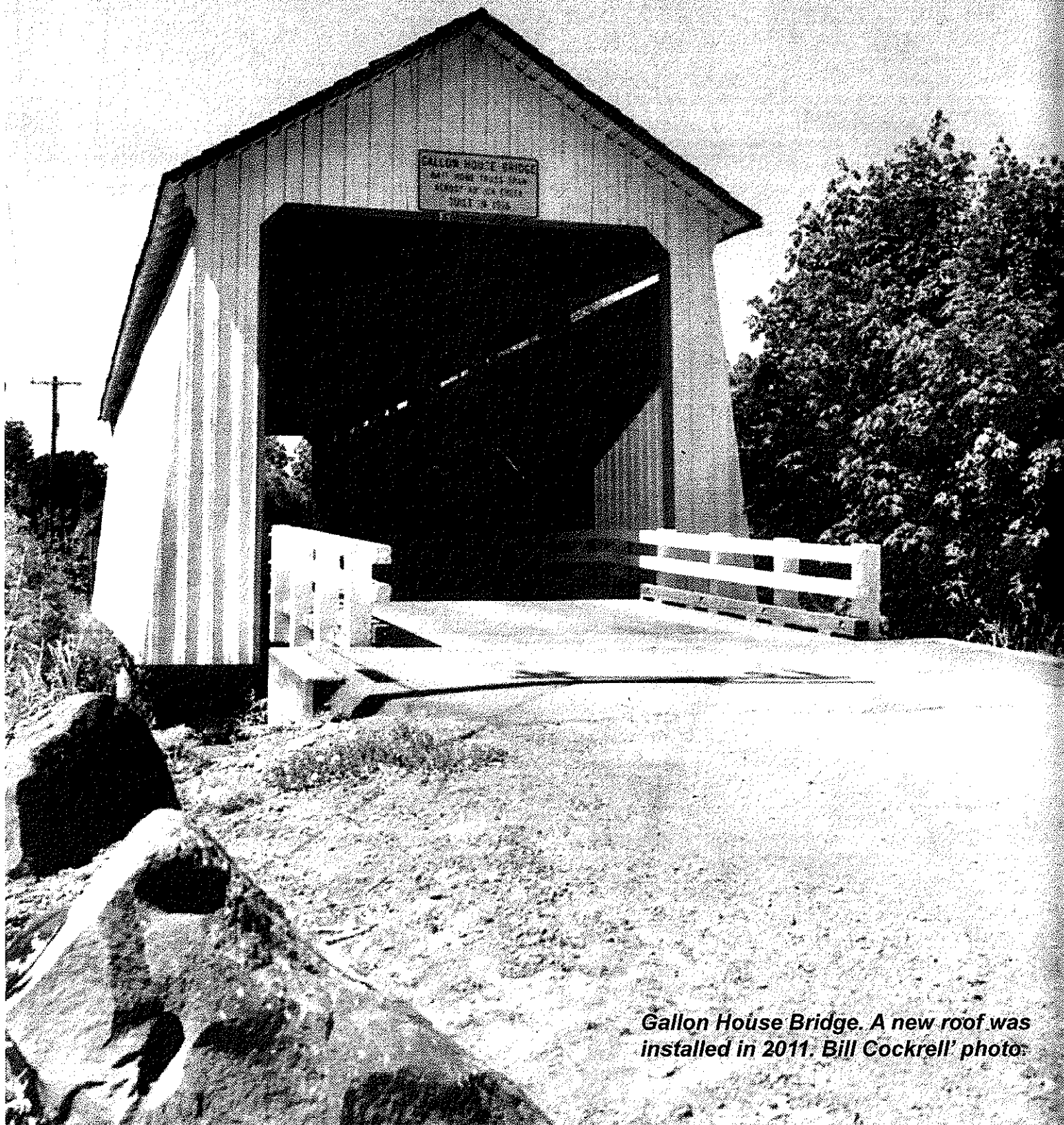


# THE BRIDGE TENDER

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*Gallon House Bridge. A new roof was installed in 2011. Bill Cockrell' photo.*

