

Newsletter

National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, Inc.

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National Society Meetings

MARCH 22nd, Sunday 1:00 p.m. National Society Meeting at the Plymouth Church, 87 Edgell Rd., Framingham, MA

APRIL 26th, Sunday 1:00 p.m. National Society Meeting at the Plymouth Church, 87 Edgell Rd., Framingham, MA

Editor's Notes

First of all, there were several things that should have been in the previous newsletters which didn't make it for several reasons and we deeply apologize if this has caused any problems. Hopefully, these items will be included in this issue to everyone's satisfaction.

I would like to note that "covered bridge preservation" does not pertain only to the preservation of our existing covered bridges, but **also** to the preservation of the **history** of bridges that are gone, including old photos, blue prints, news articles and any other documents related to them. It is very important that we gather all of this type of information that we possibly can and keep it in safe storage for the future generations. I personally have scanned thousands of postcards in the past two years and Joseph D. Conwill has also been busy scanning old negatives into his computer. These scanned images can be stored on discs for safe keeping and convenient viewing. The *Covered Spans of Yesteryear* website <http://www.lostbridges.org> is also a fine example of the preservation of covered bridge history. If you have anything that you would like to submit to these databases, then let one of us know.

Many sincere Thanks to Pauline Prideaux for her years of service to the society. Tim Andrews replaces her as Director and Jennifer Caswell is taking over as the new Membership Chairperson.

Spring Newsletter Deadline

The next newsletter is scheduled to be mailed in late MARCH 2009. Anyone wishing to submit photos, articles, etc., should send them by **March 15, 2009**. In order to save us from a lot of re-typing, please send your articles by e-mail or on a computer disc, if at all possible. If this isn't possible, then the regular mail will do just fine, as it always has. We always look forward to hearing from you! If your submissions are extracted from a published newspaper or magazine, or an internet web site, include the source of the information so that we can give proper credit. Send all items to the editor, Brian McKee, 13008 TH60, Upper Sandusky, OH 43351 e-mail bjmckee51@yahoo.com **THANK YOU!**

Calendar of Dedications, Dinners, Safaris & Events

February

1st, Sunday 2:00 p.m. Theodore Burr Society Meeting at the Manheim Twp. Municipal Building

March

1st, Sunday 2:00 p.m Theodore Burr Society Meeting at the Manheim Twp. Municipal Building

7th thru May 3rd Smithsonian Covered Bridge Exhibit at the Jefferson County Museum in Clancy, MT

8th, Sunday 1:00 p.m. NY State CB Society Meeting at the Deposit Historical Society Museum in Deposit, NY. Program by Sean McDermott

15th, Sunday 1:30 p.m. Ohio Historic Bridge Association Meeting at the Hilliard Public Library

22nd, Sunday 1:00 p.m. National Society Meeting at the Plymouth Church, 87 Edgell Rd., Framingham, MA

April

5th, Sunday 2:00 p.m Theodore Burr Society Meeting. at the Manheim Twp. Municipal Building

12th Cornerstone laid on the **Colossus Bridge** in Philadelphia in 1812

16th, Thursday Theodore Burr born in 1771 in Torrington, CT

19th, Sunday 1:00 p.m. NY State CB Society Annual Dinner/Meeting

25th, Saturday Vermont CB Society Spring Meeting at the Waterville Town Hall

26th, Sunday 1:00 p.m. National Society Meeting at the Plymouth Church, 87 Edgell Rd., Framingham, MA

May

2nd, Saturday Theodore Burr Society 50th Anniversary Banquet at the Shady Maple Smorgasbord

3rd, Sunday Theodore Burr Society 50th Anniversary Meeting

16 & 17 NY State CB Society Safari

17th, Sunday Ohio Historic Bridge Association Spring Bridge Tour

23rd thru July 19 Smithsonian Covered Bridge Exhibit at “The Gallery at 48 Natoma” in Folsom, CA

June

5, 6, 7 Theodore Burr Society Safari in Columbia County

Main Headquarters: The Budget Host Patriot Inn on US11, off I-80 at exit 241A. Phone: 800-873-1180.

For more Info, call Bob Kuether at 717-939-8228

President's Message

Dear Fellow Members, Greetings!

As the holiday season fast approaches, I am reminded once again of the dilemma I face year after year at this time: I very much want to wish each and every one of you a Most Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, but unfortunately, due to the publishing schedule of Topics and the Newsletter, I am obliged to be either too early or too late with these wishes. In the final analysis, my hope is that it shall be the thought that counts and that you shall all pardon me for my inability to express what I want to say at the time I want to say it, realizing full well, that the thought in question does come from the bottom of my heart.

To change the subject somewhat, lately, there has been a great deal of discussion as to what constitutes authenticity in an historic Covered Bridge. Some of what has been said has made sense, as far as it has gone, but a lot of it has not. In some cases, it has been the inability of the speaker or writer, whoever he was, to get anywhere near the heart of the matter that has come to the fore; in other cases, it has been particular commercial interests which have dominated the conversation, the sort of thing that could well be summarized by saying, "My firm has already acted as a consultant for ten Covered Bridge rehabilitation projects; therefore, both I and my associates are experts on Covered Bridge preservation". That the ten bridges in question suffered grievously at the hands of these self-promoting, so-called preservationists, having lost much historic fabric and having been denatured in various other ways, somehow never gets mentioned. Be that as it may, in my President's Message this quarter, I have tried to shed a little light upon the subject of authenticity, a subject which needs to be properly understood if anything like a sensitive approach to the preservation of our remaining Covered Bridges is ever to be worked out.

