

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties number: PG: 74B-19, AA-251

Name: Green's Bridge Rd. over Potomac River

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 <u> X </u>	Eligibility Not Recommended <u> </u>
Criteria: <u> </u> A <u> </u> B <u> X </u> C <u> </u> D	Considerations: <u> </u> A <u> </u> B <u> </u> C <u> </u> D <u> </u> E <u> </u> F <u> </u> G <u> </u> 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>

Amis

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC BRIDGES
HISTORIC BRIDGE INVENTORY
MARYLAND STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION/
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MHT No. PG 74B-1 & AA-851

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 Land

Ownership: State County Municipal Other

HISTORIC STATUS:

Is bridge located within a designated historic district? Yes No

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

Movable 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 _____

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 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.

Jackson, Donald H. *Great American Bridges and Dams*. Washington, D.C: The Preservation Press, 1968

P.A.C. Spero & Company. *Historic Bridges in Maryland: Historic Context Report*. Prepared for the Maryland State Highway Administration, September, 1994.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. *Historic Highway Bridges in Pennsylvania*. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1986.

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

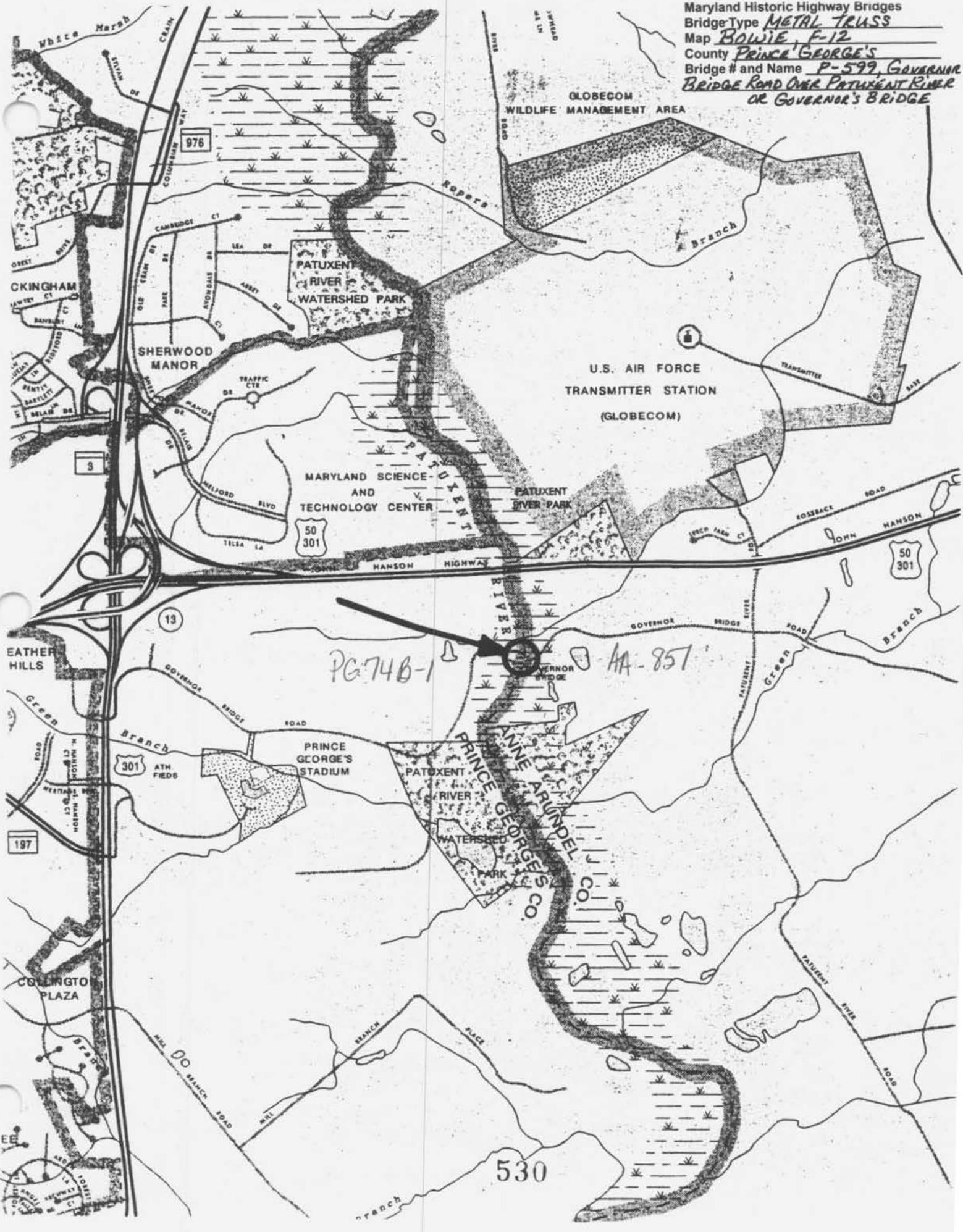
Name of surveyor Walter King/Marvin Brown

