

The Bridger



The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter

FALL, 2005

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VCBS Annual Fall Meeting To Be Held In Ascutney, Vermont

The VCBS Sixth Annual Fall All-Member Meeting will be held **Saturday, October 22** in Ascutney, Vermont, hosted by Neil Daniels, Chairman of the Weathersfield Bridge-watch Area, and open to the public as well as to the membership.

Anthony Daniels, builder of the new Mill Covered Bridge in Tunbridge, will speak about building and renovating covered bridges. The meeting will be held in the basement of the **Martin Memorial Hall & Town offices** located on US Route 5 one block north of the junction with VT 131. There is plenty of parking in rear.

Attendees may bring covered bridge items for sale or swap. The snack table will be open.

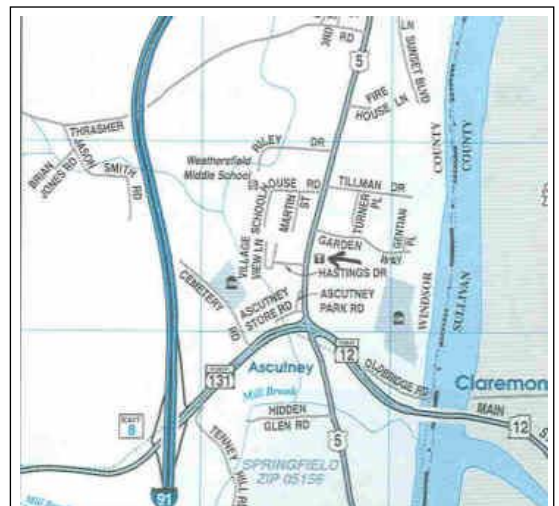
The meeting will begin at 10 AM with a short business meeting, followed by the speaker.

A catered dinner will be served at noon; roast beef, potatoes, veggie, beverage, and dessert. Attendees who want the catered dinner are asked to mail a check for \$10 per person to the VCBS, Neil Daniels, 90 E. Camp Road, Weathersfield, VT05156. Also, make reservations by contacting Neil at neildaniels2003@yahoo.com or 802.885.5517 and pay at the meeting. The deadline for dinner reservations is October 15.

After dinner car pools will be formed in the parking lot for a guided tour of the Salmond and the Upper Falls covered bridges by bridge-wrights Neil and Tony Daniels. Bring your cameras.

Folks who need overnight accommodations may contact the Comfort Inn, 8 Sykes Ave, 802.295.3051; Super 8, US 5 South, 802.295.7577; Best Western, 306 N Hartland Rd.(US 5), 802.295.3015; Hampton Inn, 104 Ballardvale Dr., 802.296.2800: All in White River Junction. Accommodations are also available in Windsor and in Springfield but are pricey.

For your convenience a dinner reservation slip and a map are provided in this issue.



The VCBS Annual Fall Meeting Directions
Martin Memorial Hall Ascutney, Vermont

Hammond Bridge Stabilization

By Jim Ligon

August 16, 2005, Pittsford, Vt - Our contract with the State of Vermont is to stabilize the bridge per their design drawings. A BIG thank you to the State for funding this desperately needed stabilization! The work began July 25 to be completed by November 4.

This Town lattice bridge has been neglected for so long it's sad. It was in use for traffic until the new highway bridge was constructed. Following that, it was open to pedestrians for a time. Several years ago it was deemed unsafe for even pedestrians, and closed.

Hammond Bridge has many problems. Other than neglect, the three contributing factors that stand out are:

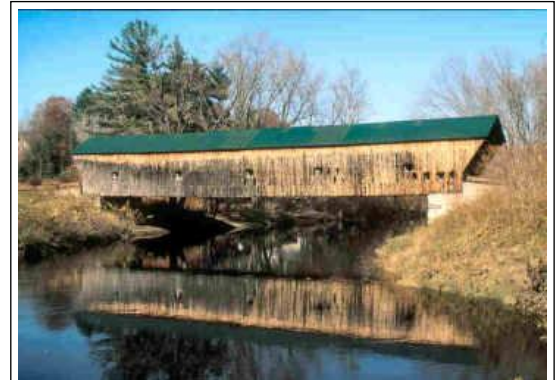
- 1) Original construction - chord butt joints are too close to each other;
- 2) Repairs made after the 1927 flood - lattice members broken in the flood were not replaced or sistered, the missing length was simply extended with a new piece;
- 3) Distribution beams added in the 1950's - originally intended to distribute the floor beam loading over several members.

