NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS

James & Sheryl Brownlow, Thompson, PA

NEW MEMBERS

Robert & Jessica Aumack, Keyport, NJ
Jeffrey Dobish, Dresher, PA
William Glavich, Lake Ariel, PA
Amy Horner Hanley, Arlington, VA
Kenneth Hannon, Washington, DC
Michael Hannon, Avoca, PA
Dan & Judy Hurley, Syracuse, NY
Tomas Ramirez, Arlington, VA
Bob Sadowaskas, Hop Bottom, PA
Dori Sankowich, New York, NY

RENEWING MEMBERS

Charles & Ginny Ahearn, Kingsley, PA
Harry Aumack, Keyport, NJ
Bruce & Eileen Baesler, Montrose, PA
Jan Bauer, Rose Valley, PA
Bill Bayne, Hallstead, PA
Bruce Begin, Jessup, PA
Doranne & Susan Belin, Waverly, PA
Rebecca Bennett, Montrose, PA
Craig & Pam Benson, Thompson, PA
Ruth & Jack Bertolino, Newtown, PA
Frank & Peggy Brager, Forest City, PA
F. Warren & Carol Brieg, Jr., Dalton, PA
Ivan & Elaine Burman, Thompson, PA
David Butler, Vandalia, PA
Patricia Cambaizet, Waverly, PA
Will & Kathryn Chamberlin, N. Abington Twp., PA
Joe & Ann Chenery, Starlight, PA
Jim Clayton, Thompson, PA
Anne & Andy Crowley, Endwell, NY
Frank Currier, Keyport, NJ
Elinor Dakey, Greenfield, PA
Ern Dobush, Clifton Twp., PA
Fred DeFeo, Starlight, PA
Dawn Howell & Armand De La Bruere, Clifford, PA
Steve & Cindy Detwiler, Susquehanna, PA
Paul & Jane Dietche, New York, NY
Cathy & Lewis Duffner, Avoca, PA
Christina Feehler, Moscow, PA
Daniel & Tracy Fenton, Hopewville, NJ
Amy & Jim Fleming, Waverly, PA
Raymond Fuller, Scranton, PA
Paul & Mary Gere, S. Montrose, PA
Grace & Joseph Gilhooley, Union Dale, PA
Michael Gillespie, Lancaster, PA
Ed Giombetti, Jessup, PA
Jose Gonzalez Family, Leonia, NJ
Linda & Steve Griffiths, Union Dale, PA
Cathy & Bob Guzzi, Dalton, PA
Michael Hapstak, Scranton, PA
Mary Jo Hart, Montrose, PA
Joyce Hatala, Fleetville, PA
Otto Hetrick, Treveose, PA
David & Nadine Hogan, Binghamton, NY
Sylvia Holtzen, Ambler, PA
Dave & Joann Horner, Union Dale, PA
Jim & Veran Johnson, Pompton Plains, NJ
Rafi & Tom Karam, Union Dale, PA
George & Michele Kelly, Germantown, MD
Dan & Diane Kimberly, Susquehanna, PA
Delores & Edward Kowanski, Dickson City, PA
Gary Lipps, Hazleton, PA
Donna Ludwig, Forest City, PA
Dave & Micki Lukens, Clifford Twp., PA

D & H Bridges Ribbon-Cutting

We have scheduled a celebration of our two newly decked railroad bridges for Friday, August 7th at 10 AM on site. The bridge project was funded through grants from the Recreational Trails Program of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Thanks to our dedicated members and trail users who assisted with matching funds through their voluntary membership dollars!

The bridges are within 200 yards of each other and cross the unspoiled & scenic upper Lackawanna River, just below Stillwater Dam. They have been decked with concrete, with new railings, access-control gates and a bench at the northerly bridge. This is much used section of D&H Rail-Trail, just 2 miles north of the Forest City Trailhead. It is well-used by early morning runners in training for our D&H Distance Run or the Steamtown Marathon. Bikers love this section, as it’s about an 8 mile ride to Union Dale, where you can visit Cables Deli and get a snack before heading downgrade and back to Forest City.

Plans will include remarks from our funders and local officials, refreshments and information about future rail-trail plans. Ample parking is found on the parallel O&W Rail-Trail; handicap accessible parking close to the celebratory tented area is available.

Directions: Follow SR 171 North through Forest City. About ½ mile above Forest City’s residential area, you will cross a bridge over our trail. Immediately after the bridge, turn right, go through yellow gate & parking aids will guide you. Please RSVP to trails@nepa.net so we may insure enough seating and refreshments.
Many trains have operated over the years on what is now the D&H Rail-Trail. How many? Well, as late as 1969, the Delaware and Hudson was operating five manifest trains over their “Penn Division” daily in both directions. How do we know?

Jim Kilcullen may be one of the few individuals who has not only hiked on the D&H Rail-Trail and rode Delaware and Hudson trains over the entire length of the railroad. He was also responsible for assembling and dispatching the trains that ran over the “Penn Division” rails of the D&H that has now become the D&H Rail-Trail.

