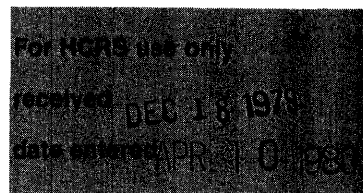


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Bedford County Covered Bridges Thematic Resources

historic COVERED BRIDGES OF BEDFORD COUNTY

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 14 bridges ___ not for publication

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district _____

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Bedford code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> thematic	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bedford County Courthouse

street & number Juliana Street

city, town Bedford state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal state county _____ local _____

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The remaining Bedford County covered bridges can be broken down into four distinctive visual types, even though only two different trussing systems are employed.

The open side wall type seems to be a regional variation and only known at this point in our survey from this county. The neighboring county of Somerset has approx. 16 covered bridges, some of these may also prove to be of a similar type.

Fifteen historic covered bridges remain today in Bedford County, however, only 14 will be nominated here. The Claycomb or Reynoldsville bridge has been moved and altered in recent years; **(NOT INCLUDED IN NOMINATION).**

Type I Features: Burr arch truss (low to medium)
Shallow gable roof
X-bracing of roof
Low (3 plank) inner walls
High, vertical plank outer walls
Truss does not extend above side walls
(one exception, Ryot)
Four of the 5 in this category have an extra horizontal beam at eave level

Bridges of this Type:

Hewitt Covered Bridge	38-05-26
Ryot Covered Bridge	38-05-17
Snooks Covered Bridge	38-05-23
McDaniels Covered Bridge	38-05-20
Jackson's Mill Covered Bridge	38-05-25

Type II Features: Burr arch truss (medium)
Shallow gable roof
Low (3 plank) inner walls
Low vertical plank outer walls
X-bracing of roof
Horizontal beam bracing at top of burr arch

Bridges of this type :

Dr. Knisely's Covered Bridge	38-05-16
Diehl's Covered Bridge	38-05-19
Osterburg or Bowser's Covered Bridge	38-05-22

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Type III Features: Burr arch truss (high-eave level)
Medium pitched gable roof
X-bracing of roof
Low (3 plank) inner walls
High, vertical plank outer walls (exception,
Hall's Mill - no outer walls)

Bridges of this Type:

Felton's Mill Covered Bridge	38-05-03
Claycomb or Reynoldsville Covered Bridge	38-05-12 not nominated
Hall's Mill Covered Bridge	38-05-15
Heirline Covered Bridge	38-05-11

Type IV Features: Kingpost truss

Only two bridges employing the kingpost trussing system are present in Bedford County.

The Fischtner or Polo Alto bridge (38-05-21) has the typical kingpost trussing system. Horizontal beams also tie the trussing system members together as on type one bridges. This bridge also has low side walls.

The Calvin or Calvin Bridge (38-05-24) has a more unusual use of the kingpost system. This bridge has short diagonal braces which only come to the middle of the panel posts. Horizontal beams are tied to the panel posts where the diagonal braces end. A second set of diagonal braces begin above these beams but are tied to the cross-beams of the roof bracing. This is the only bridge of this type in Pennsylvania.

Other

New Paris or Cupperts Covered Bridge (38-05-18) is also an unusual bridge. Its extremely low burr arch is protected by low curving vertical siding leaving the bridge sidewalls open. Horizontal beams tie the end post and panel posts.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The covered bridge was once an important part of the transportation system of the county. Today only 15 of these wooden spans remain although records show that at least 5 known others once stood in the county and other accounts put the number as high as 74. This county was settled by numerous Indian trails and an early road forged by General John Forbes in 1758. The iron industry was an important economic venture in the county during the 19th century, however agriculture was and still remains of major importance

Unfortunately pictures of all the early bridges do not exist for comparative study with the remaining bridges. However, some distinctive regional features can be seen. These include the high presence of the use of the burr arch and the open side walls. The remaining bridges are an important survival of a transportation feature once common in Bedford County.

