

LOGAN
THEATER
COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER

&



PROUDLY PRESENT

THE LAST CANAL BOAT



OCT. 2, 2026 @ 7PM

OCT. 3, 2026 @ 7PM

OCT. 4, 2026 @ 2PM

LOGAN THEATER • LOGAN, OHIO

88 E MAIN ST. * LOGAN, OHIO

NEVER GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS!



PRESENTS

THE LAST CANAL BOAT

MUSIC, STORY, AND LYRICS BY:

JEFF CRISLER, SUE BILSKI, & KATHY CRISLER

Director..... Rita Preston
Stage Manager..... Ariel Kirsch
Costume Head..... Sherri Saines
Costume Team members:
Merrilee Carlson, Marty Skeeles,
Susan Spinelli, Naomi Squires
Producer..... Kathy Crisler

Choreographer Robyn Lindsey
Sound Manager Shawn Gallagan
Lighting Design Shelly Riggs
Lighting Operator Rita Preston
Set Design Becky Roley
Orchestra Conductor... David Tadlock
Vocal Coach..... Mary Rizzardi

Synopsis

The Last Canal Boat is a family-friendly historical musical set along the Hocking Canal during the late 1800s, capturing the lives, hardships, and dreams of the families who lived and worked on Ohio's canal system. Framed through the memories of an old canal worker, the story follows young Abigail "Abby" Fletcher, a spirited girl determined to become a canal boat captain despite the expectations of her time.

As Abby grows up on the canal alongside her friend Tommy, the musical celebrates the resilience of canal families, the importance of the Hocking Canal to southeastern Ohio's economy, and the sense of community built along the towpaths and locks. Through music, humor, and heartfelt storytelling, the production explores ambition, friendship, changing times, and the fading era of canal life as railroads begin to replace the waterways. Blending local history with original music and characters inspired by the people of the Hocking Valley, The Last Canal Boat is both a tribute to Ohio's canal heritage and a story about following one's dreams against the current.

Characters

(In order of appearance)

Old Canawler Narrator 1	Jeff Crisler
Young Girl 1	Bella Dupont
Young Girl 2	Avery Skaggs
Young Abby Fletcher	Adah Kirsch
Young Tommy Patton	Mia Hurst
Aunt Martha Fletcher	Mary Rizzardi
Teacher	Eden Durand
Boy Student 1	Noah Capilitan
Boy Student 2	Keaton Buckley
Boy Student 1	Jaxson Travis
Girl Student 1	Briella Chambers
Girl Student 2	Maddy Hacker
Girl Student 3	Addy Meyer
Girl Student 4	Selah Kirsch
Girl Student 5	Harper Capilitan
Tavern Server	Barb Crawford
Older Abby	Lyndsey Skaggs
Samuel Pullen	Ryan Shepler
Circus Barker	Ben Kirsch
Pete	Josh Dupont
Elmer	Dave Crawford
Townsperson Lady	Crystal Koblitz
Townsperson Man	Steve Saines
Canal Lady Dancers	Katy Kudlapur, Stephanie Runge, Crystal Koblitz, Lyndsey Skaggs, Mary Rizzardi
Canal Men Dancers	Ephraim Kirsch, Steve Saines, Ben Kirsch, Josh Dupont
Railroad Lady Dancers	Eden Durand, Mary Burggraf, Katy Kudlapur, Melane Barlow, Crystal Koblitz
Railroad Men Dancers	Owen Nott, Ben Barlow, Ben Kirsch, Zeph Kirsch
Older Tommy	Ephraim Kirsch
Nate	Brody Chambers
Toby	Kysen Brown
Mr. Adams	Ken Bowald

Act I

Scene 1: The Old Canawler (*The Old Canawler; two young girls*)

Scene 2: Sheep Pen Lock 1872 (*Young Abby & Young Tommy;
Aunt Martha*)

Song: *"I Want to be a Captain"*

Scene 3: Night on the Canal (*Young Abby and Aunt Martha*)

Song: *"Martha's Lullaby"*

Scene 4: Sharp Family, Sugar Grove, Ohio (*The Old Canawler;
two young girls*)

Scene 5: Schoolyard (*Young Tommy, Young Abby, Aunt Martha,
Teacher, school children*)

Song: *"Someday"*

Scene 6: Hank the Mule (*The Old Canawler; two young girls*)

Scene 7: Evening on the Canal 1880 (*Older Abby, Aunt Martha*)

Song: *"Stars of the Valley"*

Scene 8: Tavern in Logan in the Morning

(*circus barker, townspeople lady, townspeople man, 2 ladies, Pete,
Elmer, Aunt Martha, Abby, Samuel*)

Scene 9: That Evening in the Tavern

(*circus barker, Pete, Elmer, rag dancers, jig dancers, townspeople,
Aunt Martha, Professor Heck, Abby, Tommy, Samuel*)

Song: *"Rag for the Railroad" and "Towpath Jig"*

Scene 10: Outside on the Canal Wharf - Same evening

(*Tommy, Abby, Samuel, Townsperson Man*)

