



D&R CANAL WATCH

Number 96 www.canalwatch.org October 2024

REGISTER TODAY AND TAKE PART IN THE FIRST ANNUAL "TOUR DE TOWPATH"

Tour de Towpath!

For D&R Canal State Park's 50th Anniversary

October 26, 2024

Cadwalader Park – Trenton – 9 AM
Featuring free D&R Canal Festival with food, music, games!

Chose Your Tour!

- > 50- mile bike to Colonial Park
- > 20-mile bike to Princeton
- > Half marathon to Wash. Crossing
- > 5k fun walk to Lower Ferry Rd.

Sign up at
TourDeTowpath.org



City of Trenton, Dept. of Recreation, Natural Resources & Culture



REGISTER AT tourdetowpath.com

Your chance to bike, walk, and run. Canal festival at Cadwalader Park, Trenton. Bike to Somerset County's Colonial Park and back. Walk north from Trenton and back. Run along the feeder from Cadwalader Park to Washington Crossing and back, and much more!

Volunteers as well as participants are needed to make this day a success! On the website, just under the photo, click on REGISTER. The last item is "Volunteer," which is free. Volunteers receive a commemorative t-shirt. The opening ceremony begins at 10:00 a.m. Volunteers should arrive by 8:30 a.m. and will be assigned tasks like check-in, greeting, parking, or overseeing breakfast. A volunteer medical professional and bike tech would be most helpful. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

On the same page, people can sign up for the 50-mile ride, the 20-mile ride, the half-marathon, or the 5K run/walk. Please share this information with your friends and family.

The press release below is credited to the Trenton Journal:

Fifty years ago this October, New Jersey Governor Brendan Byrne signed legislation to create the D&R Canal State Park, now a 70-mile linear park passing through four Central Jersey counties. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the park and the D&R Canal Commission, the nonprofit D&R Canal Watch has announced a walk-run-bike event called **Tour de Towpath**, centered at Cadwalader Park in Trenton on Saturday, October 26. Registration is now open at www.tourdetowpath.org.

"The D&R Canal State Park is the second-most visited New Jersey State Park and one of the state's best outdoor recreation resources. The Tour de Towpath is the perfect way to increase awareness and celebrate the park and Canal Commission," said Linda Barth, president of D&R Canal Watch, a nonprofit group that organizes volunteer projects and raises funds for the park.

The Tour de Towpath will feature a flagship 50-mile bicycle ride to Colonial Park in Franklin Township, as well as a 20-mile cycling route to Princeton's Turning Basin Park; a non-competitive half-marathon run/walk to Washington Crossing State Park in Hopewell; and a 5k fun run/walk. A festival at the City of Trenton's Cadwalader Park will greet participants upon their return with music, food, and a community village featuring local nonprofits.

"As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the D&R Canal State Park with the **Tour de Towpath** event, we honor not only the beauty and importance of the canal but also the dedication of the community and organizations that support it," said Trenton Mayor Reed Gusciora. "I encourage everyone to join us for a day of fitness, fun, and festivities as we come together to recognize this remarkable park and its impact on our region."

All registered volunteers and participants will receive an event T-shirt. To register or donate, visit the event website as **TourdeTowpath.org**. Registration is \$50 in advance and \$60 the morning of the event; **volunteer registration is free.**

"We are grateful for the support of the New Jersey State Parks, the Canal Commission, the City of Trenton, and more than a dozen businesses and nonprofit groups, including our lead sponsor, Capital Health," said Canal Watch's Linda Barth.

"We're thrilled to support the Tour de Towpath and help mark an important milestone for the D&R Canal State Park," said Al Maghazeh, president and CEO of Capital Health. "Capital Health and the D&R Canal are woven into the fabric of our region, and we couldn't be happier to be part of an event that promotes the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve."

DON'T MISS OUT!

SIGN UP AND SUPPORT THE D&R CANAL WATCH TODAY!

2024 Calendar of Events

The D&R Canal Watch is happy to announce the many celebratory events that will be held throughout 2024. At each of these events we will sell our brand-new commemorative mug for a mere \$10 and our 50th anniversary poetry book for a donation of your choosing. As always, the money will be used for projects that enhance our historic D&R Canal State Park.

State Park staff is holding a canalwide **Scavenger Hunt**. Visit www.dandrcanal.com and scroll down to view and print the questions.

Saturday-Sunday, October 12-13: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday; noon to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Somerset County's Journey Through the Past. Canal Watch members will open the East Millstone bridgetender's home and station (and the historic outhouse, for observation only). Linda Barth, 908-240-0488; barth-linda123@aol.com.

