

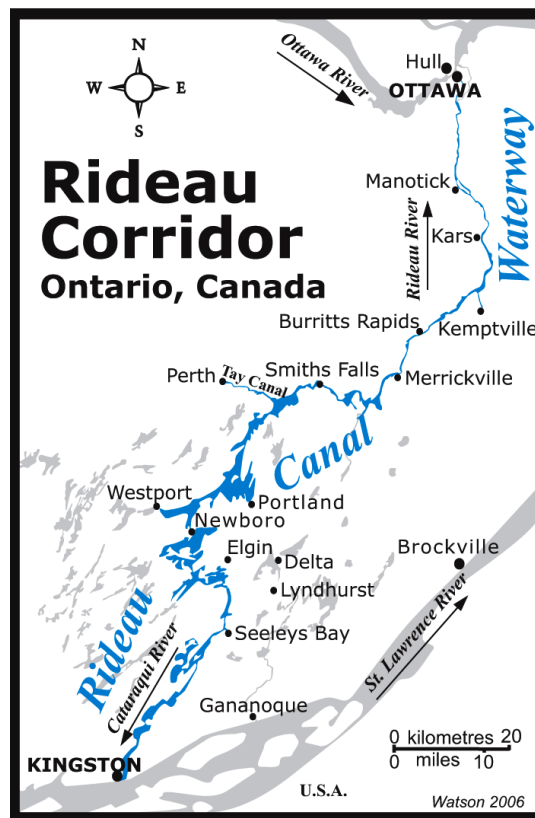
Watson's 2021 Guide to the Rideau Canal

by

Ken W. Watson

A print compilation of several sections of the Rideau Waterway website:

www.rideau-info.com



Revision date: February 12, 2021

COVID-19

In 2020 the canal opened late (end of June for the entire system) due to COVID-19. It is clear that COVID-19 rules will be in place for 2021, although the expectation is for a normal season opening on May 21, 2021.

For the latest Parks Canada COVID-19 information relating to the Rideau Canal – see:

<https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/rideau/visit/covid-19-info>

In 2020, these were the rules:

Visitors will be able to access the following services and facilities:

- lockage, boat launches, access points and mooring areas;
- day-use areas, including green spaces, picnic areas, and parking lots;
- day-use trails, including some cycling access on designated trails and pathways;
- lockstation grounds; and
- public toilets where enhanced cleaning protocols will be implemented.

To ensure visitor safety, Parks Canada will implement the following:

- Nautical distancing
- Touchless locking
- Stay on boat while locking
- Cashless payment preferred

Visitors should follow the advice of public health experts, including necessary hygiene practices and physical distancing of two metres from others.

Camping was allowed for boaters (paddlers & power boats) starting on June 22, 2020. However camping for those hiking or arriving by bicycle was not in 2020. Also in 2020, there are no oTENTiks rentals or reservable camping

Check with Parks Canada for the latest COVID-19 rules for the Rideau

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About this Guide

This guide is a compilation of some of the information available on the website: www.rideau-info.com. This is a non-commercial website, which first went on-line in 1996 and is maintained on a hobby basis by Ken Watson. Ken has also authored five books about the Rideau Canal, "*A History of the Rideau Lockstations*," first published in 2000; "*Engineered Landscapes – The Rideau Canal's Transformation of a Wilderness Waterway*," first published in 2006, "*The Rideau Route – Exploring the Pre-Canal Waterway*," first published in 2007, "*Tales of the Rideau*," first published in 2010 and *Watson's Paddling Guide to the Rideau Canal*, first published in 2012.

It has been noted that many people print sections of the website to take with them on their visits to the Rideau. This guide has been prepared to simplify that process, to provide a print and/or portable PDF version of various sections of the website that the visitor might find useful on their Rideau trip. Although I have tried to make the information accurate and up to date, I cannot warrant all the information contained in this document. You can help by informing me of any corrections or updates. I can be contacted at: rideauken@gmail.com

What's in the Guide

The Table of Contents pretty well says it all. The main idea was to include much of the information that the visitor would like to have with them on their Rideau trip. For those with more specific interests (i.e. fishing, canoeing, etc.), sections containing that type of information can be printed directly from the website.

What's not in the Guide

Keeping in mind that www.rideau-info.com is a very large website, a number of things that are on the website but were felt to be special interest, or too large to include, were left out of this guide. For example:

- **Accommodation listings:** detailed listings of all the inns, hotels, B&Bs, campgrounds, lodges, etc. in the Rideau Corridor. Some are listed on the website, others are available on tourism association websites.
- **Coming Events:** these are posted to the website as they become available.
- **Fishing Information:** detailed information about the season and fish species (it's all on the website).
- **Maps:** only the general map of the Rideau and community locations has been included – other maps on the website include road maps, community maps and even a geology map of part of the Rideau. It is assumed that a visitor to the Rideau will have their own maps (i.e. a navigation chart, road map, etc.).
- **Boat Rental information:** the website contains links to the various firm's own websites for detailed information
- **Driving Tour Information:** several driving tours, catering to specific interests, are available on the website
- **Detailed History:** although a general history of the building of the Rideau Canal and histories of each community has been included, the website includes much more detailed information on the history of each lock as well as general history of the region.
- **Canoeing/Kayak Information:** the website contains some detailed information for the paddler, including trip suggestions. You can also view/download my free "*Watson's Paddling Guide to the Rideau Canal*" with all the information and maps that you will need to paddle the Rideau Canal.
- **Photos:** in order to keep the file size down (it is already too big without photos) the information has not been photo enhanced. There are over 500 large size photos in the website's photo gallery as well as dozens of other photos scattered throughout the website. Also on the website are photo tour videos of each Rideau Canal lockstation.
- **Whole Bunch of Other Stuff:** the website also contains a large assortment of "other" items; quizzes and puzzles; behind the scenes info about the canal; weather forecast links; articles about Rideau trips; links to dozens of Rideau related websites; polls and surveys; boating rules; lake association information; local cottaging information; and more

If there is something specific on the website that you think should be in this guide, please let me know.

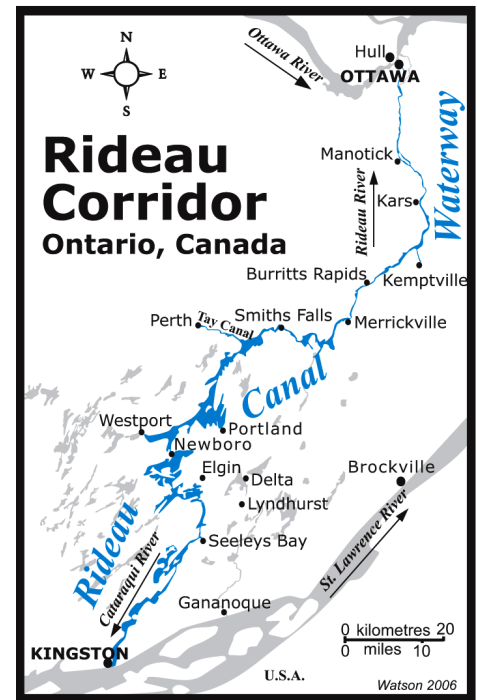
About the Rideau Canal

The Rideau Canal is both a boater's and land based visitor's delight, attracting boats from across North America and visitors from around the world to travel its 202 kilometre (125 mile) length. The Rideau Canal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a National Historic Site of Canada and a designated Canadian Heritage River, consists of a series of beautiful lakes and rivers connected by canals. It stretches from Kingston, at the foot of Lake Ontario, to Ottawa, Canada's capital. Maintained by Canada's Parks service it is arguably the most scenic and historic waterway in North America. Whether you visit by boat, car, or bicycle, the Rideau has something for you.

The Rideau Canal, which links the lakes and rivers between Ottawa and Kingston, is the oldest continuously operated canal in North America. The locks are operated today much as they were when first opened in 1832. Each lock is unique and the lock staff are always ready to offer the tourist any assistance they can. Most locks provide washrooms, overnight mooring and picnic facilities, including tables, benches and barbecue grills.

The Rideau Canal was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site because it is the best preserved example of a slackwater canal in North America demonstrating the use of European slackwater technology in North America on a large scale. It is the only canal dating from the great North American canal-building era of the early 19th century that remains operational along its original line with most of its original structures intact. The designation is also for the fact that the Rideau Canal is an extensive, well preserved and significant example of a canal which was used for a military purpose linked to a significant stage in human history – that of the fight to control the north of the American continent.

You can visit the Rideau in a number of ways. A boat is of course best to get the full ambiance of the region. You can pilot your own boat to the Rideau, trailer it here, or rent a boat on-site. Many people also enjoy the Rideau by staying at an Inn, Bed & Breakfast, Lodge, or cabin. The Rideau also makes for a wonderful driving trip, with many scenic roads winding their way through the heart of Old Ontario. So, whatever your vacation preference, the Rideau Canal has something for you.



Location Map



Your Rideau Journey – By Water

A Boat – Most types of boats can navigate the Rideau Canal. These include all kinds of pleasure craft; cruisers, runabouts, canoes, kayaks, PWCs, rowing sculls, paddle boats, etc. The only restrictions are that a boat must be less than 90 feet long by 26 feet wide by 22 feet high and draught less than five feet (four feet for flat bottom boats with a width of 26 feet).

Safety Equipment – Boats must conform to Canadian Coast Guard rules. For details about these rules get a copy of the free Safe Boating Guide, available from the Rideau Canal Office of Parks Canada or the Office of Boating Safety (see the contact list). It is also available on-line by going to www.tc.gc.ca and searching for "Office of Boating Safety".

Charts – Hydrographical charts of the Rideau Canal are extremely useful to have on your Rideau journey. These charts, at a scale of 1:20,000, with lockstation insets at 1:4,800, are the most detailed maps of the Rideau Canal. The charts show water depths with the navigation channel, including location of the buoys, clearly marked. Two sets of charts cover the Rideau Canal, **Chart 1512** covers Ottawa to Smiths Falls and **Chart 1513** covers Smiths Falls to Kingston. They are available for purchase from several on-line retailers and at many of the lockstations.

Permits – Your vessel will require a lockage permit to go through a lock. These are available in a number of forms, ranging from a single lockage pass to a full season permit. Prices are based on the length of your vessel. For more information see the fees and schedules section of this document. They are available for purchase from Parks Canada or at all lockstations.

General Information – You can obtain an information package from Parks Canada which includes the fee and hours of operation schedule, a brochure with a map of the Rideau Canal and a listing of lockstation services, and other interesting tourism information. This can be obtained by writing, emailing or phoning the Rideau Canal Office of Parks Canada (see the contact list)

Books – Frankly, no trip is complete without a few good books about the area you are travelling through. For an historic guide to each of the lockstations along the Rideau you can do no better than *A History of the Rideau Lockstations* by Ken W. Watson (all proceeds from the sale of this book go to Friends of the Rideau). In addition a good guide to the Rideau is handy, in addition to this one consider my *Paddling Guide to the Rideau Canal* – available as a free PDF download. It's not just for the paddler, any boater will find it useful, all sorts of information along with detailed maps. For those who wish a thick hardcopy guide, then the *Ports Cruising Guide to the Rideau Canal* is a good option.

Accommodation – Those travelling by vessels with enclosed accommodations have a great deal of choice. You can moor overnight at any of the lockstations (for a fee), you can drop anchor in many of the quiet bays along the Rideau Canal (for free) or stay at a full service marina (for a fee). For those of you without on-board facilities, you can pitch a tent at most of the lockstations (see the lockstation listing), stay at one of the many campgrounds, or take advantage the variety of B&Bs, Lodges, Inns, Motels or rental cottages.

Boat Launching – If you come to the Rideau Canal by water (along the St. Lawrence River, Lake Ontario or the Ottawa River) this isn't an issue. But if you trailer a boat to the Rideau Canal, you have many choices of where to launch your boat. A good option is often a marina or campground where your vehicle and trailer will remain secure. However, there are also many public boat-launching sites along the Rideau Canal. A full listing of both all the marinas and all the boat launches can be found in this document.

Watch Your Waves (aka Watch Your Wake) – A problem in restricted channels and something that can give boaters a bad name is the amount of wash generated by your boat. Several sections of the Rideau Canal have speed limits of 10 kph (6 mph), these are clearly marked along the route. There are many problems with boat wash; it can swamp other boaters, particularly those in small craft; it does property damage to shorelines, moored boats and docks; and it does aquatic habitat damage (i.e. loon nests, muskrat dens). Recognize that you are sharing the waterway with a variety of other users, including local residents (both human and non-human). Basically it is just good courtesy to pay attention to the amount of wash your vessel generates and its effect on other boaters and the shoreline. There are lots of open water spots on the Rideau Canal

where you can “let ‘er rip” should that need strike you. It is best to allow enough time for a tranquil trip, taking your time to relax, enjoy the scenery and “make haste slowly”.

High Tech – if you can’t live without the latest gadgets on your trip, be aware of some limitations. With cellphones, there are a few “dead zones” on the Rideau Canal. The location of these spots varies with the provider. As of this writing, many marinas offer high speed Internet access (check first before you assume that you’ll get access). Many local libraries also provide Internet access hot spots (most though only during operating hours).

Your Rideau Journey – By Road

The area around the Rideau Canal is known as the Rideau Corridor. It is only 200 kilometres long, anchored by the historic city of Kingston at the south end, and Canada’s national capital, Ottawa at the north end. It is easily travelled in a day, but to get the full ambience of the region it is best to plan for several days. A road travel guide has been included in the “Rideau Communities” section of this guide.

Maps: Of course a detailed road map is a must. While most people today use a map on their smartphone or GPS, a paper map is a good backup. The Government of Ontario road map or other commercial road map (i.e. Rand McNally) are good options. The Government of Ontario road map is available as a series of PDF downloads from the Ministry of Transportation website: www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/traveller/map/

Places to stay: There are many options in the Rideau Corridor; inns, lodges, campgrounds, B&Bs, etc. A listing of campgrounds as well as links to places that list B&Bs, hotels and motels can be found on-line at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/accommodations.html

Sights to see: There are many sights to see in the corridor, the historic stone bridge in Lyndhurst, the Old Stone Mill in Delta, the cheese shop in Forfar, the quaint shops of Westport, the historic town of Perth. The centre of the Rideau, Smiths Falls, hosts the Rideau Canal Visitor Information Centre, the Smiths Falls Railway Museum and the Heritage House Museum. The “Jewel of the Rideau,” Merrickville, with its stone heritage ambience, the Blockhouse Museum, and wonderful shops and Manotick with the historic Watson’s Mill. And, of course, there are the lovely lockstations which are well worth a visit such as historic Kingston Mills, beautiful Jones Falls, quiet Nicholsons, scenic Long Island and the spectacular flight of 8 locks in Ottawa.

Things to do: There are things to cater to most everyone’s interest – boating (lots of rental places), shopping, golfing, nature viewing, heritage explorations, lovely picnic spots, hiking, and much more. A few ideas for various driving tours can be found at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/driving/

Events: There are many events that take place on the Rideau every year – from Paddlefest in Smiths Falls to the Classic Boat Show (usually Westport or Rideau Ferry). Check out local municipal and tourism websites for information.

Rideau Heritage Route – this route is marked with highway signs from Kingston to Ottawa. Following it is a great way to explore the Rideau. Starting in Kingston, it heads north along County Road 15. Just past Seeleys Bay, you can take a looping tour along County Roads 33 and 42, through Lyndhurst, Delta, Philippsville and Forfar. Or, continue north along County Road 15 through Morton, past Elgin to Crosby. At Crosby there is another opportunity for a looping tour, heading west along County Road 42 to Newboro and Westport, and then along County Road 10 to Perth and then back along County Road 1, through Rideau Ferry, to Lombardy where you end up back on County Road 15. Or you could continue along Hwy 15 from Crosby, through Portland-on-the-Rideau, to Lombardy. From Lombardy the route follows County Road 15 to Smiths Falls, then County Road 43 to Merrickville, County Road 23 to Kemptville and then north, across the Rideau Canal to County Rd 5, to County Road 13, heading north along the west side of the Rideau River, to County Road 73 and into Ottawa. A full driving itinerary and maps of this route can be found at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/driving/

Your Rideau Journey – By Foot, Bicycle, Skate, Ski, Horse, or

There are many alternate ways to get around the Rideau. You can walk the Rideau Trail which extends from Kingston to Ottawa. You can hike, ride, bicycle or ski the Cataraqui Trail, part of the Trans Canada Trail System. There is a hiking guide on the website. Bicycle enthusiasts will find the many paved back roads fun to travel*. There is a detailed guide to cycling the Rideau on the website. Whatever your preferred mode of transportation, there is probably a way to do it within the Rideau Corridor.

* of note with cycling, many Rideau back roads have gravel shoulders that are often narrow and several back roads, including several to lockstations, have essentially no shoulder. Be aware of those risks.

Frequently Asked Questions

www.rideau-info.com/canal/rideau-faq.html

Note: this is taken directly from the website and references to further information are to website locations. Some of the info, such as marinas, boat launches and lockstation services are included in other sections of this document. For the paddler (canoeist/kayaker) there is a separate Rideau Canal Paddling FAQ available on the www.rideau-info.com website.

ABOUT THE RIDEAU CANAL

What is the Rideau Canal?

The Rideau Canal is a series of rivers, lakes and connecting locks and canals that form a continuous waterway from Kingston to Ottawa, in eastern Ontario, Canada. It is 202 kilometres (125 miles) long, of which about 19 kilometres (12 miles) is man made (locks and canal cuts), the rest are natural waters. There are 45 locks in 23 lockstations along the main route of the Rideau plus 2 locks that link the Tay Canal to the Rideau. From Lake Ontario at Kingston the canal rises 50.6 metres (166.2 feet) to the summit of Upper Rideau Lake and then descends 83.8 metres (275 feet) to the Ottawa River at Ottawa. To view location maps, head over to: www.rideau-info.com/canal/maps.html.

Who Operates the Rideau Canal?

The Rideau Canal is operated by the Parks Canada Agency, which is under the authority of the Canadian government Department of Environment & Climate Change. Parks Canada maintains the heritage aspects of the canal and operates it much like a park.

When and why was it built?

It was built between 1826 and 1832. It pre-dates the locks on the St. Lawrence, and was built in response to the War of 1812 to assist the defence of Canada by allowing boats to travel from Montreal to the Great Lakes without having to travel down the St. Lawrence, in gunshot range of the Americans. It was officially opened in May, 1832 and has been operated continuously ever since.

Who built it?

It was built by the British under the direction of Lt. Colonel John By of the Royal Engineers. Private contractors, such as John Redpath and Thomas McKay, did most of the actual construction. The design and engineering of the canal was done by Colonel By and the Royal Engineers. Two companies of Royal Sappers and Miners assisted in the construction. Hundreds of tradesmen (i.e. masons, carpenters, smiths, coopers) used local materials to fashion the locks and dams. The large amount of manual labour (i.e. digging & moving dirt, chopping trees, excavating stones) was done by hundreds of French-Canadian and immigrant Irish labourers. Local settlers assisted with moving materials (i.e. stones) and providing food to the construction camps. Some 2,500 to 4,000 men worked on the construction each year. Many women and children were also part of these construction camps. For details about the construction, visit the History of the Rideau Canal webpage at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/history/

What makes the Rideau Canal unique?

It is the oldest continuously operated canal in North America. Most of the locks are still operated by hand, using the same mechanisms that were used to operate the locks in 1832. As you travel the Rideau Canal, you are viewing living history. The Rideau isn't just a canal cut (only 10% is man-made), it's a waterway combining canals, rivers and lakes. This makes the Rideau a wonderful blend of urban, rural, cottage and natural landscapes. You can see million dollar homes, quaint cottages, and loons swimming in a sheltered, undisturbed bay, all in the same day.

How has the Rideau Canal been recognized?

In 1925 the Rideau Canal was designated a National Historic Site of Canada (plaqued in 1926, 1962 and 2013). In 2000 the Rideau Canal was designated a Canadian Heritage River in recognition of its outstanding historical and recreational values. In 2007 it was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site recognizing it as a work of human creative genius. The Rideau Canal was recognized as the best preserved example of a slackwater canal in North America demonstrating the use of European slackwater technology in North America on a large scale. It is the only canal dating from the great North American canal-building era of the early 19th century that remains operational along its original line with most of its original structures intact. It was also recognized as an extensive, well preserved and significant example of a canal which was used for military purposes linked to a significant stage in human history - that of the fight to control North America.

BOATING THE RIDEAU CANAL

How big a boat do I need?

There is no minimum size of boat. The locks are operated for the tourist boater so the canal staff are used to handling any type of boat whether it be a canoe, kayak, PWC, runabout or cruiser.

What are boat size restrictions?

The maximum size of boat is 27.4m/90ft. length, 7.9m/26ft. width, 6.7m/22ft height. Under special circumstances, the Rideau Canal can accommodate a boat up to 33.5m (110ft) long by 9.1m (30ft) in width. The navigation channel, which is clearly marked by buoys, maintains at least 1.5 metres (5 feet) of water under normal circumstances (the deepest part is in Big Rideau Lake, which reaches a depth of 100.3 metres (329 feet)). Parks Canada asks that any boat drafting more than 1.2 metres (4 feet) to contact them before entering the canal. Minimum fixed bridge clearance is 6.7 metres (22 feet).

Is the Rideau Canal difficult to boat?

No - it's very easy. The Rideau Canal was built as a "slackwater" system, meaning there is no excessive current in the rivers. Waves with some chop can develop on the bigger lakes but boaters can easily seek shelter near shore if the need arises. Each lock has friendly canal staff who are used to dealing with novice boaters and will help out in any way they can.

Do I need a navigation chart?

While not legally mandated, yes, you should carry a set of charts. There are two sets of navigation charts that cover the Rideau Canal. Chart 1512 covers from Ottawa to Smiths Falls and Chart 1513 covers Smiths Falls to Kingston. These charts, in addition to showing the depth of the water in all the lakes and rivers, clearly show the navigation channel and all the marker buoys. These charts can be purchased at most lockstations or can be ordered on-line from World of Maps www.worldofmaps.com.

When is the Rideau Canal open for boating?

The locks operate from mid-May to mid-October. For exact dates see the fees & schedules page located at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/fees.html. Of course with so many sections of natural water, you can boat anytime there is open water. Most of the lakes have launch ramp access. The longest "lock-free" stretch is the Long Reach, between Burritts Rapids and Long Island, stretching for 40 kilometres (25 miles) along the Rideau River.

Do the locks operate 24 hours a day?

No - the hours vary. During most of the season the locks open at 9:00 am (10 am on weekdays during spring and fall). In spring and fall, they close by 4:00 pm. In the summer they stay open until 6:00 pm from Mon to Thurs and until 7:00 pm from Fri to Sun. Of note, last lockage is 30 minutes before closing for a single lock, 1 hour for a double lock, 1.5 hours for a triple lock and 2 hours for a 4 lock lockstation. For full details see the fees & schedules page at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/fees.html.

How long does it take to boat the Rideau Canal?

A one way trip can be done by a powerboat in as little as 4 to 5 days, but in reality you should plan at least 6 days each way. A general rule of thumb is to assume 30 minutes for each lock and an average speed of 10 kph. So, with 202 km and 45 locks, that's 43 hours of travel time to get you from Lake Ontario to the Ottawa River. In summer, the lockstations are open 9 hours a day - so that's 4.7 days. Presumably you'll want some additional time to sightsee, shop, swim, fish, etc. So, look at the maps, figure out where you want to go, and do the math. Don't rush, give yourself plenty of time to enjoy the scenery and relax.

How much does it cost to go through the locks?

Parks Canada charges a fee by the foot (12 foot minimum). Based on current 2021 fees, if you just want to go through one lock, it will cost \$0.92 per foot. If you want to travel through locks for the whole season, you can buy a season lockpass for \$8.99 foot. There are various other options (one day, 6 day, one way transit). So, if you're in a 20 foot boat, a single lockage would cost \$18.40, a full day (unlimited locks) would cost \$32.80 and a full season lockpass would cost \$179.80. For details see: www.rideau-info.com/canal/fees.html.

I'm in a small boat with no sleeping quarters - where can I overnight?

If you bring a tent, you can camp at most of the lockstations (a mooring permit gives you camping privileges). Parks Canada also has oTENTiks at a few lockstations (Upper Brewers, Upper Beveridges & Upper Nicholsons). There are also many B&Bs, Inns, and Lodges located along the shores of the Rideau Canal that will allow you to dock your boat and stay at their place. Call ahead for reservations. For listings, check the accommodations page at:

www.rideau-info.com/canal/accommodations.html.

I'm in a big self-contained boat - where can I overnight?

You have many options. You can anchor your boat in one of the many sheltered bays. You can moor at most of the lockstations for a mooring fee. In some spots, such as near Colonel By Island in Big Rideau Lake, you'll find official Parks Canada mooring buoys. For those wishing more services, most marinas offer dockage to transient boaters. Have a look at the marinas page at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/marinas.html

Do I have to stock up on gas and supplies?

No - there are many services available along the Rideau Canal. There are lots of marinas so it's easy to get fuel. There are several communities along the Rideau Canal that have grocery stores within easy walking distance of a docking area so you can stock up on food, ice, drinks, etc. You'll find links to many of the towns, with maps and a listing of services from the maps page at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/maps.html

I'm trailering a boat - where can I put in?

There are many boat launches along the Rideau Canal, some maintained by local communities, some at lock stations, some at the provincial parks, some at campground and at most local marinas. A full list of boat launches can be found at:

www.rideau-info.com/canal/boat-launch.html (this listing is also included in this document). If you wish a secure spot to leave your vehicle and trailer, then a marina or a campground is the best option. Most offer well maintained launch ramps, accessible for a nominal fee. It is best to give them a call in advance, to get the details about storage for your vehicle and trailer while you are enjoying your Rideau trip. Have a look at the campgrounds page: www.rideau-info.com/canal/accom-camp.html or the marinas page: www.rideau-info.com/canal/marinas.html

Can I rent a boat?

Yes - there are a number of options. Those wishing to cruise the waterway may wish to rent a houseboat or a cruiser. Those just interested in a day trip can rent a pontoon boat from one of the local marinas. Several of the local lodges, Inns and B&Bs also offer boat rentals as part of their services. A listing of rentals and tours can be found on the boat rentals and tours page at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/boat_rent.html

LAND BASED VISITORS

Do I need a boat to enjoy the Rideau Canal?

No - the locks are very pleasant places for visitors by car or foot to visit. Nice lawns with picnic tables make a great place to enjoy a quiet lunch. The towns and villages along the Rideau Canal offer lots of opportunities for sightseeing and shopping. Those interested in coming by vehicle should have a look at the driving tours pages: www.rideau-info.com/canal/driving/

Is there a charge for using the lockstations?

Several of the lockstations have a nominal charge for parking (\$1 to \$4 per day). There is no charge for family/individual day use of lockstation facilities although donations are appreciated. A full listing of fees can be found on the fees and schedules page at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/fees.html

Can I camp at the locks?

Yes (except for Ottawa lockstation and Smiths Falls Combined lockstation). Anyone arriving by water, or by bicycle, or people hiking recognized hiking trails may camp at a lockstation. Those arriving by water have access to one camping site with the purchase of a mooring permit. Those arriving by bicycle, on foot, or by a boat that can be pulled from the water (i.e. canoe/kayak) may purchase a camping permit. Those travelling by vehicle (car, RV, etc.) **cannot** stay overnight at the locks unless renting an oTENTik. The lockstations offers lawns to pitch a tent, picnic tables, water, washroom facilities and some have metal BBQ stands. There are no showers except for lockstations that offer oTENTiks (showers are available for use by anyone with paid access to the Rideau Canal – lock pass, mooring pass or camping pass). A table showing the

facilities offered by each of the lockstations can be found at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/lock-services.html and a camping FAQ can be found at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/lock-camping.html

If I come by car or RV, where can I overnight?

There are lots of accommodations along the Rideau Canal - B&Bs, Inns, Campgrounds, Cottages, etc. - take your pick. You can find more information on the accommodations page at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/accommodations.html.

How can I get out on the water if I come by land?

You can take a boat with you (trailer, cartop, inflatable), rent a boat on-site, or take a boat tour. Information about boat rentals and tours can be found on the boat rentals and tours page at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/boat_rent.html

CONTACTS

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Fax: 613-283-0677

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email: info@rideaufriends.com

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Fees and Schedules

*The opening of the canal has been delayed until June 1.
Kingston Mills and Jones Falls will remain closed until late June.*

2021 Hours of Operation

Dates	Days	Hours
May 21 – June 17	Monday - Thursday	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
	Friday-Sunday, holidays	9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
June 18 – September 6	Monday - Thursday	9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
	Friday-Sunday, holidays	9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
September 7 - October 11	Monday - Friday	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
	Saturday-Sunday, holidays	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

The Caveats

- Times of the first and last lockages of the day, particularly at lockstations with multiple locks, are not guaranteed. They are often affected by heavy boat traffic, water management and other station opening and closing duties of the lock staff.
- To maximize chances of being locked through late in the day during regular hours, arrive early enough to allow for complete lockages in both directions.

