

Building Massawepie

From Diaries of Harley Burgdorf, Massawepie Property Superintendent

The following accounts have been directly taken from diaries that Harley Burgdorf kept during his time as property superintendent at Massawepie Scout Camps. His first day of work was Wednesday, September 26th, 1951. His last was October 22, 1966 when he retired. The accounts concern only construction years for camps Pioneer, Mountaineer and Voyageur.

It has been my privilege to prepare this information for the 50th Anniversary of Massawepie Scout Camps.

Chuck Burgdorf
(Harley's son & retired BSA property superintendent)

Special note before Massawepie years:

Nov., 1950- Severe Hurricane across Adirondacks. Much blown down.

1951

Tues., Sept. 25th- Moved to Massawepie. Got in about 6:30. Supper at Dumas's. We stayed in cabin #6 south of hotel chimney. Rain.

Wed., Sept. 26th- Saw Mr. Noelk about timber cruise. (Mr. Noelk was employee of Emporium Lumber Co. owned by Sykes family at Conifer) Also talked w/ Power Co. Rain and cool.

Thurs., Sept. 27th- Checked w/ Stu Wilson about pre-mix concrete. Still in cabin #6. Got Chuck. (Chuck- Harley's youngest son came to Tupper Lake about Sept. 10th to start school at Tupper Lake High School as a junior, boarding with the principal's son, who was a teacher at TLHS, now deceased.) Fair and cool.

Fri., Sept. 28th- Fred Wellington, Parky (Bob Parkinson), and Mr. Fay (Sumner Fay) came in last night. Talked w/ Clarence Savard (Game Warden) about posting. Also saw Mr. Hall about plastic posted signs. Opened checking account at Tupper Lake bank. Near snow and cold.

Sat., Sept. 29th- Many commissioners in last night. Had meeting in Wheaton cottage. Talked over development in general. Had dinner in George Sykes cottage w/ commissioners. Moved into Park House. Cloudy and cold.

Sun., Sept. 30th- All hands, commissioners, etc. had camping meeting at Wheaton cottage. Went over development program, posting, salvage, etc. Some excitement last night, seven boys from Tomahawk Dist. troop lost and stayed out all night. Fred Wellington and Pete Blyler were up until 3 a.m. checking on them. They came out at Childwold. Ansel Dorothy brought them back to camp.

Mon., Oct. 1st- Chuck started on school bus today. Juggled furniture with Jim in camps. (Jim, Harley's middle son will be attending ATC in Canton.)

Tues., Oct. 2nd- Jim and I juggled furniture most of the day. Fred Jebo turning off water.

Wed., Oct. 3rd- Checking camp out with Clyde Sykes. Jebo still turning off water. Cloudy and warm.

Thurs., Oct. 4th- Vic Noelk was here looking over building for salvage. Pat still moving furniture to Cranberry for the Sykes. Fair and warm.

Fri., Oct. 5th- Some excitement today. Tom Papa crashed a Piper Cub into Lee's chicken yard. Came out without a scratch. We took him to Saranac Lake. They lifted it out with log hoist. Lake's been picking up logs. Jebo and I went over water line. Fair and warm.

1951, continued

Sat., Oct. 6th- Clyde Sykes had sale today for furniture in casino. Checked on water line and furniture in cabins. Fred and Dorothy Wellington came in about 4 p.m. We all went through camps and checked on furniture. Met Mr. Lee and Mr. Weltter of the Brownlee Const. Co. Talked about pre-fab buildings until 12:30 a.m. They have a very good design and construction. Cloudy and Misty.

Sun., Oct. 7th- All up early in a.m. Fred and I went over a lot of things. Mr. Tom Lee and Col. Brown and wives came in about 11 am. With Fred, we took a look over the park and George Sykes building. Saw Clyde Sykes about giving us final report on furniture tomorrow. Vic Noelk was over and talked about hardwood and pulpwood with Carey Brown and Tom Lee. The men from Brownlee were here and gave the dope on the buildings to Carey Brown and Tom Lee. \$26,000 for Dining Hall and \$10,500 for three bedroom house for us. Rainy and cold.

Tues., Oct. 9th- called Fred W. today. Les Price offered \$250 for the buildings. Bringing crew tomorrow to start taking buildings down. Cold and fair.

Wed., Oct. 10th- Price started tearing down buildings. Has 4 men. They are staying in cabin #4. Group of Explorers from Webster came in at 10:30 pm. Fair and warm.

Thurs., Oct. 11th- John Stock (forester) came in camp and made a quick survey of hardwoods. He told me about a big spring between Long Pond and Deer Pond. Also suggested DeShane about building rd. north of lake. Estimated it would cost \$5,000 per mile. Cloudy and cool.

