

Oregon Historic Site Record

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME					
address:	Main St (approx) Eagle Point, Jackson County		historic name:	Antelope Creek Covered Bridge	
assoc addresses:			current/other names:	Little Butte Creek Pedestrian Bridge, Jackson County Bridge #202	
location descr:	Antelope Creek, E Of Main St		block/lot/tax lot:		
			twtnshp/rng/sect/qtr sect:	38S 1W 9	
PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS					
resource type:	Structure	height (stories):	1.0	total elig resources:	1
elig evaluation:	eligible/significant			total inelig resources:	0
prim constr date:	1922	second date:	1965	NR Status:	Individually Listed
				date indiv listed:	12/26/2012
primary orig use:	Road Related (vehicular)			orig use comments:	
second orig use:				prim style comments:	Queen Post Truss w/King Post Truss Support
primary style:	Other / Undefined			sec style comments:	
secondary style:				siding comments:	
primary siding:	Vertical Board			architect:	N/A
secondary siding:				builder:	Hartman, Jason, Jackson County Bridge Foreman
plan type:	Covered Bridge				
comments/notes:					
(Moved,Modified). Re-recorded for new nomination, 2012.					
GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS					
Survey/Grouping Included In:			Type of Grouping	Date Listed	Date Compiled
Eagle Point Survey Update 2019			Survey & Inventory Project		2020
Oregon Covered Bridges (TR)			MPS	11/29/1979	1977
SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY					
NR date listed:	12/26/2012	106 Project(s)		Special Assess Project(s):	None
ILS survey date:		SHPO Case	Date	Agency Effect Eval	
RLS survey date:	11/11/2019		05/15/2002	no adverse effect	
				Federal Tax Project(s):	None
ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION					
<i>(Includes expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings and alterations)</i>					
<p>The Antelope Creek Covered Bridge was constructed in 1922 by Jackson County bridge-building brothers Wesley and Lyal Hartman. The bridge is an approximately 59-foot-long queenpost through truss reinforced by kingpost trusses. It has timber framing, a plank deck, vertical board siding, and a cedar shingle roof. Approaches to the bridge are enclosed with horizontal board rails. The west (northwest) approach is preceded by Eagle Point's Veterans Memorial Park. As first built, the bridge was located over Antelope Creek about eight miles southeast of its present location, in Jackson County. The bridge was bypassed in 1975 following the construction of a newer span and left to deteriorate. It was moved on August 30, 1987 to its current location over Little Butte Creek, replacing an earlier covered bridge that had washed away. It currently serves as a pedestrian bridge, primarily for school children, approached through Eagle Point's Veteran's Memorial Park. The bridge was re-sited in 2000 with custom milled siding that replicates its earlier siding in order to be re-nominated for listing in the National Register.</p>					
HISTORY					
<i>(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)</i>					
<p>The Antelope Creek Covered Bridge is significant under Criterion C for its engineering design, at the state level, as documented in the 1979 Oregon Covered Bridges Thematic Nomination. Its Area of Significance is Engineering and its Period of Significance is 1922, the date of construction. The bridge is an excellent and relatively rare example of a housed, queenpost through truss reinforced by kingpost trusses. Although there were three queenpost truss bridges in Jackson County in the early twentieth century, it is a rare type in the state of Oregon, where the covered Howe truss timber bridge is much more common. The two covered bridges over Antelope Creek in existence in 1959 were built by Jackson County bridge-building brothers Wesley and Lyal Hartman. The Hartmans, along with their father Jason, were responsible for building hundreds of bridges in Jackson County in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the covered bridges. Use of the queenpost truss appears to be a hallmark of the elder Hartman's work, who supervised his sons. Today it is one of forty-four surviving examples of the estimated 450 covered timber truss bridges that once existed in Oregon. The bridge displays excellent integrity, retaining its timber structure and metal rod connections, representing its structural design, materials, and workmanship; and its overall form, arched portal openings, clerestory openings, knee braces and outriggers, and exposed purlins and rafters, representing its major design features. Although the structure has been moved, its current location within the same drainage system and in a park-like setting, which emulates its original semi-rural setting, allows the bridge to meet Criterion Exception B. Thus, the bridge retains integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The bridge was listed in 1979 as part of the 1979 Oregon Covered Bridges Thematic Nomination. It was de-listed in 1988. The purpose of this nomination is to again list the bridge on the National Register of Historic Places. Narrative Statement of Significance From the time of its construction by Jackson County in 1922 until 1987, the Antelope Creek Covered Bridge spanned Antelope Creek at its historic location roughly eight miles southeast of Eagle Point in Jackson County, Oregon. The bridge was built by the Hartman brothers, Wesley and Lyal, who along with their father are legends in Jackson County bridge-building history. Their father Jason came to Jackson County and began working for the County bridge department in the 1890s, building hand-hewn timber bridges. His sons began working for the County in February 1919, building every kind of bridge required by the County, including its covered bridges. A 1959 newspaper story on the brothers stated that they had worked for the County for 40 years and had built well over 500 bridges by that time. They built both covered bridges over Antelope Creek, which are pictured under construction in the newspaper article (see Figure 4). The bridge was originally constructed over Antelope Creek, eight miles southeast of its present location on Little Butte Creek, although within the same Rogue River drainage. The bridge was bypassed by a modern road in 1965. As its condition deteriorated, plans were made to move the bridge to Little Butte Creek in Eagle Point, which had lost its covered bridge earlier when it washed away. The bridge was moved on August 30, 1987 and placed in its current location, where it serves as a pedestrian bridge for children walking from the town to the schools on the opposite side of the creek. Like its location on Antelope Creek, its present location is parallel to a modern vehicular bridge. Located in a park-like setting, which effectively emulates its earlier semi-rural setting, the moved bridge meets Criterion Exception B. The Antelope Creek Covered Bridge meets National Register Criterion C, notwithstanding its relocation within the drainage system it historically occupied, because it continues to possess the distinctive characteristics of design and construction that caused it to be listed as part of the State's covered bridge themed nomination in 1979. No substitutions of fabric were made in the main structural framework. The housing precisely conforms to its historic configuration, having been reconstructed of original fabric and like-kind replacement material where original fabric was unsalvageable due to dry rot, with the exception of the siding along the length of the bridge, which was replaced in kind. A schedule of material replacements that occurred in 1987 and their justification, with the exception of the siding, appears at the end of Section 7. The Antelope Creek Covered Bridge is one of three historic housed timber truss spans remaining in Jackson County, and one of forty-four such bridges now standing in the state. Within this resource group it is distinctive</p>					

