

The Bridger



The Vermont Covered Bridge Society Newsletter Fall 2011

PREZ SEZ

I am saddened to report that Hurricane Irene has damaged several of our historic bridges. Two are being reported as swept away and several are damaged. We are receiving lots of concern from covered bridge enthusiasts from all over the nation. Many of you have sent in reports and pictures that will be seen over the next weeks and months.

Thanks to Trish Kane for collecting and posting video, photographs and reports for all to see. *Her report which is constantly being updated is contained in this issue.*

Joe Nelson tells me that he has had several interviews from press on our damages. It is heart warming to see the interest on our bridges on the national news media and on the internet.

Fall is an excellent time for bridge-watch activities, as the foliage is waning and our covered bridges become more visible.

Also, some construction projects to watch: Gifford CB in Randolph will finish rehabilitation this fall and Middlebury-Weybridge Pulp Mill CB construction will get under way by late October.

VCBS elections are coming up this winter. Please consider running for a VCBS office and/or appointment as a committee chair/member. To date, no new candidates for office have declared themselves. Let me know of your interest and your name will be put on the ballot or appointed to whatever committee work you desire.

I Hope to see you all at the VCBS meeting in October, in Windsor.

John Weaver, President

Vermont Covered Bridge Society Annual Fall Meeting

Old Toll House,
45 Bridge Street, Windsor, Vermont
Saturday, October 15, 2011

Agenda

- 9:00 a.m. - Doors open - setup, fellowship, Refreshments, Sale of tickets for drawing.
 - 10:00 a.m. - Welcome
 - - Business Meeting
 - - Reading of minutes of last meeting (Assembly to vote to hear)
 - - Committee reports
 - - Old Business
 - - New Business; Attendees are asked to bring their photos of hurricane damaged covered bridges.
 - 11:15 a.m. - Presentation: Robert Haight; Architect and architectural historian, will explain the features of the toll house.
 - 12:15 p.m. - Drawing, break for lunch: Tables will be reserved for us at the Windsor Diner.
 - 1:15-3:00 p.m. - Tour Windsor Bridge and Area Covered Bridges
- (Note: The Toll House property abuts the Cornish/Windsor Bridge offering exceptional views of the bridge and environs.)
- Parking** on premises or on Bridge Street. Parking is also available at the school on Bridge Street near the Railroad Bridge.

Accommodations - Juniper Hill Inn (802) 457-1366



Toll House at Cornish Bridge –Windsor, VT

The Toll House for the Windsor- Cornish Covered Bridge

by Suzanne Richardson- Daniels

The Toll House, affiliated with the Windsor Bridge, which was built circa 1790 on Bridge Street in Windsor Vermont, has received permission from the State of Vermont to work on architectural features of the building which needs some structural work. Along with this, the Toll House has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Toll House was responsible for the collection of tolls from those persons or animals who crossed over the ferry or bridge into Vermont as acclaimed in a notice on the New Hampshire side.

It has been recognized recently that the features of the Toll House are similar to those found in the 1790 Paul Revere House in Boston, Massachusetts, such as the bee-hive oven, brick fireplace, three flue chimney, etc.

The Toll House exhibits architectural changes in keeping with the different time periods as well. This creates an interesting "history lesson" for visitors.

An architect and architectural historian, with whom I have been working, is creating the necessary features required for wheel-chair accessibility and other "improvements." Robert Haight will explain the architectural features that exist and that will exist throughout the building.

