



NORTH GREENBUSH NOTES

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North Greenbush Elections

Since its founding in 1855, the Town of North Greenbush has experienced several interesting contests for Supervisor.

Abram Witbeck was our first Supervisor. He had been a long time justice in the old town of Greenbush and agreed to serve as a transition official for the first two years. He ran unopposed and garnered 185 votes. He was succeeded by R.M. Defreest in 1857.

Both these candidates ran on the American party ticket. The nickname for this group was the KnowNothing party because when asked what they believed in they said we know nothing. They probably said this because of not wanting to admit their anti-immigration and anti-Catholic views. Surprisingly, this party did well nationally in the mid-1850's before dying out.

In the 1890's candidates from the Village of Bath which was the largest entity in our town, won all the elections. Later that decade, the city of Rensselaer annexed Bath. North Greenbush didn't put up much of a fight, figuring candidates from Wynantskill and

Defreestville could now become the elected officials.

From 1935-41, Democrat Charles Smith ran for supervisor. He won once and lost the other three elections. One might have thought he would have been more successful since he had been Town Clerk for 10 years.

The town turned decidedly Republican from 1941 until 1965 when Democrat Jim Herbert, a drug store owner from Defreestville broke that streak.

Republicans were again the winners until 1977.

In that year, Bob Baker was the Republican incumbent. Although he was the party-endorsed candidate, he suddenly pulled out of the race. Could the Republicans replace him? Court battles ensued but the result was it was too late to name another candidate. Democrat Bill Dedrick and his party handily won the election, which began a string of 6 victories for the party.

1987 was a most unusual election. Initial vote counts on election night had Democratic incumbent Rocco Fragomeni winning by 92 votes. After a mathematical error was found in the count and the absentee votes were tabulated, Republican challenger Dan Borden was declared the victor by 11 votes. It just proves the saying that every vote counts.