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**Site Report #5**  
**Brooklyn Public Library**



### **Introduction**

Our class visited the Brooklyn Public Library located on 10 Grand Army Plaza. I have visited this library before when I was younger with my 5th grade class. I only remember so much but now that I have refreshed my memory, this library is beautiful. Fortunately, our class was able to get access to some of the archives that are in this library. We had a wonderful woman who was able to help some of us with our research. Some of the items in this public library is valuable and so interesting. There are numerous of librarians that are willing to help someone with research or any further questions. I really enjoyed this trip because I was able to get some good information about Emily Roebling that will later help me for my research paper.

## Pre-Visit Reflection

Prior to the trip I did a little background information on this library and what kind of sources they contained. I was excited to find out that they have a number of photographs that relate to the Brooklyn Bridge. I took down some questions I could ask the librarian for like letters from Emily Roebling, postcards and newspapers. I was also pleased to find that they have a wonderful online website that you could search materials for such as newspapers and so on.

## Sources found

1. **The Roebling Legacy by Clifford W. Zink (book)**
2. **Silent Builder by Marilyn E. Weigold (book)**



**Picture #1**

This is a picture of Mrs. Emily Warren Roebling in a newspaper published in 1883. It is captioned "Mrs. Emily Warren Roebling who helped her husband, Washington A. Roebling complete the bridge, was the first woman to walk across the span." I found it interesting that they did not mention all the hard work she put in but that she was the first woman to cross the bridge. In the article it mentioned Washington Roebling and all his hard work until he became ill. Her contribution was not necessarily mentioned enough in my opinion but that is because women were not socially accepted to be engineers.





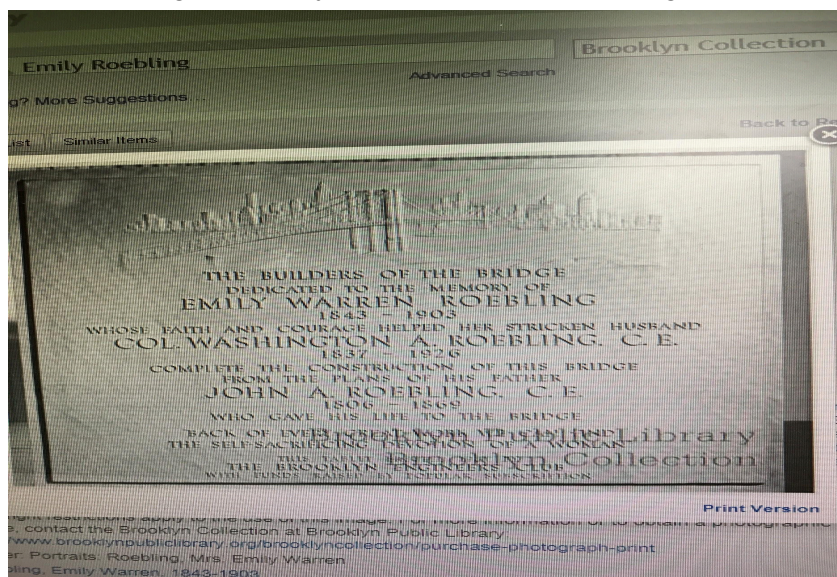
**THE GREAT PANIC** on the bridge took place six days after the opening. It had been thronged since the first night when an amateur miler sprinted over to be the first toll-payer and 250,000 more walked across in the first 24 hours. But

many had deep misgivings about the structure's strength. On May 30 when someone suddenly screamed, panic ensued. The cry spread that the bridge was falling. Twelve were trampled to death, 40 injured. Here victims are being removed.

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**Picture #2**

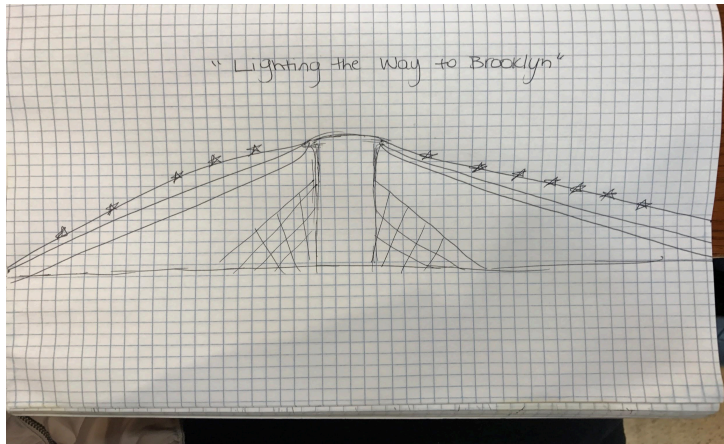
This photograph was in a newspaper that was captured on May 30th on the grand opening of the Brooklyn Bridge. It was called "The Great Panic" because that is exactly what happened. People panicked because they heard a scream and considering there were so many people that created a problem. People got trampled and some were killed because of this misunderstanding. It may not have been the best grand opening but the Brooklyn Bridge stands tall and strong until today, despite what others thought.



