



## **CANALS CANADA/CANAUX DU CANADA**

Newsletter of The Canadian Canal Society  
Société des Canaux du Canada

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### **President's Message**

The year 2007 promises to be an eventful year for the Canadian Canal Society and for canals in Canada. Next year, the Canal Society will be 25 years old and an anniversary celebration consisting of a dinner, speakers and presentations is being organized for Saturday, May 5, 2007 at Rodman Hall in St. Catharines. (see a separate report in Canals Canada for additional information and as plans are finalized, details will be posted on our website: [www.canadiancanalsociety.org](http://www.canadiancanalsociety.org).)

Next year will mark the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the completion of the Rideau Canal in 1832. A series of events is being organized throughout 2007 in communities along the length of the Rideau Canal to celebrate the Anniversary. A listing of events can be found on the website: [www.rideau175.org](http://www.rideau175.org). I hope to attend some of these events.

The Canadian Government has submitted an application to have the Rideau Canal designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. A decision on the application is expected next summer. The requested designation has considerable merit and hopefully there will be an additional reason to celebrate the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Rideau Canal.

The completion of the last section of the Welland Canals Trail this past spring represented an important milestone in enhancing public access to the existing and heritage canals. Although gateway centres, staging areas and signage still need to be provided along the Trail, it is time to consider the next strategic step to promote the tourist and economic potential of the Welland Canals Corridor. The Canadian Canal Society is supporting an initiative to obtain a Federal Government designation for the Welland Canals and associated lands as a Welland Canals National Historic Corridor. Considerable time and effort will be required to develop local community support, to prepare the necessary documentation, to cultivate contacts with Federal Government staff and to

obtain local and federal political support. The Canal Society expects to be heavily involved in the process over the next few years.

As a result of my trips this past spring and fall to visit canals in Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio, I have gained an appreciation of the wealth of canal heritage that lies within a day's drive of Southern Ontario, both in Ontario and Quebec and in the northeastern U.S. I am already thinking about future canal trips, both in Canada and the U.S. and to the 2007 World Canals Conference in Liverpool, England. I hope to report on those canal travels in future editions of Canals Canada.

**Tom Whitelaw** – President, Canadian Canal Society

## **Membership**

The Society is saddened by the death of **Doris Bates** in her 83<sup>rd</sup> year. Doris joined the Society 24 years ago and besides being an avid supporter of the Society, and many other organizations, also served as our Secretary.

Welcome to new members:

**Dave Bedwell** & Helen Donaldson, St Catharines, Ontario

The **Rockwell family**, St Catharines, Ontario

**David Serafino**, St Catharines, Ontario

## **Canadian Canal Society 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

On 1 May 1982 the founding meeting of the Canadian Canal Society was held at Dalhousie House in Port Dalhousie.

To mark our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary a dinner will be held at Rodman Hall on Saturday 5 May 2007. This is a very historic location as so much Welland Canal history is associated with the Rodman Hall area. It was the home of William Hamilton Merritt's son Thomas and from the Hall one can look across 12 Mile Creek and the location of the first two canals, and to Oak Hill the home of his father. Also to be seen across the creek is the statue of William Hamilton Merritt, and below the hill was the location of the Shickluna Shipyard. The tentative timing for the start of festivities is four o'clock.

When details are finalized there will be a separate mailing in the spring. Please mark your calendar now.

## Port Dalhousie Development

There has been much controversy on the proposed development in Port Dalhousie. The position of the Society has been to oppose development that does not respect the heritage of the community. The following letter was sent to St Catharines City Council as part of the public consultation on the development proposal.

Just as not all members of the community are opposed to the development the same is the case within the Society. CCS member **Bruce Timms** has asked that his presentation to council be included in Canals Canada as a “letter to the editor”.

Attention: Mayor T. Rigby and Members of City Council

Re: Proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments  
Port Dalhousie Vitalization Corp. Proposal  
Lock Street, Main Street and Lakeport Road  
City of St. Catharines

The Canadian Canal Society is a non-profit educational, scientific and historical organization dedicated to the preservation and promotion of canal heritage in Canada. All four Welland Canals have had significant impacts on the history and economic development of St. Catharines, the Niagara Region and Canada. As a result, the Welland Canals and associated heritage features have been important areas of interest to the Canal Society.

Port Dalhousie was the Lake Ontario terminus of the first three Welland Canals and the commercial core of Port Dalhousie developed during the 1800's and early 1900's to serve the needs of these Canals. Although the canal terminus shifted to Port Weller with the opening of the fourth Welland Canal in 1932, the commercial core of Port Dalhousie still reflects its heritage as an 1800's seafaring commercial centre with its low rise structures oriented towards the former canal waterfront. These heritage features were an important consideration in the City's decision to designate Port Dalhousie as a heritage district.

All the components of the Port Dalhousie Heritage District - the commercial core, the residential area, the industrial remnants, Lakeside Park and the canal and harbour features - contribute to the area being a heritage community. The commercial core is an integral component because it provides a vital focus for the entire heritage community. Therefore, if Port Dalhousie is to retain its status and image as a heritage community, the heritage character of the commercial core should be preserved.

Many charters on the conservation and protection of heritage sites and areas indicate that redevelopment within a heritage area should be sympathetic to the setting. In contrast, the Port Dalhousie Vitalization Corp. (PDVC) proposal

is a significant departure from the heritage character of the existing commercial core in terms of scale, massing, height and materials. The developer's consultant states, "the proposed development and its residential building are designed to serve as a signature landmark..." which implies that the building is intended to 'stand out' from its surroundings rather than be consistent with the heritage features of the commercial core. Therefore, The PDVC development has the potential to significantly compromise the heritage character of Port Dalhousie and its commercial core.

In conclusion, the Canadian Canal Society supports the continued preservation of Port Dalhousie as a heritage community. The Port Dalhousie Vitalization Corp. proposal has the potential to significantly compromise the heritage character of the community and its commercial core. Therefore, if City Council values the heritage of "Two Centuries of Seafaring Tradition" in Port Dalhousie, the PDVC proposal should be denied.

Yours truly,

Thomas Whitelaw  
President  
Canadian Canal Society



I am a life long resident of Niagara and have lived in St. Catharines since 1977. I live in Port Dalhousie, and have 15 years experience as an elected taxpayer representing St. Catharines as a Regional Councilor.

It is my personal opinion that this project is significant to the Niagara Region, the City of St. Catharines as a whole and critical to the future of Port Dalhousie.

I have considered this project in the context of various Provincial, Regional and Municipal Acts and/or policies. Smart Growth principles apply to this project beautifully, or should I say I feel this project applies the Principles of smart growth beautifully. The Niagara Region has a stated Plan and policy to Grow South. Niagara Region is also very supportive of Smart Growth and the Green Belt Legislation. But in that context I believe the Region needs to add to its Grow South policy a Reach Higher Policy. A Reach Higher policy that recognizes the constraints on St. Catharines growth, and that we can't grow south, east or west, and the lake is obviously a constraint to the North. If you can't grow out, we will have to grow up!

