



THE CANAL QUARTERLY

WWW.CANALTRUST.ORG

RIBBON CUTTING OPENS SWAINS LOCKHOUSE

Swains Lockhouse, located off River Road in Potomac, MD, is officially open! It joins the award-winning Canal Quarters program as the seventh lockhouse open to guests for overnight interpretive stays. After three years of fundraising, planning, and construction, the C&O Canal Trust and our project partners celebrated Swains' completion with a ribbon cutting June 28.

Work to furnish the home and install the interpretive elements continued right up until the week of the ribbon cutting. This meant that Bert Swain, a C&O Canal Trust Board Member who grew up in the house, did not see the final project until 48 hours before the public opening.

He visited with Robert Mertz, a volunteer who oversaw the furnishing plan for Swains, and Jacob Fenston, a WAMU reporter who was profiling both men for a story on the opening. (WAMU's story can be found at www.CanalTrust.org/Swains.)

"It feels like home, it really does," said Bert, as he walked through the home for the first time since the demolished walls had been erected. "I wish some of the folks who are no longer here could come back and see it."

He refers to the generations of Swain family members who lived and worked along the canal. His ancestors helped to build the canal in the nineteenth century, before operating

shipping boats. They then took over as lock tenders living at Lockhouse 21 until the canal closed to boat traffic in 1924. The family reinvented themselves at that time, opening a concession stand to rent boats and bikes to visitors. They lived at the lockhouse until 2006.

"I had a magical upbringing here," Bert reminisced. "Every day was a different person, a different

adventure, on the river and canal. We would go canoeing, for a bike ride, a walk, or sit by the river. High school friends would come to the house, and some would stay the entire summer. It was just a fantastic place to be."

Many Montgomery County residents agree, those who have memories of coming to Swains as part of summer camps or on weekends to rent kayaks and fishing gear from the family. "I used to come up here when I was in grad school, rented a canoe



PHOTO C&O CANAL TRUST

Celebrating the ribbon cutting at Swains Lockhouse are, from left to right, Matt Higgins, representative for Montgomery County Councilmember Andrew Friedson; Bill Holdsworth, President, C&O Canal Association; Michael C. Mitchell, Former Chair, C&O Canal Trust; Sara Love, Montgomery County Delegate; Ken Reichard, representative for Senator Ben Cardin; Kevin Brandt, Superintendent, C&O Canal National Historical Park; Steve Chaudet, Chair, C&O Canal Trust; Robert Mertz, C&O Canal Trust volunteer; Susan Lee, State Senator; Bert Swain, C&O Canal Trust Board Member; Robin Zanotti, President, C&O Canal Trust; and Don Harrison, President, Friends of the Historic Great Falls Tavern.

from your family, and paddled around," Robert told Bert. "A family who peered in the windows last week while I was setting up remembered the concession stand that used to be over there," he said, indicating the concrete pad near the canal.

Robert has spent the past year on the hunt for the perfect antiques to bring Swains Lockhouse to life. Each Canal Quarters lockhouse interprets a different period of the

"Swains" continues on page 5

BRANDT REFLECTS ON CAREER, RETIREMENT

Less than three months before Kevin Brandt, the new assistant superintendent at the C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP), took up his post in March 1996, 80 percent of the Park was underwater following a major flood in January. It was not an auspicious time to start his new job, but Kevin, now retiring after 23 years at the Park — 13 as superintendent — remembers only the positives.

"I was amazed at the huge outpouring of support and goodwill from the community. I saw how much people really loved this park and wanted to help," he said. That goodwill has inspired him ever since.

Before coming to the C&O Canal NHP, Kevin's National Park Service (NPS) career had been spent hopscotching from one national park to another, working in project planning and

construction management in iconic places such as Yellowstone and Grand Teton.

Nowhere, however, had he experienced firsthand a major natural disaster such as the floods of 1996 along the C&O Canal. Undaunted, Kevin put his shoulder to the wheel, along with the rest of the Park staff, and set about putting the Park to rights.

