



CANALS CANADA/CANAUX DU CANADA

Newsletter of The Canadian Canal Society
Société des Canaux du Canada

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President's Message

With the arrival of winter, navigation on Canadian canals has ceased. However, canals can still remain centres of activity in winter with major maintenance projects. Similarly, canal enthusiasts can take advantage of the winter season to reflect on past canal experiences and to plan for the future.

Anniversary Celebration

A major highlight of 2007 was the celebration of the Canadian Canal Society's 25th year as an organization. The celebration was held at Rodman Hall in St Catharines on Saturday, 5 May 2007. The program included an Annual General Meeting, presentations to commemorate the anniversary, past society activities and notable members, a reception and a dinner. The warm sunny weather was a bonus as it allowed us to hold the reception in the garden of Rodman Hall. The after dinner speaker, Jim Wheeler of the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, talked about some of the new technologies that are being introduced to enhance the operational efficiency of the Seaway. Everyone at the celebration enjoyed renewing friendships and discussing past Society events.

Canal Society Fall Field Trip

The Canal Society conducted a fall field trip to the Sharon Temple and the Newmarket Canal. Insufficient members signed up to justify the hiring of a bus, so transportation was by car pool. The Sharon Temple is a large three storey white frame building completed in 1832. The Temple was built by the Children of Peace and contains design features that were symbolic of their beliefs. The Temple is well preserved for a 175 year old building but obviously requires a lot of continued maintenance. The Temple, a National Historic Site, and the grounds are maintained by a not-for-profit organization and many volunteers.

The Newmarket Canal was intended to connect Newmarket with Lake Simcoe. Its route followed the eastern branch of the Holland River and would have utilized three locks to reach Newmarket. Construction started in 1907, but was cancelled in 1912 with a change of government; over 80% of the work had been completed. The abandoned lock structures are still in a remarkable state of preservation and portions of the route have been converted into linear parks with pedestrian and bicycle trails. I would like to thank **Bob Sears** for researching and organizing the tour and showing us the unique Sharon Temple and an interesting but little known canal history.

New York Field Trips

In 2007, I had the opportunity to attend two field trips organized by the Canal Society of New York State; a spring tour to the Schenectady area and a fall trip to the Black River Canal. The Schenectady area is at the junction of three major water routes: the Erie Canal, the Champlain Canal and the Hudson River. The Erie and Champlain Canals have been rerouted and enlarged since their original construction, leaving behind abandoned canal structures. With the availability of affordable water transportation, this area became a major centre of industrial development in the 19th Century. Much of this industry has now closed. Abandoned and converted industrial buildings and old canal structures are scattered over the area making this region a great place to visit for anyone who is interested in canal and industrial history.

The Black River Canal was one of several lateral canals that branched off the Erie Canal and that were constructed in the mid-1800's. Most of these lateral canals were abandoned before 1900. The Black River Canal remained operational slightly longer, in part because the Canal acted as a water supply feeder for the Erie Canal, but the last sections had closed by 1924.

The Black River Canal joined the Erie Canal at Rome, New York and extended northward about 35 miles to the canalized Black River. The Canal rose 700 feet and then descended 386 feet, requiring a total of 109 locks. In the steeper sections, the locks were built as combined flight locks. Our visits to several flight locks made one appreciate the challenges of building a canal in steep terrain. Boonville, about 25 miles north of Rome, was an important centre on the Black River Canal and recently a canal museum has been opened in the community. For canal enthusiasts, a trip to the Rome-Utica area should include a visit to Boonville, its canal museum and some of the abandoned flight locks.

Future Initiatives

The Canal Society is continuing its efforts to raise the profile of the Society and of canals. The Society is preparing a grant application to the Ontario Trillium

Foundation to fund the installation of informational signage along the Welland Canals Trail. In addition, two Society members are still pursuing the formation of a “Friends of Merritton’s Heritage Canals” to help maintain and promote the old First and Second Welland Canals in the Merritton area of St. Catharines.

Finally, the 2008 World Canals Conference will be held in Kingston, Ontario from 14 – 17 September. The Conference will feature the Rideau Canal, a National Historic Site, which was recently designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The Conference will be an opportunity to meet canal enthusiasts from other countries and to learn about canals and canal issues around the world. I hope that many members will be able to attend.

Tom Whitelaw

President, Canadian Canal Society

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society will hold its Annual General Meeting on Sunday, 13 April 2008, at two o’clock, in the Burgoyne Room, of the St Catharines Museum, at Lock 3. Some housekeeping constitutional amendments will be on the agenda. The report of the Nominating Committee will be forwarded in a spring mailing.

Membership

Enclosed with this newsletter is a membership renewal form. Due to rising costs all categories of membership have been increased by \$5.00. This is the first increase in dues in ten years.

