

Kingston Historian

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Vol. 20. No. 2 Fall 2024

KHS 2024 ANNUAL MEETING The D&R Canal Commission - 7:30 pm Tuesday, November 12th

In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of both the D&R Canal State Park and the D&R Canal Commission, the focus of KHS's Annual meeting program will be the Commission.

After a brief business meeting, John Hutchison, Executive Director of the Delaware & Raritan Canal Commission will present an illustrated program; he will describe the Commission's role in preserving the Canal and its corridor and the process of a new master plan. As part of that process, the Canal is being documented by drone; a video of the portion of the Canal already completed will be shown.



THE DELAWARE RIVER and D&R CANAL at BULLS ISLAND on the D&R FEEDER CANAL from the air by drone

The Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission (D&RCC) is a state agency created by the D&R Canal State Park Law of 1974. Its mission is to: prepare, adopt, and implement a master plan for the physical development of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, review State and local actions that impact on the park to insure that these actions conform as nearly as possible to the commission's master plan, and coordinate and support activities by citizens' groups to promote and preserve the Park.

The MasterPlan was last updated in 1989. D&RCC has received a Historic Site Management grant from the NJ Historic Trust to help fund the Plan

ANNUAL KINGSTON COMMUNITY HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING 4:30 – 5:30 pm Sunday December 1st



Annual Tree Lighting 2023

Photo by Glen McParland)

PLEASE JOIN US at the Kingston Lock-tender's House. We will gather outside, between the parking area behind the Lock-tender's House and the tree on the D & R Canal at Old Route 27 (39 Old Lincoln Highway). Due to limited space indoors, the event will again be outdoors; however, the house will be open to view the current displays until 5:00 pm

Meet KHS members, friends and neighbor's while enjoying holiday refreshments and the music of the Kingston Women's Chorus outdoors. The Tree Lighting will be at 5:00 pm. The Chorus will sing before the Tree Lighting and then lead the traditional "sing-along" after the Tree Lighting.

We hope you can attend.

KHS CELEBRATES D&R CANAL on the 50th Anniversary of the D&R's Canal State Park and Commission

KHS has had a close relationship with the D&R Canal State Park from the Society's beginning. Then Chief Ranger John Auciello worked with KHS to allow it to have the Kingston Lock-tender's House as its headquarters and also mounted the original display on the D&R Canal; in return KHS agreed to help maintain the House and make the the exhibits available to the public. The position of Chief Ranger no longer exists, but KHS remains in debt to John Auciello for making its use of the House possible.

KHS CELEBRATES (continued from P.1)



D&R CANAL, KINGSTON LOCK-TENDER'S HOUSE – headquarters of KHS

KHS Participated in several 50th Anniversary Events

April 6th, KHS Open House:

We had a very successful Open House which featured a new exhibit on the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) drawings of the Kingston lock area including detailed measured drawings of the lock, kingpost bridge, tollhouse/ telegraph station. The exhibit was put together by KHS Secretary Charlie Dieterich. The House was staffed by trustees and volunteers who demonstrated Paul Kayne's models of the lock and former A-frame bridge, described the canal and its State Park, and answered questions about the Canal, the Park, Kingston, and KHS. Over 75 people attended.



Charlie Dieterich discussing the HABS exhibit

September 14th, DEP Events at Prallsville Mills: Several trustees/ members attended DEP's panel discussion on the D&R Canal State Park and D&RCC. KHS received a Certificate of Appreciation from DEP for its years of service to the Park. Canal groups, including KHS, had information tables.

September 15th, Canal House Challenge: KHS participated in the *Canal House Challenge*, an event organized by D&R Canal Watch.

Five canal houses were open at the same time. In addition to the Kingston Lock-Tender's House, the Bridge-Tender houses at East Millstone, Blackwells Mills, Griggstown Causeway and Port Mercer were all open from 10 am to 4 pm.. There were persons onhand at each house to discuss and answer questions about the Canal and its houses. At the first house visited a person could pick up a "passport" , which could be stamped at each house visited. Those visiting all 5 houses received a commemorative refrigerator magnet.



KHS trustees and members discussed the history of the D&R Canal, its operation, its preservation as a National Register of Historic Places District and a State Park. Paul Kayne's Kingston Lock and former A-Frame bridge models were demonstrated. Also on display was a new exhibit for the 50th Anniversary.



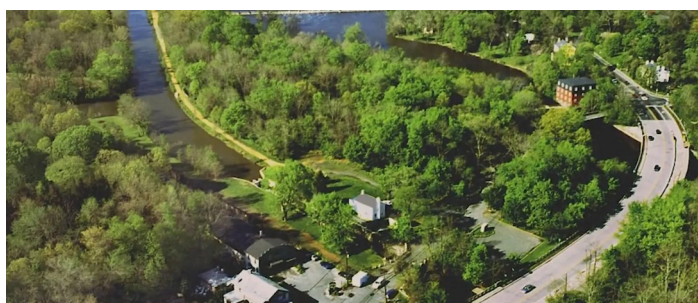
Demonstrating the Lock and A-Frame Bridge Models

A group of visitors from England were taken aback when asked for passports, but were amused when the event was explained and delighted with the exhibits.