Hurricane Irene's Toll on Vermont's Covered Bridges compiled by Trish Kane

Station/Salisbury/Cornwall – VT-01-01 I had a report this morning from a friend who, yesterday (Monday) crossed the Station/Salisbury/Cornwall Covered Bridge. The bridge is unscathed. The person with whom I spoke did not, however, mention (the probable) flotsam build-up against the center pier. – Irene Barna

Halpin – VT-01-03 - Halpin should be OK because it is high and the Muddy Brook is in flat enough terrain that the watershed is not steep. – Irene Barna

Pulp Mill – VT-01-04 - As far as I know Pulp Mill is OK – Irene Barna

Bridge on the Green (West Arlington) – VT-02-01 - The well-known covered bridge near the West Arlington Green remains closed for safety reasons. The bridge was struck by a log during the storm and it is unclear at this point whether or not it is structurally sound. -Scott Wagner

Henry – VT-02-02 #2; Papermill – VT-02-03; Silk Road – VT-02-04 - Only one covered bridge, the Henry, could be opened Wednesday. The road access to the Paper Mill Bridge from Route 67A was torn up during the flood. The Silk Road Bridge will depend on if a lot of traffic should be put over the unpaved surface. - Update per the Bennington Banner

Village/Maple Street – VT-06-02 – No impact from Irene - Rae Laitres

East Fairfield – VT-06-03 – No impact from Irene - Rae Laitres

Scott/Grist Mill – VT-08-01; Poland/Station – VT-08-02;

Gates Farm – VT-08-04 - checked on the three bridges in town (Cambridge) and found that they have been spared any

damage. Still too muddy to approach the Gates Farm Bridge, but from a distance it looks like the water did not rise to a level to affect the bridge. The Canyon and Poland/Cambridge Junction bridges are both OK, though the latter had water up on the abutments (and of course remains closed, as is the road through it). - Per Bill McKone

Union Village – VT-09-05 – The Union Village came thru unscathed. - N. Dave Charkes

Sayres/Thetford Center Bridge – VT-09-06 -There's some pileup of tree trunks on the central concrete pillar of the Sayres/Thetford Center Bridge, but no damage to the structure. The flotsam should be removed before the next storm (whenever) lest it rise and hammer the bridge itself. - N. Dave Charkes

Giorgetti – VT-11-B#2 - Completely destroyed - Rachel Stuppy

Gorham/Goodnough – VT-11-04 - The Gorham Bridge in Pittsford is still standing on Monday.

Brown – VT-11-09 - Per Eric Gilbertson – Some damage **Upper (Northfield Falls) – VT-12-11** - The Upper Covered Bridge over the Cox Brook in Northfield Falls was severely damaged by flood waters on Sunday night. A tree was thrust through the structure, puncturing the roof from below.

Village (Waitsfield) – VT-12-14 - The covered bridge, though roped off, remains standing.

West Dummerston – VT-13-02 - Closed

Kidder Hill (Grafton) – VT-13-03 - Damaged

Williamsville – VT-13-05 #2 - No damage to the actual bridge, there does seem to be some undermining of the abutments.

Hall (Osgood) – VT-13-07 #2 - Per Ray Hitchcock – Closed. Damage to upstream side. Per Will Truax – A temporary support was put under the bridge yesterday (Thursday) to stabilize it from further damage. Scour seriously compromised the abutment, and if high water had pounded this Bolster any longer it would have been among the lost.

Worrall – VT-13-10 - Per Eric Gilbertson – Some damage

Bartonsville – VT-13-11 - Completely destroyed. From Ray Hitchcock - Just heard that Bartonsville bridge was insured for a million bucks on the weather channel. From Will Truax - Scour seriously compromised the abutment, and if high water had pounded this bridge any longer it would have been among the lost.

Quechee – VT-14-A - Lt. Vail reports the Quechee Bridge in Quechee Village is still partially standing although the entire road and about a third of the bridge on the Quechee Village side has been washed away.

Martins Mill Bridge – VT-14-01 - Damaged

Hartland – VT-14-02/14-64 - Per N. Dave Charkes - I went over to check the two N. Hartland bridges today - no obvious damage. But beneath the two bridges was a raging torrent, 3 days after the rain has ceased.

Bowers – VT-14-11 - Damaged, washed from abutments, stands on dry ground.

Taftsville – VT-14-12 - Damaged and closed -

From Emergency Services personnel who were just at the Taftsville Covered Bridge. They report it is still standing and appearing to be intact despite reports that it was being knocked around both the Ottauquechee River floodwaters and dozens of propane and heating fuel tanks coming downstream from West Woodstock.

