

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: PROPOSED MOVE

PROPERTY NAME: Keller's Covered Bridge

MULTIPLE NAME: Covered Bridges of Lancaster County TR

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Lancaster

DATE RECEIVED: 10/31/06 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/14/06
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 80003518

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 12/12/06 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Proposal to move bridge to prevent its demolition is justified and new site is appropriate. See letter of 12/12/06 from N.R. to S.H.P.O.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept Proposed move
REVIEWER Patrick Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 12/12/2006

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

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Section Number 2

Keller's Covered Bridge (Relocated)

Name of property

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

County and State

Location

street & number Middle Creek Road (T-660) over Cocalico Creek

not for publication

city or town Akron vicinity

state Pennsylvania code PA county Lancaster code 071 zip code 17543

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Keller's Covered Bridge (Relocated)
Name of property
Lancaster, Pennsylvania
County and State

Introduction

Keller's Covered Bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 as part of the thematic nomination of the Covered Bridges of Lancaster County. It was built in 1891 on Rettew Mill Road (S.R. 9900) in Ephrata Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The single span wooden Burr arch-truss bridge that crosses Cocalico Creek is also known by the alternative names Guy Bard Bridge, Rettew Mill Bridge, and Cocalico #5 Bridge. As part of the Rettew Mill Road Bridge Replacement Project, it will be relocated to a site situated along Middle Creek Road (T-660) in southwestern Ephrata Township, midway between the boroughs of Ephrata and Lititz in north-central Lancaster County. Both sites are located southwest of Ephrata Borough and generally west of Akron Borough.

Procedures for the Relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge to the Middle Creek Road Site

As stipulated in the May 2003 Memorandum of Agreement for the Rettew Mill Road Bridge Replacement Project, the procedures for the relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge dictate that the bridge would be dismantled, stored, reassembled, and rehabilitated at the relocation site in a manner conforming with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. Lancaster County must work in consultation with the PHMC to insure that the work is performed in the appropriate manner, and submit removal, storage and rehabilitation plans to the PHMC for their review and approval. A steward to its historic covered bridges for the past two decades, and successfully rehabilitating numerous covered bridges during this period, Lancaster County has the prior experience and sensitivity needed to make the relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge a success.

A removal and reconstruction plan has not yet been prepared by the Lancaster County Engineers Office. They intend to evaluate the bridge's members and connections for rot and structural soundness prior to starting relocation and rehabilitation. The bridge will be dismantled and its reusable parts transported to the new site for repair and reconstruction. All unusable members will be replaced in-kind, including the wooden arches, trusses and joists as needed. No steel stringers will be added underneath the deck to support the structure. The bridge will retain its combination of arches and king-post trusses to carry the load. New stone abutments that mimic those at the original site will be constructed to support the structure.

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Description of the Location, Setting, and Proposed Orientation of Keller's Covered Bridge Relocated to the Middle Creek Road Site

Middle Creek Road crosses Cocalico Creek, approximately 500 feet south (downstream) of the creek's confluence with Middle Creek. The Cocalico is joined by Hammer Creek another 1500 feet south of the Middle Creek Road crossing. The larger Cocalico generally flows in a southwesterly direction through the middle of the township, but flows west to east at the Middle Creek Road crossing. The surrounding terrain is gently rolling with distant higher hills forming the valley limits. The rural landscape is characterized by agricultural fields and pasture lands dotted with farmsteads and roadside residences. Cocalico Creek is bordered by mature trees that line its banks. A 19th century farmstead with Pennsylvania Vernacular house and Pennsylvania Barn is located north of and overlooking the bridge site. South of the bridge site is a single property that lies on both sides of Middle Creek Road. No historic buildings remain on this property, which housed a mill and farm during the 19th century. All that remains of the milling enterprise is the mill race, which runs west to east south of the bridge. An arched culvert of stone and brick construction carries Middle Creek Road across this mill race. An early 20th century dwelling that was surveyed in 1996 has since been demolished.

Middle Creek Road crosses the bridge south-north making a sharp eastern turn on the north bank of Cocalico Creek, as a steep hill rises up from the creek bank at this location. Keller's Covered Bridge will be relocated to connect Middle Creek Road at its existing location, without any change to the road alignment. It will cross the creek north-south without a skew and rest on new stone abutments.

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Reasons for the Relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge

As traffic on Rettew Mill Road and on other roads in its vicinity increased during the 1970s and 1980s, Ephrata Township looked to replace the 19th century Keller's Covered Bridge with a larger and wider modern bridge. As early as 1980 the township began coordination and discussion with the public regarding the replacement of Lancaster County owned Keller's Covered Bridge. That year the Lancaster County Commissioners rejected a citizen request to replace the bridge with a safer structure, assuring the public that the bridge was structurally sound (*New Era* Oct. 1980 & Nov. 1980). With substantial development occurring near the bridge during the early 1980s, discussion of its replacement continued. Increased wear and tear on the bridge from ever expanding traffic volumes now justified replacement of the 19th century one-lane structure. In 1994 Ephrata Township began planning for its replacement. Community protest against the demolition of Keller's Covered Bridge spearheaded by the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County led to public discussion of its move to a new location. (Black 2002) Sensitive to the significance of covered bridges and good stewards of those under their care, Lancaster County supported this option over demolition. (Rettew Mill Road Bridge Replacement Project File)

