

Accommodations

Jubilee College State Park: Many campsites; 13015 West Fussner Rd., Brimfield; (309) 446-3758; <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/parks/r1/jubilee.htm>.

Old Church House Inn: Bed-and-breakfast located in a restored church; 1416 East Mossville Rd., Mossville; (309) 579-2300.

Super 8: Convenient location is very close to the start of the ride; 615 South 4th St., Chilli-cothe; (309) 274-2568.

Bike Shops

Bushwhacker: Combination bike, outdoors, and patio furniture shop has a loyal following in the area; 4700 North University in the Metro Centre,

Peoria; (309) 692-4812; <http://bushwhacker.com>.

Restrooms

Start/finish: Shore Acres Park has restrooms in the water park building.

Mile 26.1: Restrooms are available at Tanners Orchard.

Maps

USGS: Rome quad, La Prairie Center quad, Castleton quad, Edelstein quad, Spring Bay quad.

DeLorme: Illinois Atlas & Gazetteer: Pages 41 and 33.

23 Jubilee College Challenge

This classic central Illinois ride provides a thorough introduction to the pastoral landscape of western Peoria County. Memorable hills and vales greet you in the first and final miles of the ride. In between, the gently undulating farmland is broken up by creeks, small towns, and abandoned strip mines now covered in grassland and filled with occasional small lakes and ponds.

Start: Park at the picnic shelter on the left as you enter Jubilee College State Historic Site.

Length: 44.8 miles.

Terrain: Gently rolling farmland dominates this route, but there are enough hills at the begin-

ning and the end to make it a challenge for many beginning riders.

Traffic and hazards: US 150 at the beginning of the ride and Brimfield-Jubilee Road at the end are both busy roads.

Getting there: From I-74 in Peoria, head northwest to exit 82. Turn right on Kickapoo-Edwards Road, then left on US 150. Turn right on Princeville-Jubilee Road (follow the signs for the Jubilee College State Historic Site). Turn left on Jubilee College Road and follow it into the historic site. Park in the first lot on the left at the picnic shelter. Coordinates for starting point: 16T 265595E 4521979N

The Ride

It's for good reason that Peoria-area cycling groups have been happily turning their pedals along these roads for more than thirty years. The route offers a taste of the rural bliss that keeps many central Illinoisans firmly rooted in the area: In between pleasant

little towns, you'll encounter generous helpings of wooded hills and grasslands mixed with peaceful rolling farmland. Topping it off is an interesting starting point at the historic grounds of Jubilee College State Park.

The historic building that housed Jubilee College from 1840 to 1871 is a stone's throw from the parking area where this ride begins. Set within rolling grassy grounds studded with large old oaks is the two-story Gothic Revival building that has been thoroughly restored by the state. The school was founded as a seminary for Episcopal ministers heading westward, but it ended up primarily serving as a boarding high school. Philander Chase, founder of Jubilee (as well as Kenyon College in Ohio), drew up plans to build an elaborate campus, but they never came to fruition for lack of funding. Chase exerted tight control over all the goings-on at the college, and after his death in 1852, the school steadily declined.

The ride starts with a brief tour of this attractive state park. Immediately upon leaving the historic site, the park road drops steeply—a 13 percent grade—through dense woodland on its way down to Jubilee Creek. While following the winding road through the southern section of the 3,200-acre park, you'll pass a series of picnicking spots and the entrance to the park's camping area.

