

AMERICAN CANALS

BULLETIN OF
THE AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN NUMBER 88

Editorial Address—968 Chapel Road, Monaca, PA 15061

FEBRUARY 1994

NEW CANAL BOAT LAUNCHED AT EASTON, PA



The new JOSIAH WHITE II slides down the ways into the Lehigh Canal in the Hugh Moore Park at Easton, PA with a huge splash! Interior work will be finished in time for the summer season. (Photo by Carol Front).

More than 200 people came out to witness the launching of the canal boat *Josiah White II* on November 4, 1993. The replica mule-drawn canal boat had been under construction since last March. It will seat 150 passengers when canal boat rides resume this spring.

Following a brief program, the Hugh Moore Historical Park and Museums' staff and volunteers, with assistance from contractor Marcus Brandt, launched the boat sideways into the canal. The *Josiah White II* is 20 feet wide, 50 feet long and weighs about 40 tons. It features a steel hull built by BethShip of Sparrows Point, Maryland, a subsidiary of Bethlehem Steel Corporation, and wood superstructure built by Marcus Brandt Restorations of Bethlehem.

Participating in the launching ceremonies were

City of Easton Mayor Thomas F. Goldsmith; James S. Cox, chairman of the Hugh Moore Park capital campaign; James C. Van Vliet, chairman of Hugh Moore Park; Louise W. Moore, Hugh Moore Park Commission; and J. Steven Humphrey, executive director of the Hugh Moore Park and Museums.

Finishing work on the *Josiah White II* continues over the winter months in preparation for inaugural rides this spring. The boat was constructed with funds raised in the HMHP&M capital campaign, "Float the Boat." To date the campaign has raised \$490,000 of the \$775,000 needed for the new boat, an industrial artifacts exhibit, as well as site improvements and canal restoration.

"This is an additional attraction that enhances the commonwealth and Easton's appeal," said Easton Mayor Thomas Goldsmith.

The boat is a strong link between the city's vital past and shining future and will help attract people to the state park system, particularly, the National Heritage Corridor, Goldsmith said.

Hugh Moore Park was declared part of the corridor in 1988 when federal legislation designated the corridor from Bristol to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

The *Josiah White II* will replace the *Josiah White* in spring to carry public and chartered rides on the canal.

The *Josiah White* was purchased in 1978 for \$10,000 and carried more than 180,000 passengers, said James C. Van Vliet. He estimated that the boat earned close to \$500,000 for the museum and park.

American Canals

BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

Publisher: **William H. Shank, P.E.**, 809 Rathton Road, York, PA 17403. 717 843 4035.

Editor: **Denver L. Walton**, 968 Chapel Road, Monaca, PA 15061. 412 774 8129.

Contributing Editor: **Bruce J. Russell**, 240 Mt. Vernon Pl. (11-E), Newark, NJ 07106.

AMERICAN CANALS is issued quarterly by the American Canal Society, Inc. 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.C.S. membership. Send dues payment (\$15 minimum) to Sec'y/Treas. Charles W. Derr, 117 Main St., Freemansburg, PA 18017. Single copies may be purchased at \$3.00 from the publisher.

Manuscripts on subjects consistent with the objectives of the A.C.S. are welcome. They should be sent to the editor.

MORRIS CANAL ACCIDENT (1832)

By *William Dzombak*
(Ebensburg, PA Sky - May 24, 1832)

A more important improvement in canal communication, than that introduced by means of inclined planes in the works of the Morris Canal Company, has not been made for many years. We believe it has hitherto fully answered all the expectations of the projectors. The following singular accident ought not to lessen our faith in its utility, for no machinery is so perfect in all its parts as not at times to be subject to derangement.

We understand that a few days since, just as a boat freighted with iron and other articles, had turned the summit of the inclined plane on her descent at Boonton Falls, the chain broke, and the car being thus freed from the restraints of machinery descended to the foot of the plane with great speed, giving the boat such a hasty plunge into the water that when she rose on the swell thus created, it carried her over the towpath at the bend of the canal near the plane, and precipitated her down a rocky precipice about 200 feet, where she now lies a heap of ruins, not worth picking up—so high was she raised by the swell and so rapid her flight, that she scarcely touched the towpath or anything else, until she struck upon a rock 30 or 40 feet below the surface of the canal, and broke in two near the centre—the two parts then continued to descend among the rocks, where they now lie. The most incredible and remarkable part of the story is that there were four persons on board, a woman and three children, who went down the precipice with the boat, neither of whom received any material injury. The captain and hands probably went on shore to walk down the plane, which is frequently the case.

President's Message

Fifteen years ago I was riding a bicycle along the towpath of the Canal du Midi in southern France, following the route of Thomas Jefferson, when I came across a maiden in a blue rented canal boat. It had a Canadian flag flying, so, delighted to find someone at last who could speak English, I said (in Canadian dialect), "So you're Canadian, eh?"

To which the young lady replied, "Oh, my, so my terrible reputation is known even this far along the canal! Ever since I rented this boat I've been bumping into other boats and locks and lock gates and doing the wrong things, and I don't know if I will ever learn to do it right!" And then she gunned the motor and moved away, down the canal.

For fifteen years I have been waiting to reply to that young lady to assure her that her terrible reputation was quite unknown to me and that anyway, people on a canal holiday are not expected to be professional canal boatmen, and should relax and have a good time. So if you are reading this, young lady, rest assured that your reputation is unblemished, and that we will never reveal in these pages even the merest hint that you once bumped into other boats, locks, lock gates, etc., etc.

Another function of these pages is to tap the extensive knowledge of our membership, to solve Unsolved Mysteries. We can't guarantee an answer, but it's worth a try. Just send your queries to Denver Walton.

For example, does anyone know if a copy exists of Tony Pastor's "Canal Boat PINAFORE," a comedy take-off on Gilbert and Sullivan's famous operetta, put on in New York about 1879? I need to compare it with Virginia's own burlesque of PINAFORE, "The JRC (James River Canal) Freight Boat SARAH JANE," published in 1881. It takes place on a canal boat instead of a warship and is full of local jokes. Were similar burlesques put on elsewhere in this country?

Also, are any curved-sided or round locks known in the western hemisphere? Bruce Russell shows some in his article on the Canal du Midi, in our current issue. We've discovered one on the Shenandoah River in West Virginia, built in 1806 by the Potomac Company. The chamber is of stone, lens-shaped, 130 feet long and up to 150 feet wide, with a two-foot lift. When Virginia's canal society and the C&O Canal Association visit it in May we will be tempted to say it's the only one like it in America, so let us know if there were any others!

With this issue of *American Canals* we start a new column, "The Environmental Corner," by Betsy Hahn, our Parks, Recreation, and River Coordinator, also known as our Canal Parks Committee. Please send your suggestions for future articles on the subject to her at 1453 Grandview Road, Arnold, MD 21012. And, as always, we urge you to send in your own articles, queries, notices, complaints and comments to your national magazine, *American Canals*.

Bill Trout

ERRATA

In the November 1993 issue of *American Canals*, we ran a listing of ACS LIFE MEMBERS. Somehow, the name of FRANZ KATZ, Heritage Hills, Somers, New York, was omitted from this list. Franz is a long-time ACS Life Member. Our apologies to him!

AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

President: Dr. William E. Trout III, 35 Towana Rd., Richmond, VA 23226. 804 288 1334.

Vice Presidents: William E. Gerber, 16 Princess Ave., N. Chelmsford, MA 01863. 617 251 4971.

William J. McKelvey, Jr., 103 Dogwood Ln., Berkeley Hgts., NJ 07922. 908 464 9335.

Secretary/Treasurer: Charles W. Derr, 117 Main St., Freemansburg, PA 18017. 215 691 0956.

Directors: David G. Barber, 16 Ballou Rd. Hopedale, MA 01747.

Sidney W. Beyland, Star Rt., Peru, NY 12972.

Thomas F. Hahn, Box 310, Shepherdstown, WV 25443.

T. Gibson Hobbs, Jr., 3204 Landon St., Lynchburg, VA 24503.

David M. Johnson, 9211 Wadsworth Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817.

Frederica Kleist, 528 W. Cook St., Portage, WI 53901.

Keith W. Kroon, 2240 Ridgeway Ave., Rochester, NY 14626.

Dr. Brian M. Kutner, 211 Buck St., Box 584, Millville, NJ 08332.

John M. Lamb, 1109 Garfield St., Lockport, IL 60441.

Arden Phair, 19 Sarah Court, St. Catharines, Ont. L2S-3R6, Canada.

Roger W. Squires, 46 Elephant Lane, Rotherhithe, London SE16 4JD, England.

Arthur W. Sweeton, III, 6 Humphrey Rd., Canton Center, CT 06020.

Terry K. Woods, 6939 Eastham Cir., Canton, OH 44708.

Committees:

A.C.S. Sales, Keith W. Kroon, chrmn., Canal Archaeology, Mark Newell, chrmn., USC-IAA, 1321 Pendleton St., Columbia, SC 29208.

Canal Boat, William J. McKelvey, Jr., chrmn. Canal Engineering Design, Terry K. Woods, chrmn.

Canal Operations and Maintenance, Charles W. Derr, chrmn.

Canal Parks, Elizabeth L. Hahn, chrmn. - 1453 Grandview Road, Arnold, MD 21012.

Historic American Canals Survey, William Dzombak, chrmn., 621 Spring St., Latrobe, PA 15650.

Navigable Canals, David F. Ross, chrmn., Rt. 1, Box 87T, Savannah, TN 38372.

Other publications: *The Best from American Canals*,

William H. Shank, editor and publisher. *American Canal Guides*,

William E. Trout III, editor and publisher.

1994 DUES

ACS Secretary Charlie Derr reminds us that a number of members have not yet paid their 1994 dues. He will shortly send out a second "Reminder". Please respond promptly; otherwise this is the final issue of *AMERICAN CANALS* which you will receive.

