From the President
By David G. Barber

A matter of current discussion is the question of fees in the Chesapeake and Ohio National Historical Park. As you may be aware, the federal (and state) government has been cutting back support for parks for many years. But, usage has been increasing.

Currently, the C&O NHP charges for access to the Great Falls area where there is a huge parking lot and much demand. But, the remainder of the park and parking is free.

Recently, the park has proposed adding fees to park at Fletchers Cove and to walk in the park outside of Georgetown. In Georgetown, the towpath is part of the city pedestrian grid and enforcement would be impossible. For pedestrians, the fee is proposed at $3 per week (increasing to $7 per week in 2017) or $30 per year. The C&O Canal Association is weighing in on this, and I wish them luck.

While I appreciate the need for added resources, I wonder about the practicality on a 184.5-mile towpath that is foot accessible at a great many points. How will the permits be sold? How enforced? The towpath is used for a few miles by the Appalachian Trail at Harpers Ferry and by the Tuscarora Trail at Hancock. Is someone who walked from Georgia or Maine going to have to pay a fee to walk these miles. What about the Capital Crescent Trail, which is immediately next to the towpath for many miles outside of DC. If you walk on one you pay, but the other is free? Doesn’t this convert the limited staff to toll takers and enforcers? Or is most of the fee going to pay for new employees to do this? There are many who walk the towpath daily or use it to commute. Are you going to erect mobile toll traps to check everyone? Here in Massachusetts there is much said about the cost of the toll collectors on the Massachusetts Turnpike. The plan is to eliminate them.

When the park was first established, there was much concern about it restricting access to the Maryland shore of the Potomac River by fishermen. That issue was dealt with. But, fishing is a state issue. If you buy a Maryland fishing license, are you then going to have to pay to cross the park to get to the river? Or will fishermen be exempt, but not walkers? These are not easy issues. We will be awaiting further information.

On another, but related matter, I wish to report that in December, Congress enacted and the president approved legislation to establish a National Park in the Blackstone Valley in both Rhode Island and Massachusetts. What this will mean will be further defined in the next three years. But, the legislation includes by name, the Blackstone River and its tributaries and the Blackstone Canal.

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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 preservation, 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 objectives are welcome.

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DEADLINE: Material for our next issue must be on the editor's desk no later than March 15, 2015. Send to Steve Dean, PO Box 132, Saint Leonard MD 20685, Editor, American Canals; 301-904-9068 184.5_miles@comcast.net

Material submitted to AMERICAN CANALS for publication should be typed and double-spaced or sent by email in WORD format. You may send actual photographs (which will be scanned and returned), or digital versions may be emailed or sent on a CD.

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The American Canal Society is looking for a new sales committee chairman.
If you are interested, please contact Bob Barth at 201-402-3121 or bbarth@att.net.
A New Canal Through Central America Could Have Devastating Consequences
The ramifications of the proposed route have environmentalists worried, and for good reason

By Matthew Shaer, Smithsonian Magazine, December 2014

When construction crews begin digging a new canal this month across Nicaragua, connecting the Pacific and Atlantic, it’ll be a boon to global shipping and, the government says, to the economy of the second-poorest nation in the Americas. But activists, scientists, and others are increasingly alarmed by the environmental impact of a 173-mile artificial waterway—wider, deeper, and three and a half times the length of the Panama Canal.

Developed by Wang Jing, an enigmatic Chinese industrialist with ties to China’s ruling party, the Grand Nicaragua Canal will cost an estimated $40 billion and take five years to build. At 90 feet deep and 1,706 feet across at its widest, the channel will accommodate the newest cargo supertankers, which are longer than the Empire State Building is tall and carry 18,000 shipping containers. The vessels are too big to pass through the Panama Canal (even after a $5 billion expansion is completed) or to dock in any U.S. port.

The new canal and its infrastructure, from roads to pipelines to power plants, will destroy or alter nearly one million acres of rainforest and wetlands. And that doesn’t include Lake Nicaragua, a beloved 3,191-square-mile inland reservoir that provides most Nicaraguans with drinking water. The canal cuts through the lake, and critics say ship traffic will pollute the water with industrial chemicals and introduce destructive invasive plants and animals.

Plus, the canal route lies in the middle of a hurricane belt, says Robert Stallard, a research hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. “You’re likely going to be looking at hurricanes vastly more powerful than anything that ever hit Panama, and ever will,” Stallard says. A storm like Hurricane Mitch, which killed 3,800 people in Nicaragua in 1998, would probably cause the canal to flood, triggering mudslides that would breach locks and dams. Communities, homes, roads, and power lines would be swamped.

The Nicaraguan government has yet to release promised analyses of the canal’s likely environmental impacts and has even dodged neighboring Costa Rica’s request to share disaster plans. “We’ve got a lack of information and a potentially big threat to the environment,” says Jorge A. Huete-Pérez, vice president of the Academy of Sciences of Nicaragua. “The government just wants to rush the thing through.” The canal’s true benefits can’t be calculated, Huete-Pérez and others argue, as long as the costs to Nicaragua’s forests, waterways, and wildlife remain hidden.

Read more: http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/new-canal-through-central-america-could-have-devastating-consequences-180953394/#CSZh3WFZU0kMk6pE.99 — Follow us: @SmithsonianMag on Twitter
NEWS FROM THE SOO LOCKS VISITORS CENTER ASSOCIATION
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN

ACS members Bob and Linda Barth visited the Soo Locks Visitors Center in June as a stop on a New Jersey Lighthouse Society tour of Michigan lights. Mike Boucher, the tour leader, had cleverly planned the visit to coincide with the annual Engineers Day at the locks. Since that visit, the Barths now receive the newsletter of the visitor center association. Here are some tidbits:

The shipping season in the Upper Great Lakes came to a close on January 15, 2015, and the Welland Canal closed in late December. Shipping on the Lower Lakes continues at a reduced volume as long as ice conditions permit.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will again be busy this winter with repairs, maintenance, and upgrades to the MacArthur and Poe Locks. Work will be intensive, due to the short time between closing and the reopening on March 25, 2015.

