



William Harrer Journal



Offered in celebration of Glen Brook's 81th Anniversary


WILLIAM HARRER'S CAMP HISTORY

As I look back, examining the reason for starting Camp Glen Brook, I have to go way back to the early days of my coming to the United States.

Even before I came to the Rudolf Steiner School in 1937 as a teacher, I had been considering a job offer as a camp counselor at a camp in the Adirondacks. That, however, did not materialize.

The following summer I was asked to run a small camp for boys in a small town at the southern foothills of the Catskill Mountains. I had no previous experience but was willing to try. There was just one large cabin that could house about 20 boys. There were no bathroom facilities, but there was an outhouse. There was also no infirmary and to start with, I was the only one person to look after about 15 boys. The meals were cooked in the kitchen by the adults and we fetched it at the proper times and usually ate outdoors where we had set up a large table. It was a tiring job without a break. I made a very flexible schedule of various jobs around the camp, hikes in the woods, nature study, some crafts and in the afternoon we always went swimming in a nearby lake which was about a 15 to 20 minutes walk.

We made a clearing in the woods and built a large fireplace and after we had supper, we sang songs and told stories. We also built a gymnastics apparatus and did some gym exercises in the early mornings. All went well for the first week, when a boy who had arrived directly from England came down with the measles the second day after his arrival. We set a small room aside in the cabin for an infirmary. Luckily among the adults there was a woman who had some training as a practical nurse and was willing to look after the boy at certain times. She was rather old fashioned and she gave strict orders as for what to do in the infirmary. Heavy curtains had to be put up. No direct sunlight was to enter the room. The boy's eyesight might be affected. The windows and door had to be kept closed to avoid any kind of draft. The air was so thick one could cut it with a knife. The boy was not allowed out of bed and had to use a bed pan. No other boys were permitted in his room for fear of contamination or infecting other boys.



So to look after this boy when the woman could not be there, which was most of the day, fell upon my shoulders. In spite of all precautions, soon another came down with the measles and another and another. Some of the boys we could send home but others we had to keep. By the time we were through with the measles every boy who had not had it previously came down with it. I don't know how we managed to get through the summer, but somehow we did. During the third week a young woman came to help with the camp which was a lifesaver for me. Toward the end of the camp season, we had a great celebration.

Toward the end of the camp season we had completed carving out a tree trunk to make a canoe. When we set it finally into the water it floated alright and carried two passengers without going under, but to keep it in balance was a delicate procedure. The boys who ventured to paddle it were more often in the water than in the canoe, but it was good fun. By the end of the season everyone seemed to have had a wonderful summer, including myself, but I was dead tired and glad it was over.

It was good experience for me, but I said to myself, never again. This must have been the summer of 1939.

The following summer I went to summer school at the Teacher's College of Columbia University, and then continued attending night classes until I received a Bachelor's in teaching elementary education.

One of the summers before I was drafted into the army I spent again in a camp. It was a small camp for boys at Lake Chateaugay in New York near the Canadian border. The camp lacked enrollment and from all appearances had seen better days. I had a following of four boys who lived with me in a cabin. The other boys came from a progressive school where the camp director worked, and therefore the progressive ideas were carried over into the camp. All activities were elective and the whole atmosphere was permissive. I taught shop and some crafts, but not much was accomplished as I remember. The camp was completely isolated from the outside world and only a few times during the week did the Camp Director go to the nearest town across the lake by motor boat to get supplies and the mail and laundry. It was in this camp that for the first time I came in contact with such standard camp procedures as Sunday inspection, Sunday service, roll call, Saturday evening entertainment and the various camp activities.

I learned a lot, not always how I felt things should go, but how they should not.

If I was ever going to manage a camp, I knew already that I should do many things differently. Before I went into the army, I received the Bachelor's from Columbia, although I was short points. On my return from the army I continued to teach at the Rudolf Steiner School and immediately started again with night courses at the Teacher's College working toward a masters degree in the teaching of math in secondary schools. Not that I enjoyed the courses with the exception of a few, but I felt I did a service to the school. I never wanted to become a high school Math teacher. However, in due time I received my diploma. One summer I again spent in Summer School at Teacher's College and I said never again will I spend a muggy summer studying in New York City.

The summers 1944 and 1945, I again joined a camp. This time a highly competitive one, exclusive and expensive. It was located on one of the many lakes in the Adirondacks on an island. The whole Island was the camp. It was owned by a businessman who ran it on a profit making basis. It was a camp for 60 boys. There were 12 cabins with 5 boys and a counselor in each. It was a highly organized camp. The owner hired a camp director who had a great deal of experience, and he managed the camp very well. The owner also hired experts in their fields, and the camp specialized in horseback riding, tennis, and sailing. There was a famous retired tennis champion, an expert teacher in sailing, and an excellent riding master. The parents who sent their sons to this camp did not send them for a summer vacation, but they expected them to be taught skills mainly in these three sports. Every sport was taught in a highly competitive spirit. By the middle of the summer it had become clear who were the most



promising riders, tennis players, and sailors. They then got extra attention and training to perfect their ability in their fields. The last week or two were given to contests. The camper tennis champion was established and everybody watched the final match. There was a horse show which lasted for hours until all the ribbons were awarded. The prime achievement was a display of four riders riding abreast in the riding ring, walking, trotting, cantering, and galloping, keeping in line without a horse falling back a foot or getting ahead. This was a feat which required a lot of training, presence of mind, and control. The boys surely learned a lot in this


activity, they developed a lot of pride and they had entered the ranks of the elite, which I am sure they enjoyed. I questioned myself however, what did it do to their souls, to their character? At one time I observed a boy on horseback who seemed to be scared to death, tears streamed down his cheeks, but he was driven on till he succeeded.

