

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Hampshire
COUNTY: Grafton
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE MAY 28 1975

1. NAME

COMMON: Bedell Covered Bridge
AND/OR HISTORIC: Bedell Bridge

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Across Connecticut River between Haverhill, N. H. and South Newbury, Vt.			
CITY OR TOWN: Haverhill Newbury		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Second Vermont	
STATE New Hampshire Vermont	CODE 33,50	COUNTY: Grafton Orange	CODE 009,017

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Closed</u> <u>for repairs</u>
			<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development		
STREET AND NUMBER: P.O. Box 856, State House Annex, 25 Capitol Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Concord	STATE: New Hampshire	CODE: 03301 33

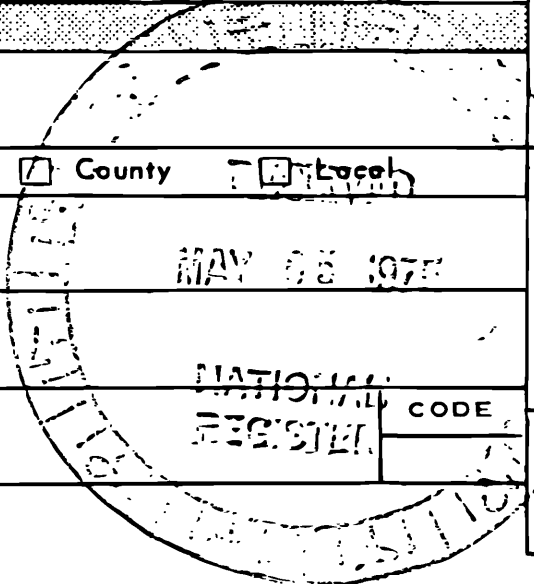
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Grafton County Registry of Deeds, Grafton County Courthouse		
STREET AND NUMBER: P.O. Box 208, Route 10		
CITY OR TOWN: Woodsville	STATE: New Hampshire	CODE: 03875 33

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: (See Continuation Sheet #1)			
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE:	

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bedell Covered Bridge crosses the Connecticut River between Haverhill, New Hampshire and South Newbury, Vermont. The low water line on the west (Vermont) side of the river marks the boundary between the states. Most of the bridge, therefore, stands in New Hampshire; only the west end is in Vermont. Despite its interstate location, the entire bridge now belongs to the State of New Hampshire.

Present Physical Appearance

The Bedell Bridge consists of two spans, each of which is supported by two flanking timber Burr arch trusses. The trusses incorporate iron reinforcing rods which connect the top and bottom chords parallel to the wood diagonal braces. Iron tension rods connect the bottom chords to increase the lateral rigidity of the structure.

Each truss of the bridge has an original single-timber arch which extends the length of one span. The individual members of each arch were sawn and hewn to the required curvature; they are butted together between, and bolted through, the upright members of the truss. An auxiliary laminated plank arch, comprised of fourteen layers bolted together, has been added to each truss of each span for reinforcement. The laminated arches support iron suspension rods which, in turn, support wood beams placed beneath, and transverse to, the bottom chords.

The trusses and auxiliary arches have been allowed to deteriorate severely, endangering the integrity of the structure. Near the central pier, the north truss of the east span has broken upper and lower chords and partly collapsed upright members. Various members of the other trusses are also broken or displaced. The auxiliary arches are rotted at the points of entering the abutments and pier. Owing to the broken chords, the east span has negative camber of about thirty inches near the central pier; the west span also has considerable negative camber.

The structure rests on abutments built of irregular stone blocks laid dry. The central pier is built of irregular stone blocks which have been mortared together. On its upstream (north) side, the pier flares outward toward the river bed to deflect floating debris and ice. A concrete footing has been poured under the east abutment, which had been undermined and had begun to settle.

The Bedell Bridge has an overall length of 382 feet at floor level, divided into two equal spans of 191 feet each. The upper ends of the side walls flare outward to meet the gable ends, which overhang the floor five feet at each portal. The bridge is 23 feet wide overall and has an 18.5-foot original roadway, now reduced by the width of the auxiliary arches.

