



The Newsletter

*of the National Society for the
Preservation of Covered Bridges, Inc.*

Summer 2013

The Covered Bridge

*Oh, yesterday's emblem standing there
Astride the turbulent rill
Weathered and old, reflecting long wear,
Through heat and winter's frosted chill.*

*Oft shelter for both horse and man
Against the blustering storm and rain,
This bridge, this dry and covered space
Protected 'till was clear again.*

*Some are low and some are high
Above the stream of water there;
Some are short and some are long,
But all are built with skill and care.*

*Some are pretty with beautiful lines,
Others are covered with timber bare,
But no matter the color or what their design,
They were an important part of the thoroughfare.*

Arden P. Titlow

* * * * *

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The Newsletter is published quarterly. It includes current bridge news and information about upcoming events.

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Editor's Comments:

I take issue with the comments made by New York Congressman Tom Reed, as noted in the Spring 2013 Newsletter ("Fixing Ohio Covered Bridge "Insult To Taxpayers"), in which he was quoted as saying "... it's frustrating to see half a million dollars being spent on a bridge ... It's an insult to taxpayers." And he was joined by Ohio's Xenia Township trustee Jim Reed who called the "use of transportation funds to fix historic properties – a waste." They both refer to the Charlton Mill (WG#35-29-16) covered bridge, a 119-foot, single span, Howe truss, built in 1883. I couldn't disagree more with their assessments. (I have since learned that this funding allocation also included the Stevenson Road covered bridge (WG#35-29-15) – Ed.)

It is the recording, restoration and preservation of these historic structures that has, in large measure, influenced the architectural development of not only our present, but of our future as well. It is the early design of our wooden covered bridges, these so-called "wasteful" architectural achievements, that have served as a "blueprint" for many of our modern steel and concrete edifices, which, despite their designer's claims, may not (and in some cases, have not) last as long as their wooden predecessors.

Yes, the requirements of progress have dictated changes in designs and materials, but, to not protect and maintain the original examples of how those changes evolved is simply wrong. It is also wrong to allocate funding dollars, simply because they offered the lowest bid, to those who might not provide truly competent historic restorative work. As the old saying goes 'You get what you pay for'; a statement all too often correct. We must remember, too, it is the esthetic appearance of these covered bridges that allows us to step back and view our society's heritage as well as marvel at the accomplishments of those bridgewright's and artisan's of more than a hundred years ago. It is these time worn covered bridges that are precious, considered historic area landmarks, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places by the U. S. Dept. of the Interior's National Park Service, for a reason - recording for posterity that which has gone before. It is these historic covered bridges that also provide an important economic engine for the communities where they are located by which the influx of tourism generates more business for retailers throughout the area. And finally, it is these covered bridges that serve in the establishment of community pride, becoming the backdrop for romance, poets, story-tellers, festivals, historians and artists. Wasteful? I think not.

Perhaps both of these gentlemen should look a bit closer to home for the sources of the "waste" and the "insult to taxpayers" they so vehemently decry. The degree of inexcusable political rhetoric and gridlock demonstrated at all levels of government, specifically in Washington, D.C., during the last number of years is far more 'wasteful' and 'insulting to the American taxpayer' than the half-million dollars spent to preserve our covered bridge heritage.

Happy Bridging!!

Editor's Note: Before going to press it was brought to my attention that the powers-to-be regarding the Charlton Mill covered bridge (WG# 35-29-16) decided to, and did in February of this year, tear the bridge down **without any public discussion**, allegedly for public safety. It is to be replaced with a "modern" covered bridge utilizing man-made components, assuring us that it 'will maintain the look of an old covered bridge.' The design engineer, who was on the committee that authorized the tear-down and is the designer for the new bridge, said that the original was "too far gone" to repair. The Greene County engineering office said construction on the new bridge, a process which usually requires expanded legal proceedings and bidding processes, is expected to begin in June of this year. It begs the question - was this the intent all along? Read the President's Message in this Newsletter, specifically the last paragraph. Think back on the threats of condemnation if repairs were not made to another 100 plus year old bridge not too long ago (fortunately the bridge prevailed) – a point of discussion in previous editions of *Topics* and this Newsletter.

Fall 2013 Newsletter Deadline

The next Newsletter is scheduled to be mailed in September. Therefore, anyone wishing to submit articles should send them to the Editor by **August 15, 2013**. **Please note** that due to some nagging computer software problems, it is requested that your information be typed on PLAIN WHITE PAPER and include proper credit information (newspaper, magazine, or web site, etc.) and sent via U. S. Mail to: Rob Mitchell, NSPCB Newsletter Editor, P. O. Box 375, Marshfield, MA 02050. Thanks! Please, remember that we always appreciate any news or comments sent in even if we can't ultimately use it.

President's Message

Dear fellow members, Greetings!

By the time you receive this message, the Covered Bridge visiting season will have begun in earnest. It will also be the time of the year when those of you who hold annual memberships in the society should begin thinking about renewing these memberships. Over and above the great personal pleasure membership in our group can bring to those of us who have joined it, a robust National Society, that is to say, one sustained by many adherents, constitutes a strong force for proper preservation of our Covered Bridges. Lately, quite a bit of progress has been made in this regard, but for all of that, now is not the time for us to let down our guard. Put another way, the National Society, and our Covered Bridges, need each and every one of you; therefore, please, all of you who can, renew your memberships in our group as soon as possible.

