



Number 84

www.canalwatch.org

October 2022

Canal Watch Work Group Restores Another Dock

In the June 2022 newsletter, we told you about “The Saga of the Kingston Dock,” where the original dock was washed away after storms Henri and Ida last year and then located and salvaged earlier this year.

The final chapter of this story was completed this September when a new dock was installed by the Canal Watch work crew consisting of Tim Roth, Bob Barth, Wayne Petko, and Chuck Martin. Since it is now firmly attached to the existing concrete base and canal bank, we are confident that it will survive the next big storm.

Our park superintendent sent her thanks: “Congratulations on your successful construction. Nice to cross one more item off the list that was damaged during Ida!”



Somerset County's Journey Through the Past, October 8-9, 2022

For the 17th year, the Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission sponsored its Journey Through the Past, an opportunity to visit, at no charge, many of the county's historic sites.

While the Griggstown bridgetender's home has participated for several years, thanks to the Millstone Valley Preservation Coalition, this was the first year in which guests could visit the East Millstone bridgetender's home, station, and outhouse.

The visitors had fun taking part in an informal ribbon-cutting. Pictured is Somerset County Commissioner Melonie Marano, snipping a piece of the ribbon as a keepsake.

The D&R Canal Watch is grateful to the guides who helped to greet people. Pictured below are Linda Barth, Wayne Petko, Tim Roth, and Bob Barth. In addition we were happy to have assistance from Marion Munk, Candy Willis, and Barbara ten Broeke.

Many of those who stopped by commented that they had



driven past this building hundreds of times and were so glad to finally get to look inside.

Guests learned about the life of the bridgetender and his family. Using historic photographs, the guides explained how this valuable canal employee would wait to hear the sound of the conch shell (and at that moment someone would blow the conch) to let him know that a canalboat was approaching. He would then go outside, swing a gate to stop the road traffic (horses and wagons in early days, cars and trucks later) and push the bridge open.

Visitors were then invited out to the newly



restored station to take part in the ribbon-cutting. In this image (right), Barbara ten Broeke is leading a tour of the building.

Over 125 people visited the site during the two days. Some stayed for quite a while, asking questions about the canal, the state park, and the Canal Watch.

More photos on the next page.

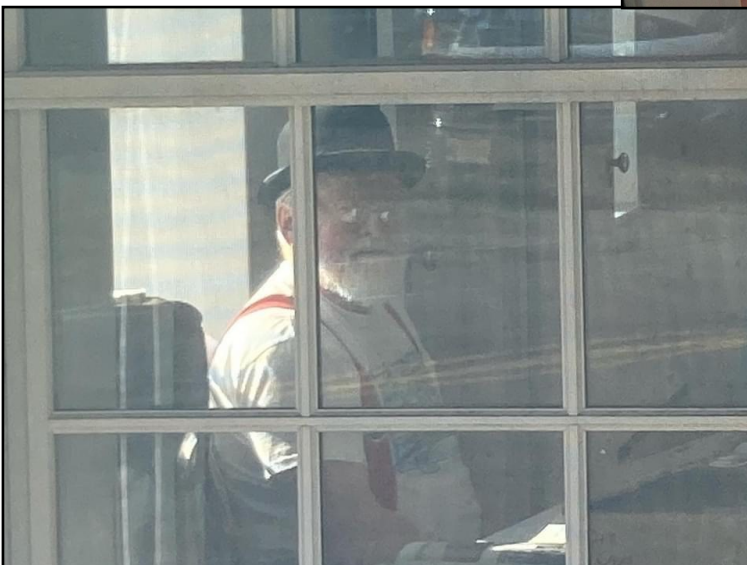




Displayed at the left are pulleys and chains loaned by Barbara ten Broeke, along with state park brochures.

The back room on the first floor featured the Canal Watch display (on left in the photo) that was created by Marion Munk and Jean Bruno Stremlo.

