

AMERICAN CANALS

BULLETIN OF
THE AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN NUMBER 61

Editorial Address — 809 Rathton Road, York, Pa. 17403

MAY 1987

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our international meeting with the Canadian Canal Society was a great success. Thanks to Bill Shank's detailed planning, the hard work of our coordinators Keith Kroon and John Burtniak, and the cooperation of Mother Nature. We all had a great time meeting people we knew only from the pages of canal bulletins, exploring canals by bus and boat, and continuing time-honored traditions begun by the Canadians at our first international meeting two years ago. The Erie Canal Museum, Erie Canal Village, the Oswego Canal locks, the Lock III Restaurant, and the Golden Eagles String Band gave us a multi-sensory experience which we can all recommend to canalers making a pilgrimage to the great Erie Canal.

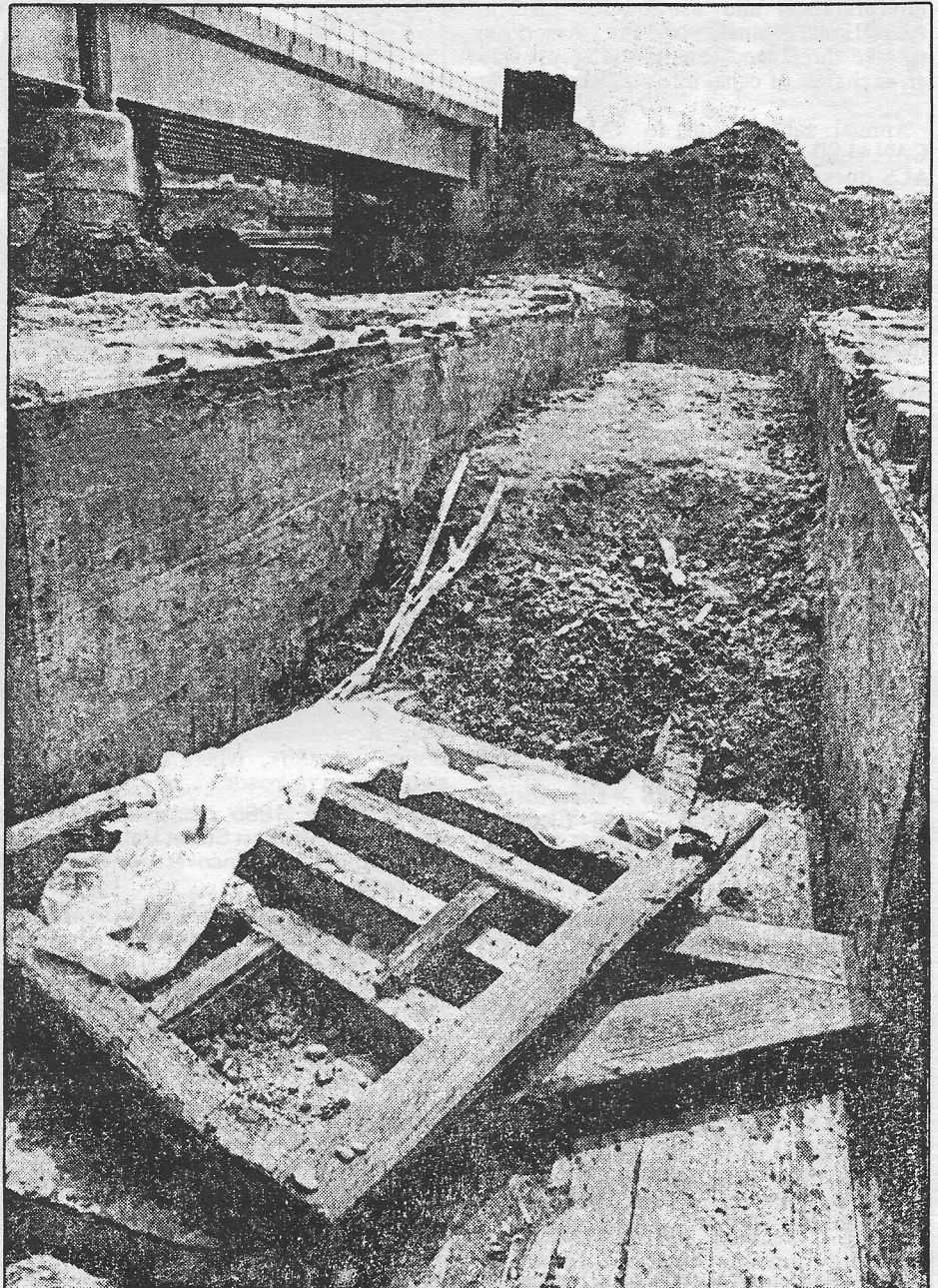
Incidentally, Dr. Bill Hullfish's Golden Eagles String Band has put out a one-hour videotape of canal songs, which would be exciting to show at canal meetings. Would someone like to work up a list for ACS of some of the other videotapes, films, and slide-tape shows of interest to canal buffs, and to manage the loan (and retrieval) of those available from ACS? Don't forget, we have two of ACS Director Roger Squires' slide-tape shows, and two British Waterways Board movie films, all from England. We'd like to see them put to more use, and to let everyone know of other available shows, but we'll need some help.

Terry Woods, Chairman of the Canal Index Committee, has brought the Canal Index, one of the society's major long-term projects, to the point where it can be made available to canal libraries for research purposes. At the Syracuse meeting we took the opportunity to present a set to the Canadian Canal Society, and to the Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse. Thanks to the work of VP Bill Gerber, we have enough sets for the Canal Society of Ohio's archives in Akron, the Canal Museum in Easton, and ACS committees. So don't neglect the Canal Index when you do your research work, or you'll miss an important information resource.

The Canal Index is an ongoing project with a goal of completing an information (index) sheet on every one of the North American navigation canals, creating for the first time a canal data base for the

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PENNA. CANAL LOCKS UNEARTHED



Joyce Mendelsohn / Post-Gazette

Jack McCandless of Pittsburgh recently sent us the following article written by Susan Mannella, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Staff Writer, and published in that newspaper June 1, 1987:

A portion of the Pennsylvania Canal

unearthed on the North Side is oldest, largest archaeological find here since the excavation of Fort Pitt, according to a scientist who examined the site during the past week.

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American Canals

BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

"DEDICATED TO HISTORIC CANAL RESEARCH, PRESERVATION AND PARKS"

AMERICAN CANALS is issued quarterly by the American Canal Society, Incorporated. Objectives of the Society are to encourage the preservation, restoration, interpretation and use of the historic navigational canals of the Americas; to save threatened canals; and to provide an exchange of canal information.

Annual subscription to "AMERICAN CANALS" is automatic with a minimum ACS dues payment of \$12.00. Individual copies may be purchased at \$3.00.

