

GILFORD ROTARY CLUB BRIDGING GAP WITH AMBITIOUS FOOTBRIDGE PROJECT

by Roger Amsden
News Correspondent

GILFORD - Made in New Hampshire from native stock and built to last.

That has been the formula for covered bridges ever since the first trestle style bridges with their post and beam construction were first built here and that is exactly what the Gilford Rotary Club intends should happen with the wooden bridge it is building as a community service project.

The 42-foot covered bridge whose frame is made of spruce joined together by 21-inch and nine-inch white oak "trunnels", or tree nails, has been built at the G2S Construction company here and will be moved into place across the Gunstock Brook on July 29.

It has been a labor of love and a learning experience for the club members says Rudy Lehr, a construction foreman and club member, who says that many of the Rotarians knew little or nothing about construction work and have had to learn how to master age-old techniques in order to build the bridge.

Lehr said that club president Larry Routhier along with Rotarians Don Roper, Bill Hauck, Rich Williams, Loran Percy and Charlie Boucher used lathes at the Graton Construction Company in Holderness to pro-

duce the "trunnels" which hold the bridge together.

"We had to hold the tolerances to within two one-thousandths (.002) of an inch," said Routhier, who said that was the only way the 21-inch wooden nails could be driven through 18 inches of spruce planks to join them together.

That part of the work required driving the trunnels with a 14-pound sledgehammer with each requiring up to a dozen solid whacks before going into place.

"That was hard work," said Don Roper, who has been kept busy since late April rounding up work parties to build the bridge and coordinating all aspects of the \$10,000 project.

Roper said the key person in the effort has been Tim Andrews, a finish carpenter who has worked on two covered bridge projects with Graton Construction, which specializes in building and restoring covered bridges.

He said that Andrews' expertise has enabled the inexperienced club members to produce a quality bridge which will last for generations. "It's all native lumber. Spruce for the sides, hemlock for the deck, pine for the sides. These bridges last" says Roper.

Lehr concurs. "It's all in protecting the bridge. It will last until the wood rots, and

as long as you keep that from happening," it will last."

Although the bridge, which will span the Gunstock Brook between Tannery Hill Road and the Gilford Fire Station, is actually rugged enough to stand motor vehicle traffic, it will be a pedestrian-only bridge, 10 feet wide with 10 feet of headroom.

The bridge is being built to allow easy access for pedestrians, particularly the elderly, between Gilford Village and Gilford Town Hall without having to brave the heavy traffic on Rte. 11-A.

Roper said that over 300 man hours have already been spent in building the bridge and preparing the bridge site. On Saturday, July 29 a 40-foot long flatbed from Pike Industries in Tilton will move the latticed sides, which weigh 5,200 pounds apiece, to the site and a crane from Dockham Tree Service will lift them into place. The timber roof frames will then be put into place and more trunnels will be driven to hold the entire structure together.



FIREWORKS

Over 1,000 types of ground & aerial in our NEW 40,000 sq. ft. fireworks headquarters.

Only 1-93 Fireworks Warehouse

Over 50 Kinds of Display Kits
100% Satisfaction Guaranteed



ASTRO SPECTACULAR inc.

FIREWORKS For All Occasions

At The Hooksett Trading Post

1-800-242-7876

1407 Hooksett Rd. Hooksett, NH 03106 since 1985

Check with your local fire department to see if permissible fireworks are allowed in your community

LOW RATES!!

Please call us for our LOW RATES on your Business, Auto and Homeowners Insurance Policies

FERDINANDO INSURANCE ASSOCIATES
Manchester, NH • 603-669-3218

CASH BAR CASINO NIGHTS REAL \$\$\$

CHRISTMAS ISLAND, WEIRS BLVD • 366-4664

FREE ADMISSION!

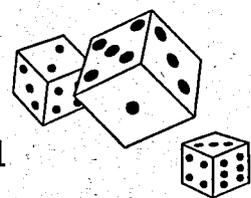
7:30pm - 12:30am

FREE ADMISSION!

