



# ALONG THE TOWPATH

## A quarterly publication of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association

An independent, non-profit, all-volunteer citizens association established in 1954 concerned with the conservation of the natural and historical environment of the C&O Canal and the Potomac River Basin.

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### **Annual Heritage Hike and Dinner Set for October 20**

The Association's annual Heritage Hike is set for Saturday, October 20, in the area of Hancock to Big Pool, near Fort Frederick State Park. It will feature three hiking options along the towpath, and an optional evening program with happy hour, dinner, and speakers. The hikes will begin and end in Hancock. The evening events will be held at St. Peter's Catholic Church in downtown Hancock.

Note that this same hike was scheduled for the 2011 Heritage Hike. Unfortunately, the event was cancelled due to an unusual storm that closed the towpath. I hope all who were disappointed last year will join us October 20 — as well everyone else who would enjoy a fascinating section of the canal park. This is a great chance for new people to become acquainted with C&OCA, so invite your friends!

Hike participants will park their cars and meet the shuttle bus in the Western Maryland Rail Trail parking lot in Hancock. Take Exit 3 from I-70 into Hancock and travel west on MD 144 for a half-mile.

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### **Big Slackwater Towpath Restoration to Be Dedicated on October 13**

The National Park Service has nearly completed the restoration of the closed section of the towpath at Big Slackwater. Brian Carlstrom, deputy superintendent of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, recently told the C&O Canal Association board that the park expects to complete work in September. The park has scheduled a dedication ceremony for 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 13, at the Dam # 4 boat ramp. Details will be forthcoming about the event, which marks the achievement of a major objective for both the park and the C&O Canal Association.

Big Slackwater is a scenic section of the C&OCNHP in Washington County, Md., between Dam # 4 (mile 84.6) and McMahon's Mill (mile 88.1). The towpath here historically followed the bank of the Potomac, allowing boats to be towed along a quiet ("slack") part of the river. Once a popular section of the park, the Big Slackwater area suffered damage from floods in 1972, 1985, and 1996. As a result, NPS closed public access, forcing hikers

*(Continued on page 2)*



The C&O Canal National Historical Park at Big Pool, at the downriver end of the 2012 Heritage Hike route. Photo by Steve Dean.

and bikers to make an unsafe 4.7-mile detour along public roads. This Big Slackwater closure was the only gap in the historic towpath between Georgetown, D.C., and Cumberland, Md.

Restoration of Big Slackwater has been a top priority for the C&O Canal Association and many other organizations. The association provided critical funding at early stages of the project. As the restoration nears completion, the association recently approved \$25,000 for the installation of wayside exhibits.

NPS conducted an engineering study of Big Slackwater in the 1990s. The C&O Canal NHP assigned its

highest priority to restoring the damaged section. This was reflected in a list of "Unfunded Funding Components" distributed at the January 19, 2007, meeting of the park's advisory commission. The estimated project cost was listed as just over \$15 million.

In 2005, C&OCA began a major effort to support restoration of the Big Slackwater towpath and created a new fund for that purpose. During the following year, C&OCA board member Tom Perry agreed to chair a committee of local leaders dedicated to that goal (see his account below). In August 2007, C&OCA contributed \$15,000 as part of matching funds for a grant to support a new engineering study of the Big Slackwater project. To help support an Environmental Assessment of the restoration project, C&OCA on March 7 and April 2, 2009, made donations to NPS totaling \$65,000.

In May, 2009, the NPS announced that the C&O Canal NHP would receive \$12.1 million for Big Slackwater under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). In January 2010, the state of Maryland announced the approval of \$4.4 million in federal Transportation Enhancement Program funding for the project. Ground-breaking for construction took place on August 7, 2010, and by early 2011, the contractor had deployed a heavy crane at the site and barges on the river.

NPS and its contractor had to race the clock on the project, because the ARRA required that all work be complete by September 30, 2012.

## A Brief History of the Big Slackwater Restoration Committee

As the time approaches when the towpath through the Big Slackwater area of the C&O Canal is to be reopened, it occurred to me that the major involvement of the C&O Canal Association, hereafter known as C&OCA, needs to be made part of the record. As Chairperson of the Big Slackwater Restoration Committee, I rejoice that our efforts have borne fruit and I want to recognize the labors of those who tirelessly moved us toward our goal.

We are indebted to former Federal Advisory Commissioner and C&OCA member, Ed Miller, for the catchy slogan, "No Slack at Big Slack." It had been ten years since persistent flooding had forced the towpath in that area to be closed and the traffic diverted to a very dangerous detour consisting of narrow, winding, county roads with no shoulders. A 1998 "Final Report" from the National Park Service had envisioned a two-phase restoration that included a temporary path away from the river and an eventual rebuilding of the stone masonry at its edge. The options would provide for the historical integrity of the

### Historic Transportation Forum Scheduled for November 10

This year's forum on transportation in the C&O Canal region takes place on Saturday, November 10, in the Delaplaine Visual Arts Education Center in Frederick, Md. Beginning at 9 a.m., the forum ends at 4:00 p.m., followed by optional guided walks in the historic district and a reception.

Presenters this year include: Lorna Hainesworth on the topic of the historic roads between Frederick and Baltimore; Tim Snyder on C&O Canal navigation at the beginning of the Civil War; Dean Herrin on certificates of freedom and Jim Crow laws affecting the mobility of African Americans; and Dave Shackelford on the B&O Railroad during the Civil War. The day will include opening comments by Frederick's mayor and the county's transportation planner.

The registration fee is \$15, plus an additional \$8 for those who may wish to reserve a simple lunch that will be catered at the Delaplaine Center. There are multiple restaurants and cafes in the area for those who prefer to eat out during the lunch break. Online registration is possible on the C&O Canal Association's webpage: [www.candocanal.org/2012forum.html](http://www.candocanal.org/2012forum.html). Registration may also be accomplished by mailing a check with the registration form inserted in this newsletter. (The form also lists the complete program of the forum). **The deadline for registration is November 1.**

The forum partnership this year includes: the C&O Canal Association (the initiating partner); the National Park Service; the City of Frederick; the Tourism Council of Frederick County; the Historical Society of Frederick County; Hood College; and the Catoctin Center for Regional Studies. For further information call Craig Roberts at 301-834-7420 or send an email to Karen Gray at [kmgrayphd@verizon.net](mailto:kmgrayphd@verizon.net).

towpath. However, the report stated that at that time, no funding was available.

Basking in the success of C&OCA's push to have the Monocacy Aqueduct stabilized, C&OCA's president (and my brother) Bob Perry in 2006 envisioned our taking on the enormous challenge of securing public/private cooperation for restoring the only break in the continuity of the 184.5 mile long national park. In February 2005, the C&OCA Board of Directors had transferred the balance of the funds from the Widewater account to a newly created Big Slackwater Fund. In his final report to the members at the annual meeting, Bob lamented the lack of progress toward restoration. Letters had been sent to the Washington County members asking their support. They were invited to participate in a committee to spearhead the push toward the goal.

In April 2006, I accepted appointment as chairperson of the committee. Seven of us from Washington County began and continued to meet together to plan activities to engage the public. It was a pleasure to serve with: Ken and Pat Heck; Charlotte Loveless; the Honorable James McCleaf, Major of Williamsport; Carl Pedersen; and John Ziegler.

Our first and biggest event was to provide a view of the damaged towpath from the Potomac River using pontoon boats from the Western Maryland Sportsman Club. It was our intent to provide the tour for local, state, and federal officials. The sportsman club had opposition from their insurance carrier. In addition, we had opposition from the National Park Service, which objected to us using the boat launch above Dam # 4. In August 2006, to our good fortune, we received tremendous support from neighbors across the river, the Izaak Walton League of West Virginia. Not only did they provide the boats and give the officials an up close view, they provided a bountiful picnic lunch for all who attended.

We are grateful to all elected officials who supported our efforts. In particular, I mention State Senator Don Munson, and United States Senator Ben Cardin. At each step along the way our committee strove to work with the Park Service personnel, while attempting to maintain our own perspective. One aspect of our work came into question and that was fund raising on our part, since a new directive of the National Park Service indicated that we could not raise "partial funding" as was the case with Monocacy Aqueduct. As it happened, our committee envisioned our role as being that of disseminating information to secure public and private support for the project, and not for soliciting money. This did not alter the reality that the C&OCA did indeed have a fund for Big Slackwater into which contributions were flowing continually. We are grateful for the contributions made by individuals and groups. In 2007, Friends of the Historic Great Falls Tavern contributed \$5000.

We had our disappointments along the way. Early on, we approached the Washington County public schools in an attempt to promote public awareness through a county-wide poster contest. We envisioned the students designing a logo for our project for which they would have been amply rewarded. But it was not to be. Also, the several organizations supporting the Great Allegheny Passage did not respond to our request for their support when, in actuality, the Slackwater area, if not restored, would have been the only break in a non-motorized vehicle passage from Georgetown to Pittsburgh.

Early on we had no idea where the enormous amount of funding (\$14 million) would come from. We were simply motivated by the need to make known the dangers of the 4.7 mile detour onto narrow winding roads with no shoulders and frequently traveled by trucks and boats being towed. We sent letters, and gathered signatures from residents along the detour, hikers, and bikers. We positioned ourselves along the detour and handed out bottles of water to through-bikers on a very hot day. We approached the county for statistics regarding mishaps and accidents along the detour. We talked with anyone who would listen and learn.

In 2007, the National Park Service did not include Slackwater in the Federal Parks Centennial initiative. However, in order to help with the preparation of a design plan and the environmental impact study, upon the request of the superintendent of the national park, C&OCA contributed \$80,000 in several increments toward making the project "shovel ready."

Our disappointments and concerns for the funding faded as we moved to 2008 when the crisis of the recession resulted in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which provided federal stimulus monies of \$12.1 million for the restoration of the towpath through Big Slackwater.

In 2010, \$4.4 million was released by Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley from the Transportation Enhancement Fund. The amount needed had been achieved. Groundbreaking took place on August 7, 2010, at the boat ramp at the Dam #4 area. We rejoiced that our work had borne fruit and that we could disband with satisfaction over the role of our C&O Canal Association in this enormous undertaking.

Respectfully, submitted,

Thomas L. Perry  
Chairperson, "Big Slackwater Restoration" Committee

*(See next page for scenes of Big Slackwater.)*





## A Ride along Big Slackwater

John Adams of the C&O Canal National Historical Park invited Ahna Wilson, Karen Gray, and me to join him on a boat ride to see the towpath construction along Big Slackwater on July 20. I was quite surprised, not only at the length of the rebuilt towpath, but that so much of the original towpath could be saved. Such original sections are protected by massive stone walls. Where this was not possible, the towpath is connected by concrete bridges.

We put the boat in at the Dam # 4 boat ramp and went upstream, past the southern end of the construction (top photo). The next photo shows a point where one of the bridges meets the original towpath. The next gives a peek at one of the concrete pillars that support the new towpath sections. (Wooden railings such as those visible here will be removed when construction is complete.) The photo below that one shows an area where it was necessary to extend the face of the bridge all the way to the waterline, while the bottom scene is an extended section where the original towpath has been preserved.

