Susquehanna Pastimes

For generations, the Susquehanna has provided both local residents and venturesome travelers with a host of leisure-time activities.

In 1877, the Columbia and Port Deposit Railroad began carrying passengers to this area, then known as Shoff’s Resort, developed by local businessman Frederic Shoff. Many vacationers came from Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Washington. A few journeyed from Europe.

In 1901 Shoff opened the Riverview Hotel, a three-storied structure, which hosted a wide array of guests, including Jack Dempsey and Calvin Coolidge. Visitors to the hotel enjoyed rides on a miniature narrow-gauge railroad, short trips on a steamboat, a game of billiards, a stroll in the woods, carriage rides, target shooting, croquet, ballroom dancing, and fine dining.

Frederick Shoff’s Pequea and York Furnace miniature railroad began operating at the Riverview Hotel in 1911.

During the 1930s, the area declined as a resort, a victim of the Depression economy and the rise of competition from the New Jersey Shore, the Pocono Mountains and the Adirondacks. Shoff’s hotel, long abandoned, was eventually demolished by a controlled fire in the 1970s.

Today, many people continue to enjoy recreational activities along the Susquehanna. They come to swim, boat, water ski, fish, hike, sightsee, bird watch, trap, hunt, camp, ride horses, and relax.

The Riverview Hotel (front view), owned by Frederic Shoff, was constructed in 1903. Courtesy The Conestoga Area Historical Society

Members of the Tucquan Club of Lancaster, PA, enjoying the moment at a summer picnic, circa 1912. Courtesy The Conestoga Area Historical Society

This project was completed with generous financial contributions from the following project partners:

National Park Service: Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Water Trails Network
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation; Growing Greener & Heritage Parks Programs
Lancaster County Planning Commission
East Donegal Township
Marietta Borough
PPL Holtwood LLC
Exelon
Safe Harbor Water Power Corporation
York Haven Power Company
The John Wright Company

Members of the Tucquan Club of Lancaster, PA, enjoying the moment at a summer picnic, circa 1912.Courtesy The Conestoga Area Historical Society

Tucquan Lake, Pequea, Pa.


Susquehanna River Water Trail

You Are Here