

The donated building is an untouched mid-19th century industrial warehouse, built right on the spot where the Canal's first shovelful was dug in 1794. It overlooks the **summit pond** and **falls** on the Concord River, the canal's ~~original~~ water source and high point, which in bygone days provided waterpower to two huge brick mills. (Both are now renovated complexes housing a variety of businesses, and **part of the Billerica Mills Historic District**.) The **Middlesex Canal Museum and Visitor Center** currently rents **4400 sq. ft.** in one of these mills.

The Museum was created to preserve and illuminate the history of the Middlesex Canal. Built 1793-1803, the Canal was the engineering marvel of its time. Because of the canal's great historical significance, and its huge impact on the early commercial viability of **Boston and New England** during the Industrial Revolution, it has been placed on the National Register of Historic **Sites**, and designated a National Historical Engineering Landmark. The museum, opened in 2000, features models, maps, drawings, artifacts, and other fascinating reminders of an era and a technology that helped to shape the world we live in today. Built **[\$100,000 ? for tradesmen for adaptive re-use of unused mill]** and run entirely by volunteers, the museum is both delightful and impressive, with sophisticated displays, publications, programming, archives, and mission. Over the years, the museum has welcomed thousands of visitors. The capable and expert volunteer board, **and** (along with) the **200+ [no +]** members of the Association, are passionate about the canal and this museum. They see their mission not only to conserve the relics of the Canal, but also to educate the next generations: they have pioneered an innovative curriculum for schoolchildren studying local history, and training for their teachers. They recently recorded QR-coded audio tour information to reach the public with state-of-art technology.