# Richard Sanders Allen's Oregon Photographs

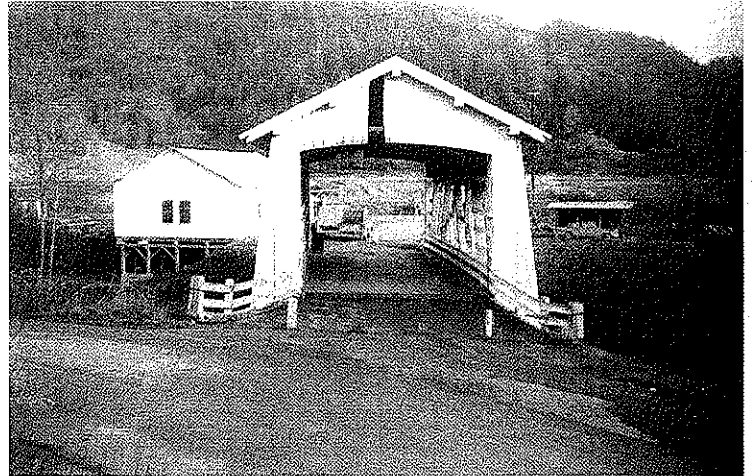
*Bill Cockrell*

*In each issue of the Bridge Tender, we will feature a few of the covered bridge photographs from Richard Sanders Allen's 1963 trip. It is sad to see how the time of 50 years has changed the landscape at the covered bridge sites, as well as to note the loss of our historic treasures.*

## **Sandy Creek Bridge (37-06-09)**

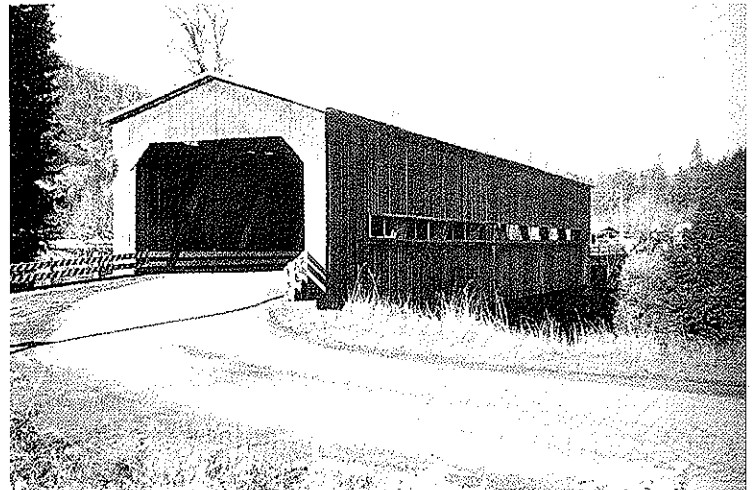
This is now Coos County's only covered bridge. It was built in 1921 by A. Guthrie and Company at a cost of \$8,188.63. The 60 foot Howe truss crosses Sandy Creek about 14 miles southeast of Myrtle Point. Coos County realigned the highway which bypassed the covered span in 1948. Efforts from the Coos-Curry Pioneer and Historical Association saved the bridge from demolition.

The Sandy Creek Bridge site was eventually set aside as a wayside Park and Rest Area. All of the structures except the covered bridge pictured in this photograph have been removed. It is also interesting to note that at least 37 covered bridge sites have been identified in Coos County.



## **Bridge at Bridge (37-06-07)**

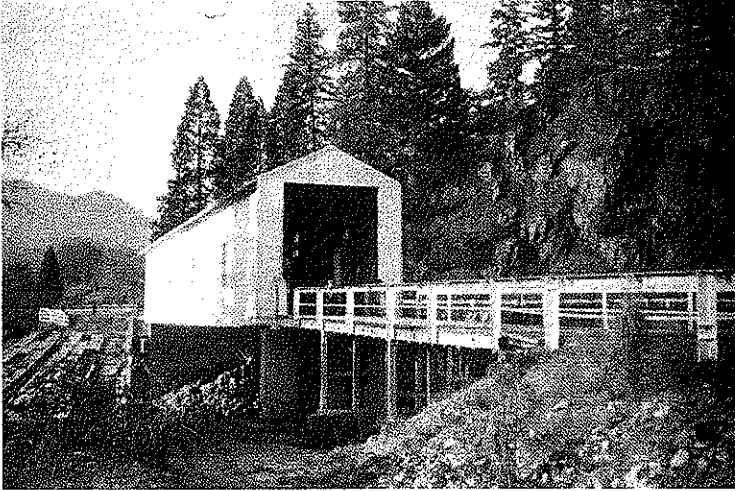
This old Coos County bridge at Bridge was the second covered structure in the community. The first one spanned Big Creek. The town moved when Highway 42 was relocated in the 1920s. In 1936, the bridge pictured here was built over the Middle Fork of the Coquille River. It was a 150 foot Howe truss bridge and was constructed by work of the WPA. The bridge survived until a deep snowfall in 1969 collapsed the roof. A concrete bridge replaced the wooden bridge.



