

The Bridger



The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter – Summer 2013

PREZ SEZ

At the spring meeting in Bartonville, Neil Daniels brought up the idea of having VCBS name and contact information posted in each covered bridge. This is a very good idea and will be pursued further. It might be possible to draft short informational messages about each bridge (date, builder, etc.) with something like "for further information contact VCBS etc.", print and laminate these, and attach them to the interior of the bridge. Certainly an idea that is worth a lot of thought. More on this at the fall meeting.

Bill Carroll, President, VCBS

The Election of Officers is Starting NOW!

With this newsletter issue, we begin the process of electing Society officers for two-year terms to begin January 1, 2014.

Starting with this, the Summer Issue of *The Bridger*, the Board of Directors is asking the Vermont Covered Bridge Society Membership for candidates to run for the offices of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. Non-incumbent candidates are asked to introduce themselves to the membership by letter to *The Bridger* and tell us why they are seeking a leadership role. The letters will be published in the Fall Issue of *The Bridger* together with the ballot. Voters will return the ballots by November 30, the deadline for the Winter Issue in which the winners will be announced. The incumbent officers will serve until midnight, December 31, 2013.

The Society bylaws governing elections was changed by the Board of Directors last February. The bylaws now state that if there are no challenging candidates for any of the four offices, election ballots will not be issued and the Board of Directors will confirm the slate.

The cause of this change is the membership voting record. When incumbent officers are not challenged by new candidates, ballot returns have fallen off. In the last election of approximately 200 ballots, only 14 were returned.

Every member in good standing is entitled to run for office and to vote. This includes the adult members listed on a Family membership and the contact person on a Business or Organization/Municipality membership.

This is an open organization and all members are encouraged to participate, giving of their time and talent. If you don't want to run for one of the four offices, volunteer to join the board of directors by chairing a standing committee or a Bridge-watch area. Also, please see the "Important Notice" elsewhere in this issue.

Candidates or volunteers will please contact acting election coordinator, Joe Nelson; jcnelson@together.net or PO Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465

The VCBS Members Handbook Updated

The VCBS handbook has been updated to include the changes made by the Vermont Covered Bridge Society Board of Directors annual meeting in February 2012, and is now available in either PDF or printed form.

The handbook describes the VCBS Agenda, or reason for being; VCBS organization, including the objectives of the Standing Committees and the makeup of the Board of Directors. Also described is the membership expense policy and a printable copy of the expense account form.

An appendix includes our constitution and bylaws, our covered bridge preservation policy, and our Save-a-bridge fund.

For your copy, contact Joe Nelson at jcnelson@together.net, or PO Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465.

**Fourteenth Annual Spring Meeting
Saturday, April 27, 2013 Meeting Minutes**

The Fourteenth Annual Spring meeting of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society was held in the Bartonsville Grange in Bartonsville, Vermont on Saturday, April 27, 2013.

President Bill Carroll called the meeting to order at 10:05AM. Nineteen members and guests were in attendance.

Minutes A motion to not have the reading of minutes of the Annual Fall meeting held in Middlebury on September 29, 2012 was made by Ray Hitchcock and seconded by John Weaver. Motion passed. Meeting minutes are always available for reading on the VCBS web site and are published in the issue of *The Bridger* following the meeting.

Treasurer's Report as of March 8, 2013
Neil Daniels, Treasurer, reports the following Income Statement; for the period January 01, 2012 thru December 31, 2012:

Income	
Donations.....	\$395.00
Dues	630.00
Events	164.00
Sales	133.00
Total income	\$1,322.00
Expenses	
Director Grants\$2,251.00	for Arlington Green
Bridge	
Postage, printing (Bridger).....	508.00
Events	355.00
Office expenses	86.00
Total expense	\$3,200.00
Transfer to Save-A-Bridge Fund.....	\$583.00
Total outflows	\$3,783.00
Income less expense.....	--\$ 2,461

BALANCE SHEET

Union Bank (Morrisville, VT) Checking	
01/01/12 =	\$5,404.00
12/31/12	\$2,943.00
Change in bank balance.....	--\$2,461.00

SAVE-A-BRIDGE FUND

Value 01/01/12.....	\$6,123.00
Added 03/09/12.....	583.00
Stock gains in 2012	455.00
Value 12/31/1	not available
Value at 01/26/13	\$7,161.00
(not in market; but in cash)	

PORTFOLIO GAIN IN 2012 6.79%

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by John Weaver and seconded by Ray Hitchcock. Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership

Read by Joe Nelson in absence of Membership Chair Suzanne Daniels:

Please join me in welcoming new members to our Society, all of whom joined us since our last annual fall meeting: Edward Lowe of Assonet, MA; Merrilyn Towne of San Diego, CA; Joseph and Diane Charles, Jr of Granville, OH; and Wendy Payson of Southampton, MA.