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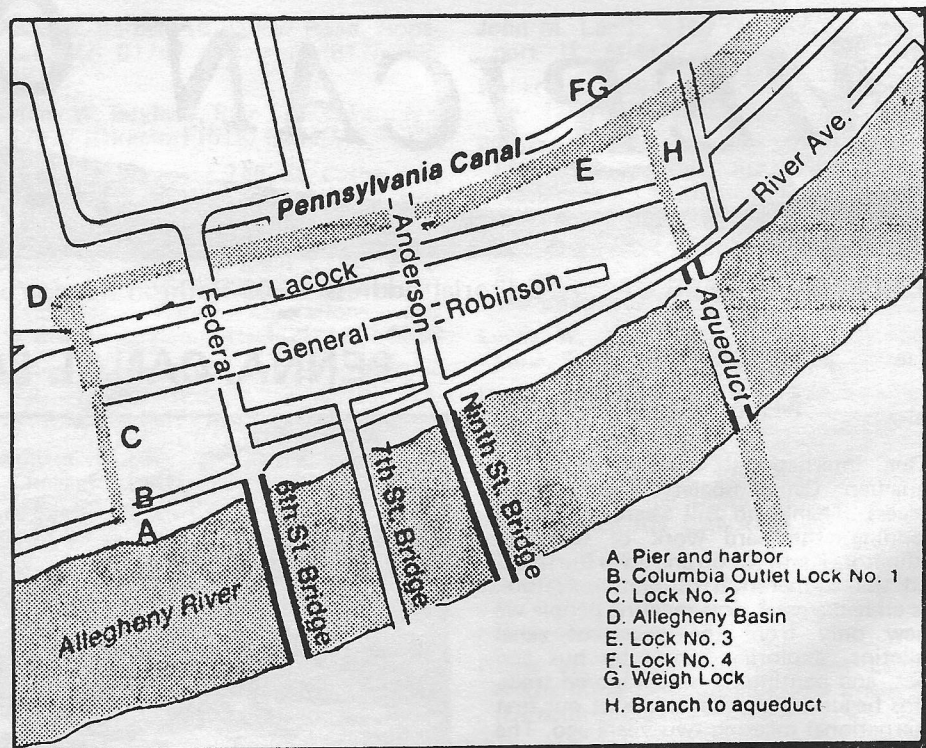
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A.C.S. President Bill Trout has recently formed an Engineering Design committee and asked Terry K. Woods of Canton, Ohio to Chair it. A tentative "Charter" for the committee has been prepared and a search is underway for committee members. Anyone wishing to help us out should contact Terry at their earliest convenience.

PENNA. CANAL LOCKS UNEARTHED



C. Tigano Gianella/Post-Gazette

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While archaeologists are impressed with the good condition of the canal's weigh station and locks — which had been sealed under 25 feet of dirt and railroad tracks — they said yesterday that they are worried about how much of the huge structure will be preserved.

The canal, a cross-state network waterways that was used to transport commodities, was completed in 1828 but abandoned in 1861, when shipments were switched to railroads.

In October 1985, construction crews working on the East Street Valley Expressway project first uncovered a portion of the canal.

Last month, archaeologists from GAI Consultants Inc. of Monroeville excavated a large portion of the canal, exposing the wooden beams and flooring of two of the locks, as well as 25-foot-high planking and giant sandstone blocks that make up the sides of the structure.

One of the lock's gates lies on the site, almost perfectly preserved, as are the floors and sides of the structures.

GAI has been working with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, doing archaeological work at construction sites on the expressway.

James Pecora, project manager for the East Street project, said PennDOT has been paying for consultants \$4,400 a day for the past few weeks to unearth the canal and to document and photograph its features.

James B. Richardson III, chairman of the division of anthropology at The Carnegie Museum of Natural History, and

Ronald C. Carlisle, an assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh and a member of the state Historic Preservation Board, said yesterday that they believe PennDOT also should pay for the removal of historically significant parts of the canal.

Carlisle, who called the site the largest find since the excavation of Fort Pitt, said it is of substantial historical interest.

Pecora said yesterday that PennDOT's consultants will remove some of the stonework in the canal and possibly a sample of the block work. Those items will be turned over to the City of Pittsburgh, he said, but the rest of the canal will simply be recorded.

Once that is finished, the site will be dug out to a level about 7 feet below the canal.

Pecora said PennDOT is required by law to notify archaeologists when they uncover anything that has historic significance, and has complied.

But, he said, there is a limit to how much PennDOT can do.

If a historical society or university wants to pay for removal of large portions of the canal, he said, it is possible that construction work on that part of the North Side could be delayed "if it was a reasonable amount of time — a month or so."

Richardson said he is not arguing that the entire site should be recovered, but he believes some parts should be dismantled and maintained until a history center to house them can built.

"What we're trying to do is just ensure that PennDOT will financially preserve part of the removal," Richardson said at the site yesterday. "You just don't hide a canal."

AMERICANS AND CANADIANS HOLD JOINT MEETING

Perfect weather was provided for us the week-end of May 15-17 when the American Canal Society and Canadian Canal Society met in Syracuse, New York, for a combined tour and meeting.

It was the Fifteenth Anniversary of the founding of the American Canal Society and the Fifth Anniversary for the Canadian Canal Society.

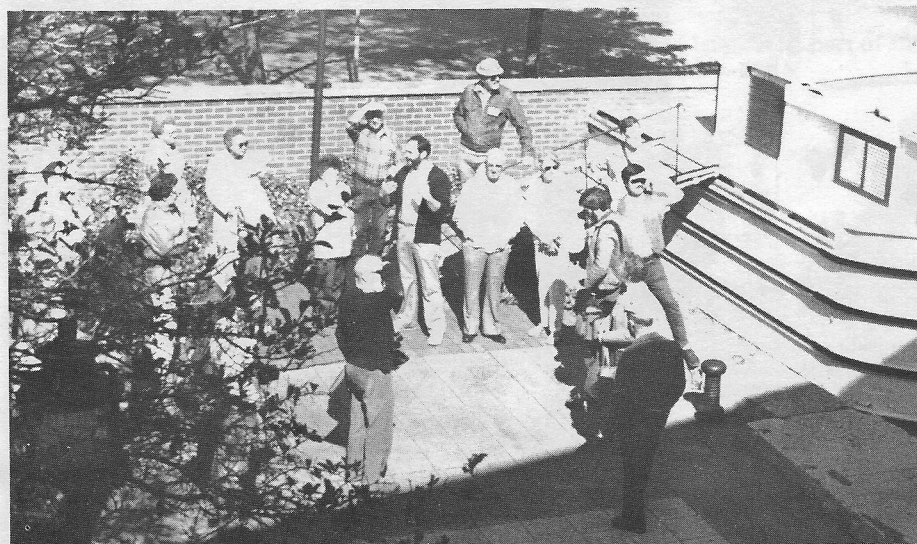
The Wine and Cheese Party on Friday evening was attended by most of the registrants; the rest joined us for the Saturday activities. The Friday program included remarks by both Bill Trout, President of the American Canal Society and Bill MacLean, President of the Canadian Canal Society. Bill Shank concluded the evening with a slide show of canal and river trips he had made in USA, Canada and Europe. Canal memorabilia and books were on display.



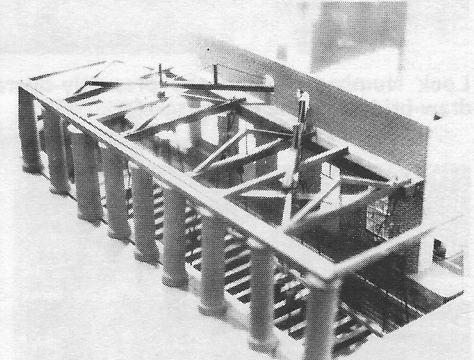
One of the groups assembles for a photo at the entrance to the Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse. Guide – Debbie Stack.



We inspect "Mud-Lock", a well-preserved relic of the Old Oswego Canal, on the north outskirts of Syracuse. Keith Kroon, ACS Tour Chairman, left center of the bridge.



One of the CCS-ACS groups inspects a canal boat replica at the Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse. Guide – Don Wilson.



A model of the weighlock mechanism, where whole canal boats and their cargos were "put on the scales".