Wayne Petko made a collage of photos showing before, during and after stages of the restoration of the station. Tim Roth brought information and giveaways related to the D&R Canal from the Canal Society of New Jersey.



The bridgetender, decked out in his bowler and red suspenders, awaits the sound of the conch shell.

Benches in the D&R Canal State Park

In late October, the Wednesday Work Group began clearing vegetation from the many benches in the park. On future work days, the team hopes to repair some of the benches whose boards need replacement. Here are a few photos showing their work.



This bench, an anniversary gift to Ellen and Michael Kaplan, is just north of the Griggstown Causeway. Vegetation has nearly engulfed it.

Here is the same bench after the vegetation had been cleared away.



Here are two more benches that have since been improved.



ONLY A FEW 2023 CANAL WATCH CALENDARS LEFT

The new 2023 D&R Canal Watch Calendar is now available. All photos were taken by canal park users and amateur photographers.

Supplies are limited, so order your copy now.

To purchase a copy, please contact Linda Barth at barthlinda123@aol.com or 908-240-0488.

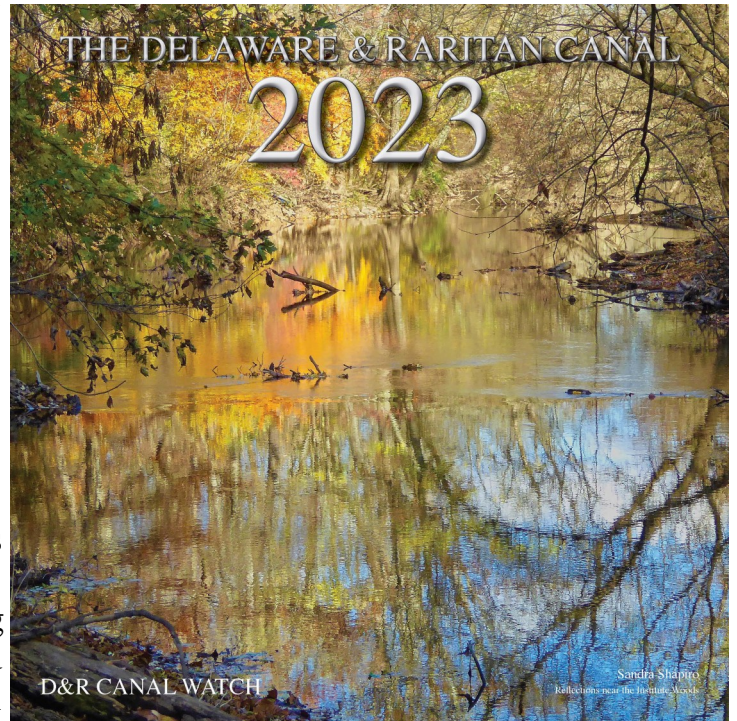
Provide your phone number and your town and she will call you to arrange for delivery.

12" x 12" -- \$20, with all proceeds going to the D&R Canal Watch to restore the Griggstown bridgetender's station. Payable in cash or by check made out to D&R Canal Watch.

This lovely full-color calendar features images taken by people who visit the towpath.

The photographs include people using the towpath for horseback riding and snowshoeing. Enjoy views of our canal in all seasons.

Our calendar includes a map and a history of the D&R Canal.



Photographers featured this year are Carla Olsen, Summer Pramer, Jorge Rivera, Mark Wetherbee, Tom Egan, Sandra Shapiro, and Joyce Grygo.

Of special note is a view of the New Brunswick terminus in Boyd Park, a place perhaps not visited by park users, as it is not part of the D&R Canal State Park.

The D&R Canal Watch is an independent, 501c3 nonprofit organization working to educate and engage the public in the protection of the environment and preservation of the heritage of the Delaware and Raritan Canal.

