

# 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 2006

## VCBS Holds Annual Spring Meeting

**Woodstock, VT** -- The 1807 Dana House in Woodstock was the site for the seventh annual spring meeting of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April, 2006.



VCBS Annual Spring Meeting, May, 2006  
Dana House, Woodstock, Vt. photo by Joe Nelson

Twenty four members and guests enjoyed a beautiful spring day to travel to Woodstock for the meeting.

Vice President Joe Nelson welcomed all, beginning the meeting at 10:20 a.m. in the absence of President John Weaver who had a previous engagement.

A thank you was expressed to Johnny Esau for making arrangements for the meeting in Woodstock and for the lunch from the Woodstock Market.

Meeting (Continued on page 2)

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## Future of Williamsville Bridge Pondered

**WILLIAMSVILLE, VT** -- The plans for the restoration of the Williamsville coveredbridge may well have to be changed.

In 2000, Newfane's voters agreed to build a new covered bridge in Williamsville, but the town of Newfane secured \$1.6 million in federal funding, through the Agency of Transportation, which would pay to restore the bridge. Construction could begin in 2008

Williamsville (Continued on page 3)

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## Covered Bridges: Spanning the American Landscape Makes New England Debut

**NORWICH, VT**--The Montshire Museum of Science in Norwich, Vermont, will present Covered Bridges: Spanning the American Landscape, a new exhibition from the Smithsonian Institution August 5-October 15, 2006. The Montshire will be the first venue in New England for the exhibit.

Few engineering structures—indeed, few historic structures of any kind—captivate the American imagination like covered wood bridges. Simultaneously sturdy and beautiful, covered bridges evoke the calm of a simpler age far from today's bustling freeways. Romance and nostalgia, however, often mask the substantial engineering achievements these bridges represent. It is precisely this embodiment of both the cultural and the technological that gives covered wood bridges their widespread appeal and understated significance.

The United States is home to about 800 covered wood bridges—nearly 60 percent of the world's total—and an active network of scholars and citizens working to document and preserve significant bridges.

Sadly, some five bridges are lost each year to age, arson, flooding, and traffic. This 1000 square-foot exhibit showcases photographs, architectural and engineering drawings, models, and bridge artifacts that illustrate the cultural heritage covered bridges represent, and the important role they still play in our transportation infrastructure. Covered Bridges: Spanning the American Landscape focuses on bridges across the United States, including several local structures like the Windsor, Vt./Cornish, N.H. Bridge. The exhibit was developed and distributed by The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) in Washington, D.C.

The exhibit is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Montshire Museum seven days a week from August 5 through October 15, 2006. The Museum is located on 110 lovely acres bordering the Connecticut River in Norwich .

## America's Oldest Covered Bridge Celebration

by Trish Kane

It has been well known throughout the various Covered Bridge Communities that the Hyde Hall Covered Bridge located in the Glimmerglass State Park is the oldest covered bridge in New York State. Throughout the past two years, however, a dedicated group of covered bridge experts have been busy writing letters and making phone calls to determine if the Hyde Hall Covered Bridge might just be the oldest existing covered bridge in the United States.

I am pleased to be able to announce that the paperwork is in, results have been tallied and experts now agree that yes indeed, the Hyde Hall Covered Bridge is the oldest existing Covered Bridge in the United States with a documented date of 1825! And, we plan to celebrate this exciting news with an event at the Hyde Hall Covered Bridge on **September 9, 2006** so please mark your calendars now so you don't miss this great historic event.

As the summer progresses, more exciting details will no doubt be added to the program. If you would like more information, please contact us at: bobtrish68@frontiernet.net or call us at 607-674-9656.

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## Nominations Committee Report

by Trish Kane

The annual election of officers was kicked off in November, 2005 with the mailing of 151 letters and ballots. Sixty-seven ballots were returned with only one write-in.