Last Lockage

- At a lockstation with **one lock chamber**, boaters must arrive at least **30 minutes** before closing.
- At lockstations with **two lock chambers**, boaters must arrive at least **one hour** before closing.
- At lockstations with **three lock chambers**, boaters must arrive at least **1.5 hours** before closing.
- At lockstations with **four lock chambers**, boaters must arrive at least **two hours** before closing.
- At **Ottawa Locks**, boaters must arrive at least **3.5 hours** before closing.
- At swing bridges, boaters must arrive 20 minutes before closing.

Bridge Schedules

Most swing/lift bridges operate on an "on-demand" schedule. However, in some areas, a more rigid schedule is kept:

- **Ottawa:** swing/lift bridges remain closed during rush hour traffic from Monday to Friday; 8:30-9:00 am, 12:30-1:15 pm, and 3:30-5:30 pm.
- **Smiths Falls Bridge**, from June 25 to August 15, opens at 8:45, 9:30, 10:15, 11:00, and 11:45 am. It operates on-demand after 1:00 pm.
- **Old Slys Bridge**, remains closed during weekdays from 11:55 am to 12:15 pm and 12:45 to 1:00 pm.
- **Perth's Beckwith Street Bridge** swings on demand (check with the Beveridges lock staff first).
- **Brass Point Bridge** – on-demand during regular lockstation operating hours (see above)
- **Kingston's Bascule Bridge** open from 6 am to 10 pm and swings hour on the hour except for 8, 12, 4, 5 o'clock on weekdays.

Maximum Overnight Mooring Period

Boaters are limited to 2 nights (48hrs) mooring at a lockstation - extensions are available at the discretion of the lockmaster. Vessels having reached the maximum stay cannot return to the same wharf or wall for 24 hours, unless otherwise directed by the lock staff.

Note: Overnight Mooring passes include one free camp site.

2021 Lockage, Mooring and Camping Fees (HST included)

Note: all figures are in \$Canadian.

Type of Permit	2021 Fees
Single Lockage and Return	\$0.92/ft
One Day Lockage	\$1.64/ft
Six Day*	\$5.16/ft
Seasonal Lockage (50% discount on seasonal lockage permits for canoes and kayaks)	\$8.99/ft
Transit (one way)	\$4.75/ft
Overnight Mooring	\$0.92/ft
Seasonal Overnight Mooring	\$10.02/ft
Power**	\$9.80 per night
Group Camping	\$5.01 per person
oTENTiks	\$102.20 per night

* Allows passage through any number of locks on any six days.

** Power is available at Ottawa, Black Rapids, Burritts Rapids, Merrickville, Kilmarnock, Poonamalie, Lower Beveridges, Narrows, Newboro, Davis, Chaffey's, Upper Brewers, and Lower Brewers lockstations.

Note: these fees apply to the Rideau Canal, Trent-Severn Waterway and Sault Ste. Marie Canals. In addition, the six day permits and seasonal lockage and mooring permits are valid for all the canals run by Parks Canada in Ontario and Quebec (i.e. with a single season permit you could traverse all those canals).

A minimum 12 foot vessel length charge will be made for boats 12 feet and under.

Purchase of a mooring permit includes one free tent site.

Payment can be made by VISA, Mastercard, personal cheque or cash at any lockstation. Advance purchases can be made by contacting the Rideau Canal Office or by purchasing online via the Parks Canada website.

Boat Launching and Parking

Boat Launching	
Per Launch (includes parking where applicable)	\$9.80
Season boat launching at Hogs Back, Poonamalie, Smiths Falls Detached, Edmunds and Beveridges Lockstations	\$98.10

Parking			
Lockstation	Hourly	Daily	Seasonal
Hogs Back	---	\$4.00	---
Hartwells	\$1.00	(max 4 hours)	-
Black Rapids	\$1.00	\$4.00	---
Long Island	\$1.00	\$4.00	---
Merrickville	\$1.00	\$4.00	
Edmunds	---	\$3.00	---
Newboro	---	\$3.39 (Twp fees)	\$207.36 (Twp fees)
Kingston Mills	\$1.00	\$3.00	---

Locking Through

Locking through is the term used for a boat being locked up or down. It's a simple procedure, boats (from canoes to cruise ships) have been doing it since 1832 on the Rideau Canal, the procedure then much the same as it is today. Keep in mind that the Rideau Canal is run by Parks Canada and caters to the recreational boater. The staff is friendly and always willing to help visitors, including novice boaters.

In addition to the required safety equipment for your boat, it is advised that boats carry a full set of boat fenders (for both sides of the boat), two boat hooks, and at least two good quality ropes for securing the bow and stern of the boat to the canal drop cables. The ropes should be supple and about twenty feet in length. A good quality mooring line is best. In small boats, plastic/metal paddles with a hooked top make good substitute boat hooks.

The basic procedure involves moving into the lock as indicated by the lock staff, looping bow and stern lines loosely around the drop cables (plastic coated cables that are fastened to the top and bottom of the lock wall), waiting until the water fills or empties from the lock, and then proceeding out when the doors open. Here are the specific procedures:

1. When you come into the lock area, tie up at the dock with the blue strip painted on it (this is the Blue Line Dock). This is the dock for boats waiting to go through the lock. It is a good idea to put down fenders on both sides of your boat since you don't know which side of the lock you will be instructed to use. If the lock is not in use and you don't see the lock staff, you may have to go and find them (usually in the lockstation house) to let them know you are there.
2. When the lock gates are open and any departing vessels are clear, the lock will be loaded. **Pay attention to the lock staff**, they will specifically direct you on when to enter the lock and which side to go to. During busy times, the lock can be filled with boats 3 or 4 across, and you in fact may end up in the middle, rather than on one side.
3. Proceed into the lock slowly. If there are two people on board, one should be positioned on the bow, with the bow line ready and a boat hook handy in case the boat has to be fended off the wall. If there are more than two, one should be positioned in the bow and one in the stern, with lines ready. Keep your boat under control. Be aware of any crosswinds or currents.
4. Once in position on the wall, loop your bow and stern lines through the closest drop cables. **DO NOT** tie the line, just loop it loosely around the cable and hold the end. Remember your boat will be traveling several metres up or down in the lock, you don't want any lines tied to the wall.
5. Once you are in position in the lock, **TURN OFF** your ignition and any other engines on your boat, **TURN OFF** all open flames, **DO NOT** smoke above or below vessel deck, and **LEAVE ON** your bilge blower.
6. During the lockage, if you are going up you may experience some turbulence in the lock as the water is let in. Maintain control of your boat with your lines. You may wish to loop a line around a deck cleat to give you extra leverage. Never leave a line unattended.
7. Be prepared to show your lockage permit to the staff, or be ready to purchase a permit from them.
8. When the lock operation is completed and the gates are fully open, the lock staff will direct you to restart your engine. Make sure your bow and stern lines are back in your boat and proceed slowly under power out of the lock.
9. Adhere to any posted speed limits and watch out for swimmers and other boats.

For a simplified explanation of how exactly a lock works, visit the Friends of the Rideau website: www.rideaufriends.com and have a look at their section on "**How A Lock Works**" (includes a downloadable brochure).

Rideau Canal Statistics

Lock Dimensions (1)	41 metres / 134 feet long by 10 metres/33 feet wide
Available Water Depth (2)	1.5 metres / 5.0 feet (minimum)
Minimum Bridge Clearance (3)	6.7 metres/22.0 feet (minimum)
Total Locks (Kingston - Ottawa)	45 (47 including the 2 Tay Canal locks***)
Total Lockstations	23 (24 counting the Tay Canal)
Total Distance (Kingston - Ottawa) (4)	202.1 kilometres / 125.6 miles
Total Distance of Artificial Channels	19 kilometres / 12 miles
Lift - ascending Ottawa to Upper Rideau Lake	83.8 metres / 275 feet (in 31 locks)
Lift - descending Upper Rideau to Kingston	50.6 metres / 166.2 feet (in 14 locks)
Maximum Size of Vessel (5)	27.4m/90ft length, 7.9m/26ft width, 6.7m/22ft height
Transit Time (one way)	4 to 6 days
Maximum Depth of Water	100.3 metres (329 feet)

- (1) This is the full length of the lock from the point of the upper sill to the point of the lower sill. The lock is actually 124 feet (37.8 m) long in the chamber, measured from the point of the lower sill to the face of the breastwork. The lower gates require 13 feet (4.0 m) of room for their swing, so a vessel must be less than 111 feet (33.8 m) long. Since the walls of the lock slope inwards, the internal width at the lower navigation water level in the locks is 31.5 feet (9.6 m)
- (2) Normally the locks are maintained with a draught of 1.7 metres (5.5 feet). However even the 5 foot minimum is subject to water availability and all vessels with a draught of over 1.2 metres (4 feet) should contact the Rideau Canal Office prior to traversing the canal.
- (3) This is the minimum fixed bridge clearance on the Rideau Canal proper. On the Tay Canal, the Craig Street fixed bridge, at 2.1 metres/7 feet limits boats going right into downtown Perth (larger boats can tie up at Last Duel Park).
- (4) Distances reflect the Rideau Canal proper. The Tay Canal, which is connected to the Rideau, extends from Lower Rideau Lake to Perth, a distance of 10.0 kilometres (6.2 miles). Two locks (Lower Beveridges #33 & Upper Beveridges #34) raise boats a total of 7.0 metres (22.9 feet) into the Tay Canal
- (5) The Canal used to allow boats with a length of 33.5 metres (110 feet) and a width of 9.1 metres (30 feet) width to traverse the system. If your vessel is less than these dimensions, but greater than the maximum shown in the chart, contact the Rideau Canal Office

How the Locks Are Counted

When the canal was opened in May, 1832, there were 47 masonry locks that provided navigation from Kingston to Ottawa. In reality, only 46 locks actually provided the navigation since one of the two locks at Hogs Back was (and still is) a guard lock (a flood guard, it doesn't provide any lift). But that is picking nits, so we'll leave the count at 47. In the late 1880s, two locks (Beveridges) were constructed at the entrance to the Tay Canal. Although not part of the Rideau Canal proper, they are administered by the Rideau Canal Office - so although the number of locks required for Kingston to Ottawa navigation didn't change, administratively, 2 more locks were added (total 49). In the 1970s, a new single lock (29a) replaced the flight of 3 Smiths Falls Combined locks. This reduced the actual number of Kingston to Ottawa navigation locks to **45** and the total locks administered by Parks Canada to **47**. This is the situation today.

In terms of lockstations, the present day Kingston to Ottawa navigation lockstations number **23** - they are: **Ottawa** (8 locks in flight), **Hartwells** (2 locks in flight), **Hogs Back** (1 lift lock, 1 guard lock), **Black Rapids** (1 lock), **Long Island** (3 locks in flight), **Burritts Rapids** (1 lock), **Nicholsons** (2 detached locks), **Clowes** (1 lock), **Merrickville** (3 detached locks), **Kilmarnock** (1 lock), **Edmunds** (1 lock), **Old Slys** (2 locks in flight), **Smiths Falls Combined** (1 lock), **Smiths Falls Detached** (1 lock), **Poonamalie** (1 lock), **Narrows** (1 lock), **Newboro** (1 lock), **Chaffey's** (1 lock), **Davis** (1 lock), **Jones Falls** (3 locks in flight, 1 detached), **Upper Brewers** (2 locks in flight), **Lower Brewers** (1 lock), **Kingston Mills** (3 locks in flight, 1 detached). The lift statistics for those locks can be seen in the next section.

Parks Canada quotes **24** lockstations since they are counting in the Beveridges Lockstation (2 detached locks) of the Tay Canal

Rideau Canal - Route Statistics

Distance km (miles) from Ottawa	Distance km (miles) from Kingston	Description	Lock Lift metres (feet)	Bridge Clearance metres (feet)	Chart	Boat Launch
0 (0)	202.1 (125.6)	Ottawa River, Ottawa	level=40.8m (134 ft)			
0 (0)	202.1 (125.6)	Ottawa Locks #1-8, in flight	24.1 (79.1)		1512 #1	
0.3 (0.2)	201.8 (125.4)	Bridge - Plaza - Fixed		7.9 (25.6)		
0.6 (0.4)	201.5 (125.2)	Bridge - Mackenzie King - Fixed		8.2 (26.6)		
0.9 (0.5)	201.2 (125.0)	Bridge - Laurier Ave - Fixed		8.2 (26.6)		
1.6 (1.0)	200.5 (124.6)	Bridge - Corktown Footbridge - Fixed		8.2 (26.6)		
2.4 (1.5)	199.7 (124.1)	Bridge - Queensway - Fixed		7.1 (23)		
2.6 (1.6)	199.5 (124.0)	Bridge 1 - Pretoria Ave - Vertical Lift		3 (10) closed - 7 (22.7) open		
3.4 (2.1)	198.7 (123.3)	Bridge - Flora Footbridge. - Fixed		6.7 (22.0)		
4.5 (2.8)	197.6 (122.8)	Bridge - Bank St. - Fixed		8.8 (28.5)		
5.5 (3.4)	196.6 (122.2)	Bridge - Bronson Ave - Fixed		6.7 (22.0)		
6.7 (4.2)	195.4 (121.4)	Hartwells Locks #9-10, in flight	6.5 (21.5)			
8.2 (5.1)	193.9 (120.5)	Bridge - Heron Rd - Fixed		8.5 (27.6)		
8.4 (5.2)	193.7 (120.4)	Hogs Back Locks #11-12, in flight (1 lift, 1 guard)	4.2 (13.8)			X
8.4 (5.2)	193.7 (120.4)	Bridge 4 - Hogs Back - Swing		2.9 (9.4)		
11.9 (7.4)	190.2 (118.2)	Bridge - CNR High Level - Fixed		9.5 (30.8)		
13.5 (8.4)	188.6 (117.2)	Bridge - Hunt Club - Fixed		>16.0 (>50)		
15.0 (9.3)	187.1 (116.3)	Black Rapids Lock #13	2.9 (9.5)			
16.0 (10.0)	186.1 (115.6)	Park - Echo Lands				X
20.7 (12.9)	181.4 (112.7)	Park - Chapman Mills Conservation Area				
21.0 (13.0)	181.1 (112.5)	Bridge - Vimy Memorial - Fixed		6.7 (22)		
23.3 (14.5)	178.8 (111.1)	Long Island Locks #14-16, in flight	7.6 (24.9)		1512 #2	
23.5 (14.6)	178.6 (111.0)	Bridge 5 - Long Island - Swing		1.1 (3.6)		
26.0 (16.2)	176.1 (109.4)	Bridge - Manotick High Level - Fixed		6.7 (22)		
36.5 (22.7)	165.6 (102.9)	Bridge - Kars High Level - Fixed		6.7 (22)		
37.4 (23.3)	164.7 (102.3)	Kars Public Wharf				X
39.9 (24.8)	162.2 (100.8)	Park - W.A. Taylor Conservation Area				X
44.6 (27.7)	157.5 (97.9)	Park - Baxter Conservation Area				
46.7 (29.0)	155.4 (96.6)	Bridge - Hwy 16 High Level - Fixed		6.7 (22)		
49.9 (31.0)	152.2 (94.6)	Channel to Kemptville**		3.4 (11)**		
50.9 (31.6)	151.2 (94.0)	Park - Rideau River Provincial				X
52.1 (32.4)	150.0 (93.2)	Bridge - Beckett's High Level - Fixed		6.7 (22.0)		
64.0 (39.8)	138.1 (85.8)	Burritts Rapids Lock #17	3.2 (10.5)		1512 #3	
65.1 (40.5)	137.0 (85.1)	Bridge 9 - Burritts Rapids - Swing		3.2 (10.4)		
69.4 (43.1)	132.7 (82.5)	Lower Nicholsons Lock #18	2.0 (6.5)			
69.7 (43.3)	132.4 (82.3)	Upper Nicholsons Lock #19	2.3 (7.6)			
69.7 (43.3)	132.4 (82.3)	Bridge 10 - Upper Nicholsons - Swing		3.6 (11.7)		

Distance km (miles) from Ottawa	Distance km (miles) from Kingston	Description	Lock Lift metres (feet)	Bridge Clearance metres (feet)	Chart	Boat Launch
70.5 (43.8)	131.6 (81.8)	Clowes Lock #20	2.3 (7.6)			
73.2 (45.5)	128.9 (80.1)	Bridge - Merrickville - C.P.R. - Fixed		11.9 (39)		
73.8 (45.9)	128.3 (79.7)	Merrickville Lock #21	2.6 (8.7)			
74.0 (46.0)	128.1 (79.6)	Merrickville Lock #22	3.0 (10)			
74.2 (46.1)	127.9 (79.5)	Merrickville Lock #23	2.0 (6.2)			
74.2 (46.1)	127.9 (79.5)	Bridge 11 - Merrickville - Swing		2.9 (9.5)		
74.7 (46.4)	127.4 (79.2)	Lion's Park - Merrickville				X
86.7 (53.9)	115.4 (71.7)	Kilmarnock Lock #24	0.7 (2.3)			
86.7 (53.9)	115.4 (71.7)	Bridge 13 - Kilmarnock - Swing		2.9 (9.5)		
92.7 (57.6)	109.4 (68.0)	Edmunds Lock #25	2.8 (9.2)			X
95.4 (59.3)	106.7 (66.3)	Bridge - C.P.R. Railway - Fixed		9.1 (30)		
95.4 (59.3)	106.7 (66.3)	Old Slys Locks #26-27, in flight	4.9 (16.1)			
95.6 (59.4)	106.5 (66.2)	Bridge 15 - Olds Slys - Swing		2.2 (7.1)		
96.8 (60.2)	105.3 (65.4)	Bridge - Beckwith Street - Fixed		7.9 (26)		
96.8 (60.2)	105.3 (65.4)	Smiths Falls Combined Lock #29a	7.6 (25.6)	Replaces old locks 28-30		
97.0 (60.3)	105.1 (65.3)	Victoria Park - Smiths Falls				
97.4 (60.5)	104.7 (65.1)	Bridge 19 - Abbot Street - Swing		1.9 (6.2)		
97.4 (60.5)	104.7 (65.1)	Smiths Falls Detached Lock #31	2.6 (8.5)			X
97.5 (60.6)	104.6 (65.0)	Bridge - C.N.R. - Bascule		Permanently open		
102.2 (62.8)	101.0 (62.8)	Poonamalie Lock #32	2.2 (7.2)		1513 #1	X
103.0 (64.0)	99.1 (61.6)	Entrance to Lower Rideau Lake				
107.5 (66.8)	94.6 (58.8)	Diversion to Tay Canal	To Perth = Tay Canal = 10.0 km			
110.4 (68.6)	91.7 (57.0)	Tay Canal Entrance – Lower Rideau Lake				
Tay 0.3 (0.2)	Tay 0.3 (0.2)	Lower Beveridges Lock #33	3.6 (12)			X
Tay 0.5 (0.3)	Tay 0.5 (0.3)	Bridge – Beveridges – Fixed		6.7 (22)		
Tay 0.9 (0.6)	Tay 0.9 (0.6)	Upper Beveridges Lock #34	3.3 (10.9)			
Tay 9.2 (5.7)	Tay 9.2 (5.7)	Last Duel Park, Wharf – Perth				X
Tay 9.3 (5.8)	Tay 9.3 (5.8)	Bridge – Craig Street, Perth – Fixed		2.1 (7)		
Tay 9.8 (6.1)	Tay 9.8 (6.1)	Bridge – Beckwith Street, Perth – Swing		1.6 (5.2)		
Tay 9.8 (6.1)	Tay 9.8 (6.1)	Bridge – Drummond Street – Fixed		2.9 (9.5)		
Tay 10.0 (6.2)	Tay 10.0 (6.2)	Perth Basin – Public Wharf				
Tay 10.1 (6.3)	Tay 10.1 (6.3)	Bridge – Gore Street, Perth - Fixed		2.7 (9)		
110.6 (68.7)	91.5 (56.9)	Rideau Ferry Yacht Club Conservation Area				X
111.7 (69.4)	90.6 (56.3)	Public Dock, Rideau Ferry				
111.7 (69.4)	90.6 (56.3)	Bridge 26 - Rideau Ferry - Fixed		8.0 (26.0)		
119.4 (74.2)	82.7 (51.4)	Park - Murphys Point Provincial Park				X
123.1 (76.5)	79.0 (49.1)	Diversion to Portland			1513 #2	
126.8 (78.8)	75.3 (46.8)	Colonel By Island (Livingston Island)				

Distance km (miles) from Ottawa	Distance km (miles) from Kingston	Description	Lock Lift metres (feet)	Bridge Clearance metres (feet)	Chart	Boat Launch
133.6 (83.0)	68.5 (42.6)	Portland Public Wharf				
133.6 (83.0)	68.5 (42.6)	Park - John McKenzie, Portland				X
132.4 (82.3)	69.7 (43.3)	Narrows Lock #35	0.8 (2.6)			
132.4 (82.3)	69.7 (43.3)	Bridge 27 - The Narrows - Swing		1.2 (3.9)		
133.9 (83.2)	68.2 (42.4)	Diversion to Westport			1513 #2,3	
140.8 (87.5)	61.3 (38.1)	Westport Public Wharf				
140.2 (87.1)	61.9 (38.5)	Bridge - Newboro High Level - Fixed		8.2 (27)		
140.8 (87.5)	61.3 (38.1)	Newboro Lock #36	2.7 (8.9)			
140.7 (87.4)	61.4 (38.2)	Newboro Public Wharf				X
146.0 (90.7)	56.1 (34.9)	Ferry - cable (auto/foot)			1513 #3	
148.2 (92.1)	53.9 (33.5)	Bridge - C.N.R. High Level - Fixed		9.1 (29.5)		
148.7 (92.4)	53.4 (33.2)	Chaffey's Lock #37	3.4 (11.2)			X
148.7 (92.4)	53.4 (33.2)	Bridge 30 - Chaffey's - Swing		1.8 (5.9)		
152.0 (94.5)	50.1 (31.1)	Davis Lock #38	2.7 (8.9)			
158.4 (98.4)	43.7 (27.2)	Bridge – Jones Falls - Fixed		7.0 (22.7)		
159.0 (98.8)	43.1 (26.8)	Jones Falls Lock #39	4.2 (13.7)		1513 #4	
159.2 (98.9)	42.9 (26.7)	Jones Falls Locks #40-42, in flight	13.2 (43.4)			
161.4 (100.3)	40.7 (25.3)	Diversion to Morton				
165.6 (102.9)	36.5 (22.7)	Morton Dam				
166.2 (103.3)	35.9 (22.3)	Diversion to Seeleys Bay				
167.2 (103.9)	34.9 (21.7)	Seeleys Bay Public Wharf				X
170.0 (105.6)	32.1 (19.9)	Bridge 36 - Brass Point - Swing		1.2 (3.9)		
176.5 (109.7)	25.6 (15.9)	Upper Brewers Locks #43-44, in flight	5.9 (19.4)			
177.0 (110.0)	25.1 (15.6)	Bridge - Sunbury Rd. - Fixed		6.7 (22.0)		
179.3 (111.4)	22.8 (14.2)	Bridge 39 - Lower Brewers - Swing		1.3 (4.2)		
179.3 (111.4)	22.8 (14.2)	Lower Brewers (Washburn) Lock #45	4.0 (13.1)			
195.0 (121.2)	7.1 (4.4)	Bridge 41 - Kingston Mills - Swing		2.3 (7.5)		
195.2 (121.3)	7.1 (4.4)	Kingston Mills Lock #46	3.0 (9.8)			
195.2 (121.3)	6.9 (4.3)	Kingston Mills Locks #47-49, in flight	10.7 (35.2)			
195.2 (121.3)	6.9 (4.3)	Bridge - C.N.R. High Level - Fixed		8.2 (26.6)		
196.0 (121.8)	6.1 (3.8)	Bridge - Hwy 401 - Fixed		6.7 (22.0)		
202.1 (125.6)	0 (0)	Kingston Lasalle Causeway ***		4.3 (14)***		
202.1 (125.6)	0 (0)	Kingston Lasalle - Bascule Lift Bridge***		0.6 (2)***		
		Lake Ontario		elevation: 74m (242.8 ft)		

* Additional boat launch ramps can be found at private marinas.

** Kemptville Creek is shallow; Kemptville bridge clearance 2.1 m (6.8 ft)

*** Small craft under 4.3 m (14 ft) vertical clearance may pass through La Salle Causeway by using boat channels at its eastern end.

A Boater's Travel Guide to the Rideau Canal

The following is some boater's travel information, listed in geographical order from Ottawa to Kingston. The services available at all of the locks have been listed. For a listing of community services, see the Rideau Communities section.

We start our journey at the base of the Ottawa Locks. The Parliament Buildings of Canada are on your right (south side of the locks), the majestic Château Laurier Hotel to your left (north side of the locks). You are about to travel a distance of at least 202 kilometres (125 miles) to Kingston, passing through 45 locks (47 if you take a trip up the Tay Canal), and with the opportunity to explore 1091 kilometres (675 miles) of shoreline. Your trip will take you up 83.8 m (275 ft.) in 31 locks to the highest point on the Rideau system, Upper Rideau Lake and then down 50.6 m (166.2 ft. in 14 locks to Kingston (Lake Ontario).

Navigation Note: The "homeport" on the Rideau Canal is Newboro. The "hand" of the buoys therefore changes at Newboro. From Ottawa to Newboro, red buoys will be on your right (west), green/black buoys on your left (east). From Newboro to Kingston (heading away from homeport), green/black buoys will be on your right (west) and red buoys on your right (east). If travelling from Kingston to Ottawa, switch right and left. The buoys are clearly marked on the hydrographic charts.

Caveats: There are several qualifiers to the lockstation information tables that can be found at the end of this section. Please read them carefully.

OTTAWA Locks No.1 - 8			
Number: 8 (in flight)	Total Lift: 24.1 m (79 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 1)	Lock Through: 1.5 hours ¹
Tel: 613-237-2309	GPS ² : N 45° 25.495' W 075° 41.740' (Lock 8)		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 346m /1136'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 55m/179'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: No	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Nearby
Picnic Tables: No	BBQ Grills: No	Public Phone: Nearby	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: beside Wellington St.		Locks Connect: Ottawa River. to Rideau Canal	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 3.5 hours prior to closing.			
Of Interest: The magnificent flight of 8 locks at Ottawa is now framed by Canada's Parliament buildings on one side and the impressive Château Laurier hotel on the other. This is the largest single set of locks on the entire Rideau system, providing a lift of 24 m (79 ft.). The old Commissariat building (the business/supply office used during the building of the Rideau Canal), the oldest surviving building in Ottawa, now houses the Bytown Museum – well worth a visit. Ottawa itself has many great attractions.			
Notes: Gas is available above the locks at Dows Lake Pavilion or below the locks at Hull Marina across the Ottawa R. or at Rockcliff Boathouse, downstream from the locks.			

Ottawa to Hartwells: There is extensive mooring available above the Ottawa locks. Please note that the speed limit for the entire Ottawa section is 10 kph. Be aware of other boaters, particularly paddlers. Your waves will bounce off retaining walls, making your wake worse – go slow. From these locks the canal proceeds through Ottawa, starting with a straight man-made cut known as the Deep Cut. About 1.3 km from the locks the canal makes a sharp turn south and you'll enter a natural flooded section, the Natural Gully. Just after you pass by Lansdowne Park and pass under the Bank Street bridge, you'll enter another narrow man-made section, Mutchmor's Cut. That will take you to Dows Lake with the Dows Lake Pavilion at it's north end. In the spring this area is in full bloom with thousands of tulips. Following along the navigation channel, you'll enter into another man-made cut that will take you to the next locks, Hartwells.

HARTWELLS Locks 9 - 10			
Number: 2 (in flight)	Total Lift: 6.5 m (21.5 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 1)	Lock Through: 30 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-235-2644	GPS²: N 45° 23.050' W 75° 42.000'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes

HARTWELLS Locks 9 - 10			
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 125m /410'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 69m/225'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: No	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: Yes
Road Access: off Prince of Wales Dr.		Locks Connect: Rideau Canal to Rideau Canal	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 1 hour prior to closing.			
Of Interest: This flight of two locks sits adjacent to the campus of Carleton University. The modern City of Ottawa skyline belies the 19th century feel of this lockstation. Cycling paths adjacent to the canal from Ottawa pass through Hartwells on their way to Hogs Back. The white clapboard lockmaster's house hides the original stone first storey. The poor living conditions of the original building (cold and damp, like all of the stone defensible lockmaster's houses) led to a renovation in 1901 when a second storey and interior walls were added. The Experimental Farm (open to the public) borders the locks			
Notes: Gas is available downstream at the Dows Lake Pavilion.			

Hartwells to Hogs Back: After Hartwells the canal proceeds through a man-made cut to Hogs Back. The Hogs Back lock is unique on the Rideau Canal in that it contains a guard lock, a lock that is not used for navigational lift, but rather for flood protection of the lift lock. So, although there are two locks here, only the lower lock is the actual lift lock. It is at Hogs Back that the Ottawa section of the Rideau Canal joins the Rideau River. It is worth a stop here to have a look at the area, including the falls, created by the massive dam that was built to tame the Rideau River.

