

## CHAPTER SIX

### Cultural Resources and History

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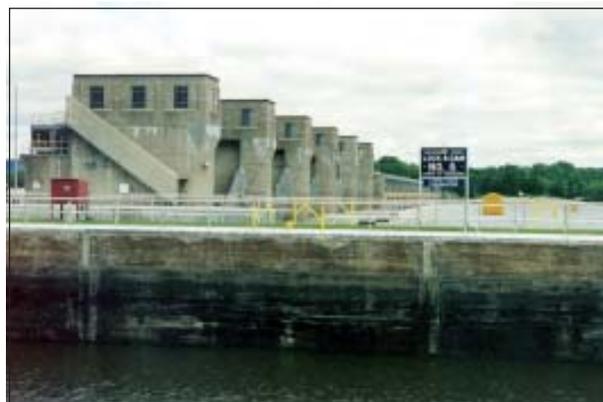
For most of its history, the Corps of Engineers has provided flood protection and facilitated navigation. Along with these and other important functions, the organization, in company with the rest of the federal government, initiated cultural resource management programs in the late twentieth century. Although still embryonic in the mid-1970s, this duty had matured by the twenty-first century and had become vital to the Corps' public interaction even though it was not one of the Corps' defined missions. Mandated by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the cultural resource management function included assessing the effects of Corps' undertakings on historic properties and interacting with Native American tribes to preserve their resources. Along with its cultural resource management responsibilities, the St. Paul District also implemented an active program to discover, protect and explain the Corps' own history. Although the historical program is not considered part of the Corps' cultural resource management responsibilities, both functions served a major role in "educat[ing] the public about Corps' history and its mission."<sup>1</sup>

#### Cultural Resources

The Bureau of Reclamation has defined cultural resources as "the physical remains of a people's way of life that archaeologists and historians study to try to interpret how people lived."<sup>2</sup> The St. Paul District's cultural resource management section, which included the position of district historian, described the term more expansively, stating that cultural resources consisted of "everything from prehistoric archeological sites to historic buildings, from historic engineering structures to historic documents and oral records of past events."<sup>3</sup> Because of the insight these materials provided to the past, they facilitated a comprehension of other cultures, as well as an understanding, of architecture and engineering.<sup>4</sup> By preserving both prehistoric and historic cultural resources and by providing means of interpreting them for the public, the St. Paul District's archeologists and historians made the past come alive.

In the early 1900s, individuals in the United States became aware of the need to protect the unique cultural resources that the nation had. Accordingly, the 1906 Antiquities Act and the 1935 Historic Sites Act provided a measure of protection for historic and prehistoric resources. The St. Paul District initially worked to excavate archeological resources by cooperating with the National Park Service under the Inter-Agency Archeological Salvage Program. By the 1960s, the recreation section in the Planning Branch coordinated these activities, which were almost always subcontracted to private organizations.<sup>5</sup> In 1966, the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act ushered in a new era of preservation by making the federal government an active participant.

The law created three major elements to help government agencies implement preservation practices. First, it established the National Register of Historic Places to list all “districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture.” Second, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act required the heads of any federal or federally assisted project to “take into account” the effects of undertakings “on any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register.” Third, it created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and authorized it and State Historic Preservation Offices to oversee the Section 106 process and the National Register in a federal-state partnership.<sup>6</sup> These provisions meant that whenever the Corps began an undertaking, it had to investigate what prehistoric or historic resources would be affected, and then consult with State Historic Preservation Offices, or SHPOs, and the Advisory Council on how to avoid or mitigate the consequences.



**Lock and Dam 5: The locks and dams built by the Corps of Engineers are cultural resources. They are valued for their historic significance, as well as their navigational function. (Photo courtesy St. Paul District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)**

### ***Preserving Cultural Resources***

In order to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act, Corps’ districts began hiring archeologists to conduct the necessary research. In 1970, Tulsa District became one of the first districts with a full-time archeologist, and in the mid-1970s, the St. Paul District followed Tulsa’s lead by hiring Dan Bowman as its first full-time, permanent archeologist.<sup>7</sup> Bowman only stayed a couple of years; and in 1978, the district hired David Berwick as archeologist. Berwick, together with John O. Anfinson, a historian first employed by the district in 1980, became the backbone of St. Paul’s cultural resource management program, which fell under the jurisdiction of the Environmental Resources Branch. As Robert F. Post, chief of the branch from 1974 to 1982 related, Berwick and Anfinson “were largely responsible for establishing the outstanding foundation of the CRM [cultural resource management] program the district has today.”<sup>8</sup>

