

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

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Number 2

President's Report

By Bill Holdsworth

As I assume my new tenure as C&O Canal Association president, I am happy that the board has authorized a \$60,000 donation to the park to enable them to hire three interns, one to support the Cumberland visitor center, one to support the Williamsport visitor center, and another to help with volunteer management. The park is chronically understaffed, and experience has shown that interns are a cost-effective means to alleviate these shortages. We hope that these interns will improve the visitor and volunteer experience in the park.

The Association is lucky that its members have always generously donated to our funds. Please take note of an especially generous donation that is described on

Page 2 of this issue. Such generosity makes it possible for the Association to support the park in important ways. Always aware of their obligation to use funds wisely, board members confer carefully with the park in working out the often complex details.

Even more valuable to the Association are those members willing to donate their time, particularly in leadership roles. As I glance around the room at Association meetings, I see members who have made invaluable contributions to the C&O Canal and the Association over the decades. Elsewhere in this issue, we detail opportunities to help the Association. Please consider volunteering for the Association.



Trent Carbaugh highlights the function of stop locks in the canal and takes us on a tour of the series of stop locks that support Big Pool. Visit Page 8 to read this interesting and informative article.



The National Park Service announced two towpath closures that will affect travel in the near future. One is in support of structure rehabilitation at Dam 5 (above) and the other is for an emergent structural issue in the Polly Pond area. Visit Page 14 for details.

C&O Canal Association Receives Significant Donation

Association's Assets will Nearly Double

By Paul D Lubell, Treasurer

In what may well be the most important single presentation of financial support since the founding of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Association, the Association has received a series of bequests from the estate of Mary Elizabeth Johns Woodward, who died in 2018 at age 91. These funds were originally for the benefit of her son, David Fray Johns, and he died on January 9 of this year. According to the terms of the trust, the remainder of the funds were to pass mostly to the C&O Canal Association. Collectively, these total at least \$200,000. The transfer is planned to be completed by early June.

The donation was announced to the C&O Canal Association board at their June 2 meeting and I am pleased to bring it to your attention.

Across the Berm

By Steven Dean

Mary Elizabeth Woodward

This Across the Berm article was originally published in the the March, 2019 Along the Towpath.

Mary E. "Emmie" Shreve Johns Woodward died on September 6, 2018 in Bridgeport, West Virginia. She was 91 and a longtime Association member. Emmie started her career with Foreign Services and later worked as a manager with the National Symphony Orchestra.

Emmie served the Association in many ways. She was the treasurer in the 1970s and early 1980s. In that capacity she resolved an issue with membership renewals. After serving as the treasurer, Emmie served a term as a director. For many years Emmie was a production and distribution assistant for *Along the Towpath*. She was a level walker, and frequently walked Level 51 between Dam 6 and Sideling Hill Creek with her husband John. In addition to all of this activity, she also served as a volunteer at Lockhouse 75. In 1992, Emmie was appointed to the C&O Canal Federal Advisory Committee as a representative from West Virginia.

Emmie worked diligently in the late 1980s to collate, inventory and prepare for storage the Justice Douglas C&O Canal Collection. These materials included personal correspondence relating to the park, newspaper and magazine articles, and artifacts, such as personal items used by Justice Douglas while hiking on the towpath. In 1990, the materials were donated to the Washington County Free Library in Hagerstown. The Association recognized Emmie in 1990 with the Justice William O. Douglas Award for her work with the collection. She was the first Association member ever to receive this seldom-presented award.

Emmie was a strong advocate for preservation of the abandoned Western Maryland Railway right of way, and its conversion to a rail trail. Emmie took the lead in forming a nonprofit organization of West Virginians and Marylanders who were dedicated to creating a rail trail along the Western Maryland Railway right of way along the Paw Paw Bends. Emmie saw great promise in the route as a trail.

Champ Zumbrun recalls that he met Emmie on several occasions, and aptly sums up her vision: "Emmie was a passionate advocate for the Rails to Trails being developed parallel to the C&O Canal. Emmie worked for years with Maryland and West Virginia elected officials to convince them of the value of the trail and obtain the necessary funding to restore the railroad bridges so that the bike trail would cross on the West Virginia side near Paw Paw. Emmie thought if this was accomplished, the bike trail would rival those in Europe and bring people from all over the world to this area, providing an economic, social, and environmental boom and boon to the region where both the canal and the rail to trail passed through."



Emmie Woodward at the Western Maryland Rail Trail Phase 3 ribbon cutting. Front row (l-r) – Gage Linden, Ken Rollins and Emmie. Back row (l-r) – Carl Linden, Jeremy Cooper and C&O Canal NHP Superintendent Kevin Brandt. Photo by Sonny DeForge from the June 2005 Along the Towpath

Donors to Association Funds

February 1 to April 30, 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

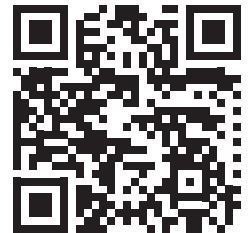
– Supports current projects and programs in and for the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

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.



A generous donation was made by an anonymous donor with a request to note the following:

***In recognition of the C&O Canal Bike Patrol
for 25 years of service to our park
and our valued visitors
May 30, 1999 to May 30, 2024***

Individual Donations

Kathleen Barber – **R**
John Bogdan, Jr. – **A, D, R**
Judith Bolton – **A**
Robert Carson – **G**
Lauren Cosgrove & Thomas O’Brien – **G**
Donald Harrison – **A**
Martin Heavner – **C**
Lisa Hendrick – **A, C, D, R**
Robert Hibbert – **A, D, R, S**
Joseph & Mary Howard – **R**
Joseph Kochenderfer – **R**
Michael Marmer – **A**
Luella Mast – **A, R**
Lorraine Minor – **R**
Ronald Morgan – **C**
Emil Moskovich, Jr – **A**
Charles Pekow – **G**

Jeanette Penner – **R**
Rachel Rogers – **A**
David Scally – **A**
Suzanne Seger – **G**
Raphael Semmes – **A, C, D, G, R, S**
Michael Shallenberger – **A, D, R**
Sally Sherman – **D**
Sierra Club Potomac Region Outings – **R**
Bridget Sisson – **A, R**
Susi Slocum – **A**
James Waite – **R**
Katrinka Westendorf – **A, C, R**
Fred Wilson – **C**
Mary Wilson – **A**
Robert Wolff – **G**
Denise Yocum – **R**

Donation 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

Refer to previous page for a description of fund types.

Volunteers in Parks

By Jim Heins

This is an AA report, not to be confused with any other meaning for AA. This is an Anticipatory Article, focusing on the Association's VIPs.

At the time this article was being developed, the VIPs had completed a successful canal cleanup on April 13, operating eight sites between Carderock and Dam 5. The good news from that cleanup was very nice weather for the project and limited trash, an encouraging sign. In addition, they provided some support in the construction of mileposts to replace some damaged or missing ones in the park. Hopefully, additional help will be provided to help Jim Tomlin with this project.

A major thrust of the VIPs this summer will be improving the overall condition of the huge number of picnic tables spread throughout the park. The project will start in early

June with the purchase and painting of boards to repair and construct picnic tables.

During the hottest time of the summer, we try to minimize the number of high-energy-required projects but stand ready to help with unanticipated projects.

We will most likely be involved in the installation of a large number of benches later in the year.

In the meantime, we wish everyone a happy summer, taking advantage of the benefits of our beautiful park and giving back by helping to pick up trash and, if riding, doing so at a safe and courteous speed.

Please contact me at vip@candocanal.org for further information.

Volunteer with the Association

C&O Canal Association has been an all-volunteer organization throughout its existence. We have accomplished a lot over the last 70 years. For continued success we need volunteer help from people like you.

Communications

- > **Social media:** Success in today's world requires a presence on social media. Are you a savvy user of social media? We could use your help to increase the Association's exposure and influence.
- > **Event Publication:** If you have writing or editing skills, we could use help in preparing broadcast emails to members or press releases.

Association Programs

- > **Hikes and Nature Walks:** Consider leading a hike or nature walk to share your knowledge of an area on the park or flora and fauna.
- > **Bike Rides:** Lead a short or long bike ride on the canal or an adjoining rail trail.
- > **Paddle Events:** Lead a short or overnight paddle trip.
- > **Annual Events:** Assist in organizing annual events. Our Program Committee organizes the annual meeting, the spring Douglas Hike, and the fall Heritage Hike. A little help goes a long way in lightening their load.

Association Operations

- > **Board of Directors Participation:** The Nominating Committee is always looking for conscientious members to serve as an officer or a director.

