

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT  
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: Bridge #12052 Survey Number: HA-1581

Project: Rehab MD 623 over Broad Cr., Harford Co. Agency: SHA

Site visit by MHT Staff:  no  yes Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)

The Broad Creek through truss bridge was identified in the 1981 survey of Maryland Department of Transportation properties as one of only six historic truss bridges on the state road system in Harford County. Erected in 1927, the bridge is significant for its use of considerably lighter structural members than was typical of steel bridges of the period. It illustrates the transition from late 19th century bridges, which used wrought iron rods in the tension structure to the much heavier steel bridges of the 1930s.

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: MIHP form #1581 and project files

Prepared by: John Hnedak

Elizabeth Hannold January 30, 1992  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

program concurrence:  yes  no  not applicable

[Signature] 30 Jan 92  
Reviewer, NR program Date

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

I. Geographic Region:

- Eastern Shore (all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil)
- Western Shore (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's)
- Piedmont (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)
- Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett and Washington)

II. Chronological/Developmental Periods:

- Paleo-Indian 10000-7500 B.C.
- Early Archaic 7500-6000 B.C.
- Middle Archaic 6000-4000 B.C.
- Late Archaic 4000-2000 B.C.
- Early Woodland 2000-500 B.C.
- Middle Woodland 500 B.C. - A.D. 900
- Late Woodland/Archaic A.D. 900-1600
- Contact and Settlement A.D. 1570-1750
- Rural Agrarian Intensification A.D. 1680-1815
- Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870
- Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930
- Modern Period A.D. 1930-Present
- Unknown Period (  prehistoric  historic)

III. Prehistoric Period Themes:

- Subsistence
- Settlement
- Political
- Demographic
- Religion
- Technology
- Environmental Adaption

IV. Historic Period Themes:

- Agriculture
- Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning
- Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
- Government/Law
- Military
- Religion
- Social/Educational/Cultural
- Transportation

V. Resource Type:

Category: Structure

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Transportation

Known Design Source: Unknown

HA-1581

1927

Broad Creek Through Truss Bridge  
Castleton vicinity  
public (unrestricted)

This bridge, which carries Maryland Route 623 over Broad Creek near Castleton, Maryland, consists of two steel Pratt through trusses, each 148 feet long, set end to end, with single 41 foot long steel beam spans placed at each end of the bridge. All connections between spans rest on concrete piers. The roadway, measuring 18 feet in width, has a wooden deck.

Erected in 1927, this bridge was built by the American Bridge Company. It is significant for its use of considerably lighter structural members when compared to other steel bridges constructed during this period. It illustrates the transition from late 19th century bridges, which used wrought iron rods in the tension structure, to the much heavier steel bridges of the 1930's.

The Broad Creek Through Truss Bridge is one of six historic truss bridges -- part of Maryland's state road system in Harford County, and one of 26 bridges of the same general structural type throughout the state road network -- identified by the Maryland Historical Trust for the Maryland Department of Transportation in a jointly conducted survey which took place during 1980-81.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Broad Creek Through Truss Bridge

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

NW of Castleton

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY  
Harford

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES, RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES, UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

State Highway Administration DOT

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

301 West Preston Street

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21201

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

NA-511

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This bridge, which carries Maryland Route 623 over Broad Creek in a NW-SE direction, consists of two Pratt steel through trusses, 148' long, each, set end to end, with a 41 span of steel beam at each extreme, all connections between spans resting on concrete piers. The 18' wide roadway has a wooden deck. The major structural members of the trusses are relatively light, especially in comparison to other bridges located in the M/DOT Survey. All connections are riveted.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

NA-1581

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS-GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1927

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

American Bridge Co,

The structural members of this bridge are considerably lighter than those of almost every other steel bridge which was examined during the M/DOT Survey (see survey report on file with the Maryland Historical Trust) and is among the oldest of them. It mediates between those heavier bridges and those of the late 19th century, which used wrought iron rods in the tension structure, and seems to be illustrative of a transition in the more common applications of metal truss bridges. Inferences should be taken cautiously, however, since the data on the subject are very much incomplete. (see M/DOT Survey general bridge significance, attached and M/DOT survey standing structures inventory final report, MHT, 1980).

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Files of the Bureau of Bridge Design, State Highway Administration, 301 West Preston Street, Baltimore, Md.

