

**A CELEBRATION OF  
100 YEARS OF THE  
TRUESDALE LAKE  
COMMUNITY  
1926 - 2026**

A guided walk around the lake to commemorate 100 years of the people and neighborhoods of Truesdale Lake.

We are a community of neighbors and friends bonded by Truesdale Lake. Together we serve as caretakers for this precious body of water.

**Let's work together to ensure its health and beauty  
for the next centennial.**

Priscilla Luckow

2026

# 100 Years Around Truesdale Lake

Pick a beautiful day and enjoy this guided walk around the lake with family and friends.

Rest and read a short write-up about the formation and development of our lake and neighborhoods at the numbered stops on the map. You'll even learn a fun fact or two as you walk to the next stop!

This walk is about 2.75 miles long and will take you about an hour. You will start and end at the Town House.

I hope that you take away an even greater appreciation of the history of Truesdale Lake and the thousands of volunteers who have served our lake community over the past 100 years.

If you would like to volunteer to be a part of this very special group of neighbors, just contact your neighborhood association...I know that they would love your help.

Enjoy your walk! Priscilla

# 100 YEARS AROUND TRUESDALE LAKE



# 100 Years Around Truesdale Lake

## Truesdale Terms:

### Real Estate Development Corporations:

**Truesdale Lake Corporation** – a development company that built roads, a water system, and sold lots in the “Truesdale Colony” starting in 1926 on the north end of the lake. This corporation went bankrupt in the early 1940s, and the assets were sold to the **TLPOA** (a membership corporation formed by the residents of the Truesdale Colony), and another developer, Lake Truesdale Properties Inc., along with a few individuals.

**Lake Truesdale Properties Inc. (LTPI)** – a real estate developer who bought many of the assets of the bankrupt Truesdale Lake Corporation, including property on the southeastern side of the lake, in the mid-1940s. The assets of LTPI were turned over to the **TEA** in 1957.

### Lake Associations: 4 Associations, ONE Lake Community

**Truesdale Lake Property Owners Association (TLPOA)** – a group of residents who took ownership of the water system, roads and dam from the bankrupt Truesdale Lake Corporation in August, 1944. Most homes are connected to the TLPOA water system at the north end of the lake.

**Truesdale Estates Association (TEA)** – a group of residents who took ownership of the assets owned by real estate developer, Lake Truesdale Properties Inc. (LTPI) in June, 1957.

**Lovecross** (Vreeland development) - also known as “Lakeview Close”. A small development of homes built by Jeff Vreeland in the early 1980s near the stream on the east side of the lake.

**“Unaffiliated Homes”** – these homes are not part of the TLPOA, TEA or Lovecross Associations, and filled in the remaining undeveloped lots on Lakeshore Dr., and Hoyt St. at the cul-de-sac.

# 1. Town House

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, South Salem was a quiet farming community. The area was full of natural beauty, including hills, lakes and forests, with clean air and clean water. As roads and parkways to northern Westchester County were improved, wealthy New Yorkers looked to escape the congestion and filth of the city. Corporations were formed to develop recreational communities on Lake Waccabuc, Lake Kitchawan and Lake Katonah, in addition to Truesdale Lake.

In 1908, Rev. Theodore Van Norden, an ambitious businessman, property owner, farmer, and 13th minister of the South Salem Presbyterian Church, paid for a dam to be built across a stream on some recently acquired property, to form Truesdale Lake. This lake was smaller and shallower than our current lake. Van Norden had big plans for South Salem and Truesdale Lake. In 1926, Van Norden became one of nine Directors of the newly formed Truesdale Lake Corporation, led by Gen. John F. O’Ryan. The corporation planned to develop a large, private and very exclusive lake colony in town.

