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Park dam honors late central Pa. lawmaker

He was among its strongest proponents, touting its recreational benefits, supporting its funding. Now the inflatable dam stretching across the Susquehanna River bears his name.

The Adam T. Bower Memorial Dam, stretching between Sunbury and Shamokin Dam, was dedicated Oct. 26 as DCNR officials and state lawmakers unveiled a memorial sign naming the dam.

A Sunbury native and member of the state House of Representatives for 28 years, the late Mr. Bower was instrumental in securing funding for the Fabridam that forms Lake Augusta in Shikellamy State Park, in Northumberland, Snyder and Union counties.

"Visitors to Shikellamy State Park are drawn from throughout the state to this 3,060-acre lake formed by the world's longest inflatable dam," said Gary K. Smith, Bureau of State Parks' chief of park operations and maintenance. "It is one of the many countless treasures that make this state's park system so unique."

The dam was named the Adam T. Bower Memorial Dam in Act 5 of 2001, legislation sponsored by state Rep. Merle H. Phillips (R-Northumberland) and cosponsored by Rep. Russ Fairchild (R-Union), and signed May 17 by then-Gov. Tom Ridge.

"As a Sunbury native, Adam Bower long recognized the recreation potential of this great, scenic river," Rep. Phillips said, speaking at the unveiling of a memorial sign near the dam's east side in Sunbury. "As a member of the House of Representatives, he was instrumental in securing the funds that made his dream a reality. Thousands of boaters, anglers and others now profit from his foresight."

Boating with unlimited horsepower motors is permitted on the Susquehanna River's Lake Augusta. The lake averages six feet in depth and is a popular water-skiing area. Construction on the dam was started in 1966 and completed in 1970.

For more information on Shikellamy and Pennsylvania's other 115 state parks, telephone 1-888-PA-PARKS.

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