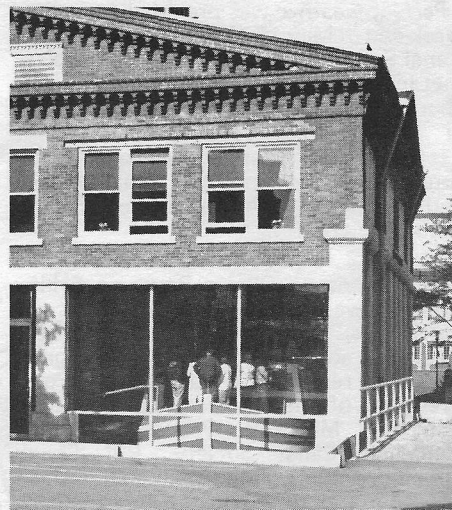
After breakfast at the Ramada Saturday morning, the group boarded two buses and made their first stop at the Canal Museum in downtown Syracuse. Here Debbie Stack, Public Relations Director for the Museum and Don Wilson, Museum Curator, took charge of the group and guided them through the various exhibits at the Museum, including the new full-scale Erie Canal Boat, built into the Weigh-Lock. ACS Vice President Bill Gerber presented the Museum staff with a multipage volume of detailed canal-index sheets for the USA and Canada which had been worked up over the past ten years by the ACS Canal Indexing Committee. The buses then moved on to "Mud Lock" on the old Oswego Canal, and next to Lock Number One on the currently operating Oswego Canal at Phoenix, New York. Our lunch stop was made at the Lock Three Restaurant in Fulton, where we watched a number of boats "locking through" while enjoying our buffet lunch. We visited several additional locks on the Canal, before arriving at the H.L. White Maritime Museum in Oswego, New York, located on a jetty extending out into Lake Ontario. Rosemary Nesbitt, the Museum Director, was our guide.

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AMERICAN – CANADIAN JOINT MEETING



Lock Number One on the presently-operating Oswego Canal presents an array of draw-bridges to the water-traveler.



The Erie Canal Weighlock Building, showing part of our group touring full-scale canal boat, built into the old weighlock chamber.

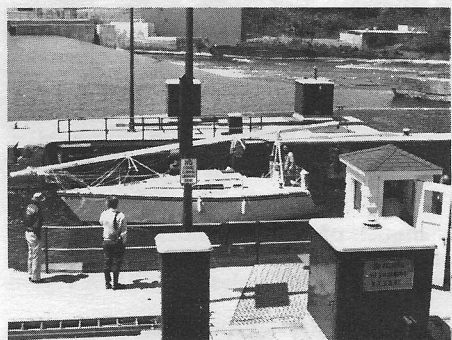
an English Lockkeeper who was visiting the USA courtesy of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust.

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Back at the Ramada in North Syracuse, the Canadian Canal Society had a brief business meeting, while the ACS members enjoyed a "Happy Hour". Our evening banquet was served on time, and we enjoyed a full hour of canal music by Dr. Bill Hullfish and his "Golden Eagles String Band" – also a fine talk on the "Erie Canal, Past and Present" by Don Wilson of the Erie Canal Museum. A definite "plus" for the evening was a slide talk on restoration work being done on the British Canals by Jonathan M. Morris,

Sunday morning, after an excellent buffet breakfast at the Ramada, the ACS-CCS groups again boarded their buses for a visit to the Rome, New York area. Enroute, we were treated to a running lecture by Howard Card, a local canal buff, as we traveled for nearly thirty miles along the "Old Erie Canal".

Arriving in the Erie Canal Village, we first rode the "Independence" mule-drawn canal boat, which took us along a short stretch of the "Old Erie" and then a narrow-gauge steam train, interspersed with visits to a fine canal museum, as well



A small boat leaves a Lock on the Oswego Canal, bound upstream. Note the dam and power house.



Robert Legget, author of several books on the Canadian Canals (left) visits with Louis Cahill, American Canal Society Director for Canada. Lock Number One on the Oswego Canal in the background.



Interior of the H. L. White Maritime Museum at Oswego. Lecturing to our group (left center), Rosemary Nesbitt, Museum Director.



Our group rides the "Independence", a mule-drawn canal boat replica on a restored section of the "Old Erie". The mule-team may be seen on the towpath at the far right.

as a carriage museum, livery stable, blacksmith shop, weaving craft house, old church and school house, amongst other historic displays.

After a light lunch at the Village "snack bar" we headed for Fort Stanwix, in downtown Rome, built by the British in 1758. This Fort was rebuilt by the Americans in 1776 and withstood a 21-day siege by the British in 1777. The

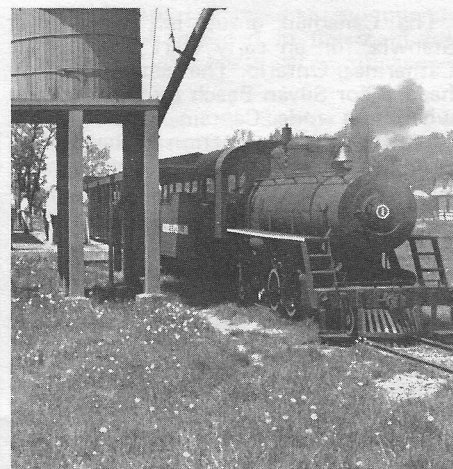
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On the top deck of the "Independence" at Erie Canal Village, as we ply our leisurely way along the "Old Erie".



At Silvan Beach, we rode Captain Gradel's small "Canal Cruise" boat along part of the present Erie Canal and out into Lake Oneida.



A narrow-gauge steam train took the ACS-CSS group on a four-mile ride along the Rome and Ft. Bull Railroad at Erie Canal Village.



Captain John Gradel gives his passengers a running commentary while traveling along the present Erie Canal, near Lake Oneida. There were about twenty of us still with the tour at this point.



Dr. Bill Hullfish (Author of "Canallers Songbook") entertained us Saturday evening, with his "Golden Eagles String Band". The group played and sang a number of old canal ballads for us.

ACS-CCS MEETING



During our visit to the Erie Canal Museum, the American Canal Society Canal Index File was presented to officials of the Museum. Left to right: Debbie Stack and Don Wilson of the Museum Staff accept the Index from Bill Gerber, ACS Vice President and Bill Trout, ACS President.

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Fort has now been restored to its original condition and is being operated by the National Park Service.

The Canadian group left us at Fort Stanwix for an early start back to St. Catharines, Ontario. The remaining group headed for Silvan Beach on Oneida Lake where we rode Captain John Gradel's canal boat, along a portion of the modern Erie Canal and out into the Lake, amidst a huge crowd of Sunday tourists and boaters enjoying the first nice week-end in May.

In charge of the bus tours was Keith Kroon of Rochester, New York. Responsible for the "contacts" with all the Canadians involved was John Burtiak of Thorold, Ontario. We had extremely good cooperation from the staff of the Ramada, the bus company, the Canal Museum and all the other agencies along the way — a most successful week-end!



Several small boats bound downstream in one of the high-lift locks on the south outskirts of Oswego.

The Curious Incident of the Canal in the Night-Time

By Bill Trout

(Celebrating the Centennial of "A Canal in Bohemia," with apologies to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle)

Flashlock Holmes leaned back in his favorite arm-chair, his dressing gown, once mouse-colored, a little faded now in his retirement years, one Persian slipper dangling from his foot, the other dangling full of tobacco. The long narrow room reeked of stale pipe smoke and the sharp tang of freshly exploded gunpowder. On the wall a patriotic "ER" was neatly stitched in bullet holes. "We must keep up with the times, eh, Watford?" commented Holmes, carefully stowing away his Uzzi. Once again, over the sound of silently munched toast could be heard the buzzing of bees on the SOUTH DOWNS and the waves of the canal gently lapping against the hull.

