Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Vermont
COUNTY: Lamoille
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE: OCT 1 1974

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Fisher Covered Railroad Bridge
AND/OR HISTORIC: Chub Bridge SE of Wolcott

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Mile 39.14 on St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County Railroad across Lamoille River, 2.1 miles by Vt. Rte. 15 east of Wolcott village
CITY OR TOWN: Wolcott vicinity
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Vt. District
STATE: Vermont — CODE: 50
COUNTY: Lamoille — CODE: 015

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☐ Building	☒ Public	Public Acquisition:	☒ Occupied	Yes:
☐ Site ☒ Structure	☐ Private	☐ In Process	☐ Unoccupied	☐ Restricted
☐ Object	☐ Both	☐ Being Considered	☐ Preservation work in progress	☒ Unrestricted
				☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☒ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☐ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☐ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Vermont Division of Historic Sites (superstructure)
STREET AND NUMBER: Pavilion Building
CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier
STATE: Vermont — CODE: 50

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Office of Town Clerk
STREET AND NUMBER: (no street number)
CITY OR TOWN: Wolcott
STATE: Vermont — CODE: 50

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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey
DATE OF SURVEY: 1974 ☐ Federal ☒ State ☐ County ☐ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Vermont Division of Historic Sites
STREET AND NUMBER: Pavilion Building
CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier
STATE: Vermont — CODE: 50

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☒ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	☒ Altered	☐ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Fisher Covered Railroad Bridge consisted originally of a single span supported by two flanking timber Town double lattice trusses. In 1968 the timber deck structure was removed and replaced with a two-span steel deck truss structure independent of the wood superstructure. The southerly span is supported by two plate girders and the northerly span by four steel I-beams.

The yellow pine trusses, each of which has an extra set of diagonal lattice members for additional strength, now support only the superstructure of the bridge. Lateral iron rods connect the top chords of the trusses through the apexes formed by the upper lateral braces. Ship's knees provide reinforcement between the principal top beams and vertical posts near each corner of the bridge.

The superstructure of the Fisher Bridge is 103.5 feet long overall. The two steel spans are 42 and 51 feet long, respectively north and south. The superstructure is 20.5 feet wide, and has an interior opening of 15 feet for the track.

The entire bridge rests on abutments built of stone blocks mortared together and capped with concrete. The lower half of the north abutment has been faced with concrete. The steel spans rest on a central pier built of timber pilings sheathed with dimension stock. Concrete back-walls retain the track bed at each end of the bridge.

On the exterior, the heavy planks pegged and bolted together diagonally to form the trusses (and side walls) of the bridge are sheathed with unpainted matched spruce boards hung vertically. Similar siding protects the ends of the trusses immediately inside the portals. The siding flares outward toward the bottom of the bridge to cover the bottom chords. The siding stops short of the eaves to leave strip openings along the tops of the walls.

The gable ends are sheathed with unpainted matched clapboards hung horizontally. The portal openings have diagonal upper corners to match the interior struts. The siding flares diagonally outward beyond the line of the side walls to meet the eaves.

A shallow-pitch gable roof covers the bridge. A wood monitor with louvered sides, which served as a smoke ventilator, extends nearly the full length of the ridge. The roof and monitor are covered with asphalt roofing paper.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Pre-Columbian	☐ 16th Century	☐ 18th Century	☒ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century	☐ 17th Century	☐ 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 1908

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal	☐ Education	☐ Political	☐ Urban Planning
☐ Prehistoric	☒ Engineering	☐ Religion/Philosophy	☐ Other *(Specify)*
☐ Historic	☐ Industry		
☐ Agriculture	☐ Invention	☐ Science	
☒ Architecture	☐ Landscape Architecture	☐ Sculpture	
☐ Art		☐ Social/Humanitarian	
☐ Commerce	☐ Literature		
☐ Communications	☐ Military	☐ Theater	
☐ Conservation	☐ Music	☒ Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Fisher Covered Railroad Bridge is unique in Vermont, being the only covered wood railroad bridge in the state which still carries an active railroad. (Two other covered railroad bridges--at Swanton and East Shoreham--remain in the state but the railroad lines which they carried have been abandoned and their tracks removed.) Nationally, the covered railroad bridge has nearly disappeared; according to Richard Sanders Allen (1974), there are only twelve examples of the bridge type left in the United States.[1] The Fisher Bridge, therefore, obtains national significance for being among the last survivors of the thousands of covered railroad bridges which were built during the railroad expansionist era of the latter 19th century.

The Fisher Bridge is the latest of the three remaining covered railroad bridges in Vermont to have been built. The Boston and Maine Railroad, which controlled the St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Railroad at the time, constructed the bridge in 1908; the architect or design engineer is unknown. The lower cost of wood construction compared with that of wood-iron (Howe truss) or iron undoubtedly accounted for its extraordinarily late use on the lightly trafficked line.[2]

The design of the Fisher Bridge incorporates a feature unique among the covered railroad bridges in Vermont--a louvered monitor which extends nearly the full length of the roof along its ridge. The monitor (which does not appear on the original engineering drawings of the bridge) served to allow locomotive smoke to escape from the bridge.[3] Superfluous since the introduction of diesel locomotives on the railroad, the monitor remains to give the bridge its distinctive architectural character.

In 1968, when the management of the St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County Railroad rebuilt several bridges along the line to accommodate heavier train loads, the Fisher Bridge was threatened with demolition. The Vermont Board of Historic Sites (now the Vermont Division of Historic Sites), together with other parties, intervened to arrange for preservation of the distinctive superstructure of the bridge. In order to provide the required load-bearing capacity, the timber deck structure of the bridge was removed and a steel deck truss structure was built to carry the track, independent of the timber trusses.[4]

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hagerman, Robert L., Covered Bridges of Lamoille County, Robert L. Hagerman, Morrisville, Vt., 1972.

Allen, Richard Sanders, Covered Bridges of the Northeast, The Stephen Greene Press, Brattleboro, Vt., 1974 (rev. ed.).

Congdon, Herbert Wheaton, The Covered Bridge, Vermont Books, Middlebury, Vt., 1970.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES	
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		44° 31' 56"	72° 25' 45"
NE	° ' "	° ' "			
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

18/704320
4933980
CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Hugh H. Henry, Historic Sites Researcher

ORGANIZATION: Vermont Division of Historic Sites
DATE: 7/3/74

STREET AND NUMBER: Pavilion Building

CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier
STATE: Vermont
CODE: 50

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [X] State [ ] Local [ ]

Name William B. Pinney

Title Director of Historic Sites
State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 7/10/74

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

A R Mortensen

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 10/1/74

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date 9-27-74

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Vermont	
COUNTY	
Lamoille	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
OCT 1 1974	

Section 8

(Number all entries)

1. R. S. Allen, Covered Bridges of the Northeast, The Stephen Greene Press, Brattleboro, Vt., 1974, p. 94.

2. Robert L. Hagerman, Covered Bridges of Lamoille County, Robert L. Hagerman, Morrisville, Vt., 1972, p. 27.

3. Ibid, p. 28.

4. Ibid, p. 30.