When the distribution beam timbers shrunk it added a point load to only one hanger. This is a common problem I encounter in covered bridges.

Stuff We Found - The east portal is racked about 2 feet to the south; There is a severe "S" curve in the bridge - (it should be straight line); There are broken lower bottom chords; Upper top chords have "slipped by" each other in plane as much as 3 inches, thus the upper cross tie beam notches are not holding the opposing top chords together; Rotten top chords - through drilling for temp x-bracing at the portal areas revealed hollow or punky chords.

The bat population is thriving in this structure - about 50 adults live here full time. They have cute little bats, too! Bat guano is soooo...nice to work in! Pigeons have found a very nice nesting spot for all their eggs - there are hundreds of those too! The thousands of spiders that live in the bridge bite - they aren't supposed to be poisonous, but my doctor says if the bite doesn't heal I have to have surgery to evacuate the venom. That bite was 3 weeks ago and I'm still taking antibiotics!

[Jim Ligon is Project Superintendent for Alpine Construction, of N.Y. Bridgers can track the progress of the work by going to <http://members.localnet.com/~jligon/Alpine/Hammond/> -Ed.]



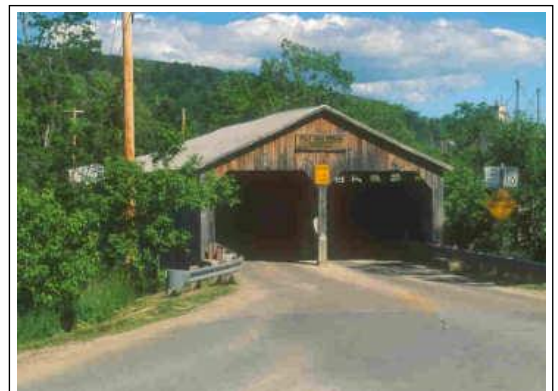
Hammond Bridge Pittsford, Vermont
WGN 45-11-05
Photo by Joe Nelson November 24, 1996

Middlebury Bridge Committee Reviews Pulp Mill Covered Bridge

by Joe Nelson

Middlebury, Vt., July 15, 2005 - The Middlebury Bridge Committee met at the town offices to review the town's bridge site analysis process and transportation needs, such as emergency service and traffic management. Much time was given to the Pulp Mill Covered Bridge, its history, the importance to the town of its site, and options for its future.

Invited to the discussions were Deputy Historic Officer Eric Gilbertson, of the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, and Jan Lewandoski, owner of Restoration and Traditional Building, the bridge-wright who has done the most recent work on the Pulp Mill Bridge. Also invited were engineers from the Engineering firm McFarlane-Johnson, Inc. of Binghamton, N.Y., the Weybridge Selectboard, and the public.



Pulp Mill Bridge, Middlebury, Vermont
Photo by Joe Nelson June 6, 1995

The meeting was moderated by longtime member of the bridge committee, Skip Brush: "We've spent the last several months looking at what alternatives there are for an additional bridge across Otter Creek to carry a full load of traffic and we preliminarily concluded . . . that there really is a need for two crossings in town. We need to get one established before we can address some of the other transportation needs . . . The only other crossing beside the Battell bridge is the Pulp Mill Bridge . . . which obviously was not built for modern traffic size-wise and weight, and it has a number of structural problems that we need to address no matter what we do. The ideas quoted are: we can replace the bridge, we can build a parallel bridge, we can build a new covered bridge that could carry emergency services."

Fred Long, Town of Middlebury Planner reviewed potential bridge sites and why the committee is zooming in on the Pulp Mill Bridge site and the Cross Street Bridge site. Said Long: "We looked at a new or parallel Pulp Mill bridge as an option, we looked at something in the area of the railroad underpass, Seymour Street over to Weybridge Street as a route, the Cross Street which we build from the intersection of Main and College Streets.

