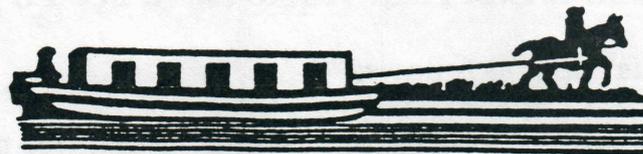


Canals  
Canada



Canaux du  
Canada

Newsletter of The Canadian Canal Society/Société des Canaux du Canada

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Vol. 15 Issue 2

## President's Message

As 1997 draws to a close, we can look back on a year of interesting activities. Although perhaps not as "grand" as "UK '96" a day in Welland visiting sites related to earlier versions of the Welland Canal, and a weekend trip to Port Stanley and St. Thomas, certainly kept our enthusiasm levels high. The launch of our C.C.S. publication of Hugh G.J. Aitken's book, *The Welland Canal Company* was probably the highlight of the year.

For myself, I had a very canal-oriented year. In August I visited Smiths Falls and Merrickville on the Rideau, and in September I spent a week on the Erie Canal on a Mid-Lakes hire boat, with English relatives. In October, five of our C.C.S. members attended the World Canals Conference in Rhode Island (see report on p. 2-3).

As the years draws to a close, we look forward to seeing many of you on our trip to the Shubenacadie Canal, and other fascinating sites in Nova Scotia in late June 1998 (see p. 3).

Have a pleasant winter! Buy your own copy of *The Welland Canal Company* and sign up for "Shubie '98"!

**Bob Sparks**

## Personnel Changes at Parks Canada

At Peterborough, **John Lewis** has left to accept a new position in the Ottawa headquarters of Parks Canada, and we wish him well in his new location. He has been most helpful to us our tours, and we shall miss him there. **Bernard Villeneuve** has taken over as Superintendent of the Trent-Severn Waterway, and we look forward to meeting him when next we visit that area. And **John Bonser** is retiring as Field Unit Superintendent, Eastern Ontario, and Superintendent, Rideau Canal - another old friend of the C.C.S., who will be missed from his Smiths Falls area. **John B.** will not be entirely severing his connection with canals, however: at the recent World Canals Conference in Pawtucket, R.I., he was appointed as North American contact for future World Conferences. We wish him a happy retirement, and look forward to seeing him at future Conferences.

**Bob Sparks, President**

## Note re C.C.S. 5-Year Schedule for Field Trips

As you know, the planned August '97 trip to Clayton, N.Y. scheduled for 1-3 August, had to be cancelled because of lack of support. Instead, the week-end tour to Port Stanley and St. Thomas was moved up from May 1999 to 27-28 September 1997. The C.C.S. Planning Committee will be meeting shortly to fill the gap for spring 1999 and fall 2001, and to plan sites for our visits in 2002. Further new as it becomes available.

## "Shubie '98" - The C.C.S. Field Trip to Nova Scotia, June '98

The Tentative schedule for this trip is as follows:

- Mon. 22 June:** Morning flight from Toronto to Halifax. Either free time, or a planned visit to sites of interest. Seafood dinner and overnight in Halifax.
- Tues. 23 June:** Visit to the Shubenacadie Canal. Overnight at either Truro or Amherst.
- Wed. 24 June:** Visit to Tidnish. Overnight at Baddeck.
- Thurs. 25 June:** Visit restored French fort at Louisburg. Overnight at Baddeck.
- Fri. 26 June:** St. Peter's Canal & historic town of Sherbrooke. Overnight at Liscomb.
- Sat. 27 June:** Return to Halifax: free time, or planned visits. Overnight in Halifax.
- Sun. 28 June:** Free time in morning. Afternoon Return to Toronto.

At the moment we can't give more than an estimated cost, but it is expected that hotels and bus hire would amount to about \$100 per day per person. Airfare (or other transportation to Halifax) would be additional, as would meals. We hope to arrange for group lunches and dinners at various locations. More information when it becomes available.

For optional activities see Questionnaire enclosed with this *Newsletter*.

Hope to see a good number of C.C.S. members there!

