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WELLAND CANAL

Fallen Workers Memorial Task Force



Plan Moving Forward to Erect a Memorial

to Workers Who Lost Their Lives

During Construction of

the Welland Ship Canal

by Arden Phair

A Discovery Made

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, two researchers pored through box after box of uncatalogued and long-forgotten records from the Department of Railways and Canals. It was all in an effort to gain insight into the complex history of the Welland Canals.

In the course of this research, for five jointly-authored books about the Welland Canals¹, Roberta M Styran and Robert R Taylor came across a list of names in the National Archives that was particularly relevant to their work. It was not just any list – it was the names of 118 men who were killed on the job, 1914-1932, during construction of the Welland Ship Canal.

The university professors/historians – widely respected as Canada's leading authorities on the four Welland Canals – had discovered yet another little-known fact that would ultimately add to our understanding of the heavy price paid to build this great national work.



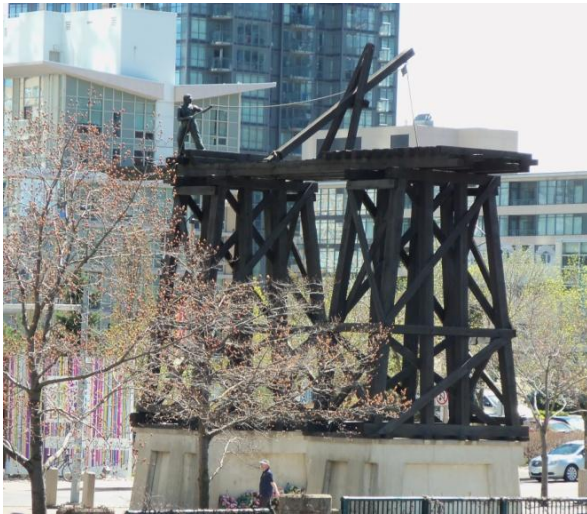
One of the Largest Losses of Life on a Public Project in Canada

From the initial list of deceased workers, Alex Ormston and other historians associated with the St. Catharines Museum explored the subject in greater detail in an effort to locate further information about these men – who they were, where they were from, details about their families and their work – and as a result of their research, the names of ten more men were identified who died as a result of accidents on the present Welland Canal.

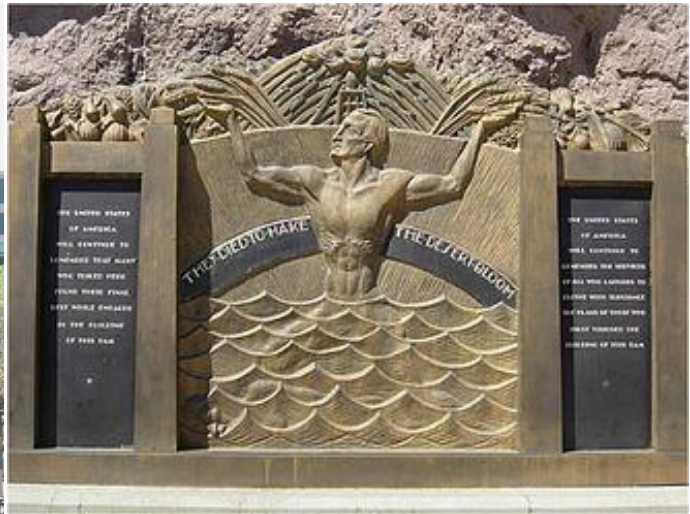
It is now apparent that the number of fatalities which occurred during construction of the Welland Ship Canal represents one of the largest losses of life (if not *the* largest loss of life), on a Government of Canada project since Confederation.

¹ Styran and Taylor are currently working on a sixth book about the Fourth Welland Canal. Taylor has also edited another book about the Welland Canal, *'Voices from the Great Ditch. The Historic Welland Canals in Pictures, Prose, Poems and Songs'*, St Catharines: Blarney Stone Press [Kevin McCabe], 2004.

There have been a number of other Canadian projects with heavy loss of life, many of which had already been memorialized, such as the Rideau Canal (built 1826-32), the Chinese labourers on the CPR's national railway, and the Quebec Bridge Disaster (1907). Almost coincident with construction of the Welland Ship Canal (1913-1932), the Hoover Dam was being built in the United States (1922-1935). In that public project, they chose to honour their 112 fatalities with a beautiful bronze memorial by a professional sculptor.



Chinese Railway Workers Memorial
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Photo by Bob Sears



Workers Memorial, Hoover Dam
Colorado, United States
Photo Wikipedia

A Promise Made

The Official Opening of the Welland Ship Canal was scheduled in 1932 to coincide with the British Empire Economic Conference taking place in Ottawa.² Leaders and senior officials from nine countries of the Empire would be in attendance.

The honour of the official opening duties was accorded to the Queen's representative to Canada, His Excellency, The Governor General, The Right Honourable, The Earl of Bessborough, in the presence of the Right Honourable, RB Bennett, Prime Minister of Canada. The event was broadcast live, to an assembled throng of 10,000, as well as to a radio audience of millions, throughout Canada and the United States.

His Excellency, The Governor General of Canada, turned a lever activating an arrester boom at Lock 6, and with these words, officially opened the Welland

² The British Empire Economic Conference was held in Ottawa, July 21 to August 20, 1932, to discuss the Great Depression.

