Quicksilver Bridge in place

by Jack Peth

July and early August saw the MTC/BB (Montour Trail Council Bridge Builders) reach some significant milestones in the construction of the Quicksilver Bridge.

In late July the structural backfill for the South Abutment was completed. Another tough job done well.

On August 2, 2000 the MTC/BB met for their regular Wednesday work party and placed the 4 CY of concrete for the wingwalls of the North Abutment. This was the last pour of the project – 107 CY total. Well done, Guys!

The removal of the forms from the wingwalls reactivated the deck crew for a big push on Saturday the fifth. The form boards were cut to length and installed to complete the deck. The railing/fencing is mostly completed.

Backfilling of the North Abutment will start in mid-August. It would have been the final task prior to the setting of the truss into position on the abutments, but, due to the project’s advancement, the finished truss was ready for placement ahead of schedule.

On Saturday morning, August 12, three Insana cranes and their crews hoisted the truss onto the abutments. Coffee and donuts were on hand as a small crowd, awed by the sight, watched in silence. It was an incredible achievement undertaken by a volunteer group, and totally unforgettable! But, don’t go away, there’s more to be done.

Now that the truss is in place, the expansion joints will be installed. Later, the trail will be built.

Many thanks to Robinson Township, (Washington Co.) whose crews swung into activities to support the MTC/BB with the Quicksilver Bridge. The township crews did some ROW (right of way) grading; placed a construction ramp, used to elevate the concrete trucks at the North Abutment; and finished the ramp and final grading at the South Abutment. Also, many thanks to all those who made this day possible. Their cooperation and dedication was key.

WE DID IT!

Enlow Tunnel lighting

Neither dark, threatening skies, nor mist in the air kept Findlay Township Officials, as well as interested trail-users, from the Enlow Tunnel lighting ceremony on the Montour Trail. This much anticipated event was held on Wednesday morning, August 9th, at 11:00 a.m.

Officials present were: Becky Frances, Legislative Asst. to State Representative, John Pippy; Gary Klingman, Findlay Twp. Manager; Chris Caruso, Findlay Twp. Asst. Mgr.; Tom Gallant, Vice Chairman of the Board of Supervisors for Findlay; John O’Neal, Public Works Director, Findlay Twp.; Sgt. Don Sedlack, Findlay Police; and Dennis Pfeiffer.

Continued on page 4...
Hi All!

As I promised in our last issue, here is an update on our “Odyssey 2000” participant, Dave Porterfield, (a 74 year young participant). “Odyssey 2000” is a year-long bike trek through 45 countries on 6 continents, with the riders averaging 77 miles per day.

Dave had a bad start to the new year...a broken leg. Through February and March, he used a stationary bike while on the mend, to keep in shape and promote new bone growth. In April, he accrued a year-to-date mileage total of 38.4.

May mileage was better with 791 miles for a year-to-date total of 829.4.

In June, his Odyssey 2000 (t) bike was stolen in Ottawa after he locked it to a bike rack to go into a restaurant. In addition to the bike the thief got his camera, a windbreaker jacket, some energy bars and 99 Band-Aids. The bike also had a wireless Performance 8.0W computer, bell/compass, rear flashing light, one rear pannier and SPD pedals. (OUCH!)

His total mileage this year through July was 3,812.9, and the most scenic country he’s seen so far – Norway.

Let’s all hope that Dave enjoys good health and happiness throughout the final quarter of his trek.

HANG IN THERE, DAVE!

Debby

Newsletter Deadline
All articles for the November/December Trail-Letter will be due no later than October 6, 2000. Please see Page 2 for submitting correspondence.

Thanks!
Calendar of Events

* Allegheny County Rib Cook-Off – Sept. 1 thru 4 at South Park. To volunteer, call John Hooten at (724) 942-0115.
* Labor Day – Sept. 4
* IKEA/Montour 1/2 Marathon 5K Run/Walk – Saturday, Sept. 9. For more info., call 412-343-4294. To register online, visit the web site: http://www.active.com/
* That Dam Ride to Confluence – Sept. 9 & 10. See page 5 for more details.
* First Day of Autumn – Sept. 22
* Cecil Twp.'s Indian Summer Festival – Sept. 22-24. See page 5 for more details.

* Halloween – October 31
* Annual Dinner Meeting – Sunday, November 5, at the Activities Center in Findlay Township. See page 6 for more information.

