

*Aquetong Creek is emerging following the deconstruction of a dam that has been in place 145 years.*



DON SCHOENLEBER, SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Creek emerges with gusto as Aquetong Lake is drained

**Beth Carrick  
Robert McEwan  
Solebury Township Historical Society**

Solebury Township’s Aquetong Lake, a fixture for the last 145 years, has drained away and the creek head is emerging with gusto.

The Aquetong Spring Park site itself is closed during the dam deconstruction work, so please do not rush to look at the changes. However, the Solebury Township Historical Society (STHS) has set up a web page with information, videos, and photo montages of the changing lake and landscape. The society’s intention is to document the lake’s existence, its history, and its demise so that future generations will be able to see what it looked like, why it was there, and why and how it was dismantled.

The society has been taking new photos and collecting historic photographs. In addition the area’s

history is being documented via a posting of past newspaper reports and writings about the lake. The society’s web site (soleburyhistory.org) is now an ideal location to see what is new at the lake site as the weeks go by and what was the history behind the lake.

Keen readers of the research on the site will notice a number of topic and document gaps. STHS welcomes members and interested locals to join us in researching and writing short histories of past events, houses, mills, farms, and happenings around the lake area. Contact aquetongproject@soleburyhistory.org to talk about participating in the project.

Thanks go to active participants who include township management, Bucks County Trout Unlimited and the Aquetong Watershed Association. Please consider joining a motivated cross section of county residents who enjoy recording our history.

## Central Bucks Chamber marks achievements

The Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce honored four distinguished individuals at the 2015 Lifetime Achievement Awards held April 10, at Spring Mill Manor, Ivyland. Recognized in four categories were Steven Gilmore, Business Achievement; Franca Warden, Bucks County Arts; Dr. Barry Ginsberg, Humanitarian; and Jeffrey L. Marshall, Ambassador of Bucks County.

Steven Gilmore and his firm, Gilmore Associates, were recognized for consistent growth, stability and use of business resources to aid community and social action projects over the firm’s 90-year history. Gilmore and Associates has been involved in the development and construction of countless schools, businesses, houses of worship and shopping areas in and around the Central Bucks community.

Franca Warden, chairman emeritus of the Bucks County Opera Association was honored for her

dedication to the Academy of Vocal Arts and the Bucks County Opera Association for over 50 years. She has served on the boards of numerous arts and cultural institutions in Bucks County and across the Philadelphia region.

Barry Ginsberg, executive director of the Center for Relationship Enhancement, was cited for his dedication and voluntary service to the families of Bucks County and the organizations that serve them. His counseling and writing have touched the lives of countless individuals and families in the community.

Jeffrey L. Marshall is president of Heritage Conservancy. His career has been devoted to helping preserve the natural beauty and historic heritage of Bucks County.

Previous Lifetime Achievement honorees have included James Michener, Justin Guarini, Nelson Shanks, Byer’s Choice, Fred Beans Automotive Group, George Nakashima and Burpee.



MARK MARGRAFF, M STUDIOS

*From left are Lifetime Achievement Award recipients Steve Gilmore, Barry G. Ginsberg, Ph.D., Franca Warden and Jeffrey Marshall.*

## Work is under way on planned Sellersville Business Campus

**Chris Ruvo**

Work is under way to transform a once-polluted site in Sellersville into a vibrant business campus that abounds with quality local jobs.

This week Premier Excavating LLC, a contractor for the Bucks County Industrial Development Authority, started breaking up concrete and asphalt at the former U.S. Gauge property. In the months ahead, Premier will perform site work and infrastructure improvements that will ready the property to host what officials hope will one day be the Sellersville Business Campus, a center for high-quality light industrial-manufacturing firms.

“This is the first large scale development project undertaken in the entire 35-year history of the Bucks County Industrial Development Authority,” said Pete Krauss, the authority’s executive director. “It also represents a major economic renewal project, returning an entire industrial brownfield to a clean, environmentally responsible, productive use.”

Once home to U.S. Gauge’s now-defunct manufacturing operation and one of the largest employers in Upper Bucks, the property has received a “clean bill of health” from the Environmental Protection

Agency, officials say. This year, site improvements will center on preparing the entrance and roadways, which will end in a cul-de-sac. Work will include installing infrastructure for water, sewer, gas, electric and fiber optics. The authority will also ensure that lighting and landscaping is done.

Premier won the contract for the site improvement work during a bidding process in which the firm was the lowest responsible bidder, said Krauss. He said the contractor is being paid \$1.16 million – funds that come from a \$4.5 million low-interest “Business In Our Sites” loan that the authority obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

To help entice companies to locate at the planned business campus, Sellersville, the Pennridge School District and Bucks County all recently approved tax exemptions for owners of the yet-to-be-constructed buildings.

Under the approved exemptions, building owners are exempted from paying real estate property taxes on buildings and related improvements for a period of five years. Owners will still pay property taxes on the land itself; the tax abatement does not reduce real estate taxes currently paid on the parcels.

The authority is seeking tenants and has already been in negotiations with at least one potential buyer.

The 40-acre site is home to six

lots. Officials anticipate that the buildings that will one day occupy the site will be 30,000 to 40,000 square feet each. Once the five-year tax abatement ends, the real estate taxes on each building should tally

about \$40,000 annually, Krauss has said. The tax revenue gets divided between Sellersville (11 percent), Bucks County (14 percent) and the Pennridge School District (75 percent) each year.

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