

# Ohio River Trail Council



1100 Pennsylvania Av  
 Monaca, Pa 15061  
 724-728-2625

## MINUTES

DATE 11-29-2011

TIME 4:00 PM

MONACA MUNICIPAL BUILDING

<b>MEETING CALLED BY</b>	Dr. Vincent Troia
<b>TYPE OF MEETING</b>	Historical Markers ORTC Committee Meeting
<b>FACILITATOR</b>	Dr. Vincent Troia
<b>NOTE TAKER</b>	Donna Campbell, Secretary

Attendees: Dr. Vincent Troia, Patricia Majors, Justin Battalini, John Szatkiewicz, Nathan Peluso, Mario Leone, Todd Allen, Donna Campbell, Melinda McKee

Agenda topics: Proposed Historical Markers, reports and historical research

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<p>Dr. Troia called the Historical Markers Committee meeting to order. The Ohio River Trail Council is pleased to partner with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) to support the Historical Markers Program which captures the memory of people, places, and events that have affected the lives of Pennsylvanians over the centuries since William Penn founded his Commonwealth. The markers will be dedicated in public events featuring public officials, local historians, community representatives, and others. Each dedication presents opportunities for Pennsylvanians to celebrate and understand their heritage. In addition, the Ohio River Trail Council is in full support of the Beaver County Historical Marker Program along the Ohio River Trail. The first marker supported is the Baker-Baldwin Cemetery in Monaca, Pa.</p> <p>Pat Majors began the meeting with a report on the Baker Family Cemetery. They started renovations at the cemetery by concentrating their efforts on a "three-tree area" in the center of the cemetery. "Several trees later" they were in the middle of a "real project". Mario arrived and helped prune the trees and pulled grapevines that opened up the area. Improvements were necessary on the dilapidated fence however their grant money had already been exhausted. The manager at Lowes Home Improvement granted them a 40% discount on material for a split rail fence that was in keeping with the area. They were able to purchase the fence with money donated by Virginia Korek, a remarkable 79 year old area resident who "works like she is 40". Virginia has been an integral part of the cemetery renovation. The Manager of the outdoor department of Lowes Department Store came on his day off and installed the fence with cement and other materials. They continued to clear out brush, clearing the back of the area to the railroad tracks. Money from the Outreach will be used to keep the area maintained. More trees were razed in the back so you can see to the new Bridge on route 51. Pat then met with Vince Dioguardi, grandson of Rome Monuments founder agreed that a marker was necessary, which he donated, an estimated value of \$1800.00. What started with the pruning of some trees ended with a total renovation of the cemetery within a month and one-half. "Before and after" pictures can be viewed on the website. Schematic of the graves will be used so that the headstones can eventually be replaced since the original sandstone cannot be recovered.</p> <p>The Baker cemetery graves are predominately descendants of Michael Baker Jr. The Bakers were the first permanent settlers in Monaca and originally were the operators of a merino sheep farm. A court injunction was secured at some point so that the cemetery would not be destroyed. One side of the cemetery is owned by the McClymonds. There was a train derailment shortly after the renovation was complete however there was minimal damage. Empty grave markers can still be seen in the cemetery</p>
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	<p>indicated by black stones in a pattern. The Ohio River Trail is adjacent to the cemetery. The Group discussed donation of the ground by the McClymonds. Pat continued to note that the cemetery was founded in 1808 and the first interment was 1810 with the grave of the owner's ten year old daughter. There is a Revolutionary War soldier and a Civil War soldier also buried there, all related by birth or marriage to the Baker family.</p> <p>Dr. Vincent Troia noted that everything south of the Ohio River was Virginia Territory during that time and the Bakers came here from Germany to the Virginia territory. This territory changed with the establishment of the Mason Dixon Line. Because of the limitation of state historical markers on cemeteries, the ORTC will be looking for county assistance with the historical marker. The application for the marker is to be submitted.