When all of the potential sites were studied, the committee concluded that something still needed to be done with Pulp Mill Bridge, said Long. ". . . it either needs to be rehabilitated once again, or replaced or paralleled or something. So we attended a meeting with Jan Lewandoski and the Covered Bridge Committee [of] the Agency of Transportation, we learned some new information about [the bridge]. It isn't as historic as we thought, [and] there are some inherent flaws in it that will influence what decisions are made here"

Said Eric Gilbertson: "The Pulp Mill Bridge is on the National Register of Historic Places. It's the only double-barreled covered bridge in Vermont . . . and the work that's done on it should meet the Secretary of the Interior's standards for dealing with historic preservation projects: You should replace things in kind if possible, and the general configuration of the bridge shouldn't change."

Gilbertson went on to say that the Pulp Mill Bridge should be rehabilitated and kept in use on its present site. "The state . . . seeks to preserve Vermont's covered bridges and one of the things that we have put in the plan is that keeping a bridge in use is important in its preservation for a couple of reasons. One is that there is a reason to maintain it, and secondly, there is money available for bridges that are in use that is not available for bridges that are not in use. Senator Jeffords has put a significant amount of money into covered bridges nationally and in Vermont as well, several million dollars a year and that money is not available for bridges that are not in the transportation system."

Said a member of the audience: "You said, keeping it in use,' and frankly, by keeping this bridge in use, we're killing it. We can probably . . . strengthen it. . . . [but] in this instance . . . we cannot do anything to this bridge to allow it to carry ambulances, fire trucks, any kind of a major emergency vehicle, due to the size of the bridge. It's a wonderful bridge, but they do not fit, and believe me there are some who've tried . . ."

"I understand," replied Gilbertson. "I look for the best solution, not necessarily the ideal solution, I doubt if we are going to find an ideal solution. The ideal solution would be to find the money to restore that bridge limited to light use traffic, cars and trucks, and have another bridge for other traffic."

To the proposition of building a new bridge parallel to the old, Gilbertson said, "We have done that . . . it's a temporary solution. One definition of temporary is anything short of forever. To me it's not the ideal solution because it's a visual thing, but is it a solution that would work here? Certainly, [but] there is a federal regulation that if you use federal funds to put an alternate bridge in, you can't use federal funds to fix the old bridge. If the new bridge was at a significantly different location and the Pulp Mill Bridge maintains that local light traffic, then [federal money could be used on both bridges], it is my understanding."

"[The pulp Mill Bridge]" said Jan Lewandoski. "I know it well because I have worked on it extensively. When I first worked on it, the date that was being kicked around was 1812 to 1820...The timber wasn't long enough, big enough, or good enough for that date. I went to the Weybridge town records and found a selectman's order to pay a person to go to Essex to get the design for the bridge at the paper mill. Lola Bennet of the Historical American Engineering Record for the National Park Service [ascertained from] Middlebury records and selectmen's commentary and cost figures that 1851 was the date of that bridge.

"In Essex at that time, John Johnson, a builder in the Burlington area from the 1790's to the 1830's, built a big double barreled [bridge] with Burr arches like Pulp Mill. I believe the person went there, didn't look at it carefully enough and made a crucial error when they built the bridge.

"The bridge was built with 200 feet of clear span originally. Probably not long after it was built, it started failing. The mistake they made in building this bridge was that the kingposts are necked down and dropped between the chords. [The kingposts] both pick the chords up and also take the load delivered on the brace that carries all the weight further on the bridge. They didn't shoulder the kingposts into the chords, nor did they put a sheer block behind the kingpost. All they had was a single bolt transfixing the bottom of the kingpost. The brace starts delivering a load down to the kingpost, the load accumulates as it goes toward the abutments and becomes very large. At all of the heavily loaded locations, the post is first bent, both top and bottom, distorted a bit, and then cracked around the bolt and pushed backwards. As soon as you start getting those small differences, you start dropping the bridge. The people knew about it right away. They started by adding arches, eventually they sub-divided it into three bridges."

The bridge was meant to be 200 feet long in a single span, said Lewandoski. It is now divided into three sixty-foot spans with "so much timber piled up in that bridge . . . no one is going to drop your car through the bottom of that bridge, I don't believe . . . the bridge (is) going to fall down and the weight of vehicles on it isn't going to kill it . . . but, the entry is too small. The bridge is littered with side-view mirrors. Anything of any size cannot go through that bridge. It's not a question of weight going through that bridge. The bridge's own deadweight, is bigger than vehicle weight. Its geometry is too small."

