

# The Bridger



The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter—Winter 2009

**PREZ SEZ**

TENTH ANNUAL FALL MEETING OF THE  
VERMONT COVERED BRIDGE SOCIETY

Windsor, Vermont

September 26, 2009

There has been much bridge-watch opportunity lately due to the three covered bridge rehabilitation projects being completed: Hutchins and Creamery West Hill CBs in Montgomery and Kingsbury CB in Randolph. Joe Nelson has followed up with site visits and excellent photos of both of the Montgomery bridges.

Also, new projects are underway in Rockingham (Worrall CB rehabilitation) and Newfane. The Newfane project entails the construction of a replica covered bridge. Ray Hitchcock has undertaken site visits and the posting of interesting progress photos.

Our fall meeting at the toll house in Windsor was well attended and took place on a beautiful fall day. I hope to see many members at our spring meeting in Jeffersonville as well.

John Weaver, President, VCBS

## VCBS Officers

- *John Weaver, President*
- *Joseph Nelson, Vice President*
- *Irene Barna, Secretary*
- *Neil Daniels, Treasurer*

## Bridger Newsletter Staff

- *Ray Hitchcock, Editor*
- *Joseph Nelson, Staff Writer*
- *802-899-2093 [jcnelson@together.net](mailto:jcnelson@together.net)*



John Weaver, Irene Barna, Joe Nelson, Photo by Ray Hitchcock,  
Sept 26, 2009

Windsor, Vermont was the site of the Fall Meeting of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society. Held Saturday, September 26, 2009, the meeting site was the Toll House for the Windsor-Cornish covered bridge, the longest two-span covered bridge in the United States. The circa 1790 cape on the Connecticut River, and adjacent to the bridge, was the original structure for the toll collection for the ferry from Cornish, New Hampshire across to Windsor in Vermont.

Nineteen people were in attendance.

President John Weaver called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

**Minutes** of the Spring All-Member meeting held in Waterville, VT were not read as all minutes are available in *The Bridger* and on the VCBS web site. A motion was made by Neil Daniels and seconded by Johnny Esau to accept the minutes as printed in *The Bridger*. Motion passed.

### Treasurer's Report

Neil Daniels reports the following for the period January 1, 2009 through September 19, 2009

Total income	\$1,274.65
Total expense	2,570.53
Income less expense	-\$1,295.88
Income - exp – grants	- 45.88

### BALANCE SHEET

Union Bank Checking 01-01-09	\$5,392.74
09-09-09	<u>4,095.96</u>
Change in account	\$-1,296.78

### SAVE-A-BRIDGE FUND

Balance 09-19-09	\$4,765.00 (same as beginning of 2009)
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A more detailed review of the Treasurer's Report is presented at the meeting; but in the interest of space in *The Bridger* totals only are printed here. The full report is always available from Neil.

Question from audience: "I gather that the purpose of this organization is to establish covered bridges?" Joe responds "to promote preservation of covered bridges." John offers, "... in numerous areas sometimes by outright financial grants to preserve these bridges."

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Membership

Joe Nelson The VCBS currently has 145 memberships - 8 are new since January of 2009. Election ballot registrar has thirty two out of the 145 ballots returned thus far. The deadline for voting is December 1, 2009.

### Historical Committee

Bill Carroll is the archivist. He says, "There are 44 collections identified and totally processed to date with, probably, four or five more collections still to do with the materials yet to get to." At the request of the VCBS he has cataloged one of the collections and sent records to the Library of Congress and can be found on the internet.

This is not the collection; but rather the catalog record. These records should be available to local libraries.

Joe adds there is still the anticipation of making VCBS archival information available at the Vermont Historical Society, the Shelburne Museum, and the University of Vermont. This issue still needs to be looked into.

### Communications

Ray Hitchcock is the new editor of *The Bridger*. He and his wife have visited bridges around the state via motorcycle over the years and have noticed changes, "It is interesting to note how dynamic these old bridges are." He encourages bridge watch involvement and is always looking for more information from members.

### Bridge Watch

Ed Barna mentions that Halloween is approaching and special attention needs to be paid to the security of the bridges.

