

D&H Transportation Heritage Council

April 24, 2019 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

The New Inn at Lackawaxen, Lackawaxen, 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
Laurie Ramie (secretary), Upper Delaware Council
Debra Conway, The Delaware Company
S. Robert Powell, Carbondale Historical Society
Kathy Land, Waymart Area Historical Society
Kerron Barnes, Town of Mamakating
George J. Fluhr, Pike County Historian
Lauren Hauptman, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River
Sally Talaga, Wayne County Historical Society's D&H Canal Park at Lock 31
Lynn Burns, Town of Deerpark 1863 Schoolhouse Museum
Norma Schadt, Town of Deerpark 1863 Schoolhouse Museum
Rolf Moeller, Shohola Railroad & Historical Society & Wallenpaupack Historical Society
Myra Snook, Warren County, NJ Canal Committee
Matt Hamel, AECOM
Carol Montana, Sullivan County Democrat freelance reporter
Bill Bollinger, Bollinger & Rutter Video Production and Services (briefly)
(Lunch guests: John Conway, Sullivan County Historian; Nadia Rajs, Sullivan County Legislature)

Call to Order: Chairperson Robinson called the business meeting held at the New Inn at Lackawaxen to order at 1:15 p.m. as the meal continued.

Additions to the Agenda: None

Acceptance of February 6, 2019 Minutes: On a **motion** by Moeller, seconded by Schadt, the minutes of the Feb. 6 meeting (rescheduled from Jan. 23 and 29 due to weather) were approved.

Treasurer's Report: In the absence of Treasurer Jane Varcoe, Land presented her written report, which included an accounting of transactions since Feb. 6. The current balance is \$3,260.47. There are 11 full memberships and five affiliate memberships listed. Conway noted that The Delaware Company has paid its dues and should be added. On a **motion** by Merchant, seconded by Powell, the Treasurer's Report was approved as presented.

New Business:

- a) **D&H Canal District National Historic Register Nomination Update** – Hauptman reported that the consulting firm AECOM is currently engaged in writing the nomination for a portion of the D&H Canal within the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, including the Roebling Bridge and Lackawaxen abutment, though it will also extend to Port Jervis. The boundary for the district is still being investigated. Hauptman distributed copies of fact sheets from the New York and Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Offices about the significance of being added to the State and National Registers of Historic Places (see attached). She said the designation can basically mean whatever you'd like. There are some tax incentives available.
- b) **Introduce Matt Hamel, AECOM architectural historian** – Hauptman introduced Hamel, who said he did reconnaissance work in this area a couple weeks ago. They want

to identify what remnants of the canal are left to tie them together. He will be reaching out to private property owners. Photos have been compiled by parcel. It's difficult to map in any north-south direction because much of NYS Route 97 has been built on top of the canal. Also, the lock numbering system is inconsistent. He intends to take a kayak down the river to see what he can find out from that perspective as well. Hamel will return to this group with a presentation of findings when they're ready. Robinson said that, by becoming part of the D&H Canal District, property owners don't give up any ownership rights and they could qualify for incentives. Hamel agreed that the designation doesn't change what can or can't be done with one's property. Powell said that fact tends to be misunderstood and scares people about establishing a historic district. Hauptman said the designation encourages preservation of historic properties by documenting their significance. Referencing the fact sheets, she said that the National Register does not: provide a marker or plaque (though property owners may obtain them at their own expense); restrict the rights of property owners; require that properties be maintained, repaired, or restored; prevent a resource's destruction; guarantee that grant funds will be available for projects; require property owners to follow preservation standards on their properties unless they wish to qualify for tax benefits; require property owners to allow public access to their property; automatically invoke local historic district zoning or landmark designation; and list individual properties if the owner objects, or list a historic district if the majority of property owners objects. Answering Barnes's question about whether they have access to the D&H Company's 1865 maps, Hamel said yes, AECOM's GIS person has overlaid them on aerial photos. Hamel said those hand-drawn maps were amazingly accurate. It was mentioned that Dave Barber was another good source of information since he has documented the route of the D&H Canal extensively. Ramie announced at that time that she had received an April 19 email from Audrey Barber in response to this meeting notice stating, "It is with great sadness that I inform you of the death of my husband, David G. Barber, on December 15, 2018 after a 9-month battle with cancer. Please remove him from your mailing list." Ramie said that she replied, "I'm very sorry for your loss and will pass along that sad news to the rest of the D&H group, which holds him in great respect."

