

ALONG THE TOWPATH

A quarterly publication of the
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association

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

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NUMBER 3

Heritage Hike to Feature Historic Fort Frederick

by Bob Perry

On October 28, we will hike in the western part of the canal towpath, with the day's activities centered on Fort Frederick. The massive stone fort, built to protect settlers on the frontier during the French and Indian period, is celebrating its 250th Anniversary (1756). (Read "Accompanied by the Past" in this issue by Karen Gray for geographical and historical information).

Arrive whenever you like since this year there will be no bus taking us to begin our hikes; instead we will walk up or downstream in the fort's vicinity and, hopefully, spend time at the Visitor Center, the CCC museum, the Fort itself (there will be a \$3.00 entrance fee to go inside) and the Sutler store.

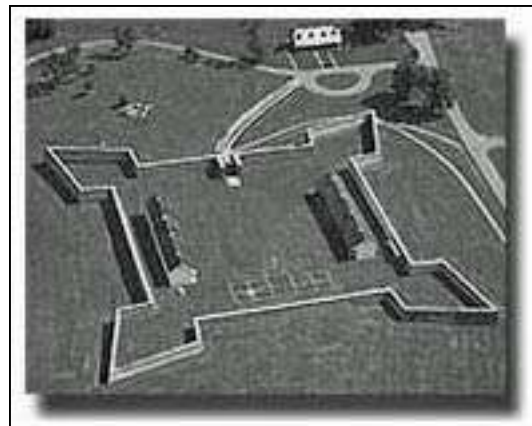
The new manager of Fort Frederick State Park, Angela Hummer, will have park personnel and guides in period costume on hand to welcome and interpret for us. Please bring a drink and bag lunch, but we are assured that the store will have light fare available for purchase.

Our banquet will be held at the Clear Spring American Legion, with happy hour cash bar at 4:30 p.m. followed by supper at 5:30 p.m. The Big Slackwater Restoration Committee will have displays in place and will have a brief presentation following the meal. The reservation form for the banquet is included in this issue.

Here are the directions to Fort Frederick: Take I-70 west to the Big Pool Exit. At the end of the exit ramp, turn left

onto Route 56. It is about a mile to the entrance to the park, on your right. The upper road goes to the Fort, the lower to the Visitor Center, which has more parking and is a good place to begin.

From Fort Frederick to the American Legion in Clear Spring: Exit the park and turn right onto Route 56. At Big Spring, Route 56 veers to the right. Do not take it; hang to the left and Big Spring Road will bring you to the American Legion in about a mile, on your right. Parking surrounds three sides of the building, and the entrance is to the front.



Fort Frederick, *above*, in a Maryland Department of Natural Resources aerial photograph.



Left: The new canal boat, *Charles F. Mercer*, arrived by truck at Great Falls. Learn more inside, beginning on p. 10

PARTNERS AND PROJECTS

Getting Our Hands Into History At the Catoctin Aqueduct

by George Lewis

Our association's partnership with the Catoctin Aqueduct Restoration Fund, Inc. and the C&O Canal National Historical Park to rebuild what was once known as the *Most Beautiful Aqueduct on the Line*, the Catoctin Aqueduct, is actively facilitating local and national awareness of the uniqueness of the C&O Canal and its urgent and special needs. Along the way, our unified effort is attracting hundreds of generous donations to restore the Catoctin Aqueduct.

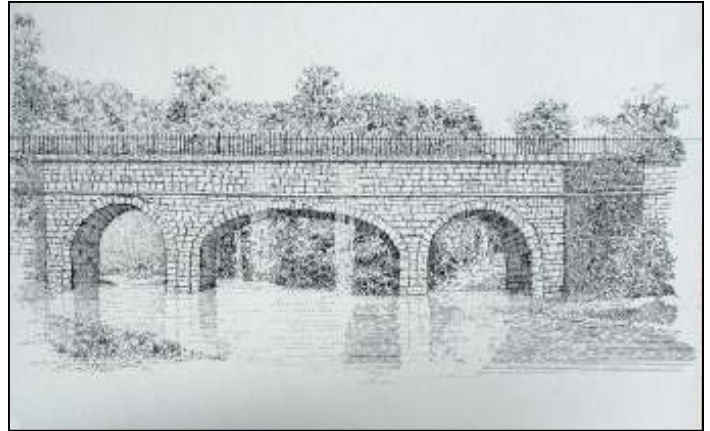
The project's robust schedule calls for the raising of \$1.25 million by mid-February 2007, construction to begin in the spring of 2008, and for participants of the COCA-organized 55th Justice Douglas Hike—The Hike that Created a Park—to cut the dedication ribbon on the restored Catoctin Aqueduct in March 2009. To date, our efforts have raised \$680,00 in cash/pledges and legislative bills from a variety of sources, the majority of which are wonderful individual donors just itching for the satisfaction of getting their hands into history.

Thus, we have left to raise \$570,000 between now and mid-February 2007 (six short months) in order to qualify the project to apply for a matching grant of \$1.25 million from the Maryland State Highway Authority.

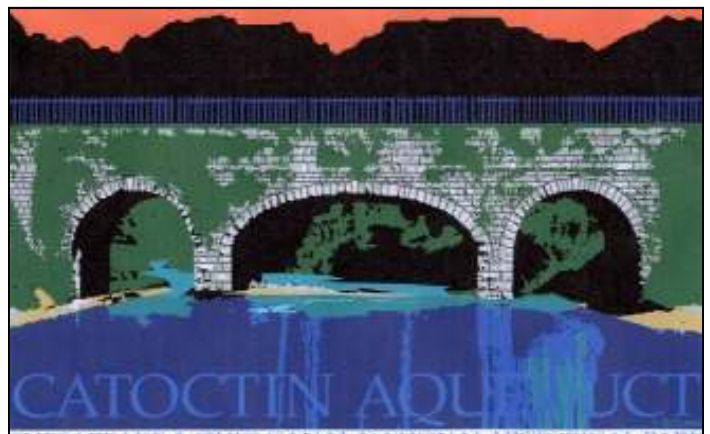
In fact, all hands are needed to help these old mules stay on the towpath, to pull our project load the full distance, and to assure that they meet you as we have planned – just up prism from the old snubbing post at the Catoctin Aqueduct – in full celebration, in March 2009.

To further support funding the restoration of the aqueduct, our association has very attractive Catoctin Aqueduct collector mugs available for your purchase. In addition, COCA is raffling two beautifully framed, signed and numbered prints of original Catoctin Aqueduct works of art: one by internationally acclaimed C&O Canal *Artist in Residence* Tom Kozar, and one by an internationally acclaimed designer and illustrator of numerous U.S. postage stamps, Tom Engeman (images of both, to the right.)

All proceeds from the mugs and art work go to the restoration of the Catoctin Aqueduct. Contact Rita Bauman at wdbauman@visuallink.com to arrange for purchase of both mugs and raffle tickets.



The Catoctin Aqueduct, as rendered by internationally acclaimed C&O Canal *Artist in Residence* Tom Kozar.



The Catoctin Aqueduct as imagined by Tom Engeman, internationally acclaimed designer and illustrator of numerous U.S. postage stamps.

Pontoon Boat Flotilla Views Big Slack Towpath Break

By Carl Linden

Tom Perry and his Big Slackwater Committee staged a splendid inspection tour by water to examine the big break in the C&O Canal towpath along Big Slackwater. Tom could not have chosen a finer summer's day than Saturday, August 12 to stage the event. The sun was bright, the sky, deep blue, the temperature, mild and the humidity, way down.

Our host, the Opequon Izaak Walton League, provided a flotilla of spacious and comfortable pontoon to carry the fifty or so people who were present for the occasion. The contingent of "inspectors" included local officials, elected representatives, invited guests and a number of Association members. C&O Canal NHP Superintendent Kevin Brandt was also on board, sharing his knowledge and expertise on what needs to be done to restore the towpath at Big Slackwater.

The excursion was delightful. The Potomac scenery was magnificent. A cool refreshing breeze played upon the river. Someone might have asked: "Were all these people gliding down the river really on business, or on a grand tour of the Potomac?"

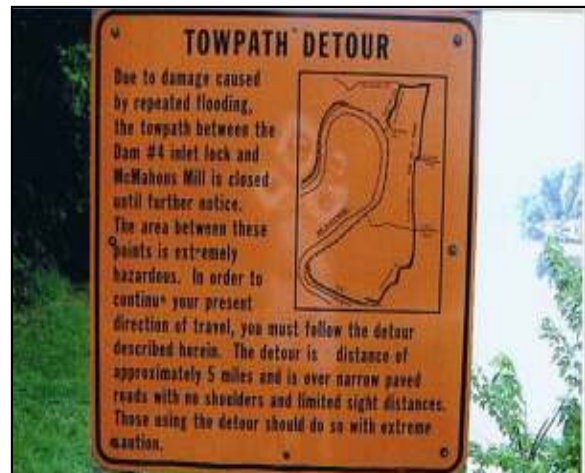
In any case, the flotilla headed down river and entered the inspection zone at McMahon's Mill at mile 88 on the towpath. Here, the break in the towpath begins and extends along the shoreline for about one-and-a-third miles. The boats skirted close to shore, enabling everyone on board to get a good *and safe* viewing of the perilous condition of the towpath. An inspection tour on foot of this section of towpath would be hazardous. The towpath here runs close against the rocky cliffs of the river palisade. The narrow passage between river and cliff is strewn with debris, entangled foliation, and at some points disappears into the river. The stone wall and under girding that supported the towpath is in ruins as a result of years of the destructive action of storm and flood.