The great event in sailing took place when the best teams at camp entered a race against other camps and sailing clubs. The sailing teacher promised his crew that if they came home with the trophy, he would walk the planks of the deck and jump fully clothed into the lake. One summer at the end of the sailing contest, he did just that.

Besides these three main activities there were other sports offered. Swimming and canoeing were the next in line of importance. No music or painting or any of the arts was offered. I was in charge of the shop and the crafts. When I was asked to make a list of tools and materials needed for such a program, I compiled such a list to be able to teach about 10 boys at a time. When I arrived at the camp and checked the supplies and tools, there was enough to teach 2 or 3 boys at a time. So I had to abandon my carefully worked out plans of teaching certain crafts and make use of that which was available. The campers were divided into four groups according to age and I taught each group 2 or 3 times a week for an hour's period. At the beginning of the camp season the groups were fairly large, but gradually the sports experts dropped out, also those who had to be tutored in academic subjects were taken out of the shop.

Shop was the least favored or supported activity by the administration and was in the program only because to offer it made for a balanced program in the recruiting of campers. I did the best I could with the limited supply of materials. I discovered somewhere on the camp ground a pile of wooden planks that were well seasoned, and I had luckily brought with me my own carving tools and rasps and files so I could develop a fairly good program in woodwork.





So I worked with those who were not so good in sports, and they began to enjoy it and wanted to come to the shop whenever they could be freed from another activity or during free periods. The shop was the one place where one did not feel one was under constant pressure.

There is one event that was scheduled during the last week of camp which stands out in my memory. I had not been aware that boxing was also taught at the camp and was surprised when the final boxing match was announced. I have never attended a professional boxing match but I have seen parts in movies and have experienced the atmosphere that exists during such a match in the audience.

It must have been considered an important and great event, because everybody on the island, including cooks and helpers and nurses were present. With great ceremony, the finalists were introduced and the match started with lots of cheering and shouting. The atmosphere was a replica in miniature of what takes place in Madison Square Garden during a world championship. The audience cried out for blood and weren't satisfied till they had it. It was a display of sheer cruelty. They called it "training of character." The champion was carried out on the shoulders of his admirers and the loser returned to his cabin crying.

At the end of the camp season was a great banquet with many speeches. First the owner spoke expressing his appreciation to the Director and to the staff. Then the Camp Director spoke and called on the various counselors and they in turn named the winners of the awards for each activity. It was a festive occasion and some of the speeches were very good and moving, especially the one of the camp Director and the sailing instructor. They spoke out of real life experience. There were a few campers who were completely out of place and should never have even been enrolled in such a competitive camp. I remember especially a little boy of a 9. He was completely lost and frightened and therefore teased and tantalized by the other campers and ignored the counselors. He seemed grateful for every bit of attention and sympathy and he followed me around like a little dog whenever he could.

Again I learned a great deal during the two seasons I spent in the camp, many positive practical things, but also many negative ones, which I wanted to avoid if I was ever going to run a camp.

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WILLIAM HARRER, REFLECTING ON HIS EXPERIENCE
AT OTHER CAMPS



The camp director was a dedicated man. He was acquainted with every aspect of the camp. When the drinking water gave out, he was the one who got up in the middle of the night and went across the lake to the mainland where the water supply and pump was to find out what was wrong, and get it repaired. He was the one who stepped in when the cook quit and cooked for the camp until replacement was found. He was concerned in the first place when a boy got sick and saw to it that he got proper care in the Infirmary or was rushed to a Hospital. He was able to step into any job that needed to be done if there was an emergency. From him I learned what it meant to be a camp director.

During the Saturday Evening Entertainment, I learned quite a few valuable skits and stunts which later were incorporated in Camp Glen Brook.