Retiring in 2008 after 38½ years with the D&H, Jim was kind enough to sit down with a group of fellow railfans to share some of his knowledge of D&H action on the trail.

As late as the 1960’s, prior to the creation of Penn Central, as many as five Delaware and Hudson trains daily climbed the trail in both directions. Northbound trains carried an odd number and southbounds were even numbered. Northbound symbol trains included WM1 and WM3 (Wilkes-Barre to Mechanicville with connecting traffic to the Boston & Maine), WR1 and WR3 (Wilkes-Barre to Rouses Point with connections to Canadian National and Canadian Pacific), and W01 (Wilkes-Barre to Oneonta). Southbound counterparts included OW6, MW4, RW6, A-MW2 (A is “Advanced,” or ahead of MW2) and MW2.

RW6 (Rouses Point to Wilkes-Barre) was the highest priority train southbound over the Penn Division rails. This was known as the “Paper Train” because of the volume of Canadian newsprint paper it carried. It generated such a large amount of revenue that it was said to pay all the bills for the railroad for the day. After reaching Wilkes-Barre, part of the train then went south to Harrisburg and part west to Pittsburgh on train CSB7. The train was also operated on a very fast schedule due to its importance.

In the opposite direction, over the rails of the Pennsylvania Railroad from Conway Yard in Pittsburgh, train CSB8 came to Wilkes-Barre. This was a high priority train since it carried a large volume of perishables from the West and was bound for New England. It was broken up on arrival and cars were switched for movements in the WR and WM trains. The perishables and other freight for New England were handed off to the Boston and Maine at Mechanicville by WM. WR to Rouses Point carried the freight for the D&H North End and Canada and included a large number empty cars being returned to Canadian Pacific and Canadian National. The D&H wanted those empties off their railroad ASAP to reduce per diem charges. (Per diem is what each railroad in the AAR (Association of American Railroads) charges the other railroads in routing their cars whether empty or loaded. Back then it was computed from midnight to midnight. D&H, like all carriers, desired to get the cars off their property within the 24 hour period, or pay another day’s per diem, so the empties were as important as the loads.)

The Central Railroad of New Jersey (CNJ) pulled out of its operations in Pennsylvania in April 1972. Prior to that, D&H train WM3 became NE84 and MW4 became NE87. The CNJ at this time was under the control of the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) and these trains originated at B&O’s Potomac Yard in Virginia. The trains operated over the B&O, Reading, CNJ, the D&H Penn Division, and the Boston & Maine (B&M) with the ultimate destination of Portland, Maine.

After the CNJ’s departure from PA, the Lehigh Valley took over much of the operations of the CNJ in PA. Because the CNJ’s backline into the Wyoming Valley was abandoned, the Lehigh Valley initially brought its freight over the mountain cutoff into Wilkes-Barre. This required a number of time-consuming moves to transfer the train to the D&H for movement north. 6 hours or more could be lost in moving these cars to the D&H. D&H recognized the problem in 1972 and decided with the Lehigh Valley to put in a connection at Dupont, PA so a quick transfer could be made for NE 84 & 87 operations over the Penn Division.

The D&H was not the only railroad using the route. Prior to its merger with the DL&W (Lackawanna) in 1960, the Erie Railroad ran a daily through train, AY78, southbound from Susquehanna to Avoca in the night hours. The northbound AY77 ran daily during the daytime hours out of Avoca, PA to Susquehanna. AY77 ran up through the Lackawanna Valley around 2 or 3 in the afternoon and over the Jeff, usually powered by 3 or 4 GP7s. Both used the Jefferson Junction connector between JN tower (later cabin) on the D&H Penn Division main and JA tower (later cabin) on the Erie main. The Erie also ran a local on the Jeff out of Susquehanna approximately 3 times per week to service customers along the route.

The 1968 merger of the Pennsylvania and New York Central railroads into the Penn Central siphoned traffic away from the D&H since this soon-to-fail company had its own routes into New England and Canada. As a result, by 1971, the frequency of D&H trains over the Penn Division was reduced to three per day. This remained, with adjustments, until the formation of Conrail in 1976 which took over many bankrupt eastern railroads, but not the Delaware and Hudson. This road continued its corporate existence even under Canadian Pacific ownership although the rails of most of the Penn Division were abandoned after the former Lackawanna route between Binghamton and Scranton was purchased by the D&H from Conrail in 1980. The remaining rails at Jefferson Junction near Lanesboro became unused after the Belden Hill Tunnel enlargement was completed in 1985.

Sources:
Jim Kilcullen, retired former D&H Yardmaster
Mike Eggleston, retired D&H employee
Henry Sommers, rail historian
What’s New on the D&H?