"Brandt" continues on page 4

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A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Summer has been an unusually busy time at the Park. We are proud to have opened Swains Lockhouse, our seventh Canal Quarters, at the end of June. It is perfectly charming, and our guests have been enjoying it. It has been so special to have Bert Swain, a member of our board who grew up in the lockhouse, around for the celebration of the history of a multi-generational canal family.

All of us at the C&O Canal Trust are sad to say farewell to Park Superintendent Kevin Brandt, who is retiring after 40 years with the National Park Service. He has been an amazing partner to the Trust, having nurtured our organization from its beginnings and continuing his investment in our success today. We thank him for that and wish him all the best in his new endeavor with the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation.

I am so pleased that the Conococheague Aqueduct project came to completion with a ribbon cutting on August 8, prior to the departure of Superintendent Brandt. His leadership in this amazing project will have a tremendous impact on the Park and the Canal Town of Williamsport for many years

to come. We also broke ground on the new headquarters and visitor center adjacent to the park in Williamsport. Really big doings!

We've enjoyed working side by side with volunteers and our NPS colleagues on a variety of projects, including ongoing towpath resurfacing, Latino Conservation Week, and our Canal Conservation Corps. Be sure to see stories on all of this good work in this issue.

Park After Dark is right around the corner. We are grateful to the many sponsors and ticket purchasers who are coming together to make the event a success. Scheduled for September 14, Park After Dark provides crucial funding to the Trust, making possible the work we do to preserve and protect the Park. I hope to see you there!

Many thanks for your support of the C&O Canal Trust. Together, we will work to keep this Park the special place that it is, for our enjoyment as well as for future generations.



Robin Zanotti, Trust President

Leave a legacy for tomorrow by Making a Bequest to the C&O Canal Trust

Making a bequest that benefits the C&O Canal National Historical Park could be the most important charitable gift you ever make. By naming the C&O Canal Trust in your will, you will become a member of the Patowmack Society, creating a legacy for the future that helps ensure that generations to come will have the opportunity to love and nurture this extraordinary natural and historical resource.



“The C&O Canal National Historical Park has been an important part of my family’s life for the past 30 years. To help assure that the Park is preserved for future generations, I am dedicating a bequest to the C&O Canal Trust.”

— Ambassador Sandy Vogelgesang, Patowmack Society Founding Member

Contact Director of Development Patricia Barber at 301-745-8880 or barber@canaltrust.org for more information.

TOWPATH RESURFACING MAKES SMOOTHER RIDE



PHOTO COURTESY OF JACK PAULIK



PHOTO COURTESY OF JACK PAULIK

The top photo shows the damage the towpath sustained at Harpers Ferry during the June 2018 storms. The bottom photo shows the newly-resurfaced towpath in the same area.

Towpath users who have found themselves mired in mud or negotiating severe erosion between Brunswick and Lock 38 near the Shepherdstown Bridge can now enjoy 18 miles of smooth resurfaced trail. It's a huge improvement on the old clay and gravel surface towpath that was difficult to maintain, prone to erosion and puddling, and broken up with roots, ruts, and rocks.

Work included grading the towpath to facilitate water runoff and the removal of all safety hazards, as well as the grass median that was contributing to water retention. The new surface — the same as that enjoyed by cyclists using the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) — is composed of crushed limestone which hardens with use, making it less prone to erosion and rutting than the old towpath surface.

Scheduled to be done by the end of August, towpath resurfacing between Brunswick (Mile 54) and Lock 38 (Mile 72.6) completes a total of 23 miles of the Park's multi-year plan to sustainably rehabilitate the 80 miles of towpath identified as in most need of attention. The first section, completed earlier this year, included five miles from Edwards Ferry and Whites Ferry. A further 16 miles of towpath from Mile 42.2 near the Monocacy

Aqueduct to Brunswick will be resurfaced in 2020.

Two funding packages, totaling \$4.05 million are supporting the 2019 and 2020 towpath work, a joint commitment from the Federal Government and the State of Maryland's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The C&O Canal Trust's advocacy to the state in support of the Park's proposals contributed to the Park's success in receiving the TAP grants. The Trust rallied community support again this year to support the Park's TAP application for towpath work to be completed in 2021.