Secretary’s Report

At the Annual General Meeting a number of motions will be introduced to amend our Constitution. The first deals with establishing a quorum for a meeting. The Society over the last few years has experienced a decline in membership. Also, as a national organization it is not practical for members to travel long distances to attend a meeting; though the opportunity to be involved is provided through proxy voting. The Board recommends the proposed wording as reflective of our ability to produce a quorum and provides it with the means to carry out the business of the Society.

The motion to be presented is that the Constitution of the Canadian Canal Society be amended as follows:

In Article VII.C where the wording is: “A quorum ... shall be thirty members ...” the following wording shall be substituted: “A quorum ... shall be the lesser of twenty members or a third of the membership in good standing ...” and At the end of Article VII C the following wording shall be added: “Where any

business cannot be considered at a General Meeting because the meeting has not achieved a quorum, a notice for another General Meeting may be issued within 60 days. At the subsequent General Meeting, the President may declare a quorum to be the number present in person and represented by proxy”.

The second set of amendments to the Constitution is administrative in nature and is made on the recommendation of CCS member and lawyer, **Patrick Little**, that the Constitution of the Canadian Canal Society be amended as follows:

In Article II A, delete the term “non-profit” and substitute in its stead “not-for-profit.”

In Article III B, in the second line, delete “purposes” and substitute in its stead “objects.”

In Article IV, add after “Ontario” the following “or at an address to be determined by the Board of Directors.”

In Article V A, in the second line, remove the comma after the word “membership.”

In Article VI B 2, include the wording of Article VI C so that B2 would read “those persons who hold ex-officio membership on the Board by virtue of being an officer of the Society who is not a regular member of the Board or the Editor appointed by the Board, from time to time.”

Article VI D would become VI C, etc and VI G would be removed.

In Article IX B, in the last line remove “the aforesaid” and substitute in its stead the word “that.”

In By-Law I G, delete By-Law I G 2 By-Law I G 3 becomes I G 2.

In By-Law II C 3, make the construction parallel to II C 2 by deleting the words “appointed ... “ and “subject to the approval of the Board” and substituting in their stead the following: “elected by the Board.”

George Hume,
Secretary, Canadian Canal Society

Membership

We have learned of the passing of the following former board members, Peter McKenna and Agnes Wilson; also, Paula Gomme wife of former board member Ted Gomme.

Albright G Zimmerman PhD

Zip, as he was known to one and all, had died at the age of 87. A past President of the Pennsylvania Canal Society, he attended his last field trip in October. Before becoming the President of the Canal Society he was active in organizing many field trips. In addition he made many presentations on canal history and technology. His published works include, "Pennsylvania's Delaware Division Canal – Sixty Miles of Euphoria and Frustration" and "A Canal Bibliography".



The program has not been finalized. Further information may be obtained by going to the web address noted above, or completing and mailing back the enclosed card.

World Canals Conference 2009 Serbia - 31 August – 2 September

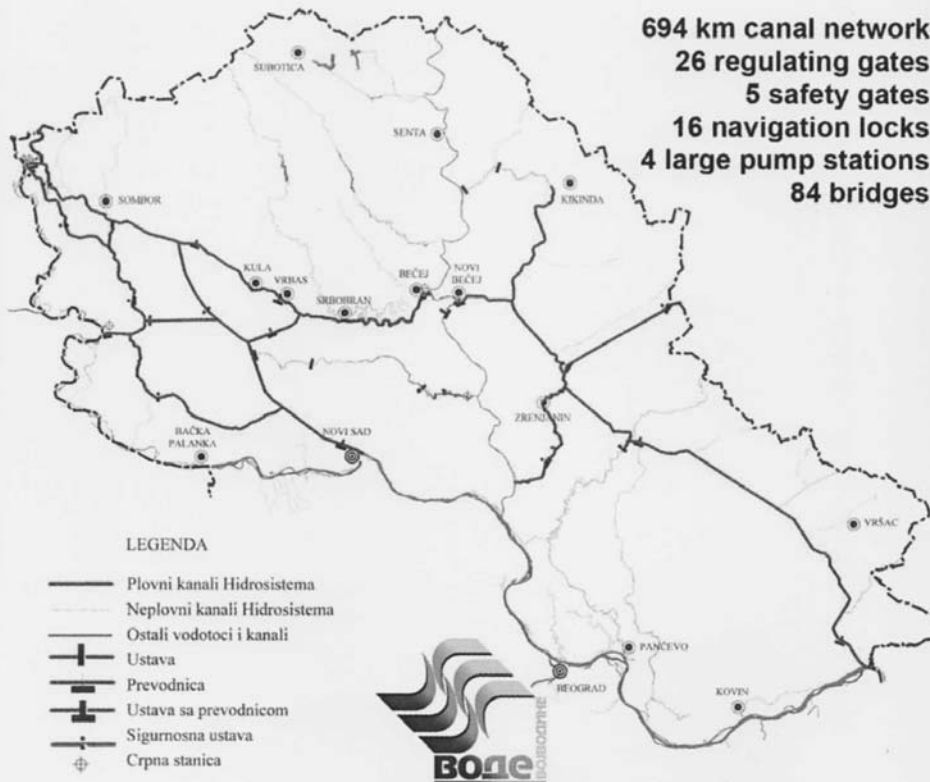
The World Canals Conference in 2009 promises to be very exciting. I say this because for the first time the conference will be off the beaten track. That is it is not being held in North America or the traditional canal areas of Western Europe. This presents challenges to both the organizer and the participants. But, what an opportunity to enjoy central European culture, an exciting new wine region to explore, and who could not be thrilled about exploring the "Blue Danube" and the historic "Iron Gorge".



