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www.canalwatch.org

May 2021

The Next Step for the East Millstone Bridgetender's Station

The D&R Canal Watch is most happy to announce that our applications to rehabilitate the bridgetender's station have been approved by both the D&R Canal Commission and the State Historic Preservation Office.

Our devoted members and friends contributed mightily to this effort by donating \$11,400 to the cause. We thank all of you for supporting this effort. See next page for more good news.

The D&R Canal Watch
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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.

Canal Superintendent—\$2000+

Clare Bohnett
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Canalboat Captain—\$1000+

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The Next Step for the East Millstone Bridgetender's Station

Bob Russell of HMR Architects completed the engineering drawings for the rehabilitation of the exterior of the station. Patricia Kalleser, the park superintendent, sent the drawings with the applications for the work to both the D&R Canal Commission (D&RCC) and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and as you read on page one, both applications have been approved.



More very good news for the Bridgetender's Station Project:

At the May 19th meeting of the D&R Canal Commission, the commissioners voted to transfer the monies deposited in the Commission Mitigation Account #4875-009 to the Division of Parks and Forestry for the **renovation of the East Millstone Bridgetender's Station.**

This means that if the bids come in under \$70,000, there is money to pay for the rehabilitation of the structure. Once the money has been transferred, the state Office of Resource Development will submit the plans for code review, which shouldn't take long. After that step, the bid requests will go out. If the office receives a good bid under the bidding limit, they can then hire a contractor. It's a series of events that, by law, they must follow.

We hope that construction can begin in mid/late July provided they encounter no stumbling blocks along the way.

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.

Among others, Julie Harris recalled that she and her uncle, Richard Harris, both loved the D&R Canal. She made a gift to the Canal Watch in his honor. She thanked us for our efforts in working with the park to improve and preserve our historic waterway.

Julie arranged with her employer, Johnson & Johnson, to provide a match, which turned out to be \$1000, much more than a match. We thank Julie and J&J for their generosity.



More Volunteers Needed for the Mini D&R Canal Project

The mini canal model (see the March issue) will cover an area of approximately one-eighth of an acre, embracing the Y outline of the D&R Canal with Lambertville, Trenton, and New Brunswick at each of the respective ends and of provisional dimensions indicated here.

The plan is to have five working locks with battery-powered boats simulating the movement of goods that the canal system once provided. The canal will have a rubber-liner covered with bentonite clay; the locks, likely prefabricated off-site, will be made of wood, stone, and cement.

Below is a summary of where we are and a current plan going forward, which is somewhat fluid depending on factors such as weather and availability of volunteers and materials. The underlined sections show where we are currently seeking volunteers. Anyone interested should contact Michael directly at michaelgbird@gmail.com.

- Michael has built a model of a steam tug, which is fairly authentic to the steam tug *Relief* on which he based the design. With a few more possible tweaks, the design is ready to be replicated by other volunteers. He would like three to four such boats to be built, so we are looking for two or three volunteers.

- We also need to construct two swing bridges and two work boats. We need one volunteer to design the swing bridge and one to design the work boat. Once we have a volunteer for each, we would recruit one or two additional volunteers to help with this. Michael, of course, will be available to consult with and assist the designers.

- While these various components are being designed and constructed, Jim Lomax will continue his work on the design of the canal itself and the lock system. He will construct a trial section of approximately 10 feet on his property to test out the operation, dimensions, and best materials to use. There is also the pumping system to be developed to ensure that the higher sections maintain an adequate water level, and of course there's the water supply itself.

- Rich Freedman is leading the robotic aspect of the project and would welcome additional assistance.

- With better weather in late spring/early summer, we will return to the farmstead to map out the Y layout for the canal model. We hope to begin the actual construction of the canal in the fall. At this time, we may need additional volunteers for the physical labor part of the project.

