AB CONNECTIONS

April 2015 – Issue #1002

ARCHED BEAUTY IN THE LONE STAR STATE

The Margaret McDermott Bridge Takes Shape in Dallas

Cover: The Margaret McDermott Bridge

www.AmericanBridge.net

CONTENTS

AMERICAN BRIDGE CONNECTIONS

April 2015 – Issue #1002

American Bridge

ARCHED BEAUTY IN THE LONE STAR STATE

THE MARGARET MCDERMOTT BRIDGE TAKES SHAPE IN DALLAS

American Bridge Company (AB) is busy in the Lone Star State constructing two of Dallas's newest landmarks - twin signature pedestrian bridges traversing the Trinity River near downtown. Working as a subcontractor to Pegasus Link Constructors (a joint venture of Fluor and Balfour Beatty) on the $800M Horseshoe Interchange Project, AB is responsible for construction of the twin 1,125 foot long, 290 foot tall true arch pedestrian bridges. Named for local philanthropist Margaret McDermott, the graceful design was conceived by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava. As part of the larger Trinity River Corridor improvement project, the iconic bridges will provide pedestrian access across the Trinity in harmony with the flourishing recreation and wildlife area.

While only recently has progress on site become visible, work has been underway for the past two years preparing for erection of this complex structure. Extensive engineering studies were necessary in the development of an erection plan for the unprecedented tall, slender arches. Site preparation work has also been completed, including installation of a crane trestle running adjacent to the work, providing access to the tallest portion of the arch over the Trinity River. Site work has also included pile driving for the arch and superstructure falsework, and erection of arch falsework towers. To date, permanent work has consisted of erection of the first five arch segment pairs at the west end of the eastbound bridge, as well as two corresponding superstructure assemblies. Preparations are being made to erect the first arch segments at the east end of the eastbound structure in early March.

Location: Dallas, Texas
Client: Pegasus Link Constructors, a joint venture of Fluor and Balfour Beatty
Owner: Texas Department of Transportation

Tampa Steel Erecting Company has been working diligently in Tampa, Florida on the fabrication of the arch and superstructure segments. Fabrication of the eastbound bridge is complete, placing the current emphasis on fabrication of the westbound arch and superstructure segments. WireCo WorldGroup is producing the structural strand cables, which suspend the superstructure from the arch rib. RJ Watson has fabricated and delivered the spherical bearings for the project, which will support the interior girder of the superstructure.

While the arch is free standing, the shared use path superstructure and floor system have unique boundary conditions. One side of the superstructure is suspended from the arch, while the opposite is supported both by cables, and by piers at four discrete locations along the interior girder. At these locations, spherical bearings are supported on the substructure of the adjacent highway bridge. Because only the interior girder is supported, the resulting boundary conditions provide for extreme technical complexity in the engineering of an erection plan. For example, the asymmetrical support results in an exterior girder camber that is 16 inches greater than the interior girder over a transverse dimension of just 32 feet. AB made accommodation in the superstructure falsework to handle this unique geometry.

The complex geometry of the arch, while visually dramatic, adds significant complexity to every aspect of the project, from erection engineering to field geometric control. In order to address the challenges associated with the complex geometric control requirements, AB is employing the use of Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technology. LiDAR is used to develop a complete three-dimensional model of each individual arch rib segment as it is fabricated. The arch is then assembled “virtually” in 3D CAD before any steel ever leaves the fabrication shop. The resulting 3D model is then used to establish reference geometry for use during erection of the arch.

The site is also logistically complicated offering limited laydown areas, so coordination between delivery, assembly, and erection of segments must be carefully planned. Specially engineered staging stands have been developed for arch segments to hold them in a workable position off the ground once unloaded from the delivery trucks. Again, the complex geometry of the structure has increases the complexity of simple operations such as unloading the segments. Field engineering staff had to develop a unique rigging plan for each arch rib segment taking into consideration the shape, weight, and center of gravity of each piece.

The majority of the arch rib assemblies are being erected using a pair of Liebherr LR1300 330-ton crawler cranes. However, seven arch rib segments at the apex are beyond the reach of a conventional crane, so those segments will be pre-assembled and erected in a single, enormous lift. The apex assembly, which is approximately 300 feet long and weighs in at just under 200 tons, will be assembled at ground level and then lifted the 280 feet into its final position using a custom-engineered strand jacking scheme. AB Senior Vice President Scott Gammon, PE, DBIA noted that “this is the type of project at which AB excels. Our unparalleled in-house engineering department led the engineering of this unique solution to a very complex construction problem. Our ability to confidently conceptualize, design and execute these types complex construction schemes sets us apart in our industry.”

With erection of the eastbound arch now well underway, completion of the first structure is anticipated later this year. Upon completion, AB will commence work on the westbound structure with an anticipated completion date of fall 2016.

DOCKING IN PARADISE

CHRISTOPHE HARBOUR MARINA, PHASE 1

Location: St. Kitts & Nevis
Owner: Christophe Harbour Development Company, Ltd.

American Bridge Company (AB) once again found itself working in what many consider to be the pinnacle of vacation destinations – the island nation of St. Kitts and Nevis. AB has a long history in the warm waters of the Caribbean Sea, dating back to the early 1990's. Since then, crews have found themselves in Aruba, Honduras, Mexico, the US Virgin Islands, and the Bahamas, building terminals, platforms, births, and other marine structures. AB was awarded Christophe Harbour Marina, Phase 1, in February of 2014. Work on the mega yacht fixed dock and seawall for the shoreline of the developer's marina village commenced immediately.

The dock itself is comprised of 339, 20-inch diameter by 44-foot long steel pipe piles. The pipe piles were topped with 3,000 tons of precast concrete caps and deck panels, which were produced in Virginia and shipped to St. Kitts on a single barge. Finally, a cast in place deck was set using a local concrete supplier, while utilities were routed on the underside of the pier deck panels.

AB also constructed a bulkhead for the marina village at the same time as the dock was being built. The bulkhead consists 800 linear feet of 45' long steel sheet piles with a sheet pile dead man system for the bulkhead. The sheet piles were finished with a concrete encapsulation, and 50,000 cubic yards of select fill material was imported to the site to complete the foundation for the marina village.

NOT JUST A GREAT VIEW

Arguably, the most alluring features of the project include the location, the weather, and the views. And while those are benefits to working in a tropical location, the most impressive fact is that the bulk of the $15 million dollar project was completed by AB in just six months. As with any project, the right mix of people with experience and planning that have foresight, safety, and execution in the forefront of their minds helped tremendously.

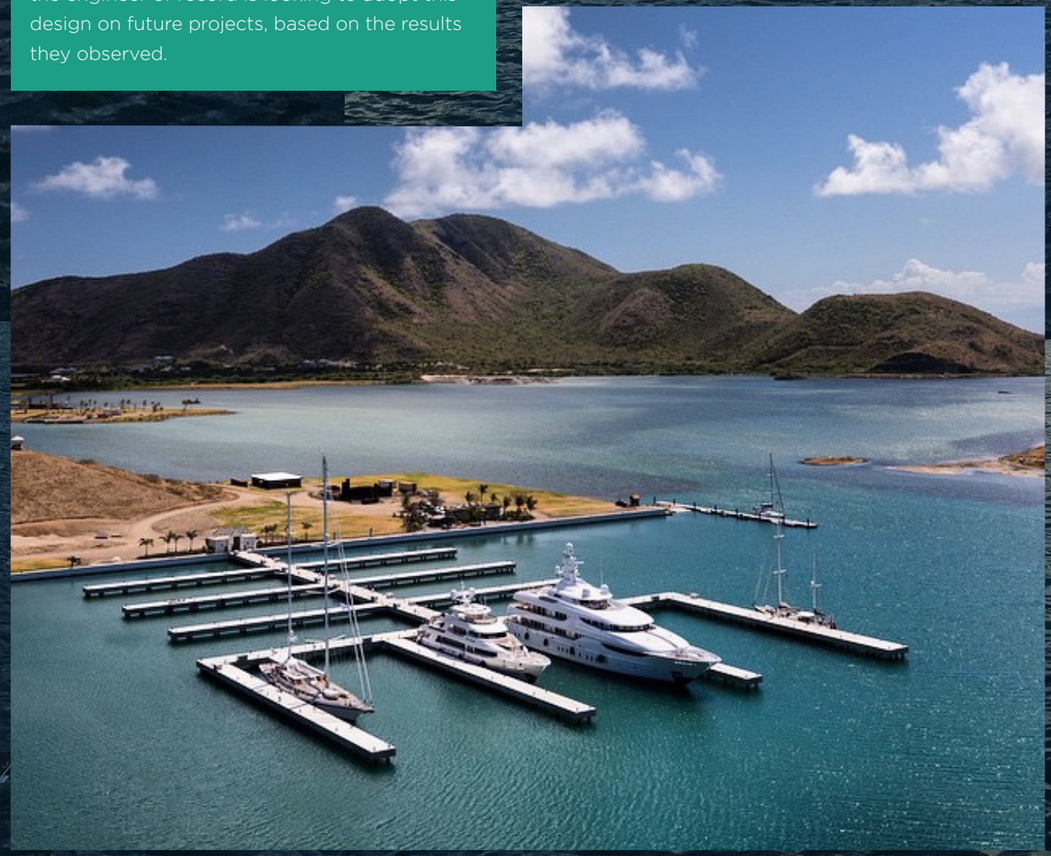
In addition to completing the project on time, the AB team finished out the job with an outstanding safety record. With 55,129 man hours worked, not a single incident was recorded. This challenging project turned out to be a success for the owner, AB, and the people who are now able to park their boats in this island paradise.

