

# The Bridger



THE VERMONT COVERED BRIDGE SOCIETY — Fall 2012

**PREZ SEZ**

This is a direct appeal to our members. By now everyone should be aware that we are in urgent need of an editor for the Bridger. If any of our membership is interested, or knows of anyone that might be interested, please get in touch with Joe Nelson (jnelson@together.net) or Bill Carroll (wcarroll@crocker.com) as soon as possible. It is not necessary that the editor be a member of VCBS, or a Vermont resident.

A big thank you to all members involved in the June history exposition in Tunbridge.

We look for a large turnout for the upcoming fall meeting, to be held at the Ilsley Library in Middlebury on Saturday September 29. The speaker will be Jim Ligon, Project Superintendent for the restoration of Pulp Mill Bridge in Middlebury, one of the very few remaining double-barreled bridges in the country.

Bill Carroll, President, VCBS

## Events

**The Vermont Covered Bridge Society's Annual Fall Meeting** will be held 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., September 29, 2012 at the Ilsley Library Meeting Room at 75 Main Street. The speaker will be **Jim Ligon**, Project Superintendent for Alpine Construction of Stillwater, New York. The topic will be the Renovation of the Pulp Mill Covered Bridge.

### Meeting Agenda

10:00 a.m. Welcome  
10:05 a.m. Business Meeting  
11:15 a.m. Break and Drawing 11:30 a.m. The speaker 12:00 p.m. Adjourn

**-The meeting is open to all comers. There are no fees.**

- Snack will be provided during the meeting.
- Lunch on own at restaurants nearby. - After adjournment, attendees are free to visit the three local covered bridges.
- For overnight accommodations, call the Middlebury Chamber of Commerce for a list of area lodgings. The phone number is 1-802-388-7951

### Fall Meeting Directions

The meeting is in the public room of the Ilsley Library (go to rear, take ramp to downstairs room).

Because there is a new bridge connecting downtown Middlebury with Route 7, there is a new way to reach the parking area that serves the library. The road to the parking area comes off the south side of the west end (downtown end) of the bridge and goes under the bridge to the parking spaces. Since the upper level spaces have a two-hour limit, it would be best to use the lower level spaces.

Coming from the north on Route 7, go through downtown, get on the roundabout at 6 o'clock, leave it at about 9 o'clock but do not enter the bridge, instead take the road to the right which is the lower lot for the library.

Coming from the south on Route 7, proceed across the bridge and immediately at the end of the bridge and on the right is the entrance to the upper level parking lot behind the library.

## VERMONT HISTORY EXPO 2012

The Expo was held Saturday and Sunday, June 16 & 17 at the Tunbridge World's Fair Grounds.



Our Wilfred Thompson explains covered bridges to a viewer. Another viewer explores the VCBS sales table. Photo by Ed Barna

The Expo theme this year was "**The Civil War and Vermont.**" Our challenge was to explore the Civil War theme as it applied to Vermont's covered bridges. One answer was the well-known talent New Englanders of the mid-nineteenth century had for building timber structures of all kinds, notably timber bridges.

Congress, responding to the outbreak of the civil war, authorized additional companies of Engineers for a new Engineering Battalion. Recruiters tapped New England for its rich source of mechanics and timber workers. Members of the existing Engineering Battalion were designated Company A. Then recruiters traveled to Portland Maine to organize Company B and to Boston for Company C.

Carrying the theme of the **Civil War and Vermont**, our display featured a 13 x 19 inch photo of the men of the U.S. Engineer Battalion in front of Petersburg, Virginia, in August 1864. While we don't know who among these men were Vermonters, it would be difficult to believe that Vermonters did not respond to the recruiters in Portland and Boston considering how quickly Vermonters filled the several infantry regiments formed at the time.

To round out the theme, we included a drawing and a photo of Engineering Companies B and C drilling with pontoon bridges at the Washington Naval Yard and on the Potomac River.

Another Vermont connection to the Civil War is the Sayres covered bridge in Thetford. Its build date is

unknown, but its truss resembles that designed by Herman Haupt, the Colonel who built and ran the U.S. Military Railroad in the South for Union forces.

