

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 LI

June 2019

Number 2

From Ruin to Restoration: The Conococheague Aqueduct

By Stephanie Spencer

Introduction

For many people, the name “Cushwa” brings to mind the quaint town of Williamsport, Maryland, a red brick warehouse with those six letters plastered on the side, or a small section of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal). For others, it stirs up memories of educational programs and boat tours in the watered basin. The Conococheague Aqueduct, which spans the creek of the same name, is another grand feature associated with the name “Cushwa.”

The Conococheague Aqueduct is the fifth of 11 aqueducts along the C&O Canal and is located at Mile 99.80. Aqueducts are “water bridges” that carry the canal and boats over creeks or rivers flowing into the Potomac River. They are larger than the culverts that carry streams beneath the canal and the towpath. Built in 1833 and 1834, the Conococheague

Aqueduct has three 60-foot arches, extending 196 feet between its north and south abutments, and was originally constructed of blue limestone from nearby quarries. The structure opened for navigation in 1835, 15 years before the official canal opening in 1850.

The Past

Thirteen years after the canal’s opening, the Civil War impacted the aqueduct. In 1863, Confederate soldiers damaged the aqueduct in an attempt to stop a Union transport of coal to Georgetown. The repairs from this damage took four days before the canal was operational once again.

Two years later, the upstream berm – outer canal wall – collapsed into the creek due to freezing and thawing, water pressure from the creek, and Civil War cannon damage.

(Continued on page 6)



Downstream side of Conococheague Aqueduct in 2010 – Photo by Steve Dean

President's Report

By Bill Holdsworth

One of the pleasures of being president of the Association is being empowered to honor people who have made significant contributions to the canal. I have had two such occasions in recent months.

I presented Jim Heins with a William O. Douglas Award at the Douglas Hike dinner May 4. The text of the award read:

In recognition of this volunteer service for the Chesapeake & Ohio National Historical Park. His "can do" spirit, innovative ideas and leadership contribute to the success of numerous park projects and provide an outstanding example to other volunteers.

Jim revived the Volunteers-in-Park team in the early 2000s. Over the years I have been amazed at the accomplishments of this group. If you have been part of Jim's team, please take a bow.

On April 5, I presented another William O. Douglas award to Rita Knox at her retirement celebration. The text of her award read:

In recognition of over 33 years of invaluable service to the National Park Service and Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park as an outstanding steward of the park and a friend to the people treasure it.

Rita has been a presence at the Cumberland Visitor Center as long I remember. It will be strange not to see her on future visits. We wish her the best in her retirement.

With the government shutdown behind us (for now), park activities are resuming at their normal busy pace.

- Ribbon cutting ceremony for the restoration of Swains Lockhouse is scheduled for 11 a.m., June 28.
- Water is flowing in the Georgetown section of the canal again, with the completion of the restoration of Locks 3 and 4.
- I submitted a letter of support for the park's application for a 2019 Transportation Alternatives Program grant. The grant from the state of Maryland would be used for towpath resurfacing. The park received similar grants in 2017 and 2018.
- Weather continues to frustrate the park's attempt to restore towpath continuity after the culvert collapse at Little Catoctin Creek. A rain storm washed away a temporary crossing at creek level. The park is now looking to install a pre-fabricated bridge on the towpath.

Along with many others, I enjoyed the Douglas Memorial Weekend festivities around Williamsport. The Association is now 65 years old. I like to think we aren't ready for retirement yet.



Rita Knox receives the Douglas Award from Bill Holdsworth in Cumberland – Photo by Steve Dean



Bill Holdsworth presents the Douglas Award to Jim Heins at the Potomac Fish and Game Club – Photo by Steve Dean

2021 World Canals Conference Update

By Bill Holdsworth

The Association's World Canals Conference committee continues its work to prepare for the event, which is just over two years away.

Venue visits – In early March the conference committee visited three potential conference sites: the Maryland Theatre, Hagerstown Community College and the Ramada Inn. Each site has advantages and disadvantages. The committee hopes to make a decision early this summer.

Inland Waterways International is the sponsoring organization for the WCC. Their president, David Edwards-May, is planning a visit to this area in June. We hope to introduce him to the C&O Canal and Hagerstown, giving him a preview of the 2021 festivities.

Conference partners – Our 2021 conference has drawn regional interest. Our local organizing committee has representatives from several organizations. The towns of WilliamSPORT, Hancock, and Shepherdstown have expressed interest in conference events.

The Virginia Canals and Navigations Society has approached us about participating in the 2021 WCC. They operate a historic bateau, a shallow-draft, flat-bottomed boat used on Americans waterways in the early 19th century.

Website – Our prototype website has been deployed. There has been more work done behind the scenes, but it's not ready for prime time yet.

Logo – The logo that graces the center of this article could change. We adopted the logo last fall, but new, creative ideas have emerged from our local organizing committee. We will take a look at the new submissions

and decide whether to make a change. Stay tuned.

Matched donations – We hope Association members will continue their generous support for the conference. Your donations are doubly effective. An anonymous donor has promised to match any member donations dollar-for-dollar up to a limit of \$10,000. The opportunity remains open.



Shuttle Around Towpath Breach Available

The Canal Towns Partnership (CTP), a group of nine communities surrounding the C&O Canal National Historical Park, is offering a free shuttle to transport C&O Canal cyclists and hikers around the towpath washout between Mile 48 at Point of Rocks and Mile 55 at Brunswick.

The washout was caused by flash flooding of the Little Catoctin Creek during a May 2018 storm, which washed out historic Culvert 82, taking a portion of the towpath with it. The park plans to construct a temporary low-water crossing, before a permanent bridge can be installed later in 2019. Until the crossing is in place, there is no way to cross the breach, short of wading across when water levels permit. High-speed traffic and a railroad crossing make bypassing the breach via the surrounding roadways dangerous.

The shuttle is run by River and Trail Outfitters in Knoxville, Md. and will follow this schedule from May 25 to July 7:

10 a.m. daily from Brunswick (Mile 55) next to MARC train station, S. Maple Ave.

11 a.m. daily from Point of Rocks (Mile 48) at Community Commons Park, Monroe St.

The shuttle is first come, first served and is only free at the scheduled times. Riders should plan to arrive 15 minutes early, as shuttles leave promptly at the times posted. Each shuttle will transport up to the first 10 riders per trip. Additional paid shuttles may be scheduled through River and Trail Outfitters, 301-834-9950.

The sponsors of the free shuttle are the Canal Towns Partnership, C&O Canal Trust, Visit Frederick, Visit Hagerstown, City of Brunswick, Brunswick Main Street, Greater Brunswick Area Chamber of Commerce, Town of Hancock, Brunswick Area Recreation Council, and Harpers Ferry Merchants Association.

Information is available online at www.canaltrust.org/shuttle.

Donors to Association Funds

February 1 to April 30, 2019

Ken Rollins C&O Canal Fund – R

– *A revolving fund to support current projects and programs in and for the C&O Canal National Historical Park.*

Davies Legal Fund – D

– *Supports the Association's involvement in activities such as opposition to the transfer of public land to any individual or enterprise for private use.*

Rachel Stewart Swains Lock Area Fund – S

– *Funds improvements to the area around Swains Lock as they are identified in conjunction with the National Park Service.*

2021 World Canals Conference Fund – W

– *Funds to help support the 2021 World Canals Conference at the C&O Canal. The first \$10,000 raised will be matched dollar-for-dollar by an anonymous donor.*

James Alden – *R, D, S, W*

John Bogdan Jr – *R, D*

Catherine Bragaw – *W*

Charles & Mary Lois Brummitt – *R*

Wayne & Christine Cerniglia – *R, S, W*

C.L. & J.L. Clark – *R*

Norman J. Cook – *D*

Joseph M. D'Amico – *S*

Lynn DeForge – *R*

Louise De La Vergne – *W*

Douglas & Frances Donnell – *R, W*

Jude & Mary Franklin – *R*

Harold B. Garrett – *W*

Robert J. Graul – *R, S*

Karen M. Gray – *D, W*

James & Linda Hahn – *R, D, S, W*

Thomas B. Hall – *R*

John C. Harden – *R, D, S, W*

Judith Hecht – *R*

Martin Heavner – *W*

William & Christine Holdsworth – *R*

Joseph T. Howard – *R*

Richard M. Jones – *S*

Ann Kelton – *S*

Roger & Nancy Kief – *W*

Paul T. Langevin – *R*

Thomas & Linda Lightfoot – *S*

Gage Linden – *R, W*

James MacDonald – *R*

Linda & Michael Marmer – *W*

Margie Martin – *R*

Phillip & Luella Mast – *S, W*

Kevin & Jane McCall – *R*

John & Barbara McGraw – *S*

Edward Terhune Miller – *R, D, S, W*

Emil Moskovich – *R, W*

Martha Nebb – *W*

Louis & Janice Odom – *R, D, W*

Thomas & Linda Perry – *R, S*

Patricia M. Pickering – *R, D, W*

Lia & David Royle – *R*

M.G. & C.F. Ryschkewitsch – *R, W*

Kate Savage – *S*

David L. Scally – *R, D, S, W*

Raphael & Katherine Semmes
– *R, D, S, W*

Robin Sue & Malcolm Skiver – *R*

Carol C. Smith – *R*

Teresa Thacker – *W*

David & Debra Trask – *R*

Patricia Ann White – *W*

Evelyn & Ronald Williams
– *R, D, S, W*

In Memory of Randy Astarb

Jane & Norman Liebow – *R*

In Memory of Deacon Brew

Marilyn Milley – *R*

In Memory of Robert Carman

Jane Johnston – *R*

In Honor of Skip Magee

James MacDonald – *R*

In Memory of Marion Robertson

Bruce Adams – *R*

Martina Anderson – *R*

Robert Eakin – *R*

Bernard Foster III – *R*

Jessica Greene – *R*

William & Christine Holdsworth – *R*

Solveig Kramer – *R*

Michael Raff – *R*

Mary Dell Robertson, on behalf of herself and her daughters – Susan Robertson Jaeger, Jean Robertson Metzger, Carolyn Robertson Claverie, and Helen Robertson Jones – *R*

Dee Schofield – *R*

Nancy Schnure – *R*

Arlene Sidell – *R*

James Walsh – *R*

John Wheeler – *R*

In Memory of Rachel Stewart

Adrian R. Stewart – *S*

Fletcher's Cove Ribbon Cutting

By Rod Mackler

On Friday, April 12, the Friends of Fletcher's Cove hosted a ribbon-cutting and shad planking to open the new dock at the prime fishing spot in the C&O Canal National Historical Park. The dock was built by the Park and Guest Services, Inc., the current concessionaire for the bait shack and boat rental facility at the cove. The dock was ready for shad season and all of the boats are on the river on a decent day. The event enabled the Friends to highlight the short-term success – clearing tons of debris that had blocked the site – and the longer-term problem – the changing hydraulics that cause the cove to silt in. Captain John Smith mapped the cove itself in 1608, but it is now in danger of disappearing under the mud. Two days before the event Jim Heins and his team of Association volunteers built six new picnic tables that were used as seating for the program.