Though it may come as somewhat of a surprise, what constitutes an appropriate repair for an existing Covered Bridge, or the best way of strengthening such a structure, was oftentimes as much of an issue a hundred years ago as it is today. A related but every bit as significant a question both then and now, is at what point should an old bridge, in need perhaps of some work, be replaced by a new and stronger one, rather than simply being repaired and strengthened? The following two letters, each drafted in September of 1908, discuss these two matters in some detail. They also suggest that upon occasion, there is an additional consideration which may, in certain circumstances, prove decisive, but here I am getting ahead of the story just a wee bit. In reading the letters in question, it will probably be obvious that the span then being discussed is the Cornish Bridge, a span that crossed, indeed still crosses, the Connecticut River between the Towns of Cornish, NH and Windsor, VT. What many of you may not realize is that in 1908, this structure belonged to a private corporation, called appropriately enough, the Proprietors of the Cornish Bridge, and was a toll facility. It in fact remained a toll facility until 1945, even though it had been purchased by the State of New Hampshire in 1936.

In respect to Jonathan Parker Snow and John William Storrs, both were men of great accomplishment. Jonathan Parker Snow, at the time of his September 9th letter, was Bridge Engineer of the Boston & Maine Railroad. Contrary to some of its competitors, the B&MRR in 1908 had a hundred or so Covered Bridges scattered here and there along its lines, and was still erecting new ones, so Mr. Snow had a great deal of experience both in building and maintaining these structures. It was he, in fact, who designed the magnificent Contoocook, Pier and Wright Covered Bridges which are still in place along the former right-of-way of the Concord and Claremont (NH) Railroad.

In 1908, John W. Storrs was Chief Engineer of the New Hampshire Public Service Commission, and consequently had certain regulatory responsibilities, plus the authority to carry them out. He was also in private practice. His business stationary at the time carried the legend, "John W. Storrs - Consulting Engineer". He noted as well on this stationary that he had had fifteen years experience with the B&MRR as an assistant engineer and bridge inspector. Subsequently, he formed a partnership with his son, Edward D., and their firm was first called "Storrs & Storrs, Bridge Engineers", and later, "Storrs, Bridge Engineers". When John W. Storrs retired from active practice in 1933 - he had just been elected Mayor of Concord, NH, and would serve in that office until his death in 1942 - "... he could boast that more bridges designed and erected by him were standing in New Hampshire than were credited to any other, not to mention ...(those) in Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont" (Obituary, Manchester Union, September 21st 1942.).

Letter to Jonathan Parker Snow from John W. Storrs dated September 8th 1908 re the Cornish Bridge Across the Connecticut River:

Dear Sir: -

Regarding Windsor Bridge – Your letter in regard to this bridge was not as definite as I hoped it would be. Will you please tell me if, in its present condition, you consider it safe for ordinary highway traffic? I have stated to them (i.e. the Proprietors of the Cornish Bridge – D.W.W.) that I did not, and have advised them to do something to improve conditions as soon as possible.

I have told them not to allow loads exceeding four tons to cross. Do you think it safe for four tons on four wheels?

Your suggestion for arches is good except that they get ice at some times that hits the boarding on the bridge. Do you think it would be safe to try arches? There is a Rail-road bridge just below this bridge.

I understand that you think by reinforcing the bottom chord as at Jones Crossing Bridge, it would be all right for any loads that it might be called upon to handle, but the vibration would still be as bad as now. Can you devise any system of rods and braces that you think would make the bridge more rigid?

How about putting two piers under the thing? How about a new Bridge?

Letter from Jonathan Parker Snow in reply to John W. Storrs' Letter of September 9th 1908:

Dear Sir: -

Yours in regard to the Windsor Bridge at hand. I cannot tell exactly what the bridge is good for. I ought not to fix upon any safe load without a personal examination. If we assume the bottom chord as per my former letter, the dead load gives 1934 lbs. per sq. inch in it. If again we assume that we can go to 2000 per (square) inch before failure, we can carry 3812 pounds live load at the center of one chord. This makes nearly 4 tons if at the center of a 20 foot (wide) roadway. This is the extreme limit I am willing to name at present. I think your restriction is just right. Perhaps if I saw the bridge under load I might change my figure up or down.

The trusses are too shallow. Lateral braces will not prevent vertical vibration. It is possible to put in lateral bracing that will hold it rigid sideways. Arches or piers will stiffen it vertically. I think arches can be made safe from ice. I don't know as the masonry is good enough to hold them. Can piers be put in without a fight with the river-men, Van Dyke and others? I think it rather brash to say that a new bridge must be built when this one has stood so long with no deterioration except a pull of ½ inch in (the) lower chords and 3" kinks in the line.

I am not so busy as I was when Wardner (i.e. the Treasurer of the Proprietors of the Cornish Bridge – D.W.W.) wrote me about this bridge, and if you want me to look it over with you, I can do it now. I do not hanker for this class of work, but am very glad to encourage our country towns to rely on engineers, who will treat them impartially, rather than to have them get into the hands of sharks who will condemn an old bridge every time for the sake of the money that they think they can make in building a new one (emphasis added – D. W. W.). *Vide Wilton.*

This letter is as definite as I can make it with present information. I wish you would train your young man to show the scale on his plans. I don't like the fad copied from machinery draftsmen of making a diagram instead of a drawing.