GATHERING A WORKFORCE

One of the largest challenges facing AB was the logistical aspect of building a first-class marina in an underdeveloped and remote location. The most effective way to attack this hurdle was with a significant effort put forth during the preconstruction phase. Building on a long history of successful projects in the Caribbean, there was a robust pool of talented employees who were familiar with the AB way. That experience allowed the project team to load and ship much of the equipment and permanent materials in a cost-effective manner, so that production could begin as soon as AB was mobilized to the island. This reduces the overall project costs and gives AB the ability to be highly price competitive in this market.

INGENUITY THAT LASTS

AB proposed to the engineer and owner that the precast deck panels include a curb cast along their edges. This reduced the time required to form, pour, and strip the deck topping pours. The finishing screed rode the curbs and provided a controlled environment for the placement of the concrete. As a result, AB was able to provide a far superior finish to the concrete than otherwise would have been possible. In addition, it allowed AB to maintain an aggressive schedule for the overall project. Impressed with the design laid out by the team, the engineer of record is looking to adopt this design on future projects, based on the results they observed.



AB RETIREES

In this issue of AB Connections, we recognize **Ugo Del Costello**, **Jon Young**, **Joe Grygiel**, and **Dave Kosar**, as they retire from American Bridge.

WITH OVER 117 YEARS OF COMBINED EXPERIENCE AT AB, these employees made lasting and invaluable impressions on many. The thing about these men is that they don't remember their careers in the number of years. They remember it in people, projects, and moments. They recount challenges and triumphs, reminisce on the past, and look optimistically to the future. They are American Bridge, through and through. There is a responsibility – rather, the honor – to bring their memories, stories, and knowledge to those who have not met them, and don't know how deeply AB runs in their veins. They are part of the heartbeat of a company, and we are truly humbled by their many years of dedication to American Bridge.

UGO (HOKEY) DEL COSTELLO
SUPERINTENDENT

Legendary projects are built on the backs of legendary people. And though they might not always stand in the limelight, they also don't seek it out. Ugo Del Costello has never sought attention as one of American Bridge's most respected and experienced superintendents, but that hasn't stopped him from becoming one of our most well-known figures. Preferring to go by the nickname "Hokey," he's had the urge to travel since he can remember. Ugo didn't start out in the bridge building world. He got his start in the harbors of Baltimore, Maryland, working on the docks. But a restless soul would eventually drive him away from a stationary position, and into one that would take him around the world. **"I could not envision myself being there for 30 years, working in a shipyard, in one location"** recalled Hokey. So, he joined the Ironworkers, and after working on several buildings in Baltimore, he was placed with American Bridge in 1980. From the start, Ugo established himself quickly. **"I started out as a connector, and after about two weeks, (Superintendent) Ron Tatum asked me if I'd take a raising gang as a foreman, so I took that. And after another three weeks, we hired on more gangs, and he asked me to take a walking boss position, which was general foreman,"** he recalled. He took a brief break in service after the I-95 job wrapped, but the desire to work on bridges eventually won out. He rejoined AB, because "you work for a bridge company, you build bridges!" He likes to recall his first job as Superintendent, which was 5th Avenue Place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania because "(current AB CEO) Mike Flowers was Project manager on that job… quite a long time ago."

Ugo's self-titled "gypsy soul" would get its fill of travel, though he paused before naming his favorite location, saying "there were a lot of favorite places, and a lot of hell holes." He cites the Tagus River Bridge in Lisbon, Portugal, as his most rewarding project. The complex endeavor consisted of spinning a new cable on a live load bridge, something that had never been done before, and has not been done since. "I remember Bob Luffy telling me when I took the job 'you're going to get to see a lot of Europe!" And I did – from the top of the tower" said Hokey, chuckling. "We extended the towers, put new saddles on top, we spun a new cable on a live load bridge" he explained. **"With live loading, the loads are constantly pulling the towers one way or the other. To spin a cable over that is pretty difficult. I came up with – and I feel proud about that – I came up with a way to do that, and it worked out pretty well."**

Early on in his life, Ugo would develop a fascination with bridges, and learn to work with his hands. With his father, they build a house for the family – and provided a spark that would instill a love for hard work, something Ugo still has today. He lists off projects, facts, and figures, always highlighting the challenging ones. He describes a job in Florida, where the original plan was to take down a bridge in 40-ton segments, which proved inefficient and cumbersome. So Ugo devised a solution: "I came up with how to make a self-unloading barge, and we took it down in 100-ton sections, and we built fish condos in Biscayne Bay." The Las Vegas High Roller, Ugo's last job, gave him the opportunity to work on another record-setting project. At 550 feet, it's the world's tallest observation wheel. Just don't call it a "ferris wheel" in front of Ugo. "Everybody thinks it's just a ferris wheel," he explained "but there were some pretty heavy stuff. By the time we reached 12 o'clock, we were pushing 560 tons vertical," referring to the construction methodology. The rim segments were brought on site, and assembled, one-by-one, using chainfalls and bolted to the next section by a collar splice. The wheel was rotated during construction by a 750mt capacity Hydraulic Rotating Mechanism (HRM) designed by American Bridge and Enerpac. As each segment and cable spoke section was erected, the wheel was pushed and another segment erected, in an incremental launching process. Compared to the London Eye, which was assembled on the ground and then tipped up, Ugo takes a lot of pride in developing the chainfall method. "We had some pretty hair raising moments out there, but it worked out real nice."

Ask anyone about Ugo, and you're bound to get some great stories. But you'll also head things like "dedicated," "hands-on," and "true AB." He's not one to sit in an office, separate from his crew, unless it's in the evening, and there's planning to be done for the next day. Throughout his career, he's earned the respect of the Ironworkers and engineers he's supervised by working right alongside them, never cooped up, out of whatever weather is battering down. These days, though, he's not climbing as many towers. **"Anyone that says they don't have a fear of heights… they're lying. But you get used to it. I've been 1,500 feet up in a tower in my younger days, before you had the tie offs or anything" he said, adding "that's a young man's job!"**

Ugo is also quick to give credit to others, and doesn't like to talk about himself. But for those who know him, he's developed a reputation for being precise, strict, and maybe a little gruff. His goal for every project is that everyone goes home at night, and the work gets done – and is done right, the first time around. His legacy extends far beyond any certain project, or just those lucky enough to learn from him. He's a formidable force in bridge construction, and while he isn't the face of a job, he's most certainly the backbone of it.

