

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 LVI

March 2024

Number 1

Douglas Hike and Dinner

By Jonnie Lefebure for the Programs Committee

Hikes in the Shepherdstown Area – Program Features a Special Speaker: *I Walked with Douglas*

This year's events will take place in the Shepherdstown, W.Va., area on Saturday, April 27, 2024. Our program speaker will be John Clinton Frye, who was invited to walk with William O. Douglas for the fourth reunion canal hike in 1958 and in the years following.

For many decades, Mr. Frye was curator of the John Clinton Frye Western Maryland Room in the Hagerstown Regional Library, filling the room with books and periodic publications related to western Maryland. At age 90, this distinguished historian has many memories of walking with Douglas and of the people who pushed to preserve the canal as a national park. His reminiscences of canal life in the Williamsport area should not be missed.

The day will start with canal hikes of three different distances. Long distance hikers will board the shuttle bus at 10:00 a.m. at the large parking lot on Canal Road. This lot is located just downstream from the James Rumsey Bridge over

the Potomac River at Shepherdstown. They will be shuttled upstream to the Big Slackwater parking lot, for a 13-mile hike back to their cars. At 11:00 a.m., medium and short distance hikers will board the bus. Medium hikers will be bused to Taylors Landing for an 8.5-mile hike. Short hikers will depart the bus at Snyders Landing for a 4.2-mile return.

Long hikers will first encounter Dam 4 (Mile 48.6), which was originally a crib filled with rocks and was replaced by masonry in the mid 1800's. Karen Gray's excellent *Accompanied by the Past* article that was published for the 2019 Heritage Hike is worth reading if you are interested in details about Dam 4, its complex structures, and functions. Reading this article reminds us how much we miss Karen's reporting. The article is reprinted in this issue on page 8.

A Potomac Edison generating plant on the West Virginia side of the river generates 1,000 kW of hydroelectric power. Just downstream on the berm is the Dam 4 cave, also known as "Bear Cave." It usually issues a trickle of water into the canal. Farther along, Taylors Landing Road starts its run beside the canal. Here, Culvert 116 carries Marsh Run under the canal.

Continued on Page 6



Dam 4 – Photo by Steven Dean

Volunteers in Parks

The Gastronomic Schedule of the VIPs for 2024

By Jim Heins, VIP Coordinator

The Volunteers in Parks (VIPs) will begin this year with what looks like a full plate. The appetizer preceding our smorgasbord will be our third annual *C&O Canal and Riverside Cleanup* being held on **Saturday, April 13**, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. If you haven't signed up yet to help with the cleanup, contact Jim Heins to do so.

The main dish this year will include repairs to upwards of 30 picnic tables throughout the park, plus the construction of six additional tables, with a generous side dish of priming and painting 80 of the 6-foot long 2 inch by 10 inch boards needed for those picnic tables.

There is also a side order of help in casting a minimum of eight replacement mile markers.



Another item on our plate is to help with the newest project of removing graffiti from as much of the park as is possible. This effort is being developed by the park staff, working closely with Jim Tomlin.

Dessert this year will once again be the installation of a large number of new benches, likely in the neighborhood of a baker's dozen.

We are always looking for additional kitchen help to do the painting and repairs. Contact me, Chef Jim Heins, at vip@candocanal.org if you are interested.

Join Chef Jim Heins on a C&O Canal project this year!

The Association Welcomes New Members

Amy & Robert Bazemore

Lesley & John Duncan

Ronald & Rose Ferraro

Mark Kennet

Robert Lamb & Amy Mubbach

Nick Lincoln

Marjorie O'Brien & James Roscher

Jeffrey & Jennie Russell

Rosanne Skirble & Daniel Klein

Don Waters

Membership Renewal Reminder –

Please note: *C&O Canal Association memberships renew at the first of the calendar year. Maintaining a current membership is required to participate in the Association board, vote in board elections, participate in the Level Walker program and to receive the **Along the Towpath** newsletter. If your membership has lapsed you will receive this March issue of **Along the Towpath** as a courtesy, but you will receive no additional issues.*

*Please use the enclosed renewal form to process your membership renewal for 2024 if you haven't already. Alternatively, you can get a form by visiting candocanal.org/membership/ or scanning the QR code to the right, where you can click on the **Renew for 2024** button and renew on-line or download the 2024 renewal form pdf. If you are unsure of your membership status, check the "Membership Expires" date just above your name on the mailing address for this issue of **Along the Towpath**. If it says, "Membership Expired Dec-2023" then your membership renewal is due. Please contact the Membership Chair at membership@candocanal.org if you have any questions. Thank you so much for your continued support of our organization!*



Donors to Association Funds

November 1, 2023 to January 31, 2024

C&O Canal Association Donation Policy. The Association is grateful for the generous support provided by donors over the years. If a donor specifies one of the special purpose funds listed below, we add the donation to that fund. With the exception of the General Fund, we will use the money in accordance with the goals of the fund and not for administrative costs.

General Fund. If a donor doesn't specify a fund, we add that donation to the general fund, which can be used for any purpose, including the Association's administrative costs.

Help the Association by Paying Online. The Association website makes it easy to pay on-line using your credit card. Processing on-line payments is more secure and easier for our volunteers. You can renew your membership, purchase event meals or bus tickets, or make donations. We use PayPal to process our payments, but you don't need a PayPal membership. You can use your credit or debit card. *Note – PayPal will encourage you to sign up. That is unnecessary. You can deselect the button "Save info and create your PayPal account."*

... Association Funds ...

A – Nancy C. Long Aqueduct Fund

– 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.

C – The Cumberland Repair and Maintenance Fund

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

D – Davies Legal Fund

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

G – General Fund

– General funds that are used for any purpose.

R – Ken Rollins C&O Canal Fund

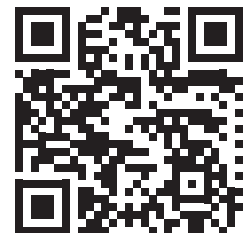
– Supports current projects and programs in and for the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

S – Rachel Stewart Swains Lock Area Fund

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

Donating Funds

Scan the QR code with a mobile device or visit www.candocanal.org/contributions/ for further information about Association funds or to contribute now.



... Donations ...

General Donations

Anne Abbate – A, R

Christopher Allison – R

Wayne Anderson – A

Katherine Andrie – A

Dennis Barry – R

Bonnie Bell – A, R

James Biasco – R

Kathleen Bilton – D

Dorothy Boerner – A, C, R

Judith Bolton – A

Steven Bralove – R

Artemus Brown – R

Richard Busch – D

John Butler – C

Robert Carpenter – A, R

Richard Cember – R

Barbara Collins – D, R

Lauren Cosgrove &

Thomas O'Brien – G

Joseph D'Amico – C

Emma Dieter – R

Larry Dreyer – A

John Dubeck – G

Ruth Dudgeon – A

Jack Ebersole – R

Joseph Eckels – A, C, R

Howard Elitzak – **A, R**
 Barbara Elliott – **A**
 Sharon Elliott – **D, R**
 David Engstrom – **R**
 Kenneth Fisher – **R**
 Janette Fitzsimmons – **R**
 John Frye – **A, C, D, R**
 Carol Galaty – **A, C, R**
 Steven Garron – **R**
 Theresa Hallquist – **A, C, D, R**
 Dorothy Harden – **A, C, D, R**
 Martin Heavner – **C**
 Judith Hecht – **R**
 Jim Heins – **G, R**
 William Herrmann – **S**
 Robert Hibbert – **A, C, D, R**
 Lynne Hottle – **A, C**
 John Howe, Jr – **D**
 Hardy Howell – **A**
 William Howell – **A, D, R**
 Jon Hymes – **R**
 Cyril Jacquot – **A, R**
 Steven Johnson – **C**
 Karlen Keto – **D**
 Ann Kelton – **A**
 Joseph Kochenderfer – **R**
 John Kochowicz – **A**
 Fred Kreiger – **C**
 Dennis Kubicki – **R**
 Andrei Kushnir – **A, D**
 Paul Langevin – **A, R**
 Peter Laugesen – **R**
 Daniel Leubecker, III – **R**
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 Barbara Newland – **R**
 Linda Nosalik – **A**
 Thomas O’Dea – **D**
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 Craig Reynolds – **A, C, D, R**
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 Sierra Club
 Potomac Region Outings – **R**
 Rima Silenas – **A, C, D, R**
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 Jayme Sokolow – **R**
 Steven Sparenborg – **A**
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 Alma Stevens – **A, C, R**
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 Alexis Webb – **A**
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 Daniel Williams – **R**
 Mary Wilson – **A**
 Philip Wirtz – **R**
 George Wyeth – **R**
 Denise Yocum – **R**
In Memory of Karen Gray
 William Bauman – **C, R**
In Memory of
Hal and Jane Larsen
 Anna Porter – **G**

... Legend ...

A – Nancy C. Long Aqueduct Fund

C – The Cumberland Repair and Maintenance Fund

D – Davies Legal Fund

G – General Fund

R – Ken Rollins C&O Canal Fund

S – Rachel Stewart Swains Lock Area Fund

Treasurer's 2023 Report to the Membership

By Paul Lubell, Treasurer

The treasurer reports to the Board of Directors at the bi-monthly Association board meetings. It is appropriate to communicate to the entire membership prior to the Association's annual meeting, which will take place on March 23, 2024. Members are encouraged to attend the annual meeting.

As of the Annual Meeting, I have served two years as treasurer. My first-year highlights concerned enhancements in financial matters for the Association. This past year the emphasis has been more on maintaining the enhancements.

- A. Minimizing the Number of Checks Written.** A service that Truist (and many other banks) offer is bill payment. They will pay one's bill electronically if the recipient has the capability to receive electronic payments. As an alternative, the bank will write a check on the sender's behalf and mail it. These services are all free of charge. Over the past year I wrote seven checks, while Truist wrote 24.
- B. Purchasing the Maximum Amount of I-Bonds Allowed.** A maximum amount of \$10,000 of I Bonds can be purchased each year. Bonds were purchased in both 2022 and 2023, for a total of \$20,000. The interest rate received to date has ranged between 9.62% and 3.38%. Because the rate offered has declined, I recommend that we wait until the next rate announcement in May to decide whether to buy another \$10,000. I Bonds must be held five years to avoid a penalty.
- C. Expenses.** Expenses incurred on behalf of the Association are submitted by July 15 if incurred during the

first half of the year and by January 15 of the following year if incurred during the second half of the year. This continues to work well. I thank everyone for their cooperation. Prompt requests for reimbursement improve the accuracy of our tax returns.

