



# 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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### Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony Marks Big Slackwater Reopening



On the chilly but very beautiful morning of October 13, an enthusiastic crowd gathered in the C&O Canal National Historical Park near Downsville to celebrate a long-anticipated event: the official opening of the Big Slackwater towpath restoration.

In his opening address, Superintendent Kevin Brandt spoke about the challenges of recreating the path historically used to haul canal boats along this section of the Potomac River. He described the lack of resources that long stymied plans to reverse the closure of the Big Slackwater following flood-caused erosion, the encouraging effect of restorations of the Monocacy and Catoctin aqueducts, and the community partnership that finally led to success. Kevin thanked staff members, contractors, and all supporters of the project, which he called the single largest contract in the canal's history. Among the individuals that he named were now-departed C&O Canal Association members Carl Linden and Ed Miller, the latter known for his slogan "No slack at Big Slack." Organizations praised

included the park's former federal advisory commission, and especially the committee of local supporters on Big Slackwater led by C&OCA's Tom Perry.

Next to speak was Senator Ben Cardin, a strong advocate of the project, who called the occasion a "great day for Maryland." The senator hailed the outstanding natural beauty of the restored area, its recreational value, and the jobs that its opening would add to local businesses – with the happy exception of hospitals, whose work will be reduced by the elimination of a dangerous highway detour.

Other speakers included: representatives of Senator Barbara Mikulski and Congressman Roscoe Bartlett; Washington County Commissioner Ruth Anne Callahan; and president Tom Rifford of the Hagerstown-Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau. The last guest speaker was Steve Whitesell, Director of the National Park Service's National Capital Region, who lauded the collaborative effort that made the project eligible in time to receive economic stimulus funding.

*(Continued on page 4)*

**Plan now to attend our Annual Meeting and dinner on March 2 : See Page 2.**

## Annual Meeting Scheduled for March 2, 2013

by Marjorie Richman  
on behalf of the Programs Committee

The 2013 annual meeting of the C&O Canal Association will be held on Saturday, March 2, at the American Legion Hall in Williamsport, Maryland at 400 South Conococheague Street, opposite the Fire Hall. At 1:00 p.m., a "Meet the Candidates" hour will allow an opportunity to become acquainted with the nominees for officer and director positions (see page 6 for their statements). The meeting itself will follow at 2:00 p.m.

You may wish to arrive in time to visit the newly renovated Cushwa Basin Visitor Center and the other points of historical and scenic interest in and near Williamsport. Bring a lunch or patronize one of the restaurants in the Williamsport area, then come to the Legion Hall to meet the candidates and to attend the meeting. After the meeting, Happy Hour will begin at 4:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 5:30.

To make reservations for the dinner, please use the form inserted in this newsletter, and mail it to be received by Friday, February 22. The price for the dinner is \$20, and there will be a cash bar available. We look forward to your presence, to hear about the year past and make plans for the new one.

## Volunteer Dinners Very Rewarding

The C&O Canal NHP recently held its annual volunteer dinners at three locations, Cumberland, Williamsport and Glen Echo, to recognize all of the volunteers and their work this past year. Many C&OCA members were acknowledged for such roles as Bike Patrollers, boat crew members, visitor center staffers, weed controllers, canal stewards, Level Walkers and Volunteers in the Park (VIPs). It was an impressive parade of achievements and a huge number of hours supporting the park.

Congratulations go to Steve Dean, our Association's Level Walker Chairman/2<sup>nd</sup> VP, who received the highest recognition – the Volunteer of the Year Award for the entire park. Some of the reasons for this distinction were his outstanding work on behalf of the Level Walkers through improved communications, encouragement of increased walker hours, and direct involvement with the park's leadership and maintenance staff. In addition to his own level walking responsibilities, Steve is developing a photographic record of the approximately 170 culverts in the park, and is

working on a GPS program initiative. He has assisted other VIPs in installing many of the park's signs and way-sides and is an integral part of the leadership of our newly developed Garlic Mustard Challenge.



Steve Dean (center) receives Volunteer of the Year award from John Noel, Chief of Interpretation, Education and Partnerships (left) and Superintendent Kevin Brandt (right). Article and photo by Jim Heins.

## Bicycle Through Ride 2012

Seventeen hardy bicyclists participated in the Through Bike Ride from Cumberland to Georgetown on October 3-8. Nearly half of them camped along the canal while the others stayed in motels. The weather was mostly pleasant, although colder and wetter near the end of the trip. The towpath had received a good soaking the day before the ride began outside of the NPS Cumberland Visitor Center, but that did not deter us. Just 1 ½ miles into the trip, we detoured across the Potomac and into a tunnel through Knobley Mountain to Carpendale, W.Va. This short rail trail offered a beautiful vista of the Potomac valley.

The muddy conditions made the towpath an alternately slippery and sticky passage, requiring constant focus on the trail for the first two days. Nonetheless, there was plenty of time later to see turtles, herons, and the occasional snake sunning itself directly across the path. In addition, the views along the path and the structures like the Paw Paw Tunnel were wonderful to behold.

On the third day, we visited Fort Frederick State Park where we toured the French and Indian War fort and watched the park's orientation film while we lunched and



*The bikers at Bill's Place, Little Orleans. L. to R.: Denny Sloppy, Rob Brown, Donna Sloppy, Art Wise, Henry Mayo, Paul Leatherman, Pat Hopson, Norman Liebow, Tom Perry, Ross Willard, Pam Lantz, Mike Holland, Fred Slick, John Betting, Brooke Alexander, Frank Wodarczyk.*

ate several pies brought from Hancock. At day's end, we arrived in Williamsport just in time for the monthly Classic Car Cruise-In. The evening came to a grand conclusion at Tom and Linda Perry's living room with music from Tom's 600-plus-pipe organ and a large assortment of delicious homemade snacks and cider.

The highlight of the ride came on the fourth day when we pedaled along the towpath beside Big Slackwater for the first time since 1996. New interpretive signs, funded by C&OCA, had been installed by Association volunteers just the day before we arrived. At McMahon's Mill, the group stopped to toast our leader, Tom Perry, with apple cider and thank him for all of his efforts to make the Big Slack reconstruction a reality. The group unanimously agreed to call the towpath in this section "Pastor Perry's Path" to honor his work. Riding through this newly opened area with Tom was a very special treat.

The fifth day was a relatively short ride from Harpers Ferry to White's Ferry. On the way, we paused to enjoy Brunswick's Railroad Days Festival and stroll through the historic town. Later, we stopped to admire the completed reconstruction of the Catocin Aqueduct, where an interpretive sign identified each stone contributed through the Adopt A Stone program. Many of the riders were contributors, and there were even two stones dedicated to Pastor Perry's Pedalers.

Just before reaching Georgetown on the sixth day, we visited the Abner Cloud House at Fletcher's Cove. This is the oldest existing structure along the canal, built as a home for a miller in about 1802. At Mile 0, photos were taken, and bicyclists headed for home. On the seventh day we rested with fond memories of wonderful vistas, fascinating wildlife, and unique structures.

We want to thank: our leader, Tom Perry; John Betting who filled in as leader on the last day; our sweeps, Norman Liebow and Art Wise; and Pat Hopson for organizing the trip. Special thanks go to Paul Leatherman's daughter Katie, and to Tom Perry's daughter Heidi Gardner and her family, who provided us dinners for two of the days, and also to Carla McDevitt for delivering the pies to Fort Frederick. We also wish to express our gratitude to Malcolm Brown, owner of White's Ferry, for his assistance to the camping bicyclists on our last evening.

By Robert L. Brown

## **Bikers' Gift to Williamsport**

Each October, our C&OCA bikers present a donation to some good project or cause, up or down the length of the canal. This year we presented \$700 to the town of Williamsport for their restoration and improvement of Doubleday Hill. Abner Doubleday (reported to have something to do with the beginnings of baseball) was a general in the Civil War who commanded cannons protecting the canal from Confederate forces on the other side of the Potomac River.

The town plans to have the restoration in place by July of next year. (Our bikers acknowledged that General Doubleday was firing at some of their relatives, but all agreed to make this contribution to the town which provides a meeting place for half of the C&OCA Board sessions each year!) More information will be provided to our readers as we approach July.

By Tom Perry

## Big Slackwater Reopens *(continued from page 1.)*

Near the close of the ceremony, Kevin Brandt presented the Superintendent's Award for Excellence in Citizen Stewardship to the C&O Canal Association. Inviting President Rachel Stewart to the stage, Kevin thanked the Association for "riding in" with help at crucial stages of the project. An NPS press release described this assistance:

The C&O Canal Association played a vital role in the rehabilitation of the towpath at Big Slackwater. Their ongoing advocacy of the Big Slackwater Restoration Project began in 1996, following flood waters that destroyed the area, and continued until 2010 when final pieces of funding to ensure the restoration project's completion were secured. Prior to receiving federal and state funding, the C&O Canal Association provided a donation of \$80,000 to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. This funding enabled environmental compliance and preliminary design work to proceed, essentially making the restoration project "shovel ready" and appealing for other funding sources and donors to support. Following a ground-breaking ceremony in 2010 to officially kick-off restoration work, the C&O Canal Association continued to provide support to see the project through completion, including a \$25,000 donation to fund interpretative waysides that ensures all visitors passing through will recognize the park's importance in our nation's transportation history.

The unexpected award was greatly appreciated by the many C&OCA members present, and received warm applause. The presentation was followed by a ribbon-cutting, shown in the photo on page 1.

The program was capped by a hike along the 2.5-mile restored section that has renewed the continuity of the towpath between Cumberland and Georgetown. Brilliant sunshine enhanced the hikers' enjoyment of the river vistas on their left as they proceeded upstream from the Big Slackwater boat ramp to McMahon's Mill at mile 88.1. On their right, the restored path provided close views of cliff formations decorated with autumn wildflowers. All were impressed by the skilled engineering that makes this section a permanent asset for the park and its visitors.

By Ned Preston



*Along the Towpath, December 2012*



Scenes of the October 13 event: (1.) Senator Ben Cardin addresses the gathering. (2.) C&OCA president Rachel Stewart accepts the award to the Association from Superintendent Kevin Brandt. (3.) Rachel displays the award. (4.) Kevin leads the hike upstream along the restored towpath. (5.) Hikers pause to admire one of seven interpretive waysides funded by C&OCA and installed by its Volunteers in the Park group. Shown are (l. to r.): Carol Purcell, Rod Mackler, Jan Heins, Tom Rifford, and VIP chair Jim Heins.

Photo credits: Office of Senator Cardin (1); Ned Preston (2, 4, 5 and front cover); Steve Dean (3 and rear cover).



On September 15, the Berkeley County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America marked the near completion of the Big Slackwater project with a celebration at its Chapter House on the West Virginia side of the Potomac. Tom Perry received the League's National Honor Roll Award for his work as chair of the Big Slackwater Restoration Committee.

At left, Tom is shown displaying his award with Marie Cyphert, the League's West Virginia state president. Certificates of appreciation were also awarded to Tom and to committee members John Ziegler, Charlotte Loveless, Ken and Pat Heck, Carl Pederson, and Mayor James McCleaf of Williamsport. Photo by Steve Dean.

## Notice of 2013 Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of members of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 2, 2013, at the American Legion Hall, 400 South Conococheague St., Williamsport, Md. The meeting will be for the purpose of electing officers for 2013, electing a nominating committee for 2014, receiving reports of officers and committees, and any other business that may properly come before it. All members of the Association in good standing are invited to attend. This notice constitutes the call for the meeting, pursuant to Articles II.2, III.1, and IX of the bylaws.

## Nominations For Officers and Directors

Officers (except directors) are elected at each annual meeting to serve a term of one year. In addition, five directors are elected at each annual meeting to serve a term of three years. This year, an additional director will be elected to a two-year term to fill a vacant position. The nominating committee, chosen at the preceding annual meeting, will submit a slate of candidates. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the annual meeting.