John Weaver reports that the Kingsbury in Randolph, the Creamery or West Hill, and the East Fairfield projects are all completed.

They all have had fire retardant and insecticidal applications. No-Char outside and Shell-Guard inside, respectively are used and are both a clear coat application. On painted bridges, fire-guard paint is used. The VCBS website gives updates.

### Archives

Ed Barna asks if archival material, particularly digital photographs, should be sent to Bill Carroll as Chair of the Historical committee. Bill replies that all photos are welcome for the archives as historical documents especially if notes accompany the photos. Bill notes that

there is nothing on disc as yet. There are lots of pictures; but nothing on CD which would be good to have because disc would have different views or show changes such as windows.

Joe Nelson adds that he takes many photos as a bridge is being worked on - as it is coming apart to make certain of details, then as it is put back together - to ensure keeping the original fabric. New innovations such as epoxy are being used in repairs. Fairfield, Comstock, and Hutchins all have epoxy in an effort to save parts of key symbols. All of this is now on record in Joe's photographs.

Bill says that all of the archives are in binders and that cross referencing is in need. There is no searchable method. To look for everything on a given bridge one must look in many binders. A cross-reference system will take time and money.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None mentioned

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Signage**

Some towns seem to be putting up height signs.

Terry Shaw and Joe Nelson visited VTrans to talk about selling idea of signs. VCBS would have to spend a lot of money to make it happen. Joe says they ran against Federal law as to what can be put on a post next to a highway. He thinks the best approach would be to talk to the towns.

Comments followed from those in attendance regarding signage:

Ed Barna says Giddings Manufacturing, Inc. in Pittsford manufactures signs for towns and offers to talk with them about it.

Joe informs that there is a fee to put up a sign up and a fee to keep it up.

However, Neil Daniels says the Fire Department in Weathersfield puts up signs to signify dry hydrants as those hydrants are not painted red. They are small signs as big as an index card on a post -- and recognizable as

indicating a dry hydrant. He suggests having a recognizable sign shape signifying a covered bridge. Drivers of oversized trucks need to be warned early enough of a covered bridge where there might not be a place to turn around. Many trucks proceed to and through the bridge because there was no place to turn around.

Signage should include size plus weight limits.

Box trucks are required to have damage insurance and Towns need to pursue violators if they are known.

One comment was made regarding the number of signs posted on a bridge and that aesthetics are taken away with too much signage.

As an example, the Upper Falls Bridge has sign attached to the bridge -- could it be moved to a sign post?

It was noted that in New Hampshire a vehicle hitting a sturdy structure located a distance of 25 feet from some bridges damages an oversize vehicle before the vehicle would damage the bridge. If a vehicle will not fit through the structure; it won't fit through the bridge! Some of these types of structures are in place near some Pennsylvania covered bridges as well.

It is recommended that signs be at the intersection of roads on which a covered bridge is located so that drivers do not proceed down that road if the vehicle cannot safely use the bridge. Signage seems to be a town vs. AOT issue. Should the Legislature be approached on the issue? It seems that box trucks are the biggest culprits causing bridge damage. That damage might be avoided with appropriate signage in appropriate places.

Next meeting date March 27, 2010 in Jeffersonville  
Terry and Jane Shaw will host.

No further discussion, the meeting adjourned 10:55a.m.

The drawing yielded \$23.00.

Jan Lewandoski was the speaker talking about repairs to the Corning-Windsor Bridge in '88 '89 and the challenge of keeping the bridge open while working on it. He spent 14 months living in the toll house in which the meeting was held.

Neil Daniels advises against walking in the near-by Cornish-Windsor Bridge as it is too dangerous. "This bridge is not very good to walk in. You are taking your life in own hands."

"The same problem existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century because the horses went too fast!" said John Weaver.

Neil encouraged those attending to come outside after meeting to discuss the C-W bridge with Jan.

Members who chose to, joined for lunch in a downtown Windsor diner which had a separate room VCBS to use.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Barna, Secretary

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### **Oxford Memorial Library -Future Home of Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center**



Oxford Memorial Library built by Theodore Burr, used by permission—Trish Kane

The future home of the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center moves forward!

