

THE BRIDGER



The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter – Issue #83

Events

Special Board of Directors Meeting August 14, 2020

- by Joe Nelson

A special Board of Directors meeting was warned on July 30, 2020, to answer two questions:

- In consideration of the pandemic, should the Annual Fall Meeting be held as scheduled on October 17, 2020, at the Visions of Vermont Art Gallery in Jeffersonville?
- Should a request by the town of Belvidere for a grant to help finance work on the town's Morgan Bridge [WGN 45-08-07] be granted?

As of August 28, 2020, with 9 of 13 members voting, it was decided by a vote of 7 to 2 to cancel the Annual Fall Meeting.

With 7 yes votes, 1 no vote, and 1 abstention, the Vermont Covered Bridge Society voted to grant the town of Belvidere the sum of \$5,000 for the repair of the Morgan Covered Bridge. With the quorum being 7, it was voted to take the funds from the Save-a-Bridge Fund.

The meeting began August 14, 2020, two weeks from the warning date in accordance with VCBS Constitution and Bylaws Article 3, Part 2. In accordance with Article 3, Part 2, the meeting was conducted by email. The meeting was closed on August 28 by a motion to adjourn by Steve Miyamoto, with Pete Cosgrove seconding the motion.

Edwin Loveland Appointed Chair of Publicity Committee

Edwin Loveland was appointed chairman of the Publicity Committee by a special Board of Directors meeting on November 4, 2020, at the request of Steve

Miyamoto, Vice President and Chair of the Publicity Committee.

Steve's case for the change: "Edwin is [a new member] but has shown a passion for promoting covered bridges in the state. As you know, he has taken the lead in contacting and communicating with towns to get approval for the placement of patches. He is also outgoing and loves to talk to people and promote the VCBS."

Steve will continue with the Communications Committee as webmaster.

Nine of the twelve available board members voted their approval. Edwin, as chair of a standing committee, will take his seat on the Board of Directors.

The special meeting began on November 2 and was adjourned on the 4th. Bill Caswell moved to close the meeting, and Bill Carroll seconded the motion.

- Joe Nelson, Chairman, VCBS Board of Directors

Membership Update

- Reported by Dan Monger, Chair

For those VCBS members who are receiving this newsletter with the mailing label marked in red, this indicates that you are behind in your membership dues. Membership fees are due in January. Annual members who are more than one year behind in their dues need pay only for the current year to return to good standing. Members who do not respond will unfortunately be purged from the membership list.

We now have 145 members, including:

- 1 Student
- 43 Individual Yearly
- 29 Family Yearly
- 44 Single Lifetime
- 25 Couple Lifetime
- 3 Business, Organization, or Municipality

President: Joe Nelson, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465 email: jcarlnelson@yahoo.com
Vice President: Steve Miyamoto, 8 Ridge Rd., Essex Junction, VT 05452, email: spmiyamoto@comcast.net
Secretary: Sarah Pierce, 7 Polygraphic Lane, Apt 7n, North Bennington, VT 05257, email: srahpierce@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Dan Monger, 26 Lake St., Tunkhannock, PA 18657-7128, email: teelmonger@ptd.net

Of our membership, 69 (47.6%) are residents of Vermont, 21 (14.5%) are residents of other New England states, 54 (37.2%) are residents of states outside of New England, and 1 (.7%) is international.

The VCBS wishes a very happy birthday and happy anniversary to:

December

01 Terry and Jane Shaw
06 Priscilla O'Reilly
20 Lyn Whiston
22 Richard Davis
23 Ed Barna
24 Dave and Marikka Guay
25 Ann Ovitt

26 Virginia Brackett
27 Dan Brock
27 Steve and Susan Miyamoto
30 Gloria Davis
31 Jan Bramhall

January

12 Jim Patch
15 Dan Castellini

February

02 Bill Caswell
05 Carol Robb
07 Rick Cyphers
12 Joe and Ruth Nelson
12 Bob Cassidy
14 Richard Howrigan
24 John Weaver
26 David Guay

Please note: If I have neglected to include anyone, please send me an email at teelmonger@ptd.net.