The Soo Locks Visitors Center Association will fundraise and work with the Corps to refurbish the center. Since the current furnishings date back many years, the association feels that it needs to be more visitor friendly.

The brutal winter of 2014 forced a late start to last year’s shipping season. There were many railroad delays in getting taconite, coal, and the western grains to the lake head. Many times when ships were available, the cargoes weren’t at the docks to be loaded. Some have blamed this on the fact that the railroads were transporting oil from the Midwestern fields to the refineries. The railroads are currently enjoying an increase in business, and they are in the process of obtaining additional locomotive power to accommodate all of their customers. In Minnesota, trucking rules were loosened so that taconite, which normally travels by rail, could be trucked from the processing plants to the docks.

Road salt is always a typical fall cargo for many of the older lakers. Two vessel-loads of salt—about 40,000 tons—were delivered to the Carbide Dock in Sault Ste. Marie. The salt will then be loaded onto trucks for distribution to storage facilities in the eastern part of the Upper Peninsula (UP). Munising, Marquette, and Houghton, Michigan receive similar deliveries. City streets, U.S. highways, and state highways are usually the only roadways salted in the UP. With the rising cost of road salt, many communities along the Lower Lakes have been able to reduce their costs by obtaining salt from as far away as Venezuela, Morocco, and Egypt.

Currently lake levels are at or above average. Finally, as of the end of October 2014, Great Lakes ports reported that they are operating at pre-recession levels.
NEWS FROM THE EDITOR: For the past ten years I have greatly enjoyed serving as the editor of *American Canals*. It has been fascinating to learn about waterways in many states and around the globe.

Many thanks to the many friends who have submitted articles and photographs to share with our readers over the years. I have decided to leave this post in order to continue my writing efforts and to have more time to work on getting a public boat ride on our Delaware and Raritan Canal.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce your new editor, Steve Dean, who is the current editor of *Along the Towpath*, the newsletter of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association. If you wish to contact Steve, here is his information: PO Box 132, Saint Leonard MD 20685; 301-904-9068; 184.5_miles@comcast.net.

Sincerely,
Linda Barth

THE JOY OF CANAWLING

By John P. Wunderle, Sr., Kent, Ohio

You have had a very enjoyable weekend on the Canal Society of Ohio Fall/Spring Tour. Your pictures have just been developed or uploaded to the internet and you have shown them to your co-workers during your lunch period. One of them, the one who spent the entire weekend slouched in a chair watching a group of grown men running up and down a field chasing an odd shaped ball, says to you, “Do you mean to tell me that you spent all day Saturday out in the rain pushing through blackberry bushes, briars and thorns just to see a ditch filled with muddy water and a pile of old rocks?” What are you, some kind of a nut?

What are you indeed? Why would anyone do something like this? Well, for starters, it gives you a chance to be a historian, an archeologist, a theorist, a researcher, a photographer, an analyst, and an interviewer and to take part in many other fields of general and specific interest. This article, by looking at one short section of the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal, will attempt to show you how all of these talents can be used.

The section between Campbellsport and Kent contains almost all of the things that go to make up a canal. There are, or were, locks, a summit, feeders, a slackwater crossing, a basin, and either a culvert or a wooden aqueduct over Breakneck Creek on the South feeder. The big surprise comes when we discover that there is more that we do not know than there is that we do know. This is where we put to use all of the talents we mentioned above when we spoke of an interest in canals.

When we first look at a section of a canal we usually start with what remains. The following are items that are still there: locks, feeders, canal prism, etc. We then go to old maps, records, etc. to try to place the things that are gone. If there are no maps or records or letters, we then begin to use conjecture process. What would the engineer have done here? Would it make any sense to do this? Why would they have done that? We then come up with a hypothesis and set out to prove what we believe might be true. Examples of this follow, along with a multitude of questions that remain to be answered by some future researcher.

One of the questions that has bugged people for a long time is the fact that there are practically no lock remains on the P&O other than the lock in Kent and the now filled-in lock in Lowellville. The Lower Kent Lock has been completely destroyed by the EPA requirement that the fish below the dam must have the ability to visit the fish above the dam. The lower west gate pocket remains intact and the west lock wall has been partially rebuilt. The east wall, which was in much better shape, has been removed. I have my own thoughts on the lack of lock stones. It will be up to someone else to prove or disprove my theory.

The Cleveland and Mahoning Valley Railway Co. bought the entire canal and all that went with it for $20,000 in June of 1876. This document is on file in the county recorder's office in Ravenna. (Samuel Lane in *Akron and Summit County* puts the purchase price at $38,000). The railroad was built right on the towpath. I know this because, as a youngster during the 1930s, I saw the ties still in the towpath at Bullhead Basin. (More about Bullhead Basin later). I believe that when the railroad reached a lock site, since it could not just jump up eight or ten feet, it went into the bed of the canal at the site of each lock and then worked its way back up to the towpath before reaching the next lock. We know that the railroad was in the bed of the canal at Powdernill Road. In fact, the ties were set in concrete at this location. Why? We do not know, something for someone else to study.

Back to the lock locations—since the railroad had to go from the towpath to the bed of the canal at each
lock, I believe they pulled each lock down and then used the rubble to make this transition. This means each lock would be destroyed. The theory sounds good until you look at the lock locations from the Ravenna summit down to Campbellsport. In this location the railroad did not follow the canal but still the lock stones are all gone. We first thought that these locks were made of wood in order to save money, but then along came Tom Goughnour with a document talking about replacing lock stones in these very locks. So they were stone, but what happened to this stone?

The location does not lend itself to one where farmers would come in to remove the stone for barn foundations. Did the railroad remove all this stone to build the bridge abutments for the nearby bridge over the west branch of the Mahoning River? The bridge piers are still there and the railroad did own the lock stones. We just do not know—another place for research by some canal enthusiast.