"There was no canal in the night-time, Watford." Holmes suddenly remarked, with a glint in his eye. "That was the curious incident!"

"You are uncanny, Holmes!" I ejaculated pawkily, startled out of my brown study. "I was, indeed, thinking about our canal adventures. But how you could tell, amazes me as usual!"

"It's only a matter of observation, Watford," said Holmes, chuckling quietly. "When I saw your attention wander from the British Waterways Board pin-up calendar to the Inland Waterways Association's Silver Sword with which I pin down my correspondence, and finally to the wet carpet, I knew from your worried expression that you were concerned that none of our canal adventures were ever published."

"Many of our cases involved canals," I agreed, watching water oozing in through the bullet holes. "It could hardly have been otherwise, Holmes, since canals are such notorious receptacles for stolen goods and unwanted bodies. As you rightly remarked, 'These are very deep waters!'"

"It was a case of jealousy, Watford, pure and simple," sighed Holmes. "That arch-fiend Professor Moriarty feared our canal adventures would overshadow his own serious works. Was he not the author of 'The Dynamics of a Canal,' a trifling monograph which reached such rarefied heights of pure mathematics that it would have influenced the development of the great inland waterways of the world, if anyone had been capable of understanding it? Why else did his cunning agents remove all mention of canals from your manuscripts and even alter our names? It has resulted in a most exasperating mutilation of the facts, as a result of which your reports have lost their full effectiveness as object-lessons in the science of criminocanal deduction."

"Fortunately, I still have copies of the original manuscripts in my battered tin dispatch-case, Holmes. After the Professor's nefarious literary agents tried to batter it open, I put it safely away deep in the vaults of Cox & Co, and in 'The Veiled Lodger' I warned them not to try to break in again."

"As I recall, Watford, you threatened to reveal to the world the secret of the politician, the lock-house and the trained cormorant. What Mr. Sherman's diving cormorant recovered from the bottom of the Limehouse Cut would have ruined Moriarty's political aspirations. Come to think of it, we could have used that diving cormorant the other day when we lost our windlass."

"Yet it was the company of Ward, Lock which finally published the first of my stories, Holmes. Perhaps they were amused by your first name. But it is beyond coincidence that no mention of canals ever saw print, except for the Suez in passing, especially when the Regent's Canal is only a short distance north of our Baker Street lodgings. Why, your narrow boat on the Paddington Arm, with the remarkable aluminum cratch, was one of your secret refuges in the heart of London!"

"Exactly, Watford! And our most memorable canal adventure, which you called 'A Canal in Bohemia,' was completely altered in the printing. Moriarty changed the story entirely, calling it 'A Scandal in Bohemia,' although he kept the original title, only adding two letters. Now only we and Moriarty know the truth about our adventure on the

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Detsky Island Canal in Prague, aboard King Wilhelm's delightful pleasure yacht. To me, she was always The Woman, Watford! By the simple uses of a smoke-bomb, we saved the IRENE ADLER from the clutches of the King and removed her to America, where as the AUNT POLLY she was an ideal base for my operations while disguised as William Gillette."

"Holmes, Moriarty even changed the Anderton Lift into a nonsensical hydraulic press, just to avoid mentioning the Trent and Mersey Canal in the adventure of 'The Engineer's Thumb.' In fact, after losing his thumb, and nearly his life, our friend Mr. Hatherley abandoned hydraulics altogether and was responsible for changing the lift to electric operation in 1906."

"And don't forget, Watford, the disappearance of the late Mr. Faversham, who entered Dudley Tunnel in the ELECTRA and was never again seen in this world."

"It's all in my battered tin dispatch-box, Holmes. But even that doesn't have the whole truth about your lost years, when everyone thought you were dead."

"With good reason, Watford," agreed Holmes, "since I never did entirely recover from my amnesia. After Moriarty and I fell into the Reichenbach Falls, I must have floated down the Aare to the Rhine, and one thing led to another, for when my memory returned I found myself Captain of the peniche HEAD LLAMA, on the Canal du Midi in the south of France, going under the name of Sigerson. Art in the blood can take the strangest forms! I immediately checked my trouser-knees, shirt-cuffs, finger-nails, shoe-laces, callosities and so on, and learned to my utter amazement that I had traveled widely in Tibet, Mecca, Persia, Upper Egypt and possibly Chicago. I can hardly recall any case in which the circumstances were more peculiar."

"I recorded your recollections in 'The Adventure of the Tired Captain,' I observed, "but being a canal story it was never published. And neither was the time you were disguised as Chocolate Charlie while searching for the Arga treasure in the murky waters of the Grand Union Canal!"

"Speaking of murky waters, Watford, it has just come to my attention that my excess of patriotic zeal has resulted in a definite increase in the water level on the SUSSEX DOWNS. If you could hand me a lump of beeswax, I shall attempt to stop up the bullet-holes. And a little exercise at the bilge-pump would not go amiss."

Jonathan Leiby of Woods Hole, Massachusetts has just become the sixtieth LIFE MEMBER of the American Canal Society. It is our plan to issue a complete roster of this elite group, which will be published in a future issue of AMERICAN CANALS.

New Canal Stamp



Jim Paisley, Blake Sugarberg, Victoria Hart and Bill Gerber have all called my attention to a new canal boat stamp (facsimile shown above) which was issued in Buffalo, New York on April 11, 1987. (Jim Paisley was kind enough to send me a first day of issue envelope.) The new stamp was designed by William H. Bond of Arlington, Virginia. The last such stamp to be issued was the Erie Canal Stamp of 1967, commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Erie Canal. *(Editor)*

Thanks to all the good offices of Bill Gerber, sets of the A.C.S. Canal Index Sheets have been presented to the Officers of the Canal Museums at Syracuse New York and Easton Pennsylvania. In addition, a set will be sent to the Director of Archives at the University of Akron where a Canals of Ohio History Collection is housed. We want to thank Bill and all the members of the Indexing Committee who have worked so hard the last year and a half to make a reality of this sharing of our knowledge. We hope that A.C.S. members and users of this Index will continue to work to make it grow and be even more important.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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continent. At this point, Terry would like to pass the Canal Index Committee chairmanship on to someone else, so he can start an Engineering Design Committee. The job of the Canal Index Committee Chairman is to encourage regional experts to complete our coverage.

It is a pleasure to announce that your society now has four new Directors: Dave Barber of Hopedale, Massachusetts; Frederica Kleist, of the Portage Canal Society in Portage, Wisconsin; Keith Kroon, our Sales Officer, from Rochester, New York; and Dr. Brian Kutner from Millville, New Jersey. They are all long-time active members of the American Canal Society whose continued advice and support will be much valued. Congratulations!
Bill Trout

PORTAGE CANAL RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Portage Canal Hiking Trail received some national recognition on May 7th, by officially becoming part of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

The National Park Service certified a 14 mile stretch of the trail from the Wisconsin River highway 33 bridge in Portage to John Muir Park in Marquette County, including the Portage Canal Hiking Trail, as a section of the "Terminal Moraine Route" of the Ice Age Trail.

A group of residents from Sauk, Columbia and Marquette counties have been working since 1985 to have the local trail included in the Ice Age Trail System. Under the direction of Henry Reuss, the group formed the Heritage Ice Age Trail Council.

The organization originally proposed, that the Park Service designate the trail through Portage as a "connecting trail" to the Ice Age Trail. Connecting trails are shorter trails branching off from the main trail.

A National Park Service representative visited Portage last year and recommended the trail be included in the main trail, because of the historical significance of the area.

