

D&H Transportation Heritage Council

April 27, 2016 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Westfall Township Building, Matamoras, PA

Attendance at business meeting:

Cliff Robinson, Jr. (chair), Delaware & Hudson Canal and Gravity Railroad Conservancy President
Bill Merchant (vice-chair), D&H Canal Historical Society and Museum President
Jane Varcoe (treasurer), Waymart Area Historical Society President
Laurie Ramie (secretary), Upper Delaware Council Executive Director
William Clark, Matamoras-Westfall Historical Society
S. Robert Powell, Carbondale Historical Society
Kristin Porter, Sullivan County Department of Parks, Recreation & Beautification
Dave Hulse, Sullivan County D&H Canal Linear Park, Lock 50, Summitville (until 2:06 p.m.)
Sally Talaga, Wayne County Historical Society Volunteer
George J. Fluhr, Pike County, PA Historian
Lynn Burns, Town of Deerpark, NY Historian
Kathy Land, Waymart Area Historical Society
Steve Skye, Neversink Valley Museum of History and Innovation
Kerron Barnes, Town of Mamakating
Rolf Moeller, Wallenpaupack Historical Society
Pete Golod, Upper Delaware Council
Bill Bollinger, Bollinger & Rutter Video Production and Services (until 1:25 p.m.)
Frank Salvati, Minisink Valley Historical Society
Paul Ludick, guest

Call to Order: Chairperson Robinson called the business meeting hosted by the Matamoras-Westfall Historical Society at the Westfall Township Building to order at 1:00 p.m. Matamoras Borough Mayor Janet Clark offered a welcome to the group.

Acceptance of January 27, 2016 Minutes: On a **motion** by Skye, seconded by Burns, the minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report and Membership Update: Varcoe reported that the Council received a wonderful gift of a \$1,000 donation from affiliate member Myra Snook after the last meeting to apply toward the video project. She summarized her financial report handout. One check was written of \$250 to Bollinger & Rutter Video Production on Jan. 30. Current balances are \$580.08 in the checking account and \$2,020.09 in the savings account, for total DHTHC assets of \$2,600.17. Her report also listed 10 voting members and five affiliate/individual members on the 2016 roster. She noted that the Council wants to encourage more affiliated members. On a **motion** by Porter, seconded by Merchant, the Treasurer's Report was accepted, with all in favor.

New Business:

- a) **Presentation by Paul Ludick: PA High-Hazard Dams** – Ludick introduced himself as a resident of Mount Pleasant Township who is concerned over the fate of five dams that were built for the D&H Canal in the 1830s. The dams are currently managed by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. The state has designated them as high-hazard; therefore, their associated water bodies are in the process of being drained in order to breach the historic dams and replace them with new earthen dams. Ludick showed video footage of the Hankins Pond Dam off Rt. 670 which he feels is the best intact example in northern Wayne County of these structures. It's approximately 1,000 feet long and 20 feet tall, with a 1.5 square mile watershed. He is trying to fight the breaching of this dam.

Hankins Pond, which had been used as a trout fishery, was drained two years ago. Ludick said he would like to hear Council members' expertise and ideas. He noted that he had contacted the PA Historical Museum and Commission and the National Register of Historic Places. Owner permission is required to list sites. Skye described what occurred with the dewatering and razing of a dam in Cuddebackville to protect the endangered dwarf wedge mussel species, which impacted the flow of water into the D&H Canal. Ludick noted that all of these dams are at the headwaters of the Lackawaxen River. Varcoe said by the time you find out that PA will breach a dam, it's typically a done deal. Talaga asked what the reaction was of the Wayne County Commissioners when Ludick approached them. He replied that the meeting was not particularly helpful and he had visited with state legislators too. Talaga said if any federal money is involved, then Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act should be followed but if the dam was declared as a high hazard, that overrides it. Ludick said the declaration was made due to the possibility of downstream flooding. The water flows through these dams and that is not allowed. It must bypass them. The reasoning is that, if the channels get plugged, that creates flooding danger. That's why the dams are being removed. Three already have; PA may be holding off on Hankins because of the commotion that Ludick has caused. Hulse asked whether the D&H Canal's listing as a national historic site would make a difference. He noted that there is typically a study done to investigate alternatives. Ludick had given the state one such alternative to breaching the dam. Ludick confirmed that he had contacted an excavator engineer who came up with a plan where a sluice would still exist but the dam wouldn't hold water. That solution would cost approximately \$250,000. The state received \$50 million to rehabilitate these dams, with Wayne County getting the highest total. Each would cost around \$5 million. Talaga suggested pursuing the Section 106 angle and seeking intervenor status to make proposals as a consulting party. Hulse said this project needs someone in the PA Legislature to take it on. Robinson said that it's a whole lot harder to address it after the fact than to prevent it from happening. If Ludick can't get help from the established bureaucracy, he suggested the last resort is to generate a public response. Enough bad publicity gets attention. Ludick thanked the Council for their time and departed the meeting.

