



# The Newsletter

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

*Winter 2012/2013*

In this issue:

President's Message .....	3
Calendar of Events .....	4
Bridge News .....	5-13
New Members .....	11
World Guide Updates .....	13
Covered Spans of Yesteryear .....	14
Items for Sale .....	15



*Spencerville Bridge (14-17-01) in DeKalb County, Indiana*

After being damaged by an oversized truck.

Photo submitted by Judy Wood

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

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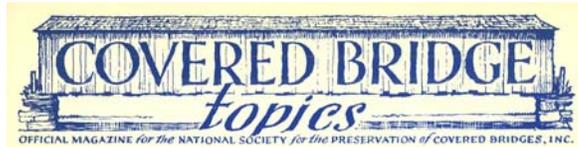
## From the Editor

I heard from a number of people who were missing their Fall Topics and Newsletter. They were mailed on September 10<sup>th</sup> but some copies, including our own, did not arrive until the second week of October. For your reference, this issue is being mailed on or around December 10<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to those who took the time to send information and photos.

This is my last issue as interim editor with Robin Mitchell scheduled to take over with the Spring edition. I will now transition to my new role as editor of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society's newsletter taking over for Ray Hitchcock who, sadly, has to step down due to failing health. Jenn and I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and Happy New Year.

## 50 years ago – January 1963

The January 1963 Topics led off with an article by Kramer Adams about the covered bridges still standing in Washington



State. His book, *Covered Bridges of the West*, would be released later in the year. Of the ten bridges described in the article, none are standing today. The last one to go was the Gray's River Bridge in 1989. It was replaced by a new covered bridge.

Edward Clark of Lincoln, New Hampshire announced that he purchased a recently abandoned railroad covered bridge in Barre, Vermont. Clark dismantled the bridge and reconstructed it at Clark's Trading Post in Lincoln where it still stands as the only covered railroad bridge in active service.

On Sunday, October 21, 1962, the Southern Ohio Covered Bridge Association (now the Ohio Historic Bridge Association) unveiled the historical marker at the Salt Creek bridge (35-60-31) near Zanesville. The Association purchased the bridge to see that it was preserved.

An article by George Gould discussed the recent loss of some of Indiana's covered bridges. Floods in 1957 washed away or seriously damaged seven bridges in Parke, Putnam and Greene Counties. In December 1960, the Dooley Station bridge burned. The College Corner bridge which crossed the Ohio and Indiana state line was replaced and the Upper Blue Creek bridge in Franklin County was being replaced with a concrete bridge.

## NSPCB Facebook Page

To help spread the word about our mission, the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges 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.

## Spring 2013 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, 2013**. In order to save us from a lot of re-typing, please send your articles on a CD or DVD, if at all possible. If this isn't possible, please type the information on 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, Robin Mitchell, P.O. Box 375, Marshfield, MA 02050-0375.

Please remember that we always appreciate any news that is sent in, even if we ultimately can't use it. **THANK YOU!**

## President's Message

Dear Fellow Members, Greetings!

Once again, it is the holiday season. At the time this message is being written, November 29th, 2012, Thanksgiving Day has just passed, and both Christmas and the New Year will soon be up-coming. My hope, therefore, for each and every one of you, is that you shall all have a Most Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and that your Thanksgiving celebrations took place joyously in the company of family and good friends. Unfortunately, due to the publishing schedule of Topics and the Newsletter, these good wishes will reach you after the events in question have occurred, in the case of Thanksgiving, long after. They are nonetheless sincere for all of that, however.

### Election Results and Appointments:

During the course of our Annual Meeting, held this year in Newburyport, Massachusetts, on Saturday, October 20th, elections took place, with the following results:

President .....	David W Wright
Vice Presidents .....	Bill Caswell, Roger Easton
Directors .....	Stephen Weston – 2013
.....	Tim Andrews – 2014
.....	Jim Barker – 2015
Treasurer .....	Michelle Andrews
Corresponding Secretary .....	Bob Watts
Custodian of the Eastman-Thomas-Meritt Fund .....	Roger Eastman

On the same occasion, the following appointments were made:

Editor, Topics .....	Joseph D Conwill
Editor, the Newsletter .....	Bill Caswell, then Robin Mitchell
Engineering Consultant .....	Jim Barker
Official Historians .....	Dick Roy, Bill Caswell
Assigning World Guide Numbers to Existing Covered Bridges .....	Dan Brock
Committee to Assign World Guide Numbers to Former Covered Bridges .....	Dan Brock, Bill Caswell
Official Keeper of the National Society List of Bridges .....	Dan Brock
Mailing Chairman .....	Bill Caswell
Hospitality Chairman .....	Dan Brock
Membership Chairman .....	Jennifer Caswell
Acquisitions and Sales .....	June Roy
Guide Salesman .....	Bill Caswell
Back Issues of Topics .....	Dick Roy
Archivist and Official Photographer .....	Joseph D Conwill
Web Master .....	Bill Caswell
Consultant for Timber Framing .....	Tim Andrews
Nominating Committee .....	Dick Roy, June Roy

Happy Bridging! !