**Picture #3**

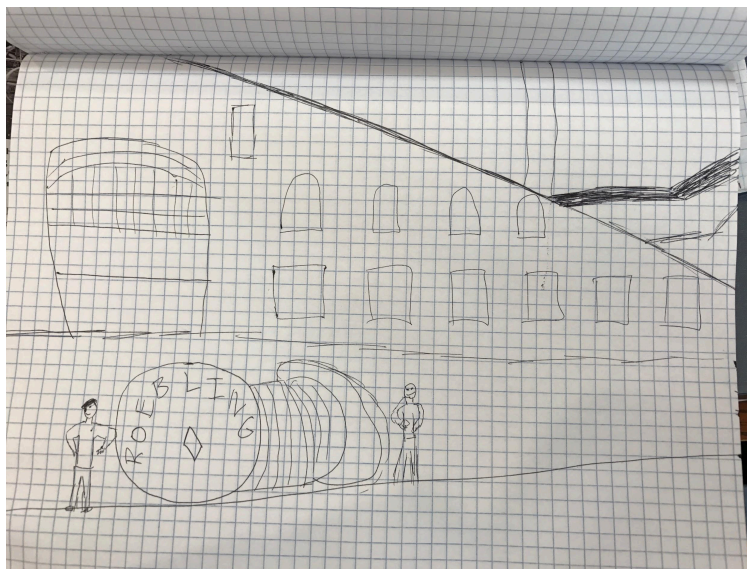
Unfortunately, I did not get the best picture since it was on the computer but this captured my attention. It is a cement piece that is titled "The Builders of the Bridge Dedicated to the memory of ..." The first one mentioned was Emily Roebling which I thought was nice. For once, she is

the first one mentioned. Then it says “her faith and courage helped her stricken husband.” Then Col Washington and John Roebling come after and the year they were born and the year they passed away.



**Sketch #1**

I sketched one of the photographs from a newspaper. It was a picture of the Brooklyn Bridge and there are stars and fireworks everywhere. The title was “Lighting the way to Brooklyn”. It almost seems like the title was welcoming the partnership with brooklyn. It was dated that the picture was taken on the day of the opening where there were fireworks and beautiful lights that stood out. This was a big deal for people and someone captured something so important for people that lived in New York.



**Sketch #2**

This is a sketch that I made when I was reading the Roebling Legacy. That book is dedicated to the Roebling's and their accomplishments and not just the Brooklyn Bridge. The family had owned various businesses and the most popular one was the wiring company. I sketched two workers at the factory with a huge bulk of wire and the name imprinted on the wood. The factory looks huge and the supplies are huge compared to the workers. I am sure it took a lot of work to be there due to all the heavy looking stuff in the background.



### **Discoveries**

#### **Brooklyn Public Library**

- a. The library is located in a nice neighborhood because it is near a park called Prospect Park.
- b. The library has several different rooms for different materials which you need permission for.
- c. You can contact the library in advance to ask for a specific material and you can meet with someone for assistance.

### **Key Events**

- a. The Roebling's Wire company became the largest company in 1871.
- b. The Grand opening of the Brooklyn Bridge was on May 30, 1883.
- c. Emily Roebling passed away in the year of 1903 in her mansion.

### **Public Perception of Key Events**

- a. From what I have seen, the Roebling family was a well respected family at their time. There are numerous of articles and advertisements about either the Brooklyn Bridge of their Wire company that became the largest in 1871.
- b. Seeing a picture of people stumbled from the accident on the Brooklyn Bridge, you could tell that people had a hard time trusting the Brooklyn Bridge. They were unsure that the bridge was stable enough but once the 21 elephants crossed the Brooklyn Bridge they earned their trust.

### **Important changes to the Brooklyn Bridge**

- a. In 1915, the name of the bridge officially became the Brooklyn Bridge.
- b. It became a toll free bridge.

### **Other Observations**

- a. Women in history have not been appreciated for their hard work and contribution.
- b. There were certain stunts that people would create to get attention such as a man "jumping" off the bridge.

### **Keywords**

1. Newspaper- printed publication that consists of folded sheets of paper that has daily news, articles, advertisements and correspondence.
2. Collection- an action of collecting something like books, photos, clippings, etc.
3. Clippings- an article that is cut from a newspaper or magazine.
4. Technical Survey- part of a continuous process of gatherings, processing and analyzing of data.
5. The Brooklyn Eagle- Daily newspaper published in the city and then later on published in brooklyn for 114 years.

6. Archives- a collection of historical documents or records providing information about a place, institute or people.

### **Questions for further Research**

1. Why did the Brooklyn Eagle go out of business?
2. Were people for or against Brooklyn and Manhattan agreeing to work together?
3. Why did the Brooklyn Bridge became toll free?

### **Research Method**

1. Search up articles from the newspapers on the Brooklyn Eagle.  
Check Brooklyn Libraries for more information
2. Newspaper articles around the year the bridge was starting the construction.  
Letters from public figures about the agreement between two cities.
3. Check articles on the Brooklyn Eagle  
Check old photographs from archives

### **Summary**

**Overall, I am very happy with the outcome of the trip. I was able to get some really good information on my topic for my research paper. I learned how to look up resources online on the library website. I was able to look at old photographs of the before and after construction of Brooklyn Bridge. Also found a book that I could possibly use for a reference. It was interesting to look at all different kinds of materials about the Brooklyn Bridge. Now that I have visited this location I will be back for more research. This trip was helpful not just for me but for the class overall.**