

## West Virginia in My Heart

Today is May 12, 2015. It is 4:35AM on a Tuesday morning and the temperature is 70 degrees. We bow our heads in prayer, then slowly inch our way out of the still-sleeping neighborhood. An ink-black sky forms a backdrop for traffic light reflections on rain-washed streets.

After we pass through Roanoke daylight creeps into view along I81. Every little stream is poofing up steam and rocks decorate the roadside.



Catalpa trees are pushing their buds open. That first rush of spring in VA is past and the world is settling into its emerald summer mode.

North of Dublin, VA on Route 100, the clouds have knocked the sox off Mr. Sun raindrops play on our windshield while kids huddle along the road, waiting for their yellow chariot

We spot the Glen Lyn Power Plant. It will be closed soon after 96 years of generating electricity. Already the huge piles of coal are gone and will never again be replaced. So sad!





We park along a peaceful side road beside the banks of the New River.



Jim snaps a picture of an eastbound train, clacking along towards the coal piers of Norfolk, VA.



There is a bright, new signal bridge here but I'm amazed that it is held in place by only 16 bolts.



They didn't ask me how to assemble that thing...what do they know, huh?  
Across the river traffic whizzes on Route 460 but the lush trees muffle the racket.



Ahead of us Mr. Sun is sneaking through a mountain pass and is highlighting the very tops of the trees.

The wind propels kazillions of tan balls in a seed storm thru the cool air and they drift into my open windows. One rascal tickles my nose. The wind changes tactics and reverses direction. Now teeny-tiny white petals fill our world.

I could sit here forever.



But, Jim doesn't want to sit here forever...he has places to go, pictures to snap. He wants another look at that power plant:



Several back streets and a steep climb yield a birds'-eye-view of the old facility:





Alas, this historic plant fell victim to its own age, the latest EPA rulings and the multi-millions of dollars that it would have cost to bring it up to regulation specs. The buildings will eventually be dismantled and hopes are for a new business to buy the property someday. In the mean time, we have some great pictures to share and remember the days when coal was king.