

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 LIII

December 2021

Number 4

President's Report

By Bill Holdsworth

We need your time more than we need your money. We need more members to volunteer.

The Association has always prided itself on being an all-volunteer organization. Any dollar donated to the Association goes to help the canal, not towards staff salaries or administrative costs.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to fill key roles within the organization. For that last year we have been without a Program Committee chair. During a pandemic year that vacancy wasn't crippling, but as life heads back towards normal, that vacancy will be keenly felt. The Legal Committee is inactive. We need to recruit a new Social Media Coordinator. We need two volunteers for the Audit Committee.

As I write this column, the Nominating Committee has been unable to recruit a candidate for President. I am stepping down after six years, longer than anyone else has ever served in that position. Those past presidents were a very talented group. My tenure has been extended only because the nominating committee couldn't find a replacement three years ago.

We can take justifiable pride in our recent accomplishments, including the installation of the CCC waysides at Carderock and the successful World Canals Conference. But these accomplishments require hours of volunteer work. We tend to see the same faces working at Association tasks. They are getting tired.

Association members have always been generous. That generosity insulated the World

Canals Conference from the financial impact of the pandemic. Looking further back, the restoration of the Monocacy Aqueduct attracted many donations.

But money isn't enough. It usually takes hours of volunteer commitment to shepherd a project to conclusion. It can be slow to work with the park. They are understaffed and underfunded, and are required to comply with a raft of bureaucratic regulations. The Association's resources seem substantial, but they pale beside the park's budget and the park's needs.

We want to continue the Association's legacy of good work. Please consider stepping forward to help.



*Fall is the favorite season of many level walkers. Read about level walker activity in On the Level on page 22.
Photo by Paul Petkus.*

Notice of 2022

C&O Canal Association Annual Meeting

By Steve Dean

Announcement of Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the membership of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Association will be held on Saturday, March 26, 2022. At the time of publication of this newsletter it has not been determined if a physical meeting will be held, or if an on-line, or virtual, meeting will be necessary due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Members will be notified via email, social media and on the Association website of the meeting arrangements. The meeting will be for the purpose of electing officers for 2022, electing a nominating committee for 2023, receiving reports of officers and committees, and any other business that may properly come before it. No proposals to amend the bylaws have been submitted. All members of the Association in good standing are invited to attend. This notice constitutes the call for the meeting, pursuant to articles II.2, III.1, and IX of the bylaws.

Nominations for Officers and Directors

Officers, except directors, are elected at each annual meeting to serve a term of one year. In addition, five directors are elected at each annual meeting to serve a term of three years. The nominating committee, chosen at the preceding annual meeting, will present a slate of candidates. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the annual meeting. Members attending the 2021 annual meeting elected Steve Dean (Chair), Diana Dean, Chris Holdsworth, Tony Laing, Barbara Sheridan and Tim Snyder to form the 2022 nominating committee. The committee has nominated the following candidates for election in 2022.

President

At the present time a nominee for the office of president has not been named by the nominations committee.

Barbara Sheridan – First Vice President

I have been a member of the C&O Canal Association for over 20 years and have served previously on the board as a director, as first vice president, and as president. I have chaired two thru-hikes (2004 and 2009) and was the membership chair for 15 years. I am also currently serving on the programs committee. I was born in Washington, D. C. and have lived in the area all my life. My first awareness of the canal was an aerial view of it from a streetcar while on the way to Glen Echo Amusement Park as a child. The streetcars are long gone, as is the amusement park, but the canal lives on for all to enjoy! If elected as first vice president, I will work

with the Association to help preserve and protect this valuable resource for future generations.

Tony Laing – Second Vice President

I have been a member of the C&O Canal Association for 16 years. During this time, I have enjoyed participating in the paddling trips that the association sponsors, including the Paw Paw Bends weekend trip, the Monocacy River trip, the Brunswick to Monocacy trip on the Potomac, and trips on the canal itself. I backpacked the canal from Cumberland to Harpers Ferry in 1980, and I cycled the entire length from Cumberland to Georgetown in 2009.

I have been on the board of directors for two terms and I am one of the two canoemasters who are responsible for the paddling trips. I also was head of the tour planning steering committee for the recent World Canal's Conference.

I have a certain historical affinity to the canal as my great grandfather helped construct the canal in the 1830s. He and his two brothers got jobs digging the canal after they disembarked from a ship sailing from Hamburg, Germany to Baltimore. At one point they operated a boarding house in Oldtown before settling in Cumberland. I was born in Cumberland and now live in Olney, Maryland. I am retired from the U.S. Department of Education.

I would like to serve another term as second vice president to give back for all of the fun and growth that the Association has given me.

Kerry Gruber – Secretary

I've been an Association member since 2010 and joined the board of directors in 2015. I have also participated in hikes along the canal and several World Canals Conferences. I was born in Baltimore and raised in North Chevy Chase, Maryland and Washington, D.C. My grandparents lived in the Burleith neighborhood of Washington, D.C. and painted scenes of the canal and Georgetown back in the 1930s. I retired from the federal government in 2012 as an education statistician. The beauty and history of the canal is something I enjoy sharing with others. It would be an honor to continue serving the board as the secretary.

Paul Lubell – Treasurer

Thank you for considering me for the position of treasurer of the C&O Canal Association. Since the 1990's, I have been treasurer at a series of non-profit organizations. This includes

the International Society of Parametric Analysts (ISPA) 1996–2000, Thrivent Baltimore County Chapter (2003–2007), Columbia Volksmarch Club (2013–present), and St Paul Lutheran Church-Catonsville (2020–present). Their annual budgets ranged from the low thousands to amounts in excess of one million dollars. Additionally, as chairman of the finance board at St. Paul (2004–2007), I was responsible for setting up the church’s account charging structure. I have an MBA in finance (1965) and have a very strong interest in investments. Like Richard Radhe, our current treasurer, I have a small tax practice which was started in 1975, so am able to prepare our 990-EZ forms that are required by the Internal Revenue Service. My son has been kind enough to give me a 2016 version of QuickBooks so reports will be able to be prepared using the same software that Richard has used.

Since I moved to Maryland in 1969, I have walked most of the first one-hundred miles of the C&O Canal and selected portions, such as Paw Paw Tunnel and Oldtown, in the western sector. The towpath and canal are a resource well worth preserving and I appreciate a chance to help do this in a small way.

Doug Zveare – Information Officer

I am honored to be nominated to serve a fourth term as Information Officer for the C&O Canal Association. I have been an Association member and a level walker for over 20 years. During that time, I have completed many level walks and participated in Association meetings and activities, as well as having bicycled and hiked the entire towpath several times. I am active in the VIP program, helping to install picnic tables, benches, and waysides in the park. I participate in the Association’s stewardship of the Swain’s Lock picnic area and campground. If elected, I will work hard to further the Association’s continuing mission.

Tiffany Ahalt – Director

I am currently the director of sales and community engagement for Visit Hagerstown/Washington County CVB. I have over twenty years of experience in the tourism industry and not-for-profit community, focusing on historic preservation and scenic byways. As a Rotarian, I have served in many roles, including club president and assistance governor for District 7620. With a passion for volunteering, I strive to inspire member engagement and sustainable practices for nonprofit organizations that I serve. I recently worked with others in the C&O Canal Association to plan and host the 2021 World Canals Conference. I reside in Jefferson, Maryland, with my husband Brad and sons Logan and Braden.

Tom Aitken – Director

The C&O Canal Association has made many contributions to the greater good of the park, and it has been a pleasure

seeing the process at work as a member of the board of directors for the past six years. I first “discovered” the C&O Canal on a bike ride near Fort Frederick many years ago and felt then and now that it is a magnificent place deserving of any volunteer time I can donate. Since joining the Association, I have enjoyed level walking, helping to edit the newsletter, and participating in nature hikes. I am very much looking forward to seeing what the Association and all of its members will accomplish in the park over the next three years.

Tom Crouch – Director

I retired from the Smithsonian Institution in February 2019, after 45 years as a Smithsonian curator and manager, serving both the National Air and Space Museum and the National Museum of American History. I hold a doctorate in American history from the Ohio State University and am the author or editor of some 15 books and scores of articles, both scholarly and popular. More to the point, I have hiked and biked the C&O towpath both alone and with friends for three decades. I have pedaled from Pittsburgh to Georgetown and ridden from Cumberland to Georgetown four more times. Having enjoyed the towpath for so many years, I decided to offer my active support to the C&O Canal NHP six years ago, joining the Association and volunteering as a level walker covering levels 21 and 22, between Brunswick and Harpers Ferry, and usually continuing on to levels 23 and 24, Huckleberry Hill and Dargan Bend. I ride a bike with a trailer to haul the heavy loads of trash accumulating in those areas out of the park. I have enjoyed serving on the board for the past three years and would like to continue for another term.

Bill Holdsworth – Director

I would be happy to serve as a director of the Association. I have 15 years’ experience on the board, including six years as president and another six as secretary. I act as webmaster for the Association website and coordinate the broadcast emails. I chaired the effort to host the 2021 World Canals Conference. I am a retired federal employee.

Travis Medcalf – Director

My fondest memories growing up in Washington County were hiking trips on the C&O Canal. I’ve lived within 20 miles of the park my entire life. It is such an unusual national park in shape and story. My first volunteer involvement with the park was as a Rail to Trail guide on the Capitol Limited in 2016. When a change of employment occurred in my life, I wanted to stay involved, and joined the Association, becoming a level walker in 2018.

I’m a big advocate of the western end of the canal and hope to champion it. I’ve spent 40 years in broadcasting and entertainment and currently work in utilities.

Donors to Association Funds

August 1 to October 31, 2021

Nancy C. Long Aqueduct Fund – A

– Supports restoration and preservation of the 11 aqueducts on the C&O Canal. The fund was established with a generous donation made by C&O Canal advocate Nancy Long.

The Cumberland Repair & Maintenance – C

– Donations specifically identified for repair and maintenance of the historic canal boat replica in Cumberland.

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.

Ken Rollins C&O Canal Fund – R

– Supports current projects and programs in and for the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

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

– Supports the 2021 World Canals Conference at the C&O Canal. Includes donations from private individuals as well as sponsorship by corporations and organizations.

General Donations

Katrina Craddock – **A**

John B. Dubeck – **R**

Gillain Grant – **R**

Bob & Stephanie Hibbert – **W**

William & Chris Holdsworth – **A, R**

The HR Team – **R**

Rich Jones – **R**

Sandra B. Kahn – **R, S**

Lyman Family Fund – **R**

Linda & Michael Marmer – **A**

Sue & Dwight Mason – **R**

William & Sue McAllister – **R**

Allyson Miller – **A, D, R, S**

Ellen Sackstein – **A**

Alicia Saffer – **R**

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

Dennis & Donna Sloppy – **R**

Elaine Stonebraker – **W**

Town of Williamsport – **W**

Arthur Wise – **R**

In Memory of Dr. James Gilford

Greg & Carol Chatfield – **R**

Michael J. Kurman – **R**

Margaret Lady – **R**

Darla & Andrew Lansman – **R**

Donna Lansman – **R**

Cheryl Nesci – **R**

Susan Smith – **R**

Maxim van Norden – **R**

C&OCA Welcomes New Members

Ruth Bielobocky

Charles High

Vanessa Lide

Anne & Charles Waters

Please use the renewal form enclosed to process your membership renewal for 2022 if you haven't already. Alternatively, you can get a form by going to candocanal.org/membership/, where you can download the 2022 renewal form pdf, or you can click on the "renew for 2022" button and renew online. If you are unsure of your membership status, you can check the "Membership Expires" date just above your name on the mailing address for this issue of *Along the Towpath*. If it says, "Membership Expires Dec-2021" then your membership renewal is due. Thank you so much for your continued support of our organization!

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

2021 Bike Through-Ride Report

By Denny Sloppy

My goal for this report is to give you a little recap of our bike ride and not bore you to tears. My first experience with the annual through ride came in 2005. At that time I met Tom Perry, a former president of the C&O Canal Association, and two orange vested members of the C&O Canal Bike Patrol, Norman Leibow and Jim Heins. Jim Heins has also headed up the Volunteers in the Park program for many years. These three men have done much to promote and care for the C&O Canal National Historical Park and, if we love the park, then we all owe them a debt of gratitude. I would also like to thank all of the level walkers and anyone else who lends a hand to make the park a better place.

In my early years with the ride, Tom Perry was the organizer and ride leader, while Norman and Jim were our sweeps, riding at the back to make sure we didn't lose anyone along the way. A number of years later, Patricia Hopson took over the organizing of the ride and eventually that task was passed on to me. I've now done the through ride 19 times, 17 with the Association and two with family. On all but four of those trips we were able to finish the entire 184.5 miles. Over the years many of the riders come back time and again, and we've developed close friendships. Others come one time and they're satisfied that they were able to do this trip with the security of being part of a group with knowledge of the towpath.