Friday & Saturday
July 28, 29, 30



- Black Jack
- POKER
- ROULETTE
- MONEY WHEEL
- Side GAMES



Sponsored By

Laconia Youth Football Assoc. & American Legion SAL

NH'S #1 WATERSPORTS STORES

2 Man Pelican Rio with Canopy \$399.99

ORANGE BOATING VESTS \$5.99

Keowee Kayaks from AQUATERRA from \$369.99

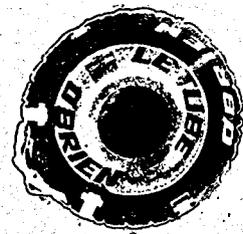
SWIMWEAR FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

- SPEEDO
- OCEAN PACIFIC
- COLUMBIA
- MOSSIMO
- TYR
- DOLFIN



SPORTS & MARINE PARAFUNALIA

H.O. • O'BRIEN • CONNELLY • STRAIGHT LINE • WAKETECH



O'BRIEN LE TUBE \$79.95

TOW TUBES from \$24.99



20% OFF SKI VESTS For the Whole Family, Infant to Adult XXXXL

LARGEST SELECTION AT THE BEST PRICES!

WAKE BOARDS from \$169.95 26 Models In Stock

O'BRIEN KNEEBOARDS from \$99.00

O'Brien Waterski Pairs Pairs from \$99.95

Kids' Trainer Combos from \$49.95

NEWLY EXPANDED We've Doubled Our Size (Meredith) Lots More Inventory!

TWO LOCATIONS OPEN 7 DAYS

Route 25, Meredith Shopping Center
Route 11B, 44 Weirs Road, Gilford

279-8077
293-8998



COVERED BRIDGE WILL BE IN PLACE FOR GILFORD'S ANNUAL OLD HOME DAY



by Roger Amsden
News Correspondent

GILFORD - New Hampshire's newest covered bridge moved a step closer to spanning the Gunstock Brook at Tannery Hill Road here as members of the local Rotary Club put the floor, roof and sides of the 42-foot long truss style bridge.

"We want to have it in place by Old Home Day," said club member Loran Percy as he eyed the abutments which supported the previous bridge.

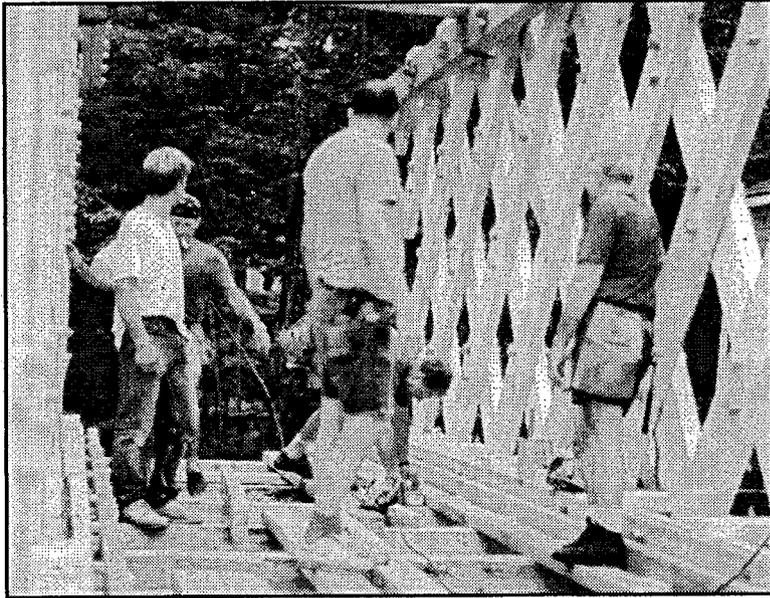
"We're going to have a poured concrete foundation for it to rest on," Percy explained as he described the variety of fund-raising efforts the club is undertaking to pay for the \$10,000 project.

He said the bridge, which is made of native spruce with a hemlock floor is held together with white oak "trunnels" or tree nails, is a unique gift to the community and will allow foot traffic between Gilford Village and Gilford Town Hall and is built to last for hundreds of years.