Our research found a photo of the Bull Run Creek Bridge; one of many repaired or replaced bridges in the South during the war. The bridge was being reinforced with Haupt trusses. Our display included the photo of the Bull Run Creek Bridge, Haupt's patent drawing, and a drawing of the Sayer's truss. The truss in the Bull Run Creek Bridge photo differs in the same way that the Sayers Bridge truss differs from Haupt's patent drawing.

It is conceivable that the Sayres Bridge was built by someone who gained his skills in reconstructing damaged and destroyed bridges in the South during the Civil War using variants of Haupt's Truss!

To round out our display, while our digital projector displayed photos of all of Vermont's bridges, we featured 13 x 19 inch full color photos of the several covered bridges erected in Vermont during the 1860's, conceivably built in part by veterans of the war.

Not to be overlooked was a handsome addition to our display; the Spade Farm covered bridge model donated to us by Reid Allen of Burlington and conveyed to our booth by Ed Barna. The covered bridge model helped mightily to draw the curious to us.

## Membership

Membership Committee Chair, Sue Daniels.

Please join me in welcoming new members to our group: Jim and Diane Donovan of Washington, VT, a warm welcome to you!

### Membership Birthdays and Anniversaries

**September** - 4 Johnny Esau, 5 Robert Salvi, 9 Tom Walczak, 10 Gordon & Priscilla O'Reilly, 15 Lou & Mary Zabbia, 17 Doris Taylor, 21 Bonnie & Leroy Shultz, 21 Wilfred Thompson, 25 Bonnie Shultz, 27 Johnny & Joanne Esau, 29 June Evans

**October** - 9 Erwin & Virginia Eckson, 11 Trish Kane, 20 Phil Pierce, 21 John & Joanne Billi, 22 Ellen Everitz, 28 Joyce Soroka

**November** - 13 Bruce Wagner, 15 Linda Crouse, 18 Euclid Farnham, 18 Bob and Mary Ann Waller, 22 Marikka Guay, 25 Richard & Gloria Davis





## Bridge Watch

by John Weaver, Bridge-watch Coordinator

Pulp Mill Bridge rehabilitation project construction in Middlebury is more than half complete and coming along nicely. The Taftsville Bridge rehabilitation project in Woodstock is advertised for bids. I also expect that the Quinlan Bridge rehabilitation project will be advertised for bids soon.

The Scott Bridge conceptual report and rehabilitation concepts were approved by the Historic Covered Bridge Committee in July 2012.

Worrall Covered Bridge is open to traffic, whereas the Bartonsville project is still under construction - I am not sure of its present status.

## Bridge Watch Windham County

by Ray Hitchcock

The covered bridges of Windham County are slowly being repaired from Hurricane Irene's wrath of last year.

**Worrall bridge** was open for business in early August with some new lattice sisters & siding. The approaches which suffered extensive damage were repaired.



Worrall Bridge west portal 8/12/12 by A. Hitchcock

**Dummerston** was opened within the past few days after repairs were made to the wing walls and the approaches to both portals.

The commuter Park and Ride lot and access to the popular swimming hole were closed during construction. I noticed that the historical kiosks have been repaired.



Dummerston Bridge west portal and wingwall 8/12/12 by A. Hitchcock



Dummerston Bridge east portal approach and wingwall 8/12/12 A. Hitchcock

**Bartonsville** The fired up community of Bartonsville scheduled an event with barbeque on August 28 to mark the anniversary of **Bartonsville Bridge** loss and usher in the replacement bridge. As reported earlier it will be similar but slightly larger. Equipment is seen assembling at the bridge site to begin trestle construction. If all goes as planned the temporary bridge will be removed in November and the new bridge opened in January 2013. Governor Schulman visited the bridge earlier in the week and Congressman Welch attended the barbeque,