- D. Recommendations for Future Investments.** I am taking advantage of the present yield curve inversion. Currently, money market funds, which have no investment time qualification, are paying 5%. which is more than one- and two-year Certificates of Deposit (CDs) are paying. On February 1, I rolled over the proceeds from a maturing CD (\$21,992.15) and invested it at the same rate (4%) for another year. We have two other CDs that mature in April.
- E. Mutual Funds.** Presently, we are investigating the possibility of investing a portion of our funds in the stock market by purchasing mutual funds. My recommendation is that we not do this unless we expect that the funds will not be needed within the next three years.
- F. Tax Deductibility.** Finally, some comments are provided concerning the tax deductibility of membership dues and fund contributions. Both can be claimed if one itemizes – with one exception. Contributions made from donor-advised funds are NOT tax deductible, because the benefit has been claimed previously.

Please contact me at treasurer@candocanal.org if you have any questions about the Association's financial matters.

Considering Volunteering to Support the Association

The Association's volunteers are the heart of the organization. Donations are appreciated, but people's time is an even more valuable resource. Consider volunteering for the Association's programs or to support the board or a committee.

The hands-on volunteer programs include the **Volunteers in Parks (VIP)** and **Level Walker** programs. The activities of both of these groups are summarized in every issue of *Along the Towpath*. If you are interested in either program you can contact Jim Heins (vip@candocanal.org) about the VIPs or Steven Dean (lw@candocanal.org) about the Level Walkers.

The Association is always looking for support for the **Executive Board** or the **Board of Directors**. These positions are voting positions that manage how the Association conducts business and the activities we support. The Association also welcomes support for **Committees**, either as committee chair or participating members. You can contact the president (president@candocanal.org), a board member or a committee chair to find out more about opportunities. They are summarized in the leadership directory if you would like to review it. We are currently looking for people who can manage finances, coordinate projects, support community outreach and manage volunteer activity. We hope to hear from you!



Leadership Directory

Medium hikers will begin their hike at the Taylors Landing boat ramp. This community was formerly known as Mercersville, after Charles Fenton Mercer, one of the founders and the first president of the C&O Canal Company. Culvert 115 (Mondell) is where Taylors Landing Road turns uphill. A well-worn path crosses the prism giving hikers a fine view of the stream bubbling down hill into the culvert. Look for the iron frame of a long-gone trailer bent around a large sycamore on the riverside shortly after Culvert 115, evidence of the power of floods. Next on the towpath is Culvert 114 (Roses Culvert) and the Horseshoe Bend Hiker-Biker Campsite. Lock 40 is up next; the stone foundation on the berm is all that remains of the lockhouse.

Short hikers will begin their trek at Snyders Landing, which was home to Snyder’s Coal and Grain Warehouse on the berm. The 1936 flood carried it away, along with a canal section house that was on the berm. In this area are the steps and abutments on the banks of the prism for a foot bridge across the prism. A mile farther on, hikers come to Killiansburg Cave on the berm. It is said that area residents who were terrified by the sounds of the Battle of Antietam at Sharpsburg took shelter here. Culvert 109 is another mile downstream, and is marked by a sinkhole in the prism. From here a stone wharf extends downstream on the berm where there was a section superintendents house. Hikers will next come to a waste weir, Culvert 108, and Lock 39 (Mitchells Lock). Some stones at the top of the lock walls are 8 feet long and 3.5-feet wide. The brick foundation on the berm is all that remains of the lockhouse.

Hikers will cross under the Rumsey Bridge, which connects Maryland with

Shepherdstown, W.Va., before arriving at Lock 38 (Shepherds Lock). The Shepherdstown River Lock is just downstream and allowed boats to cross to and from Shepherdstown. After the river lock is the foot bridge that returns hikers to the large parking lot on Canal Road where they boarded the bus.

Information about the hike and dinner is on the next page. In the time between the hike and dinner, participants can roam downtown Shepherdstown with its many restaurants and shops. Street parking is free on weekends, as is a student lot at the intersection of E. High St. and N. Princess St. This lot is two blocks from the dinner venue. Visitors should be alert to restricted parking areas indicated by signs on the residential streets around the downtown.

Bike Ride: As an alternative to the hike, participants can join Darius Mark at 12:00 p.m. for a leisurely gravel ride on the towpath near Shepherdstown. We plan on riding to Taylor’s Landing, also known as Mercersville, and back for a 17 mile round trip. Riders will make several stops to hear about local canal history along the way. This ride is suitable for cyclists of all ages who are in decent physical condition. E-bikes users can participate. We plan to average around 10 mph. Bring your helmet, water bottle, and bicycle bell. The ride will not take place if there is active rain.

The starting point is the same Canal Road paved parking lot where the hikers will meet. All participants must sign a liability waiver. For additional information contact Darius Mark at ride@dariusmark.com.



Lock 38 overhead view from the Rumsey Bridge. The extension of the lock can be seen in the upper part of the photo, along with the abutments of the old road bridge at the upper end of the extension. The bypass flume is visible on the left, with a buried culvert under the crossover. For further information about Lock 38, refer to the Towpath Guide to the C&O Canal by Thomas Hahn.

Shepherdstown Information
shepherdstown.info



Lock 39 – Photos by Steven Dean



Culvert 116 – Marsh Run Culvert



Douglas Hike and Dinner Information and Registration

2016 Douglas Hike

Hikes. The Douglas Hike features walks of three lengths. The hikes are described in the article starting on Page 1. The hikers will meet the bus at the large parking lot located on Canal Road near Lock 38, by the Norfolk Southern railroad bridge. The long hike is 13 miles from Dam 4 to the Lock 38 area. The bus for this hike departs at 10:00 a.m. The medium and short hikes are 8.5 and 4.2 miles, and start in Taylors Landing and Snyders Landing respectively. The bus for these hikes departs at 11:00 a.m. The buses leave promptly at the scheduled times and cannot wait for late arrivals.

The shuttle bus is free of charge, but **registration in advance is recommended to ensure a place on the bus.** Seating on the bus is limited and space is available for unregistered persons on a first-come, first-serve basis on the day of the event until the bus is full. All participants must sign a liability waiver prior to boarding the bus or participating in the hike.

Dinner and Program. The Douglas dinner and program are at the War Memorial Building, 102 E. German St., Shepherdstown, W.Va. A happy hour will be hosted from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and includes beer, wine, sodas and water. The happy hour is included with a paid dinner. The dinner will be served from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and is catered by *MJs on German Deli Cafe*. The cost of the dinner and happy hour is \$33.50. Dinner includes the following menu:

Choice of: roasted chicken with Pommery mustard sauce or grilled Portobello mushroom steaks with Pommery mustard sauce.

Side dishes are haricot vert with garlic butter, herb roasted potatoes and mixed green salad with grana padano cheese.

A selection of local breads from Bolivar Breads will accompany the meal. Dessert is a selection of cookies and brownies.

The program follows dinner at 6:00 p.m. and features John Frye's presentation *I Walked with Douglas*.

Contact: Jonnie Lefebure at programs@candocanal.org for further information.

Register for the Douglas Hike and Dinner

1. Register on-line on the Association's web site by **April 17**. Use the QR code below for direct access to the registration site or visit candocanal.org/events/douglas-hike-and-dinner/.
2. Download a registration form from the Association's web site at the same link, complete and mail with your check to **C&O Canal Association, P.O. Box 366, Glen Echo, MD. Mail registration in time to be received by April 17.**
3. Send a letter with the below information and your check to **C&O Canal Association, P.O. Box 366, Glen Echo, MD 20812-0366. Mail registration in time to be received by April 17.**

Number of dinner guests: ____ X \$33.50 = ____ List names of dinner guests.

Number of 10:00 a.m. bus riders: ____ Number of 11:00 a.m. bus riders: ____

Total amount paid: ____

Schedule

- 10:00 a.m. Departure of long hike bus for drop-off at Dam 4
- 11:00 a.m. Departure of medium and short hike bus for drop-offs at Taylors Landing and Snyders Landing
- 12:00 p.m. Departure of bike ride
- 4:00 p.m. Happy Hour
- 5:00 p.m. Dinner
- 6:00 p.m. Program

Directions

**Bus Pick-Up Area and
Bike Ride Starting Area
Canal Road
(Near C&O Canal Mile 72.4)**



**Dinner and Program
War Memorial Building
102 E. German St.
Shepherdstown, W.Va.**



Using Direction QR Codes: Open the camera app on your phone or tablet. Hold your device so that the desired location's direction QR code to the right appears in view. Tap the notification near the QR code to open Google Maps. Within the app select **Directions** to enable navigation guidance.

Accompanied by the Past

By Karen Gray

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

The River Access Locks at Both Ends

As we reported earlier, we will occasionally reprint Karen Gray's articles when they relate to Association hikes or other events. This article originally appeared in the September 2019 issue in support of the Heritage Hike. Additional information may have been learned about the area since 2019, but the content is still of great interest to 2024 Douglas Hike participants and other readers. References to the Heritage Hike can be considered references to the 2024 Douglas Hike.

For those taking part in the 2019 Heritage Hike, I recommend adding on visits to two points at either end of the hike. Long hikers can visit the river lock that is 250 yards below Lock 38. All hikers can visit the inlet/guard lock above Dam 4, which is only 400 yards upstream from the Big Slackwater boat ramp parking area meeting point. Both locks are critical structures to this important stretch of canal. A basic purpose of both is to provide for the passage of boats between the river and the canal—but they do it dramatically differently!

The river lock at Mile 72.65 is one of three, the other two being: the Goose Creek River Locks at Mile 30.64 (just below Edwards Ferry, and a 2-chamber staircase lock—the only one on the canal); and the Shenandoah River Lock at Mile 60.62, just below Lock 33 and opposite Harpers Ferry and the mouth of the Shenandoah. These river locks interrupt the towpath berm of the canal and the canal end of river locks—like the canal itself—is always above the river. Consequently, the water to fill them when raising a boat up to the canal came from the canal. A high bridge provided towpath continuity, allowing pedestrians and mules to pass over the lock's canal end or, in the case of the Goose Creek Locks, over the entrance to a basin above the staircase lock.

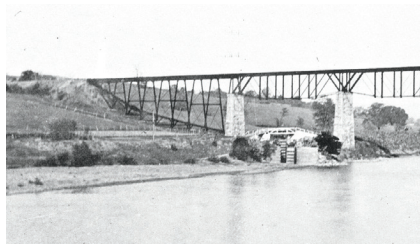
The Goose Creek and Shenandoah River Locks were located to take advantage of major water routes across the river. The former served boats using the Goose Creek and Little River system and the Potomac River landing serving Leesburg; and the latter served boats coming down the Shenandoah River. Contrarily, the Shepherdstown River Lock was not located near a major tributary but it was important to the shipment of cement from the busy Boteler cement mill located on the West Virginia side of the Potomac, about 1.15 miles downstream. Of course, it also served boats passing between the canal and the Shepherdstown river landing. The Boteler mill structures included a low dam across the Potomac at canal Mile 71.63 and it created a slackwater pool that benefited boats crossing the river to the mill or town. The dam no longer exists and the river flows at its natural level, leaving the lock high and dry.

