

# ALONG THE TOWPATH

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

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

**VOLUME XLVII**

**March 2015**

**Number 1**

## **Douglas Memorial Hike and Dinner**

**By Chris Cerniglia**

The Association's annual Douglas Memorial Hike and Dinner is set for Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, in the Brunswick to Point of Rocks area. Hikers may choose from three hike options, each ending in Point of Rocks near the historic train station designed by E. Francis Baldwin. The dinner will take place at the Beallsville Fire Department, which has proven to be a popular venue for past events.

Hikers will park at the commuter train parking lot at Point of Rocks, and board the shuttle bus there. The first shuttle bus will depart at 10:00 a.m. and go to two hike starting points. The first is at Weverton, Lock 31, for a hike of just over 10 miles back to Point of Rocks. The second stop will be at Brunswick, for an approximately seven-mile walk. Both of these hikes will pass the restored Catoctin Aqueduct, as well as Locks 28 (Point of Rocks) and 29 (Landers).

(Continued on p. 2)

## **Canal Park User Fee Proposed Increase**

**By Rod Mackler**

The C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP) is proposing to increase fees for the three areas where it currently charges fees: Great Falls, the Carderock pavilion, and for drive-in camping. In addition, the common admission fee for Great Falls in Virginia and in Maryland would be eliminated.

This revised proposal is scaled back from an earlier proposal, which would have imposed fees for hiker-biker campgrounds and, most controversially, initiated an admission fee for anyone entering the park at any point. The first proposal was floated in a press release on January 5, 2015. Superintendent Kevin Brandt hosted six public meetings – in Brunswick, Hagerstown, Cumberland, Bethesda, Hancock, and Shepherdstown – to discuss the proposal and solicit public comments.

Some, including the C&O Canal Association, were generally supportive of the proposed increases. Others, however, were adamantly opposed to entrance fees at points other than Great Falls, as Superintendent Brandt noted at the meeting in Bethesda. The opposition was particularly strong in western areas. The Hancock town council unanimously passed a resolution strongly opposing entrance fees. Congressman John Delaney wrote a letter to Jon Jervis, Director of the National Park Service, and to Superintendent Brandt requesting that park-wide fees not be imposed.

The proposed \$20 per night camping fee at hiker-biker sites was dropped in January, and the park-wide entrance fee was eliminated in a revised proposal released by the park on February 6. A proposed parking fee at Fletcher's Cove is on hold. Fees would be waived for school groups – the Association funds buses for such groups. Another concern for Association members – fees for volunteers – was also addressed,

(Continued on p. 2)



*The hikers will depart from Point of Rocks, site of the famous train station designed by E. Francis Baldwin. Photo by Steve Dean*

The second shuttle bus will depart at 11:00 a.m. and will drop hikers off in Landers at Lock 29. The hikers will have a walk of just under three miles back to Point of Rocks. This route will not go past the Catoctin Aqueduct. Hikers can visit the aqueduct by proceeding up the towpath just over a half mile and then turning back around to head to Point of Rocks, making the total walk four miles.

The MARC parking area is easily located at 4000 Clay Street (MD 28) in Point of Rocks, Md. Point of Rocks can be accessed from numerous exits from I-270 that lead to MD 28, or from the Frederick, Md. area or Leesburg, Va. area via US 15. Hikers will sign a waiver before boarding the bus. The bus fee is \$5 if paid in advance, and \$7 if paid on boarding. Please bring exact change. Food is not provided, so bring a bag lunch and drink.

Diners can meet at the Beallsville Fire Department at 4:30 p.m. for happy hour. Dinner is 5:30 p.m. and an evening program will follow. The Fire Department is located at 19801 Beallsville Rd. (MD 109), just north of the junction with MD 28. Dinner is \$22 and includes happy hour.

The reservation form for the bus fare and happy hour/dinner is enclosed in this issue. Forms must be received by Wednesday, April 15. After this date, no additions can be accepted. Any updates will be posted on the C&OCA website at <http://www.candocanal.org>. Contact Chris Cerniglia at [programs@candocanal.org](mailto:programs@candocanal.org) for any questions.



Lock 29 features an upper extension. Photo by Steve Dean



Catoctin Aqueduct. Photo by Steve Dean

with assurances that volunteers would not be charged to perform their work. There is no charge for boat launches at park ramps.

The proposal to increase fees in the C&O Canal NHP is part of a broader effort to increase and standardize fees charged by elements of the National Park system. In a memo last September, the NPS Director Jervis authorized superintendents to begin drafting proposals for increased fees and to solicit public feedback. Parks that charge fees were grouped into categories. The aim is for all parks in the same category to have comparable fee structures. Antietam National Battlefield has proposed increased entrance and camping fees, for instance, and the George Washington Memorial Parkway is considering a fee increase at Great Falls, Virginia, and a new charge at Fort Marcy.

None of the proposed increases will take place before May 1, 2015, and likely much later, perhaps summer 2016.

The C&O Canal NHP has suffered cutbacks in federal funding which led to staff reduction to the point where it can no longer provide a level of services necessary to maintain structures, ensure safety, and provide a desirable quality of service to park patrons. One wonders, however, whether the revised fee proposal will provide sufficient revenue to maintain, much less improve, “the visitor experience.”

#### Proposed User Fee Increases (as of February 6, 2015)

Fee	Current	Proposed
Park Annual Pass (Great Falls Only)	\$20	\$30
Per Vehicle Pass (Great Falls Only)	\$5 per vehicle valid for 3 days	\$15 per vehicle valid for 7 days
Per Person Pass (Great Falls Only)	\$3 per person valid for 3 days	\$7 per person valid for 7 days
Motorcycle Pass (Great Falls Only)	\$5 per motorcycle valid for 3 days	\$10 per motorcycle valid for 7 days
Drive-In Camp-ground – Single	\$10 per night	\$20 per night
Drive-In Camp-ground – Group	\$20 per night	\$40 per night
Hiker-Biker Camping	No charge	No charge
Carderock Pavilion Mon - Thu	\$150 per day	\$250 per day
Carderock Pavilion Fri - Sun, holidays	\$250 per day	\$350 per day
Entrance fees are not charged to persons under 16 years of age or to holders of America the Beautiful Annual Passes, Senior Passes, Access Passes, Volunteer Passes, or Military Passes.		



## President's Report

It is unfortunate that so many people who love our national park are not willing to help fund the maintenance necessary. The board supported the original proposal with some reservations about the hiker/biker campsite fees. Now, we support the revised proposal hoping that the increase in fees will be implemented. With the increase in visitors and continuing decrease in federal funding, it is critical that the park find funds wherever it can. With tens of millions of dollars worth of deferred maintenance, the park desperately needs additional funds. We pledge to continue our support through volunteers and what funding we can provide for special projects. I hope Association members will continue to volunteer, for without volunteers I hate to think how bad our park would be.

I am pleased that we could honor Martin Gallery for his thirty-six years of distinguished service at the C&O Canal National Historical Park as the longest-serving law enforcement ranger! He truly deserved the award for all that he did for our park.

I have served as the Association's representative to the Canal Towns Partnership for several years and have decided it is time for someone else to represent us. I hope that one of you who love the canal and the numerous Canal Towns will step up. The monthly meetings are held in one of the Canal Towns on a rotating basis, the third Wednesday of the month from 10 a.m. till noon. If you are interested, please get in touch with me at [dwardmoore@comcast.net](mailto:dwardmoore@comcast.net).

It has been a pleasure serving as the Association president for this past year. We are truly blessed to have one of the most fantastic National Parks in the United States (I'm biased, of course)! The Association has been a strong supporter of the Park over the years and you can be proud of the work of the Board of Directors, all of whom are dedicated to the preservation of the park. If you are approached to serve on the board you should give it serious consideration as the ideas of new directors and officers are greatly appreciated.

— Dward Moore

## C&OCA Presidents' Day Festivities

Our tradition of celebrating the Association presidents and enjoying general fellowship will take place again at Bill's Place in Little Orleans on June 6th. A reservation form is enclosed in this issue. Breakfast will be served at 9:00 a.m., with a hike to follow. The cost is \$10 per person. Forms must be received by Wednesday, May 27. After this date, no additions can be accepted.

At noon you can join an optional tour of historic Woodmont Lodge. Organized in 1870 as a premiere hunting club, Woodmont Rod and Gun Club was in continuous operation for almost 125 years. The surviving lodge building dates to 1930. The massive three-story fieldstone structure features large beams, wood paneling and floors, and huge stone fireplaces.

Over the years, the club hosted many famous visitors including Presidents James Garfield, Chester Arthur, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, Herbert Hoover, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The original Douglas hike group stayed there in 1954. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources acquired the property in 1995. A ranger will lead our tour, which should last about 90 minutes. The cost is \$4 per person, and should be included on the reservation form.

Woodmont Lodge is a 7½-mile drive from Bill's Place. Take High Germany Road north for 1.3 mile. Turn right onto Zeigler Road and follow it as it becomes Pearre Road. Continue past the Western Maryland Rail Trail Pearre parking lot. Turn left onto Woodmont Road. In about one mile, the entrance to Woodmont Lodge will be on your right.

Some members enjoy camping the night before at Little Orleans Campground, which is near Bill's. You can make reservations by calling the campground at (301) 478-2325. The campground has a bathhouse and showers. Come and join us!

— Chris Cerniglia

## *Thanks to our outgoing president -*

Dward Moore has served two separate terms as C&O Canal Association president. His willingness to serve his second term during a year of transition after the sudden loss of President Rachel Stewart is greatly appreciated. We thank him for his service and leadership, and wish him well in his future endeavors.

# Park Ranger Martin Gallery Retires

Martin Gallery, a park ranger whose thirty-six year career on the C&O Canal may be a record for longevity of a park ranger at one park, retired in January at the age of seventy. The C&O Canal Association recognized his long tenure on the towpath by presenting him with the William O. Douglas Award at the annual meeting on March 7.

A Vietnam veteran who came home with four Purple Hearts and an injury that required years of rehabilitation, Mr. Gallery joined the National Park Service in 1978 as a ranger at the still relatively new C&O Canal National Historical Park. Completing federal law enforcement training, he was commissioned as a law enforcement ranger. Over the years, his patrol beat has covered nearly all of the park, from Great Falls to Cumberland. His duties included arresting poachers and vandals, quelling campground disturbances, river rescues and, inevitably, recoveries. He even worked at least one homicide case. His primary mission, though, was to assist and ensure the safety of law-abiding visitors.

He was district ranger of the old Allegany District from 1987 to 1993. When the Allegany and Piedmont districts were consolidated in 1993, he became supervisor of interpretation and visitor services in the new Western Maryland District. A desk job, however, couldn't overcome the call of the towpath, and in 2001 he returned to law enforcement. In the final decade of his career, he was accompanied by Samson, his big black Labrador, who became as well-known a fixture on the towpath as Martin himself.

Martin has been a friend of many members of the Association over the last three and one-half decades, and we wish him a long and prosperous retirement. We thank him for his service, as a soldier and a park ranger.

– Dave Johnson



*Ranger Martin Gallery with C&O Canal National Historical Park K-9 Samson - Photo courtesy of the NPS, C&O Canal NHP*

## Looking for Exercise? Join the Volunteers in Parks

In 2015, there are plans for: more wayside installations; helping with the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup on April 11; continuing working on the metal railings at Great Falls; repairing and painting picnic tables; helping to improve one of the boat ramps upstream; further garlic mustard removal at Carderock; and possibly more bench installations. Other projects may come up as we work our way through the summer and fall. We also hope to get busy with work on clearing the outlets to some of the culverts.

The call for help will go out to all on the VIP email list as dates are set. If you are not on that prestigious list and wish to be, please contact me at [vip@candocanal.org](mailto:vip@candocanal.org). If you can help with the annual Potomac River watershed cleanup on April 11, please sign up through our website's calendar, which lists the VIP email address.

Skip Magee and I want to personally thank all of you who have been a part of this past year's VIP program. You are the ones who make this program so successful, and we look forward to seeing you out there with us again this year.

