

BIG SILOS LOOP

RIDE NOTES:

Barns, silos, farm fields, a windmill, a cemetery.
Hamlets of Quarryville, Mt. Salem, Clove, and
Unionville, NY.

DISTANCE: 14.9 mi. Elev. Gain: 1,142 ft.

The ride starts at the Wantage Rec Field at the intersection of Lott and Born Roads. If the gate is open, you can park in the Rec Field. If not, park near, but not blocking, the gate.

0.0 Intersection of Lott and Born Roads. From Born Rd, turn left onto Lott Rd.

The Wantage Rec Field at the end of Born Rd was once the Wantage Township Dump. Before sanitary landfills, local municipalities would dig a giant pit and fill it with garbage, periodically burning the pile to reduce its size. In 1973, the cottage I purchased in Lake Neepaulin contained a sofa. Upon sitting one day, a coil impaled me and I immediately brought it to the dump. That sofa is lying somewhere under second base.

0.5 Pass Rose Morrow Rd on your left.

1.0 Turn right onto Sally Harden Rd.

1.3 Pass Quarry Rd.

Quarry Rd is named for a small bluestone quarry that operated here from the late 1800s until 1910 when cement replaced bluestone.

2.7 Turn left onto Beemer Rd.

2.9 Ricker's Five Silo Farm

The blue Harvestore silo is the tallest structure (excluding cell phone towers) in Wantage. In July, 2009, an F2 tornado crossed this farm, damaging the farmhouse and barns and uprooting dozens of mature trees on Beemer Rd. A map, showing the tornado's path through Wantage, can be found in the NJ Herald's July 31, 2009 issue, available on microfilm at the Sussex-Wantage Library.

3.6 Beemer Farm

Beemer Rd is named after the Beemers, early white settlers of Wantage. On page 88 of *Living on the Farm* (available to borrow from Sussex County Library) Park Beemer relates the occurrence of his grandparents' wedding in the parlor of this farmhouse in 1872. When you go around the bend, you can see the part of the farmhouse that looks like an addition, but is the original structure which I've been told dates back to the 1800s and possibly the late 1700s.

4.4 Turn right onto Rose Morrow Rd.

Straight ahead (before you turn) and down the long driveway was the Young School, operated by Barbara Young from 1975—2001. Ask any graduate of this place and he/she will regale you with adventurous stories of homemade zip lines, creekside forays, hayrides on a wooden hay wagon, farm animals, and the best time of their lives.

4.6 In the 1960s, the owner of this home had one room converted into a beauty parlor. The clientele, from my recollection, were all mature women who, upon leaving, looked like they were ready for Sunday church service. There was no shingle advertising the business, but locals knew it as “Beauty on the Bend.” The beauty shop was operated for more than three decades.

4.7 The house on the right was once the Clove District one-room schoolhouse. The District Clerk was Rose Morrow.

5.0 Turn right onto Unionville Rd.

5.6 Jacob Swartout Farm

Before NASCAR, horse racing was enormously popular, and Wantage had its own race track. For some excellent photos, check out William Truran’s book *Sussex and Wantage*, available to

borrow at our local library. The famous horse “Goldsmith Maid” was born and raised on this farm. Look for the historical marker on your right.

6.2 Pass Skytop Rd on your left.

6.3 Bear left onto Clove Rd.

Sgt. Thomas Talmadge of Wantage led a group of men from Hamburg, Lafayette, and Wantage along Clove Rd to Mt. Salem, then to Greenville, NY. They then proceeded to Lackawaxen, PA where they fought in The Battle of Minisink in July, 1779. The Minisink Valley Historical Society and the Port Jervis, NY Library have lots of information about this Revolutionary War Battle.

7.2 Pass Moore Rd on right.

8.1 Pass Rayewood RV Center on right.

If you need to buy or rent an RV, this is the place—the Rayes are friendly and knowledgeable.

8.9 Mt Salem

Turn right onto Mt. Salem Rd. In 1860, this hamlet contained a blacksmith and wheelwright shops, a hotel, two stores, a post office, a school, and two Baptist churches.

9.1 Mt Salem Cemetery

The stone wall around the cemetery was built by John Carpenter, a one-armed mason, in the 1920s. The oldest gravestone belongs to the soul of Eliakim Everett, who died in 1828.

9.3 Cross Gemmer Rd intersection.

9.7 Look in the field on your left for the bottom portion of a stone silo, the only remaining evidence of a long-gone farm. Baptisms from the Mt Salem Church were held in the stream below the dam on your right.

10.0 Pass Moore and Rockport Roads on your right, Goodrich Rd on your left.

11.1 Turn left onto Unionville Rd (County Rt 651).

11.2 Appalachian Trail Crossing

The AT crossings in Wantage are inconspicuous. You really have to look closely for what resemble nothing more than deer trails. If you find the trail and look into the woods, you'll see the identifying AT marker, a 2"X 6" white rectangular blaze on a tree.

11.4 NJ/NY Border

Road name turns to NY Rt 36 (Main St).

- 11.9 Pass Unionville Presbyterian Church and Our Lady of the Scapular. Love the bell towers!
- 12.0 Downtown Unionville
- A pizzeria, general store, and tavern would love your business.
- Bear right onto Rt 284.
- 12.1 Turn right onto Jersey Ave.
- 12.2 Unionville Cemetery
- 12.4 Re-enter New Jersey. Re-cross Appalachian Tr.
- 13.5 Look behind the barn for a still-standing windmill. Only a few remain in Wantage, reminding us of days before electricity.
- 13.8 Pass Wolfpit Rd on right.
- 14.0 Pass Havens Rd on left.
- 14.1 Lott/Gilman Farm
- Jane Lott-Gilman taught in a one-room schoolhouse in Wantage and then transitioned to the Wantage School during “consolidation” in 1937. Mrs. Gilman was responsible for publishing *Our Wantage Heritage*, a book filled with local history.
- 14.9 Return to Born Rd.