

V6-31

Brant Officially Opens New Traynor Bridge

1983

A large turnout of area residents of Brant, as well as officials and politicians, was present, June 24th evening for the long-awaited official opening of the new Traynor Bridge across the Saugeen River, on the South Line Road, only a mile and a half east of Walkerton.

The concrete reinforced span was completed by Owen King Construction Ltd. last fall at a cost of \$352,000.00, of which 80% was paid by the Province through the Ministry of Transportation and Communications.

As part of the project, the road approaches were straightened and the bridge elevation raised.

Brant Clerk-Treasurer Gary Napper acted as Chairman and provided appropriate opening remarks.

Reeve Dave Thomson welcomed guests and expressed thanks on behalf of the Township to Gamsby & Mannerow, the consulting engineers, to Owen King Construction, and to Eric Winkler, ex-Grey-Bruce M.P.P. who assisted in obtaining Provincial funding. He thanked CKNX-Wingham for the use of their system. Deputy Reeve Tom Chisholm introduced the platform guests.

William Siegner, who has lived near the bridge all his life, gave an informal history of the bridge; part of which was printed on the program. The first bridge was built

around 1855-56 to serve what was the most populated area of the township at that time. This bridge was carried away by high water and was replaced by a second wooden span in 1882. This bridge was also swept away by spring floods in 1887. That year a third wooden bridge was constructed. This bridge was eventually replaced in the early 1900's by a steel structure which in turn was replaced in 1982 by the present reinforced concrete span, the fifth bridge at this location.

The bridge was named after the Traynor family who lived at the curve approaching the bridge. He stated the original deed still has water stains, said to have been caused by Mr. Traynor falling in the river when bringing the deed back from Durham before 1855.

A Jim Preston lived close to the bridge and used to chop holes in the ice to take water levels. Siegner reminisced that in the old days skinny dipping in the river was popular at the bridge. He also recalled more recent history when the spring flood of 1975 carried away a cabin near the bridge and smashed it against the structure.

Rev. James Dookram of Trinity Lutheran Church, Walkerton, representing the Walkerton Ministerial Association, provided words of blessing and dedicated the bridge.

Brant Councillor Les Young introduced the various speakers, each of whom delivered brief words of greeting. These were, William Mannerow of Gamsby & Mannerow; Richard King of Owen King Ltd.; Robert Thompson of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications; Jack Cumming, Bruce County Warden; Dr. Gary Gurbin, Bruce-Grey M.P.; Eddie Sargent, Grey-Bruce M.P.P., and Cliff Pegelo, 1982 Reeve of Brant and last year's Warden of Bruce County.

Richard King presented a framed photograph of the bridge to Reeve Thomson.

Gary Gurbin referred to the economic benefits from a pro-

ject of this nature.

Eddie Sargent said he was glad to see a bridge built over water, a dig at the Provincial Government. He thought politicians should put bridges where people can see how their money is spent.

Eric Winkler said he had been involved in three big bridges in Brant Twp. and would like to see one more, the replacement of the Crispin bridge. This is the old steel bridge at the east end of the South Line Road leading to Seventh Ave. in Hanover. Another possible bridge considered some years ago, but not mentioned, is a crossing of the Saugeen, a little over a mile west of the Traynor Bridge, to provide a Walkerton bypass.

Cliff Pegelo, who was Reeve of Brant when the Traynor Bridge was built last year, mentioned that there are still three small bridges over Deer Creek that need to be replaced.

William Mannerow said that the program of replacing bridges began in 1977, when the then Ministry of Highways conducted a bridge appraisal and found the Traynor Bridge to be one of four structurally deficient bridges over the Saugeen in Brant Twp. The first span to be replaced was the Eighth Con. bridge east of Cargill in June, 1973, or ten years ago. The township is presently straightening the easterly approach to that bridge.

The second bridge to be replaced was the Maple Hill Bridge in June, 1979. Mr. Mannerow, who was consulting engineer for the project, said the new Traynor Bridge is a continuous three-span structure set on steel piling with an overall length of 240 feet. The cost was \$53 per square foot and in terms of weight, of interest to cattle farmers, it was

only 11.7 cents per lb., the total weight of the bridge being 3,021,900 lbs.

Guest speaker at the event was William Venn, District Engineer for M.T.C. in Owen Sound, representing James Snow, Minister of Transportation and Communications. He was introduced by Brant Councillor Robert Elphick, who described the speaker's hobbies as nature, hiking and history.

Mr. Venn said the Minister is now recommending repairs where possible as they are not always able to provide full funding in one year.

He congratulated Brant Council on "an excellent bridge that will last long after we are gone."

Mr. Venn was thanked by Councillor James Abell, who presented him with a copy of the History of Brant.

Brant Twp. Road Superintendent Ron O'Hagan unveiled the bridge plaque, donated by Owen King Ltd. and Gamsby & Mannerow.

This was followed by the ribbon-cutting ceremony, the ribbon being severed by Mr. Venn.

At the close of the program, all those attending were invited to a reception held at the Walkerton Community Centre. Music was by Rick Anstett, followed by lunch provided by Anna Oehring.



Piece of Ribbon from Ribbon Cutting