

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties number: HA-1366

Name: #12031 / MD 136 OVER FALLING BRANCH

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.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST	
Eligibility Recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility Not Recommended <input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> None
Comments: _____ _____	
Reviewer, OPS: <u>Anne E. Bruder</u>	Date: <u>3 April 2001</u>
Reviewer, NR Program: <u>Peter E. Kurtze</u>	Date: <u>3 April 2001</u>

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
HISTORIC BRIDGE INVENTORY
MARYLAND STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MHT NO. HA-1866

NAME AND SHA NO.: 12031

LOCATION

Road Name and Number: MD 136 over Falling Branch

City/Town: Five Forks vicinity

County: Harford

Ownership: State County Municipal Other

Bridge projects over: Road Railway Water Land

Is bridge located within designated district?: yes no
 NR listed district NR determined eligible district
 locally designated other
Name of District

BRIDGE TYPE

Timber Bridge
 Beam Bridge Truss-Covered Trestle Timber-and-Concrete

Stone Arch Bridge

Metal Truss Bridge

Moveable Bridge
 Swing Bascule Single Leaf Bascule Multiple Leaf
 Vertical Lift Retractable 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 **514**

DESCRIPTION

Describe the Setting:

Bridge 12031 carries MD 136 over Falling Branch in northern Harford County. MD 136 runs in an east-west direction at this location; Falling Branch flows south-north. This primarily wooded area lies within the Piedmont physiographic province characterized by variegated topography created by rivers and streams cutting through the valleys. A nineteenth-century house and Reynolds Mill stand southeast of the bridge.

Describe the Superstructure and Substructure: (Discuss points identified in Context Addendum, Section C)

Bridge 12031, a single-span concrete girder bridge skewed 50 degrees, has a clear span length of 38' and an overall bridge length of 40'. The 28' clear asphalt roadway carries two lanes of traffic. Each of the open balustrade concrete parapets is divided into three sections with 13 openings in each section and features rectangular paneled endposts and a concrete cap. Steel W-beam guardrails are attached to the ends of the parapets. The substructure consists of striated concrete abutments and wing walls with concrete caps. The construction details of this bridge conform closely to the 1930 standard state specifications.

Recent photographs and inspection reports note surface erosion of the parapets; the rest of the bridge appears to be in relatively good condition.

A survey of historic concrete beam bridges undertaken by the Maryland State Highway Administration in the Fall of 1995 identified 113 bridges of that type located throughout the state. Slightly more than two-thirds (76) of that total were single-span bridges.

Discuss major alterations:

A 1975 report states that the deck was resurfaced with asphalt. More recent inspection reports note that short drains on the superstructure have been replaced with new long PVC drains, but no date was indicated for this action.

HISTORY

When Built: c. 1930

Why Built: Statewide road improvement programs and local transportation needs

Who Built: State Roads Commission of Maryland

Who Designed: Unknown

Why Altered: Unknown

Was this bridge built as part of an organized bridge building campaign?: No

This bridge was built during the Good Roads Movement era but was not one of the primary corridors slated for improvement.

SURVEYOR ANALYSIS

This bridge may have NR significance for association with:

A (Events) B (Person) C (Engineering/Architectural Character)

Was this bridge constructed in response to significant events in Maryland or local history?

The improvement of Harford County roads most likely resulted from several events that occurred during the first three decades of the twentieth century. The original Good Roads movement was aimed toward improving the primary routes through the state as well as connecting roads between counties. A later impact of this crusade included the widening, straightening, and grading of secondary roads, and construction of new bridges to carry these rebuilt roads. Further, the rapid increase of automobile, truck, and bus traffic prompted the replacement of the existing narrow and weak bridges with new, wider, and stronger concrete structures. As time, labor, and money-saving plans created by the State Roads Commission (SRC), the establishment of district engineering offices during the 1910s and the development of standardized bridge designs also aided in the construction of modern bridges throughout the state. During the 1920s, emphasis of the SRC was on improving safety and comfort of main routes while building up the secondary roads and the farm-to-market network of feeder roads. By the 1930s, bridges believed to be adequate when initial road reconstruction was undertaken became unacceptable for modern traffic and many new structures were constructed.

When the bridge was built, and/or given a major alteration, did it have a significant impact on the growth and development of the area?

No, the construction of this bridge did not play an active role in the growth or development of this portion of Harford County.

Is the bridge located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation, and would the bridge add or detract from the historic and visual character of the possible district?

No, this bridge is not located within an area which is eligible for historic district designation.

Is the bridge a significant example of its type?

Yes, due to its apparent lack of major alterations and fair condition, this bridge stands as a significant example of its type.

Does the bridge retain integrity of the important elements described in the Context Addendum?

Yes, this bridge retains integrity of its character defining elements. Although recent reports indicate that the structure exhibits signs of age and wear, including cracking and spalling of the parapets, abutments, and wing walls, none of these character defining elements has been replaced or removed.

Is the bridge a significant example of the work of the manufacturer, designer, and/or engineer, and why?

No, this bridge is not a significant example of the work of the manufacturer, designer, and/or engineer. This bridge was most likely built to standard state specifications, which corresponded to the structure's span length and year.

Should this bridge be given further study before significance analysis is made, and why?

No, this bridge should not receive further study.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Johnson, A.N.

1903 *Third Report on the Highways of Maryland (1902-1903)*. The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore.

LeViness, Charles T.

1958 *A History of Road Building in Maryland*. State Roads Commission of Maryland, Baltimore.

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Maryland State Highway Administration

1987-93 Bridge inspection reports. Located in the files of the Office of Bridge Development, Maryland State Highway Administration, Baltimore.

P.A.C. Spero and Company and Louis Berger and Associates, Inc.