Asked how long before the Pulp Mill Bridge fails, Lewandoski replied: "Decades. The Pulp Mill won't fall down for decades. If you keep a roof on it, It may never fall down . . . I don't think it's a life-safety issue, I don't think anyone will be killed in that bridge. . . "

[To see the full text of this meeting, go to www.vermontbridges.com/middlebury%20mtg.htm. Also, an audio tape of the meeting can be made available for cost. - Joe Nelson]

Pulp Mill Bridge Update

by Irene Barna

Middlebury, Aug. 5, 2005 - The timing of the announcement of the Federal dollars for the highway/rail infrastructure of western Vermont and the inclusion of dollars for Pulp Mill Bridge in such proximity to the meeting of July 15 made it unnecessary for me to write an update on a Town decision. It was apparent at that meeting that Pulp Mill Bridge needed to stay where it was, kept in service, and the site not chosen for an additional Otter Creek crossing. This sense was pretty much the understanding of the Select board after hearing covered bridge restorer Jan Lewandoski and Eric Gilbertson, of the state Division for Historic Preservation.

For the story regarding Middlebury, the highway funding bill, and the Pulp Mill Bridge, go to: <http://www.addisonindependent.com/News/080405bridge.html>

[In a nutshell, according to the referenced Addison Independent article, The Pulp Mill Bridge will stay where it is and remain in service as a "fully functional, historic bridge." The bridge will receive \$1.875 million for rehabilitation from the 2005 federal highway bill - Joe Nelson]

Vermont Covered Bridge Funding

by Joe Nelson

July 30, 2005 - Ken Connolly, Staff Director, U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee contacted the VCBS to inform us that Senator Jeffords secured \$46 million for covered bridges, \$6 million for Vermont specifically, part of the federal highway bill for 2005.

"This is a mandatory, highway trust fund," Connolly said, "The money is not subject to appropriation."

Of the amounts appropriated in section 1934 for the State of Vermont for the rehabilitation of historic covered bridges, Congress intends that the State shall allocate \$450,000 for the Creamery/West Hill Covered Bridge in Montgomery; \$450,000 for the Bowers Covered Bridge in West Windsor; \$500,000 for the Quinlan Covered

Bridge in Charlotte; \$500,000 for the Gifford Covered Bridge in Randolph; \$500,000 for the Worrall Covered Bridge in Rockingham; \$450,000 for the Kingsbury Covered Bridge in Randolph; \$1,500,000 for the Taftsville Covered Bridge in Woodstock; and \$1,800,000 on the Pulp Mill Covered Bridge in Middlebury-Weybridge.

Correction - The Covered Spans of Yesteryear Article

In reference to the paragraph in the **Spring Meeting** article on page 3 of the Summer 2005 "**Bridger**" the name of the project is Covered Spans of Yesteryear, not Covered Bridges of Yesteryear. Also, the preferred web address is www.lostbridges.org as a non-profit organization. The lostbridges.com site exists only to redirect viewers to the .org site. Also, the line - "Much of their material comes from the NSPCB archives . . . , should have read "Much of their material comes from participating covered bridge historians among the covered bridge societies." Writes Bill Caswell of Covered Spans of Yesteryear: "The overwhelming majority of our pictures have come from Dick Roy's and Richard Donovan's personal collections. Also, some people have the impression that this project is sponsored by or otherwise supported by the National Society. That isn't the case. All of our expenses are covered by Trish [Kane] and I." – Editor



Bill Caswell of Covered Spans of Yesteryear
Photo by Joe Nelson, June 25, 2005

The Covered Bridge - A Poem

by Elizabeth K. Fuller
submitted by Mary Fearon

The covered bridge is standing yet
A relic of the past,
'Twas built in "horse and buggy days"
When life was not so fast.

It's seldom now that wagon wheels—
The trotting of a horse
Are heard within the covered bridge,
The changing times, of course.

I once would boast that I could tell
What farmer came to town
By just the way his buggy squeaked,
His horse's hoofs went down.

But now I see a streak of blue,
Sometimes a streak of gray,
An auto has passed through the bridge,
Is speeding on its way.

The bridge was once a haven.
On a rainy summer day,

The children in the neighborhood
Would gather there to play.

