

C & O Canal Association

ALONG THE TOWPATH

concerned with the conservation of the natural and
historical environment of the C&O Canal and the Potomac River Basin

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The Forty-First Douglas Memorial Hike

The day broke clear and comfortable, an ideal day for a ten-mile hike from Spring Gap to Paw Paw. It was the occasion of the Forty First Douglas Memorial Hike, Saturday, April 29th.

About one hundred people assembled at the Paw Paw Campground to be bused upstream for the day's hike. Some had camped overnight, some had stayed in nearby motels, but most drove in from many points. A few opted for the seven-mile walk beginning at Town Hill but most chose to go the full distance from Spring Gap to Paw Paw. Those with extra energy walked through the Paw Paw Tunnel and back or returned on the trail over the tunnel hill.

Normally the section is lightly traveled much of the year, but not this day. There were large numbers of hikers, bikers, and campers using the towpath. Spring was on display, redbud in bloom, plus violets, spring beauties, mertensia, and countless other wildflowers. One member reported sighting 285 turtles. Another reported a growth of mushrooms sprouting in the middle of the Paw Paw Tunnel itself. And, oh yes, there were gnats and more gnats! What would Spring be like without gnats?

The hike was followed by refreshments and the annual banquet at the Paw Paw American Legion Center, with dinner provided by the Women's Auxiliary of the Legion. President Carl Linden then opened the ceremonies of the evening. First was a fitting tribute and moment of silent reflection in memory of Jim Bryant. Jim was an ardent supporter of the canal and he had many friends in the Association.

President Linden was more than a master of ceremonies; he was also a stand-up comedian who described some of the frivolous sides of canal life. Frivolity also reigned in the form of an impromptu contest that called for captioning a rather racy photo of a certain member (no need to mention here that it was Gary Petrichick) clad in Bikini-style trunks at river's edge ready for the plunge. Once decorum had returned, Jim Preston recited his epic poem on the end-to-end hike in 1994.

The featured speaker of the evening was Ralph Donnelly, who proved once again that he knows more about the Paw Paw Tunnel than anybody. His description included slides and a fact sheet about the tunnel. Did you know that the tunnel is 3,120 feet long (about 3/5th of a mile) and that it was completed in 1850? So in the year 2000 we will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the tunnel as well as the end of the second millennium.

The success of the 41st Reunion was due in large measure to the efforts of Sonny Deforge, who led the team of members who planned the events, made the necessary arrangement, and gave publicity to the day's program. Good show!

- - John Chandler

POT LUCK PICNIC AT GREAT FALLS TAVERN

Friends of the Great Falls Tavern and the C & O Canal Association are planning a pot luck picnic on July 16 at Great Falls Tavern. Association members RSVP Carl Linden's voice mail -- 202-994-6348 -- and leave your name, address, and telephone number. At the time of publication this activity was tentative. Further information will be provided to those who leave a message.

President's Column

Association Archives? Yes, Let's Keep Them. -- by Carl Linden

An important question was placed before the Board of Directors at its last meeting in April: What is to be done with our archives--dispose of them or keep them? Both sides of the question were considered at the meeting. I will not here take a stand of impartiality for the sake of hearing out arguments already heard. To pose the question, "Do we need an Association archive?" is closely tied to the question, "Who and what are we as an Association?" Without a memory, without a sense of our origins and sustaining purpose, without a written record of what we have done and where we have been, we hazard losing our way as an organization. I am, therefore, foursquare in favor of keeping and maintaining the archives in a useable and accessible form.

Lest we forget...the story of the Association is part of the single thread of the history of the canal which, in turn, was intimately tied with the origins and historical promise of our nation as it ventured West. Happily, the canal's history did not stop with the end of its commercial operations in 1926. It came to life again as today's incomparable national historical park reaching West from Washington for 185 scenic miles to Cumberland. In the early Fifties the canal was close to being buried under the roadbuilder's pavements. Were it not for Justice Douglas and all who backed him the canal and its history would now be a lost memory and the Association itself would not have seen the light of day. Our Association took shape under Douglas' lead to help make sure that the canal and its history remain alive for our fellow citizens. In a real sense that history was passed on to us by our founding members, now is continued through us, and can thus be passed on to those who follow us. Our memorial walks down the canal are in themselves a vivid expression of our sense of historical connection and continuity.

Our members, past, present, and future, from Justice Douglas and his hardy band to today's troop of Level Walkers and devoted canallers, have made, are making, and will continue to make the canal our shared experience. While we no longer find ourselves on the founder's mission to rescue the canal from outright destruction, we remain its guardians. We carry forward the labor of love and re-creation begun on a Springtime four decades ago. Are we now to become like dozing sentinels? Are we, through inattention, to let the records of our past which speak in word and image of our reason for being fall away? That ought not to happen.

The question is not whether but how we keep the intertwined history of the canal and our Association alive. Over the years we have done this in various and sundry ways. At times we are rewarded with the sheer delight of the task. Fresh in memory this year, for example, was our dedication of 'Lil,' the Mule, at Harper's Ferry in March. Lillian Langdon in her words of dedication brought a bit of canal history full circle. She recalled to us her life on the canal: "It was a hard life, but we didn't know

it!" As a girl she voyaged with her father, Captain Bud, on a canal boat laden with goods and pulled by his favorite mule, 'Lil.' Now another 'Lil' by name and trained to a T by Frank Galvin will be hard at it pulling the canal boats out of Georgetown and Great Falls.

Bit by bit the canal's life returns to us; it is a story that unfolds for us in its telling and retelling. Oral tradition is fine but we moderns can scarcely do without a written and photographic record to aid us in our remembrance of things past.

The Board's discussion at our April meeting revealed a strong consensus in favor of preserving and maintaining the archives in one way or another. A committee was formed to make recommendations on what is to be done. Board members will also inspect the archives at Ferry Hill at its meeting beginning at one o'clock on June 25th. We have already invested several thousands of dollars in equipping the archives room the NPS has provided at Ferry Hill with a computer, copier, file cabinets, furniture, etc.. We now need to address questions of ways and means: who? what? how? where? when? how much?

Any Association members especially interested in this issue are welcome to attend the meeting. The history of the Association is a part of us and we a part of it. Let's not lose any piece of it!

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CANAL CHARACTERS

ACROSS THE BERM

REMEMBERING RAY RILEY

Ray Riley, last of the family to be associated with the lock at Seneca bearing his name, left us a year or so ago. He carried with him much of the lore of the operating days, some of which I can recall and should pass along. Ray was not actually a lock-tender himself, but his father and grandfather were.

Ray recalled that his father was subject to call at all hours day and night to operate the lock. The busier season involved many operations during the night, and for his own convenience -- probably more out of consideration for his family according to Ray -- he built a little bunk house beside the lock. He was evidently able to "lock-through" without help other than that provided by the boat crew.

Ray lived out his years in a house on River Road about a mile from the lock. He considered himself a sort of guardian-interpreter-guide or anything he needed to be to oversee his beloved Canal and share it with others. He visited the area almost daily.

