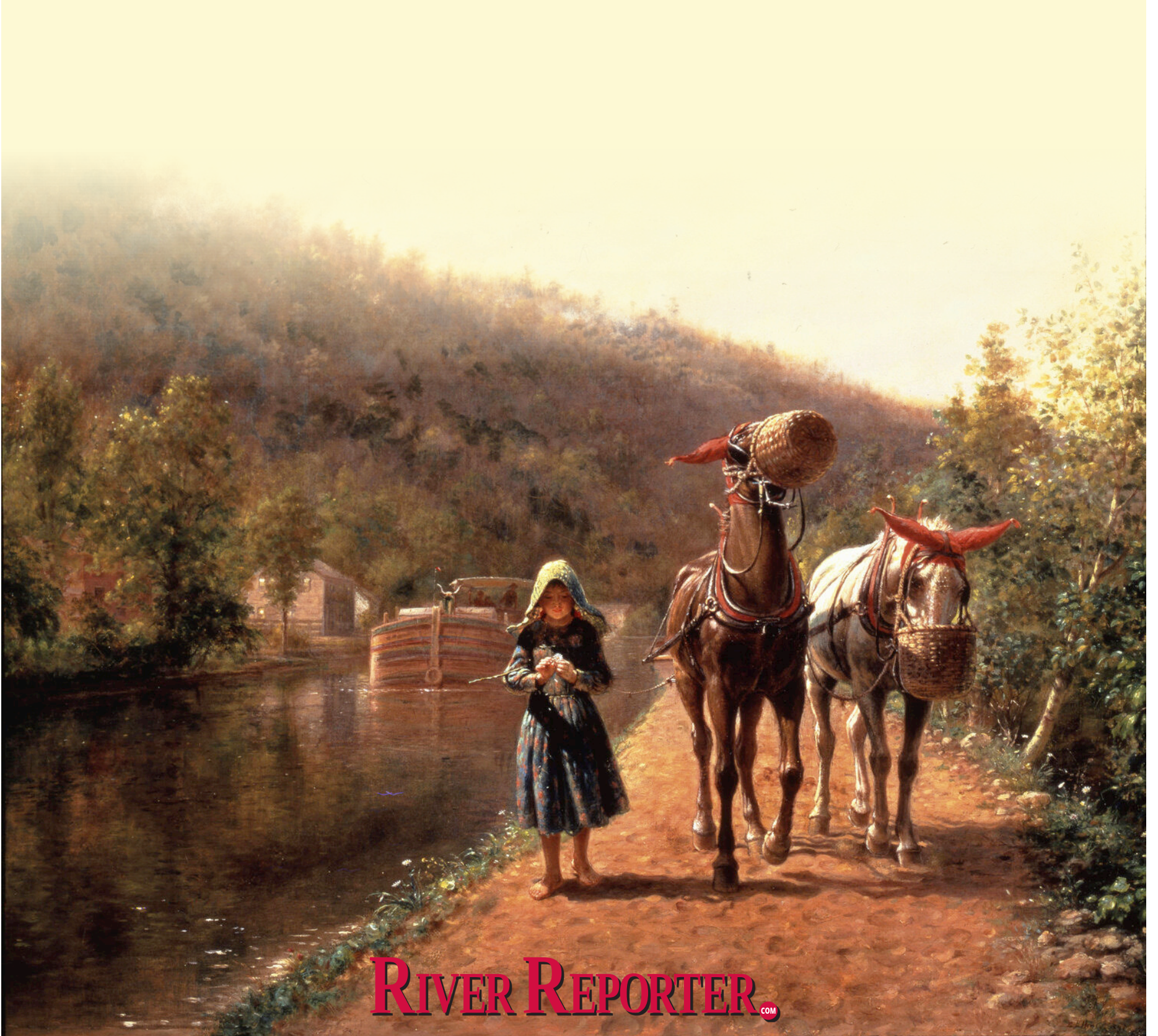


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# The Upper Delaware's rich history

There's an old adage that in order to understand where you are going, you have to understand from whence you have come. That's particularly true for the Upper Delaware. It's a significant ecological region with a rich history of innovation and an abundance of natural resources. With that, the more we know about the area's history, the more we can appreciate the beauty and the abundance of this unique landscape.

In this edition of Upper Delaware Magazine, we trace the careful stewardship of the original people, the Lenape, and their expulsion from their ancestral lands. We learn about the early Connecticut settlers who forged a subsistence lifestyle. We explore the historic significance of the building of the Roebling Aqueduct and the invention of the Gravity Railroad that moved

coal from mines in Carbondale to Honesdale, PA, and then through the D&H Canal to the Hudson River and New York City.

We learn about the lives of the hoggees, children who were put to work walking with the barge mules, and the network of the rural granges that connected farmers and built community.

Lastly, we celebrate how bald eagles were brought back from near extinction through thoughtful science and careful stewardship.

It is from these historic roots that we forge a collective and unique sense of place. A place that will serve us as we forge a future in a changing world.

Laurie Stuart, section editor

Administrative Sales Assistant:  
Kathy Leggio, ext. 134, sales@riverreporter.com

Ad Sales Associate:  
Lily Skuthan, ext. 123, lily@riverreporter.com

If you would like copies for your place of business:  
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Have a comment or idea for the magazine?  
Contact: Annemarie Schuetz at 845/252-7414,  
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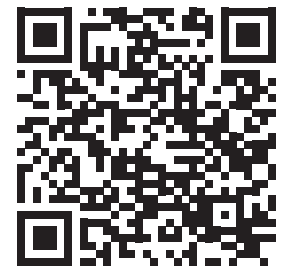
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inspire The Kate Project.