- c) **"For the Record"** – Powell provided a handout called "For the Record" which provides reference information for D&H and Gravity Railroad collections. He devotes about 10 hours a day to this research. The list includes his 25 DVD-book volumes on the history of the Delaware and Hudson Gravity Railroad with descriptions of subject matter and page counts, a directory of articles about the D&H that Powell has written for the Bridge Line Historical Society Bulletin with dates and titles, 321 pages of "new" material on the D&H Canal excerpted from three volumes of the DVD series, 130 pages on the Pennsylvania Coal Company Gravity Railroad also excerpted from the DVD series, and interesting findings from Russel Lord testimony taken from the Supreme Court, Ulster County, case of The President, Managers and Company of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company vs. The Pennsylvania Coal Company from April 23, 1857. Powell said this lawsuit changes our understanding of this history since much of the information contradicts prior material. This must be incorporated into modern histories. Merchant said he owns a copy of all eight volumes produced from this court case, with approximately 5,000 pages of testimony. He agreed that it's exciting to be discovering new information 100 years later. Powell said a Master's thesis could be done on this. Barnes said that the Mamakating Town Board wants to re-create a canal boat. Powell and Merchant said that, while there are drawings available but no plans, the testimony details every part that is required for construction of a canal boat, down to the specific types of wood for various sections. Talaga suggested that hearing an overview of revelations from

the court case could be a morning educational session for an upcoming quarterly meeting. Robinson said that would be a great idea since this group is interested in historical accuracy.

- d) **Viewing of DVD Chapter 3: Roebling Bridge to Port Jervis** – After initially tabling this item while Bollinger set up his equipment, Robinson asked Bollinger if he was ready. Bollinger said he unfortunately did not have the new footage that had been shot for Chapter 3 consisting of interviews with John and Debra Conway on the computer he brought. The group had already seen the previous draft version at the last meeting. He asked whether a subcommittee could be appointed to review it with him and offer approval to finalize the DVD. Robinson, Ramie, and Talaga agreed to meet on April 29 at 5 p.m. at the Upper Delaware Council office in Narrowsburg, with anyone else welcome to participate. Bollinger said he would need a photo for the cover of the DVD. Robinson suggested an image from Wakefield’s book, page 111 (top photo, D-21), which Merchant said he can provide electronically to Bollinger. Talaga made a **motion** which Burns seconded to endorse use of that Wakefield collection image as the cover for DVD Chapter 3: Roebling Bridge to Port Jervis.
- e) **Website Transfer and Recommendations** – Ramie reiterated that Mike Harelick from Hillside Application Services who has been maintaining www.dhthc.org is moving away and has asked the group to find another webmaster. Ramie reached out to Dorene Warner at W Design in Barryville who does a lot of excellent, non-profit website work in the Upper Delaware River Valley region. Warner and Harelick discussed the current platform (conventional HTML editing), hosting service (www.landl.com), and transfer of passwords and authorizations. Warner provided a proposal for website maintenance and recommendation for a redesign upon Ramie’s request. The maintenance agreement for routine content updates to the current website is \$65 non-profit rate, billable in 5-minute increments. Saying that the Council can’t allow the website to go into oblivion, Powell made a **motion** which Talaga seconded to approve the Website Maintenance Agreement with W Design, with all voting in favor. Talaga said it will be important to cap our expenses by consolidating our requests for changes to the website. They can be channeled through the secretary. Robinson wondered what the Council pays for the hosting expense. Powell said it was unfortunate that Varcoe was not here to answer that. Powell feels that the membership is not maximizing the possibilities of what the website could offer. Robinson said we would need to either have enough money in the coffers or seek a grant to finance development of a new website. Warner’s recommendation calls for redesigning it to be mobile device friendly and ADA compliant, using the Wordpress Content Management System, as it is familiar to many and easy to use once trained. The DVD series could be showcased with easy access for purchase. Member logos could be featured on the home page along with a button to join. A calendar of events could be set up in a database format where each member could submit events. Warner said once the committee has a sense of what it would like to include on the website, an estimated cost could be given. A subcommittee of Merchant, Conway, and Ramie was established to arrange a meeting with Dorene Warner far enough in advance of the Council’s next meeting on July 24 so that there would be time to prepare a cost proposal. Ramie said when that meeting is set, she will notify members so anyone else can participate in the discussion about content and features for a new website. Merchant said once the site was re-designed on Wordpress, we could post items ourselves.
- f) **Reschedule D&H Bus Tour Plans: Lackawaxen to Port Jervis** – Robinson said that the original spring date did not work out with the bus company and caterer. Members

discussed pushing it back to summer. Talaga said for this segment, it doesn't matter if the leaves are still on the trees. Robinson was concerned it may be too hot for the walking around parts. He said we will need at least two months to coordinate it. Conway suggested shooting for September since the summer season is so busy. Following discussion, Robinson said he will check with Avery Bus Co. about whether they could do this trip on Saturday, Sept. 7. If not, he will ask them about other September weekends. By then, we will have all three DVDs that could be sold on the bus.

