



## Frequently Asked Questions 2014

### General Walkway Information:

During your volunteer activities, the public will ask you about the bridge. Below is a list of FAQ's that will give you some background information on the project and help you answer questions visitors may have.

FAQ information organization:

Basics:	Facts and Logistics
Today:	About Walkway Over the Hudson, "friends of the park" About Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park (and NY State Parks System) Logistics – How to get there by car, by train, by bus, by foot, parking, hours About the River, the Neighborhood, what you're looking at About "enthusiasts" topics – Rail Trail, Crew, Biking, Hiking, Area activities
Yesterday:	About the Bridge: Original Construction, Re-Construction, Other Facts and History
Tomorrow:	Future plans

### Facts about the Walkway

- Walkway Over the Hudson, the grassroots organization behind this amazing project, continues on as a Friends of the Park organization, with a new mission to support and enhance the State Park and surrounding trail systems.
- In the first eighteen months since it opened, more than 850,000 people visited Walkway State Park, dramatically exceeding original projections.
- At 6,768 feet (or 1.28 miles) Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park is the world's longest pedestrian bridge.
- Walkway State Park soars 212 feet above the Hudson River. The piers extend 130 feet below the river's surface to compacted gravel.
- The Walkway's 1.28-mile long deck is comprised of 973 prefabricated concrete panels, each weighing up to 15 tons. The deck is 25 feet wide with a 4 foot 6 inch high railing. There are 3 overlook areas where the walkway expands to be 3 ½ feet wider on each side to allow for scenic viewing out of the main flow of visitors.
- The park is accessible to individuals with disabilities pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- A series of LED-filled tubes provide lighting for occasional night-time use. There are more than 81,000 light-emitting diodes which all together use less than \$1.80 per hour of electricity.
- It's estimated that nearly 1 million rivets are used to hold the 20,000 tons of steel together. Each of the 4 river piers contains 40,000 tons of timber, stone and concrete.
- The bridge is an historic landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The bridge is a Civil Engineering landmark.
- Trains first began steaming across the former Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge on Jan. 1, 1889. At the time it was the longest bridge in the world.
- First proposed in 1855, the idea of building a railroad bridge at Poughkeepsie was ridiculed. After the Civil War, the idea was taken more seriously. Successful construction began in 1886. From then it took 3 years and thousands of workers to complete the bridge, at a cost of \$3.6 million.

- The core construction project, which transformed the Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge into Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park, cost \$38.8 million and took 16 months to complete.
- It was estimated the cost to demolish the structure would have been over \$50 million.
- Harrison & Burrowes Bridge Constructors Inc. of Glennville, NY served as the general contractor for the project while design and engineering was overseen by Bergmann Associates of Rochester, NY.
- Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park opened on Oct. 3, 2009.
- The park is managed by New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation – Taconic Region.
- Currently the Walkway is not in danger of being closed based on state parks budget cuts.

## Logistics

**Where is the bridge located?** The bridge spans the Hudson River and connects the City of Poughkeepsie in Dutchess County with the Town of Lloyd and hamlet of Highland in Ulster County, New York.

**Where are the entrances?** For GPS devices the East parking entrance is 61 Parker Avenue, Poughkeepsie NY 12601. The Washington Street Stairs are at 129 Washington Street. The West parking entrance is at 87 Haviland Road, Highland NY 12528. Access is also provided from the Hudson Valley Rail Trail.

### How do I get there?

- *On the East Side of the River (Poughkeepsie):* Take Route 9 to Route 9G north (Marist Drive). Bear right onto Washington Street. Proceed on Washington Street for 0.5 miles. Turn left on Route 9G/Parker Avenue.
- *On the West side of the river (Highland):* Take NY Route 9W to Haviland Road.

New York State Park signage (White lettering on Brown signs) has been installed throughout the area clearly directing drivers to the entrances.

In Poughkeepsie, signage with the Walkway Logo (blue and red on white) provides parking, driving and walking directions.