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

Maryland Historic Highway Bridges
Bridge Type METAL TRUSS
Map BOWIE, F-12
County PRINCE GEORGE'S
Bridge # and Name P-599, GOVERNOR
BRIDGE ROAD OVER PATUXENT RIVER
OR GOVERNOR'S BRIDGE



PG-74B-1

AA-851

530



ROAD
CLOSED

Inventory # PG74B-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ AA-851

PS99 - GOVERNOR BRIDGE ROAD OVER
Name PATUXENT RIVER

County/State PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY/MD

Name of Photographer WALLY KING

Date 1/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description WEST APPROACH LOOKING EAST

Number 1 of 9
6 of 24

Backroom 053043 4611 RRM:RHS



Inventory # PG 74B-1 1/2 AA-851

P599-GOVERNOR BRIDGE ROAD OVER

Name PATUXENT RIVER

County/State PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY/MD

Name of Photographer WALLY KING

Date 1/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description SOUTH ELEVATION

Number 2 of 9

BAR KPMOIMD60043 4611 N N N N N



Inventory # PG74B-1 & AA-851

PS99-GOVERNOR BRIDGE ROAD OVER
Name PATUXENT RIVER

County/State PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY/MD

Name of Photographer WALLY KING

Date 1/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description EAST APPROACH LOOKING WEST

Number 3 of 4

darkroom1072045 4511 N 11/11/95



Inventory # PG74B-1 : AA-851

9599 - GOVERNOR BRIDGE ROAD OVER

Name PATUXENT RIVER

County/State PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY/MD

Name of Photographer WALLY KING

Date 1/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description NORTH ELEVATION

Number 4 of 9

2001083045 4611 N H H H H

7. Description

Survey No. ^{PG} 746-1

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

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
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates _____ **Builder/Architect** _____

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.¹ 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

¹ Edward C. Papenfuse and Joseph M. Coale III, Atlas of Historical Maps of Maryland, 1608-1908, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

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

³ Interview with Bill Miller, Engineering Department, Prince George's County.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

ed. name
1d
2, e

Survey # 74B-1

Building Date c. 1905-1917

Building Name Governor's Bridge

Location Governor's Bridge Road and Patuxent River, Bowie, Md.

Open to Public: Yes No Occupied: Yes No Use Trans.

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.

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public/trans./occ./fair

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

1701924717

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Governor's Bridge
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Governor's Bridge Rd. & Patuxent River
CITY, TOWN
Bowie
STATE
Maryland
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
VICINITY OF
COUNTY
Prince George's

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
State Roads Commission? Telephone #: _____
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN
VICINITY OF
STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, LIBER #: _____
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Prince George's County Courthouse FOLIO #: _____
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN
Upper Marlboro
STATE
Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN
STATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

77 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.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input 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 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

 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

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

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 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

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Michael F. Dwyer, Senior Park Historian

