



Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY
NIAGARA CLUB

Welland Canals Badge

To earn the **Welland Canals Badge**, hikers must complete a series of 4 hikes and take the required photos. Each hike is on a separate document and has a **Plotaroute** map on it. Some of the hikes are on the Bruce trail, some are not. These hikes may be completed independently or with an organized group.

The hikes are:

1. Allanburg to Mountain Locks Park loop
2. Woodend to Welland Canal Museum return
3. Sobey's Parking Lot (Johansson's Bar) to Richard Pierpoint Park, loop
4. Port Dalhousie

Welland Canals Hike #1: Allanburg Bridge to Mountain Locks Park loop

This hike will give you a flavour of all 4 Welland Canals.

Type of hike: Loop

Distance: 18.9 km

<https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2358667>

Park in the parking lot near the Allanburg bridge. **N43.076542 W79.211204**

Before starting your hike, take a moment to admire the cairn near the road. It commemorates the date of the first sod turning for the construction of the First Welland Canal, November 30, 1824.

Approximately 200 people gathered at this spot to witness the event. **Take a picture of this special cairn.**

Cross the road and follow the yellow blazes (Merritt Trail) with the 4th Welland Canal on your right. Continue to follow the yellow blazes until you reach The Battle of Beaverdams Park in Thorold. Here, you will see Lock 25 (2nd canal). It is below the bandshell. **Take a picture of this lock 25.**

Continue to follow the yellow blazes through the town of Thorold. The path turns left and then shortly afterwards a sharp right onto Bradley St. As you walk along the path, you will pass Locks 21-18, (2nd canal) also known as Neptune's Staircase. There are several footbridges along the way. Step onto a footbridge and **take a picture of Neptune's staircase from that view**. Two houses on your left, 77 and 135 Bradley St are designated as heritage buildings. Both were former Lock Tender's houses. The house at 135 Bradley is opposite Lock 17. It was built in 1851-52.

Continue to follow the yellow blazes until you almost reach Glendale Ave. On your right is Lock 15 (2nd canal). Hikers often stop here to have a snack on a long hike. Take a **picture of Lock 15**.

Proceed to Glendale Ave and take a **photo of the sign Mountain Locks Park**.

Now, turn around and retrace your steps, following the white blazes for the Main Trail. You will cross over the old canal and continue to follow the white blazes until you see the new side Trail: **Lock 24 First Welland Canal**. Take the new side trail to locate the only remnant of a lock from the first canal, Lock 24. There is a plaque commemorating it. **Take a picture of the plaque** and, at the end of the side trail, check out the old wood beams of the first canal.

Return to the Main Trail and follow it until you reach the Bert Lowe Side Trail, along the 4th canal. Follow the side trail up the hill. This is where the flight locks are located on your left. These are a set of 3 parallel locks where you can watch ships traverse in both directions at the same time. It is the steepest point in the Niagara escarpment for the ships to climb. Thorold is known as the town "where the ships climb the mountain." Along the path up the hill, you will see some murals. Unfortunately some are in disrepair. These murals give a little history of Thorold. Take a **picture of the flight locks and/or Lock 7**.

When you reach the top, make a sharp right by the Lock 7 viewing complex. Find the **Kissing Rock**. Lore has it that sailors would bring their wives or girlfriends here for a farewell smooch. This would ensure their safe return. The C.S. on the rock stands for Charles Snelgrove, a Great Lakes sailor who supposedly started the kiss-or-die tradition. Take a photo of the **Kissing Rock**.

Continue to follow the Bert Lowe Side Trail along the canal. It merges with the yellow blazes of the Merritt Trail. Follow it back to the Allanburg bridge and your car.

Welland Canals Hike #2, Woodend to Museum return

- This hike will take you past both the Third and the Present Welland Canal.
- Type of hike: **Out and back**
- Distance: **8.5 km**

<https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2268388>

Park at Woodend Conservation, Taylor Road. **N43.143377 W79.167212**

Cross over Taylor Rd and follow the white blazes through the Golf course. After a short climb, the trail turns sharply right and continues along the banks of the 3rd Welland Canal. You will pass 4 locks on your way to Glendale Ave: Locks 16, 15, 14, and 13. Along the trail, you will notice concrete bollards (used to tie up ships). Take a picture of one of these **bollards with a blaze** painted on it. Continue along the trail until you reach Glendale Avenue. Look back and take a **picture of the locks of the 3rd Welland Canal** looking back from the road.

Continue on the Main Trail and cross the lift bridge that crosses the 4th Welland Canal. **Take a picture of the bridge.** At the end of the bridge, there is a set of lights. Take a sharp right and cross the road. Do not continue following the Main Trail Blazes. Follow the walking path, keeping the present day canal on your right. Take this path to St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre. The Museum is located at Lock 3 and is open 7 days/wk from 9-5. Admission to the Museum is open to the public by donation. There is a viewing platform to observe ships in the lock.

Just past the Museum is a Fallen Workers Memorial. This memorial commemorates the 138 workers who died building the Welland Canal. **Take a picture of the Memorial.**

Inside the Museum, there are several permanent exhibits. One is a short 10 minute film: The Welland Canals: Past & Present. There may also be an exhibit entitled: The Canals Gallery.

After visiting the Museum and environs, retrace your steps back to Woodend.