HOGS BACK Locks 11 - 12			
Number: 1*	Total Lift: 4.4 m (14.5 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 1)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-224-5033	GPS ² : N 45° 22.210' W 75° 41.940'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 66m /217'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 61m/200'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: NR*	Boat Launch: Yes	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: No	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: Yes
Road Access: at 795 Hogs Back Rd.		Locks Connect: Rideau Canal Cut. to Rideau River	
*Special Notes: Although there are two locks at Hogs Back, only the downstream lock is a lift lock, the upstream lock is a flood guard lock. To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. There is a swing bridge with a clearance of 2.9m (9.4 ft). The bridge swings on demand except on Mondays to Fridays (excluding holidays) when it will NOT operate between the hours of 08:30 – 09:00h, 12:30 – 13:15h; and 15:30 – 17:30h. Camping is available but not recommended due to night-time activities.			
Of Interest: Hogs Back is the spot where the canal leaves the Rideau River and heads overland to the Ottawa Locks. A large dam, the second highest on the Rideau system (next to Jones Falls) was needed to provide the required lift of water. Originally intended to be a stone-arch dam, it failed three times during construction. In his report on the third failure, Colonel By wrote “I felt a motion like an earthquake ... the Stones falling from under my feet as I moved off.” The dam was re-designed as a timber crib earthen dam which still holds back the water today. Walking trails lead around the locks and dam. Hogs Back also features the only guard lock (a non-lift lock) on the entire Rideau system, put in place here to protect the main lock from spring flooding. Boater camping is available but not recommended.			
Notes: No gas nearby.			

Hogs Back to Black Rapids: After Hogs Back the channel proceeds through Mooneys Bay and then into the narrower channel of the Rideau River. The navigation channel is well marked and it is easy cruising. To the east of the river as you approach Black Rapids lock is the Ottawa International Airport. If you haven't had lunch yet, Black Rapids is a great place for a picnic.

BLACK RAPIDS Lock 13			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 2.8 m (9.2 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 1)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹

BLACK RAPIDS Lock 13			
Tel: 613-226-5434	GPS ² : N 45° 19.300' W 75° 41.900'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 103m /339'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 46m/150'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: No	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: off Hwy. 16 (Prince of Wales Drive)		Locks Connect: Rideau River to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing			
Of Interest: Black Rapids is a peaceful oasis in the urban sprawl of Ottawa. It offers a beautiful park like setting with large trees and verdant lawns. It's one of only two locks (the other being Newboro) that were converted from manual to electric operation, the conversion here was done in 1969 (there is third electric lock on the Rideau, the Smiths Falls Combined Lock, which was built in the 1970s as an electric lock). It also features a flat overflow dam. Spring flooding caused problems with this dam, it had to be rebuilt several times, with the last major re-construction done (using concrete) in 1925.			
Notes: No gas nearby.			

Black Rapids to Long Island: After Black Rapids the canal proceeds along the channel of the Rideau River to the locks at the south end of Long Island. Just before these locks is the mouth of the Jock River. It was (unofficially) proposed at one time to place locks on the Jock in order to make it navigable to Richmond.

LONG ISLAND Locks 14-16			
Number: 3 (in flight)	Total Lift: 7.7 m (25.3 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 1)	Lock Through: 45 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-692-3030	GPS ² : N 45° 15.050' W 75° 42.115'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 107m /350'	Docking ⁵ Downstream: 133m/436'	
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: No	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: 1 km west of Hwy. 19 (River Road).		Locks Connect: Rideau River. to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 1.5 hours prior to closing. There is a swing bridge with a clearance of 1.1 m (3.6 ft). The bridge swings on demand.			
Of Interest: Long Island features a beautiful pastoral setting and a large stone arch dam. Compare the construction quality of this dam to the dam at Jones Falls. It also has an interesting hand operated, centre pivot, steel through truss swing bridge. This is the location of the story of the “Sluiced Superintendent.” In 1899, Superintendent Phillips broke through a wooden manhole cover and was washed through the tunnel sluice into the lock, emerging into the lock without injury. By 1900, all the manhole covers on the Rideau had been changed to iron. Ask the lockmaster to tell you this story. In the nearby community of Manotick is Watson’s Mill, a beautifully restored 19th century stone mill, open to the public.			
Notes: Gas is available upstream between Manotick and Kars – at Hurst Marina and Kelly’s Landing.			

Long Island to Burritts Rapids: This section of the Rideau Canal is known as the "Long Reach", it is the longest continuous section unbroken by locks, some 40 km (25 miles) in length. It is quiet river cruising with several interesting sights along the way. As you pass Long Island you'll find a more urbanized environment with some large homes fronting the water. An interesting side trip is into Mahogany Harbour (at buoy N90) to the historic Watson's Mill in the village of **Manotick**, which is well worth a visit.

As you travel down the Rideau River, you'll pass Manotick Marina, Kelly's Landing, Hurst Marina and Long Island Marina before arriving at the small village of **Kars**. Just upstream from Kars, near buoy N120, on the west side of the river you'll find the W.A. Taylor Conservation Area. A few kilometres farther along you will come to the Baxter Conservation Area on the northeast side of the river (near buoys N140-N141). A little ways past that is Pirates Cove Marina. On the

northwest side, off the main channel and opposite the marina there is a good overnight anchorage in depths of 7 - 13 feet (2-4 m).

You'll find the mouth of Kemptville Creek at buoys N159-N160. According to the charts, Kemptville Creek is navigable by shallow draught boats for about 3 miles (5 km) to the town. Limiting depths are 3 feet (1 m) at datum, but local boaters report depths of from 7-15 feet (2-5 m). The bridge clearance just before **Kemptonville** is 11 feet (3.5 m).

On the north side of the river, just upstream of Kemptville Creek, is Rideau River Provincial Park. The next stop is the lock at Burritts Rapids.

BURRITTS RAPIDS Lock 17			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 2.7 m (9 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-258-4510	GPS ² : N 44° 58.950' W 75° 47.190'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 81m /265'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 85m/280'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: Yes
Road Access: off River Rd. (Hwy 23).		Locks Connect: Rideau River. to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. Swing bridge located 1 km upstream with clearance of 3.2m (10.4 ft.). Bridge swings on demand.			
Of Interest: An interesting construction feature here is that the lock is built at the bottom of end of a ravine, a “snie” (dry flood channel) that today forms the navigation way for the Rideau Canal, bypassing the rapids in this location. Many Rideau locks took advantage of natural features such as these natural flood channels to both speed up and reduce the cost of canal construction. The water control dam is located at the head of the island, diverting water into this channel. You can walk the entire length of the island on the Tip to Tip Trail (a pleasant 2 hour stroll). It makes for a nice relaxing journey, especially if you stop to take in the historic village of Burritts Rapids (founded in 1793).			
Notes: Gas is available several km downstream at Pirate Cove Marina.			

Burritts Rapids to Nicholsons: A stop at Burritts Rapids lockstation to take a stroll along the Tip to Tip trail and visit the historic village of **Burritts Rapids** is worthwhile. It is a short run along the river to the next set of locks, Nicholsons. Nicholsons are two lockstations, separated by 400 metres (1,300 feet) of canal cut, bypassing the original channel of the Rideau River.

LOWER NICHOLSONS Lock 18			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 2.0 m (6.5 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-269-4960	GPS ² : N 44° 57.300' W 75° 48.955'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 180' between U & L Nicholson's		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 37m/120'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: off River Rd (Hwy. 23)		Locks Connect: Rideau River to Canal Cut	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing			
Attractions: quiet, tranquil setting – see Upper Nicholson's			
Notes: There is no gas in the immediate vicinity (closest is at Merrickville). Upper and Lower Nicholson's are separated by 400 m (1,300 ft.) of canal cut.			

UPPER NICHOLSONS Lock 19			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 2.4 m (8 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-269-4631	GPS ² : N 44° 57.070' W 75° 49.050'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: No	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 37 /120'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 180' between U & L Nicholsons
Ice: Yes	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: off River Rd. (Hwy. 23)		Locks Connect: Canal Cut to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. There is a swing bridge with a clearance of 3.6m (11.7 ft). The bridge swings on demand.			
Of Interest: Nicholsons, Upper and Lower, consists of two locks separated by an excavated channel, which bypass a set of rapids in the Rideau River. Upper Nicholsons features one of four remaining King Post Truss wooden swing bridges. Just up the road from Upper Nicholsons you'll find McGuigan Cemetery (at 448 River Road), one of the oldest burying grounds on the Rideau. There you will find the beautiful poignant headstone of Margaret Davidson, the 1 year old daughter of one of the contractors for Clowes Lock, who died in 1829. Near Upper Nicholson's you'll also find an osprey nest (usually with an osprey in residence), located top of a hydro pole specifically erected for the nest.			
Notes: There is no gas in the immediate vicinity (closest is at Merrickville). Upper and Lower Nicholsons are separated by 400 m (1,300 ft.) of canal cut.			
Parks Canada has two oTENTiks (canvas topped A-frame cabins) at this location available for rent.			

Nicholsons to Clowes: It is worth a pause at Upper Nicholsons to have a look at the old McGuigan Cemetery (at 448 River Road, 0.8 km south of Upper Nicholsons) and a visit to the former village of Andrewsville. A navigation note is that you will be crossing to the other side of the Rideau River, the next lock is on the northwest side of the river.

CLOWES Lock 20			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 2.3 m (7.6 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-269-4426	GPS ² : N 44° 56.770' W 75° 49.350'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (na) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 29m /95'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 23m/75'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: beside Hwy. 2		Locks Connect: Rideau River to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing			
Of Interest: Clowes features a single lock, a waste water weir and an overflow dam, one of the few used on the Rideau. Colonel By originally planned all his dams to be overflow dams, but his experiences with spring flood on the Rideau soon changed his mind, and he added waste water weirs (a water control mechanism) to most of the locks. However, at Clowes and a few other places, he left the main dam as an overflow dam, the height of the dam being the level of navigation. The addition of the weir allows excess water to be quickly discharged and for the reach above the lock to be drained down.			
Notes: Gas is available upstream at Ayling's Boatyard (near the foot of the Merrickville locks)			

Clowes to Merrickville: It's clear sailing to the locks at Merrickville. You'll find Ayling's Boatyard on the northwest shore by the lower lock. Of note this is the last available fuel until you reach the marinas at Rideau Ferry.

Merrickville is well worth a visit – it is most easily accessed by tying up at “The Pond” at the top end of the locks.

MERRICKVILLE Locks 21 - 23			
Number: 3	Total Lift: 7.4 m (24.7 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 45 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-269-4787	GPS ² : N 44° 55.000' W 75° 50.200'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (na) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 145m/475'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 37m/120'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Limited
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: No	Public Phone: Yes	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: beside Main St.		Locks Connect: Rideau River to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 1.5 hours prior to closing. Swing bridge at upper lock with clearance of 2.9m (9.5 ft). Swings on demand. Boaters approaching from the upstream side who wish to overnight should head left (north) at buoy NM2 to the greyline docking in the basin rather than heading to the blueline docking at the upper lock. Space is often limited at the blueline docking and the channel is too narrow for larger boats to turn around.			
Of Interest: The Merrickville locks are located at the earliest mill site on the Rideau River, that of Roger Stevens, who built a mill here in about 1790. But it was William Mirick, who, a couple of years later, took over the mill and established a community which was thriving by the time of canal construction. The locks bypassed the mills, leaving them intact, allowing Mirick to continue his business. They are spaced out, three detached locks, taking advantage of the natural topography. The largest blockhouse on the Rideau, built here in 1832, is now operated as a museum by the Merrickville & District Historical Society. Merrickville is known as the “Jewel of the Rideau” and features many beautiful heritage buildings as well as many shops (including Friends of the Rideau's "The Depot", located adjacent to the Blockhouse). The Rideau Migratory Bird Sanctuary is located just upstream from Merrickville.			
Notes: Gas is available near the lower lock at Ayling's Boatyard. Groceries and supplies are readily available in Merrickville.			

Merrickville to Kilmarnock: To spend some time in **Merrickville**, it is best to tie up in "The Pond" which is accessed by proceeding along the channel above the locks, and then turning into the North Channel at buoy NM2. There is a lot to see and do in Merrickville. Merrickville is host to a large variety of interesting shops, there is also the historic Blockhouse by the upper lock and the always interesting Depot, the Friends of the Rideau interpretive centre (with many books about the Rideau Canal available here). The Depot is located on the waterfront in Blockhouse Park.

Just west of Merrickville, on both sides of the river, is the Rideau Migratory Bird Sanctuary. At Buoys N375-N376 is the entrance to Irish Creek which at one time (1816) was considered as a possible route for the Rideau Canal. The route through Irish Creek would have bypassed the Rideau Lakes, leading the Rideau Canal down to Lower Beverley Lake and then back to the current canal route at Morton. Fortunately for us, this route was abandoned in favour of a route through the beautiful Rideau Lakes.

We now continue along the Rideau River to the quiet lock of Kilmarnock which boasts the lowest lift (0.6 m / 2 ft) of any lock on the Rideau Canal.

KILMARNOCK Lock 24			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 0.6 m (2 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-283-3792	GPS ² : N 44° 53.075' W 75° 55.825'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 90m/295'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 27m/90'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: No	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: approx. 1 km south of Hwy. 43.		Locks Connect: Rideau River to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. Swing bridge with a clearance of 1.8m (6 ft). Bridge swings on demand.			

KILMARNOCK Lock 24

Of Interest: Kilmarnock, originally known as Maitland's Rapids (after the first settler, James Maitland), is a peaceful solitude lock, featuring a beautiful unequal arm, center bearing wooden swing bridge and the lowest lift of any lock on the Rideau (only 2.3 feet / 0.7 m). The tranquil beauty of this lock belies the difficulties its construction; problems with large boulders in soft mud and worker sickness cause Colonel By to reduce the height of the dam and the depth of lock excavation in order to speed up construction. This lock also features a two storey stone lockmaster's house and, just up the road, is the Kilmarnock Apple Orchard.

Notes: Very quiet - a solitude lock. No local services (closest gas is at Ayling's, Merrickville).

Kilmarnock to Edmunds: From Kilmarnock, the channel proceeds through a wide section of the river. The navigation channel itself is narrow but well marked with buoys.

EDMUNDS Lock 25

Number: 1	Total Lift: 2.8 m (9 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-283-4406	GPS ² : N 44° 52.650' W 75° 59.015'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: No	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 49m /160'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 53m/175'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: Yes	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: No	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: just N of Cty Rd. 17		Locks Connect: Rideau River to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing.			
Of Interest: Edmunds features one of the few overflow dams on the Rideau system. A combination arch stone overflow dam and weir, the dam keep the water level at navigation depth while the weir provides an outlet for excess water, especially during spring runoff. A pretty white clapboard lockstation house and large verdant grounds mark the peaceful rural setting of Edmunds.			
Notes: There are no nearby facilities (the closest gas is at Ayling's in Merrickville).			

Edmunds to Old Slys: The Rideau River in this section is winding, but clearly marked with buoys. Old Slys lockstation lies at the south end of the town of **Smiths Falls** which is close to the geographic centre of the Rideau Canal. The attractions at Old Slys includes the Heritage House Museum, just a few metres down the road from the locks. The southern entrance to Old Slys is a man-made canal cut. The dam which holds back the Rideau River is now just barely visible, only the top metre of the 6.4 metre (21 foot) high dam at Old Slys is visible today.

OLD SLYS Locks 26 - 27

Number: 2 (in flight)	Total Lift: 4.6 m (16 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 30 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-283-2663	GPS ² : N 44° 53.590' W 76° 00.250'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: No	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 61m /200'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 61m/200'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: NR*	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: on Old Slys Road.		Locks Connect: Rideau River to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 1 hour prior to closing. Swing bridge with a clearance of 2.2m (7.1 ft). Swings on demand EXCEPT on Monday to Friday (excluding holidays) when it will not swing between the hours of 11:55 - 12:15h and 12:45 - 13:00h. * Camping is available but not recommended due to night-time activities.			

OLD SLYS Locks 26 - 27

Of Interest: Old Slys is a double lock, named after an early settler in the area, William Sly, who settled here in 1798. The CN rail line crosses the lockstation, a reminder of the importance Smiths Falls once serves as a railway hub. What appears to be a retaining wall below the road that crosses the locks, is actually the top of a 21 foot high dam (similar to that in Smiths Falls), placed in the main channel of the Rideau River. In the latter part of the 20th century, the area between the dam and the railroad was filled in. The Heritage House Museum is just a few metres south of the locks.

Notes: Closest gas is Rideau Ferry or Merrickville

Old Slys to Smiths Falls Combined: Smiths Falls marks the switch from Chart 1512 to 1513 (Locks 29a and 31 are shown on both sets of charts). Of note in Smiths Falls is that Lock 29a is a “new” lock, replacing the original locks 28, 29, 30. The reason for the new lock is that the swing bridge that crossed over the original locks was too small and slow (to swing) for the growing town. It was advocated that a new lock be put in the same spot as the original locks (which would have destroyed them). It was only the change in control of the Rideau Canal from the Canadian Department of Transport to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) in 1972 that saved the integrity of the original locks. Historians within DIAND lobbied to save the old locks and a new plan was drawn up. The new bridge and combined lock (29a) were built in 1973-74.

The combined lock has the highest single lift of any lock on the Rideau Canal (7.9 m / 26 ft). The eastern entrance to this lock is under the Beckwith Street Bridge.

SMITHS FALLS COMBINED Locks 29a

Number: 1	Total Lift: 7.9 m (26 ft)	Chart: 1512 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-283-2103	GPS ² : N 44° 53.815' W 76° 01.250		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 175m /575'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 152m/500'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Nearby	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: Nearby	Self Guided Trail: Yes
Road Access: off Beckwith St.		Locks Connect: Rideau River to Rideau River Basin	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. Lock is electric/hydraulic			
Of Interest: Smiths Falls features the greatest transition from old to new on the Rideau. Concerns over traffic restrictions of the swing bridge, led to the construction of a new high level bridge. The bridge design required that the lock be relocated and a new electrically operated single lock replaced the original flight of three locks. You can still see the old flight of three locks since, fortunately for us, they were left intact. The Rideau Canal Visitor Information Centre, featuring many interesting exhibits, is located adjacent to the lock. Take a short hike to the parking lot under the water tower. The stone retaining wall that you see here is actually the top few feet of the original 23 foot high dam that once blocked the flow of the Rideau River. This area was backfilled in the latter part of the 20th century.			
Notes: Smiths Falls offers full shopping facilities for the boater within walking distance. Closest marina is at Rideau Ferry. The best tie-up is between the Detached & Combined locks.			

Smiths Falls Combined to Smiths Falls Detached: Just west of the combined lock is the dockage of Victoria Park. This is a good place to tie up to explore Smiths Falls and perhaps take on a few provisions. The Rideau Canal Visitor Information Centre and the Smiths Falls Railway Museum are located nearby.

SMITHS FALLS DETACHED Lock 31

Number: 1	Total Lift: 2.6 m (8.5 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 1)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-283-0496	GPS ² : N 44° 53.755' W 76° 01.630'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 130m /425'	Docking ⁵ Downstream: 46m/150'	
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: Yes	Parking: Yes

SMITHS FALLS DETACHED Lock 31			
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: off Lombard St.		Locks Connect: Rideau River Basin to Rideau River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. The Abbott Street swing bridge has a clearance of 1.9m (6.2 ft) – it will swing open on demand through the navigation season.			
Of Interest: A distinctive feature of this lock is the rather spectacular, raised bascule bridge. This Scherzer rolling-lift railway bridge was built in 1912-13 and was used until the rail line ceased operation in 1984. Since then it has been permanently kept in the raised position. It was designated a National Historic Site of Canada in 1983. This bridge is a clue that Smiths Falls was a major railway hub. The Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario is located just up the road from the lock.			
Notes: Closest marina is at Rideau Ferry. The best tie-up is between the detached and combined locks.			

Smiths Falls Detached to Poonamalie: We now follow the final part of the Rideau River on our way to its headwaters at Lower Rideau Lake. The lovely lock at Poonamalie is our next stop. It is entered through a man-made canal cut that was used to bypass a particularly winding section of the Rideau River.

POONAMALIE Lock 32			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 1.7 m (5.7 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 1)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-283-3543	GPS ² : N 44° 53.580' W 76° 03.340'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 91m /300'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 46m/150'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: Yes	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: Yes
Road Access: 3 km N of Hwy. 15 on Poonamalie Rd.		Locks Connect: Rideau River to Lower Rideau Lake	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing			
Of Interest: This odd name dates back to the time of canal construction. The cool cedars in this area reminded one of the British soldiers of a previous posting in Poonamallee, India, a garrison town used by the British army. It was also known as First Rapids, being the first set of rapids on the Rideau River. Have a look at the beautiful lockmaster's house. Take a hike to the dam and weir, a 1km trail leads to the upstream control dam - very scenic. The dense cedars provide cool shade and an enchanting scent. The location of the dam, at the bottom end of Lower Rideau Lake, is susceptible to spring ice damage. In April 1904, a 300 foot (91 m) wide sheet of ice opened up a 75 foot (23 m) hole in the weir. The dam and weir were then re-done in concrete. In 1971 the dam was again rebuilt, this time a large hydraulic gate replaced the wooden stop logs previously in use.			
Notes: Gas is available upstream at Rideau Ferry. There are no local services.			

Poonamalie to Beveridges: Take a few moments to enjoy Poonamalie, take a quiet walk along the cedar shaded trail. Leaving Poonamalie, the canal traverses a man-made cut until the eastern end of Lower Rideau Lake is reached. This section of the lake is marshy so it is important to pay attention to the buoys that mark the route of the navigation channel. The route of the navigation channels follows the channel of the now drowned head of the Rideau River, the reason for the long looping route. A few kilometres along the route takes us to the open waters of the lake. The traveller now has a choice of heading straight to Big Rideau Lake or take an interesting side trip up the Tay Canal to Perth. Heading to Beveridges, turn north at the bifurcation buoy. You'll see the Lower Beveridges lock at the head of Beveridge Bay.

LOWER BEVERIDGES Lock 33			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 3.6 m (12 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 1)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-267-2036	GPS²: N 44° 52.500' W 76° 08.375'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking⁵ Upstream: see Note 1 below	Docking⁵ Downstream: 191 m / 625'	

LOWER BEVERIDGES Lock 33			
Ice: Yes	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: Yes	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: just S. of Port Elmsley Rd. (Cty. Rd. 18)		Locks Connect: Lower Rideau Lake to Tay Canal	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing.			
Attractions: see notes for Upper Beveridges Lock.			
Notes: Gas is available at Rideau Ferry. There are no local services.			

Note 1: 240' of blueline docking between U. and L. Beveridges is available during lock operating hours.

UPPER BEVERIDGES Lock 34			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 3.9 m (13 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 1)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-267-2036	GPS ² : N 44° 52.615' W 76° 08.730'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 69m /225'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: see Note 1 above
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: No	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: Yes
Road Access: 300 m N. of Port Elmsley Rd. (Cty. Rd. 18)		Locks Connect: Tay Canal to Tay Canal	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing.			
Of Interest: When the Rideau Canal was built, there was no water connection to Perth. So local Perth residents had the Tay Canal built, it opened with five small locks in 1834. However, by 1865 it had fallen in disrepair, so, with the support of local MP John Haggart (son of John Haggart, the canal contractor for Chaffeys Lock), a new canal was proposed. Two locks, with the same design as Rideau locks, were built in a canal cut leading from the Tay River to Beveridge Bay of Lower Rideau Lake, between 1884 and 1887, and the route was deepened by dredging, that work was completed into Perth in 1890. The 10 km long (6.5 mi) Tay Canal, known for a time as "Haggart's Ditch," features some of the best wildlife viewing in the Rideau Corridor and leads to the pretty town of Perth. Boat tie up is available at Last Duel Park in Perth, or boats that are less than 1.8 m (6 feet) high can proceed right into town. There is lots to do and see in Perth. Take an interesting historic walking tour. Visit the Perth Museum, in the historic Matheson House.			
Notes: Closest gas is Rideau Ferry. Groceries, hardware, gift shopping, etc. available in Perth.			
Parks Canada has four oTENTiks (canvas topped A-frame cabins) at this location available for rent.			
An interesting historic note is that the Tay Canal and the Beveridges Locks were not originally part of the Rideau Canal. The present day locks were built between 1883 and 1887, placed in a newly dredged channel leading to the Tay River. Locally the Tay Canal is known as "Haggart's Ditch" after John G. Haggart, local MP, who held the portfolio of Railways and Canals and who poured much government money into upgrading the Tay Canal and constructing the Beveridges locks. The final dredging into Perth was completed in 1890, the same year the Tay Canal was transferred to the Rideau Canal by an Order in Council.			

Beveridges to Perth: Although the hydrographic charts show four feet on the upper Tay River section, Parks Canada maintains the Tay Canal at minimum of five (5) feet depth. As with the rest of the Rideau system, any boat with a draught of four feet or more is asked to advise the Rideau Canal Office. The first kilometre of this route traverses the man-made canal cut that links Beveridge Bay to the Tay River. This cut goes through Beveridge Marsh and then opens into the Tay River which proceeds through the Tay Marsh. Keep your eye open for interesting wildlife. The confluence of Jebbs Creek and the Tay River is the location of Old Lock 5 of the First Tay Canal. It now sits on the edge of the Perth Wildlife Reserve and is well worth a visit. Just south of Perth is Last Duel Park located near where the last fatal duel in Upper Canada was fought in 1833. Just upstream from Last Duel Park, the bridge clearance is only 6 feet – larger boats that can't clear the bridge can tie up at the docks by the launch ramp (washrooms and camping are available in the park). It's a leisurely stroll from Last Duel Park into Perth. If your vessel can make it to downtown, there is public dockage where you can tie up and explore the interesting town of **Perth**.

Poonamalie to Narrows: For those not taking the Perth side trip, or returning from this trip, the navigation route leads to Rideau Ferry, the narrows where Lower Rideau Lake joins Big Rideau Lake. There are two full service marinas located here as well as a gas dock. Big Rideau Lake offers kilometres of interesting shoreline, islands and bays, providing unlimited opportunities for on-water exploration.

A point of interest along the navigation route is Murphys Point Provincial Park located at Rocky Narrows on Big Rideau Lake. Murphys Point also offers several boat-in campsites for the tent camper coming by boat. For those looking for a nice overnight anchorage, check out Hawse Bay on the north shore of Big Rideau Lake. It is marked with an anchorage symbol on the chart.

Another interesting stop is Colonel By Island. This is the largest island in the group of islands known as Long Island. Colonel By Island is marked on the most recent chart, it is simply Long Island on older charts. On all charts you will see the old flat roofed "lodge" marked on the southern part of the island. This is the location of the overnight docking. You'll also find a number of Parks Canada mooring buoys in this area (regular mooring fees apply).

COLONEL BY ISLAND			
Number: 0	Total Lift: 0	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 2)	Lock Through: 0 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-272-2095	GPS ² : N 44° 44.058' W 76° 13.310'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (na) ³	Drinking Water: No ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: n/a		Docking ⁵ Downstream: n/a
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: No
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: Yes
Road Access: n/a		Locks Connect: located in Big Rideau Lake	
Special Notes:			
Attractions: Owned by Parks Canada and run via a private contract. This is the largest island in a set of islands collectively known as “Long Island”. It was formerly known as "Livingston Island" and may be marked that way on older charts. The flat roofed building on the Island is “Wag’s Lodge,” built by Danny Arnstein (co-owner of Yellow Cab in New York and Chicago) in 1949-50. The cottage features two massive “peanut rock” fireplaces and “driftwood plywood” walls. It is in disrepair and Parks Canada has marked it as off-limits to visitors.			
Notes: Closest gas is 5 km south at Portland. There are no local services. Portland offers full services.			

Whether or not you stop at Colonel By Island, a trip into the village of **Portland** is worthwhile to re-stock provisions or just wander around. Two full service marinas are located in Portland in addition to public docks.

Some of the oldest cottages on the Rideau Canal are located on Big Rideau Lake so a bit of shoreline sightseeing makes for an interesting afternoon.

From Portland, it is an easy run north to the main channel and then west to the Narrows lockstation.

NARROWS Lock 35			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 0.9 m (3 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 2)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613 507 3182	GPS ² : N 44° 42.180' W 76° 17.730'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (na) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 152m /500'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 116m/380'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: Yes
Road Access: 7 km N of Hwy. 15 on Narrows Lock Rd.		Locks Connect: Big Rideau Lake to Upper Rideau Lake	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. Swing bridge with a clearance of 1.2 m (3.9 ft). Bridge swings on demand.			

NARROWS Lock 35

Of Interest: The question you have to ask here is why is there a lock in the middle of a lake? It has to do with bedrock and malaria. When trying to excavate the canal cut through "The Isthmus," the watershed divide at Newboro, hard bedrock was encountered. Seasonal malaria also impeded the work. To speed up construction and reduce the amount of excavation at Newboro, Lt. Colonel By came up with a plan to build a dam and lock here, at a natural narrowing of the lake. This raised the level of the portion of Rideau Lake on the west side of the Narrows, "creating" Upper Rideau Lake. One of the four blockhouses built on the Rideau is located here, to protect this important lock.

Notes: Closest gas is at Portland. There are no local services. Both Portland and Westport offer excellent opportunities for grocery and gift shopping as well as restaurants.

