

HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club
Adventure Series – Underground Railroad
Year 3 –Cincinnati OH to Niagara Falls CA/NY

- Dates:** Friday, September 11, 2026 – 8 pm orientation meeting. Two weeks riding: Saturday, September 12 – Saturday, September 26. Depart Buffalo Niagara International Airport Sunday, September 27 (last night lodging included).
- Leaders:** Jimmy Schroeder and Ron Finch; **SAGs:** Mayoma Pendergast and Kathleen Schindler
- Miles:** Approximately 776 miles and ~21,450 feet of elevation gain over 13 ride days, plus 2 rest days. Daily rides average 60 miles and 1,650 feet of elevation gain. The longest rides (three of them) are 75–76 miles.
- Rating:** Intermediate-Advanced
<https://www.heartcycle.org/tour-ratings>
- Riders:** 30
- Price:** \$3,500 (double occupancy). Deposit \$900 at registration. Balance due by June 13, 2026. Single supplement (own room or with non-riding partner): \$5,250.
- Cancellation:** [Standard cancellation policy](#)

Travel insurance is strongly recommended.

OVERVIEW

Join us as we embark on the third and final year of the three-year, Underground Railroad Adventure Series. This 2-week leg of the adventure series takes us from Cincinnati OH to



Niagara Falls, Canada, through multiple historic Underground Railroad (UGRR) sites offering a journey rich in natural beauty and profound history. After 3 days of riding along the Ohio River Valley, the tour joins the Ohio to Erie Trail (OTET) for 7 days on a rails-to-trail bike path across Ohio. Upon reaching Lake Erie, we ride along the shore front through vineyards, orchards, historic Buffalo, and into Canada to the finish at Niagara Falls.

The tour weaves through rolling hills, serene countryside, and dense forests that once served as critical hiding places for those seeking freedom, bringing you closer to understanding the immense courage and resilience of the individuals who traveled this path. The route is dotted with historical markers and preserved safe houses, providing opportunities to reflect on the past while enjoying the present-day tranquility of the surroundings. The journey is punctuated by charming small towns and vibrant cities, each with their own stories connected to the Underground Railroad. This tour provides not only great biking but a deep dive into the rich tapestry of American history and the enduring spirit of freedom. Rest days and group dinners are scheduled in Columbus OH and at a historic retreat on the shore of Lake Erie. Please join us for year 3 as we complete the UGRR journey north to Canada.

ITINERARY

Day 0: Friday, September 11, 2026

Orientation meeting 8:00 pm at the Hampton Inn Cincinnati/Airport South, 7393 Turfway Rd, Florence, KY 41042

Day 1: Saturday, September 12

Florence KY to Cincinnati OH

27 miles and 1,372 ft of elevation gain

A short ride along the Ohio River ends with an expansive crossing into Cincinnati OH and the [National UGRR Freedom Center](#). We get to experience the hills of Cincinnati on the way to the [Harriet Beecher Stowe House](#) and our hotel.





Day 2: Sunday, September 13
Cincinnati OH to Maysville KY

61 miles and 2,200 ft of elevation gain

A gentle ride up the Ohio River to Maysville KY, we will stay in a riverside hotel for our last night on the Ohio River. Known for its small-town charm and connection to bourbon, Maysville was

named one of [Country Living's 10 best small towns in the US in 2025](#).

Day 3: Monday, September 14
Maysville KY to Milford OH

65 miles and 2,617 ft of elevation gain

The [Rankin House](#), with a spectacular view overlooking the Ohio River, was a significant stopping point for fugitive slaves who had crossed the river from [Kentucky](#). A fresh start in the morning helps temper the short steep ride up the bluff, one of greater challenges of the tour.



Day 4: Tuesday, September 15
Milford OH to Xenia OH

53 miles and 1,347 ft of elevation gain

We join the [Ohio to Erie Trail \(OTET\)](#) bike path here. The shaded trail follows the meandering Little Miami River passing the [Fort Ancient Earthworks and Nature Preserve](#).

Day 5: Wednesday, September 16
Xenia OH to Columbus OH

62 miles and 1,057 ft of elevation gain

A fast, riding day with 171 feet net downhill. We ride through the rural Ohio countryside on the bike path with a stop at the [National Afro-American](#)



[Museum and Cultural Center](#) on the Central State University campus. We pass through London (OH) on our way to Columbus.



Day 6: Thursday, September 17

Rest Day in Columbus OH

Known as “The Biggest Small Town in America” our Graduate hotel is in the [Short North Arts District](#) filled with art galleries, boutiques, and restaurants. Columbus offers many activities for a rest day

including the zoo and aquarium, botanical gardens, Museum of Art, and Scioto riverwalk.

Day 7: Friday, September 18
Columbus OH to Mt. Vernon OH

53 miles and 1,236 ft of elevation gain

Back on the OTET bike path through the countryside, we have a stop at the [Hanby House](#) and finish at Mt. Vernon (OH) to stay at The Grand Hotel. Located directly on the town square, this hotel is a step back to Victorian times.



Day 8: Saturday, September 19
Mt Vernon OH to Massillon OH

76 miles and 2,600 ft of elevation gain

The first of the three long days on the tour, the bike path takes us through the heart of Ohio Amish country with wooded hillsides, babbling brooks, idyllic farms, and horse-drawn buggies.

