



Pennsylvania State Archives Ceremony Honors Ralph W. Abele



photo-Dori Giles, PHIMC

PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway

On Tuesday, July 16 at 2 p.m., a ceremony at the Pennsylvania State Archives was held honoring former Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) Executive Director Ralph W. Abele (1921-1990). The ceremony high-

Pictured above are (left to right) relatives of Ralph W. Abele in attendance at the State Archives Ceremony: Jeremy Abele (grandson and Pennsylvania Angler & Boater subscriber), Ralph Abele Jr. (son and also a Pennsylvania Angler & Boater subscriber), Tyler Abele (grandson), Jennifer Abele Smith (daughter) and her husband Dr. Daniel Smith. Ralph W. Abele had a total of four grandsons. Two were unable to attend (Wilson and Zachary). Jeremy is the father of who would be Ralph W. Abele's great grandchildren, Riley and Cameron.

lighted the recent transfer of important archival records from PFBC to the State Archives. Throughout his life, Abele inspired and commanded the fight to save the natural environment. He believed strongly in the right of everyone to "clean air, pure water and the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and aesthetic values of the environment."

As PFBC executive director from January 1972 through May 1987, Abele's accomplishments garnered him the title of "Lord of the Fish" for his tireless and relentless efforts in protecting water quality against pollution and working to restore American shad to their native Susquehanna River. Abele's voice and action, as a leader during the beginning



photo-Spring Gauthart



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Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Executive Director James M. Vaughan



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Pennsylvania State Archivist David Haurly



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Ralph W. Abele Jr.



photo-Spring Gearhart

PFBC Commissioners Rocco S. Ali and Steven M. Ketterer



photo-Dan Gilles, PHMC

Jennifer Abele Smith



photo-Spring Gearhart

Ralph W. Abele Conservation Scholarship Fund President Frank Felbaum

of ecology awareness, called industry to task and empowered individuals with an understanding that they, too, had the power to affect change and protect our natural environment. While the Commission's direct constituents have been mostly anglers and boaters, it was clear that Abele's commentary on the nation's obligation to protect natural resources struck a chord with the greater, general public.

Following his death in 1990, two important legacies for conservation were established in his name: the Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award and the Ralph W. Abele Conservation Scholarship Fund. The award has been presented to such notables in conservation as Dr. Maurice K. Goddard, and the scholarship fund has provided a seed of continued growth for many students with the same aspiration in the field of conservation. ☐