



Ground is Broken for the Bridges at Hendersonville



Participating in the groundbreaking from left to right: Cecil Twp. Supervisors Andy Schrader and Kevin Camerson, Tony Andrejczik from Beech Construction, State Rep. Jesse White and State Senator, Tim Solobay, Washington County Commissioners Larry Maggi and, Bracken Burns, Congressman Tim Murphy and his wife Nanette, MTC President Ned Williams, Cecil Friends President Dennis Sims, Cecil Supervisor and MTC Board Member Frank Ludwin and Ed Taylor, MTC engineer for project. Photo by Pete Merther

Paraphrasing Washington County Commissioner Bracken Burns, it was a great day on the Montour Trail on Sunday, October 23, when ground was finally broken for the construction of the bridges of Hendersonville over Morganza and Georgetown Roads. Over 100 friends of the Montour Trail came out on a pleasant sunny fall day to the McPherson Pavilion in the Hendersonville Park to hear several local leaders speak about the benefits that the trail and these bridges will provide. Tom and Frank Dailey from Burgh's Pizza and Wings used the opportunity to present a check to the Trail Council for \$25,000 from the proceeds of their spring 5K and 10K races. Thanks to the Cecil Friends for providing the refreshments.

Beech Construction of Carnegie was the low bidder and will be working this fall to complete the abutments. The steel beams will be fabricated over the winter by American Bridge. In the spring, the beams will be erected, the concrete decks will be placed, and the trail approaches to the bridges will be constructed. Current plans are for all of us to return to the Hendersonville Park in July of 2012 to celebrate the ribbon cutting for these two bridges.

Trail Improvements

by Bill Capp, Project Manager; Photos by John Kozak

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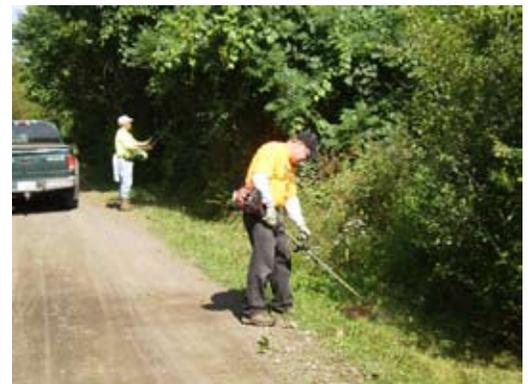
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The repair work on the Montour Trail between MP 9.2 and 17.4, which was accomplished largely through the efforts of volunteers the past two summers, is nearing completion. The work involved cutting back brush, clearing ditches, the installation of approximately 600 feet of new drain pipe to aid drainage, improvements to the Quicksilver Parking Lot, and resurfacing over eight miles of trail. More than 4000 tons of crushed limestone were used for the resurfacing and the trail width was returned to its original 10 feet.

About 25 volunteers helped with the work at one time or another and some of them logged 600-700 hours over the two years. The improvements were made possible through a DCNR Grant, a Washington County Tourism Grant, and your donations (Annual Membership Dues) to the Montour Trail Council. Thanks to all those who helped with the project and to all those trail users who were patient with the work in progress. *Editor's note: Go to www.youtube.com and search Montour Trail. Over 100 videos about the Trail have been uploaded by trail users. The more recent uploads have included this project.*



Left to right Deb Esia, Dale Main, Roger McElhaney, Bill Capp, Rich Blaskiewicz working together to spread the limestone.



Left to right: Tom Prezel and Larry Cantner clear back the brush ahead of the surfacing crew.

Visit the Montour Trail Web Site at:
www.montourtrail.org

To Converse, join the Yahoo Group at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Montour-Trail/>



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THE MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

is published bi-monthly January through December. All correspondence should be addressed to:

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Take the Subway to . . . Hendersonville

On Monday, October 24, the Montour Trail had not one but two trail closures. So, why celebrate? Because these closures are to make space for contractors moving in to build three brand new trail bridges. Worthy of a celebration indeed! So, the Cecil Friends had held a fine party the day before, on a warm sunny Sunday afternoon right next to the trail in Hendersonville Park.