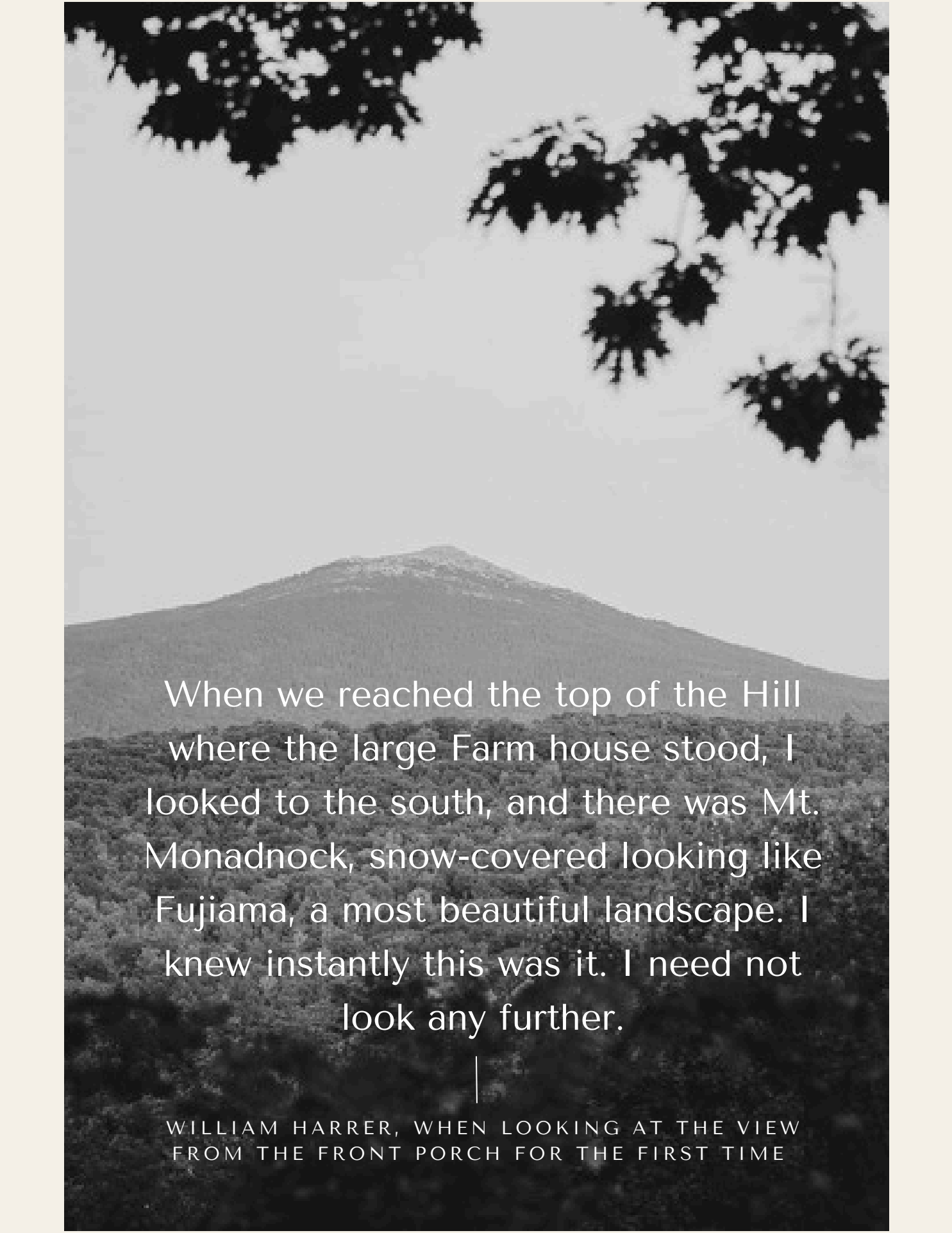
PURCHASING CAMP GLEN BROOK

After the 1945 summer, I began to seriously look for a place to start a camp. There were many farms advertised for sale in the New York Times. One spring in 1946 I began to look at some in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. In one Sunday Times, I found an ad that suited my requirements. "A 200 acre dairy farm with several farm houses, a barn and a carriage house, 40 acres under cultivation the rest wooded with a small private lake, in the Monadnock region in southern New Hampshire" The Monadnock Region did not mean anything to me, but I wrote to the agent and asked to see the farm. The following Friday I took a train to Brattleborough, Vermont and stayed overnight. The next morning I took a bus to Keene, New Hampshire and another bus to Marlborough, New Hampshire.

The agent, a middle-aged typical New England lady, looked me over very carefully and asked what I planned to do with the farm, and she must have wondered whether I had the money to buy a farm for \$16,000. She did not ask me but I could see she was in doubt or at least wondering.


She took me in her car to see Glen Brook Farm. It is located only about 1 mile from the village of Marlborough and we drove up a rather rutted dirt road. It was early in April and there were still patches of snow in the woods and on the road sides. When we reached the top of the Hill where the large Farm house stood, I looked to the south, and there was Mt. Monadnock, snow-covered looking like Fujiama, a most beautiful landscape. I knew instantly this was it. I need not look any further. I did not say so to the agent but agreed with her that this was a beautiful spot. We looked at the various buildings and it did not bother me at all that the Mainhouse cellar was filled with water and ice several feet deep, or that the carriage house was about to fall down. I learned that the stable full of heifers belonged to a neighboring farmer, who for the last few years had rented the farm. The owner had given up farming some years before and had sold his cattle but quite a few farming machines were still there. In the selling price everything there was included, furnishings and all but a few personal items.

Before I said I was interested in buying, I wanted to see the lake. So I ran down to the lake and walked along a narrow trail as far as possible. It was very muddy. The lake was overflowing at the dam and formed quite a waterfall, and Glen Brook rushed down with great force.



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—
WILLIAM HARRER, WHEN LOOKING AT THE VIEW
FROM THE FRONT PORCH FOR THE FIRST TIME



I had seen enough. I was ready to talk business. I tried to get the price down and made a definite offer. She arranged for me to meet the owner and I made him the offer. He at this point was however rather reluctant to sell. He had owned the place for 16 years and he found it hard to part. He was not willing to lower the price, and when I agreed to his asking price, he had to be coaxed by the agent to sell.

So we agreed to a down payment of \$500 and the rest to be paid in 2 weeks. The owner had hoped I would not raise the money, and I at that point also had no idea where I might find it.

I made arrangements with a Bank in Keene for a loan of \$8,000.00 as a first mortgage and went back to New York City to find the rest of the money. I had saved \$2,000.00 so I needed another \$6000.00. I spoke with Miss Parker at the Threefold Farm in Spring Valley, New York who had established the Springfield Science Foundation, and I described to her my idea of starting a children's camp. She thought she could get \$5000.00 together by the time I had to return to Marlborough and pay for the farm. I managed to raise another \$1000.00 from friends on a short term loan. The terms for the \$5000.00 loan were very favorably 4% annual interest to start in 8 years when the first mortgage was paid back.

The day before the day I was to leave for Marlborough, Miss Parker's check had not arrived. I called her and she said it was in the mail. Since it was sent by registered mail it was not delivered except at a time I could sign for it. So that evening I went to the Post Office and managed to get the letter, also it was after office hours.

So on April 28, 1946 I arrived in Marlborough with the necessary money in my pocket to pay for Glen Brook. Now I was the owner of a farm, which elated my eye and my dream to establish a children's camp had come much closer to realization.

Some good friends of mine wanted to join me in the venture, which would have made its success much surer and would have lessened the financial responsibility. I had heard of such common ventures of other friends of mine, which had not only failed but made enemies of friends.

I knew it would take a long time to establish what I had in mind, it needed luck and hard work. The hard work I was willing to do and for the luck, I prayed.

From now on, from the end of April until the end of the school year, beginning in June I took the train from New York City to Brattleboro, Vermont every Friday evening, and on Saturday morning the bus to Keene and Marlborough. Then I hiked up to the Farm. Each time I came in sight of Mount Monadnock, I felt greatly elated and thankful for the task that lay before me.




