

The new Christopher S. Bond Bridge is being dedicated today, Friday, October 12, 2007 to recognize the efforts of those who selflessly gave their time and talents to make this bridge a reality.

It would be impossible to recognize every person who has influenced this undertaking. Yet, without the leadership of the Route 19 Missouri River Bridge Transportation Corporation, and the support of U.S. Senator Christopher S. “Kit” Bond and U.S. Congressman Kenny Hulshof, we would not be standing here today, gazing upon a beautiful structure that will serve this region for decades to come.

To provide you with a commemorative item which to remember this day, this booklet will serve as documentation for the years of effort contributed by all who didn’t give up on building a new bridge. Not every date is specific, nor every individual identified, yet we hope you will keep the program as a memoir of this effort.

Thank you for attending the Bond Bridge Dedication Ceremony.

## **The History of the Senator Christopher S. Bond Bridge**

Groundbreaking Ceremony - September 10, 2005

Opened to traffic – July 23, 2007

Dedication to U.S. Senator Christopher S. “Kit” Bond

October 12, 2007

### **Talk Begins in the Region**

In 1994, the Hermann Area Chamber of Commerce launched a campaign for area residents and business leaders to write their legislators expressing concern of flooding near the Loutre River. With the help of U.S. Senator Christopher S. “Kit” Bond, the causeway was built. About this time, in 1996, MoDOT announced that it would rehabilitate the Hermann Bridge. Because the campaign for the causeway had been successful, then Hermann Area Chamber of Commerce President Jon Held, along with many others, used this success to rally support for a new bridge. From placing an ad in the local newspaper showing a school bus and tractor trailer side by side on the bridge, to holding a public hearing, people in the area and numerous elected officials showed their support for new bridge. At the public hearing, several ideas were suggested about how to fund a new bridge, one of them being the formation of a transportation corporation. A new bridge was not on MoDOT’s 15-year plan, and it was quickly being realized there was a shortfall in funding for transportation projects across the state. With energy and enthusiasm elevated, local leaders with support of the Chamber Board, met with then MoDOT Chief Engineer Joe Mickes. While efforts began focusing on the need for a new bridge, MoDOT made it clear to the community that the \$2 million rehabilitation project needed to be done or the bridge would be shut down. The rehabilitation project occurred at night in 1997.

### **How Was the Idea of a Corporation Developed?**

During a small, informal meeting held at Stone Hill Winery in June of 1997, with Chamber, City and MoDOT representatives, the idea

of a transportation corporation was recommended by MoDOT. A local transportation corporation would be able to secure bonds to help fund the bridge cost, and everyone at the meeting was receptive of this idea. In August of 1997, Mayor Wayne Hagedorn met with Jon Held, to discuss a list of “movers and shakers” to serve on a transportation committee. On November 3, 1997, the transportation committee held it’s first meeting with MoDOT. Discussion ensued about transportation funding shortfalls and the possibility of securing funding locally.

### **First Steps of the Hermann Transportation Committee**

The first formative meeting was held on November 13, 1997 where the mayor appointed Jon Held as chairman of the Hermann Transportation Committee, also known as the Bridge Committee. Within a few weeks, all of the committee members were on board and included, in addition to Jon and Mayor Hagedorn, Terry Hammer, Hermann Ford; Wilford Kallmeyer; Art Brigham, Home, Inc.; Robert Kirchhofer, First Bank of Hermann; Max Aubuchon, Northern Commissioner of Gasconade County; Vincent Eldringhoff, Southern Commissioner of Montgomery County, Ralph Uthlaut, farmer/former Senator; and John Bartel, former mayor. The committee met once a month, at first evaluating costs associated with being a corporation, then looking at asking for financial assistance from surrounding counties. The first several meetings involved a lot of fact finding, seeking support, talking with officials, and rallying people to get energized about the issue. In February, 1998, Joe Voss of Owensville joined the committee to represent the Owensville area. In April 1998, Mayor Doris Binkholder joined the committee, and former Mayor Hagedorn continued to serve.

### **Expressing Needs to Federal Legislators**

Corporation leadership embarked on an aggressive schedule to increase local awareness of the need for a new bridge. Their activities included a lot of lobbying, meetings with MoDOT and elected officials, writing letters, testifying, talking with groups,

encouraging others to write, etc. It was impossible for an elected official to come to Hermann and NOT hear about it.

