

# Panorama

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June

By Alan Fetterman

In this grand region of the Delaware Valley, along side of the old and bold Delaware River itself, lingers of course the river's most very famous sidekick ...the *towpath*.

As a long line of trodden earth this pathway remains a living piece of history. Originating as a guide and groove for transportation, it has been marked and manipulated throughout its time by man and nature alike. Unused and antiquated since the 1930 s it had fallen deep into ill repair via decades of erosion and neglect. However, through an on going major revitalization effort (by the hands, hopes and money of many) beginning in 1998 it has again become a vital passageway for locals and visitors alike. Now a welcoming state park and trail, it continues to aid our commerce, as well as render us an historical and bucolic wonder, that indeed! is a grand part of our cultural heritage and lore.

Yet, after its recent rebirthing in the last 7 years the towpath again has become disabled. This time by the power of the colossal and repetitive floods of 2004 and 2005. But, even though it currently remains partially marred and broken, it once again is heading toward repair... So, I say to all:

If one day soon, you are one of the lucky many that finds themselves upon this pathway of old, take a moment for the following.

While walking along this path, simply look down to the tip of your own toe and with a slow gradation keenly peer up towards the horizon. Take in all its glory. Feel the water that flows and be receptive to that what nature allows. No matter the season, allow yourself a complete use of your senses and then see and feel the panorama of your magical moment of time and place. There is no right or wrong, a simple, *doing it*, is enough.

From the ancient Lenape Indian to the current biker following the water's flow, the Delaware and its famous sidekick the *towpath* remains one of our regions most celebrated and precious resources. The footsteps of the human spirit have been firmly planted in this trenchant trail and so to the very river's edge ... If by chance or decision you find the time with family or friend or very much alone, seek out the towpath and embrace the moment, or maybe you already know... to do just so.

For aid and interest in the Canal please contact the Friends of the Canal (215-862-2021) because, without such qualified support the canal may not have made it back to form.