Friends' Meetings and Work Parties

♦ MTC Board Meeting, every third Monday of the month - 6:00 pm at Chartiers Valley High School, in the faculty lounge. Turn left off of the- Kirwan Heights exit of I-79. Turn left at the next light, go under the Interstate, and the school is on your left. Call Dennis at 412-262-3748 for more information or to get on the agenda.

♦ Cecil Events:
  Friends of the Trail meeting, every fourth Tuesday of the month - at the Cecil American Legion, Rt. 50, at 7:00 pm. Call 412-257-2553 for more information.
  Work & Clean-up party, every third Saturday of the month - 9:00 am. Meet at the Storage shed at Hendersonville. Call 412-257-2553 for more information.

♦ Moon/Robinson Events:
  Friends of the Trail meeting, the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month at 7:00 pm., at the Forest Grove Fire Department. Anyone from the communities of Moon and Robinson are encouraged to attend. Call 412-859-3020 for more information.
  Work & Clean-up party, every second Saturday of the month - 9:00 am. Call 412-262-3748 for more information and location.

♦ Findlay/North Fayette Events:
  Friends of the Trail, call Don at 724-899-3695 or Pete at 412-788-4136 for more information.
  Work & Clean-up party, every fourth Saturday of the month - 9:00 am. Meet at the Enlow Ballfield. Call 412-788-4136 for more information.

♦ Bethel Park Events:
  Friends of the Trail meeting, every first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Bethel Park Municipal Building Council Chambers. Anyone interested in the Bethel Park Trail segment is encouraged to come. For various committee meetings (such as fundraising) contact Peter Kohnke at 412-854-1835 for more information.
  Work & Clean-up party, every second and fourth Saturday of the month - 8:30 am. Call Bob O'Connell at 412-833-6259 for location and information.

♦ South Hills Events:
  Friends of the Trail Work & Clean-up party, last Saturday of every month. For more information call Dr. Joe Rudolph at 412-653-4900.

♦ MacDonald Events:
  Friends of the Trail Work & Clean-up party, tentatively held on the first Saturday of every month. For more information, contact Ray Johnston at 724-356-2621.
Greetings to Montour Trail Members and friends. A lot of activity has occurred, since the last issue of the Montour Trail newsletter. Our "superb" newsletter editor has to limit contributors' words to fit the eight-page format. Thus, I thought I would provide information on many items in a condensed format. Please call or e-mail us, if you desire more details.

Hurray! The new improved multicolored Montour Trail Map has arrived. It looks marvelous. Thanks to our friend Bill Metzger for designing & creating this eye-catching piece. Also thanks to my good friend Mr. James Steigerwald, who is a regional Vice President for National City. Jim was instrumental in acquiring a donation from National City of $3,000 to pay for the total cost of printing 20,000 copies of the map.

On August 7, Tom Gallant, a Findlay Township Supervisor, conducted a ceremony to celebrate the lighting of the Enlow Tunnel. (See article on page 1.)

In a meeting on August 8, the Montour Trail Council gave a notice to Mackin Engineering to proceed with a contract to design & engineer the remaining unfinished sections of the trail in Washington County. This $538,000 Federal TEA 21 contract is part of a $3,000,000 reimbursement agreement with district 12-0 of PennDOT to complete the trail in Washington County. Ed Taylor, an MTC volunteer, is the manager for this project and Rich Glass district 12-0 engineer is the PennDOT representative. Mahendra Bhalakia and Mr. Robert Center of Mackin are the engineers on the project. Mackin will have the first construction project ready for bid by mid-January of 2001.

On July 13th a second monthly meeting was held with SE Technologies, which has the contract to provide engineering & design to complete the trail in Allegheny County from the county line at Peters to Snowden Road. Dave Wright, the trail director of development is the manager for this project.

Two meetings were held with the Turnpike Commission to discuss the extension of the trail to the eastern side of Route 51 from Clairton. The Turnpike Commission has tentatively agreed to extend the trail to about 300 feet south of RT51. This will be accomplished when Peters Creek Road is moved closer to the Creek next year. Due to space restrictions the remaining 300 feet will be a challenge. The MTC hopes to have the trail cross RT51 at a pedestrian crossing near the Large Hotel.