How Should the Authenticity of a Covered Bridge Be Determined?

How to determine the authenticity, or lack thereof, of a Covered Bridge is hardly a "trivial" matter, though it is by no means as inscrutable a one as some have pretended. The word "authenticity" itself has a meaning, which can be found out, and once found out, the thought behind this meaning can be made use of to ascertain whether a particular span, or the repairs made thereto, falls or fall into the set of that which is authentic, or the set of that which is not.

When one wants to learn what a given word means, an excellent place to begin looking is in the dictionary. According to Webster's New International Dictionary edition of 1909, in my opinion the greatest in a long line of superb lexicons published under this rubric, the noun "authenticity" is defined in two ways. The second of these two definitions most directly applies to the question presently being discussed. This definition in its entirety runs as follows: "Genuineness: the quality of being genuine or not corrupted from the original". (underlining mine D.W.W.)

What is it then, in the case of Covered Bridges, that must not be "corrupted from the original" in order for a given span to be declared "authentic"?

A Covered Bridge, it should be remembered, is not a concept, nor an idea, nor a notion: it is not even a mathematical construct. It is instead particular materials, arranged in a particular fashion, which have been worked upon in a particular manner, by a particular person or persons, for a particular purpose, at a particular time.

Each of the elements in the above description of what constitutes and characterizes Covered Bridges needs to be looked at a bit more closely, something I have attempted to do in the following paragraphs.

- 1) Particular Materials: As it is Covered Bridges that are being discussed, the vast majority of the material used in their construction is wood. Wood here, however, should be understood to mean not only species and grade, but infinitely more important, the timbers and boards which were actually set in place by the original bridgwright and his crew.
- 2) Materials...Arranged in a Particular Fashion: At the heart of any Covered Bridge are the trusses, the upper and lower lateral bracing systems, and the wind bracing. Each of these systems has a particular disposition which was established at the time the span in question was first erected.

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- 3) Materials...Which Have Been Worked Upon in a Particular Manner: The timbers in some Covered Bridges were hewn; in other spans they were sawn, either in an up-and-down saw mill, or later, by means of a circular saw. In respect to the various connections found within any Covered Span, these were almost invariably made by hand, using chisels, slicks, mallets, hammers, and handsaws.
- 4) Materials...Set in Place by a Particular Person or Persons: Set in place by the original bridgewright and his crew, in other words. Who erected the various elements of a Covered Bridge is important because many bridgewrights had a distinctive way of treating the various framing details found in the spans they worked upon. The specific manner in which these details were handled is often tantamount to a personal signature. To state the obvious, removal of such details would represent one of the most serious losses of historic fabric imaginable.
- 5) Materials...Set in Place for a Particular Purpose: Though it is certainly true that a Covered Bridge can be bypassed, but left in place, open to pedestrian traffic only, or alternatively, removed to some kind of a theme park, and preserved there, when such a structure no longer serves the purpose for which it was erected, this structure seems somehow diminished. Though in theory what has been defrocked can always be refrocked, in practice, such retransformations are probably quite rare; moreover, when a publicly supported facility ceases to serve a pressing public need, maintenance funds for this facility are often difficult to obtain.
- 6) Materials...Set in Place at a Particular Time: Structures built long ago are of great antiquarian value, especially those structures that are still capable of accomplishing the tasks for which they are initially erected. Antiquarian value is quite real, sometimes almost palpable, yet difficult to define let alone explain. It is felt, rather than thought. In any case, even the very best new Covered Bridges, those erected employing 19th century and early 20th century building materials, truss designs, and construction techniques, lack this feeling. Any ancient Covered Span so thoroughly adulterated as to have lost the antiquarian value it once possessed would have been greatly diminished, so much so in fact that it would be difficult to argue that the bridge in question had been preserved at all.

