

The Bridger

V.C.B.S. Inc.
Vermont Covered Bridge Society
PO Box 97, Jeffersonville, VT 05464-0097
A Non-Profit Organization

The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter

SUMMER, 2003

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Covered Bridge Week Proclaimed

Shelburne, June 5, 2003 - Governor James A. Douglas, at the reception held at the Shelburne Museum by the Covered Bridge Preservation: National Best Practices Conference, read a proclamation designating the first week of June 2003 to be Vermont Covered Bridge Week in Vermont.

This event marked the culmination of the efforts of VCBS Director William McKone. Bill suggested to the VCBS Board of Directors in May of 2002 that the Society approach the Vermont State Legislature to propose that the State declare a Vermont Covered Bridge Week to coincide with National Preservation Week. Bill McKone pursued the project which led ultimately to the governor's office and success. The Vermont Covered Bridge Society extends thanks to Governor Douglas for his action.



Governor Douglas presents proclamation
to Joe Nelson, President, VCBS
Photo by Steve Miyamoto

Covered Bridge Preservation Best Practices Conference

by John Weaver

I am delighted to have had the opportunity to represent VCBS at the recent Best Practices conference at UVM. Representatives from across the nation and several different countries were on hand for presentations.

A great deal of material was covered and presented in the first two days, starting with an overview of bridge building in general (the very first presentation) to detailed engineering papers which addressed specific aspects of covered bridge structural analysis and material preservation as well as other topics. I concentrated on the engineering sessions.

In particular I was intrigued by the presentations on pre-stressed covered bridge trusses such as the Long and Howe trusses and the one presented by Philip Pierce which dealt with actual field measurements of plank truss member forces, deflections and stresses. It was interesting to note how pre-stressing enhanced truss stiffness and how well early designers understood these principles. It was also refreshing to hear a presentation about results of field measurements (Phil Pierce) regarding an in-place bridge truss, rather than someone's theoretical or computed analysis pertaining to structural component forces and stresses. I heartily endorse more such efforts and presentations.

Also, several interesting sessions covered the topics of fire, rot and insect infestation treatments for material preservation. Many of these new materials are very effective and do not damage or compromise structural integrity or appearance of historic wood bridge components.

No papers were offered regarding the preservation of stone masonry substructures, however the topic was covered somewhat in the draft of the Burlington Charter. My own recommendation for the Charter was to specify the allowance of stone chinking as well as cement or lime mortar (when appropriate) for repairs to stone masonry abutments and piers. Stone chinking has been used on various projects lately, and I highly recommend its further use.



Conference attendees visit VCBS sales and information table in the old Cambridge double bridge at Shelburne Museum. photo by Joe Nelson

The Fourth VCBS All-Member Meeting Held

Jeffersonville, May 3, 2003 - A bright, sunny May 3rd Saturday found 35 bridgers gathering in Jeffersonville at the Bryan Memorial Gallery for the fourth All-Member meeting of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society.

While members gathered, refreshments were enjoyed and acquaintances renewed. A sale table displaying memorabilia of items for sale and later raffle had been set up in the meeting room.

Joe Nelson called the group's attention beginning by thanking Jane and Terry Shaw and the Bryan Gallery folks for their efforts in arranging the meeting. Applause of thanks followed Joe's expression of appreciation. Joe mentioned the pattern of inclement weather that seems to accompany VCBS meetings. The Annual meetings in the fall, first in Montpelier and second in Berlin, were both rainy and cold. The third, in Tunbridge, brought snow. At the first Spring All-member meeting in Lyndon wind was an issue. The second meeting in Jeffersonville was muddy. At the third meeting, in Stowe, it rained but then cleared.

Carpooling for the covered bridge tour to follow the meeting was addressed by Joe Nelson. It was suggested that as few cars as possible be driven to make parking at the bridges less complicated.

