

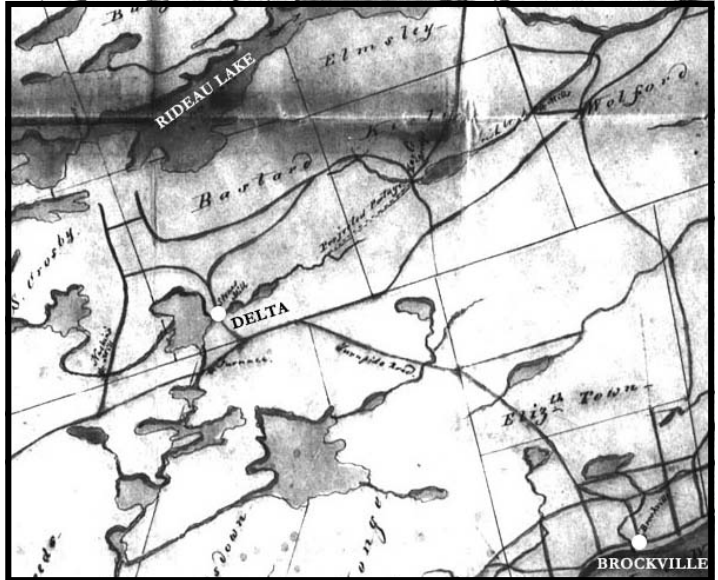
Perth & District's 200th Anniversary

This year, Perth and its surrounding townships (Tay Valley, Drummond/North Elmsley and Beckwith) are celebrating their 200th Anniversary. It was back in the spring of 1816 that the military settlement of Perth was founded. This settlement of Perth and area townships includes a Rideau connection since the first settlers travelled down Rideau Lake to get to their destination. For why that was, we have to look back to 1815.

In 1815 the government was looking to settle veterans of the War of 1812, as well as civilian settlers arriving from the British Isles. But they hit a snag, their preferred settlement location, Oxford Township, didn't have enough room, as many lots had previously been granted to United Empire Loyalists. They then looked southwest along the Rideau but encountered the same problem. The Crown Land Agent, Alexander McDonell, reported in late summer 1815 that, "I am strengthened in the opinion I already gave, that in the neighbourhood of Smith's Falls, the best place for a final Depot would be found, but unfortunately the Lots in the vicinity of the Falls have all been granted."

They chose an unsurveyed area northwest of Rideau Lake for settlement. Surveyors were dispatched to survey new townships and find a good location for the new military settlement. It was surveyor Reuben Sherwood who chose the location for Perth, a spot on the Pike (now Tay) River. On March 25, 1816 he wrote "I have fixed upon a most beautiful site for the depot stores [Perth], nearly where the line between Nos. 1 [Bathurst Township] and 2 [Drummond Township] will cross the Pike River, and within the first mile out – a fall of about 2 1/2 feet in the River, sufficient for any mills we may require, and the quality of the land unexceptionally good." A warehouse was built and stocked with supplies, ready for the settlers to arrive.

There were many settlers waiting to go to Perth and region, including some 30 to 40 civilian families from Scotland who had overwintered in Brockville. They were part of a larger group that sailed to Canada from Scotland in the summer of 1815, arriving too late to be settled. A young veteran of the War of 1812, twenty-one year old



1816 Road Map—Brockville to Rideau Lake Section

This map, which dates to early March 1816, shows the road from Brockville to Delta, part of the Kingston Back Road. It also shows the road leading out of Delta, but the road to Old Landing on Rideau Lake has yet to be cut. Upper Canada Sundries, Library and Archives Canada, RG 5, A1 vol. 27, p.12288.

John Kilborn, was chosen to lead this group to Perth. Some 60 years later, Kilborn described this first trip:

"I forwarded all the families by wagons to the Bay (now the Village of Portland), and had to cut a road the last three miles, to reach the lake. Thence, in a large scow, they were taken down the Rideau Lake, below Oliver's Ferry, to a deep bay above the mouth of River Tay; then down on ox sleds, through the woods about a mile and a-half, to the Tay, above (now) Pike Falls; then, in another scow, up the River Tay, to the Depot, the present town of Perth."

It's taken some research to determine the exact route that the first group, led by John Kilborn, took. Their first

ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

Saturday, May 7, 2016 (see back page for details)

Friends of the Rideau is a volunteer, non-profit organization, working to enhance and conserve the heritage and charm of the Rideau Canal.