Welland Canals Badge Hike #3, Sobey's (Johannsson's Bar) to Richard Pierpoint Park loop

- This hike will take you along parts of the Merritt Trail where the first Welland Canal followed. Unfortunately, there is little left of the first canal but many sections of the **Second Welland Canal** are quite visible here because it followed much the same route as the first one.
- Type of hike: loop
- Distance: 9 km

<https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2267088>

Park in Sobey's parking lot closest to the corner of Glendale Ave and Mountain St.

N43.136490 W79.216689

The grassy area between the parking lot and the road was near lock 14 of the Second Welland Canal. There is an artifact on the grass. It is called a **Johansson's bar**. This bar was used to lift the limestone blocks in to the locks. Take a picture of this artifact and head along the Merritt Trail (away from Glendale Ave). The Merritt Trail is marked well with **yellow** blazes. As you walk along the trail, you will readily see sections of the Second Canal on your right side. Between Glendale Avenue and Westchester Ave, are locks 13-6. There are 3 pedestrian bridges where you can look out over the canal. **These**

bridges are over Locks 10, 9, and 8. Step out on at least one of the bridges and take a **picture of the old second canal viewed from a bridge.**

When you arrive at Westchester Avenue, continue to follow the yellow blazes across the street, past an apartment building and then down a gravel road into a park. This park has recently been renamed **Richard Pierpoint Park.** Continue to follow the path keeping the old canal on your **right side.** The Merritt trail curves around the creek/old canal. Continue on the path, with the creek on your left side now. **Do not follow the yellow blazes when they make a sharp left turn to go up the hill.** Continue on the path with the creek/ old canal on your right. Follow the path until it comes to the parking lot/ entrance to the park. There is signage about the renaming of the park to Richard Pierpoint Park. **Richard Pierpoint** was one of Canada's most famous black loyalists who spent much of his adult life in St. Catharines after receiving a land grant that included property which is currently occupied by the park. The first canal flowed through Pierpoint's property. **Take a picture of the signage about Richard Pierpoint.**

Continue along the path, past some community gardens and then turn right to cross over the bridge to return to the other side of the park. Turn left when you cross the bridge and retrace your steps to Westchester Avenue. Cross over Westchester Ave . Turn left and walk until you see a parking area with a **large ship propeller** at its entrance. Read the information about the propeller and **take a picture of the propeller.** Follow the path , this time with the old canal on your right. As you pass the ruins of an old foundation (now a skate board park) you may see some old lumber ruins on the left. Could these be old lock gates? Follow the path until the first bridge on the right. Cross the bridge turn left and follow the path back to your car.

Welland Canals Hike #4, Port Dalhousie

This hike will acquaint you with the entry point of 3 of the 4 Welland Canals. When the Fourth Welland Canal was built, the entry point was changed to Port Weller, thus making a new, more direct route to Port Colborne and Lake Erie.

Type of hike: "Loopish"

Length: ~7 km

Plotaroute map: <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2280887>

Park at Port Dalhousie Public Parking lot. Fee for parking is \$3/hr for a total of 3 hours from May 1- Sept. 30. **N43.203031 W79.265362**

Walk to the water channel and head up towards the road. On your left is Lock 1 of the 2nd Welland Canal. Part of the area has now been made into Olde Lock One Commons, as a meeting and entertainment venue. There is an excellent plaque with historical information regarding the lock. **Take a picture of either the lock or the plaque.**

Continue towards the street until you see a metal sculpture of a tow horse. This statue was made by Beamsville artist, Floyd Elzinga to commemorate the thousands of horses and donkeys that pulled the boats to the next lock. They suffered a very difficult life, many of them dying in progress. **Take a photo of the statue.**

Walk back towards the Lock One Commons but turn right and go around the building to follow the path along the water and cross a pedestrian bridge. You will shortly see the remnants of Lock 1 of the 3rd Welland Canal. Take a picture of either the **old lock gates** or the **Lock One of the Third Welland Canal plaque.**

Continue along the path and on your right, is a small white building, The Lock Keepers House. Take a photo of this historic building.

When you reach the road, **turn left**, and walk until the path leads left down a walkway and along the other side of the water channel. Keeping the water on your left, walk along the path until you reach the first lighthouse that would guide the ships into the canal. **Take a picture of the Lighthouse.**

Turn around and walk back to the Lakeport Rd. Retrace your steps over the bridge and immediately cross the street to enter a park (Rennie Park) with walking paths. Take the first path that veers left and follow this path over a long pedestrian bridge. As you cross the bridge, you will see the entry point of another lock on your left. This is Lock 2 of the 3rd Welland Canal.

You will reach another park (Jaycee Park). As you walk along the path you will see concrete bollards on your left side. Leave the path and walk alongside the bollards. These concrete were used to tie up ships. Continue past the bollards and then go left to have a good view of the old Lock. **Take a picture of it.** Nearby and close to the parking lot, locate the large cairn that has a plaque commemorating the 3rd Welland Canal. **Take a picture of this plaque.** The 3rd Welland Canal took quite a different route than the first two. It did not use natural waterways as some of the first two did. It cut diagonally across present-day St. Catharines.

Cross over the parking lot and continue along the path towards the road, and entrance way to the park. When you reach Ontario St., cross at the lights and walk through the parking lot of Anchor Pointe Retirement Residence. Behind the building, is a very well-preserved outline of Lock 4 of the 3rd Canal. **Take a picture of the Lock or the Plaque,** located on a large rock in the centre of the lock.

Retrace your steps back through the parking lot, Jaycee Park, and the pedestrian bridge. Veer left after the bridge and follow the path back to Lakeport road and your vehicle in the parking lot near Lakeside Park.