Also, Scenic Hudson Loop Trail signs (Yellow arrows on Grey background) clearly mark the 3.6 mile loop trail which includes the Walkway, the Mid-Hudson Bridge and the Poughkeepsie Train Station

### Are there Parking fees?

New York State Parks has implemented a fee based system of \$5 for 4 hours for visitors choosing to park in Walkway State Park's lots in the City of Poughkeepsie and the Town of Lloyd. It is important to note that most NYS Parks and Sites charge for parking.

Try the Empire Passport! The annual parking pass gets you into most NYS Parks and Historic Sites for only \$65/year. The Empire Passport can be used at Niagara Falls (usually \$10 for parking), Minnewaska State Park Preserve (\$8), Jones Beach (\$8-10) and many other parks as well as historic sites like Olana (\$5). It's sold at the Walkway State Park Office on the Highland side of the River. You can also find more information or purchase it online at: <http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/admission/empire-passport/default.aspx>

Visit the new online licensing portal – [www.licensecenter.ny.gov](http://www.licensecenter.ny.gov) – to purchase a lifetime license or to learn more about the Adventure License Series.

New York's Lifetime Adventure License Series will provide many benefits including:

- **Lifetime Hunting License: \$535 for small/big game**  
A lifetime hunting license allows holders to hunt across millions of acres of majestic wild lands in New York while saving on the costs of an annual license.
- **Lifetime Fishing License: \$460**  
A lifetime fishing license provides a lifetime of fishing on more than 70,000 miles of rivers and streams and more than 7,000 lakes and ponds while saving on the cost of an annual license.
- **Lifetime Empire Passport: \$750**  
The Lifetime Empire Passport allows holders to enjoy the forests, the seashore, and the lakefronts in New York's state parks for years and years to come while saving on the cost of an annual license.

In addition, as a free one-time special bonus, purchasers will be able to select from any one of the following: a free week of camping, a free round of golf for four, or a \$100 State Parks gift card.

There are many free areas along Haviland Road in Highland, and parking lots adjacent to Haviland Road for the Hudson Valley Rail Trail. In Poughkeepsie, there's free on-street parking on Washington, Brookside and Taylor Streets. There's also free parking at Pulaski Park off Washington Street and the former Star Diner parking lot off Parker Avenue. Street signs marked with the Walkway Logo direct drivers to free parking areas.

**Is the park ADA compliant and accessible.**

Yes. Entrances at 87 Haviland Road (Highland) and 61 Parker Avenue (Poughkeepsie) and the elevator entrance are handicapped accessible pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act and have designated handicapped parking.

## Walkway Over the Hudson "Friends of the Walkway" organization

### **What is our Mission?**

Walkway Over the Hudson is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization founded in 1992. Our mission is to inspire people to connect to the beauty of the Hudson Valley through long-term stewardship of the Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park and support of the regional trail system, which offer public enjoyment of the bridge's historic architecture, the scenic wonders of the Hudson River Valley and the diversity of its recreational and cultural activities.

**What is the best way for the public to contribute to the organization?** We hope all our visitors take some kind of action to support the Walkway— become a member, sign up to volunteer on our web site, shop our new web store, renew their membership, bring a friend to walk, jog, bike or stroll the Walkway. We appreciate every contribution they make.

**Who profits from Merchandise sales? Where do donations go?** All profits from merchandise sales and donations at the Friends of the Walkway Informational booth go to Walkway improvements such as the planned amenities, and to programs which make the Walkway a vital part of the Hudson Valley community.

NYS Parks donations given on the bridge are deposited in an account of the National Heritage Trust fund for Walkway State Park. Proceeds are used specifically for Walkway State Park activities such as upgrades to the security system and signage.

### **Tell me about the community which supports the Walkway.**

As of the end of 2013, there are over 1000 Walkway members, and 33,000 Facebook fans. Our Newsletter was sent to over 4,000 recipients who have supported the Walkway in some manner.

### **What is the Ambassador Program?**

In 2010, Cunneen Hackett and McCann Foundations awarded Walkway Over the Hudson two year funding to begin the Ambassador Program. The Ambassadors are a core of volunteers to support Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park. They will perform various roles, outlined below.