\* \* \* \* \*

### Welcome to New Members of the C.C.S.

<b>Olive Faulkner</b> 3735 Dundas St. W., Apt. 914 TORONTO, Ont. M6S 2T6	<b>Bill Lewis</b> 25 Home Street WELLAND, Ont. L3C 2E8	<b>Ken Watson</b> P.O. Box 455 ELGIN, Ont. K0G 1E0 E-mail kwatson@kos-net	<b>Alan &amp; Janet Veale</b> 10 Ernbrook Cr. ST.CATHARINES, Ont. L2T 1Y5
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### World Canals Conference, Rhode Island, 14-17 October 1997

New England was ablaze with autumn colours as over 200 "canallers" gathered at the Comfort Inn in Pawtucket, R.I., for four intensive days of canal- and historical-related sessions and activities. Five members of the C.C.S. were in attendance: **Carol and Keith Manchester** from Nova Scotia, **Denise Kane and Bob Sparks** from Toronto, and **Bobbie Styran** from St. Catharines. Other Canadians present were **John Bonser**, of Parks Canada, from Smith Falls, Ont., and **Mark London**, of the Lachine Canal Project, from Montreal.

It was a hectic four days, with activities ranging from a short tour on board a Mid-Lakes canal hire boat in Pawtucket to a dinner with entertainment by legendary folksinger Pete Seeger. Some hardy souls went canoeing on a section of the historic Blackstone Canal, which

connected Providence, R.I. and Worcester, Mass. when it opened in 1828. The arrival of the Providence and Worcester Railroad in 1847 spelled doom for this canal, as for so many others. We had a trip on that Railroad; a dinner-cruise of Narragansett Bay on the VISTA JUBILEE; another boat trip on the Blackstone river at Woonsocket (as part of our morning tour of that fascinating mill town); a visit to a lock site; and a tour of the Waterplace Park redevelopment project in downtown Providence. There were presentations by many individuals and groups, including a demonstration of teleconferencing between students of a high school in Rhode Island and those in a school in Derbyshire, England.

Over the four days we resumed acquaintance with many people we had met last year in Birmingham, including representatives from Ireland, Britain and the U.S. and, of course, met many new people.

Our only complaint was that so much was laid on, involving a great deal of bus shuttling, that we had very little time in the display room, where we had hoped to market the Aitken book. But with everyone on the road most of the time (from early morning to late in the evening), it was almost impossible to meet and mingle except "on the fly." I had a chance only for a very quick glance at the other exhibits, and virtually no time to "man" our display.

On a positive (?) note, however, a fellow-Canadian won (?) the "Dink Award", for the most idiotic performance at the conference. Recipient of this great honour was **John Bonser**, who sent a drink pouring over the table at the Chairman of British Waterways, **Bernard Henderson**. [Editor's Note: C.C.S. members who went on the UK '96 trip may recall that last year's award went to **David Stevenson** of I.W.A., who had organized the field trip in Birmingham, and had failed to realize that while his car could easily negotiate a sharp left turn from a narrow lane on to a narrow bridge, it would be impossible for one touring bus, let alone two, to accomplish the feat - hence the sight of two large highway coaches inching their way backwards for about a mile along a single-lane track, with no passing places. Our driver, Mark Bickley, whom I saw during my visit to Chester in October, has "fond" memories of that day !]

At a meeting of former chairmen of World Canals Conferences, held on board the Providence and Worcester Railroad, attended by **Bob Sparks** and **Bobbie Styran**, a four-year schedule for future World Canals Conference was established, with tentative dates for a further three years:

**1998** - Joliet, Illinois - week of September 14.

**1999** - Lille, France - to be confirmed.

**2000** - Rochester, N.Y. - early August.

**2001** - Dublin, Ireland - 9-11 May (The C.C.S. is planning a trip !)

**2002** - Lachine, Montreal - tentative.

**2003** - Scotland - tentative.

**2004** - St. Catharines, Ont. - late May/early June - tentative (see p. 9).

Hope to see you at some or all of these increasingly well-attended jamborees ! See Info Sheet and Questionnaire enclosed, regarding the I.W.A. Tour planned to coincide with next year's World Canals Conference in Joliet, Ill.