Lincoln Bridge (Woodstock) – VT-14-13 - Damaged

Interview with Paul Petraska 2011 Aug 28

(*a few hours before Irene took the bridge*)

By Ray Hitchcock

Paul Petraska of Bartonsville, VT has been cutting brush around the Bartonsville Covered bridge footings and along the tracks for over **35** years. He started doing this around 1976, year of the Bicentennial.

Paul needs to get permission from both the railroad and the Town of Rockingham. He coordinates with train dispatcher due to the proximity to the tracks. He avoids working on brushing when trains are scheduled.

Strangely enough, both the current bridge abutments are on railroad's right of way. The flash flood of 1869 followed the railroad tracks as it created a new channel. The old railroad tracks were in the middle of where the current bridge is. The original bridge had been further up the road than its present location. Paul indicated that the original river channel and evidence of the bridge and other buildings can still be seen by the existing pond a block or so from the current river. The current bridge was completed in 1870 by Sanford Granger.

Steamtown, out of Bellows Falls, ran a tourist railroad excursion with the Bartonsville Covered Bridge as a main attraction. They often complained about a warning sign between the bridge and train tracks as it blocked picture taking. A large sign still located there. Yearly, Paul cut back the brush from the bridge for picture taking and rail safety.

When the 1983 restoration of bridge was completed town folks held pot luck on the bridge. Paul reports that it was quite an event with tables set up in the bridge, the restoration crew in attendance, and a ribbon cutting event. The restoration crew noted that it was undoubtedly the most photographed bridge in the area. As they were working the tourist trains would go by with numerous photo flash bulbs going off.

Paul learned from a local farmer to cut brush in dry/droughty years late in July or August as roots dry out and the plant would then die. Paul says that his newest challenge is the Japanese bamboo which must he must hack a path through to get to brush near the footings. Paul has encouraged the town to do something with this invasive species for when it dries in the fall it is a significant fire hazard to the bridge.

Paul notes that the recent structural damage has been reduced by the town changing the height restrictions down from 10' 6" to 9'6". The town wrote to box truck carriers informing them of new posted legal heights.

Paul felt that it was a big change when the new railroad signal lights were installed in the late 70's or early 80's. As the railroad is only feet from the bridge entrance it was critical that drivers needed to carefully look both ways when exiting. Accidents have been reported from people driving too fast at the curved entry to the north portal and hitting the side of the bridge. Runners don't help as they are not over the full decking.

We thank Paul for his dedication to this historic structure.



Bartonsville abutments—August 30, 2011 photo R Hitchcock



Membership Committee Chair, Sue Daniels.

Please join me in welcoming new members to our group: Phillip Jordan of Arlington, Vt., Sandra Carlson of Lebanon, Conn., and Jeffrey Gale of Strafford, Vt., a warm welcome to you!

Birthdays and Anniversaries

September - 4 Johnny Esau, 5 Robert Salvi, 9 Tom Walczak, 10 Gordon & Priscilla O'Reilly, 15 Henry Rowse, 15 Lou & Mary Zabbia, 17 Doris Taylor, 21 Bonnie & Leroy Shultz, 21 Wilfred Thompson, 25 Bonnie Shultz, 27 Johnny & Joanne Esau, 29 June Evans.

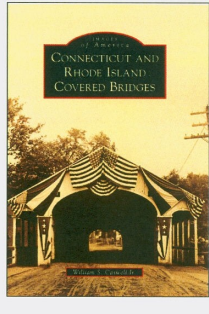
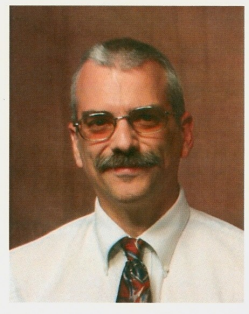
October - 9 Erwin & Virginia Eckson, 11 Trish Kane, 20 Phil Pierce, 21 John & Joanne Billie, 22 Ellen Everitz, 28 Joyce Soroka.