The first level is General Volunteer. A 2 hour class introduces the volunteer program & opportunities. The class also discusses bridge history and reconstruction.

After the General Volunteer class, two more workshops are held for Ambassadors. These are people who have identified their desire to commit to more time and responsibility. One class goes into more detail on future priorities, programs, the Walkway Master Plan, and Parks Policies. Then an "on-site" visit up on the bridge is scheduled to ensure volunteers can describe anything/everything our visitors see. Volunteer opportunities include staffing the weekend the Information Pavilions, assist with events, administrative and office support, assist with Digital Guest Book, greet visitors, offer elevator assistance, help with beautification of Walkway's gardens, & serve as docents for field trips & bus tours.

General Volunteers are required to complete required training and volunteer at least **6** times a year **2 to 4 hour shifts**.

Ambassadors are required to complete required training, volunteer at least **50** hours a year, be available for specific events and tours, assist with at least **8** hours of elevator assistance and has to volunteer a minimum **8** hours at either pavilion centers.

## **Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park**

### **Is there a fee to enter the park?**

New York State Parks does not charge a fee to access the Walkway. Permit fees will apply for some special events.

### **What are the hours of operation?**

The Park is open and staffed 7am to Sunset. (Note: All state parks close at sunset.) Selected volunteers open the gates at sunrise, weather permitting.

**What is the protocol for closing the bridge at the end of the day?** A half an hour before the bridge closes, a Parks employee goes out to the Poughkeepsie side, they drive over the Walkway alerting each person the Walkway closes in 30 minutes. A Parks employee is posted at each side of the bridge telling those who are just arriving, how much time is left until the bridge closes. Depending on the day, there will be a third person questioning at which side of the bridge they need to exit. At sunset, the Parks employees then direct people to their desired side of the bridge and close the gates. Elevator is set to close 1 hour prior to the park closing.

### **Is the Park open at night?**

The Park is open at night only for special events.

### **Is the Walkway open year-round?**

Yes. The Walkway is designed to allow year-round use; however the Walkway is sometimes closed during periods of inclement weather (e.g. thunderstorms, snow and ice). Snow is cleared from the bridge during the winter months.

### **Is there emergency access?**

Yes. Emergency vehicles can access and cross the bridge from either direction. The width of the approaches, bridge and the gates are wide enough and the bridge is strong enough handle the loading of the biggest emergency vehicle currently in service.

### **Is the Walkway accessible by public transit?**

Yes. The east end of the park is in downtown Poughkeepsie, which is currently served by City transit busses, shuttle busses from nearby colleges, and the Poughkeepsie Amtrak/Metro-North station. The Washington Street stairway access is less than half a mile from the train station and the Market Street bus stops.

### **Are bikes allowed on public transit?**

Bicyclists currently using Metro-North are allowed to bring their bicycles. There is a permit required and a fee of \$5.00. Rules and regulations are on Metro North's site at <http://www.mta.info/mnr/html/getaways/bikerule.htm>

### **Is there any security on the Walkway?**

Yes. Security cameras are on the bridge, as well as emergency phones (similar to those used on college campuses). There is a law enforcement presence by New York State Park Police and other security personnel, as necessary.

### **What improvements have occurred since Walkway's opening?**

The lighting along the bridge (on the south side) was completed in April of 2010. A stairway was added at Washington Street on the East side in August 2010. Permanent lighting for the parking lots and bridge approach trails was added 2010. The west pavilion was completed in March 2012 and the east Pavilion was completed in January 2013. The lighting, which will be used for special nighttime events, uses LED technology resulting in very low operating costs, excellent light uniformity and extensive life. Walkway's Mobile Web Tour was launched October 2013. The Mobile Web Tour is first of its kind in a NYS park.

### **Are pets allowed on the Walkway?**

Yes. Leashed dogs and other household pets are allowed on the bridge. Pets must be kept on a 6 foot leash. Pet owners will be responsible for the removal and proper disposal of pet waste. A Doggie Station is located on each approach with a watering station and doggie bags for clean up.

