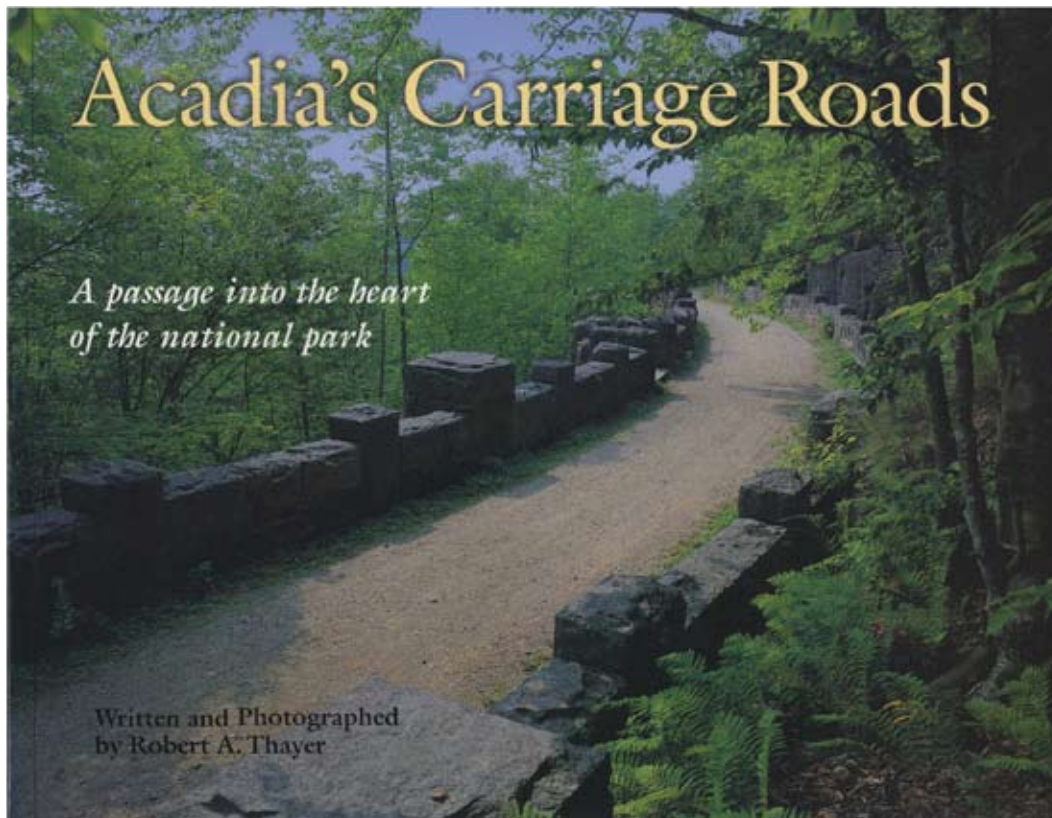


Photographer ROBERT A. THAYER, is the author of *Acadia's Carriage Roads* which was reviewed in StoneZine 4. He will be giving a presentation on the building of John D. Rockefeller Jr's carriage road system on the day before our field trip to Mt. Desert Island.



***The old Rockefeller carriage road system.  
Sixteen stone bridges. No two of them alike.  
Mount Desert Island. Acadia National Park. Maine. . . must visit!***

I was close enough, in Vermont, to be susceptible to this allure and when the Stone Foundation 'Creative Stonemasonry' Project at the Carving Studio and Sculpture Center in West Rutland was complete (see Stonexus XI, page 64) I pointed my rental car east-northeast.

In the Visitor Center at the entrance to the Park I found this book and with it as my guide I managed to see and photograph 12 of the 17 bridges. The location of each bridge was marked on a map and each bridge was succinctly described and its distinctive character noted.

One learns here that John D. Rockefeller Jr. was an ardent Idealist: "*I believe that every right implies responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty.*" He was as well an instinctive landscape designer and took consummate care in carving his roads through the terrain so they became, as he said, "a beautiful flowing line in the landscape." They are a sensitive collaboration with Nature rather than an rude intrusion into it.

It is interesting to read about the details of road and bridge construction and the degree to which Rockefeller "was a participant in every design detail. . . whenever possible he wanted the granite to be quarried at or close to the site so that its appearance would match the local bedrock. When a bridge was completed, the small quarry would be relandscaped to cover any scars."

The author quotes from Down East Magazine (1982) in describing the daily life of a stonemason on the job: "*Early morning, before the sun rises, these craftsmen converged on Acadia by foot, bicycle or car, following the partially built carriage roads to the bridge construction sites for the beginning of the workday at seven. They normally worked eight hours with a thirty minute lunch break, which they took at the smithy, where their home-prepared pail lunches were kept warm near the forge.*" The stones were rough cut at the quarry, usually a short distance from the bridge, then transported to the construction site. . . here the masons would shape them to the required dimensions. 'One well-shaped, good-sized stone per man, per day was considered an acceptable average.'" Bridges were completed at the rate of one per year.

The book also presents photos of and information about the architecture of the park's gate lodges and the flora and fauna of the island.