The vote was: President, John Weaver - 66; Vice President, Joe Nelson - 66; Secretary, Irene Barna - 67; Treasurer, Neil Daniels - 67

The letter asked for volunteers to fill openings in the standing committees. There were no volunteers

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**Spring Mtg** (Continued from page 1)

Joe announced the stepping down of Newsletter editor Steve Miyamoto and thanked him for his years of service at that post beginning with the summer issue 2003. Our new editor will be Steve Wheaton, member since July of 2005. Steve will not be attending many of the VCBS meetings, as he is a resident of Long Beach, CA.

Joe stated that there is a need for someone to take charge of the Crafts Committee. The Crafts Committee has contributed items to the Marshfield Historical Society for their auction on April 15. A donation in covered bridge memorabilia of \$200 will go toward the restoration of the Martin Covered Bridge.

**SECRETARY'S MINUTES:** The minutes of the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall All-Member Meeting held October 22, 2005 in Acutney, VT were read by Secretary Irene Barna. A motion for approval as read was made by David Guay and seconded by Terry Shaw.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** The business meeting continued with Neil Daniels reading the Treasurer's Report for the first quarter of 2006:

Balance year end	\$5,697.25
Expenses	231.00
<u>Income</u>	<u>837.00</u>
Balance 3/ 27/06	\$6,303.25

2006 amount available to invest in "fund"  
\$1,554.29

Value of the "Save a Bridge Fund" 1/1/06  
\$2,208.86

Includes cash 3/31/06 \$125.77  
\$2,242.22

Original invested amount  
\$2,276.89

GRAND TOTAL CASH AND EQUITIES  
VCBS 3/31/06 \$8,545.47

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT:** This report was read by Joe Nelson in the absence of Membership Coordinator Trish Kane. The membership is represented in 23 states and Canada:

Total membership as of 10/22/05	155
Deleted memberships since 10/22/05	-3
<u>New memberships as of 3/25/06</u>	<u>+9</u>
Total memberships as of 3/25/06	<u>161</u>

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:** Terry Shaw reports that on March 31, he, John Weaver,

and Joe Nelson were at the VANPO meeting in Montpelier where they attended several information sessions and were able to meet with Governor Jim Douglas to discuss covered bridges, focusing on identifying the location of bridges.

They later met with Rick Westman, chair of the Transportation Committee, at which time there was an opportunity to present a plan on how to identify the location of covered bridges. Joe Nelson showed a proposed design concept the image of which would be a simple silhouette of a covered bridge portal. It is hoped that the State will create the metal ID markers to place primarily on main roads and would be mounted directly below the weight limit signs. A highway weight limit sign is an indication of a covered bridge nearby. Rick liked the idea and so did one legislator who was present at the time. It was proposed that if the State makes the signs, VCBS volunteers might be able to install them. An additional meeting with Dawn Terrill, Secretary of Transportation, has been scheduled for May 9, 2006 at 1:00 pm. It is hoped that some influential people have been convinced to go along with these CB directional signs. John Dostal questioned the funding for these signs. That will be asked at the meeting with Dawn Terrill.

They are estimated to cost between \$10 and \$15 each. It is expected that they will be made by the Correctional Department. Some bridges may need signs in several places. Dick Wilson, (VCBS member) of the New York State Covered Bridge Society mentions that there are similar directional signs in Washington County, New York identifying Rexleigh and Eagleville Bridges. An estimated need of \$3,000 to \$4,000 may be enough to fund these signs. Ed Barna questions if the Vermont Department of Tourism might offer monies toward this project.

**EVENTS REPORT:** Johnny Esau mentions that the raffle will take place after lunch. The bridge tour for the day will be a walk to the Middle Bridge in town, then return to the Dana House to car pool to the Lincoln and the Taftsville Bridges. The Smith Bridge, in the area, is privately owned.

The fall meeting of the VCBS will be September 30, 2006 at the Montshire Museum of Science in Norwich, VT where a traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian Institution will feature covered bridges.

**BRIDGE WATCH REPORT:** John Weaver's report, read in absentia by Joe Nelson States "April and November are two

of the best months for Bridge-Watch activities. Without sight-blocking foliage covered bridges are revealed in full view and conditions are easily noticed. This is true for stream channels as well as for the wooden superstructures and foundation supports.

