

AMERICAN CANALS

BULLETIN OF
THE AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

Vol. XXXIV, No. 1

Dedicated to Historic Canal Research, Preservation, and Parks

Winter 2005

Romania's Danube-Black Sea Canal

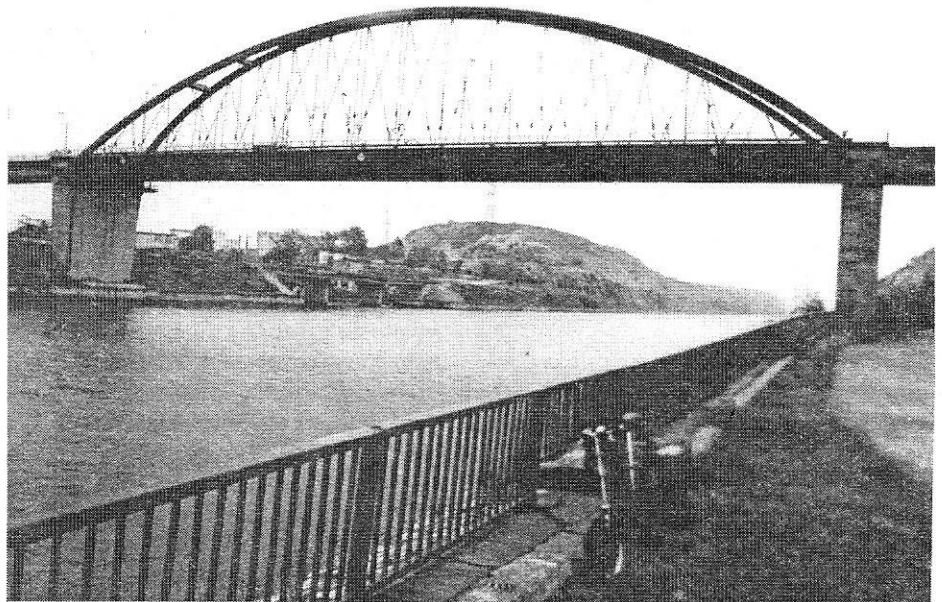
By George B. Johnston, Jr.

The Danube-Black Sea Canal is the final link to the eastern terminus of the North Sea-Black Sea waterway. In 1992, the opening of the Main-Danube Canal made passage from the North Sea to Black Sea possible via the Rhine, Main, and Danube. This inspired a bicycle journey I took in 1993, roughly paralleling the waterway where possible. American Canals No. 88 of February 1994, reported on the Main-Danube link. On that trip I traveled a bit on a Rhine cruise ship and by train in parts of Germany, Hungary, and Romania. In 2001 and 2002, I returned to those areas and biked all the missing links to form a complete crossing of Europe by bicycle. The final link took me along the Danube-Black Sea Canal. In 2003 I further explored the eastern part of that canal.

In 2002, I crossed the canal at Basarabi, traveling by road on my 16 inch folding bicycle to the last lock at Agigea and to the coast, to complete my crossing of Europe by bike. The road bridge west of the lock and the railroad bridge to the east give views of both ends of the lock.

In 2003, I started at the eastern end and traveled along the service road between the two road bridges. I used a 20 inch seven speed folding bike this time, but a serious mountain bike would have been more suitable. I rode the south service road and had a map that showed several other canal crossings, but they were just vestiges of pre-canal roads and there were no crossings for 20 km. The service road didn't seem to have had any maintenance since the fall of communism in 1989 and was overgrown with brush in some places and a

(Continued on page 3)



Canal bridge at Basarabi, looking east.

Photo by the author.



Lock at Agigea, looking west from the railroad bridge.
Note the highway bridge beyond the end of the lock.

Photo by the author.

American Canals

BULLETIN OF THE
AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

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The objectives of the American Canal Society are to encourage the preservation, restoration, interpretation, and use of the historical navigational canals of the Americas; to save threatened canals; and to provide an exchange of canal information. Manuscripts and other correspondence consistent with these objectives are welcome.

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DEADLINE: Material for our next issue must be on the editor's desk no later than June 15, 2005. Send to Paul Bartczak, 9954 New Oregon Road, Eden, New York 14057; PJBartczak@earthlink.net

Material submitted to *AMERICAN CANALS* for publication should be double-spaced and on one side of the paper only; or material may be emailed in WORD format to: PJBartczak@earthlink.net
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Lock at Agigea, looking east from the road bridge.
Note the railroad bridge beyond the east end of the lock.

Photo by the author.

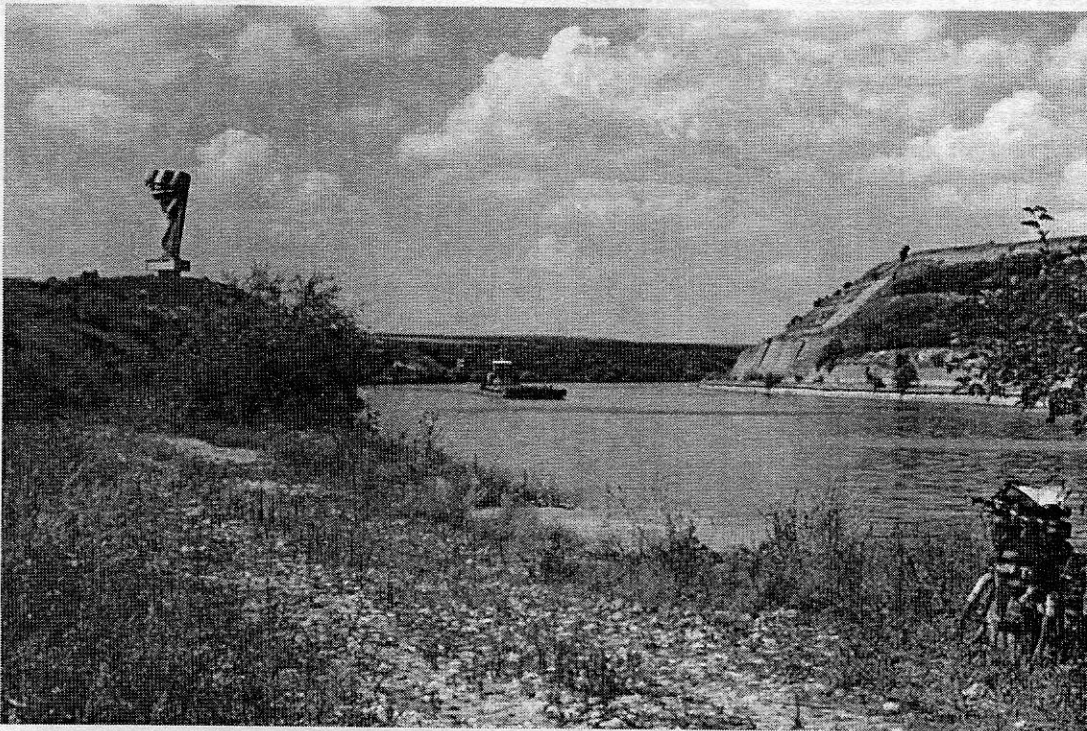
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muddy bog in others. The north road appeared better, but I'm not sure it is completely passable either.

In my half day beside the canal I saw two Romanian towboats, the *Rovari 8*

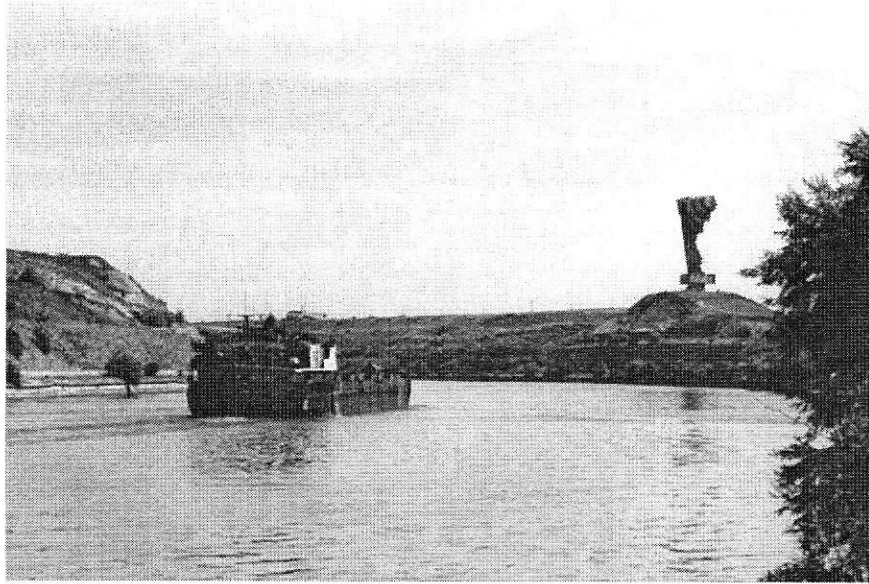
and the *Filiasi II*. The most interesting and puzzling sight, though, was the ship *Vilyusk*, home port Phnom Penh, Cambodia. It didn't look terribly seaworthy, but perhaps it had crossed the Indian Ocean, the Suez canal, the

Mediterranean, the sea of Marmara, and the Black Sea and was now returning. It's an interesting thought anyway. I spotted both it and *Filiasi II* about 5 km south of Basarabi near the monument to the construction of the



Romanian towboat *Filiasi II*, about 5 km south of Basarabi.
Note the monument commemorating the construction of the canal.

