

ON THE LEVEL



THE CANAL SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY

RIGGS CANAL PARK

In the early 1800s, Silas Riggs moved to Ledgewood from Mendham, established a leather tanning business, and occupied a simple East Jersey cottage along the newly built Morris Turnpike. The area was then known as Drakesville. As his fortunes grew, he acquired a considerable amount of land, and in the 1820s, built a fine new home on the other side of the turnpike road. When the Morris Canal & Banking Company planned the route of its canal through his property, he saw the advantage. Now a businessman of some note, he sought and was awarded a contract to build the section of canal running through Drakesville. This may have been the first length of canal to be completed. He later owned and operated two boats on the canal.

Although the canal has been replaced by highways and open farm land by shopping malls, traces of the

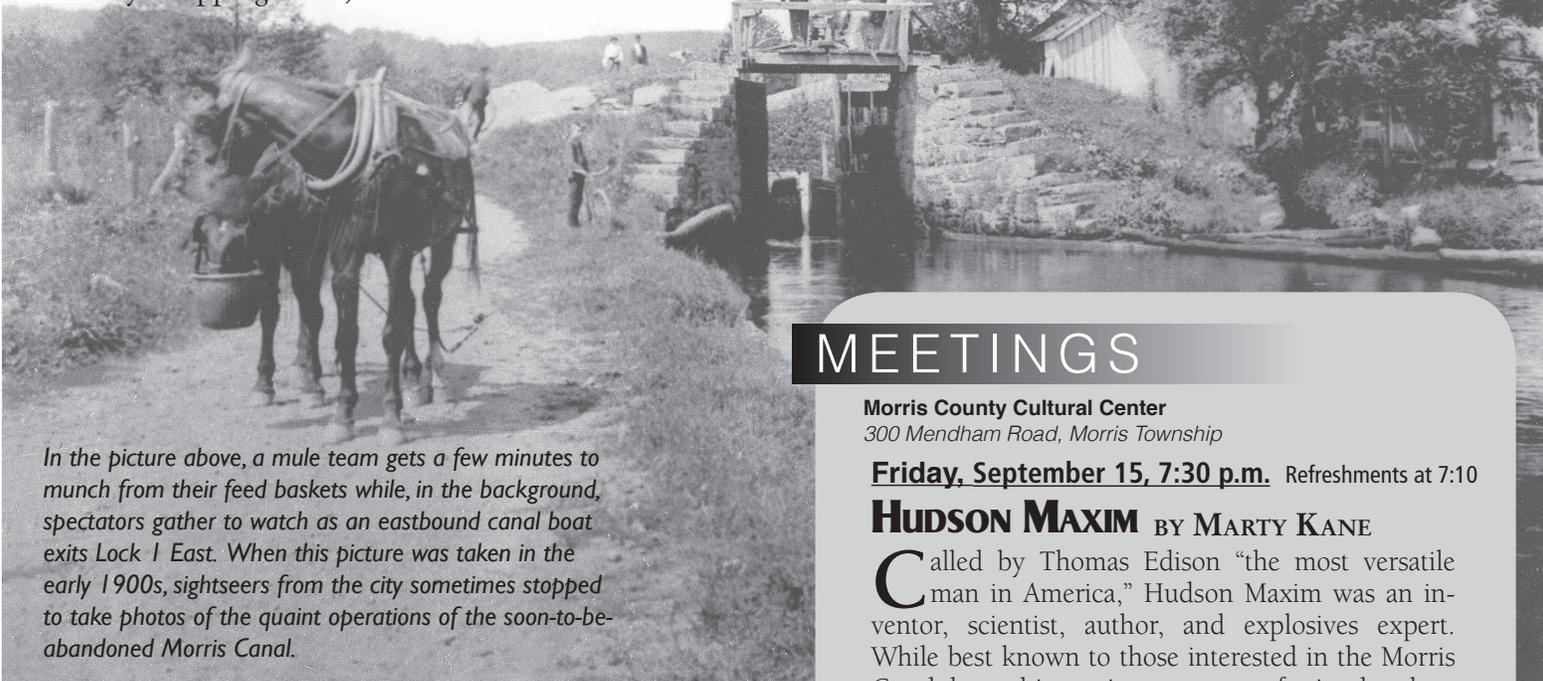
past still remain today. The original Riggs homestead survived, and in 1962 was moved a short distance to be part of the Drakesville Historic District. His grander second home survived into the mid-1900s and was used as a newspaper office until it was destroyed by fire. The land on which the house stood contained an intact section of the canal and the lower end of Lock 1 East. When this property was offered for sale in 2006, the Canal Society used Green Acres funding to acquire the land and donated it to Roxbury Township.

