

# THE BRIDGER



The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter – Issue #90

Melanie Schropp, Editor

## Election of Officers Slate is Complete

by Joe Nelson, Acting Nominations Coordinator

With the summer issue of *The Bridger* newsletter, we began the process of electing VCBS officers for two-year terms to begin on January 1, 2023. As the election slate now stands, unchallenged incumbents Steve Miyamoto, Dan Monger, and Joe Nelson will continue as vice president, treasurer, and president, respectively. Challenging candidate Melanie Schropp will contest Sarah Pierce for secretary.

Ballots for the contest for secretary will be emailed late in September.

Every member in good standing is entitled to run for office and to vote. This includes the adult members listed on a family membership and the contact person on a business or organization/municipality membership. This is an open organization, and all members are invited to participate, giving of their time and talents. If you don't wish to run for one of the four offices, you are urged to join a committee or join the Board of Directors by chairing a standing committee or a bridge watch area. Volunteers please contact Joe Nelson at [jcarlnelson@yahoo.com](mailto:jcarlnelson@yahoo.com), or at P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465.

## Candidacy Letter

Dear Fellow Members of the VCBS,

I would like the opportunity to serve as secretary of our organization. I have enjoyed being the editor of *The Bridger* these past five years, and I would love to contribute in additional ways. While I will continue functioning as your editor, soliciting articles and assembling our quarterly newsletter for the Communications Committee, I would like to volunteer as

secretary, too. I wish to share my time and abilities and work alongside the other officers to help promote and preserve the remaining historic covered bridges in Vermont.

I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Organizational Communication, and while my work has focused on written communication, I also have experience in making oral presentations, representing agencies and organizations. I served as secretary for a condominium board, where I took and published the minutes of our monthly meetings. I also helped make policy and fiscal decisions for the association. Before my retirement from the Department of Public Safety, I took minutes at Senior Staff meetings for our Director and Superintendent, in addition to drafting a variety of correspondence.

If you afford me the chance to serve as secretary of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society, you can rely on me to be dependable, accurate, and timely in the performance of my duties to you. I hope you will consider voting for me for secretary.

Thank you,  
Melanie Schropp

## Membership Committee

- by Dan Monger, Chair

For those VCBS members who are receiving this newsletter with the mailing label marked in red, this indicates that you are behind in your membership dues. Membership fees are due in January. Annual members who are more than one year behind in their dues need pay only for the current year to return to good standing. Members who do not respond will unfortunately be purged from the membership list. We are very sorry to lose them as members.

**President:** Joe Nelson, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465, email: [jcarlnelson@yahoo.com](mailto:jcarlnelson@yahoo.com)

**Vice President:** Steve Miyamoto, 8 Ridge Rd., Essex Junction, VT 05452, email: [spmiyamoto@comcast.net](mailto:spmiyamoto@comcast.net)

**Secretary:** Sarah Pierce, 49 E. Cottage Ave., Millersville, PA 17551, email: [ppierce2@gmail.com](mailto:ppierce2@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Dan Monger, 26 Lake St., Tunkhannock, PA 18657-7128, email: [teelmonger@ptd.net](mailto:teelmonger@ptd.net)

We now have 163 members, including:

- 3 Student
- 49 Individual Yearly
- 30 Family Yearly
- 46 Single Lifetime
- 29 Couple Lifetime
- 6 Business, Organization, or Municipality

Of our membership, 81 (49.7%) are residents of Vermont, 24 (14.7%) are residents of other New England states, 48 (29.4%) are residents of states

outside of New England, 9 (5.6%) are residents of states west of the Mississippi, and 1 (.6%) is international (Canada).

This represents a net increase of 11 memberships since last quarter, or an overall increase of 7%. This is mostly due to a concerted effort by Melody Beth Brown, our new Events Committee Chair. Thank you, Beth!

The VCBS wishes a very happy birthday and happy anniversary to:

### September

- 04 Richard St. Peter
- 09 Tom Walczak
- 10 Gordon & Priscilla O'Reilly
- 11 Dan Monger & Cathleen Teel
- 11 Sara Spoor
- 17 Doris Taylor
- 23 Susan Komeshok
- 25 Bonnie Shultz

### October

- 09 Erwin & Ginny Eckson
- 11 Trish Kane
- 20 Phil Pierce
- 21 Arnie & Melanie Schropp
- 28 Joyce Soroka

### November

- 04 James Crouse & Jane Porter  
Gresham
- 13 Bruce Wagner
- 16 Dan Monger
- 18 Cheryl Cullick
- 22 Marikka Guay

*Please note: There are many new members who have joined this quarter. Welcome! Please send your birthday and jubilee vitals to me in an email at: [teelmonger@ptd.net](mailto:teelmonger@ptd.net). If I have neglected to include existing members, sorry; please let me know.*

### **Editor's Correction**

In the Summer 2022 edition of *The Bridger*, the article entitled, The Covered Bridge Calendar Project Approved, should open with "A special Board of Directors meeting was called on April 1, 2022."

