



2005-2006

October Meeting Notice

Minnesota Geotechnical Society

SAVING ST. ANTHONY FALLS

John O. Anfinson, PhD, National Park Service, St. Paul, MN

On the morning of October 4, 1869, workers discovered water leaking and then pouring into the upper end of their 2,000-foot long tunnel below the Mississippi River at St. Anthony Falls. They had been digging a six-foot by six-foot tunnel through a deep sandstone formation that underlay the shale, limestone and river above. The water quickly ate away the soft sandstone walls. Within hours, the tunnel grew into a cavern up to 90 feet wide and 16½ feet deep. Though hard and thick, the limestone roof collapsed. A large whirlpool formed, sucking in everything nearby and spitting it out the tunnel's mouth, just below the falls.

After furious efforts by the millers and city to repair the damage, the Corps of Engineers discovered that St. Anthony Falls was only one tick of the geologic clock from vanishing. So between 1874 and 1876, the Corps built a 40-foot high, 6-foot wide wall under the river, from one bank to the other. This presentation looks at the events that nearly destroyed the river's only major cataract and the effort by the St. Paul District to save the falls and the flour and timber milling industries that depended upon it.

Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2005
Location: Big City Tavern & Banquet Center
2801 Snelling Ave
Roseville, MN

Time: 6:00 Social Hour
7:00 Dinner – Salad, Rolls, Coffee/Soda and a choice of:
1. Pan Seared Walleye
2. Pasta Pomodoro
3. Lemon Chicken Florentine
4. Roasted Pork Loin

8:00 Presentation – John O. Anfinson, National Park Service

(One professional development hour toward continuing education requirements for Professional Engineers is available).

Cost: \$25.00 members, \$30.00 non-members, and \$5.00 Full-time students, payable to MGS at the door.

Reservations: Requested by 12 Noon, Friday, October 7, 2005.

Please register via the website at <http://www.mngeotechnicalsociety.com/eventsmpls.asp> or call Greg Norris to indicate your dinner selection. Greg may be reached by phone: (763) 428-2242 or fax: (763) 428-8348

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