Saturday, October 26 — Tour de Towpath, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the D&R Canal State Park and Canal Commission. Your chance to support the D&R Canal Watch and bike, walk, and run. Canal festival at Cadwalader Park, Trenton. Bike to Somerset County's Colonial Park and back. Walk north from Trenton and back. Run along the feeder from Cadwalader Park to Washington Crossing and back. See page 1-2.

Sunday, November 3 – 10:00 a.m. until about 1:00 p.m. Geology walk and talk along the D&R Canal, east of Rocky Hill. Meet at the big parking lot just south of intersection of Kingston-Rocky Hill Road and Washington Street. Much of the walk will be along the towpath; however, the walk will include short hikes up and down steep hills to view diabase rock outcrops. Walk led by Pierre Lacombe, retired USGS geologist, pjlacombe25@gmail.com

Sunday, November 10: 10:00 a.m. Towpath Walk, Demott Lane to Landing Lane, 4.2 miles. Meet at the historic Van Wickle House off Easton Avenue at the foot of DeMott Lane (GPS 1289 Easton Avenue, Somerset NJ 08873). Leader: Bob Barth, 201-401-3121, bbarth321@aol.com.

If you would like to lead a towpath hike, bike ride, nature walk, or a tour of a canal town in 2025, please write to Bob Barth at bbarth321@aol.com.

In addition to the above activities sponsored by the D&R Canal Watch, you can see the D&R Canal State Park programs at this link: <https://dandrcanal.org/programs>

Five Canal House Challenge a Stunning Success!

On Sunday, September 15, the friends groups of five locktender and bridgetender homes opened at the same time. Visitors received a passport and had it stamped at each of the houses. If they stopped at all five sites, they received a small prize.



The organizers were surprised that about 100 people took advantage of the sunny day to complete the challenge. The Canal Watch is very grateful to our sister organizations for taking part in this wonderful experience. The five sites are (clockwise from top left): the Port Mercer



Canal House, hosted by the Lawrence Historical Society; the Kingston Lock-tender's House, hosted by the Kingston Historical Society; the Griggstown Bridgetender's House, hosted by the Millstone Valley Preservation Coalition; the Blackwells Mills Canal House, hosted by the Blackwells Mills Canal House Association; and the East Millstone Bridgetender's House, hosted by the D&R Canal Watch.



The friends group in charge of each home welcomed visitors and provided a tour and history of the building.

Each visitor received a passport that was stamped at each house. Those who visited all five received a small prize.



Among the many comments heard were these:

When I got to Port Mercer, I was impressed that the team there was **young**—two teenage boys and a very pregnant young woman. It's a small house compared to East Millstone, but the last family occupying it really did have six children.

The young lady I talked with at Blackwells Mills was the granddaughter of the last bridge tender there - and he lived there, without electricity or running water, by his choice, till 1970.

From Port Mercer: We had 127 people visit, including children. We received quite a bit of positive feedback from visitors who really enjoyed the varied programs at each of the houses.

Thank you for the Canal House Challenge! We thoroughly enjoyed traveling from house to house. It was a great experience and we made sure to get the stamps at each location!

(continued on page five)



I have thanked Michael Bell, Laura Strong, and Suzanne Ochse for working shifts (after 12:00) to help with traffic. We had a huge number of knowledgeable and historically curious visitors. It was a long and cheerful day. We heard many new stories from people who live in Kingston, Middlesex County, Manville, and the surrounding areas. Teaching and learning is what life is about.

47 persons signed the log book; however, not everyone did – especially children. Also 6 persons signed who did not take the tour; two from Kingston – who just stopped by and a group of four “on holiday” from England – who when asked for their passports were uncomfortable until the challenge was explained, but then were delighted with the lock and bridge models and exhibits and asked many questions.

Most people were particularly interested in the demonstration of the lock and bridge models, but were also interested in general about the canal and how it functioned. Many asked questions and also commented favorably on our exhibits. Our cookies and cider were also a big hit.

Last, but not least, many commented most favorably on the concept of the Canal House Challenge. Some thought it should be repeated.

We had a great turnout at Blackwell's Mills and had a great time showing off the house.

One bit of feedback that we received consistently at Port Mercer was how different each of the houses was—and not just the houses themselves, but the programs at each house. Visitors told us they spent more time than they were expecting at each house and really enjoyed the variety. We had about 10 volunteers—4 adults and 6 high school students—who helped. Visitors began arriving by 10:15 and kept coming until about 4:30. Hopefully we'll do this again next year.

