



## CANALS CANADA/CANAUX DU CANADA

Newsletter of The Canadian Canal Society/Société des Canaux du Canada

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ISSN 0824 – 1954

April 2002

Vol. 20 Issue 1

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### President's Report

Spring is in the air. At least it is in the air on the day that I am writing this. There hasn't been much winter to distinguish from spring but I hope that the weather has not unduly inconvenienced you.

This is the first edition of the newsletter to appear under the guidance of editor Bob Sears, so the first order of business is to express my sincere thanks on your behalf to Bobbie Styran for her efforts over the past years in editing Canals Canada, our main communication with the members. The second order is to welcome Bob to his new duties. He has already distinguished himself as a member of your board and most particularly in reviving the web-site for the Society. We thank him for agreeing to take on these additional duties as editor. You can make his job a lot easier by submitting some stories, anecdotes or articles from other sources, which he could use in Canals Canada. I hope to visit some more French and German waterways this summer. When you see some local or far-off canal, tell us about your adventures or send us some pictures.

The program for the spring tour of the Grand River, the World Canals Conference in Montreal in September and the ongoing plans for the 2004 conference will mean that there is plenty of canal-related activity to be immersed in in the coming months. (Pardon the pun...and be careful around the water.)

Your interest in canals and your ability to interest others in them should result in a growth in memberships this year. To that end, the board has printed more membership brochures and if you would be able to distribute some to prospective members, please let us know.

Happy canals to you.

George Hume, President

### Membership Renewal

Enclosed with the newsletter is a Membership Renewal Notice for 2002. Please take a minute to complete it and forward it with your remittance. An asterisk beside your name, on the envelope and on the membership list, indicates that your dues are not current, one asterisk for each year in arrears. If you have already renewed, thank you.

## **From the Editor**

Thank you to the Board of Directors, who has shown confidence in me to take on the job of editor of Canals Canada. I will continue the high standard set by my predecessors: Christopher Andrea, Sherman Zavitz and Roberta Styran.

Recently I purchased a new computer and I have also bought a scanner; so please forward any contributions including photos and I'll try to include them in future editions. This publication belongs to all members and we want to share in your exploration of the world's canals and inland waterways.

For those with the ability I can be reached by email at [dawnofdestiny@sympatico.ca](mailto:dawnofdestiny@sympatico.ca), and you can send attachments. (The email address is the name of my sailboat.) Besides being your editor I am currently the Commodore of Cathedral Bluffs Yacht Club, a member of the CCS board and work with the World Canals Conference 2004 committee (more on the conference later). The above is to reinforce that I can't do it all, I need your help to make Canals Canada the worthy journal that it should be.

## **New Members**

Welcome to the following new members:

Mr. Michael Walsh & Family  
144 Brooklawn Avenue  
Scarborough, ON M1M 2P9  
416-267-3727

Mr. Lionel Williamson  
PO Box 186 – 34 Ontario Street  
Picton, ON K0K 2T0  
613-476-8597

Enclosed with this mailing is the current membership list.

## **Happy Birthday to Us**

The Board of Directors held a meeting at Port Weller Dry Docks on April 6<sup>th</sup>. The meeting continued an historic link with the shipbuilding industry in St. Catharines. It was 20 years ago that the first meeting of the Canadian Canal Society was held in the old Muir Brothers Dry Docks building in Port Dalhousie.

At that May 1<sup>st</sup> meeting the following people were elected to the Board: Donald A. Smithies, manager, museums and archives, Peterborough Board of Museum Management was elected President of the new society; J. Hayward Madden, Director of the American Canal Society, Livonia, N.Y., was elected Vice President; other officers elected were: Secretary – Professor Rob Taylor of Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario; Treasurer – George M. Carl, Former Secretary of Scott Misener Steamships, Port Colborne, Ontario; Legal Counsel – Marvin Kriluk of Beach, Keogh, Rogers & Grass, St. Catharines, Ontario; Tom Hahn, President Emeritus of the American Canal Society was appointed to the Board of Directors.

Today the Society has grown to 150 members pursuing the objectives that were set for the Society of preserving and promoting Canada's canals.

## **Annual General Meeting and Fall Social**

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held in the Burgoyne Room of the St Catharines Museum on Sunday, December 16, 2001.

The report of the Nominating Committee was accepted and the Executive, as shown on the back page, was elected. John Burtiniak and Doris Bates, who are leaving the Board were thanked for their contributions to the Society.

Following the meeting President George Hume presented a slide show "Reflections on Irish Canals", a travelogue of the Canadian Canal Society tour of Ireland after the World Canals Conference in Dublin.