### **What amenities are provided?**

Basic amenities include restroom facilities at each end of the bridge, signage at the entrances and Walkway's Mobile Web Tour.

### **What recreational uses and special events are allowed?**

The bridge will provide recreational uses similar to a trail: walking, biking, rollerblading, jogging, etc. In addition, the Walkway hosts special events and park activities that are compatible with the Walkway. Group events are allowed only by special permit. Visit

<http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/parks/178/hours-of-operation.aspx> for more details.

### **Are there garbage cans?**

The Walkway is a carry-in, carry-out Park. There are no waste receptacles on the bridge. There are receptacles at each entrance.

### **How should pedestrians, bicyclists and dog walkers share the Walkway?**

All visitors should treat each other with courtesy and respect. Dogs should be kept on a 6 foot lead, under control, and at their owner's side. A zig-zagging dog causes accidents. Bicyclists should ride *slowly* in the middle and announce their presence with a simple "passing on your left". Joggers should also stay in the middle and announce their presence. Everyone should watch out for excited children and happy adults who are taking in the sights.

### **Are there extra considerations for special events?**

Yes, whether they are events with many people on the entire bridge or smaller events at an entrance or scenic outlook, volunteers are often needed to help manage foot traffic, provide information and help with parking or safety.

**Can we cross-country ski across the Walkway in the winter?** No. The surface of the Walkway is cleared of snow through-out the winter.

### **What is "Walkway's Mobile Web Tour?"**

The Walkway's Mobile Web Tour is an interactive, multi-media, and multilingual tour of the historic Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge and the surrounding Hudson Valley. It was developed with the objective of enhancing the visitors' experience – ensuring the visible beauty of the area while providing easy access to information about the bridge's history, its dramatic rehabilitation, and the many, varied visitor opportunities in the Hudson Valley.

### **Are the signs on the bridge color coded?**

Yes. Purple signs (A River Reborn) are about the Hudson River's animals. Blue signs (Hudson Highway) are about the ships on the Hudson River. Red signs (400 Years of History) are about the history of the area and Mid-Hudson Bridge. Green signs (from Rail to Trail) are about the construction of Walkway State Park.

**How do the self-composting toilets work?** Clivus multrum is a type of composting toilet and the name of a company that markets this brand name of composting toilets. "Clivus" is Latin for incline or slope; "multrum" is a Swedish composite word meaning "compost room," thus a "Clivus Multrum" is an inclining compost room.

Rapid aerobic composting will bring thermophilic decomposition in which bacteria that thrive at high temperatures (40-60 °C / 104-140 °F) oxidizes (breaks down) the waste into its components, some of which are consumed in the process, reducing volume, and eliminating potential pathogens. (From Wikipedia)

**What are the Brass Medallions in the center?**

The project received support from federal, state and local officials, state agencies, not-for-profit organizations, charitable foundations and many others generous donors. During the first year anniversary, Walkway recognized those donors who gave \$10,000 or more to the Build a Bridge Campaign which transformed the bridge. In the center of Walkway, on the North railing, customized brass medallions are installed which identify each donor by name. In 2010 Walkway Over the Hudson launched a "Stewards of the Walkway" campaign for additional sponsors who will donate \$10,000 and receive a medallions.

**Why are the West Gates called the Scenic Hudson Gates?**

The gates are in honor of Scenic Hudson's \$1 million donation which was pivotal to Walkway's reconstruction.

**Are privately owned motorized vehicles allowed in the Park?**

No. Only human powered equipment is allowed except for ADA compliant wheelchairs. No other motorized vehicles are allowed, including Segways and RipSticks®, which are not allowed in any NY State Park.

**Is the bridge safe?**

Yes. The bridge was designed to carry heavy freight trains – loads significantly heavier than the Walkway's visitors. Bergmann Associates and their sub consultants completed detailed engineering inspections of the bridge, including its underwater piers. The inspections confirmed that the bridge is structurally sound and will easily accommodate current and future pedestrian uses.

**How long will the Walkway structure endure?** With normal planned maintenance, Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park will be open for generations.



