



Delaware Valley Engineering Hall of Fame



Ralph Modjeski

Ralph Modjeski, founder of Modjeski and Masters, Inc., was born in Poland and was educated in France where he graduated in 1885 at the top of his class with a Civil Engineering degree. He first considered a career as an accomplished concert pianist before deciding that engineering would be his life work. In the early years of Ralph Modjeski's career, there were few proven rules concerning bridge engineering. Instead, engineers relied on their imagination, engineering skills and intuition. Few of the bridge pioneers had more imagination, skill, intuition, and outright courage than Ralph Modjeski.



Notable Delaware Valley Bridge Design Projects:

1921-1929 - Delaware River Bridge (now the Benjamin Franklin Bridge) between Philadelphia PA and Camden NJ for the Commonwealth of PA, New Jersey and the City of Philadelphia. He was Chief Engineer and Chairman of the Board of Engineers for this new Highway Suspension Bridge with Rapid Transit and footwalks.

1927-1929 - Tacony-Palmyra Bridge over the Delaware River, between Tacony (Philadelphia) PA and Palmyra NJ, for the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge Company. He was the Highway Bridge Chief Engineer (In Partnership with F.M. Masters and C.E. Chase).

1927-1932 - Henry Avenue Bridge over Wissahickon Creek, Lincoln Drive and Fairmount Park, for the City of Philadelphia, Department of Public Works. This Stone and Reinforced Concrete Arch Highway Bridge design included provisions for two future rapid transit tracks and was in partnership with C.E. Chase.

1927-1931 - Henry Avenue Bridge over Reading (SEPTA & CSXT) Tracks, for the City of Philadelphia, Department of Public Works. This concrete encased Steel Highway Bridge design was done in partnership with C.E. Chase.

Other Noteworthy National Projects:

1910 - McKinley Bridge over the Mississippi River, St. Louis MO, Chief Engineer

1916 - Harahan Bridge, over the Mississippi River, Memphis TN, Chief Engineer

1917 - Thames River Railroad Bridge, New London CT, Chief Engineer

1930 - Mid-Hudson Suspension Bridge over the Hudson River, Poughkeepsie NY (In Partnership with D.E. Moran)

1935 - Huey P. Long Highway and Railroad Bridge over the Mississippi River, New Orleans LA, (In Partnership with Masters and Chase)



Tacony-Palmyra Bridge (1927-1929)



*Benjamin Franklin Bridge
(1921 – 1929)*



*Henry Avenue Bridge over Wissahickon Creek
(1927 – 1932)*

Awards:

The Howard N. Potts Gold Medal - 1914
The Franklin Medal - 1922
The John Scott Medal of Philadelphia - 1924
Knight of the France Legion of Honor - 1926
The John Fritz Gold Medal - 1929
The Grand Prix Medal of Poland – 1929

A Partial List of Professional Affiliations:

American Association for the Advancement of Science - Fellow
American Railway Engineering Association - Charter Member
American Society Civil Engineers - Member and Past Director
American Society for Testing Materials - Member
Art Institute of Chicago - Life Member
Chi Epsilon Fraternity (Illinois Chapter) - Honorary Member
Engineers Club of Philadelphia - Honorary Member
The Franklin Institute of the State of Pennsylvania - Honorary Member



*Mid-Hudson Bridge Dedication
Pictured, L-R: FS Green, Eleanor Roosevelt,
Ralph Modjeski & D.E. Mora*

Honorary “Doctor of Engineering” Degrees:

University of Illinois - 1911
Pennsylvania Military College (Widener University) - 1927
Polytechnic Institute of Lwow, Poland – 1931

Relevant Biographical References:

Now available, the biographical book: *A Man Who Spanned Two Eras*. This is the story of Ralph Modjeski published by the Philadelphia Chapter of the Kosciuszko Foundation. This book is a translation in an American edition of Prof. Jozef Glomb's book *Czlowiek z pogranicza epok*. To purchase this biography, visit:

http://www.poles.org/DB/M_names/Modjeski_R/Modjeski_Book.html

Income from book sales benefits The Kosciuszko Foundation. For information about Kosciuszko Foundation scholarship programs find their site on the internet: www.thekf.org