

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This issue of *CANALS CANADA* provides me with the opportunity of making some introductory remarks to you. I hope this will be the first of several reports from me on the health and growth of the Canadian Canal Society.

Elsewhere, you will find an account of the July Annual General Meeting at Fenelon Falls. The members present accepted the slate of officers and directors submitted by the nomination committee headed by Robert Taylor. As your new president I look forward to working with the Executive and other members of the Board - many of whom are well known to me.

On your behalf, I would like to thank our past President, Donald Smithies, last year's executive, and Board of Directors for their sound work since the inaugural meeting at Port Dalhousie in May, 1982; they have left this incipient society in good shape. Guiding an organization in its infancy is no easy task, and our appreciation is extended to all those who accepted the responsibilities of leadership last year.

Like others, I missed John Seymour at Fenelon Falls. I think John would have been pleased with the progress made so far by the CCS. John, an American citizen and staunch member of the American Canal Society, was equally enthusiastic in initiating a Canadian canal organization, for he was a founder of our society. John passed away in February, 1982. We are grateful for his time with us. We shall miss his unqualified support and enthusiasm.

I believe we can enter our second year with confidence and optimism. Confidence comes from

the fact that we are meeting a need, for we have increased our membership since our founding meeting; we are, too, in a sound financial state for a society our size, under able administration of our Treasurer, George Carl. We should, of course, look to improve both of these, and we shall do so.

But I do not think that the well-being of our Society should be gauged solely by paid-up membership and cash in the bank. A vigorous society is one for all, and all for one. Perhaps we should remind ourselves that a member gets out of an organization what he or she puts into it. Participation, then, should be uppermost in our minds. Any contribution in time or ideas will aid the general well being of the CCS.

You may ask yourself what you can do; the easiest thing, and one of the most significant, is to promote this fledgling organization through your own enthusiasm. Try and recruit one or two persons who are just waiting to bring their interests to a group such as this; membership at the family rate would help bring about a sense of community to the Society. Have you forgotten the accepted objectives of the Society? Don't be dismayed: last year's executive had a fine membership brochure printed and copies are available through the secretary, Robert Taylor - he'll be happy to oblige.

Perhaps above all else, there is the participation and enjoyment of attending the Society's activities, most especially those bi-annual membership meetings (normally held spring and fall) where, besides the usual business, some aspects of canals are considered.

The geographical distribution of our common interest and its

very nature makes visits and field trips costly affairs. As requested by the Executive prior to the Annual General Meeting, I shall lead the field trip up the Grand River Canal on Saturday, October 22. In an attempt to keep individual costs down, I have called a general membership meeting on the field trip, rather than for the previous evening which might necessitate an overnight stay in St. Catharines for some members.

I look forward to leading you on October 22nd, and for the rest of the Society's year. I shall need your help to make our second year successful, and I know I can rely upon your support. Let us consider the national scope of our society, and reach out to those who would benefit from joining.

Colin Duquemin

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM was held at Fenelon Falls on July 15-16, 1983 because the town was celebrating the centennial of construction of its flight locks, part of the Trent-Severn Waterway. Members who attended were not disappointed either by this fascinating section of the waterway or by the charming town itself. On Friday evening, after a registration hour, the group heard an interesting presentation by Meredith Reeve, an interpreter on the canal system. On Saturday morning, a business meeting was held, at which the following officers were elected:

Executive:

President: Colin Duquemin
Vice President: Hayward Madden
Treasurer: George Carl
Secretary: Robert Taylor

Directors:

Christopher Andreae
Maurice Smith
Heather Ott
Donald Smithies
Peter Styrmo
Marvin Kriluck (legal counsel)

The outgoing president, Don Smithies, reported on the successful inaugural year of the society. Colin Duquemin, on behalf of the members, thanked the board of directors for their leadership in the past twelve months.

The meeting then dispersed to cars and visited the Kirkfield hydraulic lift lock, after which they drove down to Lindsay to inspect the lock and enjoyed a fine lunch at a canal-side restaurant. They then traveled north to Bobcaygeon, and visited the local museum and lock. The weather proved beautiful; arrangements for both meetings and overnight accommodations were generally acceptable; and everyone agreed that all such meetings should be as successful.

Many thanks to Don Smithies and all who helped arrange a fine weekend!

Robert Taylor

HIGHLIGHTS OF FALL TOUR

We shall start by bus from Brock University at 8:00 hours, arriving in Port Maitland about 9:00 hours. Cayuga will be reached by mid-day with lunch and a business meeting arranged at St. John the Divine Anglican Church. Afterwards there may be an opportunity to visit the impressive Cayuga Court House. Later we will enter the architecturally significant Ruthven Estate, once the home of David Thompson whose mills created the community of Indiana. We will also have the opportunity to explore the original lock at Indiana which is on private property. The tour will end at Caledonia and we expect to return to Brock University by 16:00 hours to provide enough light for those driving a distance home.

The St. Catharines Historical Museum will give tour participants a 10% discount on its publication, *A GUIDE TO THE GRAND RIVER CANAL*.