## Surrounding Area

**What are we looking at?** The Catskills, Poughkeepsie skyline, north and south banks of the river. Southern mountain peaks, Poughkeepsie rural cemetery structure.

### **What is the Bridge Music on the Mid-Hudson Bridge?**

Bridge Music is a public art project by Joseph Bertolozzi, which used sounds created by the Mid-Hudson bridge to compose a number of truly unique songs. Joseph Bertolozzi used the entire bridge as his instrument transforming the massive bridge into the world's largest percussion instrument. Using his laptop, some microphones and assortment of hammers he captured the various sounds from the bridge. With a little help from some employees of the New York State Bridge Authority he was able to get sounds from normally unreachable parts of the bridge, like the suspension ropes and atop the towers.

### **Tell me about the Hudson Valley Rail Trail.**

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail, created, supported and maintained by the forward thinking people of the Town of Lloyd in Ulster County. The trail stretches 4 miles, from the old railroad bridge over the Hudson between Poughkeepsie and Highland, meandering up and through the hamlet of Highland then heading west joining up with Route 299 half way to New Paltz at Tony Williams Park. You can reach its beginnings from the pedestrian sidewalk on the Mid-Hudson Bridge and follow it along its full length, stopping for lunch in Highland or sitting out at the Black Creek dangling your feet in the cooling waters as they ripple past.

### **What is the status of connecting to the Dutchess County Rail Trail?**

The connection to the Dutchess County rail trail system was completed Fall 2013. Now bicyclists, runners, walkers and rollerbladers are able to travel 13.1 miles to Hopewell Junction.

### **What is the Walkway Loop Trail?**

Crossing over the Walkway and the Mid-Hudson Bridge, this 3.6-mile loop offers thrilling river views and connects riverside parks, cultural attractions and historic points of interest on the Poughkeepsie and Highland waterfronts. Additional links provide easy access to 2.5 miles of nature trails in Franny Reese State Park as well as miles of rail trails in Ulster and Dutchess counties. Please Note: The Mid-Hudson Bridge is open to pedestrians, weather permitting, from dawn to dusk.

**What other State, Federal, Historic Parks are in the Area?** See Mobile Web Tour.

### **Tell me about Franny Reese State Park.**

On October 16, 2009, Scenic Hudson proudly dedicated its newest park to the memory of Frances "Franny" Reese (1917 - 2003), a Scenic Hudson founder and guiding spirit. This new park features 249 acres of impressive ridgeline just south of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Mid-Hudson Bridge. A new scenic overlook, opened in 2009, features dramatic views of the Mid-Hudson Bridge and the new Walkway Over the Hudson. The land boasts a broad array of tree species and features carriage trails and stone walls that crisscross the acreage.

A trail leads to the property from the Town of Lloyd's Johnson-Iorio Park, located immediately north of the bridge's Ulster County side. The path takes visitors under the bridge and connects them to a carriage trail that accesses the site. The park features 2.5 miles of woodland trails, impressive ruins of former estate buildings, and a Hudson River overlook with rustic benches made of native stone. Only two new state parks were added in the year 2009. Both parks were located in the Hudson Valley.

Please note that the access to the park from Haviland Road involves numerous stairs, then a carriage road trail which is a moderately strenuous hike. An alternative entrance to the park can be reached by car. Follow 9W south 1 mile to the Hannaford shopping plaza on the left. Follow Mack's Lane to parking at Old Lewisburgh Road.

**Is the River tidal?** Yes. Tidal waters influence the Hudson's flow as far north as Troy, where the river's southern-most dam is.



**Is the Hudson used for municipal drinking water?**

Yes, water is drawn north of the "salt line" which varies seasonally and in times of drought. Poughkeepsie's water plant is the southern-most continually used intake. New York City can draw water under emergency conditions in the Chelsea area where an aqueduct passes under the river.

**How deep is the river in the shipping channel?**

The water below you is 50-60 feet deep and the river's sediment is very thick. The deepest point in the Hudson is 175 feet at West Point.

