

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN THE REGIONS...

September 2010

A MONTHLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Old Man River

*He don't plant taters, he don't plant cotton
An' them that plants 'em is soon forgotten
But ol' man river
He just keeps rollin' along*

— "Old Man River" from the Rogers & Hammerstein musical *Showboat*

During the 1920s, many mid-westerners began to feel forgotten and stranded between two thriving coastal economies. While industries in the East and West prospered and continued to grow, aided in great part by the opening of the Panama Canal, the agriculture-and timber-based economy of the Midwest struggled under the weight of dwindling resources, skyrocketing railroad fees, and a cumbersome system of river trade.

The opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 and a 1922 Interstate Commerce Commission decision lowered the cost of intercoastal trade below the railroad rates that midwestern farmers paid to ship produce. Business leaders and politicians in the Midwest believed the Mississippi River, especially the Upper Mississippi, could serve a vital role in United States commerce. By 1930 legislation allowed for construction of a 9-foot channel consisting of a series of 24 new locks and dams running between the Upper Mississippi River in Minnesota and St. Louis, Missouri, where the Lower Mississippi began. This massive undertaking would rely on the coordination and participation of three U.S. Army Corps of Engineers districts (St. Paul, Rock Island, and St. Louis) to construct individual sections of the larger lock and dam system along the river.

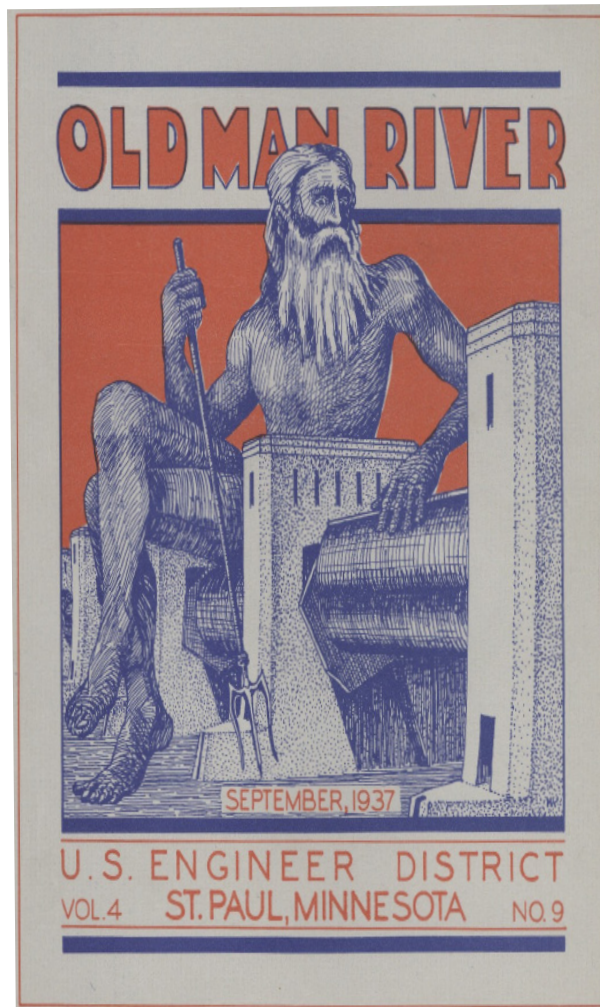
Work on the project began amidst the widespread economic depression of the early 1930s. As part of a Federal recovery plan, many unskilled laborers were afforded opportunities to join construction crews, despite the mounting safety concerns on the

part of Corps of Engineers contractors. To head off accidents and raise safety awareness, each district implemented a variety of safety regulations. Members of the St. Paul district received copies of a monthly bulletin titled "Old Man River," which conveyed progress reports, tracked accidents, suggested safety precautions, and boosted the morale of the crews who spent their days on the river. The editor of the bulletin put its purpose best, stating in the introductory remarks of the first issue, "With a humble beginning, it is planned to record along with the safety notes, the human, humorous, and interesting events revolving around the job of constructing the 'Nine-Foot Channel.'"