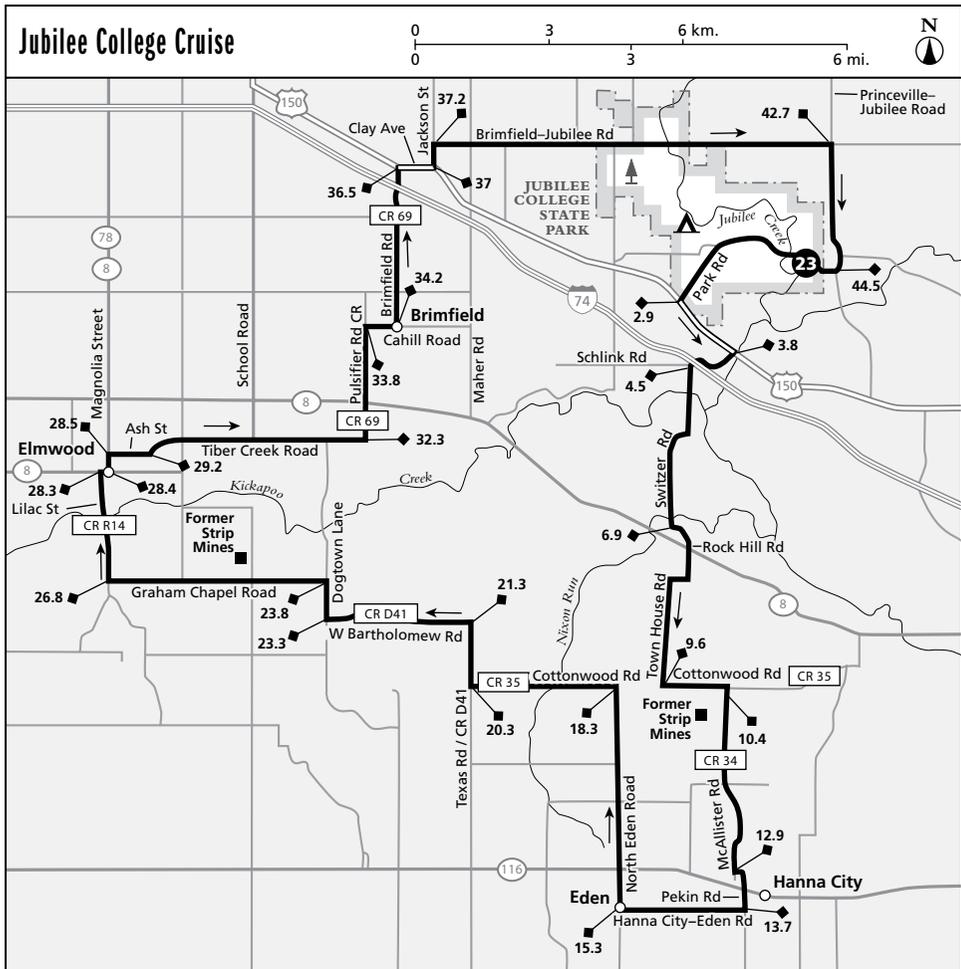
After contending with traffic along a brief stretch of US 150 and then ducking under I-74, you'll encounter a ribbony stretch of Kickapoo Creek followed by a short, steep hill that appears from a distance to be a vertical wall of pavement. At the top, claim the reward: an expansive view of the hilly, wooded landscape to the east.

The road takes a big dip before crossing SR 8; after SR 8, watch your speed on a couple of sharp turns on short downhill sections. The many ponds, long narrow lakes, and accompanying mounds on the way to Elmwood reveal the area's strip-mining past. Surface mining for coal was widespread in this area from the 1950s to the 1970s (the last Peoria-area strip-mining operation closed in 1996). Underground coal mines also operated locally: Hanna City hosted an active underground mine during the early twentieth century. Now only a handful of surface and underground coal mining exists in Illinois, mostly in the southern part of the state.

Elmwood hosts a pleasant town square containing a bandstand and a sculpture by Laredo Taft, who was born in the town in 1860. Taft was perhaps the most prominent sculptor in Illinois in the early twentieth century. His most well-known works are the 100-foot-long *Fountain of Time* at the University of Chicago and the 50-foot-tall Black Hawk statue near Oregon, Illinois. His sculpture in Elmwood, *The Pioneers*, unveiled in 1928, honors the men and women who "bridged the streams, subdued the soil and founded a state."

On the way out of Elmwood, you'll pass a small Laredo Taft museum situated within one of the spacious Victorian houses just off Magnolia Street. Outside of Elmwood on Tiber Creek Road, watch for the rambling lawn on the right that has been adorned with an array of carefully arranged plants, trees, and flowers.

After Brimfield, you'll have the pleasure of roller-coastering along a 5.5-mile stretch of Brimfield-Jubilee Road that takes you back to Jubilee College State Park. The hills



are steep and intense, but not very high: If you gather some steam on the way down one hill, you can usually make it halfway up the next one without much effort.

Miles and Directions

- 0.0** Leaving Jubilee College State Historic Site, turn left on the road that drops down the hill and heads through the park.
- 2.9** Leaving the state park, turn left on US 150. Watch for traffic.
- 3.8** Turn right on Schlink Road.
- 4.5** Turn left on Switzer Road.
- 6.9** Turn left on Rockhill Road. South of SR 8, this road turns into Town House Road. Watch your speed on the sharp turns.
- 9.6** Turn left on West Cottonwood Road/CR 35.