## Meeting Minutes

- Submitted by Melanie Schropp

Vermont Covered Bridge Society  
Spring Meeting (via Zoom)  
June 18, 2022

Eight members attended the meeting electronically.

### **I. Open Meeting – Welcome**

At 10:35 a.m., President Joe Nelson opened the meeting and welcomed the members in attendance.

### **II. Officers and Committee Reports**

#### **Reading of Minutes**

The last in-person meeting was held on October 5, 2019, in Middlebury, Vermont. Since the minutes of that meeting were published in *The Bridger*, Joe Nelson did not call upon the secretary to read them.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Since the treasurer was not in attendance, there was no treasurer's report.

### **III. New Business**

#### **Library**

John Weaver has volunteered to pick up the VCBS library from Warren Tripp and deliver it to Joe Nelson for temporary storage.

## No Char Accounting Project

No information on this project

## Quilt Donation Status

Vice President Steve Miyamoto reported on the status of the handmade covered bridge quilt that Elaine Nordmeyer, of Hubbardton, donated to the VCBS last summer. The quilt is scheduled to be displayed for sale by Terry Shaw at the Visions of Vermont art gallery in Jeffersonville, with proceeds being returned to the VCBS Save-a-Bridge program. Elaine estimates the quilt's value at \$1,200.

There was some discussion about the possibility of raffling the quilt. The idea will be revisited if the quilt doesn't sell at the gallery.

## Jeffersonville July 4<sup>th</sup> Event

Liam McKone reported that he has secured a booth for the VCBS at the Jeffersonville July 4<sup>th</sup> event. He explained that the event is always well-attended and worth our presence. Liam asked for a volunteer to help work at the booth from 9:30 a.m. to mid-afternoon. Beth Brown offered to help. She will bring copies of the 2023 calendar for sale. Steve offered to publicize the event. The event includes a parade. Liam asked for any volunteers interested in preparing a float for the VCBS.

## 2023 Calendar

Beth Brown displayed a copy of the 2023 VCBS calendar for members to see. They are selling for \$15, and she has sold 27. Joe Nelson also has a large supply of calendars. Jim Kenison has been traveling around Vermont, on his quest to visit all 100 covered bridges. As he does, he often meets other covered bridge enthusiasts, some who haven't heard about the society. He asked if he could get some calendars to have in his car, so he could offer them for sale to the people he meets. Beth offered to get a supply to him.

Jim also asked if the VCBS has business cards with contact information available that he could share with the people he meets. There was some discussion about the value of creating business cards.

## Historical Marker Project

Joe Nelson reported that in around 2018, when we were marking our bridges with the VCBS "patch," Laura Trieschmann, State Historical Preservation Officer, suggested we get involved with the state's roadside historic markers program instead. We continued with our "patch" program. While we were not prepared to get

involved with the roadside markers program then, we might be now. On June 15, Joe emailed Laura, asking how the VCBS can contribute to the marker program. He is awaiting her reply.

The website for the marker program can be found at: Roadside Historic Site Markers | Agency of Commerce and Community Development (Vermont.gov). The forms for creating the markers are presented on the first page of the site. The list of all standing markers is there also. The list includes the few covered bridges that have markers. Our chore would be to apply for markers for the covered bridges without.

Jim Kenison volunteered to work on this project. He has experience working with the Hartford Historical Preservation Commission. He believes his experience would be helpful, and he could do this work remotely from his home in New Hampshire.

## Fall In-Person Meeting

Beth Brown reported that the Vermont health officials believe the Covid pandemic is in its end stages, so she proposed an in-person VCBS meeting this fall. She has talked to the Clarendon Community Center as a possible venue. They charge \$25 per hour, and space is available on October 1, 8, and 15. Beth has lined up a speaker to conduct an hour presentation on his great-great-great grandfather, Nicholas Powers, who built four covered bridges in Rutland County.