As projects neared completion in 1940, safety concerns remained at the forefront. Although 11 accidental deaths occurred during the duration of work, the St. Paul district was the first to complete its portion of the 9-foot channel, and economic stimulus along this section of the river was instantaneous with a more than 100-percent increase in river traffic from 1936 to 1938. The impacts of the project are still felt today as over 80 million tons of cargo is shipped annually, millions of visitors use the river for recreational purposes each year, and 200,000 acres of wildlife remain protected within a refuge created by the expanded lock and dam system.

The National Archives at Kansas City maintains these records as part of Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77. Included are the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers records for districts including Kansas City, Omaha, St. Louis, St. Paul, and the Missouri River Division. Additional information can be found in the Archival Research Catalog (ARC) by searching the phrase "Old Man River safety bulletin" or "Chief of Engineers."

Center: Front cover art displaying one of many portrayals of "Old Man River."
Record Group 77
Courtesy of National Archives at Kansas City.



NARA WestCoast September 2010

Pala Reservation. Reinforcement of first joint of caisson, ca. June 1912.
Record Group 75
Courtesy of National Archives at Seattle



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 Seattle, WA "Brick Wall" Genealogical Discussion Group 11:30 A.M. Workshop Genealogists 206-336-5115 Seattle, WA Using Footnote.com 7 P.M. Lecture/Genealogists 206-336-5115	10 San Bruno, CA Perserving Your History 9 A.M. Workshop and Tour Genealogists 650-238-3488	11 Seattle, WA Records Other Than the U.S. Census for Genealogists 7 P.M. Workshop Genealogists 206-336-5115
12	13	14	15	16	17 Chehalis, WA Genealogical Conference All-Day Information Booth Genealogists 206-336-5115	18 Chehalis, WA Genealogical Conference All-Day Information Booth Genealogists 206-336-5115
19 Denver, CO Using NARA Records for Genealogical Research 9 A.M. Workshop and Tour General Public 303-407-5849 Denver, CO Using NARA Textual Records 1 P.M. Workshop and Tour General Public 303-407-5749	20 Denver, CO Using NARA Military Records 1 P.M. Workshop General Public 303-407-5849	21	22 Denver, CO Using NARA Military Records 9 A.M. Workshop and Tour General Public 303-407-5849 Denver, CO Research in Bureau of Indian Affairs Records 1 P.M. Workshop and Tour General Public 303-407-5849	23 Denver, CO Using Passenger Lists at NARA 9 A.M. Workshop and Tour 303-407-5849	24 Sacramento, CA California Council for Higher Education Conference 9 A.M. Information Booth K-12 Teachers 650-238-3478 Sacramento, CA California Council for Higher Education Conference Workshop: A California Fugitive Slave Case 4 P.M. K-12 Teachers 650-238-3478	25 Sacramento, CA California Council for Higher Education Conference 9 A.M. Information Booth K-12 Teachers 650-238-3478
26	27	28	29	30 Anchorage, AK Exhibit at U.S. Citizen Ceremony Information Booth General Public 907-261-7800		

The National Archives at

Riverside
951-956-2000
riverside.archives@nara.gov

San Francisco
650-238-3501
sanbruno.archives@nara.gov

Denver
303-407-5740
denver.archives@nara.gov

Seattle
206-336-5115
seattle.archives@nara.gov

Anchorage
907-261-7800
alaska.archives@nara.gov



NARA EastCoast September 2010

Norris Dam during Regatta on Labor Day, 1939.
Record Group 142
Courtesy of National Archives at Atlanta