1994 *Historic Bridges in Maryland: Historic Context Report*. Prepared for Maryland State Highway Administration, Maryland State Department of Transportation, Baltimore.

State Roads Commission of Maryland

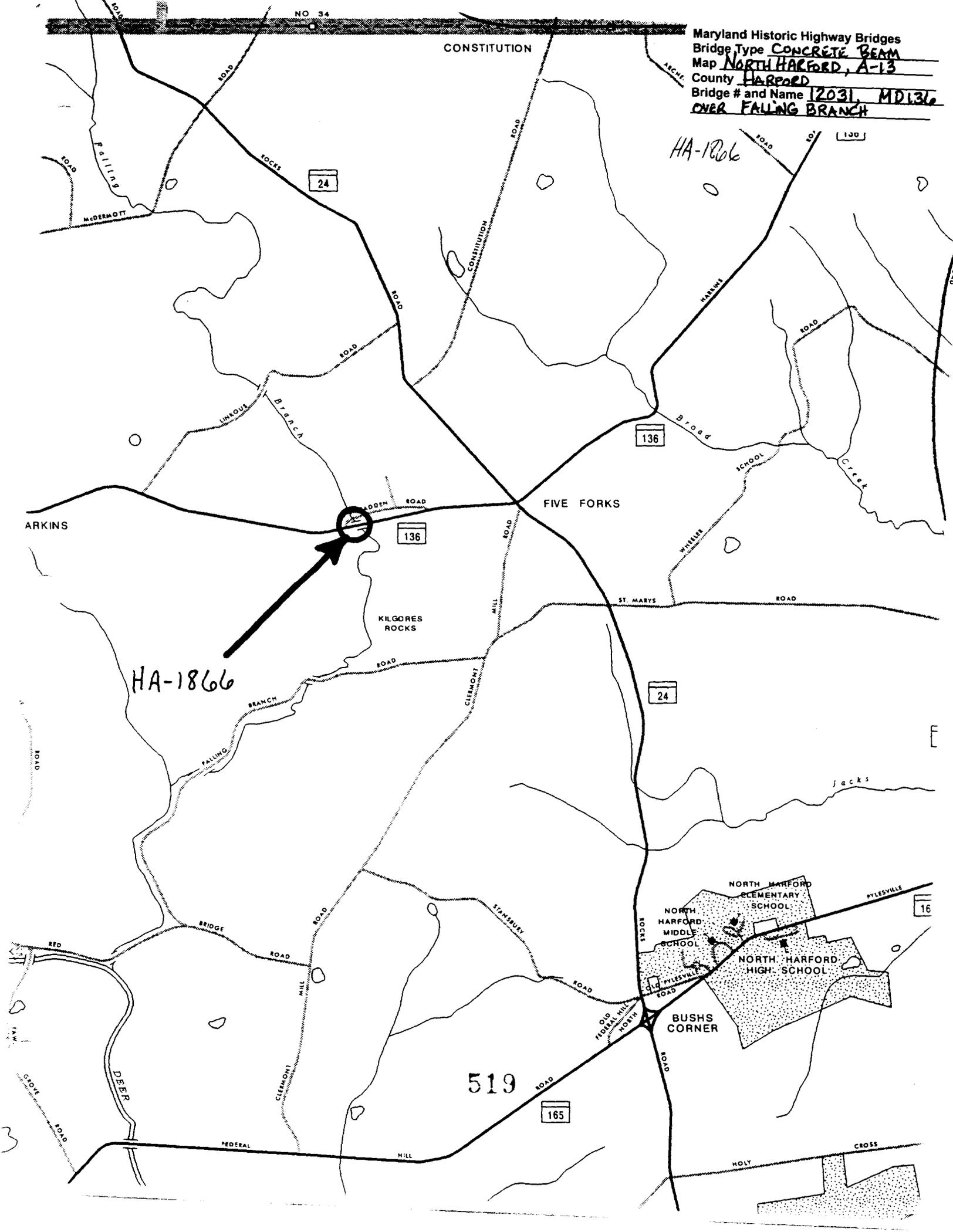
1930 *Reports of the State Roads Commission of Maryland for the Years 1927, 1928, 1929, and 1930*. State of Maryland, State Roads Commission, Baltimore.

1954-79 Bridge inspection reports. Located in the files of the Office of Bridge Development, Maryland State Highway Administration, Baltimore.

SURVEYOR INFORMATION

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Maryland Historic Highway Bridges
Bridge Type CONCRETE BEAM
Map NORTH HARFORD, A-13
County HARFORD
Bridge # and Name 12031, MD136
OVER FALLING BRANCH





HP - 1843
HARFORD COUNTY, MD
JOHN TARQUINO
3/12/95
~~MARYLAND SHPD~~ SHA

- BRIDGE 12031 OVER FALLING
BRANCH CREEK
- LOOKING WEST ON MD
ROUTE 136

1/4



HA-1366

HARFORD COUNTY, MD

JOHN TARQUINIO

3/12/95

~~MARYLAND SHPD~~ SMVA

- BRIDGE 12031 OVER FALLING
BRANCH CREEK

- LOOKING EAST ON MD
ROUTE 136

2/4



HP-1866

HARFORD COUNTY, MD

JOHN TARQUINIO

3/12/95

~~MARYLAND SHPO SITE~~

- BRIDGE 12031 OVER FALLING
BRANCH CREEK
- VIEW LOOKING NORTH

3/4



FA-1369

HARFORD COUNTY MD

JOHN TARQUINIO

3/12/95

~~MARYLAND SHPO S HA~~

- BRIDGE 12031 OVER FALLING
BRANCH CREEK
- VIEW LOOKING SOUTH

4/4