In November of this year, Bob and Trish Kane sent a letter to "Covered Bridge Enthusiast" encouraging them to participate by donating to the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center. The center has applied for two grants and one would be a matching grant where every dollar donated will be matched by the foundation.

The Oxford Memorial Library began on a five year, 4 Phased Capital Campaign project in 2005. Fundraising and grants to date have allowed the completion of Phases I & II. They are now ready to proceed to Phase III and

IV. This includes construction of shelving and display units.

The Kane's letter states, "The center will preserve covered bridge models, photographs, postcards, slides, and numerous other resource materials, as well as organize an extensive library of covered bridge books."

Theodore Burr built this house between 1809-1811 and it is the last remaining structure built by this famous covered bridge builder. It is located on the site of an ancient Indian Fort in the village of Oxford, NY.

People have contributed collections and models for the project. Current monetary donors include:

Mark and Wendy Comstock, Ann Arbor, MI

Chuck and Mary Ann Devenney, Washington, PA

Ray and Adrienne Hitchcock, Cambridgeport, VT

Jim Jones, Indianapolis, IN

Jan and Zhou Mo Lewandoski, Greensboro Bend, VT

John Weaver, Montpelier, VT

Phyllis Wells, Plattsburgh, NY

Robert McPherson, Akron, OH

Miriam Woolfolk, Lexington, KY

John Daloia, St. Mary's, KS

Robert Salvi, Tewksbury, MA

Morris Mele, Brewster, NY

Bob and Trish Kane, Sherburne, NY

Ohio Historic Bridge Association

Edinburgh Historical Society, NY

For more information on donations of covered bridge resource materials or donations to the center contact Bob and Trish Kane at: bobtrish68@frontiernet.net or 607-674-9656





## Creamery Bridge Reconstruction Completed WGN 45-06-09

By Joe Nelson



Creamery Bridge, WGN 45-06-09. A view of the south portal, the approach rail, and the upstream side by Joe Nelson fall 2009

**September 16, 2009** - Montgomery's Creamery Bridge has passed its final inspection by the Vermont Agency of Transportation and is ready for traffic. Creamery Bridge Road, unmarked at present, connects West Hill Road with Hill West Road.

Alpine Construction, of Schuylerville, New York, began work on Montgomery's Creamery Bridge on West Hill in mid-September. The winning bid was \$598,632.30.

The Contract completion date was July 31, 2009. The work on the superstructure was completed on or about July 3, however road conditions forced a delay in the work on the abutments until August 13. Road grading and the installation of guard rails was finished on or about September 14.

Structural problems forced closure of the bridge in the summer of 1994. An inspection team recommended interim rehabilitation to avoid collapse of the structure under its own weight and snow loading. The bridge was closed with concrete barriers. Over time water washing down into the bridge from the east end contributed to the rotting of the floor and floor timbers.

### Williamsville Bridge WGN 45-13-05

By Ray Hitchcock

Jim Ligon, Alpine Construction and crew are busily building the replacement replica of the very tired and very worn Williamsville bridge. The current bridge decking is pretty deteriorated and local people are apparently keeping the tire repair and replacement companies in business.



Williamsville Bridge construction site - lattice construction w/ bottom chord Glulam, by Ray Hitchcock November 2009

The crew has a tight work area just west of the bridge and have been forced to block off one lane of the highway. People are used to one lane as the bridge is also restricted to one. Jim reports that they will have the two lattice and floor beams assembled within the next few weeks. Glulam beams are used as the bottom chord to provide additional strength for the heavy traffic that frequents the bridge. Materials are in place and all appears to be on schedule.

### Hutchins Bridge Finished - October 29

WGN 45-06-07

By Joe Nelson



**October 29, 2009** - It's Thursday, cloudy and threatening rain, the final day of the project. The last of the heavy equipment is moving out after completing the installation of new guardrails, leaving Alpine Construction people to smooth the ground

around the new posts. Now, the newly renovated bridge stands clean behind park-like landscaping, ready for the first passage of the visiting public.