From the beginning, the main responsibility of the cultural resource management unit was the coordination of the Section 106 process with civil works projects. To streamline Section 106 implementation, the Advisory Council developed regulations explaining what agencies had to do to comply with the law. Under these regulations (36 CFR Part 800), the council mandated that when a federal undertaking occurred, the responsible agency had to consult with the SHPO to determine what properties listed in or eligible for the National Register would be affected. The

agency also had to confer with public and private organizations, local governments, Native Americans and others who might know about potential resources and would have to conduct literature searches and field surveys as well. Once the resources had been identified, the agency and the SHPO determined the undertaking's effects. If the two agreed there were no adverse effects, the project could continue. If adverse effects existed, the two had to develop ways to avoid or mitigate them and then sign a memorandum of agreement or a programmatic agreement, depending on the complexity of the project, outlining these methods. In cases of dispute between the agency and the SHPO, the council mediated.<sup>9</sup> In order to fund these necessary functions, Congress passed the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act in May 1974 (also known as the Moss-Bennett Act), permitting federal agencies to spend up to one percent of project funding to recover historic and archeological resources. Robert M. Vogel, the head of the Smithsonian Institution's Science and Technology Department, believed this law allowed the Corps to expand its cultural resource management efforts, transforming its historic preservation reputation from one "so rotten it had no way to go but up" to one "ever so much better."<sup>10</sup>



**Brad Johnson, archaeologist, displays a prehistoric pottery shard from a site at Sandy Lake Recreation Area. (Photo by Mark Davidson, courtesy of St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers)**

With Moss-Bennett funds in place, Corps' cultural resource management units followed the Section 106 regulations. According to Berwick, the St. Paul District used several factors to determine a site's significance, including the potential for scientific information and "engineering features, architectural styles, or an association with an important event, era, or person." If the Corps and the SHPO determined that resources were eligible for the National Register and that the project would adversely affect them, the cultural resource management staff took efforts to diminish the effects. With archeological sites, such mitigation usually took the form of excavation. Fortunately, Berwick explained, "The St. Paul District does not do a lot of excavation work, because we have a good track record in avoiding as many sites as possible."<sup>11</sup> Such avoidance was not easy, however, especially since humans naturally tend to live near water, meaning that some areas under the district's jurisdiction had had human habitation for at least twelve thousand years.<sup>12</sup> At Lake Ashtabula, a reservoir created by the Corps' construction of Baldhill Dam a few miles north of Valley City, North Dakota, surveys recorded thirty-seven prehistoric and historic archeological sites ranging from burial mounds and bison processing areas to homestead dug-

outs.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, investigations in the 1990s at Grand Forks, North Dakota, and East Grand Forks, Minnesota, located nine historic or prehistoric archeological sites in the Red River Valley.<sup>14</sup>

When large acreage surveys or site excavations were necessary, the cultural resources management staff hired archeological contractors to perform the work. Prior to the passage of a federal regulation in 1990 entitled “Curation of Federally Owned and Administered Archeological Collections” (36 CFR Part 79), these contractors would often curate the artifacts recovered from the fieldwork. In 1994, the Corps designated the St. Louis District as the Mandatory Center of Expertise for the Curation and Management of Archaeological Collections to help districts establish formal curation agreements with state historical societies and universities whose storage facilities met the requirements of regulations. However, the curation center mainly concentrated on complying with the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (see below) and provided little help or funding for curation. This forced the St. Paul District to continue to rely on contractor storage of artifacts from pre-1990 fieldwork.<sup>15</sup> This method of curation created some problems, including the scattering of collections across North Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin. In addition, small cultural resources management contractors sometimes went out of business before artifacts were curated at appropriate facilities, and a backlog of material began to accumulate in boxes outside of the district’s cultural resource management cubicles. Because of these problems, Virginia Gnabasik, a senior archeologist for the district, considered effective storage and curation of archeological collections as one of the crucial funding issues that the Corps needed to address.<sup>16</sup>



**Lake Ashtabula and Baldhill Dam: The Corps excavated thirty-seven prehistoric sites prior to filling the reservoir. (Photo courtesy of St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers)**

If the affected resources were historical rather than archeological, such as individual buildings, housing districts or other edifices, the Corps implemented other methods to avoid harm. In 1998, for example, the St. Paul District determined that the area of the flood control project at Grand Forks/East Grand Forks contained more than a hundred properties either listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. In order to alleviate the effects on these structures, the district entered into a programmatic agreement with the Advisory Council, the North Dakota SHPO and the Minnesota SHPO, stating that the Corps would “to the extent feasible, avoid historic properties either through project design changes, use of temporary fences or barricades during construction, realignments, landscaping, or other measures.”<sup>17</sup> In accordance with the agreement, the district employed innovations, such as mechanically stabilized earthwalls and invisible floodwalls, which, in the words of technical manager Edward McNally, “save[d] a number of areas that probably would have been impacted with our initial alignments.”<sup>18</sup>

