

From the President

by David G. Barber

An aspect of canal and waterway structure that we often overlook is moveable bridges. I was recently reminded of this while studying the Wabash River in Indiana. The Delaware and Raritan Canal was also noted for its moveable bridges and a few of them survive if you look carefully at them from underneath. The Delaware Canal also had a couple near its southern end at Bristol.

The New York canals had many in the enlarged era, and they are a notable feature of the western end of today's Erie Canal. There are a couple on the Chambly Canal in Quebec, and the Hennepin Canal in Illinois has several of quite different designs. The Fox Wisconsin Waterway in Wisconsin has several, including a bascule bridge due for replacement in Eureka and an abandoned railroad swing span, now on a rail trail in Princeton. There are others in Appleton and Kaukauna. But, two of the larger ones are on active rail lines across lake portions of the route in remote places on the upper Fox River and Lake Wisconsin.

Recently, when reading a guide to the Wabash River, I found a statement that there were three surviving swing bridges from the former steamboat navigation on the lower river. But, looking at Google Earth, I can see there are probably several more. Most of these survivors are railroad bridges, as the

structures that have been in use for a hundred years still serve today's trains. This contrasts to highway bridges which have had to be re-



Dragonfly docked at the home of ACS member Addison Austin. A welcome change from the crowded town dock at Labelle, Florida. See story p. 3-7.

placed due to the great increase in traffic volume and truck weights in the twentieth century. A search for these structures is helped by the fact that they often go east-west and the through truss structure of the bridge shows as a shadow on the water upstream of the bridge. These bridges have multiple truss spans, but careful study will find one that has a round pier, which is the pivot, in the center of a span and the span is continuous across this pier. While you would at first expect the moveable span, and thus the channel to be in the middle of the river, sometimes it is at one end and half of the swing span is actually over the river bank.

I visited one such site this July at Vincennes, IN, where the

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American Canals

BULLETIN OF THE
AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

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The objectives of the American Canal
Society are to encourage the preserva-
tion, restoration, interpretation, and use
of the historical navigational canals of
the Americas; to save threatened canals;
and to provide an exchange of canal
information. Manuscripts and other
correspondence consistent with these
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THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF *DRAGONFLY*

from the blog of Cynthia Berger
and Bill Carlsen

January 3—From Tierra Verde (south of St. Petersburg) we continued south on the Gulf Intra-coastal Waterway. Along the way we ventured "outside" briefly, in the "big waters" of the Gulf, to stop for a walk on a deserted beach at Egmont Key. Now usually, the crew is the cautious half of the expedition. But this time it was the crew's adventurous idea to make this outside run.

Despite the non-alarming weather forecast, the waves were, um, a pretty good size, so we used our diesel engine, which has a little more "oomph," rather than our electric motor for the trip to this island wildlife refuge. At the end of the day, safely back on the Intra-coastal, *Dragonfly* nearly ran aground on some shoals (useful boating tip: "Don't drive where the birds are wading!") but at last anchored safely off Longboat Key (just north of Sarasota). As we made our second dinghy run of the day to the appealing little beach bar on shore, an unusual watercraft hove into sight. It was our dinghy's sophisticated city cousin, a sleek and elegant scull.

We said hello to the guy at the oars, who said gratifyingly nice things about our oft-maligned dinghy. A fellow rowing enthusiast! And he was headed to the same bar! Back on the boat, the Cap'n donned a head lamp and headed down into the engine room. Loud noises ensued. At dawn he was back at it. Finally he emerged, greasy and triumphant, report that he had successfully changed out the gear that lets the electric motor interface with the propeller shaft. The original small



Welcoming committee of birds at Steinhatchee, Florida, on the Steinhatchee River.

gear had been superseded by a slightly larger gear.

Our AGNI electric motor has performed flawlessly for seven months now--a device the size of a dinner plate, propelling 14 tons of steel. But the interface with the prop shaft hasn't been perfect. Sometimes, when you'd shift into reverse, you'd get a dull "CLUNK," then frightening grinding sounds--metal on metal. Same if you tried to accelerate really fast.

Cap figured out the gear on the motor was so small, the teeth weren't getting a proper grip on the matching prop-shaft gear. He'd been carrying along a slightly larger gear, and he finally decided, "Now is the time to install it."

The original gear was trashed in the removal process, so this new gear had better work, eh? (No pressure, Cap!) Will report back! Is the crew worried about the state of the motor? Heck no. She's secure in the knowledge that, in case of emergency, we can just run a line from the trusty dinghy and take her in tow.

January 13—Today we said goodbye to Fort Myers and started cruising (gingerly) up the Caloosahatchee River ... which is part of the Okeechobee Waterway. Which means, canals and locks. Which is good, because after all, Canals "R" Us. We're riding in a boat called a "LockMaster." *Dragonfly* is capering a little, kicking up her heels, maybe because the re-mounted engine feels good, and maybe because she's in familiar waters. When we checked in at Fort Myers the marina guy hustled over to say, "I recognized our boat *immediately!* A couple from New York used to bring boats like that here!" We assume he's referring to Peter and Libby Wiles of Mid-Lakes Navigation who (back when *Dragonfly* was called the *Honeoye* and part of their rental fleet) used to bring her here in the winter, so Floridians could sample the joys of canal-boating. Our trip will take us up the Caloosahatchee and across Lake Okeechobee, the 7th largest freshwater lake in America. OK, OK, it's not THAT big ... you could fit four Lake Okeechobees

on the surface of Lake Huron. But it's big enough that, when you're out in the middle, you can't see land. And it's shallow, so a little wind can kick up some big waves.

The Okeechobee Waterway was constructed, in part, to create a shortcut for boats traveling between the Gulf and the Atlantic--no need to go round the tip of the Florida peninsula. But the waterway was also intended to provide some flood control for the region. It was a response to the Okeechobee Hurricane of 1928, which pushed the waters of the lake over the surrounding dikes. Thousands of people died. To celebrate the opening of the waterway, in 1937, a ceremonial procession of boats launched from Fort Myers and travelled the 150-mile length of the waterway, reaching Stuart, Florida the next day. We're in a SlowBoat, so our traverse will take a bit longer--four or five days. We're looking forward to seeing the orange groves and cattle ranches of the "Mucklands"--the nickname for central Florida farmland, with its rich black peat-based soil.

January 15—We planned to end the day at the town dock in LaBelle (town claim to fame: Swamp Cabbage Festival!) But before we reached the crowded town dock, our radio crackled to life: "*Dragonfly!* Hailing *Dragonfly!* Look behind you!" A man in a yellow sailor's slicker was hailing us from a dock in front of a neat, waterfront home. Addison Austin is a canal boat enthusiast and member of the American Canal Society, and ACS has been publishing excerpts from our blog in its newsletter. So he knew we were headed his way, and he'd been watching for us. End result: instead of crowding in with the

boats squeezed stern-on to the town dock, we had a luxurious night on Mr. Austin's private dock. (See photo, page 1.)

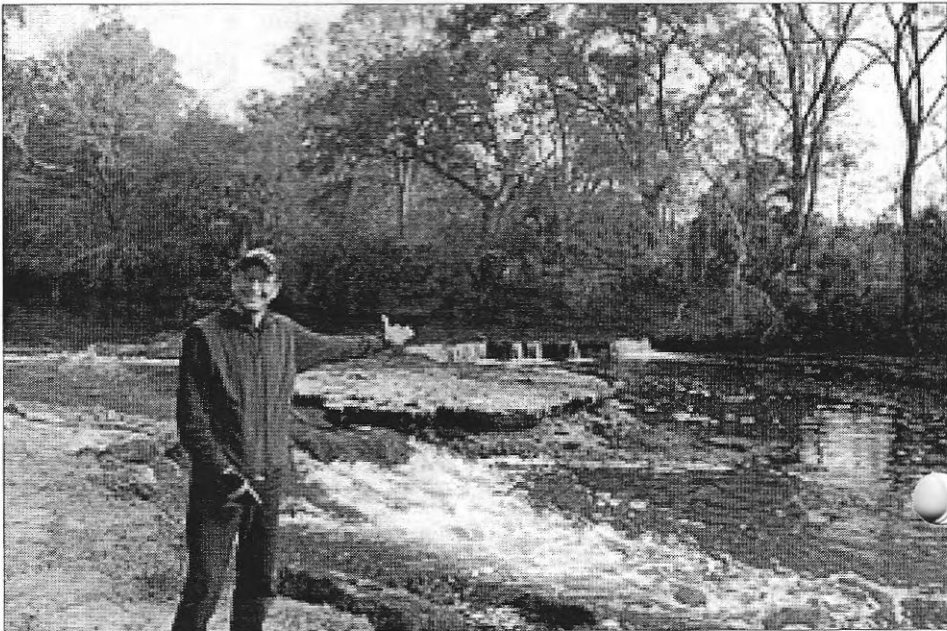
Over drinks 'n snacks with Add and Mary Jane, we paged through the album documenting their own Great Loop adventure: Two adults, three dogs, four months, six major repairs . . . in a 23-foot Sea Ray. Fortified for the road . . . er, canal . . . ahead, we left early while a light fog still swirled on the water's surface. The newly re-secured diesel engine purred happily. The newly reinstalled electric motor waited for its turn. Scrubby little Florida beef cattle watched solemnly as we passed, turning their heads slowly to track our progress. We passed a field of beehives (LaBelle is famous for its honey); then miles and miles of orange groves, ripe fruit glowing in the sunshine.

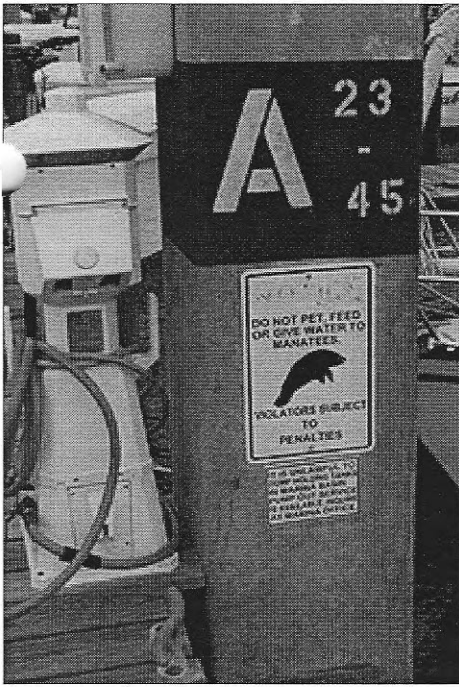
The river was mostly quiet, but once in a while we'd pass a fishing boat, with two or three guys, lines overboard. The anglers reacted much like the cattle. As we approach, one guy looks up. He sees us. He does a visible double take. His head

slowly turns to follow our progress. He nudges the next guy, who also looks up. Stare, head turn. Repeat.