David W. Wright

## NSPCB Annual Meeting

The Society's Annual Dinner Meeting was held at David's Tavern in Newburyport, Massachusetts. We enjoyed a fine meal and moved on to the business meeting. Dick Roy presented the list of officer candidates. Having no other nominations for officers, the list was voted on and approved. Bill Caswell provided an updated schedule for 2013 meetings. After the business meeting, we moved to the First Religious Society Church for a presentation by Bob Watts and Bill Caswell.



*Left to right: Dick Roy, Carmela Sciandra, James Garvin, DB Garvin, Anastasia Conlon, Bill Caswell, Jenn Caswell, Joye Olson, Michelle Andrews, Tim Andrews, Terrilyn Simpson, Stephen Weston, David Wright  
Bob Watts Photo*

### 2013 NSPCB Meeting Schedule

**Sunday, March 24 at 1pm** Horace Chase Masonic Lodge, 53 North Main St., Boscawen, NH.

**Saturday, April 27 at 1pm** National Heritage Museum, 33 Marrett Road (At the intersection of Route 2A and Massachusetts Avenue), Lexington, Massachusetts. **Note the Saturday date.**

**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 Picnic, 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](http://www.1761oldmill.com)

### Other Upcoming Covered Bridge Meetings & Events

**Sunday, February 3** Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 90 S. Charlotte Street, Manheim, PA. Meeting & Program at 2:00 pm - "Covered Bridges of Berks & Chester Counties" by Campbell Fitzhugh

**Sunday, March 3** Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 90 S. Charlotte Street, Manheim, PA. Meeting at 2:00 pm, Program To Be Announced

**Sunday, April 7** Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 90 S. Charlotte Street, Manheim, PA. Bake Sale & Meeting at 2:00 pm, Program To Be Announced

**Saturday, May 4** Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania, Dutch-Way Farm Market Restaurant, Gap, PA. 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, Fifty-fourth Anniversary Dinner

## New Covered Bridge in Madison County, Ohio

*Compiled from various articles in the Columbus Messenger, The Columbus Dispatch, The Madison Press, and Ohio Department of Transportation press releases.*

The Ohio Department of Transportation is building a wooden covered bridge to replace a deteriorated metal truss bridge on Taylor Blair Road in West Jefferson, Madison County, Ohio. Construction began with the closing of the old bridge on June 4.

Planning for the project started in 2005. From the start, some local residents were upset that it was a covered bridge. Some neighbors complained that it cost too much extra money and took too much time to build compared to a traditional steel bridge.

The sides of the new covered bridge over Little Darby Creek were built on dry land and put in place by cranes on October 24.

The Pratt truss structure is similar to those recently constructed in nearby Union County. All were designed by Smolen Engineering. RB Jergens, of Vandalia, is constructing the \$2.7 million bridge. During November, crews were working more than 60 hours a week to ensure the bridge is open before Christmas.

## Bartonsville Bridge Nearing Completion

The new covered bridge to replace the one lost during Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011 at Bartonsville, Vermont, is nearly finished. This picture was posted on facebook on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. At the time this was written, Cold River Bridges was planning to close the road on December 10<sup>th</sup> so they can begin removing the temporary bridge. The current estimate is that the new bridge will be moved into place sometime during the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. If all goes as planned, the covered bridge could be completed by the end of January.



## Taftsville Being Repaired

Repair work has begun on the covered bridge at Taftsville, Vermont (45-14-12). The bridge was damaged by Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011. The project was delayed while the necessary permits were obtained. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, Alpine Construction, LLC of Schuylerville, New York, was awarded the \$2.4 million contract. The project includes replacement of the abutment closest to Route 4, repairs to other abutment and center pier. Once the masonry work is complete, the bridge will be reconstructed.



*Bill Caswell Photo*

## Pont Louis-Gravel Damaged

The Louis-Gravel bridge (61-62-01) near Sacré-Coeur, Québec, was damaged by a freshet last Spring. The bridge is in a remote location about a four hour drive north of Québec City.

The swollen Sainte-Marguerite River washed away part of one embankment and damaged one end of the bridge. The bridge remained in service with a load restriction. It has since been repaired.

The bridge was built in 1934. In 1998, it underwent extensive repairs after it collapsed into the river. Steel beams were added during the 1998 repairs.

## Brabant-Philippe Bridge One Step Closer to Construction

In the Summer 2012 newsletter, we reported on the Gatineau (Québec) City Council's decision to build a covered bridge to replace the Brabant-Philippe Bridge (61-25-c) lost to arson last December. On November 7<sup>th</sup>, "La Revue" of Gatineau reported that Génivar Engineering was preparing the drawings for the replacement bridge. Mayor Marc Bureau stated that the same firm prepared the drawings for the original covered bridge in 2007. The City intends for the bridge to be completed before the end of 2013.