In 1922, the house on Main St., now the Town House, was bought by Thaddeus Keeler, along with acreage. In 1926, he sold 42 acres of pasture behind his house to the Truesdale Lake Corporation. The corporation had already purchased Van Norden’s lake to the north, and improved and raised the dam. Thaddeus and his sons then cleared the pasture of tree stumps and brush, and the larger, 83 acre Truesdale Lake slowly filled with water due to the natural terrain and the stream flowing in on the eastern shore.

## **WALK TO #2. the intersection of Lakeshore Drive and Truesdale Lake Drive (the southernmost tip of the lake).**

*Fun facts as you walk:*

*In 1948, the Keeler family sold their home and 7 acres to the town of Lewisboro. The home was renovated for use as town offices, and the property was later used to build the post office, library and highway department.*

*Nine of the lakefront houses along this section of Lakeshore Drive are described as “unaffiliated.” They are not part of the TLPOA, TEA or Lovecross Associations. They have the option of joining the TEA Beach.*

## 2. Southernmost Tip of Truesdale Lake

In the early 1940s, the Truesdale Lake Corporation declared bankruptcy, primarily as a result of the Great Depression and WWII. In 1946, Lake Truesdale Properties Inc. (LTPI) purchased well over 200 acres of undeveloped land from the bankrupt corporation, with plans to develop another recreational colony on the lake and extend club privileges to non-riparian (non-lakefront) homes. Some of the purchased property extended from the southern tip of the lake up the southeastern side to the stream. The lake bed was also purchased, subject to the rights of others. In other words, LTPI “owned” the lake and paid taxes on it, but had to allow anyone with deeded lake rights to use the lake (i.e. members of the TLPOA at the north end). In 1953, plans for “Truesdale Lake Estates” were drawn up for the development of the southeastern side of the lake by LTPI.

As Truesdale Lake Estates grew, a very lively social scene developed on the larger lake. There were now two beaches for swimming, games and parties. Sailfish and Sunfish races took place on the weekends, in addition to fishing derbies, water sports contests and more. Truesdale Lake Sunfish Fleet #27, formed in the late 1950s, is considered to be one of the oldest sunfish fleets in the country.

### **WALK TO #3 the TEA Beach.**

*Fun facts as you walk:*

*In the 1960s, the posted speed limit on Truesdale Lake Drive was 40MPH! The TEA requested that this speed limit be lowered in 1970.*

*According to a “gentleman’s agreement” of many years, a motion was voted upon in 1952 by the TLPOA not to allow motor boats on the lake. Thankfully, the property sales contracts generated by LTPI at the southeastern end of the lake included clauses which formally prohibited motor boats as well.*

*Every resident of Truesdale Lake can enjoy the natural beauty of the lake and its wildlife throughout the seasons. Sailing, swimming, fishing, ice skating and cross-country skiing are just some of the ways for lake residents and their guests to get out on the lake and explore. These activities have been popular since the formation of the lake in 1926.*

### 3. TEA Beach

On June 28, 1957, the Truesdale Estates Association (TEA), a membership corporation of residents, officially took ownership of the properties previously owned by LTPI, including the lakebed. The TEA includes properties on Truesdale Lake Dr., Salem Lane, Lower Salem Rd. and Stewart Rd., as well as some properties on Boway, Country Lane and Main St. There are approximately 150 individual deeded properties in the TEA.

Most members keep their boats across the lake at the TEA Boatyard on the corner of Gilbert St. and Lakeshore Dr. This was one of the properties bought by LTPI when the Truesdale Lake Corporation went bankrupt in the early 1940s. TEA members in good standing have use of the TEA Beach on Truesdale Lake Drive. This area was originally planned a few lots further north, but was moved in the 1953 plan for Truesdale Lake Estates to the present site, which is more level and allows more room for parking.

The TEA organizes many special events at the beach during the year. During the summer, many families enjoy swimming to the float and relaxing and playing in the sand. The beach is a central gathering point for the association to socialize with neighbors and friends.