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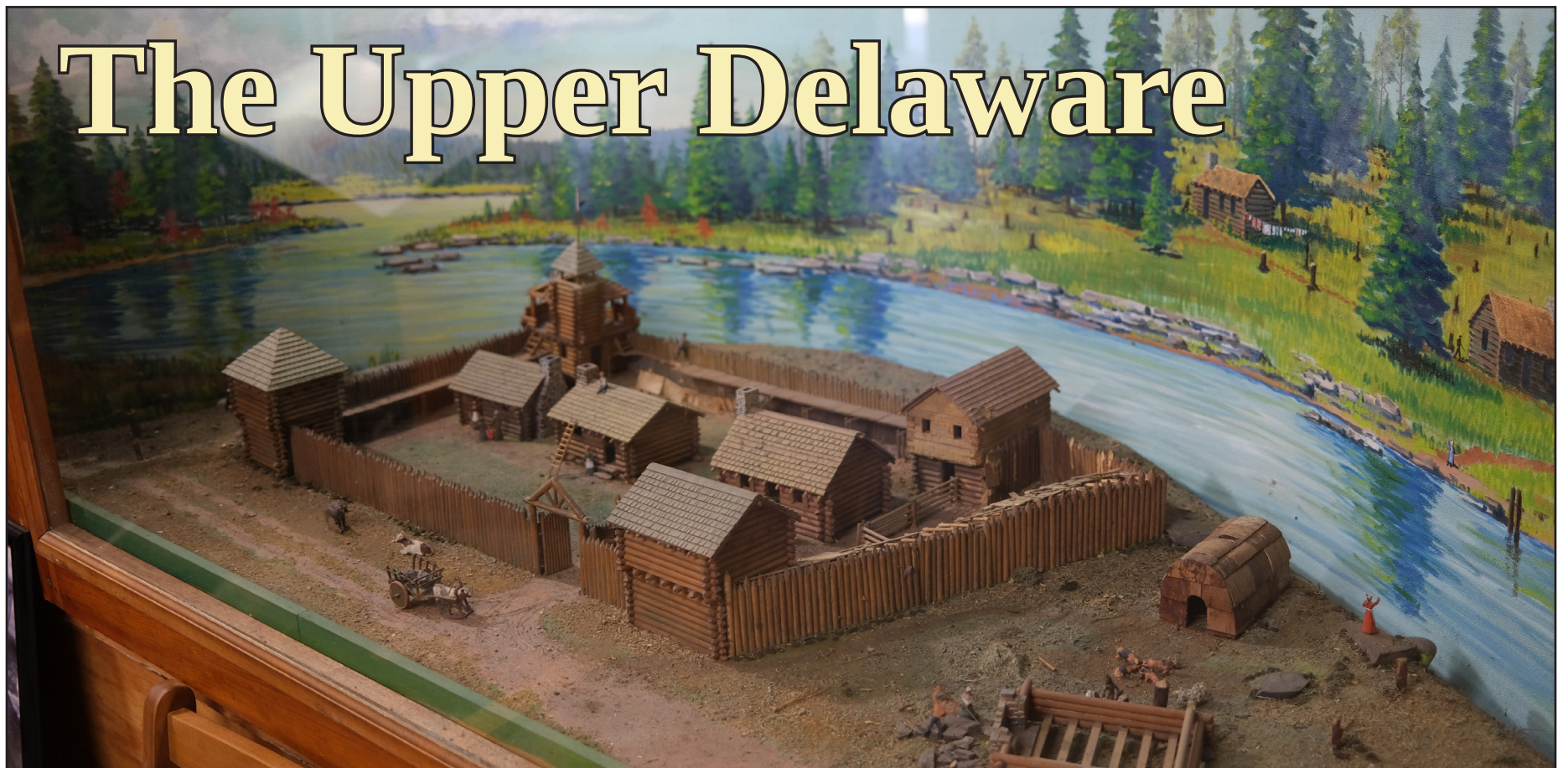
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A diorama of Cushtunk at Fort Delaware

RR photos by Jim McKeegan

## Rich in innovation and resources

By JIM McKEEGAN

UPPER DELAWARE RIVER — The Delaware River Valley is rich in history and each year inspires thousands to explore the area. Two of our most visited historical sites are Fort Delaware in Narrowsburg, NY and the Roebling Bridge in Minisink Ford, NY. They have a river in common and share an overlapping history marked by periods of competition for the region's resources.

Before visiting, you'll want to check out some of the many websites devoted to our area. But here is some background to get you started.

### Early settlers

The lands along the Delaware River were first settled by Indigenous peoples over 10,000 years ago. Europeans entered the area in the 17th century, drawn by abundant wildlife and the fur trade.

Within 200 years or so, many of the original tribes were pushed further west as European colonists arrived and built forts and small communities. One such settlement was Cushtunk, named after the Lenape word for the area. This settlement is depicted at Fort Delaware today.

Cushtunk consisted of 30 families or so, mostly English from the colony of Connecticut. The bulk of the settlers arrived in the 1750s. The Delaware River provided sustenance in the form of copious fish, predominantly shad, while the shores were rich with trees for lumber.

Fish and lumber became important local industries. Some colonists grew rich by providing products to the larger colonies downriver.

Timber became essential to Cushtunk's economy, especially white pine. These trees were tall, strong, and straight—just what was needed to construct masts in the shipyards of Trenton and Philadelphia.

Since the massive logs couldn't be transported over primitive or nonexistent roads, the settlers floated them en masse down the Delaware River. But even this method was unwieldy. In 1764, one of the original Cushtunk residents, Daniel Skinner, came up with an ingenious solution. Skinner built large timber rafts, and "sailed" them downstream to waiting shipyards. This became the main means of transporting local logs for many years, lasting into the early 20th century.



The Roebling Bridge connects Lackawaxen, PA to Minisink Ford, NY. Wooden structures surround the foundation stone piers on the upstream side of the bridge. Like a modern car bumper, the wooden pier coverings are essential as protection against large spring ice foes.

### King Coal

With time came change, though. Cushtunk was largely abandoned following the Revolutionary War. Many of its residents were supporters of the English crown. After the war, some moved to Canada or other Loyalist strongholds. Those who sided with the Patriots stayed, but spread out among neighboring communities.