Among those who visited all five homes and received a prize:



D&R Canal Commission and D&R Canal State Park Host Huge Celebration

On a beautiful Saturday in September, the state park and the commission held an all-day celebration for the 50th anniversary of both organizations.

Organized by Vicki Chirco and Pamela V'Combe, the morning session featured an invitation-only panel discussion and luncheon in the Prallsville Grist Mill. Vicki introduced Jane Rosenblatt-Birkhofer, DEP deputy commissioner, who reminisced about her early days as a park interpreter. Bruce Stout, vice-chairman of the canal commission, welcomed the attendees.

Four panelists with many years of experience working on the D&R discussed the successes and problems that they faced. Moderator John Hutchison, executive director of the commission, introduced

- Jim Amon, the commission's first executive director, 1975-2005;
- Marc Brooks, executive director of the New Jersey Water Supply Authority;
- Al Payne, administrator of DEP's Office of Resource Development; and
- Paul Stern, superintendent of the D&R Canal State Park, 1980-1998.

Afterward guests were treated to a delicious lunch catered by Lovin Oven Cakery from Frenchtown.

The afternoon featured all-day entertainment by The Successful Failures (right), a Trenton band that "combines Americana, pop, rock, and enough of a dusting of Bluegrass that serves as an appetizer to the main course without overwhelming the entire meal," according to Rock is the New Roll, July 2020.

A crowd favorite was the 12-foot tall Smokey Bear, brought by the New Jersey Forest Fire Service.

Food trucks from Tia's Tacos and Kona Ice filled the tummies of the visitors.

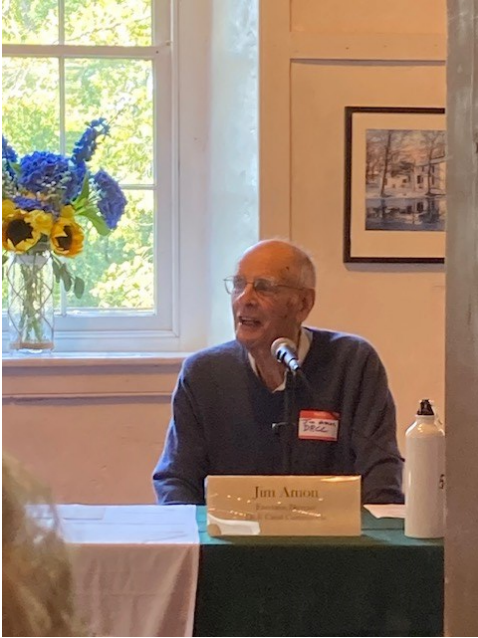
Many of the nonprofit groups that support the canal state park greeted the public inside the sawmill. Tables full of brochures, sales goods, and displays lured visitors who then learned the mission of each group. Organizations included: Canal Society of New Jersey, D&R Canal Watch, Rockingham State Historic Site, SPLASH Floating Classroom, Kingston Historical Society, Millstone Valley National Scenic Byway/Millstone Valley Preservation Coalition, Friends of Abraham Staats House, Port Mercer Canal House/Lawrence Historical Society, Delaware River Greenway Partnership, Friends of the Delaware Canal, Friends of Princeton Nursery Lands, Kingston Greenways Association, Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River, and the Delaware River Mill Society/Prallsville Mills.

Thanks also go to the many state park service employees who gave of their time to set up the buildings, direct traffic, answer questions, videotape events, and greet the visitors.

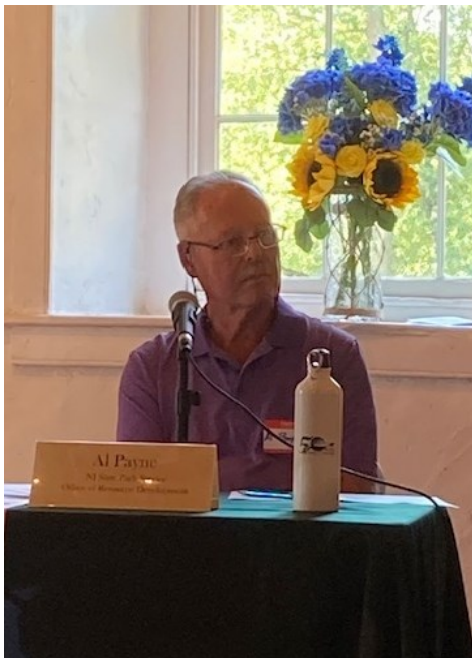
On the next pages we are pleased to share more photos from the day.



OUR PANEL OF PRESENTERS



Speakers on the panel (left to right): Jim Amon, Paul Stern, John Hutchison. Below: Al Payne and Marc Brooks.





