

Canals Canada



Newsletter of The Canadian Canal Society

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P r e s i d e n t

My term as president of the Society began with a tour of the Port Robinson area in May (see p. 2), for which I am grateful to Bobbie Styran for his knowledge of the areas visited. Then in June we had an ambitious trip to date (see p. 6). With outstanding help from Bobbie Styran (who was also a great tour guide) and the rest of the group we had our Fall tour to Lake Erie ports and Pelee Island. I was pleased that "UK '96" included members from Nova Scotia, Vancouver and Ottawa, making the winter tour a success.

Looking ahead, we hope to visit "canal" areas in the Maritimes and, particularly, Halifax, where we have been to several other sites of waterways interest. Outside Canada we hope to visit Ireland. Next August, we hope to travel to the United States to see parts of the Erie and Oswego Canals en route to the Sault. The future of the Society is also being considered. The future is bright after "UK '96".

Please let us know your thoughts on directions for the future and other canal- and waterways-related activities we can undertake.

Spring Field Trip — 4 May 1996

The 1996 Spring Field Trip, under the guidance of Dr. Robinson, two Welland Canal communities which flourished during the First and Second Canal period, were important and interesting. The period of Third Canal enlargement, had begun the period of opening of the full length of the Fourth Canal in the shadow of their former prominence. Today, both communities are in decline. Canal.

At one time, both had a wide range of industries: foundries, and shipbuilding. Today, barely any buildings — and these now converted into dwellings — two in Port Robinson; both Post Offices have been closed. The ignominy of losing its only (Fourth Canal) bridge, dividing the community into two.

But it was not so at one time, and the Field Trip, examined Allanburg and Port Robinson, at the time, respectively, trying on the one hand to catch a glimpse of the past, and, on the other, to imagine what once was the future. It became evident that the successive canals were the cause of its enlargement through the communities, had a wider and straighter channel, thereby wiping out the old homes. There were not rebuilt or replaced, and the communities and their decline was inevitable.

The morning tour included a walk along the main street, the community cemetery. It looked sad and forlorn. Thorold's Parks and Cemeteries department. People were worn and barely legible, leaning and near-tipping over. More than 200 persons, among them people of port Robinson, Allanburg, and Port Robinson.

The afternoon tour took us to Port Robinson, w
one time important enough to be designated a
its heyday, and with a significant shipbuilding
Robinson declined, but it was a more gradual p
was only with the Fourth Canal construction th
A walk along the main street showed a number
or converted into dwellings) and substantial ho
port. The remains of an entry lock from the Sec
but the large shipbuilding, repair and drydock
Copies of plans of Port Robinson during the 183
comparisons of then and now.

As with Allanburg, the highlight was a visit to a
This is a fine building with a Georgian look, cla
tower and a number of memorial windows, the
wheel. The interior was equally charming, with
altar rail and other altar furniture.

At the end of the day, on the return home, we st
outskirts of Allanburg. Built 1812-20, this house
must have been 175 years ago. Ruth and Georg
very kindly allowed the group to tour their lov
refreshments.

Allanburg (where the first sod was turned for th
Robinson have passed their days of glory as imp
into being because of the Welland Canal, grew v
the Canal enlarged and expanded. Today, both
heritage, and they deserve to be recognized. Th
other canal communities through the Ontario ca

C.C.S. mourns two Canals Historians:

C.C.S. members may have already noted the death of an avid chronicler of the small towns of Eastern Ontario. We will recall Larry with affection, having met him as a writer and, latterly, a publisher, of regional and local history. Rideau and its communities: Perth, Merrickville, Appleton, Historic Mills, and the Loyalists of Kingston and the surrounding encyclopaedic knowledge will be greatly missed.

Your Editor considers herself extremely fortunate to have known a pre-eminent canals historian, **Charles Hadfield**, whose career was in the Civil Service and in publishing (he died in 1960), he will be long and fondly remembered for his making — of inland waterways history. Charles was on the Board (1963-66) and played an important role in the development of many of the smaller British inland waterways for the carrying of freight on larger waterways owned by the Inland Waterways Association in 1945-46; edited authoritative volumes on canals of England and Wales. Legget to contribute a volume on canals of Canada. A revised edition was reviewed in the May 1995 issue. Alice Mary published Afloat in America, a charming book of the States and Canada by water (5000 miles) and rail, accompanied by Robert and Mary Legget. A long time ago Charles published Thomas Telford's Temptation, a work which Charles felt should have been attributed to the iron aqueduct at Pontcysyllte in Wales. Charles, a gentleman and a scholar," as well as an encouraging friend like again.

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Larry Turner

such heritage books often lack. There are several old photographs, and some good new ones (taken based on research done mainly in the National Canal Office. As the sub-title suggests, it is divided into two parts: the first, a history of the village; the second, a walking tour of the community and its architecture of its important buildings. Mr. Turner's history, and his Ottawa-based company "Petherick & Associates" consultation.

