In the beginning the American Canal Society was an idea, a dream. We had just been incorporated as the Ohio and Ohio Canal National Historical Park for which mostly local people, and some too few canals people, worked to establish. We have for over a period of 17 years, first to protect that canal from destruction, then to ensure its preservation, and finally to carry out the restoration. The dream is now finished and it will take the time and energy of many to see that the job is done properly. During those years we learned that we needed a national canal society to represent the interests of all Americans concerning the preservation and restoration of the canals of the United States.

Earlier we had followed the undertakings of the Canal Information Service, the purpose of which was to collect and disseminate information about canals and canal organizations. The CIS was useful but its very nature left a gap, one which could not be filled by individual efforts.

In looking over the files of Bill Shank in York, Pennsylvania early last year, I realized that all sorts of canal people in many states were working on all sorts of things, few of which were known to those outside individual societies. Exceptions of course were joint ventures by the Canal Society of New York State and the Ohio Canal Society. Most of us don’t see the activities of other societies; don’t know of their field trips, and sort of grope around when it comes to finding and interpreting the buildings. So there was another gap waiting to be filled.

Later in the year I began corresponding with canal people and organizations abroad and discovered that there was little communication between a few enthusiastic individuals such as Bill Trout - another gap to be filled, this one on both a national and international level.

The idea began to jell in the formation of the American Canal Society, and was proposed to Bill Shank, who immediately endorsed the proposal, which was then discussed in detail during the meeting of Directors. It was the "official" founding of the ACS on 1 January 1972, with Tom Mahn as President, Bill Shank as Vice President, Secretary and Bill Trout as Vice President-Treasurer.

We appealed to each local canal society, knowing that without that support we could not and would not succeed. We returned to the Presidents of the major canal societies, asking them to represent their societies to us. Directors to help guide our direction, represent the organizations they serve, and share with their experience in canal matters. Others will be asked to serve on the Board of Directors at this time.

You the things in which ACS members have told us they are interested and concerned. These letters alone make the whole venture worthwhile. We do need information on canal publications; society outings, organization requirements, addresses, membership requirements, goals, etc.; clippings on canals from local newspapers; and reactions to our bulletin and our activities. We find that $4.00 per year is the minimum membership fee on which we can survive. We will honor our charter membership of $4.00 for 1972, with a closing date of 30 June, after which individual memberships will be $6.00. We will consider other types of memberships - family, organizations, etc., for 1973. Most important, we need your support.

The American Canal Society will be as strong as its individual members and the societies of which they may be a part. I am enthusiastic about the American Canal Society and am looking forward to working with all of you. I just hope that you share my enthusiasm.

TOM MAHN

Bulletin Name?

We are considering names for the American Canal Society Bulletin. We would not want to duplicate a bulletin name already used by local or state canal societies. We suggest that it be related to canals, possibly with an American flavor. If any member has a brilliant idea for a name, please send it to Bill Shank, 806 Rathdon Road, York, Pa. 17403.

ENGINEER-ARTIST PORTRAYS LIFE ON CANALS

Probably the most prolific and authentic canal illustrator of the Twentieth Century is Philip J. Hoffman of Johnstown, Pa. A retired professional engineer, he insists upon technical accuracy in his work, and yet his full-color drawings of life on the canals a century ago have all the whimsy and charm of children's fairy-tale books. "Canals, Pennsy" by William V. Wallace and "Bronte Navigations" by J. H. Shank (1965) are profusely illustrated with Hoffman drawings, as is also "Canal Currents", bulletin of the Penna. Canal Society.
CONGRATULATIONS AND ADVICE FROM ENGLAND

Inland Waterways Association Limited

John A. C. Humphries, Esq., MA, Chairman, Inland Waterways Association: "How very kind of your Society to make me a charter member. It is indeed a great honor and I will report to the I.W.A. Council when we meet on Saturday. I see that John Dodwell, our General Secretary, has found you a rare find. I assume that you will and I can assure you that we watch with great interest the development of your Society. I would be most interested sometime to see a complete listing of all the canals in the States and I believe there were originally a great many more. I am glad you have the plans of these and certainly I will see that they are sent to you. If any of your members are coming over to this country to look at our waterways here, I do hope you will get in touch with us. We have our major rally on the Bridgewater Canal early in August and would be delighted to see any of you who are here at that time. With every good wish."