Our group has been known as Pastor Perry's Pedalers or COCANuts, and some of us have also earned the title of GAPsters. As its name reflects, the C&O Canal was originally intended to connect Washington with the Ohio River. With that in mind, many of our through-riders also do annual rides on the Great Allegheny Passage Trail between the canal's terminus at Cumberland and the Ohio at Pittsburgh.

Our through-ride this year began as usual with a meeting at 10 a.m. in Cumberland at the mule statue in front of the C&O Canal NHP Visitor Center. This year we had hoped to have 13 people riding, but for various reasons the number dropped to just eight before the ride began. This was still an improvement from last year, when only six started and five finished the ride. Returning riders this year included Katrina Craddock, Pamela Lantz, Paul Leatherman, me, Jon Wilson and Arthur Wise. Our first-time riders were Ellen Sackstein and 11 year old Daniel Wilson.

Despite all of our coaxing and arm twisting, Daniel turned us down for being the author of this report, so now you're stuck with my ramblings. This year we skipped our traditional photograph at Mile Marker 184.5 and instead took a photo in the park beside the turning basin before starting our bike ride. Our first day was fairly routine with our lunch stop at the Oldtown School in Oldtown, Maryland. The weather was quite nice for biking or hiking and this continued each day for our four-day trip, which ended this year at Harpers Ferry on Columbus Day.

At the end of Day 1, our trip had a small change from our usual routine. Ellen, Jon, Daniel and I stayed in Paw Paw, W.Va., while Katrina, Pam, Paul and Art took a shuttle from Cumberland Trail Connection Bike shop in Paw Paw to Hancock, Md. That evening, the Paw Paw group had dinner at Amanda's Place while the Hancock group had dinner in Hancock. Jon and Daniel pitched their tents at Purslane Run Hiker Biker Campsite, I rented a cabin at Canal Cabins, and Ellen stayed at Daniel Kaminski's Bike Path Bed and Bath. The next morning we all met at Daniel's place where he cooked us a hearty breakfast.



Front (l-r): Denny Sloppy, Paul Leatherman, Pam Lantz, Katrina Craddock, Art Wise, Ellen Sackstein; Rear (l-r): Jon Wilson, Daniel Wilson. All photos courtesy of Denny Sloppy.



Ellen Sackstein on the Paw Paw Tunnel detour.

Saturday was Day 2 and the Paw Paw group started the day with one of the special challenges we faced this year: The towpath was closed below the Paw Paw Tunnel while workers stabilized the hillside, which has been sliding toward the canal prism and towpath, creating a dangerous situation for park visitors. Our only option was to take the detour over the mountain above the tunnel. This meant pushing our bikes, some loaded with tents and gear, up the detour path gaining 375 feet and then coming back down over the course of one and one-half miles. Young Daniel Wilson led us up the hill, only stopping once because his dad needed a break. Ellen and I stopped for frequent breaks to catch our breath. This detour isn't for everyone, but the four of us who took it would do it again. After completing the detour, which took over an hour, our plan was to bike to Bill's Place in Little Orleans where we would meet up with the other half of our bikers, who would be biking to Bill's Place from Hancock. This worked out well, with the Hancock group reaching Bill's Place just a few minutes before the Paw Paw group. After lunch, we all biked to Hancock using the Western Maryland Rail Trail and had a nice dinner outside at Buddy Lou's. The weather was cooperating nicely.

Sunday, Day 3, saw Ellen, Jon and Daniel leaving the bunkhouse at the Hancock Bike Shop to meet the rest of us, who had stayed at the Super 8, at the Potomac River Grill for breakfast. Debbie Poole called the night before and said she had a big surprise for us and would meet us for breakfast. For a fun read, look up Debbie's trip report in the March 2021 issue of *Along the Towpath* to better understand what this big surprise was all about. Debbie and Ken Johnson joined us for breakfast, and Debbie presented the group with a bag of the elusive Pumpkin Pie Kit Kat candy bars we'd heard about last year but could not find. It was raining as we walked to breakfast, but as we were getting ready to ride the rain stopped and another good weather day lay in store for us.

We took the WMRT from Hancock to the towpath just before Big Pool and continued on to Fort Frederick where we ate our packed lunches we'd picked up in Hancock. We met

another friend, Patrick Pope, who was at the fort that day for a family reunion. He showed us a high water marker from the March 17, 1936 flood with his wife's father and grandfather's names on it. E.C. Whyte III was Missy's dad, and E.C. Whyte Jr. was her grandfather. Her grandfather was the last ranger to live at Fort Frederick and her dad grew up there.

Also at the fort we had another great surprise: as we approached the office, where we watched a short movie about the fort, we saw the easily recognizable bicycle of our friend, Norman Liebow. Norman had driven up to Williamsport and biked up to the fort to meet us. He then biked back to Williamsport with us, stayed the night at Red Roof Inn and biked about 10 miles with us the next day before returning home to Rockville, Md.

In the evening we all had dinner at Desert Rose Café in Williamsport, Md. Paul, Jon and Daniel had not stopped biking when we reached Williamsport because they were staying at a family cabin on the river at the Potomac Fish and Game Club just a few miles below Williamsport. However, Paul's wife, Bonnie picked them up and brought them to dinner and then took them back to the cabin afterward. Tom Perry stopped by to greet us. In years past Tom and his wife, Linda, would graciously invite us into their home for dessert and a meeting after dinner. In fact, some of the campers used to stay at their house overnight in Williamsport. Tom said that, if their health permits, he and Linda would like have us over to their house after dinner next year.

Day 4 found us leaving Williamsport early, meeting ready to ride at the Sheetz Store at 8:30 a.m. It would be our longest day of biking, at about 42 miles. When we reached the Potomac Fish and Game Club we learned that Paul would not be biking that last day. Paul had decided to stay home to help find his daughter Katie's dog, Bernice, who had run away a few days earlier when frightened by fireworks.

We then continued biking down river until we came to the detour just before Mile Marker 89. Again Daniel Wilson



Around the table at the Potomac River Grill (clockwise from left): Ellen Sackstein, Jon Wilson, Debbie Poole, Ken Johnson, Pam Lantz, Denny Sloppy, Paul Leatherman, Katrina Craddock, Daniel Wilson.



(l-r): Katrina Craddock, Pam Lantz, Ellen Sackstein.

Continuing Hike Series

By Pat White

These are out and back hikes where we explore the area and learn from one another. All hikes begin at 10:30 a.m. and usually conclude by 2:30 p.m. Round trip distance will be less than seven miles for these hikes.

We will cross the Potomac on **January 23** to investigate the Goose Creek Navigation System in Virginia. This old waterway is now Elizabeth Mills Riverfront Park. We will start about halfway between the Potomac River and Va. Route 7 and head upstream as far as possible before retracing our steps and heading downstream to the Potomac. Artifacts include some mill ruins and a staircase lock. The starting point, Kephart Landing Park, is hard to find. Watch the house numbers on Riverpoint Drive; 43942 looks like a driveway between a higher and lower number.

We will walk downstream on **February 26** from Dargan Bend Recreation Area (Mile 64.89) to investigate the old dry dock, Feeder Dam 3 with inlet lock, and an old iron mine.

We'll investigate the original survey stones for the Paw Paw Tunnel on **March 27**. This is a strenuous hike that climbs Tunnel Hill and bushwhacks through the forest. If we cannot walk back through the tunnel, we will have to climb Tunnel Hill again.

For all hikes dress for the weather, bring water and a lunch or snack. Cancellations will be posted on the website or on my phone answering message. Contact me at 301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org

Through-Ride (Continued from previous page)

led us up the first steep hill on the detour. He flew up the hill like it was nothing and I said, "Daniel, you're making us old people look bad!" Then when he got to the top of the hill he added insult to injury by saying "That hill wasn't even that bad!" The detour is about 3 1/2 miles to avoid about one mile of towpath that is being raised by construction crews to help keep it open during high water. It's an area that frequently floods when the river is high.

We came back to the towpath at McMahon's Mill, and continued on the concrete at Big Slackwater. We'd picked up our lunch earlier at Sheetz and stopped to eat it at Horse-shoe Bend Hiker Biker Campsite. We'd meant to stop at Big Woods Hiker Biker but I had mistakenly thought it was called Horseshoe Bend. Once we reached Harpers Ferry we had the task of lugging our bikes up the spiral staircase, which is never one of our favorite things. We survived it and later that evening had a nice dinner outside on the deck at The Rabbit Hole. Paul rejoined us for dinner and had good news: the lost dog had been found! This year we decided to stop our ride at Harper's Ferry because White's Ferry is closed and it would have meant another long shuttle ride to get to hotels in Leesburg, Va. and back to the towpath in the morning. (We normally do Harpers Ferry to Whites Ferry on Day 5 and then finish on Day 6 from Whites Ferry to Georgetown.) We stayed overnight at Quality Inn in Harpers Ferry and our friend, Tom Knoerzer, shuttled us all back to Cumberland on Tuesday morning.

When our editor, Steve Dean, said he'd like to keep this report at 1,500 to 2,000 words, I thought it would be a piece

of cake. Wrong again! It seems I'm wrong more than I'm right lately. For another view of what this annual ride is like, take a look at Doug Danley's report in the December 2017 issue of *Along the Towpath*, or any other report usually found in the December issue. There is a great archive of all the past issues on the Association web-site at candocanal.org/atpnews/

We welcome new riders. We just ask that you make sure you and your bike are in good shape to do a ride like this. We average around 30 miles a day for 6 days. We travel at 9 to 12 mph and take breaks every 5 miles or so. We do have to limit the ride to 20 people to keep it manageable. In recent years that has not been a problem!

Each year for our Through Bike Ride we collect a \$25 donation to be used for a good cause along the C&O Canal. This year we decided to have each participant donate individually to one of the C&O Canal Association funds of their choice.



(l-r): Denny Sloppy, Art Wise, Norman Liebow.

Bazil Newman and Edwards Ferry

By Rod Mackler


Bazil Newman was a free Black born in Loudoun County, Virginia, in November 1779. He became a boatman at Edwards Ferry during the first half of the nineteenth century, and owned land, a warehouse, and a gristmill, as well as his ferry boat. He operated the ferry from the mouth of Goose Creek in Loudoun County, conveying goods and people across the Potomac to the Montgomery County, Maryland, community of Edwards Ferry on the C&O Canal. The chief cargo was probably grain, especially wheat, and the flour that was ground at the several mills along the Goose Creek/Little River watershed.

Black entrepreneurs like Newman fell under increased suspicion, especially after the Nat Turner Rebellion in 1831. Ferryman, in particular, were mistrusted because of the opportunity their work presented to aid in the escape of slaves toward the north. According to Virginia law, Black ferryman had to get certification from “respectable white persons” to verify that their shipping manifests were accurate. Maryland was a slave state, but the C&O Canal was nonetheless used as an Underground Railroad route toward Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania was the first state to officially abolish slavery, in 1780, but the abolition was gradual. Even though the last slave in the state was not freed until 1847, by the 1820s, and until the federal Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, once a slave reached Pennsylvania he or she was relatively safe.

The whites of Loudoun County before the Civil War were a diverse lot. There were a number of abolitionists, especially the Quakers, but most white slave-holders would have considered a free Black such as Bazil Newman a threat, as a

bad example for their own enslaved work force. The Goose Creek area had a couple of large land-holders — and by definition, large slave-holders. Thomas Lee (1690-1750) of Stratford Hall (in Westmoreland County on Virginia’s Northern Neck, between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers) established a large plantation near the mouth of Goose Creek, which he called Coton Farm, after his ancestral home in England. Two of his sons — Francis Lightfoot Lee and Richard Henry Lee — signed the Declaration of Independence and his brother named the county seat Leesburg after their

NEW WARE-HOUSE.

 THE subscriber informs the public that he has purchased the commodious WARE-HOUSE on the Potomac, about 3 miles from Leesburg, for the business of receiving and forwarding produce or goods of every description. He has a superior BOAT, and may always be found at his post and the most careful attention will be given to all Merchandize and Flour or Grain entrusted to his care. Charges will be moderate. He solicits a share of the public favor.

BAZIL NEWMAN.

N. B. On hand and for sale at all times a full supply of Plaister and Salt and other articles wanted by Farmers.

March 14—3m

Very few free men of color were advertising in the Genius of Liberty in the 1830s when Bazil Newman posted this notice.

Bazil Newman Ware-House Ad – From Bronwen Souders: Bazil Newman, 1779-1852,” in Essence of a People II: African American Who Made Their World Anew in Loudoun County and Beyond. Leesburg, Virginia: Black History Committee of the Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc., 2002, page 5.



