



The Old Stone Wall

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Division of Historical Resources

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HISTORIC STONE CULVERTS: An Overlooked Resource

James L. Garvin, *State Architectural Historian*



Dry-laid stone box culvert on Gore Road, Warner, NH, with minor flooding damage. Photograph by James L. Garvin

The floods of October 8th, 2005, which devastated buildings and farms along several streams in Walpole and Alstead, caused lesser damage throughout southwestern and central New Hampshire. A survey carried out by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) drew attention to an often-overlooked highway structure, the stone culvert. A number of stone culverts were damaged by flooding, and planning for their restoration has recognized their vulnerability to casual replacement. Local authorities may regard these structures as having little historical value or as being too small to accommodate future floods.

In fact, such culverts are among the most evocative of the cherished stone structures that give character to New Hampshire's cultural landscape.

With proper maintenance, they are nearly imperishable.

Most stone culverts date from the nineteenth century, but some may have been built in the 1700s. They generally take two forms: the rectangular box culvert and the much rarer arched structure. Pending the development of a full survey of surviving structures and a procedure for evaluating their significance, the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources has provisionally declared all surviving stone culverts to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. FEMA is developing several innovative methods of retaining and repairing them, and has suggested armoring their earth fill against erosion and providing auxiliary bypass structures to handle floodwaters.

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Dry-laid arched culvert, Memorial Highway over Temple Brook, Temple, NH. Photograph by James L. Garvin

Save Our History Grant for Alstead

The Alstead Historical Society of Alstead, New Hampshire, has been awarded a 2005/2006 Save Our History Grant from *The History Channel*. Elementary, middle, and high school students will capture the story of the 2005 Alstead Flood, which was the greatest catastrophe in Alstead's 250 year history.

For information about the Alstead project and the 25 other grant projects, see http://www.saveourhistory.com/pres_org/recipients_2005-2006.html.

Applications for the 2006-2007 Save Our History Grant Program are available online at www.saveourhistory.com. The deadline for submitting an application for the 2006-2007 grant program is June 2, 2006.

For further information and application materials, visit http://www.saveourhistory.com/pres_org/index.html. To contact a Save Our History program representative, please e-mail Spencer Rice at spencer.rice@cegnyc.com.

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<http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr>

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The DHR is a state agency, supported by the State of New Hampshire, by the federal Historic Preservation Fund (through a matching grant administered by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior), and by donated funds and services. In addition to its state functions, the DHR is also responsible for administering the federal preservation program in New Hampshire.

Recent National Register Listings



Bridges House, Concord NH. Listed December 2005. *Photograph by James L. Garvin.*

Bridges House, constructed of brick c1835, is an early local example of the Greek Revival style. It was built at a time when brick houses were first appearing in rural New Hampshire. Although architecturally significant, the house is best known as the home of Henry Styles Bridges, one of the most influential United States senators of the New Deal and post-World War II eras. Bridges (1898–1961) served continuously as a U.S. senator from New Hampshire from 1936 until his death. As Bridges gained seniority, he also gained influence in the Senate, especially during the Eisenhower administrations from 1952 to 1960. During these years he also served as chairman of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee, where he made a reputation as an enemy of Communism and of Soviet expansion during the Cold War.



Baptist New Meeting House, New London. Listed December 2005. *Photograph by Charley Freiberg.*

New London's Baptist New Meeting House of 1826 is a well-preserved representation of a Federal style meeting house patterned after a design by Asher Benjamin. The designs of Asher Benjamin were popularized by his book, *The Country Builder's Assistant*,

the first builder's guidebook written by an American author for American craftsmen. The book was pivotal in the introduction of the Federal style of architecture. Prior to the publication of this watershed work, the classic meeting house had been a rectangular building with gable roof, its principal entrance on one of the long elevations and the pulpit placed against the opposite wall. Benjamin's design placed the principal entrance on a gable end with the pulpit facing it opposite—an arrangement previously used in Anglican churches in New England but seldom by other Protestant denominations.