(Continued on Continuation Sheet #2)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1866

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Engineering

The Bedell Covered Bridge, which has a length (at floor level) of 382 feet divided into two equal spans, ranks among the longest covered wood bridges remaining in the United States. The Bedell Bridge has two of the longest clear spans supported by Burr arch trusses in the country. Although reinforced by laminated arches added in 1929, the original trusses with single-timber arches are still intact. However, owing to lack of maintenance in recent years, the trusses have deteriorated seriously. In 1974, work was begun to rehabilitate the structure. It is planned to replace deteriorated members in kind to avoid altering the structural system.

Transportation

The Bedell Bridge is the fifth bridge on its site across the Connecticut River, the earlier bridges having been built in 1805, circa 1821, 1851, and 1863 (the first covered bridge). The present bridge was constructed in 1866 to replace the earlier covered bridge, which had been demolished the same year by hurricane winds.¹ The designer and/or builder of the Bedell Bridge are unknown.

A private company owned the Bedell Bridge from the time of its construction until 1916. In that year, the two towns which the bridge connects, Haverhill, N. H. and Newbury, Vt., negotiated the purchase of the bridge, and immediately eliminated the tolls previously charged.² The bridge remained open to public travel until 1958, when, owing to advanced structural deterioration, the bridge was legally closed to vehicles. In 1967, the towns transferred ownership of the bridge to the State of New Hampshire.

After completion in 1976 of the rehabilitation currently underway, the Bedell Bridge will probably remain closed to through vehicular traffic. A tentative plan for future use would have the bridge become the focus of a New Hampshire state recreational and historic park.

¹Harold King Davison, Haverhill's Historic Highlights (Littleton, N. H.: 1963), 104.

²Ibid., 105.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Allen, Richard Sanders. Covered Bridges of the Northeast. Brattleboro, Vt.: The Stephen Greene Press, 1974.

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

Davison, Harold King. Haverhill's Historic Highlights. Littleton (?), N. H., 1963.

(Continued on Continuation Sheet #3)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	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
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	44	02	44
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	72	04	30
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **one acre**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
New Hampshire	33	Grafton	009
Vermont	50	Orange	017
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

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

ORGANIZATION:
Vermont Division of Historic Sites

STREET AND NUMBER:
Pavilion Building

CITY OR TOWN:
Montpelier

STATE:
Vermont 05602

CODE:
50

RECEIVED
MAY 05 1975
REGIONAL REGISTER
DATE 30 June 1974

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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 State Local

Name: [Signature]
Commissioner, DRED
Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: April 30, 1975

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

[Signature]
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/28/75

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date: MAY 29 1975

VTM
18/7341550
4881175
HL

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet) #3

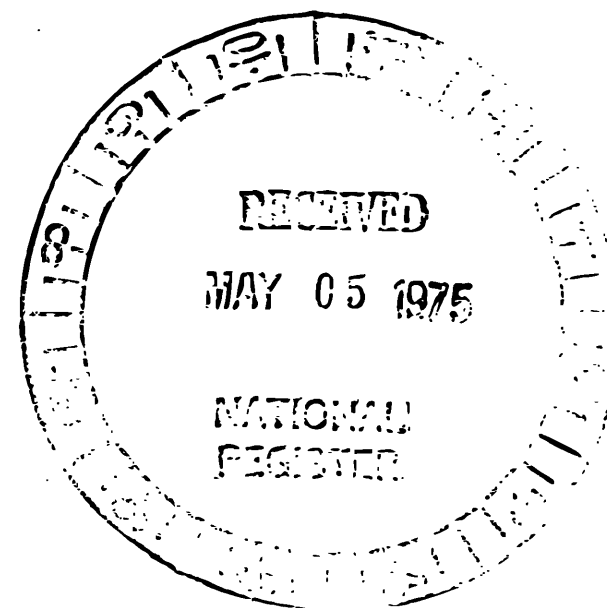
STATE New Hampshire	
COUNTY Grafton	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 28 1975

(Number all entries)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

Kenyon, Thedia Cox. New Hampshire's Covered Bridges. Sanbornville, N. H.: Wake-Brook House, 1966.

White, W. Edward. Covered Bridges of New Hampshire. Littleton, N. H.: Courier Printing Co., 1942.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet) #4

STATE New Hampshire	
COUNTY Grafton	
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(Number all entries)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA, continued:

10.2 UTM References

Zone ~~19~~¹⁸
Easting: 7-34-570
Northing: 48-81-160