In other cases, the Corps could not preserve the structures. In 1983, the St. Paul District confronted five dangerous bridges on the Kickapoo River between Rockton, Wisconsin, and La Farge, Wisconsin, on State Highway 131. Two of the bridges were eligible for the National Register because they were the only two pre-1936 Warren Through Truss bridges left in Wisconsin, but safety issues forced the Corps to take drastic measures. Initially, the district tried to close off the bridges through gates and dirt mounds, but people used cutting torches to remove the gates and maneuvered around the dirt, forcing the district to remove the structures. In order to alleviate the effects of removal, the district documented and photographed the structures. In this case, public safety took precedence over historical value.<sup>19</sup>

Because of the numerous historic and archeological resources in the St. Paul District, the cultural resource management unit and the Corps implemented additional preservation policies. Several operational management plans counseled Corps’ resource managers, rangers and project personnel to “be aware of the documented archeological and historic/architectural sites around the project” and to report “any suspicious activities near or acts of vandalism at recorded sites.” The Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 levied fines of up to \$10,000 and imprisonment for up to one year for illegally removing artifacts from federal lands, and the cultural resource management staff asked Corps’ personnel to enforce this law at all times. In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, the Corps also restricted information regarding the location and character of significant cultural resources to prevent vandalism and removal.<sup>20</sup>

## **Native American Relations**

Congress amended the National Historic Preservation Act in 1992 to provide more fully for the preservation of Native American sites and properties. Among the amendments were provisions clarifying that properties containing religious or cultural significance to Indian tribes or Native Hawaiians were eligible for the National Register. The amendments also granted “con-



**Archaeological site: (Left to right) Allen Westover, Corps' archaeologist; Jim Zorn, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission attorney; Christine Harrison, principal investigator, Archaeological Resource Services; Jeff Steere, Sandy Lake operations manager; and Terry Ladd, Sandy Lake park ranger. (Photo courtesy of Brad Johnson, St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers)**

sulting party” status to tribes in the Section 106 process by authorizing them to assume SHPO responsibilities if they developed their own cultural resource management programs.<sup>21</sup> According to Virginia Gnabasik, these amendments increased district interaction with tribes, especially after five groups – the Leech Lake Band and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe in Minnesota, the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa in North Dakota and the Ho-Chunk and Menominee in Wisconsin – assumed the Section 106 functions of the SHPO and appointed tribal historic preservation officers. In most cases, Section 106 coordination with tribes started with sending a formal letter notifying each tribe of possible religious and cultural resources in a project area and then consulting with the tribe if it expressed an interest. Although the Corps had to contact every affected tribe, regardless of whether or not it had a cultural resource management component, tribes with cultural resource management programs, Gnabasik explained, were “easier to work with” because they had “a point of contact” with a knowledge of the Section 106 process. These developments enabled the St. Paul district to develop good working relationships with the tribes.<sup>22</sup>

### ***Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act***

Another law, passed in 1990, mandated Corps' interaction with tribes. For many years, removing Native American remains and funerary objects from the earth was a common practice in the United States, and many of these objects made their way to museums and other repositories. In the 1980s, numerous tribes and other organizations lobbied Congress to stop this desecration and to return collected remains to their rightful owners. In response, Congress passed the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act on November 16, 1990. The act provided that, when Native American human remains or funerary objects were found on federal or tribal lands, they be returned to the tribe that had the "closest cultural affiliation with such remains or objects." In addition, the law established penalties for violations and required federal agencies and museums to inventory their collections and return any remains or objects to pertinent tribes.<sup>23</sup> This meant the St. Paul District had to examine any human remains or funerary items excavated under the Corps' authority and make the necessary returns.

Sissel Johannessen, a district archeologist, took charge of this effort, which was funded by the center of expertise in St. Louis. According to Johannessen, the district followed certain steps in its Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act compliance. First, district staff mapped the boundaries of fee title land for each water resource project. Second, they examined all of the cultural resource investigations that had taken place on that land, scrutinizing the reports for any artifacts that could possibly fit Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act criteria. Third, the staff contacted whatever curation facilities housed the relevant items in order to inspect them and also collected additional information about the materials. Fourth, archeologists developed arguments about the probable cultural affiliation of each artifact (or its lack of one) and sent a letter to each tribe with an interest in the area, explaining the findings. From all of these investigations, there were only a few instances where materials had to be returned or reburied. For example, the district gave the remains of three individuals found in eroding banks at Lake Ashtabula, North Dakota, to the North Dakota Intertribal Reinternment Committee in 1992. Likewise, items excavated in 1969 from Gull Lake in the Mississippi Headwaters, including the skeletal remains of eighteen individuals and associated funerary items, such as ceramic vessels, potsherds and stone tools, were returned to Eastern Dakota tribes in 1998. By 1999, Johannessen had finished inventorying all of the district's collections, and the surrounding tribes seemed satisfied with the district's work.<sup>24</sup>

