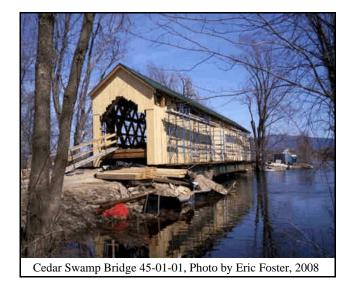


The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter - Summer 2008

Cedar Swamp Bridge Renovation by Joe Nelson



April 22, 2008 - The water is still too high to do any work on the new abutments, said Eric Foster, Vtrans Resident Engineer, "so we are working on siding and spraying the bridge with fire proofing and insecticides. The contractor is hopeful to begin abutment work the week of the 28th. We still have considerable work on the abutments and approaches. They still want to be done in June, we'll see if Mother Nature agrees."

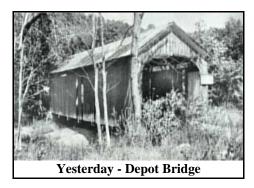
The renovation of the Swamp Road Bridge (Salisbury Station Bridge) is proceeding as usual. With the primary requirement of Vtrans in mind—highway safety, and the primary requirement for preservation by the National Register of Historic Sites, the engineers on the job are challenged daily to fulfill both. Eric Foster, of Vtrans, and Jim Ligon, of Alpine Construction, Stillwater, N.Y. are up to the task.

It is expected that 100-plus year old wooden bridges hold secrets that even the most thorough pre-construction engineering inspection can't uncover. The "Swamp" bridge hasn't disappointed. While disassembling the structure to replace known rot damaged truss members, members thought to be sound were found to be rotted also. At least one-third more than the thirty-odd lattice members specified in the contract were found to need replacement. Surprises were also found in both upper and lower chords.

March weather and snow melt, caused Otter creek to cover Cornwall's part of Swamp Road while hurling ice chunks, trees and other flotsam at the bridge under construction.

An Old Bridge Comes To Life* (A Look Back) by Mrs. Orrin Lincoln

BACK IN 1872, Harrison "Tip" Chamberlain, Townshend's famous bridge builder put up what we know as Depot bridge. High water never effected the bridge as it was over a setback of the West River. It was then over a narrow dirt road which led to the former Townshend railroad station. Later this road went off Route 30. This bridge was of sturdy construction, Queenpost truss and was built to replace a poorly built uncovered bridge.



In later years the bridge was used very little, but a great attraction for covered bridge buffs who were riding on beautiful Route 30 where they could also see two other covered bridges, West Dummerston, and Scott bridge now retired from service and is an Historic Site.

During the late 1950's we were alerted that this bridge was definitely in the path of the new flood control dam being built in Townshend.

Since no place was found to have the bridge placed elsewhere, it was taken down, boards marked and stored at Mr. Aubrey Stratton's place in West Townshend. Mr. Stratton, selectman of Townshend, had been of much help in trying to find a place for this old span.

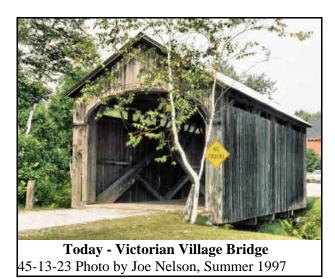
Several things came up and we believed at one time the old span would be put up in Weston, Vt., and at another we thought it might go to Weathersfield, Conn. But at Mr. Stratton's it remained and as you know, not improving.

Finally we heard rumors that maybe our old span would again be erected. It seemed Mr. V rest Orton, owner of famous Country Store in Weston, was to build a Victorian Village on land he had purchased in sight of Route 103 in Rockingham, Vermont.

(Bridge Comes To Life continued on page 1)

(Bridge Comes To Life continued from page 1)

Up to West Townshend to see Mr. Stratton, for we knew he would know if anything was to be done about re-erecting Depot bridge. Here we learned the bridge was indeed to be erected and a road built by the town of Rockingham leading off Route 103, and through the bridge to the new store.



As some of you know, Mr. Orton's Country Store is a very attractive reality and nearby over a pond that Mr. Orton had made, the Depot bridge has come to life again, this time only about half as long and now a kingpost truss but with a very sturdy. appearance and as you look at portals you feel you are indeed looking at Depot bridge. Mr. Aubrey Stratton made the pond and put up the bridge.