- b) **Planning and Funding Discussion for Videos** – Robinson offered his thanks to Myra Snook for the \$1,000 video donation. The first video highlighting the Gravity Railroad to Honesdale section cost \$2,500. The next four segments envisioned will presumably cost \$10,000. The next section will cover Honesdale to the Delaware River, for which he'd like to have Talaga and Fluhr interviewed. The third section would be Roebling Bridge to Port Jervis, with Porter and Ingrid Peterec interviewed. Talaga suggested plotting out the budget and determining whether the videos could be done in a total of four segments instead. Robinson said they discovered that with only three shooting locations, it took 12-13 minutes to properly tell the story. The sites to film next would include the D&H Canal office, the Lock House in White Mills, Lock 31 Canal Park, the coal company building at Bingham Park in Hawley, Towpath Road in Lackawaxen, and the Roebling Aqueduct. From Mongaup to Pond Eddy, the canal route follows NYS Route 97. We could extend Port Jervis all the way to Orange County, then cover Ulster County. Varcoe said she thinks each video shouldn't run longer than 10 minutes. Robinson said the first one was around 13 minutes since it provided historical context for those that will follow. Talaga said we'll have over an hour after all the tapes are done. Robinson said we've paid for one video and have the \$1,000 donation toward the next. He reported on the costs for production, which he had asked videographer Bill Bollinger to obtain. The proposal to have each segment on a DVD with a photo of the canal stamped on it, viewable through a clear case, is: \$4.50 each for 50; \$4.20 each for 100; and \$4.00 each for 250. As a sales price, Robinson suggested \$12 with part of the proceeds benefiting the organization that

sells them. Varcoe said she favors a \$10 charge. Robinson said he feels that DHTHC should make the original purchase of the DVDs then have groups buy their orders to help fund the next video. Tax ramifications are the responsibility of each group. Fluhr said there needs to be an incentive for local groups. Robinson said a question likely to come up is, if these DVDs are posted on YouTube for the general public to see, why would anyone want to buy a copy? His answer is that YouTube would greatly condense the videos so the bit rate decreases and there tends to be a lot of buffering while trying to watch it that people find annoying. He suggests offering limited-time teasers on-line to promote sale of the DVDs, which would be high in quality and the watcher can control starting and stopping. Hulse asked whether grants would be available from arts councils to help subsidize the videos. Robinson said maybe but these videos cross borders. Hulse said the requests could be tailored to fund their portions of the videos covered. He offered to make some calls to check on that feasibility. Varcoe said she could investigate whether the Lackawanna Valley Heritage Authority may be interested in providing some funds. Robinson reminded everyone that this Council can't apply for grants or receive funds because it is not incorporated. Those transactions have to take place through members. The Waymart Area Historical Society currently handles DHTHC finances under its umbrella. Powell said his book volumes on DVD have sold very well through the Carbondale Historical Society's website and it's been an easy process. Robinson said we could ask Mike Harellick to set up a PayPal option on the DHTHC website to buy directly from our organization or recommend that buyers do so through their local historical society. Talaga suggested we go back to our organizations and ask if they would sell the videos with 100% of the profits coming back to DHTHC, foregoing their own profits for the sake of getting more videos produced. Porter said her Sullivan County museum is unable to do it on consignment since they can't accept money to turn over to another party. They would need to outright purchase them. Clark pointed out that the Westfall-Matamoras Historical Society had already sent \$100 as a pre-order to help with Council costs. Talaga said it would be helpful to have the teaser from YouTube to show to their individual boards while soliciting support. Merchant said he could set up a dropbox from which the video clip could be downloaded. On a **motion** by Robinson, seconded by Barnes, the Council agreed to purchase 100 DVDs of the first video segment at the production cost of \$4.20 each for the video with an imprinted photo and a clear case. On a **motion** by Robinson, seconded by Merchant, the Council agreed to sell them to interested member organizations for \$7 each wholesale and to charge a retail price of \$10 each, with all in favor. Barnes suggested making sure the DVDs are encrypted so they can't be copied. Regarding the release parties as discussed at the last meeting, Robinson suggested they should take place in the locations that each video segment covers. He named a committee of Powell, Varcoe, and Talaga to plan the first release party for the DVD covering Carbondale to Honesdale. Talaga said they will need to know the exact availability date before they can plan the venue and logistics.