To return directly to the matter of how the authenticity, or lack thereof, of a Covered Bridge is determined, the attributes that characterize and define these structures, attributes that were listed more or less at the head of the present commentary, these attributes can be turned into a kind of check list, a check list by means of which any given Covered Span may be evaluated in respect to its authenticity. Some sort of a point system could even be devised whereby at the conclusion of the evaluation process, the bridge in question could be assigned a numerical score; that is to say, a 7 or a 13, or a 24, or a 0. For instance, regarding Particular Materials, a span from which much historic fabric had been removed, would obviously score lower than a span in which most of the historic fabric is still intact. Even if the historic fabric missing from the first of the two bridges postulated above were to have been replaced "in kind", 'in kind' here being understood to mean that all the recently manufactured replacement parts for this bridge were of the same species and grade of wood as the originals, that they all measured precisely the same as did the parts removed for reasons of necessity, and finally, that the surfaces of said parts were prepared exactly as had been the surfaces of the originals for which they now substitute, even if the missing historic fabric had been replaced "in kind", what has been removed from the subject span is still gone forever, and what has been put in its place can at best only mimic that which has been lost. The bed that perfectly replicates the one in which George Washington used to sleep is precisely that: a replica. It is not an original. It is not genuine. It is not authentic. The axe whose head has been changed twice and whose handle has been replaced three times, is no longer great grandfather's axe. It is a contemporary approximation of what he once owned. No more, no less. It should be remembered in this context, however, that certain Covered Bridge components do wear out, a fact that was undoubtedly well understood by the bridgewrights of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Floor plank, especially in the era of the horse, were, indeed still are, sacrificial elements in any Covered Span, as are sideboarding, inside endboarding, and roofing. Even bridge timbers need to be changed from time to time. A Covered Bridge in which floor plank, or sideboards, or for that matter, have been replaced is perfectly analogous to the Stanley Steamer which now sports a new set of tires, it's thirteenth. It would be better if the original set of treads were still serviceable, or still in existence, but the fact that they are not, hardly detracts from the authenticity of the steamer in question. Similarly, new floor plank laid down within a subject span ought not to be a matter of too much concern. Though it is true that the most authentic span imaginable would be one absolutely untouched since it was first thrown across the waters, floor plank are wearing parts in any such structure, as has been mentioned, so their replacement, when necessary, not only would have been anticipated, it would in fact constitute nothing more than good, prudent maintenance.

Concerning the next item on the check list, however, Materials...Arranged in a Particular Fashion, matters can quickly go from bad to worse. As was stated previously, at the heart of any Covered Bridge are the trusses, the upper and lower lateral bracing systems, and the wind bracing. Alter any one or all of these, and there will almost certainly be consequences, many of them dire, as regards the authenticity of the span in question. Frequently, thanks to neglect, the latter often being euphemistically labeled "deferred maintenance", significant sections of the trusses will need to be replaced, because the original components of said sections are now

more good garden material than sound wood. Such replacements are necessary, for the obvious reason that even historic bridges need to be safe for the traveling public. The replacement of 'good garden material' still implies the removal of some historic fabric, however, or at the very least, the remnants of some historic fabric, with all the consequences for authenticity that the removal in question will necessarily occasion. Unfortunately, when through neglect, significant sections of the trusses of a given span have deteriorated to the extent that these sections need to be replaced, the idea that said trusses could be greatly improved if only certain of their components were arranged in a different pattern often enters the minds of those who would "rehabilitate" them. Thus to the loss of authenticity brought about by the necessary removal of deteriorated truss components, is added the loss of authenticity occasioned by the shifting about of the particular materials the original bridgewright and his crew had arranged in a particular fashion. With but a little imagination, it is easy to see how a Covered Bridge from which much historic fabric was going to be removed, and in which the initial disposition of the trusses was going to be altered, could lose whatever authenticity it still possessed, as the direct result of a so-called "restoration" scheme. In the disheartening words of Mr. Richard Sanders Allen, "Sic transit gloria pontis"!!

To illustrate in a concrete manner how the authenticity of a Covered Bridge is determined, and moreover, how it is sometimes lost, consider the following list of postulated 19th and early 20th century Covered Bridges, and the degree of authenticity which can legitimately be attributed to each:

- 1) The most authentic Covered Bridge imaginable is one that has never been altered since it was first thrown across the waters. Such a span these days would be a rare bird indeed, as many of our historic Covered Bridges are more than a hundred twenty years old.
- 2) A Covered Bridge almost as authentic as the one described above would be a span that has had some of its wearing parts replaced "in-kind", as need required, but a span in which the trusses, upper and lower lateral bracing systems and wind bracing, have not been altered to any appreciable degree. Such a span in addition might still be possessed of its original floor joints.
- 3) A Covered Bridge just a little less authentic than the one sketched out in the previous paragraph would be a span in which certain repairs to the trusses, or to the upper and lower lateral bracing systems or to the wind bracing have had to be made, either, as a result of accident or "deferred maintenance". Depending on the nature of the damage, these repairs could have involved splicing or sistering of the effected members, or where neither splicing nor sistering was possible, replacement "in-kind". It should be noted that the extent of the repairs which needed to be carried out would determine the degree of authenticity that could legitimately be ascribed to the subject span once the repairs in question had been completed: a few discrete repairs well conceived and well executed, authenticity but little effected; many repairs, especially if badly planned and poorly carried out, authenticity greatly diminished. To push the matter to its extreme, a bridge in which not only the trusses, but also the trusses, upper and lower lateral bracing systems and wind bracing, had been replaced "in-kind", would no longer be an authentic 19th or early 20th century span; it would be a replica of a 19th or early 20th century span, which is not at all the same thing.
- 4) A Covered Bridge potentially far less authentic than the span conjured up in paragraph 3 above would be one in which the trusses, or upper and lower lateral bracing systems or wind bracing had been repaired in some manner other than "in-kind", or other than by splicing, or other than by sistering. For example, the dispositions of any one or all of these systems could be altered, or an entirely new arrangement of some or all of the component parts imposed upon any one or all of these systems. Connections between the various members of these systems could as well be redesigned, in some instances employing materials or devices which are not of the 19th or early 20th century, large, metal splice plates or split ring connectors, for example. Even the basic material out of which the bridge in question was originally constructed could be altered: a different species or grade of wood substituted for the one utilized initially, or worse yet, glue-laminated materials exploited to replace solid timbers. Depending upon the extent of any transformations on the order of what has been indicated above, the authenticity of the subject span would decrease, and perhaps decrease markedly.
- 5) In respect to authenticity, the most troubling case is a Covered Bridge which needs to be strengthened, either because the trusses as erected were possessed of some inherent design flaw, or because the weights of the vehicles that pass over the subject span have increased to the point where the initial load bearing capacity of the structure has been dangerously exceeded. It must be remembered here that the heart of any Covered bridge is the trusses, the upper and lower lateral bracing systems, plus the wind bracing. It is largely the state of these systems that determines the degree of authenticity of any subject span. Put another way, if the object is to strengthen a Covered Bridge, whilst at the same time preserving whatever authenticity the span in question may have left, redesigning the trusses, or the upper and lower lateral bracing systems or the wind bracing is simply not an option. Fortunately, we in the 21st century are not the first to have confronted the problem of how to strengthen an existing Covered Bridge. Several very effective techniques were developed to this end in the 19th century, and were we to wish to show ourselves to be a wise people, rather than continuing to demonstrate for all to see that as a culture, we are sometimes much too easily infatuated by that which is new or "innovative", we should take the time necessary to understand these techniques, and then make use of them whenever they are appropriate. From a STRUCTURAL POINT OF VIEW, if the trusses, and the upper and lower lateral bracing systems, plus the wind bracing, of a subject Covered

