

THE BRIDGER



The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter – Issue #74

Events

Vermont Covered Bridge Society Fall Meeting

September 29, 2018, 10:00 a.m.

Middlebury Congregational Church Addition
30 North Pleasant Street (Rt. 7)
Middlebury, Vermont

Meeting Agenda

9:00 a.m.

- Set-up time

10:00 a.m.

- Business meeting called to order

11:00 a.m.

- Vermont Architectural Historian Devin Coleman will speak about his research on covered bridge builder Nichols Powers

12:00 p.m.

- Break – dining arrangements and bridge tours will be discussed

**The meeting is open to all comers.
There are no fees.**

- Snacks will be provided during the meeting.
- Lunch on your own at restaurants nearby.
- After adjournment, attendees are free to visit the three local covered bridges.
- Call Middlebury Chamber of Commerce at 802-388-7951 for overnight accommodations.

Fall Meeting Directions:

The meeting will be held in the meeting room adjacent to the Middlebury Congregational Church on 30 North Pleasant Street (Route 7), Middlebury. The church itself stands on the corner of Route 7 and Main Street.

NOTE: We will not be meeting in the church; our meeting will be held in the contemporary addition, which faces North Pleasant Street (Route 7).

Parking

- The Seymour Street parking lot is open with designated handicap spaces and ramps. There is on-street parking on Seymour Street.
- To enter the building on the east side, please use the door on the north end of the addition.

Parking and access for individuals with disabilities:

- **To access the meeting room:** There are designated parking spaces on State Route 7, alongside the church building itself and the new addition to the north of the church. Access into the building is via a ramp *from Route 7*. There is also designated parking in the parking lot on Seymour Street.
- **To the VCBS fall meeting room site:** From the designated street (*east side*) parking at 30 North Pleasant Street (Route 7), enter using the ramp on the *north* side of the building.
- There is an **elevator** to access both the lower and upper levels of the building from the Seymour Street parking lot.

Membership Update

Once again, I'll begin with a bookkeeping issue and our new policy. For those VCBS members who are unfortunately receiving this issue of *The Bridger* with a mailing label marked in red, that is a subtle reminder that you are behind in your dues. Membership needs to be renewed each January 1st. Annual members who are more than one year behind in their dues will need to pay only for the current year to be in good standing. Members who don't respond will be purged from the membership list.

President: Bill Carroll, 5 Hutchinson Lane, Lenox, MA 01240, email: wcarroll@crocker.com

Vice President & Communications Committee: Joe Nelson, PO Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465, jcarlnelson@yahoo.com

Secretary: Irene Barna, 7 Forbes Circle, Middlebury, VT 05753-1128, email: ibarna@middlebury.edu

Membership: Dan Monger, email: teelmonger@gmavt.net

We wish to welcome four new members:

- John Connell of Underhill Center, Vermont,
- Norton Kennedy of North Bennington, Vermont,
- Peter Opstrup of Cambridge, Vermont, and
- Martin Pardys of Holland, Pennsylvania

Our membership list of birthdays and anniversaries has been routinely updated, courtesy of Joe Nelson. The following list includes all birthdays and anniversaries over the fall quarter. Again, if I have omitted anyone, please email me at teelmonger@gmavt.net.

Heartfelt Birthday and Anniversary Wishes to:

September

04 Richard St. Peter
 05 Robert Salvi
 09 Tom Walczak
 10 Gordon and Priscilla O'Reilly
 12 Dell Hoch
 15 Henry Rowse
 17 Doris Taylor
 23 Susan Komeshok
 25 Bonnie Shultz

October

09 Erwin and Virginia Eckson
 11 Trish Kane
 12 Joyce Orr (1940)
 20 Phil Pierce
 21 John and Joanne Billie
 21 Arnie and Melanie Schropp
 22 Ellen Everitz
 28 Joyce Soroka

November

04 James Crouse and Jane Porter
 Gresham
 13 Bruce Wagner
 18 Cheryl Cullick
 18 Euclid Farnham
 18 Bob and Mary Ann Waller
 22 Marikka Guay
 25 Richard and Gloria Davis

Fire Retardants for Wood Preservation

by Dan Monger

On September 10, 2016, the Cornwall-Salisbury 136-foot-span covered bridge, built in 1865, became our most recent reminder of just how quickly a fire can destroy these vulnerable historic wooden structures. As I mentioned in the Spring 2018 issue of *The Bridger*, I want to briefly discuss fire retardants. A fire retardant is an agent that slows the spread of fire by providing a thermal insulation barrier between the burning and the unburned parts of the fuel source.

Three things are needed for any fire: fuel, oxygen, and heat. Some people would simply say, "a match." Well, that is a heat source. The key ingredients of a match are potassium chlorate, sulfur, and red phosphorus. The head of a match is made of potassium chlorate plus sulfur. The side of the match box contains red phosphorus. When a match is struck, the heat caused by the friction causes a small amount of red phosphorus to be converted to white phosphorus. That will spontaneously ignite in air, which then sets off the decomposition of potassium chlorate, which is a very

strong oxidizing agent. That decomposition gives off oxygen. The sulfur then catches fire – enough to ignite the wooden stick.