Friends of the Rideau, P.O. Box 1232, Stn Main, Smith Falls, Ontario K7A 5C7

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Comments about the newsletter can be directed to the editor, Ken Watson, c/o Friends of the Rideau or by email at: rideauken@gmail.com

This newsletter is published by Friends of the Rideau with assistance from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

destination was Rideau Lake, a spot later known as Old Landing. This was a sheltered bay located just east of the present day Village of Portland (near the east end of Sheep Island). The location was flooded after the building of the canal dam at Poonamalie.

In 1816, Kilborn was living in what was later to become Unionville, today's Forthton (near the intersection of county roads 29 and 42). The road west of there led to Delta. That road shows up on an early 1816 map as a turnpike road (toll road), part of the Kingston Back Road that went from Brockville to Kingston Mills. That road was originally constructed by Abel Stevens, the founder of Delta. The section of road from Brockville to Delta was cut from the forests in 1794. In 1816, Delta, known at that time as Stone Mills, was the only inland community in the area, centered on the Stone Mill which had been built in 1810.

From Delta they headed along existing roads to today's Harlem, formerly Smiths Mills, the location of a sawmill owned by Timothy Smith. From there they headed north and this is where they had to cut the 3 miles (5 km) of new road to reach the lake. What awaited them was the "large scow" – a flat bottomed sailing barge, likely overwintered in the sheltered bay by its owner, a young Mr. Lindsay (who was living at the time on Murphys Bay of Big Rideau Lake).

There are no documented dates for the trip, but location tickets (settlement location tickets) were written to these settlers, in Perth, on April 17, 1816. One supposition is that this date represents the arrival of those settlers. While that remains a bit unclear, it is likely that

the settlers travelled in early April over mostly frozen ground (much easier to travel on than muddy roads), arriving at Old Landing with Rideau Lake still frozen. They would have boarded the scow and made the trip on the day the ice broke in the lake.

The destination for the scow was "a deep bay above the mouth of River Tay", today's Beveridge Bay, the landing made at a spot now underwater, near the present day Lower Beveridges Lock. They then went overland by ox sled to the Tay River, above the lower sets of rapids in that river. Today's Rideau Trail is likely very close to the route they would have taken. Finally they boarded another scow for the trip up the Tay River to Perth.

It's also unclear how many people used this Rideau Lake route. John Oliver set up a ferry service at the location of today's Rideau Ferry (on the south shore) in the spring/summer of 1816. However we know that a formal road leading to what was to become known as Oliver's Ferry was not built until early fall 1816, though some settlers may have used a trail leading to that spot. Settlers coming from the Kingston region would most likely have taken the Old Landing route. The population of Perth and district was listed as 1,505 in the fall of 1816, many of those would have travelled via Rideau Lake.

You can re-create the water portion of this trip this summer by taking a boat trip from Portland to Perth, travelling up today's Tay Canal. Much more information about this first trip to Perth and the early roads in the region can be found on the Perth & District Historical Society website at: www.perthhs.org.

- Ken W. Watson

New Project Proposals

Friends of the Rideau has put forward two project proposals to Parks Canada. Ideally both of these would be in place by 2017, in time for Canada's 150th Anniversary.

Rideau Passport

This is not a new concept, but we've proposed a twist. The Rideau has done two passport programs, one for the 150th celebrations in 1982 and one for the 175th in 2007. In both cases these were simply souvenirs for visitors. Our twist for 2017 would be to make a new passport not just a souvenir, but also a tool to encourage the passport holder to visit various sections of the Rideau Canal. This would involve a reward for getting a passport stamped at a number of different locations along the Rideau Canal. This type of reward passport has been used in other jurisdictions to great success. We've put this proposal to Parks Canada and hope to be able to work with them to make this a reality for 2017.

Smiths Falls Old Combined Locks Interpretation

Smiths Falls has a tremendous educational opportunity in the form of the abandoned flight of 3 locks, the Old Combined Locks. With the upper two locks empty of water, you can see all the mechanisms that make a Rideau Canal lock work. The general concept would be viewing platforms in the upper locks, with both static (signage/brochures) and live interpretation. The concept of using the old locks as an interpretation tool was originally proposed to Parks Canada in 2010. We've now formalized the proposal and have presented it as a potential Canada 150 legacy project for the Rideau Canal. As this would be a multi-year project, an issue is how to ensure ongoing support, perhaps from a private sector sponsor or sponsors.