Publicity Update

- Reported by Edwin Loveland, Chair

I have found everyone at the Vermont Covered Bridge Society to be so friendly and welcoming, and I am humbled by this opportunity to serve as chairman of our Publicity Committee. I would like to tell you a little about myself.

I was born and raised in Monroe, Connecticut, which is a small suburb of Bridgeport. I first came to Vermont with my family when I was 7 or 8, and in 1963 my folks bought a camp in Windham. After that, we were up here all of the time. My first bridge was Chiselville, and I saw it often as it was on the road that was a shortcut from Arlington to Manchester on our way to the camp. During that time, we also visited Scott, Dummerston, Taftsville, and others in Vermont and New Hampshire.

My mom was a newspaper reporter for *The Bridgeport Post* and the *Newton Bee*, as well as a freelance writer. She was also a founding member of the Monroe, Connecticut, Historical Society. It is from her that I get my deep love of U.S. History, as well as of writing and reading. I learned much from her.

My dad was born in the farmhouse of my grandparents' home in Sandy Hook in 1909. When he was a boy, they still farmed with teams of oxen and horses. Years later, when we went to county fairs, he would get as close as he could to the teams preparing to

compete in the oxen and horse drawing and try to pick which team would win. He was almost always right. It is from him that I inherited a love of the old ways, a respect for tools, and a healthy curiosity of how things are done and how things are built.

Besides bridging, I enjoy music of all kinds, and I have been in and around bands my entire life. I blame that on The Beatles. I am an avid reader, and I get nervous when my unread book pile gets too low. I also enjoy hiking, and I spend a lot of time in the woods and climbing mountains. This past summer, I climbed Mt. Horrid in Brandon Gap, my favorite place, and White Rocks in Wallingford twice. I live alone in Rutland, a great central place to live for both bridging and hiking.

I would like to thank everyone at VCBS for their help and warm welcome, as well as for the opportunity to serve. I would especially like to thank Steve Miyamoto for his countless hours of help with the Patch Program, as well as for pointing me in the right direction and answering my endless stream of questions. I look forward to being a part of helping to promote the preservation of our beautiful bridges. You can contact me at ncassady5@gmail.com.

Covered Bridge Presentation

A Look at the Covered Bridges in the Museum Collection

Bennington, October 12, 2020 – At the invitation of Deana Mallory of the Bennington Museum, Steve

Miyamoto gave a presentation on the museum's covered bridge collection.

The museum collection features five covered bridge paintings: the Chiserville [WGN 45-02-05], the Henry [WGN 45-02-02#2], the Governor Robinson [WGN 45-02-10x], the Old Red [WGN 45-02-09x], and the High [WGN 45-04-31x]. Each bridge was explored, with background and factual information detailed. General information regarding covered bridges was also

presented. Details of bridge construction were explained, with a focus on the Town lattice truss.

We thank Deana and the Bennington Museum for giving us the opportunity to share some of our knowledge with the viewers for the promotion of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society. Courtesy of the Bennington Museum, the presentation is available at <https://youtu.be/4SvtMsxhkQo>.

Morgan Bridge Wins VCBS Grant

We received a phone call from Belvidere Road Commissioner Randy Cayenne on June 15, asking if the VCBS gives grants.

The Morgan Bridge [WGN 45-08-07] in Belvidere was closed by the town because of the floor rotting. The bridge stands at the base of a hill, where in hard weather it receives water from the road it serves. The town of Belvidere needs to repair the bridge and engineer the roadway to divert water flow away from the bridge. Contractor Mike Lanphear, LLC submitted an estimate of \$14,430 for repairs to the bridge's rotted floor.