The Corporation had a meeting with both Senator Bond and Congressman Hulshof at the City offices in Hermann on February 21, 1998. Both legislators happened to be coming to Hermann for the Lincoln Day Banquet, so the Corporation seized an opportunity to have a heart-to-heart meeting about the seriousness of the problem. They showed the legislators pictures of various conditions on the bridge, and the two gentlemen left the meeting understanding the obvious need for a new bridge. By June 5, 1998, the Corporation received word that Senator Bond had been successful in obtaining \$5 million, and Congressman Hulshof \$1.5 million for construction of a new bridge across the Missouri River near Hermann.

Also in 1998, the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission signed a contract with the engineering firm CH2M Hill out of St. Louis to do the location study. A public hearing was held to share ideas about the location study and share information on innovative finance programs. Another public hearing was held on June 10, 1998 at the Hermann middle school to provide more information and gather more input about innovative financing projects, forming a transportation corporation, and finding solutions to funding a new bridge. Fifty-six people attended this meeting, and the response was favorable to forming a transportation corporation.

## **The Funding Strategy**

There were other bridges around the state that were slated for replacement in the 15-year plan, but the Hermann bridge was left out, even though it was in deplorable condition. Tom Boland, the chairman of the Missouri and Highways Transportation Commission, wrote of the 15-year plan that funding was not what was expected, speaking of the diversion of funds and enhancement projects. When MoDOT had suggested forming a transportation corporation, the group embraced the idea, with the expectation that a toll bridge would be built. The assumption of the committee was

that funding would be 20% local toll financed, 20% state directed federal funding, and 60% Federal Bridge Discretionary Funding.

The innovative financing application was filed in July of 1998, and the Commission approved it at its September 1998 meeting.

## **The Corporation Becomes Official**

The Route 19 Missouri River Bridge Transportation Corporation was approved March 25, 1999 by the State of Missouri. There were four names listed as incorporators on the Articles of Incorporation: Jonathan Held, Max Aubuchon, Ralph Uthlaut and Robert Kirchhofer.

## **Funding Strategy Revised - No Toll**

In August 2000, after receiving preliminary information on servicing the bonds required to finance the local portion of the project, the committee realized the expense of a toll. To further investigate, the committee met with the Lake Ozark Toll Bridge Corporation, and then identified the legal ramifications of a toll bridge. In this same timeframe, State Representative Merrill Townley set up a meeting. The committee thought they would be meeting with MoDOT's District 5 engineer, but when they arrived it was with many top MoDOT officials including then Chief Engineer J.T. Yarnell. Also at the meeting were Pat Goff, Patty Purves, John Cawenbergh, Jay Wunderlich, and Kevin Keith, all from MoDOT, Senator Sarah Steelman and Representative Townley. By this time it was apparent to the committee and MoDOT that the toll option was simply not feasible due to the financial size of the project, the fact that the bridge split a school district, the volume of traffic, and legal restrictions on utilizing other funding if the bridge was a toll bridge. At this meeting, it was agreed that if the committee could secure 60% Federal funding, MoDOT would fund the balance. One key point was that once construction was ready to begin, i.e. after completion of EIS and Location Study, there were no other major bridge projects in the state that were "matured".

At its September 2000 meeting, the Transportation Corporation passed a motion to abandon the concept of a toll bridge and to focus its efforts on securing Federal Funding for 60% of the project.

## **Funding Efforts**

In January 2001, Mayor Binkholder presented the Transportation Corporation with a check for \$15,000 which allowed the group to hire former Senator Mike Lybyer as a lobbyist. Vincent Eldringhoff stepped down as a member of the Transportation Corporation and was replaced by John Noltensmeyer who had replaced him as the Southern Montgomery County Commissioner.

In January 2002, a public hearing was held on the design for the new bridge. The hearing was well attended, and very favorable comments were received. There were a couple of comments favoring a four-lane bridge rather than a two-lane bridge. MoDOT investigated this concept and felt that the increased cost was not justified since in 20-40 years they could not foresee the need for a four-lane bridge.

In March 2002, the Transportation Corporation goes on record with MoDOT in favor of a two-lane bridge with shoulders and a dedicated hiking/biking lane rather than a four lane bridge. Jon Held was re-elected for fifth term as the Transportation Corporation Chairman.

In July 2002, the Transportation Corporation goes on record in support of Proposition B. The Proposition included the Highway 19 bridge in all spending scenarios. City Administrator Chuck Brown reported that the City of Hermann would again provide the Transportation Corporation with funding for Mike Lybyer's lobbying efforts. He reported that in spite of a very tight budget the Mayor and Board of Alderman were in great support of the Corporation's efforts.

