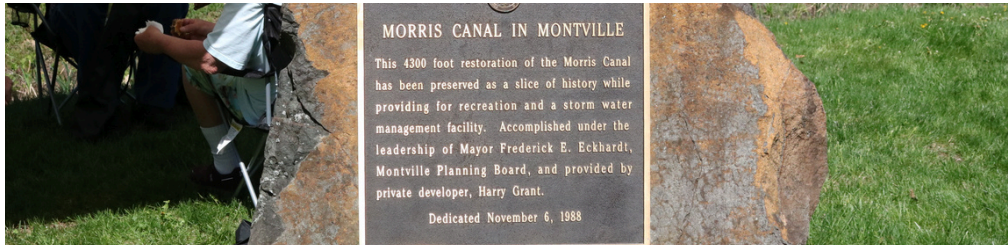


# MONTVILLE TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

SPRING, 2026

MONTVILLE, NJ



Top Photo: Members of the Montville Township Historical Society, the Canal Society, and the Montville Town Committee

Bottom Photo: The Morris Canal commemorative rock on Macculloch Drive

## CANAL DAY CELEBRATION

This year, the Montville Township Historical Society brought back Canal Day in honor of America's 250th Anniversary after a 38-year hiatus. On April 18th, Canal Day was celebrated at the commemorative marker for the Morris Canal on Macculloch Drive. The event drew more than 800 visitors and was considered a huge success in its first year back, both for the event and for the Historical Society.

Putting the event together was no small feat. It took over 50 volunteers across

6 different organizations, including the Boonton Historical Society, the Canal Society of NJ, the Montville Township High School Key Club, the Montville Township Historical Society, the Morristown Beard School, and the Towaco Civic Association, as well as over 6 months of planning to make it all possible. The local VFW Color Guard was responsible for the presentation of colors, while Giuliana Panico performed the National Anthem. Various town, county, and state officials were also in attendance to celebrate this milestone event.

Live music from the Vintage Melody Band, period-appropriate games, and multiple food trucks were just some of the things the event offered. Some local Montville artifacts were showcased in the first opening of the mobile museum, and a guided shuttle tour along the canal points in the town were widely commented on throughout the day as adding a unique element to the event.

### The History of the Morris Canal

People living in the northeast in 1824 saw a

## 2026 MONTHLY MEETINGS

- January- History of Montville- Predating 250th timeline
- February- Jacksonville Gold Rush
- March- Founding Families
- April- Cancelled
- May- Serpentine Mines
- June- Cancelled
- July- Founding Families
- August- No Meeting
- September- Historic Properties, Structures & Districts presented by the Montville Historic Preservation Commission and the Historic Society
- October- Local Graveyards
- November- Historic Restaurants
- December- Founding Families (Van Duynes / Van Ness)

GOT QUESTIONS? EMAIL US AT [montvillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:montvillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

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CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE (<https://www.montvilletwphistoricalsociety.com/>)

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need for an easy way to transport Pennsylvania coal along the eastern coast. The Morris Canal & Banking Company was responsible for constructing a canal through various points in what was then New Jersey's Iron District. At 102 miles long and taking a total of 12 years to be fully completed, the canal connected major cities like Newark, Jersey City, Phillipsburg, and even New York Harbor.

The lifts and incline planes were considered groundbreaking engineering, as they could raise and lower boats up to 100 feet. Even though it was considered an engineering marvel of the time and was the first industrial transportation system, the canal had become obsolete by the early 1900s, and by 1924, it was closed and taken apart.



## MOST SUCCESSFUL DOREMUS HOUSE OPENING



Every year since the Montville Township Historical Society has been reinstated, it has participated in the county's Pathways of History with the opening of the Doremus House. Proving to be the most successful year since reopening, the 250th Anniversary year didn't disappoint, as it drew in over 215 visitors from neighboring towns and even other states.

Guests stepped back in time to the founding of our country and learned what life was like when Washington passed through Montville. Thanks to some of the grants the Montville Township Historical Society has received, visitors were able to learn about the various forms of entertainment children and adults had in the 1700s, getting to have hands-on experience with the Hoop and Stick game as well as stilts. The Society

also explained some of the Doremus family history as an homage to the family that once owned the home.

The Society had some very dedicated volunteers serving as docents for the event, dressed in Colonial-appropriate attire. Upon arrival, guests were signed in by Communications Director Alec Grossman and greeted with the melodious performance of Society member Ben Zabel, who really helped create a welcoming atmosphere for each visitor. Continuing through the back door of the home, guests heard stories from President Anthony Angiolini about some of the artifacts shown in the home and the restorations the house has been through since the Township purchased the property. Moving into the next room, visitors were able to see some of the artifacts from the restorations in displays put together by Museum Curator Dr. Meta Janowitz. Historical Society Vice President Pat Gamsby could be found in the final room showing a drop-spindle spinning demonstration, providing people with an idea of what daily tasks of the time included.

The yearly opening of the Doremus House continues to show the consistent growth and reach of the Historical Society, exciting current members and townspeople about the preservation of our town's, and even our country's, history. As the Society grows, the interest increases town-wide, helping to encourage more visitors each year and at each event!

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# ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A DOCENT?

The Montville Township Historical Society needs docents for the Montville Museum and many other events! Please email [montvillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:montvillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering for any of the dates below.

Montville Museum, 6 Taylortown Rd. (1PM-4PM) September 20th, October 18th, November 15th, and December 20th.

We are not just looking for museum volunteers. If you would like to get involved in other ways, check out our volunteers page at <https://www.montvilletwphistoricalociety.com/volunteer-opportunities>.

No need to be a Montville encyclopedia! We now have Docent Guides for each of our museums to assist you with sharing Montville's history.



## SOCIETY T-SHIRTS

The Montville Township Historical Society & Museum are selling originally designed t-shirts at select society events, as well as at the Montville Museum on open Sundays. They come in sizes S-2XL and will be \$25.00 each. All proceeds will go to supporting the Society & Museum.

There are 3 different options available to purchase. The Towaco Train (top right), Bonnieview Farms (bottom left), and the Morris Canal (bottom right). All come with the MTHS&M logo on the front (top left).



## ORAL HISTORY PROJECT UPDATE

The Montville Township Historical Society is, and will continue, interviewing longtime Montville citizens who have memories and stories to share with both present and future generations. We are still looking for people to participate in this Oral History and be interviewed. Please reach out to us at [montvillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:montvillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com) if you or someone you know is willing to share some important Montville Memories.

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# MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

## Board of Trustees

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- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Legal/Regulatory Director
- Communication Director
- Membership Director
- Monthly Program Director
- Education Director
- Grant Director
- Museum Curator
- Fundraising Director
- Community Relations
- Entertainment Director
- Newsletter Editor
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- Trustee Advisor
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- Pat Gamsby
- Devin Tremblay
- Landi Simone
- OPEN
- Alec Grossman
- OPEN
- OPEN
- Al Lucibello
- Alan Moors
- Meta Janowitz
- OPEN
- Eileen Strasser
- Ben Zabel
- Devin Tremblay
- Linda Weisholtz
- Dick Seabury
- Dan Grant

Currently, there are four Board of Trustees position open. If you are interested in any of the positions email [montvillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:montvillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com).

To become a member, please download and fill out the form on our website at <https://www.montvilletwphistoricalociety.com/membership-1>

### Annual Membership

- Individual- \$25
- Student- \$15
- Family- \$40
- Senior- \$10
- Veterans- \$10

### Lifetime Membership

- Individual- \$100
- Household- \$250

### Corporate / Business Membership

- Annual- \$50

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