

The Bridger

V.C.B.S. Inc.
Vermont Covered Bridge Society
PO Box 97, Jeffersonville, VT 05464-0097
A Non-Profit Organization

The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter - Fall 2002

VCBS 3RD ANNUAL MEETING TO BE HELD OCTOBER 26 - EUCLID FARNHAM TO HOST

The Vermont Covered Bridge Society will meet in North Tunbridge for its Third Annual Business Meeting. The highlight of the meeting will be a tour of the nine covered bridges in the towns of Tunbridge and Randolph guided by Euclid Farnham.

The business portion of the meeting will be held in the Grange Building on Vermont Route 110 in North Tunbridge. The meeting will begin 10 a.m. A sit-down chicken and dumpling dinner will follow at noon.

At 1 p.m. we will form a car pool in the parking lot and Mr. Farnham will guide us through his bridges with a stop at each. Euclid is an author, the Tunbridge town historian, the president of the Tunbridge Worlds Fair, justice-of-the peace, town moderator, Civil War reenactor, and has conducted many tours of covered bridges, notably for the Elder Hostel program. And he is a really nice guy.

Members and friends wishing to attend are asked to let us know you are coming. Additionally, if you plan to join us at the chicken and dumpling dinner please make reservations. You will find a meeting agenda and a registration form in this newsletter.

There will be a refreshment table open during the meeting and space for members to display memorabilia.

There will be a slide show featuring covered bridge photos by the membership, so bring a few of your slides to share. An empty carousel will be available.

We are also planing a drawing, so please bring some items to serve as prizes for the raffle. The proceeds will be used to help pay meeting expenses. □

for chairing the ad hoc Events Committee that organized our effort, and to committee members John Weaver, John Dostal, and Joe Nelson, all of whom made important contributions to our display.

Many thanks to our sitters, Don and Pauline Prideaux, Neil Daniels, Ed and Irene Barna, John Dostal, John Weaver, and Joe Nelson. The team had many good conversations with the public and fielded many questions about covered bridges. Nearly all of our VCBS brochures and newsletters were handed out to interested people as well as a hefty supply of postcards advertising the opening of the covered bridge museum in Bennington.

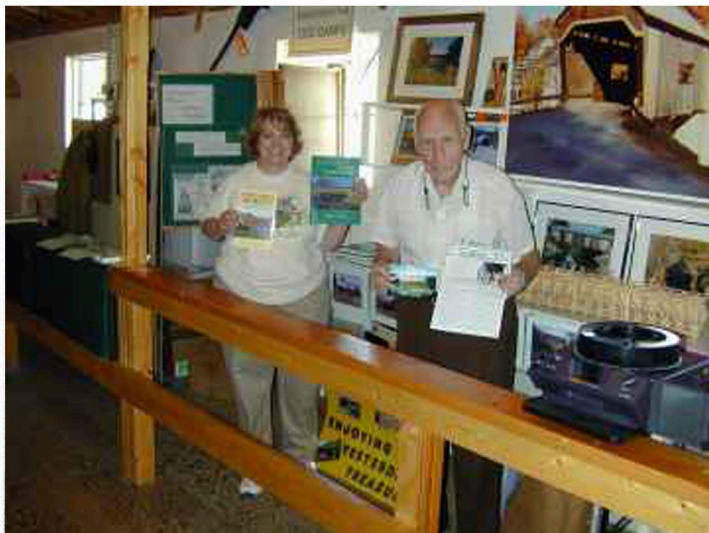
Our thanks to Matt Belden for use of his excellent model of Tunbridge's Mill Bridge. It is a fine example of good craftsmanship, a great attraction and a superb conversation starter.

We are also the proud recipients of a 34" x 49" poster of the Lincoln Gap covered bridge in Warren, donated for this and for future events by John Dostal. The banner is a real attention-getter. Thank you John.

The display included covered bridge photos and prints, covered bridge memorabilia, VCBS patches, books by authors Ed Barna and Joe Nelson, and a slide show of Vermont's covered bridges with the theme: "The Changing World of Vermont's Covered Bridges."

A total of \$225.50 was taken in from two new memberships, the sale of covered bridge books, patches, treenails, bumper stickers, digital prints, and sundry covered bridge memorabilia. □

SECOND ANNUAL SUMMERFEST HELD IN NORTH TROY



Irene Barna and John Dostal man the VCBS booth at VHS Expo 2002.
Photo by Joe Nelson 6-20-02

VCBS AT EXPO 2002

The VCBS made its third appearance at the now annual Vermont Historical Society Exposition at Tunbridge, Vermont, held June 22 and 23, 2002.