Photo by the author.



Vessel *Viluysk* (Home port: Phnom Penh, Cambodia) about 5 km south of Basarabi, near the canal commemorative monument.

Photo by the author.

canal. There was some maintenance on the service road near the bridge at Basarabi, but it appeared purely local. I continued by road from there, crossing the branch canal to the coast at Navodari, but catching only a few glimpses of the canal until reaching Cernavoda. I crossed the canal for the last time there. In August of 2003, one chamber was drained for maintenance giving an excellent view of the first lock on the canal near the junction with

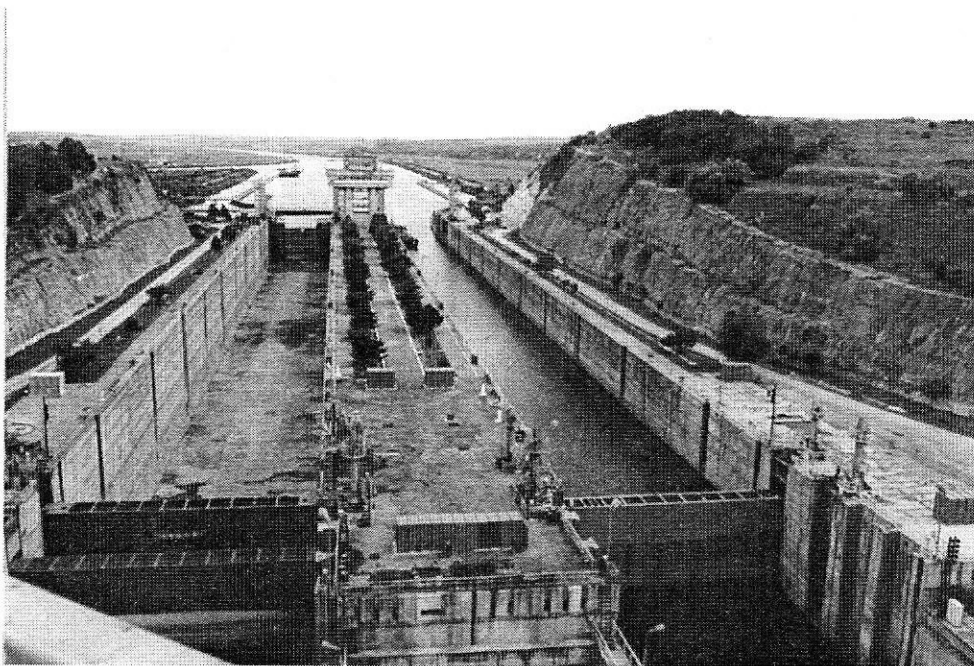
the Danube.

The Danube flows north from there to inland port cities, Braila and Galati, with a branch through Tulcea to the Danube delta nature preserve, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The navigation channel continues through the Ukraine to the sea. The canal route is over 200 km shorter, though.

Romania still has many security holdovers from the communist days so access to facilities is still rather

restricted, but could probably be arranged with the proper connections. My observations are limited to personal experience while on the fly on my bicycle.

There are now cruise ships covering most of the North Sea-Black Sea route and I think they would be most enjoyable for canal enthusiasts. They would be much more comfortable than doing it on a bicycle, but not nearly as adventurous.



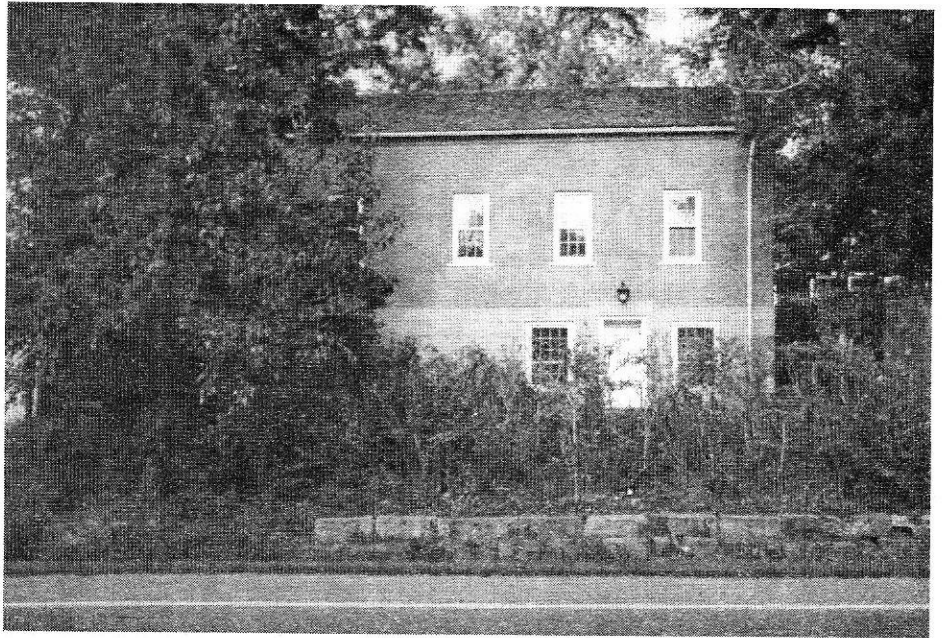
The first lock on the canal at Cernavoda.

Photo by the author.

Canal Operation: Collection of Tolls on the Ohio & Erie Canal

By Terry K. Woods
Member ACS Engineering
Design, Operation &
Maintenance Committee

We all have an intimate knowledge of toll collecting, at least from a paying of tolls standpoint. This 'paying' can consist of stopping our conveyance and following the exchange of a cardboard 'ticket' with money, throwing a handful of change into a large metal funnel, or having a 'transponder' electronically back-charge our account as we zip through. Sure, we're all familiar with toll collection. We are all also familiar with the way tolls were collected and/or paid on our nation's early canals, aren't we? I thought I was until someone new in the hobby asked me how the procedure worked and my 'simple' explanation bogged down quickly in details. Now, with the help of research material from Dave Newhardt, past president of the Canal Society of Ohio, and Wilma Hunt, Historian of Ohio's Roscoe Village, I



Roscoe Toll Collector's office on September 16, 2004. Note the same stone wall along the berm bank of the canal which was visible in the early 20th century photo. Ohio Route #16 now runs past the office in the bed of the old canal.

Photo by the author.

think we finally have a handle on this important and very basic canal operation procedure.

The basic procedure for the collection of tolls on Ohio's Canals was rather straight-forward. "A Bill of Lading, prepared by the Freight Line or Boat Master, was required that listed and described the various cargo items by destination, type and number of containers or weight."¹ The carrying of bulk cargo was rare during the early operating days of the Ohio Canal, so it was only necessary to ascertain, or estimate, the weight of an average container and multiply by the total number of containers to determine the weight of the cargo. The Cleveland collector's office contained portable scales as early as 1831 to verify a Bill of Lading. It is assumed that the other Collector's Offices on the Ohio Canal did also. It is doubtful, however, if these scales were used as a matter of course as Collectors were authorized to question a boat's Master "Under Oath" to ascertain if his Bill of Lading was true. If any passengers were on board, their names were listed separately along with a description and weight of their luggage and possessions.²

If a craft were to begin its voyage on the Ohio Canal at a point where there was a Collector's Office, or within a mile of such an office, the Master of

(Continued on page 7)



Roscoe area early in the 20th century. The Toll Collector's office is the building at the far left of the photo. The presence of the sanitary facility near the edge of the canal denotes that this is an urban area. Note the stone wall along the berm bank of the canal beneath the outhouse.

Photo courtesy of Roscoe Village Foundation.

SPECIAL CANAL COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

January 17, 1829.

Toll Collectors Appointed.