Pictured are representatives of the park's nonprofit friends groups (clockwise starting at top left): Canal Society of NJ, Friends of Abraham Staats House, D&R Canal Watch, Millstone Valley Preservation Coalition, Rockingham State Historic Site, Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River, and Friends of the Delaware Canal.



WHAT IS IT?

Canal terms explained

Spillway—A spillway is a structure used to provide the controlled release of water downstream from a dam or levee, typically into the riverbed of the dammed river itself.

On a canal like the D&R, the spillway allows excess water to flow out of the canal, down the spillway, and into a nearby stream; this prevents the

canal water from overflowing and eroding the towpath. A spillway can also be described as a passage for surplus water to run over or around an obstruction (such as a dam).

According to NOAA*, a spillway is a structure over or through which excess or flood flows are discharged. If the flow is controlled by gates, it is a controlled spillway, if the elevation of the spillway crest is the only control, it is an uncontrolled spillway.



A typical spillway (on left) along the D&R Canal. This spillway is part of the towpath and is made of stone to prevent the erosion of the towpath.

This spillway (on the right) controls the level of the Llangollen Canal in Wales.



This very large spillway takes excess water from Gatun Lake, a part of the Panama Canal. During the rainy season, the lake can easily overflow.

*Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Class of 2024-2027

Tom Lederer (Princeton)
Joseph Ciccone (Lawrence Township)
Charles Martin (Franklin Township)

Class of 2022-2025

Linda Barth (Somerville)
Robert Barth (Somerville)

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

Class of 2023-2026

Theodore Chase (Griggstown)
Tim Roth (Long Valley)
Laurie Reynolds (Bound Brook)
Barbara Ross (Princeton)

EVENTS YOU MAY WISH TO ATTEND



FREE FAMILY FUN!

Somerset County's
19th Annual

JOURNEY THROUGH THE PAST

**SATURDAY October 12, 2024
& SUNDAY October 13, 2024**

Visit Historic Sites! www.SCHistoryWeekend.com

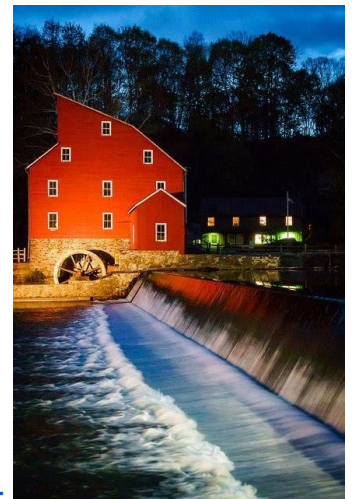


Fridays and Saturdays, October 4-5, 11-12, 18-19, and 25-26

Red Mill Museum Village in Clinton has announced the theme for this year's Haunted Red Mill: **UFO: Unidentified Frightening Objects!** The Haunted Red Mill is not only one of New Jersey's top-rated Halloween scare attractions and a thirty-four year annual local tradition, it's also the museum's top fundraiser.

Visitors get lost in mazes, flee through trails, and take the most agonizingly slow hayride along the river before wandering into allegedly the most haunted building in Clinton, with over 200 years of haunted history,

The event runs for four full weekends this year! "UFO" will be presented on Fridays October 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th as well as Saturdays October 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th with doors opening at approximately 7:00 pm. Ticket sales are available at the gate each night and online here: <https://redmillmuseumvillage.ticketspice.com/haunted-red-mill-2024-unidentified-frightening-objects> Follow our social media pages for upcoming discount promotions such as "Dinner & a Haunt."



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Barbara and Mario Ciccone
Congetta Chirichello**

**Catherine Sullivan
Jean Telljohann**

World Canals Conference Returns to the USA in 2025

Two hundred years after the Erie Canal's grand opening, international inland waterways experts and enthusiasts will gather in Buffalo, NY, bringing that same transformative spirit of innovation to drive the next century of service for canals everywhere. From September 21-25, 2025, the World Canals Conference will return to the USA for the first time since 2021. Buffalo and the Erie Canal provide the backdrop this time around, where attendees will dig deep into how canals around the world are using new technologies, sustainability, tourism, and heritage development to address our shared challenges and thrive.

The World Canals Conference is suitable not only for professional canal managers, but also for boaters and enthusiasts.

Buffalo is a shining example of canal reinvention. When the Erie Canal opened in 1825, Buffalo became a commercial and industrial powerhouse, only to see the canal's use wane in the mid-20th century and trigger a period of disuse and disrepair. Beginning in 2005, the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation successfully spearheaded an era of waterfront transformation and reclamation. Today, the revitalized Canalside area (see photo below) in downtown Buffalo bustles with new energy, business, and tourism. The city's famous grain elevators have been repurposed to host live performances, events, and historical tours. Buffalo is receiving recognition for its vibrant art scene, diverse dining, outstanding outdoor recreation, treasured architecture, and dramatically transformed Canalside waterfront.