Condit, Carl, American Building Art, 20th Century; New York, Oxford University Press, 1961.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle Name: Conowingo Dam, MD  
Quadrangle Scale: 1:24 000  
UTM References: 18.393260.4394560

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

N/A

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
N/A	
STATE	COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

John Hnedak/M/DOT Survey Manager

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Historical Trust

DATE

1980

STREET & NUMBER

21 State Circle

TELEPHONE

(301) 269-2436

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis

STATE

Maryland 21401

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

## GENERAL BRIDGE SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of bridges in Maryland is a difficult and subtle thing to gauge. The Modified significance criteria of the National Register, which are the standard for these judgements in Maryland, as in most states, must be broadly applied to allow for most of these structures. In particular the 50 year rule which specifies a minimum age for structures can be waived, and is more commonly done so for engineering structures than for others. Questions of uniqueness and typicality, exemplary types, etc., must set aside for now, because they presuppose a wider knowledge of the entire resources than is presently available. Indeed, this survey is an initial step toward understanding the extent to which Maryland's bridges are part of her cultural resources. Aesthetic considerations may have to be side-stepped entirely, for such structures as these are generally considered mundane and ordinary at best, and sometimes a negative landscape feature, by the layman. It does take a specialized aesthetic sense to appreciate such structures on visual grounds, but a case for visual significance can be made. The remaining criteria are those of historical associations. The relative youth of most of these structures precludes a strong likelihood of participation to events and lives of import. The best generalization can be made for most bridges is that they are built on site of early crossings, developing from fords and ferries through covered bridges and wooden trusses to their present state. This significance inheres in the site, however, and in most cases would not be diminished by the absence of the present structure.

These criteria may also be addressed positively. The primary significance of these bridges, those which were built between the two World Wars, consists in their association with rapidly changing modes and trends in transportation in America during the period. The earliest of them saw the appearance of the automobile and its rise as the preeminent means of getting Americans from place to place. Roads were being improved for increased speeds and capacity, and bridges, as potential weak links on the system, became particularly important. The technology for producing them was not new, and would not change significantly during the period. Accordingly, great numbers of easily, quickly and relatively cheaply built concrete slab, beam and arch bridges were built to span the small crossings, or were multiplied to cover longer crossings where height was no problem.

Truss bridges with major structural members of compound beams, of either the Warren or Pratt types, while more expensive and considered more intrusive on the landscape, were built to span the larger gaps.

With an aesthetic which allowed concrete slab bridges to have classical balustrades, or the application of a jazz-age concrete relief; with the considerable variety possible in the construction of medium sized metal trusses; and with the lack of nationwide standards for highway bridge design, the resulting body of structures displays considerable variety. The sameness of appearance of currently produced highway bridges leads one to believe this variety will not reappear. For that reason alone it is wise to keep watch over our existing bridges. Regardless of ones taste and aesthetic preference, one must be admitted that these older bridges add their variety and visual interest to the environment as a whole, and that it is often the case that their replacement by a standard highway bridge results in a visual hole in the landscape.

In situations requiring decisions of potential effect on these structures, they should receive some consideration. As the recording and subsequent understanding of Maryland's Cultural resources grows, they will be recognized as a significant part of that heritage.

It should be noted that two non-negligible classes of structure have been omitted from this set. The first is the huge number of concrete slab or beam bridges of an average of twenty feet or less in length. These are so nearly ubiquitous and of such minor visual impact (they are often easy to drive across without noticing) that they were not inventoried. They are considered in the general recommendations section of the final report of this survey, however.

The second category is that of the "great" bridges, the huge steel crossings of the major waterways. While they are awesome and aesthetically appealing, they are not included in this inventory because they do not share the problems of their more modest counterparts. They do not lack for recognition, they have not been technologically outmoded, and are in no danger of disappearing through replacement. In a sense, they are not as rare; hundreds of

these great bridges are known nationally, and there is little doubt as to the position of any one bridge within national spectrum. There seems little point in including them with the larger inventory of bridges. From an arbitrary point of view, their dates are outside the 1935 limit which we set for the consideration of bridges. We have departed from that limit on occasion, but will not in this case. These bridges, too, will be considered in the final report.

Moveable bridges deserve a special note regarding their significance. They are rare, and all but the most recent of them have been listed by this survey by virtue of that fact alone. They are, by their nature as intermittent impediments to the smooth flow of traffic, threatened. We rarely tolerate disruptions to what we perceive as our progress. This has been demonstrated recently by the replacement of the drawbridge at Denton, on one of the major routes to the Atlantic Coast from the rest of Maryland.

However much we are inconvenienced by them, we must admit that moveable bridges contribute a share of interest to the landscape. As with significance judgements in general, we here enter a realm which is governed by taste and opinion. Some of us might not enjoy being forced to sit back for a while to look at the surroundings which we would otherwise totally ignore, especially if the engine is in danger of boiling over. But there are those who are fascinated by the slow rise of a great chunk of roadway, moved by quiet, often invisible machinery; who are amused by the tip of the mast which skims the top of the temporary wall; or who reflect on the nobility inherent in a river and the fact that we have not subdued every waterway with our autos, while knowing that we can if we want to.



PENNSYLVANIA MARYLAND 26

LANCASTER CO

MASON AND 23 DIXON

LINE

CECIL CO  
HARFORD CO

SUSQUEHANNA  
CONOWINGO

HA-1581  
CONOWINGO DAM  
QUADRANGLE

SLATE HILL, PA 3.4 MI.

5763 III NE  
(DELTA)

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2 MI

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42'30"

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HA-1581  
Broad Creek Bridge  
M/DOT  
Hnedak/Meyer  
Winter 1979

HA-1581



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HA-1581  
Broad Creek Bridge  
M/DOT  
Hnedak/Meyer  
Winter 1979