## Green River Covered Bridge Repairs

*Excerpted from a DuBois & King, Inc. press release on October 8, 2012.*

The Town of Greenfield has received a commitment by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to partially fund repairs to the Pumping Station Bridge (21-06-02#2) over the Green River.

Floodwaters from Tropical Storm Irene scoured the bridge's east abutment leading to its failure along with a 150' section of the east approach road. The abutment failure caused damage to structural timbers in the roof framing, trusses and sidewalk. Floodwaters also caused the failure of the Town's water supply dam immediately upstream. The Town has contracted with DuBois & King from New Hampshire to oversee emergency repairs to the bridge and prepare a total rehabilitation design.

The first step of jacking and stabilizing the bridge was completed in November 2011. Rebuilding of the failed dam was completed in May of this year. A design is being prepared for the replacement or repair of the bridge's roof framing, upper and lower lateral bracing, timber trusses, board siding, and bearings. Both abutments will be removed and replaced with new concrete abutments and wing walls. The east end of the bridge is to be raised 2 feet to enable greater capacity to pass floodwaters without damage. The current estimate for design and construction of the repairs is \$750,000. They hope to have the bridge open to traffic in late fall 2013.

## Hillsgrove Bridge Reopened

*From an article published in the Daily Review of Towanda, Pennsylvania on November 21, 2012.*

The Hillsgrove covered bridge (38-57-02) in Sullivan County, Pennsylvania reopened to traffic on November 21<sup>st</sup>. The bridge was closed after being damaged by Tropical Storm Lee in September 2011.

The lower chords of the upstream and downstream truss were splintered from floodwater and debris hitting the structure. The majority of the siding was removed during the storm, and vertical and diagonal truss timber members were split as a result of the debris impact.

Sullivan County Commissioners hired Larson Design Group (LDG) to do the repair work. The contractor for the project was Perry's General Contracting of Dunmore.

## Bath Village Bridge Being Repaired

*Information and photo contributed by Sean James.*

A project is underway to rehabilitate the Bath Village Bridge (29-05-03) which carries West Bath Road over the Ammonoosuc River and Ammonoosuc Rail Trail in Bath, New Hampshire. The project limits begin at the Railroad Street/West Bath Road intersection and proceed east (eastbound) approximately 465 feet to a point approximately 400 feet west of US Route 302/West Bath Road intersection. Rehabilitation of the Covered Bridge will involve replacing the deteriorated bridge members, installation of new flooring, new downstream fascia siding, new metal roof, new timber approach railing, substructure repairs and partial reconstruction of roadway approaches for a total length of approximately 75'.

The siding has been removed from the bridge to inspect the structural members for additional deterioration. The project is currently on hold until January while wood is being ordered.



## Bloomfield Creek Bridge Repaired

The Bloomfield Creek Covered Bridge (55-06-01), on the Bloomfield Station Road off Route 121, in Kings County, New Brunswick was closed on September 19<sup>th</sup> so the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure could make repairs. It was expected to be closed for six weeks.

## Spencerville Indiana Bridge Damaged

*Reported by WANE-TV, Fort Wayne, Indiana, and various area newspapers. Photos submitted by Judy Wood.*

On September 26<sup>th</sup> another historic covered bridge was damaged by a negligent truck driver "following his GPS." A police officer said that the truck driver followed his GPS through the covered bridge even though he had been given directions to the new bridge on county route 68 he was supposed to cross.

The truck broke crossbeams and roof supports through the entire length of the bridge as it crossed the span heading eastbound.



The Spencerville Bridge (14-17-01) was built in 1873 and spans the St. Joseph River just east of Spencerville. The driver of the semi, Gerard Hudson, 49, of Waukegan, Illinois was arrested by DeKalb County Sheriff's Department deputies and preliminarily charged with criminal mischief. He was still in prison at the time this was written (November 22<sup>nd</sup>).



Deputies and residents at the scene say the bridge floor is still in-tact, but it's declared unsafe and will be closed until further notice. The Spencerville Covered Bridge has been declared a National

Historical Landmark. It is the only covered bridge in DeKalb County.

DeKalb County's insurance agent told the County Council that the trucking company has been cooperative and seems to want repairs made to the bridge as quickly as possible. On November 26<sup>th</sup>, the County Commissioners awarded the contract for the bridge's repairs to Jutte Excavating of Fort Recovery, Ohio, with a bid of \$103,672.

## Two Covered Bridges Designated Historic Landmarks

On October 17, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced the designation of 26 national historic landmarks and one national natural landmark as places that possess exceptional value and quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Currently there are only 2,527 designated national historic landmarks and 592 national natural landmark sites across the country that bear this national distinction.

"Each of these landmarks represents a thread in the great tapestry that tells the story of our beautiful land, our diverse culture and our nation's rich heritage," said Salazar. "By designating these sites as national landmarks, we help meet the goals of President Obama's America's Great Outdoors Initiative to establish a conservation ethic for the 21st century and reconnect people, especially young people, to our nation's historic, cultural, and natural heritage."

