

LILLY BRIDGE HINTON, WV

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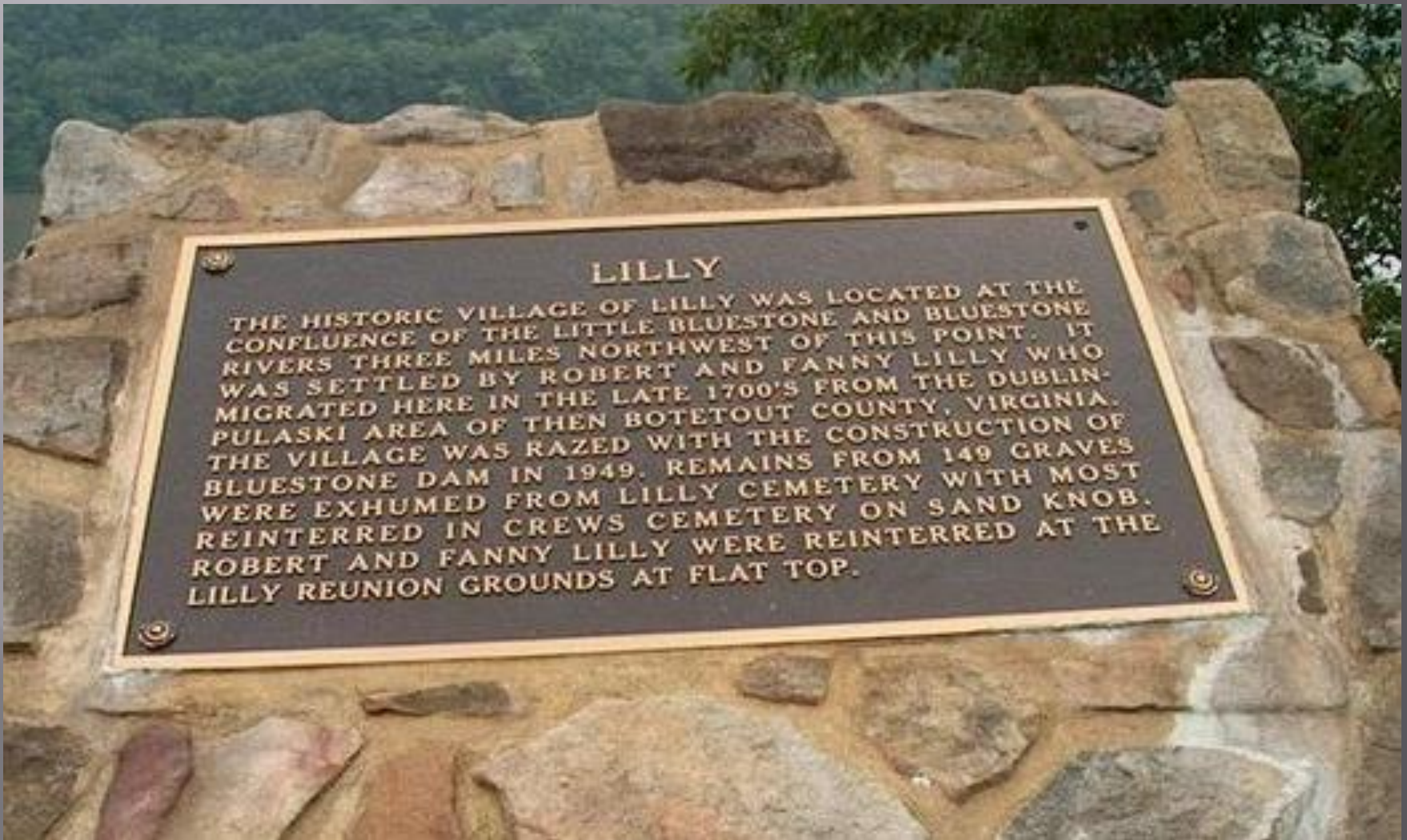
Lilly Bridge - History

Built in 1950 by Virginia Bridge Company, Lilly Bridge spans Bluestone Lake in Summers County, WV, and is one of only seven remaining cantilever truss bridges in the state. Constructed as part of the Flood Control Act to build the Bluestone Dam, Lilly Bridge is recognized by the National Register of Historic Places.