PREMIER OF NOVA SCOTIA WELCOMES SHUBENACADIE CANAL CONFERENCE

Welcoming address for the 1993 International Conference of Canals, by the **Hon. John Savage**, Premier of Nova Scotia.

Thank you all for coming to attend this year's International Conference on Historic Canals. I understand these conferences have been running for several years now, and that after our friends on the Rideau, this is the second time the Conference has met in Canada. We are very pleased that Dartmouth was chosen to host this gathering.

Historic canals, such as our own Shubenacadie Canal, have enticed people for decades. They speak to us on many levels; they are historic, romantic, they encompass our natural environment, and they remind us of the human endeavor and hard work involved in building them. Canals provide both solitude and activity for those visiting them. They are attractive to us for all of these reasons and as such people are willing to give their best efforts to see them preserved. That is why you are here this week. Because your own personal interest and commitment is strong enough to draw you, in some cases, many thousands of miles, to hear and speak from an international perspective about the on-going work to preserve canals.

The Shubenacadie Canal is part of this effort. Over the past few years the canal has begun to evolve from a little known, almost forgotten resource to recognition as an important part of our province's heritage. Each year more and more people are visiting its sites and enjoying what it has to offer. The Shubenacadie Canal Commission, a voluntary board, are stewards of the canal to preserve its workings, present them to the public and to restore navigation as far as possible. I have had the unique opportunity to watch the Canal's recent development. As a resident of Dartmouth I live on Lake Micmac which forms part of the waterway. As Mayor of Dartmouth I have participated in the Commission's activities and tried to lend it support along the way, and now as Premier I am pleased to see the Shubenacadie Canal taking its place among other canals and discussing mutual problems and challenges during this conference.

As you deliberate on historic canals I understand you will have the opportunity to travel along the route of the Shubenacadie Canal. As you do so you will literally travel through much of Nova Scotia's history. The waterway, as you may know, is based on an ancient route established by the indigenous peoples here, the Mi'kmaq, as a principal migration route. The canal was first started during a period of optimism in Nova Scotia but this first effort failed half way through. It was picked up again in the 1850s and by 1857 steam vessels were travelling between Grand Lake and Dartmouth. Traffic in barges and sailing vessels also passed the Canal on a regular basis. The canal encompasses our industrial past as we recall that vessels loaded with bricks, equipment, iron and produce left Enfield and Elmsdale for Maitland. Lumber, agricultural produce, bricks, pottery and gold bearing quartz shipped for Dartmouth. Coal and manufactured items went up the Canal from Dartmouth and, when the Nova Scotian Railway started construction railway ties and iron rails were shipped here on canal boats.

The waterway itself is a treasure of natural beauty and flows through some remarkable wetlands and ecosystems.

Like many other canals the Shubenacadie did not make much money. In 1870 the railway



Dr. John Savage, Premier of Nova Scotia. (Photo and text courtesy of the Nova Scotia Information and Communication Services.)

replaced its draw bridges over the Canal with fixed bridges so low a boat could not pass beneath them. But the Canal story does not end there. Over the years many dedicated persons here in Dartmouth and along the route have worked to preserve the canal. The Canal Commission continues to work toward the preservation and restoration of the waterway.

Canals are important reminders of our past, of the importance of our environment and of the importance of preserving both these aspects of our heritage. You will be discussing these and other themes over the next few days. I wish you well in your deliberations and am pleased to declare the 1993 International Conference on Historic Canals "open."

WATERWAYS MAP OF EUROPE AVAILABLE

A European canals and waterways map has been compiled and drawn by *David Edwards-May*, who has been mapping Europe's waterways since 1968. Also supporting the project are *Ron Oakley*, chairman of IWA International Committee, and *John Riddell*, director of the boat hire company Crown Blue Line.

A document for all waterways enthusiasts, it is printed in three colours, with overall dimensions 37" by 21½". On the front, are all the waterways from Ireland and Portugal through to the Urals in Russia. On the other side, also in three colours, is an enlargement of the main part of the network, from Ireland through to the mouth of the Danube. Both sides feature the complete geographical context (contours and rivers).

Unusual features and structures on the waterways are identified, and distances and number of locks between junctions are given.

The map may be ordered from "Canal Captain's Press," 103 Dogwood Lane, Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922. Price: \$10.00 plus 60 cents tax, if you are a New Jersey resident. Shipping charge: \$2.00 for a single map; 50 cents for extra copies.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CORNER

By *Betsy Hahn*
Parks, Recreation, & River Coordinator

I would like to say hello to all old friends and new alike. I have been busy working on "The Lock-keepers of the Chesapeake and Ohio" and the "International Canal Glossary." I have begun to put all the literature that I have received on canal parks in some semblance of order. I ultimately want to create a national database on canal parks. Please send any updates to me at 1453 Grandview Road, Arnold, MD 21012.

I am currently pursuing a masters degree in Environmental Biology and working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Annapolis, MD. I primarily work on habitat restoration projects in wetlands, riparian zones, and streams throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed (MD, VA, PA, WV, NY, DC, DE). I hope to visit as many canals as possible as I travel through these states.

I think it is wonderful that everyone is interested in a particular canal or a segment of a canal. I know members enjoy a variety of activities such as walking, bird watching, biking, and canoeing. Many of us belong to more than one environmental group such as the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, American Rivers, Inc., etc. The buzz words for the 90's are partnerships (Federal, State, local government, land trusts, etc.) watersheds, corridors, and biodiversity. I think that in these times of limited resources that all of these groups should try to coordinate preservation or restoration activities to get more "bang for the buck." There are many federal, state, local, land trusts and private organizations that offer cost-share and technical assistance.

I have a wealth of information at my fingertips and hope to share it with you in the upcoming months. Such subjects will include riparian zones, the Endangered Species Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, The Potomac River Vision Project, bird migrations, private landowners, and historical preservation. I will announce the subject of the next article and I encourage all members to send me information on how this applies to your favorite canal(s) and I will incorporate it into the article. If you have any suggestions, comments, or questions about various topics—please drop me a note.

SPECIAL BOOK OFFER TO ACS MEMBERS

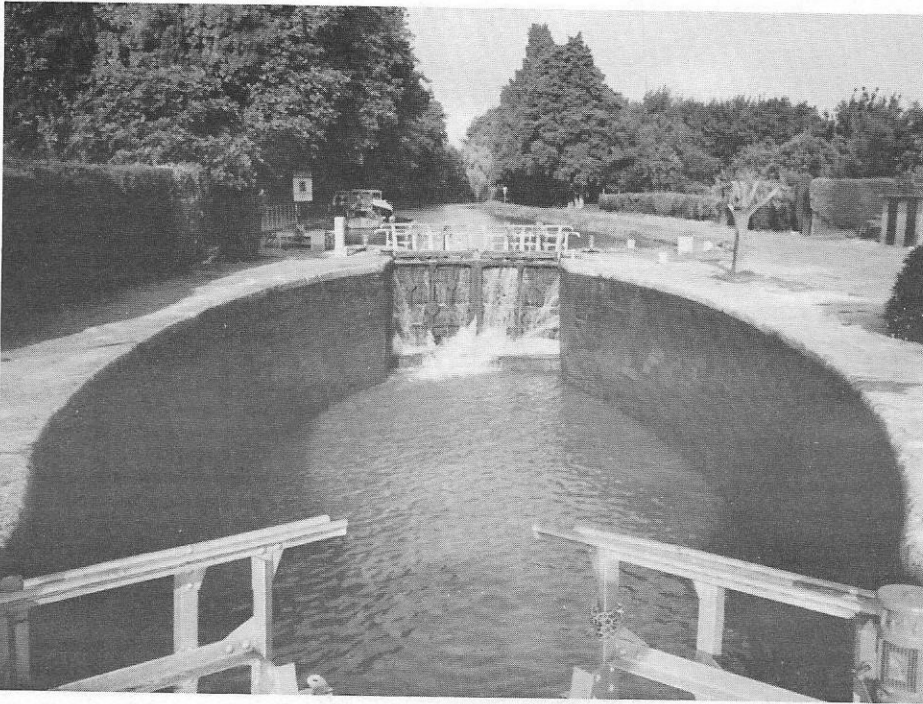
For fifteen years the American Canal Society has published a series of Journals known as *THE BEST FROM AMERICAN CANALS*. The sixth journal has just come off the press. We have now reprinted all major articles which have appeared in *AMERICAN CANALS* since 1972. The six books are all in the same format—88-pages, 8½" x 11", fully indexed, with an attractive cover. Collectively they form a 528-page encyclopedia of canal and waterways information nowhere else to be found.

All previous five "BESTS" are still available, but several are nearly out of print. While they last, we are offering the entire six volumes to members of the American Canal Society at a special discount price of \$20.00, plus \$3.00 for shipping. At the going retail price of these books they would cost \$40.50 if purchased individually.

Any ACS member wishing to take advantage of this special offer, is urged to contact: THE AMERICAN CANAL AND TRANSPORTATION CENTER, 809 Rathton Road, York, PA 17403 promptly, while all six volumes remain in stock.