Many thanks to our members who participated in our Annual Renewal Drawing by sending in their dues before the December 31st deadline. As in years past, Ruth Nelson's first grade reading group drew the winners: Robert McPherson of Akron, OH and Robert Page of Brattleboro, VT. Robert McPherson chose the book Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges as his prize and Robert Page chose the two-year free membership.

Our membership now stands at 140. Of these we have 19 who are behind in their dues. On the other hand, we have 5 members who have paid ahead. (not including the contest winner)

Of the 140 memberships, approximately half are Vermont residents. The rest of our membership hale from New England to California and one in Canada.

The Membership Committee is in need of a volunteer to serve as Coordinator assisting the Membership Committee Chair. The volunteer needs not be a resident of Vermont to maintain the membership roster and to serve as contact for the membership. To sign up for this position contact Bill Carroll, wcarroll@crocker.com

Historical Committee

Bill Carroll looks after the VCBS archives on every covered bridge in Vermont. He reports that there are "dribs and drabs" of information on every bridge at libraries and at colleges.

Communications

Joe Nelson, Chair, reports of the 140 members, 39 have opted to receive their newsletters electronically, saving the VCBS \$70.26 in postage per year and approximately \$102.96 in printing costs per year. The newsletter costs \$0.66 per issue to print, fold and tape.

Our new newsletter editor, Bill Caswell, who took over from Ray Hitchcock, produced the Spring 2013 edition of *The Bridger* in great form. We thank Bill and Ray for their excellent work on our newsletter. *The Bridger* is key in the Vermont Covered Bridge Society's outreach in promoting the preservation of our covered bridges.

Neil Daniels and I are leading a "5-week" (5 Thursdays) course on covered bridges at the Institute for Lifelong Education at Dartmouth College (ILEAD). We have 17 students signed up and we plan to make our VCBS brochures available to them. Last week we invited them to our Annual Spring meeting in Bartonsville.

We still need reporters/correspondents to bring covered bridge news to *The Bridger* with on-the-scene reports, photos and/or newspaper clippings. We find it embarrassing to be scooped on covered bridge news by organizations other than ourselves.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Joe Nelson.

Also wanted: Vermont Covered Bridge clippings from your local newspaper. Please send them to Joe at PO Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465 or to jnelson@together.net. He will share them with our newsletter and with our Historical Committee.

Publicity

Chair Ellen Everitz has researched and assembled a media directory covering most of the state of Vermont. The directory includes newspapers, radio, and television. (Ray Hitchcock recently added three more listings covering the Bartonsville area.)

A lifetime member since May 2000, Ellen is available to publicize our annual meetings and events. She may be contacted at calamity99@netzero.com or 802.951.9697.

Bridge Watch

John Weaver reports:

Taftsville: A drive by of the bridge on Labor Day showed that the west abutment was lost by the tropical storm Irene damage. East abutment will need repairs as well. The superstructure has many members needing to be replaced.

Quinlan: A steel system beneath is being installed.

Scott: At the moment the Scott bridge is under Hoyle/Tanner contract to be stabilized.

Longley: At a meeting in Montpelier it was decided it would be replaced by a new covered bridge.

Archives no report

A motion to accept the committee reports was made by Joe Nelson and seconded by Bill Caswell. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Irene Barna asked about the status of a previous effort to have covered bridge signage throughout the state. The recollection reported was that the covered bridge icon-signs hoped to be created and attached to existing weight limit signs proved to be cost prohibitive. Contact had been made with the state and the legislature where it was learned that any signs had to be in compliance with state regulations and the icons did not fit the categories in place. Cost was also a determining factor. As a result, a posted weight limit sign might be the only indication that there could be a covered bridge ahead. Bill Caswell told that funding for the signage for covered bridges in New Hampshire is collaboration between state and town resources.