## P.S. to World Canals Conference in Rhode Island

**Bob Sparks** mentioned our visit to the re-developed city centre of Providence, Waterplace Park. But Bob was not present on the Friday evening, following the official ending of the Conference, when nearly a full bus-load of exhausted-but-still-enthusiastic conferees chartered a bus and spent the evening doing what the designers of the Park had intended: strolling around in the cool autumn breezes, or sitting on the riverside "furniture." There were proper benches, of course; but the steps leading down to the river, and all the balustrades, were broad enough to be sat on. The Park was planned to be a "People Place: — and there must have been at least a couple of thousand relaxed and happy individuals, from infants-in-arms to seniors hobbling about with the aid of canes and/or friends. Cushions, blankets, picnics — an inexpensive evening for those not wishing to spend more than necessary. The whole area is alive — music piped through the riverbank-side structures, vendors selling post-cards, T-shirts, various edibles, and boats on the river — from kayaks to gondolas, and every kind of small boat in between. [It seems a Venetian gondola was imported, and copies made, especially for the Park.] But the highlight on summer evenings is undoubtedly "Fire Water" — a series of 35 iron cages anchored in a half-mile stretch of the river bed, filled with logs and set ablaze. For anyone planning a visit to Providence, an evening at Waterplace Park is a **MUST**. And I can recommend the Union Station brew-pub — where most of our party (including the Irish contingent) spent the latter part of a most enjoyable outing. Put it on your list!

**Bobbie Styran**

## Recreational Lock Planned at Sault Ste. Marie

[**Editor's Note:** the following has been abridged from an article in *Canadian Civil Engineer*, the journal of the Canadian Society for Civil Engineers, for November 1997. I am grateful to C.C.S. member **Dave Cramm** for drawing this article, written by **Robert Laporte**, Program Manager, Heritage Canals and Engineering Works, RPS (CH/EC), PWGSC, Ontario Regional Office, to my attention.]

The management of the Canadian lock at the Soo, constructed by the Department of Railways and Canals between 1887 and 1895, was transferred to Parks Canada in the 1970s. Parks maintained commercial traffic, but also paid more attention to pleasure craft and land visitors, as well as the archaeology and historic preservation of the site. Unfortunately, in 1987 a wall section of the lock failed while a vessel was being locked through. Since then, the lock has been closed to navigation.

After lengthy discussions, in 1995 a cost-sharing agreement was signed between the Federal government, the Province of Ontario and the City of Sault Ste. Marie, to re-open the lock, based on the construction of a smaller lock inside the existing one, for recreational boaters and tour boats. Design and project management are being shared by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), Real Property Services for Canadian Heritage (RPS) and Environment Canada (CH/EC) in the Ontario region. In preparation for construction, a number of studies have taken place: these included a geotechnical investigation, a petrographic study, an hydraulic model study and a mechanical investigation. The new lock will be 77 x 15.4m with a minimum draft of 3m. The \$10.36 million construction contract has been awarded to Diamond Stonebridge Contracting of Beamsville, Ontario, under the direction of PWGSC, RPS, CH/EC and Stem Engineering of Sault Ste. Marie.

## Springfield Trip and A.G.M. — Saturday 24 May, 1997

The morning tour examined the four Welland Canals in downtown Welland, centred around the Main Street Bridge, East and West Main Streets in the immediate vicinity of the Bridge, and the Niagara Street and Welland River (Chippawa Creek) area. The Fourth Canal is no longer part of a functioning and navigable ship channel, but since the opening of the Welland Bypass in 1973 has become a recreational waterway.

On the west side, next to the River, grew up the earliest settlement, "Aqueduct", the name given to the collection of workers' shanties, barns, taverns, etc., established when the first aqueduct was constructed to carry the canal over the Welland River. The settlement grew and eventually was renamed Merrittsville in 1844, and the Village of Welland in 1852.

As each successive canal was widened and deepened, the location of the channel of the first three canals through this part of the community has been lost in the Fourth Canal. Also, the business centre eventually moved to the east side of the Canal and bridge crossing, especially with the building of the Welland County Court House in the 1850s.

