Minneapolis celebrates 2005 “Year of Bridges”

One hundred and fifty years ago, a suspension bridge with wood towers opened for use at Hennepin Avenue from Nicoll Island to what is now the downtown side of the Mississippi River. Combined with an 1853 bridge connecting Nicollet Island to the other side of the river, this suspension bridge completed the first permanent span across the Mississippi River anywhere along its entire length.

First bridge across Mississippi, opened 1855

In the spirit of this historic milestone, the Minneapolis Riverfront District invites you to explore the many wonderful bridges in the district and to celebrate bridges — both the historical and the cultural kind! Minneapolis has more bridges across the Mississippi River than any other river community, and these bridges represent a fascinating variety of engineering types and materials.

For more information about today’s bridges, “lost bridges” no longer in existence, bridge engineering and 2005 Riverfront events: www.mrdbridges.com

So many reasons to visit the Minneapolis Riverfront District!

**History**
- Learn about Minneapolis’ birth and its history as the Flour Milling Capital of the World at the Mill City Museum, Mill Ruins Park, First Bridge Park, Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock & Dam Visitor Center, and the Federal Reserve Bank Plaza
- Explore the beautiful St. Anthony Falls Heritage Trail through its self-guided walking tour
- Visit the restored Ard Godfrey House, the oldest home in Minneapolis
- Experience the power of St. Anthony Falls from the Stone Arch Bridge

**Parks & Recreation**
- Walk, bike or blade miles of trails
- Enjoy a ride on the RiverCity Trolley, Minneapolis Queen excursion boat or in a horse-drawn carriage
- Explore the district (including its bridges) on a Segway tour
- Enjoy one of many festivals and events, including signature fireworks displays
- Relax as you admire scenic views of the downtown skyline and historic district
- Ice skate at the historic Depot Ice Rink

**Culture & Entertainment**
- Take in a movie or some live music
- Catch the latest performance at the Guthrie Lab or Theatre de la Jeune Lune
- Revel in the literary arts at the Open Book
- See cutting-edge art at the Soap Factory

**Food & Shopping**
- Savor the cuisine at our many restaurants
- Explore the fascinating stores in Northeast Minneapolis and the North Loop warehouse area

For more information
www.minneapolisriverfrontdistrict.com
(612) 673-5123

Cover photo: train crossing Stone Arch Bridge, Minnesota Historical Society
Dandelion Day  
May 15, noon to 3 p.m.  
Ard Godfrey House,  
University & Central avenues SE  
(612) 813-5319, www.ardgodfreyhouse.com
This event opens the season for the Godfrey House (oldest surviving wood frame house in Minneapolis) and celebrates Harriet Godfrey first bringing dandelion seeds to the St. Anthony Falls area in 1849.

Biking the Bridges  
June 11 and July 9, 1 p.m.  
(612) 313-7739, www.minneapolisparks.org
Explore the bridges of the Mississippi River on this leisurely two-hour guided bike tour. Meet at the Mill Ruins Park trail at the west end of the Stone Arch Bridge. FEE.

Stone Arch Festival of the Arts  
June 18 and 19, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Main Street SE, East Hennepin to Sixth Avenue  
(612) 378-1226, www.stonearchfestival.com
This annual juried art festival offers quality food and attractions, 200+ artists with art for sale, musical and theatrical performances and other highlights such as the "Art of the Classic Car" display and "Art in the Park." From the Stone Arch Bridge, you can watch the annual Stone Arch Slalom Races, (www.rapidriders.com)

Bridges of Minneapolis Walking Tour  
June 18, 1 p.m.  
Mill City Museum  
(612) 341-7555, www.millcitymuseum.org
Hike the Minneapolis riverfront and learn about the city's historic bridges in this 150th anniversary year of the very first bridge to span the Mississippi River—the 1855 suspension bridge at Hennepin Avenue. FEE. Reservations recommended.

Related Off-Site Activity  
Bridge Building Activities  
Every Saturday in June, 1 to 3 p.m.  
The Works, 5701 Normandale Road, Edina  
(952) 848-4848, www.theworks.org
Explore different kinds of bridges and make your own bridge to take home at this hands-on, minds-on museum. FEE.

Solstice River  
June 18 and 19, 8:15 p.m. sharp  
Stone Arch Bridge  
(651) 523-2591, www.cgee.hamline.edu/solstice/ 
Watch as the site explodes with dancers, colorful fabric, boats and kayaks for this site-specific performance honoring the Mississippi on the longest day of the year. New this year, Dakota community members are participating in the event planning.

Digging Under the Bridge  
June 19, 10:30 a.m. to noon; July 23, 1 to 2:30 p.m.  
(612) 313-7779, www.minneapolisparks.org
Take part in a simulated archaeological dig under the Stone Arch Bridge. Learn about the "lost" bridges of the Mill Ruins Park area. FEE. Reservations required.

Engineering the Falls: 
Walking Tour by History Player William De La Barre  
June 25, 1 p.m.  
Mill City Museum  
(612) 341-7555, www.millcitymuseum.org
Join this walking tour led by a costumed interpreter portraying William de La Barre, the Austrian engineer who spent half a century developing Minneapolis flour milling and waterpower and protecting St. Anthony Falls from destructive bridge projects. FEE. Reservations required.

Riverfront Walking Tours  
Saturdays, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., Sundays, 2 p.m.  
(July through September)  
Mill City Museum  
(612) 341-7555, www.millcitymuseum.org
Guides from Mill City Museum will lead visitors across historic bridges to learn about the dramatic past and bright future of the Minneapolis riverfront. FEE. Reservations recommended.

