



FALL 2021

*Friends
of the
Delaware
Canal*

Canal News

A Season of Change

The Locktender's House
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New Hope, PA 18938

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Email friends@fodc.org

Website www.fodc.org

Board of Directors

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Executive Director

Michael Ginder

Our 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.



As the days get cooler and the nights get longer, the autumn tones of yellow and gold replace the vibrant flowers of summer. The migratory birds that kept us entranced during the spring and summer are finding their way back home as our lawnmowers, weed whackers, and lower backs get a much-needed rest.

As the seasons change, the Friends are changing as well. We said farewell to our beloved Executive Director, Susan Taylor (*above*), who retired in July. Her fierce advocacy and tireless devotion to the Friends of the Delaware Canal and the waterway we serve spanned three decades. Susan's influence along the 58.9 miles of the towpath is apparent at every turn. Interpretive signs, memorial benches, four rebuilt camelback bridges, the restoration of the Locktender's House in New Hope, and the introduction of the Canal loop trails. These are just a few reminders of her lasting legacy.

One of the goals of the Friends has always been a fully-watered Canal from Easton to Bristol. There were times when this goal was in sight, but mother nature and many Canal structures did not cooperate. Over the years, Susan has witnessed numerous sinkholes, aqueduct failures, downed trees, and flooding.

Needless to say, maintaining the Canal and the towpath takes a great deal of effort on the part of the DCNR staff and numerous volunteers. As frustrating as this can be, Susan says, "We must be mindful not to allow the qualities of the canal that motivated those who saved it in the 1930s to be diminished."

A friend, and author, Will Rivinus, recently wrote, "After 30 years as Executive Director of the Friends of the Delaware Canal, Susan Taylor is retiring. After all those Board Meetings, membership pro-

Continued on following page >

OUR BUSINESS AND ORGANIZATION MEMBERS

Learn more about these
Friends.

Click on their links at
fodc.org.

FOUNDER

Tinicum Civic Association

BENEFACTOR

Stephan Design and Construction,
Point Pleasant

PATRON

Acadia Mortgage, LLC, Chalfont

Benefit Watch, Inc., Yardley

HollyHedge Estate, New Hope

Newtown Bicycle Shop

William B. Parry & Son, Ltd.,
Langhorne

MEMBER

Ahlum Gallery, Pipersville

Appalachian Mountain Club –
Delaware Valley Chapter

Bucks County Cottage on the
Delaware,
Yardley

Edgar H. Denson, Post #79
American
Legion, New Hope

First National Bank & Trust
Company of Newtown

T. Foster & Co., Inc., Yardley

Homestead General Store &
Coffee Roasters, Upper Black
Eddy

Liberty Bell Wanderers,
Philadelphia

McCaffrey's Markets, Yardley

Pete's Bike & Fitness Shoppe,
Flemington, NJ

Roll-Off Dumpster Direct,
Philadelphia, PA

Washington Crossing Insurance
Group

A Season of Change, *cont'd*

motions, public presentations, state park
phone calls, and 60-mile Canal walks,
Susan is going to take it easy.”

At a gathering honoring Susan's en-
during contribution, Brett Webber,
FODC Board President, said, “For three
decades, Susan, with the board behind
her, has been getting things done for the
Delaware Canal. She's been a great ad-
vocate for the Canal with state officials
and our local communities, bringing
people together. She's been the glue for
the organization. “She has also helped
us grow,” added Webber. “And we're
looking forward to doing her legacy
justice by moving forward with our new
executive director who has some rather
large shoes to fill.”

We know there will never be another
Susan Taylor. However, at some point,
everyone deserves to take time to refocus
and renew. Susan may have “retired”
from her full-time position at the Friends,
but we know she will continue to advo-
cate for the Canal and her community.



