

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name McNeely Creek Bridge  
other names/site number Bridge #11054, Site #CL0957

**2. Location**

street & number County Road 12  not for publication  
city or town Beirne  vicinity  
state Arkansas code AR county Clark code 019 zip code 71721

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination   
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic  
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets   
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
 nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional  
comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined eligible for the  
National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined not eligible for the  
National Register.  
 removed from the National  
Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

McNeely Creek Bridge  
Name of Property

Clark County, Arkansas  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
1		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historic Bridges of Arkansas

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road-related(vehicular)/bridge  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road-related(vehicular)/bridge  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Warren pony-truss  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
walls N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof N/A  
other STEEL  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Levels of Significance** (local, state, national)

Local  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation  
Engineering  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1923-1954  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1923  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation** (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department

McNeely Creek Bridge  
Name of Property

Clark County, Arkansas  
County and State

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreeage of Property** Less than one.

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>480626</u> Easting	<u>3749656</u> Northing	3	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date             
street & number 1500 Tower Building telephone (501) 324-9787  
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

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## Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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## Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Clark County  
street & number Courthouse Square, 401 Clay Street telephone             
city or town Arkadelphia state AR zip code 71923

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

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## SUMMARY

The McNeely Creek Bridge is located on County Road 12 at the crossing of McNeely Creek on the western edge of the village of Beirne. Comprised of one Warren pony-truss span measuring 71 feet long, the bridge has a total length of 73 feet.

## ELABORATION

The bridge is accessed from both the northeast and southwest. The Warren truss, which was patented in 1848 by two British engineers, has diagonals that carry both compressive and tensile forces.

The McNeely Creek Bridge consists of a single Warren pony-truss span measuring 71 feet, with a total structure length of 73 feet. The travel surface and overall width of the bridge is 18 feet. The deck surface is wood over the steel truss. The abutments are concrete. Resting on top of the decking, a pair of side-by-side Warren trusses run the entire length of the bridge on the northwest and southeast sides.

## INTEGRITY

No structural alterations have been made to the bridge to compromise its integrity. Its location remains rural, and its setting remains pristine. The bridge still illustrates its original design and materials. In addition, the bridge is still in use for vehicular travel.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

### SUMMARY

Constructed in 1923, the McNeely Creek Bridge is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion C** as the best example of a Warren pony-truss in the Beirne vicinity. The bridge is also being nominated under **Criterion A** for its associations with the development of vehicular transportation in Clark County. This nomination is being submitted under the multiple property listing "Historic Bridges of Arkansas" and under associated historic context "Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department Era: 1923-1939."

### ELABORATION

Settlement in the area that is now Clark County began in 1811 in the vicinity of Arkadelphia and Okolona. In addition, Jacob and Abram Wells settled in the Hollywood vicinity in 1811 or 1812 and William Stroud also settled in the area shortly afterwards.<sup>1</sup> Settlement in the southern part of the county, however, did not occur until around the middle of the 1800s. By 1854, only one road reached into southern Clark County, and it connected Arkadelphia with Rome on the Ouachita River. Only one other settlement was present. The settlement of Beech Creek, which had a post office from 1852 until 1866, was isolated in the south-central part of the county.<sup>2</sup>

Settlement in the southern part of the county would not take off until the construction of the St. Louis & Iron Mountain railroad line southwest from Arkadelphia. The line was planned at least as early as 1872, but it would not be completed until c.1880.<sup>3</sup> After the completion of the railroad line, several communities sprouted up along its route.

One of the communities that was settled after the arrival of the railroad was Beirne, located approximately four miles southwest of Gurdon. Beirne was settled in 1880 by James Lewis Beirne, who came to the area from Grafton, Illinois, and purchased 800 acres. The following year, Beirne's daughter and son-in-law came to the community, and constructed a planing mill and store on his acreage. Also, by the end of 1880, a railroad depot had been built, since people in the Okolona area considered Beirne to be the best shipping point on the railroad.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1890, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> *Colton's railroad & township map of Arkansas*. Map. New York, D. F. Shall, 1854.

<sup>3</sup> *Maps showing Arkansas Central, the Helena & Corinth, and the Pine Bluff & Southwestern Railroads together forming the Texas & Northeastern Railway*. Map. New York: G. W. & C. B. Colton & Co., 1872, and *Map of the Richmond & Danville Railroad system in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, & Texas*. New York: G. W. & C. B. Colton & Co., 1881.