The D&R Canal Watch, P.O. Box 2, Rocky Hill, New Jersey 08553
908-240-0488
www.canalwatch.org
<https://www.facebook.com/dandrcanalwatch>
info@canalwatch.org

Graffiti Clean-up Much Appreciated by the D&R Canal State Park

By Linda Barth

Speaking for myself, I can never comprehend the point of graffiti. Why do people have to write or spray paint on property that does not belong to them.

Denise Brown-Kahney, a frequent user of the path in Lambertville, wrote to the Canal Watch, wondering what could be done about the copious graffiti in the area of the Lambertville lock. We put her in touch with Eric Clark, the head of the SPLASH Classroom, who has successfully worked on this problem in the past.

In mid-October, Denise and Eric used specially designed wipes to remove much of the graffiti. These pictures show you how much they achieved. The park and the Canal Watch offer our sincere thanks.



The lock sign on the left has been beautifully cleaned, but the outlet lock sign on the right still needs work. We welcome volunteers who wish to help with this site or any other place along the canal. Please contact me (at barthlinda123@aol.com) if you see other places that need cleaning or to volunteer to help.

We wanted to share the letter below written by James Amon, the first executive director of the D&R Canal Commission. Jim loves the canal and wanted to share his thoughts with all of the users of the park.

17 October 1990



DELAWARE AND RARITAN
CANAL COMMISSION

An Open Letter to All Friends of the D & R Canal:

My wife and I bicycled on the towpath from Rocky Hill to Princeton on one of these recent warm October Saturdays and I was delighted by what I found. Ten years ago the canal was central New Jersey's best-kept secret; few people even knew it existed. On my recent visit, however, there were so many others using the towpath that my wife and I were seldom able to ride side-by-side.

There were bicyclists of all kinds. There were four-year-olds with the training wheels still on; fast-peddling mountain bikers with helmets, goggles, gloves, and the rest of the road-racing paraphernalia; families of up to six; young couples who were frequently sitting together on the edge of the canal instead of riding; even tricyclists were struggling to peddle on the path.

The array of walkers was as impressive as that of the cyclists. The greatest number of pedestrians were casual strollers, but there were also serious-looking, weight-toting power walkers in their \$120 walking sneakers, and a surprising number of people in fancy dress. The sight of women in dresses and men in white shirts with ties loosened around their necks betrays a spontaneity in their walk. They must have been driving by, seen the Canal Park, and found it irresistible. Young couples pushed strollers and baby buggies. Joggers came in waves. Fishermen and fisherwomen were posted at openings.

But the action was hardly confined to the path; the variety on the water was equally wonderful. The canal was full of canoes, kayaks, and inflated boats. One canoe had two people in it, I think. They were lying flat with arms and legs poking above the gunwales while the person in the rear occasionally stuck a paddle in the water to direct their drift. More than one canoe careened from bank to bank as the

PRALLSVILLE MILLS P.O. BOX 539 STOCKTON, NJ 08559-0539 609-397-2000 FAX: 609-397-1081

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | COMMISSIONERS | | | | | | |
| James C. Amon | Benjamin B. Kirkland <i>Chairman</i> | Martin D. Jessen <i>Vice-Chairman</i> | Donald B. Jones <i>Treasurer</i> | Stuart R. Zaikov R. William Pauley | Judith A. Yaskin Frank J. Torpey | Winona D. Nash | |

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
James J. Florio, *Governor* Judith A. Yaskin, *Commissioner*

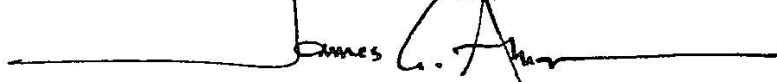
fast-paddling occupants tried to learn the mysteries of canoe navigation. One man paddled rhythmically from the front of the canoe, alone except for three dogs sitting serenely behind him.

The State Park Service has recently concluded that the Canal Park is the third most heavily-used State Park in New Jersey. (Liberty Park is first, followed by Island Beach.) The secret is out. Half a million people visit the Canal Park each year.

