

THE FALLS OF THE BIG SIOUX RIVER have been a focus of life in the region throughout history. Native American peoples were the first to visit the falls and bring stories of them to European explorers. They have been the focus of recreation and industry since the founding of the city in 1856. Today the park covers 42 acres. Each second, an average of 7,400 gallons of water drop 80 feet over the course of the falls.



Queen Bee Mill

The remains of the seven-story Queen Bee Mill, a brainchild of Richard Pettigrew, lie on the east side of the river. In the fall of 1878 Pettigrew decided Sioux Falls needed its own mill so farmers could avoid the cost of shipping wheat to Minnesota or Wisconsin. Pettigrew acquired the land and then traveled east to locate an investor, New Jersey capitalist George I. Seney.

The mill opened on Oct. 25, 1881, and consisted of a seven-story main structure built of Sioux Quartzite quarried on site. Nearly \$500,000 was spent on the construction of the state-of-the-art mill and its supporting structures. The mill could process 1,500 bushels each day. However, by 1883, the mill was closed — a victim of inadequate water power and a short supply of wheat.

Several companies tried in vain to make the mill a success in succeeding years. In 1929 it was converted into a warehouse. On Jan. 30, 1956, fire swept through the structure, destroying the wooden roof and interior floors. The upper walls were later knocked down to prevent them from falling.

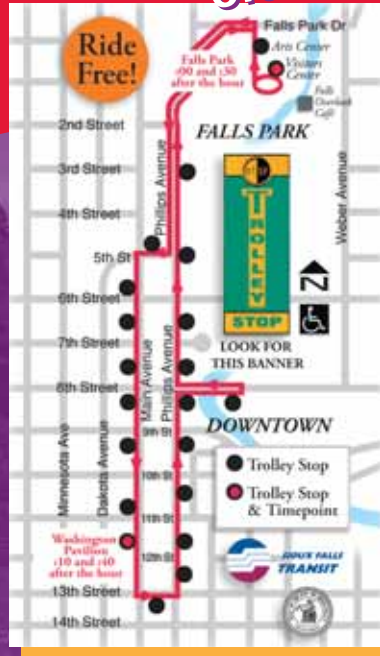
Sioux Falls Light and Power Company (now Falls Overlook Cafe)

The quartzite building still standing on the east bank is the Sioux Falls Light and Power Company building, completed in 1908. The building housed three 500-kilowatt hydroelectric generators and used the dam and the millrace from the Queen Bee Mill. In subsequent years the plant added additional coal-fired steam generators. The plant was abandoned in 1974 and donated to the city in 1977. Before remodeling took place to create the Falls Overlook Cafe, the building was in similar condition as when it was first constructed.

Seney Island

When the city was founded in 1856, a small island was located upstream of the main falls. Popularly called "The Island," later named Brookings Island, and still later Seney Island after the investor who funded the Queen Bee Mill, it was a popular spot for early recreation. The channel around the island was closed in 1907 to increase flow to the hydroelectric plant.

Sioux Falls Trolley Route Map



DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO FALLS PARK FROM I-229:

Take Exit 7 (Rice Street) off I-229. Take Rice Street west to Weber Avenue and turn right on Falls Park Drive.

6TH & MINNESOTA AVENUE:

On Minnesota Avenue, take 6th Street east to Phillips Avenue. Turn north on Phillips Avenue and take the first right into Falls Park.

Falls Park Visitor Information Center 605.367.7430

- **WINTER HOURS** (begin in Jan): 9am-5pm Sat & Sun
- **SUMMER HOURS** (begin in April): 9am-9pm Daily
- **SHORTENED SUMMER HOURS** (mid Oct-mid Nov): 9am-5pm Daily
- **WINTER WONDERLAND HOURS** (mid Nov-Jan): 5pm-10pm Mon-Fri, 9am-10pm Sat & Sun

Managed by the Sioux Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau:
Ph: 605.336.1620 or 800.333.2072 • Fax: 605.336.6499
200 N. Phillips Ave., Suite 102 • Sioux Falls, SD 57104

www.siouxfallscvb.com

Falls Park is home to the FREE, historic **Wells Fargo Falls Park Sound and Light Show**. The Sound and Light Show features information about the history of Sioux Falls and is shown at 9:30 pm, weather-permitting, from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Falls Park



SIOUX FALLS
SOUTH DAKOTA
The Heart of America
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Photograph provided by Rich Murphy



Visitor Information Center

The Visitor Information Center offers guidance to those visiting the city. A range of Sioux Falls Souvenirs are available. A five-story, 50 ft. viewing tower offers a panoramic view of the park.

605.367.7430



Falls Overlook Cafe

Visit the Falls Overlook Cafe on the east bank of the Big Sioux River in Falls Park. Located in the restored 1908 Sioux Falls Light and Power Company hydroelectric plant, the restaurant serves a variety of family-friendly foods and beverages to be enjoyed both inside and out. Historical exhibits are on display.

605.367.4885



Horse Barn Arts Center

Built in the late 1800s, the Horse Barn Arts Center houses the Loft Gallery in the former hayloft, and the Portfolio Gallery in the main level. Both galleries feature rotating exhibits of original local art. The gift shop occupies two of the former stalls on the main level. A variety of activities take place, including artist demonstrations, classes and workshops, poetry readings, artist receptions, and musical performances. Open Jan–Nov, hours vary.

605.977.2002



Monarch of the Plains Statue

Beautifully sculpted from a 12-ton piece of mahogany granite mined in the Milbank, SD, area, *Monarch* is a work of art created by Darold Bailey.



Millrace and Dam

Originally constructed to provide power for the Queen Bee Mill in the 1880s, the dam was raised in 1908 to supply power to the hydroelectric plant. Today the millrace is a viewing platform.



American Farmer Sculpture

American Farmer was created by Sondra Jonson of Cambridge, NE. This bronze sculpture won Best of Show in SculptureWalk 2004. *American Farmer* focuses on the patriarch of a rural home. Jonson says she wanted to capture a man of strength and determination who is resolute and pragmatic.

Falls Park



Falls Park Events

Falls Park is also home to numerous events throughout the year, such as Art Falls (above) and the spectacular light show, *Winter Wonderland at Falls Park*, which is on display mid November through early January (shown above Art Falls image).

