



## President's Message

With all the gloomy news of pared or cancelled grants to worthwhile organizations, there is some comfort in chairing an organization which is self-sustaining and financially healthy: this generates confidence in planning for the future.

Other portions of this newsletter report on both the successful spring trip to Hamilton Harbour and its related canals, as well as on the fall tour and cruise at Lockport and Middleport on the New York State Barge Canal. I extend our C.C.S. thanks to the convenors, **Dave Cramm** and **Art Adams** for the former, and **John Burtiak** for the latter — and, as always, to treasurer **Carol Gaspari** for the not inconsiderable task of receiving the registrations, paying the various accounts generated during the trip (sometimes writing cheques on the side of a boat in the rain!), and calculating the profit or loss of our events. The two above events were organized like a military operation, showed us unknown and surprising aspects of the pertinent areas, attracted a sold-out bus and waiting list — and generated a profit.

Roberta Styran's report on the 1996 British Canal expedition indicates it to be well subscribed and definitely "on". Of course the Macdonalds are participating. Having received the soon-to-be-published agenda at a trip committee meeting earlier in the month, I highly recommend that any undecided C.C.S. members take up the four remaining spaces.

The above-mentioned British trip committee meeting was followed by the first meeting of the "future planning", or "programme" committee, to which reference was made in the May 1995 newsletter. Chaired by vice-president Bob Sparks, the committee will be reporting further on its initial concept of expanding both the scope of our field trips, and furthering public and C.C.S. awareness of Canadian Canals through publication and seminars. More anon.

Have a pleasant (and water-oriented where possible) winter!

**Norman Macdonald**

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**REMINDER:** Signed-up members of the UK '96 tour will be receiving a proposed Itinerary and a **Questionnaire** along with this edition of the newsletter. It is **absolutely essential** that we have these **Questionnaires returned to us by 5 January 1996** in order to ensure that we get the flight that we want to Britain on 13 June. As well, we **MUST** book your return fares when we book the 13 June flight to Britain, in order to qualify for the best rates. Air fares keep going up — and so do airport departure taxes on both sides of the Atlantic, alas! Flight information is already becoming available (see further on p. 5 and 7), and we cannot afford to delay.

## C.C.S. Spring Tour, 17 June 1995

Our Spring Field Trip was a miracle of efficient planning, thanks to the inventiveness of the organizers, Dave Cramm and Art Adams, who divided our group of over forty-five into three smaller groups for three different activities throughout the day: a boat tour of Hamilton Harbour (Burlington Bay), a bus tour including Cootes Paradise and the Desjardins Canal in Dundas, and an illustrated historical lecture. Our base was the Harbour West Marina Complex, cheerful home to the Hamilton and District Chamber of Commerce and the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club. Here we enjoyed a tasty lunch in the Chamber's Harbourview Room, followed by our Annual General Meeting. The organizers had also arranged for cloudless skies and warm temperatures throughout the day. Farr's Coach Lines, as usual, provided us with an intrepid driver and a comfortable bus.

From Dundas, the bus trip followed a circuitous and narrow route into the heart of "Cootes Paradise", named for a British army officer who, occasionally neglecting his military duties, loved to go hunting and fishing in this marsh. The "Paradise", lying between Dundas and Burlington Heights, is a thousand-acre wetland with an outlet through the Desjardins Canal Cut to Burlington Bay. Because water levels in the marsh having risen in recent years, driving away much of the waterfowl, a restoration project has begun. In particular, an overabundance of carp (some of which grow to over three feet in length) has reduced 85% of the wetland. Consequently, a "carp barrier" has been designed to prevent such large fish from entering the "Paradise" from Hamilton Harbour, while not impeding the regular flow of water and entrance of smaller fish.