Narrows to Newboro: Leaving the Narrows lockstation, the route enters the highest part of the Rideau Canal, Upper Rideau Lake. Upper Rideau Lake is the head of the Rideau Valley watershed on the Rideau Canal with its water draining north to the Ottawa River. Newboro Lake represents the head of the Cataraqui watershed on the Rideau Canal, with all water draining south to Lake Ontario. These two watersheds are separated at this point by a rocky narrow section, originally known as "The Isthmus". The canal cut north of Newboro was excavated through this watershed divide.

A side trip to the village of **Westport** at the west end of Upper Rideau Lake is worthwhile. This portion of the trip is marked by the stark contrast of pastoral rolling farmland to the south, and high rocky granite cliffs to the north due to the difference in the underlying geology. Public docking is available in Westport and there are many interesting shops in which to browse. For those into hiking, the Foley Mountain Conservation Area provides trails and a spectacular view of the region.

After the side-trip to Westport the route returns to the main channel which leads into McNallys Bay and the entrance to the manmade canal cut through "The Isthmus" to Newboro. It is hard to imagine today, but this was the toughest construction section of the Rideau Canal, the workers battling hard rock and malaria in order to connect Rideau Lake with Newboro Lake (then known as Mud Lake).

The village of **Newboro** marks the "home port" of the Rideau Canal and the "hand" of the buoys changes here. From Ottawa to Newboro, red buoys were on the right (west) and green or black buoys were on the left (east). Now, descending from Newboro to Kingston, red buoys will on the left (east) and green or black buoys on the right (west). This is clearly marked on the charts. It's also indicated by the colour of the wooden flower pots sitting at both ends of the Newboro Lock.

NEWBORO Lock 36

Number: 1	Total Lift: 2.4 m (7.7 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613 507 3183	GPS ² : N 44° 38.750' W 76° 19.252'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 128m /420'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 146m/480'
Ice: Yes	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: Yes	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: Yes	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: off Hwy. 42 in Newboro.		Locks Connect: Upper Rideau Lake to Newboro Lake	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. Note that Newboro represents the "home port" for the Rideau Canal. It is upstream from Ottawa to Newboro, and upstream from Kingston to Newboro (Upper Rideau Lake is the highest elevation on the Rideau Canal). Therefore the marker buoys change sides at Newboro. This is clearly shown on the charts and also by the colour of the flower pots at each end of the lock.			

NEWBORO Lock 36

Of Interest: This spot, originally called the Isthmus, marks the watershed divide between the Rideau River watershed and the Cataraqui/Gananoque rivers watersheds. The original plan was to build two locks at Chaffeys and simply have a canal cut through this neck of land, creating a huge summit reservoir (from Chaffeys to Poonamalie). But flooding concerns meant a change of plans, one of the Chaffey's locks was moved to Newboro. When hard bedrock was unexpectedly encountered, a third lock had to be built at Narrows. Newboro was converted to electric/hydraulic operation in 1966, the first of only two locks (the other being Black Rapids – done in 1969) to be changed from manual to electric operation (there is third electric lock on the Rideau Canal, the Smiths Falls Combined Lock, which was purpose built in the 1970s as an electric lock). The Sappers & Miners Cemetery (originally the Military & Civilian Cemetery) was used to bury those who died during canal construction at this site, including 12 Sappers and Miners that died during the construction of the canal. The original wooden grave markers have long since rotted away, leaving just a few field stones (likely footstones) marking the graves. Newboro also features one of the four blockhouses built for the defence of the Rideau Canal.

Notes: Gas is available at Stirling Lodge in Newboro. Newboro offers limited services (some groceries and hardware.)

Newboro to Chaffeys: The route enters Newboro Lake, the head of the Cataraqui Watershed and the start of what is known as the “southern Rideau Lakes”. This area is renowned for its fabulous large mouth bass fishing.

If you have an adventuresome spirit and a shallow draught (< 3 ft) boat, an interesting side trip is to head west to Loon Lake and then up to the beautifully restored mill at Bedford Mills. Please note that this is a private residence (do not disturb). Weed growth later in the season can make the final leg of this journey a bit challenging for a motorized vessel.

The channel leads from Newboro Lake through a narrow canal cut to Clear Lake and then through another narrow cut to Indian Lake. Indian Lake Marina is located here.

The route proceeds along the southeast shore of Indian Lake to the narrow entrance to Chaffeys Lock. The route passes under the old railway bridge, now part of the Cataraqui Trail (part of the Trans-Canada trail system). Gas is available here at Brown's Marina.

CHAFFEYS Lock 37

Number: 1	Total Lift: 3.3 m (10.7 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-359-5914	GPS ² : N 44° 34.740' W 76° 19.190'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 85m /280'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 128m/420'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: Yes	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: 9 km W of Hwy. 15 on Chaffeys Lock Rd (Cty Rd. 9).		Locks Connect: Indian Lake to Opinicon Lake	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. Swing bridge with a clearance of 1.8m (5.9 ft). Swings on demand.			
Of Interest: A feature of this lock is the Lockmaster's House Museum, run by the Chaffeys Lock and Area Heritage Society, with many interpretive displays of the early days at Chaffeys. It's also worth a walk around "town" – visit the grounds of the lovely Opinicon Resort and then head over to the restored Chaffey's Cemetery. The Cataraqui Trail, an all-season trail, part of the Trans-Canada trail system, passes through Chaffeys, following the old railway bed. The name of the lock comes from Samuel Chaffey, who set up extensive milling facilities here in 1820. He died in 1827 and Colonel By bought the property from his widow and his brother in order to build the lock. They received £2,000 (about \$6,000,000 in today's dollars) for the property.			
Notes: Gas is available upstream at Brown's Marina or Indian Lake Marina. The lodges & marinas offer some limited supplies.			

Chaffeys to Davis: It is worth a pause at Chaffeys Lock – take in the Lockmaster's House Museum, visit the beautiful grounds of the old Opinicon Resort (newly renovated), have a look at the old Chaffey's Mill (now being converted into a B&B)..

The first part of the route into Opinicon Lake is quite winding, pay attention to the buoys that mark the channel. Once out of Murphys Bay, the water level deepens and the route follows between the islands to Davis Lock. The bulk of Opinicon Lake stretches to the west. The big white building that you can see up-lake on the north shore is the Queen's University Biology Station. Take some time out on Opinicon Lake for a bit of fishing or swimming. Of note, it is "Opinicon Lake" not "Lake Opinicon" – the latter is the name for an old (now mostly abandoned) community near the west end of the lake.

DAVIS Lock 38			
Number: 1	Total Lift: 2.7 m (9 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 3)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-359-5620	GPS ² : N 44° 33.775' W 76° 17.530'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 140m /460'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 43m/140'
Ice: Yes	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: 9 km W of Hwy 15 on Davis Lock Rd.		Locks Connect: Opinicon Lake to Sand Lake	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing.			
Of Interest: Davis is known as a “solitude lock,” one of the most remote locks on the Rideau Canal. It’s named after Walter Davis Jr. who built a sawmill here in about 1818. It features the best preserved example of a defensible lockmaster’s house on the Rideau Canal. Built in 1842, this stone house served as home to the local lockmaster until 1959. The building was fully restored in 1999. The view, from this house into Sand Lake, is, except for the navigation buoys, essentially what Colonel By would have seen when the canal opened in 1832.			
Notes: Gas is available at Sand Lake Marina. No local services. Solitude lock.			

Davis to Jones Falls: Davis lock is a solitude lock, there are no local services. As such it is a popular overnight mooring spot for vessels. It features an interesting defensible lockmaster's house, one of the best preserved in its original state on the Rideau Canal, now converted into an upscale rental offering.

The route leads into Sand Lake and follows the south shore of the lake past Birch Island where it turns and enters Eel Bay. Around this corner on the north shore is Sand Lake Marine. The route then follows a narrow, winding section of the channel through an area known as "The Quarters". It passes under the County Road bridge and enters the open water above the beautiful Jones Falls. Before you tie up at Jones Falls, you might want to stop at the public dock at the top of the famous Jones Falls dam. From this vantage point it is just a grassy area with picnic tables. Stop here, cross the road and look down. This is a 60 foot high arch shaped stone faced dam, one of the most impressive 19th century engineering works along the entire Rideau Canal.

JONES FALLS Locks 39 - 42			
Number: 4 (incl. 3 in flight)	Total Lift: 17.8 m (58.4 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 4)	Lock Through: 1 hour ¹
Tel: 613 507 3185	GPS ² : N 44° 32.760' W 76° 14.300'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 104m /340'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 55m/180'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: Yes	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: Yes	Self Guided Trail: Yes
Road Access: 4 km W of Hwy 15 on Jones Falls Rd. (Cty Rd. 11).		Locks Connect: Sand Lake to Whitefish Lake	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 2 hours prior to closing.			
Of Interest: One of the prettiest lockstations on the Rideau Canal, Jones Falls is home to the “Great Stone Arch Dam.” When completed in 1831 this was the highest dam in North America (almost 60 feet), a stunning feat of engineering, still very impressive to this day. The defensible lockmaster’s house, known as Sweeney House after the first lockmaster, Peter Sweeney, is open for interpretation. Sweeney’s personal diary is now also available as a book – makes an interesting read. The blacksmith’s shop, built in the 1840s, often has a blacksmith on duty, more than willing to demonstrate his craft.			

JONES FALLS Locks 39 - 42

Notes: Gas is available upstream at Sand Lake Marine or downstream at Seeleys Bay. Limited services are available from the Shangri-la.

Jones Falls to Upper Brewers: Jones Falls is one of the prettiest lockstations. The lockmaster's house at the top of the hill is open with an interpretive display. There is a self guided trail and watching boats proceed through the locks at Jones Falls is a favourite visitor pastime. At the foot of Jones Falls is the Hotel Kenney.

The route proceeds into Whitefish Lake. An interesting side trip here is to head southeast, past the southwest end of Deans Island into Morton Bay. This beautiful bay features spectacular rock exposures. It also provides a quiet overnight anchorage location.

From Whitefish Lake the route proceeds to Little Cranberry Lake, a narrow section, really part of the Cataraqui River. A kilometre along a side route proceeds to the village of **Seeleys Bay**. There are marinas located here as well as public dockage. You can pick up groceries and other supplies in town.

From Little Cranberry Lake the route opens up into Cranberry Lake. An interesting side trip it to proceed along the north shore of Cranberry Lake on route to Dog Lake. This route passes by Melody Lodge and Marina. There are two sections to Dog Lake, a shallow southwest section and a deep water northeast section. It makes for an interesting exploration with several good anchorage and picnic spots along the way.

Returning to Cranberry Lake, the main route follows the southeast shore to Brewers Mills. Leaving Cranberry Lake the route enters the "Court of the Duke" which features a rock outcrop on the southeast shore that has been likened to the profile of the Duke of Wellington who was a major proponent of building the Rideau Canal. He also had a prominent nose, the "Duke's Profile" was a name given to the rock outcrop during the construction of the canal.

UPPER BREWERS Locks 43-44

Number: 2 (in flight)	Total Lift: 5.5 m (18 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 4)	Lock Through: 30 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-539-6847	GPS ² : N 44° 24.770' W 76° 18.790'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (na) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 137m /448'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 82m/270'
Ice: Yes	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: 0.5 km W of Hwy. 15		Locks Connect: Cataraqui River to Cataraqui River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 1 hour prior to closing. The Brass Point Bridge, located 6.5 km (4 mi) upstream has a clearance of 1.2m (3.9ft). The bridge swings on demand.			
Of Interest: A defensible stone lockmasters house sits on top of the knoll overlooking the lock. Used as the lockmaster's residence, the gun slits have been sealed in, but if you look closely, you can see where they were. The building is presently leased out to a private resident. Behind a row of cedars on the shore of the basin is "The Ark," an old, very large "houseboat," pulled up on shore in the early 20 th century, now a private residence.			
Notes: Gas is available at marinas in Cranberry Lake and near Seeleys Bay. No local services. Solitude lock. Full services (groceries, restaurants, etc.) are available in Seeleys Bay. Parks Canada has two oTENTiks (canvas topped A-frame cabins) at this location available for rent.			

Upper Brewers to Lower Brewers: The Rideau route returns to river travel between Upper and Lower Brewers. The route is easy to follow with farmland and apple orchards bordering the canal. It leads to Lower Brewers (aka "Washburn.").

LOWER BREWERS Lock 45

Number: 1	Total Lift: 4.0 m (13 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 4)	Lock Through: 15 minutes ¹
Tel: 613-539-6574	GPS²: N 44° 23.350' W 76° 19.500'		Chart Sales: No
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes

LOWER BREWERS Lock 45			
Power: Yes	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 80m /261'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 130m/425'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: No	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: W of Hwy. 15		Locks Connect: Cataraqui River to Cataraqui River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to closing. Swing bridge with a clearance of 1.3m (4.2 ft). Bridge swings on demand.			
Of Interest: One of the four remaining Unequal Arm, Center Bearing timber swing bridges on the Rideau Canal, this beautiful swing bridge is so well balanced that one person can swing it by simply pushing on it. A sawmill existed here at the time of canal construction and a bypass channel was cut in order to leave the mill intact. Water power continued to operate mills in the 19th century and still operates a small hydro-electric station today. An apple orchard is located just down the road, at the junction with Highway 15.			
Notes: Gas is upstream at marinas in Cranberry Lake and Seeleys Bay. No local services. Solitude lock.			

Lower Brewers to Kingston Mills: The route follows the Cataraqui River to the "River Styx" a wide, marshy portion of the Cataraqui. The route is clearly marked with buoys. Power boaters are advised to stay in the navigation channel since there are standing stumps just below water level outside of the marked channel. Leaving the River Styx the channel enters Colonel By Lake, a deeper portion of the Cataraqui River at the head of the locks at Kingston Mills. It was the damming of the river at Kingston Mills (Cataraqui Falls) that created these lakes.

KINGSTON MILLS Lock 46 - 49			
Number: 4 (incl. 3 in flight)	Total Lift: 13.7 m (45 ft)	Chart: 1513 (Sheet 5)	Lock Through: 1 hour ¹
Tel: 613 507 3188	GPS ² : N 44° 17.539' W 76° 26.534'		Chart Sales: Yes
Washrooms: Yes (a) ³	Drinking Water: Yes ⁴	Day Use Docking: Yes	Overnight Mooring: Yes
Power: No	Docking ⁵ Upstream: 88m /290'		Docking ⁵ Downstream: 93m/305'
Ice: No	Boater Camping: Yes	Boat Launch: No	Parking: Yes
Picnic Tables: Yes	BBQ Grills: Yes	Public Phone: Yes	Self Guided Trail: No
Road Access: 1 km W of Hwy 15 on Kingston Mills Rd.		Locks Connect: Colonel By Lake to Cataraqui River	
Special Notes: To ensure passage, boaters must arrive at least 2 hours prior to closing. Swing bridge with a clearance of 2.3m (7.5 ft). Bridge swings on demand.			
Of Interest: This is the site of the first mill built on the Rideau Canal, the King's Mill, built here at Cataraqui Falls in 1784. The site today features a lovely set of three locks, a turning basin, a detached upper lock and the Robert Anglin Visitor's Centre. The main CN rail line crosses over the lower locks on a bridge originally built for the Grand Trunk Railroad in 1853 (rebuilt in 1890 and 1924). One of the four blockhouses on the Rideau Canal is located here. It's open during the summer months, the inside outfitted as soldier's barracks. The falls, first used to power mills, still generate power today, a small hydro-electric station was built here in 1913.			
Notes: Gas is available downstream at marinas in Kingston. No local services.			

Kingston Mills to Kingston: Kingston Mills makes another interesting stop to take in the blockhouse and the Lockmaster Anglin Visitor's Centre. The roar of a train signals the fact that the main rail line between Montreal and Toronto crosses the locks at this point.

It is noted on the navigation charts that boaters should pay close attention to the marked channel and stay within the navigation channel as shown by the buoys. The route takes us to the Inner Harbour of Kingston and the La Salle Bridge which marks the end of the Rideau Canal. You are now in **Kingston**.

There are several full service marinas located in Kingston.

The Caveats to the Lockstation Information

- 1) The lock through time is the time to actually go through the lock. Allow at least twice that for trip planning.
- 2) GPS data should not be used for navigation. It simply represents the general location of a lockstation. GPS readings are NAD 83 datum.
- 3) Washrooms marked as (a) are wheelchair accessible, those with (na) are not.
- 4) Parks Canada indicates that water is potable at all lockstations except for Colonel By Island.
- 5) The dockage figures include both blueline and greyline docking (greyline is extended mooring, blueline is temporary docking while waiting for a lock through but can be used for overnight docking when the lock is closed (ask the staff). The docking figures are a minimum since some new dockage was added to several of the lockstation in 2002. Current figures are not available.
- 6) Boater Camping means that the lock allows tent camping for those arriving by water and also for cyclists and hikers. An overnight mooring permit entitles a boater to one camping spot.

Rideau Communities (with road travel guide)

(listed in geographic order – north to south)

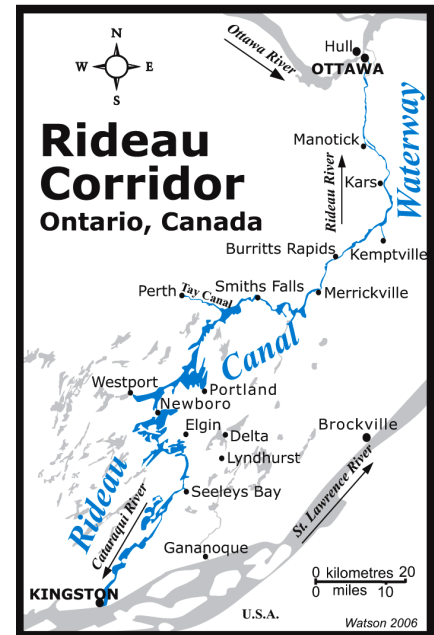
The Rideau Corridor is host to several interesting villages, towns and cities. Anchored in the north by our nation's capital, Ottawa and in the south by the limestone city of Kingston, the Rideau Corridor is home to farms, cottages, artists' havens, interesting shops, pastoral landscapes, historic locks, sparkling lakes, tranquil rivers, and much more.

If you come by road it is easy to visit all these communities. Take a moment to stop and explore. Some interesting historical facts have been listed below to enhance your visit.

If you come by boat, you'll find that most communities with waterfront access offer public dockage, allowing you to tie up and spend some time exploring the village or town.

A brief list of services has been included below for most communities. This will give you an idea of what each place has to offer in terms of tourist facilities. In addition, most communities offer various tourist shops, antique stores and the like.

So, whether you come by boat along the Rideau Canal, or by vehicle along the Rideau Heritage route, please take some time to visit some of our interesting towns and villages. Follow the motto of Perth to "make haste slowly."



A Note Regarding the Travel Guide

A road travel guide has been included below, geographically oriented from Ottawa to Kingston. It should be fairly simple for those travelling in the other direction simply to read the directions in reverse order. Many of these communities are also accessible by boat, the names of each community have been highlighted in the text in the previous "Boaters Travel Guide to the Rideau Canal" section.

With a road distance between Kingston and Ottawa of only about 160 kilometres (100 miles), the route can be easily driven in less than 3 hours. However, the many interesting communities, side roads, lockstations and other sights are really deserving of a more leisurely trip of two to three days. There are many inns, lodges, campgrounds, and B&Bs to serve the road travelling public. To get the full ambience of the area, bring along a boat or rent one here to get out on the water and get a first hand look at the Rideau Canal.

Our trip starts in Ottawa:

Ottawa - The Nation's Capital

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Ottawa, the nation's capital, was originally called Bytown, after Colonel By, the architect and builder of the Rideau Canal. Most major attractions are located downtown. It was Colonel By who in 1826 decided the location for the town, laying out roads and lots initially used by some of the workers involved in building the Rideau Canal. Barrack Hill, which initially housed the two companies of Royal Sappers and Miners who helped in the building of the canal is today known as Parliament Hill, the site of Canada's Parliament buildings.

The Rideau Canal starts with the majestic flight of eight locks that connect the Ottawa River to the Rideau Canal. These locks are flanked by the Parliament Buildings and the Chateau Laurier Hotel. Just a short ways along the canal from the

Ottawa locks is the National Arts Centre. The canal continues past Lansdowne Park to Dows Lake and then to the Central Experimental Farm and Arboretum. Hartwells Locks are located by Carleton University. The next lock is at Hogs Back where the Rideau Canal joins the natural course of the Rideau River.

In the winter, the frozen Canal becomes the world's longest skating rink. Winterlude, a festival of ice sculptures and open-air entertainment held in February, takes place throughout Ottawa with a focus on the Rideau Canal Skateway. People are encouraged to build their own sculptures downtown as well, and the parks and open spaces are graced with some of the most imaginative crystalline creations you ever saw.

By car, Ottawa can be reached via County Road 15 from Kingston, County Road 7 from Toronto, and Highway 416 from Highway 401 at Prescott. The Ottawa-Ogdensburg National Bridge spans the St. Lawrence Seaway at Ogdensburg, New York, offering easy access to Highway 416.

Travel Guide: Ottawa to Manotick

Our exploration by road starts with the scenic route out of Ottawa, following either Colonel By Drive or Queen Elizabeth Drive south along the Rideau Canal.

Colonel By Drive will take you along the east side of the canal. Following Colonel By Drive south will put you onto Riverside Drive which will turn into River Road, County Road 19. Follow it south to the turn off for Manotick. An interesting stop along the way is the Long Island Lockstation, just 1 km west of County Road 19.

Queen Elizabeth Drive will take you along the west side of the canal and around Dows Lake. Continue south along Prince of Wales Drive which will turn into Prescott Rd, County Road 73. Follow it to County Road 13 which will lead directly south to Manotick

Manotick

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Located on the Rideau River, just a few kilometres east of Highway 416, Manotick offers full services to the visiting public. The main shopping area is the Manotick Mews shopping centre. A significant point of interest is the Dickinson Square Conservation Area which hosts Watson's Mill (a 19th century grist mill), the F.E. Ayers Building and Dickinson House. The mill is open to the public with many interesting displays. There are a number of restaurants in town. Boaters will find several marinas located a few kilometres south of town.

There are several golf courses located close to Manotick. In addition, the W.A. Taylor Conservation Area, Baxter Conservation Area, and Rideau River Provincial Park are located south of town on the Rideau River.

History of Manotick

Manotick was one of the later developed communities along the Rideau Canal. A small community had developed in the 1830s near the Long Island Locks, north of present day Manotick, but no development was done in the Manotick area until the late-1850s. Failures of the control dams near the Long Island Locks since the late 1830s, resulted in the construction, in 1858, of a new weir near the Long Island Locks and a bulkhead across the west branch of the Rideau River. The bulkhead provided enough water head for a mill and Moss Kent Dickinson and his partner Joseph Currier purchased the water rights. They built a saw mill and a grist mill. Both opened in 1860. This attracted new settlers, including many from the former community on Long Island. It was Dickinson who in 1864 named the new village *Manotick* after the Ojibwa word for Long Island. By 1880 the village had grown to a population of 400.

Manotick thrived on the commercial river traffic, and as this declined, so did Manotick. By the early 1950s, the population of Manotick was about 300 - it was a quiet, rural village. Starting in about the 1970, it was realized by some that living near Manotick and working in Ottawa was a good combination. So a new boom of suburban development occurred, much of it on Long Island. Today Manotick is essentially a satellite suburb of Ottawa.

Travel Guide: Manotick to Kars

There are two route choices for this section. You can cross back to the east side of the River and follow County Road 19 south to the next crossing of the Rideau Canal, which you can then take to Kars. Or, you can simply continue south along County Road 13 to Kars.

Kars

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Narrow tree lined streets, 19th century homes, and a tranquil rural atmosphere characterize Kars. Located on the shore of the Rideau River, Kars has changed little from its village origins. A public dock offers the boating visitor access to the town. The general store is an easy walk from the dock. There are golf courses located just a few kilometres north of town, and the nature enthusiast will want to visit the W.A. Taylor Conservation Area, the Baxter Conservation Area, and the Rideau River Provincial Park, all located on the Rideau River, south of Kars.

History of Kars

The actual founding of Kars appears to be lost to history, but there is some indication that a small settlement had started at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Rideau River by about 1820. An 1828 map shows the creek already named as Stevens Creek. In 1829, James Lindsay moved into the area and built a wharf just south of the present dock. The building of the Rideau Canal provided a commercial boon, and a six street village was laid out and named *Wellington*. The early industry was lumbering and with vast forests extending to the west, Wellington became a busy shipping point. In 1856 the name of the community was changed to *Kars*. There was already a Wellington in Prince Edward County, and Kars was chosen to commemorate the British defence of Kars in Turkey in 1855 against a Russian siege.

The railroad passed Kars by and it never grew beyond its rural roots.

At the corner of Wellington and Nelson Streets you will find the Adam Eastman house, built in 1854. Adam Eastman was one of the first mill owners. On Rideau Valley Drive, just north of the corner with Ann Street you'll find the St. John's Anglican Church, built by John Eastman in 1850. About half a kilometre south of Kars is the stone house of James Lindsay, built in 1829.

Travel Guide: Kars to Kemptville

This section also offers two choices. You can backtrack a bit to the east side of the river and County Road 19. Take 19 south and it will lead directly to Kemptville. An interesting stop to have a picnic or just stretch your legs is the W.A. Taylor Conservation Area which you will find just off County Road 19 (look for the signs).

You can also head directly south from Kars along County Road 13. An interesting stop on this route is the Baxter Conservation area which you will find near the junction of County Road 13 and Dilworth Road. After Baxter, follow Dilworth Road to County Road 5. County Road 5 will take you to Rideau River Provincial Park, another interesting stop. Just past the Park, turn south along County Road 44 which will take you to Kemptville.

Kemptville

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

* closest marine service is Pirates Cove Marina near mouth of Kemptville Creek

Kemptville is located near the junction of County Road 43 and Highway 416 and so is very accessible to the Rideau visitor. In town (population 4000) there is a variety of stores and restaurants and Kemptville Hospital offers medical and emergency services. On County Road 43 close by the bridge which crosses the South Branch, boaters can find food, fuel, hardware and emergency supplies.

An area of crown land (formerly The Ferguson Forest Station), which borders the entire west shore from the main channel to the Hwy 43 bridge has 5 miles (8 km) of hiking trails taking you through pine forests, marshland and beech stands.

Kemptville is accessible from the Rideau Canal by way of Kemptville Creek. According to the charts, Kemptville Creek is navigable by shallow draught boats for about 3 miles (5 km) to the town. Limiting depths are 3 feet (1 m) at datum, but local boaters report depths of from 7-15 feet (2-5 m). The other limiting factor is the Bridge Street bridge which has a clearance of 11 feet (3.5 m)

History of Kemptville

Kemptville was founded by Lyman Clothier when he settled here with his four sons. In about 1815-1816, Clothier built his first saw mill. The settlement was first known as "The Branch" for its location on the South Branch of the Rideau River and later became known as Clothier Mills after Clothier's thriving saw mill business. In 1821, Clothier expanded his business to include grist milling. The town was on the new road route between Prescott and Bytown and soon became the centre for regional activity. In 1828 the town was renamed "Kemptville" in honour of Sir James Kemp, then the Governor General of British North America. With the completion of the Rideau, Kemptville drew weekly visits from steamers on route from Ottawa to Montreal.

Travel Guide: Kemptville to Burritts Rapids

There are two route choices for this section. You can head back north along County Road 44 to Becketts Landing and the head west along County Road 2 (Donnelly Drive) to Burritts Rapids. Turn south at Burritts Rapids to go onto the island. Continue on to the lockstation for a nice restful stop.

Another option from Kemptville is to head north along County Road 44, but turn west south of the river onto River Road. Take this to Burritts Rapids – this route will take you right past the lockstation.

Burritts Rapids

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking*	<input type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

* docking is available at the lockstation

Burritts Rapids is a quiet little community, one of the first established on the Rideau River. The village itself is on a small island, although you'll find the Church and several residences located on the north shore. A feature of the island is the Tip to Tip Trail - a brochure detailing this trail is available at the Burritts Rapids lockstation.

History of Burritts Rapids

Burritts Rapids was one of the first settlements on the Rideau River, predating the Canal itself. In 1793, Colonel Stephen Burritt, floated down this section of the Rideau River on a raft looking for a good spot to settle. At Burritts Rapids he saw the water power potential for a mill and settled there with his wife Martha (Stevens) and their two-year old son Henry. Their second son, Edmund, was born here on 8 Dec 1793.

The story goes that, soon after settling there, they were all sick from a fever when they were rescued by a band of local Indians, nursed back to health, and even had their crops harvested for them. Ever after, the Burritt home was a welcoming place for Indians travelling the Rideau.

When Colonel By came through in 1826, Burritts Rapids was a thriving village with several businesses. The village, like the Rideau Canal itself, lost its commercial importance at the start of the 20th century.

The fixed bridge at the north end of town (over the original Rideau River) is in the location where one of the earliest bridges across the Rideau River was built in 1824 (it has since been rebuilt at least twice, in 1920 and 1983). Just upstream of that bridge a mill dam was erected (as early as 1845). It crossed the entire channel, with a waste weir at the south end and served a saw mill and a grist mill (both located on the south side of the river). The remains of this dam can still be seen today.

