

Charleston's most elaborate engineering feat—the new Cooper River bridge—is being built using some of the greatest engineering technology in the world, and seven Citadel graduates are integral to its construction.



## CITADEL GRADUATES

### THE COOPER RIVER, MARCH

At 7 a.m., the sunrise casts dappled light across the Cooper River as it flows into Charleston harbor. The would-be tranquility is interrupted by a thump-thump rhythm that sounds from the stream of traffic crossing the two aging truss bridges that connect Charleston to Mount Pleasant. A tugboat maneuvers a massive container ship into place with steady determination. Nearby at the Maritime Center pier, an otter playfully bobs in and out of the water as Russ Touchberry, '01, jumps into a small skiff and heads off in the direction of the new Cooper River bridge construction site.

Construction of the new bridge has been the buzz of Charleston in recent years just as it was in the early part of the 20th century. In 1929, the completion of the Grace Memorial Bridge solved the time-honored problem of crossing the Cooper River from Charleston into Mount Pleasant. The bridge took 17 months to build and cost \$6 million. With 1,050 feet between supports, it was the fifth longest bridge in the world, and at 150 feet above the river, it was 15 feet higher than New York's Brooklyn Bridge. The toll to cross was 50 cents.