We have bounced around a bit so it is now time we took a detailed look at more of this Campbellsport—Kent section. Let’s start at the nineteen-foot lift lock at the Kent end. The canal was in the river between this point and downtown Kent because the east bank of the river was solid rock and there was no way a canal could be built on the bank. Was this really a lock with a nineteen-foot lift? We have no documentation but written history, handed-down stories, and some research tends to make us believe it may be true.

Dudley Weaver, now deceased, spent several vacations in Harrisburg researching the P&O. He came up with at least five separate surveys for the section from the Breakneck Creek feeder to Plum Creek in Kent. He claims the route finally selected along Breakneck Creek was the best engineered section of the entire canal.

Since there was only one level from the Breakneck slack water crossing to the nineteen-foot lift lock, it might well be that a nineteen-foot lift was required to maintain this level. Before we leave the question of the nineteen-foot lift lock, there are several more things to consider. We believe we know the exact location of this lock since it is shown on an old B&O blueprint. Why was it so far back from the river? Could it have been a lock cut into the solid stone on the bank and, perhaps, sheathed in wood to protect the boats? We do not know. Why are there three walls of cut stone between the present railroad location and the river? Were they made from stone from the lock? Why are these walls there in the first place? There is no reason for the railroad to fear high water at this location, and there is no reason for bank protection since the bank is solid rock.

The most reasonable explanation of the rock walls would seem to tie in with the feeder for the Center Flouring Mill. After the canal left the nineteen-foot lock it followed the river bank for quite a way before turning back toward the present double track railroad. The feeder for the mill would have to be crowded in between the canal and the river and, perhaps, the wall was needed for that reason. It is understood why the outlet for the mill feeder would need to be a ways above the lock, but why not cross the river there and go down the west side? We do not even know the age of the rock walls. They could be as recent as the 1900-03 double tracking of the B&O, and would therefore have no connection with the canal.

We do know that the Center Flowering Mill was across the river at the foot of Grant Street and that it was powered by water from the canal. There is written material that indicates there was a pond north of the mill. Today, there is no indication of this pond. Where did the aqueduct-flume to the pond leave the canal? Why can we find no indication on the bank of the canal as to where the water supply for the mill left the canal?

When we leave the upper Kent lock and head toward the summit, the next point in question would be where the Atlantic and Great Western R.R. (Erie) crossed the canal. Looking at the location today, it is much different than it was during canal days. The canal would appear to be much lower than the railroad and, perhaps, a simple bridge carried the railroad across the canal. The location was part of the upper Kent yards and is totally changed. We do know that the railroad and canal co-existed for 15–20 years at this spot.

One item of interest is between the upper lock and the Erie R.R. The new hike-bike path recently opened from Crain Ave. in Kent to Beckwith’s orchard, parallels the canal for several hundred yards. The canal is in a deep cut, very wide at the top and at least 50 feet deep. This would involve moving many hundreds of cubic feet of dirt. Where did they put it? We do not know. This cut can be seen from the paved trail.

Between the old Erie R.R. and Brady Lake Road, we come to where there was a pond just north of the Brady Lake Road. This was known as Rhodes Pond, since people named Rhodes lived on the hill where the small strip mall now stands. The pond was under the present parking lot. The road from Blackhorse to the upper village in Kent passed this point. Was there a bridge here over the canal? Was this a loading point? We do not know.
As we proceed up the canal, we come to Bullhead Basin. This is probably the best preserved basin on the entire canal system. The canal is watered in and out of the basin, and the basin is fully watered and much the same as when it was in use. This basin is located between Brady Lake Road and Rt. 59. It is somewhat of an enigma, since no map or record indicates anything called Bullhead Basin. I seem to be one of the very few people who have heard this name used. I did, however, recently talk to a lady who works in the police department at Brady Lake, and she mentioned that as a child she used to ice skate at, of all places, Bullhead Basin.

How did I come across the name? It is a similar story to the lady at Brady Lake. The boys in our neighborhood (Kent) would walk cross country through three woods, intersect the canal and then skate up the canal to play ice hockey on Bullhead Basin. These young men were of an ethnic origin, and even today have no knowledge of, or interest in canals. They most likely would have called this a pond. Where did they come up with the word *basin*? They indicate that they do not know—it’s just always been known by that name.

Now for some personal thoughts about Bullhead Basin. It is obvious that this is not a basin in the usual sense of the word. The location is between two roads known to exist in canal days but not close to either one. Therefore, we might conclude it was not a shipping point. The area between Brady Lake Road and Rt. 59 is very swampy so it required a great deal of fill to make a solid towpath and berm bank. I believe they used this high bank as a "borrow pit" for dirt to build the towpath and when they were done, they had a basin. It is hard to believe anyone would tie up there, since you would be fairly close to both Kent and Ravenna, but I do remember a line of posts running diagonally across the basin from northeast to southwest. These were still in place during the 1930s. There might have been a place to tie up or the foundation for a dock or pier. Another opportunity for someone to do a little research.

Now we come to an area that could keep a number of people busy for a long time. This is the area just south of Rt. 59 and is the location of the Breakneck Feeder, a dam, a slackwater crossing, and a possible feeder from Brady Lake. There was at least one and possibly two locks here. Let's look at the possible Brady Lake feeder first.

Dudley Weaver says, “A water gate at the south end of Brady Lake controlled the flow of water through a culvert and then by a wood aqueduct to the canal near the site of the Breakneck bridge and Rt. 59.” A letter from Dudley's grandmother (a prolific writer) tells of coming up the canal from Franklin Mills (Kent) and passing the Brady Lake feeder. But does a Brady Lake feeder at this place make any sense? The only thing it could possibly feed would be the long level from the slackwater crossing to the upper Kent lock. The Breakneck feeder at this same point, with an abundant supply of water, could also feed only this section. Alfred Kelly, when reviewing S. Dodge's report on water for the summit, agrees with Dodge that there would be 150,000,000 cubic feet of water from Brady Lake and Pipin Lake and then goes on to say that another 50,000,000 cubic feet would be available from the Lower Brady and Pipin Lakes. Were there two Brady-Pipin feeders? We do not know.