In 1999, a compromise was reached between Ephrata Township and Lancaster County. The county agreed with the township that due to the structural condition and substandard approach and alignment of Keller's Covered Bridge, its maintenance as a safe and efficient conveyance of traffic was impossible. The county agreed to move Keller's Covered Bridge to a new location crossing Cocalico Creek in Ephrata Township, and the township agreed to construct a new bridge on Rettew Mill Road. Keller's Covered Bridge would be moved two crossings downstream, replacing a closed township-owned pony truss bridge on Middle Creek Road. Ephrata Township and Lancaster County would switch ownership of the crossings, with the township owning the new Rettew Mill Road Bridge and the county retaining ownership of Keller's Covered Bridge only at its new location on Middle Creek Road. (Black 2002; Rettew Mill Road Bridge Replacement Project Job File)

This compromise plan that saved Keller's Covered Bridge from demolition facilitated the approvals of the project necessary for Ephrata Township's use of Federal transportation funds in the construction of the new bridge. An initial study of the effects of the project to Keller's Covered Bridge found that the project would have no adverse effect to the National Register listed resource (Black 2002). This report argued that the relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge was a locally funded separate project and that the construction of the new bridge adjacent to its then current location did not adversely affect its setting or association. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) did not agree with this finding, noting that construction of the new Rettew Mill Road Bridge would adversely affect the setting, feeling and association of Keller's Covered Bridge and that its bypass would result in its potential

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abandonment and neglect. Following seven months of consultation between Ephrata Township, Lancaster County, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the PHMC, an agreement was reached that allowed for the relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge to the Middle Creek Road site as mitigation for the adverse effect caused by the Rettew Mill Road Bridge Replacement Project. The PHMC agreed that relocation was a better option than preservation in place due to the close proximity of heavily traveled Rettew Mill Road. (Rettew Mill Road Bridge Replacement Project File)

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed in May of 2003 that stipulated when and how Keller's Covered Bridge would be moved to its new site on Middle Creek Road. The MOA also stipulated that state-level recordations of the original and new sites would be completed prior to construction of the new Rettew Mill Road Bridge, and that approval for the relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge would be obtained from the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places prior to the removal of the covered bridge.

Appropriateness of the Setting and Proposed Orientation at the Middle Creek Road Site

The relocated site of Keller's Covered Bridge is situated across the same waterway, Cocalico Creek, only two crossings downstream and about 1.5 miles west-southwest of its original site. Although just over the zip code boundary, the new site is in the same rural residential area west of Akron Borough as the original location. The covered bridge will be placed on the orientation of the prior pony truss steel bridge at the site. Skewed at its original location, it will now make a straight crossing over Cocalico Creek. It will rest on rebuilt stone abutments, with the crossing widened to allow for the 62 foot span of the wooden truss structure.

The relocation site two crossings downstream on Middle Creek Road retains its 19th century character. Rural and agricultural properties still surround the bridge site. Located north of the crossing are several intact 19th century farmsteads that overlook the bridge and its immediate vicinity. Although the property south of the bridge no longer retains its 19th century farmstead or mill building, it is still in agricultural use with pasture adjoining the bridge site. During the 19th century when Keller's Covered Bridge was constructed, the setting of the two locations was very similar. Both locations cross the Cocalico Creek in southern Ephrata Township. Both locations are at the site of 19th century grist/saw mills with mill races that ran parallel to the creek and mill ponds located upstream (east) of the crossing. Both are located on historically small local roads that provided transportation routes to and from commercial centers, including villages, taverns, and mills, for use by the surrounding farming community.

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The rural setting of the Middle Creek Road site is appropriate for Keller's Covered Bridge as it is similar to the historic setting of the original Rettew Mill Road site. Although the bridge will no longer cross Cocalico Creek with a slight skew, this feature was not character-defining, and this minimal change in orientation does not negatively affect the appropriateness of the Middle Creek Road site.

Effect of Relocation on the Integrity of Keller's Covered Bridge

The relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge augments its integrity, rather than detracting from it. At its original site, the bridge retained its integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Its setting had been compromised by late 20th century development along Rettew Mill Road in both directions of the bridge. The bridge's rehabilitation following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards at the new site will not remove any of its physical characteristics that qualify it for National Register listing. The extant rural agricultural setting of the relocation site on Middle Creek Road is more appropriate for Keller's Covered Bridge, more in keeping with its 19th century character, and provides a setting appropriate to its association with local 19th century transportation design. Although its integrity of location is lost, at the relocation site on Middle Creek Road, Keller's Covered Bridge will retain its integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Effect of Relocation to the Significance of Keller's Covered Bridge

Keller's Covered Bridge was listed on the National under Criteria A and C in the areas of engineering and transportation as an example of a 19th century bridge design (wooden Burr arch truss) built by a prominent local contractor during the late 19th century (Elias McMellen). Following its relocation to the Middle Creek Road site, Keller's Covered Bridge will retain its significance and associations with the history of transportation and bridge building in Lancaster County, and will also remain a fine local example of the Burr arch-truss design. The relocation site has the same setting, orientation and general environment as the original site. It crosses the same waterway, Cocalico Creek, only 1.5 miles downstream of the original site. The roads at each location follow a similar route, heading northwest-southeast, crossing the creek at a north-south orientation. The extant rural agricultural setting of the relocation site on Middle Creek Road is similar to the setting of the original site on Rettew Mill Road during the bridge's period of significance. Its relocated site at a crossing that housed a grist/saw mill during the 19th and early 20th centuries is in keeping with its location near another 19th century mill at its original site. Sensitively rehabilitated by a known steward of historic covered bridges, Keller's Covered Bridge will remain an intact example of a 19th century truss design used for wooden spans.