The inspection tour dramatized the Big Slackwater Committee's mission to create "public awareness of the need to restore the towpath in the area of Big Slackwater." The Big Slackwater break is by far the biggest gap in the towpath along its 185-mile length. Towpath continuity is essential for the integrity and unity of the park. Moreover, the long detour people have to take around Big Slackwater on heavily trafficked county roads without shoulders is a manifest safety hazard for all who travel the C&O Canal, whether they be individual cyclists, or hikers, or groups like the Boy Scouts— or, for that matter, our Association in its quinquennial Cumberland-to-Washington treks to mark the 1954 Douglas Hike to save the Canal. Slackwater begins at mile 85.

The last time we were able to hike through the Big Slackwater section was in 1994, and even then it was a challenge.

The down river leg of our river journey ended at Dam #4, where the Big Slackwater begins at mile 85. The return trip was equally enjoyable. We docked at the Opequon Izaak Walton League marina, located at the junction of the Opequon and the Potomac on West Virginia shore not far from Williamsport.

Our appetites were whetted by the river journey. We all enjoyed the lunch our hosts kindly prepared for us – grilled hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, all the fixings and a variety of beverages. Our members and all the guests who attended the event were most appreciative of our hosts' generosity, warm hospitality and good fellowship. We were impressed by their readiness to go all out in lending their support to the effort to see the towpath at Big Slackwater restored. With such support the Big Slackwater campaign will be on its way to success.



Above: The McMahon's Mill towpath detour sign.
(Photo: Linda Perry)



L-R: Julianna N. Albowicz, Kevin Brandt, Tim Magrath, Tom Riford, Delegate John Overington, Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, Senator Donald F. Munson, James McCleaf and Delegate Robert McKee.
(Photo: Marlow Madeoy)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

VIP Program Continues

By Jim Heins

Come rain or shine, cold or hot, windy or calm – all of which we seem to have experienced at one time or another this year – stalwart members of COCA have stepped up to the plate to provide some excellent results at the scheduled VIP projects to date.

On June 10, 17 members provided 81 hours of work repairing, restoring and painting the mule barn at Great Falls. In addition, considerable vegetation was removed, along with the cleaning out of some long-unattended gutters. Thanks to support from another local group, the results were outstanding.

On July 8, eight members did a fine job of refurbishing an area at Carderock, removing an ill-advised set of steps and returning the area to its natural condition.

On August 12, nine members and four non-members paid a second visit this year to Georgetown, repainting much of the area, which was desperately in need of attention. Our next project will be giving the mule barn at Great Falls a second coat of paint on September 23.

A small core of volunteers continues to be the mainstay of the VIP program. Steve DeLanoy and I keep hoping that more of our membership will be able to find the time to share some of their talent and effort with us on occasion as we strive to help the C&O Canal NHP personnel try to maintain the park, particularly in these times of a diminishing budget for maintenance and a reduction in staff. At any time you feel you can help out, let us know by contacting Jim Heins or Steve DeLanoy at c&ocanalvip@toyhouse.org, or call Jim at 301-949-3518.



A hard-working group of VIPs after the Carderock project.

L-R, Mike Cianciosi, Bill Burton, Rod Mackler, Steve DeLanoy, Barbara Sheridan, Skip Magee, Ron Howard and Ray Mushal. (Photo: Dave Tune, NPS)

Environmental Committee Report

By Fred Mopsik

There is not too much to report since the last issue of *Along the Towpath* as there has been no announcement following the comment period of the draft Environmental Assessment (EA.) There were many interesting filings, including one from the National Trust for Historic Preservation claiming that historical review procedures were not being properly followed. Others, including the D.C. Historic Preservation Office, said the same thing. This is in addition to the environmental concerns for which we were demanding an Environmental Impact Statement.

The current feeling is that, given the historic review requirements that the draft EA did not address, even if a decision is made on this EA, there still will be ample time for further action. While this period can end without much notice, as was the case earlier this year, we can only await further action by NPS.



Painting the Mule Barn at Great Falls.

L-R: Barbara Sheridan, Ruth Sexton and Mike Cianciosi. (Photo: Dave Tune, NPS)

Rail-to-Trail News

By Emmie Woodward

The Western Maryland Rail Trail Supporters Group is awaiting arrangements for an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the stretch from Pearre (current terminus) to Paw Paw, which will be called Phase Four of the development of the trail.

The State of Maryland has appropriated \$5 million to pave from Pearre through the 4,350 ft.-long Indigo Tunnel to Little Orleans. A \$30,000 grant was awarded to Morgan County, West Virginia, from the National Park Service toward this EA. The grant must be matched, but in-kind contributions are acceptable.

NEWS & REPORTS

Canal Staff Faces Hard Task Keeping Park Viable

By Carl Linden

The C&O Canal NHP staff held a three-day-long planning meeting (July 11 – 13) devoted to a growing challenge in sustaining the Park's essential operations in the next few years. Superintendent Kevin Brandt kindly invited Nancy Long and me to take part in the meeting's sessions. The meeting was highly informative and revealed in detail the dimensions of the predicament that our C&O Canal National Historical Park faces.

A continuing flat budget has forced the park to reduce its personnel one by one. The required adjustment of salaries and benefits upward to cover inflation makes it necessary to gradually reduce staff to meet the available payroll. The cadre is now less than a third of the contingent needed to run the park well. Over the past decade it has been cut by half. Now, only ninety are left to struggle to keep the park intact. The prospect of recouping the personnel shortfall is bleak.

The participants focused on how to maintain the park's "core" missions, how to eliminate non-essential activities, cut costs, and seek more help from partners and volunteers. The attendees, manifestly a talented and dedicated lot, did some hard thinking about what can be done to keep the park a going concern. First the participants discussed the issue in general, and then in detail in sub-committees representing the park's various divisions.

Maintenance of Canal Structures is Key

As Chair of our Special Projects Committee, it made sense for me to sit in with the members of the maintenance division. It is obvious that the maintenance of park structures is fundamental to sustaining the integrity of the C&O Canal NHP.

Eric Hoffer, the stevedore who became a philosopher, wrote an essay titled, "Maintenance," and argued that civilizations cannot be sustained if maintenance falters. This is also true of our national parks, and especially our park, with its 1,300 structures and among these roughly two-thirds we cannot afford to lose. These are the eleven aqueducts, the Paw Paw Tunnel, the many culverts, locks, canal walls, and flood control features. The towpath itself is not a country path, but a work of canal technology. All these structural elements are key links in the continuity of the C&O Canal. If these structures cannot be maintained, the park will fall into ruin.

In this connection, the park cannot afford to lose any of its experienced and highly qualified maintenance personnel. This talented crew is fighting a hard battle to sustain the continuity of the park. The park simply cannot afford to lose links in the 185-mile chain of canal structures and remain one continuous national park. Some five percent of all the notable historical structures of all the parks taken together are found in our C&O Canal National Historical Park. They are not just monuments of the great canal era, but remain essential to the physical integrity of the park.

In committee, the members of the maintenance division displayed their ingenuity in coming up with ways and means of keeping the Canal from falling into ruin and collapse. But without reinforcements they may, despite heroic efforts, prove to be in the midst of a losing battle. The need to find additional qualified personnel to strengthen their ranks is pressing. But their ranks are getting thin. For example, one long-time expert member of the maintenance division, Steve Schwartz, who worked on project planning and obtaining project funds, is retiring. A good replacement will be hard to find even if his position is not lost.

How Can the Association Help?

The Association can help by being advocates for, and stewards of, this unique park that ventures westward from our nation's capital and is the last unbroken right of way of the great American canal era. It is the only one of its kind in the whole system of our national parks. It has been the mission of the Association from its inception to speak for the Canal, and to be defenders of its integrity as an historical national park. We also need to persist in our efforts to support projects on the canal that are in sore need of doing. Our recent success in seeing that the Monocacy Aqueduct and the break in the towpath at Widewater were repaired shows the way. We will work for similar successes in the current effort that Tom Perry is leading to get the ruined section of the towpath at Big Slackwater restored, as well as in George Lewis's campaign to reconstruct the Catoclin Aqueduct, felled by flood in the early Seventies.

In both instances, local constituencies are coming out in strong support of these projects. Tom Perry has brought together a representative committee of local officials and leading citizens. George Lewis has also garnered similar support for the Catoclin in Frederick County.

(Continued on p. 7)

FROM THE ASSOCIATION

From the President

On August 12, along with members of the board of directors and state, local and federal dignitaries, I witnessed the devastation of the towpath in the Big Slackwater area. We have embarked on a project, the value of which cannot be overestimated. As one observer noted toward the end of the event, "We should now walk the detour area." Thought I, "No thanks!" Consider this safety issue: the narrow highway contains many limited sight areas where it is difficult for drivers to see hikers and bikers traveling the detour. Just how many accidents have occurred, and how many of those accidents involved hikers or bikers, I do not know. Here's what I do know: the unsafe condition that currently exists must be eliminated. We want no accidents, injuries or fatalities. As well, the towpath must be once again continuous from Cumberland to Georgetown.