John Dodwell, Esq., ACA, General Secretary, The Inland Waterways Association: "When the Inland Waterways Association was formed in the United Kingdom in 1946, many people prophesied that we would have a short life and achieve nothing. Now, after 26 years, we are able to look back with some satisfaction. Whilst by no means all our policies have been achieved, some of them have and some have now been adopted by the Government as official policy. We are now beginning to persuade Authorities of the merit of inland waterways for transport. We do not have the far-sighted Government that you do!"

"No doubt in the history of the American Canal Society, difficulties will be met and must be overcome. No obstacle must be too great, no talk too difficult. You must try, by means of publications, meetings, television appearances, to convince the American public and their Government of the merit of your cause.

"In this country, we find that authorities hope that if they ignore groups of determined and clear-headed people for long enough, they will weary of the fight and give up. We have not given up and we have triumphed. Do you likewise?"

We have corresponded with the Inland Waterways Association and have been receiving their very informative bulletin, temporarily on a quarterly basis. By the time the next issue of the ACS Bulletin appears, we will have worked out membership rates and/or the price to receive their bulletin.

British Waterways Board

Sir Frank Price, D.L., F.S.A., M.Inst.T., Chairman, British Waterways Board: "I am delighted to have this opportunity of contributing to the first issue of the new magazine being promoted by the American Canal Society, of which I have had the honor to be invited to become a member.

"The canals of Great Britain are now up to some 200 years old. Having been constructed at the start of the Industrial Revolution, they contributed to the growth of this nation in uncertain terms - they were the motorways of the 18th Century."

"However, time, the railways and the motor car have changed the role of a good deal of the canal network in Britain. This is not to say that the wider canals and river navigations, as we call them here, no longer fulfill a useful role in the national transport scene. Indeed, with the advent of Britain's entry into the Common Market the British Waterways Board have pioneered new systems on their commercial waterways, such as the push-tow investment which is so designed as to be capable of taking barges of the size presently being constructed for LASH and BACAT type development.

"On the other side of the coin, there has been a tremendous upsurge in the use of our canals for cruising, fishing and other leisure purposes in recent years. This the Board continues to encourage through their specially established Amenity Services Division.

"We see an increasing number of visitors from all over the world taking advantage of the annual holidays on the Board's Waterways. I am convinced that the newly established American Canal Society, with all the possibilities it presents, particularly in the exchange of information of mutual interest, will play an increasingly important part in the years ahead in the continuance of the use of the canals of various countries throughout the world, both for business and leisure."

Miss Sheila Doeg, Editor, Waterway News: "I do wish you every success with your Spring Bulletin and I hope you get as much support and enthusiasm as the American Canal Society as British Waterways Board are getting at the moment from Waterways people from all over the country."

"Waterways News" is the monthly staff newspaper of the British Waterways Board. It is distributed also to outside canal authorities. The price to ACS subscribers is 50p. We have been receiving the "Waterways News" and have had a lively correspondence with its Editor, Sheila Doeg, discussing the possibilities of a British waterways publication. Personal checks may be sent to: The Press and Publicity Office, British Waterways Board, Melbury House, Melbury Terrace, London, N.W.1, England.

English Canal Vacation

ACS member Tom Sewell of Surrey, England, writes: "Our activities in the south of England range from getting the Kennet and Avon Canal Association reopened to keeping alive the possibility of reopening the Wey and Arun Canal (connecting London with the English Channel, very useful against Napoleon) which runs through our farm."

Mr. Sewell wonders if any ACS members would like to see a British and other usual canal vacation in Britain next summer. He has a pair of traditional canal narrow boats - a motor cruiser (40 ft) with which he has carefully restored and repainted in the livery of the former Grand Union Canal Carrying Company, which is letting them out to visitors for cruises on the Grand Union Canal. They can be hired either singly, or as a pair, and are suitable for maintenance, or even for children. He has engaged a young master who is himself a canal boat owner and knows all the history of the canals as a steersman (his cousins are included in the hire charge), with the aim of making the vacation particularly suited for overseas visitors who want to sample the canals for the first time. He is based on the picturesque Little Venice area of the Regents Canal near one of the London hotels. There are all sorts of combinations of rates per night or week for the narrow boat "PROBO" and barge "PHOBOS" alone or "ARA" alone (towed by "PROBO") with other party aboard. Rates vary from around £2.00 to £4.50 per person per night. Light provisions around £125 to £195 per week for 6 - 8 passengers. Details, in an attractive brochure, can be obtained from T. J. Sewell, East Whitley Farm, Stanway Green, Surrey, England.