MIAMI CANAL

Cincinnati Samuel McHenry
Hamilton Turson Gayor
Middletown John E. Reynolds
Dayton James H. Mitchell

OHIO CANAL

Cleveland D.H. Beardsley
Akron Samuel Wheeler
Massillon James Duncan
Dover Jacob Blickensderfer
Newark Amos Van Horn

RATES OF TOLL ON THE PUBLIC WORKS OF OHIO

As established by the Board of Public Works together with Tables of Distances & C. Columbus,
Samuel Medbury's Power Press Print, 1843

COLLECTORS

Ohio Canal

Cleveland D.H. Beardsley
Akron R.K. Dubois
Massillon Z.S. Stocking
Dover N.V. Bresson
Roscoe John D. Patten

Newark T.P. Owens
Carroll John Waddle
Circleville W.E. Delaplain
Chillicothe James Miller
Portsmouth T.H. Allyn

WALHONDING CANAL

Roscoe John D. Patten

HOCKING CANAL

Carroll John Waddle
Chauncy J.E. Price

MIAMI CANAL

Cincinnati E. Converse
Hamilton John Crane

MIAMI EXTENSION CANAL

Dayton E.A. King
Piqua James Carson

WABASH & ERIE CANAL

Defiance James Cheney
Maumee City Thos. Clark 2nd.
Toledo A.L. Backus

MUSKINGUM IMPROVEMENT

Zanesville John T. Arthur
McConnelsville Geo. Russell
Harmar Wm. Smith

(Continued from page 5)

the craft would present his Bill of Lading to that Collector. All tolls on the various items of cargo and/or passengers to their various destinations were paid here by the Master of the craft. Then, a clearance was issued by the Collector showing the types and destinations of each item of cargo. A separate Clearance for the boat would also be issued here that would clear the boat to the point where the farthest item of cargo was cleared.³

If a canal boat began its journey at a point where there was no Collector's Office, it was allowed to travel to the first Office it passed on its journey without a clearance. All the tolls for cargo and/or passengers would be paid at this office and clearances obtained.⁴

The Master of a Canal Boat was required to show that Clearance to each successive Collector's Office encountered during the journey. If new cargo was picked up at or before a Collector's Office, an additional Bill of Lading would be prepared and a new Clearance issued. If cargo was to be unloaded at this point or at a point before the next Collector's Office was reached, that cargo might have been inspected by the Collector. If all was in order, a Permit of Unlading was issued.⁵ Any Lock Tender, Supervisor, etc. of the Ohio Canal could demand to see any boat's Clearance and Bills of Lading.⁶ Each time a Clearance was examined or altered by a canal official, that official was to sign it.

At the termination of a Canal Boat's journey, the various cargo Clearances, Bills of Lading and cargo were liable to be inspected by the Collector at whose office the cargo was to be off-loaded or at the last Collector's Office that boat would pass before off loading cargo. In the latter case, the Collector would issue a permit to allow the Master to take his craft to its final destination.⁷

No boat was to receive a Clearance to proceed further along a canal than any item of its cargo.⁸ One has to wonder what provisions, if any, were made for boats running 'light' (empty) further along the canal to collect new cargo or returning to home port.

As with any 'simple' procedures where humans are involved, 'weak spots' in the system were quickly discovered and

exploited. The first section of the Ohio Canal (approximately 37 miles between Akron and Cleveland) was opened on July 4, 1827. As early as September, 1828 the Collector at Cleveland was searching 'up canal' for a "Mr. Clink" who was carrying freight and passengers on a Scow between the Offices of Cleveland and Akron and not paying toll at either place.⁹

Laws and Acts were quickly passed to plug loopholes in the system and to assign fines and penalties for any boatman audacious enough to try and take advantage of them.¹⁰ In cases like "Mr. Clink's", it became a requirement for the Master of any craft operating between Collector's Offices to present his Bill of Ladings for any such voyages to the nearest Collector's Office and pay the full tolls within 10 days of the termination of any such voyage. Failure to do so resulted in a \$20.00 fine for each offense and, we assume, also payment of the tolls.¹¹

If Master of a craft should attempt to depart from any Collector's Office without a proper Clearance or to pass a

Collector's Office without showing his Clearance, he was subjected to a \$10.00 fine, plus double tolls.¹²

If a cargo item was found to have exceeded the weight or quantity listed in the Bill of Lading, through an honest mistake, the Collector at the end of the voyage would receive the toll from this excess prior to issuing a Permit of Unlading. If the Collector missed the excess, the Master of the craft was obligated to report the infraction or risk paying a \$25.00 fine and double toll on the excess.¹³ On the other hand, a Master who signed or delivered a knowingly false Bill of Lading had to pay treble toll on the unreported cargo for the entire distance of the voyage and be charged with a misdemeanor in a Court of Law.¹⁴

The paperwork a Collector was required to maintain appears to have been substantial. Every craft operating on any of Ohio's State canals was required to be registered - Master's Name, Owner, Port of origin, etc. - at the nearest Collector's Office. The Collector maintained these



The Weigh Lock in Cleveland in 1904. This was the second location for this facility since the northern three miles of the canal were given to the city of Cleveland and the city, in turn, gave the land to the Valley Railroad in 1879. This new stretch of the canal, including a new outlet lock and weigh lock, was opened in late 1878.

Photo courtesy of the late Ted Dettling of Akron, Ohio

“Certificates of Register”. They were also required to maintain a book of all the Clearances for freight and passengers that cleared their office as well as a book of Permits of Unlading. Registered Copies of any of these documents (in pre-Xerox Machine days) could be hand copied by the Collector for 10 cents (for documents of less than 100 words) and for 20 cents for documents that were longer.¹⁵

Boats whose Masters were guilty of infractions were placed on a “wanted list” and every Collector, Lock Tender and Canal Official was ‘on the lookout’ for that boat.¹⁶ Since there were few places on a canal that a Master could hide and still do business, there appears to have been very little “breaking of the rules” –except, it seems, where Bills of Lading were concerned. There are documented examples of Masters moving cargo around, through and past Collectors and their portable scales until “less than 40% of the proper toll was counted.” “Hiding Cargo” appears to have been a game, perhaps a monetary one, between the boat Masters and the Toll Collectors. When Weigh Locks with huge balance beam Fairbanks & Company scales were installed at Cleveland and Toledo in the early 1850’s, the scales at Toledo ‘discovered’ 1957 tons of ‘excess’ cargo in the first 80 days of operation. This projected a yearly savings of \$3,788.00, or 15% of the installation cost. Canal officials were so pleased that three additional units were ordered, to be placed at Cincinnati, Junction and Portsmouth. The facts are, however, that the three new scales were never installed and the one at Toledo was soon found “unnecessary in conducting the business of the canal” and removed. One hates to cast doubt on long-dead officials, but we can’t but wonder if the “kick back” is a modern invention after all.¹⁷

Ohio’s State Owned Canals were leased to a many-headed consortium in 1860. When the canal system was returned to the state in 1878 as the result of an ‘abandoned lease’, passenger service was gone as were the formal freight lines. Now, most of the boats operating the truncated canal system were individually owned and operated. Usually bulk cargo, coal, stone, etc. was carried north with few

cargos or ‘light’ boats running south. Bills of Lading were still prepared and tolls still collected, though many of the stringent rules of Clearances and Permits of Unlading seem to have disappeared with time.

So when next you are stopped in line at a bridge or turnpike toll booth, think back upon the canal Toll Collector, with his Canal Boat Registers, Bills of Ladings, Clearances, Permits of Unlading and continuous watchfulness for the Law Breakers of the old canal.

Notes:

¹ LAWS for the Protection of the CANALS of the STATE OF OHIO; the Regulation of the Navigation Thereof and for the Collection of Tolls, Board of Public Works, March 20, 1844, Columbus; Samuel Medary, Printer. Section No.77.

² Ibid; Sections Nos. 85 & 86. Diary of Joseph Suppiger, 1831—diary of a Swiss family traveling into Ohio mentions scales at the Cleveland Collector’s Office. Passengers were designated as anyone 12 years of age or older, whether they were paying for their passage or “working it off”.

³ LAWS, Sections No. 74 and No. 76.

⁴ Ibid; Section No. 75.

⁵ Ibid; Section Nos. 111 and 114.

⁶ Ibid; Section No. 116.

⁷ Ibid; Section No.114.

⁸ Ibid; Section No.83.

⁹ Letter from Beardsly to Howe, October 1828. In Ohio, a “Scow” was a short, flat-bottom craft chiefly employed by contractors to move material short distances along the canal.

¹⁰ Canal Commissioners Minutes Book, Record No. 1, original in the possession of the Ohio Historical Society. On February 23, 1830 the Legislature passed an “Act to Regulate the Navigation and Collection of tolls on the Canals of this State”.

¹¹ LAWS; Section No. 81.

¹² Ibid; Section No. 113.

¹³ Ibid; Section No. 87.