We checked with James B. McCarthy, PE, Bridge Preservation Engineer of the Vermont Agency of Transportation on the latest bridge inspection. He explained that their latest inspection report for the bridge indicated that it is in good condition. The runner planks do need to be replaced, but the deck is rated a 7, which is good. Mr. McCarthy checked with the District 8 office to see if the town had applied for a Structures Grant to replace the runners and found that the town had requested some funds from the Town Structures Grant program, but they need to wait in line as they have received their limit for the year.

The town of Belvidere, however, found that after the state inspection, the flooring under the damaged running planks had rotted and required repair. It was also found that one of the bedding timbers on the Back Road end required replacement.

On June 18, 2020, Steve Miyamoto traveled to Belvidere to view the Morgan Bridge and photograph its condition.

On August 28, 2020, the VCBS Board of Directors voted to grant the town of Belvidere the sum of \$5,000 from the Save-a-Bridge Fund for the repair of the Morgan Covered Bridge.



Morgan Bridge, photo by Steve Miyamoto, June 2020

VCBS Board of Directors member Bill Caswell, who also serves as president of the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges (NSPCB), took this information to the national organization, which matched our grant with an additional \$5,000. Our societies are both dedicated to the preservation of covered bridges and appreciate that the town of Belvidere is active in preservation as well. With a population of approximately 300, the town's taxpayers can certainly use the grants.

An Argument for Considering the Grant

The Morgan Covered Bridge, on Morgan Bridge Road, was built in 1887 across the North Branch of the Lamoille River. Unlike other bridges in the area, the 65-foot queenpost bridge still supports itself as it did when it was first constructed. The bridge is the last of the five North Branch bridges to retain its original flooring system supported by its queenpost truss as the original builders intended. The flooring system in the four others has been reinforced with steel I-beams, leaving the trusses without function.

A 1995 Vermont Agency of Transportation report noted that the bridge incorporates some unique design features. “The queenpost truss incorporates three small king rod trusses within the queenpost truss to help support the floor loads. Also, queen rods are positioned next to the queenposts. Two other short rods drop from near the bottom of the queenpost main braces as well. Another design feature includes double six-by-eight tie beams at each queenpost, allowing for two tenons and two pairs of knee braces.”

That this bridge has some unique historic design features and that it has a functioning truss makes it well worth preserving.

On August 3, 2020, VCBS Board of Director member Peter Cosgrove visited the Morgan Bridge and found that the repair work has been completed.



Morgan Bridge, photo by Pete Cosgrove, August 2020

He wrote, “Joe, Attached are photos showing the new flooring on the Morgan Bridge. The new flooring itself extends only 2/3 to 3/4 the length of the bridge. The running planks (those boards upon which the tires ride) are new and complete for the full length of the bridge. Also, as I had mentioned, shallow gullies were dug and filled with stone, one on either side of the roadway leading down the hill to the bridge. And lastly, the bridge is open to traffic. – Peter”

Exploring Sanborn Bridge Options

[WGN 45-03-05]

Lyndonville, October 5, 2020 – After sitting in the precarious state of stabilized but neglected for almost seven years, the [Sanborn Covered Bridge](#) may be seeing a new spark of hope for its restoration. Sarah Lafferty,

president of the Lyndon Area Chamber of Commerce, is forming a group to explore options to address the current state of the bridge.



Sanborn Bridge, photo by Scott Wagner, 2006

Lafferty, a lifelong resident of Lyndonville, has taken the lead in organizing a group of people to assess the current state of the bridge and determine what can be done to restore it. The group consists of the Lyndon Historical Society, town representatives, and community members.

The group has already been in contact with the current owners of the bridge to explore the transfer of ownership. They are also exploring fundraising options, as well as seeking donated materials for the repairs.

Bill Caswell, president of the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, has been providing background information, guidance, and contacts for the group.

This will be a lengthy and expensive project, requiring the expertise of bridgewrights, but Sarah has a vision of connecting all of Lyndon’s covered bridges to the existing trail system for pedestrians and cyclists. That would bring a unifying aspect to the Covered Bridge Capital of the Northeast Kingdom!

