



Tragedy Strikes Toledo Four Workers Killed in Crane Collapse

J. Brian Cunningham
Central Office

THE SOUND OF TWISTING METAL, THE crack of steel and the crash of hundreds of tons of debris punctuated a tragic day February 16, on Toledo's Maumee River Crossing project.

Work on the project came to a screeching halt when one of the erection trusses used to move components of the bridge collapsed, instantly killing three workers and injuring five others that day on the bridge. Two days later one of the injured workers died.

"This is a terrible disaster," said ODOT Assistant Director Rich Mar-

tinko. "Our deepest sympathy goes out to the families of those who lost their lives or were injured."

All four of the men killed were ironworkers and members of Toledo's Ironworkers Local 55.

Robert Lipinski, Jr., Michael Moreau, and Michael Phillips were killed instantly when the erection truss being repositioned on the bridge, crashed onto them as they were working to secure it in its new location.

Arden Clark died two days later from injuries he sustained in the collapse.

Mark Buck, Joshua Collins, Alan Hedge, and Roger Henneman were injured.

The project had been more than a year ahead of schedule. The segment casting is more than 60 percent complete, 107 of 181 piers have been constructed, and the first two of 29 pylon lifts above the roadway have been completed.

The two erection trusses – each 40 feet tall, the length of a football field and weighing 1.8 million pounds – are essentially moving bridges which lift and place enormous precast concrete segments. On the Maumee River Crossing project, each approach span segment weighs approximately 170,000 pounds. At the time of the accident, the trusses were moving for-

(see TRAGEDY on page 2)



Workers survey the twisted aftermath of the collapsed erection truss on Toledo's Maumee River Crossing project.

TRAGEDY (from page 1)

ward to erect the next span of the main span's south approaches, and were not lifting or erecting any segments.

The project up to the point of the collapse had been extremely safe with more than 1.3 million hours worked and only five "lost time" injuries.

"We are extremely proud of the safety record on the project," said District 2 Deputy Director Todd Audet. "People were conscientious, they were careful and we were progressing well. This catastrophe illustrates the dangers that are involved in this type of work."

A second erection truss, identical to the one that collapsed, was shut down immediately when the first truss collapsed. It has since been locked down into a safe position by a team of experts from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, ODOT, the Federal Highway Administration and ODOT's construction contractor Fru-Con.

As ODOT and Fru-Con employees develop a plan to continue the construction of the project's approaches and main spans, other work on the project is slowly starting again to move forward.

While members of the Maumee River Crossing work team are coping with the loss of their fellow workers, construction on the pylons and piers has resumed. The casting yard has again begun operation and the bridge continues to take shape.

"This new river crossing is not simply another bridge; it represents a new Toledo, one of prosperity and one of growth," said ODOT Director Gordon Proctor. "However, because of this tragedy it will also

rebuild the adjacent approaches. The new bridge removes Interstate 280 traffic from the existing Craig Memorial bridge, one of two remaining lift bridges on the country's interstate system. At \$220 million, the main span project is the largest and most expensive single project ever undertaken by ODOT.

This new bridge, located just downstream from the Craig Memorial Bridge, will carry six lanes of interstate traffic and has a 120-foot vertical clearance above the river with a 400-foot wide shipping channel. It will ease traffic congestion through the city's downtown and help increase economic development opportunities for the region.

The bridge's theme, as chosen by the community, reflects Toledo's industrial history. The cable-stayed bridge consists of a 400-foot tall center pylon featuring glass curtain walls that will light up at night. The 1,225-foot main span is supported by a single plane of stainless steel-clad stay cables that also provide a sail-like appearance.

More than 40 acres of green space will be created in the former I-280 roadbed and will reflect the wishes of the community.

Work on the bridge and life in general will soon get back into a normal routine; however, the fact that men lost their lives on this project is a sobering reminder this bridge is far from routine.



The erection trusses in normal operation prior to the tragedy.

photos courtesy of ODOT District 2

"This is a terrible disaster. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the families of those who lost their lives or were injured." Rich Martinko, ODOT Assistant Director.

represent sacrifice as well."

The four-mile Maumee River Crossing is a series of seven construction projects which will create a precast segmental concrete cable-stayed bridge and



The collapsed truss stopped work on the Maumee River Crossing main span.

Retail "Cap" to Bridge I-670 in Downtown Columbus

Joel Hunt
Central Office



COLUMBUS DEVELOPERS HAVE LONG struggled with connecting the Short North and downtown communities because the two were separated by a foreboding trench known as Interstate 670. That trench has been "capped," and beginning next month will be ready to house shops and restaurants atop the freeway. But the road getting there was bumpy.