To be fair, one of these bridges is the Peters Township replacement of the narrow arch over Bebout Road on the Arrowhead section of the trail. The trail's closed off, but through riders will detour around the construction area on local neighborhood roads until completion next May. In a stroke of good fortune (read: hard work) Montour is directly benefitting from this project in another way. The earthen embankment from Bebout was able to be re-used as the base of a sorely needed Montour trail ramp at Triphammer Road in South Park.

But the big story is in Cecil, where our own Georgetown and Morganza trail bridges are finally underway. I am personally quite proud of our team, whose dogged persistence through something like ten years of frustrating delays has brought these bridges to reality. The dangerous obstacle that these road crossings have presented to many of our trail users is difficult to overstate. In a real eye opener, the recent completion of the J.R. Taylor Memorial Bridge in Bethel Park has in a mere two months utterly transformed trail usage on the Bethel Branch. In Cecil, we can now state pretty flatly that our trail users will be safely passing over the very busy and tricky Morganza intersection and the blind curve of Georgetown by next July. Plan on being part of the big celebration then!

This fall, every day Beech Construction crews are furiously excavating, forming and pouring concrete. Abutments already stand on both sides of Georgetown, and are rising at Morganza. As you can imagine, these are highly active construction areas, with lots of large equipment, piles of materials, and deep holes in the ground. Definitely, places for us to stay away from. That's why the trail's fenced off, and we're asking everyone to respect the temporary construction barricades and stay out. Don't try to get through; it's really too hazardous.

The good news is that to get around the construction areas, you can take the subway, also known as a pedestrian underpass. Located between Chartiers Creek and Georgetown, it was built in 1913 to carry the Montour Railroad over a now-abandoned farm road. A century later, it has been re-opened to serve as a temporary trail detour, conveying travelers under the Montour Trail and onto adjacent Hahn Road. The 3/4-mile on-road route is nestled in the scenic rural valley of McPherson Creek. Where Hahn ends, the detour continues another half mile on Georgetown Road into Hendersonville, up Oriole Drive, and back onto the trail.



So, until next summer you get to actually experience this little-known piece of Montour history. Who would have guessed that you could take the subway to Hendersonville?

The best of Holidays and Winter seasons to you all.

Ned Williams

Friends' Meetings and Work Parties

MTC Board Meeting:

Every third Monday of the month - 6:00 p.m. at 304 Hickman St., Suite 3, Bridgeville, PA. Turn right off of the Bridgeville exit of I-79. Turn left at the next light, go straight at next light and make left turn onto Hickman St. just after the Post Office. Call Ned at 724-225-9856 for more information or to get on the agenda.

Cecil Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, every fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. From May-August, meetings are held at the Kurnick Access area along the trail off Cecil Henderson Road; other months (with the exception of November and December) meet at the MTC Offices. Work and cleanup parties are scheduled as needed. Call 412-496-4308 for more information, or email densimwx@comcast.net

Airport Area Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month at 7:00 p.m., at the Forest Grove Fire Department. Anyone from the Airport Area is encouraged to attend. Call 412 264-6303 for more information. Work and cleanup party, every second Saturday of the month - 9:00 a.m. Call 412 262-3748 for more information and location.

Bethel Park Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, every first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the Bethel Park Municipal Building Council Chambers. Anyone interested in the Bethel Park Trail segment is encouraged to come. Work and cleanup party, every second and fourth Saturday of the month - 8:30 a.m. Call Bob O'Connell at 412-833-6259 for location and information.

South Hills Friends:

Meeting second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at South Park Township Community Room, located behind the Township Building at 2675 Brownsville Road, South Park, 15129. Work and cleanup parties scheduled and advertised as needed. For more information, contact David Oyler at 412-831-9288, davidoyler@verizon.net, or Paul McKeown at 412-835-6692, mckeownp@comcast.net

Fort Cherry Friends:

Friends of the Trail Meeting, second Wednesday of the month at McDonald Borough Bldg., Council chambers at 7:00 p.m. Work and cleanup parties, scheduled as needed. For more information, contact Ray Johnston at 724-356-2621.

Peters Township Friends:

Friends of the Trail Meeting, first non-holiday Monday of the month at Peters Township Parks and Recreation Center at 7:00 p.m. For more information on work and cleanup parties, please contact Jim Robbins at 724-941-6132, or for monthly meetings, Mark Imgrund at 724-941-6351 or by e-mail at markimgrund@comcast.net.