The VCBS membership owes a vote of thanks to Irene Odell



Ruth Nelson enjoying SummerFest II in North Troy

SummerFest II, held at North Troy August 10 & 11 and a fun time was had by all concerned. We bridgers were represented there by Joe and Ruth Nelson.

The crowds were large and friendly with music and other events on both days. "Going to Troy was a lot of fun and we met (SummerFest continued on page 2)

SummerFest (continued from page 1)

some interesting people from several states," said Joe Nelson. "Interest in covered bridges seems to be universal. We arrived Friday afternoon to two very friendly and busy B & B owners, Jim and Paul. We had a great room for two nights with outstanding breakfasts cooked and served by Paul.

"Many people stopped by our booth and enjoyed the covered bridge pictures and postcards. Many walked away with an application and the knowledge that the VCBS exists, and what its purpose is."

The Covered Bridge booth was set up on a three-by-eight table under a tent with local historical societies. The table featured most of the items the VCBS displayed at Expo 2002 in Tunbridge.

It was a perfect weekend for the festival goers. They enjoyed craft booths, wagon rides, the Bobbin Mill Players, the Green Mountain Chorus, and the antics of Champ, the Vermont Expos mascot.

While interest in covered bridges was high, sales were not--the Society took in only \$45.50. "Every little bit helps," said Ruth Nelson. "It was a lot of fun. If the festival is held again, I plan to be there." □

WORK CONTINUES ON GREENBANKS HOLLOW BRIDGE

[WGN 45-03-01]

by Mert Leonard

Danville, August 31, 2002 - The bridge has been making little progress the last couple of weeks, dismantling some of the roof is about it. The new beams are on order from Oregon but it will be another two to three weeks before they get here. They have been working on the stone abutment and its about rebuilt, that activity took most of the last two weeks.

The construction contract on the Greenbanks Hollow Covered bridge was officially let on July 15th. The contractor is *Contractors Crane Service* of Huntington. They contracted to lift the bridge off the river with a crane and work on the bridge on land, then return it to the river by November this year.

Work started July 23 when the contractor began the process of rigging the bridge for the lift off its abutments. On July 26, the bridge



Greenbanks Hollow Bridge abutment.
Photo by Mert Leonard, Aug31, 2002

was off the river and on the ground, high and dry.

Work on the bridge structure itself began during the week of August 4 with the removal of the deck and supports.

The town of Danville received a \$300,000 grant to repair the Greenbanks Hollow Covered Bridge. The grant was approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation under the National Covered Bridge Preservation Act. The act, authored by Senator Jim Jeffords, provides 80 percent federal funding for historic bridge reconstruction and research.

The Danville bridge is one of two Vermont bridges selected for the preservation grants this year; the other is the Sanderson Bridge in Brandon. Last year it was Thetford's Union Village Bridge and Cambridge's Poland Bridge.

The trusses that once supported the old Greenbanks Covered Bridge are to be reconstructed allowing the removal of a pier and a pair of steel girders that have provided temporary bracing for the old span since they were installed back in the 1970s. In addition, the deck system and the roof will be replaced.

The bridge was inspected in October of 1994 as part of a state-wide study of Town owned covered bridges sponsored by the Vermont Agency of Transportation. The inspectors recommended that the community close the bridge to traffic and construct an adjacent bypass, or replace the bridge and move it to a nearby preservation site. The cost to replace the bridge was estimated at the time to be \$315,000. [Mert Leonard is Danville's Administrative Assistant - Editor] □



The ribbon is cut by Lamoille County's Senator Bartlett
Photo by Joe Nelson, June 29, 2002

RIBBON CUTTING HELD AT POWER HOUSE BRIDGE

(WGN 45-08-08)

Johnson, VT, June 29, 2002 - The long planned Ribbon-cutting ceremony was held this rare Saturday morning in warm sunlight and with harp music by Heidi Soos. The community was there to see their covered bridge returned to them after its loss to snow-load one-year-and-a half ago (perhaps a record in covered bridge rebuilding). Tourists joined the townspeople to help celebrate, one from as far away as Calcutta, India.

The ribbon cutting ceremony began at 10 a.m. with some speeches, including a few words from State Senator Bartlett (D. Lamoille County). Senator Bartlett was key in finding funds for the
(**Ribbon Cutting** continued on page 3)

Ribbon Cutting (continued from page 2)

reconstruction After the ribbon was cut, the local boy scouts bore the colors through the bridge followed by the Johnson Fire department's 1935 Reo leading a procession of old cars. The covered bridge was then closed for except for pedestrians.

