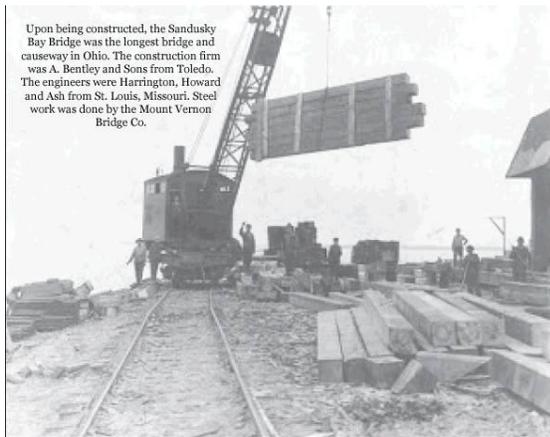


BAY VIEW

On Feb. 2, 1929, the Sandusky Bay Bridge was dedicated, providing a direct route for automobiles across the bay between Erie and Ottawa counties. This marked the first time automobile traffic could cross Sandusky Bay.



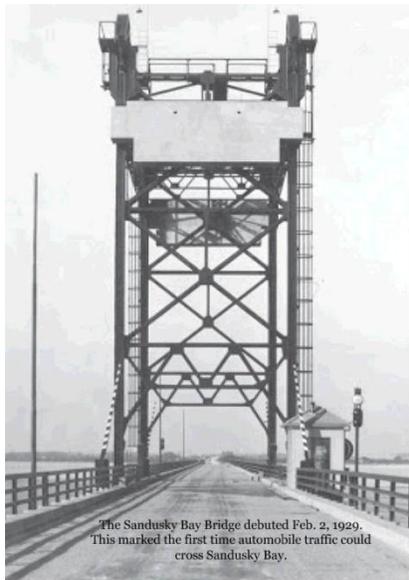
Upon being constructed, the Sandusky Bay Bridge was the longest bridge and causeway in Ohio. The construction firm was A. Bentley and Sons from Toledo. The engineers were Harrington, Howard and Ash from St. Louis, Missouri. Steel work was done by the Mount Vernon Bridge Co.

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Authorized by acts of Congress and the Ohio Legislature, the bridge provided a convenient pathway for both locals and tourists.

Those from the area were delighted to have direct automobile access across Sandusky

Bay. And the thousands of annual tourists to the Lake Erie Islands region were glad to have a quick and easy way to travel across the bay to get to their favorite beach or fishing spot.



The Sandusky Bay Bridge debuted Feb. 2, 1929. This marked the first time automobile traffic could cross Sandusky Bay.

Originally operated by the Sandusky Bay Bridge Co., workers charged each vehicle 50 cents to cross the bridge. On May 1, 1936, the State Bridge Commission of Ohio took over operations, immediately reducing the toll to 25 cents. A toll collector was stationed near the drawbridge.

On Aug. 30, 1946, Gov. Frank Lausche cut ceremonial tape across the bridge span near the toll gate, signifying a toll-free Sandusky Bay Bridge.

The first car to head west on the bridge after the ribbon cutting was Howard Higgins of Rochester, New York. The driver of the car traveling east on the bridge was Jay Johnson from Los Angeles, California.

CELEBRATING THE SPECIAL STRUCTURE.

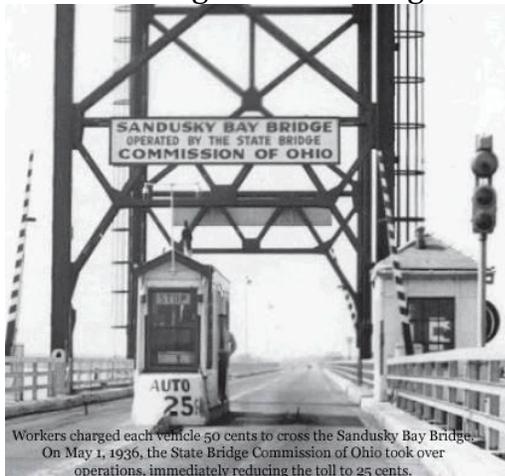
To commemorate the opening of the Sandusky Bay Bridge on Feb. 2, 1929:

- A luncheon took place at Sandusky Junior High School. Ohio Gov. Myers Y. Cooper addressed an audience of about 1,600. Cooper began his speech with, "I assure you, it is a very deep satisfaction to me to come to Erie County and the progressive city of Sandusky to celebrate, with you, the consummation of a great business enterprise which will be of incalculable benefit to the citizens not only of this county but of northern Ohio."

- Congressman James T. Begg, who had been instrumental in the Sandusky Bay Bridge project, presided as toastmaster.

- About 20 carrier pigeons were released through an arrangement with the Register. The pigeons carried a message from Cooper and were sent to other Ohio newspapers, chambers of commerce and auto clubs.

- Shortly after 3 p.m., Cooper shook hands with Toledo Mayor William Jackson as an imaginary ribbon was cut — and the bridge was formally opened to traffic.
- The oldest person in Erie County, Christina Heim, 101, and the oldest person in Ottawa County, Robert Meacham, 90, took part in the ceremonies.
- The Ackley Band played.
- There was a 17-gun salute.
- Ohio's Adjutant General sent three airplanes, which flew over the bridge, dropping aerial bombs in honor of the occasion.
- A chief from the Chippewa nation presented Cooper with a headdress, as he became an honorary member of the Chippewa tribe.
- An estimated 3,000 to 4,000 automobiles crossed the bridge that day. Tolls were not charged until midnight.



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THE BAY BRIDGE'S DEMISE

By the 1960s, the state of Ohio widened Ohio 2 into a four-lane highway. Then the four-lane Edison Memorial Bridge was constructed, running parallel to the Sandusky Bay Bridge. A majority of traffic, however, was rerouted from the bay bridge

Both bridges were used from 1965 until 1985, when the state removed the bay bridge's steel center because of high maintenance costs.

The Sandusky Bay Bridge ceased operations in 1985. Today drivers cross the Sandusky via the Thomas A. Edison Memorial Bridge.

The two ends of the Sandusky Bay Bridge are used as fishing piers. They're maintained by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.