Buffalo and the Erie Canal Bicentennial create an ideal setting and moment for the World Canals Conference 2025. Built around the theme of "Sustaining our Multidimensional Waterways," WCC 2025 will bring together the leading minds in diverse fields to discuss, debate, discover, and inspire. Attendees will partake in expertly guided field sessions, gain access to exclusive tours in the days leading up to or following the conference, and witness history repeating itself with the send-off ceremony for the replica canal boat *Seneca Chief*. This traditionally built, full-size replica of the same boat that opened the Erie Canal two hundred years ago departs Buffalo for New York City, replicating the 1825 journey that became known as the Wedding of the Waters.



Sign up for updates now and be the first to hear about registration, the call for presentations, and pre-and post-tours: www.wcc2025buffalo.com.

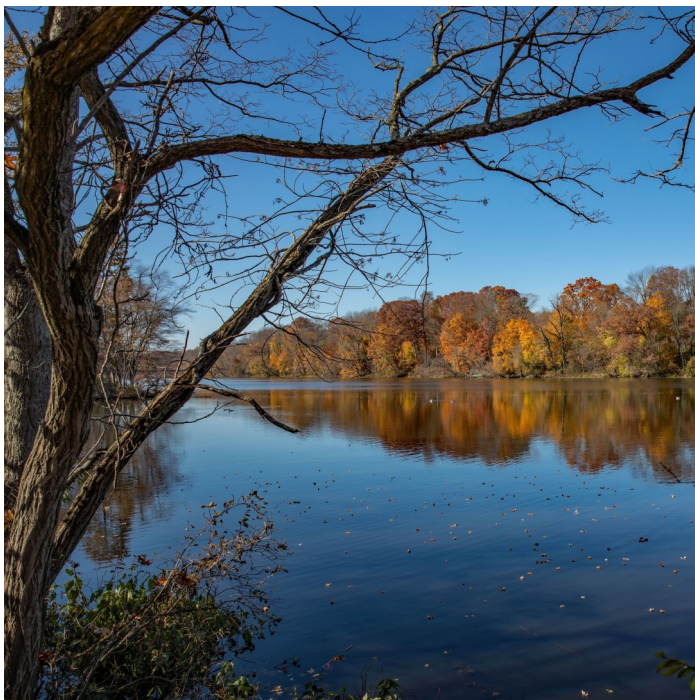
The Buffalo Maritime Center has built a traditional, full-sized replica of the Erie Canal Boat *Seneca Chief*, which originally opened the Erie Canal in 1825. From the start, the Erie Canal Boat Project has aimed to engage the community through hands-on experiences and historical exploration. This community boatbuilding effort, made possible by hundreds of volunteers, took place inside the Longshed at Canalside on Buffalo's waterfront from October 2020 to June 2024.

In 2025, the *Seneca Chief* will embark on its Bicentennial Voyage from Buffalo to New York Harbor, commemorating Gov. DeWitt Clinton's 1825 inaugural journey. This voyage offers Buffalo and communities across New York State a chance to explore the past and plan for the future. Photo courtesy Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

2025 Canal Watch calendar is now ready!



This large, 12"x12" calendar features the photography of your fellow park users. The images were judged by our team of professional photographers. To buy your copy for only \$20, just contact Linda Barth at barthlinda123@aol.com or 908-240-0488 and she will arrange to meet you along the canal and deliver a calendar to you.



Lake Carnegie at the Millstone Aqueduct, Plainsboro. Photo by Tom Egan

Board of Trustees

Linda Barth, president
Charles Martin, vice president
Ted Chase, secretary
Tom Lederer, treasurer

Robert Barth
Christopher "Kip" Bateman
Joseph Ciccone
Laurie Reynolds
Barbara Ross
Tim Roth
Barbara ten Broeke

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.



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**
- **Paid for the conditions assessment and the engineering drawings for the East Millstone and Griggstown bridgetender stations.**
- **Working with the park, we posted signage at six locations to help visitors find their way through Trenton.**
- 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.
- Sponsored star-gazing and solar observation events.
- Sponsored bird watching walks along the main canal and bilingual nature walks
- Installed and facilitated 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

Canal Watch Achievements (continued)

- 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 maintenance of the site at the rate of \$50 per month, and professional courses for the maintenance staff.

Renew your Membership for 2024



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 2024 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)