There was a slackwater crossing at this point since this is where the canal crossed Breakneck Creek. Was there a lock at the entrance to the long level to the upper Kent lock? It seems probable since there would be a need for a guard lock. Was there a lock on the Ravenna side of the slackwater crossing? This, also, seems probable since Dudley’s study indicates there were 16 locks on the Western division. We know that there were 9 locks from the Middlebury cutoff up to Cuyahoga Falls. If you add the lock between Mill St. and the Ohio & Erie lower basin and the two in Kent, we have four left. If there was one into and one out of the slackwater crossing and one at the summit, this leaves one to be located between the slackwater crossing and the summit.
We have long thought this to be the case but we are short on documentation.

Research by Ronald Kingsley (Emeritus Professor, KSU) outlines the location of the Powder Mill, its various buildings and its mill race. The mill race starts at the lock between the slackwater outlet lock and the summit lock and thus places the lock #2 close to where the canal crossed Powdernill Road. There are many cut stones laying around this slackwater-dam location, but they are in no sort of order so nothing can be determined from this. How did the railroad cross this area? Did they use the stone from the locks and the dam to cross this area? Once more, we just do not know.

We now reach an area that is wide open for a great deal of research, the summit level. We know that Dodge suggested, and Kelly agreed, that the summit be moved one and one quarter miles west of Ravenna. This would lower the summit about six feet and avoid having the north feeder going through the city of Ravenna. Tax maps show both the north and south feeders hitting the canal at the same point. Both feeders parallel the canal heading east; the north feeder for a short distance and the south feeder for quite a long distance. This enables both feeders to enter the canal at the highest point. This all makes good sense until you read some of the water agreements.

For example: in an agreement covering the use of water from the north feeder, we read, “in and through said feeder, from the feeder dam in the township of Shalersville to the main line of the canal in Ravenna below Lock #1 at the west termination of the summit level.” Below Lock #1...what does this mean? In another paragraph the same agreement reads, “that instead of discharging the whole of the surplus water, which shall hereafter be carried through said feeder as above specified, into the level of the canal next below and west of the summit, the said party of the first part shall have the right to discharge such portion thereof as they think proper, not exceeding one half of the same into the summit level of said canal and carry the same east to increase the water power at the locks east of the summit.” Keeping in mind that the north feeder was navigable, where did it come into the main canal? Was it at summit level or at the next level below Lock #1 and west of the summit.

Let's see if we can make some sense out of these statements. Most water diversion agreements required that water diverted for any purpose be returned to the stream from which it was diverted. The North Feeder took water from the Cuyahoga River at the Feeder Dam and, to follow the agreement, would have to return the water below Lock #1 west so that it would end up back in the Cuyahoga at the slackwater crossing or at the upper Kent Lock. However, it would seem that the North Feeder reached the mainline canal at the level below Lock #1 west. This means a channel went on above the lock in the feeder through which water could be added at the summit level. This would, also, mean there was a lock in the feeder with identical lift to Lock #1 west, to lower the boats to the level below Lock #1 west.

Let us now consider the North Feeder itself. In several places in the water agreements mention is made of the lock. Was there only one or were there three as Dudley Weaver’s research suggests? S. Dodge, in discussing water rights and water supply wrote the following: “Brady and Pipin Lakes were raised nineteen feet above the top water line of the summit level of the canal and will contain an average area of two hundred and fifty acres, which is equal to 207,035,000 cubic feet of available water at the summit. By locating a lock of 11 feet lift opposite these lakes and constructing a feeder to the line below, 10 feet more can be drawn from these lakes to equal 57,450,000.” Now what was that all about? Was the lock he mentions at the point where the feeder to Brady and Pipin Lakes met the North Feeder? This is another interesting location. What kind of control mechanism was located here, whether or not it was a lock? There had to be a means at this point to route water coming down the feeder from Feeder Dam into the channel to fill Brady and Pipin Lakes. But in a dry spell the same channel had to take water out of Brady and Pipin and carry it back to the North Feeder and on to the summit. What kind of control mechanism did all these things? Were there two channels? We do not know.

Dudley Weaver indicated that the South Feeder was navigable to Muddy Lake. Does this make any sense? The South Feeder parallels the main canal in an east-west direction along Hommon Road for a little over a mile. It then turns south to Muddy Lake. If in the end you are going to end up only a mile from the main canal, why dig two and a half miles of canal to navigable specifications, plus a culvert or aqueduct over Breakneck Creek at Lakewood Road to end up only a short distance from the main canal?

The feeder today when viewed from Lakewood Road appears to have been built to navigable
standards, but south of Sandy Lake toward Randolph, the feeder is too narrow. Was it planned to canalize the feeder farther south at some later date? We do not know.

The water agreement also talks about taking water for milling purposes from below the lock on the North Feeder and from below Lock #2 west of the summit on the main canal. Lock #2 would be the lock between the summit and the lock at the Ravenna side of the slackwater crossing, at or near Powderrmill road.

Those of you who were with us on the Sunday following the 1992 spring tour know that we followed the canal from the summit down to Cambellsport. We located the point where the canal turned south from the new double-tracked CSX Railroad. When the railroad was double tracked they raised the route through the deep cut made for the canal but still maintained the original single track railroad built on the towpath. Since, for awhile, they used the old single track to the east it was necessary to revamp the junction of the single and double track at the point where the canal turned south. We were able to identify the point where the single track took off and also the point where the Cleveland, Alliance and Mahoning Valley Interurban intersected the old single track when they took over this section.

One interesting bit of post-canal engineering is still visible between Bullhead Basin and Rt.59. Going downstream from Rt. 59 in canal days, Breakneck Creek made a big loop going away from the canal. It then came back and then headed east again and stayed east of the canal all the way to the Cuyahoga River. When the B&O was double tracked and the line moved east of the canal, it appeared that they would have to construct three bridges. Two over the creek at the loop and one more where the creek went east and stayed there. What they finally did is quite interesting. Where the creek first turned away from the canal to begin the loop, they dammed the creek and turned the creek into the canal by cutting a hole in the towpath. Where the creek came back from the loop they dammed the canal, cut another hole in the towpath and turned the water back into the creek. The railroad then had to build only one bridge and make a fill across both arms of the now dry loop. Today, Breakneck Creek still runs for several hundred feet in the bed of the canal.