## **Record Summer on the Trent-Severn Waterway**

One hundred and seventy thousand boaters used Canada's Premiere Vacation Waterway during the summer of 2001. This is an increase of 2.5% over the five-year average and a remarkable 20% increase over the summer of 2000. The fishing, waterskiing, and the many towns, villages and communities to explore are a great drawing card.

## **St Lawrence Seaway tonnage slips in 2001**

Unlike the Trent-Severn the St Lawrence Seaway experienced a 10.6% drop in cargo tonnage. Cargo traffic on the Welland Canal dropped 11.7% and 14.4% on the Montreal-Lake Ontario section. The total number of ship transits on the Seaway in 2001 was 4,082, 2.4% less than in 2000.

The recent imposition of US tariffs on foreign steel has the potential to impact upon next year's business.

The one bright note was that the Seaway met the objectives of its five-year business plan.

## **Ferries all the Rage**

A number of new schemes have been proposed to re-introduce ferry service on the Great Lakes.

One Lake Ontario proposal will see a high-speed ferry operating between Toronto, Ontario and Rochester, New York. The ferry, which will carry cars and trucks, is slated to make the crossing in just over two hours. The service is also planned to operate year-round.

Also proposed for Lake Ontario is a ferry between St Catharines, Ontario and Toronto. In 1998 three companies offered this service but the following year there was only one left. Two ferries are planned to provide a year-round service carrying passengers, cars and trucks for the 41-minute trip.

On Lake Erie there are four proposed routes from Toledo, Ohio to Windsor, Ontario; Sandusky, Ohio to Leamington, Ontario; Cleveland, Ohio to Port Stanley, Ontario; and Erie, Pennsylvania to either Port Stanley or Port Dover, Ontario.

A Hovercraft would operate year-round, between Toledo and Windsor. It would take passengers to the Windsor Casino, three to four times a day, and carry about 80 passengers. The City of Windsor has approved a docking site.

## **Dalhousie Princess**

May 2002 will see the return of a cruise/charter boat operating out of Port Dalhousie, Ontario. The 377-passenger ship (seats 200 for dinner) *Dalhousie Princess* will be used from May to October for sightseeing excursions, educational tours and sunset cruises.

The Port Mansion Entertainment Group, the same firm that owns the Theatre in Port and the Port Mansion Theatre Restaurant, is leasing the vessel for five years.

Add a cruise on the *Dalhousie Princess* to your summer itinerary when visiting the Old Welland Canal sites in Port Dalhousie.

## **Hamilton Discovery Centre**

The Minister of Canadian Heritage, Sheila Copps, has announced that Parks Canada will build the Canada Discovery Centre on Marine Conservation on an 8.25 acre site on the west side of Pier 8 in Hamilton Harbour. “Discovery Centres are intended to connect Canadians from coast to coast with their heritage and are one of the ways Parks Canada is connecting Canadians to their roots, to their future and to each other”, said Ms Copps. “Discovery Centres focus on using new technology, interactivity and real-time links to offer to all Canadians, the opportunity to experience Canada’s system of national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas”, added Ms Copps.

The centre is anticipated to consist of three zones.

- Zone 1 will introduce the visitor to Canada’s systems of national marine conservation areas.
- Zone 2 will pursue the theme of marine heritage and give visitors a look at specific national marine conservation areas such as the Saguenay and Bruce/Fathom Five along with information on the marine heritage of the Great Lakes.
- Zone 3 will focus on present “local” opportunities to discover the area’s Canadian heritage places such as the Hamilton Waterworks, Dundurn Castle, the Royal Botanical Gardens, as well as local efforts to improve Hamilton harbour.

Also to be found in the Hamilton area is the Burlington and Desjardins Canals.

The Tribal Class Destroyer, HMCS Haida, will become an added attraction at the Discovery Centre.

## **HMCS Haida – National Historic Site of Canada**

HMCS Haida was built in England and commissioned into the Royal Canadian Navy in 1943. She served her country in the Second World War and the Korean War until decommissioned in 1963. During the Second World War she sank or helped sink 14 vessels. In 1971 she was acquired by the Province of Ontario and moved to Ontario Place in Toronto.

Haida was built to last a war, fought in two and is now almost 60 years old. Hull surveys have revealed that if she is to remain a floating memorial then she requires repair and restoration work. The estimated cost of this project is C\$7 million of which Parks Canada has committed C\$5 million; in 1943 she cost \$4.3 million to build.

The Friends of HMCS Haida, is a non-profit, charitable organization, dedicated to the maintaining and running the ship. They may be contacted at: Friends of HMCS Haida, PO Box 405, 100-2 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2 or the web site at <http://www3.sympatico.ca/hrc/haida/home.htm>.