The National Park Service agreed with the recommendation and the trail has now been certified as a main section of the Ice Age Trail.

The Heritage Ice Age Council is planning a formal dedication of the trail in the fall, after proposed improvements of the canal and adjacent hiking trail are completed.

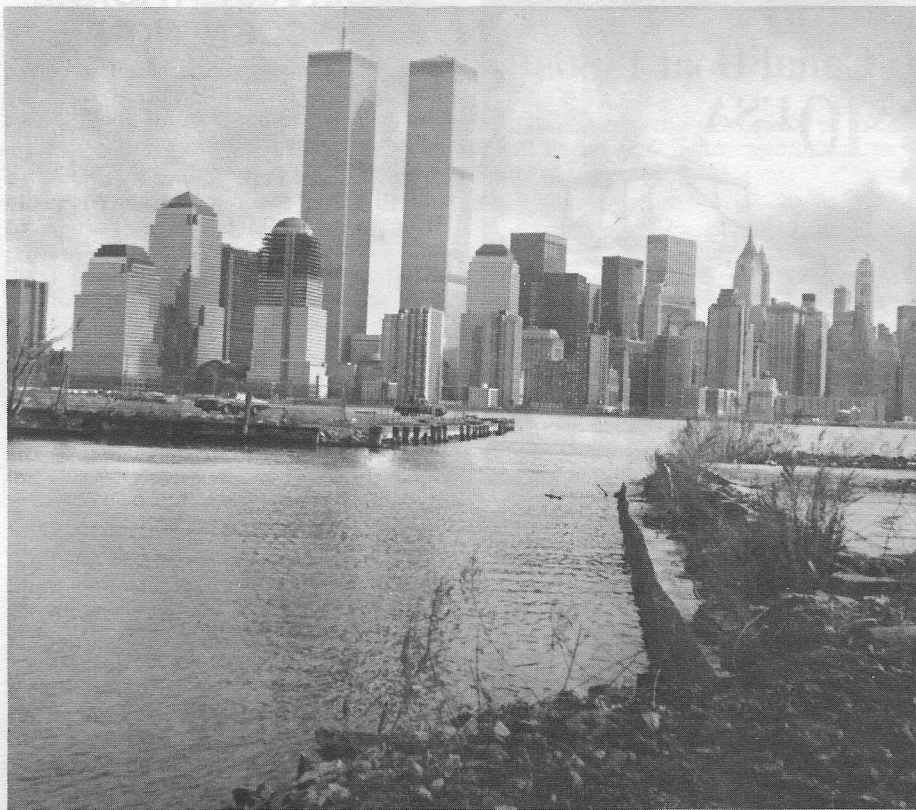
The Ice Age Trail is managed by the National Park Service, Department of Natural Resources, private parties and volunteers.

Further work on the Portage Canal consists of finishing the walkway along the second block of the canal, re-enforcing the banks in that area, repairing lock gate number one on the Wisconsin River and completing the hiking trail. August 15th is the target date for completion of this phase.
Frederica Kleist

J. HAYWOOD MADDEN

As we go to press we have received the sad news that one of our long-time canal stalwarts — J. Hayward Madden — has succumbed to cancer and kidney complications on June 6th, 1987. He is survived by his widow, Emily. Hayward and Emily have developed one of the most complete private canal libraries in the United States. We have often referred to them for information in our various publications. Hayward was a Director of the American Canal Society, a Director of the Canadian Canal Society, a Director of the Pennsylvania Canal Society and also held membership in a number of other canal-related organizations. He will be sorely missed!

MEMORIES OF THE MORRIS CANAL



The Morris Canal Basin survives in 1987, and sits in the shadow of the World Trade Center. Over the years there have been attempts to fill it in. Following the end of navigation in 1924 it became a marina. Note retaining wall of the basin on extreme right. Location of the outlet gates was probably where the water of the basin joins the Hudson River. (Bruce Russell photo)

By Bruce J. Russell

Much has been written in recent years about New Jersey's gone but not forgotten Morris Canal, that 100 mile ditch stretching from the shores of the lordly Hudson to the banks of the swift flowing Delaware, carrying coal and other assorted commodities across mostly wilderness and rural terrain. Built during a time of rapid growth in the early years of the 19th Century, and using as its model both the Erie Canal in New York State as well as the English canals dating back to the 1700s, the Morris Canal was a profitable undertaking for about 60 years until railroads got a foothold in the business of transporting anthracite coal and other items from the northeastern quadrant of Pennsylvania to tidewater. From then on it was a slow but steady decline, with fewer and fewer boatloads passing through the locks each year. The canal died a slow death, and instead of going out with a bang it ceased functioning in 1924 with barely a whimper.

Few in New Jersey gave much thought to the passing from the scene of this method of transportation which pre-dated the railroads. Here and there people told jokes about the old canal and its employees. Joseph A. Mulligan, now retired but a man who spent his boyhood in Jersey City, recalls seeing the canal winding its

way through the less fashionable parts of town. He muses about how people in more fortunate circumstances looked down on the "canalers" and made cruel jokes about them. Little wonder that when operations ceased there was no time lost in filling in those portions which ran through built up areas so that stagnant water wouldn't sit and become a breeding ground for insects. The fear of diseases was a real incentive to fill in the old Morris as soon as practical. Likewise the possibility that a child would get hurt playing on the remains of a lock chamber or on an aqueduct, with the chance of a lawsuit acted as a prod to get rid of it. Once away from the populated and industrialized portions of the state the urgency wasn't so great, and more of the canal was spared demolition.

Unfortunately for posterity in 1924 the United States was still a youthful nation, and emphasis was always on forging ahead with new and better things and casting aside the old. Furthermore Calvin Coolidge was president, and his slogan was "the business of America is business." The catch word was progress. The name of the game was not to look back into the past but to plunge ahead. Sadly it would take another two generations before Americans would rediscover the picturesque old canal that meandered across the northern reaches of New Jersey and gained elevation using quaint inclined planes with diminutive railroad cars on broad gauge

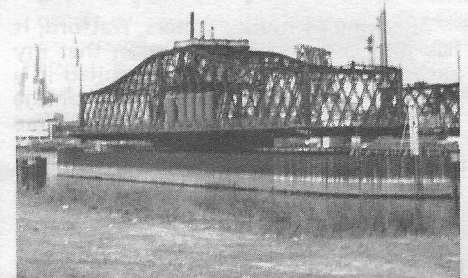
tracks, complete with cribs for holding the boats.

As canal buff BILL McKELVEY once quipped. "It would have been easy to have just taken one small but representative stretch of the Morris Canal complete with a set of locks and an inclined plane and put a chain around it and say "don't disturb — historical site for the benefit of future generations." Unfortunately in the Roaring Twenties people didn't think along these terms, so nothing was done to preserve even a tiny piece of what was probably an engineering wonder of its time.

Exploration Party

Last year four New Jersey canal enthusiasts and industrial archeologists — Bruce Russell, George Meyer, Frank "Sam" Mentone, and John "Boots" Barth decided to traverse the route of the Morris to satisfy our curiosity regarding what can still be seen 60 years after abandonment. In effect an unorganized, loosely structured field trip. Luckily Sam had done some preliminary scouting and using maps and other historical materials was able to locate some of the more obvious bits and pieces of the waterway. As a general rule, the more built up the area in terms of population, commerce, industry, etc. the less likelihood of finding anything. Conversely the more remote and undeveloped the terrain the greater the possibility of stumbling upon important artifacts.