The national historic landmarks announced that day include:

- **Humpback Bridge, Alleghany County, Virginia.** Built in 1857, the Humpback Bridge is an outstanding example of 19th-century covered bridge construction and is the best surviving example of a timber multiple-kingpost truss, used for some of the earliest covered bridges in America.
- **Knight's Ferry Bridge, Stanislaus County, California.** Constructed in 1862-1863, Knight's Ferry Bridge is an exceptionally fine example of 19th-century covered bridge construction using the William Howe patented truss, one of the most successful and widely-used American timber bridge truss types.

### West Montrose Bridge Closed for Repairs

Information and photos provided by Tony Dowling.

In September, a kayaker paddling under the covered bridge at West Montrose, Ontario, (59-50-01) noticed a large crack in one of the short beams that run crosswise under the bridge. These beams support the 2" x 10" stringers, which in turn support the 2" x 4" floor boards.



The bridge is closed to all traffic while repairs are being made. It may not be re-opened to vehicular traffic until the Region can develop a reliable plan to keep overweight vehicles off of the bridge without installing unsightly barriers. The 180' bridge was built in 1881 and is owned by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. The load limit on the bridge is 3 metric tonnes (6600 pounds) although area residents have seen much larger vehicles crossing the bridge.



The contractor ran steel beams across the bridge, supported by a steel Bailey bridge which had been built into the walls decades ago to share the weight with the original wooden structure. Two temporary cross beams, one on either side of the damaged beam, were installed to take the load off of it.

The replacement beam was milled in British Columbia and was moved to Toronto to be pressure-treated. Once that beam is delivered, it will be installed and the temporary supports removed.

BridgeKeepers, a local citizens group, is looking for suggestions to keep overweight vehicles off the bridge. Any ideas would be helpful. Suggestions can be sent to BridgeKeepers, c/o Tony Dowling, 1245 Rivers Edge Drive, West Montrose, Ontario N0B 2V0 or contact Tony by email at [Tony@elmirastoveworks.com](mailto:Tony@elmirastoveworks.com)

### Pulp Mill Bridge (45-01-04#2) Repaired

The Pulp Mill Bridge in Middlebury, Vermont, was closed on January 2<sup>nd</sup> to allow for extensive repairs. The \$1.375 million project was awarded to Alpine Construction, a New York-based firm.

The project included repairing concrete in a pier; replacing the siding, interior decking and flooring; rehabbing the bridge truss-work; removing some of the extraneous elements that have been added to the bridge over the years; and replacing the roof.



Bill Caswell Photo

The bridge was opened to traffic on November 9<sup>th</sup>.



Ed Barna Photo

## County to Take Ownership of Otway Covered Bridge

*Excerpted from an article in the Portsmouth Daily Times of November 23, 2012.*

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, the Scioto County, Ohio, Commissioners approved a resolution to transfer ownership of the Otway covered bridge (35-73-15) to the county. In August a federal grant of \$285,025 was awarded to fund needed repairs and upgrades to the bridge. In order to receive the funding, \$70,000 needs to be raised by the community as matching funds.

During the grant application process, it was discovered that the Otway Historical Society owns the bridge but not the adjoining ground next to it. To facilitate grant funding opportunities, they worked with the village of Otway and Brush Creek Township for a road dedication around the bridge.

Once the county takes ownership, the Scioto County Engineer's office will maintain and take care of this bridge.

According to released information from The Otway Historical Society, "the Otway covered bridge has been a historical landmark that has attracted people to our county and to the Otway area for many years. However, we often drive by on a regular basis, sometimes without even giving it a glance. It has been a lack of dreams that has allowed the bridge to become in a state of serious disrepair. It is a lack of dreams that threatens the bridge's very existence for the next generation to enjoy."

In March, a portion of the bridge roof was damaged by an F-0 strength tornado that passed through Otway. According to Otway Mayor Suzanne Nichols the damages to the bridge were estimated at \$1,800.

To secure the grant money, \$70,000 of matching funds must be raised. If the money is raised, the grant will be released and construction could begin in the spring of 2013.

The bridge was erected in 1874 and was in use until it was bypassed in 1963. This historic structure is listed on the National Register and was completely restored by the village of Otway in 1974. Of the 80 or so covered bridges that were built in the history of Scioto County, it is the lone survivor.

For more information contact Norval Davis at 740-372-8320, Mike Seaman at 740-372-8888, or Jack Orlett at 740-259-5747 or visit the groups facebook page "Otway Historical Society and Otway Covered Bridge."

## Pont de l'Île Népawa Repaired

*Excerpted from an article published in French in L'Écho Abitibien of Val-d'Or, Québec, on May 25, 2012. Photos provided by Catalin Petcu.*

During May and June 2012, the Pont de l'Île Népawa (61-02-23) in western Québec underwent \$250,000 of repairs and restoration work according to Luc Adam, spokesman for the Quebec Ministry of Transport.

