

## The State of the Bridges

Ohio ranks second in the nation in the number of covered bridges still standing, with approximately 150 gracing the state's scenery. Over half of these bridges continue to carry daily traffic over streams and rivers.

Nearly 2,300 covered bridges once served Ohioans. The first bridge in the state was built in 1809 in East Liverpool, Columbiana County.



Bell Bridge c. 1888

## Covered Bridge Trusses

A bridge truss is an arrangement of triangles joined together to carry a bridge and its load over a stream. Due to its structural strength, the triangle is a natural choice upon which to base truss design. The main difference among truss types is the variation in arrangement of the triangle's compression members (diagonal timbers) and tension members (upright members).

The nine covered bridges in Washington County illustrate six truss designs. The most common truss type, the Multiple Kingpost truss, is seen in the Bell and Mill Branch covered bridges. A Kingpost truss consists of two panels with a compression member in each panel mortised into a tension member. A Multiple Kingpost truss is a Kingpost truss with four or more panels.

The Shinn Bridge is a Kingpost with Burr Arch truss, a combination of a wooden arch with a Multiple Kingpost. It was patented in 1804 and was designed to strengthen the basic truss.

A lengthened version of the Kingpost truss, the Queenpost, is illustrated by the Henry Bridge. The Root, Harra, and Hune bridges are Long truss designs. This truss, first used around 1830, consists of a series of boxed X's with three or more panels making up the entire truss.

In 1869, Ohioan Robert W. Smith patented the truss design bearing his name, and the Smith truss can be seen today in the Rinard Bridge. The Hills (Hildreth) Bridge stands out as an example of the Howe truss, which implements the iron rod into wooden truss design.

Information in the brochure was provided by the Washington County Engineer's Office.

*Marietta, Washington County  
Convention & Visitors Bureau*

## Covered Bridges of Washington County



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# A Bridge to the Past

Over 50 covered bridges were once scattered throughout Washington County. Today only nine remain as reminders of the ingenuity of the past. Although the fate of many covered bridges lies in bypass or removal, Washington County's structures illustrate the resourcefulness

of previous engineers.

Covering a bridge kept animals from shying from the water, protected the timber used in construction, and kept water out of its joints, giving the structure solidity. The floor level of a bridge was usually built at a slightly higher elevation so water would drain off the

bridge, protecting the wooden floor. Our bridges—each with its own charm—are reminiscent of a peaceful, unhurried era. Take some time and enjoy the bridges and scenery.

## Mapping Your Way

The first six covered bridges are routed through western Washington County. To begin your tour into this scenic area, take Washington Street in Marietta, cross the Washington Street Bridge, and follow signs to State Route 676.



Harra Covered Bridge c. 1871

Passing St. John's Catholic Church (Built in 1866) and the German Lutheran Church, you will drive through Watertown. About one mile from Watertown, turn right at junction 339 to Beverly. Travel 2.2

more miles, turn left to Township road 108 (Camp Hervida Road) and within a half mile is the **HARRA COVERED BRIDGE (c. 1871)**.

Return to 339, turn right and follow it about 5 miles to TWP RD 39 (Bell Road). The road forks around an old tree, bear right staying on TWP RD 39. Just under 1.5 miles you will cross the **BELL BRIDGE (c. 1888)**. Continue on TWP 39 passing the Murdoch Cemetery. Turn left onto ST RT 676. Proceed 1.2 miles and turn left onto CO. RD. 6 (Burnett Road). Take the first

road to the right CO. RD. 18 (Oak Hill Road) and travel 2.3 miles to TWP RD 570 (Shinn Road). The **SHINN COVERED BRIDGE (c. 1886)** is about 1.2 miles.

Return to CO. RD. 18 and turn right. Turn right at the intersection with ST. RT. 550. Go approximately 2 miles to TWP RD 61 (Clark Road) and turn left. The **HENRY COVERED BRIDGE** is located on this road about 1 mile north of ST RT 555.



Root Covered Bridge c. 1888

Continue on TWP RD 61 to ST RT 555, turn left passing through Cutler. About 4.4 miles from Cutler, turn left on CO. RD. 6 (Brownrigg RD) and you will find the **ROOT COVERED BRIDGE (c. 1888)**. Return to 555, take a left, then turn left on CO. RD. 3 (Veto Road). Travel CO. RD. 3 to

Veto, taking a left onto 339 at Barlow. At the Barlow crossroads is the fairgrounds where the **MILL BRANCH COVERED BRIDGE (c. 1832)** now makes its home. Return to Marietta via ST RT 550.

Three remaining bridges are scattered along ST. RT. 26 and the Wayne National Forest Scenic By-Way. Leaving Marietta from the intersection of Greene and Seventh Streets, follow Greene

Street into ST. RT. 26, passing Broughton Foods Co. At 6.2 miles, turn right on CO. RD. 333 (Hills Bridge Road) at the Hills United Methodist Church. Immediately you will see the **HILLS COVERED BRIDGE (also known as the Hildreth Covered Bridge c. 1881)**. Return to ST. RT. 26 and turn right, Drive 12 miles through Moss Run and Dart to Lawrence Baptist Church and Cemetery. At 2.1 miles from this point, turn onto TWP RD 921 (Duff Road) where the **HUNE COVERED BRIDGE (c. 1877)** stands over the Wayne National Forest canoe access.

The **RINARD COVERED BRIDGE** was located another 1.5 miles north just off of ST RT 26 on CO RD 406 (Tice Run Road). Unfortunately this bridge was destroyed in the flood on September 19, 2004.



Rinard Covered Bridge c. 1874