Shad Planing – These shad were caught further down the Chesapeake Bay. Shad caught at Fletcher's are strictly catch-and-release. – Photo by Rod Mackler



Fletcher's Ribbon Cutting – (l-r) Congressman Jamie Raskin, C&O Canal National Historical Park Superintendent Kevin Brandt, Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt, Guest Services Inc. President Gerry Gabrys, Director of the District Department of the Energy and Environment Tommy Wells and President of the Potomac Conservancy Hedrick Belin. – Photo courtesy of Mike Bailey, Friends of Fletcher's Cove

C&OCA Welcomes New Members

Audrey Clement, Alexandria, Va.

David Irvine, Great Cacapon, W.Va.

Wendell & Allison Jones, Great Cacapon, W.Va.

Rita Knox, Bittering, Md.

Debbie & Tony Lodato, South Riding, Va.

Dick Mayberry, Fredrick, Md.

Elaine Stonebraker, Tall Timbers, Md.

Katherine White, Frederick, Md.

*If you ever have any membership questions, please contact
Will Stewart, Membership Chair, at membership@candocanal.org.*

This collapse was temporarily repaired with a wooden trunk. The temporary repairs remained in place until 1870 when the berm wall and the spandrels, the triangular portion between the arch and the wall, were rebuilt with stone.

One of the aqueduct's most significant structural events occurred in 1920. Canal boat number 73, captained by Frank Myers, nudged the berm wall, causing it to waver and then collapse. Although the crew and mules escaped, the boat fell into the creek below. The canal closed for over four months before repairs, which included a timber berm wall, were completed. The aqueduct then functioned until flooding caused the canal to close in 1924. Meanwhile, canal boat number 73 remained in the creek until it was carried away by the large flood of 1936.

The Conococheague Aqueduct remained in its 1920s condition until stabilization efforts began in the 1950s. It was then stabilized with steel tie rods and concrete in 1962, which maintained the structure until the 1980s when the National Park Service (NPS) reconstructed the wing walls. A few years later, many aqueduct stones were reclaimed from the creek in hopes that they would be used to rebuild the aqueduct in the future.

In 1995, the NPS established the old Cushwa Warehouse, located a short distance from the aqueduct, as a C&O Canal visitor center. More stabilization efforts occurred on the aqueduct in 2000, which held the structure until the current construction efforts that began in 2017.

The Present

A nearly 10 million dollar restoration project was awarded to Corman Construction, Inc. in June 2017. The purpose of this project is "to rehabilitate the Conococheague Aqueduct to a functioning, sustainable condition using a combination of historic and modern materials and methods," says Joe Reed, park civil engineer. The use of modern materials and engineering standards will result in a safe and sustainable structure that is also historically accurate. The restored aqueduct will reflect the 1920s era, which is consistent with the surrounding area, including the Cushwa Basin, Visitor Center, and Trolley Barn.

Construction work first began with repairs to the aqueduct piers and abutments. In 2017 and throughout 2018, the contractor stabilized the two piers and the two abutments by adding stainless steel rebar reinforcement covered with concrete. These new additions were tied into the surrounding bedrock in effort to protect the aqueduct from the scouring effects of the creek.

At the same time, the contractor worked to remove stones from the creek, similar to the efforts conducted by the NPS in the 1980s. These stones came from the past berm wall failures; not all of the stones were collected in past recovery efforts. In order to allow for in-water work on the piers and abutments, the stones had to be removed and were later buried on-site.

Although a majority of the coping stones, flat stones on the top of the downstream towpath wall, were replaced with new stones in 2018, as many of the original stones as possible



Above – 1904: View of aqueduct from southeast wing wall – Photo C&O Canal NHP, National Park Service

Below – 1920: Collapse of berm wall with canal boat in the creek – Photo C&O Canal NHP, National Park Service



1920: Beginning of repairs after the berm wall collapse – Photo C&O Canal NHP, National Park Service



1920: Completed berm wall repairs with timber – Photo C&O Canal NHP, National Park Service

were salvaged and reused. The repairs were made due to the rough shape of the wall. There were large patches of concrete, from past repairs, visible along the wall. A rough patch on the northern arch wall, west side, was an attempt at patching up the damage, caused during the Civil War, with small rubble stones. There were also fractures in some of the existing, historic stones. The new stone is from North-eastern Pennsylvania and is very similar to limestone, the material of the historic stones. In order to maintain the same stone texture as the historic stones, each of the new stones was sandblasted.

During the construction efforts, a nine and a half inch long Civil War artillery shell was found near the north end of the aqueduct, several feet below the ground. The three-inch diameter Whitworth bolt is believed to be a remnant of the war damage that caused the canal to use rubble stones in place of the damaged coping stones. *Readers are reminded that they should never remove anything from the park, including artifacts and stones.*

Completed in April 2019, the towpath side of the prism portion of the aqueduct was lined with concrete, stamped to resemble stone, and reinforced with stainless steel. In order to assist with the water tightness, an additive was added to the concrete mixture. The original, historic stone wall is protected by a bond breaker placed between it and the modern concrete wall. Amid the many steps in the aqueduct restoration project, contractors also relocated the air compressor building further from the aqueduct and closer to the current location of



Above – Civil War artillery shell found near the aqueduct and a core sample of the original limestone – Photo by Stephanie Spencer

Middle – Contractors work on reinforcing the piers and abutments – Photo by Joe Reed, C&O Canal NHP Civil Engineer

Bottom – Stones are removed from the creek – Photo by Joe Reed



the comfort station and picnic area. This opened up the views from the parking lot to the aqueduct.

While much has already been done to restore the Conococheague Aqueduct, much work remains underway. Currently, the contractor is finishing up preparations on the 450 or so feet of canal prism upstream of the aqueduct. This section of prism is lined with a PVC liner, similar to that used in landfills, and covered with fill dirt. On the Cushwa Basin side, the prism is lined with clay and a small dam will be put in place to maintain minimal water levels in the basin. During the winter months, the aqueduct and upstream prism will be drained, but the dam allows for the remaining water to freeze in the Cushwa basin for ice skating.

Ongoing work also includes rebuilding and repointing the masonry walls on either side of the aqueduct, placing metal railings along the downstream berm wall, and installing the upstream berm wall. The metal railings are expected to be in place within the next few weeks and are similar to the historic railings. The one notable difference is that the new ones are taller for safety purposes.

The upstream berm wall is going to be one of the most noticeable features of the newly restored aqueduct. This outer wall will reflect the repairs made after canal boat 73 fell through the wall and into the creek below. While reconstructing the berm wall using timber is not possible due to its inability to withstand boat impacts, modern methods allow concrete to be made to look like wood. The concrete

is waterproof and has a higher resistance to boat damage. It will also be stamped and stained to resemble the wood surface of the 1920 repairs.

“During the design process, the engineers and architects developed a concept on what and how to build, with the contractor making it a reality,” Greg Kniesler, Chief of Maintenance, adds. “With the plan for a concrete wall formed to look like wood, we wanted to ensure the vision was achieved. The park leadership team was very involved in reviewing the mock-ups of the wall sections and the approval of the final product. Both walls, one formed to replicate stone and one to replicate wood, achieve the desired results.”

At the end of the project, the current canal crossing at the aqueduct will be removed. In its place, there will be a new crossing at the downstream Railroad Lift Bridge. Work is currently ongoing to build stairs and a walkway up, over, and across the historic bridge for visitors to access the opposite side of the canal. The park continues to investigate and pursue other crossing options over the canal prism.

The Future

In July 2019, the Conococheague Aqueduct will experience its first rewatersing during a leak test performed by the contractor. To assist with the rewatersing efforts, repairs to the water intake system are currently underway. Following the expected summer completion date, the aqueduct will be one of the only functioning transportation aqueducts in North America. The Cushwa Basin to Lock 44 is



Above – The towpath side of the aqueduct, stamped to resemble stone

Middle – The berm side of the trunk, stamped to resemble wood

Bottom – New and historic coping stones along the towpath wall – Photos by Joe Reed



currently watered and allows for seasonal interpretive boat tours, and the opening of the aqueduct will add an extra element to the already functioning section of the canal. Not only will visitors have the opportunity to enjoy the previously watered sections, they will also have the chance to take boat tours across the aqueduct and around 450 feet upstream of the aqueduct, and then return to the basin.

The aqueduct will be rewatersed for the first time in almost a century, making it a unique sight to behold. Without the ongoing stabilization and repair efforts, the aqueduct would likely deteriorate due to its poor condition, and no one would have the chance to enjoy its potential. The ongoing project “will ensure that the rich history of the structure and engineering significance will continue to be enjoyed by future generations,” says Reed. Being the most publicly accessible aqueduct on the canal, the aqueduct is a major highlight in the park and a popular location for visitors. In the coming months and years, take in the unique characteristics of the Conococheague Aqueduct and learn about its rich history. Thanks to the restoration efforts, the amazing structure will be around for years to come.

Stephanie Spencer is a professional photographer and journalist from Pennsylvania who graduated from the University of Maryland University College. She currently works at the C&O Canal National Historical Park headquarters as the Maintenance Division's Facility Services Assistant.

C&O Canal Project Updates

By Stephanie Spencer

The following updates are for projects that were reported in *Along the Towpath* in 2018.

Towpath Resurfacing and the Towpath Master Plan

Towpath resurfacing efforts throughout the park are ongoing, by both park staff and construction companies. The contractor resurfaced a 5-mile section of towpath between Edwards Ferry (Mile 30.8) and Whites Ferry (Mile 35.5) with AASHTO #10 surface material. Currently, the contractor is resurfacing a 17-mile section between Brunswick (Mile 55) and Shepherdstown (Mile 72). Horse traffic is prohibited on the new surface until the surface has hardened and the signage is removed. This towpath section is expected to be complete by fall of 2019, and an 18-mile stretch of towpath will be resurfaced in 2020.

National Park Service staff are diligently working to repair much of the 2018 flood damage and towpath areas not covered under the construction projects. Since August of 2017, park staff have rehabilitated around 32 miles of towpath between Licking Creek Aqueduct (Mile 116.04) and Dam 4 (Mile 84.4).

Refer to the June, 2018 issue for the original article.

Culvert 82 Bypass

In May 2018, historic Culvert 82 (Mile 52.5) washed away during a flood event. One year has passed since the event, and crossing solutions remain underway. Near the end of 2018, National Park Service staff attempted an installation of a temporary bridge across Little Catoctin Creek. Due to frequent rain and high water levels, the bridge materials were washed away and the efforts ceased. Currently, the C&O Canal is waiting on permits in order to begin a temporary, low-water crossing. Frequent rains and flash flooding in the creek prevent the park from putting in the temporary crossing, due

to high water levels. The area is routinely flooded, causing low-water crossing efforts to be temporary and expendable. The temporary crossing will remain in place until a permanent solution, in the form of a new towpath bridge, is installed. The permanent bridge is expected to be in place by the end of 2019.

Refer to the September, 2018 issue for the original article. Details of a bypass shuttle are posted on page 3 of this issue.

Repair Watered Structures Locks 5-22

Since December 2017, work has continued to progress on the \$7.4 million “Repair to Various Watered Structures between Locks 5 -22” project, in Montgomery County, Md. The purpose of the project is to improve several locks, waste weirs, bridges, and other water control structures within one of the most popular segments of the C&O Canal. These improvements will help the park’s historic structures withstand impacts from Potomac River floods and make the features easier to maintain. Currently, there are no detours in effect for this project. In May 2019, the construction crews re-opened the towpath at the last remaining detour at Rock Run (Mile 8.93). A new detour will go into effect at Lock 19 (Mile 14.17) in the near future.

