



CANALS CANADA/CANAUUX DU CANADA

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From the Editor

It has been awhile since the last edition of Canals Canada and much has happened in your editor's life in that time. Going from being unemployed to deciding to be retired has been disruptive and one of the things that has suffered has been Canals Canada.

Recent budget cuts are putting our Historic Canals in jeopardy. Reduced funding will result in delayed maintenance and reduced staffing. Our webmaster, **Ken Watson**, has started a website www.SaveOurRideau.ca which highlights the problems that that waterway is facing. Ken has kindly reformatted much of the website so that it can be reproduced in Canals Canada. Please visit his website for the latest news.

Our website has also had a slight redesign and two new sections have been added. One deals with *People*, the intent is to provide a biography of people that have been important to our canals, such as, entrepreneurs and engineers. More importantly there is now a *NEWS* section. Ken Watson's website highlights the problems along the Rideau Canal, but, our *NEWS* section will look at all Historic Canadian Canals and how they are impacted by the cuts. From time to time there may also be interesting articles that are international in nature.

I thank you for your patience, and we look forward to your continued support of the Canadian Canal Society.

As always we welcome any contribution you may have for Canals Canada or the website.

Bob Sears, Editor

Mystery Brooch



Inquiries made through the Canadian Canal Society website are forwarded to the Editor. If I can I will answer the inquiry, or, I will forward it to one of my many contacts to see if they can help answer the question.

The request for information on this brooch was sent to the Society because the centre design looked like a lock. I felt that with the sailing ships in the background if it was a lock it was an entrance to an inner harbour. I asked if there was anything on the back of the brooch?



As can be seen there were markings on the back and here they are enlarged.



It is clearly marked as sterling and the hallmarks are a lion, star or maple leaf, and a circled 3.

I referred the inquirer to Birks who I felt would be best at providing information.

What do you think?

Here is the central device enlarged



New Members

Welcome to the following new members:

Mike Brandon	Calgary, AB
Sam King	Aurora, ON
Nicholas Kocsis	St Catharines, ON
Frank Noble	Seattle, WA, USA
Dan Taylor	St Catharines, ON

In Passing

John Jackson died on 19 March 2010 in his 85th year. John served with the Royal Navy during the Second World War. He studied Geography and Urban Planning in the UK and came to Brock University in 1965 as the first head of the Geography Department. He authored/co-authored a number of books on railways and canals and their impact on the Niagara Region.

Ted Gomme died on 5 November 2010 in his 79th year. Ted served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during the Second World War. Following the war he graduated from the University of Toronto and worked for the Provincial Government.

Dee Dickman died on 7 July 2011. Many dedicated people have come from Brock University, Dee was one of them. Also, a member of the Historical Society of St Catharines she brought her love of history and organizational skills to the Board where she served as the Membership Secretary.

James T Angus died on 16 June 2010 at the age of 82. He was born in Kitchener but grew up at Big Chute on the Severn River, where his father was the lockmaster. His career was spent in the education field but he still found time to share his love of history. He was an advisor to the Trent-Severn Waterway, about which he wrote several books. One of the most notable of his books was *A Respectable Ditch – A History of the Trent-Severn Waterway 1833-1920*.

Desmond (Des) Harris died on 8 January 2012 at the age of 82. Des was born in England and immigrated to Canada in 1956. He held various government jobs in the Ottawa area before moving to British Columbia. Among the many loves in his life were amateur dramatics, travel and with his deep bass voice his membership in the Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir. His love of travel also included an interest in canals and a number of us enjoyed the company of Des and his wife Janet at World Canals Conferences. This is especially true of those who travel with them on the CCS tour of Irish Canals in 2001.

Save Our Rideau

www.SaveOurRideau.ca

A campaign to protect our Canadian heritage

*** BACKGROUNDER ***



The Rideau Canal, the oldest continuously operated canal in North America, a National Historic Site of Canada and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is under threat from both the Government of Canada and Parks Canada, the agency charged with the care and control of this significant part of our Canadian heritage.

Save Our Rideau is a campaign to have Parks Canada focus its management on the cultural heritage values of the Rideau Canal, to have Parks Canada properly support heritage programming, and to have the Government of Canada sufficiently fund the canal to properly maintain its heritage assets.

by Ken Watson, June, 2012

Introduction

The following pages were extracted from the Save Our Rideau website – www.SaveOurRideau.ca

That website will contain the most up to date information and in some cases, such as the Jones Fall photo essay, a more dynamic presentation than this document.

Save Our Rideau is a personal initiative of CCS member **Ken Watson**. Ken has been promoting the Rideau Canal with his www.rideau-info.com website since 1996, with his books about the Rideau Canal, and with public presentations and tours – all done on a volunteer basis. He's been worrying for the last few years about the future of the Rideau Canal. Up to now most of his efforts have been internal, figuring, as a good Canadian, that rational arguments will win in the end and that he should give government the opportunity to "do the right thing". But those rational arguments seem to have fallen on deaf ears and things are now (2012) getting much worse.

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SAVE OUR RIDEAU - Home Page

The Rideau Canal, the oldest continuously operated canal in North America, a National Historic Site of Canada and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is under threat from both the Government of Canada and Parks Canada, the agency charged with the care and control of this significant part of our Canadian heritage.