Beth also suggested catering a lunch in coordination with the meeting and presentation. She proposed opening the meeting to members of the public who might be interested in covered bridges. She also suggested coordinating with other local historical groups to make the presentation and lunch worthwhile.

There was some discussion on the possibility of making the meeting a hybrid, so members could also attend via Zoom. Steve explained it would depend on whether the facility has Internet access. The meeting could also be recorded and made available on the VCBS website, with the speaker's permission.

Joe asked Beth to prepare an article for the fall issue of *The Bridger*.

**Secretary Sarah Pierce lost her connection to the meeting. Joe asked presenters to send notes to Sarah for her minutes.**

## PayPal Online Purchasing

Steve Miyamoto gave an update. While PayPal continues to be available for membership dues and donations, it is not yet available for making purchases on the VCBS website. He hopes to enable PayPal as an option for buying calendars, videos, and books online as soon as next week.

## Historical Archives Project

Joe Nelson reported that Bill Carroll has been in charge of our historical archives, but Joe has been unable to reach him for quite a while. Bill has not responded to phone calls or emails. He lives in Massachusetts, and Joe suggested we find a volunteer to pay him a visit.

Steve Miyamoto has been attending Historical Society classes on archiving. He also reported that we will need to identify a location for records storage.

## IV. Needs – Vacancies

### Publicity Committee Chair

Liam McKone volunteered for this position.

### Historical Committee Chair

Jim Kenison volunteered for this position. He is happy to fill this vacancy, as long as someone can brief him on the workings of the society. He believes his prior experience would be helpful, and this is a natural tie-in to the work on the Historical Marker Project. He just seeks clarification or confirmation regarding the position.

### Events Committee Chair

Beth Brown volunteered for this position. She asked about the structure of the committee and the budget. Joe Nelson referred her to the web site.

Joe Nelson adjourned the meeting at 11:54 a.m.

# Vice President's Report

- by Steve Miyamoto

## Archive VCBS Records

We are developing a strategy for cataloging and storing our archived materials. This long-range project has two goals. The first is to locate a permanent storage location. The materials stored there will be accessible to multiple people in the society. The second goal is to set up a catalog system that will be available to all members. Several software programs are being evaluated.

Bill Carroll served as our Historical Committee Chair for a number of years. Unfortunately, we have lost contact with Bill. New member Jim Kenison has volunteered to chair the Historical Committee. Among other tasks, Jim will be working on the historical marker program with the state of Vermont.

## Covered Bridge Calendar Project

New member Beth Brown continues to do an amazing job as the Events Committee Chair. Her work on assembling and coordinating the 2023 calendar has been so successful that she has already received a second order of calendars!

## Sales Using Square

The VCBS is now able to sell merchandise and memberships at events using Square. Beth Brown was able to use it at the State Fair in Rutland.

## Covered Bridge Quilt

The covered bridge quilt donated to the VCBS by Elaine Nordmeyer is on display at the Two Sisters shop in Jeffersonville.

# Events Committee

- by Beth Brown, Chair

Since the spring Zoom meeting on June 18, 2022, when I took this gig, we have participated in two events: The Jeffersonville July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade/Street Fair and The State Fair at Rutland.

## Jeffersonville July 4<sup>th</sup>

Liam McKone secured a booth for the VCBS at the event. We had a canopy set up on Main Street, between the Library and Red Leaf Gluten Free Brewery. The weather was perfect, and although we didn't get a float ready to enter the parade, we sold items and made many contacts. The VCBS 2023 calendar was a popular item, as three months (March, June, and August) feature bridges in the Cambridge and Waterville area.

Joe Nelson, VCBS president, was there all day and signed nine copies of his covered bridge book for buyers. That was a big draw. Jim Kenison made the trip from New Hampshire and gave invaluable help with his Square to process credit card sales.

Beth and Paul (and their handsome dog, Red) were there to describe the Bundle Deal, give away carrot cake cupcakes and cherry tomato plants, and recruit new VCBS members. Welcome to Ed, Linda, Sid and Marian, Terry and Muriel, Paul, and Andrea and Matt. Yes, NINE new members! I think we can say the 2022 Membership Drive (June 20–July 4) was a success. Andrea and Matt won the drawing (a \$50 gas card), and we added approximately \$400 to the Save-A-Bridge Fund. Thanks to Terry Shaw, Liam McKone, and Steve Miyamoto for your help.

Let's get a float made for next year's parade. Those long, cold winter days lend themselves well to such a project.

