



FRIENDS OF THE DELAWARE CANAL CANAL NEWS

Let's Replace Some Signs!

As you've walked or biked along the towpath you may have noticed that many of the interpretive signs are in bad condition. Sunlight, weather, mold, and kids with markers have made them unreadable, particularly those that have been in place for more than 15 years. All of the sign panels came with duplicate copies, so this spring the Friends would like to get the remaining ones out of the State Park storage shed and into the sign frames that are waiting along the towpath.

Here's how you can help:

Who:

Anyone who can wield a screwdriver and maneuver fiberglass panels into metal frames.

When:

Saturday, March 24 starting at 8:30 a.m. The project should be finished no later than noon.

Where:

The Locktender's House at Lock 11 in New Hope. Parking will be available in the American Legion parking lot off of New Street.

The Plan:

Volunteers will assemble at the Locktender's House to have a cup of coffee, eat a doughnut, and learn how to remove the old sign panels and install new panels. Scott Everett, Trail Manager for the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, will do the instruction. When volunteers call to offer to help, they will be told what tools are needed. If some volunteers don't have the necessary tools, they will be provided. The volunteers will then be given work locations and one or more panels to install. They will drive to their assigned site and replace panels. Old panels can be taken home for disposal or left at the site for pick-up later.

For more information and to offer your volunteer services, please call 215-862-2021 or e-mail friends@fodc.org.

With your help, visitors again will be able to learn about the history of the Delaware Canal from "Mules and Men" to "Citizens to the Rescue."



Help get the Canal's signs back in shape

In the Year Ahead

After being punched again and again by weather "events" in 2011, we are all ready to make some progress along the Canal in 2012.

Here is what is happening:

- The engineers from DCNR's Bureau of Facility Design and Construction and the Park staff have surveyed the damages caused by the March 2011 flood, Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee and have prepared assessments. The engineers have also been working on the repair plans. Fortunately, the task is less laborious this time around because, in some cases, the 2004, 2005, and 2006 flood repair plans can be referenced. Since the repair work may be eligible for FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) funding, DCNR now is waiting for FEMA representatives to tour the Canal and verify the damage assessments. FEMA is expected in January. After the FEMA verification, plans and specifications will be put out to bid, and, with luck and persistence, the major repair work will be underway in the summer.



Crossing the four lanes of Route 13 during a Canal Walk isn't easy! The sooner the northern tunnel and the southern pedestrian improvements are completed the better.

- The Park staff plans to dig a trench past the river wall break south of Easton in order to supply some Lehigh River water to the northern end of the Canal until the major repair work begins.
- DCNR is investigating and instituting specification changes that can make repaired areas endure longer and be more visitor-friendly. One example is the change in specifications for the materials used in the "stabilized turf" towpath trail surface. The

(continued on p.4)



Friends of the Delaware Canal

145 South Main Street
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Mission

The Friends of the Delaware Canal is an independent, non-profit organization working to restore, preserve, and improve the Delaware Canal and its surroundings. Our primary goals are to ensure that the Canal is fully-watered from Easton to Bristol and the towpath trail is useable over its entire length. We embrace this mission in order to sustain a unique link to our heritage, protect beautiful and diverse natural areas, provide recreational and educational opportunities, and enable the Canal to serve as a community and economic asset.

Park Manager's Report

Happy New Year to all!

It will be a busy one for us at the Canal. There are a host of projects planned for the New Year. There are quite a few projects in the works. The flood repairs should begin sometime this season as we are waiting for FEMA to visit to assess the damage. The replacement of the Ferry Street Bridge in New Hope is underway to be completed by late July. In concert with this project DCNR plans to repair the wall that had collapsed near the Mechanic Street Bridge in New Hope and extend a relining project. The relining had stopped south of the Mechanic Street Bridge and we will continue relining up to the Aqueduct. I want to thank Tony Giacobbe and Gene Gelfand, DCNR engineers, for recognizing the importance of complete these projects simultaneously rather than consecutively. We also plan on replacing Bridge 5 in Smithtown and the Upper Lime Port Bridge just north of Phillip's Mill.

Other larger projects still on the table are the Tunnels under Route 13 and the Tunnel through the Conrail crossing just south of Morrisville. The stretch from Green Lane to Route 13 is also scheduled to be relined.

The Park completed a smaller project that repaired roofing and siding on the Locktender's House at Raubsville using a contractor. We also replaced the boiler in the Locktender's House in New Hope. Both of these were really needed.

