

# Publicly Accessible Morris Canal Restorations

## Jersey City Basins

The Big and Little Basins formed the eastern terminus of the Morris Canal. Shacks built along the banks of the Little Basin after the abandonment have been cleared and the basin is now part of Liberty State Park. The southern bulkhead of the Big Basin is used for the ferry to Liberty and Ellis Islands.

*Location Northern end of Liberty State Park.*

## Clifton Level Section with Towpath

This half-mile level section of canal had been used as a dumping ground before a restoration begun by Jack Kuepfer in the mid -1980`s. The debris was removed and the canal was re-dug by hand. Several Boy Scouts have earned service awards for their projects in the park, while garden clubs maintain the gardens. Mr. Kuepfer received the "Take Pride in America Award from President Reagan" for establishing the Morris Canal Park and Nature Preserve.

*Location: Broad Street, between Allwood Road and Van Houten Avenue, along the Garden State Parkway*

## Montville Level Section

Adaptive reuse as part of a detention basin for a condominium complex has revived this one-mile section of the Morris Canal. By restoring the canal, the developer was able to utilize more land for building and recreation. Dave Phraner worked with the Township and developer to devise the restoration plan. The water control gates, however, are not part of the original canal design.

*Location: Main Street (Route 202) Towaco at Change Bridge Road*

## Boonton Level section with Towpath

This picturesque section of canal between the road and the Rockaway River is an old restoration. It was recently cleared of deadfalls and debris, making it more attractive to viewers.

*Location: North Main Street, access from Public Works yard,*

## **Wharton Level Section with Towpath**

Restored in 1976, this one-half-mile piece is the most striking of publicly accessible level sections. In places the canal was cut into a rock ledge above the Rockaway River. While along the hill is fine stonework. The remains of the locktender's house can be seen at the far end of the park.

***Location: Hugh Force Park, West Central Avenue, 1/2 mile west of Main Street***

## **Ledgewood Plane 2 East**

The Rotary Club of Roxbury is restoring this inclined plane in the Morris Canal Park owned by the Township. The inclined plane and turbine chamber have been cleared, with future plans to rebuild the powerhouse for use as a museum. King's Store, near the highway on Main Street, is a massive stone store where business flourished during the canal era.

***Location: Take Main Street west from Route 10-46 intersection, following large sign for Ledgewood and small sign for Morris Canal Park. Make a left on Emmons Road and a quick right on Canal Street. Park at the gate and walk across the millpond dam. The plane is straight ahead.***

## **Lake Hopatcong Turbine from Inclined Plane**

This Scotch turbine was salvaged by the State during the canal abandonment. While its location in a concrete enclosure is not original, it is readily accessible and easily photographed.

***Location: Northwest side of parking lot for Lake Hopatcong State Park.***

## **Stanhope Reservoir and Lake Musconetcong Dam**

In periods of low water, remnants of the earthen towpath that crossed this canal reservoir can be seen. The capstones for Lock 1 West are visible in the park adjacent to the dam, while a short watered section of the canal is across the road. When the canal was abandoned, the current dam was designed by engineer Cornelius Vermeule

***Location: Route 183 at the Netcong-Stanhope boundary.***

### **Waterloo Plane 4 West, Mule Bridge, Guard Lock 3, Aqueduct, Level Section**

In less than a mile, Waterloo has most of the major engineering features of the Morris Canal. A full scale restoration of the inclined plane is planned. The bridge brought the mules across the Musconetcong River to Guard Lock 3, which formed an aqueduct over a tail race. Along the tree-shaded level section is Smith's Store, with loading doors on the canal side.

*Location: Waterloo Village, Waterloo Road (Route 604), Stanhope. Well sign-posted from Route 80.*

### **Starport Level Section**

This level section in a wooded section of Allamuchy State Park is easily accessible.

*Location: 0.8 miles west of Waterloo, 2nd parking lot at Musconetcong River.*

### **Saxton Falls Lock 5 West**

The Morris Canal passed through a guard lock as it left the Musconetcong River and resumed its path in a cut prism. The capstones of the lock, with gate recesses, can be seen in the parking lot. Rope cuts can also be seen in the stonework.

*Location: Waterloo Road (Route 604) halfway between Hackettstown and Waterloo.*

### **Rockport Basin**

This canal basin is used as a breeding pond for many waterfowl in the State Game Farm

*Location: Across from the State Game Farm office*

### **Phillipsburg Basin and Western Portal.**

The Delaware River Park was once a large basin with loading docks for coal. Interpretive signage aids the visitor in understanding the importance of the western terminus of the Morris Canal. The best view of the western portal, a large arch that once held a drop gate, is from the Hugh Moore Canal Park, across the Delaware River in Easton.

*Location: From Main St (Route 22 Alt), go south on Stockton Street, then right on Howard, and under the bridge.*

## **Canal Society of New Jersey**