**Does the Hudson freeze?**

Yes. A US Coast Guard Ice breaker keeps the shipping channel open to Albany during periods when the river is frozen. This allows heating oil to be transported by barge to river ports. Before bridges were built, when the river froze, people and animals walked across it. Also, ice harvesting was a major industry in the area.

**Do Ocean going ships use the river?**

Yes. Ships go to the Port of Albany, approximately 75 miles north. From there, goods can continue to be shipped on water west to the Great Lakes. Originally this was done via the Erie Canal which opened in 1825.

**Why is the Walkway bridge so much higher than the nearby vehicular bridge?**

Recall that the railroad bridge was the first of any bridge to span the Hudson. When built, it needed to be high enough to accommodate the mast of any sailing ship that might travel beneath it. Today the clearance requirement is merely 135 feet.

**When barges travel on the Hudson, why do Tugboats sometimes push, and why sometimes do they pull?**

A barge will be pushed or pulled depending on its design. A barge being pushed has an indent in the stern to allow for the bow of a tug to fit in and tie up to it. A barge being pulled typically doesn't have this indent. It may also depend on the design of the tug, as some are designed to pull, while others are better at pushing. However, there are some tugs out there that cannot do either, and are only used for ship-assist efforts - such as docking or escort through a tight curve.

**What is the oil bubbling up on the near the shore northeast of the Bridge?**

A long-gone manufactured gas plant spilled residues, such as coal tar and other oily gunk, into the soil on North Water Street near the Hudson River. Over time, the stuff leached underground and wound up in the river, explained John Maserjian, a spokesman for Central Hudson.

The plant was part of the company's infrastructure dating to the days when most cities had their own gas-making plants before natural gas pipelines came to the region. It was in operation from 1911 to 1972, when it was taken down.

The mats were put in the mud in April 2009, covering nearly a quarter acre and were removed in November 2010. They are part of research-and-development project to see how well such a method works and may lead to use by other utilities with gas-plant pollution problems.

Paul Haering, Central Hudson's vice president for engineering and environmental services, said the company is voluntarily doing a "site assessment" working with the state Department of Environmental Conservation to develop a plan to remedy the pollution. Remediation is ongoing at this time.

## Bridge History

### **What is the history of the bridge?**

The Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge is a remarkable achievement, first proposed in 1855. After the Civil War, the idea was taken more seriously. After several false starts, successful construction began in 1886. The first train crossed December 29, 1888. When the bridge opened in 1889, it was the longest bridge in North America and the first bridge to span the Hudson River between Albany and New York City. It became a key transportation hub linking western raw materials to eastern industrial centers until the fire in 1974 closed it.

### **What sort of trains used the bridge?**

In addition to freight trains, the bridge hosted passenger trains connecting Boston, New York, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington as early as 1890. Trolley cars termed "rapid transit", were modified to run on both trolley and railroad tracks and served tourists, students and shoppers (from New Paltz to Lucky Platt's). Special West Point Football trains ran from 1921-1930. Circus trains, milk trains, trains for hogs and cattle – the uses were varied and the impact was huge. At its peak as many as 3,500 rail cars crossed the bridge each day.

### **Did they ever need to reinforce the original design?**

Yes, for fear of "wobbling". Locomotives got bigger and heavier (after 1900 Rogers-built F-3s were 86-91 tons then Santa Fes were 280-295 tons), and were usually more heavily loaded eastward. Since the bridge was double tracked, this kept putting extra pressure on the down-river side of the bridge, which put a strain on the bridge. When diesels began arriving during World War II, they replaced the Santa Fes. (Need to research – how heavy were the Diesels?)

### **How many tracks were there?**

There were two sets of tracks until 1918, when gauntlet track, also called interleaved track, was installed to handle the weight of diesel locomotives. It was removed in 1958.

### **Was Rosendale Cement used?**

Yes. Rosendale cement was used in the original construction of the piers.

### **Was the Bridge ever painted?**

Yes, in World War II the bridge was painted black to make it less visible in the event of an attack. Painting continued until the 1960's. The high quality of the steel used in the original construction does not need to be painted. Metal experts during reconstruction stated that the absence of paint in fact helped keep the steel in the good condition it's in today.