We still continue to deal with trees down along the Canal from Irene, Lee and then the early snowstorm in October. It seems that just when we are catching up more trees and limbs come down.

We were able to hire an Equipment operator to fill a position that has been vacant for a few years. Chris Lee will be joining our staff January 16th.

Thanks to your organization for all your help and support.

Rick Dalton

Welcome, New Friends

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Calendar of Events

Sunday, February 12, 2 p.m. “We ♥ the Canal” Walk

Meet in the parking area adjacent to the Canal in Tinicum Park, River Road, Erwinna. (Follow the entrance road all the way to its end.)

There are so many things to love about the Delaware Canal – its scenery, its history, its wildlife..... February is the month when we’re all ready for some fresh air and diversion, so we’ll venture out on the towpath for a 2-1/4-mile walk and see how many of the Canal’s lovable qualities we can find. Our route from Tinicum Park south to the Golden Pheasant Inn and back offers lots of possibilities. From the waterfowl that live in the widewaters to the intriguing history of the pretty village of Erwinna to Jacob Oberracker’s Tap Room to the Spiderman House perched above the River, we have much to explore.

Join us for a Sunday afternoon out on the Canal. We’ll have Valentine’s treats, too, because the Friends ♥ Canal walkers! The walk will be held unless the weather is exceedingly foul. If in doubt, check for a go/no go message on the www.fodc.org homepage or call 215-862-2021 for a recorded message.

Tuesday, March 13, 7:30 p.m. General Meeting

The Delaware Canal in Art

Stone Hall in the Feinstein Conference Center, The David Library of the American Revolution, 1201 River Road, Washington Crossing, PA

The Delaware Canal has been an inspiration throughout its history. Thousands of works of art have been created by artists whose styles range from photo-realism to abstraction and all points in between. Today among the best known Canal paintings are those done by the New Hope School artists in the early 1900’s.

Will Rivinus, author, historian, and member of the Friends’ Board of Directors, has compiled a slide show featuring more than 75 paintings that depict the Delaware Canal. The works encompass the days when the Canal bustled with boats and mule teams as well as more recent times when the Canal offers idyllic landscapes. Among the artists represented in the show are Baum, Bredin, Bye, Ceglia, Child, Coppedge, Folinsbee, Garber, Hargens, Leith-Ross, Lipes, McClellan, Ney, Pickett, Redfield, Spencer, and Yoder. Descriptions and stories about the artists and their works will be included in Will’s lively narration.

Don’t miss this opportunity to see the Canal in so many different ways.



Then and now, the Canal lures artists with their easels.

Photo by Peter Sperry

Saturday, March 24, 10:30 a.m. Lunch and Walk

Meet at the train station parking lot opposite the Lagoon Park on Jefferson Avenue in Bristol Borough.

This year historic Bristol Borough is luring us back with changes both on the Canal’s route and in the dining scene. Our 2-mile, roundtrip trek will begin at the beautifully restored Lagoon Park, an excellent example of the power of partnerships and volunteer efforts. From the Lagoon we will follow a trail that was once the Canal towpath. Our first landmark will be the Grundy Mill and Clock Tower followed by handsome old woolen mill buildings that have been converted to new uses.

Next comes a change in the streetscape. The old Snyder-Girotti Elementary School that was built over the Canal has been demolished and a new, larger school built to the east of the old site. One of the impediments to reopening the Canal in Bristol is gone. We’ll then proceed to the three Bristol locks and the Basin where canal boats waited their turns to be towed down the Delaware River to Philadelphia.

After exploring Waterfront Park, we’ll hurry to the newly reopened King George Inn for lunch. The Inn’s rich history (its name was changed to the Fountain House during the American Revolution, a time when being associated with the King wasn’t too popular), wonderful River views, and hospitality have made it a Bucks County icon.

Menu

A cup of the Soup du jour

Your choice of Sandwiches

Tavern Burger – “8 oz. house-ground beef, lettuce, tomato, and onion” with French fries.

Turkey Club – “Shaved turkey, smoked bacon, tomato, avocado, mayonnaise on toasted wheat” with French fries.

Tuna Salad Melt – “Tuna salad on English muffin with tomato and melted Cheddar” with French fries.

Coffee, Tea, or Iced Tea

After lunch, we will head back to the train station by way of Radcliffe Street, which parallels the Delaware River and is lined with many of Bristol’s most beautiful and historic homes and buildings. Cookies en route will help us with our stamina.