The Business meeting was called to order at 10:25 A.M. Minutes from the All-Member meeting in Stowe, June 2002, were read by secretary Irene Barna. Joe Nelson announced that Dick Wilson regretted that he could not be present at the meeting because he was tending to family



Fourth VCBS All-member Meeting held at the Bryan Memorial Gallery in Jeffersonville
Photo by Don & Pauline Prideaux

business. Vice President John Weaver was returning from a business trip and could not be in Jeffersonville for the meeting.

The Treasurer's Report was read by Treasurer Ruth Nelson.

Visitors from Michigan were welcomed. Kathy Winn and Bruce Wagner were visiting Vermont and joined our meeting. A warm Vermont welcome greeted them.

The Membership Report from Trish Kane was received electronically by Joe Nelson who read the status of our ranks. The figures in this report are *memberships*, not persons, as some are family memberships.

Memberships as of December 31, 2002:.....148
New memberships as of May 1, 2003:.....18
Total memberships as of May 1, 2003:.....166
Total active memberships:92
Memberships not renewed:74

Ruth Nelson gave a rundown of the active individual memberships: 80, or 45% are in Vermont; 98, or 55% are out-of-state.

States represented by members are: Florida 5, New York 20, New Hampshire 6, New Jersey 5, Connecticut 12, Pennsylvania 8, Massachusetts 9, Maine 1, Michigan 5, Virginia 4, North Carolina 1, South Carolina 2, Ohio 4, Indiana 3, Illinois 4, Missouri 1, Oregon 1, Arizona 2, California 2, Ontario 2, Bermuda 1. There are 11 courtesy members 6 of whom are dependable workers.

After backtracking on parliamentary procedures, the Minutes were approved as read. The motion for such was made by Dick Roy and seconded by Ed Barna. The motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by Dick Roy and seconded by Marge Converse. A motion to approve the Membership Report although deemed not necessary, was moved and seconded by John Dostal and Dick Roy respectively.

The Legislative Committee Report was read by the Chair of that committee, Terry Shaw. The VCBS meeting with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VAOT) Historic Bridge Committee was held April 9, 2003. Attending were Susan Scribner, Chair, Historic Bridge Program, VAOT; Warren Tripp, VAOT; John Weaver, VAOT; Michael Canavan, FHWA; and Joseph Nelson, VCBS. The purpose of the meeting with the VAOT was in the interest of Covered Bridge preservation.

Bill McKone has prepared a letter sent to Governor Jim Douglas asking the Governor to proclaim the first week in June of each year as State Covered Bridge Appreciation Week. The Governor appears to be quite active in supporting this kind of activity and may see it as a good thing to do in terms of cultural heritage. Should a week be declared, the VCBS might sponsor some activity or event to raise public awareness of the existence of VCBS and its commitment to preservation covered bridges. Bill hadn't heard back from the Governor's office yet; but intended to follow through.

Bill has also approached the Shelburne Museum on having the VCBS represented at a reception which is part of a national conference on covered bridge preservation being held the first weekend in June 2003. The reception will be held on the museum grounds, initially to have been held in the Cambridge double-barrel covered bridge now located at the Museum. Bill is also hoping that the VCBS can have an ongoing presence at the Shelburne Museum in and around the Cambridge Bridge to make people more aware of the need for preserving covered bridges. He asked for help from those who would be present during the reception on June 5. The national conference is entitled: ***Covered Bridge Preservation: National Best Practices Conference*** and is sponsored by the Preservation Education Institute/Historic Windsor, Inc. and the graduate program in historic preservation at the University of Vermont.

The VCBS will again have a booth at the Vermont History EXPO 2003 at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds. The dates of the Expo this year are June 21 and 22. We will again be located in the Floral Hall at the north end of the fairgrounds. Irene Barna, Chair of this event, called for folks to volunteer of their time to staff the booth. A

sign-up sheet has been prepared. John Weaver has already signed-on for all of Saturday afternoon. The shifts are for only two hours and allow bridgers to converse with the passers-by about Vermont's covered bridges. We can also encourage people to share their knowledge of by-gone bridges and locate the sites on the enlarged map that will be the focus of the booth. Irene encouraged folks to sign up for this easy job we all can do. If not, a few must do a lot of shifts.