In the town of Dundas, the bus stopped at the terminus of the Desjardins Canal. Built 1827-1837, the waterway, with a sixty foot width and five foot depth, was designed to improve communication between Burlington Bay and Dundas. As a result the town boomed. Eventually, however, the railway provided competition which decreased traffic on the waterway until 1895 when all commercial use ended. In the century since then, the canal-scape has been much altered, the turning basin has been obliterated, and the canal-related industries have decayed. The waterway still exists, however, its prism describing a straight line from Cootes Paradise into the heart of Dundas. On the broad waters of the "Paradise" several posts mark out the dredged route of the canal to the cut into Burlington Bay (some members recalled that, on an earlier C.C.S. field trip, many more of these were visible than can be seen today).

On the Hamilton Harbour Commissioners' launch (MV John L. Agro), we toured Burlington Bay for two hours, enjoying a unique perspective on the harbour facilities and other shore features. At its Centennial and Wellington terminals, the Port of Hamilton provides seven miles of commercial shipping berths, transferring about thirteen million tons of cargo annually. Dry and liquid bulk storage facilities, general cargo warehousing, roll-on and roll-off berthage, and container handling are provided by the Harbour Commission, the port's administration since 1912. Among other vessels, we noted lakers, a coal-carrying self-unloader, many tugboats, research vessels (at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters), "seadoos" and a dragon boat! The Harbour Commissioners Sailing and Powerboating School offers a fine training for sailboaters, some of whom we saw scudding along the bay. The Stelco and Dofasco steel plants presented a more complex face from the one normally seen from the skyway, while the fine homes and gardens on the Burlington shore (otherwise shielded from the road) revealed their luxurious but intimate side.

In the Harbourview Room, illustrated lectures by **Gordon Thede** (on the history of Hamilton Harbour, Burlington Canal, pumping station, etc.), and by **Betty and Harold Lampman** (on local history of Dundas, Ancaster, Hamilton) filled out our impressions of the bus and boat tours.

At the end of the day, despite sun-burned noses, the participants expressed much satisfaction with a remarkable outing. **Rob Taylor**

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### New Members

Mr. & Mrs. Sydney Ferrell  
P.O. Box 196  
24 Church Hill  
Fontill, Ont.  
L0S 1E0

Angela Hall  
1017 Earl Crescent  
Burlington, Ont.  
L7T 3R1

Bob Hennessy  
R.R. #6  
Cambridge, Ont.  
N1R 5S7

Mr. & Mrs. Patrick McNally  
348 Mountain Brow Road East  
Hamilton, Ont.  
L7R 3X5

Gordon Thede  
35 Robinhood Drive  
Dundas, Ont.  
L9H 4G2

Ms. Celia Webber  
431 St. Paul St.  
St. Catharines, Ont.  
L2R 3N4

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### George M. Carl

**George Mansfield Carl**, the Society's first Treasurer, passed away on 24 June 1995, aged 80, at Port Colborne. **George and his wife Vera** joined the C.C.S. as Family Members in the Society's inaugural year — a membership which they continued.

George was a highly respected member of Niagara's shipping industry, working for more than 40 years for the Misener Shipping Company. He retired as Secretary-Treasurer of Misener Transport in 1977. Two Great Lakes freighters were named in his honour, attesting to his years of service to the industry, and the high regard and respect in which he was held by both his company and his peers.

Throughout his life George was involved in many service and community organizations, including the local school board, numerous charities, and the Salvation Army. He was a key figure in the building of the Port Colborne General Hospital, and later served on its Board, and on the Ontario Health Council.

George maintained a keen interest in our marine and canal heritage, and held memberships in several related organizations, where he served in various capacities. His service to the C.C.S. as Treasurer, 1982-84, was an important and welcome contribution to its founding, placing the Society's financial affairs on a sound footing.

The Society extends its condolences to the Carl family.

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## Another Honorary Life Member: John Burtniak honoured at the A.G.M.

At the June A.G.M. held in Hamilton in June, John Burtniak was named an Honorary Life Member in recognition of his involvement in, and contribution to, the Canadian Canal Society over his years of association with the Society since its inception. In addition to having served as the Society's President, John has organized and conducted various meetings and tours, and as well, has provided other services to the Society. He joins the late Robert F. Legget and Lou Cahill, as Honorary Life Members. Lou was a founding member of the Society, responsible for bringing the C.C.S. into being, and a constant supporter and source of inspiration over the years.

