

# 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 1

## **The Douglas Hike - Saturday, April 17 - Cumberland to Spring Gap**

By Dorothea Malsbary on behalf of the Program Committee

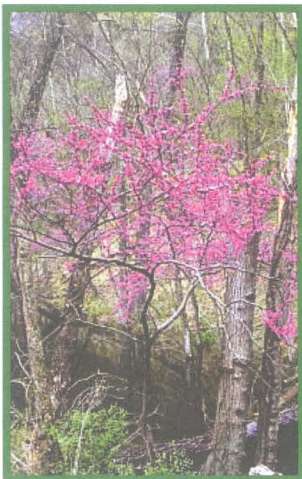
The Association's annual William O. Douglas Memorial Hike is set for Saturday, April 17, in the Cumberland to the Spring Gap area. The hike celebrates the famed 1954 trek through which Justice Douglas won support for preserving the C&O Canal. We begin in Cumberland, at the Canal Place plaza, near Harrison and Mechanic Streets. To reach the meeting point, take Exit 43-C, from Interstate 68, to downtown Cumberland. Free parking is available at several Canal Place parking areas and at the *Cumberland Times-News* lot across the way.

Hikers will take the Tourist Trolley to their choice of several starting points. Hikers then walk back along the towpath to their vehicles at their own pace. The trolley will be parked by the Western Maryland Railway Station next to the National Park Service visitor center and will depart at

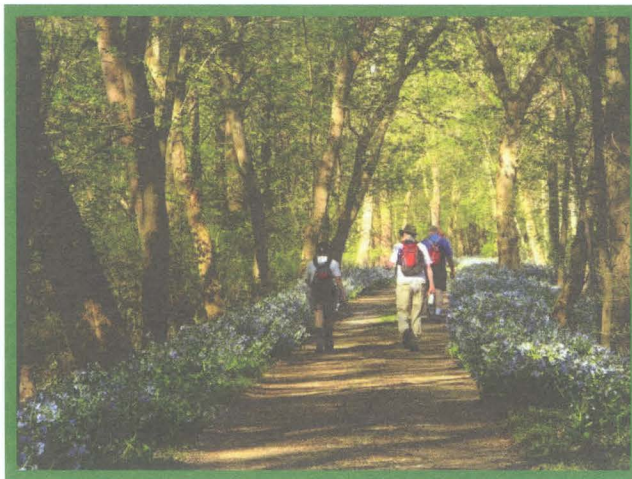
10:30 and 11:30 am. The 10:30 departure is best for those taking the longest hike starting at Spring Gap. Before boarding the trolley all walkers are required to sign an Association liability waiver and pay the \$5 fare. Please bring \$5 in cash. It is a good idea to bring a bag lunch and drink for your midday meal on the towpath.

See Karen Gray's article on page 2 for hike highlights.

The hikes back to Cumberland are about 11 miles from Spring Gap, 9 miles from North Branch (Lock 75), 6 miles from Mexico Farms and 3 miles from Offutt Street and Candoc Lane. Hikers can also walk from Canal Place as far as they wish and return. The visitor center has an information counter, gift shop, café and restrooms. There are also toilets along the hike route at Spring Gap, Iron Mountain, Lock 75, and Evitts Creek.



Redbud



Ah! Spring on the Towpath



Bluebells

**BIG SLACKWATER & CATOCTIN AQUEDUCT SET TO GO! (See page six)**

Happy hour begins at 4:30 p.m. in the Orleans Fire Hall, a deluxe buffet is served at 5:30 and a presentation follows dinner. The Orleans Fire Hall is located off Interstate 68 at exit 68. The buffet menu includes stuffed pork loin, meatloaf, scalloped potatoes, candied carrots, cole slaw, dinner roll and dessert. Beverages are coffee and iced tea. The \$18 cost of the buffet includes Happy hour.

Our guest speaker is board member Francis "Champ" Zumbun, retired forest manager of Green Ridge State Forest. He will tell the story of Frederick Mertens, Sr., 1824-1886. Mr. Merten's path to Cumberland began in Germany and continued through South America, New York and Pennsylvania. He came to Cumberland in 1852, set up a boat building yard for C&O Canal boats on Baltimore Street, and ran a coal and lumber businesses. His land holdings later became the Green Ridge State Forest.

Inserted in this issue of *Along the Towpath* are reservation forms for the dinner and the trolley. The forms must be received by Friday, April 2, after which no cancellations or additions will be honored for the dinner. Please be sure to check the Association website calendar at [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org) for any updates on the Douglas Hike. If you have questions, contact Dorothea Malsbary at [programs@candocanal.org](mailto:programs@candocanal.org)

### **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 (106-43 BCE), Pro Publio Sestio

## **2010 Douglas Hike: Spring Gap to Cumberland**

### **Spring Gap to North Branch**

Those taking the longest version of the hike will begin at Spring Gap at Mile 173.4, twelve miles from Cumberland. The Spring Gap area is an important and historic part of the canal. Across the Potomac on the West Virginia side is the B&O Railroad mainline (now owned by CSX) that makes its way around the end of the Patterson Creek Ridge and then crosses the mouth of Patterson Creek on an important railroad bridge. The Potomac could be crossed here using the Frankfort Ford; travelers on the Virginia

route from tidewater to Fort Cumberland frequently made use of this crossing in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Today, the Patterson Creek Ridge on the south side of the river and a rocky hill on the north side squeeze the river through Spring Gap, which includes a narrow strip of land where the park's recreation area and MD Highway 51 are located. The rocky height on each side subjected both the railroad and canal to flooding at times, such as in the 1936 flood that took out the Patterson Creek railroad bridge.

At Mile 173.64 on the towpath, stone abutments remain that once supported a bridge carrying the road to the ford over the canal. The bridge was completed in the summer of 1850, in time for the October opening of the canal's final fifty miles between Cumberland and Dam 6.

Because of the ford, this canal bridge was important to troops guarding the railroad bridge during the Civil War. However in early February 1864 Confederates under General Rosser captured the Union guards at the Patterson Creek railroad bridge and burned both it and the railroad bridge over the Potomac a few miles up-river. They also wrecked a locomotive, and a contingent of Rosser's force crossed the river, burned this bridge over the canal and damaged the gates at Lock 72 at Mile 174.44.

At Mile 174.18, a steam pump was installed in 1875 to add water from the river to the canal during periods when the company struggled to maintain adequate water levels. An earlier pump had been installed near Lock 68, some 9.4 miles downstream in an area where Dam 7 was to have been located. However, that pump had never worked well, and it was not repaired after being vandalized by Confederates during the Civil War. This pump was apparently of some help at times, although how much it was actually used is undetermined.

At Mile 174.4 a path leads to Blue Spring — one of the largest springs along the canal.

At Lock 72 the C&O Canal Company could once again build solid ashlar masonry locks and discontinue building composite locks of rubble stone (continued on page 3) beams with wood beams (Locks 58-71). The struggle to

### **Photo Credits: Page 1**

Center photo - Pat Hopson

Left & right photos - Rachel Stewart



get this lock built echoed the difficulties for almost all the structures between Dam 6 and Cumberland. The first contract was let to G. W. Henry in September 1837 but had to be relet a year later to Thomas M. MacCubbin. Still, no work of significance was done on the lock until February 1839 and MacCubbin's contract had to be modified in January 1840 due to dramatic increases in costs. Finally, in 1841 the lock was completed, although it would not be put into service until the final 50 miles of canal opened in 1850.

Lock 72 was the actual starting place of the 1954 Justice Douglas–*Washington Post* hike that resulted in the organization of those who had been trying for years to have the canal lands preserved for nature and recreation, and attracted many local people who supported that idea and opposed the alternative plans. By beginning here, the hikers saved 10 miles and avoided the section in Cumberland that was nearly impassable.

### North Branch to Mexico Farms

Hikers doing the intermediate length hike will set off from the North Branch locks — the last three lift locks — numbers 73, 74, and 75. These locks occur in the short distance from 175.4 to 175.6; thereafter for nine and a half miles the canal is level into Cumberland.

Between Locks 73 and 74, the B&O mainline (now CSX) crosses the canal near the bridge that carries it over the Potomac. Under the Maryland legislature's act of March 1833 that forced the C&O/B&O Compromise of May 1833, the B&O had been banished from the Maryland side of the river above Harpers Ferry. It was not allowed back onto the Maryland shore until the canal reached Cumberland, provided it did so within the time allowed by its charter. The canal did not do so, however, and thus by 1842, when the railroad was within a few miles of Cumberland, it was free to cross back over to Maryland at the first place above Harpers Ferry.

For several miles, the canal roughly parallels the river as it makes a large bend, although the railroad and MD 51 take a straight path across the top of the bend. Much of the land enclosed in the bend is farmland but this is also the home of the small Mexico Farms Airport — one of the nation's oldest, established in 1923. Among the pilots who have landed there are Wiley Post, Charles Lindberg, Howard Hughes, and Gen. Billy Mitchell.

### Short Hike: Mexico Farms to Cumberland

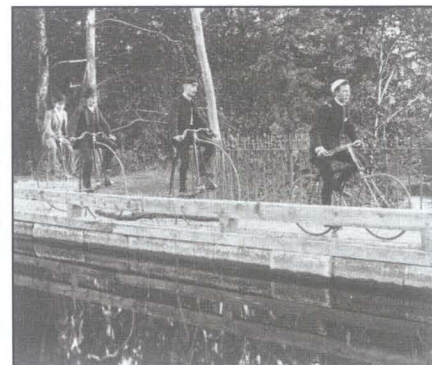
After leaving the Mexico Farms area, the canal is once again beside the river with the Western Maryland Railway not far away on the berm and MD 51 beyond it. Here the river again makes an enormous horseshoe bend, almost turning back on itself.

As the canal follows the river, it turns southwest before curving around to the northwest again and finally straightening out for a nearly due-north alignment as it approaches and enters Cumberland. A glance at these last ten miles on Google Earth (which can be downloaded free from [earth.google.com](http://earth.google.com)) or a good topographical map will clarify the complex route of the canal's final miles.

The last of the 11 stone aqueducts on the C&O crosses Evitts Creek at mile 180.66, right at the top of that big horseshoe curve north of Mexico Farms. The major rail yards begin to the west of Evitts Creek. One and a half miles up the creek is the quarry from which the stone came for the aqueduct and also Locks 72 through 75. A simple railroad was built to carry the stone to the aqueduct, but the stone for the locks had to be hauled five miles from there by wagon. It was noted at the time of quarrying that this stone is "filled with marine shells," and some of these can be seen in these structures.

Cyclists crossing the Evitts Creek Aqueduct in the days of yore. Look closely: The riders behind the leader are riding those classic big front-wheelers.

