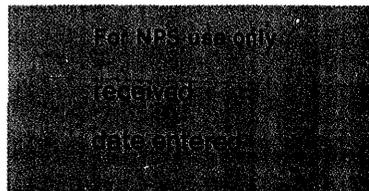


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 A. M. Kennedy House and Covered Bridges of Rush County

and/or common " " " " " " " "

2. Location

street & number Various

N/A not for publication

city, town Rushville

X vicinity of

~~Congressional District~~

state Indiana

code 018

county Rush

code 139

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
Thematic Group	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Rush County Commissioners

Andrew Ariens

street & number Rush County Courthouse,

R. R. 7

city, town Rushville

X vicinity of

state Indiana

46173

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office

street & number Rush County Courthouse

city, town Rushville

state Indiana 46173

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town

state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The A. M. Kennedy House and Covered Bridges of Rush County Thematic Group includes six covered bridges and a brick residence, all built by Archibald M. Kennedy and his sons and grandsons. The residence, which served as the Kennedy family homestead for many years, was built by Archibald Kennedy shortly after he settled in Rush County in 1864. The six bridges are the last survivors of some nineteen covered bridges built in Rush County by the Kennedy family between 1873 and 1916. Individual structures included in this nomination are as follows:

- ✓1. The Archibald M. Kennedy House, located on County Road 200 N, Route 7, Rushville. Built circa 1864.
- ✓2. The Ferree Covered Bridge, over the Little Flatrock River on Base Road. Built by A. M. Kennedy and his son, Emmett, in 1873.
- ✓3. The Smith Covered Bridge over the Big Flatrock River on County Road 300 N. Built by A. M. Kennedy and his son, Emmett, in 1877.
- ✓4. The Offutt Covered Bridge over the Little Blue River on County Road 550 W. Built by Emmett and Charles F. Kennedy in 1884.
- ✓5. The Moscow Covered Bridge, over the Big Flatrock River at the intersection of County Roads 875 South and 625 West. Built by Emmett L. Kennedy in 1886.
- ✓6. The Forsythe Covered Bridge over the Big Flatrock River on County Road 650 South. Built by Emmett L. Kennedy in 1888.
- ✓7. The Norris Ford Covered Bridge, over the Big Flatrock River on County Road 150 North. Built by Emmett L. Kennedy and his sons, Karl and Charles R., in 1916.

Each of the structures in this group demonstrates at least some of the various decorative elements and construction techniques recognized as hallmarks of the Kennedys' work. The A. M. Kennedy House, the oldest structure in the group, is a large, Italianate structure with a two story, pedimented porch of classical inspiration. Among the decorative elements on the house is a wide, plain frieze with elaborate cornice brackets used in pairs. Of the six bridges in this group, all but the Smith bridge feature a similar bracketed frieze below the gables. Each bridge employs the Burr arch truss system, and features pilastered corner boards. Rounded arch portals are used on all but the Ferree Bridge, and the Offutt, Moscow, Forsythe, and Norris Ford bridges also feature the decorative scrollwork found only on the Kennedys' most detailed structures. The use of these various elements by the Kennedys made their work unique and readily identifiable.

The six bridges in this group were constructed as a result of individual contracts let by the Rush County Commissioners and remain in the county road system. Their condition ranges from fair to good. All of the structures contained in the nomination lie within a seven-mile radius of Rushville, in the central and southern sections of the county.

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These bridges comprise the county's entire inventory of extant covered bridges and were located as a result of a survey conducted in 1977-1978. At that time, Larry Cash, director of the Region 9 Development Commission, and planner Phil McMullan, conducted a land-use survey of Rush County and four neighboring counties. To accomplish this, they traveled all of the roads in each county, recording, among other items, the location of all covered bridges. In 1980-81, Adrian Ellis, assistant director of the Region 9 Development Commission, used the information contained in this survey to locate all of the covered bridges in Rush County in order to prepare this nomination.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> transportation		
<input checked="" 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 ca. 1864-1916

Builder/Architect Archibald M. Kennedy & Sons

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) (GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE)

The A. M. Kennedy House and Covered Bridges are significant as examples of 19th century architectural and engineering principles, and as the most concentrated collection of works associated with one of Indiana's most prominent bridge-building firms. Most of Indiana's covered bridges were erected by large bridge-building firms, whereas in ^{some} other states most bridges were built by carpenters or engineers, who did not ordinarily construct bridges for a living. As a result, Indiana has many bridges that are similar in appearance and construction, 90 percent of them utilizing patented trusses (compared with less than half in Ohio).

