

THE NEW BRIDGETON BRIDGE

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Parke County Guide #8



Crossing Big Raccoon Creek beside County Road East 780 South in Parke County, this double span Burr Arch Truss structure is under construction. Once considered the most photographed covered bridge in Indiana, maybe even in the world, Bridgeton Covered Bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987.

The Bridgeton Covered Bridge was set on fire on April 28, 2005. On January 12, 2006 a bridge raising ceremony was held, and on August 28, 2006 the spans of the bridge were lifted onto the abutments. Local landowners and the Indiana State Forests donated trees, which were harvested and delivered by local logging companies, and local sawmill owners and volunteers sawed the logs into the necessary beams and boards. From July through September of 2006 the bridge was constructed from the ground up, using original blueprints.

The official dedication took place on October 1, 2006 followed by a community meal for everyone who helped to build the new bridge. Typically there were 8 to 18 daily volunteers through the week and weekend during the process, and nearly \$200,000 was raised through fundraising for the reconstruction effort.

Parke County is the home of the nation's largest Covered Bridge Festival (see <http://www.coveredbridges.com>). Established in 1821 and named in honor of the first territorial delegate to Congress, Benjamin Parke, this county is located in West Central Indiana and Rockville is the County Seat.

Parke County originally had fifty-seven (57) known covered bridges plus one (1) it shared with Vermillion County to it's west. Today it has thirty (30) remaining.

Points of interest in the County include: Turkey Run State Park, Billie Creek Village, Raccoon Lake Recreation Area, and all of the beautiful Covered Bridges.