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A GOLDEN SUMMER



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A TALE OF TWO LAKES

LAKE GLENVILLE AND LAKE TOXAWAY

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IN A LAND OF LUSH FORESTS, PRISTINE WATERWAYS, AND RUSHING WATERFALLS, RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ON THE HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS PLATEAU SUFFER NO SHORTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES TO ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS. THE AREA'S TWO LARGEST LAKES, LAKE GLENVILLE AND LAKE TOXAWAY, PROVIDE AN IDYLIC SETTING FOR HOME SITES AND AN ABUNDANCE OF JOYFUL RECREATION ON THE WATER.

LAKE GLENVILLE

During the Second World War, the country's requirements for electricity increased as factories ramped up production to support military efforts. In 1941, Nantahala Power and Light built a hydroelectric dam at Onion Falls, on the west fork of the Tuckasegee River, to power the Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA). Flooding the valley created the 1,470-acre Lake Glenville. After the war ended, ALCOA sold the lake to their subsidiary Nantahala Power in 1951, and from that point onward, the lake was referred to as Thorpe Reservoir after the electric company's first president. Subsequent to the formation of the Friends of Lake Glenville, a non-profit organization serving as stewards of the lake, the name reverted back to Lake Glenville in 2002.

Before the reservoir's creation, the settlements of Hamburg and Glenville inhabited the valley north of Cashiers, which now forms the bed of Lake Glenville. The valley was populated with homes, churches, a post office, and even an inn that attracted tourists from far and wide.

Local myth says that the settlements are still down there, sleeping beneath the water, and tales abound of scuba divers swimming around the old post office. But that's not entirely true; the original foundations of locust posts and rock remain, but the actual structures were demolished before the lake's creation.

Old photographs of the dam's construction depict oxen pulling down trees to clear the valley floor. The graves of the local cemetery were relocated to a hill above the water's edge and are visible today as you drive north on Highway 107 toward Sylva. Highway 107 replaces the old road that ran from Walhalla, South Carolina, to Sylva. That road now lies at the bottom of the lake, as does part of Toby Bryson Road, which once connected Glenville to the Norton community and Highlands.

The dam's history contributed to present-day regulations that sometimes befuddle property owners. A few families held out, refusing to sell their homes and land to ALCOA, and those properties ended up in court. As a result, the attorney negotiated a settlement in which some waterfront landowners were not subject to a setback rule. Today, many properties around Lake Glenville are subject to a 50-foot setback from the water, while others are not.

Now owned by Duke Energy, the public-access lake includes a boat launch and a popular beach area off Pine Creek Road and provides a much-loved recreational destination for residents and visitors. In addition, numerous private communities, such as Trillium Links and Lake Club and Stone Pointe, have made their homes on its shores.

Lake Glenville hosts watercraft of all types, including gas-powered and electric boats, as well as kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards. The Friends of Lake Glenville, a local non-profit organization, publishes pamphlets on boater safety to help ensure the public's continuing enjoyment of the lake. The group also puts on one of the area's most popular Independence Day fireworks displays each July.

To manage the seven inflows into the lake, Friends of Lake Glenville dedicates the majority of its efforts to water quality. With a stated mission of preserving and protecting the lake's natural beauty and integrity, they test water quality three to four times yearly, conduct cleanup initiatives, organize fish restocking programs, and have created a document outlining a long-term vision for watershed management.

As a result of these efforts, Lake Glenville is one of the cleanest lakes in Western North Carolina.

With 26 miles of shoreline and widely known as the highest-elevation major lake east of the Mississippi River (at 3,494 feet above sea level), Lake Glenville serves as a picturesque backdrop for the homes and communities that dot the water's edge.

LAKE TOXAWAY

Ten miles to the east lies another of the area's outstanding natural resources. A hidden gem in the mountains of Western North Carolina, Lake Toxaway offers homeowners an adventurous outdoor lifestyle with access to the largest private lake in the state.

First formed in 1903, Lake Toxaway was conceived by The Toxaway Company as the largest man-made lake in North Carolina at that time. Back then, this region of Western North Carolina had gained recognition as "The Switzerland of America," a vacation destination popular among wealthy tourists. The developers established the five-story Toxaway Inn overlooking the lake, and homeowners began constructing vacation homes on the shoreline. The Transylvania Railroad delivered passengers straight to the Lake Toxaway depot, where they vacationed in style at the Inn or continued their travels to Highlands and other nearby destinations by motorcoach.

