



AUGUSTA CANAL NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Spinning the Threads of History **Interpretive Center Nears Completion**

Visitors to the soon-to-be completed Augusta Canal Interpretive Center will gain a deeper appreciation of many threads that weave through the fabric of the Canal's history and the history of Augusta itself.

As they enter past the massive boilers that once powered and heated Enterprise Mill, visitors will realize they have arrived at much more than a typical visitor center. Panels depicting the massive industries that once dominated the Canal's banks lead toward the first major exhibit: a turbine and line-shaft that will use the power of the Canal's flowing water to drive industrial equipment, just as it once did in the mid-19th Century.

The 10,000 square feet of interactive exhibits take visitors from the Canal's initial conception and construction in the 1840s and expansion in the 1870s, through its role in the Civil War and its aftermath to the New South industrial growth and electrification of the city. Displays include functioning textile looms, life-sized models of Canal construction and depictions of mill worker life.

Exhibits explain not only Canal history, but also the mechanics and physics of turning flowing water into industrial power—both mechanical and electrical. Large windows reveal the working 1920-era electrical turbines that once again are generating power from the water. Visitors will gaze through the mill floor itself to view the huge penstock and tailrace as Canal water surges beneath their feet on its way to and from the turbines.

Designed by nationally acclaimed exhibit design firm, Christopher Chadbourne and Associates of Massachusetts,

the \$3 million center has been under construction since early 2002. Workers met some special challenges to prepare the exhibit space, including installing a massive pipe underneath the mill to channel Canal water to drive the line-shaft exhibit.

Authentic artifacts and personal memories make the Canal come alive. Interviews with former mill workers and modern-day canal supporters add depth and texture to the experience. Audio-visual interludes are scattered throughout the center along with a 10-minute movie which introduces visitors to the Canal, its history and people.



Installing Gift Shop floor.



R. Rogers

Rogers Named to Marketing Post

Rebecca B. Rogers has assumed the newly created position of Director of Marketing and External Affairs for the Augusta Canal. Her responsibilities include directing the public relations, promotions and fundraising activities for the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area. Among her first assignments will be planning grand opening activities for the Canal's \$3 million Interpretive Center at Enterprise Mill.

Most recently Rogers served as Director of Marketing Communications for the Augusta Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau. She also held several marketing positions with University Health Care Systems. She is immediate past president of the Augusta Advertising Federation and holds a BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an MBA from Augusta State University.

"I'm excited to come on board with the Canal just as so many projects are coming to fruition," said Rebecca. "This job lets me combine my love of American history with my experience in tourism and marketing. I can't wait to let the world know what a treasure we have here."

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Since joining the Augusta Canal Authority almost five years ago, I have been regularly amazed by the potential this great resource offers our community. Since its inception, the Canal and its related resources have inspired the imagination of countless ordinary citizens who maintained a common interest in improvement for Augusta. Although the days of King Cotton are long gone, the Canal still provides us with its historical uses such as hydropower and drinking water. Today we find ourselves on the brink of a new chapter in its history with new uses and benefits just being revealed.

For some time the many generous partners, staff and volunteers associated with the Canal Authority have been focused on the establishment and execution of a comprehensive master plan for the Canal and surrounding area. Many of the projects envisioned in this 1994 plan are at last coming to fruition. It is an exciting new chapter in the Canal Authority's existence.

The multi-use trail is underway along the upper and urban portion of the Canal and will serve as a vital pedestrian and bicycle corridor to downtown Augusta, North Augusta and Columbia County. Tours on the two Petersburg boats now under construction will provide an experience that can be found nowhere else in the world. The Interpretive Center opens this spring. Not only will this offer a unique, comprehensive and entertaining history lesson, but this facility will also be a tremendous economic development tool for the entire area. The Headgates and Savannah Rapids Park will receive a comprehensive renovation and facelift this spring and summer. Finally, but certainly not least, "The Brightest Arm of the Savannah," by Edward Cashin, now offers the most thorough written history of the Canal ever published.

All of this is happening now, yet here is much to do. We are just beginning to penetrate the surface of this great potential resource. For more than 150 years, the Canal has served as a source of potential for our community. It continues to do so.

I invite you, your friends and neighbors to experience what is happening. We are entering a new chapter. I promise it is going to be a good one.

– N. Turner Simkins
Chairman

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

16th Annual Canal Cruise is April 27

It's time to Pedal, Paddle, and Party! Register now for the annual AUGUSTA CANAL CRUISE AND COOKOUT, Sunday afternoon, April 27. PADDLE a canoe from the canal Headgates to Enterprise Mill. Or PEDAL a bicycle on the scenic towpath, from the Mill to the Headgates and back. Then, PARTY at the Mill courtyard. Enjoy live music, Sconyers barbeque and games. Plus get free admission to the brand new Augusta Canal Interpretive Center.

Get the details at AugustaCanal.com, or call the Canal Authority at 823-0440.

(Advance registration required.)

PROJECTS UPDATE

Canal Bikeway and Multiuse Trail.

Progress on the multiuse trail continues. Improvements to the Savannah River upper levee pathway from 13th Street to 10th at Riverwalk were completed in late 2002. Railings were installed and the path widened and graded. By late February, work on the full length of the canal tow-path will be underway. Over the next nine months the existing path will be re-graded and raised in low-lying areas. Safety railings and signage will be installed at key locations. In addition, a new path will be constructed on the south side of the canal from the pedestrian bridge at Lake Olmstead along the Georgia Power easement, to Chaffee Park.

