

# **D&H Transportation Heritage Council**

## **July 23, 2014 Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

### **D&H Canal Park at Lock 31, Hawley, PA**

Attendance at business meeting:

**Cliff Robinson, Jr. (chair)**, Delaware & Hudson Canal and Gravity Railroad Conservancy  
**Bill Merchant (vice-chair)**, D&H Canal Historical Society and Museum, High Falls  
**Jane Varcoe (treasurer)**, Waymart Area Historical Society  
**Laurie Ramie (secretary)**, Upper Delaware Council  
**Sally Talaga**, Wayne County Historical Society Volunteer  
**Norma Schadt**, Town of Deerpark Historian; 1863 Schoolhouse Museum, Huguenot  
**Lynn Burns**, Town of Deerpark Deputy Historian  
**Vyvyan Perez**, Town of Deerpark Deputy Historian Volunteer  
**David Hulse**, Sullivan Co. D&H Canal Linear Park, Lock 50 Interpretive Center, Summitville  
**Ingrid Peterec**, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River  
**Barbara Hare**, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River  
**Myra Snook**, Morris Canal Commission, Warren County, NJ, individual member  
**Peter Becker**, Wayne County Historian  
**George J. Fluhr**, Pike County Historian  
**Kristin Porter**, Sullivan County Parks & Recreation (at 1:06 p.m.)

Call to Order: Chairperson Robinson opened the meeting at 12:59 p.m. following a 10:30 a.m. hike at the D&H Canal Park at Lock 31 guided by Talaga and a lunch break.

Acceptance of Minutes: On a motion by Merchant, seconded by Schadt, the minutes of the April 23, 2014 meeting of the D&H Transportation Heritage Council were accepted.

Treasurer's Report and Membership Update: Varcoe summarized her written financial report, which had balances of \$386 in the checking account; \$1,065.42 in the savings account; a 94-day Certificate of Deposit (CD) valued at \$1,062.55; and a 59-day CD valued at \$821.59. Total D&H THC assets = \$3,332.69. Following clarification of recent sign-ups, there are now 10 full voting members (Wayne County Historical Society, Town of Deerpark, Upper Delaware Council, Waymart Area Historical Society, D&H Canal & Gravity Railroad Conservancy, Carbondale Historical Society, Sullivan County Parks and Recreation, Town of Mamakating, Pike County Historical Society, and D&H Canal Historical Society and Museum) and three non-voting affiliated/individual members (Myra Snook of the Warren County Morris Canal Committee, Rail Trail of NE PA, and Neversink Valley Museum of History & Innovation). Robinson asked whether the Council gets charged for its accounts. Varcoe replied that there is no bank charge for non-profits and no significant distinction between the checking and savings account. Robinson said that the Lackawaxen River Conservancy and the City of Port Jervis via Mayor Kelly Decker had expressed interest in joining the Council. On a motion by Merchant, seconded by Talaga, the financial report for July 23, 2014 was approved as amended with the membership list.

New Business:

- a) **Video Production Update** – Robinson reported that he was disappointed when videographer Brian Weber adjusted his original price proposal of \$200 total per day to produce the short educational video segments on the D&H and Gravity Railroad to \$600 per day for shooting plus \$600 per day for editing. The cost was subsequently lowered to \$500/day for each task. Robinson asked him, what if we shot our own video. That would

be acceptable but the audio is usually inadequate. Robinson asked whether anyone has access to professional sound equipment. Merchant said he may. Peterec said that the National Park Service has been working with Pocono Film based in Lackawaxen, PA. She will pass along their contact information. They have professional equipment and may entertain a reduced price. NPS also has a media intern working with them this summer who may have some free time to help. Robinson said the Council could provide a letter for charitable donation of any portion of services for tax purposes. We were prepared to pay at least \$200. Schadt said she will provide contact information for a Jason Randolph in Barryville who does video work also. Robinson reiterated that these are a series of five-minute videos that will eventually cover five sections of the canal and gravity railroad system from Carbondale to Eddyville. The goal is to post them on You Tube. The fall season would be the best time to shoot the videos. Robinson said he would follow-up on the videographer contacts to be provided to him.

