



Historic Sites Survey

<p>ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>Measuring 360' in length, the twin-tower swinging suspension bridge has a central span of 200' and two 80' spans between the towers and the Pearl River bank. The two steel I-beam towers are supported by a substructure of concrete piers sheathed in steel, with an I-beam running through the center of each concrete pier. The arched wooden deck is 20' wide, supported by steel floor beams and lateral bracing. The twin steel I-beam towers rise 25' above the deck. The I-beams are connected by sway bracing reinforced with crossbars. Two-and-one-half-inch wire cables are suspended from the towers and anchored on the river bank. The cables are supported by steel rod hangers.</p> <p>The bridge is well preserved and continues to accomodate two-way vehicular traffic. Residents of both counties built the bridge according to a cable anchoring system design patented by Schuster and Jacob of Fayette (patent</p> <p>ALTERATIONS:</p> <p>None (routine maintenance includes replacement of worn steel rod hangers and wooden deck planks).</p> <p>OUTBUILDINGS:</p> <p>LANDSCAPE FEATURES:</p> <p>Forested setting, gravel road.</p>	<p>NAME: Byram Bridge</p> <p>STREET NO: Old Byram and Florence Road</p> <p>TOWN/VIC: Byram</p> <p>COUNTY: Hinds-Rankin</p> <p>BLOCK/LOT: Boards of Supervisors</p> <p>PRESENT OWNER: Hinds-Rankin County</p> <p>ADDRESS: Hinds County Chancery Clerk Building East Pascagoula Street</p> <p>PRESENT USE: Jackson, Mississippi 39205</p> <p>FORMER USE: Rankin County Courthouse Brandon, Mississippi 39042</p> <p>DATE: ca. 1905</p> <p>STYLE:</p> <p>ARCH/BUILDER: Schuster and Jacob, engineers</p> <p>SOURCE OF DATE:</p> <p>ENVIRONMENT: <u>Fayette Chronicle</u>, July 29, 1904 rural</p> <p>LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE</p> <p>NEIGHBORHOOD</p> <p>LOCAL</p> <p>STATE X</p> <p>NATIONAL</p>
<p>STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:</p> <p>The Byram Bridge is a highly successful technological product of the early twentieth century that met rural transportation needs in central Mississippi. Easier to maintain than wooden bridges and less expensive than iron bridges, two swinging suspension bridges with structural support systems superior to those in Jefferson County were built in rural areas of Rankin County (south of Jackson) after 1900.</p> <p>The Schuster and Jacob anchoring system patent was sold to the town of Byram prior to construction of the bridge (Milton Singletary, retired Rankin County Supervisor, interviewed by Jack A. Gold, architectural historian with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, at Brandon, Miss., August 15, 1978). Residents of Hinds (town of Byram) and Rankin counties furnished the labor and materials for construction of the bridge.</p> <p>De Witt Mason, a local blacksmith from Rankin County, forged the steel rod</p>	<p>PHOTOS</p> <p>NEG. #</p>

SITE OR AREA WITH NORTH ARROW AND SHAPE OF STRUCTURE:

CONTINUATION:

Architectural Description

#s 6203,729591; dated June 2, 1903). Neither county appropriated a bond issue for its construction and the so-called "bastard bridge" received haphazard maintenance by the two counties' road crews. During the 1950s, attempts were made by Hinds County engineers to eliminate the deck swing by installing additional piers on each side of the Pearl River. The strategy failed, and the tops of the accessory piers were sawn off.

PHYSICAL CONDITION:

good

Statement of Significance

hangers for the bridge (Singletary). The Byram Bridge served the agricultural transportation needs of local farmers from Byram (northwest of the bridge) and rural settlement areas such as Frenchs Store to the southwest.

THREATS:

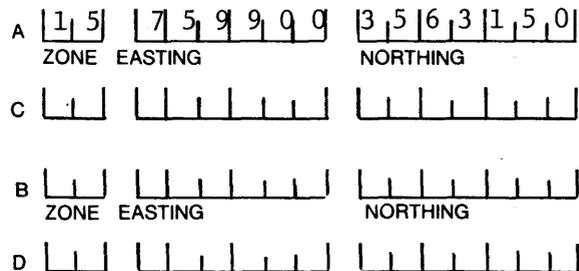
deterioration

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Swinging suspension bridge and county road right-of-way along Old Byram and Florence Road where the said bridge crosses the Pearl River.

CREAGE: two acres

TM REF:



FORM PREPARED BY:

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DATE

20 July 1978