Canal: "*It is a privilege to dedicate this Canal to the trade of the World. I hereby declare the Welland Ship Canal open to the commerce of the World.*"

Chairman of the events marking the opening of the Canal was the Honourable Doctor RJ Manion, PC, MC, Minister of Railways and Canals. Front-page news coverage of the day focuses on his remarks that the names of those who died on the project would be preserved. He went on to refer to them as "heroes" of peace:

Peace has its heroes as well as war, and in a construction job of this magnitude, with its daily risk and hazard, the sacrifices of human life seems to be unavoidable. It is only right and proper that we should give a thought to the 115 men who lost their lives during the progress of the work. In due course we shall see that the names of these workmen are suitably preserved and made an enduring portion of the great structure that rises not only as a monument to their effort and their lives, but to the efforts of the thousands of working men and engineering helpers whose unremitting toil, often in the face of difficulty and discouragement, made possible the triumph of the present hour.

HONOURABLE DOCTOR RJ MANION, MINISTER OF RAILWAYS & CANALS

THE ST CATHARINES STANDARD, 8 & 10 AUGUST 1932

Styran and Taylor located several documents in 1932 and 1933 government files about the fallen workers with suggestions that a "monument" or a "tablet" would be prepared in their honour, but a specific means of acknowledging those who lost their lives was eventually forgotten. Another form of possible recognition considered at the time was to include the names in Major P.J. Cowan's published record, *The Welland Ship Canal, 1913-1933 (sic)*. This was quashed by Arthur-Edouard Dubuc (1880-1944), the Chief Engineer of the Department of Railways and Canals from 1924 to 1936, in a letter to the Welland Ship Canal Engineer-in-Charge, Alexander J Grant:

. . . I do not think it desirable to include in the reprint the names of those who were killed during the construction of the Ship Canal and whose names were listed on the sheet headed "IN MEMORIAM", enclosed with your letter of January 17th. This feature has no particular relation to the purposes of a Reprint Volume, and in any event the Department has under consideration the erection on the Ship Canal of a suitable Tablet commemorating those who were killed during construction.

LETTER FROM AE DUBUC TO AJ GRANT, 2 MARCH 1933³

³ Library and Archives Canada, RG 43, Volume 2168. File 780.2

In Cowan's tome, with the exactitude of an engineer, one can readily find details of everything from the quantity of earth excavated and the cost of steel gates, to the names of all engineers who worked on the Canal and a detailed list of the contractors who completed the work, plus a dizzying array of other construction details, yet there is no mention of those whose day-to-day labours and human sacrifice made possible the completed work. Furthermore, even the accidents receive scant attention, and nothing at all is elaborated on about the ten lives that were lost in the worst accident to occur on the Canal when a crane and gate collapsed in 1928 at Lock 6.



Some of the Stories of the 128 Lives Lost

Construction on the Welland Ship Canal began in 1913. The first death occurred in July of the following year. By the end of 1914, eight men had already lost their lives.

A study of the full list of fatalities reveals many tragic stories of horrific deaths, lost dreams, and the human cost of such massive undertakings. In their research, Styran and Taylor found a memo where the loss of life was quantified in dollar terms. It was suggested that there would be one loss of life (referred to as a "tribute" by the unknown writer), for every million dollars in construction. The final cost of the Canal was \$130 million dollars and there were at least 128 deaths as a result of accidents (the number of injured is not known, nor is the loss of life through health-related hazards). At the Canal opening, the dead were hailed as "heroes" of peace, and a poem by an anonymous author referred

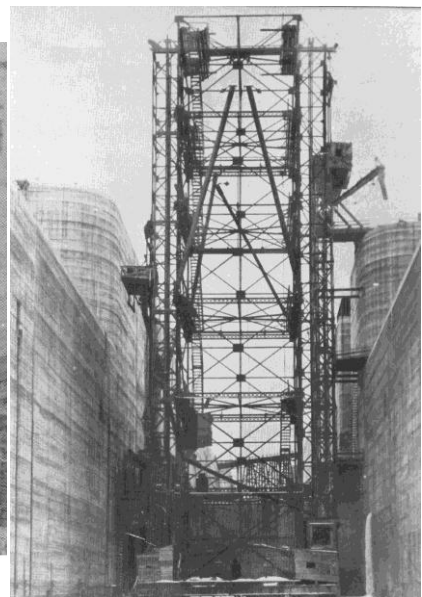
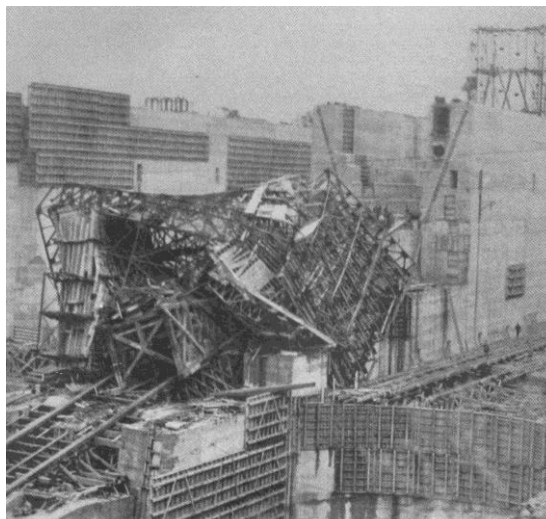
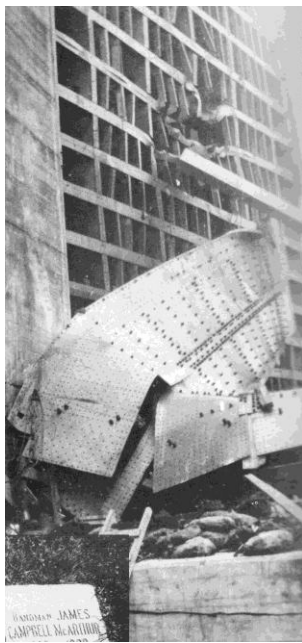
to them as “Martyrs of Progress.” Whether tributes or heroes or martyrs, their personal stories of death are beyond the realm of tragic:



Victoria Lawn Cemetery, St Catharines, Ontario, Canada – photo by Bill Stevens

- 10 men were killed in a single incident when a gate collapsed after being struck by an overhead crane at Lock 6 of the Flight Locks (1 August 1928).
- in 1928, on average there would be a loss of life every two weeks. In total, twenty-eight workers died that year, the year of death on the canal. When averaged over the entire span of construction, 1913-1933, a loss of life occurred every two months.
- the youngest who died was a water boy, age 15 (Antonio Collini - 1927); he was buried in the suit he purchased with his first paycheque. The oldest was 69 (Benjamin Kellett - 1924). The average age at death was 35.2 years.
- William Gordon was crushed by a construction train in 1924. He left behind six children to mourn his death. They had to be raised by the eldest son in the family because their mother had died two years previously of Tuberculosis (a fate also suffered by five other of their children who died about 1920 of TB).

- three families suffered the loss of both a father and a son. Two of these events occurred on the same day at the same location, August 1st at the Flight Locks, but separated by three years (Elzear & Leo Lynch – 1925; James & James Campbell McArthur – 1928). The third father-son fatalities died in Port Colborne in 1929 (Francis Fernley Bassett and William F. Bassett - 1929). The father witnessed his son's death when his body was crushed between the arm of a crane and the car at the Clarence Street lift bridge. Six months later, the senior Bassett was crushed to death by the bridge's huge concrete counterweight, only fifty yards from where his son met his untimely death.
- two brothers drowned in the Welland Canal during construction. Alvin Beeton Watt drowned in 1926, age 18. Six years later, and the last recorded Canal fatality during the construction period, was Harry Watt. He died 3 November 1932, age 21.
- the impact of death and the effect on the living is evident in some of the stories. The Pollard family remembers the tragedy as an event that shattered their family. Thomas Pollard died instantly in 1929 when he fell off of a new bridge on the Canal in Merritton. His heart-broken wife died a year later, leaving their two children orphaned. The siblings were separated, the daughter was eventually adopted and the son was placed in the care of a children's aid home.
- one worker had only been in Canada a few weeks before being killed in a Canal accident. He had just emigrated from Ireland (Samuel McMullen - 1928).



- Michael Bayusz died after only three hours on the job (1928).
- one of the last killed – 7 days before the Canal's Official Opening in 1932 – was Michael Onyschuk. It was his first day on the job and he died within an hour of arriving at the job site. They were clearing trees that were too close to the Canal channel near Allanburg. The very first tree fell the wrong way, crushing the fleeing victim. Despite having a fractured spine, broken leg, internal injuries, and severe shock, he made it to the General Hospital, but died just as his wife arrived. Onyschuk was from the Ukraine and emigrated in 1928, fulfilling a dream to be able to come to Canada to provide a better life for his family. Two years later, he brought over his wife and children to share in this dream. The job on the Canal, though temporary, was welcomed as it was his first work in two years. His widow had no money, spoke little English, and had six children to provide for (the oldest was ten and the youngest 4½ months). Despite these overwhelming challenges, she persevered; she kept the family together and raised her two girls and four boys as a single parent.
- during the period of construction, 1913-33, there were only two years when there was no loss of life (1913 and 1931). There were also no fatalities in 1917-18 when construction was suspended due to WW I. The busiest season of operations was 1927 when four thousand workmen were engaged in the work from one end of the canal to the other.
- the workers died horrible deaths by being crushed, drowned, electrocuted, falls, buried alive, explosions, hit by trains, heat prostration – all of the hazards that one would find at a heavy work site of this magnitude. There were many injuries in some of these workplace incidents, those victims should also be remembered.
- the dead reveal the multicultural cross-section of those who responded to the call for workers – they were from eight provinces and fourteen countries. Italians represented roughly 16% of all those who died, but the deceased also hailed from England, Scotland, Ireland, Hungary, Russia, the United States, Austria, the Ukraine, Yugoslavia, Finland, Poland, and Switzerland.





Searching through the wreckage at Lock 6, 2 August 1928. Ten men died as a result of the gate collapse the previous day.

Associated Press Photo - John Burniak Collection

The Call for a Memorial

Wendy Metcalfe, Editor-in-Chief of *The St. Catharines Standard*,⁴ embraced the Memorial concept and the newspaper published major features about the project. This was followed by a series of articles written by reporter Grant LaFleche which focused on many of the stories of individual fatalities. These stories, which were often heart-wrenching in their details, galvanized the public into one mindset – get the job done. In a short period of time thousands signed a petition demanding action on a memorial for the fallen workers.

Mayor Brian McMullan of St. Catharines struck a special Task Force to oversee the effort. The working Committee included the mayors of all four canal-side communities, Federal MPs Rick Dykstra and Malcolm Allen, City and Regional Councillors, union heads, community leaders, and city staff with specialized expertise.

Sub-committees were struck to co-ordinate all aspects of the large undertaking. The scope and design of the project had to be determined, a location selected, a community partner chosen, funding and grant issues tackled, and further research undertaken. Funding will be sought from government grants, labour organizations, community groups, in-kind donations, and a public campaign. It is hoped to secure funding through the Government of Canada's *Legacy Fund* program. This will necessitate the completion of a grant application before 23 July 2014 – the 100th anniversary of the first fatality on the canal construction.

The 128 workers were everyday people – husbands and brothers, fathers and sons, friends and family – and to their families they will never be forgotten. However, the public has been left with little knowledge of this chapter in canal history. Those who choose to get involved can be thanked for an initiative to not let the names of these men slip into the unknown. Honours are long overdue to the workers who made such a heavy sacrifice to ensure that the Welland Ship Canal was built for the benefit of the nations of the world.