Fri., Oct. 12th- Troop 39 in w/ 20 scouts and leaders. Cloudy and cool.

Sat., Oct. 13th- Heavy frost last night. Froze ½ inch of ice. Vic Noelk and I looked over hardwood about cutting and skidding. Explorer scouts staying at Pine Pond. Fair and cool.

Tues., Oct. 16th- Mr. Finch of Power Co. came here this p.m. staking out line. We have men starting to cut right of way tomorrow. Fair and warm.

Wed., Oct. 17th- Knute McMuller, Jim and I worked cutting right of way. Les Price will have building down by end of week. Fair and hot.

Thurs., Oct. 18th- Been cutting power line right of way. Morris Carberry fell in the beaver pond while cutting trees along same. Went over final list of furniture w/ Clyde Sykes today. Cloudy and cool.

Fri., Oct. 19th- Worked on power right of way. Fair and cool.

Sat., Oct. 20th- Jim, Chuck and I worked on clearing right of way for power line. Post 44 group of 18 came in. Fair and warm.

Sun., Oct. 21st- Mr. Sutton and Mr. Fay came in today.

Mon., Oct. 22nd- Mike Sabin came down today and got wiring ready for Park House. Mr. Sutton and Mr. Faye eating here at Park House. Deliveries in the mailbox now. Fair and hot.

Tues., Oct. 23rd- Mr. Sutton and Mr. Sumner went home today. Ruth charged them \$5.00 each for 4 meals. Guess they were well satisfied. Cloudy and warm.

Wed., Oct. 24th- Posted. Got town rd. and Russell Rd., some along Catamount Pond, north and part of west line and part of east line. Knute, Jim and I used up 100 signs. Cloudy and warm.

Sat., Oct. 27th- Bob Parkinson and wife in camp. We are going to stake out campsites. We have issued 9 permits to date, most of them for Russell Road area (to hunt deer). Cloudy and cool.

Sun., Oct. 28th Parky and I laid out svc. rd. and campsite area #1. Parky and Ethel left late in pm. Ruth had a wonderful dinner for them despite dropping the beautiful lemon pie. Cloudy and cool.

Tues., Oct. 30th- Boy oh boy, we had our lights turned on at 5 p.m. Sure seems good to have electricity. We had about all lights on in house. Cloudy and cool.

Wed., Oct. 31st- Went to Tupper to see Chet Johnson about doing contract work. He will be down tomorrow. Cloudy and warm.

Thurs., Nov. 1st- Fred Wellington called. Not going to pour concrete until spring. Snow, about 3 degrees.

1951, continued

Tues., Nov. 6th- Jim and I went over road location north side of lake. (Mountaineer road) Fair and cool.

Sun., Nov. 11th- Fred Wellington and wife stopped in today. We looked over campsites, roads, buildings, and logging job. Start service road and sites. Cut some pine and hemlock. Cold and damp.

Tues., Nov. 13th- Went to Wilmington beyond Lake Placid, to Hazleton Lumber Co. to get prices on hemlock lumber. \$90 per thousand b.f. delivered to camp. Planed and edged 1 inch for campsite platforms. Pine for same price. Cloudy and warm.

Wed., Nov. 14th- Boys started to straighten up things in bowling alley. Warm and rain.

Fri., Nov. 16th- Jim and Knute have been doing work inside at Park House and straightening up things at bowling alley, tools etc. Started a mustache today. Heavy wet snow and warm

Wed., Nov. 27th- Kitchen chimney burned out today. Lucky house didn't catch on fire. Cut road through woods back of camps and got wood for fireplace and cookstove. 0 degrees.

Thurs., Nov. 28th- Knute, Jim and I cleaned out chimney and kitchen stove pipe. Cutting road and wood back of camps. -10 degrees.

Fri., Nov. 29th- Started clearing Pioneer troop sites today. Cloudy and warm.

Thurs., Dec. 5th- Unloaded 7,000 BF of lumber for tent platforms from Hazleton Lumber Co. Cloudy and warm.

Fri., Dec. 6th- Started clearing service road into Pioneer dining hall location. Cloudy and very warm.

Wed., Dec. 11th- Cut rest of service road to campsites and dining hall. Floyd Carberry is coming with his team of horses to haul and skid logs from clearing service road and campsites. Cloudy and cold.

Mon., Dec. 16th- Took train from Tupper to Rochester. Train froze up at Old Forge. Had to wait there for 2 ½ hours. The train was very cold all the way to Utica. -14 degrees.

Tues., Dec. 17th- Met with Development Committee. They voted on giving us plenty of money. They agreed on tractor and Ford truck. Went out to dinner with Fred, Parky and Jack Merrill. (sp?)

Thurs., Dec. 19th- Returned to Tupper from Rochester by train. Only 1 hour late on arriving.

