



Historic Route Series

Throughout the last 19 years we have varied our StepTrek routes to allow for exploration of all the areas of our neighborhood and steps. To celebrate our 20th anniversary, we are releasing a variety of these historic routes where you can safely take an urban hike in our neighborhood, at your leisure.

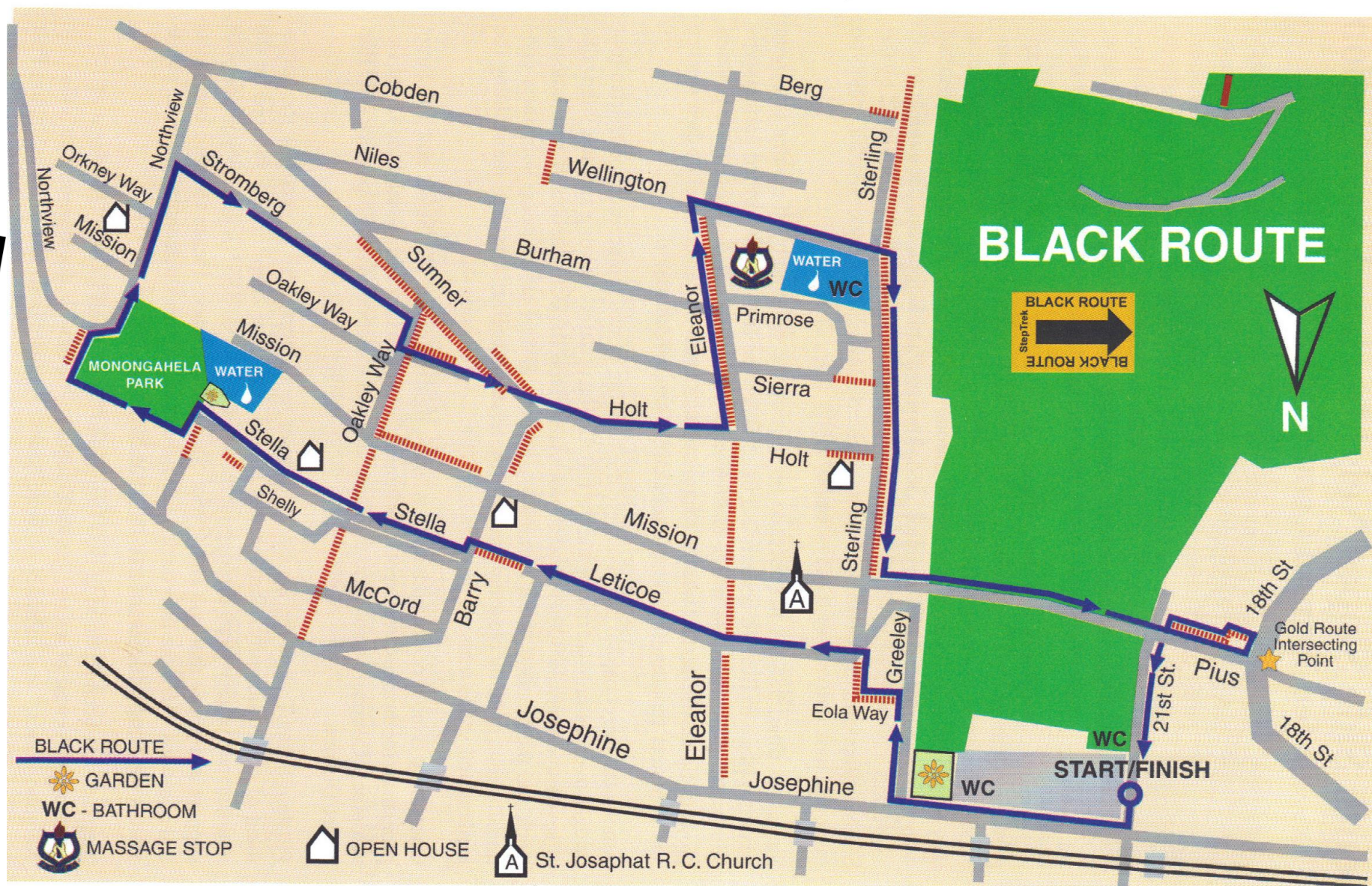


Historic Route Series

2008 Black Route

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#StepTrek

* denotes history or significant building



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1. **Starting** at the Registration Area (21st Street at Josephine), make a right as you exit the parking lot and turn right onto Josephine St. Walk east toward 23rd St. The miniature maples trees on the railroad side of the street are some of the 54 trees planted by the Pittsburgh Shade Tree Commission in spring 2003 after the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Assoc. (SSSNA) advocated for their planting and recruited tree stewards. The first street on the right is Greeley. Turn right. Here is the first of six gardens maintained by SSSNA members. It was planted in conjunction with the Western Penna. Conservancy. Cross Greeley to the steps on the left, and ascend Eola Way.
2. **Eola Way Steps** – This flight of stairs, built in 1947, contain 96 steps that are 4-ft wide. They start at Greeley, climb 51 steps and turn right. Notice the stone or brick foundation ruins perched over the hillside on the right.
3. **Leticoe and Sterling Sts.** – At the top of the steps is the rear corner of St. Josaphat Chapel. The front of the church is up one block at the intersection of Mission & Sterling streets. Either continue up Sterling to view the church front, or turn left and continue on Leticoe Street behind the church. Jump to #6 below to continue the route.
4. * **St. Josaphat Chapel** – Dedicated in 1916, the church was built to serve a Polish parish that was established in 1901. The building is Romanesque with a Byzantium influence evident in the arches, pillars and bell tower. The consolidation of Catholic churches a few years ago had limited its usage to weddings and funerals. The church closed permanently after a section of ceiling collapsed about the casket of the last caretaker during his funeral mass. The main altar held relics of St. Josaphat. In the rear, beneath the choir balcony, hung a picture of the Black Madonna. Many Polish descendants continue to inhabit this section of the Slopes.
5. **Joining from Gold Route** – At stop sign, turn left and descend Sterling Street. Stay right against the church wall. Behind the church is Leticoe St. Turn right.
