



Frequently Asked Questions: Walkway Brick Tile Replacement Huguenot Children's Library

Q: What's the history of the walkway?

The brick tile walkway at the Huguenot Children's Library was created by the Partnership for the Huguenot Children's Library through two community fundraising campaigns in 1993 and 2006. Each brick tile, engraved with the name of a supporter, reflected the generosity and spirit of New Rochelle families, and ultimately helped create what we now call the Huguenot Children's Library.

Q: What happened to the brick tiles that had donor names on them?

Over time, the walkway became cracked and uneven, creating serious safety concerns. In January, a visitor to HCL experienced a trip-and-fall. After a professional assessment in February, contractors unanimously recommended full removal and replacement of the pathway. The safety of our patrons is our top priority, and cones and signage were placed to prevent access to hazardous areas while we prepared for demolition.

Q: Why weren't the donor brick tiles replaced with new ones?

The original engraved brick tiles were part of a donor recognition program led by the Partnership for the Huguenot Children's Library, which the New Rochelle Public Library Foundation inherited when the two organizations merged. The tiles have reached their lifespan, which is almost 30 years. Repairing damaged tiles was not a feasible option; the pathway must be replaced.

Q: Why can't the Library pay to repair the brick tiles?

Repairing the existing brick pathway is not feasible due to the extent of its deterioration. The pathway had become uneven and unsafe, creating tripping hazards that could not be resolved through simple spot repairs. In addition, the base layer beneath the bricks has significantly degraded over time and must be completely replaced to ensure a stable and lasting surface. As a result, a full reconstruction is necessary.

The Library must use its limited public funds to maintain a safe and accessible facility, prioritizing essential services and infrastructure. Given the unsafe conditions and the need to replace the underlying foundation, preserving the original pathway was simply not a viable option.

Q: Can I get my original brick tile back?

Due to their age, thinness, and condition, most of the commemorative brick tiles could not be removed without breaking. However, a small number will be salvaged during the removal process. These tiles will be placed in a tub near the east corner of the Huguenot Branch building and will remain there for the next month. Community members are welcome to stop by and look through them. Any tiles that were too damaged to be salvaged will be responsibly recycled.

Q: Who made the decision to remove the brick tiles?

The decision to replace the walkway was made by the New Rochelle Public Library after professional contractors confirmed safety concerns, including uneven and cracked brick tiles that posed a risk to visitors. The original donor tiles, installed nearly 30 years ago, had reached the end of their expected lifespan. While the Library Foundation was not able to organize a new brick campaign before construction began, thoughtful donor recognition plans are now underway. The Foundation is preparing a new “buy a brick” campaign to honor the original intent in a safe and sustainable way and invite both past and new supporters to contribute to the Library in a lasting and meaningful way.

For more information, please visit the Foundation’s website or contact info@nrplfoundation.org.

Q: Why is the Library replacing the walkway at all?

After a trip-and-fall incident in January and a contractor evaluation in February, it became clear that the walkway posed a serious hazard. The new walkway will be constructed with high-quality brick to ensure long-term durability, safety, and accessibility.

Q: Why is this happening now?

The Huguenot Children’s Library must be fully accessible in time for our busiest season—summer. The Library’s Summer Reading Program draws large numbers of families and children, and providing a safe, accessible entrance is essential.

Q: Will the donors still be recognized in some way?

Yes. The Foundation is committed to honoring the generosity of the original donors. Thoughtful recognition efforts are underway, with exploration of options to maintain donor recognition. In addition, a refreshed brick campaign is being planned to invite current and new supporters to take part in the HCL story.

Q: Will access to the Huguenot Children’s Library be available during construction?

Yes. Construction will begin soon, and alternate access points to the Huguenot Children’s Library will be clearly marked to ensure uninterrupted service for families and visitors during the Project.

Still Have Questions?

For questions about the original “Buy-A-Brick” campaign or the status of donor brick tiles, please feel free to contact the Foundation at info@nrplfoundation.org or visit nrplfoundation.org for updates on upcoming donor recognition efforts.