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Justification of Significance under Criteria Consideration B

The relocated Keller's Covered Bridge meets the special requirements under Criteria Consideration B for moved properties. Having an orientation, setting, and general environment comparable to those at its original historic location, the bridge will retain its eligibility under Criterion C as a local example of the Burr arch-truss design. Given its placement at a nearby location with a history similar to its original site, the bridge will retain its eligibility under Criterion A for association with 19th century transportation trends in Lancaster County. As it remains one of an intact collection of covered wooden truss bridges that only together provide a public interpretation of this significant 19th century pattern of events, the bridge will retain its eligibility under Criterion A for its association with bridge building by Lancaster County and their preferred contactor Elias McMellen during the last four decades of the 19th century.

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Effects of Relocation to Archaeological and Historic Resources at the Middle Creek Road Site

The Middle Creek Road site does not hold any archaeological or historic significance that will be adversely affected by the addition of Keller's Covered Bridge to its environment. Although an archaeological survey has not been conducted, there are no known prehistoric or historic archaeological sites in immediate vicinity to the bridge. Construction of the new substructure and approaches is limited to the area immediately adjoining the crossing and roadway, thereby minimizing disturbance to intact ground surfaces with any potential to contain archaeological deposits. The Fahnestock/Roland Mill site is situated several hundred feet south of the bridge and outside the area of ground disturbance for the Keller's Covered Bridge relocation project. In 1996, an historic resources survey was conducted in 1996 that fully evaluated the existing pony truss bridge and surrounding historic resources (Andrzejewski and Ruth 1996). The Middle Creek Road Bridge, the I. Keller Property located just northwest of the bridge, and the P. Fahnestock Property located south of the bridge, were all determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Since that date, the historic house on the Fahnestock Property has been demolished, although its associated surrounding farmland remains intact. Collectively, the surrounding properties documented during the 1996 study and the others that lie outside the immediate vicinity of the bridge within its distant viewshed make up the intact rural agricultural setting retaining the 19th character that makes this site the best choice for the relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge.

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References Cited

Andrzejewski, Anna Vemer and Philip Ruth. *Historic Resources Survey, Middle Creek Road Bridge Replacement Project, Ephrata Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*. Report prepared by CHRS, Inc. for Ephrata Township and Lancaster County, 1996.

Black, Laura S. *Determination of Effect Report Addendum, Rettew Mill Road Bridge Replacement Project, S.R. 9900, Section BR, Ephrata Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*. Prepared by CHRS, Inc. for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, 2002.

"Commissioners Reject Request to Replace Covered Bridge." *New Era*, Lancaster, PA, November 14, 1980.

"Ephrata Township Asked to Replace Covered Span." *New Era*, Lancaster, PA, October 15, 1980.

Rettew Mill Road Bridge Replacement Project, RETTEW Job # 99-01114-003. Project records on file at RETTEW Associates, Inc., Lancaster, PA., 1999-2005.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

List of Photographs – Prior to Relocation

Photo 1: Keller's Covered Bridge at its original site, view facing southwest from the north bank towards the upstream sidewall.
E. Roman, 11/2/2005

Photo 2: Rural setting of Keller's Covered Bridge Relocation Site, view facing northwest up Middle Creek Road towards Cocalico Creek.
E. Roman, 3/13/2006

Photo 3: Rural setting adjacent to Keller's Covered Bridge Relocation Site, view from north bank facing west up Cocalico Creek towards bridge.
E. Roman, 3/13/2006

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PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1

Keller's Covered Bridge at its original site.

View facing southwest from the north bank towards the upstream sidewall.

E. Roman, 11/2/2005

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PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 2

Rural setting of Keller's Covered Bridge Relocation Site.
View facing northwest up Middle Creek Road towards Cocalico Creek.
E. Roman, 3/13/2006

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PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 3

Setting adjacent to Keller's Covered Bridge Relocation Site
View from north bank facing west up Cocalico Creek towards bridge.
E. Roman, 3/13/2006

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PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1

Keller's Covered Bridge at its original site.
View facing southwest from the north bank towards the upstream sidewall.
E. Roman, 11/2/2005

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PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 2

Rural setting of Keller's Covered Bridge Relocation Site.
View facing northwest up Middle Creek Road towards Cocalico Creek.
E. Roman, 3/13/2006

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Photo 3

Setting adjacent to Keller's Covered Bridge Relocation Site
View from north bank facing west up Cocalico Creek towards bridge.
E. Roman, 3/13/2006

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Keller's Covered Bridge
To Middle Creek Road (T-660) over Cocalico Creek
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INTRODUCTION

Keller's Covered Bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 as part of the thematic nomination of the Covered Bridges of Lancaster County. It qualifies for the National Register under Criteria A and C in the areas of engineering and transportation as an example of a 19th century bridge design built by a prominent local contractor. Keller's Covered Bridge is significant as an example of a covered wooden Burr arch bridge, a 19th century bridge type proven obsolete by the beginning of the 20th century, and of which only a small fraction of the number built now remain. The bridge is also significant as the work of Elias McMellen, who was Lancaster County's premier bridge builder and contractor from the 1860s through the first decade of the 1900s. The history of Keller's Covered Bridge illustrates how bridges were approved, designed, built, and maintained by local governments during the last half of the 19th century and early 20th century. Its period of significance spans from its original construction in 1873 to the National Register 50 year cut-off date in 1956.