¹⁴ Ibid; Sections No. 83 and 84.

¹⁵ Ibid; Sections No. 69, 92, and 108.

¹⁶ Ibid; Section No. 117.

¹⁷ Ohio’s Canals, Frank W. Trevorrow, 1973; The Weigh Lock, Pgs. 63-65.

From the President

By David G. Barber

About the last canal to be built in the towpath era was the Illinois and Mississippi Canal, usually referred to as the Hennepin Canal. The canal connects the middle of the Illinois River at Great Bend, straight west 104 miles to the Mississippi River at Rock Island. The canal was built with its 33 concrete locks, each 35 feet x170 feet, which were much larger than those of the Illinois and Michigan Canal with which it connected. When the Illinois and Michigan Canal was replaced by the Illinois Waterway, the new waterway had even larger locks. Thus the Hennepin was always out of step. Having two canals in the same area with the same I & M initials probably didn’t help either.

By 1954, the Corps of Engineers had decided that the Hennepin no longer met its commercial mission and moved to close the canal. Fortunately, the most drastic option of filling in the canal for its entire length was not adopted. Instead, the route was converted to a state park and became a long series of skinny ponds divided by non-working locks. In addition, three of the nine aqueducts were replaced by siphon culverts under the involved rivers. But the feeder and most of the route remain watered. In fact, about 40 miles of the feeder and summit level remain as a connected, watered level.

When one of our members recently asked about the possibility of restoration, he received the usual response of too high a cost. I’m sure that if any of us were asked to pay for a mile of interstate highway, we might also be blown away by the cost. But new highways keep getting built and older sections get rebuilt. That’s because the expected value of the new or rebuilt road is much greater than the cost.

So, what would be the value to the local economy of restoring a route such as the Hennepin? How does that compare to the cost? What are the operating costs? Might these costs be reduced by constructing smaller locks

beside or inside the original ones so that they could use less water and be operated by boaters instead of employees? What about the creation of a mid-west cruising ring (the canal plus the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers)? What would be the effect on tourism? Would this help the area's economy?

There is some concern about conflicting with fishing, but the fishermen use boats now. How does reconnecting the pools degrade that? Besides, east of a point halfway between Locks 6 and 5, the canal is now dry. Can't do much fishing in a dry canal. Anyone who has cruised an English canal knows that boating and fishing are very compatible. There, the pressure wave of passing boats is known to stimulate the fish.

I believe that the state park people have done a great job with the resources they have available. Our task is to help protect the canal by getting more people to have a reason to use and therefore conserve it. That will increase the resources available for the effort and the value of the result.

I believe that we need to consider our old canals as economic engines, just as they once were. Except, now the business is tourism, not transportation. If an economic case is made for restoration, the canals will be both used and preserved.

World Canals Conference – in Sweden 22-27 August 2005

In 2005, a World Canals Conference will be held in Sweden for the first time. The conference will be somewhat unusual. Apart from a well-packed package of seminars, there will be a number of exciting study visits, to both commercial and historic canals – these include everything from one of Sweden's biggest tourist attractions, the *Göta Canal*, to one of Sweden's oldest canals, the *Hjälmare Canal*. “**Canal Sweden**” will present and show some of the most extensive investments being made at present to retain and develop the canals. Evening events and excursions will encompass fine examples of Swedish culture and Swedish culinary traditions.

The conference has the sub-heading “**Six Canals in Six Days**”, and will be divided into two sections:

Main Conference 22-24 August

The conference will take place in Trollhättan, by the **Trollhätte Canal**, with its attractive surroundings, some 80 km north of Göteborg.

The main theme of the conference will be “*Historic and commercial canals in a modern society*”. This title will embrace a number of lectures and seminars, together with field trips, including subjects such as *Applying*

modern technology to historic and commercial canals and *The future of inland waterways*. Important questions will be taken up in this context concerning *The balance between the cultural heritage and commercialism, modern technology and carrying trade, waterway tourism and local society*. During this part of the conference, a field trip will also be made to **Dalsland's Canal**.

Post Conference 25-27 August

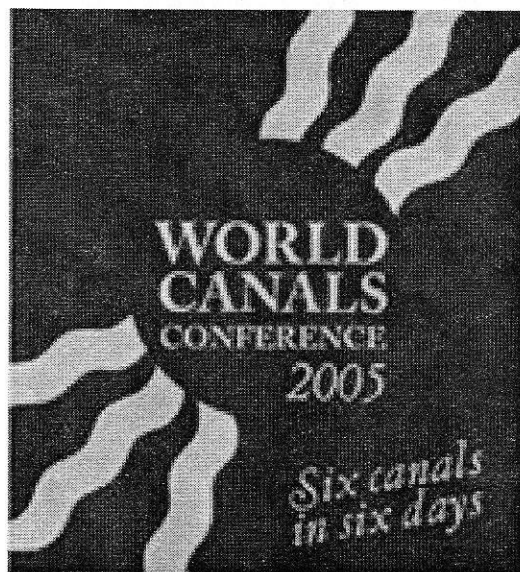
This part of the conference will show a further four Swedish canals, the **Göta Canal, Kinda Canal, Hjälmare Canal and Södertälje Canal**. These canals will be demonstrated in practical reality in connection with the issues discussed during the first three days of the main conference. The conference will end with a boat trip from *Södertälje Canal* to the beautiful Stockholm Archipelago.

Historically, Sweden has a canal tradition going back a long way. At present, some 10 canals are in use. Most are historic canals and go back to the time during which Sweden was industrialised, when the canals played an important, perhaps decisive, role for the growth of industry, and upon this the welfare of the country was built. Some canals still have commercial traffic and connect important water-courses and navigation channels. All Sweden's canals have one thing in common, whether they are of historic importance or commercial, this being that they are very important as catalysts for Swedish tourism and leisure boating. In addition, they reflect a priceless cultural heritage.

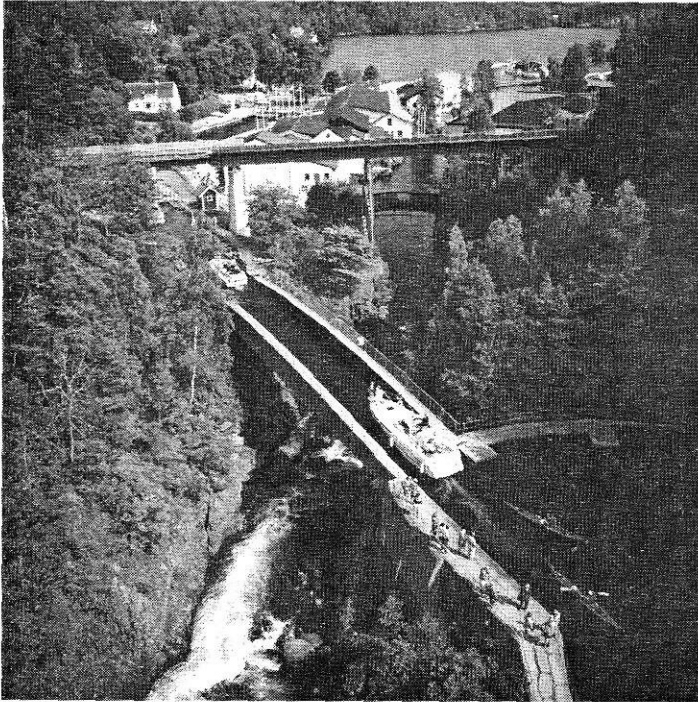
The conference is being organised by the **Association of Sweden's Canals**.

Further information concerning WCC 2005 and how to apply to participate can be found on

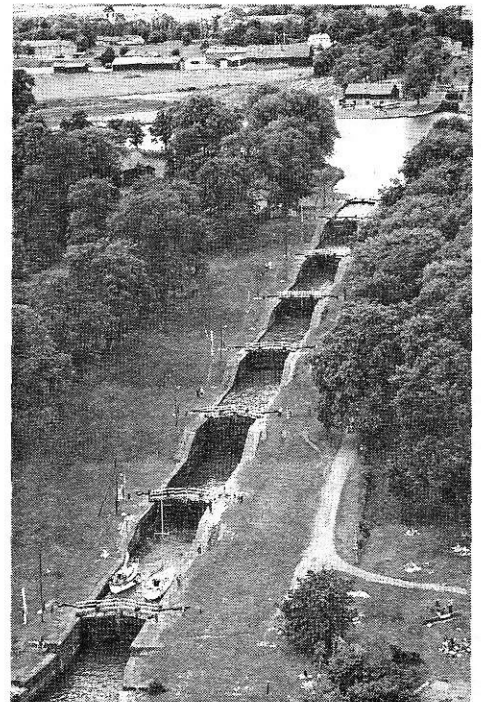
www.worldscanalsonference.org or
www.gotakanal.se



AUG 22-27, 2005
SWEDEN



The aqueduct in Häverud (Dalslands kanal).