You are invited to see all the pictures that I took at [www.imageevent.com/dwardandjeanine/bigslackwater](http://www.imageevent.com/dwardandjeanine/bigslackwater).

— Dward Moore





## Heritage Hike, continued from page 1.



**Hit the trail!** Morning at Big Pool, photographed by Steve Dean.

Turn left into the Western Maryland Rail Trail parking lot. The lot is across the street from the American Legion, easily recognized by the 20-foot rocket on its front lawn.

Hikers will be dropped off at the locations listed below and will walk back along the towpath to the Bowles House, the recently opened NPS Visitor Center. After viewing the exhibits, hikers can then walk approximately two blocks along the Rail Trail back to their cars. Those arriving at Bowles House between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. can enjoy an informal Blue Grass concert on the porch. The starting locations are:

Big Pool (mile 112.5), hike length: 10.5 miles

Licking Creek Aqueduct Access (mile 116.7),  
hike length: 6.3 miles

Little Pool (mile 119.8), hike length: 3.2 miles

All hikes end at Bowles House/Tonoloway Aqueduct, at mile 123.

There will be one bus that will make staggered departures from the Rail Trail parking area. Participants on the longest hike should arrive and park by 10:00 a.m. The first bus, for the longest hike, will depart at approximately 10 a.m. or as soon as possible thereafter. Participants for the shorter hikes should plan to arrive and park by 11:00 a.m., and the second departure will be at approximately 11:00 a.m. or soon thereafter.

All walkers must complete the Association waiver before boarding the bus. The bus fee will be \$5 (if prepaid with the reservation) or \$7 (collected onsite). Please bring exact change. You are encouraged to bring a bag lunch and a drink for the midday meal.

For historical highlights related to this section of the towpath, see the article by Karen Gray that appeared in the September 2011 issue of *Along The Towpath*. The article can be found on the C&O Canal Association website ([www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org)) by clicking on "Articles" on the left

side of the screen and then "Heritage Hike 2011: Fort Frederick to Hancock".

If you prefer to bicycle rather than hike, you can rent a bike at the C&O Bicycle shop, 9 South Pennsylvania Avenue in Hancock (to reserve, call 301-678-6665).

At 4:30 p.m. we will gather at St. Peter's Catholic Church for happy hour, to be followed at 5:30 p.m. by a deluxe dinner buffet and evening presentation. The church is at 16 East High Street, just up the hill from Hardee's. The dinner is the church's famous all-you-can-eat spaghetti buffet that includes: fresh salad; garlic bread; two kinds of sauce (tomato and meat sauce, plus meatballs on the side); coffee, iced tea and/or lemonade; plus homemade pies and cakes for dessert. The cost of the dinner and happy hour is an all-inclusive \$20.

The after-dinner program features a lecture and slide show presentation by Lou and Phyllis LaBorwit on their recent trip to Scotland, where they participated in the "The Great Outdoors Challenge, Hiking Scotland from West to East Coast." Although always an exciting walk, the event was even more challenging this year because of extreme weather conditions. Lou and Phyllis are looking forward to spreading the word about this annual hike.

Inserted in this issue of *Along the Towpath* is a dinner reservation form, which includes a reservation for the bus. **The form must be received by Tuesday noon, October 9**, after which no cancellations or additions will be honored for the dinner. Note there are no refunds for prepaid dinners or prepaid bus reservations. Also, please be sure to check the Association website calendar at [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org) for any updates regarding the Heritage Hike. If you have questions, contact Marjorie Richman at [programs@canalocalanal.org](mailto:programs@canalocalanal.org).

— by Marjorie Richman, on behalf of the Programs Committee



**Hike's end:** Bowles House, photographed by Pat Hopson

*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*

## **The Battle over the Eastern Terminus — Part II (continued from the June issue)**

In the spring of 1828, the battle over the name of the new canal had been concluded, and in late June the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company was formally organized. The ceremonial beginning of construction took place in Maryland, at Little Falls, just outside the Federal District boundary, and the company immediately began preparing contracts on the first sections upstream from that location. What would happen below, in the District, was undetermined.

As one might suspect, the reason for beginning in Maryland was a complex mixture of regional politics and economic realities. Virginia Congressman Charles Fenton Mercer, the primary political force and visionary behind the canal, had been elected the canal company's first president. He realized it was essential to have as broad a base of committed investors as possible, and one way to do that was to leave the precise location of the eastern terminus open for as long as possible. That would keep all three Federal District cities (Washington, Georgetown, and Alexandria) and even Baltimore in the running for that coveted facility.

Of course, Baltimore understood that the official terminus would be somewhere on the Potomac, but — not withstanding support there for a railroad — many in that city keenly desired a cross-cut canal above the Federal District to the C&O. Such a branch canal would give them a water connection with the Potomac route west and very likely divert to their city much of the cargo coming down the canal, as well as allow them to ship their products to western Maryland and beyond by water.

But the leaders of the City of Washington were unhappy with leaving the terminus question hanging, and with a congressionally-authorized \$1 million subscription for C&O Canal stock, the city was the company's largest investor to date except for the Federal Government itself, which also had a \$1 million subscription.

On July 31, the *National Intelligencer* reported that the Washington City Council had asked the canal company “to mark out with as little delay as possible the route of such of [sic] said Canal, as passes through this city to the Eastern Branch” (now known as the Anacostia). The C&O Canal Company responded that it “would be inexpedient to expend any part of the capital stock of the company on an extension of that canal below...the Little Falls of the Poto-

mac before the line of canal leading thence to the mouth of the Shenandoah River has been put under contract.”

The Washington investors, however, demanded a prompt determination of the eastern terminus and Mercer, realizing the enormous struggle that was developing among the various localities and factions over the issue, demonstrated the political canniness that had helped to make him such a powerful politician. He did two things: First, he scheduled a special stockholders meeting for September 10, 1828, to deal with the matter; and second, he appointed a committee of three directors — one from each District city — to work with the engineers and arrive at a recommendation.

Mercer knew that the directors fully realized that it was essential that the eastern terminus of the canal be a success and that ultimately its design and location was an issue transcending each city's special interests. But in working with the engineers, the cities' representatives would have to confront the weaknesses and strengths of each location. And of course the engineers would focus on the fact that the terminus needed a spacious and protected harbor where transshipment to and from boats, ships, and wagons could readily take place.

For Washington, this meant confronting the reality that the Washington City Canal, built essentially at tidal and water table levels with inadequate wooden tide locks at each end, was doomed to suffer from siltation and damage by high tides. Realistically, a Washington terminus on the Eastern Branch would require a new canal built at a high level through Georgetown and Washington that would drop down near the Navy Yard on the east side of the Capitol.

But this Washington high-level canal option was costly and the Alexandrians objected to spending so much money on any such plan unless an aqueduct across the Potomac to a branch canal to their harbor was included in the C&O's terminus plans. If that was not possible, then they supported a terminus at Locks Cove where the then-present Potomac Company's Little Falls canal dropped down to the river (the location today of Fletchers Boathouse).

Georgetown merchants wanted the canal to end near their wharves, although its port was no longer deep enough for trans-oceanic ships and could serve only vessels that plied the Atlantic coastal and Caribbean waters, as well as the tidal bays and rivers of the region. However, a Georgetown terminus was opposed by a group of wealthy Georgetown citizens headed by Francis Scott Key. They objected to having an unhealthy canal with its associated labor-intensive activities bisecting their charming town. Key also anticipated (rightly) that at least some of his personal property that ran down to the river and included his home would be condemned for the canal right-of-way.

The engineers preferred Washington's deep water port near the Navy Yard and even recognized the value of a



branch canal from the Eastern Branch to the Patapsco and Chesapeake on the southwest side of Baltimore. That route was low and avoided the difficulties of crossing the ridges north of the District, although the latter was Baltimore's preferred route.

No record of the committee's deliberations exists, but its report was submitted to Mercer and the canal company board on September 3, 1828. It was a masterpiece of compromise, designed to give all three District cities a connection that left open the possibility of one or more of the three ultimately becoming a primary transshipment point.

Basically the compromise recommendation was this:

Instead of carrying a new, high level canal across Rock Creek and east to Capitol Hill and the Eastern Branch, a series of locks would drop the canal down to Rock Creek—a boundary shared by Georgetown and Washington. The current wide, tidal mouth of Rock Creek just below the last of the proposed Georgetown locks would be altered by building a long peninsula that would extend the Georgetown shore of Rock Creek 1,080 feet downriver, where the creek would then terminate at a 120-foot dam and tidelock. The dam would create a basin three feet above high tide and six feet deep, and excess water from Rock Creek would flow over the dam, into the river. The canal company could lease lots on the peninsula—termed a “mole” in French style—for warehouses, work shops, and stables. Both sides of the mole would be lined with wharfs, and a bridge over the tumbling dam would connect the Washington and Georgetown sides of the mole.

To further placate Washington, it was agreed that the C&O Canal Company would build a branch canal from the Rock Creek basin to the Tiber estuary near the Potomac terminus of the Washington City Canal. However, Mercer insisted that, as its part of the arrangement, Washington would build a basin at its end matching that at Georgetown (thus three feet above high tide and six feet deep). This would mean that the C&O branch would not need a lock at either end and would simply connect the two basins. Presumably, Washington would undertake to greatly improve their canal and find ways to overcome its limitations.

An aqueduct across the Potomac for a branch canal to Alexandria was a critical part of the recommendations. It kept alive the possibility of Alexandria having a major eastern terminus if it was successful in building a canal to the C&O. Not insignificantly, Alexandria's place in the terminus plans would assure that cargo from the C&O Canal could reach a deep water port with an additional journey of only a few miles.

To address the concern of Key and the other Georgetown “environmentalists” about potentially unhealthy conditions of the canal's water and banks, it was recommended that the canal through Georgetown be lined with stone.

The proposals were hotly debated at the September 10 meeting, without resolution, requiring the stockholders to return on September 17 to continue the discussions and to ultimately approve the proposals. The Georgetown “environmentalists” however, never accepted the plans for a dirty, noisy canal passing through their town, even if it had masonry walls.

In reality, what actually happened differed from the stockholder-approved plans:

- The C&O branch to the Washington City Canal (WCC) terminated at “Tidelock B at the mouth of Tyber Creek”. That would have placed it near or at the western terminus of the WCC. It is unclear how the two canals actually connected, but maps of the era show a tidal basin at that location. In any case, the WCC was little used and by the 1870s was nothing more than an open sewer.

- The C&O ended up building, at its own expense, only the Georgetown abutment of the Potomac Aqueduct, but Alexandria did get the rest of the aqueduct and their canal constructed. Its terminus was important in the 1850s, but the canal was closed during the Civil War. It reopened in 1867 and functioned until September of 1886, but it appears its trade reflected the same decline seen on the C&O after 1875.