Photo: Courtesy NPS, C&O Canal NHP



Evitts Creek and Evitts Mountain are named after an Englishman named Evart, the first European to explore this area. He lived as a hermit in a cabin he built near Rocky Gap, dying in 1749. Near here was the home of Lt. John Frazier and his wife Jane on land known as Frazier Plantation. In 1755, during the French and Indian War, Jane Frazier was abducted by Indians and taken to Ohio. Some 18 months later she escaped and made her way back, only to discover that her husband, thinking she was dead, had married again. However, on Jane's return, he sent his





Evitts Creek Aqueduct (No. 11)

Photo: Courtesy of Lawrence Biemiller

new wife back to her father and explained that their marriage was not legal since Jane was still alive. He offered to continue supporting her but resumed his life with Jane. A descendant later wrote *Red Morning*, telling Jane's story.

The Candoc Recreation Area is located at Mile 181.83 (Candoc is an acronym for C. and O. Canal), and at Mile 182.62 the canal passes under the Wiley Ford Bridge. In the 1980s, when plans were in the works to rebuild this Potomac River bridge, it was discovered that the new bridge's design continued the situation in which the towpath crossed MD 61 at grade but just short of the bridge. The C&O Canal Association joined with several other groups in a legal action to force a full environmental impact study that resulted in a redesign of the approach to the bridge. The new approach elevated the highway enough that towpath users could go under it. The stone abutments and wing walls of this underpass were designed to evoke the appearance of many similar masonry structures along the canal.

The last of the eight original stop gates on the canal is located at Mile 183.39. (Note that, although stop gates are sometimes called stop locks, these structures are not locks.) The basic purpose of stop gates is to hold water in the canal behind the gate while it drains below the gate, so repairs can be made—or, in the case of this gate, to keep water in the basins during the winter when the rest of the canal is dry. Two of the C&O stop gates (that above Lock 16 and the one at Dam 4) also provide a channel for the canal

through a guard wall, thus those gates have abutments on either side of the canal and towpath that tower above them.

At Mile 183.55 a canal waste weir that drained the last mile of canal and basin area has been transformed with concrete into a spillway, but still marks the site of that important canal structure.

At Cumberland, Dam 8 created the pool that supplied water through twin inlet locks for the basins and 50 miles of canal down to Dam 6, the next inlet point. In the 1950s, Dam 8 was blown up and the banks of the Potomac were radically changed in a Corps of Engineers flood control project that eradicated the last mile of the canal. However, much of the twin inlet locks can still be seen under the railroad and behind the new Canal Place basin. Hikers are encouraged to tour the basin area and read the interpretive waysides that illustrate what the area was like during the canal's operating days.

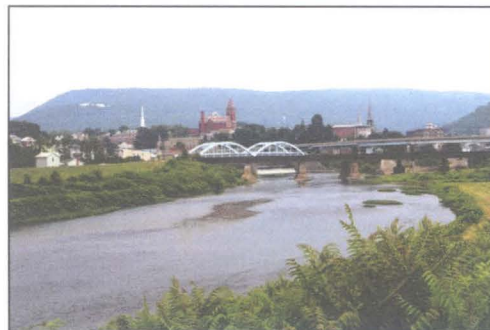
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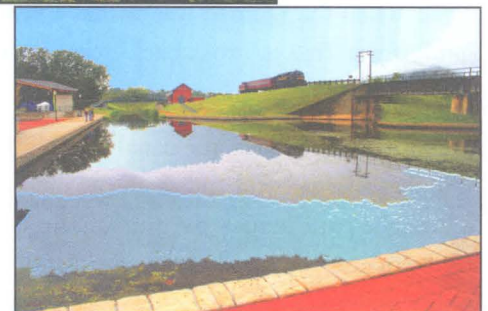


Cumberland skyline as seen from the towpath near the C&O Canal Terminus.

Photo: Tom Kozar

View of new C&O Canal Terminus Basin in Cumberland

Photo: Tom Kozar



#### Photo Credits for page 5

1. The Evitts Creek Aqueduct with icicles - by Robert G. Gormer.
2. Lockhouse 49 in Snow - Painting by Tom Kozar.
3. Snowy access to Great Falls (Winter 2010) - by Norman Liebow
4. The New Winch House in Snow (Winter 2010) - by Editor
5. Mules at Pasture (Winter 2010) - by Ann Lochstampfor



## The Snows of Winter on the C&O Canal





## Big Slackwater Restoration Set to Go

During Bob Perry's presidency (2005-06), the Association made restoration of the towpath along Big Slackwater above Dam #4 its highest priority canal project. Ed Miller gave us the rallying cry: "No Slack on Big Slack!" President Perry appointed a committee to make the public aware of the pressing need for the restoration and to solicit the support of public officials.

Now that Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley has released the \$4.4 million in transportation enhancement funds to supplement the \$12.1 million in federal American Recovery funds, we are set to go. Superintendent Kevin Brandt has announced that a groundbreaking ceremony will be held sometime this Spring. Kevin extends his thanks to the C&O Canal Association for promptly providing a \$65,000 grant for the environmental assessment, a necessary step toward making the project "shovel ready" and eligible to receive federal and state appropriations.

Along Big Slackwater the towpath is directly exposed to the impact of river floods. Here the towpath and canal route leave the canal prism and follow the river for 3.28 miles just upstream from feeder Dam # 4 and downstream from Williamsport. Here mules pulled the boats from the towpath that hugged the shore at the base of the river palisades. Remnants of Hurricane Agnes in 1972 made the towpath rough to transit, and in 1996 two "100-year" floods forced the NPS to close it as unusable for hikers and bikers. Towpath continuity was seriously disrupted. For fourteen years towpath users have had to use a five-mile detour on a windswept county road with no shoulders. Frequent accidents occurred along this hazardous route.

The C&OCA's Big Slackwater committee undertook to work closely with park officials on the issue, taking as its primary task spreading the word about the break in the towpath's continuity and appealing to those in positions of authority to take appropriate action. In the summer of 2006 we arranged an inspection of the break by boat for elected local, state and federal officials to see for themselves the destroyed section of the towpath. We spoke, wrote, walked, and listened to bikers, residents, organizations, and any one interested in our concern. We are grateful to all who spoke up for the towpath's repair. We look forward to our annual meeting in Williamsport, to honoring those who gave us a helping hand. We also want to thank all who

donated to the Association's Big Slackwater Fund. I want to honor my dedicated committee members, who were with me from start to finish. They are Association members from Washington County: Ken and Pat Beck, Charlotte Loveless, Williamsport Mayor James McCleaf, Carl Pederesen, and John Ziegler. From our own individual perspectives we worked with a common concern for the historic integrity of the towpath, for public safety, and for the economic importance of preserving the towpath's continuity and securing the safety of canal travel. There were some disappointments and setbacks along the way, but we persevered in our purpose and now we rejoice that the committee's work is done. Once again, we see that, just as in our efforts to see the Monocacy and Catoctin Aqueducts restored, dedicated and involved citizens can have a big impact in serving the common good.

We will keep you posted on the arrangements for groundbreaking. We invite you all to come out and join us for this gala celebration. Now Ed Miller and all of us together can give three cheers and say that there will be "No Slack on Big Slack."

Tom Perry - Chairman, Big Slackwater Committee

## Bridging the Gap at Catoctin Creek

In February of this year, the Catoctin Aqueduct Restoration Fund (CAR Fund) transferred \$300,000 in donor funds to the National Park Service to help facilitate the awarding of a long awaited contract to bridge in stone the 39 year old towpath gap at Catoctin Creek.

It is anticipated that in March of this year, the National Park Service will award the construction contract for this long awaited restoration of the Catoctin Aqueduct; and it is hoped that the NPS *Notice to Proceed* will follow in May; thus it is possible that the restoration will be completed no later than June of 2011. An official ground breaking is anticipated for late April/early May 2010. When C&O Canal National Park releases the details, the C&OCA membership will be advised by the most expedient means possible. It is estimated that over three quarters of a million rail road passengers and more than half a million towpath users per year, will witness this historic grass roots C&OCA-driven restoration of *The Most Beautiful Aqueduct on the Line*.

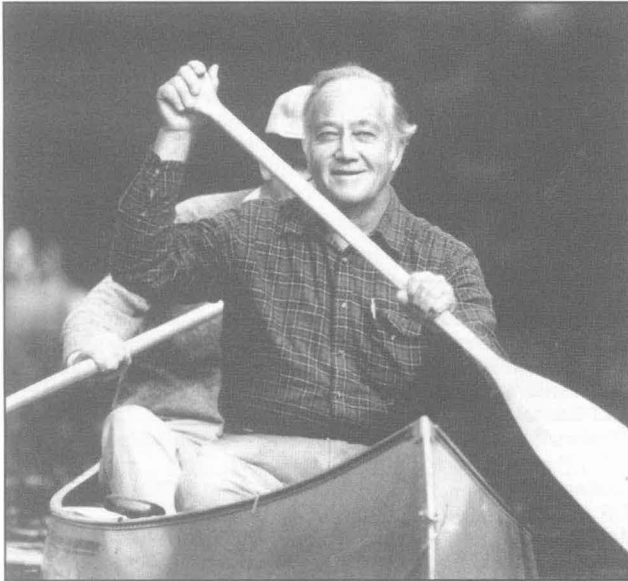
George Lewis



## ACROSS THE BERM

### Senator Charles McCurdy Mathias, Jr.

by Carrie Johnson



Senator 'Mac' Mathias loved to paddle the Potomac & the C&O

Photo: Courtesy of Gordon Hawks

Former Senator Charles McC. Mathias, Jr., (R-Md.), who passed away on January 25 at age 87, was a champion of the C&O Canal and a key legislative architect of the National Historical Park.

Twenty-six years in the House (1961-68) and Senate (1969-86), Mathias — commonly known as “Mac” — earned acclaim for his independence and thoughtful leadership in civil rights, foreign affairs, and other national policy fields. He focused much energy and persistence on protecting Maryland resources such as the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay.

The canal was close to Mathias’ heart and close to home. He played along the towpath as a boy. With deep family roots in Frederick County, he knew the upper Potomac region’s history. He was elected to Congress in 1960 from a district that covered Montgomery County and western Maryland, including the whole canal upstream from D.C. He quickly signed on to the canal park bill sponsored by then-Senator J. Glenn Beall, Sr. (R-Md.) and became its prime advocate in the House.

By the early 1960s the most stubborn resistance to Canal park plans was in the House. Since the Douglas hike in 1954, the C&O Canal Association and its allies had convinced the National Park Service to end its support for converting the towpath into a parkway. The Senate had twice approved Sen. Beall’s bill to create the national

historical park. Before leaving office, President Eisenhower designated the canal above Seneca as a National Monument. That executive action so annoyed House Interior Committee Chairman Wayne Aspinall (D-Colo.) that he refused to consider canal park bills for several years. That left the deteriorating canal in federal hands but with fragmented NPS management, minimal staff and funding, and no authority to add acreage between the canal and river.

