The bridge referenced herein was inventoried by the Maryland State Highway Administration as part of the Historic Bridge Inventory, and SHA provided the Trust with eligibility determinations in February 2001. The Trust accepted the Historic Bridge Inventory on April 3, 2001. The bridge received the following determination of eligibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility Recommended</td>
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<td>Criteria: A B C D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Reviewer, OPS: Anne E. Bruder, Date: 3 April 2001
Reviewer, NR Program: Peter E. Kurtze, Date: 3 April 2001
SHA Bridge No.  P-599  
Bridge name  Governor's Bridge Road over Patuxent River or Governor's Bridge

LOCATION:
Street/Road name and number [facility carried]  Governor's Bridge Road
City/town  Bowie  
Vicinity  X
County  Prince George's

This bridge projects over:  Road  
Railway  
Water  X
Land  

Ownership:  State  
County  X
Municipal  
Other  

HISTORIC STATUS:
Is bridge located within a designated historic district?  Yes  
No  X
National Register-listed district  
National Register-determined-eligible district  
Locally-designated district  
Other  
Name of district  

BRIDGE TYPE:
Timber Bridge  
Beam Bridge  
Truss-Covered  
Trestle  
Timber-And-Concrete  

Stone Arch Bridge  

Metal Truss Bridge  X

Movable Bridge  
Swing  
Bascule Single Leaf  
Bascule Multiple Leaf  
Vertical Lift  
Retractile  
Pontoon  

Metal Girder  
Rolled Girder  
Rolled Girder Concrete Encased  
Plate Girder  
Plate Girder Concrete Encased  

Metal Suspension  

Metal Arch  

Metal Cantilever  

Concrete  
Concrete Arch  
Concrete Slab  
Concrete Beam  
Rigid Frame  

Other  
Type Name  

525
DESCRIPTION:

Describe Setting:

Bridge P-599 is designed to carry one lane of traffic on Governor's Bridge Road over the Patuxent River, connecting Prince George's County and Anne Arundel County. Governor's Bridge Road runs in a generally west-east direction at this location and the Patuxent River flows north to south. The bridge is situated just south of Bowie in Prince George's County, Maryland.

The site of the bridge has been used as a crossing since the mid-eighteenth century. The name is believed to date from that period, when Governor Ogle utilized a predecessor bridge to travel from his Belair estate across the Patuxent to Annapolis. It is not known how many bridges have spanned the Patuxent at this point. One is known to have been in place in 1878, according to G.M. Hopkins' *Atlas of Prince George's County* of that year.

Describe Superstructure and Substructure:

This structure a single-span, steel, Pratt through-truss bridge measuring 115' in length with 13'-7" in clear roadway width. Each of its six panels measures 19'-2". The top chords, bottom chords, and end posts are back to back channels with top cover plates. The first and last vertical members are angle shaped. All of the other vertical members are I-shaped. All diagonal members are angle shapes. The bearings of the bridge at the east end are secured with pinned connections. The trusses on each side have a steel lattice safety railing. The bridge is set upon a substructure of coursed stone and concrete abutments.

Discuss Major Alterations:

The original timber deck has been replaced by an open grate steel deck. When the bridge was surveyed in 1995, it was closed to traffic. However, it has since been re-opened, although no significant alterations are evident.

HISTORY:

WHEN was bridge built (actual date or date range)  c.1907-1912
This date is: Actual _________ Estimated X_______
Source of date: Plaque________ Design plans______ County bridge files/inspection form______
Other (specify) Survey forms on file at the Maryland Historical Trust give a date range for construction of about 1907 to 1912

WHY was bridge built? To provide a reliable crossing of Governor's Bridge Road over the Patuxent River, to meet local and regional transportation needs. Prior to the establishment of MD 50 early in the century, this was a major route to Annapolis.

WHO was the designer ____________________________
WHO was the builder ____________________________

WHY was bridge altered? [check N/A  X if not applicable]
Was bridge built as part of organized bridge-building campaign? Yes _______ No X_____
SURVEYOR/HISTORIAN ANALYSIS:

This bridge may have National Register significance for its association with:
   A - Events  X  B - Person  
   C - Engineering/architectural character  X

Was bridge constructed in response to significant events in Maryland or local history?  No  Yes  X
If yes, what event?