- The Rock Creek Basin terminus was largely a failure. Low bridges in Georgetown, the flight of four locks necessary to reach it, and its propensity for silting in, all contributed to limit its usefulness. Trestles at the upper end of Georgetown from canal-side wharfs to the riverfront, where they terminated above the holds of ships, and an inclined plane, served at times as alternatives to the Rock Creek Basin.

- Baltimore rejected the possibility of a low-level canal between the Eastern Branch to the Patuxent on the basis that, once having reached the District cities, cargos were unlikely to continue on to their port. Subsequent surveys in the 1830s tried again to find a way to water the summit level of a canal over Parrs Spring Ridge that lies between the C&O in Maryland and Baltimore—but without success.

#### Sources:

*This article draws heavily from William M. Franklin's “The Tidewater End of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal,” printed in the Maryland Historical Magazine, Winter 1986, Vol. 81, #4, 289–304. Dr. Franklin was the retired Director of the Historical Office, Department of State. Another important source is “The Alexandria Canal: Its History and Preservation” by Thomas Swiftwater Hahn and Emory L. Kemp, West Virginia University Press, Monograph Series for the Institute for the History of Technology & Industrial Archaeology, Volume I, Number 1, 1992. Basic documentation can often be found in Harlan D. Unrau's Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Historic Resource Study, 2007 version at: [www.nps.gov/history/history/online\\_books/choh/unrau\\_hrs.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/choh/unrau_hrs.pdf)*



*Photos (by the author):  
This page, top left:  
Hamburg waterfront; top  
right: store fronts along  
Lubeck canal; middle:  
Lubeck canal; bottom  
left: Keil, Kaiser Wil-  
helm II Canal; bottom  
right: container ship,  
Keil. Facing page: Keil  
canal locks.*



*Along the Towpath, September 2012*



## Waterways of the German North: Strategy and Commerce

My fascination with the medieval Hanseatic cities of Hamburg and Lübeck and their surrounding waterways led me to visit them last summer. The commerce of old Hanse, a loose confederation of free cities, spanned the seas from Britain to Novgorod, Russia. In this enterprise Hamburg and its neighbor Lübeck were big players from its origins in the thirteenth century until prosperity peaked in the fifteenth. With the League as a backdrop this article speaks to both Hamburg and Lübeck and the subsequent commercial and strategic role of the Kiel Canal.

Occupying a kind of north/south mid-point between continental Europe and Scandinavia and east/west space between the Baltic and North seas, Hamburg is well suited for the commercial and strategic role which it has played and continues to play. The city rises in southern Schleswig-Holstein (the Jutland peninsula) at the confluence of the Elbe and Alster and Bille Rivers. Its promoters never tire of singing the praises of its rivers and canals, which surpass both Amsterdam and Venice in the more than 2,300 bridges passing over them. Hamburg's port, a deep one which handles large ocean vessels, is the city's economic lifeline. Hailed as the fastest-growing one in Europe, it is surpassed by only Rotterdam and Antwerp. Besides commerce, Hamburg has heavy industry, media, shipyards, and is one of Europe's most affluent cities.

Hamburg and Lübeck had always to face one great navigational obstacle, the Jutland peninsula, which blocked easy passage from the Baltic to the North Sea. The two cities solved this problem by doing the obvious, building a canal, but not through Schleswig-Holstein/ Jutland. Rather it was a north/south canal connecting a branch of the Trave River near Lübeck with a branch of the Elbe to the south. This Stecknitz Canal, built at the end of the fourteenth century, was one of Europe's oldest. In 1900 it was replaced and improved upon by the Elbe-Lübeck, or Elbe-Trave Canal (which branches off the Trave near Lübeck) with a southern terminus at Lauenburg on the Elbe some 67 kilometres (42 miles) distant. This Elbe-Lübeck Canal links the Baltic not only with Hamburg but with the Elbe at its mouth into the North Sea.

However much the Elbe-Lübeck Canal improved upon the ancient Stecknitz, it was rendered obsolete at the outset by massive North Sea/Baltic traffic. To relieve this congestion the authorities made Kiel, situated due north of Hamburg in southern Schleswig-Holstein, the anchor for a

new canal. The resulting dig at the end of the nineteenth century was not the first time that a Kiel- North Sea canal was undertaken. In 1784, a 27-mile extension of a longer 109-mile Kiel waterway had been opened. Using for the most part the present route of the Kiel Canal, it stretched from the Eider River to the North Sea. However, the Eider canal, only 32 yards wide and ten feet deep, could accommodate neither German naval nor commercial vessels.

Meanwhile, the navy insisted on linking its Baltic and North Sea bases by a full-blown ocean canal, thus avoiding the need to circumnavigate Denmark. Construction of a canal, which began in the summer of 1887 near Kiel at Holtenau, was completed eight years later in 1895. This massive undertaking, which required some 9,000 workers, was ceremoniously opened by the German Emperor William II (and named for him, the Kaiser Wilhelm II Kanal). The widening of it between 1907 and 1914,

which accommodated passage of a Dreadnought-sized battleship, included the installation of large locks at both ends of the canal, at Brunsbüttel and Hotemau. The completed canal allowed for the saving of 250 nautical miles and avoided what were often heavy seas. Although the Versailles Treaty internationalized the canal, this status was repudiated by Adolf Hitler's Germany in 1936; after World War II the canal was once again internationalized. The 61-mile canal which we know by the label of 'Kiel' under-

went a name change in 1948 from Kaiser-Wilhelm-Kanal to Nord-Ostsee-Kanal. That some 43,000 ships passed through several years ago suggests that it may be the world's most heavily traversed artificial seaway. Large cruise ships must either refrain from using the canal or be equipped with special funnels and masts to avoid low hanging bridges.

The Lübeck-Elbe and the Kiel Canal hardly tell the whole story of the importance, strategic and otherwise, of Germany's northern waterways. West of Hamburg and the Kiel Canal, where the river Weser empties into the North Sea, Bremerhaven/Bremen served as a nineteenth-century debarkation point for emigrants to America. Farther west still a North Sea bay called the Jade Bight housed Wilhelmshaven, which during World War I served as a base for the German High Seas Fleet.

I am dedicating this piece to my late good friend, travel companion, and George Washington University colleague, Carl Linden.

Albert J. Schmidt



## DONORS TO ASSOCIATION FUNDS

*Many thanks to our generous donors  
from May 16 to August 16, 2012*

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Byerlee, Derek & Laura	Powell, William & Nancy

### Donating to C&OCA Funds

*The C&O Canal Association now accepts donations online (as well as by checks mailed to P.O. Box 366, Glen Echo, MD 20812-366). To make an online contribution, go to [www.candocanal.org/contributions.html](http://www.candocanal.org/contributions.html). You can select either the Kenneth Rollins C&O Canal Fund or the Davies Legal Defense Fund. Use either a credit card or a PayPal account. (PayPal charges the Association a fee of 2.1% plus 30¢ for online donations.) During the process, you will be able to indicate whether this is a memorial donation. There is a \$50 minimum for online donations; membership dues must still be paid by check.*

## THE C&O CANAL ASSOCIATION WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS



Chris Allison, Cross  
Junction, Va.  
John Barrett & Zoe Sollenberger, Glen Echo, Md.  
Ralph Buglass, Potomac, Md.  
Phyllis Burka, Rockville, Md.  
Joel I. Cohen, Potomac, Md.  
Jasper & Becky Craig, Pasadena, Md.  
Susan, Doherty, Alexandria, Va.  
Randy & Ami Fletcher, McMinville, Tenn.  
Perry Linden, Madison, Va.  
Jennifer Morton, Jefferson, Md.  
Blanca Poteat, Dickerson, Md.  
Youcef Rustum, Rockville, Md.  
Monica Spilis, Frederick, Md.  
Stephen B. Whitaker, San Luis Obispo, Calif.

### An Invitation to Membership

*If you are not already a member of the C&O Canal Association, we hope that you will join us. Our independent citizens' group dates back to 1954, when hikers led by Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas began the march toward the creation of the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Among members' benefits are: participation in enjoyable recreational and social events; volunteer programs; opportunities to support the canal park and to protect its future; and a subscription to this quarterly newsletter.*

*To join, please print the form on the Membership page at [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org). If that's not convenient, simply send a letter to the C&O Canal Association, P.O. Box 366, Glen Echo, MD 20812, with the following information: your name; address and phone number; the membership category selected (Individual, \$15 per year; Family \$20 per year; Patron, \$25 per year); a check for the selected amount; and the name to appear on your badge, plus a second name in the case of Family or Patron memberships.*

*If you already belong to the C&OCA, please help our organization to grow by letting friends know about its mission and activities. You can give a gift membership by using the same form described above.*



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### Canal Stewards Program

An official description of Canal Stewards Program: "Dotted along the 184.5 miles of the historic Chesapeake and Ohio Canal towpath are countless opportunities for volunteers to connect to our national resources. This connection as a volunteer will take them beyond an hour long boat ride, an afternoon of biking or a weekend camping trip."

Indeed it does! I am a volunteer as well as President of the C&O Canal Association. Last year the Association joined the program and adopted the Swains Lock Recreation Area, and shortly afterward adopted the adjacent area around the lock and lockhouse.

The Canal Stewards program has attracted such diverse groups as a city (Brunswick, Md.), a hotel (Georgetown's Ritz-Carlton), retail businesses (such as North Face), and advocacy groups (Potomac Conservancy, C&O Canal Association), as well as individuals who have a special care and affinity for particular sites. We could expand our Association's impact by adopting one or more additional sites. The stewardship program is currently focusing on the Palisades District, with several places available for adoption: Alexandria Aqueduct, Lock 2 Area, Lock 7 Area, Carderock Day Use Area, Pennyfield Parking Area, and these towpath miles: 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22. If you're interested, contact George Newman, Palisades Volunteer Coordinator (301-491-1165 or [George\\_Newman@nps.gov](mailto:George_Newman@nps.gov)).

When the C&O Canal Association tackled Swains Lock "Rec" Area in June 2011, it was really a wreck. Tables were broken or lost, grills and fire rings were missing, signs were faded and chipped. After a few hours of scrubbing, painting, digging, pounding, and grass-cutting by 21 people, the area was transformed into a well-equipped space with five campsites and three day-use sites. Before we had anchored the last table, a pair of bikers wandered in and sat at a brand-new table. Seeing them enjoying the beautiful view of the Potomac River gave us great satisfaction. And the really wonderful thing is that the area has, by and large, stayed clean, litter-free, and unvandalized. Our monthly visits have been short and easy. The moral, I believe, is that if an area appears cared for and clean, visitors will help to keep it that way.

Now, our group meets monthly to shovel out the

fire rings, wash down the picnic tables, clean grills, remove trash and litter, mow the grass, and attend to special projects — such as cleaning up after the surprisingly destructive June 29 derecho storm. We have met 12 times since our first cleanup in June 2011. The core group ranges from three to eleven volunteers. We have spent 183 hours in those 12 visits. So we have great pride in our stewardship of the area. Working independently, we know that our efforts free the NPS maintenance staff to attend to bigger and more complex problems — and in a park of 184.5 miles of mostly woodland, next to a largely unfettered river, there are always complex problems.