### ***Traditional Cultural Properties***

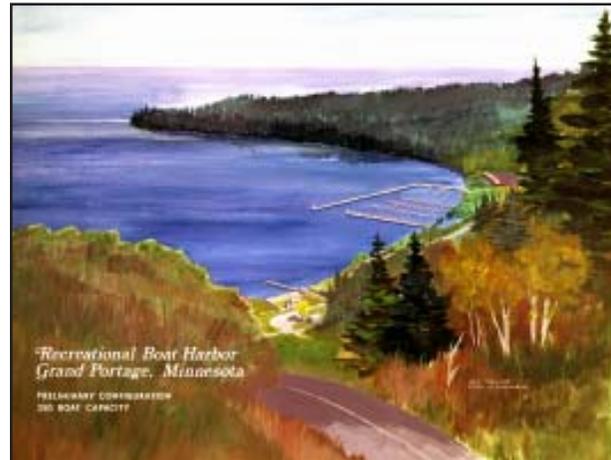
Another area that stimulated involvement with American Indians evolved in the 1990s from the concern of some historians, anthropologists and indigenous groups that properties important to a community's religious beliefs or culture were not receiving adequate protection. In 1990, the National Park Service published National Register Bulletin 38, which stated that a cultural

resource could be eligible for the National Register if it had “traditional cultural significance.” According to the bulletin, such resources, called Traditional Cultural Properties, or TCPs, consisted of any item – whether a building, a structure or a natural location – eligible for the National Register “because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that (a) are rooted in that community’s history, and (b) are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community.”<sup>25</sup>

Most TCPs the Corps and other federal agencies encountered belonged to Native Americans. Because of the different world views of Indians and Euro-Americans about these objects, tribal TCP claims sometimes led to confusion and outright disbelief on the part of the federal government. As archeologist David W.

Cushman explained, “What one group sees as vital to its cultural identity, the other often does not even recognize.” When a tribe claimed that portions of Lake Superior were important as places of religious and cultural awakening, for example, many Euro-Americans failed to understand the significance. Other problems resulted from taboos existing in many tribes to discourage the revelation of information about places of traditional cultural value, especially to outsiders. These taboos sometimes made it difficult for cultural resources management personnel to obtain the information necessary to evaluate a site’s eligibility.<sup>26</sup>

Such problems confronted district historian John Anfinson in his dealings with TCPs. In 1994, Anfinson became involved with deliberations on whether or not to approve a permit to place a 700-foot-long dock on Grand Portage Bay, located at the northeastern tip of Minnesota. The Grand Portage Band of the Chippewa Indians’ reservation surrounded the entire bay, and the tribe complained to the Corps that the dock and the accompanying boat traffic would harm the bay, which was important to the tribe’s religion and culture. According to Anfinson, “People within the district found that a hard argument to accept,” so he investigated the bay’s status as a TCP.<sup>27</sup> Anfinson interviewed seven residents of Grand Portage, both Indian and non-Indian, to explain further Chippewa’ beliefs. These discussions convinced Anfinson that the bay was “the focal point or heart of the Grand Portage Reservation.” Many of the Grand Portage Chippewa believed the bay had spirits and that a marina would force the spirits to move. “One person noted



**Grand Portage proposed small boat harbor: The Grand Portage project was cancelled when research indicated that the entire bay might qualify as a Traditional Cultural Property of the Grand Portage Band. (Illustration courtesy of St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers)**

that a mountain near the bay had been inhabited by a thunderbird spirit,” Anfinson related. “So many people had started going to the mountain that the spirit had left. This, they worry, could happen with the spirits of the bay.” Others believed the bay was a part of their soul: “to mistreat [it] could make them ill individually and as a people.”<sup>28</sup> Anfinson’s research led district officials to deny the permit; he had effectively indicated that tribal claims about the bay were not “just some spurious thing.”<sup>29</sup>

Another TCP encounter presented different problems. In 1992, a company began pulling logs off the bottom of Lake Superior at Chequamegon Bay for salvage. These logs had sunk in the 1800s on their way to sawmills during the early logging era of the Great Lakes. Because of the lake’s low oxygen content and cold temperatures, the submerged logs remained in their original condition, meaning they could be sold for as much as \$10,000 apiece. By 1997, the St. Paul District received approximately two hundred applications for permits to obtain these logs, but the Red Cliff and Bad River bands of Chippewa Indians registered their objections, stating that both the lake and the logs themselves were sacred. In this instance, Anfinson was not convinced of the tribes’ claims, mainly because many members of both bands were either Catholic or Lutheran and did not attribute any special significance to the logs. But Thomas King, an archeology and historic preservation consultant to the Advisory Council, claimed that the logs *were* TCPs, a conclusion Anfinson believed was “extremely weak.”<sup>30</sup> Ultimately, the Council decided the bay itself was a TCP, but that the sunken wood was not, although the individual logs could be part of submerged logging complexes eligible for the National Register. The district circulated this determination, stating that individuals or companies interested in logging would thereafter have to comply with special conditions in order to avoid adverse effects to the bay. According to project manager Maria T. Valencia, “This seemed to dissuade potential applicants because no further permit requests” were received after that time.<sup>31</sup> Anfinson saw this incident as “one of the classic examples of the problems of TCPs in trying to figure out what’s significant ... in a way that’s fair and true.”<sup>32</sup>