This bridge was one of a large number of metal truss bridges erected in Maryland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These bridges, which were stronger and more reliable than the majority of their predecessors, were part of a major advance in bridge technology in Maryland and throughout the nation in the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

When the bridge was built and/or given a major alteration, did it have a significant impact on the growth & development of the area?  No  Yes  X

Because of their solidity, metal truss bridges such as the Governor's Bridge Road bridge provided reliable crossings, largely free from the dangers of floods and other disasters that regularly destroyed many of their predecessors. By assuring travelers that Governor's Bridge Road could be safely and reliably passed throughout the year, this bridge promoted small-scale residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial development along the road and other thoroughfares that fed into it. It also facilitated traffic to and from the capital to Prince George's County. Though their impacts were generally localized, bridges such as this, taken *en masse*, were an important factor in the development of rural areas throughout the state.

Is the bridge located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation?  No  X  Yes
Would the bridge add to or detract from historic & visual character of the possible district?

Is the bridge a significant example of its type?  No  Yes  X

Between 1840 and the Civil War, under the impetus of a rapidly expanding railroad system, the majority of early American metal truss bridge forms were patented and introduced. In Maryland, the earliest metal truss bridges carried rail lines, which required their great strength and reliability. From the War through the end of the century, metal truss technology was improved, steel began to replace iron, and the use of trusses was expanded to carry roads as well as rail lines.

Numerous metal truss bridges were erected in Baltimore, the original hub of the metal truss in the state, from the 1850s through the 1880s. From Baltimore, the use of the metal truss spread out to other parts of the state, particularly the Piedmont and Appalachian Plateau. Many bridge and iron works were established in the eastern United States to design and fabricate truss members, which were then shipped to sites in Maryland and elsewhere to be erected. More than 15 different bridge companies located in Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, and Indiana are known to have shipped metal truss bridges to sites throughout Maryland. Bridges were first fabricated in Maryland, and shipped to sites within the state and beyond, by the companies of seminal bridge designer Wendel Bollman.

Early in the twentieth century, concrete bridges began to compete with metal truss bridges throughout the state at small to moderate crossings. With the development of uniform standards for concrete bridges by the State Roads Commission in the 1910s, the construction of smaller metal truss bridges significantly declined throughout the state. The metal truss still remained the bridge of choice for large crossings, however. In the 1920s, heavier members began to be used at these bridges. Reflecting even heavier load requirements and increased lengths, metal truss bridges erected in the state in the 1930s and 1940s were heavy and solid, rather than light and delicate like their late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century predecessors.
Numerous Pratt truss bridges were erected throughout the country between 1844, when the type was patented by Thomas and Caleb Pratt, and the early twentieth century. The Pratt has diagonals extended across one panel in tension and verticals in compression, except for hip verticals immediately adjacent to the inclined end posts of the bridge. The large majority of Maryland’s surviving metal truss bridges are Pratts, built as through or pony trusses either riveted or pin-connected.

This bridge was erected during one of the three key periods (1840-1860, 1860-1900, and 1900-1960) of bridge construction in Maryland. Built between about 1907 and 1912, it falls within the period 1900-1960. During this era, metal truss highway bridges became increasingly standardized. Also during this period, smaller and moderate length trusses were gradually replaced by reinforced concrete structures, and the modern metal girder bridge, which could easily be widened, replaced the metal truss bridge at all but the largest approaches and crossings. Built early in the century, it is characterized by relatively delicate members, rather than the heavy solid members that characterize its successors.

Does bridge retain integrity [in terms of National Register] of important elements described in Context Addendum?  No  ___  Yes  X  It retains its integrity of its character-defining elements.

Is bridge a significant example of work of manufacturer, designer and/or engineer?  No  ___  Yes  ____
This bridge has been surveyed at least four times, but neither a manufacturer, designer, nor engineer has been identified.