CANAL SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY CRUISES FRANCE'S MIDI CANAL (Part Two)

By Bruce J. Russell - Contributing Editor



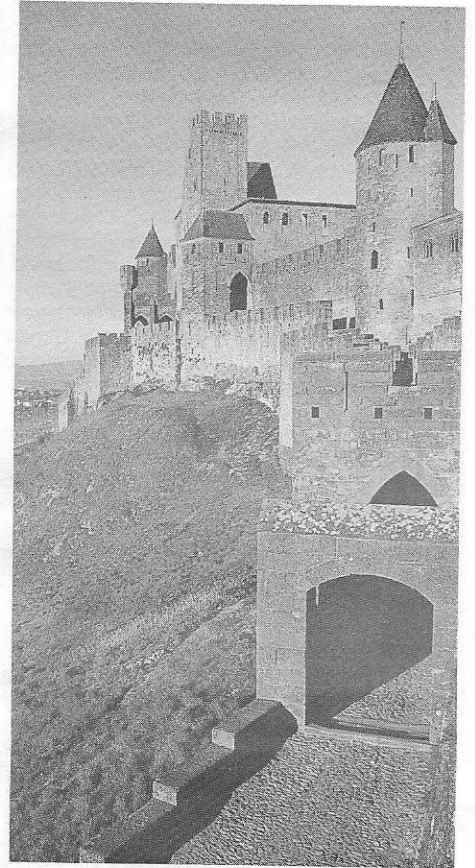
The locks on the MIDI CANAL are all circular because it was believed they would hold up better under water pressure than the standard rectangular ones. The MIDI CANAL is the only one using this design. (Russell photo)

Cruising eastward on the MIDI, we passed through several picturesque towns — including VENTENAC with its wine storage building which resembles a church, La SOMAILE, PORT La ROBINE where the branch canal to Narbonne diverges, and CAPESTANG with its tall spired church built in the 1300s. Here we re-provisioned, took on water, and mailed postcards. These canal side towns are less affected by modern trends and still lack McDonald's, Burger King, and other signs of global conformity. A few miles east of CAPESTANG we passed through the MALPAS TUNNEL, the first canal tunnel in the world and the only one on the MIDI. It is about 600 feet long.

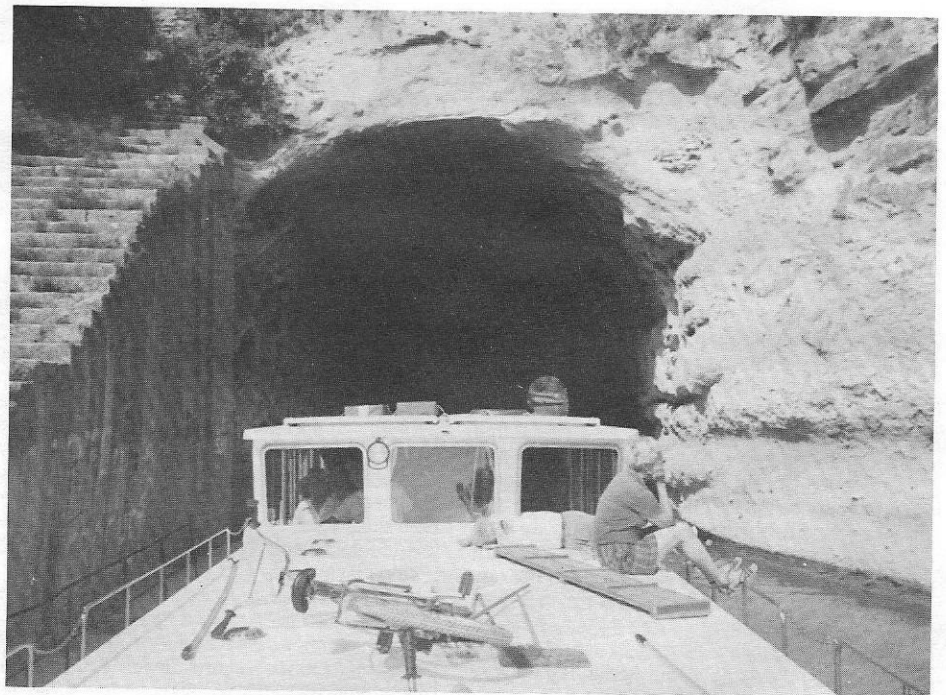
By this time all seven boats had become separated, with most ahead of our vessel. At FONSERANNES we encountered a 7 lock staircase. One lock is positioned directly behind the other, enabling the canal to overcome considerable elevation. This location marks the end of the 35 mile long level segment. It was a lot of work to get the boat through all 7 locks, and over an hour was consumed. This staircase allows traffic to proceed in one direction for an hour and then reverses in favor of the other.

A short distance beyond FONSERANNES the canal entered BEZIERS on a long stone aqueduct built in the 1850s as part of a major improvement to the then 200 year old waterway. This structure is magnificent and represents canal architecture and engineering at its best. Prior to its construction the canal crossed the River Orb at grade level, a tricky process involving a rope ferry. The builders used vast quantities of stone to create multiple arches which carry the water trough, plus towpath, across the Orb River Valley. A tour operator offered day trips on the portion of the MIDI CANAL

between Beziers and the Malpas Tunnel, giving riders a chance to cross the aforementioned aqueduct, climb the seven lock flight at FONSERANNES, and pass through the tunnel



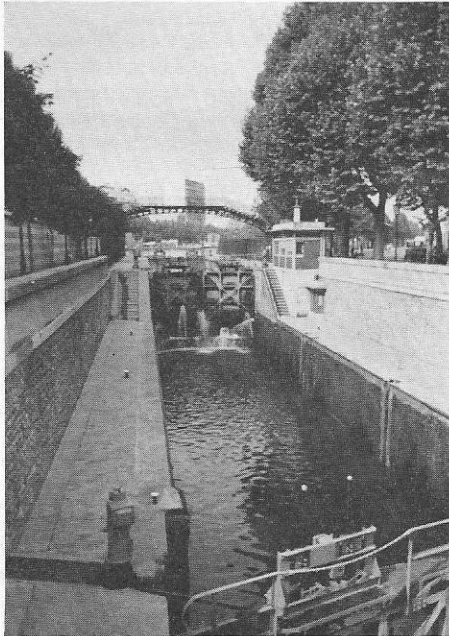
The medieval fortified city of Carcassonne, located on the Canal du Midi was one of our stops along the route.



A high point on this trip was the 600 foot long MALPAS TUNNEL built in 1677, the only one on the MIDI CANAL. The boat TREBOUL is passing through. (Russell photo)

before reversing direction. Our boat passed this tourist vessel in both directions.

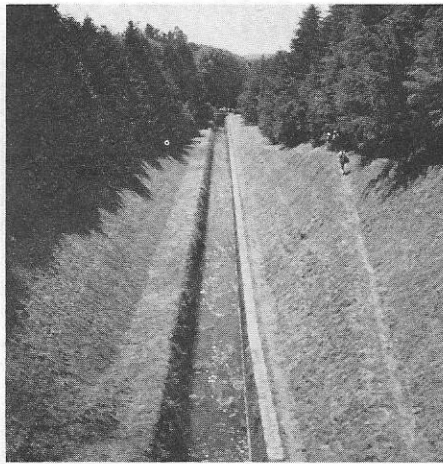
While at Beziers we visited an historic site where an old cathedral dominates the skyline. A statue of RIQUET is nearby. We moored for the night here and ate dinner in a typical French restaurant. As more and more recreational boating has occurred on the MIDI there has been an increase in canalside eating establishments. Some offer excellent cuisine while others provide only mediocre fare. Another sight in and around Beziers were large numbers of former freight boats, each about 75-90 feet long and slowly rusting. It's sad to see commercial haulage end on a canal as beautiful as the MIDI, but economic reality made such vessels redundant. Trucks and trains are simply faster.



In Paris we visited the Canal St. Martin, before heading south to the Canal du Midi. (Russell photo.)

From Beziers the canal continues to the small town of Agde, a seaside resort and tourist center. Boats headed for the port of Sete, situated directly on the Mediterranean Sea, proceed out of the final lock and enter the ETANG de THAU or salt water bay. After crossing this body of water, which is separated from the ocean by a narrow strip of land, they arrive at the port. Sete was created during the reign of Louis XIV and was intended to be a major trans shipment point between canal boats and ocean going ships. Our instructions were to proceed to Agde but under NO CIRCUMSTANCES enter the Salt Lake. The reason was that our vessels have flat bottoms and lack sufficient power to cruise on the open sea. If a strong wind or storm occurred they might be capsized or blown onto the shore. Commercial boats on the other hand have more powerful engines and leaving the canal for open waters does not pose a safety hazard. Thus Agde became the final point for our group. After visiting it and also sampling the nearby beaches the vessels were turned around for the journey back to the hire base at Argens.

On the way a diversion was made at La ROBINE so the branch canal could be navigated as far as NARBONNE, a distance of 8 miles. Had we proceeded another 13 we would have reached PORT LA NOUVELLE. Here the canal meets the Mediter-



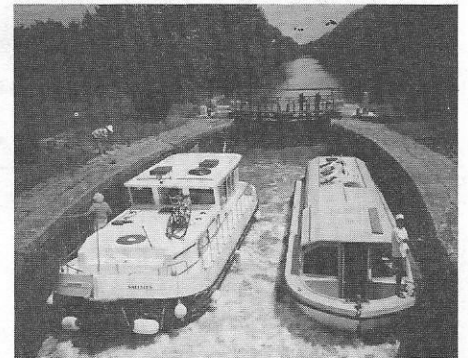
The 40-mile long feeder canal, which brings water from the St. Ferreol Reservoir in the mountains to the summit level of the Midi Canal at Naurouse. It was constructed in 1677. (Russell photo.)

ranean Sea. This branch was built about a hundred years after the main MIDI and functions as an alternate route to the ocean. Called the ROBINE CANAL it was the last portion of the MIDI system to see commercial traffic. Because of this its circular locks have been enlarged at the ends so bigger barges could be handled. Also at one point it briefly ends and boats use a natural river for about a mile before reentering the man made channel. We proceeded down this canal until dusk and then tied up. A fierce wind subsequently developed which reached high velocities. Perhaps this was the fearsome MISTRAL originating in North Africa and sweeping across southern France. Torrential rainfall then began and soon the canal water was churning. We decided to use additional ropes to secure our boat to the bank, this time tying them to sturdy trees. We were afraid

the metal stakes might work loose, causing our boat to break free and crash into a lock wall. By morning the gusts had subsided and the sun was shining once more and it was calm. We proceeded the final few miles to NARBONNE, an ancient city founded about 500 BC by the Greeks, who established a trading colony there. It later became a Roman city, and ruins abound. A large basin situated in the heart of the city was where we moored. By now all seven boats had caught up with one another and news was exchanged. At Narbonne there were several interesting things to do, but many people intended to wash clothes, call home, change money, and do other necessary tasks. From NARBONNE it was a day and a half back to the hire base at ARGENS.