## **Barton Park Bridge (37-10-09)**

This old rustic look bridge was built in 1922 to span Cow Creek not far from Glendale in Douglas County. Floyd C. Frear was the county bridge superintendent in charge of construction. The bridge survived the high waters of the 1964 flood, but it was lost in January 1968. Barton Park Bridge was a 135 foot Howe truss.

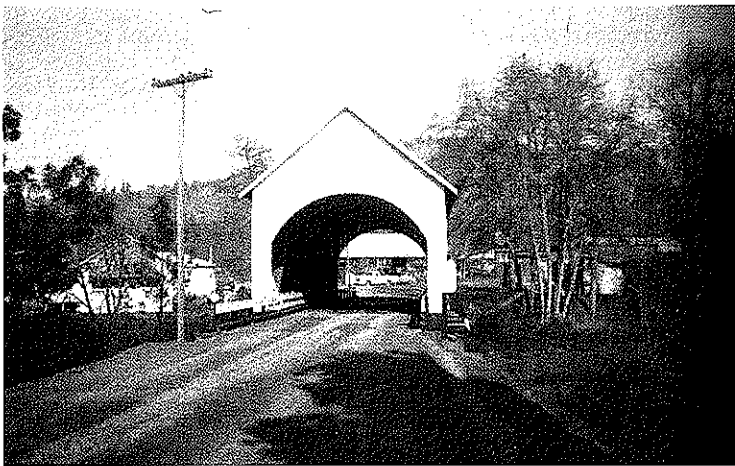




### **Milo Academy Bridge**

The first covered bridge at this site was built in 1920 and was known as Fate Bridge. It was a 100 foot truss over the South Umpqua River. Eventually, the old bridge weakened and was replaced by a steel bridge in 1960. Locals encouraged the Academy to put a “cover” on the structure as they missed the covered bridge. Decking of the old bridge can be seen at the left side in this 1963 photograph.

More than 70 covered bridge sites have been identified in Douglas County. Today, only six are still standing.



### **Wimer Bridge (37-15-05)**

Locals say a covered bridge crossed Evans Creek at Wimer since 1892. In 1927, brothers Lyle and Wes Hartman built the queen post truss bridge pictured here. The bridge served the local area for years and was temporarily closed in the 1960s. Jackson County performed repairs and the bridge was reopened to traffic.

In July 2003, the old bridge collapsed with three pedestrians on the bridge. Locals debated whether to rebuild the bridge, and if so, what kind should be constructed. In 2008, exactly five years from its collapse, the new bridge was dedicated. However, the new truss was a modified king post, not the original queen post.



### **Minthorn Bridge (37-15-04)**

Minthorn is another of the Jackson County bridges documented by Richard Sanders Allen in 1963. This bridge was constructed by Lyle and Wes Hartman in 1927. It was a 57 foot queen post truss and crossed Evans Creek about seven miles from the town of Rogue River. The 1964 flood caused its demise.

More than 35 covered bridge sites in the county have been documented, but today only four covered bridges in Jackson County still stand.

