

4.2.10**Chambers Bridge**

Score: 48



Woolwich Township

Documentation**Builder**

The builder of the Chamber's Bridge is unknown.

Age

The current Chamber's Bridge believed to be built in 1930.¹⁸⁴

Technology**Materials**

The bridge truss is made of steel and the deck is made of wood.¹⁸⁵

Design/Style

This bridge is a single span, 156 foot long, single lane, through Camelback Pratt Truss bridge.¹⁸⁶

Prototype

The Chamber's Bridge is not a prototype in Woolwich Township nor in the Region, as the Winterbourne Bridge in Woolwich Township was built earlier (1913).

Structural Integrity

In 1929, it was said that Road 6 "Pilkington Township, 20 foot span bridge had its approaches graded and surfaced and road graded to fit the bridge."¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Spanning the Generations – Phase 1: Inventory, "Chamber's Bridge," May 2004, p. 1.47 – 1.48.

¹⁸⁵ The Record, "Woolwich closes bridge over Grand." January 18, 1991 & Spanning the Generations – Phase 1: Inventory, "Chamber's Bridge," May 2004, p. 1.47 – 1.48.

¹⁸⁶ Spanning the Generations – Phase 1: Inventory, "Chamber's Bridge," May 2004, p. 1.47 – 1.48. & Wellington Advertiser. "Townline bridge expected to open soon: Woolwich to re-open; capacity is three tons; speed 5km/hour." November 15, 2002.

The Chamber's Bridge was built in 1930, but the structure may not have been situated at its current location until 1946, the same year that the west abutment was added.¹⁸⁸

On January 18, 1991, a 30 cm strip of the wood deck lifted and the bridge was closed for the rest of the day until it was repaired.¹⁸⁹

On May 29, 1992, it was said that the bridge was severely corroded in areas and was to be restricted to use by light vehicles only. Three weeks later the bridge was repaired.¹⁹⁰

On September 19, 1994, the bridge was deemed unsafe again with its deteriorating deck and rusting steel supports. Plans were prepared for repairs to be undertaken in 1995.¹⁹¹ In August of 1995 the bridge was temporarily closed. At a council meeting in March of 1996, councillors agreed to pass a by-law that would officially close the bridge for the next three years. This was presented again at a council meeting on June 17, 1996, where it also re-stated that repairs would be postponed for three years because the cost so was too high.¹⁹² Also at this time there were concerns that the bridge was not safe, even for pedestrians. To keep people off the structure, piles of gravel were placed in front of the bridge and the Township placed welded rails at either end. This attempt was not very successful as people still managed to cross the bridge. Council then had signs placed on either end of the bridge informing people that by using the structure, they would do so at their own risk.¹⁹³

The bridge remained closed until 2002. The Wellington Advertiser newspaper article indicated that the Township planned to have the bridge re-opened to light and slow moving traffic before Christmas 2002. This was to occur after repairs were complete, including deck work, and additional diagonal braces.¹⁹⁴

Bridge Aesthetics and Environment

Visual Appeal

The bridge has strong visual appeal as it is located in an "attractive area for fishing, hiking, or just a Sunday afternoon retreat."¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁷ Wellington County Council Minutes: 1929-1931. "Report of the County Road Superintendent to the Warden and Council of the County of Wellington", December 12, 1929, p.61.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ The Record, "Woolwich closes bridge over Grand." January 18, 1991.

¹⁹⁰ The Record, "Bridge restricted to light vehicles." May 29, 1992.

¹⁹¹ The Record. "Extensive repairs needed to Woolwich-Pilkington Bridge." September 19, 1994.

¹⁹² The Record, "Woolwich, Pilkington boundary bridge will be officially closed for three years." March 27, 1996. & The Record, "NO MONEY TO FIX GRAND RIVER BRIDGES: Pilkington, Woolwich councils struggle to span financial gap." June 17, 1996.

¹⁹³ The Record. "Hikers, bicyclists press Woolwich to allow use of Grand bridge on road 60." June 22, 1996.

¹⁹⁴ Wellington Advertiser. "Townline bridge expected to open soon: Woolwich to re-open; capacity is three tons; speed 5km/hour." November 15, 2002.

¹⁹⁵ The Record. "Hikers, bicyclists press Woolwich to allow use of Grand bridge on road 60." June 22, 1996.