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Bridge cannot be altered, then the only way of strengthening such a span would be to create some sort of supplementary structure, or other means of support, that would supply the required additional robustness.

- 6) From an HISTORICAL PRESERVATIONIST PERSPECTIVE, any added supplementary structure would have to be of a reversible nature, that is to say, it would have to be capable of being introduced and removed from a subject Covered Bridge without occasioning any damage to the trusses, or to the upper and lower lateral bracing systems, or to the wind bracing of the span in question. Two 19th century devices which would admirably fill the bill come readily to mind: the two hinged nail-laminated plank arch, and the solid timber arch brace. With proper planning and by making use of the services of an experienced and meticulous bridgewright, either one of these devices could be built up within the confines of an existing span without doing any significant damage to the trusses, or to the lateral bracing systems or to the wind bracing of the subject bridge. Though it is true that the introduction of a nail-laminated plank arch or an arch brace, springing as both would from the faces of the abutments on which the bridge in question sits, would alter the APPEARANCE of the span, this change in appearance would be a 19th or early 20th century change in appearance, not a 21st century one; moreover, and as has already been suggested, the aforesaid change in appearance would be of a reversible nature. The introduction of a supplementary structure within an existing historic Covered Bridge would therefore not alter such a span's authenticity to any significant extent. If a Covered Bridge retained a high degree of authenticity before the installation of a pair of nail-laminated plank arches or a pair of solid timber arch braces, it would still retain a high degree of authenticity afterwards.

As members will already have understood, the above commentary as to how the authenticity of a Covered Bridge is determined is not exhaustive, far from it. It is however illustrative of the kind of reasoning that needs to be brought to bear upon the question every time said question comes up. There are of course other kinds of authenticity more or less directly related to Covered Bridges which need as well to be investigated--authenticity in the design of trusses for new Covered Bridges, authenticity in the selection of materials used to fabricate new Covered Bridges, authenticity in the choice of framing techniques employed in the building of new Covered Bridges, authenticity in the choice of paint formulae used to produce the coatings which are destined to be applied to historic Covered Bridges, authenticity in the means whereby said coatings are brushed onto historic Covered Bridges, authenticity in the choice of techniques whereby an historic Covered Bridge is strengthened, et cetera--but these will have to await another day, or perhaps another year.

In the mean time,

Happy Bridging!

David W. Wright

President of The National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges

Book Review

Covered Bridges in the New England States by Warren H. White

Published by McFarland & Company, Jefferson, NC

Hard cover, 434 pages, 8.5 x 11, 127 photographs including 56 glossy

Warren White has written another encyclopedic work to compliment his previous book- *Covered Bridges in the Southeastern United States* (which is still available from the same publisher).

This is really an encyclopedia of all the covered bridges in New England. It follows the same format as the previous book. The bridges are divided by state, then county. Each bridge is given a World Guide number. He has indicated whether the bridge is authentic.

The listing includes the date each bridge was built, the builder (if known), the type of truss, the length and height of the bridge and a history. Most of the bridges also include a picture.

He has included very explicit directions to each bridge besides just the location. There is more information here than you can find anywhere else.

You might quibble that he has included bridges that you would not consider worthy of inclusion, but he has carefully labeled each one as to its authenticity. He has found some bridges in my hometown area that I did not know existed.

This should be considered the gold standard of reference as was his previous book. Since I bought mine a year ago, I have used it extensively.

Joseph Cohen



Covered Spans of Yesteryear

by Bill Caswell

This article about bridges of the past will take us to Missouri. The Missouri Historical Review of January 1967 contained an article about the state's covered bridges. After discussing Missouri's remaining covered bridges, the article concluded with notes of the known former ones. One of those was the Graham's Mill Bridge northwest of Chillicothe in Livingston County which is in the northern part of the state.