Yours truly,
J. P. Snow

The above letter from John W. Storrs is mostly self explanatory. What has not yet been stated in this commentary, however, is that Henry S. Wardner, Treasurer of the Bridge Company, had, on July 30th 1908, contacted Storrs, who had previously been recommended to him by Jonathan P. Snow, to see whether he, Storrs, would be willing to inspect the Cornish Bridge, and if so, how much would he charge for his services. In Wardner's letter to Storrs, he asks Storrs to treat both the fact of his, Wardner's letter, and its subject, as a confidential matter. Presumably, when Storrs agreed to take on the task Wardner had set before him, for a princely sum not to exceed \$30.00 incidentally, he was wearing his consulting engineer's hat, not his Chief Engineer for the New Hampshire Public Service Commission hat. A pertinent question in this regard would be what powers did the New Hampshire Public Service Commission possess, in 1908, respecting bridges across the Connecticut River? Be the latter as it may, John W. Storrs soon asked J. P. Snow to give him a hand evaluating the condition of the Cornish Bridge, which invitation gave rise, amongst other things, to the second letter reproduced above.

The letter to John W. Storrs from Jonathan Parker Snow is an extremely interesting document. In the first paragraph of it we learn that the bottom chords of the Cornish Bridge at mid-span are under a stress in tension of 1934 pounds per square inch (psi), this under dead load alone. As the trusses of the span are made up entirely of eastern spruce, ignoring a certain number of keeper bolts which they of necessity contain, it is somewhat startling to read that Mr. Snow was willing to allow a maximum stress of 2000 psi in tension in their bottom chords, a force which he more or less asserted would not lead to failure within the chords in question. Interestingly enough, some 24 years later, in a paper published by the American Society of Civil Engineers, entitled A History of the Development of Wooden Bridges, Snow states that an allowable for eastern spruce in tension which has been found, by experience, to result in good practice, is 800 psi. He goes on to note that spans built using this allowable have carried loads the computed stresses from which were twice that figure, and have done so to no ill effect (Table No. 1: Allowable Stresses in Timber, page 397 as originally published).

The 1991 edition of the 'Supplement to the National Design Standards' gives an allowable for visually graded select structural eastern spruce of 725 psi in tension. This value has been established for timbers 5" x 5" or larger. It is interesting to note that the 725 psi in tension is but 36% of the 2000 psi allowed by Snow in 1908, and only 46% of the 1600 psi in tension that later on he stated produced no ill effects in the bridges he had built which were subjected to it. Of course, both the B&MRR and J. P. Snow were still able, a hundred years ago, to obtain first growth spruce, the best specimens of which are of absolutely superb quality, yet the latter is precisely the point: some ancient Covered Bridges were put together exploiting certain of the finest woods America ever produced. It is therefore crucially important for an engineer in practice today to realize this fact, and to respond to it appropriately. He should not simply assume that published values for timber being supplied now are the correct

ones for timbers that were sawn out a hundred years or more ago. He needs to be willing to test representative samples selected from the span he has been hired to repair and/or strengthen, and then, from the results of these tests, establish reasonable working stresses for the materials contained therein. At least one structural engineer of my acquaintance proceeded in this fashion, and was thus able to save much more of the historic fabric of the spans he worked on than would otherwise have been the case.

The last two paragraphs of Mr. Snow's letter are absolutely extraordinary. Perhaps it was the rather flippant final sentences of John Storrs's letter that provoked Snow's angry outburst - "How about putting two piers under the thing? (i.e.- the Cornish span - D.W.W.) "How about a new bridge? - yet Storrs and Snow had known each other for many years, had worked together more than once, and obviously had great respect for one another. It is just possible that Storrs, who was after all a designer of new metal truss spans, had proposed replacement of the Cornish Bridge with one of his own creations, that suggestion behind Snow's back, but there is no hard evidence to this effect that I have ever come across. I think the real reason for Snow's ire was his intellectual independence and knowledge that wooden bridges, whether elderly spans or properly designed new ones, were still capable of holding their own, in many instances, despite growing competition from metal truss structures. Snow was an old Yankee who hated both chicanery and the frittering away of scarce public monies, hence his comments about sharks "... who will condemn an old bridge every time for the sake of the money that they think they can make in building a new one". Regarding the latter, Snow was unfortunately prescient, all too prescient. Just a single example, though numerous others would have illustrated Snow's point just as well, fairly recently, according to my sources at least, an approximately 120 foot Howe truss span on a dirt road, a dirt road with a traffic count of roughly 50 cars per day, has simply been demolished before public opposition to its removal could become too intense. It is to be replaced by a 'modern' Covered Bridge. As if to add insult to injury, the new span will be designed so as to have the external appearance, more or less, of a bridge built about the same time the historical structure, which it will replace, was erected. According to one of my sources, a structural engineer with a long and distinguished record of Covered Bridge preservation, the older span was quite repairable. *Sic transit Gloria mundi*. Yet both the engineer designing the new structure, and the contractor building it, should do well for themselves financially. It is alas we and our history that will suffer.

Happy bridging none the less.

David W. Wright

(Editor's Note:) *A Quote worth mentioning:*

"These covered bridges are engineering marvels, considering the lack of technology when they were built over 100 years ago and how they were constructed is amazing. We owe it to future generations to repair and keep these covered bridges open."

Jennings County (Indiana) Commissioner - Matt Sporleder (May 8, 2013)

Welcome to our New Members!!

*Zanita Arenos - Grand Blanc, MI
Gordon Burandt - New Hope, MN
Fred & Martha McShea - Goffstown, NH
James Metzger - Lima, OH
Jan & Dick Swanson - Olympia, WA
Erik Vangsness - Assonet, MA
Sharon Shannon-Paximadis - Cumming, GA*

Welcome to our New Life Member!!

Paul Rice - Washington, D.C.

2013 NSPCB Meeting Schedule

Sunday, June 23 at 1pm Contoocook Covered Bridge, Contoocook, New Hampshire.

