

Huguenot Children's Library Brick Pathway – Frequently Asked Questions

New Rochelle Public Library Foundation

Why are you destroying the old sidewalk?

The Library must replace the sidewalk due to serious safety concerns. Over time, the engraved brick tiles, originally installed through community fundraising campaigns in 1993 and 2006, have cracked and shifted, creating a tripping hazard. A recent slip-and-fall incident emphasized the urgency of ensuring the walkway is safe and accessible for all visitors.

Why didn't the Foundation preserve the old bricks for us to keep?

The pathway was made of engraved terracotta brick tiles, which are about .5" thick. Unfortunately, due to their age and fragility, most could not be removed without breaking during demolition. Some of the intact brick tiles may be salvaged and will be available for pickup near the east corner of the Huguenot Children's Library, and the remaining brick tiles will be responsibly recycled.

You said the Foundation will honor the previous donors. What does this mean?

We are in the process of creating a virtual brick wall, so that all original donors are acknowledged online. Additionally, the Foundation is exploring plans to launch another brick fundraising campaign, and donors who helped with the previous two campaigns will have the opportunity to purchase bricks at a discounted price. We would like to preserve all the original names, and we also would like to invite new community members to participate in the brick campaign. Watch for an announcement of a new campaign in the near future.

What is the history of the HCL Brick Campaign?

The "Buy A Brick" campaigns were launched in 1993 and 2006 by the Partnership for the Huguenot Children's Library, a grassroots group formed to restore the fire-damaged Huguenot branch and revitalize Huguenot Park. Led by community leaders, the campaigns played a key role in reopening the Library and rebuilding the surrounding space, including Jack's Friendship Garden playground.

These engraved brick tiles represent the generosity and spirit of New Rochelle families. The Foundation's committed to honoring the donors who made the original pathway possible and will preserve their impact through thoughtful recognition.

Why didn't the Foundation just redo the brick walkway so it remains the same?

The cost of installing engraved bricks is prohibitive at this time, and the Foundation has already allocated its expenditures for the fiscal year. A new brick campaign will allow for previous donors as well as new residents to participate in a new, attractive sidewalk.

I donated a brick in the last campaign. How can I learn more about things going forward?

The Foundation is going to try to contact all previous brick donors, but we don't have updated contact information for everyone and some of our donors have moved or passed away. It would help us if you could email info@nrplfoundation.org if you are interested in learning more going forward.

I thought my brick tile would be part of HCL forever - that was my intention!

Fundraising campaigns such as the brick tiles are not meant to be installations that last forever. Fundraising best practices suggest that a 25-30 life of an installed campaign is appropriate. The tiled sidewalk is nearing its three-decade mark, so it is only expected that the tiles are no longer viable.

Why wasn't a new tile campaign coordinated with the installation of the new sidewalk?

Simply put, this was a timing issue. The Library needed to replace the sidewalk because the disintegrating brick tiles are unsafe, and the urgency did not allow the Foundation to organize a brick campaign in time for a new installation.

I'm feeling disappointed, is there anything I can do?

We understand that some donors may be very disappointed by this sidewalk demolition project, and we regret that we have to say goodbye to our donor tiles. We are hopeful that our donors still value the wonderful treasure that is Huguenot Children's Library and we invite you to join us as we work hard to support the Library and all that it offers New Rochelle's community. If you are unable to participate in the next campaign but still want to be connected to the Library, please subscribe to the Library's newsletter and contact the Foundation to learn how you can help support future efforts.

Still Have Questions?

We welcome your thoughts, memories, and questions. Please feel free to reach out to the Foundation at info@nrplfoundation.org or visit our website nrplfoundation.org for more information and updates about upcoming donor recognition plans.