

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

John Wesley Snyder House

Local Historic Landmark #108

2715 Old Salisbury Rd., Winston-Salem

Construction Date: c. 1922

Landmark Designation Date: 12/18/2000

John Wesley Snyder (1889-1961) grew up in Forsyth County south of Winston-Salem. Around 1912, he moved into the city to seek his fortune. There, he joined his brother, Fred, in the establishment of the Snyder Credit Company, a combined credit and retail furniture business. In 1914, Snyder married Treva Adelia Shore. They first lived on W. Ninth Street in Winston-Salem. Although he continued to work in Winston-Salem, he missed rural life and his connection to the land. Around 1918, John and Treva Snyder moved back to the country to help care for Treva's sick mother; they lived with Treva's parents on Old Salisbury Road. In 1918, following the death of Treva's mother, Snyder purchased 30 acres of land on Old Salisbury Road from his father-in-law.

Oral tradition claims Snyder built his house in two years. An African-American man by the name of Ephram is said to have done all the stonework. Although the exact construction date is not certain, based on the recollections of two of the Snyder's daughters, it is likely that most of the work on the house took place in 1922, with occupancy in 1923.

Despite the stylishness of the house and the high quality of its design and construction, no architect was involved. Rather, Snyder planned the house with the help of his brothers, Roy and Fred. Roy was a building contractor in Winston-Salem, while Fred started a lumber company in the early 1920s. This meant not only that the brothers would have been able to direct the construction of a house, but also that they would have known good draftsmen and had access to quality millwork and builders' design books of the period. Snyder was also fortunate in that a small granite quarry was located across Old Salisbury Road just west of his property. He took full advantage of all of these assets.

The John Wesley Snyder House is a large, two-story granite structure. The exterior is a fine example of the Craftsman style popular the time of the house's construction. The three-bay main block across



Photographs courtesy of Heather Fearnbach

the front of the house is extended on the south elevation by a winter sunroom and on the north by an open-air summer porch (which has now been screened in) with a balustraded roof deck. The house has granite chimneys at the north and south ends. The low, hipped roof of the house is pierced in front by three low, hipped dormers, and both the dormers and the roof have widely overhanging eaves with exposed, carved, rafter ends. A pent eave extends across the entire front of the house at first-story level. This eave shelters a narrow, broken-tile raised terrace that stretches across the façade. The slightly projecting shed roof over the center entrance is supported by a pair of extraordinarily dramatic, large, curved wood brackets. Smaller, but matching, brackets support the corners of the north side porch.

The recessed front entrance consists of a multipaned glass door with matching sidelights and transom. Above

the entrance is a recessed triple window on the second floor. Granite steps lead from the front entrance down to the broken-tile front walk that leads to the circular drive. Most of the windows of the house are multipane-over-one sash, except for the casement windows on the south side sunroom. The other exception is the second-story sleeping porch in the northeast corner of the house. These windows are six-over-six sash. Interestingly, the windows are hinged so that the sill flips inward to allow the sash to be lowered into the wall, creating wide, open ventilation.

The Snyder House property also features a fine complement of outbuildings commonly associated with rural dwellings of the time period, but which often have not survived.

Today the John Wesley Snyder House is privately occupied.



John Wesley Snyder House, 1945

Courtesy of Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission's Files

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

John Wesley Snyder House National Register Nomination
<http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/FY2657.pdf>



This information is also available
at the Forsyth County
Historic Resources Commission's web site:
<http://www.ForsythCountyHRC.org>