Taking on the role of Executive
Director is Michael D. Ginder (*above*).
Mr. Ginder, a New Hope resident, is

no stranger to the world of non-profit
management and leadership. He was the
Director of Business and Employment
Services for The Arc Mercer, a commu-
nity-based organization supporting de-
velopmentally disabled people and their
families in Mercer County. Prior to
Mr. Ginder's tenure at Arc, he served as
Executive Director of the Woodford
Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge in Med-
ford, NJ. In this position, he was respon-
sible for the strategic planning, finance,
and fundraising for this non-profit.

Brett Webber, president of the FODC,
said, “The Friends of the Delaware
Canal is excited about Michael's ap-
pointment. We look forward to working
with him and building on Susan's many
accomplishments.”

“The Canal is such a vital part of our
region's history, and I am fortunate to
have the opportunity to join the Friends
as the next executive director,” said
Ginder. “It will be exciting to work
with the passionate individuals who are
stewards of the Canal, expanding our
membership base, and encouraging area
residents and visitors to spend time along
the Canal.”

We know that Mr. Ginder may face
many opportunities and challenges in
the future, but he does so with a firm
foundation in leadership and advocacy.
And, he has the support of the many
members and allies of The Friends of
the Delaware Canal. We look forward
to the future and welcome the season of
change that lies ahead.

* We would like to thank Jeff Werner,
The Advance of Bucks County for his
story about Susan and the FODC and
acknowledge the use of quotes from
their publication.

A NOTE FROM SUSAN TAYLOR

My 30 years with the Friends have been a joy because of all the people who
care about the Canal. Every day you made me know that what the Friends do
is worthwhile. While walking, talking, corresponding, and having fun with you,
I've been inspired, educated, and had my heart warmed.

I truly THANK YOU for being such good friends.

PARK MANAGER'S REPORT

By Devin Buzard

While many of the projects reviewed below were already in progress prior to the damage created by Tropical Storm Ida on September 1st, a brief update on the park's efforts post-Ida is pertinent. Over the past two months, the effort to catalog damages and prioritize repairs has been the primary focus. Moving into November, a large-scale contracted emergency dredging project will be in progress. While the park has already begun work with in-house staff, this larger project will allow for the removal and disposal of gravelbars that are present in locations such as the Dark Hollow Creek in New Hope, and the Hickory Run Creek in Point Pleasant along with several other locations. By removing barriers to the free flow of water within the canal prism the park will be better situated to manage future rain events. The loss of the canal banks at the High Falls Sub-canal Culvert in Upper Black Eddy is being evaluated by a qualified engineering consultant and over the coming months plans for the repair will be made.

As many of you know, the repairs to the Easton flood damages of December 2020 are still pending. The one-mile stretch of towpath that extends south from the Lehigh River inlet has been rutted and has been in a less than ideal condition for the past eight months. However, our collective patience is going to result in a repair that will be both sensible and lasting. Considering that this is not the first time this area has been affected by flooding, the repair will include armoring of the towpath slope at locations where the Delaware River overtops the Canal.

This armoring will reflect the Canal's historic character by mimicking the design of the existing Canal overflows. The new overflows will be set at higher elevations than the existing ones with the intent of safely equalizing the Canal water levels with those of the Delaware River. In addition to this armoring, a second improvement will be the installation of a geocell web along the Canal banks that will lay much like a blanket down the towpath slope interlocking the vegetation and preventing future issues with the scouring of the canal liner. A major advantage of installing the web is that it will perform its critical function beneath the surface layer of the soil for many years and will go unnoticed by Park visitors. While the final design and permitting is still pending, I am hopeful that this project will go out to public bid by this winter with repairs commencing as early as Spring of 2022.

Prior to September 1st, the most significant issue impeding the flow of water past the area of Lock 17 in Tinicum Township was the pending repair of the Tohickon Aqueduct in Point Pleasant. The first occurrence of damage to the Aqueduct was on the night of March 24 into the morning of March 25 during a heavy rain event. Our assumption is that large debris struck the nose of the northern end of the aqueduct. After the first wooden interior panel of the aqueduct was dislodged, water came in behind the subsequent panels forcing them out like falling dominos.

