



Volume 1

MAY 1961

Number 2

1961 REUNION TO WASHINGTON AREA

CANAL BILL STAGGERS ON

If you've been trying to follow the progress of the C & O National Park proposals, and if the whole thing is confusing to you, you are in good company. We'll try to bring you up to date, but it won't be simple.

First, a quick review. The 184-mile Canal came into Federal hands in 1938. The 23 miles from Washington to Seneca was restored and became part of the National Capital Parks, a unit of the National Park system. The remainder was patrolled by Capital Parks headquarters in Washington; some maintenance was done, including restoration of the Paw Paw tunnel, but the property remained an unclassified piece of Federal land. In 1954 the Douglas (see page 2)

THE LEVEL WALKER

Published as needed
by

Level Walkers Committee,
C & O Canal Association

Orville W. Crowder, Chairman
Grant Conway, Co-chairman

ADDRESS: 1300 New Hampshire Ave., N. W.
Washington 6, D. C.

After several years in upstream localities, the Douglas hike reunion this year invades the National Capital region. We have been inclined to treat these reunions less and less as simple get-togethers of old friends, and more and more as opportunities to encourage local friends of the Canal, or to draw public attention to problem areas of the route. With major threats such as River Bend Dam, the desecration caused by the George Washington Memorial Parkway, and the prospect of deep sewer construction in the Canal bed, Washington certainly merits the attention.

The overnight campout will be at the Seneca Youth Hostel -- a tribute to the interest this organization has shown in Canal matters. The reunion walk, on Saturday, May 6, will begin at Seneca Aqueduct at 8 a.m., and end at Sycamore Island, a towpath distance of 16.3 mi. En route, a halt will be called at the threatened site of River Bend Dam, just below Swain's Lock. Here consulting engineer Ellery Fosdick will discuss the implications of the impoundment and distribute some duplicated notes.

The traditional banquet will be held at Westmofeland Congregational Church in Washington. We'll sit down at 6:30 Saturday evening. Places will be held open as late in the week as the serving problems will permit -- if you can attend, contact Mr. Crowder.

CANAL BILL - continued

Post challenge hike scotched the highway proposal. In 1957 the Seneca-to-Cumberland portion (161.7 miles) was designated as the C & O Canal National Historical Park Project, supervised by an administrative office in Hagerstown reporting to Park Service Region 5 headquarters in Philadelphia. The exact division point was described as 100 feet downstream from the first culvert above Seneca Aqueduct.

Meanwhile, legislative efforts looking toward a full-fledged National Park got under way. In 1957-58, the third Congress back, the Senate passed Senator Beall's bill but the project died in a House committee. In the next Congress, 1959-60, a similar bill passed the Senate, got out of the House committee, but died on the House floor. That brings us to 1961, so let's get chronological.

January 1961: Bills were again introduced into both houses: S-77 by Senator Beall, H.R. 2047 by Representative Mathias. A revised bill by Mathias, H.R. 4684, later added a "non-park use" clause which matched the Senate version; this seems in inescapable inclusion, and in the present bills is expressed in its least damaging form. These bills provide for a park from Great Falls to Cumberland, taking in $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles between Great Falls and Seneca now administered as part of National Capital Parks. This short section contains the site of the possible --and highly controversial -- River Bend Dam. Both bills allow for acquisition of additional land, expanding the present 4800 acres to a limit of 15,000 acres. The formerly proposed mountain parkway, paralleling the Canal in the Woodmont-Paw Paw region, has been dropped.

February 1961: President Eisenhower, in a last minute act of the administration, issued Proclamation 3391 establishing the C & O Canal National Monument. At first glance a forward step, this action caught Canal enthusiasts by surprise, and many regarded it with dismay. It does two good things: it makes appropriations a little simpler, and it gives a recognized status

to the property. Presumably it might be a little harder for Congress to invade an established National Monument than to make adverse provisions affecting a miscellaneous piece of Federal property. On the other hand, there are several bad features: (1) it contains what many conservationists believe to be a much more damaging "invasion clause"; (2) it sets up boundaries from Seneca to Cumberland, leaving Great Falls to Seneca in its present Capital Parks status; (3) it fails to provide for the additional land needed to make the present strip accessible and usable; and (4) it tends to take the push out of full-park efforts. The surprise presidential action annoyed a number of Democratic supporters of the Park legislation in Congress and may give them a reason for dragging their feet.