– Jim Heins, VIP Coordinator

## National Park Service Staff Changes

Brad Clawson, chief ranger of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, retired in January. His career as a law enforcement commissioned park ranger encompassed 35 years. Brad especially enjoyed those days when he got paid to patrol the park by hiking, biking, horseback riding, and boating. Recently, while Brad was on bike patrol on the C&O Canal towpath, a visitor made the comment, "You must have the greatest job in the world," and his response was, "Yes, today it is." Congratulations to Ed Wenschhof, who has been selected to succeed Brad as Chief Ranger.



*Ranger Brad Clawson. Photo courtesy of the NPS, C&O Canal NHP*

In addition to Brad, Ron Bricker, Western District Maintenance supervisor retired in January. Ron was responsible for some of the most remote areas of the park and was known to level walkers and western Maryland park users for his dedication to the park and fast responses to towpath issues. Ron had 38 years of service, and all of that was on the C&O Canal. Ron is looking forward to pursuing his love of farming.

– Steve Dean, from NPS releases



# Fletchers Cove Fishing Access

The C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP) hosted a public meeting on December 17, 2014 regarding Fletcher's Cove river access. The meeting was held at the NPS National Capital Region Headquarters in southwest Washington.

Fletchers Cove has been a popular river fishing destination in the District, but sedimentation is threatening recreational and subsistence fishing at the Fletcher's Boathouse. The dock is at or below the water level and is closed for safety reasons.

C&O Canal NHP Superintendent Kevin Brandt and Chief of Maintenance Greg Kniesler hosted. Over 60 people attended, almost all fishermen. There was also a representative from the NPS regional office and, late in the meeting, the head of Fish & Wildlife for the District of Columbia.

Kevin and Greg gave a PowerPoint presentation showing the overview of Fletcher's Cove. There was discussion of the complicated hydrology of the cove – the flow of the river, an eddy that created (and kept open) the cove itself, and the tides. Kevin said that, in the 1960s, the District dumped fill just upstream of the cove that apparently disrupted the scour-

ing effect of the eddy and allows the cove to silt up. It has already been dredged at least once, in 1996.

The meeting then focused on short-term and longer-term solutions to the problem – that the dock cannot be used for fishermen to access the river. In the short term, Kevin said he could find the resources to fix the ramp to the existing dock by March 1, 2015, the start of the next fishing season. This will probably be a fix to last through spring 2016. For a longer-term solution – move the dock, dredge the cove, even remove the fill above the cove. Kevin will initiate discussion with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a study of the more complex questions. The study, not to mention the longer-term fix, will require much more money.

The mood of the meeting was one of gratitude – for the NPS and for Kevin personally – for reaching out to the fishing community and for arriving at an interim solution.

One interesting side note: the District official noted that 60 percent of the fishing licenses sold in the District are sold at Fletchers.

– Rod Mackler



*Fletchers Cove before the dock repairs.*



*Fletchers Cove after the dock repairs. Photos by Rod Mackler.*

## ON THE BOOKSHELF

### ***The C&O Canal Companion: A Journey through Potomac History***

**By Mike High**

Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015, 280 pp.

It is not an overstatement to say that this new edition of Mike High's *C&O Canal Companion* inaugurates a new era in up-to-date, state of the art resources for the C&O Canal student and towpath user. Available in both paperback and Kindle versions, it corrects the erroneous material that plagued the standard popular sources upon which generations of canal lovers relied in the past.

A new subtitle: *A Journey through Potomac History*, speaks to the expanded historical sketch section and to the invaluable trail guide. With mile-by-mile easy-to-find identification of structures and points of interest, the guide contains even more history and relevant information than in the first edition. The book ends with a section on the canal engineering and industry that truly makes the work the most important general source on the canal available today.

– Karen Gray

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## C&O Canal Association 2015 Annual Meeting

The 2015 C&O Canal Association annual meeting was held in Williamsport, Md., on March 7, 2014. President Edward Moore opened the meeting. He reported on the Association's accomplishments over the past year, including restoration of *The Cumberland*, continued support at the Swains Lock area, selection of the Association to support the park's Paleo Protectors project, and continued support of the Washington County Public Schools by furnishing bus transportation for student visits to the park. He also stressed the importance of the Association's participation in the Park Partners meetings between the park and other friends groups, and in the Canal Towns monthly meetings. He advised that he will need to end his support of the Canal Towns meetings in the near future and asked that any interested persons contact him. Finally, he presented the William O. Douglas Award to retired ranger Martin Gallery.

Richard Radhe provided a Treasurer's report on the financial status of the Association's funds; adequate funds remain available to allow continued support of the park. Susan VanHaften reported that the archive committee completed assessment of the archives left by Carl Linden. Dave Johnson chaired a discussion of a proposed bylaw amendment to reduce the number of Association director positions (refer to the December *Along the Towpath*). The proposed bylaw change was not incorporated because it failed to achieve the required two-thirds majority vote in favor. Steve Dean provided reports for the editorial committee, the Handbook 142 project, and the level walker program. Rod Mackler discussed the environmental committee activity. The committee continues to track the Georgetown boathouse issue and numerous other issues. Rita Bauman reported on the planned festival activity in 2015; she is considering stepping down and would welcome anyone interested in assuming the festival chair position. She also reported that the park would reopen the Hancock visitor center if enough volunteers were available.

Barbara Sheridan reported that membership was consistent with 2014, and introduced William Stewart as the new membership chair. Marion Robertson urged members to participate in nature walks in 2015. Pat White summarized information officer activity for 2014 and Bill Holdsworth summarized the web site activity. Jill Craig provided an account of store sales for 2014 and is looking for ways to increase sales of existing stock. Jim Heins provided an update of Volunteer-In-Park activity planned for 2015 and urged participation in the Garlic Mustard Challenge.

Kevin Brandt, superintendent of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, warmly thanked the Association for the volunteer support provided in 2014, including Swains Lock, *The Cumberland*, culvert crawlers, and Handbook 142. He stressed that with the constantly dwindling park budget, volunteers and financial support are increasingly significant to keep the park operating and maintain a quality experience for visitors. As reported in the article by Rod Mackler on page 1 of this issue of the newsletter, public opinion was mixed on the proposed park fee increase, and the fee program was reduced. The funds from these fees would have helped offset some of the maintenance and operation shortfalls that are frequently complained about by visitors. The C&O Canal Park Advisory Commission continues to proceed towards reestablishment. The notification for nominations will be released in the near future, and the process to select the 19 members will be initiated.

The list of candidates for officers and directors that was published in December was presented to the assembled group of members for vote. The members unanimously elected the candidates. The 2015 officers, board and committee chairs are listed on p. 23.

— Steve Dean



*Outgoing president Edward Moore transfers the gavel to newly elected president Barbara Sheridan. Photo by Steve Dean*

# Georgetown Boathouse Zone Environmental Assessment in Scoping Phase

At an open house on February 4, the National Park Service introduced preliminary proposals during the scoping phase of an Environmental Assessment process on implementing a non-motorized boathouse zone in Georgetown. NPS offered three development alternatives aimed at addressing the demand for more boating access in the zone, which extends from the end of the Georgetown Waterfront Park at 34<sup>th</sup> Street NW to a line a quarter-mile upriver from Key Bridge, within the C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP).

All three options call for multiple boathouses and a storage facility to be built in the urbanized section of the zone that lies downriver from the canal park, an area that includes both private property and NPS-owned land. The proposals' effects on the C&O Canal NHP are illustrated on this page in details from NPS maps, which are available in full on the NPS project website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=54903>).

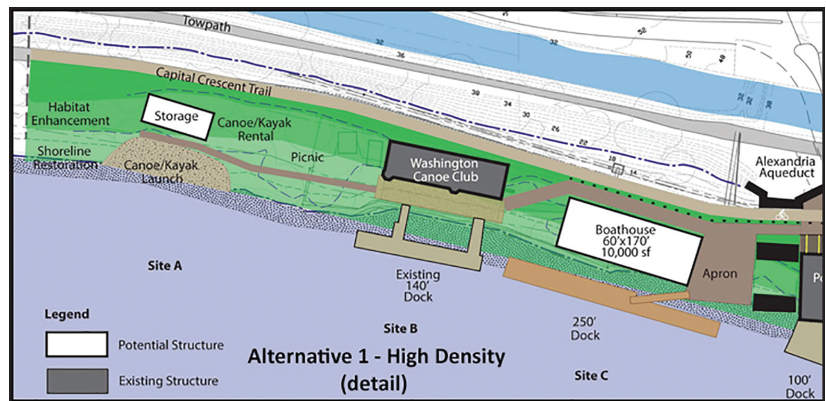
The High Density Alternative calls for development within the canal park of a 10,000 square foot boathouse, furnished with a 250 foot dock and a large apron abutting the historic Alexandria Aqueduct Bridge. The option includes possible "land exchanges or long-term leases to allow universities to develop facilities." This provision raises the possibility of a revived plan for a private university boathouse within the C&O Canal NHP, a concept that met strong public opposition in 2006. In a new version, a large private boathouse might be placed at Site C, near the canal park's entrance, instead of the upriver Site A that was previously targeted.

The Medium and Low Density Alternatives involve much less intrusion on the C&O Canal NHP, and would provide improvements such as habitat enhancement, shoreline restoration, canoe/kayak launching, and a finger pier. However, the Medium Density Alternative's plan for a storage facility and a drop-off area for boats might crowd the canal park's narrow access point. It also includes a second canoe/kayak launching area upriver at Site A, which seems less desirable than the nature trail that the Low Density Alternative would place there.

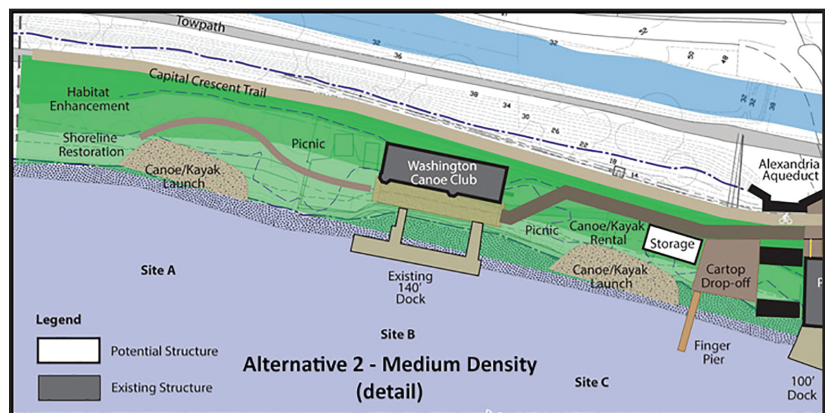
NPS accepted public comments on the preliminary proposals until March 6. Writing on behalf of C&OCA, president Dward Moore stated preference for the Low Density Alternative and opposed the High Density option's disregard of the historic, scenic, and environmental qualities of the C&O Canal NHP. He pointed out that it is possible to accommodate the desire for greater boating access in Georgetown without harming the canal park's unique values.

The public will have its final opportunity for input on the Environmental Assessment when a draft is published, which is tentatively scheduled for this summer. C&OCA members are encouraged to submit their individual comments at that time.