## **Corinth Canal under new management**

The Greek government has granted a 40-year concession to Sea Containers Ltd to operate the Corinth Canal. At the western end of the canal there are plans to construct a marina. At the eastern (Aegean) end of the canal a mixed leisure facility which will include restaurants, shops, hotel, cinemas, water park and other entertainments, including a base to take tourists on trips through the canal.

## **Kuala Lumpur to renew Waterways**

British Waterways has recently signed an agreement for a joint venture with Malaysian company, Anggun Perkasa, to provide waterway services in Southeast Asia.

The Malaysian government is planning to spend over C\$200 million on the country's waterways in the next 5 – 8 years. The waterways to be regenerated include those in Kuala Lumpur, Malaka, Kuala Kangsar and Penang. (Ed note: this should increase atlas sales)

“Our experience of working in the UK and abroad has equipped us with the skills to tackle any waterway anywhere in the world,” said Derek Cochrane, northwest regional director of British Waterways. “The Melaka River in Malaysia is much like the River Weaver in Cheshire—only with sunshine and iguanas! We believe that the lessons we have learnt in Britain can be applied to deliver real benefits to the people of Malaysia. This is a country with a fantastic waterway heritage and we are looking forward to the opportunity of working with the Malaysian authorities in the future.”

## **World Canals Conference 2004 – St. Catharines**

Planning continues on our hosting of the conference in 2004, 1 – 3 June. The conference is being held to commemorate the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Welland Canal.

## Getting a Lift

Moving a boat from one level to another has always been the challenge. A number of techniques have been used and some of the more unique means have been in the news recently.

The Anderton Boat Lift was built in 1875 to raise boats the 50 feet between the River Weaver and the Trent & Mersey Canal. After 25 years of use the hydraulic rams corroded and the lift was converted to an electrically driven mechanical operation. The lift was closed in 1983 after a routine safety inspection. The Trent & Mersey Canal Society was instrumental in restoring the lift to working order. The Anderton Boat Lift re-opened to the public in March.

Construction of the Peterborough Hydraulic Lift Lock commenced in 1896 and was modeled on Anderton and the Belgium lift locks. This lock will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its opening in 2004. The Society is planning a visit to commemorate this important event.

The hydraulic lift lock at La Louviere, Belgium was built in 1888 and has been operational since 1917. On 17 January 2002 a peniche was exiting the lower caisson when the caisson rose and trapped the vessel under the guillotine gate. The damage is considerable; the caisson has been seriously buckled and warped and will have to be replaced. The lock is one of four hydraulic locks on the Canal du Centre, which is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The newest approach for moving boats from one level to another is the Falkirk Wheel, the world's first rotating boat lift, joining the Forth & Clyde, and Union Canals in Scotland. Downbound vessels will proceed from a holding basin through a 580 foot tunnel which will take them under the Roman Antonine Wall and across a 65 foot high aqueduct into the gondola of the lift. Then, Ferris wheel like; a half-rotation of the wheel will lower the vessel and the 1800 ton gondola to the lower level. The rotation takes only seven minutes, which is a far cry from the time to traverse the 11 locks that used to be at this site. The Falkirk Wheel will be officially opened in May of this year.

The Falkirk Wheel will be one of the sites visited by members attending the World Canals Conference in Edinburgh, 24 -26 September 2003.



## Lou Cahill Honoured

The Marine Historical Society of Detroit has awarded the William J Luke Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievement to Lou Cahill. Lou has been a friend and long term member of the Marine Historical Society of Detroit for over 25 years. Congratulations.

## **British Waterways Announces Major Investment**

British Waterways has announced the biggest ever investment in waterways restoration; it is valued at over C\$1 billion.

The nine new projects are:

- **Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway**, a new broad waterway linking the national canal network with the East Anglian rivers
- **Bow Back Rivers**, a new network of navigable waterways for east London
- **Cotswold Canals**, reconnecting the Severn to the Thames by water,
- **Droitwich Canals**, creating a new 21-mile waterway cruising ring connected to the River Severn
- **Foxton Inclined Plane**, near Market Harborough – the only inclined plane on a navigable waterway
- **Liverpool Extension to Leeds & Liverpool Canal**, a vibrant new waterfront for Liverpool, connecting the docks
- **Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal**, broad canal linking Bolton and Bury to the River Irwell and the waterway network
- **Montgomery Canal**, ongoing restoration in Wales, including nationally important conservation sites
- **Northern Reaches of the Lancaster Canal**, extending the national waterway network north to the Lake District

The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway is the first new canal to be designed for a century.

Included in the program are eight projects slated for completion this year. These projects include the Anderton Boat Lift and the Millennium Link (Forth & Clyde Canal) and the Falkirk Wheel.