On-going rehabilitation work at the Cilley Covered Bridge in Tunbridge is a site to notice. At present I do not know of other such construction projects. Member should also notice the results of 15 other covered bridge maintenance/rehabilitation projects that were accomplished last year. Most of these involved stone abutment re-pointing, new railings, and fire retardant coatings: Bowers, Bests, Lincoln, Brown, Depot, Seguin, Slaughterhouse, Moxley, Gifford, Pine Brook, Gold Brook, Mill, Hopkins, Montgomery, and Village Covered Bridges were all addressed by this work and should be easily viewed at this time of year."

**NEW BUSINESS:**

John Dostal reports that Bruce Laumeister is pleased with the attendance at the Covered Bridge Museum and that attendance at the art museum has increased so that an addition is being built. Neil Daniels reminded that on May 30 the Post Office department will issue stamps of covered bridges which will include the Cornish Windsor Covered Bridge.

Sue Richardson promotes student membership to VCBS and hopes to make visits to schools visiting history classes and science classes, encouraging them to come in to do an archaeological dig at the Toll House in Windsor and learn about covered bridges. She recommends that other members go to schools to solicit student members. Sue is willing to start this summer to speak with teachers – the Toll House can be a site for classes on covered bridge construction. Sue submits a page of implementing ideas on how this will work.

Dick Wilson mentions that the New York State Covered Bridge Society Safari in May 2006 will be to Pennsylvania to view covered bridges in Lehigh, Berks, and Chester Counties.

The New York Washington County Covered Bridge Advisory Committee reports that the Eagleville and the Rexleigh bridges will have work done this summer. Willy Brinke, Washington County highway supervisor and Town Supervisors, met regarding the upcoming repairs. Dick Wilson was in attendance at this meeting..

**Spring Mtg** (Continued on page 3)

## Spring Mtg (Continued from page 2)

When the Buskirk Bridge work was finished last summer, there was no fanfare upon the opening. However, it is planned when the three bridges are completed, there will be a celebration for all three. Willy assured that no glue-lam would be used and that repairs will be made correctly.

The Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit will be sponsored by the NYSCBS at a cost to them of \$3,500 and will be at a museum in the Ithaca area. Dick wonders if this exhibit features bridges in the state in which it is currently displaying. An observer in the Harrisburg, PA area noted that fifty per cent of the bridges featured in the exhibit there were Pennsylvania bridges.

He recommends advertising this exhibit as it doesn't seem to be well attended in Pennsylvania.

John Dostal reports that Richard Sanders Allen is now in a nursing home.

The drawing yielded \$63.00. Table sales \$25.25. Total of \$88.25

**SPEAKER:** Joseph D. Conwill, writer, photographer, and editor of the quarterly publication of the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, the magazine, *Topics*. He focused his talk and slide presentation on the Vermont bridges from his book Images of America Vermont Covered Bridges Past and Present.

Respectfully submitted,  
Irene Barna, Secretary

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## Williamsville (Continued from page 1)

Originally, voters approved \$48,000 inspending for the town's match on the replacement project. At that same meeting, voters rejected a measure calling for the bridge to be replaced by a conventional bridge. Under the restoration plan, the town may not have to pay anything, however, some residents, concerned about traffic in Williamsville and South Newfane, want a modern bridge built in Williamsville.

Responding to resident's complaints, the Selectboard held a public meeting Thursday, April 27 at the New Brook Firehouse to discuss the bridge's future.

A chief concern is that the weight limit on the bridge is 20,000 pounds, not enough to support heavy trucks.

The planned restoration would increase the weight limit to 40,000 pounds, but some residents don't think that will be enough.

Trucks that are too heavy use Baker Brook Road and Parish Hill Road as a detour upsetting residents.

Some residents would like to see the bridge restored for historical reasons. Others see it as an effective brake on traffic that speeds through the villages of South Newfane and Williamsville.

As a solution to these concerns, the town of Newfane, the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Historic Bridge Committee are considering plans to build a modern base for the bridge, while retaining the rest of the historic structure. This would increase the bridges weight limit to 90,000 lbs.

Such a repair would have to be approved by the Historic Bridge Committee, which is made up of representatives from the Agency of Transportation, the Division for Historic Preservation, and the Federal Highway Authority.

