

Journal A - (#6)

July 30, 1996

Dear Reunion Groupies,

The years of my youth that were spent at Camp Waupaca have always been a happy memory. Norma Schenider died in October of 1994 and my mother followed her to the kitchen in the sky January 6, 1994. As we cleared away the accumulated memorabilia of an 82 year adventure, there were many pictures, camp recipes, and drawings that were uncovered. In our last visits she would remember different campers and counselors with the joy and fondness. Of the old cooks, only Avis Kernert is still living. She and her husband sold the Rosa Theater some years back and are retired in the area.

Some of the campers may remember the laundry lady, Rosie Caldwell. She may still live in the basement of her never finished house a ways down Stratton Lake Road. After her training as a joke master for the counselors who helped her with the laundry, she became a bar tender. I heard only a small sample of her repretrau, but it was enough to know she was capable of her profession.

Louise Grant who was the camp dietitian under Loretta K. in Skipper's rein is retired and has been out of state since leaving camp. Her mother and father still live on the old Grant farm near Almond WI. Judy J., who vied for the affections of at least two counselors has also left the area long ago. The last I heard of Fern Minor, Larry Rosen will never forget her, she was living in the Waupaca area raising a family. Mary Ann Meyer married and has three children. She has been in a wheel chair for the past several years as a result of an automobile accident. The Turner sisters have married and left the area. Evelyn Johnson married a former Camp Waupaca grounds keeper, Alvin Towne. They have three children and live in the area.

My daughters who worked in the kitchen are Tammie in Seattle WA, and Cindi in Phoenix AZ. Tammie has three children, divorced and remarried. Cindi has one child and is divorced but not remarried (as far as we know).

Nurse's Aid, (Jean) Cindy Holman (now Ziemke) married her long time sweetheart (eat your hearts out Gutienader and Fuller. She has a family and lives at P.O. Box 16, Greenbush, WI 53026.

Grounds keepers that I know of are: Alvin Towne who works at the truck terminal in Waupaca, Erle Towne who works as a maintenance foreman at the Waupaca foundry, Dean Towne who works at Sevdella in Appleton, Wi., Jeff Harvey who was killed in a late night car accident on his way home from his third shift job, and my partner as grounds keeper, Dan Danielson is still a banker somewhere (at least his name has not been mentioned with Whitewater). One of the first grounds keepers was George Meyer. George has retired from a career as a law enforcement officer.

Winfeild Stern and Forest Paine were the two who build the original mess hall and cabins out of WW II surplus barracks from the Great Lakes Naval Base. Winnie worked at the camp well into his 90's and lived to over a hundred. He built and maintained the first picnic benches. To save money on paint, he purchased odd lots and mixed them to colors that pleased only him. You see he was color blind and we ate from tables that were of colors that were known to the campers as barf brown, baby poo, rotten pink, dirty purple, and others that would be best left to the memory of the campers who named them.

Winnie felt that one could never get enough religion. He had memorized the Bible and would ask off duty counselors to check him as he recited various passages. He often won a bet about a passage where the principal character is taking a leak on the city walls. In spite of this, he was also true to his Jewish heritage.

The first head counselor was Roman Danielson. He was a coach and principal at Waupaca High School. He oversaw the construction of and layout of the original athletic fields (some never changed). Skipper and Joe Rosen did the camp layout of course. Roman died of a heart attack shortly after he retired from the high school. Some aspects of his program, such as the swimming schedules continued to the end of the camp.

Bob and Sue Kron have been running Camp Red Arrow for a number of years. A mutual friend told me that they were still at it this past summer. As soon as I can find out their permanent address I will let you know.

Clem and Cliff Caldwell used their marrow digging equipment to make the old and new beaches. The old beach was opened in 1952 and proved to be cold all the time because of near by springs. Those who fished the lake may remember that on hot days the fish would be found there. The new beach was made by Cliff digging marrow in the fall and hauling sand cover the ice in the winter. The trench for the ski dock was dug, but not filled in with sand. It was to continue to be enlarged for another two seasons, when the Wisconsin DNR directed that marrow removal from the lakes be stopped in 1958. Cliff sold the marrow to farmers in the area to put on their fields. Marrow is left from the sea shells that turned to muck after the last ice age. It is very high in lime.

Erv Kassen stopped writing about ten years ago. He always bragged about the fine program that he had started at his new camp, but he also always remembered some one or some event at Camp Waupaca. An unconfirmed report is that he has passed away.

Bob Moen called my mother once and asked her why I stopped writing him. My last letter to him came back and since then I don't know where he may be found. By the way, Bob did not give mother an address when he called.

I tried to contact Mike and Georgia when Norma passed away and my letter came back with no forwarding address. Now I know why after our conversation.

It is my feeling that Chuck Cooper passed away in the spring or summer of 1993. I talked to him about May 15th. He called me to tell me he was going into the hospital for open heart surgery. He said that he would call again when he could. He never called. My letters have gone unanswered and his phone number no longer connected to him. The last known address of Charles Cooper is P.O. Box 268530, Chicago, IL 60626-8530. His phone number was 312-764-6119.

James Hagerty was the one who issued the rifle range command, "You are off the range for the rest of the year." It was supposedly said by me when a camper by the last name of Green pointed a loaded rifle in the direction of the baseball field. I told him he was suspended from the range. He asked, "How long." and I replied, "For the rest of the year." Hagerty issued the command several times for various infractions. Once to Skipper's wife, Loretta, when she was touring some guests around the camp and walked into the ready area and began to talk.

My faux pax was during the first year that I worked as a counselor. The craft shop was then my area. A number of x-acto knives were missing. They seemed to disappear when the craft shop was closed. "Some one has been sneaking into the craft shop and stealing the x-acto knives," became my motto. After my summer off with the National Guard at Fort Lewis, this was forgotten (and I did not jar any memories of it).

Rosemary and Leroy Clotiaux wrote for a number of years, then stopped. Their address was 9821 Hawthorne, New Orleans, LA 70123.

Steve Kuklin was in Milwaukee the last I heard of. Also Steve Hersch was there in about 1980 when I met him in a shopping center.

Today I can truly state that Camp Waupaca had a lot to do with where I am today. Here on the Menominee Indian Reservation I make my bread by teaching and directing the trades programs. Away from the city lights, noise, crime and heat, here in the woods with mosquitoes, ticks, black flies, jiggers, no-see-ums, and other delights of nature, I spend my days basking in the void of selective Alzheimer's. This is of course my excuse for any lapses in memory that may account for inaccuracies in this letter.

Sincerely,

Wayne Towne