Unfortunately, for years a lack of adequate funding stalled plans to turn the 5.82-acre property into a

usable public open space. This year however, with the Morris Canal Greenway project gaining momentum, we have once again opened discussions with Roxbury about turning the site into Riggs Canal Park.

The first step came in May when members of Netcong's Grace Church on the Mount offered to send volunteers to work on

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In the picture above, a mule team gets a few minutes to munch from their feed baskets while, in the background, spectators gather to watch as an eastbound canal boat exits Lock 1 East. When this picture was taken in the early 1900s, sightseers from the city sometimes stopped to take photos of the quaint operations of the soon-to-be abandoned Morris Canal.

MEETINGS

Morris County Cultural Center

300 Mendham Road, Morris Township

Friday, September 15, 7:30 p.m. Refreshments at 7:10

HUDSON MAXIM BY MARTY KANE

Called by Thomas Edison "the most versatile man in America," Hudson Maxim was an inventor, scientist, author, and explosives expert. While best known to those interested in the Morris Canal due to his passionate support for its abandon-

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RIGGS CANAL PARK

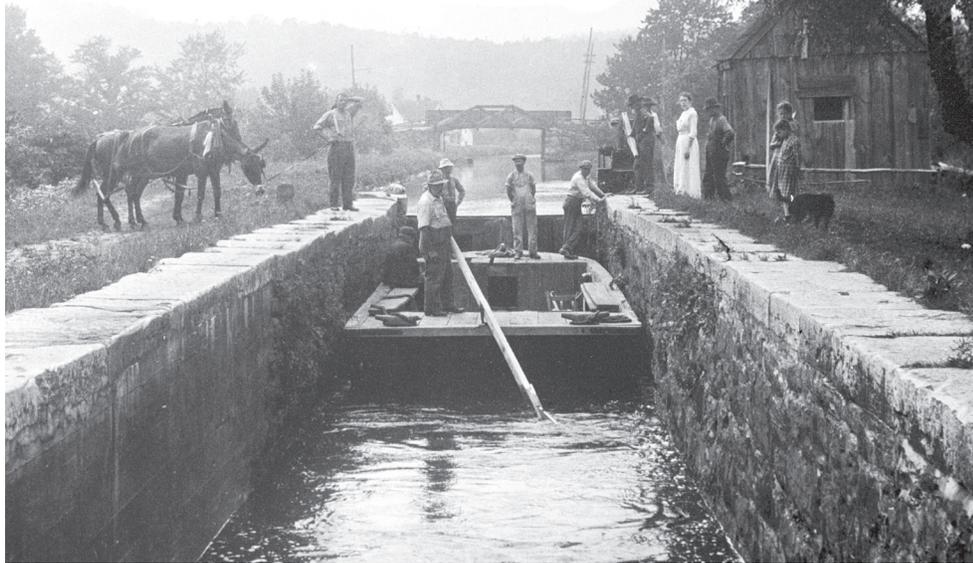
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the park. Representatives from the CSNJ, the church, and Roxbury township walked the site and laid out a loop trail through the property. On May 20, dozens of volunteers arrived along with a landscaper with professional equipment. They spent the day cutting trees and brush and scraping dirt from the old parking lot, a remnant from the time when the Riggs mansion was used as an office. By the afternoon, a walkable trail had been cleared. The path extends from the parking lot to the lock site, then along the canal tow-path and back past the site of the Riggs house. It is a great start.

However, there is still a lot to be done to bring the property up to township park standards. In the months ahead, brush along East Main Street will be cleared, grass planted, signage installed, and the parking lot rearranged. To help get things started, the CSNJ has already donated two kiosks that will hold interpretive signage and we will be contributing funds to help pay for site improvements. If you would like to watch as the park takes shape, the site is located just east of 199 East Main Street in Ledgewood. ■



The trail, pictured above, winds through the new Riggs Canal Park.



The crew of a westbound work scow, mules, mule tender, and bystanders all take a moment to pose for a picture while the boat is being raised in Lock 1 East in Ledgewood. In the distance is the road and trolley bridge that once crossed the canal where Routes 10 and 46 intersect today.

LINCOLN PARK GREENWAY TRAIL OPENING

On June 3, an enthusiastic crowd gathered in Lincoln Park to celebrate the opening of a newly completed section of the Morris Canal Greenway Trail. This project was sponsored by the Lincoln Park Health Department, headed by Kathy Skrobala, as a way to combine history with healthy outdoor recreation. CSNJ volunteers helped clear the trail and the society created, fabricated, and installed interpretive signage in a trail-head kiosk built by the Lincoln Park Maintenance Department. CSNJ President Joe Macasek led the crowd on a tour of the new pathway.