In about 1832, a timber high level fixed bridge was constructed across the channel of the canal (south end of town), just upstream of the present day swing bridge. By the early 1850s, it had been replaced by a timber swing bridge in the location of the present steel truss swing bridge (which dates to 1897). The swing bridge is opened by turning a crank in the pivot at one end of the bridge. Counter weights and a set of roller wheels mounted on a circular track underneath allow the bridge to be swung with little effort.

To learn more about this charming village and the countryside, visit the lockstation and take a stroll down the Tip-to-Tip Trail.

Travel Guide: Burritts Rapids to Merrickville

From Burritts Rapids you can head west on County Road 2 along the north side of the River to the turn off to Merrickville, or head along River Road, which turn into County Road 23 along the south side of the river.

From either route you can make a stop at Upper Nicholsons Lockstation, take a walk to the overflow dam and have a look at Andrewsville. Those continuing along River Road (south side of the Rideau Canal) may wish to stop to visit the historic McGuigan Cemetery. It is located about 0.8 km south on River Road from Upper Nicholsons, at 448 River Road (directly across the river from Clowes Lock). This is one of the earliest cemeteries in the Rideau region and some of the workers who helped to build the canal, and some of their wives and children, are buried here. Continuing along County Rd. 23 we end up in Merrickville.

Merrickville

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Merrickville, known as the Jewel of the Rideau, is a thriving community and a very popular destination spot for visitors coming by either land or water. The many stone buildings in town have been restored to their former glory and are now populated by a variety of shops. Those interested in arts, crafts, antiques or collectibles will find Merrickville to be a treasure trove of opportunity.

The village itself is a wonderful place to tour. A major feature in the village is the set of three locks on the Rideau Canal as it passes through town. You will find these adjacent to the Blockhouse, built in 1832 to guard the locks. The Blockhouse features a moat and drawbridge and it is open to the public. The locks operate today just as they did in 1832. Just across the bridge over the locks you will find the Industrial Heritage Complex, the site of some of the early mills. In addition to in-

town shopping and sight seeing, there are several golf courses located in the area. Stop by at the Friends of the Rideau interpretive centre, The Depot (located adjacent to the Blockhouse). There are a variety of accommodations available in or near Merrickville.

History of Merrickville

The first settler into the area was Roger Stevens who was granted land in the area, and arrived to take up residence in May of 1790. He built a sawmill at the site of the "Great Falls". In about 1791, William Mirick arrived in the area and apparently went into partnership with Roger Stevens. Roger Stevens drowned in 1793 and the ownership of the mill seat (water rights) and associated properties was disputed in the courts, and it was not until 1810 that William Mirick received full title to the lands that underlie present day Merrickville.

The small community that had developed around the mills was known as *Mirick's or Merrick's Mills*. Mirick is the original Welsh spelling of the family name. It was used alternately as Mirick or Merrick until 1862 when the spelling was formally changed to Merrick. In 1815, Merrick's Mills was connected to the St. Lawrence by a road extending from Prescott. However, given the condition of roads of that day, the primary means of transport was still by water. The building of the Rideau Canal was a boon for Merrickville. The locks were positioned in an excavated channel to the south of the main river channel so as not to disrupt the existing mills.

When the canal opened in 1832 Merrickville thrived on the new commerce it generated. Goods could now be easily shipped to and from Kingston and Montreal. In 1860 Merrickville was incorporated as a village. By that time the population had grown to almost 1,000. The railroad, connecting Montreal to Toronto, reached Merrickville in 1887 and allowed a healthy commerce to continue.

By the early 20th century, Merrickville, like many rural communities, was in decline. The population was decreasing as the young left town to seek work in urban centres. In the 1970s and 1980s Merrickville underwent a transformation. The lovely architecture of the town was an obvious tourist attraction. Work was done to preserve and enhance the historic values of the village. Businesses shifted to catering for the tourist trade, making Merrickville into what it is today.

Merrickville hosts many historic buildings. It has more buildings classified under the Ontario Heritage Act than any other village of its size in the province. The most distinctive is the Blockhouse, built in 1832, the largest along the Rideau Canal. It is now a museum, open to public viewing. The Depot, located just upstream from the Blockhouse, was built in about 1868. The main mill industrial area is on an island on the north side of the bridge over the Rideau locks. Destroyed by fire, only the foundations remain, but Parks Canada has an interesting interpretation area describing the area's past glory. Continuing father north, you will encounter an operating foundry (open to visitors), the oldest continuously operated foundry in Ontario. The buildings that house the present day Alloy Foundry date to the mid-1800s. Ayling's Boatyards is housed in mill buildings built in the mid-1800s by William Pearson and William Henry Magee.

Continuing on the north side of the river, there are several heritage buildings. William Mirick's third house, located at 129 Mill Street was built sometime between 1821 and 1839. It attests to William Mirick's prosperity. The Merrick Tavern located at 106 Mill Street, now a private residence, is one of the earliest surviving buildings in Merrickville.

Moving into the downtown area, south of the locks, the Jakes Block at the corner of St. Lawrence and Main Street dominates the downtown. Construction of the building was started by E.H. Whitmarsh in 1861. In 1863 it was taken over and completed by George Montgomery. In 1871, it was purchased by general merchant Sam Jakes who ran it as a thriving general store. Located just down the way on Main Street, Sam Jakes Inn started life as the residence of Sam Jakes. It was built in 1861. The churches in town mostly date to the late 1800s and early 1900s when new imposing stone structures were built to replace earlier wooden or smaller stone building. The Merrickville United Church on St. Lawrence Street was built in 1890. The St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church on Main Street was built in 1901. The Holy Trinity Anglican Church on Church Street was completed in 1909.

In addition to stone buildings, there are many interesting wooden frame buildings. These include the Petapiece-Dowdall House at 212 Brock St. East, built in about 1900. The Samuel Langford House at 306 Elgin Street was built in 1863. The Carman Knapp House at 506 Elgin Street was built in 1890. The list goes on. You will just have to visit Merrickville to discover it all for yourself.

Travel Guide: Merrickville to Smiths Falls

There are two routes that can be taken from Merrickville to Smiths Falls. The first is to head north out of Merrickville, across the bridge to County Road 43. This leads directly to Smiths Falls. A nice little side trip is the short jaunt off the route to visit the lock at Kilmarnock.

The second route is to head south from Merrickville and then take the turn-off west, along County Road 16 to Jasper. From Jasper, head northwest along County Road 17 to Smiths Falls. A nice stop to stretch your legs is Edmunds Lock just before you reach Smiths Falls. Coming into Smiths Falls, you might want to turn right to the Heritage House Museum and the locks at Old Sllys.

Smiths Falls

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Smiths Falls is a full service community, located about halfway between Ottawa and Kingston. With a population of 9,000, it is the largest community in the Rideau Corridor. Smiths Falls offers a full range of services for the visitor including restaurants (including most "brand name" fast food outlets), a wide variety of stores, and much more. There are many available accommodations in Smiths Falls including inns, motels and B&Bs. Boaters will find ample dockage at Victoria Park, just a few minutes walk away from the centre of town.

There are lots of interesting sites to see in Smiths Falls. Prominent among these are the Rideau Canal Visitor Information Centre, the Smiths Falls Railway Museum, the Heritage House Museum and the original (1832) flight of 3 locks (no longer in use).

Another favourite pastime is watching the boats lock through the Rideau Canal locks. Smiths Falls hosts 3 lockstations, Smiths Falls Detached (1 lock), Smiths Falls Combined (1 lock) and Old Sllys (2 locks). The central lockstation, the Smiths Falls Combined Lock, was built in 1972-73, replacing a flight of three, now unused, locks. It boasts the greatest single lock lift on the Rideau Canal system, 7.9 metres (26 feet).

Smiths Falls provides the opportunity for many local recreation activities. There are several parks located in the town and two nearby golf courses. The town also has two arenas, a squash/curling club, tennis courts and more.

History of Smiths Falls

Originally known as Smyth's Falls, it was named after Thomas Smyth, a United Empire Loyalist who received a 400 acre land grant in the area in 1786. Smyth did nothing with the land and in 1810 he mortgaged it to a man in Boston. In 1823, Smyth built a saw mill at Smyth's Falls, but he never lived there, choosing to stay in Elizabethtown Township on the St. Lawrence and also at Burritts Rapids. Apparently the mortgage, which Smyth thought had been paid, had not, and in 1824 his ownership of the land was contested. Smyth lost the court case and the land was sold in 1825 to Charles Jones (of Jones Falls fame) who immediately sold it at a profit to Abel Russell Ward.

It was Ward who in 1826 was the first to move into the area and actively start to build a settlement. The building of the Rideau Canal, completed in 1831, greatly expanded the settlement. Now called *Wardsville*, it became the hub of commerce in the region. In 1836 the name of St. Francis was proposed, but most residents had reverted to using the original name of *Smyth's Falls*, or *Smiths Falls* as it was now known.

In 1882 the village council wanted a new name. Rideau City and Atironda were put forward but the residents resisted, preferring the commonly used "Smiths Falls". The town was incorporated in 1883. A clerical error at that time in Toronto resulted in the registration of the name as *Smith's Falls*. That error was rectified in 1968, officially recognizing the long-standing use of the town's name as *Smiths Falls*.

In the late 1800s, the railroad came to town. Rail transportation was taking over from water transportation and Smiths Falls benefited by becoming the hub of rail traffic in the region. A direct rail link was made from Smiths Falls to Montreal. The

Canadian Northern Railway station, built in 1914, is now the Smiths Falls Railway Museum. The last passenger train to stop at the station was in 1979. The town also hosts a C.P.R. rail yard. Smiths Falls is a divisional point of CP Rail's main line from Montreal to Toronto. All through trains operating between Eastern and Western Canada pass through the town.

One of the historic buildings in town is the Heritage House Museum. It was built in 1862 by Joshua Bates, a prominent miller and merchant. In 1977 the building was purchased by the town of Smiths Falls and returned to its 19th century glory. The Rideau Canal Visitor Information Centre (formerly the Rideau Canal Museum) is housed in an interesting building, part of the Woods Mill complex, established on Wards Island in the 1840s. Purchased by Parks Canada in 1981, the complex underwent extensive renovations. In 1991 the eastern half of the complex became the Rideau Canal Office of Parks Canada and the granary section became the Rideau Canal Museum. The museum was changed into the Rideau Canal Visitor Information Centre in 2012.

Travel Guide: Smiths Falls to Rideau Ferry

Our route will now lead us south, along County Road 15 to Lombardy. At Lombardy, turn west along County Road 1 to Rideau Ferry.

Rideau Ferry

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Rideau Ferry is a small community located at a narrow section of Rideau Lake (the dividing point between Big Rideau Lake and Lower Rideau Lake). It provides a few services such as a gas station and restaurant. It also features expansive municipal docks and the Rideau Ferry Yacht Club Conservation Area which is a great spot for a picnic or swim (it has a sandy beach).

History of Rideau Ferry

This spot was originally known as the First Narrows, or sometimes the Lower Narrows of Rideau Lake. In 1816 John Oliver and his family settled on the south shore at this location and opened up a ferry service. Perth had just been founded as a military settlement in the spring of 1816. That fall, a trail to Perth was turned into a road. The only way to cross Rideau Lake was by boat, a service that Oliver provided. The spot soon came to be known as Oliver's Ferry. By 1832 that service had been taken over by Archibald Campbell, operating from the north shore. The ferry continued to operate until 1874 when the first bridge was built with fixed low level spans leading to swing bridge at the north end. In 1968 the entire bridge was replaced with the present day high level bridge made of concrete.

Travel Guide: Rideau Ferry to Perth

Our route heads north along County Road 1 to Perth. For those camping, an option to consider is Murphys Point Provincial Park which can be accessed by following County Road 21, west from County Road 1. For those that just want to get to Perth, continue along County Road 1 to Perth.

Perth

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Perth is a thriving community with all the modern conveniences wonderfully blended with the charm of an "Old Ontario" town. It is accessible by boat from the Rideau Canal by locking through the Beveridges locks into the Tay Canal which will lead you to downtown Perth (larger boats can tie up at Last Duel Park). It is easily accessible by road from both Kingston and Ottawa.

There are many things to see and do in Perth. Matheson House, built in the 1840s is now home to the Perth Museum. The Round Garden is a popular spot with visitors. It is designed for the blind, the elderly and the handicapped with waist high plant boxes and visitors are encouraged to touch and smell. Just south of Perth is the Perth Wildlife Preserve, a haven for waterfowl.

The site of the last fatal duel in Upper Canada is now home to Last Duel Park, located on the banks of the Tay. There is a launch ramp here as well as docking facilities. One of the many interesting looking stone houses is Inge-Va, built in 1824.

And, of course, no visit to Perth would be complete without taking a moment to view the full scale replica of the Mammoth Cheese, located near the former site of Perth's old train station. It is a replica of a 22,000 pound cheddar made in Perth for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

History of Perth

Perth was originally laid out as a military settlement in 1816 to help protect the inland water route connecting Lake Ontario with the Ottawa River, and to act as an administrative centre for settlers in the region. It was settled to a large degree by pensioned, half-pay officers and soldiers. The idea was that when the need arose, Perth could be called upon to quickly raise a well trained militia. A by-product of the military heritage is that in its early days Perth was described as being "very, very snooty" with the class system rigidly enforced.

Perth was laid out on the banks of the Pike River, renamed Tay after the river of the same name that flows beside Perth, Scotland. The name of the community was originally Perth-on-Tay, shortened to Perth in 1820. In 1823 it was named the administrative centre of the Bathurst District. In 1850 it became the county town of Lanark County.

The last fatal duel in Upper Canada was held in Perth on June 13, 1833 between two law students, Robert Lyon and John Wilson. Wilson alleged that Lyon had made a slight about the character of Elizabeth Hughes, a girl Wilson was sweet on. The duel appears to have been encouraged by James Boulton, the lawyer who John Wilson was studying under. The other student, Robert Lyon was studying under lawyer Thomas Radenhurst. Boulton and Radenhurst had been at odds for years, including threats to duel each other. Lyon ended up on the losing end of the exchange with Wilson shooting him dead. The tide of public opinion turned against James Boulton who was forced to leave Perth later that year. John Wilson ended up marrying Elizabeth Hughes.

During the construction of the Rideau Canal, business interests in Perth advocated for a canal link from Perth to the Rideau. There was no interest from government so private funds were raised for the construction. Four small wooden locks, designed by Perth resident John Jackson, were originally proposed. Two were built at Barbadoes (present day Port Elmsley) before the money ran out in 1831. After additional financing was received, the rest of the system was completed between 1832 and 1834. In the end, five wooden locks, six overflow dams, a turning basin in the centre of Perth, and several hundred yards (metres) of embankments provided a 3.5 foot (1.1 m) navigation depth from Perth to Port Elmsley, near the mouth of the Tay.

The canal was not much of a success for vessel navigation, but large amounts of squared timber were barged down the Tay, on their way to market in Montreal. Tolls on the Tay were not enough to keep up the maintenance and the canal was allowed to deteriorate. In 1865 several of the locks were destroyed by logs, and the canal was shut down.

With navigation between Perth and the Rideau Canal shut down, the residents petitioned the local member of Parliament, John G. Haggart. Haggart was a long time member of Parliament for South Lanark, and would eventually become the Minister of Railways and Canals from 1892 to 1896.

Presumably Haggart had some influence in launching an investigation of Tay Canal improvements in 1881. The existing canal works had been taken over from the Tay Navigation Company by the Federal government, allowing the government to do whatever work it wanted in making improvements. Two routes were proposed, one following the existing route of the Tay, and a second involving a canal cut through a swampy section to Beveridge Bay.

Despite lobbying by the residents of Port Elmsley, the route that would take the canal from Perth to Beveridge Bay was chosen. In 1885 construction on the new canal, sometimes known as "the second Tay Canal" was started. The locks were built to the same design and specifications as the Rideau locks. They were completed in 1887. Final excavation of the canal to the required navigation depth and the basin in Perth were not completed until 1890. For a time, the canal from the Beveridges Locks to Perth became known as "Haggart's Ditch".

Perhaps because of Perth's military heritage, it did not see a great deal of industrial development. Many of the industries that did set up shop did so on the outskirts of town, preserving the heritage character of the downtown core. Perth was getting a bit run down by the mid-1960s when a push began to revitalize the town and restore its distinctive heritage. These efforts continued through the 1970s and 1980s, restoring much of Perth's original charm.

In 1830, Perth's population was about 350. By the turn of the century it had grown to 3,500 and today it stands at 5,900.

Travel Guide: Perth to Westport

From the southeast end of town, take County Road 10 (Scotch Line) southwest to Westport. Just before you get to Westport you'll come to the Foley Mountain Conservation Area which provides a spectacular view of Westport and the surrounding countryside.

Westport

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services *	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

* there is no "on water" full service marina.

Westport, a quiet little village with a population of about 650, is a very popular destination spot for tourists due to the number of interesting shops in the town. Whether you come by boat or by car, you will find that Westport caters to most of your needs. Situated at the head of Upper Rideau Lake, Westport has rolling farmland to the south and more rugged terrain, in the form of Foley Mountain, to the north. In addition to public docking facilities, Westport offers a full range of land-based accommodations.

There is a lot to do and see in Westport. There are many interesting shops, two local golf courses and swimming beaches. The nature enthusiast will want to visit Foley Mountain Conservation Area, which offers a great view of Westport, as well as provides for many opportunities for hiking and nature viewing. The Rideau Trail, extending from Kingston to Ottawa, runs through the Foley Mountain Conservation Area.

History of Westport

The first settlers to the Westport area arrived in the period between 1810 and 1820. The land on which Westport now sits was originally granted by the Crown to a Mr. Hunter, but he never settled in the area, and it passed through several hands before being purchased by Reuben Sherwood in 1817. Some of this land was later purchased by the Stoddard and Manhard families. The small community that was beginning to grow was known at that time as *Head of the Lake*. In 1828, Stoddard built a saw mill and in 1829 the Manhards built a saw mill and grist mill. It became known at that time as *Manhard's Mills*.

It was two local merchants, Aaron Chambers and Lewis Cameron, who in 1841, named the village *Westport*, the name reflecting its location at the west end of Upper Rideau Lake. The village of Westport was incorporated in 1904.

Westport remained a thriving commercial centre through the 19th century and into the 20th century. The building of the Rideau Canal allowed goods to be shipped north to Ottawa and south to Kingston by water. In 1882, an entrepreneur named R.G. Harvey proposed an ambitious project to build a railway from Brockville to Sault Ste. Marie. The project ran out of money after the section from Brockville to Westport had been completed in 1888. The Brockville-Westport line (B&W) moved goods, mail and people to and from the St. Lawrence and Westport. The rail line also brought tourists north to Westport, starting a now century-old tradition of Westport as a tourist destination. The last train travelled the B&W line in 1952.

Travel Guide: Westport to Newboro

Head east out of Westport along County Road 42. An interesting stop just before you get to Newboro is the Old Presbyterian Cemetery which you will find on the north side of the road, in which several of the Sappers and Miners who helped in the construction of the Rideau Canal are buried. Another stop to consider is the Newboro Lockstation which features a restored blockhouse. It is accessed by a road just on the east side of the bridge that crosses the Rideau Canal.

Newboro

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store**	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marine Services *	<input type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

* gas dock only

** limited supplies in gift store

ABOUT NEWBORO

Newboro, a small community located on County Road 42, is a popular destination spot for anglers wishing to land one of the big largemouth bass that populate Newboro Lake. It is also a popular stop for boaters since Newboro is located adjacent to the Newboro lockstation of the Rideau Canal. It's a good spot to restock supplies, do some shopping, or have a quiet lunch or dinner at one of the local restaurants or Inns.

Newboro hosts one of the four blockhouses built by Colonel John By to protect the Rideau Canal. Whether you come by boat or by car, the Lockstation is a nice place to stop, get out, and stretch your legs. Also, check out the Newboro Loon, located in "downtown" Newboro.

History of Newboro

Newboro is one of the few communities that arose as a direct result of the building of the Rideau Canal. Originally known as "The Isthmus", it marks the watershed divide between waters flowing north to Ottawa and those flowing south to Kingston. Colonel By faced a significant challenge here, he needed to blast a canal cut through hard rock, in order to join Mud Lake (now Newboro Lake) with Rideau Lake. The original plan did not call for a lock at Newboro. There were going to be two locks at Chaffey's Mills, sufficient to raise the water level to that of Rideau Lake. However, more detailed surveys of Mud Lake showed that this could not be done, the only solution was to put in a lock at The Isthmus.

The building of the canal at The Isthmus was a major battle with nature. During the original survey of the area, no borings had been done, so the hard rock underlying the area came as a surprise. The two contractors, Hartwell and Stevenson, were forced to abandon their contracts. By, in 1829, put the work directly under the command of the 7th Company of Royal Miners and Sappers. In 1830, there were 62 military personnel and 270 labourers stationed at The Isthmus. Malaria, then called "Lake Fever", attacked most of the men during the first week of August. The "sickly season" as it was known, was usually over by early September. In 1830, almost 250 of the 330 men at the site were sick with fever.

In addition to the building of the lock at The Isthmus an alteration to the original plan was the addition of a lock at the Upper Narrows in Rideau Lake. The reason for this was to raise the water by almost 5 feet in what was to become Upper Rideau Lake, in order to cut down on the amount of rock excavation needed in the canal cut between Mud (Newboro) Lake and Upper Rideau Lake.

During the construction of the canal, some 60 log buildings sprang up. Many were built to house the workers, but some were built by merchants near the bridge over the canal cut, taking advantage of the captive market. This was the start of the village of Newboro.

After the construction of the canal, the community at The Isthmus was called *New Borough* and in 1836 the post office built there shortened it to *Newboro*. It was incorporated as a village in 1876. Newboro served as a service centre for commercial boat traffic plying goods up and down the Rideau Canal. By 1850 it had a population of 300. The stone bridge abutments that boat travellers see in the canal cut were likely built in the late 1800s. One was for the B&W railway, built from Brockville to Westport, and completed in 1888. The other was for the original County Road through the area. The railway bridge was removed in 1953 after the closing of the B&W railway.

Travel Guide: Newboro to Portland

From Newboro, continue along County Road 42 to Crosby. A side trip just at Crosby is to take the Narrows Lock Road to the Narrows Lock which separates Upper Rideau Lake from Big Rideau Lake. From Crosby, turn north along County Road 15 to Portland.

Portland

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Portland is a small village located on Big Rideau Lake and adjacent to County Road 15. Portland boasts two large full service marinas and is one of the main gateways for visitors to access Big Rideau Lake. There are a variety of places to stay in the area. Boat rentals are available in town.

In addition to boating, there are many things for the landlubber to do and see in the Portland area. There are several stores in town, including antique and collectables stores. The Cataraqui all-season trail, part of the Trans-Canada Trail system passes just a bit east of town, golf courses are located nearby and cheese lovers will want to visit the Forfar cheese factory, located just a few kilometres south of town.

History of Portland

Portland is one of the early settlements along the Rideau. Although land was granted in the area of Portland in 1801, it was not until the early 1820s that a community started to grow in the location of the present day town. An 1818 map shows a trail leading to the location which is named "Old Landing." An 1828 map also shows it as "Old Landing" with more of a substantial road leading to it. Local history credits the first settler on the village site as being Ami Chipman (b.1807, son of Heman Chipman). An 1830 map shows a "small settlement" in this location. The name of the small community was changed to Portland in 1833, in honour of William Henry Cavendish Bentinck, the 3rd Duke of Portland. The name Portland comes from the Isle of Portland, which lies off shore from Weymouth in Dorset, England.

Portland remained a centre of commerce through the 1800s, serving the commercial boat traffic that plied the Rideau Canal. The business directory for 1866-67 listed coopers, hotel keepers, store keepers, blacksmiths, wagon makers, mitten makers, a watch maker, a miller, and a dentist. When commercial activity along the Rideau Canal slowed down in the early 1900s, the main activity in Portland became a service centre for local residents, including the many people starting to cottage on Big Rideau Lake. This remains Portland's raison d'être to this day.

There are several interesting buildings to see in Portland. These include the Emmanuel Anglican Church located on the height of land at the south end of town which was built in 1862. It was expanded in 1885 and in 1897 a tower with bell was added. It is now owned by the Portland on the Rideau Historical Society.

Travel Guide: Portland to Elgin

From Portland, you have a number of choices for a few looping routes in order to visit all the interesting sights. Only one is suggested here, but have a close look at the map and invent your own looping tour. Our tour will go from Portland to Elgin, to Morton, to Lyndhurst, to Delta, to Forfar, to Crosby, to Jones Falls and back to Morton. There are many roads to choose from and all make for interesting excursions.

Heading south on County Road 15, pass through Crosby and then take the first turn off to Elgin. Elgin is a good spot to restock on supplies if you're short.

Elgin

<input type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine *	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

* located in pharmacy

Elgin is situated just off County Road 15 and offers many services for both the visitor and local resident. The main street features a post office, pharmacy, video store, grocery store, bank, florist shop, electronics store, hardware store, antique store, restaurant, and more. There is a gas station with attached garage, a liquor store, furniture store, gym, laundromat and a car wash. There are four churches in town, a library, a public school and a regional high school. Although there is no doctor in town, an ambulance is stationed less than a kilometre from town. The local population is about 300 but in the summer Elgin serves as the hub for several thousand cottage residents.

There are no accommodations right in Elgin, but there are several campgrounds, cottages and Inns located nearby.

Points of interest located nearby include the Rideau Canal locks at Jones Falls, Davis and Chaffey's, all within easy driving distance. Visitors to the area will also want to check out the cheese factory at Forfar, located just a few kilometres north of Elgin. In August, be sure to pick up some delicious fresh corn from local farmers. Elgin is located in the heart of corn country. A golf course is located just a few kilometres south of town.

History of Elgin

In 1801, the land on which the village of Elgin now sits was granted to Susannah Wiltse and Rebecca Wing, daughters of United Empire Loyalists. However, it was the Halladay family, who moved into the area in 1802, and acquired the lands granted to Wiltse and Wing, that were to become the founders of Elgin. Ebenezer Halladay, who was just seven when the family moved into the area, would become the driving force behind the founding of Elgin. It was Ebenezer, who, in the 1820s, began clearing the land occupied by present-day Elgin. The building of the Rideau Canal greatly improved commerce in the area, and by the 1830s a village known as *Halladay's Corners* had built up. It was linked by road with Jones Falls. One of the most momentous events in Elgin's history was when Mormon missionaries arrived in the region in the 1830s and recruited many families. In 1834, one hundred and thirty five covered wagons left Halladay's Corners for Mormon settlements in the United States. It must have been quite a sight. For a brief time Elgin took on the Mormon name *Nauvoo*, meaning "beautiful". The present name of *Elgin* (pronounced Elg in, NOT El gin) was given to the community in 1850 in honour of James Bruce, 8th Earl of Elgin, one time Governor-General of Canada.

There are many historic buildings in Elgin. The oldest structure is the Ebenezer Halladay House, located on Kingston Street, built in 1844. A stone house, it has stucco/plaster covering the stonework (as is common with many stone houses in the region). The private residence beside the post office was formerly the Alman S. Newman Store, built in 1867. The veranda, added later, covers the original store windows.

Guthrie House, across from the Anglican Church, was originally the Henry Laishley House, built in 1886. St. Paul's Anglican Church was built in 1905. The antique store on Main Street used to be the Dargavel General Store, built in 1893. The United Church was built in 1894, replacing an earlier, structurally unsound church, built in 1857. The Halladay Cemetery, located just east of the church, predates both churches. The St. Columbanus Roman Catholic Church was built in 1898. The old brick Public School on Halladay Street was built in 1867 and served Elgin children until 1964.

Travel Guide: Elgin to Lyndhurst

Head south from Elgin along County Road 15 to Morton. Just after you cross the bridge coming into Morton, turn east onto Brier Hill Road. Follow this to the junction with County Road 33 and turn north to Lyndhurst.

Lyndhurst

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services *	<input type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station **
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

A quaint rural village, Lyndhurst is home to the oldest bridge in existence in Ontario. The village is located on the Rideau Heritage Route and is easily accessed from either County Road 15 or County Roads 33 and 42. It offers a small boat launch into Lyndhurst Creek which connects to Lower Beverley Lake. It also hosts the famous Lyndhurst Turkey Fair, held in mid-September each year. The fair features hay rides, a quilt show, silent auctions, a children's parade, antique & classic car show and much more.

History of Lyndhurst

Lyndhurst came into being with the building by Wallis Sutherland, a Vermont founder, in 1801, of Ontario's first successful iron smelter. The village that grew up around the smelter became known as Furnace Falls. The iron works consisted of both a furnace for the production of cast iron and a forge for the manufacture of wrought iron. The iron works were destroyed by fire in 1811 and attempts to revive the smelter failed, causing the population to dwindle. However the building of a grist mill in 1827 created a revival of the village. In 1851 the village was renamed Lyndhurst, after John Singleton Copley, Baron Lyndhurst.