The bridge was built in 1946 and crosses an arm of Lac d'Abitibi near the Ontario border on the road connecting Népawa Island to the mainland.



The bridge, which had been beige in recent years, was also restored to its original "rouge sang de bœuf" (ox-blood red). The Pont de l'Île Népawa is one of six covered bridges in the Abitibi-Ouest region of Québec which borders Ontario.



The repair work was done by Infra Spécialisées, Inc. of Lavaltrie, Québec.

For those interested in learning more about the area's covered bridges, there is a collection of covered bridge material at the Société d'histoire et du patrimoine de la région de La Sarre (Historical and Heritage Society of the La Sarre Region, 187 rue Principale, La Sarre, Québec) that was bequeathed to the society by Jacques Fournier, a former resident of l'Île Népawa. The collection includes over 80 photos, as well as models of existing and former covered bridges in the area. His collection includes, among others, a scale replica of l'Île Népawa bridge which was near his home.

## Billie Creek Village Auctioned

*Compiled from multiple articles in the Terre Haute Tribune Star in October 2012.*

Billie Creek Village in Rockville, Indiana, which includes two historic covered bridges, was offered at auction on October 20<sup>th</sup> after no acceptable bids were received during a sealed bid auction in September. The village was originally owned by a nonprofit organization. Farmer and retired businessman Charlie Cooper purchased a controlling interest in the village about four years ago after financial struggles threatened the local landmark. Cooper, an 81 year old farmer, said he is too old to continue running the operation and is now selling the village.

About 90 people filled the old Baptist Church on October 20<sup>th</sup> as the historic village was put up for auction. Investors' representatives sat on wooden pews, next to Amish men and tourists just in town visiting Parke County's Covered Bridge Festival.

The auction generated combined offerings of \$550,000 for the three parcels and all antiques, buildings and contents. The property's first parcel contained 19.17 acres, the main village, all buildings and contents therein, as well as one covered bridge (14-61-19). Bidding ended at \$250,000. The second parcel, which also contains the Leatherwood Station Covered Bridge (14-61-25), included 41.78 acres, a barn, farmhouse, and all the contents of both. It ended at \$280,000. The third parcel included 3.66 acres and the parking lot near Billie Creek Inn. That one went for \$20,000.

As a multi-parcel auction, bidders had the opportunity to mix the prices for any combination, or beat the \$550,000 sum to buy the whole property. Despite some brief discussion among the bidders, none offered to combine the parcels, and no one offered \$550,000 to keep them intact.

Cooper rejected all three of the bids stating that he hoped someone would choose to combine the parcels and keep the village running as an educational attraction.

Cooper recently turned 81 years old and said he's simply too old to continue running the operation. A retired Parke County sheriff and bank president, he farms 1,000 acres with his son and said it's time for someone else to manage the village.

The facilities are currently closed for the season, but the opportunity to reopen is there for anyone interested.

## Ultimul pod acoperit stă să se prăbușească

"Ultimul pod acoperit stă să se prăbușească" ("The last covered bridge is about to collapse") was the headline on the front page of Romania's Transylvania Reporter on July 2, 2012. The article went on to discuss the poor condition of the historic covered bridge in the village of Coșbuc in Bistrița-Năsăud County in the Transylvania region of northern Romania. The article stated that the two span structure over the Salauta River was built in 1778 and was last repaired in 1937.



The bridge is presently in desperate need of repair. Coșbuc mayor Niculae Anghel stated that the beams on the west end near highway 17C are so rotten the bridge could collapse at any moment. Even though the bridge is in an advanced state of decay, it is still open to traffic.

Mayor Anghel has requested help from county and federal agencies and made numerous appeals through the Romanian media, but so far no money has become available for repairs. One engineering firm he contacted estimated repairs at 12 million lei, about 3.4 million US dollars.

Catalin Petcu, a Romanian engineer currently living in Canada who has worked on covered bridges in Québec, has offered his expertise to help with the project. Mayor Anghel indicated that having the help of these gentlemen in Canada would be wonderful. Catalin has worked on three covered bridges in Québec, in Wakefield, Routhierville and last summer's project at Népawa island.

The bridge at Coșbuc is one of two covered bridges in Bistrița-Năsăud County, the other one is at Ilva Mare. An article on the on-line news page Răsunetul from November 8, 2011 mentioned a number of other nearby towns that once had covered bridges and noted that 14 covered bridges in the county were destroyed during World War II.

### Passing of "Jersey Joe"

Joseph G. Giannattasio Jr., who we know better as "Jersey Joe", lost his battle with cancer on December 4<sup>th</sup> at age 72. Jersey Joe belonged to many covered bridge societies and was a regular on bridge safaris until failing health limited his ability to participate. In addition to his covered bridge interest, Joe was an accomplished nature photographer. He is survived by his wife, Rose; brother, George; son Daniel; and 3 grandchildren.

