

RESTORATION



Plans for the restoration of the bridge began immediately after the 1989 fire. With the support of Governor Gaston Caperton, a committee of local officials and citizens decided that the restoration project would return the bridge to its original appearance, which featured the rounded arch entrances, horizontal siding, and a roof of red wooden shingles.

Restoration work took place under a plastic "cocoon" which provided shelter and space for the preparation and repair of major structural elements using epoxy and other modern repair techniques. The historical restoration was directed by bridge historian and West Virginia University professor Emory Kemp.

Members of the West Virginia

Forestry Association, who had a

special affection for the sturdy wooden bridge, furnished yellow poplar logs, 3 1/2 feet across, to replace structural members which could not be repaired. Because

the logs were too large

for modern sawmills, a special

sawmill was set up in nearby Belington to saw the logs into rough shapes and sizes. Local carpenters learned restoration techniques and 19th century carpentry

methods for the project. Using hand tools, they

fashioned mortices, tenons and trunnels to securely interlock the beams. Forestry Association members also contributed the horizontal poplar siding and poplar shingles for the roof.

The historic Philippi Covered Bridge

was reopened for public use on

September 16, 1991.



TRAVELING TO *Philippi* WEST VIRGINIA



FROM CHARLESTON, West Virginia, and areas south:

Take I-79 to exit 115; then Rts. 20 south, 57 east and 119 north to Philippi (22 miles from Exit 115); or I-79 to exit 99, then Rt. 33 east (Corridor H) to connect with Rts. 92/250 at Norton.

FROM PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania, and areas north:

Take I-79 south to exit 115; then Rts. 20 south, 57 east and 119 north to Philippi. (22 miles from Exit 115).

FROM OHIO:

Take I-77 south to Parkersburg and Rt. 50 east to Exit 115 of I-79 at Clarksburg; or I-70 east to I-79, south to Exit 115 at Clarksburg; then Rts. 20 south, 57 east, and 119 north to Philippi. (22 miles from Exit 115).

FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.:

Take I-270 north to I-70 west, and I-68 west to I-79 at Morgantown, then south on U.S. 119.

FROM PARKERSBURG, West Virginia, and areas west:

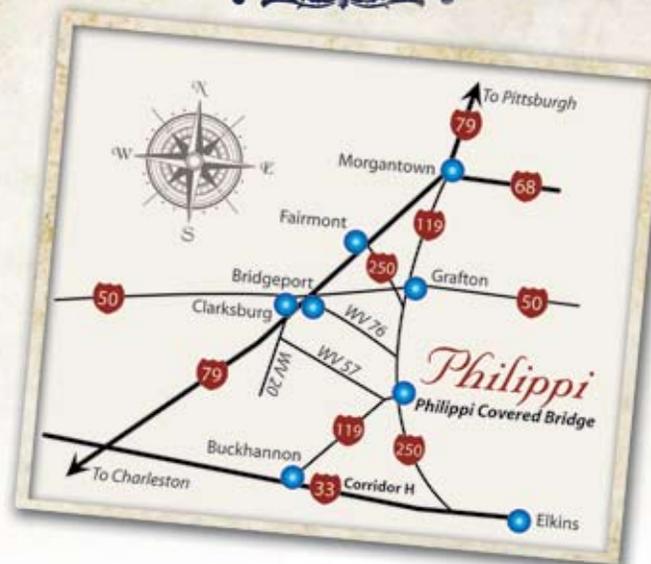
Take Rt. 50 east to Exit 115 of I-79 at Clarksburg; then Rts. 20 south, 57 east, and 119 north to Philippi. (22 miles from Exit 115).

FROM BENEDEUM AIRPORT, BRIDGEPORT, WV:

Take Rt. 50 east to Rt. 76, then south on 119 to Philippi; or take Rt. 50 west to I-79, then south to exit 115; and Rts. 20 south, 57 east, and 119 north to Philippi (22 miles from Exit 115).