With over 90% of the contract work completed, crews are currently installing timber lock gates and miter sills, raised steps against which the lock gates shut, at Locks 17, 18, and 19. Anticipated future work includes stabilizing a failed stone wall just downstream of Lock 19, which supports the towpath, and stabilizing a failing radius wall on historic Lock 17. Construction is currently anticipated to be completed in summer of 2019.

Refer to the December, 2018 issue for the original article.



Towpath at Whites Ferry before resurfacing



Towpath at Whites Ferry after resurfacing – Both photos by Brian Hixon, C&O Canal National Historical Park, National Park Service

Accompanied by the Past

By Karen Gray

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

Who Owns the Boat?

In the 1970s and 1980s, following the creation of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, both National Park Service staff and private individuals began to do research on the canal and publish their studies. Most notable among these people were NPS historian Harlan D. Unrau and Thomas Hahn. Previously the only substantive work had been Walter S. Sanderlin's, *The Great National Project*.¹ While still invaluable resources, these early works were based on limited sources of information and Hahn in particular relied on a great deal of oral and anecdotal information. The result was significant misunderstandings and errors that became enshrined as historical fact in the popular mind and continue today to be repeated in new canal materials and media.²

Of the misunderstandings arising from early canal publications, one of the most durable is the belief that the norm on the C&O Canal was for captains to own their boat and operate it with the help of their wives and children for whom it was often also home. In recent years, with access to many more sources of information on the canal, it has become clear that such was not the case and the reality is far more complex—and far more interesting.

It's now recognized that the 1891–1923 era of navigation on the canal, to which those interviewed in oral histories belonged, was in important ways different from that before the great flood of June 1889 that put the canal company into bankruptcy. By the end of 1890 the C&O Canal Company was controlled by trustees representing holders of C&O Canal bonds from 1840 and 1878. These trustees were overseen by the equity court in Washington County, Maryland. That court reviewed and approved or rejected significant decisions concerning the canal and its operation (although often with a state appellate court ruling on the lower court's decision). As a consequence, it is correct to refer to those decades as the Trusteeship Era.

Boat Ownership in the Trusteeship Era (1891–1923)

One of the most significant differences in this period is the lack of independent boatmen who owned their own boats. After the canal re-opened in sections in the summer and fall

of 1891, there were apparently about 100–150 boats that could be repaired and put back into service. How many of those had been owner-operated boats at the time of the flood is unknown, but evidence suggests that very few were, if any. Further, the ownership of any mortgaged boat would have reverted to the mortgage holder during the two years of disuse when the required payments could not have made.³

A telling article in the *Washington Evening Star* on March 16, 1893 (the beginning of the second full operating season after the 2-year closure) stated:

At the close of last season about 150 boats were engaged in the canal trade, but as soon as the weather opens it is known that at least 160 will be equipped and captained. The Consolidation Coal Company [CCC] have made known their intention to immediately build 10 new boats, and bids are now being sent in by builders.

By this time, it appears that the CCC is the primary if not sole carrier of coal on the C&O Canal. It is also the primary, if not the only company mining coal in Maryland's Georges Creek coal region.

Another article in the *Evening Star* on April 10, 1893, includes a discussion with canal boat captain, A. D. McCordle, who explained why captains can no longer make any significant money working on boats. He specifically reported that for a typical trip from Cumberland to Georgetown with 115 tons of coal, the captains were paid about \$86—their trippage income. From that they must pay \$40 a month for a crew of two “muleteers” and two “steersmen,” purchase food for everyone on the boat, as well as pay the costs associated with the mules (feed, shoes, etc.), and boat equipment such as tow and other ropes, etc. Finally, they must pay \$15 a trip to the owner of their mules. He concludes: “If we buy our mules, they cost us \$200 apiece and harness costs \$25 a set. A barge would cost us all the way from \$700 to \$1,000.” Clearly the norm as this man represents it, is that of a captain who can't buy either his boat or his mules and operates the boat with crew he hires out of his trippage income.

The biggest cost appears to be that of crew, and it is apparent from newspaper reports concerning captain complaints that the cost of wages is a major and continuing issue. Ultimately in these last decades of the canal's operation (1891–1923), it appears to drive a growing use of wives and children to operate the boat. Equally clear is that the Consolidation Coal Company itself provides boats that carry its coal and this correlates with its formation of the Canal Towage Company (CTC) in 1903.

What drove the CCC to form the CTC was the developing regulatory and legal opposition to the practice of companies both extracting natural resources *and* hauling their own products to market, or controlling the cost of such transport. This complex legal development is reflected in the 1903 Elkins Act and subsequent 1906 Hepburn Acts that I will not deal with here. What is significant is that the CCC boats were transferred to the CTC and that the CTC took over any other coal boats operating at that time either through purchase or lease. The result is that, beginning in 1903, all coal boats are CTC boats and all captains' work for the CTC. While boat people operating coal boats generally spoke of their boat as if they owned it, they did not.



Consolidation Coal Co. boat No. 3 – Image courtesy of the Western Maryland Historical Library

Consequently, it can be said with considerable certainty that in the 1891–1923 period, captains operated boats they did not own and some utilized wives and children to avoid having to pay the wages of crew. Under the CTC arrangements, captains were paid less than before, but at a guaranteed amount per month (i.e., not per trip as previously) and were provided with their boat and mules. (Those owning their own mules were paid a trippage fee for their use.) The CTC company also covered the costs associated with the mules and boat supplies, in some years requiring captains to get their boat equipment and mule feed from specific stores or providers with whom the company made arrangements. Based on the 1923 Labor Department report on child labor on the canal,⁴ it appears that about 60 percent of the coal boats were family-operated in the post-WWI years of canal operation.

Boat Ownership Issues in the 1874–78 Era

It is apparent that many aspects of canal operations can't be reliably generalized across the 90 years of navigation on the C&O Canal.⁵ For example the 1831–1850 era as the canal opened in sections, was dominated by river boats and was unlike the subsequent operating decades dominated by the large freighters built primarily in Cumberland boatyards specifically for the canal. But even the 1850–1889 era reflects many changes, and generalizations about it must be very cautiously made. Consequently, in attempting a comparison with the Trusteeship Era situation on boat ownership and operation, I'll focus on only the mid-1870s, in many ways the canal's most important years and a period better documented than others.

On Aug. 25, 1874, a group of boatmen inaugurated a "strike," demanding that all of the shippers of coal should pay them the uniform price of \$1.35 per ton to Georgetown—10 cents more than the current going rate of \$1.25 per ton. The

group striking not only refused to carry coal for less than that amount, but by "intimidation and force" they prevented other boats from being loaded unless the shipper paid their captain their \$1.35 rate. Ultimately most of the coal companies agreed to pay the higher rate, but the strikers also demanded that all companies be prohibited from hiring any boatman willing to accept the \$1.25.⁶

The C&O Canal Company board of directors then established a committee to study the boatmen's complaints and on Sept. 17, 1874 held a special meeting to present a report from the committee. Present at the meeting, which lasted until 2 a.m., were not only representatives of the boatmen but also of three coal companies, coal gas interests, and owners of wharves in Georgetown. The article on the meeting and the canal board's report in the Sept. 23, 1874, *Cumberland Alleganian* newspaper does much to illuminate the financial pressures on boat captains, the coal companies that pay them to transport the coal, and others dependent on canal business—including of course the tolls-dependent canal company itself.

The report acknowledges that:

A majority of the boatmen have found during the present season, with all the economy possible to practice, they have not been able to pay expenses with freights at \$1.25 to Georgetown, and they know that without relief from some quarter, **their property must be sacrificed.**

The report also addresses the boatmen's belief that the coal companies will permanently accept the higher rate they are demanding *only if* the canal company reduces the tolls to compensate—a belief stated in a petition to the canal company board from the boatmen for such a decrease. In terms of that request the report provides a lengthy discussion of the tolls on coal and justification for their refusal to reduce them.

However, it is clear from the report that at this time it is precisely the issue of the ownership of the boat by the captain that is at the heart of the boatmen's concerns—a concern

lodged in the reference to the looming possibility that “their property must be sacrificed.” As it turns out, many of the captains are buying their boat from a coal company that initially paid for its construction with the intent of selling it under a mortgage to a boatman. The understanding of such sales was that the boatman would operate his boat for that company unless it has no coal to ship and another company does and pay off the mortgage by a trippage fee.

In other words, there was a widespread practice at that time to enter into a boat-buying arrangement with a coal company for which one would work. In 1874 the mortgage trippage fee was \$35 to \$40 per trip. As the report acknowledges, with all the expenses that the captains must cover out of their pay (crew, mules, food, boat supplies, etc.), without the high payments from the coal companies, they cannot also pay their mortgage trippage “and live” (i.e., make an income for themselves). Any captain unable to make their mortgage trippage payments would lose his boat. This practice appears to have been common for the CCC by 1870, with similar mortgages showing up with other companies and builders selling boats.

A few months later, as the canal prepared to open for the 1875 boating season, the issue of trippage fees paid to captains was once more at the center of the threat of a boatman’s strike. However, according to an April 20 article in the *Cumberland Alleganian*, the American Coal Company owned 63 boats that they were *renting* to captains for a \$35 trippage fee. In essence these boatmen were in a worse situation than those whose trippage fee went toward the purchase of their boat, but it is likely that these were men who could not make the down payment usually required or take on the subsequent trippage payments.

That same article from 1875 includes a quote from the Maryland Coal Company’s 1874 annual report in which its president, Henry Loveridge, stated that his company avoided “large outlays in property of the most perishable nature” by not owning boats, “unlike most C&O Canal shippers.” The wording is critical for two reasons: Firstly, it reflects an apparent attitude that even if being sold to boatmen under a trippage fee mortgage, the boats were still regarded in some ways as a company asset. This was valid as such boats comprised all or part of their reliable fleet and were certainly assets when the company held the mortgage. Secondly, as assets, boats were indeed “perishable” as they had a limited lifetime of around two decades, but also required often-expensive repairs and sometimes even rebuilding during that time—or might even be lost in a flood or one of the other threats to boats.

In any case, Loveridge goes on to explain that the Maryland Coal Company uses “independent boatmen” or what in some sources of the time are referred to as “outside boats.”

These were boats operated by a boatman who had no contractual arrangement with any coal company and could negotiate his fee for each trip with any company needing coal to be carried to some port. It does *not* necessarily mean that every independent boatman owned the boat he operated, as some boats were owned by a company other than a coal company or by an individual who owned several boats or simply chose not to operate his boat himself.

It must be noted that the “independent” or “outside” boatmen were deeply resented by the majority of boatmen who were obligated to serve a particular coal company, and they were also resented due to their ability to negotiate a lower cost for the shippers because they did not have a boat trippage fee.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to determine from the newspaper articles and other sources exactly how many boats were owner-operated at this time in the mid-1870s. The answer is tied up in variables such as how many trippage fee mortgages are successfully paid off and how many failed with the captain losing his boat—information we don’t have. It would also be interesting to know how often a captain defaulting in his payments or failing to meet the upkeep and operating requirements, etc. in his mortgage, had accrued any equity in the boat that he might collect. The CCC mortgages give the company the right to take the boat, advertise its sale, then sell it after a 10 days’ notice. The money from the sale according to the mortgage was to be used to pay the remainder due on the boat and cover the cost of the advertisement and sale. Depending on the condition of the boat at the time of its sale and the amount it sold for, it seems unlikely that any significant equity would ever be recovered.