He often spoke of the "sawmill" with the suggestion that he would be glad to conduct a tour if asked. I, like many others, was puzzled by such a reference -- since all the notes on the Canal had nothing to do with lumbering in the area.

One snowy January day (1971?) Ray appeared at the lock because he heard that we had scheduled a visit. He gave us a tour of the lock-house, recalling his younger years, and finished by offering a tour of the "Sawmill." It finally dawned on some of us that he was talking about the mill across the creek which cut the Seneca red stone used in Federal buildings, notably the Smithsonian Castle.

We trooped across the aqueduct and around to the right to the ruins of the mill. Ray showed us where the water wheel was and the location of the overhead shaft which drove the wheels below at each station where the machines actually cut the stones. The shaft ran the length of the building, and the saw operators started or stopped their saws by reaching up with long poles to engage or disengage the flat belts of the respective pulleys. The "saws" turned out to be reciprocating steel bars about a half-inch thick which were lowered onto the rough blocks and flushed with a slurry of water and sand. More water and/or sand were added along with lots of patience, until the cuts were finally made.

Ray then led us up the hill behind the mill to the source of the stone. There is some left but not in commercially viable quantities -- in fact, what's left must be carefully rationed. When some of the Seneca cap stones fell from the "Union

Arch" over Cabin John Creek a few years ago, there was the question of replacement. To solve the problem, Harry Ways used some carefully dyed cement. The stone remaining at the quarry is apparently reserved for "touch-ups" of the Castle or similar structures. There were at that time some remains of the narrow-gauge tracks, similar to all mine rails such as those at Great Falls gold mines, used to move stone. Some stone was also moved by simply sliding blocks down the hill. Many years later, Joan Paull had scheduled a work party at the lock and canal prison below. As we were more or less finishing up, Ray came along with his little push-cart which he had devised to carry the pick-up trash he encountered on his daily rounds, policing the area between his house and the River. I made some comment about the baseball cap he was wearing. He explained that it was a "found" cap he had picked up along the roads, and showed me another in his cart, adding that "It's surprising what you find along the roads."

Suddenly a little light came on in my head because Joan had come over to see what was going on. I said, "Joan, do you see the cap Ray is wearing? I think perhaps he deserves another one, because he has been a V.I.P. longer than we have." I was prepared to give up my own cap, but Joan caught on at once -- ran back to somewhere and came back with a brand-new one. We had a little ceremony on the spot which seemed to delight Ray. He carefully and proudly fitted on the new cap, and a few minutes later he discreetly slipped the "found" cap into his little cart.

I looked in on Ray from time to time, but not nearly enough. He especially appreciated "C & O Canal Pure Honey" made by my bees at Lock 6. Somehow the years rushed by and my "Ol Buddy" was gone. I wish I could tell you more.

-- Ken Rollins

JAMES CALVIN BRYANT

Jim Bryant died suddenly on April 8, 1995. He suffered from cancer, had been under treatment for this disease, but evidently succumbed to a heart attack. His remains were interred with military honors at Arlington Cemetery on April 28.

Jim was born in Anderson, South Carolina, attended Clemson University, served in the Army during World War II and the Korean conflict, and spent his working career in the construction business, specializing in office remodeling.

Many Association members will remember Jim and his wife Sally as active participants in our activities. He served on the Board of Directors, and he chaired the Nominating Committee on two occasions. Both Sally and he participated for a long time in the Association's Volunteers-in-the Parks program. In addition, they were enthusiastic hikers.

JAMES CALVIN BRYANT - continued

In recent years Jim was not well enough to do any serious hiking, but he was often there, riding his bike or walking short distances. Despite adversity, he remained cheerful during his appearances on the towpath or at Association events. Now he is gone, and we will remember him for his devotion to the Association and the park and as a congenial hiking companion on the trail.



Jim and Sally Bryant at the Berkeley Springs Apple Butter Festival



Jim and Sally Bryant with VIPs at Great Falls

- - Hal Larsen

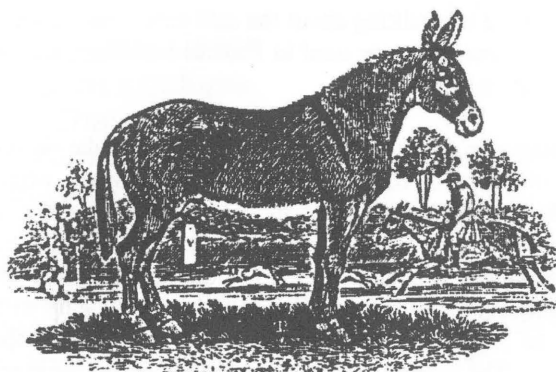
ETHEL BRIGGS DURHAM

Ethel Briggs Durham, area conservationist, educator, and friend of the canal and the Association passed away at age 90 at her home on May 14th. Ethel was the widow of our own renowned C.I.S. "Jack" Durham, a friend of Justice Douglas who adeptly managed Association affairs during its first years. Ethel and Jack both worked hard for the creation of the C&O Canal National Historic Park and were regulars on the Douglas hikes. One of our members recalls how Jack on one hike was looking about for Ethel cheerfully inquiring: "Has anybody seen my Bride?" C & O hikers often gathered at the Durham's house. Ethel would play the piano and all would sing songs from Connie Southworth's repertoire of canal ditties.

Ethel and Jack also gave of themselves unstintingly over many years to a wide range of conservation projects. Ethel was well known for her horticultural expertise among area Garden Clubs, was an outstanding photographer of her beloved Virginia wildflowers, and was a devoted bird watcher. Among other things, Ethel was instrumental in the creation of the National Arboretum's Fern Valley and helped in setting up the nature trails at Great Falls. Ethel and Jack together lovingly restored Towlston Grange, home of Lord Byron Fairfax, and made this historic residence their home for more than 60 years.

Note: Nancy Durham Robinson, Ethel's and Jack's daughter, has conveyed her parent's C&O Canal related papers to the Association archives. Nancy also plans to give the Association two framed pictures of early C&O canal boats which presently are in her home in Vermont.

- - Carl Linden



The Mule

NATURE NOTES

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF THE SEASONS - 1994

Three volunteer nature walk leaders (also Canal Association members) wound up 20-plus years of conducting nature walks in the Great Falls Tavern area of the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Focused on "Sights and Sounds of the Seasons," 47 walks were conducted during 1994, on the first and last Wednesday and Saturday of each month. Two walks were canceled (January 29 and March 2) because icy roads and bad weather led to the temporary closing of the Park. A total of more than 300 hours were spent by the three volunteers in preparing for and conducting the regularly scheduled walks.

The walks attracted 554 visitors including two from Australia and a number--chiefly during the summer--from various parts of the U.S. Most of the participants came from Maryland, Virginia and the District. The "Friends of Great Falls Tavern" scheduled a walk in April to coincide with one of the regularly scheduled "Sights and Sounds" walks. A dozen Girl Scouts came with their leaders on an extra walk scheduled in the fall.

Many walks followed the towpath, diverging into the nearby woods between the towpath and the river, or following Berma Road and paths on the Goldmine Tract. The history of the canal and its early days as well as the history of goldmining and other development often came up for discussion, especially with newcomers. Monthly checklists of seasonal flora and fauna were prepared for distribution to participants. Several people carried trash bags on each walk, winding up with well-filled bags of trash for disposing back at the Tavern.