Enjoy the hand made Beauty! Canal DANUBE - TISA - DANUBE

Being one of the most complex hydraulic engineering projects in Europe, Hydro system Danube- Tisa- Danube encompasses:

694 km canal network
26 regulating gates
5 safety gates
16 navigation locks
4 large pump stations
84 bridges



World Canals Conference 2010 Rochester – 19 – 22 September

Ten years after first holding a World Canals Conference Rochester will once again host the world. The conference will look at the progress that has been made during the ten year period, and, the challenges that still lie ahead.

The conference will provide the opportunity to focus on the Canal Society of New York State museum development at Port Byron. The preservation of the “Day Peckinpaugh” and the project to re-open the 1842 Erie Canal Aqueduct in downtown Rochester will also be examined.



Hiking the Historical Welland Canals!

For my first article for this newsletter, I thought I would show you a couple of unique Welland Canal remnants that can still be found in St. Catharines, Ontario. Despite the ever expanding population, buried in some strange spots, evidence of the past still remains visible. I have made it my mission to photograph all that remains of the Welland Canals to preserve them in some way, for future generations to enjoy.

One of my proudest finds, though not that hard to find, but if you're not looking for it, you probably wouldn't see it, is Lock Three of the Second Welland Canal. A picture in the book, "The Welland Canals Historical Resource Analysis and Preservation Alternatives", published in 1977, shows this lock was in perfect condition. However, this was before Highway 406 was expanded to meet the Queen Elizabeth Way. Now all that remains are a couple of walls, of this once proud lock. To see this remnant for yourself it is quite easy to get to. If you park on St. Paul Crescent, meeting McGuire Street, you will find a pedestrian bridge that crosses the 406. Cross the 406 on the foot bridge and at the end (before you turn right to head down in to the valley), look down and to the left and you will be able to make it out. Once you get your bearings, you can head down the hill and once at the bottom, turn left and head towards it (hint you will be heading towards the intersection of Westchester and Glenridge Avenue above you!). Here are two pictures that I took the day I found it.



To finish up, I thought I would tell you about the hardest Third Welland Canal remnant to find. Why is it so hard you ask? Well, it's under water for nine months a year. Located adjacent to Lock Six of the current Welland Canal is a location, known as the pondage. In essence it's a flood control pond, with a large weir to control water level on the current canal. It is underneath this body of water that Lock Twenty of the Third Welland Canal can be found. It is only visible when the canal is drained in the winter shutdown months. If you are standing on the edge of the pond, you will be able to see the lock in the middle. It is remarkably well preserved despite being submerged for so long. Also off in the distance you will be able to see Lock Twenty-One of the Third Welland Canal, but that is a different story



Here are two pictures of Lock Twenty. One is a before/after picture and the other is a close up picture of the lock, after I trudged through all the mud to get a good a picture.



Rest assured I will be continuing my hiking journeys to find more! Let's work together to preserve these remnants so that future generations can enjoy them as well.

Gord Westwater www.drgordsworld.com

GRAND VISION

Creating the Niagara Heritage Corridor

Niagara's wealth of opportunity has always lain with its geography. The wonder of Niagara Falls is both a major power source for the province and its greatest tourism draw. Over the past two centuries, industry and scenic travel routes have grown up beside it, along the river that feeds it and down the length of the gorge created by it. Niagara Falls also posed an impediment to travel but, in overcoming this obstacle, new opportunities were created in the form of the four Welland Canals.

In 2006, the Greater Niagara Circle Route was completed after 14 years of cooperative effort between local municipalities and upper tiers of government. This route, which can be walked or cycled, takes travelers along the shore of the scenic Niagara River and along the routes of the present day and early Welland Canals. Heading the drive for its completion was Circle Route Chairman, Regional Councillor **Bruce Timms**, who walked the entire route this past year. Now he has a new goal.

A National Commission

On 3 December 2006 at the Lock Three Museum in front of members of the Canadian Canal Society and invited guests, Timms presented a concept for a National Heritage Corridor for Niagara that would run the length of the Welland Canals from Port Dalhousie to Port Colborne. The task is daunting. It will require a huge investment from the public in terms of funds and voluntary man-hours. If it wasn't the most exciting economic stimulus ever pitched to the Region it might even seem undoable.

"It's important to see the big picture," stated Timms during his PowerPoint presentation, which graphically demonstrated the assets that lay stretched across Niagara waiting to be restored into what can one day become highly desirable lands for recreation and human habitation.