In visiting the Country Store and talking with Mr. Orton we learn there is to be a mill nearby and one can get beautiful pictures of the bridge or of the bridge and store. So once again it is used for limited traffic, no trucks allowed.

*[From the Connecticut River Valley Covered Bridge Society Bulletin, Summer 1967]

Art - In the Eye of the Beholder

[This article is about fighting graffiti and how communities have come together to eradicate it. As bridgers we know how our covered bridges have been disfigured with it. The article has some ideas worth pursuing and two web-sites that have promising products (marked *). If a reader has had experience with these products in protecting covered bridges, please contact the *Bridger*. Our thanks to *Vermont Local Roads Program* at St Michael's College for their permission to reprint this article.]

Graffiti can be a problem on signs especially in large cities. It may come as a relief that there is "a community Anti-Graffiti Team in Burlington that includes police officers, business owners and other community members [who] came together in January [2007] to create an anti-graffiti plan that proposes artistic alternatives to random tagging, provides education for taggers on the aesthetic effects of their vandalism, and impose a stiffer penalty for anyone convicted of tagging."



Graffiti has been a problem for work forces for a long time. "The Graffiti Removal Team was created in 2001 to scrub walls clean, but it hasn't stopped taggers. Taggers don't always consider their art vandalism or defacement, but the City Ordinance calls for a \$500 fine on anyone caught defacing property." (City Gets Tough with Graffiti, <u>Burlington Free</u> <u>Press</u> May 3, 2007).

Communities are tackling graffiti vandalism with a variety of tools. A comprehensive, systematic approach that includes continuous education, community involvement, improved technologies for removal, updated ordinances, and consistent enforcement and prosecution is recommended. For an excellent list of best practices visit the Graffiti Hurts web site at www.graffitihurts.org.

Anti-Graffiti sprays exist to prevent graffiti from permanently ruining a sign. New Dimensions Solutions puts out a product known as The Graffiti Shield System. It boasts that the Graffiti Shield System "may be [sprayed] on objects such as public phones, furniture and signs. They do not yellow, peel, flake, chip, nor crack. They enhance the look of all materials and paints. They help prevent rust and corrosion. It resists damage from salt water and is therefore useful on boats and ships. ... The Graffiti Shield System is commonly used to protect murals from graffiti vandalism ... and has been successfully used since 1989."

(Art continued on page 3)

(Art continued from page 2)

Barco Products provides a soy-based non-hazardous and bio-degradable cleaning solution. For a sample, look for SoySafe Graffiti Remover on Barco Products website.

The Town of New Haven coats its signs with a product called *Night Owl* purchased through State Chemical. The main purpose of this product is to increase reflectivity, but an added benefit is the protection it gives from damage including graffiti. Scott Busier states that "this spray adhesive peels off and can be re-applied if damaged." A can of *Night Owl* covers twelve 12x18 signs. Busier states the one downfall is, "the adhesive will only work if the sign is 70-90 degrees at the time of application. This forces us to swap out the signs and take them to the shop to warm up before re-applying." State Chemical will be discontinuing this product in the near future, so stock up now if interested.

VTrans purchases a product called *Graffiti Wipes* from Total Solutions (1-414-354-6417). VTrans Traffic Shop states that they've been pretty happy with the product so far. It's nontoxic, non-flammable and non-hazardous. It can also be purchased through Interstate Products. Call Vermont Local Roads if you'd like a copy of the *Graffiti Wipes* MSDS. Interstate Products also carries *Graffiti Guard*, a product that acts as a protective barrier making graffiti removal easier.

For more information visit the websites of the above mentioned sources. <u>http://burlingtongrt.blogspot.com/</u> <u>www.barcoproducts.com</u> <u>http://ndclean.com/graffitishield.htm</u> <u>http://www.interstateproducts.com/graffiti.htm</u> * <u>http://www.statechemical.com/</u> * <u>http://www.graffitihurts.org</u> <u>http://www.kab.org</u>



by Bob & Trish Kane Question #7 - Why Preserve our Covered Bridges?

Joseph Conwill, ME - This is a good question, and the answer is not so obvious as it seems. Covered bridge preservation is part of the preservation of older architecture and landscapes in general, but why not just tear down everything old and build anew?

The reason is that continuity in landscape is a factor in developing a sense of identity. Without a large number of

familiar and beautiful landmarks, I think people are more likely to develop rootless alienation. This can lead to destructive behavior, or to identification with artificial groupings such as urban gangs or extremist cults.