ODOT, the city of Columbus, real estate developer Jack Lucks, and others, worked on the High Street Cap project for nearly a decade. The on-again, off-again project faced numerous issues from the beginning including funding uncertainty, acquiring right of way, Federal Highway Administration design approval, and utility relocation on the unprecedented project.

ODOT Executive Assistant to the Director Bob Campbell – once directly involved in the Cap project as major projects coordinator – said construction of the Cap had to coincide with the I-670 reconstruction project, which concluded last September, "or it would

never get built."

Until last year, I-670 remained Ohio's only unfinished interstate highway. In 1993, ODOT completed the airport connector, east of downtown, and in 2002 it completed the Grandview connector, west of downtown. The final link was reconstruction of the highway through downtown Columbus.

So for 10 years, ODOT, the city and the developer met and resolved problems

until, as Campbell said, "it was now or never."

"We were working on a very tight time line," said Campbell. "By March 2002, reconstruction of I-670 through downtown was two-thirds done. We were literally against the wall to order the steel for the Cap then, or it wouldn't come in by the time I-670 re-opened."

By the time those involved with the Cap met in March 2002, agreements had been secured with property owners, utility companies and the

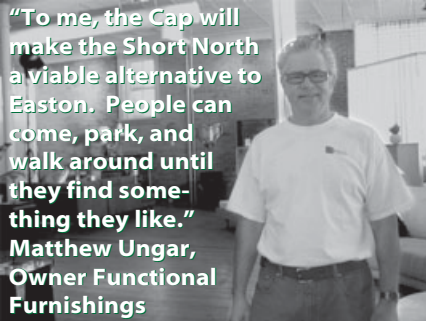
Federal Highway Administration enabling the Cap project to move forward. The city owned the land and ODOT had an easement to build I-670, improve the High Street bridge and build the Cap. The developer had an agreement with the city to use the Cap to build two buildings and lease the space to tenants. What remained to be resolved was the value of the Cap and how the developer would recoup his investment.

The Cap cost \$1.3 million to build: ODOT paid \$1 million; Columbus paid the remainder. The developer spent \$6.5 million to build the shops and restaurants on the Cap. The developer agreed to pay the city \$1 per year to lease the Cap. He also agreed to pay the city 10 percent of the profits when his investment begins returning a profit. These negotiations were enough to push the deal through. Agreements were signed in March 2002 and the steel was ordered.

So, by next month, shoppers and workers will flow from downtown to the Short North and back again as if no trench ever existed.

The Cap over I-670 marks the first in the country to incorporate shops and restaurants. Developer Bob Nelson built the first cap in America over an Atlanta highway in which offices now sit. In fact, Nelson gave a presentation to ODOT on the challenges he faced with regard to right of way and utilities when the I-670 Cap was nothing more than an idea.

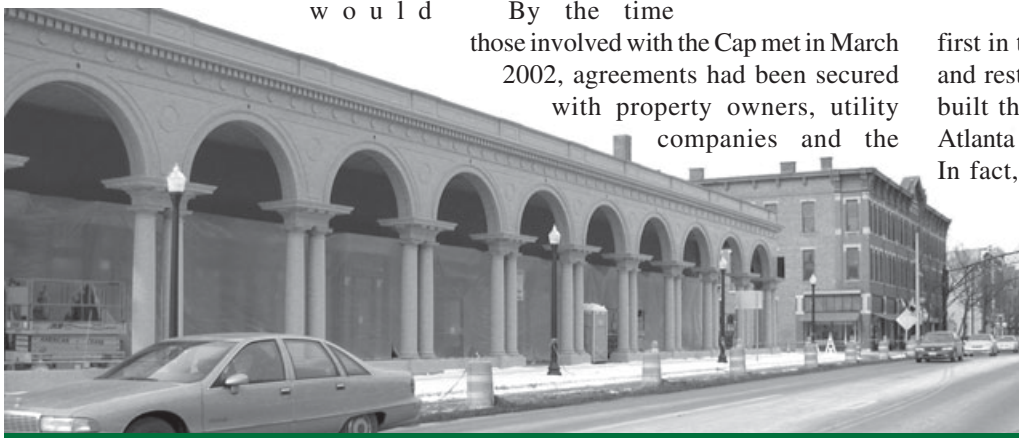
The buildings atop the I-670 Cap include classical arches and vaulted ceilings



"To me, the Cap will make the Short North a viable alternative to Easton. People can come, park, and walk around until they find something they like."
Matthew Ungar,
Owner Functional Furnishings