### **What caused the fire?**

Probably a spark from a train's brakes. This is an excerpt from Carleton Mabee's book, page 247. "An hour after a Penn Central train with 100 cars crossed the bridge on May 8, 1974 a thick cloud of black smoke hung over the bridge. Wooden ties were soldering and wooden walkways were burning, fanned by a moderate breeze. Because Penn Central had no guards or maintenance men on the bridge at the time, the fire was not quickly reported. When firemen arrived at the site, they found they could not easily pump water up to the top of such a high bridge. When they tried turning on the water to flow into the steel pipe which ran the length of the bridge, a line meant to help fight fires, they found that because it had not been drained the previous winter, it had burst at several points – Penn Central had known it but had not repaired it." Read more in the book.

### **What is the history/tradition of Crew. Who still races today? Where is the finish line?**

The intercollegiate regatta as first held in Poughkeepsie in 1895 and was won by Columbia. Most of the leading young men of the area belonged to the amateur rowing association, which was instrumental in bringing the regatta to Poughkeepsie. The crews raced on part of the "Lange Racke," a long straight reach between Hyde Park and New Hamburg. The regatta attracted thousands to cheer on their favorite college crews; there was even an observation train for spectators. The last year of the regatta was 1947: California won. (Source, Images of America, Poughkeepsie Halfway Up the Hudson by Joyce C. Ghee and Joan Spence)

Today high school and college teams still train and race on the Hudson.

## **Bridge Reconstruction**

### **During reconstruction, what were the roles of the key organizations and agencies?**

The bridge was owned by the not-for-profit organization Walkway Over the Hudson who raised funds for the reconstruction and oversaw the activities. NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (New York State Parks) was "Lead Agency" under the State Environmental Quality Review Act. Federal Funds (secured by Congressman Hinchey) to cover a portion of design and construction costs were provided by the Federal Highway Administration, which is Lead Agency for National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), through the NYS Department of Transportation and the City of Poughkeepsie. The Dyson Foundation funded a significant portion of the design and inspection. NYS Bridge Authority and National Parks Service contributed technical advisory support. Consulting services were provided by the Bergmann Associates team.

### **How much did the project cost, and who will own and maintain it?**

The cost of reconstructing the Walkway project was \$38.8 million. The project was funded through a mix of private and public funds. Upon completion of the project, New York State Parks assumed responsibility for administering public use of the Walkway, including staffing, operating costs, and maintaining trail features and associated public facilities. Ownership of the bridge structure has been transferred to the New York State Bridge Authority which will be responsible for maintaining the bridge deck, steel superstructure, piers and substructure.

### **What was the timeline?**

The design phase was completed in the spring of 2008, and construction began in the summer of 2008. The installation of the concrete panels started in September 2008 and was finished within one year. The Walkway was completed and open to the public in the fall of 2009 as part of the 2009 Henry Hudson Quadricentennial (400th year) Celebration.

### **How did construction staging occur?**

The walkway surface was constructed using prefabricated concrete panels that were transported to the bridge. Starting at both the east and west ends of the bridge, the contractor placed panels one by one, working towards the center of the bridge. Construction was done during daytime hours.

### **When did construction start?**

Selection of fabricators for the bridge deck and the railings was completed in the spring of 2008. Fabrication of components started shortly thereafter and took a year to complete. In the summer of 2008, the existing railroad ties and railings on the bridge were removed. In the fall of 2008, the general contractor started installing panels and railings. The contractor also did necessary steel and concrete repairs to the existing bridge.

### **Who were the contractors doing the work?**

The removal of the old material from the bridge was done by Environmental Remediation Services, Inc, from Schenectady, NY. New panels were fabricated by the Fort Miller Co., Inc. from Schuylerville, NY. The bridge metal repair work and installation of the panels and railings was done by Harrison & Burrowes Bridge Constructors, Inc. from Glenmont, NY.