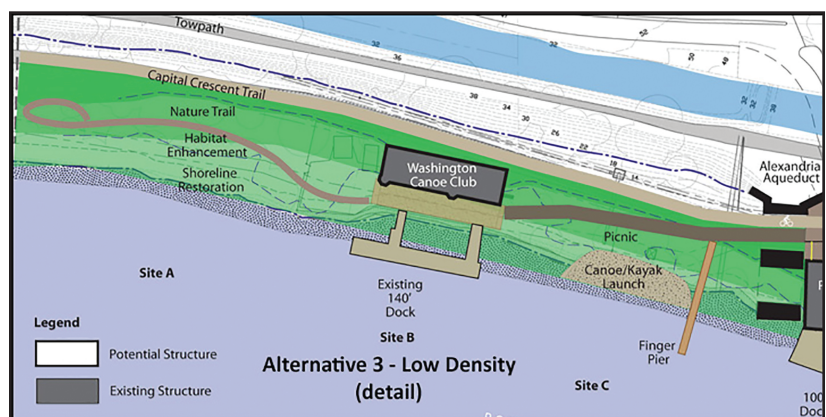
– Ned Preston



*The High Density Alternative is the most intrusive option. Maps courtesy of the National Park Service*



*The Medium Density Alternative is less intrusive, but includes a storage area and drop-off point that would impede the access area.*



*The Low Density Alternative is the least intrusive development option.*



## C&OCA Welcomes New Members

*Andrew & Valerie Bernat, Arlington, Va.*  
*John Bielagus, Amherst, N.H.*  
*Todd Bolton & Judy Hoffman Bolton, Smithsburg, Md.*  
*Nicholas & Catharina Braden, Potomac, Md.*  
*Catherine Bragaw & Len Schlaak, Ranson, W.Va.*  
*Vallie Compher, Hedgesville, W.Va.*  
*Ed Conner, Fork Union, Va.*  
*Gayle & Cindy Conner, Martinsburg, W.Va.*  
*Charles S. Connolly, Martinsburg, W.Va.*  
*Ashley Donovan, Hamilton, Va.*  
*Barbara Elliott, Harpers Ferry, W.Va.*  
*John & Mary Ferguson, Lovettsville, Va.*  
*Brandon Fisher, Cumberland, Md.*  
*Eric Froeblich, Severn, Md.*  
*William Ginivan, Alexandria, Va.*  
*Lawrence Grylack, Vienna, Va.*  
*Lindsey Holaday, Washington, D.C.*  
*Ronald Horowitz, Palm Coast, Fla.*  
*Ric Jackson, Potomac, Md.*  
*Carolina Kenrick, Washington, D.C.*  
*Roger & Nancy Kief, Martinsburg, W.Va.*  
*Vinh Le-Si, Arlington, Va.*  
*Allen F. Lindner, Vallejo, Calif.*  
*Gillian Lindt, Washington, D.C.*  
*David R. Long, Keyser, W.Va.*  
*Mark McDevitt & Courtney Pauley, Lovettsville, Va.*  
*Tom Myers, Westminster, Md.*  
*Martie & Jack Nebb, Potomac, Md.*  
*James & Ann Nelson, Bethesda, Md.*  
*Amy Pratt, Herndon, Va.*  
*David Britton Quick, Washington, D.C.*  
*Mickie Simpson, Glen Echo, Md.*  
*Michael Springer, Bethesda, Md.*  
*Jennifer Stoker, Potomac, Md.*  
*Jonathan Young, Pittsburgh, Pa.*

### *A Word of Thanks*

Barbara Sheridan has been the Association's Membership Chair for 15 years. That's quite an impressive tenure for any volunteer job, let alone one of the busiest jobs in our organization. She has decided to step down, after processing an impressive amount of new members and renewals. Her tireless efforts to maintain the membership levels over those years is of great benefit to the continued success of the Association, and greatly appreciated. Thanks, Barb!

## Annual Fall Through-Bike-Ride

Our traditional C&OCA fall bike ride is scheduled for October 7-12. We start riding in Cumberland and finish five days later in Georgetown, traversing the 184.5 miles of the towpath.

Our group has traditionally included a few hardy campers, but we are now almost all motel softies (aka "muffins"), aided by trained patrol sweeps and guided by leader Pat Hopson and assistant leader Tom Perry. There is no sag wagon on this trip. We eat most meals in restaurants, with a few carryout sack lunches. Occasionally campers choose to prepare their own meals.

Each of us is responsible for getting him/herself to the start of the ride. At the end of the ride, a shuttle back to Cumberland is provided, for an additional fee. Or, if not going back to Cumberland, those who leave at Georgetown need to arrange their transportation home.



*Through-bikers during a rest stop near mile 169 on day one of the 2014 ride. Photo by Pat Hopson*

Since we ride only 25 to 39 miles a day, our pace is fairly leisurely, with time for stops at points of interest. However, it is important that each rider is prepared for the ride and able to carry his or her gear along on the bike. Upon signing up for the ride each rider will receive suggestions for proper preparation.

The ride is limited to 22 riders, and there are currently several vacancies. There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$25, which should be sent to: Patricia Hopson, 5133 Woodmire Lane, Alexandria, VA 22311. When you send your check to Pat, please indicate whether you plan to camp or stay in motels, and include your home address, home and cell phone numbers, and e-mail address.

For additional information about the ride contact Pat at [phopson727@verizon.net](mailto:phopson727@verizon.net) or Tom at 301-223-7010.

– Pat Hopson

## Accompanied by the Past *by Karen Gray*

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

### C&O Canal Boats and Navigation: 1851–1870

Even before the opening of the last 50 miles of the C&O Canal's 184.5 miles, the demand for boats designed specifically and solely for the canal rather than river navigation had developed—although it is not clear what the early boats looked like or who was building them. Only when boat builders began to appear in Cumberland do we begin to have a record (although far from complete) of builders and their products. Thanks to William Bauman's transcription of canal company boat registers, mortgages, and newspaper articles, many of those records are now available in digital files and some are on [candocanal.org](http://candocanal.org).

For any canal, the limiting size of a boat is the "usable lockage" space within the smallest lock through which the boat must pass. For the C&O Canal with its 15 ft. lock width, that meant a maximum 14.5 ft. width for the boats (although many boats were more narrow). However, the tendency of the lock walls to slump inwards could create major problems for the widest boats, necessitating that some of the facing stone on badly slumping locks be shaved off to restore the 15 ft. width.<sup>1</sup> This was done so often to the towpath wall on Lock 31 at Weverton, that the thin masonry wall was replaced by a concrete wall during the receivership era.

Determining the maximum possible length of C&O Canal boats is a vexing problem. The original specifications for locks called for only 90 ft. between the upper sides of the sills, although later specifications lengthened this to 100 ft.<sup>2</sup> It is a critical fact that any boat passing through these locks must fit between the point of the closed downstream gate and the hypotenuse of the miter sill of the upstream gate (or the breast wall for the lower 25 locks that had their upstream gate on top of the breast wall).

The problem becomes most clear with Lock 36 that Davies reported had only 89 ft. 11 in. of usable lockage, and Lock 13 that Hahn described as having only 90 ft. 3 inches clear for boats.<sup>3</sup> As Hahn states: "Locks 5 thru 23, excluding those with drop gates, vary from 90 ft. 3 in. to 93 ft. 4¼ in."<sup>4</sup>

It must be emphasized that it is not credible that boats would fill the entire usable lockage space. The movement of a boat in the turbulence during the operation of the lock would have thrown it back and forth against the gates unless the snubbing rope was tight enough to prevent any such movement as the boat rose or fell in the lock. However a snubbing rope kept so tight could easily break as the heavy boats (especially those with significant cargo) responded to the flow of water into or out of the lock. Reason suggests that some slack in the snubbing process would have been necessary to prevent extreme pressure on the rope even though such slack would allow a boat to move back and forth in the lock. To prevent this movement from causing boats to hit proximate gates, boats must have been shorter than the usable lockage of the shortest locks – or in other words at least under 89 and more likely 88 or even 87 ft.

The difficulty results from the fact that the C&O Canal Company boat registers and other primary documents record boats that

were 92 ft. long.<sup>5</sup> Such boats would not fit in the shorter locks as Hahn casually mentions in his discussion of the shortness of the lower locks. This critical discrepancy means that the usually stated boat length of 92 ft. presents the canal interpreter or historian with a major conundrum.<sup>6</sup>

Whatever the maximum length of the canal boats was, at the time of the October 10, 1850 opening of the last fifty miles of canal, four coal carriers began their journey down the canal with a total of 411 tons of coal among them. A fifth departed for Williamsport with 80 tons. Two of the four boats headed for Georgetown drew 3½ ft. while the remaining two drew 4 ft. and got stuck above Dam 6 due to the low water levels in the newly opened section.

At the same time ten empty and two loaded boats departed from Georgetown and Alexandria respectively (the latter would have used the Alexandria canal bridge to cross the Potomac).<sup>7</sup> Nothing is known of the size and design of these boats, but the ones headed upstream from the Federal District must have been built somewhere other than Cumberland. Were they newly built boats intended for canal use only or boats still designed for canal and river navigation?

Effective April 1, 1851, the C&O Canal Company released new rules and regulations for boats on the canal. These divided boats into seven categories that indicate the great diversity of boats and the continued presence of river boats (note Class E and F in particular):

Class A – "Decked boats of substantial build, carrying one hundred tons and upwards"

Length (minimum of 76 ft. 9 in.; maximum of 92 ft. [?]); width (minimum of 14 ft.; maximum of 14 ft., 6 in.); draft when empty (minimum of 10 in.; maximum of 14 in.); draft when loaded (minimum of 4 ft.; maximum of 6 ft.).

Class B – "Boats of similar construction, carrying less than one hundred tons"

Length (minimum of 70 ft.; maximum of 90 ft.); width (minimum of 11 ft., 9 in.; maximum of 14 ft., 7 in.); draft when empty (minimum of 10 in.; maximum of 18 in.); draft when loaded (minimum of 3 ft.; maximum of 4 ft., 6 in.).

Class C – "Boats not decked, of substantial build, carrying one hundred tons and up-wards"

Length (minimum of 86 ft.; maximum of 92 ft.); width (minimum of 13 ft., 6 in.; maximum of 14 ft., 7 in.); draft when empty (minimum of 8 in.; maximum of 18 in.); draft when loaded (minimum of 4 ft.; maximum of 6 ft.).

Class D – "Boats of similar construction, carrying less than one hundred tons"

Length (minimum of 66 ft., 7 in.; maximum of 90 ft.); width (minimum of 10 ft., 8 in.; maximum of 14 ft., 6 in.); draft when empty (minimum of 6 in.; maximum of 4 ft., 2 in.).

Class E – "Long boats and scows, decked or not decked, of substantial build"

Length (minimum of 58 ft., 10 in.; maximum of 85 ft., 4 in.); width (minimum of 13 ft., 4 in.; maximum of 14 ft., 6 in.); draft when empty (minimum of 10 in.; maximum of 12 in.); draft when loaded (minimum of 2 ft., 9 in.; maximum of 4 ft., 6 in.).



Class F – “Gondolas and other floats designed for temporary use”

Length (minimum of 71 ft., 4 in.; maximum of 85 ft.); width (minimum of 9 ft., 1 inch; maximum of 14 ft., 6 in.); draft when empty (minimum of 1½ in.; maximum of 6 in.); draft when loaded (minimum of 10 in.; maximum of 3 ft., 6 in.).

Packets – “Boats used chiefly for the transportation of passengers”<sup>8</sup>

Reflecting the concern that the boats would damage the gates and walls, the regulations specified that new boats have a curved bow and that no “boats or floats” have iron on the bow, stern, or sides. Additionally, boats were required to have something between the keel or stern post and the rudder to prevent a towrope from entering the opening between the two (as might happen when a boat passed over the submerged towrope of another boat.).<sup>9</sup>

Additionally, the requirements for boats included that they have:

- A knife or sharp instrument affixed at the bow that would cut any towrope passing over it.
- Two snubbing lines. (It’s unclear whether this requirement was because boats were being snubbed on two posts, or a precaution in case a snubbing line broke.)
- Lights at the front when traveling at night, or at both ends when tied up at night.
- The name, hailing place, class, and registration number (gondolas exempted); and draft markings at the bow, stern, and midship that would indicate how heavily it was loaded (packet boats exempted).<sup>10</sup>

By the end of the 1852 boating season, Unrau reports that:<sup>11</sup>

[T]he number of boats navigating the canal was 205 of which about 140 were engaged in the coal trade. The majority of these boats were “new and built expressly for coal transportation”. They were generally capable of transporting upwards of 100 tons, and when the level of the water in the canal would permit, the average tonnage of the boats would increase to more than 120.

By 1855 there were 323 boats registered, of which 220 had coal-carrying capacities of 110 to 125 tons. For the boating season of 1857, 100 new boats were constructed. Clearly boats were rapidly being built that were close in size and design to what would become the standard C&O coal freighter so familiar to us from late-era photographs.<sup>12</sup> It is unlikely, however, that they were exactly the same.

Unrau further tells us that “in the spirit of expansion, the board purchased a number of boats from the recently-enlarged Erie Canal during the winter of 1857–58 to engage in the Cumberland coal trade.”<sup>13</sup> This report suggests the boat builders on the C&O could not keep up with the demand. How the Erie boats may have differed from those being built on the C&O is unknown. To reach the C&O, the Erie boats almost certainly would have been towed down the Hudson to New York, then down the coast to the mouth of the Chesapeake, and up the bay and Potomac to the Georgetown tidelock. As the canal company charter did not allow it to operate boats commercially on the canal (its income was primarily in tolls), they must have sold the Erie boats to individuals or companies wishing to engage in canal trade.