- c) **Viewing of Video** – Following some technical difficulties, the Council was able to view the edited version of the Gravity Railroad to Honesdale video segment by Bollinger & Rutter as debuted at the last meeting. They made note of several corrections needed to the credits which Varcoe will provide to Bill Bollinger when she places the order for 100 DVDs. The errors included the deletion of a duplicate “from” at the start, need for a capital A in WAHS, and to add Area to Waymart Area Historical Society at the end.
- d) **Roll-out of National Geographic’s “Scenic, Wild Delaware River” MapGuide** – Ramie provided an update on this project to promote the Upper and Middle Delaware regions as a unique destination and acknowledged Skye’s initiation of the listing for the Delaware & Hudson Canal System. National Geographic received over 800 nominations of special places and there is no limit for the number of listings that can be added. Roll-

out events are scheduled for May 4 and 5 in the three states serving the nine counties involved, then a New York City-based event targeting travel writers and media will be held on May 19 at the National Parks Conservation Association office. Skye said that there are 3 canal parks listed on the website, all of which can be found through a simple search. Visit www.DelawareRiver.NatGeotourism.com to see the live MapGuide.

- e) **PA Route 6 Alliance Heritage Mini-Grant for D&H Canal and Rail Area Signage** – Varcoe reported that the Carbondale, Waymart, and Honesdale-based canal and gravity railroad groups came up with a list of signs to promote the D&H for placement along Route 6. A meeting will take place in two weeks to review the design. They are approximately 18-inch interpretive signs under the theme of “Do Route 6” that motorists would need to pull over to read.
- f) **Administration of New Facebook Page** – Merchant, who set up the Council’s page at www.facebook.com/DHTHC, said anyone who would like to add content should send him their email address with that request and he can add them as an administrator as long as they have Facebook accounts. He’s been posting lots of photos from throughout the canal system. He asked everyone to link from their pages to share the Facebook items.
- g) **Other** – Ramie thanked William Clark for providing a morning tour of Fort Decker and Point Peter prior to the lunch gathering at the Erie Depot in Port Jervis for those who participated, and for the refreshments that his society provided at the business meeting.

Old Business:

- a) **List Current Public Hiking Areas of the Canal by Mile Marker Points Per County** – Merchant said he has the information gathered for Ulster County and will forward it to Robinson.
- b) **Cost-Sharing Proposal to Photograph D&H Company Maps and Records in Montreal** – Barnes reported that when the map books were transferred from Canadian Pacific Railroad to Expo Rail, one book of the three went missing and they can’t find the inventory that an archivist had done at the end of 2014. Professor Paul King had been in discussions with the railroad about donating the maps to an institution in New York State. There was an offer to allow the Council to photograph each page at \$40/Canadian funds for research purposes. There are 82 pages of 23 x 32” hand-drawn maps providing an aerial view of the canal from 1865. Barnes recommends that we seek funding from the five counties involved (Ulster, Orange, Sullivan, Pike, Wayne) to pay the approximately \$2,500 cost to photograph the first book. Fluhr asked whether these maps would help the counties with information on property ownerships or surveys. Barnes said not in a practical sense given their age but the maps have historic value. He noted that it wouldn’t have to be the county governments giving the \$500 share; it could be local groups within each county. Talaga asked Barnes if he could develop a flyer stating the facts about these maps for explanatory purposes. Barnes agreed to do that and include a copy of plate #1 which shows the Roebling Bridge.

Announcements of Member Accomplishments, Concerns, and Upcoming Events:

Bill Merchant – The bridge over the Five Locks Walk is ready. Merchant has been reading D&H Engineer Russell Lord’s journals dated 1848-1852, which came with a transcription. It reveals how much Roebling was paid for the construction of the aqueducts and other information. He will prepare a presentation for his museum on it in September. If anyone would like the journal, he can make it available as a PDF in a couple of weeks. The printing of it is out of order.

Kristin Porter – Dave Hulse will return this season to operate the Interpretive Center at Bova Road, which will re-open on Memorial Day weekend. They had to rebuild the base for the Roebling Bridge model and

cut a hole into the wall to get it into the building. At the Phillipsport site, there are some drainage issues to repair and plans to install some designated parking spots.

S. Robert Powell – During the October meeting, Powell was conducting an interview with the PA Cable Network for his latest 5 volumes of his DVDs to be issued that cover detailed aspects of the Gravity Railroad. The program will broadcast in December. He'll have copies at the next meeting. The first 5 volumes sold out but the Wayne County Historical Society has them on consignment. In his 24-volume series, Powell just finished #13. Five new volumes will be released on Oct. 9, 2016. They are available through carbondalehistorical.org. Powell was asked to serve as the keynote speaker at the Bridgeline Historical Society's meeting on June 4 in Albany. His topic will be, "The Birth of the D&H as a Steam Railroad."