## **Appendix C and Section 106 Compliance**

TCP designations were not the only issues leading to Corps’ clashes with the Advisory Council. In 1990, a conflict developed between the two over the implementation of the Section 106 process as it applies to the Corps’ Regulatory Program. Under Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, as amended by the Clean Water Act of 1977, the Corps had the responsibility of issuing permits for any undertaking on navigable bodies of water in the United States. Because the Corps was the permitting entity, any project that required a permit became subject to the Section 106 process. Since the Corps was only serving a regulatory function and not performing the actual work, complying with Section 106 assumed different features for the regulatory branch than it did for civil works.<sup>33</sup>

These differences led the Corps to develop its own guidelines for Section 106 compliance in the permitting process. When the Advisory Council produced 36 CFR Part 800 regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, it provided that agencies could develop “alternate procedures” in place of portions of Part 800 if the procedures were consistent with the Council’s regulations. If the Council approved the “alternate procedures,” they defined the Section 106 process for the agency.<sup>34</sup> On June 29, 1990, the Corps issued its alternative as Appendix C to 33 CFR Part 325. According to one summary, Appendix C explained, “The steps the Corps follows to fulfill the requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act, other applicable historic preservation laws, and the Presidential directives as they relate to the regulatory program.”<sup>35</sup> The Advisory Council did not approve the substitute; regardless, the Corps used Appendix C after 1990 to govern its compliance with Section 106.

Few disparities existed between the Advisory Council’s regulations and Appendix C, but the discrepancies were significant. The main area of contention revolved around the differences between “Permit Area” as defined in Appendix C and the “Area of Potential Effect” as defined in 36 CFR Part 800. The “Permit Area” was the geographic area in which the project’s activities were dependent on the work or structures authorized by the Corps’ permit, including waters of the United States and upland areas.<sup>36</sup> The Council’s “Area of Potential Effect,” meanwhile, was the “geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly *or indirectly* cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties.”<sup>37</sup>

Central to this problem was the definition of undertaking and the SHPO’s perception that Corps’ regulatory involvement “federalized” an entire project. The Corps defined “undertaking” as the authorization of work or structures in the waters of the United States and not the larger project. Upland project areas could be included in the Corps’ scope of analysis if the project activities in those locations would not occur but for the authorization of the work or structures or if those upland activities were an integral part or directly related to the work or structures. If these criteria were not met, the Corps believed it lacked sufficient control over the project features to avoid their potential effects on historic properties. SHPOs generally saw this interpretation as too narrow. Regardless of the situation, both sides adhered to their different positions.<sup>38</sup>

In some circumstances, conflicts over the “Permit Area” and the Area of Potential Effect could only be resolved by litigation, but in the St. Paul District, the differences merely led to expressions of discontent. Dennis Gimmestad, the compliance officer for the Minnesota SHPO, stated that Appendix C was the biggest frustration he had with the district, especially when he had to declare the Corps out of compliance with Section 106. “It doesn’t mean necessarily I don’t think they’re doing their job,” he explained. “It’s just that I can’t concur in good conscience with what I’ve been told that I need to follow.” District personnel might believe that Gimmestad was taking a hard line, but he was only following the guidelines laid out by the Council “I can’t just

throw [the Council's regulations] out and go by [Appendix C] because I would not be doing my job," he related.<sup>39</sup> Scott Anfinson, John Anfinson's brother and a National Register archeologist with Minnesota's SHPO, agreed, but believed that district employees were caught in the same bind – if they did not interpret the permit area according to Appendix C, they were deficient in their own positions. "I think a lot of the staff over at the Corps in the cultural resources management wing is sympathetic and they want to preserve sites," Anfinson stated, but "when orders come down you obey those orders."<sup>40</sup>

In an effort to improve coordination with SHPOs, the St. Paul District assigned Brad Johnson, a district archeologist, to work with the Regulatory Branch on a one-year assignment. One important result of this endeavor was an understanding that was reached on the Permit Area/Area of Potential Effect controversy between the council, the Minnesota SHPO and the Corps during consultations pertaining to the effects of a housing development on the Rose McAllister farmstead in Chanhasen, Minnesota. In November 2002, the council essentially agreed that the Area of Potential Effect for a regulatory undertaking should be based on the effects of project activities in the permit area and that the undertaking was the authorization of the work or structures in the waters of the United States and not the larger project. The Council and the SHPO concurred that the effects to the McAllister farmstead were not the result of wetland fill or the townhouse lots dependent on that fill but resulted from the larger project development over which the Corps had little control.<sup>41</sup> Whether the council continued to interpret permit areas in this way remained to be seen, but as the McAllister farmstead incident indicates, Johnson's temporary appointment to the Regulatory Branch helped to further the working relationships between the district, the SHPO and the Advisory Council.