Sunday, July 28 at 1pm Gilpins Falls Bridge, Route 237, North East, Maryland. Tim Andrews will discuss the work he did on that bridge.

Sunday, August 25 Annual picnic at the Fire Station in Westminster, Vermont. Join us for lunch at noon and the meeting at 1 pm.

Sunday September 22 TBA

Sunday, October 27 NSPCB Annual Meeting and Dinner, time TBA. Old Mill Restaurant, 69 State Road East, Westminster, Massachusetts. www.1761oldmill.com

Other Upcoming Covered Bridge Meetings & Events

Sunday, July 7 Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania Annual Picnic at Poole Forge Bridge, Lancaster County. Gather at 12 noon, picnic lunch shortly thereafter (Location - just south of PA23 between Goodville and Churchtown). Entrance to the park is from Poole Forge Road, 0.1 mile south of PA23

Sunday, July 14 New York State Covered Bridge Society Meeting at Eagle Mills Bridge, Broadalbin, NY at 1pm

Saturday, August 3 Covered Bridge Dance, Jackson, New Hampshire, 7pm at the Jackson Covered Bridge.

Note: The Jackson covered bridge will be closed to all vehicle traffic between 5pm and midnight for the event.

For more information contact the Jackson Chamber of Commerce at: www.JacksonNH.com

Sunday, August 4 Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania Meeting at the East and West Paden Twin Bridges, Columbia County, PA Mini safari to some of the nearby bridges led by Bob Kuether

Friday thru Sunday, August 9 – 11 La Fête au Vieux Pont, Notre-Dame-des-Pins, Québec. La Fête au Vieux Pont will include several activities such as a fishing contest, music in the evenings, car show, bike ride and even a duck race.

Sunday, August 11 New York State Covered Bridge Society Meeting at Jay Bridge with Noon picnic & 1 PM meeting.

Saturday & Sunday, September 7 - 8 New York State Covered Bridge Society Annual Safari! Thinking currently to be Vermont & Washington County, NY

Sunday, September 8 Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania Meeting at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Manheim, PA at 2pm

Saturday & Sunday, September 21 – 22 43rd Annual Covered Bridge Festival – Washington County and Greene County, Pennsylvania.

For more information go to: www.visitwashingtoncountyPA.com or www.vicoa.com/greene_cobridges/ or www.co.greene.pa.us or call 1-724-228-5520 or 1-866-927-4969

Saturday, October 5 11th Annual Covered Bridge Festival – Cottage Grove, Oregon. 7am – 6:30 pm.
An old fashioned family fun event!

Sunday, October 6, 2013 Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania Meeting at the Alamo Restaurant, Knoebels Amusement Resort, Elysburg, PA, 2pm during the Annual Columbia-Montour Covered Bridge Festival

Friday thru Sunday, October 11 thru 20 Covered Bridge Festival – Parke County, Indiana

For more information e-mail: info@coveredbridges.com or call 1-765-569-5526

Saturday, October 27 29th Annual Blount County Covered Bridge Festival – Oneonta, Alabama

For more information call: 1-206-274-2153

NSPCB Facebook Page

To help spread the word about our mission, the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, Inc. has a Facebook page. The page is used for sharing current bridge related news and Society meeting information. If you use Facebook, visit us at <http://www.facebook.com/nspcb>. “Like” our page and share it with your friends.



Updates to the World Guide to Covered Bridges: This section lists updates since the previous newsletter. For a complete list of changes, please visit the website at www.coveredbridgesociety.org and click on the World Guide link.

Page 7, update directions, Lula Bridge, Banks County, Georgia

10-06-06#2 Lula Lula or Blind Susie or Hyder or Garrison Grove Creek 1 34' 1975 Modified King
 3.0 miles east of jct GA52 on GA51, then 1.1 miles right on west side of **Antioch Rd.** Bridge is in woods on right. Closed, private.
Note: Property is posted "No Trespassing" N34° 21.57' W083° 38.48'

Page 10, update directions, Elder's Mill Bridge, Oconee County, Georgia

10-108-01 Farmington Elder's Mill or Rose Creek Rose Creek 1 99' 1897 (M1924) Town
 5.7 miles southeast of jct US129/441 at Watkinsville on GA15 (Greensboro Hwy), then 0.7 miles right on Elder Mill Rd. South-southeast of Watkinsville. (NR) N33° 48.157' W083° 21.826'

Page 73, delete Charlton Mill Bridge, Greene County, Ohio, bridge razed

35-29-16 Xenia Massies Creek Charlton Mill 1 119' 1883 Howe
 2.2 miles west-southwest of jct OH72 on US42, 0.9 miles right on Charleton Mill Rd. (TR29). 3½ miles southwest of Cedarville.
 N39° 43.759' W083° 52.219'

Page 88, Irish Bend Bridge, Benton County, Oregon, bridge added to National Register in 2013

37-02-09#2 Corvallis Oak Creek Irish Bend 1 60' 1954 (M1989) Howe
 2.3 miles west of US20 on OR34 at Corvallis toward Philomath, then 1 mile right (north) on 53rd St. and park in the County Fairgrounds on the west side of 53rd. Follow the foot path (Campus Way) on the east side of 53rd St. to the bridge. Rebuilt 1989.
(NR) N44° 33.993' W123° 18.055'

Page 93, Chambers Railroad bridge (Lane County, Oregon) replaced, delete 37-20-40 and add 37-20-40#2

