



WCWANews

The White Clay Watershed Association a non-profit organization since 1965

Spring 2000

Wrong Way to Celebrate Landenberg Bridge Centennial!

Annual native plant Sale April 15 at the Upstream Festival

The Stroud Water Research Center once again is the host for our major fundraising event. We will feature a wide selection of trees, shrubs, grasses and perennials suitable for a variety of habitats. Several fine local nurseries grow and donate plants especially for our sale. We will have knowledgeable gardeners on hand to answer questions and recommend the appropriate plants for your situation. Your current membership entitles you to a 10% discount on all plants. Our goal is to help the community's lawns and gardens become excellent water quality citizens as well as places of enhanced beauty and biodiversity. We hope to see you there!

-Dale Hendricks

By David R. Hawk

The Landenberg Bridge, built in 1899, has carried traffic across the east branch of the White Clay Creek for a century now and is an integral part of the historic village of Landenberg. It sits near the Landenberg Hotel and the Landenberg Store and across from the Wool House, the only remaining building of the Landenberg Woolen Mills. It is the third bridge at this site - the first was a covered bridge built in 1856, the second was an iron bridge built in 1871.



A view of the Landenberg Bridge early in the 20th century. The Landenberg Hotel, the Store, and the Lund Woolen Mill can be seen behind the bridge. On the right is a tenant house for mill workers.

The Landenberg Bridge was placed on the National Register

of Historic Places in 1988 by PennDOT along with 135 other historic bridges owned by the state. The Landenberg Bridge was included for its engineering significance - it is a Pratt pony truss bridge, an unusual style in S. E. Pennsylvania, and it has an unusual cantilevered sidewalk. This cantilevered walkway hangs out over the White Clay on the northern side of the bridge. It is segregated from vehicular traffic by the truss and provides for safe

pedestrian traffic across the bridge. It is a popular spot from which to view the stream.

Over time the bridge has

(continued on page 4)

Castle Press Release/Chambers Family	page 2
OnLine Nature Store	page 3
Landenberg Bridge (cont)	page 4
StreamWatch)	page 5
Calendar/political press	page 6
Landenberg Bridge (cont)	page 7
Membership	page 8

OFFICERS

Catherine C. Larmore,
President
West Grove, PA
larmore@vt.edu

Dale Hendricks,
Vice-President
Landenberg, PA
dale@
northcreeknurseries.com

Ed O'Donnell,
Vice-President
Newark, DE
eodonn3312@aol.com

Andrea Withers, Secretary
Landenberg, PA

David Hawk, Treasurer
Landenberg, PA
dhawk@ccil.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cyril Caster
Landenberg, PA

William Hutchings
wmhutch@inet.net

Janet Kalb
Landenberg, PA

René Marks
Newark, DE
renemarks@earthlink.net

William Marsden
Avondale, PA
wjmarsden@aol.com

Anthony Masulaitis
Landenberg, PA

Dorothy Miller
Newark, DE

Ginger North
Landenberg, PA
ginger@dnsashland.org

Sally Rickerman
Landenberg, PA
sshrr@earthlink.net

Chris Rogers
Cecil County, MD

Yda Schreuder
Landenberg, PA
ydas@udel.edu

Gary Schroeder
Landenberg, PA
gmschroeder@oakshire.com

Judith Shuler
West Grove, PA
judy_shuler@kennett.net

Joseph B. Siedlarz
St. Davids, PA

Linda Stapleford
Newark, DE
lindas@dnsashland.org

Kristen Travers
Avondale, PA
ktravers@stroudcenter.org

Thomas Zawislak
Landenberg, PA
zawisla@smxcorp.com

WCWA CONTACT

Visit our WEBSITE
<http://www.ccil.org/~wcwa>
any questions or additions:
dhawk@ccil.org

on the phone:
610-274-8499

newsletter design:
Larry & Joan Fenza
lfenza@bigfoot.com

Castle Unveils His Legislation to Protect White Clay Creek & Designate it Wild & Scenic

Calling the White Clay Creek one of America's free flowing treasures, Delaware Congressman Michael N. Castle today announced his plan to conserve and protect the watershed's natural, historic and recreational resources by designating the creek and valley Wild and Scenic. Castle also discussed his new role as a Member of the Northeast-Midwest Congressional Coalition and what this means for Delaware.