</p> <p>John Szatkiewicz noted that the Kings Creek Cemetery on Route 168 is a State Historical Area. One item that could be used for a State Marker is the history of the Baker Land Scam. Jacob Baker, a German immigrant, had purchased property from Washington on a 99 year lease, which later became central Philadelphia. The Bakers in the Pittsburgh area were heir to the Baker fortune and the land that started a legal battle in the mid 1800's that continued into the mid 1900's. This was considered to be one of the biggest scams in history. This could be a point of interest for a State Marker as Jacob Baker is buried in the cemetery. Camp Baker was also donated by Michael and Myrtle Baker. It may be better to apply for the marker as a local Historical Marker. Bernie Catalucci, head of County Historical markers, would be contacted.</p> <p>During Pat's research, she discovered that Chief Monacatotha became a hero because he sided with the English and refused to be defeated by the French. He died in Lancaster PA. His name translated to "great arrow". These Indians were all part of the Iroquois nation.</p>
<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p>Nathan Peluso is working on the <i>Great Trail</i> Historical Marker application but has a considerable amount of research to complete. This one will not be submitted in 2011. Strategies for completion of the marker, incorporating it with several other trails in the area, bringing them into one historic marker were discussed. Other trails to consider are the <i>Mahoning Path</i> and <i>Tuscarawas Trail</i>. These Indian trails were used for trade and were sometimes called "warpath trails."</p>
<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p>Justin Battalini reported on the <i>Lincoln Highway</i> Marker project noting there were not many books on the highway in our area making research difficult. He researched information from The <i>Lincoln Highway</i> in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century but there is not much documentation for western PA. He did find an Official complete <i>Lincoln Highway</i> road guide to promote the route. Justin mentioned that highway officials had considered rerouting the Highway starting in 1913. Presently Pennsylvania recognizes a corridor in the eastern part of the state but has essentially forgotten about our area. The <i>Lincoln Highway</i> had more of an impact from Lancaster to Bedford since those areas flourished because of the <i>Lincoln Highway</i>. That was not the case in our area since it was not actually a continuous highway here. The goal is to get more of the <i>Lincoln Highway</i> markers in this area. John Szatkiewicz noted that Richard Cebak who works at the Carnegie Science Center and also made a documentary about the Lincoln Highway for PBS that could be utilized as a reference. John attempted to get the Ohioville Bridge on the Smith's Ferry Road crossing the Little Beaver Creek in Ohioville registered but was unsuccessful since it was not specifically built for the Lincoln Highway. Justin is encouraged that the state will approve his application when completed because there is nothing marking the <i>Lincoln Highway</i> in western PA.</p>
<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p>Dr. Vincent Troia reported on the Lewis and Clark Marker. The Ohio River is part of the Lewis and Clark trail and although the National Park Service has recognized other areas of the trail, again, our area has little recognition. His research reflected that Lewis stopped five times in Beaver County. Horses had to be used to pull his boat and he was forced to stay in the area because of low water levels. Lewis camped out at Georgetown Island, a good place for a potential historical marker. We have an application and Dr. Troia requested we look it over. It was possible to walk to Georgetown Island before the Stratton Dam was installed. John Szatkiewicz noted that Petroglyphs were found on the right hand descending bank of the Ohio River near the Island. Dr. Troia's proposal for signage reflects that on September 4, 1803 fog and boat repairs delayed Lewis and Clark trip through the area so they stayed on Georgetown Island. There are only two markers along the Lewis and Clark route now, in Pittsburgh and Rochester. It might be good to place one in the Midland area. In his journal, Lewis described the water as being "so low and clear you could see many fish including sturgeon, catfish and pike".</p> <p>The <i>Lincoln Highway</i>, <i>Lewis &amp; Clark</i> and the Baker Cemetery historical marker applications will be submitted, tomorrow, November 30, 2011.</p> <p>Dr. Troia also reported that another point of interest in our area, The Underground Railroad, a slave escape route, travelled through Monaca from Pittsburgh. We will be taking advantage of that historic significance as well.</p>