Guard/Inlet Lock 4 is a very different structure from the Shepherdstown River Lock. Most notably, the entire lock is at the level of the river which means the upstream end must provide for continuous fluctuations in the water level of the pool behind the dam. Even without a flood, the water in the pool varies, from a significant amount passing over the dam, to other times almost none. This lock is both a guard lock and an inlet lock, which requires explanation.

The lock is an inlet lock, in that it provides water for the canal like all seven of the inlet locks associated with the pools behind their similarly-numbered dams. While all the guard/inlet locks provide water to the main stem of the canal, this one and those at Dam 5 and above Cumberland's Dam 8 function as the beginning of a canal structure as there is no canal directly above them. In the case of the Dam 4 and 5 inlets, one of the three canals in the C&O canal and river navigation system ended at the upper end of a slackwater river-navigation section. The canal segment that begins at the Dam 4 inlet ends at Rock Creek, some 85.35 miles downstream.

When the lock was operated, the water at the river level end would need to be lower (though perhaps only by inches) than the top of the lock walls. If higher it would have overflowed the lock when the gate was opened. From that point down to

Lock 40 at Mile 79.41, the canal would have remained at that level except that here there is a supplemental gated feeder culvert through which water from the river can be added to



Upper photo – Inlet Lock 4; Lower photo – Shepherdstown River Lock cut – both photos courtesy of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, National Park Service

the canal downstream of the lock. That structure—added as an afterthought—required an inlet weir, with a bridge for the towpath over it, on the riverbank just upstream from the lock.

When the level of the river pool behind the dam was higher than the lock walls, boats would have to wait until the river fell. The risk of the pool behind the dam being too high is precisely why there is a high guard wall built beside the river from the dam to the inlet and extending to the hillside the inlet is located beside. Also, the gate at the upstream end of the lock towered above the lock, as it had to be as high as the top of the guard wall and of which it is a component. That guard gate quite simply makes this lock a guard lock as well as an inlet lock. Today the lock's upper end in the guard wall is sealed with concrete and there is an extensive sloping earthen berm down to the river behind it.

At Guard/Inlet Lock 4, the towpath at the river-end of the lock becomes a very steep slope between the top of the guard wall and the top of the lock wall. A mule crossover bridge carried tow animals and pedestrians across the lock's upper guard gate to the towpath's continuation along the riverbank. This is one of those places on the canal where the mules were switched to the opposite side of the boat from the side they've been on. Sometimes they were simply changed from one side of the canal to the other (as above Georgetown), but here the change was to and from the canal below the lock and riverbank above the lock.

The 1.22 mile stretch between Dam 4 and the Guard/Inlet Lock 4, is unique in several ways. The most interesting is that the water level in the canal can be *below* that of the level of the pool behind the dam on the other side of the guard wall if the river is low. Being level with a major water source like a river is a situation canal engineers sought to avoid, understanding the danger such high water posed as well as their predictable floods. Note that in normal conditions when one stands on the abutment at Dam 4 it is especially easy to see the relationship between the river level behind the dam and the level of the towpath and canal on the land side of the guard wall—both of which are far below one.

One of the ways the engineers protected the canal from high river levels at the inlet locations (and the inlets were necessarily at river level) was to place two lift locks in quick, or relatively quick, succession just above the inlet. Those lift locks raised the level of the canal well above the river's usual and typical low flood levels. Such was not possible at Guard/Inlet Locks 4, 5 or 8 because there was no canal above these locks.

The Dam 4 Guard Gate passes the towpath and canal through that part of the guard wall that extends from the end of the dam to the hillside where Dam 4 Road and the Western Maryland Sportsman's club are located. The guard wall also extends from the top of the abutment up the river to the

Guard/Inlet Lock 4, protecting the towpath and canal on its land side. The "towpath trail" here is a up on the guard wall and not on the towpath, most of which is not maintained and can't be used for some distance above the guard gate.

Note that **guard gates**, like this one at Dam 4 and the one above Lock 16 at Great Falls, are often erroneously referred to as stop gates or locks. However, they are gates, not locks **Stop gates** serve the purpose of holding water back in the prism of the canal and thus are no higher than the canal berms. Guard gates are as high as the guard wall of which they are a part. Both the guard gates not associated with a lock on our canal have winch houses on top of them. These were used to store and winch down the planks that closed the opening where the canal passes through the guard wall. Their purpose, like that of the guard wall itself, is to hold back floodwaters above the level of the canal.

Sharpsburg's Canal Connections

The 1.2-mile level between Lock 38 and 39 was known as the "one-mile Shepherdstown level"; the 5.41-mile level between Locks 39 and 40 was known as the "five-mile Sharpsburg level"; and the 6.21-mile level between 40 and Guard/Inlet Lock 4, was known as the "six-mile Dam 4 Level." However, boatman J.P. Mose, in his listing of the names of canal levels, referred to the latter as the "six-mile level of Taylors Landing"—an excellent example of the variants one regularly finds in anecdotal sources.

Snyders Landing at Mile 76.65 is the nearest point on the canal for Sharpsburg, being only 1.7 miles west of it. In historic canal sources, it was usually known as the "Sharpsburg Landing." Due to two significant bends in the river that the canal follows, Lock 38 and the Sharpsburg/Snyders Landing are a surprising 3.85 miles apart by canal but only about 2.3 miles apart as the crow flies. This landing was one of the major locations for boats to be tied up for the winter, indicating that many captains and likely all or most of their crew had homes in the Sharpsburg area. Although Sharpsburg Landing was closer to the town and those living west and north of it, Lock 38 would have been closer for those in the area south and east of the town. Consequently, depending on where one lived, either the Sharpsburg/Snyders Landing *or* Lock 38 might have been one's nearest home wharf on the canal.

The Lock 38 area developed into a small community known as Bridgeport. At its height, it included the lockhouse and lock shanty, several residences, a basin and wharf area, a warehouse/store, and a hotel. In addition, there was a high bridge over the canal providing access to the series of ferries or bridges that crossed the Potomac River at this location over the years. The abutments for the canal bridge can be seen just below the basin area at the foot of the lock. The warehouse/store, built over the flume on the berm side of the lock, served for the trans-shipment of goods and products to and from

canal boats as well as a place where boatmen could purchase boat supplies or food, etc.

Because many boatmen lived in the Sharpsburg area, it and its boatmen often showed up in newspaper reports concerning the canal. For example, when there was violence related to strikes by the boatmen, the canal in the Sharpsburg area was often one of the locations where such occurred. Also, boatmen said to be from Sharpsburg were often cited in newspaper reports among those agitating for better pay by shippers or lower tolls by the canal company—the usual reasons for labor unrest on the canal.

It's important to remember that (1) it was the captains who were paid by the boat owners to operate their boat, or a company paying them to carry its cargo; and (2) that the captains then hired the crew they needed (typically until the last years of navigation on the canal, two “drivers” and two “steersmen”). In addition to the cost of crew, captains had other expenses, including tolls. (Note that everything changed for the coal boats after the 1903 establishment of the Canal Towing Company.) Nevertheless, the captains certainly would have tried to get crew as cheaply as possible, as any money not spent on the operation of the boat constituted their own income. When the captains were having trouble earning enough for their own living, there would have been a “bounce down” effect of low pay to their crew. Consequently, references to “boatmen” agitating for lower costs of operating a boat included crew as well as captains and it's clear that the Sharpsburg area provided many such.

Mercersville and Taylors Landing

Lock 40 is in one of those sections of the canal that can only be accessed from some point a good distance above or below. In this case they are Snyders/Sharpsburg landing 2.16 miles downstream and Mercerville 1.54 miles upstream. The Mercersville area is also the site of what is now known as Taylors Landing. It is difficult to determine with certainty the dates during which a given name was widely used for a specific location on the canal as well as the extent to which that name was used in wider community. That “Taylors Landing” is a later name is noted by Unrau who identifies the location as “a warehouse and loading dock, known as Harris' Warehouse and later as Boyer's Warehouse...[and] now known as Taylors Landing.”

There is an even earlier name for the area, according to the Wikipedia entry on “Mercersville” that cites the Maryland State Archives as the source of the following:

A court order for a new road in 1838 refers to the location as “Zook's Landing.” Since the C&O Canal was still under construction at the time and had only reached the area a few years earlier, it is thought this is a reference to the area being used by boatmen of the earlier Patowmack Company.

The Wikipedia site goes on to say:

Further evidence pointing to a Patowmack Company port is that Henry Zook, operator of Zook's Landing, died in 1825, before the canal was incorporated. He is buried at Salem Lutheran Church cemetery at nearby Bakersville. There remains today an ancient iron ring affixed to the bedrock between the boat ramps at Taylor's Landing, long rumored to be a relic of the Patowmack Company days.

The canal name for a location might not always be used in official documents. For example, “Mercersville” is still official census designation for the area, and on many maps the name Taylors Landing is used only for the road paralleling the canal on the berm side.

Mercersville is named after Charles Fenton Mercer, the Virginia congressman (serving March 4, 1817 to his resignation Dec. 26, 1839), who was the primary force behind the launching of the C&O Canal project and the first president of the company from June 1828 to June 1833. The name Taylor derives from John William “Jack” Taylor (1868–1948) who operated a store adjacent to the wharf for many years and continued to live in the area after the canal closed to navigation.

On March 13, 1850, the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper reported that a Mr. Thomas G. Harris of Mercersville, had launched a steamboat capable of towing “*10 boats from 90–100 tons, or the full capacity of the canal.*” It is unclear whether his boat-building facility was actually at Mercersville. It appears, however that the boat was a tug-type boat and not itself a cargo-carrying freight boat.

On April 20, 1850, the *Baltimore Sun* reported the arrival in Georgetown of “*a new boat, (not yet named), built and owned by Mr. Otho Baker, of Mercersville, Washington county, Maryland*” It is said that on this trip, its first, it carried “*1,112 barrels of flour, being the largest load ever brought down the canal*” and it is described as able to carry 125 tons and as drawing 5 feet of water. Baker is further said to have two boats “*of the same sort*” for sale. The Washington, D.C. *Daily National Intelligencer* April 25, reported this boat as having arrived on the 19th and bearing the name “The Whale” and it further specifically states that the boat was built at Mercersville. We can therefore presume that for a time, there was a boat yard at this location.