There are four functioning locks along the 150 miles of the Okeechobee Waterway, and Friday we went through two of them. Now, we're used to locks. We've been through hundreds of locks. But these locks are different. Let's say you enter a lock, the gates close, and the locktender lets water into the lock, to lift your boat UP. In most locks, the water comes in UNDERWATER--either from the bottom or the sides of the lock. But along the Okeechobee, locks are old-school. Once you are inside, the locktender closes the downstream gate behind you, then cracks open the upstream gate--just a bit--so that water floods in. It makes for a turbulent ride! You take the line from the lock wall and put it on the cleat, then struggle to shorten the line as the boat goes up, with the bow plunging into the wall, then away, like a tennis shoe in a washing machine. At the second lock, in Moore Haven, the crew (up on the bow)

Steinhatchee Falls, one of only two waterfalls in Florida.





was flustered by a gongoozler in an NYPD sweatshirt who was hanging over the railing at the top of the lock. Anglers and cattle don't seem malicious, just disinterested. This fellow, without so much as a "hello," or even making contact, was snapping away with a camera, just a few feet away, recording (for some album) her screwed-up facial expression as she hauled desperately on the bow line.

After the big engine remount Cap had reinstalled the electric motor and on Saturday (sunny and blessedly warmer than any other day so far this week) we purred along on solar power, trolling along at a stately 3.2 miles per hour past swathes of sawgrass cloaking the rim of Lake Okeechobee. It was the perfect pace to see wildlife, and we were so busy spotting birds we could barely steer: Purple gallinule! Common moorhen! Reddish egret! Osprey with a snake! Limpkins! . . . a bird which our Sibley Guide describes "rare." They were so common that finally, we got blasé. Geez! It's just another limpkin! The only

interruption to our birding came when we were boarded by pirates . . . I mean, by officer A.J. Maynard of the Florida Wildlife Commission, a young guy with a honkin' big pistol on his hip. "Any firearms on board? Methamphetamines?" he inquired politely, before making his safety check. Our life jackets were in order and no sewage was being dumped overboard, so we passed with flying colors. We suspect we were the most entertaining and least dangerous vessel Officer Maynard detained all day.

Our destination was the former farming town of Pahokee, and all day long, as we poked along at our stately pace, we couldn't help humming: We put the engine in We take the engine out We put the engine in And we test the engine mounts Do the Pahokee Pokey, and it makes us want to shout "That's what it's all about!"

January 26—High winds last night and driving rain this morning; we're glad we're lashed to the dock at the municipal marina in Titusville. The cement pillars supporting the docks are plastered with signs that say: "Do Not Pet Manatees." Makes sense. "Do Not Feed Manatees." Ditto. "Do Not Give Water to Manatees." Huh? This baffled me. I pictured some touron (cross between tourist and moron) lobbing plastic water bottles overboard. Or extending a Big Gulp cup to a manatee who was tailwalking, porpoiselike, near the boat. Nawww. Who would do THAT? Cap enlightened me. Manatees live both in freshwater rivers and in salty estuaries. It's

not clear that they absolutely require fresh water to drink, but they do like it--they're attracted to springs and drainage pipes. Apparently folks have learned you can attract a manatee to your dock or to your boat by hooking up a garden hose and squirting water overboard. But like the sign says, Don't.

I went for a walk at sunset and spotted some white birds stalking through the park that forms the marina seawall, past the picnic tables and around the trash barrels. They were awfully large, awfully chubby, and awfully bald for great egrets. Hah! Wood storks! Like manatees, wood storks are so ugly they're cute. And like manatees, they're on the endangered species list, for all the usual reasons: habitat loss, pollution.

Here's some specifics in the stork story: Wood storks hunt by touch, swishing their long beaks back and forth through the water, then snapping them shut--fast as a beartrap--when they feel something edible. Storks eat fish, tadpoles, crawfish...any little thing you might find in marshy places. They have to collect a lot of chow to feed their nestlings. So stork nesting season is timed to coincide with the point when (if natural cycles are functioning naturally) lakes and marshes are drying out and water levels are low. Think of boiling down broth to make stock (without the boiling part!) With low water levels, prey is concentrated in a smaller area, easier to catch.

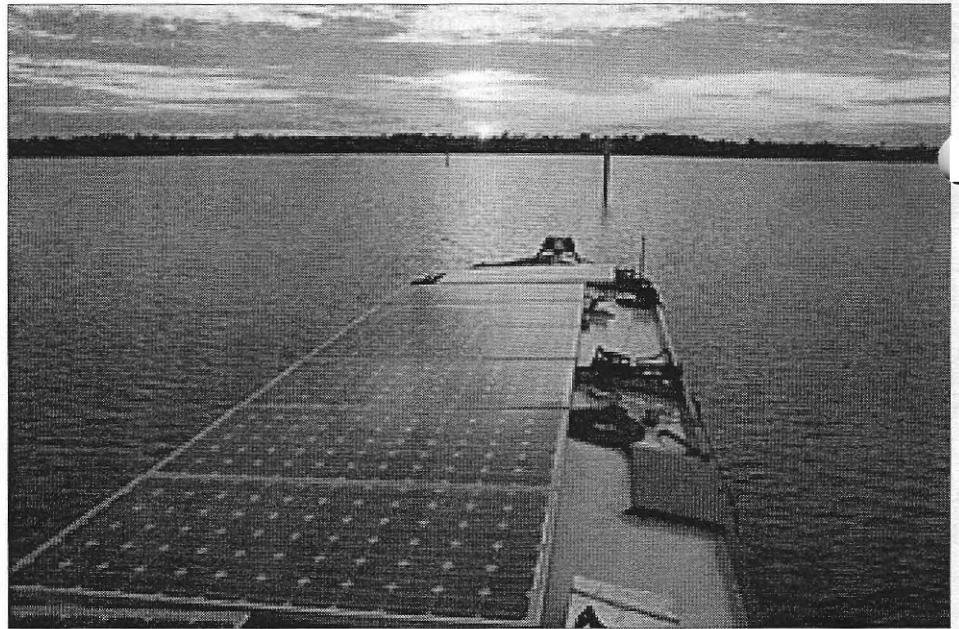
As development accelerated in Florida in the mid- 20th century, that messed with natural water regimes. Stork populations dropped from about 20,000 pairs in the 1930s to about 5,000 pairs in the 1970s. Since then, stork

numbers have rebounded at bit--partly because some stretches of habitat have been protected, partly because storks have taken to living in new places north of their historic range. And some storks have changed their habits. Once associated with wild places exclusively, storks can now be spotted along city canals.

The Florida Home Builders Association filed a petition in 2009 to reclassify the species as "threatened" rather than "endangered," charging that the current classification infringes on peoples' right to use their land as they see fit. Another part of the argument is that having endangered species on a chunk of land blocks projects that can bring jobs. This past fall, after the association threatened to sue, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service took public comments on the issue--part of a year-long study to see if the reclassification is warranted. It's heartening to learn that storks are flexible enough to adapt to new places and to living in closer contact with humans. Not all species can do this. But many organisms are more adaptable than you might think. Meanwhile in the current economic climate, with housing sitting empty everywhere you look (three large condo towers here in Titusville seem pretty empty) it seems disingenuous to suggest that what we need is more development.

On the other hand, endangered species should not be a convenient front man when environmentalists to object to development. It's easy to say "we should protect an endangered species"; it's harder to explain exactly why we should.

And then on the other hand (I think that's three hands, but so what) when business interests say,



"an ugly awkward bird with no apparent value should not take precedence over people who need jobs and homes," that's an argument with a fallacy at its base.

Both Cocoa (where we visited earlier in the week) and Titusville have expensive and elaborately engineered waterfront parks, recently built, designed to deal with flooding. Flooding caused by the asphaltization of the land.

Hmm. Storks need wetlands. Wetlands sop up runoff. I noticed, in passing that, like the marina with its "Do Not Feed the Manatees" signs, these water-control projects have educational billboards. Clearly, neither one is sufficient.

February 15—When the *Dragonfly* stopped at Isle of Hope, the first mate cruised to Savannah to tour the "Ships of the Seas" museum. The main attraction: a scale model of a very innovative boat--a hybrid vehicle. The *S.S. Savannah* was built in the town it was named for in 1818.

Notice that date. *Years* before

barges started plying the Erie Canal, dragged by mules, Captain Moses Rogers of Connecticut conceived of a powerful hybrid boat, sailing vessel and steamship combined. The *Savannah's* claim to fame: she ultimately made the world's first steam-powered trans-atlantic crossing. Full disclosure She covered only *part* of the distance under steam. It would be 30 years before another American steamship made the crossing. But innovation has to start somewhere, and in the case of hybrid boats it started in Savannah.

The next day, at the Isle of Hope Marina, we spotted pictures documenting the work of another local inventor with an unusual vision for boat design. Captain Matthew Batson built the world's first flying yacht. This was in 1912, just about a century after the *Savannah* fired up her boilers ... and less than a decade after the Wright Brothers made their first, brief flight. Batson's goal will sound familiar: He aimed to fly his airboat across the Atlantic Ocean. Indeed, he set up shop the Savannah area, in part, as homage to the pioneering steam-

ship. Batson ultimately built two "Aero Yachts." The first was irreparably damaging during launch. A second, smaller airboat did make it off the ground, flying (according to an unnamed eyewitness) for 30 minutes at a height of 15 feet. Its name, coincidentally, was *Dragonfly*.

February 16—From Dafuskie Island, it was a short cruise to Hilton Head, identifiable from the water by its famous peppermint candy-striped lighthouse. On the way we passed one marina with its very own lock, to protect boats from tide surge. "Someday," mused the Cap'n, "I'll have MY own lock, too." Once you have a canal boat, you start wanting the gear to go with it.

"Our restaurant is open," the dockmaster told us, "but you'll need reservations--it's Valentine's Day." We walked to the restaurant--just to check it out, mind you. Cap had been working on the engine all day; I'd biked around in the Dufskie pineywoods all day. We were sweaty, greasy, uncombed, with diesel-mechanic fingernails and bike helmet-hair. But before we could say, "Could we just peek at a menu?," we were hustled into seats. White linens ... fine wines ... sweeping sunset view over the marshes ... local society matrons in silk and jewels. Luckily the crew was wearing a Valentine-red sweatshirt.

March 1—We're in Charleston, South Carolina this week, working on the engine . . . and taking your questions about SlowBoatCruising. Miles Johnson writes: "What have been your top five places so far, and why?"

Whew. Do we have to pick a mere five? I'm going to take that question and twist the answer a

tiny bit. Here are some (just some) of the crew's favorite *experiences* so far:

1—Piloting the boat through downtown Chicago in the early morning sunlight, goggling at the skyscrapers and waving to the commuters. Sure, you can make the same trip on a tour boat. But doing it on our own seemed particularly magical.

2—Cruising down the Mississippi River. OK, virtually every other Looper we have met so far HATED that part of the trip--the mud, the dead trees floating in the water, the big barges bearing down on you. I loved how the scenery mapped so closely to what I'd imagined when reading Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*. (I'd expected to see much more development along the riverbanks.)

3—Rowing on the Tenn Tom. There were four or five days where we were able to take turns: one person piloting the boat, the other rowing ahead in the dinghy. The trees were at the peak of their autumn color, the water was calm, the air was warm . . . and rowing is really, really fun!

4—Cruising the Gulf Intra-coastal Waterway and having dolphins swim right up to the boat and roll over on their sides--clearly putting their eyes in the optimal position to get a good look at this very strange boat.

5—Meeting people--a sanitary engineer, a towboat captain, a librarian, a businessman-turned-rowing-enthusiast--in random places--on a dock, or at a remote anchorage, or while you're rowing your dinghy to shore--and getting together for a drink and a snack, and listening to hilarious

stories, and becoming instant friends.

Remember that you can read the blog at www.slowboatcruise.com.