The club will be selling coffee mugs, pilsner glasses and glass handled Mason-style drinking glasses, as well as T-shirts to help pay for the bridge. The 350 trunnels which hold the bridge together can be sponsored at \$20 apiece by members of the community who want to assist in the project.

The lattice work sides of the bridge were trucked from the G2S Construction company site by a flatbed truck from Pike Industries and a forklift from Fay's Boatyard was used to lift them into place atop a five-foot high platform of wooden blocks where the floor and ceiling joists were put into place to hold them together.

More work was completed Saturday with the floor, ceiling and sides going up.



42 foot long truss style covered bridge will span Gunstock Brook at Tannery Hill Road. "We want to have it in place on Old Home Day," said Rotary Club member Loran Percy.

ROGER AMSDEN PHOTO

Preparing a foundation for the bridge is expected to be completed within another week and the bridge will be lifted onto its permanent new location sometime before the last Saturday of August, when Gilford celebrates its Old Home Day.

"We decided not to use the traditional method of having oxen winch the bridge into place," said Rudy Lehr, a construction foreman who first proposed that the club build the bridge.

"We'll probably put up some granite blocks on either end so that cars can't use it," said Percy, pointing

out that the pedestrian only bridge is just wide enough for an automobile and is strong enough to support several at one time.

He said the town is looking at putting picnic tables near the area and clearing away some of the small trees and brush to provide a nice view of the brook.

It has been a labor of love and a learning experience for the club members says Lehr, who says that many of the Rotarians knew little or nothing about construction work and have had to learn how to master age-old techniques in order to build the

bridge.

Lehr said that club president Larry Routhier along with Rotarians Don Roper, Bill Hauck, Rich Williams, Loran Percy and Charlie Boucher used lathes at the Graton Construction Company in Holderness to produce the "trunnels" which hold the bridge together.

"We had to hold the tolerances to within two one-thousandths (.002) of an inch," said Routhier, who said that was the only way the 21-inch wooden nails could be driven through 18 inches of spruce planks to join them together.

That part of the work required driving the trunnels with a 14-pound sledgehammer with each requiring up to a dozen solid whacks before going into place.

"That was hard work," said Don Roper, who has been kept busy since late

April rounding up work parties to build the bridge and coordinating all aspects of the \$10,000 project.

Roper said the key person in the effort has been Tim Andrews, a finish carpenter who has worked on two covered bridge projects with Graton Construction, which specializes in building and restoring covered bridges.

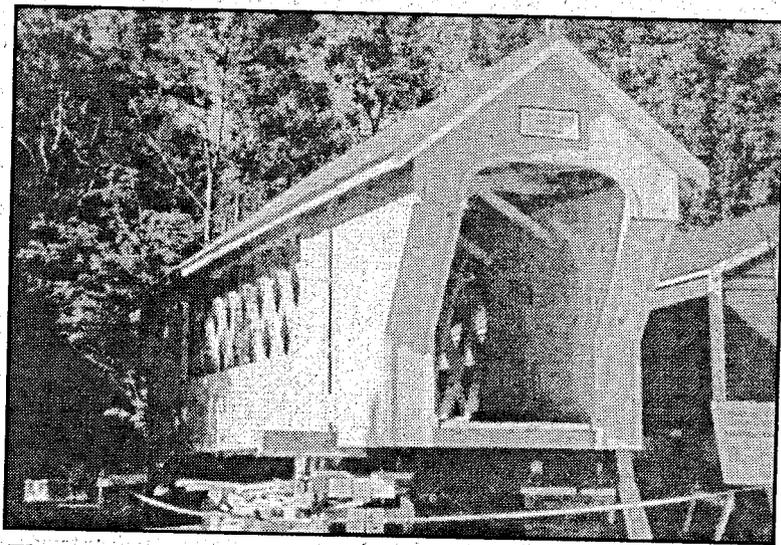
He said that Andrews' expertise has enabled the inexperienced club members to produce a quality bridge which will last for generations. "It's all native lumber. Spruce for the sides, hemlock for the deck, pine for the sides. These bridges last," says Roper.