View of the mouth of Goose Creek and Confluence Park, from Edwards Ferry, Maryland river lock (in C&O Canal NHP). Photo by Rod Mackler.

father. George Kephart was not only a slave-holder, he was an infamous slave dealer, who ran the biggest slave auction house in the country, Armfield & Franklin, on Duke Street in Alexandria. Kephart bought Belmont manor house and 433 acres in 1851 from the heirs of abolitionist Margaret Mercer. The house still stands, the centerpiece of the Belmont Country Club. Loudoun County commissioners are seeking a new name for the county park at Kephart's landing on Goose Creek, less than a mile upstream from Edwards Ferry.

According to Jon Wolz, by the late 1750s, Benjamin Edwards owned land on the west bank of Goose Creek, i.e., where Confluence Park now stands. He operated the ferry from then until his death in 1803, originating from the

Virginia side of the Potomac River and taking goods and people to the Maryland side. Benjamin's widow, Elizabeth Edwards, managed the ferry after his death, followed by his son, Philip Edwards. Could the Edwards family and Bazil Newman both own Edwards Ferry? Yes. First of all, the operator often owned his own ferryboat. Secondly, the ferry landings were considered public property, unlike the current fracas over Whites Ferry. So there is really no contradiction here. The ferry ceased operation during the Civil War — this was a very active crossing point for both Union and Confederate troops using pontoon bridges — but it resumed operations after the war.

The decennial federal census for the first half of the nineteenth century does not give names for slaves, listing them under the owner's slave schedule only by age and gender. There is more information, however, for free Blacks. The census records, available on Ancestry.com, give detail on Bazil Newman's family. Spelling of names in census records is imprecise, especially in this time and with illiterate or semi-literate respondents. The spelling reflects what the enumerator thought he heard. In 1820, for instance, he was listed as "Basil Newman" and had a household consisting of:

- One free colored male, age 25-44. That would have been Bazil, who was 40 when the census was conducted in August 1820.
- One free white female, age 16-25, probably Bazil's wife at the time.
- Two free colored males, under 14.
- One free colored female, under 14.
- One male slave, age 45 and over. Bronwen Souders speculates that this may have been a relative, purchased to keep the family together.



Goose Creek river lock, near Edwards Ferry, Maryland (in C&O Canal NHP). Photo by Jon Wolz.



View of Edwards Ferry landing in Maryland, from Confluence Park. Photo by Rod Mackler.

According to the 1830 census, “Basil Newman’s” household consisted of eight people:

- One free colored male, age 36-54 (Basil).
- One free colored female, age 24-35, (possibly a spouse).
- One free colored female, 55-99.
- One free colored male, 24-35.
- Two free colored males, 10-25.
- Two free colored males, under 10.

In 1840, the “Bazel Newman” household consisted of six individuals:

- One free colored male, age 55-59 (likely Basil).
- One free white female, 20-29.
- One free white female, 15-19.
- One free colored male, 24-35.
- Two free colored males, 10-23.

In the census of 1850, all the members of the household are named. The “Barnie Newmon” household consisted of:

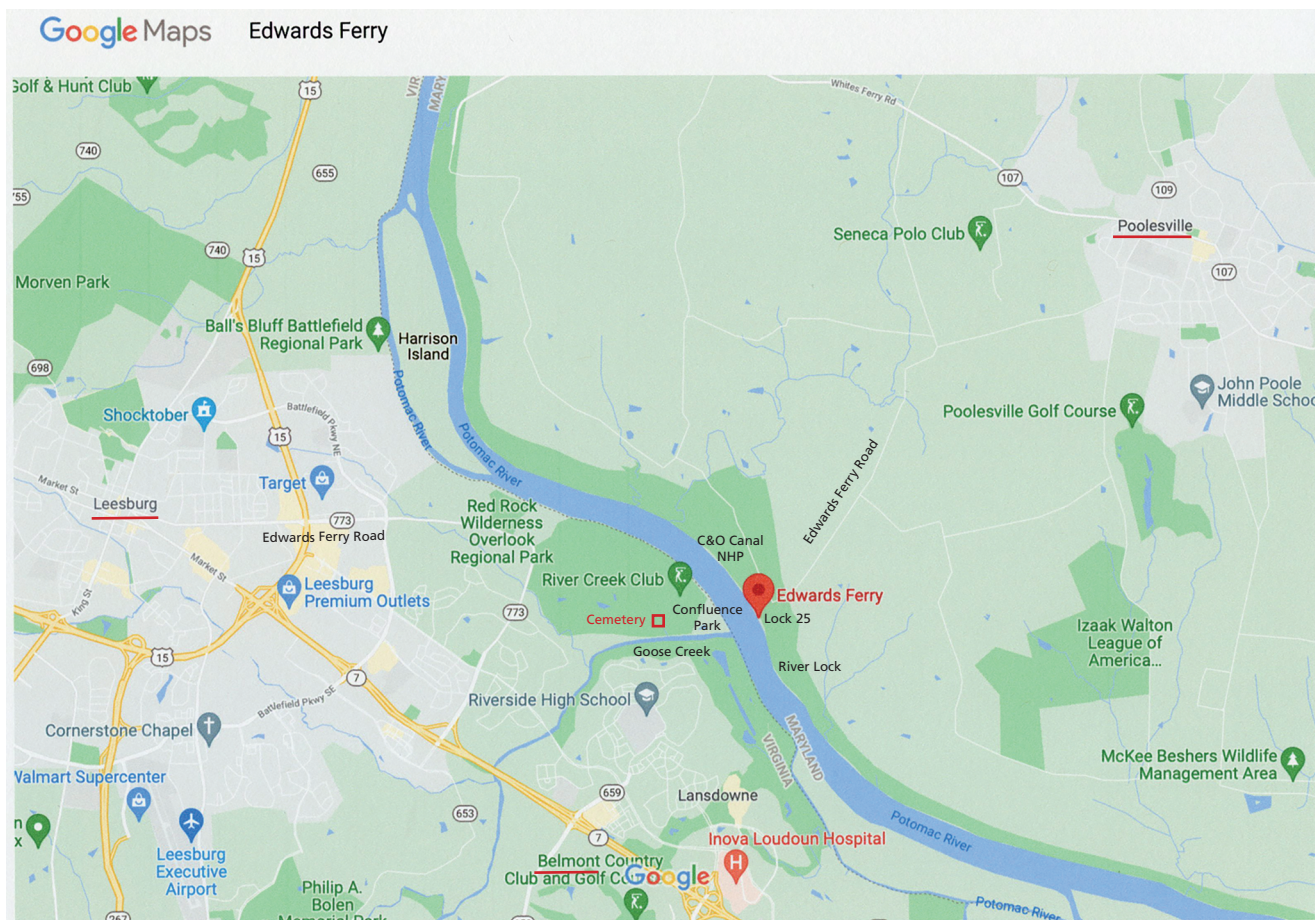
- Barnie Newmon, Black, male, age 71, occupation: Boatman, owning real estate valued at \$1000.

- Cornelia Newmon, female, age 41. In the box for race, the original entry is overwritten with a “B” for Black.
- Sophy, female, age 10, Mulatto.
- Patty Cox, age 60, no gender or race given.
- Hezekiah Newmon, male, Black, age 63, occupation: laborer (Surely Basil’s brother).

There is also an entry in the 1850 census for a Barsell Newman, age 28, perhaps a son of Basil. The 1850 census gives names for the members of this household:

- Barsell Newman, age 28.
- Maria Newman, 29.
- Ricd [Richard?] Newman, 7.
- Perciller [Priscilla?] Newman, 4.

Basil Newman died in 1852 and was buried in a family cemetery near the confluence of Goose Creek and the Potomac. He made out his will a few months before his death and left a 67-acre farm to Cornelia F. Harris, who “has lived with me the past 16 years ... and who been to me a faithful bosom companion and obedient housekeeper.” He also left funds for his coffin, tombstone, and for enclosing the cemetery.



Map © 2021 Google Maps. Annotated by Rod Mackler.

As the River Creek housing development and golf course were being built, members of the Leesburg community discovered that there was a family cemetery there. Basil Newman's gravestone was still intact and legible and there were depressions that indicated other burials in the immediate vicinity. The original tombstone has been lost, but fortunately a photo was preserved in the Thomas Balch Library and a reproduction has been installed in the cemetery. The plaque indicates the other graves likely "contain his brother Hezekiah, 'faithful companion' Cornelia, and sons Robert, Bazil, and Benjamin and maybe Benjamin's children." River Creek does an excellent job of preserving and maintaining the cemetery.

Thanks to Britannie Davis Monge, Community Manager of the River Creek Owners Association, for directions and access to the Newman Family Cemetery and Confluence Park.

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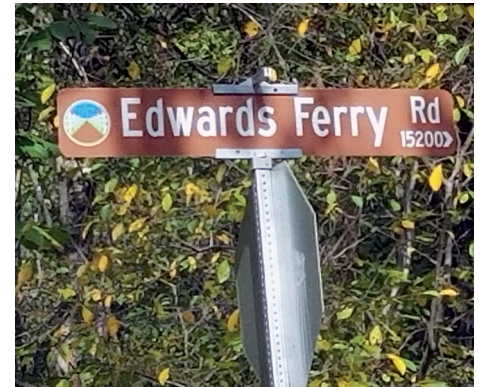
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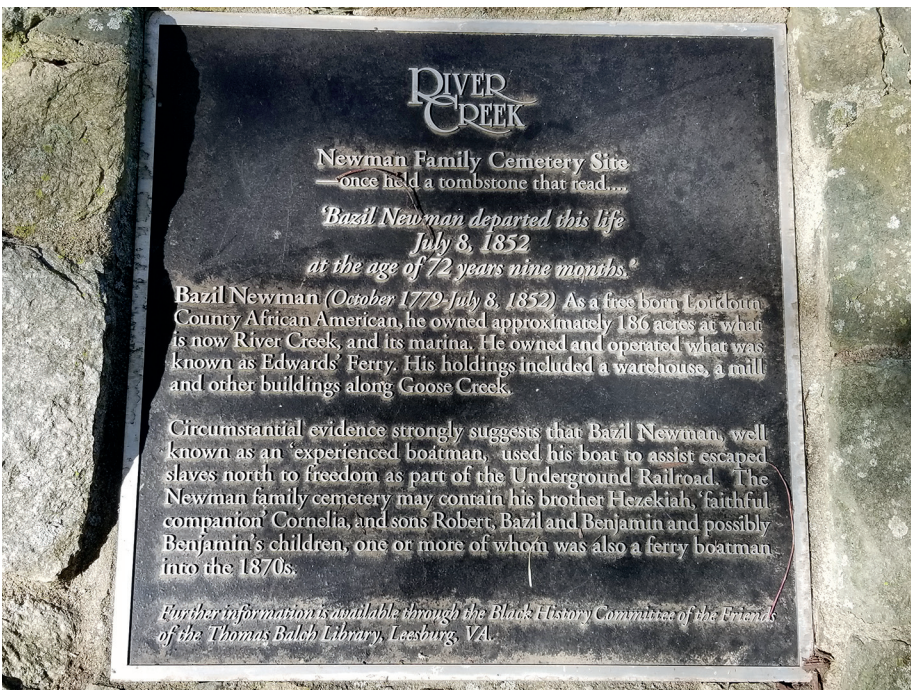
Wolz, Jon. *In Your Own Backyard — Lock 25 — Edwards Ferry (Part I)*, in the *Monocacy Monocle*, May 21, 2021, pp. 3 and 5



Edwards Ferry (Confluence Park) is five miles from the center of Leesburg, the county seat of Loudoun County, Va., via Edwards Ferry Road. All photos this page by Rod Mackler.



Edwards Ferry is five miles from Poolesville, in upper Montgomery County, Md., via Edwards Ferry Road.



River Creek plaque, detailing the life, burial and kin of Basil Newman.



Basil Newman reproduction tombstone.

Accompanied by the Past

By Karen Gray

The Trusteeship's First Years 1891 to 1906

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

On January 30, 1894, the trustees for the bondholders of 1844 filed a report with the circuit court of Washington County, then under Judge Edward Stake, and petitioned for an extension of their control of the canal beyond the original May 1, 1895, date. The trustees' petition was very revealing of the challenges they faced (emphasis in bold):

- “As the work of repairs progressed it was found that the eighteen months during which the canal was practically abandoned and dried out, had added much to the damage caused by the flood of 1889, and had also weakened the canal at points untouched by the flood. It was also found that the walls of many of the locks and the gates in almost all the locks required renewal. These Trustees have, nevertheless, carried out the work of repair and renewal, although at a cost far exceeding what they had anticipated.”
- In September of 1891 when traffic could at last move up and down the entire canal, “few of the boats used on the canal before the flood of June 1889 were even capable of repair.”
- “Throughout the year 1891 and indeed during the year 1892 and the Winter of 1892–3, the repair of the canal and its works was continued.”
- “When these Trustees received possession of the canal..., the canal as a business enterprise and a means of transportation was discredited. Its traffic had sought other routes and other methods of transportation. The port of Georgetown had lost its standing as a coal shipping port and vessels no longer sought it for cargoes of coal. Shippers of coal did not believe that the business of the canal could be revived, and coal shipped coastwise from Georgetown.”
- The **boats on the canal during the year 1891 numbered only ninety** and those parties who would have otherwise been willing to renew their investments of former years in canal boats and equipment were deterred by the court's provisions giving the trustees

control initially for only four years. Those provisions resulted in uncertainty as to the maintenance of the canal after that and prevented investments by all except those sufficiently interested otherwise in the success of these Trustees, to take the risk.