The lock-station in Berg (Göta kanal).



Södertälje kanal

The Canal Society of New York State still has room on its fall 2005 tour of canals in the United Kingdom. Reproduced below is the Society's flyer describing this tour. If you are interested in going on this tour, contact Tom Grasso. He will advise you as to any changes in itinerary or tour pricing, and what payments you must make at this time.

CANAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK STATE

Presents

UK Canal System & England's Industrial Revolution

Wednesday, September 21 – Saturday, October 8, 2005

Spend 18 days and 16 nights traveling with Society President, Tom Grasso, on a unique odyssey across southern and western England, Wales, and Scotland including the Bridgewater and Langollen Canals to visit, cruise, and observe a wide range of canal curiosities of yesterday and today. Roman and Medieval structures will also be examined.

This once-in-a-lifetime program will focus on the exceptional beauty and splendid scenery of the waterways, towns, Roman ruins, castles, and countryside of England, Wales and Scotland.

Some of the many sites include:

The magnificent city of **London** with its many waterways and operating steam engine museum at Kew

The **water wheel powered pump** to feed the **Kennet and Avon Canal** at **Claverton**

Visit fascinating **Bath** with its locks and the Roman ruins

Walk on and cruise through the highest canal aqueduct in the UK, Thomas Telford's splendid
c 1803 **Pontcysyllte Aqueduct in Wales**

Cruise through a portion of London's Regents Canal, the Dudley Tunnel, Birmingham Canals, and
Scotland's Falkirk Wheel the world's most unusual boat lift

The **Anderton Lift**, the first hydraulic boat lift in the world

The **Gloucester National Canal Museum**

The **Barton Swing Bridge Aqueduct** over the Manchester Ship Canal

The river **Severn Gorge** where **England's Industrial Revolution** began west of Birmingham

England's most exciting restoration project the **Huddersfield Narrow Canal**

Cruise to **Scotland's Almond Aqueduct** on the restored **Union Canal**

Examine the **29 Locks** at **Caen Hill** on the **Kennet and Avon Canal** at **Devizes**

In addition to 3 nights in London, this spectacular 16 NIGHT canal tour will include 2 nights in Bristol, 3 nights North of Birmingham, 3 nights in Manchester and 3 nights in Falkirk, Scotland. Only 2 nights are single overlays.

All UK bookings by Brian Kirton of Kingdom Tours, England

Your cost is just -

\$3,720 per person double occupancy-----booked before January 1

\$4,523 per person single occupancy-----booked before January 1

This price includes: round-trip airfare on Continental Airlines from Albany, Syracuse, Rochester, or Buffalo connecting through Newark, for flight to London-Gatwick, on Wednesday, September 21 and then returning from Edinburgh, Scotland on October 8

through Newark. All hotels (none less than 3-star) and breakfast, all dinners except 1 in London, 2 lunches, deluxe motor coach ground transportation, 8- possibly 10 boat trips, 36 SITE VISITS, **GUIDEBOOK**, admission fees, taxes and VAT, and tour guides are included. **Not Included:** Most midday lunches, public transport fares in London, luggage handling at airports and hotels, bus driver gratuity, and any contributions to canal societies whose volunteers may offer assistance

Please check our website: www.canalsnys.org/EnglandWalesTourNov2005.pdf for detailed itinerary.

HARDCOPY OF TOUR ITINERARY AVAILABLE BY CONTACTING SOCIETY PRESIDENT TOM GRASSO

(A minimum of 25 people is required)

TRAVEL INSURANCE IS AVAILABLE- CONTACT DONNA AT GALLERY OF TRAVEL (BELOW) FOR DETAILS
SOME DAYS WILL REQUIRE MODEST WALKING

To make a reservation for air bookings, please contact Donna Colman at:
Gallery of Travel 125 White Spruce Blvd., Rochester NY 14623 Phone: 800-888-7232
Email dcolman@rochester.rr.com

**To make a reservation for the UK portion or if you have any questions contact:
Tom Grasso 233 OVERBROOK RD. ROCHESTER, NY 14618
Email: tgrasso1@rochester.rr.com
Home phone: 585-387-0099 Cell phone: 585-314- 3782**

DEPOSIT AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE: -

NOTE: PAYMENTS FOR AIRFARE MUST BE SUBMITTED TO GALLERY OF TRAVEL SEPARATELY FROM THE UK TOUR PORTION, AS FOLLOWS—
AIRFARE CHECKS PAYABLE TO— GALLERY OF TRAVEL (ADDRESS ABOVE)
UK PORTION CHECKS PAYABLE TO—CANAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK STATE TOURS
SEND TO TOM GRASSO (ADDRESS ABOVE)

January 1, 2005	\$930.00 total--\$180.75 air and \$749.25 UK Portion-p .p. double occupancy \$1130.75 total --\$180.75 air and 950.00 UK Portion p. p. single occupancy
February 15, 2005	\$930,00 total—divided as above per person double occupancy \$1130.75 total—divided as above per person single occupancy
April 30, 2005	\$930.00—divided as January1 double occupancy \$1130.75—divided as January 1 single occupancy
June 1, 2005	\$930.00-divided as January1 double occupancy Final Payment \$1130.75—divided as January1 single occupancy Final Payment

NOTE: A LOWER DOLLAR VALUE RELATIVE TO THE BRITISH POUND, AT THE END OF MAY, COULD CAUSE AN ADJUSTMENT IN THE AMOUNT DUE ON JUNE 1

U.S. Waterway System Shows Its Age

Supply Disruptions Increase As Repairs Fail to Keep Pace With Equipment Problems

WALL STREET JOURNAL ONLINE by TIMOTHY AEPPEL Staff Reporter. Copyright 2005 by DOW JONES & CO. INC. Reproduced with permission of DOW JONES & CO. INC. in the format Newsletter/E-Newsletter via Copyright Clearance Center

February 8, 2005

The nation's freight-bearing waterway system, plagued by age and breakdowns, is saddling the many companies that rely on the network with a growing number of supply disruptions and added costs.

While some consider it an anachronism in the age of e-commerce, the system remains vital to a broad swath of the economy, carrying everything from jet fuel and coal to salt and the wax for coating milk cartons. The network stretches 12,000 miles, mostly through the nation's vast web of rivers, and relies on a series of dams and locks, which are enormous chambers that act as elevators for moving barges from one elevation of water to another.

Much of the infrastructure was built early in the last century. It's showing the effects of time and, according to some, of neglect. Old equipment takes longer to repair, and it's more vulnerable to nature's extremes.

Early last month, unusually heavy winter rains swelled rivers and caused a series of accidents, including one on the Ohio River in which a towboat pushing six barges sank after passing through a lock near Industry, Pa. Three crewmen were killed; a fourth is still missing and presumed dead. An accident farther down the river near Parkersburg, W. Va., shut down traffic in both directions around another lock.

After the accidents, General Electric Co.'s plastics division had to halt chemical operations at a plant in Washington, W. Va., because barges carrying butadiene, a key raw material, couldn't get through. The GE plant, which makes plastic used in phones and laptops, continued other production processes during the disruption.

Consol Energy Inc., based in Pittsburgh, moves about a third of the 68 million tons of coal it produces each year by water, with most of that going directly to power plants. After the recent accidents, the company told customers it was invoking the force majeure clause in its contracts, which indicates it won't be able to fulfill its obligations because of circumstances beyond its control.

Costs associated with problems on the waterway network, which carries about 13% of U.S. intercity freight annually, can be hard to measure. Towboat companies say it costs them hundreds of dollars an hour to have their vessels sitting idle with barges that can't move.

The routine inspection of a lock in Greenup, Ky., in September 2003 was supposed to close the facility for three weeks. When the inspectors found bad decay, the shutdown stretched to two months. Companies could continue using a much smaller auxiliary lock at that location to keep moving some goods, but that meant major delays. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which oversees and maintains the waterways, studied that closure and found the cost of delays to towing companies alone totaled about \$14 million.

Big companies like U.S. Steel Corp., DuPont Co. and Archer-Daniels-Midland Co. make extensive use of the system, and usually don't have easy alternatives. The rail- and truck-freight systems, which carry about 45% and

33%, respectively, of U.S. intercity freight, are near capacity and much more costly. Moving materials by barge is about a tenth the cost of using trucks, and two-thirds that of rail.