Beginning at the Jersey City waterfront along the Hudson River opposite lower Manhattan Island much of the old Morris Canal Basin is still intact, its crude sandstone walls crumbling away little by little. No trace exists of the outlet gates which permitted the hinged, two section boats to be towed across the river to New York City, but clear evidence of the entrance passage leading from the canal proper into the basin can be seen. The basin was a large area dug out of the side of the riverbank where the loaded coal boats



A view of the 1890 era Jackson Street Bridge connecting Newark's Ironbound neighborhood with Harrison on the opposite side of the Passaic River. Its approach span crossed the Morris Canal. The Newark skyline is in the rear. (Bruce Russell photo)

waited to be towed to Manhattan where their cargoes were unloaded, usually by men with strong backs, and where the empty vessels were kept until they began the trek back across northern New Jersey to Phillipsburg on the Delaware River where another load of "Black Diamonds" was taken on board and the process repeated all over again. After regular usage of the canal ended the basin was converted into a marina of sorts (more for houseboats than the pleasure craft of the rich and famous) and remained so until quite recently. In 1987 it sits on the northern periphery of Liberty State Park. When the mostly Irish laborers built it in the 1830s no one would ever think that a structure the size of the World Trade Center would cast a shadow over it as it does today during late afternoon. Sadly no historical markers identify it as the Morris Canal Basin.

From the site of this Basin in Jersey City it is virtually impossible to find any remains of the Morris Canal, although its path can be identified and the roads that occupy it can be walked or driven over by automobiles. Once you reach Newark the trail again heats up. The Jackson Street swing bridge, about one mile east of the downtown central business district, connecting the Ironbound section with the town of Harrison across the Passaic River, gives witness to the old waterway. Raymond Boulevard, sits in the filled in canal bed and passes directly beneath the approach to this 1890 vintage, steam propelled bridge. Now permanently closed. Where Raymond Blvd. takes a sharp and very noticeable dip beneath the approach is where the canal boatmen once cried "low bridge everybody down". In 1987 the tops of trucks are still getting sheared off. Perhaps the spirit of some long dead canaler is still restless.

"What Was It Like?"

As I looked at this historical spot my imagination drifted back to what it might have been like to be standing here about 1905, with the Jackson Street Bridge in place and a canal boat passing beneath, pulled by two mules. This section of Newark, now a Portugese enclave, is one of the oldest parts of the city, and it is quite likely that the route was lined with canal oriented saloons, not to mention stables and watering stations for the animals. Streetcars passed over the bridge going from Newark to Harrison and vice versa. Let's face it, if you're a guy or a gal with a vivid "fantasy life" you can visualize the past the way it might have been.

The Morris Canal bisected downtown Newark using the alignment of what is now Raymond Blvd., passing beneath Broad Street where there was a long underpass. By walking along this stretch it's possible to get a feel of the canal. Where Raymond Blvd. begins its ascent up a steep incline from Washington St. to the upper reaches of the city this is where one of the planes and inclined railways was situated. Nothing remains of it, but the topography indicates that the long and gentle ascent/descent predates



On the extreme western end of the Morris Canal Basin can be seen remnants of a sandstone wall, no doubt going back to the 1840s. The concrete barrier was erected sometime after 1924 when the canal west of the basin was filled in. Nevertheless it denotes the exact spot where the 100 mile waterway officially began. (Russell photo)

the present roadway. At the summit of of Raymond Blvd. is Lock Street, so called because this was where there was a set of locks preceding the descent down the plane. Rule number one for an aspiring canal archeologist: When you spot a name like "Plane Street" or "Lock Street," always suspect an old canal. It may be filled in, but it was once there.

To be continued

TENN-TOM LOCKAGE

MOBILE, ALA. — The Army Corps of Engineers says now that it has public boat launching ramps in each pool of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway it will go to scheduled lockages during weekends and Federal holidays for small boats using the waterway for local travel. The scheduled lockages will go into effect May 16.

Commercial and pleasure craft transiting the waterway and weekday lockages will not be affected. Gainesville Lock will remain unscheduled.

The Corps said it was putting scheduled lock operations into effect to enable it to better regulate pool levels which are affected by individual lockages and to insure safer and more efficient operation of the locks.

The Corps said it now has a total of 29 free public ramps on the waterway with three more to be opened by the summer and additional ones planned as recreation increases.

"SPIRIT OF THE FOX"

The downtown Menasha marina will be the new home of the Spirit of the Fox excursion boat, formerly known as the Belle of the Fremont.

The debut of the riverboat will coincide with the May 16 opening of the marina and the Fox River Fest.

The renamed and refurbished boat will be housed on the west side of the marina. Cruises will be taken along the Fox River through the Menasha locks to Little Butte des Morts, to Stoebe Island and back to the marina port.

The Spirit of the Fox will offer dinner cruises and Saturday night entertainment. The riverboat will be available for group excursions, weddings, class reunions, business meetings, employee outings and school field trips.

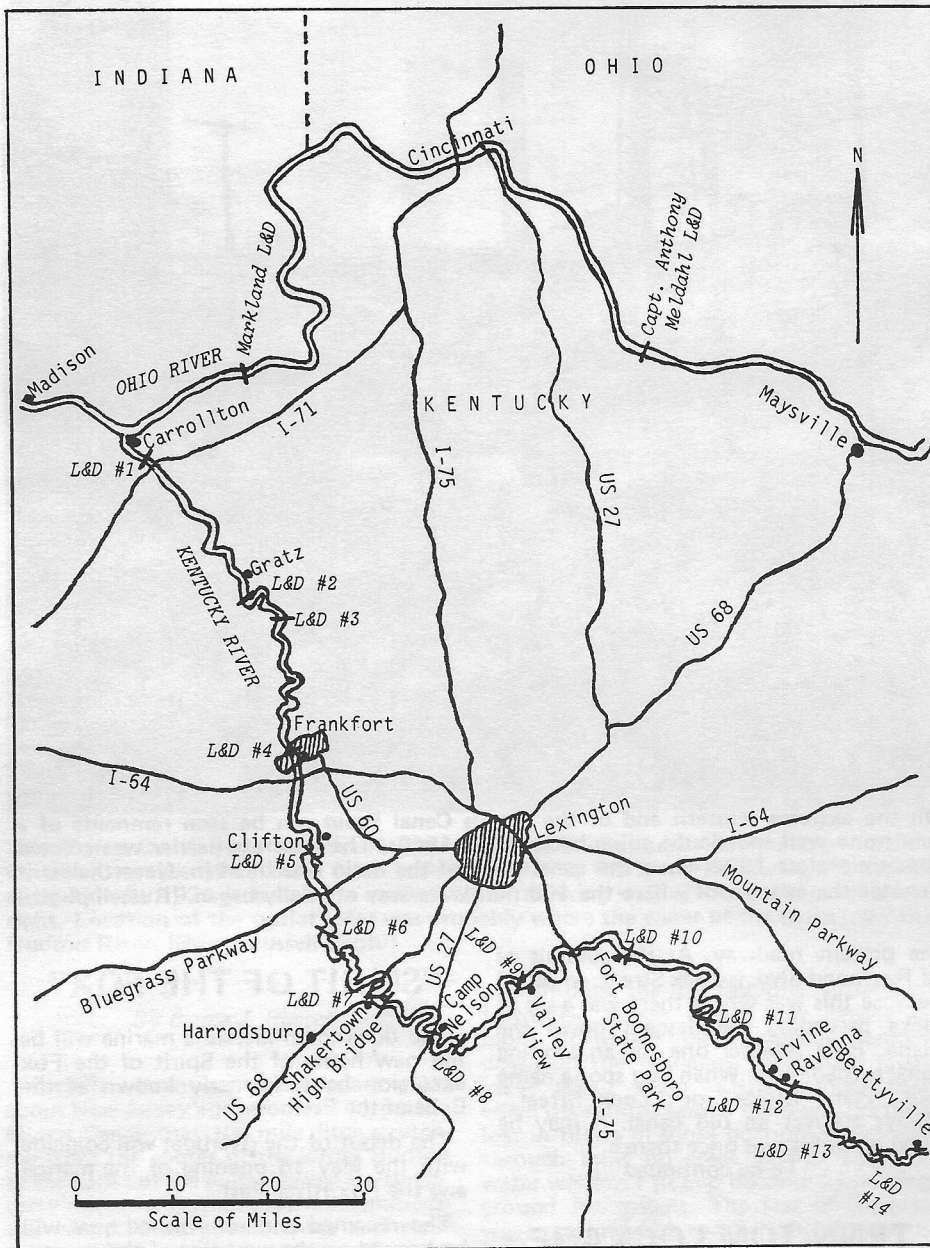
To be offered is a sightseeing cruise where locking through Menasha Locks will be a daily feature.