Donation - \$25 per person. Reservations are required. Please be prepared with your choice of sandwiches when you reserve. Please call 215-862-2021 or e-mail friends@fodc.org no later than March 16th. If it is snowing or raining, we won’t be walking, but we will meet at the King George Inn at noon for lunch and lively conversation.



Mark Your Calendars

The Friends' two-pronged approach to our annual spring cleaning effort worked last year, so we're going to try it again.

Saturday, April 14 – On-Land Clean-Up

This traditional effort will focus on specific areas of the Canal, particularly the southern 9 miles and the central section. The Work Areas will be listed in the spring issue of *Canal News* and will be posted at www.fodc.org.

Saturday, May 19 – In-Water (and Un-Watered) Clean-Up

The Canal prism (the ditch that holds water) is always a cleaning challenge. To take care of the trash and debris that lies in or on the berm bank of the watered sections of the Canal, volunteers are encouraged to launch their canoes, kayaks, or rowboats and embark on search – and – bag missions. In those unwatered sections of the Canal where tree saplings are growing within the prism, volunteers can use loppers or hand saws to cut down the interlopers.

The specific Work Areas for water and sapling work also will be listed in *Canal News* and at www.fodc.org.

Please lend a hand to these efforts that always leave the Canal looking so much better. If you have questions or would like to volunteer either as a worker or a crew coordinator, please call 215-862-2021 or e-mail friends@fodc.org. And if you know of a group that may be able to participate, please let us know.

The Canal's First Marathon

Nearly 300 runners competed in the first marathon ever to be held on the Delaware Canal towpath. The “Bucks County Marathon,” billed as “an intimate country race with a small field and tons of amenities” was held on November 20th, the same day as the Philadelphia Marathon. The 26.2-mile race course followed the towpath from Yardley Borough to Solebury Township and back.

Race Director Pat McCloskey alerted the runners to the quirky Canal course with plenty of “Low Bridge” signs and direction-bearing volunteers. All fared well, and when the race was over, many commented on how pretty the Canal was and how much they liked running on the towpath.

For its role in improving the Canal and helping with the marathon, the Friends received a contribution of \$300. Pat McCloskey of Running Resources in Warminster is already planning this year's race.



It's hard to run a marathon while singing "Low Bridge, Everybody Down."

In the Year Ahead *(continued from front page)*

new mix will contain smaller diameter stone and more soil, thus creating a more stable towpath with a smoother surface for biking and hiking.

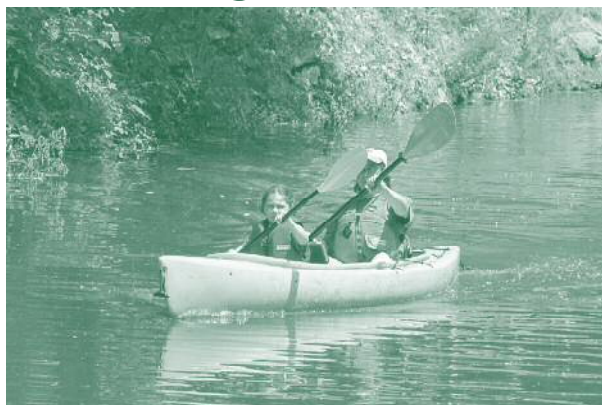
- The replacement of the Ferry Street Bridge over the Canal in New Hope got started in December. This project is anticipated to be completed in July. While the bridge project is underway, DCNR will line the Canal from Mechanic Street to the Aquetong Creek aqueduct and repair the wall collapse at the Canal Street development. When the relining and wall projects are done, the Park will pump water into the section to determine whether leakage is still a problem.
- The various trail obstruction projects in the southern end of the Canal continue to progress. PennDOT has assumed control of the Route 13 tunnel project because the agency plans to incorporate the replacement of culvert pipes, which carry the Canal's water, with the construction of the tunnel. When the culverts are replaced and the tunnel built, water flow and pedestrian safety will be very much improved. It is anticipated that construction will begin in 2012.
- Conditions at the second Route 13 trail obstruction north of Green Lane may also be improved as part of the larger Route 13 project. Plans are in the making to improve conditions for pedestrians who need to cross the highway in order to get back on the towpath. The plan calls for an improved shoulder on Route 13 from the point at which the Canal goes under the highway to Green Lane. At the Green Lane intersection, various signalization and marking solutions will be employed to create a safe passageway for Canal visitors.
- The construction of the tunnel through the Conrail embankment south of Morrisville is temporarily delayed while additional funding is sought.
- With foresight in 2001, the Friends had a towpath trail detour plan developed by Castle Valley Consultants of New Britain. The time has finally come to improve the detour path around the Tyburn Road obstruction. This move to action can be accounted for by the designation of the towpath from Bristol to Morrisville as part of the East Coast Greenway. The Friends have supplied the Castle Valley detour plan to the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, which is seeking major Greenway funding.
- Gene Comoss retired as Director of the Bureau of Facility Design and Construction last year. Gene never failed to try to do what was best for the Canal and was an excellent advocate. We shall miss him in Harrisburg, but he promises to remain involved. At the Annual Meeting in November we welcomed the new Director, Alfred Uzokwe. Alfred is already schooled in Canal projects and issues, so he hit the ground running.

