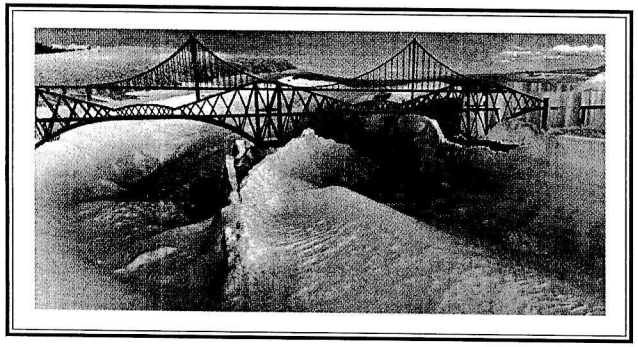
The contours of the river bed as they look today under the Forth Crossing point are shown by this latest digital image from British Geological Survey. Obviously, this would be a vital factor in the design of any future crossing.

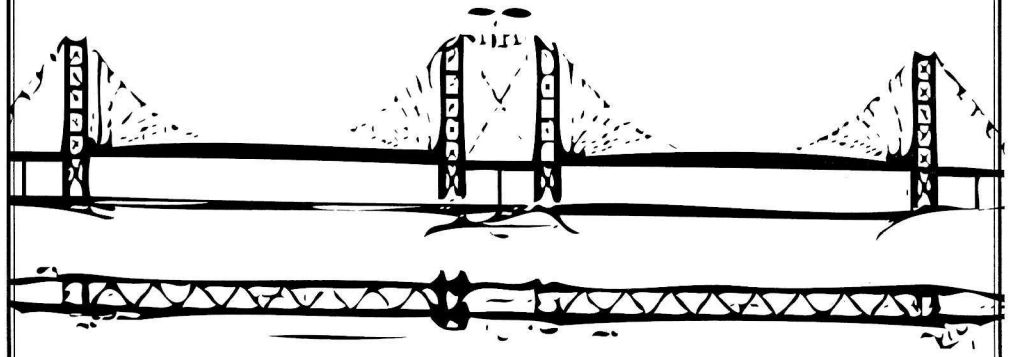


North Queensferry Heritage Trust is a charity dedicated to preserving and promoting the history and beauty of North Queensferry and the immediate surroundings. It also aims to encourage, preserve, develop and improve features of historic, architectural or environmental value. The Trust is a member of the Scottish Civic Trust and the Scottish Wildlife Trust. For more information and membership details, visit our website–www.nqht.org

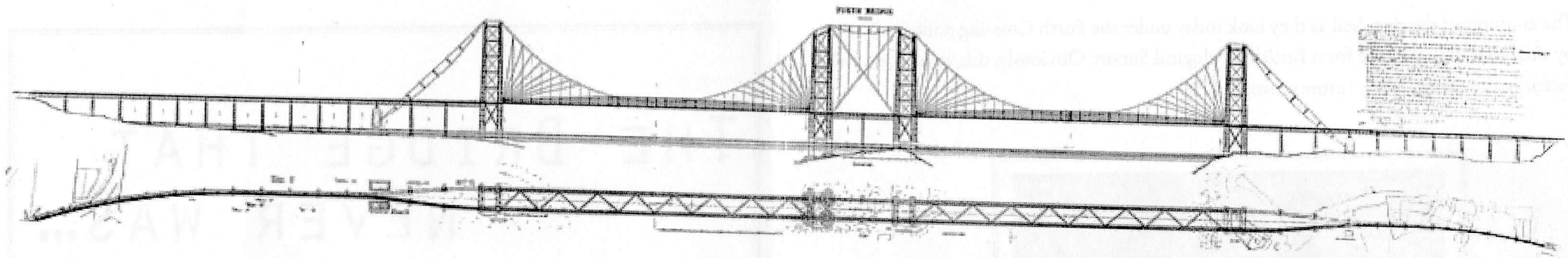
A CD with audio commentary and pictures has been produced for this exhibition. This describes the fascinating story leading up to one of Scotland's greatest engineering achievements.

Published by Deep Sea World and North Queensferry Heritage Trust November 2007

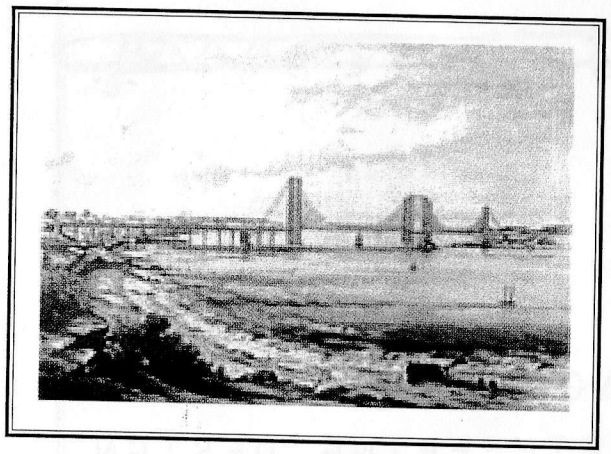
The Bridge that never was...



A key turning point in the history of engineering design

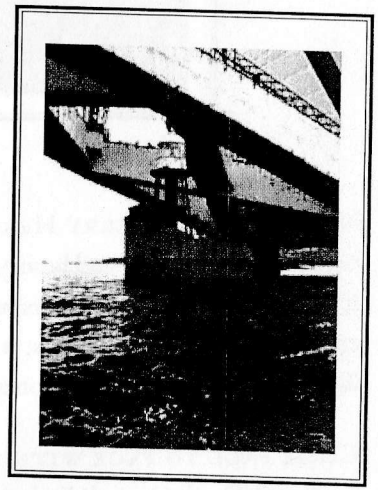


A story, covering over 200 years of Scottish enterprise through the minds of engineers planning to construct a crossing, over or under the river Forth, is presented by North Queensferry Heritage Trust at Deep Sea World. This is supported by Network Rail, British Geological Survey and the Forth Bridges Visitor Centre. A centrepiece of the exhibition is a copy of the 14ft long drawing, for the construction of a suspension rail bridge, which was presented to the Board of Trade in London on the 4th January 1879 by Sir Thomas Bouch. It clearly shows in detail the type of bridge there would have been had fate not intervened. In addition, it also shows some detail on the layout of North Queensferry in 1879.



A copy of an original painting shows how the suspension bridge would have looked, together with a photograph of the present view from the same perspective.

Preliminary construction had already begun in 1878, when the well documented Tay Bridge disaster occurred on the 28th December 1879. Consequently, all work ceased, new engineers were appointed, and in 1883 the bridge we know and admire today was born, with the laying of a foundation stone in both North and South Queensferry.
Other photographs include North Queensferry today, showing the original Town pier, built in 1812, with its harbour light. The Railway pier built in1877, was possibly designed by Bouch. This allowed local rail passengers to cross by ferry to Port Edgar to continue their journey. The original 'Bouch' pier at Inchgarvie, built in 1878, is also visible .
A copy of the overlay drawing of both bridges, by engineer in chief, John Fowler, and produced in 1882, is shown in clear detail for the first time.



History has shown that events and the elements have played a decisive role in the eventual outcome of any crossing. Conclusions can be drawn on whether the 'Bouch suspension bridge' could have stood the test of time. Let us hope that an echo from the past will not haunt future decision makers.

The events of 1879 were indeed a key turning point in the history of engineering design.