The celebration continued in the village. At the Main Street Stage: Mutt & Jeff- local jazz, bluegrass duet; Spencer Lewis and the Power Duo- fiddle duet; Davy Jones- folk musician from California; Natterjack- Irish traditional and rock. At the School Street Stage: Mark Struhsacker and Tony Washburn- two members of Radio Rangers; Vermont Dance Collective- traditional, period dancing; Tammy Fletcher; and The Parsnips- fiddle group. □

MIDDLEBURY'S PULP MILL BRIDGE REOPENED

by Irene Barna

The Pulp Mill Bridge [45-01-04] reopened Friday, August 23. I had stopped by in early August and spoke with Contractor Paul Ide and his co-worker.. Both were quite disgruntled that they couldn't proceed until the necessary repairs were completed because much more work needs to be done.

Both craftsmen expressed the wish to remove the 1980s vintage interior arches as they only add to the dead load and do not enhance the structural integrity of the bridge. Paul said the bridge was safe for traffic but more rehabilitation work is needed. Monies, of course, aren't there and the local folks will be angry and frustrated again, in a future year, with disrupted traffic.

This kind of inconvenience to people can lead to hostility which can turn opinions against the value of the historic bridge when it is part of the traffic infrastructure when put up against the convenience of getting from point A to point B. Most don't understand the longevity of a wooden bridge vs. other materials. I spoke with people who, in their frustrations with traffic delays, "Want it moved someplace else".

Unfortunately, Pulp Mill Bridge becomes the scapegoat for the fact that it is one of only two places to cross Otter Creek in this county seat-college community bisected by the Creek. 182 years old and it still takes a lot of traffic.

Poor, valiant bridge. I traveled it yesterday. In evidence are some new timbers and some new decking at the Middlebury end and traffic. Lots of traffic! □



Pulp Mill Bridge.
Photo by Joe Nelson, Aug. 14, 2002

BROWN BRIDGE WORK COMPLETED

[WGN 45-11-09]

June 13, 2002 -The Wright Construction Company of Mount Holly, Vermont completed their work on the Brown Bridge and it was reopened for traffic on Wednesday, June 12.

"The Bridge looks real nice now with it's new siding. Also, when you walk inside the bridge you can smell the nice fresh scent of cut wood. Hopefully with the newly completed repairs, the Brown Bridge will be around for many more years to come!" Said Bob Cassidy, VCBS Bridge-watch for the Rutland area. He should know- he's been following the progress of the work from nearly its beginning.

Bob discovered that the bridge was being worked on when he noticed that the road to the Brown Bridge was closed as he was driving near Shrewsbury in early June. "I walked down to the bridge and found out it was closed for repairs. About 40% of the siding on the south side of the bridge and a small amount of siding on the north has been removed. Four pieces of the Town lattice truss have been replaced on the south side. The removed truss was rotten from water damage and insect infestation."

Bob found that the bridge has been closed for about a month and repairs were to be finished in about one or two more weeks. According to a craftsman on the site, the contractor has worked on over 18 different covered bridge projects and were involved with the rebuilding of the Slate Bridge in New Hampshire.

All of the siding has been replaced, two sections of chord and eight pieces of lattice and a rafter. Mr. Cassidy went to the Shrewsbury Town Clerk's office and picked up a copy of the Brown Bridge inspection report, the text of which is included below.

[This article based on reports written by Robert Cassidy - Editor]



Brown Bridge Repaired
Photo by Robert Cassidy, June 10, 2002

THETFORD'S UNION VILLAGE BRIDGE REHAB IN PROGRESS

(WGN 45-09-01)

"The general project description is: rehabilitation of the existing Union Village Covered Bridge and the addition of new glulam floor support beams on reinforced concrete foundations," explains Sue Scribner, Project Manager of VAOT's Historic Bridge Program.

"Some specifics for member replacement include replacement of a portion of the bottom chord on both the north and south trusses as (Thetford continued on page 4)

Thetford (continued from page 3)

well as replacement of a few vertical members in each truss. The roof rafters will also need to be replaced. A new glulam deck will be installed on glulam stringers and floor beams. Of special note, a new copper roof will be installed as well as interior lighting.

The low bid price was \$609,213 and was submitted by Alpine Construction. The resident engineer is Tom Chase and the VTrans project manager is Warren Tripp.

"The project is to be substantially completed in mid-September with traffic re-opened, although some work such as the roof installation and approach paving will not be completed and will be on-going. The project completion date is in mid-November.