- b) **Delaware & Hudson Transportation Heritage Council Brochure** – Robinson reported that the draft brochure was created in a Printshop program that won't let him convert it to a PDF that most printers require despite consulting technical support. He made the edits discussed at the last meeting and took it to Staples to scan and print some sample copies, which he then distributed. Suggestions were made to adjust the text size to increase margins for the columns and to differentiate the column headings with colors so they don't seem to spell out one line going across the page when unfolded. Perez suggested cutting and pasting the document into a Microsoft Publisher program. Robinson said he would work with her on converting the electronic file. He quoted the Staples prices, which include a 10% discount, as \$555 for 500 full-color copies and \$744 for 1,000 copies of the scanned document. Folding is an additional charge. Merchant suggested using an on-line printer with whom he's had positive experience and used WiFi to look up prices of \$185.22 for 500 or \$312.06 for 1,000, which includes a proof and folding. It will require submitting the brochure as a PDF and possibly payment by credit card. Schadt offered to improve the quality of the photos through use of her In Design graphics program if Robinson would forward them to her. Robinson proposed that each full member of the Council could be allocated a set amount such as 25 copies of the brochure, with any desired extras purchased at cost. Affiliated members would be entitled to a lesser quantity. He said this gives value to membership. Hulse wondered whether the Council could find sponsors to subsidize or offset the printing costs. Talaga made a **motion**, seconded by Merchant, to authorize the Council to spend up to \$400 to print 1,000 brochures, with all in favor. Merchant said it is appropriate for the Council to absorb the cost because this brochure is for general D&H promotion which is why we're here. Talaga agreed, noting that the Council had paid for two prior versions of brochures that the Council created. We waited until the numbers in circulation dwindled to do it again and should not delay this. Snook said any member could make additional copies to hand out, although Robinson said they probably wouldn't be on the same quality paper. Fluhr noted that an organization of historical societies in Wayne and Pike Counties, PA recently formed and has their second meeting scheduled. At their first meeting, about 20 people showed up and they brought bundles of their brochures to distribute to the others. Robinson asked members to provide him with any final edits to the brochure by July 31. Around the start of August, he will get together with the Deerpark Historian folks to work on the file. Anyone with contacts for printers that can do the job for the cost authorized should provide them to Robinson, who said that he intends to have the 1,000 brochures available to hand out at the October quarterly meeting.
- c) **DHTHC.org Website and Facebook Page Report** – Robinson reported that he's had a problem setting up a public Facebook page for the Council because it keeps showing up under his Conservancy's page. Perez offered to help with this, and said that it will be set

up so that the public can post on the timeline. It does require having a monitor to oversee the content. Robinson asked Ramie to send Perez the Council's mission statement for the Facebook page's "About Us" section. Peterec offered that she has staff who could research some trivia facts about the D&H system to enable the posting of "Did You Know?" interesting questions on the page. Robinson encouraged her to do that, noting that what makes a Facebook page popular is keeping it active. Burns said we must all "like" the page also.

d) **Other** – None

Announcements of Member Accomplishments, Concerns, and Upcoming Events:

**Myra Snook** – Warren County has purchased another incline plane, which brings the number to four. They are working to link trails and county sites. Phillipsburg, NJ is doing a town-wide, multi-trail system. Snook said that visiting D&H sites is popular for organized tours by car clubs. Think of your site as a destination and get out this information to trip coordinators, she advised.

**Bill Merchant** – The new show that opened in July at High Falls is entitled, "The Plight of the Common Worker in the Canal Era". It consists of 40 historic press articles from the New York Times that provides context for the photos in the exhibit. This uses primary sources for narration. There are also period artifacts on display and interactive features. The exhibit will run through October and Merchant invited the Council to have its next meeting there to see it. He also offered to share the NY Times articles with anyone who would like to read them since they've been combined into one data file. Merchant reported that the museum is still working on acquiring the DePuy Canal House, a goal for the past three years. A state grant application has been submitted in partnership with the Open Space Institute. This 1797 tavern was purchased by the canal company in 1830.

**Ingrid Peterec** – Her focus has been on summer operations at the National Park Service. She noted that there has been a lot of turnover in staff at Steamtown and suggested that they may want to re-join the Council. Varcoe said she would send an application.

**Sally Talaga** – She provided a souvenir postcard of the Daniels Farmhouse exterior and a card advertising the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Canal Festival at the D&H Canal Park at Lock 31 on Aug. 23. There is still time to sign up as an exhibitor. Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River will participate again, and Robinson will sign and sell his "Canalboat" book. People are also welcome to just come and enjoy the festival from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Updated information will be available at [www.wchs-lock31.org](http://www.wchs-lock31.org). They are still looking for D&H Canal Co. post-1850 boat construction drawings to build a canal "boat" pavilion in the park, beginning in the spring of 2015 if funding permits. Two grants are pending. A recent park visitor remembered a canal boat being restored in Mystic Seaport, CT about 15 years ago. Talaga will follow up on this. She further reported that the Wayne County Historical Society is without an executive director for the second time since Talaga retired a year and a half ago. Tammy Satter is leaving the area and her last day was July 11. Applications to fill the position are due by Aug. 31.