Covered Bridges should also be preserved simply because so many people like them, but here we need to be careful. Construction of new covered bridges is not a valid substitute for preserving the old ones which have a true depth of history.

Ben and June Evans, PA - "Why Preserve Our Covered Bridges?" Because they are historic treasures that display the architectural genius and excellent craftsmanship of our forefathers as well as helping to illustrate one of the facets of our transportation system.

Their beauty and charm attract tourists – artists and photographers especially – and help contribute to the economic welfare of the area in which they are found. In some parts of our nation, tourism is listed as the second most important economic factor.

Sean T. James, P.E., SECB, NH - My answer to the question is two-fold; the first is to preserve an important part of our history and the second is that in many locations the bridges can continue to serve as a vital part of our infrastructure.

I believe the audience to this question does not need to be reminded of the importance of covered bridges in our past. I also believe that they can be an important part of future as well. Bypassing covered bridges and preserving them for pedestrian use, such as being done with the Haverhill-Bath Covered Bridge preserves the bridge for future generations and allows a more extensive, and safer, viewing experience.

Covered bridges can also be modified with reversible measures that work in tandem with the original fabric to serve heavier, modern vehicles loads. This is the case for the Union Village Covered Bridge in Thetford, VT where the bridge was preserved and assisted with heavier loads through the use of glulam beams under the bridge. The beams share the load with the original bridge and don't take the full load as is the case with steel beams. To me this is a great compromise as the original bridge is left intact, yet it can carry heavier loads that are critical to the Towns life safety requirements due to the 14 mile detour to a 'modern' bridge.

Bob & Trish Kane, NY - If you look up the word *preserve* or *preservation* using a Thesaurus, you come up with some interesting synonyms: protect, conserve, safeguard, save, care for, keep, continue, and sustain. Each of them defines reasons why we should preserve our covered bridges.

For those of us dedicated to their preservation, it is obvious we preserve them for their historical significance, their beauty and their connection to our forefathers. But most importantly, it is important to preserve them to learn from the engineering techniques and the craftsmanship from the past. They are unlike any we see today and they should be preserved at all costs. Once these wonderful examples are gone, they are gone forever.

John Weaver, VT - Indeed, why save CBs? Not only for their historic significance, but for their useful function as local transportation structures. Many still serve this vital second purpose on town roads in Vermont.

Rehabilitating covered bridges costs no more (and often less) than the construction of new bridges at the same or adjacent sites.

The tourist attraction value and historic preservation value of rehabilitated covered bridges is an added benefit.

Miriam Wood, OH - The covered timber truss bridge as we know it today originated in Europe in the Middle Ages and maybe even earlier, and were very common there. When our European ancestors came over here in the 1700 and 1800s, they brought with them the knowledge and skills to build these bridges. With all the timber available here, thousands of covered bridges were built across the United State and Canada.

Hundreds of our old covered bridges still stand, many of them doing what they were built to do: carrying daily traffic. The covered bridge is an important part of our engineering and historic heritage and we must preserve them so future generations will learn about this important part of our country's transportation history.

Thomas E. Walczak, PA - Since the beginning of time, man has employed his God-given talents and ingenuity to develop practical solutions to problems to make his quality of life better for himself and future generations, to erect monuments to immortalize individuals who have greatly contributed to their society or accomplished great feats, or to leave lasting artifacts or works of art which portray the beauty of life as they knew or perceived it to be or to entertain our senses. Many of the great cultures or civilizations have left buildings, monuments, and various artifacts which have endured to the present time and have stood the test of time and are regarded to be of value for future generations to learn from and to enjoy. The ancient Egyptians have left the great pyramids, the Greeks and Romans have left us their monuments and various examples of architecture, the Renaissance painters have left great works of art, various composers have left us with classical music, while countless inventors and scientists have left us with their own individual contributions which have improved the quality of life for many, etc, etc.

Covered bridges too, were a practical solution to fulfill a basic transportation need and have endured the test of time and are indeed most worthy of preservation. These 19^{th} and 20^{th} Century landmarks are a testament to the pioneer bridge

builders that speak of the values, character, and work ethic that made up these men and who contributed greatly to aid the flow of commerce and to spread expansion and development of a growing American nation. And too, there is something to be said about the beauty of a covered bridge which is comprised of natural materials and looks in harmony with its natural surroundings. Each covered bridge is unique with individual characteristics and setting and so we must make every effort to preserve each one as is humanly possible.