More in the winter issue.

2012 ELECTIONS

Included with this issue of *American Canals* is the ballot for the election of directors to serve a term for 2012-2014.

Please either mail your ballot to Bob Schmidt, nominating committee chairman, or email your choices.



Thank you in advance for your vote.

From the President (continued from page one)

formerly moveable east span has recently been replaced by a fixed deck girder span, with the round pivot pier in the middle. From the large trees growing in the swing arc, it is very apparent that it was a long time ago that this bridge last moved. Photos are on our web site.

A most unusual example of the swing bridges is in New York State on the Niagara River just south of the Black Rock Lock. There, the now land end of the railroad bridge swings across I-190 (built on the original route of the Erie Canal) while the other end opens to clear the modern channel approaching the lock.

These bridges are also a part of the waterway story, just as locks and aqueducts are.

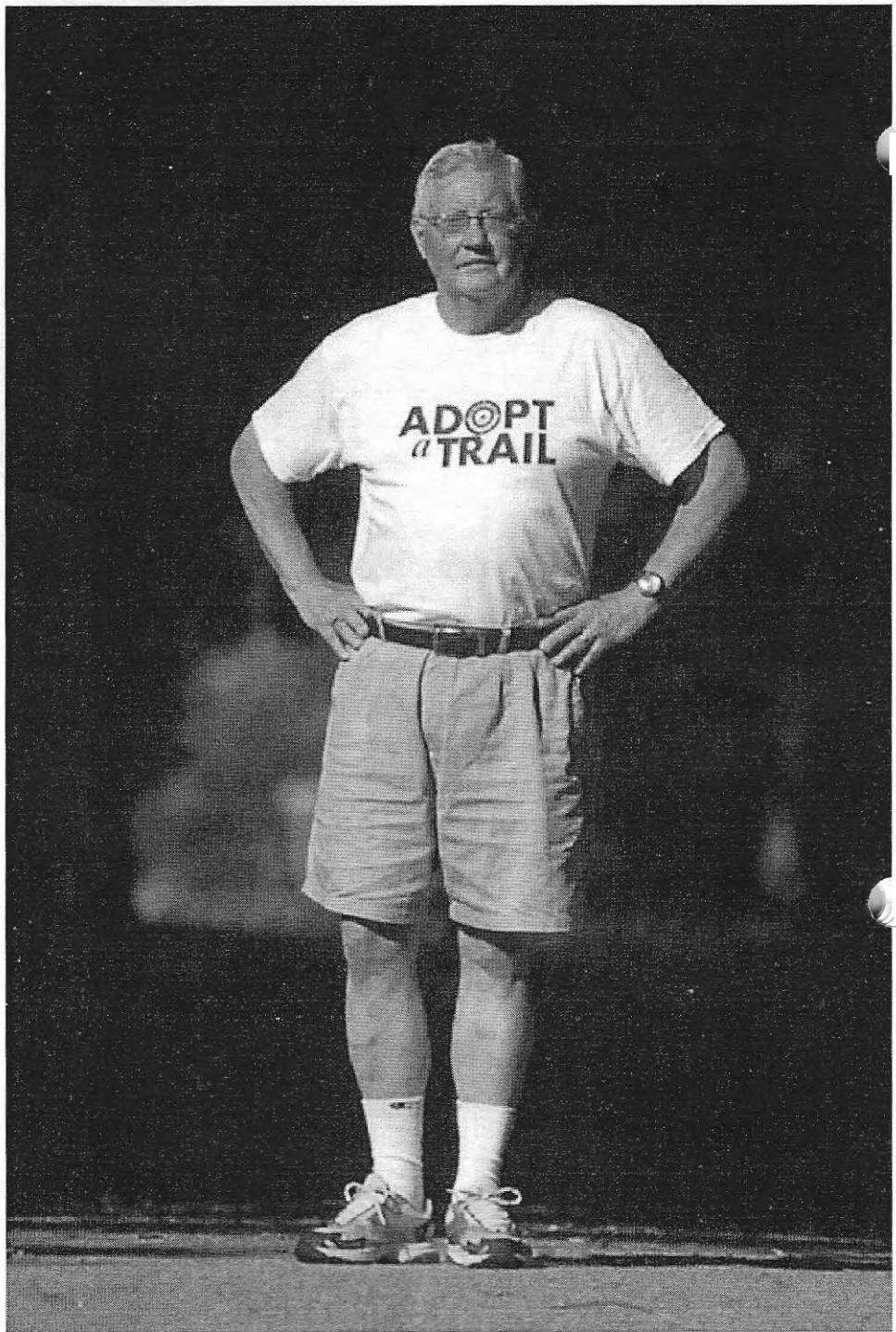
Greece 'keeper' is devoted to the Erie Canal

Written by Lisa Tiffin for the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle

They call him "Mr. Canal," and if you spend even a few minutes with Greece resident Keith Kroon, you'll understand why. Kroon not only lives on an old section of the Erie Canal, but he also exudes a passion for the waterway and has done more than almost anyone in our area to promote and maintain its history, beauty and use.

Kroon, 68, simply fell in love with the water and the canal after moving to Rochester in 1969 and buying a home along an unused section of the canal in Greece. "There was always a mystique about the canal," Kroon says explaining his initial interest in it, "but nothing serious until we moved into the house." From that point on, though, Kroon's involvement is nothing short of legendary. He began to study the canal and branched out by taking trips to other canal sites such as Erie Canal in Rome, Oneida County. It wasn't long before he was combining his interest in the canal with his personal life.

In the 1980s, he took his family on a vacation that consisted of a full week traveling by boat, with his wife and sons serving as the crew, through 72 locks on the canal. Kroon says 1991 was a "turning point" for the canal because though many people were using it, plenty of weeds and brush had made parts of the pathway unusable. Fortunately, that was also the year he retired, so he was able to devote more time to his passion. He formed the Greece Erie Canal Committee the next year, and the group spent time



clearing the canal pathway and educating people about the canal in Greece. The committee organized several Discover the Canal Days, centered on the arrival of the tug boat Urger each year as it was on its way to Buffalo.

Roger Delthony met Kroon during one of those days back in the 1990s. "Many people in Greece are surprised to find the

canal runs through Greece," he says, explaining that because it runs through the southern edge rather than through the middle like in some towns, people forget it is there. But Kroon has worked hard to change that. Delthony says, "Keith is definitely very interested in the canal and has put a lot of effort into improving it." In fact, Kroon has spent a lot of

time personally working on the trail along the canal in Greece and overseeing volunteers through the Adopt-A-Trail program. He has advocated for more recreational opportunities and signage along the canal in Greece and was instrumental in the town's creation of a small picnic area and trail at Junction Lock.

Kroon eventually became part of the Canalway Trails Association, even serving as its president. For many years he participated in the Cycling the Erie Canal bike ride from Buffalo to Albany to promote maintenance of the trail. In 2007, he was named the Canalway Trail Tender of the Year from the New York State Canal Corp. for his efforts.

But it's not all about history and walkways for Kroon. It's also about travel. He has traveled far and wide for canal conferences and simply to visit other waterways. "I gain an appreciation for what the Erie Canal is, and I get to see what other people are doing and what works or fails with their canal areas," he says.

Kroon's wife of 43 years, Judy, says of his passion for ca-

nals, "I think it gave us a focus." She adds that people are always interested when she tells them they travel for canals. Since 1997, they have attended either the North American Canal Conference or the World Canal Conference each year. They have traveled to places including Sweden, Serbia and England for past conferences, and plan on the Netherlands this year and China next year. Kroon says, "Having a theme to our travel gives us a reason to do it." He says it is also wonderful to reunite with the many friends and canal enthusiasts they have met along the way.

As for the future, Kroon says he hopes his work will help to preserve the canal and promote more recreation and use along it. He plans to continue his travels and canal-related activities as long as he can. No doubt he'll retain his Mr. Canal title for years to come.

NEW QUEEN LAUNCHED

American Cruise Lines launched the *Queen of the*

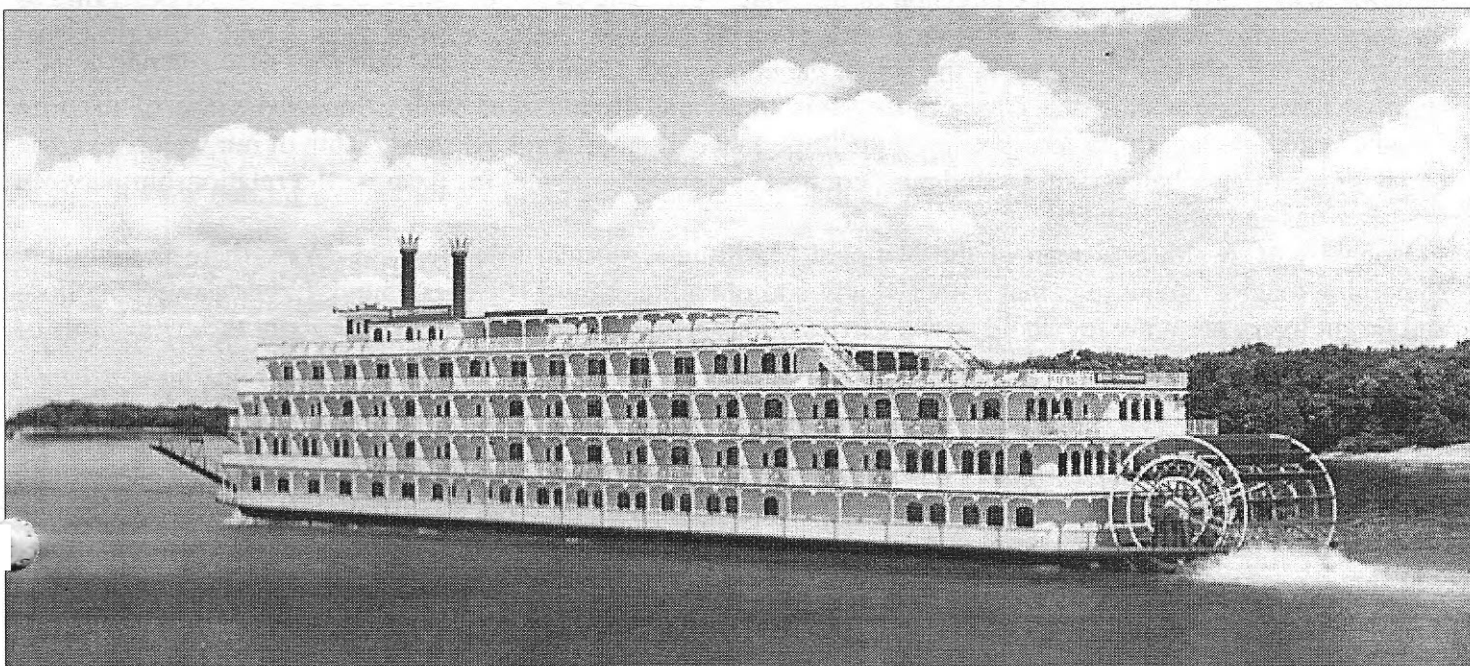
Mississippi, a new sternwheeler, on July 17, 2011. The launching came just a few weeks after the joining of the two hull sections, weighing almost 500 tons apiece. With the completion of the fourth and fifth decks up next, *Queen of the Mississippi's* superstructure will come together quickly, giving shape to the first riverboat built for the Mississippi in nearly twenty years and the grandest ever!

