

BIG SAVAGE TUNNEL DEDICATION
FRIDAY, MAY 26, 2006

SCRIPT

Hank Parke: Welcome

Thanks for coming
Reference 2003 event, rained out by Hurricane Isabel, postponed until now
Opportunity to celebrate not only the most significant construction project along the GAP, the restoration of the Big Savage Tunnel, but celebrate the completion of the entire trail through Somerset County

Jim Marker:

Recognize people in audience: Sen Kasunic, Rep Bastian, Eileen Melvin,
Proud moment for Somerset County
What trail means to the County
Introduce Sec Michael DiBerardinis

Mike DiBerardinis
Remarks

Hank introduces Sec Audrey Scott. The tunnel was needed to connect the two states, and all the effort has been seamless across the two states. Happy to welcome Sec Scott to PA.

Audrey Scott
Remarks

Hank comments on Mason and Dixon in the audience, the fact that they are certifying once again that we are truly in Penn's Colony and that it was appropriate for the Commonwealth of PA to foot the bill for the tunnel's restoration.

Introduce ATA board members, past and present. Without ATA, and the vision of connecting Pittsburgh to DC right through this mountain, this would not have happened. Introduce Linda Boxx.

Linda Boxx
Brief history of putting the funding together. Thank DCNR, NPS, private funders, Tunnel Sponsors, PennDOT Introduce Rick Geist

Rick Geist
Remarks

Hank introduces Brett Hollern

Brett Hollern

Brief remarks about the construction project. Acknowledge Big Jim and ACT, acknowledge Gannett-Fleming, Paul Lewis, etc. Two people need special recognition. To say that project was difficult, was strewn with obstacles, doesn't begin to describe it. There was the physical challenge: the liner was collapsed in several places, and the integrity of the rest of the liner was in question. The price kept escalating, and the project was halted many times for many reasons. But two people stuck with it,,and stuck their necks out, to get this finished. Jim Eppley and Rolland Rhodomoyer, please come up and accept our thanks and token of our appreciation. (Linda help present.)

Hank then asks those on stage to move to gates. Instructs those wanting to bicycle through the tunnel to get bikes and line up behind Bike PA jersey. Caution riders that they need to be careful. No stopping inside the tunnel. Turn around once they are out, but don't head back until everyone is through.

Gates rise, Ned blows train whistle to signal bikers can begin ride through tunnel.