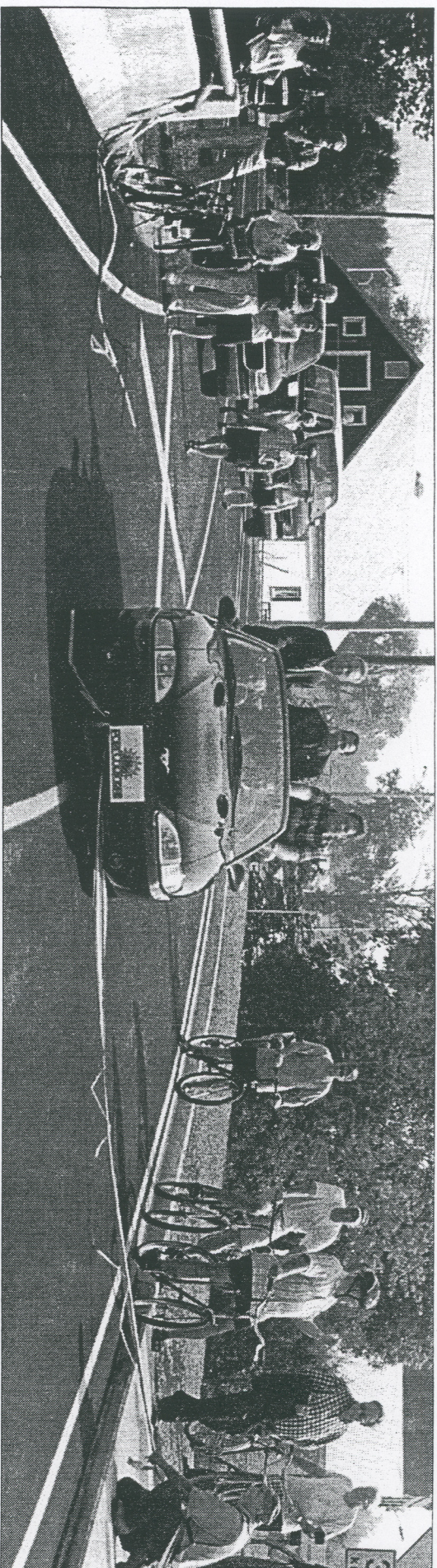


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Section A

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Mayor Vance Badawey drove a convertible Mustang through a ribbon on the new roadway connecting Killaly Street West and Mellanby Avenue yesterday to official open the road and new weir bridge. Joining Badawey in the car, courtesy of Jacobs Auto Stop, were Robert Cotterill, in passenger seat, Port Colborne's chief administrative officer and in the back seat, from left, Tim Stuart, of the engineering firm Totten Sims Hubicki who designed the bridge and roadway; Sai Iannello, city engineer and David Semley, president of the Hard Rock Group; STAFF PHOTO DAVE JOHNSON

Port's Weir Bridge finally opens

By DAVE JOHNSON
TRIBUNE STAFF
PORT COLBORNE

After a month of delays, Mayor Vance Badawey finally opened the new weir bridge and roadway, connecting the city's west side to the "island," Tuesday morning.

"We're absolutely thrilled the bridge and road are open; it's been three and a half-years in the making," says Robert Cotterill, the city's chief administrative officer.

The city had to go through an environmental assessment before the project started, then through a design

phase and finally construction, he says.

Delays in the project included the strike earlier this year by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. The strike delayed the issuing of permits by the Ministry of Transportation needed to bring large steel beams down from North Bay. The beams were for the bridge.

In another delay, the city waited as residents became used to new traffic lights at Killaly Street West and King Street and ensured work on the road and bridge was complete.

The city had to wait for the land on which the road and bridge sit, to be

transferred from the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, through Transport Canada, to it. The title transfer still hasn't taken place, but the city and Seaway reached an agreement to allow for use of the road and bridge until the transfer.

"We've resolved the issue of opening the road on Seaway lands; it's been taken care of in the short term."

An issue which still needs resolution involves transport trucks using the new bridge.

"We're thinking of making the bridge local access only, so we don't take transport trucks and traffic away from Main Street," said Cotterill.

"Our biggest fear is people coming into town from the west may head straight up Killaly Street West and go straight through town."

Signs will be put up to let people know of the businesses in the Historic Humbersone area on Main Street and a weight restriction may go up on the bridge.

The new roadway and bridge are mainly to make it easier for residents to get around the city, he says.

During Tuesday's official opening Mayor Vance Badawey thanked Peter McLean, of the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation; the Seaway itself; Canada Lands; Transport

Canada; Totten Sims Hubicki, the engineering firm; Trillium Railway and Diamond Stonebridge/Hard Rock Paving.

Cotterill says one unique design feature of the bridge is it is skewed and banked, it is not perpendicular to the new roadway.

"We didn't want to use too much of the Seaway's land and change directions once people came off the bridge."

With the rail line on the west side of the bridge, gates and lights are there to warn people, especially those coming from the east side of the bridge, that a train is approaching.