Today's event was a great success in that it provided awareness through on-site knowledge of the condition of the towpath which is otherwise not visible from the shore. We viewed a towpath obscured by trees and other vegetation taking over from what once was a stone retaining wall. We witnessed deterioration, areas with little or no supporting wall, and areas in which exists no remnant of a towpath. Above the detour at McMahon's Mill on the currently passable towpath, it was distressing to view undermining of the stone wall supporting the towpath which, if left unattended, will likely result in a greater length of detour. Unfortunate? Yes, but these sights provide the perspective and the strong rationale for our cause. *No Slack At Big Slack!*

We owe thanks for the many hours of planning and hard work on the part of the Big Slackwater Restoration Committee that provided this educational outing. Committee members include: Chairman Tom Perry, Ken and Pat Heck, Charlotte Loveless, Mayor James McCleaf, Carl Pedersen and John Ziegler. From road signs marking the way to boarding the boats, the event went without a flaw. Their work has just begun and the road ahead is arduous. Thanks, too, to the Opequon Izaak Walton League for providing their boats and skippers, for hot dogs and hamburgers, and for hosting the awareness event.

Finally, we need your support for the long haul. To ensure a viable solution that provides a continuous towpath that is sustainable through floods and the elements, this project will require many years and much work. We will succeed. As I said a year or so ago, "You did it for the Monocacy Aqueduct. Now it's time for Big Slackwater." I trust that you will continue to support C&OCAs efforts through your ideas and through your financial contributions, and perhaps your involvement with the committee.

- Bob

From the Editor

A publication is only as good as what's between its covers, and folks who put publications together like to hear ideas from readers for what should be included in future issues. If you have an idea for an *Along the Towpath* article or photo, please send an email to editor@candocanal.org.

See you along the towpath!

— Jennifer

CONTRIBUTORS TO ASSOCIATION FUNDS

With deep appreciation, the C&O Canal Association acknowledges the following who have generously contributed to its funds since the last report in *Along the Towpath*. Contributions received after July 31, 2006, will be acknowledged in a future issue of the newsletter.

Donation options currently include the C&O Canal Fund (a revolving fund to support current projects and programs in and for the C&O Canal National Historical Park) and the Davies Legal Defense Fund.

John F. **BARR**
C&O **BICYCLE**
Marilyn **CLEMENT**
Charles **DELMAR FUND**
Janet T. **ENGLEHART**
TOWN OF GAITHERSBURG
Mr. & Mrs. E.P. **IMLE**
Jean H. **JOHNSON**
Robert & Carol **KENDRICK**
John M. **LEAHY**
Al & Kathryn **SCHMIDT**
Thelma **SCHWARTZ**
Harry **SMITH**
Denny **SNYDER**
Al & Dot **ST. GERMAIN**
Beverly & Fred **STEVENSON**
Dorothy **WALTZ**
Celynn **WHITEHURST**
Steven & Martha **WILLEY**

C&OCA 2006 CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	DAY	EVENT
Sep 23	Sat	Volunteers in the Park (VIP) work party at Great Falls. Contact Jim Heins (301.949.3518), Steve DeLanoy (301.879.0013) or c&ocanalvip@toyhouse.org.
Sep 30	Sat	Canoe trip in the area of Balls Bluff. Contact Bill Burton (703.801.0963.)
Oct 1	Sun	Board Meeting at the home of Tom and Linda Perry in Williamsport, noon.
Oct 4-9	Wed-Mon	Through bike ride, Cumberland to Georgetown. No sag wagon provided. Contact Tom Perry (301.223.7010.)
Oct 14-16	Sat-Mon	Canoe trip in the western section; itinerary to be announced later. Contact Barbara Sheridan (703.306.6549.)
Oct 21	Sat	Continuing Hike Series: hike on the Billy Goat Trail at Great Falls (signing of waiver required); cookout at 4 p.m. followed by "Life and Death on the Canal." Contact Pat White (301.977.5628.)
Oct 21	Sat	Pennsylvania Canal Society motor coach tour of C&O Canal, Little Orleans to Cumberland. Contact Dave Johnson (301.530.7473.)
Oct 28	Sat	REVISED DATE of Heritage Hike in the area of Ft. Frederick State Park. See p. one for more information.
Nov 4	Sat	Volunteers in the Park (VIP) work party. Details to be announced. Contact Jim Heins (301.949.3518), Steve DeLanoy (301.879.0013) or c&ocanalvip@toyhouse.org.
Nov 18	Sun	Volunteers in the Park (VIP) work party. Details to be announced.
Nov 19	Sun	Continuing Hike Series. Park at Cohill Station (mile 130) at 10:30 a.m., walk downstream to Little Roundtop. Contact Pat White (301.977.5628.)
Dec 2	Sat	Frostbite Hike on Goldmine Trail at Great Falls. 10:30 a.m. Contact Carl Linden (301.229.2398.)
Dec 3	Sun	Board Meeting at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Avenue, 1:00 p.m.
Dec 9	Sun	Volunteers in the Park (VIP) work party. Details to be announced. Contact Jim Heins (301.949.3518), Steve DeLanoy (301.879.0013) or c&ocanalvip@toyhouse.org.
Dec 10	Sun	Carol sing-along at Great Falls Tavern. 1 p.m.
Dec 31	Sun	New Year's Eve Hike from Monocacy Aqueduct parking lot. 2 p.m. Contact Pat White (301.977.5628.)

(continued from p. 5)

Congressman Bartlett recently put a line item in the House budget bill of \$450,000 for the Catoctin and there is ground to expect that Maryland will make matching funds available for the Catoctin. Such projects, once approved by the NPS, will provide "soft money" which is helpful to the Park's maintenance efforts.

Emmie Woodward has similarly led the way for the extension of a Western Maryland Railway line rail trail in the Paw Paw Bends region of the Potomac.

While outside of the park's boundary, the park is the owner of the right of way of the now-defunct Western Maryland RR. The right of way switches back and forth over the Potomac and follows the same general course as the Canal and is intertwined with it. The rail trail would provide an alternate route to the C&O, ease traffic on the towpath, and draw many cyclists and hikers to the scenic sweep of mountains and river bends to be seen on the old railroad's pathway. With the Association's initial support, a WMRT Committee, with members from West Virginia and Maryland, has formed and become an active and autonomous entity with its own fundraising capacity. **(continued on p. 12)**

ON THE LEVEL By Level Walker Chair Bill Burton

Many thanks to all the Level Walkers for their overwhelming support of the Level Walker program and the C&O Canal NHP. The number of reports received is up 55 percent compared to last year at this time, and the number of volunteer hours is up proportionally. In addition to the long-time faithful level walkers, there has been a record number of new volunteers who have also been very active in covering their levels. This is remarkable considering the heavy rains and storms early in the summer, then the extreme heat and humidity more recently. So far this year, 129 reports have been received covering 49 levels, which leaves 20 levels not yet covered. If you haven't had a chance to get out on the towpath before now, there is still time and, hopefully, pleasant autumn weather for an enjoyable day in the Park.

Since the last newsletter, **Pat Heck, Ken Heck, Bill Holdsworth, Chris Holdsworth, Bob Mischler** and **Joan Mischler** have volunteered as level walkers. Welcome to the program and thank you for supporting the Association and the Park Service in keeping the park a safe and beautiful place for visitors.

On another note, no doubt many of you at some time have spotted blue plastic barrels in the park, usually along the riverbank. If you see these, please note the location in your level report and I will forward the information to the Park Service. I understand NPS has a contractor that will remove the barrels, so just leave them in place. Since the contents of the barrels are unknown, it's best to let the professionals handle them. The highlights of the 58 reports received between mid-May and mid-August are listed below:

*Level #1 Tidelock to Incline Plane; 5/18, 5/25, 6/2, 6/8, 6/16, 6/22, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21, 7/28, 8/11, **John Barnett** reported the anti-refuse gate at the end of Tidelock was broken, which allowed more than the usual amount of debris to wash into the lock from the river, he also commented that someone left his wallet, socks and shoes beside the towpath and swam across the canal only to return later for the belongings (who needs bridges?).*

*Level #4 Cabin John Creek to Lock 14; 5/29, **Carolyn Reeder** reported and photographed erosion in several areas along the level and noted there are two new interpretive signs at Lock 10. 5/31, 6/19, 6/29, 7/4, 7/11, 7/31, **Larry Heflin** reported the prism has been repaired across from Minnies Island and between Locks 10 and 11; also, a new wooden bridge has been installed at Lock 11.*

*Level #5 Lock 14 to Bridge at Cropley; 8/9, **Jan and Jim Heins** noted the towpath had been recently mowed and the water level in the canal was down about 12 inches.*

*Level #7 Great Falls Tavern to Swains Lock (21); 5/27, **Alan and Becky Hedin** reported the towpath in very good condition; however there were a number of windfall trees in the canal.*

*Level #8 Swains Lock (21) to Pennyfield Lock (22); 7/14, **Dottie Cousineau** noted that several trees had fallen across the canal.*