NEW BUSINESS

Neil Daniels requests to begin discussion for rack cards at Visitors Centers around the state. He gives an estimate of about \$200.00 as a likely cost. He will start working on a prototype: Printing -- 2 sides -- folded -- inviting readers to the CBS web site. Neil plans to present a brochure draft at the fall meeting. Ray volunteered to assist Neil in the creation of this project.

Discussion that followed was regarding postings in several Vermont bridges giving information about covered bridges in other states; but not Vermont. To post any Vermont bridge information, acceptability of any legitimate posting should be worked out with the town in which a bridge is located.

Neil Daniels mentioned that there is still a card posted in the Salmond bridge that he had posted ten years ago. The message on the card is information about that bridge.

Sandy Herliczek said, regarding an earlier mention of covered bridge archived materials; that there must be a collection of archived bridge materials at universities.

Will Thompson asks if the VCBS will have an inclusion in the "Passports" given out at the History Expo. Note: The Vermont History Expo in Tunbridge will be held in June 21 – 22, 2014.

Fall meeting site: Several northern towns were suggested for sites for the fall meeting; but nothing was finalized.

With no further discussion, a motion to adjourn was made by Joe Nelson and seconded by Adrienne Hitchcock.

[meeting minutes continued]

A thank you to Ray Hitchcock for arranging the meeting site and all details regarding the meeting in Bartonsville.

After a brief break guest speaker Susan Hammond presented a very detailed slide presentation with commentary about the Bartonsville Covered Bridge from its building in 1870 to its demise August 28, 2011 when the high, rushing waters of the Williams River, caused by Tropical Storm Irene, washed out one abutment and the bridge sadly, but gracefully, was swept from its 141-year resting place. A brand-new replacement covered bridge updated for the traffic of today was re-opened January 2013. A thank you to Susan for capturing the sad moment in August of 2011 and her much appreciated efforts to make the replica of the 1870 bridge be in place today.

A thank you to Susan Hammond for her presentation today.

Respectfully submitted,
Irene Barna, Secretary



VCBS Lending Library, a Learning/Research Source

The Vermont Covered Bridge Society has set up a lending library available to all Society members-in-good-standing through media mail. Librarian Warren Tripp has created a detailed booklist complete with a description and critique of each book. Copies of the index are available by mail, or you may contact Joe Nelson at jnelson@together.net for an electronic copy.

A borrower can contact Warren Tripp who will send the book by Postal Service Media Mail. Books are returned the same way. Send Warren the complete title of the book(s) you wish to borrow. He will respond with the mailing cost and mail the order when the fee is received. The borrower is then responsible to return the item(s) in a reasonable time, preferably not more than two months.

Contact Warren Tripp, P. O. Box 236, Groton, VT 05046, fftwbt@yahoo.com, Phone (802) 584-3545.

Events

Vermont Covered Bridge Society Annual Fall Meeting

September 28, 2013

Montgomery Town Hall, Vt. Route 118,
Montgomery Center, Vermont

Festivities will begin at 10 a.m. with the usual business meeting to conclude at 11 a.m. at which time our speaker, Scott Perry, will talk to us about Montgomery and Montgomery's seven covered bridges. Mr. Perry is the chair of the Montgomery Historical Society, and a member of the Montgomery Select Board.

Further details about the meeting will be published in *The Bridger* fall issue, including a map, dining arrangements, and covered bridge tours.



- Wanted: Reporter/correspondents to bring local covered bridge news to *The Bridger*.
- Wanted: A VCBS member to share the duties of webmaster of www.vermontbridges.com.
- Wanted: Volunteer to take charge of Covered Bridge Market Place.

For more information or to sign up for any of these three positions, please contact Joe Nelson, Communication Committee Chair, jnelson@together.net, or Bill Carroll, wcarroll@crocker.com.

- Wanted: Volunteer worker-bees are needed by the Events Committee to help set up meetings and assist in hosting them.
- Also wanted: Vermont Covered Bridge clippings from your local newspaper.

Please send them to Joe Nelson, jnelson@together.net.



A Warm Welcome to Our New Member:
Wendy Payson
by Joe Nelson

Wendy Payson, of Southampton Massachusetts, recently joined our Society volunteering to take on the duties of the Events Committee, but when she received her first issue of The Bridger and saw that we needed a Membership Committee Coordinator, she signed up for that, too!

