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Soo open house slated Unlocking the locks

SAULT STE. MARIE — A Michigan landmark will open its doors to the public this month, when the Soo Locks hosts its annual open house — known as Engineer’s Day — on June 30.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is inviting people of all ages to come and explore the Soo Locks complex and avail themselves of the rare opportunity to walk across the Lock walls. These walls make it possible for freighters to traverse the 21-foot drop between Lake Superior and the lower Great Lakes. To obtain a real understanding of how this engineering marvel works, only a visit will do.

“The Soo Locks complex offers such a unique glimpse at both our history and our way of life,” said Linda Hoath, executive director of the Sault Convention & Visitors Bureau. “Architecture, engineering and the lore of the Great Lakes all come together in this beautiful park setting.”

Engineer’s Day festivities begin at 10 a.m., when the gates open to allow visitors across the locks and into other facilities, like the Davis Building and the Administration Building.

Visitors are welcome to stroll the park, tour the buildings and climb into observation platforms as freighters ply the waters of the St. Marys River system.

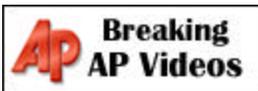
At the visitor’s center, new displays will feature shipping and history themes. “Sisters” is a display featuring those freighters constructed with the same plans and therefore considered sister ships.

“Ships of the Great Lakes” will feature historic photographs and information on ships that have sailed the lakes since the early 1800s, including whaleboats, sidewheelers, steamers with barges, wooden freighters and modern 1,000-foot freighters.

Several other new displays were developed by the Soo Locks Visitors Center Association.



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In addition to the visitors' center, other areas of the park will also feature displays of historic photographs. This year marks the 151st year the Soo Locks have operated.

The Soo Locks are located on Portage Avenue in Sault Ste. Marie, adjacent to downtown shopping, restaurants, and accommodations. The park and all facilities are open free of charge to the public and parking is located nearby.

For more information about Engineer's Day, visit www.saultstemarie.com, or call 1-800-647-2858

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