Menasha is in the center of a large population base and has good access to the Fox River and Lake Winnebago.

Even if one or more of the Fox Locks were to close, Menasha would still be a good port, because there is access to Lake Winnebago.

A Good Place to visit. Bring your boats and enjoy the sights and Waterway.
Frederica Kleist

LAST CHANCE FOR THE KENTUCKY!



By David S. Ross

The summer of 1987 may be your last chance to navigate the Kentucky River, the longest obsolete waterway still operating in the United States. If it is not your last chance, it will be because enough people like you took advantage of this opportunity to convince the Commonwealth of Kentucky that the river should be kept open as a tourist facility. Either way, therefore, boaters should make a special effort to include the Kentucky in their 1987 travel plans.

Besides being the longest in miles from source to mouth, the Kentucky may have the record for length of time in operation after becoming obsolete. Other waterways have been obsolete since their inception — for example, the Illinois and Mississippi ("Hennepin") and the Wabash and Erie

canals — but they were eventually abandoned and, being human artifacts, tended to disappear with the ravages of time and the economics of land use. A canalized river, when it has become an embarrassing monument to human folly, is not so readily swept under the rug. Instead, a blend of hopes and special interests is spun into a gossamer yarn, of which imaginative projections of costs and benefits can be woven to justify a few more years of operating and maintenance expense. The Kentucky was probably the major source of cargo for the Ohio and Mississippi river system beginning in 1787, when James Wilkinson (later famous as an alleged co-conspirator of Aaron Burr) negotiated a private treaty with the Spanish authorities at New Orleans, allowing duty-free passage to his shipments of Kentucky produce. Steamboats took to the Kentucky shortly after their introduction on the Ohio in 1811. In 1816, the first steamboat built

on the Kentucky began its maiden voyage from Hickman Creek (135 miles above the mouth of the Kentucky) to New Orleans. By 1819, however, steamboat technology had advanced to the point where long hauls were economically feasible only for vessels too large to navigate the Kentucky River. This was the beginning of the obsolescence of the Kentucky, an agonizingly extended process which has continued down to the present time.

In an effort to arrest the process of obsolescence, the state undertook the canalization of the river in 1836. By the time the first five locks and dams were completed, in 1842, the state's financial capacity was exhausted. This project provided slack-water navigation on the lower 95 miles of the river. Ninety-five miles of year-round slack-water navigation is no mean feat: even today, the Allegheny, Kanawha, and Muskingum rivers are navigable only for lesser distances. It was, however, well short of the plan that had been outlined by the State Engineer in 1836 for a continuous waterway 255 miles to the source of the Kentucky and thence via South Fork, Goose Creek, the Cumberland River, Yellow Creek, Powell's River, the Clinch River, the Tennessee River, the Hiwassee River, and the Savannah River, with connecting canals including a tunnel through Cumberland Gap, to Savannah, Georgia and the Atlantic Ocean. The project was also small in relation to the steamboats of its time, with lock dimensions of 38 by 145 feet. It was used as a feeder for Ohio River shipping for a few years, but the development of highways and railroads soon usurped that function. Wartime destruction and lack of maintenance during the Civil War accelerated the obsolescence process and brought it, by the war's end, to apparent completion.

The federal government, however, in the heady years of the congressional log-rolling era, came to the rescue. Beginning in 1880, it restored the original five locks and dams and, pacing its work to a schedule of miserly annual appropriations, completed nine more by 1917. The entire 255 miles of the Kentucky River, from its mouth at Carrollton on the Ohio to its source at Beattyville in the Appalachian Mountains, was now navigable — but only for the kind of shipping that had been in use a century before. Instead of the hoped-for coal, the only commercially significant product which flowed down the river from the Beattyville area was hardwood logs, for which the locks and dams were merely an obstacle.

For the next sixty-five years, a combination of bureaucratic inertia and Kentucky politicking kept the system in operation, albeit with waning enthusiasm on the part of the Corps of Engineers. A study undertaken in 1940 advised that continued operation and maintenance could not be justified. Another, in 1961, reaffirmed this finding, with the qualification that a benefit-to-cost ratio greater than unity might be attained if the benefits of

recreational use were included in the calculation. By the 1970s, hours had been reduced and the upper locks were closed during the winter months. Throughout this time, maintenance was kept to a minimum. Finally, with the beginning of the Reagan budgets, the axe fell. In October of 1981, locks 5 through 14 were welded shut, with the expectation that they would remain in "caretaker status" until disposed of. Protests of this action resulted in the reopening of locks 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10 for a fifteen-week period during the boating season of 1982, but at the end of that time they were rewelded, and for the next two years no lockage was available above lock 4 at Frankfort. At this point, the state government began to take the situation seriously.

An agreement was eventually worked out for a three-year trial period, during which the Corps of Engineers would retain ownership of the locks while the state would provide for their operation. At the end of the trial period, if the Corps had not been persuaded to reshoulder the burden, the state would decide whether to take it over. State operation during this period has been limited to weekends during the months of May to October. This arrangement has now been in effect for 1985 and 1986 — the summer of 1987 will complete the trial. There is no realistic hope either that the Corps will undergo a conversion experience or that significant commercial traffic will suddenly materialize above Frankfort. If the state decides to accept title to the locks for the purpose of keeping them in operation, it can only be because of their perceived value as a recreational facility. The best way to lobby for the



Palisades of the Kentucky. Photo by Kentucky Department of Travel Development.