Anyone wishing to send a sympathy card to Rose can reach her at: Rose Giannattasio, 2044 Andrea Avenue, Lindenwold, NJ 08021-2556. Donations may be made in Joe's honor to the American Cancer Society, 1851 Old Cuthbert Rd., Cherry Hill, NJ 08034.

### Passing of A.R.Schwab



Alvin Raymond Schwab, 95, a professional engineer and covered bridge aficionado, passed away on Sunday, September 30, 2012 at Brooke Grove nursing home in Sandy Spring, Maryland of congestive

heart failure. He was the father of five and grandfather of seven, great-grandfather of six.

Mr. Schwab's photos have appeared in Topics over the years. He donated his collection of covered bridge photographs to the Society.

### Repairs to the Paradise Covered Bridge

Clint Frackman sent pictures of the repair work being done on the Paradise Covered Bridge (38-36-20) in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The bridge is getting a new sheet metal roof, wingwall repairs, replacement of some of the diagonals in the truss, some new siding, some new flooring, and new paved approaches.



### Buck Run Bridge 'out of alignment'

*Excerpted from the November 16, 2012 edition of the Marysville News.*

In August, a routine inspection of the Buck Run covered bridge (35-80-62) in Union County, Ohio, discovered that the upper chords of the bridge are slightly out of alignment. Within two days of the inspection, engineer Jeff Stauch closed the bridge to traffic while his department explored possible solutions to the problem.

"We could have kept the bridge open with weight restrictions, but there was no guarantee that vehicles would have adhered to the restrictions," Stauch said. "So instead we took the most conservative route, placing a premium on safety, and shut it down altogether."

The Buck Run Road Covered Bridge was designed by Smolen Engineering of Jefferson, Ohio, in Ashtabula County and constructed by the Righter Co. of Columbus. The \$1.6 million bridge opened in the spring of 2007.

Designer John Smolen is working with the county to correct the issue. His company has been designing covered bridges for more than 10 years and has not had a problem like that before. Bids for the repair work will go out sometime in December and repairs will begin in January. "The bridge has to be jacked up in four or five places before the work can begin," Stauch said.

Covered bridges initially have a slight upward arc that eventually "flattens out after we lay the asphalt down," Stauch said. "But as the Buck Run bridge settled, it pulled the trusses out of alignment."

#### *Welcome to Our New Members!*

Jeffrey Cunningham, Orting, WA  
 Richard & Karen Henderson, Philadelphia, PA  
 Ron Pearson, Montana City, MT  
 Constance Goldfarb, New York, NY  
 Dr. Tim Grubb, Stone Mountain, GA  
 Carol & Dick Sard, Halifax, VT  
 Donald Smith, Burlington, MA  
 Tony Dowling, West Montrose, ON

#### *Welcome to Our New Life Members!*

Bill & Marty North, Warrenton, OR

### Two Blount County Bridges Re-Opened

*Excerpted from The Blount Countian of October 24, 2012. All photos by Susan Sloan Johnson.*

Blount County officials began discussing repairs to the county's three covered bridges in 2003. In 2009 the bridges were declared unsafe and closed to traffic. The analysis showed they needed extensive repair including structural support, roof replacement, facade repair, and decking. With additional delays, the repair work finally began in the Fall of 2011. At the time, county engineer Richard Spraggins set the target date for their completion: in time for the Covered Bridge Festival of 2012.

Two of the three bridges – Easley and Swann – were completed on schedule. The third – Hortons Mill – the most extensively damaged by vandals – will take a little longer. The opening ceremony for the first two took place at the Swann Bridge on Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. 60 to 70 people attended the event. Hopefully, the Horton Mill Bridge will be opened by the first of the new year.

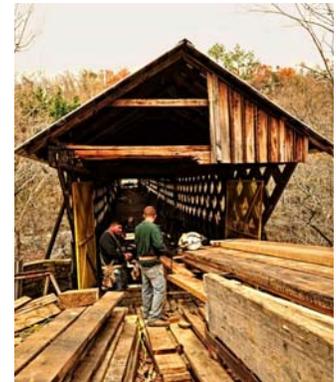


The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Covered Bridge Festival was held on October 27th, 2012.



The top photo of the Easley Bridge (01-05-12) was taken after it was reopened to traffic.

The lower two photos are of the Hortons Mill Bridge (01-05-07) still under construction.



### Covered Bridge Book by a Member

NSPCB member Jerry Rust has published an electronic book titled *The Covered Bridge Murders*. The story follows two amateur detectives as they piece together a mystery from Oregon's past. According to the book's description, "Jerry Rust brings to life the scenes of lumbering, gold hunting, and daily living of both the pioneers and present day residents of the Willamette Valley. And includes interesting facts about covered bridges." The book is available from Amazon as an electronic download for Kindle devices.