## Photographs from the Ben Maxwell Collection

*Bill Cockrell*

*As I noted in previous articles, the Ben Maxwell collection at the Salem Public Library is vast. There are more than 600 covered bridge images. All of the bridges included in this article have been destroyed or replaced. It would have been wonderful to have these old bridges still crossing our streams.*

### **Schooner Creek (State # 12018)**

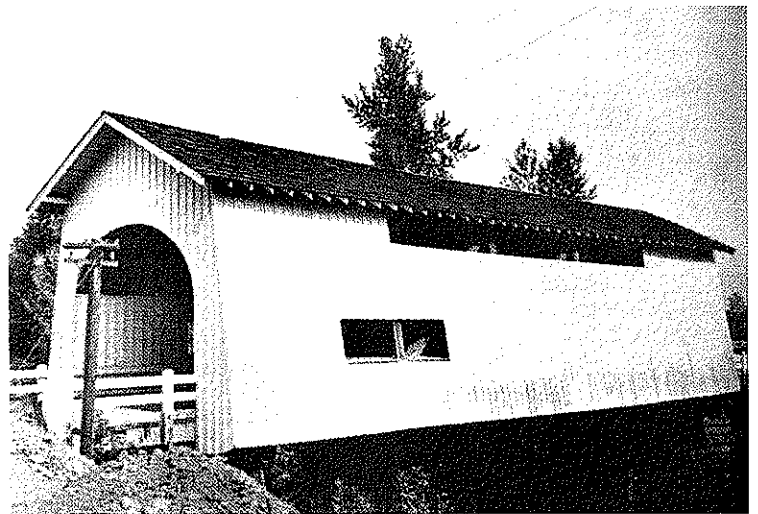
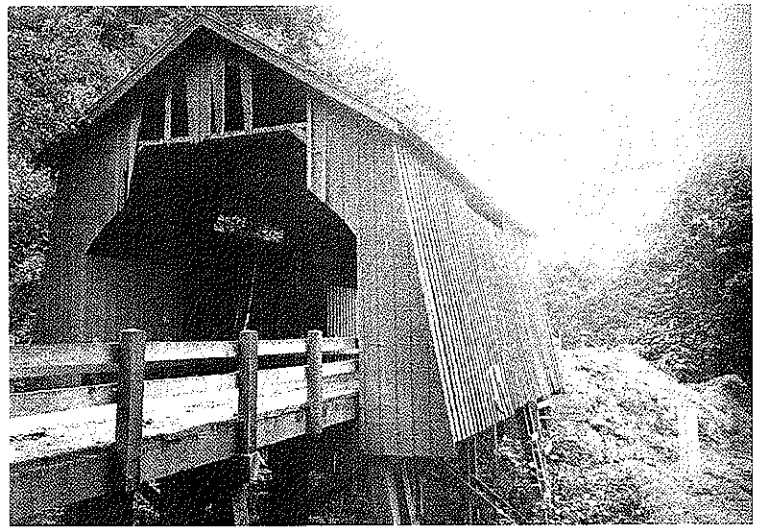
Lincoln County covered bridges are distinctive in style and color. Schooner Creek Bridge typifies those elements: red color, cedar shingle roof, slanted sides, wooden decking and rounded portals at each end. This 1950 photograph shows the bridge a few years before destruction. The bridge was built in 1914 over Schooner Creek, three miles east of Taft. Construction costs totaled only \$1,200. It was a 62 foot Howe truss. In 1963, a road grader fell through the floor, causing the bridge's replacement.

### **Little Lobster Creek (State # 12069)**

Although built by Lincoln County in 1933, this 45 foot queen post actually spanned Little Lobster Creek in Benton County. An interagency agreement between the two counties had Lincoln County perform maintenance on the structure. Costs to build the bridge totaled just \$580. Many of the Lincoln County bridges were supported by concrete piers, but this one had wooden ones. The upper portal boards are broken in this photograph, probably due to a loaded log truck. The bridge was replaced in 1957. Benton County officially took ownership of the new concrete bridge.

### **Stow Pit Road Bridge (State # 14177)**

For some reason, not much is known about this bridge in Benton County. Microfilm records show it was built in 1939 over the Long Tom River. It was a 75 foot Howe truss. The bridge was located on Road 773 at milepost 5.85 near Alpine Junction, not far from Monroe. Stow Pit Road Bridge was replaced in 1961.



