

Towns of the Susquehanna River

On two very rainy days (April 30 and May 1, 2014) my wife Cherie and I retraced by car the route (in reverse order) we used to take on the Canoe Trips down the Susquehanna River. I was hoping to supplement a description of the trip with pictures, but the weather did not cooperate. I was also unable to find most of the locations due to both poor memory and changes to the towns.

I was coming from NYC and arrived at the intersection of US 6 & 11 and PA 438 about noon. Unfortunately, route 438 was closed so I was not able to stop by the old site of KK. I decided that making the trip was more important than going around the back way through Fleetville. Traveled up route 6 & 11 toward Tunkhannock. I passed Shadowbrook (now a resort with a real golf course) in addition to the miniature one, a restaurant (does serve ice cream), but no bowling alley. Continued up Route 6 to Tunkhannock where there is a newer and larger bridge carrying Route 29 between the creek and the area where I believe the Jr. trip ended. There is a very nice park upstream from the bridge and not very much above the water. The town while not thriving is not dead. We explored much of the country away from Route 6 between Tunkhannock and Meshoppen. There still is a bridge over the river near Mehoopany (old but not the metal version from 55 years or so ago) but what was amazing were the number of very large and modern homes built overlooking the river. We went by a significant gas extraction site and saw many staging areas with lots of pipe and drilling equipment. Meshoppen was larger but certainly not bustling. Going further up river to Laceyville we encountered more drilling and newer housing. Laceyville was by far the most changed of the towns so far. It is much larger. As we continued up river toward Wyalusing, we started seeing some industry and by the time we got to Wyalusing, there was a sheet metal factory, an aluminum siding and louver manufacturer, several guide companies, and a winery. A nicely thriving community. In general, the number of houses (mostly trailer types and RVs) along the river for summer usage is rather large. Continuing up river we encountered Wysox. I think this was a lunch stop and the town is generally surviving but not bustling. We reached our evening destination of The Victorian Charm Inn in Towanda. The building is a late 1890's Victorian house with much history. The owners (in their late 20's) had both grown up in Towanda as had their parents and grandparents, were very friendly but said they were putting it on

the market as they had bought about 12 acres outside of town and were going to farm it. They said there were about 7,000 gas extraction wells in the county and the economy was doing very well (no pun intended). They do not drink well water nor recommend it. The town is significantly larger than I remember it and has several factories that were established in the late 1970s. The next morning there was a break in the weather and I was able to take two pictures of the river from the end of Bridge Street. The channel seems wider with more and larger islands. As the rain started to fall again we headed upriver toward Ulster that I believe was also a lunch stop. Ulster has more riverside summer housing, a new concrete bridge, but not much else other than evidence of gas well drilling. As we moved toward Athens and Sayre we noticed a definite change in the economic picture. Athens is a middle to upper middle class town with many large brick houses on tree lined streets. No sign of economic depression or blight. The downtown portion was stable. Sayre was more industrial and more rundown. Couldn't find any indication where we camped. The entire area was much larger and more developed. Working our way toward Owego, we encountered a country club and casino near Nichols/Ayers and did find the campsite (cow pasture) along Owego Creek. The entire area is now a very nice park. The sun shone for a few minutes and I was able to take a couple more pictures. There seems to be less gas exploration in southern NY State but maybe it is better hidden. We continued onto Endicott and En-Joie Park that is again owned by the city after having been taken over by IBM during their heyday in Endicott. Much of the surrounding area are the country clubs and parks formerly owned by IBM but now run by the city and county. Endicott is much larger having thrived, decayed, and now seems to be in revitalization. All in all this was a fascinating experience and except for the weather, very enjoyable. Any corrections as to my assumptions and recollections are entirely welcome and encouraged.



Owego Creek Camping



Owego Creek



US Route 6 Bridge Downstream from Original Metal Bridge at Bridge St.



Susquehanna River at Bridge St. Towanda, PA