The initial impression was that the repair was not substantial and could be performed by Park staff; however, as we further examined the extent of the damages, it was determined that this work would need to be bid out to a qualified contractor. At this time, the Park has developed a full statement of work, and we are hopeful that the estimated funding will be committed within the next couple of months. This repair is among the top priorities for the Park.

While I have noted pending contracted repairs, it is important to note the work of our Northern and Southern Maintenance crews. They have been diligently performing routine mowing, making repairs to numerous sinkholes, dredging gravel bars, repairing bridges, and removing hazardous and fallen trees to just name a few tasks.

To provide a better idea of the overall volume of tree work completed, it is estimated that over 1500 cumulative hours have been expended by our maintenance crews in just the past eight months alone. On July 30, tornadoes and high winds swept through the area of New Hope laying nine trees across the towpath between the area of Bowman's Hill and New Hope. The towpath was cleared within two days of the storm event.

As another example, a sinkhole opened up in the towpath side of the Canal adjacent to Mile Post 52 near the Fry's Run Aqueduct. Water was flowing through the prism of the Canal out to the Delaware River. The repair was made over a four-day period with the Canal levels being lowered only for that duration.

I have the advantage of seeing the volume, complexity, and intensity of the work performed by our maintenance personnel along the Canal's entire 58.9-mile length, and I would like to commend them for their efforts.



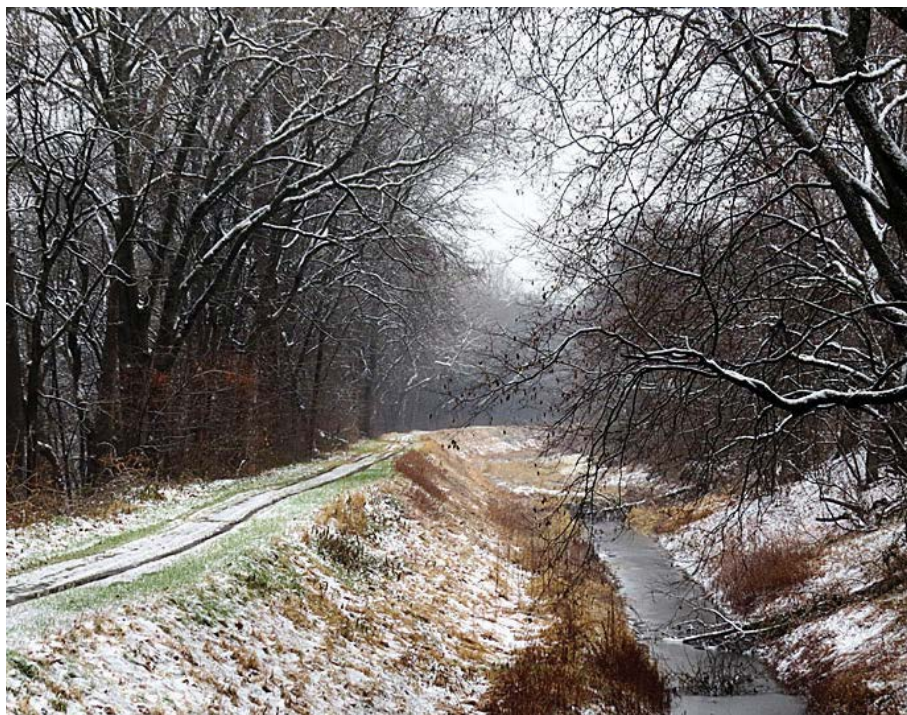
Volunteers from Giant Food Stores



Painting the Town (or fence) Red

On May 21, 2021, a group of enthusiastic volunteers from the Giant Stores in New Hope and Doylestown arrived at the Locktender's House to paint the walkway fence red. And not just any red, but a custom color to match the existing structure. With rollers and brushes in tow, they made quick work of the task. As you can see, the results are outstanding. We would like to send a big thank you to these Giant Store Volunteers for helping to protect and preserve this historic landmark and museum. See you in the produce aisle!