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## Bruce Emerson Hill: The Grand River Navigation Company

The story of the Grand River Navigation Company and the construction of a canal along portions of the Grand River between Brantford and Port Maitland at Lake Erie, is one of the relatively little-known sagas of the canal fever of the early and mid-1800s. C.C.S. member Bruce Hill has now shed light on the history of this ill-fated venture, which began with grandiose plans: the founding of the Company in 1832; the involvement of William Hamilton Merritt; the use of Six Nation's funds for financing construction of locks and dams along the Grand; insufficient funding; inadequate construction; failing revenues.

The Company and the canal, it seems, were doomed to fail almost from the beginning. But, during its life, the Company did open up the middle and lower Grand River Valley with a cheap, if not always efficient, transportation system. As a result, communities came into being, and industry developed in Brant and Haldimand Counties. Remnants of the canal channel and locks remain at Indiana, York, Mt. Healy, Seneca, Oneida and Brantford.

The book is well written, and supported with copious footnotes and a full bibliography. A variety of pictures reproduced from old and modern photographs and documents enhance the volume considerably, supplemented by reproductions of ten maps and plans of the canal system. An especially informative series of 17 tables and other appendices provide statistics on the quantity and type of goods transported on the canal, rates of tolls, list of directors, and other related documentation. John Burtniak

Bruce E. Hill. *The Grand River Navigation Company*. Brantford: Brant Historical Society, 1994. Paperbound, 134 pages, illus., maps, plans, tables, ISBN 1-895928-04-4.

Available from: The Brant Historical Society  
57 Charles Street  
Brantford, Ontario  
N3T 2W6

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FLASH! FLASH! FLASH! IMPORTANT BULLETIN!

The Society has a new post office box and address!

Thanks to Canada Post, our post office box had been relocated to a postal outlet in a Shoppers Drug Mart, in downtown St. Catharines, near the post office. This drug store has just closed!

Our new address is given on the last page of this issue of our Newsletter and the enclosed Membership Renewal Form. Please change your records accordingly.

## C.C.S. UK '96 Trip

While in Britain this fall, Bobbie Styran, who will be leading our tour, with the aid of several British Waterways staff, finalized our itinerary, arranged for hotel boats and coach hire, and for group admissions to several museums. We hope to land at Manchester on 14 June, then on the 15th, half the party will board the hotel boats SWAN & MALLARD, and TSARINA & TSAREVNA at Llangollen for a cruise on the Llangollen Canal, while the rest of the party will tour various canal sites by coach. On Wednesday the 19th, the parties will switch places at Willey Moor Lock on the Llangollen, the boat party proceeding to Chester via the Shropshire Union Canal, where the two parties will unite on Saturday the 22nd. Both groups will visit the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port, where the Shropshire Union meets the Manchester Ship Canal; the Gladstone Pottery Museum at Longton in the Potteries area, served by the Trent & Mersey Canal and its Caldon Branch; and the Castlefield area in Manchester, where the Bridgewater (the forerunner of all modern canals, opened to Manchester in 1761) and the Rochdale Canals meet. We'll also see many other canal sites in the vicinity of these centres, including the Pontcysyllte aqueduct in Wales, and the Anderton Lift, many locks and canal-related buildings. We'll have a day in the Ironbridge Gorge area, with its several museum sites, including the Iron Bridge itself. On Monday 24 June we will visit the National Waterways Museum at Gloucester (on the Sharpness and Gloucester Canal), and the following day the Canal Museum at Stoke Bruerne, on the Grand Union, and the Foxton Locks (on the Leicester Branch of the Grand Union), en route to Birmingham for the International Conference there 26-28 June.