Background

Over the past 10 years Parks Canada has been cutting its heritage support for the Rideau Canal (which also includes the Tay Canal). Ironically this was occurring at the same time as they worked to achieve UNESCO World Heritage status for the Rideau Canal. Although World Heritage status was achieved in 2007, there is no one in the direct management of the Rideau Canal in charge of heritage. In 2012 another major blow was delivered by the Government of Canada in the form of major funding cuts to Parks Canada. Parks Canada has chosen to make those **cuts deeper for its heritage sites than its parks sites** - the cut to Parks Canada was less than 6% (somewhere between 3.9 and 5.7%*), while the cut to the Rideau Canal is reported to be about 15%. This has made a bad situation (the Rideau Canal was already underfunded) much worse. And to top it all, there has been no public consultation for any of these changes even though it has impacts on the thousands of residents along the Rideau Canal, impacts the heritage of all Canadians, and under the World Heritage Convention, the international community.

What You Can Do

Get Educated • Get Upset • Communicate

- **Get Educated:** learn about some of the issues by reading this backgrounder.
- **Get Upset:** Get upset about the long term implications to our Canadian heritage.
- **Communicate:** talk to your neighbour, share the link to the website, write/email to your local MP, write/email to the Prime Minister.

Specific Issues

Each of the issues listed in the paragraphs below is elaborated upon in their own section in this document.

Heritage Management

When Parks Canada took over management of the Rideau Canal (from the Department of Transport) in 1972, it had a small core of heritage people working in their Ottawa headquarters. This was quickly beefed up (more staff, more support) given the heritage needs of the Rideau Canal and much work was done through the 1970s and 1980s. Since HQ was looking after heritage, no heritage position was created within the direct management structure of the Rideau Canal. By the 1990s, heritage support for the Rideau from HQ was waning and by the 2000s, almost non-existent.

Public Engagement

The Rideau Canal is near and dear to the heart of many Canadians, particularly those that live on or near this historic waterway. In the 1980s Parks Canada did a very good job of working with the public, examples would include the 150th anniversary of the canal and the first management plan. Both involved good public communication and partnerships with the interested public. This continued into the early 2000s and then Parks Canada started to move away from public engagement. See the Public Engagement Page for more.

Heritage Awareness

The Rideau Canal is not simply a waterway catering to boaters - it is a significant part of our Canadian heritage. But that story has to be told and it is Parks Canada's responsibility to do that. It is the public awareness of places such as the Rideau Canal and their impact on the formation of Canada that keeps these heritage sites relevant today. As the Auditor General of Canada stated in 2003 *"These places recall the lives and history of the men and women who built this country, and they foster awareness of how Canadian society evolved. They help us to better understand the present and prepare for the future. They contribute in important ways to Canadians' sense of belonging to their community."* Parks Canada continues to remove resources that help to tell this story.

Cuts to the Operating Season

Out of the many options it has available to conform to Government of Canada budget cuts, Parks Canada has chosen to reduce the operating season of the Rideau Canal in order to save money. This will be implemented in 2013. The cuts are based on a myopic and incorrect view that the Rideau Canal is simply a

transportation way and that the reductions will only affect a few boaters. However those cuts will impact on both the economy of Eastern Ontario and the heritage of the Rideau Canal. See the Operating Season section for more.

Jones Falls - Heritage In Trouble

There are many examples where the lack of attention to heritage by Parks Canada has impacted the Rideau Canal - but the poster child for this is the Jones Falls Lockstation. It is one of the most significant heritage sites on the canal. Since a photo is worth a 1,000 words, I've put together a little collage illustrating the many issues.

More and More - The LIST

After the excitement of World Heritage Status in 2007 came the realization that Parks Canada was actually cutting heritage support, not adding to it. In discussion with individuals at Parks I referred to a "laundry list of heritage items" and in 2010 I put pen to paper and wrote out that list. In December 2010, I presented that list, 11 pages long, to the Superintendent of the Rideau Canal. While some lip service was initially paid to it, there has been no movement on most of the issues presented.

Parks Canada

I present Parks Canada on this website in a less than positive light. I base this on what I'm seeing happening to the Rideau Canal. But they are not a homogenous bunch; I have nothing but respect for the front line staff who do care deeply about the Rideau Canal. My issues are with management and the present day Parks Canada culture that does not support heritage

Solutions

The solution simply isn't more money. While that is certainly a factor, particularly with the physical structures in need of repair, solutions also involve a required change in the culture of Parks Canada and flexibility in how they operate the Rideau Canal. I've compiled a few ideas - I'm sure you can come up with many more.

Communicate

Whether your concern is about crumbling infrastructure on the Rideau Canal, lack of heritage support for the Rideau Canal, or loss of wildlife habitat due to improper development, you should make your voice known to those in charge.

Why This Save Our Rideau Website

I am doing this as a personal initiative. I've been promoting the Rideau Canal with my website since 1996, with my books, and with public presentations - all done on a volunteer basis. I've been worrying for the last few years about the future of the Rideau Canal. Up to now most of my efforts have been internal, figuring, as a good Canadian, that rational arguments will win in the end and that I should give government the opportunity to "do the right thing". But those rational arguments seem to have fallen on deaf ears and things are now getting much worse.

I'd much rather be telling the fascinating story of the Rideau to the public, though my rideau-info.com website, books, newsletters, and presentations, than lobbying the Government of Canada and Parks Canada to support Canadian heritage. However the inattention to heritage by Parks Canada, the lack of response to my concerns, and the funding cuts by the Government of Canada, have forced me to spend time on this <sigh>.

- Ken Watson

The Numbers

* The budget cut to Parks Canada is \$29.2 million dollars. The 2011/2012 parliamentary spending authority to Parks Canada was 735 million dollars (\$734,973,000 - info from Parks Canada's website). So the actual % cut based on that figure is 3.97%.