With the large number of wild fires burning out west every summer, one tends to believe that both the size and the number of those fires have become more prominent. Native Americans, as good shepherds of the land, would routinely clear forests of dead wood and shrubs. Today, that practice is viewed as interfering with nature. Hence, lightning, the ultimate heat source on earth, takes care of what man has neglected to do.

One basic fire-retardant mechanism is thermal shielding. Fire retardants have been used in some form to fight wildfires since the 1950s. When wildfires threaten homes and property, air tankers drop a fire retardant as a bright red slurry. The slurry is a mixture of water and fertilizer, which clings to and insulates the coated vegetation. The fertilizer is ammonium phosphate and ammonium sulfate, and it is dyed red for visibility. That chemical mix has been modified over time

to minimize adversely affecting land and aquatic animal life, while still being somewhat viable in retarding fire. The fire retardant doesn't truly douse the flames like water, but it cools and coats the fuel on the forest floor, depriving it of oxygen.

The direct coating of wooden structures with chemical fire retardants is somewhat limited. One approach is to coat the wood with intumescent, or swelling, chemicals. Upon being heated, the chemical will swell, seal, and char, preventing the fire from igniting the wood. A commercial source of these intumescent agents is FX Lumber Guard from Fire Retardant Coatings of Texas (FRCT).

Another basic fire-retardant mechanism is endothermic degradation. This method employs certain inorganic salts, which decompose endothermically upon being heated. This means that the chemical reaction absorbs heat and hence cools the coated material. These inorganic salts are magnesium and aluminum hydroxides and carbonates used as hydrates. The use of those salts is limited, however, by their relatively low decomposition temperatures; they are often used in wire and cable applications (as are organobromine-containing polymers.)

A Covered Bridge Tour – The Windsor Area

There are eight covered bridges in the countryside between Hartland and Springfield. Three of them occupy special places in the communities of Weathersfield and Springfield because the people there made special efforts to keep them. Two were rescued from a dam project, and another was saved from demolition to become a monument to a prominent citizen. All of the bridges are historical treasures, and some of them are especially noteworthy. Three are attributed to master builder James Tasker, and two others are rare tied-arch structures. All of the sites are easily reached from U.S. Route 5 and I-91.

Martin's Mill Bridge – 1881 [WGN 45-14-01]

James Tasker, famed builder of the Windsor Bridge, put a 137-foot plank-lattice bridge across Lulls Brook next to Martin's Mill. While Martin's Mill has become broken concrete and scattered stone, Martin's Mill Bridge still serves Martinsville Road.



Martin's Mill Bridge by Joe Nelson

The waterpower provided by Lull's Brook gave rise to a small industrial center that is now gone. The ruined buildings by the south portal of the covered bridge and the foundations along the south bank of the brook are the remains of Martin's sawmill and lumber business. A wooden penstock can still be seen standing among the trees along Route 12. In his *Rare Old Bridges of Windsor County*, Richard Sanders Allen tells us that the bridge once supported wooden "conduit," carrying water to the mill.

In 1979, distribution beams were tie-bolted under the deck (and later removed), diagonal steel sway braces were installed, and steel cables were added to lend lateral support. Except for additions like those, James Tasker's bridge remains much as he left it.

Martinsville Road is clearly marked at the junction with U.S. Route 5. Travelers from the north on U.S. Route 5 will find Martinsville Road about one-half mile south of the junction with Route 12. Turn left to go to the bridge. Travelers on Route 5 and I-91 can proceed north from the I-91 Exit 9 clover for about .3 mile to turn right on Martinsville Road.

In 1762, two brothers, Zera and Timothy Lull, canoed up the Connecticut River and stopped at Fort at No. 4 in Charlestown, New Hampshire. Timothy spent the winter there; Zera continued on to the mouth of a brook on the west shore. He paddled up the brook as far as he could, then he broke a bottle on the bow of the canoe, christening the stream Lull's Brook. In May 1763, he made a clearing and prepared logs for a building. People from nearby Plainfield Plains came and helped build his*

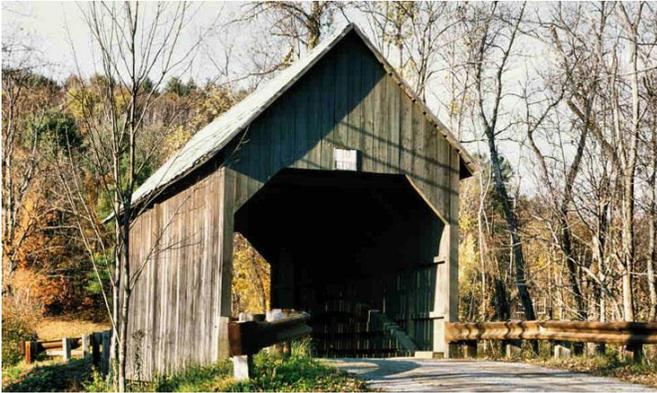
cabin. He returned to Fort at No. 4 and brought his family and goods on a pung sled.