John Dostal was called upon to elaborate on the soon- to-be-dedicated *Covered Bridge Museum at the Bennington Center for the Arts*. He chose to talk later in the afternoon as he anticipated needing about twenty minutes.

Dick Roy mentioned that there are only two states with covered railroad bridges remaining in the USA-- Vermont and New Hampshire. In Franklin, NH there is a railroad bridge, not covered, but with the wooden trusses below the rail bed. This historic bridge has experienced fire vandalism and the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges will spend the \$106,000 to repair the burned hole. The Contoocook, NH bridge has been repaired twice due to listing. The crew doing these repairs has been Tim Andrews and crew. Tim is a protégé of Milton Graton. Dick invited folks to view the covered bridge photographs he had on display. Dick mentions that the National Society was founded by Richard Sanders Allen who wrote at least a dozen books on the topic of covered bridges and of aviation. Richard Sanders Allen was instrumental in "getting the national society going". John Dostal remarked that the Richard Sanders Allen Covered Bridge Resource Center, housing about 40 volumes, will be a main attraction at the museum.

The business portion of the meeting concluded and adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

A very informative slide presentation was given by Jan Lewandoski showing many of his repair projects on covered bridges. Jan explained many of the difficulties encountered in the repair of these historic structures. Questions, answers, and discussion followed.

Lunch, catered by the "Dinner's Dunn" folks, was soup and sandwich fixin's. Very tasty as they are known for their homemade breads.

Carpooling then assembled for the tour of the North Branch and Montgomery covered bridges.

Respectfully submitted,
Irene Barna, Secretary

Vermont History Expo 2003 coming in June

by Irene Barna

Save these dates: June 21 and 22. The Vermont Covered Bridge Society will, again, have a booth in the Floral Hall at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds. We will be located at the inside wall in the rear of the building, likely the same spot we had in 2001.

This year our booth will feature an enlarged map of the state of Vermont with the locations of the existing covered bridges indicated with a three- dimensional icon. Additionally, locating by-gone bridges may be done as well--hoping to spark the recollections of passers-by to say, "Oh, I remember a bridge that was" and to locate where historically there have been bridges-- that spot on our map can then be identified with a different type of marker.

This idea was the brainstorm of John Dostal, for which I am grateful as it sounds doable and is something we could use as a permanent presentation. My observation over the past three years of the Expo is that organizations such as ours have a permanent display, contrary to local Historical societies who are encouraged to present a new theme each Expo.

In addition to the map we hope to display a few artifacts critical to bridge construction.

By the time this goes to press, I will have attended a workshop sponsored by the VHS offering creative ideas for booth set-up and presentation to further this concept.

I encourage, no, actually I plead, fellow bridgers to spend some time staffing the booth. Saturday and/or Sunday. In past years a very few of us have given our time and every-day drives to Tunbridge to get awareness of the VCBS out to the public. Your participation in staffing the booth is welcomed.

It is *FUN!!* There are many interesting people that stop by to chat. After all, they are all at the Expo because of their interest in history and preservation. I will be creating the schedule for Saturday and Sunday--hopefully in two-hour shifts. Please phone me 802-388-0247 or write ibarna@middlebury.edu for a time convenient for you to help out at the booth. Booths are open from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

3rd ANNUAL Summer Fest JULY 25, 26

The memberships of the VCBS and the NSPCB have been invited to participate in the Third Annual SummerFest at Troy, Vermont. The event will take place on the grounds of the Riverbend Bed & Breakfast off Route 100 next to the Missisquoi River one-half mile north of Westfield, or one mile south of Troy.