Should bridge be given further study before significance analysis is made?  No  X  ____  Yes  _____

It is believed that no further evaluation is necessary to determine the eligibility of this bridge for listing in the National Register. However, additional research, which could be conducted as part of any future National Register nomination prepared for the bridge, might provide further information about its history and environs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Bridge inspection reports and files of the Prince George’s County engineer’s office.

County survey files of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Hopkins, G.M. Atlas of Prince George’s County. 1878.


State inventory form AA-851 for Anne Arundel County

State inventory form 74B-1 for Prince George’s County
SURVEYOR/SURVEY INFORMATION:

Date bridge recorded  1/95

Name of surveyor  Walter King/Marvin Brown
Organization/Address GREINER, INC., 2219 York Road, Suite 200, Timonium, Maryland 21093-3111
Phone number  410-561-0100  FAX number  410-561-1150
revised by P.A.C. Spero & Company, August 1998
Inventory # PG748L & AA-851
PG99 - GOVERNOR BRIDGE ROAD OVER
Name PATUXENT RIVER
County/State PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY/MO
Name of Photographer WALLY KING
Date 1/95
Location of Negative SHA
Description WEST APPROACH LOOKING EAST
Number 1 of 4
Inventory # PG 74B-1  AA-851
P 599 - GOVERNOR BRIDGE ROAD OVER PATUXENT RIVER
Name  WALLY KING
County/State PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY/MD
Name of Photographer  WALLY KING
Date  1/95
Location of Negative  SHA
Description  SOUTH ELEVATION
Number 2/9
Inventory # PG74B-1 * AA-85

PS49-GOVERNOR BRIDGE ROAD OVER
Name PATUX-ENT RIVER
County/State PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY/MD
Name of Photographer WALLY KING
Date 1/95

Location of Negative SNA

Description EAST APPROACH LOOKING WEST

3 of 4

Number of
Inventory # PG74B-1 * AA-851
PS99 - GOVERNOR BRIDGE ROAD OVER
Name PATUXENT RIVER
County/State PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY/MD
Name of Photographer WALLY KING
Date 1/95
Location of Negative SHA
Description NORTH ELEVATION
Number # of 2
Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name  (indicate preferred name)

historic  Governor's Bridge and Patuxent Bridge

and/or common  Governor's Bridge

2. Location

street & number  Governor's Bridge Road & Patuxent River

not for publication

city, town  Bowie  X  vicinity of  congressional district

state  Maryland  county  Prince George's

3. Classification

Category  Ownership  Status  Present Use

district  X  public  X  occupied  agriculture
_buildings(s)  ___  private  ___  unoccupied  commercial
_structure  ___  both  ___  work in progress  educational
_site  Public Acquisition  Accessible  ___  government  entertainment
_object  ___  in process  yes: restricted  ___  industrial  religious
   being considered  X  yes: unrestricted  ___  X  military  scientific
   not applicable  ____  no  ____  transportation  other:

4. Owner of Property  (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name  State Roads Commission

street & number  telephone no.:

city, town  state and zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.  Prince George's County Courthouse

liber

street & number  folio

state  Maryland  20772

city, town  Upper Marlboro,

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys


date  1974  ____  federal  ____  state  X  county  ____  local

depository for survey records  Riversdale, 4811 Riverdale Road

city, town  Riverdale,  state  Maryland  20737
Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Governor's Bridge carries the Governor's Bridge Road over the Patuxent River, connecting Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties. It is a steel, single-span, Pratt through truss bridge, measuring approximately 105-1/2 feet in length and 13 feet 7 inches in width. It is supported by two poured concrete abutments and has a wire mesh deck. It was fabricated approximately 75 years ago. The fabricator is unknown.
8. Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</th>
<th>Builder/Architect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>1400-1499</td>
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<td>X other (specify)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Specific dates

check:  Applicable Criteria: ___A___B___C___D

and/or

Applicable Exception: ___A___B___C___D___E___F___G

Level of Significance: ___national___state___local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Governor's Bridge is significant for being one of three surviving early truss bridges in the County. This site is also important because it has been used as a crossing of the Patuxent since colonial days. Early maps indicate that a bridge (referred to as the "Patuxent Bridge" in most cases), rather than a ferry, was used to cross the river. The name, "Governor's Bridge," is derived from the use of this crossing by several governors who lived in nearby "Belair."^2