The number and configuration of cabins on the C&O Canal boats during this 1851–1870 era may not have matched the ones seen in the photographs from the late 19th or early 20th century. Illustrations of the boats on the enlarged Erie (constructed 1835–1862) show cabins with a lower profile at the bow (for tow animals) and the stern (for crew), and no midship cabin in contrast to the later C&O boats.<sup>14</sup>

A rare glimpse of boat operations in this era is provided by the anonymous account of an 1859 trip down the C&O Canal on a coal carrier by a young New Englander who had been visiting in the Cumberland area.<sup>15</sup> This source asserts that there were “some three or four hundred boats on the canal” at that time, and that:

A hundred or more of these boats were bought from the Erie Canal when that was enlarged, by the canal companies [note the plural] who now own nearly all the boats—the boatmen furnishing teams and outfit, receiving so much a ton for hauling the coal, paying their own expenses and the toll on the empty boat back to Cumberland. The cost of a new boat was from twelve to fifteen hundred dollars.<sup>16</sup>

In this document we are told that there were two kinds of boats on the canal. One was described by the author as of “very primitive shape” – a rectangular barge capable of carrying very large loads but very slow due to its flat ends. The author notes that “there were very few of these boats left and those that were painted at all were covered with a coat of coal tar [doubtless to limit leaks].”<sup>17</sup>

The other class of boats, according to the author, “had their ends molded and formed the same as a ship, making as fine lines as was consistent with the load they were to carry and the slow speed they sailed.” All the new boats were said to have been built in Cumberland “where they had a miniature ship yard employing the various mechanics as ship carpenter, smiths, painter, and caulkers to be found in large shipyards.”<sup>18</sup>

These “new” boats are described as having a center cargo section with “movable hatches making a watertight covering” and a “narrow walk around the edge.” At either end were cabins, the upper part of which extended about 3 ft. above the deck. The front cabin was used as a stable and the rear as “a stateroom with berths and cooking galley.” Interestingly, “the cabin was not so wide as the boat above the deck, leaving foot-ways on each side.” Behind it “was the tiller deck from which the cabin stairs went down, and under [the tiller deck] a kind of cockpit, about four feet high” where crew could sleep. This latter area was described as the “hottest and least ventilated part of the boat.”<sup>19</sup>

The stairs down into the cabin of the later boats (for which we have considerably more information), entered the cabin from the starboard side, not the rear tiller deck. Those cabins too used the unventilated area under the tiller deck for storage and/or sleeping, but according to oral history accounts, that space was entered directly from the crew cabin. In the last decades of the canal when many boats were operated by families, this area was a common place for children to sleep. If the 1859 account is correct, it appears the sub-tiller-deck area on these earlier boats might have had a separate entrance, thus separating people in the cabin from those under the tiller deck.

It seems reasonable to assume that the early Cumberland-built C&O Canal freighters were undergoing design modifications in the 1850s and possibly through the next decade or two. Such modifications may even have included hull changes to achieve maximum

cargo capacity within the limitations of lock size and canal depth as well as changes to cabin design in response to the growing experience of crews on boats built specifically for C&O navigation.

As to the crew on these earlier boats, the author of the 1859 trip account tells us that it was under “Captain Coss” who “had a comfortable home in Williamsport and two canal boats.” He also notes that the captain had apprenticed on a war ship. The “bows man” was Henry Butler, a free black nicknamed “Pic.” The author held “third place” on the boat, involving service in “every position from pilot to tow boy” but most importantly as cook. Finally, the crew included two tow boys about 12 years old, one Pic’s son known as “Little Pic,” and the other a white boy hired by the captain on the previous voyage.<sup>20</sup> It is notable that Pic and Little Pic – the two blacks on the boat – were the ones who slept in the cramped and poorly ventilated sub-tiller-deck space.

This account also includes some insights on boat operation. For example the author states:

When the boat was loaded the water came within a foot of the deck, but when it was light it just skimmed over the water, not drawing more than one or two feet, and would be almost unmanageable outside of the canal as it had no keel to prevent it from drifting with the wind.<sup>21</sup> The towrope was described as “fastened to an eye-bolt on one side near the middle of the boat...the pivot point on which the boat turned and drew nearly straight ahead.”<sup>22</sup>

According to the author of this account, the mules were changed every four hours and the typical day lasted 16 to 18 hours, although he notes “we were tied up to no regular hours and lived in Arcadian simplicity”. At times the captain would “take a quantity of hay or grain on speculation and peddle it out to the other boats” (presumably for their teams). On one trip he had a load of lumber and when transporting two barrels of whiskey from one town to another:

Pic and the Capt[ain] sampled the whiskey by driving down a hoop and boring a small hole with a gimlet and drawing out a flask full. After plugging the hole, they drove the hoop back and none but the crew were the wiser for it.<sup>23</sup>

The hazards of boating are revealed in two incidents recounted by the author. In one case the boat collided with “an old lugger standing high out of the water [and] drawn by a poor old white horse” when the “lugger” had veered toward them to avoid a tree that had fallen into the canal. Fortunately there was no significant damage to either vessel. In the other incident, the fall board (used when mules were changed to span the gap between the boat and towpath) slipped off the boat, dumping two mules into the canal. Boatmen nearby sprang in and led the mules up the steep towpath bank. Interestingly, the mules were harnessed together for this transfer between the boat stable and the towpath, and the author notes that “if they had got tangled in their harness they might have both been drowned.”<sup>24</sup> In later photographs of mules using drop boards they are not harnessed together.

Much changed in the next decade (the 1870s) with the surge of canal business that saw multiple boat builders begin to produce large numbers of boats. The full scale replica at Cumberland likely represents a pattern that became standard sometime after the Civil War. The next edition of this column will consider the boats and canal operation between 1870 and the flood of 1889.

## Notes:

1. See the *Historic Structure Report: Masonry Locks* by Harlan Unrau, 31 ff. (pdf version). The cause of this slumping was the subject of one of the major arguments between senior engineer Thomas Purcell and the young assistant engineer Charles Fisk in the summer of 1835.
2. The sills are the triangular structures against which the bottom of the gates rested when closed.
3. William Davies, *Geology and Engineering Structures of the C&O Canal*, p. 219; Thomas F. Hahn, *Towpath Guide*, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition (1999) p. 35.
4. Hahn, Thomas. *Towpath Guide*, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition (1999), p. 35.
5. See, for example, Harlan D. Unrau, *C&O Canal Historic Resource Study*, 2007 edition, pp. 349–50, and pp. 353.
6. Hahn, *ibid.*, p. 35.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 346.
8. *Ibid.* p. 347, pp. 349–350.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 348–349.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 350–351.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 351. Note that the enlarged (second version) of the Erie was constructed between 1836 and 1862, due to the first version being too small.
14. It should be noted that boats built for the considerably larger New York Barge Canal in the early 20th Century, which appear frequently in photographs and art works, could never have operated on the C&O Canal.
15. *Life on the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal 1859*, edited by Ella E. Clark and Thomas F. Hahn and published in 1979 by Hahn. The anonymous author states that his account of the trip was written from memory “thirty odd years” later (i.e. ca. 1890). The manuscript was given to the Library of Congress in 1923 by the City Library Association of Springfield, Massachusetts, and the Library of Congress had incorrectly titled the document: “Journal of a Canal Boat Voyaging on the Cumberland Canal between Cumberland, Maryland, and Georgetown, 1858.”
16. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
21. *Ibid.*, 13.
22. *Ibid.* The boat people sometimes refer to the point where the tow rope is attached as the “sweet point” on the boat.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

**Correction from the December issue:** The mule photo shown on page 6 was attributed to the wrong event. It was actually taken at Ferry Hill on the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Wilderness Act on September 6. This event was a joint effort between Ranger Kelly Fox (NPS), USFWS, and Potomac Valley Audubon. Multiple organizations, including the C&O Canal Association, were there and approximately 80 people were in attendance that day!



## On The Level By Level Walker Chair Steve Dean

*Level walkers wrapped up a successful 2014 and started off 2015 looking forward to another great year on the towpath. 2014 was a another successful year, with full coverage of all 69 levels, over 350 level walks, and more than 2000 volunteer hours. Our level walkers are a group of over 130 dedicated volunteers. The canal has been a part of many level walkers lives for years, and volunteering is their way of giving back. John N. Maclean's thoughts after his Thanksgiving walk are an eloquent summary of how some of us feel about the canal:*

*"I've lived in the D.C. area for 45 years and the canal has been an unspoiled and enduringly fresh part of that existence. So many things have changed for the worse in the past near half-century that every time I hike the canal I feel a special sense of thankfulness. Thank you William O. Douglas; thank you National Park Service; thank you my fellow Level Walkers. Also, thanks to the beaver, ducks, geese, and deer – all creatures great and small."*

*Welcome to our newest level walkers - Vallie Compher, Charles Connolly, John Ferguson, Judy Floy, David Hunter, and Jennifer Stoker. Once again, many of our level walkers were able to level walk in each of the four seasons. We thank them for their dedication to the park and their volunteer duties. For 2014, the Four Seasons level walkers are:*

Tom Aitken	Karen Forster	Pat Hopson	Paul Petkus	Bill Warren
John Anderson	Jude Franklin	Carol Ivory	Dave Plume	John Wheeler
John Barnett	Mary Fran Franklin	Bill James	Earl Porter	Valerie Wheeler
Nancy Benco	Laura Gilliam	Nan Johnson	Carol Purcell	Pat White
Catherine F. Cotter	Larry Heflin	Dennis Kubicki	Marion Robertson	Kristin Zimet
Steve Dean	Bill Holdsworth	Jim Lyons	Jim Tomlin	Doug Zveare
Jack Forster	Chris Holdsworth	Don Peterson	Lynn Walker	

**Level 1 Tidelock to Incline Plane: John Barnett, occasionally with Mary Budarz, reports December 13, 14 and 27** In early December we started out with fairly low expectations but hit the trash jackpot at two spots. We at least "neatened up" the cardboard bedding under Key Bridge and found some trash there. Tidelock yielded two bags. My "partner in junk" also located a pile of unsalvageable clothing near Key Bridge on the south side of the canal. This we put into the black bag, which was given to us by a generous user about that same time. It pays to be friendly! In late December it was a beautiful day for a walk, so I headed out to the incline plane and worked back up to, but not inside, the aqueduct.

**Level 2 Incline Plane to Lock 5: Rod Mackler reports December 10 and 12, and February 11:** On December 10 I walked from Lock 5 to Chain Bridge, and on December 12 I walked from Fletcher's Cove to Chain Bridge. Trash was moderate; a water bottle from Dean & DeLuca was the most unusual find. This was the sign of a classy, no-class litterbug. There was a little rutting on the canal side of the towpath, but nothing serious enough to obstruct bikers or walkers. There was more serious erosion directly under Chain Bridge, where water runs off the bridge. In February the sun made the cold rather pleasant. I had to crack the ice on the canal to get at some of the trash. Park staff was out clearing and cleaning various areas. **Jude and Mary Fran Franklin report December 27:** The towpath was fairly clean. There was a great deal of construction equipment in the parking area at Lock 5. The construction equipment was to re-layer the towpath.

**Level 3 Lock 5 to Cabin John Creek: Judy Floy reports December 15:** Conducted first walk of level to assess conditions and document with photos. Trash was noted in the canal. **Hugh Robinson, with Marilyn Stone and Carol Wingate reports December 21:** Not much trash was found. There were a good number of walkers, joggers and cyclists taking advantage of good weather. Reconstruction of the towpath between Locks 5 and 7 was evident with the path wider and resurfaced. At about 50 yards upstream from large

caution sign at Little Falls there is a steep drop off from path to river. A railing should be installed once reconstruction is complete.

**Level 4 Cabin John Creek to Lock 14: Larry Heflin reports November through January:** The towpath was monitored over numerous walks, through all conditions. Conditions and usage were normal for the time of year. Bagged dog waste is an increasing issue, on Level 4 and on many other parts of the canal. One dog walker was observed in the act, and she promised to pick it up on the return trip – she didn't.