**There are still 3-4 places left**, if some of you are regretting that you've not yet signed up for what promises to be our best-ever field trip! **First come, first served**, so hurry and let us know if you want to join up. Signed-up members have been making quarterly payments of \$370 per person, and **Carol Gaspari**, our Treasurer, will let you know the amount of contributions expected to date. The total cost will be at least \$3500 per person, including the basic air fare (see below for additional charges, which will be the responsibility of individuals wishing to stay on after the Birmingham meeting), cancellation insurance (air fare), boat & coach hire, hotels with breakfast & dinner included (ALL meals on the hotel boats), and group museum admission charges.

Our tour officially ends on the 28th, and advance publicity indicates that the return half of air fares will increase as of the 29th of June (by \$20 per person), and again on the 13th July (by another \$40 p.p.), so members planning to stay on for a time are advised to take these increases into consideration when making their plans. There would also be an additional surcharge of \$20 p.p. for departure from airports other than Birmingham, Glasgow, London and Manchester.

C.C.S. members who have already signed up for this tour are reminded that included in this mailing is a **Questionnaire**, which **must** be returned to us by **5 January 1996**

Anyone planning to sign up now, please advise **Carol Gaspari**, 74 Prince Charles Dr., St. Catharines, L2N 3Z1, or **Bobbie Styran**, 35 Towering Hts. Blvd., #509, St. Catharines, L2T 3G8, immediately, and we'll see that you get a copy of the Questionnaire, Itinerary, etc.

## C.C.S. Fall Tour, 16 September 1995: The Erie Canal Re-Visited

A full bus headed for Lockport and Middleport, New York, on Saturday, 16 September, for a return visit to the Erie Canal. It had been several years since C.C.S. members had cruised a part of the Erie, and the visit was welcome and invigorating, helped by ideal weather for walking, looking, cruising, photographing and relaxing.

The first stop in Lockport was not the Canal or the locks, but the New York Central's Union Station. Truly a magnificent building it is, even though it is now closed, damaged by fire and in gentle decay. It is the only known use of apparent H.H. Richardson Romanesque masonry architecture in a railroad application by the architect John D. Fouquet, a disciple and probably one-time student and/or assistant to the revered Richardson. The building is imposing, even in its damaged state, and waiting (and crying out) for restoration — more particularly, some form of re-adaptive use of the ruins. The site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.

The group then headed for Widewaters Marina, where we boarded one of the cruise boats. This took us up through Locks 34 and 35, built in 1918, providing a lift of fifty feet. This is always an impressive sail, "climbing the mountain at Lockport". It provided a fine opportunity for viewing the remains of canal- and lock-side industries and the Lockport "skyline," bridge, and buildings from the canal. Beside these modern locks are one set of the five-flight double locks that were constructed in 1847 during enlargement of the Erie.

Sailing back down through the two locks, we disembarked at the Marina, boarded our bus for downtown and lunch. At 1.30 the group gathered again for a walk down along the locks, following the information boards that are posted at strategic locations, describing the historical, engineering and other noteworthy details of the points along the way. Nestled at the base of the locks, the reward for the hardy souls who walked all the way down (because they had to walk up again!) was the Erie Canal Museum. It features reproductions of photographs and plans, and a variety of canal and lock machinery — well worth the climb!

Returning to the bus and to the Marina, we boarded our boat, specially reserved for the C.C.S., for a cruise along the Erie to Middleport. It was wonderful! A leisurely, two-hour cruise, through farmland and orchards, past century-old houses and barns, under road bridges and through fine stands of forest trees. Our destination was Middleport and the old Basket Factory Restaurant. This is a very fine eatery, situated on the banks of the Canal. The dinner was scrumptuous, and we did the C.C.S. right proud at the table! Regretably, we had to leave the tables for others. We then headed out and roamed, on foot and by bus, around the streets of Middleport, savouring the delightful commercial, public and domestic architecture. We could have lingered for another hour, but we had to start for home. On the way back we drove through Gasport, also an interesting, though smaller, canal-side community. It too had its share of noteworthy buildings, and our architecturally-oriented members were also pleased to see these. One older building, with some restrained architectural detail, on the main street, was available free for the moving! One member on the bus suggested that perhaps the C.C.S. should acquire and move it to a site along the Canal, and there establish the Society's American office!

