

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,

From the Capitol. In his remarks on May 25, 1961, Hon. Charles McC. Mathias, Jr., of Maryland noted the nationwide interest which exists in the Potomac Valley and the C & O Canal. Mr. Mathias brought out that at one time this interest was purely local, but is now widespread. As evidence of this interest he appended a copy of an editorial from the New York Times published on May 22, 1961. The article stresses the importance of saving the Potomac valley, ".....Protecting the Nation's natural resources, providing areas for recreation, and appreciation of the very land which gives us strength, is increasingly urgent. The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park may well prove to be the central park for the eastern seaboard's coming megalopolis. Its need has been strongly endorsed by the Kennedy administration...." We are all very grateful for the keen interest that Rep. Mathias has shown in the preservation of the canal.

Progress at Sandy Hook. Arrangements have been made for a local carpenter to repair the existing ceilings and erect the inside partitions for the dormitories and houseparents' apartment. Partitions have been completed and weed clearance has commenced.

A donation of \$500 towards the cost of reconstruction has been given anonymously by an AYH member. This will assist immensely in completing the Sandy Hook hostel on time and our sincere appreciation goes to the donor.

Visitors to the Towpath. There have been hostellers from Wisconsin, Chicago, and New York who have come to enjoy the beauty of the canal via the towpath. The Pittsburg, Pa. Council, AYH sponsored a trip along the Canal near Harper's Ferry during the week of July 1. Everyone has talked about how helpful the houseparents were all along the way.

The Entire Towpath is Open to the Public! The C & O Canal towpath in the vicinity of the PEPCO plant at Dickerson appears to be marked with a "No Trespassing" sign. This sign does not refer to the towpath, but to the property behind the fence. The towpath is Federal land, and the public may pass, notwithstanding the sign or the statements of PEPCO guards. We ask the readers to report obstructions, signs and warnings anywhere along the entire towpath to the committee, the National Park Service, or the Level-Walker organization for investigation.

Additional Maps of the Canal. Bill Clague of the Potomac Area AYH is in the process of drawing up a series of maps that will cover the C & O Canal from Washington to Cumberland. The whole series will consist of maps featuring points of interest, mileages and location of hostels and supplementary accommodations. The maps are five cents each and ten are now available. The series of maps up through Harper's Ferry should be finished by the end of September. The scale

of the maps above Harper's Ferry will be reduced by 1/2. The whole series will cost about \$2.00. These maps are easy to understand, are very well prepared, and show information specifically relative to the canal and towpath. The maps are well worth having and will provide an interesting addition to a visit to the canal.

Did you know....?

....that an article about the AYH appeared in the Aug. 13, 1961 Sunday Star Magazine entitled "For the Young in Heart", written by Don Day. This well-written, illustrated article tells about the activities of the American Youth Hostels here and abroad.

....that Hill Top house at Harper's Ferry refuses to accept hostellers without advanced reservations.

....that the editor is leading a group of hikers on the Canal from Cumberland to Paw Paw during the coming Labor Day Weekend. This group, starting a series of continuation hikes will stay at the Algonquin Hotel in Cumberland. All hikers are welcome to join the group at any time during their 3-day trek.

....that recently, the Level-Walker, Melvin I. Kaplan, president of the Williamsport C & O Canal Club had a guided tour of 100 persons from Washington around the Historic C & O Canal at Williamsport. Our thanks go to our friends at Williamsport, who have shown a keen interest in the promotion of the chain.

Yours truly,

C & O Canal Committee
Potomac Area Council
American Youth Hostels

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