### Rutland Fair

This event was a longer one. The Rutland Fair was once a ten-day event. Now, it is five days, and we are thankful for that. The weather on set-up day (Tuesday) was great, and Wednesday and Thursday were warm summer days. Friday and Saturday, however, were akin to the Dog Days of August that I dread. The VCBS booth was in the Vermont Building, which is close to the grandstand. It was cooler than many of the other buildings, but our ears were assaulted by Vanilla Ice on Tuesday, tractor pulling on Thursday, and Demolition Derby on Friday. Yikes! But, it was a successful event.

So many people were unaware that there even is a Vermont Covered Bridge Society. Jim Kenison joined Paul and me on two afternoons. We sold 2023 calendars, DVDs, books, hats, stationary, bumper stickers, jewelry items, and post cards and added over \$700 to the Save-A-Bridge Fund! And, that's not even the most exciting thing to report! With a tiny incentive (\$5 lunch, instead of \$10 at the fall meeting), we recruited 22 new VCBS members! Welcome, Arlene and Michael, Nancy, Rhonda, Karen T., Kirk and Karen, Dana, Joy and Ed, Kevin, Maureen and Joseph, Karen A., Chrissy and John, Kevin and Linda, Becky and Steve, and Terry and Michele.

I can't wait to work with our new members and see what great ideas you all have, not to mention hearing about your "bridging adventures" or perhaps crossing paths at a bridge in the future. I hope many of these new members will attend the October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting to meet other covered bridge enthusiasts. With other new and eager members, such as Jim, Julie, and Glenn and Kay, VCBS has gained over 35 new members in 2022! I sure hope some of you will plan to spend a couple of hours at the VCBS booth at the Rutland Fair in August 2023. It's really fun meeting new people who love covered bridges and want

to share their stories about the bridge nearest or dearest to them.

## VCBS Fall Meeting Vermont Covered Bridge Society Fall Meeting

October 8, 2022, 10:00 a.m.  
Clarendon Community Center  
111 Moulton Avenue  
North Clarendon, Vermont

### Meeting Agenda

10:00 a.m.

- Registration and light refreshment

10:30 a.m.

- Business meeting called to order (*The president has requested all officers and committee chairs submit their reports to him in writing by September 30.*)

11:30 a.m.

- Break to prepare for lunch/meet and mingle

12:00 p.m.

- Lunch, catered by Marble Valley Kitchen

1:00 p.m.

- Program/speaker – Nick Strom-Olsen of Wallingford: *Life and Work of Nichols Powers*, covered bridge builder in the 1800's and the speaker's great-great-grandfather

2:30 p.m. (approximate time)

- Announcements/Adjournment
- Those wanting to form a caravan can visit three Powers bridges (all within 15 miles of the meeting place)

### Fall Meeting Directions:

The same building as the Bailey Library. The meeting room is on the second floor. An elevator is available.

There will be a few VCBS-related items for sale, as well as covered bridge books that the Clarendon Library is selling on a "by donation" basis. Door prizes, too. Come and meet new and seasoned covered bridge enthusiasts from near and far.

Lunch reservations must be made and payments received by September 26, 2022. VCBS members \$10, non-members \$13, per person. Mail payment and the form below to reserve your lunch. If you have questions, email [melby5584@aol.com](mailto:melby5584@aol.com) or call 802-222-1573.

<p>Name(s)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <p>If you want a receipt, include your email address:</p> <hr/> <p>Number of lunches _____ Member Y N</p> <p>Amount enclosed _____</p> <p>Payable to: Vermont Covered Bridge Society</p> <p>Mail to:</p> <p>M. Beth Brown, 2702 Route 30, Sudbury, VT 05733-9694</p>
---

Nine of the thirteen directors, with a quorum of seven, voted for the purchase of the additional calendars.

\*\*\*

Trish Kane of the New York Covered Bridge Society wrote to us: "At our recent Covered Bridge Leaders' Summit in June, we covered many topics relevant to our covered bridges, their preservation, and how we can all work together to assist each other with these efforts.

"The Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center was on the agenda for discussion at the summit. I provided an update to the group on the wonderful progress we have made, the work that is currently going on, and what work still needs to be done by my summer intern. This intern was sponsored through the generosity of Terry and Sara Miller from Ohio and has been a tremendous help to me. But, there is still much to do.

"It was suggested that perhaps the various covered bridge societies could help by extending the hours of my student intern. Attendees asked if I could pull together some figures as to the cost to cover wages for the intern, which is as follows. For a 20-hour week, at \$14.25 per hour, including all taxes, it comes to \$285.00. Hard to believe, but 20 hours a week makes a huge difference as to what we can accomplish.