ORGANIZATION

M-NCPPC

DATE

9/27/74

STREET & NUMBER

8787 Georgia Ave.

TELEPHONE

589-1480

CITY OR TOWN

Silver Spring

STATE

Maryland

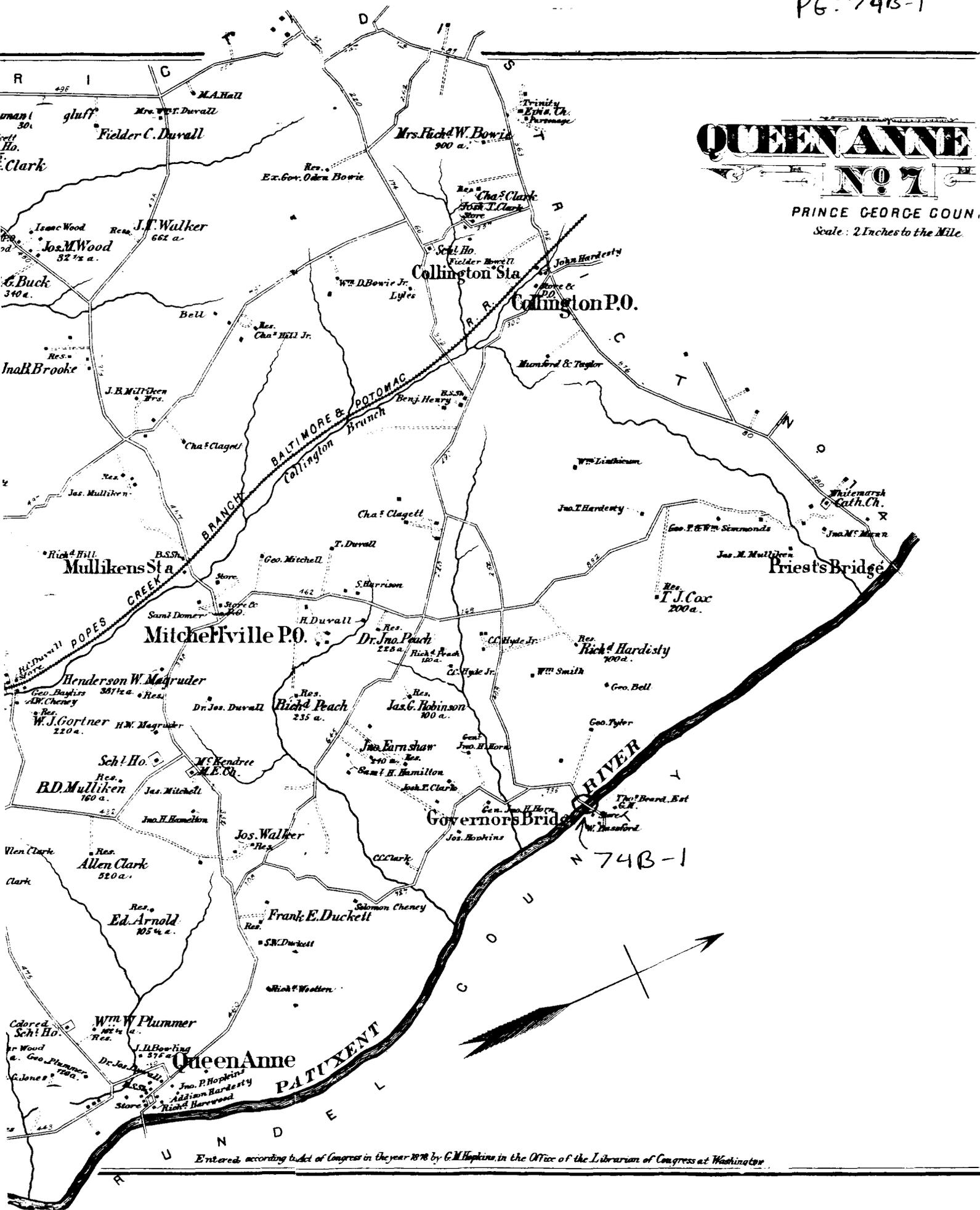
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

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

QUEENANNE NO. 7

PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY
Scale: 2 Inches to the Mile



Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1878 by G.M. Hopkins, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington



BOWIE E Governor's Bridge
PG. 74B-1



P.G. #74B-1

Governor's Bridge

Prince George's County, MD

Susan G. Pearl

July 1984

Northeast approach

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



P.G. #74B-1

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

PG: 74B-1

LOCATION " " Rd AT PATUXENT RIVER BOWIE,
Md.

FACADE LOOKING E

PHOTO TAKEN 9/27/74 M DWYER