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Bridge gains national honor

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THE BLAINE Bridge, already famed as Ohio's Bicentennial Bridge and the oldest documented standing bridge in the Buckeye State, has garnered yet another honor.

And, some Belmont County residents are receiving congratulations from Ohio National Road Association President Cyndie Gerken for the listing of the bridge on the National Register of Historic Places.

Gerken congratulated the Belmont County's Pease Township trustees and form preparers Nancy Campbell and Mike Peppe on the recent nomination and listing of the Blaine Hill "S" Bridge on the National Register.

The National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior listed the Blaine Hill "S" Bridge at Old National Road, Pease Township 649, Belmont County, 1.1 miles east of Interstate 70, Exit 220, 4.7 miles west of I-70 Exit 225, in Blaine, on the National Register in March.

Constructed in 1828, the bridge is the oldest documented standing bridge in Ohio. It is 385 feet in length with three segmental arches and carried the National Road over Wheeling Creek, a tributary of the Ohio River. The bridge was retired from highway use in 1933 when the Blaine Hill Viaduct was constructed and was saved from demolition in 1999. In 2001, the Ohio Legislature designated the Blaine Hill "S" Bridge as Ohio's Bicentennial Bridge. The bridge has since been fully restored.

The National Road ranks as one of our nation's most unique roadways, designated as both a National Scenic Byway and an All-American Road by the Federal Highway Department in 2002.

Initiated in 1806, it was America's first interstate highway, paving the way for settlement of the West. During the early years of the automobile era, it was one of the nation's most heavily traveled east-west arteries.

In the last decade, interest in protecting and preserving the historical richness of the sites along the Road, such as the Blaine Bridge, has led to increased interest and involvement of individuals and grassroots organizations, such as ONRA, in all six National Road states.

For more information, go to ONRA's Web site www.ohionationalroad.org. Further questions regarding the Ohio National Road Association should be addressed to Byway Coordinator Louis Agresta, (937) 521-2134, E-mail address: onra@clarkcountyohio.gov.

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Article Photos



THE BLAINE Bridge will be listed on the National Register.

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