This postcard from Elna Johnson's collection shows the bridge and mill. For the most part, its story is a typical one. It served the public for about 70 years before being retired by a new concrete and steel structure in 1936. It stood as a local landmark for eight more years before collapsing in 1944.

A scan of Chillicothe newspapers from the early 1900's provided a few articles referring to the old covered bridge. Depending on the source, Col. L. W. Densmore received a contract for \$37,000 to build this bridge and one at Jimtown in 1864 or 1866. It was completed two years later. A 1943 article also credits him with a bridge at Utica.

To confuse the issue is a book titled *Past and Present of Livingston County, Missouri: A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement* by Albert J. Roof, published in 1913. It states that the "Graham Mill bridge on the east fork of Grand river and the Jimtown bridge on the main river were the first steel bridges built in the county. The contract for these two structures was let by the county court on May 8, 1866, to L. M. Densmore at a cost of \$37,000 for the two... Both bridges were finished in the month of August, 1868."

On March 17, 1913, flooding, partly caused by erosion of the mill dam, threatened the north end of the bridge. County judges went out to inspect the damages to determine if the bridge should be closed. A significant portion of the north embankment had washed out, but the log abutment held firm. Workers were sent to build a wall of logs to protect that section of shore. Two days later the Grand River had receded and the danger was past. The County judges ordered the failing dam removed and it was dynamited the following week.

The May 2, 1944 edition of the Chillicothe Constitution-Tribune carried a front page article announcing that the "bridge fell about noon today, and shattered, it sprawls on a sandbar now, with rapidly rising waters of Grand River lapping at its sides."

For information about other former covered bridges, visit our website at www.lostbridges.org. If you have information or pictures of the former bridges in your area, please share that with us. There is still a vast amount of territory to cover and any assistance will be greatly appreciated. Email is usually the most effective way to contact me - bill@lostbridges.org.

Old Covered Bridge News

08-02-02 Ashland Bridge

On September 19th, the Ashland covered bridge in Delaware was damaged when a moving van drove through it, taking out several pieces of the roof support materials. Bridge enthusiast, Karen Bittinger just happened to be there with her cousin Pattie Coley and took a photo of the van coming out of the bridge. The name on the van was clearly visible; "Starving Students, 800-441-MOVE" We have not heard whether the damage caused the bridge to close to traffic. *Thanks to Karen Bittinger of Apollo, PA for this news.*

14-47-02 Williams Bridge

The Lawrence County Highway Dept. has been working on a project for several years to build a new modern bridge just downstream from the Williams covered bridge over the White River. Even though the Williams Bridge is in good condition, it is restrictive due to the fact that larger vehicles can't use it. After the new bridge is finished, the covered bridge will be closed to vehicular traffic and used only for foot traffic. It will receive some repairs such as new roof and "walkways", and the floor will be resurfaced.

Land was recently acquired from two individuals for right-of-ways so that the project can move on, hopefully soon. Bids will be sent out in December 2008, or January 2009. *(From The Times-Mail News 10-8-2008)*

Editor's Note: Currently, at 397 ft., the Williams Bridge is the second longest "old authentic" covered bridge in the United States that is still open to regular traffic, with the Cornish-Windsor Bridge being the longest. In Canada, the Ashnola River Rd. Bridge 52-01-01, Marchand Bridge 61-53-01, and Hartland Bridge 55-02-07 are longer and still carry traffic.

14-60-01 Cataract Falls Bridge

A state historical marker was installed at the bridge with a ceremony last September. It is one of about 500 state historical markers in Indiana. The sign has a dark blue background, gold lettering, and an outline of the state at the top. Part of the text reads "The bridge was built with a 'Smith's High Double Wood Truss' over the Eel River in 1876". In 1988, it was bypassed with a new bridge and closed to vehicular traffic. *(The Brazil Times 9-26-08)*

14-61-38 Sanitorium Bridge

From Parke County, Indiana, we received the news of the moving of the Sanitorium bridge to the location of the former Adams bridge, about a mile upstream from where it was over the Little Raccoon Creek. The project officially began on July 30, 2008 and the bridge was set in place on November 12th, 2008. The bridge was rebuilt extensively, using a lot of new lumber, but retaining as much of the original timber as possible. New concrete abutments were built for the 154 ft long Burr truss which was originally built in 1913 by J.A. Britton. It had unique lightning rods on the roof at one time. There are many great photos of this project on the web site www.parkecountyliving.com *Thanks to James Crouse and Ron Branson for sending out this information by e-mail*

17-68-03 Cabin Creek/ Mackey-Hughes/ Rectorville Bridge

The residents of Lewis County in the northeastern part of Kentucky are greatly concerned that their covered bridge is in immediate danger of collapse, if something isn't done, soon. Steel bracing under the bridge was damaged in the Spring flooding. KY Transportation officer, Allen Blair is aware of the problems, and said that they are currently searching for funding to get the bridge properly restored.