We need to see our position opposite one of the great markets of North America, as an opportunity with only the lake between us. To recognize the historical position of Port Dalhousie as a destination for the Toronto Market, and extension of the Toronto market, as it once was. There was a time when the beach, and the dance hall, and midway, and canoe and rowboat rentals, on the Henley Pond attracted boatloads of people from Toronto, for weekend visits and day trips. Port Dalhousie prospered in those days. Many people, and the youth of Port Dalhousie held jobs and prospered as a result of that position in the Toronto marketplace. I wonder if this may be part of the heritage of Port Dalhousie. This project offers the opportunity to put Port Dalhousie back into the Toronto marketplace, with the return of first class Hotel accommodation, and by adding significant theatre to the beach, and dining, and the Seaport atmosphere of Old Port.

This Project provides the opportunity to return to a market that is growing, and will not suffer from currency fluctuations in the American dollar, or international security, and no passports are needed. It offers a return to a more hospitality based, waterfront destination, seaport tradition. I wonder if this may be part the true heritage of Port Dalhousie.

I wonder if the true heritage of Port Dalhousie is the spirit reflected in the built heritage, the entrepreneurial spirit of the people that built the Lakeside, the Port Mansion Hotels (originally the Austin House Hotel and the McGrath and Union House). I see a reflection of a people that pursued the opportunities presented by the 12 Mile Creek, the Welland Canal and the Lake. A spirit that lead them to build the Muir Brother Dry Docks, to build mammoth Lincoln Fabrics Building, and to risk building hotels far beyond the need of a small village, but with a vision for the opportunities offered by a busy and growing

Canal Port. I see these heritage buildings as reflection of that spirit of the people of Port Dalhousie. I wonder what the builders of early Port Dalhousie would think if they saw their vision for prosperity become shackles on the future, restraints on the prosperity of their Seaport, in an effort to honour the very entrepreneurial spirit of the people that built it. It would be a sad irony, and perhaps a betrayal of that heritage, to use their legacy buildings as shackles to hobble the future. To hold Port hostage to the past, rather than see the built heritage as inspiration, to optimize the opportunity, to Reach Higher as they did in their day.

I see the Heritage of Port Dalhousie as a culture of pursuing opportunity, risking investment to build prosperity for the families of Port Dalhousie based on the blessings offered by the canal and the lakefront. I believe this project builds on the true heritage of Port, with respect for the past, and inspiration for the prosperity of Port in the future.

This project has the build it spirit of early Port Dalhousie, I think this project should proceed, not only to Save our Seaport, but also to Build our Seaport.

### **Bruce Timms**

(This is an edited version of the presentation that Bruce made to St Catharines City Council on 20 June 2006. Editor)

### **The Keefer Mansion Inn**

The Keefer family had a long association with Canadian Canals. George Keefer was the first President of the Welland Canal Company and several of his sons went on to become prominent engineers.



The mansion was built 120 years ago as the principal family residence. It is built of red Grimsby sandstone in the Richardson Romanesque style. The 9,000 square foot house includes 8 fireplaces, 12 foot high ceilings, grand staircase, outstanding hardware and ornate door and panel details.

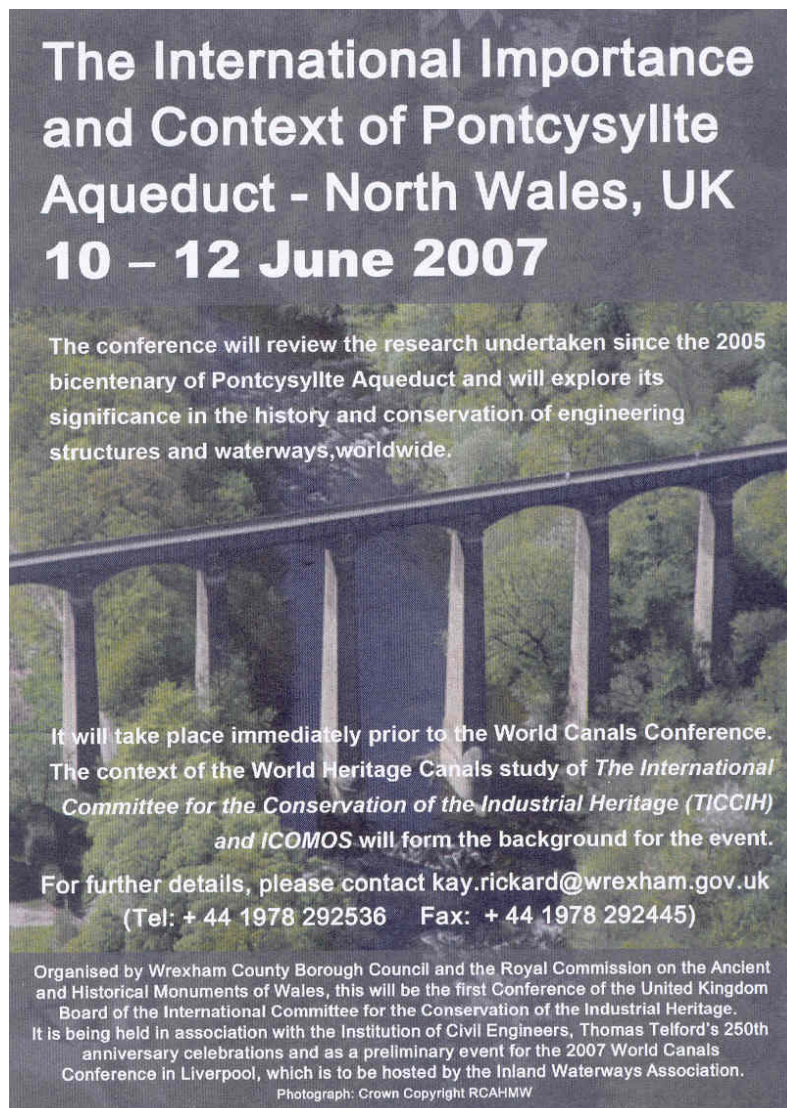


For many years it operated as Maplehurst nursing home. It was acquired by the City of Thorold and restored privately as a heritage inn. A plaque inside the door acknowledges the work of a number of people involved in its restoration, including CCS member **Ken McKenzie**.

The Inn hosted a CCS Board Meeting and gave a tour of the mansion, in September. The board took the opportunity to enjoy lunch while at the Inn.

The Keefer Mansion Inn is a great place to enjoy lunch or dinner. Should you have out-of-town visitors looking for somewhere special to stay we are sure they will feel well pampered at the Inn.

More information is available at [www.keefermansion.com](http://www.keefermansion.com).

The poster features a photograph of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, a long stone bridge with many arches spanning a lush green valley. The text is overlaid on the image in white and yellow. The title is in large white letters, and the dates are in yellow. The description of the conference is in white. The contact information and organizational details are at the bottom in white.

**The International Importance  
and Context of Pontcysyllte  
Aqueduct - North Wales, UK  
10 – 12 June 2007**

The conference will review the research undertaken since the 2005 bicentenary of Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and will explore its significance in the history and conservation of engineering structures and waterways worldwide.