Lyndhurst is home to the oldest stone bridge still in existence in Ontario. The stone masonry constructed three span bridge, built in 1856-57, is still in regular use today. In 1986 it was structurally re-enforced with concrete with the exterior restored to its original appearance.

Travel Guide: Lyndhurst to Delta

Head north from Lyndhurst along County Road 33 and then County Road 42 to Delta.

Delta

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank (Mon, Wed & Fri)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Delta is a quiet village situated on County Road 42. Services for the visitor include a grocery store and a gas station. The village also has a library and recreation centre. Lower Beverley Lake Township Park offers lots of room for family

camping, has cottages for rent, a beach and a boat launch ramp. Golf, sightseeing (Rideau locks, Athen's murals) and gift shopping are located within easy driving distance.

The main attraction in Delta is the Old Stone Mill, built in 1810, a designated National Historic Site of Canada. The mill is owned and operated by the non-profit Delta Mill Society. On the 200th anniversary of the mill in 2010, the mill was restored to operating condition and today you can watch grain being ground on 200 year-old milling equipment. It's well worth a visit. For more information see: www.deltamill.org

In early April, the **Delta Maple Syrup Festival** celebrates that sweet local nectar, maple syrup. At the end of July, the **Delta Fair**, one of Canada's oldest fairs (now over 170 years old), is held. Originally an agriculture fair, it has expanded to include many fun activities for the whole family. Its agricultural roots remain with events such as tractor pulls, horse shows and the ever popular cow chip bingo. In October, a **Harvest Festival** is held on the Saturday before Thanksgiving weekend with lots of local produce, crafts, and hot apple cider. In November and December there is **Celebrating the Season**, held on Saturdays, featuring thousands of lights in Lower Beverley Lake Park. The Old Stone Mill is also beautifully lit up with "candles" in every window.

History of Delta

Delta is the earliest settlements in the region, founded in 1796 by Abel Stevens, a Loyalist settler from Vermont who arrived in the area, with several settlers in 1794. Originally called Stevenstown, it went through several name changes. After the building of the Old Stone Mill in 1810, it became known as Stone Mills. Then, in about 1826, the name was changed to Beverley in honour of Sir John Beverley Robinson, a member of the Legislative Assembly. However, in 1886, when an application was made for a post office it was discovered that a Beverley already existed, and the name was changed to Delta because the shapes of Upper and Lower Beverley lakes, and the village between them all form triangles, the shape of the Greek letter Delta.

The village hosts many historic buildings, the most dominant being the Old Stone Mill National Historic Site. The mill was built in 1810 by William Jones and Ira Schofield. A grist (wheat) mill (with an attached sawmill for much of its life), it operated until 1949. In the 1960s it was taken over by a volunteer group which became The Delta Mill Society who have restored the mill to its former glory and have it open to the public during the summer season.

The village boasts many examples of beautiful 19th century architecture. St. Paul's Anglican Church was built in 1811 and is one of the oldest churches in Leeds County. There is the Walter Denaut House, built in 1849 (now the Denaut Mansion Country Inn), the Philo Hicock House, c.1845, the William Bell House, 1860, the Israel Stevens House, 1876 and many more.

Travel Guide: Delta to Seeleys Bay

Our scenic route will take us north from Delta to Philippsville along County Road 42. Continue along this road to Forfar. Stop at the cheese store and pick up some fresh curd and a pound or three of aged cheese. Then continue along County Road 42 to Crosby. At Crosby, turn south along County Road 15 and take this south to Morton. Just before you get to Morton, an interesting side trip is to the beautiful locks at Jones Falls. It makes a nice picnic spot. Returning to County Road 15 from Jones Falls, take County Road 15 south to Seeleys Bay.

Seeleys Bay

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marine Services *	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input type="checkbox"/> Gas Station **
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

* marinas located nearby

** located 2 km north on Hwy. 15

Seeleys Bay is the first full service community north of Kingston, at the southern end of the Rideau Corridor. Located just off County Road 15, it sits on a bay a few hundred metres off the main navigation channel of the Rideau Canal. The visitor will find lots of accommodation choices within a few kilometres of Seeleys Bay.

Seeleys Bay offers docking, a boat launch ramp and a paddling dock and launch. Power is available at the docks and several marinas are located nearby. There is a community park with playground and picnic tables.

History of Seeleys Bay

The flooding of Cranberry Marsh during the building of the Rideau Canal formed the geographic bay which was to become "Seeleys Bay". The dam and locks at Upper Brewers, completed in 1832, and the control dam at Morton raised the water level, flooding the marsh, changing it into today's Cranberry Lake.

The lot on which Seeleys Bay sits was originally granted to Matilda Read. In 1825, her son, John Seeley, acquired the lot. However it was his father, Justus Seeley, with his second wife Anne and their youngest children who moved onto the land that would become the village of Seeleys Bay. After Justus died in 1830, Anne remained on the land.

The site became a landing for steamboats plying the Rideau Canal, and Anne and her children ran a store to serve visitors. In 1841, the community that was growing in area became known as Seely's Bay (sic). By the 1850s, Seely's Bay was a regular stop for stagecoaches heading south to Kingston and north to Perth. It was also known at that time as Coleman's Corners, after the first postmaster of Seely's Bay, William Coleman. In 1950 the spelling was changed to "Seeleys Bay".

Travel Guide: Seeleys Bay to Kingston

From Seeleys Bay, follow County Road 15 south. An interesting stop along the way is the Kingston Mills lockstation, which features a blockhouse, a visitors centre and a lovely set of locks. Continuing along County Road 15, you will pass by the entrance to historic Fort Henry just before the bridge that will take you into the downtown core of Kingston.

Kingston - The Limestone City

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Docking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grocery Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marine Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquor Store	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas Station
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank Machine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laundromat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor/Clinic

Kingston is located at the meeting point of Lake Ontario, the 1000 Islands of the St. Lawrence River, and the Rideau Canal, so it makes a natural jumping off place for regional exploration. Kingston is easily road accessible with six exits off Highway 401, as well as by County Road 2 via the 1000 Islands Parkway, County Road 15 from Ottawa, and the Loyalist Parkway (County Road 33). The Ivy Lea Bridge spans the 1000 Islands to U.S. Interstate 81 just 30 minutes east of Kingston. For the boater, Kingston has topnotch docking facilities such as Portsmouth Olympic Harbour and Confederation Basin Marina.

Kingston is known as the "Limestone City" because of the beautiful buildings constructed of local limestone that lie within the city. Kingston is known for its warm hospitality and in summer it bustles with many open air cafés. There is always something to do and see in Kingston.

History of Kingston

The city can trace its origins back to 1673, when Louis de Buade, Count Frontenac, built Fort Frontenac at the mouth of the Cataraqui River. The fort was strategically located at the convergence of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. Count Frontenac also noted the quality of the harbour at the mouth of the Cataraqui. In 1758 the British captured the Fort from the French and tore it down. In 1783, after the peace treaty between the U.S. and Britain was signed, a new British military base was established here and a community grew up around it. Originally known as Cataraqui, the name was later changed to Kingston. By the early 1800s, a shipyard had started up on Point Frederick.

After the war of 1812, many proposals were put forward for additional fortifications including plans for extensive fortifications on Point Henry. In the end, Fort Henry was constructed between 1832 and 1836 and several Martello towers were built. At Kingston Mills, the southernmost lockstation on the Rideau Canal, a blockhouse was constructed for the defence of this critical lockstation, in 1832. In 2007, the Kingston Fortifications (Fort Henry, Fort Frederick, Cathcart

Tower, Shoal Tower, and Murney Tower) were included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site designation for the Rideau Canal.

When the Province of Canada, the union of Upper and Lower Canada, came into being on February 10, 1841, Kingston was named as the capital. This was short-lived since no one, other than the residents of Kingston, were very happy with this decision, and in 1844 the capital was moved to Montreal.

The name for Kingston of “Limestone City” was coined because of the many beautiful stone building in the downtown core. This came about partly due to a disastrous fire in 1840 that burned down much of the downtown. In 1847 an act was passed to prevent wooden buildings from being erected in the thickly built parts of town.

Kingston is also known as the “City of Institutions”, both famous and infamous. On the famous side is Queen’s University, which got its start in Kingston in 1842 and now boasts one of the loveliest campuses in Canada with many beautiful limestone buildings. Also on the famous side is the Royal Military College (RMC) which started in 1876 as the training centre for Canada’s military officers. On the infamous side are Kingston’s several penitentiaries. The first, Kingston Penitentiary, was built in 1835 as a provincial penitentiary where prisoners from all over Upper Canada were incarcerated. Another infamous institution is the Kingston Asylum, the former Rockwood Estate acquired in 1856 for use as a provincial asylum to house the criminally insane. It gradually evolved over time into the Kingston Psychiatric Hospital.

Through the mid-1800 to the mid-1900s Kingston did not see the same growth as other major Canadian cities. The opening of the St. Lawrence to navigation and the advent of the railroad allowed goods to quickly travel between Canada’s two main centres of commerce, Montreal and Toronto. Kingston today is a vibrant city, it’s economy based on several light industrial businesses and its many government/educational institutions.

Marinas & Wharves

Listed geographically, south (Kingston) to north (Ottawa)
See www.rideau-info.com for links to websites for these marinas

Name	Location	Fuel	Transient Dockage	Pump Out	Ramp	Phone
Confederation Basin Marina	Kingston	No	Yes	No	Yes	613-542-2134
Portsmouth Olympic Harbour	Kingston	G & D	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-544-9842
Kingston Marina	Kingston	G & D	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-549-7747
Collins Bay Marina	Kingston	G & D	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-389-4455
Melody Lodge and Marina	Cranberry Lake	G & D	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-387-3497
Rideau Breeze Marina	Seeleys Bay	G	Yes	No	No	613-387-3100
Seeleys Bay Public Dock	Seeleys Bay	No	Yes	No	Yes	613-929-2461
Sunny Acres Resort & Marina	Seeleys Bay	G	Yes	No	Yes	613-387-3379
Hotel Kenney	Jones Falls	No	Yes	No	No	613-359-5500
Sand Lake Marine	Sand Lake	G	No	No	Yes	613-359-5612
The Opinicon Resort	Chaffeys Lock	G	Yes	No	Yes	613-359-5233
Brown's Marina	Chaffeys Lock	G	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-359-5466
Franklin's Roadside Marina	Chaffeys Lock	G	Yes	No	Yes	613-359-5457
Indian Lake Marina	Indian Lake	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-777-8546
Newboro Public Wharf	Newboro	No	Yes	No	No	
Stirling Lodge	Newboro	G	No	No	No	613-272-2435
The Cove Country Inn	Westport	No	Yes	No	Yes	613-273-3636
Westport Harbour	Westport	No	Yes	No	Yes	613-273-2931
Bayview Yacht Harbour	Portland	G	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-272-2787
Len's Cove Marina	Portland	G & D	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-272-2581
Portland Public Docks	Portland	No	Yes	No	Yes	
Rideau Ferry Marine	Rideau Ferry	No	No	No	Yes	613-267-3512
Rideau Ferry Harbour	Rideau Ferry	G	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-264-2628
Rideau Ferry Public Wharf	Rideau Ferry	No	Yes	No	No	
Last Duel Park	Perth	No	Yes	No	Yes	613-267-3311
Perth Public Wharf	Perth	No	Yes	No	No	
Peter Ayling Boatyard	Merrickville	G & D	Yes	Yes	No	613-269-4969
Ludlow's Boatworks	Becketts Landing	No	Yes	No	Yes	613-258-4270
Pirate Cove Marina	Kemptville	G & D	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-258-2325

Name	Location	Fuel	Transient Dockage	Pump Out	Ramp	Phone
Kars Public Wharf	Kars	No	Yes	No	Yes	
Long Island Marina.	Kars	G & D	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-489-2747
Hurst Marina	Manotick	G & D	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-692-1234
Kelly's Landing	Manotick	G	No	No	No	613-692-1243
Manotick Marina Inc.	Manotick	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-692-4083
Manotick Public Wharf	Manotick	No	Yes	No	No	
Dows Lake Pavilion	Ottawa	G & D	Yes	Yes	Yes	613-232-1001
Rockcliffe Boathouse Marine	Ottawa	G	Yes	Yes	No	613-744-5253

Boat Launches on the Rideau Canal

(listed in geographic order, south to north)

The exact locations of launch ramps and marinas are shown on the appropriate navigation charts

Name	Location	Description
Rideau Acres Campground	10 km north of Kingston on Cunningham Road. 2 km north of Hwy 401. On Colonel By Lake	Good launch, steel grating over gravel. Accommodates boats up to 25 feet. Dock, parking and picnic tables available. Launch fee.
Bill Hughes' Ramp	13 km north of Kingston on Hughes Road. 5 km north of Hwy. 401. Follow pavement to gravel, past farm to the ramp (about 4 km). On River Styx.	Gravel ramp. Accommodates fishing boats up to about 18 feet. No dock. Parking and camping available. Launch fee.
Dog Lake, Gilmour Point	33 km north of Kingston on Hwy 15 - then about 18 km west of Hwy 15 on Burnt Hills Rd. to Battersea. About 1 km east on Wellington Road to ramp. On Dog Lake	Steel grate on gravel. Dock. Parking available (no overnight parking). Accommodates boats up to 20 ft. Launch fee: free
Melody Lodge and Marina	33 km north of Kingston on Hwy 15 - then 10 km west of Hwy 15 on Burnt Hills Rd., past Carrying Place to marina. On Cranberry Lake	Paved ramp. Fairly steep. Dock. Parking. Picnic area. Accommodates boats up to 26 ft. Launch fee.
Henry Knapps Campground	33 km north of Kingston on Hwy 15 - then 2 km west of Hwy 15 on Burnt Hills Rd., past Brass Point Bridge to campground. On Cranberry Lake	Gravel ramp with paved approach. Dock. Accommodates boats up to 24 ft. Parking available (fee). Launch fee.
Seeleys Bay	34 km north of Kingston on Hwy 15. Take Main St off Hwy 15 (west) then left onto Bay St. If coming south, turn west onto Mill Street to where it meets Bay St. On Cranberry Lake	Good paved launch with docks and ample parking. Supplies and amenities in village. Accommodates boats up to 28 ft. No Launch fee.
Shangri La	44 km north of Kingston, 3 km west on Jones Falls Road. On Whitefish Lake	Gravel launch. Dock. Parking (fee). Fuel, ice & phones. Accommodates boats up to 36 ft. Launch fee .
Sand Lake Marine	44 km north of Kingston, 5 km west on Jones Falls Road, turn right (north) onto Sand Lake Road. Next left is Glover Road, about 1 km to left at Hugh's Road, then 1 km to Marina. On Sand Lake.	Gravel launch. Dock. Parking, ice, fuel, repairs. Accommodates boats up to 26 ft. Launch fee
Sand Lake Road	44 km north of Kingston, 5 km west on Jones Falls Road, turn right (north) onto Sand Lake Road. Next left is Glover Road. Continue to end. On Sand Lake.	Small paved to gravel launch. Dock. Limited parking. Accommodates boats up to 20 ft. No launch fee.
Battams Road	52 km north of Kingston, on Hwy 15 to Elgin. Turn left (west) onto Davis Lock Road for 1 km, then left on Bush Road for 0.5 km, the right onto Battams Rd. Continue to end of road (2 km). On Sand Lake.	Small gravel ramp. No dock. Limited parking. Accommodates boats up to 20 ft. No launch fee
Franklin's Marina	Chaffey's Lock Road - 8 km west of Hwy 15. On Opinicon Lake.	Good ramp. Parking for car and trailer (fee). Accommodates boats up to 30 ft. Launch fee.

Name	Location	Description
Opinicon Hotel	Chaffeys Lock Road - 9 km west of Hwy 15. On Opinicon Lake.	Paved ramp up to water then gravel & sand. Accommodates boats up to 24 ft. Free for hotel guests. Fee for non hotel guests.
Iron Bridge Lane	Chaffeys Lock Road - 8.5 km west of Hwy 15. Turn right just after Brown's Marina. On Indian Lake.	Paved ramp. Limited roadside parking (or see owner of Simmons' Lodge for parking). Accommodates boats up to 25 ft. No launch fee: free (donation box available for donations).
Indian Lake Marina	Marina Road - 7 km west of Hwy 15 on Chaffeys Lock Road, turn right on Marina Road and go 1 km to Indian Lake Marina. On Indian Lake.	Paved Ramp. Dock. Parking available. Accommodates boats up to 35 ft. Launch fee
Newboro	59 km north of Kingston on Hwy 15. Turn left (west) at Crosby onto Hwy 42 and go 5.5 km to Newboro. Turn left onto Lock Road to village maintained launch ramp and parking lot. On Newboro Lake.	Paved Ramp. Parking (fee). Accommodates boats up to 35 ft. No launch fee.
Forresters Landing Drive	10 km west of Hwy 15 on Cty Rd. 42, just before Westport. On Upper Rideau Lake.	Gravel ramp and dock maintained by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority. Roadway parking. Accommodates boats up to 25 ft. No launch fee
Westport ("The Cove Boat Launch")	15 km west of Hwy 15 on Cty. Rd 42. At bottom end of Bedford Street (turn right onto Rideau Street, continue around to Main Street, then right at The Cove Restaurant on Bedford Street. On Upper Rideau Lake.	Paved ramp and sheltered dock. Limited roadside parking. Accommodates boats up to 28 ft. No launch fee
Crosby/Big Rideau Lake Road	Off Hwy 15, on Cty. Rd. 42, take 1st right onto Narrows Lock Road, 3 km to McCann Rd. Continue 2.5 km to Big Rideau Lake Road, turn left (west) and drive 1.5 km to ramp. On Big Rideau Lake (Hudson Bay).	Steel grated launch ramp. Dock. Limited roadside parking. Accommodates boats 20 ft & up. No launch fee
Portland	On Hwy 15, 66 km north of Kingston. Turn left onto Colborne Street, the left (west) on St. Mary's to ramp. On Big Rideau Lake.	Paved approach ramp, steel grate over gravel. Parking on street. Full services in village. Also pay ramps at Lens Cove Marina or Bayview Yacht Harbour Marina. Accommodates boats up to 30 ft. No launch fee
Portland	On Hwy 15, 1.5 km north of Portland. On Big Rideau Lake.	Gravel ramp. No dock. Good parking, toilet, picnic tables, lookout area. Accommodates boats up to 18 ft. No launch fee.
Murphys Point Provincial Park	Off Hwy 15, on Cty. Rd. 42, take 1st right onto Narrows Lock Road. Follow road about 12 km, across Narrows Lock to County Rd. 21, into Murphys Point Provincial Park. On Big Rideau Lake.	Gravel ramp. Dock. Good parking, toilet, picnic tables. Day use fee (includes parking)

Name	Location	Description
Rideau Ferry Yacht Club CA	17 km N of Portland, 83 km N of Kingston, 11 km S of Smiths Falls. Turn left (north) at Lombardy onto Rideau Ferry Road and continue 6 km to village. Turn right onto Yacht Club Road and go 1 km to Rideau Ferry Yacht Club Conservation Area. On Lower Rideau Lake.	Paved ramp. Parking. Toilets. Picnic Tables. Accommodates boats up to 18 ft. Launch fee: day use fee.
Rideau Ferry Harbour (marina)	1 km north of Rideau Ferry, turn left (west) onto Coutts Bay Road, 2 km to Rideau Ferry Harbour. On Big Rideau Lake.	Wide dirt launch, dock and lift for larger boats. Parking (fee). Accommodates boats up to 40 ft. Launch fee.
Port Elmsley Road (Lower Beveridges Lockstation)	1 km north of Rideau Ferry, turn right (east) onto Port Elmsley Road (County 18), and go 3 km and turn right, just past bridge to Beveridges Lock station. On Lower Rideau Lake.	Paved ramp. Cement dock. Parking, toilet, picnic tables. Accommodates boats up to 30 ft. Launch fee.
Last Duel Park, Perth	Located just off Craig St (Cty Rd. 43) in Perth. On Tay Canal.	Paved ramp. Launch fee (free for canoes & kayaks)
Poonamalie Road (Poonamalie Lock)	91 km north of Kingston, 7.5 km north of Lombardy, turn left (north) onto Poonamalie Road, continue 2 km on dirt road. On Lower Rideau Lake/Rideau River.	Gravel ramp. No dock. Parking. Accommodates boats up to 24 ft. during low water season (mid to late summer) & 40 ft. during high water season (spring). Launch fee.
Smiths Falls (Detached Lock)	94 km north of Kingston. Turn left onto Abbott St., cross bridge, then turn left at the Parks Canada Detached Lock. On Lower Rideau Lake/Rideau River.	Paved ramp. Cement dock. Picnic tables. Parking (\$3 day fee). Accommodates boats up to 20ft. Launch fee:
Edmunds Lock Lane (Edmunds Lock)	Take County Rd 17 (Jasper Road) from Smiths Falls to Edmunds Lock. On Rideau River.	Paved ramp. No dock. Parking (fee - use upper parking lot). Accommodates boats up to 30 ft. Launch fee.
Riverside Camp	10 km east of Smiths Falls on Hwy.43 to 1st entrance to River Road, continue another 5 km to 2nd entrance. Then from 2nd entrance, travel 3 km to Riverside Camp (between Kilmarnock Lock and upper Merrickville Lock.) On Rideau River.	Gravel/Dirt ramp. Parking. Toilets. Accommodates boats up to 16 ft. Launch fee (free if staying at park).
Montague Township	From Riverside Camp, continue past to Boat Launch Road. On Rideau River.	Gravel ramp. Narrow dock. Limited parking. Accommodates boats up to 16 ft. No Launch fee
Lions Campground, Merrickville	Turn south at flashing light in Merrickville onto Main Street. Go past Blockhouse parking then turn right at Lions Campground. On Rideau River (upstream of Merrickville locks).	Good paved ramp. No dock at ramp. Parking. Accommodates boats up to 26 ft. Launch fee.
Rideau River Provincial Park	19 km north of Merrickville, turn left (west) onto County Rd 44, 5.5 km to Rideau River Provincial Park. On Rideau River.	Paved ramp to shallow gravel. Cement pier, parking, toilets. Accommodates boats up to 23 ft. Launch fee.
Muldoon Road	On south side of Rideau River at foot of Muldoon Road (about 2.5 km from The Catchall. On Rideau River.	Gravel ramp. No dock. Some parking. Accommodates small boats. No launch fee.
Becketts Landing	On north side of Rideau River at foot of Malakoff Road. On Rideau River.	Gravel ramp. No dock. Some parking. Accommodates small boats. No launch fee.

Name	Location	Description
Curry Park	In Kemptville, at foot of Parliament Street (just east of Curry St.) On Kemptville Creek.	Gravel ramp. Good dock. Parking. Accommodates boats up to about 20 ft. No launch fee.
Pirates Cove Marina	From Kemptville, head east on Hwy 43 then turn north on County Road 19 (River Road) for 5 km. Turn left (west) opposite Flynn Rod into Pirates Cove Marina. On Rideau River.	Paved ramp. Good dock. Washrooms. Full marina facilities. Parking. Accommodates boats up to 50 ft. Launch fee .
Reeve Craig Launch	On north side of Rideau River at foot of Greenline Road. On Rideau River.	Gravel ramp. No dock. Parking. Accommodates boats up to about 18 ft. No launch fee.
W.A. Taylor Conservation Area	On River Road (Cty Rd. 19), about 23 km south of Ottawa. Turn left (west) opposite junction of Road 114 to Osgoode, and go into W.A. Taylor Conservation Area. On Rideau River.	Paved ramp. Good dock. Toilets. Picnic tables. Parking. Accommodates boats up to 20 ft. Launch fee.
Kars – Rideau River	21 km south of Ottawa on Carleton Road #6 (aka Roger Stevens). Take Rideau Valley Drive to Kars. Turn left at Wellington Street to small craft ramp. On Rideau River.	Good cement ramp. Pier. Walk 0.5 km to Kars recreation area for parking. Accommodates boats up to ?. No launch fee.
Kars – Stevens Creek	In recreation area (west on Wellington Street). Lots of parking.	Good gravel ramp. Boats up to about 18' (main limiting factor is getting under bridge to get to Rideau River). No launch fee.
Long Island Marina	2 km north on Commodore Lane in Kars. On Rideau River.	Gravel ramp. Dock. Accommodates boats up to 35 ft. Launch fee (includes parking)
Hurst Marina	On Rideau River Road (County 19), just past intersection with Roger Stevens Rd. On Rideau River.	Not open for public use
Manotick Boat Launch	Off Bridge Street, on southwest side of bridge over Rideau River. On Rideau River.	Wide gravel ramp. Dock. Launch Fee
Gloucester Eccolands Park	11 km north of Manotick, turn left opposite Environmental Technology Centre. On Rideau River	Wide paved ramp. Floating docks. Toilet. Kids playground. Parking. Accommodates boats up to ?? (prob. at least 30 ft.) No launch fee.
Hogs Back	off of Hogs Back Road. On Rideau River	Concrete ramp. Accommodates boats up to 26 feet. Launch fee.
Dow's Lake at the Pavilion	off Prince of Wales Drive, turn right at Preston. On Dows Lake.	Wide corrugated cement ramp. Parking fee. Accommodates boats up to 65 ft. Launch Fee.

A Short History of the Rideau Canal

The Rideau Canal, which first opened for navigation in 1832, is the oldest continuously operated canal system in North America. The word rideau is French for curtain, the appearance of the falls of the Rideau River as it plunges into the Ottawa River, to Samuel de Champlain who travelled up the Ottawa River in 1613. The name Rivière du Rideau first appeared on maps in about 1700.

The plan to construct a navigable waterway between Lake Ontario and the Ottawa River was conceived after the War of 1812 (you remember; the war where Canada beat back the invading Americans). The war made it evident how vulnerable the naval base at Kingston was and the ability to safely supply the base. The Ottawa – Rideau route was developed to provide a secure supply route from Montréal to Kingston, avoiding the vulnerable St. Lawrence River route. Today we welcome the invading Americans to journey its scenic route. As you travel along the Rideau Canal you will see most of the stonework and many of the buildings as they were in the 19th century.

In 1826, Lieutenant Colonel John By of the Royal Engineers was assigned to design the canal and supervise its construction. Colonel By faced a stiff challenge, to create a navigable waterway between the Ottawa River and Kingston, through what was at the time a wilderness of rough bush, swamps and rocky terrain, funded by an awkward system of British parliamentary grants.

Initial construction of the Rideau Canal started with preparing the area for the Ottawa locks in the fall of 1826. Construction on the rest of the route started in 1827. By November 1831 construction of the northern half of the canal been completed with only finishing touches required on several of the southern locks. This was done in the spring of 1832. In the end, 47 masonry locks and 52 dams created a 202 km (125 mile) waterway, one of the greatest engineering feats of the 19th century. Although chastised by the government for cost overruns, Colonel By had created one of North America's best navigable waterways. The exquisite stonemasonry of the control dams and locks are admired by waterway travelers to this day.

The Beginning

The history of much of early Canada starts with water. Many communities were formed at the foot of rapids, a natural spot for river travelers to stop. Montréal for instance, one of the great cities of Canada, was founded at the foot of the Lachine Rapids. In the same way, Hull was founded by Philemon Wright in 1800 at the foot of the Chaudière Falls, on the north side of the Ottawa River. Across from Hull, on the south side of the Ottawa, the Rideau River cascaded, in a beautiful set of twin falls, into the Ottawa River.

The Rideau route was only known to indigenous peoples who used it to travel from the St. Lawrence River/Lake Ontario to the Ottawa River (see Human History on www.rideau-info.com for more information). The earliest written report is a survey expedition initiated by the British government in 1783 when Lieutenant Gershom French traveled from Montréal, up the Ottawa River to the Rideau Falls, up the Rideau River to its source in the Rideau Lakes, down through the lower Rideau lakes, then into the Gananoque River system and to the St. Lawrence River at Gananoque. The route to Kingston as we know it today was non-navigable (there was no direct connection between the southern Rideau lakes and the Cataraqui River due to the elevated Cataraqui Flood Plain), Lt. French ended up on the St. Lawrence River at Gananoque and had to get to Kingston by paddling up the St. Lawrence River.

During the war of 1812, naval strength was a major issue. The naval shipyards at Kingston were critical to Canada's defence, and a secure supply route from Montréal to Kingston was crucial to any war effort. After the war ended, it was revealed that the Americans had been hatching a plan to cut off access to the St. Lawrence. So it was that in 1816, Lieutenant Joshua Jebb of the Royal Engineers was given the duty of surveying a route for a navigable waterway which in part was *"to follow up the course of the Cataroque [sic] from Kingston Mills, and, keeping a northerly direction, to penetrate into Rideau Lake, and descend the river which flows from it to its confluence with the Ottawa."* Jebb also surveyed a secondary route via Irish Creek and in his final report he recommended the Irish Creek route over a route going through the Rideau lakes. At that time a paddling route from the Rideau lakes to Kingston was possible since mill dams built in the early 1800s had flooded the area (Cranberry Flood Plain) that was previously non-navigable.