The vessel is currently being outfitted with miles of electrical cable, piping, joiner work, and more. When completed, she will have 75 passenger staterooms, larger than those on any former Mississippi riverboat, spacious private balconies, and modern amenities, while maintaining the elegance and Victorian appearance of classic Mississippi riverboats.

ACL will operate the authentic sternwheeler over the entire Mississippi River system beginning in August 2012.

Readers may see a video of the launch at www.americancruiselines.com/seminar.php.

Artist's conception, ACL



CANAL TUGBOAT *URGER* TURNS 110 YEARS OLD

Flagship of NYS Canals Fleet now Center for History, Education

A tugboat that has plied the waters of New York's Canals for nearly eight decades years turned 110 IN June, according to the New York State Canal Corporation. The tug *Urger* is the oldest state vessel operating on New York's waterways. It now functions as a floating museum and a classroom for schoolchildren.

Brian U. Stratton, director of the New York State Canal Corporation, said, "The *Urger* is classroom, time machine, and floating ambassador all rolled into one. The rich history of this venerable old tug is matched only by her continuing contribution to educating, and inspiring thousands of New York's future leaders each year."

When the *Urger*, now the flagship of the state canal fleet, slid down the ways at Johnston Brothers Shipyard in Ferrysburg, Mich., on June 13, 1901, the Detroit Free Press dubbed her the "finest boat in the local fishing fleet." Originally christened the *Henry J. Dornbos*, the vessel was operated by the Verduin family on Lake Michigan for 20 years. Due to her unparalleled seaworthiness, the vessel was occasionally used by the U.S. Lifesaving Service (a forerunner of the U.S. Coast Guard) for rescues on the lake.

In 1922, the vessel, given the eponymous name *Urger* in recognition of her new duties, entered into service in New York as a maintenance tugboat on the recently completed Erie Barge Canal, "urging" scows and barges along in conjunction with dredging and other maintenance activities. She remained in active, everyday operation until 1986 when she was retired from her regular maintenance duties.

In 1991, the *Urger* began a new chapter in her storied life as a floating museum and classroom under the command of Capt. Schuyler Meyer Jr., president of the non-profit State Council on Waterways. He operated the program under a permit from the Waterways Maintenance Division of the State DOT. The *Urger* has spent the past 20 years serving as the focal point of a program to educate fourth graders about the importance of New York's historic Canal system and the role that it played in the state's economic and social development. More than 100,000 school children have gone aboard the *Urger* during this time, and disembarked with a renewed sense of the Erie Canal's incredible legacy. In recognition of the importance of environmental stewardship of our waterways, the *Urger* program also helps visiting students "connect the drops" – a way to illustrate the relationship between our activities and water quality.

Ronald L. Oswald, chairman of the National Maritime Historical Society, said, "Yes, there is definitely something magical about tugs that attract young and old alike. Now 110 years young, *Urger's* sweeping lines and bright livery are a joy to behold as she carries on her work of educating the public about the critical role of our inland waterways in the growth and development of New York State and the country."

Thomas X. Grasso, president of the New York State Canal Society, said, "Like the venerable *Day Peckinpaugh*, this indefatigable workboat has defied both time and the odds to endure as a symbol of the history, innovation, and unprecedented impact of New York's Canals. Vessels like the *Urger* and the *Day Peckinpaugh* help tell a story and interpret a past. The interpretive floodgates they open will unleash a wave of learning appreciation, and increased awareness for our canals which was heretofore unknown and which would otherwise be gone. The Canal Society of New York State salutes the heroic efforts begun by Capt. Schuyler Meyer in 1991, and the great work which continues by the New York State Canal Corporation today, to preserve this great vestige of our maritime heritage."



Photo: New York State Canal Corp.

William Weston and his Contribution to Early American Engineering

by Richard Shelton Kirby, Member

(Read at the Engineers' Club, New York, and at the Iron and Steel Institute, London, April 22nd, 1936).

CONCLUSION

In Part I, published in the summer 2011 issue, we read of William Weston's early work in the United States, including the Middlesex Canal, the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike, and the Potomac River locks.

WESTERN INLAND LOCK NAVIGATION COMPANY

As early as April, 1793, Weston's fame had spread to New York State, for Philip Schuyler wrote from Albany to Robert Morris⁷ asking the Schuylkill and Susquehanna people to loan him and promising that he would not be detained longer than necessary to make surveys and give directions on the canalization work then being pushed in the Mohawk Valley and westward, in the effort to connect Albany, or at least Schenectady, by way of the Mohawk River, with Oneida Lake, and the latter with Seneca and Cayuga Lakes and also with Lake Ontario. The letter apparently did not bear fruit for some two years and the company proceeded temporarily without Weston. In the spring of 1795 Weston made an extensive examination of the New York State project⁸ and made his first formal report to the directors of the Western Inland Lock Navigation Company, which, together with the Northern Inland Lock Navigation Company had been incorporated three years earlier. More than a year after his first visit, that is in 1797, he seems to have left Philadelphia and assumed charge of this work, with several local surveyors more or less under him, among them Benjamin Wright, who eventually became chief engineer of the Erie Canal. Apparently he spent parts of two years in this region, making his headquarters at Fort Stanwix, (now Rome). During this time he built, or rather rebuilt, the elaborate masonry locks at Little Falls.

The Lock Navigation Company was only moderately successful in what it attempted, for the western country was developing so rapidly that men's ideas were constantly enlarging. In 1798 the Erie Canal was only a dream in the minds of a few visionaries. By 1812 it had taken such form that the Western Inland Lock Navigation Company was taken over by the State and surveys for the Erie Canal began. By 1811 the surveys were apparently complete⁹ and were sent over to Weston, who although residing in England, seems to have been considered here as a sort of consulting engineer in perpetuity. He wrote the Erie Canal Commissioners at this time:

"Should your noble but stupendous plan of uniting Lake Erie with the Hudson, be carried into effect, you have to fear no rivalry. The commerce of the immense extent of country, bordering on the upper lakes, is yours forever, and to such an incalculable amount as would baffle all conjecture to conceive. Its execution would confer immortal honour on the projectors and supporters, and would in its eventual consequences, render New-York the greatest commercial emporium in the world, with perhaps the exception at some distant day of New-Orleans, or some other depot at the mouth of the majestic Mississippi. From your perspicuous topographical description and neat plan and profile of the route of the contemplated canal, I entertain little doubt of the practicability of the measure."

One of the best informed, not to say patriotic, of the early writers on the Erie Canal observed that:

"In 1813 the commissioners entered into correspondence with an American gentleman at that time in London, authorizing him to engage William Weston, Esq., then considered the most accomplished engineer in Europe, to come over and survey the route of the canal and proposed as a maximum salary seven thousand dollars per year. Fortunately Mr. Weston's engagements were such that he thought proper to decline. . . It may be considered a fortunate circumstance that Mr. Weston did not accept the offer of the canal commissioners.¹⁰ Because from the ostentation usually displayed by foreign engineers and the great expense attending their movements the people of this frugal and republican country would have been discouraged, and it is more than probable the work would have been abandoned or at least indefinitely deferred."¹¹

SCHUYLKILL RIVER BRIDGE

In 1798 or 1799 Weston played an important part in designing the piers of the monumental "Permanent Bridge" spanning the Schuylkill at Market Street, Philadelphia. The superstructure consisted of three covered wooden trusses, designed and erected by the carpenter-engineer Timothy Palmer of Newburyport, Mass.

Of its two piers, the westerly one gave especial trouble, for the water was deep and bedrock was more than 41 feet below its surface. Weston had designed the piers, it would seem, before he left for England. In fact he had at first furnished plans for a stone arch bridge and later had planned a cast-iron structure. The following extract is from Richard Peters's *A. Statistical Account of the Schuylkill Permanent Bridge*.¹²

"... The general Wish of the Stockholders, at the Commencement of the Project, was strongly in Favour of a Stone Bridge. A Draft of a Stone structure, elegant, plain, practicable and adapted to the Site, with very minute and important Instructions for its Execution, was furnished to the President gratuitously, by William Weston, Esq. of Gainsborough in England; a very able and scientific Hydraulic Engineer, who was then here, and from friendly and disinterested Motives, most liberally contributed his professional Knowledge and Information to promote the Success of the Com-pany. The Foundations of the present Piers and abutments were laid nearly according to his Plan, tho' the Circumstances compelled a considerable Departure from it, as the Work advanced. His Communications were attended to with great Advantage, wheresoever they could be applied. Having viewed the Inefficiency of the Eastern Coffe-Dam, in the same spirit of Liberality he furnished to the President a Draft for the western Coffe-Dam, before his Departure for England. This plan was original and calcu-lated for the Spot on which it was to be placed. It was faithfully and exactly executed under the Care of Mr. Samuel Robinson, who was then Superintendant of the Company's Work in Wood. Mr. Weston foresaw great Risques and Difficulties arising from the peculiar character of the River, and the Nature of its Bottom, in so great a Depth of Water. He declared that he should hesitate to risque his professional Character on the Event, tho' he was convinced that the whole Success of the Enterprise depended upon, and required, the At-tempt. Some Idea of the Magnitude may be formed, when it is known that 800,000 Feet (Board Measure) of timber were employed in its execution and the accommodations attached to it. Sufficient ;n Quantities for a Ship of the Line. . . .

"But it was soon discovered that the expence of erecting a stone bridge, would far exceed any sum, the reve-nue likely to be produced would justify. For this reason alone, no farther progress was made in the stone bridge plan. And though some other drafts, among them a very elegant one by Mr. *Latrobe*¹³ were presented, the board of Directors were under the necessity of returning them, as being objects, however desirable, too expen-sive to be executed with private funds. It was therefore concluded to procure plans of a bridge, to be composed of stone piers and abutments, and a superstructure of either wood or iron. Mr. *Weston*, at the request of the President and Directors, sent from *England* (after viewing most of the celebrated bridges there, and adding great Improvements of his own), a draft of an iron super-structure, in a very superior stile; yet with his usual attention to utility, strength and economy, accompanied by models and instructions. Although highly approved it was not deemed prudent to attempt its execution. All our workmen here, are unacquainted with such opera-tions; and it was thought too hazardous to risque the first experiment.

"The castings can be done cheaper here, than in England, and with metal of a better quality, though the amount of the erection would in the whole, far exceed one of wood. Mr. *Weston's* draft¹⁴ is preserved, and may yet be executed in some part of the *United States*; and it would do honour to those who could accomplish it."

The building committee of the bridge reported on December 31, 1802 :

"Our particular duty, as a committee, was to superintend the execution of the plan. But as members of the board, we cannot avoid lamenting that the dangerous character of the river, its extraordinary depth and rocky bottom, forbad any other mode, to ensure the stability of the piers, than that which necessity compelled us to take. Every substitute we could devise, or were informed of, even though some were only plausible, or palpa-bly visionary, were stated to Mr. Weston, more competent to judge. He decidedly advised us to the mode we have adopted; warning us of the difficulties we had to encounter. He disinterestedly gave instructions, and fur-nished the plan of the *coffer dam*, which is a pattern worthy the imitation of all who engage in such inter-prizes."