A St. Catharines Standard editorial from 27 September 2004 stated the following: It is long overdue that remnants of the old Welland Canals be considered for designation as a national historic area... Niagara Region's planning services committee and regional council have initiated formal discussions with the 12 local municipalities on the subject of designation, and while politicians from some municipalities have expressed interest, others have concerns, saying their parks departments don't have the money to do justice to the maintenance of national historic sites. That may be so, but with senior government support, obstacles can be overcome... If municipalities get on board, designation would not be speedy—possibly taking more than two years. But that's not long considering the years the old canals have been a hidden if not forgotten secret.

There is no better time to tackle something big than at the beginning of a new council's term of office. With the term having been extended from three years to four, there is even an extra year to get the job done. What is required, according to Timms, is the formation of a national commission to coordinate cooperation among the many stakeholders in order to achieve National Heritage status. As a National Heritage site, federal funds would be forthcoming to get the ball rolling. Private investment would not lag too far behind.

Unearthing our Treasures

The plan calls for the restoration, recognition and promotion of the four old Welland Canals, their related buildings and structures as a nationally significant heritage site. Though the boost in Niagara's tourism alone would warrant the investment, there are other factors to consider as well. The old canals are a significant part of our culture and played an important role throughout our history in building our nation. To properly tell Canada's story, artefacts such as the old wooden and stone locks need to be uncovered and restored. The era of canal building began in 1824 and continues to this day. Nowhere in the world outside of Niagara can people see remnants of canal construction spanning this extensive period of time. The famous canals of the world such as the Panama and Suez canals were built during one era. The same goes for our own Rideau Canal.

Though the routes of the four canals are not the same, there are places where they do come together. Thorold, where the ships climb the mountain, is where remnants of all four canals exist in close proximity to each other. Though little remains of the original wooden locks other than what may be buried underground, there is a visible wooden lock (capped with concrete) existing in Centennial Park in St. Catharines.

The reasons why we chose to bury our old canals rather than maintain them is very simple. Cultural historians were not in charge. Governments and agencies at all levels placed the canals in the hands of those who were responsible for operating them. Safe, risk-free operation was the priority and covering over what was seen as a hazard rather than an asset, was less taxing on the taxpayer than maintaining something that existed as a public liability requiring costly safety features.

Rather than scenic ravines with accessible waterways flowing through them, we have no-trespass zones, parking lots and brownfields as well as underutilized green spaces that hide more than they show of our heritage.

Saving the City Centre

It was the Welland Canals that built our city and it is the Welland Canals that can save it. St. Catharines began as Shipman's Corners on a bend of the Twelve Mile Creek that formed a part of the First and Second Welland Canals.

This is where, what we know today as downtown St. Catharines, got its start. The Third Welland Canal ran diagonally across the city and businesses developed and grew along this route as well. St. Catharines is faced with a development dilemma. The city cannot expand beyond its fixed urban boundaries and therefore must develop existing lands within the city in order to grow its tax base. To attract private investors who will develop these lands, there has to be an aesthetic appeal that will attract buyers of the developed commercial and residential properties. Lands that sit above a ravine with an accessible waterway running through it that reflect a pride in our heritage would be extremely more valuable than what presently exists.

With the closing of Hotel Dieu Hospital and the likelihood of closing the St. Catharines General Hospital upon building a new one in West St. Catharines, these lands can become prime opportunities for private investment. Instead of the Queenston Street area falling into decay and ruin as a result of the closing of the hospital, it can become the most appealing part of the city for urban dwellers relocating here from other cities such as nearby Toronto, Hamilton, Burlington and such who are cashing out of their respective housing markets.

Phase One

As one of the first orders of business, Timms is suggesting the establishment of a National Commission to plan and co-ordinate a co-operative project with the municipalities of Niagara Region, the Province and the Federal Government, the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, the Ministry of Transport and the Welland Canals Foundation. The commission would ask the Ministry of Transportation, who have jurisdiction over the canal lands, to initiate discussions with the local municipalities to design a strategy for developing the Welland Canals Heritage Corridor, and related structures, as a nationally significant heritage site.

An initial task of the commission would be to compile an inventory of all structures, sites and built heritage that exist, including sites where heritage structures may be hidden. Though this may seem an onerous task, some of this work has already been done by the now defunct Welland Canals Society who turned their records over to Brock University when the group disbanded in 1991.

In addition, the City of St. Catharines and civic volunteers have done some initial work in unearthing and beautifying some of the remnants of the old canals as is evidenced in Jaycee Park, Mountain Locks Park and Port Dalhousie. The city has also developed a master plan for Mountain Locks Park and budgeted \$8,500 to undertake archaeological work to investigate the existence of the remnants of the first Canal entrance piers and lock in Lakeside Park.

Private investment is also playing a significant role in heritage restoration both in Merritton and in Port Dalhousie and Timms claims that the time is ripe to capitalize on the momentum being generated by both private and public initiatives.