As impressive as the total number and variety of people in the park is its beauty. Shortly before my recent bike ride I had been on Cape Cod for a two-week vacation. While I was there I had bought a booklet that described bike trails on the Cape and I rode on most of them. None was as nice as the D & R Canal Park path.

The Canal Commission has been proclaiming for a number of years that the D & R is central New Jersey's premier resource. We are far from developing the Canal Park's full potential, but it is a pleasure to see its value so recognized on a warm October weekend.

Yours sincerely,



James C. Amon
Executive Director



TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIVING TO THE D&R CANAL WATCH

Many people consider making charitable contributions for income tax purposes. Remember that the Canal Watch is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, so your contributions are tax-deductible.

News from the D&R Canal Commission meeting, September 21, 2022

Executive Director's Report

Director Hutchison reported that one of the general permits completed this month was to the New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA) for the in-kind repair of the footbridge that spans the Alexauken Creek aqueduct in the City of Lambertville. The Director thanked NJWSA's Chief Engineer Darin Shaffer for providing the Commission staff with old plans related to the 1947 reconstruction of the aqueduct by the Department of Conservation, which revealed the existence of As-built plans of the 19th-century wooden aqueduct structure that preceded the current concrete trough made by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1921 and held by the New Jersey State Archives.

Director Hutchison reported that he attended a virtual public information center (PIC) hosted by an engineering firm retained by the N.J. Department of Transportation (NJDOT) for the proposed replacement, relocation, and expansion of the bridge that conveys Route 29 northbound over the Delaware and Raritan Canal immediately north of the Scudder Falls Bridge in Ewing Township, Mercer County. The 407-foot-long bridge was constructed in 1960 and last rehabilitated in 1984. The project was in the planning stages and would commence in the fall/winter of 2026. From the perspective of the Commission, the movement (slight 3'9" to the east) and expansion of the bridge posed questions of visual, historic, and natural quality impacts. Also, the present bridge is supported by five concrete piers that rest within the prism of the canal. The removal or reduction of the number of piers will be a point of discussion with NJDOT as the project advances.

Director Hutchison offered his opinion that the Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) retaining walls used for the Scudder Falls Bridge that carries Interstate 95 (I-295) over the Delaware River had proved unsatisfactory from a visual perspective. It was his hope that a design, which utilized a more natural random ashlar patterned stone facing, can be employed in areas where any proposed retaining wall is visible from the park multiuse trail.

Park Superintendent's Report on the State Park

Superintendent Kalleser reported the success of the 5th Annual Delaware River Cleanup from Holland Township to Hamilton Township, which drew 200 volunteers and included many dedicated state, county and municipal employees.

She also reported that the DEP Office of Resource Development (ORD) had estimated that the project to expand the parking lot at the Cooley Preserve in Kingwood Township would be completed in May or June 2023.

The superintendent reported that the project to elevate the utilities to the second floor of the Port Mercer Bridgetender's House in Lawrence Township were ongoing, as was the project to tie the house to the Ewing-Lawrence Sewer Authority sanitary sewer service. She reported that the Park Service had created an Eventbrite account to enable interested persons to sign up online for public programming and other events offered by the staff of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park (www.eventbrite.com/o/dampr-canal-state-park-33461201207).

Superintendent Kalleser reported that progress was ongoing to repair and improve several of the park gates along the main section of the canal. She stated that she was pleased to report that the East Millstone Bridgetender's House and the recently restored bridgetender's station would be two of the 30 historic sites open to the public as part of Somerset County's annual "Journey Through the Past" weekend event on October 8 and 9. She stated that members of D&R Canal Watch would be present at the house during the event. She expressed her appreciation to D&R Canal Watch and its volunteers for the project to restore the canoe dock at the park public access area near the Kingston Locktender's House.

