

History of MARCH

The historical society known as M.A.R.C.H., Montague Association for the Restoration of Community History, began as a grass-roots effort in response to the Tocks Island Project which had destroyed many historic homes, farms and landscapes in Montague. The Army Corps of Engineers' project was to dam the Delaware River and create a 40-mile long lake. Thankfully, the Tocks Island project was de-commissioned by the U.S. Congress. The National Park Service now administers the Delaware Water Gap National Recreational Area.

Through the efforts of the original M.A.R.C.H. members in 1979, the Nelden Roberts Stone House, a circa 1820 stone schoolhouse, was saved and the idea of preserving history became firmly entrenched in Montague. That accomplishment led to M.A.R.C.H. being asked by the National Park Service to add the Foster-Armstrong House to our charge in 1993. This circa 1790 two-story clapboard with a circa 1820 stone addition was built as an inn along the Old Mine Road. The distinctive Dutch gambrel roof, front Dutch door and beehive oven has charmed and intrigued travelers for over two centuries. Today it has become a second home to M.A.R.C.H. members. Volunteers meet all year long to tend to our many activities which include making hand-made crafts, cataloging donations, gardening, managing a small general store, planning programs, updating curatorial displays, opening both sites on a regular basis, providing small group tours, and keeping up with general site maintenance.

Both buildings and their grounds belong to the National Park Service. M.A.R.C.H. has a long-term agreement with the NPS to manage both sites as museums opened to the public. M.A.R.C.H.'s mission to save historic properties, sites, landscapes and artifacts, and to share information concerning the history of Montague and the Minisink region with the public, gives the public a lot to see in both museum sites.