

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED **MAY 23 1979**
DATE ENTERED **AUG 1 1979**

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Cat Tail Brook Bridge

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

NW of Rocky Hill on

STREET & NUMBER

Montgomery Road over Cat Tail Brook

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Rocky Hill n.c.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Hillsborough Township

VICINITY OF

5th District

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New Jersey

34

Somerset

35

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Thomas Decker, Engineer - Somerset County

STREET & NUMBER

County Building

CITY, TOWN

Somerville

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

County Office Building

CITY, TOWN

Somerville

STATE

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

Date of survey 1975

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of Historic Preservation, Dept. Environmental Prot.

CITY, TOWN

109 West State Street

STATE

Trenton

New Jersey

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Cat Tail Brook Bridge is a simple stone arch bridge across the Cattail Brook in Hillsborough Township, Somerset County. Built in 1825 by a B. J. Gray it is constructed of local fieldstone and the arch employs the keystone construction technique. The arch stones are quarried.

Maintained by the Somerset County Road Department this one lane bridge is in a good state of repair; the masonry having recently been repointed. Approximately thirty feet long the archway is about ten feet wide.

On the eastern side the stone wall has an original cornerstone which reads:

"1825 CAT TAIL
BROOK BRIDGE BUILT BY B. J.
GRAY. DIRECTED BY ESPR STR +
YKER AND MAJ. CRUSER
JOHN ROWLAND JR. THOM-
AS STOUT, MASONS."

The bridge is situated on a relatively flat area of land, surrounded by both forest and open fields in a generally undeveloped area in the township. Montgomery Road, which runs over the bridge is still unpaved in this section.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1825 BUILDER/ARCHITECT B. J. Cray

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Cat Tail Brook Bridge is one of the two remaining stone arch bridges in Hillsborough Township. The other bridge has a double arch and is of similar construction, but does not have a cornerstone documenting its date of erection. Consequently, the Cat Tail Brook Bridge is the only documented early 19th century bridge in the township. While a comprehensive survey of bridges had not been conducted for Somerset County it is probably safe to estimate, based on superficial surveys of the region, that there are no more than twenty extant stone bridges in the county.

Stone bridges are by their very nature strong, lasting, and need little or no maintenance. The stone bridge, however, also took a concerted effort to build. Consequently, when a stone bridge was erected its long term advantages were usually carefully weighed against the necessary added initial expense and the incurred delay in construction.

Americans in the 18th and 19th century clearly understood the importance of methods of portage across a river or stream. Certainly the largest rivers received the most concentrated and noteworthy attempts at spanning them, but smaller streams were also formidable obstacles worthy of bridge construction.

The smaller stone spans required much less engineering and stone masonry skills, and, as a consequence, were much more common throughout the country. Few exist today as a result of attrition and modern transportation trends.

The Cat Tail Brook Bridge has provided the area farmers and nearby villages of Neshanic, Clover Hill, and Rocky Hill with a ford across the Cattail Brook by which to transport goods and produce since 1825.

As evidenced by the crudeness of the stone plaque, the bridge was constructed by simple builders and masons who were not elegant or terrifically literate, but the existence of the bridge today attests to their competence. The bridge stands as a memorial to their otherwise unrecognized craftsmanship.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Somerset County Engineer's Office, Somerville, New Jersey
 Cornerstone on Cat Tail Brook Bridge, 1825
Somerset Messenger Gazette. On file with Hillsborough Township
 Historical Society

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	521740	4476550	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point on Montgomery Road 1000 feet NNW of its intersection with Long Hill Road; thence proceed 10 feet NE; thence proceed 40 feet NW; thence proceed 20 feet SW; thence proceed 40 feet SE; thence proceed 10 feet NE to the point of origin.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE	
Wayne T. McCabe (revised by Terry Karschner, Office of Historic Preservation (609) 292-2028)	
ORGANIZATION	DATE
Historic Preservation Consultant	July, 1976
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
Newton	New Jersey
CITY OR TOWN	STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

Deputy
 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE *Foster Wilson*

DATE *11-27-78*

TITLE Deputy Commissioner, Dept. Environmental Protection DATE November 27, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>Charles Thurman</i>	DATE <i>8-1-79</i>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: <i>Wm A. Beebe</i>	DATE <i>July 29, 1979</i>
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	