On Saturday, July 26, beginning 10 a.m., we are invited to help celebrate the Town of Troy's Bicentennial with a family day including hay rides, horse rides, games for the kids, exhibits by local historical societies, the Vermont Covered Bridge Society, and the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, great food and more.

The VCBS was represented by Joe and Ruth Nelson at SummerFest II last August and a fun time was had by all concerned. "Going to Troy was a lot of fun and we met some interesting people from several states," said Joe Nelson. "Many people stopped by our booth and enjoyed the covered bridge pictures and postcards. Many walked away with an application and the knowledge of the VCBS, and what its purpose is."

Also, on Friday, July 25, 7:30 p.m. SummerFest will present the group "Atlantic Crossing" from Vergennes, under the big tent. Hamburgers, hot dogs, desserts, and maple treats will be available beginning at 6 p.m.

The Covered Bridge booth was set up on a three-by-eight table under a tent along with local historical societies. Joe and Ruth plan to attend again. Anyone who wants to join in the fun, call Joe Nelson on (802) 899-2093 or email jcnelson@together.net.



Ruth Nelson enjoying SummerFest II
in North Troy
Photo by Joe Nelson 8/10/02

For more details go to <http://www.riverbendvt.com/summerfest.html>.

CB COMMUNITY NEWS

Hectorville Covered Bridge Removed (VT-06-06)

by Joe Nelson

Gone! While surveying the covered bridges in Westford, Fairfax, Cambridge and Montgomery, this writer was stunned to see vacant abutments where Montgomery's Hectorville Bridge has stood since 1899.

According to the Town Clerk the bridge had been taken down sometime in October, 2002. Its trusses and roof have been put into storage. The town hired a consultant three years ago to advise them on the condition of the bridge. The Select Board has been considering potential actions.

Last fall, a person from the State Historic Division advised the town that the bridge was unlikely to survive heavy snows and the bridge was taken down. While the bridge is owned by the town, The Montgomery Historical Society is very much involved in preserving the bridge.

A Select Board meeting is scheduled in late June to decide what is to be done with the bridge. Relocation at a new site on the town walking path beside the Trout River is one idea. While the Gibou Road site is an exceptionally beautiful one, featuring a pool and a waterfall, it is too far from the population center. The retired bridge has been the target of vandals.

The bridge was originally built in Montgomery Village in 1883 by Savanna and Sheldon Jewett. It was moved over the South Branch of the Trout River in 1899 to serve Gibou Road and a tub factory now long gone. The bridge was ultimately bypassed with a concrete and steel span.

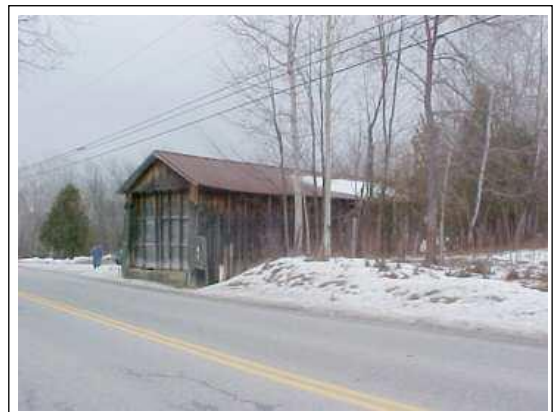
The truss began to fail, probably in the 1950s, and a jury rig was added to the truss in the form of inverted "Vs" with steel cables attached to a log slung under the floor.



Hectorville Bridge, Montgomery, Vt.
Photo by Joe Nelson, May, 1995

Rutland's Twin Covered Bridge Project On Hold

The Town of Rutland's project to restore the remaining Twin covered bridge is currently on hold. The restoration project began in 2001 with a projected completion date sometime in 2003. The initial phase of the restoration, which included engineering drawings of the bridge, was to be funded through an enhancement grant. However, in January 2003, the new administration placed a moratorium on all enhancement grants. This put the project on permanent hold. Byron Hathaway, Town of Rutland Engineering, said that there was no local funding included in the current budget since the enhancement grant funds were not available. In spite of all these developments there still may be some hope of getting the project going. Mr. Hathaway was told by a local representative that there may be money available. They are hoping that since they applied for the grant in the fall of 2002 that they would still qualify. If this fails, they may try to contact the Freeman Foundation for assistance with the project.



