



Clock Tower Building, Spring 2000

again proposed. This exterior work will be carried out on the clock faces, roof, stonewalls, fire escapes, downspouts, attic windows, and foundation moat. The Corps contracted an architectural conservator to conduct background research documentation and analysis on the wooden members of the four clock tower

faces, and to report upon the results and interpretation. The report documents that much of the wood, which comprises the clock faces, is original, but very decayed.

The clock face, comprised of the “stars and bars” that designate the 12 hours and the dial, is painted on stone. Over the years, the painted dial and its hourly designations have alternated between, light symbols on a dark background, or dark symbols on a light background, at least 10 times with different paint colors. Paint analysis of samples from the rock and wood revealed various shades of white, cream, gray, and black colors. An early paint sample from the “stars and bars” indicated that gilding was used for a period. In this process, thin sheets of gold foil were burnished on the stone in the shape

of the stars and bars.

The center portion of each dial is constructed of pine lumber. These circular frames house the portholes and the 12 glass windows on each face and the mounting system for turning the clock hands. The portholes light the room during the day and interior lanterns could

have illuminated the clock hands at night. Exterior electric spot lighting on the clock faces was not in place until 1934.

The architectural contractor made recommendations for restoration and repair of the clock tower faces. The preferred recommendation in the report proposed “in kind” (wood in exact dimensions) replacement of the clock faces. Wood members will replicate the existing members, except for a reduction in number of joints. This recommendation is made in light of the extensive wood deterioration of the clock faces and to reduce long-term maintenance. The metal porthole frames and glass will be reused in the newly reconstructed clock faces. An historic paint scheme will be used for the interior and exterior of the clock faces.

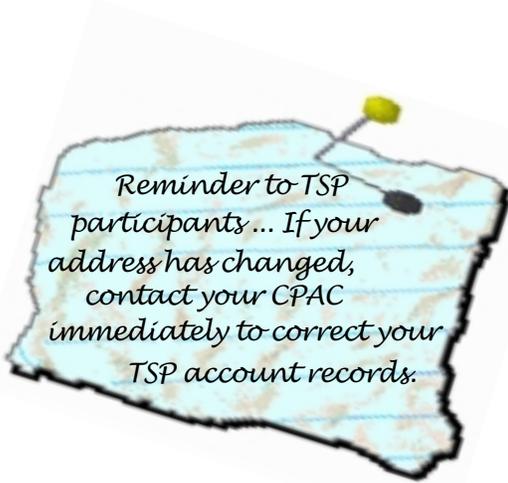
During the replacement of the wood, all sound wood members from all four faces will be salvaged and one will be reconstructed from original wood components. This reconstruction will be displayed within the tower as part of the Clock Tower’s historic corridor. As in 1988, the exterior repairs to the Clock Tower Building will ensure that the stonework and other proposed maintenance would preserve the significance of the building for another 133 years. 🏰



May 24, 2000

Low water looking northeast from Arsenal Island. After construction of the nine-foot navigation channel, the Mississippi became reliable for transportation and recreation, and created backwater ecosystem habitat. While the river still experiences fluctuations in water levels, the dams maintain pools and keep the channel at navigable depths. Here, riprap prevents shoreline erosion and a levee provides protection during high water.

Have you ever wondered what the Upper Mississippi River looked like during low water at this location before the locks and dams? Just look at this issue’s cover again. 🏰



Don't Forget About TSP

The Thrift Savings Plan Open Season recently started May 15, and will end this month July 31. This is the last chance federal employees will have this year to start contributing to TSP, if they meet the following conditions:

- Newly hired employees between July 1, 1999, through December 31, 1999.
- All Federal Employees Retirement System employees hired before July 1, 1999.
- FERS and Civil Service Retirement System and CSRS Offset employees who were rehired, had a break in service of 31 days or more and were previously eligible to participate in TSP, can elect to reenroll during this open season.
- All CSRS and CSRS Offset employees who have not had a break in service.

If a federal employee is currently participating in TSP, the employee may change the way his future contributions are invested in the three TSP funds. Elections made prior to July 1, 2000, will be effective July 2, 2000. Elections made after July 1, 2000, will be effective the following pay period.

To start or change your contributions: Call the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) at 1-877-ARMY-CTR or log onto the ABC-C web site at <http://www.abc.army.mil>.

Remember: Open Season changes only affect a federal employee's future contributions. If an employee wants to reallocate the funds in his TSP account, he must make an Inter-fund transfer by either contacting the TSP Thriftline at 502-255-8777 or by visiting their website at <http://www.tsp.gov>.

When is a PIN not a PIN?

When it's the wrong PIN. For an employee to access his TSP account and make transactions on the TSP website or the ThriftLine, he must use or have his four-digit TSP PIN. It is different from the six-digit PIN used to access the ABC-C systems. To request a lost or forgotten TSP PIN, use the TSP website at <http://www.tsp.gov/> or the ThriftLine at (504) 255-8777 to have a new PIN number mailed to you.

To change a lost or forgotten ABC-C PIN, go to <http://www.abc.army.mil/>, select Employee Benefits Information System, then "PIN" and "Forgot my PIN." An employee can also call ABC-C at 1-877-ARMY-CTR and enter an incorrect PIN three times. The system will automatically transfer the employee to a counselor who will ask him pertinent personal information, which can be found on his Leave and Earnings Statement. Upon verification, the counselor will put the employee back into the system to change his PIN.

Vicki Kohl, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, said the TSP Open Season has been going well for District employees. She also said employees should be patient.

"We need to adapt to it," said Kohl. "Accept it, we're going to use it whether we like it or not, but be patient ... this is our first season, a test season to see how it works. It's not perfect, but going better than predicted." 