

D&H Transportation Heritage Council

July 26, 2017 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Wayne County Historical Society Museum, Honesdale, 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 – departed at 2:30 p.m.
Laurie Ramie (secretary), Upper Delaware Council
S. Robert Powell, Carbondale Historical Society
Lynn Burns, Town of Deerpark, NY Historian, 1863 School House Museum
William Clark, Matamoras-Westfall Historical Society
Kathy Land, Waymart Area Historical Society – departed at 2:30 p.m.
Ingrid Peterec, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River
Brian Scardefield, Sullivan County Director of Parks and Recreation
David Hulse, Sullivan County D&H Canal Linear Park in Summitville
Kenny Christianson, Lackawaxen River Conservancy
Rolf Moeller, Wallenpaupack Historical Society, Shohola Historical and Railroad Society
Myra Snook, New Jersey Canal Society
Tom Salopek, individual member
Bill Bollinger, Bollinger and Rutter Video Production and Services (partial meeting)

*Note to minutes: Action items are in **bold**.*

Call to Order: Chairperson Robinson called the business meeting held at the Wayne County Historical Society to order at 12:55 p.m. following an optional morning tour of the “Wayne County History in 100 Objects” exhibit guided by Sally Talaga and lunch at Elegante Restaurant & Pizzeria. WCHS Executive Director Carol Henry Dunn offered a welcome to the group.

Acceptance of April 26, 2017 Minutes: On a **motion** by Talaga, seconded by Powell, the minutes of the last quarterly meeting were approved. Introductions were made around the table for the sake of canal enthusiast Tom Salopek, in attendance at his first DHTHC meeting.

Treasurer’s Report and Membership Update: Varcoe reviewed her written report, which included a balance of \$7,019.51 in the checking account, and itemized four deposits with no expenditures since the last meeting. There are currently 12 full voting members and seven affiliate members. Robinson asked how much of the balance is earmarked for digitization of the historic maps in the possession of Canadian Pacific Railroad. Varcoe calculated \$2,700. She noted we also have an outstanding payment of \$500 owed for the production of the 2nd DVD segment out of that \$2,000 cost. Robinson said he was pleased to hear that we have enough funds to proceed with the 3rd DVD segment. On a **motion** by Moeller, seconded by Merchant, the Treasurer’s Report was approved.

New Business:

- a) **D&H Bus Trip Proposal** – Powell reported that he feels the expanse of the canal and gravity railroad is too large to make a bus trip practical. He said it’s a great idea but we need to re-think how to divide up the route so that people wouldn’t need to be picked up along the way and lose out on portions of the program. Hulse said this event would be a way to market this organization. Showing people the resource that we advocate for would help build support. Burns said that the Town of Deerpark didn’t hold its Battle of Minisink Brant Raid bus tour this year due to a lack of interest. They’ve decided to take a

- break and potentially resume it next year. Robinson agreed with Powell that the length of our route is a problem. We could do several trips of shorter lengths. **He suggested leaving it up to the subcommittee of Powell, Robinson, Merchant, and Schadt to develop a concept.**
- b) **News Release for DVDs** – Robinson said that when we have the second DVD and additional copies of the first DVD ready, which should be in September, he would ask Ramie to **issue a news release** announcing their availability and thanking the donors who contributed to the cost for the second chapter. He asked about compiling a media list. Ramie noted that she has contacts for the greater Upper Delaware River Valley and would only need others for the far reaches of the Kingston and Carbondale regions. Talaga suggested sending the news release to Council members and asking them to disseminate it widely to their memberships and contacts. Robinson said the news release may generate interest by reporters in writing their own articles. It's fine if it ends up being sent to particular outlets multiple times. He suggests using the cover illustration from the first DVD as an accompanying graphic. Hulse said that he developed a flyer for the first DVD rather than leaving it out on the shelves of the museum gift shop. Burns agreed that we could create a poster for it.
- c) **Supply and Teaser Video Status of DVD Chapter 1: Gravity Railroad to Honesdale** – Ramie reported that she now has only 7 copies left of Chapter 1 available for sale at the \$7 wholesale and \$10 retail rate. Robinson noted that Bill Bollinger had brought a draft of the teaser trailer that he would show once he got his equipment set up as the meeting progressed.

