

Golden Gate Bridge, Which Scientists Said Couldn't Be Built, 20 Years Old

San Francisco — The bridge they said couldn't be built celebrates its 20th birthday today.

For the Golden Gate bridge it has been two decades as the prima donna of San Francisco landmarks, the "Statue of Liberty" of the West coast, the welcome-home symbol for an estimated 3 million American servicemen of World War II and the Korean war.

It has the longest span (4,200 feet) and the highest towers (746 feet) of any suspension bridge in the world, although its length would be eclipsed by the proposed New York Narrows bridge.

Since it was opened to traffic May 27, 1937, the Golden Gate bridge has weathered wind, storm, riptide and earthquake, not to mention the unwanted reputation as a jump-off place for suicides. At least 169 persons have leaped the 220 feet from the bridge to death.

Bridge Was Opposed

The story began in 1918 when City Engineer M. M. O'Shaughnessy asked Engineer Joseph B. Strauss to survey the possibility of bridging the Golden Gate.

"Everybody says it can't be done and that it would cost over \$100 million if it could be done," Strauss was told.

The ferryboat interests opposed it. So did the budget-minded who called it an "economic crime." The military warned that a well-placed bomb or shell would bottle up the harbor, and scientists said that an earthquake would topple the bridge.

But far-sighted civic and government leaders rallied behind Strauss. After numerous court challenges by opponents, construction began in 1933.

The builders had more than their share of troubles. Fog, high winds and ocean storms swept through the Gate. The tidal current reached seven knots. Workmen embedding foundations 30 feet into bedrock got seasick as 15-foot swells tossed their barges like corks.

A ship groping through the fog and later a storm swept away work trestles.

With only three months to go, only one worker had died. Strauss' special shore-to-safety net had saved 15 workmen who formed the select "Half Way to Hell Club."

Ten Killed in Fall

Then tragedy struck. A movable platform tore loose and dragged the safety net with it. Ten men were killed.

The towers soared the equivalent of 65 stories above San Francisco bay. Five thousand cables in each tower allow for sway. Each of the cables suspending the roadway contains 27,000 strands of pencil-thick wire.

It takes a 30-man crew four years to paint the entire bridge in its distinctive dark red color, known to the trade as "international orange."

Except for wartime blackouts, the bridge has been closed only once, on Dec. 1, 1951, when 69 mph winds caused a "galloping motion which reduced motorists' visibility to zero."

Seventy-six persons have been prevented from jumping from the bridge. One person, 22-year-old Cornelia Van Ireland, jumped and survived. She suffered two broken arms, a fractured vertebra and cut legs.

PLENTY OF FRESH AIR
Schenectady, N. Y. — A ventilation system so powerful it could change the air every four-and-a-half minutes in the Empire State Building will be installed under the Patapsco River in Maryland's new Baltimore by-pass. Thirty-two fans powered by 64 electric motors will circulate the air in the 1.4 mile tunnel. The tunnel is expected to be completed in December at a cost of 45 million dollars.

Quotes From the News

By UNITED PRESS

Washington—Adm. Lewis L. Strauss, chairman of the Atomic Energy commission, proposing a conference to deal with biological and nuclear warfare problems.

"We should now call a conference in humanistics to get historians, philosophers and humanitarians together to form some idea or method to see if man can cope with the problems which his inventiveness has brought him."

Travis AFB, Calif.—Army M. Sgt. Robert G. Reynolds, on the Taipei riots touched off by his court martial acquittal in the slaying of a Chinese prowler near his home.

"I'm extremely sorry this thing happened, but I was just doing my duty to my family and protecting myself."

Tokyo—Acting Japanese Prime Minister Mitsuhiro Ishii, on Japanese intentions to try an American soldier for manslaughter regardless of American objections.

"To say that the case is under U.S. jurisdiction merely because it occurred when the American soldier was on duty is too simple thinking."

Chicago—Gov. Frank Clement of Tennessee, urging that the United States provide Poland with economic aid in spite of objections by Senate Republican Leader William F. Knowland.

"If the people behind the Iron Curtain, oppressed, helpless and starving, are now seeking to free themselves, we should give these people help instead of the back of our hand, as proposed by Knowland."

Gettysburg—President Eisenhower to fence-straddling photographers while touring his farm with West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer.

"If Ivan Feister (the farm manager) catches some of you fellows on that fence, somebody's going to lose a head."

CARP FOR CHICKENS

Brookings, S.D. — C. W. Carlson, poultryman at the S. D. State College Agricultural Extension station here, says if a large number of carp removed from lakes each year could be processed into a low-cost meal, it could replace a portion of the fish supplements now used in commercial chick rations.

Head-On Collision Claims 11 Lives

Benson, Ill. — Seven children and four adults, believed to be two Illinois families on an outing, were killed Saturday night when the two cars in which they were riding collided head-on, one of them turning into a funeral pyre wrapped around a tree.

Officials at a funeral home in nearby Minonk said two of the children, and a man and a woman, were burned almost beyond recognition when one of the cars caught fire after being thrown against the tree by the impact of the collision.

The other victims died in the wreckage of the second auto, authorities said.

They said the collision occurred about a mile from Benson, a small farming community, on a stretch of paved road where high speeds are frequent, because it is remote and straight for a distance.

The Woodford county sheriff's office and state police were seeking witnesses to the accident and believed that a third car may have been involved, after studying the accident scene.

More than 42 million young Americans have come of age in the past 18 years. The census bureau estimates the U. S. population may reach 300 million by the turn of the century.

About 75 per cent of Canada's population lives along its southern frontier adjoining the United States.

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