

Louisiana landmark drawbridge celebrating centennial

Once slated for the scrap yard, Louisiana's last vertical-lift drawbridge is celebrating its 100th anniversary, a testament to late 19th Century design and engineering.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Caddo Lake Drawbridge in Mooringsport, La., was constructed in 1914 during the region's oil boom era. However, its unique design can be traced back directly to 1893 Chicago and the South Halsted Street Bridge, designed by James Alexander Low Waddell. Like the Chicago span, the Caddo Lake

Drawbridge design allowed the entire center span to lift in a vertical direction to allow tall ships to pass through.

Although the lift is no longer operable, the uniqueness of the bridge design, the legacy of its designer, and the fact that it is the

Built in 1914, the drawbridge is a civil engineering landmark that is used today as a pedestrian walkway. Darren N. Guin photo



last remaining example of this bridge type in Louisiana all combined to save the bridge from the scrap yard. It was slated to be demolished in the late 1980s, but a citizens' group

successfully campaigned to preserve it.

Funds that were originally appropriated for removing the structure were then used to refurbish it as a pedestrian walkway and preserve it as a tourist attraction and civil engineering landmark. Located about 12 miles north of Shreveport, the bridge is open to the public from dawn to dusk. ●

For details about the bridge and other attractions in Mooringsport, visit www.caddolakedrawbridge.com or call (318) 222-9391 or (800) 551-8682.