## Bartonsville Bridge Update

by Susan Hammond\*

**August 20, 2012** - Hello everyone, **Cold River** [Construction] has the wood in for our new bridge and they are beginning to prepare for the construction. They should be here soon to build the platform but I do not have a confirmed date. As I am sure you have heard the insurance company is being a pain about awarding the town the full \$1 million policy on the covered bridge claiming that the policy only covers up to \$270,000 of the bridge, basically the roof and siding. They claim that the rest of the covered bridge is part of the floor so it not covered under the policy. Not sure how they made this decision and how they could have in good faith taken payments on \$1 million policy when the replacement cost of the bridge for their insurance purpose was only \$270,000. The town is fighting this decision, Tom Salmon the state auditor is also going put pressure on Vermont League of Cities and Towns to increase the payout but so far they are not budging.

In the end, it looks like FEMA will be able to cover the difference as they will pay 90% of whatever the insurance company will not pay. Fingers crossed. The State of Vermont will cover 5% and the town of Rockingham either the remaining 5% or possibly will only have to pay up to \$0.03 for each \$1.00 of the grand list for all of the Irene damage in Rockingham (if my calculations are right this is about \$142,000). The rest of the Irene damage in that case will be paid for by the State. The details are still being worked out as FEMA is also looking at the insurance policy before they determine how much of the total project cost they will cover. The town now has to decide if they will take out a loan in the interim to cover the cost of construction before FEMA and State reimbursements come in as they were expecting to have the money from the insurance company before construction begins.

\*Forwarded by Priscilla Petraska & Ray Hitchcock

## Historical Committee Report

Some notes from Tunbridge. Because of the bridge work being done on I-91 at the Ottauquechee River and the subsequent traffic slow-down, the twin bridges in Hartland (Willard and North Hartland Twin Bridges) were readily visible and easily seen

from traffic northbound on the interstate. Many people visiting our booth were impressed by the bridges and asked for more information about them. The "man bites dog" story was very well received, and people complimented the state on its common sense approach in the building of the new North Hartland Twin Bridge.

### Man bites dog!

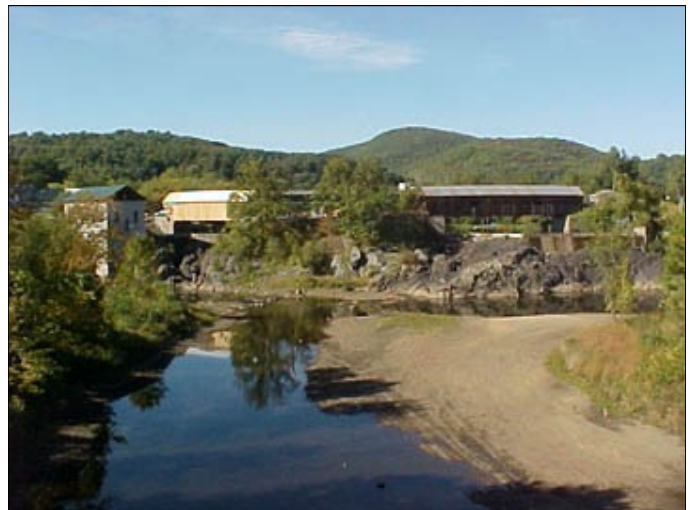
October, 2001 - A steel and concrete bridge is being replaced by a wooden covered bridge instead of the other way around! Jan Lewandoski of Restoration and Traditional Building is the contractor.

Two bridges crossed the Ottauquechee River at the North Hartland Dam, mainland to island, island to mainland. The concrete bridge has failed, but the Willard Covered Bridge is in great shape.

Two covered bridges served the causeway until a hurricane took one of the bridges out in 1938. "They replaced it with a concrete bridge," said covered bridge restorer Lewandoski.

"The town has decided they want to put a wooden bridge back in there, and the State went along with that. And because one wooden bridge already exists, there is no point in making the other wooden bridge any wider or taller than that one, so I didn't have to build 24 feet of roadway or something like that, just 17 feet of roadway like the existing one has. It does you no good to get into the one bridge if you can't get through the other one."

Asked for the name of the new bridge, Lewandoski replied: "The bridge has no particular name although they were known as the twin bridges. The existing bridge is sometimes called the Willard Bridge after a prominent family in North Hartland.