In addition to our advocacy work, the Trust also raises funds to supplement the federal and state funding for towpath resurfacing. We have contracted with Jack Paulik of Alder Valley Consulting, who worked on the GAP trail, to provide engineering and project management consultation for the resurfacing project.

Our Fund-A-Need paddle raise at this year's Park After Dark will benefit towpath resurfacing.

To make a gift to support towpath resurfacing, visit www.CanalTrust.org/towpath.

TRUST PARTICIPATES IN LATINO CONSERVATION WEEK

The C&O Canal hosted 90 middle school students from Identity, Inc. this summer at Great Falls as part of Latino Conservation Week. This yearly program was created to provide Latino youth and families with outdoor recreation opportunities and to allow Latino communities to demonstrate their commitment to conservation.

Sherry Guillen, the Community Volunteer Ambassador for the C&O Canal National Historical Park, organized a day of hiking, biking, and learning activities. Guillen wanted kids to realize what resources are available to them at the Park and provide them with recreational opportunities they might not have experienced before. There were many "firsts" for the students that day, including being in the park, seeing Great Falls, and riding a bike.

Volunteers Gail Melson and Eddie Rivas led hikes to Great Falls. Their main focus was encouraging the students to "observe the power of the river," says Rivas, but he also

pointed out some flora on the hike, especially poison ivy. The bike ride was only a few miles, and most kids did not want to stop riding. "Their energy and enthusiasm was definitely contagious," says Guillen.

Cheyenne Sebold, the Trust's Chesapeake Conservation Trust intern, held a pollinator talk and workshop. Kids learned about common pollinators and why they are important. They also made and decorated mason bee houses out of bamboo straws and toilet paper rolls. These homes provide a place for bees to reproduce and gather pollen. Cheyenne wanted to provide a "hands-on opportunity for the students to learn about some of the great things that happen in their environment and their communities."

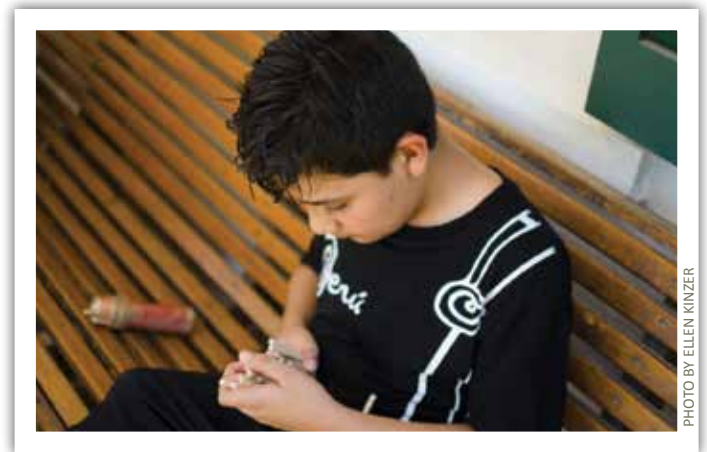


PHOTO BY ELLEN KINZER

A student from Identity, Inc. creates a native bee house.

The sentiment that the kids were enjoying themselves and engaged in the activities is echoed by the volunteers and staff that made this event possible. "Our national parks were created for everyone to enjoy, and I feel lucky that we were able to come together to share the wonders of the C&O Canal with more people," concludes Guillen.

STUDENT CJC CREWS PERFORM CRITICAL TASKS IN PARK



PHOTO COURTESY C&O CANAL ASSOCIATION

Working in partnership with Maryland State Parks and the Montgomery County Department of Recreation, the C&O Canal Trust is managing a dozen high school students as paid members of a Conservation Jobs Corps (CJC) crew this summer. The students are working on a variety of conservation, historic preservation, and maintenance projects throughout the Park. Pictured, they help to clear mud left behind by flash flooding at Great Falls last month.