The thematic nomination form for the Covered Bridges of Lancaster County (Zacher 1980) is very brief, providing only a one-page description, two-page significance statement, and list of the 27 bridges. Included with this nomination were one-page forms for each bridge that simply listed their name, location, truss type, builder, date constructed, dimensions (length and width), and condition. Keller's Covered Bridge is identified as Guy Bard Bridge, one of its secondary names. Its form simply notes that it was named for a state jurist that lived nearby. This name never stuck locally, the bridge referred to as Keller's by the majority of Lancaster County residents. Given the lack of a narrative description, a property history, and an historic context in the thematic nomination form, these sections are found below to justify this property's continued integrity and significance at its new site on Middle Creek Road.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Description of Keller's Covered Bridge

Keller's Covered Bridge is a single span Burr arch-truss structure. Measuring 62 feet long, it crosses Cocalico Creek north-south without any skew or angle. It is composed of two Burr arch-trusses that rest on mortared stone abutments with concrete capped wingwalls. The bridge's abutments flank the Cocalico Creek with its wing walls extending up and across the sloping banks. All are constructed of local fieldstone that has been parged with concrete. The approaches are bordered with stone knee walls that are upwards extensions of the wing walls. The raised south approach keeps the road above the surrounding floodplain. A fieldstone wall runs north along the west creek bank for about 50 feet north of the bridge.

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The exterior is sided with vertically-placed wooden weatherboards. These are nailed onto a light wood frame that is in turn nailed to the trusses. The siding ends about 3 feet below the roof overhang providing ventilation and light to the interior. One panel in from each end there are small open windows cut through the siding on the east elevation. The 'front-facing' gable roof has an open cornice with exposed rafter ends. It has a shallow 1-foot deep overhang on all elevations. It is covered with modern asphalt shingles. The portal ends are sided with board and batten siding. The upper corners of the opening are clipped at a 90 degree angles, following the profile of the roof bracing inside the structure. The exterior of the structure is painted white, with black and yellow caution striping beside the opening in each portal wall. The interior and underside of the structure is left unfinished natural aged wood, and the underside of the roof is exposed. On both portals is modern signage that posts the bridge for 5 tons and indicate its 11 ft.-6 in. clearance.

Each truss is composed of a pair of arches sandwiching a 9-panel multiple king post truss. The multiple king post design has strong vertical posts at approximately 7-foot intervals which are connected to a top and bottom chord that run the length of the truss. Diagonal braces connect the posts to each other from bottom to top toward the center of the truss. The central panel has an 'X'-brace connecting the two central posts, while the outmost panels lack any bracing. The upper chord is a single timber while the lower chord is made up of two parallel timbers that function as a single unit. The trusses are connected at the top by transverse ceiling beams and diagonal 'X' bracing that rest on top of the upper chord. Knee braces connected to the posts provide additional stabilization to the ceiling beams. The roof is supported by purlins that rest on common rafters that in turn rest on top of the top chord. The trusses are connected at the bottom by floor beams that rest on top of the lower chord and diagonal 'X' bracing that attaches to the underside of the lower chord. The wooden floor boards are nailed to the beams. The framing members are all mortised and pegged together. The arch pairs are connected by bracing blocks along the top edge and long bolts that run into and through the posts. Each Burr arch-truss end rests directly on a shelf of the abutment, which extends upwards to also support the end panels of each truss. Vertical steel ties dating from 1935(Lamar and Schafer 2002) run from the arch through the lower chord in each of the seven interior panels of both arch-trusses.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary History of Keller's Covered Bridge at its Original Site on Rettew Mill Road

Rettew Mill Road followed its current path in November 1871, when local residents petitioned the county for a bridge at its Cocalico Creek crossing, as the expense for such a bridge was too great for the township to bear. As noted in the petition, "the citizens generally of said Ephrata Township under great inconvenience for want of a bridge across Cocalico Creek immediately

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south of H. K. Keller's mill on said creek in said Ephrata Township at a point where said creek crosses the public road" (Lancaster County Court of Quarter Sessions November Term 1871). Given the width, depth and flow of Cocalico Creek, this fording would have been quite hazardous through much of the year. Twenty-one local residents signed the petition including neighbors Samuel Keller, John Witters, Emanuel Widder, and Samuel Royer. Henry Keller did not sign the petition. The court appointed three viewers, who upon visiting the site the morning of December 16, 1871, recommended that a bridge was needed. They also produced a map of the site showing their recommended slight realignment of the crossing to accommodate a bridge. This hand drawn map also shows Henry Keller's mill, house, and barn, the mill dam and pond, and full length of the mill race. (Bridge Records file at LCHS)