Mathias and others worked to wear down opposition to the park concept on Capitol Hill and upriver, where longtime residents and local officials feared a federal takeover of the towpath and riverside. To allay those concerns, Mathias designed a refined bill insuring river access for hunting and fishing and promoting cooperation with landowners. He also called for creating a canal park advisory commission with local and state representatives to channel public input and foster collaboration between the NPS and the localities along the canal. This became an innovative feature of the eventual law.

In another context, Mathias once said that “the true task of leadership is not to invoke transient majorities but to shape durable unities.” That long perspective, with its emphasis on patience and amiable discussions, could be frustrating for activists who preferred a more aggressive approach. Yet the low-key canal campaign kept gaining ground: the annual C&OCA hikes grew larger; the region’s Boy Scouts discovered and promoted the towpath, and small-town merchants started to count profits from tourism.

Then came a challenge from another direction. In 1967 President Johnson and Interior Secretary Stewart Udall, aroused by increasing pollution of the Potomac, unveiled a far-reaching Potomac National River plan. The proposal subsumed the canal in a much larger protected area covering both banks of the river. Despite pressure from some environmentalists, Mathias declined to endorse the controversial plan. While he supported cleaning up the Potomac, he joined the C&OCA and others in adhering to an incremental strategy that would maintain the C&O Canal’s identity and not undermine the growing public support for the national historical park.

The debate over priorities and tactics bubbling along until mid-1970 when Mathias, by then in the Senate, learned that the Nixon administration was poised to endorse the National River idea. Joined by Rep. Gilbert Gude (R-Md.), Mathias but-thonholed Interior Secretary Walter Hickel — who, as an Alaskan, was used to large parks — and convinced him that the relatively modest canal bill was much more likely to pass.

With administration backing, Gude and his allies pried a national historical park bill out of the House committee. The measure largely tracked the earlier Mathias-Gude bills. House approval of the bill came on October 5, 1970, 16 ½ years after the Douglas hike.

The trick was to get the House bill out of legislative traffic jam in the Senate before Congress adjourned. Mathias’ negotiating talent saved the day. Though a very junior Republican then, he persuaded the Democratic lords of the Senate Interior Committee to hold a quick hearing on December 15. (Colin Ritter spoke for the C&OCA, urging action to ward off



private development pressures along the river, but cautioning against NPS over-development of recreational facilities.) A snag arose when Maryland officials wanted assurances that the bill would not affect state control over the Potomac's water. A staff conference at lunchtime added some language for the record and the bill moved on. The Senate passed the bill on December 22, just shy of adjournment. It became law on January 8, 1971.

Mathias congratulated all who took part in the 17-year campaign of "energetic walking, working and waiting" that had finally secured the park. He was not inclined to brag about his own role. Two decades later, however, he told an interviewer that going to the park and seeing so many people enjoy it made all the effort to save it "worthwhile."

Carrie Johnson was Sen. Mathias' legislative assistant from 1965 to 1972 and later served as chairman of the C&O Canal National Historical Park Advisory Commission.

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LIEBOW Norman  
LINDEN Carl A.  
LLEWELLYN J. Carl  
MACDONALD Verna J.  
MARMER Michael & Linda  
MARSINCUP Robert & Marie  
MARZIANI John & Mary  
MAST Phillip & Luella  
McEWAN Mary K.  
MEIJER Paul H.  
MILLS Larry  
MINOR Forrest & Lorraine  
MOORE Dward & Jeanine  
MOORE Thomas A.  
MOORE Gary & Janis  
MORITH Ronald G.  
MOULTON Stephen & Nancy  
MUSHAL Raymond & Barbara  
NOSALIK Ronald & Linda  
ODOM Louis & Janice  
PETERSON David & Kathleen  
PETKUS, Jr. Paul A.  
PETRICHICK Gary & Nancy  
PETRICHICK Glenn E.  
PLASKETT Roger & Patricia  
POLING Paul J.  
POORE Katherine L.

(Continued on page 10)

DATE	DAY	C&OCA CALENDAR OF EVENTS
		(visit <a href="http://www.candocanal.org">www.candocanal.org</a> for updated event information)
Mar. 27	Sat.	VIP Work Party, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Painting the Georgetown Canal Boat. Contact Jim Heins (301-949-3518 or <a href="mailto:vip@candocanal.org">vip@candocanal.org</a> ).
Mar. 28	Sun.	Continuing Hike Series. 10:30 a.m. Nolands Ferry (mile 44.58) to walk upstream. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or <a href="mailto:hikemas-ter@candocanal.org">hikemas-ter@candocanal.org</a> ).
Apr. 4	Sun.	Board Meeting moved from April 4 (Easter) to April 11 (see below)
Apr. 10	Sat.	Potomac Watershed Clean Up, 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Contact Jim Heins (301-949-3518 or <a href="mailto:vip@candocanal.org">vip@candocanal.org</a> ).
Apr. 11	Sun.	Board Meeting at Brookmont Church, 4000 Virginia Pl., Brookmont, 1:00 p.m. (Meet in Community Hall in basement)
Apr. 17	Sat.	Annual Douglas Memorial Hike and Dinner. Hikers will have three different length options with bus transportation provided. Cumberland to Spring Gap area with dinner and evening program at the Orleans Volunteer Fire Dept. Details provided in the March newsletter.
Apr. 24-25	Sat. & Sun.	Mini-Bike trip, location TBD. No sag wagon provided. Contact Tom Perry (301-223-7010). Reservations required. TRIP CANCELLED
Apr. 24	Sat.	Spring bird walk at 8 a.m., led by Kurt Schwarz, Maryland Ornithological Society and the C&OCA Nature Committee. Contact Marion Robertson (301-657-8992 or <a href="mailto:marobertson@verizon.net">marobertson@verizon.net</a> ). Meet at Sycamore Landing.
May 2	Sat.	Continuing Hike Series. 10:30 a.m. Snyders Landing (mile 76.65) upstream. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or <a href="mailto:hikemas-ter@candocanal.org">hikemas-ter@candocanal.org</a> ).
May 8	Sat.	VIP Work Party, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Invasive plants. Contact Jim Heins (301-949-3518 or <a href="mailto:vip@candocanal.org">vip@candocanal.org</a> ).
May 22 & 23	Sat. & Sun.	Two one-day paddling trips on the Monocacy River. Contact <a href="mailto:canoemaster@candocanal.org">canoemaster@candocanal.org</a> or Barbara Sheridan at 301-752-5436. Reservations required.
May 30	Sun.	Joint Picnic, C&OCA & Friends of the Historic Great Falls Tavern, 6:00 p.m. (tentative date)
June 5	Sat.	Presidents' Day, Little Orleans. Breakfast at 9:00 a.m., hike to follow. Details will be in March newsletter.
June 5	Sat.	Potomac River Family Festival, Brunswick, Md.
June 6	Sun.	Board Meeting at Williamsport Memorial Library, 1:00 p.m.
June 12	Sat.	One-day canoe trip at Violette's Lock (Lock 23). For information on this introduction to canoeing, contact Sonny DeForge (301 530 8830 or <a href="mailto:deforgelynn@comcast.net">deforgelynn@comcast.net</a> ) or Carl Linden (301-461-2071 or <a href="mailto:clinden@gwu.edu">clinden@gwu.edu</a> ).
June 19	Sat.	VIP Work Party, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Details TBD. Contact Jim Heins (301949-3518 or <a href="mailto:vip@candocanal.org">vip@candocanal.org</a> ).
June 26	Sat.	Barge Blast, Hancock, Md.
June 26 and 27	Sat. & Sun.	Montgomery County's "Heritage Tour Days," at the Monocacy Aqueduct.
July 17	Sat.	Canoe trip. Brunswick to Monocacy. Call Bill Burton ( <a href="mailto:billburton@earthlink.net">billburton@earthlink.net</a> or 703-801-0963) for reservations.
July 24	Sat.	VIP Work Party, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Details TBD. Contact Jim Heins (301-949-3518 or <a href="mailto:vip@candocanal.org">vip@candocanal.org</a> ).
Aug. 1	Sun.	Board Meeting at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave. 1:00 p.m.
Aug. 14	Sat.	Canoe trip, Old Patowmack Canal, Virginia. Contact Sonny DeForge (301 530 8830 or <a href="mailto:deforgelynn@comcast.net">deforgelynn@comcast.net</a> ) or Carl Linden (301-461-2071 or <a href="mailto:clinden@gwu.edu">clinden@gwu.edu</a> ).
Aug. 21	Sat.	VIP Work Party, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Details TBD. Contact Jim Heins (301-949-3518 or <a href="mailto:vip@candocanal.org">vip@candocanal.org</a> ).
Aug. 27 - 29	Fri. Sat. & Sun.	Canoe trip/camp, Paw Paw Bends. Contact <a href="mailto:canoemaster@candocanal.org">canoemaster@candocanal.org</a> or Barbara Sheridan at (301-752-5436). Reservations required.
Aug. 28 - 29	Sat. & Sun.	Williamsport Days in Williamsport, Md.
Sep. 4	Sat.	Tree ID walk. 10:00 a.m., Location TBD. Contact Marion Robertson at (301-657-8992) or <a href="mailto:marobertson@verizon.net">marobertson@verizon.net</a>
Sep. 12	Sun.	Happy Birthday Montgomery County, Beall Dawson House, Rockville, Md.
Sep. 19 -24	Sun.-Fri	World Canals Conference, Rochester, N.Y. For more information, see <a href="http://www.worldcanalsconference.org">www.worldcanalsconference.org</a>



DATE	DAY	C&OCA CALENDAR OF EVENTS (continued)
Sep. 25 & 26	Sat. & Sun.	Canal/Rail Fest, Cumberland, Md.
Oct 2	Sat.	Bird walk at 8 a.m. with Kurt Schwarz, at Riley's Lock. Contact Marion Robertson at (301-657-8992) or morobertson@verizon.net
Oct. 2	Sat.	Canal Reunion, Williamsport, Md.
Oct. 3	Sun.	Board Meeting at the home of Tom and Linda Perry in Williamsport, 1:00 p.m..
Oct. 6 - 11	Wed. - Mon.	Through bike ride, Cumberland to Georgetown. No sag wagon provided. Contact Tom Perry (301-223-7010). Reservations required. RESERVATIONS NOW CLOSED.
Oct. 16	Sat.	"Life and Death on the C&O Canal." Contact Great Falls Tavern Visitors Center (301-767-3714).
Oct. 23	Sat.	VIP Work Party, Details TBD. Contact Jim Heins (301-949-3518 or vip@candocanal.org).
Oct. 23	Sat.	Continuing Hike Series. 10:30 a.m. Lock 67/Town Creek Aqueduct Access (Mile 162) upstream. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).
Oct. 30	Sat.	Annual Heritage Hike and evening dinner and program, Harper's Ferry to Point of Rocks vicinity including Brunswick and Catoctin Creek Aqueduct. Hikes of varying lengths will be available. Details in September newsletter.
Nov. 14	Sun.	GEOHike. Exploring the geology of the Seneca area. Meet at Riley's Lock at noon. Contact Marlow Madeoy (703-723-6884) or madeoym@verizon.net.
Nov. 21	Sun.	Continuing Hike Series. 10:30 a.m. Goose Creek Navigation (Virginia, parking lot at intersection of Route 7 and Goose Creek. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).
Dec. 4	Sat.	Frostbite Hike, 10:30 a.m. Meet at the Great Falls Tavern. Visit five vistas along the canal in the Great Falls/Widewater area. Music & snacks at the tavern after hike. Contact Carl Linden (301-461-2071 or clinden@gwu.edu).
Dec. 5	Sun.	Board Meeting at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave. 1:00 p.m.
Dec. 31	Fri.	New Year's Eve Hike. Details TBD.
Jan. 1	Sat.	New Year's Day Hike (2011). Details TBD.
Waivers are required for many of these Association activities. Forms will be provided at the activity. Hikes require proper footwear.		