Roberta Styran and Rob Taylor shared their historical findings with the St Catharines Museum. As new information is uncovered, it is being archived with the Museum in order to centralize the stories, photographs, and artifacts about the Canal's 128 fallen workers. Should you have further information, please forward it to: Kathleen Powell, Supervisor Historical Services / Curator, kpowell@stcatharines.ca.

⁴ Wendy Metcalfe was Editor-in-Chief at *The St Catharines Standard* and Regional Content Director for Sun Media Niagara and Southern Ontario, she was promoted to Editor-in-Chief of the *Toronto Sun* on 29 July 2013.

How Can You Help – Make a Donation

You can help build the Fallen Workers Memorial:

- Make a donation: your donation is important – financial contributions can be matched by the *Legacy Fund* of the Federal government. Together – with public, private, and government support – the Memorial will get built. Receipts for Income Tax Purposes will be issued to donors by the City of St. Catharines.

Please make cheques payable to “The City of St Catharines” and mail to:

Welland Canal Fallen Workers Memorial
c/o City of St Catharines
PO Box 3012, 50 Church Street
St Catharines ON L2R 7C2

- Sign the Petition: go to *The St Catharines Standard's* website:
<http://www.stcatharinesstandard.ca/> or, log on at,
<http://www.change.org/en-CA/petitions/build-a-memorial-for-those-who-died-building-the-welland-canal>
- Spread the word: tell your friends and colleagues about the effort
- Learn the stories of the fallen: go on-line and learn about the 128 fallen workers and the danger of their jobs. Read the columns written by *The St Catharines Standard's* Grant LaFleche and other Standard staffers. Add to the information, especially if you are a descendant or if you know more about the individuals.
- For more information, call your local MP's office:
 - Rick Dykstra, MP: Karen Moncur, Executive Assistant
905 934-6767
 - Malcolm Allen, MP: Lisa Bastien, Constituency Assistant
905 788-2204
 - Mayor Brian McMullan: Maggie Riopelle, Executive Assistant
905 688-5600
- The work of the Task Force may be monitored at the City of St Catharines website:
<http://www.stcatharines.ca/en/governin/Fallen-Workers-Memorial.asp>

Special thanks to Grant LaFleche for resource material and contacts which have been prepared from interviews with descendant families. Also, to Roberta M Styran and Robert R Taylor for providing the list of names and sourcing for some of the above from their book, *THE "GREAT SWIVEL LINK": CANADA'S WELLAND CANAL*, BY ROBERTA M STYRAN AND ROBERT R TAYLOR (TORONTO: CHAMPLAIN SOCIETY, 2001), pp 367-368.

This list honours those who lost their lives during construction of the Welland Ship Canal, 1914-1932

Date	Name	Age	Cause of Accident	Birthplace
<u>1914</u>				
23-Jul	■ Robinson, George William	21	Crushed; train	England
05-Aug	■ Patterson, John A.	55	Crushed; dump car	Ireland
19-Sep	Benasho, Stana	23	Drowned; dumping car	Russia
26-Oct	Fiore, Gineseppe	18	Head crushed; dump car	Canada
02-Nov	• Dupalo, Stanko	29	Fractured skull; boom	Rujevac, Austria
18-Nov	Pakalo, Osip	24	Crushed; dump car	Russia
07-Dec	• Wilson, Arthur	28	Crushed; locomotive	Sheffield, England
30-Dec	Moratt, John	43	Crushed; locomotive	Italy
<u>1915</u>				
12-Jan	Eliashevich, Estafy	19	Electrocuted; power wire	Russia
27-Apr	Mastericola, Cornelio	20	Crushed; fall from train	Italy
20-May	West, James	43	Crushed; train	
10-Jun	Crowe, Edwin	28	Crushed; stone	Port Elgin, Ont.
14-Jun	Farris, Guiseppe	24	Crushed; concrete bucket	Italy
08-Aug	Aiello, Carmine	32	Crushed; conveyor pulley	Italy
10-Sep	• Montemurrow, Antonia	22	Electrocuted	Italy
08-Oct	▲ Nicolozzo, Nick		Fell beneath train	
09-Oct	▲ Willard, A.		Drowned	
20-Nov	Payne, Hudson	49	Crushed by train	Richmond Twp., Ont.
<u>1916</u>				
28-Feb	• Gardner, Richard B	19	Crushed by train	Selkirk, Man.
01-Jul	Procopovitsy, Wasil	28	Drowned	Russia

1917-18

NO FATALITIES - WORK STOPPED DUE TO THE GREAT WAR

All staff was relieved of duties 30 April 1917, including Engineer-in-Charge, John Laing Weller.

A new Engineer-in-Charge, Alexander Joseph Grant, was hired effective 1 January 1919 to resume work.

1919

16-Jun	Price, Benjamin	41	Fall from [rail]car on trestle	South Shields (?), Durham, England
25-Jun	• Finnemore, Reginald Ward	22	Drowned	Stoke Newington, Hackney, London, England

1920

21-Jun	McDonald, David	26	Drowned	
27-Sep	Wacpnovick, Michael	26	Drowned	Poland

1921

17-Feb	Sharpe, Robert James	25	Fall from lock wall	Niagara Twp., Ont.
08-Mar	Anderson, George	29	Crushed; shovel bucket	Finland
06-Jul	Seaman, John Thomas	54	Heat prostration	Holbeach, Lincolnshire, England

1922

14-Jan	• Randucci, Luigi	57	Fall from trestle	Italy
29-May	■ Thibeau, Moses William	32	Fall from tower at Lock 2	Cape Breton, N.S.
06-Sep	• Chisholm, Alexander Daniel	23	Buried in sand	Inverness, Cape Breton, N.S.

