



President's Message

With all the gloomy news of pared or cancelled grants to work some comfort in chairing an organization which is self-sustaining and generates confidence in planning for the future.

In other portions of this newsletter report on both the successful trip to the Harbour and its related canals, as well as on the fall tour and the Middleport on the New York State Barge Canal. I extend our thanks to Dave Cramm and Art Adams for the former, and John Burt for the latter. Always, to treasurer Carol Gaspari for the not inconsiderable task of tallying the various accounts generated during the trip (some of which were a boat in the rain!), and calculating the profit or loss of our trip. The trip, well organized like a military operation, showed us unknown areas, attracted a sold-out bus and waiting list — and a lot of fun.

Roberta Styran's report on the 1996 British Canal expedition is also definitely "on". Of course the Macdonalds are participating in the yet-to-be-published agenda at a trip committee meeting earlier in the year. At any undecided C.C.S. members take up the four remaining items.

The above-mentioned British trip committee meeting was for "future planning", or "programme" committee, to which refer to the newsletter. Chaired by vice-president Bob Sparks, the committee discussed the initial concept of expanding both the scope of our field trips and the C.C.S. awareness of Canadian Canals through publication and other means.

Have a pleasant (and water-oriented where possible) winter!

Our Spring Field Trip was a miracle of efficient planning, the organizers, Dave Cramm and Art Adams, who divided our group into three smaller groups for three different activities throughout the day. We took a boat tour of Hamilton Harbour (Burlington Bay), a bus tour including the Desjardins Canal in Dundas, and an illustrated historical lecture at the West Marina Complex, cheerful home to the Hamilton and Burlington Harbours and the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club. Here we enjoyed a taste of the Harbourview Room, followed by our Annual General Meeting. The day was arranged for cloudless skies and warm temperatures throughout. The C.C.S. Lines, as usual, provided us with an intrepid driver and a comfortable ride.

From Dundas, the bus trip followed a circuitous and narrow route through "Coote's Paradise", named for a British army officer who, during his military duties, loved to go hunting and fishing in this marsh. The "Paradise" is located between Dundas and Burlington Heights, is a thousand-acre wetland, and is the Desjardins Canal Cut to Burlington Bay. Because water levels have fallen in recent years, driving away much of the waterfowl, a restoration project is in progress, in particular, an overabundance of carp (some of which grow to 100 lbs) has reduced 85% of the wetland. Consequently, a "carp barrier" has been installed to prevent such large fish from entering the "Paradise" from Hamilton Harbour. The barrier is the regular flow of water and entrance of smaller fish.

In the town of Dundas, the bus stopped at the terminus of the Desjardins Canal, built in 1837, the waterway, with a sixty foot width and five foot depth, was a vital line of communication between Burlington Bay and Dundas. As a result of the canal, Dundas eventually, however, the railway provided competition which ended the canal's use as a waterway until 1895 when all commercial use ended. In the area, the landscape has been much altered, the turning basin has been obliterated, and the industries have decayed. The waterway still exists, however, and is a line from Coote's Paradise into the heart of Dundas. On the way, several posts mark out the dredged route of the canal to the harbour. The members recalled that, on an earlier C.C.S. field trip, many of the features can be seen today).

On the Hamilton Harbour Commissioners' launch (MV John A. Macdonald) we spent two hours in Burlington Bay for two hours, enjoying a unique perspective of the harbour and its features. At its Centennial and Wellington terminals, we saw the

Hamilton Harbour, Burlington Canal, pumping station, etc.
Lampman (on local history of Dundas, Ancaster, Hamilton
the bus and boat tours.

At the end of the day, despite sun-burned noses, the partic
satisfaction with a remarkable outing.

* * * * *

New Members

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Angela Hall
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Mr. & Mrs. Patrick McNally
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* * * * *

George M. Carl

George Mansfield Carl, the Society's first Treasurer, passe
at Port Colborne. George and his wife Vera joined the C.C.
Society's inaugural year — a membership which they conti

George was a highly respected member of Niagara's shipp
than 40 years for the Misener Shipping Company. He retir
Misener Transport in 1977. Two Great Lakes freighters we
attesting to his years of service to the industry, and the hig
was held by both his company and his peers.

Throughout his life George was involved in many service
including the local school board, numerous charities, and
key figure in the building of the Port Colborne General Ho

At the June A.G.M. held in Hamilton in June, John Burtniak, a long-time Member in recognition of his involvement in, and contribution to the Society over his years of association with the Society since its inception. Having served as the Society's President, John has organized many meetings and tours, and as well, has provided other services to the Society. He is joined by late Robert F. Legget and Lou Cahill, as Honorary Life Members of the Society, responsible for bringing the C.C.S. to its present state, a supporter and source of inspiration over the years.

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Bruce Emerson Hill: The Grand River Navigation Company

The story of the Grand River Navigation Company and the portions of the Grand River between Brantford and Port Maitland, two relatively little-known sagas of the canal fever of the early 19th century. Bruce Hill has now shed light on the history of this ill-fated grandiose plans: the founding of the Company in 1832; the Hamilton Merritt; the use of Six Nation's funds for financing; the dams along the Grand; insufficient funding; inadequate construction.

The Company and the canal, it seems, were doomed to fail from the start. During its life, the Company did open up the middle and lower Grand, a cheap, if not always efficient, transportation system. As a result, commerce and industry developed in Brant and Haldimand counties. The canal channel and locks remain at Indiana, York, Mt. Healy, and Port Maitland.