Lehr concurs. "It's all in protecting the bridge. It will last until the wood rots, and as long as you keep that from happening," it will last."

"TANNERY HILL COVERED BRIDGE" PREPARED TO BE DRAWN INTO PLACE

GILFORD - The Rotary Club of Gilford, New Hampshire, which has been planning and constructing the "Tannery Hill Covered Bridge" for over a year, has set Friday, August 25, 1995, at approximately 9:00 a.m., as the date on which the bridge will be "drawn" across the Gunstock Brook by a pair of oxen owned and donated by Gilford resident, Ronald Salanitro. It is expected a large number of spectators will attend, including members of the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, Inc. and the media who have followed the progress of the bridge construction, nearing completion in an area behind the Gilford Fire Station. Club members are working diligently to complete the roofing, trim work, placement of the capstan to be turned by the oxen and cribbing in time to have the bridge in place for Gilford Old Home Day on Saturday, August 26. This is truly an event to be experienced to learn how covered bridges were placed in position when originally constructed.

As an idea conceived by Rotary Club Past President Rudi Lehr in 1994, the covered bridge has been built by



The completed bridge, a project of the Gilford Rotary Club, will be moved into place across the Gunstock Brook by a pair of oxen on Friday, August 25th at approximately 9:00 AM. This method of transporting the finished bridge is borrowed from centuries old methods of covered bridge construction.

COURTESY PHOTO

club members and other volunteers under the direction of Tim Andrews, finish carpenter and member of the bridge building Graton Construction, Inc. of Ashland, who has, himself donated many hours of his personal time and has provided equipment and expertise generously donated by his employer. A walking bridge, to be used by non-motorized vehicles only, it will replace a former bridge over Gunstock Brook, dismantled nearly 50 years ago due to disrepair. To be donated to the Town of Gilford, it will be the only covered bridge in Belknap County and will

permit safe passage for residents and students between the village center and the town offices, without necessitating walking on dangerous Route 11A. A formal dedication will be planned at a later date by town officials and club officers.

The Tannery Hill Covered Bridge is being financed entirely by members of the Gilford Rotary Club and donations from interested citizens. T-shirts and glassware, the latter designed and engraved by Susan Percy of the Loran Percy Studio, will be available for purchase at the site both on the day of placement of the bridge over the brook, as well as on Gilford Old Home Day. To further defray expenses, a unique "adopt a trunnel" program will provide the public the opportunity to receive, in return for their \$20 donation, a certificate specifying the exact location of the "trunnel" or "tree nail" which they have "adopted."



Gilford Public Library

Left to Right:

Tim Andrews, Rudy Lehr, Bob Judas selectman w/book,
? Rauthier, + ?

Oct 8 1995

Gilford, NH Janney Hill Bridge #68

VF
GILFORD



**TANNERY HILL BRIDGE
DEDICATION**

October 8, 1995

TANNERY HILL BRIDGE

Gunstock Brook, Gilford Village, NH

Sunday, October 8, 1995 at 11:30 a.m.

Ceremony of Dedication

Welcome: Mr. Larry Routhier, Gilford Rotary Club President

**Invocation: The Rev. Raymond C. Wixson
Pastor, Gilford Community Church**

**Proclamation by the Board of Selectmen
Chairman, Mr. Robert Jordan**

**Greetings; Past President Rudy Lehr
Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

**Song of Celebration
"God Bless America"**

Greetings from:

Gilford Police Chief, Evans Juris

Gilford Fire Chief, Michael Mooney

Gilford Public Works Director, Sheldon Morgan

Other Visiting Dignitaries

Our Master Bridge Builder, Tim Andrews

Address: Mr. Larry Routhier, Gilford Rotary President

TANNERY HILL BRIDGE

This covered bridge was constructed by the Gilford Rotary Club for the Town of Gilford. The project was conceived by the Rotary Club to provide pedestrian access to the Town municipal buildings, and the Weeks Woods trails from the Village.