PREPARING FOR THE FIRST SUMMER CAMP

There were hundreds of jobs that needed to be done, but the first thing that needed to be done was to sort them and tackle the most important first.

It was clear to me that a small beginning had to be made with a camp that summer. So I investigated the possibilities in the Main House. The Hill House was occupied by a family who had looked after the place for the former owner. They paid \$10.00 rent per month.

The main house had five furnished rooms on the second floor and I figured that at least a dozen boys could be housed there plus some counselors. There were two bathrooms also on the second floor. On the first floor there was a large living room with a fireplace and three smaller rooms. I set one room aside for my living quarters, one for an office and supply room, and one for a dining room. There were two kitchens, one summer kitchen and one winter kitchen. The summer kitchen was near to the main building and was shut off in winter time as it could not be heated. Then beyond the summer kitchen was a store room, a woodshed, and a milk house. The milk house was equipped with an old fashioned milk separator and huge concrete cooling tank. Down by the lake was a combination Ice House and Sugar House. During the winter, ice was cut on the lake and stored in sawdust in the Ice House for summer use. So every day during the summer huge blocks of ice were brought up to the tanks in the milk house to cool the milk in 20 gallon cans. When I bought the farm, this milk operation had been discontinued for two years. By that time also the ice house had been transformed into a wood shed, and the sugar house was idle, but was still fully equipped with an evaporator, sap buckets, and the rest of equipment needed for maple sugaring.

Since by that time I had no capital left and my borrowing power had reached its limit, I had to think about raising money. Since I did not plan to do any farming or sugaring, I decided to sell all the farm machinery. I consulted our neighbor farmer, Mr. Richardson, who advised me where to advertise and he himself was interested in some of the equipment. In this way, I raised enough money to tie me over till summer.



Also I continued the arrangement which Mr. Richardson had with the former owner regarding the renting of the farm land and barn for \$100 a year. I told Mr. Richardson that at this rent, he could not expect us to do any repair on the barn and he would have to see that his cattle were safe.

In looking around to see what had to be done first, there were quite a few firsts.


If I wanted to save the carriage house it had to be tied together, a cement floor had to be put in and the roof had to be shingled. I knew we needed this building for a Rec Hall and a shop room and a crafts room. So this is what I tackled first and had a contractor do it. I got a binding estimate which seemed reasonable.

While this was going on I wondered how I could get the water out of the Main house cellar. It had no drain. To pump it out would only be a temporary solution as it would flood again and again. The cellar needed a drain which meant digging a trench from the corner of the house to the road some 50 feet so that was the next job I tackled myself. At the corner of the house it had to be 8 feet deep and by the road it came to the surface in the bank. It was a hard job, but since the drain is in we had no more floods in the cellar.

The next major problem was sewage disposal from the main house. There was a cesspool on the other side of the road some 100 feet down in the field, and a sewage pipe led into it. This was not adequate to say the least. I consulted the Health Department in Concord and an engineer came and made a plan for a sewage disposal.

In those days, it was customary to lay perforated pipes in level ground for the sewage water to dissipate in the ground. His plan showed that most of our baseball field area would have to be dug up and pipes put in. This would have been very expensive, and from later experiences it would not have worked for long, because that whole area is very wet during Spring and could not absorb much water.

So I asked the contractor who repaired the carriage house. He gave me a very inexpensive estimate. His plan was to put a septic tank near the main house and the drainage pipes between main house and hill house. I had my doubts about it working for any length of time. I was afraid the sewage would come to the surface within a year or two. When I told the



contractor about my doubts, he was very sure that it would work. When I told him that the Health Department would inspect the camp every year, he changed his mind and withdrew his estimate. So I had to come up with a new plan. Why not replace the cesspool with a large septic tank and let the overflow run through perforated pipes to the edge of the woods into a dry well. So I started to dig a hole for the septic tank. It went fairly fast to a depth of 2-3 feet, but then I ran into a hard pan and it was like rock. It had to be chipped off in small bits.

By this time I had made the acquaintance of a neighbor, Mr. & Mrs. Elliott. Roland came down frequently to see how I was doing. When he saw me digging this hole, he went home and got his own tools and worked with me until it was done. He helped me to install the septic tank and one weekend some boys came up from the Rudolf Steiner School to help me dig the trench from the septic tank to the dry well. The whole job cost me several hundred dollars while it would have cost several thousand had I followed the Health Department plan. When we had the first inspection by the Health Department, the inspector found the system acceptable, and for years to come we had no trouble.

Another problem I had to solve was in the main house. There was no bathroom on the first floor, and if I was going to live in a room on the first floor it would have been rather inconvenient to have to go upstairs for a bathroom. Also there was no hot water source except from the kitchen stoves. So one weekend I persuaded friends of mine to come up with me to help me solve this problem. Mr. Schmidt was a plumber. In 1946 it was very difficult to get any plumbing materials, but somehow through his connections he got a coal fired hot water heater and the necessary materials to build a small bathroom with a sink and toilet. He installed it all in one weekend and the following weekend, I built a partition around the bathroom. So now we had an adequate hot water supply, but the question was did we have a sufficient water supply for a camp.

There was a 22-foot-deep well near the main house and during spring when there was plenty of water in the ground we did not run out. The farmer also had enough for his cattle in the barn. However, if the well was low, a pipeline went down to the foot of the hill by the lake, and there was a spring and a small reservoir. A gasoline pump could be started and the well by the main house could be filled whenever it was needed.

It seemed we had our fundamental problems solved.