After years of neglect, the Sanborn Bridge was on the verge of collapse in 2013. Emergency funds were raised to stabilize the bridge. The work was done by Tim Andrews of Barns & Bridges of New England. Details of the condition of the bridge and the rescue efforts from 2013 can be found in this article: [Sanborn Covered Bridge Near Collapse Averted.](#)

You can follow the group’s progress at the [Save The Sanborn Covered Bridge Facebook](#) group.

New Manosh Romantic Shelter

[WGN 45-08-Q]

Hyde Park, July 15, 2020 – Harold Manosh wrote to the VCBS about his new romantic shelter. The bridge is located on Mr. Manosh’s property in Hyde Park, Vermont, which adjoins the Green River State Forest and the reservoir. The bridge crosses the Green River and provides access to his property on Green River Road.

The original bridge was built in 2011 as an uncovered bridge, supported by four large steel beams. The bridge was built to accommodate a weight limit of 30,000 pounds.



Manosh Romantic Shelter, photos by Harold Manosh

The romantic shelter covering was added in 2015 by Jan Lewandoski of Restoration and Traditional Building of Greensboro Bend. Jan’s work consisted of constructing a queenpost truss over the previously existing uncovered I-beam bridge. Jan told us that the truss is “fully functional and supports itself, the walls,

and the roof system. The bed timbers are larch, the truss is local spruce and hemlock, with a couple of sticks of Douglas fir. The four queenposts are yellow birch 10 x 11 x 15 feet. The bracing is natural knees, mostly white spruce and tamarack (larch). Some of the framing in the central panel was added by others to produce windows and do not contribute structurally to the truss. Much of the timber and crane services were provided by Harold Manosh.” The siding and metal roof were installed by Mr. Manosh’s crew. The bridge is 60 feet long and has a height clearance of 12 feet, 6 inches. Mr. Manosh welcomes visitors to the bridge.

VAOT Update – Warren Covered Bridge

[WGN 45-12-15]

October 14, 2020 – J. B. McCarthy, of the Vermont Agency of Transportation Covered Bridge Committee, provided an update on the [Warren Covered Bridge](#) project.

The committee has reviewed and approved minor repairs proposed for the Warren Covered Bridge via email review in November 2019. The major work is the replacement of the deteriorating concrete facing the west abutment. There will also be a few floor beams replaced. No work is proposed for the queenpost truss. With funding through the Agency’s Municipal Assistance Bureau, the town has hired Dubois & King to complete the design. Construction is planned for the summer of 2021.

VAOT Update – Moxley Covered Bridge

[WGN 45-09-01]

October 14, 2020 – J. B. McCarthy, of the Vermont Agency of Transportation Covered Bridge Committee, provided an update on the [Moxley Covered Bridge](#) project.

The committee reviewed and approved repairs to the Moxley Covered Bridge several years ago. The town had secured some funds through the District Town Highway Structures Program.

John Weaver completed the design before his retirement from the agency. The proposed work includes the replacement of the existing deck and floor beams, along with a section of the northeast corner bottom chord. That work was completed over the summer by Wright Construction.

Bridges Damaged by Vehicles

West Dummerston Bridge Damaged

[WGN 45-12-02#2]

November 12, 2020 – Kristopher Radder, of the *Brattleboro Reformer*, reported that the West Dummerston Covered Bridge was damaged in a hit-and-run accident. The east end of the bridge was hit by what appears to have been an oversized vehicle. No other details were known at the time the article was published. Anyone with information about the incident is asked to contact the Town Office at 802-257-1496.

The [West Dummerston Bridge](#) was originally built in 1872 with a Town lattice truss across the West River. The bridge was renovated in 1998. At 280 feet, it is the longest covered bridge within the state of Vermont's borders.

Pulp Mill Bridge Damaged

[WGN 45-01-04]

Updated November 4, 2020

October 30, 2020 – Anita Larkin Ford passed along this article from the *Sun Community News* website. The Pulp Mill Covered Bridge was damaged in a single car accident on Saturday morning, October 22nd.