**Honey Grove Bridge (37-02-06)**

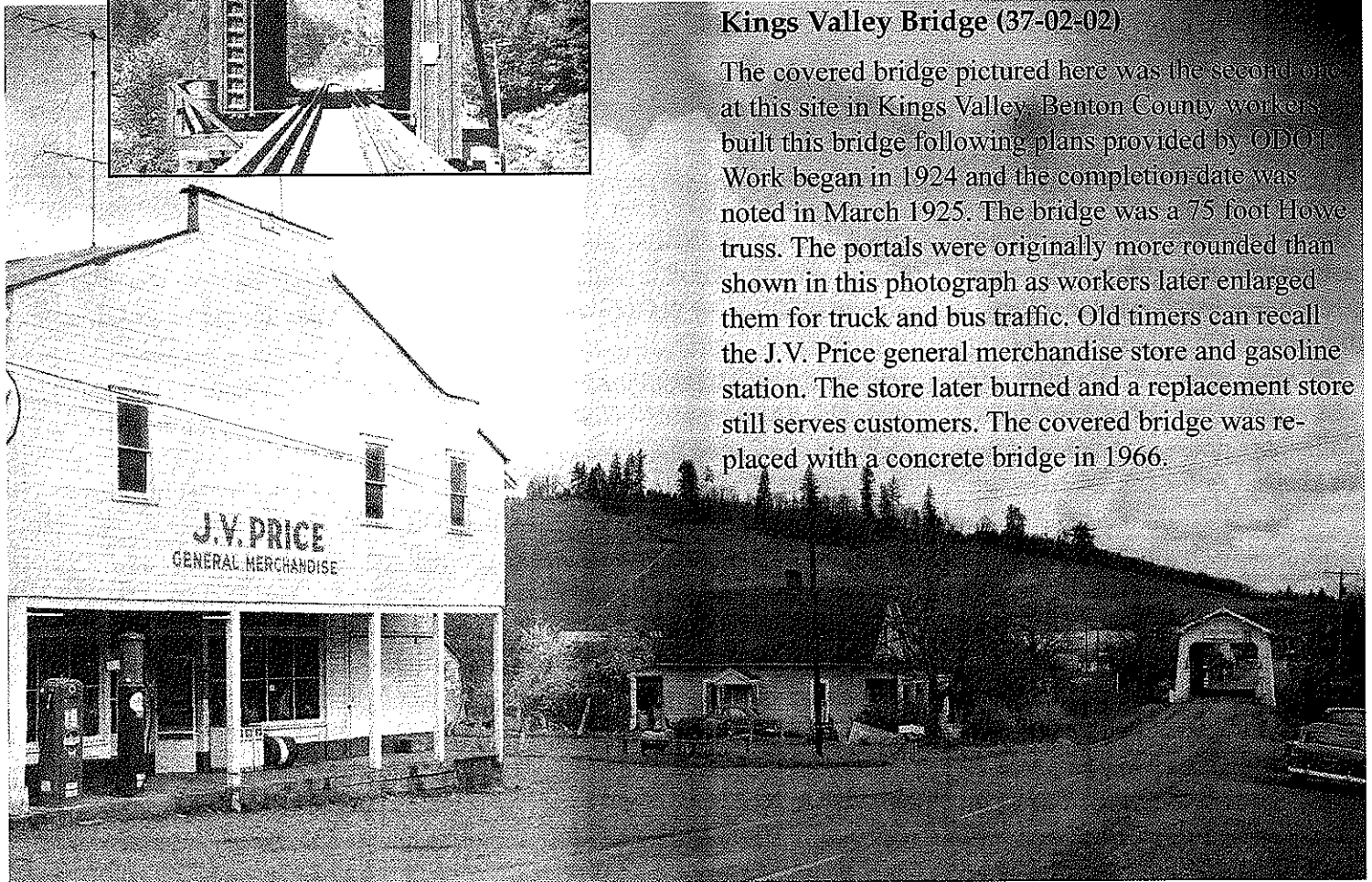
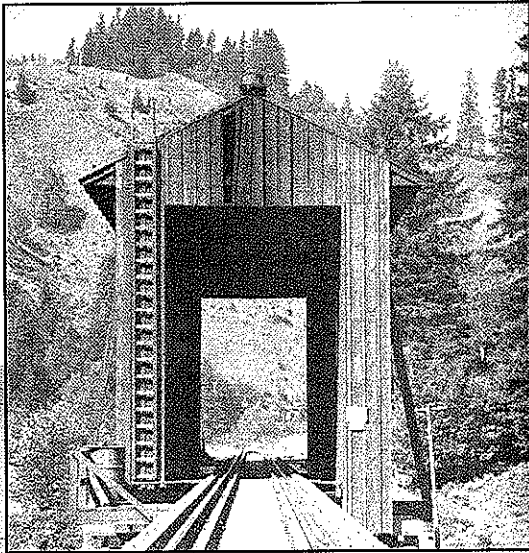
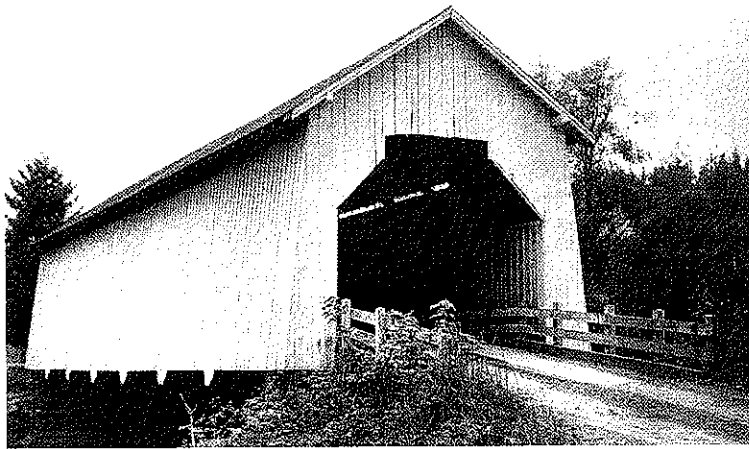
Two covered bridges spanned the Alsea River near the town of Alsea in Benton County. Hayden Bridge (37-02-05) is west of Alsea, while the Honey Grove Bridge was east of town. Benton County records show the bridge was built in 1945 by H.W. Fielder. The bridge replaced a prior covered bridge at the site. Honey Grove Bridge was a 96 foot, three inch Howe truss on Road 752 at milepost 0.22, about one mile east of Alsea. The bridge was replaced in 1964.