Railway and Canal Historical Society

We have corresponded with the Railway and Canal Historical Society, who are members of this fine organization, which is primarily interested in the historical development of railways and canals in Britain. Membership in the RCHS for ACS members is: Surface mail, £5.30 including £7.90 for the monthly Bulletin and the quarterly Journal. Members checks should be sent to: Mr. J. Broadhurst, 5 Tewin Close, Harlow, St. Albans, Herts., England.

Please note that for the convenience of ACS members, personal checks in U.S. dollars may be sent to such organization.
The James River Canal, later called the James River and Kanawha Canal when the enterprise became more ambitious, was a project of Virginia’s attorney general, William Valley, to divert the James River to Richmond. At Richmond a short canal bypassed some dangerous falls at Westham (now known as Deep Bottom) and another canal led into downtown Richmond to a large turning basin at the foot of Capitol Hill. Because the canal at Westham was navigable with a bargeload of legislators in December 1819, it was the first canal system in the country. By 1830 the riverbed improvements had been extended to more than 220 miles westward to the center of Virginia, and beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains to Buchanan. In 1820 the navigation became a state enterprise, and the canal was extended to Fort Mchenry, 30 miles above Richmond. By 1838, the Blue Ridge Canal was seven miles long, around the James River’s falls, and the mountains was complete, as well as the Kanawha Turnpike (now U.S. 60) from Covington to Huntington, 100 miles long, two miles of river improvements for flax, horses and steamboats on the Kanawha River from Charleston to the Ohio. At an early date, the company’s works connected the Atlantic seaboard with the Mississippi valley. In 1835 the company was again reorganized, and became the James River and Kanawha Company. By 1840 the canal had been extended again, to take horse-drawn boats, and extended to Lynchburg, 164 miles above Richmond, involving 52 locks, each with a long flight of five stone locks and a ship lock, called the Tidewater Connection, was completed in 1852, with Richmond and Kanawha Basin with tidewater. By 1851 a look-and-dam system with 11 dams and 32 locks extended the canal 50 miles westward to its final terminus at Buchanan. A further 15-mile extension, with two tunnels, was begun in 1853, but it was never completed. There were several branches of the canal: the North River Canal, the New Kanawha Canal, the Kanawha River Navigation, and the Tuckahoe Creek Navigation near Richmond.

The JKK Canal was never extended across the Alleghenies to the Kanawha River, although negotiations (following a plan for a nine-mile tunnel) were being made up to the moment of the canal’s demise. All this work, badly begun, was abandoned in 1853, when the State and by floods, the company was in fact helping to build the Buchanan and Mchinton Railroad Company, which built the new railroad line (the Old Railway, 1857, which at first it sold the canal to and the Richmond and Allegheny Railroad Company, which built the railroad line (the Old Railway Line of the Canal) on the towpath in 1851; so after serving a last function of delivering railway ties to its own towpath, the James River and Kanawha Canal died.

Today the only part of the canal with water is a nine-mile stretch near Richmond; but in spite of the railway on its towpath, about 36 of the 101 locks are still in good condition, as are eight aqueducts and a number of dams. Most of these works can be seen from the comfort of an open-top railway car, on the usual October “Rutland Line Special” of the Old Dominion Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (FO Box 138, Richmond, Va. 23226) — tickets should be obtained in advance to ensure a seat. One lock in the mountains has been restored by the National Park Service at Batavia. A book, next to the James River under the Blue Ridge Parkway. A 32-page illustrated booklet on the canal’s restoration is available from the American Canal Company, 515 15th St., Ft. Meade, Md. 20355, 135 pages. (For those who like economic history, the 251-page History of the James River and Kanawha Company by V. F. Dunaway (1922) has been reprinted at $12.70 ppd. by ASH Press, Inc., 36 E. 13th St., N. Y. N. Y. 10003. Riverside Park in Lynchburg has the cooperating shores of the boat-hatch Marshall, and people of the river city hope to build a dry-dock facility to the packet-boat Marshall and the boat city would be helpful: (City Manager, Lynchburg, Va. 24505).