William Bauman has transcribed an 1878 registry of canal boats that provides further insight on the complicated matter of boat ownership and operation. For most boats it includes the name of the boat, the captain and the owner, as well as the year built, the builder, and the company with which the captain has some kind of arrangement. A study of that registry reveals some very interesting statistics:

- 384 boats are included in the registry, not all of which are coal boats as a few carried grain, limestone or cement, etc.
- 39 boats, or about 10 percent of the total boats in the list, were built for the CCC. At this time the boats still had names but at some point CCC boats carried the company name and a number, like the later CTC boats. The captain for these boats is named, suggesting he always captained the same boat. However, as has been found in other studies of captains and the boats they operate, there are

some complexities. For example, David Yingling is listed as both owner and captain of two CCC boats as well as a third boat owned by Frederick Mertens.

- The American Coal Company that rented its boats to boatmen, had 61 boats or about 16 percent of the total boats in the registry.
- 169 of the boats appear as “owner-operated” boats and they constitute 44 percent of the total boats. However, 81 of those boats (about 48 percent), were employed by one of the other coal companies such as the *Blaen Avon*, *Borden* and *Hampshire*. The nature of captains’ obligation to those companies is unknown and may well have involved a mortgage trippage fee or other contractual requirement relative to the boat being used. At some point an effort should be made to track those buying a boat under a mortgage with its later operation, although the number of mortgages found are far less than the number of boats built and sold in the 1850–1889 years.
- Finally, the remaining 88 of the 169 “owner-operated” boats (about 52 percent) were “outside” boats. They constituted about 23 percent of the total boats on the list. As these were free from contractual obligations with a coal company, presumably their captains owned their boat outright or under a mortgage that had no such obligations. In either case they were likely the most independent of the boatmen in terms of the operation of their boats

The bottom line of this analysis is that: During the 1891–1923 Trusteeship all or almost all coal boat captains worked for a company owning their boat and that many were increasingly unable to pay crew wages and thus were likely forced to use unpaid family as crew. In comparison, during the mid-1870s, about a quarter of the boats operated as independent (i.e., “outside”) boats. These could negotiate for their cargo and their fee for transporting it, while the rest of the captains would be in a contractual arrangement with a coal company that paid a set per-trip fee from which they might have to pay a mortgage or rent trippage fee for their boat as well as pay their crew’s wages, their cost of supplies, and ultimately their own cost of living. The more I study the issue of boat ownership and operation on the C&O Canal, the more certain I am that it is unwise without specific information to the contrary, to assume that any given captain owned his boat or used family rather than paid crew to operate it.

Accompanied by the Past notes:

1. Originally published by Johns Hopkins Press in 1946, it was reprinted by AMS press in 1981 and since 2005 it is now available in paperback through Eastern National.
2. My own work (including these columns) provides excellent examples of writings by a researcher whose initial understandings must subsequently be corrected as more and sometimes better sources of information became available.
3. William Bauman’s transcription of mortgages for boats and/or mules, etc. are available on the C&O Canal Association’s website at www.candocanal.org.
4. Springer, Ethel M. *Canal Boat Children*, published under the US Dept. of Labor, Children’s Bureau and reprinted in the Monthly Labor Review, February 1923. The study was done in 1921 on the C&O Canal, Lehigh and Delaware Division canals in Pennsylvania, and the canals in New York state.
5. The years of operation are calculated from the opening of the first section in 1891 through the 1923 boat season, minus the two years of closure from June 1889 to the reopening after repairs beginning in the summer of 1891.
6. September 23, 1874 Cumberland *Alleganian*. Note that William Bauman’s transcripts of newspaper articles concerning the canal are available on the Association’s website.

Aqueduct Debris Cleanup



A fact of life for the canal aqueducts is the build-up of debris. Trees and large branches jam against the aqueduct piers and smaller debris progressively build-up and create a damming effect. Frequently, three or more of the seven arches of the Monocacy Aqueduct are blocked.

Jon Wolz observed a cleanup effort at the Monocacy Aqueduct in May, and photographed the efforts.

Nature Notes

By Marjorie Richman

Dandelions: The Useful Weed

The ubiquitous dandelion: found in so many places, despised in so many places, the pariah of the plant world. It wasn't always so. In Europe at the time of the migration to the new world, dandelions were highly valued for their medicinal qualities. Although constrained by what they could take on the voyage, an essential part of a family's luggage was a collection of tiny brown dandelion seeds carefully carried in packed containers. Upon arrival, one of the first tasks was to plant a garden for food and for the family medicine chest. It may be hard to believe that anyone would purposely plant dandelions in a garden, but that's apparently what they did.

At the time of European migration there were no pharmaceutical textbooks. Medical knowledge was transferred verbally from generation to generation typically by women, the traditional family caretakers, gardeners and cooks. One of the first efforts to record herbal knowledge was written by Dr. Nicholas Culpepper in the mid-17th century in his book, *The English Physician*. The book explains how to use herbal remedies based on the doctor's experience with patients over many years. The most versatile plant mentioned in the book, the one that is said to cure a variety of diseases, is the dandelion. With Dr. Culpepper's blessing, dandelions traveled from Europe to our continent either accidentally or intentionally, and they have thrived here ever since.

Thanks to current research in the field of nutrition, we now know why dandelions are good for us. Dandelion leaves are rich in a number of vitamins including A and C, as well as potassium, and calcium. They also have antibiotic qualities and the flowers have properties found in our common pain relievers. Europeans journeying to our continent didn't know why eating dandelion leaves seemed to cure strange symptoms that struck in late winter. We now know that people were suffering from scurvy, a debilitating disease caused by the lack of fresh food and especially vitamin C. The arrival of dandelions in early spring came just in time to relieve the symptoms of scurvy. Colonists also used dandelions

to heal open wounds and relieve pain. With so many general benefits it's no wonder dandelion wine and dandelion tea became traditional medications for all winter ailments from colds to depression.

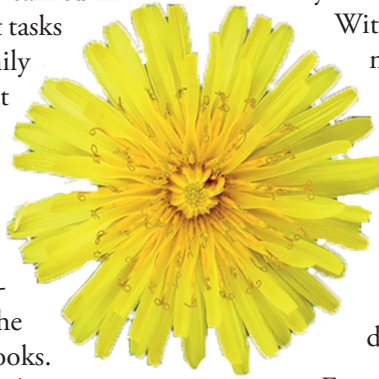
Dandelions had no problem adapting to the new world. Their reproduction strategies are very efficient, so efficient that they thrive in a variety of environments. Their roots are strong enough to crack cement. With just a little sunlight they take over open space, like our lawns and roadsides.

With just a little wind their seeds disperse. Whereas most plants have only one chance to bloom and reproduce each year, dandelions bloom twice, in early spring and again in early fall. In order to find optimum amounts of moisture for germination, dandelions use two strategies. Most plants rely on either shallow roots to capture water from a light shower or taproots to burrow down to the water table. Dandelions develop both.

Even more intriguing is the number of seeds each plant can produce. What we call a single dandelion flower is really a set of flowers grouped around a head. Each so called "petal" is a complete flower with full reproduction capabilities. One "flower" can produce hundreds of gray globes loaded with tiny seeds ready to be dispersed by a passing breeze. As if that's not enough reassurance for the success of the next generation, some species of dandelion can reproduce asexually in the absence of pollinators. No wonder dandelions are almost indestructible.

Regardless of their miraculous qualities dandelions now are regarded as weeds, plants that grow where we don't want them to and are hard to control. People spend thousands of dollars on weed killers just to eradicate the lowly dandelion. Only practitioners of herbal medicine and environmentalists continue to value dandelions as providers of nutrition for both people and wildlife.

If you are interested in the long history of dandelions as medicine and an important food source, read *The Teeth of the Lion*, by Anita Sanchez. It is written for non-scientists, and even includes recipes.



Dandelions – Photos by Marjorie Richman

Spring Wildflower Walk

By Tom Aitken

The wildflower hike on April 14th was well attended with eight participants identifying 19 plants. It started off with a bang as we found a group of toad trillium approximately 40 feet from our starting point and ended with a large patch of Virginia bluebells that has been monitored as part of a citizen science project for the past five years.

Picking a date for a hike like this is a product of guesswork and luck. Somebody's favorite may have either come and gone or is yet to arrive. The biggest disappointment, for me at least, was that we were a week late in seeing bloodroot

at its finest, but scheduling at a later date than last year all but assured that several patches of the very showy trout lily would be in bloom.

Other wildflowers that we spotted included the following: spring beauties, grape hyacinth, Dutchman's breeches, cutleaf toothwort, garlic mustard, purple dead nettles, ground ivy, nodding star of Bethlehem, lesser celandine, speedwell, and wild ginger. I would like to thank Jill Craig, Don Peterson, Karlen Keto, Paul Petkus, and Sue Muller for both attending and making this a successful nature walk.



Counter-clockwise from left: trout lily, toad trillium, lesser celandine, bloodroot and bluebells.
Photos by Tom Aitken



River Otter Citizen Science Project

Dr. Tom Serfass from Frostburg State University is interested in starting a citizen science project within the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Ranger Stephanie Siemek is assisting him by finding interested volunteers.

Dr. Serfass plans to do an educational session on river otters, addressing their natural history, presence within the region, and their use as a flagship species. Citizen volunteers would advise if they see a river otter along the canal or assist in reviewing photos taken by wildlife cameras (camera traps) that will be placed along the canal.

Contact Stephanie Siemek stephanie_siemek@nps.gov or 301-722-8226 if you are interested in supporting this project.



River otter – Photo courtesy of Dr. Tom Serfass

The Palisades District Bike Patrol Celebrates Twenty Years on the Job

By Bill Knight

The Palisades District Bike Patrol (PBP) is comprised of approximately 170 volunteer patrollers who ride their bicycles along the Chesapeake and Ohio National Historical Park towpath. Riding primarily within the boundaries of the Palisades District, our volunteers also cover the Georgetown District and frequently are found upstream in the Central and Western Districts, supplementing the bike patrols within those areas.

PBP's mission statement as of April 26, 2014, is:

- *To serve as ambassadors for the National Park Service by providing visitor services. This includes;*
 - » *Serving as additional “eyes and ears” on the towpath.*
 - » *Providing directions, maps and other information, such as Park history, upcoming events, and water and restroom locations.*
 - » *Educating visitors about safety considerations and Park rules and regulations, and*
 - » *Providing basic first aid and minor bike field repair.*
- *To assist National Park Services resources by:*
 - » *Informing visitors of violations to support a safe visitor experience and to promote resource stewardship in the Park,*
 - » *Alerting NPS staff to potential problems and safety issues, and*
 - » *Identifying and assisting, if called upon, in emergency situations.*

History

Originating with the arrival of Nancy Poe, a ranger from Cuyahoga National Park, in 1998 the roots of the Palisades Bike Patrol were set down. Initially a “beta” program in the Palisades District due to its high visitor volume, the bike patrol concept would be considered for the other districts depending on its success. A local bike shop (no longer in business) provided support in the form of blue bibs for the patrollers to wear. Not having enough professional staff to implement the patrols, the park sought volunteers through an announcement in a local paper and an accession process was

established. This process required an interview with both a Law Enforcement and Supervisory ranger. Additionally, successful candidates were responsible for learning the history and rules of the canal. From its origins, the role of a patroller has always been one of informing our visitors, not enforcement of the rules.