"If any of the covered bridge societies would care to donate wages for my intern, it would be greatly appreciated. And please note, personal donations will be gratefully accepted, as well. To make a donation, please make your check payable to the Oxford Memorial Library. Include a note that the funds should be added to the student wage budget line for the Resource Center. The mailing address is: Oxford Memorial Library, P.O. Box 552, Oxford, NY 13830."

\*\*\*

The directors were asked, "Should the Vermont Covered Bridge Society donate wages for the Oxford Memorial Library student intern?" Six directors voted yes, two voted no, and two abstained. The donation of wages for the intern was approved.

Since the donation was approved, the directors were asked, "How much?" Four directors voted \$100, one voted \$285, and four abstained. The average amount is \$685/9=\$76. Five directors pledged wage amounts vs.

## Board of Directors Meeting

July 16, 2022

The Board met at the request of Melody Beth Brown, Events Committee Chair, to approve or disapprove the expenses to be incurred with the VCBS having a table at the annual Rutland County State Fair and the cost of the VCBS membership in the Vermont Historical Society.

The Board of Directors, with a quorum of seven, approved paying the state fair expenses of \$345, an annual liability insurance expense of \$555, and an annual fee of \$50 for membership in the Vermont Historical Society.

Melody Beth Brown asked, "Do the next 200 calendars need Board of Directors approval, or is the wording on the first vote such that a reorder can be done without another vote? The invoice will be \$950 for printing the next 200. There will be no art fee of \$150 on reorders." Yes, the Board does need to approve this further expense.

four abstentions. There were no objections to a pledge of \$100.

Yours in Bridging, Joe Nelson, Board of Directors Chair

The meeting was adjourned by moves for closure.

## Bridge Watch

### Red Bridge and Cornwall-Salisbury Covered Bridge

- by Beth Brown

After checking with the Chairman of the Salisbury Selectboard and the Town Clerk for the town of Troy, there is nothing new to report on the replacement of the Salisbury-Cornwall Bridge or the River Road Bridge. Both of these covered bridges were lost to fire in 2016 and 2021, respectively. There is hope for both to be replaced in the next two to four years.

### Remembering the Salisbury Station Bridge

It might have been the spring of 1995 when I found myself splashing along Swamp Road, a muddy dirt lane with dark, wet woods on both sides. I had recently begun visiting Vermont's covered bridges, and I was exploring those along Otter Creek. I thought that this one, the Cedar Swamp Bridge, might be especially interesting because of its location by the Great Cedar Swamp and the swamp's Revolutionary War history. Slipping and sliding in my four-wheel-drive Chevy Blazer, I came in sight of the bridge at last.



*Salisbury Station Bridge, photo by Joe Nelson, 1995*

I found two men there; one of them was on scaffolding, working on a truss. He was the most peculiarly dressed of the two, wearing a broad-brimmed hat and clothes resembling those worn by the Pennsylvania Dutch. Both of the men welcomed me and explained to me what they

were doing. The man in the hat, I was to learn, was Paul Ide, a well-known timber engineer.

I found the Salisbury Station Bridge what and where the *World Guide to Covered Bridges* said it was – a 155-foot long bridge, using a Town truss, crossing Otter Creek at the edge of the Great Cedar Swamp, also known as the Cedar Swamp Bridge, or simply as the Station Bridge.

The night before, I had read up on the bridges that I would be exploring this day, and I found that the Station Bridge was built in 1865, by forgotten builders, and the Ithiel Town truss the bridge uses is unique in that the web is wider than that of any other plank-lattice truss in Vermont. It measures 4' 10" on center rather than the usual 3' on center. In 1969, the bridge was renovated and a mid-stream pier added to support the long span. Until then, the Station Bridge was one of the longest spans in the state.

I wondered why the bridge was built in a remote spot between a large swamp and acres of fields, so I Googled further and found that in the 1860s, it provided the town of Cornwall with a vital economic link to the railway shipping point at Salisbury. According to Max Petersen, who wrote *Salisbury: From Birth to Bicentennial*, the Champlain & Connecticut Railway right-of-way through the town of Salisbury was approved in 1846. It was originally planned to build the railway parallel to the road that became Route 7, but a farmer who owned much of the land in Salisbury Flats caused the right-of-way to be moved to West Salisbury. The depot was erected on the east side of the tracks, just south of the Cornwall Swamp Road crossing. The change in plan was regretted

afterward; the roads to West Salisbury and Salisbury Station were so bad, the shipping facilities at Leicester and Brandon had to be used for much of the year. Swamp Road – a soggy trace in the 1840s and 50s – wasn't improved until 1862.