Members assembled at the 2012 annual meeting elected John Anderson, Bill Burton, Pat Heck, Dorothea Malsbary, Mary Ann Moen, and Pat White to the 2013 nominating committee. The committee has recommended the following candidates for 2013:

### Rachel Stewart – President, Arlington, Va.

I am honored to be asked once again to serve as President of this important organization. My direct experience with the C&O Canal Association began in 1984 when I met a woman who had participated in the thru-hike that year. I'd known of the canal from childhood visits to Great Falls with my father and brothers but had never heard of the Association. And so I became a member. At first I joined the hikes and I volunteered with work parties. In the early 1990s, I joined the Board and have been a director, Secretary, First Vice President, and President. I look forward to continuing to work to preserve and protect the canal's structures and resources, particularly now. Official funding for all national parks is dramatically reduced, both now and in the coming years. Organizations like ours have an opportunity to step up and fill the void.

### Barbara Sheridan – 1st VP, La Plata, Md.

I have been a member of the C&O Canal Association for the past 16 years and have served previously on the Board as both a Director and as 1st Vice President. I have chaired two Thru-Hikes (2004 and 2009) and have been Membership Chair for the past 13 years. I am also currently serving on the Programs Committee and acting as Assistant Treasurer.

I was born in Washington, D.C., and have lived in the area all my life. My first awareness of the canal was an aerial view of it from a streetcar while on the way to Glen Echo Amusement Park as a child. The streetcars are long gone, as is the amusement park, but the canal lives on for all to enjoy!

If elected, I will work with the Association to help preserve and protect this valuable resource for future generations.

### Steve Dean – 2d VP/Level Walker Chairman, Prince Frederick, Md.

I am completing my second year as the Level Walker Chair. During the past two years I have worked with a great group of volunteers in the Level Walker program and I am impressed with the depth and capabilities of the group. I combine my duties in the Association with my great interest in the canal and spend as much time as possible walking and photographing the canal. I believe the Level Walker program provides valuable support to the NPS with the maintenance and operation of the canal, especially in these times of increasingly limited Federal funding. I understand the responsibilities of the Level Walker chair and welcome the opportunity to support the C&O Canal Association in that role if I am re-elected.

### Unslated – Information Officer

The Nominating Committee is still seeking a candidate for this position as this newsletter goes to press. Members who are interested in the position, or have suggestions for a candidate, should contact the committee chair, John Anderson, at 703-678-6933 or ol-canada@msn.com.

### Susan Van Haften – Secretary, Arlington, Va.

Over the years I have enjoyed walking on the C&O Canal towpath, visiting its aqueducts, riding on the canal boats in Georgetown and Great Falls, introducing friends and family to the canal, and taking pleasure in knowing that there was such a great natural and historical treasure practically in my own back yard. I also realized there was a way not only to enjoy the canal, but also to help out with protecting and promoting it. In 2005, I joined the C&O Canal Association. In 2007, I became a Level Walker. In 2010, I became a Director on the Association's Board. In 2012, I accepted the position of Secretary. I would be pleased to continue my service as the C&O Canal Association's Secretary in 2013.

### William D. Bauman – Treasurer, Winchester, Va.

I have been a member of the Association for over 26 years and have served on the Board of Directors. I am the Volunteer Coordinator, for the C&O Canal's Lockhouse 75, which is open every weekend from Memorial Day through Sept 30 and for special events when requested.

I have also transcribed many documents for the C&O Canal NHP, several of which were edited and included in the *History of the C&O Canal*, by Harlan D. Unrau. Recently I have been documenting canal family histories and relevant historical documents which may be found on the Association's website.

For the past six years I have maintained the Association's accounts in a clear and accurate manner. I will be happy to serve another year, if elected.

### Ron Howard - Director (two-year term), Rockville, Md.

I have enjoyed numerous splendid experiences along the C&O Canal over the years: biking, hiking, camping and canoeing with family and friends, including one bike trip from Cumberland to Georgetown and the 1999 Justice Douglas thru-hike. This national historical park is truly a treasure — a magnificent gift. Having been a member of C&O Canal Association for a long time, I've been a Level Walker for Level 24 since 1995, and took on Level 21 as well in 2004. In March 2004, I was elected to the Board of Directors to complete a vacant position that had two years remaining, and was reelected for a three-year term in March

2007. I have: assisted in generating funding for the new canal boat *Charles Mercer* by volunteering on the dry-docked *Canal Clipper* in 2005; substituted as the Association “store manager;” assisted in various VIP work projects; and assisted in the annual Potomac watershed cleanup, serving two years as a site leader. I look forward to serving again on the Board.

**Dave Johnson - Director**, Bethesda, Md.

A member of the Association since 1980, I have served as: president, 1991-1994; treasurer, 1989-1991 and 1995-2004; and director, 1985-1989 and 2007-2013. Currently, I chair the Bylaws Committee and serve on the Editorial Review and Special Projects committees. I am a member of the boards of directors of the American Canal Society and the Pennsylvania Canal Society. I have been a volunteer at the C&O Canal National Historical Park since 1983 and assisted at the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center from 1990 through 2011. I retired from the Department of the Navy, where I was a financial manager.

The C&O Canal Association offers many different things to many people — recreational and social activities, volunteer opportunities, publications, etc. However, the Association’s primary mission is to be an independent advocate and watchdog for the C&O Canal, dedicated to ensuring that protection, conservation and development of the park conform to the concepts under which it was established and in its General Plan. This is the most important role of the Board of Directors and one which I will wholeheartedly support.

**Tom Lightfoot - Director**, Arlington, Va.

Upon moving to this area in 1991, I quickly became aware of the C&O Canal National Historical Park and used it primarily for access to the Potomac River for fishing, canoeing and kayaking. My historical interests were piqued after helping the Park Service with recovery and clean-up after the two floods in 1996 as a member of a local fishing club. Walking the entire towpath, in segments, over the following three years with the Pentagon Volksmarch Club was even more revealing and rewarding.

I became a member of the C&O Canal Association in 2006 when co-workers Barbara Sheridan and Bill Burton gave me a membership as a retirement present. Since that time I have enjoyed the many hikes and nature walks sponsored by the Association, and have assisted in a number of level walker and other volunteer activities, such as placing wayside and directional signs and painting the canal boats.

If elected I would work to see the Association continue the many successful efforts we have undertaken and look for new opportunities to help preserve the heritage of the park.

**Rod Mackler – Director**, Arlington, Va.

I’ve spent my life around water. Born in Davenport, Iowa, on the Mississippi River, I grew up in Louisville, on the Ohio. Since then, I have lived on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts in the U.S., the Red Cedar, Isar, Danube, Sava, and Rhine Rivers, and on the Atlantic in West Africa. I have had careers in academics and in the diplomatic corps. I enjoy traveling, photography, hiking, and reading.

I have been an active member of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association since 2005. I have served as a Volunteer in the (C&O Canal) Park and as a level walker. My chief interest in the canal is the history, but the canal has also introduced me to birding and wildflowers. Through my interest in the C&O, I have gotten more deeply involved in canals and inland navigation gen-

erally, and have participated in the last four World Canals Conferences. I am married to Susan Van Haften and have a grown son.

**Craig Roberts - Director**, Knoxville, Md.

I was born in Paterson, N.J.; spent my school years in Charlottesville, Va.; and hold degrees in Civil Engineering and Engineering Management. I retired after 34 years with the Federal government. Most importantly, I became fascinated with the C&O Canal since my first canoe trip in 1966. My family moved near the canal in 1981. My wife, myself and our five children often went out on the canal hiking and biking. Where else can kids safely take a 50-mile bike ride free of auto traffic? My children now live across the country, but on visits home it is out on the towpath we go. I volunteer with the Park Service at the Ferry Hill and Williamsport Visitor Centers, Bike Patrol, Canal Pride Days and Trails & Rails. In the Association, I take part in the Volunteers in the Park, participate in paddling and nature walks, serve on the Forum and Audit Committees, and pick up a lot of trash as a Level Walker. The C&O Canal affords me many memorable and pleasurable moments. I would be delighted to serve again as a member of our Board.

**Marion Robertson - Director**, Chevy Chase, Md.

I joined the Association in 2004 to go on the Douglas through-hike. I found people I liked, flowers galore and a joyful place to go. I like our hikes and paddles. My appreciation of the canal has deepened over the years. I am now a Level Walker and a Weed Warrior (with a focus on garlic mustard!) I have enjoyed serving on the Board and volunteering in the park. I would be glad to serve another term on the Board. As Nature Committee chairman, I would like to continue, and expand, C&OCA’s nature walks, encouraging people to learn about nature, thus enhancing their enjoyment of being outside in our great National Historical Park.

### Boathouse Zone Feasibility Study Status

The National Park Service is continuing to conduct a study concerning the feasibility of implementing a non-motorized boathouse zone in Georgetown. Included in the area under study is a portion of the C&O Canal National Historical Park that lies between the eastern side of the remains of the Alexandria Aqueduct to a point up-river from the Washington Canoe Club. The study’s recommendations may therefore have a major impact on the canal park’s future.

NPS expects to announce a public meeting on the study when it is published, and to open a period for public comment. The timing of the meeting and comment period is not known as this newsletter goes to press. When available, that information will be posted on our Association’s website, [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org).

# It's a Grand Canal

## A Report on the World Canals Conference 2012

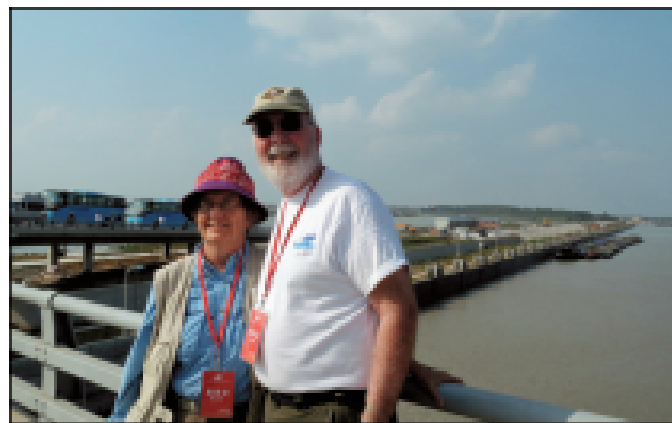
Laura Gilliam and Rod Mackler flew the C&O Canal Association flag (figuratively) at the World Canals Conference in Yangzhou, China, September 24-27. Yangzhou is located at the intersection of the Yangtze River and the Grand Canal in southeastern China.

The oldest parts of the Grand Canal date back to the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and the various sections were combined during the Sui Dynasty (581-618 A.D.). The total length of the canal is 1,776 kilometers, or 1,104 miles, making it the longest canal in the world. It stretched from Hangzhou in the south to Beijing, and provided a means for taxes (in the form of grain) from the south to be delivered to the capital. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the northern end of the Grand Canal fell into disrepair, due to flooding of the Yellow River and, of course, the impact of the railways, but the southern portions are still very heavily used, primarily for coal and other bulk goods. We saw strings of up to fifteen barges proceeding up the canal.

Yangzhou is considered a small city by Chinese standards, a mere 4.6 million people. It has a more

provincial feel than Beijing or Shanghai, with fewer skyscrapers, fewer English-language signs, and more bicycles than the larger, more cosmopolitan centers. Besides the commercial, wide, heavily trafficked, and heavily polluted Grand Canal on the outskirts, Yangzhou has a large and scenic system of canals in the city, including the West Slender Lake National Park. Laura and Rod took cruises on several of these canals, both in daytime and at night, when the waterways were outlined in neon. The cruise boats sported dragons' heads fore and outboard motors aft, with tea served and ancient instruments being played to accompany the voyage. Musical groups, dance companies, and puppeteers also performed for us along the banks.

The conference itself was a bit heavy on the welcoming speeches and receptions, a bit light on actually visiting canals. The hosts were very concerned with protocol, providing in the program instructions for dress for most events. They even presented the men with red silk ties, the women with red silk scarves, to encourage proper dress for sessions with important government and party officials. Our Chinese hosts, mostly English and political science majors, were also amused to see canal buffs going bonkers over locks and dams, but they were unfailingly courteous and gracious hosts. They took good care of us and fed us extremely well, with lunches that ran to 20 courses.