April 1961: The Senate bill came up for public hearing on April 12. Secretary Udall strongly supported it, pointing out the inadequacies of the National Monument designation. Opponents consisted of two old, familiar objectors: the Potomac River Development Association, a collection of anti-canal individuals gotten together under the guise of "multiple use" of the Potomac, and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, who insist that no park development be permitted in the 40 miles which would be flooded if a dam were built at River Bend. The electric interest is highly suspect, as competent engineers feel that River Bend power generation would provide little more than enough power to operate the proposed water supply pumps. The U.S. Corps of Engineers, whose long delayed report on the Potomac Basin may soon be ready in preliminary discussion form, intimated that they might ask legislation be delayed a year. Present indications are that the Engineers report will not call for construction of a River Bend Dam, but will ask that the site be reserved and the impoundment area purchased against the possible future need of the structure.

So that's where we stand at "press time". Have we cleared up anything, or are you still confused?

O. W. C.

T H E L E V E L W A L K E R S R E P O R T - - -

Level Walker Reports for the past year (have you gotten yours in?) provide a wealth of interest. In another issue, we'll try to summarize them and draw some overall implications. Meanwhile, here are some random notes. Figures in parentheses are towpath mileages from Georgetown to the downstream end of each Level Walker's section.

Beverly Thompson (2.1) spotted two erosion problems and a silt-pollution situation at Chain Bridge.

Bob McCara (12.3) listed birds and plants on the Great Falls section, and was impressed by the cactus growths.

Jean d'Alpuget (16.6) noted heavy horseshoe damage near Swain's Lock, and reported on pipeline construction problems; he submitted a long and interesting bird list.

Constant Southworth (19.6) invaded the sections of Jean d'Alpuget and Justice Douglas, says the Justice's section is the best of the Canal and says he's glad it's his, and goes into the horseback damage problem at some length.

Capt. Gordon Keating (27.2) tackles his report in true U.S. Navy style, and points out the questionable aspect of drainage ruts dug by maintenance personnel across the towpath. He urges that the practice be stopped before it causes expensive washouts.

Jack Connor (33.2) came in with six closely typed pages of report, containing many useful comments. He is interested in Civil War history of his section opposite Harrison Island, where the Canal played a part in the Battle of Balls Bluff.

Woody Kennedy (35.5) gave a wildlife report that covered even mammals, fish and algae, and added up-to-date information on Whites Ferry.

Anson Courter (39.4) goes into helpful detail on canal structures, including the Monocacy Aqueduct.

George Kline (44.6) discusses towpath condition and attaches two photos from the Nolands Ferry section to prove his point about ruts.

Herbert White (51.5) comments on the eternally sorry-looking section thru Brunswick, with its city dump.

Sterling Edwards (62.4) is another birdlife reporter, and notes the successful Park Service work which has restored water to the Canal near Dam #3.

Arnold Mason (65.1) who is recently back from Leningrad discussing those back-of-the-moon photos with the Russians, proves he can still see things terrestrial, and submits a lengthy and useful report.

Myron Glaser (67.0) got away from his newspaper writing long enough for a good coverage of the Antietam section, and roped in an associate Level Walker, Woodrow & Lothrop V-P Ludwig Antmann (a trick worth emulating).

Kenneth Rollins (69.4), who covers the section above Antietam, did a thorough coverage and called attention to a geological point we'd missed - a series of interesting twisted folds.

Henri Siegel (76.7) did a fine coverage of his Snyders Landing section, noting the NPS towpath improvement work going on there. He even cultivated the acquaintance of a lock-keeper's granddaughter. (Henri is single.)