November - 13 Bruce Wagner, 15 Linda Crouse, 18 Euclid Farnham, 18 Bob and Mary Ann Waller, 22 Marikka Guay, 25 Richard & Gloria Davis.

Connecticut and Rhode Island Covered Bridges

by William S. Caswell Jr.

The newest addition to Arcadia Publishing's popular *Images of America* and *Postcards of America* series is *Connecticut and Rhode Island Covered Bridges* from local author William S. Caswell Jr.



The book boasts more than 200 vintage images and 15 postcard memories of days gone by.

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 three of the historic structures.

Covered bridges were heavily concentrated in the hills of northwestern Connecticut, spanning the Farmington, Housatonic, and Naugatuck Rivers. In Rhode Island, most were built by the railroads in Woonsocket, Providence, and other communities in the northern part of the state, though few pictures are known to exist. Connecticut was the birthplace of two of the nation's best known covered bridge designers: Ithiel Town and Theodore Burr. Half of the covered bridges currently standing in the United States are supported by trusses patented by Town or Burr.

The author, a native of Narragansett, RI, developed an interest in covered bridges after moving to New Hampshire in 1984. He is vice president and historian for the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges and a life member of numerous other covered bridge societies. He also maintains a website dedicated to gathering and sharing covered bridge information and pictures.

Available at area bookstores, independent retailers, and online retailers, or through Arcadia Publishing at (888)-313-2665 or www.arcadiapublishing.com.



Reminder; Don't Let A Learning/Research Source Go To Waste

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

Librarian Warren Tripp has created a detailed booklist complete with a description and critique of each book. Copies of the index are available by mail, or you may contact Warren Tripp at ftwtbt@yahoo.com, or Joe Nelson at jcnelson@together.net for a PDF copy.

Letters

August 5, 2011, Subject: 45-10-02 - Joe, I received a question on the Irasburg or Orne or Black River or Coventry or Lower Cover Bridge (which ever name you want to call it). They said it now has the name Roy W. Ingalls over the portal. Do you know anything about this? Is this another new name? - Thanks, Dan Brock

Dan, with a lot of help from the membership, I became acquainted with a news article from the Orleans County Record. In my neighborhood, the only papers I see are the Burlington Free Press and the Mountain Journal, so I ask the membership: If a covered bridge article appears in your local paper please do send me a clipping or a web address. It will be most appreciated.

According to the article, Irasburg Board of selectmen Chair Randy Wells announced that the bridge has been renamed to honor former Selectman Roy W. Ingalls, 95, for his years of service.

Ingalls, over the years, has served in every town position except town clerk. He was the first to drive across the bridge in 1999 with then Gov. Howard Dean after it had been rebuilt after it was burned by vandals.

The town had to do a little reconstruction last fall, when an operator of oversize farm equipment drove through and damaged the arch over each entrance. It was then that the new name sign was put up.

September 2, 2011 - Joe, we Just wanted you to know that we are thinking and praying for all the Vermonters during this horrible tragedy. Watching the video's and seeing pictures posted in your local papers is so absolutely devastating.

We watched the collapse (video) of the Bartonsville Covered Bridge and felt as if we had lost a friend. We are hoping it will rebuilding and will be watching V.C.B.S website for future updates.

We most assuredly would like to donate for the repair of damaged Covered Bridges . We know the Federal Government will aid some of the Covered Bridges but are we interested in helping where no Federal aid is provided.

I have found several website's that are taking donations for helping small business/farms and family's. We were hoping you could direct us to the sites that would help most efficiently. - Kathy & Bruce Wagner

(continued page 5)

Dear Kathy and Bruce - I share your feelings. For donations I can offer the Preservation Trust of Vermont; www.ptvermont.org. 100% of the money will be used for engineering and architectural rehabilitation work. Donors may designate their donation specifically for bridges or buildings. Eric Gilbertson of the PTV is coordinating the Trust's covered bridge efforts. His number is 802-272-8543.

Publicity Committee

Two years ago I was asked to take on the job of publicity chair, which I gladly accepted. I notify the general public, through all branches of the media, of our semi-annual meetings.