BOOK REVIEWS

P.-Andre Sevigny: *TRADE AND NAVIGATION ON THE CHAMBLY CANAL: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW*, Parks Canada 1983.

Available in French; \$6.00, \$7.20 outside (payable to Receiver General for Canada), Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Supply and Services Canada, Hull Quebec, K1A 0S9.

The Chambly Canal at St Jean, Quebec, on the Richelieu River consists of nine locks along a canal of 19 km. It is the major river improvement that permits commercial navigation between the St. Lawrence River at Sorel and Lake Champlain. From Lake Champlain, further waterways extend navigation as far as New York City.

The Chambly is the larger of two navigation structures needed to permit commercial shipping on the Richelieu. The other structure is the single St. Ours lock further upstream which is unfortunately barely described in this study.

A unique feature of the Richelieu system is the small locks dimensions of the Chambly canal (only 36.6 m by 7.3m). They were considered too small when completed in 1843 and yet never rebuilt. Despite this a thriving shipping industry developed that carried lumber and paper from Quebec to New York. This reviewer always wondered how this was economically possible by the 20th century. Sevigny provides a fascinating discussion of the shipping process which evolved to overcome the problems of the small locks. Commercial use of the canal did not disappear until the 1960s.

The study is an economic history of the canal and over half of the book is given to discussions of the major users of the canal: lumber rafts, sailing vessels, barges, and steamboats.

TRADE AND NAVIGATION ON THE CHAMBLY CANAL continues the growing list of Parks Canada publications on canals. Beginning in 1972, Parks Canada became the operating agency for nine canals that had previously been administered by the Department of Transport (see letter to the editor). To fulfill their mandate of interpreting these canals for the public, there has been an increasing outpouring of studies on all aspects of Canadian canals.

The first published study appears to have been John Heisler's *THE CANALS OF CANADA* (Occasional Paper No. 8, 1973). This has been accompanied by a number of manuscript reports, mainly about the Rideau and Trent Canals, a few of which have been published in the Parks Canada "History and Archaeology Series. (See for example, William Beahen, *DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEVERN RIVER AND BIG CHUTE LOCK STATION* [Series No. 40] and Edward Bush, *COMMERCIAL NAVIGATION ON THE RIDEAU CANAL* [Series No. 54]). An outstanding publication is Robert Passfield's wonderful *BUILDING THE RIDEAU CANAL: A PICTORIAL HISTORY* (1982).

Parks Canada is to be commended for editing these studies for the general public by making them attractive, informative and relatively affordable. The only improvement would be to broaden the scope of each published report. They are obviously written to address a specific research problem. Although of interest, most readers cannot be expected to desire such a detailed knowledge of a single study area. An overall history of, for example the whole Richelieu River would have greatly increased the value of the study. But this is a small criticism. These well researched, if highly focused, studies can be the stepping stone for others to produce the general histories.

Christopher Andreae

EDITOR'S EDITORIAL

There are several editorial goals that I think this newsletter could achieve. Obviously it must provide information about membership activities, tours, meetings, queries, etc. Secondly, it should offer short news items regarding current events in canal developments. These can be clipped from local newspapers or items of your own information discovery. Thirdly, the newsletter should provide research information regarding all aspects of the history of canals. This can be done by printing articles, book reviews and occasional specialized bibliographies. Alexandria Greaves' article, in the previous newsletter, about the abandoned lock near Huntsville is a promising beginning to future articles. Finally, and not least, the newsletter should provide information on the existing remains of canals - where you can find them, the condition they are in and what is being done to recognize them.

For the present time, *CANALS CANADA* will be printed twice a year and limited to four pages. Therefore articles can and should be mercifully short. The newsletter is to explore and introduce ideas and not be a definitive journal. Articles of one page, letters to the editor of one or two paragraphs and news items of a few sentences will suit our needs.

Photographs and line drawings will be appreciated, subject to the limitations of photocopy reproduction.

All editors begin their tenure by pleading with the membership for articles on the above subjects. *CANALS CANADA* will only be as interesting as the submissions I receive. I make the same plead but with a slight threat as well. You see, first and foremost I am a railway enthusiast [What you might ask is a railway buff doing editing a canal newsletter? That's another story] I have plenty of information on railways

in my files. If I don't get turgid prose on canals from you, the membership, I will be sorely tempted to print railway articles in future. This would, you must agree, produce a most unusual newsletter for a canal society.

Christopher Andreae

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

I recently picked up a copy of Parks Canada's *ONTARIO - A GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL PARKS, HISTORIC PARKS AND HERITAGE CANALS*. Under "1885-1985: 100 years of Heritage Conservation" mention is made of nine heritage canals in different parts of Canada. Elsewhere, the Sault Ste. Marie, Trent-Severn Waterway and the Rideau Canal are given as Ontario's heritage canals; where are the other six?

Sincerely,
Colin Duquemin

Nova Scotia - St. Peters; Quebec - Beauharnois (which is very quaint since there are no visible remains), Lachine, Chambly, St. Ours, Ste. Anne (*editor*).

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The CANADIAN CANAL SOCIETY publishes *CANALS CANADA* twice a year and promotes an interests in all aspects of Canadian canals. Annual membership is \$10.00.