But, trying to figure out Parks Canada's actual budget is difficult based on the publicly available data. In the Federal Main Estimates for 2011/2012, the Parks Canada budget is shown as \$690.5 million dollars. So, based on that number, the % cut is 4.2%

The Government of Canada dictate is that 29.2 million dollars be cut from the operating budget only (not the capital budget). That number for 2011/2012 is 515 million, so based on that the cut is 5.7%

The actual budget for the Rideau Canal is unknown (it doesn't appear to have been made public). Media reported numbers range from 10 to 20 million. Even if we take the higher number, 20 million, and compare it to the lower Parks Canada budget number (690.5 million), the Rideau represents less than 3% of the Parks Canada budget. That would be the max, it is likely a lot less since I doubt their budget is anywhere near 20 million.

In comparison, the Parks Canada administration (their "internal services") ate up \$78.3 million dollars of their budget (2011/2012 Federal Main Estimates).

SAVE OUR RIDEAU – Heritage Management

HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Within any corporate structure (government bureaucracies included), the delivery of programs requires direct management control in terms of planning and implementation. The background and skills of those managers controls how those policies are developed and implemented.

I'll admit that even today, I don't fully understand how exactly heritage is managed within the Parks Canada corporate structure. All I know is that we've lost heritage support in the field (a boatload of evidence for this is presented on this website) and that in the recent (2007) restructuring, National Parks programs are being implemented at National Historic Sites such as the Rideau Canal, at the expense of heritage.

I come from a large corporate background so I looked to see what in the Parks Canada structure has caused the failure to support the heritage of the Rideau Canal. As noted in the main page lead-in to this article, heritage used to be managed at the headquarters level, mostly by professional historians but professional support also included archaeologists, conservators and restoration specialists. They initiated extensive research into the Rideau Canal in the 1970s/80s. Cultural Resource Management policies were subsequently developed for Parks Canada which could be applied in the Rideau Canal. This focus on heritage filtered down to the Rideau Canal Office, the staff actually implementing those policies in the field.

By the late 1970s, cultural resource specialist support for the field units, including the Rideau Canal, shifted from Parks Canada headquarters to Service Centres co-located with Regional Offices. For Ontario, this was situated in Cornwall. For reasons of efficiency, specialists were located in a central service centre so that they could provide support for all of the field units, particularly National Historic Sites, located in the Ontario region. This was in contrast to National Parks, which because of their size had dedicated resource staff located within the Park itself. Although the Rideau Canal rivals those National Parks in scale and complexity, it did not have dedicated specialist cultural resource staff but had to rely on the regional office. Ironically, as noted above, it did receive dedicated natural resource staff although the Rideau Canal derives its significance from its history and cultural heritage.

Over the last decade or so, the heritage section within Parks Canada's HQ has been eroded, heritage people retiring and not being replaced - those heritage voices have been lost. The same process is underway in the regional service centres. Since last year vacancies in the service centres have not been re-filled

and with the announcement of reductions arising from the budget cuts a number of specialist staff has received notices. This support to the field unit has now been lost. There is in fact some question whether Parks Canada is capable and even willing to address its responsibilities associated with the management of cultural heritage resources of National and indeed Global significance.

When the Rideau Canal was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, based on its cultural heritage values, there was an expectation and a need to have a qualified manager at a department head level in charge of heritage. No such position exists and no such qualified person exists at the Field Unit level. Furthermore, support from the regional Service Centre is now being removed. This has resulted in a gap in the ability of Parks Canada to deliver heritage on the Rideau Canal and it is putting the Rideau's World Heritage Site designation at risk.

The solution is clear - the Rideau Canal Office needs a Heritage Manager, someone who directly answers to the Superintendent and is in charge of restoring the heritage voice on the Rideau Canal. That manager doesn't have to be a professional historian, just someone with a heritage background that understands heritage issues. That manager would be tasked items such as the delivery of heritage programs, developing heritage site plans for the lockstations, adding a heritage voice to engineering issues, working co-operatively with Rideau heritage organizations and developing public awareness programs for Rideau heritage. Furthermore there has to be back-up specialist capacity in the regional Service Centres, or failing that, at Parks Canada HQ, that the heritage manager can call upon to address cultural resource management issues on the Rideau.

Bottom line is that the Rideau is both a National Historic Site of Canada and a UNESCO World Heritage Site - its core value is heritage - and there is nobody directly looking after that in the field unit or apparently in Parks Canada HQ or the Ontario Regional Office.

SAVE OUR RIDEAU – Public Engagement

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

There is an active public heritage community along the Rideau Canal - people who care about the Rideau's heritage and are very knowledgeable about various heritage issues. But in recent years Parks Canada has shut out that community, opting instead for the paternal approach (we know best, we don't have to talk to you). As one heritage person put it (a former employee of Parks Canada), this harkens back to the "bad old days of Parks Canada." This paternal approach is more expensive than working with the public and results in poorer quality programs.

Background

On the Rideau Canal, an apparent turning point in government/public relations was the 1982 celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the Rideau Canal. Parks Canada made a wise decision to make this a government/public partnership, bringing together members of the community to help plan the celebrations. A lasting legacy of this partnership was the formation of **Friends of the Rideau**, a not-for-profit volunteer organization.

This co-operative attitude extended into the first management plan for the Rideau Canal developed in the mid-1980s. The public was engaged and encouraged to participate in a meaningful manner. A legacy of this was the **Rideau Canal Advisory Committee**, an informal group made up of public representatives with backgrounds in heritage, ecology and recreation/business, who would meet with the Superintendent four or five times a year and discuss various issues impacting the Rideau Canal.