The Big Woods Hiker-Biker campsite is located at Mile 82.46 and the large opening to the Dam 4 Cave is seen at Mile 83.3 (1.1 mile below Dam 4). The cave is closed in an effort to protect bats using it from white nose syndrome, a disease caused by a fungus that can be carried into a cave by human visitors. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife agency describes it as “*one of the worst wildlife diseases in modern times, having killed millions of bats across North America.*”

The Wood Turtle (*Clemmneys insculpta*)

By Trent Carbaugh

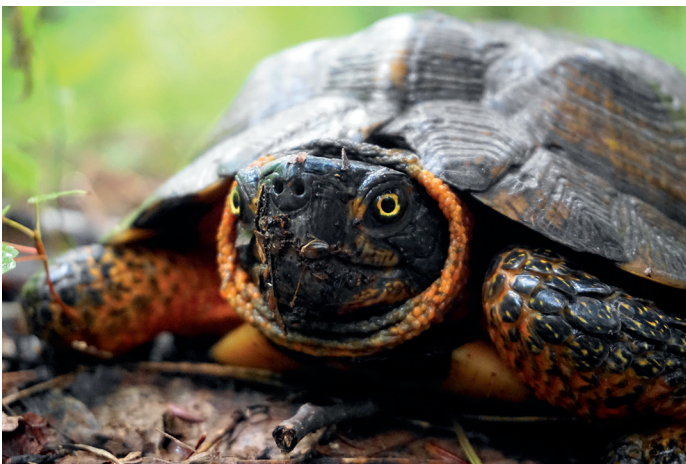
The wood turtle is an interesting critter, more terrestrial than aquatic, very much like box turtles. Though it hibernates in soft bottom mud during the winter you usually see them in meadows, woodlands and wetter boggy areas around streams and ponds. It is a large, bulky turtle that is easily identified by its brown upper shell and pyramidal individual scutes. The plastron, the bottom of the shell, is yellow with black blotches and like most turtles is slightly concave in males. The skin of the forelegs and neck is usually bright orange/red giving the wood turtle its common nickname “Ole Redlegs.”

The C&O Canal/Potomac River drainage is almost the southern limit of the wood turtle’s range. The northern limits are the Great Lakes area and as far north in the east as Nova Scotia. Breeding occurs in early spring with females laying six to eight (or more) eggs in a clutch, with the eggs hatching in early fall.

Unfortunately for wood turtles, they evidently taste good and in the 19th century they were considered a food source. This caused a decline in the population which has slowly built itself back to supposedly “normal” levels, but this is questionable as habitat loss and environmental contaminants affect all reptile and amphibian populations, more so than other species. Wood turtles have the rather rare talent for members of family emydidae of having the ability to climb chain link fences, which I’m sorry to say puts them at risk of being victims of vehicular “turtlecide.” *Please watch for all critters when you’re driving, especially turtles!*

Reference:

John L. Behler and F. Wayne King, *The Audubon Society Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians*, 1989



Wood turtle displaying the orange coloring they are known for



Concealed wood turtle in grass - Photos by Trent Carbaugh

Fletchers Cove –

On a recent trip to Fletchers Cove on a cold day, Nancy Benco observed colorful canoes and kayaks. The colorful display made her hopeful for the upcoming summer season.



Along the Towpath, March 2024



Pedal, Paddle and Hike

By Trent Carbaugh

An Overview of Types of Bicycles to Ride the Towpath

If you are thinking of taking up bicycling or are already bicycling and want to start touring or just generally improve your equipment here is some information for you. Every serious bicycle traveler has their own opinions on bikes and gear, most of which are valid, so please don't take my advice as the "be all, end all." Ultimately you will find what suits you and what you plan do with a bicycle.

The Magic Machine Itself

Bicycles can simply be complex mechanical tools, or they can be deeply personalized companions for exciting adventures; it all depends on your point of view. For many children getting a bicycle is that first thrilling taste of traveling freedom leading to adulthood. On the other hand, many adults get a bicycle and get the joy of being a kid again. It seems pretty much a win either way.

There is no clear-cut definition between bicycle types and there is much overlap betwixt all the names we arbitrarily assign to different kinds of velocipedes. So, if you are going to get a first bike or wish to improve on your existing ride, I recommend doing some research and a few test rides before you spend lots of money. What follows is a brief description of the most common kinds of bikes.

Mountain Bikes

A mountain bike is probably the most common bicycle that you will see on the towpath. There are basically three types of mountain bikes, full suspension, front suspension (also called "hardtails"), and no-suspension rigid frame bikes.

Full-suspension bikes are for jumps and fast downhill runs, probably not the best choice for the towpath. This kind of bike will have an air or hydraulic suspension fork and some kind of articulated spring or hydraulic dampened rear suspension. This kind of bike is very difficult to mount bags on and they are relatively inefficient on level although smooth terrain, fun to ride on steep downhill.

Front suspension hardtails are a fairly good choice for the towpath. The dampened fork absorbs many of the small impacts that can cause hand and wrist pain on long towpath rides. Unlike with full suspension bikes, it is easy to mount rear racks, frame bags, and handlebar bags.

Unsuspected mountain bikes, though once common, are now mostly used for bikepacking.

Hybrid Bikes

Another commonly seen bike on the towpath is a hybrid bike. This is kind of a confusing term, as "hybrids" can be almost as lightweight as road bikes or can approach the utility of touring bikes. They will almost always have flat handlebars of some sort and the frame geometry will allow for a more comfortable upright riding posture. The popularity of hybrid bikes is simple: they are pleasant to ride, relatively light, and a good one can be inexpensive. Hybrid bikes can be used for light touring, though many of them lack mounting points for bags and racks.

Touring, Gravel and Bikepacking Bikes

These three types of bikes are very similar with much design overlap between the three. If you want to pursue longer range riding and camping on a bike, one of these three is probably your best option.



Front suspension (hardtail) mountain bike – Photos by Trent Carbaugh



Bikepacking bike loaded out for camping

Touring bikes are usually built as sturdier versions of road bikes, generally with steel frames and forks. They will have lots of mounting points for racks and bags along with a less aggressive frame geometry which is more comfortable for long days in the saddle.

Gravel bikes are designed for the type of trail surface found on the towpath. They generally incorporate higher volume tires and extensive bag mounting options. Gravel bikes are intended to be fast, and many designs lean heavily into the endurance racing end of bicycling.

Bikepacking can be described as the bicycle version of ultralight backpacking. Bikepacking bikes, if set up correctly, can get you across the African veldt or traverse Iceland in the winter. Lighter versions of bikes designed for bikepacking are not a bad choice for all season towpath riding. The bikepacking idea of using less and lighter gear along with innovative packing methods have percolated into all aspects of bike touring. Bikepacking bikes are usually built along the lines of old school rigid mountain bikes with an upright riding position.

Most use high-volume low-pressure tires that supply some suspension for both rider comfort and traction but are also easier on trail surfaces.

Recumbent Bikes

A recumbent bike is a bicycle that is designed to put your body in a reclining position. The reason to do this is it takes much of the strain off the normal stress points of an upright bicycle, including wrists, neck, and lower back. There are two basic configurations of recumbent bikes, two wheels, which requires you to balance the bike, and three wheel which does not. Recumbents, not being in the mainstream of the bike world, are more expensive for both the bike itself as well as any touring gear you may need, but if you have chronic arthritis or other health problems that make riding an upright bike uncomfortable this may be an option for you. I recently acquired a tadpole trike for those very reasons. It is a beautifully well-made machine and is incredibly comfortable to ride but it doesn't seem to help with my poor old decrepit knees as much as I would like.



Road/gravel bike, note the more aggressive frame and drop bars



Hybrid bike



Touring/hybrid bike



Recumbent trike, this one folds in the middle for easier transport

There are some drawbacks to recumbents as well. Recumbents are not great at climbing hills, which really isn't a problem on the towpath but could be on unexpected detours. On the other hand, they are faster than upright bikes on the flat and downhills, sometimes shockingly so. Three-wheel trikes are not going to go through the Paw Paw Tunnel or across aqueducts that have water in the prism. Unlike upright bikes, it is difficult to push a trike anywhere. I have no experience with two-wheel recumbents, but I understand there is a steep learning curve in picking up the knack of riding one.

Road Bikes

Road bikes are built for speed and performance and are the least appropriate kind of bike for the towpath. Should you have a good road bike and want to ride in the park I would suggest putting on the biggest tires you can get to fit.

E-Bikes

Pedal assist e-bikes seem to be taking the world by storm. Personally I'm not sure if this is a good idea or not. I see more people going too fast on the towpath and not using proper trail etiquette when passing. On the other hand, I see more elderly and other folks out enjoying bike rides, which they normally wouldn't be able to do comfortably. Drawbacks to e-bikes include limited range of electric assist, which could be problematic for touring, and care needed to avoid potential battery fire. Another issue is the potential of having more bikes going past the 15-mph speed limit on the towpath.

Tires

Tire choice is sort of a pet peeve with me. I see too many riders on heavily loaded touring bikes with high pressure tires that are too narrow or mountain bikes with very aggressive tread. Both tire types damage the towpath by cutting deep ruts which cause other riders to go around the ruts on the side of the towpath, causing more damage. This is bad in wet conditions but can be even worse when the towpath dries out leaving hard ruts that can cause falls. I shall step down from my soapbox now.

The best choice for the towpath is low pressure/high volume tires with either low tread or tread specifically designed for surfaces like the towpath (there are plenty of choices among different tire makers).

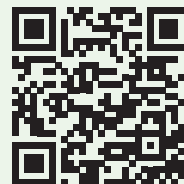
Another thing that will make your life easier is to use tubeless tires. You need to have tubeless capable rims, and this is a feature to look at when purchasing a new bike as good wheels can be pricey if you buy them separately. Tubeless tires work by having a locking bead on the tire that engages a hooked rim in the wheel. Tubeless sealant is then put in through a nifty valve that attaches to the rim. You then add air, spin the wheel in multiple orientations to seal the bead, then ride. If you ride over a thorn or piece of glass the sealant runs into the hole and closes it. If you get a bigger hole, it can be filled with a plug just like a car tire. Since I changed over to tubeless five years ago I have not had a flat tire.

Ride Safely and Courteously

The National Park Service has a well thought out set of rules for the use of the C&O Canal towpath. It is wise for all users of the towpath to periodically review these rules for everyone's safety. There are also things that are not in the rules that you should strive do as well when conditions warrant. The main thing is to be respectful of other towpath users even if they are not respectful to you. Reviewing the rules is also important as the demographic of towpath users is changing; bicyclists are now the biggest user group. This will only increase as dedicated trail systems grow across the country and folks are making longer trips by bicycle.

The C&O is unique in that it is a National Historical Park on a major river. This means that you can encounter everything from local fishermen to bike touring travelers from anywhere in the world. All of these people need to get along, and usually do. Unfortunately, there are plenty of users of the canal who don't know or understand the rules and this can cause problems. Hopefully this article will help to alleviate this discrepancy. Effectively, trail rules are guidelines; circumstances dictate what you should or should not do. Everyone should use common sense in unusual situations and always try to err on the side of safety.

Trent provided a well thought out article about trail safety and etiquette in the March, 2021 *Along the Towpath*. The article is available at www.candocanal.org/atp/2021-03.pdf. He offered references, recommendations and safety tips for hiking and biking on the canal. Whether you are new to biking or an experienced rider, you may want to review this article. For current information about biking on the C&O Canal NHP visit www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/bicycle.htm.



March, 2021
Along the Towpath



C&O Canal NHP
Bicycle Use Guidance

If you don't want to, or can't, change over to tubeless for any reason you can get puncture resistant tires that work very well for things like multi-flora rose thorns or similar small punctures.