Retirement is bittersweet for Ugo. On one hand, he'll be able to spend time with his children and grandchildren, something he has long wished for, and would have done, if not for his dedication to his job. He and his wife will live in Illinois, to be with her mother, but travel frequently to his hometown of Baltimore, to see his family. "My oldest granddaughter is driving now, so I'm looking forward to spending some time with my children and grandchildren" he says, as a big smile breaks across his face. And don't expect to find him indoors much. As an avid hunter, fisher, and trapper, Ugo will be as he always has been, outside in the fresh air. And it's doubtful that AB will ever be too far away. **"I've already told them, if they got into a problem, I'd help. I do have American Bridge in my blood – it's BLUE"** he said towards the end of his interview. There's no doubt that he's been part of the heartbeat, the backbone, and lifeblood of American Bridge. When the Las Vegas High Roller topped out, Ugo was presented with a plaque that read "enjoy the woods and the water," a fitting wish for a gypsy soul that could never settle. **Happy hunting, Ugo.**✦

JON YOUNG
MANUFACTURING PLANT MANAGER

American Bridge runs in the Young family. Jon's father worked in the engineering department at the Ambridge, Pennsylvania office, and would often sit at the table after dinner, pouring over calculations. "I remember growing up, actually helping him do calculations in the living room after dinner, and he would be making charts, and would give me the numbers, and I used to calculate on a circular slide rule. That was my first exposure, and it was just kind of fun working with him." When he went off to college, mechanical engineering was his plan, but that took a turn after his first year. "I wanted to get more into building things." So he changed his major to civil engineering, and landed a co-op position with American Bridge in 1967. Starting out in the drawing room at the Ambridge plant seemed like a dream come true for Jon. However, after three quarters, "I want to do this for the rest of my life" turned into "get met outta here!" So, Jon was transferred over to the design office, where he met another young engineer named Lanny Frisco. "We sat right next to each other. We both started working on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. At that point, it was just co-op, design calculations. One of the things I had to do that was kind of unique – they were worried about really close erection stresses, so they wanted to fine-tune their design, and I had to spend one week solid calculating the weight of the paint for the one span they were concerned about. I mean, there was quite a few tons of paint, but the calculations were that close" recalled Jon.

After graduation, Jon moved to the Chicago office to start his full-time position at American Bridge, and joined what was called at the time the Inspection Group. Responsible for inspecting US Steel facilities and mills, advising on and designing repairs, and overseeing that work, Jon's work encompassed runways, buildings, and later on, cranes. "You did electrical, mechanical – a little bit of everything," said Jon.

AB projects would take Jon all over the country, where he witnessed the lean years of the 1980's, and saw the evolution and rise of a changed company. **"When I first started with the Company, it was steel bridges and steel buildings. Today, it's concrete, it's building an island for Disney, building piers, all across the country. Work that we never envisioned that we would be getting into back then. The whole culture has changed from a mentality of steel, steel, steel, to a major construction company, and there are no bounds"** remarked Jon. But he's quick to note that there are still things that remain quintessentially American Bridge. **"There are a lot of people here that are different from when I started with the company, but one of the things that I've learned through the years is that it's always been a tight-knit group, whether it was starting up in Chicago, coming back here to Pittsburgh, working in the Manufacturing group, you create a lot of friendships, and it's just a great culture to grow up in."**

A 48 year career hold many memorable moments. Perhaps the project most etched into Jon's mind is a Norfolk Southern bridge in Hannibal, Missouri. "The project manager left to do a job down south somewhere, so I went in and filled in for him. And about that time, the 500-year flood hit the Mississippi River – surprise!" recalled Jon with a laugh. The original float-in date in July turned into a December event, right before the Christmas holiday. "We had to move everything up onto barges, get it off the land – the entire complex flooded. The Mississippi River was up 23 feet above normal, almost into the bridge itself" he explained. Flood waters were so high, there were concerns about the bridge actually being pushed off the foundations by the water.

Not all projects were as nerve-wracking. As Manufacturing Plant Manager, Jon oversaw the Bronx River Parkway job, a fabrication of six octagonal towers, all with very complex framing, which would tie together to make one bridge. "They were super-elevated and on a slope, so it was very challenging, very unique. Every day was something new, and that's the kind of stuff I like," said Jon. When it was time to deliver the fabricated components, Jon and his team trained the crew on how to install the pieces – an incredibly intricate task. "To have it hit the field, the only back charge on the whole project, we had some 12-inch bolts that weren't long enough. To have a job that complex, and have that be the only issue, it's a big home run. You take a lot of pride in that" Jon explained.

Jon is quick to recognize several people that made his career at American Bridge challenging, and rewarding. "Over the years, being able to work with some of the people – the Tommy Melvins – just so many people. You know, Hokey, I've spent a lot of time with Hokey on several different jobs, and just to see how fantastic and how great these guys are, you're impressed to see what they can do and how differently they think. They can make something complex, simplistic. It's just impressive," said Jon. He was also greatly influenced by Rodger Larson and Lanny Frisco. When he got into Manufacturing, Jon noted that "we leaned on Lanny hard, and he took a big interest in getting us started, getting us going." The notion of teamwork and perseverance is a key AB trait, says Jon. **"American Bridge is a success story. (In the 1980's) we were right on the verge of not being there, and the leadership was tenacious enough – and lucky enough, because luck had something to do with it. You went for almost two years now knowing every Friday if you were going to be laid off, let go, if the company was going to be sold. I just managed to get through that and why I was chosen to stay with the group, I couldn't tell you."** Those that saw through the tough times, like Jon, were hugely responsible for the rebirth of American Bridge into the company it is today.

So, what does Jon have planned for retirement? He excitedly shares "hardware store! My wife, brother, and I, we went and bought a little hometown hardware store in Ohio. It's relaxation, it's fun, the people are great, we have some that just come in to talk. We have the opportunity to help a lot of people, because my brother and I were trained by my dad." **Like father, like son.** ✦

JOE GRYGIEL
SUPERINTENDENT, AMERICAN DOCK & TRANSFER

If you've spent any time at the American Bridge headquarters in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, chances are you've met Joe Grygiel. When you hear someone say that their employees are the heart of a company, they're talking about people like Joe. American Dock & Transfer is a logistical hub for American Bridge, ensuring that equipment, shipments, and transportation are all in order, with Joe at the helm.

In 1964, Joe was looking for a job with good pay, and decided to put an application in to be an Ironworker. "They were taking applications for apprentices, and I passed my test. They took me in as an apprentice in Rockford, Illinois, and I got my book in 1968." His initial job with Mississippi Valley Steel continued after it was bought out by Bristol Steel. But in 1990, things would change. "In May, they went out of business. My old boss called me and asked what was going on. I said 'nothing as of June 1st, because I'll be out of a job.' He said 'don't go looking because I got one for you with American Bridge.' So I went to work in Gary, Indiana." The Gary Plant was a 24 mile drive from Chicago, and had fabricated the likes of the Mackinac Bridge, which weighed in at 67,300 tons of steel.

Joe's career has traveled with American Bridge. In 1992, the Gary team moved to Point Pleasant, West Virginia, and then in 1998, up to Pittsburgh. But the relocations didn't take a toll on Joe. "Each time we made the move, it was a better move. I wouldn't trade it for the world. I enjoy what I do." Part of the reason Joe stayed with AB throughout the years has a lot to do with the people, many of whom see him as a true "AB Blue" kind of guy. **"All the people I've worked with are very knowledgeable, take your suggestions, work with you, and respect you. In turn, you respect them, which means a lot"** explained Joe.

AB's Coraopolis location wouldn't have happened without Joe and his team, who arrived before everyone else, taking care of the prep work for the manufacturing building and the new office. Starting from nothing, the foundations were laid, buildings put up, even the landscaping was managed by the dedicated employees. When it came time for the office itself, the steel was fabricated on-site, and erected just yards away. The project holds special meaning to Joe, because "to see what this was like when we got here, and to see what we've got today, it's definitely my favorite project."

Another effort at the heart of American Bridge is the Annual Meeting, an event that is highly anticipated and always enjoyable. Again, Joe is incredibly involved in the process, and takes pride in pulling it off successfully, year after year. "It takes us a couple of days to do the actual setup. We go up on a Wednesday, and do all the weed whacking and cleaning, and get everything set up. Thursday, we'll go in and do all the final prep work. It's really three long days!" Compliments on the event are all the thanks Joe needs. As he puts it "that's what's so satisfying, you put a lot of work into it, and then you see everybody enjoying themselves, it gives you a great deal of satisfaction. And everyone says 'how do you do it?' And you laugh and go, 'oh, it's not a job to me.'"