The **Rideau Canal Advisory Committee** helped to develop another form of public engagement, the **Rideau Waterway Symposium**, a forum that allowed the discussion of Rideau issues with a mix of government and public representatives. It was originally envisaged as an annual event - an opportunity to bring the public and government decision makers together. The last one was held in 2007.

In 2006, a new initiative, the **Rideau Heritage Network**, was created, originally as a co-operative venture between Parks Canada and the public heritage community. As it turned out, the driving force for this co-operative effort from Parks Canada was the Planner, and when he retired in 2009, Parks Canada dropped its support for this excellent initiative.

When Parks Canada finally got around in 2009 to addressing a 2006 UNESCO request to evaluate and protect the visual values of the Rideau Canal (the **Rideau Corridor Landscape Strategy** - RCLS), they formed a

public/government committee. When some government people complained that they weren't on the committee, the structure of the committee was changed to be an all government steering committee, with a promise that there would be a community (public) advisory committee formed. In 2011 the Steering Committee voted not to have a community advisory committee and continues to "work" with no public input.

Public Input in 2012

There is no **Rideau Canal Advisory Committee** (killed by the Superintendent in 2008, briefly revived for 2 meetings in 2011, and now dead again). There are no more Rideau symposiums. The Rideau Heritage Network is dead. The Rideau Corridor Landscape Strategy committee is muddling along with no public input. Friends of the Rideau is barely limping along. There is no meaningful dialog between Parks Canada and the Rideau heritage community.

It's shameful that Parks Canada is doing little to engage the heritage community on the Rideau Canal in a meaningful way. It's certainly more expensive for Parks Canada (your tax dollars) that they don't take advantage of the skills and knowledge the public heritage community can provide. And, as is clearly evident on the Rideau Canal (see the Jones Falls Photo Essay as an example), heritage on the Rideau Canal is suffering as a result of the lack of skill sets within Parks Canada and its unwillingness to take advantage of what the public has to offer.

What Should Be Done?

All the initiatives and organizations mentioned above are or were useful tools in helping Parks Canada serve its heritage mandate for the Rideau Canal. So one thing is to re-instate these. Some, such as the **Rideau Canal Advisory Committee** are essentially no-cost items. Others, such as the Rideau Waterway Symposium and the Rideau Heritage Network will require funding, staff attention and logistical support. There should be staff that liaises with heritage organizations and the greater heritage community in a meaningful and positive way. This would be money and time well spent - these are extremely cost effective ways of creating heritage awareness for the Rideau Canal.

But the bottom line is that Parks Canada should liaise with the public heritage community in a friendly, co-operative, pro-active and meaningful manner.

SAVE OUR RIDEAU – Heritage Awareness

HERITAGE AWARENESS OF THE RIDEAU CANAL

Heritage awareness is something that has to be worked at. With the Rideau Canal, heritage awareness is low, for most people their knowledge of the Rideau is of the skateway in Ottawa (since that is very well publicized) or perhaps some vague notion of it as a waterway catering to rich people in large boats. The heritage value of the Rideau Canal, as a significant part of the early development of Canada, and as a marvel of 19th century engineering, is poorly understood. When I say "most people", that would include most politicians, people responsible for allocating our tax dollars. It even included me prior to moving to this area in 1995.

It is a responsibility of Parks Canada to foster heritage awareness of the Rideau Canal - something that is being poorly done these days. Parks Canada's role in fostering heritage awareness should include such things as site interpretation (see examples on the Jones Falls Photo Essay section and the Heritage List section), communication with shoreline landowners (their role in the stewardship of the heritage site), school education programs/opportunities, support for third-party efforts to create awareness of Rideau heritage, and more (simply read the rest of this website).

The proof is in the pudding as they say - two tangible results of this lack of awareness are the current government cuts to funding and even internally within Parks Canada, the fact that the Rideau Canal is taking a bigger hit than other parts of the organization. Heritage voices within the organization have been lost (see my comments in the Heritage Management Section)

This isn't new - I've noted many examples where Parks Canada has lost focus on promoting heritage awareness. In 2003, the Auditor General of Canada criticized Parks Canada for similar issues. In that report, the auditor general noted that *"Cultural heritage is increasingly considered not only an asset to be protected and valued but also a means of promoting and reinforcing the cultural identity and cohesion of society."* The report dealt mostly with built heritage and it was quite critical of how Parks Canada was managing its cultural assets. It was also critical of the federal government of the day for how it funds the preservation of cultural assets. But the root of the issues brought up by the Auditor General is heritage awareness. People have to be educated in the value of the Rideau Canal and its role in developing our Canadian identity.

SAVE OUR RIDEAU – Operating Season

OPERATING SEASON

The value of the Rideau Canal to the local economy is as an operating canal attracting tens of thousands of land based visitors. The heritage value of the Rideau is not as a static display, but as a heritage site operating the same way as when it was opened in 1832. There are no other sites in Canada (or North America) that can claim this. So, from both an economic viewpoint and a heritage viewpoint, cutting the season is going to have an adverse affect.

Parks Canada has apparently taken the myopic view that it is just a numbers game with the boaters - shorten the season down to the peak boating season. They seem to have entirely missed the point that it's not about the boaters (although this will of course affect them), it's about the heritage presentation of the Rideau as an operating canal and it's about the economic effect the Rideau Canal has on the struggling economy (mostly tourism based) of this part of Eastern Ontario.

Parks Canada has decided to take a sledgehammer approach to the problem, simply cutting the season in order to reduce staffing costs. There are other options (such as flexible hours at lockstations) - but it is unknown if Parks Canada has considered these.