Brakes

At some point if you spend enough time out on the towpath, you are going to get wet and probably muddy. Storms have a pesky way of sneaking up on you in the Potomac River valley. This is why I recommend a bike with disk brakes as opposed to rim brakes. You'll stop much quicker especially with a loaded bike. I have had the experience of not being able to stop at all with rim brakes during a wet, cold, muddy camping trip, no fun at all!

Always make sure your brakes, no matter what type, are in good working order.

Contact Points

Contact points are the three places that your body connects to the bicycle: pedals, saddles, and handlebars. These three items are extremely important for not only comfort but control and safety. These three things are relatively easy to change and can make a big



difference. For comfort and efficiency, it is very important that these three things are adjusted correctly for your body and riding style. If you don't know how, any good bike shop can do this for you.

I hope this is helpful information, safe and happy riding!

Many thanks to Jamie Boward, owner of Mercury Endurance Cycles, in Hagerstown, Md. for letting me photograph bikes.

Captions this page:

Upper Center – Low pressure high volume tire with a tread pattern specifically designed for trails like the towpath. The large volume provides some shock cushioning, and the low pressure helps in not damaging a softer surface.

Lower Center – A narrower version of a low pressure tire with a low tread for narrower wheels that performs better on road surfaces by adding more air.

Bottom Left – A short muddy section of the towpath showing the damage caused by narrow tires. Some of the less deep ruts are the results of wider lower pressure tires. The depth of the mud can be seen in the deer tracks in the lower left side of the photograph.

Bottom Right – The beginnings of a mud hole. Though it might be a little dirty, it is always best to slow down and ride through the puddle. Fenders help.



Antietam Conococheague Watershed Alliance

Connecting People to Their Waterways Through Recreation, Education, and Conservation

By Zander Hine

A group of concerned citizens was moved in the early 2000s to act to keep the overflowing trash out of the Antietam Creek. The waste was visible at every road crossing and something needed to be done. Dave Biser, the current membership coordinator and founding member, reflects on how he first got involved in 2004.

“The first ACWA event was held in September 2004 which is where I met the primary organizers Sally and Bob Hatch. They had an article in the *Herald-Mail* asking for volunteers to bring boats to help clean up trash on Antietam Creek – just upstream of Dual Highway” reports Biser.

The Antietam Conococheague Watershed Alliance (ACWA) began meeting regularly in 2006 and became a registered non-profit in 2007. The earliest mission of ACWA was to beautify and clean up Antietam Creek and over the years it has grown into much more. The organization started as a group of volunteers looking to pick up trash and it has evolved into many highly impactful programs with meaningful partnerships and larger reach in the community.

The mission has been expanded to include the Conococheague watershed, and the organization’s focus has evolved into more than just trash cleanups. ACWA’s focus now also includes beneficial tree plantings, community science (water research and testing), education and outreach as well as trash cleanups.

Membership

ACWA is a volunteer-based organization and everything that the organization does relies on its volunteers. When it started, it had just 12 members. By 2023, membership has grown to over 75 members. ACWA has student, individual, family and lifetime memberships. Members and volunteers donate time and sweat equity to benefit our local watershed. In total, over 600 hours of volunteer work took place in 2023.

Mission Focus

Trees. A focus of ACWA is their Tree Stewardship and tree planting programs. ACWA’s “Trees not Trash” initiative, beginning in 2018 in partnership with the City of Hagerstown, identified areas in need of urban street trees and planted new native trees in those areas. Trees in urban areas help with several environmental factors: they reduce air and water pollution by filtering impurities through leaves and roots, they cool the air and surface temperatures – reducing the “urban heat island,” and they also bring pride of ownership – urging residents to keep their

neighborhoods clean. Trees Not Trash was a boots on the ground initiative, putting volunteers in downtown Hagerstown neighborhoods where planting areas were marked, informational door hangers were distributed and new trees were planted. At the same time as the plantings, volunteers would also pick up any trash found in the streets and sidewalks.



Student volunteers, Zelda (left) and Maverick Bonnes secure a tree shelter to a newly planted tree in Smithsburg, Md – All photos courtesy of the Antietam Conococheague Watershed Alliance



ACWA Tree Steward Brian Bonnes (in orange) demonstrates to community volunteers how to properly secure a newly planted tree

In 2021 ACWA was awarded a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust as a part of the five million trees initiative for Maryland. Over 200 new trees were planted with the grant funds at Hagerstown Community College, in Maugansville and Williamsport.

ACWA cares for trees that are already planted in our community through its Tree Stewardship program. Initially trained through the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, ACWA's Tree Stewards now train members and other volunteers, who have included a Maryland DNR forester. The Stewards take care of trees that the organization has planted through such actions as pruning, mulching, and removing stakes/cages. This maintenance is important because it preserves the health of the plant and the area around it. Tree Stewardship and maintenance is so important because it preserves the health of the plant and the area around it. Often companies and landscaping crews will weed whack too closely to a tree,



ACWA Tree Steward Brian Bonnes (in orange) demonstrates to community volunteers how to properly secure a newly planted tree



Community Science volunteers Noel Gollehon, Alicia Lewis, and Doug Hutzell (l-r) reading water quality measurements during a monitoring event

or choke trees with tightly secured stabilizing wires or web straps. ACWA helps the tree by installing a protective shelter to prevent the cutting of the trunk and, when appropriate, loosening/removing the straps, allowing the tree to move and grow. If tree maintenance and stewardship were neglected, there would be no point in planting trees in the first place.

Community Science. I interviewed ACWA president Susan Simonson for this article. She indicated that she believes one of ACWA's most impactful projects is Community Science because, as a watershed alliance, it is important to maintain healthy streams and water sources. Community Science is a large focus of the organization that explores the stream health and habitat in our area. The program was created in 2018 by ACWA and another watershed alliance, the Beaver Creek Watershed Alliance, to assess impacts that negatively affect the health of the watershed.



Volunteers Dave Smith (left) and Kristen Aleshire (right) float tires down Antietam Creek during an ACWA cleanup event near Funkstown, Md.

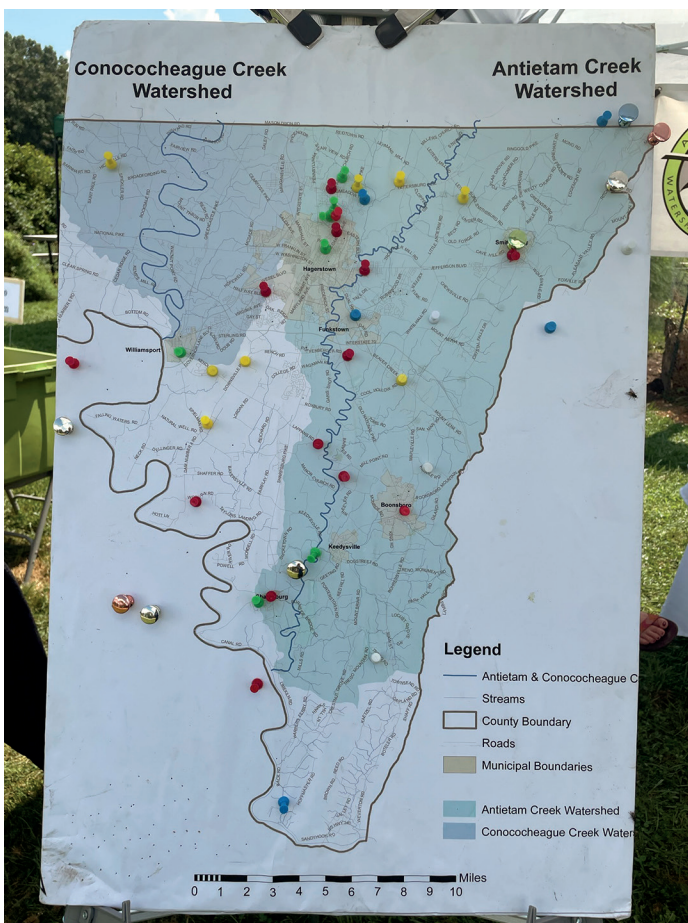
Donna Brightman, one of ACWA’s six lifelong members and a founding member of the organization, discussed the importance of the community science program, “I really felt there was a need to clean up the rivers.” She was inspired by the early mission of the organization and decided to support it by becoming a lifelong member. She also stated that “the training of people to help with the insects and the water, and to try to ascertain how safe the waters are and where the pollution points are. That’s a huge effort right there.”

ACWA feels that poor land management practices need to be monitored, and by collecting quality data they can document how the water’s health is changing. Volunteers with this program collect aquatic insects, also known as “benthic macro-invertebrates,” as well as take monthly water samplings, looking for physical and chemical parameters in the water. The Community Science program also oversees and maintains temperature

logging devices that are in the streams in the area. According to Simonson, “our streams are warming up,” and this is a big problem in the big picture with urban development and climate change.

Trash. ACWA educates people on the effects of trash and gathers volunteers to participate in stream and street clean-ups in the local area. The clean-ups are an important way to prevent litter such as plastic and metal from getting into our waters and negatively affecting the wildlife. Most recent cleanups were included as part of ACWA’s Trees Not Trash initiative which was funded by several “Keep Maryland Beautiful” grants. The initiative was aimed to beautify the streets of Hagerstown while keeping trash and grime out of runoff water.

In years past, ACWA hosted larger cleanups called “Rubbish Roundups,” where volunteers pulled trash directly from area streams, mainly the Antietam Creek. Many volunteers would walk along the stream



ACWA displays maps of the Conococheague and Antietam Creek drainage areas (also known as “watersheds”) at outreach events for attendees to identify where they live in the local watersheds



Tree tubes are installed on young trees, but after several decades require removal, as these volunteers are completing in the Beaver Creek watershed

side or hop in kayaks/canoes to collect “rubbish” such as tires, bottles, bricks, cans, etc. According to a 2014 Hagerstown *Herald-Mail* article *Annual Antietam Rubbish Roundup set for Sept. 20*, this event collected 5,060 pounds of trash from the Antietam and immediate surrounding areas.

Education, Youth and Community Outreach. Community outreach is very important to ACWA, because it is how the organization is most impactful, working with others to share environmental stewardship ideas and habits. Susan Simonson said that networking was an important skill that she has learned during her time with ACWA, learning to communicate with other organizations and organize events. ACWA is 100% volunteer run and by partnering with other area organizations and community groups, it can be most effective in their mission. Funding from their events and grants go directly to projects and outreach materials.

The primary focus of ACWA’s educational outreach is to encourage people to make wise choices for the environment and to understand how their choices impact the environment. ACWA has produced water and tree educational coloring pages for elementary aged children in the area. Educational resources are found on their website and posted regularly on several social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. ACWA also attends many community events and talks to area residents about taking care of our watershed.