The weather during this trip was superb and typical of the SOUTH of FRANCE. While there was sometimes an early morning haze it quickly burned off revealing a bright sun and blue sky. It was necessary to use sun block lotion to avoid severe

(Concluded on Page Six)



Competitive hire-boats in a lock, side by side. Note water turbulence from opening of the upper lock gate. (Russell photo)



One of the dredges on the MIDI, which maintains the waterway at a five-foot depth. (Russell photo.)

CSNJ CRUISES FRANCE'S MIDI CANAL



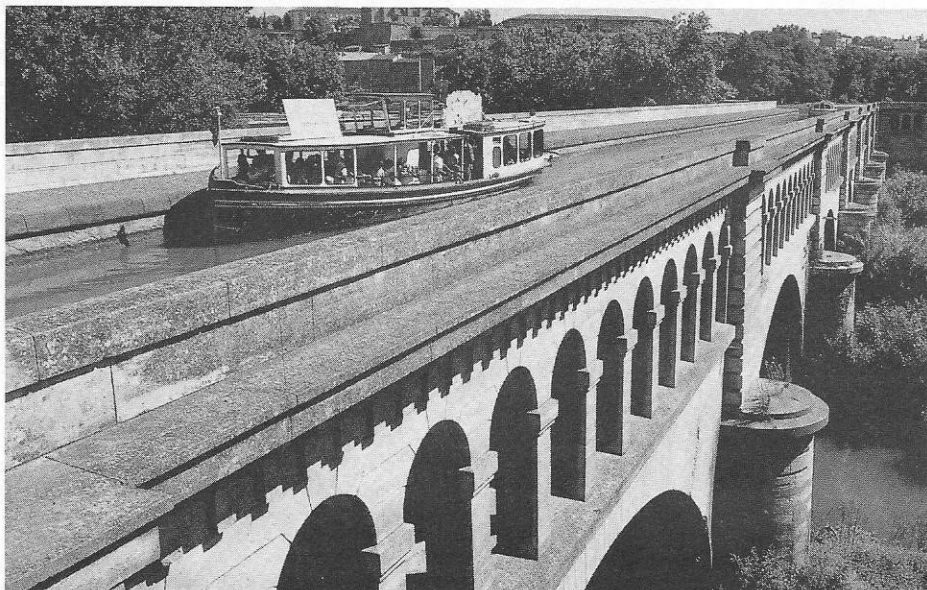
The TREBOUL, the author's boat, moored along the towpath. This vessel accommodates 10 passengers. Note the line of trees which shades the waterway and help to retard water evaporation. This was Pierre Riquet's idea. (Russell photo.)

(Concluded from Page Five)

sunburn, at least during the first few days. The MIDI region is becoming increasingly popular with vacationers who feel prices at the nearby Riviera are too steep.

Upon return to the ARGENS base the boats were cleaned out and all remaining food placed on common tables for the traditional CS of NJ farewell banquet in which stories of the trip are compared. Unused food and beverages were consumed and items such as stakes, hammers, and bicycles were turned into the company. We were thankful that no serious injuries had occurred and that all had a good time. Few realize that

canals and especially locks do have the potential of causing bodily harm, especially if common sense safety precautions aren't exercised. A few people had wished we had covered the ENTIRE canal from Agde to Toulouse but none had criticism for CAPT. McKelvey. It was subsequently explained that to travel the whole waterway would have required another hire base near Toulouse plus a similar group willing to take our seven vessels back in the opposite direction. Future trips for CS of NJ were discussed at the farewell dinner, and two which came to mind were the ELBLASKI CANAL in Poland which features inclined planes, and the GOTA CANAL in Sweden between Gothenberg and Stockholm.



The magnificent 1857 vintage stone aqueduct over the Orb River Valley at Beziers. It was built as part of a 19th century improvement to the MIDI CANAL and replaced a level crossing of the river.

HOFFMANN BOOK RECEIVES PENNSYLVANIA AWARD

The ACS-sponsored book *PICTURE-JOURNEY ALONG THE PENNSYLVANIA MAIN LINE CANAL* has received an Honorable Mention Award in a state-wide contest sponsored by the Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations. There are two Awards of Merit and and three Honorable Mention Awards in the publications category this year. Bill Shank will pick up the Award at the 1994 Awards Banquet held April 11th in Reading, PA.

BOOK REVIEW

ALWAYS KNOW YOUR PAL: CHILDREN ON THE ERIE CANAL. Edited by *Debbie J. Stack and Donald A. Wilson of the Erie Canal Museum, Syracuse, New York.*

Reviewed by Bill Shank

A 103-page, 6" x 9" paperback with a 4-color photomontage cover, the book is a charming review of all activities involving children on the 19th-Century Erie Canal system.

The book contains more than fifty old photos, etchings, quotations, and drawings from such diverse publications as *St. Nicholas Magazine, Harpers Weekly, Marco Paul Adventures, McGuffey's Eclectic Primer, and Buffalo Bill's Wild West portfolio.*

This interesting publication successfully weaves together all the daily scenes and experiences of children traveling with their families on old Erie Canal Boats—the schools they attended (in winter), the books they read on board, the food they ate, the friends they made, the chores they performed—in short, just about all the daily experiences they enjoyed as Canal Boat Children.

None of them ever complained of their lives on the water and said they would have not traded a single day with their land-lubber acquaintances on shore.

A bibliography is included at the back of the book.

To obtain a copy write: Erie Canal Museum, The Weighlock Building, 318 Erie Boulevard East, Syracuse, New York 13202. Price \$14.85, plus \$1.50 for shipping.

HENNEPIN MAY GET NEW LIFE

(From the August 9th 1993 issue of THE WATERWAYS JOURNAL, ST. LOUIS:

The Hennepin Canal may get a new lease on life as the Mississippi River National Heritage Corridor Commission debates a proposal to ask for federal recognition for the Mississippi. If the canal is included in the proposed national corridor, the commission could receive money to restore and promote it. The Hennepin could become a recreational right-of-way, and include the use of canal boats pulled by mules such as on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal near Washington, D.C.

DIVERS FIND SUNKEN FRENCH TRAIN IN GATUN LAKE

ACS Member Clif Brown sent in the following interesting item, as published in the "Panama Canal Spillway" by Susan K. Stabler, April 8, 1993.

By Susan K. Stabler

Under about 45 feet of water—outside the Canal channel at Penas Blancas Reach—sits a steam locomotive hooked up to dozens of carts, or rock wagons, all resting perfectly upright on railroad tracks on the floor of Gatun Lake.

When the French abandoned their efforts to build a canal through Panama, they also abandoned thousands of dollars in equipment, leaving behind everything from cranes to shovels. Some things, like the train near Penas Blancas Reach, sit exactly as they were when Gatun Lake was filled.

Christensen Dredge Master Bobby Fearon, a scuba diver who has explored the Penas Blancas train many times, says, "To find it, you line up the stern of your boat with buoy 28 and points the bow north toward the survey marker. Then, swim west about 50 yards and dive there."

"The first time you see the big locomotive," Fearon adds, "it's an awesome sight." Even under the best conditions, he explains, lake visibility is never crystal clear. You usually don't see the locomotive until you're practically face to face with it. Then, what gradually unfolds before your eyes is an entire train—a huge steam locomotive hooked to car after car after car.

Of the French canal construction effort, historian David McCullough wrote, "The official end came on February 4, 1889." That was when the first French canal company—Compagnie Universelle du Canal Interocéanique—went out of business. A second French company evolved about five years later, but few took it seriously. In 1904, its rights and property were sold to the United States.

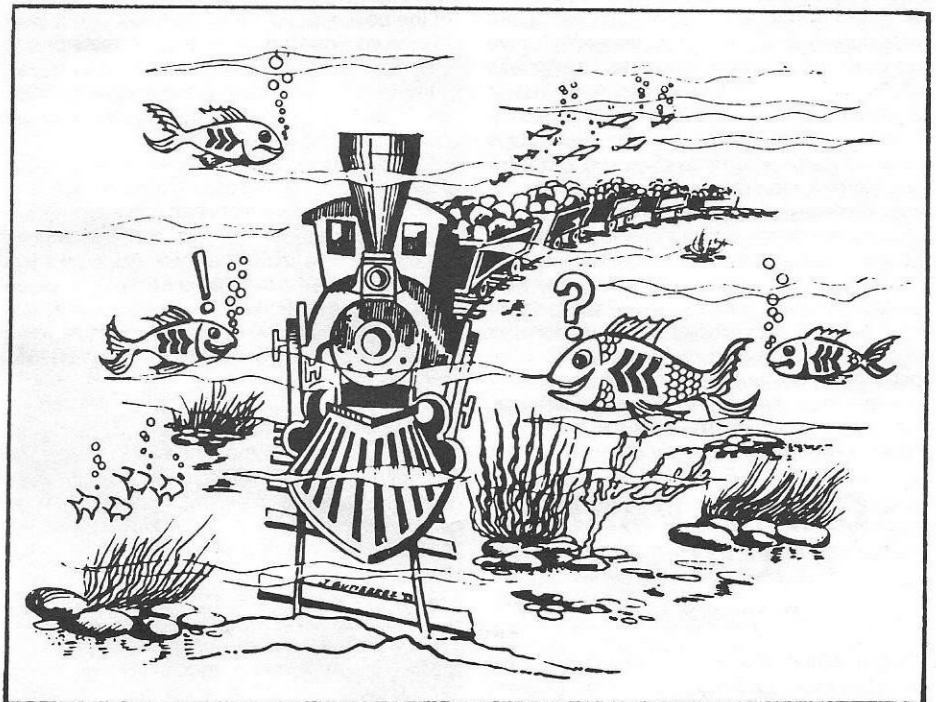
French equipment actually contributed to the U.S. construction effort. The November 7, 1909, issue of the Canal Record noted, "In one of the old diversion channels just north of Bohio, two cranes have been found that will be taken out and sent to Gatun where they will be utilized in the work on the locks."