37-20-40#2 Cottage Grove Coast Fork Willamette River Chambers Railroad 1 78' 2011 Howe
 0.5 miles west of OR99 (9th St) on Main St, then 0.3 miles left on River Rd., 200' to the bridge on the east side of South River Rd.
 N43° 47.370' W123° 04.192'

Page 142, update status of Longley Bridge, Franklin County, Vermont

45-06-08 Montgomery Longley or Harnois or Head Trout River 1 85' 1863 Town
 1.1 miles northwest of main intersection in Montgomery on VT118, then just left on Longley Bridge Rd. (NR) N44° 54.442' W072° 39.330' **Closed.**

Page 142, update status, West Hill Bridge, Franklin County, Vermont, re-opened

45-06-09 Montgomery West Hill Brook West Hill or Creamery 1 59' 1883 Town
 0.5 miles west of main intersection in Montgomery on VT118, then 2.5 miles left on West Hill Rd. and 0.2 miles right on Creamery Bridge Rd. **Note that Creamery Bridge Road near the bridge is not maintained in winter. Closed.** (NR) N44° 52.065' W072° 38.871'

Page 143, update directions of Lumber Mill Bridge, Lamoille County, Vermont

45-08-06 Belvidere North Branch Lamoille River Lumber Mill or Lower 1 71' 1895 Queen
 6.5 miles west of jct VT118 on VT109, then 0.5 miles **right** on Back Rd. West of Belvidere Center. (NR) N44° 44.630' W072° 44.481'

Page 55, add (added May 24, 2013)

32-13-05#2 Middletown Tuscarora Club Mill Brook 1 24' 2012 King
 2.2 miles southwest of jct NY30 and Margaretville on NY28, then 0.3 miles left and 0.3 miles right on NYC road along Pepacton Reservoir, 2.8 miles left on Mill Brook Rd. to D.L.Reese mailbox, walk 0.1 miles right. Private. Request permission at lodge 2.0 miles ahead on left N42° 05.22' W074° 41.46'

Page 57, correct coordinates (added May 24, 2013)

32-53-01 Neversink Neversink River Halls Mills 1 119' 1906 Town
 2.7 miles north of NY55 and Curry on C19, then 0-3 miles left to bypassed section of Hunter Rd. Walk 0.2 miles south. North of Curry. Bypassed 1963. N41° 53.42' W074° 35.40'

Page 88, remove "Krewson" from bridge name (added May 25, 2013)

37-10-02 Drain Pass Creek ~~Krewson~~ or Pass Creek 1 61' 1925(M1987) Howe
 0.1 miles east of jct OR38 on OR99 (B St), then 0.2 miles right on 2nd St. to south side of A St. in community park (behind Civic Center). Closed. N43° 39.647' W123° 18.992'

Vermont Covered Bridge Update

In 1958, the Vermont covered bridge (WG#14-34-01), the last wood covered bridge in Howard County, IN, was in danger of being lost forever when the construction of the Kokomo Reservoir would flood the valley where the bridge was situated. As the County owned the bridge, they basically said ‘you want it, you move it or it will be torn down’. Facing a rapidly approaching deadline to begin flooding the area, a community campaign, headed by the Howard County Historical Society, raised the funds needed to move the bridge to Highland Park, a location site donated by the city. Even as plans were underway to move the bridge, vandals still tried to destroy it, arsonists tried to burn it, and, a delivery driver ran into it multiple times! Originally envisioned as being moved in one piece, reality necessitated the dismantling of the entire structure, relocating the components some five miles away to their new home, and reassembled. Closed to traffic since 1958, the 96-foot, single span, type #3 Smith truss bridge, built in 1876 by the Smith Co. of Toledo, OH is one of only a few of its type remaining in the State. In 1992, the bridge received a new roof, and in 2004 a new coat of paint. Because of serious flooding at the Highland Park site, the structural integrity of the bridge was being compromised resulting in the 1992 addition of steel beams and new abutments. The Superintendent for Kokomo Recreation & Parks Dept., John Martino, said, “It’s a historic structure and shouldn’t just be a big empty thing sitting there – walk on it – appreciate it for what it is.” The bridge is expected to reopen to pedestrian traffic only sometime in late spring or summer 2013 after the installation of security cameras, maintenance work and landscaping is completed.

[Compiled from Rosie Githinti article April 2013 (Indiana)]

West Dummerston Damaged . . . Again

A 23-year old man, driving the truck used as part of his job collecting sap for his family’s farm, failed to realize the height restriction imposed on the 143-year old Vermont bridge. The 280-foot long West Dummerston covered bridge (WG#45-13-02#2), a Town lattice truss, 2-span structure, suffered shattered cross beams and trim board damage when the Budget truck attempted to cross. The damaged truck was later found not far away by police. Mike Renaud, whose company has made previous repairs to the bridge, estimated the damage at less than \$6,000. The driver was to be arraigned May 7th. [Compiled from article April 3, 2013 Brattleboro Reformer/ Eben Holderness April 10, 2013 The Commons issue #198]

Historic PA Dutch Country Covered Bridge to be Renovated

Located in the heart of the Pennsylvania Dutch Country, Berks County officials recently secured a \$1.4M Federal Grant to begin a 3-year old restoration project of the historic Dreibelbis Station (WG#38-06-07) covered bridge. The bridge, a 190-foot, single span, Burr Arch truss, was built in 1869 connecting Greenwich and Windsor Townships across the Malden Creek. According to family history, as told by Eric P. Dreibelbis, wood was hauled from Schuylkill County for bridge construction. During its lifetime, beams have rotted and stone abutments deteriorated, and, was impacted by a house after tropical storm Agnes in 1972. According to Ms. Kris Thompson, Architectural Historian for PennDOT – the goal of the restoration work will be to repair the damaged areas while maintaining the features that make the bridge historically significant such as appearance and the Burr Arch support. It is intended that the work include internal lighting and fire suppression. Hidden steel beams may be added to extend bridge life and safety for the approximately 200 vehicles that use the bridge each day. The bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