The project began November 2008 with a completion date of October 30, 2009. The winning bid was \$1,085,869.93 made by Alpine Construction of Schuylerville, New York. The bid included a temporary bridge.

### **Worrall Bridge Repairs WGN 45-13-10**

By Ray Hitchcock



Worrall Bridge Reconstruction, Photo by Ray Hitchcock  
November 23, 2009

Daniels Construction is steadily moving forward with bracing and dismantling components of the Worrall Bridge in Rockingham town. They completed significant site work, retaining walls and a dry fire hydrant this fall. As pictured, they have cut up decking and are removing that along with floor beams. Most of them will be reused along with many other components. The bridge will be repaired in place.

Replacement wood has been ordered and should arrive in about two months. Crews on site report that they will need the time to brace and remove damaged components.

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### **MY INTRODUCTION TO THE COVERED BRIDGE**

By Ellen Everitz

Having moved to Vermont with my parents from the

Boston Area in 1943 as a young girl I had never seen or heard of a covered bridge. I was familiar with huge Iron Bridges over the Charles River between Cambridge and Boston.

My uncle took us for rides in the country on Sunday afternoons, which was a treat for a city girl. There was so many things to see, such as cows, horses, farmers plowing their fields or harvesting their crops at the end of the season. One thing in particular stood out—the covered bridge, which made a lasting impression on me.

The twin bridges in Cambridge village were the first covered bridges I encountered. I was fascinated by the strange—looking structures. It was fun riding over the rattling wooden floor boards through the “tunnel”. The signs over the portals reminding drivers to keep their horses at a walk also attracted my attention.

As time went on, I became more interested in these structures and began to notice some of the details about the bridges. Unfortunately, many of these bridges were demolished to accommodate modern traffic or fell into disrepair and were replaced by cement bridges. When the remaining bridges were renovated, I began to notice how beautiful they were. In my opinion, the covered bridge is a marvelous piece of architecture. We’re lucky to have so many of them remaining.

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### **Election Ballot Registrar’s Report**

**November 20, 2009** – In accordance with the constitution and bylaws of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society, John Weaver, President; Joseph Nelson, Vice President; Neil Daniels, Treasurer; and Irene Barna, Secretary, have been duly re-elected to office to serve two-year terms beginning January 1, 2010. There were no opposing candidates.

One-hundred-forty-five ballots were sent to the membership, of these thirty-eight were returned. Twenty-four respondents filled in their birthday/anniversary dates, ten signed up for the PDF edition of the Bridger newsletter.

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# Covered Bridge Fiction or Fact?

## What is a covered bridge? Addressing the Vexing Questions of Authenticity.

The following article posing the question was written by Terry E. Miller for *Bridges and Byways*, the journal of the Ohio Historic Bridge Association, and reprinted here with his permission.

This subject was addressed by Fiction or Fact in the Winter 2008 *Bridger* by **Question number 9 – How should authenticity of a covered bridge be determined?** Terry Miller's article closes with a detailed and interesting answer to the question. Readers are invited to respond. Write: Bob & Trish Kane, 167 Williams Road, Sherburne, NY 13460, or email bobtrish68@frontiernet.net.

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The subject of covered bridges does not strike most people as controversial, but indeed it can be when questions of authenticity arise. For many years, the major divide has been between those who accept newly built, often undersized "fake" bridges and those who reject them, at least as far as including them in official publications such as *The World Guide* and *Covered Bridge Topics*. Now a rapidly increasing number of rebuilt (or cloned) bridges, where the original structure was either lost through arson, flood or tornado or merely removed, and then replaced by a new bridge using between a few and no original truss members, creates new challenges. Resolving these questions turns on one fundamental question: what defines a "covered bridge"?

If the descriptor—"covered"—defines the type, then any bridge with a roof and siding merits inclusion. I am aware that this definition alone would satisfy quite a few readers. But there are alternate ways to define the type as well. Some use the material as the critical element: the bridge must be all wood or a combination of wood and metal with the former dominating. According to this definition, then, stone arch bridges with wooden covers, which are commonly found in Europe or China, would not satisfy the criteria and would be excluded. Similarly, the now famous "Japanese covered bridge" in Hoi An, Vietnam, well known to thousands of Western tourists, does not qualify for inclusion since it is a

series of four small stone arches flanking a center span built on a stone slab, with all covered in wood.

