

# THE WATER GAP TIMES

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue Number 54 - Winter 2024



Stay connected with community happenings by following us on Facebook at Borough of Delaware Water Gap.

When the snow begins to fall, please remember that Ordinance 173 States:  
All sidewalks must be cleared within 24 hours of a snowfall.  
***This is the responsibility of the property owner.***



Main Street & Shepard Avenue are **SNOW EMERGENCY ROUTES** and are marked accordingly. All vehicles **MUST** be removed from these streets immediately during inclement weather or they will be towed at the owner's expense. If you are parked on a street that is not an emergency route we asked that, if at all possible, you move your vehicle from the roadway so that our snow removal can be completed more efficiently.

## Borough Office

49 Main Street  
PO Box 218  
Delaware Water Gap, PA 18327  
Phone: 570-476-0331 Fax: 570-476-0380

[boro@dwgpa.gov](mailto:boro@dwgpa.gov)  
[www.dwgpa.gov](http://www.dwgpa.gov)

Hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
After 1:00 p.m., by appointment.

Borough Secretary/Treasurer – Allisen Trotter  
Municipal Authority Secretary – Lauren Hoglund  
Borough Superintendent - Callum Whiffen  
Delaware Water Gap Police Department  
570-476-4674  
[police@dwgpa.gov](mailto:police@dwgpa.gov)

Chief of Police, Jim Fisher  
State Police – 570-619-6800

***Dial 911 for emergencies only***

## ***Borough Council***

Derek Anspach  
Charles Bickart  
William Buzzard  
Howard Ike  
Ian Foster  
Lisa Paulette  
Larry Freshcorn, Mayor  
*Council meetings are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.*  
*Council work sessions are held on 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.*

## ***Municipal Authority***

James Reynolds, Chair  
Harry Darlington, Vice Chair  
Martin W. Wilson, Secretary  
Jeff Higbee  
Steve Simister  
*Municipal Authority meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.*

## ***Planning Commission***

Derek Anspach, Chair  
Ann Biffen  
Gary Schubert  
*Planning Commission meetings are held as needed.*

## ***Zoning Hearing Board***

Frank Davis  
Carol Penna  
Dmitri Snytkine  
Harry Kent Darlington, Alternate  
*Zoning Hearing Board meetings are held as needed.*

## ***Building Code Board of Appeals***

James Holbrook  
Bob Mancuso

## ***Zoning Officer***

Michael Manter

## ***Building Inspector***

Dave Manter

## ***Emergency Management Coordinator***

Howard Ike

## ***Floodplain Administrator***

Walter Conway

## Council News!!!

Dear Borough Neighbors,

I hope everyone enjoyed their holiday and is ready to usher in 2024. Happy & Healthy New Year to all. As far as winter goes, the borough is prepared for whatever mother nature has in store for us. Our vehicles have been decked out with plows and loaded with salt. Our Superintendent is ready to make sure our roads are clear and safe for travel. He is on call day and night and ready to address all winter weather related issues.

As far as borough news, I am sad to report that our Borough Superintendent Chris Chmielnicki has moved out of the area and is no longer working for the borough. Chris did a fine job as superintendent and he will be missed. We wish him well in all his future endeavors. With that being said, I am happy to report that after extensive interviews, council has hired a new superintendent. Please join me in welcoming Superintendent Callum Whiffen to our Borough Family. Callum, has extensive experience in the areas of work that we need our borough superintendent to engage in. He has already started and is doing a great job. Welcome aboard Callum.

As many of you know we had an election last November. As a result of that election we now have three new council members, so please welcome Dr. Ian Foster, Charles Bickert and Fire Department Chief Howard Ike to our borough council. We are excited to have them all working on council and thank them in advance for their commitment to our borough. With the welcoming in of new council members we also have to say goodbye to council members that are retiring from service. Zack Booth, Terry Fagan and Jack Shoemaker will be retiring as council members. These gentlemen have done a great service to our borough and exemplify what it means to be a self-less volunteer. It is my understanding that Zack, Terry and Jack have graciously agreed to continue to work alongside borough council in an advisory capacity as committee members in some of our boroughs many public works committees. Thank you gentleman.