Gloriosky! This has to be too good to be true, but it is. With an eye on increasing our membership, she has created a free Mail Chimp account (whatever that is) and entered the VCBS into Facebook and Twitter, all with the objective of attracting young members. In addition to that, she has initiated a new page on our website:

www.vermontbridges.com/vcbs_members_page.htm.

For those of us who may not have access to the website, Wendy tells her readers: "As bridge enthusiasts, we are always looking for ways to spread the word about the society, upcoming events, and ways in which people can get involved. In addition to quarterly newsletters, we will also be sending out periodic emails to our members. We encourage members to forward these emails to anyone who might be interested, and perhaps they'll decide to join.

"Beyond these traditional ways of connecting, we are now reaching into the social media world. We've created a Facebook page and a Twitter account. Click on either of these links to follow us-you'll be glad you did! Write on the Facebook wall. Share your stories and your news.

"It's great that we have so many members, but it would be wonderful to have even more. We welcome and encourage people from all generations and all walks of life to join us. Do you have some ideas on how to reach out to people? In particular, we need help reaching out to the younger generations. Share your thoughts via email or, better yet, join our emerging membership subcommittee.

"Share your thoughts. Ask your questions. Join the subcommittee. And most definitely, if you're not already a member, join the Society! For more information on any of the above, please email Wendy Payson, Membership Committee Coordinator, at vermontcoveredbridgesociety@gmail.com"

Wendy has hit the ground running. Let's give her all the support she needs.

Membership

First, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Wendy Payson, and I'm from Southampton, Massachusetts. I just joined the VCBS, and I volunteered to be the membership coordinator. I have always loved covered bridges, and I am very excited to be a member of your organization.

It's wonderful that there are so many members of VCBS, but it would be even more wonderful if we could increase the membership. In particular, it seems important to find ways to reach out to the younger population. Perhaps a Facebook page? Perhaps through some other social media outlet? Perhaps you have some ideas. I am looking to form a membership subcommittee whose task is to reach out to potential new members, with a special focus on the younger population. If you're interested in being on this committee, please contact me at wpayson@gmail.com.

And lastly, Happy Birthday and Anniversary to:

June

4 Charlie Elflein
7 Carolyn Clapper
10 Ron Bechard
14 June Roy
27 Glen Hall
27 Terry Shaw
28 Bob Kane
30 Debra and Lionel Whiston

July

4 Neil Daniels
5 Ada and Bill Jeffrey
11 Evelyn and Charles Lovastik
20 Trish and Bob Kane
22 Lou Zabbia
28 Ray Gendron
28 Jan Lewandoski
28 Dick Roy

August

3 Joanna Titcomb
5 Joe Nelson
10 Tom Carpenter
17 Euclid Farnham
18 Irene and Ed Barna
23 Tina Conn
25 Linda and Jim Crouse
29 Dolores and Ray Gendron
30 Robert McPherson
31 David Charkes



Longley Bridge to be Replaced WGN 45-06-08

The Longley Covered Bridge in Montgomery will be addressed with a replacement covered bridge. Design status of the replacement structure is very preliminary at this time. The Longley Bridge is an 85' long Town lattice truss built by brothers Sheldon and Savannah Jewett in 1863.



Bill Caswell Photo, March 9, 2013

Quinlan Covered Bridge Repairs WGN 45-04-03

The Quinlan covered bridge in Charlotte has been closed and is undergoing repairs. Deteriorating timber trusses and wear on the joints of the arch-truss system have concerned town officials for several years about the ability of town plow and sand trucks to continue to use the bridge. The bridge was built in 1849 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. The project is expected to be completed before the end of the summer. Wright Construction is the contractor.

Scott Bridge to be Repaired WGN 45-13-13

The Scott Covered Bridge in Townshend, which was shored up last year, is undergoing rehabilitation. Design for the project is just starting.

The bridge was named for Henry Scott, former landowner. It was built at a cost of \$5200 to replace one lost in the 1869 flood. The former bridge was south of the present one. A 166' Town lattice span crosses the river and two Kingpost spans cross the dry land adjacent to the river. Arches were later added to the Town truss. At first, only the Town truss was covered. The kingpost spans were covered in 1873. The structure was deeded to the Vermont Historic Sites Commission in 1955.