#### **WALK TO #4. the stone walls over the stream on Boway Rd.**

*Fun facts as you walk:*

*Living on or near a lake provides lots of opportunities to see wildlife. Swans, ducks, geese, fish, all kinds of turtles and frogs live in and on the lake. Lots of animals spend time near the lake to drink and cool off. Deer, foxes, raccoons, bobcats and even bears have been spotted in our neighborhoods. Don't forget to look up! Birds love the lake. We have an abundance of songbirds, crows, hawks, etc. We even have a pair of nesting eagles!*

*A great way to explore the lake is by being ON the lake! Rowboats, canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, windsurfers, sunfish and even boats with small electric motors allow you to easily explore the entire lake and our three islands.*

## 4. Stream from the Pumping Station Aquifer

Soon after turning left on Boway, you will see two stone walls on either side of the road. These walls and the culvert under the road protect the primary water source for Truesdale Lake. This stream originates in the Pumping Station Aquifer in Ridgefield, CT., and continues under Boway Rd. before flowing into Truesdale Lake.

The stream flows through the Lovecross development, to lakefront property owned by the TLPOA, and finally into the lake. Residents of Lovecross have deeded lake access to the lakefront here to store their boats and enjoy the beach, due to the original Colony drawings of Hoyt Street. Residents work together to maintain the dock, beach and boat storage.

Although this stream is the lake's primary source of water, there are many small springs around the lake which also provide fresh water. Maps dating back to 1858 show the stream (then referred to as Coal Kiln Brook) originating in CT, and feeding into Hoyt's Pond. In 1908, Van Norden built a dam at the outlet to Hoyt's Pond to form Truesdale Lake. Water from this stream (and now lake water flowing over the dam), has always flowed northwest, eventually emptying into the Waccabuc River.

### **WALK TO #5. the TLPOA Hoyt St. Boatyard**

*Fun facts as you walk:*

*The house at 123 Boway on your right was once rented by Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones. He did a professional photo shoot while staying here.*

*Turn left on Country Lane, go around the curve and left down the hill. The TLPOA Boatyard is straight ahead. After your visit to the boatyard, you will come back up the hill and turn left... and STILL be on Hoyt St.*

*Most of the streets around the north end of the lake honor the founding families of South Salem: Gilbert, Howe, Bouton, Hoyt and Lawrence (a "paper" street at the curve on Country Lane, that was never completed, but still appears on many maps today!)*

## 5. TLPOA Hoyt St. Boatyard

The Truesdale Lake Corporation's plans for an exclusive lake colony began to unravel with the Depression in the 1930s. The company soon ran out of money to maintain the water system and colony roads. The TLPOA was formed when residents banded together in 1944 to protect their community assets from neglect by the bankrupt Truesdale Lake Corporation. These residents offered their time and money to form the TLPOA and take ownership of the water system, including wells, pumps, pipes and the 15,000 gallon reservoir on Howe St. They also received a deed to own all of the completed roads in the community, as well as some of the incomplete (paper) roads, and several undeveloped lots to use for lake access.

The TLPOA includes approximately 200 individual properties on Indian Lane, Gilbert St., Bouton St. and Howe St., most of Hoyt St., several houses on Main St. and the northern end of Lakeshore Drive. TLPOA Boatyards provide boat storage and access to the lake for non-riparian home owners. Maintenance of the boatyards is often a combination of TLPOA funds and resident volunteers who use that boatyard. The TLPOA boatyards are spread throughout the association property and can be found on Lakeshore Dr., Gilbert St./Indian Ln, and Hoyt St. Another boatyard owned by the TLPOA is used by the residents of Lovecross at the stream outlet. All boats on the lake must be registered and show a Truesdale Lake boat sticker.