And so, I believe we have a moral obligation to preserve these historic icons from our past that have been entrusted to our care. We are just one generation in a long succession of those who preceded us and those who will follow us so it is imperative that we try to preserve these remaining examples for future generations to learn from and to enjoy. If we fail to fulfill this obligation then our covered bridges will disappear forever and future generations will never know the value and beauty of these magnificent landmarks. The time is now and we must continue the legacy that has been entrusted to us. It is my hope that future generations will also continue to recognize these values and carry on the tradition of preserving our beloved historic covered bridges after we are gone.



A Covered Bridge Video Fundraiser?

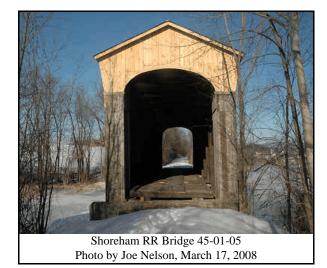
VCBS Life Member Ellen Everitz has come up with an idea to raise funds to support covered bridge preservation. Why not, she asks, create a Vermont covered bridge video featuring as many of the bridges as possible. It would be narrated, with each bridge's history and highlights.

There is, Ellen says, a local production company. "Their work is excellent. They made several Vermont videos featuring many of the covered bridges, which I have. The bridges are only featured as part of the Vermont 's scenery as a tourist attraction. They have no knowledge of the bridges. We need someone from the VCBS to furnish information. The production company will do the rest. You need to contact them to make arrangements. Their address is Odyssey Productions of Vermont, P.O. Box 929, Williston, VT 05495, phone: 658-6554."

Is there someone in the VCBS organization who would be willing to lead such a venture? For the benefit of the bridges? If so contact Joe Nelson at <u>jcnelson@together.net</u>.



East Shoreham RR Covered Bridge [VT-01-05]



March 22, 2008 - Asked for comment on the East Shoreham Railroad covered Bridge rehabilitation project, John Weaver, Vtrans Project Manager replied: "The project field work was completed by mid January 2008. The top chord and roof are new and approximately half of the bottom chords have been replaced. Otherwise - diagonals, floor framing, siding and bracing are minimally repaired/replaced or original components. There are a few brand new triangular metal bearing plates. As you probably remember, this heavy bridge required extensive shoring during rehabilitation – looks a lot better now. The standing seam metal roof should last many years." — Joe Nelson

Highlands, NC, May 25, 2008 - The old Bagley covered bridge serving Warner, New Hampshire, was taken down in the 1960s and stored. Built in the 1830s to cross the Warner River, it now spans a creek in downtown Highlands, North Carolina to serve as an entry to The Bascom Center for the Visual Arts.

Arnold Graton of Arnold Graton Associates of New Hampshire played matchmaker when he saw an article by a Bascom supporter looking for a covered bridge. Arrangements were made and Arnold and his team transported and reassembled the old bridge. Onlookers were treated to the sight of the old bridge being moved over the creek by oxen using Milton Graton's Capstan.

The recycled span is dedicated as the Will Henry Stevens Bridge.

[This article based on Citizen-Times.com article forwarded by VCBS reporter Tom Keating -Ed.]

Pulp Mill Bridge at Middlebury Selectboard

April 7, 2008, Middlebury, Vt. - Below is a Draft Copy of the applicable portion of the minutes of the Selectboard meeting relative to Pulp Mill Bridge:.

<u>Members present</u>: John Tenny, Dean George, Bill Perkins, Craig Bingham. Victor Nuovo, and Don Keeler.

<u>Staff Present</u>: Town Manager Bill Finger, Assistant Town Manager Joe Colangelo, Town Planner Fred Dunnington, and Director of Operations Dan Werner. Several members of the community were present at the meeting, which was televised on MCTV and reported by John Flowers of The Addison Independent.

5. Pulp Mill Bridge: Engineering Analysis Presentation, Discussion of Historic Preservation Easement Finance & Maintenance Agreement with Weybridge Select Board

Joe Nelson of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society, covered bridge expert Jan Lewandoski, John Weaver of the Vermont Agency of Transportation, and Weybridge Select Board members Gale Hurd, Peter James, Steve Smith were in attendance to further discuss renovations to the Pulp Mill Bridge and the Finance and Maintenance Agreement proposed by the State. Hoyle-Tanner representative Sean James gave a power point presentation outlining the report generated by the engineering firm commissioned by VTrans to renovate the Pulp Mill Bridge, which is jointly owned by the Towns of Middlebury and Weybridge. The year-long construction is estimated at a cost of \$2,250,000 in 2008 dollars, and \$2,600,000 in 2011 dollars.