The bridge was built around the same time as the Bluestone Dam when about 50 families were forced to move because the federal government worried that the creation of the dam would flood the Village of Lilly, hence the name the Lilly Bridge.

According to the Lilly Family History records, Lilly was a Village at the Bluestone and Little Bluestone Rivers in Summers County settled in 1772. “It was said that they came here with a rifle, a bible and an axe to settle this rugged area,” National Park Ranger Teena Lilly said in the West Virginia Public Broadcasting documentary “Three Rivers”. “The graves were exhumed, families were moved, and homes were torn down because they believed that Lilly would be under water.”

Very little remains of the actual village since the Federal Government forced residents off the land. The family is left with the bridge and a monument to remember their homeland. The new bridge will keep the Lilly name.



1948 Pier Construction



Lilly Bridge Collapses During Construction

March 31, 1949

The bridge was a 5-span cantilevered thru-truss supported by concrete abutments and 4 concrete piers.

On March 31, 1949 the span between piers 3 and 4 fell. The 300 ton span buckled and folded downward into the river, killing 5 workers and injuring 4 others.

Career steel erector and crane operator Tommy Lilly offered a possible cause of the collapse:

“At the time of the Lilly Bridge collapse, all bridges were of box girder design, the span would support itself as long as all the rivets, braces, etc. were tight and there was not too much excess weight on the cantilevered end. They used a stiff leg derrick on the structure to erect the steel. They were within feet of reaching the next pier, and they must of had too much weight on the very end of the structure, possibly, steel, kegs of rivets, rivet ovens, kegs of bolts and the structure buckled, twisted and fell into bluestone river.”

The following slides depict the aftermath of the bridge collapse.

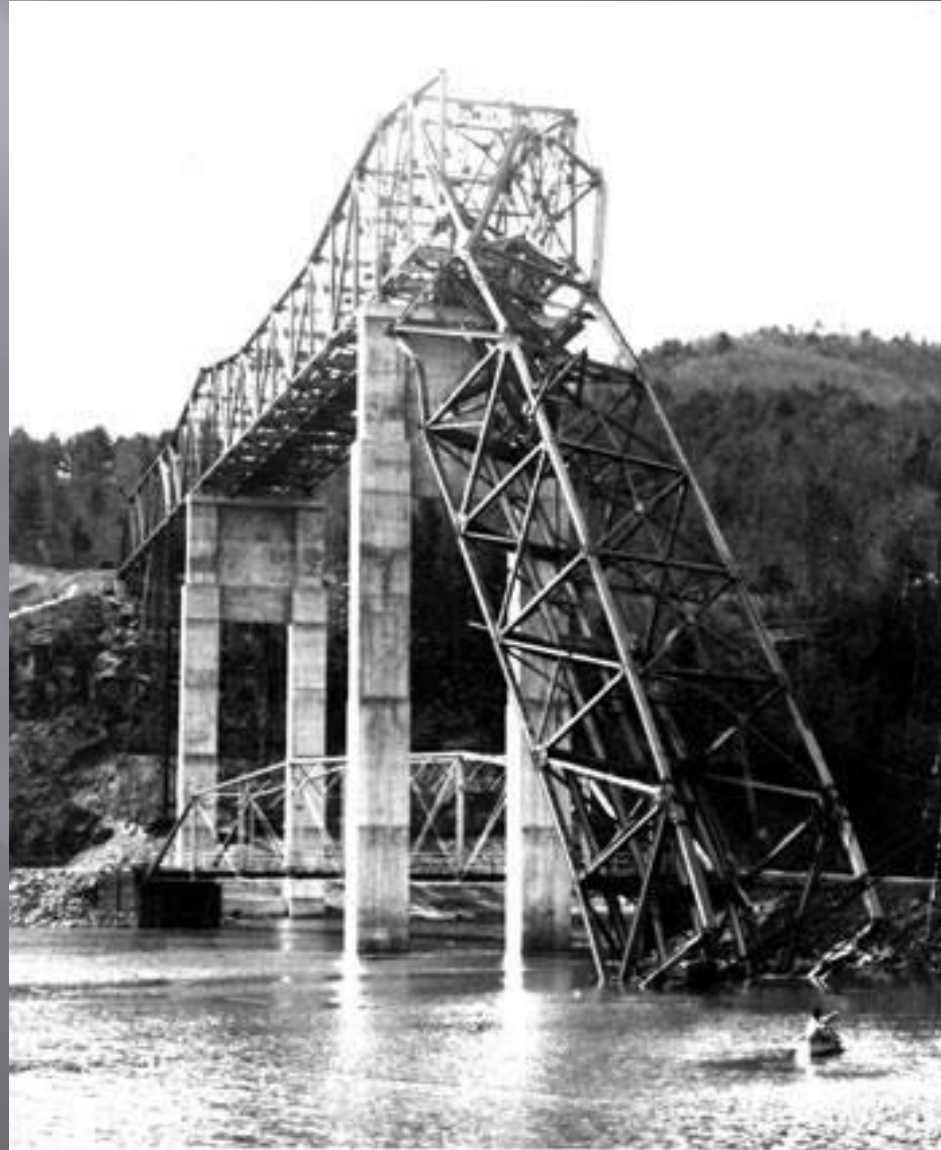
A week after the disaster workmen began dismantling the twisted span, using a never before used technique by burning the steel beams with chemicals.