One of the "Big Three" bridge building firms in Indiana, the Kennedy family's efforts span a period of almost fifty years, during which time they developed perhaps the most ornate and distinctive style in the region. Kennedy family members, including Archibald, his sons Emmett and Charles, and grandsons, Karl and Charles, eventually constructed at least 58 covered bridges in Indiana. Only 13 of these are still standing, six of them being included in this thematic group.

Archibald Kennedy, born in North Carolina in 1818, came to Indiana with his family as a child. Eventually settling near Rushville, Indiana, he purchased a farm, erected a house, and made his living as a carpenter. He inaugurated the family's bridge-building tradition in 1870, when he was hired to build a two-span bridge near Dunlapsville, in Union County. He and his son, Emmett, completed this project and went on to build at least 14 more bridges before the end of the decade. In 1880 they were joined by another son, Charles, and, as A. M. Kennedy & Sons, built at least 24 more bridges in the next three years. In 1884 Archibald Kennedy turned the bridge-building business over to his two sons and devoted his full attention to state and local politics. Emmett and Charles worked as partners for two years, completing ten more bridges between 1884 and 1886. Charles left this partnership in 1886 and eventually became a lawyer. Emmett continued building bridges, both on his own and with his sons, Karl and Charles, until 1918.

The majority of the Kennedy family's bridges, including all of those in Rush County, were built using the Burr arch truss system. Theodore Burr first devised this structural system in 1804, using it to bridge the Hudson River at Waterford, New York, in a four-span structure over 400 feet long. Simply described, the Burr arch truss is created by attaching a timber arch onto a multiple kingpost truss. The arch is formed in such manner that its ends extend below the lower chord of the truss and rest on the abutments. Burr invented this system after discovering that the multiple kingpost, alone, as described by Andrea Palladio in 1570, was not stable under live loads in lengths exceeding 60 feet. He patented this truss in 1817, and for the next 20 years it was the most popular truss system in the country. In Indiana it was eventually adopted by three important bridge builders: A. M. Kennedy, J. A. Daniels, and J. A. Britton.

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In 1840, William Howe invented a simpler truss system, using vertical iron rods and posts with wood cross-X braces as struts. This truss had several advantages over the Burr truss, most notably the fact that it could be kept in perfect alignment by tightening or loosening the iron rods. The struts were square-ended; the angled intersection of these timbers with the bridge-chords was achieved with wedge-shaped blocks of iron. These wedges were mortised into the chord timbers in order to transform the horizontal shear of the braces into direct fiber compression. Howe obtained a patent on this truss, which was considered an improvement over the Burr arch because it was lighter, required less timber, and adapted more easily to prefabrication and installation by less skilled workmen. By 1880, the Howe truss had become the preferred bridging system throughout the eastern part of the country, almost completely supplanting the Burr arch.

The Kennedy family, however, looked upon the Howe truss with some disdain, reportedly considering its iron wedge system to be an unnecessary complication designed mainly to garner royalties for its patent-holder. Consequently, they continued to use Burr arch construction except in those instances where the customer specifically requested a different truss system. Of the 58 bridges they built between 1870 and 1918, only seven used the Howe truss.

