

# Unlocking the Great Lakes: The Opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway

On June 26, 1959, the St. Lawrence Seaway was officially opened, connecting the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. This massive project was a major engineering feat that had a profound impact on the Great Lakes region and beyond.

## A History of the Seaway

The idea of a seaway connecting the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean has been around for centuries. The first serious attempt to build a seaway was made in 1824, but this project was ultimately unsuccessful.



## Pandora's Locks: The Opening of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway by Jeff Alexander

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 15359 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 465 pages



In the early 20th century, the United States and Canada began to explore the possibility of building a seaway together. In 1932, the two countries signed a treaty that called for the construction of a seaway. However, the project was delayed due to the outbreak of World War II.

After the war, the United States and Canada revived their plans to build a seaway. In 1954, the two countries signed a new treaty that authorized the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

### **The Construction of the Seaway**

The construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway was a massive undertaking that took seven years to complete. The project involved the construction of seven locks, two canals, and a dam.

The locks were necessary to raise and lower ships to the different elevations of the Great Lakes. The canals were built to bypass rapids and waterfalls. The dam was built to control the flow of water in the St. Lawrence River.

The construction of the Seaway was a major engineering feat. The project required the excavation of millions of tons of rock and earth. It also involved the construction of numerous bridges and tunnels.

### **The Opening of the Seaway**

On June 26, 1959, the St. Lawrence Seaway was officially opened. The first ship to pass through the Seaway was the Canadian ship Edmund Fitzgerald.

The opening of the Seaway was a major event for the Great Lakes region. It allowed ships to travel from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean without having to unload their cargo. This made it possible for the Great Lakes to become a major shipping hub.

### **The Impact of the Seaway**

The opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway had a profound impact on the Great Lakes region. It led to a significant increase in shipping traffic on the Great Lakes.

The Seaway also helped to boost the economy of the Great Lakes region. It made it possible for businesses to ship their goods to and from the Great Lakes more easily.

In addition to its economic benefits, the Seaway also has had a number of environmental benefits. It has helped to reduce pollution in the Great Lakes by reducing the number of ships that have to travel through the Soo Locks.

### **The St. Lawrence Seaway Today**

Today, the St. Lawrence Seaway is an essential part of the Great Lakes region. It is used by millions of ships each year. The Seaway has had a major impact on the economy and environment of the Great Lakes region.

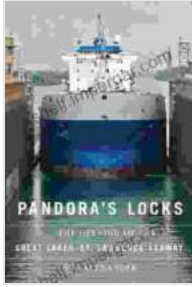
The St. Lawrence Seaway is a testament to the ingenuity and perseverance of the engineers who built it. It is a major engineering feat that has had a lasting impact on the Great Lakes region.

### **Further Reading**

- The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation
- The History of the St. Lawrence Seaway
- The St. Lawrence Seaway: A Maritime History

### **Image Credits**

- St. Lawrence Seaway, 1959 (U.S. Navy)



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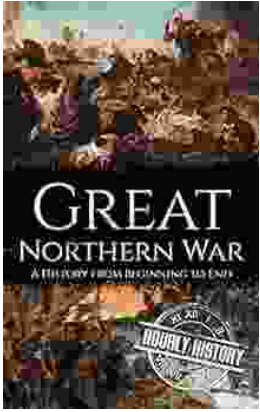
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