

American Canal Society Canal Structure Inventory

CANAL Chesapeake and Ohio		STRUCTURE Paw Paw Tunnel	HAER CONDITION Good
STATE <u>Maryland</u> COUNTY <u>Allegany</u>		DESIGNER(S): <u>Charles B. Fisk, Chief Engineer</u> <u>Elwood Morris, Asst. Engineer</u> CONTRACTOR/BUILDER <u>Lee Montgomery (initial)</u>	
CITY/TOWN <u>Paw Paw</u>		SOURCE OF MATERIALS: <u>Locally made brick</u>	
STREET <u>Tunnel is 1 mi. N of Paw Paw, WV via MD</u> <u>51, then go 1/2 mi. E (downstream on canal towpath)</u>		DATES OF CONSTRUCTION START <u>1836 Holed thru</u> COMPLETION <u>1840</u>	
ASSOCIATED WATERWAY <u>Potomac River</u>		RESTORED <u>1960s</u> ABANDONED <u>1924</u>	
NAME OF 7.5 MIN USGS QUAD <u>PAW PAW 18020 4381690</u> Downstream (N) Portal <u>17.718228</u> Upstream (S) Portal <u>17.717969.4380770</u>			
<p>HISTORY & USE IN SERVICE; USE SINCE ABANDONMENT: The Paw Paw Tunnel is one of the major features of the canal, built as a bypass to some very difficult terrain along the Potomac River in Paw Paw Bends. The tunnel route takes about a mile, whereas the river route takes six. While the tunnel route involved cutting through solid rock, the MD shore contains some impressive cliffs coming right down to the river. To have followed the river would have required either crossing to WVA shore and back, hacking out a canal along those cliffs or damming the river at the lower end of the bend to form a slackwater and cutting a towpath along the cliffs or putting the towpath on the WVA side. The tunnel plan under the advocacy of newly appointed engineer Fisk won out. Even when work was well advanced, the board of directors contemplated abandonment of the tunnel in favor of a dam. Tunnel was restored in the 1960s by the National Park Service which administers the C&O Canal.</p> <p>DESCRIPTION (Visible remains at the site) The tunnel is 3118' long, with a 200' cut at the upstream end and a 890' cut at the downstream end. There were two sets of vertical shafts (two shafts per set) dug down to tunnel level and digging carried out along the tunnel line in each direction from there; six active digging faces. One set of shafts (one shaft of each set used for ventilation) was 122' below surface level and the other 188'. Vertical shafts were 8' in dia, with 23' between centers of each in a pair. Each pair located in a ravine overhead to shorten vertical distance. One pair about 370' in from downstream portal and the other about 900'. Presence today indicated inside the tunnel by dripping of water flowing down them and through the brick lining and also where weep holes in the brick walls at towpath level are closer together; and on the hill above by the still-visible scars. Digging of the tunnel was done by blasting out big pieces with (turn over</p> <p>OTHER WORKS OR EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH SITE: Downstream of the tunnel the towpath consists of a wooden boardwalk; there are interesting rock slides and rock formations to be seen in that area. Not far downstream are three lift locks associated with the tunnel. At the uppermost (Lock 66) are the remains of a canal carpenter shop where lock gates were made. Just below Lock 63 1/3 is an elaborate waste weir, similar to those used on the Erie Canal. Upstream of the tunnel is a section house and above there thousands of left over bricks from tunnel construction.</p> <p>PRESENT PROPERTY OWNERS: <u>Federal Government.</u> LOCATION OF DEED DESCRIPTION: <u>National Park Service & Archives of the U.S.</u></p> <p>A part of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, National Park Service.</p> <p>BIBLIOGRAPHY (Published, unpublished mss, maps, photographs): <u>Unassembled records are largely in the U.S. Archives. There is no one publication on the Paw Paw Tunnel, not does any one book have a good description. The above information was taken from TOWPATH GUIDE/(SECTION THREE)-FORT FREDERICK TO CUMBERLAND (HAHN), \$2.50, Box 842, Shepherdstown, WV 25443.</u></p> <p>AGENCIES, INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN PRESERVATION/RESTORATION: <u>National Park Service, Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Association; On the National Register. Canal and River Rights Council, American Society of Civil Engineers</u> Some HAER cards are made out.</p> <p>INVESTIGATION MADE BY: <u>Tom Hahn</u> DATE: <u>info submitted;</u> ADDRESS: <u>Box 842 Shepherdstown, WV 25443</u> <u>23 Nov 1975</u></p> <p>RETURN TO: ACS CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE C/O P.H.STOTT, HAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NEW YORK 10549</p>			

IF AT ALL FEASIBLE, A PHOTOGRAPH SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO THE REVERSE SIDE. A SKETCH MAP OF THE SITE IN RELATION TO SURROUNDING AREA WOULD ALSO HELP.