Perhaps the most stringent of the definitions is based on structure. To be "authentic", the bridge must have a functional, load-supporting truss of some sort. As a consequence "stringer" bridges, which have simple beams for support, do not qualify. Similarly, stringer bridges having non-functioning trusses placed there for looks also would not qualify. But excluding stringer bridges requires exclusions that do not always make sense. Most of the covered bridges in China's eastern provinces (primarily Fujian and Zhejiang) have "woven-arch" construction, which can be rationalized as a kind of truss placed below the deck, but some of the shortest are adequately supported by a stringer alone, though otherwise identical.

Considering the structure as the key factor also raises the question of which trusses are authentic? Some brand new bridges, such as Ashtabula County, Ohio's "State Road" bridge (35-04-58), built in 1983, make use of traditional trusses; "State Road" is Town Lattice. But Ashtabula County has also constructed a number of new bridges using variants of the Pratt truss, such as "Caine Road" constructed in 1986. The Pratt truss is atypical among historical bridges, though not unprecedented.

Additionally, if "functional" is a required trait, then what to say about bridges that have been reinforced to the point that trusses, while present, no longer bear the load or merely support themselves and not the deck? When a series of supports are added, these, rather than the truss, support the bridge. The addition of I-beams hidden beneath the deck to fully support the bridge render the trusses non-functional. By that standard, Meems Bottom Bridge in Shenandoah County, Virginia, which was burned but saved through the addition of I-beams, would no longer qualify. The famous "double barrel" bridge at Phillipi, West Virginia, too, which is now a modern concrete and steel bridge housed over by the original trusses and roof, would also not qualify.

Less satisfactory is a definition that privileges age and date of construction. It is agreed that the "golden age" of covered bridges was the nineteenth century up to about 1925, but basing authenticity on age creates more problems than it solves. There is little problem with including the four bridges in Putnam County, Indiana, built after 1900 or the nineteen bridges in Parke County of similar vintage, but virtually all of Oregon's bridges were not only built after 1900 but continued to be built as late as 1966. The same holds true for Quebec and New Brunswick in Canada, where all bridges were built after 1900 and as late as the 1950s. Using date of construction

as the determinant would also eliminate from consideration all of the newly cloned bridges, authentic in construction, but mostly built after 1990.

A possibly more valid but difficult to ascertain criterion is original intention. If the reason for building the covered bridge is purely pragmatic, that is as the best solution based on questions of efficiency such as cost, then the bridge is arguably authentic regardless of age, truss or material. Ashtabula County, Ohio's second "State Road Bridge", now officially called the "Smolen-Gulf Bridge", dedicated in 2008 with Pratt trusses measuring 613 feet (making it the longest covered bridge in the United States, IF accepted as authentic), was called by its builder an appropriate choice for the county. But do we wish to accept or reject this bridge based on the question of whether wood construction was cheaper than concrete or steel?

Building covered bridges for reasons of nostalgia or ambiance would seem to exclude them based on the question of intention. This criterion makes it difficult to accept numerous new bridges, many of which might fail on other counts as well. For example, the covered steel truss bridge in Ohio's Mohican Forest State Park, built for atmosphere rather than function, fails on several counts, including date, material, and intention. But can we be sure of the intention for (re)building Madison County, Iowa's "Cedar/Casper" bridge, whose original was burned by arsonists in 2002? When the county cloned the bridge in 2004 using its original plans, was it because this was the best solution for crossing Cedar Creek or because Madison County wished to maintain all examples of its greatest tourist draw—its covered bridges—based on the success of Robert James Waller's novel, *The Bridges of Madison County*, and the movie of the same name?