PHOTO COURTESY ESTHER HERBERS

WELCOME ESTHER HERBERS

Esther Herbers joined the C&O Canal Trust in June through the AmeriCorps VISTA program. She will be working with the Canal Towns Partnership on economic development, capacity building, and communication efforts, as well as updating the Plan Your Visit website and the C&O Canal Explorer mobile app to make exploring the Park easy and fun. Esther recently graduated from Indiana University with a Bachelor of Science in Public Affairs and hopes to pursue a career in nonprofit management and environmental law.

“Brandt” continued from page 1

At that time, annual visitation to the C&O Canal NHP was under one million. In 2018, visitation had swelled to almost five million. Kevin, who took over as superintendent in 2006, viewed that increase as both a challenge and an opportunity — the Park had a growing universe of constituents to draw on to get things done in an era of decreasing federal support.

“What I have enjoyed most in my time as superintendent is establishing and strengthening relationships between the Park and our community,” he said. “Everyone has their specific interest in the

C&O Canal. My job has been to bring all parties together to benefit the Park. We’ve taken on some complex projects which the Park could never have completed alone. With our community partners, though, we have always found a way.”

The idea of creating the formal philanthropic partnership that became the C&O Canal Trust began with Kevin’s predecessor, Doug Farris, but it was Kevin who brought it to fruition. “The idea began to gain real traction after I talked to Matt Logan, who went on to become the first president of the Trust,” Kevin said. “He knew the philanthropic sector and what was needed to start a successful nonprofit. We started out small and took many of our cues from Golden Gate Conservancy. They really informed how we saw the relationship between the Park and the Trust, that we should have ‘shared DNA.’”

Without the Trust, Brandt said, the Park would not be what it is today. “There would be no Canal Quarters program,” he said. Neither, he added, would the Park benefit from the funding support and advocacy for ongoing towpath needs and Canal Classrooms, the critical maintenance support of Canal Pride volunteers, or the fruitful

relationships and support grown out of the Trust’s outreach initiatives.

“It has been such a pleasure to work with Kevin,” C&O Canal Trust President Robin Zanotti said. “These are not easy times for our national parks, but Kevin has brought his exceptional management skills, strategic vision, and sheer dogged determination to get the job done. His ability to develop successful partnerships has enabled the Park to be both ambitious and successful over the past 13 years. I particularly value the partnership between the Trust and the Park that is in no small part due to Kevin. Both organizations have benefited from his commitment to the relationship. We look forward to sending Kevin off in style at this year’s Park After Dark on September 14, which is his last official day as Superintendent.”

While Kevin is retiring from the National Park Service, he is not leaving the NPS world entirely. He and his family will be moving to North Carolina where he will join the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation as a project manager.

A full transcript of Kevin Brandt’s interview can be read at www.CanalTrust.org/Brandt.



PHOTO BY TURNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Former Trust Board Chair Mike Mitchell and President Robin Zanotti cut a cake with Superintendent Kevin Brandt to celebrate the National Park Service’s Centennial in 2016.

RIBBON CUT ON AQUEDUCT IN WILLIAMSPORT

A two-year project that saw the restoration of the Conococheague Aqueduct in Williamsport, MD, came to a festive conclusion August 8, when the ribbon was cut on the project, with Governor Larry Hogan and Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen in attendance. For the first time since 1924, the historic Conococheague Aqueduct is again watered and fully operational, allowing a canal boat to pass over Conococheague Creek. The Park Service has restored two other aqueducts, but this is the first to be watered.

“It’s an amazing accomplishment,” said Trust President Robin Zanotti, “and it is fitting that Kevin is able to see this project completed before his retirement (see page 1 for more on Brandt’s retirement).

A groundbreaking for the new C&O Canal headquarters and visitor center was also held during the event. The C&O Canal Trust will move our offices to the new headquarters building when it is completed in late 2020 or early 2021.

“Swains” continued from page 1

C&O Canal’s history. Swains depicts 1916, the year the National Park Service was formed and the date when the C&O Canal was beginning to transition from a working canal to a recreational space.