GLEN BROOK'S FIRST SUMMER CAMP - 1946

In the meantime I had to find some campers and a small staff. Following up my old contacts in New York City and speaking to parents of the Rudolf Steiner School, I got an enrollment of 12 boys and one girl. The staff consisted of 2 teachers of the High Mowing School which had been established a few years earlier than the camp, a cook and the Wetzles. The first camp season was a rather simple and family life affair, but the children were happy and we managed to pay our current debts. When we had our first State Health inspection, the inspector made a number of suggestions and requests which were helpful to us and satisfied the department. From that first visit the same health inspector visited us annually for the next quarter of a century, and our relationship became very cordial and the camp's rating gradually went up from satisfactory to excellent where it has been for many years. Whenever we foresaw or encountered a difficulty we discussed it with the health inspector, and received valuable advice.

Shortly before the first camp season opened I applied for a driver's license and readily failed the test. I had innocently driven the testing officer through several red lights. My mistakes were quickly corrected and when I tried again, I passed the test and received a license. By that time I had bought an old Chevy Station wagon. Once camp started we were able to use the counselor's cars and this old chevy to take the campers on trips and take care of our shopping.



After the first camp season when the time came around for the school to start in New York, I ventured to drive the Chevy to the big city. I got as far as Winchester, New Hampshire when I had a flat tire. Not being equipped with the necessary tools to change a tire, it happened luckily close enough to a service station where I could get the tire fixed. I followed Route 10 to New Haven and had a hard time finding my way through the city. But once I had found the Merritt Parkway it was slow but easy sailing. It took me between 8 and 9 hours to get to New York. In those days there were plenty of parking spaces in the streets.



WORK AT GLEN BROOK CONTINUES

From now on, early September to the middle of November, every Friday after school I drove up to New Hampshire and every Sunday afternoon I returned to New York. On the way up, I gradually learned to cut the driving time down to between 6 and 7 hours, but coming back on Sunday evening it often took between 9 and 10 hours.

During the summer, the lake usually was only half full, as the dam leaked and had to be fixed. This was a job I could not do alone as it needed an excavation machine. I contracted the job with a local mason in Marlborough who was to take out the wooden planking and replace it with concrete. He also was to replace the outlet pipes with cast iron pipes and a valve so that we could drain the lake when needed. His work extended into the time I had to return to school and when I returned again he had finished the job and filled in around the dam. When the valve was closed and the water gradually rose in the lake, I noticed that the leak in the dam had not been stopped, if anything it was worse.

I had to get another contractor to dig it up again, break through the concrete and fix the hole. I refused to pay the first contractor which caused bad feelings among the townspeople and Camp Glen Brook. The mason was about to sue me when our good neighbor Roland Elliott interseeded and we came to an out of court settlement. When the dam was refixed, it held but there continued to be a small leak. It stayed as a problem with us to this day.

On those trips in autumn 1946, I tried to have someone from the school join me to help with the driving. My schedule at the school was such that I could leave early at 11AM and therefore it was hard to find someone who was free also. On time I succeeded in Miss Jeffrey joining me. She told me at a much later time that she was scared to death of my driving. I had developed a habit of creeping up on the car in front of me and passing it at the first opportunity. Also I went around curves much too fast for her liking. My guardian angel must have been with me, for I never had an accident on those trips, and I never got a ticket for speeding. Miss Jeffrey was happy to drive all the way back to N.Y. and I was too.

During the winter of 1946-47 our neighbors, the Elliotts, lived in the main house. Their house was not yet ready for winter use, so I was very glad to let them live in the main house. There was a huge furnace in the cellar that could be wood or coal fired. So Roland E. made all kinds of improvements to make the first floor warm and livable. During the Christmas holiday I came up and stayed for a few days with them. I remember the snow was as high as up to the eaves. During that winter I brought out a simple brochure describing the camp and its activities. The enrollment increased to about 25 the second season.

Our neighbor farmer Charles Richardson cut us some lumber from our woods and in 1947 I started to build a deck at the waterfront. The platform was supported by 6"x6" posts lowered in the ground 3 feet deep. I had hopes that the winter ice on the lake would not disturb it, but I was wrong. The ice built up under the platforms and lifted the posts out of the ground. For a few years I repaired the deck every year, until the time came we had to do something else.

The lake was surrounded by thick forests, and only a narrow path led around the lake. A lot of clearing had to be done to open up the lake. The entire area where we now house a tennis court and a beach was hilly and covered with trees. This area we cleared first and leveled the ground.

There was a gentle slope into the lake but it was all very muddy. We brought in loads and loads of sand and built a beach and swimming area. In spite of this we were plagued the first few years by blood suckers. Many of the campers feared them until we had educated them that they are harmless when you catch them and take them out of the water. So we took some cans to the waterfront filled with salt water and the first thing we did before swimming was to catch all the leeches we could find each day and put them in salt water where they died.



GLEN BROOK'S SECOND SUMMER CAMP - 1947

By spring of 1947 we succeeded in persuading our tenants in the Hill House to move out, as we needed that house if we were going to have boys and girls in the second season. The Hill House had no modern bathroom facilities but only an outhouse. So the next job was to install bathrooms downstairs and upstairs. That was again quite an expense but we had good indications that the enrollment would be quite a bit bigger and by now we also could increase the tuition. Another windfall came when our neighbor, Dr. R. White, wanted to buy some of our land which lay between the road leading up to camp and his property. We were glad to sell it as we were desperate for funds.

By the time the second season started, the Hill House was ready to accommodate the girls and the enrollment had doubled over the first season. We had a good staff. I persuaded Miss Jeffrey to join us, the Wetzles were here again, Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Cassidy, and nephew of Mr. Spiegel (Frank), Mrs. Pusch, Mrs. Linder, John Boller, Dorothy Smith, Ann Eristoff, and Miss Lobke.



At the end of the 1947 camp season there was a most happy event. Miss Jeffrey became Mrs. Jeffrey according to Miriam Spiegel who was here as a camper. On Sept. 2 Dorothy and I were married right here at Glen Brook in a simple private ceremony. The Barnses and Kochs were here.