Our Chair, Hunter McGill has discussed both of these projects with Parks Canada management and they are now being considered. In addition to the concept, we've offered our heritage expertise in the development of both projects. We hope for a positive outcome.

2016 AGM

Our AGM will be held on Saturday, May 7, in the theatre of the Rideau Canal Visitor Centre (former Rideau Canal Museum) in Smiths Falls. This year our featured speaker will be **John Festarini**, the new Associate Director of Ontario Waterways, who will provide us with information on the infrastructure program and the new management plan for the Rideau Canal. This is a great opportunity to get all the details on both those topics.

Our AGM is also a great opportunity to come out and meet the directors and members of Friends of the Rideau. We share a common love of the Rideau Canal so there is no lack of interesting conversation. See the back page for full details.

Everyone is welcome to attend!

The Depot

We hope to have The Depot in Merrickville open by late June or early July, depending on availability of volunteers. And speaking of volunteers, we could use some help, all we ask is that you bring your knowledge and enthusiasm for the Rideau and share it with visitors. If interested or if you wish to learn more, please contact Hunter McGill at huntermcgill1@gmail.com

Canoe & Kayak Rentals

You can rent a canoe or kayak at The Depot courtesy of our partner, canaltripping.com. On your next visit to Merrickville, consider going for a paddle.

Membership Renewal

A reminder that this is membership renewal time (our membership year runs from June 1 to May 31). If your membership is up for renewal, you'll find a handy renewal form with this newsletter. Please note that our mailing address is P.O. Box 1232, Stn. Main, Smiths Falls, K7A 5C7. We thank you very much for your support.

Summer Activities

This summer we hope for warm dry days for the following events, as we plan to be present in our Friends of the Rideau booth and meet many members of Friends.

July 30 - Aug 1: Canalfest, Merrickville

Aug 1: Colonel By Day, Bytown Museum, Ottawa

Aug 13: Classic Boat Show, Rideau Ferry

Message from the Chair

Dear Friends,

As I write this the snow has melted, the Rideau River is rising, a few optimistic spring bulbs are showing and my anticipation is building for the 184th season of operations of the Rideau Canal. I hope the work taking place along the Rideau will be completed in time for the opening on May 20.

A most welcome recent development has been the appointment of John Festarini as Associate Director, Ontario Waterways division of Parks Canada's Historic Canals Directorate. John will be based in Smiths Falls and in charge of all aspects of the operation of the Rideau Canal, reporting to Jewel Cunningham, the Director for Ontario Waterways. The Board of Friends of the Rideau has had the opportunity to meet John and we had a very productive discussion and look forward to working with him and his team. John has kindly accepted to be the keynote speaker at the Friends' annual meeting on May 7, as you will see from the announcement elsewhere in this newsletter, so come and meet him there.

The summer season for Friends of the Rideau will include the usual events along the waterway, including Colonel By Day at the Ottawa Lockstation on the August long weekend and the Classic Boat Show at Rideau Ferry in mid-August. We will once again be operating The Depot in Merrickville in July and August, do come and visit. Some of you visited our booth at the Ottawa Boat Show in late February and it was a pleasure to talk with you then. Naturally, if you could find a day or two to volunteer to assist at The Depot you would be very welcome. Please get in touch.

The most significant event – though it will last over a number of weeks – will be the Parks Canada organized consultations on the preparation of a new management plan for the Rideau Canal National Historic Site. This plan, delayed by several years due to reorganization and staff changes at Parks Canada, will provide all of us "stakeholders" with the opportunity to comment on Parks' accountability for its stewardship and management of the Rideau, and on the results Parks will work to achieve. The plan will cover the next 10 years, so now is our chance to help identify what needs to be done. Let's participate!

I hope to see you at the annual meeting on May 7 and then over the summer on the Rideau.

- Hunter McGill

Rideau Canal Infrastructure Program

Ed Note: I'm hoping that this article will be somewhat outdated by the time you read this – the reason for this is outlined in the "BUT" section towards the end of this article.

Parks Canada has embarked on an ambitious 5-year infrastructure repair program. This article will look at the background to that program, what work is being done this year, what is planned for the future and what remains to be done.

