

HISTORIC BRIDGE INVENTORY

London Bridge

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION

county	Mohave	inventory number	08630
milepost	0.00	inventory route	McCulloch Boulevard
location	in Lake Havasu City	feature intersected	Lake Havasu Channel
city/vicinity	Lake Havasu City	USGS quadrangle	Lake Havasu City South
district	85	UTM reference	11.743550.3817630

STRUCTURAL INFORMATION

main span number	3	main span type	111
appr. span number	0	appr. span type	
degree of skew	0	guardrail type	0
main span length	152.0	superstructure	concrete filled spandrel arch
structure length	952.0	substructure	concrete abutments, wingwalls and piers
roadway width	32.6	floor/decking	asphalt roadway over earth fill
structure width	35.0	other features	stone masonry veneer with decorative voussoirs, copings, corbel brackets, guardrails and balusters

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

construction date	1831	designer/engineer	John Rennie
project number		builder/contractor	city (London) work force
information source	city bridge records	structure owner	City of Lake Havasu City
alteration date(s)	1971	alterations	bridge dismantled and moved to this location

NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATION

inventory score	63	For additional information, see "Vehicular Bridges in Arizona 1880-1964" National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form	
		NRHP eligibility	eligible
		NRHP criteria	A <u>x</u> B <u> </u> C <u>x</u>
		signif. statement	unique adaptation of European bridge to Western setting

FORM COMPLETED BY

Clayton B. Fraser, Principal

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31 October 2004

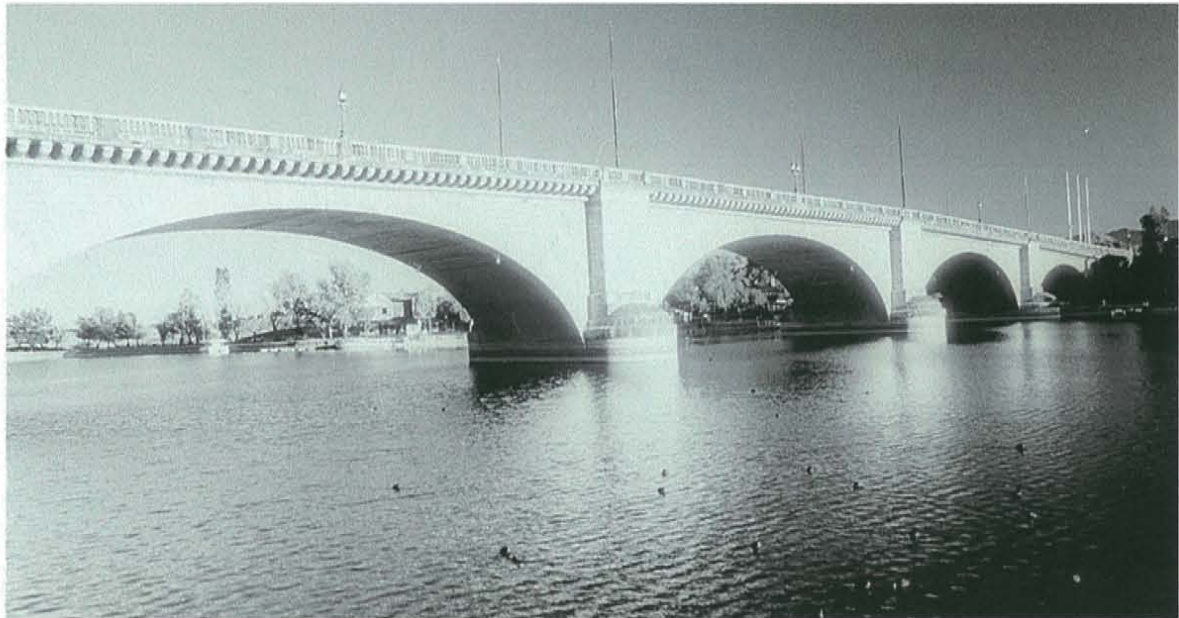


PHOTO INFORMATION

date of photo.: November 2002

view direction:

northwest north

photo no.:

02.11.190 02.11.191

CONSTRUCTION HISTORY

The first timber bridge over the Thames River in London may have been constructed as early as the 1st Century. In 1209 the first stone bridge was completed, and by the end of the 18th Century it had aged to the point of replacement. After a design competition by the city, Scottish engineer John Rennie was retained to design the replacement bridge, an immense stone arch structure with the longest span extending some 130 feet. The first stone on the new bridge was laid ceremoniously on June 15, 1825, and the structure was completed seven years later by Rennie's son after the father's death. The five-span arch structure was formally dedicated on August 1, 1831.

By far the busiest among London's major bridges, this structure carried numerous royal events. The London Bridge withstood a terrorist bombing in 1834 and German air raids in World War I and World War II. In 1967 the City of London moved to replace the 133-year-old stone bridge, offering it for sale. What followed was one of the most bizarre episodes in world bridge history, as developer Robert P. McCulloch purchased the London Bridge for \$2.5 million and endeavored to move it to Arizona. Workers marked the individual face stones and crated and shipped them to the state, rebuilding the structure over a reinforced concrete armature in a desert community beside the Colorado River. Lacking a real river for the bridge to cross at Lake Havasu City, a decorative lagoon was dredged and filled with water. Completed in 1971, the London Bridge has since functioned as a tourist attraction and city center.