1923

11-Mar	Cherriere, Antonie Joseph	34	Drowned	Hamilton, Ont
27-Jul	■ Stackew, George	40	Struck by dumping car	Austria

1924

03-Mar	Kennedy, David	34	Struck by falling ice	Dunbarton, Scotland
24-Mar	Monsson, Otto	38	Struck by falling ice	Switzerland
29-Apr	Moronk, Ivan	24	Struck by crow bar	Yugoslavia
17-May	Kellett, Benjamin	69	Bank slipped; fell	Farnley, Yorkshire, England
03-Jul	Dugan, Manus	48	Fell in lock	Pennsylvania, USA
05-Jul	Caseron, Attilio	40	Struck by shovel	Italy
13-Aug	• De Biase, John	44	Electrocuted	Conegliano, Italy
15-Aug	Douglas, William Charles	33	Caught between (railway) cars	Charney Bassett, Wantage, Berkshire, England

16-Aug	Hutchison, William James	44	Fell over lock wall	Ireland
25-Aug	Lindsay, Thomas Warren	60	Blasting; struck by clay	Windsor Junction, N.S.
08-Nov	LaCroix, Wilfred Earl	21	Crushed; steel form	Calumet, Que.
08-Nov	Larocque, Gorman	25	Crushed; steel form	Calumet, Que.
09-Nov	■ Gordon, William James	53	Struck, construction train	Grantham Twp., Ont.

1925

23-Jan	Murray, Murdo	23	Fall from derrick chain	Stornoway, Scotland
27-May	Campbell, Ross William	34	Crushed; steam shovel	Humberstone, Ont.
30-May	■ Constantino, Stefano	30	Crushed, bank cave-in	Italy
08-Jun	MacDonald, Donald	26	Dynamite explosion	Scotland
31-Jul	■ Iannizzi, Rocco	33	Crushed by train	Mammola Reggio, Calabria, Italy
01-Aug	Lynch, Elzear	58	Collapse Blaw-Knox form	Rigaud, Vaudreuill, Que.
01-Aug	Lynch, Leo	20	Collapse Blaw-Knox form	Chute à Blondeau, Que.
09-Aug	Alder, Thomas	46	Collapse Blaw-Knox form	Earlestown, Lancashire, England
16-Oct	Kruzle, John	26	Drowned	Italy
20-Nov	Ostarjas, Joseph	25	Crushed; dump car	Yugoslavia
12-Dec	Brady, Timothy Harvey	58	Run over by train	USA

1926

18-Mar	■ Pearce, Amos Lloyd	34	Crushed; train	Grantham Twp., Ont.
26-Jun	• Macdonald, Daniel	52	Drowned	Canada
05-Jul	Watt, Alvin Beeton	18	Drowned	Haliburton, Ont.
08-Jul	Martinell, Joseph	36	Drowned	Italy
12-Jul	Bentiskul, Alexander Mike	45	Struck by dragline bucket	Austria
22-Jul	Horton, James Austin	47	Crushed; falling timber	Gainsboro Twp, Ont.
25-Sep	Jusko, Stephen	28	Electrocuted	Austria
08-Oct	Pirro, Charles	28	Killed by drill	Italy
23-Oct	Swan, John	21	Drowned	Scotland
01-Nov	Wodella, John	46	Struck by train	Hungary

1927

28-Jan	Mahon, Ira E.	48	Crushed by crane boom	North Wakefield, Que.
23-May	Saunders, James	36	Drowned	Northwich, Cheshire, England
29-May	Koran, Janos 'John'	36	Fall	Hungary
15-Jul	Plantedi, Franceico 'Francis'	45	Drowned	Italy
26-Jul	■ Collini, Antonio	15	Fall from lock wall	Italy
28-Jul	Wylde, Elmer Robert	20	Crushed; locomotive	Welland, Ont.
08-Aug	Boyle, Peter Joseph	29	Crushed under [rail]car	England
13-Nov	Wachawic, Martin	26	Struck by train	Poland

10-Dec	Bisson, Achille	29	Crushed and drowned by collapse of cofferdam	Quebec
10-Dec	Nealis, Henry Moses	36	Crushed and drowned by collapse of cofferdam	York Co., N.B.
20-Dec	Lethbridge, Robert W.	47	Crushed and drowned by collapse of cofferdam	Port Hope, Ont.