*Level #10 Seneca Aqueduct to Milepost 25; 5/12, **Carol Purcell** spotted blue birds, a Baltimore oriole, a Carolina wren, a barred owl with a blue-gray gnatcatcher attacking it, a blue grosbeak, a red-tailed hawk, a turkey vulture and a red-winged blackbird.*

*Level #12 Sycamore Landing to Edwards Ferry; 5/19, 8/5, **Pat Hopson and Carol Ivory** initiated a major cleanup of the level around Edwards Ferry, with several fellow members of the Sierra Club, and removed 27 large bags of trash, tires, metal pipe and propane containers. 7/26, **Stephen Pollock** commented on the apparent use of the Sycamore Landing parking area as a party area, resulting in a large amount of trash, mostly beer cans, and the remains of campfires. 3/31, **William Tamaro** noted the towpath was in great shape other than a large amount of trash, mostly in parking and fishing areas.*

*Level #14 Harrison Island to Whites Ferry; 5/14, **Sharon Freedman**, with daughters and son-in-law, enjoyed Mothers day on the towpath and spotted a pair of wood ducks.*

*Level #16 Woods Lock (26) to Monocacy Aqueduct; 6/17, **Mike Cianciosi** used a trash pickup tool which he found it very helpful, and also saw bikers with fishing gear heading down the towpath.*

*Level #18 Nolands Ferry to Point of Rocks; 6/20, 6/29, **Jed and Gaye Tucker** noted the trash bag dispenser at Nolands Ferry, which had previously been reported empty, had now been re-supplied, and reported the towpath was in remarkably good condition considering all the recent heavy rain.*

*Level #19 Point of Rocks to Catoclin Aqueduct; 5/29, **Jack and Pat Cook** remarked there were a lot of hikers, bikers, and paddlers enjoying the Park on Memorial Day. 6/11, 7/3, **Marlow Madeoy** reported the grass had been mowed along the towpath and around the Lander lockhouse, and fallen trees from the recent storms had been removed.*

*Level #25 Dargan Bend to Lock 37; 5/27, 7/29, **Carol and Don Juran** reported the rotted stairs at Lockhouse 37 have been replaced and new padlocks have been installed on the doors.*

*Level #26 Lock 37 to Antietam Aqueduct; 5/27, 8/13, **Jack and Karen Forster** removed broken glass on the Antietam Aqueduct and collected more trash than usual, probably indicating high visitor usage.*

*Level #32 Marsh Run Culvert to Dam 4; 7/2, **Dave and Kathy Peterson** noted the recent heavy rains had caused considerable erosion on the hill coming down from Dam 4 near the gate house.*

*Level #37 Falling Waters to Lock 44; 6/6, 6/30, **Russ Meinke** removed a number of sticks from the towpath and trimmed back some low overhanging branches..*

*Level #38 Lock 44 to High Rock Quarry; 6/15, **Diane Summerhill** commented on the considerable amount of trash left by fisherman and was thanked for her work by a small boy feeding mulberries to the turtles.*

*Level #42 Four Locks to McCoy's Ferry; 8/1, **Carl Pedersen** removed a lot of large tree branches that had fallen on the towpath.*

*Level #43 McCoy's Ferry to Fort Frederick; 8/1, **Carl Pedersen** remarked he had picked the hottest day of the year to walk the towpath.*

*Level #44 Fort Frederick to Ernstville; 5/29, **James Biasco** found the towpath and Big Pool surprisingly clean, and noted the water level at Big Pool is still below normal, leaving some beaver lodges high and dry.*

*Level #46 Licking Creek Aqueduct to Little Pool; 8/13, **Margie Knott with Barbara Shapiro** commented that the paw paw trees were starting to have small fruit.*

*Level #50 Lock 53 to Dam 6; 5/19, **Karen and Ed Leisinger** found no trash and reported the level in good shape.*

*Level #51 Dam 6 to Sideling Hill Aqueduct; 8/12, **Bill and Chris Holdsworth** reported that Culvert #201 appears to have collapsed on the berm side at mile 135.7 and commented that bikers seem to be using the towpath rather than more popular Western Maryland Rail Trail.*

*Level #53 15 Mile Creek Aqueduct to Lock 59; 7/23, **Mary and Steve Huebner** picked up quite a few sticks, which had fallen during the recent storms, from the towpath.*

*Level #54 Lock 59 to Lock 60; 6/16, **Dennis Kubicki** encountered a couple of dozen runner/biker teams participating in a 200-mile relay race, and was carrying a large bag of trash found at Stickpile hiker-biker campground until a DNR ranger took the stash.*

*Level #55 Lock 60 to Culvert #208; 6/3, **Karen Gray** commented the composite construction of Lock 60, utilizing masonry with wooden beam walls, is still in amazingly good condition after all this time.*

*Level #61 Town Creek Aqueduct to Lock 68; 5/29, **Steve Johnson** commented on, and provided a photo showing, the condition of the porch at Lockhouse 68, but otherwise reported the towpath in great shape.*

*Level #62 Lock 68 to Oldtown; 7/18, 7/29, **Bob and Joan Mischler** reported crown vetch and garden phlox in bloom, and also water lilies just about choking the canal from mile 165.5 to mile 166.*

*Level #68 Evitts Creek Aqueduct to Wiley Ford Bridge; 7/14, 8/8, **Bob and Joan Mischler** noted erosion at Culvert 240 which NPS had marked with orange fencing. 7/8, **Karen Gildea** cleaned up trash from the level on a beautiful summer day.*

*Level #69 Wiley Ford Bridge to Cumberland Terminus; 7/9, **Gil Hill and Carol Galaty** found the towpath unusually clean, nicely mowed and free of trash, and also commented on how nice the recently re-watered basin at Cumberland looked now.*

THE PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFT

It's never too early to start thinking about gift ideas for the coming holiday season. Consider giving a gift that lasts all year: membership in the C&O Canal Association. New members will receive:

- Membership card
- Name badge(s)
- C&O Canal Association decal
- Four big issues of *Along the Towpath*

If you would like, we can even enclose a card or note (your choice) indicating that the membership is a gift from you.

Gift membership forms received prior to November 1, 2006 will be processed in time to receive the December 2006 issue of *Along the Towpath*. For a printer-friendly gift membership form, please visit www.candocanal.org/membership.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Across the Berm

By Ken Rollins

Hal Larsen, Association president from 1986 through 1990, passed away August 13 after a long illness. He will be remembered for his leadership, loyalty and sense of humor. A memorial service was held on September 16 at St. Luke Catholic Church in Arlington, Virginia.

If you have fond memories of Hal you would like to share for future publication in "Along the Towpath", please send them to editor@candocanal.org

Program Committee Chair Needed

As previously announced, Tom Perry has assumed leadership of the Big Slackwater campaign. To allow time for this new duty, he is resigning as chair of the Program Committee, although he will remain one of its members. The functions of the committee include making arrangements for the annual Justice Douglas Hike, Heritage Hike, and other similar events.

We hope that someone will step forward without delay to fill this key position, in which Tom has served with unfailing efficiency. Those who are interested should contact President Robert Perry at 703-590-5568 or rperry5568@comcast.net.

Moving Ahead: Widewater Fund Closes

Now that the Widewater restoration is complete, it's time to close that fund and transfer the balance to other projects benefiting the C&O Canal. With the consent of the donor, \$50,000 has already been contributed toward purchase of the "packet boat" for Great Falls, and \$25,000 has been contributed to the fund to restore the Catoctin Aqueduct. The balance of the Widewater Fund – approximately \$76,000 – will be transferred to the C&O Canal Association's current project, restoration of the towpath beside Big Slackwater, at the end of this year.

Donors to the Widewater Fund are welcome to re-designate their contributions to benefit the Association's other funds: (1) the C&O Canal Fund, which provides support to the C&O Canal National Historical Park in a number of ways, such as providing the Canal Tags for sale by the park, and paying for the printing of the park newsletter, *The Canaller*, or (2) the Davies Legal Defense Fund, which pays legal fees incurred to protect the integrity of the park. Should you wish to re-designate your Widewater contribution to the Canal Fund or the Davies Legal Defense Fund, you may do so by completing the form included in this issue of *Along the Towpath* and mailing it to the C&O Canal Association at P.O. Box 366, Glen Echo, MD, 20812.

NOTE: The Association supports the canal boat and Catoctin Aqueduct projects, but we are not the sponsor of these projects. Amounts re-designated to funds other than C&O Canal or Davies will be credited to the Canal Fund.

Continuing Hikes Fall 2006

By Pat White

Our next hike will be the Billy Goat Trail Hike on October 21, starting from the Great Falls Tavern (mile 14.2) at noon. This is a very strenuous hike and waivers* will be required. Following the hike there will be a pot luck dinner at Carderock (first parking lot to the right) starting at 4:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to come to the pot luck. Bring a dish to share and something to grill. We will have a stove for hot coffee and other hot beverages. Following dinner most of us will return to Great Falls for Life and Death on the Canal, the NPS's answer to Halloween Haunted Houses. (Reservations are required; call the Great Falls Visitor Center at 301-767-3714.) If I've gotten the date for Life and Death wrong, we'll just party until dark.

