

## Barrytown Nature Club's Spring Cleanup through the Years

Henry Christopher  
May 5, 2016



*Robin and Patricia Graham, Jonathan Brundrett, Katsuko and Henry Christopher after clean-up in April, 2016*

In 2005 Scenic Hudson, the non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the Hudson River and the Hudson River Valley, challenged local villages and hamlets along the river to conduct a riverfront Spring cleanup each year.

The newly created Barrytown Nature Club, composed of Barrytown residents and UTS staff and students took up the task on an April weekend picking up trash and enjoying the outdoors. Scenic Hudson provided plastic bags, gloves, and baseball type caps with their name emblazoned on the front.

After the cleanup, we all met at Sandy and Randy Lydon's house for drinks and snacks on her porch. "I have always been proud of, and pleased with the enthusiasm and deep caring of people in this small community coming together to pitch in and care for the environment," Sandy said.



*Pastor Gavin Hamnett, left of pole, and wife Cindy, daughter Raya, Howie Callies, UTS Groundskeeper (standing), Jonathan Brundrett, former UTS building manager, and John Schmitz, Barrytown resident, and Sandy holding tea pot*

Sandy, who grew up in Barrytown, and has lived here all her life, has always been the community activist. She delighted in hosting our cleanup team after the cleanup. Sandy says it always reminded her of her childhood, when neighbors would stop by her house on Station Hill Rd. as they walked by, to chat with her family on their porch.

This began a yearly endeavor which we all looked forward to each spring. Usually a small write up was put in our monthly UTS Barrytown Gazette newsletter, which was distributed to all the houses in Barrytown and around Red Hook. After a few years, the Town of Red Hook, following our lead, organized a town cleanup each year that was synchronized with ours, usually on the Earth Day weekend.



*Photo: Alexandr Zamushinskii Sandy, Barry, Katsuko Christopher, and John Schmitz*

Sandy's son Barry, who was handicapped most of his life, also loved to talk it up with folks who passed by as he sat on the porch. He was a keen observer of people and could keep people in stitches as he bantered with whomever came by. Just like a politician, he waved to everyone that drove by, and seemed to know them all. Maybe that is why Barrytown folks fondly named him the "Mayor of Barrytown." Barry passed away four years ago and he is missed by all.

We enjoyed these occasions for a number of years, until the Seminary located its programs in NYC in 2010. Henry Christopher, the Admissions and Community Relations Director moved back to his house in West Virginia with his wife, Katsuko.

But by some unusual circumstances, UTS brought him back last year, and this April, we got back to our cherished walk, up and down Barrytown Rd., picking up the litter, and afterwards meeting around the table at Sandy's house.



*School kids helping our elderly neighbor on River Rd., Doris Soroko (wearing scarf), do Spring cleaning*

*around the house.*

"It is our hope, that future generations will continue the work we have started here in our little hamlet of Barrytown," Sandy said.

Robin Graham, UTS Advancement and Communications Director, and his wife, Patricia joined the crew and happily returned from their assigned section of the road with a nice, big bag full of garbage, and a five dollar bill that Robin found on the road.