Note: All photos are courtesy of the West Virginia and Regional History Center.

1949 Wreckage



1949 Wreckage



Ground View



Ground View



Deep Sea Diver, Norman Smith from Norfolk, VA prepares for underwater search for casualties.



Underwater and Water Level Crew



West Virginia & Regional History Center

Search and Recovery



Twisted Steel



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Twisted/Mangled Steel



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Worker Climbing on Wreckage



Preparing for Chemical Burn



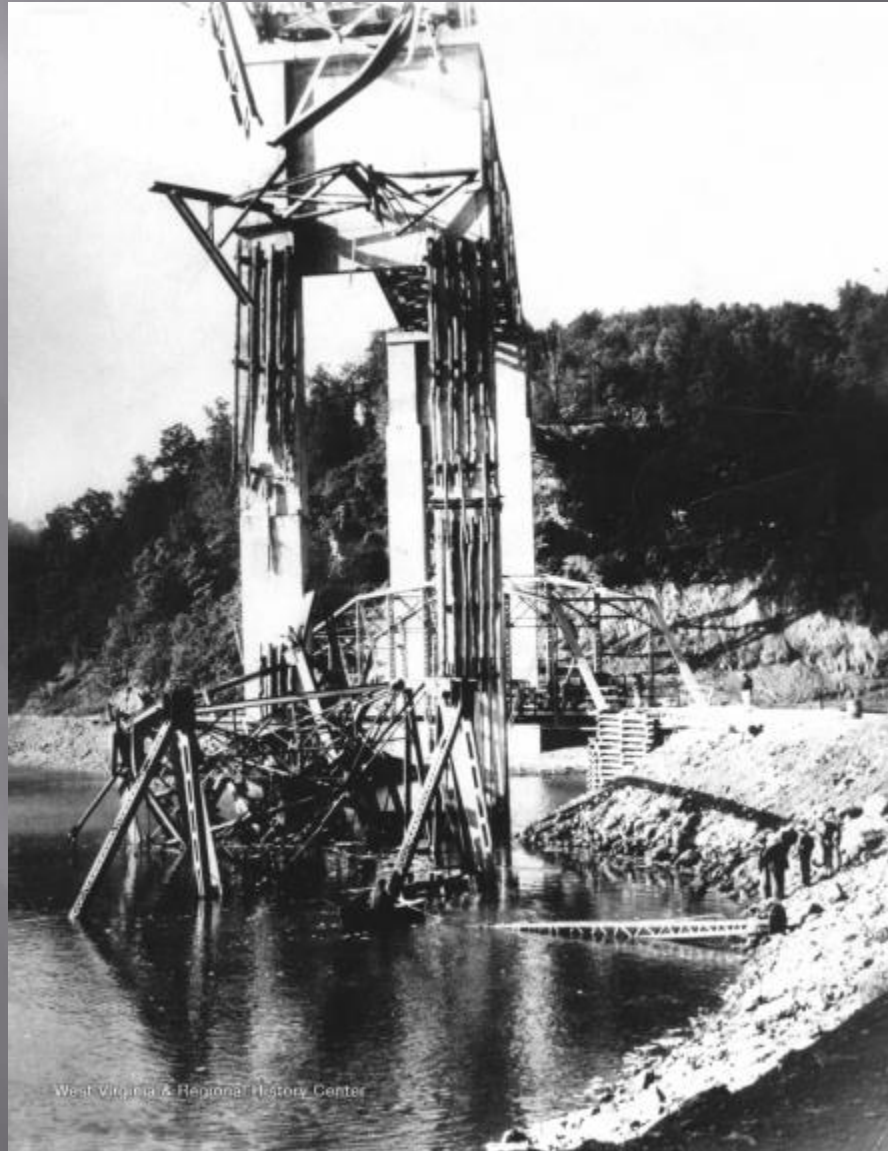