The members of my own stewardship group are predominantly retirees, but I've visited with other groups that include families with children. I love knowing that they are engaged in fostering a sense of ownership and developing connections with the outdoors. And, believe me, cleaning up a place and making it shine is an emphatic source of pride for children, as much as for the rest of us.

The Canal Stewards program engages us all and fosters in us a strong attachment to our special spot within this long string bean of a park. Our particular area slopes down from the towpath, through the flood plain, and to a part of the river that is calm, quiet, shady in summer, subtle in winter, and colorful in spring and fall. It is always the same, yet ever changing. And the river too is ever changing. With this summer's drought the river is low, and many rocks are visible between the campground and the island. On a quiet day, both the rocks and the island are reflected in the water. There is a great contentment to be found in spending time here. That's why we keep returning to make sure that it remains welcoming.

### Actions of the Board of Directors

At its August 5 meeting, the Board of Directors agreed to be the fiduciary agent for an \$8,000 grant from the National Park Foundation to the C&O Canal NHP. The grant will reimburse schools and school districts for transportation costs incurred in bringing school children to various parts of the Park.

The Board also agreed to be responsible for up to \$25,000 for the cost of constructing the new wayside exhibits that will be installed for the soon-to-be-opened Big Slackwater section by the Association's VIP volunteers.

— Rachel Stewart

## ACS Certificate of Authenticity Awarded to *Charles F. Mercer*

By Dave Johnson

The American Canal Society's Certificate of Authenticity recognizing the packet boat *Charles F. Mercer* was presented to the C&O Canal National Historical Park on May 27, 2012. The National Park Service operates the mule-drawn boat on the restored section of the canal at the Great Falls. The plaque was presented to Superintendent Kevin Brandt by ACS director Dave Johnson. Also participating were Donald Harrison, president of the Friends of Historic Great Falls Tavern, and Ranger Kelly Fox, who prepared the nomination of the boat for the certification.

The *Mercer*, a replica of a nineteenth-century packet boat on the C&O Canal, was built at the Scarano boatyard in Albany, N.Y., following a successful fund-raising drive by the Friends. The C&O Canal Association and many of its members contributed to the fund. The boat was delivered to Great Falls and launched in the canal in 2006. It was named for Charles Fenton Mercer of Virginia, a member of the House of Representatives and an ardent supporter of the Potomac route to the west. He became the first president of the C&O Canal Company in 1828, an apparent conflict of interest that was deemed acceptable in those days.

The *Mercer* replaced the old *Canal Clipper*, which had been retired after nearly thirty years of service. NPS nominated the boat for certification in May 2011. The award was approved by the ACS Board of Directors and announced by Carroll Gantz, chairman of the canal boat committee, the same month. Plans to present it during the celebration of the park's fortieth anniversary had to be cancelled, and subsequent attempts to reschedule before the end of the 2011 boat season were unsuccessful. When the new season opened this spring, the presentation was held at the annual picnic supper cruise for members of C&OCA and the Friends, the two principal independent citizens associations supporting the canal. This occasion was particularly appropriate because the Friends led the fundraising drive that generated more than \$530,000 to build the *Mercer*.

The ACS Certificate of Authenticity was created in 2006 to recognize and encourage historical accuracy in boats operating in canal parks. The primary criterion is that nominated boats replicate the appearance of boats on the host canal during the historic operating era. Before the *Mercer* received its certification, the ACS had previously recognized three boats: the *Lois McClure*, of Burlington, Vermont; the *General Harrison*, at Piqua, Ohio; and the *St. Helena II*, at Canal Fulton, Ohio.

The American Canal Society was founded in 1972 by: Tom Hahn, the C&OCA's level walker chairman and newsletter editor, and author of the *Towpath Guide*; Bill Trout of the Virginia Canals and Navigations Society; and Bill Shank, author and pub-

lisher of numerous books on canals and a founder of the Pennsylvania Canal Society. The society was organized to encourage preservation, restoration, interpretation and use of historic and modern navigation canals. Its members are active in state and local canal societies from Canada to the southern United States and from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi River. Their quarterly bulletin, *American Canals*, ranks with *Along The Towpath* among the best canal newsletters in the country.



Shown above from left to right: Superintendent Kevin Brandt; Ranger Kelly Fox; Dave Johnson, ACS, and Don Harrison, FHGFT

## Around the Park

The good news about Big Slackwater reported on page one should not overshadow other important projects that have continued even while the Park copes with the downing of more than 100 trees during late June's severe storm. Among these are the construction near Angler's Bridge, expected to be completed this fall. The work will repair the canal breach there and leave a more sustainable prism, with synthetic liner topped by clay. The odor control structures at Angler's and at Fletcher's Cove remain on track for completion before year's end. For Williamsport, planning continues on returning functionality to Lock 44 and, eventually, restoration of the Conococheague Aqueduct. Meanwhile, major preservation steps at the historic Cushwa Warehouse have included a very tricky repainting of the exterior side facing the loading basin. Preliminary design work has been completed for raising to a fixed upright position the railroad lift bridge that blocks boat traffic between the basin and the watered section of the canal. NPS will continue interpretive launch boat rides along that section on weekends until September 2, and will resume them in the spring, when launch rides are also planned to begin in Georgetown. Trips aboard the *Charles F. Mercer* at Great Falls, suspended during recent low water, have resumed and will continue on Wednesdays through Sundays until October 28. Sadly, however, the venerable *Georgetown* is beyond repair, ending

decades of rides for appreciative park visitors. The boat will be moved to Fletcher's Cove this autumn for demolition. Another event affecting the Georgetown section of the park will be publication of the NPS boathouse zone feasibility study, expected within the next few weeks or months. Depending on its content, the study may assist or set back C&OCA's long fight to prevent construction of a large private boathouse on a site within the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

— Ned Preston

## Garlic Mustard in September?

The topic is offered at this time only because we want folks to continue to think "garlic mustard." The time to actually deal with it is usually late March to around June. After that, the second year plant dies and the first year plant stays close to the ground and is not so obvious.

The Garlic Mustard Challenge started this year had a good beginning. Eighteen sites were adopted with at least 19 volunteers trained by NPS standards, plus others who helped at least one garlic pull. From information submitted, 298 hours have been spent on this effort with 190 large and 29 small bags of garlic mustard collected and disposed of.

This is a great start but only scratches the surface. Almost everyone who adopted a site will return next year and probably see as much garlic mustard as there was at that site this year. We basically pull the second year plant so the first year plants won't be ready to be harvested until next year. THEN – the following year (2014), everyone should see significant improvement as a result of their efforts this year and next.

What we need now are more volunteers to agree to be trained next spring and to adopt sites so we can make a real impact on our beautiful park. There will be more information in the December newsletter about next year.

The sites and those who adopted them in 2012 are:

Antietam: Pat and Ken Heck	Pennyfield Lock: Bud and Dell Cline
Carderock: C&OCA VIPs	
Edwards Ferry: Carol Ivory	Point of Rocks: Bill Alkire
Edwards Ferry: Pat Hopson	Point of Rocks: Kevin Shaner
Great Falls: Diane Seward	Rileys Lock: Calleva (Karen Seibert)
Lock 10: Ranger Kelly Fox	Rumsey Bridge: Bill Warren
Marsden Tract: C&OCA VIPs	Spring Gap: Nasra Sakran
Millers Sawmill: Kathy Bilton	Swains Lock: Rachel Stewart
Nolands Ferry: Marion Robertson	Weverton: Karlen Keto
	Williamsport: Tom and Linda Perry

— Reported by Jim Heins and Steve Dean

Along the Towpath, June 2012

## On The Level

By Level Walker Chair Steve Dean

*The impact of the June 29 derecho storm was the dominant factor on much of the canal during the early summer. Many trees were uprooted, broken off, or lost major limbs. The towpath was blocked in numerous places. The National Park Service did an outstanding job by rapidly responding to the vast number of tree issues. Level Walkers did their part by moving light limbs and reporting tree issues.*

*Level Walkers are busy as always. A total of 91 reports covering 109 level walks on 57 levels were received for May through July. This is an impressive effort by our volunteers! At the end of spring as many as 60 Level Walkers were still in contention for the 2012 Four Seasons award.*

*Please welcome new Level Walker Martha Shannon on Level 15. We always have room for more Level Walkers if you would like to join us.*

*See you on the towpath! - Steve Dean, 301-904-9068 [Levelwalker@candocanal.org](mailto:Levelwalker@candocanal.org)*

**Level 1 Tidelock to Incline Plane John Barnett reports 19 May** Still very messy under Key Bridge. Piles of personal effects and cardboard bedding on landing and behind chain link fences. **3 June:** Tidelock is nicely mowed and I worked on the north bank of the lock, which has nothing but brush at its base. Pulled giant weeds and chopped vines and other creeping florals. For a while, at least, we have an Angel among the Key Bridge Club members who is maintaining the area in a reasonably neat condition. I supply him with bags and he takes the full ones up to the trash basket for pickup. I also cleaned around the Aqueduct. Boy, do I have some luck!! A very charming young woman approached and commenced to load the trash bag and insisted on carrying it to the spot under the freeway ramp. **27 June:** Georgetown looks like it's sinking but has been



Tidelock Area — Photo by John Barnett

pumped out on occasion. Tidelock looks just fine. I raked off cuttings on the lock bottom and disposed of them. There was a lot of trash. It almost got to the old man toward the end of the day. On top of

everything, I was hauling a very full bag from Key Bridge when IT BURST!!! The air in the vicinity was blue for a minute or so. **13 & 14 July** Usual mix of trash with emphasis on beer and booze. I'm pleased to report that the Key Bridge occupants are still policing their grounds and the place looks a lot better. I observed a person taking a cat (in a cat carrier) for a walk.

**Level 2 Incline Plane to Lock 5 Larry Grylack reports 17 May** Numerous areas of erosion between towpath and canal, broadest area being below Chain Bridge and across from trail leading to river. Noted several unleashed dogs. **Jude and Mary Fran Franklin report 18 May** The path was pretty clean except for Chain Bridge area. Clipped a lot of vine growth extending onto the towpath. **Susan VanHaften and Rod Mackler report 19 and 26 June** Many ruts in towpath between Fletcher's and the Incline Plane, undoubtedly contributing to the higher use of



the Capital Crescent Trail instead of the towpath for bikers and joggers. Much of the log debris in the prism and just below the Incline Plane has been removed. Finally! We met a pair of workers from the D.C. Department of Natural Resources conducting a “turtle inventory,” checking traps in the canal.

**Level 3 Lock 5 to Cabin John Creek Marcus Boorstin reports 28 May** Except for a few stretches near Sycamore Island, the entire canal was covered with a solid carpet of algae. Large islands (with tall wild grass) in the canal have nearly blocked it at the Little Falls pumping station and at Sycamore Island.. There was almost no water in the canal above Lock 7. **Caroline and Bill Triplett report 1 July** We walked the upper part of Level 3 and up to Lock 8. Several trees were damaged and had not been cleared by NPS yet. Several bikers coming from Georgetown area said there were lots of trees down and across the towpath. **Marcus Boorstin reports 22 July** The canal through almost all of the level was a solid carpet of algae. There are still many fallen trees in the canal (especially near Locks 5 and 6) from the derecho, but I noticed two tree removal trucks in the Lock 5 parking lot.