The Montour Railroad Historical Society:

The newest Friends group. For more information send email to mrhs@montourr.com.

Race Director Bill Orr Says Thanks

On September 10, the successful running of the 16th Annual UPMC Urgent Care of Robinson Half Marathon & 5K event took place. I have been involved with the Montour Trail for 9 years and after each event, this organization never ceases to amaze me with the outpouring



Photo by Jesse Forquer

of support, enthusiasm and energy that it puts into making a fundraising event successful. I am always proud to be part of the organization and to be around such wonderful people. With that, I wish to publicly acknowledge every volunteer that helped to make this event successful. As with any exhaustive list of thanks, all efforts are made to not miss anyone, so apologies in advance if anyone was missed. Mark your calendars for September 8, 2012 for the 17th Annual UPMC Urgent Care of Robinson Half Marathon.

Stu Agreeen - Race Marshal, finish line coordination, course preparation.

Airport Friends of the Trail - Consistent care and preparation of the trail.

AJ Myers Bus Company Volunteers - For taking the walkers out to the start of their run and for transporting the runners back to the start.

All Occasion Catering - Donation of coffee.

Bruce Barron - Race day parking, registration, port-a-john line inspector, helping where needed and participating in the Half Marathon.

Mrs. Barron - Race day parking, race day registration, food setup.

Jerry Bates - Radio repeater operations.

Charlie Beaumariage - Packet stuffing and for always asking the tough questions.

Boy Scout Troop 301 - Staffing the water stop near Garden Ridge

Boy Scout Troop 310 - Staffing the water stop Cliff Mine Parking Lot.

Boy Scout Troop 830 - Staffing the water stop near Enlow Road

RaDonna Burik - Race day registration, food setup.

Coca Cola - Donation of cups for the water stops.

Cathy Connor - Designing the race flyers and shirt, designing the volunteer shirts, helping with volunteer drives, race promotion, support, lending an ear, and being a good sport about doing anything that was asked without ever saying no.

Angela Cubbison - Transition of Race Registrar duties.

Burt Cubbison - Website administration, Race day parking, finish line, promotion, cleanup and pitching in where needed.

D & M Chiropractic and Therapeutic Rehab - Providing post race massages and stretching.

Dick's Sporting Goods - Corporate sponsor, tent donation, race award gifts and for being a great race partner

Pat Eagon - Packet pickup and friendliness.

Beth Edwards - For being a great race partner and being so flexible with the needs for the race, being on hand race morning for assistance.

Elite Runners and Walkers - Presenting sponsor, ordering and printing of the race shirts, use of the store for packet stuffing and packet pickup, the friendly staff who pitched in where needed.

Jim Ellison - Race Marshal

Deb Esia - Packet stuffing, race day registration, promotion, vendor research and for signing the checks, participating in the Half Marathon.

FedEx Ground - Presenting sponsor.

Findlay Township Police Department - Assisting with road closures and safety of our volunteers and participants.

First Niagara Bank - Presenting sponsor.

Julie Flynn - Race day registration, food setup.

Jesse Forquer - Coordinating the EMS, police and road closures, logistical setup for the start, support and advice, race start coordination.

Fort Pitt Capital Group - Supporting sponsor.

Lin Francis - Race Marshal

Gary Graf - Race day registration, food setup.

Laura Graf - Race day registration, food setup.

GSK - Donation of Breathe Right Strips for the race packets

Mark Imgrund - Race parking, water stops, race logistics, transportation of the race director, and being a good sport about doing anything that was asked.

Interstate Communications - Donation of the radios for race day. *continues page 3*

South Hills Friends of the Montour Trail in South Park, Jefferson Hills, and Clairton by Paul McKeown

The South Hills Friends deals with the area having most of the remaining undeveloped mainline Montour Trail. Between Route 88 in South Park Township and Route 837 in Clairton, only about four of the eventual eleven miles of Montour Trail is complete in three somewhat isolated segments.



South Hills Friends clearing brush from the Library Trestle. From left to right, Kim Becker, President Paul McKeown, John Becker, Bud Halpin (kneeling), Secretary/Treasurer Dave Oyler, Ed Bickar, Dave Phenicia, Jim Taggart. Photo 2/28/2009, by Rich Kraeuter.