"The combination of the White Clay Creek Watershed's unique features and the strong local support for protecting the watershed justify its designation as a Wild and Scenic River," Castle said. "My legislation would prohibit federal funds from being used to interfere with the free-flowing nature of the river and its resources, thereby ensuring the vitality of the region for generations to come.

Castle's bill, H.R.3556, the "White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic Rivers System Act," ensures that the river received permanent protection from federally-licensed or assisted water resource projects (dams, diversions, channeling) that would have a direct and adverse affect on its free-flowing condition or outstanding remarkable resources. In doing so, it elevates the status of the river in competing for federal preservation grants. However, this does not mean that existing wastewater treatment plants or potential reservoir sites cannot be expanded to accommodate carefully planned residential, commercial and industrial growth.

The White Clay Creek was designated as a potential addition to the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System in 1991, as part of The White Clay Creek Study Act. In order to determine if the White Clay Creek could be added to this system, a thorough survey and management plan was put together over the past few years to provide recommendations for the protection and management of the Creek. It details the role of the state and local governments and affected landowners. In September, 1999, the National Parks Service released its final report as ordered by Congress recommending the size and scope of the wild and scenic designation for the White Clay Creek—191 miles, 24 miles as scenic and 167 miles as recreational.

The next step is for the Congress to pass Castle's bill and for the President to sign it into law so the White Clay Creek will be protected. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers have been protected under legislation since 1968. Over 150 rivers throughout the United States have been labeled Wild and Scenic and are used for public recreation, including class 5 rapids, float casting for trout and strolling along the banks.

(see related story on page 6)

Chambers Family Historical Material Donated

by David R. Hawk

Barbe Ballard Breylinger of Bigfork, Montana has recently donated a scrapbook of historical material concerning the Chambers family to the Association. The Chambers family became one of the pioneer families in the watershed when John Chambers purchased a 664-acre tract known as the "Hop Yard" in 1720. Much of this tract, which straddled the state line, is now in the White Clay Creek Preserve. Many place-names, such as Chambers Rock Rd., can be traced to this family. The bank house that serves as the nature center for the Delaware Preserve is an old Chambers family home that was known in the family as "Stairways". The scrapbook contains copies of old letters, deeds, photographs, and genealogical material selected from two trunks of material in Barbe's possession. Included in the material was an 1876 home remedy for rheumatism recorded by Mary Jane Kemble Chambers (a daughter of the family for which Kemblesville is named):

Home Remedy for Rheumatism

Take black snake root ¼ of a lb. Bark of prickly ash root ¼ of a lb. And cover them with the best Old rye whiskey and let it stand 10 days then pour it off if their is one pint of the tincture add a piece of salt petre the size of a small hickory nut and then take a tea spoon full three times a day before each meal for 2 weeks then stop one week then go on as before This time will clear the rheumatism entirely out of the system.



WCWA Opens On-Line Nature Store

by David R. Hawk

The White Clay Watershed Association has opened an on-line Nature Store at its website. At the Nature Store you can purchase over 8000 nature related items using your credit card without even leaving your home. Available items include educational books on animals, plants, geology, forests, natural history, conservation, gardening, and birds. Also available are optical equipment such as binoculars and even jewelry and gifts. A portion of the proceeds from each sale will go to support the Watershed Association's programs.

Items at the Nature Store are priced at a fairly good discount below retail prices (a good deal since nature education books are rarely discounted at bookstores since they don't tend to be best sellers). You do have to pay a postage and handling fee for your purchases, however. The break-even point for book sales seems to be around \$30. That is, if your were to purchase on-line the same books that would cost you \$30 at your local mega-bookstore, the discount would roughly cover

the shipping and handling fee and you would still pay around \$30. However if you were to buy \$50 worth of books you would only pay about \$45 including shipping and handling - a savings of almost 10%. Similarly you would save about 15% on a \$100 order. The best part, of course, is that your purchases help support the Watershed Association!

