

American Canal Society Canal Index

CANAL Nashua Mfg. Co. (Power Canal)		STATUS Stabilized-water processing only at present. To be a City Park.		ACS HAER
STATE/PROVINCE: New Hampshire		DATES IN USE 1824c.1919		LIFT LOCKS No./ SIZE
COUNTIES: Hillsborough		LENGTH CANAL SLACKWATER TOTAL 3 2? 3 1/2?		
LOCATION (Endpoints of Canal): Downtown Millyards to Mine Falls.		ENLARGEMENTS		
TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS: NASHUA NORTH 97900.36940 PEPPERELL 95000.35860				

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

This canal was built by James F. Baldwin, son of Loammi Baldwin who built the Middlesex Canal. Opened for the first time in December 1824. Its purpose was to supply water power for the mills downtown. This canal when first constructed was 36 ft. wide, 6 1/2 ft. deep and about 3 miles long. During its later years of operation it was enlarged to 60 ft. wide, 8 ft. deep and still the same length of 3 miles.

During enlargement a new gate house was built at Mine Falls (where rapids) are located. This site regulates the flow of water into the canal, which has a drop in elevation of 33-36 ft. The canal is high above the Nashua River and stable today. Truly an artifact of industrial history of that era.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

This entire site is beautiful today. Located right in the heart of the City but takes you back to virgin territory of the 1800's. Hard to believe but true! There is a service road that runs the length of the canal on its north side, but supposed to be used only by the caretaker. Yet it has been used quite extensively by bicycles and motorcycles. In the near future only emergency vehicles will be permitted. Is also used for hiking and picnics. Boating, canoeing and other diversified activities will come later after access bridges are built over the Nashua River and the canal. This site is now adjacent to the new Nashua High School. Therefore, there will be a great deal of ice skating on the canal during the winter months. Indeed this park when completed will be one of the best of its type in the New England States. Truly a park with a 12 month operation of activities.

NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANALS PRESERVATION/RESTORATION:

Nashua Historical Society, Nashua, N.H. City of Nashua, N.H.
 New Hampshire Foundation (address not known) Nashua Public Library, Nashua, N.H.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY:

One of the very few artifacts of an era long past that remains very much intact in 1975. This entire site, including the combined Mill Pond which ends at Mine Falls has been kept very well watered all of these 151 years. When the advent of electric power came to the area with sufficient power to operate entire mills, then the days of the water wheels were over. Yet this beautiful site has been retained, and its historical aspects remembered.

UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, PHOTOS, DRAWINGS (CEHR, HAER, HABS, Local or Regional Historical Societies, Libraries, etc.):

Nashua Historical Society, Nashua, N.H.
 Nashua Public Library, Nashua, N.H.
 City of Nashua, Recreation & Parks Dept. Nashua, N.H.
 American Canal Society, P.O. Box # 842, Shepherdstown, WV 25443

EXISTING OR RECOMMENDED LANDMARK STATUS (CEHR, National Register, etc.):

This should be on the National Register of Historic Places.

This entire area to become a City Park. Now under development in 6 stages I believe.

REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: **Alden W. Gould, 12 Shady Crest Dr. Nashua, N.H.** DATE: **9/75**

RETURN TO: **CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, c/o P.H. STOTT, HAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NY 10549**