It will take place immediately prior to the World Canals Conference. The context of the World Heritage Canals study of *The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH)* and *ICOMOS* will form the background for the event.

For further details, please contact [kay.rickard@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:kay.rickard@wrexham.gov.uk)  
(Tel: + 44 1978 292536 Fax: + 44 1978 292445)

Organised by Wrexham County Borough Council and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, this will be the first Conference of the United Kingdom Board of the International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage. It is being held in association with the Institution of Civil Engineers, Thomas Telford's 250th anniversary celebrations and as a preliminary event for the 2007 World Canals Conference in Liverpool, which is to be hosted by the Inland Waterways Association.

Photograph: Crown Copyright RCAHMW

This conference immediately precedes the World Canals Conference being held in Liverpool, see the next article.

**World Canals Conference 2007**  
**Liverpool, England 13-15 June**



The World Canals Conference in 2007 is scheduled to take place in Liverpool between 13 and 15th June 2007. This links in with the annual Mersey River Festival, which immediately follows on from the conference dates. Two thousand and seven is a special year for Liverpool, in that the City celebrates the 800th Anniversary of its founding Charter. It will also mark the revitalization of the old Docks by the opening of a new 'Canal Link'.

Liverpool, as a city, has long trading connections with Canada. It was the key seaport for transatlantic trade. Sadly the old town docks have now closed, but the whole area has recently undergone a renaissance with the opening of the Tate Northern Museum, new conference facilities and a Maritime Museum in the old dock premises. Nearby, major canal restoration schemes, rebuilding lost canal links, are also proceeding apace.

The combination of an historic city, past Atlantic trading links, and new waterway construction, offer the basis of a rewarding conference experience. Full details of the program, and pre-conference study tours, will be available at the World Canals Conference 2006 in Pennsylvania this coming September. Further information will be posted on the Inland Waterways Association web site [www.waterways.org.uk](http://www.waterways.org.uk) as it is finalized.

(I have a limited number of brochures for the conference, contact me if you would like one. Also, note that there is cheaper accommodation within walking distance I can provide you with the information if you require it. Editor)

**World Canals Conference 2008**  
**Rideau Canal**  
**Kingston, Ontario**  
**15 – 18 September**



The theme of the conference will be “Managing Canal Corridors in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”. Topics to be examined include conservation, presentation, tourism and selling a heritage corridor. In the year preceding the conference the Rideau will celebrate its 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It is also hoped that the Rideau will have been recognized as a World Heritage Site by the convening of the conference.

The conference will be based in Kingston. The city is rich in Canadian history and promises to be an exciting venue for this conference.



## **World Canal Conference 2009 – 31 August – 2 September**

The conference will be based in Zrenjanin, Vojvodina, Serbia. It will explore the following themes: canals and rivers in the Middle Danube region; natural and historical resources of the Middle Danube region; development of nautical infrastructure and its influence to the market; and, development of hunting and fishing resources.

### **Tour to Northern and West Central Germany**

**Tom Grasso**, President of the Canal Society of New York State and Inland Waterways International and Canadian Canal Society member has planned a tour to Germany for 11 – 26 September 2007.

The tentative itinerary sees the tour arrive in Berlin and departing from Frankfurt. In between there are a variety of canal site visits, boat trips, museum visits and boat lift tours.

My experience in Germany is that the people are friendly and helpful and that there are enough words in the English language with German roots that you can read descriptions at museums and get the meaning of the commentary.

The Canal Society of New York State has always run quality tours and this tour will be no exception. If you are interested, contact Tom Grasso at 585-387-0099 or [tgrasso1@rochester.rr.com](mailto:tgrasso1@rochester.rr.com), full details can be found at [www.canalsnys.org](http://www.canalsnys.org).

### **Canal History and Technology Symposium**

The 26th annual Canal History and Technology Symposium will be held Saturday, 17 March 2007, at the William E. Simon Center for Economics and Business Administration at Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania. Sponsored by the National Canal Museum and Lafayette College, this event features the presentation of research papers on topics of transportation and industrial history.

Topics to be presented include: "Locks and Canals of the Merrimack River" by William E. Gerber; "Canals at Cohoes: Waterpower and Navigation" by Thomas X. Grasso; "The Shenandoah River Navigation and the New Shenandoah Company: 1790-1890" by Robert J. Kapsch; "Adoption of European Engineering Innovations to Create a Modern American Commercial Inland Navigation System" by Emory L. Kemp; "Design Evolution: Reconstructed Timber Swing Bridges on the Rideau Canal" and "Reconstructing Timber Bridges at Parks Canada" by Robert W. Passfield; "Coping with the Elements and Chicago on the Illinois and Michigan Canal, 1848-1943" by John Thompson.

The complete text of the selected papers is published in the Canal History and Technology Proceedings, which is part of the registration package. Registration for the symposium, which includes continental breakfast, buffet lunch, open house at the National Canal Museum and a copy of the Proceedings, is \$60 (\$54 for members of Hugh Moore Historical Park and Museums). All registrations received after March 2 will incur a \$5 late fee. Registrations will be accepted until March 9. Individual copies of the Proceedings can be purchased after the Symposium for \$19.50 (plus tax and shipping).

If you would like a registration form for the Symposium, contact the National Canal Museum at 610-559-6616 or e-mail [membership@canals.org](mailto:membership@canals.org).

(The trip to Easton from St Catharines is about a six hour drive and is all inter-state driving. Editor)

## **Canal Trips**

In the spring and the fall, I took several trips to visit canals in Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio. Through these trips, I expanded my knowledge of canal systems, history and related industrial features and met other canal enthusiasts. I have outlined some of the information and impressions gained from these trips in the following paragraphs.