There were about 50 participants from North America and Europe, with similar numbers from China. They presented papers on a wide range of subjects, including: Abraham Lincoln and canals; the Morris Canal in New Jersey; the Riverwalk in San Antonio; the Suez; and Dutch and Polish canals. The hosts focused on their campaign to win for the Grand Canal the UNESCO designation as a World Heritage Site, like the Rideau Canal in Ontario or the Canal du Midi in southwest France.

All in all, it was a great experience, a chance to see a vibrant and swiftly expanding economy through the lens of canals and waterways. We are looking forward to the next

two conferences, in Toulouse (Canal du Midi) September 16-19, 2013, and Milan (Leonardo de Vinci's canal system) in 2014.

— Rod Mackler and Laura Gilliam

*Photos on the opposite page (by Rod Mackler except as noted), clockwise::*

*The Grand Canal at the Shaobo navigation locks.*

*Laura and Rod at the same location (by Dan Van Haften).*

*Nighttime along one of Yangzhou's interior canals.*

*A bridge on West Slender Lake.*

## Heritage Hike 2012

The weather was fantastic on October 20 as 50 Heritage Hike participants trekked upstream to Hancock. At their destination, many relaxed on the lawn of the Bowles House visitor center to listen to Blue Grass performers on the porch, shown below in Frank Wodarczyk's photo.



Later, 62 members and guests gathered for a tasty dinner at St. Peter's Church. The after-dinner presentation began with C&OCA president Rachel Stewart recapping the Big Slackwater opening ceremony (see page 1). She displayed the award that

the Association received at the event, and read the citation. Audience members agreed that Rachel had looked speechless

when Superintendent Kevin Brandt called her to the stage that day, and she confirmed that it had been a surprise. Volunteers In Parks (VIP) committee chair Jim Heins then asked Steve Dean to stand beside him as he told the group about Steve's Volunteer of the Year award (see page 2). Everyone applauded this well-deserved recognition.

To cap the evening, Lou and Phyllis LaBorwit gave an inspiring slide show about their annual trip to Scotland to join "The Great Outdoors Challenge." Instead of following a single trail, participants plan their own route, subject to approval from a committee that makes sure that they are not going places off limits to hikers. They meet in Edinburgh and then take a boat to the starting place. This year was very rainy, causing many to back out — but not Lou and Phyllis, who entertained the audience with their adventures.

— Marjorie Richman



*Is THAT a tennis ball? Barbara Sheridan gets a skeptical response from Angus as she shows him an Osage orange.*

*Other hikers shown pausing near Big Pool are (l. to r.) Pat Hopson, Roger Plaskett, Patricia Plaskett, Louise Wideroff, Howard McGown, Mark Stover, Lisa Hendrick, Pat White, Ken Heck, Pat Heck, Frank Wodarczyk, and Bill Burton. Photo by Steve Dean.*

Along the Towpath, December 2012

## DONORS TO ASSOCIATION FUNDS

Many thanks to our generous donors  
from August 17 to November 16, 2012

## Ken Rollins C&O Canal Fund

<i>Beckwith, Suzanne S.</i>	<i>Saccoia, Patrick</i>
<i>Dieter, Emma</i>	<i>&amp; Erica</i>
<i>Fleck, Brian</i>	<i>Schnaar, Ronald</i>
<i>Heins, James K.</i>	<i>Suburban Women's</i>
<i>Marmer, Michael</i>	<i>Club</i>
<i>&amp; Linda</i>	<i>Weidenfeld, Sheila</i>
<i>Podvia, Mark W.</i>	<i>Rabb</i>

**Ken Rollins C&O Canal Fund  
in memory of Carl Linden**

*Gibbs, Rick & Cathy      Linden, Per & Judy*

## Davies Legal Defense Fund

*Linden, Per & Judy*      *McManus, James*  
    *& Karen*



## ***Ways to Donate 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 20812-0366). 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



Steve & Karen Appleton, Potomac, Md.  
 Chauncy & Kristen Brinton, Poolesville, Md.  
 Suzanne Bucci, Shepherdstown, W.Va.  
 Berkeley County Chapter, Izaak Walton  
 League, Martinsburg, W.Va.  
 David & Barbara Collins, Monrovia, Md.  
 Howard Elitzak, Arlington, Va.  
 Al & Naomi Everett, Brunswick, Md.  
 Mary Lee Hoffman, Hagerstown, Md.  
 Dan Huddleston, Falls Church, Va.  
 JoAnn McGregor, Finksburg, Md.  
 Karen Teague Peko, Sterling, Va.  
 Don Peterson, Brunswick, Md.  
 Douglas Schwab, Cumberland, Md.  
 Daryl Seese, Shippensburg, PA  
 Steve & Brenda Sparenborg, Poolesville, Md.  
 Richard Walls, Binghamton, N.Y.  
 Judy T. Wyant, Washington, D.C.

***Be Sure to Renew Your Membership!***

*Keep Along The Towpath arriving in your mailbox, and help the Association move forward with its goals of protecting and improving the C&O Canal National Historical Park! It's so important — and so easy to do — just use the form inserted in this newsletter!*

## Keep in Touch Online!

Here's how to stay updated 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. Not on Facebook? Then go to [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com) and register (there is no cost), and then look for us.

**Email** — If you haven't been getting our Association messages and would like to do so, please send your request to [communicator@candocanal.org](mailto:communicator@candocanal.org).

## Announcements

### Towpath Pins Still Available

The Association has discontinued offering new towpath pins for sale. But in our inventory, we have individual pins for past years: 2002 (canal boat), 2004 (Douglas), 2005 (Monocacy), 2006 (Paw Paw), 2007 (Catoclin), 2008 (Mercer), 2009 (Cushwa), 2010 (Mule). If you want to purchase an individual pin or a complete set consisting of 9 pins (which includes the 2003 pin), contact the Association at P. O. Box 366, Glen Echo, MD 20812 0366. A complete set will cost \$10.00, or individual ones will cost \$2.00 each. Add postage: \$2.00 for a set of 9 and \$1.00 for individual pins.

### Volunteers Needed for Guidebook Update

The Harpers Ferry Historical Association is currently revising Thomas Hahn's *Towpath Guide to C&O Canal*. The popular guidebook was last published in 1999 and is undergoing a major facelift — not only to update geographical, structural, and recreational changes that have occurred along the towpath, but also to modify technical data based on the latest studies, and modernize the text to 21st century style standards. Plans also include updated photos, an index to maps and points of interest, a glossary of canal terms, and possibly GPS coordinates to specific areas along the towpath.

HFHA wishes to extend its sincere gratitude to all those C&OCA members who have volunteered their time for the first phases of revision. Level Walkers have been out on the towpath with Hahn's text in hand, editing and updating conditions. Their meticulous notes have been invaluable. Special thanks to Level Walker Chairman Steve Dean for his overall guidance and organizing the volunteer efforts, and to Dr. Karen Gray for her technical expertise and enthusiastic dedication to this project.

Help is still needed with the project's next phases. If you have skills in research, or in editing text or images, and would like to volunteer, please contact Cathy Baldau, HFHA Publications Specialist, at 304-535-6881 or [cbaldau@earthlink.net](mailto:cbaldau@earthlink.net).

### New iPhone Application for Canal Visitors

If you have an iPhone, the C&O Companion App is available to help you enjoy the canal by providing information on lodging, campsites, food, water, and access points along the towpath.

The application can use the iPhone's GPS technology to track your location on the towpath, but the software isn't dependent on that feature. Even where you don't have cell phone connectivity, all of the application's logistical information is still available, including zoomable road maps covering the entire canal.

Bicyclists are the target audience for the app's developer, James Menzies. Although hikers can also find the app useful, it doesn't include much information about points of interest along the towpath. Note that it isn't available for Android phones. The cost is \$2.99. To learn more, visit <http://bikewashington.org/canal/app/index.html>.

### C&OCA Fashion Alert!

*Special sweatshirts and jackets displaying the Association's name and logo are now available! Please check the News page of our website, [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org), for details, prices, photos, and a printable order form.\* Mail your order form and your check to be received by February 1; then pick up your items at the Annual Meeting on March 2 or at either of two later events: the Board meeting in Glen Echo on April 7 or the Douglas Hike on April 27.*



*\* If you lack access to the internet but would like information about this offer, please contact Rita Bauman (540-888-1425 or 1086 Adams Rd., Win-*

### Continuing Hikes for 2013

These are our small (usually 8 to 12 people) discovery hikes. We investigate the canal, enjoy the scenery, and learn from one another. Bring water and lunch or snack and dress for the weather. These hikes go rain or shine, but we do cancel when winter driving conditions are bad or the snow is more than a foot deep. Check the website or contact me if doubtful. All hikes begin at 10:30 a.m., and locations with brief directions are posted on the Calendar. Contact me for more detailed directions.

January - walk through the McKee-Besher Wildlife Management Area to the canal and lunch at the Horsepen Branch hiker biker campsite, then return via the location of a historic radio telescope. Not strenuous, but could be wet, wear waterproof footwear.

February – investigate the site of Fort Duncan, one of the forts overlooking Harpers Ferry. This hike will be strenuous and may involve bushwhacking.

March – leisurely stroll along the canal from Spring Gap to Pigman's Gap hiker biker campsite.

May – Billy Goat trails B&C, some scrambling, but beautiful views along the Potomac.

September – Snyders Landing, Civil War history, interesting culverts.

November – Cohill Station west of Hancock, interesting area, possible round trip using the rail trail.

— Pat White (301-977-5628 or [hike-master@candocanal.org](mailto:hike-master@candocanal.org))

# A Profile of John Frye

by Jill Craig

John Frye is a native of Washington County, Maryland, a historian who worked as a seasonal ranger at the C&O Canal National Historical Park for 15 years and has been the curator of the Western Maryland Room at the Washington County Free Library in Hagerstown for 44 years. He drew maps for the state of Maryland in the assessment office in Washington County for a number of years, adding to his knowledge of the county. He has been a member of the C&O Canal Association since 1958.

The C&O Canal in south Washington County was a place John visited frequently with his grandfather, John Hahn, in the 1940s. His grandfather fished in the Potomac from Millers Narrows to Harpers Ferry, so the young Frye walked the canal towpath looking at the locks and gates, listening to his grandfather's memories of the sound of the horns and of the people on the boats and their mules. His family, who lived in Brownsville, would also picnic at Mountain Lock (Lock 37), which still had the lockhouse and lock gates.

John was interested in history generally, but settled into a study of the canal because, unlike the Civil War, it was not a widely known aspect of local history. In addition, there were still old canalers living, and those who remembered the canal talked with nostalgia about the slow pace and what they recalled of the canal era. John remembers a man, about 100 years old, talking to him about the remains of a canal boat in the river below Dargan Bend at Milepost 63 that his brother had captained. John talked with J. P. Mose, Brownie Knode, several of the Rileys, Raleigh Bender and Harvey Brant, the lock tender at Williamsport. When he became a seasonal ranger for the park in 1983 and conducted interpretative walks, some of these old canalers would show up, so the stories and the lore grew. Before the park came into being, John had taken photos along the length of the canal, and he showed them to service clubs when giving talks about the canal. He worked for the park until 1998, and has continued as a student and lecturer on the canal for Hagerstown Community College and other civic organizations.

John missed the 1954 Douglas Hike, as he was in military service, but he was part of a group in Williamsport who formed the C&O Canal Club to lobby in Western Maryland for a park. Jack Berkson, Adam Harsh, Donald Ebersole, Chic Meyers, Mel Kaplan and Hooper Wolfe were some of the other members. They were inter-

ested in preserving the land, but John, Ralph Donnelly, and the Williamsport Canal Club were also interested in the canal's historical value. In 1958, John became a member of the C&O Canal Association and he is one of the longest serving members.