### **Were there repairs to the bridge which impacted the waterway and its habitat?**

During reconstructions, there were no underwater construction activities and therefore no adverse impacts to the river and its habitat. In November 2010, underwater pier repairs overseen by the New York State Bridge were performed. A small "cave" in one pier and a two-foot "scratch" in another were both repaired by fitting them with plastic bags, which were then pumped full with concrete. The voids were not an immediate problem, but would have caused continuing deterioration of the pier structure if not repaired. All of the piers were scanned using the latest sonar technology and no other significant problems were found.

**How was historic preservation consideration factored into the adaptation of the bridge into the Walkway project?**

The preservation of this nationally historic structure was one of the primary objectives of the project. Therefore, preserving its integrity was very important. The project designers worked with the Bureau of Historic Preservation to assure the historic integrity of the bridge was preserved. In May 2010, The Preservation league of New York State presented awards for Excellence in Historic Preservation to the Walkway and over 30 businesses and individuals involved in the project.

**What is the funny bump in the deck near the Highland side and on the Poughkeepsie side?**

It is where the Railroad Bridge design changes from truss to cantilever. Originally timber was used to smooth the transition. Now that the concrete panels are installed directly onto the steel structure, the transition is more obvious. There is one transition point on the West side. There are 2 transition points on the East side because of some differences in the original truss structure.

## Future Plans

### **What is the status of the River Access Project?**

Planning for an elevator and stairway at the Poughkeepsie waterfront using a \$2.4M federal stimulus grant continues. The design features an elevator cab with viewing windows on three sides looking north, south and west. The 7-by-12 foot elevator will hold 25 people, accommodate bicycles and provide views of the Hudson Valley through glass. The view during the two minute ride up and down will be spectacular. Visitors will see the vista of the Hudson River Valley open up before their eyes as the elevator rises 210 feet from the bank of the river. There will also be a close up view of the structural elements of the bridge which are invisible from the deck of the bridge. The elevator will allow people with limited mobility another approach to see the river. This is set to be finished by May 2014.

### **Will the bridge connect to trails on both sides of the river?**

The bridge will connect to several miles of rail trails already built or planned in Ulster and Dutchess Counties. The bridge was referred to as the Great Connector when it was built because it connected rail lines on both sides of the Hudson River.

October 2, 2010 – the section of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail in Highland connecting to the Walkway officially opened. At this time we cannot predict when the connection to the Dutchess County Rail trail on the east side will commence but the friends of the park organization is looking forward to working with Dutchess County to help complete the connection.

### **What are the economic benefits of the project?**

Walkway State Park has become a powerful tourism magnet attracting more than 2.5 million visitors since it opened in October, 2009.

Of those 2.5 million visitors nearly half come from outside Dutchess and Ulster counties (independent survey of nearly 1,000 Walkway visitors.)

Walkway State Park visitors have come from all 50 states and at least 42 countries (according to Walkway visitor guestbook signings of more than 7000 visitors)

2011 study verified that Walkway visitor spending results in a \$24 million annual economic impact for the Mid-Hudson Region. (Camoin Associates)

This new revenue results in 383 new jobs, \$9.4 million in new wages & \$779,000 in new tax revenues annually for Dutchess & Ulster counties.

**Will more amenities be added in the future?** Future amenities will include additional benches, more signage, shade structures, a visitor's center, bicycle facilities and landscaping on both the east and west approaches.

### **Whatever happened to the Plank Program?**

There have been a variety of fundraising efforts for Walkway Over the Hudson since its inception, but none was as enduring or garnered as much interest as the Plank program. At the time, the bridge deck was to be reconstructed using wooden planks and the idea for the fundraiser was that each donor would have their name--or the name of their choice--engraved on a plank that would become part of the final structure. Over one thousand donors responded to this fundraiser, contributing to the Walkway Over the Hudson's public support of one day opening the bridge to the public. To recognize these early visionaries, a plank donor sign has been created and is on display on the West entrance of the park.

### **Can I sponsor a bench?**

Yes. The Build a Bridge Campaign originally designated benches for donations of \$50,000 or above. But we will continue to offer an opportunity to add a name to a bench with the Stewards of the Walkway campaign for a donation of \$5,000.