In September 2002, the Transportation Corporation discussed strategy after the sound defeat of Prop B statewide. (Prop B passed

in the City of Hermann). They decided to target their efforts on the federal level, particularly since they would be working on the next Federal Highway Bill in 2003. A moment of silence was held during the meeting in honor of the passing of our former Board member Vincent Eldringhoff.

## **High Points**

- The first federal earmark for funding \$5.4 million from Senator Bond and \$1.5 million from Congressman Hulshof really “got the ball rolling”!
- The Highway Commission approved the location study at their June 6, 1997 meeting in Joplin.
- Bridge placed on MoDOT's 2005-2010 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (September 2004)
- The “groundbreaking” ceremony held September 10, 2005
- Opening the bridge to traffic on July 23, 2007

## **Low Points**

- For the committee, the feasibility study that quashed the toll bridge idea. It just wasn't doable. However, in the end, it became a high point because the bridge was successfully funded another way.
- That proposition B failed statewide.

## Local Involvement for Design and Construction

There were several public meetings and hearings to help with the design of the structure. MoDOT hired Harrington and Cortelyou to design the bridge, and they were involved in all the public



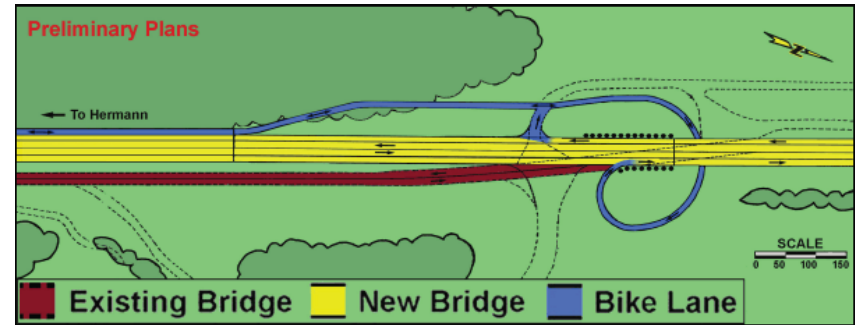
involvement related to the project. They received strong support at every turn. When the project was soon to become a reality, the City of Hermann offered the old motel site for staging and the firehouse for a project office.

*Rick Domzalski served as MoDOT's transportation project manager, taking over the project from Jim Zeiger in 1999. He is shown here at a public meeting held at the Hermannoff in June 2002.*

## Design of the New Bridge

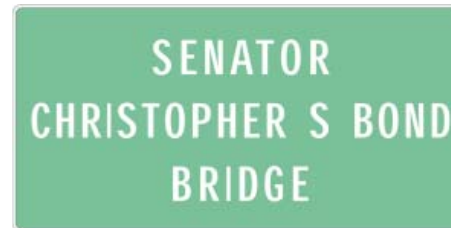
A memorandum of understanding dated November 17, 1999 issued between MoDOT, DNR Historic Preservation, Federal Highway and the Bridge Committee that the bridge would be designed with aesthetic treatment. There was a concern that the new bridge not “clash” with the historic nature of Hermann. The engineering firm Harrington and Cortelyou out of Kansas City, Missouri worked with local historians and residents to design the bridge so that it would further define the heritage of the community for generations to come. This bridge was designed to a higher seismic category than typical bridges in the area because it is a major river crossing. The solid concrete piers will have a stone-block appearance. Forty historical lights, matching the lighting in Hermann were installed

on the bridge. The spun concrete light poles have a salt and pepper etched surface and are topped with acorn-shaped luminaries. The bridge railings are a combination of concrete, also with a stone-block appearance, and aesthetic steel.



## Naming the New Bridge

Senate Bill 233 signed in June of 2005 officially named the new bridge “Senator Christopher S. Bond Bridge” to honor the efforts of Senator Bond to improve and expand Missouri’s transportation infrastructure. According to Corporation members, “it was just something we felt needed to occur.”



## The Groundbreaking

A true celebration (Hermann-style) held on September 10, 2005 complete with a toast to the new bridge and a cookout, the community embraced the day with more than 600 in attendance.



*(Upper left) Senator Bond on stage at the groundbreaking ceremony. (Upper right) Senator Bond and Congressman Hulshof hold up the cake served after the ceremony. (Below left) Bob Kirchofer shares history of the bridges over the Missouri River. (Below right) Don Kruse, editor of the Hermann Advertiser-Courier and other participants at the ceremony look at the bridge rendering.*



## Construction of the Bond Bridge

The construction project was awarded to Jensen Construction Company out of Des Moines, IA for \$32,816,558. Their first day on the job was in October 2005.