- 10.4** Turn right on McAllister Road/CR 34. No road sign is posted at this intersection—it's the first right turn after turning onto West Cottonwood Road.
- 12.9** Turn left on Pekin Road. This turn comes at the bottom of a dip—watch your speed.
- 13.7** Turn right on Hanna City–Eden Road.
- 15.5** Turn right on North Eden Road (the road sign is difficult to read because it has faded).
- 18.3** Turn left on West Cottonwood Road/CR 35.
- 20.3** Turn right on Texas Road/CR D41.
- 21.3** Turn left on Bartholomew Road/CR D41.
- 23.3** Turn right on Dogtown Lane.
- 24.0** Turn left on Graham Chapel Road.
- 26.8** Turn right on CR R14 (name changes to Lilac Street in Elmwood).
- 28.3** Turn right on Main Street (SR 8/78).
- 28.4** Turn left on Magnolia Street (SR 8/78).
- 28.6** Turn right on Ash Street.
- 29.2** Turn left on Tiber Creek Road
- 32.3** Turn left on Pulsifer Road/CR 69.
- 33.8** Turn right on Cahill Road.
- 34.2** Turn left on Brimfield Road/CR 69.
- 36.5** Turn right on Clay Avenue.
- 37.0** Turn left on Jackson Street.
- 37.2** Turn right on Brimfield-Jubilee Road.
- 42.7** Turn right on Princeville-Jubilee Road.
- 44.5** Turn right on Jubilee College Road.
- 44.8** Return to parking lot.

Local Information

Peoria Area Convention & Visitors Bureau: 456 Fulton St., Suite 300, Peoria; (800) 747-0302; www.peoria.org.

Local Events/Attractions

Christ Orchard: Pick your own apples, cherries, plums, pumpkins, and squashes, and purchase jam, jelly, honey, cider, and Indian corn; 4313 North Texas Rd., Elmwood; (309) 446-9751; www.christorchardonline.com.

Elmwood Historical Society/Laredo Taft Museum: 302 North Magnolia St., Elmwood; (309) 742-7791 or (309) 742-2431.

Illinois Valley Wheelm'n: In September the club hosts the No Baloney Ride on this route, which brings in several hundred people and boasts the

“best and most plentiful food of any ride in the area”; 6518 North Sheridan Rd., Suite 2, Peoria; www.ivwheelmn.org.

Jubilee College State Historic Site: The state pulled out all the stops in rehabbing this building; free tours offered; 11817 Jubilee College Rd., Brimfield; (309) 243-9489.

Restaurants

Ludy's Kickapoo Creek Saloon: Serves up highly celebrated burgers with a special mix of seasoning; 9828 US 150, Edwards; (309) 692-6446.

Accommodations

Hotels/motels: You'll find several chain establishments on War Memorial Drive (US 150) on the way into Peoria.

Jubilee College State Park: The park has several camping areas, including a spot for walk-in tent camping; 13015 West Fussner Rd., Brimfield; (309) 446-3758; <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/parks/r1/jubilee.htm>.

Wildlife Prairie State Park: This zoo/park with a pioneer farmstead offers several lodging options, most notably a set of train cabooses; 3826 North Taylor Rd., Hanna City; (309) 676-0998; www.wildlifeprairiestatepark.org.

Bike Shops

Bushwhacker: Combination bike, outdoors, and patio furniture shop has a loyal following in the area; 4700 North University in the Metro Centre, Peoria; (309) 692-4812; <http://bushwhacker.com>.

Restrooms

Start/finish: Restrooms located across from parking area.

Mile 13.3: Turn right on SR 116 to reach the gas station/convenience store in Hanna City.

Mile 28.5: Restrooms are available at the gas station and Tastee Freez on Main Street in Elmwood.

Mile 36.6: Turn right on US 150 to reach the gas station/convenience store in Brimfield.

Maps

USGS: Oak Hill quad, Hanna City quad, Elmwood quad.

DeLorme: Illinois Atlas & Gazetteer: Page 40.

24 Kickapoo State Park Ramble

It's hard to believe that all the scenic lakes and wooded hills at Kickapoo State Park were once home to an extensive strip-mining operation. After marveling at this enormous reclamation project, you'll tour the quiet country roads that border the Middle Fork State Fish and Wildlife Area and ride through the valley carved out by a scenic river.

Start: Clear Lake parking area between the canoe launch and Kickapoo Park Road.

Length: 25.8 miles.

Terrain: Gently rolling terrain dominates, but a few steep hills crop up along the way.

Traffic and hazards: The first mile on Newton Road may have steady truck traffic. Trucks will diminish after crossing CR 2150 North.

Getting there: Take exit 206 from I-74 west of Danville. Head north on Oakwood Street. Turn right on Glenburn Creek Road and follow it into Kickapoo State Park. Just after crossing the Middle Fork of the Vermillion River, park in the small lot on the left, adjacent to Kickapoo Landing. Coordinates for starting point: 16T 436919E 4443143N

The Ride

What was once considered a forsaken blight on the land is now one of the most popular parks in central Illinois. Located 6 miles west of Danville, the land at Kickapoo State Park was strip-mined for coal for nearly a hundred years. Strip mines were big business within Vermillion County, and according to the State of Illinois, these