- We are suggesting that we use temporary fencing during the construction phase, as it will allow us flexibility in shifting the design if needed as well as to allow small machines to help with digging and other

tasks. We will, in the meantime, locate a vendor for a permanent fence, which we would have installed once the canal has been completed. For both the temporary fence and the permanent fence, we will contact local government and businesses to see what can be donated.

- The model canal project team welcomes anyone interested in participating in the design and construction. Tasks where volunteers are currently needed are noted above and, as with any endeavor of this type, more will surely arise! Please email Michael Bird at michaelgbird@gmail.com or Kathy Manetas, Communications Manager, at kmanet@comcast.net to let us know of your interest.



The Black River and Western Railroad Company From “Along the Delaware & Raritan Canal, by William J. McKelvey

On September 1, 1964, a group of steam railroad enthusiasts leased the Pennsylvania Railroad’s Flemington Branch from Ringoes to Flemington to operate steam-powered train excursions. On February 1, 1970, these same people, now incorporated as the Black River and Western Railroad Company (BR&W), bought the entire branch from Lambertville to Flemington to provide freight service and seasonal tourist passenger service.

On April 1, 1976, the date that Conrail assumed control of the properties of the Penn Central Railroad, the BR&W augmented its line through the purchase of two segments of track located on each end of its route. On the southern end it purchased a 3.5-mile portion of the former Bel-Del main line and industrial trackage in and about Lambertville. On the northern end, it purchased a 4-mile portion of the former South Branch Railroad (CNJ) that ran from Flemington to near the former Lehigh Valley main line (now Conrail) at Three Bridges.

During December 1976 a new interchange connection was constructed between the BR&W and Conrail by L.E. Vernon, former Bel-Del track expert. It was placed in service during March of the following year. *Down Along the Old Bel-Del*, by Warren F. Lee.



The 3.5-mile section of former Bel-Del track in the Lambertville area was along the original towpath of the D&R Feeder Canal. On one of its field trips the Canal Society of New Jersey chartered a BR&W train and made a trip up to the Stockton Quarry and back on this track.

All BR&W track south of Ringoes is currently out of service.

LATE NEWS from the BR&W website (<https://www.blackriverrailroad.com/alexauken-division>): Our goal is to reconnect Lambertville to Ringoes and Flemington, NJ by rail! We will offer a wide variety of passenger excursion trains, including holiday-themed events, service

to D&R State Park, trains providing convenient access to special events in downtown Lambertville, and much more!

In 2017 we began service to our new station at Bowne. This new service utilizes the first 2.5 miles of railroad to be rehabilitated and features a beautiful shaded picnic grove, as well as events in partnership with our neighbor, WoodsEdge Farm! Now, our Track Dept. is turning its attention to the 4.5 miles of railroad left between Bowne and Lambertville.

This project is funded entirely by revenue from our existing excursion operations and private donations. You can help us move the project forward through your patronage on our Flemington-Ringoes trains or making a donation.



Bike NYC to Philly, Aug. 28-29 along the D&R Canal towpath

From cheesecake to cheesesteak! The East Coast Greenway Alliance's inaugural New York City-to-Philadelphia Greenway Ride travels from one iconic city to another, with lots of beautiful Garden State greenway in between. After departing Liberty State Park we'll end for the day in Princeton and head on the next day for an end-of-ride celebration in Philadelphia.

Proceeds from the 2-day, 125-mile fundraising ride will benefit the nonprofit East Coast Greenway Alliance. In particular, your fundraising will help accelerate the development of the route in New York City, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Roughly 1,000 miles of our Maine to Florida route is on protected greenways, and our organization is working daily to move the entire route off-road as close to 2030 as possible. To register, visit www.greenway.org and click on "Events."

Somerset County will welcome the bikers in Colonial Park. More details about that later.

Have you seen a downed tree across the towpath or some other problem in the park, including graffiti?

If so, please contact the D&R Canal State Park superintendent at 609-924-5705 or by email at Patricia.Kallessen@dep.nj.gov.