## **Historical Activities**

Along with its cultural resources management program, the St. Paul District also actively implemented historical activities in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Led mostly by John Anfinson, district historian from 1980 to 2000, the district worked to preserve its own past, complete environmental site histories and develop interpretive materials at district visitor centers. Although Anfinson periodically had to justify his own position and responsibilities to district officials, St. Paul established a strong historical program that effectively portrayed its past.

The district saw the value of its history even before it hired Anfinson in 1980. In the 1970s, the Corps contracted with Raymond H. Merritt, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, to compose a history of the St. Paul District from its beginnings to 1978. District personnel embraced the book after its 1979 publication, with District Engineer Colonel William W. Badger claiming that it "did a very good job of showing what the Corps does."<sup>42</sup> Despite their enthusiasm, district leaders were still uncertain about hiring a full-time historian, questioning whether or not such a position was justified. When the district engaged Anfinson's services in

1980, it actually hired him as an archeologist because he had a double major in history and anthropology. Not until 1985 did the district change his job title to historian and, even then, it did so reluctantly.<sup>43</sup>

Throughout Anfinson's tenure as a district historian, however, he gradually built up the historical program, aided by Corps' headquarters in Washington, D.C., which had a strong contingent of historians. In the 1980s, headquarters issued ER 870-1-1, outlining the responsibilities of district historical programs. According to this directive, historians should "develop in Corps' personnel knowledgeable interest and pride in the history of the Corps of Engineers," publish histories of individual district activities, prepare policy-study reports, compile research materials, preserve records, conduct oral history interviews, collect historic artifacts, support public affairs activities and provide information for visitor centers.<sup>44</sup> As part of these obligations, the St. Paul District implemented an oral history program in the 1980s, consisting of end-of-tour interviews with district engineers to provide perspectives and "lessons learned" for future commanders.<sup>45</sup> Frank "Mickey" Schubert, a member of the Corps' headquarters Office of History staff, carried out annual interviews with Colonel William W. Badger and Colonel Edward Rapp, both district engineers in St. Paul, in the early 1980s, and Anfinson assumed the responsibility thereafter, conducting end-of-tour interviews with North Central Division commanders as well.<sup>46</sup> These histories became valuable sources for information about the St. Paul District and the Corps in general. A 1991 interview with outgoing District Engineer Colonel Roger L. Baldwin, for instance, covered a "typical" day in his life, his leadership philosophies, information about Life-



**Henry P. Bosse's photo of wingdams on the Mississippi River: The Bosse collection of 136 photographs, held by the District, is a historical treasure. (Courtesy St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers)**

Cycle Project Management and explanations about cost sharing, the drought of 1988, civil works projects, regulatory issues, the International Joint Commission, congressional relations and the Corps' reorganization.<sup>47</sup>

Along with these end-of-tour interviews, the district began other projects in response to Corps' headquarters request that districts "conduct interviews with as broad a spectrum of the [district's] active and retired personnel as possible."<sup>48</sup> In 1986, the cultural resources management staff interviewed former Mississippi River headwaters employees, including dam tenders. According to Anfinson, these interviews were intended to show "how the headwater's [*sic*] staff perceived what the district office was saying and how they carried it out."<sup>49</sup> Another project involved interviewing individuals who had helped construct and operate Mississippi River Locks and Dams 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. The report on these interviews explained that they "preserve[d] important information not contained or poorly detailed in written documents."<sup>50</sup> According to Berwick, these interviews helped make "present employees proud of what the district has done in the past."<sup>51</sup>

In the 1990s, the cultural resources management unit assumed the function of completing environmental site histories, performed mostly by Jane Carroll, who worked as a second historian for the district during that decade. These studies, which included archival research, as well as site visitation, eliminated delays in civil works projects, especially the construction of urban levees. Frequently industries had operated on sites where the Corps wanted to construct a levee, and sometimes these businesses left behind contaminated soil. If the Corps did not discover the polluted areas until late in the project, it could, in the words of Anfinson, "significantly delay a project or cause an increase of costs." Carroll and Anfinson thus conducted environmental site histories in the planning process to determine where potential contaminated soils were in order to forestall any late discoveries. After Carroll left the district, Anfinson and his successor, Matthew Percy, had little time to continue such studies because of the pressing demands of other projects, so they became the responsibility of the district's Geotechnical and Geology Section.<sup>52</sup>