At the root of any successful campaign is educating both the public and civic leaders on the benefits and required tasks of the undertaking. Though City Councillors Mark Elliott and Heather Foss attended his presentation on December 3rd, all elected officials and senior staff members will need to understand the potential and the duty to accomplish the initial goal of achieving National Heritage status for the Welland Canals Corridor.

All municipalities can benefit but none can benefit as much as St. Catharines. With few avenues of prosperity left open to us, we should be the ones leading the charge down the Welland Canals corridor. With a four year mandate to accomplish a goal that is estimated to take two years, it is certainly achievable and a legacy that earns bragging rights when that mandate comes up for renewal once again in 2010.

David Serafino (this article originally appeared in the January 2007 edition of Dalhousie Peer and is reprinted with permission)

Welland Canals Historic Corridor – An Update

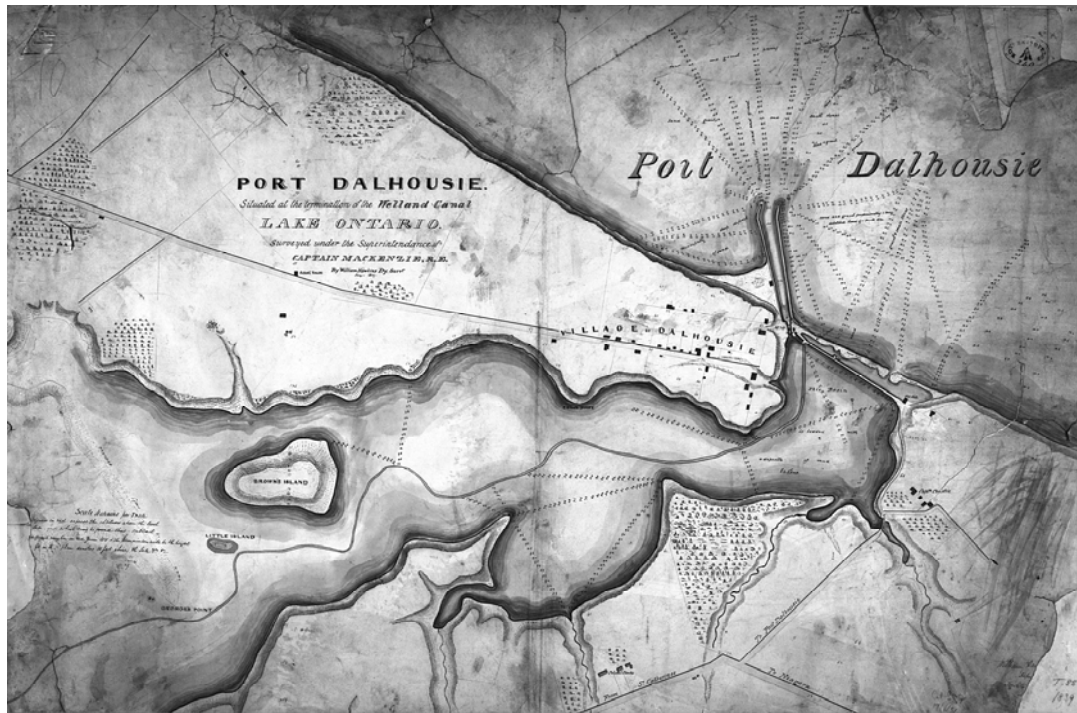
A meeting was held in Ottawa with Michel Audy, head of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Subsequent to the meeting a researcher was assigned to “examine the potential significance of the whole canal system.”

Marc de Caraffe, research manager for the Historical Service Branch of the National Historic Sites Directorate visited the canals in November. Accompanying Marc on his visit were **Bruce Timms**, **John Burtniak** and Bill Lewis.