We found skunk cabbage blooming in swampy areas in January or earlier. The peak spring blooming usually comes from April to early June. At the peak, 50 or more different kinds of wildflowers can readily be found on a single walk. The flowers stretch upward to attract pollinators and set seed before the greening of surrounding vegetation and the leafing of the trees.

This is also peak season for bird observation as winter residents leave and spring migrants pass through or choose local nesting places. The pair of bald eagles, nesting for the tenth (possibly eleventh) year on Conn Island is a never-ending source of wonder. One or both adult eagles can often be seen, soaring high overhead, sitting at the top of a tall tree on a mid-river island, or sitting on the nest. Last fall a noisy flock of crows mobbed an eagle, sending him flying swiftly upriver with the crows in noisy pursuit.

The tree with the eagle nest was lost in a spring flood one year, but the eagles built another nest at another conspicuous location on Conn Island. Early each year they re-arrange sticks and perhaps add a few. The bulky nest can be seen even without binoculars.

During this winter, flocks of bluebirds and cedar waxwings have been major attractions. A lone yellow-rumped warbler was observed on one winter walk. Recently robins have started to

appear. The frequency of bluebird observation suggests the success of efforts to bring back the eastern bluebird from what seemed likely to be almost total extinction. Seen far less often than in the past are white-throated sparrows and juncos, both winter visitors in this area. Even chickadees and tufted titmice seem less frequent. The variety and number of warblers passing through or nesting in the area likewise show decline. Barn swallows once nested each year under the eaves at the Tavern. Apparently they find weekend crowds incompatible with bringing up a swallow family. One enterprising pair, however, was reported by a Park ranger to have nested on the canal boat last summer!

One or two great blue herons stalk the river bank and the canal at intervals. Occasionally one will perch high in a tree, blending so well with the tree branches as to become almost invisible.

With the present crowds of Canada geese, it seems hard to believe that 20 years ago an infrequent pair was a major attraction. As their numbers have increased, they have become almost a nuisance--still amusing, but messy and possibly even dangerous to small children. The mallard population -- interspersed with a few black ducks -- seems fairly stable, possibly with a gradual increase. An occasional wood duck is observed. In past years they have nested in the swamp between the towpath and the river above the Tavern.

In contrast with earlier years, the spring flowers along the canal bank have almost disappeared; the reasons appear to be chiefly past mowing practices, the deterioration of the canal bank in some places, and the pounding of many feet and bicycle tires. Wildflowers can still be found in some abundance in more or less hidden places. The hunt for seed-pods and dried stems can be almost as interesting during the winter as the hunt for blossoms during spring, summer and fall. Year-round green ferns, lichens, mosses and fungi also become more visible during the winter when they are no longer hidden by the growth around them.

Other delights enjoyed by "Sights and Sounds" participants include the water turtles, an occasional box turtle, spring peepers, the half-dozen or so kinds of non-poisonous snakes, the very occasional copperhead, butterflies, including the mourning cloak, sometimes seen as early as February, deer and raccoon tracks or the animals themselves, and the woods as a whole with their seasonal changes. Dominating the natural scene is the ever-changing river.

As years pass, storms continue to wash out the towpath in the Widewater area. Because of the difficulties it presents, this area is now less often used by participants in "Sights and Sounds" walks, although it is still heavily traveled by hikers, bikers, dog-walkers, and families with baby strollers. Without substantial repair in the near future, the storms of 1995 could ravage the area further--a great loss in one of the most heavily used and the most beautiful areas between Georgetown and Cumberland, Md.

-- Helen L. Johnston

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Robert C. Perry
Editor, *Along the Towpath*
12713 Knightsbridge Drive
Woodbridge, Virginia 22192

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C & O CANAL ASSOCIATION

1995-1996 Association Officers

President:

Carl A. Linden 6404 Ridge Drive
301-229-2398 Bethesda, MD 20816

First Vice President:

Thomas L. Perry 116 S. Conococheague Street
301-223-7010 Williamsport, MD 21795

Second VP & Level Walker Chairperson:

Keith Kridenoff 1725 Red Oak Road
410-661-8285 Baltimore, MD 21234

Secretary

Rachel L. Stewart 5914 N. Washington Street
703-237-4727 Arlington, VA 22205

Treasurer

David M. Johnson 9211 Wadsworth Dr.
301-530-7473 Bethesda, MD 20817

Information Officer

Helen Shaw 8721 Burning Tree Rd.
301-365-1933 Bethesda, MD 20817

Board of Directors: (Terms expire in 1998) William J. Evans, Karen M. Gray, Fred I. Mopsik, Gary M. Petrichick, Peggy Weber. (Terms expire in 1997) William D. Bauman, John Frye, Norma Hendrickson, Ellen Holway, Lyman Stucker. (Terms expire in 1996) Charles Ayres, Ralph Donnelly, Nancy Long, Ken Rollins, Elizabeth Scott.

Editor:

Robert C. Perry 703-590-5568

DIRECTORY C & O CANAL NHP TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND PERSONNEL

C & O CANAL NHP HQTRS

Box 4, Sharpsburg, MD 21782 301-739-4200

Superintendent	Douglas Faris
Assistant Superintendent	Terrie Savering
Chief Ranger	Keith Whisenant
Admin Officer	Christine Streng
Asst Ch. Ranger & Chief, Visitor Protection Br.	Kevin Fitzgerald

Chief, Natural Resource Mgmt Branch
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Chief of Maintenance

Patrick Toops
Susan Trail
Gordon Gay
Bob Hartman

PALISADES DISTRICT

11710 MacArthur Blvd, Potomac, MD 20854
301-413-0024

District Ranger
Supv Ranger - Fee Collection
Supv Ranger - District Interpretation

Tom Nash
Terry Barbot
Clyde Bell

GEORGETOWN VISITORS CENTER

1055 Thomas Jefferson St, Washington, D.C. 202-653-5844

Park Ranger - Subdistrict Interpretation

Kathy Kupper

GREAT FALLS TAVERN VISITORS CENTER

Great Falls Tavern Information
Park Ranger - Subdistrict Interpretation

301-299-3613
Nancy Brown

The Palisades District begins at Milepost 0 (Tidelock) and continues to Milepost 42.19 (Monocacy River).

WESTERN MARYLAND DISTRICT

District Ranger

Vacant
301-739-4200 X237

Monocacy Subdistrict
Conococheague Subdistrict
Four Locks
Paw Paw

Bill Orlando
John Bailey
Bob Gray
Rick Erisman

Supv Ranger District Interpretation

Martin Gallery
301-678-5463

WILLIAMSPORT VISITORS CENTER

Williamsport Subdistrict Interpretation

Fred Viers

HANCOCK VISITORS CENTER

326 East Main Street

301-678-5463
Hancock, Maryland 21750

Park Ranger

Sherilyn Seyler

CUMBERLAND VISITORS CENTER

Western Maryland Station

301-722-8226
Cumberland, Maryland 21502

Park Ranger

Rita Knox

The Western Maryland District begins at Milepost 42.19 (Monocacy River) and ends at the Canal Terminus, Cumberland, Milepost 184.5.

OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Georgetown Boat Operation 202-653-5844

Abner Cloud House 202-472-2679

Fletcher's Boat House (Concessionaire) 202-244-0461

Canal Clipper, Great Falls Tavern 301-299-2026

Swains Lock (Concessionaire) 301-299-9006

On The Level

By Keith D. Kridenoff
1995 Level Walker Chairman

Spring is again upon us! Mother Nature has been cooperating very nicely for level walking. Thanks to everyone who has turned in a report so far this year. We are ahead of the same time frame last year. Thanks also go out to all the level walkers who helped in updating the copies of the Clague map book sent out with my earlier mailing. Your work is appreciated by the Board as well as myself. We have had a few new openings since Jan. 1 because some people have had to give up (reluctantly) their levels. Anyone interested in becoming a level walker can contact me at:

1725 Red Oak Road
Baltimore Maryland 21234
(410) 661-8285

Welcome New Level Walkers!

Richard Tibbets 15
Howard Solomon 23
Suzanne DeVore 24
Liz Hillenbrand 36
Jean Searles 38
Len Skoglund 62

Reports received by the May 5th deadline. The next cutoff is August 5th.

3 - 5 to 7.5

Lock 5 to Cabin John
Jim & Joan Wilson (3/26,27,28)
Lots of thick green (and smelly) algae above Lock 6 with water level low above Lock 7.

4 - 7.5 to 9.4

Cabin John to Lock 14
Carolyn Reeder (1/28)
Cabin John culvert now clear. Cut in riverbank extending into towpath opposite cabin in river getting worse. A hazard to bikers. Lift Lock 10 sign still missing.

5 - 9.4 to 12.3

Lock 14 to Cropley
Olivia Casasnovas (3/11)
Near Cropley bridge are several trees on the verge of falling and possibly blocking towpath. Ducks in abundance.

6 - 12.3 to 14.3

Cropley to Great Falls
Harry Bridges (2/22,3/23) Helen Johnston (Jan-Feb)
Water level low in Widewater area. Increased deer tracks and beaver activity in Widewater area since first of year.(2/22) Water level still low at Widewater and Canal Clipper area.(3/23)

8 - 16.6 to 19.6

Swains Lock to Pennyfield Lock
Maggie & Paul Davis (2/3,3/18)
Fresh beaver cuttings near entrance road from boat ramp to Pennyfields. Signs of continued NPS removal of problem trees on towpath. (2/3) Cleanest level has ever been. Large amount of activity this late in day.(3/18)

11 - 25 to 27.2

Tenfoot Island to Sycamore Landing
Sharon Freedman (3/6)
Signs of park service trimming trees. Condition of towpath getting worse. Canal prism caving in at culvert 38.

13 - 30.8 to 33

Edwards Ferry to Harrison Island
Don Groelsema (3/4)
Collapse of cut stones at west end of north retaining wall continues to progress.

14 - 33 to 35.

Harrison Island to Whites Ferry
Herbert Madison (4/23)
Mileposts 33,34 &35 have been repainted. Store at Whites Ferry now open for season.

16 - 39.4 to 42.2

Woods Lock to Monocacy Aqueduct
C.H. & Chris Breedlove (2/19)
Newly constructed beaver lodge ½ mile above Dickerson parking lot. Large amount of bulky trash concentrated near mile 41 probably due to flooding.

18 - 44.6 to 48.2

Nolands Ferry to Point of Rocks
Paul Redmer (3/17)
Towpath surface much improved with but one mudhole between 46 and 47.

19 - 48.2 to 51.5

Point of Rocks to Catoctin Aqueduct
Pat & Jack Cook (3/23)
Large amount of trash in canal prism probably from railroad. Tulips planted in front of lockhouse beginning to bloom.(3/23) Trash collected mostly centered at boat ramp. Several old tires in canal between Lander and Catoctin Creek.

20 - 51.5 to 55

Catoctin Creek to Lock 30
Mario & Anne Abbate (3/7,3/31)
Culvert 82 collapsed in prism of canal at 52.5. Spring Peepers appearing near Lock 30. Bridge at Catoctin Creek not finished but usable. (3/31)

23 - 60.7 to 62.3

Harpers Ferry to Dam 3
Mike Reges & Kathy Wotring (4/10)
No trash on towpath at all! Signs of spring on the trees and plants.

25 - 65.1 to 67

Dargan Quarry to Lock 37
Don & Carol Juran (w/ Marilyn Weiner & Bob Ballentine 3/4)
Towpath in good shape with some trash on riverbank from high water. Beaver activity near 67.9.

27 - 69.4 to 72.8

Antietam Creek to Lock 38
Harry Robinson (4/13)
Towpath fairly clean with most trash from fisherman. Flowers beginning to bloom everywhere.

28 - 72.8 to 74
Lock 38 to Lock 39
John Frye (3/20)
Lock 39 sign still not repaired. Damaged at least 2 years.

32 - 81.6 to 84.4
Marsh Run Culvert to Dam 4
Bill Wentzel (3/4)
Level very clean with only branches to clear from path.

33 - 84.4 to 88.1
Dam 4 to McMahons Mill
Nick & Peggy Weber (3/14) Paul & Rita Marth (3/12)
Duck blinds between Dam 4 and boat ramp have been removed. Unusual trash noted was car battery, exhaust pipe and propane bottle. (3/14) Less trash than usual but area was still snow covered. (3/12)

34 - 88.1 to 91
McMahons Mill to Opequon Jct.
Tom & Linda Perry (4/22)
Remains of fire on towpath above 88. Spotted sluggish snake across towpath. Trimming needs to be done at HBO.

40 - 105 to 106.8
Nessle RR Bridge to Dam 5
Sheri Burdick (4/15)
Towpath and level very clean. Picked up 4 bags of trash.

42 - 108.8 to 110.4
Lock 47 to Culvert 142
John Ziegler (3/10)
Graffiti still defaces face of road culvert to McCoys Ferry. Although parking lot has been paved.

43 - 110.4 to 112.4
McCoys Ferry to Fort Frederick
Karen Gray (3/5)
Much improvement to towpath from NPS a welcome sight. First two culverts up from mile 111 continue to deteriorate.

44 - 112.4 to 114.5
Fort Frederick to Ernstville
Jane & Hal Larsen (3/12,4/30) Marlin Heintzelman (4/1)
Towpath very clean with birds noisy and busy staking their claims for spring. (3/12) Trees recently felled by beavers near Big Pool. Several fisherman. (4/1) More recent beaver cuttings at mile 113. Trees and flowers not completely in bloom. (4/30)

49 - 127.4 to 130.7
Roundtop Cement Mill to Lock 53
Norman McBurney (2/26)
Beaver lodge at 129.2 with fresh cuttings in area.

50 - 130 to 134
Lock 53 to Dam 6
Gren Whitman & Janice Plotczyk
Footbridge removed from Dam 6. Vandalism continues with more stones being removed from retaining wall.