The Lancaster County court and grand jury approved the construction of the bridge at Henry Keller's mill on April 17, 1872 (Bridge Records file at LCHS). The county hired local bridge builder and contractor Elias McMellen to build the 'wooden arch' bridge for a total fee of \$2,075.00 (Bridge Dockets- Small Book). It was finished during that year and inspected by a court appointed team of inspectors in December. The team of six inspectors included McMellen's competitor James Carpenter, also of Lancaster. They found the bridge to be erected according to the specifications included with the contract. Keller's Covered Bridge was then opened to handle horse and foot traffic heading between the eastern and western parts of Ephrata Township. (Bridge Records file at LCHS)

Heavy flooding along Cocalico Creek during the spring of 1891 damaged many of the bridges along that waterway owned and maintained by Lancaster County. Keller's Covered Bridge was one of the bridges destroyed by the flood waters. The county rehired Elias McMellen to rebuild his bridge, this time for a cost of \$1,250.00. (Bridge Dockets- Small Book) Given the reduced cost of rebuilding, it is assumed that the entire bridge and its abutments did not need complete replacement. McMellen also rebuilt two other wooden truss bridges that year- Cocalico #1 on Black Horse Road and Cocalico #10 at Buchers Mill. Located furthest downstream near the Cocalico's confluence with the Conestoga, the bridge that carried Black Horse Road is noted as "being swept away by the flood." (Bridge Dockets- Small Book)

Keller's Covered Bridge was so well constructed that it needed no repairs until 1914, several years after Elias McMellen's retirement from bridge contracting. Between 1913 and 1918, the bridge was beginning to deteriorate and needed repairs four times. The June 1913 inspection report (Bridge Records at the LCHS) notes that the roof needed patching, one portal wall was knocked out, the abutments were in 'bad shape', the wing walls were lopsided, and that the approach needed filling. The inspector only made the small repairs to the siding and portal wall. The following year, the county hired William F. Stohler to make repairs to the bridge for a cost of \$30.66 (Bridge Dockets- Small Book). Only two years later in 1916 a July inspection report notes that rip rap was added in the southeast corner and the screw backs were replaced with

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concrete (Bridge Records at the LCHS). In 1918, the bridge needed additional repairs, and the county hired A. R. Kreider to complete the work for a cost of \$139.00 (Bridge Dockets- Small Book). Although their exact nature is not known, the repairs to Keller's Covered Bridge done in 1914 and 1918 by outside contractors were too extensive to be completed by the county's own maintenance crew. Vertical steel ties were added to Keller's Covered Bridge by the county engineer in 1935 simultaneously with the other Burr arch-trusses in Lancaster County. Why they were added is not known, but it may have been done system-wide to provide a redundant load path in the event of shearing failure during ice damming or high flooding. (Lamar & Schafer 2002) Since then, Keller's Covered Bridge has continued to be owned and maintained by Lancaster County.

The area surrounding Keller's Covered Bridge remained rural and agricultural until the 1970s, when residential development began expanding into the rural areas surrounding Ephrata and Akron Boroughs. Farms along Rettew Mill Road and Cocalico Creek were sold for residential development in the 1970s and early 1980s. Similar development pressure and increased traffic across Lancaster County led to the loss of many of the county's covered wooden bridges. With support of local preservationists, Lancaster County began a program to preserve and maintain their covered wooden bridges. In 1980, the county's covered bridges including Keller's were listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a thematic nomination (Zacher 1980). The county began rehabilitating the covered bridges to allow for their continued use by modern automobile and truck traffic. In 2006, Keller's Covered Bridge will be moved and reconstructed on its new site on Middle Creek Road to make way for a new bridge at its original location.

Historic Context – Engineering and Transportation

Covered Bridges in Pennsylvania and Lancaster County:

Pennsylvania has more extant covered bridges than any other state or foreign country. Having upwards of 1500 during the 19th century, only 225 remain in the commonwealth today. The first wooden covered bridge in the United States was built in Pennsylvania in 1805. Located in Philadelphia, the Timothy Palmer designed bridge crossed the Schuylkill River. (Dangelas 2003) The state's earliest bridges designed to carry heavy loads and traffic were of stone arch construction. Small local roads were usually forded, with steeply banked creeks crossed by simple wooden stringer spans. By the mid-19th century, constructed examples of several patented bridge designs proved the strength and usefulness of wooden truss bridges. Timber bridges quickly became the most popular design due to their lower cost, easily available construction materials, ease of construction by less-skilled local craftsman, and their ability to cross greater widths. They were covered with roofs and siding to protect their wooden support system from the weather, thereby increasing their life spans and reducing maintenance. These bridges quickly became recognized for their covering although it is not a critical element of their

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design. The height of covered bridge building ended with the 19th century, as metal truss and stringer bridges saw widespread adoption by local and state bridge departments.

