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Massive canal restoration project slated for Waterloo Village, N.J.



Waterloo Village (formerly Andover Forge), N.J., date unknown. The pony truss bridge in the foreground was collapsed by an overweight truck in the 1950s, and is the bridge that Tom Rick wants to replace with a similar truss. *Photo courtesy Tom Rick.*

Tom Rick [SIA] is looking for a metal pony truss for Waterloo Village near Stanhope, N.J. When he finds the right bridge, it will become part of an incredibly ambitious effort to restore to working condition about a quarter-mile length of a lower canal, a lock, a river crossing, an inclined plane, and about three-quarters of a mile of an upper canal. All the machinery and facilities of the canal will be replicated, including the turbine to power the winding drum, the drum and all gearing, all buildings, a cradle car for the canal boats, two boats, and a mule barn.

In the original operation a canal boat arriving at Waterloo Village and heading east would be maneuvered from the lock to the stilling basin where it would be floated aboard a half-submerged, heavy oak cradle car with wheels on iron rails. The car would be winched by wire cable to the top of the plane and be lowered into the upper canal to continue on its journey.

Waterloo, the only canal village left in N.J., is the site of Plane Number 4 West on the Morris Canal (1830-1926), a system that stretch-

ed between Jersey City and Phillipsburg on the Delaware River. The canal and plane with rails and sleepers are intact.

Rick is project coordinator for the Waterloo Foundation for the Arts and, as president of Manitou Machine Works, Inc., of Cold Spring, N.Y., will do the engineering study necessary to restore the plane and lock, a project estimated to take two years. Although he hoped that construction would begin this summer, funding delays have set the work back.

According to Rick, the Morris Canal photographs and drawings in the N.J. state archives are quite complete. Given the available resources, project planners believe that fabrication of the necessary turbine, rails, wire ropes, and other machinery should not be an insurmountable problem. Likewise, the building of a canal boat and railway carriage also could be done with little difficulty since photos and plans of both exist.

If you know of an appropriate bridge for the Waterloo project (see photo of original), contact Tom Rick, Manitou Machine Works Inc., 37 Main St., Cold Spring NY 10516 (914-265-3153).