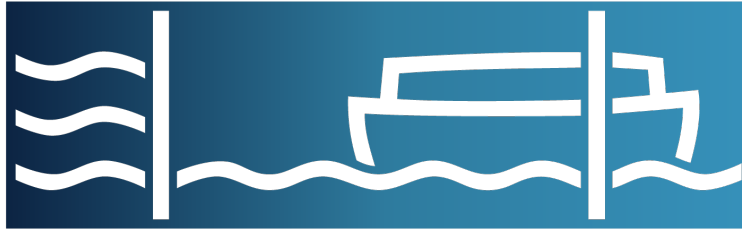


SCHUYLKILL NAVIGATION
1825 • BICENTENNIAL • 2025



108 MILES • 5 COUNTIES • 32 DAMS • 27 CANALS • 71 LOCKS

At the Confluence of Navigation History: Past, Present & Future

SYMPOSIUM: Sunday, May 18, 2025, 8:30am to 4:30pm
C. Howard Hiester Canal Center, Berks County Heritage Center
1102 Red Bridge Road, Reading PA 19605

8:30 Full Site Opens for Confluence Attendees

Self-guided tours:

Berks County Heritage Center grounds, including the Union Canal Towpath, Wertz's Covered Bridge, and Mildred the canal houseboat, and more historic attractions

Inside the Hiester Canal Center:

Permanent museum displays, including canal boat models by Glenn Wenrich

Theatre films looping all day "The Schuylkill Navigation: A Journey on the Historic Nineteenth Century

Waterway" by Larry Whyte, and "Shadow River: Recovering the Schuylkill Navigation Ruins," by Addison Geary

8:30 LOWER BARN Coffee and Kind Bars—check in

Excerpts from **John Bowman's stories** of early canal life, onscreen during breaks (compiled by **John Bambrick**)

MORNING SESSIONS

9:00 WELCOME and Overview of the Day:

Jessica Chernich BCHC, Sandy Sorlien, Stuart Wells "Why May 2025"?

9:20 WHERE WE ARE:

Video of Glenn Wenrich, BCHC Volunteer for 21 years Why the Hiester Canal Center is here: Confluence of the Union Canal and the Schuylkill Navigation

Doug Logan, Pennsylvania Canal Society, Locating the Navigation on American and PA Canal Maps, Lenni Lenape Land

Mike Szilagyi, Trail Designer, Coal Region geology, Schuylkill Valley transportation corridor, canals-rails-trails

10:20 HOW WE GOT HERE:

Sandy Sorlien, *Inland.* A Speedy History of the Schuylkill Navigation 1815-2025

10:40 WHAT WE INHERITED:

Chari Towne, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, *A River Again.* The Schuylkill River Desilting Project

11:30 Sandwich & Salad Buffet on the deck (one hour break)

Canal Center and houseboat, books, canal songs, towpath

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

12:30 **WHAT'S OUT THERE** (EXISTING CONDITIONS)

Stuart Wells, Historian: "The Reticence of Ruins," Girard Canal Survey then and now, 1985-2025

Sandy Sorlien, Photographer: Visual Highlights from 108 Miles of Bushwhacking 2013-2025

1:10 **WHAT'S IN THERE** (ARCHIVE SHARING)

Mary Ellen Heckman Reading Area Community College, **Adam Levine** PWD WaterHistoryPHL,

Doug Logan PA Canal Society, **Dave Willauer** SFAHS, **PA State Archives** (links slide)

1:50 Ten minute break

2:00 **WHAT WORKED** (PRESERVATION)

Larry Whyte The Lock 60 Success Story, video and surprises from the Schuylkill Canal Association archives

Ryan Strause, Leesport Lock House Foundation 50 years of Canal Advocacy

Kay Sykora Manayunk Canal and Towpath Trail 1970s, Flat Rock Betterment 2025

3:30 **NOW WHAT?** (GOING FORWARD)

Informal Discussion: Adopt A Canal Boat, Sojourn, Hamburg Canal Tour, Flat Rock Progress (**Sandy Sorlien**), Recent Lock Reveals: Herbines Lock 38 by Ed Glausman (**Sandy continues**), Port Clinton Lock 27 and Parker Ford Lock 57 (**Mitch Martin**). Forming the Friends of the Schuylkill Navigation (**Schuylkill Mitch**).

Issues to ponder over Happy Hour and beyond: Conundrum of buried locks and private property, attracting graffiti, annoying the locals, quirky destinations versus industrial authenticity, trail dominance, excessive clearing, ongoing maintenance, funding ideas, your favorite rescue projects ahead!

4:30 Adjourn

Note: From 12-4 the general public will be milling about the property, but are supposed to be quiet when they come in to the gift shop next to our Confluence Room.

5:00 Celebrate at Sly Fox Wyomissing, 820 Knitting Mills Way #100, Wyomissing PA 19610 484-878-2154

Good bar food and drinks, outdoors or in, pay as we go

MONDAY TOUR UPPER BERKS: THE HAMBURG CANAL 10-3

TUESDAY TOUR FLAT ROCK: THE REWATERED MANAYUNK CANAL 10 AM one hour

Register for each free tour by emailing sandysorlien@gmail.com