The Bridge is a smaller version of the type built in the United States between 1820 and 1850. It is called a Town Bridge, named after its designer, Ithiel Town of New Haven, Conn. The Bridge, with a 42 foot deck and a roof ridge of 48 feet, spans Gunstock Brook. The two lattice trusses are made of native spruce which are held together with 358 oak pegs, called "tree nails" or "Trunnels." The roof rafters are also native spruce with the intermediate rafters made of hemlock. The deck is native hemlock, and the siding is made of pine with pine trim. The bridge weighs approximately 12 tons.

The Rotarians and dedicated towns people have provided all of the very labor intensive work constructing the bridge as volunteers. Some of the materials have been donated along with much of the equipment and tools. The cost of materials, etc for this project is \$12,000. These funds are being raised by the Rotary Club through donations, and several funding raising programs including;

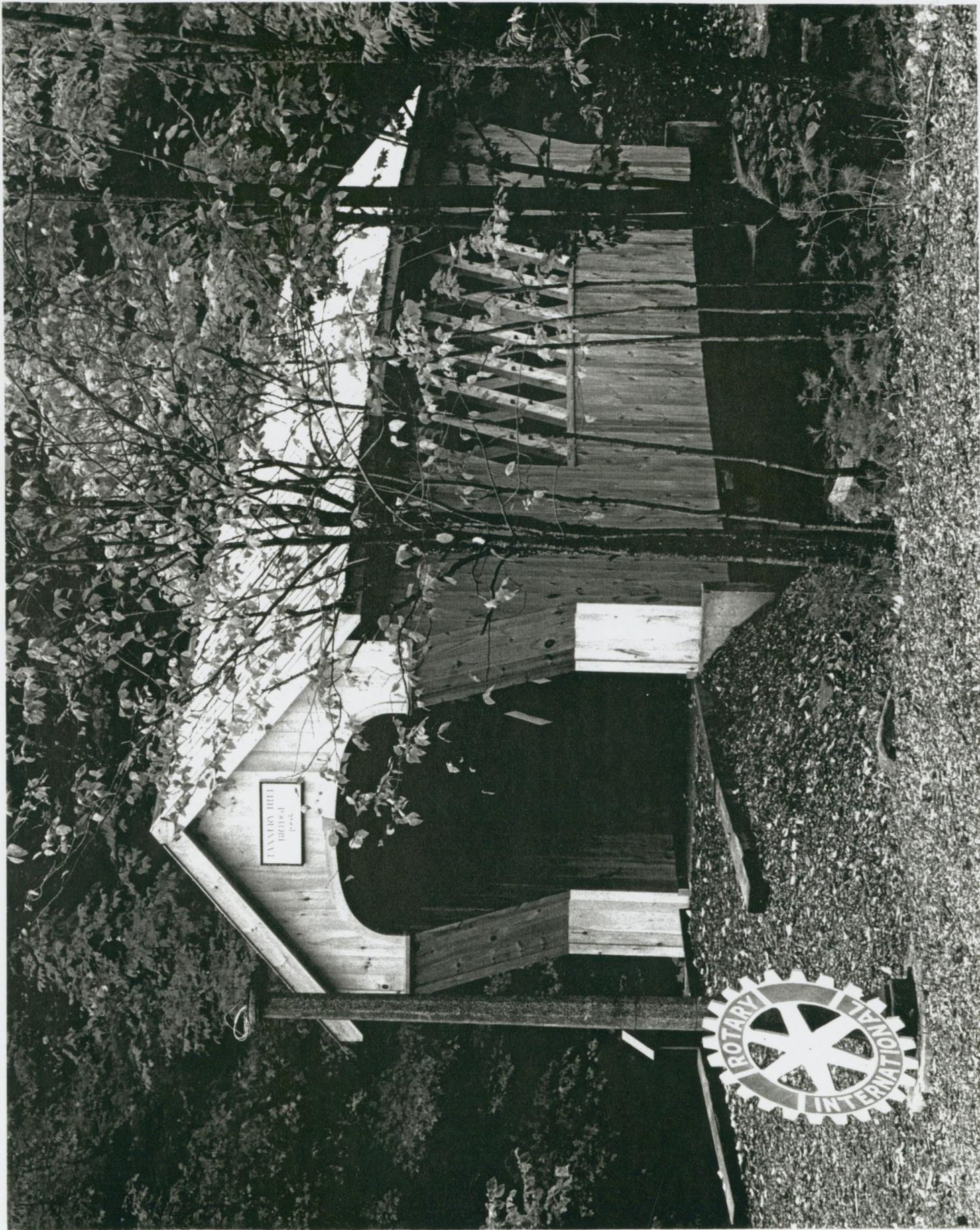
"Adopt a Trunnel" for \$20.00

Commemorative Glass Ware created by the Loran Percy Gallery, and featuring the bridge image on pilsner glasses, coffee mugs, and drinking jars.

Bridge T Shirts with the bridge image silk screened on the front.

These items are available at the bridge site on weekends, and at the Loran Percy Art Gallery 524-4855.

Gilford Public Library



Oct 1995 January Hill Covered Bridge #68 Lifford, N. H.

Gilford Public Library

Janney Hill Bridge #68
Oct 1995 Gilford, N.H.

GILFORD ROTARY CLUB
Post Office Box 7091
Gilford, New Hampshire 03247-7091

October 10, 1995

Debra Eastman
Town Clerk/Tax Collector
Subject: Tannery Hill Bridge

Dear Debby,

I have been unable to find anyone who is preparing a report on the Tannery Hill Bridge for your historical files, so I have compiled the following:

