4-H
4-H is a youth development education program of Penn State Cooperative Extension. It is a non-formal education program for youth between the ages of 8 and 19. Visit us at: http://extension.psu.edu/4-h

Allegheny Portage Railroad
This railroad, built mainly in Cambria County, was the first railroad constructed through the Allegheny Mountains in central Pennsylvania. The Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic site is a park that contains nature trails and historical remains of the old railroad system. For more information including history, updates and tours go to: http://www.nps.gov/alpo

Directions
Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site can be reached by taking Rt. 22 West to the Gallitzin exit (8 miles from Altoona), then follow the signs. Leaving Allegheny, continue west on Rt. 22 to the 53 South exit. Follow it to Portage, about 20 minutes. From Portage, follow 53 North back onto 22 and follow it west to 271 South. This will take you to East Conemaugh in about 35 minutes.

How to Quest
The Quest begins at the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site. You will be hiking one of the nature trails, so proper attire such as pants and sneakers are advised. Two other sites are included, so there will be some driving involved. Directions are provided with the clues, when needed, and maps can be found on the last pages. The stop included in Portage is a museum open from 12-5pm Wed through Saturday so if you wish to go into the museum, plan accordingly.
YOUR CLUES
Welcome to Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site. Feel free to visit the visitor center and take a walk along the few trails provided. The Nature Trail Loop (3.9 mi) partially follows the path of the original railroad bed of the Allegheny Portage Railroad which operated from 1834-1858 between Hollidaysburg and Johnstown. The trail also has several historic features, included in the quest, so put on your hiking boots and have fun. It takes about 2-3 hours to complete.

Stop 1
What’s left of the railroad is old and run down
You’ll find pieces from town to town
Start early in the morning so time isn’t tight
At the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historical site
A good place to start is the visitor center
Open year round, you’re always welcome to enter
Learn a little about the places you will visit
From every one of their wonderful exhibits.

Stop 2
Take the Nature Trail Loop, a 4 mile hike
Take lunch or camera or maybe a bike
It follows the remains of the original railroad bed
From 1834 to 1854, this place was alive but now it’s quite dead
Yet history remains for those who do seek it
See ghosts of the past and those who do keep them
But don’t dawdle too long there’s still much to see
Look for incline #6 just right around the trees

Stop 3
One of ten of the original inclines
A shelter with a full-scale model of a steam engine was designed
With 5 on each side of the Allegheny Ridge and span over 36 miles
They designed a unique system over many trials
Steam engines at each crest of an incline
With wire-rope cables that pulled up the cargo and showed off their wiles
Many people traveled this unique inclined plane system
Including Charles Dickens, Ulysses S Grant and others of wisdom
Stop 4
A tavern on the railroad was named the Lemon House
provided great service
Provided rest for the weary passengers and the nervous
Revamped into a museum by the park
A historical stop, it’s practically art
Open year round so take a look inside
But don’t take too long cause there’s still more to see
and more to try

Stop 5
The Skew Arch Bridge is an interesting stop
An arch to take cars up over the top
In 1853 the bridge was redesigned, hence the skew
Changed for a bend in the road that was new
So stop, take a look and a picture or two

Stop 6
With a short drive and straight into Portage town
The museum there invites you to come on down
Once a railroad station of old
They fit a museum quite nicely into the mold
But if you want to enter take note of the time
It’s only open from lunch to dinner time
But this isn’t the last stop of the trip
So let’s get back in the car and don’t give the driver any lip

Stop 7
At 900 feet it’s the first of its kind
The Staple Bend Tunnel was quite a gold mine
4 miles east of Johnstown it stands
3 years of hard labor, it was built by hand.
But now we have come to the end of the line and
you’ve made it this far so you did fine
Now look for the box that holds the treasure worth your time

Thank you for joining us on the 4-H Quests. Check out the PA 4-H website for more Quests in the Lumber Heritage Region.

http://extension.psu.edu/4-h/explore/programs/4-h-questing

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