



# SOMERSET COUNTY'S COVERED BRIDGES

by *Linda Stager*

*photos by the author*

Step back in time and imagine when horse-drawn carriages or early automobiles traveled old-time country roads and crossed the covered bridge before you. Listen to the creak of the wooden planks underfoot, the sound of water flowing beneath the bridge and the scent of old-aged timbers.

This is the feeling of Somerset County's 10 covered bridges. Pick any of them to visit; pick all of them—it's a fun visit for everyone in the family.

While you are at it, bring your fishing gear. There are fish, too, in Somerset County.

Somerset County's covered bridges were built between 1859 and 1891. Initially, they served as part of our old

highway system. Now, they stand as examples of advanced craftsmanship, civil engineering and romantic symbols of an earlier time in history.

Grab a map and guide for the Somerset County Covered Bridge Tour when you visit. It's a self-paced 55-mile driving route that lets you see the county's bridges in an organized manner. Enjoy the bridges, and take some time to visit the nearby towns and attractions.

**Packsaddle Bridge** (also known as Doc Miller Bridge): The Packsaddle Bridge is in Fairhope Township in the southeastern part of the county. It is well worth a visit.

This single-span bridge is the county's shortest covered bridge, only 48 feet long. But, its location on Brush Creek is unique. It sits atop a natural waterfall.

This red king post truss bridge has complete vertical plank siding and sits on large stone abutments. Sometimes, Brush Creek has a low water level and may not have a lot of water flowing over the falls. However, it's always picturesque.



*Packsaddle Bridge, Somerset County*

*photo-Linda Stager*

The falls can't necessarily be seen from the bridge since they sit directly under the bridge, but trails along the creek can access them. Be careful getting to the creekside and do not trespass on private property.

During summer, folks may be swimming in the large pools below the falls. But, the pools also hold bass and trout, so they're popular for fishing, too.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission stocks Brush Creek. Several times each year, volunteers help Waterways Conservation Officers stock Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout and golden Rainbow Trout in the waters near the bridge. Bring a valid fishing license, follow stocked trout waters regulations, and remember, "Trash in, trash out."

**Barronvale Bridge** (also known as Barron's Mill Bridge): The longest bridge in the county, this Burr truss bridge is younger in age and may have been built as recently as 1902. It is 162 feet and 3 inches long. Since the bridge is less than 14 feet wide, it is open to foot traffic only. It crosses Laurel



*Barronvale Bridge, Somerset County*

*photo-Donna Mohney*



*Glessner Bridge, Somerset County*

*photo-Donna Mohney*

Hill Creek, part of the Laurel Highland Trout Trail. Laurel Hill Creek carves through an old-growth hemlock forest, perfect for off-the-grid fishing.

**Glessner Bridge:** Glessner Bridge is on Stonycreek River, near Shanksville. The Stonycreek River has been stocked with catchable trout for decades. This is a great year-round fishing opportunity for Brook Trout and Rainbow Trout.

Take a few days to visit these quaint bridges from a simpler time and do some quality fishing in Somerset County. There is lots to do here for everyone! ☺

### More information:



[somersetcountychamber.com/product/covered-bridges-of-somerset-county](https://somersetcountychamber.com/product/covered-bridges-of-somerset-county)