Old Business:

- a) **Incorporation of DHTHC as a New York State Non-profit Organization** – Barnes said that he had volunteered to write the application and pay the fee after the Council decided to pursue this designation at the last meeting. He needs three more directors to sign the incorporation papers. Talaga suggested that should be the Council officers, while Powell also offered to sign. Robinson said if there is no building or artifacts involved, the incorporation can be done under the State Department of Education rather than the Attorney General's Office. It is less expensive. That route only requires a \$100 fee and filing an EZ form. He said once the petition is granted, DHTHC could go for an EIN and 501(c)(3) charitable status if desired.
- b) **Accessing Blue Ridge Cable's 5-Minute D&H Promotional Video** – Ramie said she put this on the agenda after Connor Simon had shown at the last meeting the piece he produced for PA Channel 13's "Wallenpaupack Life" show. It aired every day at various times during February, then would be posted online at wallylife.com as well as social media sites for anyone to view, re-post, or share on their sites.
- c) **Inventory and Sales Report for DVD Chapters 1 and 2** – Talaga reported that the Wayne County Historical Society has 43 DVDs of Chapter 1 and 80 copies of Chapter 2 remaining. Each had been reprinted from the original orders. Robinson said we should all be promoting these videos. He always has a few with him when he attends events to publicize and sell. Conway said that Carol Montana from the Sullivan County Democrat plans to mention the DVDs in her article about the new D&H Canal Marker dedication that took place this morning at the Highland Fishing Access on Rt. 97. Also, Sullivan County Historian John Conway mentioned the DVDs in the "Sullivan County Retrospect" column he writes for that same newspaper. Robinson said it would be good if we had a flyer promoting the DVDs that we could hand out to appropriate audiences.
- d) **Google Maps Directory of Publicly Accessible D&H Corridor Hikes** – Robinson said he would like to post an interactive map of these hiking opportunities on the website's home page. Merchant said he needs to sit down with Pennsylvania people to fact-check the hiking areas there. He noted that Google Maps now include the D&H Canal.

Announcements of Member Accomplishments, Concerns, and Upcoming Events:

Lauren Hauptman – The National Park Service's Zane Grey Festival will be held on July 13 in Lackawaxen. D&H Canal Days on both sides of Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct will take place on May 7-10 and 15-17 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. each day, with rotating stations for 4th grade students from various school districts. The public may attend. Powell mentioned that NPS intern Laine Rubin will be doing an interpretation of a coal miner with some items borrowed from the Carbondale Historical Society Museum.

Kathy Land – The Waymart Area Historical Society is working on its calendar of events, which will be posted on Facebook. They're currently researching some papers dating back to the 1800's that a landowner found while cleaning out a barn.

Lynn Burns and Norma Schadt – Burns handed out copies of their 2019 program schedule and latest newsletter for the Town of Deerpark Museum. She highlighted that they will host a program by Frank Salvati on May 5 at 3 p.m., "Sir William Johnson, Heaven-Taught General" and the 240th Anniversary of Joseph Brant's July 1779 Raid Bus Tour will take place on July 20, with pre-registration required at \$10 adults and \$5 children. She also gave copies of the "Historic Markers of the Town of Deerpark" brochure. Schadt said that the Deerpark Heritage Fund supports the culture and history of Deerpark and the tri-state area, including Montague, Mount Hope, Neversink Valley Area Museum, etc. As a group of small historical societies who are located at the ends of their counties, they want to band together and promote visitation. They are planning to publish a passport to visit these historical societies and are planning a big band event called "The Swing" in October at the Port Jervis Elks Club. Details will be confirmed.

Sally Talaga – D&H Canal Park's canal "boat" pavilion & ADA ramp to it: Due to budget cuts, the overall dimensions of the prefabricated pavilion are back to being historically correct, 70' x 14', plus a 20' curved "bow" pergola. Even if SHPO okays the related ground disturbance in the canal in the next three weeks, ground breaking, let alone use of the pavilion, will probably not be until after... 7th Annual Canal Festival, August 17: Most of the prior participants have been invited but new ones are always welcome. NPS Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River is providing a canal boatman/boatwoman to perform a first-person interpretation. Thank you, Ingrid! That allowed us to afford Rob Gibson of Gibson Photography, a tintype artist whose work is described in the March/April 2019 issue of *Pennsylvania* magazine. We are still looking for basket weavers, broom makers, beekeepers, two mules and anyone else who relates to the site's history. Again, this year, the canal park is benefiting from Wayne County Prison Work Release Program. We have had two to three inmates, as much as three times a week, for the past three weeks and more time is promised. They are palletizing the stones from the post-canal stone building for future use elsewhere in the park, which may include the construction of the pavilion's ADA ramp. Talaga also passed out WCHS's 2019 color brochure and calendar of events for members' distribution at their sites.