The 114 ft. bridge was built in 1867 and bypassed in 1983. Since then, it has been in an abandoned status. *(Information from the Lexington Herald-Leader Sept. 29, 2008 sent to us by Miriam Woolfolk)*

17-101-01 Johnson Creek Bridge

The Arnold Graton & Associates Company will be able to complete the restoration of the Johnson Creek covered bridge in Robertson County, now that federal funding has been approved for Phase II of the project. Graton began the work in May 2008 and completed Phase I of the project before the money ran out, actually doing more work than he had agreed on. After much paperwork, the additional funding of \$425,000.00 was made available so that the bridge repairs could continue as planned. Total costs for the project are \$1.025 million. The stone abutments are being repaired by the Drystone Conservancy which will also raise them by 18 inches and the center support will be removed. Completion of the entire project is expected in July 2009, but it may well be finished by the time you read this. Johnson Creek Bridge is a 112 ft. Multiple King Post truss with arch built in 1874. When your editor saw this bridge in September 2005, I was afraid to walk across it for fear that it would collapse at any minute. It is good news to see that the Kentucky covered bridges are now being restored in an **authentic** manner by **competent professionals**. *(Information from Maysville Online.com Feb 20, 2008)*

Old Covered Bridge News

29-05-03 Bath Village Bridge

The historic Bath Village covered bridge may soon get a much overdue restoration, thanks to a 2.3 million dollar federal grant. According to a report in the *New Hampshire Union Leader* dated Dec. 23, 2008, the bridge was originally built for around \$3000.00 over the Ammonoosuc River in 1832. The article states that repairs will include "laminated timber arches", a new metal roof, and repairs to the abutments and piers. At this time, we haven't had any word of the work schedule. *(Thanks to Dick & June Roy for sending this article)*

29-05-09 Blair Bridge

The Grafton County town of Compton, NH has won an award of free services from the firm of DuBois & King, Inc. which will donate \$10,000.00 worth of engineering towards the rehabilitation of the Blair covered bridge. The bridge is overdue for extensive repairs, and its load limit has been reduced to three tons. It is a 293 ft. Long truss with arch and was built in 1869 over the Pemigewasset River. DuBois & King, Inc. is celebrating its 50th anniversary by donating the professional services to a community with a viable project that would benefit the needs of the area's residents.

37-20-40 Chambers Railroad Bridge

Bill Cockrell of Salem, Oregon met with Cottage Grove city officials back in November concerning this rare old railroad bridge. He reports that they want to dismantle the bridge in 2009 and give it a complete rehabilitation. Costs are estimated to be at least \$1.5 million. It has fallen into a condition of extreme disrepair. We hope this much needed work begins soon, and that it is done with historic accuracy.

37-22-03 Shimanek Bridge

Bill also tells us that the Linn County road crew removed the asphalt from the floor of this bridge recently. He believes that they will leave it as a wooden floor from now on. *Thanks, Bill!*

38-09-03 Van Sant Bridge 38-09-09 Frankenfield Bridge 38-09-10 Cabin Run Bridge

These three Bucks county covered bridges were to receive new fire resistant roofing earlier in 2008, according to an article in the *Bucks County Courier Times* (May 8, 2008). County commissioners approved \$150,000.00 for the replacements, which were needed on these particular bridges. Arsonists have hit the Bucks County covered bridges hard in the past couple years, so the county is trying to prevent any further damage to their historic spans.

38-25-03 Gudgeonville Bridge

On November 8, 2008, this Erie County Pennsylvania bridge was burned by two criminals who were on a "crime spree" across Crawford and Erie Counties. Jeffrey Gleason (23) of Conneautville and Joshua M. Bell (21) of Albion are both held on bond and charged with the arson of the bridge. Both men are also charged with other crimes. The Gudgeonville covered bridge, built in 1868 over the Elk Creek, was located in a beautiful scenic valley in Girard Township. There are two other remaining covered bridges in Erie County. (The county's Carmen Perry Bridge was lost to arson on April 19, 1996 and never replaced).

The bridge was not totally destroyed by the fire and **was** repairable, but sadly, the Girard Township supervisors have already contracted with the Schwartz Construction Company of Conneaut, OH to remove the bridge and store the timbers for later use, but apparently not to rebuild the bridge. Several covered bridge enthusiasts, including David Wright and Joseph Conwill, had written to them to try to get them to rebuild it, but it seems they were not interested in doing so. *(This news came from the GoErie.com web site)*

38-63-09 Brownlee Bridge

Anyone looking for the Brownlee Bridge in Washington County, PA will have to make a change on their map. Last fall, the bridge was dismantled and moved to the McGuffey Community Park at Claysville, which is along the old National Rd., about 10 miles SW of the city of Washington. It's a 41 ft King Post truss, which formerly resided on T414 in East Finley Township.

35-45-06 Gregg/ Handel Bridge #2

On October 21, 2008, the Gregg Bridge in Licking County, Ohio was struck by an oversize truck and the roof timbers were damaged to the extent that the bridge was closed to traffic. The driver of the vehicle left the scene and hasn't been found. The Gregg Bridge is a 120 ft. Multiple King Post truss, built in 1881 and was extensively modified in 1992 by placing it on top of a modern concrete bridge, so there is no danger of it collapsing into the Wakatomika Creek. The Licking County Sheriff's Dept. is investigating the incident while county engineer, Tim Lollo, is gathering estimates for repairing the damage. The article from the *Newark Advocate*, also states that it was heavily damaged in a flood in 1995, which required \$307,000.00 in repairs.

