

The Newsletter

National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, Inc.

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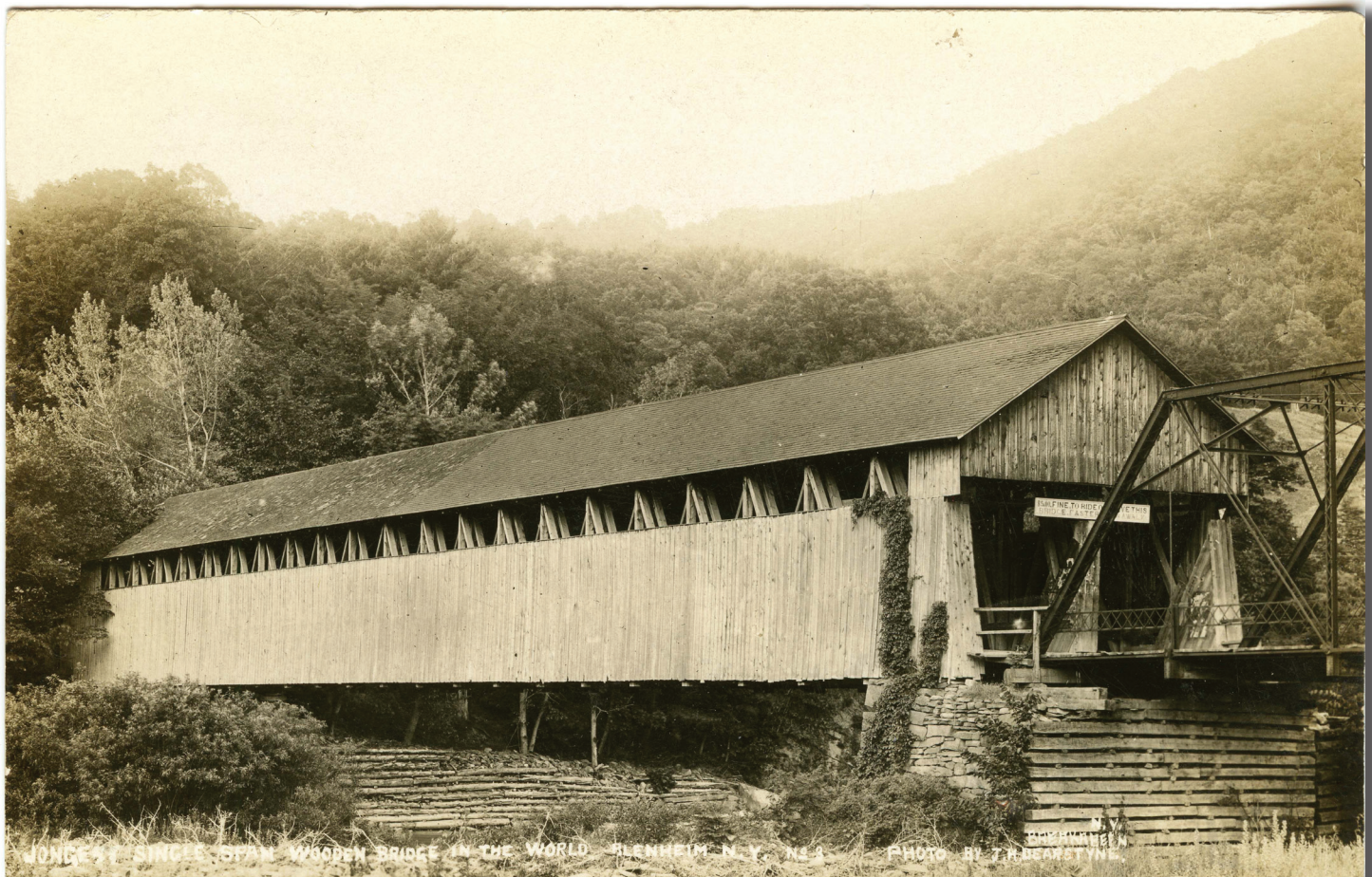


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The Old Blenheim Covered Bridge
Built in 1855. Destroyed by flood waters on August 28, 2011

The President's Message

Dear Fellow Members, Greetings!

Once again, I am facing what has been a yearly dilemma ever since the days when I first began drafting a "President's Message"; namely, how can I wish all of you a Most Merry Christmas and Happy New Year in a timely manner; that is to say, neither too soon nor too late? The answer, of course, given the publishing schedule of Topics and the Newsletter, is that I cannot. This year, therefore, I am simply going to face reality, and wish all of you a Most Happy Holiday season, knowing full well that you shall be receiving these good wishes retrospectively. They are none-the-less sincerely meant for all of that, however.

And now to several items of Society business:

Election Results: At the Society's Annual Meeting, held on Sunday, October 23rd 2011, at the usual meeting place, that is to say, at the French King Restaurant in Millers Falls, Massachusetts, the following candidates were elected as officers of the Society for fiscal year 2011-2012, and the following appointments were made for the same period; to wit:

Elected Officers:

- 1) David W. Wright, President.
- 2) Richard Roy, Bill Caswell, Roger Easton, Vice Presidents.
- 3) Tim Andrews, Stephen Weston, James Barker, Directors.
- 4) Robert Watts, General Secretary and Statutory Agent.
- 5) Joye Olson, Recording Secretary.
- 6) Michele Andrews, Treasurer.

Appointments:

- 1) Editor of Topics, Joseph D. Conwill.
- 2) Editor of the Newsletter, Brian J. McKee.
- 3) Engineering Consultant, James A. Barker, P. E.
- 4) Official Historians, Dick Roy, Bill Caswell.
- 5) Assigning World Guide Numbers to Existing Covered Bridges, Dan Brock.
- 6) Committee to Assign World Guide Numbers to Former Covered Bridges, Dan Brock, Bill Caswell.
- 7) Official Keeper of the National Society List of Bridges, Dan Brock.
- 8) Mailing Chairman, Dick Roy.
- 9) Hospitality Chairman, Dan Brock.
- 10) Membership Chairman, Jennifer Caswell
- 11) Acquisitions and Sales, June Roy.
- 12) Guide Salesman, Bill Caswell.
- 13) Back Issues of Topics, Dick Roy.
- 14) Archivist and Official Photographer, Joseph D. Conwill.
- 15) Web Master, Bill Caswell.
- 16) Consultant for Timber Framing, Tim Andrews.
- 17) Nominating Committee, Dick Roy, June Roy.