George Fluhr – The Shohola Caboose will reopen on Memorial Day weekend then be open from 11-2 on Saturdays and Sundays. On Memorial Day, there will be the traditional ceremony at the Old Congregational Church in Barryville to commemorate the confederate soldiers killed in the Civil War train wreck as well as soldiers that are buried there from the Battle of Minisink.

Laurie Ramie – A handout on the Thomas Kennedy Local History Festival at the Dorflinger Factory Museum in White Mills on April 27 was provided from the Local History Roundtable. Ramie distributed copies of the Upper Delaware Council's Spring 2019 issue of "The Upper Delaware" newsletter. Lastly, she reported that Kenny Christianson has offered to host the July DHTHC meeting at the Rowland Café, which he has been renovating since October. Christianson said he can provide lunch and a space for the meeting.

Myra Snook – The Warren County Parks Foundation and Morris Canal Committee will present ParkFest 2019 on June 8 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Bread Lock Park, 2627 Route 97, Stewartsville, NJ with free admission, an author's alley, classic cars, history presentations and displays, and the County History Museum will be open. Visit www.explorewarren.org.

Deb Conway – The 11 a.m. dedication of the historic canal marker funded by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation went well, with D&H THC members, Sullivan County Legislature Nadia Rajsiz and Parks Director Brian Scardefield, Sullivan County Historian John Conway, Town Supervisor Jeff Haas, and Greater Barryville Chamber of Commerce President Roswell Hamrick present. She is developing a site plan to extend the Towpath Trail in partnership with the National Park Service a half-mile to the Eagle Observation Blind in the Town of Highland. She is hoping to receive funding to have bluestone benches, interpretive signing, and have a snubbing post. The second phase of the development would be commissioning and installing a bronze sculpture of the hogue and mule that she has dubbed “The Kate Project”. Conway noted that while the Battle of Minisink will be observed on July 20 at 4 p.m. at Sullivan County’s Minisink Battleground Park, there will be no re-enactment for the 240th anniversary because her grant application was rejected. Frank Salvati will be the keynote speaker for the July 20 ceremony. Lastly, the Magical History Tour will take place on Father’s Day weekend in June.

Bill Merchant – The Society was awarded in November a \$100,000 challenge grant by the Thompson Family Foundation of New York. They must raise the equivalent amount as renovation of the DePuy Canal House continues. The roof has been replaced with cedar shake. They hope to move into the building within two years. The society’s annual meeting will be held April 27. Merchant has prepared a new program on underrepresented populations of the canal.

S. Robert Powell – Carbondale recently celebrated the 168th anniversary of its incorporation. It is the 4th oldest city in Pennsylvania. The city’s library is the oldest one in Lackawanna County, with a 145th anniversary coming up.

Kerron Barnes – He proposed to the Mamakating town supervisor that they organize a Canal Summit to bring agencies and groups that are working on canal projects, trail systems, and improvements into one room to talk to each other. That would include the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Open Space Institute, Sullivan County Planning, Rails-Trails, etc. He anticipates having six major groups present for 15 minutes each, with a question and answer period, followed by a networking session. The supervisor supports the idea. They are looking at holding it on a Saturday during June or September. Engineer Al Fusco has been hired by Orange County to investigate the Neversink Aqueduct. He’ll look at the feeder canal and structures in Cuddebackville to come up with a plan on how to fix them and the cost estimate. Barnes is working with him. He said the local fire department needs that water source in addition to the cause of historic preservation. Barnes would appreciate receiving any drawings, maps, photos, or descriptions that anyone has of this feeder canal system for a history that he is compiling. Powell said that wasn’t part of the original canal plan. They appropriated \$34,000 to bring in the Neversink for more water to enter Port Jervis at a higher elevation than planned. Schadt advised Barnes to look at the records of the electric company.

Cliff Robinson, Jr. – There are two dams in Cuddebackville. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said that taking out the south dam wouldn’t affect the north dam, but it did. It created the largest concentration of mussels in the world. The dam had been there for 180 years. Everything in the USACOE’s report was opposite to their 2004 predictions. Now the canal is dry, everything is falling apart, and there are new endangered species there now. Robinson has been talking with Orange County Legislator Tom Faggione. He would like to see supporters make their positions known on the Wet the Canal Facebook page or by email. Robinson and four others are incorporating a new conservancy to try to save this resource and re-water it. Robinson’s group could do the work and take the cost away for the county. He also has a project pending in Huguenot, with estimates prepared for the construction work, but he can’t get the county to act on

it. They are worried about liability. He has a group willing to do the work for free but can't get a yes or no response.

Next Council Meeting: The next quarterly meeting will take place on the 4th Wednesday, **July 24, 2019, at the Rowland Café**. An agenda with directions will be sent when arrangements are confirmed.

Adjourn: The April 24, 2019 DHTHC meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m. on a **motion** by Schadt, seconded by Moeller.

Minutes submitted by Laurie Ramie, 5/10/19