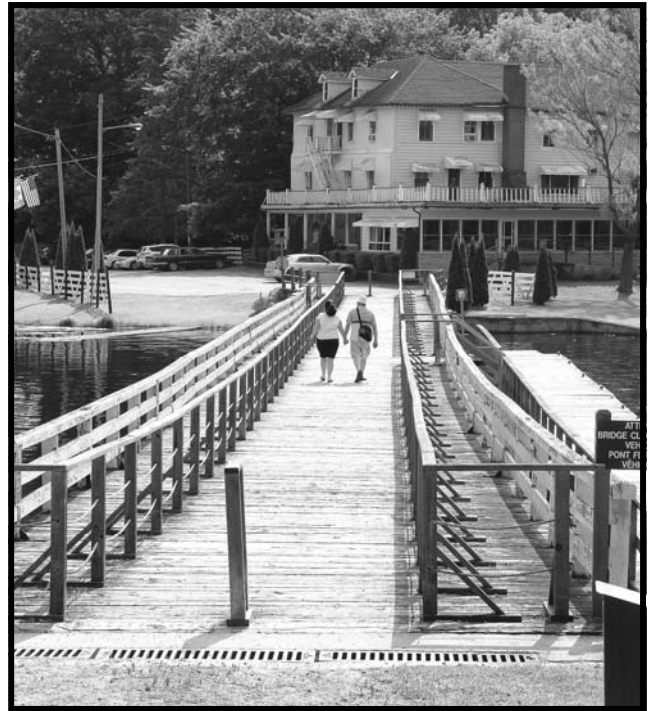
Background

Undercapitalization of the Rideau Canal has been a hallmark of the waterway since 1832. The recent funding to address this problem has its roots in the Auditor General's report of 2003. That report was very critical of how Parks Canada was looking after its heritage assets. The Rideau at the time was only receiving 0.2% of its asset value in capital funding (a general number to maintain heritage assets is in the order of 3% of the asset value on an annual basis).

To fully identify the problem, Parks Canada evaluated the condition of all its assets. Completed in 2012 this is known as the 2012 National Asset Review. It identified billions of dollars in "deferred work," repair work needed on assets deemed to be in poor or very poor condition. On the Rideau Canal this deferred work was shown as being \$104 million (2012\$). Looking at the 49 locks on the Rideau and Tay canals, 2 were listed as being in Good condition, 33 were in Fair condition and 14 were identified as being in Poor condition.

The Infrastructure Program

In June of 2015, the Government of Canada announced a huge infusion of new money for Parks Canada, 2.6 billion dollars over 5 years. Of that amount, the Rideau Canal got 39.6 million dollars (1.5% of the funding pie). By contrast, the Trent-Severn Waterway received \$285 million (11%). The reason for the discrepancy is the target of the 2015 infrastructure program; for our heritage canals it is focussed on "safety of persons" issues – primarily dams, berms and bridges (for our National Parks, funding also includes improvements to service infrastructure in addition to safety of persons). In fairness to the Trent-Severn, it does have a lot more "safety of persons" issues than does the Rideau. However, in terms of heritage structures, only 2 of the 14 locks listed as being in Poor condition on the Rideau Canal received funding. There is a "but" to this which will be explained at the end of this article.



Wooden Bridge at Jones Falls

This bridge was closed to vehicle traffic and cordoned off in 2007 since the edges were starting to fall apart. The bridge was first built in 1883 (in the location of an earlier canal construction era bridge), and has been repaired over the years. Work on its replacement is scheduled to start this fall/winter.

What's Planned?

We'll have a quick look at the original June 2015 list. That list totals \$46 million since it included \$6.6 million of previously announced funding.

- **Ottawa Canal Walls Repair**, downtown core – \$7.6 M
- **Hogs Back Dam & Weir Rehabilitation** – \$1.1 M
- **Hogs Back Fixed Bridge Rehabilitation** – \$3.0 M
- **Black Rapids Dam Rehabilitation** – \$1.1 M
- **Black Rapids Lock 13 Rehabilitation** – \$2.3 M
- **Burritts Rapids Earth Dam Rehabilitation** – \$2.6 M
- **Upper Nicholson's Earth Dam Rehabilitation** – \$0.85 M
- **Merrickville Swing Bridge Rehabilitation** – \$0.775 M
- **Edmonds Weir & Dam and Lock 25 Masonry Rehabilitation** – \$1.2 M
- **Poonamalie Dam Rehabilitation Phase 1** – \$5.3 M
- **Narrows Lock 35 Masonry Repairs** – \$0.8 M
- **Bobs Lake Dam Rehabilitation** – \$3.1 M
- **Chaffeys Swing Bridge Replacement** – \$0.75 M

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Rideau Canal Management Planning

Management planning is a process undertaken by Parks Canada to set out, and periodically reassess, strategic management direction of a National Historic Site. This process helps to ensure Parks Canada delivers on its commitments to heritage places on behalf of Canadians. It also provides an opportunity for Indigenous peoples, boaters, visitors, residents and partners to voice their ideas, feedback and advice.