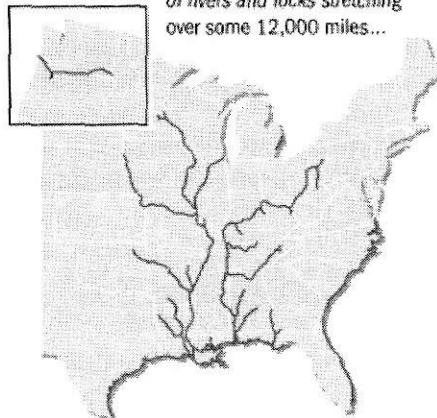
Mark Devinney, vice president of Nicholas Enterprises Inc. in Butler, Pa., a company which has two barge terminals in the Pittsburgh area, says he had customers concerned during the recent shutdown in West Virginia because barges couldn't get through with products such as food-grade wax, which comes up the river from Texas on special barges. The wax is kept in a heated tank at Mr. Devinney's terminal so it stays in liquid form until it can be picked up. One barge fills 65 to 70 trucks. The cost of driving that material to its final destination from the Southern U.S. would be huge, he says.

"Many of the facilities are at the fatigue point now, where they need major rehabilitation," says David Grier, a navigation analyst at the Institute for Water Resources, part of the Army Corps of Engineers.

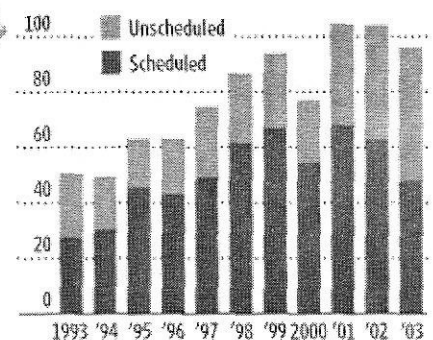
Each year, the U.S. spends about \$500 million on operations and maintenance, including dredging channels. In recent years it has spent an additional \$200 million to \$230 million for new construction. Mr. Grier says that while spending on new construction varies widely, depending on which projects get earmarked, the budget for maintenance has held roughly steady in inflation-adjusted dollars for three decades.

Logging the Jams

Since its 19th-century beginnings, the freight-bearing U.S. waterways system has grown to a web of rivers and locks stretching over some 12,000 miles...



But aging equipment and tight budgets for repairs and improvements have boosted disruptions. A look at total outage hours at navigational locks, in thousands



Sources: The Waterways Council Inc.; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Waterways Council Inc., a trade group for waterway users, says the government should spend at least \$100 million more a year for construction and upgrades. The group says more money could come from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, gathered from a 20-cent-a-gallon diesel-fuel tax paid by towing companies. The fund had \$372 million as of Dec. 1 and provides half of the money for waterway projects.

"People forget how many basic industries rely on the waterways," says Barry Palmer, president of the Waterways Council. "What we need is a program that identifies the locations that need attention the most urgently, so we can reduce the risks of a catastrophic failure."

Meanwhile, not everyone wants to see waterway systems upgraded. Environmentalists often oppose major expansions of lock and dam complexes, pointing to damage to surrounding wetlands and river ecosystems.

Others question big investments in these structures at a time when other infrastructure needs are pressing. Moreover, while other freight-transport systems have seen healthy growth in traffic, the use of waterways has grown only modestly in the past two decades.

But L. Van V. Dauler Jr., president of Neville Chemical Co. in Pittsburgh, thinks maintaining the system is as crucial today as when his grandfathers founded Neville in 1925. The privately held chemical company makes hydrocarbon resins used in printing inks, adhesives and tires.

Mr. Dauler notes that before the lock and dam system was built, the island where his plant sits in the Ohio River was prone to massive seasonal flooding -- great for creating fertile asparagus fields, but terrible for industry.

When the system was built, it was a huge boon to commerce, he says. "We need to maintain this vital commercial highway."

The Delaware & Raritan Canal: The Past, The Present and the Promise

Save the Date: June 1, 2005

Please join us on June 1, 2005 for a **day long conference** at The College of New Jersey to celebrate the significant regional contribution of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park and Canal Commission. This day and evening event will focus on the past, present and future of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Park and its diverse and valuable contributions as a recreational, historic, cultural, environmental, and economic regional resource.

Conference Topics Include:

- The D&R Canal: A Framework for Regional Cooperation
- The D&R Canal: Opportunities for Healthy & Active Living
- The D&R Canal: Neighbors and Their Local Perspectives
- The D&R Canal: The Canal as an Economic Catalyst
- The D&R Canal: Rediscovering a Capital Resource
- The D&R Canal: A Regional Natural Resource

Public officials, community leaders, and D&R Canal supporters, and all who have come to enjoy this important resource, are invited to a **companion evening event** at the Prallsville Mill to strengthen and forge new relationships.

Planning Partners as of March 1, 2005:

- Municipal Land Use Center at The College of New Jersey
- Princeton University
- D&R Canal Commission
- County of Mercer
- City of Trenton
- Princeton Township
- Canal Society of New Jersey
- NJ Department of Environmental Protection
- Regional Plan Association
- NJ Water Supply Authority
- D&R Canal Watch
- O'Reilly Associates

**COMPLETE CONFERENCE
BROCHURE AVAILABLE
IN EARLY APRIL**

The Municipal Land Use Center
at The College of New Jersey
McCauley House
PO Box 7718
Ewing, NJ 08628

Phone: (609) 771-2832
Fax: (609) 637-5162
Email: mluc@tcnj.edu
www.tcnj.edu/mluc

Canal Tidbits

By David Barber

Canal Art

During the 1930s, the federal government sponsored an artists project as a relief effort. Artists were commissioned to create public art in places such as post offices all over the country. Recently, we have learned that some of the studies for these murals are shown on the University of Maryland art museum's web site at <http://www.artgallery.umd.edu/permcol/mural/01.html>

Going to the web site leads to the first image, that of Kimmitt's Lock. Kimmitt's Lock (note the spelling difference) is Lehigh Canal Lock 39 at the upper end of the Allentown, PA pool. The image clearly includes a Lehigh coal boat. The mural still exists over the Hamilton Street entrance of the main Allentown post office.

Canal Anniversary

The year 2005 marks the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Dismal Swamp Canal in Virginia. The canal was opened to navigation for flatboats in 1805. It has been enlarged three times and remains in use as an alternate route of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway. Although earlier US canals were built, none remain in service. It is, thus, the oldest active canal in the US. Ceremonies are planned during the year.

Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook III: Wabash and Miami Counties available

FORT WAYNE, IND. 2005: — *Wabash & Erie Notebook III* describes and locates the great Indiana canal project constructed through Wabash and Miami counties. Readers are guided along the canal through countryside and towns in each county. Carefully researched, its 190 pages relate the history of the canal and describe the relics that are visible to this day in both Wabash and Miami counties.

Numerous historical photographs, diaries, and recollections are recorded and retold. Legislative reports of canal officials; contracts for mechanical structures; local histories; state and county history periodicals; newspaper accounts of the day or as remembered in later years; archaeological findings; topographical maps; field observations; and historical markers combine to place as many facts as possible in one source.

This is Tom Castaldi's third book in a trilogy that tells the story of the original plan for the Wabash & Erie Canal to be completed from the Indiana – Ohio State line to the mouth of the Tippecanoe on the Wabash River. *Notebook I* is about Allen and Huntington counties and *Notebook II* deals with the canal through Cass, Carroll and Tippecanoe counties, each published by the Canal Society of Indiana.

Anyone interested in where the canal tracked as it arched across Indiana has only to read the three *Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook* series. Together they assemble and record the official reports, myths, legends, lore and traditions of the Wabash & Erie Canal. These books also focus on the location of the canal line and what can be seen of the old route today. Sites include remnants of mechanical structures, channel and towpath, affects on economic development, and the canal's influence on the lives of people today.

Indiana's great internal improvements project succeeded in its mission to open the west before it struggled against great odds and eventually failed. Its legacy, however, is the contribution that opened Indiana to countless numbers of people and created an economy for the products they produced.

Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook III is available for purchase at selected historical society and museum gift shops and antiquarian book stores. The book is of interest to the general reader and especially historians, transportation specialists, genealogy researchers, American Indian researchers and economic development professionals.

###

Books are available at: Allen Co. History Center, Carroll Co. Historical Society, Canal Society of Indiana, Cass Co. Historical Society, Delphi Canal Interpretative Center, Historic Forks of the Wabash, Huntington Co. Historical Museum, Hyde Bros. in Fort Wayne, Indiana State Museum, Miami Co. Historical Museum, Reading Room in Wabash, Tippecanoe Battleground Museum, Wabash Co Historical Museum, Von's Book Shop in West Lafayette.

But while shipments of bulk cargo such as grain and coal are expected to remain stable, the Seaway Management Corp. hopes to draw more shipments of cargo that are potential growth markets but are currently hauled by trains and trucks.