This might be a good place to stop. I have attempted to show how much there is that we do not know in just one short section of the P&O Canal. While this might be an unusually complex section, I am sure there are places close to wherever you may live that will provide just as much a challenge. So, it’s time for you to get started in filling in some of the blanks. It is your chance to be an active participant in history.

THRUWAY AUTHORITY AND CANAL CORPORATION ANNOUNCE
THE PORT BYRON, NY, OLD ERIE CANAL HERITAGE PARK

The New York State Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation announced in May a project to create the Port Byron Old Erie Canal Heritage Park, an attraction for Erie Canal enthusiasts and upstate tourists curious about the history of the canal and its impact on the development of both New York State and the United States. Part of Governor Cuomo’s popular “Path Through History” initiative and developed in conjunction with the Canal Society of New York State, the park will be the first facility of its kind to offer access directly from the New York State Thruway to a historic site. Visitors will be able to access the park directly from the eastbound Thruway (I-90) and also from N.Y. Route 31 in the Village of Port Byron, as part of a later project in 2016.

“This project is a perfect example of the cooperation we have cultivated between the Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation,” said Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation Chairman Howard P. Milstein. “The Thruway and Erie Canal have been economic engines for New York, both commercially and recreationally, and this site will tell Port Byron’s story to thousands of tourists each year.”

The park will give visitors an authentic glimpse into life on the Erie Canal from the mid-19th century to the early-20th century. Key historical elements include the Enlarged Erie Canal Lock 52 from the 1850s and the Erie House Complex, which dates back to 1895 and includes the Erie House Tavern and Hotel, a mule barn, and blacksmith shop. As part of a future phase, a new visitor center will offer interpretive displays, and educational materials.

“The Thruway provides motorists access to historic communities throughout upstate New York, and this project gives visitors a chance to experience some of that history without making a detour from their trip,” said Thruway Executive Director Thomas J. Madison. “Moving forward, we will continue to utilize our partnership
with the Canal Corporation to find additional ways we can bring our state's rich history directly to our customers."

"It's amazing to think that 150 years ago, mules were pulling barges in the very spot where today, vehicles are cruising the Thruway at sixty five miles per hour," said Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton. "The Port Byron Old Erie Canal Heritage Park will showcase this deep historical connection in helping countless people travel between the Hudson River and Great Lakes to ship goods and experience all that upstate communities have to offer. With the canal system supporting nearly $380 million in tourism-based economic activity, it's clear people want to experience this history, and this park is the perfect way to tell these stories."

"The Erie Canal is part of our state and national legacy and a monumental and colorful chapter in American history," said Thomas X. Grassi, president of the Canal Society of New York State. "Thanks to the leadership and vision of Governor Cuomo and the Thruway and Canal Corporation this project will come to fruition and provide an opportunity for thousands of school children and the general public to not only learn but literally touch a part of history they have heard so much about. What a marvelous example of what can be achieved when we all work together."

The contract to build phase 1 was bid on April 30, 2014 and the low bidder was Cold Spring Construction of Akron, NY. "We at Cold Spring Construction are looking forward to being a part of a project of this significance," said President Stephen Forrestel. "It's been a privilege to work for the Thruway Authority over the years, and we are proud to team again to show upstate visitors this important part of our local history."

Phase 1 will include ramps to and from the eastbound Thruway, a parking area, paved trails connecting the parking lot with the historic lock, and interpretive signing. This work was completed this year.

Future phases will include the rehabilitation of the historic Erie House and other on-site buildings,
construction of a parking lot accessible from Route 31, the visitor center with historical information, and additional trails connecting the entire site.

In fact, a recent survey at the Thruway’s Port Byron Travel Plaza found that 61 percent of summer travelers would visit this type of historical site. The entire project is expected to be completed by the summer 2016.

The New York State Canal System is comprised of four historic waterways, the Erie, the Champlain, the Oswego and the Cayuga-Seneca canals. Spanning 524 miles across New York State, the waterway links the Hudson River, Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario, the Finger Lakes, and Lake Erie (via the Niagara River) with communities rich in history and culture. For more information about the canal system, call 1-800-4CANAL4 or visit www.canals.ny.gov.

C&O Canal fees needed to offset budget cuts, park chief says

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park plans to start charging entrance fees for the entire length of the park to deal with federal budget cuts, as well as to generate additional funds for improvements.

Kevin D. Brandt, superintendent for the park, said that the C&O Canal’s yearly budget has been reduced by more than a million dollars since 2010, while the number of full-time employees at the park has dropped from about 93 to fewer than 73.

“It’s because over the last five years there has been a decrease in our budget, which has reduced our staffing and reduced our ability to take care of the park the way we would like and the way the public has come to expect it,” Brandt said.

The canal, which runs for about 185 miles from Washington, D.C. to Cumberland, Md. is part of the National Park Service. In plans unveiled on January 5, 2015, the park service said that an annual pass to the park would cost $30 a year, while a seven-day vehicle pass from areas west of Seneca Creek to Cumberland would cost $5 for seven days. The cost for a similar pass in 2017 would rise to $15, under the plan.

A “per-person pass” from areas west of Seneca Creek to Cumberland would cost $3 for seven days in 2015 and go up to $7 in 2017. A schedule of fees for drive-in campgrounds, hiker-biker camping sites, picnic pavilions and motorcycle passes has also been suggested. The proposed rates would go into effect on May 1, 2015.

About 5.1 million people visited the park in 2014, a number that has been climbing by about 2 percent every year, putting it in the top 10 of the most visited national parks in the United States, Brandt said. He said the park service has no way of knowing how much money the fees would generate. The C&O Canal raises about $400,000 a year from park fees in the Great Falls Tavern area in Montgomery County, the only place where an entrance fee is currently charged.