Recently, ACWA has been getting more young people involved in the service and event. In fact, when I asked Susan Simonson what her favorite part of the nonprofit is, she said it was getting the youth involved. Over the summer of 2023, ACWA had its first ever intern, Emma Flint, a local college student working to earn her degree in biology at the University of Maryland. Flint participated in community science, attended

conferences on ACWA’s behalf, and reported on her findings. Another example of young people volunteering and helping with ACWA is that in 2022, the organization gained its first ever student board member – me! I am a student at North Hagerstown High School, and I have been an active volunteer with ACWA for over four years. As part of my duties with ACWA, I write a weekly blog about critters in our local watershed. My blog is called *Wildlife Wednesday* and I have been writing it for over six months.

If you have any questions about the organization or its members, be sure to visit our website at www.acwamaryland.org/. ACWA is always looking for new members and new volunteers. For any updates about events, you can follow our Facebook and Instagram pages.



Board member Alicia Lewis (left) explains ACWA’s role in the community to a festival visitor

Resources:

Antietam Conococheague Watershed Alliance website
www.acwamaryland.org/



Wildlife Wednesday and other ACWA blogs
www.acwamaryland.org/blog



Hagerstown *Herald-Mail* article *Annual Antietam Rubbish Roundup set for Sept. 20*



On the Level

By Steven Dean

November 2023 to January 2024 Level Walker Activity

This report covers level walker activity for November through January. Earlier reports are included in some cases. Any reports for activity performed on February 1 or later will be in the June Along the Towpath.

The Level Walker program is a long-term Association volunteer activity and the oldest volunteer program on the park. Level walkers periodically visit their levels and assess conditions, pick up trash and perform light trail clean-up. Many level walkers are long-time volunteers. Level walkers must be members in the C&O Canal Association, comply with NPS regulations and walk at least once a year to remain active level walkers. As a reminder, the status of level walkers is reviewed in March. If you are a level walker who has not met those requirements please contact me to discuss if you want to place your participation on hold or if you want to coordinate a plan to return to the program.

Recent level walker findings are typical for fall and winter. The NPS maintains towpath and structure conditions as much as possible, but budget restrictions and staff limitations dictate what they can and can't support. There are several ongoing projects on the park and they can often be delayed by unforeseen problems or

weather issues. Park visitors, whether for recreational or volunteer purposes, should always check the Plan Your Visit link (provided on page 27).

Like many park activities, bicycling has become a part of the level walking program. Many level walkers use bikes as part of their activity. I've heard of trailers and other devices to enhance functionality of the level walking activity. I've even joined the trend – after 30 plus years walking the towpath I decided to start using a bike myself. The good folks at C&O Bicycle in Hancock helped me select a bike that supports level walking and photography quite well. There are advantages to both walking and biking, but biking does make it easier to cover more ground and carry more trash out. Admittedly, level walkers on bikes make frequent stops, but both ways work well. One question I have been asked in recent years is if the program name would ever change. It will not – the term Level Walker is derived from a historical term related to an actual job in the canal era and the concept of “walking” a level relates to the duties performed both then and now to monitor conditions of a section of the canal.

Thanks to all who participate in our volunteer program! As a team, your efforts make a significant contribution to the park. For information about the Level Walker program, please email lw@candocanal.org or visit candocanal.org/level/ (link at right).



Level 2 Incline Plane to Lock 5: Kamile Kay reports Jan. 31: I went on several walks in January. As always, this is my favorite walk in the world. There was not too much trash. I saw many different birds, including a heron. It was beautiful during snow falls. The canal was mostly frozen during these walks and there was a person ice skating on it on one date. The towpath was in good condition, with some puddling after rains. There was graffiti on Custis Trail pedestrian bridge by Arizona Ave. *Kamile is a new level walker and we welcome her to the team!*

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

Level 5 Lock 14 to Bridge at Cropley: Jude and Mary Fran Franklin report Nov. 5, 6 and 7: The towpath was clean and in good condition with a few puddles. The major towpath detour west of Carderock from just before the stone wall to Brickyard Road was still in effect. There was additional construction and lots of black pipes around the Carderock entrance related to the Fairfax County, Va. sewer project. Billy

Goat Trail B was closed, and Billy Goat Trail C was open. There was little to no water in the prism from Mile 10 to the Capital Beltway and the canal was filled with trees, plants, and other growth. There was water, but no flow, in the prism from about Mile 11 to the bridge at Cropley. There were moderate amounts of people on the towpath. An unusual sighting was one person walking eight dogs.

Level 9 Lock 22 to Seneca Aqueduct: Louis Robbins reports Dec. 25: It was a beautiful partly cloudy day with light to moderate amounts of people out for Christmas Day walks. The towpath was clean and in good shape. A dead tree is overhanging the towpath ¼ mile north of Pennyfield and is not marked for removal. Many other at-risk trees are marked for removal. Lock 24 and the Violets inlet lock both have vegetation growth and visible gaps, and need pointing of stonework. The Seneca parking lot has significant potholes. The previously noted debris at the Seneca Aqueduct was cleared. There are old graders at the Pennyfield parking area that appear to be disused or abandoned. The previously noted gabions and sandbags at the Lock 22 waste weir were removed and water flow was several inches deep.

Level 10 Seneca Aqueduct to Milepost 25: **Judith Walton reports Nov. 5 and 26:** I was accompanied on these walks by my canine assistant Flora. Level 10 is well used by walkers, hikers, joggers, and dogs. There is typically some trash on the level, but on the second walk there was more trash than usual. Most of the trash found is by the picnic tables. Of concern during the first walk were fish hooks that someone had left. The towpath is well maintained. There was debris blockage at the aqueduct and trash was getting caught in the tree blockage. Potholes are an issue at the Seneca parking lot.

Level 12 Sycamore Landing to Edwards Ferry: **Pat Hopson, with Carol Ivory, Margaret Nuese, Ron Wise and Frank Wodarczyk, reports Nov. 5:** The Edwards Ferry access bridge was closed on this date. *Note: Refer to the article in the September 2023 Along the Towpath for details of this project and visit the park's Plan Your Visit page at the link on page 27 for current information about park projects.* As usual, we split up for this level walk. Frank and Pat met at Sycamore Landing, and Frank walked the entire level. He found almost no trash, even at the two informal fishermen's sites. Pat cleaned up at Sycamore Landing, then drove around to Edwards Ferry and eventually met up with the other three. Carol, Margaret, and Ron met at Edwards Ferry and scoured the riverside downstream to the hiker-biker. The deterioration of the Goose Creek river locks is accelerating. The entire lock area is now very overgrown with plants, making it hard to spot trash. The deterioration of the downstream wall on the lower lock is worse than before. Unless some repair is undertaken soon, it is possible that more stones will fall into the lock prism. The prism of the lock appears to be partly filled in by soil and plants. The towpath was in good shape and that there was very little trash, partly because the still-present leaf litter hides any. Wood asters were the only flowering plant seen along the towpath margins. The canal prism was dry except for a small stretch downstream of the hiker-biker campsite. The flaking

away of red brick at the back of the downstream wall inside the Jarboe store is still progressing.

Level 13 Edwards Ferry to Harrison Island: **Liz Wagner reports Nov. 30:** The level continues to be well maintained. The sides of the towpath and the lock areas had been mowed. The resurfaced towpath between Mileposts 32 and 33 is showing signs of wear, but no standing water or ruts were seen. The Broad Run Trunk crossover bridge wooden bridge deck is showing wear, especially one wooden deck plank that is almost half rotted. Many small birds were seen, along with a red-shouldered hawk and several turkey vultures. **Ron Tipton, with Don Owen, reports Dec. 7:** It was a beautiful sunny winter day and very quiet overall. We encountered no hikers or bikers as we walked from Edwards Ferry to the towpath view of Harrison Island, which was very unusual. Most trash found was related to several large items such as construction foam and bottles that we found on both sides of the towpath between above and below Milepost 33. The entrance to the parking area was closed off due to the work in the bridge area over the canal. (See note under Level 12 report.) As we were leaving there were several Montgomery County Fire & Rescue vehicles parked just outside the gate to Edwards Ferry.

Level 15 Whites Ferry to Lock 26: **Jon Wolz reports Nov. 22, Dec. 4, Dec. 8, and Jan. 24:** The towpath is in excellent condition on this level. In November an abandoned set-up tent, with numerous beer containers nearby, was found on the river side near Milepost 37. A downed tree was reported across the towpath in this area and was eventually removed in December. There are trees growing in the stones of the Whites Ferry Granary ruins that need to be removed. A person was observed walking the towpath and smoking marijuana. Bald eagles were observed in December and January. Graffiti is on the port-a-pot at the Marble Quarry hiker-biker camp. The towpath was mostly covered with melting snow in January and there were no park visitors. There were human footprints



Inlet Lock 2 – Photo by Louis Robbins



Debris build-up at Monocacy Aqueduct – Photo by Jon Wolz

in the snow as well as many deer and raccoon tracks. There were also dog or coyote tracks in the snow. Most of the level had higher than normal water level and was ice covered. The giant silver maple tree at Lock 26 was still standing with a large chunk from a rotting limb that has fallen at the base of the tree. Numerous deer were sighted in January.

*Level 16 Lock 26 to Monocacy Aqueduct: **Jon Wolz reports Nov. 23 (with Charles Wolz), Dec. 14 (with Steve Hovarth), and Jan. 8:*** This is always a nice level to visit. The water level above Milepost 41 is a little low and the prism leak seen earlier in the year was not noted in November but was leaking forcefully in January. The pipe from the old power plant continues to pour water into the canal. The ramp into the aqueduct basin has ruts that could be hazardous for cyclists. Tree debris has accumulated in front of the berm side of Culvert 65 that needs removing. A large limb has fallen off a tree that has exposed roots next to the side berm side entrance. This tree is a potential hazard because when it falls it will damage the side wall of the culvert with its roots pulling out stones. Biker dismount signs at the Monocacy Aqueduct are still missing. Tree debris is starting to build up against the aqueduct again.

*Level 17 Monocacy Aqueduct to Nolands Ferry: **Earl Porter, with Ed Boddinger, reports Nov. 17, Dec. 20, and Jan. 20:*** The trash free park bag container at Nolands Ferry is missing. Trash, as usual, was heaviest around the Indian Flats hiker-biker camp and Nolands Ferry. The picnic table at the hiker-biker has two rotten boards. The lock at the Monocacy boat ramp port-a-pot is broken. Moderate to high amounts of trash were found on the level. *Earl Porter is retiring from level walking after 10 years of faithful service on Level 17. Throughout that time he walked his level on a monthly basis in all conditions and his thorough support on this level made a significant contribution to the park and its visitors. We thank him for his outstanding support!*

*Level 18 Nolands Ferry to Point of Rocks: **Bob Carpenter reports Jan. 29:*** It was a good winter day for a hike; the towpath was quiet because of the closure of parking lots at both Nolands Ferry and Point of Rocks due to the risk of river flooding. There was very little trash on the towpath, a bit more at the Nolands Ferry Boat Ramp, with most of the trash collected at the Point of Rocks parking lot. The towpath, while littered with small tree debris from recent storms, was in good condition for both walking and bicycling. As usual, the bulk of the trash collected was at the Point of Rocks parking lot. One troubling concern was the amount of trash in the toilets at both the Point of Rocks restrooms and the porta-potty at the Calico Rocks hiker biker camp. There is a considerable amount of a bamboo-looking plant in the canal prism and on the prism side of the towpath between Miles 45.60 and 45.75. The river and creeks were very high, as could be observed at the culverts and boat ramps.