## A Warm Welcome to Our New Members



Jeffrey Behar, Towson, Md.  
 Charlie Brummitt, Greensboro, NC.  
 Jill Craig, Keedysville, Md.  
 Paul Gooder, Columbia, Md.  
 William M. Grant, Columbus, Oh.  
 Joel Grosser & Jenny Grimes, Fall Church, Va.  
 Richard Hirsch, Cabin John, Md.  
 Joshua Martin, Harpers Ferry, W.Va.  
 Jack Nerlinger, Boonsboro, Md.  
 Rodney & Sara Putman, Rockwood, Pa.  
 Carol Randall & Brian Walker, Huntington, Md.  
 Ada Schintz, Carlisle, Pa.  
 Sally Strain, Washington, D.C.  
 Fred & Nancy Wilson, Eldersberg, Md.

## Big Slackwater Fund Continued from page 8

POREMSKI Richard P.  
 PRATT Amy Kathryn  
 RAVENSCROFT William E.  
 REEDER Carolyn O.  
 REYNOLDS Craig A.  
 REYNOLDS Grant & Jo  
 REYNOLDS Robert Joel  
 RIDGE Albert & Mae  
 ROGERS Edward & Patricia  
 ROONEY Richard & Ruth  
 SCHILLING Elias Roy  
 SCHLEGEL Cory & Nancy  
 SCHOOLEY David & Patricia  
 SCHUCHAT Michael A.  
 SCHWARZ Kurt R.  
 SEMMES Harry & Lurette  
 SENGERS Jan & Levell  
 SENGSTACK George F.  
 SHERIDAN Barbara  
 SHIPP Diane N.  
 SKIVER Malcolm & Robin  
 SKOGLUND Leonard & Joyce  
 SLOPPY Dennis & Donna  
 SMALL John Scott  
 SMAMUELSON Lawrence & Judith  
 STANLEY William & Phyllis  
 STEVENS Robert & Alma  
 STICKLES Jack & Frances  
 STOCKHAM Edwin H.  
 STRASSER Russell & Alice

SULLIVAN Michael & Alice  
 SWANK Jean H.  
 TEITELBAUM Steven  
 TRIPLETT Caroline L.  
 TUCKER Samuel & Grace  
 VENN Porter W.  
 WELCH Jack B.  
 WESTENDORF Katrinka L.  
 WHEELER Mary C.  
 WHITE Gerald  
 WIEST Robert & Vera  
 WILLIAMSON James & Elizabeth  
 WILLIAMSON Daniel & Martha  
 WILSON Ronald W.  
 WINTER Roger P.  
 ZIEGLER John & Margery  
 ZVEARE Douglas W.

## IMO Ken Rollins/ CAR Fund

MYERS Bettyjane F.  
 SKINNER Dorothy J.

## Davies Fund

ABBATE Mario & Anne  
 ANDERSON Wayne & Lark  
 BOGDAN, Jr. John R.  
 BROWN William & Patricia

(Continued on page 15)

## ON THE LEVEL by Level Walker Chairman Bill McAllister

During my three years as Level Walker Chairman, several of our Level Walkers retired. Their dedication to the park, the Association, and level walking is manifest in their farewell notes to me. Most continue as members of the Association; some leave the area and participate in volunteer activities elsewhere. Some finished their service at the outset of my tenure so I did not have an opportunity to get to know them better. However, on behalf of all our level walkers, I want to express our appreciation both to them and to the more recent retirees — Sharon Freedman of Gaithersburg, Md., Roger Winter of Woodbine, Md., Russ Meinke of Chambersburg, Pa., Leonard A. Preston, formerly of Arlington, Va., Bill Quinn of Washington, D.C. and Jed Tucker of Adamstown, Md.

Bill McAllister  
(301-577-4757, levelwalker@candocanal.org)

*Level #1 Tidelock to Incline Plane* **John Barnett reports 12/4/2009** Almost no users at all save one striking and scantily clad female jogger. Whew!! Tidewater still looks great. I am keeping the beach clear of incoming trash and drift wood, and raking leaves out of the lock. A small amount of trash today including a big Dunkin' Donuts box. Hope they got sick on the stuff!! Just about all the leaves are down. One of the reliable and helpful homeless has returned to the "Key Bridge Club" and keeps it neat there for me. **12/11/2009** Usual mix of trash. Over half of it from Tidelock where high tides have washed up a lot of trash and wood. A real mess. I'll suggest to Danny Filer (NPS volunteer coordinator) that I pile up driftwood at Tidelock in an unused spot so that he can have it picked up periodically for use as firewood at the various campsites. He had the idea of doing that with the haul we got October 31. It's a darn good one and would help me keep the beach in better shape too. **12/18/2009** Human usage, almost nil. A few joggers and that was that. **1/19/2010** A hawk was standing on the Tidelock footbridge as I crossed it. Not seeing it, I almost tripped over it. It stood in a small pool of blood but I couldn't tell whether it was the hawk's blood or a victim's. Anyway, I asked it what the hell it was doing there and it hopped up onto the railing. I asked again and it flew away. End of hawk story. Hope this makes your day.

*Level #3 Brookmont-Glen Echo Lock 5 to Cabin John Creek* **Caroline and Bill Triplett report 12/10/2009** Cold and windy. Temp. at 11:30 was 32° and at 1:00 p.m., 39°. At 11:30 saw, 15 playing hockey, four in strollers, three skating, five jogging, six walking, three biking, and four dogs. At 1:00 p.m., 42 playing hockey on ice, nine under 12 years old were on the ice also. Lots of people of all ages were enjoying the ice and the towpath. It was very clean. Only

did part of the level and will work on the rest when it is warmer. Bob and Kathleen Vorthman came along with me.

*Level #4 Cabin John Creek to Lock #14* **Larry Heflin reports 12/12/2009** Several muddy areas from just below Lock 8 to Lock 14 cause walkers and bikers to attempt detours to edge of embankment. Gravel or crushed stone fill, not clay, seems called for to allow drainage. A leaning tree spans the canal a couple of hundred feet downstream of Lock 8 inviting the intrepid to use it as a footbridge over the shallow canal. The water fountain at Lock 10 was turned off early December: Woolly bear caterpillars aside, this is always taken as the Park Service assurance of the coming of winter. It appears they were right. **1/1/2010** Many large trees and much brush cut down as PEPCO sets poles and hangs electrical wire towards lockhouse at Lock 8. Very visible now and forevermore from the towpath.

*Level #5 Seven Locks Lock #14 to Bridge at Cropley* **Bobbie Thorberg reports 11/29/2009** In the vicinity of the overpass above the road to Carderock where pipes carry the water, the sinkhole near the berm is quite visible now that vegetation has died down. It appears to be 20 feet wide and at least 6 feet deep. Erosion problems continue from upstream from Milepost 11 to Cropley and evidence of NPS repairs continues. There is evidence of greenery such as bush honeysuckle and unidentified plants of various kinds in the canal. American crows, turkey vultures, robins, and lots of mallards were evident. This was the Sunday after Thanksgiving and there were so many people it was hard to count them all.

*Level #10 Seneca Aqueduct to Milepost 25* **John and Val Wheeler report 11/15/2009** I've never seen so little garbage on the level. There was practically none at the picnic areas on both sides of Seneca Creek. A few people fishing; lots of bikers and hikers. 104 people signed the Girl Scout's Riley's Lockhouse log. I'd guess that about 25 percent of people on the towpath came to the lockhouse, so more than 400 people on the towpath. Lots of activity! This trip was multi-tasking: I was level walking while Val visited with a Girl Scout Troup from Rockville (Val met a Girl Scout advisor at the Thompson's Boathouse VIP work trip.) I spent most of my time removing invasive vines (primarily English ivy and Japanese honeysuckle) from trees and around Riley's Lockhouse. **Mason White reports 1/23/2010** The first 1/4 to 1/2 mile from the aqueduct was very muddy. The rest of the level was in better condition-nowhere near good but all right. As usual, I removed many limbs and sticks. I saw two squirrels, one heron or egret, and two Canada geese. The foliage is long gone. It was a good day to be out, and I am glad I didn't put it off. It was a bit cold at first, but I soon warmed up. I plan to walk each month.



*Level #11 Tenfoot Island to Sycamore Landing* **Mason White reports: 1/16/2010** The towpath very muddy, especially west of Milepost 26. The other end of the level was in better condition. I removed many downed limbs — some of them large enough to send an inattentive biker over the handlebars. The parking lot was very muddy, which is often the case. There was a large pothole on Sycamore Landing Road.

*Level #21 Brunswick Lock #30 to Lock #31* **Ron Howard reports 12/15/2009** I collected very little trash — not much in the canal, where it's usually plentiful, having been left behind by high water. More water than usual in the canal probably hid the trash. I saw some items between the railroad tracks and the canal, but because of the water in the canal I couldn't get to it. Then I saw three cyclists, four walkers, and one jogger. Most of the towpath was in good condition. However, there were just a few muddy spots. I cleared off a number of tree branches. I saw no wildlife, but I heard a cardinal, a pileated woodpecker, and crows. It was a pleasant winter day — good to be out. I returned to Brunswick for a tasty lunch at Mommer's Diner.