as one of only three extant queenpost through trusses, two of which are to be found in Jackson County. The Howe truss is by far the predominant truss type represented in standing examples statewide, making this resource relatively unique. The Antelope Creek Covered Bridge also is among the older standing examples, having been erected in the early automobile age when road widths were narrower, under 20 feet. The standing covered spans in Jackson County were constructed between 1917 and 1927 under supervision of the County bridge foreman, Jason Hartman. The Antelope Creek Covered Bridge is of statewide significance as a distinctive representative of a long-lived bridge-building tradition in Oregon. Because it is a timber-abundant state characterized by a myriad of drainage systems and a rainy climate in its mountainous western region, Oregon became the area of heaviest covered bridge construction activity west of the Mississippi River. At the height of this activity, Oregon is believed to have had 450 housed timber spans. The ‘youngest’ of the type were built in the 1960s. The oldest standing today was erected in 1914. The bridge’s historic period of significance is 1922, the date of its construction. This is consistent with as it is within the Period of Significance established by the Oregon Covered Bridges Thematic Nomination, which is 1914 to 1966. The practice of putting housings on spans evolved to protect wooden truss members and their critical fastenings from deterioration, which would occur more rapidly if these features were wholly exposed to the weather. After World War II, construction of the modern highway system, with its wider road-width and straighter alignment standards, caused the number of covered bridges to decline rapidly. Housed timber trusses were also rendered obsolete at this time by development of the means to extend the usable life of pre-cut timbers by pressure-treating them with creosote or chemical treatment with Wolmanized salts. Additionally, steel and concrete became increasingly economical for long spans in the post-war years, as well as affording both longer life and greater adaptability in design to the requirements of the modern highway system. The nominated bridge was erected at a time when the Oregon State Highway Department had begun to encourage standardization of covered spans. State Bridge Engineer C. B. McCullough had issued a drawing for a standard 150-foot Howe Truss in 1920, no doubt in conformance with guidelines promulgated by the Bureau of Public Roads. The drawing was made available to county engineers and local contractors, who either adapted the design or used it in its entirety. The nominated bridge was not patterned after the standard, however. Jackson County bridge foreman Jason Hartman appears to have adhered to an older, more traditional queenpost truss type for the comparatively short spans required to bridge Lost Creek (1919) and Antelope Creek (1922). Hartman also erected a queenpost through truss span of 85 feet over Evans Creek at Wimer as late as 1927 (no longer extant). Covered bridges are no longer utilized on the state road system because they are incompatible with modern transportation standards for loading and clearance. Therefore, many covered bridges have historically been bypassed, demolished, or moved to allow for the construction of modern road systems. The bridges that remain in the state are mostly distinguished by low-volume use on local transportation routes. Because of this, the remaining bridges are often in locations away from highly urbanized areas, the result being that the remaining bridges are characterized as resources that are found in countryside locations away from the hustle and bustle of modern life. While the Antelope Creek Covered Bridge is in an urban setting, it is sited within a park along Little Butte Creek, which contributes to the sense that the bridge is separate from its small-town setting. Another salient feature that is shared by the bridges of the Oregon Covered Bridges Thematic Nomination, and continues to be a feature of the Antelope Creek Covered Bridge, is the reliance on timber truss construction. This bridge not only retains its important timber truss, it is a relatively rare truss type in Oregon timber bridge history, raising its level of significance.