RogerWhitcomb, VTrans Project Engineer, said replacing the bridge base would be a low priority repair based on that committee's criteria. The Historic Bridge Committee is meeting May 10 could have a decision.

[This item developed from articles in the Brattleboro Reformer by Andy Rosen. Our thanks to John Esau for forwarding the articles to us..]

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## Covered Bridge Community News Notes

### Jackson County seeks Bridge Funds

**Brownstown, IN, May 19, 2006** -- The Jackson County commissioners will seek federal money to restore all three of the County's covered bridges, which include the Shieldstown Bridge, the Bell's Ford Bridge, and the Medora Bridge.

The county park board wants to seek 100 percent funding from the 2008 federal budget for historic bridge restoration.

Commissioner President Gary Darlage would not agree to any more on the Bell Ford Bridge: "There is nothing left of the Bell Ford Bridge and I will not spend another tax dollar on it. Ninety percent of the people in this county think it is asinine to even consider rebuilding that bridge."

The three bridges were built to span the East Fork of the White River. The 331-foot, two span Shieldstown Bridge was built in 1876 using a Burr Truss. The 434-foot, three span Medora Bridge was built in 1875, also using the Burr-type truss.

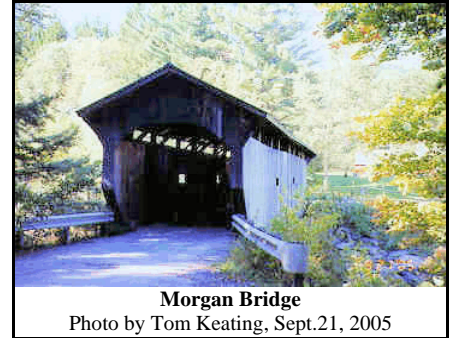
The 330-foot, two span Bell's Ford bridge collapsed into White River January 2, 2006

and has been removed. It was built in 1869 using a truss designed by Simeon S. Post, an iron truss combination with wood. [This item is taken in part from a "The Tribune" Article written by January Wetzel.. Our thanks to Charles Dinsmore for forwarding it to us]

## Belvedere Vermont's Morgan Bridge Closed

[WGN 45-08-07]

by Joe Nelson



Morgan Bridge

Photo by Tom Keating, Sept.21, 2005

**May 1, 2006** - The Morgan Covered Bridge was closed by the Town of Belvidere last fall on recommendation by the VAOT. There are severe bottom chord breaks. The town has applied for funds through the district VAOT office to make repairs.

The 63-foot Morgan Bridge was built in 1887 to span the North Branch of the Lamoille River using a queen post truss. The bridge serves Morgan Bridge Road off Vermont Route 109.

The Morgan is the last of the small bridges spanning the North Branch retaining its original floor system. All of the others, Church Street, Montgomery, Jaynes, and Lumber Mill bridges have been modified with self supporting roadways.

### Friends, funding sought for Huffman Bridge

**TELL CITY, IN, April 17, 2006** -Huffman Mill Bridge has friends in Perry and Spencer counties who want to help return the historic structure to its former glory, and are assembling the people and money necessary to do that. For additional information go to web address: <http://www.perrycountynews.com/articles/2006/04/10/headlines/h3/txt>

**CB Notes** (Continued on page 4)

CB Botes (Continued from page 3)

## du Panache Bridge Burned

[WGN 61-21-P1]  
by Gerald Arbour



du Panache Bridge  
Photo by Gerald Arbour May 3, 2006

**May 3, 2006** - Sad news for the du Panache Bridge (61-21-01). The bridge has been destroyed by fire (arsoned for sure) and the date is unknown (last fall, this winter?).

Roads are no longer in use in that area. There is no house around. The remnants (of the bridge were) discovered recently and the Town will have to wait months before it will be possible to clean the stream due to high water and bad roads to move heavy equipment on the site.

The police are looking for evidence but they have never found anyone guilty here in Quebec for bridge arson

## County Inmates Groom CB's

**Putnam County, IN, April 5, 2006** -- The county tourism board is committed to seeing that the county's historical landmarks are preserved by setting aside \$500 for the Putnam County Sheriff's Department which provides the labor to keep the [covered] bridges looking presentable to tourists.