- > **Finances:** There are opportunities to help with financial management. We have openings on our Finance Committee and Audit Committee. We are looking for someone to assume the role of Treasurer in the coming year.
- > **Membership:** The Association has over 500 members. If you have organizational skills or are comfortable using computer software, we could use your help on the Membership Committee.
- > **Website Management:** If you have experience using WordPress (or are willing to learn), we could use your help. The website has been a one-man operation for many years.

Helping in the Park

- > **Level Walkers:** You can enjoy the canal and help maintain it. Volunteers monitor a section of the towpath on a regular basis and report on conditions.
- > **Volunteers in Parks (VIPs):** Consider helping the park by participating in the VIP program. VIPs support a variety of projects, including painting, bench installation, wayside installation and site clean-ups.
- > **Swains Lock:** The Association schedules periodic work sessions to keep this campground area in good condition. Become one of the volunteers.

If you are interested or would like more information, please email us at volunteer@candocanal.org.



The Association Welcomes New Members

Paul Durham

Mark Mitchell

Bruce Ours, Jr.

Jeff & Anne Powers

Thank you for your continued support of our organization! If you have any membership related questions, please contact Pat White, Membership Chair, at membership@candocanal.org.

Membership information is available at candocanal.org/membership/ or by using the QR Code to the right.



Board Meeting Highlights – April 14, 2024

By Jane Hanna

The C&O Canal Association Board of Directors and a few other interested members met at the Glen Echo Town Hall. Without duplicating the meeting minutes, here are some of the highlights:

Bill Holdsworth presented his priorities for his term as president:

- > Continue to develop and improve the relationship with C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP).
- > Improve efficiency of board meetings.
- > Recruit new volunteers from Association membership.

Christiana Hanson, Chief of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers for the C&O Canal NHP, reported on current Association-funded projects; including exhibits for the Trolley Barn at Cushwa Basin in Williamsport and the reprinting of the Park Planner guide. She requested additional Association funding for three interns to support three areas:

- > Williamsport Visitor Center
- > Cumberland Visitor Center
- > Parkwide volunteer services

The board approved this expenditure, paid for in part by a \$32,000 credit in Association funds not yet used by the park. The board asked that Christiana provide a brief written report on the intern's accomplishments and that at least one of the interns make a report on their efforts at the 2025 Association annual meeting.

In response to questions about the procedure for planning official Association events, the board agreed on a coordination process. Key contact people are:

- > Jonnie Lefebure, Program Committee Chair
- > Tiffany Ahalt and Bill Holdsworth for social media and website publicity.
- > Steven Dean, *Along the Towpath* editor, for inclusion in the appropriate issue.

Further details about event coordination are provided on the following page of this issue.

The C&O Canal NHP recently terminated their partnership with the Georgetown Heritage over a disagreement in how to proceed with improvements in the 31st Street NW area of the canal. The board agreed to support a general meeting of all park partners and park management.

The next board meeting is Sunday, June 2, 2024, in Williamsport, Md.

Board and Annual Meeting Note –

The C&O Canal Association Board meets six times a year at various locations or on-line. Refer to the calendar in *Along the Towpath* or on-line for dates and details. We will provide short summaries of the board meetings in future issues of *Along the Towpath*.

The Association Annual Meeting was held on March 23 as planned. During the meeting the two proposed bylaws amendments that were summarized in the December 2023 *Along the Towpath* were approved. One of the approved proposals was the **Reduction in Size of Board of Directors** amendment. This amendment reduces the overall size of the Board from 21 to 13, consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and nine Directors. The size reduction will take place as terms expire and as possible vacancies occur. No incumbents will be forced out of office. The quorum was reduced accordingly. The changes will go into effect as of the March 2025 Annual Meeting election.

The election of the Board was held during the meeting and the slate of candidates summarized in the December 2023 *Along the Towpath* was elected. The current board, with any resignations, is shown on the contact list of Page 23 of this issue.

Consider Leading an Association Event

By Bill Holdsworth

If you are willing to lead an Association event, that's great news! Hikes, bicycle rides, nature walks, and paddle trips promote appreciation of the C&O Canal and the Potomac River valley. Here are the steps required.

- > Obtain approval of the event and date from the appropriate committee chair(s). All events need approval from the Program Committee chair, Jonnie Lefebure. If the event is a Nature Walk, clear it with the Nature Committee chair, Paul Petkus.
- > Provide event information to the people who manage Association communication channels: Tiffany Ahalt (social media), Bill Holdsworth (website calendar and broadcast emails), and Steven Dean (*Along the Towpath* quarterly newsletter production).
- > Be aware of the newsletter schedule. The newsletter producer needs to be informed of event content by the following dates:
 - » February 1 for the March issue
 - » May 1 for the June issue
 - » August 1 for the September issue
 - » November 1 for the December issue
- > Include the basic information: date, time, place and contact information. This will be used for the calendar in *Along the Towpath* and on the website. An example entry is:

Dragonfly walk, 9 a.m., Oldtown. Contact Steven Dean, editor@candocanal.org for further information.
- > Provide descriptive information to interest potential participants. This content may be used for supplemental articles in *Along the Towpath*, for a press release, or for announcements on the Association website and on social media. An example is:

Join Steven Dean in Oldtown, Md. for an odonate walk to observe dragonflies and damselflies at on June 22 at 9:00 a.m. Oldtown, with its watered section of canal prism, is

known for a plentiful and diverse range of odonates. The walk will take approximately two hours. Bring water and good walking shoes. A field guide (Stokes – Beginners Guide to Dragonflies is a good basic reference) and field glasses are optional. Photography is encouraged! The meeting point is at the Lock 70 parking area and the walk will proceed downstream. Contact Steven Dean at editor@candocanal.org for further information.

- > Supply digital imagery for possible use in communications. Images could be of previous events, the area where the event will be held or of the flora or fauna subject of the nature walk.
- > On the day of the event, remember to have participants sign liability waivers. You can find them at the bottom of the events/calendar page of the website. A short form is required for most hikes, and a longer form is required for some hikes and other activities such as bicycling and canoeing.

Please consider leading an Association event in the future! We look forward to hearing from you.

Reference links:

C&O Canal Association Calendar:
candocanal.org/calendar/



Liability Waiver – short form:



Liability Waiver – long form:



Pedal, Paddle and Hike

By Trent Carbaugh

How to Save Water and Fix a Broken Canal *Or* The Perils of Geology

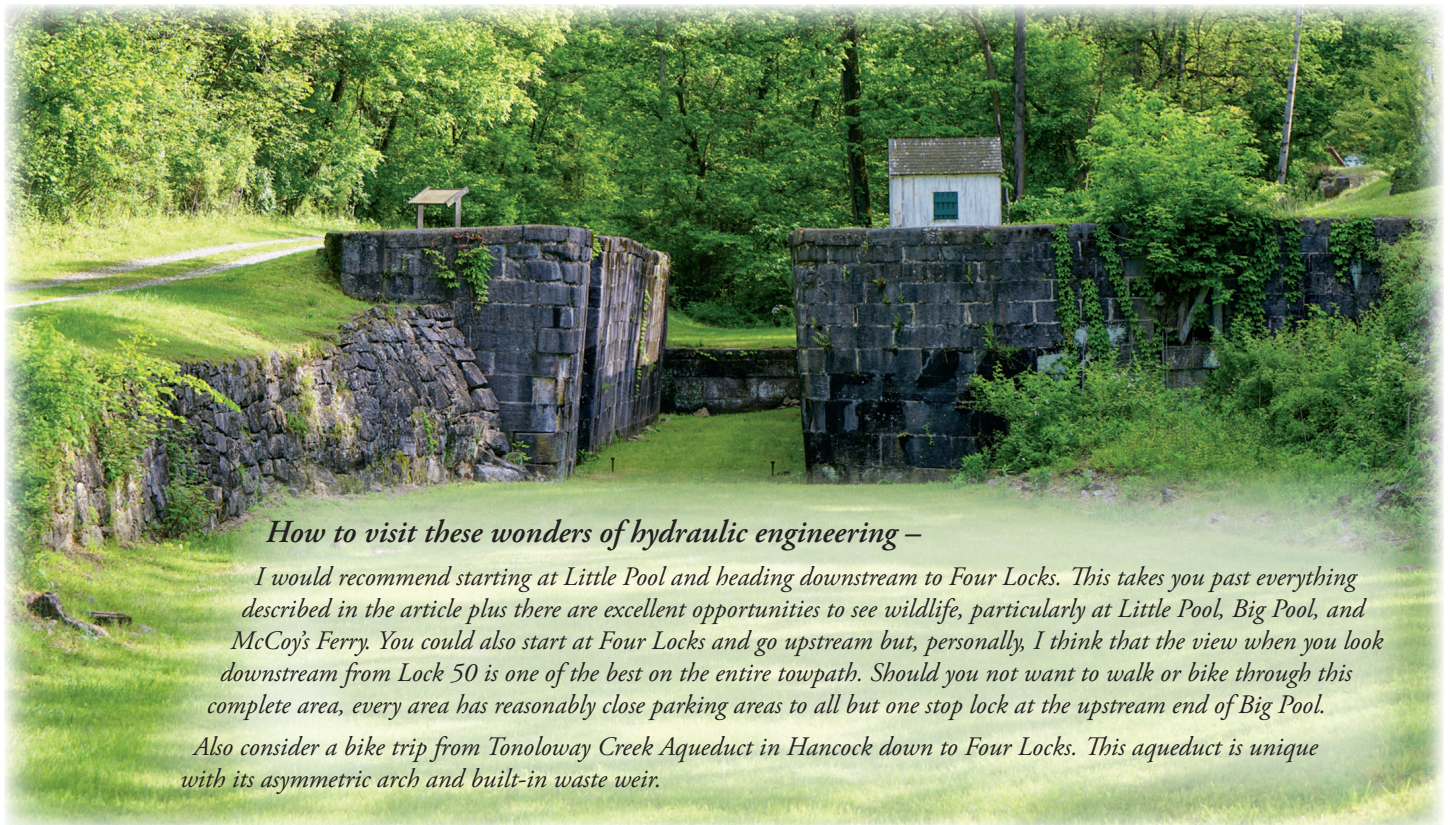
In days of yore our ancestors believed movements of the earth were caused by dragons, dwarfs, or other subterranean creatures either with nefarious intent or by pure accident. In our somewhat more enlightened time, we know that nature's universal solvent, water, is the most likely culprit, at least in a localized context. When we get to the global scale, earth movement is most often caused by tectonic plate movement or volcanic activity. As this massive and long-term process involves fire, dragons *may* possibly be involved. We can only hope.