1928

17-Jan	▲ Farracci, Rocco		Fall from trestle	Italy
04-Feb	McCoy, James Wesley	38	Struck by chain blocks; fall	Lyndoch, Ont.
04-Feb	● Bianco, Carlo	29	Explosion	Italy
04-Feb	● Whitwell, Lorne Edmund	32	Explosion	Stoney Creek, Ont.
10-Mar	Szolonyik, Peter	27	Blow from bucket	Hungary
29-Mar	Mattei, Guiseppe	33	Fall	Italy
05-Apr	● Morin, Edward Joseph	24	Caught in gears on dredge	Quebec
01-May	Bode, John	27	Smothered; slide of earth	Hungary
23-Jul	Bayusz, Mihaly 'Michael'	36	Fall	Hungary
01-Aug	Boccioletti, Louis	34	Collapse of crane & gate	Italy
01-Aug	Carrig, Joseph	29	Collapse of crane & gate	County Clare, Ireland
01-Aug	McArthur, James Sr.	59	Collapse of crane & gate	Ireland
01-Aug	McArthur, James Campbell	36	Collapse of crane & gate	Scotland
01-Aug	McMullen, Samuel	21	Collapse of crane & gate	Ireland
01-Aug	Overholt, William Chester	51	Collapse of crane & gate	Louth Twp., Ont.
01-Aug	Smalko, Theodore 'Fred'	38	Collapse of crane & gate	Ukrania [Ukraine]
01-Aug	● Talashkewich, William	38	Collapse of crane & gate	Russia
03-Aug	Sawchuk, James	22	Tractor overturned	Ukrania [Ukraine]
03-Aug	Dion, Leon	33	Collapse of crane & gate	Sherbrooke, Que.
03-Aug	Wilson, Alexander	34	Collapse of crane & gate	Scotland
20-Aug	Simmons, John Lester	51	Struck by cable	Point Anne, Ont.
29-Sep	McInnis, Charles	24	Struck by falling pole	Prince Edward Island
20-Oct	Demoulin, Joseph	31	Buried by slide of bank	Grenville, Que.
21-Oct	Koner, Mike	59	Buried by slide of bank	Austria
14-Nov	Kady, Karoly 'Charles'	38	Crushed by falling timber	Hungary
23-Nov	Thomson, Robert Ramage	19	Fall into lock	Scotland
05-Dec	Kopniak, Steve	18	Smothered; gravel	Saskatchewan
08-Dec	Frado, Louis	49	Fall	Italy

1929

22-Mar	● Nottingham, Donald Fergus	34	Drowned	Utica, N.Y. USA
06-Apr	Bassett, Francis Fernley	23	Crushed; locomotive crane	England
26-Apr	▲ Stanbury, William John		Drowned	Palmerston, Ont.
15-May	Fater, John	24	Drowned	Hungary
15-May	Lengjel, Daniel	34	Head crushed by timber	Yugoslavia

06-Jun	Stahl, Joseph	64	Fall into lock	St. Joe, Missouri, USA
07-Sep	Pollard, Thomas	34	Fall from Bridge 5	Newfoundland
03-Oct	McKinley, Archibald	44	Electrocuted	Belfast, Ireland
11-Oct	Bassett, William Francis	43	Crushed; bridge counter weight, Bridge 21	England
21-Oct	Paolozzi, Felco	46	Crushed; truck	Colles, Mango(?), Italy

1930

27-Jan	Radford, David	49	Shafting pulley	Staffordshire, England
03-Apr	Ryan, Andrew	47	Fall	Scotland
19-Jun	▲ Hansler, Sheldon Raymond		Electrocuted	North Pelham, Ont.
19-Jun	Smith, Edward Albert	28	Electrocuted	Power Glen, Ont.
19-Jun	Tice, Lloyd Burton	25	Electrocuted	Thorold Twp., Ont.
30-Jun	Corkum, Albert	25	Legs amputated - shock	Whitefield, New Hampshire USA
03-Jul	Hines, Elmer Francis	21	Crushed; Bridge 14	Dunnville, Ont.
27-Oct	Berardi, Frank	46	Drowned	Italy

1931

NO FATALITIES

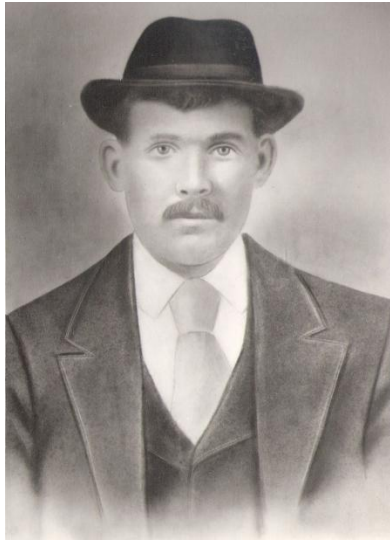
1932

07-Apr	Benson, Henry	53	Fall	Ontario
30-Jul	■ Onyschuk, Michael	36	Struck by falling tree	Torskie, Zaleszczyki, Ukraine
18-Oct	Hawthorne, John William	54	Struck by timber	Collingwood, Ont.
20-Oct	Kuchenbecker, Luther	37	Struck by snapped cable on dredge	USA
03-Nov	Watt, Harry	21	Drowned	Haliburton, Ont.

▲ No official Provincial Death Registration yet located.

■ Not on the original "In Memoriam" list found by Styran & Taylor in National Archives Canada, RG 43, Volume 2168, but nevertheless later verified by contemporary accounts and/or family tradition.

● Slight variation(s) in initial(s)/name(s) between Welland Ship Canal lists and official Registration. (For these, consult the St. Catharines Museum's work sheets in its Research Centre).



William James Gordon	Achille Bisson	Elzear Lynch
James Saunders	Sheldon Hansler	Michael Onyschuk
James McArthur family	William F Bassett (L) Francis F Bassett (R)	John Lester Simmons family

Rideau Canal Construction Workers

(Press Release) OTTAWA, ONTARIO, November 2, 2012

“The Government of Canada is proud to recognize the contributions of the construction workers who made the Rideau Canal a reality,” said Minister Kent. “These workers, the majority of whom were Irish immigrants or French Canadian, worked in extremely difficult and dangerous conditions and hundreds paid for it with their lives. The significant contribution of the canal workers to Canadian history deserves to be recognized for the benefit of future generations of Canadians.”

With this recognition, the contributions of the Rideau Canal construction workers will be commemorated within Canada’s family of national historic sites, persons and events, designated on the recommendation of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC). During its discussion, the HSMBC noted the need to reflect on how the construction workers’ story fits into the commemoration of the Rideau Canal in all its complexity. Larger-than-usual plaques and interpretive panels will be erected at two prominent locations along the canal to tell the story of the Rideau Canal and the construction workers who made it a reality.