**Level 4 Cabin John Creek to Lock 14 Larry Heflin reports May through July** Towpath is monitored over numerous walks. Derecho storm left many trees down, especially around Lock 10.

**Level 5 Lock 14 to Bridge at Cropley John N Maclean reports 3 June** Moderate usage for a brilliant Sunday. I spoke to a couple who, armed with a high-tech camera and tripod, were closely observing the grassy berm along the towpath. There were very few non-human animals out,



Grown-in Canal Prism near Carderock  
— Photo by John N Maclean

but when I asked the couple if they had discovered anything interesting, they replied they certainly had. “We watched a ladybug larva eating an aphid,” the man remarked shyly. The lesson: if the big stuff isn’t out, make your life interesting and investigate the small

stuff. The overwhelming impression of the canal in this level is that it’s in terrible shape. The water is stagnant and nasty from the bridge at Cropley to Carderock. Vegetation has taken hold and may be difficult to clear when the breach is repaired.

**Level 6 Bridge at Cropley to Great Falls Tavern John N Maclean reports 12 May** The towpath and banks were remarkably clean and clear of trash. However, I did note nearly a half-dozen plastic bags of dog waste left here and there around the parking lot area. The canal boat was operating at Great Falls, which surely accounted for the crowd.

**Level 8 Lock 21 to Lock 22 Jack and Karen Forster report 18 May** Water medium level and dirty. Still saw three windows very well boarded over on Swain’s lock house, but screen door torn and flapping and shutter on second floor east side of building nearly falling away. **28 July** Large piles of downed wood lie next to towpath from recent derecho. Bulldozer tread marks in many places, but towpath is completely clear.

**Level 9 Lock 22 to Seneca Aqueduct Patricia Vucich reports 12 May** Very little trash noted. Two hazardous erosions, both on river side of towpath. One is just south of Lock 24 and the other is north of Pennyfield, alongside a vertical path used by kayakers. This was reported to the NPS. **Paul and Rita Marth report 15 June** We have never seen this section of the towpath with so little trash. Of course, some of it could be concealed by the lush growth of plants and the always-present poison ivy, which makes almost anyone hesitate to poke around too much at this time of year. A highlight was watching a group of kids from the kayak camp. They started at Seneca and came down the river to the rapid near the river inlet at Violette’s Lock.. All of them did very well, even if they didn’t all follow the leader’s shouted instructions to “paddle, paddle” as they went over the rapids. **26 June** Great hordes of kids in the water sports camps. **Sylvia Diss reports 16 June** No trash noted. Numerous kayakers, hikers and bikers. Some visitors expressed concern about the lack of picnic tables.

**Levels 9 and 10 Lock 22 to Milepost 35 Frank Wodarczyk and Pat Hopson report 28 July** Light trash on level. There were empty beer cans at the picnic table at Seneca (which was painted on top with “No Alcohol”).

**Level 10 Seneca Aqueduct to Milepost 25 Carol Purcell reports 26 June** Level was very clean. Seneca Creek is low and the huge pile of debris and trash has mostly been removed; however, two huge trees are lodged in the creek across the two pipes that span the torn-out section of the aqueduct. They will become the basis for another debris pile. Further up my level between mileposts 24 and 25 there are areas where bikers have gone around puddles and have eaten away at the edge of the towpath.

**Levels 10 through 12 Seneca Aqueduct to Edwards Ferry Frank Wodarczyk reports 6 June** There was little trash on the towpath itself. The most trash was in the Edwards Ferry parking lot. The towpath has largely dried out from recent rains, but there are still numerous mud holes and water puddles, despite the efforts the Park has made to fix the surface at problem sites. One cyclist I met at Chisel Branch was using the water pump to clean mud from his gears and brake pads.

**Levels 10 through 14 Seneca Aqueduct to Whites Ferry Frank Wodarczyk reports 8 July** The debris is overwhelming from leaves, branches, and tree trunks blown down by the violent winds on June 29, 2012. Very little human-created trash was noted on the towpath. I noted 17 major blow-downs from Seneca Aqueduct to Sycamore Landing. NPS equipment was on hand, indicating that the blow-downs would be cleared soon.

**Level 11 Milepost 25 to Sycamore Landing Pat Hopson reports 25 July** Here, as apparently everywhere, the Park Service has done a great job of clearing the towpath of all the downed trees from the June 29 storm. I saw many downed trees, and they’d all been moved off the towpath. The towpath was also mainly free of smaller branches and debris.

**Level 12 Sycamore Landing to Edwards Ferry Pat Hopson and Carol Ivory with fellow Sierra Club members Ray Abercrombie and Frank Wodarczyk report 23 June** This was primarily a trip to pull invasive multi-flora rose at Edwards Ferry, but we also spent time picking up trash in the area. We worked in the area near the lockhouse. Also, Ray removed the last bit of fence along the towpath that we had overlooked in our fence removal project of a couple of years ago. **Steve Pollock reports 4 July** I walked Level 12 to take a look at what tree debris was left from the storm. The level was walkable, or bike-able without too much of a problem, if one is willing to stop and walk around trees at places. I removed

quite a lot of small brush. **Pat Hopson, Carol Ivory and Frank Wodarczyk report 14 July** We cleaned up the Edwards Ferry area. There was a moderate amount of garbage, the greatest volume being a large collection of boxed beer bottles that were behind the perma-potty. The NPS has done a heroic job of clearing the towpath since the monster storm. We saw many downed trees all along the level, and they'd all been moved off the towpath; it was easily passable by pedestrians and bicyclists the entire way. At least two separate bicyclists confirmed that the towpath is open along its entire distance. Thank you very much, Park Service!

**Level 13 and 14 Edwards Ferry to White's Ferry Bob Robinson reports 17 June** Highest traffic level I have seen on these levels. Virtually all trash removed was from the Edwards Ferry area.

**Level 14 Harrison Island to White's Ferry Bill Holdsworth reports 7 May** What a difference two months make. I walked the level for the first time on March 19 and didn't have enough bags to collect all the trash I saw. I returned this time to continue the effort. Two months of spring growth made it difficult for me to spot the offending trash.

**Level 16 Woods Lock to Monocacy Aqueduct Mike Ciansiosi reports 16 June** There was less trash than usual. I entered my garbage collection amounts in a spreadsheet and determined that for the first six years I did this level walk, I averaged just over one bag of garbage per walk. But in the last six years, I averaged only half a bag. I'm taking that as an indication that the park (or at least my level) is getting cleaner. There is a very small logjam behind the Monocacy aqueduct, only about 20 feet in diameter. A tree growing out of one of the walls in Lock 27 is getting kind of large.

**Level 17 Monocacy Aqueduct to Nolands Ferry Marion Robertson and Laura Gilliam report 29 March** Park Service maintenance folks were removing two large trees overhanging west end of the aqueduct. Beer bottles in the Monocacy bathroom are a problem. **18 June** Light trash on towpath. We met a group who had served lunch to 250 cyclists taking part in a Rails to Trails bike ride from Georgetown to Pittsburgh.

**Level 18 Nolands Ferry to Point of Rocks Karen and Jack Forster report 13 June** Great day of hiking. Many puddles in the half-mile nearest Point of Rocks, occasional puddles other places.

**Level 19 Point of Rocks to Catocin Aqueduct Lynn Walker reports 1 May** Shallow puddles and mild ruts on the outer edges of the towpath between MP 51 and Lock 29. **5 May** One person who had parked at Point of Rocks complained that there were not enough spaces for towpath parking. **Kevin Shaner reports 19 May** The towpath was dry and in good condition, with light trash. **Lynn Walker reports 22 and 24 May** Good conditions on the level. The river was high and muddy. Picked up trash at the Landers Boat Ramp and the Bald Eagle Hiker-Biker Camp

**Level 20 Catocin Aqueduct to Lock 30 Michael and Judi Bucci, with Fred Bowell and Doug Anderson report 16 June** Moderate amount of trash on level. River was low.

**Levels 21 and 22 Lock 30 to Lock 33 Ed Rhodes reports 1 June** Three days of activity trimming brush, tree limbs, and poison ivy hanging over towpath. The grass and weeds need to be cut and the stinging nettle is really bad. **11 July** The canal was in good shape. Lots of trees had been moved off the towpath by park workers. I moved sticks and tree limbs and cut back overhanging limbs. Large amount of trash at Weverton. The canal was in good shape. **30 July** Found large amounts of trash at river access points.

**Level 22 Lock 31 to Lock 33 Karlen Keto reports 20 May** Light trash on

towpath. I snipped a few thorny sprigs hanging over the towpath. Several folks thanked me for what I was doing.

**Level 23 Lock 33 to Dam 3 Karlen Keto reports 5 June** All appears well on this short level. I enjoyed talking to some youth groups. The bike rental firms should instruct their clients on proper rules of cycling on the towpath.

**Levels 23 through 26 Lock 33 to Antietam Aqueduct Ed Rhodes reports 1 May** Noted much trash at Huckleberry Hill Hiker-Biker camp. Reported discarded tires found near Milepost 64. **28 May** Found more trash at Huckleberry Hill. Reported several downed trees across towpath.

**Level 24 Dam 3 to Dargan Bend Karlen Keto reports 14 June** The level looks great! Only found light trash, including a bicycle computer.

**Level 25 Dargan Bend to Lock 37 Karlen Keto reports 17 June** The level looks good. I encountered two men in their 70s who started their cycling trip in Florida and plan to end in Bar Harbor, Maine! **Craig and Sandi Roberts report 17 June** Numerous users out on a pleasant morning. Several bikers were camping. The level was very clean as another level walker was walking just ahead of us and had done a great job of picking up the trash.

**Level 27 Antietam Aqueduct to Lock 38 Steve Dean reports 19 May** Moderate amount of trash; most from Lock 38. Numerous joggers, which is normal for this level. There was a large group of Boy Scout campers at the Antietam camp ground. Aqueduct and culverts are in good condition.

**Level 28 Lock 38 to Lock 39 Bill Warren reports 28 May** All the debris I observed was natural, knocked down by a storm during the previous night. I observed very few park users due to the early hour. Two downed trees were blocking the towpath. **16 July** No trash found. An unusually large number of bikers for a Monday morning, nearly all headed downstream. There was much evidence of downed trees and broken limbs left from the June 29 storm, but all had been cleared off towpath and were lying on the river bank or in the canal bed. No impediments to free movement of hikers and bikers.

**Levels 28 and 29 Lock 38 to Snyders Landing Elliot Krafur reports 29 July** Towpath was clear. The repaired sinkhole at Culvert 111 is holding well but the sinkhole some 800 yards downstream continues to grow and soon will require professional attention.

