

# Montgomery and Smithers

A heritage of immigrants, education and industry.

- Scenic and Natural** - Kanawha River
- Recreational** - boat ramps and fishing
- Historical** - WV University Institute of Technology
- Archaeological** - Mt. Carbon Ancient Works
- Cultural** - Italian heritage and coal mining

## Montgomery

For his service in the Virginia Militia, Major Henry Montgomery received land grants on the Kanawha River and operated a ferry port. Montgomery's Landing attracted river traffic which moved as far west as Cincinnati and New Orleans.

Centuries before, the area thrived with a prehistoric culture that built the Mt. Carbon Ancient Works, a stone wall enclosing an area about a mile in width. Scientific dating places this archaeological feature at around the 15th Century. Strip mining ultimately removed all traces of the Works.

Montgomery is home to West Virginia University Institute of Technology, which offers education, engineering, print management, and health professions. The public is welcome to participate in the school's Wellness Program and use their olympic-size pool and rock-wall climbing facility. The Bank Bar and Grill, offers a unique dining experience in a restored bank building. Boaters can launch their boats from the public boat ramp located near the bridge.

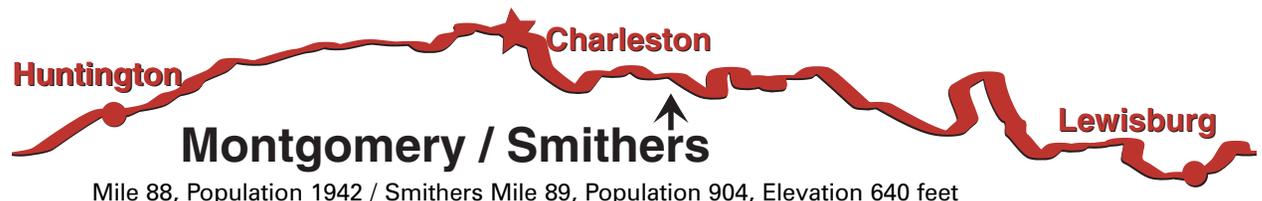
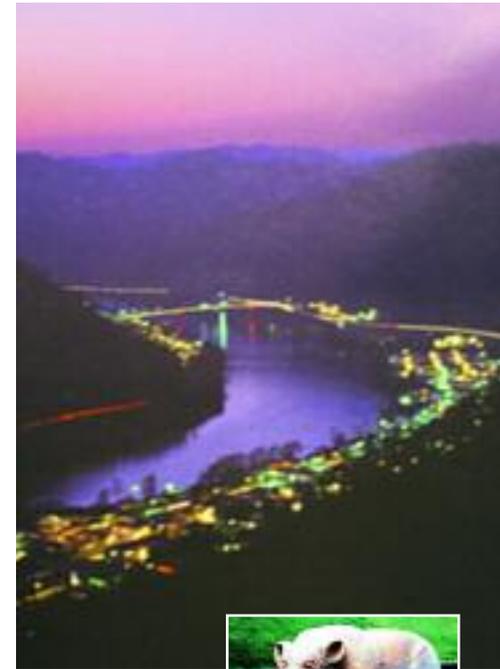
Montgomery became the commercial center for the surrounding coal mining and ferro-alloy industries; a boom town with a hospital, department stores, and the college.

## Smithers

Smithers' history is closely intertwined with the Midland Trail. Around 1825, the James River and Kanawha Turnpike (now the Midland Trail) was completed through Smithers west to Charleston.

Early settlers include James Smithers, for whom the town is named. His descendant Benjamin Smithers, born in 1809, was brought into the salt and coal businesses through marriage, first to Julia Ruffner and later to Eliza Shrewsbury. Smithers owned 2270 acres of coal-rich land around Smithers under the name of Peabody Coal Fields. Another early settler, Aaron Stockton, brother-in-law of William Tompkins, founded the Glen Ferris Inn.

The influence of Italian immigrants who settled in the area to work the coal industry is evident today in the town of about 900. Italian food specialties are found at Cavalier Market and Lopez Restaurant. Of special interest is the recently unveiled Veterans War Memorial, which honors over 800 men and women who entered military service while living in Smithers or Longacre.



# Alloy

A proud tradition on the Midland Trail.