The Rideau Canal's Management Plan was last updated in 2005. Since then, some changes to the planning process have occurred. Most notably, management planning used to take place on a five year cycle. This has since been extended to ten years, with strengthened implementation and monitoring procedures put in place throughout the cycle. In addition, management plans are now more integrated, strategic and results-based. Emphasis is placed on objectives (what will be accomplished) instead of specific management actions (how it will be accomplished).

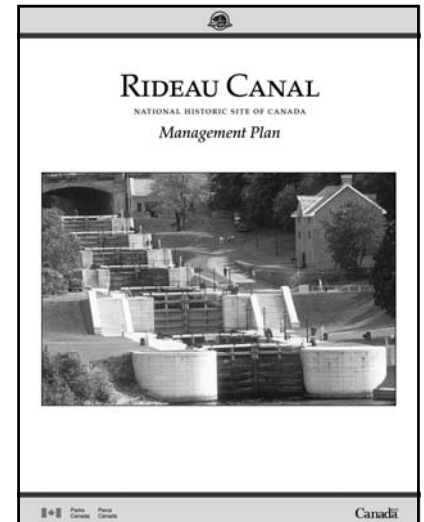
When I joined Parks Canada in November, I was asked to lead the review and update of the Rideau Canal's Management Plan. Over the past five months, I've been working closely with a planning team made up of skilled and experienced individuals within the Agency to work through the initial steps of the process. The planning team is in the final stages of measuring performance against the previous plan as well as assessing the state of the Rideau Canal in order to better inform where we go from here.

Over the course of the 2016 navigation season, Parks Canada will be actively engaging and consulting with Canadians who have an interest in the management planning process. This will be your opportunity to provide input into the new management plan and help shape the future of the Rideau Canal National Historic Site and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In the interim, and as always, I invite you to share any feedback you have about the Rideau Canal by sending an e-mail to rideaucanal-info@pc.gc.ca. Public consultation schedules and other information about the Management Plan will be posted, when available, on the Parks Canada website: www.pc.gc.ca/rideaucanal

John R. Festarini

Associate Director, Ontario Waterways, Parks Canada



Management Plan Consultation Participation

Friends of the Rideau encourages everyone to participate in the public consultation process. In the past, consultations have taken place over a 2-year period, but due to the lateness of this planning process there is a very compressed timeframe for doing this.

A new management plan is long overdue, the last plan was done in 2005. Work actually started on a revision in 2010 when there was a legislated 5-year requirement for an update. That update was abandoned as the government of the day worked on changes to the management of our historic canals.

In 2012, in conjunction with the merger of the Rideau Canal and the Trent-Severn Waterway under a single management unit, the Parks Canada Agency Act was changed, extending the update cycle for the Management Plan from 5 years to 10 years.

The Management Plan, when completed, will be tabled in Parliament. It is one of the very few opportunities for the public to comment on how the Rideau Canal is run. What Parks Canada does on the canal affects thousands of residents and businesses within the Rideau Corridor.

Given the new 10-year outlook of the plan, Friends of the Rideau will be paying particular attention to natural and cultural heritage preservation and presentation, education, public outreach and public engagement – all key components of Parks Canada's mandate. These are also very important in Parks Canada's administration of the Canal as an UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Bring your ideas forward as part of the public consultation. We'll post information about that process on our website as soon as we have it available.

Continued from page 4 ...