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 tax-exempt organization, so your contributions are tax-deductible.

D&R Canal Watch 2021 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? May we call on you? Yes ___ No ___
Try me ___ (circle your skill)

CANAL WATCH ACTIVITIES FOR 2021

www.canalwatch.org

www.dandrcanal.com

Many of the Canal Watch activities for 2021 have been put on hold, but our big fundraiser will be held.

Have you ever locked down? Join us on a Canal Boat Dinner Cruise on Sunday, September 12 (date tentative) at 4:30 p.m. This fundraising activity will include a 2-hour cruise aboard the *Josiah White II*, a three-course dinner, music and storytelling by Dave Matsinko and a locking experience at the Abbott Street lock.

The cost of \$100 per person will enable the D&R Canal Watch to continue its mission to engage the public in the protection of the environment and preservation of the heritage of the D&R Canal.



PLUM WINE

once a fox
pranced out of the beach plums
because a friend and I had been singing
of strawberries and sweet wine

the fox came so near
that I knelt on the sand
to be blessed by
fox gaze

to this day I am sure
if I could have stayed kneeling
that princeling would have walked
right up my lap

I have spent
the remainder of life
wishing for his wildness



American red fox, Wikipedia

CAROLYN FOOTE EDELMANN

The Holland Submarine

By William J. McKelvey

Frank Taylor Cable, *The Birth and Development of the American Submarine*, New York, Harper & Bros., 1924. Chapter 11 describes the 500-mile trip the HOLLAND, the first submarine to be accepted in the US Navy, took from New Suffolk, LI, NY to Washington, DC in 1899, including the trip across the waist of New Jersey on the D&R Canal.

“At Princeton the onlookers began to assemble at noon, and waited patiently until dark, when word came that we were berthed for the night six miles distant. At midnight our watchman turned us out to report that so great a crowd had assembled that he was getting nervous. Apparently half the inhabitants of New Jersey had gathered on the banks, armed with all manner of lights, in their eagerness to see the boat... Our largest crowd awaited us at Trenton. Most of the shopkeepers had closed for half a day to give their employees a chance to see the boat, and the docks and canal banks for three miles were black with people. At Bordentown, where we locked out in the Delaware River, we found the public schools closed in honor of our arrival and most of the children assembled on the docks...” The 52-foot, 10-foot-diameter USS HOLLAND(SS1) had been built in Elizabethport, NJ for John P. Holland. One of his earlier experimental submarines rests at the Paterson Museum.



Reports from the D&R Canal State Park and the New Jersey Water Supply Authority April and May 2021 meetings of the D&R Canal Commission

Executive Director’s Report — Mr. Hutchison reported on his May 7 site visit with the D&R Canal Watch to the Lambertville lock. Bob Barth provided the history of the outlet lock and the cable ferry.

Park Superintendent’s Report —

In April volunteer groups did clean-ups in Trenton and Bordentown. In Frenchtown new multi-lingual signs have been installed. At Bulls Island, workers have to scour the macadam, install signage, and replant before that section of the park can reopen; reopening is likely to be in the fall.



At the May meeting the superintendent noted that the park will explore new uses for the Lambertville lock tenders house, as interest has been expressed by two different groups. Some Princeton residents request appropriate mowing around Monarch butterfly habitat. Work is under way for a new parking lot in Kingwood Township.

New Jersey Water Supply Authority report

Scuba divers have been contracted to study the status of four locks: Griggstown, Ten-Mile, South Bound Brook, and Five-Mile locks. They

will begin work at the end of May or in the fall.

Hydrilla agreement with contractor July start to add lower dose rate of fluridone herbicide injections, using a lower dosage rate than in previous years. The dredging has been completed. By summer all staging areas will be restored. Bids for work on the Landing Lane spillway are due on May 13. Work is complete at the Island Farm weir except for the complete replacement of the towpath surface that was mistakenly placed there.

