

## Newsletter Fall 2016

Octoraro  
Watershed  
Association



# OWA Turns 50!

Celebrating 50 years of preserving and protecting the natural and historic resources of the Octoraro.



Pat Fasano & Levi Fisher  
on a Farm Visit

### President's Message

Holiday Greetings from OWA! As the chilly weather arrives and the last of the leaves turn and fall, all of us who live in this beautiful area can reflect on the blessings we have. Our watershed contains 208 square miles of prime farmland, rich soils, diverse plants and wildlife, and vibrant and close-knit communities. As we enter our 50th year of service to you and your neighbors, we can look back on a productive year and look towards a busy 2017.

In this issue, we have a fascinating summary of our work through the last half-century; a report on our booth at the Solanco Fair; and a look at some of the exciting new projects we are starting. As usual, we would love to have our membership participate in our endeavors to preserve and protect the watershed. Keep your eye on our website to stay updated on our Spring Cleanup and Annual Meeting (both in April 2017).

A warm welcome to Frank Humbert, who has joined the Board representing the Chester Water Authority.

Finally, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to send out our sincerest thanks and appreciation to Ed Thayer. Ed has been an active member of OWA for many years, most recently serving on the Board as both a regular board member and as President. His knowledge of the region, its people and resources, and his skill in fencing and boundary installations have made him an invaluable leader and partner. Ed has moved up to Maine, where we are sure the local community will benefit greatly from his experience and work ethic. Best of luck, Ed, and thank you!



Ed and Twist,  
one of his Golden Retrievers

As usual, I would love to hear from you. Please send any correspondence to the address/e-mail or phone number on this newsletter. I look forward to seeing you in the new year.

**Yours in Conservation,  
Anders Alfelt  
President, OWA**

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### Mark your Calendars

- Octoraro Reservoir Clean-up:**  
Saturday April 8,  
2017 @ 9 a.m.
- Annual Dinner Meeting:**  
Thursday April 27,  
2017 @ 5:30 p.m.

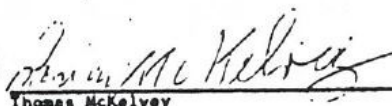
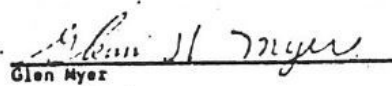
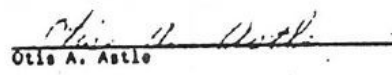
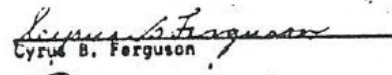
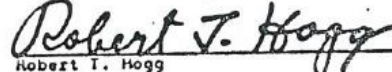
## The Octoraro Watershed Association

### A Historical Perspective

By: Arba L. Henry & Patrick Fasano

Over the past fifty (50) years, the Octoraro Watershed Association has remained focused on its core mission, to “restore and protect the natural resources of the scenic Octoraro Creek and to preserve and protect its farmlands, forests, and rural heritage through education, outreach, restoration, and community stewardship.”

Formed in 1967, the Association was formally recognized by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a nonprofit organization on June 17, 1968 followed on October 14, 1968 by articles of incorporation. At the time of incorporation, the following Chester and Lancaster County residents were appointed to serve as directors: Thomas McKelvey, Colerain Township; Glen Myer, Colerain Township; Otis A. Astle, Upper Oxford Township; Cyrus B. Ferguson, Colerain Township; and Robert T. Hogg, Lower Oxford Township.

seals this <u>14th</u> day of <u>October</u> 1968.	<u>Address</u>
 _____ (SEAL) Thomas McKelvey	R. D. 1, Oxford, Pennsylvania Colerain Township, Lancaster County
 _____ (SEAL) Glen Myer	Kirkwood, Pennsylvania Colerain Township, Lancaster County
 _____ (SEAL) Otis A. Astle	R. D. 1, Oxford, Pennsylvania Upper Oxford Township, Chester County
 _____ (SEAL) Cyrus B. Ferguson	R. D. 1, Oxford, Pennsylvania Colerain Township, Lancaster County
 _____ (SEAL) Robert T. Hogg	Oxford, Pennsylvania Lower Oxford Township, Chester County

Although no minutes of the meetings of this early group are documented, it was the initial belief that this Association was formed by the concern that the Chester Water Authority was going to condemn more farmland by raising the dam, thus increasing the size of the existing reservoir. Today, however, the Chester Water Authority is a proud supporter of the Association, both financially and physically by providing an office for the Association.