**Level 5 Lock 14 to Bridge at Cropley: John N. Maclean reports November 16:** I skipped the first half mile of the eastern end of the hike because there was a Potomac River Marathon event underway that finished just before the viaduct at Carderock. I got all the trash that was along the towpath and in the canal on the towpath side – lots of fishing with a staff to retrieve the cursed plastic water bottles. The new bridge at Cropley is a great addition. The old porta-potties have been removed – thank you, NPS – having been replaced by the excellent new facility, the large brick lavatory structure on the upper parking lot level. For a lavatory it's an unassuming and good-looking structure.

**Level 6 Bridge at Cropley to Lock 20: John N. Maclean reports December 25:** The towpath was amazingly clean on this Christmas walk, especially considering the large number of people using it this day. I know at least one other person walked it with a trash bag in hand – I talked to her and she also remarked on how clean things were. Not a single plastic water bottle could be found the whole trip, which is a first. There were several hundred walkers on the Canal towpath: very few bikers and joggers by comparison with a "normal" day. Nearly all the walkers were couples and family groups: they were polyglot – I heard as many foreign tongues as English ones. A hike on the C&O Canal from Great Falls to the bridge at Angler's Inn included memorable Christmas day images. A walker I observed must have been well into her 80s; she looked straight

ahead apparently without pain or fear, and pushed ahead with her walker along the tow path one small slow step at a time: no one accompanied her. If that isn't the spirit of the joy of life unbowed by the march of time I don't know what is. She'd already gone a half-mile. Far ahead was warm beckoning glow of the Tavern at Great Falls in all its Christmas finery, but I don't suppose she made it that far.

**Level 7 Lock 20 to Lock 21: Nancy Ben-co reports December 17:** Overall, there were very few people on the trail, despite a beautiful sunny morning. I picked up quite a lot of trash along the river trail. Scaffolding on Swain's lock house, which was observed in November, has been removed. The scaffolding was constructed to replace deteriorating metal roof. However, the old metal roof remains on the front of the lock house and a shaker roof has been installed on the back of the lock house. **William James reports January 4:** This was a slow, long walk because of all the branches, twigs and bark that I removed. There are some deep ruts on the towpath on this level that are often filled with water.

**Levels 8 and 9 Lock 21 to Seneca Aqueduct. Jennifer Stoker reports 17 January** I did not see any trash to pick up although I did note a couple of heavier things that would need to be picked up by the Park Service. I also saw a pipe coming from Bretton Woods that looked broken and was leaking water out, not seriously but it may need to be looked at and fixed. I also noted a small amount of graffiti on the Seneca Aqueduct. This was my first level walk and I really enjoyed walking the levels; both of them are suitable for me.

**Level 8 Lock 21 to Lock 22: Jack and Karen Forster report February 4:** On arrival at Swains Lock we counted 15 cars, which was more than expected. We encountered a number of walkers and bikers, including a group of 15 bird watchers. The bikers included two bike patrol people; Ric Jackson was especially friendly. Canal water level was normal, with some ice.

**Level 10 Seneca Aqueduct to Milepost 25: Paul Graunke reports November 25:** Most of the trash was in one location, in the brush by the picnic area on the west side of Seneca Creek. There was light traffic on the towpath. There were no major obstructions and only a few branches on the towpath. Parking lot potholes are an issue. **Carol Purcell reports November 30 and February 8** On both dates it was noted that rutting is still a significant issue on this level. The one located in the dip in the towpath shortly before milepost 25 is very bad – so bad that Park Service has placed a sign there requesting bikers to dismount and walk around it. I observed that the sign is largely ignored. Lack of vegetation presented a clear view of the hole in the prism at Culvert 35. I am concerned that it is getting larger and as reported above appears to have drained that stretch of the canal. It is also easy to see the damage to the berm arch of Culvert 37 at the top parapet.

**Level 11 Milepost 25 to Sycamore Landing: John Kochowicz reports November 17 and January 15:** Trash was light on a seasonably comfortable day in November. Most trash was in the Sycamore

Landing parking area. The towpath was clear, with some ruts. Many large branches were moved off to the side. In January it was evident that hunters had built a fire at Sycamore Landing. They left beer bottles and hunting-related trash.



*Widewater Christmas walker. Photo by John N. Maclean*

any significant changes from earlier assessments. The large hole in the prism over Culvert 38 is still present. It's hard to gauge if it's gotten bigger. The Park Service has re-erected a new orange netting fence around the hole.

**Level 16 Lock 26 to Monocacy Aqueduct: Mike Cianciosi reports December 27:** There were many users out on an unseasonably warm day. The logjam behind the Monocacy Aqueduct is still present and unchanged. It's still about 30 feet in diameter, partially blocking two arches. The towpath was in good condition. I inspected the four culverts on the level. Culvert 68 had a stone missing from the towpath side wing wall. The photos I took in December of 2013 showed the stone was present at that time, so it must have fallen out sometime in the past year. Culvert 65 had a lot of debris on the berm side in December 2013, but the debris is now gone. The conditions of Culverts 67 and 69 are unchanged from last year.

**Level 17 Monocacy Aqueduct to Nolands Ferry: Earl Porter reports December 8 and January 31:** The level is in good condition with a moderate amount of trash. Debris continues to block arches at the Monocacy Aqueduct. The eastern portion of the towpath was covered with snow on the January walk.



*Seneca Aqueduct in winter Photo by Paul Graunke*

**Level 18 Nolands Ferry to Point of Rocks: Pat White reports November 29 and February 8:** There was the usual quantity and type of trash on both dates. In November there were remnants of snow in the shaded areas, in February the towpath was icy in places. Generally the towpath was in good condition. There is an apparent sinkhole just downstream of Calico Rocks Hiker Biker that should be watched.

**Level 19 Point of Rocks to Catoclin Aqueduct: Lynn Walker reports December 13 and 14, and January 22 and 23:** During the December walks I inspected Culverts 75, 76, 78 and 79. All are in good condition and have not changed since my 2013 inspections. The NPS has cleared brush from many of the culverts, which is of great benefit to their continued function and survival. In both December and January it was noted that debris was across all three arches of the Catoclin Aqueduct. During a later visit in February it was evident that a beaver was possibly living in the debris pile on the upper end of the aqueduct.



*Levels 19 through 21 Point of Rocks to Lock 31:* **Don Peterson reports November through January:** Towpath was monitored over numerous walks. Conditions are generally good on all three levels, and no significant issues were reported.

*Level 20 Catoctin Aqueduct to Lock 30:* **Doug Zveare reports December 15:** I inspected the towpath portals of Culverts 81 through 87, and the berm portal of Culvert 84. No changes noted from last Level Walk. Culvert 82 on the towpath side is still flood damaged. The towpath/road section between town of Brunswick and the Brunswick Family Campground was heavily littered. I removed all visible trash along that section.

*Level 21 Lock 30 to Lock 31:* **Ed Rhodes reports December 19:** The towpath was in good shape. There was a lot of trash at Culvert 91 that I will need to go back for.

*Level 22 Lock 31 to Lock 33:* **Ed Rhodes reports December 10:** Trash was moderate. I only saw one other person walking. Nice day to walk on the canal. **Karlen Keto reports December 17:** Conditions were normal for winter. There was a concentration of trash near the crossover for the youth hostel. There were few park visitors, but a cute elderly couple was enjoying the towpath.

*Level 23 Lock 33 to Dam 3:* **John Ferguson reports February 11:** This was my first walk on this level, and it's a gorgeous area. The towpath was practically devoid of trash all the way. I was impressed with the very good condition of the towpath and it's surroundings.

*Level 27 Antietam Aqueduct to Lock 38:* **John Lefebure reports December 26:** The canal was wonderfully drenched with sunlight streaming through bare trees, making for a pleasant walk. The Shepherdstown river lock downstream wall stones are coming apart, apparently due to repeated major floods. Upstream walls are in good shape. Most trash was fishing related at the aqueduct.

*Level 28 Lock 38 to Lock 39:* **Bill Warren reports December 21:** Due to the low temperatures and lack of sun, it was pretty much just a dog-walkers' day out. The sign for the construction site above Lock 39 was still there, but the construction seems to have been completed, or nearly so. There was no equipment visible. The disturbed areas where excavation had taken place had been reseeded and bedded with straw. The straw was visible in the canal bed, on the river-side of towpath, as well as up the hill on the other side of the canal away from the river.

*Level 30 Snyders Landing to Lock 40:* **Charles Connolly reports January 19:** It was an excellent day on the towpath. There was a moderate amount of trash but the towpath was in good condition. I found a discarded "Caution, dismount and walk bike through rough area" sign, which I return to Sycamore Landing for the attention of park staff.

*Level 31 Lock 40 to Marsh Run Culvert:* **Bill Warren reports December 26:** The towpath, as usual, was in good shape. It was wet after recent rains and had a few mud holes that walkers and bikers had to go around. But in general, it was very accessible. I collected mis-

cellaneous pieces of trash along the towpath and in the canal bed. It was too cold, wet, and muddy to try to collect the large trash pieces visible on the flood plain beside the river



*Hole over Culvert 38. Photo by Pat Hopson*

*Level 32 Marsh Run Culvert to Dam 4:* **Catherine Fenselau Cotter reports October 19:** Towpath surface was good, with snow remaining in a few places. A tree was down on path around mile 82.5, but passage had been cleared. Trash consisted mostly of beer cans. I met ten other folks on the path.

*Level 35 Opequon Junction Hiker Biker to Lock 43:* **Stephen Williams reports November 23:** Conditions were sunny and mild, with some ice. Towpath resurfacing is evident on this level.

*Level 37 Falling Waters to Lock 44:* **Jim Tomlin and Andy Harbert report January 17:** Winter access to prism allowed for collection of lots of trash from canal bed. The towpath was frozen, icy and treacherous for cycling. It was difficult to walk in some places. All sticks and litter were removed from Falling Waters to Lock 44. It was evident that the NPS had removed one blow down recently.

*Levels 42 Four Locks to McCoy's Ferry:* **Jack Ebersole reports January 1:** I decided to take my first level walk on this level on New Years Day. The towpath is in excellent condition, dry, clean, and with no holes or puddling.

*Levels 43 McCoy's Ferry to Fort Frederick:* **Jill Craig and Elizabeth Howe report December 13:** Trash was light and there were not many canal users out. Two of the culverts have been cleared fairly recently, grass and trees cut back. The prism over Culvert 147 is considerably more degraded than earlier in the year.

*Level 44 Fort Frederick to Ernstville:* **James Biasco reports December 14:** The towpath was very clean. Brush along the towpath looks to have been cut back since last report.



*Beaver path to debris pile at Catoctin Aqueduct. Photo by Lynn Walker*

*Level 48 Hancock to Round Top Cement Mill:* **Michael and Judi Bucci report November 22.** Trash was light. We spoke with local resident at house near Mile 125, out in 16 degree weather in a tee shirt. He stated he was used to it. There was graffiti the Geology wayside at Round Top Cement Mill. New gravel filled most of ruts and potholes – it looked good. **Phillip Michael Clemans reports January 11:** The canal was snow-covered; it looked great and there was no trash. There was ice in the canal prism and water could be heard flowing

under the ice into holes over the culverts. A homeless person was camping at White-Rock Hiker-Biker. The bench at the cement mill is still unstable.

*Level 49 Round Top Cement Mill to Lock 53:* **Kristin Zimet reports December 21 and January 24:** In December it was evident that many invasives have been removed from the Lock 53 walls, but for some reason the honeysuckle remains intact. Thank you to whoever wisely left the little ferns. Railroad ties falling downhill from the Western Maryland Rail Trail are perched on the muddy hillside just above the red brick walls upstream of the Cement Mill. If they slide

further those walls could be damaged. This is an enchanting time to visit the canal. White sycamores shine against the gray flanks of Round Hill. In January, it was the day after a big snowstorm; more snow was in the forecast but never materialized. The river was flowing slowly with ice along the banks. Water in the canal itself was thinly frozen. The towpath was snow-covered perhaps an inch deep; great for seeing tracks. At Devil's Eyebrow, someone had climbed up to the cave and made a pile of wood for a fire, leaving trash: a cup, a water bottle, a piece of pipe, a silvery metal curled object. I did not feel it was safe to climb so I left that trash in place.