The same issue of the Canal Record also stated that at Bohio and at Pena Blanca, "laborers were paid nine cents a car for each Decauville car of 18 cubic feet capacity that they loaded and dumped." This is perhaps a reference to the same cars that are hooked to the steam locomotive explored by Fearon and other Panama Canal Commission employees, including budget execution supervisor Mark Saunders, Office of Public Affairs clerk-stenographer Carmen Ortiz, and locks coordinator Mike Drennan.

The February 9, 1910, Canal Record stated, "Thirteen of the locomotives left by the French are in use on construction work as stationary boilers to furnish steam to various equipment. These engines are in addition to those used as locomotives on the construction work."

Fearon has also discovered other large pieces of equipment on the lake's floor, such as a dredge in 80 to 90 feet of water in the Chagres River bed off DeLesseps Island. He's also located French cranes and other bits of French equipment.

Local divers urge those who would search for the submerged French relics to exercise caution. "It's a good idea to leave someone on board the boat in case it should drag its anchor and drift into the Canal channel," suggests Curundu Junior High School librarian Anita Seifert. "When diving,



don't kick up the silt on the lake floor or you will destroy your visibility."

Some who dive on the French equipment, like Seifert, Fearon and Saunders, return again and again, never tiring of the exploration. Others, like Drennan, admit the last dive they made was over 20 years ago. Ortiz has been once, but plans to go again.

For visibility, according to Fearon, the best time of the year to dive in the lake is the end of dry season after there have been a few good rains. Another recommended period is during the change from rainy season to dry, but before the winds pick up. Seifert said visibility is always better in the morning.

Both Fearon and Seifert claim that if you're under water diving on the French equipment when a ship passes by in the channel, the muffled sound of the vessel's propulsion produces an eerie sensation. According to Fearon, "You'd swear it was the chug-chug-chug of a train beginning to rumble on down the track."

25TH ANNIVERSARY CANAL SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY MAY 29TH, 1994

The Canal Society of New Jersey will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 1994. We will sponsor an event in which historic and antique boats will be launched on the D & R Canal at Colonial Park, just north of East Millstone, on Memorial Day weekend. For the first time in 62 years the public will be able to ride in historic vessels on our canal.

In addition to the boating event, we plan to have a "wedding of the waters" ceremony, appropriate music, the dedication of a plaque for the event, and pursue a proclamation from Governor Whitman.

For further information please contact the Canal Society of New Jersey, P.O. Box 737, Morristown, NJ 07963. Telephone (908) 722-9556.

VC & NS ANNUAL MEETING AT HARPER'S FERRY, MAY 27-29, 1994

This is the first time, as far as we know, that a canal society ever met to explore the Shenandoah. Our meeting will also be a special joint one with the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association; we will see things in Harper's Ferry National Historical Park which are not accessible to the ordinary tourist; and we're even planning a raft trip down the falls of the Shenandoah!

We'll be meeting in Harper's Ferry because that's where all the Shenandoah's locks and canals were, along the Falls of the Shenandoah. We'll visit the Shenandoah Canal and its mills in Virginius Island; rediscover Little's Falls Lock (the only remaining lock on the Shenandoah); tour the Millville Hydro plant (built on another Shenandoah lock); make a special visit to the Masonic Hall in Harper's Ferry, Park Service, to see the vaulted ceiling made of Shenandoah River gundalow wood; and re-measure the width of the C&O Canal's Shenandoah River Lock, which gave a Yankee general so much trouble during the Late Unpleasantness. If all goes well, the folks in Port Republic will have the first ever replica of a Shenandoah river boat, a Gundalow, for us to take a ride on.

See you in Harper's Ferry!

Bill Trout

With a current membership list of 841, ACS is the largest canal historical organization in the Western Hemisphere. Our listing appears in most USA historical directories. We receive inquiries, world-wide, on a weekly basis.

THE HENNEPIN — RONALD REAGAN'S CANAL

By W.C. Cowles

Having grown up in the Chicago area and with my grandparents living on the banks of the Mississippi in Iowa, my family frequently drove across northern Illinois to pay a visit. I think it was in 1935, on such a trip, that we crossed, or at least passed in sight of a wonderful engineering work—a canal. Only a year later, by one of those fortuitous coincidences of which I so often seem to have been blessed, I found myself traversing that very same waterway.

Having spent my apprenticeship in the Boy Scout organization, at age sixteen, I became eligible for the senior scouting program, i.e. a SEA SCOUT. Our town was fortunate in having a very active Sea Scout organization, and our troop was the proud owner of what was known as a "shore boat", that is an oar propelled boat, some thirty eight feet long, intended for ferrying sailors between ship and shore. The boat had suffered a broken keel, and having totally outlived it's

CANAL PARK PROPOSED

By Frederica Kleist

Assemblyman Prosser of Appleton is proposing a State Park from Portage, Wisconsin, to Green Bay involving the locks, canal and dams on the Lower and Upper Fox River. Continued use of the locks—part of the park plan. Backers of the proposed plan want to keep the lock system open. The Corps of Engineers want to fill in the locks and plant grass on them. That would surely spoil a historic waterway.

The Park Plan could use state and federally owned land. In doing this, there would be a series of parks. The State and Communities would have the financial responsibility.

A special committee was formed. Recently, an engineering firm was hired to study what can be done and what will be acceptable closure of the locks. The closure plan of the Corps is unacceptable locally and it hoped the Corps will be challenged. The cost estimate of the closure would be \$4.2 million.

It is suggested that each community along both the Lower and Upper Fox create the park in their area. This means more work on the canal and the Fox River in the Portage area.

The City of Portage continues to try to work with the Corps. Locally, there is strong support NOT to have a levee in front of the Portage Lock. As a compromise it has been suggested that a navigable box structure be used in the flood control system.

A historic survey of Portage revealed ten historic districts for National consideration plus many individual homes and businesses. Two applications have been sent in: Portage Downtown Retail District and The Waterfront District, which includes the canal.

A Canoe Trail is in place along the Wisconsin River from Wisconsin Dells to Prairie du Sac.

A park in the Portage area would be partly in the city and the rest a rural setting, which could include nature trails, wildlife, a section of the National ice age trail, Boy Scout trail and canoeing. The area has the following historic sites: Indian Agency House, Surgeon Quarters (last remaining building of Fort Winnebago,) Portage Canal, Fort Winnebago District, Fort Cemetery, Fox-Wisconsin Portage (Wauona Trail) and Military Road, and much more.

usefulness to the Navy, been abandoned at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station. Somehow, our Sea Scout organization had come into possession of the boat, spliced the broken keel with a steel "I" beam, installed an engine, a more-or-less marinated Buick automobile engine, and added a trunk cabin, complete with some minimal bunks, and something that passed for a galley. Thus we had a fairly respectable motor cruiser.

Our skipper was always a bit reluctant to expose this craft and her young crew to the waters of Lake Michigan, and furthermore had grown up in Iowa so our cruises tended to be in sheltered waters. When it became known that there was to be a Sea Scout Camboree in the area of Keokuck, Iowa, on the banks of the Mississippi, it was determined that this would be an ideal objective for a three week cruise. I of course signed on for this end-of-June expedition.

Thus, sometime about mid-June, 1936, we left our mooring in the heart of Chicago, journeyed up, or down, depending on how you look at the reversed Chicago River, into the Chicago Sanitary and Shipping canal, (a passage we always chose to make at night, both for purposes of scheduling and ambiance) and by morning were entering the Des Plaines River, and later, the Illinois River.

Late in the afternoon, we approached the entrance to the Hennepin, once known as the Illinois-Mississippi canal. A very comprehensive series of articles on the Hennepin appearing in the *Best of American Canals—Number 1* both jogs and confuses my memory. I recall entering the canal late in the afternoon and running all night. Sometime about mid-morning we entered the Rock River. A few miles on the Rock and we entered the Mississippi opposite Davenport. As best I can recall we moored at Muscatine for the night and proceeded to the Keokuck area the next day.

The Hennepin itself is seventy-five miles long. Although a towpath canal, my guess is, that during most of its working life, most passages were by powered vessels. In any event, I do recall that the locks were tended, even at night when we were passing through. Each lock tender having responsibility for several locks, and driving along the canal from one lock to the next. Still in my memory of the canal we encountered something like thirty-three locks, seven aqueducts and twenty-six highway bridges.

This, my first canal experience was followed some twenty years later, when I was on board the newly built LST *Lorain County* on a delivery voyage from the building yard at Lorain, Ohio to New Orleans for final outfitting and delivery, when we again traversed the Chicago Sanitary Canal—indeed the last major vessel to do so before the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

One more casual relationship to the Hennepin, however. At least in the Midwest, there was an extensive series of books of the genre popular with young boys of the era, describing the adventures of Jerry Todd, and his buddy Poppy Ott and their "gang". Clearly set in a fictitious northern Illinois town, there were frequent references to the canal. Unknown to me at the time, in retrospect, it clearly referred to the Hennepin. An item in the February, 1988 *American Canals* bulletin discusses President Reagan's association with the canal. Mr. Reagan may well have been a member of the poppy Ott Gang!

