

## The Old Dance Hall

According to the 1899 Plat Map, Clark Lake's first building belonged to a P.Klaus who owned 68 acres on the northwest shore. By the next plat survey in 1914, shown below, Fred Goeks owned this property and had five buildings. These were the only structures shown on Clark Lake plat in 1914.

SHOW ----- 1914 PLAT OF CLARK LAKE

Old timers remember these buildings as a dancehall, hotel, tavern, pavilion, clubhouse and lodge with "honeymoon cottages" and boats for rent . My grandmother recalls walking the few miles from her farm near the Washington School on County I

to picnic there and make ice cream while the menfolk fished. She may have even "honeymooned" there in 1918. Goeks Place, possibly known at one time as "The Grasshopper", was a popular weekend destination for local folk in the early years of the 20th century.

SHOW ----- ARTICLES FROM ADVOCATE

An article from the Advocate, May 23, 1912 announces an "opening" with the Nasewaupsee Brass Band and a "new road" from Valmy ( being now County WD and Nelson Rd.). Another road, a spur going southeast from Highway 57 and Loritz Rd. shown on the 1899 Plat Map, was the earliest access to Clark Lake. In 1906, an Advocate article tells of the drowning of the Goeks' 18 month old son, Munro, in a washtub there. No mention is made of any commercial enterprise.

SHOW----- PHOTOS OF RESORT

By 1919, the Goeks property was sold for taxes to Frank Butts Sr. with lake access to Eric Swenson who operated a fishing lodge there. The dance hall is just a hole in the ground, but its hardwood floor still serves the Hall cottage. In the next few years, Mr. Butts sold parcels to friends who began building cottages in the 1920s: Niblocks, Meyers, Halls, Rocks.....

Now all that is left of this old resort are myrtle covered foundations with phlox and daylily among them, set in the woody area above the Ries/Hall cottage at 5558 Butts Rd. By the 1950s, the two-story frame hotel still stood--sort of--with a few iron bedframes and an old potbelly stove that today lies rusting in the woods. We kids would explore the tiny rooms upstairs, calling it the "haunted house".

HALL, RATHKE

SHOW ---- PHOTOS OF CLUBHOUSE,

*We continue to search for more information on early settlements on Clark Lake and welcome any corrections or additions to the above.*