*Level 52 Sideling Hill Aqueduct to Fifteen Mile Creek Aqueduct: Tom Aitken and Chris Fink report January 29:* There was a moderate amount of trash. There were not many other walkers, and it was probably due to a threat of freezing rain for the early afternoon. The railing is a bit rough on the Sideling Creek Aqueduct, and pruning would be a good idea.

*Level 53 Fifteen Mile Creek Aqueduct to Lock 59: Tom and Marsha Dulz report November 23:* The towpath surface was in good condition with no obstructions. Trash was light. A few local users were out.

*Levels 56 and 57 Culvert 208 to Lock 63 1/3: Barbara Sheridan and Pat White report December 15:* We found a lot of the usual stuff—flood debris, assorted cans, plastic bottles and chunks of Styrofoam. We did find an aluminum cook pot, a light bulb and a golf ball to make things interesting. Our strangest find was a deer skeleton (minus head and 2 legs) in the center of the towpath under the Western Maryland railway bridge. We moved this off the towpath. We did not see another person the whole time we were out. There were an unusual amount of twigs and branches littering the towpath probably from the recent snowstorms. The towpath itself was in very good condition with only a few low spots containing water.

*Level 58 Lock 63 1/3 to Tunnel Parking Area: Tom Aitken and Rick Dunbar report February 6:* There was some puddling inside of the tunnel. It was very icy just outside of the tunnel in the Tunnel Hollow/boardwalk area. The rockslide fence continues to get the job done. During a previous visit, I was alarmed by a mass of loose rock above the fence, but it has dropped in small batches, and the fence has held up well.

*Level 63 Oldtown to Kellys Road Culvert: David and Edna Tosten, with Roy Beiler report January 1:* I thought a level walk would be a good way to begin the new year. It was a mild day for New Years Day. A significant amount of trash picked up at Pigmans Ferry campsite and from Lock 70 to Lock 71. With the winter die back of the vegetation the trash was readily visible. It appeared someone had pried some boards loose at the back corner of the building to gain access to the lockhouse. I did not enter the building to check for additional damage. I contacted the NPS the next day to report the damage.

## Level Walker Nature Sightings

Winter is often the best time for watching wildlife, especially birds. Kristin Zimet is a regular participant in the annual mid-winter C & O Canal Bird Count, which D.C. Audubon runs. Between mile post 125 and 130.7 we counted 368 individuals of 28 species!

It was a fine day for raptors. A mature bald eagle took center stage, flying low across the river. Just after that, a red-shouldered hawk took off from a roost in a tree right beside us, showing off his plumage. Crying out loudly, he swept down the canal, his cries

haunting us for a long time. Another pair of red-shouldered hawks was in action further downstream near the Round Top Cement Mill, and we also had five red-tailed hawks.

Waterfowl were gathered in abundance too, perhaps because the small farm ponds were still frozen. We saw 14 beautiful common mergansers, plus 67 Canada geese, and 48 mallards. It's been a bonus year for pileated woodpeckers, who outnumbered and outshone the red-bellied and downy woodpeckers and the few complaining yellow-bellied sapsuckers.

The most notable birds of the day were turkeys—not seen but always in evidence. We followed the tracks of turkeys, throngs of turkeys, for miles. Tracks of deer, rabbits, and foxes crossed the towpath, but the turkeys swaggered right down the middle. They crowded the path, sometimes dragging their wings, sometimes turning over the earth in patches on either side or sauntering across the frozen canal, leaving tracks on the ice.

Other level walkers have noted the abundance of pileated woodpeckers this year. Bill Warren either saw a large number of them on Level 31, or was stalked by the same pair. Bald eagle sightings are always welcome, and Pat White keeps an eye on a pair on level 18.

During his February walk through the Paw Paw Tunnel, Tom Aitken noted that there were countless bats in the tunnel. Surprisingly, some were along the towpath side of the tunnel and almost within arm's reach along the walkway.

Other mammals besides bats make frequent winter appearances in level walker reports. Deer are often sighted and level walkers always have squirrels for companions. Raccoons are occasionally observed throughout the canal park. Often animals make use of the icy canal surface to support their foraging and hunting, or just to get to the other side, making for excellent viewing opportunities.



*Bats in the Paw Paw Tunnel. Photo by Tom Aitken*



*Young raccoon exploring the canal ice. Photo by Jennifer Stoker*



## Continuing Hike Series

These are our intimate hikes where we investigate the park and learn from one another. This was especially true in January when 14 of us braved the brambles and fallen trees to investigate the Seneca quarries and stone cutting mill. The area around the stone cutting mill has been cleared allowing easy access, and vandals with spray paint have found it. Near the mill we found the remains of a sandstone foundation for a 19<sup>th</sup> century Lafayette Square fence. At the Bull Run stream we were treated to a brief geology lesson from a geologist that we'd met in the parking lot. He explained that the Seneca sandstone was part of a much larger formation that extended from North Carolina into New York. Outcroppings like Seneca could be found all along its range.

In February snow conditions limited attendance for the continuing hike at Williamsport. The towpath was covered with about six inches of snow and we only walked as far as the first culvert above Williamsport, about a half mile, while expressing admiration for the Revolutionary and Civil War troops who trudged through snow for miles. Afterwards we retired to the Desert Rose Cafe and feasted on the house specialty red beans and rice soup, followed by ice cream.

We have three hikes planned this spring. On Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> join us at the Paw Paw Tunnel parking lot for a stroll through the tunnel and downstream. Weather permitting, we'll investigate the remains of the Outdoor Club where William O. Douglas stayed on the 1954 hike. A new addition to our schedule is a hike in Green Ridge State Forest on Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, led by Champ Zumbun. We'll hike downstream from the parking area and boat ramp at Point of Rocks on Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>. We'll pass the Kanawha Club where Douglas stayed and maybe see an eagle or two; they frequent the area.

The September and November hikes both feature aqueducts; in September it is Licking Creek and in November Town Creek. They will be described further in later issues of *Along the Towpath*.

All hikes start at 10:30 a.m. Dress for the weather and bring water and lunch or a snack. Contact me for more information at [hikemaster@candocanal.org](mailto:hikemaster@candocanal.org) or 301-977-5628.

– Pat White

### Tree Identification Nature Walks

Join Carol Ivory for a series of three tree identification nature walks at Dickerson Conservation Park. The walks are on March 22, June 6 and October 31 at 10 a.m. The three walks will observe seasonal differences at the same location. Bring water, a snack, a walking stick and wear sturdy shoes. Optional equipment: binoculars and your favorite tree ID book. The March 22 tree walk will focus on three champion trees – the state champion sycamore and the county champion cottonwood and silver maple. In order to visit the Sycamore and cottonwood we will go off the towpath but remain on paths along the river. There are many other trees of note along the way. The county champion silver maple is a venerable old tree at Lock 26.

From Route 28, just on the east side of Dickerson, Md.; turn onto Martinsburg Road at the blinking light. At 0.6 miles turn left to stay on Martinsburg Road; at 1.3 miles, bear right; at 2.2 miles turn right into Dickerson Conservation Park. For GPS users, the parking lot is Latitude 39.197883, Longitude -77.469971. For more information, contact Carol Ivory at [carolivory@verizon.net](mailto:carolivory@verizon.net) or 703-869-1538 (cell).

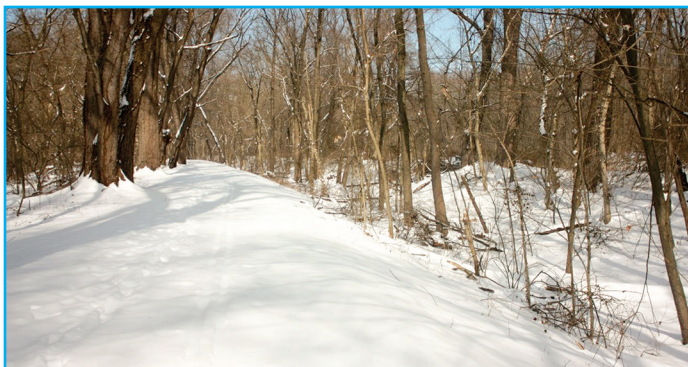
– Carol Ivory



*Pat White discusses the Seneca Quarry. Photo by Nancy Benco*



*Hikers at Culvert 35 in Seneca. Photo by Doug Zveare*



*Snow-covered towpath at Williamsport. Photo by Pat White*



# The Mystery of the Knoxville Iron Furnace

By Marc Howell

Iron-producing furnaces were an important element in the economy of the region served by the C&O Canal in the nineteenth century. For a researcher interested in these furnaces, there is no better resource than *The Iron Ores of Maryland with an Account of the Iron Industry* by Joseph T. Singewald, Jr. (June 1909). The book lists and briefly describes historical furnaces by county, including one built in 1848 in Knoxville, a small Frederick County community near the C&O Canal, upriver from Brunswick. Singewald calls this “Lonacoming Furnace,” which is clearly an error. Lonaconing Furnace, which introduced new technology to the United States’s iron smelting industry, is a well-documented historical site in Allegany County. In a subsequent section, Singewald also states that local iron ore was delivered to the “Long a Coming” furnace near Knoxville. The naming confusion aside, he offers enough detail to dispel any doubt that an iron furnace existed near that town. But, unlike those ghostly stone stacks that dot parts of Pennsylvania and Maryland, the site seems to have vanished.

I wanted to locate this furnace more precisely. The clue to this was in Singewald: the furnace was built by Barker and Co. from Baltimore. Reasoning that if Barker built the furnace, Barker might have bought the land on which to build, I searched for his name in Frederick County land records. The description of two lots sold to Barker and his business partner, both iron entrepreneurs from the Baltimore area, was listed in 1849. One lot was squeezed between the C&O Canal and the south side of an east-west B&O Railroad track. The start point for the survey of this larger lot was the key stone of the arch at the north end [berm side] of the C&O Canal Culvert 91, which crosses Pain’s Branch, a stream that joins the Potomac River on the east side of Knoxville. The first survey direction was north to the B&O Railroad line. The measures continued in a counterclockwise fashion, running east to near Culvert 90 over Johnson’s Branch, east of Knoxville, and then returning to the Pain’s Branch culvert. This sliver-shaped lot contained a little more than 14 acres. The bounds of the second lot survey started north of the rail line near Johnson’s Branch and described a nearly rectangular box back to Johnson’s Branch that contained 6 acres. The small size of the lots reveals a great deal about operation of the furnace. No large tracts of treed land, from which the owners could supply char-

coal fuel to the furnace, were included. Fuel for this furnace was evidently planned to be coal or coke, both readily available in the 1850s from the dock at Cumberland or by railroad.

Besides defining the boundaries of the properties, the sale document granted the purchasers to “pass and repass” the Pain’s Branch culvert using “horses, carts, wagons and carriages” to procure sand from the river and to deposit cinders at the river. There was no mention of a furnace, but the sand and cinders are very descriptive of iron smelting. The land purchasers gained access to an unusually large culvert. Its twelve-foot span and six-foot rise were twice as great as the dimensions of nearby culverts intended for stream passage only.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the canal builders adopted this generous design to accommodate existing traffic that crossed the Potomac at Pain’s Ferry. Unfortunately, silting of the Pain’s Branch culvert currently obscures the structure’s actual size, making it difficult to imagine that horses and wagons were once able to pass through it.

The land purchase documents also gave access to spring water that was pure enough for the seller’s farm hands to drink, to be delivered in sufficient amount by specified diameter pipe to the purchasers. Along with the health concerns for workers, it is highly likely that the purchasers’ requirement for pure water was linked to operation of a steam boiler. The continued efficiency of a boiler is very dependent on the purity of the water used in it. The sale document paints a picture of a then-modern steam powered, coal/coke fired iron furnace, tightly aligned to both the canal and railroad transportation modes.

Upon further search, I found a second land record, dated to 1854. The record described a lease arrangement for an iron furnace between a pair of entrepreneurs and an estate trustee on behalf of the deceased partners and owners, Barker et al, of the iron furnace. This record refers to the properties as the Blue Ridge Furnace Property, not the Long a Coming furnace.