Since joining the Company in 1990, Joe has seen quite a few changes, but "for the good!" he explains with a laugh. After a pause, he continued "it's certainly gotten a lot bigger, they have more challenging jobs. With American Bridge, you get more unique jobs – really interesting ones, jobs that no one else can do. I think that's one of the things that will stay with American Bridge. Anyone can put a warehouse in, but not everyone can do SAS," referring to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge Self-Anchored Suspension span. What hasn't changed? Well, the people. When asked who has influenced him the most, the names Michael Flowers, Bob Luffy, Brock Rowley, and Lanny Frisco come to mind. And if he were to pass on advice to AB's young engineers? "Keep doing what you're doing. Work hard. Take other people's suggestions, and treat everyone like you want to be treated."

Retirement seems to hold little rest for Joe, who is currently building a new home back in Illinois, a location that will bring him closer to family. Travel is also on the itinerary, with Vegas, Palm Springs, and Arizona bookmarked, and there's a purposeful omission of cold places, "because I'm moving to a cold place!" laughs Joe. And he's incredibly satisfied with his career, saying:

> **"I can't think I'd do anything differently. Everything I've done has been so satisfying, and I guess I've been very, very fortunate to have an excellent crew here, because the people who work for you actually make the person that's in charge."**

American Bridge is fortunate indeed, to have Joe as part of our family, and forever will he be.✦

DAVID KOZAR
COST ACCOUNTANT

American Bridge is known for structures that rise above the water, alter skylines, and the foundations that dive down into bedrock. These are surely the attention-grabbing works, but are by no means the most important. In Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, there is a bustling office building, filled with engineers, estimators, administrative staff, and a vast accounting crew. If a bridge must stand on solid foundations, the Company must rest on the individuals who ensure fiscally-responsible operations. They keep the company coffers in line, the taxes paid, and the employees compensated. In 2014, a key member of AB's talented Accounting team, David Kosar, retired.

It was by a little luck that Dave came to AB. He was looking for a job through a placement firm, and jumped at the chance to work for a company that he was familiar with. "I knew about AB's history and the location in Ambridge – the local ties and a little of the history" said Dave. After gaining experience with a number of different companies, he was hired as a Cost Accountant., a position he would hold until retirement. The job required a lot of interaction with staff across the country, and internationally, something Dave thoroughly enjoyed.

Dave's favorite memory from his time at AB? "When AB/Fluor was awarded the contract for SAS," referring to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Self-Anchored Suspension Span, a unique and iconic bridge the JV completed in 2013. Another highlight for Dave was the AB Annual Meeting, held each fall on the Company's property in Farmington, Pennsylvania.

Retirement doesn't mean slowing down for an outdoor enthusiast like Dave. The Pittsburgh region is one sprawling playground, with an abundance of State and National Parks, all of which he plans to explore by hiking, biking, and kayaking. Another goal Dave has for retirement is to learn how to sail, and perhaps even buy a boat. After a long career, some fun is well-deserved. When looking back, Dave said:

> **"AB was my tenth job, and by far the best in my career. It is a great place to work with talented employees and a tremendous future. I'm very fortunate to be able to end my working career here."**

Smooth sailing, Dave!

UGO DEL COSTELLO

"Ugo is the consummate American Bridge field boss. He is a meticulous planner of work and organizer of skilled craft workers. He is a natural leader that is equally comfortable communicating with Ironworkers and engineers. He uses his deep understanding of the tools of our trade to customize and even invent new equipment that results in safer execution and optimized production. He has integrity. He has found and developed numerous future superintendents. Most important of all, he has the indispensable trait of CAN-DO; when there is a task to complete get out of the way because he is going to make it happen. Ugo has earned his place in the legendary line of past American Bridge superintendents that have built some of the world's greatest structures, including Hardnose Murphy, Red Kelley, the Tatums, Tommy Melvin, and others. His legacy will live on in the people he has and will continue to mentor, and in the example he set. He is one of the great ones, and will be sorely missed. "

- Michael Cegelis, Senior Vice President

"Hokey devoted a lot of time mentoring and developing me into an "AB Engineer." I recall one point we were trying to figure out how to connect a catwalk to an existing bridge, which at the time was critical to advancing other work. Hokey calmly said to me "you need to figure this out soon or we will have to shut down the job." That hit home as the engineering fell solely on my shoulders. Needless to say we developed a plan and the job got done. Hokey has made a positive impact not only on me but to countless others. His construction insight, experience, leadership and hardworking get-it-done attitude is second to none. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with him on numerous occasions and wish him the very best in future endeavors."

- Scott Tudor, Welding QC Manager

"Hokey, You are an excellent Ironworker, outstanding superintendent and a great friend. I have been honored to work with AB legends during my years in field: Peewee Ducet, Tommy Melvin, and you. They all have in common the work ethic and AB dedication (AB blue blood that runs thru) and also the endless amount of stories that make up the AB History. Retirement has been on your horizon for a while now, since I first met you almost 20 years ago. You are finally there old buddy. Enjoy it now!"

- Miguel Lo, Office Manager

"Working with Hokey I learned to respect his understanding of how things work. He always had clever short-cuts to make tasks faster and easier, and he took time explaining what he wanted to young engineers who further developed his ideas. But you don't want to be in the shoes of the engineer who messed up and is not there to make it right. If you are there, he has a gentler manner and will help you figure out a way to fix the problem. If you are not there, he curses out the engineer who messed up as he explains between breaths to another engineer what to do to fix it. Hokey, it has been a pleasure working with your through the years, and I will repeat what I told you years ago over breakfast in Vancouver - you are one of the best engineers I have ever encountered!"

- Ron Crockett, Vice President

"I first met Hokey in the spring of 2012. He agreed to meet and consider me for the raising gang foreman position at the Las Vegas High Roller. A few days after the interview, I got a call from the general foreman who said the position was mine if I wanted it. A decision that would change the course of my career, my life, and add to my list of lifelong friends, one hard-nosed, no nonsense, AB General Superintendent, Ugo "Hokey" Del Costello. As the job progressed, he talked more and more about American Bridge. Never with ego, just passion and pride. Stories about previous projects and experiences and about the company's core values. Innovation, ingenuity, and integrity. These are all ideals that companies and people preach but rarely practice. He and American Bridge were a perfect fit. I didn't understand at the time how much a part of him AB was. I appreciate every lesson.
My biggest regret is that we met at the end of his amazing career. I had the opportunity to work with a man that I can honestly say is the best ironworker I've ever met. Arguably one of the best in the world. His contributions to the American Bridge family can not accurately be measured. The photos in the hallways only represent a small portion of what he's given. The knowledge and passion that he's passed down to AB staff, engineers, estimators, and ironworkers will echo for years to come.
Thank you my friend for all that you've done."

- Robert Fitz, General Foreman

"I was really amazed at his ability to always be on top of the smallest details of a project of that magnitude. From the first, it was obvious that he took great pride in being a member of the American Bridge Team. Beyond the WWB, he offered advice and helped me plan for several other AB projects. His thinking "outside the box" and his attitude that nothing is impossible has helped American Bridge be a leader in innovative construction methods. I am thankful that I have had the opportunity to have had Hokey as a supervisor and a mentor. I am proud to have him as a friend."

- Andy Kerr, General Superintendent

"It's tough putting into words what a man like Ugo Del Costello has meant to American Bridge. This is particularly true when you recognize that Hokey was ascending to the Superintendent role, just as many of the old line "blue bloods" were retiring and AB had totally lost favor with its owner US Steel. The company had become a shadow of its incredible brand, shuttering all fabrication facilities and looking to sell off the construction company. The backlog was nonexistent and there was great doubt about the next job and yet AB was kept alive through the hearts and souls of men like Hokey who knew what it meant to lace up their redwings and don that brown hard hat and attack projects which most feared.

New ownership and leadership meant new opportunities and a glimmer of hope for the company. First came AB's return to the suspension bridge business with the Tagus retrofit and Hokey was there to step up and shoulder the burden of execution in Lisbon. Then the extraordinarily complex Lions Gate Suspension Bridge retrofit in Vancouver, as AB slowly but surely grew back into that stellar reputation. Then followed the record-breaking Woodrow Wilson bascule span in Alexandria, VA, and the Vegas High Roller, as AB stamped its name on another record achievement. Any one of those signature projects would have been a lifetime accomplishment, and yet Hokey was at the helm for all four, and in a twenty year period of time. He adds his name to a very select list of master builders that plain and simply define what it means to be an AB Superintendent. A hard driving consummate professional in his craft and a superior leader of men."