Dragons aside, we shall concern ourselves with the process that the engineers and builders of the C&O Canal devised to make it easier to both save water and make repairs. The Potomac River watershed has diverse geology that caused problems for the engineers and workers who built the C&O Canal. Materials were for the most part sourced locally in

many areas that had excellent stone for building, while other localities did not have the quality of stone that was needed. This caused some very creative thinking and improvisation at times along with improved repairs as time went on. But this diverse geology had other implications as we shall see below.

Canals need water to operate and they are kind of pointless if you can't manage water in a consistent way. From Cumberland to Georgetown the Potomac River drops a significant amount, and for canals to work they must be as level as possible. With 74 lift locks the C&O drops 605 feet. It is an incredible feat of engineering that not only did the canal work, it worked very well. The system of stop locks, lift locks, flood gates, etc. allowed not only mechanisms for normal operations but allowed improvisation during emergencies.

One of the best areas to see how this process worked is the section of the canal from Little Pool to Four Locks. This area has the reservoirs of Little Pool and Big Pool that held water after the canal's winter draining and sped up the spring refilling. Unfortunately, the local geology didn't cooperate at times. Just downstream of McCoy's Ferry the local underlying stone changes from hard sandstone to limestone. Limestone is a fine building stone. It cuts into blocks well and is dimensionally stable. This is why so many canal structures were



How to visit these wonders of hydraulic engineering –

I would recommend starting at Little Pool and heading downstream to Four Locks. This takes you past everything described in the article plus there are excellent opportunities to see wildlife, particularly at Little Pool, Big Pool, and McCoy's Ferry. You could also start at Four Locks and go upstream but, personally, I think that the view when you look downstream from Lock 50 is one of the best on the entire towpath. Should you not want to walk or bike through this complete area, every area has reasonably close parking areas to all but one stop lock at the upstream end of Big Pool.

Also consider a bike trip from Tonoloway Creek Aqueduct in Hancock down to Four Locks. This aqueduct is unique with its asymmetric arch and built-in waste weir.

built using it. A problem with limestone is that it is prone to damage, or more precisely, modification from water. This is why we have caves and caverns along parts of the Potomac River.

What this meant for the canal, in some spots, is that sinkholes can form when the underlying limestone structure collapses due to voids caused by underground water flow. This was very bad if it happened in the canal prism. A large sink hole exists in the prism just down from the stop lock at McCoys Ferry.

In order to facilitate ease of repair and interrupt canal traffic as little as possible, some mechanism was needed

to isolate smaller sections of the canal in some areas. Stop locks were used to “stop” water movement in the canal prism. Many of these locks were used for water management during the yearly winterization of the canal. But other times it was necessary to block off a section of the canal for repairs, such as at McCoys Ferry. A large sinkhole in the canal prism would be like pulling the plug on a full bathtub; the water would disappear quickly. The stop lock would have been closed along with the upstream gate of Lock 50, the uppermost lock at Four Locks, and the waste weir just above Lock 50 would have been opened to drain this section of the canal in order to do needed repairs.



Stop gate at McCoy's Ferry – All photos by Trent Carbaugh



Stop gate at the western end of Big Pool

Many stop locks on the C&O Canal were closed with plank “gates” where heavy boards were slid into slots built into either side of the lock walls. These boards were probably quite wide and judging by the width of the slots at least 2½ to 2¾ inches thick. Most likely some sort of portable winch system was used to place and remove the boards though I could not locate any information on this. Plank gates were probably preferred as they weren’t used very often and wouldn’t require the regular maintenance that normal miter or drop gates required.

Two unique features in this section of the canal were Big Pool and Little Pool. These man-made lakes served as water reservoirs for a large portion of the canal and could be closed off during the winter. Big Pool had a stop lock with a drop gate and presumably the machinery to open and close it. This stop lock also has slots for a plank gate which may be an addition as it is from a later 19th century concrete repair to the lock chamber. A double lock may also have been prudent as Big Pool was left full over the winter and froze to a thickness



A view of the Big Pool western stop gate plank slot



Plank slot in a stop gate



Stop gate at east end of Big Pool. There was a drop gate here as well as the mounting foundations for a swing bridge. The swing bridge remains are at the west end of the gate.

that could have been problematic for the lock gates due to the pressure from expanding ice.

At the far upstream end of Big Pool there is another stop lock of more conventional construction with slots for plank gates. Unfortunately, this stop lock is not in great shape and shows extensive historic repairs.

At the downstream end of Little Pool there is a stop lock, almost exactly like the one at McCoy's Ferry, that has slots for a plank gate. This stop lock is built a little downstream from the end of Little Pool quite likely again as protection from ice expansion. Little Pool is substantially smaller as well as shallower than Big Pool.

It's easy to get onto the towpath on foot or on a bike and not notice some of the infrastructure that made the canal work. Granted, often the wonderfully riotous efforts of nature obscure some of the works of man, but to me that just makes it more interesting to look for them. You never know what you might find.

References:

Historic Resource Study, Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, Harlan Unrau, 2018

Towpath Guide to the C&O Canal, Thomas F. Hahn, 2015 revised edition.

Geology of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park and Potomac River Corridor, District of Columbia, Maryland, West Virginia, and Virginia, 2008, USGS Professional Paper 1691, S. Southworth, D. Brezinski, R. Orndorff, J. Repetski, and D. Denenny.



Sinkhole in the canal prism close to McCoy's Ferry



Butterfly gates in the waste weir above Lock 50 at Four Locks



Waste weir above Lock 50 at Four Locks

Animals You Can See on the Canal

By Trent Carbaugh

Snapping Turtles (*Chelydra serpentina*)



Many folks consider the snapping turtle an ugly creature with a foul disposition. I think they are rather beautiful in a prehistoric way, though you can't argue the fact that they can have a bad attitude.

On average an adult snapper has a shell length of about 12 inches and can weigh as much as 35 pounds. They have a large head in proportion to their body with a fearsome beak-like mouth. Captive snappers can get much bigger, over 80 pounds. I have seen them in the wild pushing at least 50 pounds if not more. The carapace, the top of the shell, is quite distinctive with three prominent longitudinal ridges that become less protruding with age. The plastron, the bottom of the shell, is relatively small and you can see more of the legs than in other turtle species. The shell can be black to light brown with a cow horn-like translucent look to it. The legs are very sturdy with quite long claws on the toes. A snapper's tail is almost as long as its carapace and has a serrated ridge down the dorsal surface. Overall, this critter looks like it could eat small dinosaurs.

Regarding eating – snappers are voracious omnivores. They eat small aquatic invertebrates, fish, reptiles, birds, mammals, carrion, a fair bit of vegetation and rabbits. Anything that fits in their mouth or can be torn apart by their jaws is sustenance to a snapping turtle. It is best to not get any of your appendages close to a snapper's mouth.