*Level #22 Weverton Lock #31 to Lock #33* **Karlen Keto reports 1/21 and 22/2010** To evaluate my first level walking: I love it! I get exercise and do a "service" for others. Two people thanked me for my efforts. I am glad to live close to my levels. Thanks to John Barnett for spurring me on.

*Level #28 Shepherdstown Lock #38 to Lock #39* **Dale Walter reports 1/28/2010** Some puddling at lower end of my level but mostly just damp. Path in very good shape after a lot of rain. Good deal of water in the canal and lots of downed trees and branches. Both locks look very good.

*Level # 29 Foot of Sharpsburg Lock #39 to Snyders Landing* **Elliott Krafur reports 1/20/2010** It seems the Potomac valley is the public's favorite rubbish bin. What a mess. Potomac was within a meter of flooding the canal but now is falling rapidly. Water in canal prism is from the earlier rains and backfilling from the river via sinkholes. Prism water has made visible tremendous amounts of trash particularly at Snyder's Landing. Moreover, Potomac high water has deposited great amounts of trash between the towpath and river.

*Level #34 McMahon's Mill to Opequon Junction* **Hiker Biker Tom Perry with our dog, Schatz, reports 11/25/2009** One couple, a young mother and son, and one man with a dog were on towpath. All were hikers. I noted with pleasure the new bridge which, I take it, is to carry heavy vehicles for work in the Big Slackwater area. Also new surfacing of the towpath where it juts out around the cliffs seems to be holding up very well. The towpath is in excellent condition at this point.

*Level # 43 McCoy's Ferry to Fort Frederick* **Karen Gray reports 12/27/2009** Met a couple out for a walk from the Fort Frederick direction on my way up from McCoy's Ferry,

and met them headed back that way on my way back. No deer, although there were lots of footprints in the snow of people, deer, and dogs. Clearly a lot had been happening on the towpath since the snow on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Some of the paw prints could have been coyote rather than domestic dog, but there was no way to be sure. None seemed small enough to have been made by fox. Hawks, crows, and cardinals were the only birds I saw or heard. The prism had water in it the entire length — quite a bit in some places. I couldn't see the prism of culvert #145 (per Hahn), the first upstream from Milepost 111, well enough to determine if the hole that has been present in it sometimes was back after the last patch. However, #146, the next one upstream, has a depression of varying depths in a line from the berm embankment to the middle of the prism. As has often been the case before, water was running into the depression in the middle of the prism and was disappearing—apparently falling through into the culvert beneath. Because of the snow I didn't try to make my way down the bank to look through the culvert, but when I've done that before the water falling through the vault of the culvert was like a little waterfall in the middle of the culvert and I presume that would have been the case this time as well. However, it likely would have been difficult to get a clear view through the culvert because the stream was carrying quite a bit of water. The river was high but was not flooding the boat ramp area at McCoy's Ferry. All the streams in the area were also running high but not flooding.

*Level #44 Fort Frederick to Ernstville* **James Biasco reports 11/28/2009** Nobody was out on the towpath. However, there did appear to be a few people out on the parallel rail-trail. People must have been Christmas shopping. Towpath was in good shape. A few geese swimming in Big Pool, other-wise very quiet. Big Pool still seems at a lower level than it was several years ago.

*Level #56 Seven Mile Bottom Culvert #208 to Lock #61* **Pat White reports (with Barbara Sheridan) 11/15/2009** Lock 61 appeared normal. Culvert #208 was dry. Walked through, noted several areas losing bricks, up to 5 courses deep in several spots. Note: Twigg Hollow stream has washed out Outdoor Club Road preventing vehicle access to the NPS gate or the site of the Outdoor Club. The stream was diverted by the canal company to join the stream from Grubbs Hollow near Culvert #210. However, the Twigg Hollow stream keeps flooding over Outdoor Club Road and washing it out. The washout is the deepest I've seen in many years. This area is in the State Forest, not on NPS land.

*Level #57 Twigg Hollow Lock #61 Lock #63 1/3* **Barbara Sheridan reports (with Pat White) 11/15/2009** The upstream side of the culvert pipes (2) under the access road to the Twigg Hollow gate was completely blocked. Pat and I removed large quantities of large limbs, branches, and other debris to clear the pipes.

## **The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal and the Underground Railroad**

by Timothy R. Snyder

It has long been said that the C&O Canal was a part of the Underground Railroad used by slaves to escape from bondage during the American Antebellum Era. Take, for example, the below quote from a travel brochure issued to Baltimore & Ohio Railroad passengers, circa 1923:

An interesting chapter in the history of the C. & O. Canal was in the slave days preceding the Civil War, when it was secretly utilized as a part of the famous "Underground Railway" system. Along its route were stations maintained by abolitionists and their friends, whose bribing of canal boatmen enabled many a slave to be smuggled into the free states.<sup>1</sup>

Although rumors of the canal being utilized as a part of the Underground Railroad have persisted, definitive proof has been difficult to find. In 2001, however, the Maryland State Archives began an effort to locate records in its collection that documented resistance to slavery, including use of the Underground Railroad.<sup>2</sup> One outcome of this research was the creation of a website called, "Beneath the Underground: The Flight to Freedom and Communities in Antebellum Maryland."<sup>3</sup> Recently it gave the public access to some of its primary documents over the internet, utilizing a "Search Our Database" function.<sup>4</sup>

A search of slave jail records shows that in 1829 a Baltimore County jail held twelve fugitives, all of whom were charged with being a "runaway servant" or a "runaway indentured servant" to the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Company. The runaways were brought to the jail in small groups between October 29 and November 4.<sup>5</sup> Rather than being African American slaves, however, it is likely that this group of canal workers were runaway indentured servants from the British Isles. Because of labor shortages in America, in 1829 the Canal Company sent an agent to England to obtain one thousand English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish workmen. The canal company agreed to pay their transportation costs in exchange for a fixed term of labor. The agent began sending men over in August 1829, with the last contingent to arrive in America in late October. In his book, *The Great National Project*, Walter S. Sanderlin wrote that the canal company had difficulty with many of its indentured servants and that dissatisfied workers often "deserted the line of the canal and disappeared into the neighboring countryside."<sup>6</sup>

A search of runaway slave advertisements in newspapers yields a small sample of 31 cases of runaway slaves associated with the canal in some manner from 1829–1860. Twenty-seven of the ads were published during the early construction period of the canal's history, from 1829–1839. In the case of twelve runaways, it is explicitly written that the escapees had at one time been, or were actively engaged in, working on the canal.

Interestingly, Sanderlin also writes that because of the difficulty that the canal company had with indentured servants, its board of directors refused to purchase slaves.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, any slaves who worked on the waterway must have been hired out by their owners to contractors that the company engaged to do work on the canal. Based on the runaway slave ads, it can be concluded that the canal company utilized slave labor indirectly by hiring contractors who employed slaves.

In all the cases of runaway slaves, the escapees were males. The physical demands of flight, lack of child rearing responsibilities, and more relative freedom of movement may help explain why all of the fugitives were men. The sample also illustrates that running away was usually a young man's activity. Six runaways were under the age of 20 (the youngest was sixteen); sixteen of the escapees were between age 20 and 29; four from age 30 to 39; two between 40 and 49; and one was 60-year old. Two ads provided no age.

(Continued next page)

Tim Snyder is an Association member who grew up near Williamsport and now lives in Hagerstown. He shares with many of us a deep interest in both the C&O Canal and the Civil War. He has a book manuscript on those topics currently under review by a publisher. - Gary Petrichick



In seven of the twelve examples of slaves who worked on the canal, the slave owners indicated that their bondsmen had worked on the canal in the past; four ads indicate that the slave absconded while employed on the canal. Owner Levin J. Wilson submitted a runaway slave ad to the *Frederick Town Herald*, published on January 2, 1830: "Fifty Dollar Reward. Ran away from the subscriber on the 18<sup>th</sup> instant [December 18, 1829], a Negro man, named BEN ADDISON, about 21 years of age, dark color, 5 feet 9 or 10 inches high, sulky when spoken to, stout built, and is left handed. He has been working on the canal in Georgetown for the last three months."<sup>8</sup>

The canal company lodged workers near the line of the canal, which may have made escape particularly tempting, given its relative remoteness from population centers.

In eighteen cases, slave owners wrote that their runaway slaves were headed for the canal or suspected that they were headed for the waterway. It is likely that because slaves and free black laborers already worked on the canal, escapees felt more secure from capture and expected to receive comfort and support from African American laborers as well as from any abolitionist networks that may have existed in the region. The remoteness of the Potomac River Valley, and the nearness of Pennsylvania as a runaway moved farther up the river, likely also drew escaped slaves to the canal. Runaways were drawn to the canal for another reason: the opportunity to earn money. Perhaps claiming to have been born free, or with borrowed, stolen, or forged manumission papers, some slaves sought employment on the canal as a means to support themselves and, presumably, their families. Contractors unconcerned with strict compliance with existing laws may have been willing to overlook a runaway's lack of papers because of labor shortages during the period. Working on the canal may have provided slaves with more freedom of movement and less oversight than they had experienced doing agricultural labor on their owners' property. Take, for example, the case of Henry, who escaped from his Charles County, Maryland, proprietor on September 22, 1839. His owner, Sylvester F. Gardiner, wrote that Henry had run away before and had been apprehended in Washington: "It is probable he may make for the Canal, as he has worked there, and has expressed a wish to work there again."<sup>9</sup> In other examples, the escapee may have sought employment on the canal as a means to finance his later flight to the free states. George Duvall of Prince Georges County, Maryland, whose slave Bill escaped on February 14, 1830, wrote "when last heard of he was making towards Washington city, where he may now be, but more likely attempt to get employment on the canal, and then make his way to Pennsylvania."<sup>10</sup>

In only two cases did owners believe that their slaves stowed away on canal boats, which the B&O Railroad brochure indicated was the means used by slaves to escape to the north. On August 31, 1860, for example, Rufus Jackson's owner, William H. Benson of Montgomery County, wrote of his slave: "I have every reason to believe that he is making his way off on a canal boat."<sup>11</sup> In a third case, when the slave John Nevil escaped on April 28, 1830, his owner wrote that he believed his bondsman escaped "in some of the long boats trading up and down the Potomac River," which was during the period when the Potomac Company's river improvements were still being utilized by shippers.<sup>12</sup>

From an analysis of these data, two significant findings come to light: 1) that to some extent, slave labor was indeed utilized on the canal; and 2) that slaves sometimes fled to the canal to find work, which provided more relative freedom, including an opportunity to earn money. Still, the runaway slave ads leave unanswered at least one important question: was the canal a part of an organized network—the Underground Railroad—to aid a slave's escape, as written in the B&O Railroad brochure? The small number of the runaway slave ads limits the conclusions that can be drawn. If runaway slave ads from additional newspapers along the line of the canal—especially those in print just prior to the Civil War—can be added to those obtained from the collection at the Maryland State Archives, a more complete picture of the canal's role in the Underground Railroad will come into focus. In the absence of memoirs or other first person accounts, however, we may never have a complete picture of the canal's role in the veiled Underground Railroad.

