

Events & Points of Interest on Major Taylor Century Rides

C=Century, M=Metric, Q=Quarter followed by the approximate mile mark gives you an idea where the event or POI is located. A description and directions are also provided. These are but a few of the many sites you will see on your ride. Let us know if you discover something we should add here.

C-0, M-0, Q-0 Whitin Community Center, Whitinsville, MA. The historic mill village of Whitinsville and the Whitin Community Center exist today because of the success and generosity of generations of Whitin families. Beginning in the early 1800's, the Whitins built their fortune milling cotton and manufacturing textile machinery. The Whitinsville Cotton Mill and the Whitin Machine Works grew into industrial giants, and with their growth emerged an entire community. The company's workers were cared for in a paternalistic style that went far beyond the provisions of wages and housing. The Whitins built churches, fire stations, a reservoir for water and recreation, a hospital, Town Hall, and even a retirement home. For over 150 years, the family's commitment to strengthening the quality of life continued. In 1922, four Whitin daughters: Elsa, Katharine, Lois, and Elizabeth, gave the funds to build a gym and pool for the enjoyment of local citizens in memory of their father, George Marston Whitin. This recreation center, known affectionately in earlier days as "The Gym," was one of the finest facilities in the state.

C-26.0 Chestnut Hill Meeting House, Millville MA. The Chestnut Hill Meeting House is the oldest meeting house in Massachusetts to survive in its original condition. It was constructed in 1769 from native timber felled nearby and milled by local residents. Turn left on Chestnut Hill Road. Double-back to get on route.

C-29.0 Millville Lock, Millville MA. Inspired by the success of the Erie Canal (begun in 1817) and spurred by the expansion of textile manufacturing along the Blackstone River in the early 19th century, the Blackstone Canal was built to link Central Massachusetts to the Atlantic via Providence, RI. Between 1828 and 1848, segments of the river were paralleled by the canal on which horse-drawn boats carried freight and passengers between Worcester and Providence. Initially highly successful, the canal was made obsolete by the completion of the railroad in 1847. Most of the canal structures are now gone, but the remains of lock chambers, dams, bridges, workers' housing, and a company store serve to remind us of the rich industrial history of the Blackstone River Valley. Dismount at the parking lot on your left about .3 miles past the bridge that is under construction. Follow the signs down a path to your left until you come to the locks. It is about ½ mile.

C-M-27.6 Wallum Lake / Douglas State Forest, Douglas, MA. Bordering both Connecticut and Rhode Island, this popular 4,640-acre state forest offers a variety of recreational opportunities. Visitors can enjoy swimming, boating and fishing at Wallum Lake and hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling on miles of woodland trails. On the Metric ride you will pass the entrance to the state forest, on the Century ride, turn right at the Wallum Lake / Douglas State Forest sign. Double-back and continue straight on Cedar St.

C-40.0 Town of Chepachet, Chepachet, RI is a charming little village with a cluster of antique, arts, crafts and collectible shops for everyone to browse. A small waterfall and sometimes raging stream, the Chepachet River, passes through the community and the bridge holds the green metal sign is a humorous reminder of an May 25, 1826 escaped circus elephant named Betty which gave the villagers a wild search but ended on a sad note with the elephant being shot. This historical tale is the precursor of the Barnum and Bailey Circus as Betty's owner, named Hakaliah Bailey, used to wander with his elephant from town to town. Chepachet is along the century route.

C-6.0, M-6.0, Q-6.0 Manchaug Mills, Sutton, MA. One of many historic mills in the Blackstone Valley. As with other mills in the area, the Manchaug Mill is now home to high technology, warehousing, and other small businesses. Take a few moments to enjoy the sounds of Manchaug Falls across the street from the mill. The route will continue to your left.

C-59.0 Thompson International Speedway, Thompson, CT. This grand lady still is the crown jewel in short track racing in the northeast. Thompson Int'l Speedway hosts several major events each year and also provides a wonderful variety of weekly racing programs. These major events attract thousands of fans from both the U.S. and Canada. Unlike so many race facilities that have fallen on hard times or have disappeared from the landscape, Thompson Int'l Speedway continues to thrive even after more than sixty years. The speedway is along the Century route.

C-69.1, M-31.8, Q-10.2 Whittier Farms, Sutton MA. Whittier Farms is located in the historic and picturesque town of Sutton, Massachusetts. The farm is presently owned and operated by the fourth and fifth generation of the Whittier Family. The farm consists of two locations, which oversee each other from the tops of two hills with rolling fields nestled between them, depicting a true New England countryside. The chocolate milk is a must try at this local dairy. This is also the SAG stop for the ride.

C-69.5, M-32.3, Q-10.7 Waters Farms, Sutton MA. Waters Farm Days, October 3. Waters Farm is a historical farm that hosts many great events in Sutton including winter carriage rides and summertime festivals. It is on a simply gorgeous piece of land that overlooks the entire valley. Turn right on Waters Road about ½ mile from the Whittier Farm SAG stop. Ride 1/3 mile and Waters Farm is on your left. Double-back to get on route. Animals, wagon rides, food, and much more. Well worth a visit and possibly lunch.

Q-11.9 Pauper's Cemetery, Sutton MA. See one of the oldest cemeteries in the town. Can you find the headstone of the last known Native American to be buried in the town? The cemetery is on your left after you turn right on Town Farm Road

Q-15.6 Eaton Farm Confectioners, Sutton MA. Homemade chocolates since 1889. Try the Lust Bar. Take a left at the Burbank Rd / Armsby Road intersection off Boston Road. Ride ¼ mile. Eaton Farm is on your right. Double back to route.

Q-18.8 Keown's Orchard, Sutton MA. Heritage Homecoming and Farm Day -October 3 (All Day) Our pick your own pumpkin patch will be open today! We will be giving free tours of our orchards, barn, packing shed, and cold storage today, reflecting the history of our farm as part of the unique history of the Blackstone Valley. Apple picking as well

C-19.3, C-95.9, M-58.5, West Hill Dam & Park, Northbridge & Uxbridge, MA. West Hill Dam and Park is a 557-acre park operated by the Army Corps of Engineers. Park facilities include five miles of trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding and a swimming area at Harrington Pool, formed by the West River. Ranger programs are also offered. Open Memorial Day to Labor Day.

C-74.9, M-37.6 Asa Water's Mansion, Millbury, MA. This fabulous mansion was constructed by Asa Waters II in the late 1820s. Unlike most in the Blackstone Valley, the fortune of the Waters family was not based on textiles, but guns. In 1808, Asa Waters II built armory along the banks of the Blackstone River just down behind the house, giving this area the name of Armory Village. Water's great-grandson was William Howard Taft, elected President of the United States in 1908. Today the Waters Mansion is home to the Millbury Historical Society, which offers tours, lectures and special events here. As you enter Millbury, the mansion will be on your right side as you enter downtown.

C-82.5, M-45.2 Grafton Town Common, Grafton, MA. View a quintessential example of a New England Town common here in Grafton, so perfect in fact it was used as a set for a Hollywood movie. Surrounding the common today are churches, shops and a number of homes, some former mansions of the town's wealthy, others converted shoe and boot shops. You may recognize the common from New England Tourism commercials on TV.