6. **Continuing with Black Route on Leticoe St.** – Stay right and descend the street to the terraced area on the right. Do not walk down the left side of the street. Cross before the two white houses on the right. At the end of the sidewalk are the Eleanor St. steps, which rise to the right. The area is lush with vegetation that shrouds the steps and hides the houses on this city “paper” street. Continue down the 23 steps to Leticoe. Continue forward, and walk up the street. In the 2500 block, just past the crest of the hill, look left to the houses tucked behind houses. Close quarters! Continue to Kosciuszko Way
7. **Leticoe St Steps** – Located at the eastern terminus of Leticoe St., these 3-ft. wide wooden steps were rebuilt in the 1990’s. There are 57 steps. At the top, the street signs are on the utility pole by the mail box to the left. Take care and then cross Barry St. to Stella Way.
8. **Stella St.** – Go ahead . . . give it your best Marlon Brando. “STELLA!” Walk to the metal fencing that divides the road. In 1935 the Work Projects Administration (WPA) terraced this part of the hillside and created the bi-level street topped with an iron fence. In 1998 Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation designated the Stella-Shelley fence as a historically significant landmark. Stay left on the lower level, and climb two steps to Oakley Way.
9. **Oakley Way Steps** – A total of 289 steps, built in 1928, climb the equivalent of 18 floors from Josephine St. below to Mission St. above. You’ll only ascend 17 of them and rejoin Stella, where you make a left.
10. **Stella Way** – Continue along Stella to the next intersection, where, on the right, two of eight townhouses were built in 2003 by the South Side Local Development Company in cooperation with the SSSNA. Even these new homes had to be shoe-horned into the hillside. Continue walking on the right side.
11. **Tear Drop Garden** – At the end of Stella, neighbors planted a community garden. Its tear-drop shape originated the name. Ahead is a large grassy field known as Monongahela Park.
12. * **Monongahela Park** – Step around the guardrail to enter the park. Years ago the area here was a water basin. The basin was filled with earth in the 1950s. A water station is located within the park. Cross the ball fields and climb 18 steps to the upper park. Cross the clearing to the steps at the far end. That’s Josephine St. on the left, which winds up the slopes.
13. **Northview Steps** – Turn right. These 115 steps climb through a nicely shaded area. On the left are the remains of a foundation. At the top of the steps, make a right onto Northview St.
14. **Northview St.** – Northview curves to the right and passes Mission St. Make a right onto Stromberg St.