Gilford Rotary Club Past President Rudi Lehr, early in his term as President from July 1994 to June, 1995, suggested the Club design, finance, build and donate to the Town of Gilford, New Hampshire, a bridge to replace the long absent metal bridge which formerly spanned Gunstock Brook from the foot of Tannery Hill Road (the original main highway between Laconia and Gilford) toward the Town Hall, Fire and Police Departments. Construction of such a bridge would eliminate the need for school classes, residents of Gilford Village and seniors of Gilford Village Knolls to walk on busy and dangerous Route 11A in order to reach these locations. In discussion with the Board of Selectmen (Chairman Robert Jordan, Russell Dumais and Philip LaBonte) it was suggested a covered bridge would be most appropriate to connect the Historic District with the Town Offices, since this type of bridge was present in numbers in the State of New Hampshire.

Gaining the support of members of the Club, and after several design attempts, a decision was made to construct a covered bridge of the Town Lattice Truss design. This type of bridge was named for its inventor, Ithiel Town of New Haven, Connecticut, who patented the design in 1820, a design used prominently in the United States from 1820 to 1850. Volunteering to assist the Club in its efforts was Tim Andrews, proprietor of *Barns & Bridges of New England*, who had considerable experience, as did his father, in the construction and rebuilding of covered bridges in the U.S.A. in the employ of the *Graton Bridge Construction Company* of Ashland, New Hampshire, a firm with whom he was still employed. Bridgebuilder Andrews donated his services, time and active participation in the construction of the bridge. Several members of the Club were trained in turning "trunnels" or "tree-nails" on lathes in the Graton shop, the use of which was generously donated by the company along with other much needed equipment. Commencing in April, 1995, under the direction of Tim Andrews and Project Manager, Rotarian Don Roper, the trusses were constructed in the fabrication shop of G2S Constructors, a firm owned by Gilford Rotary Past President Philip Swett., then transported to the site on flat bed trucks donated by Pike Construction Company, and raised to an upright position by equipment donated by Fay's Boat Yard.