**Fort at No. 4 in Charlestown, New Hampshire, was the starting and ending place for the raid conducted by Major Robert Rogers and 200 rangers in 1759.*

Bowers Bridge – c. 1919 [WGN 45-14-11]

The Bowers Bridge, or Brownsville Bridge, spans Mill Brook amid open fields and low rolling hills, serving the road to the hamlet of Sheddsville.

Bowers and Best's bridges are two of the last three surviving tied-arch bridges in the state; the third is the Lake Shore Bridge in Charlotte. The originator of the design of this unique truss is unknown.



Bowers Bridge by Joe Nelson

Built in the early 1900s by an unknown craftsman, the 45-foot span used a simple arch truss constructed of a laminate of five, ten-inch planks. The chords were suspended from the arches on three-quarter-inch iron rods, the whole protected by a post and beam shed set upon the bridge deck. The abutments are unmortared stone slabs with concrete caps. Bowers Bridge is essentially a copy of the older Bests Bridge, two miles to the west.

In August 2011, the bridge was swept away by Tropical Storm Irene. Having then set sail upon Mill Brook, which had become a raging river, the bridge failed to maneuver around the first bend and landed upright and nearly intact on top of a bank some hundreds of yards downstream. It conveniently landed in a clearing with easy access to the road heading back to the crossing. The bridge was returned to its crossing place, where the post and beam shed was replaced, and Jan Lewandoski repaired and upgraded the tie-arch truss system with additional lamina and renewed connections to the chords to better support live loads. In early March 2014,

the town reopened the span to traffic. Bowers Bridge stands north of Route 44 on Bible Hill Road, six miles west of Windsor and one mile west of Hartland Road in the village of Brownsville.

Smith Bridge at Brownsville – 1973

[WGN 45-14-17X]

Once there were two Smith bridges; now there is only one. They were halves of the retired Garfield Bridge over the Green River in Hyde Park, Vermont. The half erected in Brownsville served a housing development. The other half was erected in Pomfret to serve a development, which was voted down, and now serves a private residence.



Smith Bridge at Brownsville by Joe Nelson

On October 6, 2001, the Smith Bridge at Brownsville was taken down by a microburst. It collapsed in three sections: the two trusses and the roof. The wreckage blocked the roadway, a self-supporting bridge deck rated for 30 tons. The downed bridge was the sole access for 17 households, so the residents reopened an abandoned trail to reach the highway. With no funds available to restore the covered bridge, the town replaced it with a poured concrete span.

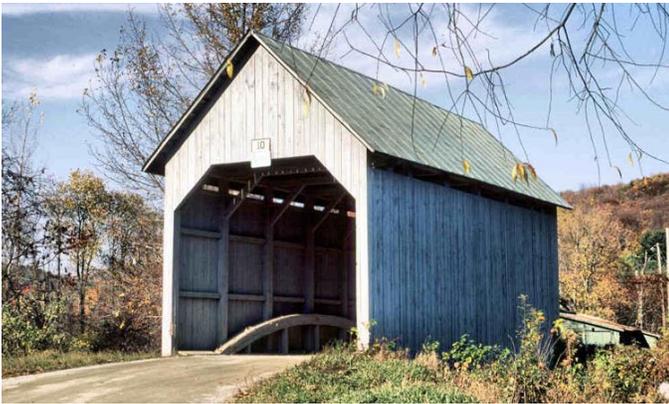
Several in the community served by the bridge would still like to have the covered bridge. It may have helped that cause if the trusses could have been salvaged intact; however, they were found to be too damaged by rot to be salvaged. John Dostal, who was working with Bruce Laumeister of the Bennington Center for the Arts to establish a covered bridge museum, took part of a truss for preservation and display.

The Smith Bridge at Brownsville stood in the valley below Mount Ascutney, where it crossed Mill Brook south of Route 44 and two miles west of Brownsville. It

was similar in appearance to the other half of the old Garfield Bridge in Pomfret, differing in that here, large rectangular pieces of the portals were cut out, and the upper bracing system was changed to increase passage height for construction trucks. This action undoubtedly contributed to the bridge's collapse.

Best's Bridge – 1890 [WGN 45-14-0]

Best's Bridge stands hidden in a cluster of buildings south of Route 44 on Churchill Road, 2.5 miles west of Brownsville and 1.3 miles east of the junction with Route 106, north of Feltschville. Amasa W. Swallows built Best's Bridge, also known as Swallows Bridge, over Mill Brook in 1890 at a cost of \$250.13. It is structurally a smaller twin to Bowers Bridge.



Best's Bridge by Joe Nelson

The bridge was refurbished in 1991. The Agency of Transportation Covered Bridge Inspection Report comments, "Technically unsophisticated, it serves adequately the need for an economically durable span to carry a lightly travelled country road over a brook.

The Swallow House is located on Route 44, west of the Brownsville Antique Store, part of the Brownsville Historic District. Frank Burlingame built the house in 1810 and sold it in 1855 to Nahun Swallow. The Swallows had three children - one of them Amasa, the bridge builder.