Town Manager Bill Finger asked what the Town could expect in terms of life expectancy of the bridge upon completion. Mr. James explained that it would depend on maintenance, but that a newly renovated bridge should last between 30-50 years.

Dean George stressed the point that taking the Pulp Mill Bridge out of service for a year, in addition to the underpass construction in the downtown area, before the Cross Street Bridge is constructed, would create a major impact on the community. Dean asked about the possibility of a temporary bridge at the Pulp Mill Bridge location.

Mr. James estimated the cost to build a temporary one-lane bridge to be a million dollars; however, he was not convinced a temporary bridge could be built given the proximity of the houses on either side of the Pulp Mill Bridge. John Weaver of the Vermont Agency of Transportation also noted that permitting would likely delay construction for two years, and the State would have to re-apply for additional funds from the federal government, making the 2011 construction date more realistic.

(Pulp Mill Bridge continued on page 6)

(Pulp Mill Bridge continued from page 5)

Noting that the Towns have relied on the expertise of Jan Lewandoski over the years to make recommendations concerning renovations to the bridge, Bill Finger asked if the Towns of Weybridge and Middlebury were locked into the Hoyle approach. Also, given the \$2.6 million price tag in 2011 dollars, Bill suggested it might be more practical to consider moving the historical bridge to another location and constructing a more modern one in its place.

Mr. Weaver responded that the State is open to all recommendations; however, the federal funds ear-marked for the historical bridge are not available should it be taken out of service.

Jan Lewandoski reviewed his comments contained in his April 1st memorandum to the Town Manager. Mr. Lewandoski suggested that the critical piece that needs replacing in the bridge is the bottom chord, an original structural error that has been left uncorrected since [the 1850s]. He added that the top chord should be replaced in areas where rotting appears, the bracing needs to be checked, and he has consistently advocated that the entire stringer level should be removed and replaced with one layer of decking in order to reduce the weight of the bridge.

Chairman John Tenny noted that Mr. Lewandoski has brought forth a different approach that may be in conflict with Historic Preservation guidelines. Weybridge Select Board member Gail Hurd suggested that the Historic Bridge Committee consider Jan Lewandoski's recommendations, specifically taking into account replacing the bottom chord and repair error of 18[50] so that the renovations for the bridge may be made at a lower cost.

Noting that an estimated 1,900 cars pass through Pulp Mill Bridge on a daily basis, Bill Finger asked how much the Towns should be spending to maintain the bridge at this time, and if the repairs are a matter of urgency. Mr. James advised that VTrans continues to inspect the bridge, however, the east truss is deteriorating and is in need of attention.

Regarding the Finance and Maintenance Agreement in connection with Pulp Mill Bridge, Bill Finger suggested the Board delay any decision until the rehabilitation effort is resolved. Both members of the Middlebury and Weybridge select boards concurred. - reported by Irene Barna



Pulpmill Bridge [WGN 45-01-04], Traveler beware! Photo by Ed Barna, May 25, 2008

Membership

Vice President Joe Nelson has made use of the newly acquired laptop computer and POWER_POINT equipment to produce the information and pictures that consisted of the sessions conducted for the ILEAD (Institute of Lifelong Education At Dartmouth) classes for the autumn session in 2007. No new members were acquired from the class, but the program has been requested to be presented again , with Joe Nelson and Neil Daniels as presenters, as a means for recruitment purposes as well as educating prospective members with a better knowledge of Vermont's covered bridges.

- Suzanne Daniels, Chair, Membership Committee

VCBS member birthdays and anniversaries

June

04 Charlie Elflein 07 Carolyn Clapper 07 Robert & Barbara McPherson 09 Carleton Corby 10 Ron & Marie Bechard 14 Dick & June Roy 20 Joanne Billie 27 Glen Hall 27 Terry Shaw 28 Bob Kane 30 Lionel & Debra Whiston

July

04 Neil & Suzanne Daniels 05 Bill & Ada Jeffrey 11 Charles & Evelyn Lovastik 11 Marie Bechard 20 Bob & Trish Kane 22 June Roy 22 Lou Zabbia 28 Ray Gendron 28 DickRoy 28 Jan Lewandoski