Calendar of Events



A first snow fall on the Canal towpath

HIKE OUT THE OLD YEAR WEDNESDAY, DEC. 29, 1:00 P.M.

Scudder Falls Bridge Parking area to Hough's Aqueduct 4-mile round-trip walk. Meet at the Parking lot adjacent to the Scudder Falls pedestrian walk.

Say goodbye to 2021 and hello to 2022, as we stroll along the canal and hear stories about the present and the past. What better way to spend time with friends old and new between Christmas and New Year's?

We will start at the base of the Scudder Falls bridge and learn about the improved accessibility and how the bridge got its name. From there we will travel north to Woodside Road then onto Borden's Lock, which is the first lock south of New Hope and the end of the seven-mile level. We will pass a board and batten "house" along the towpath complete with coal stove.

As we continue north we will see the Milk House Bridge with a nearby gambrel roofed house that dates back to 1706. The first owner's grandson was convicted of aiding British prisoners during the Revolutionary War. Records show the man was charged with

"disaffection to the American cause" and fined £10,000.

One of the six authentic camelbacks is next on the tour. This is one of the camelback bridges that was restored by the Friends. We maintain the structure by replacing boards and painting as needed. We will then learn about the Tabola-Beans Bridge. According to Hugh Shaudys, the man who lives by the Canal at Mt. Eyre Road and who talked with Canal Walkers, Fred Beans (of car dealership renown) owned the property in the 1920s and the next owner changed the name to Tabola.

Finally, we will end at Hough's Creek Aqueduct. This structure was rebuilt in 1969 in concrete. The creek is named for the first settler on its banks, Richard Hough.

This hike will be held unless it's raining or snowing. If in doubt, check for a message on our homepage: www.fodc.org.

Pre-registration is required: Call the Friends of the Delaware Canal at 215-862-2021 or email friends@fodc.org to reserve your spot. Attendance is limited to 25 people.

POP-UPS

Dates, Times, and
Places TBD



Snowbird in New Hope

Bad weather conditions and a pandemic may have foiled our past efforts to have winter walks along the Canal.

But, the lures of ice skating, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, and brisk walking are still strong, so once again we're going to endeavor to have Pop-up events.

When the forecasters agree that the skies will be sunny, the temperatures above frostbite, and the winds relatively calm OR when we have a perfect snowfall, we will send out a message letting you know what we'll be doing and where/when we'll be doing it along the Canal's length.

We will be waiting for the right opportunities and will notify you of the details in two ways:

- Adding an Event to our **website** fodc.org
- Posting on the **Friends of the Delaware Canal Facebook page**

Be on the lookout for winter fun along the Canal.

FACES AND PLACES: AN OLD HOME, A NEW HOME



A recreated trellis, constructed by Friends member Josh Gradwohl, welcomes guests.

We held a successful return of our annual fundraising event Faces and Places, Celebrating the Arts and History Along the Delaware Canal. Many thanks to our sponsors, patrons and attendees for helping to make the afternoon enjoyable.

This year, the Friends discovered the many facets of the historic Buckstone Farm property and celebrated its preservation and possibilities as the newest part of the Delaware Canal State Park Complex. Our Faces & Places 2021 activities and festivities revolved around the property, which lies on land that William Penn selected for his personal use as “The Manor of the Highlands.”

The tour of the expansive farm included a history of the past owners since William Penn, who were stewards of the property, including the Taylors of Taylorsville, a Dupont relative, and the illustrious Feinstone family. Attendees experienced a tour of the mid-19th century mansion fondly known as “The Big House,” which has not been open to visitors until now.

Guests were also treated to a showing of *Paradise Ditch*, a 1950’s era film about the Delaware Canal. It has footage tak-

en while the Canal was still in commercial operation spiced with vintage ladies in their shirtwaist dresses lounging along the Canal and naughty boys skinny-dipping.