"The Cap will be good for business. We've already seen a lot more people from the Convention Center."
Kim Simpson,
Manager,
Coffee Table



Next month retail stores will begin opening atop Interstate 670 in Columbus. The freeway was "capped" to bridge downtown and the Short North.

photos by Leslie Dellovade

(see **CAP** on page 8)

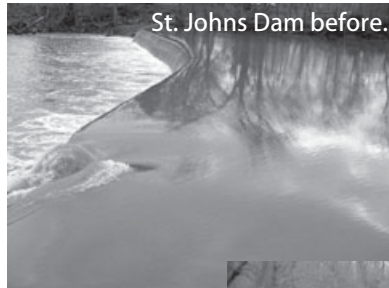


John Hackley
Central Office

Round Up from the Ground Up

Teamwork Improves Sandusky River

A recent dam removal between Upper Sandusky and Tiffin along County Route 6 was a significant improvement



St. Johns Dam before.

photos by John Hackley

to the local natural environment.

Aside from ecological benefits, the St. Johns Dam was a safety hazard to recreational users of the Sandusky River, so the project will result in safer boating, swimming, and fishing on that section of the river.

The dam's removal has been a priority for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for many years, but financial constraints prevented the department from accomplishing the removal alone. With cooperation and assistance from ODOT, the project was finally completed.

"The St. Johns Dam removal project is a terrific example of two state agencies working together to accomplish their respective goals," said Mike Pettegrew, the environmental supervisor of the ODOT's Office of Environmental Services Waterway Permits Unit.

"The benefit to ODOT is the establishment of a significant amount of

'pooled stream mitigation credits' at a reasonable cost, which can be utilized as stream mitigation on future ODOT projects in the Sandusky River's watershed and adjacent watersheds," said ODOT Environmental Specialist Don Rostofer. "ODOT had a need to find stream mitigation in this part of the state for future transportation projects which would adversely impact streams to a high degree."

Another potential benefit to ODOT is the success of this single project could result in similar efforts in the future along with continued partnering with ODNR or other state agencies in relation to mitigation projects.

The actual removal of the dam was completed by a work crew from Mosser



OES Waterway Permits Supervisor Mike Pettegrew and Environmental Specialist Don Rostofer on site during the St. Johns Dam removal on the Sandusky River.

Construction, and all of those involved seem to agree on the benefits.

"It is definitely benefitting the river because, now, it is free flowing," said ODNR Northwest Ohio Scenic River Coordinator Robert Vargo. "Now there is less chance of future flooding in the area so many of the local farmers are happy, and the overall health of the river will improve as the banks reinvigorate themselves next spring."

It is also important to consider the



After the dam removal.

preventive maintenance aspect of this project. "A project like this allows ODOT to pro-actively mitigate for stream impacts in a cost-efficient, timely manner," said Rostofer. "The regulatory agencies involved with waterway permitting – the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency – prefer to see stream and wetland improvements completed prior to beginning the highway projects where the mitigation is used. This approach streamlines the entire permitting process."

The removal of the dam will return an approximate 14-mile portion of the river to its natural, free-flowing state. "We expect to see an improvement in aquatic life movement, physical stream habitat, and transport of sediment in the river," said Pettegrew. "The end result should yield a healthier aquatic ecosystem with more diverse populations of fish, macroinvertebrate, and mussel species."

Plates Preserve Lake Erie

Since 1993, the sale of special Lake Erie license plates has generated more than \$7 million to protect the lake.

Competition from newer specialty plates and lack of awareness of the program have recently decreased needed revenue for Lake Erie. ODOT is working with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the Lake Erie Commission to increase plate sales.

The planned efforts include a number of marketing strategies such as placing information about the program at ODOT's 12 Travel Information Centers.

Since its inception, the program has helped more than 200 projects that focus on restoring, protecting and improving the quality of Lake Erie.



Emergency Management Goes Mobile in District 12

The new District 12 mobile office and command center, unveiled in January, will significantly improve emergency operations throughout the Cleveland region.

“The incident response trailer will aid in directing our forces and activities during any emergency,” said Howard Huebner, District 12 roadway services manager. “It will allow us to make our decisions on site rather than having to do so remotely. While we have not yet had a chance to use the unit yet, it can only improve our effectiveness in responding to or assisting in situations such as disaster cleanup operations.”

The specially-equipped Mobile Incident Management trailer is slightly larger than a horse trailer and pulled by a decommissioned RoadCrewZer vehicle. It cost approximately \$10,000 and contains a wireless laptop computer, television, radio, respirator, assorted tools and other safety equipment for emergency response. Much of the equipment was “recycled” from other sources.