Old Business:

- a) **Access to Digitize the ExpoRail Archival D&H Maps** – Robinson said that Kerron Barnes remains diligent in working to receive permission to digitize these 90-100 plates of full-color, hand-drawn canal maps that date back to 1865. The archival situation has changed numerous times and the inventory list has been lost on occasion, as well as the actual map books apparently. He said we have offered to travel to Montreal to help locate the books. Merchant said he'd be willing to call there once a week if necessary to free up access to these maps. Robinson said based on his experience in once being allowed to view the maps, Canadian Pacific Railroad is handling the documents very protectively so they do not appear to be in any danger, except for not being readily located.
- b) **DHTHC Brochure Reprint with New Graphics** – A handout was provided of a new design for the front page of the brochure that Hulse developed. He explained that he reoriented the page so that the brochure opens to the left. He replaced the former acronym title with the full words, added an explanatory paragraph about the Council, and placed The Future in larger font. The fold-out map page would stay the same. Merchant said a larger canal photo would be nice but then we would have to lose some text. Robinson asked everyone to continue distributing the supply they have left of the current brochure but said that we would need a re-print soon regardless. He wondered if we could add some color to make it pop more. Members discussed putting the title in color or adding a background shade to the title box. Another way to spruce it up would be to add a logo graphic. Merchant said he would work on a **design for a logo**. He noted that he had arranged for the last printing through the online company PS Prints. They turn around requests in less than a week generally. Varcoe found that we paid \$374 for 1,000 copies in October 2014. On a **motion** by Robinson, seconded by Clark, Council members authorized Merchant to broker the printing of 1,000 revised brochures, with all in favor. Hulse will provide Merchant with the new file. Following the vote, further changes to the brochure style were agreed upon: **change the orientation back** to the other fold by

swapping out the two panels, **delete “The” from the title;** and add a **color background** and potential logo to the title box. The **draft logo will be circulated for review.**

New Business:

- d) **“The Delaware & Hudson Canal Co. Its History and Legacy. Chapter One: The Gravity Railroad”** – Council members gathered around a screen to watch the short draft video that Bollinger has compiled to highlight Chapter 1. People offered suggestions for art and closing titles that will include ordering instructions. It was decided to have people make requests through the dhthc.org website and they will be directed appropriately. Powell said he has an online payment system set up through his website in Carbondale to which he offered that DHTHC could provide a link for DVD orders. The Council discussed asking webmaster Mike Harelick from Hillside Application Services to **set up a YouTube Channel for the D&H group.** That requires having a Google account to do. The file can also be uploaded onto member websites. **Bollinger said he would get together with Ramie to finalize the production of the teaser video.** He shared costs for making additional copies of DVD Chapter 1, which were \$4.75 for 25, \$4.50 for 50, \$4.25 for 100, and \$4.20 for 250. The last printing of 100 copies was done in January 2016, of which there are seven left. On a **motion** by Merchant, seconded by Moeller, the Council authorized **Varcoe to order 100 DVDs for \$425,** with all in favor.
- e) **Production Update of DVD Chapter 2: Honesdale to Delaware River** – Bollinger showed some raw footage from the one day of shooting that has occurred so far, featuring Robinson and Talaga. **Additional footage** out in the field is required. Robinson, Peterec and/or Susie Kaspar, Talaga, and George Fluhr are requested to participate. A date of Aug. 10 was set, with a back-up date of **Aug. 11,** to meet at **10 a.m. at the Zane Grey Museum in Lackawaxen, PA.** Bollinger made arrangements with Merchant to come to High Falls to **film the working canal lock model in his museum on Aug. 2.** Chapter 2 will be approximately 15 minutes in length like the first video. Bollinger said it should be ready for release in September.
- f) **Other** – Robinson said next to come will be filming of DVD Chapter 3, covering the Roebling Bridge to Port Jervis, which should be able to begin this fall. The 4th segment will be Port Jervis to Ulster County. The 5th segment will be in Ulster County. Powell noted that the introduction for each video should always state that this is part X of five segments in total so that viewers are aware that it’s part of a larger story.

Old Business:

- c) **Publication and Posting of a Directory of Current D&H Public Hiking Areas** – Robinson said that he will re-post his Honesdale to Eddyville list. Merchant said his Society has a Google Maps depiction into which he is inserting historic photos to accompany sites listed on the map. Once that is ready, he’ll **send it out for everyone’s input.**
- d) **DHTHC.org Website and <https://www.facebook.com/DHTHC> page** – Varcoe said that we need to **add more photos to the website.** Merchant said he would like to keep the Facebook page fresh as well. Peterec suggested **making Susie Kaspar at the National Park Service an administrator** so that she can regularly add photos or other postings. New material for the website may be sent to Ramie to pass along to website manager Mike Harelick at Hillside Application Services.

Announcements of Member Accomplishments, Concerns, and Upcoming Events:

Kenny Christianson – The Lackawaxen River Conservancy will host its Day by the River on Aug. 5 from 12-5 at Rt. 206 & Rowland Towpath Road. The event is open to the public.

Ingrid Peterec – It has been a busy summer season for the National Park Service. Planning ahead for next summer, the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River offers programs on the D&H Canal if anyone is interested in hosting them.