From now on we were a team in carrying the responsibility of the camp, and everything became so much easier for me. I moved into Dorothy's apartment in New York City and from now on I never had to travel again alone to the camp. Dorothy relinquished her life insurance which made it possible to move ahead with improvements at the camp more rapidly.

One day in the autumn of 1947 a couple appeared at the camp looking for counselor jobs the following season. We hired them and ever since, the Currans have been with the camp every summer with a few exceptions.



1948


In 1948 the staff consisted of the Currans, Mrs. Sorge, Miss Paulsen, the Wetzles, E. Lobke, Mrs. Lustgarten (cook), two kitchen girls, Ralph Kaeth. The majority of the campers were boys.

In 1948 the largest expense was repairing the dam. We began to realize that we never could completely close up the leak. We had an estimate made by Whitcomb for a completely new dam which was way out of our reach. Later on we had some borings made and it was found that the entire rockbed was gravel. On dry seasons the lake went down 2-3 feet, while in wet seasons it overflowed most of the time.

We had some lumber cut for future use. We invested in a walk-in refrigerator, and Mr. Priest worked on bathrooms.

Mrs. Lustgarten, who was the cook, did not last through the season and Miss Lobke filled in when she left.





After the camp season, the weekend trips started again, but now I was no longer alone, and the driving became so much easier, as we shared. One managed to sleep while the other drove. The trips back to New York City were still long because of Sunday evening traffic, so we often got up Monday morning at 2 am to make it in time for school. That year we moved to a new building where for many years to come the parking was very easy.

The main expenses in that year were:

The repairs on the dam ~\$1300

Lumber cutting \$350

Cooler, walk-in

Bathroom installation by Priest \$750


1949

We had about 35 campers, 23 boys, 12 girls. The counselors included the Currans and others. This was the season when John Laurie and Virginia Polson lost their way and landed in Marlborough, Vermont instead of New Hampshire.

When we went berry picking in the back woods where in the 1938 hurricane lots of trees were felled. Mrs. Deshcler had to be rescued as she suddenly disappeared in the jungle.

This was the year we experienced a twister just before the camp season started. Miss Janke and Miss Reeve had come up with us, and on Saturday afternoon we noticed black sky in the west moving rapidly in our direction. I rushed around to close the windows and by the time I had done so the twister had passed. As the twister approached us we could see the funnel reaching from sky to earth. It passed in a minute or two. It twisted off a big maple tree and dropped it on the front lawn, tearing down the power line and ripping off the corner of the main house. Two elms were badly damaged and had to be taken down later on. Several canoes were lifted way into the air and thrown on the lawn by the well. Some porch chairs had disappeared and were found days later way down in the woods. We had the fallen maple removed and planted 2 new trees in its place, a Pin Oak and a Norway Spruce.





This was the year when Mrs. Karl did the gardening and laid the stones on the front porch.
We built a new dining room on the northside of the Main house, removing the porch on that side, using our own lumber.

We drained the lake and did some bulldozing along the swimming area side of the lake.
This was the year when we had a lice epidemic.

This was the year we bought a Buick Sedan (1950)

Paid back a loan \$250

New dining hall \$195

Tree removal \$146

Repair on Main House \$450

Repair and Painting Hill House \$300

Whitcomb Bulldozer at the lake \$300

Tree Planting \$50

1950

We had about 40 campers.

Staff included: Currans, 3 kitchen boys from Derry, N.H. from Peter Curan's school.


This was the year when we enlarged the playfield. There was a row of Elms in line of the big Maple by the cabins to the road. They were removed and some earth was moved down from the hill to level the playfield.

Ruth Ginger taught archery.

A camper was awakened one night by Betty Curran, as Peter C. had wrenched his arm out of the socket and was in great pain.

Miss Swansen was our nurse.





This was a very dry summer. The lake went down so far that swimming had to be abandoned. We took the campers to other lakes.

This was the first year M + N Strolmon were at camp.

Whitcomb Bulldozer \$300

Charles Richardson cut lumber for us in the back of the lake \$400

Chase Tree Service planted a spruce and a Pin Oak west of the Main House \$50

Mr. Priest put new pump in Main house 300

Also repairs and improvements on houses. \$400

We bought Beds, Furniture, Vacuums, Meat Slicer, Piano \$650

We bought a 1946 Packard and Old Station Wagon \$2000

Repaid Loan to H. Koch \$500

Amortization \$800

1951

36 campers

Staff: Mr. & Mrs. Franklin, Mr. Suomi, Mr. & Mrs. Wetzle, Mrs. Mastin, Mrs. Williams (cook).
Kitchen boys.

This was one of the years the Currans were not with us and they were sorely missed.

The Wetzles were there and John Suomi. The rest of the counselors were new.

Mr. Franklin was in charge of the Waterfront and he introduced the body count, whereby each camper had a partner, and only after all the partners were together could the campers go into the water. It seemed a good idea, yet the following year it was dropped again, as during general swim every counselor was there for supervision.

Repayment of Loan \$1800

Final Payment on Packard \$500

1952

38 Campers

Staff: Currans, Mr. Wetzle, Mrs. Steiger (cook), Miss Gardner, 2 kitchen boys.

The Currans were back and with Mr. Wetzl and Mr. Tainlinson and we had a solid core of counselors. Mrs. Koenler was the nurse. Mrs. Steiger was the cook and Linda Gorch and Greenman were dining room girls.

Conrad Latter was in the kitchen doing pots and pans. He was a real nature boy. One day he came up from the lake with a 6 foot black snake wound around his neck and body. Another day he caught a skunk and put it in the garbage can. Mrs. Steiger refused to let him come into the kitchen until he had disposed of his clothing and taken a bath.

During 1952, work on the waterfront proceeded.

Storm damaged tree removal \$200

Amortization \$800

Loan repaid Miss Peckham \$200



1953

41 campers.