- Michael Flowers, CEO

JON YOUNG

"As I recall I first bumped into Jon Young in the Pittsburgh Regional Engineering Office at 600 Grant Street selling industrial services with a guy named Wayne Willard. At the time I was working in a not so glorious assignment inspecting US Steel facilities like Coke Works, Blast Furnaces, BOP Shops and Rolling Mills. Lanny Frisco was toiling in a similar role in a different region of the country and we all kind of knew each other as we were in a similar "AB fraternity". Jon had actually "graduated" from the day to day grit and grime of the inspection services and was selling and managing industrial work.

Jon's dad Ned Young was the Regional Engineering Manager in the mid 70's and Ned gave me my first job out of college.. The Pittsburgh Regional Engineering Office was loaded with a bunch of real classy guys and Jon was another in a long line of very loyal and humble professionals that often put the company before themselves. When we were struggling to grow back into our reputation in the 90's and needed some more seasoned engineering help in NYC on the Williamsburg Bridge, Jon set aside a lot of family obligations and commuted to New York for an extended period of time to lend a hand working with Jake Bidosky and Tom Melvin. Then when the call came to help in gearing up a fabrication operation first in rental space in Carnegie and then Coraopolis, Jon was there solid as a rock every day, right to the end! I doubt that you will find a finer gentlemen and a true friend whose vocabulary didn't include "no" and "can't".

- Michael Flowers, CEO

JOE GRYGIEL

"I first met Joe in 1993 at the AB Storehouse, which at that time was located in Point Pleasant, West Virginia. Joe was very organized and had a very good rapport with his crew which he had assembled from scratch. Because Point Pleasant was very inconvenient to AB's headquarters, we decided in 1998 to re-locate the storehouse to its present location here in Coraopolis. Joe was very instrumental in the planning and logistics of shipping (both barges and trucks) everything to Coraopolis. Once again he built a yard crew from the "ground up." This crew is very efficient and talented, and most importantly, they perform their work SAFELY. This is a testimony to the Leadership of Joe and Mike McCoy.

This crew is very efficient and talented, and most importantly, they perform their work SAFELY. This is a testimony to the Leadership of Joe and Mike McCoy. Joe was a very loyal and dedicated employee, truly an "AB Guy." I wish Joe and Karen nothing but the best in a long and prosperous retirement."

- Lanny Frisco, Senior Vice President (retired)

"Joe was a hard, dedicated worker with a great work ethic. Always pleasant and planning ahead which was a huge help. I enjoyed working with Joe and really miss him here at AB."

- Laura Jamison, Administrative Assistant

DAVE KOSAR

"Dave was a hard-working, loyal, and dedicated employee, the type of employee that every manager is proud to have on his/her team."

– Ken Sible, Director of Finance

"Dave Kosar did a great job running the jobcost function and overseeing the Company's financial reporting. He was the "go-to" guy for project management in the field, as well as a liaison to our upstream owners in Taiwan for financial reporting. Thank you Dave for all of your efforts and contributions over the past nine years!"

– Don Berlin, Controller

"I always appreciated the quiet professional demeanor and can-do attitude of Dave Kosar. My questions on our projects for Dave always came with an implied sense of urgency and at times a less that congenial attitude, but were always dealt with by Dave quickly and accurately and almost always accompanied by an offer to help if anything else was needed. My personal thanks for your service Dave!!"

- Michael Flowers, CEO

CARSON CARNEY

DEPARTMENT MANAGER OF THE CABLE STAY BRIDGE

THE QUEENSFERRY CROSSING, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

1. What does a typical day look like for you, as Department Manager of the Cable Stay Bridge Superstructure on the Queensferry Crossing Project?

There is no such thing as a typical day. We have yet to enter the typical segment erection stage of the project, so my days are always filled with something different. That's what makes the job so exciting. We are in the final stage of the planning for the big show now. There are ever-constant coordination meetings between internal team members, different departments on the project, the designer, the client, external stakeholders, subcontractors, and suppliers. I get in before most of the office staff, so I spend that quiet time signing off on purchase requisitions, payment requests, communication drafts, and other mountains of paperwork. I don't get out of the office as much as I used to as a field engineer. It still thrills me when I do get out to view the progress first hand. There is no better job than building large complex structures.

2. You've had the chance to work all over the world with AB. Where have you worked? How do you handle travel? What are the biggest challenges in relocating outside of the USA?

My passport is overflowing with country stamps and business visas. I worked on the Lions Gate project in Vancouver, Canada on my first assignment outside of the US. That remains my favorite place in the world. I worked on the short-lived Chiloe Bridge project in Chile while American Bridge International got started. I lived in Germany while putting the tender together for that project. After the project was mothballed, I started travelling all over South America, Europe and Asia working with (AB Senior VP) Mike Cegelis in developing partnerships and tenders for many projects before we won the Queensferry Crossing project in Scotland. Once you are travelling a lot you get used to it. You learn little tricks to help deal with the stresses that come along with it. The biggest challenges to relocating outside of the US are healthcare and banking. No matter how much you investigate and read up on what it is like, you don't understand what you are getting into until you start experiencing it. Establishing yourself in a new country can take time. You essentially have to build your life from scratch. Another challenge is not being as close to family. Due to the distance, you just don't get to come home and see your loved ones as much. It's a price you have to pay when living abroad. However, there are so many advantages in relocating as well.

3. What are some of the differences working in the UK, as opposed to the United States?

Where do I begin? There is a heightened need to follow procedures in the UK working culture. Now, there is nothing more important in construction than planning your work and then following the procedures you put together in that plan, but in the UK sometimes I find that many people don't know how to react unless it is laid out for them in a procedure. I think the US business culture is more tolerant to changes that are inevitable to occur. The reactions in the UK are slower when dealing with changes. While they can make a proper cup of tea here in the UK, the coffee is horrible (instant is prevalent) so taking coffee breaks during the day is different. I haven't seen any Bunn-o-Matics over here.

4. How has it been working with international JV partners? What are the challenges and rewards?

Having international JV partners is absolutely vital when working abroad. They provide the local experience and insight that is needed to navigate the local labor markets and supply chains. Sometimes language barriers can be a challenge in an international JV. Some of the Americans on the job have a hard time understanding the local Scottish dialect, and vice versa. Certainly getting different business cultures to align on a common goal is challenging. Different companies will approach accounting, procurement, profit expectations, and subcontract management in their own unique way. There is never only one way to do anything, and getting exposed to so many different approaches to conduction business is the great reward. You are challenged and therefore are learning constantly. This can only have a positive result.

5. As AB expands European operations, what are some key observations you've made that would help employees transition into life "across the pond?"

The best approach to moving into any new area is to immerse yourself into the local culture. If you resist it and try to hold onto the way you are used to living, it won't work out. Embrace the new experience and your transition will be shorter and smoother. Another suggestion is to setup an offshore account as soon as you have a secure address. Many large banks have these offshore affiliates that allow you to transfer USD into the local currency bank accounts. Having a bank account opens up your ability to establish utility, cable, and phone accounts. It can be very frustrating when walking into a brick and mortar bank in a new country to open an account and they ask you for a utility bill as proof of residence, and then having the utility company tell you they can't establish your account until you show proof of having a bank account to pay them. For an expat…which came first, the bank account or the utility bill?

6. What's been your favorite project so far?

Lions Gate for sure. The job was extremely challenging from a programme, technical, and commercial point of view. We had a great group of people working on the job, so even with the difficulties experienced at work, it was just a fantastic environment. When living and working in Vancouver, it was so easy to come home and leave the stress of the job on the job. I love the outdoors and my wife and I could fish for salmon before work, and then hike among the black bears after work - all within minutes from our apartment. My current project is a close second. For me being a graduate of Carnegie Mellon, it is almost poetic that I am building a bridge just miles from Andrew Carnegie's birthplace. Carnegie not only founded the University I gained my civil engineering degree from, but his steel empire eventually gave rise to U.S. Steel and the great American Bridge Company for which I have been working almost 20 years. The coincidences are not lost on me and I feel fortunate and humbled to have been influenced in so many facets of my life by such an amazing individual.

7. The culture at American Bridge is unique and highly valued. How does AB keep that culture as it grows into a larger company?