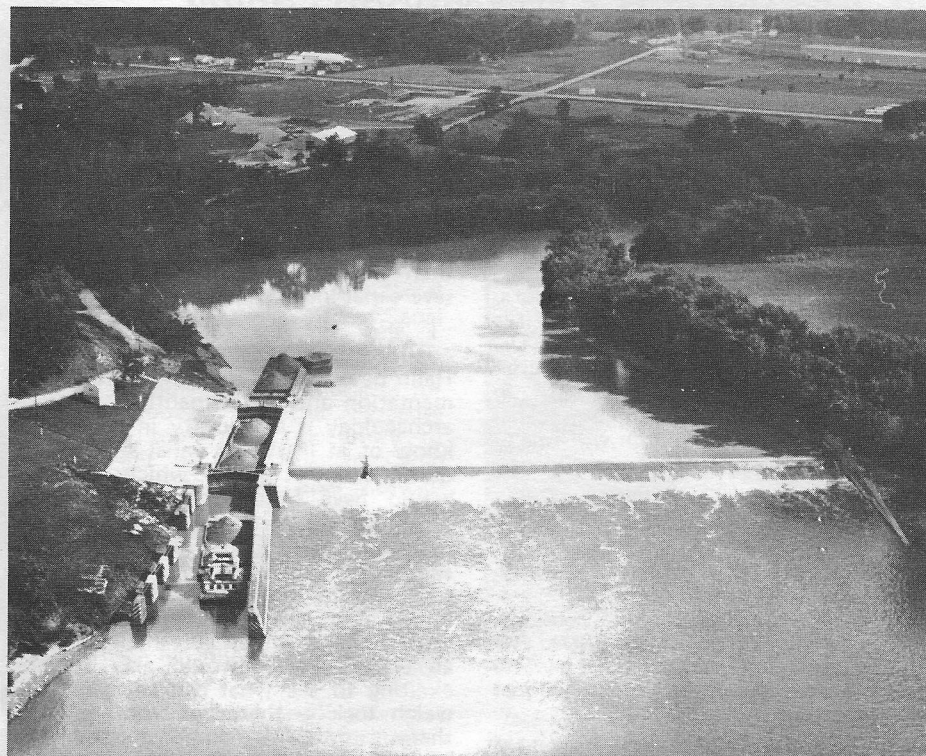
continuance of navigation is to put your boat on the river where it can be counted.

Unfortunately, a cruise of the Kentucky is not an easy venture, given the limited hours and days of operation of the upper 10 locks. There are essentially three ways to accomplish it. One is to go up one weekend, spend a few leisurely days in Beattyville and environs, and come back down the next weekend. Beattyville has all the attractions and conveniences you would expect to find in a county seat of

under 5,000 population. There is no dock, but you can tie up to a tree next to the boat ramp and go ashore for provisions. You can also explore five or ten miles up each of the three forks which come together at Beattyville to form the Kentucky River. If you choose this option, bring plenty of reading material. A second choice, if your boat is of the trailering class, is to limit your objective to a one-way trip, and arrange for an accomplice to meet you with your car and trailer at the Beattyville ramp. If neither of these proposals suits your convenience, a continuous round trip is a possibility, with careful planning and a certain amount of luck.

(To be Continued)

In the next issue, Author Dave Ross will give you a mile-by-mile, lock by lock, account of present travel on the Kentucky, with plenty of advice for boat-owners.



Lock and Dam #1, showing a tow passing through the lock. The lead barge has locked through; the second barge is in the lock; the towboat and the third barge are waiting their turn. Photograph by Corps of Engineers, Louisville District.

ROEBLING AQUEDUCT RE-DEDICATED

The National Park Service, in conjunction with the Town of Highland, New York and the Delaware and Hudson Canal Historical Society on June 13, 1987 held "Reopening Ceremonies for Delaware Aqueduct" at Lackawaxen, Pa., with ribbon-cutting and participation of members of Congress and local historical groups. This cable-suspension bridge, designed and built by John Roebling in 1847, is the oldest surviving Roebling structure now in existence. It was recently restored by the National Park Service, after serving for many years (after its abandonment as a canal aqueduct) as a toll-highway bridge.

CCS FALL TRIP

The Canadian Canal Society extends a cordial invitation to members of the American Canal Society and neighboring State Societies to join them Saturday, September 19, and Sunday, September 20, at Kingston, Ontario for the C.C.S. autumn field trip.

The interesting and educational program will include a tour of the historic Wolfe Island Canal commencing at two p.m. followed by a reception on the Island hosted by Frontenac County Council. Accommodation has been arranged at the Howard Johnson Hotel. A reception hosted by the City of Kingston and banquet will highlight the evening program followed by a guided tour of Kingston's nearby distinctive City Hall, built in 1846.

A bus tour Sunday starting at 9:30 a.m. will include the Rideau Canal and locks at Kingston Mills; Fort Henry and Royal Military College grounds; Kingston waterfront; Portsmouth Olympic Harbour and Queen's University campus. A feature of this tour will be a steam museum owned and operated by the city where "live steam powered engines" will be viewed.

Lunch will be at the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes at Kingston, a most impressive heritage marine facility, concluding the program early Sunday afternoon. (See "contact" below)

CANAL CALENDAR

July 11, 1987 — Erie Canal Canoe Trip. Contact: Steve Gurney, 52 Edgewood Way, New Haven, Connecticut 06515.

July 10-11, 1987 — "Old Canal Days Festival." Contact: Canal Fulton Heritage Committee, P.O. Box 584, Canal Fulton, Ohio 44614.

July 11, 1987 — Annual Lehigh Canal Festival. Contact: Hugh Moore Park, Box 877, Easton, Pa. 18044.

August 1-2, 1987 — "Canal Days '87", Historical and Marine Museum Heritage Complex, 280 King Street, Box 572, Port Colborne, Ontario L3K 5XB Canada.

September 19-20, 1987 — Canadian Canal Society Autumn Field Trip, Kingston, Ontario. Contact: John Burtniak, P.O. Box 304, Thorold, Ontario L2V 3Z3, Canada.

October 1-2, 1987 — Merritt Lecture and Welland Canal Rally, St. Catharines, Ontario. Contact: Welland Canals Foundation, P.O. Box 745, St. Catharines, Ont. L2R 6Y3, Canada.

October 9-10, 1987 — Fall Tour of the Canal Society of Ohio. Portage Lakes and Portage Summit on the Ohio and Erie Canal. Write: Sandra Gates, 560 Maynard Avenue, Canal Fulton, Ohio 44614.

November 12-13, 1987 — Annual Meeting of the Association for Great Lakes Maritime History, Kingston, Ontario. Write: David T. Glick, P.O. Box 25, Lakeside, Ohio 43440.

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SAVE THE PITTSBURGH LOCKS!

Editor's Note: ACS President Bill Trout has written the following letter to Donna Williams, Director of Historical Research at the State Museum in Harrisburg, in connection with the Pittsburgh Weigh-Lock excavation:

I understand that a section of the Western Division Canal in Pittsburgh has been uncovered by a PennDOT project, and will be documented by the Historic American Engineering Record before it is destroyed. I also understand from Dr. Carlisle of the University of Pittsburgh that there is considerable interest in moving the remains of the two canal locks to a park so Pittsburgh will finally have an educational display from the canal era.

I think it is very important to Pittsburgh to have a physical remnant of her canal era. The city is a remarkable inland waterways hub, at the junction of the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio River navigations, but her canal history has been buried and forgotten. It would be a shame and a waste to throw away the locks which have just been uncovered.

Canal locks have been moved elsewhere in this country — there is a transplanted lock in Carillon Park, Ohio, and there are lock stones here in Richmond, which were saved from expressway for future use

when our canal is restored. The Richmond Omni Hotel, built on the canal basin, recently borrowed some of the stones for landscaping to promote the restoration of the canal. In fact, because the lock stones were mapped, numbered and saved, we were able to discover and decipher a "code" painted on the stones by the original canal builders. So there is more than one good reason to dismantle and save canal locks which must be torn out.

I also strongly recommend that a qualified canal specialist such as Dr. T. F. Hahn be present during the HAER documentation and the dismantling, for canal archaeology is a specialty in itself and I know of at least two canal studies with quite serious errors which probably would have been spotted by a canal specialist. Of particular interest are the remains of lock gates in the Pittsburgh site, which deserve study, especially since I understand the canal there was abandoned much earlier than most of Pennsylvania's canals so the gate may represent an early type. It would also be most exciting to see what can be found in a weigh lock — there were not many of them.

Since the site must be removed, then by all means save the stones for a canal park. It has been done before. And Pittsburgh badly needs a canal park!