Vice-Chairman Stout inquired about the status of the project to repair the park multiuse trail and the trestle over the Wickechoke Creek at the Prallsville Mills, which had suffered erosion damage from Tropical Storm Ida. The Superintendent reported that the DEP and NJDOT had secured a contractor and that work was anticipated to be completed by Memorial Day 2023.

Commissioner Lubitz asked the superintendent if she had any information to share on what appeared to be work at the inlet to the canal on Bulls Island. He asked if landscaping and planting were planned for the area. The Superintendent deferred the question to Mr. Sellar.

New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA) Report

Michael Sellar informed the Commission that work on the project to rehabilitate the NJWSA spillway at Landing Lane in New Brunswick remained delayed because of materials supply issues, and that the project was now tentatively scheduled to commence in late October. Mr. Sellar reported that the NJWSA was awaiting the approval of permit applications from State agencies, other than the Commission, before they could commence the Six Mile Run culvert rehabilitation project. He stated that NJWSA had completed the final close-out work related to the project to dredge the main portion of the Delaware and Raritan Canal, including road paving work on Canal Road in Somerset County.

Mr. Sellar reported that NJWSA's 2022 application of the herbicide fluoridone to treat the invasive aquatic plant hydrilla within the Delaware and Raritan Canal concluded on September 9, 2022. He reported that within the month, the NJWSA would submit a permit application to the Commission for Phase 1 of the project to repair the western embankment of the canal in Stockton in the area generally south of Prallsville Mills. Mr. Sellar reported that the NJWSA recently submitted an application for the in-kind reconstruction of approximately 820 linear feet of the embankment of the Delaware and Raritan Feeder Canal at 17 areas.

You may take part in the monthly commission meetings either in person or online. Visit www.nj.gov/dep/drc and click on "Meeting Information." Then click on "Upcoming Meeting Notice." The D&RCC meets at 10:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month. The public is allowed to comment on the proceedings. When in-person meetings resume, they are held at Prallsville Mill on Route 29, just north of Stockton.



Bob Barth cuts the ribbon to open the newly restored bridgetender's station.

Class of 2020-2023

Theodore Chase (Griggstown)
Tim Roth (Long Valley)
Jeff McVey (Lambertville)
Barbara Ross (Princeton)

Class of 2022-2025

Linda Barth (Somerville)
Robert Barth (Somerville)

Christopher "Kip" Bateman (Branchburg)
Barbara ten Broeke (East Millstone)

Class of 2021-2024

Tom Lederer (Princeton)
Carl Hemmingsen, Bordentown
Marion Munk (Piscataway)
Wayne Petko (South Bound Brook)
Charles Martin (Franklin Township)

EVENTS YOU MAY WISH TO ATTEND

**Thursday, November 3 -- Mercer County
A Mind at Play: An Evening with Authors Jimmy
Soni and Rob Goodman**

Thursday, November 3 at 6:30 p.m.

In-person Tickets: \$20 General Admission, \$10
for Morven Members and Students

Virtual Tickets: \$10 General Admission, \$5 for
Students, Free for Morven Members

Join authors Jimmy Soni and Rob Goodman for a
hybrid discussion of their best-selling book *A
Mind at Play: How Claude Shannon Invented the
Info Age*. Known as "The Father of Information
Theory," Claude Shannon is considered one of the
20th century's most important scientists. His in-
sights stand behind every computer built, email
sent, video streamed, and webpage loaded. *A Mind
at Play* offers an inquisitive and vibrant look into
Shannon's singular life including his time working
for Bell Labs.

In-person guests may visit the museum and the *Ma
Bell* exhibition from 5:00 to 6:15 p.m. prior to the
screening and discussion. Doors open for the in-
person version of the event in the Stockton Educa-
tion Center at 6:00 p.m. **Copies of *A Mind at
Play: How Claude Shannon Invented the Info
Age* will be available for purchase from
Morven's museum shop with the opportunity
for author signing following the program.** For
virtual attendees, a Zoom webinar link will be
shared via email prior to the event. A recording
will be sent to those registered following the pro-
gram.