Although the timber industry remained, it soon faced stiff competition from another local resource—coal.

Trade between America and Britain was disrupted by the war of 1812. With no British coal, the United States turned to its own coal fields in Pennsylvania. The Delaware & Hudson Canal Company (D&HCC) was instrumental in providing American coal to fuel the new reliance on steam-powered industries. Founded in 1828, the company became extremely important in the developing U.S. capitalist economy.

### Enter John Roebling

The D&HCC not only controlled the mining of coal, but also its transport. Initially, before railroads were widespread, getting the coal to market required towing barges full of coal overland through a series of man-made canals.

Coal was mined in Carbondale, PA, transported by gravity railroad to Honesdale, PA, then taken by barges over 100 miles to Rondout, NY. From there it was sailed down the Hudson River to New York City.

Somewhat ironically, this water route was impeded by the Delaware River. Crossing the Delaware required the construction of a shallow dam near where the Roebling Bridge now sits. Overhead cables were used to tow coal barges from one side of the river to the other. As you might imagine, this created conflicts with timber rafters who were used to having an uninterrupted journey south.

An aqueduct to take barges over the river was proposed, but such an aqueduct was problematic. At the time, any bridge supporting such an aqueduct would require massive supports in the river itself, blocking the easy passage of watercraft. And given the construction technology of the time, such a structure wouldn't be high enough above the river's surface, further hindering boats and timber rafts.

This is where John Roebling entered the story. Roebling was German, and was trained during a period when European engineers were experimenting with so-called "suspension" bridges. As the name suggests, these

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# RESOURCES - Page 5

bridges were suspended below ropes hung between frameworks of stone and wood. They were lighter, stronger and required a smaller footprint. The materials of the time, though, weren't always up to the task. Suspension bridges had an unfortunate tendency to fall down.

To successfully build his bridge across the Delaware River, Roebling innovated in several ways. First, he developed a new process for twisting metal wire into extremely strong braids. Thick metal cables took the place of the woven ropes used previously.

Roebling also came up with a process for spinning the metal cables in place. Since suspension bridges essentially are built from the top down, this process eliminated the need to lift the heavy cables overhead during construction.

Another innovation was how the cables were anchored. Even if the local bedrock was unsuitable, as it was in this case, it could be reinforced with special concrete. Roebling's creation of an artificial anchorage allowed the heavy metal cables to be adequately supported.

Many of the techniques developed in the building of the bridge in Minisink Ford, NY would be used by Roebling again. His company would go on to build the most famous of his structures, the Brooklyn Bridge in New York City.

Construction on the Roebling Bridge began in 1847, and opened to canal traffic in 1849. Roebling's design had fewer and smaller supports, and thus blocked less of the Delaware River. It also was higher above the water, and allowed taller water-



RR photo by Jim McKeegan

The entrance to Fort Delaware in Narrowsburg, NY. The fort depicts the Cusetunk settlement, complete with reenactors who interpret colonial life.

craft to pass underneath. Important to remember, though, is that this really wasn't a "bridge" and never went by that name in its heyday. The "Delaware Aqueduct," as it was known, connected canals on either side of the river. Although you can drive across it today, the structure was filled with water at the time.

You easily can visit these historic sites in one day. Both are found along NY Route 97 in Sullivan County. The Fort Delaware Museum of Colonial History is in Narrowsburg. It's a reconstruction of the Cusetunk settlement, just a few miles from the orig-

inal site. Reenactors in period dress are on hand to guide you through the daily lives of the early settlers. Fort Delaware is open mid May through Columbus Day, October 14. For more information, contact the Fort at 845/252-6660 or visit <https://thedelawarecompany.org/fort-delaware-museum/>.

The Roebling Bridge is located along a particularly scenic stretch of the Delaware River, 15 miles south of Fort Delaware. The aqueduct was restored in the 1980s and 1990s. It's now a one-lane bridge connecting Minisink Ford with Lackawaxen, PA.

Bring a camera! You can visit the website maintained by the National Park Service at [www.nps.gov/upde/learn/historyculture/roebblingbridge.htm](http://www.nps.gov/upde/learn/historyculture/roebblingbridge.htm).

A wonderfully detailed model of Roebling's aqueduct can be viewed at the Delaware & Hudson Canal Interpretive Center in Summitville, NY. The center's website is [sullivanny.us/Departments/ParksRecreation/DelawareHudson](http://sullivanny.us/Departments/ParksRecreation/DelawareHudson).

For more photos visit [riverreporter.com/upper-delaware-magazine](http://riverreporter.com/upper-delaware-magazine).



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Photo by Dave Soete

The Upper Delaware River Valley, originally named Lenapehoking, homeland of the Lenape, is an exceptional landscape of a free-flowing majestic river and fertile rolling hills.

# The forced removal and relocation of the Lenape, The Original People

By CURTIS ZUNIGHA, Co-Director, Lenape Center

In 1504, my ancestors began encountering seemingly god-like people arriving from the East on great ships with sails (Verazanno and, 100 years later, Henry Hudson). They brought with them a world view, a value system and a religion that viewed my ancestors as savages who must be dominated and on land that must be conquered and plundered.

The Dutch participated in their first land swindle in 1638 with the so-called Purchase of Manhattan. The Lenape did not understand the concept of selling land and conveying title for exclusive occupancy. An exchange of gifts by a small village of “foreigners” for ostensibly peaceful occupation on a small patch of land was an agreement in keeping with the egalitarian lifestyle of the Lenape. The land, the water, the sky was not a commodity to be bought, sold or transferred. It was a sacred gift from The Creator.

Soon however the Dutch fort at New Amsterdam was built on the island of Manahatta (“The place where they gather wood to make bows”) and surrounded by a wall to keep the Indians out. Thus the path along the perimeter of the wall ultimately became today’s Wall Street.