Historical Committee Report

Many thanks to Irene Barna for a number of clippings about Vermont covered bridges, mostly from the Rutland Herald. We always want clippings or any other information about the covered bridges to add to our archives. We would greatly appreciate members in other parts of Vermont to save any articles about the covered bridges in their area. Also thanks to Joe Nelson for forwarding an item on the Bartonville Bridge that appeared in the Washington (D.C.) Post.

Schoolhouse Bridge WGN 45-03-03

The Lyndon Academy and Graded School building was completed in 1872, and a new road (now part of South Wheelock Road) was built to directly connect the new school with Lyndon. As part of the new road, a bridge was built across the South Wheelock Branch of the Passumpsic River. This bridge was said not to be a covered bridge.

There are two stories relating the origin of the present Schoolhouse Bridge. One story simply says the the open 1872 bridge was covered in 1879, and is today's bridge. The other story is that the 1872 bridge was both expensive and poorly built, and "a specimen of the architecture of the dark ages", which was replaced with the present Schoolhouse Bridge in 1879.

The bridge is a single-span truss about 42 feet in length. The truss is boarded from both sides, and is not visible, but the bridge is probably a Queenpost truss, in common with other bridges of similar size in the Lyndon area. When built, the bridge had a sidewalk on each side, but only the one on the north remains today. The appearance of the bridge shows a very graceful symmetry, and was likened by Herbert Wheaton Congdon to a "bird poised to take wing". The appearance was marred at some point, probably in the 1950s, when the Selectmen ordered the portals to be squared off, so larger trucks could use the bridge.

The bridge was nearly lost during the 1927 flood. Floodwater and water-borne debris piled up against the bridge and tipped it almost to the point of falling from the abutments. As the floodwater receded the bridge settled back down with no serious damage.

The bridge was threatened in the early 1970s by the construction of I-91 and the interchange at Lyndon. Fortunately the original plans for the interstate were altered enough so the bridge could be saved, though that part of South Wheelock Road was relocated to the north. The bridge was restored to its original appearance, painted white, and now sits in a small park.

Taftsville Covered Bridge Progress WGN 45-14-12

by Jim Ligon

The reconstruction of the Taftsville Covered Bridge is coming along nicely. My guys worked right through the winter on this and they've done their usual miracles in spite of the weather. Winter ended last night with snow, by the end of the week it'll be in the 90's. The "missing" half of the bridge is back in place and the new roof extends almost all the way from River Road to the Route 4 side. We've left a small section open there for access by our stonework contractor. Bruce Payne and his crew from P&P Landscaping again earn kudos for another covered bridge stonework restoration project well done. Bruce has done a lot of stonework for us on covered bridges and I can't say enough good things about his work.

The work on the center pier is complete. We placed a concrete cap on top of the structure of stone laid up dry, added missing stone, tuck pointed the surfaces, then consolidation-grouted the pier from the bottom up, filling huge voids in the existing stone pier, drilled nine holes 35' deep from the top down into ledge rock and installed heavy steel anchor rods grouted deep into ledge rock. The rods get torqued to compress all the elements.

We began work on the east abutment to finish some exterior tuck-pointing. We'll consolidation grout it eleven feet out down the wings from the main structure, as planned. The rest stays as-is.

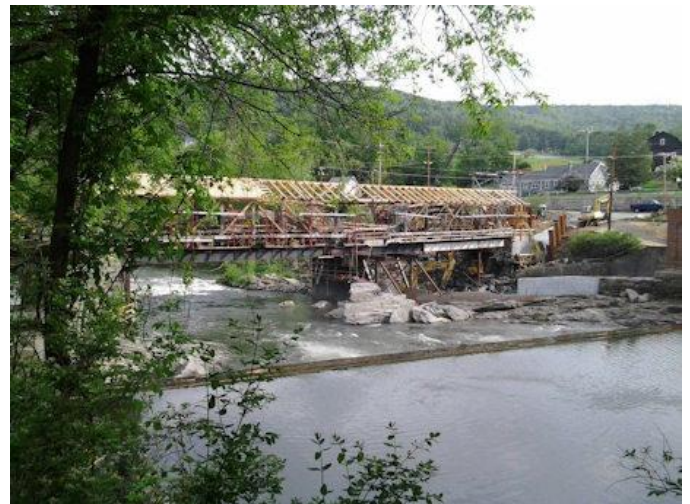
The west abutment will be backfilled with a combination of stone, gravel, and for earth stabilization and erosion control, gabion baskets.

