

Newly opened Potterfield Bridge has become favorite spot in Richmond for lovers

By ALI ROCKETT Richmond Times-Dispatch | Posted: Friday, December 16, 2016 10:30 pm

The newly opened T. Tyler Potterfield Memorial Bridge has become a favorite spot among lovers in Richmond.

With a picturesque location spanning the James River and an unobstructed view of the city's skyline, it has been the backdrop of at least one proposal and a spontaneous wedding since it opened Dec. 2.

Charles Robinson, a Henrico County firefighter, proposed to Nicole Ingram, a nurse at Virginia Commonwealth University Health, on Dec. 9, the couple's one-year anniversary and one week after the bridge opened. Robinson, a Richmond native now living in Henrico, said the pedestrian bridge, which links Brown's Island and Manchester, was the perfect spot to pop the question.

"In the summertime, I work as a raft guide," Robinson, 32, said in a phone interview. "We both really love the James River. The bridge was perfect (in) that it incorporates two things we love about Richmond, the river and the skyline."

Ingram said she "had an inkling" the proposal was coming earlier in the week. It was their anniversary and both had the weekend off — which doesn't always happen given their busy work schedules.

But as they made more plans for the weekend, Ingram started to have doubts. They had been out to dinner that evening and had decided to take a walk over the new footbridge, which had just opened a week earlier.

"That day, he wasn't acting out of the norm. He wasn't nervous or clammy at all," she said. "It was so cold. I couldn't think of anything except how cold it was. Then how pretty it was, and then how cold it was."

But halfway through their trek, Robinson stopped her and got down on one knee.

"I made it up on the fly," he said jokingly. "It sounded great, and she'll confirm that as well."

Ingram remembers it well. "It happened really fast," she said. "He said, 'This has been the best year of my life,' and then gave me a kiss, and said something like 'I want to have many more.' I said 'Without a doubt!'"



Potterfield Bridge proposal

Charles Robinson, a Henrico County firefighter, and Nicole Ingram, a nurse at VCU Health, were engaged Dec. 9 on the T. Tyler Potterfield Memorial Bridge spanning the James River in Richmond. xCharles Robinson, a Henrico County firefighter, and Nicole Ingram, a nurse at VCU, were engaged Dec. 9 on week-long The T. Tyler Potterfield Memorial Bridge.

The happy couple asked a stranger nearby to take a holiday photo with Ingram's cellphone. The passer-by happened to be a photographer taking shots of the skyline. Robbie Mercogliano volunteered to take a portrait of them and send them a copy.

"We just lucked out on that," Robinson said.

Another Richmond photographer, Dave Parrish, who often shoots events for Venture Richmond, was walking along the bridge Dec. 5 readying to take photos as the sun set, when a man approached and asked if Parrish would be a witness to his wedding.

The couple, who The Richmond Times-Dispatch is hoping to identify, were headed to Brown's Island, but Parrish suggested the bridge for their nuptials.

"They didn't even know I had a camera," Parrish said.

He took a series of photos of the ceremony and portraits of the couple afterward, and gave them his card so they could contact him for copies of the images.

That was the last he heard of them.