Weston wrote from Gainsborough, England, to Peters on May 4, 1803, his enthusiastic congratulations on the completion of the western pier:

"I most sincerely rejoice at the final success that has crowned your persevering efforts, in the erection of the western pier; it will accord you matter of well founded triumph, when I tell you, that you have accomplishe an undertaking *unrivalled by anything of the kind that Europe can boast of*. I have never in the course of my experience, or reading, heard of a pier founded in such a depth of water, on an irregular rock, affording little or

no support to the piles. That the work should be expensive—expensive beyond your ideas—I had no doubt; the amount thereof, with all the advantages derived from experience, I could not pretend to determine; and if known, would only have tended to produce hesitation and irresolution in a business, where nothing but the most determined, unceasing perseverance, could enable you to succeed. However, now ‘ all your toils and dangers o’er ’ I heartily congratulate you on the result: not doubting but the completion will prove as honourable to you as beneficial to the stockholders.”

The “ Permanent Bridge ” no longer spans the Schuylkill. Connecting as it did with the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike, it served well, however, for some fifty years, when it was considerably altered; in 1875 it was burned down.

NEW YORK CITY WATER SUPPLY

Apparently Weston’s last engagement in America before he returned to England was an examination and report on New York City’s water supply. The city of some 50,000 persons, occupying a square mile of area at the tip of Manhattan Island, was altogether dependent on wells for its water. And the city fathers were in a quandary whether to use the Collect Pond (near the present Canal Street) as many people urged, or to look elsewhere. In December, 1798, the City Council voted to send for Weston and get his advice. He arrived about Feb. 1, 1799, and proceeded to make an investigation. His “ Report on the Practicability of Introducing the Water of the River Bronx into the City of New York ” was presented to the Council on March 16 and ordered to be printed. On April 22 he was paid \$799.67 for “ Services and Expences. . . .”

This report of Weston’s is worthy of more than passing notice. After very properly disposing of the Collect Pond as a source of supply he proposes that the city tap the Bronx River just above Lorrillard’s Snuff Mill, “ about half a mile upstream from the little village of West Farms, then in Westchester County. He proposed to equalize the flow in the Bronx by raising the level of its principal source, Rye Pond, six feet. He would also build a six-foot dam near the Snuff Mill, and bring the water in an open conduit some 14 miles to a reservoir in or near the Park (City Hall Park). The total fall would be only 23 feet. For crossing the Harlem Valley he suggested 24-inch cast-iron pipe. No cast-iron mains had previously been used in this country,¹⁵ and very few broad. In the Park Weston planned a “ grand reservoir ” of three compartments, for reception, filtration, and distribution respectively; the third one covered. In this he was far in advance of European practice. He expected his system to supply three million gallons daily by means of a dual distribution system. Any surplus was to be used for dry docks.

It is only proper to add that the suggestion that the city should use water from the Bronx was made to the city fathers by Doctor Joseph Brown in 1798, and that Weston, called in as an expert, adviser, elaborated on Brown’s scheme. Weston’s recommendations were not accepted. The first outside water came from the Croton River forty years later. Rye Pond, mentioned in his report and now part of Kensico Lake, has furnished a small fraction of the city’s supply since about 1884.

CONCLUSION

When Weston returned to England is not certainly known, probably in 1799 or perhaps in 1800. His later career there is equally obscure. He was living in Gainsborough in 1811, and when he died is not certainly known, possibly in 1833. Some of his descendants are living near the ancestral home in Oxford.

One could quote almost indefinitely from comments on Weston’s ability made by those who came in contact with him in America. Apparently he easily inspired confidence in his skill. His reports indicate that this confidence was not misplaced, for they show a judicial temperament, careful analysis and excellent powers of expression. Without doubt he had a considerable influence on American engineering, and was a source of inspiration to the young canal engineers who were just reaching maturity during the years he was active in this country, such men as Benjamin Wright, James Geddes and Nathan S. Roberts, to name only three.

Among the writings of the men in public life to whom Weston was responsible I have found nothing but praise for his work. Only one word of criticism appears in a letter of De Witt Clinton, written in 1821 under the pseudonym of “ Tacitus.” Clinton, while he praised Weston, made the comment that he was totally ignorant of the country and the people, that he had at one point at least on the Western canal involved the company in great expense by some unnecessarily heavy construction, and that he had neglected to make use of the local

stone quarries. Unfortunately, Weston probably never had opportunity to present his side of the case. He planned and built substantially, as the English always have. Furthermore, it doubtless is true that Weston and the proprietors of these early canals did not always give sufficient consideration to sound economics, and did not realize the impending competition from turnpikes.

I feel that I should add here the long list of those persons on both sides of the Atlantic, who, during the past four years, have contributed bits of information or suggested leads which I have followed; space forbids, but I must mention my friend, Mr. H. W. Dickinson, of this Society; Messrs. Clark Dillenbeck and Gordon Chambers, officials of the Reading Railroad; Miss Edna J. Jacobsen, of the New York State Library, and the officials of the Baker Library, Harvard University.

The paper was illustrated by a map of the United States, showing the works cited in the paper, and by photographs of sketches and letters of Weston. From these Fig. 38 and Plate XX have been made.

Readers who wish to see the source material are asked to contact the editor (see page 2 for contact information).



CANALS: GLOBAL, NATIONAL, LOCAL: A SPEECH TO THE TOLEDO TORCH CLUB

by Benjamin Marsh, Canal Society of Ohio

I grew up on Northwest Ohio flat farm land - not even close to a canal. My first contact with canals occurred when I was in the Navy and went through the Lake Washington Ship Canal on a destroyer tender. Shortly thereafter I was on the same ship as it went through the Panama Canal. I've had numerous contacts with canals since then - local, national and in Europe.

Perhaps I should have been a civil engineer; I'm fascinated by the way the canal builders located the exact route - without modern surveying tools - and for that matter, aerial photographs. Also, like many of you I am very interested in local history. Further, there is a romantic side to the discussion.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the construction and impact of canals in the world. That is, undoubtedly, too large an undertaking. We will start with mentioning some of the well-known and major canals on the globe and some of the history in connection therewith. We will then move on to, in the following order, European canals (that is, continental), English canals, and early American canals. Then we'll put a little more emphasis on Ohio canals and will conclude with the impact of canals on Northwest Ohio and on Toledo and its neighbors.

World

When one thinks of the major canals of the world, perhaps the one that comes to mind immediately is the Panama Canal. I am sure that a number of you have taken cruises through the canal. If not, I recommend that you do so. I first went through, as I mentioned, in 1946 on a U.S. Navy destroyer tender from the Pacific to the Caribbean. We were forbidden to take photos—wartime restrictions—but of course, I did so with my Brownie camera. I still have the pictures. Many years later - say 50 - we went on a cruise from Miami to Acapulco, Mexico - east to west. As you know the canal was started by the French and finished by the United States with President Teddy Roosevelt pushing hard in the early 1900s.

The earliest canals that I am aware of were in Egypt some 3000 years before Christ. In the Sixth Dynasty (2300-2180 BC) a canal was built to by-pass the first cataract near what is now the Aswan Dam on the Nile.

Another famous canal was constructed to connect the Nile to the Red Sea in the 12th century BC. It failed on numerous occasions - probably because of blowing sand!

The Grand Canal of China, which still exists, was built in stages several thousand years ago.

And in more recent times the Suez Canal was built - with no locks - thus creating a short-cut from Europe to the Far East.

Europe

Now let us look at Continental Europe. There was some canal building activity as early as the 1600s, and perhaps before. A prime example was the Canal Du Midi across southern France connecting the Atlantic to the Mediterranean - another short-cut avoiding the long sail around Spain. Today it is a major tourist attraction. One can take a barge - with say 15 passengers - and have a delightful tour.

Early on, Holland, Germany and France had (and have) numerous canals. And the rivers were so important, long before modern forms of transportation such as highways, railroads and, for that matter, canals.

One could travel from Amsterdam to Bavaria in Germany via the Rhine and the Main rivers, and one would travel from Bavaria to Vienna, Budapest and the Black Sea by way of the famous Danube River.

As far back as Charlemagne there was the dream of somehow connecting the two river systems, which meant getting over the Alps. This was finally accomplished some 20 years ago.

Perhaps some of you have taken that trip. We (Martha and I) took a river boat (about 100 passengers) from Cologne, up the Rhine to the Main River, to Frankfurt, through Bavaria, then the Main-Danube Canal to the blue Danube and thence to Vienna. We later completed the trip, so to speak by traveling by riverboat from Budapest to Constanta on the Black Sea.

Major cities that were centers of canal activity were and are Amsterdam, Paris, and Berlin among others. It is very common these days for Americans (and others) to take tourist trips on barges (that is the correct word) on a whole variety of canals on the continent. The barges are fairly substantial crafts propelled by diesel motors and operated by a crew.

England

I have a very nice original map of England, published in London in 1837. It shows a veritable spider web of canals. The major difference between continental canals and English canals is the size of the locks and therefore the size of the boats.

An English canal boat cannot be wider than 6 feet 6 inches because the locks are 7 feet wide. But the length is a different matter. The maximum length can be as much as 70 feet! Picture that if you can. A bit like a Great Lakes ore boat! The English, Scottish, Irish, and Welsh boats at this point cater strictly to the tourist trade, both local and overseas.

Here are a few personal comments about Britain's canals:

On our 25th wedding anniversary, Martha and I spent some time on a 30-foot boat on the Oxford Canal (no crew). The Oxford Canal basically connected Oxford on the Thames River to the Birmingham area. James Brindley (1716-1772) was the driving force and architect. He later was called upon to assist in American canal building. As you can see, there were no airlines or railroads, and the roads were notoriously bad and often impassable. And this was the beginning of the industrial revolution.

The Oxford Canal, built during the twenty years following the passing of its act in 1769, was for a time the main link in the waterway chain between the North, Midlands and London via the Thames at Oxford. One of its prime initial functions was to open up the coal trade with the South Midlands, until that time confined to erratic deliveries to Oxford from Newcastle by sea to the Thames and then up river.

Despite later competition from the effectively parallel Grand Junction Canal for London traffic and railway expansion from the 1840s, the Oxford prospered until the general decline of waterways in the last century. Despite the effects of two world wars, the canal managed to survive, and today is an important leisure and amenity waterway popular with cruising enthusiasts.

The little canal boat which we had was powered by a small diesel motor. Speed limit: 4 miles per hour. Of course in olden times the boats were pulled by horses or mules. The towpaths still work: they are wonderful walking paths today.

It was always a bit tricky to meet a boat going to other way. Perhaps six inches clearance. The locks for the most part are self-operated. A few have lock tenders. One used a crank (called a lock key) to open and close a lock. Sometimes you threw the lock key to your companion, but you were in big trouble if the key dropped to the bottom of the canal. As mentioned, England is narrowboat country. There are a few, very few, so-called hotel boats, i.e. with a crew. Another time we traveled with the Canal Society of New Jersey in a fleet of canal boats in and around the Birmingham Ring.

And in Scotland, the boat that we were on was literally caught in a lock gate. As one of our friends said

"we were locked in a lock in Loch Ness."