Sometimes 'twas "kitty corner"
Sometimes 'twas "keeping school,"
A noisy bunch of youngsters
Bent on breaking every rule.

They went climbing up the latticework
And hiding on the beams,
Calling out to folks who passed
And scaring all the teams.

The boys would carve initials,
Unite what names they pleased,
And then look down in laughter
Because the girls were teased.

But what excitement always reigned
When circus bills were posted
Roaring lions! Acrobats!
All things the circus boasted.

We studied on those circus bills
Where daring stunts were shown
And after painful practice
Gave a circus of our own.

But now when children cross the bridge
They're told to hurry through,

And frightened into knowing
What a speeding car might do.

The covered bridge is standing yet
And through its open portals
The cars go dashing day and night,
What chance have we poor mortals

Passings

Lilian Daniels Passes

We are saddened to report that Lilian Rose Daniels passed away Wednesday, August 17, 2005 at the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, NH after a courageous battle with cancer. Lil was the wife of Neil H. Daniels of Weathersfield, VT, VCBS Board Member and Treasurer, and retired contractor-builder of covered bridges. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Neil and his family.

Kathryn Ramsey Departed

We have just been notified that Kathy Ramsey passed away Tuesday, August 30. Arrangements are being made. Kathy, a dedicated covered bridge devotee, was Chairperson of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society Chapter in the Northeast Kingdom and a member of the VCBS Board of Directors. She will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family. Cards can be sent to daughter Terry Ramsey, PO Box 479, Lyndonville, VT 05851.

Covered Bridge Community News Notes

Happy Birthday Blenheim Covered Bridge!

Blenheim, NY, August 23, 2005 - The Blenheim Covered Bridge will be celebrating its 150th birthday on Saturday, September 10th. Please join local residents in the celebration of this historic event. Celebration plans include a parade, machine expo and a craft and bake sale. Refreshments will also be available. And be sure to plan on staying for the fireworks later that evening at the Power Authority. Please join us for another exciting Covered Bridge event.

[This item forwarded by Trish Kane - Ed.]

Erwin Park Covered Bridge Dedication Set for September 24, 2005

Boonville, NY, August 23, 2005 - Please join Boonville residents and other covered bridge enthusiasts in the State of New York for the dedication of our newest covered bridge. The town of Boonville will be hosting a gala celebration of the Erwin Park Covered Bridge on Saturday, September 24, 2005 at 1:00 pm. An exciting day is being planned and it is an event you won't want to miss.

A representative of the US postal service will be in attendance to cancel a first day issue cover envelope that will depict the covered bridge. There will also be covered bridge medallions given away to the first 500 guests. Both designs are the work of Boonville's own talented artist, John Mahaffey.

If overnight accommodations are needed, please visit the following website for a listing of area accommodations: <http://www.starinfo.com/woodsmen/lodging.html>

[This item forwarded by Trish Kane - Ed.]

Update - Support Reconstruction of Risser's Mill Covered Bridge

August 7, 2005 - Greetings to our Bridging Friends: We had a very interesting and thankful visitor at our TBCBSP meeting this afternoon -- Mr. Sam Allen. Mr. Allen is the gentleman from Lancaster County who is spearheading the effort to have Risser's Mill Covered Bridge rebuilt as a traditional covered bridge. He was interesting because he shared his enthusiasm and hopes for the success of his mission. He was thankful because of all the support our society has shown toward this project through the physical presence of many of our members at the public meeting on July 26; and, through the letters and emails that have been sent in support of the reconstruction of the covered bridge. While talks and fact-finding continue, the final decision will be made by the Lancaster County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on Monday, Sept. 26, at 1:00 PM. This is not a public meeting as such, but Mr. Allen indicates that the public may attend. He encourages those persons that can be available at that time of the day to do so to show support for the rebuilding of the bridge. The meeting will be held at the Old Southern Market Building, Queen and Vine Streets, Lancaster (next to St. Mary's School.)

Mr. Allen also suggests that emails or letters be sent to the 21 members of the MPO to continue to show our support. We have attached a list of the members of that organization which Mr. Allen provided. It will not be too late until the final vote is cast on Sept. 26.

Thank you, once again, for your continued support on behalf of covered bridge preservation, rehabilitation, and replication.

