THE HISTORIC VILLAGE OF ROEBLING, NEW JERSEY
JOHN A. ROEBLING (1806-1869)  
AMERICA’S BRIDGEBUILDING GENIUS

Mr. Roebling came to America in 1831 from Muhlhausen, Germany after graduating as a Civil Engineer from Berlin’s prestigious Royal Polytechnic Institute. He founded the town of Saxonburg, Pa., in 1832 where he successfully substituted wire rope for hemp, saving lives by reducing accidents.

He built his first bridge in 1846 at Pittsburgh over the Monongahela River. became the expert when his Niagara Falls double-decked railroad structure was accepted worldwide. His Cincinnati Bridge was the model for the 8th wonder of the world — the Brooklyn Bridge. The Chisholm Trail was connected by his Waco Texas Bridge over the Brazos River in 1870 — all three still in use.

His family company built many more bridges including the George Washington and the most graceful Golden Gate. He perfected the state of the art for suspension bridges and fashioned wire rope to industrialize America. His applications and techniques are still in use today.

For further information, see The Roebling, NJ Historical...
2006 German Stamp Commemorating John A. Roebling
Washington Augustus Roebling was born on May 36, 1837. Son of engineer John A. Roebling, he would follow in his father’s footsteps. Roebling completed many suspension bridges with his father and served in the Civil War as an engineer. Roebling is most famous for completing the Brooklyn Bridge. This was the largest suspension bridge in the world at the time of its completion. Washington Roebling became a physical invalid while the bridge was under construction, but he continued to direct its construction from his home with the assistance of his wife Emily. Washington A. Roebling died on May 26, 1937.
Charles G. Roebling
Founder of the Village of Roebling
Charles Roebling was the father of the model town of Roebling on the Delaware River, designed originally to give comfortable homes to the thousands of employees working in the wire and steel mills. Among Mr. Roebling's achievements in the industrial growth of the John A. Roebling's Sons Company are the construction and operation of seven large wire mills, the largest rod mill in the country and a smaller one for copper; an open hearth and steel plant of twelve furnaces, a billet mill, many tempering and tinning furnaces, a large cloth factory, and great mills for making flat steel wire and corset wire. He had control of 8,000 operatives.
Statue of Charles Roebling
5th and Main St Circle
Ferdinand Roebling
Treasurer and General Manager
of the John A Roebling Company
1842-1917
Treasurer and General Manager of the John A Roebling Sons Company. Products consisted of iron, steel, copper, brass wire, wire rope, electric cable, and modern wire goods. He was very interested in the importance of electrical development and became director in a number of electrical and allied manufacturing companies.
The story of the town of Roebling began in Mulhausen, Prussia on June 12, 1806. On this day, John A. Roebling was born. John was fortunate enough to study architecture, bridge construction and hydraulics at the Polytechnic Institute in Berlin.

He was also a student of the famous philosopher Hegel from whom he learned the doctrine of self-realization and independence which characterized his life. It was his belief in this doctrine that led to his decision to leave Prussia in 1831 to get away from the political and religious tyranny taking place.
John and a group of young people who emigrated with him eventually settled on the outskirts of Pittsburgh, Pa. where they founded the town of Saxonburg. It was here that he began to fabricate rope out of wire. He used his wire rope to build suspension bridges and it became very much in demand.

In order to meet the increasing demand for his wire rope he built a factory in Trenton, N. J. in 1848. In 1850, John Roebling began to build a suspension bridge across the gorge of the Niagara River.
In 1866, John began to build the Brooklyn Bridge which would connect the boroughs of Manhattan and Brooklyn in New York City. However, John died as a result of a construction related accident in 1869 and his son Washington took over the task of supervising the project to its completion.