The President's Message (page 2)

Consequences of Hurricane Irene: In the fall "President's Message", I promised all of you an accurate list of the bridges that were damaged or lost as a result of Hurricane Irene. Unbeknownst to me – the "President's Message" is prepared here in Westminster, Vermont, and the Newsletter is compiled out in Upper Sandusky, Ohio – Brian McKee was one or two steps ahead of me and had already produced such a list, so there is obviously no need for me to duplicate what has already been so perfectly accomplished elsewhere, and previously! Bravo Brian; good job.

The Boxed Pony Truss Bridge Formerly Over Moose Brook in Gorham, New Hampshire: I last wrote about the boxed pony truss bridge which formerly spanned Moose Brook in Gorham, New Hampshire, in my winter 2011 "President's Message". Since that time there have been developments. As most of you will probably remember, the reconstruction of this bridge was a project in which three entities were to participate: namely, the Historic American Engineering Record division of the National Park Service (H.A.E.R.), Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, and the National Society. The whole operation was largely to be financed by H.A.E.R., thanks to monies allocated for research by the Jeffords Covered Bridge Bill, so called, a bill that had been passed by the United States Congress several years previously. The trusses of the Gorham span, once they had been reconstructed, were to be transported to Case Western Reserve University, where they would be installed in Professor Dario Gasparini's Laboratory. The plan was for them to remain in Cleveland until such time as Professor Gasparini had finished his study of them, probably for a year or two. The first of these trusses was transported to Cleveland earlier this year, and the second ought to be arriving out there by the end of January 2012.

Why a year, more or less, between the delivery of the first and the second of the Gorham span's two trusses, some of you may be asking.

The reason has been the problem of getting several of the span's metal bridge shoes repaired.

Some of you may remember an earlier discussion about the span's bridge shoes; more specifically, a discussion as to the nature of the material out of which these shoes had been fabricated. If of cast steel, repairs could be made fairly easily, but, if of cast iron, then the matter was rather more complicated.

At first we believed that the bridge shoes had been made up out of cast iron, but then we were informed, reliably we thought, that they were actually of cast steel. Unfortunately, the latter turned out not to be the case, as subsequent testing performed for us out at Case Western Reserve University demonstrated conclusively. Connections within the trusses of the Gorham boxed pony span were thus affected by means of cast iron bridge shoes, not cast steel ones.

In the interval preceding the Case Western Reserve tests, however, several New Hampshire firms assured us that they could repair our bridge shoes. One firm actually succeeded in repairing one of them – this by means of electric welding!! – but had so much trouble with that repair as to refuse taking on the four others. A second New

The President's Message (page 3)

Hampshire company was therefore approached by us, a full complement of bridge shoes obviously being required before reconstruction of the second truss of the Gorham span could be undertaken. Once again we were given assurances by the company in question that that they could repair the damaged bridge shoes. Well, they tried several times, but in each instance, success failed to crown their considerable and costly efforts. At some point during the latter proceedings, Professor Dario Gasparini of case Western reserve University, suggested that we get in contact with Vern Mesler, of Lansing, Michigan, a gentleman who specializes in the repair of cast and wrought iron metal truss bridge components. To make a long story short, Mr. Mesler volunteered to take on the task of welding the bridge shoes of the Gorham span. Thanks to him, these bridge shoes have now been successfully repaired and will soon be incorporated in the second of the two reconstructed trusses of that span.

Once again, a Most Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to each and every one of you!!!

Yours Sincerely,

David W. Wright

Welcome to Our New Members!

Beth Wegener, 1177 Caddo St., Zwolle, LA 71486

Tammy Kennedy, PO Box 253, Dudley, MA 01571

Debby & Terry Peterson, 900 Harmony Hill Drive, Lebanon, PA 17046-2219

Allen Renken, PO Box A, J4-216, New Castle, IN 47362

Daniel Seeling, August Barn Co., 3942 Pleasant Valley Road, Cogan Station, PA 17728

Michael Shreck, 151 Turkey Trot Path, Trout Run, PA 17771

Cynthia Beagley, 2430 Camber Road, Newark, NY 14513

Rob Bermudes, 645 Cedarwood Terr., Rochester, NY 14609

Dan & Norene Foley, 81 Stoney Hill Road, Ridgefield, CT 06877

Jeffrey Glickman, 7007 SW Wedelia Terrace, Palm City, FL 34990

Susan and Ray Varisco, 103 Eagle Stream Dr., Y19, Eagleville, PA 19403

2012 Meetings, Dinners, Dedications & Events

- February 5**
2:00 p.m. **Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania**
Meeting at the Manheim Twp. Municipal Building. Program is “Maryland’s Covered Bridges, Past and Present” by Jim Smedley
- March 4**
2:00 p.m. **Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania**
Meeting at the Manheim Twp. Municipal Building. Program is “A Look at Our Society Page on Facebook” by Gloria Smedley
- March 4**
Indiana Covered Bridge Society
Winter “get together”
Details will be announced later
- March 18**
1:30 p.m. **Ohio Historic Bridge Association**
Meeting in Hilliard, OH
Exact location and program are to be announced.
- March 25**
National Society Meeting
At MoeJoe’s Restaurant, 2175 Candia Rd., Manchester, NH Phone (603) 668-0131
Lunch at Noon, Meeting at 1:00
- April 1**
2:00 p.m. **Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania**
Bake Sale and Meeting at the Manheim Twp. Municipal Building. Program is “Covered Bridges of New England” a documentary film produced by Ocean State Video. It will be presented by Ben and June Evans.
- April 22**
1:00 p.m. **National Society Meeting**
At the Harvard, Mass. Historical Society Building, 215 Still River Rd. in Harvard
The program has not been decided upon at this time.
- April 28 & 29** **Indiana Covered Bridge Society**
Spring Trip to Carroll, Howard, and Grant Counties
- Late April** **Vermont Covered Bridge Society**
Annual Spring Meeting at the Bennington Center for the Arts Covered Bridge Museum
- May 5 or 6th** **Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania**
53rd Anniversary Dinner
- May 19-20** **Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania**
Annual Safari
A trip to Perry County and the surrounding area.
Headquarters are at the Holiday Inn Express, 2055 Technology Parkway, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050. Phone: 717-732-8800. Rooms are \$79.00 + tax per night. If you call for reservations, be sure to mention that you are with the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society Safari in order to get the Special Group Rate.
- May 20** **Ohio Historic Bridge Association**
Spring Tour
Time & Location are to be announced

