

Pittsburgh Steps Walking Tours – Lincoln Place

From Farm to Amusement Park

Lincoln Place is Pittsburgh’s most southeastern neighborhood, stretching the city all the way to the boroughs of Munhall and West Mifflin. Originally part of Mifflin Township, Lincoln Place was annexed to the City of Pittsburgh in 1929.

In the Nineteenth Century, the 106-acre Stoney Farm, owned by a gentleman named John Means, occupied much of the land comprising present day Lincoln Place. In 1898, the farm was sold, and the new owner divided the land into 936 home lots. Thus began the development of Lincoln Place as an early example of a “bedroom community.”

Lincoln Place was also the location of one of Pittsburgh’s roughly two dozen “trolley parks.” When trolley lines were first built, they primarily served workers going to and from their places of employment. Trolley owners, in a bid to promote ridership during evenings and weekends, developed their own “parks” as attractive destinations that people would want to visit. Riding trolleys and, of course, paying fares to get there. Most of these parks started out as picnic groves, and later evolved into amusement parks as the owners added attractions to, well, make them more attractive as destinations. Very popular today is Kennywood Park, which has its origins as a trolley park.



Calhoun Park Anniversary Post Card

In 1896, the Pittsburgh Railways Company built Calhoun Park in Lincoln Place. The park had a roller coaster, carousels, and a dance hall; it stayed in business until about 1908. Later, the land occupied by Calhoun Park became a trailer park. The site, along Mifflin Road, now sits vacant.

Learn more about trolley parks here. <https://pa-trolley.org/from-picnic-groves-to-amusement-parks-the-history-of-trolley-parks/>

Most of the Lincoln Place steps tour is a pleasant walk along quiet streets lined by modest homes. During the tour you will encounter five staircases, although two are impassable. The

remaining three staircases are comprised of 177 steps. The tour is about 2.2 miles long and will take you a little under an hour. It is current as of July 2024.

Begin your tour at the Lincoln Place Parklet on Cox Avenue. This delightful little park is “dedicated in memory of World War II veterans.” Head north on Cox Avenue and then turn right on Cox Place.



Cox Place Steps

At the circle at the end of Cox Place you will find the Cox Place steps leading into the woods and down the hill to Mifflin Road. These 59 steps were constructed in 1960 and are lined with Rose of Sharon bushes as you begin your descent. The staircase takes you to a bus stop on Mifflin Road, suggesting the steps still provide a benefit to local residents.

Carefully cross Mifflin Road, which can be busy with cars ignoring the speed limit of 25. Turn right and head up Mifflin Road. While there is no sidewalk, the road’s shoulder provides adequate room for walking. And don’t worry, you won’t be on Mifflin Road very long.

Turn left on Interboro Avenue. Take the first left, which is Oakleaf Drive. As you start walking down Oakleaf Drive, look to your right just before you pass a large parking lot. You will find an impassable staircase that leads from

Oakleaf Drive back up to Interboro Avenue. It was impossible to count the number of steps through the weeds, but they likely number 15 or so. These steps were built in 1960.

Oakleaf Drive feels like a pleasant country lane, although most of the trees appear to be anything other than oaks! At the end of Oakleaf Drive you’ll discover your next set of steps. These 44 steps, constructed in 1948, also appear to get a lot of use, as I noticed during a recent visit that the grass at the bottom of the staircase had been mowed and saplings along the staircase had been pruned. The steps lead up to Leaside Drive, where you will turn right.

You’ll now be walking along the neighborhood streets of Lincoln Place for a while. While these are pleasant streets, some of them are steep, so be prepared for some good exercise. This is Pittsburgh, after all!

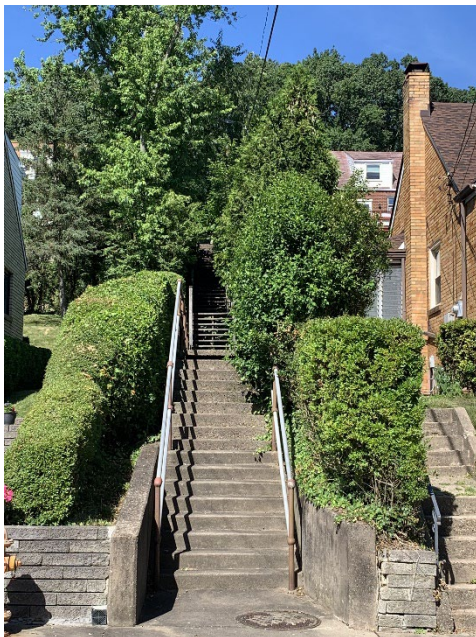
Follow Leaside Drive until you come to F Way, where you will turn left. Then turn left again at Scorer Street. Turn



Oakleaf Drive Steps

right when you reach Lougean Avenue and then left when you reach Lindberg Avenue. Walking down the Lindberg Avenue hill, you will find Kinley Way coming in from the right. Look up the steep vacant hill to your left and you will discover the Kinley Avenue steps winding up the hill. These impassable steps were constructed in 1965. But I brought you down here to view them as they are not easy to observe from the top of the hill.

Now return to Lougean Avenue and turn right. Turn right when you reach Scorer Street again and then take an immediate left to stay on Lougean Avenue. Just after you

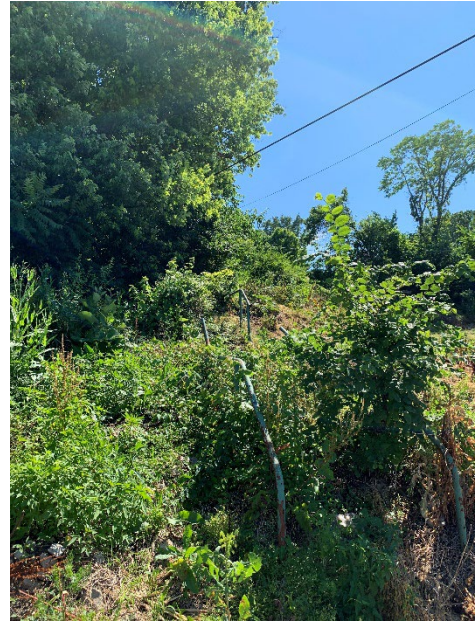


Bottom of Steps from Lougean Avenue to Glenhurst Road

pass 5155 Lougean Avenue, you will find a staircase leading down to Glenhurst Road.

This pleasant set of wood and concrete steps, lined with Rose of Sharon bushes, was built in 1953.

Turn left on Glenhurst Road and follow it out to Mifflin Road, where you will turn left. Again being careful, walk along Mifflin Road to return to the Cox Place steps and then your starting point. On a hot day you will likely wish that the vacant lot was still home to an amusement park, where you could treat yourself to a lemonade.



Impassable Kinley Avenue Steps