Happy Bridging,
Ben and June Evans

[Check www.vermontbridges.com for more information on Risser's Mill CB - Ed]

Martin Bridge Fundraising Event

September 25, 2005, 12-3 PM

Marshfield, Vt. - The festivities will be held at the Old Schoolhouse Common, featuring a BBQ Steak Dinner to benefit the Martin Covered Bridge Restoration Project.

Also featured: Music in the Bandstand by Colin McCaffrey and Susannah Blachly, and a History Talk on the Martin Bridge by Nathan Phillips.

For Tickets call Joanne 454-7301 or Kass 454-7702: Adults \$20, Children \$3. The menu for adults; Steak, potato, corn on the cob, tossed salad, roll, and desert. The special children's menu; hot dog or hamburger, corn on the cob, beverage, and dessert. Take outs on request.

PLUS, starting at 9 a.m. a TAILGATE FLEA MARKET to benefit the Jaquith Library.

Depot Bridge Swallows Dump Truck

by Irene Barna

Pittsford Vt. June 22, 2005 - Ed and I went to visit the Depot Bridge [WGN 45-11- 06] last evening. It is indeed trashed. The entire west end of the supporting roof structures are smashed and on the floor. I took several photos with my little "point and shoot". The entire dump truck body remains in the bridge. I didn't, at the time, attempt to make an estimate of how far into the bridge the body remains; but I'd say, on recollection, maybe 20 feet. It's in there a good ways having taken out everything in its path overhead along the way.

The Depot Bridge has significant roof overhang at the portal and the body is 20 feet is from where the portal meets the road! All cross bracing and roof bracing to where the truck body remains still standing on end is smashed to smithereens and on the floor and there are huge holes in the roof on either side of the roof ridge.

Photographing the interior was difficult as both ends of the bridge are totally barricaded with sheets of plywood. The only means of viewing the interior (without a ladder of significant height) is by peering through about 5-inch-wide openings alongside of each portal side. Looking at the bridge from a distance down the road, the west end does wrack to the south. (But remember, Depot is the lattice bridge that does have at the east end the iron braces that look like railroad rails supporting both outsides.)

While there we had an opportunity to speak with a young man who said his father is with the Pittsford fire department. The explanation he gave is that the dump truck had been parked overnight with the dump body in a slight upraised position to allow rain water to drain out, a typical practice. When the driver drove off, the

hydraulics activated the dump body to be raised to full height and in that upright position off he went toward the bridge. Fortunately for the driver he did not encounter any electrical wires; but unfortunately for the bridge it stopped his forward motion, ripping the dump body from the chassis and there it remains. Now I ask: if automobiles have dashboard warning indicators to alert of a "door ajar", why do trucks not have same for "truck body not in road position" which would activate when a certain forward speed is reached? At least this one didn't seem to be so equipped. Driver error; but at a very sad expense.



July 7, 2005 Hello! My name is Elise Brown and I am from Parke County, Indiana. We have 30 covered bridges and we're working on rebuilding two that were destroyed by arson in the last three years. I really enjoy the bridges. It runs in the family since my great-great-grandfather built one in the county.

I recently attended an FFA leadership conference in Washington DC. While we were there, we were challenged to come up with a plan to somehow better our communities, and I came up with a plan to clean the graffiti off the covered bridges since we have the Covered Bridge Festival and many tourists throughout the year. However, I wasn't sure how to go about doing that.

I found your website, which said your organization works to remove the graffiti. How do you do that? I thought about painting over it, but wasn't sure about that because I would like to keep the natural wood as much as possible. I also thought about scraping and washing it off, but was unsure as to how realistic that is. I'm open to any suggestions. This is something I'd like to get off the ground, and you are my first contact. I believe the highway department will need to be contacted, also, but I wanted to figure out a method before proceeding that far.

Elise

July 11, 2005 - This topic is of considerable interest to VAOT as well, so I asked our chemist to research it. The response follows:

John Weaver, VAOT

From the City of Burlington, Vermont:

For wood Surfaces: If the wood is not weathered and is sealed with paint, stain or sealer, try to remove it by wiping it with mineral spirits. If the wood is weathered, do not use this technique, as the mineral spirits will be absorbed by the wood - driving the paint further down into the wood.