2012 Meetings, Dinners, Dedications & Events

- June 3rd Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania**
A Meeting will be held at the Kreidersville Covered Bridge (38-48-01) Festival
- June 24 National Society Meeting**
At the Contoocook Railroad Bridge in Contoocook, NH
Lunch at Noon at the pizza shop next to the bridge
Meeting begins at 1:00 p.m. inside the bridge
- July 8 NY State Covered Bridge Society
Picnic at the Shushan Covered Bridge.**
Lunch is at 12:00 noon, meeting is at 1:00 p.m
- July 15 Ohio Historic Bridge Association
Annual Picnic**
Noon
At the Salt Creek Covered Bridge in Muskingum Co.
The program will be presented by speaker Julie O'Keefe McGhee, "Teller of Tales that weave folklore into our lives"
- July 22 National Society Meeting**
1:00 p.m.
At the Theodore Burr Resource Center in Oxford, NY
Located inside the Oxford Public Library, 8 Ft Hill Park, Oxford, NY
Program: Covered Bridges in the Civil War by Bob and Trish Kane
- July 21 & 22 Indiana Covered Bridge Society**
Summer Trip to the French Lick Area
- August 26 National Society Meeting and Picnic**
At the Westminster Fire Station
Lunch at Noon, Meeting at 1:00 p.m.
- Sept. 16 Ohio Historic Bridge Association
Fall Tour**
Time and place to be announced
- Sept 23 National Society Meeting**
Time and place are not decided, yet.
- Sept. 29 & 30 Indiana Covered Bridge Society**
Fall Trip to Dearborn, Fayette, and Franklin Counties
- Oct. 28 National Society Annual Meeting**
Time and place are not decided, yet.
- Nov. 18 Ohio Historic Bridge Association**
1:30 p.m.
Meeting in Hilliard, OH
Location and program are to be announced.

Bridge News

Alabama

Swan/Joy Bridge 01-05-05, Horton Mill 01-05-07, Old Easley 01-05-12 Bridges

Bob Smith Construction is the company leading a project to rehabilitate Blount County's three landmark covered bridges. The contract for the project came in at \$469,110. The repair money will come from the Federal National Historical Covered Bridge Preservation program and from transportation enhancement money. After inspections raised safety concerns in 2009, Blount County's bridges were closed to vehicular traffic. The decking has been removed to allow for a closer examination of all the support structures. A third-party inspector will come in and examine the entire structure to help determine what needs to be replaced and what needs to be reinforced.

The **Swann Bridge**, a 305-foot-long wooden structure which is just north of Cleveland and off Alabama 79, is the first one scheduled for rehabilitation. With the decking up, the bridge shows virtually no rot or decay on unpainted wood that has spanned the river for almost 80 years. The heart pine wood came from trees that had grown slowly for hundreds of years. To get comparable wood, the company will have to special order it and have it treated.

Next will be the **Easley Bridge**. Built in 1927, the bridge is the shortest of the three at 82 feet, but probably will require the most rehabilitation work.

The final challenge will be the 203 ft. **Horton Mill Bridge**. Built in 1935 near Oneonta, that bridge is a dizzying 70 feet above the water.

The job also will involve putting new tin roofs on the bridges. The roofs are the main factor in the long life of a wooden bridge, keeping moisture from soaking through the wood structure. When completed, the bridges will be open to traffic, though they will have weight limits of 3 tons. *(Taken from an article in The Daily Reporter.com Dec 21, 2011)*

Blount County Covered Bridge Tours by Sharon Rose Murphree

For your information, the Blount County Memorial Museum located in Oneonta, Alabama, offers tours of the Covered Bridges and other historical sites around Blount County. To schedule a tour for your family or your group, please contact Amy Rhudy, Curator, Blount County Memorial Museum at (205) 625-6905. Amy has been leading tours throughout Blount County for 12 years. She knows the county like the back of her hand and is gladly offering tours by appointment. Give her a call and learn more about the history of Blount County and our beautiful covered bridges. *(Thanks to Bill Caswell and Facebook)*

California

Bridgeport Covered Bridge 05-29-01

The **Bridgeport Bridge** became inaccessible to **all** traffic, including pedestrians, as of Friday, October 12, 2011, according to California State Parks officials. The western Nevada County icon, one of 10 remaining covered bridges in California, has structural deficiencies that led to its closure.

With the recent demise of the **Blenheim Bridge** in New York, the **Bridgeport Bridge**, originally built in 1862, is now the longest single-span covered bridge in the world.

"I can confirm we are moving toward closure due to concerns over the structure of the bridge," said Roy Stearns, spokesman for California State Parks, which earlier this year announced the closure of 70 parks statewide, including Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park and South Yuba River State Park, where the bridge is located.

Closure of the bridge entered into consideration after a maintenance person with South Yuba River State Park noticed some twisting of the bridge, as well as some shifting.

"You can see the structural problems," he said. "If you look at where the bridge meets the shore, you can see where it's twisted."

After maintenance workers reported the initial findings, a preliminary engineering analysis confirmed the problems.

The bridge will be closed for as long as it takes to secure funding for a full engineering analysis, which could cost in the area of \$20,000. A spokesman labeled the cost of actual repairs to the bridge as "large."

"We are hoping for funding, but obviously in this climate, it will be an issue," he said. "I know it means a lot to the community; it's too bad. But, we have to shut it down." Anderson said he was also disappointed to hear about the closure of bridge, which he considers a local icon. "This is the second whammy in a pretty big double whammy," he said. "The first is the proposed closure of the park. I just hope the state is committed to pursuing maintenance of the bridge."

In 1972, the bridge was refurbished and raised a few feet, Anderson said. The bridge was closed to vehicular traffic 18 months ago. *(Information was taken from an article in The Union.com October 17, 2011)*

Bridge News

Illinois

Martin Sprague Memorial Bridge 13-20-A

This 30 ft long replica bridge collapsed in a windstorm on November 12, 2011, according to a report from Pantagraph.com 11-15-2011. It was located in a park in Clinton, IL.

Glenarm/Hedley/Sugar Creek Bridge 13-84-02

The Glenarm/Hedley Covered Bridge in Sangamon County is about to get a new roof and a new coat of paint.

