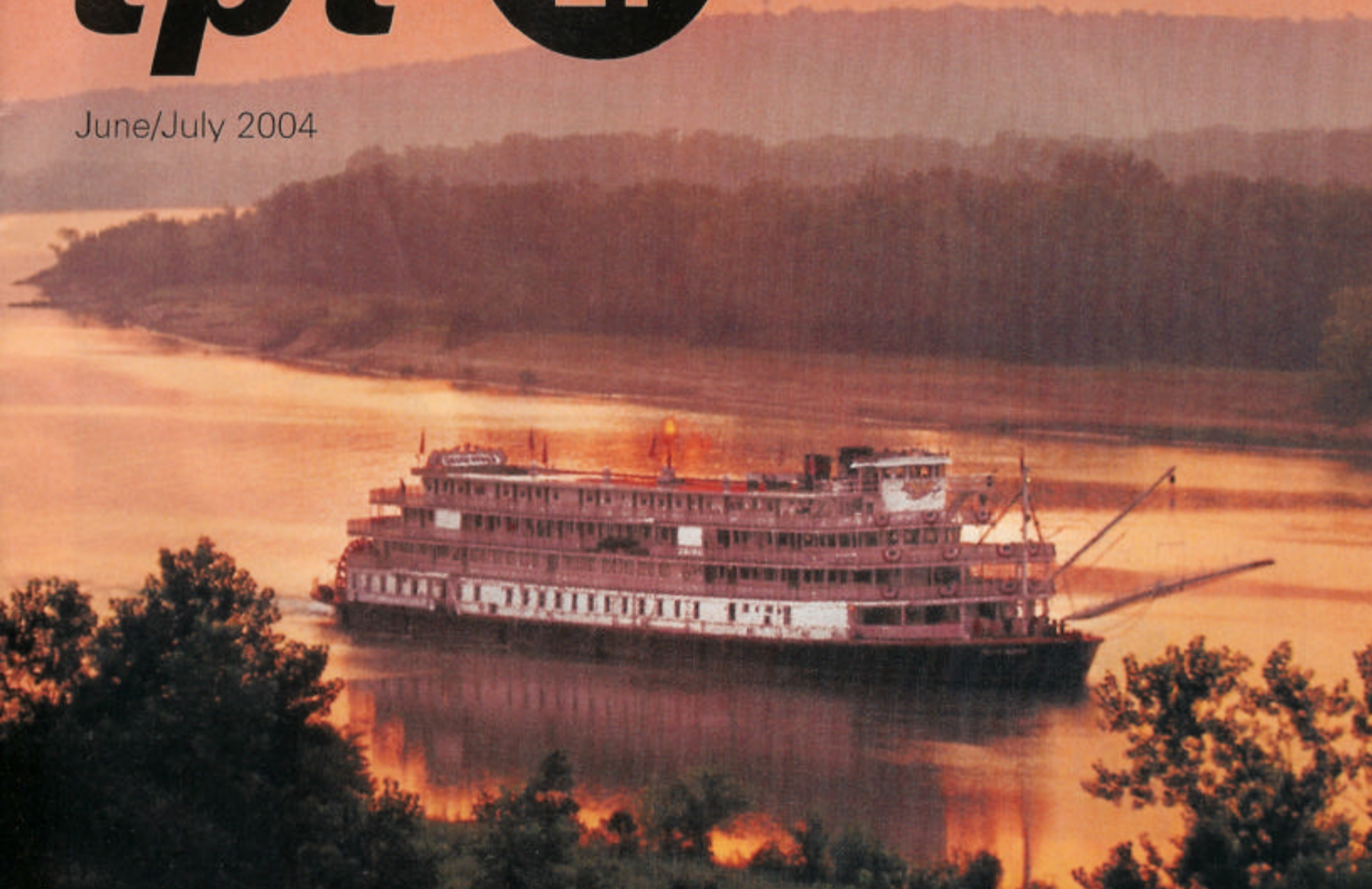




Liberty!
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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Stories
of the
Mississippi

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GRAND EXCURSION 2004™

Stories of the Mississippi present the classic and offbeat role of the river in our history and culture

Filmmaker Chuck Strinz thinks we don't fully appreciate the Mississippi River.