North Hartland Twin Bridges 10/9/01 by Tom Close



# Letters

A Covered Bridge in Russia?

Hi,

According to the World Guide to Covered Bridges, there is a single covered bridge in Russia, located in the gardens of the Palace of Catherine the Great. We visited this garden and the guides were unaware of this bridge.

They did know of a marble covered bridge. See the attached postcard. The postcard says the Marble Bridge was built in 1770-74. I notice there is no date listed in the WGCB for Ru-01.



Marble Covered Bridge Post Card – Tom Keating

I have also attached a scan of St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow, and one of me in front of Lenin's tomb. If anyone wants to see all 650+ pictures, let me know.

TomKeating;

keatingfamily@roadrunner.com

## The Pulp Mill Covered Bridge Rehab Status

By Jim Ligon, Foreman for Alpine Construction

The Middlebury-Weybridge Pulp Mill Bridge is coming together nicely.

Sub-decking is complete and the timber curbs will be finished tomorrow. We're working on the roof removing the "old" standing seam metal and replacing about 40% of the rotten and dry rotted roof boarding. The local select boards have chosen Forest Green for the new standing seam roof color. The new standing-seam roof work will start around September 10.

Diagonal, knee, and check bracing is complete except a 40-foot section where we will replace a ridge beam timber soon. Upper lateral bracing will be com-

plete tomorrow. The graceful lateral curves of the old bridge have been retained for the most part. Misalignment of the existing arches pretty much control that.

Kingposts have been plumbed as much as the misaligned concrete piers would allow. Siding lines have been adjusted accordingly to make a straight line abutment to abutment. Curb

lines have been adjusted to make a straight line between the arches where they come up through the deck. Roof eaves will be tweaked similarly. The frosting that one sees will be straight, and the travel lanes will be straight.

The fire alarm system and bridge lighting installation will start soon. We'll be starting pier concrete rehabilitation tomorrow, including the minor underwater work.

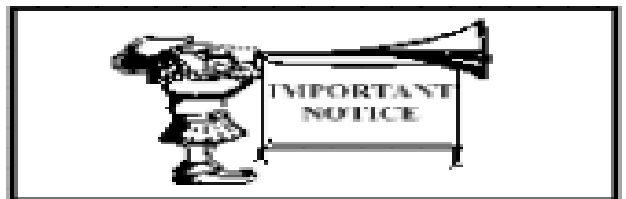
Middlebury-end roadwork started and stopped abruptly last week—we encountered ledge rock at 3 feet, we were supposed to dig 9 feet.

The state is re-designing drainage and revising project storm water permitting at the moment and our progress there is temporarily on hold. Granite curb, guardrail, and paving will ultimately follow the re-design.

New siding will follow immediately behind the new roof, and the oak deck wearing coarse will fit somewhere nicely in the near future. After that we spray it for bugs and fire, remove our temporary lower support structure and call it a done thing :-)



Pulp Mill Bridge Renovation June 3, 2012. Photo by Ed Barna



Wanted: A volunteer newsletter editor trainee to ultimately take over the editorship of The Bridger, a key position in the Vermont Covered Bridge Society's outreach. The editor needs not be a resident of Vermont.

The editor is called upon four times each year to edit copy sent to him/her, assemble it into newsletter format, and forward the result for printing. It normally takes but a few hours per issue.

Wanted: Reporter/correspondents to bring local covered bridge news to The Bridger.

Wanted: A VCBS member to share the duties of the webmaster of [www.vermontbridges.com](http://www.vermontbridges.com)

Wanted: Volunteer to take charge of Covered Bridge Market Place.

For more information or to sign up for any of these four positions, please contact Joe Nelson, Communication Committee Chair, [jnelson@together.net](mailto:jnelson@together.net) or Bill Carroll, [wcarroll@crocker.com](mailto:wcarroll@crocker.com)

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Wanted: Volunteer worker-bees are needed by the Events Committee to help set up meetings and assist in hosting them.