Remaining Twin Bridge, Rutland, Vt.
Photo by Steve Miyamoto, Dec, 2000

According to Mr. Hathaway there are a number of people from the Rutland area that are anxious to have the bridge restored. Many of these people remember the bridge when it was still in use before the 1947 flood. The second twin bridge of the pair was destroyed as a result of the flood. If the project gets completed, the covered bridge will be located just off the East Pittsford Road in the vicinity of its original location over the East Creek

in Rutland Town. The original plan to move the restored bridge to Northwood Park was changed to reduce the cost of the project. Mr. Hathaway's goal is to have the bridge restored and placed in a field just off the road. There would be a small parking area so people could stop and view the bridge.

Work in Progress on "Historic" Brandon span.

April 28, 2003 - Blow & Cote have brought the two lattice trusses of the mostly new Sanderson Bridge to the crossing over Otter Creek in Brandon, and with the help of various cranes have put them in place. The work of tying them together is in progress. There appear to be a number of original timbers, but otherwise this seems to be a case of burning our bridges before we come to them. - **Ed Barna**

Gorham Bridge Renovation Begun

May 1, 2003 - Hey all! Went to see what work was done on the Sanderson CB yesterday, (quite a bit has been done there) and decided to stop by the Gorham CB to see if it was still closed. What a surprise I got.

Here are the details I got from the Project Supervisor, Jason Briggs. Work started 4/29/03, and the completion date is November. Cost of the project is 1.2 million. The bridge weighs 156,000 lbs. The Bridge will be taken off the river and put on to the west bank to be worked on. The target date is Tuesday, May 7, weather permitting, to take the bridge off the river. Cranes, barges, and trucks with flatbed trailers will be used to do this job.

The following items are being replaced: floor beams, decking, siding, the roof including rafters, parallel and collar ties, and all knee braces. Bottom/Bottom chord will be replaced with a 114 foot glue laminated beam, Top/Bottom chord will be of southern white pine. Approximately 40% of end lattices will be replaced, center lattice will be saved. Floor beams will be glue laminated beams, decking will be of southern white pine. Both abutments will be taken out and replaced with concrete. The elevation will be the same height as the original abutments.

The work is being done by Contractor Crane Service (CCS) of Morrisville.

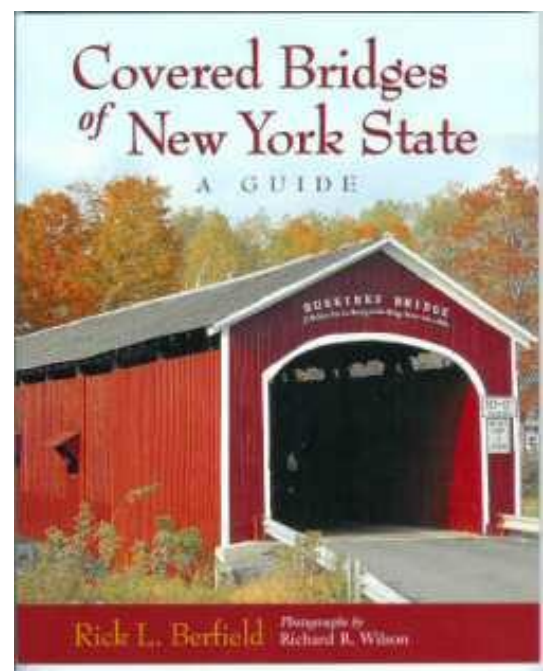
Yours in Bridging, David Guay

New Covered Bridge Book!