Around the turn of the century, the Roeblings decided to build a steel mill to make their own steel to be used in making their wire rope. They wanted to build the mill in Trenton, close to the existing plant. However, due to high land prices they decided to look elsewhere.
After much searching, Charles G. Roebling (John’s third son) purchased a 115 acre peach and potato Farm from Jacob Hoffner for $17,000 on June 25, 1904. Charles and his brother Ferdinand then spent $4,000,000 to build their steel mill, wire rope plant and the model town of Roebling for its workers. The design and layout of the town was conceived by Charles and thus, he is considered to be the founder of Roebling.
Excavation Site 1904-05
Originally a Peach Orchard
Roebling Inn
First Building in Roebling
Built 1905
Roebling Inn
This is the first permanent building constructed by the Roebling family which remains today. Men working in the construction of the plant and village paid $2.00 a week for room and board. In 1910 the Roebling’s hired John W. Stone from Frackville, Pa., to manage the hotel and bar. (This is the reason it was referred to as Stony’s Inn.) He sold quality whiskey and bottled his own beer from kegs in the cellar. Before prohibition men would line up and down 3rd and 4th Avenues waiting to get in for a drink. At one time you had two bowling lanes in the cellar.
Third and Riverside
Dr. Traub: Roebling’s First Doctor in Front of the Village Tavern 1906
Roebling Park at 3rd Ave
General Store, Bakery, and Drug Store
5th and Main
1905
General Store
Construction of the General Store began in 1905, and it opened for business on June 3, 1906, with Samuel L. Major in charge. Here they sold everything from pork chops to pianos. This was really one of the first indoor malls in the United States. On January 2, 1930, the Roeblings turned the grocery and meat departments over to the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company. On February 28, 1947, the General Store was sold by the Roeblings to the Corporation headed by H. Russell Brown, Theodore Zotta and Herbert D. Rathburn. It continued to operate until 1959 when the construction of newer shopping malls in the area forced its closing.
Interior of General Store before shelves were stocked
General Store Departments
Separated from the main General Store by an alley were several businesses. Moser’s Bakery was situated just to the right of the alley. Here they made fresh bread, rolls and pies daily. Charles Moser was told by the Roeblings to “bake the best you can, with the least profit for the company.” They used the best flour and butter available. The bakery closed on August 6, 1907. The Deli is located there today.
To the right of the bakery was the drugstore which is still located there today. The first pharmacist was Mr. Kemp in 1907. Located behind the drugstore was the barber shop. One of the first barbers in Roebling was Joe DeVincentis, but the town people knew him as “Mango the Barber”. In 1917 shaves were 15 cents, haircuts 25 cents, and shampoos cost 30 cents. The 5 barber chairs were constantly full.
Behind the barber shop was the doctor’s office. The first doctor in Roebling was Dr. Paul Traub, a graduate of Temple University Medical School. The fee for the first visit was $1.00. Serious cases were taken by horse and wagon to St. Francis Hospital in Trenton.

On the top of the drugstore you also had the first real estate office run by R.H Thompson (he is know as the first resident of Roebling). In back of this office was a large room which was used both as a place to show silent movies and where the Methodist’s held their church services on Sunday. When the real estate office moved to the First National Bank in 1920 the dentist office was established.
Drug Store
Original Fire House
1907
Drug Store 4th Avenue and Main Street
Upstairs Drug Store
Methodist Church Meeting Room
General Store, Bakery and Drug Store Main Street
Drug Store
4th and Main Street
First Houses
4th and 5th Avenues
1906
First Houses

The houses on 4th and 5th Avenues between Knickerbocker Avenue and Main Street were the first homes built in Roebling. The last brick homes built by the Roeblings were 8th Avenue between Main Street and Riverside Avenue, and 6th Avenue south of Knickerbocker Avenue in 1921. R.H. Carty was hired by the Roeblings to handle all the brick work in both the village and plant. 750 solidly constructed homes were built for a population of around 3600 people. Persons with high positions in the Roebling Company lived in the large homes along Riverside Avenue.
First Houses
4th and 5th Avenues
1906
4th Avenue Alley 1928
5th and Main St Water Tower
1908
5th and Main St Water Tower
Main Street
1910
Roebling Bank
5th Avenue and Main Street
1920
Interior Roebling Bank
5th Avenue and Main St
Main Gate and 2\textsuperscript{nd} Avenue 1906
#1 Gate
This was the main gate of the Roebling Plant where thousands of workers would enter and leave each day. For a majority of the people who worked for the Roebling Company it was the entrance way to the first and only job they would ever have. December 31, 1953, was the end of the Roebling owned Company as it was on this day that it was sold to Colorado Fuel and Iron.