[Compiled from Liam Migdall-Smith Article September 2012 Reading Eagle (Pennsylvania)]

Work on Cabin Creek Bridge Continues

As a follow-up to the Spring 2012 Newsletter article, Arnold Graton, who specializes in covered bridge restoration, is confident that the project will be finished ahead of the 2014 scheduled completion date. In 2009, steel trusses were installed beneath the bridge for the construction phase. Some of the original timbers, including the flooring, have rotted and need replacement. Graton said he is using new spruce parts, new siding and repairing the flooring. He hopes that after completion, the bridge will remain open to automobile – no trucks – traffic. The bridge closed in 1983 due to storm damage and fell into disrepair after flood waters damaged the bridge even more. [Compiled from Christy Hoots Article April 3, 2013 The Independent Ledger (Kentucky), Bill Caswell Photo, June 3, 2013]



Biedler Farm Covered Bridge Information

Tucked away on a farm in Rockingham County, Virginia is the privately owned Biedler Farm covered bridge (WG#46-79-01). Make note, the bridge is posted “Private Property – No Trespassing” and they mean it. According to documents received by a descendent following the death of her great-grandfather, Daniel Ulrich Biedler, we are told from the farm ledgers, dating 1869 – 1950, that he built the bridge in 1896. The 92’ - 6” long single span bridge utilizes a Kingpost truss with a Burr arch and has a clear span over the Smith Creek of 72-feet. The bridge is not recorded with the Virginia Historical Landmarks Commission nor is it listed on the National Register of Historic Places. However, the current owners are very much aware of its historic significance. (If anyone has any additional information, please pass it along. Ed.) [Compiled from Covered Bridges of Virginia website April 2013 (Virginia)]

Houck Covered Bridge Damaged in January

On January 23, 2013, an alleged drunk driver damaged the Houck covered bridge (WG#14-67-11) one of the oldest covered bridges in Putnam County, Indiana. According to officials, damage to the 133-year old structure, a 210-foot, 2-span, Howe truss bridge, appears to be entirely cosmetic and was estimated at less than \$5,000. The driver, taken to a local hospital, was arrested for drunk driving. The bridge was built by the Massillon Bridge Co. and is among the oldest remaining covered bridges crossing the Big Walnut Creek. [Compiled from Jared Jerngan, Asst. Ed., Article January 30, 2013 (Indiana)]

A New Covered Bridge for Blenheim, New York?

Schoharie County officials remain uncertain as to the future plans for reconstruction of the historic Blenheim (WG#32-48-01) covered bridge lost in August 2011 to Hurricane Irene. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) declared the bridge ineligible for rebuilding funds. Informal discussions with FEMA earlier this year regarding submission of an appeal to the decision suggested that consideration for funding might be made if the town were to rebuild the bridge in another location away from the Schoharie Creek and outside the flood zone. Unfortunately, FEMA has offered no official response to the appeal – well past the 60 day time frame the Agency was given to respond. With several planning and recovery efforts hinging on the bridge’s future, Blenheim’s Long Term Recovery Committee will consider developing other options for the bridge and the bridge site. [Compiled from Article April 4, 2013 The Mountain Eagle (New York)]

Burkeville Covered Bridge May Re-open To Traffic

In January of this year, State officials were scheduled to visit the Burkeville (also known as Conway) bridge (WG#21-06-01) to discuss whether to re-open the 143-year old, 106-foot, single span, Howe truss structure to traffic. The Franklin County bridge underwent a \$1 million repair in 2003. [Compiled from Article January 2013 Associated Press (Massachusetts)]

Union Covered Bridge Supports Tourism

It was built in 1871 across the Elk Fork of the Salt River in Monroe County, MO and is now one of only four covered bridges remaining in the State and the only one consisting of the Burr arch style truss. Timbers in this bridge are made from local oak and fastened primarily with ‘trunnels’ with hand made siding and wooden shingles covering the framework. The single span Union bridge (WG#25-69-02) is 125-feet long with a 12-foot entrance – high enough for a wagonload of hay. Union covered bridge has been victim of neglect and overweight trucks and was closed to all but pedestrian traffic in 1970 following restoration authorized by the Missouri Legislature through the Missouri State Park Board . A second restoration took place in 1988 replacing rotted timbers, siding and repairing failed joints. Named after the nearby church, it has served as a bridge, a local landmark, emergency shelter and signboard. As a State historic site, Union bridge also is the scene of an occasional baptism or wedding. [Compiled from Article May 22, 2013 Lake Gazette (Missouri)]

Decisions, Decisions ... About Taftsville Bridge

The Select Board of Woodstock, Vermont seem perplexed as to what color to make the roof of the Taftsville covered bridge (WG#45-14-12) once the restoration work is completed. The 191-foot, 2-span, Tied arch truss bridge was badly damaged by Hurricane Irene in August 2011 and is currently under reconstruction. Before the storm, the roof was green; before that, galvanized sheet steel that rusted over to a 'rust red'. While the discussion certainly has merit, apparently someone had enough of the color debate and suggested 'going old school – put on a (treated cedar) shingled roof! [Compiled from Article April 22, 2013 The Vermont Standard (Vermont)]

'Postage Up' at the Post Office!

