By Frances Gotcsik

FOGVG celebrated the American Hiking Society’s 31st annual Trails Day on a June blue-sky day at the Greenway’s Genesee Valley Canal Lock #2. The Canal, which operated from 1840-1878, forms the backbone for our Greenway Trail, so this was a fitting venue. As the most complete preserved lock of the Genesee Valley Canal, Lock #2 gives us the clearest picture of how the locks looked, operated and — with a little imagination — a sense of what life was like during the less than 40 years when the canal was in operation.

A group of 30 to 40 Greenway and canal enthusiasts gathered to hear canal historian, Chris Romanchock, recount the technical and historical story of the canal. Brian Nagel, another historian, shared his interpretation of life along the canal. As these presentations unfolded, other folks streamed by on bikes and on foot. One estimate was as many as 75 people passed by during the two hours of our National Trails Day event.

Romanchock and his son Henry set the stage with a very detailed account of how the Genesee Valley Canal was created and the challenges that the builders and later the operators faced. Chris reminded everyone that the canal was never profitable (though my records say it made a profit in 1854 when it transported 158,940 tons.)

Stephen Richard added to the program by sharing his considerable experience as a mason and stone cutter.

Continued on next page.
to demonstrate the tools and techniques used to construct a fully cut stone lock like Lock #2. All that Richard said took on greater meaning as the group was surrounded by the massive stones when they walked down into the 90-ft. long lock chamber.

To complete the picture, Brian Nagel, senior director of interpretation at the Genesee Country Village and Museum, came dressed as a lock tender of the day, complete with a very distinctive top hat. According to Brian, the position of lock tender was often a political appointment. Most, but not all, lock tenders lived next to the lock in a very small house and would earn extra money by selling produce and other goods to the crew and passengers on the boats. According to the 1860 census, those living at Lock #2 were 33-year-old lock tender George De Forrest and his wife Emily (25) and four children: Sarah (11) George Jr. (6), Ella (4) and Elsie (2). Nothing more is known about DeForrest at this time.

Thanks, again, to Chris and Henry Romanchock, Stephen Richard, and Brian Nagel for their time and expertise. Along the Genesee Valley Greenway every day is a day to celebrate this unique historic trail. But as the Friends of the Greenway have done since 1992, we look forward to again celebrating National Trails with other trails enthusiasts around the country next year.
It is time to join or renew your FOGVG membership for our upcoming fiscal year: Sept. 1, 2023 to Aug. 31, 2024. Visit Fogvg.org and click the “join us” tab OR print the form on Page 11 of this PDF and mail Mailing Address: FOGVG, P.O. Box 42, Mt. Morris, NY 14510.


Right: Jules Hoepting (left) and Davies Nagel (right) tabling at the Stand With Seneca Nation Caneadea Field Day on July 1. Located in the Town of Caneadea Park in Houghton, NY. Photo by Rebecca Rowley.
By James C. Hutton


The first, or Part I, of these articles, appeared in the Fall 2020 edition of the Greenway News. It told about the one-day rides we did while exploring the Greenway over several years, prior to making our first end-to-end ride in 2007. Part II was the story of a typical first day of our annual, three-day, end-to-end rides. It was in the Spring 2021 Greenway News. Part III, telling about a typical second day, appeared in the Fall 2021 Greenway News. My original intention had been to write Part IV, the story of a typical third day of our annual rides, immediately following the publication of Part III. Unfortunately, that did not happen for a variety of reasons. Now, with some prodding from Joan Schumaker, I am finally getting around to writing Part IV.

Day 3 always started at the Genesee Country Inn and Suites in Mt. Morris, where we had spent another night sleeping with our bikes beside our beds. As usual, Ned was up and dressed at what I thought was an ungodly hour (about 6:00 a.m.). His dressing and showering normally woke me up. And, when he saw I was awake I remember him telling me we had to get going because there was a long bike ride ahead of us. The good news was the Country Inn and Suites always had an excellent buffet breakfast. There was everything from cold cereal to waffles. There were also fresh apples and cookies we could take for consumption during the ride ahead.

The Greenway is essentially flat from Mt. Morris to Genesee Valley Park in Rochester; and by 2007 there were only two detours in this section of the Greenway Trail. Therefore, it was unlike the first two days, from Hinsdale to Mt. Morris, where we had several significant detours onto roads, and a couple of steep hills to climb. In other words, it was a relatively easy bike ride, although on unpaved surfaces, of about 33 miles.*

We would always be on our bikes and on the road by 7:30 a.m. From 2007 to 2011 our ride from Mt. Morris started by turning right onto the Route 36 bridge across the Genesee River. Since November 2011, a crossing has allowed bikers and hikers to...
cross without joining automobile traffic on Route 36. We then turned right onto Route 37, River Road, and after passing under the railroad underpass, we would turn right onto a farm crossing which intersected the Greenway Trail. The trail goes straight north from there along route 37, for about 2.5 miles to Route 20 in Cuylerville. It was often dark and misty in the early morning along this stretch of the rial. Every rabbit in Livingston County always seemed to be out nibling on the grass along here.