On the right side of the entrance way was the employment office and on the left the village police station and magistrate office. Magistrate Tom Callery would listen to any complaint that occurred in the village and render a decision that would appropriate to the complaint.
Main Gate 2nd Avenue
Knickerbocker and 2nd Avenue
1911
Sixth Avenue and Riverside
1910
Superintendents House
6th Avenue and Riverside
Sixth Avenue
Sixth Avenue and Main
Police Call Box - Fire Shed in Background Where Post Office is Located Today
5th Avenue and Main St Circle
1926
Foreman’s House
4th and Riverside
Roebling School with addition 1923
Roebling Public School
This building was constructed in 1914 for grades 1-8 at a cost to the Roebling Company of 80,000 dollars. The south wing was added in 1923. The first supervising principal was Maja Mathis and the teaching salary was $500 per year. The Roebling Parent Teachers Association organized January 26, 1925.
Auditorium
7th Avenue and Main St
Built 1915
Roebling Auditorium

- In 1915 an auditorium was built to provide a place for entertainment. The seats were removable thus opening up into a large ballroom. It was the site for vaudeville shows, minstrels, boxing matches, silent movies, and later sound movies. The sound movies in the 40’s and early 50’s were shown 7 days a week. Shows during the week were at 7 and 9 o’clock. On Saturdays they had a matinee for kids at 2 0’clock. On Sundays they started a 2 in the afternoon and continued straight through till 11 o’clock. This was one of the first air conditioned buildings in America.
Painting of the Brooklyn Bridge Auditorium
Workingmen’s Hotel
4th Avenue
#1 Boarding House
#1 and 2 boarding houses were managed by J. Donnelly. Room and board was $2.50 per week. This included a hot lunch delivered to the worker at the mill while he was working. As more homes were built for the workers #1 boarding house was converted into different business establishments, including the post office, cigar store, hospital, and wall paper office.
Living Room Roebling Inn
School in Roebling
4th Avenue
#2 Boarding House
This Building served not only as a boarding house but also as a school for children in the village. Grades 3-6 were taught here until the present public school was constructed in 1914. #2 Boarding House remained in existence until the early 1930’s when it was closed and eventually occupied by the American Legion Post 39.
Miss Gennett McKenzie's
3rd Grade #2 Boarding House
View of the Village from atop of the School
Trolley Tracks along Knickerbocker Recreation Hall top right
Victory Gardens and First Dump
Top right
Victory Gardens
Plots of land were free to the town people to grow vegetables for their own consumption
Fields behind the Roebling School
Horse Barn
Between 2nd and 3rd Avenues
1912
Stable
Built in 1912 this structure was the home for the horses and mules that served the village and plant. The horses and mules worked six days a week and had Sunday off to graze in the fields across the highway.
Town Employees Report to This Building
2nd and Knickerbocker
Pest House

Built during the 1917 influenza epidemic, people were brought here to prevent it from spreading through the village. It got its name afterwards when people in the community who were pests to their neighbors were placed here until their behavior improved. It was later converted into a gym where famous boxers such as Danny Cooney, a World Lightweight contender trained, and also where Golden Gloves Champions such as Carl Schaum, Harry Varava, and Gus Alexander sharpened their boxing skills.
Hospital Room
4th Avenue
Boat House
4th and 5th Avenues
1912

BOAT HOUSE, ROEBLING, N. J.
Boy Scout Hut
Situated along the marshes at the bottom of what in now 9th Avenue, it was built by the Roeblings for the young boys in the village. Just outside its front door was a spring which provided drinking water for the community during the influenza epidemic of 1917, and for five decades afterwards.
Interior Boy Scout Hut
Roebling Depot
Camden and Amboy Railroad
1910