On July 23-25, the MTC set up an information booth at the National Conference on Transportation and Environment at the Hilton Hotel in Pittsburgh. Their were over 200 attendees from all over the country. We were able to provide useful information to organizations that are creating trails and greenways in other parts of the country. We also had interesting dialog with the Allegheny County Port Authority and the Pittsburgh International Airport long range planning committee. A letter is being sent to the airport planning group to consider a connecting branch to the Montour Trail near Imperial.

On June 17, the Montour Trail Council had a group of nine individuals ride 44 miles from McKeesport to Connellsville on the Yough Trail. This ride was in support and in conjunction with the AHA ride from McKeesport to Washington, DC. Of particular interest was that our members convinced Rick Sebak of WQED to ride with us to Connellsville. Rick may be producing in the near future a documentary on national trails.

On June 27 thru July 2 the MTC set up an information booth at the Allegheny County Fair. Peter Kohne headed up this effort. It was a good opportunity to update the South Hills Area on the progress of the trail.

On July 26th we received an e-mail from a Jim Toth of Ohio. He had just completed a solo self contained "730" mile bike ride starting at mile "0" on the Montour Trail to Washington DC and then back to McKeesport. Wow! That's a heck of a ride.

Happy Trails!

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Enlow Tunnel

...continued from page 1

President, Montour Trail Council.

Tom Gallant addressed the small crowd gathered for the lighting. He related an event that happened that day as he and son, Tyler (in a stroller), and neighborhood children, Ashley, Leslie, and Lindsey Wood were walking through the tunnel to attend the lighting ceremony. A passing biker told them to go single file, and Mr. Gallant jokingly replied, "If there were lights in this tunnel, we could do that."

After Mr. Gallant thanked Board Chairpersons, Joe Nestor and Janet Craig, Rep. Pippy (for acquiring the $6,700 grant from the Department of Economic Development), and Duquesne Light for making the day possible, Mr. Gary Klingman threw the switch on the eleven 150-watt, high-pressure sodium light fixtures in the Enlow Tunnel.

MTC's President, Dennis Pfeiffer, thanked Findlay Twp. and its Public Works Department for their efforts and continued commitment to support the Trail and maintain its commodities.

THANK YOU!

Many thanks to Min Pachesky, mother of Bill Pachesky (a daily trail-user), for her recent donation to Penny Day. At 91 years young, she's not a trail-user herself, but keeps well informed of the happenings on the Montour Trail.

Happy Trails, Min!
WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Membership Chairman: Jerry Agin

Development Dimensions
- International
- Janice W. Donatelli
- Jack Eaton III
- Robert Frame
- Judy Hockensmith
- Mark F. Honath
- Ed Taylor

The Montour Trail Council would like to welcome these new members and thank them for their support. We would also like to thank all our members who have renewed their membership and remind all that a growing membership is one of the criteria foundations look for when they apply for grants.

BENEFACTORS
John & Berenice Hooton

Thank You!

LEADERS CIRCLE
Development Dimensions
- International

TRAIL HAPPENINGS

Cecil Township Indian Summer Festival
by Dennis Sims

The 13th annual Cecil Township Indian Summer Festival will be held at Cecil Park on Route 50, September 22-24. A Friday night session has been added this year. There will be craft and food booths along with an Indian village set up on the Montour Trail side of the Park. Several bands will entertain and fireworks will be ignited Saturday night.

The Cecil Friends of the Montour Trail will have their information stand set up by the tennis courts to provide information about the Montour Trail for all Festival attendees.

See you there!

Yes, I want to help build the Montour Trail!

- I want to spread the word. Please send me additional flyers.
- I have written my Legislator and County Commissioners asking them to support the trail.
- My organization would like to provide a letter of endorsement.
- I know a group interested in a presentation.
- I wish to become a member of the Montour Trail Council.
- STUDENT/SENIORS $15
- INDIVIDUAL $25
- FAMILY $35
- SUPPORTING $50
- SUSTAINING $100
- BENEFACTOR $250
- LEADERS CIRCLE $500 + up

(Membership is tax deductible)

- I wish to make an additional tax deductible contribution of $__________ to the Montour Trail Council to help make the Montour Trail a reality.

(Make your check payable to the Montour Trail Council)

NAME __________________________________________

ADDRESS _______________________________________

CITY __________________________________________

STATE __________ ZIP __________

PHONE (daytime) __________ (evening) __________

E-MAIL _________________________________________

By applying for membership in the Montour Trail Council, I indicate my support of its goals.

