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**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic COVERED BRIDGES OF BERKS COUNTY

and/or common

2. Location

street & number

___ not for publication

city, town

___ vicinity of

congressional district

state Pennsylvania

code 42

county Berks

code 011

3. Classification

Category

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object
- thematic

Ownership

- public
 - private
 - both
- Public Acquisition**
- in process
 - being considered

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:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple

street & number

city, town

___ vicinity of

state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Berks County Courthouse

street & number Sixth and Court Street

city, town Reading

state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Pennsylvania Inventory
title of Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes ___ no

date ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

city, town Harrisburg

state Pennsylvania

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

COVERED BRIDGES OF BERKS COUNTY

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 1

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Transportation
Transportation & Safety Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Pleasantville Bridge (36-06-01) T916, Oley Township

Berks County
c/o County Commissioners
Berks County Courthouse
6th and Court Streets
Reading, Pennsylvania 19601

Greisemer's Mill Bridge (36-06-03) T479, Oley Township
Kutz's Mill Bridge (36-06-05) T798, Greenwich Township
Dreibelbis Station Bridge (36-06-07) T745, Greenwich Township

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7. 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

There are only five covered bridges remaining today in Berks County. All use the Burr arch trussing system and date from the 1850 to 1870 period. Berks County bridges portray some unique regional characteristics; all possess horizontal siding and three have unusual stepped portals.

<u>Bridge Name & Number</u>	<u>Truss</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Length</u>
Pleasantville 36-06-01	Burr	1852, 1856	126'
Greisemer's Mill 36-06-03	Burr	1868	124'
Kutz's Mill 36-06-05	Burr	1854	93'
*Wertz's 36-06-06	Burr	1867	165'
Dreibelbis Station 36-06-07	Burr	1869	172'

* Listed on National Register on 11-17-78.

The Pleasantville bridge has the unusual distinction of being built in two stages because of the shortage of lumber following the Great Flood of 1850.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input 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 (in one paragraph)

The Covered Bridges of Berks County are rare survivals of a type of bridge technology which was once common in this county. Thirty-seven covered bridges were built in Berks County between 1818 and 1887, today only 5 remain. These remaining 5 portray some interesting regional portal designs, it is unfortunate not to be able to examine the designs of the original 37 bridges to trace how wide spread these regional differences actually were.

One of the original 37 bridges over the Schuylkill River, known as the Stroud's Ferry bridge had the problem of serving a highway and carrying two canal towpaths. It was able to do this with an ingenious system which was the forerunner of the cloverleaf of todays highways. This bridge also had the honor of being the worlds longest covered bridge at 238'. It was neglect that finally did in this unusual structure on September 12, 1948. Neglect of these fine examples of wooden technology could well decrease Berks County's remaining 5 bridges as well as Pennsylvania's other coverd bridges.

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COVERED BRIDGES OF BERKS COUNTY

CONTINUATION SHEET

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County Bridge Records

World Guide to Covered Bridges, National Society for Covered Bridges,
Inc. 1972, p. 59

Fred J. Moll, Personal Communication (letter), 11-4-79

George M. Meiser IX, Personal Communication 10-24-79

Additional information on the triple set of arches used in the
Pleasantville Bridge can be found in the Winter (1979-1980) issue
of the Berks County Historical Review

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Berks County Covered Bridges, Berks County
Continuation sheet

Item number

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After a re-examination of the boundaries on the Pleasantville Covered Bridge, it was decided that the usual formula was not adequate to include the long bridge abutments. Therefore, we are increasing the verbal boundary for this bridge to:

Manatawny, Pa. Quadrangle

1:24,000

Pleasantville Bridge (36-06-01)

Acreage: .14

Zone 18 E437260 N4469870

$(126'+40') \times (16'+20') = 5976 \div 43,560 = .14$