The trailer’s use is not exclusive to the District 12 area. If other districts have a use for the emergency response unit, they should contact Huebner at: (216) 584-2190.



Ron Poole
Central Office



District 12’s new mobile incident management trailer is an on-the-go office.



photos by Lora Hummer

Librarian Helps Develop Research Tool

The January release of a new national on-line training course, developed with the help of ODOT personnel, will significantly improve the country’s transportation professionals access to research information.

“Since its inception, the demand for the course has been great, said ODOT Librarian Janet Bix, who was involved with the creation of the new training. “Would-be students had to be turned away from the pilot.”



my searches much more efficient in the future.”

The Midwest Transportation Knowledge Network, the National Highway Institute and the NTL launched a pilot for the on-line instructional course for Internet transportation research.

NTL scheduled four more classes throughout the month of February with Bix teaching the session scheduled on Feb. 24.

For additional information regarding possible future on-line classes, visit: www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov.

“Working Smarter” is a short bibliographic instruction course that aids individuals in using the Internet as a research tool. The course, which lasts from 90 minutes to two hours, covers efficient and effective methods for finding transportation-related information and sources. It also teaches information evaluation and interpretation and when to go to a library for assistance. Students learn through lectures and quizzes administered by National Transportation Library (NTL) instructors.

Monique Evans, administrator of ODOT’s Office of Research and Development took part in the January pilot. “I was familiar with several Web sources for conducting transportation research, but I was surprised to learn the numerous techniques I could use to optimize the results from these sources,” said Evans. “These skills will make

County Work Plan Update

Joel Hunt, Central Office

DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, HIGHWAY maintenance has improved 58 percent. The number of deficiencies in the maintenance categories identified in the ODOT County Work Plan have fallen from 179,710 in 2001 to 76,258 in December 2003.

“This means our highway crews are working much harder than ever before

and that taxpayers are getting a better product for their money,” said Division of Highway Operations Deputy Director Tony Vogel.

The plan was born from the 2001 Strategic Initiative Four: *Re-defining County Priorities*. It evaluates the condition of eight core county maintenance categories: Guardrail, Pavement Deficiency, Pavement Drop Off, Vegetation Obstruction, Litter, Drainage Ditch Ob-

struction, Sign Deterioration, and Pavement Marking. These categories are measured separately on the priority and general systems for a total of 16 categories.

Additionally, all but one of the 16 category goals have been met; Drainage Ditch Obstruction on the general system. This goal is expected to be met by the end of March.

The table below shows the number of districts currently below goal.

Ohio Department of Transportation County Work Plan Maintenance OPI Exception Report Rolling 4 Quarter OPI Scores as of 12-31-2003

OPI Category	System	District OPI Scores Below Their 3 Year OPI Goal Rolling 4 Quarter Summer 2003 (1/01/03 - 12/31/03)														# of Districts per Category/Route Type Below Goal						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	State	04/01/00 to 03/31/01	04/01/01 to 03/31/02	04/01/02 to 03/31/03	07/01/02 to 06/30/03	10/01/02 to 09/30/03	01/01/03 to 12/31/03		
Guardrail	Priority																11	2	1	1	0	0
	General													0			7	1	2	2	2	1
Pavement Deficiency	Priority																8	0	1	1	0	0
	General																9	1	1	0	0	0
Pavement Drop Off	Priority								2								0	9	8	7	6	1
	General				2												0	7	9	6	5	1
Vegetation Obstruction	Priority																3	1	1	1	0	0
	General												3				4	7	4	7	2	1
Litter	Priority																5	0	0	0	0	0
	General									2							5	4	1	1	2	1
Drainage Obstruction	Priority		3		3										0		5	3	9	11	12	3
	General	1	3	3	0	1	2	2	1	2	2	1		2		10	2	9	11	12	11	
Sign Deterioration	Priority				2								2	3			11	7	5	5	6	3
	General																8	5	2	3	1	0
Pavement Markings	Priority					3	3						2	2			12	8	5	7	7	4
	General		3		2		1						3	0	0	2	10	8	7	9	10	6

# of District Categories per Route Type Below Goal	1 of 16	3 of 16	1 of 16	5 of 16	2 of 16	3 of 16	1 of 16	2 of 16	3 of 16	5 of 16	6 of 16	0 of 16	2 of 16

Statewide per Category/Route Type					
108 of 192	65 of 192	65 of 192	72 of 192	65 of 192	32 of 192

NOTE: 1/1/03 to 12/31/03 represents the latest OPI data for the 2003 CWP. Additionally, this report reflects the HMA's decision to apply the Priority System deficiency ranges to the General System.