**Level 29 Lock 39 to Snyders Landing Elliot, Edwin, and Julia Krafur report 14 June** All rubbish was at the Snyders Landing boat ramp. The towpath was in fine shape even after the inch of rain earlier. Four large sycamores and two large oaks had lain fallen into the prism since last March and all were well cleared from the towpath. The frequency of downed trees may increase as they mature. The shallow soil base and steep slopes on the berm cannot easily support large trees, many of which are approaching a century in age. The NPS has maintained the towpath in remarkably good condition this year.

**Level 30 Snyders Landing to Lock 40 Margie Knott reports 25 June** Very light amount of trash found. I met a group of Boy Scouts doing a two-night ride. **31 July** Towpath in good shape; very glad to see there was NO tree damage along this short section of towpath from past storms in early July.

**Level 31 Lock 40 to Marsh Run Culvert Bill Warren reports 28 July** I saw no trash along the towpath. Trash was visible in the flood plain of Horseshoe Bend, but it was too buggy, snaky and full of poison ivy to collect that now. June 29th storm damage is not evident, so either the Level 31 area was spared or most fallen trees or limbs have been removed. Towpath in that area is in good condition but muddy in places, though passable.

**Level 34 McMabon's Mill to Opequon Junction HBO Tom Perry reports 28 May** Conditions following the fierce storm during the previous night were

horrible, so I elected to return by way of the hard surface road! Trees were down all over the place, and debris all along, although the lower I got on the towpath the better it got, for the most part. I picked up and threw off the light debris, and at one point several younger people arrived on bikes and actually moved a tree out of the way, which I am not about to do. Access is still difficult due to ongoing Big Slackwater construction.

*Level 35 Opequon Junction HBO to Lock 43* **Stephen Williams reports 26 June** An NPS crew with an earthmover was clearing trees and debris from the towpath. I cleared light debris and small branches. Lock 43 house rear door step has rotten wood. Behind the lock house were property for sale signs for the adjoining property.

*Level 36 Lock 43 to Falling Waters* **Dick Ebersole reports 2 July** Two trees were down on the towpath after the recent storm. Lock 43 and the lock house appear to be in good condition.

*Level 37 Falling Waters to Lock 44* **Jim Tomlin and Cindy Walczak report 19 May** About an average amount of trash. There was an unusual number of cigarette butts (all one brand!) Structures were in good shape.

*Level 38 Lock 44 to High Rock Quarry* **Nick Russo reports 20 June** Removed light amount of litter and some branches. Overall condition of the towpath is excellent. The log jam at the Conococheague Aqueduct area is still there and is becoming overgrown with vegetation.

*Level 39 High Rock Quarry to Nettle RR Bridge Piers* **Jean Swank reports 8 June** The towpath is in great condition. There are great views of the river on this level. **Stefanie Boss reports 13 June** There were a lot of puddles between miles 102 and 103 after the previous day's rain. It wasn't as bad on other parts of the level.

*Level 40 Nettle RR Bridge Piers to Dam 5* **Mercedes and Paul Tibbits report 7 July** Towpath puddling due to recent storms. Most trash was by Dam 5.

*Level 41 Dam 5 to Four Locks* **Mercedes and Paul Tibbits report 20 July** The light amount of trash was noteworthy. Eleven golf balls were found on towpath near Charles Mill.

*Level 42 Four Locks to McCoys Ferry* **Carl Pederson reports 11 June** The level was in good condition and freshly mowed. The dead tree that harbored a large bee colony at mile 109.75 was gone. **9 July** A tree that was reported down at mile 109.2 was removed. The towpath was clear on the entire level. Much fishing-related trash at McCoys Ferry.

*Level 43 McCoys Ferry to Fort Frederick* **Karen Gray reports 12 May** Light trash — only one cup. The second culvert above Milepost 111 continues to deteriorate. There is still a large hole in the berm wall, and the holes across the canal and directly above the line of the culvert are growing. For the Bicentennial in 1976 the prism was cleared and planted with grass from the lower end of Big Pool to below Milepost 112. These days I never cease to be amazed that it is now impossible to tell the difference between that formerly-cleared prism and the prism below it that has always had trees, etc., in it. Actually, as nature took over the prism in the former grassy section, a process of species succession took place. It has been fascinating to watch.

*Level 44 Fort Frederick to Ernstville* **James Biasco reports 25 July** Towpath very clean and in good condition. Several boats in Big Pool.

*Level 47 Little Pool to Hancock* **Lisa Hendrick and Anthony Kajencki report 28 May** After the heavy winds and rains of the previous days there were many branches on the towpath, which we removed. There were very few visitors so I assume folks were somewhere enjoying a cookout or picnic.

*Level 48 Hancock to Round Top Cement Mill* **Phillip Michael Clemans reports 25 May** There was light trash. The towpath was wet but solid with few low spots. The water level in town and up to Milepost 125 was the highest I've seen for awhile. Several park users out on a dry, sunny day.

*Level 49 Round Top Cement Mill to Lock 53* **Paul Petkus reports 14 July** Trash was light as usual. A large and rowdy group with canoes and kayaks embarked at Cohill Station and went downstream, making their presence known my entire walk. The areas around Lock 53 and the Round Top Cement Mill are overgrown.

*Level 50 Lock 53 to Dam 6* **Steve Dean reports 19 June** Recent mowing at Locks 54, 55 and Dam 6. Most trash was at Cacapon Junction Hiker-Biker. Someone left a bag of trash there and an animal got into it. Water flowing through culverts. Moved many small limbs from towpath.

*Level 51 Dam 6 to Sideling Hill Aqueduct* **Steve Dean reports 22 June** Towpath condition excellent. One recently uprooted tree left a gouge in towpath and one large hanging vine was over towpath.

*Level 53 15 Mile Creek Aqueduct to Lock 59* **Tom and Marsha Dulz report 16 May** Towpath clear and in good condition. It was recently mowed. Construction was in progress near Little Orleans camp area.

*Level 54 Lock 59 to Lock 60* **Dennis Kubicki reports 25 July** The level is very clean. A section of the towpath east of the recently resurfaced section is particularly rutty with puddles. Locks 59 and 60 are in good condition.

*Level 55 Lock 60 to Culvert 208* **Paul Petkus reports 23 June**

The surface of the towpath is in good condition. Only a small number of branches needed to be moved off of the towpath. The level looks good. It's apparent that the Park Service has pruned some trees and cleared some brush on the Level. Lock 60 and Culvert 208 are both in good condition. The culvert is presently dry. A recent and welcome addition to the Bond's Landing area is a permanent structure with pit toilets.



Lock 60 — Photo by Paul Petkus

*Levels 56 and 57 Culvert 208 to Lock 63 1/3* **Pat White and Barbara Sheridan report 1 June** Canal watered entire distance. Breach at Twigg Hollow stream has totally eroded access to the canal. Diapers and wipes appear to have been left in a plastic bag at Sorrel Ridge and scavenged by animals. Possible bear scat was nearby, which is disturbing. Runner with "Fort Hunt or Bust" sign accompanied by bicyclist. It may have been a relay. Lock 61 crossover bridge rail was repaired.

*Level 58 Lock 63 1/3 to Tunnel Parking Area* **Steve Dean reports 20 June** Most trash was drink containers thrown in the prism at the entrance to the Paw Paw Tunnel. Tunnel and locks in good condition. Boy Scout group camping at Tunnel campground left the area immaculately clean.

*Level 60 Opposite Little Cacapon to Town Creek Aqueduct* **John Lefebure and Elizabeth O'Neill report 11 May** Grass around aqueduct and towpath recently mowed. Lock 57 is in good shape, lock sign has been bent. Some culverts under Western Maryland railroad grade have



stopped up and flood waters have apparently washed over the RR, eroding the RR bed and depositing eroded earth in prism.

*Level 61 Town Creek Aqueduct to Lock 60* **Steve Johnson reports 7 May** Conditions were good. Not a bit of garbage on the level! Lockhouse 68 porch could use some attention. The wood decking is rotting away.

*Level 64 Kelly's Road Culvert to Spring Gap Recreational Area* **Nasra Sakran, with Toma and Daphne report 8 July** There was very little garbage. The towpath was clear of trees. There looks like some potential for towpath erosion from an uprooted tree just west of Milepost 172.

*Level 65 Spring Gap Recreational Area to Lock 74* **Jim Lyons reports 8 April** Moderate amount of trash found on an Easter Sunday walk. **Bill and Marsha Romano report 9 June** Towpath has many ruts and gravel is sparse in a number of locations. Grass near Lock 72 is high. **Jim Lyons reports 8 July** The towpath is clear but much storm damage was evident.

*Level 66 Lock 74 to Mexico Farms* **Jim Lyons reports 7 July** Recent storm damage was evident. Quite a bit of trash. Bench at mile 177.6 is damaged.

*Level 67 Mexico Farms to Ervitts Creek Aqueduct* **Steve Johnson reports 9 July** Towpath was clear. Several trees fallen and in the prism. Brush is very thick in places and it is easy to brush against poison ivy. **Jim Lyons reports 29 July** Towpath is rutted in places but overall it is clear and in good shape.

### Level Walker Nature Sightings

Many of our Level Walkers have spent time with their nature guides in hand on the towpath this summer. On some of the very hot days the only wildlife present seemed to be mosquitoes!

Several Level Walkers have noted that turtle sightings are on the decline this year. Perhaps it's the record heat, or the dry weather, but several points on the canal that usually yield dozens of turtles on logs many



Black Rat Snake —  
*Photo by Marsha and Tom Dulz*

times only have a handful of log occupants, or none. Rod Mackler and Susan Vanhaften did report seeing two large snapping turtles swimming in the canal on Level 2. A few Level Walkers have also commented that snakes are scarce this year as well. While some don't miss the snakes, they are a thrill to watch and an

important part of our ecosystem. Tom and Marsha Dulz did encounter a black rat snake who just didn't want to leave the towpath!

In the view of most canal visitors, the wildflower season is never long enough. Carol Purcell spent a late June afternoon on Level 10 with her flower book. She didn't see as many flowers as in spring, but still saw several interesting flowers. Her list included white clover and pink clover, daisy fleabane, wild onion in bloom, common fleabane, nettle, smooth phlox, honeysuckle, common thistle, fringed loosestrife, honeysuckle, sweet cicely, dandelion, heart-leaved purple aster (supposed to bloom in August), red trumpet vine, and both crimson-eyed rose mallow and swamp rose mallow. Further up the canal, Paul Petkus noted nearly twenty types of wildflowers on Level 49 on a mid-July afternoon. His observations included knapweed, common mullein, crown vetch, daisy fleabane, soapwort, cardinal flower, jewelweed as well as phlox, wood-

land sunflower, and pale touch-me-not.

In other flora notes, Rod Mackler and Susan Vanhaften noted some colorful trumpet creeper in bloom on Level 2. Wild raspberry and wild strawberries were noted by several Level Walkers all along the canal. Mushrooms and other fungi of various types made an appearance in June, especially in the moister areas of the canal.