I have considered five possible criteria for for designating covered bridges as authentic. But how do we apply these? Do we require the standard of total conformity? If so, the number of bridges listed in the *World Guide* (in future editions) will decline sharply. Is conformity to four out of five standards good enough? Three out of five? Or shall we offer a multi-tiered system of rating authenticity. And who would make such determinations? Should someone (but who?) form a Board of National Standards? Too many of these, however, sound like cures worse than the diseases. While universal acceptance of such standards might be the goal, since everyone is unlikely to be completely satisfied, there is the danger of covered bridge enthusiasts falling into the equivalent of religious denominations or political parties. Indeed, informally this is the situation at present.

We should also ask what is the purpose for list making, such as the *World Guide*? What do readers want to know? If the purpose is to include every known covered bridge in the land regardless of its attributes, the book will realize what publishers call a "high thud factor" (according to its sound when dropped flat on the table). If the list's purpose is to identify only the strictly historical bridges, then it will be a rather slender volume. Would readers like to know about partial clones such as Kentucky's "Bennett Mill" bridge and the out-of-whole-cloth Town Lattice "State Road" bridge in Ohio's Ashtabula County? Should they also know about the same county's newest bridge, the gigantic "Smolen-Gulf" bridge? I think most do. Further, should they know about Parke County, Indiana's newly rebuilt "Bridgeton" bridge whose burned original was central to the county's covered bridge festival?

Ultimately, it is up to the editors of publications listing covered bridges to set standards for inclusion. Just as with professional journals, policies may change dramatically from one editor to another. Joseph Conwill, editor of *Covered Bridge Topics*, follows a stricter standard for inclusion than his predecessor did. That is the editor's prerogative. Conwill's successor may see fit to offer a broader standard. The *World Guide* (if there are future editions) is more problematic in that changes in policy would wreak havoc on each edition if editors make major changes, such as including or excluding all those "fake" bridges we love to hate. Designating a bridge with an official number (state-county-bridge) lends it legitimacy. Once a number is assigned to a bridge, you cannot eliminate that listing or replace it without creating a certain amount of chaos.

I can only speak for myself. I would prefer a policy that clearly distinguishes "classic" historical bridges from those which are not by virtue of non-conformity to at least one of the criteria. Obviously, there will be bridges in dispute and no easy way to resolve the issue. Nonetheless, I would probably elect a four-tiered system.

1. Numbered bridges that have historical and structural integrity.
2. Numbered bridges having an historical foundation but which have been modified in some significant way. I would assign an extra symbol, such as an asterisk, to these numbers.
3. Numbered bridges which lack historical roots. Essentially these are the new bridges that have working trusses and are primarily built of wood. I would assign yet another symbol to these, perhaps a cross or plus sign.



4. Unnumbered bridges which lack historical roots as well as a working truss could be listed in an appendix, but I would have to decide how to separate the more significant of these (e.g., the bridge at Lanterman's Mill in Youngstown, Ohio's Mill Creek Park) from backyard, amateur-built miniatures. Obviously, this involves making value judgments which some may not accept.

I began by suggesting that inclusion and exclusion turn on a clear definition for the term "covered bridge". After considerable discussion I have made clear how muddled the waters are, that no simple definition likely satisfies even a simple majority of 51 % of bridge enthusiasts. But a fuller understanding of the issues involved should cause the dissidents to be more sympathetic to the editors and writers who must make finite decisions when pen meets paper.

Terry E. Miller, Kent, PhD, Ohio April 19, 2009

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## SE Windham County

By Bill Carroll

I look at five bridges in southeastern Windham County two or three times a year at various seasons. When last checked just before the fall meeting, Hall Bridge in Rockingham, Kidder Hill and McWilliam Bridges in Grafton, Green River Bridge in Guilford were all found to be in good shape. Creamery Bridge in Brattleboro has been closed to traffic and a new bridge was being built just downstream for the relocated road. The bridge will continue in use as a pedestrian and bicycle bridge, and the approaches will be landscaped as a small park. It's unfortunate to see a bridge taken out of service, but was probably inevitable in this case as the road is a popular bypass of downtown Brattleboro.