National

About eighty-five years ago, Alvin F. Harlow wrote a book, *Old Towpaths: The Story of the American Canal Era*. This quote comes from that book:

"Here and there in Ohio, Indiana and the Eastern States the pedestrian - for nobody else would be apt to see such inconspicuous remains - may sometimes notice the faint indication of an embankment or a shallow depression, weed-grown but stretching away with such regularity of line as to rouse his belief that it may be an artificial work. He may even find a bit of crumbling stone wall, and - what is less probable - shreds of decaying timber still weakly attached to the wall by bits of rusty iron. Surely it is of human origin; perhaps pre-historic! But if he will inquire in the neighborhood he may find some white-bearded ancient who remembers that these poor ruins are all that is left of what was once a great internal improvement, the pride of the locality and the State - a canal.

"The old canals are passing away rapidly. The year 1924 witnessed the death of two of the great ones among them - the Chesapeake and Ohio and the Morris. The Chesapeake and Ohio went as did several of its fellows, through the agency of an ugly spring flood which tore its banks in so many places and so cruelly that repairs were declared too expensive to be thought of."

And in 1991 Ronald C. Carlisle wrote in *Canals and American Cities* the following:

"From the late 18th century to the middle of the 19th, the United States, like France, England, Holland, and other European countries before it, was caught up in a brief but intensive experiment in canal building. Together with the construction of turnpikes, the digging of canals was the first truly national American phenomenon, a great if short-lived experiment in democracy and capitalism that attracted the attention and money of the most notable political and business leaders of the day. It was also the first great modification of the American landscape. An important motivation for the nearly simultaneous construction of canals in many states was the wide-spread belief in the intrinsic value and good of "internal improvements" as a way of stimulating both settlement and economic growth of the great American interior. Such improvements were "...widely regarded as essential to the preservation of republicanism." As many Atlantic seaboard states desired to participate in and, if possible, to prevail in the opening of the American West and its markets, competition among states also played a major role in the spread of the canal-building fervor. Individual entrepreneurs saw the opportunity to make money by reducing the cost of transporting food as well as timber, building stone, coal, and other raw materials from the American interior to the East Coast. The cost of transporting such products to market, not the cost of extraction, often proved the limiting factor in the development of business, and it was precisely this obstacle that the backers of early American canals hoped to overcome. Similarly, imported and American-made goods required a cost-effective means of distribution from the East Coast to the frontier. The limitations of overland travel were prohibitive in many cases given the technology of the day, and railroads, though soon to supplant canals as the distribution system of choice, were as yet in their technological infancy.

"The American canal-building era thus focused the debate for the first time over the respective roles of individuals and both the state and federal government in promoting internal improvements and economic development. The concept of "public-private partnerships," a mainstay of contemporary American economic and civic life, was first articulated in the canal-building era as a means of paying the high cost of canal construction and maintenance. As a result of incurring these unprecedented costs, some states, of which Pennsylvania was the best example, soon also had to learn to cope with the demands of enormous public debt by levying income and property taxes. Important ethical and legal questions about collective good versus the rights of individual landowners were raised in "eminent domain" proceedings as the course of canals was plotted over the American landscape.

"The canal-building period also stimulated the development of civil engineering, an all but non-existent American professional at the beginning of the 19th century. The construction skills first learned and subsequently shared among canal engineers as they moved from state to state and project to project soon created a small cadre of professionals who later applied their collective knowledge to the engineering of American rail road lines and to the laying out of new roads and cities.

In retrospect, many of the engineering accomplishments of the canal-building era now appear almost fantastic in view of the twin limitations imposed by the vastness and topographical barriers of the American interior

and by an essentially preindustrial technology rooted in the use of natural construction materials - wood, stone, and clay.

“The building of canals also had important consequences for American cities. Interurban competition for canal routes mirrored the competition among the states. As canals opened, prices for imported and native manufactured goods dropped and greater supplies of mineral wealth were channeled to cities, either as the ultimate consumers or as points of transshipment. For example, the anthracite coal of northeast Pennsylvania was rare to the homes and forges of nearby Philadelphia as late as 1815, but it was a commonplace in city homes just 15 years later when it was being shipped to that city by canal; moreover, canal-transported anthracite arrived in Philadelphia in sufficient quantities that it was economical to reload it onto sailing vessels for shipment to other coastal cities. Thus canals often stimulated urban economic growth both directly and indirectly.”

When did the canal boom start in America? Answer: fairly soon after the Revolution. Time does not permit a description of all of the many attempts. Suffice it to say, the new United States followed the examples of its former enemy, namely Britain, in these efforts.

The main motivation seems to have been to achieve fast, simple transportation to the West, i.e., west of the Alleghany Mountains. One obvious example is the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, which was promoted to a great extent by George Washington. It started in the City of Washington (later the District of Columbia) and Georgetown, followed the Potomac River, and made a major effort to get over the mountains to the Ohio River, without success. A major obstacle, in addition to a mountain chain, was the Great Falls of the Potomac. Here is what Washington said in letters from Mount Vernon to George Driggs and Thomas Johnson on December 28, 1786:

"We ought undoubtedly to avail ourselves of all the aids we can derive from experimental knowledge in our search. I concur readily therefore in sentiment with you and Mr. Lee that it would be proper to see what lights Mr. Brindley can afford us in conducting the navigation thro' the little Falls, and the idea of a model for the Locks at the great Falls, I think good for the reasons you offer, the experience (expense?) will be trifling and the saving may be great."

The only waterway truly successful in reaching "the West" was, of course, the famous Erie Canal (also known as Clinton's Ditch). It ran from Albany to Buffalo when fully constructed. Many of your ancestors and mine arrived in New York City from Europe, sailed up the Hudson River, rode a canal boat from Albany to Buffalo, and sailed west to Cleveland, Sandusky, Toledo and Detroit.

Today there are local folks who have taken their pleasure boats from Toledo, to Buffalo, to Albany, to New York and sailed through the inter-coastal waterways, all the way to Florida!

Ohio

Now let us review in broad terms the canals of Ohio. Even before statehood, both Thomas Jefferson and George Washington were advocating a water connection between the Ohio River and Lake Erie!

The Ohio and Erie Canal ran from Cleveland to Portsmouth and was completed in 1834. The Miami & Erie Canal ("our" canal) construction began in 1825 in Cincinnati. Work continued through the late 1840s.

As stated in "Canals of Ohio" (Ohio Historical Society):

“Ohio's new inland waterways achieved their primary goal of making agriculture a more financially rewarding enterprise in the state, and the improved economic situation of established farmers attracted new settlers from the eastern states, all hoping to acquire larger and more productive and profitable farms. The likelihood of immediate employment in canal construction also beckoned. Unskilled immigrants, primarily from Ireland and the various German states, composed much of the labor force, but sons of established families as well as new arrivals from the East, some of whom had worked on the Erie Canal, also helped build the waterways.

“Employment opportunities in Ohio's canal system did not end with its completion. Locks had to be tended, and heavy traffic on the waterway meant frequent repair work, as did the accumulated effects of weather. The enterprising individual who operated a canalboat always needed crewmen, one of whom drove the team of oxen or horses that pulled the vessel. This humble job, one that required the incumbent to plod alongside the canal hour after hour, was a tedious and uninspiring responsibility; but it was a start in the world of many young Ohioans, including James A. Garfield, who followed the towpath before beginning a public career that

eventually led him to the White House.

“During their heyday, the canals of Ohio were used primarily for moving freight of one sort or another; and towns like Akron, Dayton, Youngstown, and others located alongside the waterways grew more prosperous as a result of canal traffic. The growth of Cleveland, the northern terminus of the Ohio and Erie Canal, was particularly notable. In 1825 it was a hamlet numbering some five hundred souls. By 1860 its population had grown to more than twenty-five thousand, not yet the



industrial metropolis it would soon become, but already in a position of great advantage over all but a few Ohio towns. Envious communities some distance removed from a canal, Sandusky, for example, which at one time was larger than Cleveland, saw their economic prospects diminish.

“The canals of Ohio were used for more than simply shipping the products of agriculture and industry. Packets, or passenger boats, also plied the waterways of the state. Following completion of the Ohio and Erie Canal, one could travel in relative comfort from Cleveland to Portsmouth in about eighty hours at a cost of approximately \$1.70 for the 308-mile trip. After railroads eclipsed the canals as the primary means of transportation in Ohio, Sunday afternoon excursions on the waterways became a fashionable pastime.

Miami & Erie

As can be observed on the map (below), the Miami & Erie met the Wabash & Erie in the little town of Junction (appropriately named) just south of Defiance. So upon completion one could travel from Toledo via either canal to the Ohio River, then the Mississippi and onward to New Orleans!

Construction of the upper reaches of the canal was held up because of a certain boundary dispute, named “the Toledo War.” In the 1830s the villages of Perrysburg, Maumee, Waterville, Vistula, and Manhattan all vied to be the port at the northern end of the canal. Perrysburg soon dropped out of the competition because it was determined that the line of the canal would be on the north side of the Maumee River. Maumee held out

for a while but lost out because it was too far from Lake Erie. (Although the Maumee River was navigable to the present day Maumee-Perrysburg Bridge. Later both Maumee and Perrysburg were given access by way of the Side Cut Canal.)

Toledo

Toledo, like all cities, held out hope of being a major metropolis. Think of the efforts over 150 years for example: grain capital of North America, major transportation hub, glass capital, automobile-building promise, "Key to the Sea", etc.

Where the canal would terminate was a major issue in Ohio and Michigan. Here is an over-simplified story of the Toledo War. Obviously Ohio, by this time a state, and Michigan, still a territory, claimed "ownership" of Toledo. There were two boundary lines in question: one ran from the southern tip of Lake Michigan due east (the Fulton line) and one ran from the tip of Lake Michigan to North Cape (the Harris line). But the technical issue was: where is the tip of Lake Michigan?

The U.S. Congress took an interest in the situation and ordered the U.S. Army to come out and survey the lines. Among other young Army officers who in 1835 did the work was one Robert E. Lee! (Only 30 years later he was General Lee of the Confederate Army!)

But that action did not settle anything. At one point Governor Lucas of Ohio had his militia in Perrysburg and the Territorial Governor of Michigan had his militia coming down from Monroe to enforce its rights. There were a few incidents but the only injury was to one Stickney (son of Benjamin Franklin Stickney) who was stabbed in the side!

There appeared to be a need to have an official meeting in the disputed territory in order for Ohio to prevail. The story goes that in fact such a meeting was held. Dr. Horatio Conant of Maumee was elected clerk. Late in the evening, the cry went up: "the Michiganders are coming." So they galloped their horses down River Road to friendly country, namely Maumee. The official papers were in Dr. Conant's stove pipe hat which fell off! It was saved, and so what became Toledo and Lucas County was saved for Ohio! And Congress awarded the Upper Peninsula to Michigan! Question: who won? All of this because of civic pride and boosterism!

The Miami & Erie Canal was completed but was almost fully abandoned by 1900. The Sidecut Canal ceased operation in about 1870 as did the extension to north Toledo.