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

As a pivotal crossing of the Thames in the heart of London, the historical significance of the London Bridge can hardly be overstated. Although its present function in Lake Havasu City is substantially less important, the bridge does serve as a focal point for this thriving western Arizona community and as a well-known tourist attraction in America. Technologically, the London Bridge represented a conservative engineering approach, even for its relatively early date. Its monumental nature, however, made it a showcase of 19th century stonemasonry. The dismantling, shipping and reconstruction of the bridge in the 1960s presented a tremendous exercise in logistics and engineering. Celebrated in literature, history and song, the London Bridge is unquestionably the most famous bridge in the world. In London, it would be considered internationally significant. In Arizona, where it is a radically different setting, it is significant for different reasons.

NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATION

TECHNOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- ☐ represents the work of a master
☐ possesses high artistic values
☒ represents a type, period or method of construction

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- ☐ associated with significant persons
☒ associated with significant events or patterns
☐ contributes to historical district

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

- ☒ Criterion A
☐ Criterion B
☒ Criterion C

NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

- individually eligible ☒ yes ☐ no
 contributes to district ☐ yes ☒ no

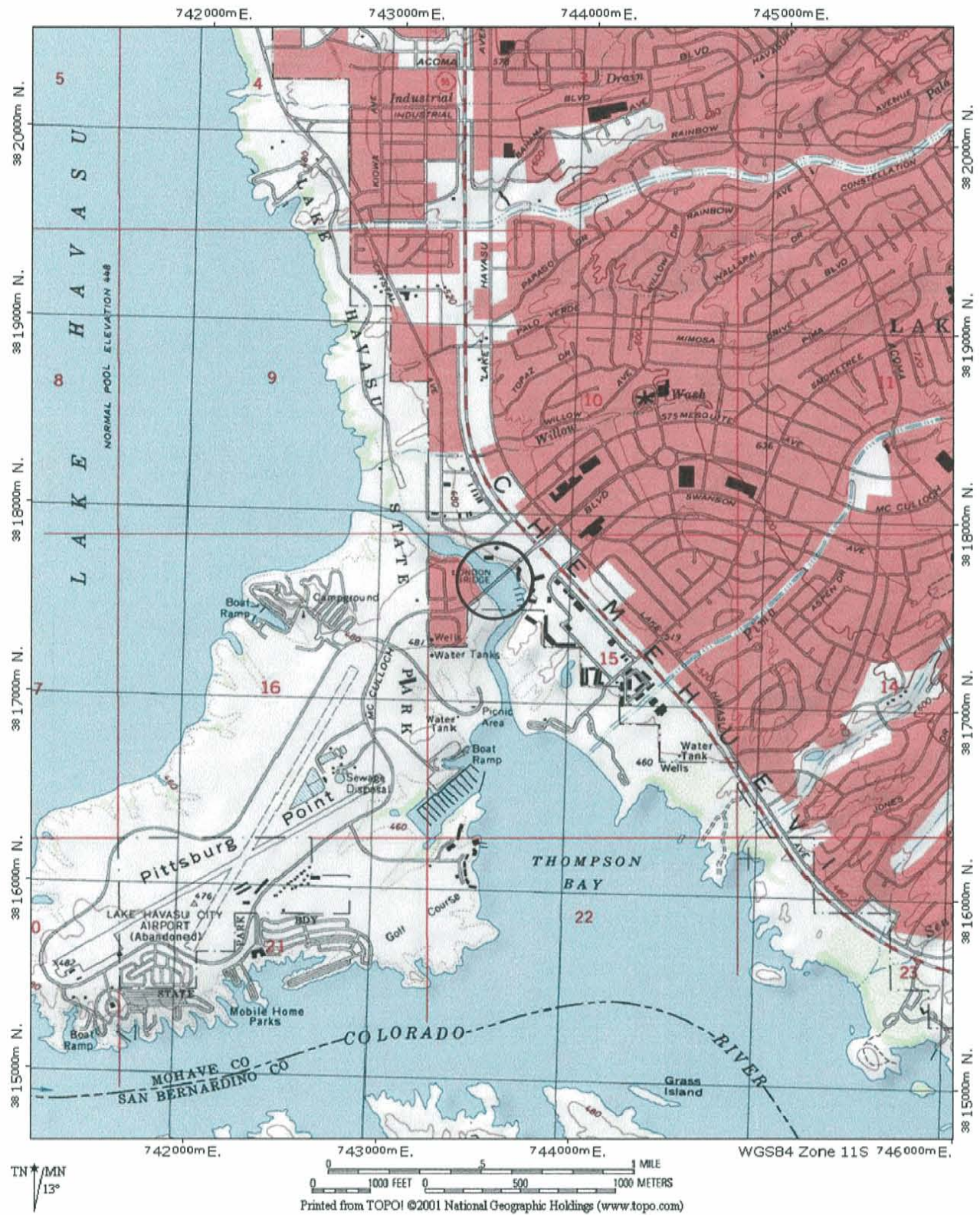
AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Transportation; Engineering

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1971

THEME(S): Transportation: Highways

LONDON BRIDGE

Structure No. 8630



Location Map