

Blue Ridge Overpass

JACK56

GENERAL DATA

structure no.:	042700.1	city/town:	Blue Summit
county:	Jackson	feature inters.:	Missouri State Route 12
		cadastral grid:	S5, T49N, R32W
		highway route:	Blue Ridge Boulevard
		highway distr.:	4
		current owner:	Jackson County

STRUCTURAL DATA

superstructure:	stone filled spandrel arch		
substructure:	stone masonry abutments and wingwalls		
span number:	1	condition:	good
span length:	70.0'	alterations:	none
total length:	86.0'	floor/decking :	asphalt over earth fill
roadway width:	56.4'	other features:	ashlar stone masonry on spandrels, wingwalls, guardrails and arch barrel; concrete string-course with stone corbels on spandrel; builder's plate: BUILT BY FORRESTER-SWENSON CONSTRUCTION CO. / OSCAR KOELHER

HISTORICAL DATA

erection date:	1906
erection cost:	unknown
designer:	Oscar Koehler, Jackson County Surveyor
fabricator :	none
contractor:	Forrester-Swenson Construction Company
references:	Missouri Highway and Transportation Department Structure Inventory and Appraisal: Structure Number 042700.1; Oscar Koehler, Jackson County Surveyor, "Good Roads and Safe Bridges," October 1908 - located at the Kansas City Public Library; field inspection Lon Johnson, 10 February 1991.
sign. rating:	63
evaluation:	NRHP possibly eligible (outstanding example of stone arch construction)

Inventoried by: Clayton B. Fraser 26 September 1994

HAER INVENTORY

Missouri Historic Bridge Inventory

NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE

Blue Ridge Overpass
MHTD: 042700.1

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DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION

1906

LOCATION

Blue Ridge Boulevard over Missouri State Route 12; S5, T49N, R32W
Blue Summit; Jackson County, Missouri

USE (ORIGINAL / CURRENT)

roadway overpass / roadway overpass

RATING NRHP possibly eligible (score: 63)

CONDITION

good

OWNER

Jackson County

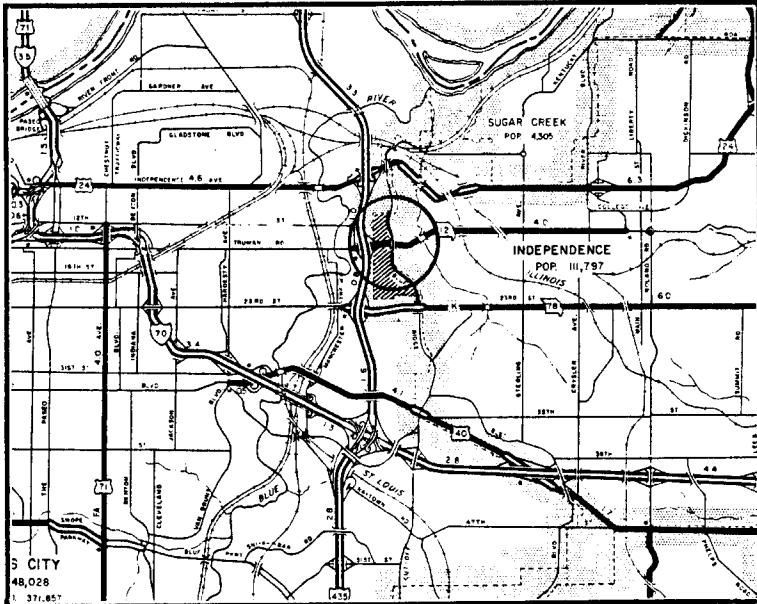
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This handsomely proportioned structure carries the Blue Ridge Boulevard over Missouri State Highway 12 in Blue Summit. The overpass is configured as an elliptical stone masonry arch, with limestone ashlar used for the arch spandrels, barrel, wingwalls and guardrails. Architectural expression on the overpass consists of decorative stone guardrails and a concrete stringcourse with stone corbels on each of the spandrels. The Blue Ridge Boulevard Overpass dates to 1906. That year Jackson County Surveyor Oscar Koehler designed this structure to carry the Blue Ridge Boulevard over Blue Avenue (15th Street) "on the main rock road between Kansas City and Independence." This was the largest of several stone arch bridges of various descriptions that Koehler had designed. The overpass, according to Koehler, "commands a grand view of the eastern part of Kansas City and the beautiful Blue River Valley, including fine rolling country thereabout, with the City of Independence in the distance." It was built that year by the Forrester-Swenson Construction Company. Since its completion, the Blue Ridge Overpass has carried vehicular traffic, without serious alteration.

"This is the longest single span rubble masonry arch bridge that has been constructed in the western country, and has been greatly admired by all who have had an opportunity to view it," Koehler stated in October 1908. He was proud of the Blue Ridge Overpass, featuring it prominently in a campaign brochure entitled "Good Roads and Safe Bridges." Indeed the Blue Ridge Overpass stands out among the stone arch bridges built in Missouri. It is today the oldest dateable stone bridge and by far the longest-span stone structure found in the state. It features the most successful architectural treatment in a group of relatively plain-faced stone arches remaining in Missouri. And it is one of the best preserved of Missouri's remaining stone bridges. All of Koehler's lesser known arch bridges have since been demolished. The Blue Ridge Overpass today stands as the most noteworthy of Missouri's stone arch bridges.

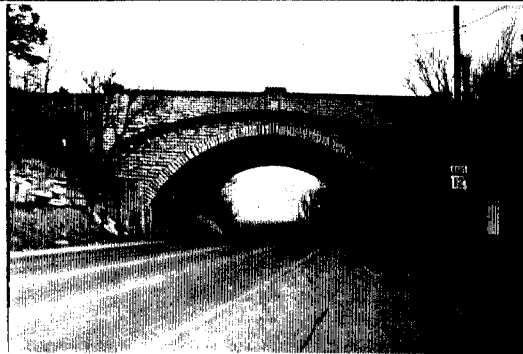
NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE
Blue Ridge Overpass

PHOTOS AND SKETCH MAP OF LOCATION



LOCATION MAP

TAKEN FROM MISSOURI HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP



SOURCES

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INVENTORIED BY
Clayton B. Fraser

AFFILIATION
Fraserdesign, Loveland CO

DATE
24 September 1994