The present canal situation in Richmond is at once encouraging and ominous. Work has already begun on James River, which is supposed to eventually include most of the nine miles of still-watered canal. The planned Virginia Science Museum may embrace some of this section; we hope it will include a transportation museum as proposed by the Old Dominion Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. The city planners want also to restore the rest of the canal in the city, but the Richmond Dock, the level formed by the Great Ship Lock, 10 blocks long, is slated to become a “temporary” storm sewage retention basin (a plan now delayed for a year, because of the need to fill the basin with water for the turning basin, and the first three of the five Tidewater Connection locks are threatened by the Dominion Expressway and commercial development. The two locks missing by the expressway, locks 4 & 5, are owned by Reynolds Metals, which has begun to restore them. In spite of this help the complete restoration of the canal through the city is problematic. Encouragement would be welcome, but the Main-to-James Citizens Advisory Council 217 Governor Street, Richmond, Va. 23219. You might want to write us and visit the canal in Richmond while it is still there.

ACS TAKES ACTION ON J.R.K.C. SEWAGE BASIN

On 11 November 1972, the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission voted to recommend approval of the proposed Chickahominy Creek combined Water and Sewer Retention Basin, a 30-million-gallon retention basin for sewage and conditioned storm water in the Great Ship Lock of the James River and Kanawha Canal between 17th and 26th Streets downtown Richmond.

Subsequently, President John Hahn of the American Canal Society protested that the action was to be taken, and stated the Richmond is one of the most populated cities in the United States, and a loss of service would have an ultimate consequence. However, the Commission for its plans for the canal, and in reply on 15 January, the Acting Chief of Regional Planning stated that the Commission "...has no definite plans regarding the canal at this time" and that they had not voted to recommend approval of the project after weighing the need for the facility against possible adverse effects on the area.

In February we learned that because of strong opposition, the plan has been delayed for a year. Though this is no time to rest on our laurels, more work needs to be done during the year to ensure that the James River and Kanawha Canal in downtown Richmond is not used as a public cesspool, this is a good example of what an involved public can do through vigorous action to prevent an environmentally-unsound act which would not be in the public interest.
CANAL PUBLICATIONS

The history of the Santee Canal. A reprint of the scarce history of the Santee Canal by Cooper, F. A. (1972). The original text, the two foldout maps and new appendix and foreword. The map reproduction is limited to a new print but can be ordered. Paperback, 245 pages, Sandlapper Book Store, P. O. Box 1468, Columbia, S. C. Price $1.00 + $.50 mailing charge.

Historic Urban Plans, Box 276, Ithaca, N. Y. 14850, published quite extensively but not including reproductions of early maps for libraries and framing. Their catalog illustrating all of their 2000 historical maps (most recent and books on few print show canals, as in Cleveland, 1835), Louisville (1832), proposed canals, Ottawa (1856) and Lowell (1832).

According to the December newsletter of the Society for Historical Archaeology, Dr. John Hales, of the National Historic Sites Service (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 100 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G5), has acquired a collection of 1000 Canadian canals. Two projects on the Rideau Canal are also underway, a social history by Melody Morrison and a cooperative history by Keith Brown, both of the Historic Sites Service. We hope to have specific information on Dr. Hales’s book in our next bulletin and perhaps more information on the other two studies.

Indiana Students Buy W. & E. Canal Site

Students in Indiana have supported their interest in state history with action by purchasing a ten-acre tract of land for a canal site. The woodlot site, along the Wabash and Erie Canal, which contains some of the few remaining evidences of the Wabash and Erie Canal, was purchased by statewide committee of young persons representing 180 junior high and high school chapters of the Indiana Junior Historical Society.

Archaeological Work on Potomac Canal

Archaeological work on the Potomac Canal is ongoing. Dr. W. M. Gardner and students of the Catholic University of America are conducting historical research on the Potomac Canal, following the tradition of the Village of Matildaville at Great Falls, Virginia. This spring, preparatory to an archaeological investigation, there will be great interest in the area as work progresses. In the middle of March, or as soon as the weather permits, there will be major excavation efforts on the canal. There is an opportunity to engage in this work, and we encourage you to contact the organizers for more information.

