

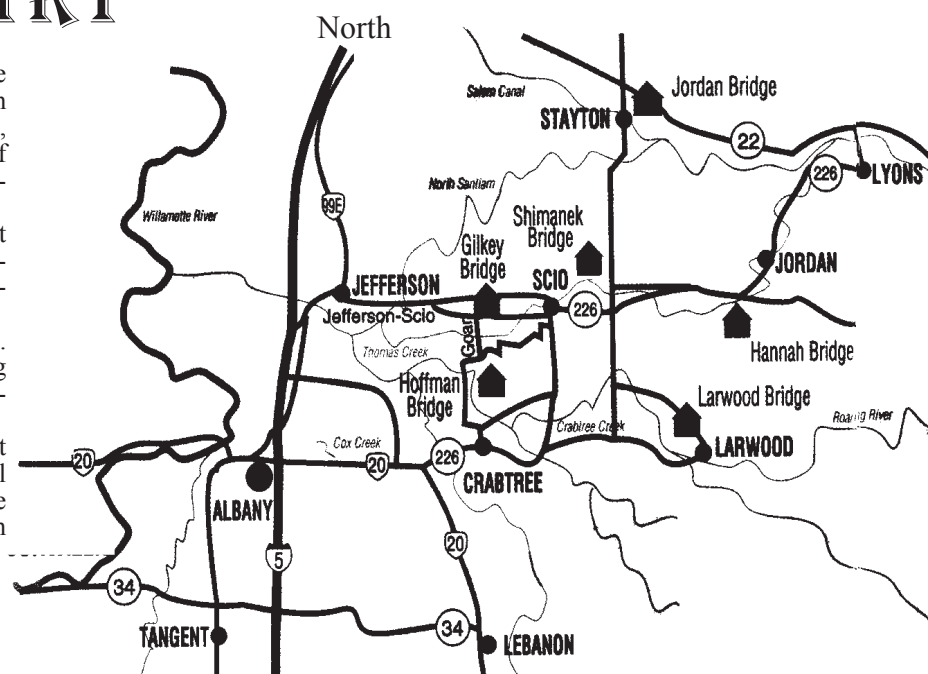
# COVERED BRIDGE COUNTRY

Oregon has the largest collection of covered bridges in the west and one of the largest in the nation. Nine of these authentic wood covered bridges are located in Linn County. The quiet roads linking these bridges are ideal for touring by bicycle, automobile and motorcycle. Five bridges located around the town of Scio, east of Albany, are included in a driving tour that is marked by signs along the approximately 30 mile route.

Most of the bridges are painted white, however the Shimanek Bridge is set apart by its beautiful red color. Larwood Bridge and Wayside Park located on the picturesque Crabtree Creek still has an old water wheel that was used to produce electricity for the area many years ago.

Linn County covered bridges were originally built during the 1930's and 1940's. Bridge builders often camped out at remote sites, living off the land or contracting with local farmers for food. Early covered bridge owners often financed construction by charging tolls; 3 cents for a sheep, 5 cents for a horse and rider.

The life span of a wood bridge is about 10 years; however, by covering the bridge it could last eighty years or more. The Howe truss-type construction was used on all Linn County Bridges. Named for Massachusetts-born architect William Howe, the trusses are a series of half "A" timbers sloping toward the center, where they form "X"s with vertical tie rods.