I also send requests to weekly Vermont newspapers to acquaint the general public with VCBS and its functions.

I have recently assembled media contact lists for all parts of Vermont to help the VCBS publicize itself and its planned annual events.

I may be reached on calamity99@netzero.com

Ellen Everitz, Publicity Chair



BRIDGE WATCH CHECKLIST

Bartonsville Bridge

8/3/2011

1) Bridge components are free of accumulated dirt and debris - Yes

2) Drainage areas are free of debris. Run-off from deck drains and approaches is kept away from bridge elements below - Yes

3) Small trees and shrubs are kept clear of substructure and bridge superstructure - Yes

Comment: Some brushing needed along south portal approach railings

4) River channels beneath bridges are clear of major debris - yes

5) Proper load posting and advance warning signs are maintained and visible - Yes

Comment: New signs 2010. Inventive signing during detours for Hwy 103 bridge replacements.

6) Roof system is maintained and water-tight - Yes

7) Siding is repaired, replaced and maintained - Yes

Comment: Rotten window sills replaced. Runners need replacement on south portal approach. Planned for.

9) Roadway approaches are smooth and maintained - Yes

10) Approach railings are reasonably straight, continuous and maintained - Yes

Comment: Rusty but serviceable. Needs de-brushing on south portal rails

[Editors note: Pictures attached to transmittal letter are sent along with the bridge inspection. The following show the new window sill and the second picture shows the brushing that is needed. The submittal letter and response shows the cooperation from the town.]



Bartonsville window sill repairs—August 2011



Bartonsville Brushing south portal—August 2011

Bartonsville Bridge Inspection
Mr. Hindes;

I do annual inspections of the Bartonsville and Worrall bridges for the VT Covered Bridge Societies Bridge Watch program. In the past these were sent to Everett Hammond.

Attached please find the report that I submitted for Bartonsville. As the Worrall bridge has been recently repaired no report is filed this year for that bridge.

Please note that we appreciate the good progress made on the Bartonsville Bridge last year.

However, there are some regular maintenance items needing attention and some priority repairs to the window shelves. We found that the windowsills were rotted through in places enough to let moisture inside of the siding and on the bottom chord.

If you have any questions please contact me by email or 802-869-4243.

Thanks, Raymond Hitchcock

Bridge Inspection - Bartonsville

Hello,

Thanks for the report. I'm aware of the runners needing attention. When things slow down here a little I plan on getting them replaced. Generally there is a local resident that trims around the bridge. If he doesn't get to it I see it gets done by the end of the month.

Thanks again, Mike Hindes

[Editors note: Bridge lost August 28th—Irene]



Wanted, a newsletter editor trainee to ultimately take over the editorship of The Bridger, a key position in the Vermont Covered Bridge Society's out-reach.

Wanted, reporter/correspondents to bring local covered bridge news to **The Bridger**.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Joe Nelson, Communication Committee Chair, jcnelson@together.net

Volunteer worker-bees are needed by the **Events Committee** to help set up meetings and assist in hosting them. For details contact Suzanne Daniels, Events Committee Chair: 802.885.5517 or neildaniels2003@yahoo.com

Needed: Volunteer to serve as membership coordinator assisting **Membership Committee** Chair, Suzanne Daniels. Contact Suzanne at: 802.885.5517

The Election of Officers—It's That Time of Year Again

With the last newsletter issue, we began the process of electing Society officers for two-year terms to begin January 1, 2012 by asking the membership to step forward and run for office.

As of this date no one has applied, but it is not too late. We are still asking for candidates to run for the offices of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

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

Candidates or volunteers will please contact Joe Nelson, Chairman of the VCBS Board of Directors; jcnelson@together.net or PO Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465.



Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges by Joseph C. Nelson

Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges 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**, listing information on each; **A Covered Bridge Glossary**, describing the details of a covered bridge; **A Bridge Truss section**, explaining how trusses work with drawings of the trusses used in Vermont; **The Bridge Builders**, providing thumbnail biographies of people who designed and built the bridges; **A Covered Bridge Reading List**, for bridge and history buffs; A detailed Index. *Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges: 7" x 10", 288 pages. Published by New England Press at P.O. Box 575, Shelburne, VT 05482. Spanning Time is available directly from the author for \$39.00, free shipping. (Vermont residents add 6% sales tax)*

Go to <http://www.vermontbridges.com/special%20070514.htm> Also see: <http://www.vermontbridges.com/bookreviews.htm>.

World Guide to Covered Bridges - 2009 Edition Published by the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges

On Sale: \$15.00. Profits will go to the Vermont Covered Bridge Society's Save-A-Bridge Program. For your copy send \$15.00 plus \$4.95 shipping to Joe Nelson, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465-0267. (Vermont residents add 6% sales tax)

Covered Bridges of New England —DVD Produced by Ocean State Video of Rhode Island for Public Television. On Sale: \$20.00. Profits will go to the Vermont covered Bridge Society's Save-A-Bridge Program. For your copy send \$20.00 plus \$1.88 shipping to Joe Nelson, P.O. Box 267, Jericho, VT 05465-0267. (Vermont residents add 6% sales tax)

To place your ad in the Bridger, contact Joe Nelson, jnelson@together.net. The ad must be about covered bridges and you must be a member of a covered bridge society.

△△△

Pier (Chandler Station) Bridge – NH 29-10-03
Wright's Bridge – NH 29-10-04
 Submitted by Bob Durfee

Repairs were recently completed for Pier Bridge, and a major rehabilitation was completed for Wright's Bridge. The NH Division of Resources and Economic Development (DRED), the bridge owner, with assistance from the NH Division of Historic Resources (NHDHR), secured a Federal Transportation Enhancement (TE) grant for the repairs & rehabilitation project. Additional funds were secured from the NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and the Newport Historical Society. The bridges are located in the Town of Newport, New Hampshire on an abandoned railroad line converted to a State recreational trail.

The NHDHR and the Town of Newport selected the consulting engineering firm of DuBois & King, Inc. of Bedford, NH to evaluate the condition of both bridges, design repairs and rehabilitations, and manage the construction phase.

"We were able to complete some repairs to Pier Bridge," says Robert H. Durfee, P.E., Vice President for DuBois & King. "Funds were limited, and another phase of repairs is recommended for Pier Bridge when funds become available. For Wright's Bridge, sufficient funds were available for a complete rehabilitation."

Wright Construction of Mt. Holly, Vermont completed all repairs to Pier Bridge and the rehabilitation of Wright's Bridge.

"A lot of heavy timber framing work (bridgewright work) went into the rehabilitation of the downstream truss on Wright's Bridge" says Joe Poston, Project Manager for Wright Construction. "We had to

secure 3,350 board feet of heavy timber (3 X 12) in short order, to complete repairs and re-open the bridge to trail use."

"This was a cooperative effort by numerous Federal, State, and local partners" says Antonio Sanz, the Resident Observer for Dubois & King. "The NHDOT, DRED, NHDHR, LCHIP, the Town of Newport, the Newport Historical Society, Wright Construction and Dubois & King all were active participants and worked together to make this a successful project".

Pier Bridge - Repairs to the Pier Bridge were completed in April, 2011. Repairs consisted of replacing worn or rotted siding boards, runner planks, and deck end bearing beams. Additional supports were added to the upper lateral bracing. Fire detection and prevention measures were also installed on the bridge.

Pier Bridge was constructed on 1907 by the Boston & Maine Railroad. It is a two span Town Lattice truss bridge, with individual span lengths of 118 feet and 110 feet. The bridge spans the Sugar River, and is located at railroad milepost 49.09.

Wright's Bridge - An extensive rehabilitation to the Wright's Bridge was completed in April, 2011. The extent of the rehabilitation included repairs to the roof, a complete reconstruction of the downstream truss (south truss) top chord and lattice members to replace rot and decay, reconstruction and replacement of bolster beams and bearing blocks at the abutments, installation of all new deck planks to replace rot and decay, replacing worn runner planks, and replacing worn or rotten board siding. Fire detection and prevention measures were also installed on the bridge.