Growing to become a much larger company will mean that we will have to do things differently. We will have to change some of the ways we carry out our jobs. We will have to work with new people, and more often in Joint Ventures where we are likely to be influenced by other cultures and systems. But we should not think that this is a threat to us - it is more of a challenge to get others to act the way we do. Learn from the good processes that they have and use them, but keep true to the AB way. Keep doing what we've been doing and continue to hold dear the values that make American Bridge the company that it is. In the new strategic plan that Mike and the team are refining right now, they have a section that defines these values. Focusing on the customer, self-performing, taking on the complex projects and applying our engineering skills, developing great engineers and project managers, and giving brilliant people a chance to excel are some of the things that contribute to this culture.

8. Have you taken the opportunity to travel in Europe during your assignment there? What have you gotten to see that you wouldn't if you were assigned to a project in the USA?

Part of the reason why I wanted to work on an international project was to give my family the experience of different cultures and to think globally. I think they will end up better people by understanding that there are so many cultures around the world with different priorities and beliefs. My wife has family in Northern Ireland and England so we get to travel there quite often. We've been all around Europe. My twin girls don't remember when we travelled with them while living in Germany so I'm glad they have another chance now that they are older and will remember it. We love going into European countries and travelling by train and the local transport. My kids can read a subway timetable no matter what language it is in. That's really great. My girls danced in the Irish step dancing World Championships in London. My boy is learning the bagpipes and wants to busk outside of Manchester United's football (soccer) stadium, Old Trafford, once he gets his own set of pipes. We bought our golden retriever puppy from an estate just north of Loch Ness where the breed originated. We took the kids to the Dachau concentration camp in Munich. We want to show them the Anne Frank house in Amsterdam. Here in Scotland, we hike to a castle behind our house that was built in 1430. One of the houses we lived in here in Scotland was built before my home state of Colorado was founded. The history outside of the US is overwhelming as an American.

EMPLOYEE ACHIEVEMENTS

Robert Landers Loss Control Manager
Robert earned his Associate in Risk Management designation, the premier designation for all risk management professionals, from The Institutes.

Josh Ishibashi Senior Engineer
Josh wrote an article called "Steel: the real deal" and explains why steel is the best option material for the Queensferry Crossing. The article was featured in the February 2014 FCBC Newsletter.

Chris Deklewa Field Engineer
Chris earned his Pennsylvania P.E. Chris currently works as a Field Engineer on the Columbus Road Lift Bridge in Cleveland, Ohio.

Brian Binder Project Manager
Brian was recently promoted to a Project Manager for AB. Brian's next assignment will be working in the role of Assistant Project Manager on AB's recent win at the Blount Island Marine Terminal Project in Jacksonville, Florida.

Dan Edwards Chief Estimator
Dan was promoted to Chief Estimator of American Bridge Company. In his new position, Dan will be in charge of all American Bridge Company estimating responsibilities, reporting to Chief Operating Officer, Terry Poole.

NEW EMPLOYEES

Bret Clark Field Engineer
Robin Allen Office Assistant
Kenneth Boyd Materials Coordinator
Stephen Burns Health and Safety Advisor
Jay Copenhaver Director of IT
Jeffrey "Scott" Droginske Cost Accountant
William Eichelberger Talent Acquisition Manager
Matt Fry Document Control Specialist
Matt Guerrera Office 365 Administrator
Jason Hoover Senior Estimator
Bruce Irving Quality Manager
Brian McCollum Field Engineer
Boyd McKay Superintendent
Fergal McKey Field Specialist
Charles Moran Transportation Manager
Howard Neubert Project Engineer
Derek Nickerson Safety Manager
Donald Plumb General Foreman
Edwin Proulx Safety Manager
Robert Taylor Surveyor Supervisor
Terry Twentyman Gantry Supervisor
Don Ulemek Safety Supervisor
John Wilson Superintendent

CURRENT CONTRACTS

- **Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project** New York, New York
- **U.S. 69 Missouri River Bridge** Platte County, Missouri
- **Forth Replacement Crossing (The Queensferry Crossing)** Edinburgh, Scotland
- **Angus Macdonald Bridge Suspended Spans Deck Replacement** Halifax, Nova Scotia
- **Blount Island Marine Terminal Wharf Reconstruction** Jacksonville, Florida
- **Horseshoe Arch Pedestrian** Bridges Dallas, Texas
- **Three Nations Bridge Demolition** Cornwall, Ontario, Canada
- **Freeport Harbour Berths 3, 8, and 9 Refurbishment** Freeport, Bahamas
- **George Washington Bridge Span Upper Level Structural Steel Rehabilitation** New York, New York
- **Sea Terminal at Barcadera** Barcadera, Aruba
- **Walt Whitman Priority Structural Repairs** Gloucester City, New Jersey

AB PROJECT WIN

FREEPORT HARBOUR BERTHS 3, 8 AND 9 REFURBISHMENT

Location: Freeport, Bahamas
Owner: Freeport Harbour Company Ltd.

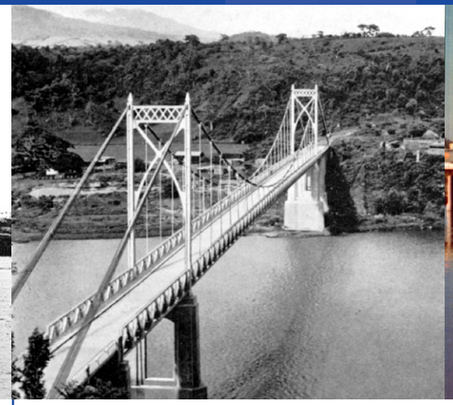
The work for the Freeport Harbour Berth's 3, 8 and 9 Refurbishment Project consists of work on two separate existing berths. Berth 3 work includes demolition of existing facilities and installation of 204 meters of new sheet pile wall. The bulkhead will be tied back with conventional tie rods and concrete tie back blocks. The bulkhead includes concrete encapsulation, bollards and fenders. Berth 8 and 9 are similar in scope including 152 meters of new bulkhead system. The project also includes minimal dredging within the harbor and backfill/paving behind the new bulkhead structures.

FLASHBACKS

PISCATAQUA RIVER BRIDGE

Location: Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Kittery, Maine
Completion Date: 2/11/1924
AB Order #: F-600

The Piscataqua River Bridge was a vertical lift bridge that was completed 91 years ago in 1924. American Bridge was elected to fabricate and erect this three through riveted truss span bridge which spanned the Piscataqua River, connecting Portsmouth, New Hampshire to Kittery, Maine. It was also designated as a World War I memorial, dedicated to the sailors and soldiers of New Hampshire who participated in the War. The bridge closed permanently in 2011 and has since been replaced. The total length of the original bridge was 1,201 feet.



CUSCATIAN BRIDGE

Location: El Salvador
Completion Date: 7/1/1942
AB Order #: H-3357-60

American Bridge was the general contractor for the Cuscatian Bridge, a two lane suspension bridge, which was completed in July of 1942. This was a design-build contract, and all design was done by AB in-house engineering. The bridge is a helical strand highway suspension bridge that carries two lanes across the Rio Lempa River in El Salvador.