## Siegrist Mill Bridge to be Repaired

*Excerpted from an article published on LancasterOnline on October 31, 2012.*

The Lancaster County commissioners approved a contract with Bulldog Construction of Coatesville to rebuild the 127-year-old Siegrist Mill Covered Bridge (38-36-37). The bridge was washed off its abutments on September 8, 2011, when Tropical Storm Lee dumped more than 15 inches of rain on northwestern Lancaster County. Charlie Douts, chief of the county's facilities management department, expects the rebuilt bridge to be carrying traffic by next July.

Fearing that it might be washed away by flooding caused by Hurricane Sandy, county workers anchored the bridge in place by tying it to a nearby tree and chaining timbers to concrete barriers. As it turned out, the rain-swollen Chiques Creek didn't rise anywhere near the bridge, Douts said.

The \$674,421 contract awarded to Bulldog to repair the bridge is more than \$300,000 less than the county's original estimate for the job. County workers helped cut the costs by removing the siding and roof so the contractor didn't need to do that work. The entire cost is being picked up by the federal and state emergency management agencies.

## Conway Officials Want Traffic on Bridge

*Associated Press, October 22, 2012*

Efforts are underway to allow cars to cross a 141-year-old covered bridge in Conway, Massachusetts. The Recorder of Greenfield reports that the Board of Selectmen is backing the Conway Historical Commission's efforts to allow vehicles on the Burkeville Covered Bridge (21-06-01). The 107-foot long bridge was built in 1871. It closed in 1985 due to structural deficiencies, but underwent a \$1 million renovation that allowed it to reopen to pedestrians in 2006. The Historical Commission says that the bridge is strong enough to support vehicles and that reopening it would draw tourists and help residents. The state Highway Department kept it closed because it has no guardrails and because of fears that road salt would damage the wood.

## Williams Covered Bridge Repaired

*Reported on WBIW, October 10, 2012*

The covered bridge in Williams, Indiana, built in 1884, has been renovated. Repairs were made to the roof, trusses and all the siding was replaced and painted. The bridge was painted with a clear-coating to protect against fire and a heavy-duty fence was placed inside to protect the bridge from vandals.

## 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](http://www.coveredbridgesociety.org) and click on the World Guide link.

Page 34, add "#2" to World Guide number 17-45-01 in Greenup County, Kentucky

17-45-01#2 Lynn Tygarts Creek Bennett Mill 1 145' 2004 Modified Wheeler or Warren  
8.2 miles south-southeast of jct US23 on KY7, 0.1 miles left on Tygart's Creek Rd. (KY3112). South-southeast of South Shore. Replaced a bridge built in 1875. N38° 37.854' W082° 55.608'

Page 76, add new bridge, 35-49-27, in Madison County, Ohio

35-49-27 West Jefferson Little Darby Creek Taylor Blair 1 150' 2012 Pratt  
On Taylor Blair Rd. 0.15 miles north of jct with US40. N39° 56.771' W083° 16.900'

Page 233, add covered bridges at Coşbuc and Ilva Mare in Bistriţa-Năsăud County, Romania.

RO-06-01 Coşbuc Salauta River Coşbuc 2 1778  
On Route 1A at its intersection with route 17C at Coşbuc. N47° 21.681', E024° 23.283'

RO-06-02 Ilva Mare Ilva Mare 1  
On Route 172D, 0.2 miles (0.3 km) west of the intersection of Route 4B at Ilva Mare, then just right.  
N47° 21.898, E024° 52.797



## Covered Spans of Yesteryear

by Bill Caswell

At the NSPCB annual meeting in Newburyport, Massachusetts, Bob Watts and I gave a presentation that included a discussion of Timothy Palmer who lived in Newburyport for many years. Palmer was the first American builder of long-span wooden bridges. He was born on August 22, 1751, in Hawley, Massachusetts, the oldest child of John Palmer and Mary Cressey. As a young man, he was an apprentice to Jacob and Moody Spofford, well-known artisans of the day, and together they designed some of the longer spans of wooden bridges over the Merrimack River.

There is little documentation of Palmer's work. His earliest known bridge of importance was at Newburyport, the first bridge to span the Merrimack River. It was opened to traffic in November 1792.

*"The two larger arches, one of which is superior to anything of the kind on the continent were both of them invented by Mr. Timothy Palmer, an ingenious housewright of Newburyport, and appear to unite elegance, strength and firmness beyond the most sanguine expectation."*  
Massachusetts Magazine, May 1793

