

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF TREADWAY 1989-2009

BRUCE TRAIL

TREADWAY

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SHERMAN FALLS BRIDGE REPLACED AFTER 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

The Sherman Falls bridge has been a landmark for over 25 years. Not only has it served as a viewing platform for one of the most spectacular waterfalls in Ontario, it has also facilitated safe passage for thousands of hikers along the Bruce Trail. It's also a favourite prop for hundreds of wedding pictures. On any one day the bridge and falls receives dozens of visitors.



The bridge was originally built in the '80s by volunteers and with a generous donation from Stelco

who provided the steel beams. The beams were assembled in 4 sections and bolted together. Over the years, wear and tear

has taken its toll. It was time to replace the bridge. Through the gallant efforts of our volunteers, a generous donation from *Siemens Fossil Power Generation, Hamilton*, the permission of the landowner, and some help from Hamilton Conservation (talk about a team effort) the project was underway.



The trail was rerouted temporarily to allow safe passage for hikers around the construction area. The old bridge was dismantled. The railings and deck boards were removed and the discarded lumber was piled neatly to one side. Some of the salvaged lumber will be used again on future projects. The exposed steel beams weighing 1400 pounds, were carefully

lowered into the streambed using cables and people power. Once on the ground, the beams were cut up into manageable pieces and carried to the nearby roadside to be salvaged.



The footings at each end of the bridge were reinforced. Wooded beams, 8"x8" were used plus logs, placed in a configuration to contain the existing supportive rock. Additional rock was added. The banks of the streambed were also reinforced to reduce the possibility of erosion. This part of the reconstruction was a two-day project in itself. Tons of rock were moved manually by our volunteers on each of the two days.



Lumber for the bridge was delivered to an off-site location for some preassembly. The two 36-foot long 8"x10" Douglas fir beams were shipped directly to the work site. Sixteen volunteers were on hand to receive them; the beams had to be carried from the roadside to the bridge location, a distance of about 150 metres. They weigh approximately 500 pounds each. An ingenious device consisting of ropes and rollers was assembled to ease the big timbers into place. The deck boards were nailed down and the handrails were bolted into place.



Nine work parties, 540 volunteer hours and the job was done. For at least the next 25 years, thousands of hikers and visitors will use the new Sherman Falls bridge; it will be there in full view as a back drop in hundreds of wedding photos for years to come. It now becomes part of our heritage...well done volunteers.

Photos courtesy of Paul Beneteau & Richard Pomeroy