



# NORTH GREENBUSH NOTES

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## Building Boom at Snyders Lake

Where was the hottest real estate property in Rensselaer County in the early 1900's? Not Troy or Rensselaer but Snyders Lake.

According to the August 21, 1909 Troy Times, summer homes at Troy's nearest lake increased from three to nearly one hundred in eight years. Prior to this time, Snyders Lake was comparatively unfamiliar to city dwellers and was seldom visited for recreation except by the occasional picnic party or fishermen.

All this began to change in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Troy and New England Railway was built from the city out to the Rensselaer County Lakes and a stop was situated at Snyders Corners only a short distance from the Lake.

Land values which had been \$75 an acre skyrocketed to \$500 an acre for a lot of fifty feet frontage on the lake.

Mr. Dimmick's hotel on the northwest shore of the lake, near the center of the cottage colony became a popular resort but burned in 1895. Louis J. Thiesman of Troy erected a tent on the site for the use of his family during the summer season.

Soon thereafter E.G. Bernard built the first summer cottage. Samuel H. Francis became the next cottager and Snyders Lake rapidly increased until nearly a hundred families had established summer homes.

Residents created a variety of summer social activities. At the southwest end of the lake, known as "Dodds Plantation", boat parades, field athletics and carnivals were held.

In 1909 Dr. Reed B. Bontecou and eight others including Lynd Cox, created a swimming float on the lake. It had a high diving board, a water slide and a springboard. It was anchored in about thirty five feet of water about 100 feet off shore near the center of the northeast side of the lake.

I believe the float expanded into a night club run by Lynd Cox and provided entertainment at the lake until it was taken down in the 1940's.

There was another item of note from the Troy newspaper story. A group of young men erected a clubhouse called the "Idle Hour Lodge" on the east shore of the Lake. I wonder what went on there.

If you want the names of the cottage owners in 1909, call me at 283-6384.