RESEARCH INFORMATION

Title Records	Census Records	Property Tax Records	✓ Local Histories
Sanborn Maps	Biographical Sources	✓ SHPO Files	✓ Interviews
Obituaries	✓ Newspapers	State Archives	Historic Photographs
City Directories	Building Permits	State Library	

Local Library:

Historical Society: Oregon Historical Society

University Library:

Other Repository:

Bibliography:

Cockrell, Nick, and Bill Cockrell, *Roofs Over Rivers: A Guide to Oregon’s Covered Bridges*, (Beaverton, Oregon: The Touchstone Press, 1978), p. 26. “Covered Bridges in Jackson County,” Draft Five Year Capital Improvement Program,” July 1, 1979, Jackson County Public Works Department, p. 64. Leeuwenburgh, Walt, Jackson County Department of Public Works Bridge Engineer, informed the State Historic Preservation Office that each of the covered span presenting standing in Jackson County was constructed by County bridge foreman Jason Harman. Telephone communication, February 1, 1988. Nelson, Lee H., “A Century of Oregon Covered Bridges, 1851-1952,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (June 1960), 101-209. Potter, Elizabeth, et. Al., National Register Inventory-Nomination Form, June 1979. Oregon Covered Bridges TR. Antelope Creek Covered Bridge, Inventory #12, was listed in the National Register as part of this thematic nomination on November 29, 1979. Smith, Dwight A., James B. Norman, and Pieter T. Dykman, *Historic Highway Bridges of Oregon*, (Salem, Oregon: Oregon Department of Transportation Environmental Section, 1985). Vroman, Bob, “Hartmans Built County’s Early-Day Bridges,” *Mail Tribune*, Medford, OR, July 19, 1959, p. 12.