



# The George Washington Bridge: Poetry in Steel

*Michael Rockland*

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Since opening in 1931, the George Washington Bridge, linking New York and New Jersey, has become the busiest bridge in the world, with 108 million vehicles crossing it in 2007. Many people also consider it the most beautiful bridge in the world, yet remarkably little has been written about this majestic structure.

Intimate and engaging, Michael Rockland's rich narrative presents perspectives on the GWB, as it is often called, that span history, architecture, engineering, transportation, design, the arts, politics, and even post-9/11 mentality. Stunning archival photos, from the late 1920s when the bridge was built through the present, are a powerful complement to the bridge's history. Rockland covers the competition between the GWB and the Brooklyn Bridge that parallels the rivalry between New Jersey and New York City. Readers will learn about the Swiss immigrant Othmar Ammann, an unsung hero who designed and built the GWB, and how a lack of funding during the Depression dictated the iconic, uncovered steel beams of its towers, which we admire today. There are chapters discussing accidents on the bridge, such as an airplane crash landing in the westbound lanes and the sad story of suicides off its span; the appearance of the bridge in media and the arts; and Rockland's personal adventures on the bridge, including scaling its massive towers on a cable.

Movies, television shows, songs, novels, countless images, and even PlayStation 2 games have aided the GWB in becoming a part of the global popular culture. This tribute will captivate residents living in the shadow of the GWB, the millions who walk, jog, bike, skate, or drive across it, as well as tourists and those who will visit it some day.

ðFirst major book on the George Washington Bridge

ðFull of amazing facts about the GWB that will surprise even bridge historians

ðIncludes over 30 spectacular illustrations, ranging from archival photographs of the building of the bridge to those that show it draped in an enormous flag after 9/11

ðIncludes personal accounts of the author's adventures on the bridge

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