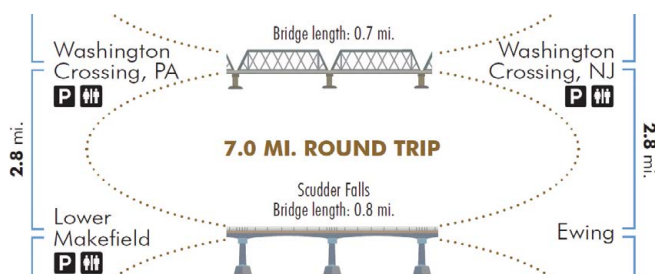
David Library of the American Revolution was once housed here, attracting scholars from around the world. This resource is known as the best collection of Revolutionary War-era documents outside of England. The library has been moved to Philadelphia, and the buildings and surrounding farmland are now in the capable hands of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. They acquired the 143-acre property in October of 2020, ensuring that the open land will always remain so.

The event’s finale was a sunset view from the front lawn of the “Big House” where we toasted to the bright future for Buckstone Farm and DCNR.



The Stone Family in front of the Big House.

ONE MORE LOOP TO GO



The Scudder Falls Pedestrian path will connect Lower Makefield, PA to Ewing, NJ.

A new shared-use pedestrian/bike path adjacent to the Scudder Falls Bridge is under way, completion is scheduled for November 2021. This new addition to the bridge’s upstream span will link the Delaware and Raritan Canal in New Jersey with the Delaware Canal in Pennsylvania. Once completed hikers, bikers, and joggers will be able to “do a loop” between the Washington Crossing Bridge and Scudder Falls Bridge. Just one more way to enjoy the Canal and towpath and all they have to offer.

The new path will be 10 feet in width. However, trail etiquette is still needed to ensure everyone uses it safely. Bikes should yield to pedestrians and maintain a safe speed when passing. Also, bikers should alert walkers and joggers when approaching and try to pass on the left.

Historic Bridge Reconstruction Gets Underway

Spahr's Bridge in Upper Black Eddy is the last remaining authentic camelback bridge requiring restoration, and we are happy to say that the work has begun. This work can be painstaking as the preservation contractor must



dismantle, inventory, and record all of the existing timbers and hardware and salvage as much as possible. The State, with the support and encouragement of the Friends, is confident the chosen contractor is up for the challenge.

The bridge superstructure has been dismantled, cataloged and put in storage while the rest of the work is being completed. The towpath was closed during the dismantling process and future closures are expected as the repairs continue. The next phase of the process is to work on repairing the abutments that support the bridge. The abutments have become undermined by time, weather, and an earthquake or two. The State will pay for the removal and cataloging of the bridge structures and the abutment repair.

However, this historic landmark needs the help of the Friends of the Delaware Canal to return it to its former glory.

The Friends were instrumental in funding the restoration of four of six camelback bridges that still span the canal. The largest project prior to Spahr's was the Thompson-Neely Bridge in Washington Crossing. It was quite an undertaking. The bridge was lifted on jacks so that deteriorating components could be removed and replaced.



The Spahr's Bridge will be a total rebuild requiring a great deal of time and resources. This is the most expensive project we have undertaken so far, and we are confident our members and supporters are up to the challenge. To date, we have several generous donations that have helped us kick start this campaign.

It is the contributions of our friends and supporters that will ensure we can purchase the beams, trusses, decking, and hardware needed to rebuild. Our influence and impact will help maintain the historical integrity of the bridge.

We hope you will help us complete this important work to rebuild Spahr's Bridge. It would be a great way to pay tribute to the men and women who worked on the canal and celebrate the Friends of the Delaware Canal's 40th anniversary in 2022.

You can become a supporter of this project by donating now on our website at fodc.org. Just scroll to the bottom of our home page to find the link titled "Let's Restore the Sixth Camelback Bridge."



Our Jack

The man who holds the record for completing the most Friends' 58.9-mile Canal Walks passed away on October 5 at the age of 89. Jack Merkl was a steadfast walker, relished revisiting the Canal each year, and kept his "magic" red and white umbrella in his car trunk to ward off any rain.