The range of snappers is from southern Canada to the Gulf of Mexico from north to south and from the Atlantic seaboard to the Rocky Mountains east to west. Locally they can be found in the Potomac River and all its tributaries, filled portions of the canal, ponds, and surprisingly, in small mountain trout streams. You can also see them at times walking on the towpath. Whether they do this to get to new waters or just for exercise remains to be ascertained.

Reference:

A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Eastern/Central North America, Peterson Field Guide Series, Roger Conant, 1975



Baby snapper on towpath - Photos by Trent Carbaugh



Snapper head detail

2024 Spring Bird Walk

By Kurt Schwartz

The C&O Canal Association Spring Bird Walk occurred at Rileys Lock on April 27. The weather was 50 to 54 degrees with light wind from the southeast and overcast with intermittent light rain. The parking area at Riley's was very full due a nearby rowing event.

The species total was 21, and numbers in general were low. The river held little of interest, except for 20 double-crested cormorants and two great egrets flying upstream. Great crested flycatchers were vocal, but none were spotted. Prior to the start of the walk, two eastern kingbirds had a noisy tussle in the parking lot area. We got eyes on a few blue-gray gnatcatchers. The only thrush was a single eastern bluebird.

Four warbler species were recorded. We had one Louisiana waterthrush come in for a recording, but it failed to perch for a good look. It did sing loudly for us. A northern waterthrush sang once and was silent and invisible thereafter. Northern parulas were singing along the towpath but were invisible. Finally, yellow-rumped "Myrtle" warblers were abundant and vocal, and we even glimpsed one or two.

We hope we will see more species during fall migration. The next C&O Canal Association Bird Walk will be September 14 at Sycamore Landing. We will seek warblers, thrushes, and maybe some early sparrows.

2024 Odonate Walks

The C&O Canal NHP has one of the most diverse dragonfly and damselfly populations of any national park. The canal in Oldtown has an especially large population of odonates and Dickerson is another active area.

Participants will observe dragonfly and damselfly mating and egg laying and also observe how dragonflies cope with the heat on warm days.

Join Steven Dean in Oldtown at 9:00 a.m. on June 22, or in Dickerson at 9:00 a.m. on July 20. The walks will be up to two miles. Bring water and walking shoes; photography is encouraged. Stokes Beginners Guide to Dragonflies is a good reference. Refer to the calendar on Page 22 for further information.



Oldtown Directions
Meet at Lock 70



Dickerson Directions
Meet at Dickerson
Conservation Park

C&O Canal Towpath Closures

By Steven Dean, from NPS Press Releases

The C&O Canal National Historical Park recently announced two towpath closures. One is for a planned rehabilitation project and the other is for an emergent structural safety issue. For both closures effective detours are available.

As noted on the contact page of this newsletter, always visit the C&O Canal NHP website **Plan Your Visit** page for the most up-to-date information if you are concerned about possible park issues or closures. This is preferable to contacting the Association or volunteer program leads, since the park provides the most accurate information. Also remember that project schedules are subject to delay from a number of factors, including weather, budget limitations or unforeseen technical issues.



www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/conditions.htm

Dam 5 Parking Lot Closure and Towpath Detour

Project Background:

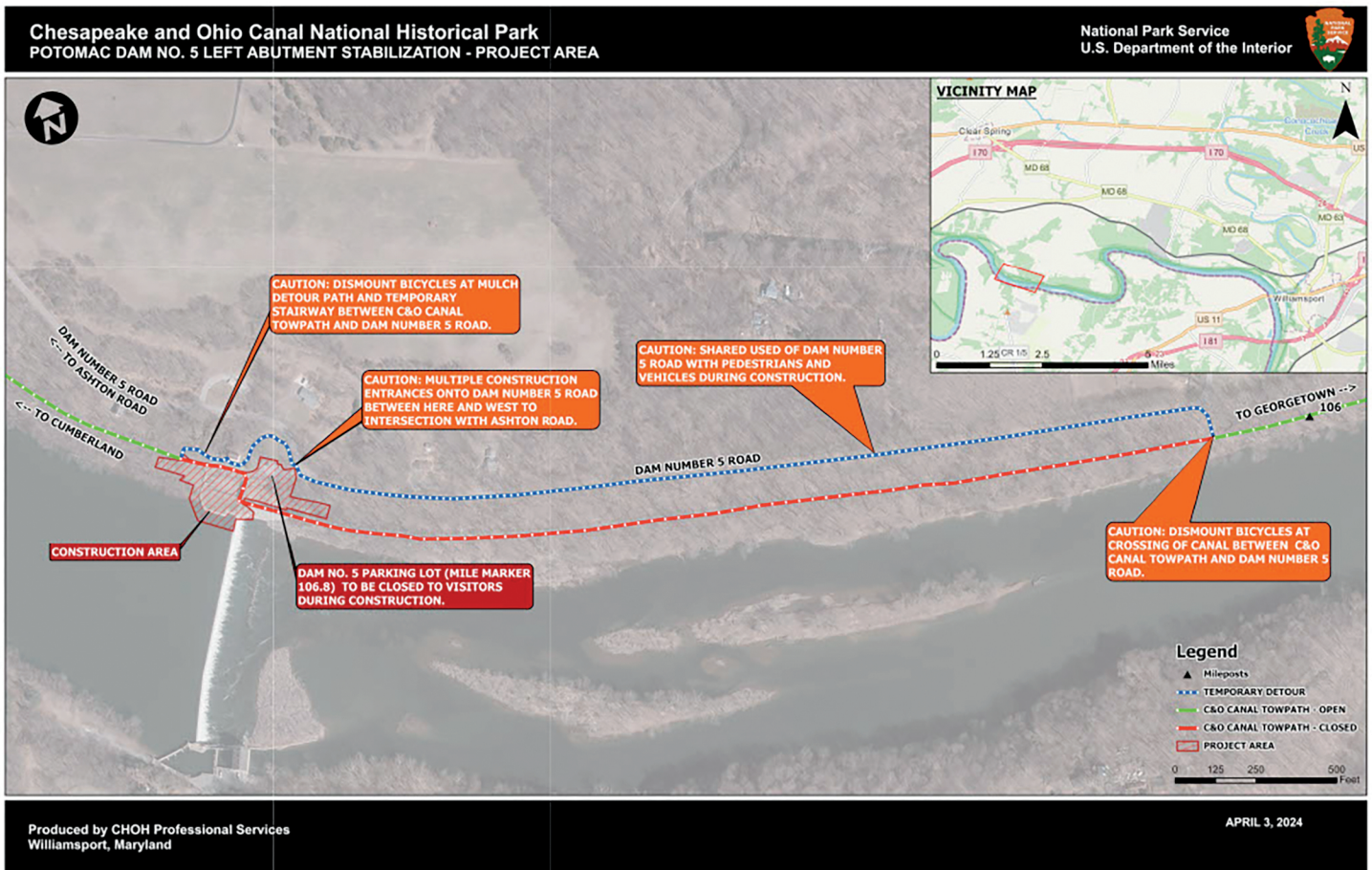
Historical Significance: Potomac Dam No. 5, built between 1857 to 1870, is made of mortared limestone blocks. It ties the run-of-the-river spillway to bedrock on the Maryland shore and includes a guard lock system that was used for boat access during the canal's operational period.

Objective: Stabilize the historic stone dam abutment to improve safety and reduce impacts of high-water events on the towpath, historic features, and visitors.

Outcome: Increased resilience of the park to flooding and climate-related hazards.

Effective Dates: Week of May 20, 2024, through Fall 2025 (weather dependent).

Affected Area: Towpath Miles 106 through 106.8, including the parking lot at Dam 5.



Reason: Rehabilitation of the left abutment of the historic Potomac Dam No. 5.