Lancaster County is known for its collection of extant covered bridges, which are one of its main tourist attractions. As early as 1931, Pennsylvania and especially Lancaster County were attracting tourists interested in seeing the 19th century relics. The covered wooden truss bridge was the most commonly built bridge type in Lancaster County during the 19th century (Kurtz 2005). Once having over 100 covered bridges, by the early 20th century only 60 remained in Lancaster County, a number reduced to 45 by 1937 (Yeager 1937) and less than 30 by the mid 1940s (Bridge Dockets, Large Book). The county has more examples than any other county in Pennsylvania, with 27 historic bridges remaining today. The large number erected in Lancaster County between the 1840s and 1890s is perhaps due to a combination of factors, including the presence of many steams and tributaries, the relatively dense rural population during the 19th century, and the large number of grist mills which necessitated the need for improved roads and bridge crossings. In addition, there was a locally available supply of both the materials and craftsmen needed to build this type of bridge.

Design of Keller's Covered Bridge:

Keller's Covered Bridge employs a Burr arch-truss, the most commonly utilized design for covered wooden truss bridges in the eastern United States, including in Pennsylvania and Lancaster County. The Burr arch-truss employs two long arches, resting on the abutments on either end, that sandwich a multiple king post structure of one or two centered posts with multiple diagonal panels to each side (TBCBS 2005). The following history and significance of the Burr arch-truss is taken from the HAER Report of the Pine Grove Bridge (Dangelas 2003).

"Theodore Burr patented his first bridge design around 1805 and a second on April 3, 1817. The 1817 patent drawing shows a multiple kingpost truss resting on stone abutments, superimposed with an arch whose ends are anchored to the abutment faces below the lower chords. In Burr's design, the posts are in tension while the diagonal braces are in compression. The diagonals meet the posts with little need for mortise and tenon. It has long been debated whether the arch or the truss carries the majority of the load. [A structural analysis conducted by the HAER team] concludes that the arch and truss work together simultaneously and therefore no element can be considered absolutely dominant.

"Although Burr built dozens of bridges, he is remembered more for the practicable design he patented and promoted. No doubt, much of its success was due to its expediency. Burr wanted to reduce the need for complex carpentry/joinery. He advocated merely butting suitably mitered ends to save as

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much of the carpentry effort and expense. He design also allowed for variation at the connections, in the proportions, and with the materials. The design's widespread repute and proven durability helped provincial carpenters successfully bid for and build economical, lasting bridges more or less in their own backyards. The Burr arch-truss became one of the most popular vernacular designs for wooden bridges in the U.S., its product varying slightly from builder to builder." (Dangelas 2003: 10-11)

The Burr arch-truss was the most successful wooden truss system due to its stiffness compared to other truss types. In Keller's Covered Bridge and other Burr arch-trusses across the country, one can find the result of centuries of engineering to find a practical method for spanning intermediate lengths with timber (Lamar & Schafer 2002). Examples from the 19th century are significant if they retain their character defining double arch construction still supporting the bridge deck (Slater, Jackson & DeLony 2005). Keller's Covered Bridge is a fine local example of the type, with all its structural elements intact. Repairs that have been made to the bridge over the years have been done in keeping with the historic design and materials, similar to the other covered bridges maintained by Lancaster County.

Elias McMellen, Lancaster County Bridge Builder:

Elias McMellen was one of Lancaster's most prominent and familiar figures during the last four decades of the 19th century. McMellen was born in Lancaster County in 1839, starting his career as an apprentice carpenter at the age of fourteen. His bridge building career began in 1859 when he was only 20 years old, when he assisted in the construction of covered bridges at Overholtzer's Mill and Pool Forge. At the start of the Civil War he enlisted in the Union Army, rising to the rank of Captain before leaving service at the end of the war in 1865. Upon his return, he resumed his young bridge building career and quickly became the county's most favored bridge contractor for both repairs and new construction. (Caruthers 1981) In 1894, he was cited as "one of the most successful bridge builders in eastern Pennsylvania" (*Portrait & Biographical Record* 1894: 406). By the end of his life in 1916, he was still known for his bridge building career which had long since ended. His obituary states the "he did good work and his services were in demand. For many years he was the principal bridge builder of this section and employed a great many men." (*Lancaster Intelligencer* March 4, 1916: 2)

McMellen was not only a bridge builder, but also a hotel proprietor and politician. He lived on East Vine Street in the city of Lancaster, which provided him easy access to the county government agents that sought his services frequently. In the city directories between the mid-1860s and late 1890s, he is listed as a contractor, bridge builder, builder and carpenter, or bridge contractor. His hotel was more of an investment, as it was managed by an employee. (Dangelas 2003) During the early years of his business, he employed 9 men to whom he paid \$6000 in

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wages in 1870. That year he built 5 bridges and 4 houses. (Census of Manufactures 1870) McMellen was elected to several local offices and was a leader of the county Republican Party. He also served on the boards of the two railway companies. (*Biographical Annals* 1903) Married twice, only two of his six children survived to adulthood. He died penniless with a younger widow, his grave in Woodward Hill Cemetery lacking a tombstone until a veteran's marker was provided by the US government in the early 1980s (Caruthers 1981).