A significant part of the South Hills Friends effort supports construction of new trail, and some of our biggest challenges are involved with this support. The Friends have held many work parties clearing underbrush to free up sight lines for engineering surveys and more extensive clearing in preparation for trail building.

Work is currently underway to build trail eastward from Triphammer Road. Although the Montour Trail Council used a number of funding sources, including Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Allegheny Regional Asset District and other grants, to hire Mingo Creek Construction Company to install a bridge over Piney Fork Creek, there was a significant volunteer component.

Volunteers from the South Hills Friends cleared trees from the approaches to the bridges, acted as surveyor's assistants for the engineering, helped facilitate land acquisition from trail neighbors, and installed the wooden deck on the bridge after its installation. To support land clearing efforts by the Friends, Mingo Creek Construction volunteered heavy equipment and skilled operators on multiple occasions to remove trees and brush.

South Hills Friends volunteers also painted the structural steel of the pre-existing railroad bridge on the opposite side of Triphammer Road, installed a deck on it, and installed railings on all of the bridges of that trail segment. Friends removed trash and hundreds of tires from future trail right-of-way along Piney Fork Creek. Under Friends group oversight, Boy Scouts and other volunteers have installed benches, trail map signs, and other amenities on all three of the South Hills Friends Montour Trail segments.

There is a core of devoted volunteers who regularly attend monthly meetings and work parties of the South Hills Friends such as those in the accompanying picture. Due to the many challenges faced by the Friends supporters from elsewhere on the Montour Trail frequently help out when needed.

At the South Hills Friends work parties involving trail building or trail maintenance, John Becker usually provides planning and technical leadership and on some occasions is the sole member of the work party. John also is the At-Large officer of the Friends and performs most of the mowing work west of Triphammer Road.

In 2010, the Friends lost one of their most dedicated volunteers, Rich Kreuter, who died of a heart attack in February of that year. Rich single-handedly took on many projects on his own, walking the South Park section of trail every day and looking for and fixing problems along the trail. Rich and John Becker were responsible for the installation (*Continues page 5*)