Wright's Bridge was constructed on 1906 by the Boston & Maine Railroad. It is a single span Town Lattice truss bridge with a laminated arch integral to the truss. The span length is 136 feet. The bridge spans the Sugar River, and is located at railroad milepost 50.26.

△△△

In Memorial



Bartonsville a great bridge loved by one and all.

Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center Grand Opening a Huge Success

Written by Jeanie Petersen, Woollybear Web and edited by Trish Kane



Theodore Burr portrayed by Bill Brower

On July 2, the Oxford Memorial Library held a Grand Opening of the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center as well as the bicentennial of the library's building. There were displays by covered bridge societies, including the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania, who were exhibiting their wares that day in Fort Hill Park. There was music by the Community Band, dignitaries, speeches, a dedication ceremony, tours, refreshments, presentations, a barbecue, balloons, and even a special guest (amazingly at the ripe old age of 240), Theodore Burr himself!



Nancy Wilcox, Assemblyman Clifford Crouch and Matt Voce

The celebrity that is Oxford's very own Theodore Burr (1771-1822), the "Father of American bridge building", originally came to Oxford in 1792. Burr, known for his "extended trav-

els" defied his own mortality and came back to Oxford for this celebration. The story of his life, accomplishments and even a hypothetical question and answer period was performed with charm and elegance by Burr impersonator, Bill Brower. (There is no known likeness of the famed bridge designer so Bill has given a physical image to the verbal Burr portrait.) In full costume, Brower amused and enlightened a full audience in the Library's new Community Room.

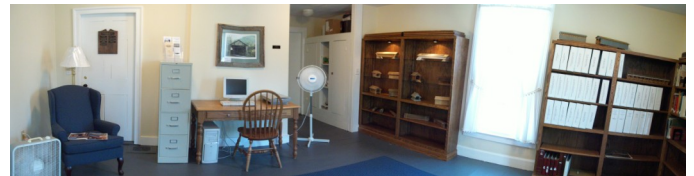
In brief this special guest "Burr" explained that he designed and built the Federal style mansion – which now houses Oxford's public library - in 1811, two-hundred years ago. It is in fact, the only structure that he built which remains in existence today, making it very special indeed. It has been a library since 1901, and Theodore was proud to add, that it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981.

Burr also talked about his timber bridge designs that were even able to span over 200' due to the invention of his patented and very strong truss/arch combination. He designed many impressive bridges, and although none of his stand today, there are still over two-hundred Burr truss style bridges in the U.S. Trish Kane, who along with her husband Bob provided much of the material for the Resource Center, was on hand to add a few details that the "absent minded Burr" forgot. At his age, however, he was certainly forgiven.

Another (much younger) special guest was Assemblyman Clifford W. Crouch, Assembly District 107. He presented the Oxford Memorial Library with a framed Legislative Resolution commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Burr house.

The Oxford Memorial Library now bears a beautiful new sign hand painted by Kim Begeal, with the name of the library's new room, the "Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center". The TBCB Resource Center had its Grand Opening and dedication, and tours were provided during this celebration. The room was dedicated to Charlotte F. Stafford, former Town and Village of Oxford Historian, and Richard T. Donovan, Mr. Covered Bridge Extraordinaire.

It has two lovely oak desks, many shelves displaying covered bridge models and truss examples, as well as a library full of books, magazines and newsletters (from all the known covered bridge societies) about covered bridges. The inviting room was kept period appropriate for the Federal-style house but has several modern amenities including a computer and scanner. A filing cabinet is full of various historical newspaper clippings in regards to bridges all over the country.



