NIAGARA’S WELLAND CANAL CORRIDOR

EVOLUTION OF THE WELLAND CANAL

First Welland Canal
Known As: First Welland Canal
Built: 1824-1833
Length: 28 miles
Number of Locks: 40 of oak timber
Length of Locks: 120’
Width of Locks: 22’
Depth of Locks: 8’

Second Welland Canal
Known As: Old Welland Canal
Built: 1842-1853
Length: 28 miles
Number of Locks: 26 of masonry
Length of Locks: 150’
Width of Locks: 26.5’
Depth of Locks: 12’

Third Welland Canal
Known As: New Welland Canal
Built: 1872-1887
Length: 23 miles
Number of Locks: 25 of masonry
Length of Locks: 270’
Width of Locks: 45’
Depth of Locks: 14’

Fourth Welland Canal
Known As: Welland Ship Canal
Built: 1951-1952
Length: 27 miles
Number of Locks: 8 of concrete
Length of Locks: 859’
Width of Locks: 80’
Depth of Locks: 25.5’
Time to Fill One Lock: 12 minutes
THE STORY

CONSTRUCTION OF THE CANAL
FROM 1913 TO 1935
Construction Photos courtesy of The St. Catharines Museum collection
Removal of 35-ton Jacks after lowering timber lift-watering Gate on Pintle Lock #1. 10/10/1940.
THE COLLAPSE AT LOCK 6

The year of the greatest number of fatalities was 1928, when, on average, one man died for every two weeks of construction. The 29 deaths that year included 10 killed in a single incident when the Lock 6 gate collapsed on August 1st.
THE FALLEN

FAMILIES LOST THEIR SOLE PROVIDERS

William Gordon (centre) and his family
BROTHERS, FATHERS AND SONS

The Bassett Family
Pictures from Family albums from across North America . . .

Elzior Lynch McArthur
A thousand words . . . The Onyszczuk funeral, 1932
TODAY

THE WELLAND CANAL IS AN ESSENTIAL SYSTEM FOR OUR ECONOMY, AND BELOVED BY NIAGARANS
Niagara is home to eight locks as part of the Welland Canal transit system, which runs through St. Catharines, Thorold, Welland and Port Colborne.
The Welland Canal is used by industry, tourism, naval and private vessels.

THE 4TH CANAL IN NIAGARA
THE PROJECT
FINANCING, DESIGN AND CREATION OF THE WELLAND CANAL FALLEN WORKERS MEMORIAL
TASK FORCE GOALS

1. Finalize the design of a memorial that will honour the Fallen Workers and respect their families and communities.

2. Engage the community across Niagara, with special attention to the four Canal communities.

3. Raise awareness and funds to see it to completion.

4. Contract for the fabrication and installation of the final memorial.

5. Celebrate, Commemorate and Connect
TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

• Mayors from Port Colborne, St. Catharines, Thorold and Welland
• MPs from St. Catharines and Welland/Port Colborne
• Regional Council representative
• Labour Community representatives including:
  • The St. Lawrence Seaway Seafarer’s International Union
  • UNIFOR Local 4211
  • IBEW Local 303
  • Niagara Regional Labour Council
• Community Partners
  • Niagara Folk Arts Council
  • The Welland Canal Foundation
  • Canadian Canal Society
• Marine Industry representatives
• City of St. Catharines staff – Mayor’s office, Museum and Cultural Services
PROJECT OUTCOMES

- **Honour the past** – the fallen men, their families, their co-workers, and the many men who lost their lives building the first three canals

- **Build connections** – across Niagara, between the past and the present, between residents and visitors

- **Deepen understanding** – of the Canal, our history, our community

- **Empower the future** – each year 1,000 men and women die in on-the-job accidents. By remembering the past can we change our future?
The land directly north of the St. Catharines Museum site at Lock 3 has been selected as the future home of the Welland Canal Fallen Workers Memorial.

PROJECT SITE: LOCK 3
Offering visitor amenities including parking, washrooms, gift shop, staff and volunteer support, and a picnic and playground area.

NEARBY, THE ST. CATHARINES MUSEUM & WELLAND CANALS CENTRE
ALONGSIDE GREATER NIAGARA CIRCLE ROUTE

As well as the Welland Canals Parkway and the Canal itself. Easily accessible site for cars, bikes and pedestrians, near a developing residential community.
THE DESIGN CONCEPT

by Dereck Revington Studio Inc.
THE GROVE

A blackened steel veil is cut into the ground, greeting visitors from the south end of the site. A limestone plinth offers the story’s beginning “Peace has its heroes, as well as war.”
As the visitor travels north, the site dips into a “lock bed,” creating a space for quiet contemplation or ceremonies. The steel acts as a mirror, enticing people into the site and reflecting the surroundings.
The names, ages and date of death for each Fallen Worker are engraved on these gates, designed to echo the Lock gates of the Canal.
TIMELINE OF THE FALLEN

Inscribed on the floor of the site is a timeline . . .
TIMELINE OF THE FALLEN – THE NUMBER OF DEATHS PER YEAR ARE REFLECTED IN THE LENGTH OF LINE
ACCESS TO THE SITE FROM ALL DIRECTIONS

Enticing visitors from the north, south, from the road, via bike, ship or on foot – a distinct experience of the memorial site no matter how you are travelling.
CURRENT PROJECT STATUS

• Fundraising still ongoing
• Community outreach taking place across Niagara
• Phase 2 underway, contracting designer to finalize design, fabricate key memorial components, prepare tender documents and oversee contract administration
• Goal is to unveil on August 6, 2017 – the 85th anniversary of the opening of the Welland Canal
For more information visit
www.stcatharines.ca/CanalWorkersMemorial