Integrity

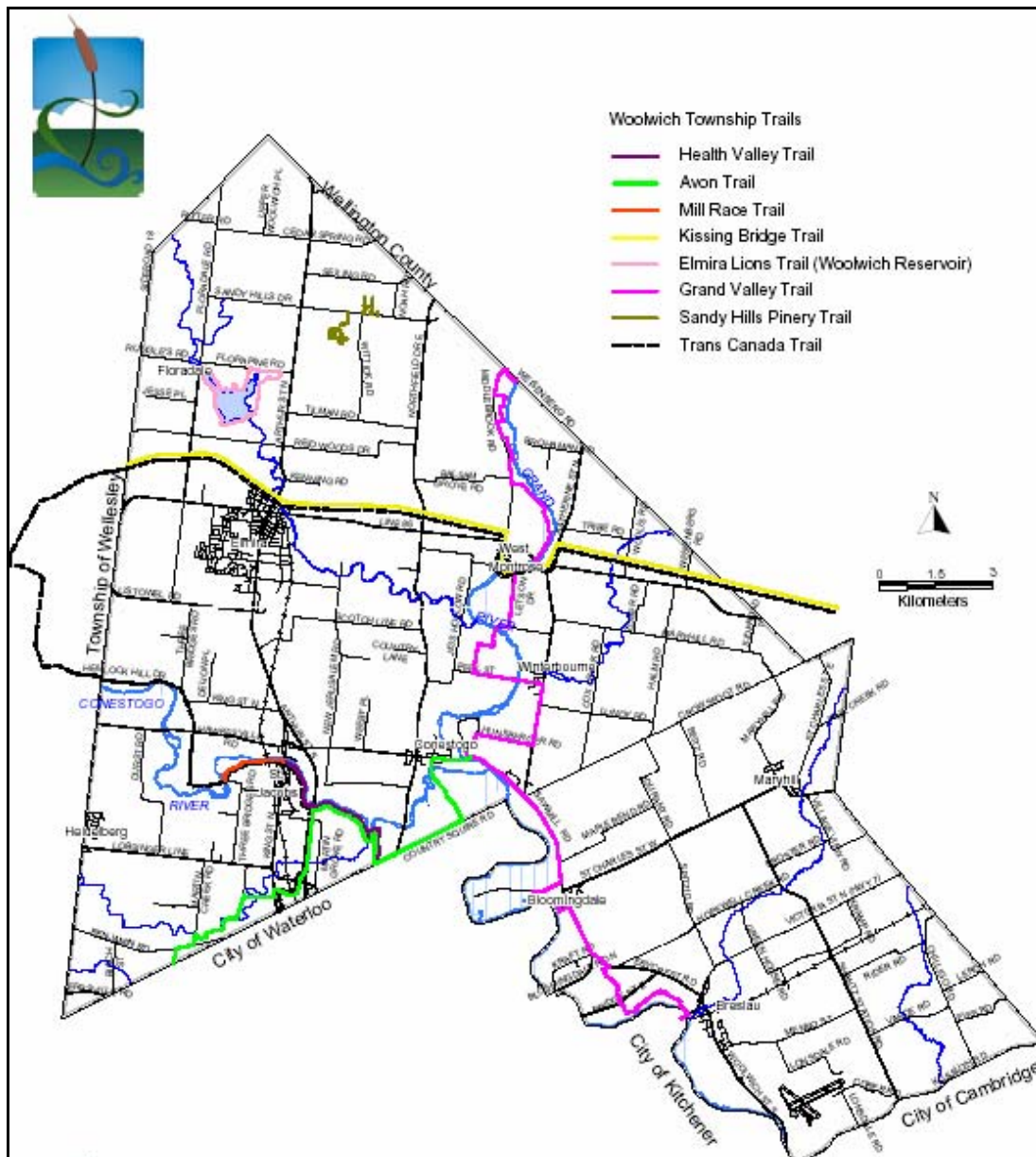
It is believed that the “steel superstructure was brought to the Grand River from another location in 1946.” Therefore the bridge has low integrity.¹⁹⁶

Landmark

The bridge is a significant landmark along the Grand Valley Trail, which follows the west end of the Grand River until it approaches the bridge. In 1996, it was found that people often liked to cross the bridge while approaching it from the trail because the terrain on the east end was much safer.¹⁹⁷ The following map displays all of Woolwich’s Trails including the Grand Valley Trail near the Chamber’s Bridge.

¹⁹⁶ Wellington Advertiser. “Townline bridge expected to open soon: Woolwich to re-open; capacity is three tons; speed 5km/hour.” November 15, 2002.