Thank you continues from page 3

Janet Jackson - Packet stuffing, race day registration, food setup, contacting volunteers and for always being there when I was most anxious.
 Pam Jones - Packet pickup, bank deposits and tracking, participating in the Half Marathon.
 Tim Killmeyer - Delivering race results.
 Shema Krensky - For being a great race partner and being so flexible with the needs for the race.
 Denise Lindberg - Packet pickup, participating in the Half Marathon.
 Living Well Chiropractic - Providing post race massages and stretching.
 Frank Ludwin - Donation of his truck to get supplies.
 John Macek - Being the DJ and the voice of the race to get everyone going in the morning.
 Tim Marsh - Communications coordinator, arranging pickup of radios, setting up repeater.
 Phyllis McChesney - Volunteer support, rounding up volunteers, guidance, support, for always asking the tough questions and making sure I thought of everything.
 Gil McGurl - Race day registration.
 Paul McKeown - Advice for the lead bicycles, for sacrificing a long time job with a smile and willingness to help where needed, race marshal
 Pete Merther - Setting up the course, truck rental, filling up water barrels, course preparation and maintenance, cleanup, for being the first to arrive and the last to leave, and numerous other details and for his unending support over the years.
 Moon Township Municipal Authority - Opening their gates for the bus to turnaround.
 Moon Township Police Departments - Assisting with road closures and safety of our volunteers and participants.
 Nadim Mrza - Race Marshal, 5K turnaround coordinator, course preparation and maintenance.
 MyWay Storage - Donation of water.
 North Fayette Park and Recreation - Staffing the water stop near Northstar Road
 North Fayette Police Department - Assisting with road closures and safety of our volunteers and participants.
 Northwest EMS - Being available for the safety of our participants
 Amy Orr - Helping with packet stuffing.
 Gloria Orr - Packet Pickup, parking, water stop support, cleanup, support and guidance.
 Laura Orr - Race registration, guidance, support, love, understanding.
 Tom Orr - Helping with packet stuffing and for the use of his truck..
 Bill Orr, Sr. - Helping load and haul supplies, packet pickup, parking, water stop support, cleanup, support and guidance.
 Dave Oyler - Race Marshal
 Brandon Pauls - Directional sign setup and for all the miles of running lending an ear, participating in the Half Marathon.
 Dan Pedan - Race Marshal
 Dennis Pfeiffer - Course preparation and maintenance, course setup, setting up the turn on to the trail, for his unending support over the years.
 Victor Porch - Bus ambassador for the walk ensuring everyone was taken care of on the 5K Walk.
 Alex Prevendoski - Race Marshal, course preparation.
 Allen Prevendoski - Race Marshal, course preparation.
 Quaker Valley Ambulance Authority - Being available for the safety of our participants
 Reed & Whitting - Printing of the race flyers.
 REI - Providing the community room for a volunteer drive at the store.
 Jim Robbins - Race day registration, food setup, cleanup, always being there to lend a hand where needed.
 Karen Robbins - Race day registration, food setup, cleanup, handling the port-a-john rentals, always being there to lend a hand where needed.
 Robinson EMS - Being available for the safety of our participants
 Robinson Township Police Department - Assisting with road closures and safety of our volunteers and participants.
 Gary Sarti - Assisting with the start of the race.
 John Shaver - Course preparation, advice, race marshal, finish Line coordinator.
 Kevin Smith - Advice, advice and more advice.
 Jim Stafford - Packet pickup and friendliness.
 Jim Stauber - Race Marshal
 Jack Swisher - Setting up the course, water stop setup, trail marshal, cleanup.
 Cathy & Steve Taylor - Providing assistance to a race participant in need.
 Ed Taylor - Race Marshal
 The Mall at Robinson - Host sponsor, tent donation and for being a great race partner
 The Vitamin Shoppe - Corporate Sponsor, handing out product samples and being a great race partner.
 Don Thobaben - Race Marshal
 Deb Thompson - Creating the initial race email blast.
 Trek of Robinson - Providing lead bicycle support for the half marathon.
 UPMC Urgent Care at Robinson - Title sponsor, providing t-shirts and being a terrific race partner.
 Connie Vargo - Handing out finisher medals.
 Gary Vargo - Handing out finisher medals.
 Jake Ward - Lending an ear and offering advice and participating in the 5K
 John Wasco - Race Marshal and bringing the nice race weather from Arizona.
 Ned Williams - Supply pickup, announcing race awards, transporting of volunteers, guidance, support, volunteer recruitment and lending an ear.
 Bever-Leigh Wisdom - Race day registration, food setup.
 Dave Wright - Race Marshal, helping the bus drivers become familiar with their loop.
 Paul Zeppenfeld - Race day registration, food setup.

9th Annual Tour The Montour – A Lovely, Sunny Day! by Sam Hvifelt

Despite the rain storms which finally stopped late Friday night, the fog cleared Saturday morning to a sunny day for the Ninth Annual Tour the Montour on September 24, 2011 – clearly the sun wanted to join in the fun!

Here are some random facts about the 9th Tour you may not realize:

- We had a record number of riders again this year! Up to 557 participants over last year's record-breaking 475!
- Excluding those folks too shy to claim their age, our eldest participant was 82 and our youngest rider was just past the 12-month mark. Women make up 42% of our participants; men are still holding their own at 58%
- Riders from Arizona, Florida, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and West Virginia represented their home states with pride
- Fifty-three folks took last minute advantage of the weather and signed up on the day
- King and Queen of the Mountain challengers attempted the summit again this year, with Bob Stumpf and Amanda Gannon taking home bragging rights and some cool jerseys

A big THANK YOU goes out to our wonderful group of volunteers and sponsors. Aside from a small rest stop issue, riders were well-supported and enjoyed an extensive lunch at Brothers Grimm at Mile 3. Our sponsors Brothers Grimm, The Oakdale Diner, Mediterra Bakery, Moon Giant Eagle, Robinson Eat n Park, All Occasion Catering and Anthony's Original Wholesale Produce kept everyone's energy levels up with their yummy food. Many folks took advantage of the magical hands of the ladies from Mount Lebanon Chiropractic – their massage chairs were constantly occupied.

