

National Great Rivers Museum Re-Opens Melvin Price Locks and Dam to Public Touring

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EAST ALTON – The US Army Corps of Engineers, Rivers Project Office, will once again open the top of Melvin Price Locks and Dam to public tours.

The National Great Rivers Museum has a long history of providing free public tours of the adjacent Melvin Price Locks and Dam. But, beginning in March of 2020, public tours were modified to stay on ground level, as the elevator ride to the top of the structure was excluded from the tour for COVID safety reasons. Now, for the first time in 20 months, the public will once again be able to view the Mississippi River and barge traffic from this one-of-a-kind vantage point while they learn about the purpose of the locks and dam systems and the importance of navigation on the river.

“This is something we are very pleased to be able to once again offer our community,” said Museum Director Allison Rhanor. “While we’ve continued to offer modified tours, being able to tour the top of Mel Price really adds to the experience we’re able to give our visitors.”

Melvin Price Locks and Dam is the last structure of its kind on the Mississippi River, as the locks and dam system ends after the Chain of Rocks canal. This, coupled with the fact that Melvin Price is the newest locks and dam on the river, makes it an ideal location to learn more about river navigation and river systems in general.

“Melvin Price tours have been a staple in our region for quite some time, so we are so excited to welcome everyone back for the full Mel Price experience. We’ve gotten a lot of phone calls asking when tours were going back up top, so as a way to say “welcome back,” we’re going to be doubling the number of tours we normally offer in a day for this Saturday, November 20th only. Six free public tours will be offered every hour on the hour between 10:00am and 3:00pm. And it looks like it will be a beautiful, mild fall day, so it will be a perfect time to swing by and get a spectacular view of the Mississippi River from the top of Melvin Price. Our Rangers are looking forward to seeing everyone.”

The National Great Rivers Museum is located at 2 Locks and Dam Way, East Alton, Illinois and is open seven days a week, excluding only Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day. Hours of operation are 9:00am to 5:00pm and public tours are offered at 10:00am, 1:00pm, and 3:00pm daily.

For more information, please call the National Great Rivers Museum at 618-462-6979.