<sup>1</sup> *Along the Picturesque Potomac on the Baltimore & Ohio* (n.p., c1923) 11-12.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mdslavery.net/html/links/ugrrwebsiteoverview.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.mdslavery.net/ugrr.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.mdslavery.net/>

- <sup>5</sup> Baltimore County Jail (County Docket), 1827 - 1832, 2/72/1/11, Dockets 359-370 <http://www.mdslavery.net/>  
<sup>6</sup> Walter S. Sanderlin, *The Great National Project: A History of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1946), 71-74, 76.  
<sup>7</sup> Sanderlin, *The Great National Project*, 78.  
<sup>8</sup> *Frederick Town Herald*, Jan. 2, 1830, "Beneath the Underground: The Flight to Freedom and Communities in Antebellum Maryland," <http://www.mdslavery.net/>  
<sup>9</sup> *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, Oct. 2, 1839, "Beneath the Underground," <http://www.mdslavery.net/>  
<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, Feb. 24, 1830, "Beneath the Underground," <http://www.mdslavery.net/>  
<sup>11</sup> *Rockville Montgomery County Sentinel*, Sept. 7, 1860, "Beneath the Underground," <http://www.mdslavery.net/>  
<sup>12</sup> *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, May 5, 1830, "Beneath the Underground," <http://www.mdslavery.net/>

## Davies Fund Contributors

Continued from page 10

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Chinese Symbol for  
Generosity

## President's Report

### Some Thoughts on C&OCA's Progress Before I Pass the Gavel On

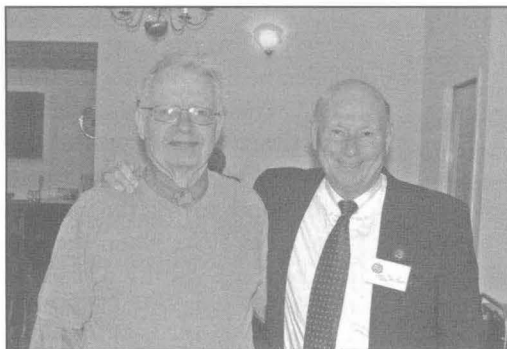
by Rachel Stewart

The Association has been doing quite well raising money for various Park projects, from providing school bus money to bring children to the National Canal Museum exhibit last year to major, multi-year, multi-million dollar restoration of the Monocacy Aqueduct, which now looks great. The Catoctin Aqueduct's restoration is now moving along. The towpath along Widewater just below Lock 15, which had been a rocky ruin, is now rebuilt and in great shape. Remember that 2009 is the year that we gave the Park a total of \$65,000 to jumpstart the environmental assessment for Big Slackwater's towpath repair. And 2009 is the year when we learned to our great pleasure that the project will benefit by some \$12 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Just a few weeks ago, we learned also that Maryland has awarded the project a grant of \$4.4 million from Transportation Enhancement Funds. That leaves us still with substantial money in the Big Slackwater fund. I know it will be put to good use in time. But I will no longer have the pleasure of handing large checks to the Superintendent. I will be in the audience, applauding. Thank you all for a rewarding two years as your President. I hope to see you out on the towpath.



## Annual Meeting Report

The 2010 Annual Meeting on March 6 opened on a note of celebration because of the progress of causes to which the Association has contributed advocacy and funds. Outgoing president Rachel Stewart called for a special report by Tom Perry, chair of the committee that has spearheaded the campaign for restoration of the ruined towpath in the Big Slackwater area above Dam 4. For the occasion, Tom had assembled an extensive display of documents and pictures relating to Big Slack. His remarks honored the effective work of the committee members, cooperating organizations, the park staff, as well as individual supporters and contributors (see his article on page 6). Maryland State Senator Donald Munson, a key figure in the campaign, spoke about the teamwork that resulted in funding for Big Slack from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Transportation Enhancement Program. The group also heard from representatives of Maryland's governor Martin O'Malley and of U.S. senators Barbara Mikulski and Ben Cardin, all of whom played important roles in securing the resources.



Partners for 'Big Slack' Towpath Repair

Tom Perry & Maryland State Senator Don Munson

George Lewis, head of the Catoctin Aqueduct Project, thanked the Association and other supporters of restoration of the "Most Beautiful Aqueduct", another major undertaking that is moving rapidly toward the construction phase (see page 6).



The canal park's deputy superintendent, Brian Carlstrom, delivered a report including information on other important projects funded by the federal economic stimulus program. Among them are: towpath resurfacing; exotic plant removal; boat ramp improvements; repairs to several lock gates and to walls at Lock 22; and reconstruction of Culvert 82. Brian said environmental assessments are underway concerning the move during this spring of the Hancock visitor center to the Little House near the canal, and also on the major improvements planned for the Williamsport vicinity. He thanked Association members for their part in making the C&OCNHP the eighth ranking national park in number of volunteers. He also reported that the park is moving to establish interpretive programs for youth at the Chick Farm and to install durable new benches at many points along the towpath. Asked about the status of the Georgetown University boathouse proposal, he replied that the environmental impact study has been complicated by the need to consider the possible impact of a holding tank for rainwater runoff the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority is planning to install deep beneath the Georgetown waterfront. Brian also noted that maintenance projects will delay the opening of the canal boat ride season.

In presenting the treasurer's report, William Bauman expressed thanks for contributions that included a \$29,556. generous bequest from the estate of Ms. Winifred Marjorie Proudman. Points made in various committee reports included: at the end of 2009, the Association's memberships numbered 1,044; an updated video on the Monocacy Aqueduct will soon be available; members interested in representing the Association at festivals should contact Rita Bauman ([wdbauman@visuallink.com](mailto:wdbauman@visuallink.com)); those who learn of school programs involving the canal should contact Val Wheeler ([valthepotter@att.net](mailto:valthepotter@att.net)). The Nature Committee is preparing a new illustrated web page on wildflowers in the park, and members should check [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org) for features, and possible additions to the nature walk program. Jim Heins reported that the Volunteers In Parks (VIP) program has evolved to include duties beyond the work parties listed in our Calendar. He also recommended that the Association consider assuming responsibility for a selected area under the Canal Stewardship program, and Rick Schulman of the Hagerstown Kiwanis Club described how his organization uses the program to assist the park.

The assembled members voted on proposed by-laws changes that were published in the December *Towpath*, approving amendments to restructure the Membership Committee and to establish a standing Nature Committee. Not approved were amendments that would have allowed the Nominating Committee to nominate multiple candidates for a particular position, and would have placed the Level Walker program under an appointed chair rather than an elected officer. By acclamation, the meeting approved the nominations for officers and directors listed in last quarter's newsletter. Dward Moore became president, Ned Preston became first vice president, and the other four in-

cumbent officers received another one-year term. Directors elected for a three-year term were Dave Johnson, Tom Perry, Craig Roberts, Marion Robertson, and Susan Van Haften. Chosen to serve on this year's Nominating Committee were Jim Heins, George Lewis, Mary Anne Moen, Ned Preston, John Reed, and Pepper Scotto.

After receiving the presidential gavel from Rachel, Dward urged members to continue their strong support of the Association's activities during the coming year. The meeting concluded with an enjoyable happy hour and dinner buffet.

-- Ned Preston



## New Winch House at Great Falls

Great Falls is always bleak in winter, but this year it is even more so. The contract to widen the access road, repave the parking areas and improve landscaping near the Tavern has made much of the area into a construction site. In addition, the canal is drained to permit major restoration of Lock 19. These projects will significantly improve the future appearance and ambiance when they are completed later in 2010.

While these projects move slowly forward, another job that will have long-reaching benefits was quietly finished. The stop gate above Lock 16 was built following the flood of April 1852, the greatest flood in the history of the Potomac to that time. The gate and the adjoining 15-foot high, 506-foot long guard bank were designed to protect Locks 16 and 15 and Widewater from flood waters. A frame structure that spanned the canal atop the gate housed the machinery to raise and lower the stop logs into the vertical slots in the masonry gate. The great flood of 1889 wrecked the stop gate and carried away the winch house, leaving Widewater exposed to repeated damage in subsequent freshets. After the Agnes flood in 1972, which caused extensive damage in Widewater, the Park Service restored the stop gate, but the new stop logs had to be stored in the open next to the towpath. It was necessary to bring a mobile crane into position to install and remove them from the gate. This was time-consuming, requiring a crew of five, and the weight of the crane threatened the stability of Mary's Wall. The stop gate functioned successfully in the 1985 flood, saving the area below from damage. However, it failed in 1996, when the weathered stop logs gave way to the pressure of flood water, and much devastation again resulted.

Now, 120 years after the original winch house was washed away, the Park Service has built a new winch house atop the stop gate. The design is similar to the house on

the stop gate at Dam #4 and is a replica of the original. The stop logs are stored in the winch house when not in use, protected from rain and snow. When a flood threatens, two workers can use the electric hoist to quickly lower the logs through a trap door, no longer requiring a crane to move them. A footbridge on the downstream side of the new winch house provides a connection between the towpath and the Berma Road for hikers and cyclists. (Several courses of stop logs are kept permanently in place in the gate to maintain a normal level of water in the canal below Lock 17, while the short section of canal between the stop gate and Lock 16 is left unwatered to allow emergency and maintenance vehicle access to the towpath from the Berma Road.

The new winch house is an example of the many Park Service projects, in progress and planned, to enhance both the historic appearance and the functional integrity of the canal. After twelve decades, this important structure is whole again, and hopefully will serve the purpose for which it is intended when the river throws its might against the old waterway.



The new winch house for the Great Falls Stop Gate viewed from the upstream side. Photo by Dave Johnson

## Erratum

**Uff Da!** The editor left out the “Bar.” “Bar” is a key word dropped in the first sentence of the second paragraph of Dave Johnson’s article, “New Exhibits at Great Falls Tavern” (p. 19 of the December 2009 issue). It should read: “The visitor information desk, set along the back wall in about the location where the original **bar** is believed to have stood, dominates the room.” **Herregud!** What’s a tavern without a bar! Answer: a NPS visitor center.

## A Cruise on the Canal du Midi

by Barbara Sheridan

Six of us C&O Canal Association members, who were on our way to attend the World Canals Conference in Serbia last September, decided to begin our sojourn in Europe with a cruise on the Canal du Midi in southern France. We rented a boat and plotted the course (cruising 145 km. through 60 locks) for a week-long adventure. Our intrepid crew consisted of Laura Gilliam, Estelle Laughlin, Helen Shaw, Barbara Sheridan, Rachel Stewart and Pat White.