Old Covered Bridge News



S-06-22 Gsteig

The two photos were taken by Todd Clark while on a trip to Switzerland in October. This Queenpost bridge has been outfitted with unusual hydraulic lifts at each corner to raise the bridge out of harms way in the case of high flood water. It was built in 1738 and is located at Wilderswil.



40-23-02 Campbell's Bridge

The Greenville County Recreation District is planning on building a 15 acre park around Campbell's Bridge and an application for the National Registry of Historic Places is being submitted so that the old bridge may have some protection and recognition as it approaches its 100 birthday. It was built by Alexander Lafayette "Fate" Campbell, who was born in 1836 and died in 1920. He had two wives, twenty one children and owned 194 acres of land. The county "hired" 30 goats to clear off the brush and garbage around the bridge so that the park will look nice. The park should be open by summer. *(Thanks to Howard Rogers for sending the two news articles from The Greenville News dated Oct 23, 2008)*

42-63-01 #2 Port Royal Bridge

The covered bridge in the Port Royal State Park in Montgomery County, Tennessee is gone. It was damaged in a flood in 1998, then pulled out of the Red River in late 1999. The bridge was only a stringer type of replica and replaced an earlier authentic wooden truss covered bridge. It was used for foot traffic and wasn't an exact replica of the original bridge. It was already built when the park was created in 1979, but park officials didn't have the money to maintain it or properly repair it. The bridge was constructed with a steel frame and covered with wood siding and roof. The original stone abutments will remain in place.

55-15-08 Upper Stone Ridge/ Keswick River #6

Very sad news came to us from York County, New Brunswick on Friday, October 10, 2008. The Stone Ridge Covered Bridge was burned and completely destroyed by arsonists at around 10:00 p.m. It was a 126 ft. Howe truss built in 1914 and located about 30 kilometers northeast of Fredericton. This was the last covered bridge spanning the Keswick River. At this time, it does not appear that it will be rebuilt as a covered bridge. The last two covered bridges to span the Keswick River were also destroyed by fire. Only 63 covered bridges remain in New Brunswick. *(Information was obtained from the Globeandmail.com web site)*

Vernon White

We are saddened to learn of the passing of Mr. Vernon White of Bowling Green, Kentucky on December 1, 2008. Mr. White was known to bridgers as the author of the book "Covered Bridges: A Focus On Kentucky", a well done book published in 1985. He was born in 1915 and was a graduate of both the University of Louisville and the University of Tennessee. He was also a veteran of WWII serving in the Army Air Corps. He is survived by a daughter, Carolyn White Bell and a son, Charles Vernon White. Our most sincere sympathies are extended to his family and friends.

New Covered Bridge News, Members, etc.



38-19-12 #2 West Paden Bridge

These two photos were taken by Bob Sheldon on October 17th, 2008, showing the new replica bridge at the site of the former West Paden bridge in Columbia Co. PA. It is a 92 ft Burr truss spanning the Huntington Creek near Forks, PA. The original bridge, built in 1850, was washed away in a flood on June 28, 2006. The new replica is an astonishingly accurate copy of the original covered bridge. We also thank Terry Miller for sending several good photos of these twin bridges.

08-02-04 Wooddale #2 Bridge

On December 15th, 2008 a new covered bridge was opened to traffic at the site of the old Wooddale bridge which was washed away in a flood on Sept. 15, 2003. Construction began on the new bridge on Sept. 4, 2007. Mumford & Miller Concrete Inc. was the main contractor for the project, which cost \$3.4 million. The new bridge sits 5 ft higher than the original, and its dimensions are larger. A spokesman from the Delaware Historic Preservation Society was quoted as saying "We wanted to go with something authentic". Pictures that your editor saw during construction do not show any steel beams under it. It appears to be truss supported. (Thanks to Karen Bittinger for sending photos) (Information obtained from Delaware Online, Dec. 16, 2008)

Ritner Creek Bridge Commemorative Bricks

Friends of the Ritner Creek Bridge 37-27-01 are selling bricks for installation at the bridge in Polk County, Oregon. Anyone can purchase a brick (or several) and have it engraved with their choice of wording. There can be up to three lines of text and a maximum of 14 characters per line. This is a great opportunity to have your own name at the bridge or the name of a passed loved one.