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15. **Stromberg St.** – Take in the sweeping view of downtown and Oakland. The Cathedral of Learning is on the right. Continue along Stromberg.
16. * **Company Houses** – Coal was mined in this area and transported by incline down the slope to the mills. To house the workers, the coal company built the eight houses on the left, which begin at 2918 Stromberg. Uniformly square, the first four have peaked roofs, and the next four have traditional tent or sloped roofs.
17. **Stromberg St.** – Below on the flats is South Side Works, a successful brownfield development, on the site of a former steel mill, of residences, shops and offices. At the stop sign, cross Oakley Way to the set of steps on the far side.
18. **Oakley Way Steps** – Descend 17 steps and make left to rejoin Stromberg St.
19. **Stromberg St.** – Take Stromberg to where the pavement stops. Follow the fence on the left. Make a left around the shed and join the Sumner St. steps directly ahead.
20. **Sumner St. Steps** – Stay to your right, climb 4 steps, walk 30 feet and turn right. Enter the woods and descend 57 steps to Holt St.
21. **Holt St.** – Make a left on Holt. Cross to the right and step onto the sidewalk. A series of 15 steps lead to the wood steps at 51 Holt. Climb the steps to street level, or continue along the walk in front of the homes set below street level on the right.
- * **SSSNA Founding** – A fire across from 42 Holt took out three homes during Memorial Day weekend in 1998. Alarmed by the inability of a standard fire truck to negotiate the narrow, windy streets, a group of residents joined forces to create the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association and lobby for smaller fire trucks with a tighter wheel-turning base.
22. **Holt St. continued** – Follow Holt St to where it intersects with Eleanor St. Approximately seven condos are being built on the right. Turn left and start up Eleanor St.
23. **Eleanor St.** – Keep left on the sidewalk that climbs along Eleanor St. This is a tough climb, but the view at the end is worth it. At Eleanor and Burham St. is the Eleanor St. parklet.
24. **Eleanor St. Parklet** – Every neighborhood needs a place where children can play. This parklet is tucked into the hillside and was rebuilt by Citiparks a few years ago. The terrace of playground equipment and benches offers a stunning view of downtown and the Point, and is a favorite site to watch fireworks.
25. **Eleanor St.** – Continue up Eleanor St. on the left side. These sidewalks contain the fewest number of steps – exactly one – of any in the City. A much needed handrail assists the ascent up the steep slope. A classic paper street, it is the only “street” to climb from Josephine to the top of the Slopes. At night, the vertical path of its street lights are visible from Oakland and the Birmingham Bridge. Continue to Wellington St. and make a right.
26. **Wellington St.** – Follow Wellington to Sterling St. Cross street and make a right onto Sterling St. steps.
27. **Sterling St. Steps** – Built in 1951, the steps connect to Patterson St. above and Mission St. below.
28. * **Rest Stop** – Sterling & Primrose Streets: A water, restroom and massage stop is at the corner. Take five and enjoy a break from the action. When ready, return to Sterling St steps and continue descent.
29. **Sterling St. Steps** – While descending, notice Oakland and the Flats in front. To the left is downtown. These 251 steps drop down to Mission Street.
30. **Mission St.** – If you joined the Black Route via the Mission St. bridges and the Gold Route, drop down to # 31 on this list. If not, make a left onto Mission. After the first bridge is the Mission St. pumping station circa 1900. Walk across the second bridge to 18th St. You may join the **Gold Route** by crossing 18th St. at the traffic signal to Pius St. or return to the start by descending the steps behind the bus shelter on the left. These 102 steps drop down to 21st St. and the registration area.
31. **Sterling St.** – Continue on Sterling St. and keep to the sidewalk on the left. Cross over Gomer St. and continue on Sterling to the intersection with Leticoe St. Stay left.
32. **Eola Way Steps** – These 96 steps begin at the corner of Sterling and Leticoe streets. Built in 1947, they drop and turn left on their way down to Greeley St. Perched over the hillside on the left are stone or brick foundations, the ruins of former homes.
33. **Greeley St.** – Make a right onto Greeley and continue past the garden on your left. It was planted in conjunction with the Western Penna. Conservancy and is maintained by SSSNA members.
34. **Josephine St.** – Turn left on Josephine St. and return to the registration area at 21st Street.

**SOUTH SIDE
SLOPES
NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION**

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Save the Date!



Oct 1-7, 2020

In our 20th year of the Pittsburgh StepTrek, the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association intends to support our community and region with an outdoor, family friendly, socially distanced, and safe event that will help people to get out and explore our neighborhood. We understand the implications of our current situation with the pandemic and financial fallout that has accompanied it. Our intent is to produce an enjoyable experience in our neighborhood, while keeping our distance from each other.

StepTrek.org