On May 30, 1999 (Memorial Day) the first four patrollers went out in the morning for the initial official tour. As there was no established history of what would work, the patrol was limited to around two miles in either direction on the towpath from the Great Falls Tavern visitor center. Radios were used for communication and patrollers went in pairs. After four hours, another group of four conducted the afternoon patrol. On short order, a few operational limitations became clear:

- The patrol would not succeed if members were required to work on a set schedule. People had jobs, families and other commitments.
- Limiting the range of patrolling to roughly a 4 mile stretch of the towpath would dissuade possible members who are mostly avid cyclists and want to cover a longer range.
- Like the issue of a set schedule, requiring a buddy also would not work as there was a very finite population of patrollers and trying to match up schedules would be challenging at the least.

Within a few weeks of its start, it became apparent to the park staff that the patrol would need be “self-supervising.” Even in the patrol's infancy, the park did not have the staffing resources to manage the program effectively. Norman Liebow, one of the initial 8 members, offered to fill the role of what we now designate as the Team Leader. Norman developed a system of management and expanded the scope of the patrol's activities and reduced the initial restrictions in consultation with the park supervisors.

With the success of the Palisades Bike Patrol, patrols were later established at both Williamsport and Cumberland. While both Brunswick and Hancock had Visitor Centers, bike patrols were never established with those locations as their operational hub.

Current Status

Requirements to join the Patrol have evolved over the years, but the core mission has remained much the same as when it started. Applications (currently we are not permitted to accept new volunteers per a Park directive) are submitted via the www.volunteer.gov website. After initial screening by Park staff, information about an acceptable candidate is forwarded to the Team Lead. The candidate must complete an orien-



A Bike Patrol member assists with a bike repair – Photos courtesy of Bill Knight

tation and at least two successful training rides all of which are conducted by senior bike patrol members. Members are required to provide their own bicycles, helmets and basic repair tools. The park provides basic first aid supplies. A safety check of their bicycles is conducted by appropriate volunteers before the first training ride. Basic first aid and “field expedient” bike repair training is also a requirement within the first year of patrol participation.

While on patrol, the members regularly interact with visitors providing information, either verbally or in the form of park maps, basic first aid, minor repairs (usually in the form of fixing a flat tire), and sometimes bottles of water in hot weather (the patrol members donate the supplies of water for handing out). Patrollers frequently are the eyes on the ground who report maintenance issues (trees down on the

towpath are a big issue when they block movement) and critical medical issues requiring some form of EMT response. Most riders are greeted with words of appreciation for presence on the towpath to keep an eye out for people needing help. Often friendly relationships have been created between regular visitors and patrollers.

A strong camaraderie exists within the Patrol as exhibited by the many friendships that develop through a shared experience and desire to help others. Several of the members are also volunteers at other activities within the area ranging from our local music and arts venues to support activities such as the United Service Organization. The depth of life and professional experiences that members bring to bear are broad and frequently represent those at all levels of business and government in either their current or prior careers. Members have been in the Peace Corps and other aid organizations. This diverse pool of knowledge is shared and used to help the program operate and grow. Additionally, given the broad cultural origins that our visitors from many countries bring with them, our ability to understand and interact appropriately is greatly enhanced.

The Palisades Bike Patrol plays an integral part in helping visitors enjoy the Park in a safe manner. From its humble beginnings the Patrol has grown into a key organization helping support Park operations. We are regularly reminded of the diminishing resources available to the Park, both staffing and budget wise, thus the increasing importance of the volunteer corps that helps sustain the Park cannot be understated. The approximately 170 members on the PBP roster reported 2152 patrols with over 10,000 hours of volunteer participation in fiscal year 2018. Our members are dedicated to the safe enjoyment of the park by our many visitors throughout the year. Winter is not a limiting factor, some of our folks are out there riding almost every day they are in town.

The first 20 years should only represent the beginning of what needs to be a continually renewing and evolving volunteer effort at the Park.



Bike Patrol members taking to skis when the towpath is snowed over. The familiar orange vests are always a welcome sign that the Patrol is on the job.

Across the Berm – Marion Robertson

The C&O Canal Association lost a dear friend March 4, 2019, when Marion Robertson died from complications of Parkinson's disease. Marion is survived by her husband, Donald B. Robertson, as well as four children and seven grandchildren. Marion was originally from Minnesota, and moved to the Washington, D.C. area after completing her education. Her professional career included service at the National Institute of Health and the Maryland Department of Health. She was an active volunteer for many causes in addition to the C&O Canal, including educational causes, the National Zoo and Arena Stage.

Marion was a long-term and enthusiastic Association member and volunteer. She served as a director, committee chair and a level walker. She was a first week hiker in the 2004 Douglas Thru-Hike, and proudly completed the full two-week hike in 2009. She described her time in the Association and her love of the canal in a director's biography: "I joined the Association in 2004 on the Douglas Thru-Hike. I found people I liked, flowers galore and a joyful place to go. I enjoy our hikes – and paddles. My appreciation of the canal deepened. It is both a lovely outdoor pathway and a part of our history."

Marion was widely recognized for her love of nature and her efforts to establish the Association's nature committee. John Wheeler remembers: "I served on the nature committee with her, and just planning our nature outings was almost as much fun as doing them." Marjorie Richman, the nature committee chair after Marion, sums up Marion's efforts for the nature committee:

I first met Marion Robertson on the 2009 Thru-Hike on the C&O Canal towpath. As motel muffins we did a lot of carpooling together. The flowers were fantastic that year, bluebells as far as the eye could see among many other species. Several of us spent a good deal of time taking pictures.

Marion decided we should put our pictures on the Association's website so that everyone could enjoy the gorgeous flowers we were fortunate enough to see over a two-week period. Marion organized the



Marion Robertson (right), with Betsy Williamson, reaches Mile 0 during the 2009 Thru-Hike – Photo by Carl Linden

collection as well as the selection of pictures. The result is the *Guide to Spring Wildflowers on the Towpath*, an impressive set of pictures that can be found on the Association website at www.candocanal.org/articles/flowers.pdf. Marion started with an idea and brought it to fruition.

Next, she decided to form a committee that would organize nature walks for everyone interested in the many natural features on the towpath. The result is the Nature Committee. Her enthusiasm encouraged many equally enthusiastic volunteers to lead walks at locations along the towpath where the best of nature can be seen at the best of times during the year. Once again, Marion started with an idea and brought it to fruition.

I think it's obvious that Marion loved sharing her interests with other people. If she found something interesting, she assumed others would too, and she was right. We will miss her always positive attitude, organizational skills and good humor.

Jim Heins recalls Marion's enthusiastic efforts to support the fight against garlic mustard: "Marion was a sweet-heart. What a gentle person, and still she worked aggressively in the Nolands Ferry area attacking garlic mustard. The records indicate the huge amount of stuff she hauled out while she could. That area is undoubtedly missing her efforts to contain garlic mustard."

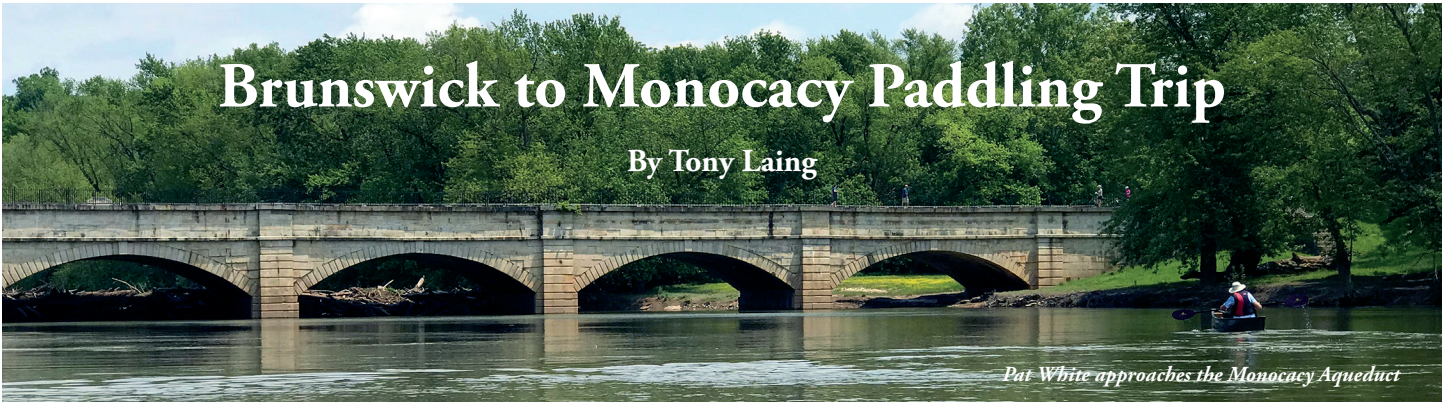
Stephen Williams recounts a typical account that demonstrates Marion's love of nature: "As chair of the nature committee, she shared her enthusiasm and knowledge with many people. I remember how she gave me a 'Got Milkweed?' bumper sticker. Thanks to Marion's encouragement, I had fun learning about the life cycle of the monarch butterfly – and sharing milkweed seeds."

Marion will be missed, but as people continue to explore the delights of trees, flowers, birds, dragonflies, butterflies and other living things on the Association nature walks, her legacy will live on.

– Steve Dean

Brunswick to Monocacy Paddling Trip

By Tony Laing



Pat White approaches the Monocacy Aqueduct

The C&O Canal Association sponsored the first of four 2019 paddling trips on the Potomac on May 18. Last year we were flooded out of three of the four. This year we feared that our first trip would get canceled because of the high water. A week before the trip, the river was in the red zone and considered too swift and dangerous. Also, five of the seven arches under the Monocacy River were clogged with trees and the water level on the side arches was up to the top making passage impossible from the Potomac.

But the weather gods shined on us and after floods and high water in April and early May, the water level receded Saturday morning to a safe level. Five intrepid paddlers rode the Potomac under a mild and overcast day – four kayaks and one canoe. The current was relatively swift but calm. We embarked from Brunswick and paddled for 13 miles to the boat ramp on the Monocacy River just upstream from our fabled Monocacy Aqueduct. Along the way we enjoyed the sights and sounds of the river especially the ripples as well as the

birds. The cormorants seem more numerous every year and we observed sandpipers, kingfishers and ubiquitous ducks.

Point of Rocks was the half way point so we stopped for a rest break and an early and leisurely lunch. Pat White treated us to her legendary chocolate chip cookies as we sat on a picnic table enjoying the sights and sounds of the river.

I always consider the trip a success when we spot a bald eagle. This year was no exception when an immature eagle flew over us as we were nearing the Monocacy River. Some of the group spotted an adult over the Monocacy Aqueduct. And as we paddled under the end arches of the aqueduct, we were greeted by the chirping from the colony of cliff swallows diving above. They make their mud nests on the protected sides of the aqueduct.

We paddled in record time under five hours leaving Brunswick at 9:40 and arriving at Monocacy at 1:23. A good time was had by one and by all.



Julie Gilson and Ed White on the river at Point of Rocks



(left to right) Pat White, Louise Wideroff, Tony Laing and Ed White – Photos courtesy of Tony Laing and Julie Gilson.

Volunteers-In-Parks – What's Happening?