Without minimizing the contributions of any of the other retiring council members, I wanted to extend a special debt of gratitude, on behalf of the borough to Jack Shoemaker. Jack has given over thirty years of volunteer service to our borough. He has served our borough as a council member, committee chair, council president and in many other capacities. He is a leader in our community and much of what our borough is today is directly attributed to his leadership, service, and genuine desire to make our borough a wonderful place to live. Thank you Jack.

Finally with regard to our last election, I am very proud to report that our borough had a fifty (50) percent voter turn-out meaning that half the registered voters in our borough voted. This is truly outstanding since the average turnout for municipalities in our county was about half that. We may be a small borough, but we have a large voice. It is that voice that will force legislators to consider us for grants, public works projects and affords us greater access to state and federal funds. They need our votes and despite being the smallest municipality in the county they recognize that we cannot be ignored. Good Job DWG – Keep Voting!!!

Lastly, as many of you are already aware, I have been elected to be our new District Judge. As such, pursuant to the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of District Judges I am required to resign my position as a member of borough council. At the next council public meeting on January 2, 2024, our new borough council will fill my seat and select a new president. It has been my absolute honor to have been the president of our borough council. I am very grateful to have worked with so many dedicated council members and members of our community. Together we were able to accomplish many goals, overcome many obstacles and adversities, and kept the borough safe, running effectively and efficiently. I will continue to be of service to the borough in my capacity as a firefighter and an EMT and will always be available to advise and assist our borough council and residents.

Thank you – Sincerely,  
Jamie Levy, Esq.  
Outgoing Borough Council President  
Incoming Magisterial District Judge

*The Borough of Delaware Water Gap*  
AN APPALACHIAN TRAIL COMMUNITY

**Mayors Corner**  
Winter 2024

Happy Holidays fellow residents! It's truly a pleasure to drive around our little Borough looking at the light decorations this year. It's great to see everyone in the festive spirit! I'll start with the 611 closure. As many of you know there was a set back involving the permit that PennDot submitted to the National Park Service. Apparently the amount of rock remediation that PennDot has planned, needed further study from the Park Service before the permit can be issued. So, once again we are in a holding pattern. PennDot did have a contractor clearing the road of debris, rocks and tree limbs a couple of weeks ago in anticipation of the remediation work but it's still unclear when a permit will be granted. In my conversations with PennDot, they are still wanting to open a single lane once phase one of the project is completed.

The Borough police Dept is still looking for Officers. The Personnel Committee has received a couple of applications and hopefully they can be forwarded to our Chief for background checks and further considerations. I'd also like to congratulate our new Chief, James Fisher, on his new position as Chief and I look forward to working with him! The Borough has an ad out looking for new candidates but sometimes word of mouth works even better. If you know someone in law enforcement and is interested in working for our great town, please forward them to me or our Borough manager. We would love to hear from them!

Wreaths Across America was a great event this year! The cemetery sold more wreaths than we needed which is always great to see and the extras will carry over to next year. If you sponsored a wreath, our cemetery association thanks you for your support as we remember the veterans buried in our cemetery. I will have pictures posted on my Facebook page soon and I'll see if we can put a few on the Borough web page.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Council members who will be stepping in January of 2024. I offer my congratulations and look forward to working with them. I'd like to also thank those members that will be leaving our Board. Their dedication and hard work keep our Borough the most desirable place to live as the gateway to the Poconos.

Lastly, I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year! Stay warm and I hope to see you around the Gap!

Larry Freshcorn,  
Mayor DWG.