Detour Details:

- Start Point: Mile 106
- End Point: Mile 106.8
- Route:
 - Detour from the towpath across the canal to Dam No. 5 Road
 - Follow the shoulder of Dam No. 5 Road on a temporary mulch trail



Dam 5 left abutment - All images courtesy of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, National Park Service

- Use a temporary wooden stairway to rejoin the towpath upstream of the project

Instructions for Visitors:

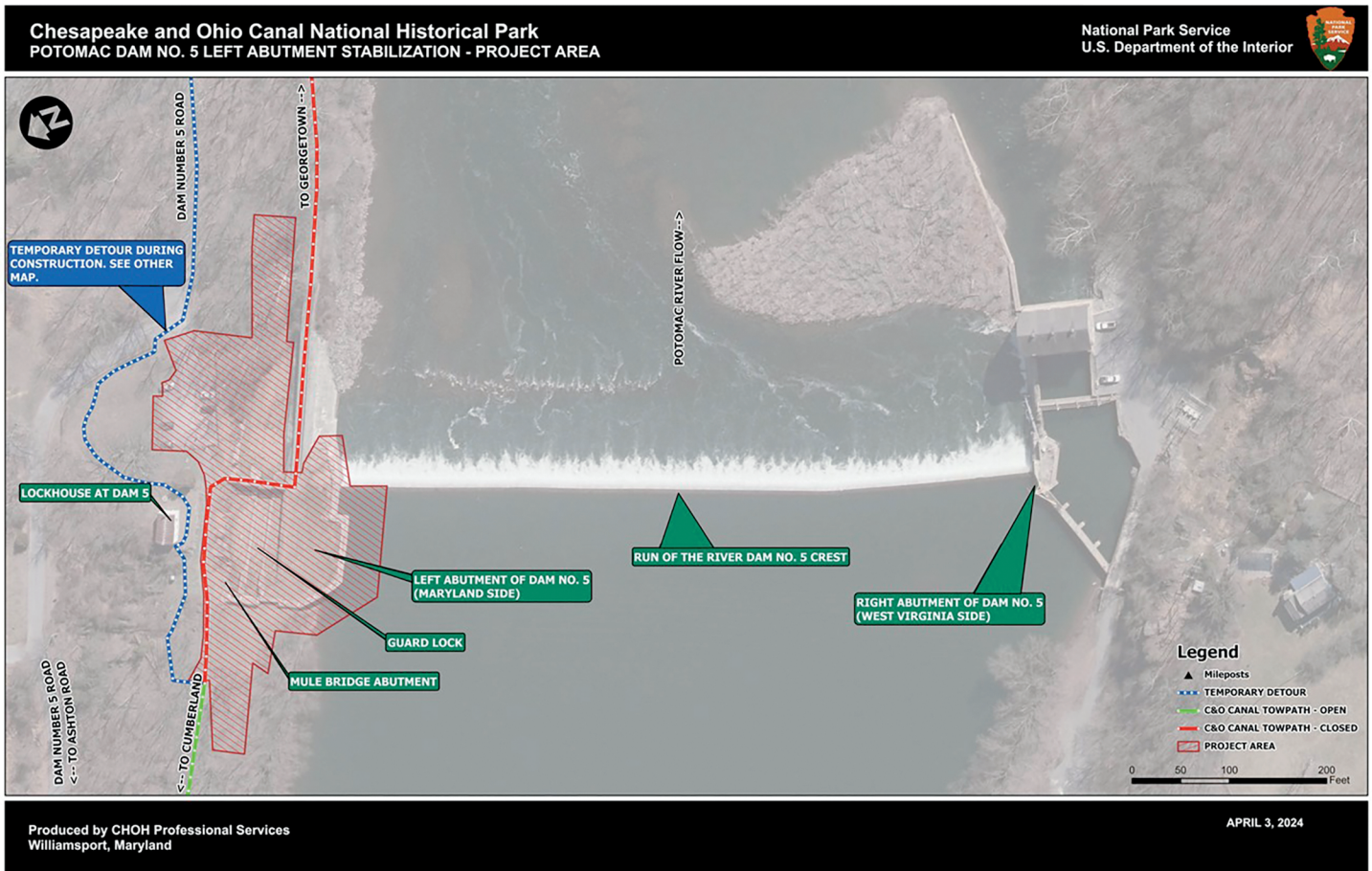
- Follow posted signage
- Dismount bicycles while crossing the canal, and use the mulch trail and the wooden stairway

Parking Information:

- Dam 5 parking lot closed
- Nearest Upstream Parking: Four Locks (Mile 108.8)



Dam 5 left abutment detail



- Nearest Downstream Parking: Williamsport (Mile 99.7)

The National Park Service appreciates your cooperation and understanding as they work to preserve and enhance the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. For more information, please follow the park's updates and notifications.

The construction contract for these repairs was awarded for \$6.7 million and was funded from the National Park Service's Great American Outdoor Act Legacy Restoration Fund. Visitors can learn more about the stabilization of a historic stone dam abutment and associated components on the C&O Canal NHP website at www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/potomac-dam-5.htm.



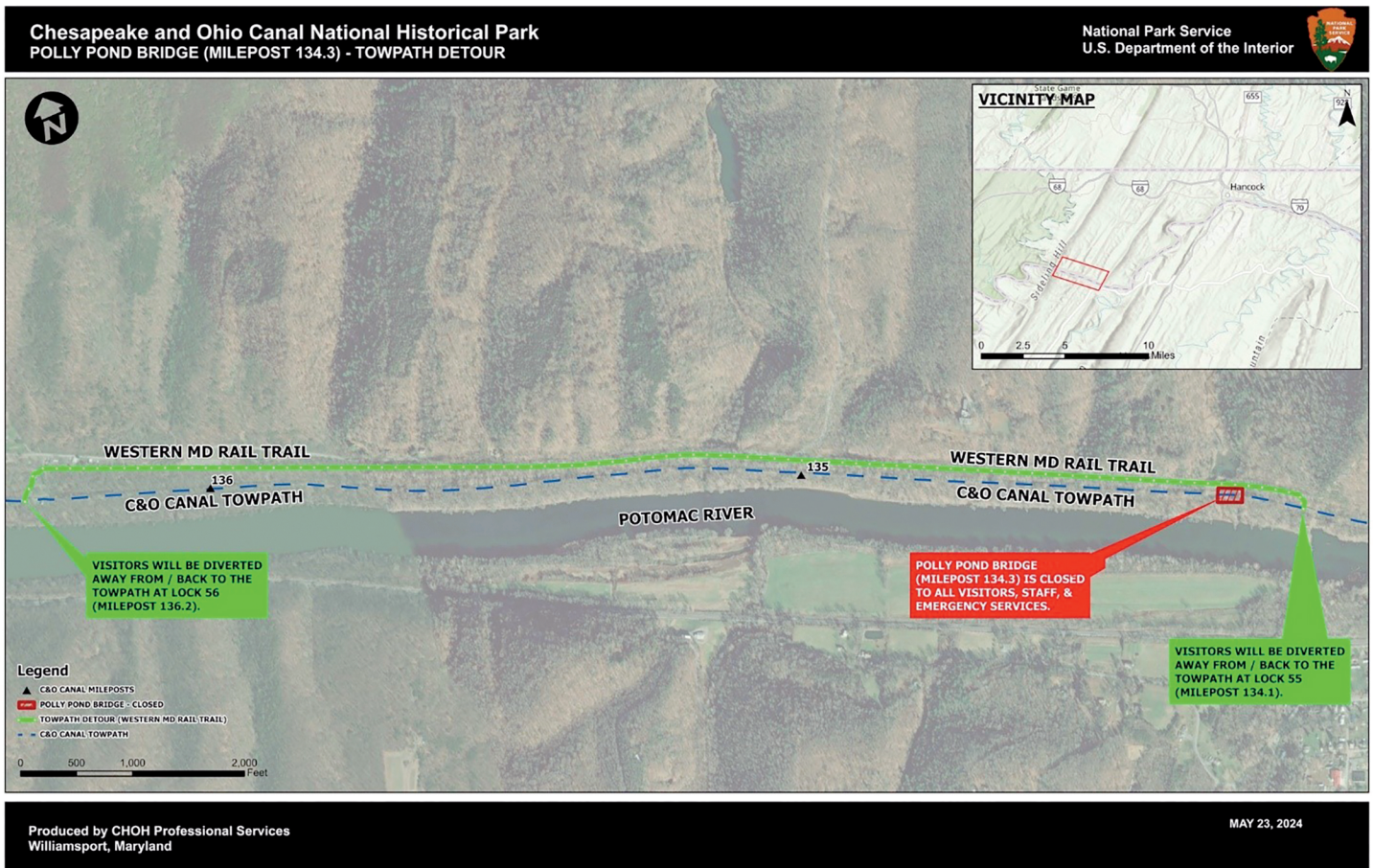
Polly Pond Bridge Closed

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park has closed the Polly Pond Bridge at Mile 134.3 because engineers found damage to its foundation, piers, and structure due to erosion. This bridge crosses Polly Pond Creek.

While the bridge is closed, visitors can follow a detour marked with signs. This detour leads to the Western Maryland Rail Trail, which runs alongside the towpath. The detour leaves the towpath at Lock 56 (Mile 136.2) by using the causeway across the canal. The detour is routed about two miles along the Western Maryland Rail Trail until returning to the canal with the bridge over Lock 55 (Mile 134.1).



Polly Pond towpath bridge structure damage



2024 Douglas Memorial Hike Dinner

By Bill Holdworth

John Frye's stories provided attendees with a connection to Justice William O. Douglas at the Association's annual Douglas Hike banquet April 27 at the War Memorial Building in Shepherdstown, W.Va.