Chemically Burning Steel



Workers Observe Dismantling

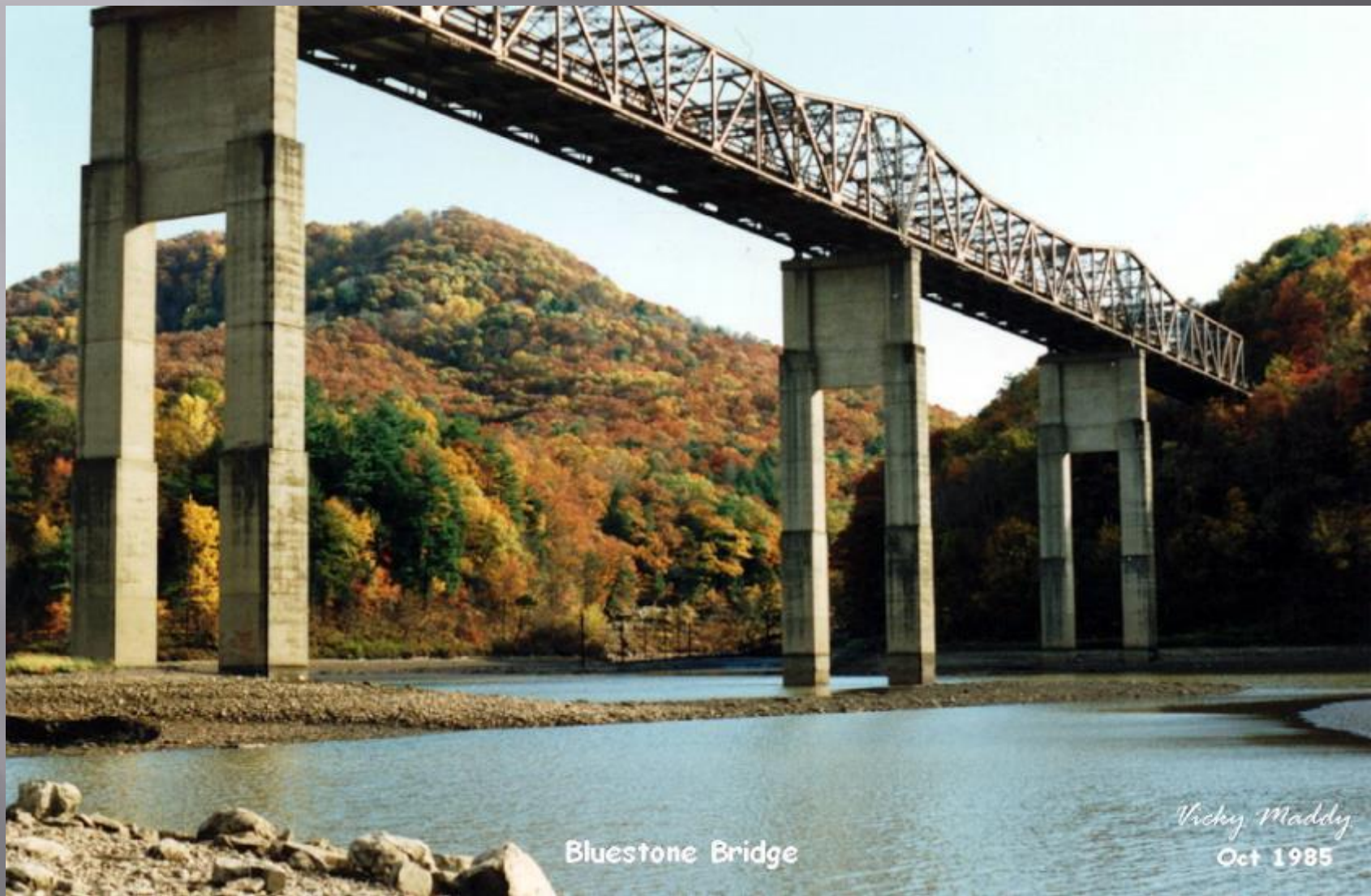


Chemical Burn Complete



Modern Day View From Bluestone Lake





Bluestone Bridge

Vicky Maddy
Oct 1985

Road View Approach From Hinton



Bridge View From Hinton



Autumn Mountain Top View



Winter Lake View



Summer Mountain View



Road View Approach From Pipestem



Lake View



The following slides depict the preparation and demolition of the bridge.

The actual demolition occurred on November 15, 2015

November 2015 Workers Making Ready For Demolition



Workers Setting Charges