Power washing with low pressure can be used, however, observe carefully to make sure the pressure is not driving the paint deeper into the wood grain. *It is not recommended to exceed 700 psi.*

If these methods do not work, sand the wood and re-paint or simply paint over the graffiti.

From the City of Melbourne, Australia:

For painted and protected surfaces, such as wood, metal or concrete surfaces that have a topcoat. These surfaces are easier to clean because the graffiti doesn't seep below the surface. Use a common solvent, appropriate commercial remover or citrus oil based product.

To find the most effective cleaner, always test a small area to start with, and gradually increase intensity, starting with detergent, citrus oil, methylated spirits, turpentine or white spirit and finally acetone.

For bare or raw surfaces, such as stone, concrete, brick, wood and metal. Two removal methods can be effective on these types of surface. 1. Apply a solvent remover, wait three to five minutes then use a wire brush, rinsing with water to remove the graffiti. 2. For heavily affected areas apply paint stripper (to dry surface), wait three to four minutes, then scrub with a wire brush. Wash the paint stripper away, taking care not to splash it on clothing or skin.

From the Minneapolis, MN Police Dept:

For Wood, Try working up the solvent list if the marks are new. Most thinners will remove magic markers and acetone will remove day old spray paint. You must use a clean rag and keep using a fresh part on each wipe.

On latex or oil-based paint, use a stain-killing primer for exterior use. After the primer or stain blocker coat has dried, you can proceed with regular paints, oil or latex. Most oil base paints are more durable to solvents and hence could make future clean up easier. Consider a sealer coat after final finish. Avoid using flat paints as they readily absorb pigments from markers and spray paint.



by Trish Kane, Membership Coordinator

In less than 30 days, summer will be over and autumn will be upon us. What a fabulous time of year to photograph our covered bridges. The fall foliage enhances our bridges in such a spectacular way.

The Vermont Covered Bridge Society received seven new memberships this quarter. Please join me in welcoming them. Alfred Mangus, Sacramento, CA; Carolyn Clapper, West Charleston, VT; Steve Wheaton, Long Beach, CA; Thomas and Lisette Keating, North Tonawanda, NY, Mary Mauer, Ocean Grove, NJ; John Esau, Windsor, VT and Susan Cole, Manchester, VT.

Although it is only September, I know some of our members like to shop "early" for the holidays. A gift certificate for a membership to the Vermont Covered Bridge Society makes a lovely gift. And don't forget, there are some wonderful covered bridge books available through many of the covered bridge societies as well. Gift certificates to covered bridge societies and covered bridge books make especially nice gifts for someone who isn't able to travel to see our beautiful bridges.

Early Renewal Contest – 2006

For all of you who have asked, Yes, we will indeed once again run our Early Renewal Contest. This contest has been a huge success and helps the Society so much! Paying your membership fees ***before the December 31 deadline*** not only qualifies you for a chance at a nice gift, it saves the society additional postage expense having to send reminders that your dues are due. Here are the prizes for this year's contest: One year free membership to the VCBS; a lovely covered bridge welcome sign or a gift bag filled with covered bridge items. To be eligible for this year's contest, here's what you need to do:

- 1) ****Pay your membership dues before December 31, 2005. That's the key!*** (Please note that if your membership has been paid in advance of this date, or if you are a life member, your name will automatically be entered into the drawing.)

- 2) Complete the membership form in this issue of the newsletter and return it with your check made payable to the VCBS no later than December 31st. The mailing address is: VCBS, PO Box 97, Jeffersonville, VT 05464-0097. Your name will then be put in the drawing for one of three lovely prizes mentioned above. Keep in mind that only memberships paid by December 31st are eligible for this contest. Don't wait until you get so busy with the holidays that you forget to send in your membership fee as you will miss out on some nice gifts if you do. Do it today while you are thinking about it. Winners will be announced in the winter issue of our newsletter.
- *You might also like to consider changing your membership to one of the other categories or joining one of our Giving Societies mentioned on the form. Your support is so important to our preservation work and what a nice gift to the VCBS too.

Happy autumn everyone!
Trish Kane Membership Coordinator

Upcoming Birthdays and Anniversaries:

Please note: If you would like your birthday or anniversary listed, please send me an email with the dates.