In 1954 Justice Douglas mobilized public support for preserving the C&O Canal by hiking the full length with editors of the Washington Post and others. The Association traces its origin to that hike. This year's morning hike and banquet celebrated the 80th anniversary of that event.

In the following years Justice Douglas participated in reunion hikes. Those early reunion hikes were invitation-only events, unlike today's hikes. In 1958 a teen-aged John Frye was lucky enough to receive an invitation to join this elite group as they hiked upstream from Williamsport. Uncharacteristically for Justice Douglas, hikers paused long enough to nominate and approve John for membership in the Association.

John recalled how those early reunion hikes attracted political figures. John spoke about hiking with Senator Paul Douglas

(no relation) of Illinois and children of Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. The 1961 hike included Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall.

John was a part of a reunion hike group that was ejected from the Old Anglers Inn. The manager didn't appreciate this group's muddy boots after a day of hiking on the canal.



*John Frye speaks to attendees of the Douglas Dinner —
Above photo by Chris Holdsworth, below photo by Bill Holdsworth*



John's interest in the canal has continued throughout his life. In 1983 he retired after a career with Washington County. After that he became a seasonal ranger in C&O Canal National Historical Park, serving until 1998.

John volunteered at the Washington County Free Library for 50 years, serving as curator of the Western Maryland Room. That room is now named for him. He helped assemble the William O. Douglas collection of canal artifacts.

John's talk was recorded by Antietam Broadband. You can find a link to the video on the Canal History page of the C&O Canal Association website.

Program Note —

The butterfly walk that was originally scheduled for June 29 at Carderock is postponed. It will be rescheduled at a later date. Check the Association website for updates on the revised date for this event.

On the Level

By Steven Dean

February to April 2024 Level Walker Activity

This report covers level walker activity for February through April. Earlier reports are included in some cases. Any reports for activity performed on May 1 or later will be in the September 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.

Recent level walker findings are typical for winter and early spring. Level walkers observed conditions on 25 of the 69 levels and noted wildflower growth, especially Virginia bluebells, throughout the park. Various projects are underway, including access bridges and the towpath bridge over the site of the collapsed Culvert 82. Projects and responses to weather events and emergent conditions from weather or structural issues can affect towpath travel. Park visitors, whether for recreational or volunteer purposes, should always check the Plan Your Visit link (provided on page 23).

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/.

Level 2 Incline Plane to Lock 5: Kamile Kay reports February through April: I went on multiple walks each month. There was not too much trash in February and March. The towpath was in good condition, with some puddling after rains. The previously reported graffiti on the Custis Trail pedestrian bridge by Arizona Ave was gone in March but was returned later.

Level 3 Lock 5 to Cabin John Creek: Allyson Miller reports Nov. 3, 7 and 12; Jan. 12; and March 8: In November overall conditions were generally good, but it was noted that towpath surface continued to erode due to heavy general usage and from trucks, showing large rocks under dirt surface. There was an ongoing problem with lots of trash left at Lock 7, especially with people tossing dog waste bags off the path to the lock house. The two trash cans have helped somewhat. The Lock 6 house looked great. The bypass flume there could use a thorough weed clearing. The prism wall at Lock 6 is separating from the embankment. The park is aware of the issue and the area has been cordoned off. Water level varies depending on rain but is mostly found from Cabin John Bridge to Lock 7, and then resuming from a bit below Lock 7 all the way to Lock 6. Conditions were consistent during the January and March walks. I found three used syringes in the Lock 7 parking lot and was able to pick them up with the pickup stick and drop them in the trash can the NPS placed here (I used heavy duty rubber gloves and was at no risk.) I felt that was more expedient than contacting NPS to remove them, and safer for the many folks and dogs that frequent this area. This is the first time I've seen evidence of drug use in the park.

Level 4 Cabin John Creek to Lock 14: Allyson Miller reports Nov. 8 and 30, and Feb. 1: The prism stone wall at Lock 10 is separating from the embankment. There is no rope cordoning this area off. It is very close to the picnic table. Overgrowth was noted at Locks 12 and 14. There is some towpath puddling and rutting, primarily between Cabin John Bridge and Lock 9. The towpath could use resurfacing between Locks 7 and 9. The towpath between Locks 10 and 14 is in decent shape. I noted three ruts I had reported earlier (at Locks 11 and 12) had both been filled with gravel. **Larry Heflin reports February through April:** The towpath was monitored over numerous walks, through all conditions. No significant issues were reported during this period.

Level 7 Great Falls Tavern to Lock 21: Carol and Joe Hayes report April 19: On a drizzly, Friday, mid-day, the towpath was in beautiful condition. Pawpaw trees were flowering; blue phlox, mayapple and other spring flowers were in their glory; and the canal provided some necessary water for a duck and a great blue heron. The towpath was in good condition with no trash, and users were respectful. No concerns were noted.

Level 8 Lock 21 to Lock 22: Rinze and Sue Roosma report April 8: It was a nice spring afternoon on the trail. Many spring flowers to enjoy, such as Virginia bluebells, nodding stars of Bethlehem, phlox and trillium. Traffic on the trail was very light this afternoon. The repaving of the trail was complete, and the surface was in a much better state. At Lock 21 new upper lock gates were installed and the lock house had gotten a new roof. We were lucky enough to catch the solar

eclipse on the trail. We saw quite a few great blue herons, a bald eagle on its nest and snapping turtles. The whole level was watered for the first mile below Swains Lock the water level was still very low. Several bikes were noted that were riding at excessive speed.

Level 12 Sycamore Landing to Edwards Ferry: **Pat Hopson reports March 3 (with Frank Wodarczyk), April 14 (with Larry Broadwell, Carol Ivory, Margaret Neuse, Ron Wise, Frank Wodarczyk), and April 29 (with Larry Broadwell and Carol Ivory):** During the March visit, there was very little trash at Edwards Ferry, a little at the Goose Creek Locks and Chisel Branch hiker-biker camp, and virtually none along the towpath. The towpath was wet but in good shape. We removed lots of small branches along the towpath. The hole in the prism above Culvert 42 at Mile 29.8 continues to increase in size. The downstream walls of the Goose Creek River Locks are badly deteriorated, as noted before. There is water and vegetation and some trash in the prism of the locks. All the graffiti at the locks is still there, but none has been added. There were numerous bicyclists out, including a large group of e-bikers. The two April walks were for garlic mustard clean-ups in the Edwards Ferry area. We carried out the equivalent of 14 large trash bags of garlic mustard, plus two extra-large paper bags. Conditions in the area were comparable with the March walk. The Edwards Ferry access bridge repairs appeared to be complete, but it was not yet reopened.

Level 15 Whites Ferry to Lock 26: **Jon Wolz reports Feb. 20 and 26, March 8, and April 25:** During the first February walk there was water in the prism to Milepost 38 except at Quarry Run near the marble quarry. On February 26 there was water in the canal all the way to Milepost 38. Water was flowing through all culverts except Culvert 56. Bluebells were beginning to show in February. In March bluebells, spring beauties, blood root and Dutchman's breeches were blooming. Invasive plants were noted, including lesser celandine and garlic mustard. In April it was noted that different areas along the level had been recently mowed and looked great. The portable restrooms at the White's Ferry parking lot and the Marble Quarry campsite had been serviced and were in good condition after an interruption in contract service. The grills have been installed at the Whites Ferry pavilion. The grass had been mowed around the pavilion, the parking lot, the prism on both sides of Md. Rt. 107 and along the towpath for a stretch. The large field next to the pavilion had not been mowed. Potholes in the parking area at the Whites Ferry Pavilion needed filling. A large group was using the tables at the pavilion in April.

Level 16 Lock 26 to Monocacy Aqueduct: **Jon Wolz reports Feb. 27, March 8, and April 24:** In February the prism had water all the way to the Monocacy Basin, where there was some against the towpath. The leak above Milepost 41

continued to flow forcefully into the Potomac River. There was tree debris completely or partially blocking five of the arches of the Monocacy Aqueduct. Wood frogs were out from below the waste weir down to the basin. Several turtles were out on a couple of logs in the canal near Milepost 40 enjoying the mild weather. In March all the Monocacy Aqueduct arches were obstructed, except for the second arch where I watched a power boat go through. Garlic mustard was growing, and multi-floral rose bushes had green leaves. The prism leak continued to flow in March but was not flowing in April. At Lock 26 the maple tree continues to degrade. It is still standing, though it has severe rot. A limb that had been cut and was previously laying on the ground was gone. Bees were going in and out of openings on the tree. Grass had been mowed. Many turtles were noted in April. They were in the prism sunning themselves on top of logs. There was a very large snapping turtle camouflaged with green duckweed hiding just below the water surface with its nose and eyes peering above the water. The Monocacy Aqueduct cliff swallows have reappeared once again on the downstream side of the aqueduct. They retrieve mud with their beaks returning to build/repair their mud nests that line above the arches of the aqueduct. **Mike Ciancoisi reports March 30:** A walk was conducted to assess the four culverts on the level. Culvert 65 was unchanged from the 2023 visit, with a little less debris but nothing blocking the water flow. Culvert 66 also had no changes, with normal water flow. No significant issues were noted with Culverts 68 or 69, and they were consistent with the 2023 conditions.