Robert relies on antiques malls and estate sales for many of his acquisitions, although he says a lot of the magic happens through word-of-mouth and generosity. “I’ve been doing this program for 11 years, and I’m always amazed at how generous people are who are doing historic restoration projects, how generous they are with their expertise and their advice.” He also acquired much of the furniture from the family of George Hartzog, the former director of the National Park Service.

One of the unique pieces in Swains is the Victorian sofa in the the sitting room, the center room upstairs that used to be Bert’s childhood bedroom. “This was a very popular sofa in the period,” Robert said, turning to Bert, “but I don’t know if you had one.”

“We did, downstairs,” Bert confirmed.

Robert’s biggest challenge was furnishing the kitchen, due to its size. “Bert once told me that the kitchen was so small that if you needed something, you had to ask someone to pass it to you, because you couldn’t move from where the table or stove were.”

He paid meticulous attention to the details, making sure that each cooking utensil had been patented prior to 1916 before placing it in a drawer. He also found a beautiful farmhouse sink to go along with the thoroughly modern oven and range, donated by the A.R. Landsman Foundation, that looks just like a vintage woodstove.

Robert has volunteered with the Canal Quarters program since its inception and has furnished both the full amenities lockhouses and the rustic ones. He explained the appeal of the program: “Some people love to camp and some don’t. For the people who want

to have all of the modern amenities and still have a historical experience, this is about as close as you can get.”

At Fenston’s request, Bert reflected on what the rehabilitation of his old family home meant to him. “It’s a new beginning. The work my family did here over all those years preserved this house for this generation and future generations. That’s a fantastic thing.”

“Here we are, 30 minutes outside of the center of Washington, D.C., and all we’re hearing is water and wildlife,” he said. “The fact that other folks will be able to enjoy the house overnight and see what it was like to be here on the canal, I think it is just great. I’m really happy we were able to accomplish this.”

Visit www.CanalTrust.org/Swains to book your stay at Swains Lockhouse and to see more stories from the Swain family and photographs from the rehab.



PHOTO BY SCOTT CANTNER

The first boat to cross the Conococheague Aqueduct in nearly 100 years cuts the ribbon as it sails, marking the re-opening of this historic structure in Williamsport, MD.



PHOTO C&O CANAL TRUST

Bert Swain looks through a family photo album with WAMU’s Jacob Fenston on a Victorian sofa located in his childhood bedroom.



PHOTO C&O CANAL TRUST

The kitchen in Swains Lockhouse.

CANAL TOWNS PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES TEMPORARY SHUTTLE



A towpath washout caused by flooding in the spring of 2018 between Point of Rocks and Brunswick was still an issue in 2019. Cyclists and hikers would either wade through the water at the breach or walk across the nearby train tracks in search of a bypass. Both were dangerous and impractical options.

The Canal Towns Partnership (CTP), an economic and community development organization consisting of nine towns along the C&O Canal, worried about the safety of the cyclists, as well as the impact the broken towpath might have on their economies — their merchants depend on the business the towpath brings to their towns. If only there was a shuttle that could transport cyclists and their bikes safely around the breach, one member suggested. The CTP saw an opportunity and seized it.

The CTP started fundraising in mid-May and met their goal quickly in order to have the shuttle running prior to the Memorial Day weekend. Donations were made by tourism agencies, business associations, and town governments who understood the challenges the towpath breach could cause the region. The CTP has been building these relationships for years, which allowed them to mobilize quickly and effectively.

“The shuttle was full every weekend, and there was ridership every day of the week” says Abbie Ricketts, Chair of the Canal Towns Partnership. “I think the program went very well considering the short window of time we had to organize and promote it.”

Shuttle service ended when the Park built a temporary low-level crossing at the washout, meaning the CTP now has additional savings to put towards future emergency responses.

The C&O Canal Trust serves as the fiscal agent for the CTP and works with their board of directors on mutually-beneficial projects.

