

34

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

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

| |
|-------------------|
| For HCRS use only |
| received |
| date entered |

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

1. Name

historic BELLS MILLS COVERED BRIDGE

and/or common

2. Location

street & number L. R. 64180, Milbell _____ not for publication

city, town don Townships _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 21

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Westmoreland code 129

3. Classification

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Westmoreland County, Department of Roads and Parks

street & number R. D. #8, Box 21-C

city, town Greensburg _____ vicinity of _____ state Pennsylvania

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Westmoreland County Courthouse

street & number North Main Street

city, town Greensburg _____ state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic American Building Survey PA-415 has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes _____ no

date 1936 federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Historic American Building Survey

city, town Washington _____ state D.C.

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

The Bells Mills bridge which crosses Sewickley Creek is unusual in that it actually has an architectural style. Built in 1850 by Daniel McCain, an architect and contractor, the protals of the Bells Mills bridge use the plain pilasters and pedimented gables of the Greek Revival style. This one span, Burr arch truss, bridge measures 95' and has a total width of 14'.

Its horizontal clapboard siding comes to arch level leaving a window opening under the leaves. The bridge is constructed of oak and has two inch plank floor boards with two inch plank runners. The original roof has been replaced with corrugated iron covered by one inch thick sheathing boards. The bridge abutments are of cut sandstone, one abutment has been braced with concrete. The date of construction and builders name is painted on the bridges pedimented gables.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input 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 1850

Builder/Architect Daniel McCain

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Bells Mill bridge is the only remaining example of the wooden truss period of bridge development in Westmoreland County. This unusual bridge also uses a distinctive architectural style. This Greek Revival covered bridge is the only one of its kind in Pennsylvania.

The Bells Mill bridge was the first of three that had been built across the Big Sewickley Creek: Bell's Mills in 1850; Waltz Mill about 1860; and the third at old Gratztown. The latter two were replaced by iron and then concrete bridges about 1917.

The Bell's Mill Bridge has been many times referred to as the Milbell Bridge which is a misconception. There was a town known as Milbell about two miles down the Creek on the Markle plantation which has since disappeared. There was first a sawmill, then a grist mill and then a famous paper mill, also a school for employees' children. It was a unique operation with all needs practically being supplied on the Markle tract. That was Milbell and it was shown most recently on the railroad maps in the 1850's.

Bell's Mill, the little community which gave the Bridge its name, was so called because of the grist mill owned and operated by the Bell family of South Huntingdon, and it too was a thriving little crossroads.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Historic American Building Survey, PA-415, 1936.

Stotz, Charles M. The Architectural Heritage of Early Western Pa.
Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966, p. 21, 176, 191.

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property .06

Quadrangle name Smithton, Pa.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| Zone | | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

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| Zone | | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Acree is calculated by adding 20 feet (95'+20') x (14' + 10') = 115' x 24' = 2760 ÷ 43,560 = .06

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan M. Zacher / Hazel Adams

organization PHMC / Travel & Historic Development

street & number Box 1026/Courthouse Square telephone

city or town Harrisburg / Greensburg state Pennsylvania

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

ED WEINTRAUB, Director
title Office of Historic Preservation date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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| Zone | | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

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State Historic Preservation Officer signature Ed Weindraub

ED WEINTRAUB, Director
title Office of Historic Preservation date 3/10/80

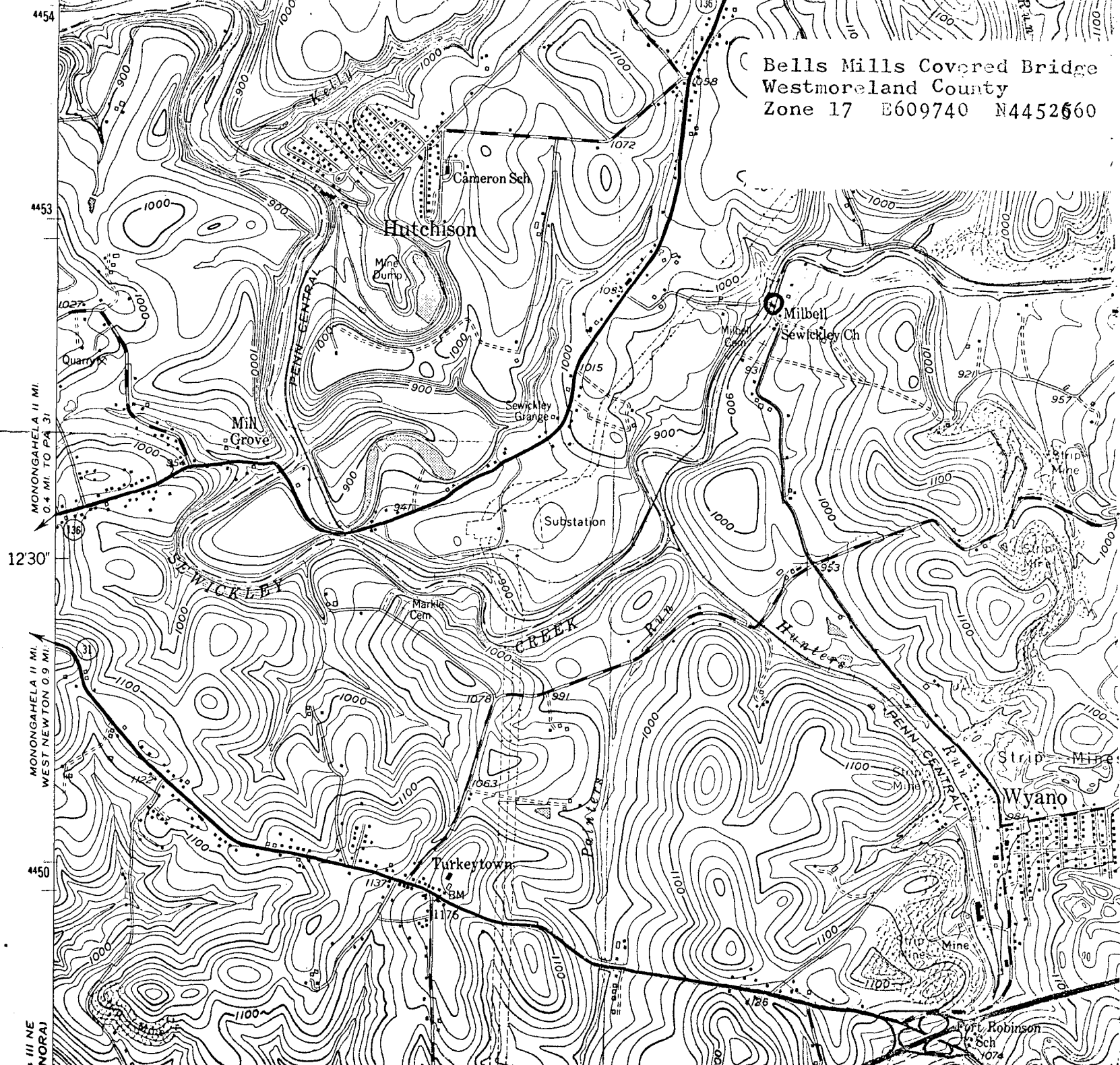
For HCERS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date

Chief of Registration

Bells Mills Covered Bridge
Westmoreland County
Zone 17 E609740 N4452660



MONONGAHELA II MI.
0.4 MI. TO PA 31

MONONGAHELA II MI.
WEST NEWTON 0.9 MI.

III NE
MONRAJ