Polypore —  
*Photo by Steve Dean*



Trumpet Creeper— *Photo by Rod Mackler & Susan Vanhaften*

In most parts of the canal the dense foliage makes bird watching a challenge. Some interesting bird sightings were reported by Level Walkers. Dennis Kubicki noted not just one, but two rafters of wild turkeys on Level 54. Frank Wodarczyk and Pat Hopson observed a white egret during a walk of Levels 9 and 10, Patricia Vucich noted one on Level 8, and Jack and Karen Forster noted one on Level 8. Perhaps the same egret is getting around! Level Walkers observed a cedar waxwing and an indigo bunting during the June dragonfly walk. Phillip Michael Clemans noted numerous birds on Level 48 and enjoyed watching a belted kingfisher make its rounds. Of course there was no shortage of geese. Pileated and red-bellied woodpeckers were more often heard and not seen.



Cedar Waxwing and Indigo Bunting — *Photos by Steve Dean*

Butterflies were frequently reported, especially yellow and zebra swallow-tails and cabbage whites. Monarch sightings were not reported, though Level Walkers on the dragonfly walk saw one..

Deer were, of course, in abundance. There is a plentiful supply of fawns this year. The appearance of velvet bucks is a sure sign that autumn is on the way. No bears were sighted, though the park service reported that dry conditions increased the likelihood of encountering a bear by canal or river. Steve Johnson noticed several muskrats near Mexico Farms. Many reports indicated much squirrel activity. Onwards to autumn!



Velvet Buck — *Photo by Steve Dean*

# The C&O Canal in the Civil War

*One hundred and fifty years ago*

## **The Battle of Shepherdstown Ford**

**September 20, 1862**

by Dave Johnson

On July 27, 1863, the Army of the Potomac crossed its namesake river at Edwards Ferry, pursuing Robert E. Lee's second invasion of the North, a move that would end at Gettysburg. In the long column was a small regiment from Maine whose heroic defense of Little Round Top has been recounted often in books and film. Less well known is the story of their first combat, which occurred on (and, literally, in) the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal.

The Twentieth Regiment Infantry, Maine Volunteers, was mustered into federal service in late August 1862. Its men came from throughout the state. Most of them were farmers, fishermen and lumberjacks, accustomed to the physical hardship they would encounter, but their hard-headed Yankee independence was frustrating to their commanding officer, who was trying to instill in them a degree of military discipline. He was Adelbert Ames, an 1861 graduate of West Point who had been wounded and decorated at First Bull Run before being appointed colonel of the new regiment by the governor of Maine. Second-in-command was Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, a 33-year-old father of two, who left his teaching position at Bowdoin College, over the objections of the faculty, to join the army.

The regiment arrived in Washington on September 6. They were posted at Fort Craig (near the present-day intersection of South Courthouse Road and South 4<sup>th</sup> Street in Arlington) to reinforce the battered veteran Third Brigade, First Division of the Fifth Corps (V Corps). They anticipated the beginning of their training as soldiers, but in less than a week they were on the road. Lee had invaded Maryland, and by September 12 the army was marching west to intercept the Confederates. The Fifth Corps crossed South Mountain and approached Sharpsburg on the seventeenth, but General George B. McClellan chose to hold it in reserve, and the boys from Maine were merely spectators to the bloodshed at Antietam.

Two days later, General Lee withdrew his army across the Potomac at Shepherdstown Ford. (Also known as Botelers, Blackfords and Packhorse Ford, it is about two miles upstream from Antietam Creek Aqueduct and 1.4 miles below Lock 38.) That evening, McClellan ordered V Corps to send a force across the river to learn if Lee was retreating or merely regrouping. Four regiments crossed

on the evening of September 19, with others, including the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine, to follow in the morning.

Upon learning of the Union move early on September 20, Stonewall Jackson sent A. P. Hill hurrying back to hold the ford. Hill's troops rapidly covered the five miles to the river, struck the advance Union regiments and drove them back to the bluff. As the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine moved up the towpath, they could hear the heavy firing from across the river, and when they approached the ford, they saw Union troops fleeing toward them from the Virginia side. But their orders had not been rescinded, and Col. Ames ordered them forward. They sloshed through the shallow water, even as other soldiers retreated and rebel bullets rained down around them.

Finally, as they reached the Virginia shore, they heard the bugles sounding recall and began to wade back to the Maryland side. Lt. Col. Chamberlain sat his horse in the middle of the Potomac, calmly directing the men to move quickly and to take cover in the dry prism of the canal. Bullets continued to roil the water about him, but none found their mark. His horse, however, was not so lucky and soon became the first (but not the last) of the steeds that would be shot from under him during the war. Chamberlain joined the foot soldiers wading to safety.

Scrambling up the riverbank and over the towpath, the troops found the canal made an ideal trench. The two sides exchanged shots across the river for most of the rest of the day. During the night, Hill pulled away to rejoin Jackson and the Battle of Shepherdstown Ford was over. The 20<sup>th</sup> Maine's casualties, aside from Chamberlain's horse, were three men wounded. The overall losses of V Corps were 363 killed, wounded and missing. Most of the Federal casualties were taken by the 118<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania, another new, untrained regiment, which met Hill head-on on the Virginia bluff. Hill lost 391, mostly from Union artillery.

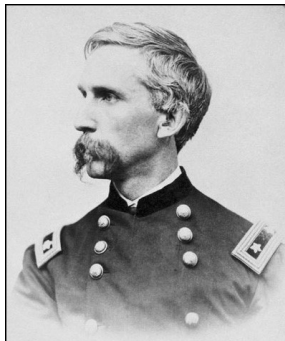
The Army of the Potomac remained at Sharpsburg until the end of October. The Third Brigade encamped near the mouth of Antietam Creek, close to the iron works and aqueduct. These quiet weeks gave Col. Ames the opportunity he needed to begin his regiment's basic training. When not on picket duty along the canal, the troops spent their days at drill in everything from the manual of arms to battlefield maneuvers. The colonel was a profane, hard-driving drill master, but he knew that strict discipline was the secret to survival on the battlefield. At night, while the soldiers slept, Ames held classes in military science and tactics for the officers. The training continued when the army moved south, and when they crossed the Rappahannock to attack Lee at Fredericksburg in December, 1862, the 20<sup>th</sup>

## The C&O Canal in the Civil War, continued

Maine was ready.

The regiment that marched north the following June was far different from the one that entrenched behind the towpath in September. Their strength was about 40 percent of the nearly 1,000 that had mustered in Maine, but the men that remained were well-trained and battle-tested. They did good service at Fredericksburg, held their position as rear guard during the retreat and were the last regiment to recross the Rappahannock. The regiment did not fight at Chancellorsville in May, having been assigned to guard the telegraph line. That duty did not require the presence of field-grade officers, and Ames was attached to V Corps headquarters during the campaign. Chamberlain found a similar role at division headquarters and participated in the battle (in which he lost another horse) and in holding the bridges during the army's retreat. Following

*Joshua Chamberlain was later promoted to brigadier general (and brevet major general). After the war, his career included service as Maine's governor and as president of Bowdoin College. Photo: Maine.gov*



the Chancellorsville campaign, the army rewarded Ames with a brigadier general's star and a brigade in XI Corps. With Ames' endorsement, Chamberlain was promoted to colonel and command of the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine.

As the soldiers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine crossed the canal lock at Edwards Ferry, did their thoughts drift back to that day nine months earlier when the C&O Canal was their fortress at Shepherdstown Ford, and to the weeks they spent drilling on the fields along the berm near Antietam Creek? Perhaps they did for just a moment, but probably their minds were on the future and the big fight they all knew lay ahead. They did not know where it would be or what they would be called on to do, but they knew they would be ready for whatever the enemy threw at them. They were five days away from their rendezvous with history.

### Sources:

*John J. Pullen, The Twentieth Maine: A Volunteer Regiment in the Civil War (Published 1957; reprinted Dayton, O.: Morningside House, 1991)*

*James I. Robertson, Jr., General A. P. Hill: The Story of a Confederate General (New York: Random House, 1987)*

*Willard M. Wallace, Soul of the Lion: A Biography of General Joshua Chamberlain (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1960; reprinted, Gettysburg: Stan Clark Military Books, 1991)*

### Civil War Paintings

#### Exhibition and Programs in Hagerstown

**September 7 — October 2**

The Sharpsburg Historical Society presents an exhibit of 51 watercolors by Garnet W. Jex at the Washington County Arts Council Gallery, 14 West Washington Street, Hagerstown from September 7 through October 2. Produced between 1962 and 1965 as part of the centennial anniversary of the Civil War, the paintings depict battles and events along the Upper Potomac as well as along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and the Antietam Creek between 1859 and 1863.

The free opening reception on Friday, September 7 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. will include remarks by John Frye, historian, and by antique and fine arts appraiser Clifford Springer. Jennie Avila will perform original compositions from the special 150th anniversary edition of the compact disk *Civil War Stories in Song*. The CD will be available for purchase, as will prints of the paintings, note cards, and a newly revised edition of a booklet concerning them. Purchases will benefit the Arts Council and the Sharpsburg Historical Society.

Two additional programs are scheduled. On September 14, the historical aspects and significance of the events of the paintings will be explored by Timothy R. Snyder, historian and author of *Trembling in the Balance: The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal During the Civil War*. A September 28 program by the Executive Director of the Harpers Ferry Historical Association, Debbie Piscitelli, will be "Jex: The Artist and the Art."

The exhibit and programs are sponsored in part by the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, the Hagerstown Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Maryland State Arts Council. For more information, please visit [www.washingtoncountyarts.com](http://www.washingtoncountyarts.com) or call Vernell Doyle, Sharpsburg Historical Society, 301-992-9767.



## Nature Notes by Marjorie Richman

### Trees for All Seasons

What is the best time to identify trees? Is it in winter to test your skills using the few clues nature gives us? Or perhaps in the spring when the leaves and flowers are in bloom? Or maybe in the fall to catch the brilliant colors? The answer is: all of the above.

This year Carol Ivory, a member of the C&OCA Nature Committee, conducted a winter and spring walk in the area of Great Falls. She plans to end the year with a fall walk in the same area.

The winter walk posed the greatest challenge. With only bark and the shape of the tree to guide us, we took our best guesses and consulted books. At the end of the walk, we decided to return in the spring when leaves and flowers make identification easier. On May 12, a day of lovely spring weather, we walked the same trails as we had during the winter hike and discovered that winter identification is not so hard after all. Many of our tentative identifications were correct, especially for those trees with distinctive bark and a strong preference for a certain type of habitat.



*River birch. Photo by Marjorie Richman.*



*Redbud. Photo by Marjorie Richman.*

On the winter walk we knew we would find river birch along the River trail, a narrow path near Great Falls Tavern that goes along the flood plain of the Potomac. Besides thriving in a wet environment, river birch is also easily identified by its peeling, shaggy bark.