When asked how the park service planned to enforce the entrance fees, Brandt referred to a “road audit” in which park rangers would set up a checkpoint for people going by. “We would like to come up with maybe a window sticker that would go in a car or a towpath tag, and people could put that on their shirt, their day pack, coat,” he said. The revenue from the fees would be used to help pay for park projects in Williamsport, Hancock, and other areas, while also bolstering safety for park visitors, according to Brandt.

Hancock Mayor Daniel Murphy said in an email that the park system is facing a bleak time when it comes to funding. “The reality is other National Parks charge a fee to enter and use the areas. Other parks are well defined with entrances and exits, amenities, and services; the C&O Canal is unique in that you can enter it at almost any point along its route, in the western region,” Murphy wrote.

“We have become used to its easy access and availability since its beginning, so any regulation added to our routine will be a significant change. I understand the proposal, but I am not sure it will be met with very much support from the locals. Those that travel and visit our nation’s park system will probably accept the change without much criticism,” he said.

Williamsport Mayor James McCleaf said people might not like to pay, but “you have got to pay to play. I don’t like the idea, but I understand why they are having it,” McCleaf said.

Herald-Mail Media.com staff writer Don Aines contributed to this story. January 7, 2015
AMERICAN EXPRESS ANNOUNCES $1 MILLION GRANT TO THE TRUST FOR THE NATIONAL MALL TO RESTORE HISTORIC LOCKKEEPER’S HOUSE
December 9, 2014 in Business Wire

Dilapidated House in the Shadow of the Washington Monument to be Reimagined as Gateway to National Mall

WASHINGTON — In December 2014 American Express announced a $1 million grant to the Trust for the National Mall to preserve and restore the 178-year-old Lockkeeper’s House, the oldest existing structure on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The Lockkeeper’s House stands as a rare artifact of early 19th-century Washington when commerce was conducted via a system of canals designed to transport goods connecting the capital to the nation. The house has been boarded up for more than 40 years and is in a state of extreme disrepair, despite its prominent location near the iconic Washington Monument and the World War II Memorial at the corner of Constitution Avenue and 17th Street, NW.

As part of the grant funding from American Express, the Lockkeeper’s House will be lifted and moved back approximately 32 feet, away from the road and heavy street traffic. In addition, the grant will fund extensive interior and exterior restoration, including energy-efficient mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and HVAC
systems, making the Lockkeeper’s House the first site on the National Mall to incorporate the latest technology and materials to ensure environmental sustainability. The restoration will allow the Lockkeeper’s House to function as a much-needed educational space for the 29 million annual visitors to the National Mall.

“Historic places like the Lockkeeper’s House help us unlock our rich cultural and commercial past,” said Timothy J. McIlvain, president of the American Express Foundation. “We are proud to join the Trust for the National Mall and the National Park Service to preserve the Lockkeeper’s House and create a space for future generations to learn and grow from our country’s history.”

“Today’s announcement is a great example of how public-private partnerships can successfully preserve our national landmarks,” said Caroline Cunningham, founding president of the Trust for the National Mall. “This often overlooked historic building is on one of the most prominent corners in America’s most visited national park. Now thanks to the generosity of American Express, the Lockkeeper’s House will have yet another life as a gateway to one of the most visited areas of the National Mall, and a visible reminder of the Capital City’s past.”

Built as both a home and workplace, the Lockkeeper’s House served the lock that connected the Washington branch of the Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Canal and the Washington City Canal that ran parallel to where the National Mall is now. Between 1835 and 1873 the house was operated by a lockkeeper who collected tolls, kept trade records, and operated the lock gates to allow for the passage of canal boats transporting heavy goods from the interior of the United States. When the C&O Canal was replaced by railways and the canals were filled in, the Lockkeeper’s House was no longer needed. The home was further isolated from the Potomac River at the turn of the century during a reclamation project that created Potomac Park, the site of the Lincoln Memorial and Reflecting Pool. In 1902, ownership of the house was transferred to the Army Corps of Engineers, who used the building as a watchman’s house and tool shed. More recently, the National Park Service (NPS) used it at various times as a storage facility and as a location for public restrooms. In the 1970s, the building was closed to the public and fell into a state of disrepair.

With a long history of philanthropy, American Express is deeply committed to historic preservation, providing more than $50 million in grants to preserve historic places globally. In 2014 alone, nearly $3.5 million has gone to preserve historic places throughout the world as part of American Express partnerships with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the World Monuments Fund, including projects at Güell Pavilions in Barcelona, Union Station in Washington, D.C., Nantucket Lightship in Boston, and Fundidora Park in Monterrey, Mexico.

This American Express gift is the latest donation to the two-phased revitalization of Constitution Gardens—a 38-acre site between the World War II Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial that is home to several restoration projects including the Lockkeeper’s House, a poorly functioning lake and a shaded, but stunted, natural landscape.

To learn more about the Trust’s Campaign for the National Mall, the largest public-private partnership in the history of the National Park Service and the scope of the Constitution Gardens restoration, please visit http://nationalmall.org/about-trust-national-mall.

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**YOUR HELP NEEDED RE BREEDS OF CANAL MULES AND HORSES**

The Livestock Conservancy seeks to preserve breeds that have fallen out of favor in the rush to produce more and “better” livestock products. As these older breeds have characteristics that have many positives, we do not want to lose their gene pools. Does anyone know what breeds of horses, donkeys, and oxen, as well as mules, may have worked to build the various canals and tow the boats and barges? These work animals could be added to the Livestock Conservancy’s efforts.

Contact: Deborah Remer at dremer5337@comast.net and I'll pass the information on to the organization.

Debbie Remer, Society for the Preservation Of Old Mills
Dozier’s Waterway Guide Great Lakes 2014

Updated annually, WATERWAY GUIDE’s Great Lakes 2014 edition is the indispensable cruising companion for boaters exploring the Great Lakes and the inland portions of the Great Loop Cruise from New York to the Great Lakes and from Chicago to the Gulf of Mexico. The guide features mile-by-mile navigation information, aerial photography with marked routes, marina listings and locater charts, anchorage information, and expanded “Goin’ Ashore” articles on ports along the way. Helpful cruising data like GPS waypoints, detailed planning maps, distance charts, and bridge tables help get cruisers there safely. Flexible spiral binding and heavy laminated covers with bookmarker flaps ensure durability and easy use in the cockpit and at the helm. Available from Amazon.com.