During the summer, non-violent Putnam County Jail inmates clear out brush and trim overgrown grass from around the bridges. The tourism bureau has provided the weed trimmers and gasoline for the department for use on these projects. Maintenance of the bridges falls under the jurisdiction of the Putnam County Commissioners.

[Gleaned from Greencastle Banner Graphic article by Adam Coates, forwarded to James Crouse by R. Branson of the County History Preservation Society.- Ed.]

## Robert Cassidy Honored by Rutland Historical Society

Robert Cassidy was given a certificate of appreciation and a covered bridge picture at the Annual (Rutland Historical Society) Meeting for his valuable contributions to the Society.

Robert became a member of the Society in 1994 while a high school student. In 2002 he became a Life Member. Upon graduation from high school he became a member of the Vermont Air National Guard. In the meantime Robert has nearly completed a degree in history at Castleton State College

Robert has served both his country and the Society with distinction. He was involved with lighting for exhibits at the Society and shoveled snow from the Society walks on many a cold day. Between juggling college and his Air Guard activities, Robert has served as a member of the Society's Board of Directors for four years from 2001 to 2005 and has worked at the Society's exhibits at the Vermont History Expo on numerous occasions.

Robert has become a local and statewide covered bridge expert. He was the chief designer of a recent Rutland covered bridge exhibit at the Society that was also shown at the 2005 Vermont History Expo.

Often people say, "I don't have time". Robert is a wonderful example of "I can make time" for a community need.

[This item is from >i Rutland Historical Society newsletter. Our thanks to Irene Barna for forwarding the article and to Jim Davidson for permission to post it. Robert Cassidy is also a Life Member of the Vermont Historical Society and we appreciate him too. - Ed.]

## Work begins on the New Bridgeton Covered Bridge Likely to be finished in October

**BRIDGETON, IN, Apr. 10, 2006** -- Said Jim Meece, a Parke County commissioner and team member: The goal is to have the new bridge up in time for the 50th Parke County Covered Bridge Festival celebration. The Bridgeton Covered Bridge Association needs to raise more money to pay for the completion of this bridge. He said fundraisers will be on going throughout this year.

Anyone willing to help raise funds should call (765) 548-4095, Bart Barnes, treasurer of the Bridgeton Bridge Association; or Meece at (765) 498-1811.

## Mood Bridge Reconstruction could begin 2007 [WGN 39-09-07]

**Jan 25, 2006, East Rockhill, Twp, Pa. -** Reconstruction of the Mood Covered Bridge will begin early in 2007, PennDOT said. The bridge was torched June 22, 2004 by six highschool graduates.

The new bridge will be a replica of the original 126-foot Town Truss span built in 1873, however, the steel beam-self supporting roadway and abutments not fire damaged will be retained.

Assuming materials are on hand, construction will start in early 2007 to be completed by mid-summer, PennDOT said. Designers are currently working on the bid packages and work has started on obtaining the necessary permits. Bids will opened later this year. Bucks County is to assume ownership of the bridge.

The work is expected to cost approximately \$400,000, paid for by PennDOT and \$66,666 restitution from the arsonists as ordered by the Bucks County Court.

[This item condensed from a News-Herald clipping sent by Doris Taylor - Ed.]

## Historic Footbridge Lost

**Newmarket, NH, May 15, 2006** – A historic wooden footbridge in Newmarket washed out overnight.

The covered bridge crossed the Lamprey River where Main Street meets the river and was built in the early 1800s. As of noon, no other historic bridges or buildings have been reported severely damaged, state architectural historian Jim Garvin said [Concord Monitor Staff writer Chelsea Conaboy. Thanks to Tom Keating for forwarding this news item.]

