accommodate holiday traffic the bridge opened July 1, 1926 to vehicular traffic. President Calvin Coolidge officiated at the opening.

The bridge is a wire-cable steel suspension bridge and employs with the Manhattan Bridge (another Modjeski bridge) the practical application of the “deflection theory” in its design. Ralph Modjeski (1861-1940) was chief engineer, Leon Moisseiff was design engineer and Paul Philippe Cret was the architect. The construction was by American Bridge Co. (deck and approaches), Bethlehem Steel Co. (towers), Keystone State Construction Co. (piers, anchorages and installation of cables) and American Cable Co. (manufactured the wire for the cables). This bridge spawned an era of long-span suspension bridges that lasted into the late 1930’s. The Benjamin Franklin Bridge (Delaware River Bridge) was the first of four primary bridges to eventually cross the Delaware River from the City of Philadelphia to Camden and southern New Jersey.

References:


Scope and Content Note:
Delaware River Bridge Construction Photographs (circa 1921-1926) contain 208 photographs and one fiscal report dated 1928. Each of these items relate to the Delaware River Bridge connecting Philadelphia, PA to Camden, N.J. The subjects of the photographs are various on site construction views, several artist’s renderings of the proposed bridge and some neighborhood demolition views. An annual report of 21 pages by the Joint Commissioners of the project includes statistics as to vehicular use of the finished bridge and revenue generated ending December 31, 1928.