Today, the wall of the Second Canal aqueduct on the east side remains, a marvellous example of the stonemasons' art of the 1840s. The aqueduct itself was filled in, but in the 1940s and 1950s was used as a swimming pool. The course of the Welland River had also been realigned to flow beneath the Fourth Canal at more of a direct line.

Members of the C.C.S. walked around and along both sides of the Canal, the Second and present aqueduct areas, and across the bridge, which has been retained as a reminder of the City's canal heritage. Commentary was provided by **John Burtniak**, supplemented by a handout with old pictures of the various canal features in that part of the City.

The tour moved south along the Canal to the site of the lock where the Feeder Canal entered the First Canal when it was extended to Port Colborne. The walls of the filled-in lock are now land-locked in a parkette. This area, known as the Junction, is only a small reminder of the significance of the Feeder in the Welland section of the early Canal.

Leaving the Feeder lock, the tour stopped at the Welland historical Museum, where the members were warmly greeted by the staff, and provided with an opportunity to view the Canal Exhibit. We were able to examine the visual interpretation of the four Canals through downtown Welland, thereby being able to clarify our understanding of the canal channel lines, and the associated aqueducts, bridges, and other related features. The tour then moved on to the Welland Club, an attractive "Arts and Crafts" style building located on the east side of the Fourth Canal, for a pleasant and satisfying lunch.

The afternoon was spent at Brock University, where the Annual Meeting dealt with the Society's business, highlighted by the launch of the Society's re-issue of Hugh G.J. *Aitken's The Welland Canal Company*. Members were gratifyingly pleased with the publication.

The remainder of the afternoon was spent in viewing slides taken by a number of our members who went on the UK '96 tour. This provided an opportunity to refresh memories of that tour, and bring to mind interesting events and sights, and humorous anecdotes. It also reminded those had gone on the tour of the great time they had had, and for those who had not been able to join that tour, how much they had missed.

**John Burtniak**

## The Chambly Canal Recognized as National Historic Site

On May 31, following the annual Conference of the Canadian Society for Civil Engineers, a commemorative plaque was unveiled, and permanently installed, at the Interpretation Centre of the Canal. The plaque was unveiled by **Mel Hossain**, president of the CSCE, **Alistair MacKenzie**, Chair of the History Committee of the CSCE, **Ed Groff**, President of the American Society of Civil Engineers, **Hélène Gagné**, representing Parks Canada, and **Pierre Labossière**, Chair of the Organizing Committee.

## Canadian Presence at Opening of Cornard Lock on the River Stour, England

Your Editor was pleased and honoured to be invited to attend the official Grand Opening of the Millennium Lock at Great Cornard, on Monday 29 September 1997. The original wooden lock at Great Cornard, near Sudbury, Suffolk, was constructed soon after the enabling Act of 1706, which empowered the Corporation of Sudbury to carry out navigation works, and appoint Commissioners to undertake the work. Despite the adverse effect of the coming of railways, navigation was maintained on the river well into the present century.

The River Stour Trust was set up in 1968 "to protect and enhance the right of the public to navigate the River Stour," one of the longest and most beautiful rivers in East Anglia — and one which has been immortalized in the paintings of John Constable. The Trust's headquarters are in the restored Granary of the Stour River Navigation Company at Sudbury, and it was there that the day's proceedings began. Invited guests were conveyed from The Granary by boat to the site of the lock, rebuilt with funds from the Millennium Commission. The ceremonies at the lock were opened by the current Chairman of the Trust, Mr. **A. Anthony Platt**, with speeches by **Sir Jocelyn Stevens**, Patron of The Trust and Chairman of English Heritage, and **Mr. Joseph James**, Senior Programme Manager for the Millennium Commission. A plaque commemorating the event was unveiled by **Mr. James** and Mr. **John Constable** (direct descendent of the artist). Mr. Constable addressed the gathering following lunch — in and around a marquee set up for the purpose. The official party, some in costume, locked through in a variety of boats, from canoe to steam-driven launch, after which a number of the assembled boats provided cruises from the Cornard lock to the original site of the next lock, at Henry, which marks the end of that particular navigable stretch.