**Chili & Trivia Night**  
**Thursday, February 8th**  
**6:00 PM**

**Dutof Museum & Gallery**  
**24 Main Street**  
**Delaware Water Gap**

**\$12.00 per person**  
**Salad, Chili, & Homemade Cornbread**  
**Dessert**  
**Seating is limited**  
**B.Y.O.B**

## Local History Spot

By Marty Wilson

### Is It Time To Revise Water Gap's Founding Story?

Computers and the internet have revolutionized historical research. Countless documents have been digitized and made available to researchers who can view them from the comfort of their homes. Recently my wife, Susan, has spent weeks scanning online sources for information about the founder of Dutotsburg (now Delaware Water Gap), Antoine Dutot. What she has found requires us to revisit the accepted story about the founding of our village.

Most Water Gapians know the basic narrative of the borough's founding story: in 1793 Antoine Dutot, a French plantation owner in Saint Dominique (today's Haiti), fled a slave rebellion there and made his way to a plot of land just north of the famous Delaware Water Gap where he founded a town named after himself.

How do we know this story? In 1832 Maxmilian, Prince of Weids, visited the area and met Dutot. In his journal he describes him as an elderly man who had once been a wealthy planter in the Caribbean but who had lost his fortune in the wilds of Pennsylvania. Maxmilian does not mention the 1793 founding date, however. A book published in 1870 does offer the date for the founding of Dutotsburg, but it is 1794, not 1793. The book contains the reminiscences of George La Bar who was a contemporary of Dutot.

In 1867, Luke Brodhead published his book on the Water Gap. Brodhead claims the year Dutot came to the area was 1793. Most publications since Brodhead's book adopt his date for the founding. It is the date that currently appears on signs welcoming motorists to the borough and on banners hanging on Main St.

Susan has found information that sheds light on this story. Here is some of what she has found:

Antoine Dutot was born in France (Criquet sur Ranville, Calvados, Basse-Normandy, to be exact). His father, Nicolas Dutot, was a plantation owner. A July 8, 1786, advertisement in Saint Dominique offering a reward for a runaway slave says the reward would be paid by "Sir Dutot," a local cooper. That Dutot was probably Antoine or his father. On August 10, 1791, Antoine Dutot married Marie-Adelaide Mire in Port-Au-Prince. Marie-Adelaide was born on the island. On June 6, 1793, Antoine's name appears as a witness on the marriage record of his half-sister in Port-Au-Prince, indicating that he was still on the island at that point.

Now we get to the interesting bits. Susan discovered what appears to be the manifest (list of passengers) of the ship that brought Dutot to the United States. He arrived in Philadelphia on November 12, 1793, on the schooner *Hester*. The *Hester* sailed to Philadelphia from Jamaica, not Haiti. Traveling with him was John B. LeNoir. Dutot's wife's name does not appear on the ship's list of passengers. A deed shows that on February 19, 1794, Dutot bought 418 acres of land in Lower Smithfield Township. This land became Dutots Town, then Dutotsburg, and finally, long after Dutot's death, Delaware Water Gap. At the time of the sale, Dutot and Peter LeMaigre, the seller, both lived in Philadelphia. Hence, the evidence seems to suggest that our village was founded in 1794, not 1793. On August 7, 1794, Dutot purchased another 468 acres in Lower Smithfield Township from John Smith. By then he was living here.

We know that Dutot's wife, Adelaide, eventually joined him because they had eight children between 1796 and 1818. The local newspaper's announcement of Antoine's death indicates that he died on December 4, 1842, (not 1841, as is written on the plaque near his burial place on Sunset Hill). Adelaide died in Stroudsburg on November 17, 1853.

It appears, then, that parts of the borough's founding story ring true. Dutot was a French planter living in Saint Dominique when the famous slave rebellion broke out. He did sail to Philadelphia in 1793. He had sufficient sums to enable him to buy large tracts of land. He was living here by 1794.

But this new evidence raises questions. For example, why didn't Adelaide sail with Antoine? Why did the ship that brought Antoine to Philadelphia sail from Jamaica? What happened to John B. LeNoir? "Le Noir" in French means "the black." Was Le Noir a black freedman in Dutot's employ? Did Dutot see the land that would become Dutotsburg before he bought it? Perhaps the answers to these questions will one day be discovered.