Venice: The Grand Canal
by Daniele Resini

This is a stunning photographic survey of both the right and left banks of the famous canal that winds its way through Venice, past palaces, churches and museums that overlook the water. All are illustrated with captions stating the name, date of construction and architect. What makes this book unique is that the pages are hand-glued together in an accordion-shape, so that the reader can turn each page, once it’s slid out of its clear slipcase, one after another as with a normal book—or you can unfold the whole 14 yards of this title and see the Grand Canal in its astonishing entirety. In viewing this book from the first page to the last, the reader is presented with the right bank of the canal. Turning the book upside down and looking from the last page to the first provides a look at the left bank. This creative book is perfect for those who have an admiration for Venice and simply beautiful photography.
Available from Amazon.com.

Through the French Canals

Through the French Canals has probably tempted more people to explore the beautiful waterways of France than any other book. A bestseller for many years and now in its 13th edition, it is the essential planning guide for anyone wanting to cruise through the stunning scenery of the French waterways, or take their boat from the English Channel to the Mediterranean via the inland route. Over 50 routes described and illustrated, with positions of locks, towns and villages. Through routes from the English Channel and Atlantic to the Mediterranean, plus distances. Suitable boats for the canals, and dimensions of locks and operating times. Bridge heights, canal depths, fueling points, waterway signals. Cost of living, shopping and stores. Weather information, port plans for Paris, Dunkerque, and Strasbourg. Packed with appealing photographs and updated information on local facilities, distances, tunnel lengths, costs of cruising, it also discusses the local wines of the region.
Available from Amazon.com.
**CANALENDER**

**January 25 — 2:00 p.m. Two-Canal Walk** with the D&R Canal Watch and the Friends of the Delaware Canal. Meet outside of the Lambertville Station restaurant, near the caboose, Lambertville, NJ. We will begin on the D&R Feeder on the New Jersey side and then cross the Delaware River to walk along the Delaware Canal in New Hope. Cookies and hot chocolate await at the locktender’s home. Free, but donations are welcome and appreciated. Questions? Contact Bob Barth at 201-401-3121 or bbarth@att.net.

**January 25 — 4:00-6:00 p.m.** “Steamboat Memories,” American Legion Hall, 322 North Union Street, Lambertville, NJ. $5 donation. Questions? Visit info@steamboatclassroom.org.

**February 7 — 10:00 a.m. BEGIN THE JOURNEY on NJ’s D&R Canal with the D&R Canal Watch: Hike 5.7 miles from Bulls Island to Holcombe-Jimson Farmstead Museum (the meeting place; parking lot at the canal) or choose the 3-mile walk to Prallsville Mill. Leader: Pamela V’Combe, 609-635-2783.**

**February 8 — Middlesex Canal Association Fall Meeting will be held in the museum, at 1 p.m. Speaker: Don McElroy, from the EPA, will discuss “The Present and Future of the Shaffer Landfill.” The Shaffers have offered to give the one mile of canal to the Middlesex Canal Association, which must take all 106 acres not just the twelve acres of canal. Refreshments will be served following the presentation. 71 Faulkner St, N. Billerica, Mass. 978-670-2740.**

**February 21 — Light rail trip. Join Barbara Ross and the D&R Canal Watch for a tour by light rail into the 19th century. Meet at the Bordentown (NJ) River Line light rail station at 9:15 a.m. (turn left into parking lot at 100 W. Park Street at Prince Street, above the boat landing), purchase tickets, and receive a brief introduction before boarding the train for Trenton. The train follows the path of the D&R Canal from Crosswicks Creek to Trenton. See the abandoned canal, Watson’s Creek and the Abbott Marshlands. In the City of Trenton where Rt. 129 is on the former route of the canal, remains of the industrial and commercial buildings can be compared with earlier photos. Participants will get an overview of places that are difficult to see any other way, but anyone expecting a leisurely guided tour will be disappointed. In Trenton, participants may opt for a guided walk (4/4-mile round trip) to the State Street Bridge over the former canal (now the Trenton Freeway). Tickets are $1.50 ($1.70 for seniors); the current one-way-only provision may apply so be prepared to pay double the amounts. Please bring exact change. Pre-registration is strongly advised; call 609-924-2683 after February 15th.**

**February 28 — 10:00 a.m. Hike 5.3 miles with the D&R Canal Watch on NJ’s D&R Canal from Fireman’s Eddy to Prallsville Mill (the meeting place) or choose the 2.6-mile walk to the Holcombe-Jimson Farm. The tour will include the historic remnants of the feeder canal outlet lock to the river, other historic canal structures and expansive views across river. Leader: Pamela V’Combe, 609-635-2783.**

**March 7 — Winter Symposium, Rochester, NY — Canal Society of New York State Winter Symposium and Meeting. Monroe Community College, Warshoff Conference Center, Rochester, NY. 8:00 to 4:00. $50 preregistered, $60 at the door. Includes lunch and snacks. Eight high quality presentations are planned. The central theme will be an update on the construction and planned opening of the Erie Canal Heritage Park at Port Byron given by CSNYS, NYS Thruway and Canal Corporation representatives. Bookending around this presentation will be the story of two sets of five locks: the 19th-century Flight of Five under restoration in Lockport, NY and the 20th-century Waterford Flight, celebrating its 100th birthday. Other topics are: Erie Canal Draftsmen, David Vaughn; Lake Biva Canal, Japan; Chittenango Canal Boat Museum; Chemung Canal. CSNYS members will receive a preregistration form. Others may preregister by sending a check for $50 made out to Canal Society of NY to Dave Kipp, 61 Thistledown Drive, Rochester, NY 14617. www.newyorkcanals.org.**

**March 14 — 10:00 a.m. Hike 5.3 miles on NJ’s D&R Canal from Fireman’s Eddy to Washington Crossing (the meeting place) or choose the 4.1-mile walk to Church Road in Titusville. Leader: Pamela V’Combe, 609-635-2783.**