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1		2	3
Exhibit: Boston, MA "Photographs from the National Youth Administration, 1935-1943" Ongoing					Philadelphia, PA First Friday Genealogy Open House Noon Genealogists 215-606-0100	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Exhibit: Philadelphia, PA "Stand Up and Be Counted!" Ongoing						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		New York, NY Finding Family: Introduction to Genealogy 12:30 P.M. Workshop and tour General Public 866-840-1752	Lenox, MA Beginning Your Genealogy at NARA 2 P.M. Lecture General Public 413-236-3600 <hr/> Morrow, GA Home School History 10 A.M. Lecture K-12 Students 770-968-2530	Ellis Island, NY Family History Game Show 1 P.M. General Public 866-840-1752	Federal Hall, NY New York's National Treasures Noon General Public 866-840-1752 <hr/> Waltham, MA Know the Constitution 10 A.M. Workshop Federal Employees 866-406-2379	Williamstown, MA Life In the Past Lane VII 8:30 A.M. Conference Genealogists 413-236-3604 <hr/> Morrow, GA Ancestry Day 9 A.M. Workshop Genealogists 770-968-2555
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Exhibit: New York City, NY "The Ringling Bros and Barnum Go to Court" Ongoing			Waltham, MA We The People 9 A.M. Workshop and tour K-12 Teachers 866-406-2379			Morrow, GA Genealogical Society of Clayton and Henry Counties 9:30 A.M. Workshop Genealogists 770-968-2555 <hr/> Salisbury, CT Genealogy on the Internet 10 A.M. Lecture Genealogists 413-236-3604
26	27	28	29	30		
		Lancaster County, PA Willow Street Retirement Community All Day Information Booth Genealogists 215-606-0108				Buck's County, PA Hidden Treasures at the National Archives Genealogists 800-236-2825 <hr/> Morrow, GA Afro American Historical Society 11 A.M. Public Reading General Public 770-968-2555

The National Archives at

Pittsfield
413-236-3600
pittsfield.archives@nara.gov

Boston
866-406-2379
waltham.archives@nara.gov

New York City
866-840-1752
newyork.archives@nara.gov

Philadelphia
215-606-0100
philadelphia.archives@nara.gov

Atlanta
770-968-2100
atlanta.archives@nara.gov



NARA Midwest September 2010

Albuquerque Indian School, female students participating in a festival, ca. 1912.
Record Group 75
Courtesy of National Archives at Denver



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
Exhibit: Kansas City, MO "Partisan Pieces: Quilts from Political and Patriotic Persuasion" 7/1-10/1/10						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Exhibit: Gladstone, MO "Nothing for Something: Oscar Hartzell and the Sir Francis Drake Estate Con" 7/1-10/1/10				Kansas City, MO Lincoln in the National Archives 6 P.M. Lecture General Public 816-268-8000	Kansas City, MO Military Records at the National Archives 10 A.M. Workshop Genealogists 816-268-8000	Kansas City, MO Indian Boarding Schools 10 A.M. Workshop Genealogists 816-268-8000
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Exhibit: Excelsior Springs, MO "Nothing for Something: Oscar Hartzell and the Sir Francis Drake Estate Con" 7/17-10/31/10			Rapid City, SD Building an Exhibits Program from Scratch Noon Lecture General Public 816-268-8000	Rapid City, SD Designing Temporary Exhibits and Exhibits Without Objections Lecture 816-268-8000	Kansas City, MO Searching Ancestry.com 10 A.M. Workshop Genealogists 816-268-8000	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Exhibit: Chicago, IL "Becoming American: Immigrants, the Federal Courts in Chicago, and the Expansion of Citizenship, 1872-1991" Ongoing				Kansas City, MO Lincoln and Kansas 6 P.M. Author Event Book Lecture 816-268-8000	Kansas City, MO Indian Boarding Schools 10 A.M. Workshop Genealogists 816-268-8000	Overland Park, KS Military Records at the National Archives 10 A.M. Workshop Genealogists 816-268-8000
26	27	28	29	30		
Exhibit: Chicago, IL "James B. Parsons: More Than a Judge" Ongoing			Kansas City, MO Basic Genealogy:101 10 A.M. Workshop Genealogists 816-268-8000	Exhibit: Kansas, MO "Abraham Lincoln: Self-Made in America" 8/27-9/24/10 "Abraham Lincoln: Lincoln Lives On" 8/27-10/30/10		

The National Archives at

Chicago
773-948-9001
chicago.archives@nara.gov

Kansas City
816-268-8000
kansascity.archives@nara.gov

St. Louis
314-801-0850
Archival Programs Division

Fort Worth
817-831-5620
ftworth.archives@nara.gov