VISIT THE ALBANY VISITORS ASSOCIATION WEBSITE OR CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION

## Suggested Tour Route

(2-1/2 hours) approximate

From I-5, Drive 6 miles east on Hwy 20. At Hwy 226 (Crabtree sign) turn left and go 2-1/2 miles to Cold Springs Rd., turn left. Turn right in Crabtree and go 1/2 block. Turn left on Hungry Hill Rd. Travel approximately 4 miles through the **Hoffman Bridge** and turn left on Hwy 226 then left again on Gilkey Rd. At the stop sign, go right on Goar Rd. Travel through **Gilkey Bridge** to Robinson Dr., turn right. At the Main St. intersection in Scio, turn right. Cross the bridge and then turn Left on Hwy 226. Travel approximately 2-1/4 miles and turn left on Richardson Gap Rd to **Shimanek Bridge**. At the first right, take Shimanek Bridge Drive to Hwy 226. Turn left and then right on Camp Morrison Dr. Drive through the **Hannah Bridge**. Turn around room is adequate just beyond the bridge. Leaving the bridge on Hwy 226, go left on Richardson Gap Rd. 3 miles and left on Larwood County Park. (Park is the small parking lot and walk across the wooden foot bridge into the picnic area. View the bridge and partially restored water wheel.) Leaving the park, drive through Larwood **Bridge** and continue on to Fish Hatchery Dr. for approximately 8 miles. Turn left on Hwy 226. At the intersection of Hwy 20, turn right and continue on to I-5 and Albany.

**Optional 3 more Bridges** – for those who have half a day or more.

At the intersection of Hwy 20, turn left and continue all the way into Sweet Home. Here you'll find **Weddle Bridge** on 14th Ave. straddling Ames Creek at Sankey Park. Return to Hwy 20 and travel East 37

miles to Cascadia. Turn left off Hwy 20 at High Deck Rd. near the city limits of Cascadia to travel through the **Short Bridge**. Use turn around area to head back to Sweet Home. (or continue on Hwy 20 to take the Scenic Byway, but allow an extra 4 to 5 hours and make sure you have a full tank.) From Sweet Home, take Hwy 228 west to Crawfordsville. As you cross the Calapooia River, **Crawfordsville Bridge** sits along the road. From here, Hwy 228 returns to I-5 where you can head North back to Albany.

## History of Bridges

(1) **Gilkey Bridge** is 120 ft. over Thomas Creek, built in 1939 this bridge is still open to automobile traffic. The bridge is a standing reminder of what was once the town of Gilkey. This beauty exhibits open sides and curved portal openings.

(2) **Hoffman Bridge** was built in 1936. Spanning 90 ft. across Crabtree Creek the bridge was built primarily with hand tools, the upper timbers show adze marks where workers shaped them by hand. Instead of the usual open sides, this bridge has gothic windows.

(3) **Shimanek Bridge** is the only red covered bridge in Linn County. Built in 1966 this special bridge boasts Gothic louvered windows on each side and a cedar shake roof.

(4) **Jordan Bridge** Once connecting Pioneer Park and Wilderness Parks in Stayton, Jordan Bridge was moved from Thomas Creek in Linn County to the Salem Canal in neighboring Marion County On December 20th, 1994 the bridge caught fire when Christmas lights ignited the roof. Local citizens constructed a new covered bridge at the site throughout 1997 and 1998. The

new bridge was dedicated in September 1998.

(5) **Hannah Bridge** has spanned Thomas Creek since 1936 and was built on land from an original Donation Land Grant from 1846. Hannah Bridge handles daily automobile crossings and is popular with those who like to swim and fish.

(6) **Larwood Bridge** built near the confluence of Roaring River and Crabtree Creek in 1939 this bridge stands proudly at Larwood Wayside Park. This is a great spot for a picnic and fishing. A water powered wheel that once provided electricity to locals is a reminder of simpler times.

(7) **Weddle Bridge** in Sweet Home's Sankey Park features exposed trusses and rounded portals. The bridge was built in 1937 and carried traffic over Thomas Creek for 43 years until being by-passed in 1980. The structure was moved to Ames Creek in 1989.

(8) **Short Bridge** was built in 1945 and was commonly known as Whiskey Butte Bridge but was renamed for a long-time area resident, Gordon Short. It is one of the few remaining bridges to have a wooden shingle roof. The Short Bridge is the most eastern covered bridge in Linn County.

(9) **Crawfordsville Bridge** and town were named for Philemon Crawford whose land the town was established on. Crawfordsville Bridge features slit windows on each side. Originally the portals were rounded, but were later enlarged. By-passed by the highway in 1963, the bridge now stands beside the main road. McKercher Park, one mile downstream, is an excellent picnic spot.