Wanted: Volunteer to serve as Membership Coordinator assisting Membership Committee Chair.

The Membership coordinator needs not be a resident of Vermont. The Coordinator will maintain the membership roster and serve as contact for the membership

For more information or to sign up for either of these two positions, please contact Bill Carroll, [wcarroll@crocker.com](mailto:wcarroll@crocker.com)



**Aug 23, 2012** - Leola Pierce, former President and founder of the Virginia Covered Bridge Society passed away on April 26, 2011. I knew she was in a nursing home, but I was not aware she had passed away.

I know this is old news, but thought I would share it just in case there are others who were not aware of her passing. Izzy DeJesus (another past President of the Virginia Covered Bridge Society) shared the news with me yesterday.

I wish someone had let us know so we could have at least mentioned her passing in the various newsletters since she was the founder and President of the Virginia Covered Bridge Society.

Anyone who knew her, knew she was a lovely lady and she did so much for Virginia's Covered Bridges. Many of us met her, and her son Steve, at the Hyde Hall Celebration in 2006. - - Trish Kane

## NHCBP Program Announces 2012 Funding

Aug 3, 2012 - The National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program Funding for the rehabilitation of covered bridges has announced its awards for 2012. The NHCBP program supports the rehabilitation, repair, and/or preservation of historic covered bridges. Only States are eligible for NHCBP funding.

Ten states received funds including two Vermont bridges; the Longley Covered Bridge in Montgomery and the Brown Covered Bridge in Shrewsbury, each to the amount of \$850,000.

The NHCBP program received 28 applications for funding. Of these, 22 were selected. Of \$13,510,025 funds requested, \$9,762,116 were awarded.

The Longley Covered Bridge project will replace deteriorated floor beams, install a new deck and repair the roof to keep this historic bridge in a state of good repair and allow it to continue to carry vehicular traffic.

The Brown Covered Bridge project will repair deteriorated timber members and install a new deck to keep this historic bridge in a state of good repair and allow it to continue to carry vehicular traffic. Go to <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/discretionary/2012nhcbp.cfm> to see the complete list of awards.



## VCBS Lending Library, a Learning/Research Source

The Vermont Covered Bridge Society has set up a lending library available to all Society members-in-good-standing through media mail.

Librarian Warren Tripp has created a detailed booklist complete with a description and critique of each book. Copies of the index are available by mail, or you may contact Joe Nelson for an electronic copy at [jnel-son@together.net](mailto:jnel-son@together.net).

A borrower can contact Warren Tripp who will send the book by Postal Service Media Mail. Books are returned the same way. Send Warren the complete title of the book(s) you wish to borrow. He will respond with the mailing cost and mail the order when the fee is received. The borrower is then responsible to return the item(s) in a reasonable time, preferably not more than two months. Contact Warren Tripp, P. O. Box 236, Groton, VT 05046, [fftwbt@yahoo.com](mailto:fftwbt@yahoo.com) Phone (802) 584-3545.



# For Sale

**Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges** by Joseph C. Nelson features 102 color photographs of Vermont's covered bridges in fifteen chapters, each a guided tour. The tours are complete with maps, commentary on the uniqueness of each bridge, and historic highlights about the towns and villages in which the bridges stand. An appendix provides: A Summary of Vermont's Covered Bridges; A Covered Bridge Glossary; A Bridge Truss section, explaining how trusses work; Thumbnail biographies of people who designed and built the bridges; A Covered Bridge Reading List, for bridge and history buffs; A detailed Index. *Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges: 7" x 10", 288 pages. Published by New England Press at P.O. Box 575, Shelburne, VT 05482. Spanning Time is available directly from the author for \$39.00, free shipping.*