*Level 19 Point of Rocks to Catoclin Aqueduct: **June Miller and Cathy Guzauskas report Nov. 8:*** Trash was light. We looked at all picnic tables on this level. The only one showing wear is the one at Point of Rocks parking lot. There was, yet again, new spray paint graffiti on the Point of Rocks pivot bridge. A variety of birds was observed, including robins, blue jays, Carolina wrens, black capped chickadees, golden crowned kinglet, creepers and woodpeckers. **Don Peterson reports Jan. 11:** Trash was light. The river water level was high, and the Bald Eagle hiker-biker camp was flooded. A red fox was observed on the towpath. A total of 13 bird species were noted during the level walk.

*Level 20 Catoclin Aqueduct to Lock 30: **Louis Robbins reports Nov. 4:*** This was my first level walk on this level. The level was clean. Structures were inspected. The area around the Catoclin Aqueduct was well-maintained and the aqueduct looked great, with no blockages. Culverts were in normal condition, with obscured outlets on culverts near Brunswick and existing sink holes over several. The low water bridge at the site of collapsed Culvert 82 remains in service and is dangerous for bikers who do not dismount to cross the bridge. The towpath was in good condition, but the joint use part of the towpath near the campground is dusty from vehicle use. **Bob Carpenter reports Jan. 30:** It was a chilly and overcast winter day for a walk on the towpath. The restored Catoclin Aqueduct is always the highlight of this level. However, the project to replace the footbridge at Culvert 82 makes a walk on this level difficult, with towpath damage from Lock 29 in Lander to the Brunswick Family Campground (mile 54.0) from vehicle traffic to and from the project site. The temporary low water crossing bridge has been removed, with no detour in place. Hopefully this project will be completed before bicycle traffic picks up in the spring. Access for this level at the present time is difficult and I started at Lock 29 and walked to the site of the low water bridge and returned. Next, I drove to



High water at Culvert 72 – Photo by Bob Carpenter

the Lock 30 (Brunswick) access point only to find the gate locked; it was later unlocked.

Level 22 Lock 31 to Lock 33: Karlen Keto reports Dec. 29: The towpath was in fine shape with a very few small blow downs to move. Trash was light. I saw one 15-inch turtle sunning on a log. The newly shingled roof at the Lock 31 house appears to be almost finished and supplies were cleared from the area.

Level 23 Lock 33 to Dam 3: Arthur Tsien reports Nov. 24: It was my fifth walk of this level in 2023. Walking the towpath is a great way to spend some of Black Friday. Thanks to Pat White for the idea last year! It was a seasonal, partly sunny late fall day. I had my usual positive experience walking the towpath. The level was in good condition, and I did not see any impediments to foot or cycle travel. Work on the stone wall project downstream of Lock 34 appears to be near completion. As far as I can tell, the concrete wall to hold up Harper's Ferry Road is done. Non-structural stone facing needs to be added. Two workers were on the job. There were no noticeable changes from my prior reports of the erosion of the resurfaced towpath in the 120 or so yards between the upstream end of Lock 33 and the old railroad bridge piers. Fortunately, the erosion does not seem to have gotten worse. Otherwise, the resurfaced towpath continues to be in very good condition with no significant problems.

Level 24 Dam 3 to Dargan Bend: Craig Roberts reports Nov. 7, 22 and 26: The Dargan boat ramp construction was proceeding, and the parking lot remained open. There were still too many bikes going by at excessive speed. I saw signs of a busy beaver in the area. Trash seemed to be decreasing in the area.

Levels 28 and 29 Lock 38 to Snyders Landing: Brigitta Shroyer and Joel Anderson report Nov. 11: It was a gorgeous sunny day in the low 50s. The parking lots at both ends were nearly



Busy beaver tree work – Photo by Craig Roberts

full when we arrived. All trash was found at Snyders Landing near the restroom. The towpath was in very good shape. There are numerous Ailanthus trees growing in Lock 39. We met a group of people at Snyder's Landing who had never been on the C&O Canal before, and they were very impressed.

Level 30 Snyders Landing to Lock 40: Charles Connolly reports Nov. 6: It was a beautiful day for a walk on the C&O Canal! The river very low. No trash other than a few large items that were on the canal side berm. I observed three pileated woodpeckers.

Level 32 Marsh Run Culvert to Dam 4: David Plume reports Nov. 15: The river level was low. There were several tree work orange ribbons on trees just below Dam 4, and there were two wooden markers with orange ribbons along the towpath in this area. The towpath was in good condition. A few short sections below Dam 4 had fine gravel loose enough to leave bicycle tire tracks. There were several areas along the river side of the towpath showing minor erosion. The prism was dry with a few shallow pools in small areas near the Big Woods hiker-biker camp and one area just upstream from the Dam 4 cave. No water was flowing from Dam 4 cave. Visitation was very light.

Level 42 Four Locks to McCoys Ferry: Jack and Deb Ebersole report Jan. 5: We wanted to do the level before the big snowstorm hit. By afternoon it was a sunny 40 degrees. Except for the McCoy's Ferry campground, the park was pristine, with no trash along the towpath. There were a few small limbs, but it was otherwise clear. The lock tender's shanty at Lock 50 remains in very poor condition and the Four Locks mule barn also needs attention. There is a tree growing in the prism just below Lock 49 that should be removed before it gets any bigger.

Level 45 Ernsville to Licking Creek Aqueduct: Steven Dean reports Nov. 6: The culverts on the level (151, 152 and 153) are stable with no degradation of pre-existing sinkholes or erosion. No blockages were evident. Culverts 149 and 150, just below the level, were also visited. The towpath on the level is in good condition. Milepost 115 is damaged. The Licking Creek Aqueduct is stable and shows no degradation from earlier conditions.

Levels 47 and 48 Little Pool to Round Top Cement Mill: Phillip M. Clemans reports Jan. 31: Recent tree work was evident and tree debris was all around. There was extensive trash at the White Rock hiker-biker camp, including numerous soup cans and diapers (which are often found there). There appears to be someone living there. The towpath was in good condition and the prism was watered in many places. The Bowles House appeared to be in good condition. There were more birds on the level, especially above Hancock, that have been seen in recent level walks, including woodland mallards, numerous cardinals, and downy and pileated woodpeckers.

Level 49 Round Top Cement Mill to Lock 53: Paul Petkus and Sue Muller report Jan. 27: It was a pleasant winter day for an outing. The towpath was in good condition. Windy weather during the winter deposited branches onto the towpath. All except one were small enough to be moved off to the side. No significant change was observed in the condition of any of the structures along the level. Evidence of gypsy moth activity was seen on a couple of trees. The most surprising sighting of the outing was seeing an opossum sleeping in a nest in a tree. Birds present included pileated woodpecker, hairy woodpecker, yellow-bellied sapsucker, American crow, raven, white-breasted nuthatch, cardinal, chickadee, geese, common merganser, red-shouldered hawk, Carolina wren and song sparrow. Red-spotted newts were active in the water at the egress of Lock 53. We observed a group of six bicyclists that appeared to be a family that included a member of the Bike Patrol.

Levels 50 and 51 Lock 53 to Sideling Hill Aqueduct: Steven Dean reports Nov. 5 and 7: The towpath was in good condition on both levels. Level 50 was one of the first levels to be resurfaced and it has held up very well. Culvert 202 has a fallen tree across the outflow, making access difficult, but it is not blocked. The berm/prism sinkhole and erosion at Culvert 201 continues to degrade. Overgrowth, especially Japanese stilt grass, is much worse on both levels that it was before. Locks 53, 54, 55 and 56 remain stable and no issues were noted at the Sideling Hill Creek Aqueduct. Trash was minimal.

Levels 56 and 57 Culvert 208 to Lock 63 1/3: Barbara Sheridan and Pat White report Nov. 24: Conditions were pretty much unchanged from our previous visit. Both levels were surprisingly clean. Large water-filled potholes noted mostly on Level 56. This condition was expected since neither level has an improved surface yet. Most of the previously reported potholes have been filled with some sort of coarse

stone mixture. There was the usual amount of branches, which we removed from the towpath. Structures looked good. Culvert 208 may have lost a few bricks, but water was flowing freely. Locks were in good condition but there is an extensive amount of vegetation in Lock 62. We encountered one deer and a flock of turkeys. *Note: Pat is the primary level walker for Level 56 and Barbara for Level 57, and they traditionally walk their levels together on Black Friday.*

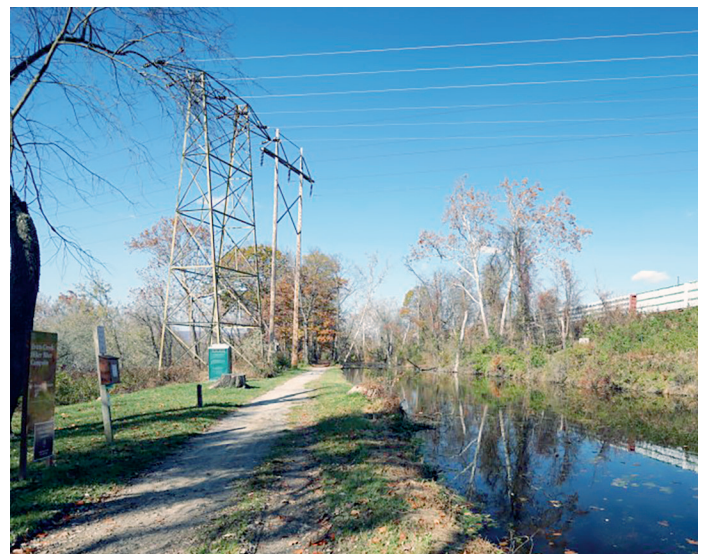
Level 63 Lock 70 to Kellys Road Culvert: Steven Dean reports Nov. 8: The level was clean and there were no towpath issues. Lock 70 looked good as usual (one of the most picturesque spots on the canal in my opinion). The sinkhole over the towpath arch of Culvert 221 continues to grow. Kellys Road Culvert (222) is still losing a few bricks from inside the barrel. Turtles were observed in the marshy water in the canal above Lock 71.

Levels 65, 66 and 67 Spring Gap to Evitts Creek Aqueduct: Trent Carbaugh reports Nov. 10: Towpath conditions were mostly good, with areas of tire ruts covered by leaves making riding interesting. On Level 65 there was a one-foot in diameter sinkhole, this was flagged with caution tape on a stick and called in to the NPS hazards line. I trimmed back much multi-flora rose and some small very offensive tree limbs. There were numerous walkers and bicyclists. The word on water does not seem to be getting out, as I talked to three thru-riders who didn't know how to get water. There was one person sleeping on the ground at Evitts Creek. He was very still, so I was concerned and roused him. He woke up and stumbled off.

