

Gary C Worrell

From: Gary C Worrell [gcw@igx.net]
Sent: 20 August, 2007 10:43
To: gcw@igx.net
Subject: Postcard
Attachments: Hello.jpg; map.gif; Towanda01a.jpg; FrenchAzilum01a.jpg; FrenchAzilum02a.jpg; FrenchAzilum03a.jpg; T378Summer.jpg

Hello.

So you may be wondering what Marie Antoinette has in common with the Susquehanna River Valley?

Well, back in the late 1700's during the French Revolution, a group of French Aristocrats in fear for their heads came to America in search of political asylum.

A sympathetic Pennsylvania (remember the French were instrumental in the success of the American Revolution) cordoned off a choice piece of property along the Susquehanna River for the French Refugees to settle (see map). Surrounded on three sides by the river, it was a peaceful, fertile and safe location.

The area is named French Azilum. The refugees built homes and began farming the land (which was quite different from their previous lifestyle). It's also reported (but can't be verified) that a large structure was built to house the Queen of France (that would be Marie) and her children. But as history illuminates, she never got to make the trip over. Within ten years, the money from France dried up and the settlement went belly up.

Napoleon Bonaparte allowed the refugees to return to France, but some stayed behind. The offspring of the remaining settlers helped to found many of the nearby river towns like Towanda, Wysox, Athens & Wyalusing.

Today, French Azilum is still a quiet, cozy and beautiful chunk of ground with rolling hills, farmland and river-front property. There is a park at the site of the original settlement, but none of the original structures exist except for one building foundation.

In the pictures you can see the cliffs in the hills that are on the opposite side of the Susquehanna.

When I departed the area heading for home, I stopped again on township road

T378 (see postcard dated 26 March 2007) at the same location that I took the last photo. I wanted to get a summer shot.

Cheers,
G.