There is a ford visible here by the bridge, indicating that this was a crossing long before there was a bridge. Because the bridge crosses the town line at Otter Creek, the bridge is co-owned and maintained by the towns of Cornwall and Salisbury.

A covered bridge is also made special by its surroundings. Here, we have the Great Cedar Swamp and the happenings here during the American Revolution. Amos Story came to the Salisbury grant from Connecticut with his wife, Ann, and their son, Solomon, in the early 1770s. Amos had taken rights to 100 acres not far south of where Swamp Road crosses the railroad tracks today.

There, Amos and Solomon built a cabin and cleared a field. Amos was killed by a falling tree. Ann was determined that the family was going to live on their land. In 1774, she and Solomon and her other four children came to the cabin Amos had built. There, the Storys planted the field. In 1775, in the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Tories and Indians were ravaging unprotected settlements. Other settlers retreated to Rutland, but Ann and her children stayed on to harvest their crops. When she saw the smoke from a neighbor's burning homestead, she gathered her children into a canoe and paddled into the flooded woods. From there, she watched unseen by the Indians who came and burned her cabin. The Storys dug a tunnel into the west bank of the Otter Creek and stayed there at night while they continued to work on the land by day.

The tunnel remained undiscovered until a Tory heard a baby crying as he passed nearby. He surprised the Storys when they came out, demanding they leave. Ann sent Solomon to Rutland to warn the people that the Tories were back. As a result, 14 Tories were captured and taken to Fort Ticonderoga.

This and her resolve to defy the King's forces gave Ann Story her reputation as a heroine of the Revolution. There is no road to the little clearing by Otter Creek, but there is a monument there. The Cornwall Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution placed it over the site of Ann's cave in 1907. Ann Story's cave lies about one-third mile north of the Station Bridge. Source: Petersen, Max B. *Salisbury: From Birth to Bicentennial*. The Offset

House, So. Burlington, Vermont, 1976. [Published privately]

Many repairs have been made to the bridge over the years. The agency oversaw a project in 1969 that involved various timber repairs and the addition of a pier at mid-span, designed for H10 loading to level up the bottom chords and remove sag. In addition, the abutments were capped, repointed, and faced. In 1992, the towns hired Jan Lewandoski to rehabilitate the structure. Mr. Lewandoski's work included significant timber repairs, such as replacing or sistering all broken or rotted chord and lattice members with spruce. Abutment bedding timbers were replaced with white oak and other miscellaneous repairs were done. A new standing seam roof was added to the bridge during the summer of 2002.

The Historic Covered Bridge Committee met on February 11, 2004, to address new concerns about the Cedar Swamp Bridge. The bracing system was analyzed for wind load and the existing rafters for snow load. The truss members were assessed individually for wear and replaced as needed with in-kind members, the floor system was revised, and the new roof was salvaged. The town of Cornwall was most concerned about fire. Various detection and retardant measures were discussed at the meeting, but more input was needed from the towns.

The bridge was renovated in March 2008, with the primary requirements of VTrans in mind – highway safety, and the primary requirements for preservation by the National Register of Historic Sites, the engineers on the job were challenged to fulfill both. Eric Foster of VTrans and Jim Ligon of Alpine Construction, Stillwater, NY, were up to the task. When the renovation was underway, I began my weekly visits with my camera and note pad.



Rot



It was expected that the 100-plus-year-old wooden bridge held secrets that even the most thorough pre-construction engineering inspection couldn't uncover. The "Swamp" Bridge didn't disappoint.



19<sup>th</sup> Century Graffiti. Notice the pistol drawing.

While disassembling the structure to replace known rot damaged truss members, members thought to be sound were found to be rotted also. At least one-third more than the thirty-odd lattice members specified in the contract were found to need replacement. Surprises were also found in both upper and lower chords. Another kind of

surprise was the 100-plus-year-old graffiti left there by the builders and found as the truss was disassembled.

To make the situation even more entertaining for the crew, Mother Nature took a hand. March weather with snow, rain, and snow melt, Otter Creek covered Cornwall's part of Swamp Road, while hurling ice chunks, trees, and other flotsam at the bridge under construction.