174
A group of Rotary Club members, and a number of other generous volunteers, constructed the bridge adjacent to a site which had been prepared by the Department of Public Works under the supervision of Director Sheldon Morgan. On Friday, August 25, 1995, the bridge was "drawn" across Gunstock Brook by a team of oxen donated by Ronald and Cathy Salinitro of Belknap Mountain Road. On Saturday, August 26, coinciding with the Old Home Day activities on that date, the bridge was lowered into place upon concrete footings, poured by Persons Concrete Company, then leveled and it was officially opened at approximately 11:00 a.m. Nearly 2,000 man hours were invested in the project by club members and other volunteers.

Town employees razed the old "Salt Shed" adjacent to the bridge location and during the next month, members of the Club and the Department of Public Works cooperated in grading, landscaping and preparing the bridge for the official dedication to the Town. Two light posts, upon which kerosene lights formerly lit Belknap Mountain Road, were located, given to the club and electrified by member (and Belknap County Commissioner) Norman Marsh, an electrical contractor, and placed at each end of the structure.

Tannery Hill Bridge was completely financed by donations from Gilford Rotary Club members, generous merchants and citizens and through the sale of commemorative t-shirts, glassware crafted by Susan Percy, local crystal cutter of The Loran Percy Gallery, and proceeds from a program enabling the public to "adopt" one of the 374 trunnels (356 which hold the bridge members together and 16 attaching the side rails to the bridge). A donation of \$20 entitled the donor to a certificate designating the trunnel which was "adopted". The bridge deck of 42 feet is constructed of hemlock. The lattice trusses and roof rafters, creating a 48 foot roof line, are constructed of native spruce, the intermediate rafters are of hemlock and the trim and siding of pine. Approximately 10,000 board feet of lumber were used to construct the nearly 12 ton structure. Tannery Hill Bridge was given New Hampshire Number 68 by DRED and World Guide Number 29-01-02. (29 indicates the State of New Hampshire, 01 Belknap County and 02, the second bridge to be built in the county). Although another was designated as the first covered bridge constructed in Belknap County, it no longer existed and the Tannery Hill Bridge was the only covered bridge in the county at the time of its construction. It was the first bridge in New Hampshire constructed totally of native lumber, most of which was obtained from club member Bill Finethy, proprietor of Gilford Building Supply Co.

The bridge was officially dedicated to the Town of Gilford by the Gilford Rotary Club on Sunday, October 8, 1995, in ceremonies held at the bridge. Club President Lawrence Routhier presided, the invocation was given by (Rotarian) The Rev. Raymond C. Wixson and a proclamation from the Board of Selectmen was presented by Board Chairman Robert Jordan. Past President Rudi Lehr led those assembled in a Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and the group sang "God Bless America". Other brief greetings were given by Police Chief Evans Juris, Fire Chief Michael Mooney and Public Works Director Sheldon Morgan. Also, in attendance, were Governor's Councillor Raymond Burton, State Senator Leo Frazier, Chairman of the Belknap County Delegation Gordon Bartlett and Representative to the General Court, George Hurt of Gilford.

Master Bridge Builder Timothy Andrews was made an Honorary Member of the Gilford Rotary Club on Friday, October 6, when he was presented a framed photograph of the finished bridge in place, and a photograph album, compiled by Rotarian and local artist, Loran Percy, giving a complete pictorial history of the construction of the bridge. In accepting this honor, and in his remarks at the dedication ceremonies, Andrews emphasized working with the Rotary Club members and other volunteers had changed his total outlook on life and he had learned the true meaning of Rotary's motto, "Service Above Self". A plaque appears at each end of the bridge reading, "TANNERY HILL BRIDGE, Constructed by the Gilford Rotary Club, Presented to the Community of Gilford. Tim Andrews - Bridgebuilder 1995".

In order to give the youth of the community a "sense of ownership", special dedication ceremonies were held on Friday, October 20, 1995, with the student body of Gilford Elementary School and the Gilford High School Band. Speakers participating were principals Michael Tocci and George Edwards, Rotary President Routhier and a member of the student body.

The entire community supported the Gilford Rotary Club in the construction of Tannery Hill Bridge which is certain to be a lasting landmark in Gilford, New Hampshire, for many years to come.

Gordon H. Weymouth
for Gilford Rotary Club