Does the WCWA need



volunteers to help staff a warehouse and fill orders from our Nature Store? No, we have better uses for your volunteer time than that! The WCWA Nature Store is actually an Internet "Portal" to a company in Naples, Florida called Birding.com that has selected appropriate merchandise, made the purchasing and shipping arrangements, and developed the Internet server software to handle our orders. Birding.com provides similar

Nature Stores to other environmental groups around the country such as several chapters of the Audubon Society. Birding.com handles all the order taking, credit card processing, and shipping for all of these groups and, of course, takes a small percentage of each order as their profit.

The Nature Store uses "secure server" technology to ensure that your credit card information is safe. Your card numbers are encrypted (using 128-bit encryption algorithms - the best available) to ensure that no one other than Birding.com can read it as it travels over the Internet. Shopping using secure server technology is safer than giving your credit card to a clerk or waitress who disappears for a minute or two before returning your card.

The next time you are looking for a gift for a favorite niece or nephew, or if you are just looking for a book for yourself, remember to visit the WCWA website. Whatever you are looking along the line of nature education is probably there, and you can have it shipped anywhere you want. It has never been easier to support the Watershed Association!

from page one

suffered from neglect and botched repairs. Structural members are severely rusted and have been subjected to numerous quick fixes. At some point truss struts at the center of the bridge on each side were welded together where they crossed. In order to properly perform their structural function within the truss these struts should have been left unconnected. They would need to be replaced since the welding has damaged the internal structure of the metal. PennDOT says these struts and other needed replacement parts are no longer available and would be very expensive to fabricate today. For this reason they have concluded that it is not feasible to repair the bridge and return it to its original condition 100 years ago.

PennDOT scheduled the bridge for replacement several years ago, but the work was postponed and postponed. Last summer, before work even began, the bridge was abruptly condemned after a routine inspection. It is expected that it will be several years before a new bridge is in place. PennDOT has finally announced plans for this new bridge, but area residents and the White Clay Watershed Association have safety, historic and aesthetic concerns that have not been properly addressed in the new design.

The old bridge is 18 ft wide. PennDOT wants to replace this with a new bridge that is 32 ft wide. Area residents feel that the relatively narrow current bridge has had a traffic calming effect over the years and has served to limit speed down the steep, narrow and winding road leading to the bridge. It is felt that a wide bridge would encourage excessive speed and could lead to more accidents in the future.



The excellent restoration of the Wollaston Rd. Bridge north of Kennett Square done by Chester County in 1992 is seen as an example of what should be done for the Landenberg



The restoration of the Wollaston Rd. Bridge involved dismantling the old bridge, building a new modern supporting structure, and rebuilding the old bridge on top of it.

The road leading down to the bridge is very steep - it drops 200 ft. in about 1/3 of a mile. The speed limit posted at the top of the

continued on page 7

Streamwatch

The White Clay Streamwatch began in 1991 due to concerns about increasing development in the watershed. A partnership was formed with the Stroud Water Research Center to develop a biological monitoring program that produced meaningful and high quality data. Over the years, as the Watershed Association became more proficient with the techniques and identification of macroinvertebrates, the program evolved. Additional sites were added in PA and eventually 3 sites in DE (in conjunction with the DE Nature Society) to provide a more comprehensive view of the entire watershed. As of 1999, 15 sites were being monitored.

In 1999 a shift was made in how the samples were processed. College interns working in the Stroud Centers entomology lab were employed to sort and identify the 6 most critical PA sites. As in previous years the samples were identified to the family level. During 1999 the Watershed was fortunate to have the assistance of Mary Reed. Mary volunteered to sort and identify the remaining sites from the 1999 collection. At this point, all 1999 samples have been sorted and identified although the analysis is still unfinished. Some work still remains to complete the 1998 samples though.

At this time, almost 10 years of data for the White Clay exist. Although the numbers vary somewhat on a yearly basis due to variables such as weather, the basic story remains the same. In general, water quality is good in the headwaters of the East, Middle, and West branches but declines progressively downstream. By the time the White Clay approaches the state line, the EPT (pollution sensitive insects) density has decreased by approximately 96%.

The data generated through the program has provided the opportunity to document over time the quality of the tributaries of the White Clay and to use the information for planning and education. The 2000 Streamwatch collection will change slightly to cut down on the number of sites sampled. Only the most critical PA sites along with the 3 DE sites will be sampled. Streamlining the monitoring program will provide more time to dedicate to educating people about the results of the program and what action individuals can take to help protect and improve the quality of the White Clay.