BELINDA STREET BASCULE BRIDGES

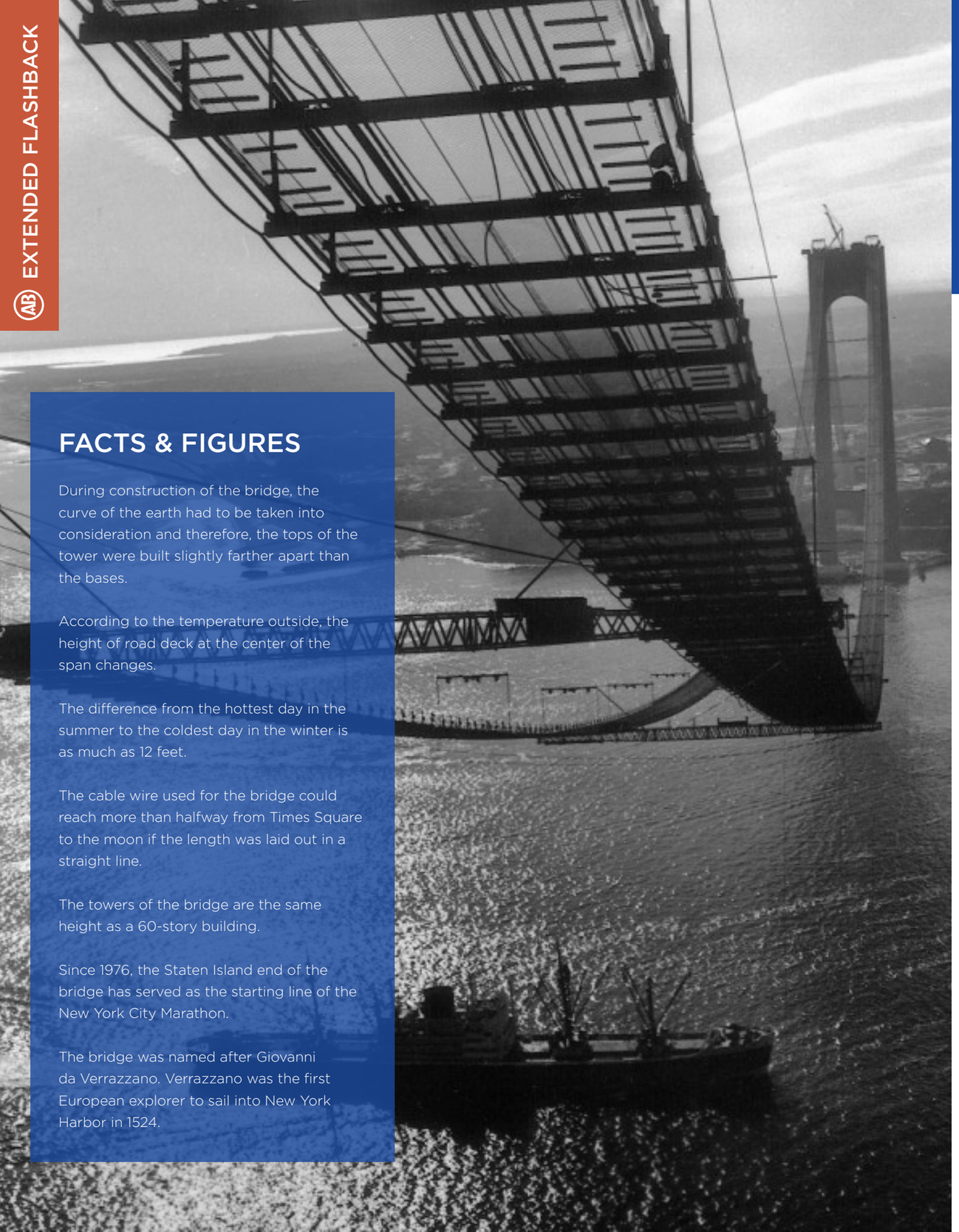
Location: Bay City, Michigan
Completion Date: 7/1/1976
AB Order #: K-5849-66

The Belinda Street Bascule Bridges in Bay City, Michigan were completed 39 years ago in 1976. American Bridge was responsible for both the fabrication and erection of this 1,207' movable, double leaf rolling bascule span with a mainspan length of 185' and a width of 69'. The total tons of steel for the movable span was 650 tons and the total tons of structural steel in the bridge was 1,765 tons.

USACE WBV-72 WASKEY BRIDGES

Location: New Orleans, Louisiana
Completion Date: 2/25/2011
AB Order #: 405010

Four years ago, in 2011, the USACE WBV-72 Waskey Bridges, in New Orleans, Louisiana, were completed. American Bridge was responsible for the construction of the two precast concrete bridges which were built by the top-down method in order to minimize ground disturbance. The contract also included installation of precast piles, precast bent caps, and precast deck panels. The mainspan length is 19 feet and the width is 26 feet.



FACTS & FIGURES

During construction of the bridge, the curve of the earth had to be taken into consideration and therefore, the tops of the tower were built slightly farther apart than the bases.

According to the temperature outside, the height of road deck at the center of the span changes.

The difference from the hottest day in the summer to the coldest day in the winter is as much as 12 feet.

The cable wire used for the bridge could reach more than halfway from Times Square to the moon if the length was laid out in a straight line.

The towers of the bridge are the same height as a 60-story building.

Since 1976, the Staten Island end of the bridge has served as the starting line of the New York City Marathon.

The bridge was named after Giovanni da Verrazzano. Verrazzano was the first European explorer to sail into New York Harbor in 1524.

VERRAZANO-NARROWS BRIDGE CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

This past November, the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge celebrated its 50th anniversary. The bridge opened on November 21, 1964, and as a bridge that has made history, its milestone anniversary was celebrated accordingly, exactly 50 years later on November 21, 2014.

The 2014 ceremony included a 50-shot cannon salute and a fire boat water display, which elected officials and dignitaries attended. The United States Post Office also created a stamp which featured the bridge.

However, this wasn't the first time the bridge has been showcased on a stamp. It was also featured on a stamp as part of the "Wonders of America" series back in 2006.

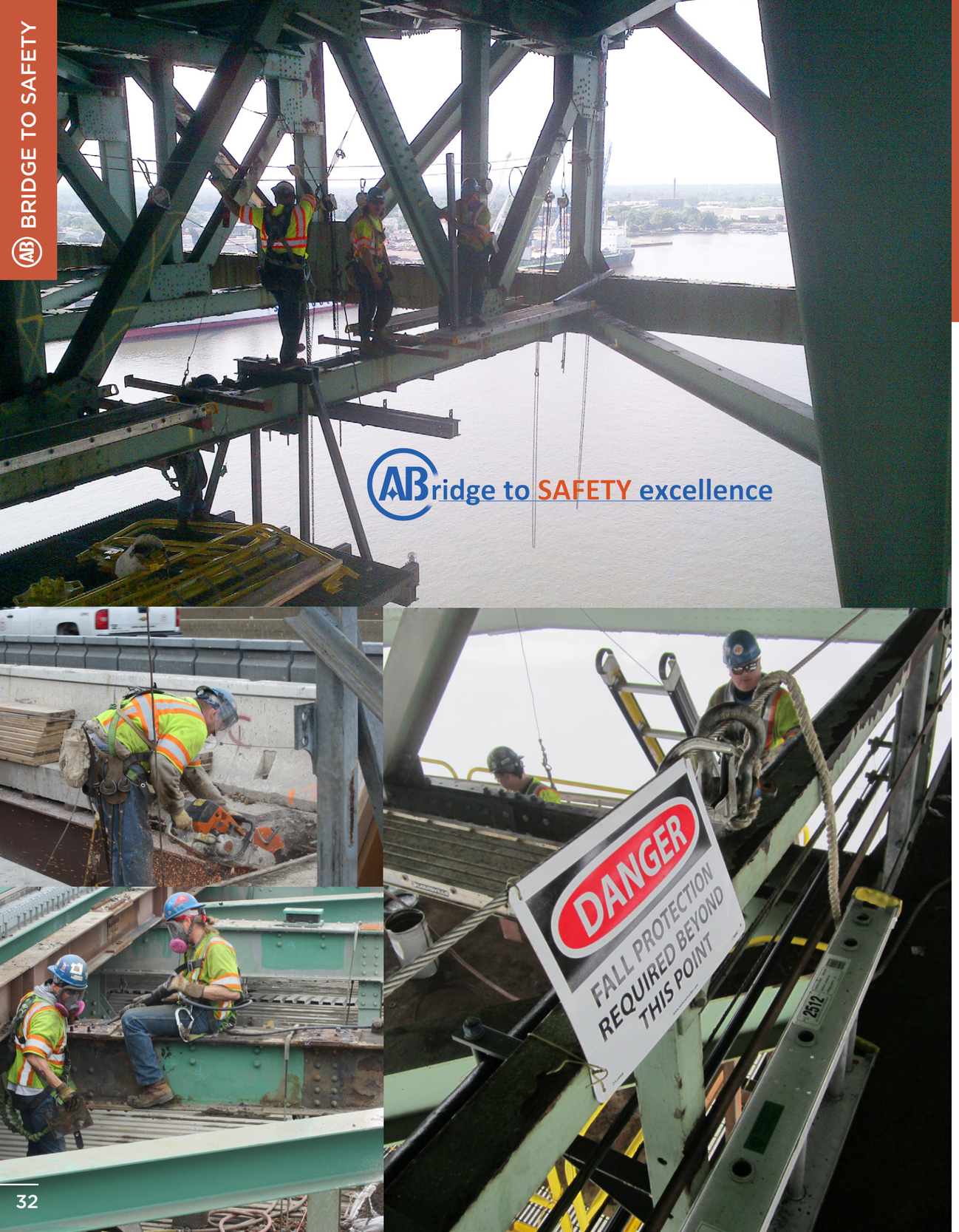
The Verrazano-Narrows Bridge is a two-deck suspension bridge with each deck carrying six lanes of traffic across the Narrows, connecting the New York City boroughs of Brooklyn and Staten Island. When the bridge opened, only the upper deck was in working condition, with the lower deck set to open in 1975. However, with traffic demands, the lower deck was opened early in June 1969.