Song: *"Canal Boat Waltz"*

INTERMISSION

(15 minutes)

Act II

Scene 11: The Old Canawler: Backwater (*The Old Canawler;
two young girls*)

Scene 12: Tavern in the Morning, few months after the dance
(*Pete, Elmer, server, Abby, Aunt Martha, Nate, Toby, townspeople*)
Song: "*A Hoggee I Will Be*"

Scene 13: Hoggee (*The Old Canawler; two young girls*)
Song: "*Cargo Manifest*" (*This occurs in the middle of the Old
Canawler's monologue; Cargo Manager,
various cast*)

Scene 14: Abigail and Samuel at the Tavern
(*Server, Samuel, Abby, Mr. Adams, Tommy*)
Song: "*Abby's Song*"

Scene 15: Slackwater (*The Old Canawler; two young girls*)

Scene 16: Storm on the Canal (*Abby, Aunt Martha, Tommy, Toby*)
-Short comment by the Old Canawler at the end of the scene

Scene 17: Sheep Pen Lock 1882 (*Tommy, Abby*)
Song: "*Moon Over the Canal*"

Scene 18: The Old Canawler (*The Old Canawler, two young girls*)

END of SHOW



Stage Tech/Crew

Zeph Kirsh, Mickey Hart, Naomi Squires, Becky Roley,
various cast members

Pit Orchestra

David Tadlock.....Conductor

Sue Bilski.....Keyboard

Robert Stieg.....Violin

Anna Elliot.....Violin

Renee Bartholomew....Flute

Darlene Barrett.....Cello

Heidi Brymer.....Viola

Dave Filon.....Bass

Danny Brymer.....Percussion

Thank you to our Sponsors:



This production was made possible largely through a grant from **Explore Hocking Hills**, and donations from our amazing community.

CAPTAIN **\$1000**

Warthman Drilling
Motherwell Distilling Co.
Katy and Prakash Kudlapur

HOGGEE **\$300**

Hocking Hills Messenger
Vicki & Mark Davidson
Jim & Linda Hayward
Sue Bilski
Wendy Stallsmith
Wilson Photography

TOWNSPEOPLE **\$50**

Ann Sauers

CANAWLER **\$500**

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Tom Kennedy &
Chris Kennedy
Ginger Rogers

LOCK-KEEPER **\$100**

Hocking County
Historical Society
Daine & Lenny Moller
Marty Skeeles
Hocking Hills
Coffee Emporium
Maryann Daggett
Valerie Winston
Bright Side Studio
High Rock Adventures



Joyce and Larry Gerstner

Dedication

This show is dedicated to Larry Gerstner. Only with Larry's encouragement and support for renewing downtown Logan, plus his enthusiasm for renovating the Logan Theater and hosting live local productions, were we able to bring *The Last Canal Boat* to the community.

Special thanks to...

Sadie Burger, Kalie Roach, and Megan Rader
Logan Theater Board
Joyce Gerstner
Hocking Hills Tourism Association
Heather Eddy • Jordan Dean
Shelly Riggs • Nyla Volmer
Tom O'Grady - WOUB • Mark Bohach - WLGN
Hocking County Historical and Genealogical Society
Barb and Dave Crawford
Ariel Kirsch and Hocking County Children's Chorus
Becky Roley • Wendy Wilson • Don Bilski
Hawk's Nest • ABC Players • Cheryl Gallagan
Amy O'Nail • Deb Tobin • Jim Phillips
Shawn Gallagan, Jr. • Jarrod Crawford
Vince Crisler • Therese and Steve Karnes
The Robert Sharp Family
Lori Schrader • Mark Barrell
Linda Hayward • Molly Weiland
Diane Moller • Valerie Winston
Chris Schweitzer • Amanda Reynolds, Sunset Slush
Many script readers and advisors
The cast, crew and production team!

***Very special thanks for the support of the parents,
spouses, partners, friends, and family of the
production team, cast, and crew!***

Common Canal Terms and Definitions

Canawler - a person who worked on the canal

Hoggee - the person, usually a young boy, who took care of the mules and led them along the towpath

Backwater - when two boats met at a very narrow section, one had to back up

Slackwater - where the canal ran in the river, these sections were called *slackwater*. **Special note:** The Hocking Canal sometimes ran in the Hocking River when the river allowed safe passage; river flooding could present dangers to canal boats



Current day Sheep Pen Lock

Special note: Scenes 2 and 17 are at Sheep Pen Lock. Sandy Starnes was a 6th grade teacher at Rockbridge Elementary. She and her students were responsible for the preservation project of the Lift Lock #12, also known as the Sheep Pen Canal Lock located in Rockbridge. This accomplishment was awarded at the State Historical Society and was published in a McGraw-Hill Social Studies 6th grade textbook.

You can find more information about the Hocking Canal, including a brochure with a self-guided tour of the canal route through the city of Logan, at the **Hocking County Historical and Genealogical Society Museum**.