John described his experience with Justice Douglas:

"My first experience of Justice Douglas was in 1958 on the fourth Douglas hike. Every spring they would have a hike reunion. That year, the reunion hiked from Dam # 4 to Williamsport. With Charles Payne, a Williamsport native, I represented the Williamsport Canal Club on the walk. We and our wives walked with the group from the Fish and Game Club into Williamsport. Half way there, Douglas stopped to sit on a log and he chatted with us. Back then the C&O Canal Association was a closed organization – it was still the original

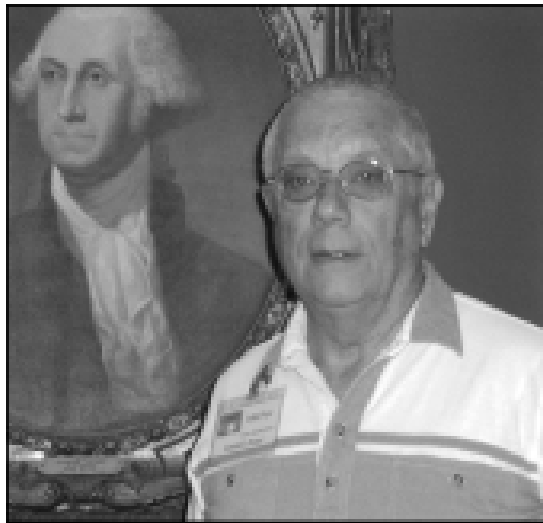
group and you didn't get in by just paying membership as you do today. He proposed we join the Association, and Charles Payne and I had the honor of being admitted to the C&O Canal Association on a motion of Justice Douglas."

Noting that people thought he was hobnobbing with Douglas, John was quick to point out that that was not the case. He walked the same towpath as Douglas was walking. But Douglas was out there to enjoy himself, not to chat. He would talk as he was walking along, but it was clear he was a conservationist whose vision was a walking path along the bank of the river from Cumberland to D.C., with its urban sprawl. He foresaw that path would become a tremendous treasure. John believes,

like many others, that Douglas was right and that 50 to 100 years from now that green strip will be of even more value as recreational space, not because it was once a canal.

John recalled that the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, the county commissioners, and the state of Maryland were against the idea of a park because they were afraid to lose access to the river. Congress was against it because it wasn't a western park like Yellowstone and Glacier. The Williamsport group worked with the Washington group led by Douglas, Grant Conway, and many of the original hikers until the idea of a park was accepted. John believed the turning point came when the National Boy Scout organization supported the preservation of the canal.

The canal became a national monument in 1961 and a national historical park in 1971. The emphasis from the beginning was to maintain the towpath continuity. John was one of two members to represent Washington County at the first C&O Canal National Historical Park Federal Advisory Commission. At that first meeting the group adopted a goal – to preserve the continuity of the towpath. John still believes in this as the purpose of the park. While he hates to lose



*John Frye in the Western Maryland Room.*

historic structures, he acknowledges the park's limited resources. If the Park Service puts the money into maintaining the towpath and the adjacent land from Cumberland to Georgetown, and where possible the restoration of some structures like the Monocacy and Catoctin Aqueducts, they are doing all they can, given the economic climate. Frye emphasized, "If it were not for those recreational users we would not have that park. I get the benefit of the historic preservation because of the recreational users. The lower 22 miles have been maintained as a canal, not a usable canal but a canal where you can imagine how the system worked. There are sections like Williamsport with the restoration of the aqueduct, the lock and now the section with the canal boat." John reiterated: "In practicality, it is hard enough to get funds to just maintain the towpath. I appreciate that. If they can keep it as a park as we planned in the first canal commission I'd be happy. You have at least four million people who use it every year at a cost of less than a dollar per user."

John Frye served two terms on the board of the C&O Canal Association. He joined the Pennsylvania Canal society, formed in 1972, and was later a director of that society. When Tom Hahn formed the American Canal Society and when Virginia formed a canal society he became a charter member of both. He still belongs to them all. Dave Johnson, Hal Larsen, Gordon Gay and John organized the fifth World Canal Conference, which was held at Harpers Ferry in 1992, hosted by the C&O Canal Association and National Park Service. With his wife Janice, he has toured canals throughout North America, mainly towpath canals, and traveled by boat on the entire modern Erie Canal and the Rideau Canal, built the same time as the C&O Canal.

John's contribution to the study of local history has been widely acknowledged. As Hagerstown columnist and author Tim Rowland put it "For those four-plus decades, anyone on this end of the state who was asked a particularly dicey local history question had a stock, four-word answer: 'Better ask John Frye.' More often than not, Frye knows the answer off the top of his head. If not, he can retrieve the information from a book or file faster than an Internet browser." The Washington County Commissioners have named an annual award in his honor. The John Frye Preservation Awards are given to persons or organizations that have made extraordinary efforts to preserve and protect the history of Washington County through historic rehabilitation and restoration, letters and advocacy.

John recently received the Herbert C. Bell Fellowship from the Antietam Historical Association, an award designed to recognize accuracy and objectivity in Antietam history, for his long-standing and proven dedication to accuracy in local history, both in his work at the library and in lectures to other organizations. When the rebuilt Washington County Free Library reopens next year, the Western Maryland Collection will be housed in the John Frye Room, named in his honor. As those interested in local and Chesapeake and Ohio Canal history know, if you need an answer, "Better ask John Frye."

## On The Level

By Level Walker Chair Steve Dean

*This report ends as the canal weathers another storm, in the form of Hurricane Sandy. Many Level Walkers responded to calls from the National Park Service to assess their levels and respond to needs for other volunteer support. Reports from the post-storm assessments will be featured in the March issue.*

*Please welcome new Level Walkers Nancy Benco (Level 7); Joel Cohen (Levels 8 and 13); Steve, Karen and Megan Appleton (Level 8), Monica, Jason, Brandon and Joe Spilis (Level 18); and Dick Stoner (Level 33). Also please welcome returning Level Walkers Rod and Sara Putman on Levels*

**Level 1 Tidelock to Incline Plane John Barnett reports 21 August** Light visitation. Most trash was at the aqueduct and Tidelock as expected. Three through-bikers finished their ride from Pittsburgh at Tidelock and asked me to take their picture. The canal has water in it but looks like a mill pond. There is much hydrilla and trash sitting on the surface of the water. **John Barnett assisted by Judy Wyant report 9 September** Conditions around Key Bridge look pretty good. The Tidelock and Visitor Center areas continue to look particularly good due to the stewardship agreements with the boathouse and hotel folks. Now if we could just have some of those directional signs for Tidelock it would be VERY helpful. We ran into a party of three bikers at Tidelock. They were fresh in from Pittsburgh. **23 September** Many folks sitting on walls and on the ground just taking in the wonderful atmosphere. The hydrilla exists particularly from 34th St. west. Unfortunately, it prevents a lot of unsightly trash from flowing toward the end of the canal and out thru the locks. **30 September** Level looks good - especially Tidelock. Once again, Ms. Wyant has been a great help. Hope she sticks around for another 20 or 30 years. **27 October** Noted many runners, probably getting ready for the Marine Corps Marathon. A maintenance crew was opening Lock 4 to let water AND trash accumulated along the canal in the hydrilla run thru to Rock Creek or to try to catch some of it to bag. I understand they were draining accumulated water in the hold of *Georgetown* in order to ready it for dismantling.

**Level 2 Incline Plane to Lock 5 Jude and Mary Fran Franklin report 29 August** The towpath was pretty clean except for Chain Bridge area. New towpath surface noted between Lock 5 and Fletcher's Boathouse. **Rod Mackler reports 18 October** Many towpath ruts between Fletcher's and Chain Bridge were repaired. The section beyond Chain Bridge, in the direction of Lock 5 has been completely re-graveled. Some ruts and washouts remain. The construction on the odor abatement project seems to be winding down. **Susan VanHaften and Rod Mackler report 21 and 23 October** Susan made a very welcome return to the towpath! Conditions on the level were good with the recent towpath improvements.

**Level 3 Lock 5 to Cabin John Creek Marcus Boorstin reports 25 August** The water level was low and the water covered with algae. The "island" in the canal across from Sycamore Island has grown and is now several hundred feet long. **15 September** There was a race of some sort which turned around at mile 7.25 and continued downstream. I counted over 80 runners. There were many discarded water cups from water stations for the runners. **Caroline and Bill Triplett report 15 September** Towpath was very clean and clear of litter. There were many trees down by Sycamore

*Continued next page.*

Island Bridge and in the canal. Work to repair bridge from storm damage has started. A group had rented Lockhouse 6 and was enjoying a picnic there. **Marcus Boorstin reports 30 September** I spent a little time investigating the Sycamore Island bridge; the tree has been completely cleared, and a chain link fence has been erected blocking people from crossing it. **21 October** There are still fences blocking Sycamore Island bridge and people have torn person-sized holes in them. **27 October** Conditions were good on this pre-storm assessment walk. **Caroline and Bill Triplett report 27 October** We encountered a large group at Lock 6 from Maryland Kayak club. Many users out enjoying the good weather before the storm Level was relatively clean.

**Level 4 Cabin John Creek to Lock 14 Larry Heflin reports August through October** Towpath was monitored over numerous walks. Conditions were good and no issues were reported.

**Level 5 Lock 14 to Bridge at Cropley John N Maclean reports 13 September** Towpath was clean. The work on the breach above the bridge at Cropley is in an advanced stage. Workmen are spreading what looks like a thick layer of gravel on the bottom of the canal, which will be welcomed by fish as a clean spawning ground. Kudos to NPS; they could have left it mud. Below the bridge, stagnant water has nourished a mass algae bloom that has reduced aquatic habitat for fish, turtles and other critters. One hopes the high water this coming winter and spring flushes out the unhealthy buildup. **Jim and Jan Heins report 24 September** We removed a fair amount of trash; mostly cans and bottles. The canal is terribly grown up with weeds, small trees, fallen trees, etc. The Park Service is looking at what they might do to clear this before rewatering.

**Level 6 Bridge at Cropley to Great Falls Tavern Harry Bridges reports 11 September** No trash! The signs at Locks 15 and 16 are covered by weeds. Of all the bikers who passed me only one gave a warning. **John N Maclean reports 14 September** The towpath was in exceptionally trash-free condition. I looked without success for shadows of largemouth bass along the edge of Widewater: you usually can see a few. But a fisherman was landing—and losing—a nice largemouth, about a pound and a quarter, at the eastern end of Widewater as I passed by. The fisherman had the fish on the bank, but as it flopped around he stepped on his line, it parted, and so did the fish, which flopped its way back into the water.

**Level 7 Great Falls Tavern to Lock 21 Nancy Benco reports 26 September (with Marion MacDonald) and 27 September** Found light trash on the lower part of level. More trash was found on the upper part of the level and around Swain's parking area. Towpath was dry with early leaves falling.

**Level 8 Lock 21 to Lock 22 Jack and Karen Forster report 15 September** Level in good condition with light trash. Lockhouse at Swain's remains in poor condition. We saw our record number (97) of bikers on this walk. Two tent campers at Swain's campground. **Joe D'Amico and Amy Proft report 24 October** Relatively light use on an



Level Walkers Steve, Karen and Megan Appleton on Level 8

unseasonably warm day. This was our first walk since the derecho and we noted several areas with completed tree removals. **Steve, Karen and Megan Appleton report 27 October** The level looked good. Noted ongoing erosion near Locks 21 and 22. Recovered a deck chair from the canal.

**Level 9 Lock 22 to Seneca Aqueduct Patricia Vucich reports 3 September** Level was recently mowed. Moderate water with some movement; none in McKee-Besher's. Noted orange-painted tree roots on towpath north of Violette's. The water fountain at Violette's Lock was not working. **John McGraw reports 20 and 21 September** It was the cleanest I have ever seen this level. There are two rewards to this job. The first is enjoying a walk on an autumn day. The second is having people say "thanks." **Patricia Vucich reports 27 October** Conditions were good on this pre-storm walk. Many users out enjoying the day before the storm.

**Level 10 Seneca Aqueduct to Milepost 25 Carol Purcell reports 5 October** Seneca Creek Aqueduct is blocked and the huge pile of debris and trash is building again. The same two trees are lodged in the creek across the two pipes that span the torn-out section of the aqueduct. They have become the basis for another debris pile. The two remaining spans of the aqueduct are blocked by a huge sycamore tree that is lodged crosswise in the creek, blocking all egress to the Potomac River. Further up my level between Mileposts 24 and 25 there are areas where bikers have gone around puddles and eroded the edge of the towpath. **11 October follow-up** Cabin John Fire and Rescue team cleared some of the debris from the aqueduct using a boat and rescue equipment. They used the problem as a practice drill.