On Sunday, November 19 we will meet at Cohill Station (about mile 130.7), about seven miles from Hancock, at 10:30 a.m. and walk downstream to the Round Top Cement Mill. Bring water and lunch, and we'll probably have lunch at the cement mill before returning to Cohill Station. Round trip distance is about 6.6 miles. **Note:** Cohill Station is now just a wide spot in the road; call me at 301-977-5628 for directions.

Think snow – the last time we did the Goldmine Trail in December we had six inches of the white stuff. Frostbite Hike: Saturday, December 2, Great Falls Tavern at 10:30 a.m. Our Year-end Finale and New Year start will be the New Year's Hikes at the beautifully restored Monocacy Aqueduct (mile 42.2). We'll go upstream Sunday, December 31 at 2:00 p.m.; and downstream Monday, January 1, 2007 at 10:30 a.m. Be prepared for the weather. We might stop for lunch in Montgomery County after the January 1 hike.

The 2007 Hike Schedule is in the planning stages. The theme will probably be Favorite Hikes and Places. If you have a favorite hike or place on the Canal, let me know and I'll try to include it.

* The waiver is available at www.candocanal.org, and with reasonable notice from me.

Assistant Treasurer Appointed

At its April meeting, the Board of Directors agreed to create the position of Assistant Treasurer. That position has now been filled.

The Association's new assistant treasurer is Kirk Moberley. Kirk has been a member of the Association for many years, and has through-hiked the Canal solo. His interests include protecting the historic structures along the towpath from collapse and protecting the treasurer from collapsing under the burden of paperwork. Please introduce yourself to Kirk, and welcome him to the task of helping the Association help the Canal.

CANALLER ARTICLES

Note: The following articles are from the fall 2006 issue of the Canaller, the official newsletter of the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Printing deadlines did not allow Along the Towpath to cover the dedication of the new canal boat in the September issue, but we will do so in the December issue.

Charles F. Mercer Packet Boat Dedication September 9 at Great Falls

By Don Harrison, President
Friends of Great Falls Tavern

The public is cordially invited to join the C&O Canal and the Friends of Historic Great Falls Tavern in a history-making event. The dedication ceremony for a new packet boat, *Charles F. Mercer*, will be held on Saturday, September 9 at 11 a.m. near the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center. The ceremony will include the Wildcat Regimental Band and singing by local elementary school children followed with speeches by dignitaries and National Park Service staff.

The new boat is named for Charles F. Mercer, who served as President of the C&O Canal Company from 1828 to 1833. Because of his many contributions, Mercer has been called by some as the “father of the C&O Canal.”

This new boat replaces the old *Canal Clipper* at Great Falls which operated for thirty years on the C&O Canal. In the spring of 2003, the *Canal Clipper* suffered cracks in its hull which made it inoperable. In April 2004, Seven Locks Elementary School students drew attention to the need for a boat at Great Falls and collected \$3,160 to help purchase a new boat. Subsequently, the Friends of Historic Great Falls Tavern successfully raised an additional \$530,840 needed for a new boat, including funds from Montgomery County and the State of Maryland.

The Friends are having the boat built by Scarano Boat Builders, Inc. of Albany, NY. When the boat arrives in late August, the Friends will turn ownership of the boat over to the National Park Service, where it should be in service at the Great Falls Tavern for many years.

This beautiful replica double-decker packet boat has an aluminum hull and wooden superstructure of Port Orford cedar, grown in the town of Port Orford, Oregon. The color scheme of the new boat is based on a painting from the mid-1830s found by Park Ranger Rod Sauter. The painting depicts a scene of the canal with a packet boat in the Maryland Heights area.

The upper deck of *Charles F. Mercer* will be open with benches, railings, and a structure to hold a canopy. Just as it was 150 years ago, power will be provided by two mules.

Packet boats were a common site on the canal in the early years. It was not unusual in the last half of the 19th century to see a packet boat traveling from Georgetown to the Great Falls Tavern taking passengers for an evening of dining and dancing.

Beginning on Sunday, September 10, rides will be available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis aboard *Charles F. Mercer*. There is a fee for riding the boats. Groups of 10 or more people may call to make reservations. *The Georgetown* and *Charles F. Mercer* may be chartered for evening cruises. For additional information, please call either the Georgetown or Great Falls Tavern visitor centers.

Volunteers are needed to serve on the boat crews. Go to www.nps.gov/choh, click on “Volunteers” and select “Living History Volunteer - Boat Crew” for information. The C&O Canal looks forward to your visit this fall, either on *The Georgetown* or *Charles F. Mercer*, so that we may wish you “welcome aboard.”

Right: The Mercer hovers over the Canal on Aug. 30.

Below: The Mercer nears touchdown. (Both pictures: Ned Preston.)

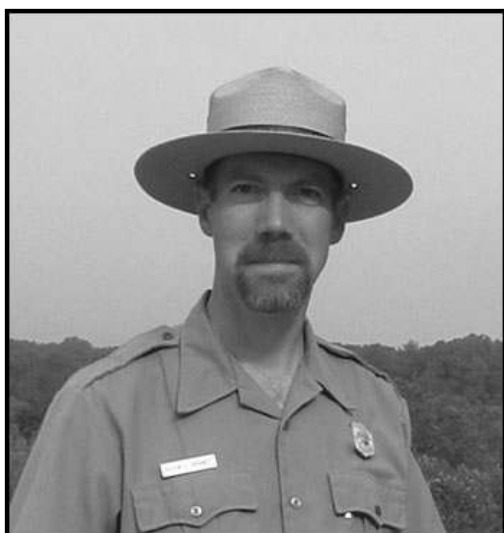


CANALLER ARTICLES, CONTINUED

From the Superintendent

By Kevin Brandt

The dedication of the park's new canal boat, *Charles F. Mercer*, is the realization of a dream. It is a tremendous example of a private, state and federal partnership. I applaud the vision of the students from Seven Locks Elementary School and the leaders and members of Friends of Historic Great Falls Tavern. We are grateful to so many of you who contributed to the building of this extraordinary boat. Because of these efforts our grandchildren will enjoy the unique experience of riding a mule drawn canal boat along the C&O Canal.



Superintendent Kevin Brandt

NPS

As you see in Don Harrison's article, the *Charles F. Mercer* is based on packet boats of the 19th century. It also has features not found in any other canal boat. It includes a chair lift that will enable mobility impaired visitors to move themselves between decks. The "head" is wheelchair accessible, and the sound system includes a system that makes it possible for visitors with hearing aids to hear the ranger more clearly. In many ways it is state of the art.

Fall is a great time to enjoy the towpath. The changing leaves and cooler weather make recreational activities in the park all the more enjoyable. Remember to dress for the weather and drink plenty of water. Stop at Hancock during the Canal Apple Festival or at Brunswick for Railroad Days to learn more about the history of the canal and the communities it passes through.

Be safe, and I'll see you on the towpath!

Who was Charles F. Mercer?

By Karen Gray
Volunteer Librarian

Charles Fenton Mercer (1778–1858) began to push for a continuous canal up the Potomac Valley while still a Virginia legislator (1810–1816). Once in the U.S. Congress, where he served from 1817 to 1839, he authored or supported many pieces of legislation that made it possible to organize the C&O Canal Company in 1828 and begin construction.

Mercer called together the great Canal Conference of 1823, negotiated the tricky legal and political path that transferred the Potomac Company's charter to the C&O Canal Company (giving the C&O prior rights to the Potomac shoreline), and shepherded the legislation through Congress. This legislation authorized the federal government and the federal cities of Washington, Georgetown and Alexandria to purchase \$2,500,000 in canal company stock.

As the first President of the C&O Canal Company, serving from 1828 to 1833, Mercer was deeply involved not only in the company's administration, but also in engineering and construction matters as well. Charles F. Mercer alone had the power, passion, position and skills to envision what was necessary and possible. He obtained the essential political and private support to achieve it, making him truly the "father of the C&O Canal."

(continued from p. 7)

The proposed trail would cross the Potomac back and forth between West Virginia and Maryland over six bridges and go through three tunnels on the Western Maryland Railway right of way.

Park Superintendent Kevin Brandt is taking a leading role in an effort to forge a state, county and federal partnership to carry out the trail project. Recently Emmie and the WMRT Committee received Senator Byrd's blessing. He has put a \$1 million line item for the construction of the West Virginia section of the proposed trail. The WMRT on the Maryland side of the river is making good progress and will soon reach Little Orleans and in current plans will be extended to the first of the six bridges crossing the Potomac between Maryland and West Virginia. Here the State of Maryland has provided substantial help and funds for the rail trail.

The projects noted above are of obvious help to the park in maintaining and repairing its key structures. But the boost the projects give to the park does not address the growing short-fall in the funding of a staff necessary to keep the C&O Canal NHP a going concern. Here the Association needs to continue to champion and advance the cause of the C&O Canal National Historical Park and lend its support to the dedicated staff that is engaged in a hard struggle to preserve the park.



ACCOMPANIED BY THE PAST By Karen Gray

History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illumines reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life, and brings us tidings of antiquity. Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BCE–43 BC), Pro Publico Sestio

Fort Frederick: Where the Canal and the 18th Century Meet

1754 was a momentous year for those settled in Western Maryland or trading with the Indians. In January the young Colonial officer George Washington completed his trip to the Ohio Company to deliver Governor Dinwiddie's letter to the French, insisting the country belonged to Britain and therefore inviting the French to depart. During the next couple months a fort was established at the Forks of the Ohio (present day Pittsburg) only to be taken over on April 17th by the French who began building Fort DuQuesne.