**C&E Railroad Bridge (Bridge # 15299)**

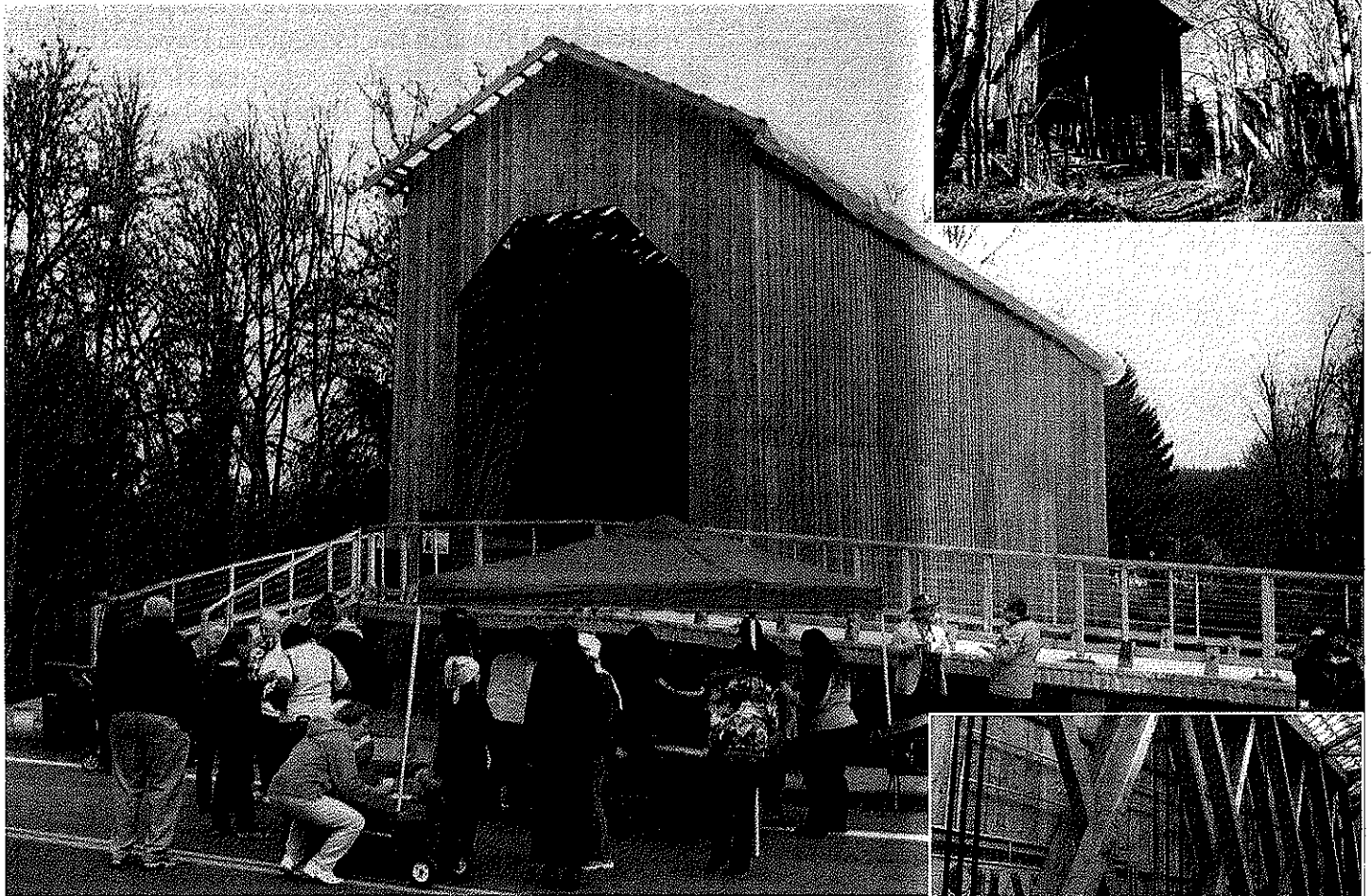
Originally, the rail line was the Oregon and Pacific Railroad. In 1895, A.B. Hammond bought the bankrupt line. Two years later he named it the Corvallis and Eastern Railroad Company. This 1943 photograph shows the Lincoln County bridge at its site just east of Chitwood. The bridge crossed the Yaquina River. Note the exterior stabilizing braces on each side. Also, barrels of water or sand were positioned on the roof in case of fire. Another barrel was positioned on the side near the ladder. The date of replacement is not known.