**Saturday, November 5 -- Mercer County
November 5th EVENT,
WASHINGTON CROSSING STATE
PARK, NEW JERSEY
Cannon Firing Demonstration!**

Lamb's Artillery Company (Revolutionary War
reenactment group) will be conducting Artillery
demonstrations from 12:00 Noon. to 4:00 P.M. in
the field behind the **Visitor Center Museum** at
Washington Crossing State Park, Titusville, New 11

Jersey, on Saturday, November 5th. The cannon firing
demonstrations will be held at 12:00, 1:30, 2:30 &
3:30. This event is co-sponsored by The Swan Histori-
cal Foundation Inc.

The Visitor Center Museum can be reached from
I-295 by taking the Trenton/Lambertville Exit (this is
the first exit in N.J. heading north and the last exit
heading south). Head north on Route 29 for 2 ½ miles
and turn right at the first traffic light. Park Entrance
will be on your left in a ½ mile. Enter the park and fol-
low the signs to the Visitor Center Museum. For more
information call (609) 737-0623.

Thursday, November 10 -- Virtual

You are cordially invited to
Burlington Island
part of the Virtual Thursdays Series
Thursday, November 10, 2022
6:30pm - 7:45pm
via Zoom
with a \$5 donation

Judy Gaunt, Dawn McCreary and Jim McCreary,
Members of the Friends of Burlington Island, will of-
fer a joint presentation about the history of Burlington
Island and its connection to the land known as Peach-
field, through the last two centuries.

To make your reservation via the Peachfield website,
visit <https://peachfield.org/virtual-offerings-2/>

You can also view all of our upcoming Virtual
offerings.

**To learn about upcoming hikes led
by the state park trail interpreter
Pamela V'Combe, please visit
[https://www.dandrcanal.com/
programs](https://www.dandrcanal.com/programs)**



The D&R Canal Watch is asking for your support for our activities that protect, maintain, and promote the recreational, historical, aesthetic, and environmental qualities of the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park. Over the past years, the Canal Watch has:

- **Restored the Kingston canoe/kayak boat launch**
- Led history walks along both the main canal and the feeder, pointing out historic structures and Light Rail study tours
- Led history bike rides along the main canal and star-gazing events
- Sponsored bird watching walks along the main canal and bilingual nature walks
- Sponsored lectures on topics such as “The Role of the Delaware and Raritan Canal in the Growth of Trenton’s Industrial Potteries,” “The Operation of the Joint Companies and the Interrelationship of the canal with the state’s first railroad,” “The Roebling Story,” “Photography Along the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park: Treasure in Central New Jersey,” “Meet Ashbel Welch, the second chief engineer of the Delaware and Raritan Canal,” and Jim Amon on how the canal and the park changed during his tenure with the commission.
- Purchased gifts that the park budget could not provide. These include a digital camera, seven picnic tables, several benches, a laptop computer and software, a desktop computer, an LED projector, an inflatable screen for outdoor viewing of videos, a subscription to the Meetup website, a scanner, printer ink, a water testing kit, an external computer drive, lumber for canoe dock at Griggstown, folding tables and twenty chairs for Bulls Island, development of a new park website, and professional courses for the maintenance staff.
- Canal interpretive signage at locks and spillways
- Activities in 2009 marking the 175th anniversary of the opening of the Delaware and Raritan Canal. These included “Meet the Canal Authors Day” and “The D&R Canal: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow,” by Richard Hunter” walks, bike rides, canoe and kayak rides, “Hands Along the Canal,” and proclamations from our legislature.
- Examination of Lock 9 to determine the feasibility of reopening the lock to navigation
- Post-flood cleaning of canal structures in Griggstown, Zarephath, and East Millstone
- Painting over graffiti in East Millstone
- Repair of shutters on the East Millstone bridgetender’s home
- Straightening and painting of the outhouse at the East Millstone bridgetender’s home
- Staffing the East Millstone bridgetender’s home during the village’s Canalfest in October
- A photographic exhibit of the homes of bridgetenders and locktenders.
- Services of an information technology consultant for the park’s computers
- Funded classes to certify maintenance staff in small motor repair, applying herbicides, etc.
- Contacted legislators and the governor’s office to keep the parks open and retain the commission
- Facilitated the mothballing of an empty bridgetender’s home by buying lumber and painting the windows.
- Installed Kaya-Arms on docks to facilitate entering and exiting kayaks
- Funding the park’s website and continued updating
- Paying the dues for the Meetup site used for announcing park activities
- **Paying for the conditions assessment and the engineering drawings for the East Millstone bridgetender’s station.**