On May 28 Major Washington and some of his men, led by a band of Indians attacked a small French detachment. Those of the French party who had been injured, including the French commander, Ensign Jumonville, were murdered and scalped by the Indians. Ultimately this led to the disastrous battle at Little Meadows' Fort Necessity on July third, culminating in Washington's surrender. So began the hostilities known in American history as the French and Indian War—a sidelight in the much larger Seven Years', War which Winston Churchill called "the first World War."

Numerous Indian tribes that became allies of the French now began to raid and attack colonists residing in the valleys and ridges beyond the piedmont. In late 1754 and early 1755, Maryland Governor Horatio Sharpe began the building of Fort Cumberland at Wills Creek and in the summer of 1755, Washington participated in Major General Edward Braddock's ill-fated campaign to dislodge the French from the Ohio country that ended with the British defeat at the Battle of Monongahela on July 9.

Also in 1755, Governor Horatio Sharpe called out the colonial militia and ordered the building of Fort Tonoloway near Hancock. In May of 1756, the Maryland Assembly passed a supply bill of \$40,000,000 for the King's service and defense of the frontier. \$11,000 was designated for a strong fortification, and in June the land was purchased from Lancelot Jacques and construction of the stone fort—named after Frederick Calvert, Sixth and final Lord Baltimore—began.

The fort has a 1,660 ft. perimeter, enclosing 1 1/2 acres. The walls are 4.5 ft. thick at the base and taper to 3 ft. as they rise to 17.5 ft. at the top. A catwalk allowed kneeling provincial forces and militia to fire while protected by the upper ranks of stones and the corner bastions increased the fort's defensive capability and may have held canon. Water was available from wells within the fort's walls and barracks housed the Maryland's forces posted to the fort.

On April 29, 1757, Cherokees led by Wahachey of Keeway (in present-day South Carolina) arrived at Fort Frederick to enter into an alliance with Maryland. A second conference on May 21–22 reaffirmed their alliance and extended it to include Pennsylvania.

Concerned by the high costs associated with Fort Frederick, the Maryland Assembly brought an end to construction at the site on December 15, 1757. In May and June of the following year Fort Frederick served as a supply depot for Brigadier General John Forbes' campaign and a road was begun to connect it with Fort Cumberland. However, work on the road ceased once a Pennsylvania route was selected for Forbes' army to approach Fort DuQuesne.

After Gen. Forbes's troops occupied Fort DuQuesne on November 28, 1758, Fort Frederick was abandoned and the Maryland forces were disbanded. Fort Frederick, like Maryland as a whole, had played only a minor role in the French and Indian War which, for all intents and purposes, ended in the Americas with the agreement forged in September 1761 with formerly French-allied Indian nations of the interior. Ultimately the fort was perhaps most important for the 1856–1858 period as a symbol of the colony's ability and willingness to protect those living in her western lands, many of whom—including the intrepid "Rattlesnake Colonel" Thomas Cresap—retreated east to the vicinity of Hancock and Williamsport during those years of greatest danger.

The Fort appears on history's stage three more times. During the brief but massive Indian uprising led by Ottawa Chief Pontiac in 1763, it provided protection to several hundred settlers and militia. The Fort was as a prison for Hessian and British soldiers during the American Revolution; and, while it had been sold in 1791 and farmed for the next 131 years, it was briefly occupied by Union troops during the Civil War, and was the site of a brief skirmish on December 25, 1861.

Through several generations in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the farm was owned by an African American family, the patriarch of which was Nathan Williams. He first purchased his freedom, and later that of the woman who would become his wife. The state purchased the ruins of the fort in 1922 and in the late 1930s the walls were rebuilt as a Civilian Conservation Corps project.



Members of Cumberland, Maryland's Shawnee Canoe Club in 1904, with the fort in the background.

(Photo courtesy of the National Park Service, C&O Canal NHP.)



ACCOMPANIED BY THE PAST, *CONTINUED*

THE CANAL ABOVE AND BELOW FORT FREDERICK

The road from the fort to the river crosses the canal and the towpath at the stop gate at the lower end of Big Pool (mile 112.5). It was one of four stop gates built in a 9½ mile stretch of the Great Valley (named the Shenandoah below the Potomac and the Cumberland above). During operating days it had a swing bridge for vehicular traffic and early 20th century pictures show a high pedestrian bridge arching over it. The stop gates were only 18 ft. wide, so boats would slow to carefully enter and pass through them without damaging either the boat or the gate masonry.

The canal above and below Fort Frederick maintains the longest level stretch on the C&O. Known as the “14 Mile Level,” it extends from Lock 50 at mile 108.87—the last of the Four Locks—to Lock 51 at mile 122.59, 1 ½ miles below Hancock. The placement and frequency of locks on the canal as it makes its way up the Potomac Valley, represents the topography of the valley. Where the river drops most rapidly, locks occur in rapid succession. By the same token, long stretches without locks represent places where the elevation of the land changes little, as is the case here in the Great Valley.

UPSTREAM

Headed upstream, one walks alongside Big Pool for nearly 1½ miles. Here the Canal Company engineers placed the towpath on a revetment of sandstone rubble built through an extensive marshy area. This created an attractive shallow lake that for some time after 1900 was a popular recreational area and remains a popular fishing site. Along the way one crosses a former masonry waste weir and elaborate masonry spillway 121 ft. long.

Above Big Pool the towpath passes under a railroad trestle that originally connected the Western Maryland mainline on the berm with the B&O at Cherry Run, West Virginia (mile 114.02). A second stop gate is passed at mile 114.15 and at mile 114.43 the towpath crosses over the 12 ft. span Dry Run culvert #150—a road culvert providing access to the Cherry Run ferry and the farm land between the river and the canal.

At mile 114.52 a road crosses the canal to Ernstville (mile 114.59) and provides access to the village of Big Pool, .7 mile to the east (right). Those walking enthusiasts who make it to mile 116.04, will be rewarded with a visit to the Aqueduct #6 over Licking Creek. Here again one is taken back to the 18th century as, in 1775, James Johnson built a forge near the mouth of the creek, using pig iron from the Green Springs Furnace (downstream near present-day McCoy's Ferry).

DOWNSTREAM

A walk downstream from Big Pool offers a nearly-two-mile woodland experience along a stretch of canal that rich in wildlife, flowering plants, and remnants here and there of former human occupation and cross-canal activity in the days when the bottom lands were farmed. McCoy's Ferry at mile 110.42 offers one of the major, still-used, road culverts on the canal (mile 110.42), an impressive railroad trestle on the busy CSX line along the berm, and yet another stop gate (mile 110.29).

This level also demonstrates the relationship of the topography to the canal proper. The observant walker will notice some places where the canal and towpath are high above the surrounding land as it cuts laterally across the several small valleys between low ridges that characterize the land here. At McCoy's Ferry, in order to maintain the level across the Green Spring Run valley, the engineers were forced to build an especially high wall that carries the prism and towpath. A large culvert provides passage through that revetment for the lively stream that comes down the valley and the road culvert provides access to the former ferry site, now one of the park's most beautiful recreation areas with boat landing, picnic ground, and campground.

A historical marker on the towpath informs the walker of the May 23, 1861 skirmish involving the ferry that operated across the river at this point. Also, Gen. J. E. B. Stuart used this crossing on his second ride around Gen. George B. McClellan's army on Oct. 10, 1862; and troops under Gen. John McCausland and Gen. Bradley Johnson crossed in route to their raid on Chambersburg on July 29, 1864.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, *CONTINUED*

Volunteers Needed for Trail Traffic Survey

The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail needs volunteers to help with a trail traffic survey. If you can spend an hour or more on the trail in September, at a time and location of your choosing, email the CCCT at survey@cctrail.org.

Note: The Association is especially interested in the volume of traffic near the Georgetown Trailhead, close to where the Washington Canoe Club is located and where Georgetown University wants to put a boathouse in our national park. This is one of the locations the CCCT wants surveyed.

AROUND THE PARK

National Park Service Fall Activities

The trip from Cumberland to Georgetown by canal boat was a long and demanding journey. Today, you have the opportunity to experience an entertaining and relaxing one-hour mule-drawn ride on a canal boat in Georgetown and Great Falls. Park rangers in period clothing demonstrate canal operations and describe the history and life of families who lived and worked along the canal during the 1870s. Tickets are first-come, first served. Groups with 10 or more people may call to make reservations. Boat schedules are below.

The Georgetown

Sept. 1 to Oct. 29

Wed. through Fri.: 11 a.m. & 3 p.m.

Saturdays and Sundays: 11 a.m., 1:30 & 3 p.m.

Fares for Georgetown:

\$8 Adults

\$6 Seniors (62+)

\$5 Children (4-14)

One-hour tours begin and end at the Georgetown Visitor Center
1057 Thomas Jefferson St.

Washington, D.C. 20007

For more information, call 202.653.5190

Charles F. Mercer

Sept. 10 to Oct. 29

Wed. through Fri.: 11 a.m. & 3 p.m.