"Special funding for 100% of the project construction costs was received through the special efforts of Senator James Jeffords."



"The Glulam decking is somewhat in place already. Three floor beams and four more short panels have to go in place after removing an oversize backwall on the far end" -- Tom Chase

Photo by Tom Chase 8/13/02

Letters

Dear Editor:

I found the essay UNCOVERING THE PAST by Steve Miyamoto very interesting. My family owned a home near Norwich VT on Pompanoosuc river. There was an old abutment for a bridge that spanned the river just before it joined the Connecticut river, I was always curious regarding the history of this bridge. I could never uncover any information about this structure.

Do you have any suggestions regarding where I might find such information?

Regards, Tim Ullrich

Dear Mr. Ullrich:

In 1962 a small book entitled "Rare Old Covered Bridges of Windsor County [Vermont]" was written by Richard Sanders Allen, one of the foremost authorities on covered bridges.

On page 21 of the above title is information on the Pompanoosuc Village Bridge [World Guide Number 45-14-67]. I quote from this book:

Drowned out

Better known, and the subject of thousands of photographs, was the big bridge on U.S. 5 at Pompanoosuc village. This long span was a valley landmark for nearly a century. Pompanoosuc Bridge was built in 1866 by Bela J. Fletcher of Claremont, New Hampshire, who received

\$9,913.35 "For work done." Describes as "a practical bridge builder and general carpenter," Fletcher is thought to have had a hand in the building of similar bridges over the Connecticut at Fairlee-Orford and Lewiston-Hanover. He collaborated with James F. Tasker on the Windsor-Cornish Bridge and, being fifteen years older, may well have taught the latter a great deal of trade.

Pompanoosuc Bridge used a new system of lattice which Fletcher may have thought up himself, adapting the original Town "mode." The lattices were square timbers instead of usual planks, pinned together with iron bolts held by nuts and washers.

Even after U.S. 5 was changed in 1937 to a new crossing further downstream, Pompanoosuc Bridge continued to be used until nearly flooded out. Considered a menace when left only just a bit above the level of waters resulting from the new Wilder Dam, it was razed in 1954.

I hope that this helps out a bit.

Dick Roy, Historian N.S.P.C.B.



Old Pompey
Photo from NSPCB Archives

The Vermont Covered Bridge Society "Patch" Now Available

The new VCBS patch depicting the "Bridge-at-the-Green" in West Arlington, Vermont are now on sale for \$3.50 each at: **VCBS Patch, P.O. Box 97, Jeffersonville, VT, 05464-0097**. Enclose a self addressed stamped envelope. (Up to three patches can be mailed with a 37 cent stamp.)

The profits will help fund the VCBS mission advocating the preservation of covered bridges.



NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL GOOD MEMBERS TO COME TO THE AID OF THEIR SOCIETY

Annual Meeting time is nigh and our Nominations Committee is once again searching for interested people to fill our many vacancies and to take an active roll in working for the preservation of our covered bridges.

Our by-laws require that we elect officers at the end of each year to one-year terms. Candidates for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer are needed. In addition, volunteers are needed to staff our Standing Committees.

If you are a member in good standing and can attend meetings regularly, you can have your name placed on the ballot. If you choose to run, contact John Weaver, Nominations Committee Chairman, (802) 223-7064 or jweaver6cl@aol.com

The duties of the four offices are:

President - Presides at the meetings of the Society and of the Board of Directors, and has the duties and powers normally appurtenant to the office of President in addition to those specified by the Constitution and By-laws of the VCBS.

Vice President - Has the power to exercise the duties of the President in the event of the absence or incapacity of the President. The Vice President serves as the chairperson of a standing committee.

Secretary - Has charge of the Society's correspondence and maintains a record of all meetings of the Society and of the Board of Directors. The Secretary assists the President and the Directors with arranging meetings and maintaining contact with members and the public. The Secretary can appoint a **Recording Secretary** as needed.

Treasurer - Receives all monies belonging to the Society, and deposits them in a bank satisfactory to the Board. The Treasurer reports at every Board meeting the condition of the Society's finances.

The Nomination Committee is also searching for interested people to fill positions in the **Standing Committees**. Most of the positions require only a few hours of time each year. Members interested in joining a committee are invited to contact John Weaver.

Communications Committee - Publishes the VCBS Quarterly Newsletter. The staff includes the **Newsletter Editor** who collects stories, edits, and composes the quarterly issues of The Bridger; the Staff Writer who writes feature articles, assists the editor in the collection of stories and to rewrite articles as needed;

Correspondents to collect covered bridge items and stories and send them to the newsletter staff; and the **Distribution Person** who works with the copy center or printer, handles billing, labels and mails each issue of The Bridger.