Go to <http://www.vermontbridges.com/special%20070514.htm>

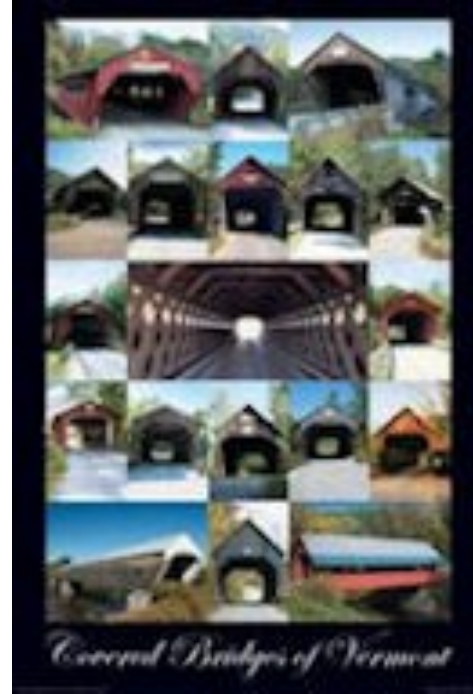
Also see: <http://www.vermontbridges.com/bookreviews.htm>.

**World Guide to Covered Bridges - 2009 Edition** Published by the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges. On Sale: \$15.00. Profits will go to the Vermont Covered Bridge Society's Save-A-Bridge Program. For your copy send \$15.00 plus \$4.95 shipping to Joe Nelson, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465-0267.

**Covered Bridges of New England —DVD** Produced by Ocean State Video of Rhode Island for Public Television. On Sale: \$20.00. Profits will go to the Vermont covered Bridge Society's Save-A-Bridge Program. For your copy send \$20.00 plus \$1.88 shipping to Joe Nelson, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465-0267.

**New York State Covered Bridge Driving Tour Now Available!** - Would you like to see all of New York State's Covered Bridges at your leisure in the comfort of your own vehicle? Well now you can! The New York State Covered Bridge Driving Tour is a spiral bound, full color tour which includes turn by turn directions and color photographs of each of New York's authentic and historic covered bridges. Included are the statistics on each bridge and an interesting history of the bridge and the surrounding town, and old postcards of how the bridges looked during an earlier time. To obtain a copy of the tour, contact: Bob and Trish Kane, 167 Williams Rd., Sherburne, NY 13460, 607-674-9656, Email: bob-trish68@frontiernet.net

**Covered Bridges of Vermont Print** - The Covered Bridges of Vermont features 19 photographs of covered bridges taken throughout the state by photographer, and VCBS member, Ray Arsenault. The print is beautifully printed on professional high quality 100lb paper, and measures 18" x 26.5." Order now at: [www.coveredbridgesofvermont.com](http://www.coveredbridgesofvermont.com)



## March of the Dumbs

In England in 1831, the Broughton Suspension Bridge over the Irwell River collapsed. What was said to be the reason for this?

Your Answer: The vibrations caused by troops marching in step.

Mechanical resonance was thought to be the result of troops marching perfectly in time across the bridge, causing it to suddenly snap, and send forty men tumbling into the water below. "Left, right, swim for it men, paddle paddle!" The men, marching three abreast, felt the bridge begin to vibrate and started to whistle in time, marching even more vigorously to the beat, when - "Thar she blows!"

The bridge was rebuilt and propped up with extra piles now and then if large crowds were expected, and then rebuilt again in 1914. One imagines by then the thought of tanks lumbering across the bridge may have caused considerable alarm. - Creedy  
[Submitted by VCBS founding member Ed Barna for our amusement - Ed.]

(Business or Society please provide name of contact person)

New Member       Renewing Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Check type of membership

Individual - \$10    Family - \$15    Student - \$8

Life single - \$150    Life couple - \$200

Business/Organization/Municipality - \$15

Sign me up for PDF version of newsletter

Check type of donation:

Palladio - \$2    Palmer - \$5    Hale - \$10

Powers - \$50    Town - \$75    Tasker - \$100

Paddleford - \$200    Whipple - \$250

*(Memberships valid to the end of the current calendar year, Dues and Donations will be used to promote preservation of Covered bridges.)*

Please make all checks for dues and donations payable to:  
The Vermont Covered Bridge Society. Mail to: V.C.B.S., Inc.  
Attn: Treasurer PO Box 97, Jeffersonville, VT 05464-0097

**VCBS Officers**

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