We've trimmed the laminated-plank arches on the west side and reattached them to our new concrete abutment. Pier attachments will start next week with east abutment to follow. We then align the arches end to end and temporarily block them from the king posts. Once the bridge structure is released from the staging and settled a bit we will then attach the arches to the king posts.

When the arch ends are moved to their new positions, we can begin installing over 6 miles of sub-decking, then over 2 miles of oak on top. When the deck is complete, we'll install timber curbing to protect the trusses from moving traffic.

Unfortunately, we have been disassembling some of our finished new bridge framing to extract "original fabric" timbers found to be rotten by engineering after samples were sent to a Boston lab for analysis.

[Jim Ligon is Project Superintendent for Alpine Construction LLC of New York]



*Taftsville Covered Bridge photos by Jim Ligon,
May 31, 2013*

VCBS Officers

Bill Carroll, President
Joseph Nelson, Vice President
Irene Barna, Secretary
Neil Daniels, Treasurer

Bridger Newsletter Staff

Bill Caswell, Editor
Joseph Nelson, Staff Writer

Covered Bridge Community News Notes

Humpback Bridge Lost to Arson WGN 35-82-06

The covered bridge community experienced another tragic loss on June 6th when the Humpback Bridge in Vinton County, Ohio, burned. The State Fire Marshall stated that the fire was set. The bridge had been bypassed and stood in a remote part of the county. Built in 1874, the 175', 3-span structure crossed Raccoon Creek with an unusual double multiple king truss with arches.

Your editor and his wife were fortunate to have visited this bridge for the first time a mere three days before the fire.



Photos: Jenn Caswell (before), Bob Twyman (after)

Cabin Creek Bridge Work Underway WGN 17-68-03

Arnold Graton is actively restoring the Cabin Creek Bridge in Lewis County, Kentucky. The bridge was originally built in 1873 by William Henderson as a 114-foot, single span, multiple king post bridge, according to Patrick Kennedy, preservation officer in the Kentucky Heritage Council. It was closed in 1983 to foot and vehicle traffic, due to storm damage. It fell into disrepair after flood waters damaged more of the bridge. Graton has a year and a half to complete the work, but he expects it to be completed before the end of this year.



Bill Caswell Photo, June 3, 2013

Charlton Mill Bridge Razed WGN 35-29-16

In February of this year, the Charlton Mill covered bridge in Xenia, Ohio, was torn down without any public discussion, allegedly for public safety. According to the Greene County engineering office, it is to be replaced with a "modern" covered bridge that "will maintain the look of an old covered bridge." The design engineer, who was hired to repair the structure, was also on the committee that authorized the tear-down and is the designer for the new bridge, said that the original was "too far gone" to repair. The Greene County engineering office said construction on the new bridge is expected to begin in June of this year.

[Reported by Rob Mitchell, NSPCB Newsletter editor]



Bill Caswell Photo, February 27, 2009

Second National Covered Bridge Conference

The Federal Highway Administration's National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program (NHCBP) sponsored the Second National Historic Covered Bridge Conference in Dayton, Ohio, June 5-8, 2013.

The Dayton Conference featured presentations from some of the leading covered bridge engineers, scholars, and builders from across the United States, China, Germany and Russia. The international guests included a large Chinese delegation representing the Wenzhou Lounge Bridge Cultural Society.

Jenn Caswell staffed a table for the National society with help from Bob Watts and Trish Kane. In addition to promoting the NSPCB, they handed VCBS brochures to conference attendees who stopped at the table. Maybe that will result in a new member or two.

In addition to the numerous educational and informative presentations at the conference, timber framer Will Truax and crew were demonstrating traditional covered bridge construction techniques by building a kingpost truss at a city park near the conference site.

Presentations will be at <http://www.woodcenter.org>.

The Way it Was

by Joe Nelson

It was an exciting time, the period between our founding in February 2000, and the summer issue of The Bridger in May 2001.