McMellen is the builder of record for 51 bridges in Lancaster County. Although the large majority (45) are covered wooden spans, he also built three stone arch and three iron truss bridges. He also repaired covered wooden truss, stone arch, iron truss, and steel girder bridges. Between 1859 and 1908, he was awarded a total of 111 contracts with Lancaster County, to build, rebuild and repair county owned bridges at 73 different locations. On several occasions, he was hired to repair or rebuild relatively new wooden covered spans that had not survived the yearly spring floods. (Bridge Docket Books) His success rate at building wooden covered bridges that rarely failed and needed few repairs no doubt led to his preferred relationship with the leaders of Lancaster County government. McMellen was the most successful builder of covered wooden truss bridges in Lancaster County, building over 40 percent of the total. The majority were Burr truss structures, like Keller's. He is known to have built one multiple king-post truss bridge, which crosses Little Conestoga Creek between Manheim and East Hempfield Townships and is still in use today.

Other Burr Arch-Truss and McMellen Bridges in Lancaster County:

Of Lancaster County's extant 27 historic covered bridges, all but one are of the Burr arch-truss design. Elias McMellen built thirteen or almost half of these extant covered wooden truss bridges. Twelve of these are Burr arches, while one is the county's one example of a multiple king post truss. All of his bridges have similar characteristics, including the angle of the arches, the slope and overhang of the roof, the vertical weatherboard siding, clipped portals, and even the height of the stone abutments. Three of his bridges have been recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey and Historic American Engineering Record at the National Park Service, including Pinetown Bridge in 1936 (still extant and in use), Johnson's Mill Bridge in 1962 (demolished), and Pine Grove Bridge in 2003 (still extant, in use, and proposed for rehabilitation). These drawings, photographs, and narratives provide an excellent record of McMellen's local influence as a builder of Burr arch covered wooden bridges. McMellen's choice of the Burr arch-truss design for Keller's Covered Bridge was probably a combination of his extensive experience in building this type of bridge and the region's history of trusting this truss design to support strong and safe bridges.

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Keller's Covered Bridge

Approval for a Move

Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Photo 1

Prior to Relocation

031581\Rettew Associates_031581\NRamend



Keller's Covered Bridge Approval for a Move
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Photo 2

Relocation Site

031581\Rettew Associates_031581\NRamend

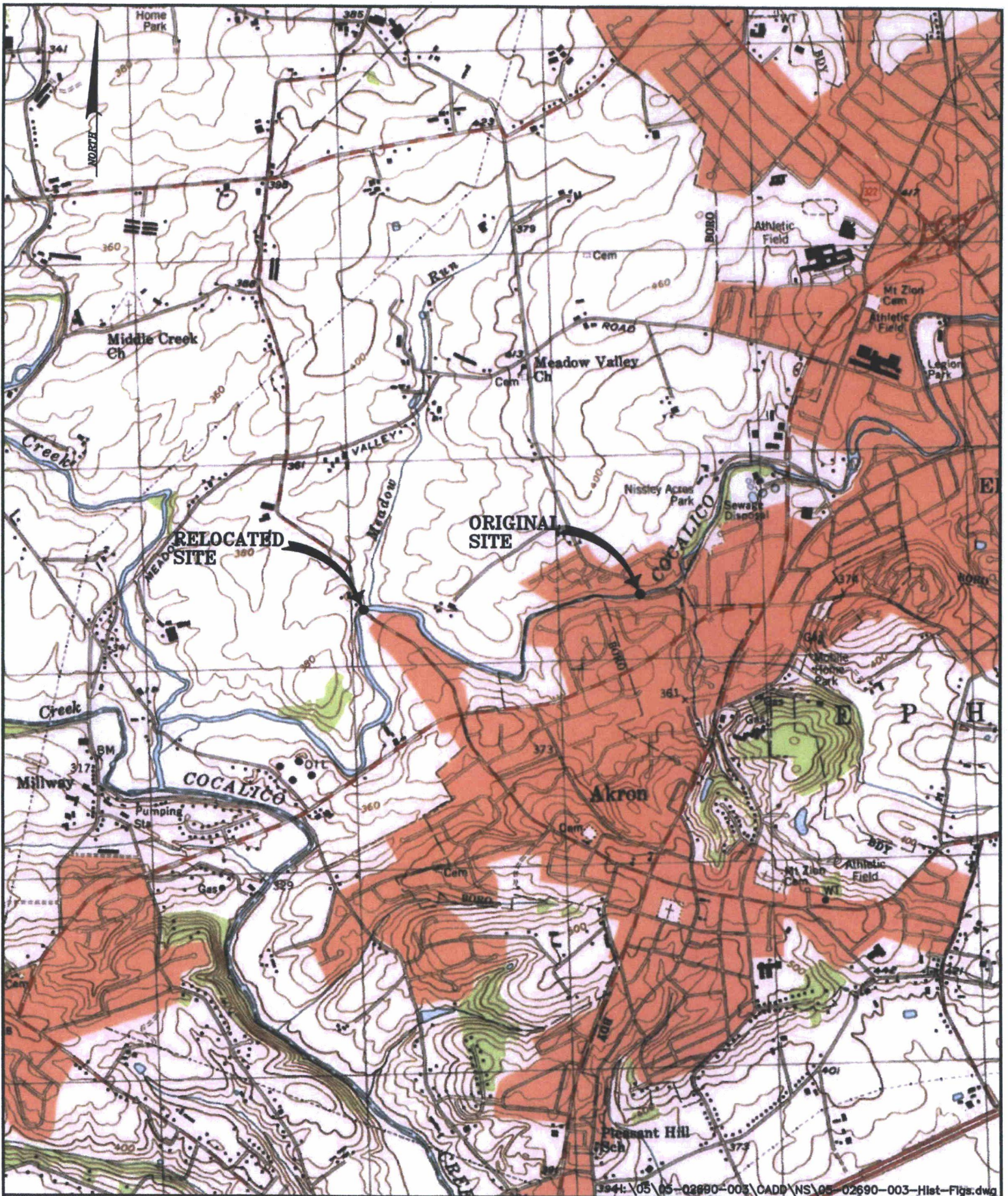


Keller's Covered Bridge Approval for a Move
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Photo 3