George Johnson, who worked on the other bridge, regularly showed up at the site throughout construction. At 95

years of age, George remembered clearly what it was like nearly eight decades before to build the other bridge. He provided photographs of construction on the old bridge, which are featured on the web at [www.modot.org/northeast](http://www.modot.org/northeast) under the Bond Bridge link. George was going to be recognized by the contractor with a “paycheck” and photo opportunity, since he showed up to “work” regularly. Unfortunately, George Johnson passed away in the spring of 2007 and did not see the completion of the new Bond Bridge.

Members of the construction crew worked fast and furious, making accelerated progress on the new bridge. The new bridge was selected as a pilot project for a web cam, which would take pictures of construction every 15 minutes and post them on the Internet. Cameras were placed in three locations in Hermann – the Historic Hermann Firehouse (which was serving as the MoDOT project office), the Gasconade County Courthouse, and West First Street. Thousands of visitors viewed construction via the Web.



*From Historic Hermann Firehouse Web cam taken March 2007*

The winter of 2006-2007 was a rough one, so work slowed down, only to pick up again in the spring of 2007. It looked like the new bridge was going to be completed earlier than expected. However, excessive rains north of Missouri caused the Missouri River to rise aggressively in late spring and early summer, again impeding construction. In order to minimize the impact to the Hermann intersection, the new bridge was designed to overlap the old bridge. The overlap was constructed completing the new bridge connection, and the old bridge was closed to traffic. On July 23, 2007, the new bridge was opened to traffic, but not

completed. To further accommodate construction, the first two spans of the old bridge were removed.



*(Upper left and right) MoDOT designers check out construction on the bridge in 2006. (Bottom left) Randy Aulbur and Bob Davidson, construction inspectors for MoDOT, discuss the project. (Bottom right) The last 50-ton girder arrives in September 2007.*



## The Opening of the Bond Bridge

The new bridge opened to traffic on July 23, 2007. Local residents, including Jon Held, former chairman of the Transportation Corporation, gathered to witness Florence Mundwiller-Kelly cut the ribbon signifying the opening of the new bridge. In 1930, Ms. Mundwiller-Kelly was the Mayor of Hermann's neighbor, so at age



10, he invited her to help him cut the ribbon for the new bridge across the Missouri River.

*Ribbon cutting ceremony held on the new Bond Bridge July 23, 2007.*

## About the Bond Bridge – Now and into the Future

In 2007, more than 6,000 cars will travel each day over the Bond Bridge. It was designed, however, to manage much more, as well as pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Its unique design was developed after dozens of meetings with local residents, resulting in beautiful aesthetics that would complement the region's culture and heritage. From the historic light poles to the decorative piers, the community stepped in to help fund these enhancements.

The final construction cost of the Bond Bridge was just over \$32 million. This amount does not encompass the thousands of hours included in the planning and design of this structure. It is difficult to capture the magnitude of all the elements involved. Yet, the sacrifices made are captured in the bicyclists that ride the KATY Trail, the tourists that cross to officially enter Missouri "wine" country, the tractor trailers that bring goods to industry on either side of the Missouri River, the smiles of family members as they drive their campers across to seek out the peace and quiet the region offers, and the area residents who are headed to a football game, a restaurant, or Oktoberfest. May the Bond Bridge safely serve you with enjoyment and beauty.



*Photo taken by Don Kruse, editor of the Hermann Advertiser-Courier, in September 2007, prior to demolition of the old truss bridge shown behind the new bridge.*

*Special thanks to Senator Bond, Congressman Hulshof and the Highway 19 Hermann Bridge Transportation Corporation for their efforts in making a new bridge over the Missouri River near Hermann a reality.*



*U.S. Senator  
Christopher S. "Kit" Bond*



*U.S. Congressman  
Kenny Hulshof*



*From left to right are: Jon Held, John Bartel, Mayor Doris Binkholder, Max Aubuchon (Gasconade County northern district commissioner), Barry Orscheln, of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, Terry Hammer, Wayne Hagedorn, Ralph Uthlaut, Bob Kirchhofer and John Noltensmeyer, Montgomery County southern district commissioner. Barry Orscheln happened to be in town with his band that was performing at the Fasching Ball, a pre-lent celebration in Hermann. The photo was taken late February 2004. (Not pictured - Arthur Brigham and Joe Voss and Wilford Kallmeyer.)*

More information and pictures are available on the web at [www.modot.org/northeast](http://www.modot.org/northeast).