By Jim Heins

Members of this group are asking the same question. We did participate in the annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup in April, operating a number of sites along the canal. After that, we assisted the park at Fletchers by building and installing six picnic tables there for a special occasion.

In addition to those activities, we finally managed to have our first cleanup at Swains in a year, taking advantage of a day when there was no water lying around ankle deep or dropping in on us from above.

So, what's happening now? We are waiting. Waiting to get approval to start installing 21 benches throughout the park; waiting for me to order more materials to build an additional five or six picnic tables that the Association has agreed to purchase; waiting for material to be ordered and delivered by the park service so we can anchor down these new tables ;and then waiting for delivery of a new milepost (midpoint) that has been approved for installation.

If the weather holds, we will have a very productive summer and fall.

A word about garlic mustard –

Remember, pulling garlic mustard and depositing it on the towpath does NOT help. Garlic mustard continues to germinate after it is pulled up. Dropping garlic mustard on the towpath only spreads it further as people pick up the seeds with their bike tires or boots and track them to other places.

We're Half Way There – Finally

By Jim Heins and Bill Holdsworth

If you are looking at the milepost in the accompanying picture, you are half way there, whether it be Cumberland or Georgetown. At long last, there is a milepost designating the midpoint between Cumberland and Georgetown.

Through-hikers and through-bikers on the towpath now have a new landmark to mark their progress – a mid-point milepost at mile 92.25. Yes, they can now celebrate the halfway point on their journey between Cumberland and Georgetown.

The installation of this marker has been a torturous journey over the last 15 months. It started with a suggestion from Tom Aitken. The idea was first submitted to the park's compliance process in April 2018. The compliance process takes into account rules concerning environmental protection and historic preservation. Every project, even a 30-inch tall marker along the towpath, goes through the compliance process.

Some time last summer the midpoint milepost got sidetracked in the compliance process. Ben Helwig, the park's partnership coordinator, intervened to restart the process. Jim Heins came up with a design that resembled but didn't replicate the existing mile markers.



The newly-installed midpoint marker – Photo by Jim Heins

After the government shutdown this winter, there was a personnel change on the compliance team. The attitude toward Jim's proposal changed. He had to use persuasive skills to get the project back on track. Approval was finally achieved, and on May 30th the new midpoint milepost went into the ground with thanks to the efforts of those mentioned earlier and to the installers, Skip Magee, Craig Roberts, Jim Tomlin and Jackson Helling, an intern working with Jim Tomlin and Jim Heins.

This is another good example of your association at work providing support to the C&O Canal NHP.

Upcoming Events and Opportunities –

Williamsport Canal Days

By Tom Perry

The town of Williamsport will again hold its "Along the Towpath" celebration on August 24 and 25. You can come and patronize the vendors, meet the local folks, and talk about the C&O Canal National Historical Park as you walk the streets.

Tom and Linda Perry will again this year be heading up an effort to keep the park in the minds of the festival participants, and get them to go down and see what is offered in this exciting time as the Conococheague Aqueduct is reopened and the Park headquarters prepares to move to the town.

Ahead of the festival we will prepare handout sheets for people to read to know what is available to see and do "down the street." They can walk or drive down, but we again are hoping for the transportation vehicle which is owned by the

town to carry riders to Cushwa Basin and/or Lock 44. We are in touch with the town officials about this and should know what is to happen as the event approaches. We would like to recruit volunteers who will talk with the festival participants and hand out materials for them to read.

If you are willing to help us during the celebration, please let us know. We need to know who you are, how we can contact you, and your preference for a day and a time for serving. Suggested time slots are from 10 a.m. until noon, or from noon until 2 p.m. Please contact Tom Perry at 301-223-7010 or perrywinklehaus@verizon.net.

Thanks for your consideration of this request.

Sharpsburg 256th Anniversary

By Rita Bauman

The 256th Anniversary of the founding of Sharpsburg will be celebrated on Friday, July 5th, with a wine tasting at Antietam Creek Vineyards, 4835 Branch Avenue from 6-9 p.m. There will be music. Wine and food will be available for purchase.

On Saturday, July 6th, the Association will have a booth on North Mechanic Street from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Music, living history tours and food will be available in the town.

A community service will be held on Sunday, July 7th at 10 a.m. at the Church of the Brethren at 123 E Main Street in Sharpsburg. Afterwards, a tour of the church will be offered. A free concert at the Jacob Rohrbach Inn by the New Horizon and Rohrville Bands will be held between 1 and 3 p.m.

Further information about Sharpsburg is available at sharpsburgmd.com or www.canaltrust.org/pyvtowns/sharpsburg/

***The Georgetown Canal Boat* Volunteers Needed**

By Dick Ebersole

The replica canal boat *The Georgetown* in Cumberland will be open from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The boat will be staffed from 1 p.m. till 4 p.m. each Saturday and Sunday. Volunteer support is needed. The volunteer will initially report to Ranger Stephanie Siemek in the Visitor Center to complete paperwork, training or instructions. This service does not require two people, but could be worked as a team of two or more. Prospective volunteers can contact Stephanie Siemek at 301-722-8226, or Dick Ebersole at dsebersole@verizon.net.

Bowles House Open in 2019

By Rita Bauman

The popular Hancock Visitors Center will be open during the 2019 season. The visitor center is in the Bowles House, which played a significant role in the history of the canal in Hancock. It provides a unique western Maryland interpretive experience.

The Hancock Visitors Center will be open on Saturdays and Sundays from May 25th through Labor Day. The start time for Saturdays is 10 a.m. and for Sundays is noon. Closing times will vary depending on available staff, but the center should be open until at least 2 p.m. Visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/choh or the park Facebook page at [@chesapeakeandohiocanal](https://www.facebook.com/chesapeakeandohiocanal) for schedule info. Stop by on your next visit to Hancock.

C&O Canal Association 2019 Annual Meeting

The C&O Canal Association annual meeting was held March 16 in Beallsville, Md. The new location and revised date were both successful measures. Committee reports were presented, and Ben Helwig and John Noel provided a park report. Summaries of the committee reports and minutes are available on request from the board.

The annual elections were held, and the slate as published in the December, 2018 *Along the Towpath* was unanimously elected. Of note was the completion of several years of service as Secretary by Susan VanHaften and as Information

Officer by Pat White; both are thanked for their long years of exemplary service in those roles.

One topic of discussion was the need to improve the Association's presence on social media. Elisabeth Groth agreed to take on the task of enhancing the social media presentation. Social media links for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are included on page 28 of this newsletter.

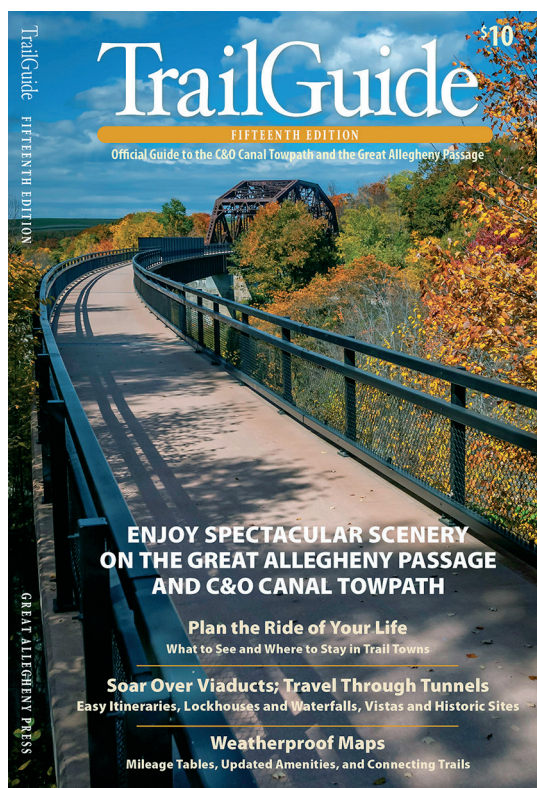
Tentatively, the 2020 Association annual meeting will be held on March 14 at Beallsville.

— Steve Dean

2020 Trail Guide

The *TrailGuide* generates excitement among those planning trips along the C&O Canal Towpath and Great Allegheny Passage! It's packed with great photography, insider travel tips, and updated lists of lodging options, eateries, bike rentals, tour planners, and shuttle services. Further information is available from the Allegheny Trail Alliance at www.GAPtrail.org.

Limited quantities are available from the C&O Canal Association store at www.candocanal.org/store.html. While you're there, check out our selection of other books, including the *The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Official National Park Handbook*.



Continuing Hike Series

Pat White led one of her very popular continuing hikes March 24 to view the original surveyor stones for the Paw Paw Tunnel. This is a strenuous hike, going up the Tunnel Hill Trail, which is rocky and steep. The reward is a few nice views and then a trip down a dirt road to the first stone, which is relatively close to the road. From there, hikers bushwhack through the forest to find the other four remaining stones. The trek ends up over the downstream end of the tunnel.

In the below photo by Lisa Hendrick, hikers observe one of the survey stones. Left to right are Pat White, Dick Ebersole, Joyce Ebersole and Jack Ebersole.



On the Level

Level Walkers are C&O Canal Association volunteers who are assigned a section, or "level" of the canal, and periodically walk it and perform light trail maintenance, assessments and cleanup. The program is popular because the walks can be performed by an individual or family, and on their own schedule. Please contact me if you are interested in joining us.

This report includes walks from February through May 18. With winter gone, spring in full force and summer soon upon us, level walkers are increasingly active, as is evident in this report. We have many new level walkers who have joined us, young and older. Enjoy your time on the towpath, and remember to be safe! Look for safety tips on the level walker blog – levelwalker.blog.

– Steve Dean, Level Walker Chair, levelwalker@candocanal.org

Level 3 Lock 5 to Cabin John Creek: Allyson Miller reports March 19: There was quite a bit of trash in the Lock 7 area and much of it was removed. Large items included a rusty propane tank, an old file cabinet and a blue barrel.

Level 4 Cabin John Creek to Lock 14: Larry Heflin reports March through May: The towpath was monitored over numerous walks, through all conditions. No significant issues were reported during this period.

Level 6 Bridge at Cropley to Great Falls Tavern: John N. and Frances M. Maclean report March 24: The canal was being heavily used. Bikers were obeying the sign that told them to walk their bikes in the vicinity of the Great Falls Tavern. Total number of walkers and bikers was into the hundreds. The towpath was in surprisingly good shape considering the heavy rains this year and the government shutdown earlier that stopped maintenance. The Great Falls parking area is big enough to accommodate a Sunday surge like the one today, but even with the second parking lot at Cropley the lots there were overflowing. Cars were parked along MacArthur Boulevard for a quarter mile or so east of the Cropley turnoff. Cropley is badly overrun. The amount of foot traffic on MacArthur from the overflow crowd is getting dangerous.

Level 7 Great Falls Tavern to Lock 21: Jim and Lisa Goheen report March 5, April 6 and 7, and May 17: The area was generally clean – perhaps from other cleanups. Bagged dog waste is a consistent problem in the area. There were numerous bird sightings, including egrets, herons and a barred owl.

Level 9 Lock 22 to Seneca Aqueduct: Jon Wolz and Steve Hovarth report March 24: This walk was conducted to fill in for John McGraw. The entrance the Pennyfield Lock parking lot has very large potholes that make it almost impossible to drive to park. At Riley's Lock, there are very large potholes that need to be repaired and it is very difficult to enter the parking lot. There were too many people to count. There were numerous dog walkers, numerous walkers and many cyclists. It seemed to us, many of the cyclists were traveling in excess of 15 miles per hour. The Pennyfield lockhouse appeared to be in good condition.