- **Jones Falls** Concrete Bridge Rehabilitation – \$0.65
- **Jones Falls** Timber Bridge Rehabilitation or Replacement – \$1.6 M
- **Upper Brewers** Earth Dam Rehabilitation – \$2.1 M
- **Kingston Mills** Fixed Bridge Replacement – \$2.3 M
- **Kingston Mills** Swing Bridge Rehabilitation – \$2.2 M
- Regular Dam (multiple) Repairs – Various locations from Ottawa to Kingston – \$2.5 M
- Lock Masonry Repairs (various) – Various locations from Ottawa and Kingston – \$4.5 M

It's a bit unclear with the last two items whether this is really new money on top of the Rideau Canal's normal yearly capital and maintenance allowance (which, in recent years, has been in the order of \$2 M capital and \$3 M maintenance).

What's Being Done?

The bulk of the work is being done outside of the navigation season in order not to affect boaters and visitors. Some projects, such as the Chaffeys Swing Bridge replacement, have already been completed. Pre-season 2016 included work on the Kingston Mills stone arch dam, the weir at Old Slys, Upper Brewers lock walls, Ottawa canal walls, and a weir, berms and canal walls at Poonamalie.

Winter 2016/17 work is a longer list. The second phase of the repair of the Ottawa canal walls will get underway. Concrete and lock repair at Black Rapids will begin. Work on the Manotick dam; the earth dam and masonry walls at Upper Nicholsons; the weir, dam and lock at Edmonds; and masonry on the Narrows Lock will also be started. At Jones Falls work will commence on the two bridges and at Bobs Lake rehabilitation of the reservoir dam will begin.

The caveat on this work is that, particularly with older structures, lots of up-front evaluation and planning has to be done before work can begin, so some projects may proceed faster than others.

Parks Canada is posting a list of projects, with updates, on their website at: www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/on/rideau/visit/infrastructure.aspx

BUT

There are actually two "buts". The first "but" is that of the 14 locks in Poor condition, only two were identified for heritage repair in the 2015 infrastructure program. Those fourteen locks are: Black Rapids Lock 13, Long Island Lock 14, Edmonds Lock 25, Old Slys Lock 27, Smiths Falls Old Combined Lock 28, Smiths Falls Combined Lock 29a, Poonamalie Lock 32, Narrows Lock 35, Chaffeys Lock 37, Jones Falls locks 40, 41, and 42, and Kingston Mills locks 46 and 47. The locks originally identified for long-term heritage repair in June 2015 were Black Rapids Lock 13 and Narrows Lock 35.

The second "but" is that in the 2016-17 Report on Plans and Priorities for the Parks Canada Agency, it states that Parks Canada has a 100% target to improve the "condition of heritage canal, highway and townsite assets in poor or very poor condition ... to fair or good." Their target date for this is March 2020. As of this writing, no funding has been announced to bring the 12 locks not listed in the

current infrastructure program, from poor to fair or good condition, by March 2020. There are also several other assets that would fall into this category such as the Brass Point Bridge (both fixed and swing) which is listed as being in Poor condition.

The 2016-17 report also has a 100% target for March 2020 of "Condition of visitor experience assets" which in Parks Canada parlance would be things like wharves (several are listed in Poor condition), roadway walls (i.e. those at Jones Falls), and even The Depot in Merrickville.



Kingston Mills Fixed Bridge

The single lane fixed bridge is slated for replacement.

Bottom line with the second "but" is that we should be seeing a lot more funding from Parks Canada for the Rideau Canal prior to 2020 if they are to meet their 100% March 2020 target. The March 2016 Federal Budget did not specifically identify this additional funding, but Parks Canada recently announced (March 30, 2016) an additional \$170 million in infrastructure funding for the Québec canals so we anticipate something similar for the Ontario canals. The Rideau Canal would need somewhere north of an additional \$100 million to complete all the "deferred work" listed in the 2012 National Asset Review by March 2020. We're crossing our fingers.

We've posted the Rideau Canal portion of the 2012 National Asset Review, the Parks Canada 2016-17 Report on Plans and Priorities and the link to the Rideau infrastructure section of Parks Canada website, on our website (www.rideaufriends.com). We'll also post any funding updates as they become available.

2016 Hours of Operation

Dates	Days	Hours
May 20—June 26	Mon to Thurs	10 am to 4 pm
	Fri to Sun, holidays	9 am to 7 pm
June 27 – Sept. 5	Mon to Thurs	9 am to 6 pm
	Fri to Sun, holidays	9 am to 7 pm
Sept. 6— Oct. 10	Mon to Friday	10 am to 4 pm
	Sat to Sun, holidays	9 am to 5 pm

2 for 1 Lockages

During the period of May 20 to June 30, 2016, Parks Canada is offering a 2 for 1 promotion on single lockage and return and one day permits. On your arrival at a lockstation to buy your lockage permit simply ask one of the lockstaff for a promotional coupon which will grant you a second permit which can be used on another occasion within the promotion period or shared with a friend so that two vessels can travel together.