September

- 4 Don & Pauline Prideaux
- 5 Robert Salvi
- 7 Fred Spink
- 9 Tom Walczak
- 10 Rudy & Marjorie Bettis
- 10 Rudy Bettis
- 15 Lou & Mary Zabbia
- 17 Linda Spink
- 17 Doris Taylor
- 17 Euclid & Priscilla Farnham
- 20 Phil Pierce
- 21 Wilfred Thompson

October

- 6 Dick Wilson
- 7 Conrad & Dorothy Nagengast
- 11 Trish Kane
- 13 Mary Phillips Hyde
- 18 Leo Fleury
- 21 John & Joanne Billie
- 22 Ellen Everitz
- 27 Robert Damery
- 28 Joyce Soroka

November

- 6 Kathy Knight
- 13 Bruce Wagner
- 15 Linda Crouse
- 17 Kathy Winn
- 18 Euclid Farnham
- 18 Bob & Mary Ann Waller
- 22 Marikka Guay

PREZ SEZ

Dear Members: I had a discussion with Mr. Gilbertson, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer at the meeting held July 15 in Middlebury concerning the fate of the Pulp Mill Bridge. In the course of the conversation I told him of the VCBS commitment to promoting the preservation of Vermont's covered bridges. I quoted to him the contents of our brochure citing the Adopt-a-bridge pledge. Mr. Gilbertson responds:

August 02, 2005

Subject: Shoreham Covered Bridge.

We had a quick discussion about the Shoreham Bridge in Middlebury at the Pulp Mill Bridge meeting. AOT is now responsible for cutting the brush around the bridge but I will continue to pursue your offer of the Covered Bridge Society doing some cutting.

The reason I write at this time is to request a letter of support from you for work on the Shoreham Bridge.

The Agency of Transportation and the Division are applying for a Transportation Enhancement Grant to replace the roof and do some work on the upper chords of the Shoreham Bridge based on Jan Lewandoski's recommendations. We would repair the trusses in kind and replace the deteriorated wood shingle roof that was put on about 20 years ago with green standing seam metal. The leaks in the roof have caused the problems with the truss. The cedar shingles of today are not what they were 100 years ago and a water-tight fit is of course essential.

It would help our application if the Vermont Covered Bridge Society could supply a letter of support. If you can, please send it to my address. The application is due on August 15 and it would be helpful to have the letter by then.

Thank you, Eric Gilbertson

I responded with the following letter on VCBS letterhead:

August 6, 2005

Dear Mr. Gilbertson:

We of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society were pleased to hear that the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Division for Historic Preservation are applying for a grant to support much needed repairs to the Rutland Rail Road Covered Bridge in Shoreham. The Shoreham Bridge needs to be preserved for its historical significance. It is not only the last of its type in the State of Vermont, it is also a monument to 19th century structural engineering, and a classic example of Howe's truss supporting the needs of the then growing railroad industry.

The mission of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society is to encourage the preservation of covered bridges by working with the towns or other entities owning or overseeing covered bridges, and cooperating with the public and with other organizations committed to the preservation of historic bridges.

The VCBS promotes an adopt-a-bridge program in which members adopt a bridge and work with the owners clearing brush, picking up trash, sweeping, painting, keeping watch against vandalism, and notifying authorities when the bridge needs attention.

If we can be of service to you, please let us know.

Yours in bridging,
Joseph C. Nelson, President, VCBS

John Weaver, Terry Shaw, and I have been discussing this potential project. The responses from the Board of Directors have been positive. John is behind the effort, and Terry and I have volunteered to go to the site to be part of a brush cutting party. All are welcome to join us in this opportunity to fulfill the stated purpose of the VCBS: "To preserve Vermont's covered bridges; to provide fellowship for Bridgers." No dates have been set as yet. Volunteers please contact me.

Our Thanks to Kathie Knight. Kathie has been serving the Communications Committee as Mail Person Extraordinary, handling the distribution of the Bridger newsletter. She has also been part of the Membership Committee, filling out and mailing membership cards and packages. Now, due to her slow recovery from carpal tunnel surgery, she is retiring. Get well, Kathie, and thanks again.

Another unsung hero; Ron Bechard. Life Member Ron has been monitoring our post office box in Jeffersonville, receiving and distributing the incoming mail to its various destinations. Thank you Ron, you have our vote of thanks.

I am yours in Bridging
Joe Nelson, President, VCBS

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

This file was coded by Steve Miyamoto

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