Victor Conrad (88.1) virtually did an essay on towpath walking in wild weather. His interesting section along Big Slackwater above Charles Mill gave him concern by reason of herbaceous growth and blocking cables. This is a problem section, since property matters are confused where there is no actual canal. The towpath from which boats were pulled in the river is a very narrow strip, of course.

Clarence Baker (106.8) covers the Dam. No. 5 section, and reports NPS repairs to the towpath in the form of a wooden walkway over a washout.

John Frye (118.9) lists six serious conditions in the Little Pool section and has some pithy comment in this connection. We have not yet established a satisfactory basis of interchange of information with the Monument office in Hagerstown; perhaps this will follow later on.

THE LEVEL WALKERS REPORT (Continued)

William Wagner (146.6) was encouraged by Wild Turkey sign along his section from Lock 59 to Lock 60.

"Doc" Himes (159.7) says the fishing has been good in the watered section above Town Creek.

Isaac Long (164.8) is another one who has towpath rut trouble; likes the Park Service timber-and-clay fill which keeps water in the section above Lock 68. Ike lives in the lockhouse at 68.

Lawrence Mallery (167.0) sends a full report on his section from Oldtown upstream. He and Miles Thompson have exchanged sections. George Stein submitted a thorough-going bird and plant report on this section, too.

Ken McCarty (175.6) found things in the North Branch neighborhood "in good condition except for a few small garbage dumps".

Bill Price (180.7) found a 6-man Park crew smoothing out ruts on his Evitts Creek section; says the open sewer was still flowing through the canal at the disposal plant last winter. We hope he is following this, as it was to be corrected long ago, and the sewage, as well as the B&O's oil waste, was to go through the Cumberland treatment plant.

Tom Conlon (182.6) reports that the property dispute which has been holding up work on the big Industrial Highway construction job was clearing up in December, and promised to watch the road work that would follow. Tom says that a site is still available at the terminus of the Canal for an Historical Museum or other interpretive facility.

CANAL HOSTEL CHAIN

MAKES PROGRESS

The proposed Youth Hostel chain along the Canal, mentioned in our last Level Walker, has gotten a promising start. Some of the progress is due to cooperation of Level Walkers along the route, and further assistance will be welcomed by the Hostel people.

In the preliminary phase, overnight stopping places will be designa-

ted which are not full-fledged Youth Hostels, but provide low-cost accommodations for pass-holders without all the features of a hostel. These are known as "Supplementary Accommodations". Here is the status of the project, with towpath mileages from Washington:

- 0.0 Washington: Dupont Hostel
- 22.8 Seneca Youth Hostel
- 42.2 Dickerson (location needed)
- 59.3 Sandy Hook hostel project
- 60.7 Harpers Ferry: Hilltop House
- 72.8 Shepherd College (summer only)
- 84.4 Dam No. 4 (location needed)
- 96.8 Williamsport: Lester Nalley
- 99.8 Williamsport: Mrs. Ardinger
- 108.6 Four Locks: undeveloped prospect
- 124.1 Hancock: Miss Susan Creager
- 140.9 Little Orleans (location needed)
- 156.3 Paw Paw: Mrs. Ruth Bevans
- 166.9 Oldtown; two prospects
- 174.4 Spring Gap: Mrs. Raymond Wheeler
- 184.5 Cumberland: Algonquin Hotel

An encouraging development was decision of the Northwest Kiwanis Club of Washington to fully sponsor the first new full hostel in the chain. They set about it with a will, purchased a former country auction house bordering the canal near Sandy Hook bridge, and made provision for remodeling the interior to hostel standards. Possession of the building was obtained on May 1, and the work should be completed during the summer. There will be more news of this as the dedication date approaches.

Full hostels are available only to AYH passholders, but most of the supplementary accommodations will put up any canal hiker who wishes to stay, at somewhat higher than hostel rates. You can join AYH if you wish, even though your "youth" is past, and obtain for \$6 an annual pass good in hostels all over the world.