The new lockage fees provide reduced rates for cargo classified as "new" to the canal. Cargo receives that status if it has not moved through the canal in an annual average amount of 10,000 metric tons between 2001 and 2003.

The "new" status for that cargo - and the reduced rates - would remain in effect through 2007. One type of cargo that the canal hopes to attract more of: aluminum. The canal also wants to draw more containerized cargo, Corfe said.

Corfe concedes that the ships can't move products as fast as trucks and trains, but he said the vessels can promise reliable delivery while helping to reduce highway emissions and traffic congestion.

About \$20 million (Canadian) in maintenance was performed on the Welland Canal in the past three months, including the conversion of one lock to hydraulic power, as part of a six-year plan, Corfe said.

The canal is also finishing converting the lift bridges that span the waterway so that they are operated remotely, he said.

Wednesday's opening ceremonies in St. Catharines, Ont., included the annual presentation of the "top hat" to the captain of the first vessel of the season to pass through the canal.

Feroze Irani of the *MV Pineglen* accepted the honor. Corfe attended, along with Gerry Carter, president of Canadian Steamship Lines, which owns the *Pineglen*, and Albert Jacquez, administrator of the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corp. Jacquez is Corfe's U.S. counterpart.

The Montreal-to-Lake Ontario section of the St. Lawrence Seaway is set to open Friday. Last year's 281-day season was the longest in Seaway history.

Hugh Moore Park Canal Boat Cruises

Experience a Savory Get-Away
on the Lehigh Canal
*Cruise includes
food, entertainment*

From a Press Release

Easton, PA, April 14, 2005 – Take a cruise on the Lehigh Canal!

Experience Italy, Germany, Cajun and the Caribbean. Or choose from one of our American specialties – picnic or barbeque. The schedule is as follows:

Evening Cruises departing at 6 PM

Enjoy a **Yankee Doodle Picnic** on July 2 as we celebrate American Independence Day. Roy Justice will perform patriotic and folk favorites as Michael's Country Caterers serves fried chicken, sausage and peppers, baked beans, potato salad, cole slaw, corn bread, cookies, lemonade and ice tea. \$36 per person.

Indulge in a **Touch of Venice** on July 16. Enjoy Italian music as you savor a menu of bruschetta, insalata mista, penne pasta, tortellini carbonara, chicken marsala, bread, soda, and mini pastries provided by Juliana's Italian Restaurant. \$33 per person.

Go Down on the Bayou on July 30 with zydeco music and a Cajun menu. Michael's Country Caterers serves tossed salad, blackened chicken, jambalaya, Cajun potato salad, Ambrosia, rolls, cookies, lemonade and ice tea. \$33 per person.

On Aug. 6, mellow out with **Jazz, Blues and BBQ**. Michael's Country Caterers provides a menu of smoked, shredded pork BBQ, BBQ chicken, potato salad, cole slaw, baked beans, melon salad, cookies, lemonade and ice tea. Roger Latzgo performs jazz and blues favorites. \$36 per person.

Imagine palm trees and white sand as **Caribbean Calypso** cruises down the Lehigh Canal on Aug. 20. Relax to the beat of steel drums while you enjoy jerk chicken, pulled pork with potatoes and mojo sauce, tossed salad, fruit salad, rolls, dessert, lemonade and ice tea by Michael's Country Caterers. \$33 per person.

Fall Foliage Cruises departing at 1 PM:

On Oct. 1, mellow out with **Jazz, Blues and BBQ**. Michael's Country Caterers provides a menu of smoked, shredded pork BBQ, BBQ chicken, potato salad, cole slaw, baked beans, melon salad, cookies, lemonade and ice tea. Roger Latzgo performs jazz and blues favorites. \$36 per person.

Celebrate **Oktoberfest** on Oct. 8 with German music and a menu of roast pork, sauerkraut, apple-cider chicken, German potato salad, tossed salad, gingerbread, and cider prepared by Michael's Country Caterers. \$33 per person.

Indulge in a **Touch of Venice** on Oct. 15. Enjoy Italian music as you savor a menu of bruschetta, insalata mista, penne pasta, tortellini carbonara, chicken marsala, bread, soda, and mini pastries provided by Juliana's Italian Restaurant. \$33 per person.

Advance reservations required at least ten (10) days prior to ride. For reservations call (610) 515-8000 (select #2 from menu).

Master Plan Will Guide Hugh Moore Park Development

From a News Release

Easton, PA, February 16, 2005—The [National Canal] museum has selected Yost Strodoski Mears of York, Pennsylvania to create a new master plan for Hugh Moore Park. This process will involve a series of public workshops, study of the Park's natural and historical resources, consideration for public services and education at the park, and landscaping and circulation. The master plan will serve as a guiding document that will lay the groundwork for future capital projects in the park, and for the interpretation of its natural and historic stories. The master plan is made possible in part by a grant from the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program.

The master plan coincides with the impending construction of the Elaine and Peter Emrick Technology Center, an educational facility that will include classrooms, a state-of-the-art archives including film and photo vaults, a large reading room and 8,000 square feet of exhibits focusing on the history of industry in the Lehigh Valley.

Heritage Walks in Hugh Moore Park

Announcing an Expanded Series of History and Nature Topics

Walks are Free and Open to the Public

From a News Release

Easton, PA, March 16, 2005—Hugh Moore Historical Park and Museums sponsors a series of heritage walks on Sunday afternoons conducted by the staff of the National Canal Museum and Hugh Moore Park. Walks begin at the Canal Boat Store at 1:30 PM. In case of inclement weather the walk is cancelled. Heritage walks are free and open to the public.

May 8—Cotton, Guns and Wire: Early Industry in Hugh Moore Park, Presented by Lance E. Metz, Historian, National Canal Museum

May 22—The Lehigh Navigation, Presented by Charles Derr, Park Ranger, Hugh Moore Park

June 26—The Lehigh Navigation, Presented by Charles Derr, Park Ranger, Hugh Moore Park

July 24—The Lehigh Navigation, Presented by Charles Derr, Park Ranger, Hugh Moore Park

August 14—Hot Blast and Iron Pigs: Ironmaking in Hugh Moore Park, Presented by Lance E. Metz, Historian, National Canal Museum

August 28—The Lehigh Navigation, Presented by Charles Derr, Park Ranger, Hugh Moore Park

September 11—Creeks, Creatures and Canopies, Presented by Sonya Dollins-Colton, Curator of Education, National Canal Museum

September 25—The Lehigh Navigation, Presented by Charles Derr, Park Ranger, Hugh Moore Park

Welland Canal cutting fees to attract more vessels

By MATT GLYNN
News Business Reporter

3/24/2005

This article appeared in the March 24, 2005 edition of The Buffalo (NY) News. © 2005 All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

The Welland Canal is known for the massive vessels that pass through its system of locks. But the canal's administrator wants smaller ships to feel welcome, too.

As the waterway opened its 176th season on Wednesday, the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp. and Transport Canada announced a reduction in lockage fees designed to attract more traffic to the 27-mile-long canal.

The hope is that the lower fees will generate more 'short-sea shipping,' using the canal as an alternative to train and truck shipments, said Richard Corfe, president and chief executive officer of the Seaway Management Corp., which runs the canal. The lock rates are calculated on a sliding scale, so that smaller vessels will see the greatest benefits.

The old fee structure, established years ago, was actually designed to "chase away" smaller vessels in favor of the bigger ships, Corfe said. "That was then, this is now."

St. Lawrence Seaway traffic increased 6.5 percent last year, and Corfe said he expects equal or slightly higher growth this year.



At Wednesday's opening of the Welland Canal were, from left: Albert S. Jacquez, administrator of the U.S. St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corp.; Gerry Carter, president of Canada Steamship Lines; Feroze Irani, captain of the first ship through this season, and Richard Corfe, president and CEO of the Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp.

Photo by The Buffalo News

**The Grand Journey
Canal Schooner *Lois McClure*
From the Green Mountains
to Manhattan
2005**

The following itinerary lists the locations and dates where the *Lois McClure* will be visiting on her 2005 journey from Lake Champlain to New York City and back.

