

# IN ABITA SPRINGS, LOUISIANA



## Davie Shoring, Inc. Rescues Historic Hotel and Gazebo

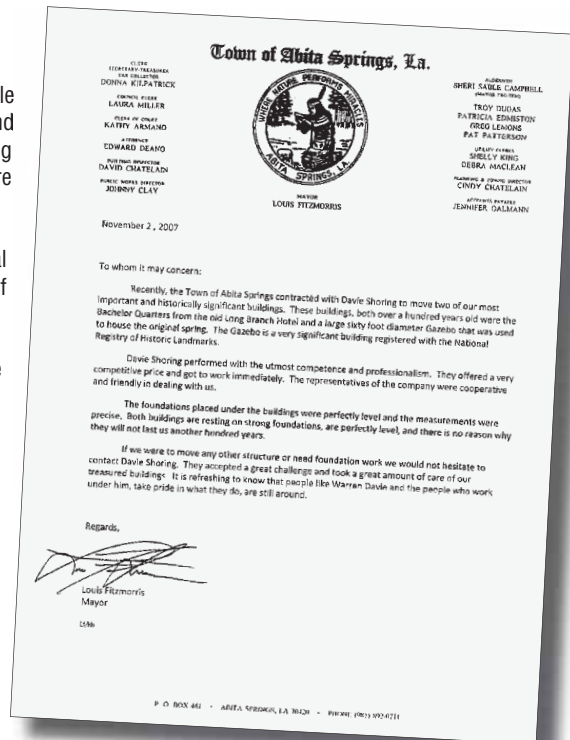
### A brief history

Historic structures contribute greatly to the lives of the citizenry where they are located. While the structures provide ambiance and pleasure to those who enjoy their presence, time and the elements are ever corrosive. Structural moving companies are the “white hats” riding to the rescue of such structures when they are threatened. IASM members, especially, are always ready to “save the day.”

Take the town of Abita Springs, Louisiana for example, when they had need of a professional structural mover to help save two historic structures that had long been a central focus of the town’s attraction for visitors.

Abita Springs is a community located near New Orleans and is recognized for its attractive historic district. Visitors and local citizens are able to enjoy shaded sidewalks, friendly restaurants, beautiful gardens, art galleries, country stores and a quaint folk art museum. Bikers walkers, joggers, skaters and horseback riders make use of the popular 31-mile Tammany Trace, a former railroad line with 31 bridges that passes through the center of this small town with a population of 3,000. Abita Springs has always been a popular destination for New Orleanians.

For more than 100 years visitors have been attracted to the cooler weather and the abundantly fresh spring water. In earlier years the visitors crossed Lake Ponchartrain by steamboat to Mandeville where they would then travel by tallyho, or streetcar, to Abita Springs. The springs were thought to have curative and medicinal properties and were much sought after in the late 1800’s.



A Gazebo was constructed as part of a State of Mississippi Exhibit in the 1884 New Orleans World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition held in what is now Audubon Park. Captain John Poitevent purchased the gazebo, had it dismantled, transported to Abita Springs where in 1888 it was reassembled over the springs near the banks of the Abita River. A fountain was installed that provided a constant flow of water to any who chose to consume. A resort community of hotels and parks was created with the Abita Springs Gazebo as the central attraction.

In January 2007 Abita Springs mayor, Louis Fitzmorris, called Davie Shoring, Inc. to inquire about saving two historical structures. One, the Bachelor's Quarters from the original Long Branch Hotel, constructed just after the end of the Civil War. Secondly, the Abita Springs Gazebo, being overtaken by the Abita River. The Gazebo was surrounded by a levee but the concern was that another flood, such as Katrina, could destroy the historic icon. Now, over 120 years later, it was necessary to relocate the structures once again.

#### Preparation

Chris Ellis, of Alpha Specialized Movers, Ltd, New Zealand, representing Davie Shoring, Inc, met with Mayor Fitzmorris and members of the city council to agree on contractual conditions. A final price of...

*To read the rest of this story and other articles in this issue of Structural Mover, contact IASM for information on Membership. Structural Mover is published by IASM for members. As a member you receive all issues of Structural Mover.*