For almost 100 years, travelers along the Midland Trail have caught an occasional glimpse of furnace flames blazing from behind the factory walls, as Elkem Metals Company and its predecessors have maintained a proud tradition as a large manufacturer of quality products.

Materials produced at the Alloy facility are intermediaries for products that improve the ways we eat, feel, look, and work. When consumers open a cereal box, use personal grooming products, or turn on a personal computer, chances are they are using a product which Elkem helped make. In fact, half of the world's computers contain chips with silicon refined at Elkem. Their silicon is also the crucial ingredient for the glue, which binds the space shuttle's panels to its body.

Production of ferroalloys on the Midland Trail began in 1901, about 5 miles east of the present facility at Alloy, when Wilson Aluminum



established a smelting plant at Kanawha Falls. Wilson simultaneously received permission from the U.S. War Department to tap the river's force for hydroelectricity to power its operation. Today, you can see the power station at Kanawha Falls, which still provides some of the energy for Elkem's operations at Alloy. Union Carbide later purchased the operation. To meet an ever-expanding market, Union Carbide built the present facility at Alloy. Carbide's long history ended in 1981, when Elkem, a multinational corporation based in Oslo, Norway purchased the Alloy plant and associated properties.

During its 65-year history, Elkem-Alloy has become the world's largest silicon metal plant and operates the largest silicon furnace in the world. In past years, the facility has produced manganese, chrome, and other alloys. Today, Elkem is a major supplier of high-quality refined silicon for the chemical, electronic, aerospace, and aluminum industries. As one of Fayette County's largest employers, Elkem has many employees sroking the same furnaces as their fathers and grandfathers.



5.30  
Alloy

# Western Fayette County

Fayette County begins the heart of the Trail's scenic and recreational areas. Numerous roadside waterfalls and breathtaking rock formations dot the north side of the Byway, while the Great Kanawha hugs the south side.

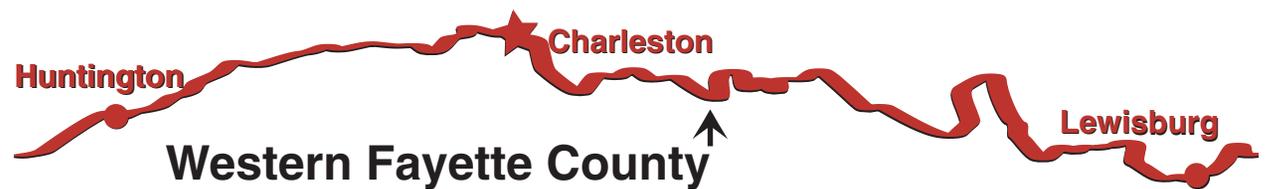
**Scenic and Natural** - Several roadside falls between Montgomery and Falls View and Great Kanawha River created at Gauley Bridge, unique rock formations line the mountains

**Cultural** – Boomer/Alloy: Coal camp town and Elkem's hydroelectric dam

The Great Kanawha River provides a pleasant backdrop for travel as it hugs Route 60 from its headwaters in Gauley Bridge, to below Charleston and St. Albans, where it turns and heads for the Ohio River at Point Pleasant. A series of locks and dams assure its flow. Huge barges carrying coal and other industrial products routinely pass. As evident in the history of each town along its banks, the Kanawha River has played a key role in the development of industry along what is now known as Advantage Valley.

Although it is one of the nation's busiest commercial waterways, there are also ample opportunities for public access for recreational use. Many homes in the six miles between Alloy and Kanawha Falls, for example the towns of Boomer, Charlton Heights and Falls View were built for employees and management of Alloy/Elkem. Sticks and Stones at mile 32.5 is a wonderland of speciality garden and decorative items.

Fayette County begins the heart of the Trail's scenic and recreational areas. Numerous roadside falls dot the highway, including Kanawha Falls at mile 97 and Cathedral Falls at mile 99. The New and Gauley Rivers merge at Gauley Bridge to create the Kanawha River, which flows to the State Capitol and eventually into the Ohio River.



# Glen Ferris and Kanawha Falls

Hospitality and history amidst natural beauty.