## A New Parke County Indiana Website

**Parke County, IN, Apr.12, 2006** -- Says Katharine Marsoff: "My husband has started a website on living in Parke County. He is going often to Bridgeton and taking pictures of the progress that is being made. Please feel free to visit the site; <http://www.parkecountyliving.com>

# Letters

paint in the middle, a target so's you won't miss the bridge!" - Rick Allen

## Bridge Photo Project Complete

Good morning, my name is Bill Flagg & I live in Wayne, Pa. I've been a school bus driver for 31 years & have worked at summer camp's for 32 years. As a bus & van driver (started at Camp Dudley, oldest boy's camp in the USA-1885, in Westport, NY!)! on my day's off from Dudley, I took the Essex ferry across Lake Champlain to Charlotte & proceeded in different direction's to photograph as many as I could of Vermont Covered Bridge's!!!

I started in 1998, & I can proudly announce my project is now completed (as of April 10, 2006 my last photo's were taken at the very small, very tough to locate, very muddy, bridge at Kent's Corner)!!! I wanted to make this happen before I turned age 50 (April 16, Easter Sunday, 2006).

I had 4 beautiful spring day's starting last Saturday, April 8th, & I took 2-3 color photo's of the remaining 24 bridge's in northern Vermont, Lyndonville, Lemington, Danville, Lunenburg, Troy, Montgomery, Coventry, & Irasburg!!! I enjoyed this project a lot, met quite a few folks along the back road's, endured lots of spring MUD!!

I would like any info about VCBS you can send my way, thanks! Happy Bridging!  
- Bill Flagg

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# Membership

It is hard to believe but by the time you receive this issue of *The Bridger*, spring will be almost over. My how the seasons come and go so quickly. None the less, it has been a beautiful spring. Everything is fresh and clean, flowers have bloomed and many folks are already mowing their lawns.

Please join me in welcoming the following new members to the Vermont Covered Bridge Society: Alma Swanson, Champlin, MN, Dan Brock, Vernon, CT, Jean Carrington, Syracuse, NY and Henry Lambert, Colchester VT. A warm welcome to each of you! And congratulations to our newest, honorary life member, Joe Conwill.

As you travel this summer, please remember to mention the Vermont Covered Bridge Society to people you meet along the way. Better yet, why not request a few of the society's brochures so you will have them readily available to distribute as your travel throughout the months ahead? And don't forget to keep a few in your vehicle should you meet a 'new' bridger at one of our bridges. The brochure is designed with a membership form right inside. If you are interested in having some brochures sent to you, please contact Joe Nelson at [jcnelson@together.net](mailto:jcnelson@together.net)

Have a safe and wonderful summer and enjoy our bridges.

Yours in Bridging,

Membership Coordinator

## Upcoming Birthdays and Anniversaries:

### June

4	Charlie Elflein
9	Carleton Corby
20	Joanne Billie
27	Terry Shaw
28	Bob Kane

### July

1	Melvin & Judy Marolewski
5	Bill & Ada Jeffrey
11	Charles & Evelyn Lovastik
20	Bob & Trish Kane
22	Lou Zabbia
28	Raymond Gendron
28	Dick Roy
28	Jan Lewandoski

### August

3	Joanne Titcomb
5	Joe Nelson
8	Virginia Eckson
8	Evelyn Lovastik
10	Tom Carpenter
18	Ed & Irene Barna
23	George Conn
25	Jim & Linda Crouse
29	Melvin Marolewski
30	Hank Messing
30	Ada Jeffrey
31	Kathleen Havranek

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## Green River Covered Bridge

Joe: I recently received the following message regarding the Green River Covered Bridge and will answer her. This bridge has always been "barn red" since it was built in 1870 to replace a bridge washed out in the 1869 freshet.

I suppose that red was used as the ochre coloring was readily available and it was used with a milk base as red barns were. Am I correct to the best of your knowledge?

- Addison Minott, Green River, Vt.

Addison: I am researching covered bridges for the Historic American Engineering Record, a division of the National Park Service. We are currently in the final stages of putting together a traveling exhibition, "Covered Bridges: Spanning the American Landscape" <[www.sites.si.edu](http://www.sites.si.edu)>.

Part of the exhibit introduces cultural aspects of covered bridges, including how people started painting them red in the 20th century. Would you happen to know when the portals of the Green River Bridge were first painted red, or would you have any late 19th/early 20th century photographs of it? Thanks very much for your time.