51 - 134.1 to 136.6
Dam 6 to Sideling Hill
New beaver activity near Polly Pond. Beavers have felled tree blocking towpath.

58 - 154.5 to 156.2
Lock 63 1/3 to MD 51 bridge
Judie & Fred Mopsik (3/23)
Railing 500 ft. from north end of tunnel rotting and needs repair. Two

boulders fallen near north entrance next to towpath.

Ltle. Cacapon to Town Creek
Keith Kridenoff (4/29)
Again very little trash on this normally pristine level. Abundance of turtles watching Douglas hike going by.

61 - 162.3 to 164.8
Town Creek to Lock 68
Charles Ayres (4/29)
Board covering basement door to lockhouse broken.
Evidence of much beaver activity.

62 - 164.8 to 167
Lock 68 to Lock 71
Joyce & Len Skoglund (4/14)
Duck nest with eggs between Locks 69 and 70. Lift Lock 71 sign missing as well as shutter and fascia board from lockhouse. Beaver lodge being built at mile 165.

64 - 173.7 to 175.47
Oldtown to Spring Gap
Mary Twigg (3/25)
Culvert 223 has tree across it that needs to be removed.

65 - 173.37 to 175.47
Spring Gap to North Branch
Mary Twigg (3/12,13)
Very little trash along level mostly sticks and branches.

66 - 175.5 to 177.7
Lock 74 to Mexico Farms
Mary Twigg (2/19,3/12) Jim Sartwell (3/26)
Very little trash, towpath in good shape. (3/12) Prison is visible from towpath. Spotted many turtles as well as fresh beaver cuttings. (3/26)

67 - 177.7 to 180.7
Mexico Farms to Evitts Creek
Mary Twigg (2/17)
Some paper wrapping but mostly sticks on towpath.

68 - 180.7 to 182.6
Evitts Creek to Wiley Ford
Tom Conlon (4/16)
All mile markers on level have been repainted. Plywood on aqueduct is rotting and in need of repair.

68 & 69 - 180.7 to 184.5
Evitts Creek to Cumberland
Wayne Hargy (3/15)
Towpath relatively clean with only a few muddy spots from melting snow.

DAVE GARDNER'S HISTORY OF THE C & O CANAL CLASS OFFERED THIS FALL

Montgomery College will again be offering Dr. Dave Gardner's class on the history of the C & O Canal this fall. The class is scheduled for four Tuesday evening lectures from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. on September 19 and 26, and October 3 and 10, with two Saturday field trips on September 30 and October 7. The telephone number for Montgomery College is 301-279-5188.

SUMMARY OF THE FEBRUARY 12, 1995 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The minutes of the Board's meeting of February 12 1995 were not read, copies having been distributed by mail. John Frye noted that items 2 and 11 refer to "Lock 38", which should read "LOCK 33." As corrected, the minutes were approved as distributed, on motion by Helen Shaw. The report of the Treasurer was distributed and read by Dave Johnson. Reports of committee chairmen were made as follows:

1. Archives committee, Hal Larsen, Chair. Larsen's report was printed in ATP, March 1995 issue, p.14. Following extensive discussion of the report and Petrichick's memorandum in response, the Board established a Steering Committee to analyze and report to the Board resolution of the Archive situation as described by Larsen, and that the Board convene before its next regular meeting to visit the Archive. The Steering Committee is: Ken Rollins, Chair, Nancy Long, Norma Hendrickson, Fred Mopsik, Ellen Holway, Peggy Weber; Hal Larsen is ex officio member.

2. Program Committee, Sonny DeForge, Chairman, reported on plans for the Douglas Hike on April 29, 1995.

3. Membership Committee: William Bauman submitted Rita Bauman's sales report and inventory, and the items she had used at festivals and events. He then reported on numbers and types of membership. The Board determined that the list of "complimentary" members will be edited. On the question, "Is the Board in favor of publication of a new membership directory?" the question was denied.

Board member Tom Conlon resigned effective 4/1/95; the resignation was accepted with regret. Nominated to replace him were Ralph Donnelly and Hal Larsen; Donnelly was elected by ballot.

The Board heard remarks from new member Michael Ditzkoff, who had a number of suggestions for both publicizing the Association and increasing its membership. He was appointed Vice Chair of the Publications Committee.

The President requested that Karen Gray investigate the cost of a telephone/voice mail system for the association and report at the next meeting.

4. Publications Committee. Editor of *Along the Towpath*, Robert Perry, circulated a memorandum requesting funds for purchase of a computer. After extensive discussion,

the Board authorized up to \$2,600.00 for purchase by Perry, for publication of the newsletter, a computer, scanner, and software. Fred Mopsik reported on proposed redesign of the membership brochure; the final design is to be presented when the issue of an Association telephone number has been resolved.

5. Environmental Committee. Chair Ralph Donnelly suggested that a co-chair be appointed for the lower Canal; Fred Mopsik was appointed. Gary Petrichick reported that the mapping project is proceeding. Nancy Long reported on a proposal to remove NPS jurisdiction the Clara Barton Parkway from Washington, D.C. to the Beltway and transfer it to the State of Maryland, which may open it to trucks and increase the speed limit.

6. Other matters: Dave Johnson reported that the National Park Service plans to open the Cushwa Warehouse in Williamsport shortly and that the Rails to Trails organization is planning an inventory of canal corridors and canal remnants.

7. The next meeting of the Board is Sunday, June 25, 1995, 1:00 p.m., at the Williamsport Library, unless other arrangements can be made to visit the Archive and hold the meeting nearby.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

- submitted by Rachel Stewart, Secretary

C & O CANAL ASSOCIATION PATCHES FOR SALE



The Association has embroidered patches for sale. These 3 1/4 by 2 inch patches have green lettering and design on a gold background. The cost is \$1.85 including postage and handling for each patch.

(Maryland residents add \$.08 (5%) sales tax). To order, please complete the following and forward to:

C&O Canal Association,
O. Box 366, Glen Echo, MD, 20812-0366.

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____ for _____ patches.