Although I had assumed the canal to be long abandoned, a brief item in the May 1991 issue indicates that it is still at least partially watered and that indeed, dinner cruises were being offered on board the *Hennepin Traveler*!

STEAM TUG TRAPPED



Ex Philadelphia and Reading Railroad steam tug "Catawissa" sits on the bottom between Locks 3 and 4 of the Waterford Flight in Waterford, NY. She was built by Harlan & Hollingsworth at Wilmington, DE in 1896 and was one of nine sister tugs used in the Philadelphia to New England coastal coal trade. The boiler and 1000 horsepower triple expansion engines of this 637 ton 159' by 29' vessel remain in place. After World War II she was relegated to tank cleaning duties first by the Bethlehem Hoboken Shipyard as "Beth Tank Ship No. 2" and was finally working for Standard Tank Cleaning Co. as "Tank Master No. 1." In the fall of 1992 "Catawissa" was sold to midwest interests to be converted into a restaurant, but was found to have too great a draft to negotiate the Erie Canal. Her future is uncertain at this time. Bill McKelvey reports that the "Catawissa" is still there (1994) and her future status is still unknown. (Photo courtesy of Paul Spunable, New York State Thruway Authority.)

GUILLOTINES AND ELEVATOR SHAFTS: A DOUBLE FOLLOW-UP

By David F. Ross

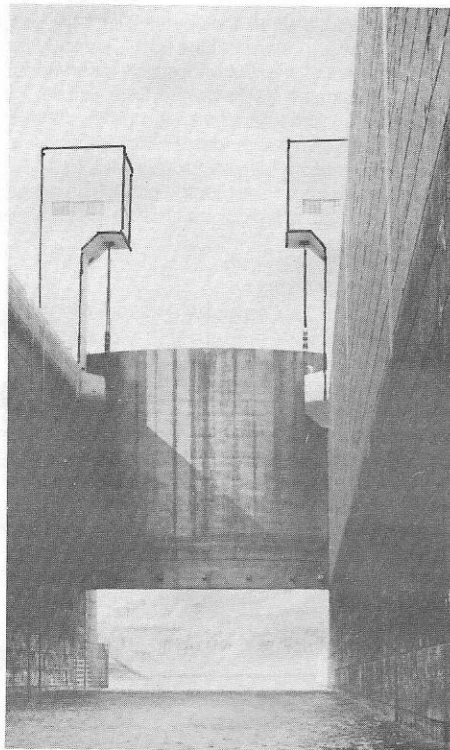
Following the first printing of Bill Shank's *Towpaths to Tugboats: A History of American Canal Engineering*, a flurry of comments generated a front-page article in *American Canals*, (No. 42, August 1982) on the subject of guillotine locks. A picture caption in the book referred to Lock 17 on the Erie Canal as having "what is thought to be the only Guillotine-type lift gate in the Western Hemisphere." Alert readers were quick to call attention to a number of Canadian locks with guillotine gates. In the course of the discussion, mention was also made of high-lift locks. When this material was reprinted in *The Best from American Canals*, volume II (published in 1984), a further comment was added, to the effect that "the highest lift in North America is surely John Day lock on the Columbia River at 113 ft." No one mentioned, however, that John Day is one of three locks on the Columbia-Snake waterway in Washington and Oregon which have guillotine gates. The other two are Ice Harbor and Lower Monumental locks on the Snake. All three had been in operation for several years prior to 1982.

The subject of high-lift locks came up again, indirectly, in a discussion which I initiated in the February 1990 issue of *American Canals* (no. 72) on the subject of "elevator-shaft" locks—locks which are higher than they are wide. The Walter F. George Lock on the Chattahoochee River was cited, with a width of 82 feet and a lift of 88 feet, and readers were challenged to identify others. Several defunct and foreign examples were brought forward by readers, but no other operating locks in the United States which fit the category were named. Somewhat later, however, I was chagrined at discovering that Fort Loudon Lock, just up the Tennessee from my home, is another elevator shaft, 60 feet wide and 72 feet high. No one mentioned that six of the eight locks on the Columbia-Snake waterway have lifts greater than their 86-foot width—along with John Day, The Dalles Lock on the Columbia, and all four on the Snake.

In a 1989 publication, the Corps of Engineers refers to John Day as "the highest single-lift lock in the free world"—whatever that means. Bonneville Lock, with a mere 70-foot lift, is now the runt of the Columbia-Snake family. When it was first built, however, in 1937, it was (still quoting the Corps of Engineers) "the highest single-lift lock in the world." Clearly, whether we are looking for guillotines, elevator shafts, or just plain towering size, this is a waterway of superlatives. How come it seems that nobody ever heard of it?

NEWS RELEASE

Terry Woods edited that portion of Pearl Nye's unpublished manuscript that described the Ohio & Erie Canal from Lock No. 16 in Akron, south to Lock No. 1. This appeared in the second issue of TOWPATHS (the quarterly publication of The Canal Society of Ohio) for 1989. Terry has now edited the remaining portions of Nye's manuscript from Cleveland to within a quarter of a mile of the Bolivar aqueduct. Anyone wishing a copy of this typewritten effort may send a stamped (two first class stamps please), self-addressed, legal-size envelope to Terry at 6939 Eastham Circle, Canton, Ohio, 44708.



Guillotine gate at an elevator-shaft lock. This is Lower Monumental Lock, Snake River mile 41.7. Length: 666 feet; width: 86 feet; lift: 103 feet. Built: 1961-1969.

CANAL CALENDAR

March 20, April 24, 1994.

Spring walks along Delaware Canal. Canal Society of New Jersey.

March 20, May 8, 1994.

Old Santee Canal (SC) Sundown Canoe Trip
Contact: Mary S. Bell (803) 899-5200.

April 2, May 7, June 4, 1994.

C and O Canal (MD) VIP Workday 9 A.M. to Noon
Contact: John Lindt (301) 469-6381

April 8-10, 1994.

Canal Society of Indiana. Spring tour at Terre Haute on the Wabash and Erie Canal.

April 16 - April 30, 1994.

Justice William O. Douglas 40 year Commemorative Hike on the C and O Canal (MD).

April 29-30, 1994.

Joint Tour (PCS and CSNYS) on the Delaware and Hudson Canal, eastern section (NY).

May 27-29, 1994.

Virginia Canal and Navigation Society Annual Meeting on the Shenandoah Navigation at Harper's Ferry.

May 29, 1994.

Outdoor Celebration at Colonial Park East Millstone on the Delaware and Raritan Canal. 25th Anniversary of the Canal Society of New Jersey.

Canal Way Trail Albany to Buffalo

Excerpted from "THE CANALER," Fall 1993 published by the Canal Corp., a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority.

A "Canal Way Trail" will stretch the length of the New York State Canal System, enhancing recreational opportunities for all canal system uses.

Plans for the trail were announced recently by Gov. Mario M. Cuomo and Thruway Authority/Canal Corporation Chairman Peter Tufo.

"The Canal Way Trail offers an exciting opportunity for recreational users to explore the beauty and history of the canal, which played such a vital role in the development of New York State and the Midwestern United States," Gov. Cuomo said.

The initial phase of the Canal Way Trail will extend and improve more than 120 miles of trails by 1995, increasing public access and opening up the canal corridor for land-based recreational use. This initial phase is on state-owned right-of-way. It may be a combination of paved trail and fine gravel, referred to as "stone dust."

The Governor noted that the trail system will connect cities and villages with agricultural areas and pristine open spaces, and also provide enhanced access to the cultural and recreational resources of the canal, including parks, museums and historic sites.

"Thanks are due to Canal Corporation Chairman Peter Tufo for initiating this program," Gov. Cuomo said.

Through cooperative efforts among state and local governments and volunteer trail organizations, five trail segments have been identified for initial completion. This first phase will include the development of new trails as well as enhancements in areas where trails are in deteriorated condition.

Work planned for this year includes about five miles of trail along the Old Erie Canal near Rome, where work on the canal began on July 4, 1817. This five-mile section will be constructed by Thruway maintenance forces.

Phase one improvements to existing trails will include: 37 miles of trail along the Old Erie Canal between Rome and Syracuse (portion between Rome and Canastota being designed this year, with work due to be completed by early next year); segments east and west of Rochester totaling 25 miles (including eight-mile segment between Pittsford and Perinton being designed this year, completed early next), and 16 miles between Lockport and Medina.

New trails to be constructed in the first phase are: more than 40 miles between Herkimer and Fort Hunter in the Mohawk Valley, and nine miles along the Glens Falls feeder canal, between Fort Edward and Glens Falls in the Champlain Canal section.

Trail planning will be coordinated closely with the on-going efforts of the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; Department of Environmental Conservation, Department of Transportation, and local trail groups that have been instrumental in creating and maintaining trails along nearly a third of the canal system.

"I am pleased to be a partner in this important endeavor. I look forward to coordinating the planning, design and implementation of the trails program with local governments and trail organizations," Mr. Tufo said. "I applaud the spirit of volunteerism and service by organizations such as the Erie Canal Trail Committee in the Mohawk Valley, E.R.I.E. (Erie's Restoration Interests Everyone) in Wayne County, the Erie Canal Parkway in Jordan, the Town of Camillus Erie Canal Park, and the Feeder Alliance in Glens Falls in laying the groundwork for the end-to-end trail."

PASSENGER PACKETS ON THE OHIO AND ERIE CANAL—PART I

By Terry K. Woods

[An earlier version of this article appeared in the fall 1989 issue of *The Gamut*, a publication of Cleveland State University. It is republished here with their permission. This is the first of two parts.]