Prior To Demolition



[YouTube
Hilltop
Video](#)

Click your Browser "Back" arrow
after watching each video.

[YouTube
Lake
Video](#)

Demolition - One



Demolition - Two



Demolition - Three



Demolition - Four



Demolition - Five



Demolition - Six



Demolition - Seven



Demolition - Eight



Demolition - Nine



Demolition - Ten



Demolition - Eleven



Demolition - Twelve



Demolition - Thirteen



Aftermath























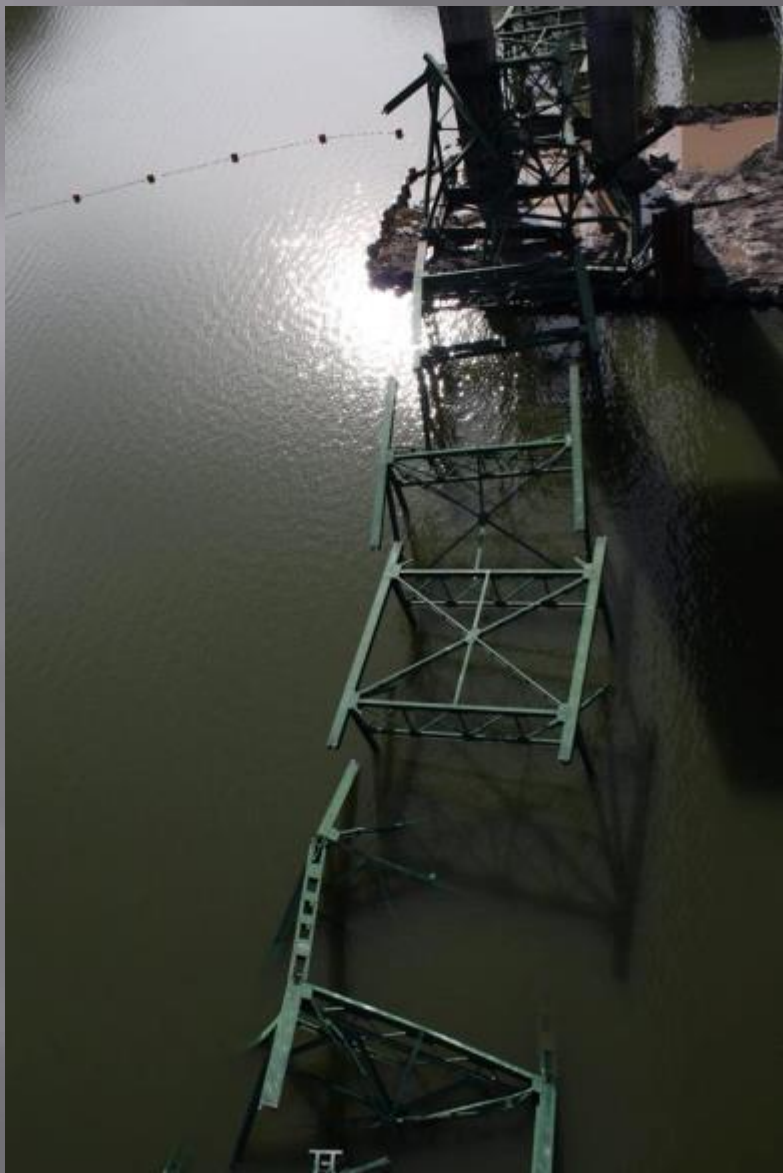


















New Lilly Bridge View From Pipestem Side





New Lilly Bridge View From Hinton Side