ANCIENT ORDERs are now being taken for an authentic Pennsylvania Boat Model. Not a kit, it is a completely assembled unit being produced in limited quantities and is both a kit and also in ceramic. Built to a scale of 3/16 to the foot, Hudson-Pennsylvania Canal Boat colors, ready for your mantel or bookshelf. Prices: $25 for wood-finish ceramic; $26.50 in buah. Shipped in a sturdy, protective carton. Address inquiries to: Samuel L. Haldane, 201 South Plankton Road, York, Pa. 17403.

UPCOMING CANAL TOURS

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Association will hold its annual business meeting on Thursday, April 28, at 27 and 28 April. The business meeting will be in or near Williamsport, Maryland, on 27 April. The annual meeting will be held on Saturday, the 28th, between Williamsport and Frederickstown, Park, a distance of 13 miles. Canal bike rides for the conference are planned. The bike route are Lock 44 and Conococheague Aqueduct, two old mules, Feeder Dam No. 5, "Two Locks" (Locks 45 and 46), the pier of a mill corporation, "Locks 2" (Locks 47, 48, 49, and 50), McCleary Ferry, old restored Pt. Frederick, and one of the most important canal areas in America, along the Potomac River. The Williamsport C & O Canal Club is sponsoring this year’s Upcoming Canal Tours, the annual meeting that the NAHS will hold. The conference will be held at the Williamsport Museum in Williamsport, Maryland. The conference will start at 9:00 AM and will continue until 4:00 PM. The conference will include a tour of the Potomac Canal and a visit to the Potomac Canal Museum. The conference will also include a special session on the history of the Potomac Canal and its impact on the local economy.

Robert J. Sculler, Editor of the "Townpath Project," of the New Jersey Canal Society, has written a great account of the CSNJ Canadian trip last year, with beautiful photos of the work. The highest point in the borough, plus many other canal photos in Canada and upper New York State. Bob’s address is 297 2nd Avenue, East Peterston, N. J. 07307. He may have extra copies.

The American Canal Center, 7535 Will St., Pla, Meads, Md. 20775 (not associated with the ACS) is beginning to build up its list of canal publications, though it is quite modest at this time. Books available are
e. R. Aspinwall and J. Aspinwall: "The C&O Canal, Section 1, Georgetown to Seneca; The Townpath Guide to the C&O Canal, Section 2, Seneca to Frederick" (1972). The Townpath Guide to the C&O Canal, Section 3, Harper Ferry to Pot. Frederick (All three sections are $2.25 each; sections subject to change after 1 May). The guides were written by LeRoy Walker (C&O Canal) Tom Bahn. The book that was just mentioned and the following book will be finished in 1972.) "The Amazing Pennsylvania Canals" by Pennsylvania Canal Society Canal Currents' Editor, Bill Shaffer. For further information, write to The West - The story of the old James River and Kanawha Canal. Price 75¢. The Gates (section 1, Wabash Canal) "The Ohio Canal" 75¢ (subject to change); Inland Waterways Guide, 1972. (England) Price $7.50 (subject to change); The Ferry Mill Plantation Journal. "Life on a plantation on the C&O Canal in 1838-39" Price $3.00. Complete descriptions on request. All prices include postage.

Snow-Dumping Pollutes Erie Barge Canal

ACS member Gerald Abendschein of Waterport, New York reports the dumping of snow in the Erie Canal Canal, polluting it with salt, oil, debris, etc. "Canals are not civic dumps. If something isn't done very soon our New York State Barge Canal is going to become not only a big sewer, but soon the big sewer is going to get plugged up and then some one of us will have to clean the canals around and up and make more highways." He reports that the city of Albion dumps snow and the canal is badly polluted in several other areas.

Woods Doing Canal P.B. Wells in Ohio

Perry K. Woods, 2145 Clarence Ave., N.W., Canton, Ohio 44706, is rapidly becoming one of the best canal public agents in the Canal Society of Ohio. He reports that the Ohio State President of the LSOSO and Associate Editor of "Townpaths" (the OSO Bulletin), Terry Woods publishes a column in various Ohio newspapers under the heading "Canals Comments." He is also a frequent contributor to "Canal Currents" the Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Canal Society.
Nineteenth-Century Inland Navigations of the Virginias