**Level 11 Milepost 25 to Sycamore Landing Pat Hopson reports 25 September** The towpath on Level 11 is in very good shape and very dry. I saw one couple bicycling from Pittsburgh and another duo headed to Pittsburgh.

**Level 12 Sycamore Landing to Edwards Ferry Pat Hopson reports 25 September** Level 12 is much bumpier than Level 11. Also, the towpath on Level 12 is often two dirt tracks, with a lot of green in the middle; and the vegetation from the sidelines is encroaching more and more. At Edwards Ferry, I encountered a pair of Italian-speaking women who seemed a bit unsure where they were, so I told them how to get back to the D.C. area.

**Level 13 and 14 Edwards Ferry to White's Ferry Bob Robinson reports 16 August** Pleasantly surprised that Edwards Ferry had relatively minimal trash, though a rim with tire was found. Rest of towpath almost completely trash free. The towpath between mile markers 31 and 32 has some ruts and depressions that are across the entire towpath and could use some repairs.

**Level 14 Harrison Island to White's Ferry Bill Holdsworth reports 30 July** It was a quiet day on the level. The towpath was clear and trash is not visible in the grown-in prism. **Bill and Chris Holdsworth report 16 September** We walked with our dog Myrna. This was our first weekend walk on this level. During weekdays we only see a handful of bikers. Today the level was crowded with users. Light trash was found; mostly granola bar wrappers. Towpath was clear, but there are still a lot of downed trees in the area.

**Level 15 White's Ferry to Woods Lock George Wyeth reports 19 August** Nothing remarkable except a fair number of downed trees, probably from the recent derecho. Downed trees were cut up and the towpath was open.

**Level 16 Woods Lock to Monocacy Aqueduct Mike Cianciosi reports 28 September** There is still a small logjam behind the Monocacy Aqueduct, only about 20 feet in diameter. It doesn't look any bigger than it was on my last level walk. I discovered a huge pile of trash in the aqueduct. This looked like trash that someone had fished out of the water or out of the woods, but left

in a pile. It consisted of mostly plastic bottles, but included lots of odd things such as a basketball, a tennis shoe, the head of a golf club, etc.

**Level 17 Monocacy Aqueduct to Nolands Ferry George Kennett and Mary Wheeler report 14 August** Quite a bit of trash was found at the aqueduct and Nolands Ferry. An older through-hiker complained that there weren't enough places to sit along the towpath. The towpath was in good shape. **Laura Gilliam reports 26 August** Towpath mowed and in good condition. Many downed trees and branches on sides of towpath probably from the derecho. Unusual trail marker clasped around tree leading to river between Mileposts 43 & 44 (black bra). **Marion Robertson reports 21 September** There was not much trash on the level. Numerous small sticks were down. Nice day to be out!

**Level 18 Nolands Ferry to Point of Rocks George Kennett and Mary Wheeler report 14 August** The level was clean. NPS had very recently cleared some downed trees. The "Flood History Pole" in the middle of the new parking lot at Point of Rocks is quite interesting. **Monica, Jason, Brandon and Joe Spilis report 16 September** Nice pre-fall day on the canal! Some trash at Nolands Ferry but otherwise it was in good condition. Numerous bikers passed through. **29 September** Quite a bit of trash at Point of Rocks, mostly alcoholic beverage related. It looked like several people were out boating. We met several friendly towpath users.

**Level 19 Point of Rocks to Catoctin Aqueduct Lynn Walker reports 23, 24, 25 August** The towpath was free of downed trees and branches and in good condition except some shallow puddles on the sides from Lock 29 to Culvert 79. The river was low, at the bottom of the yellow line on the Lander boat ramp. There was abandoned bedding and a large amount of bagged and unbagged trash at the Bald Eagle Hiker-Biker camp.

**Level 20 Catoctin Aqueduct to Lock 30 Doug Zveare reports 12 August** Very little trash found due to large amount of weeds and undergrowth. Towpath found to be in good condition but many muddy areas due to recent rain. No problems found around the Catoctin Aqueduct. There is an ongoing problem at mile 54.57 at Culvert 86. The earth on the downstream side of the outflow portal is still eroded all the way back to the towpath/roadway and appears to be advancing. The park service has placed a bright orange net type fence to warn hikers, cyclists, and autos away from the dangerous area. This fence is falling down and is now covered with some sort of vine making it no longer visible. If someone walks or drives too close to the edge by this culvert they could go over the side. **26 August** Retrieved very little trash due to the weather. Almost all towpath travelers were through riders with loaded panniers and handlebar bags. There were a few section cyclists and hikers. I tossed many limbs and branches that had fallen on towpath. Although I did not retrieve much litter I was able to assist quite a few "soaked to the bone" through riders with directions, Visitor Center location, restaurant locations, as well as other canal information.



Level Walker Doug Zveare at Culvert 82

**Levels 21 and 22 Lock 30 to Lock 33 Ed Rhodes reports 24 September** Towpath was in good shape. I used a pruner to cut back overhanging branches and briars. Several bikers stopped to talk about how good the tow-

path looked. Towpath was clean except Brunswick and Weverton parking areas.

**Level 22 Lock 31 to Lock 33 Karlen Keto reports 11 August** Good conditions on the towpath. I removed some minor branches but there were no major blow-downs. I took a break in Harpers Ferry to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. **14 September** Towpath was in good condition. Several people were standing around the area of the Harpers Ferry crossover. They may have been watching rock climbers climb Maryland Heights. Canal prism under the bridge at Sandy Hook held picnic trash.

**Level 23 Lock 33 to Dam 3 Karlen Keto reports 23 August** I walked with my dog Chessie. She really enjoyed her water breaks! Conditions are good on this level. Most trash was collected in the Harpers Ferry area.

**Level 24 Dam 3 to Dargan Bend John and Elin Haaga report 4 August** The towpath looked good. In several places we could see that the damage from July's big storms had been cleared. Most trash was by Dam 3. A bunch of guys from a bass fishing tournament were holding their weigh-in at Dargan Bend when we returned. **Karlen Keto reports 16 September** Towpath was in great shape. Numerous cyclists, but no large groups. Very little trash. Very friendly users were out on the towpath!

**Level 25 Dargan Bend to Lock 37 Craig and Sandi Roberts report 15 September** It was a beautiful day for being outside and doing just about anything. Others thought so too, as there were people biking, boating, fishing, jogging. There were a few who were hiking or biking the entire towpath so they were going to be out no matter the weather, and were definitely pleased they had that perfect kind of a day. We only found two items that looked as if they had fallen from a bike, a pedometer & cup holder. What a pleasure to walk the towpath and only see signs of nature. **Karlen Keto reports 17 September** The towpath is in good condition. The paths to the cave at mile 65.38 continue to erode and encroach onto the towpath. Culvert 97 is still in bad condition. Orange safety fence is up.

**Level 26 Lock 37 to Antietam Aqueduct Jack and Karen Forster report 29 September** Gravel pile in Mountain Lock parking lot greatly reduced and entire trail to Milepost 69 ten feet wide and no ruts showing. Mile markers appear to be newly painted and look very sharp. Three gravel-moving vehicles seen at different places along the trail.

**Level 27 Antietam Aqueduct to Lock 38 Steve Dean reports 4 August** Very little trash. It was early and the towpath was quiet, a couple of dog walkers and bikers. The Antietam camp ground was half full and just waking up. Culverts and aqueduct in good condition.

**Level 28 Lock 38 to Lock 39 Bill Warren reports 6 October** Towpath was in reasonably good condition, but several muddy spots remained from recent rains. More pea gravel is needed in Mile 73 low spots, especially as one gets closer to Lock 39.

**Level 29 Lock 39 to Snyders Landing Elliot and Helen Krafusur report 10 October** Towpath is in good condition. There is still too much vegetation to see much of the Potomac. **24 October** Towpath was clear and in good shape. The purpose of the walk was to inspect for invasive plants.

**Level 30 Snyders Landing to Lock 40 Margie Knott reports 20 October** No trash on the level. The towpath was in good shape. The grass was very tall. **Hilary Walsh, assisted by Heather Coxon and Fiona Coxon report 14 September** The level was unmowed but in good condition. We were able to retrieve a six gallon RV water container from the prism. We encountered a jolly group of about 20 cyclists, heading to Shepherdstown. There is now a sign at

the Antietam Guest House citing the birthplace of Captain Raleigh Bender, a C&O Canal boatman for 35 years. **Margie Knott reports 31 August** Grass has been mowed at Lock 40. Towpath muddy but in good shape.

**Level 31 Lock 40 to Marsh Run Culvert Bill Warren reports 14 October** Towpath was relatively clean. All the flood debris trash washed up in Horseshoe Bend remains in place, much of it visible from the towpath. This debris includes large items and would be a large scale clean-up.

**Level 32 Marsh Run Culvert to Dam 4 Woody Hurtt and Edda Brenneman report 16 September** Towpath in good condition. Someone cleaned their car out and left the trash in the Dam 4 parking area.

**Level 33 Dam 4 to McMahon's Mill Tom Aitken and Candee Schneider with Keegan Stark report 16 September** We walked on the original part of the towpath and back on the road that most towpath traffic uses. The original towpath is in good condition. The grass basically looks like an 8' wide swath of fairly well-manicured lawn running through the woods. It was recently mowed. We removed a few small snags and a hanging grapevine, but a larger downed tree we noticed on an earlier trip near the guard lock had been removed. The guard lock is in good shape, as is the road leading up to the Big Slackwater project. The new towpath section at Big Slackwater on this date was closed at both ends.

**Levels 33 and 34 Dam 4 to Opequon Junction HBO Nan Johnson reports 23 September** The Big Slackwater section was newly opened. Many people mentioned they had been monitoring the status of construction and were eagerly awaiting confirmation they could get out and ride/walk the new section. Towpath near wheel house at Dam 4 has 5-6" erosion ruts on steep hill.

**Level 34 McMahon's Mill to Opequon Junction HBO Tom Perry and Gary Naugle report 27 August** Amazingly clean. Is everyone avoiding this area? Some small limbs were down from storms the day before, which we removed. This is probably for the last time we will have to start at the detour near Mile 89 on bikes, as we are expecting Big Slackwater to reopen and we will have access from McMahon's Mill again.

**Level 35 Opequon Junction HBO to Lock 43 Stephen Williams reports 12 and 19 August** I cleared several small branches. The Lock 43 sign is in poor condition. I cleared quite a bit of trash at the Opequon Junction Hiker-Biker, and enjoyed listening to the falling water as I did it.

**Level 36 Lock 43 to Falling Waters Dick Ebersole reports 7 September** Quiet day on towpath. Very little trash noted. Two trees were down on the towpath after the recent storm. Lock 43 and the lockhouse appear to be in good condition, but mowing was needed in the area.

**Level 37 Falling Waters to Lock 44 Jim Tomlin reports 15 September** Excellent condition; all debris from summer storms has been removed. Level is clear, litter-free, and is in very good shape for walking and cycling.

**Level 38 Lock 44 to High Rock Quarry George Kennett and Mary Wheeler report 14 August** The freshly painted Cushwa Warehouse looks GREAT! NPS Maintenance personnel were mowing in the Cushwa Basin and aqueduct area. We encountered an environmental group that was riding from Pittsburgh to Washington to raise awareness and money for environmental causes. **Diane Summerhill reports 21 August** Pleasant day to walk. Very little trash on towpath. Fire pit and port-a-pot at Jordan Junction Hiker-Biker were messy. **Nick Russo reports 22 September** A substantial amount of litter was recovered, especially water bottles. There were also a lot of cigarette butts in the basin area. Biggest find was a clear plastic tarp. I ran into the same person twice while I was carrying this out. She confessed she thought I was a homeless person at first. **George Kennett and Mary Wheeler report**

**23 September** We spoke to a biker who was attempting his first thru ride. He left Cumberland on the 22nd and hoped to reach Georgetown on the 24th. We told him that he was in luck as the area at Big Slackwater had just opened. Most trash was at Lock 44 parking area including a large vodka bottle—it must have been some party! **27 October** Conditions on the level were good during this pre-storm assessment. We noted that one pair of shutters was missing from a second floor window at the Lock 44 house, leaving the window exposed to the elements. We reported this to the volunteer at the Cushwa Basin.