The Trust has already restored Flatford and Dedham locks, the Flatford Barge Dock (in association with the National Trust), the Quay Basin, Gasworks Cut and The Granary at Sudbury, and an original River Stour Lighter (a wooden barge, the typical craft of the River Stour), as well as numerous landing stages along the length of the River.

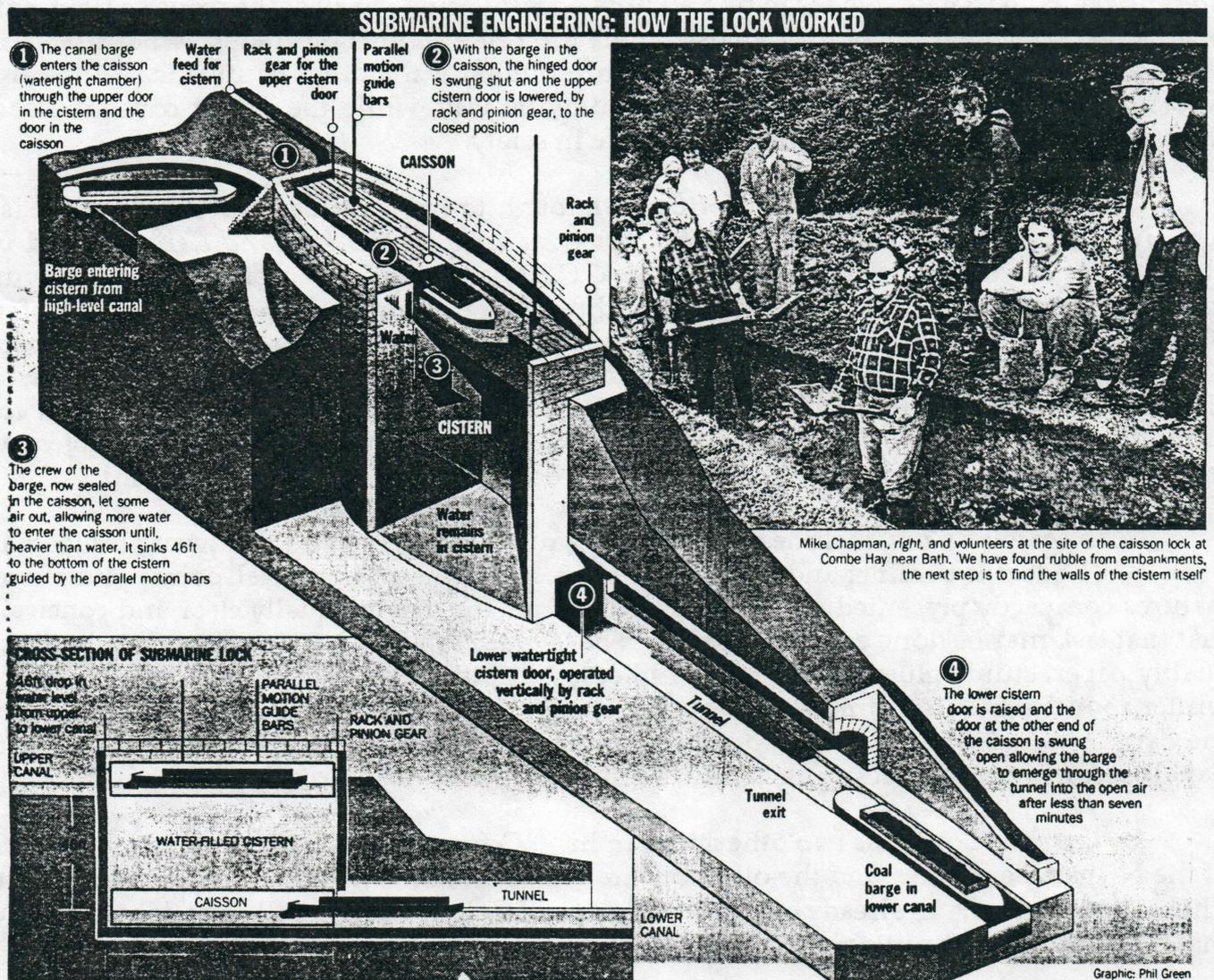
The day was sunny, if a trifle cool, the company was enthusiastic, and extremely proud of The Trust's accomplishment — all in all, a most enjoyable occasion, which I owe to **David Stevenson and his wife Janet**, who picked me up in Colchester in the morning, for the drive to Sudbury. David has long been associated with The River Stour Trust, and it remains close to his heart. After the day's events were over, David and Janet undertook to get me to a railway station for the next lap of my travels. But since David insisted on showing me other canal-related sights in the area, the day ended with Janet and I dropping him in a parking lot to walk to their boat, moored nearby, while she and I repaired to their home in Thringstone for the night! A long day, but a most enjoyable one.