- “**During the season of 1892 the number of boats on the canal increased to one hundred and eighty-two**, representing with their equipment an additional investment of about \$150,000. **During 1893 the number has not materially increased**, although some new boats have taken the places of old ones.”
- Further, lessees of canal properties or water rights had been challenging the right of the trustees to collect their payments and hoped that the trustees will be gone before they could be dispossessed of their lease. By the same token, the Trustees find they couldn't make new leases, as those who might want them were not certain they'd have them for more than the trustees appointed 4 years.

Clearly the Trustees had valid arguments that the four-year initial limitation on their control of the canal worked powerfully against a full restoration of the canal's income and its use in the present and the future.

The Promise of Electrically Powered Towing

In the January 30, 1894, petition for an extension, the Trustees also requested approval of their contract with the Chesapeake and Ohio Transportation Company (C&OTC) that was incorporated November 29, 1893. Although the court approved the contract (which guaranteed a \$100,000 payment annually to the Trustees), the appeals process on extension ruling, delayed the signing of the contract until 1896.

In 1893, even before the C&OTC was incorporated, there was considerable interest in the use of electrically powered systems to tow canal boats. In fact, it was the C&OTC's inclusion of an intent to “operate canal boats by means of electricity” that was likely the most immediate cause of support for the new company. At the time, experiments with an electrical cable towage system were underway on the Erie Canal and even C&O Canal captains were discussing it, as we see in this Washington *Evening Star* article of May 2, 1893:

“BELIEVES IN ELECTRICITY. Capt. Jackson of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal notes several exceptions to the statements made by Capt. Hebbs in an interview a few days ago with a reporter for *The Star*. He believes that the towline and the shaggy



Weston Family on canal boat. Photo courtesy of the National Park Service, C&O Canal NHP

mule are back numbers and that the electric barge is the inland marine vehicle of the future. Two miles an hour is too slow to travel in this age of electric shocks. He thinks the trolley experiment on the Erie canal will be a success.”

In addition to a cable system, an electric trolley system was proposed and the General Manager of the canal under the trustees, George Nicholson, was interviewed for a Washington *Evening Star* article that appeared on June 23, 1893:

“MULES VERSUS ELECTRICITY. General Manager Nicholson of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal stated to a reporter for *The Star* this morning that if the trolley experiment proves to be a success on the Erie canal it will be a question of but a short time when the system will be adopted on the Chesapeake and Ohio. He believes that there is room for improvement in canal navigation and believes that electricity is the system which will revolutionize canal methods. The trolley people insist that their plan is cheaper absolutely than mule power and vastly cheaper relatively. Four miles an hour can be run without endangering the embankments.”

By August 1, 1893, the *Evening Star* reported that there was growing support among boatmen for electrical power as seen in this article:

“ABOUT GEORGETOWN – Traffic on the Canal – There have been no more arguments of late among canal men on the subject of “the mules versus

electricity” for the reason that the former has lost his champions, and by the time the Erie experiments have proved successful the animal will be looked upon for canal purposes as an antediluvian.”

By December 4, 1893, the C&OTC was incorporated, and the *Evening Star* reports:

“The new Chesapeake and Ohio corporation will endeavor to make arrangements with the canal company to furnish the motive power necessary in transporting cargoes on the canal. The trolley system is the one under active consideration.”

However, by July 11, 1895, the Washington *Evening Star* noted that the system experimented with on the Erie “did not fulfill expectations” and attention had turned to experiments with the new Lamb electrical cable system for boat haulage being made in Trenton, N. J. That system was described as involving “a towpath overhead cable line, with the motors suspended from the cable...to which the towline is attached.” The Lamb system was also tested on the Erie in the fall, Oct. 28 to Dec. 11 at a cost of \$1,468.95.¹

Nevertheless, neither the trolley nor the cable system were ever used on American 19th Century canals.

Conditions for the Boaters

It is hard to imagine what the canal people went through with the uncertainty of the canal’s future as it lay derelict after the June 1, 1889, flood, and then under the first years of the potentially temporary Trusteeship arrangement. During

the period of decline in canal business and management from 1878 to 1889, the transition had begun from experienced, mostly male crews operating the canal boats on a demanding schedule, to increasing cases of men being hired as captains who use their family as crew. Typically, these families were poor with no home on land and thus living year-around on their boat. After the 1889 flood, recurring newspaper reports highlighted the needs of these impoverished people.

Unfortunately, we have no significant information on what boats were repaired and put back into service in 1891 and 1892, and what was done with the permanently abandoned boats. Nor do we know anything of the labor force seeking employment as a captain on the boats that were being put into service, or how many former captains still wished to operate a boat—perhaps the one they'd been living on—after the 18 months of the canal's disuse. It seems clear that only boats owned by companies or owners with sufficient funds to make their boats usable again were reactivated.

Boat building began quickly after the canal reopened, as seen in this article in the Baltimore *Sun*, on April 14, 1892, from the Cumberland *Times*:

"Mertens & Sons have just launched two more new canal boats, known as No. 104 and No. 105. This makes four new boats this firm have launched during the past two weeks or thereabouts. The Meredith-Winship Company are building boats as rapidly as possible and have launched quite a number recently at their leased yards, in the rear of the West Virginia Central Station. The other boat yards are actively engaged in building and repairing boats.

On December 13, 1894, an article in the Hagerstown *Herald and Torchlight* reported:

"To Revive Boat Building. — G. L. Nicholson, superintendent of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal and Wm. T. Hassett, of Four Locks, one of the supervisors, have purchased the old Mitchell & Dawson boat yard at Hancock, which has been idle for some years and will recommence boat building. This means employment to a number of idle boat builders and carpenters about Hancock."

It's clear from shipping reports in the newspapers in 1892 that many of the Consolidation Coal Company's boats in their large fleet, were reactivated and that the CCC was the primary shipper of coal on the canal. However, in May of 1894 a miners strike stopped coal shipments into July. For a time afterwards, the CCC shipped most of its coal on the B&O RR.

On the positive side, in July the American Coal Company announced that it was opening two new mines, which

increased optimism for the canal. Then, Judge Stakes decision July 30, 1894, to extend the Trusteeship and approve the Trustee's contract with the C&OTC, helped even more.

However, the situation of the impoverished boat people at the end of 1894 remained unchanged. As an article states from the Hagerstown *Herald and Torchlight*, printed December 19, 1894, by the Cumberland *Evening Times*, states:

"Many boating families will live the entire winter in the cabins of the flat-bottomed, dreary water houses, held fast in the mud of the big trough, while others call shanties in lonely spots along the river their winter quarters. Some few will find employment in the cities along the water course. Most boatmen, those who are true to their calling, though, do not work in winter, they just exist and wait for the summer to come again. None ever make enough during the boating months to keep them comfortable throughout the year, but this does not interfere with their winter rests usually."

If the reader detects a critical trace in the comments, I will note that newspaper reports are rarely objective and most fall towards the "romanticized" or "exceedingly grim" ends of the spectrum. These comments are as close to a moderate report on the boat people's situation as one will find.

A glimpse into the boatmen's values may be seen in a quote from the Hagerstown *Mail* published in a Washington *Evening Times* article on April 17, 1895:

"A petition has been sent to Georgetown, signed by two-thirds of the captains of canal boats on the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, requesting General Manager Nicolson to enforce the Sunday law on the canal; that is, that he order all boats to tie up at 12 o'clock Saturday night and remain tied up until 12 o'clock Sunday night."

Sunday closure of the canal was one of those recurring issues in the canal's history. While religious principles were doubtless a factor, the boatmen couldn't simply decide for themselves to take Sundays off. Agreements with the boat owners or shippers generally carried a requirement that the boat be operated whenever the canal was open for navigation. Consequently, Sunday closure regulations amounted to an assured day off every week without contravening boat operation agreements.

Ultimately, one of the most frustrating aspects of studying the Trusteeship years, especially these early ones, is that our sources provide no definite information on the economics of being a boat captain such as we have in the 1870s especially. At best for this time, we find statements like this which appeared in the Washington *Evening Times*, April 23, 1895:

Across the Berm

Dr. James Gilford

Dr. James “Jim” Gilford died on August 19, 2021, in Frederick, Md. Dr. Gilford was a long-standing member of the C&O Canal Association and an original member of the C&O Canal Advisory Commission. As a member of the Monocacy Aqueduct Committee he was instrumental in the efforts that ultimately led to restoration of that aqueduct. He also served as a C&O Canal Association director from 2004 to 2007.

Dr. Gilford’s career spanned education and study of biological science, and he ultimately retired from the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, D.C. In addition to his support and advocacy of the C&O Canal, he served on and chaired numerous environmental-related boards and committees at both the state and federal levels. He was an avid outdoorsman and sportsman.

Dr. Gilford served on the C&O Canal Advisory Commission from 1971 until the interregnum that began in 2011. As a member of the commission, he was instrumental in advocacy and a major influence on the direction of the newly established park. He took an active part in the deliberations on the general plan of the C&O Canal NHP. A summary of the commission’s activities and establishment of the general plan was written by Dr. Gilford and published in the September 2011 *Along the Towpath*; it is available at candocanal.org/atp/2011-09.pdf.

Ken Rollins hailed Dr. Gilford in a December 1995 *Along the Towpath* feature article. He commented on Dr. Gilford’s long service: “He is an outstanding illustration of the value of continuity within the membership of any organization, which we shall soon see. Turnover and new membership are invaluable in assuring growth and adaptability of any group, but continuity is also vital lest it unwittingly stray from its intended purpose or lose the history of its various considerations through time.” Ken summarized Dr. Gilford’s support of the Monocacy Aqueduct: “... Jim Gilford’s quiet, firm insistence that something be done, and that we can wait no longer has set all this in motion. I hereby nominate Jim for the title *Hero of the Canal*.”



Dr. Gilford (back row, second from left) with the initial C&O Canal Advisory Commission in 1972. Photo courtesy of the National Park Service, C&O Canal NHP.

Accompanied by the Past (Continued from previous page)

“Hard Times on the Ditch: The fact that Georgetown is overstocked with coal adds to the lull in the trade on the Chesapeake and Ohio canal and makes the depression along the entire line of the waterway a distressing feature.... The blow strikes the boatmen hardest, many of whom purchased teams and outfits on time and contracted to pay for them by the trip. Thus, their source of revenues is cut off, and they are placed in a trying position. Some have temporarily abandoned boating until trade resumes and are seeking employment in another way.”

While indications are that most (if not all) the boats were owned by companies and builders, this suggests that most or all the captains provided the mules, with their equipment such as harnesses, as well as their feed and care, including the frequently needed services of farriers. If a captain didn’t own mules and their associated equipment, he would lease or buy them, making a payment each trip out of his earnings. His earnings were determined by the tons carried

and their destination. Likely the boat owner did equip the boats with the requisite ropes, etc., and basic furnishings in the crew cabin (stove, table, and chair and bunk); but the captain would feed and pay the crew (a fact that pushed men to use their families) as well as pay boat operation expenses such as tolls, as well as wharf and trimmer fees. If there were times when there was no cargo, or a captain could not operate the boat for some reason, he still would have had expenses related to his crew and mules.

Although much is not certain about boat operation at this time, everything we do know indicates that it was not possible for a captain to earn enough during the boating season to cover his expenses in the winter. Those men who lived year around on a boat with their family were even less likely to escape poverty as indicated by the frequent reports of destitution among the boat people that appear with some regularity after the 1889 flood.

Notes:

1. *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, Issues 58-67, p. 128.

Nature Notes

By Marjorie Richman

Slave Labor Camp or Best Friends?

It took a long time for scientists to accept the fact that members of two different species could join together to form a new organism capable of carrying out a distinct and robust life style. When Simon Schwendener, a Swiss botanist, proposed this concept to explain the composition of lichens in 1867, his ideas were dismissed by the scientific community. It was a difficult theory to accept at that time, since a lichen looks nothing like either of its components, fungi and algae, and it was hard to prove with the limited technology available at that time. Much later, in 1939, mycologists and biologists studying plant pathology began publishing experimental proof of the dual nature of lichens. We now accept the fact that a lichen is a unique organism composed of a partnership between a fungus and algae living together in a mutually beneficial relationship.

