

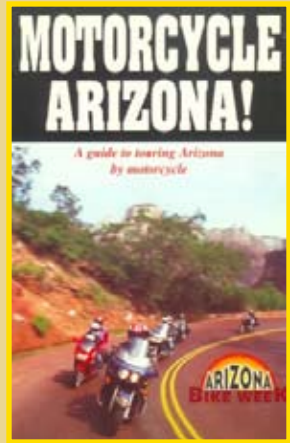
Where to Ride

by Frank Del Monte

Silent Cal's Dam

As luck would have it, we are blessed with one of only two multiple-dome dams in the world. Ours is Coolidge Dam, built in 1928 and is 16 miles east and 14 miles south of Globe as the crow walks. The other is the Odivelas Dam in Beja, Portugal and was built in 1972.

Coolidge Dam is one of the prettiest dams I've ever seen, and the ride's not bad either. The dam has huge cement eagles cast into its front and art deco ornamentation all over it. I would have loved to have seen the light pedestals when they were complete and working.



The ride to the dam starts out on the road we love to hate, Rt. 60 East. Blast over to Superior, stop at the Buckboard Café for breakfast and visit the World's Smallest Museum. If the Buckboard is closed (Tuesdays) your next opportunity for food is in Miami, Claypool, or Globe, but I've never found any eatery worth writing about in any of them.

As you leave Superior, look down and to the left to see the original road and an old bridge. Give a moment of thanks because that's the road you are not riding on. It was replaced in 1952 when they carved out the Queen Creek Tunnel. You can see more of the old road to the right as you enter the tunnel. Once in the tunnel, gear down and throttle up and see if you can bring down the mountain. I've been trying for years. As you exit the tunnel look to the left and you'll see a huge air blower for the Magma Mine. Also, start counting the curves and at about the 5th curve you should see Elvis Rock standing tall on the left side of the road, pompador and all.

Ride to, through, and out of Miami, Claypool, and Globe. Sixteen miles east of Globe watch for the green sign pointing left onto Indian Route 3. The road to the dam is 14 miles and is paved all the way but is a "Low Maintenance Road." That means a rough surface and occasional potholes, so ride



aware. Four miles down the road is a nice country store and if you need water or snacks, they got `em.



Homeland Security has blocked off the parking areas on the dam with large concrete barriers so no four wheel terrorists can park there, but naturally they have no effect on you and me so ride right out there and put the sidestand down where the eagles nest.

I have always thought the dam was solid with interior passages like Hoover or other large dams, but the photo I found in the Phoenix Library Archives shows the three domes as completely hollow with a small powerhouse nestled at the bottom of the middle dome. It's interesting to see what you can't see when you're standing right on top of what you're trying to see!

The road to the dam is a 39-mile loop. It crosses the dam and continues back up to Route 60. But the remaining 25 miles are in worse condition than the 14 you already rode, so turn around and backtrack. Oooo, I hate saying that!

John Calvin Coolidge was our 30th President. He was known as "Silent Cal" and was a man of few words. My wife gave me a quotation of his back in 1989 when I was fighting with all the bankers, lawyers, and insurance agents in the world while trying to start my motorcycle rental business. I hung it over my desk and it kept me going through some really dark times.



"Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'press on' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race."

Ride on, Silent Cal!

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