In January 2013 the United States Postal Service celebrated the Arlington Green (Bridge at the Green) (WG#45-02-01) covered bridge with the issue of a new Priority Mail stamp (\$5.60). Although damaged during Hurricane Irene in August of 2011, the bridge, an 80-foot, single span, Town lattice truss bridge, had been closed for a time but is now again open. The bridge, built in 1852, crosses the Batten Kill, and is one of the most photographed bridges in Vermont. [Compiled from Article January 29, 2013 WGNA (Vermont)]

FEMA Funds Bridge Reconstruction

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has committed 75% of the almost \$400 million cost to rebuild the Sonestown covered bridge (WG#38-57-03) that was nearly destroyed by two destructive storms, Tropical Storm Lee and Hurricane Sandy, in 2011. The bridge, a 110-foot, single span, Burr arch truss was originally built circa 1850. [Compiled from Article April 14, 2013 FEMA web site (Pennsylvania)]

Oversize Truck Gets Stuck in Bridge

An oversized truck tried to drive through the Warren covered bridge (WG#45-12-15) in March and didn't make it. The truck, wedged inside the 55-foot, single span, Queenpost truss bridge, took more than two hours to extract, and damaged several structural braces that, according to public works officials, did not compromise the overall structural integrity. In addition to the new damage, the town of Warren had already been planning repairs after an abutment was damaged during Tropical Storm Irene and the flood of 1998. Those plans include moving one abutment and raising the bridge to improve water flow during flooding as well as repair of the 'stuck truck' damage. [Compiled from Rachel Goff Article March 14, 2013 The Valley Reporter (Vermont)]

DeKalb County Bridge to get 'Bumpers'

DeKalb County Commissioners have endorsed a proposal to install 'last chance bumper beams' at both ends of the single (plus) span, 160-foot, Coburn, or Spencerville, covered bridge (WG#14-17-01). The Smith #4 truss bridge was built in 1873 and heavily damaged last fall when an oversized truck drove through. The new bumpers will be made from donated barn beams and hung at each end to stop too-tall trucks from damaging the bridge. The driver of the truck was sentenced to 180 days in jail for the incident. [Compiled from Article April 30, 2013 The Star of Auburn/Associated Press (Indiana)]

Jennings County Covered Bridge Restoration Hits a Snag

While work on the James covered bridge (WG#14-40-02) is continuing, renovation of the Scipio covered bridge (WG#14-40-01) may not be so lucky. After 13-years of planning, and more than \$100 thousand already into the project, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) notified county officials that they had dropped the Scipio project. The plans had also included the construction of a "bypass" span nearby to carry the heavier vehicular traffic. The 148-foot Scipio covered bridge, a single span, Howe truss style, was built in 1886. The decision by INDOT jeopardizes the County's ability to acquire Federal funding for the project. [Compiled from Bryce Mayer Article May 8, 2013 ny covered bridges.org (Indiana)]

Mt. Orne Covered Bridge Damaged ... Again

On April 30th of this year *another* oversized truck *again* damaged the Mt. Orne covered bridge (WG#29-04-08#2/45-05-03#2) the 102-year old Howe truss bridge spanning the Connecticut River between New Hampshire and Vermont. The 266-foot 2-span bridge, now again closed to traffic, had just re-opened in March following a closure from a similar accident in May 2010. The Canadian driver said he was just following his GPS unit which failed to warn him of the height restriction. The bridge has a history of mishaps – 1969, an over weight truck broke through the floor deck ending up in the river below; 1983, closed for rehabilitation by State of New Hampshire with funding derived from Federal and local grants; 2006, an oversized vehicle damaged the bridge; 2010, an oversized truck drove through the entire length of the bridge for which repairs took two months and included splicing diagonal braces, replacement of bearing beams and blocks, and, timber decking. As with the 2010 damage, the most recent damage is being repaired by NSPCB Director, Tim Andrews's firm of Barns and Bridges of New England and is expected to be completed by the end of May. The Mt. Orne bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

[Compiled from Articles May 8 and May 13, 2013 Coos County Democrat (New Hampshire/Vermont)]

The Spirit of Bartonsville Covered Bridge Lives On

The same volunteers who lead the program to rebuild the Bartonsville covered bridge (WG#45-13-11) swept away by flood waters in August 2011, have undertaken plans to utilize recovered pieces of the original bridge to build a visitor's kiosk near the rebuilt bridge. While the actual size of the kiosk is still in discussion, it is envisioned to resemble a small covered bridge that will hopefully include some of the truss and roofing components salvaged from the bridge debris.

[Compiled from Article May 10, 2013 Brattleboro Informer (Vermont)]

Irish Bend Covered Bridge Listed on National Register

The Irish Bend covered bridge (WG#37-02-09#2) located in Benton County, Oregon, has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the U. S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service. The 60-foot single span Howe truss bridge is based on Oregon State Highway Department plans developed in the 1920's and constructed by Benton County in 1954. In 1975, the bridge was bypassed and eventually dismantled in 1988 by the county. In 1989, as part of a community-wide preservation effort, the bridge was re-assembled along the Campus Way pedestrian and bike path over Oak Creek on the grounds of Oregon State University by employees of the County, OSU students and faculty, and, the Covered Bridge Society of Oregon. The new location is similar to the original surrounded by pastoral farm fields.