The Best House is located on Route 44, 2.9 miles west of the village, near the covered bridge which became known as the Best Bridge. It is Cape Cod style, built in 1820. Will Best was born in 1869. He died at 102, the oldest resident in town – Fenn, Mary Beardsley. Parish and Town: The History of West Windsor, Vermont. Countryman Press, Taftsville, Vermont, 1977. Published for West Windsor Historical Society.

Weathersfield

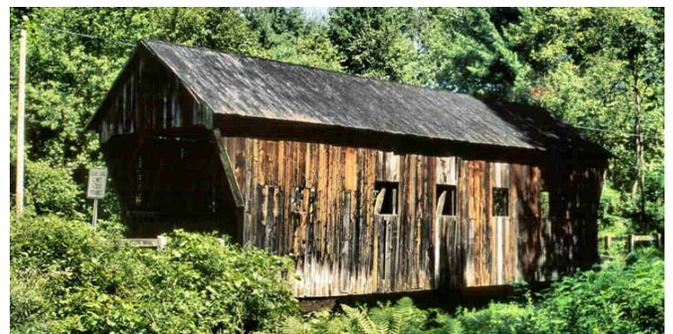
The town of Weathersfield was a Benning Wentworth grant, dating back to August 20, 1761. The town was named for Weathersfield, Connecticut.

Weathersfield is home to three unique bridges. One of them, Downers Bridge, is an example of beauty in bridge architecture. The others are monuments to the dedication local residents showed in preserving something of the old ways in the face of inexorable change. In the 1950s, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conceived a flood control project for the Springfield-Weathersfield area. The plan called for a dam in the Black River Valley to collect excess runoff and valve it harmlessly downstream to the Connecticut River. Naturally, anything above the dam would be subjected to periodic immersion, so the policy was to clear everything out of the collection basin – houses and bridges had to go! The Salmond and Stoughton Bridges stood over the Black River, near Stoughton Pond, part of the flood control basin.

The Weathersfield Historical Society came to the rescue, alerting the townspeople about the threat to their heritage. In response to community concerns, the flood control project prime contractor hired Milton Graton and Sons of Ashland, New Hampshire, to move the bridges. In 1959, the Salmond Bridge was relocated in the Amsden Village road maintenance yard. Graton and Sons moved the Stoughton Bridge to Mr. Andrew Titcomb's hayfield in Perkinsville.

Salmond Bridge – c. 1875 [WGN 45-14-05]

The 53-foot Salmond Bridge, built by James F. Tasker of Cornish, New Hampshire, using his own version of the multiple-kingpost truss, now serves Henry Gould Road, crossing Sherman Brook, east of Amsden Village. Henry Gould Road leaves Route 131 to the north, five miles west of the junction with U.S. Route 5.



Salmond Bridge by Joe Nelson

The townspeople joined to rescue their bridge from the town equipment yard, where it served as a storage and salt shed for 27 years, and relocated it over a small stream by a little park with picnic tables. Milton Graton and Sons presided over this second move of the bridge and did the restoration work.

On Sunday, October 26, 1986, townspeople and other covered bridge fans gathered to celebrate the relocation, restoration, and opening of the Salmond Bridge.

With the project completed at a cost of \$34,389, the bridge, property of the town, serves as an historic landmark and recreational area. A picnic area, donated by former Town Clerk Elizabeth Murray, stands adjacent to the bridge. Two bronze plaques were placed there by the Weathersfield Historic Society, one for the bridge and one for the park. The bridge plaque reads, "Salmond Bridge was built by James H. Tasker, circa 1880. This 53-foot Multiple Kingpost structure spanned the Black River near Stoughton Pond and was named after the Salmond family, who lived near the bridge. It remained in this area until 1959, when it was relocated beside Route 131 in Amsden in order to remove it from the flood control area. There it was used as a town storage shed. It was restored and moved to this site over Sherman Brook in 1986 through the efforts of the townspeople of Weathersfield."

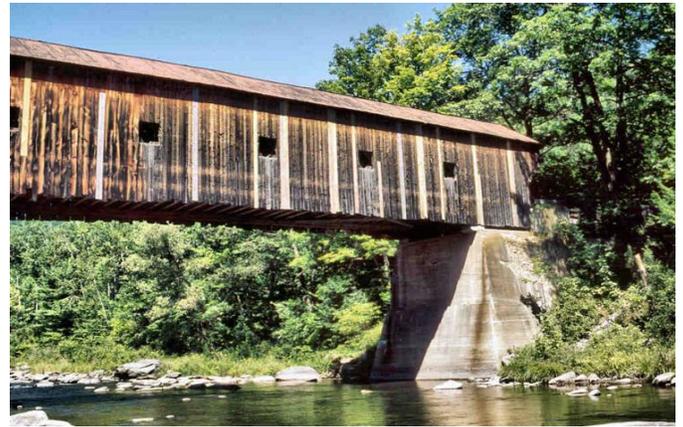
Only one challenge for the bridge remains: It is being attacked by porcupines, with some of the timbers being heavily gnawed for the winter salt splash.

