

= Skinners Falls ? Milanville Bridge =

The Skinners Falls ? Milanville Bridge is a bridge spanning the Delaware River between Milanville , Pennsylvania and Skinners Falls , New York in Wayne County , Pennsylvania and Sullivan County , New York . The bridge is 470 feet ( 140 m ) long and holds one single lane of Skinners Falls Road , a local road . The bridge was constructed by the American Bridge Company and funded by the Milanville Bridge Company . The bridge replaced a ferry run by raftsman Daniel Skinner and his family . The bridge opened in 1902 and remains in service today . It is one of several bridges in Sullivan County that are on the National Register of Historic Places , including the Roebling Aqueduct and Pond Eddy Bridge .

= = Early history and construction ( 1764 ? 1902 ) = =

In 1764 , the crossing from Skinners Falls to Milanville was the location of timber rafting for one of the most prominent families in the area , the Skinners . That year , Daniel Skinner took the first timber raft down the Delaware River . Completing this accomplishment , Skinner received the name " Lord High Admiral " , an honor that still stands to this date . The Skinners lived in a place christened as Milanville , but was known more locally as Skinners Falls . Upstream from the falls along the Delaware , another member of the Skinner family , Milton L. Skinner , operated a private ferry across the river between Pennsylvania and New York . Along with his brother , Volney , Milton Skinner also operated a local sawmill in Pennsylvania . For many years , these two rivermen remained prominent in the area .

The idea to construct a bridge in the area did not arise until the 20th Century . In 1900 and 1901 , politicians started to feel it was appropriate to build a bridge in the area . A firm , run by Milton L. Skinner , first opened in 1901 to help sell stock , construct the bridge , and then follow it by operating it for the general public . The firm , named the Milanville Bridge Company , was located in the community of Milanville on the Pennsylvania side . At the time the name of the bridge was referred to as the Milanville Bridge , but eventually , locals referred it as the " Skinners Falls Bridge " . The corporation received the charter from the state of Pennsylvania to construct the bridge in the later months of 1901 . The firm hired the American Bridge Company to construct the bridge . Construction did not get far , before an ice flood raised the river to the second story level of Milanville homes . This , along with local opposition , caused a short delay in construction .

Other than local opposition , the company owners for the nearby Narrowsburg ? Darbytown Bridge and Cohecton ? Damascus Bridge , complained about the competition of a bridge just 3 miles ( 4 @ . @ 8 km ) apart from each . The owners said that the bridge was unnecessary , and the issues eventually reached the state capital of New York , Albany . The attorney of the Cohecton Bridge , John Anderson , went to the capital to fight the construction of the bridge . The most noticed objection to the companies was that the bridge under construction could only handle one lane of traffic , increasing the necessity of the other two bridges for people in a hurry . Objections decreased with the compromise , and the American Bridge Company finished construction of the bridge in November 1902 , the total cost being \$ 14 @ , @ 000 .

= = Private ownership ( 1902 ? 1920s ) = =

After construction of the Skinners Falls ? Milanville Bridge was completed in late 1902 , tolls were immediately charged along the one lane structure . However , unlike the other two bridges , the Skinners Falls ? Milanville Bridge cost \$ 0 @ . @ 22 ( 1902 USD ) . A person traveling on foot did not have to pay to cross the structure . This decision was different compared to the other bridges , which made it separate . Another decision was that ministers were not tolled so they could better serve their communities . However , when one minister began to abuse the special privilege , he was charged \$ 0 @ . @ 05 for crossing . The tollhouse for collection was in Milanville and was run by the Dexter family .

Just two years after opening , a flood in March 1904 did serious damage to the structure . However

, the owners hired the Horseheads Bridge Company , run by the Perkins brothers . They charged \$ 7 @, @ 000 ( 1904 USD ) to complete repairs of the bridge . With the reopening of the bridge , and along with the newly constructed Erie Railroad station , a new revitalization came to Skinners Falls and Milanville , including an acid company , creamery , and a dairy company , which helped raise income for the bridge using the \$ 0 @. @ 22 toll . One company that could not make it is the Skinners ' timber rafting , which had been in business for over 140 years . In 1914 , J. Skinner was the new owner , but the company was devastated when one of their timber rafts collided with a Myers family @-@ owned ferryboat , killing four . The blame was placed on the ferry operator . However , along with the tragedy , the lack of riverside forests made it hard for timber rafting to prosper and in 1914 , they closed their doors .

= = Bridge Commission ownership ( 1920s ? present ) = =

With the opening of the New York ? Pennsylvania Joint Bridge Commission , a predecessor of the current Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission , in the 1920s to buy out these bridges from private ownership , the tolls along the bridges of the Delaware were beginning to come to an end . The Commission offered the Bridge Company an offer of \$ 19 @, @ 542 @. @ 22 ( 1920s USD ) . The company took the offer and under new ownership , the tolls were eliminated . The bridge had more activity after the elimination of tolls and business continued to prosper . With the new owners , the bridge was kept under routine maintenance , and the bridge has continued to maintain a strong structure . Even with the floods from Hurricanes Connie and Diane of 1955 and the 1960s , the bridge survived with little to no structural damage . From May to October 1986 , the commission closed the bridge to do some renovations . The wooden deck was replaced , the entire bridge was painted , and new guide rails were constructed . The only thing is that the 3 ton ( 6000 lb ) weight limit remained after the revamping . On November 14 , 1988 , the bridge was added to the National Register of Historic Places .

On January 19 , 2010 , the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation shut down access to the Skinners Falls ? Milanville Bridge when a truss member of the bridge was found to be defective . The bridge was supposed to undergo rehabilitation of the truss members later in the year for \$ 200 @, @ 000 ( 2010 USD ) and a larger \$ 8 million ( 2015 USD ) rehabilitation in 2015 . As of July 2013 , the bridge is in operation and open to vehicle traffic .

An inspection on December 11 , 2015 revealed that the bridge 's suspension wires were twisted and out of line , making the bridge unsafe to carry vehicles and the 114 @-@ year @-@ old bridge will be closed indefinitely , according to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation .

" This is not something that 's going just weeks or even months ; it 's going to be a while , " added DOT spokesman , James May .

Signs for detours are posted .