

D&H Transportation Heritage Council

July 24, 2019 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Rowland Corners General Store, 101 Solverson Rd., Rowland, 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

Kenny Christianson, Lackawaxen River Conservancy and Rowland Cooperative

S. Robert Powell, Carbondale Historical Society

Kathy Land, Waymart Area Historical Society

George J. Fluhr, Pike County Historian

Lauren Hauptman, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

Ingrid Peterec, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

Sally Talaga, Wayne County Historical Society's D&H Canal Park at Lock 31

Bill Clark, Westfall-Matamoras Historical Society

Myra Snook, Warren County, NJ Canal Committee

(Lunch guest: Dan Engvaldsen, musician)

Call to Order: Chairperson Robinson called the business meeting held at the Rowland Corners General Store to order at 1:10 p.m. The meeting following a morning tour of the general store building under restoration by the Rowland Cooperative, an old toll house, a carpenter's shop, and remnants of Canal Lock 11; a barbecue lunch courtesy of host Kenny Christianson and Rowland Cooperative members; and Canal Songs entertainment by NPS Canal Days musician Dan Engvaldsen.

Additions to the Agenda: Bill Merchant-covered bridges; Laurie Ramie-grant support letter; Cliff Robinson-assistance with an Orange County issue.

Acceptance of April 24, 2019 Minutes: On a **motion** by Varcoe, seconded by Fluhr, the minutes of the last quarterly meeting held at The Inn at Lackawaxen were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Varcoe presented her written report, which included an accounting of transactions since April 24. The current balance is \$2,365.47. There are 13 full memberships and five affiliate memberships. The latest addition is The Century House in Rosendale. Merchant said he would send their logo for the membership website page. There are two outstanding invoices by Bill Bollinger and The Delaware Company for DVD orders of \$140 and \$175 that Talaga said she would pursue. On a **motion** by Merchant, seconded by Powell, the Treasurer's Report was approved as presented.

New Business:

- a) **Proposal for www.DHTHC.org Website Redesign** – The Council reviewed a written proposal submitted by Dorene Warner from W Design in Barryville which was based on a subcommittee meeting that took place on July 15 in Narrowsburg with Merchant, Ramie, Varcoe, Debra Conway, and Warner present, as well as input provided by Powell, Hauptman, and Bill Bollinger. The new, responsive website would be custom designed and developed utilizing a Wordpress Content Management System, allowing Council members direct access to update the site's content. W Design would remain available to make any routine website updates or expansions as requested. The website appearance

will be mindful of the historic nature of the subject, while making allowances for new technologies and user experience protocols. The goal is a fresh, relevant, and inspiring look, along with easy-to-navigate, accessible information. The proposal included a DHTHC.org Sitemap with a list of pages (Home, Membership, History, News, Videos, Photo Gallery, Contact Form); optional add-ons to enhance the website and associated costs (Event Calendar, Online Payments Form, WooCommerce Shopping Cart, Photo Galleries); a Timeline/Project Process for Website Development with six phases; and a Fee/Payment Schedule. To design and develop a responsive website as described, the basic cost is \$5,200, payable in four installments. A two-hour training session is included in the fee; any additional sessions would be charged at \$65 per hour. W Design's charge for website maintenance is also \$65 per hour, billed in 5-minute increments. Ramie reminded all that the membership decided at the last meeting to contract with W Design for maintenance of the current site after Mike Harellick from Hillside Application Service indicated that he will be moving out of the area, while also asking Warner to provide a proposal for an upgrade. Varcoe noted the previous charges incurred for the website were paying Harellick \$125 per year and \$50 for the hosting site. Merchant said if this organization was a 501(c)(3), it would be eligible for grants. Currently the budget doesn't support this project. Robinson said through a new interactive site with an optional enhancement, we could sell items to generate some revenue. He agreed that there are grants available for registered entities for website development. He's not aware of the status of Kerron Barnes' offer to pursue NYS non-for-profit incorporation status for DHTHC which is a precursor to seeking federal 501(c)(3) designation. On a **motion** by Robinson, seconded by Merchant, the Council agreed to table discussion on the DHTHC.org website upgrade until after the 501(c)(3) designation is secured in order to seek grant funding for it.

- b) **Availability of DVD Chapter 3: Roebling Bridge to Port Jervis** – Robinson reported that there was a problem with the duplication machine that messed up videographer Bill Bollinger's master of DVD Chapter 3 after it was completed. Fortunately, he can re-do it from his files. Talaga said she hoped to have copies of it to sell and play on a continuous loop during the Aug. 17 Canal Festival. Robinson said that Bollinger indicated he could have a new master available within the week. He asked Talaga whether there is an adequate supply of Chapters 1 and 2, to which she said yes. Robinson said he brings a supply with him when he gives speeches and feels that the more we're advertising the availability of these DVDs, the better it is for their promotion.