Pulp Mill Bridge, photo by Edwin Loveland

Vermont State Police, Middlebury police, Middlebury EMS, and the Middlebury Fire Department responded to

a truck accident. The driver was headed south on Morgan Horse Farm Road, when he struck the northbound guardrail and then the center dividing structure of the bridge.

The driver was taken to the hospital and released; however, he was cited for several violations. The article did not mention the extent of the damage to the bridge or to the truck.

Kingsley Bridge Damaged, Closed, Reopened

[WGN 45-11-03]

October 15, 2020 – Keith Whitcomb, Jr., of the *Rutland Herald*, reported that the Kingsley Covered Bridge was damaged by a box truck on Wednesday morning, October 14th. Neighbors near the bridge alerted the authorities.



Kingsley Covered Bridge, photo by Edwin Loveland

The bridge was closed pending damage inspection by the Agency of Transportation. The Rutland County Sheriff's Office posted this notice on their Facebook page on October 14th: "Due to a motor vehicle incident, the Kingsley Covered Bridge on East Street in Clarendon will be closed to motor vehicle traffic. The incident is under investigation. The investigation has revealed that a white box truck with out-of-state plates went through the bridge at approximately 0830 this morning.



Kingsley Covered Bridge, photo by Edwin Loveland

Anyone with information regarding this vehicle or who received a delivery from this type of vehicle in this area, please contact the Rutland County Sheriff's Department,

Sgt. Andrew Cross, at 802-775-8002." VCBS member Peter Cosgrove visited the bridge on Saturday, October 17th. He reported that the damage did not seem extensive. On October 19th, VCBS member Edwin Loveland also visited the bridge, and he confirmed Peter's damage assessment.

Jack Thurston, of *New England Cable News*, provided a video that documents the damage and the reaction of local residents: [Sheriff's department searches for driver following crash into Vermont covered bridge.](#)

The bridge was reopened to traffic on Monday, October 19th.

Scribner Covered Bridge Update

[WGN 45-08-07]

November 7, 2020 – It has been a year since the "Halloween Storm of 2019." Unfortunately, the [Scribner Covered Bridge \(WGN 45-08-09\)](#) is still out of commission.

VCBS member Pete Cosgrove let us know that the Scribner Covered Bridge in East Johnson was out of service. The roadway leading up to the bridge was washed out in the rainstorm that happened October 31 thru November 1, 2019.



Scribner Covered Bridge, photo courtesy Governor's Office

Peter has gone through the select board minutes from July 20, 2020, and he provided the following summary. Progress has been slowed because of the coronavirus

pandemic. FEMA was prohibited from doing site visits until recently. The select board is asking for funding for an engineering study on Scribner Bridge so they can apply for a construction grant for repairs, particularly on the abutment area. It appears that the town is going forward to address this issue.

According to a *Vermont Business* magazine article, dated November 25, 2019, "The U.S. Department of Transportation has approved \$500,000 in emergency relief funding following the Halloween rainstorm that left widespread damage throughout Vermont. These emergency funds will assist the Vermont Agency of Transportation in repairs to roads on the federal highway system damaged during the October 31 – November 1 storm event."

According to multiple sources, the Vermont Agency of Transportation received \$9.7 million from the Federal Highway Administration's Emergency Relief Program this past September. The bulk of the funding will be used toward repairing damage caused by the Halloween 2019 storm. Hopefully, some of these funds will be used to repair the damage to the roadway leading to the Scribner Bridge.

The Scribner Covered Bridge, on Rocky Road in East Johnson, was built in 1919. The single-span, 48-foot-long modified queenpost bridge was built to cross the Gihon River.

Touring Woodstock's Covered Bridges

by Joe Nelson

Interstate Highway 91 is handy for accessing the seven wooden bridges scattered from rural Thetford and the old mill town of North Hartland to Woodstock, a pretty, upscale resort town. I-91 is quicker, but old Route 5 is more fun. It threads through the countryside, bringing the visitor to a world of small villages.