The Multiple Kingpost and Arch structure south of Chatham also is the only one surviving out of as many as 18 that historic researchers say once carried horses, wagons, pedestrians and, later, cars, across the rivers and streams of Sangamon County. It was built in 1827 by Thomas Black, an early settler to the region who wanted an alternative to crossing Sugar Creek on foot or by horse. At 110 feet in length, 13 feet in width and 12 feet in height, it was designed to accommodate horse-drawn wagons full of hay.

"We're hoping to get the work done this year, with maybe a bid-letting in the spring," Sal Madonia, a project engineer with the Illinois Department of Transportation, said Thursday.

Madonia is a member of Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission panel that approved use of a \$52,000 federal grant for the work. The state, which owns and is responsible for maintaining the bridge, plans to add \$13,000.

Madonia said the work also must be approved by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. The bridge is on the National Register of Historic Sites and is among five original covered bridges remaining in Illinois.

According to research at the archives of The State Journal-Register, the state took over maintenance of the bridge from the township road district in 1963. A major renovation was completed two years later. The bridge remained in use until 1984. (From The State Journal-Register Jan 6, 2012)

Kentucky

Grange City Bridge 17-35-05

Officials are concerned that this 80 ft. Multiple Kingpost Truss is not going to last long if it is ignored much longer. Even though it is on a schedule to be renovated, it is behind the Cabin Creek Bridge and the Beech Fork/Mooresville Bridge. It's close counterpart, the Ringo's Mill Bridge, is also in the group of covered bridges to be renovated. The Grange City Bridge, which is bypassed and closed to traffic, was inspected in 2009 by the KTC before the Fleming Covered Bridge Festival and was given approval for unlimited pedestrian traffic at that time.

Ringo's Mill Bridge received \$400,000 in funding last year, but Grange City Bridge received nothing. Hopefully, the internal steel gridwork that is supporting the Cabin Creek Bridge, will be moved to the Grange City Bridge soon, and will keep it stabilized until it can be permanently repaired. (From *The Ledger Independent* Nov. 16, 2011)

Maryland

Jericho Covered Bridge 20-03-02/20-12-01

A meeting was to be held on December 8th at the Kingsville Elementary School in regards to the renovation of the Jericho Covered Bridge. Engineers from both Baltimore and Harford Counties were to conduct the meeting, where they were to discuss historic guidelines, traffic detours and vandalism. The bridge was built in 1865 over the Little Gunpowder Falls. The project is expected to take up to a year to complete and should begin in late 2012. (From *BelAirPatch.com*)

Massachusetts

Gilbertville/Ware Bridge 21-08-04 21-14-01

Wood removed from the Gilbertville Covered Bridge when it was repaired last year could be used for bridges along the rail trail and to create a museum display, but two town bodies have only two weeks to make a proposal.

The Board of Selectmen on Tuesday said it wanted to decide on a specific plan at the Jan. 10 meeting, set for 7 p.m. Chairwoman Nancy J. Talbot said the Rail Trail Committee and the Historical Commission have to decide whether they will share the wood and what they would do with it.

The 139-foot bridge was built in 1887 and shut down in 2002 because of a low weight-bearing capacity and damage caused by an insect infestation. It was restored at a cost of \$1.9 million and no longer has a weight limit.

Also known as the Ware-Hardwick Covered Bridge, it connects Old Gilbertville Road in Ware and Bridge Street in Hardwick over the Ware River. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Rail Trail Committee hopes to use the wood for bridges along the trail; the Historical Society has proposed building a model of the covered bridge as a display in a future museum. The Historical Commission supports giving it all to the Historical Society. Selectman William R. Braman said any plan from the groups "would probably be fine with us." (Continued on next page)

Bridge News

Cynthia LaBombard from the Historical Society said both uses would be acceptable, but the Rail Trail Committee has not been cooperative and members have not been meeting to discuss it.

Herb Foley, a member of the Rail Trail Committee said, "We are still interested in the wood. ... We're going to be fair about it and give each other 50-50."

Braman asked the two groups to set up a meeting time immediately and stick to it.

The Historical Commission, in a letter to the board, asked for all the wood to be given to the Historical Society.

"As the wood was removed from the Bridge due to its structural instability, we feel it would be unwise to place it in a situation where stress on the wood would be an issue," the letter reads. "This recommendation is made to the Board of Selectmen in order to prevent the Town (of) Ware from incurring any exposure to liability due to improper use of the wood."

"There's no reason we can't postpone (a decision) for a week or two," said Talbot. But the wood needs to be used quickly or it will deteriorate.

"My personal feeling is it should be used for a bridge. That's what it came from," Selectman John E. Carroll told The Republican before the meeting.

Hardwick has already sold its portion of the wood to an individual for personal use. *(From MassLive.com Dec. 27, 2011)*

New Jersey

Haines Dairy Farm Bridge (Replica) 30-08-A

This replica bridge was destroyed by Hurricane Irene sometime around August 28, 2011. *(From Sandy Adrion 11-12-2011)*

Ohio

West Liberty Street Bridge 35-04-65

Ohio's newest covered bridge is also the shortest in the nation. Designed by well known, former Ashtabula County Engineer, John Smolen, this rare King Post truss measures 18 ft long. Columbiana County's Church Hill Rd. Bridge is 19 ft. long. Ashtabula County Joint Vocational School students built the bridge at the school, then helped finish it at its new home in the town of Geneva. It is located just west of OH534 on West Liberty St. The bridge was officially dedicated on Saturday, October 8, 2011.

Fairfield County Covered Bridges and Historic Sites

A report by the OHBA tells us that the voters of Fairfield Co. approved a new .4 mil 10 year tax levy to provide some funding of the maintenance of the county's old historic structures and sites. This includes their covered bridges. Hopefully, they will be able to take better care of the old covered bridges from now on. The World Guide to Covered Bridges lists 16 in Fairfield County.

West Engle Mill Rd. Bridge 35-29-03

is finally getting some attention after being neglected and closed for many years. The OHBA reports that this 148 ft. Smith Truss will be renovated by Jim Barker's Engineering Firm from Indiana. OHBA 3rd VP, Douglas Miller, PE, will be involved in working on this project.