It was four years after Lt. Jebb's survey that a prominent figure, Charles Lennox, the Fourth Duke of Richmond, and the Governor-in-Chief of British North America, decided to make a tour of the Canadas (Upper & Lower). This included an inspection of the planned route of the Rideau Canal. In 1819, he started his tour, leaving Québec City, travelling to

Montréal, and on to Kingston. From Kingston he headed overland, along rough roads, until he eventually reached the new community of Perth, on August 21.

Unfortunately, the Duke had been bitten by a soldier's pet fox in Sorel (near Montréal) two months previously, and it was in Perth that the symptoms of rabies first appeared. He was able to continue on to the new settlement of Richmond, but a day later, in a settler's cabin near Richmond, he died. Prior to his death, he had managed to get an important British figure, the Duke of Wellington, who at the time was the Master-General of the Ordnance (the branch of the government in charge of fortifications and canals) interested in the Rideau Canal project. Wellington wrote a memorandum on March 1, 1819 which, in part, advocated that the Rideau Canal should be built as part of the defence system for Canada.

No action was taken on the Duke of Wellington's recommendations to proceed with the building of the Rideau Canal. The next activity was in 1821 when the legislature in York appointed a commission to look into improving the internal navigation of the province. The investigation of the Rideau route was part of this commission, which made its report in 1824. The commission hired Samuel Clowes, a civil engineer, to make a detailed survey and cost analysis. The results ranged from a ludicrously low estimate of £ 62,258 (about 50 million dollars today) for small 4 foot deep locks, to an equally unrealistically low £ 230,785 (about 200 million dollars today) for a system with locks 100 feet long by 22 feet wide and a navigation depth of 7 feet. These original low estimates would come to haunt Colonel By when he was faced with the task of actually building the canal.

The Start

In 1826, Lieutenant Colonel John By of the Royal Engineers was handed the task of creating a navigable waterway, with a minimum depth of 5 feet, from the Ottawa River to Kingston, using the route recommended by surveyor Samuel Clowes. It was a daunting task. The land through which Colonel By was to construct the waterway was a sparsely populated frontier. The only significant communities in the area outside of Kingston and Wright's Town (Hull) were the recently formed settlements of Perth and Richmond. Other than that, there were a few tiny communities such as Burritts Rapids, and a few small settlements based around mills (i.e. Merrickville, Chaffeys Rapids). The rest of the region was sparsely populated by settlers operating small farms.

Colonel By landed in Québec City in May, 1826. He then moved and set up an office in Montréal to make preparations and in September, accompanied by the Governor-in-Chief of British North America, the Earl of Dalhousie, traveled to Wright's Town (Hull), which at the time was a very comfortable settlement. On September 28, 1826, the two men stood on the north shore of the Ottawa River and selected the entrance for the Rideau Canal. In doing so, they founded what was to become Canada's national capital, Ottawa.

Colonel By had already decided to create navigation by flooding, a method known as the slackwater system (making moving water into still, "slack" water). The small rivers along the route (Rideau, White Fish and Cataraqui) were small enough to be dammed by the dam building technology of the day. A disadvantage of the slackwater system is that it is more difficult to build tow paths. These were typical of canals of the era, a path along the canal so that draft animals could tow barges. But Colonel By was designing a canal for steamboat navigation, he didn't need tow paths. A huge advantage of the slackwater system is that it would allow most of the locks to be built "in the dry" – above the existing water level. The water would be raised to navigation depth after the locks had been built with the completion of the dams.

The first order of business was to survey the initial portion of the route (Entrance Bay to the Rideau River) and make specific decisions regarding what was needed for the construction. The bush and swamps in the Ottawa area (Dow's Great Swamp) proved so tough, that this job had to be done in winter, when the frozen ground could be more easily traversed. In addition, a bridge was built linking Hull to the south shore of the Ottawa. This was the first bridge to link Upper and Lower Canada. The last but most important order of business was to arrange the contracts for the actual construction of the canal. This was done in Montréal, with all contracts being administered by the Commissary General (an arrangement that was to cause many problems for Colonel By).

The "Clerk of the Works" assigned to Col. By was John MacTaggart who did much of the early groundwork for the canal planning. MacTaggart came up with a couple of off the wall ideas, including building a wooden aqueduct to cross Dows Great Swamp. This aqueduct was to be supported by cutting off the tops of the many cedar trees in the swamp. MacTaggart was dismissed in 1828 and he returned to England where he wrote a book about his adventures called "Three Years In Canada".

In 1827, some of the Royal Engineers along with John MacTaggart and surveyor John Burrows did survey trips along the Rideau route, looking at each spot where there was a navigation impediment (rapids) and working out ideas for the

placement of locks and dams. Although they had a general idea from pre-canal surveys of what was needed, those initial surveys didn't provide enough detail for any exact designs of dams and locks at those sites. These surveys and other work was part of the adaptive engineering that was to characterise the building of the Rideau Canal, adapting to the conditions they found at each site, coming up with new engineering solutions.

The Construction

The Canal was constructed by thousands of labourers and tradesmen, hired by independent contractors who were under the supervision of the Royal Engineers. Although the actual construction was done for the most part by these independent contractors, all the engineering design work was done by the Royal Engineers, much of this by Colonel By himself. Colonel By divided the Rideau into 23 work sections with the intent that a contractor should be able to complete the work requirement for a single section within a 2 year time span. Work initially started with the clearing of Entrance Valley (Ottawa Locks) in the fall of 1826. Most of the major contracts were awarded in 1827 with work starting at the various worksites in the summer and fall of that year.

The work force was varied. Tradesmen, such as masons, carpenters and blacksmiths were multi-ethnic, many recently emigrated from the British Isles but also French-Canadian and local tradesmen. The labourers, axe-men and pick & shovel men, were primarily French-Canadian and recently immigrated Irish. This depended on the contractor, some such as John Redpath and Philemon Wright had available French-Canada workers that they brought to their Rideau construction sites. Others had to hire whoever was locally available, a large component of which were recently immigrated, primarily Protestant, Irish. Colonel By also had two companies of Royal Sappers and Miners (7th & 15th) comprising 167 men skilled in various trades such including black powder blasting. There were also many women and children on the worksites, families of the men. Local settlers were also involved with supplying food and assisting with jobs such as hauling stones from the quarries to the worksites. The overall workforce was in the order of 2000 to 3000 men per year (varied with the time of year).

While the contractors were paid by cheque, the Commissariat had a rule that the men the contractors hired were to be paid cash and that the contractors wouldn't be paid unless the men had been paid. Since cash in the form of coins was in short supply in Canada at that time, the Commissariat brought in U.S. half-dollar silver coins for the contractors to use to pay their men. Colonel By's Clerk of the Works, John Mactaggart, noted: *"All the labourers on the Canal were paid in Yankee half-dollars ; the commissariat furnished these to the contractors, brought up in boxes from Montreal.* He also noted the irony of paying the men building a canal for the defence of Canada from the U.S. in coins that bore U.S. symbols, an eagle on one side and Lady Liberty on the other side.

Work camps were modelled on the timber camps of the day, mostly log buildings including cookhouses, bunkhouses and offices. In areas with existing sawmills, frame buildings were also constructed. Workers with families often built cabins, some of the worksites growing into small communities. For instance, a census done in November 1830 at Kingston Mills shows 101 buildings located on the site, including three licensed public houses (O'Reilly's, Franklin's and Mahoney's), a Catholic chapel, a store, and a schoolhouse. Draft animals such as oxen and horses were present on many sites.

The dams and locks were built with local materials; the stones of the locks and dams reflect the local geology; limestone in the south, sandstone in the central area, and a mix of dolomite and limestone in the north. The stones were lifted into place using block and tackle hanging from tripods with the stones held using large iron tongs (you can see the dimples for the tongs on the original stones of the locks). A lime kiln was built at each site to create lime for mortar. Lock gates were built by hand from local white oak. Iron was brought in from various sources and the smaller ironwork was hand forged on site. Most of the larger cast iron pieces came from Les Forges Saint-Maurice (owned at the time by Mathew Bell) near Trois-Riviere in Lower Canada (Québec).

During the winter of 1826, several small contracts were given for forest clearing, excavation, and stonemasonry. Colonel By didn't agree with the original concept for locks being 100 feet long by 22 feet wide. He argued that the locks should be able to handle the new naval steamboats, and wanted locks that were 150 feet long, 50 feet in width, with a navigation depth of 10 feet (he later revised to latter down to 5 feet). A commission was set up to study the issue and in June 1828 a compromise size for the locks of 134 feet long by 33 feet wide, with a minimum 5 foot deep navigation channel, was finally agreed upon.

Adaptive Engineering

Today a construction project is put together, with details figured out to the millimetre, before the first shovel hits the ground. Colonel By didn't have the information to be able to do that. He had two rough surveys, the one done by Lt. Joshua Jebb in 1816 and the slightly more detailed survey, one that included levels, done by Samuel Clowes in 1823 & 1824. By planned a slackwater canal from the beginning, but the details of how to achieve navigation at each of the navigation impediments (falls/rapids) was still being worked out in 1827.

These weren't cookie cutter solutions, we see that different engineering designs were being tried out at different lockstations. An example of this is the tunnel sluices, tunnels in the upper foundations (breastworks) that allow water into the locks. At most lockstations a control valve was put into the middle of the tunnel sluice, but at Kingston Mills and Jones Falls, a different design, a face valve at the entrance to each tunnel sluice was done. Later it was determined that the face valves worked much better than in-tunnel valves (much less maintenance) and, in 1839, all the locks were converted to using face valves.

After the Hogs Back Dam, which was being built as a stone arch dam, had fallen down three times, an engineering re-think was done and a new design, that of a rock filled timber crib dam, was built. The problem Colonel By saw at Hogs Back and other lockstations such as Black Rapids, was the amount of water coming through during spring flood and this sparked another design change. Colonel By had originally (1826) planned all of his dams to be overflow dams, but in 1827 he found it "indispensable necessary" to add weirs (water control dams using stop-logs) at every lockstation that had a dam.

The Royal Engineers did all the design work, but it was up to the contractors to execute those designs. In some areas he had the contractors tear down initial dam and lock works because they were being done in an "inferior manner". Some of his contractors, in particular John Redpath and Thomas MacKay did have previous lock construction experience (Lachine Canal) and By would sometimes consult with them to solve engineering problems such as when the sills of the Ottawa locks moved due to hydraulic pressure when they were first tested.

The move to the larger lock size also required an engineering re-think. For instance, at Ottawa, it was originally planned to have two flights of four locks with a turning basin in the middle. But when the new larger lock size was approved in June 1828 there was no room for a basin and a single flight of eight locks had to be designed. In other areas, By and his other Royal Engineers changed the designs to adapt to local conditions. Three lift locks were originally planned for Hogs Back, but he found that he could save a large amount of excavation by moving two of those to Hartwells. At Merrickville, a flight of three locks was originally planned in an old flood channel. But that channel was being used by the local miller as his bywash and so, to avoid disruption to the mills, By moved the locks to the east of that area, spacing them out to take advantage of topography.

The Newboro area shows some of the greatest changes. It was originally proposed to simply cut a channel through the Isthmus (the height of land separating Rideau Lake from Newboro Lake) but the level survey was in error and there was too great a difference in water level to overcome (originally with the idea of raising the dam height at Chaffey's). So Colonel By decided that a lock was now needed at Newboro to overcome the difference in water elevation. But that brought up another problem, as they dug down they hit unexpected hard and fractured (leaky) bedrock and excavation slowed to a crawl. Raising the water of Rideau Lake would save excavation of the cut at Newboro and a survey showed that the water could be raised by almost 5 feet. So By added another lock at a narrow constriction in the lake, today's Narrows Lock, to solve his excavation problem at Newboro. A relic of By's original idea of channel with no locks at Newboro is the fact that the locks at both Newboro and Narrows were built with no upper foundation (no breastworks) – Colonel By never intended those locks to be permanent. He knew that technology would come along some day that would allow a deeper excavation of the cut and if that was done, the locks at Newboro and Narrows could be removed, and his original plan restored.

Death & Burial

Today we have a skewed view of the building of the Rideau Canal. Many people still think that the malaria that affected the workers was brought to this area by British soldiers and that it was unique to the Rideau – that's incorrect on both counts. Many people think that workers who died were buried without funerals in unmarked graves – they weren't. Many people think that the Rideau construction camps were like a gulag with a callous disregard for the worker – they weren't. Working conditions were tough, that was simply the nature of the times and the area they were working in. But no one wanted to see anyone get hurt or die, Colonel By did everything in his power to mitigate the problems they encountered.

Most of the deaths during construction were from disease. Contrary to today's popular beliefs, the number of accidents was low for a project of this magnitude in this time period. We know from the records of A.J. Christie (hired by John By to look after the medical needs of the workforce in 1826 & 1827) that, in 1827, the first full year of construction, a total of 17 men died - 10 of disease and 7 from accidents. In that year 6 women and 38 children also died along the canal. On a more positive note, Christie also recorded 54 births. We also know that during the entire construction period, 22 of the Royal Sappers and Miners died, 5 from blasting related accidents, 1 by drowning and the remaining 16 died of sickness or have no cause given for their death.

The Montreal Herald reported in its December 15, 1827 edition "*The last advices from the Rideau Canal, we regret to state, mention the occurrence of a number of distressing accidents. Two labourers have been smothered by a bank of clay falling on them at Hog's Back. ... Considering, however, the extent of the works, and the dangerous nature of many of them, there have been fewer accidents since the commencement, than could have been supposed. Two have be before this killed by blasts ... and one killed by a tree falling on him.*"

When a death by accident occurred an inquest was held to determine the reason (this was required by law in Upper Canada). A number of the accidents were self-inflicted, a result of alcoholic overindulgence. An inquest held into the death of John Rusenstrom, killed in a fall from the Hogs Back dam, found that his death was the "*consequence of intoxication by Ardent Spirits*". Patrick Sweeney, a construction labourer at Old Sly's, drowned while trying to swim across the Rideau River to obtain another bottle of whiskey. He was inebriated when he made the attempt. In the August 1831 inquest into his death, the coroner stated: "*When last seen alive, he was going down with a bottle or flask in his mouth.*" A local paper reported that William Ferguson, a fellow labourer, "*after returning from the [Sweeney's] funeral, expired in the open streets at Smiths Falls, in the arms of his fellow workmen*". The jury in the inquest into his death concluded that it "*was caused by intemperance.*"

Cemeteries were established near each worksite. In some cases, existing cemeteries such as McGuigan Cemetery near Merrickville were used, in others, new cemeteries were developed. Funerals were held for fallen workers and the graves marked with wooden markers at the head and a field stone as a footstone marker. Today, the wooden markers have long rotted away leaving only the field stones. This has led to the myth of mass burial in unmarked graves. This was not the case, the mores of the day dictated that bodies be buried with respect (funeral) and the graves well marked and this is how it was done.

By far the largest cause of death was disease and the biggest culprit was malaria. It is to be noted that malaria on the Rideau, contrary to popular myth, was not brought in by the soldiers working on the canal. It was a temperate form of malaria already prevalent in populated areas Ontario at that time (going back to at least the late 1700s), in regions where the anopheles mosquito was present. In 1826, prior to the start of construction on the Rideau Canal, malaria was already present in both Kingston and Perth. Today we've forgotten that malaria (often known as ague) was endemic in the southern regions of Ontario up until the late 1800s.

Malaria is a parasite that comes in several forms. We think of malaria today as a tropical disease, and in the tropics it is a deadly form of malaria called *Plasmodium Falciparum* that is most commonly present. But in Ontario (and northern U.S., southern England and in Europe) at the time it was a temperate form, a much less deadly type known as *Plasmodium Vivax* (P. Vivax), that was present.

Malaria needs both people and a certain type of mosquito to survive. That mosquito is the anopheles mosquito, a dusk and dawn biting mosquito that will bite a human more than once (it both delivers and picks up the malaria parasite). When a mosquito infected with malaria bites a human, it injects the malaria parasites into the bloodstream. Those then head to the liver to incubate. Once sufficient numbers have been reached they head back into the blood and infect red blood cells. They multiply in the blood cell, eventually bursting out en-masse. This causes the classic fever & chill symptoms of malaria. It also affects the mortality rate, temperate P. Vivax infects a small percentage of the blood cells (only new blood cells) and therefore has a low mortality rate. Tropical P. Falciparum infects far more red blood cells and therefore has a high mortality rate.

As noted, malaria was present in the area long before the construction of the Rideau Canal. There are many reports in the Rideau area, from the early 1800s, of settlers suffering from malaria. In a diary entry for April 1827, the Reverend William Bell of Perth stated that "Repeated attacks of ague have left me reduced in body and discouraged in mind." The effective prophylactic for malaria is Quinine. Cinchona bark had been used for centuries for its quinine content, with limited effect, it was the isolation of quinoline alkaloid in 1820, named Quinine, that proved to be a potent anti-malarial drug. But, during the construction of the canal in 1826-1831, Quinine was difficult and expensive to obtain, supplies coming to Canada were very limited. Reverend Bell knew this and would send his son to Montreal to pick up new supply when it arrived from Europe. Malaria was present in York (Toronto) at the time with the papers carrying ads, such as the January 1827 ad in the

Canadian Freeman for "Ague Powders" stating "Have just received a fresh supply of QUININE, - so celebrated as a cure for the Ague, which they warrant to be pure and genuine."

The 2% mortality rate from malaria seen on the Rideau is consistent with the low mortality rate of *P. Vivax*. Complications due to malaria on top of other diseases, and health issues that people on the worksites suffered, such as dysentery and regular fevers, contributed to the mortality rate. About 60% of the workers in the southern Rideau contracted malaria each year. The southern Rideau was affected much more than the northern Rideau – the Ottawa area was known to be “generally healthy” when it came to malaria. We know today that this is because it’s the limit of the range of the carrier of malaria, the *anopheles mosquito*.

The first big attack of malaria came in the summer of 1828, an exceptionally warm spring and summer that provided perfect conditions for the *anopheles mosquito*. The period from August to mid-September was already known as the "sickly season" and the conditions of 1828 created a major outbreak of malaria in all of southern Ontario. The construction of the canal put hundreds of people in close proximity to each other, aiding in the transmission of the disease. It was not known at that time that mosquitoes transmitted the disease, it was thought to be the result of bad air (from which the name “malaria” is derived). Colonel By had large sections of trees cut down at each work station to improve air flow, in order to (he thought) lessen the chances of malaria.

Extrapolations from the factual records which have survived, indicate that perhaps upwards of about 500 men, women & children died of malaria. For instance, in 1830, in the area from Newboro to Kingston Mills, out of a total of 1,316 men, 787 got sick and 27 died. At the same time, 13 women and 15 children were also recorded as having died. A rough guess is that perhaps upwards of another 500 died from other diseases (dysentery, small pox, tuberculosis, regular fevers), other medical issues resulting from excessive drinking and smoking, and accidents (blasting accidents, rock falls, drownings, etc.). So today, the round number of 1,000 is generally used for the number of deaths, with the biggest killer being various diseases.

Over the years, many of the old burial grounds have faded into history. Three have been maintained on the Rideau; McGuigan Cemetery near Merrickville, the Royal Sappers and Miners Cemetery at Newboro, and the cemetery at Chaffeys Locks. In addition, memorials to these fallen workers have been erected in Kingston and Ottawa and at several spots along the canal. While some of these commemorate Irish over others, it’s to be remembered that disease played no favourites, all got sick and died in equal numbers.

Contractors

The decision to build the Rideau Canal using private contractors was made in England in early 1826 before Colonel By was selected to be Superintending Engineer for the project. This caused two problems for By, one was the quality of those contractors and a second was the fact that long term contracts conflicted with the government method of funding the project using short term parliamentary grants.

There weren’t many contractors with previous canal building experience. Two recent canal projects were the Lachine Canal in Montreal and the Erie Canal in New York, both completed in 1825. By preferred to hire British/Canadian contractors over U.S. contractors, although he did hire one contractor with previous experience on the Erie Canal (Walter Fenlon for Hogs Back). He was also able to hire contractors who had worked on the Lachine Canal; Thomas McKay, John Redpath, Andrew White and Thomas Phillips. Local entrepreneurs such as Robert Drummond of Kingston and Philemon Wright of Hull were also hired. Surveyor Samuel Clowes was also hired as a contractor (Lower Brewers). In some cases contractor details have been lost to history, the contractor for Merrickville was A.C. Stevens, but we don’t even know what his first name was.

As previously noted, the contractors were paid by cheque. The Royal Engineers stationed at various worksites were responsible for ensuring the work was done to Royal Engineering standards. They also measured the work completed each month which formed the basis of the how much the contractor would be paid. They also ensured that the workers were paid before the contractor was paid. About half the contractors made good profits, about half quit or went bankrupt. At Upper Brewer’s for instance, the story goes that contractor John Brewer fled to the U.S., just a step ahead of his creditors.

The failure of some of the contractors gave By a number of headaches. The contractor at Newboro quit due to the tough ground conditions at the site, he couldn’t make any money and a subsequent contractor also quit after just a few weeks. Walter Fenlon at Hogs Back begged to be released from his contract after his dam failed (twice). In June 1828 he wrote to Colonel By, *“I find that I cannot possibly continue the Work at the prices that I am at present getting according to my Contract and I am the loser to a great amount on what I have already done. My humble prayer at this time, is, that Government would take the job and release me from all claims on the Contract.”* By initially refused but in the fall of 1828

accepted Fenlon's resignation and took over the project himself, putting the two companies of Sappers and Miners onto the project along with many civilian labourers. He also took over the Newboro project, moving the 7th company of Royal Sappers and Miners there in 1829.

Although Colonel By had problems with several of his contractors, he also worked with some of the best. Five of these were Robert Drummond, Thomas McKay, John Redpath, Andrew White and Thomas Phillips. The latter four contractors entered into a partnership for their work on the Rideau Canal, pooling their financial resources and splitting the profits four ways. Their work on the Rideau Canal was exceptional and By had nothing but high praise for these men. To show his appreciation, Colonel By awarded large silver cups to these five contractors.

Some of the contractors went on to even better things. John Redpath for instance, the contractor for the magnificent engineering works at Jones Falls, is best known today for "Redpath Sugar" which got its start as the largest sugar refinery in Montreal, built by Redpath in 1854. Thomas McKay started work on the Rideau Canal by constructing the stone arches for the Union Bridge, the first bridge linking Upper and Lower Canada. He then went on to construct the magnificent flight of eight locks at Ottawa. After his work on the Rideau Canal he stayed in Bytown, building a house for himself, Rideau Hall, now the home of the Governor General for Canada. He built the first courthouse in Bytown as well as several mills. Robert Drummond of Kingston was involved in all sorts of enterprises, including building steamboats.

The Defence of the Canal

The defence of the canal itself was of primary importance to Colonel By. The Canal, designed as a military supply line, was itself vulnerable to attack. Accordingly By put forward a proposal to purchase additional land and construct several blockhouses. The cost estimate for this work was £ 69,230. By submitted his proposal to the Ordnance in March of 1830. The Ordnance made a decision that due to the high cost of the canal, any defensive works would have to be postponed. However they neglected to inform Colonel By of this decision until the spring of 1832.

By, hearing no word from Ordnance, and knowing that the defence of the canal was extremely important, contracted the construction of several blockhouses. Four and a half were completed, the blockhouses at Kingston Mills, at the Isthmus on the summit of the Canal (Newboro), at the Narrows on Rideau Lake, at Merrickville (the largest) and one at Burritts Rapids that was started but never completed.

The blockhouse at Merrickville was extremely important to the defence of the canal. An early defence strategy had been to maintain a wilderness buffer around the Canal. This would prevent easy access by enemy troops to the canal works. However, in 1832, the provincial government began to upgrade the Prescott Road, providing easy access between the St. Lawrence and the Rideau Canal. In the event of hostilities, the blockhouse at Merrickville would become a key defence point.

The Canal never saw direct military use with the technical exception of being used, as intended, for the transport of troops to a military activity. In this case it was the Battle of the Windmill (near Prescott) in November 1838, when American "patriots" invaded Canada. Troops from the Royal Marines, who fought in that battle, were transported to that area on barges that were towed down the Rideau Canal. This invasion was sparked by the Upper Canada rebellion of 1837-38. That event also sparked the building of wooden guardhouses at Jones Falls and White Fish Falls (Morton) and later, the building of defensible lockmaster's houses at several lockstations along the canal.

Completion

The construction of the canal was essentially finished by November 1831, with finishing touches at several southern lockstations continuing through to the spring of 1832. In December 1831, the two companies of Sappers and Miners were disbanded and several of the soldiers were given the position of Lockmaster on the newly built locks. On May 22, 1832, Colonel By, his family and some fellow officers boarded the vessel *Rideau* (sometimes better known by its nickname *Pumper*), in Kingston for the grand opening voyage. It was on May 29, after stops at all the small communities along the way, that the *Rideau* sailed into Bytown. The canal was open.

The only blight on the whole affair of building the canal was the final cost of £ 822,804 (an 1834 number which included the final costs of land acquisition). Cost estimates had increased steadily as design parameters and construction details were refined. In early 1828, when the final lock dimensions of 33 feet wide by 134 feet long had been decided upon, By submitted a cost estimate of £ 576,757. This estimate did not include any costs for constructing military works along the canal. In 1831, once actual details of construction were known, Colonel By submitted a detailed revised estimate of

£ 776,000, which was considerably more than parliament had originally allocated for the project. However problems, such as the failure of the Hogsback Dam, increased this estimate. There were also some accounting irregularities by the Board of Ordnance. It should be remembered that in those days, a simple request by By for stationary supplies (quills, paper) took six signatures and two months to process.

A question often raised is what do these cost figures mean in terms of today's dollars. The replacement value placed on all the "assets" of the Rideau Canal by Parks Canada was calculated be 929 million dollars in 2012. This figure does not include such things as the over 20 km of required canal cuts, channel dredging, surveying and route clearing that would also be required if the clock could be turned back to a pre-canal era. Clearly today we'd be talking about a project that would cost well over a billion dollars.

Colonel By got into trouble with the government in part due to the funding model for the Rideau Canal. Although funding for the project was conditional on yearly parliamentary grants, he couldn't simply turn on and off contracts. It initially worked out okay for Colonel By – he kept submitting revised estimates, all the work was necessary and there were a number of unexpected costs, things like the addition of weirs, the larger size of the locks and the significant cost of land acquisition (the entire Rideau had been granted to loyalists long before the Rideau Canal project started – much of this land had to be purchased for use by the canal). The government in power in Britain supported the defence of Canada, so although costs were going up, they understood the reasons for those cost increases.

Canal cost overruns were the typical of the day. The Ottawa canals, which took 15 years to complete, had a 60 percent cost overrun. The Welland Canal took almost 10 years to complete and went 55 percent over budget. The Caledonian Ship Canal took 19 years to build and had a cost overrun of 87 percent. In contrast, the Rideau Canal was built in only five years, and against the June 1828 estimate, was less than 43 percent over budget. In fact, the final cost was only 19 percent over By's March 1830 supplementary budget that had been accepted by the British parliament, much of those extra costs due to the cost of land acquisition.

Support for the Rideau Canal project changed in November 1830 when a Reform government came to power in Britain. This was a government that saw money expended in colonies such as Canada and India as a waste of British funds. When they went looking for where this waste of money was occurring, they found it in the Rideau Canal, the largest infrastructure project at the time in the British colonies. It's a long and involved story (recounted in the story "By By" in Tales of the Rideau), but in the end they fingered Lt. Colonel John By as the man responsible (as opposed to By's bosses who escaped censure). On the very day By was passing through Smiths Falls (May 25, 1832) on his triumphant first steamboat trip through the newly built Rideau Canal, a recall notice was being written in England, relieving By of command and ordering his return to England.

By was exonerated of wrongdoing at parliamentary hearings held in June 1832. These hearings happened before By had even received the notice of his recall – it took weeks for news of this to travel from England to Canada. His costs for building the canal were all accounted for, there had been no financial mismanagement. Parliamentary grants had been exceeded, but that wasn't By's fault. Although exonerated of any wrongdoing, the whole affair left By tainted. He should, at minimum, have received an increase in rank (from Lt. Colonel to full Colonel) and there was an expectation that he would be knighted for the tremendous job he did in service to the British Crown in creating a navigable waterway between Ottawa and Kingston. But none of that happened and he died in 1836, his accomplishments not recognized.

As the Years Went By

When the canal was completed, forty of the Royal Sappers and Miners who helped build the canal were given land grants in the region. Several of these men also became the first lockmasters. The Canal remained under the control of the British Ordnance Department until 1856 when the provincial board of works assumed responsibility for the canal. In 1868 responsibility was transferred to the federal government, the Department of Railways and Canals (later to be called the Department of Transport) eventually taking control of the Rideau Canal. In 1972, control of the Rideau was transferred to the Canadian Parks Service, now called Parks Canada, part of the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage, later transferred to the Department of Environment.

Although the Rideau was never directly used for its intended purpose, a military supply route in time of war, it acted as a significant military deterrent to future hostilities. In addition, when opened in 1832, it quickly became a commercial success. It was the commercial lifeline for the port of Montreal, with thousands of tons of heavy materials (wood, minerals, grain, etc.), transported by boat from Canada's hinterland, via the Rideau Canal and the Ottawa River to Montreal. Also, in its first years, thousands of immigrants destined for Upper Canada travelled by boat via the Rideau Canal. The 19th century saw continued commercial use of the canal in transporting products from local sources: farming, lumbering, mining,

milling of various types (grist, lumber, carding), cheese factories, distilleries, and other small businesses that were operating in the region.