That is, the relationship appears to be beneficial since both the fungus and the algae contribute different benefits to the lichen. However, being the philosophical creatures that we are, people began to question whether all partners equally benefit, or if algae are in fact prisoners being exploited. This might seem like an unscientific rather anthropomorphic question, but the pursuit of an answer has led to interesting research into the nature of lichens.

Fungi do not create their own food, as do organisms that are able to photosynthesize. Different fungi have found solutions to finding food; some form mycorrhizal relationships with plants, others feed on organic matter and are valuable recycling agents. About 20% of fungi species form relationships with photosynthesizing algae that result in the formation of

lichens. In these relationships, the fungus is dependent on the photosynthesizing partner. Separated in the laboratory, the fungus dies or sickens with no adverse effect on the algae.

Yet, in a lichen body the fungus appears to be in control. The fungus seems to capture the algae. It surrounds an algal body with hyphae, sometimes actually enclosing it. The fungus may also penetrate the cell walls with fungal tissue. A lichen body may contain one or more fungal partners and one or multiple algal partners. The algae provide the food via photosynthesis. Scientists have found that some algal partners give 80% of their sugar manufacture to the fungus.



Above and below – lichens. Photos by Marjorie Richman.



So far it sounds like a prison camp: the algal partner is trapped and must feed at least one or more hungry fungi. There is another side to the story.

Algae alone are actually quite fragile. They cannot take a great deal of sunlight and they need plenty of moisture in order to photosynthesize. Lichen, on the other hand, live in almost every environment on earth, in moist and dry climates. They are found in Arctic tundra, in deserts, and along rocky coasts. They are wide spread here in the mid-Atlantic. This wide distribution is only possible because of the benefits each species is able to contribute to the partnership.

Lichens seem almost indestructible. In dry habitats, or habitats with wet and dry seasons, the fungal partner can send out filaments to gather water from dew and fog. In times of low photosynthesis, the lichen body is able to absorb nutrients and moisture from whatever substrate it is anchored on. A lichen can thrive on a wide variety of materials, such as bark, rock, leaves, mosses, grave-stones, buildings, in fact almost any exposed surface. The fungus also provides sun screen for the algal partners. As a member of a lichen body, algae are able to live in areas that would be impossible otherwise.

Volunteers in Parks

By Jim Heins

The VIP Team's 2021 Efforts and Results

Those hardy souls who participated in the various projects this year must have contributed at least 2021 hours of effort on behalf of our beautiful park. As reported in the last issue of this newsletter, these intrepid workers provided the leadership and organization for eight cleanup sites along the canal for the Potomac River Watershed Cleanup early in the year.

The Swains Lock area was well maintained by the stewards of Swains Lock. A fairly large amount of garlic mustard was removed from the park. New wayside panels were swapped out for old ones on the Paw Paw Tunnel Hill trail. As a result of a couple of cleanup projects, the Goose Creek River Lock, Rileys Lock and the Seneca Aqueduct are now looking better than they have for quite a while. Almost all of the parks approximately 60 bulletin boards were refurbished. A number of picnic tables throughout the park were attended to, with replacement of damaged or rotting boards and the repainting of others. This fall, 16 more benches were installed in the park, many of them in the western section of the park necessitating a great deal of travel time in addition to the long and hard work of the actual installations. There is still some ongoing effort to finish up loose ends of some of these projects.

All in all, 25 members contributed to the efforts mentioned. Much of it was physically demanding and was met

with enthusiasm and a great deal of energy. I extend, on behalf of our association, many thanks and congratulations to all for providing a tremendous support to the C&O Canal NHP in 2021.



***The fruits of our labor.** In early October, the bench bunch was just finishing up the installation of one of the 16 new benches we put in this year, when a couple of visitors to the park came strolling by. We invited them to have a seat and be the first ones to sit on this latest addition to our park's bench program. This couple explained that in their retirement, they had very recently moved to the Frederick area to be closer to their daughter. They were very appreciative of the opportunity to "sit a spell" and said their daughter warned them that there wasn't any place to sit along the towpath so this was a pleasant surprise. No sooner had they mentioned this, their daughter and son-in-law came riding by on their bikes and we all had a good laugh at the surprised look on their faces when they saw Ira and Elizabeth sitting there. This experience made our day, as well. They continue to enjoy walking on the towpath and "sitting a spell." Photo by Doug Zveare.*

Nature Notes (Continued from previous page)

Lichen can survive even in the hostile environment of outer space. In 2005 two different species of lichens were placed in a sealed container and sent aboard a manned space mission. Once in orbit, the container was opened and the lichens were directly exposed, unprotected, to the varying temperatures and cosmic radiation found far above earth's atmosphere. Fifteen days later, upon return to earth, the lichens were unharmed and still able to photosynthesize.

Lichen seem to be able to break down any surface they attach themselves to. Over a long period of time, lichen activity gradually turns rocks into soil and degrades concrete. This type of weathering proves costly when a lichen chooses a man-made structure as a substrate, as they often do. Two examples are the Mt. Rushmore sculptures and the façade of the National Museum of the American Indian building on the Mall. Both require constant maintenance because of lichen.

Unfortunately we will never resolve the question of how algae "feel" about being a part of a lichen body. Maybe it isn't important considering the advantages of the partnership. Perhaps these two organisms, fungi and algae, have found an extraordinarily successful formula for survival. By joining together to form a completely new creature that can live anywhere, they have found a solution to the evolutionary arms race.

Lichens are everywhere in the Washington area. The towpath is a particularly good habitat since they thrive in open, sunny places. They can be found on rocks and trees along the towpath and on trees close to your car in towpath parking lots. Although they appear colorless, a magnifying glass will introduce you to a world of lichen color. And best of all, there is no preferred season for viewing lichens. You can see them anytime, all year.

Pedal, Paddle and Hike

By Trent Carbaugh

Not all who wander are lost – J.R.R. Tolkien

Things That Go Bump in the Lock House

A Look At Creatures of Folklore in the Potomac River Valley

Human beings to some extent or another believe in some irrational, bizarre, or otherwise just plain odd stuff. We, as a species, often choose the irrational over the rational explanation simply because we prefer it. Folks in the past did the same. They lived in a world where the wildness and uncertainty of nature was much closer; they saw things they could not easily explain from the back of a horse, walking on a dark road, or on the wood line at the edge of the isolated farm. Without the modern conveniences of electricity or instant communications, shadowy things sometimes became dire threats or portents of unpleasant events to come. Unusual occurrences, for lack of a better explanation, often became supernatural events and the things that went bump in the night were one of the creatures described below, not just the cat knocking something over.

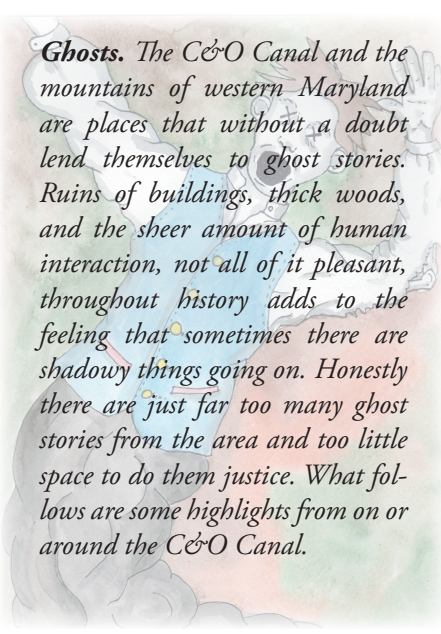
The early immigrants to Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania were a diverse lot. Scots, Germans, English, and a smattering of other Europeans all came to the American Colonies with their own tales from folklore. When you figure

in Native American stories, these beliefs adapted and changed and a New World mythology evolved.

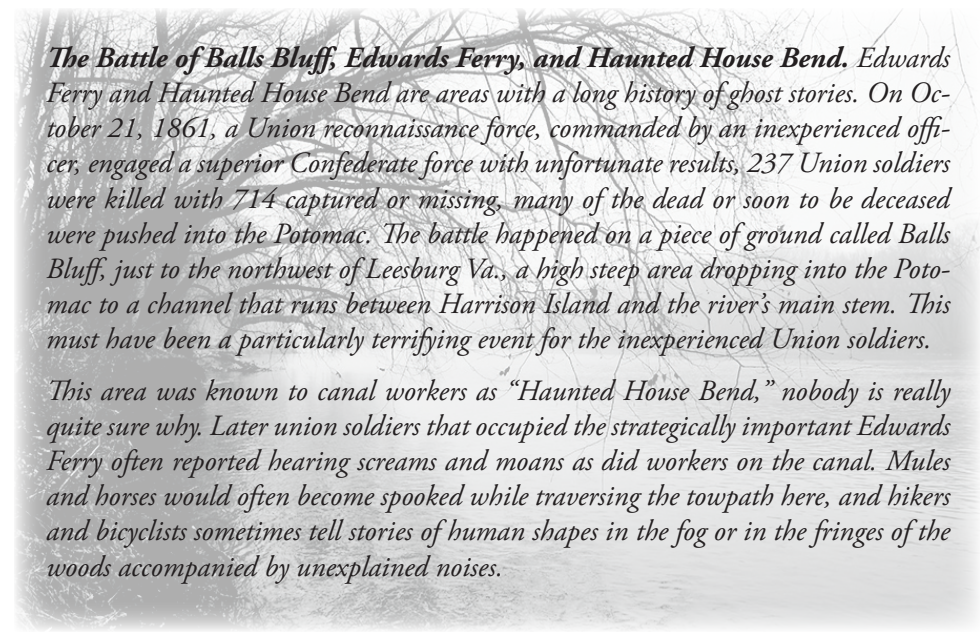
The New World *was* a scary place for the newly arrived folks from other countries. Most of these people came from places that were very old. Cultures in Europe and Africa were built on the bones of previous civilizations that often stretched back into prehistory. America was, without a doubt, a very frightening place for Europeans. The mid-Atlantic colonies were covered in old growth forests all of the way to the west as far as anyone had gone. Of course the Native Americans had a playfully sarcastic sense of humor that often elaborated on these tales and added their own take on them just for the joy of storytelling and to keep the newcomers on their toes.

Some cultures brought their folkloric creatures with them, such as the hexenwolf, black dogs, and witches. Other critters were unique to North America, such as snallygasters and hoop snakes. Wild men/women and little people appear in Native American, European, African, and Asian contexts. Ghost stories are from everywhere people have ever lived.

So turn down the electric lamps and light a candle for ambiance and follow along here for an introduction to one of the weirder byways of history, this is certainly the time of year for it. Most of these creatures were/are believed to inhabit the area between the Susquehanna River and the Potomac River watersheds, though many of them show up with different names in other places. Oh, and keep an eye on the window, you never know what might be looking in.



Ghosts. *The C&O Canal and the mountains of western Maryland are places that without a doubt lend themselves to ghost stories. Ruins of buildings, thick woods, and the sheer amount of human interaction, not all of it pleasant, throughout history adds to the feeling that sometimes there are shadowy things going on. Honestly there are just far too many ghost stories from the area and too little space to do them justice. What follows are some highlights from on or around the C&O Canal.*



The Battle of Balls Bluff, Edwards Ferry, and Haunted House Bend. *Edwards Ferry and Haunted House Bend are areas with a long history of ghost stories. On October 21, 1861, a Union reconnaissance force, commanded by an inexperienced officer, engaged a superior Confederate force with unfortunate results, 237 Union soldiers were killed with 714 captured or missing, many of the dead or soon to be deceased were pushed into the Potomac. The battle happened on a piece of ground called Balls Bluff, just to the northwest of Leesburg Va., a high steep area dropping into the Potomac to a channel that runs between Harrison Island and the river's main stem. This must have been a particularly terrifying event for the inexperienced Union soldiers.*

This area was known to canal workers as "Haunted House Bend," nobody is really quite sure why. Later union soldiers that occupied the strategically important Edwards Ferry often reported hearing screams and moans as did workers on the canal. Mules and horses would often become spooked while traversing the towpath here, and hikers and bicyclists sometimes tell stories of human shapes in the fog or in the fringes of the woods accompanied by unexplained noises.

Paw Paw Tunnel. Given the amount of workers killed during the building of the 3,118 foot long tunnel, in accidents or by sickness along with violence associated with labor disputes, there should be plenty of ghosts lurking in the area.

In 1837, disagreements about pay and rivalries between workers turned violent. English miners, employed for their technical expertise, "Dutch" workers (local German immigrants), and Irish laborers ended up in conflict. The Irish, who did seem to be getting the short end of the stick, terrorized the work camps and managed to briefly drive off English workers. In 1838 more riots occurred resulting in the destruction of the tavern at Oldtown, Md. and the workmen's shanty town was burned. Eventually the problems were worked out, mostly, and the tunnel was completed and open for operation in 1850.