Level 17 Monocacy Aqueduct to Nolands Ferry: **Earl Porter, with Ed Boddinger, reports Feb. 20:** The towpath was in good condition. The picnic table at the hiker-biker had a rotten center board. High amounts of trash were found on the level.

Level 19 Point of Rocks to Catoctin Aqueduct: **Stephen and Debby Jones report Feb. 20:** We walk this level once or twice a week. Trash is typically light to moderate. English ivy is heavy on many trees in the area and appears to be strangling them. The prism is typically lightly watered after rain and is full of brush in places. The towpath surface is good on the level. The access road to Lock 29 is very rutty. **Louis Robbins reports Feb. 27:** One of the support blocks on the Catoctin Aqueduct guide rails is rotting; otherwise, the aqueduct was in good condition. As always noted, it is a beautiful structure. There are sink holes over Culverts 78 and 79. Trash was light during this walk. Towpath condition was good. The Point of Rocks pivot bridge was in good condition. **Don Peterson and Karlen Keto report March 24:** It was a beautiful day. Wildflowers were in bloom, including bluebells, forsythia, Dutchmans breeches, spring beauties, dandelions, blue violets and mayapples. Garlic mustard was also present. Many walkers were out, as well as a few bikers. Trash was moderate.

Level 20 Catoctin Aqueduct to Lock 30: **Louis Robbins reports April 24:** It was a nice spring day with limited visitation since it was a weekday. A construction crew was installing the bridge at the Culvert 82 location. They were installing the new steel truss for the bridge. The work site was clean and clearly marked, and equipment was not blocking towpath. A sink hole over Culvert 83 is increasing in size. No changes were noted on the other culverts on the level. Blockage was noted on the upstream side of the Catoctin Aqueduct. **Bob Carpenter reports April 29:** While the restored Catoctin Aqueduct is typically the highlight of this level, the progress being made on the replacement footbridge over Little Catoctin Creek is most encouraging. The wood decking needs to be installed and ramps onto the bridge completed before it will be opened and thus replace the temporary low water crossing. Small sink holes are noted on the path over the waste weir at Mile 55.

Level 22 Lock 31 to Lock 33: **Karlen Keto reports April 4:** I encountered one group of courteous cyclists. There was no trash. The most enjoyable part of the walk is that I am just now aware of the many streams heading to the Potomac River. Recent rains made them very noticeable. Culverts are doing well. I took a side trail to the river through a massive bluebell field.

Level 23 Lock 33 to Dam 3: **Arthur Tsien reports April 4:** After three days of being cooped up because of rain, it was time for some outdoor activity, so I made my first visit of 2024 to this level. The river was quite high. It was a seasonal, partly sunny early spring day. The trees were in varying stages of leafing. I saw three white ducks in the river near Lock 34. I've seen lots of white ducks in parks, but not in the Potomac away from an urban area. I had my usual positive experience walking the towpath. The level is in good condition. I did not see any significant 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 reconstruction of the wall to hold up Harper's Ferry Road is done and some clean-up work in the canal itself was in progress.

Level 26 Lock 37 to Antietam Aqueduct: **Larry Cohen reports April 13:** Excellent work by the NPS on grading and filling the approach to the river from the Mt. Lock parking area was noted. A local citizens group, not part of the Level Walker program, was conducting a concurrent clean-up in the area.

Level 27 Antietam Aqueduct to Lock 38: **Jonnie and Joycie Lefebure report Feb. 1:** It was a very pleasant first day of February. The river was high and muddy. Not surprisingly, there were no boaters on the river. The Antietam Creek water was clear. The aqueduct was in good shape and trees that were growing out of the riverside spandrels and wingwalls have been cut away. The new towpath surface was in excellent condition. We saw robins, some sparrows and geese in the

river, and we heard pileated woodpeckers and a barred owl. **Ben, Jennifer, Zoe and Holly Helwig, with canine friend Lizzy, report March 16:** Towpath conditions were good. The Antietam campground looked good and there were numerous campers. There were two ties in the canal prism at Packhorse Ford. Blooming flowers included bloodroot, bluebells and Dutchmans breeches.

Levels 28 and 29 Lock 38 to Snyders Landing: **Brigitta Shroyer and Joel Anderson report March 30:** It was a lovely partly sunny day. We saw several families with small children walking the towpath and two boats with fisherpersons. We met an interesting cyclist who commented on us picking up trash. Most trash was found in the Snyders Landing area. The towpath was in very good condition. We passed a large group of cyclists who appeared to be bikepacking. The lock on the bathroom door at Snyders Landing was not working, which is a safety concern.

Level 30 Snyders Landing to Lock 40: **Charles Connolly reports April 7:** It was a beautiful sunny day! The river was high and had exceeded its banks the day before after heavy rain during the week. Almost the entire level was watered. Excellent. The new towpath surface really held up from the rain and one would not know that it even rained. Extensive towpath usage including runners, walkers, bikers, and even a motorized unicycle! I saw a snapping turtle, pileated woodpeckers and white breasted nuthatches. Wildflowers were amazing! Bluebells and stars of Bethlehem were at peak. Very impressive. I even saw white bluebells. There was almost no trash at all, even in the parking lot and restroom.

Level 34 McMahons Mill to Opequon Junction: **Trent Carbaugh reports April 3:** It was a sunny day with nice fluffy clouds. There was very little trash and most was from the hiker-biker camp. The towpath was in good shape, with a few puddles. Considering the amount of rain in the previous week it was not bad. I trimmed back quite a bit of multi-flora rose in places. The McMahons Mill area looked good. Lock 41 had lots of water in the lock and no visible degradation of the structure from the last visit. There was more water in Lock 42 than usual but otherwise it was the same as last visit. Culvert 118 1/2 was in good shape on both sides and some debris that was previously on the berm side had washed away.

Level 41 Dam 5 to Four Locks: **Mike Anderson reports March 4:** It was my first level walk of 2024. It was a pleasant sunny day for a quiet walk on this level. The towpath in good condition was exceptionally clean. There was quite a bit of river-borne trash in Lock 45, including a large plastic barrel and a beach ball. A dead deer was encountered that apparently fell off the above cliff. It was reported to the NPS.

Level 44 Fort Frederick to Ernstville: **Jim Biasco reports March 16:** Generally, the towpath is in good condition, although it is still the older surface. Some roots are starting to

protrude more from the towpath surface. There was no trash worth mentioning, just a few small items. The signs on the post at the Ernstville access are both missing. The post is still there. There were some geese and ducks on Big Pool but otherwise it was very quiet.

Level 47 Little Pool Hancock: Michael and Judi Bucci report April 15: The towpath and canal were in great shape, and the canal was wetter than usual. It was difficult getting by a tree blowdown just below the Little Pool hiker-biker camp. We used our handsaw to trim enough branches. Just as we finished, a single biker came through. She stopped to say thank you and told us she was not a biker but was riding her dad's bike from Pittsburgh to Washington. He had died over the past winter. She was looking forward to a shower in Williamsport. Moments like this amplify the joy of the C&O Canal! Bluebells were abundant, as was garlic mustard and the other usual spring wildflowers were out. Three trees were blocking the towpath above Little Pool. Just as I was about to call them in, a park maintenance truck came to the rescue and removed the blowdowns.

Level 49 Round Top Cement Mill to Lock 53: Paul Petkus reports March 24: It was a sunny and pleasant day, overall. Most of the park visitors were seen in the late afternoon after it warmed up. It rained during the previous day, but the towpath was in good condition. It was mostly dry. Only a couple puddles or slightly muddy sections were found. Spring wildflowers were emerging. No change was detected in any of the structures along the level. Daffodils, coltsfoot and spring beauty were at peak bloom, but others are in various stages of emergence. Birds were active. Turtles and newts were present. Nothing concerning was observed during this outing. The towpath is scheduled to be resurfaced along this level in 2025. Overall, the surface of the towpath was in good condition. Only a couple of puddles and some slightly muddy areas were evidence of the precipitation that fell the previous day. Some light rutting was visible in a couple of places. Plants in bloom included spicebush, Virginia bluebells, spring beauty, Dutchmans breeches, squirrel corn, coltsfoot, dandelion, purple deadnettle, cutleaf toothwort, bloodroot, speedwell, daffodils and violets. Coltsfoot only bloomed at the cement mill. Daffodils were located upstream from the cement mill where they always bloom every year. As usual, Virginia bluebells carpeted an area approximately between Mile 128.2 and 128.4. Some birds foraged on the towpath. Others darted between the brush and trees. Birds seen and heard included red-winged blackbirds, cardinals, crows, wood ducks, mourning doves, pileated woodpeckers, red-bellied woodpeckers, black-capped or Carolina chickadees, dark-eyed juncos, flycatchers and sparrows.