The Lenape began to realize it was too late; change was happening. Whites did not intend to assimilate and share occupancy. Under the Christian Doctrine of Discovery—also known as Manifest Destiny—they intended to rid the land of the savages and take control of it. There they would dwell on new abundant lands taken by conquest and extract resources for the enrichment of Europe’s kings, the Catholic Papacy—and themselves.

Dutch military governors and Christian missionaries wrote extensively about establishing colonies in New Amsterdam and along the coast and riverways of what is now New Jersey. Massacres during Governor Kieft’s war with the Lenape were described in horrific words of bloody murder. Embedded in the language was the foundation of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery as justification for such violent domination.

## The spread of disease

Another major effect on the Lenape was the rapid spread of diseases brought by the Europeans. My ancestors had no natural immunity to diseases they had never encountered. Thus, my ancestors felt anxiety when natural plant medicines and healing ceremonies could not fight back the deadly effects of smallpox, diphtheria and measles, among others. They feared the swannock (white man) had brought an evil magic that was more powerful than them.

In 1664, the might of the English under King Charles II forced the Dutch out of Lenapehoking (home of the Lenape) and they became the primary European power. At first the Lenape thought they could engage in an equitable fur trade. But the English proved to be just as unfair when it came to land “ownership” claims and their powerful control over the market.

The Delaware River Valley was named after colonial governor Sir Thomas West, Lord de la Warr. The royal charter, a mere piece of paper waved before our ancestors, claimed Lenapehoking now belonged to their king. Men like William Penn sought commercial control over the lands and dominion over the savages. Penn, a Quaker, hoped to use

Christian conversion of the Lenape rather than warfare to establish such control. The Lenape Sachem (*sakima*) Tamanend is credited as being the principal spokesman of a council of Lenape leaders that agreed in 1782 to provide land for the occupancy of Penn’s colony at a place now known as Philadelphia.

Now from the Muhhecanituk (Hudson River) to the Lenapewihittuk/Kithanne (Delaware River), the English controlled all trade and commerce. Their relations with the Lenape became more tenuous. The infamous Walking Purchase in 1737, an intentional land swindle by the progeny of William Penn, stole hundreds of thousands of acres in Pennsylvania. With a continuing wave of English immigrants seeking a fresh start in a new land, the Lenape were forced to relocate from their homeland.

Our ancestor’s centuries-long spiritual relationship with our Earth Mother... our Turtle Island... was denied to us. Our ceremonial grounds, our sacred sites, the buried bones of our ancestors all left behind by the forced relocation of The Original People. So the Lenape, now known as Delaware Indians, were no longer a nation; they no longer occupied their sacred homelands. Lenapehoking loomed behind them under dark clouds of war as they marched toward the setting sun.

*Curtis Zunigha is the co-director of Lenape Center. Lenape Center is a nonprofit organization fiscally sponsored by the New York Foundation for the Arts. Its work has been the creation and development of exhibitions, public art, symposia, performance, music, opera, theater and education, including workshops, lectures and curricula. It is currently in its sixth season of a seed repatriation project.*



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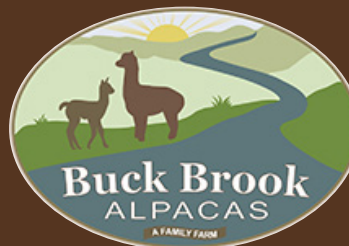
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# Expanding on the story of the D&H Canal

By JOHN CONWAY, Sullivan County Historian

In October of 1828, the Delaware & Hudson Canal opened for business, just a little over three years after the initial groundbreaking for the project.

The canal would prove to be one of the most transformative projects in American history, and Sullivan County—which just happened to be in the way geographically—would be immeasurably impacted.

In the first 20 years of the canal's operation, the population of Sullivan County more than doubled—from the 12,364 recorded in the 1830 census to 25,088 in 1850. In addition, the completion of the canal made possible the rise of the bluestone and tanning industries here in the mid-19th century and contributed mightily to the growth of a number of communities from Barryville, NY to Phillipsport, NY.

In fact by 1870, Wurtsboro, which owed its existence almost entirely to the canal, had a population of 650, which ranked it second in the county behind Monticello (1,000). Phillipsport, with a population of 400, was sixth, and Barryville (259) ranked 11th.

The D&H was a massive undertaking, and during its 13 years of planning and 70 years of operation spawned numerous stories, ranging from the financial risk of the Wurts brothers who conceived the idea, to the growth of the communities it created, and from the rough-and-tumble canal boat captains to the children who were indispensable to its existence.

Those children, who most often filled the role of "hoggee," the person responsible for guiding the team of horses or mules that towed the canal boats, made possible the efficient operation of not just the D&H

Canal, but the more famous Erie Canal and others as well.

No one seems quite certain of the origin of the term hoggee, but most historians say the word comes from the commands "haw" and "gee" used to get a horse or mule to stop or go. Still, there are some who insist the word is a bastardization of hogler, the old English term for a low-level laborer, while others prefer some different etymology. Whatever the origin of the term, it caught on during the early days of the Erie Canal and entered the popular lexicon through its usage in ditties of the day, supposedly sung by the boys and girls to help pass the time as they walked mile after mile hour after hour:

"Hoggee on the towpath/Don't know what to say/Walk behind a mule's behind/All the live-long day."

The fascinating but obscure story of the role that children—often as young as seven or eight years old—played in the D&H operation is one that is only recently drawing attention. The nonprofit history education group The Delaware Company, and in particular its executive director, Debra Conway, have been leading the way in telling that part of the canal's story, and have recently taken a big step toward memorializing it.

Partly inspired by a romanticized painting by E.L. Henry, The Kate Project is the group's three-phase undertaking that includes construction of a half-mile extension of towpath along the Delaware River just south of Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct, the creation of seating areas to include stone benches and interpretive signs, a canal snubbing post and a bronze sculpture of a hoggee and mule.