The St. Lawrence in 1832 was difficult to navigate upstream against the rapids. So it was that by 1840, many vessels were traveling from Montréal to Ottawa and through the Rideau Canal to get to the Great Lakes. However by the 1850s, locks were opened up on the St. Lawrence and ship technology had improved to the point that steamers could make it up the St. Lawrence under their own power and traffic on the Rideau dropped off. It was at this time that the railroad boom in Canada was going on, and little railroads were springing up all over. The Rideau played a part in this, working well in conjunction with small railroads in the region to move goods.

By 1875, Canada was experiencing the "age of railroads." However this didn't have a large impact on the Rideau since most of the local heavy goods were still being transported by barge along the canal. In fact, when the Canadian Pacific Railway decided to make Smiths Falls its main junction in eastern Ontario, coal for those trains was shipped across Lake Ontario from the US and then loaded onto barges in Kingston and brought up the Rideau Canal to Smiths Falls. This lasted until early in the 20th century when it became cheaper to bring the coal in by rail.

As the 20th century progressed, the current use of the canal, a waterway route for recreational boats, came to the fore. The Rideau had been used for pleasure since its early days. The drowning of lands for navigation resulted in the creation of ideal habitat for bass, particularly Large Mouth bass. By the late 19th century, the Rideau region was renowned across North America for its exceptional bass fishing. Several lodges sprang up catering to the sportsman, and a thriving business grew up with boats and guides taking the avid fisherman to the bass hotspots. Lakes such as Sand, Opinicon, Indian, Clear, and Newboro became prized fishing destinations.

Through the first half of the 20th century, these lodges thrived on fishing. It was at this time that boating on the Rideau changed again. The introduction of the internal combustion outboard motor engine heralded a new era in boating. It allowed people to easily travel the Rideau on their own. New types of boats, motor launches, built by the likes of Chris Craft and Peterborough began plying the Rideau. Summer homes started to be built along the shores of the Rideau. Marinas started to replace the lodges as destinations for the Rideau tourist.

In 1925, the Rideau was designated a National Historic Site of Canada (plaqued in 1926, again in 1962 and again in 2013).

By the 1950s, the Rideau had turned into the waterway as it can be seen today. Cottages dot the shores of many lakes, with small runabouts, canoes, and sailboats enjoying the tranquil waters of the lakes. Larger cruisers from across North America travel the full route of the Rideau, traveling from lock to lock, stopping to enjoy a picnic on a rocky knoll under the shade of a large pine tree.

In the 1960s with the approach of Canada's 100th anniversary, there was a growing recognition by government of the heritage value to Canada of the Rideau Canal. Several of the blockhouses along the Rideau were rehabilitated at that time.

The biggest change came in 1972 when the Rideau Canal was transferred from the Department of Transport to Parks Canada. At that time, the government gave direction to Parks Canada stating that *"under the Conservation Program there should be a shift in emphasis in the management of the canal systems from "transportation" to historic restoration, preservation and interpretation; natural environmental preservation and interpretation and the optimum use of federal lands."* The 1970s and 1980s saw a great deal of heritage work done by Parks Canada.

In 2000, the Rideau was designated a Canadian Heritage River.

In 2007 it was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (together the Kingston fortifications – Fort Henry, Fort Frederick and the Martello towers), recognizing it as a work of human creative genius. The Rideau Canal was cited as the best preserved example of a slackwater canal in North America demonstrating the use of European slackwater technology in North America on a large scale. It is the only canal dating from the great North American canal-building era of the early 19th century that remains operational along its original line with most of its original structures intact. It was also recognized as an extensive, well preserved and significant example of a canal which was used for military purposes linked to a significant stage in human history - that of the fight to control the north of the American continent.

The Future

In an ideal future, the next centuries will see the Rideau Canal as it is today, with people enjoying the pleasure of boating its tranquil waters, visiting the historic lockstations and learning about this significant part of our Canadian heritage.

Work has been done in recent years to rehabilitate many of the locks and dams (government infrastructure program) and while more needs to be done, it's a very good start. Unfortunately severe cuts to Parks Canada by the government in 2012, which included the re-organization of canals into a new waterways unit, removed the capacity (and willingness) to do heritage presentation (public education). Public education is a legislated and policy require for Parks Canada, something they are presently not doing on the Rideau Canal. The Rideau Canal, as a National Historic Site of Canada and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has legal requirements to make the public aware of the reasons for those designations. However, Parks Canada has no public education program to inform people of the Rideau Canal's place in the story of Canada. And that's a shame.

One reason why the Rideau is important for Canada was perhaps best stated by the Auditor General in her 2003 report, which discussed Canadian heritage sites such as the Rideau Canal:

These places recall the lives and history of the men and women who built this country, and they foster awareness of how Canadian society evolved. They help us to better understand the present and prepare for the future. They contribute in important ways to Canadians' sense of belonging to their community. When important parts of Canada's built heritage are lost, future generations of Canadians are deprived of access to key moments of their shared history.

With proper support for the Rideau Canal, future generations of Canadians will be able to enjoy the canal just as we do today, they will be told the story of the Rideau Canal and they will learn about its place in the story of Canada. The Rideau Canal is far more than just a recreational waterway, it's a significant part of Canadian history.

Ecology of the Rideau Corridor

The Rideau Corridor is the way it looks today because of three factors, the Frontenac Axis which is the southernmost section of the Canadian Shield in Canada (very old and hard rocks); the last period of glaciation (did you know that whales once swam where Ottawa and Smiths Falls are today?); and the building of the Rideau Canal.

It is the shield rocks that produced the lovely Rideau lakes, with their beautiful rocky exposures, ideal cottage country. Glacial sediments lying on top of flat lying sedimentary rocks support most of the region's farmlands. The building of the Rideau Canal drowned many areas, creating new marshlands and expansive new habitat for fish species such as the large mouth bass.

So, it is no surprise that the Rideau Corridor is host to a large and varied group of flora and fauna. The Rideau lakes host a healthy population of loons. In addition to loons the Rideau traveller is likely to spot great blue herons and ospreys, both common on the Rideau Canal. The forests and fields support a large white tailed deer population as well as raccoons, chipmunks, squirrels (black, grey and red), foxes, rabbits, and in recent years, wild turkeys. Shoreline watchers will spots hundreds of turtles, frogs, and muskrats. The keen observer might even see a beaver or a family of otters at play. Turn over a rock and likely as not, you'll spot one of several varieties of salamander.

Marshlands are common, especially in the southern and northern sections of the waterway. They are worth a close watch with their interplay of bird, insect and aquatic life. There are several types of swamps including cedar swamps and hardwood swamps (with ash and maple trees). Common in the Rideau Corridor are hardwood forests with trees such as maple, oak, bass, beech and ash. In rockier areas conifers dominate, particularly the majestic white pine.

The waters of the Rideau Canal are clean. Deep water lakes such as Big Rideau show greater than 6 metres of clarity (secchi readings) while shallower, nutrient enriched lakes generally show clarity levels of 2 to 5 metres. Clarity is most often affected by the amount of algae growth in the water. Recently water clarity has jumped with the invasion of zebra mussels into the lakes. The surface waters of most lakes and rivers warm up to +20°C by mid-June and stay that way until mid-September. Acid rain isn't much of an issue since many of the underlying rocks are limestone, which buffers the water.

Fish abound in all the waters of the Rideau. The Cataraqui River and southern Rideau lakes are host to warm water species such as large mouth bass as well as small mouth bass, pike and crappie. The deep water of Big Rideau hosts lake trout. The Rideau River has pickerel (walleye) in abundance. A detailed review of fishing and fish species is available on the website. Of note on the Rideau Canal, large mouth bass fishing does not start until the **fourth Saturday of June** in order to protect the eggs and new fry (bass spawn in June). Please respect this law, it is there to protect the fish population and ensure that the Rideau Canal will provide good fishing opportunities for generations to come.

There are many ways to get out and enjoy the ecology of the Rideau Corridor. A trip along the water is of course one of the best ways. Those on foot will enjoy the Rideau Trail (www.rideautrail.org) and the Cataraqui Trail (www.cataraquitrail.ca). Those coming by road will want to take in a few of the park and conservation areas.

For more information about the Ecology of the Rideau, check out the Ecology section on the website at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/ecology/

Parks and Conservation Areas

The whole of the Rideau Canal is a park of sorts, but along the way you can stop in at two Ontario Provincial Parks, Murphys Point and Rideau River Provincial Park. These parks offer camping opportunities for the boater, trails, and interpretative displays. You can visit the Web sites for these parks by going to either Murphys Point Provincial Park (www.ontarioparks.com/english/murp.html) or Rideau River Provincial Park (www.ontarioparks.com/english/ride.html)

In addition to the Provincial Parks, there are several conservation areas that offer lots of family fun. Some are free, and some charge a \$7 day use fee (a \$50 annual pass is available). For more information contact the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (at 613-692-3571 or toll free at 1-800-267-3504). You'll find links to the websites of all these conservation areas by going to the RVCA website: www.rvca.ca or by using the links on the rideau-info attractions page: www.rideau-info.com/canal/attraction.html

Conservation areas (listed geographically, south to north) are:

- **Foley Mountain Conservation Area:** located near Westport, off County Road 10, it offers swimming, group camping, hiking, educational programs. It also has a 6 km walking trail, an Interpretive Centre, toilets, beach, change house, picnic tables and a picnic shelter. Located on Upper Rideau Lake.
- **Portland Bay Conservation Area:** located in Portland, on County Road 15, it offers a lovely lakeside picnic area. Located on Big Rideau Lake.
- **Mill Pond Conservation Area:** located on Briton-Houghton Bay Road, off County Road 15 between Portland and Lombardy. Offers natural habitat and a seasonal sugarbush program. It also has 15km walking trail, a seasonal Interpretive Centre, toilets, small boat launch, picnic tables and a picnic shelter. Located near Big Rideau Lake.
- **Rideau Ferry Yacht Club Conservation Area:** located off County Road 1 in Rideau Ferry. It features a sandy beach, picnic area and boat launch. It also has toilets, a change house, picnic tables, a picnic shelter and claims to have the best beach on the Rideau. Located on Lower Rideau Lake.
- **Perth Wildlife Reserve:** Off County Road 1 between Perth and Rideau Ferry. It features a wildlife area, including an overlook of the Tay Marsh. It provides for goose habitat with a goose landing zone and features a 4km walking trail. It also has toilets.
- **Baxter Conservation Area:** Located on Regional Road 13 (Dilworth Drive) off County Road 16, south of Kars. It features swimming, hiking and year round programs. It has a 5km walking trail, an Interpretive Centre, marsh boardwalk, toilets, a beach, change house, small boat launch, picnic tables and a picnic shelter. Located on Rideau River.
- **W.A. Taylor Conservation Area:** Located on Regional Road 19 near Osgoode. It features a concrete boat launch and a picnic area. Located on Rideau River.
- **Dickinson Square Conservation Area:** Located on Mill Street in Manotick. Features the historic Watson's Mill (operating), access to the dam, a heritage square and picnic tables.
- **Chapman Mills Conservation Area:** Located on the Rideau River under the Vimy Memorial Bridge. It offers 23 acres with hiking trails.

Geological History of the Rideau Canal

As you paddle the Rideau Canal, the route you follow is defined by its geology. The area is underlain by part of an old mountain range, the Grenville Mountains, eroded down over many millions of years. Much of this eroded mountain range has been covered by younger sedimentary rocks, but portions of the old mountains are exposed, partly a result of their original topography and partially due to the eroding away of younger overlying rocks. This area is known as the Frontenac Axis. In essence, if you boat or drive from Kingston to Smiths Falls, you'll be going over a (very old) mountain range.

The Frontenac Axis can be thought of as a ridge connecting the extensive area of the Canadian Shield to the north and the Adirondack mountains to the south. On the Rideau, the southern irregular boundary of the Frontenac Axis is near Kingston Mills and the northern irregular boundary is on the northern reaches of Big Rideau Lake. The Frontenac Axis is made up of rocks formed 1.35 to 1.06 billion years ago (Precambrian: middle to late Proterozoic age) and then deformed and metamorphosed 900 million years ago. The rock types that you'll be able to see as you travel through the Frontenac Axis include granite, syenite, monzonite, migmatite, gabbro, quartzite, marble, gneiss and pegmatite. Many of the lakes are underlain by marble (crystalline limestone) which provides some buffering against acid rain.

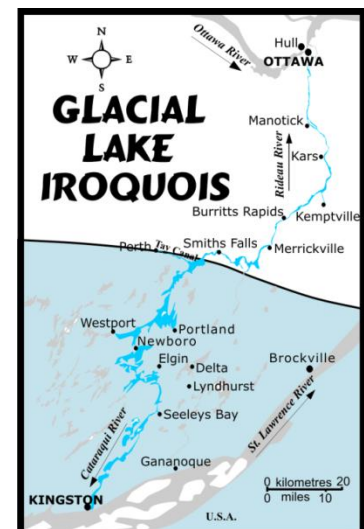
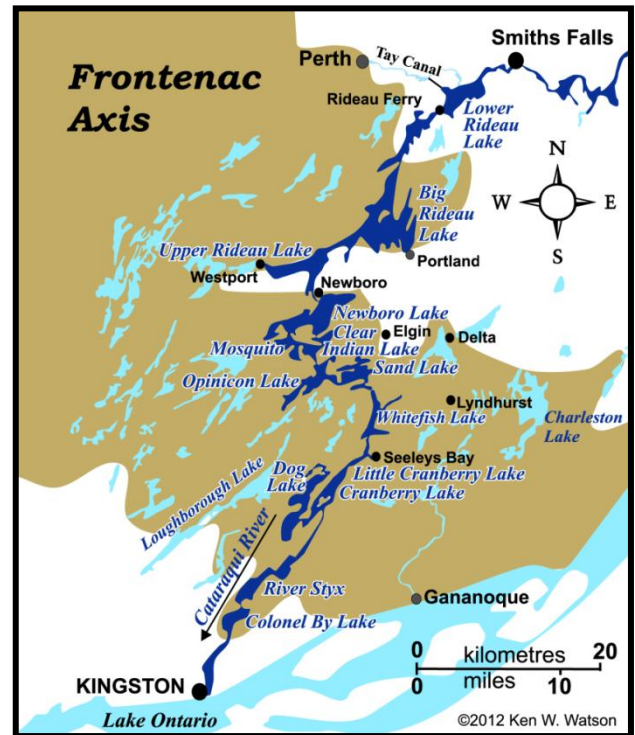
To the north and south of the Frontenac Axis are younger, 520 to 460 million year old (Paleozoic: Cambrian to Lower Ordovician age) rocks including limestone, sandstone, dolomite, shale and conglomerate. Most of these rocks were laid down in a shallow sea that covered this area, which was near the equator at that time (part of Laurentia which eventually became part of North America due to continental drift). The rocks near Kingston are dominated by limestone which provided much of the building material for the early town (hence the nickname, Limestone City). In the centre part of the Rideau Canal, on the margin of the Frontenac Axis, the younger sedimentary rocks tend to be dominated by sandstone. Beyond that, from Smiths Falls to Ottawa the rocks are mostly dolomite, limestone and shale.

More recently, three events have impacted on the landscape - the ice last age, glacial Lake Iroquois and the Champlain Sea. During the last ice age, which peaked about 20,000 years ago, the Rideau area was covered by ice up to 1.5 kilometres (1.0 mi) thick. The ice polished and moved rocks, excavated some of the landscape and left large deposits of sand and gravel. The weight of the ice depressed the landscape by about 175 m (575 ft) below where it is today.

By 14,000 years ago, the climate began to warm up, melting the glaciers and forcing them to retreat. In the area of Lake Ontario, today's exit of the lake down the St. Lawrence River was blocked by ice and a large lake, about 30 m (100 ft) higher than today's Lake Ontario, formed. That lake, known as Lake Iroquois, extended as far north as Perth and Smiths Falls.

Evidence of that lake exist today in form of glaciolacustrine (a big word for glacial lake) deposits. These include near shore sediments such as gravel and gravelly sand, and deeper water deposits such as silt and clay. These deposits are found all over the southern Rideau, including on heights of land, such as near the top of Rock Dunder. This is because the overall landscape was depressed, and features such as Rock Dunder formed part of the bottom of this large lake.

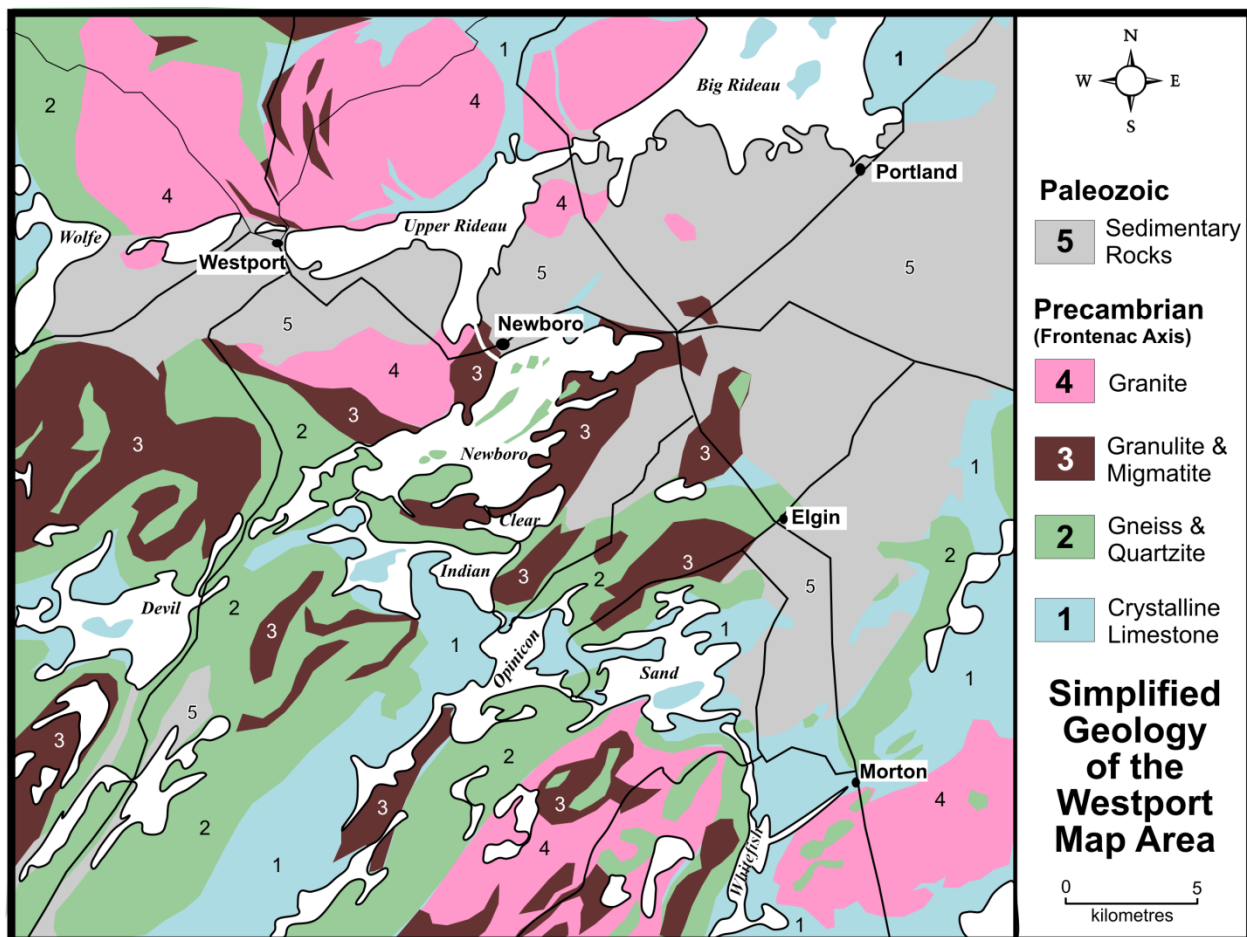
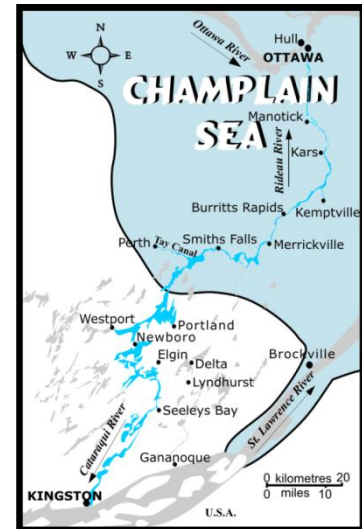
By about 13,350 years ago a channel opened up in the ice dam (near Rome, NY), rapidly draining much of the lake. At the same time the land was rising as the weight of the ice was removed (this rising is called "isostatic rebound").



As Lake Iroquois and subsequent glacial lakes were getting smaller, the glaciers were continuing their retreat from the St. Lawrence lowlands. About 13,000 years ago this allowed waters from the Atlantic Ocean to mix with glacial melt-waters and river drainage to create a brackish sea known as the Champlain Sea which extended past (west and south) of Ottawa.

The southern limit of this sea on the Rideau Canal was near Nobles Bay of Big Rideau Lake. If you were paddling the sea back then, you would have been enjoying it in the company of whales. The bones of a humpback whale were found near Smiths Falls and beluga (white) whale bones have also been found in Champlain Sea deposits. This sea retreated as the glaciers moved north and the land continued to undergo isostatic rebound. By about 11,100 years ago, the central Rideau had risen above sea level and the land that we see today was being revealed. Rivers and streams continued to modify the landscape up until the building of the Rideau Canal.

There are some interesting geological features in the Ottawa area. The northern part of the Rideau River is the youngest part of the waterway (outside of canal altered sections) since, in the immediate post-glacial period, the Ottawa River had a channel to the south of where it is today, across much of urban Ottawa to the Mer Bleue area (where the trace of the old Ottawa River channel can be clearly seen). It eventually shifted north (due to isostatic rebound) to its present location and cut a deep channel. The faster excavation by the Ottawa River, through the underlying limestone rocks, compared to the Rideau River, formed Rideau Falls.



This highly simplified geology map shows some of the contact area between the Frontenac Axis (units 1, 2, 3 and 4) and the younger sedimentary rocks (unit 5) in the central Rideau area.

Map adapted from GSC Map 1182A by H.R. Wynne-Edwards, GSC Memoir 346, 1967.

Another geological feature at Ottawa is that much of the area is underlain by a thick clay layer, a type of “quick clay” known locally as Leda clay (named after a type of small clam found in the clay deposits). Quick clay is a clay that is not well bonded and is subject to liquefaction, that is, when vibration is induced, it can turn into a liquid and flow. When undisturbed, it looks and acts like a normal solid form of clay. It was formed by glacial silt settling out on the bottom of the Champlain Sea. There it formed a stable type of marine clay, “glued” with salt. When the sea retreated due to the rising land, this clay was exposed to rainfall that removed much of that salt bonding, creating the unstable clay that is present in much of the region today. Earthquakes can cause this clay to liquefy, leading to landslides. Ottawa is a seismically active region (earthquake prone) and, in the future, an earthquake is going to play havoc with the city (if I lived in Ottawa, I’d check to see if my house is sitting on bedrock or on clay).

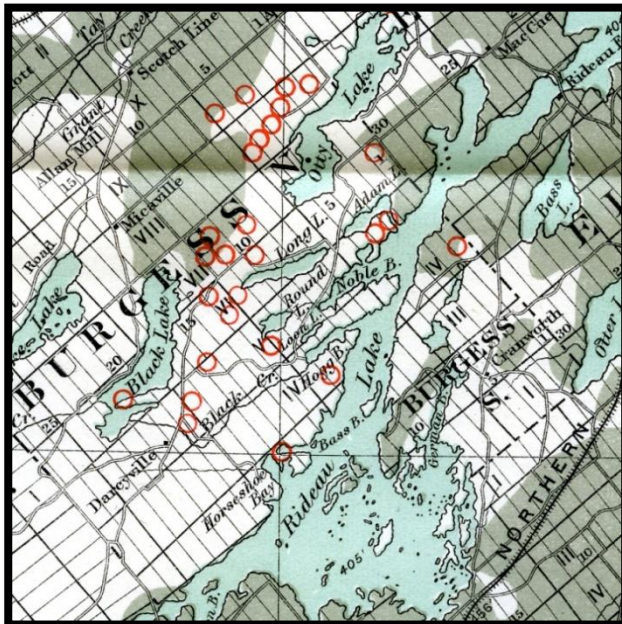
Mining in the Rideau Region

The rocks of the Frontenac Axis are host to some small mineral deposits, several of which were mined in the mid-late 1800s and in the early 1900s. In the Rideau Canal region, minerals such as apatite (for phosphate), mica, feldspar, graphite and iron were mined. A few of these old mining areas have been noted in the guides.

Some of the earliest mining in the region was for rocks to be used for the dams and locks of the Rideau Canal. Rocks of the Frontenac Axis were not suitable for this purpose (too hard and often fractured) and so quarries to mine rocks for the canal were established in the younger sedimentary rocks, mining sandstone or limestone.

The first mine on/near the Rideau Canal (excluding the small scale iron mining near Lower Beverley Lake in the early 1800s) was the iron mine on Iron Island near Newboro opened by the Chaffey brothers, John, Benjamin and Elsworth, in about 1850. Phosphate mining (for fertilizer, most was shipped to England) started in the Rideau area in about 1867 and continued to the early 1890s. By the late 1880s, mica mining was also underway. Apatite (phosphate) and mica form in the same geological environment, so as the maps below show, several mines which started off mining phosphate were later mined for mica. Mica mining ended in the 1920s as the value of the mineral fell to uneconomic levels.

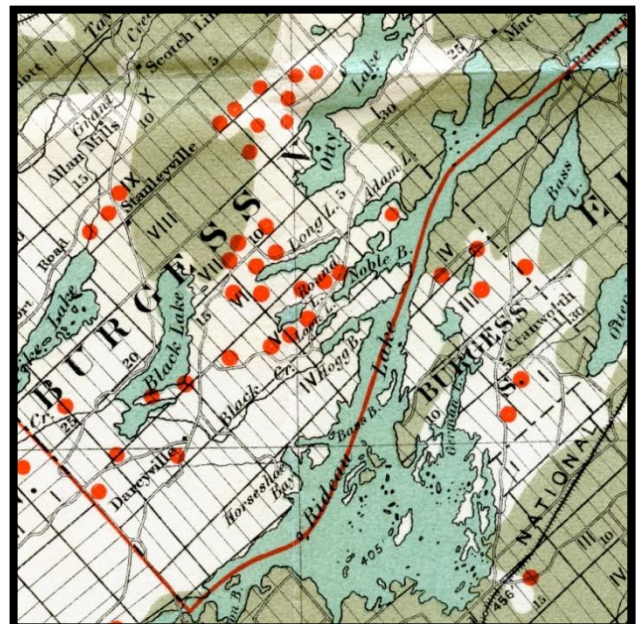
Today, mining in the region is mostly surface quarrying for sand, gravel, and stone.



Phosphate Mines

The location of small scale phosphate mines in the area of Big Rideau Lake.

Section of a map from “Phosphate in Canada” by Hugh S. Spence, Canada Department of Mines, 1920.



Mica Mines

The location of small scale mica mines in the area of Big Rideau Lake.

Section of a map from “Mica” by H.S. Spence, Canada Department of Mines, 1929.

Information Contact List

Parks Canada - Rideau Canal Office 34 Beckwith St. South, Smiths Falls, ON K7A 2A8 Tel: 613-283-5170 Toll Free: 1-888-773-8888 Fax: 613-283-0677 email: RideauCanal-info@pc.gc.ca website: www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/rideau	For Rideau Canal information, lock permits and charts. Ask for their free boater's information package (includes lots of tourist information).
Friends of the Rideau P.O. Box 1232, Stn. Main Smith's Falls, Ontario K7A 5C7 email: info@rideaufriends.com website: www.rideaufriends.com	For Rideau Canal information, charts and books. In the summer, visit their interpretive centre, the Depot, located on the waterfront, near the Blockhouse in Merrickville. They are a registered charity and proceeds from sales go into programs to help to enhance and preserve the Rideau Canal.
Canada's Capital Information Centre 14 Metcalfe Street Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5L1 Tel: 613-239-5000 Toll Free: 1-800-465-1867 (North America Only) Website: www.canadascapital.gc.ca	For information about tourism activities in and around Ottawa, Ontario.
Kingston Tourism Information Office 209 Ontario Street Kingston, Ontario K7L 2Z1 Tel. 613-548-4415 Toll free: 1-888-855-4555 (North America Only) email: tourism@kingstonarea.on.ca website: www.kingstonarea.on.ca	For information about tourism activities in and around Kingston, Ontario.
Office of Boating Safety Transport Canada 330 Sparks Street, 11th Floor Ottawa, ON K1A 0N5 Toll free: 1-800-267-6687 Email: obs-bsn@tc.gc.ca Website: www.tc.gc.ca/boatingsafety	Safety regulations for vessels in Canadian waters.