Thetford

Thetford was chartered in 1761 and settled by people from New Hampshire and Connecticut. In the 1860's, historian Isaac Hasford remarked that while the Connecticut River town was favored and above average in thrift and population, nothing had happened there to claim space in history. "We have, besides farming, a riotous mill stream, the Ompompanoosuc, bisecting the town, giving life and power to three smart villages...It has, on occasion, [washed] half their bridges and sometimes their mills down to the Connecticut and the towns below."

Along the course of the mill stream were eight saw mills, four grist mills, a straw-board and paper mill, two flannel factories, a carriage shop and bedstead factory, an edge tool and trip hammer works, and the Sayre Brothers furniture mill.

Two covered bridges survive and continue to span the Ompompanoosuc. The Sayres Bridge is one of them. The Union Village Bridge is the other, but that is another story.

Sayres Bridge – c. 1839

[WGN 45-09-06]

The Sayres or Thetford Center Bridge is thought by some to be a Haupt truss span, mostly because some of the diagonals cross more than one truss panel. Whatever truss it is, it is the only one of its kind in New England. While the names of the builders of the Sayers Bridge are lost, the Haupt truss designer is remembered by Civil War buffs as the Colonel who built and ran the U.S. Military Railroad in the South for Union forces.

Herman Haupt graduated from West Point in 1835. He resigned his commission to become district superintendent and chief engineer for the Pennsylvania Railroad. When the war began, he was drafted to serve as superintendent of military railroads. He pushed his tracks through Virginia, building trestles out of found

materials described by Abraham Lincoln as "bean poles and corn stalks."

The Haupt design, as implemented here, resembles a multiple kingpost truss. It differs in that it is assembled from planks instead of square timbers and is joined with treenails rather than with mortise and tenon. The builder integrated the whole with a segmented plank arch.



Sayres Bridge, photo by Joe Nelson, June 2014

The chords are constructed with two four-by-eight-inch planks, sandwiching the vertical members and the braces. The vertical members and braces are four-by-eight-inch timbers pegged together between the chord planks with their long dimensions parallel to the bridge span. The arch segments are four-by-twelve-inch timbers treenailed to both sides of the vertical members. The open spaces between the chords and between the arch segments are filled with lengths of wood. The whole structure is pegged together with treenails.

The 129-foot Sayers Bridge was strengthened in 1963. The existing floor was replaced with a nail-laminated timber deck on four longitudinal steel I-beams supported in mid-span by a concrete pier. The work was estimated by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VAOT) to cost about \$30,000, with \$6,000 the town's share. The town replaced the siding and roof as part of a community project.

The Thetford Center Bridge underwent repairs again in 1997 after a local resident tried to drive a dump truck through with its bed raised. He went part of the way, taking off two-thirds of the tie-beams and the roof.

The Select Board voted to award the work to local craftsmen. Hemlock timber was cut and hauled from the town forest to replace thirteen tie beams. The accident occurred on Thursday, October 16. By December 16, the repairs were complete and the first car passed through the bridge.

In November 2002, a car went through the upstream truss of the bridge when the driver lost control. The vehicle landed in the millpond, upside down, submerging the occupants - two 11-year-old boys and a woman. The boys got out, but the woman, tangled in her seatbelt, had to be rescued by the people from the following vehicle, who resuscitated her on the upturned bottom of the car.

Closed in April 2007 for a \$814,000 rehabilitation, the Sayres Covered Bridge was opened to traffic in September. The tremendously long detour imposed by the work distanced the community from essential services for five long months.

But all was not happiness in Thetford. Residents cited safety problems for pedestrians. A public meeting was held, suggesting the installation of lighting, painting a pedestrian zone within the bridge, cutting windows into the side of the bridge, cantilevering a walkway on the side of the bridge, and putting a traffic-slowing circle at one end of the bridge.

The VAOT refused the changes to the bridge itself, because funding was given under the guidelines for the preservation of historical sites. The original bridge did not have windows or a pedestrian walkway, and adding them would be “altering the structure.”

