

Our Rich History: The new 2nd edition of Don Tolzmann's *The Roebling Suspension Bridge*

By Paul A. Tenkotte, PhD -- *Special to NKyTribune* – 29 May 2023

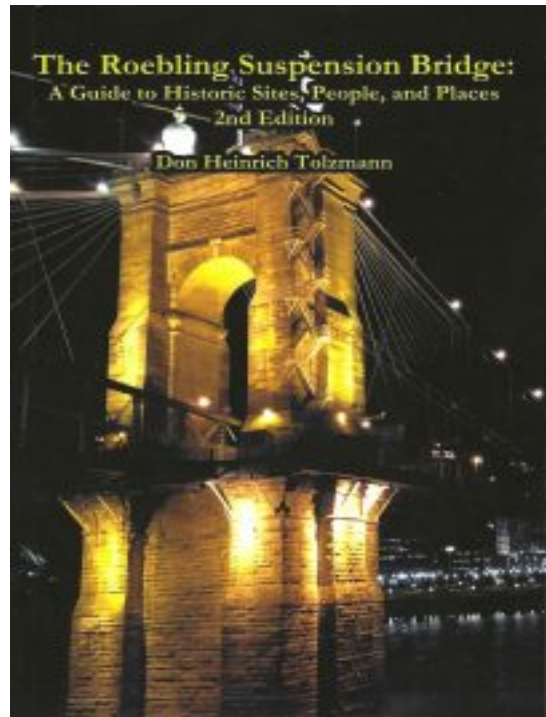
Residents of our region call one of our favorite icons by various names: The John A. Roebling Bridge; the Suspension Bridge; the Covington and Cincinnati Suspension Bridge; and the "Singing Bridge."

Cover of the 2nd edition of Don Heinrich Tolzmann's book, The Roebling Suspension Bridge: A Guide to Historic Sites, People, and Places (2nd ed., Cincinnati, OH: Archivarium Press, 2022).

In 2017, in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of its opening, Don Heinrich Tolzmann first published his now classic *The Roebling Suspension Bridge: A Guide to Historic Sites, People, and Places*.

Available now in a second edition, with a stunning nighttime view on the front cover, the book remains an engaging and informative source for all interested in the Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky region, as well as in great American engineering achievements.

But the John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge — connecting Cincinnati, Ohio and Covington, Kentucky — is much more than an engineering accomplishment. It's also a work of art. Its graceful suspension cables beckon us to cross the mighty Ohio River.



John A. Roebling, chief engineer of the Covington and Cincinnati Suspension Bridge. (Courtesy of the Kenton County Public Library, Covington, Kentucky)

Likewise, Dr. Don Tolzmann beckons us to cross into the fascinating history of the bridge. Tolzmann, a preeminent scholar known for his books about German-Americana, is the official historian of the Covington-Cincinnati Suspension Bridge Committee. His previous books about the bridge have included *John A. Roebling and His Suspension Bridge on the Ohio River* (Milford, OH: Little Miami Publishing, 2007) and his editing of E.F. Farrington's *The John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge, a Full and Complete Description, with Dimensions and Details of Construction* (Milford, OH: Little Miami Publishing, 2016).

Tolzmann's latest work is divided into short, very readable chapters well-suited to the busy reader of today. Chapters include a "Roebling Heritage Tour," and the latest research

relating to Amos Shinkle, Washington Roebling, Wilhelm Hildenbrand, Charles Stolzenburg, and others.

The Appendices contain a list of Roebling's bridges, a timeline of the Roebling Company, and a plethora of illustrations. At 196 pages in length, this edition is more than twice the length of the original.



(Our region's majestic John A. Roebling suspension bridge. Source: Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, 17 Aug. 1867)

Tolzmann includes a fascinating account of the Cincinnati branch of the Roebling family, led by Henry C.P. Roebling. Tolzmann's research has included the Roebling Collection in the Folsom Library at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, as well as the Bruce Family Papers in the Special Collections and Archives of the Steely Library at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights.

As always, Tolzmann is a seasoned storyteller, able to bring history to life. And further, he does so at a very affordable price. The Kindle edition of the book on Amazon is available for only \$5.99: Don Heinrich Tolzmann, *The Roebling Suspension Bridge: A Guide to Historic Sites, People, and Places* (2nd ed., Cincinnati, OH: Archivarium Press, 2022).

We want to learn more about the history of your business, church, school, or organization in our Ohio River Valley Region. If you would like to share your rich history with others, please contact the editor of "Our Rich History," Paul A. Tenkotte, at tenkottep@nku.edu. Paul A. Tenkotte, PhD is Professor of History and Gender Studies at Northern Kentucky University (NKU) and the author of many books and articles.