In Cambridge Junction in April, the "first phase" of the project to preserve the Poland Bridge, WGN 45-08-02, was nearly complete, to keep the bridge from slumping into the Lamoille River. The second phase will restore the bridge to carry light traffic. The funds for the work came from the \$10 million National Historic Bridge Program announced by Senator James Jeffords last August. The \$1 million provided for the Cambridge Junction Bridge was received by the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

In Johnson on March 8, 2001, the Power House Covered Bridge, WGN 45-08-08, collapsed under a roof-load of heavy wet snow. The top-structure crashed down onto the self-supporting bridge deck, the trusses thrown outward and into the Gihon River. Rescue crews rushed to clear the debris from the still-standing bridge deck, not knowing if anyone was trapped beneath it. No one was.

Historically, the bridge-owning towns hired a person each year whose job was to "snow the bridge," putting snow on the bridge floor so sleighs could get through. John Weaver, a Vermont Covered Bridge Society member and structural engineer for VTrans said that a person also was hired by the towns to see that the bridge roofs were kept clear of snow, but the practice died out when most bridges became roofed with metal, which tends to shed snow. The Power House Bridge used snow-retaining cedar shingles.

On May 30, it looked very much like Westford's Browns River Bridge, WGN 45-04-05, was beginning its final lap on the journey back to its rightful place; over Browns River where it was built in 1837. An entire upper chord was replaced with several vertical posts, a tie beam, the portal sheathing and the roof have been renewed. The last obstacle to completion are the abutments, one of which needs to be rebuilt.

The journey began in February 1987 when Westford residents called a special meeting to save the bridge and the Westford Historical Society was formed. One can only wonder at the tenacity and dedication with which Caroline Brown

and her team pursued their dream to restore this historic bridge.

The town of Danville got a \$300,000 grant to repair the Greenbanks Hollow Covered Bridge, WGN 45-03-01. The grant was approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation under the National Covered Bridge Preservation Act. The Danville bridge is one of two Vermont bridges selected for the preservation grants that year; the other was the Sanderson Bridge in Brandon, WGN 45-11-02. In 2002, it was Thetford's Union Village Bridge, WGN 45-09-05 and Cambridge's Poland Bridge.

The Vermont Covered Bridge Society was invited Vermont Historical Society sponsored Expo 2001 held at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds in June. We have participated in every Expo since.

Back then, the VCBS occupied an eight-foot booth in the Floral Building and staffed it from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The society used this opportunity to publicize its work in preserving our covered bridges with a slide show, brochures, newsletters, and discussion to recruit new members.

Our exhibition was assembled by members Ed Barna, Irene Odell (now Barna), me, and John Weaver with the support of Ruth Nelson and Bill McKone. We were invited to exhibit at the Expo through the persistence and salesmanship of Irene Odell, then president of the Salisbury Historical Society. Thank you Irene.

We were asking for volunteers back then, too: Newsletter Editor: Requirements; Computer with e-mail address; Staff writer: Requirements: Computer with e-mail address; Correspondents: Duties: Collect covered bridge stories from their home areas or travels and send them to the editor; Crafts Committee: To design covered bridge greeting cards, Christmas cards, post cards and stationary, then oversee the manufacture and distribution of the products for the purpose of funding covered bridge preservation.

We never did get a Crafts Committee volunteer.



A Look Back

A Look Back

About Montgomery, Vermont

by Joe Nelson

Montgomery, Vermont, named for Revolutionary War hero Richard Montgomery of New York, was chartered in October, 1789. General Montgomery had commanded American forces under Schuyler in the expedition against Canada. The Americans took Montreal but were defeated in front of Quebec City, where Montgomery was killed.

The Town of Montgomery is home to six wooden bridges, all built by the brothers Savanna and Sheldon Jewett over a period of about thirty years. In all, the Jewetts built nine plank lattice bridges in the Montgomery area. They used timber from the family farm on West Hill and dressed the lumber in their own mill.

The northern edge of the Green Mountain chain rises around the Town of Montgomery on three sides. The valleys among the foothills are laced with small rivers and streams. Fed in the spring by melting mountain snows and in the summer by the frequent rains that make the Green Mountains green, the streams usually keep mill ponds filled for much of the year. With a wealth of water power and accessible softwood forests, Montgomery became a town of mills, turning spruce, beech, birch, maple, and hemlock into sap buckets and butter tubs, bobbins and veneer.

Factories sprang up by the streams, sharing the waters. The peak growth years for the mills stretched from the 1860s into the 1890s, the years the Jewetts built their bridges. Each new mill created the need to cross the stream that powered it, so the boom years of mill construction led to a flurry of bridge building as well.