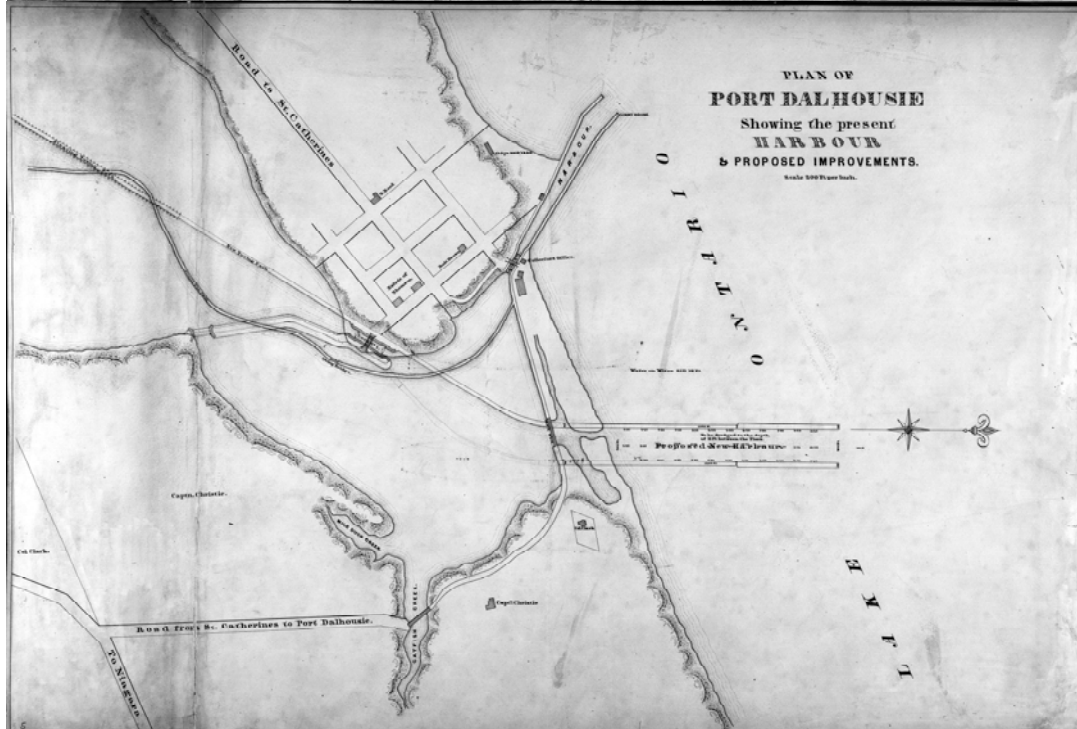
Marc de Caraffe said, “the issue is ...how can this site, if it’s going to be designated, tell a story? We also want to have an idea of what are the dimensions of this site. I have to try to find reasons for designation ... for making the Welland Canals a National Historic Site. It’s a very complex cultural landscape. It’s a very mixed usage, with industrial and residential sectors and we also have parks.” We wait with anticipation for Marc’s report.

Where is Lock One of the First Welland Canal?

With the move to establish a Welland Canals Historic Corridor the question is being asked, “Where is Lock One located”? Here are various maps of Port Dalhousie, what do you think?



1837



1845

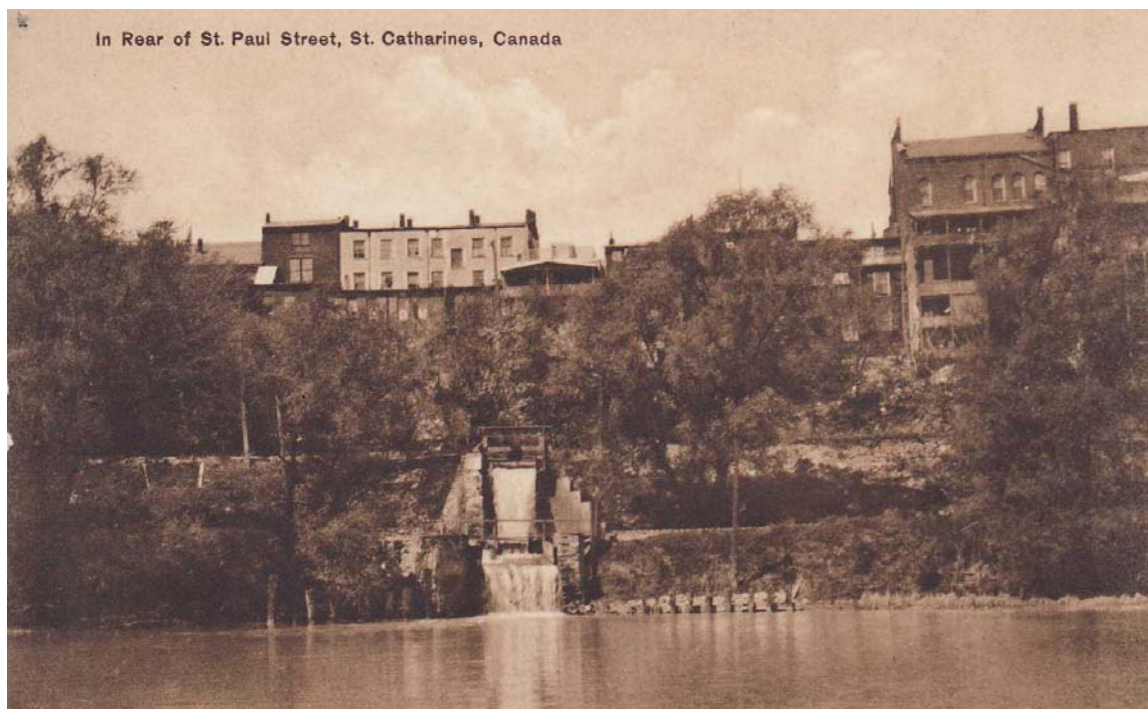
Restorable Canals – Promoting Tourism

The American Canal Society website has a section on restorable canals. One of the canals listed is the Second Welland Canal. The suggestion is to provide a link from Port Dalhousie to Thorold, as an alternative to using the Fourth Welland Canal. This would mean that a boater would have 27 locks to enjoy, instead of the current seven.