Stephen Rowe Bradley House, Walpole. Listed December 2005. *Photograph by Lynne Emerson Monroe.*

The c1808 Stephen Rowe Bradley House is an excellent example of late Federal residential style. It has a hip roof form common to large Federal houses in Walpole and a fully developed Federal façade featuring pilasters and pronounced cornice, Palladian window, and portico. The interior has a typical four-room, center hallway plan. Federal woodwork includes doors, wainscoting with chair rails, door and window surrounds. It also has importance as the only surviving structure associated with the life and career of Stephen Rowe Bradley (1754–1830). Bradley's significance on the state and national levels derives from his role in the establishment of Vermont and its State government, and as a prominent U.S. senator during the period when Congress was developing a government for the new nation. Most of his life was spent in Westminster, Vermont. In 1817 he relocated to Walpole, remaining until his death.

*Christine Fonda Rankie
National Register and
Tax Incentives Coordinator*

New Faces in New Places

The New Year is always a time of optimism, resolutions, and opportunity. At the Division of Historical Resources the New Year looks bright, and contributing to that is a fully staffed office for the first time in many years.



Tanya Kress,
photograph
by Richard
Boisvert

Featured in this issue are some of our new faces in new places. Late in the fall we were pleased to have **Tanya Kress** join us as the **Cultural Resources Records Coordinator**. She continues to do the critical work of putting our historical data in digital format and assisting consultants and other researchers.

Pat Blevens,
photograph
by Richard
Boisvert



Filling the newly created position of **Grants Coordinator** is **Pat Blevens**. We have for the first time a person administering all of our grant programs and serving as a resource to other staff who are finding new sources of funding for important historic preservation work.



Emily Paulus,
photograph
by Richard
Boisvert

Finally, and more about her in the next issue, Emily Paulus joins us as a Preservation Planner. Emily comes

from the State Historic Preservation Office in Washington, DC, and will be working with communities all over the state to apply the tools of preservation locally.

We welcome them all and hope you will seek them out whenever you need assistance.

James McConaha
Director, Division of Historical Resources, NH State Historic Preservation Officer

Eighteenth Annual Conference on New England Industrial Archeology

Sponsored by the Northern and Southern New England Chapters of the Society for Industrial Archeology (SIA), the annual conferences encourage the study of the material culture of our industrial past, and the exchange of information on all aspects of our industrial heritage. This year's session is at Plymouth State University, Plymouth, New Hampshire, on Saturday, February 18, 2006. It will feature presentations on a range of industrial heritage topics, including a panel on New Hampshire's Fort Point, in New Castle, and the challenges in dealing with this unique coastal defense system that includes Battery Farnsworth, the earliest large concrete structure built in New Hampshire. For further information contact Dennis Howe at 603-224-7563.

**2006 NHDHR
Moose Plate Grant
applications now available!**



<http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/moose.html>

New Hampshire
SCRAP PROJECT
ARCHAEOLOGY

*NH spring and
summer 2006
educational opportunities*

**SCRAP
State Conservation and
Rescue Archaeology
Program:**

<http://www.nhscrap.org/>
and

**Project Archaeology
Program:**

[http://www.nh.gov/
nhdhr/project
archaeology.pdf](http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/project_archaeology.pdf)

Save America's Treasures Application Deadline Extended

Federal SAT grants are available for preservation and/or conservation work on nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts and historic structures and sites. Intellectual and cultural artifacts include artifacts, collections, documents, sculpture, and works of art. Historic structures and sites include historic districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects. Grants are awarded to Federal, state, local, and tribal government entities, and non-profit organizations through a competitive matching-grant program, administered by the National Park Service in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

The deadline for submitting 2006 SAT grant applications to the National Park Service has been extended to Tuesday, April 18, 2006. Go to <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/treasures/index.htm> for more information.