“The Rideau Canal is one of the main reasons Ottawa is today the capital of a G-8 nation,” said the Honourable John Baird, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs. “We owe those responsible for the Canal’s construction an immense debt of gratitude and respect.”

Parks Canada has begun the process to create the plaques and interpretive panels that will help visitors to the Rideau Canal to understand its complex history, including the noteworthy contributions of the construction workers in bringing this monumental achievement through to completion.

“The workers are integral to the story of the Rideau Canal, which is why I decided that the original designation should be expanded to honour their contributions,” added Minister Kent. “I look forward to a formal commemoration ceremony in the coming months with representatives of the various communities who contributed to making this a reality.”

Built between 1826 and 1832, today the Rideau Canal is a National Historic Site as well as a UNESCO World Heritage Site managed by Parks Canada for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Canal Society Business

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at the St Catharines Museum on Sunday, 14 April 2013.

The Treasurer reported a bank balance of \$4,045.21 as of 31 January 2013. Membership was down to 36. (After the presentations following the AGM we gained four members. Following up on delinquents has also been successful and the membership is now just under 50. Editor)

Bruce Timms, CCS Director is also a Councillor for the Regional Municipality of Niagara and serves as the Chair of the Greater Niagara Circle Route. The walking/biking route has become a popular tourist destination. A large part of the route parallels the Welland Canal. Work is underway to extend the Route from Ansell Park the current northern terminus, at Lock 1, to Port Weller East.

Bruce also stated that development is planned for the Lock 14 area of the Second Welland Canal and he is asking for canal photos and information on the area.

Welcome New Members

Roger Brashaw

John Calvert

Bob Passfield

John & Judith Sayers

Ken Westhue

Annual General Meeting Announcement

The next Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Canal Society will be held in the Burgoyne Room at the St Catharines Museum on Sunday, 6 April 2014 at 1:00 pm. A program, still under development, will follow at 2:00 pm.

Deaths

The Society notes the passing of the following members and extends our condolences to their families.

William Hugh Maclean (President 1987)

Peacefully on March 12, 2013 in his 88th year after a brief illness. Bill, husband of Joan Ashby, loving father of David, John (Linda) and Tim (Sue), adored grandfather of Ben, Taylor, Andrew, Maddie, Courtney and Steven. Bill was born on February 11, 1926 to the late Edwin & Viola (Preston) MacLean. He grew up in St. Catharines, twice lived in Montreal and settled in Toronto in 1965. He is survived by his cherished sister Helen Spinney, nephews Ken

(Maureen) Spinney and Bill (Sue) Spinney and in-laws Michael & Barbara Ashby and David & Christy Ashby and their families. Surpassed only by his feelings for his family was his love of cruising (especially Norwegian cruises), and researching and scrapbooking passenger ships of today and yesteryear.

Patricia (Pat) French

In loving memory of Patricia Elizabeth Elwood French, who passed away on Sunday, July 21, 2013, at the St. Catharines Hospital, surrounded by her family. The family is very thankful for the kindness of the doctors and nurses who were involved with her comfort and care.

Alun Hughes

Alun Hughes was not a member of the Canadian Canal Society but we too are poorer by his death. Though a Geographer he had a passion for the history of the Niagara Peninsula including its canals. The following is extracted from *The Brock News*.

Former Brock Professor Alun Hughes died last week (9 May 2013) after a lengthy illness.

Alun Hughes had a knack for setting the historical record straight.

Take Laura Secord traipsing across the Niagara countryside with a cow in tow to warn the British of a pending American attack during the War of 1812.

Or her navigating a swamp to arrive at DeCew House in 1813.

They were good stories but probably just that, Hughes would argue.

He also sought to find out where Sir Isaac Brock was really shot, the true story of the Battle of Beaverdams and to provide some real perspective on St Catharines' Power Glen neighbourhood.

Hughes, a retired Brock University geography professor who garnered a reputation for separating historical fact from fiction died last week after a lengthy illness. He was 71.

"He corrected history," said Loris Gasparotto, cartographer in the Geography Department.

And he did it with his publication Looking Back... with Alun Hughes, a Historical Society of St. Catharines newsletter that Gasparotto helped him layout, even after Hughes retired in 2012.

“He loved history. I think he loved writing articles about Thorold and Niagara more than writing about cartography,” Gasparotto said.

Hughes’s passion for the past wasn’t lost on the Niagara community. He was a regular go-to guy for local media requiring context for historical stories. Earlier this year, he was awarded a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his historical writings and the City of Thorold named Hughes its honorary civic historian as a result.

Still, Hughes was a geography professor first, arriving to teach at Brock in 1969 after working as a cartographic editor in London, U.K. Hughes taught cartography, surveying, remote sensing and GIS for 42 years at Brock and also co-founded and coached the University’s rugby club.

Among his other passions, Hughes was heavily involved in promoting and teaching Welsh in North America. He was recognized in 1989 for his contributions to keeping the language alive when he was inducted into the highest rank of the Gorsedd of Bards, a society of poets, writers, musicians, artists and others who have made a significant contribution to Wales, its language and culture.

Gasparotto recalled Hughes as a friend and colleague who was strong-willed, a stickler for grammar, but with whom he could joke easily.

“When he had a cause, he was like a badger,” Gasparotto recalled. “He kept going until it happened. And he supported his colleagues.”

About 20 years ago, Hughes started to turn his attention to correcting history. As the person helping to put together Hughes’s Looking Back newsletters, Gasparotto said he developed a deep appreciation for what the former professor was doing.