Staff: Wetzles, Miss Schmid, Mr. Zay, Mrs. Sorge, Mrs. Stiger, Mr. Prun, Donald Stoodley, Mrs. Glazer, Neil Livengood, Dexter Dawes, Mrs. Stiger, Mrs. Gorge, D. Stoodley, 2 boys.

No Currans, but Wetzles.

This was the year Neil Livengood was cornered by a bobcat up in a tree. When he finally escaped he came running down the hill and was speechless for a while. All he could do was mumble and gesture.

Lawnmower \$100

Canoe \$230

H. Priest \$140

Linoleum floor kitchen \$150

H. Hall \$600

Oldsmobile \$1300

Amortization \$800

Repayment of Loan \$500

1954

40 Campers.

Staff: No Currans, Wetzles, Miss Meese, Mr. Tomlinson, G. Benner, Mrs. Zippel, Mr. Modelski (cook), Carolyne Gorge (nurse), Robertson Farrar, Don Kingmorn, P. Gardner, A. Neil, J. Skelly, J. Weise, Mrs. Zippel.

Mr. Priest installed another Bathroom in Hill house.

Phillipp Paquette built Rolondel. We had Thanksgiving dinner in the unfinished living room, together with the Elliotts.

Lots of deer grazing in the Oats field below the House.

Borrowed \$5000

Hill house bathrooms by Priest \$550

Priest \$175

H. Hall \$430

Pontiac Station Wagon \$950

Phillipp Paquette Rolondel \$6000

Amortization \$1100

New Loan \$5000



1955

48 Campers.

Staff: No Currans, Wetzles, J. Weise, James Shea, Ruth Alexander, Paul Retting, D. Patrick, C.M. Koch, Mrs. Rayers, Folger Mac Fadden, Mr. Rogers, Mrs. Sleiger, Paul Ruffie.

At the end of season, Ruth A. got married in the little chapel on Stone Pond.

Changed Olds 1950 for 1952 \$1000

New House \$970

Amortization and loan payment \$2500

Repairs \$740

H. Hall \$120

Furniture, Tent \$300

Cutting + Sawing timber \$300



1956

43 Campers

Staff: Currans, Wetzles, S. Finser, CM Koch, Ferdinand Boesch, Barbara Koch, Linda Gardner.
F. Mac Fadder, F. Boesch, F. Liaise.

This was the year we installed a dishwasher. \$950.

Built a new dock with granite and pipes \$750+350

Bought a Truck \$250

Beds \$180

Dining room tables \$200

Carpet Living Room M. H.

Power Saw \$87

Amoritization + Loans \$1700

Work on waterfront, Buldozer (Payne)

Pipeline from Lake to Hill House

Dishwasher

New Dock

The granite blocks were brought from the old Railroad trestle. Payne did the work.



1957

45 Campers

Staff: Currans, Mr. Wetzle, H. Karl, B. Liaise, Elfie Swanson, Ms. Sleiger, S. Finser, M. Spiegel, John Barnes, J. Kavaes, Mr. Jensen, G. Jackson, O. Larsen.

This is the year we acquired the Pony (Jerry).

Pipeline from Pump house to Hill house.

Constructed current Pump house. Roof collapsed.

Last payment on mortgage.

Cheshire County Savings Bank loan \$8000

Purchase of Land

Paint \$500

Station Wagon \$700

Pony \$350

Water Heater

New Pipe Line from Hill house to Main house \$750

Repair of Sewage lines \$260

Pump + Instillation \$400

Tree Service \$225

Amoritization \$500

Bought land \$1,000

Loan from Cheshire \$1,000



1958

56 Campers

Staff: Currans, Wetzles, Larsen, Juniper Alexander, Mr. Jensen, Chr. Manns, P. Kaplan, F. Mac Fadden.

Bought 1956 vehicle \$1700

Tennis Court (R. Cameron)

Dining room chairs \$60

Gable \$1900

Hill house \$400

Flush Septic Tank Sewage \$975

Bath in Main house \$400

Heater for Main house \$500

Heater for Cabin \$75

Whitcomb Excavation

H. Priest builds Dining room \$300

Infirmary \$360

Roof of barn

Amoritization

Cheshire Nat. Bank \$1,000 Repayment

Cheshire County \$1,000

New Loans Cheshire \$2000

Rudolf Steiner School \$1200

Savings Bank \$1300



1959

51 Campers

Staff: Currans, Wetzles, H. Kretz, Elfie Swanson, F. Mac Fadden.

Eq. Kitchen Range \$400

Canoe \$225

Organ \$40

Infirmery by Priest \$1,100

New Cabin by Preist \$1,900

H. Priest Repair \$500

Ph. Paquell Old Cabin

Payne Bulldozer Lake \$466

Whitcomb \$185+90

Amoritization

Rudolf Steiner School \$1200.

Cheshire County \$1000

New Loans

Cheshire National \$1000

Other \$500



1960

60 Campers

Staff: P Curran, W. Curran, H. Kretz, Elfie Swanson, L. Gardner, D. Lippman, D. White.

Lawn mower \$150

Renting of College \$200

Deep Freeze \$1200

Hill Hall \$385

H. Priest repairs \$350

Lights in Rec Hall \$150

R. Sharkey Bulldozer Lake \$400

Raft \$125

Fish \$87.50

Truck Dodge \$275. + old Truck

Ford Station Wag \$1000 + Pontiac

Amoritization

Cheshire National Bank \$1000

Cheshire County Bank

Other \$1000



1961

58 Campers

Staff: P. Curran, Vivienne Clark, Wetzles, Irene Tompkins, Elfie Swanson, R. Hollers, James Higgins, D. Lippman, D. White.