On the surface such a proposal might seem impossible. But, those of us that have been to England, Ireland and Scotland know that the word “impossible” has been removed from the dictionary used by canal enthusiasts. Canada does not possess the volunteer sector that those countries do, and the reopening of canals has come at a great cost; some of the monies have been raised through fund raising and others through grants and lottery funding.

St Catharines

For St Catharines a start could be made by building a marina in the lower level parking lot behind St Paul Street. Locks One and Two are still intact and bridges can be either made operable or raised (if they can raise the Jacques Cartier Bridge in Montreal by 50 feet for the Seaway development then nothing is impossible, more on that issue later). But, a new Lock Three might be required and the entrance to the marina would have to tunnel under Highway 406. Of note is that any planned hydro development in the area of Lock Two must also provide for future navigation. This is meant to be an opinion piece and not a detailed engineering study so I will end now on St Catharines.



Port Robinson

The lock at Port Robinson is a natural first project. It is in good shape and besides the refurbishment of the lock it would require a new section of canal on the upstream side and clearing the channel on the downstream side. There are no major impediments between Port Robinson and the Niagara River, the original terminus of the First Welland Canal. Bridge heights restrict the size of powerboats that could use the route and sailboats with their masts down would have no difficulty. Height restrictions were not an impediment to the reopening of the Lachine Canal, which has seen an increase in boating traffic year after year since re-opening. For people that were going to or exiting from the Erie Canal this would provide an attractive alternative route. Those boaters exiting at Port Robinson then have a choice of continuing northbound or turning south if they are following a circular route.



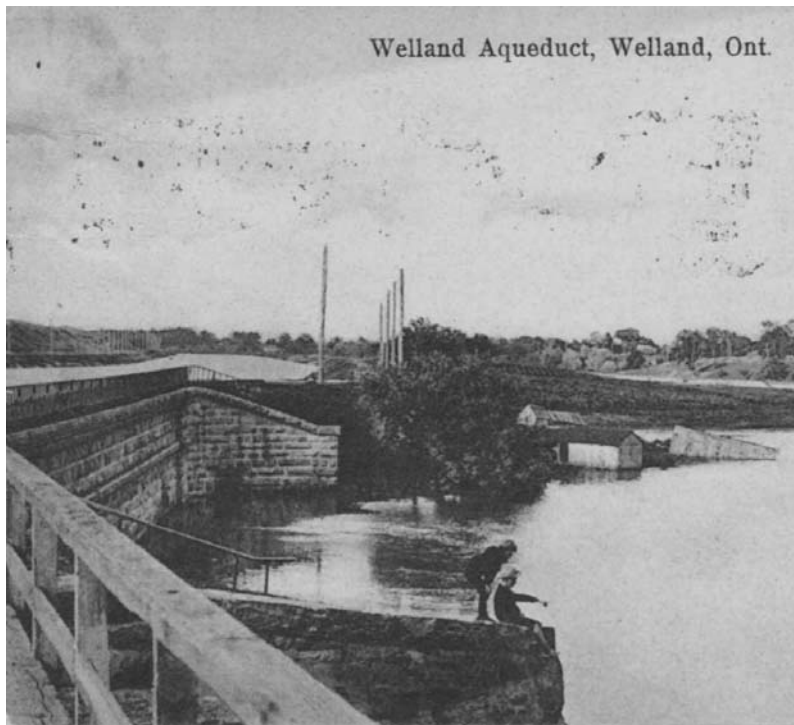
Welland

Boaters that had no difficulty traversing the Welland River from Chippawa to Port Robinson would also have no difficulty following the original route of the Fourth Welland Canal into the City of Welland. There is the opportunity to make Welland a boating destination.

Currently the old route of the Fourth Welland Canal through the City of Welland is not a through route, but, there is no reason that that could not change. At the town line on the south side of Welland there is a “plug” that