Miscellaneous

Here are a few specifics about the Miami & Erie Canal and its environs:

- It was established by the Ohio Legislature. Ohio took the land by eminent domain so to speak. Legally a survey line was drawn and Ohio acquired all of the land "where the dirt flew or the water flowed." Nobody cared very much about where the lines were drawn. They liked it because it was economic development, as we would say today. One hundred years later it became controversial in towns such as Defiance, Waterville and Maumee.
- There was a lot of talk about the City of Toledo acquiring the abandoned canal, beginning in the 1920s. The WPA finally filled in the canal (in Toledo, Maumee and Waterville) in about 1939. A new highway was built, first called Canal Boulevard and then the Anthony Wayne Trail.
- George Ritter was law director of Toledo in 1928. He took great pride in killing the so-called riparian rights of a few mills along the waterway.
- In time, the canal became a major nuisance to its neighbors in South Toledo and elsewhere.
- At one point, in the 1920s, the farmers whose land was below the level of the canal (now Providence) got pretty tired of the flooding of the fields from the canal. So they did a little self help. They dynamited the canal, and the water dried up, all the way to, I believe, the next lock in South Toledo!
- There exists a wonderful boat called the *Volunteer* at Providence Metropark near Grand Rapids. A trip includes passage through an original lock. Living history characters tell educational and enriching stories about life in the 1800s!
- The canal connected to Swan Creek by a series of locks and then to the Maumee River. Note that a lift bridge still exists today at the location, at the entrance to Owens-Corning World Headquarters.
 - At one time the canal extended through downtown Toledo and entered the river at Manhattan. It was abandoned long before the rest of the enterprise.

CAMILLUS CANAL PARK WINS ANOTHER AWARD

The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission is pleased to announce the Restored 1842 Nine Mile Creek Aqueduct at the Camillus Erie Canal Park in Camillus as the recipient of the 2011 Erie Canalway Heritage Award of Excellence. Honorable Mention was awarded to the Verona Beach Lighthouse on the eastern shore of Oneida Lake and the Delta Sonic Heritage Farm at the Buffalo Zoo in Buffalo.

"We congratulate and thank this year's recipients for doing so much to celebrate, preserve, and share the rich history of the Erie Canal," said Judy Schmidt-Dean, Chair of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission. "These are not only great places to visit—each has a valuable story to tell about how preserving our heritage can go hand-in-hand with economic and community revitalization."

The Heritage Award honors significant places of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and recognizes excellence in advancing the goals of the Erie Canalway Preservation and Management Plan. A five-person jury selected award recipients based on a written application and site visit, which included meetings with officials at each site, as well as community leaders, municipal representatives, and other stakeholders.

The jury selected the restored 1842 Nine Mile Creek Aqueduct at the Camillus Erie Canal Park for its extraordinary achievement in historic preservation and sustained public-private partnership between the Camillus Canal Society and Town of Camillus. Of 32 aqueducts constructed on the Enlarged Erie Canal in the mid-1800s, Nine Mile Creek Aqueduct is the only one that is restored and navigable.

The project was spearheaded by volunteers, who worked in partnership with the Town of Camillus to raise \$2.2 million to complete the restoration. The aqueduct is the centerpiece of the canal park, which serves more than 2,000 school children and 237,000 Erie Canalway trail users annually. In addition, several thousand people take advantage of the park's cruises each year, which lead right over the aqueduct.

"For nearly 40 years, town officials and the community have supported the Camillus Erie Canal Park, which is operated and maintained solely by 160 volunteers who constantly step up to the plate," said Liz Beebe, Vice President of the Camillus Canal Society. "We are honored to be recognized for our efforts to transform an abandoned, brush filled, forgotten canal into a showpiece for local residents and visitors."

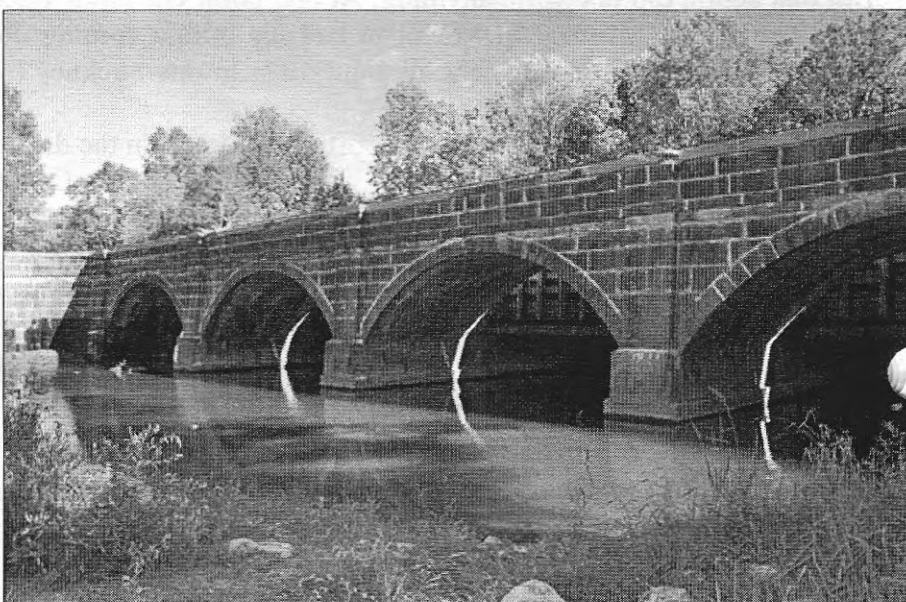


Photo courtesy of the Camillus Canal Society

The recent publicity about the Nine Mile Creek aqueduct brings up an interesting question! What do we mean by "navigable" or "restored." Obviously, Nine Mile Creek Aqueduct fits both criteria. But, to be navigable, does an aqueduct have to be navigated? I'm thinking of the Cowassalon Creek aqueduct and the Chittenango Creek Aqueduct, both of which have full-width concrete troughs across the piers and carry water, but no boats. I know that Chittenango Creek Aqueduct has a steel footbridge across the flume, but is that a disqualifier? Other locations that come to mind are the Delaware Canal's Tohickon aqueduct, the Windsor Locks Canal's Stony Creek Aqueduct (a concrete trough today, but no boats), the Whitewater Canal's Duck Creek Aqueduct at Metamora (the only covered wooden aqueduct remaining), and the I&M Canal's Little Vermillion Aqueduct (which could be navigated by the LaSalle canal boat with dredging. It's watered, but silted). I believe that both the Aux Sable Aqueduct and the Nettle Creek Aqueduct also on the I&M are watered, but not navigated. Of course, we can also look at the other I&M Canal (the Hennepin) where six of the nine aqueducts (including the feeder) are watered and navigable. On the Ohio & Erie in the Cuyahoga National Park, the Tinker's Creek aqueduct is currently being rebuilt and I believe that the Mill Creek Aqueduct still carries water.

David Barber

So, readers, what do you think? What other aqueducts do you know of that are navigable, restored, or both? What do those terms mean to you? Send your candidates and comments to Dave at dgarber@cs.com.

FAMED STEAM YACHT MAKES FIRST-EVER VOYAGE ON THE ERIE CANAL

Ship Has Entertained Prime Ministers, Princes

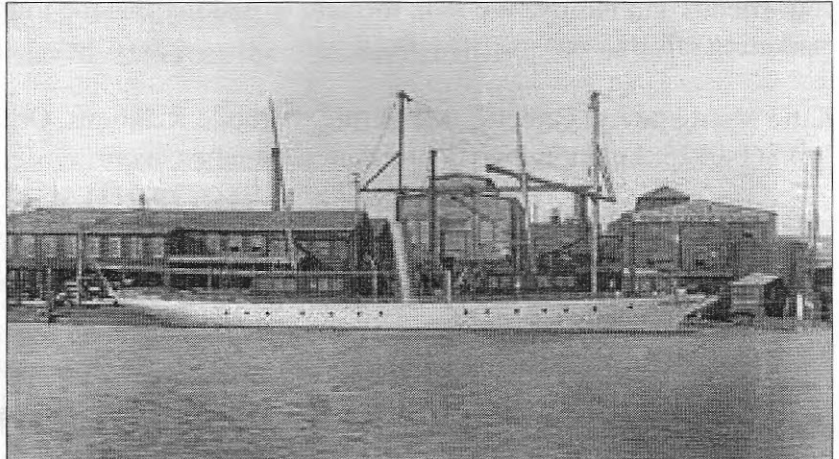
The famed steam yacht *Cangarda* made her inaugural trip on the Erie Canal in May, the New York State Canal Corporation announced. The 126-foot-long vessel, built in, 1901, is the last remaining U.S.-built steam yacht in America, and one of only three left in the world.

"We are pleased that this storied vessel will ply the waters of the Erie Canal this year," Canal Director Brian U. Stratton said. "When I went aboard to welcome and visit with the crew, I was astounded at the elegance of this historic craft, and the meticulous restoration of all the original woodwork."

The vessel was purchased in 1904 by George Taylor Fulford, a member of Canadian Parliament. The yacht remained with the family for many years, home ported on the family estate on the St. Lawrence River. While there, it hosted the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Kent, and the prime ministers of both England and Canada.

The opulent vessel's New York history continued after the Fulford family ownership. From 1953 to 1983, Frederick Burtis Smith lived aboard the vessel in Rochester, N.Y. Smith was the son of a wealthy attorney who socialized with the Rockefellers and John Barrymore.

The vessel later fell in to disrepair, eventually sinking in Boston Harbor in 1999 during a restoration attempt. In 2004, California resident Bob McNeil began a second, and ultimately successful, complete restoration. The elegant yacht began its trip on the Erie Canal at Waterford in Saratoga County, bound for her former home port at the Fulford estate, where so much of her rich history was made. The owners of the vessel had to cut a small section off of the ship's smokestack to fit under the low bridges of the canal system.



The steam yacht *Cangarda*, May 1901. Photo courtesy Tri-Coastal Marine

FOR MORE INFORMATION about the itinerary of the *Cangarda* on the New York Canal system, please contact the Canal Corporation Office of Media Relation & Public Affairs at (518) 436-2983.

NEW WEBSITE FOR OHIO & ERIE CANALWAY

The Ohio & Erie Canalway is pleased to announce that its new website is up-and-running. Take a look at www.ohioanderiecanalway.com. The Canalway thanks everyone for their tremendous help in bringing the site to life; they couldn't have done it without each and every one of you!

The site was launched on July 1, as scheduled. Throughout the summer, the webmaster continued to load content and photos. The vendor, REI, will actively monitor the site and perform quality control checks.

A Virtual Tour - *a few things you might like to know*

About Our Contributors: Special call outs to our key contributors!

www.ohioanderiecanalway.com/Main/Pages/78.aspx

Partnerships & Contributors - Our "Growing Thank You List" of website contributors:

www.ohioanderiecanalway.com/Main/Pages/83.aspx

Some of you may find yourselves on both lists.

National Heritage Area Boundaries online - For the first time in a long time, we have the boundaries of the National Heritage Area included as part of our interactive map. **Tip:** *Click on a County Section for a closer view:* www.ohioanderiecanalway.com/Main/Pages/Map.aspx

Tremendous thanks to Anthony Gareau, CVNP, for providing updated files.

Regional Information - now at your fingertips:

Regional Fact Sheet: www.ohioandieriecanalway.com/Main/Pages/71.aspx

National Heritage Area Overview: www.ohioandieriecanalway.com/Main/Pages/57.aspx

NHA Partnerships & Brand Identity: www.ohioandieriecanalway.com/Main/Pages/67.aspx

Marketing & Brand Identity: www.ohioandieriecanalway.com/Main/Pages/69.aspx

Towpath Trail - stem to stern: www.ohioandieriecanalway.com/Main/Pages/56.aspx

Canalway Samplers - a collection of favorite outings for visitors to try!

www.ohioandieriecanalway.com/Main/CanalwaySamplers.aspx

This has been an amazing process marked by collaboration, strong regional partnerships and your invaluable support. In addition, we found a great partner in our website vendor, Ripple Effect Interactive, a division of Great Lakes Publishing. Their commitment to the project and the Canalway in general has been nothing short of spectacular.