### **Tom Whitelaw**

President, Canadian Canal Society

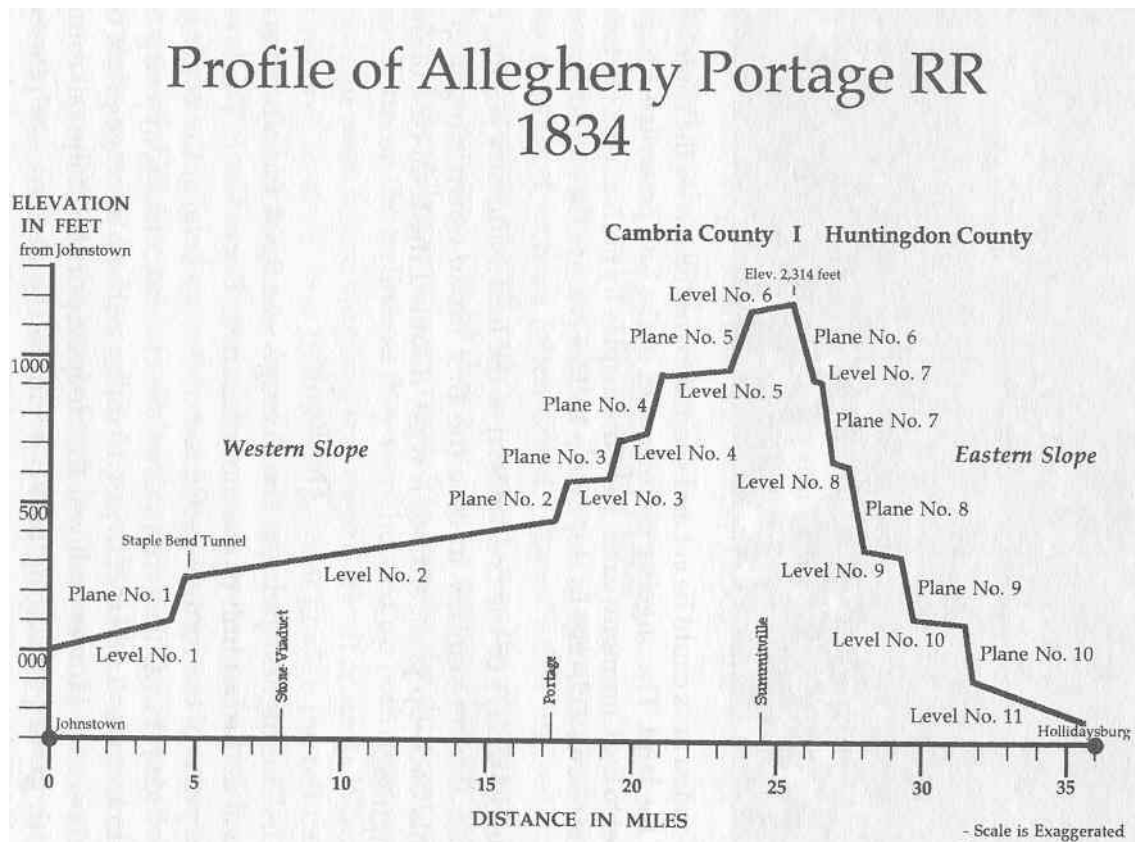
## **Allegheny Portage Railroad**

The Canal Society of New York State held its Spring 2006 Field Trip over the weekend of June 9 to 11. The field trip covered the Altoona-Johnstown area of southwestern Pennsylvania and focused on the Allegheny Portage Railroad and the Johnstown Flood.

The Pennsylvania state legislature, in 1826, authorized the construction of a canal across the state to link Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. However, the canal had to cross the Allegheny Plateau, a formidable physical barrier. Because of the steep grades, the elevation changes, the distances and the lack of water, a conventional canal was not feasible. Therefore, it was decided to build a portage railroad to carry canal boats and off-loaded cargo over the summit between Hollidaysburg just east of Altoona and Johnstown.

The Allegheny Portage Railroad, completed in 1835, was a 37-mile railroad consisting of ten inclined planes and eleven levels, with five planes on each side of the summit and six levels on the west side and five on the east. Special segmented canal boats and cargo were loaded on purpose built railroad wagons

which were pulled up or lowered down the incline planes by cables powered by fixed steam engines located at the summit of each incline. The grades of the planes ranged from 7% to over 9%. Between the inclined planes were levels, relatively flat sections, where the wagons were hauled by horses and later by steam locomotives. The portage railroad raised boats and cargo up 1400 feet on the eastern side of the Plateau and lowered them about 1180 feet on the western side to Johnstown.



The planes were costly to operate and were dangerous; cables and couplings broke resulting in run away wagons. The state legislature directed the building of a portage railroad without planes. The New Portage Railroad was completed in 1855 and was a conventional railroad where wagons were hauled by steam locomotives. The New Portage Railroad was 45 miles long, 18 miles on the east side of the summit and 27 miles on the west side. However, the Pennsylvania Railroad opened its own rail line through the same area in 1854. In 1857, the state sold the New Portage Railroad to the Pennsylvania Railroad which then dismantled unwanted sections of the Portage Railroad.

The Allegheny Portage Railroad was an impressive engineering achievement for its time and helped to open up Western Pennsylvania. However, it had a limited life span, 20 years, before it was superseded by conventional railroads, both the New Portage Railroad and the Pennsylvania Railroad. Many of the incline planes are still visible and several stone culverts and bridges associated with both portage railroads can be found in various states of repair. The

National Parks Service operates an interpretative centre at the summit of the Allegheny Portage Railroad. The centre includes an original inn and tavern that served the Portage Railroad and a replica of an engine house.

The Johnstown Flood occurred on May 31, 1889 when a dam burst after heavy rain. The dam, a 72-foot high structure, was originally built in 1853 to provide a water supply for the western branch of the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal from Johnstown to Pittsburgh. The dam and reservoir were abandoned after the Pennsylvania Railroad bought the canal system. The dam and reservoir were sold to the South Fork Club in 1879 to create a private recreational retreat for the industrial elite of Pittsburgh. After inappropriate modifications to the dam which contributed to its later failure, the reservoir was refilled.

The sudden failure of the dam released 20 million tons of water. The impacts of the rushing water were magnified by the narrow river valley and the amount of development near the river. The flood destroyed most of Johnstown and its industrial suburbs and killed over 2,200 people. The field trip visited a National Parks Service interpretative centre at the dam site and a city operated museum in Johnstown. Photographs and displays of the destruction were awesome and demonstrate the power of rushing water.

After the field trip, I explored the railroad heritage of Altoona. Altoona became a major railroad centre, in part because of the need to add extra locomotives to haul trains over the Allegheny Plateau. The Pennsylvania Railroad established its steam locomotive building and repair shops in Altoona. These facilities were closed with the introduction of diesel locomotives. One section of these facilities was converted into a Railroaders Museum to showcase the history of railroad operations and the lives of railroaders. I also visited the Horseshoe Curve and the 3,600-foot long Gallitzin Tunnel portal, important features built by the Pennsylvania Railroad to overcome the elevations of the Allegheny Plateau.

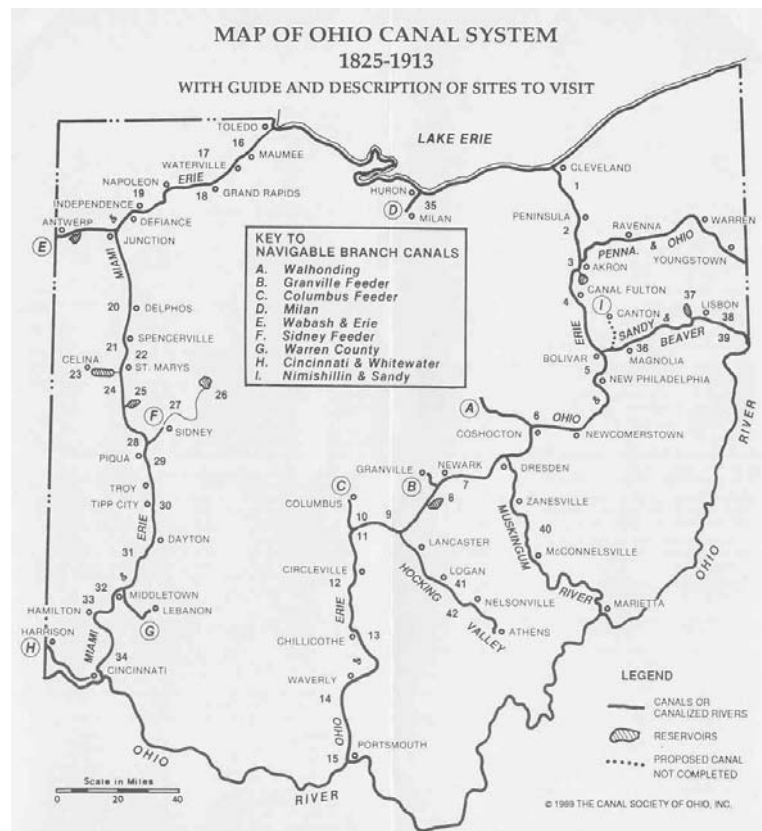
In conclusion, the Altoona-Johnstown area offers a wealth of transportation history and is certainly worth visiting.