During their peak years in the 1880's, the Kennedys operated a large bridge timber yard in Rushville, adjacent to the railroad tracks. Emmett Kennedy would often travel to Michigan to select the pine timber preferred for the structural members of covered bridges. This timber was then shipped to the Rushville yard where it was cut and shaped into struts, posts, and other bridge members. The arches were also constructed in this yard, usually by splicing together pine timbers 20 to 25 feet in length. The ends of each arch were made out of oak, which was considered more resistant to decay. Yard preparation of all of these timbers substantially decreased the time needed to construct a bridge, and reduced the size of the erection crew to three or four key men and 15-25 locally-recruited workmen.

The Kennedys were particularly known for the decorative elements they used to embellish their work. Portals on their bridges normally had a distinctive configuration, and were often rounded arches. The corner boards adjacent to the portals were regularly treated with moldings so as to resemble pilasters; the capitals of these pilasters then served as the imposts for the portal arches. Decorative scrollwork was often employed above the pilastered corner boards. A wide, plain frieze was commonly used below the gables, and elaborate cornice brackets were used in pairs on this frieze.

While an examination of the existing Rush County bridges might seem to indicate that the Kennedys' use of decorative elements increased as the years went by, historic photographs of other Kennedy bridges do not support such a theory showing, instead, that the amount of ornamentation varied arbitrarily from bridge to bridge. The 1878 Milroy Bridge (moved from Rush to Lake County, 1933), for example, was built with the full complement of decorative elements, while the later Swain's Mill (Rush County, 1881-1959) and Circleville (Rush County, 1883-1949) bridges were less ornate, lacking the decorative scrollwork and the rounded arch portals. The Offutt Bridge, built in 1884, and the Moscow Bridge of 1886 once again employed all of the Kennedy detailing. As these examples show, it seems incorrect to suggest the varying amounts of ornamentation on Kennedy bridges resulted from an evolutionary process, and the reason certain design elements were inconsistently used remains unclear. The Kennedys were, however, the only bridgebuilders

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in the state to decorate their structures with an identifiable combination of ornamental detailing, and while individual bridges often lacked certain elements, enough of this detailing was employed to make each structure easily recognizable as a Kennedy bridge.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property See attached

Quadrangle name See attached

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References See attached

A

Zone	Easting			Northing			

B

Zone	Easting			Northing			

C

Zone	Easting			Northing			

D

Zone	Easting			Northing			

E

Zone	Easting			Northing			

F

Zone	Easting			Northing			

G

Zone	Easting			Northing			

H

Zone	Easting			Northing			

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Phil McMullan, Principal Planner

organization Region IX Development Commission

date January 3, 1980

street & number 120 West 9th Street, Box 347

telephone 317/825-0524

city or town Connersville

state Indiana 47331

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

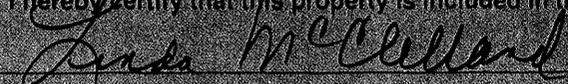


title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

date 12-9-82

For NPS use only

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



date 2-2-83

Keeper of the National Register

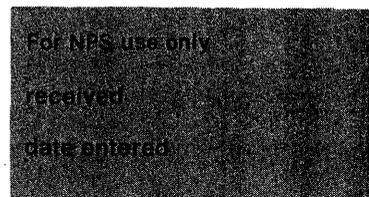
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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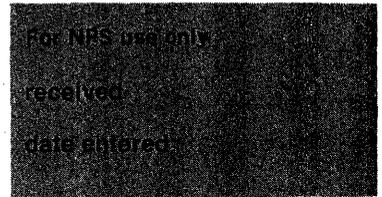
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Item number

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Kennedy, A. M., House and Covered Bridges of Rush County Thematic Resources
State Indiana

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Offutt Covered Bridge

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland
2/2/83

Attest

2. Norris Ford Covered Bridge

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland
2/2/83

Attest

3. Smith Covered Bridge

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland
2/2/83

Attest

4. Ferree Covered Bridge

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland
2/2/83

Attest

5. Moscow Covered Bridge

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland
2/2/83

Attest

6. Forsythe Covered Bridge

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland
2/2/83

Attest

7. Kennedy, Archibald M. House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland
2/2/83

Attest

8.

Keeper

Attest

9.

Keeper

Attest

10.

Keeper

Attest