The Canal du Midi was designed by a Salt Tax collector named Pierre-Paul Riquet to link the Atlantic Ocean with the Mediterranean Sea. Work on the canal began in 1666 and was completed in 1680, just a few months after Riquet’s death. It is 240 kilometers long and contains 64 unique oval-shaped lock basins that would allow for more boats than conventional oblong basins. Plane trees are planted extensively along the sides of the canal, and their roots help stabilize the banks.

The Canal du Midi has been used without interruption for over three centuries. It was built originally to transport wheat, wine and textiles but sadly, like our own canal, fell into disuse as a trade venue with the arrival of the railways. Today’s usage is mainly recreational. All the lock gates are now electrified, and lock-keepers are on hand between 9am and 7pm to operate them except between 12:30 pm and 1:30 pm, when they are closed for lunch. You are not allowed to operate your boat on the canal after dark, but you can pretty much tie up and stay the night anywhere along the banks.

Our rental boat was not too large but did have three cabins (bedrooms) and three heads (bathrooms) which we felt were essential for a crew of six women. We had a small well-equipped kitchen, a cozy dining nook and a spacious deck from which we enjoyed fantastic weather and great views. The following is a partial daily accounting of our travels:

9/11/09 – What a beautiful sunny day to begin our adventure. We arrived in Le Segala in the afternoon and were met by Matthew with Rive de France (the boat rental company) who went over the operation of the boat and took us on a short training cruise. We had to navigate under a narrow bridge as part of the training, and somehow tore one of the bumpers off of the boat when we grazed the wall. How embarrassing! Fortunately, another boater retrieved the bumper and Matthew re-affixed it to the boat for us. I am sure he was wondering what condition the boat will be in when he sees it again in seven days.

We finally got organized and set off at 4:30 pm. We knew we had to get moving as the plan was to stay the night at Castelnau-dry, ten kilometers and eight locks away. We had absolutely no idea how long it would take to nego-



tiate the eight locks but knew we had to get them behind us before 7 pm, when the lock-keepers quit for the day. I am sure it was pretty obvious to the lock-keepers that we were novices at locking through, but all managed to be patient with us and offered helpful advice regarding our less than stellar first attempts at securing the boat. They were also nice enough to pretend not to notice as both Rachel and I fell while alighting from the boat. We did manage to get to Castelnau-dry with not much time to spare.

9/12/10 – Up early and into town to pick up provisions for the boat including a good supply of local wines and a luscious apple tart which we will have instead of a cake to celebrate Rachel's birthday today. We got underway at 11:30 am and plan on travelling 17 kilometers through 18 locks so we can stay the night at Bram.

Not a good day for the boat crew! Rachel got stung by a bee and I caught my shorts on a cleat while jumping off to secure the boat in a lock. I just kind of hung there for a few seconds but the shorts finally tore and I was deposited none too gracefully on the top of the lock wall. Thank goodness I remembered to bring a needle and thread on the trip.

We are still trying to get the hang of things and today we bumped a few lock walls, lock gates and another boat while locking through. The lock-keepers seem to be amused that we are a crew of six inexperienced American women. We suspect they are calling ahead to warn the next lock-keeper in line to be on the lookout for us.

After a lovely dinner at an outdoor café in Bram, we hiked back to the boat, opened a bottle of wine and put the apple tart on the table. Since we didn't have any candles, we stuck a big wooden match in the center of the tart, lit it and sang "Happy Birthday" to Rachel.

9/13/10 – Today we planned to travel 24 kilometers and pass through six locks. We had only gone through two locks when it was time to stop for lunch. After lunch, we went through a double lock and a single lock with two other boats. It was very cozy in the lock but there was room for all of us.

We had to wait to go through the next lock so we pulled the boat over to a dock to wait. When the lock-keeper motioned for us to approach, the boat would not budge. Pat and I jumped off the boat to push while Laura tried both forward and reverse – nothing happened. The lock-keeper and a biker came and helped us push – still nothing. Then the lock-keeper asked for our bow rope and he and the biker attempted to tow us (a two-man mule team?) but we were hopelessly stuck in the mud. The lock-keeper then told us to wait while he raised the water level in the canal. We weren't sure how he would do that but he closed the lock gates and over-filled the lock. When he opened the gates, the water rushed out – instant high tide! It was enough to raise us out of the mud and we headed for the lock. Just then a breeze caught us and the boat veered

towards the lock gate. Thankfully, the lock-keeper and biker were there to push us away so we would not damage the gate. I am sure the lock-keeper at Lock #39 (La Douce) will be talking about those six American ladies for a long time.

The only other problem today involved low-hanging branches along the sides of the canal. I don't think we missed too many of them. This kept us very busy ducking our heads and sweeping leaves and debris from the decks.

We docked for the night at the marina in Carcassonne. Laura expertly backed our boat into a slip between two other boats with only the verbal assistance of a dozen or so people on the dock including the harbourmaster. After dinner at an outdoor French pizza/Tex-Mex restaurant, we retired to the boat to share a bottle of wine and review our adventures thus far. It goes without saying that we laughed until we cried!

9/14/10 – Up early and off to the store for more supplies as we will not be anywhere near a town or village where we could get dinner tonight. The plan today is to go 30km and 18 locks, which is rather ambitious but we will try.

Our first challenge was getting out of the boat slip (without hitting the other boats) and getting through the first lock which is right at the end of the marina. There were maybe 15-20 people on the bridge overlooking the lock who (I think) expected us to make a mess of things, but I am happy to say that they were sorely disappointed.

The second lock was much more of an adventure. As the water was being lowered, the bow of the boat drifted over the lip of the lock wall. Pat tried to push it off but it would not budge. The lock-keeper was talking to someone and did not seem to see what was happening or hear us screaming until the boat was seriously tilting over. He tried to help push us off before we capsized but when that didn't work, he quickly stopped emptying the lock and began refilling it. When the water got high enough, we were able to get the boat loose and it dropped back into the lock with a lot of rocking and splashing. We could hear things bouncing around in the cabin but, luckily, nothing got broken.

A little later, I was down in the cabin writing postcards when the boat stopped abruptly. When I arrived on deck, I saw that we had run aground just a few feet shy of a bridge. As I jumped off the boat to shove us off, I uttered a prayer of thanks that it was a nice dirt bank that we had hit and not the bridge.

We did not make our goal today (given our misadventures and delays waiting for lock space) but we did manage 28 kilometers and 16 locks. Quite an accomplishment for six old ladies!

9/15/10 – We were up early and since the lock-keeper would not come on duty until 9 am, Helen decided to go for a walk up toward the lock. Before long, she was back telling us that this was the lock we had been looking for –



the one that we had heard had wood carvings and sculptures. We all hiked up to the lock to see. The art works were great – hens, chickens, owls, Elvis, an elephant and various other creatures and things, including a stork and nest up near the lockhouse chimney. I was instantly glad that we had not gotten any further yesterday or we would not have had time to enjoy the uniqueness of this area.

Today should be much easier. We plan on doing only 18 kilometers and ten locks. We stopped in La Redorte to



Le Chat

buy more supplies and had lunch at a lovely restaurant beside the canal. Almost all of our meals (so far) have been outdoors and today was no different, except there was a cat sleeping in a flowerpot in the windowsill by our table — very cute.

Cruising along the canal later in the afternoon, we passed under some low-hanging branches and heard an awful clanking noise as one of our push poles was swept overboard and was in the water behind us. Laura put the boat in reverse and I lay down on the swim platform behind the boat and was reaching for the pole and almost had it when a branch hit me in the face. Before I could recover, the pole disappeared under the boat. Someone hollered and Laura immediately put the boat back in forward gear which nearly threw me into the canal. Lucky for us, the pole popped up and I managed to grab it. We found out later it would have cost us 30 Euros if we had lost it.

Getting docked at the marina in Argens-Minervois was difficult due to some strong winds. The harbourmaster was leaving for the day when we arrived, but said we could stay and pay in the morning. The doors to the showers were locked so we decided to go find some place to get dinner. Argens-Minervois is a lovely little village at the base of a 14<sup>th</sup> century chateau but, unfortunately, all three of the cafés we could find were closed for the season. Oh, well, back to the boat to see what we have to eat. Dinner tonight consisted of wine, bread, cheese, pâté, pastries and white chocolate. YUM!

9/16/10 – Up early again to find the harbourmaster, pay the docking fee and get the key to the showers in the ladies room. The harbourmaster could not find the key so he gave us the key to the showers in the men's room. Three of us showered without incident but right after Helen went in, a man entered the men's room and shut the door. I hollered at Helen through the open window so she would know that she had company and would not come out of the shower until she was fully dressed. The bare-chested man was still washing up at the sink as Helen exited.

Only one lock to do today — our last. When we got to the lock, the lock-keeper came right out to assist us. He seemed very impressed that we were six women traveling

by ourselves and offered to join us after thumping his chest and pointing out to us that he was a “man.”

Before long we crossed over the Pont-canal de Repudre, one of the few aqueducts built by Riquet himself. Completed in 1676, it was the first aqueduct for boats to be built in France and is reputed to be the second one built in the world. We stopped for lunch in Ventenac-en-Minervois where the restaurant kitchen was outdoors as well as the diners. Of course we stopped in at Le Château du Ventenac for a wine tasting before re-boarding the boat. In the late afternoon, we passed the Canal de Junction. This is one of the places where you can exit the Canal du Midi and follow another canal to the Mediterranean Sea.

Our goal was to stop for the night in Argeliers, a fair-sized town, but decided to press on and by 6:30 pm the boat was tied up to some trees for the night, God knows where. We off-loaded the bikes and were taking turns riding or walking in the area when shots were fired in a nearby field. Everyone hurried back to the boat because the shooting was way too close for comfort. Some wanted to move the boat but it was getting dark, so we stayed put, locked the doors and windows and closed the curtains. After a light dinner, we headed to bed with thoughts of a long nervous night ahead of us.

9/17/10 – The night passed incident-free and we welcomed another bright but chilly morning. We have been very lucky to have had no rain, allowing us to spend most of our time outside taking in the great views of the canal and countryside.

With plenty of time today, we stopped at Capestang for brunch and a stroll around the town. Three km. further along the canal, we stopped at Domaine du Guery, a 400-year-old vineyard. The owner's son, M. Tastavy, was very charming. He gave a tour of the wine cellar and let us sample four different regional wines, all very good.