- Lola Bennett

Addison: I think you are correct to the best of my knowledge. I am forwarding your note to some covered bridge historians to get their take on this. - Joe Nelson

Joe (et al): Greetings, the information about the paint is true, but the Green River Bridge, just the portal's, the sides of the bridge have never been painted. I don't know when the portal's were first painted. In Herbert Wheaton Congdon's book, *The Covered Bridge*, published in 1941, there is a portal view on page 54, fig.32. The portal shows no weathering, so I tend to go with that the portal was painted as early as 1940. Why just the portal all these years, is anybody's guess.  
- Richard Wilson

Joe: Yes, When I first saw the bridge in the 1930's, it was notable as sheltering the town highway equipment and all those mail boxes. I remember my wife remarking something about those persnickity Vermonters! "Green River, and green verdure all around, but red

# Legislation Watch

by Terry Shaw, Director, Legislation Watch

On May 9<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM Joe Nelson and I met at the Vermont Agency of Transportation in Montpelier. We had originally planned to meet with Transportation Secretary, Dawn Terrill, as arranged. Rather, due to a schedule change, we met with David Dill, Deputy Secretary, John LaBarge, Policy Research and Development coordinator and John Zicconi VAOT Director of Communication.

The purpose of the meeting was to present to the VAOT the proposal put forth at the VCBS spring meeting for locating Vermont covered bridges with easily recognizable signs. I explained that because our bridges are a primary attraction to visitors it would make sense to have some sort of road identification to make it easy for folks to locate them. David Dill asked if there were not already covered bridge locations available on maps.

Joe answered that the maps only give a rough indication of where the bridges are. In too many cases the bridge is out of sight from the traveled road, the maps do not reveal the actual location.

We pointed out that all secondary roads served by bridges are marked at its junction with a main road with a weight limit sign on a signpost.



Sample Coverd Bridge Sign  
Photo by Joe Nelson 5/6/06

It was our suggestion to add a marker to those signposts. A sample marker was offered, a rendering of a covered bridge printed onto a rectangular tag that is also used to mark highways with location codes. We felt that since these were already being manufactured in quantity it would be cost effective to have a version for the purpose of covered bridge location. We also explained that the membership of VCBS would put up

the locator signs if the state would make them and give approval for placement.

David Dill explained that there are strict rules for road signage and that any modification to existing signs would have to be approved. John LeBarge also indicated that there might be a union issue if VCBS members were to do the work. We asked if the Jeffords funds were available for something like this. No one knew the answer.

It seemed clear to all present that our proposal has merit. John LaBarge suggested that we might want to make the sign more visible by changing the color to red. It was left that the three issues mentioned (sign rules, union issues and Jeffords money) would be researched. Joe and I were assured that we would be kept informed.

Our thanks to Representative Rich Westman for helping us to make this contact. Unfortunately we received the following on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

Dear Mr. Nelson & Mr. Shaw: It was very nice meeting with you the other day regarding your covered bridge sign proposal. After doing some research and meeting with several different people, it became clear that according to the federal M.U.T.C.D. sign standards, that we would not be able to attach your sign to the "Legal Load Limit" sign post. The load limit signs are considered "traffic control devises" and installing what would be considered a non-conforming directional sign is prohibited. There are two other options. One would be to utilize an OBDS sign (Official Business Directory Sign) which would allow the use of your covered bridge symbol and could state the name of the covered bridge and the distance to it.

However, you would have to purchase these signs at a cost of \$75.00 (includes installation) and \$60/yr. maintenance fee. I believe the cost would be prohibitive for you.

The only other legal option available to us is to install a 10 x 18 inch sign above the load limit sign stating "Covered Bridge". This would cost the agency \$40 per sign plus labor for installation. Currently, our agency revenue is declining and falling below projections. I'm afraid that justification for such an expense is not practical at this time.