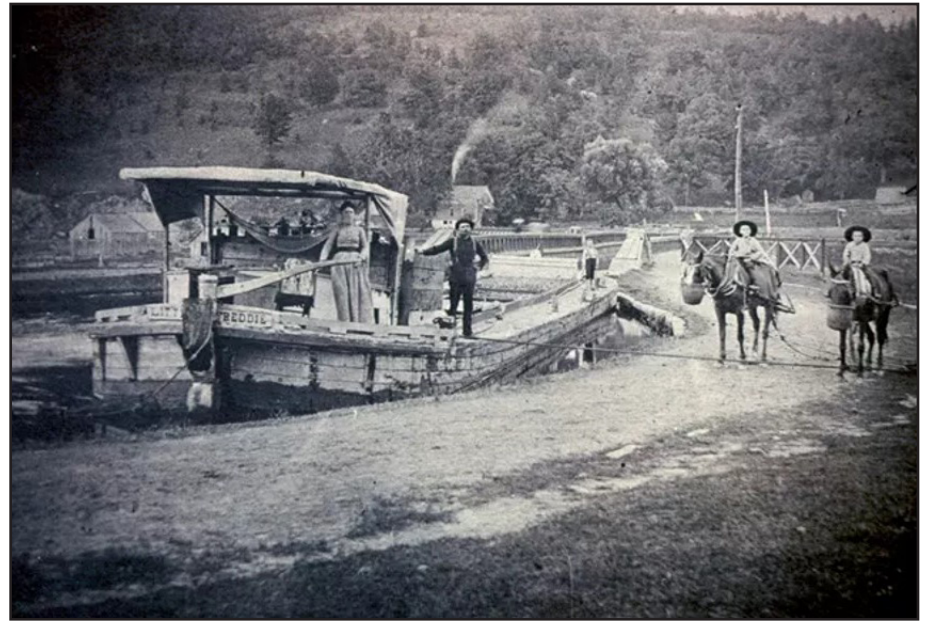


Photo courtesy of D&H Canal Museum

D&H Canal hoggees at Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct.

"The project is intended to tell the canal's lesser-known stories, such as the bluestone industry in the river valley that utilized the canal for a time and later developed connections to Boss Tweed and Tammany Hall," Conway explained. "And we want to especially highlight the role of the children, some of them orphans adopted out of the overcrowded foundling homes in New York City and put to work tending the mule teams that pulled the boats. These boys and girls woke up early to feed and outfit the teams, walked 18-20 miles a day alongside them, and then prepared them for 'bed' at the end of the day. It has been said that the mule teams were often treated better by the boat owners than the hoggees, because they were more expensive to replace."

Phase one of the project involved the selective clearing of a viewshed along the Delaware River and the route of the hiking path, and was completed in 2020. Phase two, which will entail all of the remaining work except for the sculpture, is now underway and is expected to be completed by the end of this year. The work is now plainly visible along Route 97.

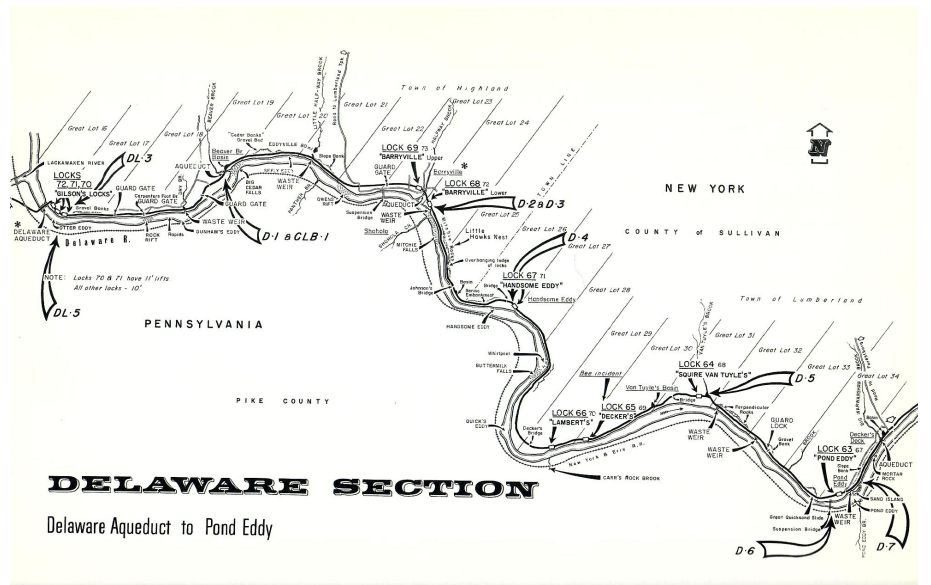
Phase three will be the procurement and placing of the bronze sculpture.

When it is completed, The Kate Project will tell yet another of those sometimes-obscure stories of the D&H Canal, one of the most significant operations in Sullivan County's history.



Photo by John Conway

A section of the Kate Project trail is under construction just south of Roebling's Delaware Aqueduct. The Delaware River is on the right and NY Route 97 is visible on the left.



from the 1965 book, "Coal Boats to Tidewater," by Manville B. Wakefield

A map of the Delaware section of the D&H Canal

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# The battle of the Cushtunk Women

By RICHARD ELDRED

*(Reprinted with permission from Mr. Eldred's "Historically Speaking" column in the Jan.-Feb.-Mar.: 2011 issue of the Wayne County Historical Society Newsletter.)*

The battle of the Cushtunk woman was reported by Nathan Skinner, according to memories of his family members.

Nathan Skinner was born in Newton, NJ, on April 4, 1777, where his family had fled from Cushtunk, PA, during the Revolutionary War.

He was the son of "Admiral" Daniel Skinner and Lillie (Healy) Skinner.

Lillie previous married a Mr. Richardson and had a daughter named Phoebe, but her husband was killed during the French and Indian Wars. Daniel and Lillie had nine children with Nathan being the eighth.