Charleton Mill Rd. Bridge 35-29-16

On November 28, 2011, this bridge was closed to all traffic by Greene Co. Engineer, Robert Geyer, due to its deteriorating condition. Rotted timbers were found recently, causing the 120 ft. Howe Truss to be closed. Three dates of construction are given in the article..1860, 1870 and 1882. The World Guide to Covered Bridges lists 1883 as the date of construction. According to the Mr. Geyer, the bridge will be renovated and brought up to modern specs, so that heavy vehicles like school buses will be able to cross it safely. *(From The Dayton Daily News Nov. 28, 2011)*

Johnson Rd./Crabtree/Petersburg Bridge 35-40-06

This 75 ft Smith Truss has been closed to traffic by Jackson County Engineer Melissa Miller, due to deteriorated timbers. Our records show that at least 50 percent of the timbers in this bridge were replaced in 1999.

Otway Bridge 35-73-15

This old Type 3 Smith Truss, located in Scioto County, was the subject of a local fundraising effort recently. Approximately \$5000.00 was raised for repairs to the 1874 covered bridge. The Otway Bridge is one of the two in Ohio which have an iron span attached to one end. The other one is the Harpersfield Bridge in Ashtabula County. On your editor's last visit to see this bridge, it was still open to traffic. Does anyone know if it is still open?

Bridge News

Pennsylvania

Knecht's Covered Bridge 38-09-02

New lighting, fire sensors, and a fire alarm system were installed at this Bucks County Covered Bridge. The project was funded from several sources, including a \$23,000 grant from the **National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Fund**.

Pine Valley Bridge 38-09-12

Shaker style dining tables are being made from the wood that is being replaced at the Pine Valley Covered Bridge. Students in the Upper Bucks County Technical School cabinetmaking shop are making the tables, and the society will receive some of the money with the remainder going to the school program. Stain colors being offered for the 6- to 8-foot-long tables include cherry, special walnut, golden oak, Early American, and red chestnut. Each limited-edition table will be accompanied by plaques and verification plates. "This wood is white oak," retired carpentry teacher John Cressman, chairman of the **Bucks County Covered Bridge Society**, told the *Perkasie News Herald*. (From *The New Jersey Herald* Jan. 2, 2012)

Rapp's Dam Covered Bridge 38-15-14

PennDOT reopened the Rapps Dam covered bridge on Nov. 21, 2011 following the completion of the \$1.5 million project to rehabilitate the historic structure over French Creek in East Pikeland Township, Chester County. PennDOT's contractor worked the past 10 months to restore the 122 ft long double Burr truss by removing and replacing its deteriorated cedar shake roof, redwood siding and wood decking. Crews also replaced four steel beams supporting the bridge deck, and repaired the structure's stone abutments and wing walls.

The bridge, which was originally built in 1866 and reconstructed in 1978, was closed for construction on Jan. 17, 2011.

During the construction project, Rapps Dam Road motorists have been detoured over Route 113 and Route 23. The bridge carried approximately 4,300 vehicles a day prior to its closure.

Bi-State Construction Company, Inc. of Easton, Pa. was the general contractor on the \$1,527,257 project. The project was financed entirely with state funds. (From *The Phoenixville Patch* Nov. 18, 2011)

Martin's Mill Bridge 38-28-01

An 1849 Town Truss covered bridge in Franklin County may be getting a real boost.

Antrim administrator Brad Graham, in response to a citizen's query at the Tuesday, Dec. 13 regular meeting of the board of supervisors, talked about a \$700,000 federal grant the township just received for Martin's Mill Bridge.

Awarded by the Federal Highway Administration, the money will not be available for several years, and will be distributed by PennDOT.

Graham said it would be used to extend the life of the 162-year-old covered bridge. Antrim also received \$245,000 in matching earmarked funds from Rep. Bill Shuster's office in 2008, but Graham said it was yet unclear how much of the new money would have to be matched. (From *The Echo-Pilot.com* 12-11-2011)

Pinetown Covered Bridge 38-36-05

The Pinetown Bridge, also known as Nolt's Point and Bushong's Mill Bridge, was damaged by flood waters from Tropical Storm Lee, although not washed off its abutments, it was moved a few inches and the structure was bowed, requiring officials to close it to traffic. As of this time, we haven't heard what the current status of the bridge is. (Thanks to *Jim Smedley and the Theodore Burr CB Society*)

Seigrist Mill/Moore's Mill Covered Bridge 38-36-37

The Seigrist Mill Bridge was washed downstream on September 8, 2011 by severe flooding from Tropical Storm Lee. It came to a stop along the bank of the Big Chickies Creek, finally resting on private property. Contractors obtained permission to secure the bridge and prepared it to be moved back onto its original abutments. The latest reports say that the bridge will eventually be moved sometime in late 2012. (Thanks to *Jim Smedley and the Theodore Burr CB Society*)

Lairdsville/Moreland/Frazier Covered Bridge 38-41-03

We have heard of some controversy concerning the recent repairs done to the Lairdsville/Moreland Covered bridge in Lycoming County. Some covered bridge/timber framing experts have seen the site or pictures of it, and have expressed their opinions that too much of the original timbers were being replaced. If more than 50 percent of the original timbers were replaced, then the bridge no longer can be considered "original" and will lose its status as a historic structure. Mr. Carl "Mac" McDaniel has posted some photos of it on his Flickr page on the internet, and sent us some by email. Pictures that were taken on November 17th 2011 show the bridge is almost completely finished. The bridge is an 1888 Burr Truss and spans the Little Muncy Creek. The road ends with a cul-du-sac and therefore, the bridge carries very little traffic. (Thanks to *Jim Crouse, Jim Smedley, Carl "Mac" McDaniel, Tim Andrews, and Terry Miller*)

Bridge News

Pennsylvania

Lairdsville/Moreland/Frazier Covered Bridge 38-41-03 #2

The Lycoming County commissioners were expected to approve a reimbursement agreement with the state Department of Transportation that would clear the way for the county to receive state and federal funds associated with the renovation the covered bridge in Lairdsville. Work on the bridge, which spans Little Muncy Creek and is one of three such bridges owned by the county, has been completed, Mark Murawski, county transportation planner, said Wednesday during the commissioners work session.

The cost of the project was more than \$1.3 million, Murawski said. The reimbursement agreement will provide the county with a final \$100,000 installment toward that cost, which was covered entirely by federal and state funds.

“The project basically involved a comprehensive rehabilitation of the bridge,” he said. **“Two-thirds of the bridge is new.”**

Renovations included the installation of a new foundation, a new metal roof and new side boards.