Level 54 Lock 59 to Lock 60: Paul Petkus reports March 16: It was a nice day for an outing. Despite that, park visitation was light in the area. The towpath was in good condition

overall. Only a few small puddles and muddy sections were present. The wall of the bypass flume of Lock 59 lost a stone. All other structures were unchanged. The prism held water for the length of the level. It was a great environment for reptiles and amphibians. Wildflowers and butterflies were emerging as spring approached. Nothing was noted that required immediate attention. The towpath was in good condition in most of the level. The patched areas are still looking good. A few small puddles existed in places. Some of the small muddy areas showed some tracks. I moved the branches deposited onto the towpath from winter storms off to the side. No obstructions were present. It appears that maintenance cleared a tree that straddled the towpath between Milepost 148 and Culvert 207. Water was in the prism for the entire length of the level. Turtles were plentiful in the prism for most of Level 54 except for in Mile 149. They were even present in the neon green water in one small area of the prism in Mile 148. Many of the turtles basked on exposed objects in the prism. Upon detection of my presence, they typically cascaded into the water. Fish swam in the canal in Mile 147. Salamander larvae were active in the prism between Lock 59 and Culvert 206. Egg masses from wood frogs and spotted salamanders were also in that area.

Level 58 Lock 63 1/3 to Tunnel Parking Area: Arthur Tsien reports March 14: This was my first walk of this level in 2024 and was part of my effort to revisit all 11 canal aqueducts, which I finished during this visit. This walk was a "tag on" to a visit to Evitts Creek and Town Creek Aqueducts. I was pleased to see that there were no lingering signs of recent construction in the parking lot or along the towpath. The plywood "plug" was still in place at the upstream end of the tunnel. At the downstream end, there was a scenic seasonal waterfall coming down the rocks. It was a lovely early spring day, and I had a pleasant outing, as with almost all my canal-related outings. As previously reported, the un-resurfaced towpath is generally in good condition for foot or bike travel. There was a fair amount of mud between the end of the new boardwalk that extends from the downstream tunnel portal and the junction of the towpath and the Tunnel Hill Trail. One spot would benefit from a small wooden bridge, which the NPS has installed in several other spots in this stretch. Elsewhere, there was some rutting, tire grooves and minor puddles but nothing that struck me as particularly bad. As previously reported, the superintendent's house upstream from the tunnel needs substantial repair to address longstanding neglect. But nothing indicates to me that immediate attention is needed to prevent collapse, etc. I did not notice any new concerns.

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

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
June 22, Sat., Nature Walk – Dragonflies and Damselflies , 9:00 a.m. at Oldtown Contact: Steven Dean – editor@candocanal.org.
June 24 – 26, Mon. – Thu., World Canals Conference Bydgoszcz, Poland. Further Info: wcc2024bydgoszcz.pl
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.
July 20, Sat., Nature Walk – Dragonflies and Damselflies , 9:00 a.m. at Dickerson Contact: Steven Dean – editor@candocanal.org.
Aug. 4 Sun., Board Meeting , 1:00 p.m. via Zoom Check calendar at www.candocanal.org for details or changes.

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.
Sept. 14, Sat. Nature Walk – Birds , 8:00 a.m. at Sycamore Landing Contact: Kurt Schwarz – krschwa1@verizon.net or 443-538-2370
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
Oct. 6, Sun., Board Meeting , 1:00 p.m. at Williamsport Check calendar at www.candocanal.org for details.
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.
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.
Nov. 24, 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
Dec. 1, Sun. Board Meeting , 1:00 p.m. Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave.

Additional details about events will be included in the *Along the Towpath* issue before the event.
Contact programs@candocanal.org for questions.

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 NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
C&O Canal National Historical Park Headquarters
 142 W. Potomac St., Williamsport, Md. 21795
 C&O Canal NHP Contact Information
 choh_information@nps.gov or 301-739-4200

SuperintendentTina Cappetta
 Deputy Superintendent Ben Helwig (Acting)
 Superintendent’s Assistant Erin Cowan
 Chief Ranger Ed Wenschhof
 Chief of Business ManagementBen Helwig
 Chief of Resource ManagementAndrew Landsman
 Chief of Maintenance Jim Yelton
 Chief of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers....Christiana Hanson
 Chief of Professional Services Joseph Reed
 Partnerships Coordinator Anthony Bates
 Volunteer Program ManagerEmily Tyner-Hewitt
 Cultural Resources Manager and HistorianJustin Ebersole
 Safety Officer John Adams
 Supervisory Park Ranger (Law Enforcement) Joshua Cunningham

Palisades District

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

Interpretive SupervisorNicolette Talley
 Supervisory Recreation Fee Specialist Evan Costanza
 Georgetown Partnerships Coordinator Shaun Lehmann

Western Maryland District

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

Interpretive Supervisor Joshua Nolen

Visiting the Park

The C&O Canal NHP is open 365 days a year, but may be closed entirely or in sections 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.

Check park status before visiting.

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 information phone number is 301-739-4200.



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

REPORT SAFETY HAZARDS OR TOWPATH ISSUES:

HAZARDS CHOH_Hazards@nps.gov

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Associate Editors: Tom Aitken, Bill Holdsworth and Ned Preston.

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Association business – 36%, history/education – 19%; nature/environment – 8% volunteer/project activity – 22%, NPS/park information/park use – 15%

C&O CANAL ASSOCIATION

Membership in C&OCA is open to all persons with an interest in the C&O Canal, the C&O Canal National Historical Park and the Potomac River Basin. Annual membership dues are: \$25 individual, \$35 family, and \$50 patron, assessed on a calendar-year basis, and include subscription to the newsletter. Dues should be mailed 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.

C&OCA maintains a web page at www.candocanal.org. The webmaster is website@candocanal.org. Inquiries can be directed to the Association at inquiries@candocanal.org.

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

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Second Vice President: Barbara Sheridan

Secretary: Jane Hanna, secretary@candocanal.org

Treasurer: Paul Lubell, treasurer@candocanal.org

Information Officer: Vacant

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Terms expire in 2026: Jim Heins,
 Darius Mark, Allyson Miller

Terms expire in 2025: Tom Crouch,
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CHESAPEAKE & OHIO CANAL ASSOCIATION INC.

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GLEN ECHO, MD 20812-0366

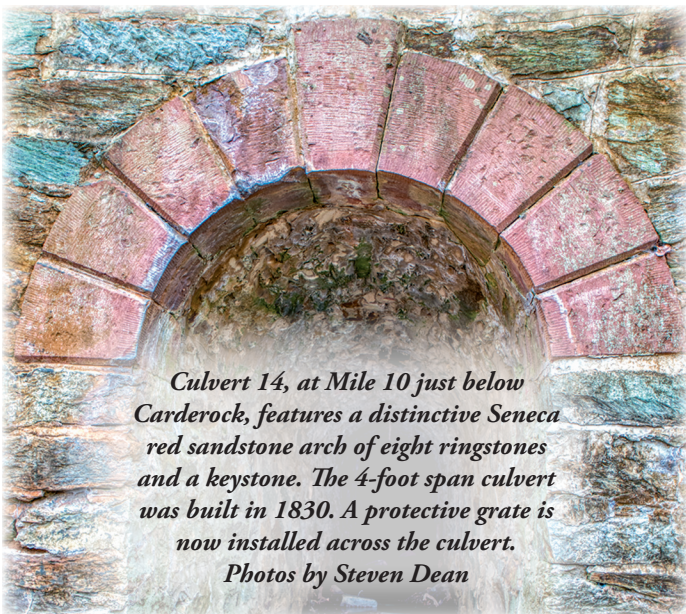
C&O Canal Association



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*Culvert 14, at Mile 10 just below Carderock, features a distinctive Seneca red sandstone arch of eight ringstones and a keystone. The 4-foot span culvert was built in 1830. A protective grate is now installed across the culvert.
Photos by Steven Dean*


ALONG THE TOWPATH

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association
www.candocanal.org

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