**Level 39 High Rock Quarry to Nettle RR Bridge Piers Stefanie Boss reports 17 October** Level in good condition. Three large puddles with bike ruts were noted between Miles 102 and 103.

**Level 45 Ernsville to Licking Creek Aqueduct George Kennett and Mary Wheeler report 19 August** Towpath was very clean but wet and muddy from recent rain. Graffiti on Cherry Run railroad trestle just east of MP 114 includes a swastika and needs to be painted over.

**Level 46 Licking Creek Aqueduct to Little Pool George Kennett and Mary Wheeler report 19 August** Level was rather overgrown. Towpath was very clean. A large hole in the towpath was noted near mile 119.5 and reported to NPS. A tree was down across one end of the aqueduct.

**Level 47 Little Pool to Hancock George Kennett and Mary Wheeler report 19 August** Several small branches were removed from the towpath. Grass was recently mowed around the Bowles House and locks. Only light trash was found. **Lisa Hendrick reports 13 September** I started my walk at the Little Pool end of the level. The level was in excellent condition, with a few small branches to move and a small amount of trash. I ran into two ladies who were exploring the level for the first time, and a marathon runner training on the towpath.

**Level 48 Hancock to Round Top Cement Mill Phillip Michael Clemans reports 15 September** Perfect hiking weather; towpath was LOADED with people. A lot of trash found; mostly beer, juice and energy drink containers. The towpath was wet but solid with few low spots and canal structures were in good shape. **Michael and Judi Bucci report 22 September** Towpath was clear and dry. Two 1-foot sinkholes still present at Culvert 183. Two sinkholes are still at Culvert 185—one is 5 feet across and the other is 4 feet across with parts 3 feet deep.

**Level 49 Round Top Cement Mill to Lock 53 Paul Petkus reports 23 September** The towpath is in good condition and well maintained. Occasional puddles were a reminder of recent rains. They were easily bypassed. Most areas have been mowed recently. Trash was light and a few fallen limbs were moved. The culvert and waste weir were in good condition.

**Level 50 Lock 53 to Dam 6 Steve Dean reports 11 October** The level was in good condition with branches to remove. The towpath was resurfaced in 2010 and is in good condition.

**Level 51 Dam 6 to Sideling Hill Aqueduct Bill Holdsworth reports 24 October** Towpath was a little bit muddy, but otherwise in good condition. Most bicycle traffic was on the Western Maryland Rail Trail.

**Level 52 Sideling Hill Aqueduct to Fifteen Mile Creek Aqueduct Tom Aitken and Candee Schneider report 19 August** The towpath was in good condition, but unmowed and very muddy from recent rains. A large amount of trash was found in the Fifteen Mile Creek campground fire pits. One tent was pitched at Indigo Neck, but nobody appeared to be spending the night at Fifteen Mile Creek Campground. We met a

couple at Indigo Neck who had taken a canoe and a large amount of gear downstream from the Fifteen Mile Creek boat ramp. They couldn't get back up river, and we helped them carry their boat and supplies back to camp.

**Level 53 15 Mile Creek Aqueduct to Lock 59 John Wheeler reports 31 May** Vegetation was seriously encroaching on the hiking/biking portion of the towpath. I cleared lots of limbs on towpath from the previous week's storm. **Tom and Marsha Dulz report 16 September** Towpath was clean and in good condition. Observed horseback riders, river users and bikers.

**Level 54 Lock 59 to Lock 60 Dennis Kubicki reports 5 October** The level was very clean except for some plastic sheets left at the Stickpile Hill camp. Recent rains have left many puddles on the towpath. The level was not mowed for some time, but the high grass did not present a potential hazard.

**Level 55 Lock 60 to Culvert 208 Paul Petkus reports 21 October** The towpath was clean and in good condition, with fewer branches than normal. The stream through Culvert 208 was completely dry. Bricks have fallen from inside of the culvert barrel.



Brick damage in Culvert 208

*Photo by Paul Petkus*

**Level 59 Tunnel Parking Area to Opposite Little Cacapon John Lefebure reports 23 August** Towpath was clean and mowed. Signage was in good condition. Very light use.

**Level 60 Opposite Little Cacapon to Town Creek Aqueduct John Lefebure reports 23 August** Grass around aqueduct and towpath was freshly mowed. Light towpath use. Only a few bikers were noted.

**Level 62 Lock 68 to Oldtown Jim Waite reports 6 May** The towpath is in average to good condition, but the surface on this level is much rougher than the surface on Level 63. The gravel is coarser, and there are some small potholes. The boards on the front porch of the Lock 68 house are partly rotted away. (Note: this report and the Level 63 report were inadvertently omitted from the September report)

**Level 63 Oldtown to Kelly's Road Culvert Jim Waite reports 6 May** The Lock 71 house gutters are gone or in ruinous condition. There is a rotted window sill on the first floor window on the canal end of the house. At the rear of the house there are rotted window sills and the house's sill plate is rotted. It is not known whether that could threaten the house's stability. The painting and clean-up from Canal Pride Days was evident.

**Jim Lyons reports 5 August** Pigman's Ferry Hiker-Biker campsite was very clean. Many ruts in towpath. Tires in canal at Mile 167.

**Level 64 Kelly's Road Culvert to Spring Gap Recreational Area Jim Lyons reports 5 August** Much rutting in towpath from bike tires. Spring Gap Camp was very busy and messy.

**Level 65 Spring Gap Recreational Area to Lock 74 Jim Lyons reports 30 September** Towpath was clear but very worn from bicycle traffic.

**At-Large Level Walker** Mark Stover level walks various parts of the canal throughout the entire year. He spends quite a bit of his free time out

there. Many Level Walkers and park visitors have run into him as he helps throughout the park. If you run into him make sure you thank him for his efforts!

### Level Walker Nature Sightings

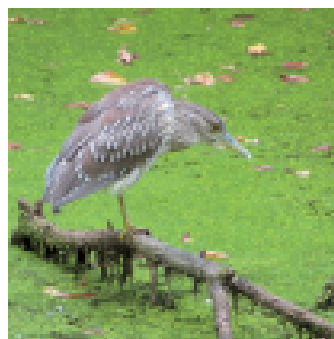
The heat of summer has progressed to the color of autumn. Autumn is a wonderful time to be on the C&O Canal. The autumn colors delighted many walkers. Colorful sycamore and maples were frequently mentioned. Walkers also admired (from afar) the bright colors that poison ivy leaves become in autumn. Another welcome late summer and early fall delight is the arrival of paw paws. Many Level Walkers commented on both the abundance and great taste of this year's fruit.



Eastern comma butterfly and *coprinus comatus* mushroom by fence at Monocacy. *Photos by Marion Robertson*

Butterflies are out during some of the warmer autumn days, and Marion Robertson and Laura Gilliam sighted an eastern comma butterfly on Level 17 above the Monocacy. They also noted some interesting mushrooms near the Monocacy parking lot.

Caroline and Bill Triplett noted an immature black crown night heron



Young black crown night heron  
*Copyright © 2012 Robert Vorthman*

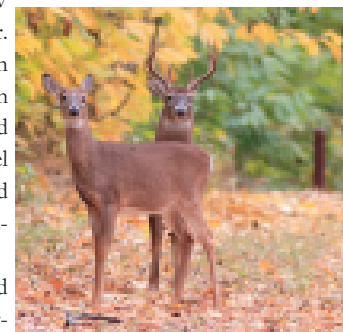


Above: fountain grass growing along towpath on level 2  
*Photo by Rod Mackler*

near Sycamore Island that their friend Robert Vorthman photographed. Colorful grasses often grow along the towpath in late summer. Rod Mackler and Susan Van Haften noted colorful grass on the towpath near Fletcher's. Elliot Krafur noted a thriving ailanthus colony on Level 29. Ailanthus set seed fast and spread rapidly and pose a threat to the canal.

Deer are in rut and many antlered deer are out on the towpath. Squir-

Below: 8 pt. and 2 pt. bucks  
*Photo by Steve Dean*



# The C&O Canal in the Civil War

## Did Canal Boats Serve as Water Ambulances during the Civil War? by Timothy R. Snyder

During a panel discussion at the September 10, 2011, Cumberland Transportation Forum, an attendee asked the panel if the C&O Canal was used to evacuate wounded soldiers after the major battles of the Civil War, such as Antietam, Gettysburg or Monocacy. The short answer is no. During each of the major Confederate invasions of the north, the southerners cut the canal and damaged locks, culverts and/or aqueducts, which put the canal out of commission for weeks. To a limited extent, however, the Union army did utilize the canal to transport sick and wounded soldiers to hospitals, although in most instances it was an experience to be avoided if possible. Most of the documented examples of its use for this purpose are from the first two years of the war, although it is likely that other occurrences took place as well.

The Union defeat at the October 21, 1861, Battle of Balls Bluff did not affect the canal; as a result, the Union army utilized the waterway to transport the wounded. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., son of the renowned poet and a future U.S. Supreme Court justice, was perhaps the most famous wounded soldier to be evacuated by canal boat. Hit several times while aiding a fallen officer, Holmes was initially taken to a field hospital on Harrison's Island, then was ferried to the Maryland shore. As Holmes later wrote, he was "put in the hold of a canal boat and the hatches or scuttle or whatever you call it [came] tumbling in and nearly all but smashing me & one or two others into sudden death." Holmes was taken to Edwards Ferry and transferred to a two-wheeled ambulance "which were then in vogue as one form of torture," he wrote. Later he was among those who were transported to hospitals in Washington via canal boat.<sup>1</sup>

The account of Alonzo H. Quint, chaplain of the Second Massachusetts Infantry, helps illustrate why canal boats were such poor means of moving sick and wounded soldiers. In early December 1861, while on duty near Darnestown, Quint's regiment was preparing to move, with the rest of General Banks' division, to a new encampment near Frederick. The regiment received orders to send its sick and wounded, along with others from the division, to the canal for transportation to Point of Rocks, where the men would be transferred to the B&O Railroad, bound for hospitals at Frederick. In total, over 100 men were transported to the canal to wait in the bitterly cold air for the overdue boat to arrive. Quint wrote: "The boat came, but entirely insufficient. Its floor was still wet, for the water had but just been pumped out. There could be no fire, and there was no shelter; and these men were to go down the canal in that cold night. Straw had been promised, but no straw came." Furthermore, not all of the men could be accommodated that night. Some remained behind, cared for by attendants, to await another boat the next day.<sup>2</sup>

When Confederate General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson threatened Hancock, Md., in early January 1862, it was initially defended by only two green Union regiments. Other troops were sent to help defend the canal town. Brig. Gen. Alpheus S. Williams arrived on January 8, followed by a full brigade, swelling the town's defenses to 6,000 men. Jackson soon moved on, however, and the town was inundated with

soldiers who needed lodging and care. In late March the sick and wounded — mostly sick, because there was little fighting — were taken by canal boat to Hagerstown. A hospital steward wrote that the men "were conveyed in four wheeled ambulances and Government wagons to the Canal in the night over the roughest road ever trod by human being, and placed in a filthy Coal Boat, in which they were conveyed to Williamsport, where wagons were again put into service in conveying them to this hospitable town [Hagerstown]. The hardships and sufferings of that journey will ever be present in the minds of all those afflicted by disease. . . . Seven have died from the effects of the terrible journey from Hancock and the fearful ravages of that army dreaded disease: the Typhoid Fever."<sup>3</sup>

As a means of moving sick and wounded soldiers to hospitals, generally the canal was ill-suited for the task. The canal provided very limited packet service — an excursion line from Georgetown to Harpers Ferry — and, accordingly almost all boats were coal barges. The holds of the barges were dark, damp, unheated and filthy with coal dust. Placing wounded on the decks of barges presented another set of problems: limited space, risk of falling overboard, and exposure to the elements, such as rain, excessive sun and extreme hot and cold temperatures. Additionally, because of its location on Maryland's southern border, the canal was exposed to Confederate raids and picket fire as well. The regulated speed of canal boats—only four to five miles per hour due to erosion caused by a boat's wake—made boats even more vulnerable. The B&O and other railroads handled extensive passenger business and were more easily converted into carriers of the sick and wounded. Portions of the B&O, and most other rail lines, were usually more secure from Confederate raids as well. Although boats on the C&O Canal did indeed provide this service during the war, it was on a limited scale, and, as the above examples illustrate, was an experience to be dreaded by those afflicted with wounds or disease.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., *Touches With Fire: Civil War Letters and Diary of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., 1861-1864*, edited by Mark De Wolfe Howe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946), 29, 32.