When he could no longer handle the Walk's longer distances, he switched to being the walkers' guardian. In his car, he would transport them to and from the start and end points, haul lunches, and watch over them all along the way. Then to add to the sport of it, he started to hide from the walkers, challenging them to spot him from the towpath. This evolved into a "Where's Waldo?" sort of game, of course, called "Where's Jack?". To make it official, one year "Where's Jack?" t-shirts were made. Jack's shirt was emblazoned with "I'm Jack."

Jack was a wonderful friend and Friend and epitomized what the 58.9-mile Canal Walk is meant to be. We very much miss him! And the sight of a Tastykake pie will always evoke the memory of Jack having one for lunch at each and every walk—his special treat.

CANAL TENDERS

Maintaining Our Natural Resource



There is always a silver lining to every situation, even the advent of COVID. To fight off feelings of isolation, many people turned to nature for comfort. All along the towpath, we certainly saw an increase in visitation as people jogged, walked, and biked, re-discovering the Canal and all it has to offer.

This influx of new visitors had a bit of a downside. Crowded parking lots, remnants of human consumption, and flaring tempers were hallmarks of a resource bursting at its seams. And through it all, the dedicated Park Staff and our Canal Tenders persisted, determined to maintain the towpath and the waterway for all to enjoy.

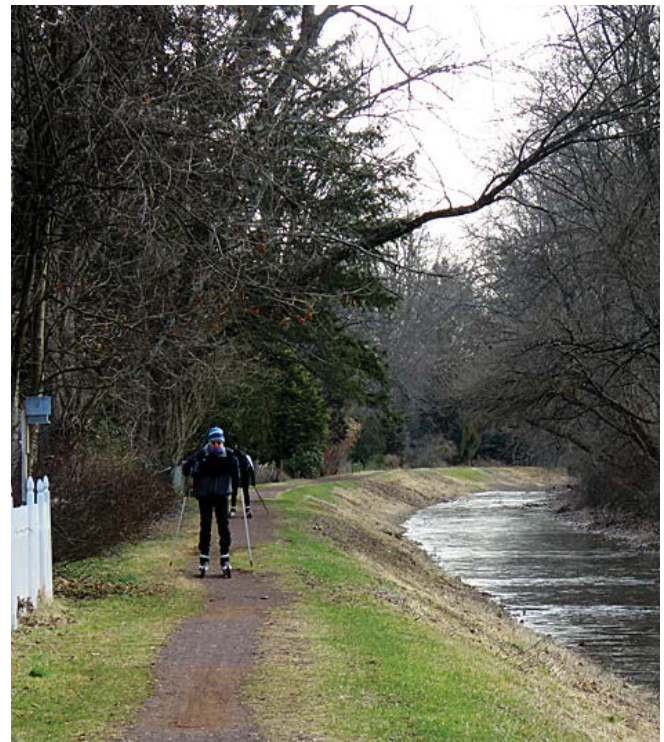
And as the seasons change, we also have some changes in the ranks of our devoted Canal Tenders. We want to thank Louise Wile and Michael Schwartz, who retired as Canal Tenders this year, and for caring for the Bridge Street to Palmer Street footbridge section of the Canal in Morrisville for so many years. Also retiring this year are Janice Armstrong and Steve Schlosser from Milford, New Jersey, who tended the Canal and towpath between Lock 19 to Homestead Store in Upper Black Eddy. Ann and Keith Webb and family who cared for the Black Rock Road to East Afton section in Yardley have handed the reins to Keller Arnold, who previously tended from Levittown Shopping Center to Mill Creek Road. This section is now being cared for by Charlie Bozzo. And Evan Homrighausen will tend the area from Mill Creek Road to Tyburn Road Detour South.