[Compiled from Article April 22, 2013 The Oregonian (Oregon)]

Concern For the Brookwood Covered Bridge

Concern that county officials may demolish the Brookwood covered bridge (WG#05-12-08), and replace it with one of concrete and steel 'for safety', has prompted local residents of a 20 family sub-division, for which this bridge is the only way in or out, to organize to assure the red with white trim wooden bridge remains. Built in 1969, the last covered bridge built in California, the 66-foot Howe truss single span bridge is built with redwood truss members and fir deck beams. The side walkway was removed some years ago but replaced after neighborhood concerns for bicycle and pedestrian safety were voiced. The historic value to the community is considered priceless. A local resident said, "It's a finely crafted labor of love ... It would be a shame to lose this part of our local culture." To learn more contact the Humboldt County Historical Society at (707)-445-4342 or the County website www.redwoods.info (see the *Historic Site* section.

[Compiled from Ali Lee Article May 10, 2013 The Arcata Eye (California)]

Thanks to all contributors!!



Covered Spans of Yesteryear

by Bill Caswell

Covered Spans of Yesteryear recently achieved a milestone – 10 years of documenting the covered bridges of the United States and Canada. Thanks to the many people who have donated information and photos, we have nearly 14,000 covered bridges listed on the website along with 700 pony truss bridges and nearly 500 uncovered wood truss structures. Earlier this week, I posted the 10,000th image with many more still waiting to be processed.

In this issue, I have chosen to explore the covered bridges of Minnesota. Today, the state has one historic covered bridge standing; in the town of Zumbrota about an hour drive south of the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

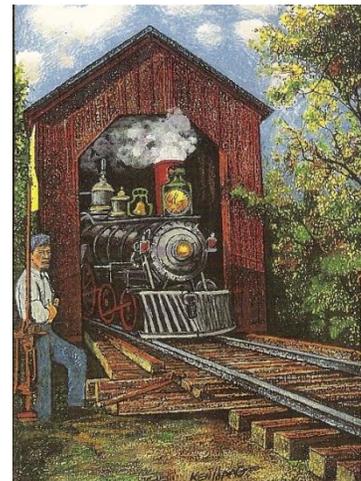
The bridge was constructed in 1869 at a cost of \$5,800 by Evander L. Kingsbury, a local carpenter, using the town lattice truss design, as a replacement for one lost during a flood in the previous Spring. Originally an open span, the bridge was covered in 1871. It served the community until being replaced by a steel bridge in 1932. At that time, it was moved to the Goodhue County Fairgrounds.

Through the efforts of the Zumbrota Covered Bridge Society, the bridge was moved to the Zumbrota Covered Bridge Park in 1970. In 1997, the structure was moved again and placed back over the Zumbro River at West Avenue, one block west of its original location and near the new City Hall and new Public Library. The top photo, from Dick Roy's collection, shows the bridge at its original location.

Zumbrota's other covered bridge was not quite as well known. It also crossed the Zumbro River about ½ mile upstream from the center of town. The bridge was built by the Duluth, Red Wing & Southern Railroad around 1888. In 1901, the Chicago Great Western took over the line and relocated the section near this bridge. This postcard from Elna Johnson is based on a photo of the bridge taken around 1900 owned by the Goodhue County Historical Society. A copy is also on the Minnesota Historical Society's website at <http://reflections.mndigital.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/good/id/347/rec/29>

The third postcard, from Todd Clark's collection, shows a deck covered bridge over the LeSueur River southwest of Mankato. The Southern Minnesota Rail line (later the Central Railroad and then the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul) had reached Wells by the summer of 1869 and by the summer of 1870 surveyors worked on the next segment, from the Maple River to the Red Jacket mill. Because of financial and legal disputes with the railroad, the Red Jacket trestle wasn't completed until September 1874. The trestle connecting the bridge with the bluff was 618 feet long and its highest point was 59 feet above ground. The wooden deck span was replaced with a steel deck structure in 1901. By 1978 the Milwaukee Road had abandoned 30 miles of track between Mankato and Minnesota Lake. The former rail line is now the Red Jacket Trail.

At least a half dozen other covered bridges are now known to have existed in the state. 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.



Books Available from Bill Caswell

Order from Bill Caswell, 535 Second NH Turnpike, Hillsboro, NH 03244, E-mail: bill@lostbridges.org

2009 World Guide to Covered Bridges,\$19.95, includes priority mail postage.

Connecticut & Rhode Island Covered Bridges by Bill Caswell:, Arcadia Press, Images of America Series, 2011, 6.5x9.25 soft cover, 128 pgs.,\$26.00, includes priority mail postage.

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This disc contains a PDF copy of the World Guide as it was published in 2009. 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.

The CD also includes:

- Several files of changes to the various editions of the World Guide.
- 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.
- An index to all copies of Covered Bridge Topics. Including an up-to-date table of contents for each issue, a list of subjects, a list of authors and photographers, poetry and obituaries.
- A bibliography of known books that pertain to covered bridges.
- Large sketches of common truss types, and
- A few more miscellaneous files.

Send a check for \$15 made out to Joseph Cohen. \$10 from each sale goes towards the Society's bridge preservation efforts.

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

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

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).

Books Available from the Society Store

Order from Mrs. June Roy, 73 Ash St. #2, Manchester, NH 03104-4906, E-mail: dickroycb1@comcast.net

Covered Bridges of Vermont by Ed Barna, 6x9 soft cover, 216 pgs. Postpaid, \$17.00

Vermont Covered Bridges by Joseph D. Conwill:, Arcadia Press, Images of America Series, 2004, 6.5x9.25 soft cover, 128 pgs.\$19.99 each plus \$3.00 shipping and handling.

Books by Andrew Howard

All books, 6"x9" paperback

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National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges

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