Burlington, VT: May 1-June 14

Essex, NY: June 23-26

**Lake Champlain Maritime Museum
Basin Harbor (VT):** June 17-21

Whitehall, NY: July 2-4
October 16-17

Fort Ann, NY: October 13-14

Fort Edward, NY: July 7-10
October 10-11

Schuylerville, NY: October 6-8

Mechanicville, NY: October 3-4

Waterford, NY: September 9-11

Troy, NY: September 1-3

Albany, NY: September 4-8

Kingston, NY: July 15-19

Poughkeepsie, NY: July 21-24

Newburgh, NY: July 28-31

West Point, NY: August 11-12

Constitution Island, NY: August 13

Peekskill, NY: August 4-7

South Street Seaport, NYC:
August 16
September 19-26

**North Cove, Battery Park City,
NYC:** August 17-18

**Kings Point, U.S. Merchant Marine
Academy, NY:** August 20-22

Jersey City, NJ: September 17-18

For further information, contact the
Lake Champlain Maritime Museum
www.lcmm.org
(802) 475-2022

**Towpath Tidbits
Winter 2005**

By Linda Barth

Land Donation – The D&H Canal Society has received a donation of canal land from Charles Opitz, a resident of Eddyville, NY. Mr. Opitz has long been interested in the canal and currently resides next to Lock #1

and the Weigh Lock. In December he generously donated 1.02 acres of land that lies between the Tidewater Lock (#1) and the Guard Lock.

Panama Canal documents – The National Canal Museum in Easton, PA, recently received a donation of rare Panama Canal documents and printed material. Donated by Lee R. Maddex, of Morgantown, WV, these government documents and reports, dating from the early 19th century, relate to the design, construction, and administration of the canal.

Maintenance Barges – Thanks to funding from the federal Transportation Enhancement Program, Hugh Moore Park, in Easton, PA, has received two eight-foot barges. They will be used to maintain the canal banks, for transporting equipment, and for repairing locks, sinkholes, etc.

New Executive Director – Rebecca Fitzgerald is the new Executive Director of the Susquehanna Museum of Havre de Grace. Formerly the newsletter editor, Becky replaces Bob Magee, who retired last year.

The museum has received a \$45,000 loan from the Maryland Historic Trust to continue the restoration of the lock.

New Canal Book – *Cabell's Canal: The Story of the James River and Kanawha*, by Langhorne Gibson, Jr., has recently been published. According to ACS past president Bill Trout, the book is "a good read, a compelling narrative of ninety-five years of canal history along the James River." The book, with 306 pages and 22 photos and illustrations, can be ordered from:

Commodore Press
1318 Loch Lomond Lane
Richmond, VA 23221
(804) 353-7059
lgibsonjr@aol.com
\$25 + \$2.25 shipping & handling
Virginia residents please add 5%.

2005 Canal Calendar

By Linda Barth

June 11 – Old Santee Canal Park Canoe Trip. Take a trip through the cool blackwater of the Santee Canal while observing alligators sunning, ospreys nesting and many other surprises around the bend. Large

turtles, river otters and wading birds are coming sights along the tour. We will explore the diverse habitats of historic Biggin Creek and enjoy refreshments on the banks of America's first true canal. 1 PM – 4 PM; \$15 per person; Registration by June 9th; Interpretive Center; ages 12 and up; (843) 899-5200

June 18-25 – 20th Annual James River Batteau Festival; www.Batteau.org

June 18 – 2nd Annual Locktender's Beer and Wine Fest and Auction, Susquehanna Museum of Havre de Grace; (410) 939-5780.

August 4-21 – The Canal Society of New Jersey will cruise the Llangollen Canal in Wales and visit some of the famous narrow-gauge railroads. Info: Bill McKelvey, (908) 464-9335.

September 21-23 – Canal Society of Indiana will cruise the Erie Canal from Syracuse to Albany aboard the *Emita II*. Members of other societies are welcome to attend.

Call (260) 432-0279, CSI headquarters, or email (indcanal@aol.com) for complete information.

-NOTICE-

We are **Canal & Company**. We offer hotel barge cruises on the waterways of England and France. We would like to extend a 10% discount on any full price package to any member of any North American Canal Society.

You can look at our programs at www.frenchhotelbarge.com, or www.canalandco.com.

We also offer self drive boats in the USA, Ireland, England, France, Holland, Germany, and Italy. Canal Society members will receive a 5% discount on these rentals.

See www.frenchcanalboat.com.

We do not have a mailing list of your members. We ask that you get this information out to them.

Thank you,
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Canal & Company
412 E Shore Trail
Sparta, NJ 07871
(973) 729-9195

Zebra mussel threat prompts call to close Welland Canal to ships

By STEPHEN WATSON
News Staff Reporter

12/30/2004

This article appeared in the December 30, 2004 edition of The Buffalo (NY) News. © 2004 All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

A federal scientist in Michigan is urging the closing of the Welland Canal in an effort to stem the spread of zebra mussels and other exotic invaders in the Great Lakes.

This recommendation comes in response to the rapid infiltration of fish, mussels and other nonnative species carried by oceanfaring vessels into the Great Lakes system.

"I think all options need to be on the table. . . . I think closing the door (at the Welland Canal) is one way to look at it, and I'm serious about it," Gary L. Fahnenstiel, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration researcher in Muskegon, Mich., said this week.

But shippers and canal officials say that the Ontario canal is a vital artery in the St. Lawrence Seaway and that closing it would severely damage the North American manufacturing economy.

"I think the recommendation is certainly extreme. I don't think closing the Welland Canal to shipping is the solution," said Michel Drolet, a vice president in the St. Catharines, Ont., office of St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp., which operates the canal.

About 33 million tons of materials - mainly iron ore, coal and steel - went through the Welland Canal in 2004.

Transferring those goods from ship to truck would sharply increase costs, pollution and traffic, said James H.I. Weakley, president of the Lake Carriers Association, in Cleveland, representing 15 Great Lakes shipping firms.

"It's a much more complicated issue than saying all we have to do to solve the invasive species problem is close the Welland Canal," Weakley said.

The recommendation comes as scientists increasingly are warning of a threat posed to the Great Lakes ecosystem by nonnative, or invasive, species.

"Ecosystem Shock," a report issued in October by the National Wildlife Federation, found that 162 species have invaded the Great Lakes - including the sea lamprey, the aggressive round goby and the zebra mussel - with a new species arriving every eight months.

Zebra mussels, which started showing up in the Great Lakes about two decades ago, attach in large clusters to the hulls of ships and water intake pipes.

They have no natural predators, reproduce rapidly and consume vast quantities of microscopic plants and animals that other species rely on for food. Toxic blue-green algae blooms follow in their wake, and the cost to manage their spread is \$1 billion so far, Fahnenstiel said.

Zebra mussels typically arrive in the ballast water of oceangoing vessels that travel up the St. Lawrence River into Lake Ontario and - through the Welland Canal - to the other Great Lakes, scientists say.

Fahnenstiel has found that even ships that change or dump their ballast water still carry zebra mussels in residual sediment at the bottom of their tanks.

That is why he is urging the canal's closing to protect the four upper lakes - and the rest of North America - from the further spread of zebra mussels. "The Welland Canal caused the problem," said Fahnenstiel, who described his recommendation as "a call to arms."

When told of Fahnenstiel's recommendation, canal administrators and shipping representatives said that it would be an economic disaster.

Oceangoing vessels - known as "salties" - use the canal to bring foreign-manufactured steel to American ports. Those ships would be most affected if the canal closed.

Salties carry 17 million tons per year over the Great Lakes, Weakley said, and transferring those materials to rail or trucks at a Lake Erie port would sharply increase transportation costs and traffic in the region.

The average shipload of cargo is equivalent to 870 truckloads, Drolet noted.

"Our highways can't cope with our existing trade," said Ed O'Connor, chairman of the Welland Canals Foundation, based in St. Catharines.

The industry already is exploring the cost-effectiveness of treating ballast water on the ship or at an onshore treatment center along Lake Erie. "You can't arbitrarily just shut down a transportation infrastructure that would affect the whole North American economy," O'Connor said.

Replica Sailing Canal Schooner to Pass Through Champlain Canal

From an announcement made at the Canal Society of New York State Winter Meeting on March 5, 2005.

This year the Champlain Canal will see the first passage through the system of a real wooden sailing canal schooner. The *Lois McClure*, a replica vessel built by the famous Lake Champlain Maritime Museum and launched last July (2004) will be transiting the canal south in July and again in October when she heads north on her return to Burlington, VT. The schooner will be assisted through the canals and locks by the classic wooden tug *Churchill*. She is typical of the old tugs that provided this service in the late 1800s.

Certainly these events will represent historic moments for the New York canal system. This will be the first time in approximately 100 years that a vessel such as the *Lois McClure* has passed through from Lake Champlain to New York City replicating a typical voyage for the vessels of this distinct type. Only a very small number of these vessels were constructed between 1823 and 1887.

Champlain Canal Tour Boats will be saluting the *Lois* as she passes through our Saratoga area, down and up. We will offer special group rates for the canal society members, historical groups and clubs. Please contact us for more details and the schedule of special sailings to complement this once in a lifetime happening.

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