Salisbury Station Bridge, Good for the next 100 years  
photo by Joe Nelson, April 23, 2008

## Salisbury Station Bridge Burned September 10, 2016



Salisbury Station Bridge  
photo by Ed and Irene Barna, September 11, 2016

A mysterious fire totaled the Salisbury Station Bridge on September 10, 2016. The cause of the fire has yet to be positively determined. A portable bridge has temporarily replaced the span to accommodate approximately 540 cars per day. Whether the covered bridge will be replaced with a replica or with a concrete and steel bridge is under consideration.

Gone, after all of the TLC lavished on it, our inheritance, an irreplaceable piece of history is in ashes. Our descendants won't have the experience of viewing what our forebears have left them, all because of carelessness or evil intent. The Cedar Swamp Bridge can be replaced only with imitations.

\*\*\*

According to the *Addison County Independent* newspaper, the folks of Salisbury and Cornwall are opting for a covered bridge. Last year, VTrans presented leaders of both towns with three long-term replacement options:

- A new steel-beam, concrete-deck bridge that would be 150 feet long, with the option of one or two lanes, and a 75-year design life. Total cost: \$2.15 million for the one-lane version, or \$2,218,902 for two. The local share for each town: approximately \$110,000.
- A new truss bridge of 150 feet in length, with a choice of one or two lanes. Lifespan of 75 years. Total cost: \$3,312,446 for the one-lane version, \$3,863,066 for two. The local share for each town would be \$165,622 for the one-lane, \$193,153 for two.
- New covered bridge, 150 feet long, one lane only, 14-foot lane width, 75-year lifespan. Total cost: \$4,387,044, with a local share of \$219,350 for each town.

Selectboard members from both towns reviewed the three options and wanted to know their constituents' preferences. So, both Salisbury and Cornwall mailed postage-paid survey cards to each local address, asking recipients to pick their top choice among the three bridge scenarios.

### Summer and Fall

by Nona Keen Duffy

Today it still is summer,  
Tomorrow will be fall.  
I see the purple asters,  
I hear the autumn's call.

I feel the warm sun shining,  
As a balmy south wind blows;  
I see more flowers blooming.  
And I see the grass still grows;

The goldenrod is waving,  
The bees are in the clover.  
I hear a distant honking--  
The geese are flying over.

A slight plurality of Salisbury residents (189) sided with the covered bridge replacement option, closely followed by the concrete-deck version (182), and then the truss bridge (42). A decisive majority of Cornwall respondents opted for the covered span (275), followed by the concrete-deck version (145), and then the steel truss (50).

The pluses of a new covered bridge outweigh the minuses for most Cornwall residents who have weighed in. In addition to the covered bridge's nod to Vermont history and rural character, the span will – by virtue of its tight confines – self-regulate the size of vehicles on what is a fairly rugged road.

Swamp Road was installed during the 18<sup>th</sup> century with a base of logs through Cedar Swamp. The road is currently forbidden to vehicles weighing more than 12,000 pounds and/or more than eight feet wide. Those limits, coupled with the narrow passage afforded by the Station Bridge, have historically steered away 18-wheelers, tandem dump trucks, and farm vehicles that might otherwise chance the route if it were equipped with a more conventional two-lane bridge.

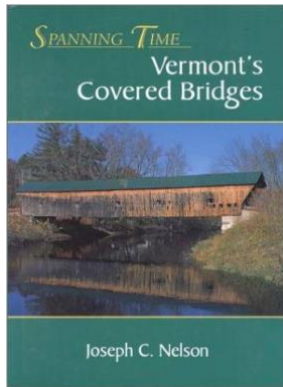
Selectman Vaczy is hoping VTrans will consider a "hybrid" covered bridge design that he believes could make the span more durable and easier to maintain, while remaining inhospitable to large vehicles. The idea is to incorporate steel into the frame, walls, and/or roof of the new bridge. This would make it less flammable and perhaps less of a magnet for potential vandals and arsonists, according to Vaczy.

The maple leaves are golden;  
The pumpkins, round and yellow.  
The apple cheeks are rosy,  
The pears are getting mellow.

The nuts are growing rounder,  
The cornstalks, brown and sear.  
By twenty lovely tokens  
I know that fall is near.

Today it still is summer,  
Tomorrow will be fall.  
Today I still am barefoot--  
Oh, how I love it all!