Again this year, The Enlow Station ice cream shop provided free cones for riders who pedaled out to Mile 8 and beyond – a treat no other local ride can boast. Tim Killmeyer's Collectors' Edition 9th Annual Tour T-shirts were a hit and a resoundingly popular color choice. Again, shirts were only guaranteed for pre-registered participants, so there is distinct benefit for registering before the deadline.

We cannot thank our generous sponsors enough – but we can certainly try. Many thanks for their financial support go out to our wonderful title sponsor Thermo Fisher Scientific, and our presenting sponsors Brothers Grimm, REI, Nova Chemicals, Wojanis Hydraulic Supply and WYEP 93.1. Additional and much needed support came from our sponsors: Huntington Bank, Chairman of the Boards, Gordon's Terminal Service, Holy Trinity Knights of Columbus, Lanxess, Trek, AeroTech Designs, Somma Funeral Home, Park West Supply, Signal Graphics, and Original Shake and Twist. You'll find the names of all fantastic sponsors proudly emblazoned on our T-shirts.

Please don't forget to mark your calendars for the 10th Annual Tour The Montour on September 22, 2012 – you read that correctly – it's our TENTH ANNIVERSARY !!

On behalf of the Tour The Montour Planning Crew (Phyllis McChesney, Tim Killmeyer, Dennis Pfeiffer, Don Thobaben, Roger Fowler, Cyndi Fink, Bud Halpin and Mark Imgrund), we'd like to thank all of the 9th Annual Tour's volunteers, sponsors and participants !! We're all looking forward to turning the big 1-0 next September – see you there !!!

South Hills Friends continues from Page 4

of connections for posts on the Brownsville Extension and Catfish Run Bridges needed to put railings on the bridges in 2007 and 2008.

David Oyler is the Secretary-Treasurer of the Friends, and also wears other hats as MTC Board Member, MTC Engineering and Construction Committee Member, and MTC Construction Project Manager for the Piney Fork Creek Bridge, bridge ramps and adjacent trail. In the latter job, Dave oversees engineering and construction contractors and keeps records of contracts and volunteer hours used as an in-kind funding match.

Paul McKeown is both the President of the South Hills Friends and the Secretary of the MTC Engineering and Construction Committee and his involvement with South Park Township Montour Trail Construction predates the existence of the South Hills Friends.

Tim Schumann is the Vice President of the South Hills Friends and the President of the Peters Creek Watershed Association (PCWA). The MTC and the PCWA have a common interest in acquiring land in the Peters Creek Valley to preserve its natural beauty and use it as a recreational resource.

As the Montour Trail Council's construction efforts increasingly are concentrated in the South Hills, the Friends also face the challenge of finding new members to increase our fundraising efforts in order to purchase equipment and supplies for our anticipated increased maintenance responsibilities, to obtain permanent local storage space for the new equipment and supplies and to bring in new members to perform the additional maintenance the new trail will require.

An additional challenge not faced by the other Montour Trail Friends groups is that of trail right-of-way acquisition. The South Hills section of the trail includes nearly six miles of share the road right-of-way. A long range goal of the Montour Trail Council is to purchase or obtain donations of property and easements to eventually complete the off-road trail in the South Hills area. Although primarily a Montour Trail Council rather than a Friends responsibility, the efforts of dedicated volunteers knowledgeable about the area and willing to work with local municipalities and property owners are likely to pay off sooner in obtaining the needed rights-of-way.

Eagle Scout Completes Adirondack Shelter at Kurnick

Eagle Scout candidate Jacob Volanski of Troop 2 in Bridgeville has led his crew to complete work on the Adirondack shelter he built this past summer for the Montour Trail at the Kurnick campground in Cecil. They took advantage of a good weather on the weekend of November 5 and 6 to finish up some woodwork and shingle the roof. Jacob is happy to be able to see the job done, and to provide a good facility for Montour's campers.



Crew Lineup image: Finishing up in the last moments of sunlight. Left to right: Jacob Volanski, Eagle candidate, in the orange hard hat; Liz Burkhardt, assistant Scoutmaster of Troop 2; Kurt Rothenberger, assistant Scoutmaster of Troop 2 and Liz's husband; Eagle Scout Roy Rothenberger, also of Troop 2; friend and tool guy Mark Coleman; and Troop 2 future Eagle Scout A.J. Rothenberger.