Roving Level Walker: Mark Stover reports November through January: Mark walks various parts of the entire canal on a regular basis. Downed trees and other issues are frequently reported.



Opossum hiding in a tree – Photo by Paul Petkus



Towpath at Evitts Creek hiker-biker camp – Photo by Trent Carbaugh

2024 World Canals Conference

By Barbara Sheridan

The World Canals Conference will take place in Bydgoszcz, Poland, June 24th through 26th, 2024. This annual event is presented under the auspices of Inland Waterways International and is for inland waterways enthusiasts worldwide. This year's theme is *Challenges Between Ecology and Economic Use – Sustainable Revitalization of Canals Focusing on Nature*.

This 3-day conference will have speakers from all over the world during the breakout sessions. They will cover topics in three separate areas: *Ecology and Technologies; Water, Heritage and Tourism; and Man and Human Activities*. There will be excursions to other areas each afternoon.

The beautiful city of Bydgoszcz is centrally located in Poland. The Brda River runs through the center of Old Town. Nearby is the historic 17-mile Bydgoszcz Canal, which is part of the waterway connecting the Oder and Vistula Rivers.

WCC2024 is offering both Pre- and Post-conference Tours. These tours will take participants to other waterways areas in Poland. An “Accompanying Persons” package is being developed for guests of conference attendees.

Visit wcc2024bydgoszcz.pl for more information. We hope to see you there!



2024 Presidents Lunch

By Jonnie Lefebure for the Programs Committee

The ever-popular Presidents Luncheon at Bill's Place in Little Orleans, along the towpath at Mile 140.8 in western Maryland, will be Saturday, June 1, 2024. No reservations are needed; just show up for lunch at or before noon, place your order and enjoy camaraderie with your fellow canal supporters.

For those who would like some activity before lunch, we will go on a hike at 9:00 a.m. on the Western Maryland Rail Trail to visit the Indigo Tunnel. Visitors can't go in the tunnel, but can view the impressive support beams and rough cut rock inside the tunnel.



Indigo Tunnel

Bill's Place
12719 High Germany Rd.
Little Orleans, Md.

Directions:



Past presidents Bill Holdsworth, Barbara Sheridan and Christine Cerniglia at an earlier presidents event

Important Information About Association Events –

- » Liability waivers are required for many Association activities.
- » Hikes require proper footwear. Paddling, hiking and biking participants are responsible for their own equipment, food and water.
- » Reservations and/or advance fees are required for some events. Reservations must be received prior to the listed closing date. Advance fees are non-refundable after the reservation closing date.
- » Participants must arrive on-time for outdoor event start times. Outdoor events are usually rain or shine, however in extreme cases may be canceled for weather travel conditions or other reasons. Check www.candocanal.org/calendar/ (use QR code at right), contact the event host for updates, or visit Facebook @candocanal.org.
- » Participants are expected to comply with local health or safety related rules.
- » The Association cannot accommodate requests for variations from established event agendas, transportation and arrangements, including requests for alternate pick-up or drop-off locations.



C&O Canal Association

Calendar of Events – 2024

C&OCA Business
C&OCA Hike and Dinner or Other Event
C&OCA Paddle Trip
C&OCA Nature Walk
C&OCA Volunteer Event
Non-C&OCA Event
C&OCA Hike
C&OCA Bike Trip
<p>March 23, Sat., C&O Canal Association Annual Meeting Upper Montgomery County Fire Department 19801 Beallsville Road, Beallsville, Md. 11:30 a.m. – Meet the Candidates; 1 p.m. – Annual meeting; 3:30 p.m. – Happy hour; 4:30 p.m. – Dinner. Reservations required for lunch and dinner.</p>
<p>March 31, Sun. Continuing Hike Series, 10:30 a.m. at Cohill Station. Hikers will visit Feeder Dam 6 and inlet locks. Contact: Pat White – hikemaster@candocanal.org or 301-997-5628</p>
<p>April 13, Sat., C&O Canal and Riverside Cleanup, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at various areas; see article on page 24 Contact: Jim Heins – vip@candocanal.org</p>
<p>April 14, Sun., Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m. Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.</p>
<p>April 27, Sat., Douglas Hike and Dinner. There will also be a concurrent bike ride. Details are on pages 1, 6 and 7 of this issue. Contact: Jonnie Lefebure – programs@candocanal.org.</p>
<p>April 27, Sat. Nature Walk – Birds, 8:00 a.m. at Rileys Lock. Contact: Kurt Schwarz – krschwa1@verizon.net or 443-538-2370</p>
<p>June 1, Sat. Presidents Lunch, 12:00 p.m. Bill's Place, Little Orleans, Md. Details are on page 25 of this issue. Contact: Jonnie Lefebure – programs@candocanal.org.</p>
<p>June 2, Sun., Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m. Williamsport Town Hall, 2 North Conococheague St.</p>
<p>June 22, Sat., Nature Walk – Dragonflies, 9:00 a.m. at Oldtown Contact: Steven Dean – editor@candocanal.org.</p>
<p>June 24 – 26, Mon. – Thu., World Canals Conference Bydgoszcz, Poland; see article on page 25 Further Info: wcc2024bydgoszcz.pl</p>
<p>June 29, Sat., Nature Walk – Butterflies, 10:00 a.m. at Carderock Contact: Paul Petkus – papetkus@yahoo.com or text 773-450-6039</p>

<p>July 20, Sat. Paddle Trip. Brunswick to Monocacy Aqueduct 4-5 hour paddle trip. Reservations by July 10 are required. For information and reservations, contact Tony Laing, canoemaster@candocanal.org or 301-980-8932.</p>
<p>July 20, Sat., Nature Walk – Dragonflies, 9:00 a.m. at Dickerson Contact: Steven Dean – editor@candocanal.org.</p>
<p>Aug. 4 Sun., Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m. via Zoom Check calendar at www.candocanal.org for details or changes.</p>
<p>Aug. 23-25, Fri.-Sun. Paddle Trip. Paw Paw Bends Area Potomac River from Paw Paw, W.Va. to Little Orleans, Md. Trip includes two nights camping. Reservations are required. For information and reservations, contact Barbara Sheridan, canoemaster@candocanal.org or 301-752-5436.</p>
<p>Sept. 14, Sat. Nature Walk – Birds, 8:00 a.m. at Sycamore Landing Contact: Kurt Schwarz – krschwa1@verizon.net or 443-538-2370</p>
<p>Sept. 29, Sun. Continuing Hike Series, 10:30 a.m. at Dargan Bend. Hikers will visit Feeder Dam 3, inlet locks, and a dry dock. Contact: Pat White – hikemaster@candocanal.org or 301-997-5628</p>
<p>Oct. 6, Sun., Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m. at Williamsport Check calendar at www.candocanal.org for details.</p>
<p>Oct. 11-16, Fri.-Wed., Through Bike Ride. Cumberland to Georgetown. No sag wagon. Reservations required. Limited number of riders. We ride 30 to 40 miles per day for six days. Participants must be willing to accept instruction from ride leaders before and during the trip, and must come equipped with recommended bicycles and have clothing for warm, cold, and rainy weather. Contact: Denny Sloppy – dennysloppy@yahoo.com or 814-577-5877.</p>
<p>Oct. 26, Sat., Heritage Hike and Dinner, Details will be published in the September <i>Along the Towpath</i>. Contact: Jonnie Lefebure – programs@candocanal.org.</p>
<p>Nov. 19, Sun. Continuing Hike Series, 10:30 a.m. at Rileys Lock. Hikers will visit Feeder Dam 2 and inlet locks at Violettes Lock. Contact: Pat White – hikemaster@candocanal.org or 301-997-5628</p>
<p>Dec. 1, Sun. Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m. Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.</p>
<p>Additional details about events will be included in the <i>Along the Towpath</i> issue before the event. Contact programs@candocanal.org for questions. Refer to Page 25 for important event information.</p>

C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Personnel and Contact Information

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	Ed Wenschhof (Acting)
Superintendent's Assistant	301-491-3374	Erin Cowan
Chief Ranger	301-714-2222	Ed Wenschhof
Chief of Business Mgmt.	301-714-2204	Ben Helwig
Chief of Resource Mgmt.	301-714-2225	Andrew Landsman
Chief of Maintenance	301-714-2211	Jim Yelton
Chief of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers	301-714-2238	Christiana Hanson
Chief of Professional Services	301-491-1392	Joseph Reed
Partnerships Coordinator	301-714-2218	Anthony Bates
Volunteer Coordinator	301-491-7309	Emily Tyner-Hewitt
Cultural Resources Manager/Historian	301-491-2236	Justin Ebersole
Safety Office	301-745-5804	John Adams

Palisades District

Mile 0 (Tidelock) to Mile 42.19 (Monocacy River)

Interpretive Supervisor	301-331-6782	Nicolette Talley
District Ranger Law Enforcement	301-491-6279	Joshua Cunningham
Supervisory Recreation Fee Specialist	301-331-7193	Evan Costanza
Georgetown Partnerships Coordinator	240-291-8466	Shaun Lehmann

Western Maryland District

Mile 42.19 (Monocacy River) to Mile 184.5 (Cumberland)

Interpretive Supervisor	240-625-2931	Joshua Nolen
District Ranger Law Enforcement	301-722-0543	
Cumberland Subdistrict	301-722-0543	
Hancock Subdistrict	301-678-5463	
Ferry Hill Subdistrict	301-714-2206	

Visiting the Park

The C&O Canal NHP is open 365 days a year, but may be closed at times due to weather conditions, towpath issues or repairs. Park visitor centers are located at Georgetown, Great Falls, Brunswick, Williamsport, Hancock and Cumberland. They may be closed seasonally or due to staffing limitations.

www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/index.htm
(QR Code at right) provides information about park facilities, towpath local closures, NPS events, canal boat programs, visitor centers, camping and other visit related information. The park phone number is 301-739-4200.



Check park status before visiting.

Other Useful Contacts

Canal Quarters Program – www.canaltrust.org/programs/canal-quarters/

Canal Towns – www.canaltrust.org/programs/canal-towns/

24-HOUR EMERGENCY:

911 or 866-677-6677

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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 to the C&O Canal Association or paid on-line. 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 contacting the C&OCA at the address above or emailing inquiries@candocanal.org. 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.

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If address label says, "Membership Expired Dec-2023" your membership has expired. Please renew to continue receiving *Along the Towpath*.



Long- and medium-hikers in the Douglas Hike will cross Culvert 115, the Mondell Culvert, at Mile 80.55. This 6-foot culvert carries an active stream with rapidly flowing water over a rock stream bed. The outflow (above) leads directly into the Potomac River. The inflow stream (left and below) flows down hill into the culvert. Hikers can cross the prism to view the inflow stream. Photos by Steven Dean



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Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association
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