In the 1790s a few pioneers opened up the land around Merrickville. The probable founder of the village was John Galt, who sought to exploit the falls here for his gristmill. In 1832 benefitted the settlement and in the later years plows were turned out by iron foundries, woollen mills. By 1900 these enterprises had declined, but there are still

Merrickville glories in having over one hundred churches in the Gothic and Romanesque Revival, Picturesque and vernacular styles, many of these are a proliferation of "gingerbread" and Italianate town. Main and St. Lawrence Streets would have been lined with two and three-storey industrial buildings — alas, many have been cut down and the entrepreneur.

As this book clearly shows, Merrickville is an excellent example of three hand-operated stone locks, the blockhouse (see the District Historical Society), a swing bridge, and a parking lot with no parking problems! Canal enthusiasts will find washrooms, water, and picnic tables. All of these are less than a fifteen minute walk from the canal. The book also testifies to the good cuisine in at least three of Merrickville's

Learn: Turner's book is far from being technical.

Impressions of



— Packing & wondering whether I should include Tilley underwear.

— Manchester airport & on to Anderton Lift, then Transaat's sumptuous breakfast.

— Trying to stay awake & appreciate Tony Hirs' joys of jet-lag!

— The mountain pass route to Llangollen & the Mersey (Ed. note: he hadn't!)

- And Walter Webb finally getting his luggage
- The Basin master at Stourport, who didn't know the presentation on the history of the Stourport canal
- professionalism of B.W. people
- Bobbie & Mark (our driver) doing a fantastic job
- Nicholson's Guides but it sure is different on the
- Blisworth and Foxton!
- 28! All here! Let's double check. OK! 28 here!
- Our blue shirts, pins & jackets, & Tilley hats
- Ah, Birmingham (Brum!). Bobbie, Mark & I
- [International Convention Centre] and finally to
- was the chief organizer of the IWA Jubilee Jigs
- A whirlwind tour of canal sites around B'ham
- Warehouse in Stourbridge & a boat trip inside the
- The Lord Mayor's reception at B'ham Town
- cuisine: Chicken Tikka Masala with rice!
- The Malt House [pub] & the Australians! What
- River navigations? I think we were invited but a
- sure? All this & a fine view of Farmer's Bridge o
- as some left very early.
- It's best if Air Transaat gets out of town early
- refuelling stops!
- And I embarked on the narrowboat "Denme
- its convenient mooring outside the Pit Stop pub
- Images of dozens of locks and windlasses an
- that's another story.

Editor's Note: Bob was invited to take part in the
 Ron Evans, Chairman of the Chester and District
 notices in the local press, including one in the C
 for Canal Rally" which contained the following:
 attending as part of a boating holiday in the UK.
 Canal Society has organized a tour visit to visit

changed to "World Wide Waterways" as soon as
will likely be held in the US within a month of the
the Blackstone Valley, Rhode Island, October 1996.

It was proposed that the organizations represent
year's honorary membership to any member of the
The I.A.I.W. agreed that member organizations should
[At a meeting of the Executive of the C.C.S. on 20/10/95]

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C.C.S. Jackets & Ties

To identify the C.C.S. group on our UK '96 tour we
windbreakers (in a bright blue) with the C.C.S. logo (in
blue) with the logo printed in black. As Bob Spence and
members of our group, even at a considerable distance,
were impressed with our C.C.S. identification.

In response to requests from a number of members who
have expressed an interest in purchasing the windbreakers,
announce that this is now possible.

If you would like to acquire either of these items,
please fill in the attached form and mail it to:

Art Adams
2 Short Road
GREENSVILLE, Ont.
L9H 5L7

Please send in your request as soon as possible so that
Catharines, to be announced at a later date.

The **Tower Wharf area of Chester**, scene of June plans for redevelopment. Approval in principle committee during our visit to Britain, but there demands that British Waterways re-think the project involves regeneration of the area to provide residential associated parking and landscaping. One particular Boatyard, an open-air structure which, it is proposed UK '96 group were given a tour of this area, and arrival in Chester. The Boat Museum at Ellesmere alternative proposal calling for restoration and an exhibition/museum centre, to provide the centre the nearby Telford Warehouse was successfully — as members of the C.C.S. group will recall with

One of Britain's handful of ship canals, the **Caledonian** through the "Great Glen" of Scotland to Fort William. The Caledonian, built by Thomas Telford, and once leaking badly, requiring £20 million for emergency canal, says that it contributes £14.5 million to the almost 500 people in jobs. Whether or not this is industry (Loch Ness forms a part of the Caledonian Banavie, near Fort William, was dubbed "Neptune" is possible that the use of this term as applied to visit to the Welland by George Bruce, 8th Earl of in 1847. The Caledonian (like the Welland) was

The 29-lock flight at **Devizes, on the Kennet and** £1-million scheme of pumps which recycles the water the country. The canal has been closed since 195 Kennet and Avon Canal Trust, a volunteer organisation

The Canadian Canal Society

Executive Officers for 1996-97

Past President:	Norman Macdonald
President:	Robert Sparks
Vice-President:	Al Sykes
Secretary:	Doris Bates
Treasurer:	Carol Gaspari

Send all correspondence to:
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Contributions for 1996-97 to:
Roberta Bates
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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Please enrol me as a member of the Canadian Canal Society.
I/ We enclose my/ our membership fee of \$10.00.
Individual/ Couple/ Family/ Other _____