Michigan Bridge Conference
February 22, 2006

Before the Bridge . . .

1923

1911
Construction began in the spring of 1954

Then and Now

MACKINAC BRIDGE AUTHORITY

Then and Now

Then and Now

40 Workers to Maintain the Bridge

Engineers
Steeplejacks
Bridge Workers
Welders
Electricians
Mechanics
Laborers

2500 Men to Build the Bridge

40 Workers to Maintain the Bridge

Engineers
Steeplejacks
Bridge Workers
Welders
Electricians
Mechanics
Laborers
Decorative
Lighting

Painting Project

Blast
Containment

Top Coat

Intermediate Coat

Painting Center Span
$18 Million
Containment Rigging

Outriggers For Tarps

General Maintenance
More Joints,

Maintaining Electrical Equipment

Pipe Rail Repairs
South Side Span - 1,800 feet
2002 – 2003
South Side Span
$8.2 million

South Side Span - 1,800 feet
Albert B. Abbott
October 25, 1954
"Aerodynamically Invisible!"

"The most stable suspension bridge, aerodynamically, that has ever been designed."

"...complete and absolute aerodynamic stability against all modes of oscillation..."

"one hundred percent safe aerodynamically"

"perfect aerodynamic stability"

"Critical wind velocity = Infinity"
Overcoming the odds......

- Could the money ever be raised for such a large project?
- Geology – Could the brecciated rock base support the massive foundations?
- Ice Pressure – Could the foundations withstand the pressure of the ice pack?
- Aerodynamics – Could the bridge withstand the high winds that blow through the straits area?