**George Fluhr** – The commemoration of Pike County's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary continues. Every township is trying to tie in to the celebration. In Shohola, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War Train Wreck was marked on July 12-13. Next up will be the debut of a DVD history of Shohola Township on Aug. 9 at 8 p.m. in Rohman Park. Footage of the Civil War reenactment weekend will be included as a supplement. Copies of the DVD may be ordered through the Shohola Railroad and Historical Society. The Grave of the Unknown Soldier and Battle of Minisink commemorations took place on July 19. Fluhr feels there should be a meeting of event organizers in the spring to coordinate calendars and discuss arrangements for these annual activities. Lastly, Fluhr reported that the 1848 Church of St. Mark's in Lackawaxen may be put up for sale by the Lutheran Synod since it's not being used. Its ownership is in question. It's located next to an Oddfellows building that was long abandoned but had been used as a church hall. The D&H Canal Co. was famous for benefiting local churches and organizations. Fluhr wonders whether the company provided that land to the Oddfellows, the church, and the cemetery that holds the remains of the Unknown Soldier and Zane Grey. Lawyers are looking into this mystery, to which there are currently more questions than answers.

**Kristin Porter** – She serves as the Sullivan County liaison to the Town of Mamakating which has been meeting once a month to complete a mapping project related to the canal. The town has applied for a transportation grant so that the Village of Wurtsboro can repair the canal section near the IGA Market and connect that to the existing trail.

**Dave Hulse** – He recently did a couple new highway signs to direct the public to the Summitville site and hopes to get a new index sign as a historic marker. The completion of a new exhibit awaits building alterations that must take place first. It will include the aqueduct model when that can fit through the door. The site is open Fridays, Saturdays, and Mondays from 10-5 and Sundays from 12-5.

**Jane Varcoe** – The Waymart Area Historical Society has produced its first brochure which Varcoe handed out. It notes open hours for the Gravity Railroad Depot of 1-3 p.m. Tuesdays and Saturdays, May through September. An antique roadshow will take place Aug. 12 from 6-8 with Byron White doing appraisals for \$3 per item. On Aug. 26 at 1 p.m., Varcoe will do a historical presentation of early Waymart.

**Norma Schadt** – Schadt introduced Lynn Burns, the deputy historian for the Town of Deerpark, and her granddaughter Vyvyan Perez. Next year, Norma and Lynn will switch jobs. Schadt brought copies of the “Deerpark Diary” newsletter for June. She noted that the Brant Raid Bus Tour on July 19 sold out again. The 1863 School House Museum will host an open house on Sept. 28 from 11-4 in Huguenot with a transportation theme to include the canal with a boat, Old Mine Road, a stagecoach, rafts, two railroads, motorcycles, and the interstate highway. They also just received a donated collection of World War I uniforms and photos that will be on display. She continued that there is interest in forming a 501(c)3 to save the 1934 Grange building which is on the National Register of Historic Places from falling down and converting it into a community center. On behalf of the Neversink Valley Museum, Schadt noted that Frank Salvati will give a lecture on The Walking Purchase on Aug. 8 in Cuddebackville.

**Peter Becker** – Talaga suggested that Becker, as the newly-appointed Wayne County Historian, reach out to all of the townships in the county to ask them to name a local historian, if needed, to serve as a contact person he can rely on for information and to create a helpful network. Fluhr had done that in Pike County and agreed that it was a worthwhile endeavor.

**Laurie Ramie** – Flyers for the Upper Delaware Council’s 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Raft Trip on Aug. 3 were handed out with the itinerary discussed. Ramie also mentioned that there are a number of economic studies underway in the river valley, including trying to quantify the impacts that proximity to a national park unit has on businesses and communities, and that visitation to the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway has on the greater area, and what gaps there are in services for tourists.

**Cliff Robinson, Jr.** – He mounted a new snubbing post in the parking area at the Westbrookville canal trail and plans to get a brush hog in there for more vegetation clearing. A teacher at the Ellenville Elementary School invited Robinson to lead a tour on a path from the old telegraph building to Lock 30 for her English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Language students. They were enthusiastic in their questions and the teacher hopes to make this program an annual event. At the Port Orange Road site, there is a problem with over 50 tires dumped that must be removed. This fall, his Conservancy hopes to get from Huguenot to Port Jervis for trail-clearing purposes, although there are three breeches along the way.

**Next Council Meeting:** The quarterly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, **October 22**, 2014, at the D&H Canal Historical Society and Museum in High Falls. Itinerary details for a morning tour of the exhibit and lunch prior to the 1 p.m. business meeting will be announced.

**Adjourn:** The July 23, 2014 D&H THC meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m. on a motion by Hulse, seconded by Schadt.

*Minutes submitted by Laurie Ramie, 7/31/14*