In addition, the event featured Atlantic Health System's Walk with a Doc Program and its theme, "Be Active, Eat Healthy, Have Fun."

Future plans include a

dedicated parking area close to the trail head and additional interpretive signage donated by the CSNJ. In the meantime, use the map in last May's *On the Level* or available on the CSNJ website to walk and enjoy the trail now. ■



A new kiosk at the Lincoln Park trail head features signage created and funded for by the CSNJ.

THE CANAL MUSEUM AT WATERLOO – OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

By *Tim Roth*

If you haven't been to the Canal Society's museum at Waterloo Village lately, now is a great time to go. For the first time in a decade, the Canal Museum has been open every Saturday and Sunday in June, July, and August for the 2017 season. More than 1,000 visitors have come through the museum door, and more than \$600 has been collected in sales and donations.

One reason why the museum days were increased is to take advantage of the State Parks' scheduling at Waterloo, where programming is now available on both weekend days. If you visit Waterloo on Saturday, you can tour historic 19th-century buildings such as the canal store, the gristmill, and the blacksmith shop. If you make the trip on Sunday, you can visit the Lenape village to learn how the native inhabitants of this land lived thousands of years ago. Of course, if you visit on one of the Canal Society's Heritage Days at Waterloo, you can experience additional attractions, such as canal boat rides, live entertainment, and additional craft demonstrations. The Canal Museum is open on all of these days.

Located in a 19th century tenant house, the Canal Museum offers two stories of exhibits, artifacts, and historic photographs of New Jer-



The Canal Society's museum at Waterloo.

sey's two towpath canals. The first floor covers the Morris Canal and contains historic photographs of Waterloo showing how the village looked during the canal era. Models of a lock and inclined plane help visitors better understand how the Morris Canal overcame the extreme changes in elevation. The second floor features a room dedicated to the Delaware & Raritan Canal, as well as tools used on and around the canals. Visitors can also relax and view educational videos on

the two canals, including James Lee's interviews with Morris Canal workers.

Of course, the museum could not have been open for so many days if not for a team of dedicated volunteers to serve as docents. A special thank you to Bob Barth for spearheading the effort to expand the museum opening, recruiting the docents, and organizing the project, and to all those who took the time to join in. We would like to con-
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D&R CANAL FALL TOUR – OCTOBER 20 THRU 22

The Pennsylvania Canal Society, the D&R Canal Watch, and the Canal Society of New Jersey will sponsor a motorcoach tour of the



A canal boat unloading at Perseverance Paper Mill along the D&R feeder near Lambertville.

Delaware & Raritan Canal feeder on our Fall 2017 Field Trip on October 20–22. The motorcoach will leave our hotel at 8 a.m. on Saturday the 21st.

Bob Barth will lead our tour of the 22-mile feeder along the Delaware River and the tidal area of the D&R Canal above Bordentown, including Lock 1. We'll start at Bulls Island and then visit the Prallsville Mill, Lambertville, Washington's Crossing, the Battle Monument, and confluence in Trenton. Finally we'll take NJ Transit Light Rail at Bordentown, which follows the route of the canal and the Camden and Amboy Railroad.

Our hotel for the tour is the Holiday Inn in Bensalem, PA. Our banquet dinner will be at the hotel and will feature a program by author Linda Barth. Optional Sunday tours may include the Roebling Museum, Grounds for Sculpture, the Kuser Farm Mansion, Howell Living History Farm, and the Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead.

Registration check-in will be in the hotel lobby from 5 to 6 p.m. Friday. A Saturday preview by Bob Barth will be in the Greenwood or Schuylkill Room from 7 to 8 p.m. Friday. ■

Please use the registration form on page 5 to sign up for the tour.

MEETINGS

(Continued from page 1)

ment, his greatest fame came from his inventions in modern warfare, as the inventor of smokeless powder and other propellants, shells, and torpedoes.

Hudson Maxim was first drawn to Lake Hopatcong at the beginning of the twentieth century while working with the American Forcite Powder Company. Maxim fell in love with the area and purchased land on the lake's west shore in 1901; he would spend most of his time there until his death in 1927.

Marty Kane will present an overall look at the Morris Canal's fiercest critic with a special emphasis on the unique role he played in America's entry into World War I.

In addition to this evening's presentation, CSNJ member Deb Wefferling will prepare and serve a light supper and dessert. Deb's culinary skills are well known among members, so please come early to enjoy food and friendly conversation before the meeting. Food service: 7:00p.m.