One way in which WCWA has

been providing more educational opportunities is through the Upstream Festival held at the Stroud Center. The Upstream Festival is a community event featuring crafts, workshops, and programs about the environment for all ages. For the WCWA it has provided a venue to educate the local community about the Watersheds' mission and to communicate the Streamwatch results. It is also the site for the native plant sale, an important fundraiser for the Association. In addition to being a fundraiser, the plant sale is a valuable opportunity to raise public awareness about the importance of native plants in the White Clay Watershed.

SAVE THE DATE

Streamwatch collection is scheduled for March 25, 2000. Volunteers are needed for the annual collection.

Contact Kristen Travers at 610-268-2153 x239 for details

White Clay Watershed Association Native Plant Sale at the Upstream Festival on April 15, 2000. Volunteers are needed.

Important Dates

April 15: Upstream Festival at Stroud Water Research Center, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. and WCWA's Annual Native Plant & Shrub Sale.

April 27: Women Naturalists and the Discrimination They Have Endured.

Delaware Museum of Natural History, Tim Pearce, 7:30 p.m.. 302-658-9111.

June 3-10: Annual River Clean-up Week.

Note:

In our 1999 Fall Newsletter we did not give credit to Larry Walker for his informative and interesting article on The Gabion Wall. Our sincere apologies!

Thanks

Many sincere thanks to those members who have recently donated to the Jack Murray Scholarship. They are:

Ellen J. Krause

David Hawk

Edward J. O'Donnell

Donald F. & Sara C. Ives

Mr. and Mrs. J. Dennis Newbold

(make your contribution on the membership page)

White Clay Would Become first Delaware Wild and Scenic River

from Newark Post 11/26/99

US Senator William V Roth Jr (R-DE) recently joined US Senator Joseph R Biden Jr (D-DE) in co-sponsoring legislation that designates the White Clay Creek watershed as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The White Clay Creek is one of the few free-flowing river systems remaining in the highly developed corridor between Philadelphia and Newark," Roth said. Roth and Biden introduced legislation to designate 191 river miles of the White Clay Creek and its tributaries as Delaware's first and only National Wild and Scenic River.

Once designated, the White Clay Creek and its tributaries would receive permanent protection from federally-licensed or assisted dams, diversions, channelizations, and other water resource projects that would have direct and adverse effects on its free-flowing condition or resources

Keeping the White Clay Creek the Way it Always Was

By Congressman Joe Pitts

The quality of life we enjoy in Chester County is unique. We boast of an unusually rich history, including Revolutionary War sites at Brandywine, Fricks' Locks, and Valley Forge. We enjoy incredible natural and recreational resources—from French Creek State Park and Marsh Creek Lake, to the Schuylkill and Brandywine Rivers. But among all of these treasures, the White Clay Creek Watershed stands out as one of a very few pristine streams in the highly congested and developed area between Philadelphia and Newark, Delaware.

Chester County still has an opportunity to preserve its heritage of open spaces and lush fields. But the opportunity is slipping away as more and more malls and developments appear. The White Clay Creek is one resource we must not lose. The time to act to preserve it is now.

In 1992 a group of citizens from southern Chester County began work with state, county, and local officials—looking for ways to preserve this watershed in cooperation with the National Park Service. After eight years of work, a consensus was reached that legislation adding the watershed to the national Wild and Scenic Rivers System was the best way to accomplish this goal.

This designation makes the considerable expertise of the National Park Service available to local officials as they act to preserve the watershed. Amazingly, this arrangement offers the best of both worlds: the resources of the federal government without any loss of local control. Decision-making power will remain in the hands of the same township and borough officials who have been in charge all along.

On January 11, I held a town meeting at the Stroud Water Research Center to discuss the task force's report. Chuck Barsz of the National Park Service and members of the task force presented the plan to receptive ears. Nearly 140 interested neighbors attended. Most in attendance vocally supported the designation, and no one voiced opposition.

After allowing some more time to make sure there were no outstanding concerns, I introduced the White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, H.R. 3520, on January 26. I am hopeful that before the year is out, this bill will become law.