The New York book is here. This is a Guide of the covered bridges still standing in New York with all the information you would want to know about each bridge. Driving instructions are given and there are drawings of each truss. Rick Berfield did a wonderful job with each bridge and the pictures are from Richard Wilson, president of the New York State Covered Bridge Society.

Look for it at Barns & Noble and other book stores in New York. The book is also available thru amazon.com at a 25% discount.

[Thanks to Dick Wilson for the heads-up. -Ed.]



The Bennington Bridge Trilogy #4 OnDisplay

The Bennington Bridge Trilogy #4 created by covered bridge model builder Dorrel Harrison will be on open public display at the Merchants Bank in Bennington from May 27 - June 6. It will then be displayed at the Bank of Bennington from June 9 to June 12. He will be presenting the work to the Covered Bridge Museum at a later time; perhaps June 13.

The Bennington Bridge Trilogy #4 highlights the three plank-lattice truss covered bridges in Bennington, Vermont, along with Mt. Anthony and of course the Walloomsac River. The three bridges are one of many of Bennington's attractions which visitors will often photograph and experience by a "drive through". The hand-crafted piece of three dimensional art is made primarily of barn board and took nearly eighty hours to complete. The art work will be donated to the Covered Bridge Museum and will be on permanent display to visitors of that museum.

The hand-crafted artist is currently in the process of relocating to Southern Indiana where he will continue to make Vermont covered bridge wall decor and ornaments.



The Bennington Bridge Trilogy #4
by Dorrel Harrison

Perreault Bridge Repairs Underway

June 2, 2003, Beauce County, Quebec - The Perreault Bridge is undergoing extensive repairs. Bypassed in the 70's, the bridge was closed to pedestrians a few years ago. Work started May the 5th, to be completed in July, an up to \$700,000 project. When the work is completed, the bridge will be illuminated and the rest area will be upgraded.

The Perreault Bridge, WGN 61-06-01, was built in 1928 using a Town truss variant. It is 495 feet long in four spans over the Chaudiere River near Notre Dame-des-pins.

[Our thanks to Gerald Arbour, who submitted this article and photo - Ed.]



Perreault Bridge Repairs Underway
Photo by Jimmy Veilleux, May 2003

Londonderry's Utley Bridge

by Charlie Elflein

In the northwest corner of Windham County, just east of the Green Mountains, lies the small village of Londonderry. First chartered in 1770 by New York and known as Kent, the town was again chartered by the new Vermont Legislature in 1780. At this time, the town was renamed Londonderry by homesick arrivals from New Hampshire.

Through the early years, there were many prosperous industries in this West River Valley community including: saw mills, grist mills, machine shops, carriage shops, a tannery, chair stock and marble works. Today, tourism is a major part of the local economy with skiing in the winter and sightseeing during the warmer months.



Utley Bridge

At the west end of Londonderry, near the junction of Routes 11 and 100 south, stood the former Utley or West End Bridge spanning Utley Brook (or Utley Branch). A fine picture of this historic landmark is on page 17 of Victor Morse's *Windham County's Famous Covered Bridges*. In this old photo, two children are standing near the span emblazoned with many advertising signs on its high portal. Being on a major route into town, what better place for merchants to tout their products.

Unfortunately, very little seems to be known about this former covered bridge. Mr. Richard S. Allen, the world's foremost authority on the subject, stated the following: "I remember this as being right on the edge of the village at the foot of the hill (present Rte. 11). Don't think I ever had a name of the builder or whether it was a king or queenpost. I'd guess queen."

Shirley Twitchell, the Assistant Town Clerk, discussed the old span with Patty Wiley, Historical Society Curator, and they could not find much information either. They did send an 1859 Londonderry map pinpointing the locations of local businesses and residences at the time. Adjacent to Utley Bridge was a cabinet shop, and the Congregational Church, which still exists today, is just east of the covered bridge site.