## **Ohio and Erie Canal, Coshocton, Ohio**

Approximately 1,000 miles of canals and feeder canals were constructed in Ohio between 1825 and 1847. These canals were instrumental in opening up the state for settlement and development in the mid-1800's. However, the canals ceased to be used for transportation by the early 1900's and are now mostly abandoned. Only selected sections have been maintained for water supply, flood control, drainage, recreation or natural habitat preservation.

In early April, I participated in the Canal Society of Ohio's Spring Field Trip of the Ohio and Erie Canal south of Coshocton in southeastern Ohio. The Ohio and Erie Canal ran from Cleveland on Lake Erie to the Ohio River and served

the eastern half of the state. The canal south of Coshocton is in a ruined state. In many cases, the route has been obscured by later road and railway building. Canal structures beside roads were often partially dismantled by locals for their own use. The better preserved canal features tend to be on private lands well removed from public access. This section of the canal does contain good examples of remnant structures and offers an interesting story. However, few features are signed so a guide with local knowledge is desirable.



There are better examples of tourist oriented canal sections elsewhere in Ohio. In the Coshocton area, Roscoe Village has been restored as an 1800's canal village and there is a short section of watered canal where rides on a horse drawn canal barge are provided during the summer. A 110 mile section of the Ohio and Erie Canal from Cleveland south through Akron and beyond has designated a National Heritage Corridor. A hiking and biking trail has been established along much of the Corridor and canal related features are being restored. Overall, Ohio contains a lot of canal heritage which I hope to explore in the future

## **World Canals Conference, Bethlehem, PA.**

The 2006 World Canals Conference was held in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in mid-September. Bethlehem is located on the Lehigh River in eastern Pennsylvania, a short distance from the Delaware River which forms the Pennsylvania-New Jersey border. Canals were built along the banks of the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers in the late 1820's and early 1830's to carry anthracite coal from northeastern Pennsylvania to Philadelphia. At the same time, two canals, the Morris Canal and the Delaware and Raritan canal, were completed across New Jersey, primarily to bring coal to the Atlantic coast and New York City.

Access to coal and the opening of the Lehigh Valley Railroad and the discovery of nearby iron ore deposits in the 1850's resulted in the development of iron



furnaces in South Bethlehem. These iron works evolved into the Bethlehem Steel Company, an integrated steel mill which eventually covered a 1,800-acre site in South Bethlehem. Bethlehem Steel played a critical role in the industrial development of the U.S. and in the two world wars.

The canals in eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey have long since been abandoned as waterways, although the Delaware and Raritan Canal still functions as a water supply facility. Bethlehem Steel ceased operation on its South Bethlehem site in 1995. Only the heavy forge plant with its unique capabilities remains in production under new ownership on 50 acres of the original site.

The theme of the Canals Conference was “Industrial to Recreation: Greening the Coal Canals”. Through mobile workshops, Conference participants visited remnants of all four canals in the area to see examples of selected sites being restored as tourist attractions. Two prominent examples were Hugh Moore Park which included a canal boat ride and the National Canal Museum, both located in Easton, Pennsylvania. The Canal Museum was designed to appeal to school-aged children, but many adult conference attendees enjoyed playing with the displays. We also visited the derelict Bethlehem Steel site. The abandoned blast furnaces and other buildings were fascinating but it was sad to see the remnants of a once magnificent industrial complex. There are plans to clean up and redevelop the Bethlehem Steel site as a commercial, entertainment (casino) and intermodal transportation/warehousing complex. Plans include the establishment of a National Museum of Industrial History.

The Delaware and Lehigh Valleys have been designated by the U.S. Congress as a National Heritage Corridor to recognize the area’s canal and industrial history and to help develop programs to enhance the tourist and economic potential of the heritage resources. Anyone interested in canals should visit this area of Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

### **Buffalo Field Trip and Anniversary**

The Canal Society of New York State held its Fall Field Trip in Buffalo over the weekend of October 13 to 15. The field trip also celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canal Society with a luncheon at the Lafayette Hotel Tap Room (where the Society began) and an evening dinner. The field trip got off to an interesting start with the Buffalo area experiencing a record breaking snow storm over the Thursday evening. The Friday evening events were postponed and the Saturday bus tour was delayed two hours in recognition of the travel challenges. However, my journey to Buffalo from St. Catharines on Friday evening was uneventful.

The field trip focused on the Buffalo River and harbour. Buffalo was the western terminus of the original Erie Canal. A 12.5-acre waterfront site just south of the old Memorial Auditorium is being redeveloped into a tourist

destination. The \$49 million (US) project includes the rewatering of the commercial slip that was the outlet of the Erie Canal to the Buffalo River, a museum for the Naval and Military Park, interpretative features for the old Erie Canal and generally enhanced public access. The project is to be completed in October 2007. I intend to return at that time to view the finished project.

The tour bus followed the Buffalo River passing by the remaining grain elevators. Some of these elevators are gaining a new life as ethanol production facilities. On a vacant lot sitting in the open were the engine and the pilot house of the passenger excursion vessel *Canadiana* salvaged from its final resting place at Ramey's Bend in Port Colborne. The SS *Canadiana* carried passengers between Buffalo and Crystal Beach from 1911 to 1958. Hopefully these artifacts will be moved to a covered enclosure for their protection. The harbour area also contains large expanses of open land that were once steel mills but are now just brownfield sites that are reverting back to natural habitat.

We also visited the Colonel Ward Pumping Station on the waterfront which supplies potable water to much of Buffalo. The pumping station was completed in 1916 and included five huge triple-expansion steam driven pumps. These pumps were replaced in 1938 by three electric driven pumps which are much smaller but more efficient. It was interesting to see the progression of technology.

The City of Buffalo contains many examples of outstanding architecture. Sunday morning, a small group toured the abandoned 1929 New York Central Railroad Passenger Terminal. The Terminal was designed in the Art Deco style and includes a 17-storey office tower and a large passenger waiting area. A volunteer group is trying to preserve the structure. It would be a tragedy if the structure was demolished.