The bounds of the land sale documents were described in the archaic distance measurement known as “perches.” Level Walker Jim Tomlin, an expert on Global Positioning System mapping, created land boundary outlines on maps. He had to rationalize missing and erroneous distances and degrees that were omitted in the copy filed in the courthouse, but he created two very plausible outlines of the plots of land. That these lots straddled a rail line in 1849 is almost no help in locating them on a current map. Track configurations in that area changed radically after the 1890 B&O Railroad’s move to Brunswick, and there have been extensive rail bed constructions and renovations between Knoxville and the C&O Canal through the years.

I began to search for maps that would place a furnace within the outline of the pair of properties. Two historical maps of the area show a building marker on the east side of Knoxville described as a furnace. An inset map of Knoxville and Weverton printed on an 1858 map of Frederick County is the earlier of the two. The “Old Blue Ridge Furnace” was denoted by a building marker on the east side of, and very near to, Pain’s Branch. Pain’s Branch takes an almost unnatural looping course to end up at the C&O Canal culvert on this map. A second map of Frederick County dated 1873 had a



Culvert 91 towpath arch. Photo by Steve Dean



building marker next to which “C.S. Maltby furnace” was printed. This was a new name, possibly related to the ownership change after the Civil War. Again, the building marker was on the east side of Pain’s Branch. The building markers seem too far north to have been in the bounds given in the land sale document; however, these early maps are in low resolution and based on the cartographer’s positional sense rather than on surveys.

The U.S. Geological Survey maps for the area began to appear in 1884, but the earliest ones showing adequate detail and buildings were drawn after the turn of the century. The 1907 USGS map of the Middletown Quadrangle with a contour interval of 20 feet was a great improvement over previous maps and showed some buildings around Knoxville. I hoped that a building marker would appear close to the suspected property lines, but none was annotated. By careful examination of this map at magnification, I noted that a small open area appeared among the railroad tracks near Pain’s Branch where I thought a building marker denoting a furnace should have been. This gap might be significant because the area was otherwise tightly filled with railroad tracks. The open area was to the west of a water course that should have been Pain’s Branch. The markers on the older historical maps were definitely on the east side of Pain’s Branch. The looping course of Pain’s Branch seemed to flow further to the east than on the old maps. Off-trail exploration revealed a long cement culvert carrying the stream under the railroad yard throat at Knoxville. This structure, together with the awkward angles of the current Pain’s Branch water course, suggest displacement of the stream to the east to align the flow with the railroad culvert. Perhaps the stream shown on the west side of the furnace on the old maps now flows under the railroad on the east side of the furnace site.



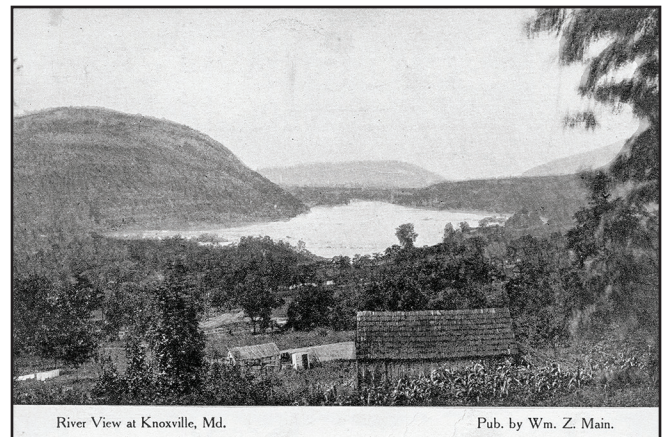
B262—Long a coming furnace, Knoxville, Md. Pub. by Wm. Z. Main.

Wm. Z Main postcard of Longacoming Furnace. Image courtesy of Research Center of Historical Society of Frederick County

A few years after discovering the land sale records, I was browsing collections at the Brunswick Museum when I found a photo with a caption: “Blue Ridge Furnace, Knoxville, Maryland on the C&O Canal, torn down about 1906.” The photo was of a large brick ruin that appeared to include a steam engine house with chimney, a furnace stack behind it, and two work wings. This configuration is likely to have been that of a furnace that was part of a foundry or rolling mill. In such a plant, a central steam engine was flanked by powered rollers that were used to shape hot iron. In another bit of serendipity, I found a postcard by Wm. Z. Main with photo captioned “B262 Longacoming furnace, Knoxville, Md.,” at the Historical Society of Frederick County. The two photos were

identical. This seemed to confirm that an iron furnace located near Knoxville was either the Blue Ridge Furnace or the Long a Coming Furnace, or maybe both names were used. Then I realized that a building would not be noted on the 1907 USGS map because its demolition around 1906 was just prior to the land survey for the USGS map.

If the surrounding area around the building ruins could be identified, perhaps the site of the furnace could be approximated. Unfortunately, the building ruins nearly fill the photo. A further search for Wm. Z. Main postcards at the Historical Society of Frederick County turned up several: “B264 Canal at Knoxville, Md;” “B265 River near Knoxville, Md;” and an un-numbered “River View at Knoxville, Md.” These photos were taken looking west, up the Potomac River toward the Blue Ridge gap, with Short Hill on the left. They appeared to show the general area of the furnace photo, but did not allow me to identify a specific site. Other Main photos might be of great help in settling on the location of the furnace, but none have been found.



Wm. Z Main postcard of river view at Knoxville, Md. Image courtesy of Research Center of Historical Society of Frederick County

Mystery surrounding precise location(s) of the furnace at Knoxville remains. Hypothesizing a general location south of the current north rail track and west of the current Pain’s Branch water course might be “as good as it gets.” While current rail tracks do not cover the entire area, it is likely that roadbed and tracks filled the area at one time or another, causing serious disruption of an iron furnace site. Railroad records might help to determine the last furnace location before that occurred. My guess is that iron furnaces of different types were resident on the same or adjacent sites. As to the names – Blue Ridge Furnace, Long a Coming Furnace, C.S. Maltby furnace, and Knoxville Furnace – these may or may not refer to the photographed ruin, or perhaps to more than one building.

1. William E. Davies’ *The Geology and Engineering Structures of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal: An Engineering Geologist’s Descriptions and Drawings*.

Marc Howell’s decades’ long avocational interest in 1750-1850 iron production regionally, nationally and internationally has led to preparation of a book tentatively titled: “Harpers Ferry, Virginia: Almost an Iron City”. This iron furnace-C&O Canal vignette is one of those completely unforeseen connections that emerged from his search for iron history. Howell writes from Frederick, Maryland. Mhowell1944@msn.com



### Natives – Exotics – Invasives

Non-native plants have a bad reputation. It's often assumed that if it is non-native, it must be invasive. Although it is true that all invasive plants are non-native, it is not true that all non-native plants are invasive. Note that non-native plants are also referred by the rather colorful terms, "aliens" and "exotics."

There is a long history of non-native species arriving in this country. Since the beginning of European immigration, exotic plants have been imported by humans either as a food source or for medical purposes. Others hitchhiked in packing materials or aboard ships. In fact the transportation of species that began during the Age of Discovery is so extensive it is referred to as the "Columbian Exchange."

Many of the species brought to this country are still appreciated today. Apples, rice and barley, for example, helped support an expanding population and, most importantly, they did not negatively impact the native ecosystem.

It is not origin that automatically earns a plant the name, "invasive," rather it is a matter of how it behaves once settled in a new environment. A well-behaved exotic plant is much appreciated; a badly behaved exotic is another story. Badly behaving plants can devastate an existing ecosystem.

In a stable ecosystem, species are in balance with one another so that all have equal access to resources. Populations are kept in check by predators such as insects and fungi, niche requirements of specialized plants are accommodated, and complementary growth seasons ensure the availability of resources at different times. If a newcomer disturbs this stability, it can cause the demise of a resource that affects an entire ecosystem. For example, the new species may be immune to native predators. While native plants have to expend energy fighting off predators, the new arrivals use their energy to reproduce. Also important is the time the newcomer blooms. If the plant goes to seed before the native plants are ready, the invasive plant will capture the best nutrients, water and pollinators.

Climate change and large-scale development have added other factors to the mix. As conditions change, a species must be able to adapt in order to survive. An exotic plant has already met that challenge; native plants have yet to be tested. Since many invasives are early bloomers, longer growing seasons give them more opportunity to reproduce and overwhelm the native population.

No discussion of invasive plants can be complete without mentioning the most pernicious invasive plant on the towpath: garlic mustard. It was brought to this country in the late nineteenth century as an herb to spice up salad greens. Once established, garlic mustard soon met all the criteria for bad



*Garlic Mustard - Photo by Marjorie Richman*

behavior: it is unaffected by local predators (deer don't like the taste), it produces chemicals which suppress fungi that native plants and trees require for their own reproduction, and as an early bloomer it has the top pick of the best nutrients in the soil.

Unfortunately it is not easy to remove garlic mustard. As can be seen in the picture, Rachel Stewart is almost chest high in garlic mustard. The picture was taken near White's Ferry. The most effective way to permanently remove such robust garlic mustard is to pull out the root by hand. Otherwise the root will reestablish itself the following year and continue to reproduce. Timing is also important. Each plant must be removed before the flowers bloom in the spring. Since dates differ each year, it is hard to plan ahead. By the second year of its life, a single plant can produce hundreds of seeds in one season creating a carpet of garlic mustard that deprives other plants of sunlight and nutrients.



*Garlic Mustard at Whites Ferry - Photo by Marjorie Richman*

To help eradicate this annoying pest, be sure to volunteer for Jim Heins' VIP workdays. Check the calendar for times and dates. Level walkers may also ask for help. Keep in mind that one must obtain the proper training and National Park Service approval before starting any effort to remove garlic mustard or any other invasive plants in the canal park.



## The Cumberland Update

Canal Place Authority has authorized JLD Construction LC to proceed with the Phase 2 repairs of *The Cumberland* replica canal boat in accordance with their proposal of December 2, 2014. The Association will again pay the invoice.

In the upper photograph the narrow raceway/walkway is visible diagonally across the bottom of the photograph, and on the far side. Canal boat crew members used that raceway to walk from the aft cabin to the hay house amidships or the mule stable at the bow, and return. There were hatch covers over the hold. The raceway is rotten in some places and sloped in the wrong direction. Behind the cabin the tiller deck is also rotten in some places and sloped the wrong way. During Phase 2, both the raceway and the tiller deck will be removed, replaced, sloped to direct water away from the interior and repainted with the same bedliner shown in the adjacent photograph, except then it will be red in color, as shown. The bedliner provides a watertight, slip resistant covering.

New windows for the captain's cabin have been built, retaining the historical look, as shown in the



*Above - The red walkways require replacement.*

*Below - Interior view of the new cabin windows.*

*Photos by Rita Knox, NPS*



lower photo, an inside view of the cabin from the previous report.

All three cabin exteriors will be re-caulked to eliminate moisture and the mule stable side windows will be replaced, one to open for ventilation.

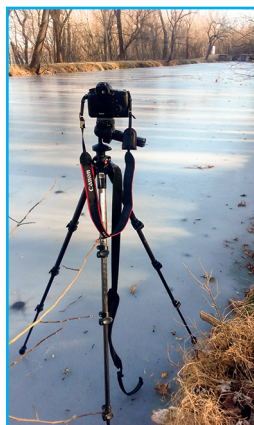
The wire rope used to operate the access ramp, the black object in the upper photograph, lower left hand corner, will be replaced. The wire rope was fraying.

Rotten boards in all the cabins will be replaced, as necessary, and the tarpaper roof on the mule stable replaced. The drain in the stairwell to the cabin will be improved in functionality; now, water collects around the drain and the persistent moisture has rotted some of the boards.

The winter weather has slowed the contractor's efforts. The contractor is doing excellent work, however, and expects to be finished well before the Allegany County school students resume visitation in the spring 2015.

— William Bauman

## Winter on the Canal



The winter of 2015 provided a solidly frozen canal surface, and canal users delighted in the opportunities offered by that benefit. Marjorie Richman and Bahar Atamyildiz observed hockey players in the Palisades in January, as seen in the top right photo, taken by Bahar. Steve Dean's photo at bottom right shows a quieter scene at Lock 70, although skaters were out on the canal just above the lock. Tom Aiken observed a spirited hockey game on the Cushwa basin, seen in the lower left. At top left, Steve Dean uses the frozen canal to get a slightly better vantage point for a photograph of Lock 27.