Circa 1915, Mr. and Mrs. George Armstrong of Savannah, Georgia, established their magnificent Hillmont House on Lake Toxaway. The home, designated on The National Register of Historic Places, was transformed into The Greystone Inn in 1985 and receives guests to this day. The 30-room inn provides luxurious accommodations to its guests, with an all-inclusive spa, a lakeside restaurant, and catering services for special events.



and many other second-home owners persisted in their enjoyment of the area even through the trials of the Great Depression. Finally, in 1961, the Lake Toxaway Company purchased the dry lake bed, rebuilt the dam, and recreated the beloved destination.

The 640-acre private reservoir is home to Lake Toxaway Estates and its numerous sub-communities, with the Lake Toxaway Community Association anchoring conservation and safety programs. Members in good standing access the lake for boating, skiing, tubing, paddleboarding, fishing, and swimming. The nearby Cardinal Lake, a 65-acre private lake just upstream, provides another source of recreation with boats restricted to electric-only motors.

The enduring legacy of Lake Toxaway has contributed to its reputation as a welcoming, upscale respite from city life throughout the Southeast. After falling in love with the serenity of Lake Toxaway, visitors often decide to relocate to the community as second-home owners or even full-time residents.

Guests come from far and wide to experience the magic of The Greystone, but the historic mainstay remains a local favorite among those who enjoy “staycations” on the lake. The Inn is also open to the public so that visitors can explore all that Toxaway has to offer, including hiking trails, waterfalls, and a quaint mountain town.

Although Toxaway’s dam was destroyed by a devastating flood in 1916, the Armstrongs



**BOATING ON THE PLATEAU:
GAS VS ELECTRIC**

Boating has evolved over the years into a popular recreational diversion. As with all human innovation, watercraft designers continually develop their products to match consumer expectations and preferences.



With more public awareness around the environmental impact of emissions from gas-powered engines, many boaters have begun to consider electric-powered options. In addition, the large wakes produced by more powerful watercraft can contribute to shoreline erosion. For this reason, as well as the issues of noise pollution and boater safety, many smaller lakes — Mirror Lake, Lake Fairfield, Cardinal Lake, and Lake Osseroga come to mind — do not permit gas-powered boats within their waters.

Situated on Lake Glenville, Signal Ridge Marina specializes in gas-powered boats by Bennington, which creates luxury pontoon vessels, models



used for fishing, and recreational boats. Signal Ridge Sales Manager Brandon Luethye explains the primary differences between gas- and electric-powered watercraft.

“Electric boats are just beginning to gain widespread attention. They tend to be slower, designed for cruising rather than the more intense and popular activities like skiing and wakeboarding, and are still limited to 22 feet in size. Gas-powered vessels are capable of higher speeds and are typically better suited to the more exciting watersports.”

Beyond environmental concerns, practical issues can impact the boat buyer’s final selection. “With electric boats, you have to charge for 8 to 12 hours. So, when you’re done, you’re done! But with gas-powered boats, you can gas up and continue enjoying your day,” shares Luethye.

Bob Bean at Singleton Marine in Salem, South Carolina, says their pontoon and sport boat sales revolve exclusively around gas-powered crafts from well-known makers such as Cobalt and Regal. He expands on the limiting factor of electric power for larger watercraft. “You have to remember that boats don’t have brakes. Most people have two speeds; you’re either idling or wide open. In the ways that most people use sport boats, the battery life of an electric boat just isn’t sufficient.”

For those worried about emissions, Bean offers reassurance. “Remember that cars are still the main producers of emissions. The average boater might put 30 or 40 hours on their boat each year. That’s equal to just a few days of driving a car.”

However, he says, “We do carry an electric surfboard by Radinn that’s selling like hotcakes! Picture a paddleboard that goes 30 miles per hour.” After charging for three hours, electric surfboard users can expect about 40 minutes of run time at maximum speed.

“Battery drain is the main reason you don’t see many larger electric boats just yet,” Bean explains. “For people who enjoy water sports and want to spend a day on the lake, it just wouldn’t be convenient. But for those who want to cruise around and sightsee, Torqeedo does make an electric pontoon boat that many find enjoyable.”

For thrill-seekers with an environmental conscience, hope is on the horizon. Luethye has good news: “Some electric boat models that can handle higher speeds are currently in the testing phase. So those could be coming along and hitting the mainstream soon!”

For most boaters, the choice between gas and electric depends upon how they plan to use their crafts, as well as local regulations. Gas-powered engines remain the standard for many, but with more electric options becoming available, the future of boating looks exciting — and possibly “greener” than ever.