<sup>4</sup> Wendy Richter (ed.). *Clark County Arkansas: Past and Present*. Arkadelphia, AR: Clark County Historical Association, 1992, p. 244.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Only ten years after its founding, Beirne was a thriving settlement. Goodspeed's *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas* described the community in 1890 as:

Bierne [sic.], on the Iron Mountain Railroad, four miles southwest of Gurdon, contains a post-office, railroad depot, a saw-mill and planing mill, three general stores, a church and school house combined, a hotel and some other buildings. From this point to a saw-mill about four miles in a northwest direction there is a wooden tramway.<sup>5</sup>

By 1897, the community had continued to grow, and was described fairly extensively in the *Southern Standard*. The article stated:

The town is situated in a rich farming country, about 20 miles southwest from this place on the Iron Mountain Railroad. It is being settled up with a good class of emigrants from Indiana. The Yeager Bros. have just put in a [sic.] operation and have in good running order an extensive mill, and saw lumber exclusively for manufacturing all kinds of furniture, which is quite an addition to the place. F. M. White also owns a mill which is doing a good business. Our old friend A. W. Cagle has charge of the mill. Mr. White also has a neat little drug store. J. G. Clark is one of the successful and enterprising men of the place. He is not only one of the largest merchants, but a successful farmer also, and has furnished quite a number of farmers with supplies this year. This year he planted over a hundred acres of oats which will yield from 15 to 20 bushels to the acre. G. W. Cobbs & Co. do a general grocery business. The post office is located in his building and our friend Capt. J. L. Beirne, the founder of the town has been postmaster for twenty years and is still in charge. Beirne has a good hotel, kept by Mrs. J. D. Robertson. There are two churches, Methodist and Baptist, with good memberships. The public school is in charge of Miss Daisy Johnson, of this city. She has about forty pupils, and her patrons are highly pleased with her.<sup>6</sup>

Today, Beirne is still a small community and the major industry remains the lumber mill just to the northwest of town.

It is unknown when County Road 12 was constructed, but it is likely that it was built in conjunction with or shortly after the construction of the railroad line in the late 1870s. This is based upon the fact that it follows

<sup>5</sup> *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*, p. 121.

<sup>6</sup> Richter, pp. 244-245.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

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the railroad line from Gurdon, four miles to the northeast to a point 2.5 miles to the southwest of Beirne. It is also likely that the road was the main highway through the area before the construction of U.S. 67 southwest of Gurdon.

The current McNeely Creek Bridge was built in 1923 by an unknown builder. It is likely that the current bridge was not the first one at the site, especially if County Road 12 was the main highway in the area and built in the late nineteenth-century. It is likely that the current bridge was built to carry the heavier loads that the growth of the automobile in the first part of the twentieth-century would have needed. By 1931, the current U.S. 67 had been built in that part of Clark County, and by 1936 County Road 12 was a “metal surfaced” road, according to the *General Highway and Transportation Map, Clark County, Arkansas*.<sup>7</sup> (In this case, metal refers to a nineteenth-century British term for broken stone or cinders used in making or repairing roads.)

Today, County Road 12 remains a gravel road, used mainly by the local residents of Beirne. Since it was built in 1923, the McNeely Creek Bridge has been a vital crossing on the road for the residents in the area. The McNeely Creek Bridge remains an important transportation link in the area and a good example of an early twentieth-century Warren pony truss.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1923, the McNeely Creek Bridge is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion C** as the best example of a Warren pony-truss in the Beirne vicinity. The bridge is also being nominated under **Criterion A** for its associations with the development of vehicular transportation in Clark County. This nomination is being submitted under the multiple property listing “Historic Bridges of Arkansas” and under associated historic context “Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department Era: 1923-1939.”

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<sup>7</sup> Arkansas State Highway Commission. *General Highway and Transportation Map, Clark County, Arkansas*. 1936.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arkansas State Highway Commission. *General Highway and Transportation Map, Clark County, Arkansas*. 1936.

*Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1890.

*Colton's railroad & township map of Arkansas*. Map. New York, D. F. Shall, 1854.

*Map of the Richmond & Danville Railroad system in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, & Texas*. New York: G. W. & C. B. Colton & Co., 1881.

*Maps showing Arkansas Central, the Helena & Corinth, and the Pine Bluff & Southwestern Railroads together forming the Texas & Northeastern Railway*. Map. New York: G.W. & C. B. Colton & Co., 1872.

Richter, Wendy (ed.). *Clark County Arkansas: Past and Present*. Arkadelphia, AR: Clark County Historical Association, 1992.

McNeely Creek Bridge

Name of Property

Clark County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

From a point on the south side of County Road 12 40 feet southwest of the southwest corner of the McNeely Creek Bridge, proceed northeasterly 165 feet, then proceed northwesterly 100 feet, then proceed southwesterly 165 feet, then proceed southeasterly 100 feet to the point of beginning.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary includes the McNeely Creek Bridge and its immediate setting.