I could go on, but there is another group representing local tourism and business operators who will be directly impacted by these cuts and they have started a campaign to maintain the operating season. For details on this see:

www.historiccanalsofcanada.com

SAVE OUR RIDEAU – Jones Falls Photo Essay

JONES FALLS - Heritage At Risk

Like a canary in a coal mine, Jones Falls serves warning for the entire Rideau Canal about the lack of attention being paid to heritage. At Jones Falls we see many examples, both in the physical structures and the interpretation of the site. The canary isn't dead yet - but it's on life support.

Jones Falls should be the shining light in the heritage presentation of the Rideau Canal. It is a relatively undisturbed site, the landscape much as it was when the locks first opened in 1832. It has some of the most spectacular examples of canal engineering, including the Great Stone Arch Dam. But many of the heritage features of the site are not being interpreted, physical structures are falling apart, repairs are not being done with heritage values in mind, the site is overgrown which obscures heritage details, and there is no heritage presentation plan for the site.

The photos below illustrate some of the problems - most were taken in late June, 2012. A more dynamic version of this section can be viewed on www.SaveOurRideau.ca

Temporary Gate and Quoin Repairs



Temporary Gate Repair

This ugly patch on the lock gate, which mars the appearance of the lock, was put in place in 2011. If proper maintenance and capital expenditures had been made, this type of ugly jury-rigged repair would not have been required.



Temporary Quoin Repair

Look at the glaring white corner foundations. These were done as a “short term repair” in 2007 with very modern looking cement. A proper, conforming to heritage values repair, was supposed to be done in 2010/11 (either concrete that would match the original concrete or stone). No such proper repair is on the books – this contravenes Parks Canada’s own cultural management policy

Weir Repair



The repair to the weir was done in 2011 without any heritage aesthetics in mind. The weir is highly visible to visitors and the bright white cement and the aluminum steps clash with the older cement and make the heritage stop-log mechanism look out of place.



Another view showing how the heritage mechanism looks out of place with the modern repair around it. The highly modern aluminum steps falls into the category of “what were they thinking?”

There is also no interpretive signage for the weir (the channel for the weir was created with black powder blasting in 1830/31) and the weir outflow channel is incorrectly called “Jones Falls” on the brochure for Jones Falls (the original Jones falls/rapids were in the valley below the weir)

Great Stone Arch Dam



Where is the Dam?

If heritage presentation was a consideration, the entire dam would be visible, illustrating all of its 19th century engineering features. At some point the trees were removed (stumps are visible today with regrowth around them), but Parks Canada has allowed the dam to become obscured by regrowth.



Dam Viewing Platform

Not only is the view of the dam obscured by excessive vegetation, the view of the original river valley in which the dam was emplaced cannot be properly seen. That view would place the dam into proper context on the landscape plus it would allow heritage interpretation of the original setting.

Sweeney House Viewscape



Defensible Lockmaster's Houses

This is a photo of Sweeney House, one of the defensible lockmaster's houses on the Rideau Canal. The location of Rideau blockhouses and defensible lockmaster's house on the landscape tells its own heritage story. It provided the lockmaster with a view of approaching vessels, and, in times of war, potential invading forces. At Jones Falls (and several other lockstations) that story is not being told since Parks Canada has allowed the view to be obscured by excessive vegetation growth.



View from Sweeney House

Yes it is a pretty view, but you can barely see the water from the steps of Sweeney House. Visitors to the site should be able to experience a similar view to the one the lockmaster had in order to fully appreciate why this building is where it is and the role it played in assisting the lockmaster with his duties.

Of note, an environmental review by Parks Canada in 2007 gave the green light for both clearing the view from Sweeney House and the vegetation around the dam - but that's as far as it got.

Maintenance Issues



Heritage Safety Fencing

Heritage Safety Fencing, nothing enhances a heritage site like bright orange safety fencing. In this case cordoning off sink holes that could have been prevented with proper maintenance.



Crumbling Infrastructure

Since the Rideau is undercapitalized (not enough funding for repairs), problems are not nipped in the bud but are left in a state of disrepair.

Heritage Uninterpreted



Canal Era Haul Road

The pile of crushed rock beside the current road has actually been placed on top of the original 1827-1831 road used to haul the stones that were used to build the locks. Not only is this haul road uninterpreted (as is the story of how the stones were quarried and taken to the lock), it is now being adversely disturbed.



Winching Pins

There are two iron pins set into bedrock at Jones Falls. Set in place in 1827, these were used as winching supports for wagons carrying stones from the quarry. Although a significant part of the story about how the locks were built, the pins remain uninterpreted.

Viewpoints Obscured



View from the Guardhouse

This blocked view of the upper lock relates to both heritage (it is a heritage viewscape) and general photography (if cleared it would provide an excellent view of the upper lock). Lack of a heritage site plan, which would incorporate maintaining these viewpoints, degrades the visitor experience of the site.



Upper Lock View

I do some professional photography and I look at views with a photographer's eye. One of the potentially best views of the upper lock is blocked by recent tree growth. These photographic viewpoints should be cleared and incorporated into a heritage site plan.

More Viewpoints Obscured



View of the Dam in 1841

This 1841 painting by Thomas Burrowes shows what the dam and landscape looked like a decade after the construction of the dam.



View of the Dam in 2012

If you try to replicate Burrowes' 1841 painting today, it cannot be done due to overgrowth of the viewpoint. Burrowes was sitting just about where the sawn tree stump stands today. If both the viewpoint and the dam were cleared of excessive vegetation, it would present a spectacular photo opportunity for visitors (to take home and share with their friends and/or post to the Internet, encouraging more visitations to the site and a better heritage appreciation of the Rideau Canal).