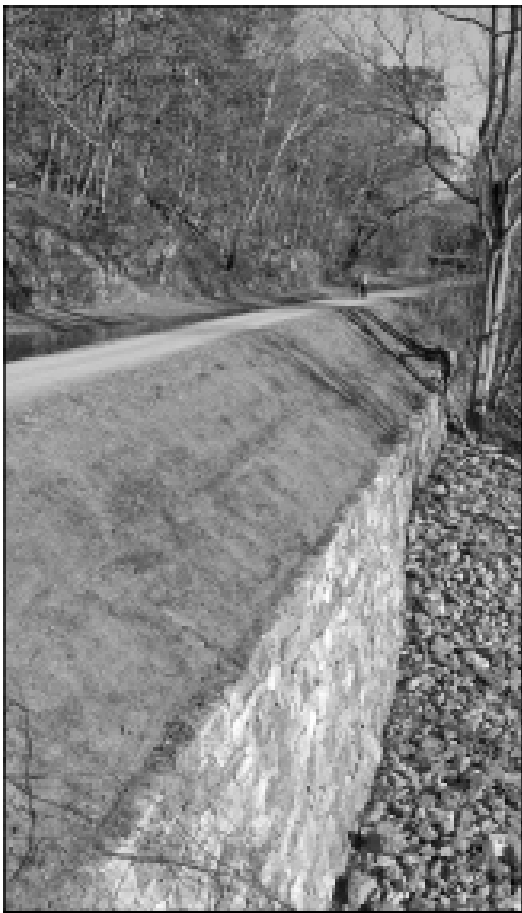
<sup>2</sup> Alonzo H. Quint, *The Potomac and the Rapidan*, (Boston: Crosby and Nichols, 1864), 62–65.

<sup>3</sup> *Hagerstown Herald of Freedom and Torch Light*, April 9, 1862 (<http://www.whilbr.org/itemdetail.aspx?idEntry=7773>)

### Corrections to the September 2012 issue:

In Albert J. Schmidt's article on waterways of the German north, pages 8-9, the photographs should be credited to Emilio Pabon.

In Dave Johnson's article on the Battle of Shepherdstown Ford, p. 18, the date given in the first line for the Union army's crossing of the Potomac should be June 27, 1863.



*Repair of the breach included reconstruction of a massive stone wall. Photo: Ned Preston*

## Anglers Breach Repair Completed

More than four years after a major breach in a popular stretch of the C&O Canal towpath known as Anglers, repair work has been completed and the towpath reopened for travel.

Kevin Brandt, superintendent of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, speaking at a ribbon-cutting ceremony Nov. 17 held at the site, said water will be flowing through the affected stretch of the canal within a few weeks, as soon as relatively minor repairs are completed on downstream locks and culverts. The breach has drained most of the water from seven miles of canal below Great Falls.

On September 5, 2008, Bike Patrol volunteers reported a sinkhole, caused by long-term erosion, on the steep embankment at Anglers on the Potomac River side of the canal. One day later, on September 6, Tropical Storm Hannah struck with torrential rains causing large-scale runoff and flooding; the embankment ruptured, opening a 125-foot breach in the canal wall. The National Park Service built a bypass for the towpath, but it was closed for nearly a year during the construction period.

Superintendent Brandt said the C&O Canal Trust made an early donation of \$100,000 for geotechnical evaluations, surveying, and design work. He said the donation was essential to start preliminary work and secure public funding. With much community support, the repair project was fully funded in September 2011. Maryland's Transportation Enhancement Program earmarked \$1.1 million and the National Park Service Line Item Construction Program provided \$2.2 million.

Dan Copenhagen, Park engineer, said the repair work is designed to provide a long-term solution to withstand even severe disruptions. Construction workers used reinforced concrete and stone to rebuild the canal wall at the breach point. They also installed 69,454 square feet of PVC liner in the canal, stretching from just above the crossover bridge at Cropley to the first turn in the towpath below Widewater. Two feet of clay and gravel were spread on top of the liner.

In addition, workers built a spillway under the towpath just above the bridge at Cropley and put several feet of loose fill on top: if the canal floods, the fill will wash out and the water will spill into the Potomac. In all, workers poured 1,007 cubic feet of concrete. Construction was completed in 335 days, 31 days ahead of schedule.

— John N. Maclean, Level 5 and 6 Walker

## Race/Walk Honors Ranger Anderson

On September 8, a five kilometer race/walk on the towpath near Antietam memorialized Margaret Anderson, a former C&O Canal NHP ranger who lost her life in the line of duty in Mt. Ranier National Park early this year.

At right, Lisa Hendrick is shown displaying one of the event's T-shirts in a photo by her brother Gene. They were among the C&OCA members who joined in or assisted the competition, which drew an enthusiastic crowd despite very warm weather. With 212 registered participants, the event raised more that \$5,000 to benefit Ranger Anderson's two young daughters.



## Nature Notes by Marjorie Richman

### The Colors of Winter

Gray skies, white snow or bare ground, brown tree bark, early darkness: these are the perceived colors of winter by the majority of people. But there are others who think differently: the early risers and those who are willing to stand outside in the cold at twilight. These clever people have found that the colors at sunrise and sunset are more intense in winter than in other seasons of the year. This small set of nature lovers knows that winter sunrise and sunset is a great time to take pictures or just enjoy the scenery. The contrast of a colorful sky and a less colorful landscape makes a wonderful impression on the senses, but is there really a difference? Are the colors of sunrise and sunset particularly vivid in winter? The answer is yes, and there is a scientific explanation for this phenomenon.



*Sunrise over the Potomac near Weverton. Photo by Steve Dean*

First of all, why is the sky blue and why does its color change at sunset and sunrise? The reason has to do with the wavelength of the colors and a phenomenon called “scattering.” Molecules and small particles in the atmosphere change the direction of light rays, causing them to scatter. Blue light has a short wavelength, and therefore is more easily scattered by air molecules such as nitrogen and oxygen. Longer wavelength colors – reds and oranges – are not scattered as much by air molecules. The wavelength of the light and the size of particles the wavelength must pass through determine the colors we see.

During sunrise and sunset, light from the sun must pass through more of our atmosphere before reaching our eyes, so it comes into contact with even more molecules in the air. As a result, much of the blue light gets scattered away, making the reds and oranges more pronounced. The shorter wavelengths (blue, violet and green) are scattered more strongly than the longer wavelengths (red and orange). Furthermore, since in winter the sun is low on the horizon, sunlight passes through more air at sunset and sunrise than during the day. More atmosphere means more molecules to scatter the violet and blue light. If the path is long enough, all of the blue and violet light scatters out of sight, leaving the other colors to continue the way to our eyes.

Now that we know there really is a difference, these next few months are the time to walk along the towpath and view the Potomac River before dawn and later, before darkness closes in. But you must time it right. You can keep track of the changing times of sunrise and sunset on the web at <http://www.sunrisesunset.com>.

### Fall Bird Walk by Kurt Schwarz

On the Nature Committee’s October 6 bird walk at Point of Rocks, we enjoyed pleasant temperatures and occasional bits of sunshine through the mostly cloudy sky. Soon after starting, we encountered a mixed-species flock, mostly chickadees and titmice, but with a few migrant warblers. Though they were high up, we were able to pick out one northern parula, one chestnut-sided warbler, two blackpoll warblers, and one black-throated green warbler.



On the return leg, we found a migrant Swainson’s thrush, but only two of us were able to locate it deep in the foliage. The total number of bird species seen was 24, which was disappointing for



*Along the Towpath, December 2012*

prime migration time, but I was delighted to add three new species to my list for Frederick County.

Besides birds, there were interesting wildflowers and arthropods. Virtually at the start of the walk we located a marbled orbweaver, a vividly-colored spider (see photo). Before we turned back, we also saw a woolly bear with a very broad red central band — just the ends of the caterpillar were black. What does THAT portend? After

the group broke up, I strolled down to the river and was surprised to find an American rubyspot damselfly, a species I had not seen in over a decade.

The spring bird walk is set for Sunday, April 21, 2013, at Riley's Lock. Our targets will be: prothonotary warblers; Louisiana and northern waterthrushes; and other warbler species.

## Fall Tree Walk by Carol Ivory

The fall tree walk took place on October 27, a spectacular day colored with shades of yellow and orange with splashes of red. The walkers took the same route as for the two earlier tree hikes — starting at Great Falls Tavern, up the Gold Mine Loop Trail to the Lock 19 Loop, with a side trip to the top of the Overlook Trail.



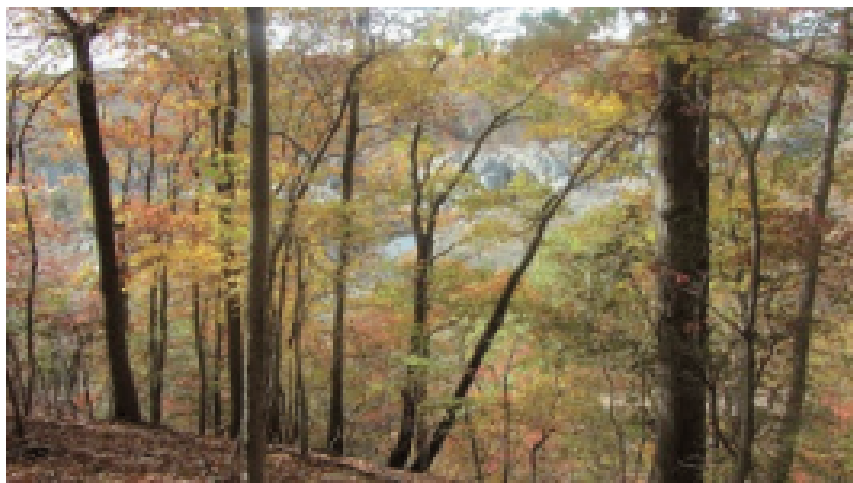
*Musclemore*

Then, we went back to the towpath and onto the River Trail that hugs the Potomac until it rejoins the towpath, and back to the Tavern.

This less than four-mile walk covers upland forests of tulip, beech and oak trees, with understory trees such as musclemore, sassafras and American holly. The flood plain along the river trail is populated with box elder, sycamore, river birch, silver maple, hackberry and pawpaw. These trees can tolerate flooding and the resulting low levels of oxygen to their roots.

The upland trees like to keep their "feet dry." This whole area is very rich in diversity and each walk revealed new delights and interesting insights into just how amazing trees are.

Three tree walks are planned for next year. The first walk, on March 23, will start at Violette's Lock. Plan to join us.



*Above: Oaks, sassafras and a sprinkling of red maples in the forest of the Overlook Trail. Below: A sycamore grows out over the river. Photos by Frank Wodarczyk.*



*The tree walk participants admired new, more legible trail sign posts, 17 of which were installed this fall in the Great Falls area by our VIP volunteers, supported by NPS' Nate Finney. More posts will follow. Seen working near Locks 18 and 19 are (l. to r.) Tom and Linda Lightfoot, and Jim Heins. Meanwhile, Craig Roberts and Phil Travers worked near the Gold Mine on the project. Photo by Rod Mackler.*



# Calendar of Events - 2013

Jan. 1, Tues., New Year's Day Hike, meet 10:30 a.m., front of Cumberland Vis. Ctr. Contact Mary Huebner, [marybrd22@gmail.com](mailto:marybrd22@gmail.com) or 301-876-7545.