A c. 1910 view of the Roebling Depot, the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks are pictured on the right. (Courtesy Louis Borbi.)
Roebling Depot
It was at the depot that people would get the train for Trenton or points South of Roebling.
Firehouse and V.I.P. Parking
2nd and Knickerbocker
1923
African-American Recreation Hall
Railroad Avenue
Recreation Center

Built in the early 1920’s this building contained four bowling lanes, six pool tables, and two shuffleboard tables. It was run by Mr. Hawkins at first and he was followed by Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Myers. Young boys were paid 2 cents a game to set up the duck pins and a game cost 15 cents. There was a bar inside which served only soda and candy.
Recreation Hall
6th and Knickerbocker Avenue
View from Atop the School
Interior Recreation Hall
Pool Tables and a Bowling Alley
West End Avenue
Across from Riverbank Charter School
West End Avenue

West End Avenue was located across from the present Charter School. There were 10 houses in all, five on each side of the street. They were built by the Bristol Ship Works and brought across the river by barges in 1919. Refugees mainly from Russia and Romania were housed there and the men would go to eat in Mrs. Donnelly’s kitchen behind the recreation center. These homes were later used by married couples who had no children until suitable homes became available in the village. In 1929 the homes were sold for $125 each and moved to different areas of Florence and Mansfield Townships where many can still be seen today.
West End Avenue
Married Couples w/o Children
Lived in These Homes
Riverside Line Trolley Crossing Assicunk Creek Burlington N.J. 1911
Riverside Line Trolley
Crossed over Craft’s Creek
in Roebling
Cost: 5 Cents to Bordentown or Burlington
Knickerbocker Avenue
Trolley Tracks to the Right
Roebling Ball Park
Between
Knickerbocker Avenue and
Main St
Roebling Ball Park
Opened 1920’s
Seating for 1,200 Fans
Roebling Ball Park
Built by the Roebling Company in the 1920’s, it was one of the nicest ball parks in New Jersey. With a wooden fence surrounding the playing field and a large grandstand for the fans, many interesting and exciting ball games were seen.