Marty Kane retired after 18 years as business manager for the joint Marine Corps-Army Towed Artillery System program office at Picatinny Arsenal in 2016. Marty is originally a native of New York City, where he graduated from Queens College and St. John's University School of Law.

Growing up on Lake Hopatcong as a summer resident, Marty has served as the president of the Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum since 1990 and has been a board member with the Lake Hopatcong Foundation since its founding in 2012. Dedicated to improving Lake Hopatcong, the foundation is actively involved with initiatives in water quality, safety, trails, education, and historical preservation.

He is the author of several books on local history as well as co-author, with his wife Laura, of the script for the award-winning documentary Greetings from Bertrand Island. ■

Friday, November 17, 7:30 p.m. Refreshments at 7:10

MORE MOVIES WITH MITCH

AN ALL-REAL FILM SHOW PRESENTED BY MITCH DAKELMAN

This program will include another eclectic selection of films from Mitch's vast collection with an emphasis on canal history and technology. Featured will be a showing of *The Grit of the Girl Telegrapher*, a short action adventure shot here in Morris County on the Wharton & Northern Railroad. The movie will be narrated by railroad historian Mike Del Vecchio.

Mitch Dakelman is the curator of the National Railway Historical Society film and photographic collection, stored in Phillipsburg, NJ. He is a retired college librarian presently working for the Metuchen and Sayreville school districts as a substitute teacher. Mitch has authored or co-authored six railroad-and highway-related books. His latest book, *The Glory Years of The Pennsylvania Turnpike*, was co-authored with Dr. Neal A. Schorr in 2016 and published by Arcadia Publications. Mitch has been a CSNJ member since 1982.

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ON THE LEVEL is published three times a year by the Canal Society of New Jersey.

973-292-2755 – nj-cnal@googlegroups.com – www.CanalSocietyNJ.org

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE WALKS

September and October

September 16

Hacklebarney Forges and Mines

October 15

Chester Furnace

Industrial Heritage Walks are sponsored by the Morris County Park Commission.

For information and reservations, please e-mail macgraphics2@gmail.com or call 973-292-2755.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

(Continued from page 3)

tinue this schedule through the end of October and next season, but we need more docents in order to make this happen. Since the museum is mostly self-guided, no previous experience is needed to be a docent, and training will be provided. If you are interested in volunteering at the museum, please contact Tim Roth at timroth@com-cast.net. ■

Warren County Morris Canal Bus Tour

Saturday, September 30

The Warren County Morris Canal Committee invites you on a scenic tour of the historic Morris Canal. Come see for yourself what made our canal unique in all the world. Learn what a "Jersey team" was before it meant something about sports. This heritage corridor gives reminders of its glory days with inland ports such as Port Colden, Port Murray, Port Warren, Port Washington, and Rockport. For more information or to register, please call the Warren County Planning Department at 908-475-6539 or e-mail at

morriscanal@co.warren.nj.us

A box lunch will be included.

For further information about the Morris Canal, please visit our websites:

www.warrenparks.com

and www.morriscanal.org

D&R CANAL 2017 WALKS & EVENTS

These walks and events are sponsored by the D&R Canal Watch. The walks are free, but donations are welcome and appreciated. For additional information contact the tour leaders:

**Bob Barth 201-401-3121 or bbarth@att.net
Pamela V'Combe 609-635-2783 or pjvcombe@gmail.com**

Saturday, October 14 – 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
East Millstone Canalfest, Market Street, East Millstone, NJ.
<http://franklinfoodbank.org/events>

Saturday, October 21 - 10:00 a.m.
Bilingual (English/Spanish) Nature Walk. Enjoy a casual six-mile walk on the D&R Canal towpath between Lock 11 in South Bound Brook and the Millstone Causeway. Please meet at Lock 11 in South Bound Brook, across from the post office on Canal Road at Madison Street. We will enjoy conversation in English and Spanish. Please RSVP at <https://goo.gl/kdlL6b> or e-mail Jessica Hunsdon for more information at jhunsdon@gmail.com or call/text at 732-993-4505.

Saturday, November 18 – 10:00 a.m.
Walk 6.2 miles on the D&R Canal towpath between Carnegie Road and Ellarslie, or choose a shorter hike of 2.5 miles. Meet at Ellarslie, the Trenton City Museum in Cadwalader Park, Trenton. Leader: Pamela V'Combe.

Saturday, December 9 – 10:00 a.m.
Walk 5.5 miles on the D&R Canal towpath between Carnegie Road and Alexander Road, or choose a shorter hike of 2.9 miles. Meet at Turning Basin Park on Alexander Road, Princeton. Leader: Pamela V'Combe.