Before the bridge opened, the only way to get to Staten Island was a ferry service. Once the bridge opened, the ferry service was shut down and the bridge allowed for thousands more cars to cross daily. Today, the bridge carries a million and a half vehicles weekly, about 190,000 per day, compared to 48,000 per day in its first full year of operation.

American Bridge held the prime construction contract for the cables and suspended spans of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. AB fabricated and erected the 101 foot wide, 24 foot deep, double-deck, 6,690' foot suspended truss, which weighed 44,000 tons; hung 389,000LF of suspender ropes, and fabricated and placed nearly 100,000SF of steel grid deck. The work also entailed the largest air spinning project ever completed: four 36" diameter main cables, encompassing 143,000 miles and 38,469 tons of wire. The project remains the largest airspinning project ever. Under a separate contract, AB fabricated and erected 21,000 tons of steel for all of the approaches. The bridge has a main span of 4,260' and a total length of 13,700'.

When the bridge opened, it was the world's longest suspension span and stayed that way until 1981. Today it stands as America's largest suspension bridge and it is now 11th in the world.

During the bridge's 40th year of service, in 2004, AB was awarded a contract for the Verrazano Narrows Bridge Suspender Rope Replacement (AB Order No. 640310). This rehabilitation project involved the removal, replacement, and destructive testing of four suspender ropes at three separate locations on the bridge. As part of the contract, AB also tested the existing ropes. This project was completed less than a year later in 2005.



LEAVING A LASTING **IMPRESSION**

SAFETY EFFORTS ON THE WALT WHITMAN BRIDGE RESULT IN AN INCIDENT-FREE 2014

2014 was an exceptional year for American Bridge's Walt Whitman Bridge Team, with "ZERO" injuries in the completion of three separate rehabilitation projects for the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA.) The team's resolute effort to make safety a priority was led by Project Manager Dan Murphy, Safety Manager Mark Sharin, Field Engineers Bill Batzel, Kara Mullin, and Jason Loebig, and Iron Worker General Foreman Mike Rambus. After the first year of the Deck Replacement project, between mid-2010 through mid-2011, it became apparent that the expected safety goals were not being realized. New York District Vice President Kwadwo Osei-Akoto and Dan made the necessary changes to ensure both safety goals and the overall success of the project would be achieved. Kwadwo and Dan brought in a new Project Safety Manager, Mark Sharin. Mark, with the invaluable input and support of New York District Safety Manager Pete Bereza, performed reviews of the prior incidents. Dan, Pete, and Mark then formulated a plan of corrective action.

It was discovered that the vast majority of injuries were related to dust and debris getting into the worker's eyes, so the project team implemented a policy of mandatory foam lined safety glasses in the early fall of 2011.

Observing how significantly the foam lined safety glasses reduced the accident frequency rate, CEO Mike Flowers issued a mandate in January 2012 that all AB projects use foam lined safety glasses, where appropriate. The next leading cause was strains and sprains. After conferring with members of the Corporate Safety Department, Henry Mykich and Jody Porterfield, a Stretch and Flex program was implemented in February 2012 with excellent results. This is a stretching exercise program which includes all employees onsite before starting work. After some minor push back, the program has become well received by the field employees who now even lead the Stretch and Flex exercises each morning.

December of 2011 seemed to be the true turning point on the project from a safety standpoint. There were several months of minor gains and numerous reminders that "Safety First" was not just a slogan, but also the way business would be conducted. The project's team phrase "Safety First. Get it Right" was repeated each time a correction was needed. On the morning of December 19, over thirty workers stood at the tool box talk (another company-wide safety program) wearing t-shirts they had made saying "Get it Right." It turns out the team had gotten the message, and showed it through their actions over the months to come.

In an effort to maintain the positive changes in attitude, a safety incentive program was put into place in February of 2012 to recognize all craftsman for their efforts. At the beginning of every month, all craftsman who had no accidents or discipline notices, and blood lead levels within specified guidelines were eligible for the drawing of a safety award. The foreman of the winning employee received a matching safety award. When the entire project had no recordable injuries for the month, four additional workers received the award as well. Provisions were in place to protect the company from under-reporting by eliminating the foreman and entire crew if an injury was not reported. As a result of the recognition program implementation, there were numerous months that went incident-free.

In 2013 and 2014 the Walt Whitman team picked up the pace with the knowledge and expectation that safety and productivity can and must work together. The Walt Whitman team made the decision that safety would become a fundamental driving force of a successful and profitable project. All members of the management team continually enforce all applicable OSHA standards along with AB and DRPA safety policies, first by example and then by direction.

2013 was highlighted by Dan Murphy, Mark Sharin, and the entire Walt Whitman team being eligible and nominated for the American Bridge Presidential Award for Safety. In 2014, Dan along with Mike Rambus were again nominated for the award.

The entire Walt Whitman team includes the current team listed above as well as former members who have moved on to other AB projects, taking with them the safety mindset they helped cultivate on the Walt Whitman project. These former team members include Superintendents George Terrance, Dave Geesaman, and Dave Meche, along with Project and Field Engineers Jim Thornton, Mike Hartranft, Drew Merritt, and Zach Osei. Collectively, the team was able to substantially turn things around. They showed that not only could they "talk the talk" but were committed to "walk the walk". Each member of the team, as well as the efforts of the craftsman, contributed to the overall success of the program.

Taking a proactive rather than reactive approach to safety has reaped many benefits. The team no longer chases safety statistics, rather safety has become the team's culture with everyone taking responsibility for their own safety, and that of their coworkers. Instead of settling for meeting "OSHA" minimum standards, they look for best practices. They are regularly recognized by the DRPA and their safety monitors as the team who can get it done, on time, under budget and most importantly SAFELY. Two of the many notable quotes for the team were:

"I want to convey our congratulations to everyone involved in completing the Gusset Re-Hab work. This was a great collaborative effort which was accomplished with minimal traffic interruptions and during trying weather conditions. Please convey our thanks to your respective teams for the commitment and dedication to this important project."

– Mike Venuto, Chief Engineer for the DRPA

Jeff Spatz, Assistant Vice President at the Graham Company, DRPA Safety oversight, stated at a DRPA bi-weekly safety meeting; When some of the other contractors working for the DRPA say they have trouble achieving compliance with the safety requirements of their projects because of union or other issues they need only look at American Bridge as proof it can be accomplished. He referenced the Walt Whitman project as their largest and most complex, yet maintaining the highest level of compliance and success. He went on to say, "One of the very best or the best I have witnessed from a planning, coordination, and execution standpoint".

The Walt Whitman team's proactive approach to safety and operations working together, backed by unwavering management support has been proven successful. All available bench marks on the project were achieved while accomplishing three straight years of reduced accident frequencies, with 2014 coming in at "ZERO" and with American Bridge being awarded additional contracts with the DRPA at the end of the deck replacement contract.

AB CONNECTIONS CONTRIBUTORS

EDITOR

Heather Nicholson

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS

Kelsey Gooding
Paul Michalak
Adam Roebuck
Ugo Del Costello
Joe Grygiel
Jon Young
David Kosar
Mark Sharin
Mark Bell
Carson Carney
Mike Cegelis
Scott Gammon

GRAPHIC DESIGN

www.AramDesigns.com

American Bridge

1000 American Bridge Way
Coraopolis, PA 15108
United States of America

www.AmericanBridge.net

info@americanbridge.net
412-631-1000

CONNECTIONS

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CORAOPOLIS, PA
PERMIT NO. 7

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

April 2015 – Issue #1002

American Bridge

1000 American Bridge Way
Coraopolis, PA 15108
United States of America

www.AmericanBridge.net

info@americanbridge.net
412-631-1000

CONNECTIONS

INTL SURFACE AIR LIFT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CORAOPOLIS, PA
PERMIT NO. 7

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

April 2015 – Issue #1002