

MONUMENTAL UNDERTAKING: AGING BRIDGE REPLACED

When the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) decided to replace the 84-year-old B.B. Comer bridge over the Tennessee River, it knew that the multi-year project was both a necessity and a monumental undertaking.

Kicked off in 2007, the \$54.9 million project was opened to traffic in April 2016 and replaced the last of 15 memorial bridges built by Alabama State Bridge Corporation in the early-1900s.

Working on the third and final span of the new bridge, Kirkpatrick Concrete, Inc., completed three foundation pours that equaled about 2,900 yards.

Each pour took about 26 hours to complete and took place underwater. Shifts of 18 operators used two concrete pumps during the pouring process.

“We were literally providing concrete around the clock,” said Spencer Glassco, Sales Manager for Kirkpatrick’s Northern Division. Two different Kirkpatrick plants supplied the concrete, which was specified by ALDOT.

For the final phase of the bridge construction, Kirkpatrick supplied concrete for the decks, which provide a drivable surface for Jackson County residents commuting across the Tennessee River.

Glassco said the project – which was fairly substantial in size for the rural area where it’s located – went smoothly and

that “everyone at the ALDOT was happy with the final results.”

Construction on the original 2,143-foot B. B. Comer Bridge began in 1929 and was completed in 1931. Built by the Kansas City Bridge Company, the aging bridge spanned the Tennessee River along Alabama State Route 35 in Scottsboro, Alabama.

Jackson County residents sought to save the historic structure, turning the antique span into a walking and biking trail but that effort was unsuccessful.



Aerial photo by David Kenamer