¹⁹⁷ The Record. “Hikers, bicyclists press Woolwich to allow use of Grand bridge on road 60.” June 22, 1996 & Spanning the Generations – Phase 1: Inventory, “Chamber’s Bridge,” May 2004, p. 1.47 – 1.48.



Source: Planning Housing and Community Services Department, Region of Waterloo.

Gateway

The bridge is not a gateway, but it is an integral part of the Township Line road.

Historical Association

Bridge Group

The bridge belongs to the larger group of camelback through Pratt Truss bridges in Waterloo Region. The other significant bridges in this group include the Winterbourne Bridge also in Woolwich Township and the Oxford-Waterloo Road and Bridge Street Bridges in Wilmot Township.

History of Chamber's Bridge

The first Chamber's Bridge was made of wood and must have been constructed around 1845. A blueprint dated March 1845, describes a "proposed plan of a bridge over the Grand River on the site where the new line of road in the Township of Woolwich crosses the river."¹⁹⁸ Now this bridge existed until 1900 as County by-laws of the year refers the Chamber's Bridge over the Grand River being made of wood with a crib foundation.¹⁹⁹ This bridge was removed around 1905 because on July 13, 1905 a contract was signed to "build a bridge across the Grand River on the road forming the boundary line between the Townships of Pilkington and Woolwich, [where] said bridge [is] known as the Chamber's Bridge." This bridge was to be completed no later than August 15, 1905.²⁰⁰ This bridge was slated for replacement around 1925 because it was stated that a "1925 design drawing for a replacement superstructure indicated using the existing east abutment and pier." In 1929, it was said that Road 6 "Pilkington, 20 foot span bridge had its approaches graded and surfaced and road graded to fit the bridge."²⁰¹ This bridge probably existed at the site until 1946 as the present bridge was built in 1930, but did not move to its current location until 1946.²⁰²

Human Interest

People "often use[d] the bridge for nature walks" especially when walking the Grand Valley Trail. As well, hikers, bikers and fisherman have been known to use the bridge.²⁰³

Other Points of Interest

In a 1906 Atlas, the bridge was seen located next to John Chamber's land. This is probably why it was named the "Chamber's Bridge."²⁰⁴

This bridge has also been called Bridge #16 and the Pilkington-Woolwich Bridge as it borders both Townships and its maintenance costs are subsidized by both.²⁰⁵

The Chamber's Bridge is a single span bridge and "single span bridges are only supported by the abutments at either end of the structure." However, this bridge has an abutment located in the middle of the structure that is technically not related for this bridge design. This could indicate that a previous structure located there may have been a double span bridge.²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁸ Wellington County Museum and Archives. "BLUEPRINT: Proposed plan of a bridge over the Grand River: Chamber's Bridge." March 1845.

¹⁹⁹ County of Waterloo By-laws etc. 1852-1900. 1900---County Bridges. The Region of Waterloo Archives, p. 107.

²⁰⁰ Wellington County Museum and Archives. "Chamber's Bridge Contract." July 13, 1905. Retrieved from archives: Thursday, April 20, 2006.

²⁰¹ Wellington County Council Minutes: 1929 – 1931. "Report of County Road Superintendent to the Warden and Council of the County of Wellington", December 12, 1929, p. 61.

²⁰² Spanning the Generations – Phase 1: Inventory, "Chamber's Bridge," May 2004, p. 1.47 – 1.48.

²⁰³ The Record. "Hikers, bicyclists press Woolwich to allow use of Grand bridge on road 60." June 22, 1996.

²⁰⁴ Historical Atlas of Wellington County. "Townships of Nichols and Pilkington." Historical Atlas Publishing Co.: Toronto, 1906.

²⁰⁵ The Record. "Extensive repairs needed to Woolwich-Pilkington Bridge." September 19, 1994. & County of Waterloo By-laws etc. 1852-1900. 1900---County Bridges. The Region of Waterloo Archives, p. 107.

²⁰⁶ "Historic Bridges of Michigan - Slideshow." Promoting the Preservation of Our Transportation Heritage.

Chamber's Bridge

Location Woolwich Twp. Rd. No. 60 (now Weisenburg Road), 2.4 km west of Katherine Street N., north of Zuber Corners, Township of Woolwich.