MONTOUR RAILROAD HISTORY

McDonald Transfer (Bob Ciminel ©2011)

The McDonald Trailhead parking area and the section of the Trail between Mileposts 17 and 18, along with the Panhandle Trail Connector, comprise what was known as the McDonald Transfer on the Montour Railroad. During its final years of operation, the Montour used the tracks at McDonald Transfer to interchange coal cars loaded at the Champion cleaning plant with Conrail. When the Conrail unit trains arrived, McDonald Transfer became a busy place for several hours as cars were pulled off the Conrail tracks and hauled across Noblestown Road and up the 2% grade to the Montour main track at McDonald Siding for delivery to Champion. After loading, the cars were returned to McDonald Transfer, but this time the Montour crews were challenged to maintain control of the loaded cars as they descended the steep grade.

McDonald Transfer was not part of the original Mifflin Extension between North Star and Mifflin Junction when the new line was completed in 1914. All eastbound and westbound trains crossed the Montour Viaduct high above the Pennsylvania Railroad Panhandle Division tracks and continued on to the Montour's termini at Mifflin Junction or Montour Junction. Those high-flying Montour trains operated that way for the next six or seven years until the Carnegie Coal Company offered the Montour a new source of revenue at the expense of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

In 1917, the Carnegie Coal Company (not affiliated with Andrew Carnegie) owned and operated 11 coal mines along the Panhandle main track and its branch lines. Its newly opened mine, the McDonald mine, entered the Pittsburgh Seam in the hillside north of McDonald Viaduct, with the workings eventually extending eastward toward McDonald on a trestle that crossed over the Montour and Route 980 at approximately Trail milepost 16.5. The McDonald mine tipple straddled Noblestown Road north of the old bony pile that marks its location today.

Drainage from the McDonald mine flows down the hillside and beneath Noblestown Road where it enters Robinson Run, which is already carrying acid mine drainage (AMD) from the old Primrose mine farther west. AMD from these two mines causes the bright orange color in Robinson Run and the wetlands beneath the McDonald Viaduct. (Interestingly, Robinson Run AMD was not discussed in the Operation Scarlift studies carried out the 1960s and 1970s. The more recent Chartiers Greenway studies reported Robinson Run as having too many AMD discharge points to be analyzed for mitigation.)



The McDonald mine tipple was served by PRR trains from a connection with the Panhandle main track where the Panhandle Connector joins the Panhandle Trail. Working back east toward the tipple, trains could drop off empty coal cars on three tracks for loading Lump, Nut or Slack coal. (Lump, Nut and Slack refer to the size of coal.) There was also a Material track used for bringing supplies to the mine that bypassed the tipple on the north side and a Runaround track on the south side that allowed locomotives to access the loaded yard and pick up cars. The mine tracks were on a descending grade eastward from the tipple to allow the cars to roll by gravity into the loaded yard.

The Carnegie Coal Company continued shipping coal from McDonald mine via the PRR until 1920, at which time it asked the Montour Railroad to build a spur from its main track north of McDonald Viaduct and connect to the three tracks in the loaded yard. The spur would also extend westward beyond the tipple to connect with the Runaround track and allow Montour engines to cross over and deliver cars to the empty yard tracks.

The new spur came off the Montour main track where the access ramp from the McDonald Trailhead joins the main trail today, descended a 2% grade to the Noblestown Road crossing and then ascended a 1% grade as it passed beneath the McDonald Viaduct to the tipple, basically following the same route as the Panhandle Connector.

As part of the changes to the PRR and Montour tracks going into McDonald mine, the Carnegie Coal Company allowed the PRR to install a track that went beneath the McDonald Viaduct to connect with the Panhandle's JO Yard, which paralleled the main track. The aerial photograph from 1939 shows the track arrangement for McDonald Transfer as well as JO Yard. The designation, JO, were the Morse Code call letters for JO Tower, which controlled movements into and out of the yard for the Jumbo mine, located at present day Gladden Heights west of McDonald.

The relatively quiet and peaceful environment that exists near the McDonald Viaduct and Panhandle Connector today is several orders of magnitude less than the smoke and noise that permeated the area in the 1940s when the Panhandle and Montour tracks were handling multiple trains each day collecting coal, sorting cars, and moving them to their respective destinations.