SIGNATURE ________________________________________

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling tollfree, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Please fill out this application and return it with your check to:

MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 11866
PITTSBURGH PA. 15228-0866

DON'T FORGET! The Montour Trail Council may be designated as your United Way Contributor Choice option #3308, or Combined Federal Campaign Contributor Choice option #9308, where you work.
New trail and Irish tunes?

by John Hooton

"Yes, we will have new trail in the year 2000!" That is more or less a direct quote from Dick Quasey, and with Frank Ludwin's help and equipment, it is going to happen.

What is at issue here is the finishing of work dedicated last year at the opening of Glass Hill bridge in Cecil, PA. Washington County commissioners were on hand last August, and Trail officials rounded up a dozen ribbon-cutting scissors for the traditional Grand Opening celebration. It was a great send-off at the time. Everyone looked forward to rehabbing the six-tenths mile of trail surface that had been decimated years earlier.

Though for one reason or another, this rehabbing never materialized, and the Trail sat unimproved.

Dick Quasey's "Irish" emerged in July, 2000 and he ventured on John Hooton and Hoyt Hall. All right, already. Frank Ludwin had been a big help in 1999 at clearing efforts between Route 51 and Clairton, "how about talking to Frank?" Wouldn't you know that Frank has both a backhoe and a ten-ton truck! He quickly agreed, and good luck helped out in the bargain. When the original salvage crews picked up rails and ballast twenty years ago, they removed only center-trail crushed stone, leaving plenty on the sides and drainage areas for our purposes of filling and grading.

With Danny Jones to drive the truck (avoiding snagging its side-view mirror on the narrow bridge's railing), the crew is hard at work. Pete Merther is tractor jockey to smooth out the piles Danny tailgates. Hooton and Hall, are "garbage-pickers," and performed the important, if unglamorous, job of tossing out extraneous cinder block, rail spikes, and cast-off contractor dumpings.

To date, about ten truck-loads of limestone ballast have been applied and another full day of work remains. But, WE'RE ON A ROLL! Frank has a promise from Cecil Township that when the filling is complete, we'll have available their grader and roller to apply our traditional crushed limestone "finish coat."

And, it will happen this year. We want Quasey to sing happy Irish tunes.

PANHANDLE TRAIL SURFACE FUNDS APPROVED

by Dave Wright

Allegheny Land Trust approved using $33,000 funds from Allegheny Regional Asset District for purchasing fine aggregate to surface the Panhandle Trail. Letters were sent to each of the five municipalities in Allegheny County, requesting them to spread the material. Allegheny County also expects to deliver another 2000 tons of milled asphalt pavement material for Oakdale and McDonald Boroughs to place as a trail base. If every municipality cooperates, we will have the 6.8 mile section in Allegheny County surfaced this year.

Collier Township and its volunteers also hope to complete installing bridge fences this year. Bridge fences outside Collier will remain to be installed. Contact Ned Williams at (724) 225-7470 ext. 221 or Doreen Duscay at (412) 777-7747 if you are interested in helping.

MTC'S ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

The Montour Trail Council's Annual Dinner Meeting will be held at the Activities Center in Findlay Township on Sunday, November 5, 2000 at 5:00 p.m.

Brochures containing more information on the event, as well as the voting ballot, will be mailed to all members.

Please remember to return your ballot and registration form (with payment) by the date specified in the brochure.

If you need further information on the event, please call Judy Thompson at 412-922-1702.

Hope to see you there!

100 YEAR-OLD MAYOR A PANHANDLE TRAIL VETERAN

by Dave Wright

As the Panhandle Trail is being completed, we recognize those who have already used the corridor. On July 15th, Oakdale Borough held a party to honor its 100 year-old mayor, June Austin. Mr. Austin said that he knows every inch of the Panhandle Trail corridor, having spent 48 years working for the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Mr. Austin stated that he worked on both commuter and long-distance passenger trains. He served on short trains that moved hopper cars between Scully Yard and the coal mines at the end of local branch tracks. He also served as conductor on the long distance freights.

