

Canal boat dedication



Captain Jerry Stoner mans the tiller

Photos and story
by Jennifer Archibald

With fanfare, ceremony, and the firing of a cannon, the Wabash and Erie Canal Association's replica canal boat was dedicated Saturday morning.

The dock at Canal Park, Delphi, was decorated in red, white, and blue. The Vintage Brass band stirred the crowd with "The Star Spangled Banner," and songs of the canal era.

State Representative Rich McClain read a state proclamation from Gov. Mitch Daniels, proclaiming June 20, 2009, as Delphi Canal Park Day.

Julie Kitchell spoke on behalf of US Congressman Joe Donnelly.

"This boat may only move a few hundred feet forward, but it moves our recognition



Emcee Dan McCain thanks everyone involved

of history forward for generations..." she said. "Just over 80 years ago, Franklin Delano Roosevelt came to Delphi and spoke in a park before leaving on a train bound for Indianapolis. Even he would say the trail system and new canal boat have been a new deal for Delphi

that has rallied the citizenry."

Delphi Mayor Randy Strasser offered his congratulations and proclaimed canal association president Dan McCain as Honorary Mayor for the day.

McCain read a long list of names who helped make the canal boat dream a reality.

He also recognized other friends of the canal. All dignitaries who were previously issued tickets were entitled to the inaugural ride on the boat.

The ceremony ended with the canal association's traditional shout of "Hip Hip Hooray!" and the firing of a cannon.

After the dignitaries' ride, the public had their chance to board.

McCain said the boat was kept busy, hauling more than 300 passengers. He said attendance at the park was estimated at 400 on Saturday and 250 on Sunday.

The boat is handicapped accessible and holds 40 passengers plus crew. The narrated cruises begin at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and at 2 p.m. on Sundays. The narrator tells the history of the canal, especially "the Delphi story."



More than 300 passengers rode The Delphi at its public launching last weekend



Vintage Brass band adds to the fanfare



Crowd waits their turn for a ride on The Delphi



Cynthia Harmon

Attorney at Law

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