**Bobbie Styran**

## A Unique Late-Eighteenth Century Lock Discovered

On 14 September 1997 the *Sunday Telegraph* carried a story about an archaeological excavation which revealed the caisson hydrostatic lock, now buried in a field in Somerset, but which was hailed as a scientific wonder when crowds cheered the "daredevil" barges which used the lock for a mere two years.

**Robert Weldon**, a noted engineer of the time, provided an easy, if somewhat terrifying, solution to the problem of costly delays while barges worked their way through a staircase of locks. The accompanying diagram, reproduced from the *Telegraph* explains how this unique lock worked. **Michael Chapman** who, as an historical landscape surveyor, has spent years studying the route of the Somerset Canal and this caisson lock, referred to it as "the space shuttle of its day." He noted that the principle upon which it worked was never tried again — perhaps because of spectacular accidents, such as when the parallel motion bars snapped, sending one end plunging to the bottom, almost killing the bargees inside. Of course, the Canal directors blamed poor workmanship and design, but it now appears that a layer of clay, which expands and contracts, underlay the lock. Be that as it may, by 1800 the lock was abandoned, and replaced by an inclined tramway, which in its turn was replaced by a long (and time-consuming) staircase of locks in 1806.



## Notice of Publications — To be Reviewed in the next issue of Canals Canada

**Jackson, John N.** *The Welland Canals and Their Communities: Engineering, Industrial and Urban Transformation* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997. 535 pages; illust.; bibliography; index; hard cover only. \$70 plus \$4 postage. Available from: Orders, University of Toronto Press, 5201 Dufferin Street, NORTH YORK, Ont., M3M 5T8.

**Lewis, William M.** *Aqueduct, Merrittsville and Welland: A History of the City of Welland — The Beginning years* Welland: A.M.W. Publications, 1997. ISBN 0-9682743-0-7. 143 pages; 50 illus. (including 30 plans and maps); bibliography; 9" x 6"; paper cover. \$11.95 plus \$3.50 postage. Available from: A.M.W. Publications, 25 Home St., Welland, ON L3C 2E8

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**Book Review: Colin K. Duquemin.** *The Driver's Guide to the Welland Canal*  
St. Catharines: Norman Enterprises, 1994. 26 pages; illust.; 9" x 6"; paper cover. \$8.00. Available from: Norman Enterprises, 56 Highland Avenue, ST. CATHARINES, Ont., L2R 4J1. ISBN 0-9698994-0-8

There are two ways to spend an enjoyable and worthwhile day touring the historic and present Welland Canals. One is to find a knowledgeable guide to sit at the driver's right hand, one who knows the route of the Canals and the important points of interest, what streets and roads to take to reach them, and one who can provide for the other occupants of the car an informative and entertaining commentary along the way, while the driver concentrates on the serious business of driving the whole route in safety.

The other way, for those not fortunate enough to have such an informed guide, is to pick up a copy of **Colin Duquemin's** *The Driver's Guide to the Welland Canal* to lead you along the route. **Colin** (a past president of the C.C.S.) has compiled a useful and concise guide to the Welland Canals. The passenger can direct the driver, from the four corners of the Niagara Peninsula (Fort Erie, Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, St. Catharines, Thorold, Welland and Port Colborne) as to what roads to take to reach the Canal, where the interesting sites are located along the Canal route, and where to pull over, stop, park, get out and look around, and to leave, all in safety. Also, where the amenities such as picnic tables, and facilities (washrooms!) are to be found, and then how to return to the starting point.