These retirements have created opportunities for new Canal Tenders to join this prestigious group of volunteers. And, the need is greatest in the southern section of the towpath. We are seeking tenders for:

- Bristol Riverfront Park to Beaver Street: Bristol Borough
- Beaver Street to Bristol Lagoon: Bristol Borough
- Bristol Lagoon to Green Lane: Bristol Borough
- Green Lane to Edgely Avenue: Bristol Township
- Edgely Avenue to Levittown Shopping Center: Bristol Township/Tullytown Borough
- Tyburn Road Detour South End to Conrail Tunnel: Falls Township
- Bridge Street to E. Maple Avenue: Morrisville Borough
- Bridge Street to Rabbit Run: New Hope
- Lock 19 at Park Headquarters to Homestead Store: Upper Black Eddy

Please let us know if you would like to help with any of these sections or an area nearest you. When you become a Canal Tender, you join a group of volunteers who enjoy being a part of this historic waterway.

To learn more about Canal Tending and other volunteer opportunities, please visit the Help Page on our website at fodc.org/help-the-canal.





FRIENDS OF THE DELAWARE CANAL

145 South Main Street
New Hope, PA 18938

Nonprofit Org.
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WELCOME NEW FRIENDS

Michael Ahern	John Ford	The Norris Family
Nancy Axler	John Francis	Stanislav Oleynikov
Marie-Claude Beaudette	Fred & Helen Fritz	Jennifer Pallante
Cheryl Bennett	Kathy Gill	Kathy Polansky
Jeffrey Bishop	Michael Ginder & John Beck	Paul Price
Elizabeth Bodnar	Sue Gotta	Karen Reichart
Maria Bouloux & Peter	Kelly and Sean Hanrahan	Gina Roche
Hochschild	Stanley Hawrylo	Timothy & Judith
Jerry Bowers	Brian Hornak	Rudderow
Maureen Bowers	Karen & James Horton	Christine Sayre
Eric Boyko	William Johnston	George Schott
Michelle Bradley	Leslie Jordan	Mary M. Skorupa
Eleanor Breslin	Richard Kimmel	Richard Speranza
Lou Cammisa	Henry Koon	Jamie Stamos
Judith Clayton-Goldstein	Karen & Tim Larson	Michael Stein
James Cochran	Laura Larenzano	Lenore Steinmetz
Lew Cohen	Bill Loftus	March Storm
Cathy Colt	Kathleen Long	Edna Telep
Marcy Conti	Robert Margadonna	Tom Wells
Amanda DeLorenzo	Julia McKeon	Robert Wright
Joanne & Lee Ensalada	Melissa Mennen	
Cynthia & Joseph Farruggio	Douglas & Cathy Monroe	
Wayne Fish	Belinda Morrison	

TEAMWORK ALONG THE TOWPATH: *Clean-Up Day Marches On*

This April, we made some adjustments to our Canal Clean-Up Day to accommodate COVID protocols and protections. After communicating with our Canal Tenders and Coordinators, we suggested that small masked groups tend to their areas on the proposed Day of April 10th or any day throughout April.

The response was outstanding! Nearly 50 Coordinators and their teams collected and bagged trash and other debris the entire length of the towpath on foot and by boat. Scout troops, bike clubs, neighborhood groups, and public officials all joined in the month-long effort.

A BUSY SEASON FOR CANAL ACTION TEAMS.

This spring and summer, several projects were completed by our CAT team. One of the most extensive projects was the repair work on Ground Hog Lock Wicket Shanty. Rotten wood structures on all four corners were removed and replaced along with some siding. Then the teams set to work scraping, sanding, and painting, returning the lovely wooden structure to its former glory.

Other CAT projects included a beam replacement at the wastegate between Locks 9 and 10 in New Hope and a new 911 memorial bench installation in Lumberville. With some soap and TLC, a graffitied bench and sign in Lower Makefield were restored.



In-water clean-up in Morrisville



Volunteers from Traditions in Washington Crossing



Amazing Results! Completed by a team led by Josh Gradwohl, including Bob Auwater, Gordon Heisler, Pete Rosswaag, Steve Saddlemire, and Jerry Taylor.



Before and After Clean-up by Josh Gradwohl and Lynn Vogel