## Calendar of Events - 2015

March 22, Sun., Nature Walk focusing on tree identification at Dickerson Conservation Area, 10 a.m. First in a series of three walks in the same location to observe seasonal differences. Bring water, a snack, and a walking stick, and wear sturdy shoes. Optional equipment: binoculars and your favorite tree ID book. Contact Carol Ivory at carolivory@verizon.net or 703-869-1538.

March 28, Sat., Continuing Hike Series: 10:30 a.m., downstream from Paw Paw Tunnel (mile 156.2). Contact Pat White (hikemaster@candocanal.org or 301-977-5628)

April 10, Fri., Work party at Swains Lock, 9 a.m. The group will check on conditions and tend to the picnic tables, fire rings, and vegetation in the area. The Association is responsible for the Swains Lock Recreation Area under the Canal Steward program. For more information, contact Pat White at hikemaster@candocanal.org or 301-977-5628.

April 11, Sat., Potomac Watershed Cleanup, 9 a.m. to noon. The Association will be operating or coordinating various sites. Contact Jim Heins (301-949-3518 or vip@candocanal.org).

April 11, Sat., Hike in Green Ridge State Forest led by Champ Zumbrun. Meet at 10:30 a.m., Bill's Place (mile 140.8), 12719 High Germany Road, Little Orleans, MD 21766. For more information, contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).

April 12, Sun., Board Meeting, 1 p.m., Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.

April 18, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on spring wildflowers at Widewater. Meet at 10 a.m. at the parking lot opposite the Old Anglers Inn. We will stay on the towpath and walk at a leisurely pace. Bring lunch, wear sturdy shoes, and bring wildflower books of your choice. Contact Marion Robertson (morobertson@verizon.net or 301-657-8992).

April 25, Sat., Annual Douglas Memorial Hike and Dinner. Refer to the article on page 1 and the enclosed reservation form. Contact Chris Cerniglia at programs@candocanal.org.

April 25, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on birds, Rileys Lock, 8 a.m. to about 11 a.m. Kurt Schwarz of the Maryland Ornithological Society will lead the group upstream. Contact Marion Robertson (morobertson@verizon.net or 301-657-8992).

May 8, Fri., Work party at Swains Lock, 9 a.m. For more information, contact Pat White at hikemaster@candocanal.org or 301-977-5628.

May 24, Sun., Joint Picnic, C&OCA and Friends of the Historic Great Falls Tavern, 5:30 p.m., aboard the *Charles F. Mercer* at Great Falls. Reservations required. Contact Don Harrison (donh811@verizon.net).

May 30, Sat., Continuing Hike Series: 10:30 a.m., downstream from Point of Rocks (mile 48.2). Contact Pat White (hikemaster@candocanal.org or 301-977-5628)

June 6, Sat., Presidents' Day Breakfast at 9 a.m. at Bill's Place in Little Orleans, Md., celebrating Association presidents and enjoying general fellowship. Optional tour of historic Woodmont Lodge at noon. Refer to article on page 3 and the enclosed registration form. Contact: Barbara Sheridan (programs@candocanal.org or 301-752-5436). Noon: optional tour of historic Woodmont Lodge, \$4 per person.

June 6, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on tree identification, 10 a.m., Dickerson Conservation Area. Second in a series of three walks in the same location to observe seasonal differences. Contact Carol Ivory at carolivory@verizon.net or 703-869-1538 (cell).

June 7, Sun., Board Meeting, 1 p.m., Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St.

June 12, Fri., Work party at Swains Lock, 9 a.m. For more information, contact Pat White at hikemaster@candocanal.org or 301-977-5628.

June 13, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on tree identification at Dickerson Conservation Area, 10 a.m. Second in a series of three walks in the same location to observe seasonal differences. Contact Carol Ivory at carolivory@verizon.net or 703-869-1538.

June 13-14, Sat.-Sun., Two one-day paddle trips on the Monocacy River. Frederick to Lily Pons (Sat.), Lily Pons to Potomac (Sun). Reservations required. Contact Barbara Sheridan (canoemaster@candocanal.org or 301-752-5436).

June 20, Sat., Nature Walk along the towpath to view dragonflies, about 4 miles total between Oldtown and Lock 68, meeting at 10 a.m. Contact Steve Dean for directions and details at levelwalker@candocanal.org or 301-904-9068.

June 27-28, Sat.-Sun., Montgomery County Heritage Days, various sites. For more information, visit <http://www.heritagemontgomery.org>.

July 18, Sat., Paddle trip, Brunswick to Monocacy. Reservations required. Contact Bill Burton at canoemaster@candocanal.org or 703-801-0963.

Aug. 2, Sun., Board Meeting, 1 p.m., Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.

Aug. 8, Sat., Nature Walk along the towpath to view dragonflies. Meet at 10 a.m. Location TBD. Contact Steve Dean for details at levelwalker@candocanal.org or 301-904-9068.

Aug. 21-23, Fri.-Sun., Paddle trip in Paw Paw Bends area. Reservations required. Contact Barbara Sheridan at canoemaster@candocanal.org or 301-752-5436.

Aug. 22-23, Sat.-Sun., Williamsport C&O Canal Days. Events will be taking place in various areas of the town. Contact: Tom Perry, 301-223-7010.

Sept. 7-10 Mon.-Thu. World Canals Conference, Ghent, Belgium. For more information, see [www.wccghent2015.com](http://www.wccghent2015.com).

Sept. 19, Sat., Paddle trip, Old Patowmack Canal, VA. Reservations required. Contact Bill Burton at canoemaster@candocanal.org or 703-801-0963.

Sept. 26, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on birds, 8 a.m. to about 11 a.m., location TBD. Kurt Schwarz of the Maryland Ornithological Society will lead the group. Contact Marion Robertson (morobertson@verizon.net or 301-657-8992).

Sept. 27, Sun., Continuing Hike Series: 10:30 a.m., upstream from Town Creek (Mile 162). Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).

Oct. 4, Sun., Board Meeting, 1 p.m., Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St.

Oct. 7-12, Wed.-Mon., Through bike ride, Cumberland to Georgetown. No sag wagon provided. Reservations required, no later than September 16. Limited to 20 riders. Contact: Pat Hopson, 703-379-1795 or phopson727@verizon.net.

Oct. 24, Sat., Annual Heritage Hike and Dinner. Details will be in the September *Along the Towpath*. Contact Chris Cerniglia at programs@candocanal.org.

Oct 31, Sat., Nature Walk focusing on tree identification, 10 a.m., Dickerson Conservation Area, Third in a series of three walks in the same location to observe seasonal differences. Contact Carol Ivory at carolivory@verizon.net or 703-869-1538.

Nov. 23, Mon., Continuing Hike Series: 10:30 a.m., downstream from Licking Creek. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).

Dec. 6, Sun., Board Meeting, 1 p.m., Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.

Dec. 13, Sun., Frostbite Hike, Washington City Canal, 10:30 a.m. Contact Bill Holdsworth (301-762-9376 or website@candocanal.org).

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	John Noel
Superintendent's Secretary	301-714-2201	Annette Martin
Chief Ranger	301-714-2222	Ed Wenschhof
Administrative Officer	301-714-2204	Connie Hufford
Chief of Resource Mgmt.	301-714-2210	Chris Stubbs
Chief of Maintenance	301-714-2239	Greg Kniesler
Chief of Interpretation, Education and Partnerships	301-714-2238	Catherine Bragaw, Acting
Partnerships Coordinator	301-491-2465	Daniel Filer
Volunteer Coordinator	301-491-7309	Emily Hewitt
Project Management	301-714-2239	TJ Stottlemeyer, Acting
Historian	301-714-2236	Ahna Wilson
Librarian	301-714-2220	Karen Gray
Safety Officer	301-745-5804	John Adams
IT Specialist	301-745-5817	John Lampard

**Palisades District** Milepost 0 (Tidelock) to Mile 42.19 (Monocacy River)  
11710 MacArthur Blvd, Potomac MD 20854

District Manager	301-491-6265	Catherine Bragaw
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 DC 20007

**Great Falls Tavern Visitor Ctr** 301-767-3714  
11710 MacArthur Blvd, Potomac MD 20854

**Western Maryland District, mile 42.19 (Monocacy River) to Milepost 184.5 (Canal Terminus, Cumberland, MD)**

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	Ben Helwig
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**Hancock Visitor Center** 301-745-5877  
439 East Main St., Hancock MD 21750

Supervisory Park Ranger	Rita Knox
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**Cumberland Visitor Center** 301-722-8226  
Western Maryland Station, Cumberland MD 21502

Supervisory Park Ranger	Rita Knox
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#### OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

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

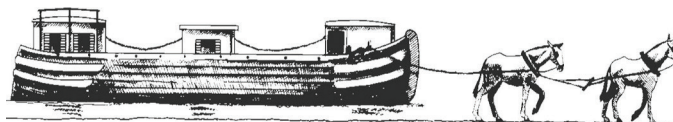
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**Editor:** Steve Dean

**Associate Editors:** Dave Johnson, Don Juran, Nancy Long, Ned Preston, and Marjorie Richman



## 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 in 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 [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org). The webmaster is webmaster@candocanal.org. C&OCA also maintains a telephone number for recorded information and inquiries: 301-983-0825.

#### 2015 Association Officers

**President:** Barbara Sheridan, 11550 Farm Dr., La Plata, MD 20646-4402, 301-752-5436, president@candocanal.org.

**First Vice President:** Rod Mackler, 944 N. Potomac St., Arlington VA 22205, 703-536-1737, firstvp@candocanal.org.

**Second Vice President & Level Walker Chairman:** Steve Dean, P.O. Box 132, Saint Leonard, MD 20685-0132, 301-904-9068, levelwalker@candocanal.org.

**Secretary:** Susan VanHaften, 944 N. Potomac St., Arlington VA 22205, 703-536-1737, secretary@candocanal.org.

**Treasurer:** Richard Radhe, 8902 Skyrock Court, Columbia, MD 21046, 410-302-2721, treasurer@candocanal.org.

**Information Officer:** Pat White, 66 Oak Shade Road, Gaithersburg MD 20878, 301-977-5628, inquiries@candocanal.org.

**Board of Directors:** (terms expire in 2018): Bill Burton, Dick Ebersole, Kerry Gruber, Christine Holdsworth, Anthony Laing. (terms expire in 2017): Chris Cerniglia, Jill Craig, Harry deMoll, George Kennett, Doug Zveare. (terms expire in 2016): David M. Johnson, Tom Lightfoot, William R. Stewart, Craig Roberts, Marion Robertson.

**Committees** (contact at C&OCA address/tel. no. above): Archives, Susan VanHaften; Auditing, John Wheeler; By-laws, Dave Johnson; Editorial Review, Steve Dean; Environmental, Rod Mackler; Festivals, Rita Bauman; Finance, Richard Radhe; Legal Advisory, John Wheeler; Level Walkers, Steve Dean; Membership, William R. Stewart; Nature, Marion Robertson; Nominating, Steve Dean; Programs, Chris Cerniglia; Sales, Jill Craig; Special Projects, vacant; Volunteers in the Park (VIP), Jim Heins; Youth, vacant.

CHESAPEAKE & OHIO CANAL ASSOCIATION INC.

P.O. Box 366

Glen Echo, MD 20812-0366

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*Campers at the Pigmans Ferry hiker-biker campsite and curious tow-path travelers are treated to a view of a beautiful culvert on Mile 169. Culvert 221 carries a small stream and features a hammer dressed sandstone arch and brick lined barrel. The berm side of the culvert adjoins another culvert under the Western Maryland Railway. In the summer an inviting breath of cool air is noticeable at the culvert arch. Photo by Steve Dean*

Stay Connected!

Our website, [www.candocanal.org](http://www.candocanal.org) – Visit it regularly and add it to your favorites or bookmarks. Also check out our access guide with your computer or smart phone at [www.candocanal.org/access.html](http://www.candocanal.org/access.html).

Facebook – If you have a Facebook account, look for “C&O Canal Association” and “Like” us. If you are not on Facebook, go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and register (there is no cost), and then look for us.

Email – C&OCA members may receive our periodic updates by mail. If you haven’t been getting those and would like to, please send your request to [communicator@candocanal.org](mailto:communicator@candocanal.org).



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