**March 28 — D&R Canal Watch 5K Fun Run, Washington Crossing State Park, Titusville, NJ. For more details, visit our website, www.canalwatch.org.**

**April 10-12 — Canal Society of Indiana. “Frühling Kanal Ausflug mit Freunden,” the Spring Tour of the Canal Society of Indiana will have a German theme as it explores the Wabash and Erie Canal in Jasper and Dubois counties. Tour HQ: Evansville, Indiana. See www.canadiancanalsociety.org/documents/2015-04-csi-spring-tour.pdf for details. 260-432-0279.**

**April 11 — Middlesex Canal Association’s spring bicycle tour. Meet 9:30 a.m. at North Station (commuter rail) and take bicycles on the 10 a.m. train to Lowell. Riders meeting the group at Lowell meet at the train station at 10:40. An early group will take the 8:00 a.m. train from North Station to allow more time in Lowell and breakfast at the historic Owl Diner, owldiner.com, aka the Four Sisters. Route visits the Pawtucket and other Lowell canals, the river walk, Francis Gate, and then Middlesex Canal remnants in Chelmsford.**
Lunch at Route 3A mini-mall in Billerica. Quick visit to Canal Museum, then on to Boston. A long day of exploration (35 miles end-to-end) but sunset is late.

Riders can board northbound trains at other stations or catch southbound trains at 1:07 or 3:14 to return to Boston early. Complete Lowell line schedules can be downloaded at http://www.keoliscs.com. Participants are responsible for one-way train fare ($9.25 from Boston to Lowell). For changes or updates, see www.middlesexcanal.org. Leaders Bill Kuttner (617-241-9383) & Dick Bauer (857-540-6293)

April 12 — Joint MCA-AMC Spring Middlesex Canal Walk. Meet at 1:30 p.m. at the Middlesex Canal Museum and Visitor Center in the Faulkner Mill in North Billerica. The walk will last 2-3 hours, rain or shine, over generally level wooded terrain and streets. No dogs, please. The route follows the canal for several miles south of the Concord River. Sites to be visited include: two guard locks; an anchor stone and the peninsula at the opposite ends of the floating bridge that once carried the towpath across the Concord; the 1825 iron bolt pond-level reference; the “deep cut”; a smallpox cemetery; stretches of canal, some of which are still watered; and possibly the site of a photovoltaic facility on High St. The museum and bookstore will be open from noon-4:00. 978-670-2740. Leader: Robert Winters 617-661-9230; Robert@middlesexcanal.org; co-leader, Roger Hagopian, 781-861-7868 until 10 pm.

April 18 — 10:00 a.m. Hike 6.2 miles with the D&R Canal Watch on NJ’s D&R Canal from Washington Crossing to Ellarslie, the Trenton City Museum in Cadwalader Park (the meeting place) or choose the 2.5-mile walk to Scudler’s Falls. The tour will pass by Wilburtha and Upper Ferry Road and include historic canal structures: stop gates, a spillway, an aqueduct, and other historic features. Leader: Pamela V’Combe, 609-635-2783.

April 19 — 1:00-3:00 p.m. Explore the Abbott Marshlands and learn about Charles C. Abbott, naturalist, doctor, and archeologist. 157 Westcott Avenue, Hamilton, NJ. $5 per person. Group is limited to 20 people. Register by contacting Bob Barth, bbarth@att.net; 201-401-3121.

April 24-26 — Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal Societies’ tour of the Beaver Division of the Pennsylvania Canal. Daylong tour will run along the Beaver and Shenango rivers between Rochester and Sharpsville, PA. HQ: Hermitage Quality Inn, 3200 S. Hermitage Road, West Middlesex, PA 16159; 724-982-4600. Steve Fritz of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will speak on Friday evening about planning navigation improvements on the upper Ohio and lower Monongahela rivers. Saturday speaker, John Lokoski of the Greenville Canal Museum. Contact: Dave Wright, werealwright@gmail.com

The annual meeting of the American Canal Society will be held in conjunction with this tour on 4/24 at 3 p.m. For more information contact Dave Wright. Register through pacanalsociety.org.

May 2 — 10:00 a.m. Hike 4.5 miles on NJ’s D&R Canal with the D&R Canal Watch from Whitehead Road to Ellarslie, the Trenton City Museum in Cadwalader Park (the meeting place) or choose the 2.5-mile walk to the Trenton Battle Monument. Questions? Contact Bob Barth at 201-401-3121 or bbarth@att.net.

June 5 & 6 — Spring Field Tour: Pre-Seaway Canals, St. Lawrence, Cornwall, Ontario. This New York and Canadian Canal Societies’ tour will examine the pre-Seaway canals along the St Lawrence River and will be based in Cornwall, Ontario.

June 14 — 10:00 a.m. Hike 5.8 miles on NJ’s D&R Canal with the D&R Canal Watch from the Trenton (NJ) Battle Monument to Port Mercer (the meeting place) or choose the 2.9-mile walk to Carnegie Road. Questions? Contact Bob Barth at 201-401-3121 or bbarth@att.net.

June 20 — 10 a.m. History Bike Tour on the towpath of NJ’s D&R Canal from Kingston to Griggstown and back, 10 miles round trip. Explore the structures along the D&R Canal with Canal Watch trustee Bob Barth. Meet at the locktender’s home in Kingston. Bring water; helmet required. Questions? Contact Bob Barth: 201-401-3121; bbarth@att.net.

Fall 2015 (date TBA): Genesee Valley Canal Society (section to be defined) Mid-October. Canal Society of NY State; newyorkcanals.org.

Sept 7-10, 2015 World Canals Conference, Ghent, Belgium. Conference will include boat trips on Ghent’s inland waterways and the Port of Ghent, and visits to the project of Waterways & Seacanal and Flanders Field. www.wceghent2015.com.


Spring 2016 (date TBA) Buffalo, Tonawandas, & Lockport. Canal Society of NY State; newyorkcanals.org.