The book is well written, and supported with copious footnotes and a variety of pictures reproduced from old and modern photographs. The volume considerably, supplemented by reproductions of maps of the canal system. An especially informative series of 17 tables and charts, statistics on the quantity and type of goods transported on the Grand, the directors, and other related documentation.

Bruce E. Hill. *The Grand River Navigation Company*. Brantford: Grand River Historical Society, 1994. Paperbound, 134 pages, illus., maps, plans, tables.

While in Britain this fall, Bobbie Styran, who will be leading several British Waterways staff, finalized our itinerary, arranged hire, and for group admissions to several museums. We hope to leave on the 12th of June, then on the 15th, half the party will board the hotel boat TSARINA & TSAREVNA at Llangollen for a cruise on the Llangollen Canal. The other half of the party will tour various canal sites by coach. On Wednesday 16th June we will switch places at Willemoor Lock on the Llangollen, then travel to Chester via the Shropshire Union Canal, where the two parties will meet on the 22nd. Both groups will visit the Boat Museum at Ellesmere. The Shropshire Union meets the Manchester Ship Canal; the Gladstone Pottery Museum in the Potteries area, served by the Trent & Mersey Canal and its Cheshire Ring. The Castlefield area in Manchester, where the Bridgewater (the first to be opened to Manchester in 1761) and the Rochdale Canals meet, has several canal sites in the vicinity of these centres, including the Pontefract Canal and the Anderton Lift, many locks and canal-related buildings. In the Ironbridge Gorge area, with its several museum sites, including the Coalbrookdale Museum of Craft. On Monday 24 June we will visit the National Waterways Museum at Ellesmere (on the Shropshire Union), Sharpness and Gloucester Canal), and the following day the National Maritime Museum at Bristol. On the 26th we will visit Bruerne, on the Grand Union, and the Foxton Locks (on the Great Ouse Navigation), en route to Birmingham for the International Conference.

There are still 3-4 places left, if some of you are regretting not signing up for what promises to be our best-ever field trip! First come, first served, and let us know if you want to join up. Signed-up members will make payments of \$370 per person, and Carol Gaspari, our Treasurer, will report the amount of contributions expected to date. The total cost will include the basic air fare (see below for additional charges for those of individuals wishing to stay on after the Birmingham meeting), boat & coach hire, hotels with breakfast & dinner included (for those on boats), and group museum admission charges.

Our tour officially ends on the 28th, and advance publicity information says that air fares will increase as of the 29th of June (by \$20 per person for those flying to the UK, by another \$40 p.p.), so members planning to stay on for a further week should take these increases into consideration when making their plans. There will also be a surcharge of \$20 p.p. for departure from airports other than Heathrow.

A full bus headed for Lockport and Middleport, New York, a return visit to the Erie Canal. It had been several years since a part of the Erie, and the visit was welcome and invigorating walking, looking, cruising, photographing and relaxing.

The first stop in Lockport was not the Canal or the locks, but the Station. Truly a magnificent building it is, even though it is old and in gentle decay. It is the only known use of apparent H. H. Masonry architecture in a railroad application by the architect and probably one-time student and/or assistant to the revered imposing, even in its damaged state, and waiting (and crying out for, particularly, some form of re-adaptive use of the ruins. The National Register of Historic Places in 1977.

The group then headed for Widewaters Marina, where we boarded boats. This took us up through Locks 34 and 35, built in 1907. This is always an impressive sail, "climbing the mountain" and an opportunity for viewing the remains of canal- and lock-side "skyline," bridge, and buildings from the canal. Beside these are the five-flight double locks that were constructed in 1847 during

Sailing back down through the two locks, we disembarked for downtown and lunch. At 1.30 the group gathered again at the locks, following the information boards that are posted at strategic historical, engineering and other noteworthy details of the project. At the base of the locks, the reward for the hardy souls who walked up (they had to walk up again!) was the Erie Canal Museum. It contains photographs and plans, and a variety of canal and lock machinery.

Returning to the bus and to the Marina, we boarded our boat, the C.C.S., for a cruise along the Erie to Middleport. It was wonderful, through farmland and orchards, past century-old horse bridges and through fine stands of forest trees. Our destination was the old Basket Factory Restaurant. This is a very fine eatery, situated on the canal. The dinner was scrumptuous, and we did the C.C.S. right people. We had to leave the tables for others. We then headed out a

As indicated in the May '95 issue of Canals Canada, a Program plan a five-year schedule of spring and fall events, trying to while expanding our range, especially of Canadian sites. The plan in the Spring '96 Issue of Canals Canada and would

- 1) fields trips in conjunction with canal-related anniversary events, or, longer trips to various parts of the country;
- 2) suggestions for canal-related community one-day
- 3) one-day "seminar" topics (St. Catharines, Welland, Hamilton, Toronto would be the logical locations;
- 4) any other possibilities.

Please send your ideas to the Editor, clearly marked "Program

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Port Carling Locks Face Uncertain

This was a headline in the May 18 issue of The Muskoka, a Ministry of Natural Resources, which has been operating the would no longer continue to do so, on the grounds that the did not wish to be responsible for accidents which might occur been formed and hopes to create a waterways commission. continued operation of the 124-year old locks, which are vital carrying goods along the Indian River, as well as for the tourist Lady Muskoka, and for residents and visitors travelling by Gravenhurst News also featured the story, and the attempt and party leaders, in the campaign to keep the locks in operation.

It is to be hoped that this issue will be resolved satisfactorily.

* * * * *

World Canal Conference, Birmingham, Eng

Planning for the first World Canal Conference by British Waterways Association International, and Birmingham City Council is under way. The conference theme will be Regeneration, and delegates are expected. Many events are being planned, including re-enactments of

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