July Fourth Celebration  
July 4; parade at 2 p.m., fireworks at 10 p.m.  
www.minneapolisriverfront.com
Watch the neighborhood parade and enjoy fireworks over the river.

Ibaraki Day  
July 17, 2 p.m.  
Nicollet Island  
Gather at the "Bell of Two Friends" sculpture on Nicollet Island for speeches and refreshments for the 25th anniversary of the Minneapolis/Ibaraki sister city relationship—a bridge between two cultures.

Aquatennial KOOL 108 Riverblast and 
Target Fireworks Show 
July 23, 6 to 10:30 p.m., fireworks at 10 p.m.  
RiverBlast along West River Parkway, fireworks visible throughout riverfront  
(612) 376-7669, www.aquatennial.org
The annual RiverBlast extravaganza will return to the banks of the Mississippi River featuring family fun, food and live entertainment. Be sure to stay for the Target Fireworks Show—the fourth largest in the nation!

A Bridge to a Bridge  
July 31 and Aug. 28, 1 p.m.  
(612) 313-7793 www.minneapolisparks.org
Nicollet Island served as a stepping stone for the first Hennepin Avenue Bridge. Discover more about the island on this fun, informative walking tour. Meet at the Nicollet Island Pavilion. FEE.

Landmark: 24 Hours at the Stone Arch Bridge 
August 26 to 28 (sunrise to sunrise)  
www.soupfactory.org
A 24-hour public art event created for the historic St. Anthony Falls/Stone Arch Bridge area by a team of multi-disciplinary artists will feature interactive performance tours that lead audience members through surprising installations, secret videos, mill-inspired dances and live music compositions. Watch the event planning process evolve at the Soup Factory throughout May.

Holiday Open House  
December 4, noon to 3 p.m.  
Ard Godfrey House,  
University & Central avenues SE  
(612) 813-5319, www.ardgodfreyhouse.com
Come enjoy light refreshments, entertainment and tours of the oldest frame residence in Minneapolis. The house is decorated for the holidays in the modest style of the era, and children are welcome.

New Year's Eve  
December 31, 8:30 p.m.  
Fireworks over the Minneapolis Riverfront District allow families to usher in the new year and welcome the new.

Please visit www.minneapolisriverfrontdistrict.com or call (612) 673-5123 for updated and additional event information.
The Boom-Nicollet Island Pedestrian Bridge was built for rail use in about 1901 and now provides a trail connection from Nicollet Island to Boom Island, home of the Minneapolis Queen.

The Merriam Street Bridge is actually one span of an 1857 bridge originally built to cross the Mississippi at Broadway that was floated downriver 100 years later to provide a connection from Main Street and Nicollet Island.

Today the Stone Arch Bridge entices pedestrians to cross the river. You can see the abutment from the old 10th Avenue Bridge in the foreground with the east bank mills in the background.

The graceful and dramatic 2,100 foot long Stone Arch Bridge was built by James J. Hill for rail use in 1883 and now is a riverfront icon. This photo shows the construction framing to form one of the 21 arches.

The Boom-Nicollet Island Pedestrian Bridge was completed in 1918 and designed by noted Minneapolis engineer Frederick Cappelen. Here it is viewed from the west bank with the Exposition Building and flour mills in the background.
The Mill Quarter on the downtown side of the river is a new neighborhood with much to delight visitors. The Mill City Museum, built within the fire-damaged walls of the historic Washburn Crosby A Mill, offers year-round adventures, complemented by the outdoor archeology of Mill Ruins Park. The rehabilitated Milwaukee Depot complex has two hotels, a water park, historical displays in the lobby and an indoor skating rink during the colder months. And coming in 2008 — a new three-theater complex to house the renowned Guthrie Theater!

Nicollet Island played a critical role in early bridge building as a stepping stone in the middle of the Mississippi. Today, it offers restored historic homes on the north end of the island and the Nicollet Island Inn. Walk inland along East Hennepin to the charming North-east commercial area with its shops and restaurants.

The east bank area along historic Main Street originally was part of the town of St. Anthony before it merged into Minneapolis. The landmark Pillsbury milling complex soon will be redeveloped for housing and commercial use. The restaurants of St. Anthony Main and Riverplace occupy historic commercial and industrial buildings. Just up and beyond Main Street are the historic Ard Godfrey House and Our Lady of Lourdes Church.

The North Loop warehouse area mixes rehabilitated warehouse and commercial buildings with new construction in a booming new neighborhood. Treats for visitors include the Guthrie Lab, Theatre de la Jeune Lune and a variety of shops and restaurants.

**Bridges Scavenger Hunt Walking Tour Route**

Clues can be found at the __ locations on the map.

Start at the parking lot at West River Parkway just upriver from Portland and follow the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Trail counter-clockwise.

**Scavenger Hunt answer form**

1. __________
2. __________
3. __________
4. __________
5. __________
6. __________
7. __________

Take the letters in the boxes to spell out what each of the bridges did to the Mississippi:

Return these answers to the reception desk at the Mill City Museum before Labor Day to enter a prize drawing and/or return these answers to have your Mighty Mississippi Passport stamped at the Mill City Museum, Ard Godfrey House or Mill Ruins Park.

For more information about the Mighty Mississippi Passport program, visit www.mississippipassport.org.