*The Driver's Guide* includes three maps, featuring Canal routes, roadways, bridges, and vessels. The text is succinct and clear, with all descriptions of historical points and current features compactly presented, and all instructions for the driver equally clear and concise, so that that task may be done easily and safely. The *Guide* itself is 9" x 6" in size, printed on good quality paper, sturdy glue-back binding, and easy to hold and to open. Perhaps the coming winter months are not prime Canal touring season, but come spring, it will be time to tour the Canal again. Now is the time to acquire a copy of Colin's *Guide* and be ready to open the Canal season yourself next spring, with *The Driver's Guide to the Welland Canals* in hand.

By the way, Colin has two other titles in his "Driver's Guide" series: one on Battlefields of the Niagara Peninsula, and the other on the Niagara Parkway, and both are worth having. Those of you who have already enjoyed using one of Colin's *Guides* will be delighted to know that there will be other titles in the future!

## Inland Waterways Association Plans North American Tour, September 1998

The I.W.A. group will fly to either Newark, N.J. or New York City on 1 September, and return to the U.K. from Chicago on 20 September. On 2 Sept. they will drive to their embarkation point on the Hudson River, and cruise up the Hudson. On 3 Sept. they will reach Troy, N.Y. Sept. 4-6 will be spent on the **Ermita II**, cruising the Erie to Brewerton, with stops for excursions. On 7 Sept. the group will board the **City of Syracuse**, to Baldswinville. Sept. 8-10 will again be on the **Ermita II**, continuing along the Erie to Buffalo. All overnight accommodation will be on land.

Sept. 11-16 will be an overland tour, visiting canal sites in Canada, Ohio and Indiana. This part of the itinerary has not yet been fixed in detail, but the Welland Canal Flight Locks are included. Other sites will probably include the National Park Canal Centre at Cleveland; the Deep Lock Quarry Metro Park where grindstones were quarried; Akron, Ohio, where there was a flight of locks, one of which has been restored; the Sandys & Beaver Canal, in a state park; Roscoe village and triple locks on main line of the Ohio & Erie Canal; Miami & Erie Canal, with a boat trip to Piqua; Dayton, Carilon Park; Cincinnati - whole day tour of this Ohio river port. Other sites will be included, and it is hoped to have guides from the local canal societies.

Sept. 16 the group will arrive at or near Chicago. Those planning to attend the World Canals Conference will be dropped at Joliet; the rest will proceed to Chicago.

Sept. 17-19: World Canals Conference, or at leisure in and around Chicago.

Sept. 20: depart from Chicago to the U.K.

Any Canadians wishing to join this tour are invited to do so, starting either on 2 Sept. for the full package, or on 11 Sept., with the option of attending the W.C.C. or not. Estimated cost would range from £1575 (approx. \$3780 Can.) + Conference registration + accommodation for those attending the Conference, or those not wanting to stay on in Chicago, to £1650 (approx. \$3960 Can.) for those staying for 3 nights in Chicago. These figures are per person, sharing a room — Single rooms proportionately higher. If joining the tour on 11 Sept., proportionately lower. If you are interested, please return the Questionnaire to:

Bobbie Styran  
35 Towering Hts., Apt. 509  
St. Catharines, Ont.  
L2T 3G8.

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### I.W.A. Tour September 1998

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Join Tour 2 Sept. \_\_\_\_\_ Attend W.C.C. \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Nights Chicago \_\_\_\_\_

Join Tour 11 Sept. \_\_\_\_\_ Attend W.C.C. \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Nights Chicago \_\_\_\_\_

**The Canadian Canal Society**

Executive Officers for 1997-98

Fast President	Norman Macdonald
President	Robert Sparks
Vice-President	Al Sykes
Secretary	Doris Bates
Treasurer	Carol Gaspard

Send correspondence for the Canadian Canal Society to:

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Canadian Canal Society  
P.O. Box 23016, Mid-Town Post Office  
124 Welland Avenue,  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
L2R 7P6

Contributions for Canals Canada to:

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

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Please enroll me as a member of the Canadian Canal Society  
I/We enclose my/our membership fee of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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Individual \$	10.00
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