"If you ask any kid in America to draw a picture of the United States, they'll draw the outline of the country," he says. "If you ask a kid anywhere else in the world, they do the same thing—and then they draw a line in the middle, from top to bottom."

The Mississippi. The largest river in the United States, from its beginnings at Lake Itasca in northern Minnesota to New Orleans, where it spills into the Gulf of Mexico. The Mississippi created commerce, agriculture and culture for hundreds of miles around its banks.

This summer, the Twin Cities, along with communities in Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois, celebrate the 150th anniversary of a promotional steamboat trip led by President Millard Fillmore. The Grand Excursion 2004 re-creates Fillmore's 400-mile journey from the Quad Cities of Iowa and Illinois to the Twin Cities of Minnesota, starting in Bettendorf, Iowa, on June 25. There are celebrations and recreational, educational and cultural events in communities on both sides of the river, many continuing all summer. For information about the festival, dates of events, communities involved and ways you can take part, go to www.grandexcursion.com.

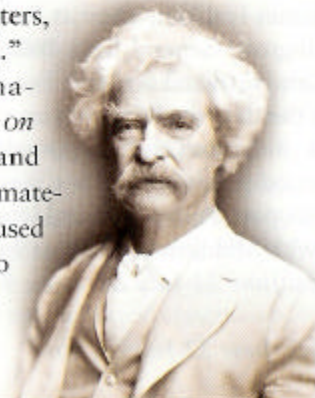
Twin Cities Public Television is airing a number of programs about the Mississippi River and its history—in-

cluding a new documentary by Chuck Strinz, *Back on the Mississippi—Hidden Trails, Offbeat Tales*. The documentary grew out of a simple driving trip Strinz made along the river in 1996. "I thought it would be fun to do a television show about it someday," he says. "Then the Grand Excursion came along and I thought this would be a good way to give it a beginning and an end."

Back on the Mississippi visits more than a dozen cities on the Upper Mississippi and finds little-known stories about the people and places along the river. It explores Buffalo Bill Cody's river roots, goes into the country's first lead mine, visits the birthplace of America's favorite water sport and shows what happens when a big rock visits a small house.

"It's a trail of discovery," says Strinz, "an offbeat trail of discovery." Kind of like the filmmaker. Strinz says the documentary he's thrown his heart and soul—and a few credit cards—into was always planned as a nonprofit project funded by underwriters, "but there are no underwriters, so it's self-funded."

For information about *Back on the Mississippi* and the educational material that can be used with it, go to www.backonthemississippi.com.



As part of its Grand Excursion programming, *tpt* is bringing back a classic, *Mark Twain Tonight!*, a one-man performance by Hal Holbrook. Holbrook has done his interpretation of Mark Twain for decades on many stages. He performed live on television only once in 1967—and the show has not been rebroadcast before now.

Twain's commentary on politics, religion, patriotism and more is amazingly contemporary, and Holbrook captures his muse's humor and irreverence. With *Mark Twain Tonight!*, *tpt* also rebroadcasts an interview of Hal Holbrook—as Mark Twain—with Bill Moyers, and the two-part *Ken Burns American Stories/Mark Twain*.

Other river-related programming in June includes *The Main Stream*, an unpredictable odyssey with humorist Roy Blount, Jr., and *Cruising America's Waterways: The Lower Mississippi*.

Celebrating the Mississippi on *tpt* 2

Wednesday, June 16, 8:30pm, *The Main Stream*
Wednesdays, June 23 & 30, 8pm, *Ken Burns American Stories/Mark Twain*

Saturday, June 26, 8pm, *Mark Twain Tonight!*
9:30pm, Now with Bill Moyers/ Hal Holbrook as Mark Twain

Sunday, June 27, 1pm, *Mark Twain Tonight!*
2:30pm, Now with Bill Moyers/ Hal Holbrook as Mark Twain; 3:30pm, *Mississippi MN*; 4pm, *Cruising America's Waterways: Memphis to New Orleans*; 5pm, *Back on the Mississippi*

Wednesday, June 30, 9pm, *Back on the Mississippi*