

Spanning the Gap

In her own words ... Nancy Shukaitis



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Spanning the Gap
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In her own words ... landscapes of her life



2005: *If you have a farm in this valley, you are never going to replace it. You had access to the river, and you had the flat rich land, and the hillsides for grazing, and you had the woodland. It has so many natural amenities. They talk about comparable property--there are none. You can't go find another one, because those valleys are well*

spoken for.



1970s: *Our farm was in the family since 1794. So we were definitely there right up till the government took it, the same group of people, the Michaels crew ... [In the 1936 flood] the river came up over the garden and the garden was right below the great big house -- a 26 room farmhouse.*

In her own words ... the fight against Tocks



1955: Camp Davis: Aerial view of wrecked roadways and rail lines at this summer camp along Broadhead Creek, scene of 37 deaths from flooding in hurricane Diane:

The Mayor of Easton had pictures of rows of people with sheets over them. ... He said -- Look at this! Do you want this to happen again? I thought, "Oh, they are transposing the flood of the Broadhead, [over to the flood of the Delaware] river. so they get the dam" -- I was the only person to complain, and I mean, I could have been shot.



1967: The Pennsylvania bank of the Delaware seen from Mt. Mohican NJ in a composite photograph. Landmarks include (*left to right*): Pardee Place, a beach that preceded today's Smithfield Beach; a line of trailers along in the fields; a complex of white barns on River Road.



1970s: *Our farm was identified by the sandy beach, which extended out into the river several hundred feet. We didn't think of it as a public beach ... In the 1960s, ... people began asking if they could bring in trailers. They only paid \$60 a year. Big money, right?*

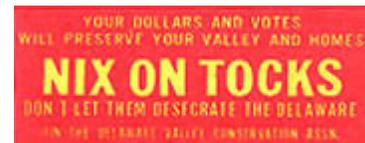


1971: *Letters have been written that these people were better off when they got relocated--that's so bad that it's laughable. The Walters--you may know them--his wife, when she was home she would cross the road to feed the chickens and take care of all the different things in the barn there. Now she's in town, and she walks to her mailbox and back. That's her daytime errand.*

(Above, a bumper sticker)

1965: Resistance organizes:

*I went to both of those ... [National Park Service public meetings in the summer of 1964] ... there were 30 proponents [of the dam] on the list and I was the lone opponent ... That's the day when I thought: someone must have known something down there ... Then we formed the **Delaware Valley Conservation Association** in '65. It took a year to get things rolling...*



**YOUR DOLLARS AND VOTES WILL PRESERVE YOUR VALLEY AND HOMES
NIX ON TOCKS
DON'T LET THEM DESECRATE THE DELAWARE
JOIN THE DELAWARE VALLEY CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION**



2005: *I've seen the sensi-tivity more so in the last 20 years than in the beginning, because in the beginning, the mission was still hot; you had the feeling that it might come back ... I do not plan to be buried in the Zion Cemetery because I feel that future generations -- who knows what their values will be? -- and I don't want to feel that I had to be excavated because I was in the way again.*

So I asked one of [our lawyers], what happens when it goes down there, when it goes to the Supreme Court?

"Oh," he says, "you have to wear a black gown ... "

*I wasn't thinking about what we were going to **wear**. I was thinking about what we were going to **say**.*

(Photos above, top to bottom):

Horses graze on former Michael property on **Mosier's Knob Road**, looking toward the Delaware.

Michael Farmhouse (since demolished) on River Road.

A view from River Road, near Zion Church, of **Blanchard Michael Trailer Park** along the Delaware River.

Walters Farm on River Road PA (buildings since demolished).

The morning shadow of **Zion Church**, where Delaware Valley Conservation Association began in 1965, falls across the congregation's graveyard. The church is now the recreation area's Office of Historic Preservation and Design; the cemetery is owned and still used by the community. *(NPS photo by Ken Sandri)*



1967: Drilling core samples:

*I began hearing things that didn't fit ... their answers were: "Yes, some of the worst foundation materials (for anchoring a dam) are there. But we will replace the bad materials with good materials." 400 feet down? How are you going to do that?...I decided: they're reaching for straws here... Personally, **I don't think they really wanted to build it.***



1967: Sunfish Pond NJ Walk:

*When [Supreme Court] Justice [William O.] Douglas went on that walk with his young wife, that was really national news...it really spread like what -- an eagle? -- well, better than that... **then** they discovered the valley.*