Saturdays and Sundays: 11 a.m., 1:30 & 3 p.m.

Fares for Great Falls; fall season only:

All tickets \$2; Children ages three and under are free.

One-hour tours begin and end at the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center

11710 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac, MD 20854

For more information, call 301.767.3714

“Life & Death on the C&O Canal”

Sat., Oct. 21, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Reservations Required

The tenth annual “Life and Death on the C&O Canal” will come back to life on the evening of Saturday, October 21, at the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center.

This one-hour living history interpretive program will give visitors the opportunity to observe and appreciate some of the struggles workers and families faced on the C&O Canal during its construction and operation.

Along the approximately one-mile route, visitors will witness reenactments of some of the lesser known events in the canal’s long and tumultuous history. All scenes are based on documented events or legends which grew from actual events from the 19th and 20th centuries.

Participants in the program dress in period clothing and perform various roles. Many have speaking parts, while others play the dying, the suffering, or the dead. Others carry lanterns and escort groups to ensure their safety. Discover the mysterious and interesting happenings that took place on the C&O Canal by joining the staff and volunteers for this exciting evening full of history and fun.

Costumed rangers and volunteers will repeat the program every 15 minutes, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. with approximately 25 visitors per group. Tickets for “Life & Death on the C&O Canal” go on sale Saturday, October 1. Advance registration and prepayment are required. Costs for tickets are \$6 for adults and \$4 for seniors and children. Parental discretion is advised.

For more information or tickets, call the visitor center at 301.767.3714.

Lock Demonstrations

Sat. & Sun. 2 to 3 p.m. thru October

Join a ranger to observe the workings of historic Lock 44 and find out about the sacrifices and challenges of canal families and lockkeepers. Lock 44 is a 10-minute walk downstream from the Williamsport Visitor Center.

Brunswick Railroad Days

Sat., Oct. 7 & Sun., Oct. 8

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Block Party

Sat., Oct 7, 6 to 10 p.m.

Brunswick will be holding their annual celebration of railroad heritage with Railroad Days on October 7-8. Highlights include strolling minstrels and live entertainment, unique craft displays, carnival rides, antiques, a model train show, flea market and great food. The Brunswick Railroad Museum will display three floors of Brunswick history and a working model train layout that depicts life along the railway in the 1950s from Union Station (Washington, DC) to Brunswick, Maryland. These will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. A block party will be held at Railroad Square Stage from 6 to 10 p.m. on Saturday

Canal Apple Days Festival in Hancock

Sat., Sept. 16, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and

Sun., Sept. 17, noon to 5 p.m.

Join the family fun. The C&O Canal will have displays set up at Widmeyer Park and the Hancock Visitor Center will be open during the weekend.

Lockhouse 70 at Oldtown

Sat. & Sun. only thru Oct. 29

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Lockhouse 70 is located off MD Route 51, 15 miles south of Cumberland.

CANALLER ARTICLES, CONTINUED

Recreation Along the Towpath

The C&O Canal "is a refuge, a place of retreat,
a long stretch of quiet and peace . . . "
--Justice William O. Douglas

The C&O Canal National Historical Park is one of the largest and most diverse parks within the National Park system. It provides an expansive array of recreational opportunities.

In general, the surface of the towpath is an even, hard-packed dirt trail ideal for hiking and biking. The towpath is the trail once used by the mules that pulled the canal boats. Whichever activity you enjoy on the canal, bring water and exercise caution to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience.

Biking is one way to see the canal. Regulations must be followed at all times.

- Motorized vehicles are prohibited on the towpath and trails.
- Ride single file; maximum speed of 15 MPH.
- Helmets are required in accordance with county ordinances; helmets are required for bikers under the age of 16.
- Sound-producing device must be sounded when approaching within 100 feet of other towpath users.
- Yield right-of-way to all pedestrians and horses.
- Walk bike over aqueducts and through the Paw Paw Tunnel.

Boating opportunities include:

Georgetown to Violettes Lock (mile 0-22); Big Pool (mile 112-113); Hancock (mile 124.1-124.7); Williamsport to Lock 44 (mile 99.8-99.30); Little Pool (mile 120-121) and Oldtown to Town Creek (mile 162-167).

Use of electric motorized vessels is allowed only at Big Pool, Little Pool and canal waters between Lock 68 (Oldtown) and Town Creek Aqueduct. Gasoline and propane motorized vessels are prohibited within the park. Personal flotation devices are required by the State of Maryland.

Canoeing on the Potomac River can be hazardous and should only be done under the direct supervision of an experienced adult canoeist. To hear a taped message regarding river conditions in the lower Potomac Valley, call 703.260.0305.

Hiker-biker campsites are located along the towpath about every five to seven miles. All 30 sites are primitive and are free on a first-come, first-served basis. Facilities at the campsites include a chemical toilet, picnic table, and grill. Drinking water is usually available from mid-April through November 15. Visitors are advised to bring water. Stay at hiker-biker campsites is limited to one night and eight people per site.

Drive-in campsites are located at McCoy's Ferry, Fifteenmile Creek and Spring Gap. Primitive sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis at a fee of \$10 per night per site. Camping is limited to eight persons, two vehicles, and two tents per campsite. Recreational vehicles are limited to 20 feet. No hookups are available. Facilities at the campsites include a chemical toilet, picnic table, and grill. Drinking water is usually available from mid-April through November 15. Visitors are advised to bring water.

Group sites are available at McCoys Ferry, Fifteen-mile Creek, Spring Gap, and Paw Paw for \$20 per night. No more than 35 people are allowed. Primitive camping is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Marsden Tract group camping is available for overnight use by organized groups. Advance permit required. The fee is \$20 per night. Parking for Marsden Tract is 0.5 miles downstream at Carderock. To obtain a permit, call the Great Falls Fee & Permit Office at 301.767.3731.

Walk-in campgrounds that have adjacent parking are Antietam Creek and Paw Paw. Sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis for a fee of \$10 per night, per site. Camping is limited to eight persons, two vehicles and two tents per campsite. Facilities at the campsites include a chemical toilet, picnic table, and grill. Drinking water is usually available from mid-April through November 15. Visitors are advised to bring water.

Golden Access & Golden Age Passport holders receive a 50 percent discount on camping fees where applicable. Passports can be purchased at Great Falls Tavern Fee Booth.

Carderock Pavilion may be reserved by organizations by permit only. The pavilion has 26 picnic tables. Groups may reserve the pavilion for organized events from April 1 through October 31. Fees are \$150 for Mondays through Thursdays and \$250 for Fridays through Sundays and holidays. Call the Great Falls Fee & Permit Office at 301.767.3731 to make a reservation.

Fishing is permitted in accordance with state regulations. For more information, contact the Maryland Department of Natural Resources at 301-898-9724 or the District of Columbia Department of Health at 202.535.2260.

Hunting and camping in the park to establish a hunting base is prohibited in the park. Crossing park lands to access adjacent hunting areas with unloaded weapons is permitted in designated areas. For more information, visit the park website at www.nps.gov/choh or call park headquarters at 301.739.4200. Ice skating is at your own risk except where prohibited by signs. Never skate alone. Swimming is not permitted in the canal or in the Potomac River bordering the District of Columbia and Montgomery County, Md. Swimming is not recommended in other areas of the river.

CANALLER ARTICLES, CONTINUED

Horseback riding is another way to enjoy the canal. Again, it is important to follow regulations at all times.

- Horseback riding is permitted on the towpath from Swains Lock (mile 16.6) to the Offutt Street crossing at Candoc (mile 181.8) in Cumberland.
- Horses are prohibited through the Paw Paw Tunnel—use the Tunnel Hill Trail.
- Riders may not exceed a slow trot.
- Dismount and walk horses across aqueducts; horses are prohibited on wooden footbridges, which are not designed to carry their weight.
- Remove all manure.
- Grazing is prohibited in the park. Feed for horses must be carried by the group.
- Watering, cleaning, or tethering horses near park wells is prohibited.
- Watering is permitted at public river access points (boat ramps).
- Access from private property is prohibited.
- Trail-rider camping is permitted at hiker-biker campsites with a limit of six persons, four horses and one night per visit per site.
- Tether horses at the furthestmost portion of the campsite, away from the tent and picnic table locations.
- Horse trailers are not allowed in drive-in camping areas. May use boat ramp parking lots.

An Invitation

If by some mischance you are not a member of the C&O Canal Association, please consider joining our organization! Among the benefits are: recreational and social events; volunteer programs; the opportunity to participate in discussions concerning the park's future; and a subscription to this quarterly newsletter.

If you are already on our roster, give a membership to a friend! In either case, please use the convenient form below and mail it to the address indicated.

Membership Form for New Members

Please enter the following membership in the C & O Canal Association in the category indicated:

(Select one)

NAME: _____

___ Individual \$15

ADDRESS: _____

___ Family \$20

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

___ Patron \$25

E-MAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

Total: \$ _____

Name to appear on badge: _____

Second name to appear on badge (Family or Patron memberships) : _____

Gift from (if applicable): _____ Enclose card ___ Enclose note ___

Please make your check payable to the **C&O Canal Association** and mail to: P.O. Box 366, Glen Echo, Maryland 20812-0366

NEWS AND REPORTS, *CONTINUED*

A Sailing Canal Boat

By Ned Preston

History buffs who have an opportunity to visit Vermont will enjoy a visit to the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, headquartered at Basin Harbor, near Vergennes. The unpretentious but lively museum interprets the lore of the region's waterways, including naval, commercial, and recreational aspects. Its collections include a fascinating array of vessels large and small.