See related story, page four

Shelburne's Meadow Bridge Receives National Grant



The northeast span of the *Meadow Bridge in Shelburne* (1897) is lifted by crane from the shore of the Androscoggin River, February 25, 2004. Photograph by Ray Danforth.

The town of Shelburne, New Hampshire, has been awarded a \$220,000 "Save America's Treasures" grant for rehabilitation of Meadow Bridge, an 1897 pin-connected span that crosses the Androscoggin River close to the Maine border. The award is one of only two competitive "Save America's Treasures" grants ever made for preservation of a bridge.

As previously reported in the *Old Stone Wall* (Summer 2003, Winter 2003-4, Spring 2004), Meadow Bridge was bypassed by a new downstream span in 1984. By 2000, one of its four piers was being undermined by riverbed scour, causing two of the trusses to lean and twist. In 2003, recognizing the engineering significance of the bridge, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation offered to pay 80% of the estimated \$1.4 million cost of rehabilitation if the town or other parties would raise the remaining 20% of the total costs and assume ownership of the bridge after restoration.

Raising \$280,000 was a daunting challenge for a town of 380 people, but the community partnered with the Division of Historical Resources to nominate the bridge to the National Register of Historic Places and to apply for the "Save America's Treasures" grant. Meanwhile, NHDOT awarded a

contract to move the two endangered trusses to temporary storage on the banks of the river. In the bitter cold of February, 2004, a huge crane with a 160-foot boom picked up the two spans, each estimated to weigh 72,000 pounds before the removal of its wood plank floor, and placed the trusses gently on temporary steel trestles on each side of the river. The undermined river pier was later lifted from the bed of the stream to await replacement.

The "Save America's Treasures" grant will greatly enhance the ability of the town and its allies to raise the remainder of the needed matching funds and rehabilitate the bridge. SAT grants have become a powerful preservation tool. Some 425 competitive SAT grants have been made between 1999 and 2005, generating \$242 million in public grants and private matching funds.

Of these grants, about 75 have benefited industrial or engineering projects. As a subcategory, however, bridges have not yet fared well under the "Save America's Treasures" program. The only other competitive SAT grant for a highway bridge was a \$250,000 award made in 2001 for rehabilitation of the multi-arch concrete open-spandrel Tenth Street Bridge in Great Falls, Montana.

The rarity of SAT grants for bridge preservation results from the fact that metal or concrete bridges have not often been defined in terms of their national significance or enshrined as national treasures in the broader public consciousness. The recent SAT award to the little town of Shelburne may provide a precedent and an opportunity for other engineering landmarks around the nation to win a larger share of the millions of federal and private dollars that will be generated through this popular program.

James L. Garvin
State Architectural Historian

CURATOR'S REPORT

Work on state collections continues. Recently we rediscovered the portraits of four New Hampshire personages placed in storage long ago. **James Patterson**, U. S. Senator (1867-1873) was a distinguished professor at Dartmouth College for many years. **Captain Frank Butler**, 5th New Hampshire Volunteers, was mortally wounded at Petersburg, VA in 1864. **State Rep. James French**, "Guardian of the State Treasury," was a state legislator and Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee (1897-1917). **Governor Henry W. Keyes** (1917-1919) served three successive terms as a U. S. Senator.

The Joint Legislative Historical Committee, chaired by State Senator Robert Odell, has approved sending these four works of art out for conservation to the Northeast Document Conservation Center in Andover, Massachusetts.

The committee has also approved conservation of six governors' portraits. Conservator Nick Isaak of Swanzey, New Hampshire is currently working on portraits of Governors **Samuel Bell** (1819-1823) and his brother **John Bell** (1828-1829); **William Badger** (1834-1835); **John Steele** (1844-1845); **Anthony Colby** (1846-47), and **Frank Rollins** (1899-1901).

Russell Bastedo, State Curator

Historic Stone Culverts (continued from page one)

DHR, FEMA, and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation are seeking resources to begin a survey of stone culverts in southwestern New Hampshire as a template for a future statewide inventory.

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State Architectural Historian

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