## Montgomery's Creamery Bridge Vandalized

By Joe Nelson

Montgomery, Vt., November 24, 2009 – Soon after com-

pletion of the renovation of Montgomery's Creamery Bridge, WGN 45-06-09, vandals moved in.

On October 27, Jim Ligon, Alpine Construction foreman, on his last inspection of the bridge site, emailed me that damage had been done to the bridge. I visited the bridge that day and found that some siding had been kicked out and gang style graffiti painted in two places. I took several photos of this and of names and initials gouged into truss members. These I shared with Bridge-watch Coordinator John Weaver, the VCBS Board of Directors, and with the Montgomery Selectboard

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## VCBS Annual Spring Meeting Slated

By Suzanne Daniels, Chair, Events Committee

The Annual Spring Meeting will be held on April 24, 2010 at the **Visions of Vermont Art Gallery** in Jeffersonville in the Sugar House Studio. The gallery is owned and operated by Jane and Terry Shaw, long time members of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society.

Our speaker will be Jim Ligon of Alpine Construction of Schuylerville, New York. Jim will speak about the recent renovation of the Cambridge Junction Covered Bridge, also known as the Poland Bridge. He has presided over the renovations of the Creamery and Hutchins bridges in Montgomery, that work completed this fall. He has currently begun work on the Williamsville Bridge in Newfane.

In addition to the Cambridge Junction Bridge, Jeffersonville is home to the Grist Mill Bridge off Route 108. Several other covered bridges stand within an hour's drive.

The meeting agenda and final arrangements will be announced in the Spring 2010 issue of the *Bridger* in March

# Historical Committee Report



By William Carroll

The Historical Committee is staffed by Society members, chaired by a member of the Board of Directors. The purpose of the Historical Committee is to collect covered bridge history in the form of documents, news and magazine clippings, books, photographs, postcards, and artifacts. The Historical Committee will oversee the use of the collection for display, publication, and a lending library. The committee also collects, designs, crafts, or purchases items for sale to help fund promotion of the preservation of covered bridges. The Historical Committee maintains a lending library of covered bridge books for the use of the membership."

<http://www.vermontbridges.com/whatis.vcbs.htm>

Our archives have been organized into about 45 separate collections of photographs, postcards, clippings and articles, and other information about the covered bridges in Vermont, as well as some bridges in several other states. Written finding aids with inventory lists have been prepared for each collection. During the winter we plan to catalog each finding aid and send the catalog record to the Library of Congress, who will enter it into an international database which includes nearly all published works and a large number of archival collections. We have a lot of information on several of the bridges, very little on others. Since we are charged to collect the history of each covered bridge, we plan to begin researching each bridge by visiting local historical societies, Town offices, reviewing old maps and town histories, and any other sources, including our own archives. Ultimately we hope to have a comprehensive history of each bridge and the historical context within which each bridge is found, as well as knowing what information exists for each bridge and where that information may be found. Many bridges were associated with now long-gone mills, some with 19<sup>th</sup> century turnpikes or other roads. Rather than looking at a bridge as an attractive scene, or from an engineering perspective, we would like to present a comprehensive story of each bridge in Vermont. Such a project will take a lot of time. Anyone who might be interested in helping with this project, please email me at [wcarroll7@verizon.net](mailto:wcarroll7@verizon.net)

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October 14, 2009

John Weaver, President

The Vermont Covered Bridge Society

P.O. Box 97

Jeffersonville, VT 05464-0097

Dear John,

On the last weekend of September, 2009, the annual Pioneers Safari took place in western Vermont. We had 44 "bridgers" from 8 states attending. Those who stayed with the safari for the full two days saw 22 of Vermont's authentic bridges. We had a wonderful time and, I'm glad to report, some of our group extended their stay and saw even more of Vermont's beautiful bridges and countryside.

We always try to schedule our safari for the last full weekend of September. Unfortunately, that led to a conflict with the meeting of the VCBS. We are sorry for that conflict. Although it had no big impact on either event, it would have been nice to have had some of your members join us. Since we are strongly considering a return to Vermont & New Hampshire next September, perhaps our organizations can work something out so that our dates do not conflict.