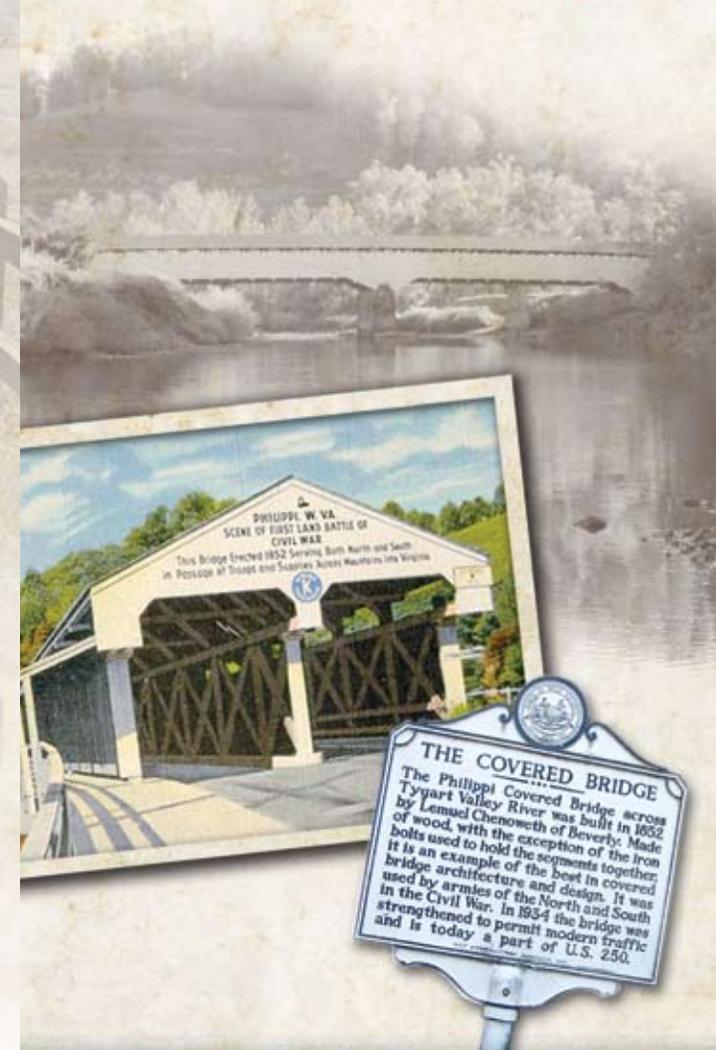
FROM ELKINS, WV:

Take Route 92/250 northwest.



PART OF AMERICA'S PAST
PRESERVED FOR ITS FUTURE

Philippi Covered Bridge



CITY OF PHILIPPI, WV

304.457.3700 • www.philippi.org

THE HISTORIC LURE OF COVERED BRIDGES

*Covered bridges are part of
America's history, artifacts of the
craftsmanship of the past and picturesque
reminders of another way of life.
Seventeen covered bridges are
still in existence in West Virginia.
Many of these bridges serve modern traffic.*

The covered bridge concept originated in central Europe. It featured a roof and siding that protected the wooden truss structure and contributed to its longevity. Even after the introduction of iron into the bridge building process, covered wooden bridges were inexpensive solutions for spanning the many creeks and rivers in West Virginia.

Covered bridges connected portions of the early turnpike system in western Virginia, which separated from Virginia and became West Virginia in 1863, during the Civil War.

PART OF
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The Philippi Covered Bridge, built in 1852, is the best known of West Virginia's many covered bridges. Today the two-lane "double barrel" structure serves local as well as U.S. Rt. 250 traffic. It is the nation's only covered bridge serving a federal highway.

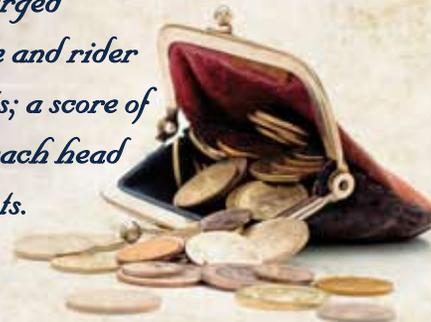
The Philippi Covered Bridge dates back to 1852, when the General Assembly of Virginia authorized the construction of the Beverly to Fairmont Turnpike. The turnpike required construction of two bridges, one across the Tygart River at Philippi and the other across the West Fork River at Hunsakers Ferry.

The Philippi bridge contract was awarded to Lemuel Chenoweth, who had built numerous covered bridges for the turnpike system.

Constructed of yellow poplar, the bridge is 26 feet wide and 285 feet long, larger than most bridges of the time.



*A tollgate was placed at the east end to
collect fares from users. Carriages with two
horses were charged
35 cents; a horse and rider
charged 10 cents; a score of
sheep, 5 cents; each head
of cattle, 1.5 cents.*



The Philippi Covered Bridge was the site of the first land battle of the Civil War. On June 3, 1861, Union troops led a surprise attack on Confederate troops under the command of Colonel George Porterfield. The attack caused the Confederate troops to retreat. Union troops took command of the bridge and used it as a barracks. The victory strengthened the Union position in western Virginia and discouraged secessionist movements.

*The Philippi Covered Bridge
has endured floods, fires,
and structural modifications.
Renovations to the bridge in 1938
replaced the wooden deck with concrete.*

On February 2, 1989, the bridge was severely damaged by fire. An extensive \$1.4 million restoration project was begun by local preservationists with the goal of restoring the bridge to its original condition.

The two-year historical restoration project repaired the fire-damaged timbers and built new ones of West Virginia yellow poplar. The exterior was restored to its original appearance.

Today the Philippi Covered Bridge is an authentic representation of the bridge during the American Civil War, with a few additions to make it compatible with modern highway requirements. Traffic loads are supported on a reinforced concrete deck, which in turn is supported on steel girders. Modern additions (a smoke detector, sprinkler system, and lighting) have been discreetly installed so as not to detract from the historic character.