Our challenge today is the Malpas tunnel, a narrow one-way tunnel much like our Paw Paw tunnel, only shorter (160 m). You are advised to sound your horn before entering the tunnel, but discovered that the horn no longer worked. That said, we decided to moor the boat and have lunch before attempting the tunnel. After lunch, we watched other boats passing through the tunnel and then hiked up to the Visitor Center to look around. There, we learned that the tunnel was dug in just one week!

Happily, we sailed through the tunnel without meeting any oncoming boats. The final destination, the marina in Colombiers, is now only two kilometers away.

Matthew was at the marina when we arrived and looked relieved that both boat and crew had completed the journey relatively unscathed. Once docked, we hit the showers to wash off the last of the canal water (eau de canal?). It was a great cruise with good friends, good food and wine, good weather and good times. What more could anyone want?



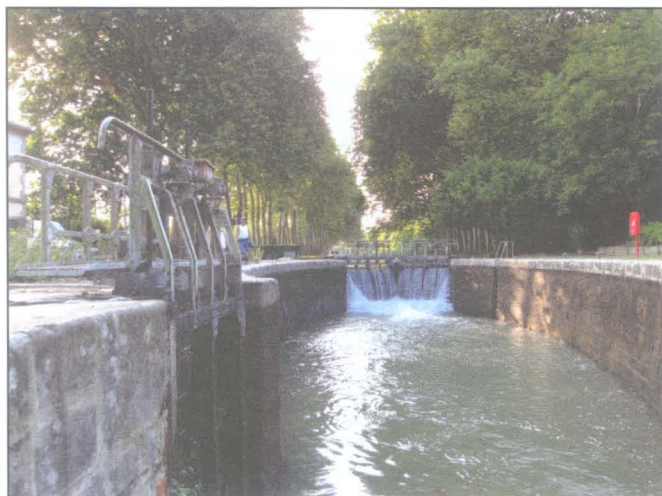
## Cruising on the Canal du Midi - Photos by Barbara Sheridan



Canal Cruiser "Ravel" with its All-American women crew



A reach on the Du Midi with plane trees lining the berm



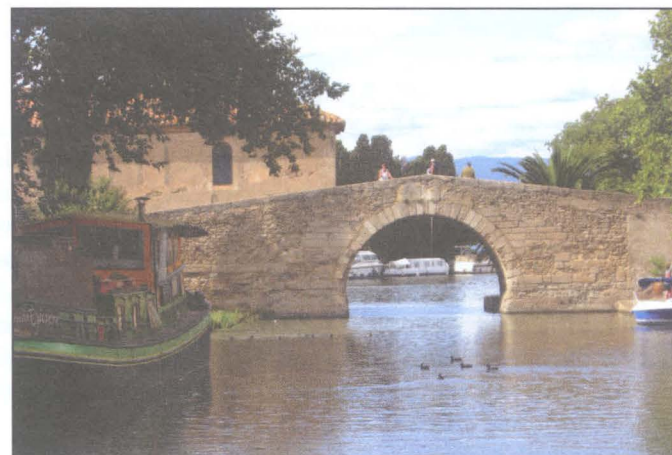
A typical du Midi lock with curving walls in the chamber



The typical lock is spacious and can accommodate several boats



Pat White snubbing the cruiser for a stop at the lockhouse



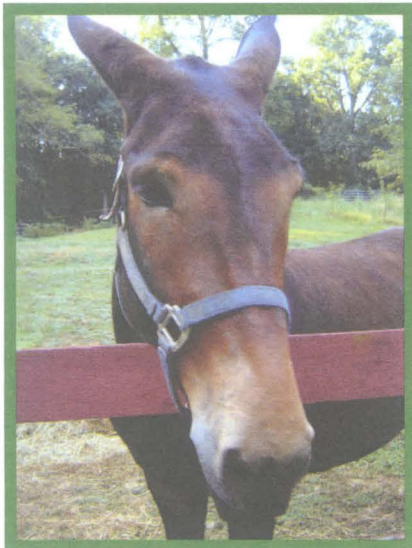
Du Midi bridges present a tight passage for the cruiser's pilot





### Get Your Towpath Pin for 2010

At visitor centers, a \$5 donation to the park gets you one. Wear it to show your support for the C&O Canal National Historical Park



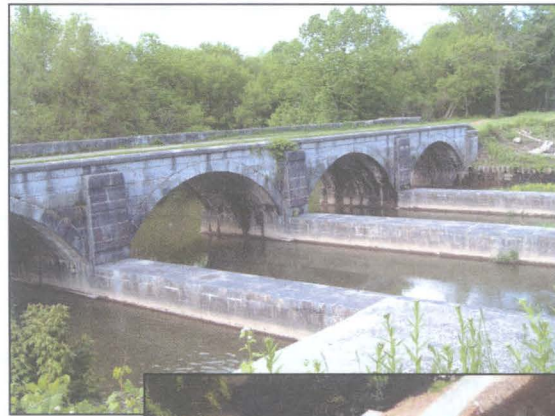
"Now I ask you confidentially. Ain't she sweet?" "Eva" is her name. She's a young thing and new to the park. Ranger Mark Myers will tell us more about her in the next issue. The Friends of the Historic Tavern & the C&O Canal Association joined hands and bought her for the park.

Ann Lochstampfor, a volunteer who leads our mules on canal boat trips in Georgetown, says this about Eva:

"Eva is quite an extraordinary mule. Though she is the youngest and new to the herd, she tries to dominate Ada and Nell. I have not seen her take on Lil yet. Eva is very friendly with people, but is a little pushy with the other mules. But that is her nature."

*Along the Towpath*, March 2010

### Nine-Mile Creek Aqueduct at Camillus Restored



Aqueduct at Camillus, before restoration minus wood trunk.

Photo by Wikipedia

The Aqueduct at Camillus, its wooden trunk restored and re-watered.

Photo by Bob Reese



The Nine-Mile Creek Aqueduct at Camillus, N.Y. was recently restored to operation. A wooden trunk provided the prism for canal water flowing in the aqueduct. The trunk rested on the aqueduct's stone piers. The aqueduct began operation in 1841 on the "Enlarged Erie" that replaced the first Erie Canal (often called "Clinton's Ditch" by critics of DeWitt Clinton's canal project). In turn, the "Enlarged Erie" was replaced in the early 1900s by today's Barge canal.

The Camillus Canal Society under the leadership of Dr. David W. Beebe restored a several mile stretch of the old Enlarged Erie a number of years ago. It stopped at the aqueduct which was in disrepair. Dr. Beebe's next order of business was the aqueduct's restoration. The big task was making a completely new wooden trunk for the structure. The old trunk was no longer there. A new trunk has now been built and canal waters once again flow in the aqueduct.

The Camillus Canal Society is a volunteer organization similar to our Association. Without its perseverance there would be no Camillus Erie Canal Park today. Three cheers go to David Beebe and the Camillus Canal Society. The Society will hold a Grand Aqueduct Celebration on Saturday, May 22, 2010, including a boat parade over the aqueduct, entertainments, and a concert plus fireworks in the evening near the aqueduct. The old C&O Canal Company's motto aptly applies: *Perseverando* (figuratively meaning "By perseverance a noble work is done.")

## Hustle and Bustle on the C&O Canal - 1870 to 1880

### The Traffic at Lock 75 by William Bauman

Number of Boats cleared with Coal from the Port of Cumberland during the years: 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1879 and 1880<sup>1</sup>

Coal				Average of Boats	
Years	Boats	Tons	Cwt	Tons	Cwt
1870	5, 537	606,708	19	109	13
1871	7,801	848,200	08	108	17
1872	7,412	814,365	09	109	18
1873	7,126	797,838	06	112	00
1874	7,378	836,997	19	113	13
1875	7,995	904,898	07	113	06
1876	5,700	654,409	14	114	19
1877	5,380	603,096	...	112	05
1878	5,525	630,293	12	114	13
1879	4,627	522,904	...	113	2
1880	5,464	615,423	...	112	15

Unstated in the above tabulation is that this listing was for only the descending boats. Generally speaking, they all came back through Lock 75 to reload. At the end of each boating season some would winter-over in other canal towns. Nevertheless this listing provides a context for the yearly traffic through Lock 75.

"The boatmen took all the mules off the boat below Cumberland, usually at Lock 75 at the Foot of the Nine Mile Level, but sometimes at the Stop Gate above, so that the mules would not drown if the boat developed a leak and sank while being loaded with coal at the wharf at Cumberland. When the boat reached Cumberland the captain lay the boat by at the wharf to be loaded and had the mules taken up the towpath to the stables."...."After the boat was loaded, or during the process, the captain went to the Collector's Office to get his way-bill. The way-bill was checked at Lock 75 (about ten miles below Cumberland) and again at Lock 5 (above Georgetown), and then checked both at Lock 5 and Lock 75 on the return trip."<sup>2</sup>

After the coal dust was washed off the boats and the two teams of mules hitched, the boat departed. At Lock 75, the spare team of mules was loaded back into the boat while the boat was in the "up" position. They could have been loaded at the Stop Lock just below Cumberland, but that would have required using the long (i.e. 16') fall board whereas at the lock a short (i.e. 4') fallboard could be used, which was much easier to handle.

The point is, throughout the 1870's at least, Lock 75 was a bustling place with boats arriving from both directions, mules being off-loaded or on-loaded, way-bills being checked, signed and the details recorded in the register. We have the register for boats ascending and the register for boats descending during 1875, passing Lock 75. We plan to have both those registers available at Lock 75 during the 2010 season. They do reveal what a 24/7 job meant in 1875. It was far more than a "day- light" job.

<sup>1</sup> *Fifty-Third Annual Report of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Co.*, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1881, Table J, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Hahn, Thomas F., *The C. & O. Canal Boatmen: 1892-1924*, (Published by The American Canal & Transportation Center) 1980, p.14.



## C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK Telephone Numbers and Personnel

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Volunteer Coordinator	301-714-2218	Daniel Filer
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**Palisades District** Milepost 0 (Tidelock) to Mile 42.19 (Monocacy River)  
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Georgetown Boat Operation 202-653-5190  
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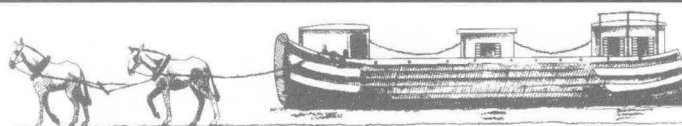
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## C&O CANAL ASSOCIATION

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 ([webmaster@candocanal.org](mailto:webmaster@candocanal.org)). C&OCA also maintains a telephone number for information and inquiries: 301-983-0825.

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The Charles F. Mercer: mothballed for the winter and snowed in.

## Along The Towpath

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association



Ranger Mark Myers tips his hat and beckons us out for a ride on the canal. Left to right: Rangers Joe Connor, Kathy Kupper, "Ada," "Nell," and Mark.

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