Nothing, perhaps, epitomizes the glories of the canal age as much as visions of the magnificent express passenger packets, flying along at near the speed of a trotting horse, six white stallions with belled harness jingling up front of the gleaming white- and green-trimmed craft with an immaculately-clad captain tending to the passengers' every want and desire. Charles Dickens's vivid description of travel on Pennsylvania's Main Line Canal and Mrs. Trollope's acid-tongued accounts of her experiences on the Erie seem to be mandatory in any written account of the canal age of any state or system. But each system of canals, by custom and necessity, developed craft designs and operating procedures unique to itself. The Ohio & Erie Canal was no exception.

The first section of the Ohio & Erie Canal to be opened for traffic was the 37-mile northernmost stretch between Akron and Cleveland. On July 3, 1827, a boat credited by most historians as being the first canal boat constructed within the state, and named, appropriately enough, the *State of Ohio*, left Akron for Cleveland carrying dignitaries to the opening ceremonies scheduled there for the next day. On board were the governor, several of the canal commissioners and canal fund commissioners, and a number of passengers who paid \$5.00 each for the privilege of making this historic journey. Thus, passenger traffic on the Ohio & Erie Canal was inaugurated the day before the canal was officially opened, on the 4th of July, 1827.

That same month, John Blair of Cleveland brought the boat *Henry Clay* from the Erie Canal and began a freight and passenger line. He had a sign painted for the boat's side, "The Farmer's Line—Night and Day." Blair also acquired the *Sun* under Captain Munson and began a regular passenger service between Cleveland and Akron on September 25, 1827. That 38-mile trip took from 15 to 20 hours to complete, but with a new canal, and hundreds of tons of freight rushing in both directions before winter came, clogging the canal and causing delays at the locks, it's no wonder that the *Sun* was given plenty of time to complete its journey. For the rest of the 1827 boating season (the canal froze over around Christmas that year) the *Sun* left Cleveland at 8:00 p.m. each Monday and Friday and departed Akron for the return trip on Tuesday and Saturday afternoons at 5:00 p.m.

As completed sections were added to the canal (it was finished through to Portsmouth on the Ohio River on December 1, 1832) additional passenger boats were added. For a number of years to come, though, the Ohio & Erie could boast no true express packets such as those of the Erie Canal,

those narrow, swift, top-of-the-line craft that carried only through passengers, express freight, and often U.S. mail. Instead, the combination boat, with several bow and stern cabins fitted up nicely for passengers, but with the midsection reserved for cargo, dominated traffic on the Ohio & Erie.

Charles Dickens never traveled on the Ohio & Erie Canal, but Alexander Phillip Maximilian, Prince of Weid in Rhenish Prussia, did. In 1834, he took a trip from Portsmouth north to Cleveland and described a typical early Ohio passenger packet:

"This fine canal is navigated by numerous boats, which are built on the same style as the keelboats of the Missouri, but have many convenient small chambers; they are from seventy to eighty feet in length, fourteen in breadth, and are drawn by two horses, on which the driver is seated. These Ohio Canal boats are not so well arranged and fitted up as those on the Erie canal, where they have distinct boats for goods and passengers, which is not here the case. They are also slower because fewer horses are employed. In the middle of the boat is the long space for the goods; in front two small cabins; and at the back is the saloon or dining room. At the sides of the cabins are cushioned seats, on which, as well as on the floor, the beds are arranged for the night. In the other cabins are berths for the ladies."

The Women's Viewpoint

We also have a description of the ladies' cabin on one of these boats that would have done Mrs. Trollope proud. Mary Pratt, wife of the first president of Granville College, traveled from Cleveland to Newark aboard a canal boat in 1831 and described her accommodations in a letter to her parents:

"The boat on which we last took passage was so crowded with passengers as to render it very uncomfortable and unhealthy. Our party was composed of men, women and children—and even babies, the noise of which you know I am not overly fond. Such an unrefined, illiterate, filthy set I never saw before and do not desire to see again."

"The ladies' cabin was nearly half as large as your little kitchen, with six berths in it. Six grown women, three of which had babies, and one little girl, were stowed into this place. I occupied an upper berth, which was so high that I was in reality, placed on the upper shelf."

Lift locks, the method of going from one elevation to another, were 15 feet wide by 90 feet long. This limited the size of all canal boats to a length of from 75 to 85 feet and a width of from 13½ to 14½ feet. The early packets from the heavily traveled eastern canals such as the Erie and the Pennsylvania Main Line were narrow and sleek. A typical Erie packet was 11 feet wide by 75 feet long, with a five-foot high cabin on deck, even though locks on that canal were the same size as

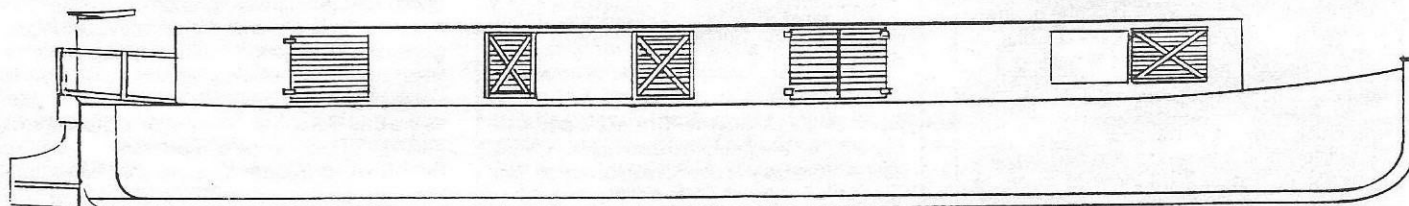
those on the Ohio & Erie. The Ohio packets, even the early ones, used the full available dimensions, though their lines were somewhat sleeker than those of the freight boats that were developed later to crowd the maximum amount of tonnage into a limited package.

A typical Ohio passenger packet of the 1830s was 77 to 80 feet long and 14 feet wide, with a long, low "house" over its entire length that was divided into many small compartments. Located at the stern of this typical packet were the kitchen and cooking apparatus, along with the sleeping rooms for the cook and crew, and the "necessary convenience." Next came a cabin about 10 feet square which was the saloon or dining area. In the middle of the boat would be the long space for the cargo. Next would be two small cabins in the bow which were sitting rooms for the passengers, one about 10 by 12 feet, used by the gentlemen, and a smaller cabin about 10 by 5 feet for the ladies. Occasionally the two would be separated only by a curtain. This caused some embarrassment if the boat should be slammed against one of the stone walls of a lock while being raised or lowered to another level and unceremoniously pitch a passenger into the area reserved for the opposite sex, particularly if the traveler had been preparing for bed.

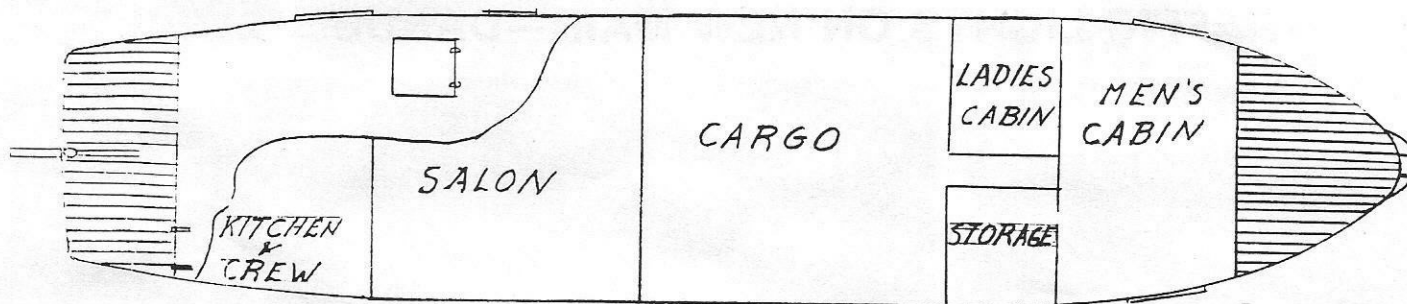
One advantage of traveling by canal was that miles could be traveled while a passenger slept. The sitting rooms and dining hall converted into sleeping quarters. Despite Mrs. Pratt's "upper shelf" and the grim admission of one young traveler that sleeping on a canal boat berth gave a person "about as much elbow room as a man might find in his coffin," some of the sleeping arrangements on Ohio's early packets weren't bad. Cushioned settees within the sitting rooms doubled as sleeping couches. Additional cushions strewn about the floors of the other cabins took care of the remainder of the passengers. All of this luxury, including meals, which were in the American tradition of "heavy, salty and a lot," cost the traveler about 5 cents per mile. At that rate, a trip the entire length of the canal from Portsmouth to Cleveland would cost about \$15.45.

These early Ohio packets were slower than many of the eastern packets. As a rule, they employed fewer horses, and their larger bulk didn't conduce to speed. A speed limit of four miles per hour was imposed upon all boats navigating the Ohio & Erie, lest the wake from a faster craft damage the earthen banks. Also, the captains of these early packets paid little attention to strict schedule, but "sailed" whenever expected cargo and/or passengers were on board.

Until 1837, no locktenders were employed by the state for the Ohio & Erie canal. The captain of each boat was required to send a crew member on ahead to "fit" a lock as it was reached. When there were many locks per mile, then, it was



Elevation view of a combination packet-cargo boat. (Sketch by the author.)



Plan view of a typical early Ohio and Erie combination packet and cargo vessel. (Sketch by the author.)

useless to work the animals at a faster pace than a man could run. Occasionally, to help make time, able-bodied male passengers were pressed into service to assist in fitting the locks.