Jan. 16, Wed., Canal Towns Partnership meeting, 10 a.m. to noon, location TBD. For info on these meetings, set for the third Wed. of each month, contact Dward Moore at [dwardmoore@comcast.net](mailto:dwardmoore@comcast.net) or 301-834-6007.

Jan. 27, Sun., Continuing Hike Series, 10:30 a.m., McKee-Beshers Wildlife Mgmt. Area and C&O Canal. River Rd. past Seneca to left turn at Hughes Rd., use first parking lot on right. Wear waterproof footwear. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or [hikemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:hikemaster@candocanal.org)).

Feb. 3, Sun., Board Meeting, 1 p.m., at Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St.

Feb. 23, Sat., Continuing Hike Series: 10:30 a.m., Search for Ft. Duncan. Take Sandy Hook Rd. past Locks 33 & 34, left turn at church onto Pleasantville Rd., park at gate; involves walking on unmaintained forest road. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or [hikemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:hikemaster@candocanal.org)).

Mar. 2, Sat., Annual Meeting, 2 p.m., and banquet, 5:30 p.m., at Williamsport American Legion. See article on page 2 and reservation form inserted in this newsletter.

Mar. 23, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on tree identification at Violette's Lock. Contact: Carol Ivory at [carolivory@verizon.net](mailto:carolivory@verizon.net) or 703-869-1538.

Mar. 24, Sun., Continuing Hike Series, 10:30 a.m. Spring Gap (mile 173.37) downstream. Approximately 9 miles east of Cumberland off MD Route 51. Contact Pat White ([hikemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:hikemaster@candocanal.org) or 301-977-5628)

Apr. 6, Sat., Potomac Watershed Cleanup, 9 a.m. to noon. C&OCA will be responsible for sites at Carderock, Anglers, Great Falls, Swain's, Pennyfield, Violette's, Riley's and Edwards Ferry. To sign up, visit the [Ferguson Foundation website](http://fergusonfoundation.org): <http://fergusonfoundation.org>.

Apr. 7, Sun., Board Mtg., 1 p.m., Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.

Apr. 20, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on wildflowers. Meet at 10 a.m. at the Carderock Recreation Area. Park in the third parking lot on the left. Wear sturdy shoes. Bring lunch and wildflower books of your choice. Contact Marion Robertson ([marobertson@verizon.net](mailto:marobertson@verizon.net) or 301-657-8992).

Apr. 21, Sun., Nature Walk focusing on birds led by Kurt Schwarz of the Md. Ornithological Society, Riley's Lock, 8 a.m. to about 11 a.m. Contact Marion Robertson ([marobertson@verizon.net](mailto:marobertson@verizon.net) or 301-657-8992).

Apr. 27, Sat., Annual Douglas Memorial Hike and Dinner, featuring Big Slackwater area, with hikes of varying lengths offered. Details to be in March newsletter. Contact Marjorie Richman at [programs@candocanal.org](mailto:programs@candocanal.org)

May 18-19, Sat.-Sun., Two one-day paddle trips on the Monocacy: Frederick to Lily Pons (Sat.), Lily Pons to Potomac (Sun). Reservations required. Contact Barbara Sheridan ([canoemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:canoemaster@candocanal.org) or 301-752-5436)

May 25, Sat., Continuing Hike Series: 10:30 a.m. Billy Goat Trails B&C. First parking lot on the right at Carderock. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or [hikemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:hikemaster@candocanal.org))

June 1, Sat., Presidents' Day Breakfast at 9 a.m. at Bill's Place in Little Orleans, Md., celebrating C&OCA presidents and enjoying fellowship, with optional hike to follow. Contact: Barbara Sheridan (301-752-5436 or [programs@candocanal.org](mailto:programs@candocanal.org)). Some members enjoy camping the night before at Little Orleans Campground (301-478-2325).

June 2, Sun. Board Meeting, 1 p.m., at Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St.

June 8, Sat. Nature Walk focusing on tree identification at Violette's Lock, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.. Bring water, a snack. Binoculars & your tree ID book optional. Contact Carol Ivory at [carolivory@verizon.net](mailto:carolivory@verizon.net) or c: 703-869-1538.

June 15, Sat., Paddle trip, Violette's Lock (Lock 23) to Great Falls. Reservations required. Contact Bill Burton ([canoemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:canoemaster@candocanal.org) or 703-801-0963).

June 22, Sat., Nature Walk on towpath to view dragonflies, about 4 mi. total between Oldtown and Lock 68, meeting at 10 a.m. Contact Steve Dean: [level-walker@candocanal.org](mailto:level-walker@candocanal.org) or 301-904-9068

June 29, Sat., Heritage Montgomery Tour, Seneca Aqueduct and Lock 24. Interpretative talks by Karen Gray. Contact: Ron Howard ([ronhoward@comcast.net](mailto:ronhoward@comcast.net)). Part of county's Heritage Days Celebration.

July 20, Sat., Paddle trip, Brunswick to Monocacy. Reservations required. Contact Bill Burton at [canoemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:canoemaster@candocanal.org) or 703-801-0963.

Aug. 3, Sat., Paddle trip, Old Patowmack Canal, Va. Reservations required. Contact Bill Burton at [canoemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:canoemaster@candocanal.org) or 703-801-0963.

Aug. 4, Sun., Board Meeting, 1 p.m., at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.

Aug. 23-25, Fri.-Sun., Paddle trip in Paw Paw Bends area. Reservations required. Contact Barbara Sheridan at [canoemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:canoemaster@candocanal.org) or 301-752-5436.

Aug. 24-25, Sat.-Sun., Williamsport C&O Canal Days, events in various areas of town. Contact: Tom Perry, 301-223-7010.

Sept. 16-19, Mon.-Thu., World Canals Conference, Toulouse, France. For more information see [www.worldcanalsconference.org](http://www.worldcanalsconference.org)

Sept. 28, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on wildflowers at McMahon's Mill, 10 a.m. Carol Purcell to lead the group downstream. Contact Marion Robertson (301-657-8992 or [marobertson@verizon.net](mailto:marobertson@verizon.net)).

Sept. 29, Sun., Continuing Hike Series: 10:30 a.m., Synders Landing (mile 76.65). In Sharpsburg, turn north on N. Mechanic Street, west/left on Synders Landing Rd., follow to end. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or [hikemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:hikemaster@candocanal.org)).

Oct. 6, Sun., Board Meeting, 1 p.m., at Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St.

Oct. 9-14, Wed.-Mon., Through bike ride, Cumberland to Georgetown. No sag wagon. Reservations required. Contact: Pat Hopson, 703-379-1795.

Oct. 26, Sat., Annual Heritage Hike. Evening dinner and program to follow. Details will be in September newsletter. Contact Marjorie Richman at [programs@candocanal.org](mailto:programs@candocanal.org).

Nov. 2, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on tree identification walk at Violette's Lock. Contact: Carol Ivory at [carolivory@verizon.net](mailto:carolivory@verizon.net) or 703-869-1538.

Nov. 2, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on birds, location TBD. Kurt Schwarz of the Md. Ornithological Society will lead the walk. Contact Marion Robertson (301-657-8992 or [marobertson@verizon.net](mailto:marobertson@verizon.net)).

Nov. 24, Sun., Continuing Hike Series: 10:30 a.m., Cohill Station (mile 130.7) upstream. Route 144 west from Hancock, left on Willow Rd., pass through RR culvert, park where road turns right along canal. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or [hikemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:hikemaster@candocanal.org)).

Dec. 1, Sun., Board Meeting, 1 p.m., at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.

Dec. 8, Sun., Frostbite Hike: 10:30 a.m., meet at Half Street entrance to the Navy Yard-Ballpark Metro station, hike 5.7 miles from the Anacostia River to Georgetown Visitor Center following path of the former Washington City Canal. Contact Bill Holdsworth ([website@candocanal.org](mailto:website@candocanal.org) or 301-762-9376).

Liability 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).

## 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	Daniel Copenhaver, Acting
Chief of Interpretation, Education & Partnerships	301-714-2238	John Noel
Partnerships Coordinator	301-714-2218	Daniel Filer
Chief of Preservation & Project Management	301-714-2239	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, mile 42.19 (Monocacy River) to mile 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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**Acting Editor:** Ned Preston

**Associate Editors:** Steve Dean, Dave Johnson, Don Juran, Nancy Long, Marjorie Richman and Helen Shaw



## C&O CANAL ASSOCIATION

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

C&OCA maintains a home page at <http://www.candocanal.org>. The webmaster is (webmaster@candocanal.org). C&OCA also maintains a telephone number for information and inquiries: 301-983-0825.

### 2012 Association Officers

**President:** Rachel Stewart, 5914 N. Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22205-2910, 703-237-4727, rachelstewa@gmail.com.

**First Vice President:** Barbara Sheridan, 11550 Farm Dr., La Plata, MD 20646-4402, 301-752-5436, bsheridan411@gmail.com.

**Second Vice President & Level Walker Chairman:** Steve Dean, P.O. Box 132, Saint Leonard, MD 20685, 410-586-0329, deansm@comcast.net.

**Secretary:** Susan Van Haften, 944 N. Potomac St., Arlington, VA 22205, 703-536-1737, susan.vanhaften@gmail.com.

**Treasurer:** William Bauman, 1086 Adams Rd., Winchester, VA 22603-1909, 540-888-1425, wdbaumana@visuallink.com.

**Information Officer:** John Wheeler, 4304 Yuma St. NW, Washington DC 20016-2028, 202-362-6009, compostman.wheeler@gmail.com.

**Board of Directors:** (terms expire in 2015): Nancy Long, Pat Hopson, Bill Holdsworth, Alan Shane; (terms expire in 2014): Chris Cerniglia, Skip Magee, Dan Mick, Marjorie Richman, Francis "Champ" Zumbun; (terms expire in 2013): David M. Johnson, Tom Perry, Craig Roberts, Marion Robertson, Rod Mackler. Pat White will fill a vacancy by serving until the 2013 Annual Meeting.

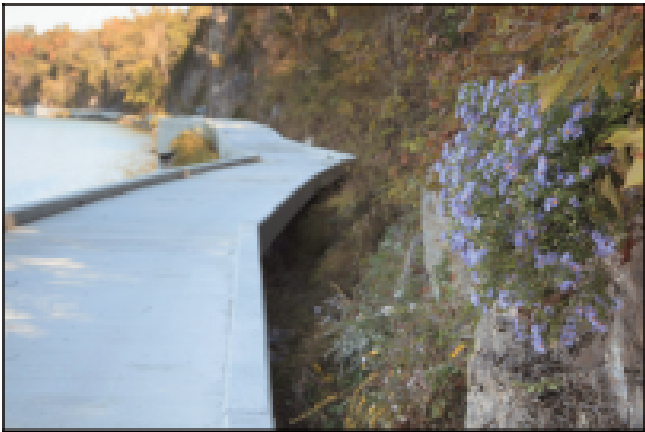
**Committees** (contact at C&OCA address/tel. no. above): Archives, Molly Schuchat; Auditing, John Wheeler; By-laws, Dave Johnson; Editorial Review, Ned Preston (acting); Festivals, Rita Bauman; Finance, William Bauman; Forum, Karen Gray; Legal Advisory, Helen Shaw; Level Walkers, Steve Dean; Membership, Barbara Sheridan; Nature, Marion Robertson; Nominating, John Anderson; Programs, Marjorie Richman; Sales, Bill Hibbard; Special Projects, vacant; Volunteers in the Park (VIP), Jim Heins; Youth, Val Wheeler.

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*Big Slackwater reopened! See page 1.*

**AS WE MOVE TOWARD A NEW YEAR**

two inserts between the pages of this newsletter  
deserve special attention:

- A **membership renewal form** — your passport to the continued exciting activities and to maintaining your support of the C&O Canal Association and its work to help enhance and safeguard the canal park.
- A **dinner reservation form for our Annual Meeting** on March 2. See page 2 for information on this important event, always a good time to renew friendships and to make new ones as we set the Association's course for the coming year.



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