- c) **Planning for D&H Canal Lackawaxen to Port Jervis Bus Tour** – Robinson spoke to the driver during The Delaware Company's Magical History Tour and found that the Avery company's buses hold 45 people. We have targeted September for this tour but he's not able to schedule it yet due to a mandatory seminar he has coming up for which the date has not been confirmed. The Foundry in Port Jervis is on board to host the lunch, during which City of Port Jervis Mayor Kelly Decker has agreed to speak about their desire to water a section of the canal. The bus tour will start at the Roebling Bridge. Peterec said that Sept. 28 is National Public Lands Day, so don't schedule the tour then. When the date is known, NPS will work with the Council on logistics regarding the bridge and parking lot usage. Robinson said he would love to target teachers since their excitement about the canal translates to their students to spur more interest. Since Decker is a teacher, Robinson has discussed with him putting together a seminar for educators about canal history. Peterec observed that it is difficult to get teachers out of school during the academic year. There has to be an incentive, such as credits to earn. NPS has contact lists for fourth grade teachers in local school districts from its Canal Days

program. Based on past participation from the last bus tour and interest expressed during the Magical History Tour, Robinson said he expects we will have a waiting list and could do this more than once. He will send out a message with potential available dates for everyone to review after his seminar is confirmed.

d) **Other** –

1) Ramie provided copies of a draft Letter of Support to the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council for a NYS grant application for a Marketing Program for the Upper Delaware Visitor Center. She explained that this is a project by the Callicoon Business Association to convert the abandoned 1899 Erie Depot in the hamlet of Callicoon into a regional visitor center in partnership with the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway among other community uses. The letter explains who DHTHC is, offers support, and states, “As an important component of the bi-state Upper Delaware River Valley’s transportation history which preceded the advent of railroads, we look forward to having an opportunity through the visitor center’s exhibits to interpret the legacy of the Delaware & Hudson Canal which operated from 1828-1898 as a vital contributor to the Industrial Revolution and the growth of communities along its path from Carbondale, PA to Kingston, NY.” On a **motion** by Merchant, seconded by Christianson, the Council approved the letter for Chairperson Robinson’s signature.

2) Merchant stated that Ron Knapp, a history professor at SUNY New Paltz, has authored a book on covered bridges. In the 19th century, they often would cover the bridges for weather protection so the trusses would last longer. There is a Society of Covered Bridges. Through their archives, Merchant has found 20 of these covered bridges in his area. He is now working on a paper with Professor Knapp about covered bridges on canals. Merchant said this is a way to interact with other histories to extend our reach. It broadens the audience, such as finding out that when he posts information about railroads, it attracts 2-3 times more traffic to the site. He would like to replicate a pony truss covered bridge to place along the 5 Locks Walk in High Falls. He wishes he could find drawings for one. Merchant was asked to share a photo of a canal covered bridge. Fluhr said that Sullivan County did a driving tour of covered bridges years ago. Robinson noted that Lynn Burns has a good collection of covered bridges in her Deerpark archives.

3) Merchant said that he has found four similar photos of the famous “Little Freddy” picture taken by Hensel at one end of the Lackawaxen Aqueduct showing that same lock. He asked whether anybody else has any of those photos. He also noted that the 200th anniversary of the D&H Canal is six years away. He’s been asked whether there are any plans in the works to organize a canal-wide anniversary event.

4) Robinson said that his D&H Canal Conservancy has reached an impasse in its dealings with Orange County. In 1988, property was purchased for \$1 from O&R and the County Parks Department was put in charge of it. Since his conservancy was formed in 2006, its members have done a lot of work in Orange County to clear canal trails. In 2009, Orange County issued the Conservancy a 10-year license pertaining to liability, workers comp, etc. which will expire on October 28, 2019. The Conservancy is working on a breach in Huguenot which could be resolved with two abutments and a concrete bridge. The Parks Department must give permission because it’s their land. It also requires engineering and Department of Public Works approvals to get the permit. Time is running out since the license ends soon and the grant expires at the end of the year. He can’t get the sign-off that is needed. Storms had delayed some activity. The reimbursement grant works on the basis of getting 80% back after project expenses are paid, then those funds are put back