## **Port Robinson Lock**

The City of Thorold has recently designated the Second Welland Canal lock in Port Robinson as a heritage site.

The single stone lock replaced the earlier wooden locks of the First Welland Canal that connected the canal to its original terminus, the Welland River.



## Thorold Murals



Located along the Welland Canals Parkway Trail, between Locks Six and Seven, the murals are generating a lot of interest in, and enthusiasm for, the unique history of the city of Thorold and the four Welland Canals.

As of October 2006, four of the planned twelve panels have been completed, with the next eight planned for summer 2007. The work being done is a result of the efforts of community volunteers and the artist, Shawn Reimer. When completed, the mural will cover over 20,000 square feet, making the Thorold Murals Project the largest in Canada. Our vision is to depict the people, places and events that have been important to the development of our city, creating a story that connects our current community members to our past, thus "taking our community back!"

There is lots of work to do and we need many more volunteers to help us reach our goal. Visit [www.thoroldmurals.com](http://www.thoroldmurals.com).



## Kirkfield Lock

The year 2004 marked the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the Hydraulic Lift Lock in Peterborough. Next year it will be the turn of the Hydraulic Lock at Kirkfield to celebrate it's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. In preparation a contract was recently let to paint the tubs and steel structure of the lock. The Trent-Severn Waterway was designated a National Historic Site in 1929.



The Merrickville & District Historical Society has organized a lecture series as part of the celebration of the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Rideau Canal. The lectures will be held at the Merrickville United Church, corner St. Lawrence and Main Street East, Merrickville, admission in \$5.00.

Among the presenters are CCS member and webmaster **Ken Watson**, and Doug Stewart, who was a director on our first board of directors.

18 March **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW** by Professor Brian Osborne  
Introduction to series and overview the history of the Rideau Canal.

15 April **THE RIDEAU ROUTE** by **Ken Watson**  
A view of the landscape of the pre-Canal waterway.

27 May **THE WAR of 1812** by Victor Suthren  
The war, the troubled peace, the decision to build the canal.

17 June **BUILDING THE CANAL** by Mark Andrews  
Col By's innovative adaptation of European techniques to wilderness construction.

22 July **BOOM CANAL YEARS** by Bob Sneyd  
The story of the years of great Canal success and prosperity 1832-1856.

19 August **ETHNIC SUBTERFUGE** by Glenn R Lockwood  
Social life of Rideau corridor 1830-1930.

16 September **THE ROMANCE OF STEAM** by Coral Lindsay  
The age of leisure steam boats and the canal's survival through troubled times.

21 October **ANOTHER RIDEAU WORLD** by Jonathan Moore  
The underwater archaeology of the Rideau Canal.

18 November **THE RIDEAU as LIVING HISTORY** by Doug Stewart  
The Rideau's 20th Century evolution and its future promise.

(Merrickville is about a five hour drive from St Catharines. Plan a trip to the Rideau Canal to celebrate the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary and include a lecture as part of your journey. Further events may be found at [www.rideau175.org](http://www.rideau175.org). Editor)

## Membership Survey

Last year we asked members to complete a survey when they sent in their membership renewal. Here is the data from the survey.

Ages: under 25 - 0    25-45 - 1    45-65 - 10    65-75 - 10    75+ - 22

Working: 8       Retired 25       Semi retired 6

e-mail    Canals Canada       yes 8       no 9

e-mail    notices                    yes 19       no 9

Mobility a Problem:    yes 5       no 27

Work Shops as alternative to field trips:    yes 15                    no 14

Length                    half-day 11       one day 9

Locations:       Brock 1       Lock 3 Museum 1       Hamilton 1  
                  Toronto 1       Owen Sound 1       Peterborough 1

Field Trips taken in the past:    yes 25       no 8

Length preferred for trips:    1 day - 12       2 days - 6       3 days - 7

Canal Location Interests:    Ontario 23    Quebec 17    New York 14  
Pennsylvania 12    Ohio 11       Illinois and Maritimes mentioned

Future trips to: 3 replies only, Trent-Severn Waterway, Quebec Canals,  
Pennsylvania Canals

Special Trips: Canal Society of New York State 13    Sault-Ste-Marie 6  
World Canal Conferences 6

Interests: all mentioned "history"

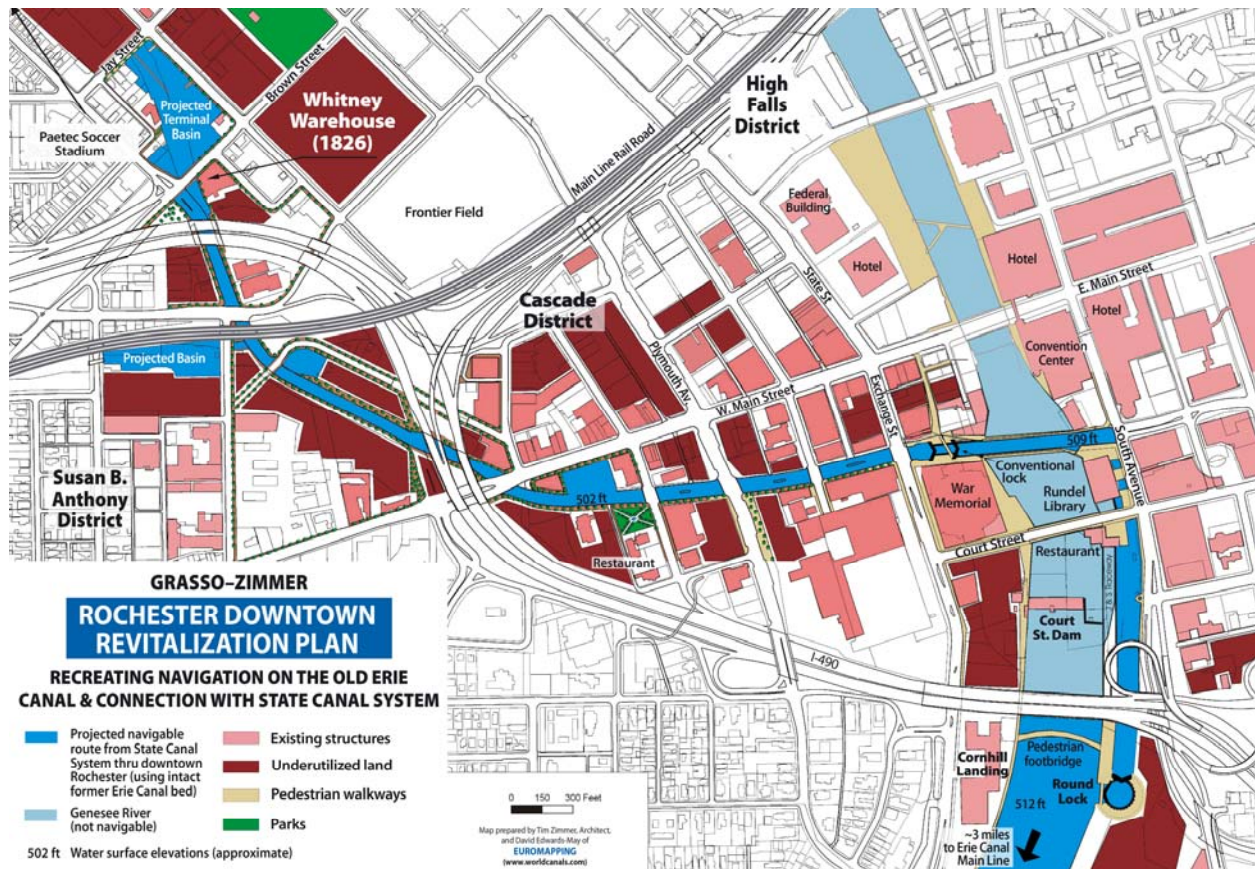
Wish for: more photos, articles on bridges, construction details, more local  
content, and work towards rehabilitation of a Canadian Canal

