



2026 NEWSLETTER

THANK YOU

To all of our visitors, volunteers, donors and members of the Black River Canal Museum, we thank you for your support! You have all helped to further share and preserve the story of the Black River Canal and its importance to our region.

The summer of 2025 brought us many visitors with 800+ touring the complex June through September. One hundred and fifty were excited children, and 19 of the visitors were from other countries (Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland and Italy).

MUSEUM NEWS

Unfortunately, two hard-working board members (Steve Schleicher and Valerie Kessler) had to resign from the board this past year. We are extremely happy to welcome Cris Adsit and Ann Fillhart to fill the open seats. Cris and Ann will continue to volunteer as guides along with their new positions as board members.

Thanks to a grant from Pratt-Northam Foundation, we have co-interns this summer. Madeline Pfeiffer and Dakota Young will be working the desk and store as well as doing tours of the museum. This fall, Madeline will be attending SUNY Cortland for a degree in Speech & Hearing and Dakota will be majoring in Computer Informational Technology at Cayuga College.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025

Your donations in the Mercantile and in the Mason jars around the community, plus so many membership renewals have helped the growth of the Museum. Donations like these allow us to make repairs and replacements both inside and outside the complex and to add new displays as the opportunity arises. In last year's newsletter, you saw pictures of the drainage repair project around and under the Conference Center. Volunteers worked hard all summer to fix the problem, and this past winter provided proof that it was done correctly. The cellar now stays completely dry.

The bob sled to flower garden conversion was in place in time for the 2025 summer season. During the summer, both time and hard work created a beautiful flower garden around the flagpole. The memorial pavers were moved to the entryway where they stay clean and visible. If you are interested in purchasing a paver, ask for the paperwork at the desk in the Mercantile.



NEW DISPLAYS FOR 2026

Several new displays have been created by volunteers over the last year. Below are some pictures with descriptions, but if you come to the museum, you will get a better look at these new additions.

TOUCH TABLE

This table holds various tools and supplies from days gone by. Children (and adults) can pick up the objects from the table to feel the texture and weight before guessing what it is and how it was used back in the days of the canal.



CHARLES HAMMOND CARVED FIGURES

Under glass in the Mercantile are several of “Charlie” Hammond’s hand carved figures. There are people and animals you might have seen along the canal back when the boats were carrying supplies south to the Erie Canal. The figures are carved and painted to depict the clothing and type of work one would see along the loading area in the late 1800s.



CHARLES BARLETT DISPLAY

Dr. Barlett of Boonville lived in a big, beautiful house that stood on the land that is now Capri’s Pizzeria’s parking lot. Next to that, on Main St. was his office. His family gave the museum all the memorabilia that is now in a display case and on the wall nearby. You’ll see his medical instruments, along with pictures of his family, house and office.



SNO TOP ADIRONDACK

Home to the Polaris Spring and master of various bottled beverages, Sno Top of Boonville was in its glory back in the early 1900s. The display has many pictures, bottles and memorabilia from days when the mineral water was bottled right here in Boonville. If you look closely, some of the water is still in the unopened bottles.



THE MERCANTILE STORE

The store will be up and running again this year with clothing, books and maybe stuffed animals. Once again, this year, children ages 4-16 we will have a scavenger hunt available with patches for all who complete the list. Also at the front desk, visiting children can ask for a Corn Husk Doll Kit, with directions, to take home and complete.



THE CANAL PATH

If you would like to walk awhile on the original Black River Canal path from Boonville to Forestport, it is just across Rte. 12 at the northern end of the covered bridge. You can walk or drive to the parking lot on the south side of the bridge, walk across the bridge, then turn right to the entrance of the canal path that follows the canal for 10 miles. Bicycles are allowed, but nothing motorized. Enjoy!



SPECIAL THANKS

Once again, this year, we would like to thank the Village of Boonville for plowing all winter and Craig Freeman for shoveling the walks in the winter and mowing the lawn in the summer.



VOLUNTEERS ARE WELCOME

We are always looking for volunteers interested in joining the fun by greeting and guiding the visitors. It is exciting and super interesting as you will meet so many people from near and far. It would require four hours of your time just once a week, 12 noon to 4 p.m. We would train you on the history of the Canal and things to know around the Museum. You would always have someone with you. If you would like to get involved at the Museum, we would love to have you join us! Please give us a call, send us an email or leave your name and number at the front desk when you visit.

2026 DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION:

The museum will open Memorial Day Weekend and for weekends only in June. In July and August, the museum will be open daily. September through Labor Day, the museum will be open weekends only. The hours of operation throughout the 2026 season will be 12 noon-4 p.m.

Email: contactus@blackrivercanalmuseum.com

Mailing Address: PO Box 122, Boonville, NY 13309

Museum Location: 520 Main Street, Boonville, NY (corner of Route 12 and Route 12D)

Phone: 315-942-6763

Website: blackrivercanalmuseum.com

Facebook: Search "Black River Canal Museum"

We hope to see you soon!