into the project for the next phase. He had worked out a line of credit with a bank to meet the up-front costs. Not until the project is completely finished will the Conservancy get fully paid back. His contact at the bank is no longer there and new managers tried to convert the line of credit into a loan with a 3-year payback period, which the Conservancy can't pay because it has no assets. Robinson has indicated to Orange County that the trail restoration has wide support but he believes it would be helpful to indicate that through letters. Right now, there appears to be no discussion about it. The Orange County Legal Department has cut off communications. Robinson said he would offer a sample letter if organizations and individuals are willing to express their support. He would like to request a meeting with County Executive Steven Neuhaus to straighten it all out. The state agency is expecting a progress report or they can cancel the \$60,000 grant balance. Merchant recommended contacting the Community Foundation which works with non-profits to help manage grant monies. Ramie suggested that Robinson provide a fact sheet in the form of bullet points about this grant project delay with the appropriate contact information that she can circulate to the membership for consideration of sending support letters.

Old Business:

- a) **D&H Canal District National Historic Register Nomination Update** – Hauptman reported that the consulting firm AECOM did a field survey at the end of June to supplement a windshield survey from April. They are now working on the final report. It's believed that the focus area for designation will be on the Sparrowbush DEC Access, Mongaup River DEC Access, Lock 66 at Tuthill Road, the NPS Corwin Farm property in the Town of Lumberland, and the NPS Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct in Minisink Ford, NY/Lackawaxen, PA. Of 55 parcels that were identified, the consultant only got permission by 14 owners to enter 24 properties. The schedule is that AECOM should have the National Register nomination form drafted in March 2020 and finalized next October. Hauptman said that the Federal government shutdown had postponed a lot of activity. Regarding the Sparrowbush Access, Robinson observed that tons of boulders have been dumped in the middle of the canal prism off Hook Road. He doesn't know how that happened.
- b) **Incorporation of DHTHC as a New York State Non-profit Organization** – Robinson noted that we will need to ask Barnes for an update. When Robinson applied for a new charter, he said it took a month and a half just to get acknowledgement of his letter, so it can be a long process. The NYS Education Department would have oversight. It can be a non-profit with tax-deductible options but it is not considered to be a charter or charity if the organization owns no assets or property. Once the Council has state incorporation, seeking the 501(c)(3) federal designation is another process of requiring new bylaws, paperwork, and has a \$750 fee.
- c) **Inventory and Sales Report for DVD Chapters 1 and 2** – Talaga asked anyone needing a supply to email her with their orders. Merchant and Powell each said that they need more Chapter 2 videos for their shops.
- d) **Google Maps Directory of Publicly Accessible D&H Corridor Hikes** – Merchant pledged to have this ready for the next meeting, and definitely ready to post on the upgraded website!

Announcements of Member Accomplishments, Concerns, and Upcoming Events:

Kenny Christianson – Once the Rowland Cooperative receives approval for its water supply, the renovated general store will open to the public to serve breakfast and pizza initially. More information on the mission of the Cooperative is available at www.rowlandcoop.com, along with photos showing their progress. The Lackawaxen River Conservancy holds Towpath Cleanups in the spring and fall, is involved with developing a trail with interpretive signs from the Settlers Inn to Lock 31, and will hold its annual Day on the River Aug. 3. Visit www.lackawaxenriver.org for their activities. The Conservancy has around 100 members now.

Sally Talaga – The Wayne County Prison Work Release crew has been helping to demolish the post-canal stone building at the Canal Park, with the age determined through a cement analysis. That work yielded 43 pallets of stone which will be used on-site for other projects. The Wayne County Historical Society received a 50% matching PHMC Keystone Grant for plaster restoration for the interior of the lock house. Unfortunately, the building is not approved to hold more than 5 people upstairs and 30 people downstairs at a time. The 7th Annual Canal Festival will take place on Aug. 17 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the D&H Canal Park at Lock 31, one mile west of Hawley. Visit www.waynehistorypa.org for the event schedule. One new feature will be a tintype artist. The Canal Boat Pavilion project is over-budget and they may need an extension on the grant. It is expected to be a 16 by 70 ft. pre-fab pole building with a concrete slab and an ADA ramp.

Bill Merchant – The new museum for the D&H Canal Historical Society is on track to open in 2021. They are working on exhibit designs now. The plan is to have a tourism visitor center with a self-guided museum and volunteer docents on the weekends. The Society is submitting a grant through the NYS CFA process which would make Merchant's position full-time if approved.