D&R CANAL TOUR REGISTRATION FORM

Names for name tags: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____ E-mail: _____

Buffet banquet includes a tossed salad, rolls and butter, Italian chicken, roast beef, roasted garlic mashed potatoes, vegetable medley, brownies and cookies, and coffee, tea, iced tea, and water. Gratuity is included.

Member(s) of: _____ D&R Canal Watch _____ CSNJ _____ PCS

Saturday bus tour and lunch: # _____ @ \$65.00 (non-members \$70.00) = \$ _____

Saturday evening banquet: # _____ @ \$35.00 (non-members \$40.00) = \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Your light rail pass is included, but please indicate # _____ 62 or over, # _____ 5 or younger

Special food requests (other than those included in above description): _____

Mail to Registrar for receipt by October 7th.

Make check payable to Pennsylvania Canal Society.

Roberta Longenbach, National Canal Museum, 3327 Hugh Moore Park Road, Easton, PA 18042

Tour Hotel: Holiday Inn, 3207 Street Road, Bensalem, PA 19020

Reservations: 877-410-6667 (\$109 – ask for Pennsylvania Canal Society group rate)

Direct tour questions to Doug Logan via e-mail to LoganD2@verizon.net or call 610-955-6436.

WATERLOO

**Canal Heritage Days
September 9 & 23
October 14 & 28**

Members will receive Canal News e-mail updates on CSNJ events at Waterloo.

D&R TALK

THE JOINT COMPANIES

Delaware & Raritan Canal
Camden & Amboy Railroad

A presentation by Joe Macasek

Sunday, Sept. 10 – 1:00 p.m.

PRALLSVILLE MILLS

33 Risler Street, Stockton 08559
608-397-3586 – www.prallsvillemills.org

The Delaware & Raritan Canal, completed in 1834, was built to carry Pennsylvania coal to the New York market. Unlike the Morris Canal, however, the D&R chose an easier 44-mile route across the waist of New Jersey from Bordentown to New Brunswick. A 22-mile-long feeder brought water from the upper Delaware River to a junction with the main canal at Trenton. However, since this route also connected two of the country's largest cities, New York and Philadelphia, the state also issued a similar charter to the Camden & Amboy Railroad. Rather than compete, these two interests formed an entity called the Joint Companies to share one of the most powerful and controversial monopolies in New Jersey history.

The Joint Companies used technical innovation, sharp business practices, and political manipulation to create a transportation empire. For forty years they fought off all comers, spared no expense to win, and put profits above all else. Their little-known story is one of the New Jersey's most fascinating tales. ■

Morris Canal Greenway Working Group Meeting

September 19th, 2-4 p.m.
Central Railroad Terminal, Jersey City
For information: macgraphics2@gmail.com

CSNJ TO BE HONORED BY THE DAR

The Daughters of the American Revolution Chinkchewunska Chapter of Sussex County has nominated the Canal Society of New Jersey and Friends of Waterloo for its Historic Preservation award, honoring both groups' efforts to save Waterloo Village. Almost since its inception, the CSNJ has been involved in the preservation of Waterloo, first in cooperation with the Waterloo Foundation of the Arts (WFA) and then in partnership with the New Jersey State Park Service (NJSPS).

In 1975 the CSNJ established a presence in the Village with the opening of its Canal Museum. For years the society provided museum docents on weekends and participated in village activities. When the WFA lost its lease in 2007, the CSNJ joined the NJSPS, the property owners, in efforts to reverse the effects of years of neglect. Since then we have played a major role in bringing the village back to life. The award will be presented at a program to be held February 24, 2018. ■

Mary Ann Smith

On Saturday, August 12th, Mary Ann Smith, wife of Canal Society founder Clayton Smith, passed away at age 100. With Mary Ann's help, Clayton founded the Society in 1969 and served as president of the society for 10 years. ■



Mary Ann and Clayton Smith on the steps of the newly opened New Jersey Canal Museum at Waterloo in 1975.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Friday September 15 Membership Meeting**
Hudson Maxim
Marty Kane
Morris County Cultural Center, 7:30 p.m.
- Friday November 17 Membership Meeting**
More Movies with Mitch
Mitch Dakelman
Morris County Cultural Center, 7:30 p.m.
- Saturdays Sept & Oct Waterloo Canal Heritage Days**
September 9 & 23, October 14 & 28

www.CanalSocietyNJ.org

nj-cnal@googlegroups.com



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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FIRST CLASS MAIL