Rail-Trail Council’s list of events includes a variety of nature hikes, history hikes, bike rides and more. With 48 miles of trail we have something for everyone! Our May 17th “Secrets of the D&H” Hike, Thompson to Buck’s falls, took us to the northern not as heavily traveled section of our trail. Over 300 riders participated in the June 20th Heritage Explorer Bike Tour bringing attention to both the Lackawanna River Heritage and D&H Trails in what has become a Father’s Day tradition. Severe weather caused us to reschedule our Panther’s Bluff hike for the 8th annual D&H Distance Run. September 13th runners will “Go the Distance” at the Coal Cracker 2 mile and 1/4 marathon. We will partner with the Forest City Cross Country Team for the Coal Cracker 2 Mile and 1/4 Marathon. September 13th runners will “Go the Distance” at the 8th annual D&H Distance Run. Fall will bring more rides and plenty of other opportunities to enjoy the trail.

Trail Cleanups

With the help of our volunteers we completed two “Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful” cleanups this fall. April 18th volunteers meet at the Forest City and Union Dale Trailheads and cleaned 6 miles of trail collecting over 30 bags of trash. Our May 9th cleanup attacked an illegal dumpsite on the Endless Mountains Trail removing 1.72 tons of trash. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation’s largest volunteer-based community action and education organization.

Coal Cracker 2 Mile and 1/4 Marathon

August 1. Registration info: dhdistancerun.com

Are You Ready to Be a Trail Tender?

Who are Trail Tenders? They are ordinary people who volunteer their time to maintain and enhance sections of the D&H and Endless Mountain Trails. If you are interested in joining this growing volunteer program or would like more information now is the perfect time. We invite you to attend our “Trail Tender” meeting scheduled for Sunday, August 23 at 2 PM.

Becoming a Trail Tender is easy and you can choose your level of involvement. Anyone with an interest in the trail and the outdoors is welcome. Volunteers say they enjoy the time spent outdoors and the personal satisfaction they gain through volunteering on the trail.

You can receive a copy of our new Trail Tender Brochure by checking the box on our membership renewal form!

Membership Renewal Form

Please renew! The date on the mailing label on the reverse indicates when your membership expires.

☐ Lifetime/Founding $500 ☐ I am available for trail cleanups.
☐ Patron/Sponsor $250 ☐ Call me to discuss a corporate donation.
☐ Club/Organization $100 ☐ I am interested in finding out more about the “Trail Tender” program.
☐ Family $35 ☐ Send my newsletter electronically (instead of by mail) to: _____________________________
☐ Individual $20 ☐ Send me a brochure.
☐ Senior/Student $15

NAME ______________________________________________ PHONE NUMBER __________________________

STREET ADDRESS _____________________________________________ E-MAIL ADDRESS __________________________

CITY ______________ STATE __________ ZIP ________________

Please update your address here if necessary. Make checks payable to Rail-Trail Council of Northeast PA
P.O. Box 32, Union Dale PA 18470 / Phone: 570-679-9300 / E-mail: trails@nep.net
Grant Awards & Updates

Rail-Trail Council has recently been awarded three new grants! The Constitution Pipeline Community Grant Program offers funding for noteworthy projects that directly benefit the surrounding communities of their pipeline. Rail-Trail received funding for the beautification of the Union Dale Trailhead which includes trail improvements to the side trail along the east side of the D&H north on Union Dale. This side trail is often used for snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and nature studies year-round. The improvements will begin immediately and should be completed by the fall.

The RTC was also fortunate to receive funding from the Atlantic Sunrise Environmental Stewardship Program, which is the first environmental stewardship program launched by Williams/Transco. In order to better understand and support local natural environmental resource needs within their project, they aligned themselves with The Conservation Fund to seek out local projects, score, rank and suggest awards based on multiple environmental & community benefits. We will be receiving funding for planning and constructing a series of trail switchbacks in the Buck’s Falls ravine. The photo shows the valley once spanned by a long trestle, now removed in the Starrucca area. We must now get trail users down & up those slopes! We hope to begin on this project immediately and plan for construction next spring.

Finally, Rail-Trail Council received a mini grant from Get Outdoors PA to purchase snowshoes for our winter events. The grant is through PA Recreation & Park Society supported by a grant from DCNR. The purpose of the grants is to provide Get Outdoor PA Community Partners with additional tools, specifically training and equipment, for implementing quality Outdoor programs. We are proud to be one of the 10 organizations across the state to be chosen!

Thanks to a grant from the Overlook Estate Foundation our newest interpretative sign is almost ready to ship! The sign will be installed at the site of existing bridge abutments in the Simpson area. It will tell the story of the importance of mining, processing and transportation of coal on the railroads. A side trip to view/dedicate our new sign will be available following our August 7th ribbon cutting.

Winter and spring footage for our “Four Season’s of the D&H Rail-Trail” promotional video is complete. Summer and fall will offer lots of opportunities to showcase the many uses of the trail as we finish the project. The video is being produced by Bollinger & Rutter Video Productions through a Wayne County Tourism Grant.

Please renew! The date on the mailing label below indicates when your membership expires. (No date indicates you are receiving a complimentary copy!)

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www.nepa-rail-trails.org

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