One year, Ned wanted to check the benches that had been placed along the Greenway, starting in this section. Ned was very conscientious in that he wanted to assure that all the planned benches were in place, and in good condition. But believe it or not, it was easy to miss a bench, even though we had a map showing the location for all of them. I remember Ned’s frustration when we would come, for example, to Bench No. 8, even though the last one we had seen was No. 6. Ned dutifully made notes on every bench in a little notebook.

It was during one of the last years of our rides that a new Information Kiosk was being constructed on the north side of Route 20A in Cuylerville. Of course, this necessitated a stop for another inspection by Ned, and noting the results in his little notebook. The trail passes through some woods, but mostly farmland north of Cuylerville. We stopped one year to examine a section of the trail that had been flooded. I believe the flooding was at what was called Tracy’s Basin. If I correctly remember, the section of the trail south of Chandler Road used to be closed when there were planes flying during the Genesee Air Show. There is a farm at the Chandler Road crossing where the annual Greenway Horse Ride started from for several years. It is a relatively short distance from Chandler Road to Piffard. The Yard of Ale restaurant is on the west side of the Greenway at Piffard, at the crossing of Route 63. Several FOGVG Board members met there several times for planning meetings one winter. However, Ned and I always arrived there on our end-to-end rides much too early for lunch.

North of Route 63 we passed by the Arkema’s Genesee Production plant on the right side of the trail. About one and one-quarter mile north of Piffard we saw where the Genesee and Wyoming Railroad crossed the Pennsylvania Railroad (now the Genesee Valley Greenway). Also, we saw an original Pennsylvania Railroad Milepost 27 south of York Landing. One year there was a detour after leaving Piffard, due to a large wash-out of the trail just south of York Landing. The detour took us west on Caledonia Road for a short distance, and then turned right onto River Road. It went by the Abbey of the Genesee before turning right into York Landing and back onto the Greenway.

We would normally stop at York Landing to inspect the Greenway information kiosk. There are normally some people at York Landing, and we would chat briefly with them. North of York Landing there is a stock farm where the trail comes out of the woods. North of York Landing we passed over Brown’s Creek, where there had been a very large washout that cost about $300,000 to repair. About one and one-half miles north of Fowlerville Road we usually stopped to inspect the remains of Genesee Valley Canal Lock 5. The next major road crossing is Route 20, west of Avon. I think it is here Ned found the last of the benches, hidden among the weeds. Between Routes 20 and the next road, Route 5, the Valley Sand & Gravel Company is adjacent to the Greenway for much of the way.

Continued on page 7
We’ve caught Pauline Burnes, Genesee Valley Trail Towns (GVTT) Coordinator “in the field” working with 10 Trail Town Committees, the NYS Department of Transportation, and staff of Genesee Valley Greenway State Park to enhance and promote trails in our region. Seven of the Trail Towns have sections of the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park (GVGSP) within their borders while three are adjacent to GVGSP and have their own trails which may one day connect to the Greenway. All of these towns are part of the Genesee Valley region that the Greenway passes through and offer GVGSP users many amenities and sites to explore.

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By Pauline Barnes

We’ve caught Pauline Burnes, Genesee Valley Trail Towns (GVTT) Coordinator “in the field” working with 10 Trail Town Committees, the NYS Department of Transportation, and staff of Genesee Valley Greenway State Park to enhance and promote trails in our region.

Top: Pauline gets behind the camera and photographs FOGVG Board Member, Michael Doyle, at a new handicap accessible picnic table on the east end of the GVGSP in Cuba, NY. They are checking out this and other amenities added to at this location through the efforts of the Cuba GVTT Team, of which Michael is a member.

Not pictured are another picnic table, several benches, a bicycle rack, a dog waste station, and solar lighting. These amenities were funded by a grant from Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Legacy Funds administered by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo.

Bottom left: On May 1st despite the rain, and hail later in the day, Pauline, Phyllis Gaerte and Chris Jordan discussed signage and crosswalks for Route 19 in Houghton at the Caneadea Town Park and GVGSP access point. Also under discussion with NYS DOT was highway drainage and the need for ADA accessible sidewalks from Rte. 19 to the GVGSP.

Phyllis is a FOGVG board member and Town of Caneadea GVTT Lead as well as Senior Director of Alumni & Community Engagement at Houghton University. Chris Jordan is the Safety Evaluation & Transportation Operations Engineer, Office of Traffic Safety & Mobility for NYS DOT Region 6.