Downers Bridge – c. 1840 [WGN 45-14-08]

The Downers Bridge is a truly beautiful bridge with classic lines. Built around 1840, the portals are rendered in the Greek Revival style. Partial cornice returns and enclosed roof-end overhangs bracket the gable-end boarding. The treatment simulates the Greek pediments in the Federal architecture popular in the first half of the 1800s. The Sanderson Bridge over Otter Creek I Brandon, built circa 1838, is the only other covered bridge in Vermont with cornice returns.

Downers Bride is Vermont's last example of splined boarding in a bridge portal. The 121-foot plank-lattice span, also known as the Upper Falls Bridge, crosses high over the Black River. The tall stone abutments and long curved wing walls are the most impressive examples of dry stone masonry in the state. The northern abutment

hasn't been cased in concrete and remains a tribute to the skill of the masons who provided the foundations for Vermont's covered bridges. The trusses were originally supported with sway braces, or buttresses, dispensed with when the restoration was done by Milton Graton and Sons in 1975.



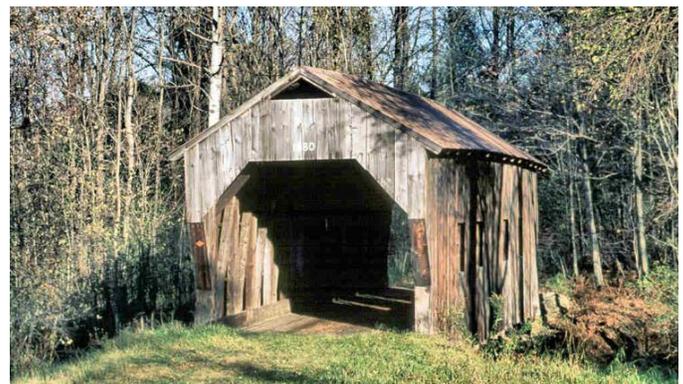
Downers Bridge by Joe Nelson

The south bank of the river, upstream from the bridge, is lined with the foundations of abandoned mill works. Downers Bridge is located south of Route 131 on Upper Falls Road, .2 mile west of the junction with Route 106.

The bridge was closed for renovation from the summer of 2007 to January 2008, when it received new chords, floor system, roof, and siding, at a cost of \$1.2 million. The bridge currently serves five families.

Stoughton Bridge – 1880 [WGN 45-14-04]

When the Stoughton Bridge was rescued from the flood control area, the little bridge was given refuge from a changing world on Andrew Titcomb's farm in Perkinsville. The homeless bridge was set over a ditch at the edge of a hay field east off Route 106, just south of Perkinsville.



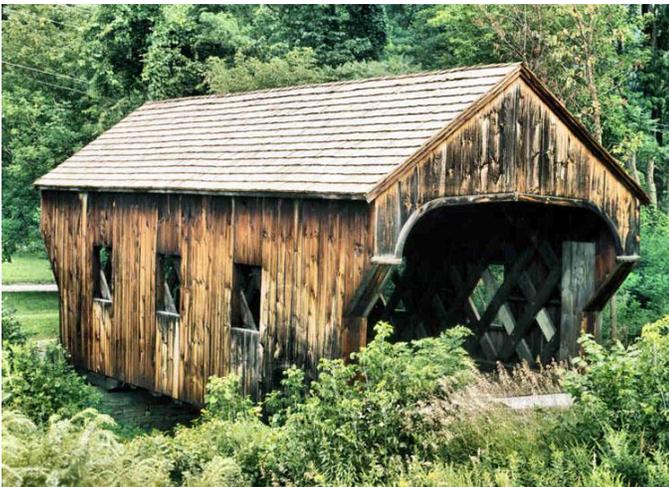
Stoughton Bridge by Joe Nelson

The Stoughton Bridge, which is now often called the Titcomb Bridge, was built in 1880 by James and Henry Tasker, using a multiple-kingpost truss spanning 40 feet. The Graton set the bridge on abutments constructed of stone from the original site. Andrew Titcomb, an architect and member of the Weathersfield Historical Society, did the restoration work.

The Stoughton House, built in about 1790, was also moved out of the valley in 1959 when the bridge was moved. The house was built by the Stoughtons and remains in the family.

Baltimore Bridge – 1870 [WGN 45-14-03]

The Baltimore Bridge and the Eureka School House are located in a small park next to Route 11 east of Springfield, less than one mile from U.S. Route 5 and I-91 Exit 9. For travelers driving south on Route 106, the site lies nine miles south of Perkinsville.



Baltimore Bridge by Joe Nelson

The school has an historic site marker, while a bronze plaque adorns the bridge, reading, "In 1967, the 45-foot plank-lattice truss bridge was declared unsafe. A committee was formed in 1969, headed by U.S. Senator Ralph Flanders to move the bridge to the park beside the Eureka School House, and there restore it. The committee contracted with Milton Graton to move the bridge seven miles from its original site over Great Brook, where it served Baltimore Village."