Among the exhibitions that my wife Leni and I saw at Basin Harbor in August was "Life Aboard: Canal Boat Workers and Their Families." The display, which is based on several hundred artifacts recovered from a shipwreck known as the Sloop Island Canal Boat, will remain open until October 15. The museum's most conspicuous canal-related exhibit is docked near its branch facility on the Burlington waterfront: the schooner Lois McClure, a full-scale replica of the adaptable type of craft that once traveled both Lake Champlain and the Northern Canal that connected the lake to the Hudson River. Ships of this kind were built from the time of the canal's opening in 1832, but McClure is modeled on the larger versions favored after the waterway was widened in 1862. Some 88 feet long and sturdily constructed, the schooner is an impressive sight.

Although McClure is not licensed to carry passengers offshore, the museum provides free tours of the vessel in harbor. We boarded for a leisurely inspection of the ship, guided by costumed crewmembers who were knowledgeable and friendly – even to the point of offering samples of the superior local chocolates. Below decks, the schooner has ample space for coal or for cargo in stacked containers. The cramped living quarters, stocked with artifacts and toys, seemed particularly interesting to the youngest members of our party. Since her launching two years ago, Lois McClure has made frequent tours of Lake Champlain's ports. This autumn, she will visit Grand Isle on October 2-5 and Plattsburgh on October 10-18. More information about the ship and the Maritime Museum is available at the web site www.lcmm.org.

A crewmember demonstrates the aft hatch to visitors Erica Harper, Ned Preston, Eliot Tindall, and Owen Tindall.



THE ASSOCIATION WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Bruce & Denise EXSTROM
Susan HANSON
Keith IVERSON
Lorrie & Bob KAPLAN
Kathy KUPPER
Tom & Linda LIGHTFOOT
Bob & Joan MISCHLER
Susan MYRICK
Harriette L. PHELPS
Mary & John PIERCE
Tim & Diane SEWARD
Robert SWIFT
Peter WILBORN
Joan ZARDUS

Hyndman, PA
Jefferson, MD
White Plains, MD
Bethesda, MD
Arlington, VA
Arlington, VA
Fisher, WV
Washington, DC
Greenbelt, MD
McLean, VA
Potomac, MD
Grantham, PA
Charleston, SC
Amesbury, MA

ON THE BOOKSHELF

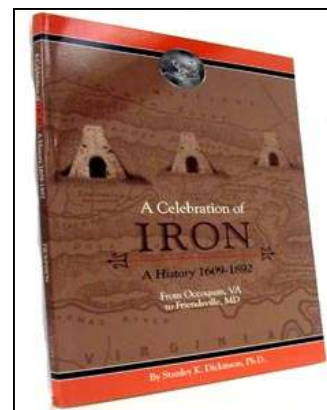
A Celebration of Iron

by Stanley K. Dickinson

During a three-year period, the author traveled over most of the 184 miles of the C&O Canal and took excursions along several tributaries of the Potomac River to compile first-hand research on iron and how it shaped the region.

Using maps and descriptions dating from 1856, he presents a history on the geology, iron industry and people of the region from Occoquan, Virginia to Friendsville, Maryland from 1609 to 1892. Contains historic photographs and illustrations.

** Book description from www.eparks.com, where you can purchase copies of this book and help support National Parks at the same time.



C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Telephone Numbers and Personnel

C&O CANAL NHP Headquarters

1850 Dual Highway, Suite 100, Hagerstown, Md. 21740

General number	301-739-4200	
Superintendent	301-714-2201	Kevin Brandt
Deputy Superintendent	301-714-2201	Bob Hartman
Chief Ranger	301-714-2222	Ryan Peabody, Acting
Admin Officer	301-714-2204	Jeannie Denk
Chief, Natural and Cultural		
Resource Mgmt Branch	301-714-2231	Bill Justice, Acting
Chief, Interpretation	301-714-2214	Bill Justice
Natural Resource Program Mgr.	301-714-2224	Marie Sauter
Public Affairs Assistant	301-745-5804	Vacant
Special Permits	301-745-5817	Lee Smith
Chief of Maintenance	301-714-2216	Bradley Hofe, Acting
Partnerships Coordinator	301-714-2238	John Noel
Volunteer Coordinator	301-714-2233	Dave Tune
Engineer	301-745-5818	Dan Copenhaver
Historian	301-714-2211	Sam Tamburro

Palisades District, extending from Milepost 0 (Tidelock) and to Milepost 42.19 (Monocacy River):

Palisades District

11710 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac, Md. 20854	
District Ranger	301-767-3720 Alex Negron, Acting
Fee Collection Supervisor	301-299-3603 Paul Johnson

Georgetown Visitor Center

202-653-5190	
1057 Thomas Jefferson St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20007	
Supv. Park Ranger, Interpretation	Rod Sauter, Acting

Great Falls Tavern Visitor Ctr.

301-767-3714	
11710 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac, Md. 20854	
Supv. Park Ranger, Interpretation	301-767-3702 Rod Sauter

Western Maryland District, extending from Milepost 42.19 (Monocacy River) to Milepost 184.5 (Canal Terminus, Cumberland, Md.):

Western Maryland District

District Ranger	301-714-2236	Al Voner, Acting
Cumberland Subdistrict	301-722-0543	
Hancock Subdistrict	301-678-5463	
Ferry Hill Subdistrict	301-714-2206	

Williamsport Visitor Center

301-582-0813	
205 West Potomac St., Williamsport, Md. 21795	
Supv. Park Ranger, Interpretation	Rita Knox, Acting

Hancock Visitor Center

301-678-5463	
326 East Main St., Hancock, Md. 21750	
Park Ranger, Interpretation (part time)	Vacant

Cumberland Visitor Center

301-722-8226	
Western Maryland station, Cumberland, Md. 21502	
Park Ranger, Interpretation	Rita Knox

OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Georgetown Boat Operation	202-653-5190
Boat House at Fletcher's Cove (concessionaire)	202-244-0461
Carderock and Marsden Reservations	301-767-3731

24-HOUR EMERGENCY

(TOLL FREE): 1-866-677-6677
HAZARDS CHO_Hazards@nps.gov

Along the Towpath is published in March, June, September, and December by the C&O Canal Association (C&OCA), P.O. Box 366, Glen Echo, MD 20812-0366. Articles for publication should be submitted to Jennifer Hanna at the address below, for receipt by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Electronic submission is preferred.

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Associate Editors: Dave Johnson, Don Juran, Carl Linden, Nancy Long, Ned Preston and Helen Shaw



C&O CANAL ASSOCIATION

Membership in C&OCA is open to all persons with an interest in the C&O Canal, the C&O Canal National Historical Park, and the Potomac River Basin. Annual membership dues are \$15 individual, \$20 family, and \$25 patron, assessed on a calendar-year basis, and include subscription to the newsletter. Dues should be mailed to the C&O Canal Association, P.O. Box 366, Glen Echo, MD 20812-0366. C&OCA is a non-profit organization as defined by section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and all contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. A copy of our current financial statement is available upon request by writing to C&OCA at the address above or calling 301-983-0825. Documents and information submitted to the State of Maryland under the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State for the cost of copying and postage.

C&OCA maintains a home page at <http://www.CandOcanal.org>. The webmaster is Matthew James Teigen, mjteigen@gmail.com. C&OCA also maintains a telephone number for information and inquiries: 301-983-0825.

2006 Association Officers:

President: Robert C. Perry, 12713 Knightsbridge Dr., Woodbridge, Va. 22192-5159; 703-590-5568; rperry5568@comcast.net

First Vice President: Barbara Sheridan, 11550 Farm Dr., La Plata, Md. 20646, 703-306-6549, barbara.sheridan@gsa.gov

Second VP & Level Walker Chair: Bill Burton, 6400 Halifax Ct., Warrenton, Va. 20187-2219, 703-801-0963, level-walker@earthlink.net

Secretary: Bill Holdsworth, 10 Radburn Ct., Rockville, Md. 20850-2740, 301-762-9376, w.holdsworth@att.net.

Treasurer: Linda Willard, 9401 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Md. 20814, 301-530-0408, willardlz3@verizon.net

Information Officer: Bill Onorato, 6889 Churchill Rd., McLean, Va. 22101, 703-734-1589, wtonorato@aol.com.

Board of Directors: (terms expire in 2009): Steve DeLanoy, Bill Hibbard, Nancy Long, Marlow Madeoy, Dorothea Malsbary; (terms expire in 2008): Blair Bower, Jim Heins, George Lewis, Dward Moore, John Wheeler; (terms expire in 2007): James Gilford, Don Juran, Tom Perry, Ron Howard, Richard D. Stoll.

Committees (contact at the C&OCA mailing address or tel. no. above):

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Along The Towpath

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association

Please Note:

Reservations for the October 28
Heritage Hike supper must be received
no later than Friday, October 20.



See page one of *Along the Towpath*
for details on the Hike,
and the insert in this issue
for the reservation form.

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