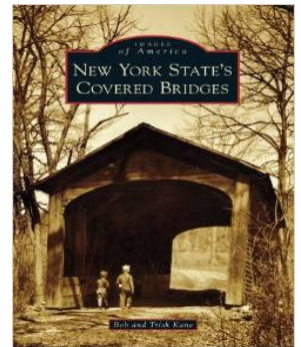
# For Sale



**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 the people who designed and built the bridges; A Covered Bridge Reading List for bridge and history buffs; and A detailed Index. *Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges*: 7" x 10", 288 pages. Published by New England Press of Shelburne, VT. For reviews of the book, go to [www.vermontbridges.com/bookreviews.htm](http://www.vermontbridges.com/bookreviews.htm). *Spanning Time* is available directly from the author for \$20.00, plus \$3.00 shipping, U.S. Vermont residents add \$1.20 (6% sales tax). Send your check or money order to: VCBS, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05489.

**New York State's Covered Bridges** - When one typically thinks of covered bridges, New York is not the first state to come to mind, but New York once had over 300 covered bridges. Floods, fires and progress have claimed all but 32. Readers will enjoy seeing NY's current bridges, including the oldest existing covered bridge in the U.S., the Hyde Hall Covered Bridge, located in Glimmerglass State Park, and the world's longest single-span covered bridge in the world, the Blenheim Covered Bridge, washed away by Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. This book also highlights the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center in Oxford, NY, the first ever center of its kind specifically designed for covered bridge researchers. For a copy of the tour, contact Bob and Trish Kane, 167 Williams Rd., Sherburne, NY 13460, 607-674-9656, [bobtrish68@twc.com](mailto:bobtrish68@twc.com).

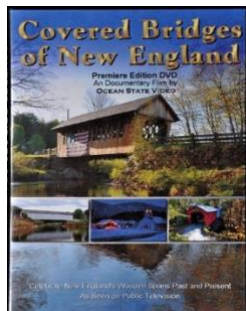
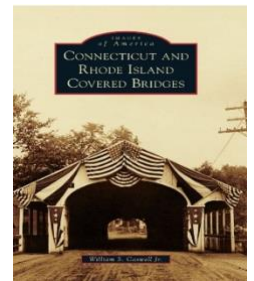


**Visions of Vermont art gallery**, Jeffersonville, Vermont at: <https://www.visionsofvermont.com/>, 802.644.8183

A special sale for the benefit of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society featuring the works of Eric Tobin. All proceeds of the unframed prints go to the VCBS. Sale of the framed prints will be shared 50/50. They are all Giclée on acid free paper. The glass is non-glare artist's glass.

- 10"x12" unframed, \$125
- 16"x20" unframed, \$175
- 16"x20" matted and framed, \$550
- 20"x24" matted and framed, \$850

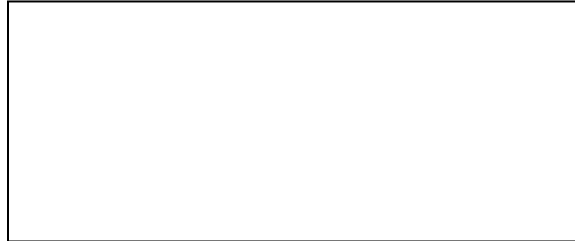
**Connecticut and Rhode Island Covered Bridges – Price reduced!** During their heyday in the mid- to late 1800s, more than 150 covered bridges dotted the landscape of Connecticut and Rhode Island. Since that time, floods, fires, and progress have claimed all but two of the historic structures. With over 200 images, this book provides insight into the covered bridge history of an area that has not been well documented in the past. To order your signed copy, send \$20.00 to Bill Caswell, 535 Second NH Turnpike, Hillsboro, NH 03244.



**Covered Bridges of New England – DVD**, During the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20 centuries, New England was home to nearly 1,000 covered bridges. Today there are fewer than 200 in the six-state region. This one-hour documentary visits more than 75 bridges and interviews with several of the people dedicated to the preservation of these precious examples of our country's earliest infrastructure. Produced by Ocean State Video of Rhode Island for Public Television. Profits will go to the Vermont Covered Bridge Society's Save-a-Bridge Program. For your copy, send \$10.00 plus \$1.88 shipping to: Vermont Covered Bridge Society, c/o Joe Nelson, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465-0267.



PO Box 267  
Jericho, VT  
05465-0267



### Membership Application

(Business or Society please provide name of contact person)

New Member       Renewing Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

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;  
We are a 501c3 Non-profit org.  
(Federal tax deductible.)

- 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.  
P.O. Box 267  
Jericho, VT 05465-0267