Murawski said Lycoming Supply, which was the contractor that worked on the bridge, “did a very good job” on the project.

The three county-owned bridges are the only covered bridges left in the county. The other two bridges, which are in Buttonwood and Buckhorn, already have been renovated.

Work on the Lairdsville Bridge commenced just in time. Much of it was completed when the flooding from Tropical Storm Lee hit the area in September. Some components of the bridge, which had not been installed when the flooding occurred, were washed downstream. Most of the components were recovered. The cost of reassembling the components was covered by Federal Highway Administration funds. *(Article taken from The Williamsport Sun Gazette Jan 5, 2012)*

Tennessee

Elizabethton Bridge 42-10-01

The Elizabethton Covered Bridge will be getting a facelift in the coming months as the work on the rehabilitation project started the first week of December, 2011. The project will include new lighting fixtures, removal of the old roof and the installation of a new roof with split cedar shake shingles, removal of damaged siding boards and the installation of new boards, exterior and interior painting, repair to damaged structural timbers, handicapped accessibility improvements, new bird protection and other miscellaneous items.

Interim Director of Planning and Development Jon Hartman said the schedule for the project is for the work to be completed by February if there is good weather during all those months. If there is inclement weather that causes delays the project will likely be completed in March. The “drop-dead” date for the work is April 1 so all work will be finished by then. The city received the grant for the work in April 2008. The total amount of the grant was \$320,000 with a 20 percent matching grant from the city of up to \$80,000 bringing the total to \$400,000. The city only has to match the amount spent from the grant for the rehabilitation. During the September City Council meeting, Council approved the low bidder for the project, which was Allegheny Restoration and Builders Inc. from Morgantown, W.Va., with a bid of \$301,158.34. The Elizabethton Covered Bridge is one of only three historic covered bridges remaining in Tennessee, and all three have been rehabilitated with transportation enhancement funds. The other two covered bridges in the state are the Bible Covered Bridge in Greene County and the Harrisburg Covered Bridge near Sevierville. The Covered Bridge was built in 1882 at a cost to the county of \$3,000 for the bridge and \$300 for the approaches to the bridge. The bridge was designed by Thomas E. Matson, an engineer who also helped build the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina narrow gauge railroad through the mountains. Matson also served as mayor of Johnson City and president of Johnson City Foundry and Machine Works, which built several steel bridges in the area. Funds for the Elizabethton Covered Bridge project come from the Federal Highway Administration’s National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program. *(From an article in the Elizabethton Star, November 3, 2011)*

Vermont

Pulp Mill Bridge 45-01-04

The Pulp Mill Covered Bridge between Middlebury and Weybridge was scheduled to close for repairs on Tuesday, January 3rd and remain closed through mid-November.

The covered bridge crosses the Otter Creek and was built in 1820. It is one of 5 “doubled-barreled” covered bridges remaining in the country.

The repair work will include replacing the deteriorated bridge members, installing new siding and a metal roof, repairing the substructure and rebuilding the roadway approach.

A pedestrian bridge nearby will stay open for much of the construction, except on days when it must be closed to allow a crane working on the covered bridge to operate safely. The project is expected to cost about \$1.6 million. *(From “The Republic” Jan 1, 2012)*

Vermont

Green River Bridge 45-13-04

On Christmas Eve, a historic sign mounted on the Green River Covered Bridge was stolen by unknown vandals. Similar to the one on the other side of the bridge, the sign read *"Two dollars fine to drive on the bridge faster than a walk."* It's a piece of 1800s history that had town officials making a public plea for the sign to be returned. "No questions asked," town administrator Katie Buckley said after the theft. "Even if they just laid it next to the bridge we would be eternally grateful." On Tuesday evening, under the cloak of darkness, someone did just that.

"My neighbor stopped and knocked on my door and she said that a white sign was leaning against the left-hand post," said Addie Minott, whose home is located just feet from the span. Minott wakes up every morning gazing at the bridge's beauty and first reported the sign's theft. She went right back down and brought it up to the house and put it away for the night. Now, the sign is being stored away at the town office. Coincidentally, it needed to be taken off the bridge anyway for a touch up. (From WCAX.com Jan. 4, 2012)

As stated in our previous *Newsletter*, the **Green River Bridge** is slated to be completely rehabilitated by Hoyle, Tanner & Assoc.

Waitsfield Covered Bridge 45-12-14

At a meeting of the Waitsfield Selectboard in October 2011, a short term solution to fix the damage from Hurricane Irene was decided upon, leaving the major repairs to be done next Spring. (From *The Vermont "Bridger"*)

In the context of Vermont's broader damage, the Waitsfield Covered Bridge was lucky. After Irene thundered in, the bridge was closed for emergency repairs, forcing regular users to take detours for about 10 weeks while the nearly \$20,000 fix was completed. A more extensive repair that was planned pre-flood to improve the walkway that was attached to the bridge circa 1940 will take place later, possibly next year. The bridge re-opened Nov. 16. (From *The Vermont "Bridger"* and *"The Burlington Free Press"*)

Bartonsville Bridge 45-13-11

A Vermont select board is still trying to choose a contractor to remove the wreckage of the Bartonsville covered bridge that was destroyed by flooding from Tropical Storm Irene last summer.

During a selectboard meeting on Tuesday, Rockingham Town Manager Tim Cullenen said he wanted to allow board members **more** time to continue discussing alternatives.

The *Brattleboro Reformer* says there are six proposals for the cleanup, ranging from \$42,000 to about \$180,000.

Meanwhile, a committee is moving forward with the design of a replacement bridge.

The destruction of the Bartonsville bridge was captured on video by a neighbor. It was posted on the internet and it was one of the most famous images of the destruction Vermont suffered during the flooding. (Info from *The Brattleboro Reformer*, Dec. 23, 2011)

Taftsville Bridge 45-14-12

The Taftsville Covered Bridge looks like it is slowly being abducted by aliens. Three different crews were working on dismantling it. One crew constructed a coffer dam, so others could work down at the base of the south abutment, where new footings will be placed to arrest the sinking that has been occurring to that wall.

A second crew has been dismantling the bridge board by board, numbering each piece of the bridge before it's moved to the town garage for storage over the winter.