The schoolhouse was taken down years before by Senator Flanders and stored in his barn. It was set up and restored around the year 1967. Senator Flanders saw the work on the bridge nearly completed, but he passed away a short time before the dedication.

In memory of Senator Ralph E. Flanders, 1880-1970. This last covered bridge in Springfield, Vermont, the Baltimore Bridge, completed in 1870, was one of two built across Great Brook by Granville Leland and Denis Allen. It was moved from the original location on Baltimore Road, North Springfield, and restored on this site by Milton S. Graton, covered bridge builder, Ashland, New Hampshire, 1969-1970.

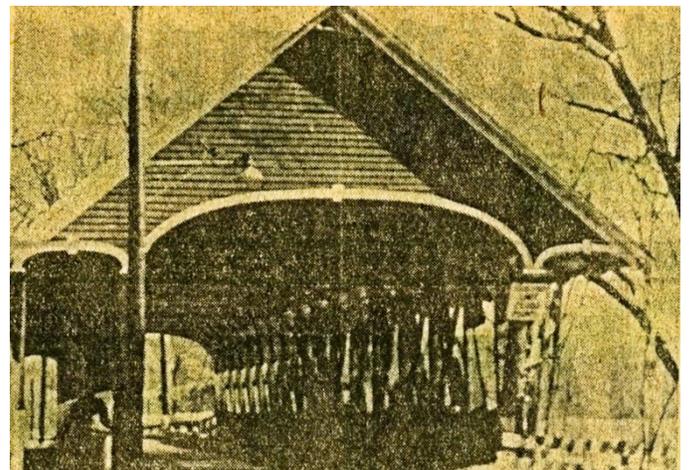
(From Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges, planned 2nd edition, by Joe Nelson)

Need Money to Save 100-Year-Old Covered Bridge

Lyndonville, March 21, 1960 — A century old covered bridge in Lyndonville, Vt., is doomed unless the locals interested in preserving it can raise money enough to have it moved before June 1. It has been judged a hazard and so must go.

The bridge has not been condemned because of structural weakness, merely because it stands in the way of new construction, construction some of the people of the community feel will not answer any problems.

One person who voted for the new construction said later, "I didn't think about the bridge going. I was thinking that the construction was a good buy. We only have to pay \$15,000 for a \$160,000 project. I don't really see much advantage to (the construction) it." The balance of the cost of the project will be paid by Federal and State funds.



CENTURY OLD covered bridge, which has become the object of discussion throughout the state, is located in Lyndonville. The bridge must be moved by June 1 or be destroyed for construction of a new, modern structure. It is the only bridge of its type left in the world, some claim.

Including the bridge that must go the Town of Lyndon of which Lyndonville *is* an incorporated village has five covered bridges, but the one that is doomed is said to be the only bridge of its type of construction left in the world today.

The vote to remove the bridge indicates that the voters either didn't understand what they were voting [for] or that they had a change of heart. In 1940 they dedicated a portion of their Town Report to the bridge. Its picture graced the front cover of the report and a history of the bridges of the town was given prominent space in the report.

The state and local officials have delivered their ultimatum: they will give the bridge away but it must be gone before it stands in the way of the road construction project slated for June.

The bridge is one of the greatest tourist attractions to be found in the village which heretofore has been most proud of its heritage.

The bridge, although its exact construction date is not known, is more than a century old. It has lived out floods that [have] destroyed bridges more modern and supposedly more functional.

At least one president of the United States and many important figures of industry and state have traveled through the bridge in ornate carriages drawn by numbers of show-groomed ponies. The bridge was on the route from the Railroad station to the stately mansion of the late Theodore N. Vail, eminent in the field of electronics at the time of the telephone's gaining widespread usage.

Such memories as these have fired citizens of the community to call on the Vermont Historical Sites Commission for aid. The commission can help but not in the finance department because it is without funds for such ventures.

A frantic study is being made by the Northeastern Vermont Development Association, a non-profit area association, which has offices in Lyndonville, to see what can be done to save the bridge for the people of the community.

[From St. Albans Messenger, contributed by VCBS member Rae Laitres]

How Covered Bridges Taught Kids New Tricks

by Joe Nelson

Richmond, Vt., Aug. 26, 1993 — How, you may ask, can a knowledge of covered bridges - relics of the 19th century - help today's children learn to compete in tomorrow's world? The teachers and students of a fifth-grade class at the Camels Hump Middle School can tell you.

Teachers Susan Girardin and Kerry Young have designed an eight-week unit entitled, "Bridges; Spanning Time." For four weeks of the eight, the focus is on covered bridges. The unit features visiting experts, a toothpick bridge contest, and a field trip to study covered bridges. "It is an interdisciplinary unit covering math, science, social studies, reading, and writing," said Girardin. "The study requires cooperation between the students and promotes self-esteem," she said.