General Information

<i>Bridge No.</i>	180160
<i>Jurisdiction</i>	Township of Woolwich
<i>Year built</i>	1930
<i>Drawings</i>	MTO (west abutment)

Physical Components

<i>Type</i>	through Truss
<i>Spans</i>	1
<i>Dimensions</i>	Length 47.5 m Width 4.3 m
<i>Load Limit</i>	3 tonnes

Descriptive details

This is a single span single lane through truss bridge. The maintenance costs are subsidized between the Township of Woolwich and Pilkington Township (now Centre Wellington). The MTO had drawings of the west abutment and have given copies to the Municipality for evaluation. A 1925 design drawing for a replacement superstructure indicated using the existing east abutment and pier. The west abutment was constructed around 1946, and the truss was likely moved slightly at this time, making the middle pier superfluous. The deck of the bridge was deemed “unsafe” by Woolwich Township, even for pedestrians.



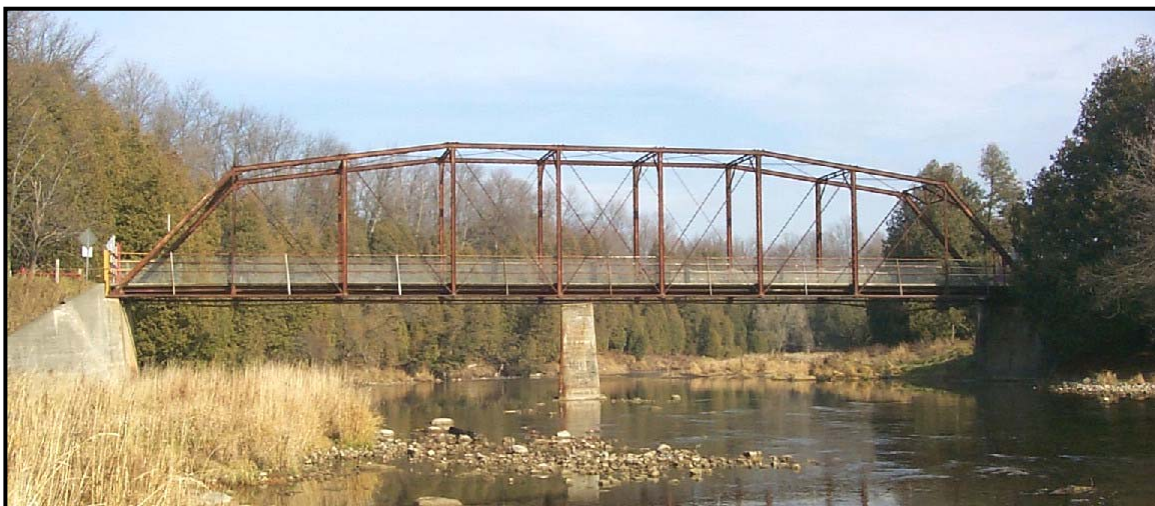
Source: Planning Housing and Community Services, Region of Waterloo

Chamber's Bridge

West View



North View



Chamber's Bridge Bibliography

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Region of Waterloo: Planning Housing and Community Services Department. Woolwich Trails Map. <http://www.township.woolwich.on.ca>. 5 April, 2006.

The Record – Kitchener, Waterloo & Waterloo Region. Bridge restricted to light vehicles. 29 May, 1992.

The Record – Kitchener, Waterloo & Waterloo Region. Hikers, bicyclists press Woolwich to allow use of Grand Bridge on road 60. 22 June, 1996.

The Record – Kitchener, Waterloo & Waterloo Region. NO MONEY TO FIX GRAND RIVER BRIDGES: Pilkington, Woolwich councils struggle to span financial gap. 17 June, 1996.

The Record – Kitchener, Waterloo & Waterloo Region. Woolwich closes bridge over Grand. 18 January, 1991.

The Record – Kitchener, Waterloo & Waterloo Region. Woolwich-Pilkington boundary bridge will be officially closed for three years. 27 March, 1996.

The Record – Kitchener, Waterloo & Waterloo Region. WORK POSTPONED TO 1995: Extensive repairs needed to Woolwich-Pilkington Bridge. 19 September, 1994.

Wellington Advertiser Newspaper. Townline Bridge Expected to open soon: Woolwich to re-open; capacity if three tons; speed 5km/hour. 15 November 2002.

Wellington County Council Minutes: 1929 – 1931. Report of County Road Superintendent to the Warden and Council of the County of Wellingto.

Wellington County Museum and Archives. "Chamber's Bridge Contract." July 13, 1905. Retrieved from archives: Thursday, April 20, 2006

Wellington County Museum and Archives. BLUEPRINT: Proposed plan of a bridge over the Grand River: Chamber's Bridge. March 1845.