A third crew from Maine has been working on removing the roof of the bridge; the metal will not be saved, but the rafters and roof decking will be marked and saved. When they are done the entire span from the center pier to the south bank will have evaporated for a time, leaving only the two laminated wooden arches, which will be stabilized so as to survive the winter. (excerpt from *The Vermont Standard*, Dec. 21, 2011)

Québec

Eustis Bridge (61-18-02)

Here is a link for a video showing the rebuilding of the Eustis Bridge (61-18-02). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lveIQ_x5Mc

I take this opportunity to wish to all of you the best for 2012.

Sincerely,

Gérald Arbour

Brabant Philippe #1 (61-25-c)

On Friday night, December 30, 2011, this covered footbridge was destroyed by fire. It was a Town Truss, located behind the Campeau arena, in Gatineau, QC. Damages are expected to be about \$1 million. (From *The Ottawa Citizen* Dec. 31, 2011)



Covered Spans of Yesteryear

by Bill Caswell

In November, I was contacted by a writer looking for some information about covered bridges for a children's article she was writing. While digging through my research, I stumbled onto a newspaper clipping about the Upland Bridge over Chester Creek connecting Chester Township and Upland Borough in Delaware County, Pennsylvania. A movie producer in Philadelphia learned of a plan to remove the bridge a few days it was to happen. He immediately contacted the contractors about the possibility of shooting some scenes around the bridge before it was demolished. He sent pictures to a writer who, within hours, wrote a scene around the bridge for a movie that was to be called "On Bitter Creek". The movie told a story of two Kentucky families who live on opposite sides of the river. In the story, a girl from the well-to-do Youse family who built the bridge falls in love with a boy from the less fortunate Kirby family on the other side of the river. The girl's family opposes the relationship, a feud ensues and at the climactic moment when some Kirby supporters are crossing the bridge, it is dynamited into the river. The couple eventually marries and returns to the area years later to see the modern bridge that has been built at the site. This story was chronicled on the front page of the Chester Times of February 4, 1915.

After reading that newspaper article, I was wondering what other covered bridges have been featured in movies. Of course, during the early years of moving pictures, covered bridges were a common part of the landscape so they are likely to have been included in many movies.

I am aware of one other story from that era regarding the Union Falls Bridge over the Saco River in Maine. This bridge needed to be removed to accommodate a new power dam which was going to flood the area. On November 3, 1921, the bridge was blown up for a stunt in a James Oliver Curwood movie "Blazing Barriers" being filmed in the area. In the movie, the bridge was blown up to prevent a forest fire from spreading across the river. The blast lifted the bridge a foot in the air before it dropped into the river. The remains were soaked in gasoline and burned.

Morley's "The Covered Bridges of California" (1938) states that the Glen Canyon Bridge over Branciforte Creek in Santa Cruz, California, has appeared in a number of movies although no names were mentioned. In 1939 it was moved off the street to DeLaveaga Park and restored. The bridge was dismantled in the Spring of 1993.

The historical marker at the Stovall Mill over Chickamauga Creek near Sautee, Georgia, notes that the bridge was featured in the 1951 movie, "I'd Climb the Highest Mountain", starring Susan Hayward. The bridge was restored in 1998.

The South Randolph Bridge over the Second Branch of the White River in Randolph, VT, was in Alfred Hitchcock's 1956 movie "The Trouble With Harry".

Oregon's Earnest Bridge (pictured above) appeared in "Shenandoah" with Jimmy Stewart. The movie was filmed in the Mohawk Valley during the mid-1960s. The movie company altered the bridge to reflect Civil War architecture, and then restored it back to the original condition in 1965.

Of course, there are the well-known examples of "The Bridges of Madison County" with Clint Eastwood and Meryl Streep and "Beetlejuice" where the opening scenes feature a covered bridge built for the movie. If you are aware of others that I have not mentioned here, please let me know.

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.



Web Sites

www.lostbridges.org A very informative and useful web site listing all known historic/authentic covered bridges. It is a wonderful research tool. Maintained by Bill Caswell.

www.dalejtravis.com An extensive site listing all existing covered bridges, including replicas, and round barns, and some other misc. items.

www.bridgehunter.com A huge database of Historic Bridges of all types, Iron, Stone, Covered, etc. This may be the most well designed web site on the internet.

http://www.woodcenter.org/CoveredBridges/queryMain.cfm

A searchable database using information in *The World Guide to Covered Bridges*, plus other important information about covered bridges.

www.coveredbridges.com The official site of Parke County Indiana

www.coveredbridgemap.com A wonderful new web site which shows all existing authentic covered bridges on Google Maps. It is very well organized and easy to use.

www.vermontbridges.com The Vermont Covered Bridge Society's official web site

www.mdcoveredbridges.com A web site devoted to Maryland's covered bridges by Jim Smedley

www.nycoveredbridges.org Official web site of the New York State Covered Bridge Society

50th ANNIVERSARY ITEMS

We still have a few nice items regarding the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the **National Society**

Tote Bag — Has the *National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges* emblem in dark blue on front pocket measuring 12 1/2" by 15 1/2" with a top snap and 20" handle straps. Cost: \$15 (includes shipping)

Ornament — A 3" round glass maroon ornament with the Society emblem in gold. Cost: \$7.00 (includes shipping)

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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COVERED BRIDGES

On a Single Compact Computer Disc

For several years now we have published an ad offering a copy of the World Guide on a computer disc from member Joe Cohen. Until recently it was \$5. At the request of NSPCB Board of Directors the price changed to \$15 with \$10 going to the Society. Joe has kept the price low as a service to the Society.

The disc contains many more files than just the World Guide. The World Guide is included that is an exact copy of the book. However, since that copy cannot be changed a World Guide file in Word format is included so each copy can be updated. That file is updated as more information is received.

It includes several files of changes to the various editions of the World Guide.

It includes a file of Romantic Shelters, i.e. unauthentic bridges. Many changes were made in the latest World Guide that redefined an authentic covered bridge. Those bridges that were reclassified can be found in the Romantic Shelters file.

The disc contains an index to all copies of Covered Bridge Topics. This includes a table of contents for each issue, a list of subjects, a list of authors and photographers, poetry and obituaries. This is kept up to date.

There is a bibliography of known books that pertain to covered bridges.

Also included are large sketches of common truss types.

There are a few more miscellaneous files.

Send a check made out to Joseph Cohen.