P. S. - HAVE YOU GOTTEN OFF YOUR
LEVEL-WALKER REPORT?

THE C & O CANAL NEWSLETTER

Number 2

June 27, 1961

PURPOSE: This newsletter reports periodically on progress by the Potomac Council, American Youth Hostels, in developing a hostel chain along the C & O Canal. The newsletter is sent to persons and groups known to be interested in the establishment of a hostel chain and in the preservation of the C & O Canal for its recreational and historic values. The newsletter is also being sent to the C & O Canal Level-Walkers. Their knowledge of particular sections will be helpful in future Hostel programs. The editor invites comments, contributions, and suggestions that will further these aims.

John E. Connor, Editor

Dear Friends,

Little Orleans Prospect. A prospect for a hostel looks very good here, as a result of a mid-May trip made by several hostellers. A clapboard building owned by Mr. Charles A. Linaburg (of Cumberland) located near Little Orleans is the subject prospect. The location is exactly at the point on the towpath where a hostel is needed. It is midway between Paw Paw and Hancock.

Progress at Sandy Hook. A dinner meeting was held on June 6, by a group of the Potomac Area Council AYH and the Kiwanis Club in a discussion of the projected Sandy Hook Hostel. Tighe E. Woods of the Kiwanis Club has contacted officials in Hagerstown, Md. in order to have the water in this area tested. Among recent work done at the Hostel has been the dismantling of an old stage. There is still much work to be done.

Slackwater Prospect. A delegation of hostellers recently looked at a property near Dam #4. It is an old stone slave quarters owned by Jacob E. Berkson, a Level-Walker and resident of Hagerstown, Md. Their report shows that the amount of work needed to put the building in shape makes it an unlikely hostel prospect, unless the owner plans to do extensive repairs on his own account. Mr. Berkson seems quite enthusiastic for the promotion of the chain, and our thanks go to him for his interest in the project.

Cycling on the Towpath. Jackie Bash, a very active hosteller, led a May bicycle trip covering the entire length of the canal. This one-week trip saw the hostellers spending each night enroute at hostel accommodations along the way. The group reported that they had a good week and they felt that the entire towpath was well worth seeing.

Jackie has a group of very interesting colored slides taken along the canal during this trip. Any organization or group interested in seeing these slides should contact the editor of this Newsletter. Advanced arrangements can be made for having a future slide show.

Topographical Maps of the Entire Canal. A set of the 1:24,000 scale maps of the canal put out by the Geological Survey, Dept. of the Interior, are available for 35¢ each. The entire series consists of the following quadrants:

Washington West	1956	Leesburg	1943-52	Charles Town	1944-55
Falls Church	1956	Waterford	1943-52	Keedysville	1943-53
Vienna	1951-7	Poolesville	1943-52	Shepherdstown	1943-53
Rockville	1956	Buckeystown	1943-52	Williamsport	1943-53
Seneca	1943-52	Point of Rocks	1944-55	Hedgesville	1943-53
Sterling	1943-52	Harpers Ferry	1944-55	Big Pool	?

/Cont'd/

Topographical Maps (Cont'd)

Cherry Run	1951	Paw Paw	1950	Evitts Creek	1949
Hancock	1951	Oldtown	1950	Cresaptown	1949
Artemas	1950	Pattersons Creek	1949	Cumberland	1949

Yours truly,

C & O Canal Committee
Potomac Area Council
American Youth Hostels

THE C & O CANAL NEWSLETTER

Published as needed

by

C & O CANAL COMMITTEE
POTOMAC AREA COUNCIL
AMERICAN YOUTH HOSTELS

John E. (Jack) Connor, Editor

Address: 819 W. Glebe Road, Apt. 218
Alexandria, Virginia

Separate edition follows.

THE C & O CANAL NEWSLETTER

Number 1

May 22, 1961

PURPOSE: This newsletter reports periodically on progress by the Potomac Council, American Youth Hostels, in developing a hostel chain along the C & O Canal. The newsletter is sent to persons and groups known to be interested in the establishment of a hostel chain and in the preservation of the C & O Canal for its recreational and historic values. The newsletter is also being sent to the C & O Canal Level-Walkers. Their knowledge of particular sections will be helpful in future Hostel programs. The editor invites comments, contributions, and suggestions that will further these aims.