And so it goes.

Visit the Friends' website
www.fodc.org for more news

New on www.fodc.org

Canoe and Kayak Guide to Paddling on the Canal



The Canal is a fine place for a family paddle.

When there's water in the Canal, it's a great place to canoe and kayak. It offers a leisurely, safe paddle with lots of things to see and do on shore. There is water in the Canal from New Hope south to Morrisville, and water will return to the other sections, so a guide full of helpful information for paddlers has been added to the Friends' website in the *Charts and Maps* section.

The guide was developed by Priscilla Linden, an experienced, trained paddler and Friends' member. "A safe paddle is a happy one" appropriately introduces the safety section, which includes how to not to lose teeth in a water fight. Information about the Canal's unique characteristics – steep banks, portages, respect for private property – is followed by a chart of recommended paddling trips with parking and drop-off sites.

When next you visit www.fodc.org, check out the Guide. You don't have to be a canoeist or kayaker to benefit from its information.

Filling Doesn't Make Sense

The Delaware Canal serves as a drainage ditch. Local streams, as well as PennDOT and municipal roadway storm drains, flow directly into the Canal. This function is dramatically illustrated by the stone and gravel dams that accumulated in the Canal from the Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee runoff.

During the coming months, the cries of "Fill in the Canal." and "It isn't worth the expense." will be heard once more. There are many, many reasons why both of those statements are wrong. A dollars and cents refutation is that it would cost millions of dollars to reroute the streams and storm drains away from the Canal and into the next permissible body of water.

Based on a study that the PA Department of Environmental Protection conducted regarding the rerouting of Silver Creek in Yardley Borough, the cost of rerouting all the streams and storm drains that flow into the Canal could well exceed the cost of repairing, improving, and periodically maintaining the Canal.

The bottom line is that the Canal is worth keeping – for so many reasons.

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Learn more about these Friends by clicking on their links at www.fodc.org.

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Michael and Anke Stieglitz
Robert and Edith Sukup
Don and Mary Woodruff

We Need You!

- ☞ The Canal from the southern end of Morrisville to Bristol still has no Canal Tenders. Please consider adopting a stretch. It matters not how long or how short.
- ☞ Nearly all non-profit organizations get things done by utilizing committees. The Friends have three especially active committees that could use your assistance, expertise, and talents — Membership, Fundraising/Events, and Education. If you're interested in learning more and, perhaps volunteering, just call 215-862-2021 or e-mail friends@fodc.org.

Happy Anniversary!

The Friends' signature Canal Walk will mark its 25th anniversary this year.

How shall we celebrate?

A reunion?

A grand slide show?

New sneakers for Will Rivinus?

What should the t-shirt look like?

Give us your ideas, please.

Many Thanks!

- ✓ 2011 ended on a positive financial note thanks to the **contributors** who generously responded to the Friends' Annual Appeal. Your gifts give us a boost into the new year.
- ✓ **Steven Snyder** sandblasted the numerals on the replacement stone for Mile Marker 29 and very kindly donated his services. The original marker was done in by a heavy construction vehicle.
- ✓ This year's *Faces and Places* in Point Pleasant was a notable success thanks to the help of so many people. It was a classic example of "It Takes a Village...." Recognition of the contributions of several people got lost in the flurry at the time, and we would like to remedy that now. **Barbara Postel** very kindly allowed the Friends to reproduce one of her wonderful Canal paintings on the invitation and promotional pieces. **John Sikora** did likewise with his stunning photograph of the Tohickon Aqueduct. We couldn't have asked for a more congenial President Grover Cleveland than the one portrayed by **Charlie Huchet**. Trips to the attic and Memory Lane fully prepared **Nura Petrov** and **Barabara Zimmerman** for their roles as Point Pleasant pump protestors, which they played to the tee.

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Friends of the Delaware Canal, Inc.
145 South Main Street
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