Again, little is known about the Association between 1967 and 1982, although we do know from their Articles of Incorporation through the Chester County Court of Common Pleas, three (3) things: (1) the names and addresses of the five (5) individuals who founded the Association in 1967, (2) the registered office of the Association was R.D. #1, Oxford, Pennsylvania (Chester County); and most importantly (3) the purpose of the corporation was to “promote the restoration and conservation of the natural resources of the Octoraro Creek Watershed by scientific research, study, education and other proper means, and to disseminate such information as will contribute to and assist in the restoration and conservation of the said Octoraro Creek Watershed...”. As one can see, the founding purpose and the current Mission of the Association complement each other, even with fifty (50) years separating the two dates.

We do know that in the late 1970's and early 1980's the Association became more actively involved in conservation work through streambank fencing and stream cattle crossings. However, one of the most notable events, because of the diligent work of the Association, occurred in 1982 when the Octoraro Creek was designated a scenic river. This was one of the first scenic river designations in Pennsylvania.

In 1986 an Octoraro Task Force was formed to address the implementation of the Scenic Rivers plan. It was during this time that some of the stalwart watershed farmers such as A. Dale Herr and Kenneth Shoemaker became very active in the Association. As a result of this task force, on August 20, 1987, the Secretary of the Commonwealth’s Department of State reaffirmed the Octoraro Watershed Association, Inc. of 100 Ashville Road, Nottingham, Little Britain Township, as a nonprofit corporation. It was in this document that a Mission Statement of the Association first appeared in writing when it stated: **“To promote the conservation, protection, preservation, and restoration of the natural and historic resources of the Octoraro Watershed by means of scientific research and investigation; property acquisition for the protection of the Octoraro Scenic Corridor, and educational programs, projects, and demonstrations.”** This document was signed by Association members Hugh Hetzer, chief of treatment of the Chester Water Authority and Association member, and John Yorkey of Academy Road, Colerain Township, also an Association member.



8. The name(s) and post office address(es) of each incorporator(s) is (are):

NAME	ADDRESS (Including street and number, if any)	
Hugh W. Hetzer	461 Sproul Road, Kirkwood, Pa.	17536
John Yorkey	501 Academy Road, Oxford, Pa.	19363

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, the incorporator(s) has (have) signed and sealed these Articles of Incorporation this 20th day of August, 1987  
*Hugh W. Hetzer* (SEAL)      *John J. Yorkey* (SEAL)

In keeping with the Mission, educational programs have included the design and construction of a Nature Study Center for Lancaster County school districts, and collaboration with teachers to develop a curriculum which utilizes the Center throughout the students’ educational careers. The Association has also worked with area high school clubs and organizations on streambank restoration projects and water-quality studies.

In a unique outreach to the Amish community the Association working with their school elders and teachers developed environmental education and sustainable farming curricula for the students in their schools.

In recent years, the Association, through grants from foundations, companies, and individuals, has continued to develop programs and projects to address the ever changing environmental concerns within the watershed. In addition, through a general membership newsletter and exhibits, the Association continues to build upon its mission by highlighting historical, environmental, scientific and educational issues within the watershed.

**Do you have any photos, papers or reminiscences about the early days of the Association (especially before 1982) that you would be willing to share with us? We’d love to make copies for our archives, include them in the next newsletter and/or put them on display at the Annual Dinner.**



### A quick look at some active grants and an exciting new partnership.

We have received two grants totaling \$92,800 from PA DEP's Growing Greener program. These enable Pat and our Amish Liaisons to visit farms in the Lancaster County portion of the watershed with a focus on Nickel Mines Run, Meeting House Creek and Bell's Run. A third grant, of \$10,000, from the PA Foundation for Watersheds applies to the whole of the PA portion of the watershed. The goal of the grants is to get commitment from farmers with Conservation Plans to implement the Best Management Practices (BMPs) specified in those plans, or preparation of Conservation / Manure Management Plans, depending upon the farmers' level of readiness. Meanwhile, design work continues on the stormwater management and stream restoration in Veterans Memorial Park in Rising Sun. This is a partnership with the Town of Rising Sun, the Center for Watershed Protection, and Ecotone, with grant funding to the town from the MD DNR Trust fund of \$633,710.

We have also entered into an exciting new partnership with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay who have secured two grants from National Fish & Wildlife Foundation totaling \$798,000. The first is a Technical Capacity grant to synthesize and analyze existing information gathered by OWA and Chester County Water Resources Authority, visit 10 high priority farms with Conservation Plans in the source water protection area and secure commitments to implement the Plans' BMPs. **The second, much larger grant, will install these BMPs and build the capacity of OWA and partners to continue this work long after the grant is completed. The Environmental Finance Center will work with OWA and partners to develop a sustainable funding strategy to cost-share prioritized BMPs and support a dedicated, full-time Octoraro Agricultural Technician to manage an increased demand for BMP installation.** This is exciting news indeed which will help to set us up for the next 50 years! Many thanks to the Alliance and all our funders and partners.

