

Friday Covered Bridges

Today we visit three covered bridges near Pipestem. The Laurel Creek covered bridge is still in operation for us to ride through today.

<u>Covered Bridge</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Status</u>
Laurel Creek	1910	34'	Still in service
Indian Creek	1898	49'	View roadside
Hokes Mill	1899	81'	View roadside

Lunch will be in White Sulphur Springs, WV, at Cook's Country Kitchen.

At the Laurel Creek bridge we will park along the road side single file while visiting the bridge. After the Laurel Creek bridge, there is a treacherous turn onto US 219. **Come to a complete stop and look carefully before pulling out.**

After the turn onto US 219 we will stop in the small gravel parking lot about a mile down the road to view the Indian Creek covered bridge. **This gravel pull out is a challenge given its small size and slope. There is a church parking lot within sight that could be an alternative if uncomfortable with the pull out at the bridge.**

At the Hokes Mill covered bridge we will park single file on the road side while visiting the bridge.

Saturday New River Bridge and Gorge

The destination today is the New River Gorge in the area around the New River Gorge Bridge. After a morning break in Beckley, at the next stop we will visit the ghost town of Thurmond. Lunch will be at Chetty's Pub located at Adventures on the Gorge along the rim. Be sure to check out the view of the New River Bridge and Gorge from this area before we leave Adventures on the Gorge.

Thurmond

Thurmond was once more prosperous than Richmond, with one hotel boasting a non-stop poker game that ran from opening day until Prohibition. Today it's a ghost town offering a glimpse at life one hundred years ago. The last 150 yards into town is across a 100-year-old narrow iron grated bridge with no solid surface and the raging New River below. If you have ridden your bike across a drawbridge or other bridge with metal grating, you know what I mean. A little disconcerting at first, but if you relax and don't fight it you will be okay.

Opt Out: The bridge to Thurmond is scary, so you do not have to ride across it. There is a gravel pull out just before the bridge where you can park your motorcycle, then walk across the bridge to see Thurmond.

New River Gorge Bridge

We will stop for lunch after crossing the bridge, then come back to the visitor center after lunch. Riders wanting to avoid the ride into the old gorge should park. Riders wanting to ride into the old gorge should stay lined up with Kevin. Gorge riders will return to the visitor's center.

The ride down into the gorge is recommended for experts only. It is a narrow, one-way route with some especially tight off-camber switchbacks.

Opt Out: The ride into the gorge is challenging and requires skill. Avoid it by waiting at the visitor center. Riders going into the gorge will return to the visitor center where we can assemble once again as a group to return to Pipestem.