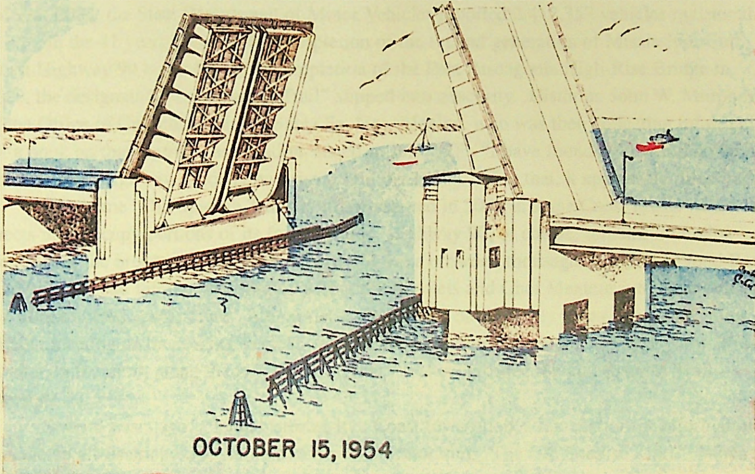


# PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI

SINGING RIVER COUNTRY



*Artwork of the 1954 East Pascagoula River Bridge kept by Susan (Ford) Robertson as a memento of that day. Photo courtesy of Susan (Ford) Robertson.*

Howard Avenue to the beach.

Roderick Seal and his Harrison County “holes to holes and home for dinner” road workers of 1876 would be amazed at what they set in motion. In 2003, 86 years after they began laying out a sandy track across Harrison County, a great paved highway runs the 140 miles between Mobile and New Orleans. Every water crossing on the Mississippi Gulf Coast (the Pascagoula estuary, Back Bay Biloxi, Biloxi Bay, and the Bay of St. Louis) has been spanned twice. [The John C. Stennis/A.J. “Tony” Creel Parkway Bridge over Back Bay Biloxi, which opened on February 20, 1988, was never on Highway 90, and is therefore not included in this study.]

The first of a third generation of Mississippi Gulf Coast Highway 90 bridges is slated to be dedicated on August 29, 2003. The East Pascagoula High-Rise Bridge, built at a cost of \$48 million, is 3,379 feet long, and boasts eight traffic lanes. The bridge is 137 feet wide (the widest in Mississippi), and its center span stands 80 feet above the East Pascagoula River, thus eliminating the need for a draw.

At 2 p.m., Friday, May 2, 2003, U. S. Senator Trent Lott and Mississippi Department of Transportation Southern District Commissioner Wayne Brown led westbound motorists in the first crossing of the bridge. The eastbound lanes opened on June 23, 2003.