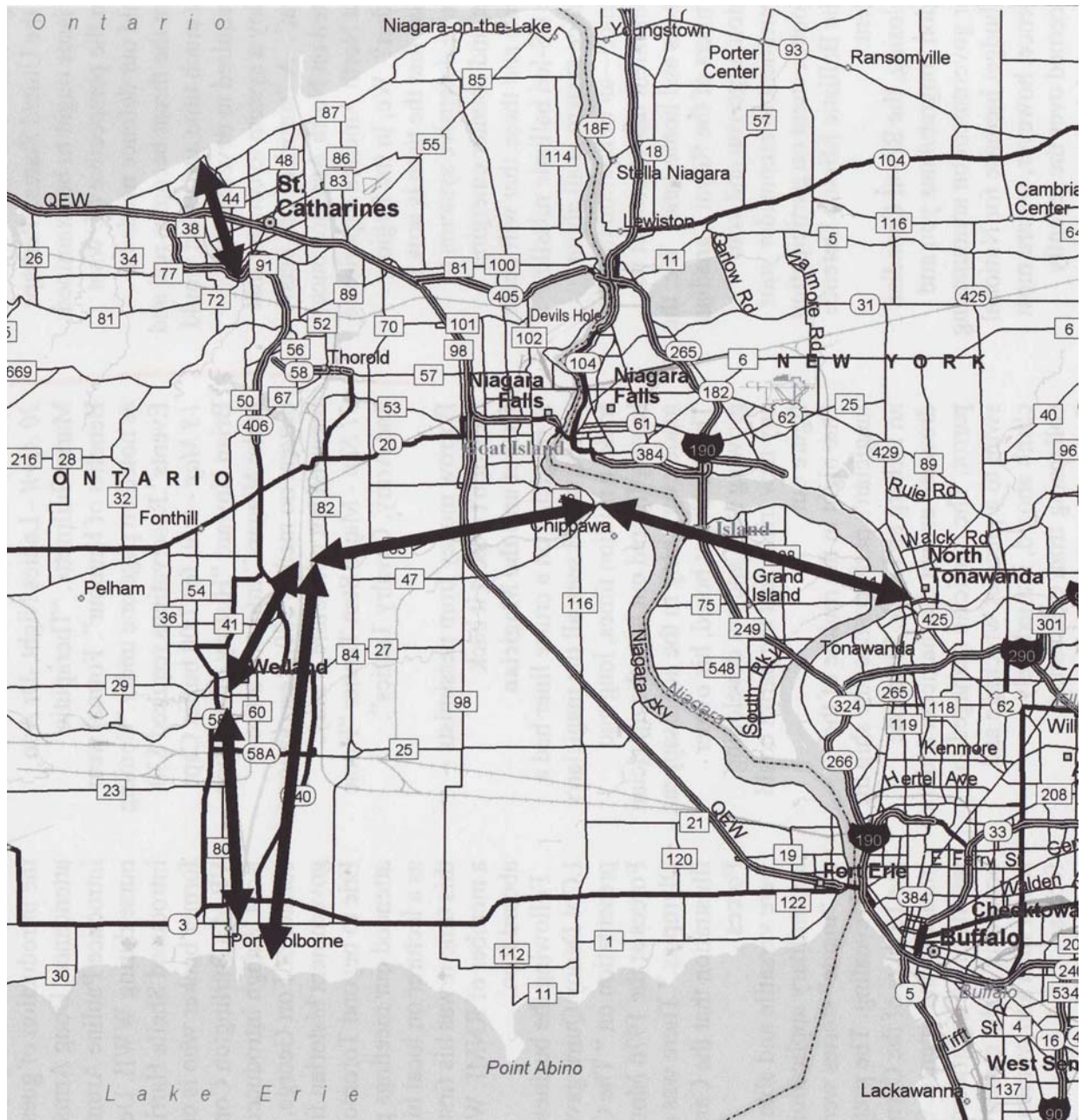
was necessary to provide the railway with the necessary grade to use the tunnel under the Welland Canal Bypass.

With a little imagination this obstacle could be overcome. My first choice would be to put in an aqueduct if the railway would still have sufficient headroom. What could be more appropriate than the City that was once called Aqueduct, to once again have one? The Welland River is taken under the old route of the canal through a reverse siphon, which is not an aqueduct. The bridge slightly to the east of the “plug”, Canal Bank Street, suggests that the height clearance for the railway may not be a problem.



There is a second alternative and that is to use a Marine Railway, such as the one at Big Chute on the Trent-Severn Waterway. This could raise boats high enough to provide the railway with the clearance that it needs. A Marine Railway could be a tourist attraction in its own right.

The proposed alternative Welland Canal routes would reduce recreational boats on a commercial waterway. They would also provide the opportunity to promote tourism and create jobs.



Bob Sears © Quoin Enterprises

A Toronto Destination

If you find yourself in Toronto on the last Saturday of the month there is no finer way to fill your time than touring Union Station. The tour is run by the Toronto Railway Historical Society and meets at the Travelers Information booth at 10:50. It is time and \$10.00 well spent, for a two hour behind the scenes tour. www.thra.ca



Friends of the Rideau

At the Rideau Symposium, held in Kingston on 26 November 2007, the Friends of the Rideau were presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by Gavin Liddy, the Superintendent of the Rideau Canal National Historic Site. The certificate recognized the long-term commitment of the members of the Friends in supporting and promoting the Rideau Canal Heritage Corridor.



Seaway Celebration 2009

The Seaway will mark its 50th Anniversary in 2009. The Society, along with others, is looking at appropriate ways to celebrate this event. There will be more to come in the spring 2008 issue of Canals Canada.





Canada issued a stamp to mark the opening of the St Lawrence Seaway in 1959. It was similar in design to the United States four cent stamp. A number of the Canadian stamps were printed with the centre design inverted.

The Canadian Canal Society

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