Events Committee - Members plan All-member meetings, bridge excursions, picnics, dinners and work parties.

Legislation Watch Committee - Members keep up to date on historical preservation legislation and apply for grants to fund bridge preservation. The rules that guide 501c3 organizations are followed.

Membership Committee - Issues membership cards to paid-up members, sends a welcoming letter to new members, solicits new members, designs and participates in membership drives, and maintains and shares the membership database.

Publicity Committee - Establishes and maintains a working relationship with the media to provide the public with news, articles, and information about historic covered bridges, and about the Society's aims and activities.

Advertising rates in The Bridger

\$7.00 per column inch

\$15.00 per quarter page

\$25.00 per half page

\$45.00 per full page

Advertisers contact Joe Nelson, 2 Sugar Hill Rd., Underhill, VT 05489 or jcnelson@together.net

Newsletter deadlines

Spring Issue - February 28

Summer Issue - May 31

Fall Issue - August 31

Winter Issue - November 30

VCBS Officers

•Joseph Nelson, President

2 Sugar Hill Road, Underhill, VT 05489

802.899.2093 jcnelson@together.net

•John Weaver, Vice President

6 Colonial Dr., Montpelier, VT 05602

john.weaver@state.vt.us

•Irene Bama, Secretary

7 Forbes Circle, Middlebury, VT 05753

ibama@middlebury.edu

•Ruth Nelson, Treasurer

2 Sugar Hill Road, Underhill, VT 05489

802.899.2093 jcnelson@together.net

Bridger Newsletter Staff

•Joseph Nelson, Editor

802.899.2093 jcnelson@together.net

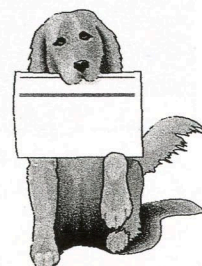
•Steve Miyamoto, Asst. Staff Writer

802.879.3690 spmiyamoto@adelphia.net

•Kathie Knight, Distribution

TUNBRIDGE AREA LODGINGS

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Sharon, VT | Columns | (802) 763-7040 |
| Sharon, VT | Half-acre Hotel | (802) 763-8010 |
| Chelsea, VT | Shire Inn (B&B) | (802) 685-3031 |
| Barre, VT | Days Inn | (802) 476-6678 |
| Barre, VT | Hollow Inn & Motel | (802) 479-9313 |
| Barre, VT | Pierre Motel | (802) 476-3189 |



VCBS THIRD ANNUAL MEETING; OCTOBER 26, 2001

North Tunbridge, Vermont Guided tour of the Tunbridge and Randolph Covered Bridges.

The meeting and dinner will be held in the Grange Building on Route 110 in the Village of North Tunbridge.

- 10:00 a.m.- Call Meeting to Order (Joe Nelson)
Welcome to the Third Annual Meeting of the VCBS
- 10:05 a.m.- Nominating Committee on coming election.
Treasurers Report
Membership Committee Report
Bridge Watch
Other reports
Open Floor Time - Questions and discussion
- 10:45 a.m.- Show covered bridge slides brought by members.
Drawing for prizes
Free time
- 12:00 p.m.- Break for catered lunch
- 1:00 p.m.- Form car pools, begin Tunbridge/Randolph covered bridge tour guided by Euclid Farnham
- 5:00 p.m.- Return to parking area. Adjourn.

- Refreshment table and memorabilia sales tables to be open during meeting.
- Members to bring items for sale or swap
- Members to bring covered bridge slides for showing. Carousels will be available
- Members asked to bring items for prize drawing, the funds to go for meeting expenses
- Members are invited to bring guests

VCBS Third Annual Meeting - October 26, 2002

Please let us know if you are coming, and if you plan to attend the dinner.

Please make your reservations early.

Mail to: John Weaver, 6 Colonial Drive
Montpelier, VT 05602

Yes, I plan to attend. My name is: _____

Phone () _____ - _____

I, we, also plan to attend the Chicken Pot Pie Dinner with vegetable, potatoes, dessert and coffee. There are _____ people in my party at \$12.50 each. My check is enclosed to the amount of \$_____. (Make check payable to VCBS)

(✓)

I plan to bring slides for the show _____

I plan to bring item(s) for raffle _____

I plan to bring Memorabilia _____

See page 5 for overnight lodging

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