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



PHOTO BY KURT SOBINA (May Winner)

Congratulations to Stephen “Van” Van Meter, MJ Clingan, Sandy Rosenblatt, and Kurt Sobina for their winning photographs. Visit <http://www.canaltrust.org/photocontest> for details on how you can enter your canal photography in our monthly contest, and visit our Facebook page at the beginning of every month to vote for your favorites!



PHOTO BY SANDY ROSENBLATT (June Winner)



PHOTO BY MJ CLINGAN (April Winner)



PHOTO BY STEPHEN “VAN” VAN METER (July Winner)

REI HIKES TO BENEFIT C&O CANAL TRUST

This fall, REI will be hosting two sunset hikes in the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Participants will hike through the Park to see the sun setting over the Potomac River, while exploring history and nature along the way. After the hike, there will be a bonfire at Swains Lockhouse — s’mores included! Hikes are September 8 at 6:00 p.m. and November 10 at 3:30 p.m. Twenty percent of proceeds will benefit the Trust. Visit www.REI.com to register.

TICKETS ON SALE: *Park After Dark*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14
6:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.



PHOTOS BY TURNER PHOTOGRAPHY



Park After Dark is the C&O Canal Trust's annual gala fundraiser, held under the stars at Historic Great Falls Tavern. This year's event will feature bluegrass band *Troy Engle and Southern Skies*, great food, libations, a campfire, a night hike to Great Falls Overlook, unique auction items, and more – all while raising funds to benefit the Park. This year, we will be raising money to support the Park's ongoing towpath resurfacing project. Tickets are \$250 per person or \$2,000 for a table of 8. Sponsorships are also available. We typically sell out, so don't delay!

Order Now: www.ParkAfterDark.org

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C&O CANAL CONSTRUCTION & PROJECT UPDATES

At 184.5 miles long and with more historical structures than any other national park, the C&O Canal National Historical Park is always a work in progress. This summer, however, visitors will be able to enjoy the fruits of several big projects nearing completion.

- **Georgetown:** The canal has been re-watered from Fletchers Cove to Georgetown! A small section of the canal will remain dry to facilitate replacement of the 31st Street bridge by the District of Columbia. Water is being channeled through the dry area via a pipe.
- **Locks 5 through 22 (Fletchers Cove to Violettes Lock):** Work is close to complete on the water management structures between Lock 5 (Fletchers Cove) to Lock 22 (Violettes Lock/Inlet Lock 2). The Park has re-watered the canal from

Pennyfield to Violettes Lock and will be re-watering from Great Falls to Pennyfield once work is finished on Lock 19.

- **Williamsport:** Construction on the rehabilitated aqueduct is complete. Pedestrians and cyclists are permitted to walk across the aqueduct.

Projects that are currently underway:

- **Towpath resurfacing:** Sections of the towpath resurfaced so far include Edwards Ferry (Mile 30.8) to Whites Ferry Mile 35.5) and from Brunswick Family Campground (Mile 54) to Dargan Bend (Mile 64.9). The Park anticipates completing rehabilitation of the towpath all the way to Packhorse Ford near the Shepherdstown Bridge soon. Horseback riders are asked to stay off the newly-resurfaced sections for about three weeks to give the new stone dust surface

time to harden. (See page 3).

- **Paw Paw Tunnel:** Rock scaling of the cliff above the towpath on the upriver end of the tunnel will begin as soon as the final engineering design is complete. Hikers and bikers will be able to continue to use the tunnel once the work begins, with flaggers controlling tunnel traffic when necessary.
- **Bridge over Culvert 82:** Planning for a bridge over the towpath washout at Culvert 82, downriver from Brunswick, is in progress. The Park's goal is to have the bridge in place by September. In the meantime, the Park has installed a temporary low-water crossing to help hikers and bikers safely cross the washout.

Watch www.CanalTrust.org and www.nps.gov/choh for more information.



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Featuring 13 full-color photographs of the C&O Canal National Historical Park from our Monthly Photo Contest. Proceeds benefit the C&O Canal Trust.

Order Now: www.CanalTrust.org/calendar



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