Petersburg Boats. By mid-summer two canal cargo vessels, known as Petersburg boats, will depart from docks near the interpretive center for educational tours of the canal. The fiberglass replicas will hold up to 45 passengers. Rusty Fleetwood, the boat builder who built the wooden replica now housed at the Augusta Museum of History, is constructing the boats at shops on Tybee Island, GA.

Headgates and Locks Improvements. In February bids were solicited for the Headgates and Locks Rehabilitation project, with construction to begin by summer. Plans call for improved access and amenities at the headgates area/ Savannah Rapids Park along with improvements to the locks and headgates themselves. Visitors will be afforded view inside the gatehouse and see the 19th-century mechanisms which still operate the locks. Park improvements include a new pedestrian bridge, restroom and concession facilities and better parking.

During construction at the headgates, public access will need to be restricted due to safety concerns. Therefore, work on the new pedestrian bridge will be put on an accelerated schedule. Construction updates and temporary closing information will be posted to www.AugustaCanal.com website and sent to local news media to help keep canal and park users informed.

Atlanta Gas Light Abatement Project.

The Canal Authority has raised concerns about Atlanta Gas Light's new plan to use rock riprap to line the banks of the canal's second level after the coal tar contamination abatement process is completed. The original plan called for concrete below the waterline with plant material along the banks. A change in the abatement technology used will allow shallower excavation than originally proposed. Instead of concrete, riprap-large rocks that fight erosion-will line the canal from 7th to 12th streets. "It's aesthetically not very pleasing; we've told them that," said Dayton Sherrouse, Augusta Canal Executive Director. Discussions between the Canal Authority and AGL continue.

Interpretive Center Dedication Set for April 17.

Officials and invited guests will formally dedicate the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area Interpretive Center during a 6 p.m. ceremony on April 17. Guest of honor will be Fran P. Mainella, Director of the National Park Service. The following day the center officially opens to the public. Hours of operation will be Monday - Saturday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Sunday 1- 6 p.m.

Brightest Arm Book Wins Award

"The Brightest Arm of the Savannah - The Augusta Canal 1845-2000," has won the 2002 Lilla M. Hawes award of the Georgia Historical Society. The book, by noted Georgia historian Edward J. Cashin, was published by the Augusta Canal Authority in November 2002.

The Hawes award recognizes the best book on local Georgia history. The award will be formally presented April 12 at the historical society's 164th annual meeting in Savannah.

The Brightest Arm details the creation and construction of the Augusta Canal as one of the South's few successful pre-Civil War industrial development projects, and assesses its continuing impact on the city's social and economic development through the 19th and 20th centuries.

Since its publication in November 2002, *"The Brightest Arm of the Savannah"* has been well received. Six hundred copies from the initial press run were purchased within the first month. Available in hardbound or paperback, the book may be ordered from the Augusta Canal Authority (\$27.95 hardbound, \$18.95 softbound, plus tax and \$3 shipping) at 706-823-0440.

AWARDS



Petersburg boats under construction

GET YOUR COPY OF THE AWARD WINNING BOOK

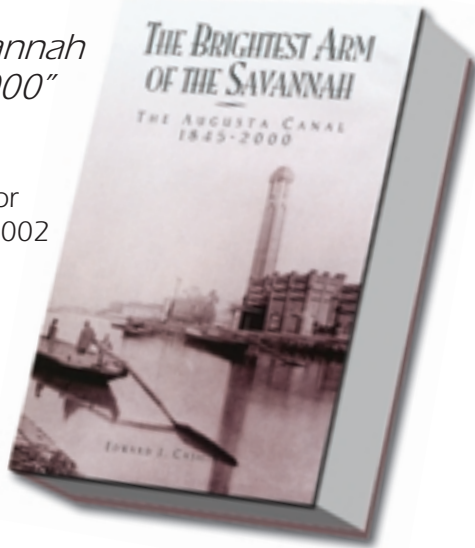
*"The Brightest Arm of the Savannah
The Augusta Canal 1845-2000"*

by Edward Cashin

Winner of the Lilla Hawes prize for
best local Georgia history book of 2002

Available at local bookstores and
museum gift shops or
from the Augusta Canal Authority
706-823-0440

\$27.95 Hardbound
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plus tax and \$3 shipping if applicable



Herbert J. Kado has been a member of the Augusta Canal Authority since 1999. He and his wife, Shirley, have lived in the Augusta area for the past 25 years. They have three adult children and five grandchildren.

After a 20 year career in the US Army, Herb retired at the rank of major and in 1983 went to work at the Savannah River Site. Following an intermittent semi-retirement in the late 90s, Herb returned two years ago to SRS with Wackenhut Services.

In addition to his hobbies of bowling, golfing and tinkering with antique cars, Herb is active in his church, the Fort Gordon Bicentennial Chapel.

On his service with the Augusta Canal Authority Herb says, "I enjoy the idea of seeing the CSRA grow and the Canal has been and will be a big part of that. It is interesting to work with people who are so excited about what they are doing."

In addition to his regular Authority service, Herb recently went "above and beyond the call of duty" by posing as a model for the life-sized statue of a Petersburg boat captian which will be featured at the entrance to the Canal Interpretive Center.

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