There are two settlements in the town, about two miles apart—Montgomery Village and Montgomery Center. Montgomery Center, the seat of the town government, was a mill town. The most famous enterprise may have been the Nelson and Hall Company veneer factory. Nelson and Hall operated the mill that made the veneer for the Victrola Company's cabinets. The mill-works used to stand across the Trout River from the Route 118 bridge near the junction of Route

242. A scattering of other mills operated along the South Branch of the Trout River. Jewett-built covered bridges stand near two of the old mill sites south of town.

White painted portals and splash-panels give the three bridges in and near Montgomery Village a clean and cared-for look. The Fuller Bridge, the Comstock Bridge and the Longley Bridge are each named with wooden cutout letters placed high on the gable-ends, additional evidence of tender loving care. Except for the addition of distribution beams tie-bolted under the decks of all three bridges, the structure of the bridges remains as the builders left them. A fourth span, the Creamery Bridge, is unpainted, but like all of Montgomery's covered bridges, it is marked with a signboard testifying to the Jewett's craftsmanship and the year of construction.

The Tub Factory

It would be wrong to think of the Hutchins Bridge's history as idyllic and bucolic. This was a busy spot in 1883, as the moss-covered foundations just south of the west portal reveal. Here, Joseph Hutchins' five-lathe factory produced 2,000 butter tubs a day. The bridge resounded with the arrival of the mill workers at dawn, and again with their departure at dusk. Teams of horses clattered through, bringing logs of spruce, hemlock, and basswood, and other teams took the completed butter tubs away. The bustle stopped only when night fell. Over the years, as industry and society changed, the activity waned, until it finally stopped altogether when the factory shut its doors for good.

[These articles are from *Spanning Time*;
Vermont's Covered Bridges]

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Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges by Joseph C. Nelson features 102 color photographs of Vermont's covered bridges in fifteen chapters, each a guided tour. The tours are complete with maps, commentary on the uniqueness of each bridge, and historic highlights about the towns and villages in which the bridges stand.

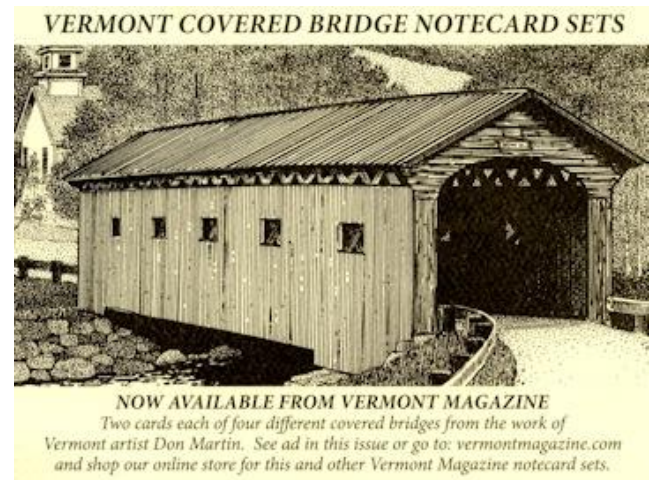
An appendix provides: A Summary of Vermont's Covered Bridges; A Covered Bridge Glossary; A Bridge Truss section, explaining how trusses work; Thumbnail biographies of people who designed and built the bridges; A Covered Bridge Reading List, for bridge and history buffs; A detailed Index. *Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges: 7" x 10", 288 pages. Published by New England Press at P.O. Box 575, Shelburne, VT 05482. Spanning Time is available directly from the author for \$39.00, free shipping. Go to www.vermontbridges.com/special%20070514.htm. Also see: www.vermontbridges.com/bookreviews.htm.*

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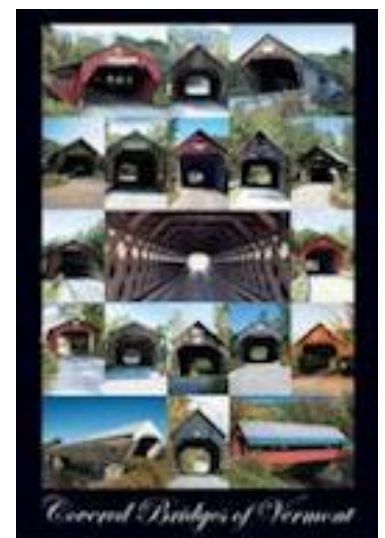


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