The Sayres Bridge is easily reached from I-91, Exit 14. Drive west two miles on Route 113, then take Tucker Hill Road south through Thetford Center. Sayres Bridge crosses the Ompompanoosuc River above a millpond. The river flows over a ruined dam and cascades down terraces of bedrock.

Find Union Village by returning to Route 113 from Thetford Center and driving east to Thetford Hill and Academy Road. Go south 2.5 miles to the bridge. Union Village stands in the Ompompanoosuc River valley in the shadow of the Union Village Flood Control Dam.

Union Village Bridge – 1867

[WGN 45-09-05]

The Union Village Bridge stands in the center of the village, connecting the two halves of the community since 1867. With a deck length of 113 feet, it is the

longest multiple-kingpost span in the state. The average truss length of a multiple-kingpost bridge in Vermont is 54 feet.

Local historian Charles Latham, Jr., in his *A Short History of Thetford, Vermont, 1761-1870*, refers to Thetford as a “river town,” an appropriate title for a town standing on the banks of the Connecticut River, with the Ompompanoosuc River flowing through it. The first settlers arrived by means of the Connecticut River. The Ompompanoosuc provided waterpower for grist mills and sawmills, and wherever a mill was built, a village grew and roads and bridges came to be.



Union Village Bridge, photo by Joe Nelson, June 2014

Latham wrote, “Several references indicate that a bridge was built in 1782 to carry this road over the Pompanoosuc [sic] at Union Village...” A petition to the assembly in 1787 for a tax to build a bridge to Norwich on the road from the meetinghouse (perhaps at Union Village) mentions that “there are now seven large bridges in said town.”

Charles W. Hughs of Thetford wrote in his, *The Mills and Villages of Thetford, Vermont*, that there had been four bridges across the Connecticut at North Thetford: a bridge on piles, an open bridge, a covered bridge, and an iron bridge.

Over the following years, the bridges were lost to fire, flood, and modernization. In all, five covered bridges survived into the mid-twentieth century. A newspaper clipping kept by the Thetford Historical Society states that three covered bridges in Thetford were lost with the construction of the Union Village Flood Control Dam in 1948. Now there are but two: the Sayres and the Union Village bridges.

A visitor to the Union Village Bridge can’t help but notice a long inverted “V” on each truss. An attempt had been made to stiffen the bridge with what has been

called a “kingpost arch.” The Agency of Transportation bridge inspectors found that this bracing has been lending little structural support, “due to lack of substantial connection to the trusses.”

The timber deck was replaced and the unmortared stone abutments capped in the 1970’s and the east abutment faced with concrete. Except for the addition of the kingpost arches, the span remained as originally designed.

Unfortunately, the bridge was in trouble. The camber had reversed, so that instead of arching upward at mid-span, the old bridge was sagging. The Agency of Transportation recommended that the Union Village Bridge be closed to traffic and bypassed or rehabilitated with a self-supporting roadway.

The rehabilitation of the bridge began in the summer of 2002 and was completed with its reopening on November 13, 2002. The work included massive glulam support beams to allow the town’s emergency vehicles to serve a community divided by the Ompompanoosuc River.

Letters

To Whom It May Concern,

As an old man and lover of covered bridges, I decided in 2011 to build one over the Green River to access my 250-acre forest and log cabin. This property adjoins the Green River State Forest and reservoir.

I hired Jan Lewandoski to construct a 60-foot queenpost structure, and my construction crew installed the finish siding and metal roof. It has a 12’6” clearance and a weight limit of 30,000 lbs. Four 60’ x 30’ steel beams allow for the added limit.

Enclosed is a photo, and I would welcome visitors.