Besides baseball games it was also the location of the Blue Center and later Holy Name football games. The Blue Centers were famous for playing against the Philadelphia Yellow Jackets which eventually became the Philadelphia Eagles and for playing one of the first indoor football games in America- Atlantic City Convention Hall. The Roebling Holy Name Team of 1946 was Burlington County League Champs.
View from atop School
Wooden Fence, Bleachers, and Grandstand
Baseball Game
Roebling Bulldogs Football Team 1929
From left to right:(front row) Joe Garbley, George Lengel, Mike Lastishen, John Kotch, Bud Marshall, Martin Bucs, and Joe Breza; (middle row) George Tiffenback, Mike Kostrub, Andy Sahol, “Legs” Wargo, Bundy Papp, John Ligos, John Wargo, and Ted Ivins; (back row) Manager Charley Keiley, Andy Rusnak, John Alter, Nick Kleiner, Mr. Anch, John Kostrub, Ziggy Garbley, and George Alter.
From left to right: (front row) Frank Bogdin, John Kostrub, and Toby Houseworth; (middle row) Bruce Hubley, Jack Thomas, Bruno Quistberg, Hilgo Quistberg, Andrew Drangula, and Charles Wall; (back Row) Maw Pickett, Weast F. Gren, “Hecker” Miller, Ray Carter, Joe Carter Stan Vechesky, Henry Englund, Arnold Wall, unidentified, and Jack Madden.
Roebling Blue Centers 1930
Played 1st Football Game in
Atlantic City
vs Philadelphia Yellowjackets
Won 13-6
From left to right: (front row) Ray Carter, Lee Carr, Jack Pitman, Eddie Hutton, Charles Crilley, Murphy, Bob Applegate, and Bruce Hubley; (middle row) George Olah, Phil Sheridan, Stan “Gotch” Vechesky, ? Richardson, Bug Jeanette, And Alge Parker; (back row) Jack Gardener, Henry Englund, Clarence Ledger, and Bulligan Bogdany.
Football Game: Holy Name Field
Behind Holy Assumption
Holy Name Football Team
1946 Burlington County Champions
From left to right: (front row) Martin Vrgoyti, assistant manager; Ben Bell, trainer; Sam Dudik, co-captain; Jack Lichvarcik, co-captain; and J. “Sep” Csercsevits, coach; (middle row) Dinky Tonne; John Mazar; G. Tymash; Bill Schaum; Chubby Cronin; R. Bintliff; A. Joyce; F. Savuly; G. Schaum, J. Nagy; and R. Bintliff, assistant manager; (back row) L. Varga; J. Quig, J. Horvath; J. Papp; P. Shoriak; J. Bodrog; M. Miyo; J. Miyo; P. Stone; M. Kovacs; J. Buhan; G. Magyar; and Pete Litus.
This photograph shows the 1949 Roebling American Legion Post 39 baseball team. They are, from left to right, as follows: (front row) Bob Murphy, Mike Kostrub Jr., Alex Simonka, Bill Bernath, John Lisowski, Nick Cantwell, and John Jakim; (back row) John E. Dimon, Matthew Kais, Bob Mullen, Walter Chandler, John Sofchak, Bob Hughes, Bill Breza, and manager John Bodrog. (Courtesy Mary Arnold Montalto.)
Roebling Park
Roebling Park
Delaware River in the Background
Roebling Park
Playground behind Rec Hall
6th Avenue
Tennis Courts
7th Avenue
Dr. Hornberger Blood Drive
Jabbo’s Gas Station
Sold candy, snacks, and auto supplies. Hangout for Teenagers
Steve Jabbo Bucs: Attendant
Gas Station 4th Avenue and
Knickerbocker
Swedes Brought to Work at the Mill 1907 Operate Open Hearth Furnaces
The Roebling Plant

When Charles Roebling decided to build the steel plant here he did so in a very efficient manner. He personally paced off and staked the location most buildings. Some of the most important buildings constructed were the open hearth shop, blooming mill, as well as annealing and tempering departments, the galvanize shop, copper mill bridge, and production facilities for manufacturing tensioning material for prestressed concrete.

From these facilities many different products were produced to serve many functions. From the Roebling Plant came wire rope for oil drilling, elevators, logging, slings, fishing, construction equipment and mining. From prestressed concrete wire and strand, stadiums, garages, bridges, warehouse and piers were built. From wire strand and wire rope tramways, ski lifts and suspension bridges were built, with the Golden Gate Bridge being the most famous. From the electrical wire and cable division came material for homes, high tension lined and sub-stations, airports, telephones, televisions, washers and refrigerators.

These products bearing the name **Roebling** were sold throughout the world.
KINKORA WORKS OF
JOHN A. ROEBLING'S SONS COMPANY
ROEBLING, NEW JERSEY
Roebling Steel Mill
AERIAL VIEW ROEBLING STEEL PLANT
Steel Mill and Scrap Iron Yard
Open Hearth Furnaces
Melt Shop
Open Hearth Furnaces
Pouring Steel Into a Ladle
Laboratory
Steel Mill
Ladle with Molten Steel Molds With Hot Tops
Molds with Hot Tops
Drying Ladles in Pit Area
Drying Ladle
Coal Car Outside Power House
Blooming Mill
Roll Ingots into Billets
Rod Mill
Billets Made into Rods
Power House
#11 Galvanize Rig
Tire Wire Rig
Galvanize Shop
Copper Mill: Tin Shop
#1 Tin Pan
Bridge Shop
CMD Strander
Patenting Shop
Flat Wire from Cold Roll
Wire Rope Cable Stretcher for Golden Gate Bridge
Plant Cafeteria
Interior Plant Cafeteria
Roebling Made Tram Cable
Palm Springs, California
Ray Arnold and Police Chief Bellejeau During 1941 Strike
Bloodied Worker
1941 Strike
Worried Resident
Mrs. Brantmeyer