Redbud trees were a bit harder to identify in the winter, but in the spring there was no problem. The distinctive heart-shaped leaves were in bloom and the fruit was clearly visible. We were too late for the lovely red flowers that bloom before the leaves appear, but the fruit was already hanging from the branches. As a member of the legume family, the fruit of the redbud looks like pea pods. The legumes begin their life as a lovely shade of red and then turn brown as they mature in the summer.

In the fall, on October 27, Carol will lead the final hike of the year along the same trails near Great Falls, this time to see the impressive fall colors. In the fall, identification is the least challenging, as leaves obey their chemistry and assume the colors assigned to them by nature. The variety of habitats near Great Falls means there are many different species of trees, each with its own distinctive leaf color to contribute to the foliage season. We can count on dogwoods, red maples, and red oaks to provide brilliant reds, while redbuds, tulip and sycamore trees contribute warm yellow hues.

A good guide for identifying trees by the color of leaves is *Fall Color Finder* by C. Ritchie Bell and Anne H. Lindsey. This guide is inexpensive and lightweight, two characteristics not commonly found among books of this type. You can find it in most book stores. Be sure to bring the book when you join us on October 27.



## Dragonflies — Round Two

On June 23, Marion Robertson and Steve Dean led eight other dragonfly enthusiasts on the Association's second dragonfly walk along the towpath in the Oldtown area. Dragonflies are more difficult to identify than one might imagine. Their colors, wing patterns and body structures can vary depending on age and gender. On top of that, they really don't care to sit for very long to allow detailed examination! Despite all that, the group is reasonably sure they saw nine or ten different types of dragonflies and damsel flies. Rod Mackler noted a number of wildflowers, and the group was also treated to a very nice monarch butterfly. Alas, the large muskrat observed near Lock 68 was not seen this year. Maybe next year!



*L. Damselfly*

*C. Horse  
Nettle*

*R. Eastern  
Pondhawk*

*L. Rod  
Mackler and  
Susan  
Vanhaften  
take a break  
at Lock 68*



*C. Milkweed  
R. Monarch*



*Above: L. Perching and flying Blue Dashers. C. Dragonfly watchers Marion Robertson and Steve Dean. R. Whitetail dining on a fly.*

*Photos by Rod Mackler and Steve Dean*

## Peter Whitney Remembered

I was saddened indeed to learn of Peter Whitney's passing. Peter was an extraordinarily well-versed amateur botanist—"amateur" in the original sense of one who loves---and he did much to share his knowledge and enthusiasm with other C&OCA members.

He and I walked together one day during the 1999 through-hike. I was at first impatient at his leisurely velocity, as he scanned for interesting flora. Gradually, he drew me into his fascinating botanical world, and I accommodated gladly to the pace. Peter taught me to enjoy the spicy taste of garlic mustard, and how not to confuse it with stinging nettle. Violets were also edible. He told me of the time he found a huge patch of them near his house, picked a basketful (very labor-intensive), ground them up and made a vivid purple syrup, which he served over ice cream at a dinner party. I'd give a lot to have been one of his guests.

Peter Whitney will definitely be missed.

— Don Juran

## Calendar of Events - 2012

Date	Day	Event
Sep 7-Oct 2	Fri-Tues	Exhibition of G. W. Jex's paintings of Civil War, Hagerstown, with talks on Sep 7, 14 & 28. See p. 19
Sep 8	Sat	Margaret Anderson Memorial 5K Race/Walk on towpath. See announcement at right for details.
Sep 9	Sun	Happy Birthday Montgomery County, Rockville. Contact: Rita Bauman, wdbaum@visuallink.com.
Sep 15-16	Sat-Sun	Sharpsburg Festival/Battle of Antietam event. Contact: William Bauman, wdbaum@visuallink.com.
Sep 23	Sun	Continuing Hike Series, 10:30 a.m., mi. 119.8. Little Pool to Licking Creek Access. Great Eastern Trail. Contact Pat White for information at 301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org.
Sep 23-27	Sun-Thur	World Canals Conference, Yangzhou, China. For information see www.worldcanalsconference.org.
Sep 29	Sat	Art at the Point, Point of Rocks Community Park, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., an outdoor juried fine arts and crafts festival. Contact: Rita Bauman for information at wdbaum@visuallink.com.
Sep 29-30	Sat-Sun	Canal/Apple Days at Hancock. Contact: Rita Bauman, wdbaum@visuallink.com.
Oct 3-8	Wed-Mon	Through bike ride, Cumberland to Georgetown. No sag wagon provided. Reservations required. Contact: Tom Perry, 301-223-7010.
Oct 6	Sat	Nature Walk focusing on birds, 8 a.m., Point of Rocks, led by Kurt Schwarz of the Maryland Ornithological Society. Contact Marion Robertson (morobertson@verizon.net or 301-657-8992).
Oct 7	Sun	Board Meeting at the Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St., 1 p.m.
Oct 13	Sat	Big Slackwater towpath dedication, 9:30 a.m., Dam # 4 boat ramp. See p. 1.
Oct 19	Fri	Unofficial Chesapeake and Ohio Canal NHP Federal Advisory Commission meeting. Time, location TBD.
Oct 20	Sat	Annual Heritage Hike, Big Pool (Ft. Frederick) to Hancock area. Hike of varying lengths & evening program. See p. 1 and enclosed reservation form.
Oct 27	Sat	Nature Walk - tree identification, 10 a.m., Great Falls. Contact: Carol Ivory at carolivory@verizon.net or 703-869-1538.
Oct 27	Sat	"The Dark Side of the Canal," living history presentation at Great Falls, details TBD
Nov 10	Sat	Frederick Historic Transportation Forum: By Road, Rail, and Water, 9:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., Delaplaine Visual Arts Education Center, 40 S. Carroll St., Frederick, Md. See p. 2 and enclosed registration form.
Nov 18	Sun	Continuing Hike Series: Oldtown downstream to Lock 68. Potomac Heritage and American Discovery Trails. Meet at Lock 71 parking lot (mi. 166.7), 10:30 a.m. Contact Pat White for information (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).
Dec 1	Sat	Frostbite Hike: meet at Great Falls Tavern, 10:30 a.m. Visit five vistas along the canal. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628) or hikemaster@candocanal.org).
Dec 2	Sun	Board Meeting at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave., 1 p.m.

## Calendar of Events, continued

Date	Day	Event
Jan 1	Tue	New Year's Day Hike 2013, Cumberland. Details TBD.

Waivers are required for many of these Association activities. The event leader will provide the forms. Hikes require proper footwear. For updates on any of the above events visit [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org).

## Margaret Anderson Memorial

### 5K Race and Walk

**Saturday, September 8**

On Saturday, September 8, a 5K race and walk will honor Margaret Anderson, a former C&O Canal NHP ranger slain in the line of duty in a California park early this year.

Parking and registration packet pickup will take place 7:00-8:30 a.m. at Ferry Hill Place in Sharpsburg. Participants will be shuttled to towpath mile 69.4 for the 9:00 a.m. start. An after-event gathering will take place at Ferry Hill.

The race is limited to 500 participants, with T-shirts for the first 300 registrants. The fee is \$20 for those who preregister at [www.CanalTrust.org](http://www.CanalTrust.org), or \$25 if paid on the day. All proceeds from the race will be donated to Margaret Anderson's family for the care of her two young daughters. Donations from those unable to participate in the event will also be accepted through the website above.

For further information, contact Race Director Tom Shantz at 304-676-3257.

**An editor is needed** for *Along the Towpath*. The ability to use a desktop publishing program, while helpful, is not necessarily a requirement. If interested in this rewarding volunteer position, please contact Ned Preston (301-530-8153 or [editor@candocanal.org](mailto:editor@candocanal.org)).



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

### C&O CANAL National Historical Park Headquarters 1850 Dual Highway, Suite 100, Hagerstown, Md. 21740

Superintendent	301-714-2202	Kevin Brandt
Deputy Superintendent	301-714-2200	Brian Carlstrom
Superintendent's Secretary	301-714-2201	Annette Martin
Chief Ranger	301-714-2222	Brad Clawson
Administrative Officer	301-714-2204	Connie Hufford
Chief of Resource Mgmt.	301-714-2210	Chris Stubbs
Community Planner	301-745-5817	John Hitchcock
Chief of Maintenance	301-714-2239	Mike Seibert
Chief of Interpretation, Education & Partnerships	301-714-2238	John Noel
Partnerships Coordinator	301-714-2218	Daniel Filer
Chief of Preservation & Project Management	301-745-5818	Daniel Copenhaver
Historian	301-714-2236	Ahna Wilson
Librarian	301-714-2220	Karen Gray
Safety Officer	301-745-5804	John Adams

**Palisades District** Milepost 0 (Tidelock) to Mile 42.19 (Monocacy River)  
11710 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac, Md. 20854  
Park Ranger Law Enforcement 301-491-6279 Joshua Cunningham  
Supervisory Visitor Use Assistant 301-767-3703 Betsy Buchanan

**Georgetown Visitor Center** 202-653-5190  
1057 Thomas Jefferson St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20007  
Supervisory Park Ranger 202-767-3711 Mark Myers

**Great Falls Tavern Visitor Ctr.** 301-767-3714  
11710 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac, Md. 20854  
Supervisory Park Ranger 202-767-3711 Mark Myers

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

**Western Maryland District**  
District Ranger 301-722-0543 Todd Stanton  
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  
Supervisory Park Ranger Curt Gaul

**Hancock Visitor Center** 301-745-5877  
439 East Main St., Hancock, Md. 21750  
Supervisory Park Ranger Rita Knox

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

### OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Georgetown Boat Operation	202-653-5190
Great Falls Boat Operation	301-767-3714
Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove (concessionaire)	202-244-0461
Carderock and Marsden Reservations	301-767-3731
Canal Quarters Program	301-714-2233

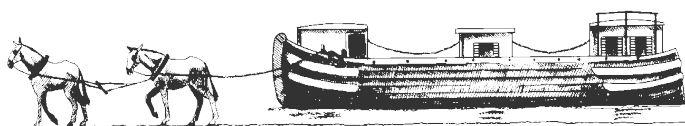
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## C&O CANAL ASSOCIATION

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

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**TWO IMPORTANT INSERTS**

are contained between the pages of this newsletter:

- A reservation form our annual **Heritage Hike and dinner**, set for October 20 in the Hancock/Big Pool area. Detailed information about this year's outing and evening program starts on page 1.
- A registration form for the **Historic Transportation Forum** on November 10 in Frederick. See the announcement on page 2 and the complete program printed on the form itself.

**Stay in the Know!**

*Along The Towpath* is packed with info about the canal park, but news often breaks rapidly. Electronic media can keep you in touch between our quarterly issues:

**Our website**, [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org) — visit it regularly and add it to your bookmarks or favorites list.

**Facebook** — If you have a Facebook account, look for "C&O Canal Association" and select the "Like" button. Or, if you are not on Facebook, go to [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com) and register (there is no cost), and then look for us.

**Email** — C&OCA members may receive our periodic news updates by email. If you haven't been getting these messages and would like to do so, please send your request to [communicator@candocanal.org](mailto:communicator@candocanal.org).



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