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The covered bridge is an important and significant historic structure in the Commonwealth of Pa. Not only does Pa. have the most extant covered bridges today, it probably had the most during the height of the covered bridge period 1830 to 1875. Estimates have been made that Pa. once had at least 1500 covered bridges. (Allen, 1959: 51). Not only is the sheer number important but Pa. had the first known U.S. covered bridge, as well as the prototypes for most of the major truss types.

The first US covered bridge was located in Philadelphia over the Schuylkill, built in 1800 by Timothy Palmer, a master carpenter from Newburyport, Massachusetts. From the completion of this first bridge, the age of the covered bridge was upon Pa. Not only was the truss types of Burr and others first tried out in Pa. but the covered bridge spread as the local carpenter adapted it to the local problem of crossing the numerous small streams and creeks throughout Pa. The covered bridge is also important in the history of bridge building. The early stone arch bridges were really only practical on smaller streams and then in areas with an abundance of good building stone. The peak of the stone bridge in Pa. can be seen in the Rockville Bridge over the Susquehanna River built by the Pa. Railroad and contains a quarter of a million tons of stone. The covered bridge was the transition from the stone to the cast-iron in most places.

Since the heyday of the covered bridge they have been rapidly disappearing through neglect, flood, arson and progress. Prior to the Agnes Flood of 1972, Pa. had 271 covered bridges, spread across 41 of its 67 counties. Since that time the number has been decreasing at a fast rate. Because of their importance, the state level National Register Review Committee as well as the Office of Historic Preservation have embarked on a covered bridge survey and registration project. A survey form and inquiry letter were developed and mailed to county bridge engineers, historical societies, members of the Society of Industrial Archaeologists, the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society and numerous others. To date we have information on approx. 3/4 of the 41 counties containing covered bridges. Our results to date show that the number of covered bridges is down about a third from the 1972 figure of 271. Just since beginning our survey, two bridges have been destroyed by arson and one by an overloaded truck. It is because of

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this rapid disappearance rate, as well as their significance to Pa. in the history of transportation that we intend to nominate as many as possible to the National Register of Historic Places. Because of time and the immensity of the task a thematic nomination covering the whole state is impossible. We are therefore nominating these structures on a county or two county basis. All bridges constructed after 1930 have been excluded unless the bridge has a significance of its own. Bridge construction dates and builders are not always readily available, therefore after exhausting the files of the bridge engineers, historical societies and the archives, we have been lenient with the bridges for which we could find no dates, mainly on the view that very few have been built in the last 50 years and that the registration of all of these fast disappearing resource is valuable. Moved structures have been included in our nominations for several reasons; firstly in all cases if these structures had not been moved they would have been destroyed, secondly they still retain their significance as examples of trussing types and while they have lost their location they still retain an integrity of location in a rural setting. Therefore we have tended to nominate every eligible covered bridge in each county.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Whisker, Vaughn E. Taleo from the Allegheny Foothills. Bedford Gazette, Bedford. 1975, Vol. 3.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property .68
Quadrangle name See continuation sheet Quadrangle scale _____

UMT References

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification Acreege and boundaires are calculated by adding 20 feet to each length and 10 feet to each width to include abutments.

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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan M. Zacher / Barbara Hufnagel

organization PHMC/Historic Sites Sunvey date _____

street & number Box 1026 / 203 S. Juliana Street telephone _____

city or town Harrisburg / Bedford state Pennsylvania

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

ED WEINTRAUB, Director

title Office of Historic Preservation

date 12-10-79

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

Sally J. Oldham
Keeper of the National Register

date 5/10/80

Attest: Lynn A. Beese

date April 8, 1980

Chief of Registration

DEC 18 1979

Bibliography

World Guide to Covered Bridges, National Society for Covered Bridges, Inc.
1972, p. 59.

Fred J. Moll, Personal Communication (letter), 10/4/79.

George M. Meiser IX, Personal Communication, 10/24/79.

Additional information on the triple set of arches used in the Pleasantville Bridge can be found in the Winter (1979-1980) issue of the Berks County Historical Review.

Prepared by :

Berks County Conservancy
960 Old Mill Rd.
Wyomissing, PA 19610

December 1979