Kiln \$160

Renting Cabin \$150

Chute \$225

H. Hall \$360

H. Priest Cabin, Attic \$1900

Repaid \$2000

Old Cabin Septic Tank \$750

Whitcomb for Lake \$480

R. Payne for Lake \$320

Amoritization

F. \$1000

1951 Station Wagon \$900

1959 Olds Hard Top \$1950



1962

54 Campers

Staff: P. Currans, A. Searer (cook), J. Grimm, L. Gardner.

Renting Cabin \$150

H. Priest working on Hill house \$750

Cabin \$300

Repairs \$200

Tree clearing at lake w/Ariel \$120

Whitcomb \$1000

Hemlock Construction Co. Bulldozer

Amoritization

Science Foundation \$1000

Bought Land from J. Walker \$1088



1963

54 Campers

Staff: Currans, Tomlinsons, L. Gardner, J. Barnes, M. Kurkowski, B. Ruskher.

Main house Living R. Rug \$170

Green hard Raft \$250

Campsite \$125

Tree service \$150

H. Hall \$700

Roof Repair \$100

Whitcomb \$184

A.C.\$320

Barn repair \$150

W. Ariel tree cutting \$100

M. Tappan Tile batch. \$180

R. Sharkeg Machinery Lake \$4,700

Payne \$160

Whitcomb \$2000

Amortization \$1,000



1964

66 Campers

Staff: Currans, Tomlinsons, Kretz, D. Crosby, M. Gardner, L. Gardner, A. Lombardy, B. Raschen.

Olds 1962 \$1925

Wish Bus \$700

Rent of Cabin

H. Priest- Hill house extension \$2000 and Repair \$300

Rec Hall extension \$2000

Tennis Court Fencing Backstop \$1,350

Water Heater in Hill house \$175

Sharkey Bulldozer \$635

H. Hall \$540

Whitcomb Tree cutting \$70

Amoritization \$1,000



1965

60+ Campers

Staff: Currans, Kretz, Francis, Ella Schmidt (nurse), C. Elliot, Lombardis, D. Meisner, V. Barrett, S. Weiner.

1958 Dodge Truck \$475

Chevy Station wagon Bus \$725

R. Fish Pump repair \$175

Addition to building \$9,400

Drilling of well \$940

R. Fish Pump \$813

Sept. Tank at Hill house \$409

General Repair \$1800

Built Garden House



1966

73 Campers, counting both months

Staff: Currans, Kretz, Lombardis, Roses, Dula-Blythe (cook), C. Elliot, H. Haag (nurse), L. Habersstock, A. Grupp, Ed. Scherer, S. Weiner, D. White, Senny Pil Yu, Senny Pil Si.

Campsite \$150

W. School bus \$200

Furniture Office \$425

Meat slicer \$200

Beds \$600

Row boat \$190

Canoe \$200

Dock \$525

Extension \$4,500 (total cost \$14,000)

Repairs- Sewage, Roof, etc. \$4,000



1967

80 Campers, both months

Staff: Currans, Kretz, Roses, D. Barten, Dula-Vappier (cook), H. Haay (nurse), Senny Pil + Li Yu, E. Black, C. Elliot, J. Falenki.

1964 Oldsmobile \$1,500

Deep Freeze \$270

Alumni Dock \$1,600

Chairs \$200

Tent \$100

Repairs \$500



1968

67 Campers

Staff: Currans, Kretz, Smiths, J. Trudell, R. Whealan (nurse), H. Hesse, D. Meagher. Sh. Elliot, D. Hamshaw, S. Weiner, Dula-Vappier (cooks).

Painting \$600

Rugs in living room \$440

Biological Management Treating Lake \$360

Dishwasher \$2,000+140

Lawn mower \$135

Whitcomb moving granite blocks for Granite Ring \$500

Arnold Miner Tree Service \$80

Mr. Priest \$2,700



1969

65 Campers

Staff: Currans, Kretzs, K. Chenault, A. Noble, R. Wheaton, S. Weiner, R. Giles, M. A. Becker, G. Daula, P. Graff, A. Richler, R. Martindale, G. Rowling, C. Kugpers, Karl Christiansen, Laura Neissner.

1962 Plymouth Station wagon \$500

Projector \$200

Sink \$250

Linoleum \$150

Beds \$250

Lawn mower \$300

Basket Ball Court \$1,700

Remodeling Service Room + Bath \$1,500

Whitcomb \$420

Priest repairs \$2,450



1970

72 Campers

Staff: Currans, Kretzs, Roses, P. Shortledge, G. Dula, Murphys, R. Wheaten, Sta. K. Chenault, S. Weiner, J. Bach, R. Martindale, M. Hoover, E. Pokle, C. Kugpers, Mr. Holton, Mr. Tready.

W. School Bus \$1200

Refrigerator \$300

Well digging for Main house \$3,500

R. Fish pump etc. \$2,500

Mr. Priest working on bathrooms, barn, and stables \$2,700



1971

68 Campers

Staff: Currans, Kretzs, M. Shorlidge, R. M. M. Wheaton, A. + Ch. Martindale, Roses, G. Dula, Leafs, Weiss', T. Fortier, E. Pohle, Seth Weiner, K. Chenault, D. Hamshaw, A. Richter, C. Koenegrass.

1969 Oldsmobile \$2,200

Gas Range \$550

Garden tractor \$1,900

Surveying \$320

Equipment House \$1,400

Repairs by Mr. Priest \$2,000



1972

68 Campers

Staff: Currans, Kretzs, Leafs, Weiss, R. Ch. Martindale, E. Pohle, D. Hamshaw, K. + St. Chenault, S. Weiner, D. Loveall, M. Hoover, A. Richter, M. Shorlidge, C. Koenegrass.

Truck \$1,000

Ind. Bus \$1,100

Sears Rug

Tent \$200

Surveying \$135

Deep Freeze \$370

J. Layers Foes \$440

Lightening Rod \$500

H. Priest Hill house Insulation + Heat \$10,000 paid by W. Sh.

Extension to Dining Room \$4,000