Level 11 Mile 25 to Sycamore Landing: Pat Hopson reports March 12: There was only a small amount of trash along the level. There were only small bits of trash at the Horsepen Branch Hiker-Biker. I always feel that this is one of the most secluded and peaceful levels I'm aware of. It's away from main trailheads, with no road noise nearby. The towpath was in good shape and fairly dry along this level. I heard lots of spring peepers in the standing-watered sections of the canal.

Level 12 Sycamore Landing to Edwards Ferry: Pat Hopson, with Elizabeth Dame, Janet Kegg, Margaret Neuse and Ron Wise, reports March 9: Towpath usage was light, with only a few hikers and bikers. We encountered three people on horses; one horse was very skittish and jumpy, so we stayed well away from them. The towpath was generally in good shape along this level, except for the washout at about Mile 30.4. **Pat Hopson, with Ray Abercrombie, Elizabeth Dame, Carol Ivory and Frank Wodarczyk, reports April 10:** This was a combined level walk and garlic mustard pull. The Goose Creek Lock has deteriorated even further, and the floods have brought in a lot of debris. There is a big pile of organic rubble and trash on the upstream side of the lower lock. There is also a lot of trash in the lock itself. There was very little GM at Edwards Ferry. Upstream from the parking lot the ground had been thoroughly scoured by the winter's floods and a load of sticks and debris along the outlet stream showed how much the floodwaters had advanced. The spring wildflowers were lovely – we saw lots of Virginia bluebells, spring beauties and purple violets.

Level 13 Edwards Ferry to Harrison Island: Liz Wagner reports March 14: There was a lot of water in the prism and standing water in the field and woods beside the canal as a result of the cold and wet weather. The towpath path was freshly resurfaced with a gravel top surface and stone base layer.

Level 15 Whites Ferry to Lock 26: Jon Wolz and Steve Hovarth report March 14 and May 1: In March we noted that all of the significant towpath ruts had been repaired and the layer of silt and mud was scraped off from White's Ferry to the Dickerson entry path to the towpath. The towpath now is smooth and wonderful now on Level 15. The NPS did a wonderful job! A Potomac River Cleanup was conducted in the area March 30 and we collected 32 bags of trash, and 28 bags of blue recyclables. In May the Potomac River water was receding after recent high waters. There was very little trash. There is still a lot of water in the prism; in previous years the prism was dry.

Level 16 Lock 26 to Monocacy Aqueduct: Jon Wolz and Steve Hovarth report Feb. 26 and April 22: There was a significant amount of trash in February from Culvert 68 to the area behind the Lock 27 house. The towpath was in excellent condition. Near Mile 41.5 the canal prism continued to leak into the Potomac River, but the towpath appeared to be level and not damaged from the leaking beneath it. The biker dismount signs at the Monocacy Aqueduct were still missing. Four of the wooden bumpers are missing from the stone towpath on the aqueduct. A Potomac River Cleanup was conducted in the area April 6 and we collected 30 bags of trash, 35 bags of blue recyclables and numerous large objects. During the

April walk the towpath and aqueduct were clear of trash. Everything seemed normal at Lock 26; however, tree limbs continue to fall from the silver maple tree. The leak near Mile 41.5 was still active. **Michael Ciancoisi reports March 16:** The towpath was almost trash-free. I inspected three culverts and found most of the trash near the culverts. There was a lot of trash down near the Potomac. There was still a large logjam at the Monocacy aqueduct. The middle three or four arches were blocked. The un-watered sections of the canal had standing water. Some of that water was flowing into a sink hole and into Culvert 69 at mile 42. I counted 52 turtles in the canal on fallen trees.

Level 17 Monocacy Aqueduct to Nolands Ferry: **Earl Porter reports March 21 and one additional undated report:** Arches 1, 2 and 7 of the Monocacy Aqueduct were open on both visits. Water was high and mud and debris remained from flooding. In March it was reported that the picnic table at the Indian Springs camp was replaced. **Laura Gilliam reports March 30:** I noted that bushes and other plants growing out of aqueduct stones were removed. University of Maryland students were in marshy areas of canal searching for salamanders. Many trees were recently trimmed or cut down along the towpath.

Level 19 Point of Rocks to Catoctin Aqueduct: **James Spangenberg reports April 25:** The towpath was in good shape and was recently mowed where necessary. Trash on towpath was very little, but most of trash picked up was from out of the prism. Except for the amount of trash in watered canal prism and below the Catoctin Aqueduct, the canal was in very good shape. There were numerous types of song birds, turtles and butterflies. **Don Peterson reports May 3 and 9:** Human use was light on both dates. A small amount of trash was removed.

Level 21 Lock 30 to Lock 31: **Karlen Keto reports March 15:** It was an absolutely beautiful day to walk with my dog Chessie. I even had a very gentle sprinkle the last 10 minutes. I noticed several bikers, including one tandem carrying an adult male and preschool female. Numerous turtles were spotted. Trash was light.

Levels 21 and 22 Lock 30 to Lock 33: **Tom Crouch reports Feb. 26, April 17 and April 23:** Level 21 was a bit soft in places in February but the surface of the towpath on Level 22 was fairly firm. For the most part, both levels were relatively free of trash. During the April 17 walk I noted that the contractors had begun to resurface the towpath on these two levels. Both levels were clear of trash, with the exception of the area west of Brunswick where considerable trash remains in areas of the prism that are too wet for me to access. On this perfect spring day, the towpath attracted considerable traffic. On April 23 the crews were working. They deserve high marks for co-operating with trail users, halting their work or moving their equipment aside to allow hikers and bikers to pass. In spite of relatively high water in the Potomac, the canal prism near Brunswick was dry enough to enable me to retrieve more trash from the problem areas.

Level 23 Lock 33 to Dam 3: **Tom and Renata Baginski report Nov. 11, 2018:** The Potomac River was high, and some trees were under water. Trash was light. There were many hikers out. The towpath was in fair condition, with frequent puddling.

Level 25 Dargans Bend to Lock 37: **Brigitta Shroyer and Joel Anderson report April 6:** There is a lot of trash in this section and this level walk was focused on cleanup. The area around Culvert 97 may

need maintenance of the orange fencing. There is a large amount of lot of garbage and large logs jammed up on the other side of the culvert.

Level 26 Lock 37 to Antietam Aqueduct: **Jack and Karen Forster report March 24:** Numerous bikers and walkers were reported. The river level was very high. Noted the erosion on the river side of Culvert 100.

Level 27 Antietam Aqueduct to Lock 38: **Steve Dean reports Feb. 23:** The water levels of the Potomac and Antietam Creek were high. Trash was light. All three culverts on the level were inspected. **John and Joyce Lefebure report March 31:** We talked with a lady who was starting a cross-country backpack to San Francisco on the American Discovery Trail. Shallow water was in much of the prism, making some high water borne trash inaccessible. There were many dead trees cut down; some marked for cutting remain. **Ben, Jennifer, Holly and Zoe Helwig report April 28:** This was our first time out as level walkers! A tree was down across the towpath – looked very recent as the tree had begun to leaf out for this season already. We reported it. There was a lot of water in the prism and some unreachable trash around the campground. We made a severe rookie mistake and forgot bug spray. It was very buggy. Not as bad as last year, but not pleasant, either! It seemed to be the downside of the peak bluebells, but we were there for the upswing of the mayflowers.

Levels 28 and 29 Lock 38 to Snyders Landing: **Clifford Smith reports April 17:** Conditions were surprisingly good considering the weather. There were some muddy sections around Miles 73 and 74 and from Mile 76 to Snyders Landing. A number of areas were silted, usually about 100 yards or less, where either the river or the canal itself had flowed over the path. The level was in pretty good condition. There were lots of small branches and twigs which I removed using my patented “stick flicker stick!”

Level 30 Snyders Landing to Lock 40: **Hilary Walsh reports Feb. 24:** I was the only soul on the towpath on this overcast and raw day. There was not much trash, other than some large plastic containers. Around Mile 78 there is lots of exposed rock and rubble. One couldn't bike over it; indeed, one might even want to carry their bike over these sharp rocks. At Mile 79, there was more damage; it appears the towpath eroded and washed into the prism, as the prism in some parts was nearly level with the towpath and full of sand and crushed stone.

Level 31 Lock 40 to Marsh Run Culvert: **Tom and Renata Baginski report March 30:** The towpath was dry and in good condition. There is quite a bit of river-borne trash along the level. Several trees were down, but were trimmed back. There were several families on bicycles. **Jennifer Bean reports April 17:** Just south of Marsh Run Culvert there is a fishing area where there was a lot of trash. Most of the trash that is not flood debris is within a short walk from Taylor's Landing. There is a large tree laying on top of Lock 40. There is a large amount of flood debris on the river side of the towpath around Mile 80. Blooming wildflowers include bluebells, Dutchman's breeches, spring beauties, trout lilies, may apples.

Level 32 Marsh Run Culvert to Dam 4: **David Plume reports April 6:** There are still some large items in the canal (buckets, a large plastic barrel, etc.) that are not accessible due to water or mud. There is a picnic table in the river. There are pieces of debris still caught in trees as floodwaters receded. From Marsh Run upstream to just

below the water pump the towpath was in good condition. For the rest of the level there are many areas covered in mud. The mud was dry enough that conditions were not slippery. A number of logs that were across the towpath in January have been removed. There is a spot below Mile 84 with erosion on the river side of the towpath that was caused by a large tree falling over. The top of the tree is in the river. Water flowing from the rock wall in an area above the Dam 4 cave has filled the canal. There is a school of about 25 carp in this water.

Level 34 McMahon's Mill to Opequon Junction: **Trent Carbaugh reports March 24:** The first causeway west of the mill was partially submerged; the other two are very flood damaged. The middle causeway has a large sinkhole, about 3 feet in diameter; I marked this with a stick and logger tape. The towpath between the mill and Lock 41 is silt covered and muddy in spots with a few large puddles. From Lock 41 west the towpath has been graded and slightly widened and overall looks very good except at approximately Mile 89.5 there is a washout beginning on the river side of the towpath. There were quite a few larger limbs down on the towpath as well as some low overhanging tree limbs that I trimmed back.

Level 35 Opequon Junction to Lock 43: **Stephen Williams reports March 26:** The towpath along this level is in excellent condition. I stopped to admire a favorite waterfall and a barred owl close by called out – “Who cooks for you?” I talked with an overnight hiker who had taken the precaution of hanging food in a tree to avoid attracting bears.

Level 43 McCoy's Ferry to Fort Frederick: **Fred and Susan Kreiger report March 27:** There was not much trash. Very few people were out on this brisk but sunny day. The towpath was in excellent condition! It was firm with no puddles or obstructions, despite recent bad weather. The canal prism was watered the entire way. The McCoy's Ferry day use area was spotless. Some trees were budding, and multiflora rose and honeysuckle were beginning to green up.

Level 45 Ernstville to Licking Creek Aqueduct: **Dennis Kubicki reports March 28:** With one exception, the towpath itself is in great condition reflecting the resurfacing that occurred in 2017. The exception is a muddy stretch of about 15 feet in length and 3 feet wide at about Mile 114.7. At this location, there is an earth embankment on the river side that is eroding onto the towpath. There was standing water of varying depth up to about 16 inches throughout the level. Multi-flora rose seems to be pervasive throughout the level.