**Thank you** to all of the members who took part in the survey. As we often  
don't see members this has provided valuable feedback to the Board.



# ROCHESTER DOWNTOWN REVITALISATION PLAN

## Re-watering the Old Erie Canal



1. **Remove Broad Street** from Rundel Library and **South Avenue** West to **Brown Street** a distance of approximately 1 mile exposing the original old Erie Canal alignment
2. Through the right-of-way **restore the only intact, urban, 1842 old Erie Canal Aqueduct** and the **old Erie Canal to Jay Street**. **Connect the old restored canal to the existing Erie Canal** and New York State Canal System **through a round lock** for boats not to exceed 100 feet long, 19.5 feet beam, and 6 feet draft on the **east side of the Genesee River**
3. The **canalized Genesee River**, behind the Court Street Dam, **is 3 feet higher than** the historic level of the **old Erie Canal** across the aqueduct. Therefore the river provides more than enough water for the entire length of restored canal
4. **Construct** a small **conventional lock** in front of the War Memorial **lowering the canal 7 feet west** of the lock. This permits **boats to pass beneath cross streets** (like Plymouth Avenue) **without** resorting to **lift bridges**. (BOTH

LOCKS OPERATED BY BOATERS AND TOUR BOAT COMPANIES, NO LOCK TENDER NEEDED)

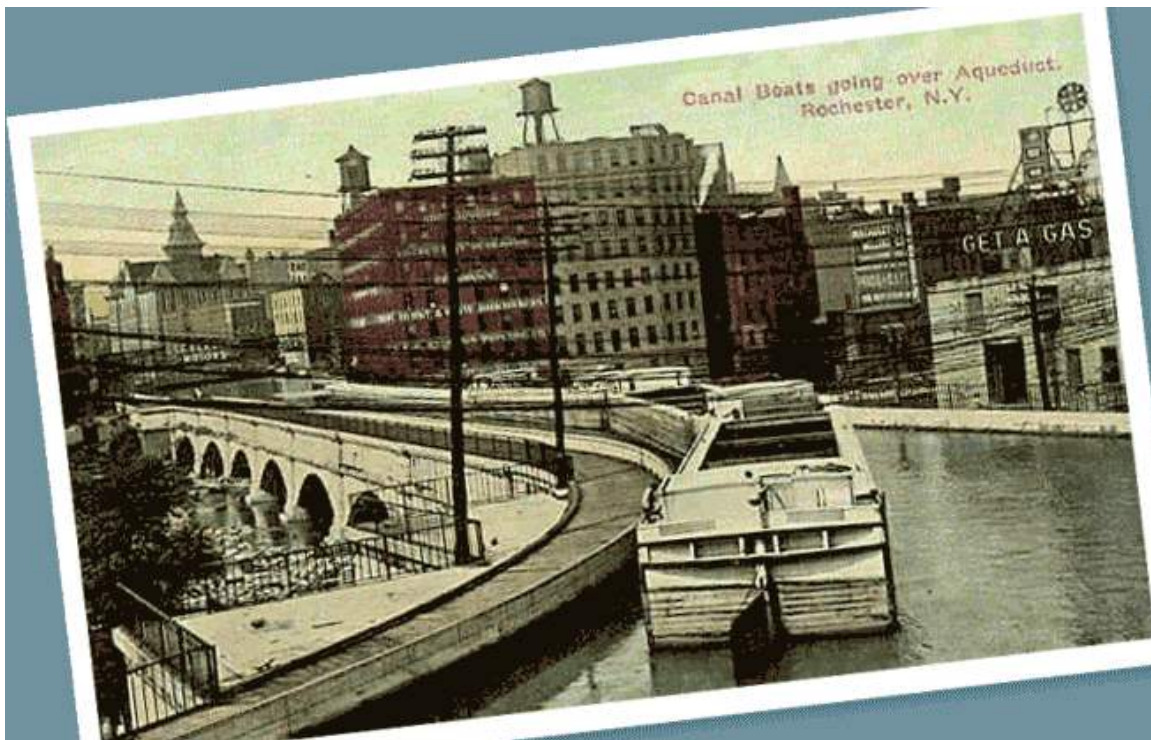
5. Construct a **terminal basin** also used as a turn around between **Brown and Jay Streets**. The old Erie Canal becomes ***“an inner harbor”***.

6. **Overflow spillways** to drain water back to the Genesee River and control the water level in the canal, preventing stagnation and spilling excess water coming in from lockings, built **beneath Rundel Library** and one **near Brown Street**

7. **CONCLUSION:** Results in a **"BRAND NAME" waterway** uniting new ball parks, High Falls, historic canal side buildings/warehouses along Broad and Main Streets, Convention Center, War Memorial, restaurants with the existing Erie Canal, Cornhill Landing and proposed Brooks Avenue Landing/University of Rochester. There is unrivalled potential **for economic revitalization and tourism**. Has potential to blow San Antonio out of the water certainly Providence, Rhode Island and the Bricktown Canal in Oklahoma City. IS THE WEST SIDE BOOKEND COMPLIMENTING THE EAST SIDE RENNAISSANCE SQUARE?

Waterway utilized by water taxis, tour boats, hire boats, pleasure boats, canoes, kayaks, row-boats, and paddle-boats (water torches at night)—ice skating in winter. Landside use: strolling, biking, roller-blading, dining, shopping, lodging at hotels and Bed and Breakfasts, picnicking, green space, concerts and festivals, people gathering places

8. Projected total cost probably well below 100 million dollars





## Genesee Community Charter School

at the Rochester Museum & Science Center

We often ask where are the future members of our canal societies going to come from. The Genesee Community Charter School, in Rochester, New York, will hopefully provide many recruits for the Canal Society of New York State or other societies in the various communities in which the students may settle.



The school is an Expeditionary Learning School serving 210 children in grades kindergarten to six. Students take an active part in investigating and contributing to solutions that address community issues. Intellectual growth and character development are viewed as being mutually dependent and of equal importance. In addition to academic skills, students build a strong sense of social and community responsibility.