All of that being said, the primary purpose of this letter is to present the VCBS with a check for \$60. Each year, if our finances allow it, we like to recognize and support the covered bridge organization in the area where we hold our safari. This donation to the VCBS, although small, is in appreciation of all the fine work your organization does to help preserve and protect the beautiful historic covered bridges of Vermont.

Best wishes to the VCBS,

George D. Conn, Coordinator Pioneers Covered Bridge Safari  
(also member of the VCBS)

*Response to George D. Conn from President John Weaver:*

*Thank-you so much for the generous donation to our fund for the preservation of historic covered bridges in Vermont. VCBS often makes grants to towns and other organizations for preservation and rehabilitation work.*

*Sorry we missed the Safari this year. We usually set our next meeting date during the spring or fall of the year. Hopefully your date and ours will work out OK in 2010. We would be happy to get together and discuss covered bridge activities, background, and other topics of interest with a group as active and interested as yours.*

## Membership

By Suzanne Daniels, Chair, Membership Committee

Please join me in welcoming the following new members to our group: Milt Cannan of Marlton, NJ, and Josif Bicja of Manchester, NH. A warm welcome to each of you!

### 2010 Early Renewal Contest

We are pleased to be able to once again offer our Early Renewal Contest. This contest has been a huge success in the past and really helps the Society in many ways. Paying your membership fees before the December 31 deadline not only qualifies you for a chance to win a nice gift, but gives the society the funds it needs going in to the new year.

Here are the prizes for this year's contest: Two year free membership to the VCBS; a copy of New England's Covered Bridges of Vermont by Ed Barna; or a signed copy of Spanning Time, Vermont's Covered Bridges by Joe Nelson.

To be eligible for this year's contest, there are two things you need to do:

**1) Pay your membership dues before December 31, 2009.**

That's the key! (Please note that if your 2010 membership has been paid in advance of this date, or if you are a life member, your name will automatically be entered into the drawing.)

**2) Complete the membership form** in this issue of the newsletter and return it with your check made payable to the VCBS no later than December 31st. The mailing address is: VCBS, PO Box 97, Jeffersonville, VT 054640097. Winners will be announced in the spring issue of our newsletter.

### Membership Birthdays and anniversaries

#### December

01 Terry and Jane Shaw  
06 Priscilla O'Reilly  
08 Mark Dawson  
20 Ben and June Evans  
20 Lyn Whiston  
23 Ed Barna  
22 Richard Davis  
24 Tina Conn  
24 Dave and Marikka Guay

25 Ann Ovitt  
26 Virginia Brackett  
27 Steve and Susan Miyamoto  
27 Dan Brock  
28 Anthony and Pat Daniels  
30 Gloria Davis  
31 Jan Bramhall  
31 Ben Evans

#### January

4 Marclay and Thomas Davis  
12 Ray Hitchcock  
12 Jim Patch  
15 Dan Castellini  
23 Ray & Adriene Hitchcock  
29 Bill Jeffrey

#### February

2 Bill Caswell  
7 Richard (Rick) Cyphers  
12 Joe and Ruth Nelson  
14 George and Tina Conn  
14 Richard Howrigan  
12 Robert Cassidy  
21 George Longenecker  
21 Jean Carrington  
24 Tina & George Conn  
24 Marge Converse  
24 John Weaver  
26 David Guay

Newsletter deadlines

Spring issue – February 28

Summer Issue- May 31

Fall Issue- August 31

Winter Issue- November 30



Mystery Bridge—Ties two states together—Any guesses?



## Please sign me up or renew my membership

### In the VCBS:

(Business or Society please provide name of contact person)

☐ New Member ☐ Renewing member

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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:

☐ Palladio- \$2 ☐ Palmer - \$5 ☐ Hale - \$10

☐ Powers - \$50 ☐ Town - \$75 ☐ Tasker - \$100

☐ Paddleford - \$200 ☐ Whipple - \$250

*(Memberships valid to end of 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: The V.C.B.S., Inc.*

*Attn: Treasurer P.O. Box 97, Jeffersonville, VT 05464-0097*

PO Box 97  
Jeffersonville, VT  
05464-0097