"All of the subjects a fifth grader is required to master are given reality, immediacy, and made interesting by being related to some aspect of a bridge," Girardin said. "I must fulfill my obligation as a teacher in the classroom. Many hours are spent on math. The challenge has been for Kerry and me to learn what is mathematical about the bridges. We make sure the kids have the skills to tackle that. We have to spend so many hours a week teaching reading and writing skills; we've done much bridge poetry and studied the metaphors in songs like 'Bridge Over Trouble Waters.' We make sure the class is getting what it needs."

Sheila Mitchenson, covered bridge artist and illustrator; Gary Bressor, covered bridge builder and restorer; Tom McClay, area representative for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Timber Bridge program; and Carolyn Muenier, a structural engineer and bridge inspector for VAOT, accompanied the class on the covered bridge tour.

The class is organized into ten toothpick bridge construction teams of five students each. The members of each team choose a company name and decide among themselves who gets what job. "Kerry and I avoided that decision making," said Girardin. Two of the company names were Arches-R'-Us and The Spanners. The jobs are Head Project Engineer, Accountant, Architect, and Engineer. Each group's task is to complete a toothpick bridge of their own design according to

building codes and specifications and have it ready for the contest. Weight is added to a bucket hung at the middle point of each bridge until the bridge collapses. The bridge that holds the most weight is the winner. “We taught them about truss construction too well,” said Young. “We had to add more weight than we planned, but some bridges just wouldn’t collapse.”

Asked if they had seen any improvement in the class’s performance because of the bridge program, Gerardin said, “They are performing at the level expected at this time of the year. What I have seen is excitement about coming to school. We had a couple of students who have had truancy problems all year. One of them is on his 15th straight day of coming to school because he is part of a toothpick bridge construction team. He can’t miss a day because he is the project engineer. If he doesn’t come to class, his group doesn’t perform. To have almost 100% attendance every day because of this unit is the proof in the pudding.”

“The parents have been supporters of the program,” said Girardin. “We send a monthly report, letting parents know what we are doing in the classroom. We’ve received many notes and phone calls from them expressing excitement with what we are doing.” “They were very excited about the field trip,” said Young. “We had 14 parents volunteer to come with us.”

Asked how the bridge study began, Gerardin explained, “A couple of years ago while I was driving through a town, I saw a beautiful covered bridge and stopped to look at it. When I saw the learning possibilities for kids, I began compiling a file about all kinds of bridges. I decided that with a willing teammate I would develop an eight-week unit to study all subjects to do with bridges. I finally got the opportunity with Kerry Young and the perfect group of kids to try this out on.”

Barriers Set at Covered Bridge

The Associated Press, July 3, 1987 – State transportation officials erected barriers on the approaches to the historic Cornish N.H. – Windsor covered bridge Thursday, closing the bridge to all but bicycles and pedestrians for perhaps two years.

Local residents, merchants and officials were allowed up at the bridge to hear New Hampshire Transportation Commissioner Wallace Stickney answer questions before the noon closing. They offered many suggestions

designed to keep the bridge open, but Stickney said the bridge is unsafe.

“If I were to leave this bridge open and something drastic happened to that bridge or to one of your friends or neighbors, it would be my responsibility,” said Stickney, whose office oversees the bridge.

He faced hostile questions during much of the 45-minute news conference from residents worried that closing the bridge, the only link between Cornish and Windsor, would be a major economic setback to both.

“The economic dislocation to both towns is going to be enormous,” one man in the crowd told Stickney.

Frank Anthony of Windsor urged Stickney to leave the bridge open “so you don’t have to think in terms of civil disobedience here, and that’s what’s coming.” He would not be specific.

Stickney cited an engineer’s report that said the 466-foot bridge – the longest double-laned covered bridge in the country – is so weak it hardly holds its own weight.

He said officials hope repairs can be completed by the fall of 1988 or spring of 1989. Stickney would not be specific on a reopening date partly because no specific design for the work has been chosen. A state committee is to decide by September.

State transportation officials had hoped that lowering the weight limit to three tons last year on the 121-year-old bridge would slow its deterioration, but said too many drivers ignored the limit.

Some area residents argued that the bridge could have remained open if the state enforced the weight limit.

“You can’t tell me you can’t control traffic across the bridge,” said Windsor restaurant owner Rudy Aldighieri. “There is no reason it can’t be kept open.”

Others suggested alternating one-way traffic to restrict the number of cars on the bridge at one time, or keeping the bridge open for ambulances.

The closing means the 2,600 cars that cross the bridge daily will have to either use a bridge five miles south between Claremont, N.H., and Ascutney, or one 15 miles north in West Lebanon.

Stickney said officials have considered building a temporary bridge during repairs, but probably will not because of the cost: an estimated \$600,000. He also said

that reducing the size of the bridge's entrance – as someone suggested – would still allow overweight loads to get through. Area residents and merchants are upset that the state is closing the bridge with two days' notice, just before the busy Fourth of July holiday weekend.

The New Hampshire Legislature this year approved \$1.5 million for bridge repairs. The legislation stipulates

that the contract be awarded by the end of the year, with work to begin by next spring.