Sincerely, Howard Manosh

Location details:

NE of Hyde Park, Hyde Park Township. Centerville Road .57 mile from the junction with VT100 in Hyde Park, E (curves SE) on Noyes Farm Road .55 mile, NE on Carpenter Hill Road 3.1 miles, N on Green River Road .45 mile to a parking area on the W side of the road. There is a gate to a private road and a sign welcoming people to walk on the road. – Romantic Shelters Home Page; www.vermontbridges.org

While the glulam beams compromise the historic structural integrity of the bridge, they permitted the original structure of the bridge to remain intact. Original fabric replacement included only portions of the bottom chord on both the north and south trusses and replacement of some vertical members in each truss. The roof rafters were replaced, and a new glulam deck was installed on glulam stringers and floor beams. For “nice,” a new copper roof and interior lighting were also installed. Declared an historic innovation, the kingpost arches remain.

The low bid for the work was \$609,213, submitted by Alpine Construction. Project completion was targeted for mid-November. Special funding for 100% of the project construction costs was received through Senator James Jeffords.

NOTE: *This tour will continue in the next issue of The Bridger.*

Dear Members of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society,

The Belvidere Select Board would like to extend our sincere gratitude and heartfelt appreciation for your generous donation to help offset some of the repair cost to the Morgan (covered) Bridge. Though there are many historic buildings in the town, people come from all over looking for the covered bridges. With your support once again Morgan Bridge can be enjoyed by those who wish to experience history in its true fashion. For some, it may be their first time to see and actually drive through a covered bridge. For others, it may be the place to walk or drive down memory lane. And for some of us who use and enjoy the Morgan Bridge on a daily basis, the bridge provides convenient access for daily commute. For all we say thank you.

Sincerely, Belvidere Select Board

Earl Domina, Jr., Chair Kevin Leavitt, Ken Adams, Jr.

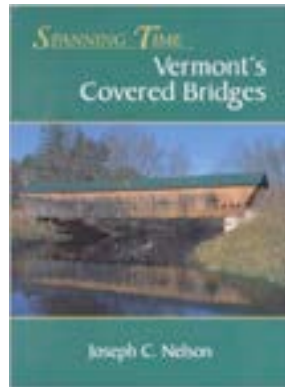
Our Lending Library

The Society’s library is closed until further notice. Anyone interested in a book, please contact Joe Nelson at jcarnelson@yahoo.com.

For Sale

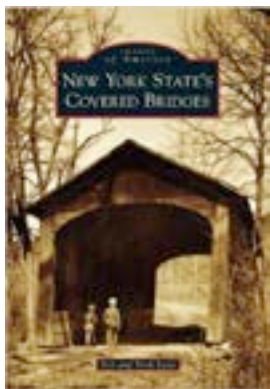
Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges by

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 \$25.00, free shipping. For reviews of the book, go to www.vermontbridges.com/bookreviews.htm. Send your check or money order to: VCBS, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05489.

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. For a copy of the tour, contact Bob and Trish Kane, 167 Williams Rd., Sherburne, NY 13460, 607-674-9656, bob-trish68@frontiernet.net.

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

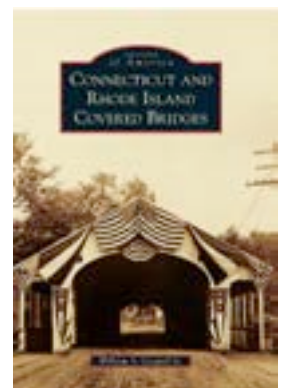
16x20 \$550 Matted and framed

20x24 \$850 Matted and framed



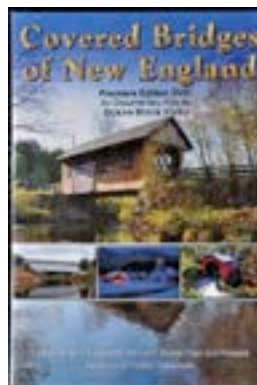
Connecticut and Rhode Island Covered Bridges –

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. Profits go to the Vermont Covered Bridge Society's Save-A-Bridge Program. For your copy, send \$20.00 plus \$2.75 shipping and \$1.20 Vermont sales tax to VCBS, c/o Joe Nelson, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465-0267.





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