Kerron Barnes – Engineering work for the project in Mamakating continues. The right-of-way acquisition process found a need for easements or construction permission which must be followed up. This should be completed by fall. They had to do a phase 2 archeological dig survey in which 20 holes were dug by a stream near Town Hall. They found a U.S. half-dime, fragments of a bluish-green hand-blown bottle labeled the Honesdale Bottling Company, and arrowhead fragments but no signs of any settlement. The highway superintendent got a Terrain King mower which has a giant arm that has allowed the removal of old vegetation along the D&H trail in Wurtsboro.

Lynn Burns – Burns handed out flyers for the Town of Deerpark Museum's summer programs, including a presentation on Red Cloud by Frank Salvati on May 22 at 3 pm. at the 1863 Huguenot Schoolhouse; a Railroad Lecture by Joseph Senese with the dedication of a Valley Junction Railroad Marker at the Neversink Valley Grange Building on June 12 at 2 p.m.; Arts & History Day June 18 at Orange Square and Drew Methodist Church in Port Jervis; July 23 Joseph Brant Bus Tour which requires reservations through www.1863schoolhouse.org; Aug. 21 Deerpark History Road Rally celebration at 3 p.m. at the museum; and Sept. 18 Deerpark Community Show & Tell Open House with a one-act Revolutionary War play at the museum and Grange Hall, 11-4. She also distributed copies of the "Deerpark Diary" newsletter for March 2016.

William Clark – Clark welcomed the Council to use their meeting room in the future.

George Fluhr – Fluhr handed out copies of an illustrated page from Wakefield's book to question the origin of the photo that he intends to research and a map of the Delaware & Lackawaxen Aqueducts.

Sally Talaga – Talaga handed out brochures for the Wayne County Historical Society 2016 programs and exhibits, and for the 4th Annual Canal Festival at D&H Canal Park at Lock 31 which will take place from 10-4 on August 20. Interested exhibitors should contact her. The new exhibits opening in the main museum on April 16 with a reception from 4-7 p.m. are "The Dairy Industry of Wayne County" and "Hitch a Ride on the Gravity Honesdale Train Table". At the Lock 31 property, the lock house porch on the northwest corner of the lot has been restored at a price tag of \$67,080. Volunteers are continuing to paint and clean up. There is a movement to extend the existing trail right-of-way to allow people to walk from Settler's Inn in Hawley Borough to the Lock 31 park, one-quarter mile along Route 6, but six landowners are adamantly against it. It would be helpful for advocates of this project to speak up publicly for it. Mike Stevens from WNEP, TV channel 16 in Scranton, visited the canal park for his "On the Road" segment recently.

Steve Skye – Orange County's park commissioner held a meeting about the derelict canal in Cuddebackville and has taken ownership of fixing the problem.

Kathy Land and Jane Varcoe – The 24-foot display at the Waymart Area Historical Society Gravity Depot Museum is now there but contents had to be scattered to make way for it. They hope to open for the season on June 4. One activity being planned is movie nights for children.

Laurie Ramie – Ramie introduced UDC Resource Specialist Pete Golod, who started his new position on April 23 and had come to meet cultural resource partners today. She also distributed copies of the Spring/Summer issue of "The Upper Delaware" newsletter.

Cliff Robinson – Robinson said there used to be two islands near the canal in Cuddebackville that backed up the water there. Once they breached the dam, that was no longer the case. The NYS DEC owns that section. Robinson asked for a stream disturbance permit to have volunteers move rocks in preparation for a study of whether the feeder dam can hold water. The timetable for that is to budget for the study in 2017 and undertake the possible remediation of the dam in 2018. We're aware that the canal was leaking because it was built with clay. His Conservancy has newly acquired Volunteer Stewardships for a couple sections of canal: 1) Rt. 17 west for 1.9 miles to Rt. 209; and 2) Mongaup River south. They're working with NYS DEC to investigate an encroachment that has been identified. Lastly, the Conservancy put up a series of historic markers in May and are still looking for sponsors for the 32 markers in total that tell what happened along the canal trail.

Next Council Meeting: The quarterly meeting will take place on Wednesday, **July 27**, 2016 at the DePuy Canal House in High Falls, NY. An agenda will be circulated with the itinerary. The October 26 meeting is tentatively scheduled for the D&H Canal Park at Lock 31 in Hawley, PA.

Adjourn: The April 27, 2016 DHTHC meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m. on a motion by Merchant, seconded by Porter.

Minutes submitted by Laurie Ramie, 05/13/16