One of the community issues that students examined was the Grasso-Zimmer proposal to re-water the Broad Street Aqueduct in Rochester. In their background investigation they examined the Bricktown Canal in Oklahoma City and the Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas. They also looked at many other successful examples of canal revitalization. Ultimately they put together a report that they presented to the Rochester City Council.

The report done this was not the end of student involvement. The class that made the presentation to City Council challenged the following year's class to continue the work. When delegates to the World Canals Conference in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania attended their first session they found 27 students of the Genesee Community Charter School in attendance. In addition to the conference program additional presentations were given by subject experts in attendance at the conference. The students also came prepared with survey questions which would be incorporated into the report by this year's class.

Delegates were appreciative of the interest and inquisitiveness of the students. They left the conference feeling that the future of our canals is in good hands if we can develop more youth, such as the students who attended and harness their enthusiasm.

Further information on the school can be found at [www.gccschool.org](http://www.gccschool.org)

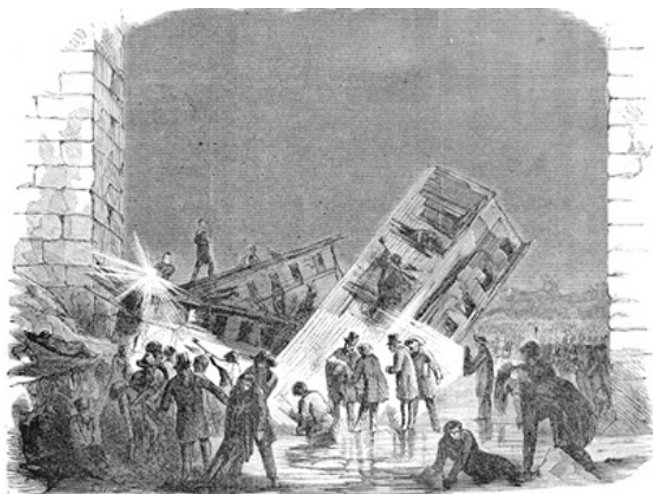
## Great Western Train Disaster

Next year will mark the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the great railway catastrophe at the Desjardins Canal Bridge on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1857. Fifty-nine people were killed; notable among them was Samuel Zimmerman of Niagara Falls, at that time considered the richest man in Canada.



The Desjardins Canal had originally followed a circuitous route via Spencer Creek. Through negotiations with the railway company a new more direct route through Burlington Heights with achieved. The canal company built a high-level suspension bridge to maintain the roadway for the toll road. The railway built a swing bridge at a lower level. Schooners were still able to make their way to the canal basin in Dundas.

A broken front axle on the locomotive was the cause of the accident and the locomotive, tender, baggage car and two first-class passengers cars fell onto the ice below. Most of these broke through the ice drowning many of the people. The onset of darkness and the difficulty of access hindered recovery operations.



The 16<sup>th</sup> March 1857 was declared an official day of mourning by the City of Hamilton, and the large public funeral was attend by 10,000 people.

**Uncommon Carriers** by John McPhee

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2006 - 248 pp., \$30.00 (Cdn)

Reviewed by **George Hume**

Few of us will have the opportunity of riding with tugboat captains, freight train engineers or long-distance truck drivers as they navigate their specialized worlds. Something of the romance, tedium and skill can be experienced with John McPhee's new book.

Inland waterways enthusiasts will be particularly drawn to the descriptions of river and lock navigation on the Illinois River and the nostalgic five day paddle on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, recalling the past glories of taming these rivers for the dual benefit of transportation and power.

It is at Port Revel, a pond in the French Alps, that we learn that the skill of the Great Lakes captains creates an admiration for mid-continent manoeuvring among the "salties" sharing a refresher course. McPhee tells us about the modern captains' reliance on harbour pilots, docking pilots, river pilots, bar pilots and canal pilots, so they rarely have the opportunity to practice moves that they may need in emergencies with no pilots around to help.

The "bank-effect," the difference between dredging an anchor and dragging it, the "width of influence" and "depth of influence" are not likely to affect us personally, but knowing about them can inform our understanding of ship handling in our harbours and especially in our canals. Although the Port Revel ships are models, they are to scale in weight as well as dimensions. Philippe Delasalle, the instructor, says they are "like a large lorry with a moped engine and no brakes."

It is at this abandoned clay quarry that captains practice emergency stops using the Jordan Turn or the Williamson Turn, comparing the results with the emergency full astern command. Overtaking another ship in restricted waterways is one thing they try, showing them that it is so fraught with problems that they may never attempt it in actual service.

River tug captains execute manoeuvres that the deep sea captains wouldn't think of. An upbound captain on the Illinois River, with a "tow" of fifteen 200-foot barges three abreast ahead of him will seek a "hold-up spot" when a downbound tow is due to pass. This is usually a wider portion of the river and the upbound tow is often rammed into the shore to make sure that it is not sucked into a collision with the passing tow. The downbound tow, moving faster with the current, has much less ability to manoeuvre. Besides, it wouldn't have the current to help pull the lead barges out of the bank to get going again.

It is observations like these that fascinate the student of inland waterways, but



John McPhee, a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, exhibits a keen ear and eye for human characteristics as well. This is a book to recommend to anyone interested in transportation as it is currently practised. As this is McPhee's twenty-seventh book, he has an easy assurance of keeping the reader's attention. I look forward to finding other volumes that he has authored.

## Canadian Canal Society Social – 3 December 2006

A well attended Social was held at the Welland Canals Centre at Lock 3 in St Catharines.

After a few opening remarks by President **Tom Whitelaw** a video on the proposal for the Rideau Canal to be granted World Heritage Status was present by **Bob Sears**.

The principal presentation was given by **Bruce Timms** who outlined a plan to develop a Welland Canals Heritage Corridor. On the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Welland Canal in 1929 the Trent-Severn Waterway was recognized as a National Heritage Site. The Rideau Canal has also been granted National Heritage Site status. But the Welland Canals, which has formed such a vital link in the development of the Great Lakes and the vast resources in its hinterland, has gone unrecognized. This plan will set out to rectify this omission. We will report more fully on this as plans develop.

<p><i>The Canadian Canal Society</i></p> <p>Executive Officers for 2006-2007</p> <p>President: Tom Whitelaw  Vice-President:  Secretary: George Hume  Treasurer: Steve Hinchliffe  Past President: Bobbie Styran</p> <p>Send correspondence to:</p> <p>Secretary  Canadian Canal Society  PO Box 23016,  Mid-Town Post Office  124 Welland Avenue  St. Catharines, Ontario  L2R 7P6</p>	<p>Contributions for Canals Canada to:</p> <p>Bob Sears, Editor  Canals Canada  248 Tower Drive  Toronto, Ontario  M1R 3R1</p> <p>Phone: 416-285-7254  Email: dawnofdestiny@sympatico.ca</p> <p>Website:  <a href="http://www.canadiancanalsociety.org">www.canadiancanalsociety.org</a></p> <p>Canals Canada is Copyright by The Canadian Canal Society</p> <p>Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Society</p>
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