



The Wigwam



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Camp Kawanhee, Weld, Maine

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Thirty-sixth Season Launched with Transport and Weather Co-operating

The installment-plan opening of Kawanhee's thirty-sixth season proved to be one of the smoothest and most efficient within memory. Several factors contributed to this record low of stresses and strains, most notably the fact that for once all matters pertaining to transportation moved according to schedule. Mr. G. R. Frank and his Ohio convoy arrived by bus just before 6:00 P. M. on Friday, June 29, and Mr. R. C. Frank brought in his busload of Easterners at 5:15 P. M. Saturday, June 30. Both groups had come all the way from Boston by bus, thereby by-passing the chronic bottleneck of Portland, and both were enthusiastic about their drivers who had accomplished with ease and dispatch a journey which had often seemed interminable in past years. These two contingents of travelers quickly amalgamated with the staff, the bulk of which was already on deck, and with the campers delivered by family cars in ever increasing numbers throughout the two days. By supertime Saturday the camp was at its summer's strength -- a lodge population (campers and counselors, both Junior and Senior) of 153 and an over-all "cook's count" of approximately 180 for the total camp community to be fed.

Another happy auspice for the seasonal send-off was the weather Friday and Saturday. True, the sun shone only at intervals, but then there was no rain except for a shower or two in the middle of the night. There was certainly no heat wave to cause complaint, but neither was the temperature actually chilly except in the early morning when some "briskness" is to be expected of Maine weather. In short, the weather wasn't bad enough to put a crimp in anyone's plans, nor good enough to distract from the business at hand!

June Workers Have Camp Grounds and Buildings in Readiness

More important was the state of the camp itself! As the result of much productive work during June with the Directors themselves on the scene, both the organization and the physical set-up were ready to tick. Lodge lists had been worked out, so incoming groups could settle down immediately. Trunks were already in the lodges -- the right lodges, thanks to Dan Keck and his crew! The Athletic Field looked unusually well groomed. The two docks were largely in place, and that is conventionally -- and correctly -- taken as indicative of the fact that Bates was among those present and had been getting in his licks. Other departments were still in the final stages of additions or of face-lifting. The Scout Cabin was receiving a large lean-to addition at the rear for the storage of trip supplies. The Sailing Department appeared to be strewn all over the area between the Shop and the Crows' Nest, for Mike Smith, Ernie Johanson, J. Sanders and "Uncle Charlie" Long had been among the year's earliest arrivals and their as yet unconcluded labors comprehended the repair and partial rebuilding of two boats, and the construction of a set of reef markers so elaborate as to make one instinctively look for parking meters beneath the red flags. And if occasionally the kitchen was more lightly peopled than usual, it could be assumed that everyone was down in the basement, admiring the new deep freeze for vegetables.

First Round of Sight-seeing Includes Ladies and Lady's-slippers

In spite of the unpacking to be done, a good many man-hours were immediately devoted to checking on who, and what, were in camp. Sue and Emma were both in the kitchen, a most comforting sight for anyone interested -- and who is

not -- in the subject of good eating. A source of great interest was the presence of a new nurse, Pat Dinsmore, in the camp infirmary, to say nothing of a new secretary, Mrs. Harmon, in the office -- two attractive additions to the exclusive roster of Kawanhee ladies! It was equally pleasant, on the other hand, to discover that mosquitoes were not to be counted in the personnel, for a voracious crop of the insects had ostensibly been slaughtered by a spraying as recent as June 27. A very late spring, however, had produced other manifestations of fauna and flora to delight the naturalists. There were, most appropriately, orchids waiting for that popular lady, Mary Baker, in the form of lady's-slippers still blooming along the Council Point trail. A family of loons continued for a few nights to discourse on the lake at hours that would seem eccentric even for a counselor's day off. Speaking of days -- or years -- off, it was wonderful to find Mr. H. C. Marshall, "The Chief", once more active in camp after a somewhat sabbatical year. Another pleasure was provided by the presence of all three of the Frank ladies. Mrs. George Frank was at Kawanhee Inn. She had, indeed, been there since June 4, opening the Inn for the summer and organizing the camp's dietetic schedule. Mrs. R. C. Frank (She's known as Frannie just to her friends, but, since she's automatically friendly with everyone, the formal "Mrs." never makes much headway!) was waiting in her cabin to make everyone, newcomer as well as old-timer, feel most welcome. Her daughter, Miss Betty Frank, whose graduation from Northfield on June 3 immediately preceded the Franks' annual migration to Weld, remained in Kawanhee until the evening of June 30, when she departed for her summer's work as a trip counselor at Camp Kineowatha.

Sunday Services and Swimming Tests Initiate Season's Activities

Sunday morning brought the first assembly of the full camp for church services in the Recreation Hall. The sermon was by Dr. Elmore -- and presented this reporter with a familiar dilemma: the impossibility of failing to mention these inspiring weekly talks which inform Kawanhee life with something intangible, yet far more durable and valuable than any program of activities; and the equal impossibility of attempting adequate remarks on a unique and memorable experience. Let it be understood that, here or later, the mere phrase "a sermon by Dr. Elmore" represents so long established and highly maintained a standard that comment would be not only redundant but impertinent. Evening found the group convening again in the Recreation Hall for Vespers with Herb Yenser and his recently reorganized Glee Club. Dean Miller's talk on Friendship gave the first full day of the 1956 season a fitting and impressive conclusion.

One department virtually jumped the gun on the season, and that was the Swimming Department under the energetic leadership of Jack Welton and Gardner Defoe. The work on the diving tower and docks was completed Saturday morning and, in the afternoon, the department went into action with the basic swimming tests necessary for boating privileges. This allowed numerous campers to pass the Dock Swim, and a few to complete the Cove Swim, even before the season had actually opened. The program was resumed after church Sunday morning and, that afternoon, continued in full swing so that a fair number of campers progressed through the Lake Swim before the threat of a thunder shower, which finally missed the lower end of the lake, called a halt to aquatic business for the day. In all, Sunday evening found 91 Dock Swims on the records, 59 Cove tests, and 36 Lake tests. Meanwhile John Nowold labored mightily and in retirement so that he had the full program of activities ready to go into action Monday morning.

These hit-and-run jottings constitute, not so much the first number of the WIGWAM for the summer, as a pinch-hitting newsletter from the Editor. Due to circumstances beyond Kawanhee's control, it is impossible to have one of the standard editions of the WIGWAM printed during the week of the Fourth of July. Since the WIGWAM does not want you to wait until the middle of the month for any message indicative of life in the old camp newspaper, it is hoped that these hasty paragraphs will serve to convey the essential news that the Kawanhee season is off to a flying start. On July 13, the WIGWAM will reappear in its usual printed columns, and will take up again its schedule of weekly publication on Fridays. In the number of July 13 will be found all the facts about lodge lists, organization, personnel, etc., to supply you with the background of the summer's activities. Thereafter, week by week, the WIGWAM will do its best to bring you as full a record of Kawanhee's 1956 season as may be dug up and packed into print.

C. Scarlett