“I really enjoyed his work at the end. I have all of them and I think ‘My God’, someone should publish this in a book or a faculty member should pick it up,” Gasparotto said. “I have a folder of unfinished articles and I look at it and get a little teary eyed.”

World Canals Conference 2014

The Conference in 2014 will be based in Milan, Italy. Details may be obtained at the Conference website: <http://www.wcc2014.net/en>.

Canal Society of New York State Collection

The Canal Society of New York State (CSNYS) has existed for over 50 years. During their life they have amassed a large collection of canal material through acquisition and donation. A large part of the collection was donated by Hayward and Emily Madden. The total volume of the Collection is some 600 cubic feet of material.

The Collection has had various homes over the years and has never been properly catalogued. Last year the CSNYS partnered with the Erie Canal Museum (ECM) who will now house the Collection.

The ECM has applied for a grant to hire an Archivist for a year to catalog the collection. The Collection is international in scope and therefore, in addition to partnering with the CSNYS, they also included the Canadian Canal Society.

When the CCS was founded our first Vice President was Hayward Madden and Tom Hahn, who was President Emeritus of the American Canal Society, became one of our Directors. Our membership today continues to be international in scope.

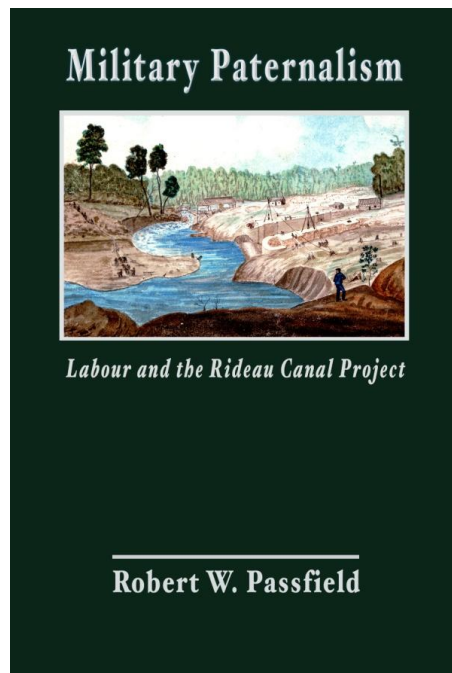
No doubt because of Hayward Madden's involvement some of the material in the Collection will include his interest in Canadian Canals and also the early field trips of the CCS.

The CCS Board recently committed up to \$1,000 to support this Project. This will enable Canadian subject experts to travel to Syracuse, New York, to assist in the identification and cataloging of Canadian material in the Collection.

When the Project is completed the Collection will be more accessible to researchers and thousands of images will be made available online.



Military Paternalism, Labour, and the Rideau Canal Project by Robert W. Passfield (Bloomington, Indiana: Author House, 2013), 302p, illus.



This book comprises a revisionist history of the labour situation on the Rideau Canal construction project (1826-1832), that rejects the existing Marxist interpretation of class conflict and worker exploitation by the military. In doing so, it examines working conditions on the canal project, takes into account cultural factors in assessing the degree of acculturation of the different immigrant labour groups in adapting to living and working in a North American wilderness environment, and records the paternalism practiced by the Commanding Royal Engineer, Lt. Col. John By, on behalf of the workers on the canal project, and by British military officers in aiding immigrants to settle in the Rideau wilderness.

An Appendix presents a critique of the Marxist interpretation of canal labour history during the 'contractor paternalism' era, and proffers a cultural values interpretation for military paternalism in Canada, which is based on a comparative analysis of the political culture values of Anglican torysism and Lockean liberalism.

To order: consult www.amazon.ca, or www.amazon.com. Also available at www.chapters.indigo.ca, and books.google.ca where extracts from the book are posted. Search: Robert Passfield

Canal Book Buyers Wanted

Attic Books of London, Ontario has recently informed us that they have acquired a large private collection of canal books. Perhaps some treasure that you have long sort may be available.

Their catalog is available online through www.Abebooks.com, a recent check of their stock showed over 600 canal books listed.

Alternately, if you do not have online access then call Jason Dickson at 519-432-7277.

Letter to the Editor from **Peter Styrmø** former Curator of the Marine Museum of Upper Canada in regards to the article on *SS Keewatin*, in the last issue of Canals Canada.

There is an interesting note about these ships, early in the 20th Century, when "Wireless" or "Radio" was deemed to be a very significant safety factor for all ships, the installation of Wireless facilities aboard ships became the "order of the day".

"Radio" or "Wireless" began to be introduced to ships in Canada circa 1910/20 and the Marconi Co., held the Canadian franchise for all Marine Wireless Communications on Canada's Atlantic Seaboard and the Great Lakes for land based and ship's "radios" until World War II. "Wireless Cabins" were built and placed on existing vessels on the upper deck in order to have clear access to the antenna rigging, and all of the wireless equipment was owned, installed, and set up by the Marconi Company. The wireless equipment on board was leased from the Marconi Company, and all of the operators were trained, employed, and paid by the Marconi Company. The shipping companies paid the Marconi Co. directly for the wireless service.

In 1983 or 4, The Marine Museum was offered a wonderful collection of actual period Marconi wireless equipment of the type used on the Great Lakes ships during the mid 1920's through to the late 1930's and we were also fortunate to locate not one, but two, original "Marconi Operators", one of whom had been an operator on board the *SS Assiniboia*. With the help and expertise of these two former operators, we were able to build a full scale replica of the *SS Assiniboia* Wireless Cabin in the museum, along with an extensive display of pictures and equipment illustrating the importance of wireless communications for shipping during that era.

Alas that museum no longer exists - a pity!

Canadian Canal Society

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