October 19th, *Walk the Lock, an exploration of the Kingston Lock Area:*

The walk began and ended at the Locktender's House; Participants, led by KHS secretary and archivist Charlie Dieterich, walked on the D&R Canal towpath to the Carnegie Lake dam; the canal's structures, buildings, sluice gates, overflows and more were discussed. Also included was a walk on the berm path side of the canal, where the turning basin and former railroad were discussed.

In the House, KHS president Robert von Zumbusch discussed the Canal's history and demonstrated the models of the lock and original A-Frame bridge. Visitors enjoyed cider and cookies.



D&R CANAL and MILLSTONE RIVER at KINGSTON LOCK AREA from the air by drone

We look forward to the Annual Meeting program (see P. 1) on November 12th. In the meantime, the two first floor exhibit rooms will remain open to the public on weekends from 10 am to 5 pm through October and from 10 am to 4 pm in November; however, the House usually will not be staffed.

After the Holiday Open House on December 1st the Lock-tender's House will be closed to the public until the first Saturday in April 2025.

ARCHIVES UPDATE

Progress Continues

KHS has a large collection of information and artifacts, collected over 25 years. Organization and making our collection available is the goal of our Archivist Team, formed a year ago. Our current archiving team consists of five active volunteers - Peter Shell, Bob Brown, Kristina Hill, Alexandra Trevena, and Maxwell Vega. While working on understanding the KHS collection and learning about Kingston's history, they are expanding our horizons.

KHS Secretary, Charlie Dieterich, has been creating projects for the team. He and Doug Miller have been

continuing to assemble technology for providing access to our collection.

KHS welcomes donations of appropriate artifacts related to Kingston

A public repository for KHS archival items relating to Kingston history, <http://archive.khsnj.org>, has been built. Already a number of items have been placed in this repository and more are being added.

Volunteer Opportunities

While we have made progress, KHS's archives have a substantial backlog requiring entry; KHS would welcome additional archivist team volunteers to help preserve and catalog items. Further information is at www.khsnj.org/interest-groups-forming/

ANNIVERSARIES

2025: Kingston Volunteer Fire Company Auxillary – 100th Anniversary

2026: War of the American Revolution – 250th Anniversary over multiple years - 2023

New Jersey is aptly called “the Crossroads of the American Revolution.” It was the site of many battles/ skirmishes, including the critical battles of Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth. General George Washington spent more time in New Jersey than any other colony/ state. He led the Continental Army across New Jersey four times

Situated half way between NY and Philadelphia on the main road connecting the colonies, Kingston played a crucial role in the American Revolution.

KHS is planning events/ programs over the coming years to commemorate the Revolution and Kingston's part in it.

LOCK-TENDER'S HOUSE UPDATE

KHS is continuing to work with the D&R Canal State Park staff and the Park Service Office of Resource Development to provide a heating system which will not be subject to flooding. The existing furnace is located in the basement; it has had to be replaced twice due to flooding. Plans had been prepared and put out to bid twice, but no bidders responded; furthermore, revised estimates for the project are very high due to rampant inflation.

Therefore, an electrical system, rather than the attic located gas-fired system originally proposed, is being considered. The electrical panel, also located in the basement, would also be relocated to the Kitchen. We had been hopeful work could be completed this year; hopefully it can be completed during the coming winter. Fortunately, so far there has been no flooding this year.

KINGSTON'S FIRE COMPANY

2024 has also been the 100th Anniversary of Kingston Volunteer Fire Company No.1. KHS has also been celebrating the Company's Anniversary:

Exhibit at the Locktender's House - May – September, 2004

Photographs and newspaper articles from the archives of KHS and KVFC were selected and arranged by KHS secretary Charlie Dieterich and KHS vice president George Luck, Jr. and mounted with the assistance of archivist volunteers.

The focus of the exhibit was on "People" – the members of the Company who have kept the community safe for 100 years.



Exhibit - 100 years of Volunteers - KVFC

KHS Spring Program – May 14th, 2024: Kingston Volunteer Fire Company No. 1

On May 14th KHS vice president and former KVFC Chief George Luck, Jr. presented the illustrated program which covered the Fire Company's history and its members. Since his talk in 2019, George had discovered considerable additional information about the Company, of which he has been a member for over fifty years.

George is a life-long resident of Kingston who knows the community's history. He has also served the community in many ways – especially in the Fire Company and the Kingston Presbyterian Church. He has been a trustee of KHS since its beginning and for many years served as vice president.



George Luck, Jr.,

The "hybrid" program was well attended both in-person at the Kingston Firehouse and also virtually by Zoom.

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Robert von Zumbusch, *President*

Anne Zeman

David Potts *Trustee Emeritus*

The Kingston Historical Society

The Kingston Historical Society was formed in 1997 as a non-partisan, nonprofit organization to preserve, enhance, and promote the history of the village of Kingston. It is a 501(c) (3) organization.

All with an interest in Kingston and its history are invited to join. For more information, see the KHS website: www.khsnj.org

The Society has its headquarters in the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park's historic Kingston Locktender's House, which it helps maintain.
(GPS: 39 Old Lincoln Highway, Princeton, NJ 08540)

Past issues of the Kingston Historian can be found at <https://www.khsnj.org/archives/>