



Dramatic beginning of Old Chain of Rocks Canal Bridge demolition: Live video/story

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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LIVE VIDEO OF OLD CHAIN OF ROCKS CANAL BRIDGE EXPLOSION

With a loud boom, a portion of the Old Chain of Canal Rocks Bridge started to go down Tuesday morning with a multitude of spectators present.

The first phase of demolition of the Old Chain of Rocks Canal Bridge began and a limited viewing area was set up on the east end of the area. It was lined with spectators, young and old.

Trent Clover was about a mile away in his Granite City apartment and he had a vivid way to describe the initial explosion.

"That was loud," he told Riverbender.com. "I jumped out of bed. It felt like an earthquake."

Hallie James of St. Louis brought her young grandchildren over just so they could witness history in the making.

"I wanted my grandkids to see it," she said.

Earl Fanning of Granite City said he was glad the old bridge was being demolished.

"I watched the new bridge going up for the last two and a half years," he said. "This is a good thing."

A Granite City man who wished to go by only the name Jim said he had lived near the bridge his whole life and said he found this a fascinating piece of history.

“The new bridge is very nice with three wide lanes,” he said. “I have been around construction all my life so I enjoy this.”

Glen Reichman, of Hamel, the owner of Reichman Trucking, was on hand and he was patient with people parking in his lot area for trucks.

“I have been here for 45 years,” he said of his business. “I remember when this was built.”

Reichman said he started his working career on a farm outside Hamel then he made a decision to start the trucking business and he has owned and operated it ever since, right across from the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge.



Len Cook of Glen Carbon and his close friend Glen Davis reflected during the start of demolition on days of of yesteryear swimming near the bridge and jumping off part of it.

“We used to swim across the canal,” Cook said. “I probably did it a half dozen times. There was a nice area beach near the bridge. “

Davis said once he swam across the canal and he didn’t know if he would make it back.

“I used a log to get across the final part,” he said.

The Illinois Department of Transportation guided westbound traffic on to Illinois Route 3, while eastbound traffic was detoured onto Riverview. There will be additional closures in the future, but those will be announced ahead of time.