We hope you take some time to explore the site, "Like" us on Facebook, and share the new site with all your friends and family. We look forward to making this the foundation for a number of future Canalway marketing efforts.

Katie Montgomery, Director, Marketing & Public Relations, Ohio & Erie Canalway Association,
330.860.0825; kmontgomery@ohioandieriecanalway.com

The Ohio & Erie Canalway is a National Heritage Area – designated by Congress to help preserve and celebrate the rails, trails, landscapes, towns and sites that grew up along the first 110 miles of the canal that helped Ohio and our nation grow. Visit us anytime at www.ohioandieriecanalway.com

BEYOND THE BRIDGES

Rediscovering America's Waterways

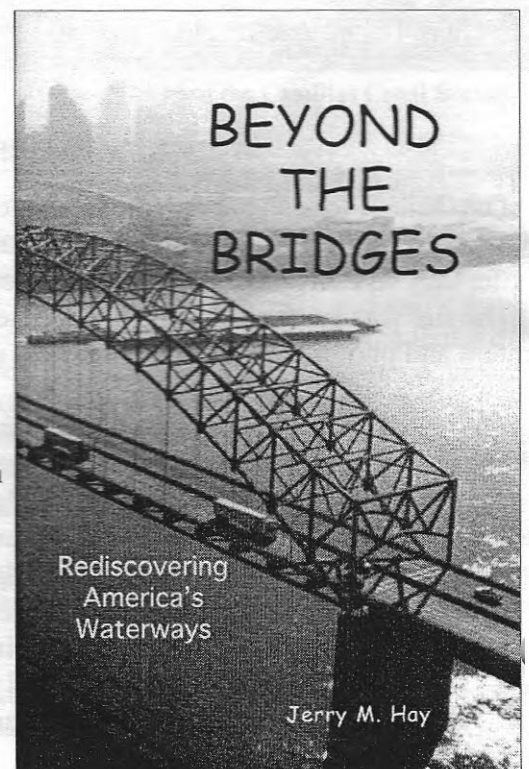
By Jerry M. Hay

Reviewed by David G. Barber

This book is a little different from most books reviewed in *American Canals*, as its subject is more about rivers than dug canals. But, several of the rivers discussed are or were canalized with locks and some, such as the Wabash and White Rivers in Indiana had slack water pools which were part of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

The book is about the author's adventures on Midwestern rivers, whether commonly navigated today or not. He also discusses his experiences as Riverlorian aboard the *Delta Queen* and the *Mississippi Queen*. There is even one section where he discusses canoeing up Beaver Creek from the Wabash to Grand Lake St. Marys, across the lake, and then down the St. Marys Feeder to the St. Marys River. This is a not usually thought of connection between the Ohio River watershed and the Great Lakes watershed.

I found the book to be enjoyable and informative. In addition to this book, the author also has written and sells river guides to the Wabash and White Rivers as well as the Illinois, Tennessee, Cumberland, Ohio and others. The book is available on the internet from riverlorian.com at \$ 28.50 hardback. Other titles are also available at this site.



THE RASPADURA CANAL—*AMERICAN CANALS*, No. 26, AUGUST 1978

“Women’s Canal Expedition a Bust”

A UPI article of 3 November 1976 (Los Angeles Times) described an all-female expedition to explore the fields of South America. A part of the mission of the group was to seek out a “lost canal,” said to have been dug in the late 18th century. The three-month expedition was to explore the giant Arato swamp in Colombia.

As a follow-up, Bill Trout wrote to the UPI office in London, which stated that “the expedition returned in total disarray...They found no lost canal.” The letter finished (so help us) “I fear it was pretty much a bust.”

Recently, Bill wrote to Steve Burgess, of the Cape-to-Cape Expedition:

Dear Mr. Burgess,

I was delighted to find your reference in www.capetocape.org.uk to the American Canal Society's Index Sheet on the Raspadura Canal, which is no longer lost, and your plans to navigate it from coast to coast. This is great stuff!

The YouTube film on the canal, which you link to, is very fuzzy on my computer so I couldn't see details. It certainly looks like a cutting. Are there any engineering features of the canal showing how it was built and used? How long is it, and at what altitude? Is anyone like you working on a definitive history, or an archaeological study of what's left of the canal? It's worth a book or two!

Many thanks for putting an ACS Canal Index Sheet to good use. This one definitely needs updating.

Bill Trout

LEESPORT LOCKS IN HISTORIC CANAL SITE

The borough now owns property that was once key to moving coal in the 19th century.

By *Mary E. Young, Reading Eagle*

The history behind the Leesport Lock House has taken nearly two centuries. Settling its future took less than a month after the Leesport Lock House Foundation approached the county with an idea.

Now part of the Berks County Parks System, the lock house that once was a rest stop along the Schuylkill Canal and a residence for the lock tender will soon become the property of the borough for which it's named.

"It's their history," said County Commissioner Kevin S. Barnhardt, who worked out the details on behalf of the county. "Without the lock house, there would be no Leesport. "They will have more of a passion to keep it going."

Borough officials and the members of the Leesport Lock House Foundation are thrilled, not only about receiving ownership of the lock house, but about something the county has thrown in with the deal. Barnhardt and commissioners Mark C. Scott and Christian Y. Leinbach approved the purchase of an abandoned carwash on land adjacent to the lock house for \$35,000. On that site sit the walls of the canal, which was filled in with dirt before the carwash was built in the 1950s or 1960s, and a historic marker from the canal. The county will spend another \$10,000 to \$20,000 to have the carwash structure demolished and prepare the property according to plans provided by the foundation, Barnhardt said.

Those plans include removing the asphalt and planting the lot with grass, foundation President Beverly Miller said. "We've had concerns about the (lock) walls for many years," she said. "We've wanted to acquire that property for a long time. We never had the opportunity until now. We have a lot of plans. We're going to expose the tops of the canal walls and fill it with blue flowers to resemble water."

Borough Manager Sandra L. Weiser-Pascavage said the recent vote by borough council to accept ownership of the lock house was unanimous. "It's a historic site in our town," she said. "It's one of the best preserved lock houses along the Schuylkill Canal.

The lock house has always been close to everyone's heart. "It belongs to the Schuylkill River and the canal. We look at it as an asset."

Barnhardt said that if at any point the borough has problems preserving the lock house, ownership will be turned to the county for \$1. The foundation will continue to maintain the property with volunteer labor, as it has since buying the lock house in 1975, Miller said. After restoring it, the foundation gave the lock house to the county in 1992. "It's like we're reverting to 1992," Barnhardt said. "We're turning back the hands of time."

CANALENDER

September 19-24, 2011—World Canals Conference in the Netherlands provinces of Gronigen, Friesland, Drenthe, and Overijssel. www.worldcanalsconference2011.nl/home.html

September 23-25, 2011—Canal Society of Indiana fall trip, "Once on the Blue Moon," a six-hour cruise on the Tennessee River at Chattanooga, TN, passing through locks; Civil War Dinner Theater at Buttonwillow Church at Whitwell, TN; time for touring battlefields, museums, aquarium, etc. on your own

October, 2011—October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29. The 24th annual guided walking tour of all 58.89 miles of the Delaware Canal from Easton to Bristol, Pennsylvania. 12-mile+/- sections. Visit www.fodc.org for full itinerary.

October 1—9th Annual Middlesex Canal Bicycle Ride. Meet 9 AM at the Middlesex Canal plaque, Sullivan Sq T Sta., follow the canal route 38 miles to Lowell and return by train to Boston. Google canalridecuesheet. Snack at Kiwanis Park, Woburn (across canal from Baldwin Mansion, 2 Alfred St); visit at Canal Museum, 71 Faulkner St, N. Billerica. Riders who leave early can take a Lowell line train back to Boston. Middlesex Canal Association. Leader Dick Bauer. www.middlesexcanal.org.

October 9—Walk the D&R Canal from Alexander Road, Princeton, NJ, to Carnegie Road (5.5 miles). Meet at 10 am at the Basin parking lot on Alexander Road. Contact Bob Barth, 201-401-3121.

October 14-16, 2011—Canal Society of New York State Fall Field Trip, Western Wayne County, with headquarters in Newark. For more details, please visit www.newyorkcanals.org.

October 14-16, 2011—Pennsylvania Canal Society tour of the Juniata Division of the Main Line Canal. Contact: Bill Lampert, indnbll@yahoo.com.

October 16—Middlesex Canal Fall Walk, Winchester/Medford. 3-mi. level history walk along canal route to site of Mystic River aqueduct in Medford. Meet at 1:30 pm at Sandy (Shannon) Beach lot at Upper Mystic Lake on Mystic Valley Pkwy., 1.3 mi. N of Rte. 60. Joint with AMC Local Walks. Info: www.middlesexcanal.org or Roger Hagopian (781-861-7868 to 10pm). Robert Winters (robert@middlesexcanal.org; 617-661-9230).

October 21-23—Pennsylvania Canal Society tour of the Juniata Division of the Main Line Canal, Newport to Raystown Feeder Dam. HQ: Quality Inn, Lewistown.

October 26—National Mule Day. Please check www.lasallecanalboat.org for event updates. 815-223-1851.

November 6—Middlesex Canal Assn. Fall Meeting; 2:30 in the museum. "In Search of Locks, a 400 mile Bicycle Tour of the Erie Canal." 13th annual *Cycling the Erie Canal*, Buffalo to Albany. More than 500 cyclists participated, among them our speaker, **Jeff Ellis**, from Billerica, who will regale you with photos and tales of his extraordinary experience.

November 20—Walk the D&R Canal Feeder from the Ellarslie Mansion in Cadwalader Park, Trenton, NJ, to the junction with the main canal at Old Rose St. Meet at 10 am at Ellarslie. Contact Bob Barth, 201-401-3121.

March 10, 2012—Canal Society of New York State Winter Meeting and Symposium, Rochester, NY. For details, visit www.newyorkcanals.org.

April 13-15, 2012—Canal Society of Indiana 30th Anniversary Tour, headquartered in Batesville, IN. Bus & Whitewater Valley Railroad tour of Whitewater Canal locks and dam (Connersville to Brookville). Visit Whitewater Canal headquarters, Gateway Park, Yellowbank Lock 21, railroad shops and yard. Meals at historic Laurel Hotel and Sherman House. Teddy Roosevelt re-enactor on NY and Panama canals

May 4-6, 2012—Virginia Canals & Navigations Society Annual Canal Conference, Covington, VA. Contact: Phil de Vos, phipfox@yahoo.com.

June, 2012—The American Canal Society and Canadian Canal Society's Historic Canals Conference, Hamilton, Ontario. to examine the Desjardins Canal (which will be celebrating its 175th anniversary), the Burlington Ship Canal, and Hamilton Harbour and its environs. Contact Bob Sears, 416-285-7254; dawn-ofdestiny@sympatico.ca

September, 2012—World Canals Conference, Yangzhou, China. www.worldcanalsconference.org <http://yangzhou.jiangsu.net>.

September 30-October 2, 2012—NY State Canal Conference. Please check www.newyorkcanals.org

2013—World Canals Conference, Toulouse, France