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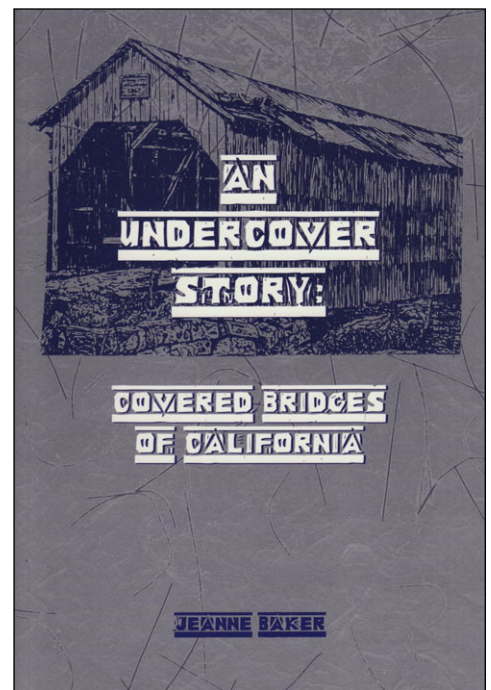
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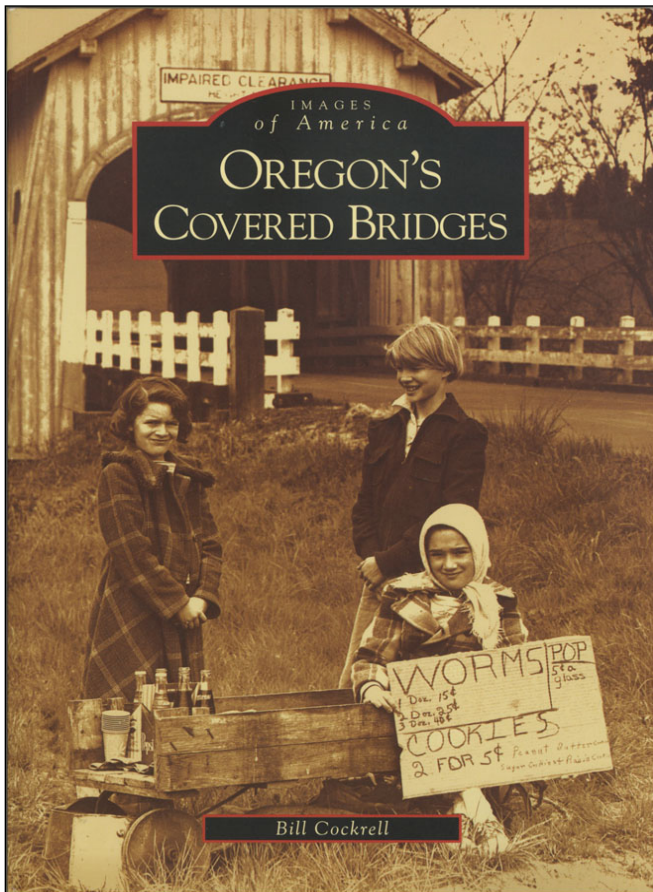
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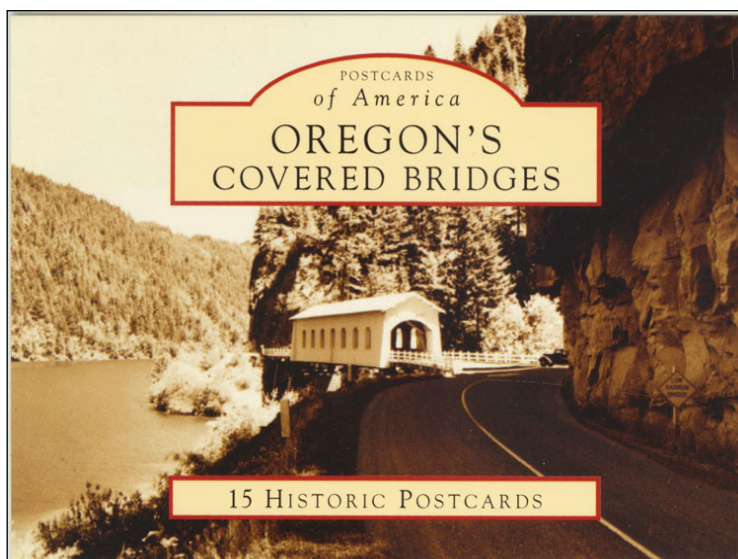
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“Covered Bridges of Vermont” by Ed Barna. This is an excellent book depicting all the covered bridges in Vermont in the year 1996. 6x9 soft cover, 216 pgs., Pub: The Countryman Press, ISBN 0-88150-373-8 Postpaid \$17.00

Two great books (below) by Joseph D. Conwill: The Arcadia Press Images of America Series

“Vermont Covered Bridges”

Pub in 2004, 6.5x9.25 soft cover, 128 pgs., ISBN 0-7385-3598-2

“Maine’s Covered Bridges”

Pub in 2003 6.5x9.25 soft cover, 128 pgs., ISBN 0-7385-1271-0

They sell for \$19.99 each plus \$3.00 shipping and handling.

“Life in the Slow Lane” is still available for \$16.95 + \$3.95 Shipping and Handling. This is a hard bound 8.5x11 in. book with 162 pages of excellent photos by many various contributors from all over the country. Publisher: Reiman Publications 1998 ISBN 0-89821-240-5

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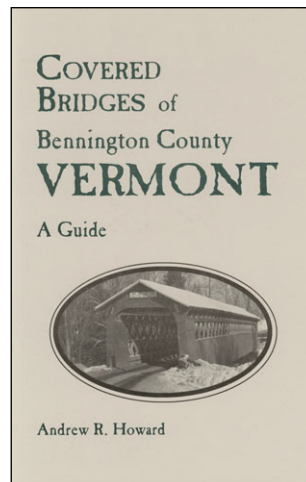
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