Name _____
Address _____

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Event</u>
Monthly	Wed, Sat	<i>Sights and Sounds of the Seasons</i> nature walks are scheduled four times monthly on the first and last Wednesday and Saturday. Meet in Great Falls Tavern at 10 a.m.
Jun 25	Sun	Board Meeting, Williamsport Library, 1:00 p.m.
Jul 1-4	Sat-Tue	VA'95 - Appalachian Trail Conference biennial meeting in Harrisonburg, VA. The Association will have a table in the exhibit hall. Contact Jane Larsen (703-356-1809).
Jul 8	Sat	Canoe the River from Brunswick to Monocacy landing. Contact Carl Linden (301) 229-2398 or Ken Rollins (804) 448-2934.
Jul 15-16	Sat-Sun	Cumberland Canal Boat Festival. Contact John Millar (301-729-3136)
Aug 6	Sun	Board Meeting, Glen Echo Town Hall, 1:00 p.m.
Aug 26-27	Sat-Sun	Williamsport C&O Canal Days. Contact Tom Perry (301) 223-7010.
Sep 2	Sat	VIP Workday. Details later.
Sep 9	Sat	Canal Commission meeting.
		BIRD HIKE: Contact Pat Schindler (703-281-3399).
Sep 16-17	Sat-Sun	Annual overnight Paw Paw bends canoe trip. Contact Carl Linden (301) 229-2398 or Ken Rollins (804) 448-2934.
		Hancock Apple Festival. Contact John Popenoe (301-678-6379).
Sep 19	Tue	History of the C & O Canal Class by Dave Gardner begins at Montgomery College at 7:30 p.m. See announcement on page 8 of this issue. Phone 301-279-5188 for information.
Sep 24	Sun	Board Meeting, Williamsport Library, 1:00 p.m.
Oct 2-6	Mon-Fri	1995 International Historic Canals Conference & First Annual Southern Canals Conference. Augusta, Georgia.
Oct 7	Sat	VIP Day. Details later.
Oct 7-8	Sat-Sun	Brunswick Railroad Days
Oct 21	Sat	Annual Heritage Hike - Nolands Ferry to Brunswick. Details later.
Dec 2	Sat	Annual "FROSTBITE" HIKE. Contact Ken Rollins (804-448-2934).
Dec 3	Sun	Board Meeting, Glen Echo Town Hall, 1:00 p.m.
Dec 9	Sat	Canal Commission meeting.

1996

Feb 4	Sun	Board Meeting, Williamsport Library, 1:00 p.m.
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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS - continued

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Event</u>
Mar 2	Sat	C & O Canal Association Annual Meeting, Williamsport
Mar 9	Sat	Canal Commission meeting
Apr 7	Sun	Board Meeting, Glen Echo Town Hall, 1:00 p.m.
Jun 27-30	Th-Sat	World Conference. Birmingham, UK. Dates provisional.

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AN OPEN INVITATION

Ken Rollins has often reminisced that during the early years of the Association, members would gather to camp out on the eve of events like the Douglas Hike, a tradition that has unfortunately lapsed in recent years. Because Nancy and I face a six hour drive, Saturday morning arrival for Association events was out of the question. Our solution was to come down Friday to camp overnight at the nearest Canal facility.

For the past four years we've been pretty much alone, but two years ago we began getting company for the Paw Paw Bends canoe trip, and this year Bob and Jane Perry and Ken joined us for the Douglas Hike. To our surprise, at least a dozen people commented to us before, during and after the hike that they wished they had thought of camping.

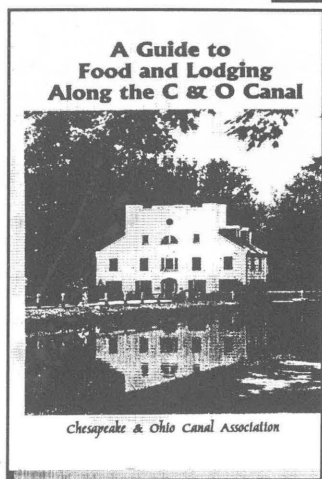
Since we will definitely be camping the night before the October 21st Heritage Hike, we hereby proclaim ourselves hosts and extend an invitation to one and all to join us. In addition to affording yourself an extra hour or two of sleep Saturday morning, you get the chance to join in the festive camaraderie of the late night campfire.

The hike from Nolands Ferry to Brunswick makes the Brunswick Town Park campground a perfect location. For those not familiar with the Town Park, drive down toward the boat launch area and turn left after crossing the Canal. Lock 30 will be on your left. Continue one mile down the towpath, a dirt road at this point, and the campground will be on your right. The fee is \$8.00 per night for two tents and if we can get a group of 25 to 30 people, the fee is only \$25.00. We have made arrangements to camp around the large picnic pavilion for protection in case of rain.

Brunswick has several fine restaurants for those (like ourselves) who would rather not cook breakfast in camp. And even if you don't have a long drive home after dinner, consider staying Saturday night too. Why pack all that gear for only one night?

Along with your camping gear, bring your own snacks and beverages. Our hosting obligations start and end with the issuance of the invitation. See you there.

Nancy and Gary Petrichick



FOOD AND LODGING GUIDE AVAILABLE

Copies of the C & O Canal Association publication are available to members at a cost of \$2.30 per copy, including postage and handling. **Maryland residents must add 8 cents sales tax, \$2.38 for each copy.** To order, please include the following:

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$_____ for _____ copies of *A Guide to Food and Lodging Along the C & O Canal*. Please mail to :

Name: _____
Address: _____

BOOK REVIEW CORNER

THE AMERICAN DISCOVERY TRAIL EXPLORER'S GUIDE; Reese Lukei, Jr., General Editor; 1995, American Hiking Society; 128 pp, color photos and maps; \$14.05.

We have been following the development of the American Discovery Trail (ADT) for several years. The route that has evolved stretches for 6,357 miles from Cape Henlopen, Delaware, to Point Reyes, California. It follows the C & O Canal towpath for 167 miles, from Georgetown to Oldtown. Between Cincinnati and Denver, the trail divides into northern and southern routes.

This guidebook highlights the course of the ADT state-by-state and features a general route description, color photographs, trails illustrated maps, and a comprehensive listing of local trail systems and resources along the route. It provides a general overview of where the trail is located, enabling the reader to identify some of the natural, cultural, historic and scenic features along the way. (It is not a step-by-step guide; a comprehensive five-volume series of books is under development and will be published as the trail is completely located and marked, probably beginning in 1997.)

Reese Lukei is the American Hiking Society's national coordinator for the ADT. He is past president of the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club, a past board member of the Appalachian Trail Conference, and has hiked in all fifty states.

The ADT Explorer's Guide will be available from the American Hiking Society, and soon should appear in bookstores.

-- Dave Johnson

The Blue Hills of Maryland: History along the Appalachian Trail on South Mountain and the Catocins. By Paula M. Strain, (Vienna, Va.: Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 1993, 307pp, Illustrations, photos, maps, sources. \$14.00 paper.)

Thomas Jefferson was not alone in his admiration for the spectacular water gap at Harpers Ferry, where the Potomac River intersects the westernmost of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Millions of us have shared his enthusiastic appreciation of the site (and sight). Nearby is another intersection, that of the Appalachian Trail and the C & O Canal towpath. This latter crossing is embodied in Paula M. Strain who is a member both of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and of the C & O Canal Association. My acquaintance with Paula dates from a number of years ago when she took my C & O Canal course at Montgomery College. My strongest memory of her is the struggle I had trying to keep up with her as we hiked back through the Paw Paw Tunnel on one of our field trips for that course. Believe me, this woman can **walk**.

The book was reviewed in the Maryland Historical Magazine (Spring, 1994) where the reviewer wrote in part:

Paula M. Strain courageously tackles the rich historical endowment of Maryland's Blue Ridge from its most advantageous perch: the Appalachian Trail. To her and her comrades of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, and its parent Appalachian Trail Conference (bless them), we owe a considerable debt of gratitude for binding the region together with their mountaintop pathway.