Canal Watch Calendar of Events

To see our events for 2022, please check this issue or the Canal Watch website, www.canalwatch.org

We have been sending the Canal Watch newsletter by email so that you can read it in **COLOR**. You also have one less item to recycle. If you would like a black-and-white paper copy, please write to Linda Barth at barthlinda123@aol.com.



Through the windows of the Muletenders Barracks by Summer Praner

The D&R Canal Watch
P.O. Box 2
Rocky Hill, New Jersey 08553
908-240-0488
www.canalwatch.org
<https://www.facebook.com/dandrcanalwatch/>
info@canalwatch.org

Our Mission

The D&R Canal Watch is an independent, nonprofit organization working to engage the public in the protection of the environment and preservation of the heritage of the D&R Canal.

Board of Trustees
Linda Barth, president
Charles Martin, vice president
Wayne Petko, secretary
Tom Lederer, treasurer
Robert Barth
Christopher "Kip" Bateman
Ted Chase
Carl Hemmingsen
Jeff McVey
Marion Munk
Barbara Ross
Tim Roth
Barbara ten Broeke

D&R Canal Watch Memorials are a thoughtful gesture

Often when friends or family members have passed away, people ask where they can make a donation that would be meaningful to the deceased.

If your loved one enjoyed exploring the canal or just found it a peaceful sanctuary, perhaps a gift to the D&R Canal Watch would be appropriate.

All of our funding is used to enhance the park and assist the staff in purchasing necessary equipment. If you would like to discuss this option, contact us at info@canalwatch.org.



Renew early: 2023 Membership

As we approach the new year, we would like to remind our members to please renew their membership. You can do so online by visiting www.canalwatch.org and clicking on "Join" at the top right.

Please wait a few seconds for the membership form to appear. When you click "Submit," you will be taken to the payment page. If you prefer to pay by check, please make it payable to D&R Canal Watch and mail it to the Canal Watch at P.O. Box 2, Rocky Hill, New Jersey 08553.

Alternately, you may use the form below and mail it with your check.



D&R Canal Watch 2023 Membership Renewal Form

Membership year: January 1 to December 31

Nonprofit Org \$10 _____ Individual \$15 _____ Family \$25 _____ Organization \$40 _____
Supporter \$100 _____ Patron \$250 _____ Business member \$500 _____ Benefactor \$1000 _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(s) _____

Email address _____

Please send this form and your check, payable to the D&R Canal Watch, to D&R Canal Watch, P.O. Box 2, Rocky Hill, New Jersey 08553-0002. Dues can also be paid online at <https://canalwatch.org/join/>

For reasons of fiscal and environmental responsibility, newsletters will be posted on the Canal Watch website, www.canalwatch.org, and emailed to members for whom we have email addresses. If you require a paper copy, please check here _____.

Volunteers are needed to lead walks/trips. Do you have computer, photography, or design skills that you are willing to use for the organization? Would you like to join the Wednesday Work Crew? May we call on you? Yes ___ No ___ Try me ___ (circle your skill)