The other two truss bridges are the late 19th century Queen Anne Bridge which crosses the Patuxent at Queen Anne, and the VanWagner Road Bridge which crosses the B&O Railroad main line near Upper Marlboro. The Queen Anne Bridge is no longer in use for traffic. One other later, c. 1930s, truss bridge is located on Leland Road. Its condition has been determined as unsafe and it will probably be removed. A similar bridge, the McHenry Road Bridge, of the same vintage, was already removed due to poor condition.3

Footnotes


2 Michael F. Dwyer, Governor's Bridge Historic Sites Survey Form, 1974.

3 Interview with Bill Miller, Engineering Department, Prince George's County.
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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438
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public/trans./occ./fair
NAME

Historic
Governor's Bridge
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Governor's Bridge Rd. & Patuxent River
CITY, TOWN
Bowie
STATE
Maryland
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY
DISTRICT ---
BUILDINGS ---
STRUCTURE ---
SITE ---
OBJECT ---

OWNERSHIP
PUBLIC ---
PRIVATE ---
Both ---

STATUS
OCCUPIED ---
UNOCCUPIED ---
WORK IN PROGRESS ---
ACCESSIBLE ---
YES RESTRICTED ---
YES UNRESTRICTED ---
NO ---

PRESENT USE
AGRICULTURE ---
COMMERCIAL ---
EDUCATIONAL ---
ENTERTAINMENT ---
GOVERNMENT ---
INDUSTRIAL ---
MILITARY ---
MUSEUM ---
PARK ---
PRIVATE RESIDENCE ---
RELIGIOUS ---
SCIENTIFIC ---
TRANSPORTATION ---
OTHER ---

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
State Roads Commission?
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
STATE, ZIP CODE

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Prince George's County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Upper Marlboro
STATE
Maryland

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE
DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☑ Excellent
☑ Good
☐ Fair
☐ Deteriorated
☐ Ruins
☐ Unexposed

CHECK ONE

☑ Unaltered
☑ Altered

CHECK ONE

☑ Original Site
☑ Moved
☐ Date

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This is an old Patuxent River crossing, that dates from Colonial times. The present span over the river is a rare, early-20th Century, steel truss bridge.
SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

- PREHISTORIC
- 1400-1499
- 1500-1599
- 1600-1699
- 1700-1799
- 1800-1899
- 1900

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

- ARCHAEOLOGY PREHISTORIC
- ARCHAEOLOGY HISTORIC
- AGRICULTURE
- ARCHITECTURE
- ART
- COMMERCE
- COMMUNICATIONS
- COMMUNITY PLANNING
- CONSERVATION
- ECONOMICS
- EDUCATION
- ENGINEERING
- EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
- INVENTION
- INDUSTRY
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- LAW
- LITERATURE
- MILITARY
- MUSIC
- PHILOSOPHY
- POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- RELIGION
- SCIENCE
- SCULPTURE
- SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
- THEATER
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER (SPECIFY)

SPECIFIC DATES

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This was one of the most heavily-travelled Patuxent River crossings since Colonial times. The name reportedly comes from the usage made by several governors of Maryland, who lived at nearby "Belair". This was the old road to Annapolis, the state's capital, that has since been replaced by Rte. 50.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE   COUNTY

STATE   COUNTY

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Michael F. Dwyer, Senior Park Historian

ORGANIZATION
M-NCPDC

STREET & NUMBER
8787 Georgia Ave.

CITY OR TOWN
Silver Spring

DATE
9/27/74

TELEPHONE
589-1490

STATE
Maryland

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The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438
Governor's Bridge
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
July 1984
Northeast approach
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD
Governor's Bridge
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
July 1984
View from Southwest
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD
NAME: GOVERNOR'S BRIDGE
LOCATION: " " Rd AT PATUXENT RIVER BOWIE, Md.
FACADE: LOOKING E
PHOTO TAKEN: 9/27/74 M DWYER