An interesting article appeared in the October 12, 1922 "Manchester Journal." It stated that: "The old covered bridge at the west end of Londonderry village has been taken away and a foundation has been put in for a new iron bridge. This bridge was one of the old landmarks of the town and its removal will greatly change the appearance of the village as well as do away with a dangerous spot for autos. A temporary bridge has been built for crossing, just south of the old one."

With the arrival of the automobile, our old covered spans were seriously threatened, especially those on main roads like Utley Bridge was. In the 1920s, most folks were eager to get rid of the "old bottlenecks" and have them replaced with wider, more up-to-date structures. Fortunately, as our nation's old covered bridge count dwindles, interest in them has increased dramatically. When news gets out that a venerable span is destined for removal, people voice their opinion in favor of preservation. Thank goodness things have changed!

While Utley Bridge has been gone from Londonderry's landscape for just over eighty years, we still have old photographs and post cards to recall what this faithful servant looked like. It played a vital role in the early transportation needs of northern Windham County, and hopefully, will never be entirely forgotten.

letters

March 25, 2003

Mr. Joe Nelson: You were instrumental connecting me with the right people in regards to a torched bridge in Auckland, Province of Quebec. The Leggett Bridge was named after my uncle. To say the least a part of my life was destroyed from this loss. Your organization in Vermont is so important retaining the covered bridges. Your voice is being heard and you have a good following of caring people. Another Province in Canada known as Ontario has only "one" covered bridge. Sad but true! We are happy to share these photos with VCBS

Sincerely, Brendan & Elizabeth Larrabee
Member of VCBS from Guelph, Ontario

[The West Montrose Covered Bridge (WGN 59-51-01). This structure, the only remaining covered bridge in Ontario, was designed by John Bearin 1880, on the authority of Woolrich Township Council, to replace an earlier bridge over the Grand



Kissing Bridge
W. Montrose, Ontario, Canada
Photo by B. Larrabee

River. Built a year later by John and his brother Benjamin, the 198-foot bridge was covered to protect the wooden flooring and frame against the elements. Known locally as the Kissing Bridge. It later came under the jurisdiction of Waterloo County. In 1937 the province assumed responsibility for the Guelph-Elmira Road, including the West Montrose Bridge, and its floor and sub-structure were subsequently rebuilt and reinforced. - Ontario Heritage Foundation]

Hi VCBS:

I hope you remember me. I was the boy who had a school project on covered bridges. Just to let you know I received a B+ on it. You were a great help and I wanted to thank you. I am really hooked on them now, I have over sixty postcards from twenty states. Also the longest covered bridge in the world Hartland Canada, 1282 feet long.

I do have a problem on the states that still have them, the book I have is 1989 with a list of them. The states I can't get are DE, Miss., NJ, SC. They only have one or two listed but I cannot get a reply. Maybe they don't exist anymore. I have found out about the problems with fires. If you could help with this problem. Also is there a new list of covered bridges or a new book?

I was down in Pennsylvania on school vacation and they have a lot there. It is a great hobby. Thanks again for starting me on this great Idea. John Murphy, Medford, MA

[Note: In response to this letter, we have sent John a gift one-year student membership to the VCBS. If you want to help John with his collection, please contact me - Ed.]



Membership

Spring has arrived and members have reported they have been visiting our bridges. It has been especially nice to hear about the work that is being done in an effort to preserve them. As you bridge, don't forget to mention the Vermont Covered Bridge Society to folks you meet along the way.

This quarter we have seven new memberships. Please join me in welcoming the following individuals to our Society: Jeff Connor, Waterbury, VT; Joe Conwill, Rangely, ME; Russ Hokanson, Jeffersonville, VT; John Murphy, Medford, MA (a 6th grader *and* our youngest member); and Virginia Eckson, Williamstown, VT. Wendel Wells, Jeffersonville, VT; Robert Wilson, W. Brookfield, MA Welcome! Special thanks to Jan and Zhou Mo Lewandoski for converting to a Life Membership. We appreciate your support and your vote of confidence in the Society.