Without question, South Mountain constitutes the state's

historical spine. First of its kind, this book describes in agreeable detail the myriad variety that unfolded on its blue- green slopes and throughout its adjacent valleys. Here, too, one fully grasps the mountain's embodiment of Maryland's crossroads of the Civil War, its premiere attraction. Virtually every conceivable point of interest is enthusiastically embraced without hesitation or bias.

The reviewer for MHM goes on to suggest that with additional editing, this volume could be the first of a sequence of periodically updated editions comparable to the series of Tom Hahn's **Towpath Guide**.

Note: Members of the C & O Canal Association will be participating in the **VA'95 - Appalachian Trail Conference** at Harrisonburg, VA July 1-4 as noted in the March issue of *Along the Towpath*.

-- Dave Gardner

NEW MEMBERS SINCE 2/10/95

KEVIN P. ADAMS
JAMES R. ALDEN
THOMAS N. BETHELL
JOHN W. BETTING
ARTHUR BRUESTLE
PHIL BUDIG
LYNDA & WILLIAM CONWAY
GRETCHEN CORBIN
LEE DION
DAVID & JACKIE FOWLER
GEOFFREY E. GRANT
JAY GREELY
SLAINE D. HALL
GERALD HERZ
GEORGE & CINDY HOMEWOOD
CHARLES K. JOHNSON
EDDIE KERNS
LARRY LOGAN
REED MARTIN
MRS. JUDY ANN MC DUFFIE
MARY MC LEOD
WALTER S. MC MANN
DR. CONSTANTINE MENGES
MARY ANN & JIM MOEN
WINONA MONTGOMERY
TONY & DIANA MORRIS
JIM & PATRICIA MULLEN
NANCY A. NICOLETTI
CHARLES D. PIERCE
NANCY H. POWELL
WILLIAM C. PREHN
BARBARA A. RAUCH
TOM REID
JAMES C. RIMMEL
HELEN SCHUILING
JUDITH SHIPLEY
DAVID L. SUTHERLAND
EUGENE J. TALLIA
DELEGATE CASPER R. TAYLOR, JR.
BETTIE W. THOMPSON
F. JOSEPH TOBEY THE 3RD
PAUL S. WALCZAK
DR. GUS WEISS
MARK E. WHEATLEY
SEAN YARUP

BETHESDA MD
MADISON NJ
WASHINGTON DC
ALTOONA PA
BETHESDA MD
ALEXANDRIA VA
PITTSBURGH PA
ROCKVILLE MD
E. HAMPTON NY
POTOMAC MD
BETHESDA MD
BETHESDA MD
KEY LARGO FL
ROCKVILLE MD
WILLIAMSBURG VA
BETHESDA MD
WINCHESTER VA
HANCOCK MD
CABIN JOHN MD
GAITHERSBURG MD
BETHESDA MD
BERRYVILLE VA
WASHINGTON DC
LAVALE MD
WHEATON MD
ANNAPOLIS MD
WOODBRIIDGE VA
ARLINGTON VA
WINCHESTER VA
BETHESDA MD
ELKRIDGE MD
BALTIMORE MD
FALLS CHURCH VA
GERMANTOWN MD
LEESBURG VA
WASHINGTON DC
SILVER SPRING MD
POTOMAC MD
CUMBERLAND MD
BETHESDA MD
GETTYSBURG PA
MIDDLETOWN RI
WASHINGTON DC
TAKOMA PARK MD
GAITHERSBURG MD

MYSTERY ON THE TOWPATH

This is a love story, sort of: Expertly cut into a coping stone at Lock No. 2 is the assertion:

TE
< AMO >
PA

With the admittedly politically incorrect, though not unreasonable, presumption that the stone cutter was a male, who was he and what was he telling us? For one thing, he was surely a skilled craftsman, not just in the perfectly inscribed letters, but also in the cutting and placement of the two small darts on either side of the second line. The unknown artisan took every advantage of the nature of the stone itself which is Aquia Creek sandstone, often called Virginia freestone by the canal stone masons for the freedom with which it could be cut and carved.

As for the message, it appears to be in Spanish: *Te Amo* means *I love you*. It is a proclamation of love. As modern suitors might use spray paint or sky writers, our stone cutter used stone. And what of the object of his desire, *PA*? Was it *I love you PAULA*, *I love you PATRICIA*, *I love you PAULINA*? We'll never know. My theory is that right about then MARIA CLEMENCIA walked by and the amorous stone cutter's life took a different direction.

This charming artifact is very accessible: The inscription is on a coping stone on the berm side of Lock No. 2 a little upstream from the midpoint of the lock. It is within a stone's throw of 30th Street in Georgetown.



-- Photograph and article by Dave Gardner

1995 CONTRIBUTORS TO THE DAVIES LEGAL FUND AND THE C & O CANAL FUND

The following is a list of persons not mentioned in the March edition of *Along the Towpath* who have contributed to the various funds:

Davies Legal Fund

R. Justin Deforge	Bethesda, MD
David M. Johnson	Bethesda, MD
Mrs. Win M. Proudman	Chevy Chase, MD
Harold A. Larsen	McLean, VA
William J. Evans	Baltimore, MD
Ellen N. Holway	Rockville, MD

C & O Canal Fund

R. Justin Deforge	Bethesda, MD
David M. Johnson	Bethesda, MD
Harold A. Larsen	McLean, VA
William J. Evans	Baltimore, MD
Carl A. Linden	Bethesda, MD

The following list comprises contributions received after the closing date for the last newsletter:

Davies Legal Fund

Anne Pahl Wright	Rockville, MD
Emma R. Dieter	Washington, DC

C & O Canal Fund

Douglas W. and Norma W. Sharp	Kings Mountain, NC
Robert and Marianne Smyth	Chevy Chase, MD
Maureen Williams	Germantown, MD
Nathaniel P. Breed, Jr.	Washington, DC
Emma R. Dieter	Washington, DC
Virginia L. Evans	Potomac, MD
Edwin M. Martin	Washington, DC
Mr. and Mrs. Carl F. Norden	Washington, DC
Mark Docterman	Stone Mountain, GA
Elizabeth D. Hillenbrand	Bethesda, MD
Thomas J. Patton	Falls Church, VA
James F. McAndrews	Towson, MD
John G. and Miriam B. Reed	Bethesda, MD
Rockwood F. Foster	Washington, DC

Monocacy Aqueduct Fund

Nathaniel P. Breed, Jr.	Washington, DC
James W. and Elaine Clarke	Rockville, MD
Mr. and Mrs. Paul R. Davis	Potomac, MD
Emma R. Dieter	Washington, DC
David R. Gardner	Gaithersburg, MD
Mark Docterman	Stone Mountain, GA
Charles J. Weir	Oakton, VA
Patricia Ann White	Gaithersburg, MD
Steven M. Dean	Lexington Park, MD
John J. and Judith Looney	Princeton, NJ
David F. Engstrom	Laytonsville, MD

THE 1994 HERITAGE HIKE

On Saturday, October 22, about 50 people boarded the bus at Edward's Ferry to begin the 1994 Heritage Hike. After a brief stop at Sycamore Landing to pick up a few more hikers, the bus arrived at Pennyfield Lock, the official beginning of this years hike. There, about 60 or so people started the walk back to their cars at either Sycamore Landing or Edwards Ferry.