In the 1840s, Nathan wrote about the colonists who in the 1750s had settled along the Delaware River in the area the Indians called Cushtunk.

His booklet was later called "The Nathan Skinner Manuscript." It was written after 1840 as Nathan mentions Barnes Corners, in western Damascus Township, PA, but John Barnes did not move to West Damascus until about 1840.

Nathan was born about 10 years after the battle of the women and had to rely on the memory of others. As the story was retold over the years, certain details may have been elaborated by the family members. My favorite portion of the booklet is the battle of the women of Cushtunk.

According to Nathan, the success of his father Daniel Skinner in piloting logs down the Delaware River to the banks of the shipbuilding yards near Philadelphia caused jealousy among some of the other settlers of Cushtunk.

Abraham Ross, Nathaniel Evans, Phineas Clark and families were all crowded in one log house in the valley while Daniel Skinner had a spacious home a short distance up the valley.

The three men had discussed the possibility of driving Daniel Skinner out of the valley and taking over the logging work.

Their wives had urged the men to

drive the Skinners out and were disappointed when the men refused to act.

In May of 1767, when the three men were absent, rafting down the Delaware, their wives—Sarah Evans, Huldah Ross and Mrs. Clark—decided that they could accomplish what their husbands had failed to do.

Nathan Skinner wrote that Mrs. Clark said that she would restrain Mrs. Skinner while the other ladies removed the Skinner belongings from the house and replace them with their own possessions.

On a sunny morning, the ladies marched to the Skinner dwelling but found Mrs. Skinner absent and only her daughter Phoebe there, taking care of the three infants.

The ladies began to remove the Skinner things, but Phoebe began putting them back in the house.

When Mrs. Clark attempted to stop Phoebe, the girl tripped her and knocked her out.

When Mrs. Skinner returned at this time, Huldah Ross hit her with a stone, cutting her head. Phoebe came to the aid of her mother, and Sarah Evans to the aid of Huldah.

The fight turned into a hair-pulling contest, which ended when Mrs. Skinner, finding a pile of ashes on the ground, threw them in the face of Huldah Ross, which disabled her.

With Mrs. Clark and Huldah out of the fight, the battle ended. Huldah went to the river to wash her face and Mrs. Clark gradually recovered and asked for peace.

The three ladies admitted that they were wrong and asked for forgiveness. Then the ladies all went to the river to wash and attempt to stop the bleeding of their heads.

Mrs. Skinner sent her daughter Phoebe to the house to prepare food for the ladies.

According to Skinner, the ladies lived after that in peace and friendship for many years.

The story is told from the Skinner viewpoint. Notice that after more than seventy-five years, Skinner could not remember Mrs. Clark's first name.

I have shortened the story for the sake of space. It is a great tale, but how much of it is true remains an open question.

# Bald eagles in the Upper Delaware

*30 years and going strong*

By SCOTT RANDO

If you drive along or float on the Delaware River today, chances are that you would see at least one bald eagle, and probably more.

Eagles, taken for granted by many people today, can be seen in almost every area of the region, and all the counties that comprise the region have several occupied bald eagle nests. During the winter, many eagles are seen in the area; some of these eagles are migrants from Canada, but many are adults and immature eagles from local nests.

This wasn't always the case here; the effects of DDT caused eagles, as well as several other bird species, to experience reproductive difficulties in the form of thin and brittle eggs that would not endure the incubation process. In the late 1970s, Pennsylvania was down to three breeding nests and New York was down to a single breeding pair that could not reproduce due to DDT effects before the chemical was banned. The bald eagle was on the verge of extirpation (local extinction) in NY and PA, and there were no nests within our region.

In 1976, New York State initiated a bald eagle reintroduction program where eaglets from Alaska, which had a plentiful population of eagles, were placed in cages on man-made elevated nesting platforms called "hacking towers." Eaglets were fed



*RR photos by Scott Rando*  
The female adult of this pair is seen arriving at the nest to relieve the male of incubation duty. Eagles in the region start laying eggs from late February to early March, and the eggs must be kept warm, even though it is still winter. Both members of this breeding pair share equally with incubation; each incubation stint could last several hours. Incubation takes about 35 days and most nests in the area will see hatchlings during early April.

by people who stayed out of view of the birds so the eaglets did not "imprint" on humans as a parent.

When the eaglets were around 12 weeks old, the outside parts of the cages were opened so the eaglets could perch on

branches placed on the cages and eventually make their first flight, or fledge.

Four years later near Watertown, NY, a pair of these "hacked" eagles were found successfully breeding at a nest of their own.

In 1980, the NYSDEC went large-scale with the project, hacking close to 200 eaglets during the next nine years. Pete Nye, the NYSDEC biologist who spearheaded the NY restoration effort, explains it here: [vimeo.com/73593168](https://vimeo.com/73593168).

Pennsylvania initiated its own reintroduction in 1983.

The Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River comprises 73 miles of river from Hancock, NY to just below Cherry Island at Sparrowbush, NY. This is prime habitat, with many undisturbed areas, many potential nesting locations and a plentiful uncontaminated source of food for the fish-eating bald eagle. It took close to a decade from the time the first hacked eagles reached breeding age until the first pair of bald eagles established a territory within the Upper Delaware area; eagles typically establish a nest and take a mate within 50-100 miles of their natal nest (where they themselves were raised).

The spread of eagles was slow at first, and perhaps some of the earlier territorial eagles in the area could have originated from the PGC hacking facility that was initiated in 1983 at nearby Shohola Lake in Pike County, PA. The first occupied pair appeared in 1993 along the river, but they did not produce young for the first two years—typical of some newly mated pairs.

The number of bald eagle pairs increased slowly but steadily over the next 30 years to the point that 21 breeding pairs were esti-

mated to be active by 2023. Eagles utilized more river territories, and some eagles had bands that they received when they were young and were banded in a river nest during NYSDEC nest surveys.