While we believe you have a valid point in trying to help people locate our historic covered bridges more easily, we are limited by state and federal law and our budget as to what we can legally do in terms of signage. Please feel free to contact us if you have any further ideas or questions. Thank you.  
John LaBarge, Policy, Research & Development Information Coordinator, VAOT. □□□

# Events

Events Committee News  
by Johnny Esau, Director, Events Committee

**VERMONT HISTORY EXPO 2006** will be held the weekend of June 24-25th, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at the Tunbridge World's Fair Grounds. "For the fourth year, the State Chamber of Commerce has designated the Vermont History Expo as a 'Vermont Top Ten Summer Event.'"

**The 7th Annual Fall VCBS meeting** will be held at the Montshire Museum in Norwich, Vermont on September 30, 2006. Following a brief meeting we will view the Smithsonian Institute's Covered Bridge exhibit. This exhibit will feature Covered Bridges in America.

For more information, including exhibition descriptions and other tour schedules, visit <[www.sites.si.edu](http://www.sites.si.edu)> .

Our cost will be \$6.00. Not only do we get to see the covered bridge exhibit, but we can see the rest of the museum as well. There will be coffee, tea and snacks to be had during our meeting. Lunch will not be provided. You can bring your own lunch or there are plenty of places to eat at in Hanover.

## Events' Committee Notes

Thanks to everyone who helped out at the Woodstock Meeting.

Is there anyone interested in being officially on the committee that would like to help with setting up & cleaning up our meetings and selling tickets for the raffles? If so, contact Johnny Esau at: [jesau@adelphia.net](mailto:jesau@adelphia.net)

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This has been a very good year for VCBS events so far and the out look is for further successful gatherings:

The April 29th all member meeting was well attended and had an outstanding speaker. Special note -- by vote of the Board of Directors, Joseph Conwill, the main presenter, was awarded a life membership for his generous services to VCBS.

We have a new venue for the History Expo in June, the Industrial Building. This promises to be a much better location for us than was Floral Hall.

We have an excellent venue for the September all member meeting - Montshire Museum in Norwich - where a related covered bridge exhibit will also be taking place.

My thanks to all of the VCBS members who contribute and continue to contribute time and effort to these events. These are highlight VCBS commitments.

One other matter before I close: Thanks so much to Steve Miyamoto for his past years of dedicated service as Editor of the Bridger. And welcome to Steve Wheaton as the new editor of our vital newsletter. Steve W. has been a member since July, 2005. We look forward to the continuing editorial excellence we have enjoyed so far.

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### THE NORTHEAST POW /MIA NETWORK

The goals of our organization match those of activists nationwide in our approach to the Prisoner of War /Missing in Action issue: the return of all LIVE American POW/MIAs, repatriation of the remains of those who have died, and comprehensive explanations for cases where the previous two options do not exist. Our efforts are directed toward the most complete resolution of this issue for all conflicts, with endeavors to establish awareness in our Country that will reduce such losses to the lowest possible level during present and future operations against America's enemies.

Activism in this arena must be coupled with great attention paid to maintaining physical reminders of the issue's continued significance. Symbolism in the form of the international logo's appearance on flags, pins, decals, articles of clothing, and accessories bolsters awareness. Wearing POW/MIA

bracelets honors those individuals who still wait and evokes conversations on the issue. Strongest of these visual messages has been provided by weekly POW/MIA Vigils maintained every Thursday night in Meredith, New Hampshire (since August, 1989) and Fair Haven, Vermont (since August, 1993).

Conversations addressing every facet of the issue are held. Discussion and debate are encouraged in this forum, which is open to all.

We are involved in acquiring and disseminating information on this issue. Presentations and discussions with community organizations, schools, veterans' organizations, and through a broad spectrum of events allow us to convey evidence and our concerns to the public. We are actively involved in the legislative process, as we attempt to provide maximum protection for those who serve our Country, and for their families and loved ones should loss occur. We attempt to address the needs of families and returned POW/MIAs, and assist in coordinating activities with associated groups and promoting effective information flow.

We are a volunteer organization, veterans and non-veterans, using awareness, communication, education, legislation, and compassion to assuage the pain associated with one of the most devastating outcomes of service to one's Country. As we honor POW/MIAs, returned and still waiting to come home, we aggressively pursue means to return the missing and protect those serving.

Don Amorosi, NY Chair Vets Serving Vets  
1-518-792-2057

□□□

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