

Ovist Family Portage Lake Lift Bridge Photograph Collection

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Finding aid written in English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections

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Summary Information

Repository: Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections

Title: Ovist Family Portage Lake Lift Bridge Photograph Collection

Identifier: MS-966

Date: 1958-1959

Physical Description: 0.01 cubic feet (1 folder) : 18 photographs

Container Information: SC_box 6, Folder: 16 (Mixed Materials)

Overview

Eighteen photographs, June 1958-January 1959, depicting construction workers and progress on the Portage Lake Lift Bridge.

Language of Materials

English

Conditions Governing Access

Available for use in the Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.

Historical Note

A succession of bridges connecting the cities of Houghton, Hancock, and points beyond have crossed the Portage Canal for well over a century. The Portage Lake Lift Bridge, constructed between 1958 and 1960, replaced a 1905 steel swing span that had itself replaced a wooden predecessor. Designed by consulting engineers Hazelet and Erdal from Chicago, the double-decker lift bridge span would carry automobile and pedestrian traffic on the top deck, with trains (and later snowmobiles) crossing on the lower level. To accommodate the passage of large ships through the Portage Canal, the central span could be lifted some one hundred feet above the water.

Following more than a year of construction alongside the old swing span, the lift bridge was opened to

automobile traffic in December 1959. Additional work to prepare the bridge for full operation, however, continued well into the following year. The bridge was officially dedicated amid great fanfare on June 25, 1960.

Preferred Citation

MS-966, Ovist Family Portage Lake Lift Bridge Photograph Collection, Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, Houghton, Michigan.

Processing Information

Emily Riippa, 10/3/2017

Scope and Contents

Eighteen photographs, June 1958-January 1959, depicting construction workers and progress on the Portage Lake Lift Bridge. The snapshots are a fascinating glimpse of a time of great change for the Houghton and Hancock area, showing the new lift bridge rising gradually alongside the long-serving swing span. Men engaged in building the bridge are also captured in the collection, both working with construction equipment and taking a well-earned break.

Conditions Governing Use

Various copying restrictions apply. Guidelines are available from Michigan Technological University Archives & Copper Country Historical Collections.

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Controlled Access Headings

- Bridges -- Design and construction -- Michigan -- Portage Lake
- Hancock (Mich.)
- Houghton (Mich.)
- Photographs