**Scenic** - Glenn Ferris: Kanawha Falls, Gauley Bridge: Cathedral Falls

**Natural** - Kanawha Falls, Gauley Bridge: Union of New and Gauley Rivers, Cathedral Falls

**Recreational** - Gauley Bridge: New River Campground and Gauley Bridge Tepees

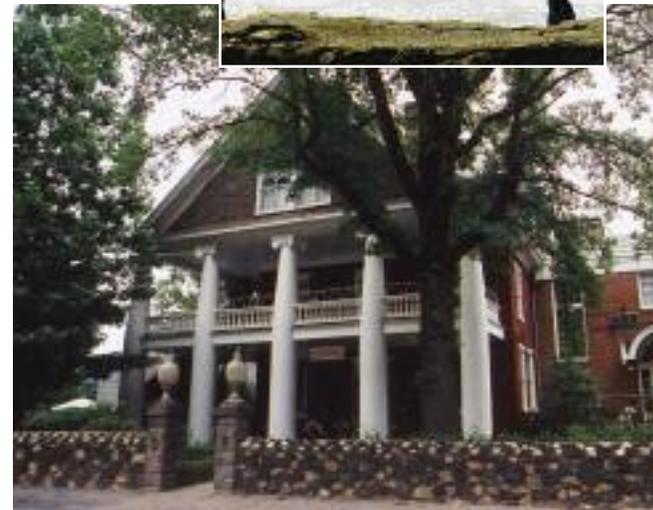
**Historical** - Glen Ferris: Glen Ferris Inn

Since Aaron Stockton first opened his doors to weary, hungry stagecoach travelers in 1839, the Glen Ferris Inn has provided hospitality for visitors on the historic Midland Trail. Today, owners Dan and Becky Hill, as well as manager Natalie Phillips, carry on Stockton's tradition in fine style. The Glen Ferris Inn is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Aaron Stockton was the grandson of Richard Stockton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. He was a salt entrepreneur and gentleman farmer who built flatboats that carried those traveling west on the Kanawha and Ohio

Rivers and beyond. Stockton shipped the first commercial load of West Virginia coal from a seam of cannel coal that was discovered on his farm in 1848. His inn served as a Union quartermaster's depot during the Civil War, and his grandson, O. A. Veasey, who was born at Glen Ferris Inn during 1851, was West Virginia's first state mine inspector.

Overlooking Kanawha Falls, the original red brick structure was constructed circa 1800. In about 1910, Stockton's granddaughter added the charming columns, a third-story, and verandas. Union Carbide later extended the inn's guest capacity after constructing an ell in the early 1930s.



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Glen Ferris and Kanawha Falls

# Gauley Bridge

Marriage-place of two rivers.

**Scenic** - New and Gauley Rivers merge to create the Great Kanawha River

**Natural** - Kanawha Falls, Union of New and Gauley Rivers, and Cathedral Falls

**Recreational** - New River Campground and Gauley Bridge Tepees

**Historical** - Gauley Bridge Historical Society Museum

At Gauley Bridge, the New and Gauley Rivers merge to create the Kanawha River, which flows to the State Capitol and eventually into the Ohio River. As eastbound visitors round the bend at Glen Ferris (Mile 37) they get their first view of the merged rivers.

At this marriage-place of two rivers, learn about the junctions of past and present at the Gauley Bridge Visitors Center and adjoining Gauley Bridge Historical Society Museum. Kanawha Falls Post Office, Fayette County's first, has also been relocated to the complex. Gauley Bridge was first explored in 1671, when Captain Thomas Batts discovered and claimed the area east of Kanawha Falls for King Charles II of England and Ireland. Although their expedition stopped at Kanawha

Falls, they learned through their Native American guide that Native Americans were making salt at present day Malden.

Gauley Bridge's position at the confluence of the rivers made it a strategic location during the Civil War. Gauley Bridge takes its name from a toll-bridge which crossed the Gauley River and which Confederate troops burned; today you can see its old mossy piers. When the iron horse roared across the state's landscape, Gauley Bridge was a railroad stop for the old New York Central Railroad. Gauley Bridge Town Hall (304-632-2505) is housed in the renovated railroad passenger depot. Inside hangs a print of Corporal J. N. Roesler's 1862 depiction of the Camp Gauley Civil War Encampment.

Step back in time with a visit to a downtown diner, housed in the former Greyhound Bus Terminal. Evan Scent manufactures candles at their facility on the Trail and also operates a gift shop and the Gauley Bridge Visitors Center.



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Gauley Bridge

