



1929

The Ambassador Bridge Opens

The commencement ceremony was held for the Ambassador Bridge on November 11th. Large crowds of 50,000 gathered on the Canadian side and possibly up to 100,000 on the American side. Sirens were sounded from factories and a plane dropped balloons over the center of the bridge. Politicians from both cities gave speeches about the importance of the bridge and the unity it would bring the two cities and countries. After completion, they crossed the bridge and gave the same speech on the other side. When the ribbon was cut spectators from both sides rushed to the center of the bridge and filled it almost completely.

Cornelius L. Henderson, an African American architect, helped design the Ambassador Bridge and later designed the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel.

¹ Ambassador Bridge

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University 12315_vmc

² Traffic on the Bridge

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University 28245_4_vmc_

³ Cornelius L. Henderson

From the Collections of the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History

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Credits:

Mason, Philip P. *The Ambassador Bridge: A Monument to Progress*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987.

Keywords/Topics:

Questions:

1. Why was the Ambassador Bridge important?
2. Is the Ambassador Bridge still as important as it was in 1929?
3. Have you been on the Ambassador Bridge or the Tunnel? Did you like it?

Links to Internet Websites:

http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9618_11088---,00.html

<http://www.answers.com/topic/cornelius-langston-henderson>

<http://www.ambassadorbridge.com/>

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Construction of the Ambassador Bridge began in 1927 and was completed in 1929. At its opening, it was the largest suspension bridge in the world. The bridge is 7500 feet in length and its longest span is 1859 feet. The bridge allows Americans and Canadians to hold international jobs. Today, the Ambassador Bridge makes more than 100,000 jobs possible.

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The opening of the Ambassador Bridge excited thousands of people. It's opening solidified relations between Detroit and Windsor, and symbolized relations between the United States and Canada.

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Cornelius Henderson was born in 1888 in Detroit. He attended the University of Michigan and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. When racial tensions in Detroit kept him from finding work, he moved to Canada and found work at the Canadian Bridge Company. He worked there for 47 years.