

# HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

## LAKESHORE DRIVE BRIDGE

HAER NO. AR-52

**LOCATION:** The Lakeshore Drive Bridge spans a small ravine, immediately adjacent to Lake No. 3, approximately 0.2 miles north of Fairway Avenue on Lakeshore Drive in North Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas.

UTM: 15/3850325/568460

Quad: North Little Rock

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:** ca. 1935

**STYLE:** Single span, masonry arch bridge.

**BUILDER:** The Lakeshore Drive Bridge was built by the Metropolitan Trust Company, North Little Rock, Arkansas. Design Architect, Mr. Frank Carmean.

**PRESENT CONDITION AND USE:** This bridge is in good condition. It is currently blocked off to vehicular traffic and is being used for a pedestrian walkway.

**SIGNIFICANCE:** The Lakeshore Drive Bridge is one of eight known masonry arch bridges in Arkansas, and one of a pair situated next to Lake No. 3 in the Lakewood Development area of North Little Rock, Arkansas. The Development area was an innovative housing project conceived by Justin Matthews and financed through his Metropolitan Trust Company. Certain design details, such as the vertical square columns incorporated into its spandrel walls, make this pair of bridges unique in the state.

**HISTORIAN:** Michael Swanda  
Survey Coordinator  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
August 26, 1988.

The Lakeshore Drive Bridge is one of eight known masonry arch bridges in Arkansas. It is one in a pair of bridges constructed adjacent to Lake No. 3 in the Lakewood Development area of North Little Rock (the other bridge is the Edgemere Street Bridge, HAER No. AR-40). The Lakewood Development housing project was originally conceived by Mr. Justin Matthews, at a cost of \$250,000, and administered through his Metropolitan Trust Company of North Little Rock, Arkansas. His unique and innovative plans called for not only the development of residential areas, but also for the construction of several recreational lakes, open spaces, parks, and sculpture within the projects boundaries, including Lake No.3 and its stone bridges. Justin Matthews was a very prominent Arkansan, past member of the Arkansas Highway Commission, and community leader. It is very likely that the Metropolitan Trust Company's design architect, Mr. Frank Carmean, designed the Lakeshore Drive Bridge in the rustic architectural theme so prevalent throughout the development.

### STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS

The bridge is constructed from roughly squared, uncoursed rubble. Its single elliptical arch barrel runs perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the spandrel wall. Square columns are incorporated into the design of the spandrel and protrude outward from it. These columns are slightly turned to give a beveled appearance and extend vertically up through the parapet wall at different heights, giving the parapets an uneven, curving top surface. The bridge roadway is currently covered with asphalt over unidentified fill material. The roadway and spandrel walls are slightly curved.

DIMENSIONS:

The bridge is 53 feet in length. Its single arch reaches to a height of 5 feet above the creek bed and spans 20 feet.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

AHPP Resource No. PU2028.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Adams, Walter M. A History, North Little Rock, The Unique City. August House, 1986 Little Rock.

Bridge Division Files, Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, Little Rock.

Historic Bridge File, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock.

McClurkan, Burney B. Arkansas' Historic Bridge Inventory, Evaluation Procedures 1987 and Preservation Plan. Manuscript of file, Environmental Division, Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, Little Rock.