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**Continued from “Pauline Burnes.”**

**Bottom middle:** Pauline Burnes’ “selfie” with Becky Lewis and Martha Edmonds, members of the York Trail Town Committee, exploring a trail in the Little Italy Nature Preserve in the Town of York on a cold and windy May 4 day along with Davies Nagel (not pictured).

The group was discussing future trail linkages from the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park to the Little Italy Preserve Trail and other trails in York. The Little Italy Trail, for example, could be extended to link the GVGSP to the Groveland Secondary Trail, also known as the “Phoebe Snow Trail,” which presently extends from Rte. 63 in York to Rte. 20 in the Genesee County town of Alexander.

**Bottom Right:** On June 6th, Corrin Strong (Landowner) led Pauline (far right) along the northern section of the new Geneseo Loop Trail with some members of the Genesee Geneseo Trail Town Team.

(L-R): Jennifer Apple (Assoc. Professor of Biology, SUNY-Genesee), Dan DeZarn (Director of Sustainability, SUNY-Genesee), Louise Wadsworth (Geneseo Downtown Coordinator), and Keith Walters (Village Trustee and Owner, Gallery in the Valley). A Parks & Trails New York Trail Towns grant will allow the team to erect new signage this year. Photo Credit: Meg Reitz (Geneseo GVTT Member and Assoc. Director of Resident Life, SUNY Geneseo).

The Trail Town Coordinator’s efforts are supported with funding awarded to Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway from the New York State Park and Trail Partnership Grants and New York’s Environmental Protection Fund. The Park and Trail Partnership Grants are administered by Parks & Trails New York, in partnership with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. A profile of Pauline and summary of the GVTT Initiative appears on p.4 of the FOGVG Spring 2023 Newsletter

**Continued from “Remembering Ned Holmes.”**

We had to go up and down earthen ramps to cross Route 5. After crossing Route 5, we continued our ride on the Greenway towards Scottsville. About one mile past Route 5, we saw the former bridge abutments where the Erie Railroad crossed the Pennsylvania Railroad. The Erie Railroad right-of-way east into Avon has been developed into a rail trail. About 4 miles further on we saw the bridge abutments where the New York Central Railroad had crossed the Pennsylvania Railroad. Of course, the major crossing was the Lehigh Valley Railroad, at what was called Wadsworth Junction. There is an interpretative sign there with pictures of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, and particularly the large trestle to the east side.

We continued our ride northward on the Greenway across Route 251 to Canawaugus Park on the south side of Scottsville. For several years we ate a picnic lunch at one of the tables in the park. However, we discovered it was a short ride up onto Main Street in Scottsville. We bought our lunch, and refilled our water bottles, at Salvatore’s Old-Fashioned Pizzeria. From there it is a short way back onto the Greenway for the final part of our ride to the Genesee Valley Park in Rochester.

I had planned on this being the last article in my series on Ned and my end-to-end bike rides on the Genesee Valley Greenway. However, given the amount of detail I have included, and wanting to do justice to our final ride in 2012, I am now planning on finishing the story in a Part V. My goal is to complete it in time for inclusion in the next issue of the Greenway News.

**Current Greenway Volunteer Opportunities**

Contact: trail@fogvg.org

**Gate Painting:**
Volunteers are currently working in Mt. Morris and Nunda. There are also gates in Rochester, Caledonia, Piffard, Portage, Belfast, Black Creek and Hinsdale in need of painting.

**Flower Planting:**
Scottsville Greenway volunteers are welcome to plant flowers in GVGSP planters on the trail between Scottsville and Genesee Valley Park.
Stand with Seneca Nation Field Day Event in Caneadea

By Walter Pond

On July 1st, 2023, the Town of Caneadea Trail Town Committee, with the Town of Caneadea and the Seneca Nation Council, presented the first annual Caneadea Field Day using the theme “Stand With Seneca.” The event was funded by grants and generous donations from over 2 dozen local businesses and organizations (see below). In the words of Town Historian, Craig Braack:

“On Saturday, July 1st, I was privileged to witness one of the most stirring and significant historical events in my career; a meeting of the Seneca Nation leaders and the Town of Caneadea on the banks of the Genesee River. This well-planned ceremony honored the history of the Seneca as the Town of Caneadea was the original site of the Seneca Council House, now wonderfully restored and preserved on the Council House Grounds and Mary Jemison gravesite in Letchworth State Park. The two flags respectfully raised are for the Seneca Nation and the Town of Caneadea. Thankfully, this will be an annual event.”

Also in this photograph is William Crouse, a self-taught Seneca artist and performer, singing in the Seneca language as part of the flag raising during the Welcome Ceremony. The large eagle sculpture was presented by the Seneca Nation to commemorate the event and will be on display in a Town of Caneadea building or park in the future.