### **WALK TO #6 the dam and bridge on Indian Lane.**

*Fun facts as you walk:*

*After walking down the very steep hill on Hoyt St., you can view the 1 mile length of our lake, including the three islands. This stretch of Hoyt St. from the bottom of the hill to the dam, holds many of the oldest lakefront homes in our community. Electric light, telephone connections, rock ballasted roads and clean water were listed as enticements for buying a lot on the lake, in addition to the clubhouse, boat house, beach and tennis court.*

*Dixon Van Wormer lived in a home along this stretch in the 1960s. He built an airplane in his garage and would fly it during the winter, taking off and landing on the frozen lake!*

## 6. Truesdale Lake Dam

The original dam was completed in July, 1908, and paid for by Theodore Van Norden. When the Truesdale Lake Corporation bought the dam and small lake from Van Norden in 1926, they improved and raised the existing dam. A control tower was built to drain the lake as needed.

The siphons that you see from the bridge (brought in because our low level outlet under the dam is no longer functional) now serve to lower the lake every two to three years and expose the lakebed to cold air in the winter, which helps to kill the weeds that grow on the lake bottom.

The TLPOA owns the dam and the undeveloped property north of the dam. The road over the dam is also owned by the TLPOA, although the Highway Dept. maintains the asphalt, guard rails and bridge. In the fall of 1955, an unprecedented flood damaged the dam and the road and destroyed the main well pump. The TLPOA completed all repairs quickly and saved money by acting as the general contractor for the huge project. Repaving of the road over the bridge was completed by the Highway Dept. that spring.

### **WALK TO #7 the TLPOA Beach on Gilbert St.**

*Fun facts as you walk:*

*The original plans for the Truesdale Colony showed Indian Lane continuing up the hill to connect with Howe St., and ending at Main Street. Gilbert St. was also going to meet Main St. This work was never completed.*

*As you turn left onto Gilbert St., you pass a TLPOA boatyard. Boatyards and beaches are owned by the TLPOA and TEA. The town has the right to use and maintain TLPOA roads and the bridge, but the TLPOA has ownership of the roads (including the shoulders), because our water system pipes are underneath.*

*Boats were originally kept at the Truesdale Colony boathouse, next to the beach. The TLPOA later designated four undeveloped lakefront lots to act as boatyards and access for non-riparian homeowners.*

*In 1926, Truesdale lake had FOUR islands, but at some point during the next 20 years, an island northeast of the TLPOA beach sunk to the bottom of the lake!*

## 7. TLPOA Beach

The Truesdale Lake Corporation originally owned the lakefront clubhouse on the bend of Gilbert St. as well as the two lots to the north which served as the beach for Colony residents. A float with a diving board was moored off the beach. The Truesdale Lake Club was formed on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1926 to ensure exclusivity. Applications and interviews were required for membership, and acceptance to the residential country club was necessary prior to purchasing property from the corporation. The clubhouse was the center of the social scene offering dinners, dancing, plays and parties. A boat house next to the clubhouse stored canoes and sailboats. Take-away snacks for the beach were offered at the terrace window.

When the Truesdale Lake Corporation went bankrupt in the early 1940s, the clubhouse, beach and many undeveloped lots were sold off, and the members of the relatively new TLPOA were no longer allowed access. The clubhouse and beach were sold to a private owner. Finally, in 1950, the TLPOA was able to purchase the two beach lots and parking area for their members from that property owner. In 1963, a new retaining wall with steps was built, and the sandy beach was expanded back to the wall.

The TLPOA sponsors parties and events year-round on the beach. Long-standing traditions like Water Sports Day, Holiday Caroling, contests, derbies, and adult socials continue even now. New events and ideas from volunteers continue to make the beach the heart of the association.

### **WALK TO the last stop #8 the Town House**

*Fun facts as you walk:*

*This part of Gilbert St. was originally called Red Pine Lane, due to the many pine trees that lined the road down to the lake in 1926.*

*A small “servant’s beach” was kept on the south side of the clubhouse. The Truesdale Colony’s tennis court and maintenance garage were located at the corner of Lakeshore Dr. and Gilbert St., now a private home.*

**Cheers to 100 years!!**