From September to March: 210 Wellington F, West Palm Beach, FL 33417-2559

From April to August: 130 Westfield Drive, Holliston, MA 01746-1257

The following items are still available through the Society

Covered Bridge Polo Shirts

A **white Polo Shirt** with a blue NSPCB logo, send \$10.00 plus \$4.50 for shipping and handling. Specify, Medium or Extra Large. Shirts are 100% pre-shrunk cotton. This is a fund raiser for the preservation fund. Buy several as gifts for your family and friends.

Society Arm Patch with N.S.P.C.B. logo 3" arm patch available for \$1.75 + 55 cents P&H.

Please order any of the items above from Mrs. June Roy, 73 Ash Street, Manchester, NH 03104-4906
or E-mail: dickroycb1@comcast.net

Spring 2012 Newsletter Deadline

The next Newsletter is scheduled to be mailed in March. Therefore, anyone wishing to submit photos, articles, etc., should send them to the EDITOR by **March 1, 2012**. In order to save us from a lot of re-typing, please send your articles by e-mail or on a computer disc (no floppies, please), if at all possible. If this isn't possible, then the regular mail will do just fine, as it always has. If you type the information, please use PLAIN WHITE PAPER. 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 bjmckee@gmail.com

We are getting too much news and information from the internet these days and not very much from our members. Maybe this is a sign of the times, but we really need to have more covered bridge news sent to us for the Newsletter. Please remember that we always appreciate any news that is sent in, even if we ultimately can't use it. *THANK YOU!*

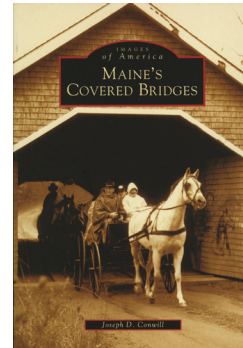
Books Available from the Society Store

“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 Post-paid \$17.00

“Vermont Covered Bridges” A book by Joseph D. Conwill:
The Arcadia Press Images of America Series

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

It sells for \$19.99 each plus \$3.00 shipping and handling.



Books by Andrew Howard

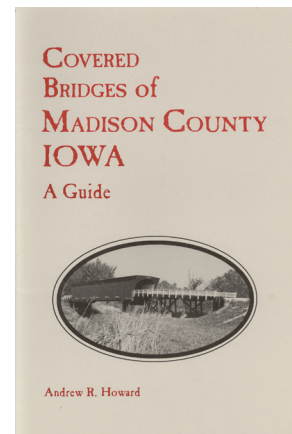
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6x9 format paperback, 46 pgs., ISBN 0-940310-07-4

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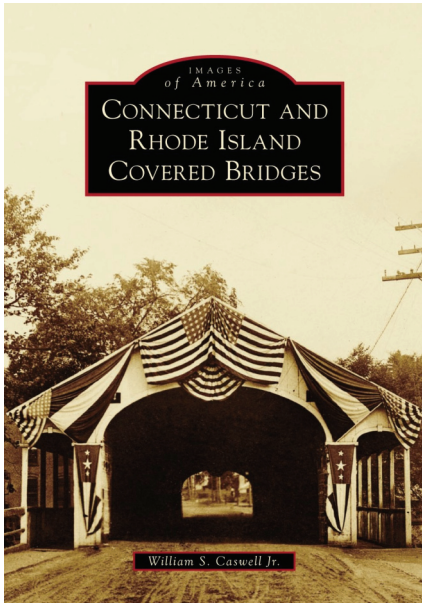
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6x9 format paperback, 49 pgs., ISBN 0-940310-06-6

C/B's of Massachusetts, A Guide\$6.95
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(There is a \$2.00 postage and handling charge for each book)



All the books above should be ordered from Mrs. June Roy, 73 Ash St. #2, Manchester, NH 03104-4906
E-mail address: dickroycb1@comcast.net

There is another excellent book on Vermont covered bridges called **“Spanning Time: Vermont Covered Bridges”**, by Joseph Nelson, who is the President of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society. It is a superb hardbound book containing wonderful color photos, maps and information about each Vermont covered bridge. The book is 7.5 x 9.25 in. and has 271 pages. ISBN 1-881535-25-8 For ordering information contact the author at 2 Sugar Hill Road, Underhill, VT 05489 or on the Web www.vermontbridges.com
(This book isn't available from the society store).



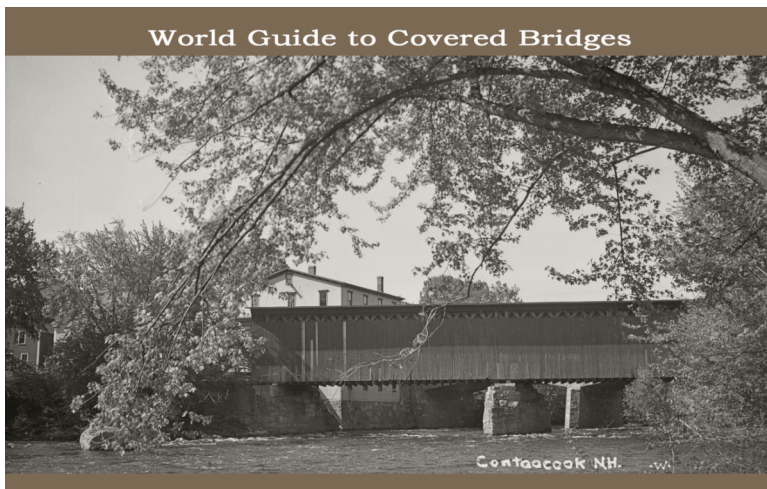
Connecticut and Rhode Island Covered Bridges

Released September 12, 2011

128 pages containing 200 photos and historical notes

During their heyday in the mid- to late 1800s, more than 150 covered bridges dotted the landscape of Connecticut and Rhode Island. Since that time, floods, fires, and progress have claimed almost all of the historic structures. Covered bridges were heavily concentrated in the hills of northwestern Connecticut, spanning the Farmington, Housatonic, and Naugatuck Rivers. In Rhode Island, most were built by the railroads in Woonsocket, Providence, and other communities in the northern part of the state, though few pictures are known to exist. Connecticut was the birthplace of two of the nation's best-known covered bridge designers: Ithiel Town and Theodore Burr. Half of the covered bridges currently standing in the United States are supported by trusses patented by Town or Burr.

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National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges

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Jennifer Caswell, 535 Second NH Turnpike, Hillsboro, NH 03244

Every year, \$1000 is remitted to the Eastman-Thomas-Merritt Fund from optional donations. Please help keep the fund afloat for covered bridge preservation.