Strike April 14, 1941
Roebling, N.J.
Anti-Strikers 1941
Beautiful, Sturdy Bridges by ROEBLING All Over America

- Delaware River Aqueduct, Lackawaxen, PA - 1848
- Cincinnati-Covington, KY - Ohio River - 1867
- Waco, Texas - Brazos River 1870
- Brooklyn - New York City - East River - 1883
- George Washington - NY to NJ - Hudson River - 1931
- Golden Gate - California - San Francisco Bay 1937
Roebling Wire Rope Cable
# Roebling Suspension Bridges 1844 - 1952

**John A. Roebling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Bridge Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Length</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Allegheny Aqueduct Bridge</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa.</td>
<td>162' spans</td>
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<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>Smithfield Bridge</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa.</td>
<td>188' spans</td>
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<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>Lackawaxen Aqueduct Bridge</td>
<td>Northeast Pennsylvania</td>
<td>120' spans</td>
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<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>Delaware Aqueduct Bridge</td>
<td>Northeast Pennsylvania</td>
<td>134' spans</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>High Falls Aqueduct Bridge</td>
<td>Southeast New York</td>
<td>145' spans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Neversink Aqueduct Bridge</td>
<td>Southeast New York</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>Niagara River Bridge</td>
<td>New York-Canada</td>
<td>821' span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Allegheny Bridge</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa.</td>
<td>344' spans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Cincinnati-Covington Bridge</td>
<td>Ohio-Kentucky</td>
<td>1056' span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Brooklyn Bridge</td>
<td>NYC-Brooklyn, N.Y.</td>
<td>1595' span</td>
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*(Designed by John A. Roebling built by Washington A. Roebling)*

**John A. Roebling Son's Company**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Williamsburg Bridge</td>
<td>NYC-Brooklyn, N.Y.</td>
<td>1600' span</td>
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<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Manhattan Bridge</td>
<td>NYC-Brooklyn, N.Y.</td>
<td>1470' span</td>
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<td>1916</td>
<td>Parkersburg Bridge</td>
<td>West Virginia-Ohio</td>
<td>775' span</td>
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<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Roundout Creek Bridge</td>
<td>N.Y. State</td>
<td>705' span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Bear Mountain Bridge</td>
<td>N.Y. State (Hudson River)</td>
<td>1632' span</td>
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<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Maysville Bridge</td>
<td>Kentucky-Ohio</td>
<td>1066' span</td>
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<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Maumee River Bridge</td>
<td>Northwest Ohio</td>
<td>785' span</td>
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<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>St. John's Bridge</td>
<td>Portland, Oregon</td>
<td>1207' span</td>
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<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Grand Mere Bridge</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1207' span</td>
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<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Dome Bridge</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>802' span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>George Washington Bridge</td>
<td>New York-New Jersey</td>
<td>3500' span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>San Rafael Bridge</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>451' span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Golden Gate Bridge</td>
<td>San Francisco, California</td>
<td>4200' span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Tacoma Narrows Bridge</td>
<td>Tacoma, Washington</td>
<td>2860' span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Peace River Bridge</td>
<td>Alcan Highway Canada</td>
<td>2060' span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Adams Suwanee River Bridge</td>
<td>Northern Florida</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>San Marcos Bridge</td>
<td>San Salvador, El Salvador</td>
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Walker Evan’s Photograph
Brooklyn Bridge 1929
Cincinnati-Covington Bridge now know as John A. Roebling Bridge
George Washington Bridge
This presentation was made possible by information & material contributions from the following individuals:

1. Mr. Louis Borbi- Founder of The Roebling Historical Society-for the use of his photos, and extensive knowledge on the village of Roebling.
2. Jennifer Eckley- Florence Township Memorial High School Senior for her typing and organizational skills in setting up the power point presentation.
3. The Friends of Roebling: Images of America: -Roebling Revisited -Roebling
   Volumes 1 and 2