Cyrus Bradley, a 17-year-old Dartmouth College student, took a western trip in 1835 and kept a rather detailed journal of his experiences which included taking a packet north out of Portsmouth:

"Several steamboats arrived last night and this morning, and brought several more passengers, so that we are sufficiently crowded for all good purposes. Indeed, I began to suspect that the captain, having no freight, was not particularly anxious to cast off last night (when promised) but was willing to add to the number of his passengers

"Our breakfast was plain enough, a piece of bacon, a piece of mackerel, both salt as the Atlantic, baker's bread and butter....Close to Portsmouth are a number of locks, and we were a long time getting started. At one place we had to go ashore and assist them in opening the gate. This kind of traveling is undoubtedly pleasant enough for a short time, when one doesn't feel in a hurry, so as to feel impatient at the delay of the plaguey locks. There are a great many of them on this canal in its whole extent—no long levels, as in the great New Yorker. They go slow, about 60 miles a day."

Four Miles an Hour

Though a packet could approach a speed of four miles an hour on the levels between locks, the time required to fit and negotiate the numerous locks (there were 146 of them between Cleveland and Portsmouth) limited a day's travel to the 60 miles noted by Bradley. A pace of 80 to 90 miles per day was regularly maintained by the packets on the Erie. A trip on an early Ohio packet from Lake Erie to the Ohio River would take a little more than five days, though if accidents or breaks in the canal banks occurred, hours or days could be added to that time.

There were no locks or speed limits upon the roads and a traveler could average well over four miles per hour by stage if he could arrange for daylight, good weather, and passable roads. The problem was that the majority of the roads in Ohio, as well as in the rest of the country, were literally impassable for wheeled vehicles much of the year. Severe accidents and overturned carriages were common occurrences. Young Bradley grew impatient at Chillicothe and he and three other passengers rented a hack to go to Circleville, where they caught a stage. His narrative continues above Columbus:

"The road in the afternoon was, if possible, worse than before dinner. Besides the usual depth of mud, we would occasionally, without warning, dive into a hole of unknown depth, filled with a black mud, whose murky consistency effectively concealed the mysteries of the interior—and there stick. This they called being stalled—and on such occasions we were obliged to take a fence rail and help along. At one of these "swales" we broke

our main tug and most of us concluded to walk on while it was repairing.

"Where the fences were not covered up or carried away, we usually crossed these places by an interesting process which these fellows term "cooning the fence"—that is by clinging to the fence rails with fingers and toes and worming along in the best manner the case will admit of. For inducing a general perspiration, I know of nothing which surpasses it. But the grotesque figures, the grimaces and the reluctance which some of our grave old gentlemen displayed at this undignified and laborious way of traveling, was truly amusing. Being rather active, I generally got over first and then had a fine time laughing at their awkward maneuvers and occasional faux pas." Apparently, in spite of their shortcomings, the early Ohio canal packets were used by the wealthy and influential.

The packet lines, or companies, during this period of time appear to have been loosely-knit groups of individual boat owners and renters of towing animals. What schedules there may have been were hardly adhered to. A runner for a hotel or steamship line would inform prospective passengers that a packet was about to leave port. When the vessel was loaded as full as the captain desired, he would leave. It would take an early Ohio packet however long it took to get to its next stop, and then the whole procedure would be repeated.

All this changed, at least in intention, in March of 1837, when the *Ohio Canal Packet Boat Company* was organized in Cleveland for \$50,000 as a private stock company. The company had a fleet of "eight new and well-furnished boats," one each of which left Cleveland and Portsmouth every 24 hours for the three-day trip to the canal's other terminus. These craft, then, were true express packets, running on fixed scheduled between the major cities on the Ohio & Erie Canal and junction points with other canal systems. The next five or six years can be considered to be the heyday of passenger travel on the canal.

These express packets, carrying only passengers, express packages, and U.S. mail, ran the length of the canal and its major branches. Schedules were set up so that interconnections could be made for travelers heading in any direction. Packets running north and south on the canal interchanged at Lockbourne with boats coming down the feeder canal from Columbus, at Dresden with travelers from the Muskingum and Lower Ohio River steamers, and at Akron with the eastern packets of the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal. Travelers could then leave a packet at either Ohio canal terminus and book passage on a steamer for any port along the Great Lakes or lower rivers.

During the heyday period, the Ohio canal packets were the equals in speed and comfort of any in the nation. Nineteenth-century British author James S. Buckingham left Columbus on a packet bound for Portsmouth on April 30th, 1840:

"I found the canal-boat quite as commodious

as those on the Erie canal, in which we had traversed part of the State of New York, but with the same inconvenience of course and disagreeable companions as fellow travelers, though the Captain and his wife who superintended the ladies' cabin, were both very desirous to gratify our wishes, and made us as comfortable as their arrangements would admit. The boat was drawn by three horses and our rate of speed was about four miles per hour. The canal was in good condition, the weather beautiful."

[To be continued.]

INTERNATIONAL CANALS CONFERENCE

Further to the 1993 International Canals Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia, British Waterways and IWA International would like to host the 1996 conference in the U.K. This represents an excellent opportunity to hold the first truly global conference on canals.

IWA International and B.W. are looking forward to working in partnership to host this major event.

Tom Brock, British Waterways

BOOK REVIEW

A little-known (to Americans) canal in the south of France suddenly became world famous when the November 1993 issue of *American Canals* was published. Therein was a comprehensive report by Bruce Russell of the Canal Society of New Jersey's two week trip on the 300 year old Canal of Midi (continued in this issue).

Synchronistically, your editor received a book for review entitled "The Canal of the Midi and Pierre-Paul Riquet" by Jacques Morand. The canal is in the Languedoc region in France, which is wine producing country with a pleasant climate.

The book deals with construction details of the canal and presents the architect, Riquet, as a genius among engineers of his time. Engineering drawings are presented in the book, as well as maps showing the canal extending from the Atlantic coast (Bay of Biscay) to the Mediterranean Sea, where Riquet constructed a port, Sète.

The latter two-thirds of the book consists of a collection of exquisite photographs, many showing the characteristic oval locks of the canal and the water slope structure, designed to lift boats without locks.

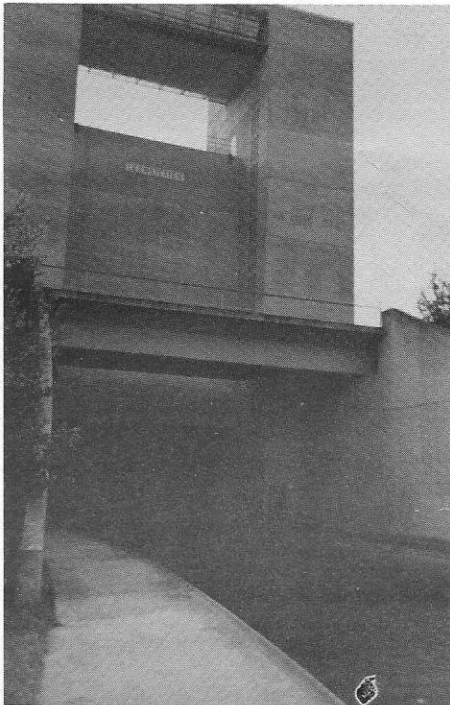
The book may be ordered from the publisher: EDISUD, La Calade - R.N. 7, 13090 Aix-en-Provence, France.

The cost is about \$30 U.S. and can be charged to your Visa account. Specify the English edition (Also available in FRENCH!)

For the serious canal collector, this book would be an important addition to your library. By D.L.W.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS ON NEW MAIN—DANUBE CANAL

By George Johnston



Guillotine gate on the Leerstetten Lock on the Main-Danube Canal, ten kilometers south of Nurnberg, looking south.

On a bike trip along the Main-Danube Canal I found traffic lights on the link opened in September 1992. (See *American Canals* No. 82, August 1992.) Tows were more common than the ships, which are more common on the Rhine. A number of recreational boats were seen with some anchored for a swim near the summit level. The water seemed quite clean there.

All locks and aqueducts were of similar construction. The locks use the guillotine type rather than swing gates. These are shown in the accompanying photographs.



A large tow of stone, leaving a lock about 30 kilometers south of Nurnberg, looking south.

The path along the canal is primarily fine packed gravel rather than asphalt or concrete and is better suited to mountain bike tires than the narrow tires. Bike routes along the Main from Frankfurt to Nurnberg were much better.

The main reason for the light traffic became apparent as I continued the trip on to eastern Europe. The conflict in the former Yugoslavia severely restricted through traffic on the Danube. Little traffic was moving above Russe, Bulgaria. Tourism has been greatly affected also. Hydrofoil service which ran from Russe to Vidin near the Serbian border last year was discontinued and the boats sit idle on the shore. Economic development in Bulgaria and other countries with Black Sea access is being slowed by these problems. Russe and Vidin are attractive port cities and it is hoped that the Yugoslavian situation can be resolved soon and they may reach their potential and become highly desirable destinations for us.



An aqueduct on the Main-Danube Canal 8 kilometers south of Nurnberg, looking north.

CORRIDOR STUDY COMPLETED

The long-awaited Ohio & Erie Canal Corridor Study, "A Route to Prosperity," is now printed. It was distributed for review to supporters, executives of the National Park Service, the media and members of Congress on September 10.

The 80-page study is the result of almost three years' effort by the staff of the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, headed by Paul Labovitz. The study concluded that the Corridor indeed has national significance.

Legislation to make the corridor a reality is currently being drafted. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Ralph Regula of Ohio's 17th District, hopes that it will be introduced before January, 1994.

Copies of the study are in limited supply. To obtain one, call or write the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, care of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, 15610 Vaughn Rd., Brecksville, OH 44141, 216/657-2950.

(From "The Silver Ribbon", Nov. 1993)

"LOCK, STOP AND BARREL"

Bill Trout picked up this item as published in a recent issue of the newsletter of the Association for Great Lakes Maritime History.

... Pierre Kountouris, who operates a Greek restaurant in St. Catharines, has signed a long-term lease to open a \$300,000, 160-seat restaurant on the top floor of the building that houses the St. Catharines Museum at Lock 3 on the Welland Canal. It has tentatively been named "Lock, Stop and Barrel." The space has been vacant since the museum complex opened in 1990.