

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON THE C&O CANAL

- Why was the Canal needed?-----To provide a means of inexpensive transportation by water for commercial development of the Potomac River Valley.
- When was the Canal started?-----President John Q. Adams dedicated the Canal at Little Falls, (approximately 5 miles from Georgetown) on July 4, 1828.
- Where did the Canal start?-----At Georgetown, D.C., (tidal lock on the Potomac River).
- When and where was the Canal completed?-----The Canal was completed and dedicated at Cumberland, MD, on October 10, 1850.
- What was the cost of the Canal?-----Almost \$12,000,000, (not including interests costs on loans).
- How many people comprised the Canal's labor force?-----At the height of construction 4,000 workmen were employed.
- What delayed completion?-----Right-of-way disputes, floods, labor problems encountered in construction work.
- How long was the Canal?-----Approximately 184.5 miles.
- How deep was the Canal?-----6 feet deep.
- How wide was the Canal?-----60 to 80 feet depending upon section of the Canal.
- How many Aqueducts are there along the canal?---11
- How many culverts were built along the canal?---Over 165 were constructed.
- How many locks are there on the Canal?-----74 lift locks, to raise the boats 605 ft. above sea level; 12 river & feeder locks.
- What were the dimensions of the locks?-----100 feet long inside the gates, 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, and 16 feet deep.
- What was the average number of feet lift locks raised canal boats?-----Approximately 8 feet.
- How many river dams were located on the Potomac River along the Canal?-----7
- Were there any branch canals?-----The Alexandria Aqueduct used the Alexandria Canal to transport goods until it closed in 1866. The old City Canal in Washington, D.C. was utilized but proved inadequate for requirements of the C&O Canal.
- What are the dimensions of the Paw Paw Tunnel?---3,118 feet long, 27 feet wide, and 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet high.
- How long did it take to construct the tunnel?---Approximately 8 years, an average of 1 foot completed per day.

Operation

What were the years of operation?-----1830 to 1924
When was the peak year?-----1871 with 850,000 tons transported.
What were the major trade items?-----Coal, grain and lumber.
How long did it take to get from Georgetown to
Cumberland?-----An average of 7 days.
How many boats operated on the canal?-----800 during peak operating years.
What was the size of a boat?-----93 ft. with a 125 ton capacity.
How long did it take to "lock through"?-----Approximately 10 minutes.
How long was a towline?-----35 yards or 100 feet.
How many mules were on the canal?-----4,000
What were salaries/compensations like?-----Locktenders: \$100/yr. to \$75/mo.
with house and garden.
Boat Captain: .40/ton to Georgetown.
Laborers: \$10 to \$20/mo. with
poor food, housing, and
medical care.
What caused the canal to cease operation?-----Floods, competition of the B&O
Railroad.

The Canal Today

What is the condition of the canal now?-----Much intact, presently under-
going stabilization and restoration.
How many acres does the canal own?-----Approximately 12,000 acres.
When did the government acquire the canal?-----1938
When was it made a National Monument?-----President Dwight D. Eisenhower
issued a proclamation creating
the canal as a National Monument
in 1960.
When was it made a National Park?-----An act of the United States
Congress created the C&O Canal
National Historical Park in 1971.
What sections are rewatered and restored?-----22 miles from Georgetown to
Seneca, MD, 4.5 miles from Town
Creek to Oldtown.
What are some historic areas along the canal?-----Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
Antietam National Battlefield
Fort Frederick State Park
Fort Tonoloway
Where are the Visitor Centers located?-----Foundry Mall, Georgetown, DC
Abner Cloud House, Washington, DC
Great Falls Tavern, Potomac, MD
Hancock Visitor Center, Hancock, MD
North Branch, Cumberland, MD