In some cases, the distance between the natal nest and that young's new territory was five miles or less.

Eagles reach breeding age at four to five years, and newly established territories by banded eagles have shown that they tend to get started young. Five- to seven-year-old eagles were the norm for banded eagles and a four-year-old female was observed establishing a new territory with an older male (unbanded, but showing four-year subadult plumage).

It is impossible to determine the age of eagles by sight once they molt to full adult plumage at five years or so of age, so band resights by birders or photographers are very valuable.

The Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River has proven its worth for bald eagle habitat. Even before eagles started to breed along the river, winter visitors from Canada were utilizing the river for a winter food source while their own breeding habitats were frozen completely over.

For the estimated 21 resident eagle pairs as of 2023, the immediate threat is habitat loss; we as a people can work as partners and stewards to minimize this threat.

As I watch an eagle in flight, I stand in awe of nature's perfect airframe. Watching an eagle soar in a thermal, we can see a circle of motion; we are fortunate to live in an area where we are able to observe this winged one's circle of life.



This young fledgling, about 15 weeks old, has unwanted attention in the form of a male red-winged blackbird that is harassing or "mobbing" the young eagle in order to drive it out of its territory. Parent eagles will assist young for several weeks after fledge as they learn how to fend for themselves.



RR photos by Scott Rando

This is a set of bands on a 2.5-year-old immature eagle that was banded as eaglet in a NY nest and recaptured during a study during the fall of 2008. The blue band is a NY state color band and the silver band is the harder to read USF&WS band. A guide to colors used by various states can be found at [www.cbbirds.org/what-we-do/research/species-of-concern/virginia-eagles/eagle-band](http://www.cbbirds.org/what-we-do/research/species-of-concern/virginia-eagles/eagle-band).



This pair of 13-week-old young are shown "branching out" or perched out away from the nest on July 1, 2007. Eaglets get bolder and branch out a few weeks before their first flight. The first of these young fledged a day later. Two eaglets is the normal clutch size for bald eagle nests.

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# Harking back to community

## *A network of Granges*



RR photo by Jeffrey Sidle

Delaware Valley Grange #1564, Atco, Damascus Township, 41.62120 N, 75.08598 W

By JEFF SIDLE

WAYNE COUNTY, PA — One of the things I like about living in rural Northeastern PA is the myriad of back roads just waiting for a leisurely drive to explore the landscapes. Seeing the many farms still in existence and imagining how those farmers worked the land and raised their families with little money and many time demands on their lives is amazing.

Tucked into the landscape are old buildings proclaiming their existence as grange halls. It had always been in the back of my mind to explore the history of the buildings and the organization that supported them. This summer I decided to investigate.

### An arduous process

My first stop was the Wayne County Historical Society in Honesdale, where I met with Carol Dunn, the executive director. She helped by pulling what little information was available in their cataloged collection before my arrival. She said that it is likely that there is more information in other works in their collection but it had not been included in an indexed manner, requiring many hours of research to find references to the county's Granges.

I also visited Bernadine Lennon at the Greene-Dreher Historical Society in the southern end of Wayne County at South Sterling. She shared an article that she had written for their newsletter *The Greene Hills of Home* titled "The Grange Served the Community Well."

My last visit was to the Equinunk Historical Society in the northern tier, where I met with Carol Ann MacMaster. There I photographed a few pages from "Calkins Consolidated Before and After 1923-1963" by Betty Sheard, which referenced Labor Grange in Calkins.

### Reaching out to others

These visits were followed by phone calls to the Forest City Historical Society and the Waymart Historical Society as well as other individuals, and many emails. I had fallen into a rabbit hole with no end in sight. I went online to the PA State Grange website and was directed by an email from the state Grange historian on how to navigate through their pages to find the list of active and non-active granges in the state. Now I was getting somewhere!

From the list of issued charters from the PA State Grange I learned that there were 35 subordinate granges chartered by the PA State Grange in Wayne County. Today, there are three that are still active: Enterprise Grange in Torrey, Beech Grove Grange in Honesdale and Unity Grange in Galilee. With the information I had assembled, I turned my focus to locating and photographing the remaining grange halls within Wayne County.

### Just what is a Grange?

From the PA Grange website: "The Grange (Patrons of Husbandry) is a fraternal family organization dedicated to the betterment of the American way of life through community service, education, legislation and fellowship. The

Grange includes members of all ages and specifically has programs for juniors (ages 5-14), youth (ages 14-23) and young adults (ages 23-35). The Grange represents approximately 5,440 Pennsylvanians across the Commonwealth. It is the oldest agricultural and rural advocacy organization of its kind in the United States. The National Grange, representing about 140,000 members, began in 1867 and the PA State Grange was chartered in 1873."

Its motto is "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity." Its mission is to support the local Granges to help members grow as individuals, unify their communities and create opportunity through legislation and community service.

Grange membership is open to all, regardless of race, religious beliefs, political affiliations or gender. The organization's secret and ritualistic decorum at its meetings was based on Masonic Lodge rituals.

Today's meetings have evolved a bit and the secret password to enter meetings has vanished. You could say that it is a progressive organization, given that it offered women roles in holding offices and voting well before this was the norm in everyday U.S. politics. In fact some of the ritualistic roles specifically were created to be filled by women.

So you now know that the Grange is steeped in history and that it is also surviving, despite the decline in the number of family farms across the country. It is still serving its mission for today and into the future.

# The Upper Delaware is brew-tiful

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Seminary Hill Orchard & Cidery co-owner Doug Doetsch descends from a Callicoon family. His grandparents and great-grandparents were subsistence farmers who lived off the land and made their own cider. To make ends meet, they took in summer boarders and offered farm-to-table meals decades before the term became popular. Now, with co-owner Susan Manning, Seminary Hill honors the agricultural history of the Sullivan Catskills (and Doug's family) and aspires to provide locals and visitors alike an experience that's proudly local and intently sustainable, and evokes authentic Catskills heritage.