## **World Canals Conference 2003 – Scotland**

A number of members are planning on attending this conference. As we did in Ireland we are planning on a week's tour of canals in conjunction with the conference. Should you wish to join this group please contact me. We hope that you will join us for this trek through the Highlands of Scotland. For those members who have already expressed an interest there is a separate insert. (Ed note: arranging the tour is another project that I have taken on)

## **World Canals Conference 2002 – Montreal**

This year's conference is being held in Montreal in conjunction with the re-opening of the Lachine Canal.

The conference will be based at the Hilton Bonaventure (Downtown Montreal); conveniently located near bus, train and subway stations and minutes from Dorval Airport.

Pre-conference activities and registration will take place on Tuesday, 10 September. Conference presentations, workshops and site visit will occur on Wednesday through Friday. There will post-conference tours on Saturday. Registration information will be available shortly.

## **The Lachine Canal**

The Lachine Canal has been described as the cradle of the Industrial Revolution in Canada. From 1850 to 1950, the canal and its surroundings had the largest concentration of factories in the country.

The idea of a canal to overcome the rapids at Lachine can be traced back to the Sulpician Fathers, the Seigneurs of Montreal in 1680. After lying dormant work commenced on a rudimentary canal in 1701, but it was never completed.

The completion of the Erie Canal threatened to divert Great Lakes trade from Montreal to New York. A group of Montreal merchants banded together to form the “Company of the Proprietors of the Lachine Canal”. But the ability to raise funds was daunting and finally, as a last resort, the Province of Lower Canada took over the project and completed the canal between 1821 and 1825.

Many of the skills learnt on the project were later used on the building of the Rideau Canal, which commenced in 1826.

From 1843 to 1848 the Board of Works of the new United Province of Canada carried out an enlargement of the canal. This construction reduced the number of locks along the 13.4 kilometer route from seven to five and permitted the passage of larger steamships.

Between 1870 and 1885 further improvements were made to the canal. Locks were lengthened, but not widened and sections of the canal were widened. Electrification of the lock-gates also took place along with other improvements to improve transit and berthing.

The opening of the St Lawrence Seaway in 1959 spelt the end of through navigation on the canal. Finally, in 1970 the Lachine Canal was closed to shipping.

In 1997 the Government of Canada and cities bordering the canal announced the Lachine Canal Revitalization Project. The investment of over C\$83 million will see the canal re-open to through traffic by pleasure boats. But this is not just a project for boaters. There will also be walking and bicycle paths and public space and parks. The redevelopment will lead to more projects to renovate older industrial buildings and the construction of new residential units, and the establishment of new businesses. The Old Port of Montreal is one of Montreal’s main tourist attractions; the Lachine Canal is a natural extension of that area.

Come and explore this exciting redevelopment by attending the World Canal Conference in Montreal, 11 – 13 September 2002.

## **Field Trips**

Enclosed with this newsletter is an insert for our Spring Field Trip to the Grand River Navigation on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Program Committee is planning our Fall Trip to the Upper Trent-Severn Waterway. More details will be forthcoming in August.



## Great Laker – Lighthouses, Lake Boats, Travel & Leisure

Great Laker is a new quarterly magazine dedicated to exploring all things Great Lakes. Roger LeLievre and Neil Schultheiss publish it; Roger is the editor and publisher of the annual boatwatcher's guide "*Know Your Ships*", and Neil is the talent behind [www.boatnerd.com](http://www.boatnerd.com), the popular internet site dedicated to ships and shipping on the inland seas.

A selection of well written and colour illustrated articles are sure to keep you entertained and informed. To view a sample or subscribe on-line visit [www.greatlaker.com](http://www.greatlaker.com), or write to Great Laker Publishing Co., LLC, PO Box 244, Troy, MI, USA 48099-0244. Subscriptions are US\$14.00, US\$19.00 for Canada or US\$24.00 International.

## Waterfront renewal in Ontario

A number of new schemes have been put forward to revitalize the waterfronts in Toronto, Hamilton and Burlington. As other communities have discovered citizens are drawn to the water and there is the opportunity for waterfronts to once again become an economic engine for their cities.

More details in the next issue



The Burlington Ship Canal

## Boating Holidays in England?

A recent report in *The Economist*, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, reports that the number of hire-boats, on canals and navigable rivers, has been shrinking. Part of this trend is due to a decline in domestic tourism; holidays taken by Britons in Britain have fallen by 12% in the last decade.

A trade association, Waterway Holidays UK, was set up 18 months ago to market boating both at home and abroad. Their web site is [www.waterwayholidaysuk.com](http://www.waterwayholidaysuk.com).

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