John E. Connor, Editor

Dear Friends,

What is a hostel, you may ask! It is an inexpensive overnight accommodation, located throughout the U. S. and 33 foreign countries. It may be a converted farm building, an ancient castle, a sailing ship, a school dormitory, or a specially constructed building. Resident houseparents are in charge of each hostel. Hostels include separate sleeping quarters and washrooms for fellows and girls, a kitchen and a common room. Hostels further goodwill among people of all lands, by providing, especially for youth, the inexpensive, educational and recreational, outdoor travel opportunities of hosteling, that is, travel primarily by bicycle and on foot along scenic trails and byways, and to places of historic and cultural interest in America and abroad. It is the goal of the Potomac Council AYH to maintain a chain of hostels on the C & O Canal dedicated to the service of youth, young adults, families and organizations.

New Work at Seneca. Many long hours of back-breaking work were spent for 5 weeks getting the Old Stonehouse Hostel at Seneca, Md. in shape for the Justice Douglas Reunion Hike. Mrs. Ernest Grubb and Dr. & Mrs. William J. Frank, the houseparents, deserve special thanks for the time, money and effort they have put into renovating the Hostel. In addition, they paid for the installation of a new floor. Among other work done was the construction of an outside staircase, installation of new sink and stove, as well as generally cleaning-up work.....

Justice Douglas C & O Canal Reunion Hike of May 5-6. Among the hikers who spent the night at the Seneca Hostel were: Justice and Mrs. William O. Douglas, Secretary of Interior and Mrs. Stewart Udall, and two children, Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois, and Ex-Governor Leroy Collins of Florida. These famous outdoorsmen were impressed by the Seneca Hostel and expressed keen interest in a plan to establish a complete Youth Hostel chain.

Sandy Hook Acquisition. Located on the Maryland side of Harpers' Ferry, the projected Sandy Hook Hostel is the first full-fledged new Hostel to become part of the canal chain. Under the leadership of Tighe E. Woods of the Northwest Kiwanis Club of Washington, acquisition of this hostel was made possible. This is the first instance in the U. S. where a service club has undertaken to sponsor a hostel. The Kiwanis Club undertook to purchase the property for \$6,500 and has set up \$2,000 to bring the building up to Hostel standards. The Potomac Area Council agreed to undertake putting in the movable

installations up to \$1,000. Work will occupy the coming summer. Target opening date is set for September 15. We'll keep you posted on progress at this location.

The Kiwanis Club decided that this method of contribution would be the best way of helping youth develop into healthy, happy, self-reliant, well-informed, community-minded and world-minded citizens. We hope that others will see the great need for citizenship training and will follow the example of our friends of the Kiwanis Club.

Yours truly,

C & O Canal Committee
Potomac Area Council
American Youth Hostels

NOTE: Following is the status of the project with towpath mileages from Washington:

0.0 Washington: Dupont Hostel
22.8 Seneca Youth Hostel
42.2 Dickerson (location needed)
59.3 Sandy Hook hostel project
60.7 Harpers Ferry: Hilltop House
72.8 Shepherd College (summer only)
84.4 Dam No. 4 (location needed)
96.8 Falling Waters: Lester Walley
99.8 Williamsport: Mrs. Ardinger
108.6 Four Locks: undeveloped prospect
124.1 Hancock: Miss Susan Creager
140.9 Little Orleans (location needed)
156.3 Paw Paw: Mrs. Ruth Bevans
166.9 Oldtown: two prospects
174.4 Spring Gap: Mrs. Raymond Wheeler
184.5 Cumberland: Algonquin Hotel

THE C & O CANAL NEWSLETTER

Published as needed
by

C & O CANAL COMMITTEE
POTOMAC AREA COUNCIL
AMERICAN YOUTH HOSTELS

John E. (Jack) Connor, Editor
Address: 819 W. Glebe Road, Apt. 218
Alexandria, Virginia