At the Bulls Island canoe launch, trees have been removed from a stone wall; new trees will be planted some distance from the wall.



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:

- 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.**

Class of 2020-2023

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

Class of 2019-2022

Linda Barth (Somerville)
Robert Barth (Somerville)
Michael Kaplan (Griggstown)

Ellen Kaplan (Griggstown)
Pamela V'Combe (Trenton), activities chair

Class of 2021-2024

Tom Lederer (Princeton), publicity chair
Carl Hemmingsen, Bordentown
Marion Munk (Piscataway)
Wayne Petko (South Bound Brook)

EVENTS YOU MAY WISH TO ATTEND

Saturday, June 5 -- Somerset County

Outdoor Concert - Doors open at 6:00 pm - *Concert starts at 6:30 pm.* Harper Lovey and the Waitlist will be performing everything from Indie Garage Rock to 50s Torch Songs, a little bit of country and many of Harper's original songs. Darcy Rhatican, will debut as the opening act. Join us for this outdoor concert at Farmstead Arts, 450 King George Road, Basking Ridge! For tickets and more information, visit <https://farmsteadartscenter.org/>.

Saturday, June 5— Roebing Museum announces the return of their beloved annual Garden Tour in 2021!

On June 5th, Roebing Museum is hosting a fun opportunity to celebrate the beautiful weather and brightly blooming gardens in a company town famous for building America's most iconic bridges. The event is outdoors and will observe social-distancing guidelines. When: June 5, rain or shine, 10-3.

Where: 100 Second Avenue, Roebing

Price: \$15 per person and the proceeds benefit the operation of the Roebing Museum.

Registration: Tickets may be purchased by calling 609-499-7200 or by visiting www.roebingmuseum.org, or at Roebing Museum on the day of tour. Choose between a self-guided experience or sign up for a guided tour at 1:00 pm. See website for details.

Sunday, June 6 -- Monmouth County

Join Navesink Maritime Heritage Association for a Whale Watching Cruise!

Sunday, June 6 from 1:30pm to 4:30pm
from the Seastreak Terminal in HIGHLANDS
NMHA is pleased to announce a whale watching cruise on a spacious Seastreak ship, a fast and stable catamaran to speed us to the watching areas.

This is a FAMILY event so bring your children or grandchildren for three hours of fun spotting whales!

Registration is required at
www.NavesinkMaritime.Org/Events

Lambertville Then and Now Available Online

In case you missed the popular walking tour in 2020 LAMBERTVILLE, NJ – If you were unable to take the self-guided walking tour of the 20 sites on the "Lambertville Then and Now" exhibit in the fall of 2020, or would just like to see it again, we are pleased to announce that it is now available as a virtual tour that can be experienced from the comfort of your own home.

The virtual tour can be accessed from the "History" menu on the Lambertville Historical Society website www.lambertvillehistoricalsociety.org. **A quick link to start your tour is available here:**
www.lambertvillehistoricalsociety.org/thenandnow.

Lambertville, NJ was incorporated as a town in 1849 and as a city in 1872. From the mid-1800s to the early 1900s the ferry, the canal, the railroad and the Old York Road stagecoach route all contributed to the development and industrialization of Lambertville.

The historic exterior images on this virtual tour date from the mid-1800s to the early 1900s and include such things as factory buildings, mansions, a theatre, stores, halls, and more.

The virtual tour has been updated to include a modern image next to the historic image of the site. You can also read a bit about the history of each site.

You will notice that some of the buildings have barely changed in over 150 years, some have changed a great deal and some no longer exist. We hope you enjoy learning just a little bit of the history of some of the iconic buildings in Lambertville, NJ.

The Lambertville Historical Society is a nonprofit organization that promotes, inspires and encourages the preservation and appreciation of Lambertville's architecture and history through education, community involvement, and through preserving and maintaining the James Wilson Marshall House. For more information, visit www.lambertvillehistoricalsociety.org.