Visitors to the tunnel have described seeing moving shadows, hearing disembodied voices, and a few instances of being grabbed by hands that are not there. Modern paranormal researchers claim to have experienced the same things as well having their instrumentation register the presence of something happening in the non-visible electromagnetic spectrum.


Hoop Snakes. One of the more absurd creatures here listed, hoop snakes would be quite the dangerous critter to run into. Of various lengths, the hoop snake had the unique ability to grasp the end of its tail in its mouth and form a hoop like shape. This allowed the hoop snake to roll at high speed to escape or to attack (usually) its foes. Though armed with considerable fangs its most dangerous weapon was a poison filled spike on the end of its tail. This poison was so virulent that it could kill a mature tree with one stab, turning it black and rotten almost instantly. Fortunately, a rolling hoop snake is said to be quite clumsy when moving and are easy to escape. When walking on the towpath you should ask yourself though, are those bicycle tire tracks or hoop snake tracks...

Big Pool. Some people have claimed to see a Native American ghost walking around the area of Big Pool. This fellow is said to be well dressed in traditional clothing. Like most ghost stories he is seen late in the evening or in very foggy conditions. As a historical note, the area on the Potomac River side of Big Pool had a very large Native American presence in pre-contact times.

Fort Frederick. Fort Frederick, built in 1756/57 during the French and Indian War, just off of the C&O at Big Pool has lots (and I mean lots) of ghost stories associated with it. I must also admit that I have experienced many strange occurrences there when I was on staff. The Fort was initially used as a garrison and supply depot to protect Western Maryland and the route to Fort Cumberland. During the Revolutionary War, it was used as a prison for British and German prisoners of war and was briefly occupied by Union troops during the Civil War. Fort Frederick also has the distinction of being the first place that Confederates crossed the Potomac and invaded the north on Christmas Day 1861. It was a very short invasion, just a few hours.

Some of the common stories are classic ghost tales like the Scottish soldier late at night who can be heard crying for home in the northeast bastion or transparent soldiers marching in ranks on the parade ground in the fort. Other tales are not so common such as howls and screams coming from the surrounding woods or the infamous "fog" that blankets the fort gates on some nights causing folks to lose their way, sometimes for hours.


The strangest to me has always been what I called the 3:30 ghosts. At about 3:30 in the afternoon, especially on hot August days when visitor traffic was non-existent, you could see and hear things that weren't really there. A person in colonial clothing passing across one of the barracks doors, footsteps on the upper floor above where you would be, coming from a locked room, or voices you could just barely hear. This was so commonplace that I would use these occurrences as practical jokes on the high school kids that we hired as interpreters for the summer. This probably tells you too much about my sense of humor and just how un-seriously I take ghost stories.



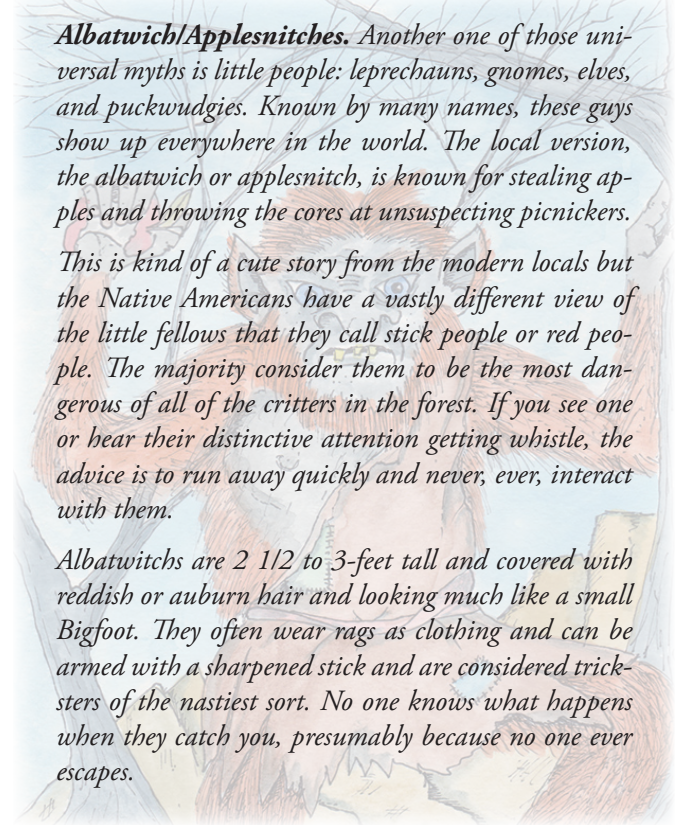
The Snallygaster or Schneller Geischt. Often described as half horse and half alligator, the snallygaster was a large critter that preyed on livestock and possibly the occasional human. Some colonial witnesses described it being with or without wings, sometimes flying, some said it had a metallic beak (with metal teeth), and in one or two cases tentacles like an octopus (I suspect that most of these witnesses were on their way home from a tavern). The origins of the snallygaster are obscure; they do not appear to be a crossover from European folklore except in the broad sense of dragons but unfortunately many of the Native American tales from the area did not survive European contact so we may never know the snallygaster's true origin.

The snallygaster, or critters described with the same appearance and characteristics, are a fairly common folkloric beast in the mid-Atlantic region. It was a particularly common belief in areas of German settlement in southern Pennsylvania and central Maryland although historically there have been reports of sightings from far western Maryland, West Virginia and into the Ohio country.

The snallygaster stories are in general very similar in description and behavior to its more famous cousin the Jersey Devil. Living in the wilderness of the Pine Barrens in southern New Jersey sightings of the "Devil" are still reported to this day.



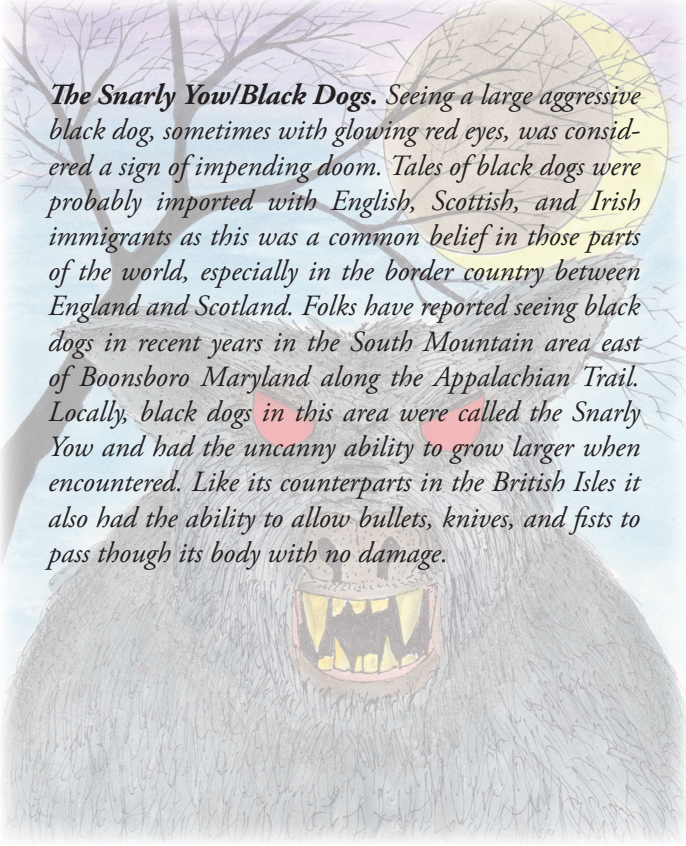
Forest People. Wildmen/women, Sasquatch, Bigfoot, Yeti, known by many names are a universal bogeyman; some type of creature of a similar description is a common belief held all over the world. Most people of western origins think of Bigfoot as modern tall tale. Native Americans on the other hand just see them as part of nature to be respected and left alone. Forest people have been with us since prehistoric times as ancient cave art shows us. Standing 8 to 9-feet tall and sporting a hairy hide in a variety of colors, with long arms, eyes glowing red in the dark, and, of course leaving their signature large footprints, a forest person would be quite startling to run into. Modern reports of encounters with large hairy beings along the Potomac start west of Cumberland, Md. and as far east as Potomac, Md. and everywhere in between. So keep an eye open for glowing red eyes watching you from the berm side of the canal as you settle in for the night at that remote hiker/biker.



Albatwiche/Applesnitches. Another one of those universal myths is little people: leprechauns, gnomes, elves, and puckwudgies. Known by many names, these guys show up everywhere in the world. The local version, the albatwiche or applesnitch, is known for stealing apples and throwing the cores at unsuspecting picnickers.

This is kind of a cute story from the modern locals but the Native Americans have a vastly different view of the little fellows that they call stick people or red people. The majority consider them to be the most dangerous of all of the critters in the forest. If you see one or hear their distinctive attention getting whistle, the advice is to run away quickly and never, ever, interact with them.

Albatwitches are 2 1/2 to 3-feet tall and covered with reddish or auburn hair and looking much like a small Bigfoot. They often wear rags as clothing and can be armed with a sharpened stick and are considered tricksters of the nastiest sort. No one knows what happens when they catch you, presumably because no one ever escapes.



The Snarly Yow/Black Dogs. Seeing a large aggressive black dog, sometimes with glowing red eyes, was considered a sign of impending doom. Tales of black dogs were probably imported with English, Scottish, and Irish immigrants as this was a common belief in those parts of the world, especially in the border country between England and Scotland. Folks have reported seeing black dogs in recent years in the South Mountain area east of Boonsboro Maryland along the Appalachian Trail. Locally, black dogs in this area were called the Snarly Yow and had the uncanny ability to grow larger when encountered. Like its counterparts in the British Isles it also had the ability to allow bullets, knives, and fists to pass through its body with no damage.

Hexenwelf/Dwyao. *The mortal enemy of the snallygaster is the hexenwelf. Werewolf creatures were a common belief in Germany and Eastern Europe with regional variations; these beliefs were brought along with the German immigrants. There are hints that these things were part of local Native American legend as well, pre-European contact. The hexenwelf (dwayo or dawayo was the name used in the Catoctin/ South Mountain area of Maryland, possibly of Native American origin) was a classic werewolf. Man sized, with a short tail, capable of running on two legs or four, and dangerous to livestock, farmhands, and milkmaids. In some accounts the hexenwelf (plural) are able to turn invisible or visible at will, other witnesses state, though, that the critter is just extremely good at blending into its environment. Hexenwelf would often hunt in packs and most anything alive and kicking were its preferred meal with the exception of cats and dogs who were often seen running with hexenwelf in a friendly manner. According to folklore packs of hexenwelf, presumably with their cat and dog allies, would chase down snallygasters in the forested mountains and epic battles would ensue with much howling, bellowing, and crashing through the trees. Hexenwelf have been reported as late as the 1960's around Catoctin Mountain National Park, and Cunningham Falls State Park.*

Modern sightings of "dogmen", as they are called now, are remarkably similar to historic descriptions of hexenwelf with the disturbing ability of the creature to disappear and reappear at will.

Witches. *Witches were kind of a catch all to blame bad things on; your milk cow dries up, a witch did it, chickens stop laying eggs, you must have made the witch mad at you again. Historically though, in the area the only "witches" were wise older women (and a few men) that helped people with folk medicine and served as midwives. Of course, many of these older ladies were looked at askance for not fitting into the perceived norms of their local culture and no doubt some of them were of a contrary nature. If you were beset with problems that you could blame on witches you could bribe the aforesaid older ladies to intervene in your problems in exchange for bundles of old clothing (preferably black) or gifts of food.*

One unique local defense against witches was the "Witch's Seat" this could manifest itself as a convenient rock on a hilltop or a "seat" built with a comfortable sitting stone extending out from your chimney close to the top. The idea being that when a witch was flying by on her broomstick, she would be pleased that you gave her a nice comfortable place to rest from her nefarious tasks with cows and chickens, this discouraged her from sending harm your way. On holidays you could put out food as well, pleasing her even more.

All images by Trent Carbaugh.

It doesn't really matter if any of these creatures were or are real. What matters is that folks in the past believed in them (and plenty do nowadays as well), or more importantly believed in the *idea* of them. This helped people cope with things that they could not understand. A wasting sickness could be attributed to the depredations of an evil witch, an empty chicken house could be caused by a hexenwelf or a snallygaster. You could feel you were being proactive about those things you couldn't control by leaving food out for the witch or putting up a hex sign or two on your chicken house.

So what do we make of these tales? Are these just figments of our collective imagination? The result of a long evening in the local tavern? Or do some of these things have some basis in reality? I spend quite a bit of time in the mountains and forests along the Potomac River, and I must admit that I have seen and heard some strange things; tracks I cannot explain, a long whistle from the brush, shadows that move when they shouldn't so I keep an open mind. So when you're staying in a lock house or camping along the canal on a dark

and stormy night pay close attention to the darkness around you; who knows what you'll run into. Hopefully it won't be hungry.