August

03 Joanna Titcomb 08 Evelyn Lovastik 08 Virginia Eckson 10 Thomas Carpenter 15 Ed Rhodes 17 Euclid Farnham 18 Ed & Irene Barna 23 George Conn 25 Jim & Linda Crouse 25 Leo Fleury 29 Ray & Dolores Gendron 30 Ada Jeffrey 30 Henry Messing 30 Robert McPherson 31 Kathleen Havranek 31 N. David Charkes



by Johnny Esau, Events Chair

• VERMONT HISTORY EXPO 2008 will be held the weekend of June 21-22nd, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at the Tunbridge World's Fair Grounds. "For the sixth year, the State Chamber of Commerce has designated the Vermont History Expo as a 'Vermont Top Ten Summer Event.'" Contact Irene Barna at <u>ibarna@middlebury.edu</u> to sign up to work at the booth.

• Our 9th Annual Fall VCBS Meeting will be held on October 11, 2008. There will be more information in the Fall Issue of the Bridger.



I have received some excellent bridge-watch reports lately from Jack Tecce (Thetford covered bridges) and Wil Thompson (Scott covered bridge). Please keep up the good work! Bridgewatch is so vital to the well being of covered bridges.

I am (as many members are also) looking forward to an excellent History Expo in Tunbridge this June. I hope to meet and talk with many members on the Tunbridge Fair Grounds. I also hope to meet and recruit new members for VCBS.

Yours in bridging, John Weaver, President, VCBS

VCBS Officers

John Weaver, President
Joseph Nelson, Vice President & Board of Directors contact
Irene Barna, Secretary
Neil Daniels, Treasurer

Bridger Newsletter Staff

•Steve Wheaton, Editor •Joseph Nelson, Staff Writer 802.899.2093 jcnelson@together.net

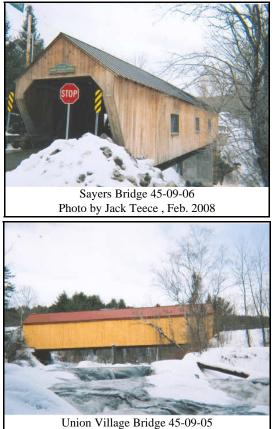
Bridgers - Add Spice to Your Covered Bridge Visits by Joe Nelson

VCBS member and Bridge-watcher Jack Tecce sent Bridge Watch Reports and photos for Thetford Center's Sayres Bridge and Union Village's bridge to John Weaver this February past.

Jack reported that the bridges were free of accumulated dirt and debris; the drainage areas were free of debris, and run-off from deck drains were kept clear of the bridges; brush was kept clear of the bridge superstructures; the river channels were clear; the signage maintained and visible; the roofs water tight and siding in good repair; excessive snow accumulation was removed; the road approaches maintained; and the approach railings straight, and continuous.

He reports that the approach rails at the Sayres Bridge were covered in snow but could be assumed to be straight, continuous and maintained (they were renewed last summer), and that one of the "main beams" was damaged in the Union Village Bridge.

Jack's report was guided by a checklist form published in the VCBS Bridge Watch Membership Handbook. When you are visiting our bridges this season, why not make your visits more interesting by using the check list forms and give each bridge a good look. Photos of the problems you may find would be invaluable in helping to get the problems fixed. The handbook and the forms are available through Bridge-watch Coordinator John Weaver, or through *The Bridger*: jcnelson@together.net, or call Joe Nelson at 899-2093.



Union Village Bridge 45-09-05 Photo by Jack Teece, Feb. 2008



Transportation Needed

We have some members who have faithfully attended society meetings for many years. These folks have contributed mightily to our success and have long been part of what we do, but unfortunately they now lack the means to join our gatherings, events that have long been part of their lives.

There are three members in Lyndon and another in Shelburne who would come to our meetings if they could find a way. If you can provide transportation for our friends, please contact me: Joe Nelson, 802.899.2093, or jcnelson@together.net.

Pl	ease sign me up or renew my membership in the VCBS:
	(Memberships valid to end of current calendar year) (Business or Society please provide name of contact person)
	□New member □Renewing member
Name	2
Street	<u>.</u>
City_	
State/	/Zip
phone	e/email
Make	e check type of membership you want:: Student-\$8 Individual-\$10 Family-\$15 Life-single-\$100 Life-couple-\$115 Business/Organization/Municipality-\$25 all checks for dues and donations payable to the Vermo ed Bridge Society. Mail to:
	The V.C.B.S., Inc., .Attn: Treasurer P.O Box 97, Jeffersonville, VT 05464-0097