Good bye to Joe Nelson? Well, not really, but he is stepping down as Editor of The Bridger which will allow him more time to focus on the duties of the President for the Society. But rest assured, he isn't going far and he will remain as Staff Writer for The Bridger. Thanks, Joe, for wearing a hat of many colors and for all you do, and continue to do, for the Vermont Covered Bridge Society.

And a very warm welcome to our new Editor, Steve Miyamoto. Steve is no stranger to our group as he has assisted Joe as Staff Writer for The Bridger for the past two years. As you know, a newsletter can only be successful if our members submit information and articles, so please show your support by sending in bridge news from your area. Congratulations, Steve and thanks for taking on this very important role for the Society. (I'd like to take a moment to offer condolences on behalf of the Society to Steve on the recent loss of his Dad.)

In closing, emails and postcards will be going out shortly to those members who have not renewed their membership. Those who do not respond will be removed from our mailing list and will have received their last newsletter.

Happy Bridging!
Trish Kane
Membership Coordinator

Upcoming Birthdays and anniversaries:

June

20 Joanne Billie
15 Bob Kane
? Dolores Gendron

July

1 Melvin & Judith Marolewski
11 Marie Bechard
11 Francis Converse
20 Bob & Trish Kane
28 Raymond Gendron

August

2 Conrad Nagengast
18 Ed & Irene Barna
23 Kathy Ramsey
25 Jim and Linda Crouse
29 Raymond & Dolores Grendron
29 Melvin Marolewski



One of the issues addressed by the Director's meeting this year was that of preventing the loss of our historic covered bridges to replication, the fates of Montgomery's Fuller Bridge, and Bennington's Henry and Paper Mill bridges.

It was proposed that perhaps the adoption of the Davis Bill by the Vermont State Legislature would be the way to go, however some directors felt that such a bill would be too restrictive and inflexible and that the recently adopted VAOT Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Plan would better serve.

The VCBS Legislation Committee met with the VAOT Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Committee on April 9. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the VAOT Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Plan. The concerns expressed to the VAOT were: Will the plan, by itself, protect Vermont's covered bridges? Can a situation like that of Montgomery's Fuller Bridge recur? Attending were: Susan E. Scribner, chair., Historic Bridge Program, VAOT; Warren Tripp, VAOT; John Weaver, VAOT; Michael Canavan, FHWA; Joseph C. Nelson, president, VCBS; Terry Shaw, Legislation Committee chair, VCBS.

The Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Plan was discussed in some detail. In summary, the VCBS (specifically, the members present) believes the plan, written and agreed to by the Vermont Agency of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation, goes far to protect Vermont's historic covered bridges if the work is funded by State or Federal money and the engineering and contracting is done by the VAOT.

Discussion brought out the fact that the Fuller Bridge work was funded by FEMA and town money and planned and executed without the services of the VAOT, demonstrating that there is little, if any, protection for bridges repaired outside of the VAOT umbrella. The VCBS team suggested that legislation may be in order to augment the Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Plan to protect those bridges.

The VAOT position is that legislation would be too restrictive, that the Preservation Plan is a "living document" that could be changed as needed to insure the preservation of covered bridges.

The text of the VAOT Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Plan and of the Davis Bill are available on the www.vermontbridges.com website on the "Covered Bridge Preservation" page. If you do not have access to the web site, contact me by writing to VCBS, Preservation Plan, PO Box 97, Jeffersonville, VT 05464 to receive printed copies. A check for \$2.00 to the VCBS would help pay printing and mailing expenses.

A meeting of the Legislation Committee will be announced at a time convenient for all to discuss and resolve the issue.

Yours in Bridging,
Joe Nelson

Joe Nelson, P.O Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465-0267, jcnelson@together.net
This file posted June 24, 2003