The weather was ideal: warm (70 degrees F.) with a gentle breeze blowing in from the Potomac. At many stretches of the towpath the view of the flawless blue sky, through the canopy of trees adorned with their multi-colored leaves, was glorious.

Details of the many points of interest along the way are described in Tom Hahn's books and are not repeated here.

Many walkers stopped for lunch at either Riley's Lock or just beyond the bridge over Seneca Creek where there are numerous picnic tables. At lunch we were joined by Carl Linden, our Association President, and bearer of the Association's official flag. Continuation of our hike to Edward's Ferry was slowed by a leisurely lunch in a beautiful setting and a minor injury to my wife's ankle, when she stepped into a leaf-covered pothole. Thus, Carl, my wife, and I were sweepers of the hike although the officially designated sweeper was Marlowe MacCoy.

Several of the hikers who stopped at Sycamore Landing to reclaim their cars expressed regret in not completing the entire hike, in view of the perfect weather and easy transit.

There were two incidents that marred an otherwise superlative hike. The first was the numerous bicyclists who shared the towpath. A few were polite enough to warn of their approach. Most, however, just sped by without any warning. This unpleasant situation was not only an annoyance on the Heritage Hike, but is a continuous problem for those of us who hike the various stretches of the towpath regularly on weekends. If anyone has a solution to this problem, please send your suggestion to the Association.

The other unpleasant experience was the unexpected (by the planning committee) long wait at White's Ferry to board the General Jugal Early for crossing the Potomac to Virginia and Leesburg (site of the dinner). Unfortunately, Carl Linden, who had the liquid refreshments for *Happy Hour* at the Volunteer Fire Department in Leesburg, was greatly delayed by the heavy traffic at the Ferry, arriving a short time before dinner was served.

An amusing event occurred at White's Ferry. A driver caught in the long line waiting to board the Ferry did not move his car along as the vehicles in front of him progressed. In fact, many an irate driver had to drive around him. Finally, someone from our group stopped and recognized the Canal Commissioner and Association member Ed Miller was the driver -- fast asleep.

The late refreshments and dinner at the Leesburg Fire Hall were delicious and provided a most happy ending to our 1994 Heritage Hike. The after-dinner speaker was Mike Howlett, former president of the Virginia Canals and Navigation Society. He presented an instructional and interesting account of George Washington's efforts to push for a waterway to the West. Washington was concerned about the possible French incursions into the Ohio River Valley. To prevent this from occurring, he promulgated enhancing river transportation to the West.

I believe each one of us who participated in the Hike experienced an enrichment and enjoyment of our lives, and we look forward to future Heritage Hikes with great pleasure.

-- Eugene C. Weinbach



The above photograph of canal construction near the Paw Paw Tunnel is one of three from originals on glass contributed for scanning by Mr. and Mrs. Bill Miller, owners of the Paw Paw Patch B & B in Paw Paw and members of the Association. The photographs are now on diskette for our future use, thanks to the Millers.

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal

National Historical Park



The Washington Aqueduct

The Washington Aqueduct is the first public water system of the District of Columbia. Built by the Army Corps of Engineers from 1853 to 1863, it is a monumental achievement and a tribute to the brilliance of its designer and developer, Montgomery C. Meigs. In 1852 the evergrowing population of Washington, and the memory of two devastating fires, forced the U.S. Congress into the realization that the nation's capital required more than the wells and springs that were its current source of water.

In November of 1853 ground was broken at Great Falls, Maryland for a public water system for Washington. Meig's plan was to divert the waters of the Potomac River, at a point 12 miles upriver from Georgetown, into a brick conduit. With the aid of gravity and pumping stations the water would be carried through the conduit to retaining reservoirs where it could then be pumped to the pipelines of the city.

Accomplishing this feat required construction of a masonry dam across the Potomac, a control gatehouse at Great Falls, a 12 mile conduit, 11 tunnels, 6 bridges, pump stations, pipelines, and 2 reservoirs! Supplies including cast iron, sand, concrete, brick and Seneca sandstone were brought to the construction site by wagon or by boat on the C&O Canal. The aqueduct's dam on the Potomac was originally built only halfway across. The District's increasing demand for water resulted in the dam's extension to the Virginia side between 1884 and 1885. Built of cut stone, the dam was anchored to the river floor, not to block the flow but to divert it.

The original intake works along the

shoreline of the Potomac are largely covered by two succeeding expansions.

In the mid-1920's a second conduit was added to increase the capacity of the system, and the intake was enlarged and modernized. The final expansion in the 1970's produced the building and observation deck that stand on the original location today. Four "gates" allow water diverted behind the dam to enter the two conduits by gravity flow. A small portion of the original sandstone intake is still visible on the shoreline.

The first gatehouse, although no longer in service, stands next to the Great Falls Tavern. The red sandstone used as the building material was quarried just eight miles west in Seneca, Maryland. Inside was a system of 20 small cast iron slide gates, which were operated by threaded hand wrenches and filtered the largest debris from the water.

The conduit is the largest single structure of the water system. It stretches almost 12 miles downriver from the intake at Great Falls to the Georgetown Reservoir. This circular tube, built of brick, stone, and mortar, is 9 feet in diameter. Construction of the conduit was by tunneling or by deep rock cuts. A road was built parallel to the conduit to facilitate cleaning repairs and inspections. The road was originally named Conduit Road, but today it is called MacArthur Boulevard.



There were 6 bridges built as part of the original Washington Aqueduct water system, carrying the conduit over streams and creeks. Only three: Bridge #3, the old Cabin John bridge (also called Union Arch bridge), and Rock Creek bridge remain in full view today. The latter two enjoyed much acclaim at the time of their construction. Cabin John, built of timber, granite, and sandstone held the record for the longest masonry arch in the world for 40 years...220 feet. Rock Creek employed the use of cast iron pipes, not only to transport the water of a city but also to support a span for vehicular traffic. Today its arch of 200 feet is still one of the longest unsupported metal pipe arches in the world.

The water of the Aqueduct spilled into 2 reservoirs, Dalecarlia Reservoir at the District line and the Georgetown Reservoir two miles downriver. It was hoped that by allowing the murky river water to remain in these reservoirs that the material carried in suspension would settle to the bottom before distribution to the city. Such was not the case. Washington City's public water was destined to have a muddy yellowish color until rapid-sand filtration was adopted in 1928. Today Dalecarlia has been completely modernized, and the Georgetown Reservoir is a sedimentation basin with filtration completed at another location.

Amazingly the Washington Aqueduct, constructed over 140 years ago, is still serving the nation's capital its public water. Over the decades its capacity has been expanded many times, modern filtration has been implemented and fluoride added. With 1.1 million customers, the Aqueduct produces 300 million gallons of filtered water per day and has a storage capacity of 44 million gallons. The Aqueduct provides public water for all of Washington, Arlington County, and Falls Church; 50 square miles of Fairfax County; and all federal installations including the Pentagon, Fort Meyer, Andrews Airforce Base, the Defense Mapping Agency, and National Airport!



NPS Handout by NPS Ranger and Association member Susan Fauntleroy