



NORTH GREENBUSH NOTES

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Nowadays if we want to get from Troy to Snyders Lake, we just hop in our cars and make the trip. However, one hundred years ago people more than likely took the trolley. From about 1895 to 1925 the Troy and New England Railway Company operated trolley services from the "city" to the "country". This electric railway was the dream of James K. Averill who wished to establish a transportation link between Averill Park and Troy. Actually Mr. Averill had bigger plans, he hoped his company could build a line all the way to Pittsfield, but the money ran out - so Averill Park was as far as the trolley line went.

Charles Viens and Sanford Young wrote an article about the trolley stops in Wynantskill, from which I have taken much of the following narrative:

The Troy city trolley line ran up Congress Street hill (except in the very snowy weather) and out Pawling Avenue to Albia. Its route from Albia was parallel to the Wynantskill Creek, then more or less parallel to the West Sand Lake Road. Stops that served Wynantskill residents were between Jack's and McDonald's; another where the line crossed Brookside Ave. There was a stop at West Sand Lake Road, at Streamview Lane and another on the flats at Sagendorf Lane.

Three kinds of cars were used. In summer the cars were open sided; there were five of these. When the weather turned cold four cars with windowed sides were put into use. The cars had their own electric motors, powered from an overhead wire carrying 550 volts DC. Energy was produced at both ends of the line by water-powered AC turbine generators and converted to DC. For freight there were box cars and flatcars; the latter were towed by the motor equipped box cars or by the passenger cars. Freight consisted of lumber, sand, machinery, fiber, farm and dairy products, and coal.

Since there was only one track, several switching places had to be provided for two-way traffic. One was between Albia and Wynantskill and another near Worthington's and one at Snyder's Lake. In nice weather as many as five cars made up a "train". Cars would be crowded as picnickers headed for Snyders Lake and beyond.

Children used the trolley for school. Long time Wynantskill resident Lila Dearstyne recalled taking the trolley to West Sand Lake for Regents exams. The fare all the way to Averill Park was 25 cents round trip. Trolleys ran from 5:30 AM to midnight on the half hour.

What killed the trolley service? Some say it was bus service, but probably the biggest reason for its demise was the automobile.

Some hot evening this summer, close your eyes and imagine still being able to take a leisurely ride from the "city" out to Snyders Lake.

Thanks for your many calls and e-mails. All ideas for stories are appreciated. I would like to write about Snyders Lake. Can anyone help me?