**Kings Valley Bridge (37-02-02)**

The covered bridge pictured here was the second one at this site in Kings Valley. Benton County workers built this bridge following plans provided by ODOT. Work began in 1924 and the completion date was noted in March 1925. The bridge was a 75 foot Howe truss. The portals were originally more rounded than shown in this photograph as workers later enlarged them for truck and bus traffic. Old timers can recall the J.V. Price general merchandise store and gasoline station. The store later burned and a replacement store still serves customers. The covered bridge was replaced with a concrete bridge in 1966.



## Chambers Bridge Reopens



***A crowd begins to form, awaiting the bridge dedication.***

Dozens of covered bridge enthusiasts gathered in Cottage Grove on December 3rd, 2011 to dedicate the rebuilt Chambers rail bridge. Attendees enjoyed train rides from city hall to the bridge, cinnamon rolls, hot apple cider and a variety of keepsakes for sale.

Speeches from a host of dignitaries recognized both the history and the process that culminated in the complete rebuilding of the old Chambers Bridge. Cottage Grove mayor, Gary Williams, also read congratulatory letters from US Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden as well as US Congressman Peter Defazio.

Roofing material still needs to be installed on the roof. Clear plastic sheeting did allow visitors more light to view interior displays as well as the refurbished tension rods and new truss members. The floor decking replicated the look of cross ties and steel rails.

The new concrete handicap-accessible ramp permits easy entry and exit at the Chambers Bridge. Lots of youngsters will cross the bridge as Cottage Grove High School and a campus of Lane Community College are nearby.

Chambers Bridge was built in 1925 and was in use until the mill burned

***Top photo as bridge looked in 1991. Inside photo shows new truss & refurbished tension rods. Cockrell photos.***

in 1951. It is remarkable that the old structure lasted so many years without maintenance. Some covered bridge fans say that the Chambers Bridge is the remaining covered railroad bridge west of the Mississippi River. But there is the Manning railroad bridge in Whitman County, Washington. This old 163 foot Howe truss structure spans Palouse River near Colfax. Although this bridge has no roof, each truss is enclosed.