More and More

I could go on, but I'll stop here. Given Parks Canada's mandate to look after Canadian heritage it is shameful to see the state that lockstations such as Jones Falls have fallen into. It begs the question - why doesn't Parks Canada care about the heritage presentation of sites such as Jones Falls?

Oh, one more thing - it should be noted that Jones Falls isn't the only place with issues, the photo below was taken in June, 2012, of the lovely yellow warning tape keeping people away from the crumbling wall at Chaffeys Lock:



SAVE OUR RIDEAU – The Heritage List

HERITAGE ISSUES LIST

In the excitement leading up to World Heritage Status for the Rideau Canal in 2007, it seemed like the Rideau Canal was moving forward in terms of protection and enhancement of its heritage values. After the dust settled from both the World Heritage designation and the 175th anniversary celebrations in 2007, came the realization that Parks Canada was moving backwards, not forwards.

As various public input venues were shut down or left to die (see the Public Engagement section) and staff restructuring (and presumably internal policy decisions) reduced the ability of Parks Canada to protect and promote Rideau Canal heritage, I started to compile a list of issues. It was reviewed by various other heritage people and on December 8, 2010, I presented it in person to Don Marrin, Superintendent of the Rideau Canal.

It's now a year and a half later, I've received no official response, and if I was to grade the list as a report card, Parks Canada would get an F.

I won't bore you with all the details; the following is a brief synopsis of the 16 items that made up the list.

1.0 PUBLIC INPUT REGARDING CULTURAL HERITAGE ISSUES

Issues surrounding mechanisms for public input into Parks Canada's heritage management of the Rideau Canal.

2.0 HERITAGE IN THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

There is no Heritage Manager position and no other position directly looking after heritage issues.

3.0 HERITAGE COMMITMENTS IN THE RIDEAU CANAL WORLD HERITAGE SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN

This plan, submitted to UNESCO, outlines commitments made by Parks Canada. Several of these, such as "establish an outreach and education program" and "work with ... landowners ... to ensure that suitable land use policies for adjacent lands are in place to protect the property" are not being done.

4.0 HERITAGE COMMITMENTS IN THE RIDEAU CANAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

This plan outlines how Parks Canada is supposed to manage the Rideau Canal. Sections dealing with "Heritage Presentation" and "Ongoing Partnership and Public Involvement" either aren't being done or poorly done.

5.0 HERITAGE LANDSCAPES AT LOCKSTATIONS

This covers everything from various types of heritage views (lockmaster's houses, engineering structures), to photographic viewpoints, to the placement of garbage cans at the lockstations. See the Jones Falls Photo Essay for some examples.

6.0 HERITAGE INFORMATION AT LOCKSTATIONS

Every lockstation should have its own site interpretation brochure. These are easy and inexpensive to create. Additional points of interest signage are also required.

7.0 ON-CANAL HERITAGE INFORMATION OUTSIDE OF LOCKSTATIONS

The Rideau Canal is more than just the lockstations. There are many heritage points along the canal (i.e. Newboro Cut, Morton Dam, The Quarters) that are not being interpreted.

8.0 HERITAGE PRESENTATION ALONG WATERWAY

I recommend doing a on-site heritage review of the entire Rideau Canal (both on land and on water) at least once a year and fix any heritage presentation issues.

9.0 PUBLIC OUTREACH

The delivery of heritage information/awareness to the public needs improvement. That would include direct communication with Rideau shoreline landowners, facilitating the distribution of third-party Rideau heritage information, presentations to schools and community groups, etc.

10.0 RIDEAU CANAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTATION

There should be a long term research strategy that defines what archaeology is needed along the canal, identify priorities and identify a timeline for addressing these needs. There are a number of cultural resources (sites directly relating to the building of the Rideau Canal) that have no documentation. This contravenes Parks Canada's own Cultural Resource Management Policy. Currently no work is being done.

11.0 SUPPORT FOR HERITAGE Non-Government Organizations

The Rideau Canal Office has no dynamic working relationships with groups or individuals working to support the heritage of the Rideau Canal.

12.0 SUPPORT FOR RIDEAU HERITAGE RESEARCHERS

Parks Canada no longer has the capacity (or will) to do its own heritage research - but there are still research needs. An extremely cost effective way of doing Rideau research is to pro-actively provide people doing such research on a volunteer basis with the resources they require. From Parks Canada that would include everything from maintaining/expanding their library to digitizing heritage information (documents, images, maps) and posting it on-line.

13.0 HERITAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

The authenticity of the infrastructure of the Rideau Canal is threatened by "short term" repairs (see the Jones Falls Photo Essay as an example). There is a real danger that the cumulative impact of "short term repairs" will lead to the eventual erosion of the values which led to the National Historic Site/World Heritage Site designations.

14.0 HERITAGE PROTECTION - GOVERNMENT MECHANISMS

Parks Canada is not pro-actively soliciting public support into changes in government policies/legislation that can affect the heritage values of the Rideau Canal. An example would be the 2010 revisions to Ontario's Provincial Policy Statement under the Planning Act, in regards to land use and development. Parks Canada (quite rightly) attempted to get the Rideau Canal World Heritage Site as a special designation - but it didn't alert public heritage groups and attempt to get their support.

15.0 WORLD HERITAGE SITE PUBLIC AWARENESS

Site awareness of the Rideau Canal as a World Heritage Site is lacking. There is limited signage (you can drive from Highway 401 at Kingston to Smiths Falls with no indication that the Rideau Canal is a World Heritage Site), no brochures, no signage at lockstation, etc.