Maintenance Administration 12-31-2003 (Updated 1-27-2004)

Understanding the Controlling Board

Generally, every two weeks state agency representatives are “grilled” by Ohio’s Controlling Board as to why contracts are unbid or require unanticipated changes. This legislative body is responsible for monitoring state agency spending.

Representatives from the state agencies appearing before the board are often subject to intense questioning by legislative members regarding the necessity of the pending request. In ODOT’s case this task is coordinated by the Office of Legislative Services Deputy Director Michelle Holdgreve and Legislative Liaison Todd Nielsen. They are assisted by an array of others with the department in the fiscal, legal, and consultant services areas.

Recently, ODOT has come under fire for a multitude of “retroactive” Controlling Board requests. These requests involved ODOT personnel instructing vendors to perform services outside the scope and funding limit of the original Controlling Board approved contract.

“We have been very diligent in our requests to the Controlling Board and we must continue to do so in order to maintain a good relationship with board members,” said Holdgreve. “If we become lax in our responsibilities, it will result in the board delaying our project requests.”

It is imperative the Controlling Board procedures are followed appropriately or those involved with ODOT contracts could continue to be subject to roasting on the Controlling Board’s virtual grill.

Computers Receive Extreme Makeovers

In keeping up with the trend of today, ODOT’s Division of Information Technology will soon be giving all employee computers an “extreme” facelift.

All computer facelifts will include Microsoft XP Operating System along with both Microsoft and Corel Office Suites. There will be 2,000 new monitors and 3,500 computers replacing outdated ones. Additionally, nearly 600 ex-



Melissa Cook
Central Office

News From the Road

isting computers will be upgraded.

“As with all new programs, a few glitches will need to be worked out, but everything will soon be running smoothly,” said DoIT Deputy Director Shobna Varma. “DoIT team members have logged a great deal of hours in this effort and I commend them for their dedication.”

During the next two months, DoIT employees will be installing the new software statewide. The added memory and disk space will provide users with more efficient machines. Everyone should be on the look out for the new and improved faces that will soon be appearing at ODOT.

Mineta Talks Transportation

Using Cleveland’s aging Innerbelt Bridge as a backdrop, U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta recently outlined the importance of the new six-year federal transportation bill to states like Ohio.

Mineta visited Cleveland to promote the President’s bill which calls for funding levels at \$256 billion. The recently passed Senate version has \$318 billion for its total. The funding level for the House proposal, currently being debated in Congress, is set at \$375 bil-

lion.

The House, Senate and President Bush’s administration funding bills may differ in the total amount they allocate for highway construction purposes, they all do call for increased funding. The previous federal transportation funding bill allocated \$218 billion during its six-year span.

While the funding levels have not yet been finalized, the President’s proposal would increase Ohio’s federal allocation by 6 percent. Under the Senate and House versions Ohio’s allocation would grow by 38 percent and 61 percent respectively.

The funding levels in the final version of the bill will set the course for how much of Gov. Taft’s 10-year \$5 billion transportation plan for Ohio can be implemented.

The governor’s Jobs and Progress Plan, unveiled last August, focuses on improving Ohio’s urban interstate network, completing the state’s macro-corridors and eliminating high-crash and congested locations.



U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta delivers a speech on the importance of the new federal transportation bill to Ohio during his Feb. 11th visit to the Cleveland area.

photo by Michelle Proctor

CAP (from page 3)

similar to the architectural style of the early 1900s. The final design resembles the arches of Union Station- Columbus' old train station, which was located adjacent to the Cap where the Convention Center now sits.



"Let the flood gates open."
Marty McGreevy,
Owner and
Krystyna
Sonnenberg
Market Blooms

photo by Leslie Dellovade

Feature Photo



photo by Julie Walcoff

The new cap, with arch-covered sidewalks and retail storefronts on both sides of High Street above Interstate 670, offers a new view and access in downtown Columbus.

FYI

Conaway Conferences UPDATE!

The Conaway Conferences have been rescheduled as follows:

February 26 and 27

Districts 7, 8 and 9
Deer Creek Resort and
Conference Center
Mt. Sterling, Ohio

March 18 and 19

Districts 5 and 10
Ohio University Inn and
Conference Center
Athens, Ohio

March 25 and 26

Districts 3, 4, 6, 11 and 12
The Lodge at Sawmill Creek
Huron, Ohio

April 1 and 2

Districts 1 & 2
Maumee Bay Resort and
Conference Center
Oregon, Ohio

Ohio Department of Transportation Employee Newsletter



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