It was a good day, capably and efficiently organized by John Burtniak. It was agreed that the Erie Canal, Lockport and Middleport deserve another visit soon!

## Programme Committee

As indicated in the May '95 issue of Canals Canada, a Program Committee has begun to plan a five-year schedule of spring and fall events, trying to keep costs to a reasonable level while expanding our range, especially of Canadian sites. The Committee hopes to publish a plan in the Spring '96 Issue of Canals Canada and would welcome ideas for

- 1) fields trips in conjunction with canal-related anniversaries (these could be one-day events, or, longer trips to various parts of the country;
- 2) suggestions for canal-related community one-day walking tours;
- 3) one-day "seminar" topics (St. Catharines, Welland, Thorold, Welland, Dundas, Hamilton, Toronto would be the logical locations;
- 4) any other possibilities.

Please send your ideas to the Editor, clearly marked "Program Committee".

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### Port Carling Locks Face Uncertain Future

This was a headline in the May 18 issue of The Muskokan, reporting that the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, which has been operating the locks, had announced it would no longer continue to do so, on the grounds that the locks are unsafe, and the MNR did not wish to be responsible for accidents which might occur. A Locks Task Force has been formed and hopes to create a waterways commission to facilitate the repair and continued operation of the 124-year old locks, which are vital for many local businessmen carrying goods along the Indian River, as well as for the tours of R.M.S. Segwun and the Lady Muskoka, and for residents and visitors travelling by boat. On 7 June the Gravenhurst News also featured the story, and the attempts to interest local politicians, and party leaders, in the campaign to keep the locks in operation.

It is to be hoped that this issue will be resolved satisfactorily!

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### World Canal Conference, Birmingham, England, 26-28 June 1996

Planning for the first World Canal Conference by British Waterways, the Inland Waterways Association International, and Birmingham City Council is progressing satisfactorily. The conference theme will be Regeneration, and delegates are expected from around the world. Many events are being planned, including re-enactments of historic events, boat gatherings and rallies, lectures, talks and walks. A group from the C.C.S. will join others from the U.S., Australia, France, Germany and other European countries.

**Important Note to C.C.S. members signed up for our tour:** It is understood that the programme for 27 June will consist of excursions to various canal sites in the Birmingham area, which I'm sure our members will not want to miss. The conference sessions on the 26th and 28th may be too technical to attract our members, so for reasons of economy (return air fare is scheduled to rise by \$20 p.p. as of 29 June), those of you not wishing to stay on, may wish to return to Toronto on 28 June. We expect to have more details regarding the Birmingham meeting in the near future, and will immediately advise signed-up members of the tour group as to the 28 June programme, and will arrange departure dates accordingly.

## The Canadian Canal Society

Executive Officers for 1995-96

Past President: Sheila Wilson  
President: Norman Macdonald  
Vice-President: Robert Sparks  
Secretary: Doris Bates  
Treasurer: Carol Gaspari

Send all correspondence for the Canadian Canal Society to:

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Canadian Canal Society  
P.O. Box 23016, Midtown Postal Outlet  
124 Welland Avenue  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
Canada L2R 7P6

Contributions for Canals Canada should be sent to:

Roberta Styran, Editor  
35 Towering Heights Blvd., #509  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
L2T 3G8

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### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL

Please enrol me as a member of the Canadian Canal Society  
I/We enclose my/our membership fee of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Category \_\_\_\_\_

Individual	\$	10.00
Family		15.00
Institution		25.00
Contributing		25.00 or more

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: Mr. ( ) Mrs. ( ) Miss ( ) Ms. ( ) Dr. ( ) Capt. ( ) Other ( )

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PROVINCE (STATE): \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Business \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to the CANADIAN CANAL SOCIETY and mail with the application form to:

Secretary, Canadian Canal Society  
P.O. Box 23016, Midtown Postal Outlet  
124 Welland Avenue  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
Canada L2R 7P6