16.0 USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Parks Canada is not making full use of digital technologies to promote heritage awareness of the Rideau Canal. I'll admit that I'm a bit of computer nerd so I'm a bit biased in my opinion, but the world is going digital and Parks Canada has been very slow to keep up with this.

The original document ran to 11 pages detailing all these issues. As I noted to the Superintendent, I really don't expect all of these issues to be fixed, but they are all valid issues affecting the heritage of the Rideau Canal.

It boils down to the need for Parks Canada to put heritage first in their decision making and to create public awareness of the heritage value of the Rideau Canal so that it can remain something that is both valued as part of our Canadian identity and cherished into the future.

SAVE OUR RIDEAU – Parks Canada

PARKS CANADA

The Parks Canada front line staff are excellent. Many of them care deeply about the heritage values of the Rideau Canal. So, two thumbs up for the men and women that you see at the lockstations.

My issue is with management, particularly the decision makers in Parks headquarters. The loss of heritage focus on the Rideau Canal is due to decisions they are making. This contravenes their own charter.

Parks Canada is a schizophrenic organization, it is tasked, supposedly equally, with the care and control of our National Parks System, and so primarily concerned with environmental issues (as core values) and also with the care and control of several National Historic Sites, where the primary concern is supposed to be cultural heritage. These shouldn't be in competition, but apparently are, with the erosion over the last few years of the heritage side of Parks Canada.

This is clearly evident on the Rideau Canal, where there is no management position tasked with heritage in the Rideau Canal Office. That lack of heritage expertise and voice has led to some of the heritage issues I've outlined on this website. It also translates into a problem for someone like me - who can I talk to about the many heritage issues? My route to date has been to talk to the Superintendent of the Rideau Canal (a position we're apparently going to lose). But the Superintendent is pulled many different ways, and has to answer to the masters in HQ, and so to date, I haven't gotten very far.

It has also translated into moral problems for staff, particularly the front line staff that don't see the same passion for the Rideau that they have reflected in the management levels above them. In fact they often see the opposite.

Bottom line is that there is a major problem in the management setup and culture of Parks Canada when it comes to managing the Rideau Canal. So, when you see a reference to "Parks Canada" in a less than positive light on these pages - I'm not talking about the good eggs - it's those bad eggs that are making poor decisions.

The Heritage Management section details some of the erosion by Parks Canada in its ability and willingness to deliver its heritage mandate on the Rideau Canal.

The Parks Canada Charter

The following is the charter of the Parks Canada agency. As a reminder to Parks Canada, I've highlighted some of the items that should apply, as a first priority, to the Rideau Canal.

Our Mandate

On behalf of the people of Canada, **we protect and present** nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and **cultural heritage**, and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the

ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations.

Our Role

- **We are guardians of** the national parks, **the national historic sites** and the national marine conservation areas **of Canada.**
- We are guides to visitors from around the world, opening doors to places of discovery and learning, reflection and recreation.
- We are partners building on the rich traditions of our Aboriginal people, the strength of our diverse cultures and our commitments to the international community.
- We are storytellers recounting the history of our land and our people - the stories of Canada.

Our Commitments

- **To protect, as a first priority,** the natural and **cultural heritage** of our special places and ensure that they remain healthy and whole.
- **To present** the beauty and significance of our natural world **and to chronicle the human determination and ingenuity which have shaped our nation.**
- To celebrate the legacy of visionary Canadians whose passion and knowledge have inspired the character and values of our country.
- **To serve Canadians, working together** to achieve excellence **guided by values of competence, respect and fairness.**

SAVE OUR RIDEAU – Solutions

SOLUTIONS

What are the solutions to this problem? I've compiled a few ideas.

SHORT TERM SOLUTIONS

- In the short term, given the de-facto nature of the Government of Canada budget cut for Parks Canada - that less than 6% cut should be applied equally, the Rideau should be taking a less than 6% cut, not a 15% cut.
- In the staff restructuring that is going to take place, create the position of Heritage Manager within the Rideau Canal Office and staff it with someone with a qualified background who can look after the heritage needs of the Rideau (overall heritage presentation, heritage site interpretation plans for all lockstations, heritage awareness, etc.).
- Parks Canada, similar to many government bureaucracies, is very management heavy. Cuts and efficiencies should be applied to HQ first before cuts are applied in the field. Management begets management - Parks Canada is not operating with an efficient administration that consumes less than 5% of the operating (non-capital) budget (which should be the goal). According to 2011-12 federal estimates, Parks Canada's "internal services" are 78.3 million dollars, representing 15.2% of the operating budget. So, streamline management to reduce overheads that suck funding from the field units.
- Stop spending Rideau Canal budget funds on non-heritage programs that are being done at the expense of heritage. An example is the Parks Canada National Parks' program (done on the Rideau at the expense of cultural heritage programming) that made No. 36 on the list of Macleans 2012 list of "99 stupid things the government spent your money on."
- Lift the price freeze and re-institute a modest yearly increase in fees. User fees don't account for a lot of revenue, but they are important. The worst thing done by Parks Canada (or its political masters) was to implement price freezes. Every time they do that, they eventually remove the freeze and implement "catch-up" pricing. That sends sticker shock to the boaters and there is an immediate decrease in boating (and associated revenue). A few years ago Parks implemented a pricing policy that included a modest yearly inflation adjustment. That was a really good idea. But then they nuked that good idea with a price freeze. When the current freeze is removed, don't play catch-up.
- Be flexible in the staffing and delivery of services and programs. Currently Parks works on a one size fits all models for the Rideau Canal (every lock operates on exactly the same schedule). Operate with flexible hours based on demand - use staff more efficiently. There are many ways that savings

in operations can be achieved without actually shortening the season or dramatically impacting on visitors to the canal. In fact services could be improved while at the same time reducing costs.