Established on May 1, 2021, Seminary Hill grows more than 60 varieties of apples and pears in rocky clay at 1,200' on a south-facing slope overlooking the Delaware River. The orchards are certified organic, and the goal is to grow fruit with the complex aromatics, sharp acids and tactile tannins needed to ferment and blend ciders with depth and nuance. Seminary Hill is also home to a farm-to-table restaurant (The Tasting Room) and a boutique hotel outfitted by local studio Homestead (The Boarding House), which allows locals and city folk alike to fully immerse themselves in the cider experience.

## Catskill Brewery

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Catskill Brewery has a straightforward mission: To express the spirit of the Catskills through their business. From the fresh Catskill mountain water that is the primary ingredient in their beers, to the LEED Gold certified production facility that they built here; from their deep involvement in the local Catskill communities, to their charitable support of local environmental and historical organizations, the brewery seeks to embody the Catskills and add their own contribution to the long and fascinating story of this special place.

Founded on June 2, 2014, the brewery has an incredible team of locals and is one of the original craft breweries in the region.

## Here & Now Brewing Company

645 Main St.  
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info@hereandnowbrewing.com



Owner Allaina Propst came home to Honesdale with the goal of preserving a beautifully built building and creating something from the ground up rather than working on something else somewhere else. With that, Here & Now Brewing Company was founded on May 4, 2017. The brew company offers beer and food inspired by their surroundings and whatever ideas float through their heads. The team is guided by a mission of "world-class beer and food for the people of Honesdale and whomever happens to be coming through." Local, seasonal and whimsical drives everything they do.

Propst's mission is to create a more sustainable and resilient regional economy the old-fashioned way by sourcing products as locally as possible, reducing waste and just doing the right thing. This drove her into the business and has proven more important as time goes on.

## Upward Brewing Company

171 Main St.  
Livingston Manor, NY 12758  
845/4391382  
info@upwardbrewing.com  
www.upwardbrewing.com



Owners David Walton and Dana Ball were each hard at work working in a brewery when they decided to create their own establishment. With that, they founded the Upward Brewing Company on November 1, 2019. Located on a 120-acre property, complete with trails for their customer and with their own water source, the owners also work as the resident brewers. After just under five years in business, the brewery has won several state medals and a World Beer Cup® Award. The establishment, which is open six days a week, also offers a beautiful taproom with amazing views of the Catskill Mountains and its own kitchen/restaurant.

Dana has a background in the craft beer business dating back to the early '90s with Brooklyn Brewery, as well as extensive experience with craft beer distribution and brewing. David has a background in computer science, engineering and economics. When they found that they worked well together, had similar tastes in beer and enjoyed the business, they thought it would be a good idea to keep it going.



# Equinunk Historical Society

570-224-6722  
1972 Pine Mill Rd.  
Equinunk, PA 18417

[www.equinunkhistory.com](http://www.equinunkhistory.com)

## First Friday - Calder Cafe

Event November - April 6:30 - 9:00  
Call Pat at 570-224-0223 to get on schedule to perform or just come enjoy the music!

## November 16th

Annual Chili Sale  
Preorder! First 100 orders filled

## December 6th, 7th & 8th

Open House  
Calder Shop & Museum Christmas Sale.  
Music & Refreshments on 8th  
12pm to 4pm

EHS is open for research & pleasure  
Wednesday & Friday from 2-4pm through October 27.  
Also open Saturdays 12-4pm thru Columbus Day Weekend,  
and Sundays in July and August. Other times by appointment. 570-224-6722



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**GRANGES** - Page 17

The number of people who are now living who remember things about the Granges of the past are a treasure, and any stories that they can share with the **River Reporter** would be most welcome.

Any Grange artifacts or historical documents in residents' possession would be welcomed with open arms at any of the local historical societies mentioned above for safekeeping.

Amazingly, I was able to find and photograph 14 buildings that served as Grange Halls in the past, including the three Granges that are still active in Wayne County. You will find the GPS coordinates in the accompanying list. I'm not 100 percent sure that there are not a couple more up in the northern sections of the county around Preston Township and elsewhere. If I do find them, I will update the information at a later date.

Also of note—three of the Granges without photos were chartered in locations no longer included on current maps of the county: Inglehart (near Welcome Lake), Jonestown and Waynesville.

Some of the photographed buildings are vacant, while some are works in progress of preservation, and others have been transformed into private residences or business ventures. On my visit to the Hickory Grange, I was lucky to be there when the building was open and I was allowed to take some photos of the interior with my phone. The woodwork is extraordinary. I learned that there have been some efforts to get the building put onto the National Register of Historic Buildings in the hope that it would create an avenue to secure funding to help further stabilize the leaky roof before too much damage is done by the weather.

The Indian Orchard Grange Hall has been purchased by Brenda Krehul and her daughter Andrea Janssen Jana, the former owners of the Ascalona Campground in Barryville, NY. Work has begun to completely restore the building, which houses an antique shop, and the outside grounds will be available for flea market tables, food trucks and craft vendors. They also supplied some photos of the inside restoration.

In conclusion, I must say that while driving around looking for these locations, I realized that Wayne County is bigger than I thought! And remember those back roads I began this article with? I actually added some to the list of roads least traveled, realizing that I have yet to be on them all.



**Beech Grove Grange #1089, Dyberry Township, 41.60170 N, 75.30146 W**

*RR photos by Jeffrey Sidle*



**Big Hickory (later Hickory) Grange #1483, Rileyville, Lebanon Township, 41.71598 N, 75.22942 W**



**Enterprise Grange #1352, Oregon Township, Torrey, 41.63215 N, 75.19183 W**



**Beech Grove Grange #1089 Carriage House, Dyberry Township, 41.60170 N, 75.30146 W**

# Welcome to De Bruce





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