Bob Ciminel is the founder of the Montour Railroad Yahoo group http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour_rr/ There are currently 287 members from across the country. You are encouraged to join. There is a wealth of information about the Montour Railroad at this location and you can pose questions of its membership, from whom you are sure to get an answer.

Welcome New Members

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

New Members

Tom Austin
Enos Axtell
Larry Baker
Jay Barry
Jeff Bragdon
Scott Breisinger
Mary & Bruce Broglie
Kevin Cooney
John Cullen
Julie Cursi
Laurel Dagon
Chris Dell
Terry Duffy
Maryam & Mehrouz Emamzadeh
Norman Farrish
Peter Fedyshin
Jack Fontana
Jim Frambes
Michael Friedrich
Phil Groschwitz
Joyce Hallowes
Karen Hathaway
Edward Heinz
Wes Hemmings
Michael Herley
Loreen Iezzi
Curt James
Dave Jenkins
David Kasper
Philip & Kimberly Kocher
Clem & Janet Lacava
Peter Mahoney

Teresa Montag
Bob Mulshine
Noreen Nalitz
Catherine Perich
Marcus Petersen
John Pivetz
Tony Prezioso
Norine Prinzo
David Reilly
Shawn Scott
Robert & Amelia Shillingsburg
Paul Sigmund
Allan Simons
Warren & Dawn Smith
Ronald Snyder
John Sutton
Lou Tamler
Kelly Thomas
JoAnn Truchan
Adriana Vencato
Patterson Weaver

Benefactors

Greg & Juliann Brzozowski
C.E. Marsteller
Marcus Petersen
Kristina Watts
Helge H. Wehmeier

Leaders

Phyllis McChesney
Robert & Amelia Shillingsburg

Cliff Mine Road Trail Head Grand Re-opening and Ribbon Cutting on October 21, 2011



(Pictured from Right to Left) David Wright, MTC Project Engineer, Andy Baechle Allegheny County Parks Director, Matt Campion, Senator John Pippy's Office, Ned Williams, President MTC, Bernie Rossman, Allegheny County Public Works, Ray Chappel, Supervisor Findlay Township, Dennis Pfeiffer MTC coordinator. Unable to attend : Bill Bottorff, Project Manager Allegheny County Public Works

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Piney Fork Bridge Update photos and story by Dave Oyler

As early as August, Montour Trail Council President, Ned Williams, began eyeing up the embankment at the Bebout Road Tunnel on the Arrowhead Trail as possible fill at the Triphammer ramp. The tunnel was removed in October and November and will be replaced by a bridge in 2012. Through September and early October, with Montour Trail Council Board approval, Ned negotiated an agreement with Marricco Construction Company (the bridge contractor) to deliver up to 4,500 cubic yards of fill, and volunteer Dave Oyler wrote a scope of work and bid package for a contractor to place and compact the fill at the Triphammer site. Dom Folino Construction completed clearing of the site and raising a manhole located within the area of the ramp during the week of October 17 and began placing the first fill on October 28. Fill was also delivered during the unseasonably early snow on Saturday, October 29, to a soggy, muddy site. The fill delivery from the Bebout embankment was completed on Thursday, November 3, but a small additional quantity



of fill material was delivered by South Park Township on November 4. An estimated total of almost 5,100 cubic yards of fill were delivered, placed and compacted, raising the ramp by approximately 11 feet. The accompanying photographs show the Triphammer ramp site before and after delivery of the fill. The ramp still requires an estimated 3,000 cubic yards of fill to bring it to its final grade. The fill from the Bebout Viaduct is well qualified for use in the Montour Trail, having originally been part

of the Montour Railroad, and more recently being employed as part of the Arrowhead Trail.

Upon completion of fill delivery to the Triphammer ramp, Marricco Construction began delivering an estimated 300 to 500 cubic yards of concrete from the Bebout Tunnel, to be used for stream bank protection along Piney Fork Creek and to complete the stream bank remediation begun earlier in 2011.

The next stage of the project is also being planned. The Montour Trail Council is currently working on a scope of work for a contract to complete construction of the ramp to the Piney Fork Bridge. We hope to have this project out to bid early in 2012 and construction underway in the spring of 2012.