- Develop public-government partnerships with the Rideau heritage community to help deliver the heritage message at a much lower cost than trying to go it alone.

LONG TERM SOLUTIONS

- Change the culture within Parks Canada to restore support for the heritage sites they manage. Parks Canada should take heritage seriously and should have the resources in place to do that. The main focus of the National Historic Sites section should be cultural heritage - staff in this area of Parks Canada should be knowledgeable about heritage and have it built into their job descriptions and their performance reviews. This is basically a no extra cost item.
- Restore funding to the Rideau Canal to allow the proper delivery of heritage programs - including items mentioned in the short term solution section (i.e. implemented lockstation heritage site plans, general heritage programming, outreach & education, heritage messaging to shoreline owners, etc.). The heritage story of the Rideau Canal should be properly delivered at all the lockstations and to the greater Canadian public.
- Restore funding to the Rideau Canal at a level that will properly maintain the heritage assets. The Rideau Canal has over 500 million dollars of heritage assets (the locks, associated buildings, dams, etc.). A general rule of thumb is that capital expenditures to maintain those structures should be on the order of 3% of the asset value. For the Rideau that would mean a \$15 million dollar per year capital budget (about 2% of Parks Canada's overall budget). While that full amount would not be needed every year, it should be available in order to properly maintain the heritage structures. Presently the Rideau Canal is woefully undercapitalized with only a 2.5 million dollar capital budget. Allocating sufficient capital is a small price to pay to maintain this unique part of our Canadian heritage. Interesting that 15 million dollar figure is about what Parks Canada spends on travel, hospitality and conferences.

SAVE OUR RIDEAU – Communicate Your Concerns

Whether your concern is about crumbling infrastructure on the Rideau Canal, lack of heritage support for the Rideau Canal, or loss of wildlife habitat due to improper development, you should make your voice known to those in charge.

If you've read through this backgrounder, you'll see that it's not a new problem; the recent cuts have only exacerbated an existing problem of lack of support for the heritage of the Rideau Canal. As noted on this website, there are lots of issues, not simply the recent cuts, to choose from.

Ultimately it is the Government of Canada and the Prime Minister who are responsible for the cuts to the Rideau Canal. They have made a decision to cut support for Canadian heritage while at the same time increasing spending in other areas. It's not a question of money; it's a question of priorities. I'm sure you can come up with dozens of ways that the government is inappropriately spending money other than the modest amount required for the Rideau Canal.

Parks Canada is an agency under Environment Canada. The minister for that department, Peter Kent, can mandate that Parks Canada better support the Rideau Canal.

Directly it is Parks Canada who have over the last decade, cut heritage support for the Rideau Canal and now, with a government mandated blanket cut to their budget, decided to make that cut deeper on the Rideau Canal (and other National Historic Sites) than other areas of their jurisdiction.

It is also local politicians (federal, provincial, and municipal) who should be fighting to maintain the heritage values of the Rideau Canal - both for cultural reasons (the direct heritage of many of their constituents) and for economic reasons. They should be championing the Rideau Canal - I've been told that municipal representatives are working "behind the scenes" but they have yet to make whatever they are doing public.

So share this information, talk to your neighbour, start a blog, tweet, write emails, write letters - make your voice heard. You can also sign the petition on the Historic Canals of Canada website - go to:

www.historiccanalsofcanada.com/Sign-the-Petition.html

A few email addresses to get you started:

Prime Minister Stephen Harper: pm@pm.gc.ca

Minister of Environment, Peter Kent: peter.kent@parl.gc.ca



Canal du Midi – UNESCO World Heritage Site in peril

The Rideau Canal is not the only World Heritage Canal at risk. The Canal du Midi, the first World Heritage Canal also has a problem. Like an episode from HG Wells's *War of the Worlds*, the beautiful plane trees that line the canal are being killed by a lowly fungus.



The Canal, which is 240 km long, stretches across the south of France, north of the Pyrenees Mountains. The Canal du Midi joins the Canal de Garonne and they along with minor canals and rivers provide a route from the Mediterranean on the east to the Bay of Biscay and the Atlantic Ocean on the west.

The canal was completed in 1681 and had 99 locks, 328 bridges, dams and tunnels, and 40 viaducts.

(map courtesy of Euromapping)

The challenge for this canal, like many, was obtaining a reliable water supply. Pierre-Paul Riquet overcame this problem by directing mountain streams into reservoirs.

The UNESCO World Heritage Site designation cited the Canal du Midi as providing “the model for the flowering of technology that led directly to the Industrial Revolution and the modern technological age”.

The plane trees that line the canal were a later addition, not added until the 1830s. The idea was that they would strengthen the canal bank, provide shade to those using the canal, and water evaporation from the fiery Midi sun would be reduced. In fact it is estimated that the trees reduce summer evaporation by 80%.

The Great Lakes have their invasive species brought over from Europe. The problem that the 42,000 plane trees along the canal face is a North American import. The deadly fungus has been traced to World War Two ammunition boxes brought from the United States. Originally introduced into Italy the fungus has slowly been spreading north. A program is now underway to cut down all the trees and replace them with disease resistant plane trees. The beautiful canopy over the canal will not return until almost the end of this century.

Toulouse, France will be the site of the World Canals Conference in September 2013, and the Canal du Midi will be a focus of the conference and its tours.

The Canadian Canal Society

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