In addition to these responsibilities, Anfinson focused on preserving the Corps' own historic resources. In the early 1990s, the district discovered a book of rare photographs of the Mississippi River taken by Henry P. Bosse, who worked for the Corps in the late 1800s. The album, entitled *Views on the Mississippi River*, contained a hundred and thirty-six photographs showing some of the Corps' initial work on the waterway. One copy of the rare album had retrieved \$217,000 at a 1990 auction. Many believed the district's copy was worth as much as \$1.5 million.<sup>53</sup> In order to promote these photographs, Anfinson composed a brochure about them and made presentations to interested public audiences. The photographs proved to be tremendously popular, and Anfinson estimated that he lectured at least thirty times about them. In addition, the Corps itself embraced the photographs as an important resource, with officials at Corps' headquarters calling it a great treasure.<sup>54</sup> In 2003, prints of the photographs still lined the second floor corridor of the St. Paul District office, showing the importance the district placed on them.

Other Corps' resources were equally significant, especially the locks and dams under the district's jurisdiction. In the early 1980s, the district undertook an examination of each of its locks and dams to determine their hydropower potential, and, at the same time, began a major rehabilitation of these complexes, including repairing structures, installing new wiring and building new central control stations. As with all federal undertakings, these projects had to go through the Section 106 process, and the State Historic Preservation Offices in the various Upper Mississippi River states asked the Corps to determine whether the locks and dams themselves were eligible for the National Register. The district hired historian Jon Gjerde in 1983 to study the edifices, which had been built between 1932 and 1938, and Gjerde and Anfinson together determined that Locks and Dams 3 through 10 were eligible. According to Anfinson, they represented the orderly "spirit of the Progressive Era" and "the public works associated with the New Deal and Keynesian economics of Franklin D. Roosevelt." Their design also showed "both the influence of the Art Moderne movement and the austerity of the Great Depression."<sup>55</sup> But a study commissioned by the Rock Island District in the mid-1980s to evaluate Locks and Dams 11 through 22 disagreed with Gjerde's and Anfinson's assessments, stating that the structures might have local and regional significance, but they had no national importance. The study recommended that only one of the complexes be determined eligible as a representative example. After reviewing both reports, the various SHPOs agreed with Gjerde's and Anfinson's arguments and declared the locks and dams eligible for the National Register.<sup>56</sup>

When Corps' officers learned about the determination, they were not pleased, believing that eligibility would just make it harder for the agency to maintain and operate the dams. Fearing that Section 106 requirements would adversely impact operation and maintenance, the Corps, especially Rock Island and St. Louis districts, balked at complying with the decision. As Anfinson related, the determination did not "fit well with the construction-operations mentality" of the Corps.<sup>57</sup> The St. Paul District, however, was less reluctant to accept the decision, perhaps because it recognized the importance of preserving the engineering history of the locks and dams. To that end, the district entered into a contract with the National Park Service in 1986 to produce Historic American Engineering Record documentation for Locks and Dams 3 through 10. In 1990, Rock Island and St. Louis followed St. Paul's lead; and in 1992, the National Park Service issued a report on the locks and dams entitled *Gateways to Commerce: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' 9-Foot Channel Project on the Upper Mississippi River* which specifically explored the structures' engineering aspects. All of the documentation, including photographs, manuscripts and inventories, were stored in the Library of Congress in the Historic American Engineering Record archives, thereby preserving the historical record of the Nine-Foot Channel Project.<sup>58</sup>

Ultimately, the eligibility determination did increase the difficulty of lock and dam operation and maintenance. In order to preserve the structures' integrity, the Corps had to remove any "features inconsistent with the historic character of the locks and dams" when possible, in addition to consulting frequently with SHPOs to mitigate any effects that major rehabilitation efforts



**St. Anthony Falls Visitor Center: (top) A commercial pleasure boat passes the visitors center. (below) A view of the river from inside St. Anthony Falls Visitor Center. (Photos by Frank Star, courtesy of St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers)**

might have.<sup>59</sup> To ease the implementation of this increased bureaucracy, Anfinson, as head of the cultural resources management unit, argued for its “early involvement ... in all construction and maintenance projects that may potentially affect eligible properties.”<sup>60</sup> Although the determination hindered and delayed some structure rehabilitation, it helped to preserve a vital part of the Corps’ history, however reluctantly the organization agreed to this protection.

Another way the St. Paul District tried to maintain the history of the district’s locks and dams was through the establishment of visitor centers. In the 1970s, Lieutenant General John W. Morris, Chief of Engineers, initiated a program instituting local, regional and national visitor centers. Corps’ headquarters reiterated the importance of these units in the 1990s with a regulation stating that it was Corps’ policy to operate centers at water resource development projects in order to “educate and inform the public with regard to the history and mission of the Corps, its role in water resources development, the project, its purpose, benefits and costs.”<sup>61</sup> One of the earliest visitor centers in the St. Paul District was at Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, completed in 1963 at the site of the only naturally occurring waterfall on the Mississippi. The center initially was only an open overlook structure on the top of the control building. In the late 1970s, the district proposed a renovation but funding for the construction was cut in 1978.<sup>62</sup> It was not until the late 1980s and early 1990s that the Corps made a concerted effort to restructure the overlook and establish first-rate exhibits telling the story of Upper St. Anthony Falls and the Corps.