Relocation Site

031581\Rettew Associates_031581\NRamend



394:\05\05-02690-003\CADD\NS\05-02690-003-Hist-Figs.dwg

LOCATION MAP
KELLER'S COVERED BRIDGE

RETTEW

RETTEW Associates, Inc.
 3020 Columbia Ave., Lancaster, PA 17603
 Phone (717) 394-3721 • Fax (717) 394-1063

DRAWN BY: JME
 DATE: APRIL 17, 2006
 SCALE: 1"=2,000'
 DWG. NO. 1 OF 1



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
Bureau for Historic Preservation
Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2nd Floor
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093
www.phmc.state.pa.us



October 30, 2006

Jan Matthews, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
U.S. Department of Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW, 8th floor
Washington D.C. 20005

Re: Keller's Covered Bridge, Ephrata Twp, Lancaster County

Dear Ms Matthews:

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby request approval for the relocation of Keller's Covered Bridge, Lancaster County, PA, a National Register-listed resource, according to procedural requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

If you have any questions regarding this request please call us at (717) 783-8947.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea L. MacDonald".

Andrea L. MacDonald, Chief
Division of Preservation Services

cc: Susan Zacher
ALM/cl

P. Andrus
12/12/06

H32(2280)

Ms. Barbara Franco
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
State Historic Preservation Officer
Bureau for Historic Preservation
Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2nd Floor
400 North Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120-0093

DEC 12 2006

Dear Ms. Franco:

Thank you for the letter of October 30, 2006, regarding the proposed move of Keller's Covered Bridge, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, a property listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The bridge is being moved to prevent its demolition. You have included documentation justifying the move, describing the new site, and evaluating the archeological potential of the new site.

On December 12, 2006, we approved the proposed move. The bridge will remain listed in the National Register during and after the move. Final approval of the continued listing of the bridge on its new site will be issued after the move. After the bridge has been relocated please provide a letter notifying us of the date of the move, a description of how the bridge was dismantled and reassembled, an evaluation of the bridge's historic integrity following its reassembly, along with photographs of the bridge at its new location, a new verbal boundary description, acreage figure, UTM point, and an original USGS map locating the bridge on its new site. Once we have received this documentation we will issue a final approval of the bridge's continued listing in the National Register.

We appreciate the interest of all parties involved in preserving this bridge and look forward to being notified of the successful move.

Sincerely,

(Sgd) Patrick Andrus

Patrick W. Andrus, Historian
National Register of Historic Places

cc: Andrea L. MacDonald, Chief
Division of Preservation Services
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
Bureau for Historic Preservation
Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2nd Floor
400 North Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120-0093

bcc: 2285
2201
Basic File Retained In 2280
FNP:PAndrus:OP:12-12-06:S://nr/Move.pa.wpd

80005518

SW of Ephrata

38-36-13 **Name:** Guy Bard (Keller's) Covered Bridge
Location: T656 Ephrata Twp
UTM: Zone 18 N 4447100 E 397380 **Acreage:**
Owner: Lancaster Co./Ephrata Twp.

Stream: Cocalico Creek
Truss Type: Burr
Builder: Elias McMellen
Year: 1891

End Post to
End Post Length: 76 feet
Clearance:

Road Surface
Width: (15')
Load:

Distinguishing

Features: In excellent condition the Keller's Bridge has vertical board and batten siding and horizontal siding in its portal ends. Locally known as Guy Bard's bridge, the Bridge was named for a leading Pennsylvania jurist who lived near by.

Condition: Excellent

DEC 10 1980

NOV 13 1980

Property

Covered Bridges of Lancaster County Thematic Resources

DUE
1/13/81

State

PA Lancaster

Working Number

11.13.80.2815

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos

27

Maps

16

Covered bridges thematic, illustrating use of various truss types in wood frame construction in 19th century. All are good candidates one is in poor condition + needs better justification, however; many seem to need larger boundaries to encompass abutments fully.

HISTORIAN

- List: Shenks mill, Seigrists Mill,
- Herr's Mill, White Rock Forge,
- Buck Hill Farm, Landis Mill,
- Lime Valley, Russels mill,
- Shearers mill, Jacksons Mill,
- Kellers, Erbs.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

ACCEPT

DUBIE

12/10/80

HOLD OTHERS - CALL

List remaining 15 bridges - condition of Butcher's classified by state - trusses in good condition; boundaries adjusted on files to insure inclusion of tree abutments -

OTHER

ACCEPT
DUBIE 12/11/80

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up _____

Send-back _____

Entered

DEC 10 1980

Federal Register Entry

2,282

Re-submit _____



Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000717