Select References:

Mysteries and Lore of Western Maryland, Snallygasters, Dogmen, and Other Mountain Tales, Susan Fair, 2013, (Writers note; if you have any interest in Western Maryland folklore, Susan Fair's book is a great starting point.)

Strange Creatures From Time and Space, John Keel, 2014

Our Haunted Planet, John Keel, 2014

American Monsters, A History of Monster Lore, and Sightings in America, Linda S. Godfrey, 2014

On the Level

By Steve Dean

August – October 2021

Level Walks

The end of summer and start of fall is a very busy time for level walkers. This report also includes a few earlier level walk reports. Level Walker activity throughout the canal has recovered after the reduced activity in 2020. The combined effort of Level Walkers is a significant contribution to the park and their support is appreciated both by the National Park Service and the Association.

Level Walkers are Association members who agree to cover a section of towpath. They volunteer on their own schedule. For more information and a list of the levels, visit candocanal.org/level/. Information for level walkers is also available at levelwalker.blog/. Contact Steve Dean at lw@candocanal.org for further information. Please note the updated address.

Level 3 Lock 5 to Cabin John Creek: Alyson Miller reports June 4; July 15; Aug. 12; and Sept. 13, 16, 21 and 29: There are always lots of people on Level 3, including kayakers, cyclists, runners and walkers. There is an extensive trash problem at the Lock 7 area, and I notified the NPS. There were two abandoned Lime e-bikes on the level. I notified Lime about the bikes, but as of September they were not picked up. In several areas the riverside of the towpath was damaged just south of Cabin John Creek.

Level 4 Cabin John Creek to Lock 14: Alyson Miller reports June 1 and 4; July 15; Aug. 12; and Sept. 13, 16, and 29: There is a little water from Lock 8 to the Cabin John Creek culvert. I fear this entire level is filling in with plants, including trees. Several large trees have fallen in the prism between the Cabin John Creek culvert and Lock 8. The prism between Locks 9 and 10 is completely filled with plants. **Larry Heflin reports August through October:** 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: Nancy Ben-co reports Oct. 4: There was very little trash on a very busy towpath! The walk from Great Falls to Widewater and back took place on a beautiful Saturday morning with hundreds of walkers, bicyclists, and dog walkers on the towpath. A small snake on the towpath attracted some attention from curious park visitors.

Level 7 Great Falls Tavern to Lock 21: Alice Mayo reports Aug. 4: The towpath was very clean. Almost all debris came from the picnic area at Swains Lock, around a large structure

near Milepost 16, and around a bench near Great Falls Tavern. There were three picnicking groups at Swains' Lock and one group setting up a campsite with tent.

Level 8 Lock 21 to Lock 22: Rinze and Sue Roosma report Oct. 13: It was a very nice fall day with moderate towpath use. Trash was light. There were plenty of turtles on the level, with the occasional blue heron.

Level 14 Harrison Island to Whites Ferry: Jone and Joseph Parr report Sept. 11: This is a shady and very clean level. It was a busy day on the level with perfect towpath conditions. Trash was light. We identified several fall wildflowers. **Dave Shumaker reports Sept. 27:** The prism had been cleared at several culverts, which enabled me to cross and view the berm side of the culverts. As I was headed back to the parking lot, I encountered an NPS truck headed downstream. The driver said they were out scouting for maintenance issues and picking up trash. I gave them my trash bag and told them everything looked good down to Mile 33. As I put my bag in the truck bed, I noticed they had a weed whacker so maybe they were the ones responsible for clearing the prism in the culvert areas.

Level 15 Whites Ferry to Lock 26: Jon Wolz reports Aug. 19, Sept. 16 (with Steve Hovarth) and Oct. 15: In August it was noted that the Whites Ferry granary ruins had been mowed. There were many dry or just muddy stretches of the prism. In September we noted that the areas around all the culverts on this level were overgrown, but on a later walk it was noted that they were trimmed. The Marble Quarry Hiker Biker camp was in good condition. Paw Paw fruit was ripe. In October the towpath was in good condition. I noted that a downed tree I reported earlier was cut up. Osage oranges and black walnuts were falling. The Whites Ferry pavilion field was overgrown and all the picnic tables were moved away to the river. The masonry restroom was closed, but portable restrooms were open. The area around the Whites Ferry granary ruins was again overgrown.

Level 16 Lock 26 to Monocacy Aqueduct: Jon Wolz reports Aug. 26, Sept. 15, and Oct. 20 (with Steve Hovarth): In August the towpath was in good condition. Some of the gray crushed stone is washing on to the concrete white prism on both ends of the aqueduct. There are erosion "groves" on the new towpath surface on both sides of the aqueduct. In September I encountered a crew of NPS contractors at Culvert 69 who were weed trimming around culverts from WilliamSPORT to Seneca. The Potomac water level was high in the Potomac River as well as the Monocacy River. The aqueduct took a beating from tree debris and arches four through seven

were jammed with debris after Ida went through the region. On September 24, after a heavy rain, I noticed arch seven was clear of debris. Two of the upstream abutments have a definite “bulge” to them. A mud bar is upstream from the aqueduct at arches five and six, and if the mud bar was removed then debris could float freely through the arches. In October the towpath was in good condition. Undergrowth was high again along the towpath. There were a lot of fallen leaves on the towpath. The towpath that slopes down to the aqueduct on the upstream side continues to erode and the fine gravel accumulates around the drains in the aqueduct basin.

Level 17 Monocacy Aqueduct to Nolands Ferry: **Earl Porter reports Aug. 19 and Oct. 11:** Bicycles were observed riding over the aqueduct towpath on both dates, which is quite dangerous. The Nolands Ferry area was in good shape on both dates. A large trash bag was found at the Monocacy restroom in August; it appears someone had a party. Aqueduct arches two and three were clear in October, but the rest were clogged with a huge debris pile. Many people were out in October despite gloomy weather, and several stopped to talk about the canal and thank me for my support.

Level 19 Point of Rocks to Catoctin Aqueduct: **June Miller reports Aug. 3, with Linda Miller and Pat Weideman-Stone:** There was a large pile of trash at Point of Rocks; someone got it before we finished our walk. There is still graffiti at the pivot bridge. We observed a dagger moth caterpillar. **James Spanenberg reports Oct. 7:** There was the most water I have seen in the prism this year. Lock 29 was watered. Security personnel were at Point of Rocks searching for a missing person. The towpath was in perfect condition with leaves on the ground.

Levels 21 through 24 Lock 30 to Dargan Bend: **Tom Crouch reports Aug. 3 (21-24), Aug. 9 (21-24), Aug. 23 (21-22) Aug. 31 (21-24), Sept. 10 (21-24), Sept. 21 (21-24), Sept. 27 (21-24), Oct. 5 (21-24), Oct. 12 (21-24), Oct. 18 (21-24) and Oct. 27 (21-24):** During the August walks the towpath was busy but in good condition. Trash found was moderate for the area, but the others were picking it up as well. The weather was fine for the September walks. Towpath conditions were good, but the trash was plentiful during the first two walks. Leaves and black walnuts were falling during the early October walks, but fall colors were not noted. During the last October walk I told an NPS maintenance person in a truck about a branch that was partially across the towpath near Brunswick, and on my return trip it was cleared away. Towpath use was moderate to high on all occasions.

Level 22 Lock 31 to Lock 33: **Karlen Keto reports Sept. 27, with Don Peterson:** Paw Paws were nearing the end of harvest. We each enjoyed a delicious pawpaw ripened to perfection. There was minimal bird life and turtles still sunned on logs. There was little ordinary trash on most of the level, including two washable face masks, but there was one almost

full grocery bag of the remains of a beer party with a dozen beer cans and an empty ice bag at one location.

Level 23 Lock 33 to Dam 3: **Arthur Tsien reports Oct. 15:** Most trash was found around the vicinity of the stairs to the footbridge. Black walnuts were falling on the level. There were no issues in the Dam 3 and inlet lock area. The towpath was in good condition.

Level 26 Dargan Bend to Lock 37: **Larry Cohen reports June 27:** The prism was unwatered but in good condition. The level was mostly litter free. Since my last report a huge clean-up was conducted on Earth Day with county support. All trash, including a heat pump and mattress, was removed.

Level 27 Antietam Aqueduct to Lock 38: **Jonnie and Joycie Lefebure report Oct. 1:** The towpath was in good condition. The towpath margins were unmown, with stilt grass and other vegetation over a foot high, except at Miller Sawmill community where the prism and towpath were mowed. The Shepherdstown River Lock has some graffiti and the downstream wall seems to be more degraded than I remember. A camp host was present at the Antietam Creek group campground.

Levels 28 and 29 Lock 38 to Snyders Landing: **Brigitta Shroyer and Joel Anderson report Oct. 30:** There was a light amount of trash on the two levels. Towpath conditions were good. Numerous walkers and bikers were encountered.

Level 30 Snyders Landing to Lock 40: **Hilary Walsh reports Oct. 19:** The towpath was an interesting light colored sand for most of the level – clearly the resurfacing is well under way here and is in varying stages. Paving equipment was on the level. Trash was light.

Level 33 Dam 4 to McMahons Mill: **Dick Stoner reports Sept. 28 and Oct. 4:** A large rock slide occurred in late September near Milepost 87. The NPS team brought a loader and pushed about half of the rocks into the river, making it clear for walkers and bikers. The rock slide was on the towpath/ground and not on one of the newer paved sections.

Level 36 Lock 43 to Falling Waters: **Dick Ebersole reports Sept 15:** The towpath was in good condition, with some small branches and tree bark on the path. Lock 43 and the lockhouse seemed to be stable. The old bridge piers at Falling Waters were overgrown with vegetation again. A few years ago a Boy Scout troop cleaned them off; it appears to be needed again.

Level 38 Lock 44 to High Rock Quarry: **Tom Mears reports Aug. 29:** The towpath was in excellent condition, with no signs of puddles or storm damage. This was before Ida hit the area. Although it was a cool day relative to the previous couple of weeks, there were fewer people than I expected to see. I assumed that was due to the threat of rain. There was no trash along the towpath. There may have been trash near the campsite but the weeds were deep, so litter could have

been concealed. **Jone and Joseph Parr report Sept. 3:** The towpath was clean. It was two days after Ida storm passed by; the Potomac River was muddy and moving fast, but we saw no flooding. The parking lot near the crossover bridge has many large potholes. There was evidence of someone cutting underbrush north of Milepost 102, including several small pawpaw trees.

Level 40 Nettle Railroad Bridge Piers to Dam 5: James Spanenberg reports Oct. 7: The towpath was in excellent condition without much trash. The amount of trash in this section has dramatically improved since my last report. Perhaps the local residents are pitching in.

Level 41 Dam 5 to Four Locks: Mike Anderson reports Aug. 3 and Sept. 25: There were numerous downed trees on both dates from earlier summer storms. The towpath was in excellent condition on both dates. The level was relatively clean on both dates. In August a group of wild turkeys was encountered near Dam 5.

Level 42 Four Locks to McCoys Ferry: Jack Ebersole reports Sept. 17: Considering the amount of rain from the previous day the towpath was in good shape. It drained well, with just one small puddle the whole way. A downed tree had recently been cleared. The towpath and parking areas were in need of mowing. All of the fruit on the Paw Paws was gone; either picked or eaten by wildlife.

Level 45 Ernstville to Licking Creek Aqueduct: Dennis Kubicki reports Sept. 10: The towpath was in generally great condition. Throughout Level 45 the crushed stone surface was smooth and dry; although there were a couple of isolated locations where I found a small accumulation of puddled rainwater. Vegetation was about thigh high along the edge of the towpath. There were a couple of locations where deadfall borders the path making for an unsightly view. And there were many instances near the towpath of dead trees from the emerald ash borer. Vegetation at Culvert 153 had been cut back thoroughly. Stones were noted that were falling away and down into the flow on the north side of the culvert. Further, the opening there is mostly blocked by stones, mud and vegetation.

Level 46 Licking Creek Aqueduct to Little Pool: Rick and Wendy Duke report Sept. 6: The river level was very high and muddy following Hurricane Ida.

The towpath was in good condition, with the exception of an expended sky lantern in the Licking Creek area there was little trash. We observed numerous pollinators, including a monarch butterfly.

Level 49 Round Top Cement Mill to Lock 53: Paul Petkus and Sue Muller report Aug. 7 and Oct. 9: The towpath was in good condition in August. There were a few more branches to move off of it than I expected. The level was well maintained by the National Park Service. The areas near the lock, waste weir, culvert and camping area were mowed. Sue did surveys for the Maryland & D.C. Breeding Bird Atlas and the Maryland Biodiversity Project. Nine butterfly species, 15 birds, and 34 plants were identified, while frogs and turtles were plentiful. The towpath was in good condition and busy during the October walk but, as usual, it sounded like the Western Maryland Rail Trail was busier than the towpath. A vernal pool was present in the prism around Mile 128.4. We encountered numerous birds, including a belted kingfisher that streaked from Maryland to the trees in West Virginia, and several wood ducks.

