



The Wigwam



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Camp Kawanhee, Weld, Maine

July 6, 1955

Dear Tribesmen and Friends of Kawanhee:

There was a hot time in the old camp on the evening of June 30 -- and that is a statement easy to substantiate on at least two counts! For one, the elements observed the date by serving up a spell of weather unusually warm and humid for Maine and, particularly, for the Webb Lake valley. For another, the Kawanhee season went into operation the latter part of that Thursday and promptly worked up a full head of steam. The camp began to simmer at 5:00 P.M. when Mr. G. R. Frank and two busloads of campers from Ohio rolled down the hill. For the first time in years they had made "that connection" in Boston. But the full boil was not reached until 9:00 P.M. or thereabouts when Mr. Raymond Frank with his New York convoy made a somewhat delayed entrance in another big bus.

These arrivals sparked the opening of Kawanhee's thirty-fifth season. (We don't want to provoke a public dispute with Chief Kawanhee, but if he truly believes that he has welcomed the tribe thirty-six times, as he was understood to remark Saturday evening, he has either put one over on us, or he has had an attack of double vision somewhere along the line!) Other statistics prove this also to be Kawanhee's biggest season. According to Mr. Frank's official count, the summer's personnel consists of 188 individuals -- 131 campers; 41 counselors, Senior and Junior; and 16 other staff members ---- thus surpassing last summer's high-water mark of population by two or three. It is a source of deep regret to the camp that this total had to be reduced by one at the last minute, when a leg injury forced Bob Elliott to exchange the prospects of a summer in Kawanhee for a summer in a cast. No one ever took such a disappointment with better sportsmanship. Bob will be missed all through the season and he has the very best wishes of the whole camp while his leg is mending.

New Lodge and Enlarged Council Ring Noted in Camp

Incoming tribesmen found the camp itself in readiness for a summer's activity Thursday afternoon. The docks and diving tower had been set up with last summer's sags and wallops corrected; sailboats were in the water, and rowboats and canoes on the beach; the Nature Building was open with its many displays all set to buzz or glow for the edification of visitors; the Range and the Shop were cleared and equipped for action (except for the dispersal of hammers chronic at this season) -- all facts indicative of much pre-season preparation on the parts of Bates, Nick, Dex, Ben Bennett and other early-comers. Buildings and equipment, indeed, looked as if there had been scarcely a lapse since the 1954 season ended ten months ago, except for several points where something new had been added.

A new lodge, for instance, had been sandwiched into the south side of the boathouse below the Crows' Nest to house half a dozen of the older boys and two counselors. A new fawn was curled in the straw in the pen behind the Nature Building. This little fellow (?) is named Wanhee too --- it must be Wanhee the Third! Born on June 8, Wanhee is one of the smaller of the seven orphan deer sent to Kawanhee for nature during recent summers, but gives every indication of thriving in the Nature Department's care as have all the others.

The greatest change was to be remarked on Council Point. Last autumn, Hurricane Carol, striking from the east, bowled over fourteen or more of the 90- to 100-foot red pines around the Council Ring, flattening them completely or leaving them tilted crazily out toward the lake like a gigantic pile of jackstraws. Clean-up work in September and this year in June had "twitched" out the fallen lumber, removed the stumps, and left the camp with a much enlarged Council Ring, one ample at last to seat Kawanhee's waxing enrollment.

Favorite Ladies Provide a Warm Welcome

If the whole camp appeared ready for action, it was in the most vital of all departments, the kitchen, that this readiness was promptly and actually put to the proof, for good hot meals were immediately forthcoming Thursday evening both for the early arrivals and the late. This effective operation was easy to understand in view of the composition of Kawanhee's dietetic Staff. Mrs. G. R. Frank had been in these parts since June 3, preparing for her dual tasks as dietician for the camp and Resident Manager of Kawanhee Inn, which pleasant hostelry she had open and receiving guests on June 25. Although Mrs. Frank may be little in evidence in camp, her contribution to the well-being of every camper is a basic one and one from which every camper benefits substantially three times a day. Representing Mrs. Frank on the firing line are two of Kawanhee's best friends, Emma and Sue. This is the twenty-fourth Kawanhee season for Mrs. Emma Briggs of Madison, Maine, and her wonderful bread and apple pies have long been legendary. Mrs. Susan Weld of Dixfield is presiding over the big range for the fourth time, and it is difficult to know whether the sight of Sue is more welcome for her good company or for her good cooking. With these two ladies on deck, Kawanhee appetites are in the best hands possible.

As usual, the camp's most popular welcoming committee consisted of Mrs. Raymond Frank, for she has always been so generous with her great resources of enthusiasm and friendship that she holds a unique place in every Kawanhee memory. Since May 20, Frannie has been devoting herself to the manifold job of setting the camp to rights for the opening, and, with the beginning of the season, her duties as Camp Mother have again laid claim to her extensive energies. Her daughter, Betty, was among those present during the early days of the summer, for the late opening of Kineowatha did not take her to Wilton until July 3.

Chief's Visit Officially Launches Camp Season

Friday, July 1, found the season well under way. The morning was spent in unpacking and, in the afternoon, almost all departments went into operation. A new Director of Activities, John Nowold, called the signals and, since "Pop" is anything but a stranger to Kawanhee, "bugs" in the program were kept at a minimum. Heavy swimming traffic across the cove was to be seen as the job of classifying aquatic prowess was promptly undertaken, and Saturday morning the first round of lodge inspections showed that Kawanhee had settled down tidily.

The season was formally initiated Saturday evening, July 2, with the ritual visit of welcome paid by Chief Kawanhee. Mr. R. C. Frank presided at the customary session in the Rec Hall, telling something of this region's history and expounding the legend of Kawanhee. The ceremony itself was acted out in the twilight on Council Point. Mr. Chace again filled the role of Kawanhee with dignity. Dan Keck called the role of the Sachems, and Dean Miller read out the message left by the campers of 1954 for their successors. Bill Hauser, the camp bugler, played TAPS in the distance to bring the evening to an impressive close.

Sunday proved to be the first "real Maine day" of the season -- bright and clear, but a bit on the windy side. Morning service was therefore held in the Recreation Hall where it was a privilege and a great joy to hear another of Dr. Elmore's memorable sermons. That afternoon Bates conveyed the first trip to Coos Canyon -- a large group drawn from the Bears, the Crows and the "New" Lodge. (If no one names that lodge, people are going to assume that it must be the Gnu Lodge!) Dean Miller conducted a brief vesper service in the evening, anticipating the Fourth with his talk on the meaning of the flag. And with Monday morning, 1955's first full week of activities was off to a flying start.

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This is more a fill-in letter from the WIGWAM than the summer's first number of the paper itself. Because of a general Fourth-of-July week vacation in our printer's office, it was impossible to publish the standard printed number. These paragraphs, therefore, are merely a note to let you know that all went well with the opening of the season. The WIGWAM's usual format and the schedule of Friday publication will be resumed next week, and that number will contain all the facts about lodge lists, personnel and organization customarily to be found in the initial issue. Thereafter the weekly numbers will do their best to provide campers with an adequate record of their accomplishments here in camp and to furnish more distant parents and friends with all the Kawanhee news, major and minor, which fails to find a place in those semiweekly letters. That is a large order, but an all-out attempt to fill it will be the summer's first concern of the WIGWAM and its editor,

C. Scarlett