort on Route 9 in Lake George has about 16 bikes to rent and can steer people toward the bikeway. Bike racks are located on the west side of Battlefield Park along Beach Road. Other bike racks in the village include those near the information center at the corner of Canada Street and Beach Road.