This push for an expanded visitor center occurred for a couple of reasons. First, the Corps itself requested that more time be spent on developing interpretive materials at visitor centers.<sup>63</sup> Second, in 1988 the Minnesota State Legislature created the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Interpretive Zone in the area of the lock and dam and established a Heritage Board to administer it. As part of its plans for the region, the Heritage Board proposed the development of a trail system throughout the zone that would help interpret the historic riverfront. The board proposed making the district’s Upper St. Anthony Falls Visitor Center one of the primary features of the trail. If the board implemented the trail and other interpretive features, the Corps estimated that the center’s current visitation of 30 to 40 thousand visitors annually could triple. This would necessitate an expansion in order to manage the increased visitation.<sup>64</sup>

However, the center was located within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. Because of this, as an officer at the Minnesota SHPO related, even though the lock and dam was not eligible for the National Register, the Corps still had to treat it as “a contributive element” to the historic district and prevent extensive modifications that “could have considerable impact.”<sup>65</sup> Officials and citizens concerned with historic preservation worried about the effects of the Corps’ expansion, especially given its track record in the area. When it first constructed the lock and dam in 1963, for example, the Corps altered the historic Stone Arch Bridge, built by railroad magnate James J. Hill in the 1880s, by replacing two arches and installing a steel truss bridge to accom-



**Stone Arch Bridge 1962: The Corps altering the 1880s Stone Arch Bridge in Minneapolis prior to building Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam in 1963. (Photo courtesy St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers)**

modate barges.<sup>66</sup> Although the bridge had since been recognized as a National Civil Engineering Landmark, the damage had been done. In order to ensure changes to the visitor center did not likewise disrupt the historic character of the St. Anthony Falls District, Russel Snyder, a landscape architect for the St. Paul District, and Anfinson met frequently with the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board to receive their input on the renovation designs. Among other things, the board successfully convinced Snyder and Anfinson not to block off the south windows of the observation deck for a display area, believing “the view from the observation deck was critical to interpretation of the area and the Corps’ role.”<sup>67</sup>

With the approval of the Heritage Board and the SHPO, the district completed the necessary renovations in the mid-1990s. These improvements included installing an elevator to the observation level and a rest room at the ground level to make the center more accessible for people with disabilities. At the same time, new exhibits told the story of Upper St. Anthony Falls and the

Corps' involvement there. The new displays, generated by Anfinson and John Fisher of the district's Engineering Division, explained the general history of the Corps and its missions, the general history of the St. Anthony Falls area, how the Corps preserved the falls from destruction in the late 1800s, the construction of Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam and how the lock and dam operated. In addition, an interactive kiosk allowed users to simulate the locking of a vessel and the dredging of a waterway. The Corps hoped such displays would teach the public more about the district and its activities, as well as about the history of the falls.<sup>68</sup> These improvements generated increased visitation, but some interaction was lost in September 2001, following coordinated terrorist attacks against the United States. Because of the resulting security concerns, the Corps barred any public contact with its locks and dams and shut down the Upper St. Anthony Falls Visitor Center until the middle of 2002. When the center reopened, its hours were changed from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. to 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The lock continued to follow these visitor hours in 2003, with no indication of when or if they would return to the longer hours.<sup>69</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The Upper St. Anthony Falls Visitor Center was a good example of some of the ways the St. Paul District sought to provide information about the Corps and its structures to the general public. With such activities, coupled with existing programs in oral history and environmental site histories, Anfinson built a strong district history program. Meanwhile, David Berwick and other archeologists implemented the district's cultural resources management program, including the Section 106 process for Corps' undertakings and the mediation between SHPOs and the Regulatory Branch over Appendix C. Both the history and cultural resources management components educated the public about the Corps' past and the history of the region under the St. Paul District's jurisdiction. As John Anfinson related, those personnel comprising the cultural resources management section, be they archeologists or historians, successfully explained history and prehistory to the public in a way that enabled citizens to "really use [cultural resources] and learn about them."<sup>70</sup>

## Chapter Six Endnotes

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6 Quotations from "National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended through 1992," in U.S. Department of the Interior, *Federal Historic Preservation Laws* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1993), pp. 7, 9-10, 22; see also Mike Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), p. 190.

7 Mighetto and Willingham, *Service – Tradition – Change*, pp. 33-36; Bob Post, personal communication with the authors, 6 January 2003.

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16 Gnabasik Interview, p. 9.

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18 Edward McNally interview by Matthew Godfrey, St. Paul, MN, 22 October 2002, p. 7.

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