## Closing California's Bridgeport Covered Bridge

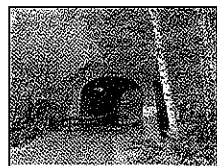
*Photo courtesy Mediawerkz at en.wikipedia*

Last October, the California newspaper, the UNION reported that the Bridgeport Covered Bridge (05-29-01) would no longer be accessible to pedestrian traffic. The bridge had also been closed to vehicular traffic about 18 months prior.

Currently, there are 10 covered bridges in California. As late as 1938, S. Griswold Morley in his book, THE COVERED BRIDGES OF CALIFORNIA described 32

covered bridges in the state. Of the Bridgeport Bridge, Morley noted, "...In 1862 after the winter of the great rains had swept out an earlier structure, this combination of Warren trusses and auxiliary arch was erected by J.W. Woods, owner of a sawmill in the mountains. The material is local Douglas fir. The abutments are massive granite blocks. Engineers say that it is impossible to figure the proportion of stress carried by the truss and by

the arch, either of which is capable of carrying the entire weight." Closure of the bridge occurred after a maintenance person with the South Yuba River State Park noticed some twisting of the bridge. Engineering analysis could reach \$20,000, but the actual repairs could be very much larger. Funding is an issue. We hope the state and local governments are committed to saving the bridge.



### Covered Bridge Society Officers

#### President

Bill Cockrell  
3940 Courtney Lane SE  
Salem OR 97302  
503-399-0436

#### Vice President

Jerry Russell  
4730 Dalke Ct. NE  
Salem OR 97305  
503-798-6437

#### Secretary/Treasurer

Jeannine Schmeltzer  
24595 SW Neill Road  
Sherwood OR 97140  
503-628-1906

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# Bridge Log

Please check your mailing label. If there is an 11 after your name, dues are due. We certainly want to keep you as a member of our Society. For your BRIDGE TENDER in color, it is just \$20. For the newsletter in black and white, it is just \$15 per year. Please send your check or money order to:

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maintenance. For the most part, Jackson County provides labor and equipment.

The McKee Bridge was built by Jason Hartman and his sons in 1917 to allow crossing of the Applegate River. Land for the bridge was donated by Adelbert "Deb" McKee. Extensive repair was done in the 1950s and later in the mid-1990s. There are only three other covered bridges remaining in the county. They are the Lost Creek Bridge (37-15-03), the newly rebuilt Wimer Bridge (37-15-05#2) and the relocated Antelope Bridge (37-15-02) in Eagle Point.



straighten the Lane County bridge over the McKenzie River near Leaburg.

According to retired bridge worker Ole Haldorson, work to construct the Goodpasture Bridge ((37-20-10) began in 1937. Work was halted when winter rains started, but construction was completed in 1938. Total building costs were just \$13,000. The 165 foot Howe truss rests on concrete abutments. In 1987, Lane County authorized an expenditure of \$750,000 to upgrade the bridge as well as the concrete retaining wall.



## McKee Bridge Closed

Inspection analysis by the Oregon Bridge Engineering Co. (OBEC) determined that McKee Bridge (37-15-06) had suffered significant decay in wooden members. So, on October 24th, the entire span as well as approach spans were closed to pedestrians.

The main concern is the rot found in the bottom chord of the north truss. The immediate problem is the probability of repair and who would cover that cost. Jackson County would look to the McKee Bridge Historical Society, for funds, as that society has taken on the responsibility for its upkeep and

## Gallon House Renovation

The old Marion County covered bridge over the Abiqua River was repaired in 2011. Contract work was completed by ARCIFORM, a firm which does historic structure renovation. The company was hired to restore the Gallon House Bridge (37-24-01) back to a safer condition, including a complete roof reconstruction, structural replacement of support members and detailed exterior refinishing.

## Goodpasture Bridge Strengthening

A grant application for some \$2 million will strengthen and

The project to repair the truss will mean an installation of a temporary steel truss to support the bridge. Workers will then be able to make repairs and reduce the sag while keeping the bridge open to traffic. Decayed timbers will be replaced along with bridge decking of both the main span and north approach. Post-tensioning cables will help maintain the camber of the truss. Finally, the temporary steel truss will be removed.

The bridge will remain open to traffic during the project. Some traffic may be delayed 20 minutes or more except when the work to install and remove the steel trusses. Then, an eight hour closure will be necessary. Work should begin this summer.