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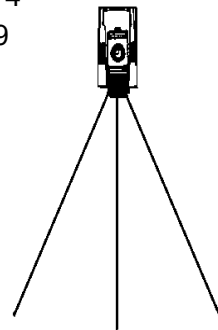
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Hopatcong State Park Fountain

By: Marty Kane, President
Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum

“ We would like to congratulate the Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum on the completion of this much-anticipated and important project, which we know will be of great benefit to our lake community.”

Lake Hopatcong Foundation

For decades starting in 1925, thousands of visitors coming to Lake Hopatcong were welcomed by a beautiful fountain flowing at Hopatcong State Park. It was like an old friend greeting you each season. In recent years, this symbol of Lake Hopatcong had unfortunately been largely forgotten. The few times it has been allowed to flow it was a mere trickle, while the overwhelming amount of time it sat idle and neglected.

In addition to its aesthetic qualities, the fountain at Hopatcong State Park is one of the most important surviving legacies of the abandonment of the Morris Canal. Located in the Morris Canal Historic District, the fountain was designed by Cornelius C. Vermeule, Consulting and Directing Engineer in charge of the dismantling of the Morris Canal, to settle thorny legal issues concerning the flow rate of water from Lake Hopatcong to the Musconetcong River.

An effort to restart the fountain began in 2013 when the Lake Hopatcong Foundation held meetings with the Hopatcong State Park Superintendent and maintenance staff. In collaboration with New Jersey Parks, the Lake Hopatcong Foundation received a Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund grant in 2014 to develop a Preservation Plan. Unfortunately the path forward under the Preservation Plan was too costly and the outlook for the fountain again looked bleak. At that point it was agreed the project would fit better under the Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum and efforts towards restoration were kept alive by Hopatcong resident and engineer Bob Rung. Joining the volunteer efforts was another Hopatcong resident and Stevens Institute of Technology engineering student, Justin McCarthy.

Their extensive efforts indicated a lower cost restoration might indeed be possible. Historical architects, Connolly & Hickey, were brought on board to assist with the project joined by a group of four engineering students from Stevens led by McCarthy and faculty member Dr. Leslie Brunell who made the restoration of the fountain their senior project. The Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund liked what they saw and awarded grant funding with a match supplied by the Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum. The combined professional and student team, with the support of State Park personnel, and herculean efforts of local contractor Bob O'Donnell have made the restoration effort a reality.



The Hopatcong State Park fountain restoration effort has truly showed what the Lake Hopatcong community is capable of – from the volunteer efforts to donations, support of a Beefsteak Dinner at St. Jude's Church, and the generous support of the Verhalen, Szigethy and Kellogg Foundations – it was a great team effort. Combined with amazing support from Morris County, New Jersey State Parks and an amazing professional and contractor team, Lake Hopatcong's fountain is back!



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