S. Robert Powell – On May 16-17, he went to the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute to study materials in the Johann Augustus Roebling Collection after making an interesting discovery about Roebling abutments years ago. He noted the high security in place to access those records. Some of the documents about the four aqueducts are in Roebling's own hand. He will be publishing articles about what he has found. The PA Association of Geologists will be meeting in Carbondale on Oct. 4 and Powell will be their speaker about the use of stones on these bridges. Powell congratulated the National Park Service for their Canal Days Programs at the Delaware Aqueduct on May 7-10, 15-17. He recognized the efforts of Peterec, all four presenters, and Laine Rubin, an Upper Delaware intern, for his excellent presentation on anthracite coal mining for which he borrowed artifacts from the Carbondale Museum. Peterec noted that Rubin now works for the Fort Delaware Museum of Colonial History in Narrowsburg. Powell said he also enjoyed being a first-time exhibitor at the Zane Grey Festival on July 13, which was a beautiful day with a large crowd of visitors to the museum and Delaware Aqueduct. On June 1, copies of all 25 volumes of Powell's "History of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad" were added to the University of Albany archives and 15 volumes were added to the Portsmouth University Library in Portsmouth, England, which is the first international order he has received. Powell visited the D&H Canal Museum in Cuddebackville on June 8 and was never previously aware that there was such an excellent museum at the turn of the road by the Neversink Aqueduct abutment that he was investigating. Robinson said in the Council's past visits there, we've met at Orange County's visitor center building and not the museum. An article by Powell called "The D&H's Saratoga Express" was published in the Bridge Line Historical Society Bulletin in May 2019 and "The D&H Boston Express" was published in June. He has three more articles coming up in that publication on "D&H Baseball: An Introduction", "The Birth of the D&H as a Steam Railroad", and "Roebling's System of Anchoring the Cables on the Four D&H Aqueducts". Following the leads of the Towns of Highland and Mamakating, Powell applied to the William G. Pomeroy

Foundation for a historic marker to commemorate the Jan. 6, 1983 listing of the Carbondale City Hall and Courthouse on the National Register of Historic Places. It was approved within a week. They will plan a dedication ceremony for its installation. On July 3, Powell attended a talk by Professor Paul C. King, Department of Architectural Technology at NYC College of Technology, at the D&H Canal Museum in High Falls and was hosted overnight by Bill and Kelly Merchant in their canal-era home. Professor King is working on a book, "Roebing Before the Bridge". Lastly, Powell said that all eight volumes of the NYS Supreme Court proceedings in the case of the D&H Canal Co. vs. PA Coal Company are available on-line in the Hathi Trust Digital Library (www.hathitrust.org). In light of this recorded primary data, all existing accounts of the D&H Canal will have to be updated and revised in the years ahead. Powell shared samples of interesting facts and statistics.

George Fluhr – The Shohola Caboose is open on Saturday and Sundays from 11 a.m. for a few hours. He noted that the foundation of the original aqueduct to cross the Lackawaxen River is visible if you cross the Zane Grey Bridge, turn right, and on the right-hand side, you overlook the Lackawaxen River and can get a glimpse of the masonry. It's worth seeing when it's not overgrown with vegetation. There is a scene in DVD Chapter 2 of it.

Kathy Land – The Waymart Area Historical Society will hold its annual flea market at the 1900 railroad station from 10-2 on Aug. 24, along with a town-wide yard sale.

Ingrid Peterec – She thanked Powell for briefing everyone on the NPS Canal Days and the Zane Grey Festival that occurred recently.

Laurie Ramie – The Upper Delaware Council's 31st Annual Family Raft Trip will take place on Aug. 4 from Ten Mile River to Barryville, with reservations needed by July 26. More information is available at www.upperdelawarecouncil.org.

Myra Snook – A third event was held at Breadlock Park along the Morris Canal consisting of a Story Walk, which traced the current sites with historic photos from a book about a canal family going through the locks. There is an animated program of a canal boat going up the Morris Canal incline which shows all the mechanisms based on photos but she's not aware of its availability. The Morris Canal operated from around 1817-1917.

Cliff Robinson, Jr. – Robinson said his earlier report about Orange County work would suffice.

Next Council Meeting: The next quarterly meeting will take place on the 4th Wednesday, **October 23, 2019, at the Century House Museum and Widow Jane Mine** in Rosendale, NY, located 3 miles from High Falls and 8 miles from Kingston. An agenda and itinerary, including a morning tour and lunch option, will be sent when arrangements are confirmed.

Adjourn: The July 24, 2019 DHTHC meeting adjourned at 3:38 p.m. on a **motion** by Merchant, seconded by Fluhr.

Minutes submitted by Laurie Ramie, 8/8/19