Brian Scardefield – Having just started employment with Sullivan County as the Director of Parks and Recreation this spring, he looks forward to working with DHTHC. Clark complimented the county for opening up such a large stretch of D&H property to the public.

Dave Hulse – The Lock 51 Interpretive Center is halfway into its season. He would like to see the roadway and signage improved to encourage additional visitation.

Bill Merchant – Since the D&H Canal Historical Society and Museum’s executive director resigned, that is now his role. They are busy selling a property and moving forward with the DePuy Canal House. He offers presentations on that property as well as the Russell Lord Journals. Lord was the chief engineer for the canal from the 1830s through the 1860s and Merchant has his hand-written journals and correspondence from 1848-1861. Merchant also does a monthly, hour-long program on WJHQ radio every third Thursday at 7 a.m. Additional programs and events are posted on Facebook. Merchant asked people what their experience has been with New York State’s Path Through History program.

Tom Salopek – He has been trying to figure out where the canal basin was in Port Jervis, Hawley, and at Lock 58 in Mongaup. He’d be interested in seeing a map that shows the layout. Council members suggested the resources of the Minisink Valley Historical Society which meets at the Port Jervis Library every Thursday afternoon and Manville Wakefield’s book which Talaga shared from the WCHS collection. Robinson offered to show Salopek the vicinities in question.

Myra Snook – She has finished two new signs for the New Jersey Morris Canal, and set up a QR code with video and audio at the Incline Plane. She discussed the use of mules in canal exhibits.

Sally Talaga – The Wayne County Historical Society is \$25,000 short to complete the canal exhibit at Lock 31. She reviewed the Centennial Celebration going on in 2017 and showed the book by Peter Becker that is available to accompany the 100 Objects exhibit. The 5th Annual Canal Festival will be held on Aug. 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at D&H Canal Park at Lock 31. One new feature will be bikes from Sawmill Cycles available to ride on the trails. A flyer was provided of the itinerary of activities. Talaga displayed copies of two collections of original handwriting correspondence that awaits a volunteer to transcribe them, covering the period of Oct. 24, 1846-Dec. 18, 1848 and including names such as Wurts, Lord, Roebling, Archibald, and Morris. The correspondence references planning efforts to build the Roebling Bridge. George Fluhr brought them in for donation.

S. Robert Powell – Volumes 16-20 of Powell’s digital book series on the D&H Canal and Gravity Railroad history will be released on October 9, amounting to 2,713 pages and bringing the total number of pages to 8,035. In June, he visited Wales to tour railroad and mining sites. Powell observed that memberships in historical societies are down significantly, in part due to online availability of information and virtual tours. There are serious challenges ahead in the historic community. The computer age has been a blessing and a curse. Carbondale is able to earn income from doing historic research upon online requests but it cuts down on site visits. People assume everything they need to know is on-line but it isn’t. There is also a challenge to keep the significance of “D&H” alive through promotion and preservation.

Lynn Burns – She agreed with Powell that museum visits are dwindling. She sees 2-3 people per week in Deerpark. Genealogy is the “in” thing. The Town of Deerpark Museum will hold its annual open house on Sept. 17 at the Neversink Valley Grange building in Huguenot. They will host a Star Party on Aug. 4 at 7:30 p.m. Burns thanked Ramie for bringing copies of a new Town of Deerpark Historic Markers brochure that Norma Schadt had produced through an Upper Delaware Council grant. It has been a very popular piece.

Bill Clark – The Matamoras-Westfall Historical Society will host a lecture by Dr. Powell on the PA Coal Company's Gravity Railroad on Sept. 17 at 2 p.m. at the Westfall Township Building (downstairs).

Cliff Robinson, Jr. – In Port Jervis, Mayor Kelly Decker is interested in permanently watering a one-mile section of the canal between the West End Bridge and the Trovei property as part of the Whitewater Kayak Park and has cleared hundreds of trees. They have discussed getting Orange County Tourism onboard to do canal-related tours that would start at the New Jersey Transit railroad station.

Laurie Ramie – Ramie discussed the Upper Delaware Council federal funding delay which had jeopardized her organization's ability to continue operating but has now been resolved through Sept. 30. She shared a photocopy of a rare Howard Becker painting that depicts the canal in White Mills, PA that a friend of hers from Waymart had recently purchased at an estate sale.

Next Council Meeting: The quarterly meeting will take place on Wednesday, **October 25, 2017** hosted by the National Park Service **at the Zane Grey Museum in Lackawaxen, PA**. A meeting notice with full details will be issued in advance.

Adjourn: The July 26, 2017 DHTHC meeting adjourned at 3:19 p.m. on a **motion** by Hulse, seconded by Moeller.

Minutes submitted by Laurie Ramie, 8/3/17