**While grants fund our projects, they explicitly forbid funding our administrative costs. So to "keep the lights on", seek grants and build partnerships, we are reliant on donations and membership dues.**

### Celebrating our 50th at the Solanco Fair Peg O'Grady

As we have done for decades, the OWA sponsored a booth at the Solanco Fair. OWA volunteers, board members and employees of supporting agencies contributed their time to staff the booth for the entire fair.

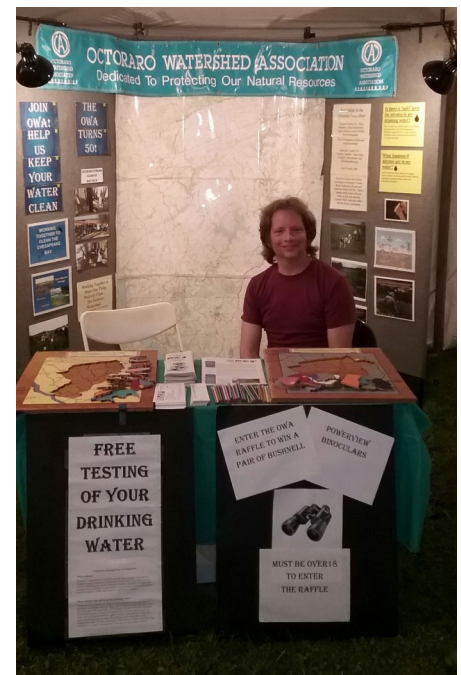
A sincere THANK YOU goes out to all who volunteered their time. It was a wonderful opportunity for the members of the Solanco community and beyond to start the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the founding of the OWA.

The booth featured a wooden puzzle of the Octoraro Watershed created by Rupert Rossetti which was a favorite of the children. Countless people stopped to talk with our volunteers regarding their concerns, methods to improve water quality and discuss activities that the OWA has sponsored and will continue to sponsor in order to improve water quality. Almost 550 inscribed pens were given away to engage people in discussion and to promote the OWA.

To add to the festivities, the OWA raffled off a pair of Bushnell binoculars. One hundred and thirty-one people entered the raffle and Christina A. of Lancaster was the winner. She was very excited and appreciative.

Finally, 48 water sample bottles were taken by individuals who were interested in investigating the nitrate level in their drinking water.

Overall, the OWA booth at the Solanco Fair was a complete success and a good time was had by all.



*Board President Anders Alfelt  
at the OWA Booth*



**Spring Clean-ups—2016**

**Sat April 2nd** – Octoraro @ Richardsmere, MD – Trash Pick-up

Organized by George Raley, 97 volunteers from Octoraro Lakes, Conowingo Elementary School and West Nottingham Academy cleared 1,200 lbs trash + 340 lbs tires in a steady rain.



**Sat April 16th** – Octoraro Reservoir @ Scroggy Road, PA – Trash Pick-up

Organized by Linda Swank, 30 volunteers from the watershed association, Solanco High School Honor Society and West Nottingham Academy cleared 1000 lbs of trash + 240 lbs of tires.



**Sat May 7th 2016** —Triangle Dog Park , Rising Sun , MD— Invasives Removal and Tree Planting

Organized by Commissioner Dave Warnick, Bryan Lightner & Rupert Rossetti, 30 volunteers from the local community and West Nottingham Academy cleared a dumper load of invasives and planted 63 trees and shrubs donated by the Octoraro Native Plant Nursery.

### **Stream Clean-ups April 2017**

**Mark your calendars for a clean-up of the Octoraro East Branch at Scroggy Road on April 8, We are partnering with the Chester Water Authority. Additional clean-ups are planned in PA & MD. See website for details**

Octoraro  
Watershed  
Association



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#### **Officers**

**President: Anders Alfelt**

**Vice-President: Linda Swank**

**Treasurer: Matt Kehoe**

**Secretary: Rupert Rossetti**

#### **Board Members**

**Pat Fasano**

**Arba Henry**

**Frank Humbert - CWA**

**Axel Linde**

**Newsletter Editor: Rupert Rossetti**

[rupertrossetti@aol.com](mailto:rupertrossetti@aol.com)

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# OWA Turns 50!

Please consider a special year-end donation  
to the Association.

**\$50 for 50**

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