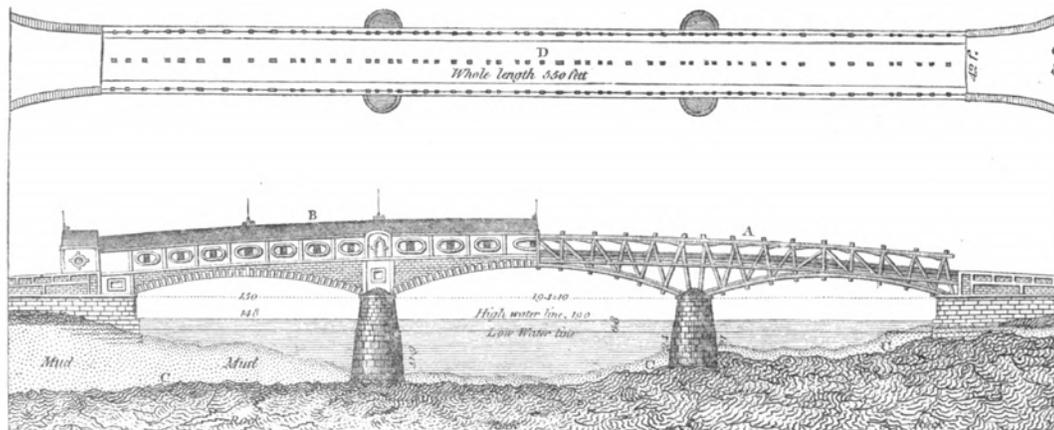
In 1794, he opened two more long wooden spans, the Haverhill Bridge in Haverhill, Massachusetts over the Merrimack River and the Piscataqua Bridge in New Hampshire. The Piscataqua Bridge was 2200' long with its longest span being 243'. Another Palmer bridge was constructed over the Potomoc River at Georgetown, Maryland (now in Washington, DC). His design for these bridges was not patented until 1797.

In 1804, he had the opportunity to construct a new toll bridge over the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia. It was called the Permanent Bridge because it replaced a floating bridge at that location. The structure was made free in 1840 and railroad tracks were added in 1850. The bridge burned Saturday November 20, 1875

The Permanent Bridge is the earliest documented covered bridge in the United States. In a letter from Timothy Palmer to Schuylkill Bridge Company President, Richard Peters, Palmer discussed the desire to have the Permanent Bridge covered. The letter was reprinted in *A Statistical Account of the Schuylkill Permanent Bridge*, published in Philadelphia in 1807, along with the sketch at the end of this article. The letter said in part:

*To some questions you put to me some time since, relative to the durability of timber bridges, without being covered, sides and top, I answer, from the experience that I have had in New England and Maryland – that they will not last for more than 10 or 12 years, to be safe for heavy carriages to pass over. The bridge near Newburyport, over the Merrimack, was built in the year 1792. It was repaired in the year 1802. The bridge at Andover, across the same river, was built in 1793. It was rebuilt in 1803. Piscataqua bridge, near Portsmouth, NH was built in 1794. I believe there have been no repairs since, except the Draw. But I have lately been informed it was much decayed, and is to be repaired next season. The bridge that I built over the Potomoc at Georgetown, in 1796, is not safe for heavy teams to pass over. ... it is sincerely my opinion, that the Schuylkill bridge will last 30 and perhaps 40 years if well covered.*

Architectural Plan and Elevation of the Schuylkill P. Bridge.



**Everything You Need To Know About Covered Bridges**  
 On a Single Compact Disc

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](http://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](mailto: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.

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**C/B's of Madison County IA, A Guide**, 46 pgs..... \$6.50 plus \$2.00 postage and handling

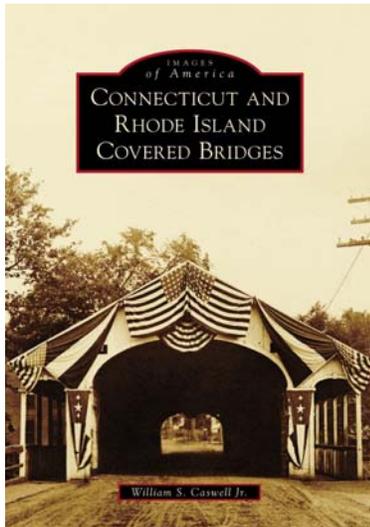
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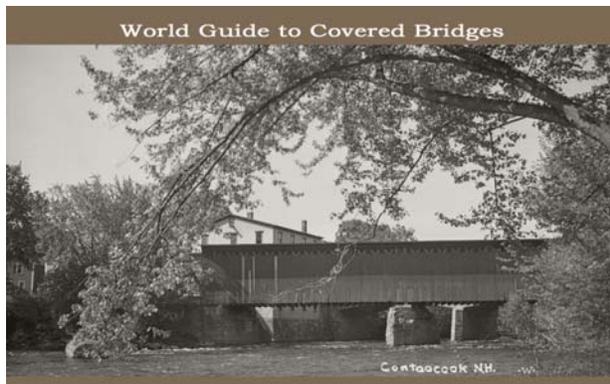
## Connecticut and Rhode Island Covered Bridges



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.

## World Guide to Covered Bridges



2009 Edition

Listing historic and modern wood truss covered bridges in the United States, Canada, and throughout the World.

Questions? email: [bill@lostbridges.org](mailto:bill@lostbridges.org)

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