Panoramic view of the center taken by Vicky House

A great deal of work went into establishing this center, and the Library's Board of Directors thanked a long list of contributors from all over the U.S. and Canada. The educational impact of this center may not seem obvious at first, but the Resource Center will be to research students, covered bridge societies,

and fans of covered bridges what Cooperstown is to baseball. There is no other covered bridge center like it anywhere. The new research facility will attract serious scholars to Oxford who are looking for covered bridge images through photographs, books, post cards, and slides, researching bridge history and details, and other documentation. For covered bridge fans, just being able to sit in the house that Burr built, will be inspirational.



Theodore Burr (Bill Brower), Trish and Bob Kane, Assemblyman Clifford Crouch

For visitors to this special celebration, there was a complimentary "I Love Covered Bridges" tote bag filled with covered bridge and informational brochures and discount coupons provided by local businesses. Also included was information on the newly published NY State Covered Bridge Driving Tour published by Bob and Trish Kane which was offered for the very first time at the celebration. The Driving Tour is a spiral bound full color tour which includes turn by turn directions and color photographs of each of New York's authentic and historic covered bridges. Also included are the statistics on each bridge and an interesting history of the bridge and the surrounding town. Old postcards of how the bridges looked during an earlier time have also been included. Anyone wishing to purchase a copy of the tour should contact Bob and Trish at: 167 Williams Rd., Sherburne, NY 13460 or call: 607-674-9656. You can also reach them by email: bob-trish68@frontiernet.net. It is an excellent book and you won't be disappointed.



Donna Freeland (NY), Michael Chorazy (PA), Janis Ford (OH), Theodore Burr (Bill Brower), Colleen and John Murray (IN), Bill Caswell (NH)

Representatives from five covered bridge societies were on hand to join in the festivities and offer their congratulations.

The day was a huge success and those in attendance thoroughly enjoyed the festivities and seeing the center first hand. Visitors are always welcome to the center whenever the Library is open.

Teach Kids About Covered Bridges

by Trish Kane

As many covered bridge enthusiasts are aware, much of the future of our covered bridges lies in the hands of our youth and young adults. The long time question has always been how do you get our youth interested in our covered bridges so they will want to help preserve them?

One way is to develop a program that can be taken to the schools to help educate them about their significance and their importance. Another way is to develop a curriculum about our covered bridges that can actually be taught in our schools.

Part of the mission of the newly established Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center is to invite school age children to the Center to learn more about our bridges. In conjunction with the visit, we would first like to join forces with various schools and teachers to design a course about our covered bridges that can be taught to our youth. In particular, we are looking at 5th through 9th grades.

If you are interested in serving on a committee to help design this curriculum please contact us at bob-trish68@frontiernet.net. Or, feel free to give us a call at 607-674-9656. We won't guarantee this will be an easy task, but it will be an exciting and rewarding one.

(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

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

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

____ Paddleford - \$200 ____ Whipple - \$250

(Memberships valid to the end of the current calendar year, Dues and Donations will be used to promote preservation of Covered bridges.)

Please make all checks for dues and donations payable to:
 The Vermont Covered Bridge Society. Mail to: V.C.B.S., Inc.

Vermont Covered Bridge Society Annual Fall Meeting
 Old Toll House,
 45 Bridge Street, Windsor, Vermont
 Saturday, October 15, 2011

Agenda

- 9:00 a.m. - Doors open - setup, fellowship, Refreshments, Sale of tickets for drawing.
 10:00 a.m. - Welcome
 - - Business Meeting
 - - Reading of minutes of last meeting (Assembly to vote to hear)
 - - Committee reports
 - - Old Business
 - - New Business; Attendees are asked to bring their photos of hurricane damaged covered bridges.
 11:15 a.m. - Presentation: Robert Haight; Architect and architectural historian, will explain the features of the toll house.
 12:15 p.m. - Drawing, break for lunch: Tables will be reserved for us at the Windsor Diner.
 1:15-3:00 p.m. - Tour Windsor Bridge and Area Covered Bridges
 (Note: The Toll House property abuts the Cornish/Windsor Bridge offering exceptional views of the bridge and environs.)

Parking on premises or on Bridge Street. Parking is also available at the school on Bridge Street near the Railroad Bridge.

Accommodations - Juniper Hill Inn (802) 457-1366