In addition to riding the trains, his job occasionally required him to walk the tracks. Maybe the exercise helped him to live to be 100 years old.
Quicksilver Bridge at a glance

Former construction coordinator compliments the MTC/BB

by Tim Killmeyer

Because of various other projects I have been working on, my time spent with the Montour Trail Council the last year or so has been way down. But when I heard that the bridge over route 980 near Quicksilver Golf Course was a "go" to be installed as soon as the MTC could get some concrete abutments built on both sides of the road, I knew I had to get out there and lend a hand when I could. This was a project I had waited many years for, and would provide an important missing link.

What a pleasant surprise I had when I arrived on the site. I thought we had undertaken some pretty large undertakings when I was construction coordinator for some of the western sections. And I won't downplay the huge tasks we accomplished when we filled tens of dumpsters with trash and disposed of hundreds of tires and railroad ties as well as decking a couple of bridges. But to witness the construction of these concrete abutments, built by volunteers to PennDOT specifications, really brought home the fact that the Montour Trail Council has grown extraordinarily as an organization in the past ten years. After a couple of slow building years to do the (very necessary) fund raising and engineering studies necessary to continue, those abutments proved to me that NOTHING is going to get in the way of the MTC completing what they set out to do.

My compliments to all who made it happen.

Editor's note:

Next issue, meet the "crew."

(Above) Brand new truss before construction. (Below) Work begins on deck and rails.

(Above) South Abutment with wingwalls is finished, while North Abutment is drying in forms. (Below) Wingwalls to the North Abutment in construction, MTC logo on N. Abutment created by Mitch Cholewinski.

"First Walk" by the three "Honchos" (project heads) on the newly erected Quicksilver Bridge. (l to r) Head Honcho, Dick Quasey, Deck & Rail Honcho, Ned Williams, and Construction Honcho, Jack Peth. GOOD JOB, MEN!

(Above) Two large cranes move truss, but only halfway. (Below) The bridge hangs suspended above the road until the third crane is brought in to complete the move.
Mine drainage workshop

by Donna Colwell Rosser

Earlier this year, the Montour Run Watershed Association (MRWA) garnered a grant from the Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (WPCAMR) to be used to present a workshop as the first step in working out the problems of abandoned mine drainage (AMD) in this area. Our “Attacking AMD” workshop, held May 19th, attracted participants whose expertise runs the gamut from interested citizen to PA Dept. of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) Deputy Secretary for mineral resources.

We began our attack with an overview of the Montour Run Watershed area, itself, by MRWA treasurer, Alex Ropelewski. With maps and slides, he delineated the watershed margins.

Next, came Mike Koryak, a Limnologist with the Pgh. District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who gave us hope for the recovery of our streams, because the Monongahela and Youghiogheny were ‘dead streams’ (no fish living in them) in the 1950’s, but have been recovering since 1965.

John Davidson, state mine inspector from the Greensburg District Office, has sampled, for some years, certain area streams for iron, aluminum and manganese. When he mentioned a treatment called ‘re-mining’, he introduced David Aloe who has done this type of reclamation. John was joined, in his presentation, by Jim Fletcher, also a mine inspector, who samples other sites in our area.

Peter Hartman, from the Office of Surface Mining, mentioned a federal grant program that partially funds construction of passive treatment systems for AMD, production of an educational newsletter, stream sampling, etc. Another federal grant might enable us to hire a college intern to assist us.

The Regional Coordinator for WPCAMR, Mark Killar, by reviewing current treatment options for AMD, explained that the original aim of mine reclamation was to close mine entrances and remove the dilapidated buildings left behind. Now, the focus is on cleaning up AMD.

Robert Dolence, Deputy Secretary for Mineral Resources Management, PA DEP, mentioned grant possibilities from the ‘Growing Greener’ fund. Of special interest, was a feasibility study being conducted concerning remining old coal mines on Airport property which will be affected by the construction of the Southern Beltway. He explained the Good Samaritan Act which protects organizations making remediation efforts.

After retreating for lunch, we attended a brainstorming session facilitated by Rita Coleman, Watershed Coordinator for the Southwest Regional Office of the PA DEP. Under Rita’s energetic direction, we were guided through a discussion that brought the participants together as partners, who possess the information and know-how necessary to decide on and handle treatment of the mine-drainage problems in our watershed. An advisory committee was then formed to work out the next steps MRWA will take.

We ended the day with a bus tour of selected AMD sites in the Montour Run Watershed, seeing for ourselves some of the damage done by this pollution with which we will do battle. Please join us in our quest...the more soldiers, the better!