The Town of Caneadea commemorated the day with a gift of a walnut tree sapling, behind the commemorative jug in this photo. It will be the first tree of a planned native nut tree grove in the Town Park. The commemorative jug represents the Seneca peoples (in the wooden handle patterned after a wampum belt) and the land (represented by the Genesee River etched into the side of the jug). See the statement of the artist, Aaron A. Harrison, on a July 3rd post on his Facebook page www.facebook.com/aaharrisonceramics.

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The organizers of Stand with Seneca Nation in Caneadea Field Day event gratefully acknowledge the financial support of grants from Parks & Trails, New York, and the Allegany County Area Foundation. Additional support was provided by partner organizations: Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway, Genesee Valley Trail Towns, Genesee Valley Greenway State Park, and the Letchworth Gateway Villages Initiative. Sponsors included over 2 dozen local business and organizations. See the full list in a June 27 post on the Town of Caneadea Facebook page.
At the Genesee River in Caneadea, Seneca members of the Allegany River Dancers with their Director and Choreographer, William Crouse. Photo by Phyllis Gaerte.

We do not have the capacity in this Newsletter to capture the color, sound, and exuberant energy of this collaborative event. The activities included demonstration lacrosse games, a hoop dance, displays from the Seneca Nation Museum, and displays by artists selling their work. Local food vendors were there and the day concluded with everyone – from the Town and from the Nation – joining in a Friendship Dance. For a visual sample of the day, see a 3-minute video from the Seneca Media and Communications Center on their Facebook page, Seneca Media. You can also find a Photo Album of the event there, with over 60 images.

While the activities described before were taking place, members of the Seneca Nation Council and other Seneca, dressed in regalia, made a ceremonial return to the Genesee River for the first time in over 190 years, after their ancestors left the Caneadea Reservation. They walked the Genesee Valley Greenway Trail in Houghton to reach the river that had been central to the spiritual and daily life of the Seneca at Caneadea. The name “Caneadea” is derived from the Seneca name “Gaoyadeo,” meaning “where the heavens rest upon the earth.” For a succinct summary of the history behind the Stand with Seneca Nation in Caneadea Field Day event, see “Seneca Nation History in Caneadea, NY” by Jules Hoepting on the Explore Genesee Valley website.
**Upcoming Events:**

**August 19:** **GVGSP Hike Series: Cuylerville Section**
Saturday at 10:00 a.m. (2 hours, 2 miles)
Meet at parking lot on the north side of State Route 20A, 3.5 miles west of Geneseo and 1.5 east of Leicester.

**August 26:** **RBC's ALGE Gravel Grinder**
The Rochester Bicycling Club (RBC) has organized a 40+ mile loop ride for its members.
In addition to the Genesee Valley Greenway, the route includes the Erie Canalway Trail, Auburn Trail, and the Lehigh Valley Trail.
For details visit the [RBC Meetup page](#) and join RBC.

**September 10:** **Oakland Locks Nature Hike**
Sunday at 10:00 a.m. (2 hours, 1 mile)
Meet at junction of Oakland Road and Route 436 in Oakland, New York

**September 24:** **GVGSP Hike Series: Dugan Creek**
Sunday at 1 p.m. (2 hours, 2 miles or more)
Meet at parking lot on the east side of River Rd about 4.5 miles north of Rt 5 (Caledonia-Avon Rd) and 2.5 miles south of Canawaugus Park in the Village of Scottsville.

**Announcement Coming Soon! FOGVG Annual Meeting**
Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway

P.O. Box 42, Mt. Morris, NY 14510
585-658-2569 | www.fogvg.org | trail@fogvg.org

To Join Online and Pay via PayPal or Credit Card, visit the Join Us tab at fogvg.org.

Membership runs from Sept. 1st to Aug. 31st.

Circle one:  New Member  Returning Member  Renewing Member
(gap in membership)  (renewing last year’s membership)

I use the Greenway for: ____________________________________________
(hiking, biking, horseback riding, dog walking, birding, snowmobiling, XC Skiing, etc.)

I would like to
help FOGVG with

- Contribute Newsletter Articles
- Adopt-a-Trail
- Trail Town Program
- Paint-a-Gate
- Fundraising
- Special Events
- I Love My Park Day
- Lead-a-Bike Ride
- Lead-a-Hike
- First Day Hikes

Circle a Membership Level and enclose a check payable to FOGVG to the P.O. Box above:

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*By providing FOGVG with your Email address, you are opting-in to receive email messages from FOGVG periodically, about FOGVG business, events, and activities. You may unsubscribe online at any time. FOGVG does not share personal information or mail/email lists with any other non-profit organization or business.

The Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway is a 501(c)3 not for profit charitable organization. Your membership donation is fully tax deductible. A copy of FOGVG’s Annual Report is available at fogvg.org, by contacting FOGVG at the addresses above, or from the Office of the NYS Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, NY, NY 10271.