[From St. Albans Messenger, contributed by VCBS member Rae Laitres]

VCBS Lending Library: A Learning/Pleasure Reading/ Research Source

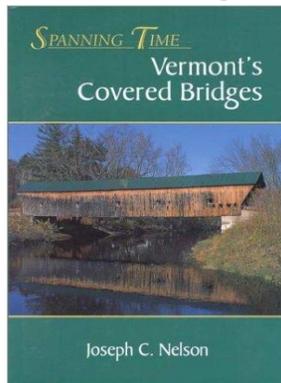
The Vermont Covered Bridge Society has assembled a lending library available through media mail to all society members in good standing.

Librarian Warren Tripp has created a detailed book list complete with a description and critique of each book. Copies of the index are available by mail, or you may contact Joe Nelson for an electronic copy at jcarlnelson@yahoo.com, or go to <http://www.vermontbridges.com/whatis.vcbs.htm#item7>. 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 no longer than two months. Contact Warren Tripp, P.O. Box 185, South Barre, VT 05670, fftwbt@yahoo.com, phone 802-584-3545.

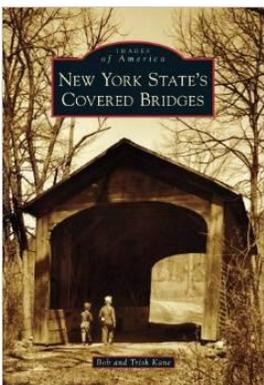
For Sale

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](http://www.vermontbridges.com/special%20070514.htm). Also see: www.vermontbridges.com/bookreviews.htm.*

New York State's Covered Bridges - When one typically thinks of covered bridges, New York is not the first state to come to mind, but New York once had over 300 covered bridges. Floods, fires and progress have claimed all but 32. Readers will enjoy seeing NY's current bridges, including the oldest existing covered bridge in the U.S., the Hyde Hall Covered Bridge, located in Glimmerglass State Park, and the world's longest single-span covered bridge in the world, the Blenheim Covered Bridge, washed away by Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. This book also highlights the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center in Oxford, NY, the first ever center of its kind specifically designed for covered bridge researchers.



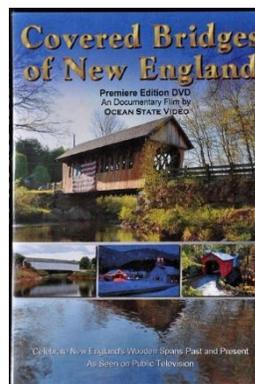
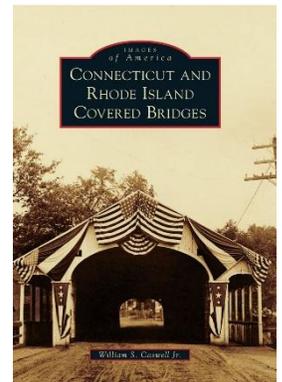
Visions of Vermont art gallery, Jeffersonville, Vermont at: <https://www.visionsofvermont.com/>
802.644.8183

A special sale for the benefit of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society featuring the works of Eric Tobin. All proceeds of the unframed prints go to the VCBS. Sale of the framed prints will be shared 50/50. They are all Giclée on acid free paper. The glass is non-glare artist's glass.

- 10x12 \$125 unframed
- 16x20 \$175 unframed
- 16x20 \$550 Matted and framed
- 20x24 \$850 Matted and framed



Connecticut and Rhode Island Covered Bridges . **Price reduced!** During their heyday in the mid- to late 1800s, more than 150 covered bridges dotted the landscape of Connecticut and Rhode Island. Since that time, floods, fires, and progress have claimed all but two of the historic structures. With over 200 images, this book provides insight into the covered bridge history of an area that has not been well documented in the past. To order your signed copy, send \$20.00 to Bill Caswell, 535 Second NH Turnpike, Hillsboro, NH 03244.



Covered Bridges of New England —DVD Produced by Ocean State Video of Rhode Island for Public Television. On Sale: \$20.00. Profits go to the Vermont Covered Bridge Society's Save-A-Bridge Program. For your copy send \$20.00 plus \$2.50 shipping to Joe Nelson, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465-0267.



PO Box 97
Jeffersonville, VT
05464-0097



Membership Application

(Business or Society please provide name of contact person)

New Member Renewing Member

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

email _____

Check type of membership

- Individual - \$10 Family - \$15 Student - \$8
- Life single - \$150 Life couple - \$200
- Business/Organization/Municipality - \$15
- Sign me up for PDF version of newsletter

Check type of donation;
We are a 501c3 Non-profit org.
(Federal tax deductible.)

- Palladio - \$2 Palmer - \$5 Hale - \$10
- Powers - \$50 Town - \$75 Tasker - \$100
- Paddleford - \$200 Whipple - \$250

(Memberships valid to the end of the current calendar year,

Dues and Donations will be used to promote preservation of Covered bridges.)

Please make all checks for dues and donations payable to: The Vermont Covered Bridge Society.

Mail to: V.C.B.S., Inc.
P.O. Box 267
Jericho, VT 05465-0267