Level 46 Licking Creek Aqueduct to Little Pool: **Bert Lustig, Patricia Graybeal and Jerry Marks report April 23:** The towpath was in very good, with some small downed branches. The prism was watered on about half of the level, with many downed trees in the prism. We saw a giant snapping turtle.

Level 47 Little Pool to Hancock: **Michael and Judi Bucci report March 14:** The towpath looked good. There was a tree partially blocking path at Mile 123.6, and a log blocking whole path between the Tonoloway Aqueduct and the Bowles House. We noted storm damage that had occurred since November; there was evidence of towpath clearing of downed trees and limbs.

Levels 47 and 48 Little Pool to Round Top Cement Mill: **Phillip M. Clemans reports March 12:** An extensive amount of trash was removed. The canal prism was watered from Mile 123 to the Devil's

Eyebrow. There were signs of a semi-permanent inhabitant at the White Rock Hiker-Biker camp. There were numerous bird sightings, including pileated and hairy woodpeckers, gnatcatchers, and a pair of common mergansers at the Tonoloway Aqueduct.

Level 49 Round Top Cement Mill to Lock 53: **Paul Petkus reports April 13 and May 11:** It was quiet on the towpath in April and there seemed to be more activity on the nearby rail trail. There were subtle signs of activity at the Round Top Cement Mill project. Numerous flora and fauna sightings included 14 species of wildflowers and four kinds of butterflies. In May no significant changes were noted from the April walk, although it was very wet after recent rains.

Level 54 Lock 59 to Lock 60: **Dennis Kubicki reports April 3:** It was a great day for being on the towpath! I observed a significant level of degradation of the towpath on the level, but it was irregular. In many locations there was deep rutting and pits. In some there was standing water of varying extent. In other places the towpath was in moderately good condition. There was much evidence of wind damage to the wooded areas that border the towpath. Specifically, there were many locations where trees had fallen and had been cut up and removed from the path. A significant quantity of smaller branches littered the towpath but did not represent an obstruction.

Level 55 Lock 60 to Culvert 208: **Paul Petkus reports March 10, March 30 and April 20:** Conditions continued to be wetter than normal in March. Of particular interest during the March 30 walk was a group from the Natural History Society of Maryland Herpetology Club. One of them reported seeing a corn snake in another area of the park earlier that day. I noted that the NPS removed a tree that I observed earlier across the towpath. The towpath was a bit drier in April, but the prism held water on the entire level. April is usually the best time of the year to view wildflowers along the level, and 16 types were noted.

Levels 59, 60 and 61 Tunnel Parking Area to Lock 68: **Trent Carbaugh reports March 30:** There were numerous branches down and a light amount of trash. Towpath was in good condition and most of the water that was in the prism has subsided. There are beavers active beavers on Levels 59 and 61. I saw lots of turtles, ducks, probably a muskrat or nutria (brown furry things jumping into the water) and some squirrels of both the gray and red variety. There is a sink hole developing at Mile 162.5.

Level 64 Kelly's Road Culvert to Spring Gap Recreational Area: **Nasra Sakran and Laffy Buckler report March 18:** There was a considerable amount of water in the canal. Towpath edges seemed to be more aggressively cut back. There was the normal number of end-of-winter potholes. Some garlic mustard was showing.

Levels 65, 66 and 67 Spring Gap Recreational Area to Evitts Creek: **Trent Carbaugh reports April 6:** Everything looks fairly good; the towpath was in good shape with a few mud holes. All structures looked about the same except for some more damage on the board and batten on the back side of Lock House 72. The dam at Evitts Creek aqueduct is in bad shape yet again but has had recent attention from maintenance. There were many smaller sticks on the towpath on all three levels. There was beaver activity on Level 67.

Calendar of Events – 2019

Non-C&OCA event
National Park Service Event
C&OCA business
C&OCA hike and dinner or other key event
C&OCA hike
C&OCA nature walk
C&OCA volunteer event
C&OCA paddling trip
C&OCA bike ride
June 22-23 Sat.-Sun. Montgomery County Heritage Days. For information visit www.heritagemontgomery.org/events/heritage-days/
June 22-23 Sat.-Sun. Oldtown Summerfest Celebration. Tours of the Michael Cresap Museum will be offered noon to 4 p.m. For information visit www.oldtownmdsummerfest.com/indexhtml.htm
June 28 Fri. 11 a.m. to noon, Ribbon-cutting for Swains Lockhouse restoration.
July 7, Sun. noon to 5 p.m. Open house at the Abner Cloud House at Fletchers Cove.
July 13, Sat. Paddle trip from Rileys Lock (Seneca) through the old Potowmack Canal on the Virginia side of the Potomac to Pennyfield Lock (approx. 4.5 miles). This trip takes only about 4 or 5 hours, but is challenging with numerous rocks and ledges in the old canal. Reservations are required and paddlers must provide their own canoe/kayak and gear. For more information, contact Tony Laing at canoemaster@candocanal.org or 301-980-8932.
Aug. 4, Sun. noon to 5 p.m. Open house at the Abner Cloud House at Fletchers Cove.
Aug. 4, Sun. Board Meeting , 1 p.m., at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.
Aug. 23-25, Fri.-Sun. Paddle trip in the Paw Paw Bends area of the Potomac River from Paw Paw, W.Va. to Little Orleans, Md. (22 miles). This 3-day paddle trip includes 2 nights camping out. Reservations are required and paddlers must provide their own canoe/kayak and associated paddling/camping gear. Paddlers are expected to contribute to community-type meals and help out in camp. For more information and to make reservations, contact Barbara Sheridan at canoemaster@candocanal.org or 301-752-5436.
Aug. 24, Sat. Nature Walk along the towpath to view dragonflies. Meet at 10 a.m. at the Dickerson Conservation area. The group will head upstream. Contact Steve Dean for details at levelwalker@candocanal.org or 301-904-9068. See Google map.
Aug. 24-25, 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. 1, Sun. noon to 5 p.m. Open house at the Abner Cloud House at Fletchers Cove.

Sept. 16-18, Mon.-Wed. World Canals Conference , Yangzhou and Wuxi, China. Hosted by the World Historic and Cultural Canal Cities Cooperation Organization. Visit www.wcc2019china.com
Sept. 28 Sat. Continuing Hike Series , Dam 4, Mile 106.8 upstream to McCoys Ferry. Contact Pat White (hikemaster@candocanal.org or 301-977-5628)
Oct. 6, Sun. Board Meeting , 1 p.m., at Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St.
Oct. 11-16, Fri.-Wed. Through bike ride , Cumberland to Georgetown. No sag wagon provided. Reservations required, no later than September 1. Limited to 20 riders. Contact: Denny Sloppy, 814-577-5877 or dennysloppy@yahoo.com .
Oct. 19, Sat. Nature Walk focusing on tree identification, 1-3 p.m., Dickerson Conservation Park. Learn or brush up on tree identification skills while viewing several of Maryland's champion trees, the largest trees in Maryland. This is the last of two walks to observe seasonal changes. Semi-brisk pace and a few semi-steep hills. Meet at the Dickerson Conservation Area parking lot, 20700 Martinsburg Rd, Dickerson, Md. 20842. Co-leaders: Carol Ivory and Ralph Buglass. For more information, contact Ralph, rbuglass@verizon.net ; 617-571-0312 (cell for day of the walk), or Carol, 703-476-8730; 703-869-1538 (cell for day of the walk).
Oct. 26, Sat. Annual Heritage Hike and Dinner , with program to follow. Location TBD. Complete details will be in the September <i>Along the Towpath</i> . Contact Steve Dean at programs@candocanal.org or 301-904-9068.
Nov. 17, Sun. Continuing Hike Series , 10:30 a.m., walk downstream from Dargan Bend to Lock 36 and then leave the towpath to investigate the colonial era iron mine on the berm just upstream from the lock. Contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).
Dec. 1, Sun. Board Meeting , 1 p.m., at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.
Dec. 7, Sat. Frostbite Hike : 10:30 a.m. Location TBD. Contact Bill Holdsworth at 301-762-9376 or website@candocanal.org .
Jan. 1, 2020, Wed. New Years Hike . Details TBD. Tom Aitken at (304)-279-0521 or at thomasaitken01@comcast.net .

Important Information About Association Events

- *Liability waivers are required for many Association activities. You will be asked to sign a waiver before participating in certain events.*
- *Hikes require proper footwear.*
- *Paddling, hiking and biking participants are responsible for their own equipment and food.*
- *Reservations are required for many events.*
- *Outdoor events are subject to cancellation in the event of inclement weather. Contact the event coordinator in the event of weather concerns.*
- *Visit www.candocanal.org/calendar.html or follow Facebook @candocanal.org for up-to-date event information.*

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 Assistant	301-714-2201	Vacant
Chief Ranger	301-714-2222	Ed Wenschhof
Chief of Business Mgmt.	301-714-2204	Kris Butcher
Chief of Resource Mgmt.	301-714-2225	Jeri DeYoung
Chief of Maintenance	301-714-2211	Greg Kniesler
Chief of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers (Acting)	301-714-2238	Brendan Wilson
Partnerships Coordinator	301-714-2218	Ben Helwig
Volunteer Coordinator	301-491-7309	Emily Hewitt
Cultural Resources Manager/Historian	301-491-2236	Vacant
Historian	301-714-2220	Karen Gray
Safety Office	301-745-5804	John Adams
IT Specialist	301-745-5817	John Lampard

Palisades District – Mile 0 (Tidelock) to Mile 42.19 (Monocacy River)
11710 MacArthur Blvd, Potomac, Md.

Interpretive Supervisor	301-767-3702	Pete Peterson
District Ranger Law Enforcement	301-491-6279	Joshua Cunningham
Supervisory Visitor Use Assistant	301-767-3703	Shaun Lehmann
Georgetown Interpretive Supervisor	240-291-8466	Brendan Wilson

Great Falls Tavern Visitor Ctr 301-767-3714
11710 MacArthur Blvd, Potomac, Md.

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

District Ranger Law Enforcement	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.

Supervisory Park Ranger (Acting) 240-625-2931 Joshua Nolen

Hancock Visitor Center 301-745-5877
439 East Main St., Hancock Md.

Supervisory Park Ranger Stephanie Siemek

Cumberland Visitor Center 301-722-8226
Western Maryland Station, Cumberland, Md.

Supervisory Park Ranger Stephanie Siemek

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

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



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ISSN 2575-9876

Along the Towpath is published in March, June, September,
and December by the C&O Canal Association (C&OCA), P.O.
Box 366, Glen Echo, MD 20812-0366.

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content submission requirements.

Editor and Producer: Steve Dean – editor@candocanal.org

Associate Editors: Tom Aitken, Dave Johnson,
Don Juran, Nancy Long and Ned Preston.

Printed by HBP, Hagerstown, Md. www.hbp.com

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phone number for recorded information and inquiries: 301-983-0825.

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Culvert 49, at Mile 34.82, is known for the ornate stonework of its arch. Although an active stream now flows through, it may have once been a road culvert for Whites Ferry that has silted in. Photo by Steve Dean

Check out our new social media presence!

C&O Canal Association

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Founded in 1954

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