For all the details about this offer see:

parkscanada.gc.ca/canals

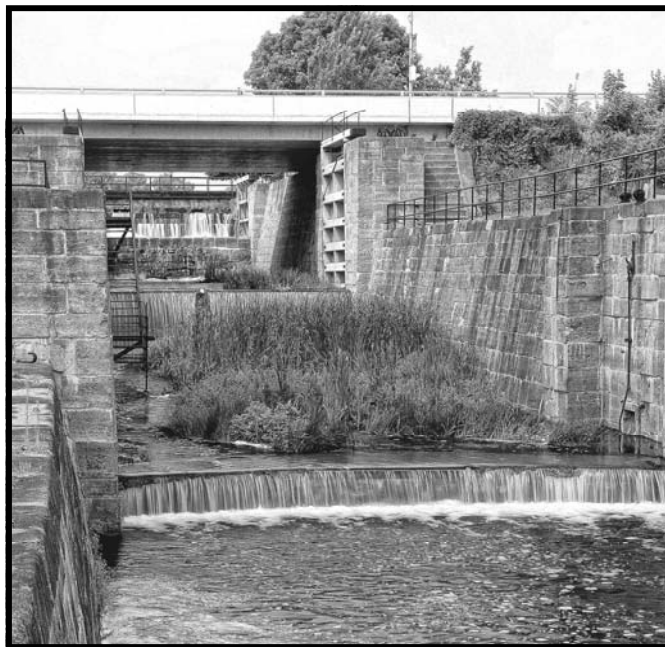
oTENTiks

For summer 2016 there will be three spots with Parks Canada oTENTiks (canvas covered A-frame cabins); Upper Nicholson's, Upper Beveridges and Upper Brewers. These are of interest to the Rideau traveler, not only as potential accommodations, but because those sites now have showers – which are available to anyone mooring or camping at those lockstations. This may be particularly attractive to hikers, cyclists and paddlers.



Friends of the Rideau Event Booth

Come and visit us this summer, or join us in the booth as a volunteer — see page 3



Old Combined Smiths Falls Locks

Abandoned in the mid-1970s when the new combined lock was built to accommodate a low level fixed bridge, these locks present a wonderful educational opportunity. With the upper two locks empty of water, features not visible in a working lock such as the tunnel sluices, sluice valves, breastworks, sills and even the construction of the gates can be interpreted. Friends of the Rideau has submitted a proposal to Parks Canada to interpret these locks (see pg. 2).



Artificial Loon's Nest

As you travel the Rideau in spring, you may come across a loon on an artificial nest. There are many of these along the Rideau, providing a safe nesting location for loons. Loons generally nest in mid-May and one or two chicks will hatch in mid-June. For more information about these nests, including how to build one, see:

www.rideau-info.com/canal/ecology/loon-nest.html

Also check out the "Be Rideau Loon Aware" section of our website: www.rideaufriends.com/loonaware/

FRIENDS OF THE
RIDEAU 

ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

Saturday, May 7, 2016

9:30 am to noon

Rideau Canal Visitor Centre, Smiths Falls

9:30 am	Meet and Greet - coffee & tea
10:00 am	Annual General Meeting
10:30 am	Rideau Canal Infrastructure Program and Management Plan Update

Our featured presenter is **John Festarini**, Associate Director, Ontario Waterways, Parks Canada, who will provide us with details about all the work Parks Canada is doing, and plans to do, to fix the Rideau Canal's ageing infrastructure. John is also working on the new Rideau Canal Management Plan (see page 5) and will provide us with information about that as well.

This is a great opportunity to learn about all the work being done on the canal and to ask questions to someone who knows all the details.

***Come out and meet some Friends
Everyone is welcome***

Enjoy refreshments

Chat with some of the Friends' directors

***Or simply come out and
meet some like-minded Friends***

The Rideau Canal Visitor Centre (formerly the Rideau Canal Museum) is easy to find – it's the big stone building with the grain elevator sitting at the south end of the main downtown area (34 Beckwith Street South) in Smiths Falls.