Level 54 Lock 59 to Lock 60: Dennis Kubicki reports Sept. 9: From Little Orleans to about the Devils Alley area the towpath was in generally good condition, while above that point I observed a rutted and irregular surface. This is the normal condition on this level. Conditions at both the Devils Alley and Stickpile Hill Hiker-Biker camps were generally good. There was no trash and debris. There was a large accumulation of cut firewood at the fire ring at Stickpile Hill. The picnic table at Stickpile Hill was positioned directly beneath a dead tree with limbs hanging precariously over it.

Level 55 Lock 60 to Culvert 208: Paul Petkus reports Oct. 23: Numerous campers were at Bonds Landing, including a Boy Scout troop from Shepherdstown, W.Va. They hiked to the Paw Paw Tunnel and returned separately. I chatted with one of the hikers from their group. He was the first of the group to return. He reported seeing a copperhead snake during the hike. I observed what appeared to be a riverside wedding across the river in West Virginia. The condition of Lock 60 remains unchanged. A large branch from an adjacent tree appears to have fallen across the lock at some point. No damage to the lock structure was evident. A flock of geese flew over the



Western Maryland Railway canal crossing above Paw Paw.
Photo by Trent Carbaugh.



Canal boat dry dock at Lock 35. Photo by Meredith McCulley.

towpath, while wood ducks flew closer to ground level when they took off from the prism after they sensed my presence. I observed a pair of bicyclists on e-bikes utilizing battery power.

Level 56 Culvert 208 to Lock 61: **John Wiggins and Kathleen Moriarty report Oct. 14:** The day started with heavy fog and ended with beautiful fall weather. The fairly large potholes/puddles around Mile Marker 153 (and a few in other areas) seem to be getting a good deal worse. We saw a large number of wood ducks on the watered area of the canal, mergansers on the Potomac again, and finally got to see a bald eagle while walking the canal.

Levels 56 and 57 Culvert 208 to Lock 63 1/3: **Barbara Sheridan and Pat White report June 4:** The levels were very clean. We expected a lot more trash with the increased park usage during covid. It was a very pleasant surprise to find it so clean. The canal had a good amount of water, probably due to recent rain. There was a substantial amount of tree debris and a few large puddles on the towpath. The largest water-filled potholes were across the entire towpath between Mileposts 152 and 153. There was also a tree down in the same area blocking most of the towpath. There was lots of wildlife to see! A wood duck and five ducklings were in the canal. A baby fawn was hidden in the weeds beside the towpath near Sorrel Ridge. Butterflies, turtles and cicadas were everywhere. We don't see most of this when we level walk in November.

Levels 59 and 60 Tunnel Parking Area to Town Creek Aqueduct: **Trent Carbaugh reports Sept. 26:** Water in the canal prism was about normal, with less turtles than usual. The towpath conditions were good, with a few puddles. Grass was very high, and I removed some small fallen limbs and trimmed back vast amounts of invading multi-flora rose stems. I did see a geriatric wood turtle on the towpath so I stopped and had a one-sided conversation with him before gently moving him off the travel path.

Levels 68 and 69 Evitts Creek Aqueduct to Cumberland Terminus: **Travis Medcalf reports Sept. 7 and Sept. 29 (with**

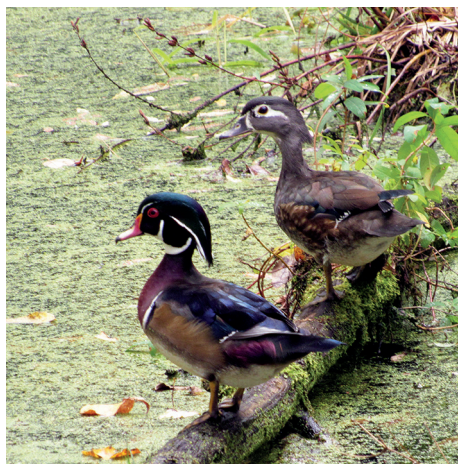
Ciara Ugalde): The first walk was on Level 68 only. I encountered another tree blocking the entire towpath. This time it was not as large a tree as I reported in the spring, but it was blocking the entire towpath. It was at Mile 180.9, upstream of the Evitts Creek Aqueduct. I called the NPS emergency number and reported it. The towpath was in magnificent dry condition, especially considering Tropical Storm Ida's presence just six days before. The second walk was on a cloudless beautiful fall day. I met up with an NPS mowing crew that was just wrapping up freshly mowing both of my levels. The recently repainted 184 mile marker was defaced with spilled white paint on it. Both levels were clean.

Roving Level Walker: **Mark Howe – 2021:** Mark walks various parts of the entire canal on a regular basis. He notes the following over the past year:

1. Most, if not just about all, of the resurfacing is doing fine. An exception is by the locks/bridges by Harpers Ferry. It is rather steep, so keeping solid small/fine stone in place is difficult.
2. Seems to be the year of the rabbit in the spring and summer. There was quite a number along the towpath in multiple locations.
3. The cicadas – at least west of Lander – seem to be non-existent in the park. I walked the lower sections were outside (pre- and post-) cicada season. Then only place I observed them was in the Fort Frederick/McCoy's Ferry area.
4. I suggest signs at in Landers and Brunswick stating the low water bridge at the Little Catoctin Creek may be covered in high water events.
5. There have been two recent heavy rain events and I passed numerous culverts after these events. I observed no noticeable changes in the condition on the towpath, canal bed surface and the abutments on the river sides.



Dagger Moth Caterpillar. Photo by June Miller.



Wood Ducks. Photo by Paul Petkus.



Wood Turtle. Photo by Trent Carbaugh.

Calendar of Events - 2022

Non-C&OCA event
C&OCA business
C&OCA hike and dinner or other key event
C&OCA Bike Ride
C&OCA hike
Jan. 23, Sun. Continuing Hike: 10:30 a.m. Goose Creek River Navigation System in Virginia. Meet at Kephart Bridge Landing. For more information, contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).
Feb. 6, Sun. Board Meeting, 1 p.m. Details to be announced. The meeting could be in-person at Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St. or via Zoom. Decision will be made closer to the event.
Feb. 26, Sat. Continuing Hike: 10:30 a.m. Dargan Bend to iron mine near Lock 36. Meet at Dargan Bend Recreational Area Mile 69.89. For more information, contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).
Mar. 26, Sat. Annual Meeting, Details to be announced. The meeting could be in-person or via Zoom. Decision will be made closer to the event.
Mar. 27, Sun. Continuing Hike: 10:30 a.m. Paw Paw Tunnel hill and the original surveyor stones. Meet at the Paw Paw Tunnel parking lot, Mile 156.10, on Md. Route 51. For more information, contact Pat White (301-977-5628 or hikemaster@candocanal.org).
April 3, Sun. Board Meeting, 1 p.m. Details to be announced. The meeting could be in-person at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave. or via Zoom. Decision will be made closer to the event.

June 5, Sun. **Board Meeting,** 1 p.m. Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St.

Aug. 7, Sun. **Board Meeting,** 1 p.m. Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.

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

Oct. 7–12, Fri.–Wed., **Through Bike Ride,** Cumberland to Georgetown. No sag wagon provided. Reservations required; Reserve no later than August 12. Limited to 20 riders. To register or for more information, contact Denny Sloppy at dennysloppy@yahoo.com or 814-577-5877.

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

Important Information –

- » *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.*
- » *All events are subject to cancellation. Before attending, visit www.candocanal.org, Facebook @candocanal.org or contact the event coordinator.*
- » *Participants are expected to comply with whatever local requirements for COVID-19 are in effect at the time of the event.*

Support is Needed for the Program Committee

After an extended period of limited event activities, the Association is ready to resume a full calendar of events as the restrictions on activities are lifted. The program committee chair position is vacant and a new program committee chair is needed. The program chair works with the nature committee chair, hike leaders, paddle trip leaders and other committee members to schedule and coordinate nature walks, hikes, paddle trips and other events. Additionally, the program chair coordinates annual events, including the Douglas Hike, Presidents Day Breakfast, Heritage Hike and annual membership meeting. The program committee meets once a year, in the fall, to plan the event calendar for the next year. No special qualifications are needed. This is a rewarding position and provides great assistance to the Association.

Interested members should contact Bill Holdsworth at president@candocanal.org.

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



C&O Canal National Historical Park Headquarters

142 W. Potomac St., Williamsport, MD 21795

Superintendent	301-714-2202	Tina Cappetta
Deputy Superintendent	301-714-2200	John Noel
Superintendent's Assistant	301-714-2201	Mackensie Henn
Chief Ranger	301-714-2222	Ed Wenschhof
Chief of Business Mgmt.	301-714-2204	Ben Helwig
Chief of Resource Mgmt.	301-714-2225	Jeri DeYoung
Chief of Maintenance	301-714-2211	Jim Yelton
Chief of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers	301-714-2238	Christiana Hanson
Partnerships Coordinator	301-714-2218	Anthony Bates
Volunteer Coordinator	301-491-7309	Emily Durán Hewitt
Cultural Resources Manager/Historian	301-491-2236	Justin Ebersole
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	Vacant
Georgetown Partnerships Coordinator	240-291-8466	Millie Jimenez

Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center 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	240-625-2931	Joshua Nolen
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Hancock Visitor Center 301-745-5877
439 East Main St., Hancock Md.

Supervisory Park Ranger		Stephanie Siemek
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Cumberland Visitor Center 301-722-8226
Western Maryland Station, Cumberland, Md.

Supervisory Park Ranger		Stephanie Siemek
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OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Great Falls Boat Operation	301-767-3714
Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove (concessionaire)	202-244-0461
Carderock and Marsden Reservations	301-767-3731
Canal Quarters Program	301-714-2233
Williamsport Boat Operations	301-582-0813

24-HOUR EMERGENCY:
911 or 866-677-6677

REPORT SAFETY HAZARDS OR TOWPATH ISSUES:
866-677-6677 or 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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Editor and Producer: Steve Dean – editor@candocanal.org

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

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

C&O CANAL ASSOCIATION

Membership in C&OCA is open to all persons with an interest in the C&O Canal, the C&O Canal National Historical Park, and the Potomac River Basin. Annual membership dues are: \$25 individual, \$35 family, and \$50 patron, assessed on a calendar-year basis, and include subscription to the newsletter. Dues should be mailed in to the C&O Canal Association. C&OCA is a non-profit organization as defined by section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and all contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. A copy of our current financial statement is available upon request by writing to C&OCA at the address above or calling 301-983-0825. Documents and information submitted to the State of Maryland under the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State for the cost of copying and postage.

C&OCA maintains a home page at www.candocanal.org. The webmaster is website@candocanal.org. C&OCA also maintains a telephone number for recorded information and inquiries: 301-983-0825.

Association Officers

President: Bill Holdsworth, president@candocanal.org

First Vice President: Barbara Sheridan

Second Vice President: Anthony Laing

Secretary: Kerry Gruber, secretary@candocanal.org

Treasurer: Richard Radhe, treasurer@candocanal.org

Information Officer: Doug Zveare, inquiries@candocanal.org

Board of Directors: (terms expire in 2024): Trent Carbaugh, Philip de Vos, Dick Ebersole, Christine Holdsworth, Paul Petkus. (terms expire in 2023): Jill Craig, Karen Gray, Jane Hanna, Jim Hutzler, Jonnie Lefebure. (terms expire in 2022): Tom Aitken, Tom Crouch, Tim Snyder, William R. Stewart, Pat White.

Committees (contact at C&OCA address/tel. no. above): Archives, Christine Holdsworth; Auditing, Jon Wolz; By-laws, Dave Johnson; Editorial Review, Steve Dean; Environmental, Rod Mackler; Festivals, Rita Bauman; Finance, Richard Radhe; Legal Advisory, Vacant; Level Walkers, Steve Dean; Membership, William R. Stewart; Nature, Paul Petkus; Nominating, Steve Dean; Programs, Vacant; Sales, Jill Craig; Special Projects, Susan VanHaften; Volunteers-in-Parks (VIP), Jim Heins.

CHESAPEAKE & OHIO CANAL ASSOCIATION INC.

P.O. Box 366

Glen Echo, MD 20812-0366

Along The Towpath

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association

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Culvert 192, at Mile 130, is located just above Lock 53 near Cohill Station. The 10-foot span culvert was built as a road culvert and now carries an active stream. The berm arch, shown here, requires a trek through briars but presents a striking view as the stream rushes over its rocky bed approaching the culvert. Photo by Steve Dean.

Check us out on social media!

C&O Canal Association



Founded in 1954



@candocanal.org



@CandOCanalAssoc



candocanalassoc

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