The White Clay Creek looks today much as it did when William Penn first founded Chester County in 1682. If we are careful and dedicated in our land use decisions, this priceless legacy will remain intact for future generations as well. A century from now, perhaps, a man and his son will sit fishing on the banks of the White Clay Creek—just as I and my own son used to—and think, just for a moment, what a good idea it was to preserve this creek all those years ago. If that momentary thought is our only reward, our children will know we did the right thing.

from page 4 hill is 40 mph, and cars can pick up a lot of speed going down the hill. Drivers usually slow down dramatically at the bottom of the hill when they see the narrow bridge with its massive trusses ahead. This is good, because on the far side of the bridge people park on both sides of the road to go into the Landenberg Store. It is doubtful that a 32 ft wide bridge will have the same effect in slowing traffic before entering this parking area. It is feared that eventually someone will be seriously hurt or even killed by a speeding vehicle crossing the wide bridge and entering the parking area - an accident that would probably not occur if the bridge were reconstructed in its narrow configuration.

The old bridge has a three-ton weight limit that has been an inconvenience over the years. Everyone wants the new bridge to be sturdy enough to carry school buses and fire trucks safely. Area residents desire that the new bridge retain the aesthetic character of the old bridge and the surrounding community. It should minimize any change in elevation so as to avoid marring the view of the historic buildings of Landenberg.

PennDOT plans to mount the distinctive trusses from the old bridge on the edges of a new 32-ft wide bridge in an attempt to preserve the visual appearance of the bridge. This is unacceptable aesthetically since the trusses, which look and feel

adequate for the 18-ft wide bridge, would seem noticeably undersized on a 32-ft wide bridge.

Area residents cite a superb restoration job done on a small bridge on the Red Clay Creek north of Kennett Square on Wollaston Rd. as an example of what should be done with the Landenberg Bridge. This bridge, also a truss bridge, was restored in 1992 by Chester



A glimpse underneath the Landenberg Bridge shows the consequences of the neglect the bridge has suffered.



In a botched repair, the truss struts were welded together consequently weakening the entire bridge.

County. There the old bridge was taken apart, a new modern supporting structure built, and the old bridge was rebuilt on top of it. The result is quite pleasing. Unless you are underneath it, you do not realize it is a modern bridge. That bridge, being a county rather than a state bridge, is not subject to PennDOT guidelines, and PennDOT has indicated no interest in doing something similar for the Landenberg Bridge.

Over time the area has lost most of its old covered bridges, a loss many now appreciate. Now it is beginning to lose its metal ones as well. It would be quite tragic if the centennial year of the Landenberg Bridge marked its final demise. Fortunately the public is making itself heard on this issue, but it will be an uphill fight to get PennDOT to do the right thing to save the bridge and help preserve the historic character of Landenberg.

Previous promises of support from the New Garden Supervisors vaporized when they unexpectedly switched their position and voted to support the PennDOT plan at the beginning of March. Their stated reason was that any other action would only delay the re-opening of the bridge, and that resisting PennDOT was futile. Area residents have vowed to continue the fight anyway.

Additional information about the Landenberg Bridge is available on the White Clay Watershed Association's web site: www.ccil.org/~wcwa

Yours to Preserve



address correction requested

Non Profit
Permit #5
Landenberg PA
19350

WHITE CLAY WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
P O Box 10
Landenberg PA 19350

W.C.W.A. Membership Application

To join the White Clay Watershed Association, please fill out the form below and mail it to:

WCWA
PO Box 10
Landenberg PA 19350

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip(9dig) _____

Municipality/Township

Annual Dues		
Student Membership	\$10.00	\$ _____
Senior Citizen Membership	\$10.00	\$ _____
Individual Membership	\$15.00	\$ _____
Family Membership	\$25.00	\$ _____
Corporate Membership	\$100.00	\$ _____
Additional Contribution		\$ _____
Jack Murray Scholarship		\$ _____
Consevancy Fund		\$ _____
Total:		\$ _____

make checks payable to "W.C.W.A."
The W.C.W.A. is a non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

We Need Volunteers!

Please indicate areas of interest:

Education
 Conservation
 Cultural and Historic
 Water Quality (Stream Watch)
 Promotion
 Membership Development
 Other: _____