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NEWS RELEASE

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Augusta Canal Smartphone DigiTrail

Augusta's 19th Century historic canal is using 21st Century smartphone technology to tell its stories. The Augusta Canal DigiTrail uses QR code tags (square black and white boxes similar to UPC bar codes) to link smartphone (iPhone, Android and other 3G mobile phones) to specially created mobile web pages by simply scanning the QR tag with their phone's camera.

Small 3x7 signs will be placed at about half mile intervals along the canal's towpath at well-known and lesser known locations such as the Petersburg boat docks, the Butt Memorial Bridge, or the Tin House gates. Others will bring up information on some of the canal's abundant wildlife, such as slider turtles and heron. Users will be able to pull up written information, photos, maps and additional web links as they walk along. Soon, video clips will be linked to the sites as well.

Some mobile devices have a QR scanning application preinstalled, or a free app such as QRVark or QuickMark can be easily downloaded, explained Canal Marketing Director Rebecca Rogers.

The project was the brainchild of Augusta Canal Authority member Peter Hughes, who volunteered his time to research and build each of the DigiTrail mobile webpages.

Markers will be installed over the next few days, and more may be added later, Roger's said. Locations/topics include: The Headgates, Towpath, water flow, slider turtles, great blue herons, Native Americans, floods, the Rapids of the Savannah River, cliff swallows, the Long Gate Spillway, the Tin House Gate, the Augusta & Knoxville Railroad, mill houses, the Butt Memorial Bridge, Petersburg Boats and the 13th Street First Level gates.

"One of the cool things about these markers is that the content can be dynamic—we can change and add to it at any time without having to replace a whole big, expensive interpretive sign," Rogers said. "I can see us using these only on the trail, but in our Interpretive Center to add digital layers of information to what we now present."

EXAMPLES



Butt Memorial Bridge



Cliff Swallow Nests and Confederate Powderworks Magazine Island