Day 9: Sunday, September 20

Massillon OH to Macedonia OH

51 miles and 903 ft of elevation gain

We ride on the [Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath trail](#) (part of the OTET) around Akron and through portions of [Cuyahoga National Park](#).

Approximately 40% of this trail is hard-packed crushed limestone. A paved alternative/bypass is available.



Day 10: Monday, September 21

Macedonia OH to Austinburg OH

75 miles and 2,266 ft of elevation gain

The second of the three long days, we leave Macedonia and the OTET and ride on quiet country roads to Mesopotamia OH though more Amish country. The last half of the ride is downhill towards Lake Erie.

Day 11: Tuesday, September 22

Austinburg OH to Erie PA

61 miles and 1,300 ft of elevation gain

A ride along the shores of Lake Erie, we stop at the [Hubbard House](#), a way station on the UGRR. The hotel in Erie is located on the harbor.



Day 12: Wednesday, September 23

Erie PA to Highland-on-the Lake NY (Suncliff Inn)

76 miles and 1,990 ft gain

Today is the last of the three long ride days as we pedal along the shores of Lake Erie. Our vistas

alternate between lake views and vineyards and fruit orchards. Our hotel for the next two nights is the [Suncliff Inn](#), built in 1914. This lakeside mansion also served as a retreat for the Catholic Diocese of Buffalo for 70 years.

Day 13: Thursday, September 24
Rest day at Suncliff Inn on the Lake

We'll take a private tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's nearby [Graycliff House](#). Additionally, many outdoor activities and/or lounging facilities are available at the Suncliff Inn.



Day 14: Friday, September 25
Suncliff Inn to Niagara Falls NY

52 miles and 1,008 ft gain

We ride along the lake front through the heart of historic Buffalo NY to cross over the Peace bridge into Canada. We ride along the Niagara River in Canada to the famous falls. After a café lunch, we cross back to

the US on the Rainbow bridge for a tour of the [UGRR Heritage Center](#).

Day 15: Saturday, September 26
Niagara Falls to Lake Ontario
CA to Amherst NY

53 miles and 1,595 ft of elevation gain

Today's ride takes us back across the Rainbow Bridge to Niagara-on-the-Lake, a town regarded as one of the prettiest in Canada.

After dipping our toes in Lake

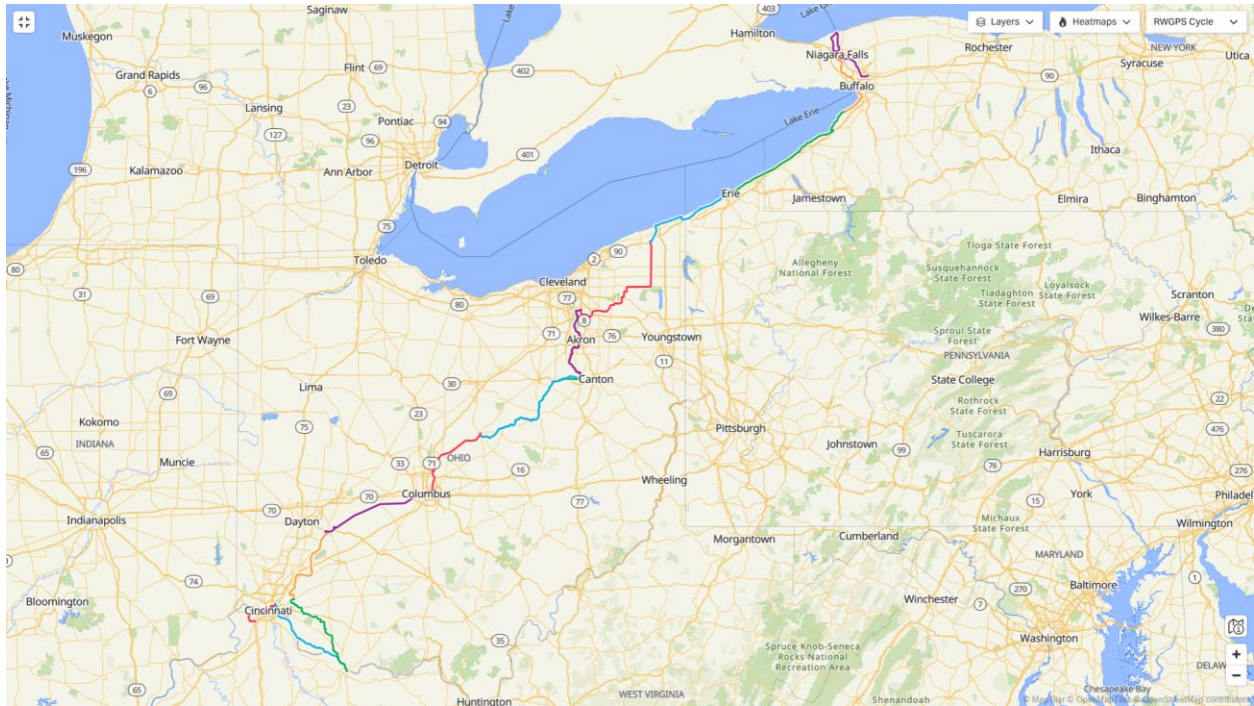
Ontario, we return to the US and our hotel in Amherst NY near Buffalo Airport.



Day 16: Sunday, September 27

Departure day – Buffalo Niagara International Airport is 20 min from our hotel.

Year 3 of the Underground Railroad Adventure Series tour – Cincinnati to Niagara Falls



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