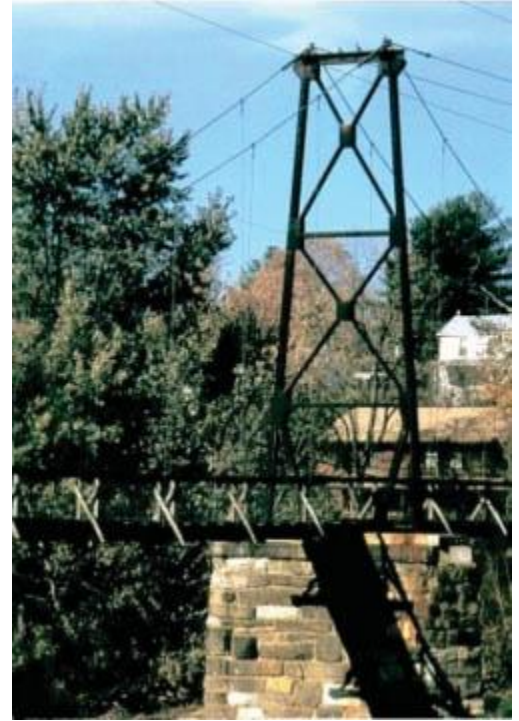


Buchanan Swinging Bridge

One of Buchanan's most recognized architectural structures is the Buchanan Swinging Bridge. The Bridge is 366 feet long, 57.5 feet tall and the only one of its type to cross the James River. Portions of the bridge date back to 1851 and have witnessed Hunter's Civil War Raid, the rerouting of U.S. Route 11, and numerous floods. The Swinging Bridge is a contributing structure to the Town of Buchanan Historic District.

Portions of the large stone piers rising from the James River were constructed in 1851 as part of the Buchanan Turnpike Company's Toll Bridge. Toll for every person to pass through this wood covered bridge was five cents with an additional five cents for each horse, mule or oxen and five cents for each wagon. On June 13, 1864 the covered bridge was burned by Confederate General McCausland in an effort to prevent Federal troops from crossing the James River on their way to Lynchburg. The bridge was rebuilt following the war but washed away in a flood of 1877. At this time, the R&A Railroad Company rebuilt a toll free covered bridge. In 1897 this wood covered bridge was replaced with a steel bridge that remained in use until 1938.



In July of 1937 construction of the current concrete James River Bridge was started with an agreement with the Town under Mayor C. W. Blount to maintain pedestrian access to Pattonsburg via the swinging bridge. In the photo to the left you can see the concrete bridge under construction and the old steel bridge sitting of footers which would be replaced with the new swinging bridge on those same footers. On July 4, 1938, the new bridges were dedicated by former Governor E. Lee Trinkle as speaker.

To the right you can see an image of the Swinging Bridge when it was completed in 1938.

For more than 150 years, portions of the Buchanan Swinging Bridge have played a critical role in the Town of Buchanan's history earning it the role as symbol of the Town of Buchanan. The bridge is a favorite landmark of residents and visitors alike providing a scenic view of the James River and surrounding mountains. The Buchanan Swinging Bridge is proudly featured on the Town Seal.

Visitors wishing to visit the Swinging Bridge may park at the Buchanan Swinging Bridge Park located at 687 Lowe Street. The site offers beautiful flowers, a picnic table, kiosk with Bridge history, Calendar of Events Listings as well as a view of the Bridge itself with easy access to the Bridge by way of a





Supporting Documents

2023 Buchanan Swinging Bridge
BROCHURE 398.95 KB

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