Thurs., Dec. 26th- Ham Ferry and Roland Dorothy started work today with chainsaw and started taking partition out of back room for tent platform building. Cold and snowy. 18" snow in woods.

Fri., Dec. 27th- We got coal grates put in cook stove tonight. Fair and cold. -10 degrees.

Sat., Dec. 28th- Roland Dorothy and Ham Ferry cutting and clearing trees for campsites today. Jim and I have been getting back room (off kitchen at Park House) fixed for shop work. Jim has been setting up oil burner stove. Knute brought skidding tongs. -30 degrees last night.

1952

January

- Bentley of Albion brought our new Cletrac Tractor for logging and plowing. Carberry still skidding with team of horses. Carberry keeping his team in barn.
- Much logging going on during January and campsite clearing.
- Mike Sabin (from Tupper) to provide estimate to wire camps (cottages) for summer use by staff and off-season use.
- Constructing tent platforms. Storing them in annex.

February

- Building dining hall tables and benches.
- Logging from Long Pond.
- Platform construction.

February, 1952 (cont.)

- Boat repair (boats from Eagle Island).
- Feb 16th Dozer broke through the ice on Catamount Pond hauling log sled to landing.
- Cutting pulpwood along Town Line Rd.
- Feb 20th tent platforms completed for Pioneer.
- Shoveled snow off casino, #4 and #6 camps.
- New wood boats being built at Adams Center. All wood construction.

March

- Logging, sawlogs and pulpwood.
- Chet Johnson gets contract to build dining hall foundation for Pioneer.
- March 17th dining hall tables are completed.
- Got load of boats from Hulberts at Adams Center. (Wood boats need to be put in lake for a few days to expand boards so boat will float.)
- Staked out buildings.
- Got dope on water supply.
- Took Brass around on inspection in sleigh pulled by tractor. Men from council on inspection. Berry Huntly, Maloy Smith, Fred Wellington, Bob Parkinson, Jack Papas, Lee Franke, Al Kittleberger, Pete Bleyler and Jack ? and Paul ? (note: not clear in diary)
- Cutting out campsites beyond Catamount outlet.
- Carpenters constructing table benches and cots.
- Mar. 19th snow... lots of snow.
- Mar. 20th saw Chet Johnson contractor. Saw Bob Lyons about graveling road and hauling longs to Conifer.
- Boys cutting and hauling logs from Sykes trail.
- Mar. 24th Johnson started excavating for Pioneer dining hall.
- Went to Adams Center for another load of boats.
- Cut some trees in campsite in back of casino.
- Bill Johnson and men staked out dining hall foundation. They will start digging tomorrow.
- Boys (carpenters on council payroll) finished up benches and started on portable latrines.
- Johnson about ready for concrete for footings for dining hall.
- Mar. 28th Troop 105 came in and are camping by cabin #1.
- We expect Les Price tomorrow to take down more buildings.

April

- Boys staining benches, painting cots and repairing canoes.
- Still hauling boats from Adams Center.
- Roads very muddy. Up to axles.
- Johnson poured Pioneer dining hall foundation today April 1st.
- Started clearing for Pioneer shower house April 2nd.
- Roads get awful. Ruts 3' deep.
- Jim Burgdorf and Walt Dumas hauling hemlock from Conifer today. Tongue on sleigh broke so couldn't haul logs. Hope to get the rest of logs tomorrow.
- April 3rd Johnson started on footings for showerhouse. Also he staked out other buildings. Snow is fading fast.
- Have so much work to do, don't seem to be able to get enough done in a day.
- Ham and boys finished latrine sample.

April, 1952 (cont.)

- Johnson loaned us command car to bring brass in coming from Rochester. (4-wheel drive vehicles were rare in those days. Command car was a 4-wheel drive army surplus vehicle similar to present day Humvee in size.)
- Jim and I took some soundings near Manhattan. (Mountaineer)
- Logging finished before the snow went.
- Brass in from Rochester, Bob Parkinson, Fred Wellington, Art Bennett, Cleo Ross, Marv Forester, Frank Quinlin. (sp? Not clear in diary)
- Located latrine sites. Checked other buildings with Brass.
- Brass liked sample latrine.
- April 6th Chet Johnson and Ray Woods (Woods Bros. plumbing and heating contractors) came down and we went over everything. Took all the men out in the command car (Brass) to Rt. 3 and their cars.
- Block work started on dining hall.
- Cleared for cooking sites.
- Dug pits for latrines (by hand with shovels)
- Les Price is tearing down bishop's camp.
- April 10th Johnson has wall very near up except kitchen.
- Ad in Tupper paper got results. Put 12 new men to work for one dollar per hour.
- Cutting and skidding logs on town road.
- New men burning brush in campsites.

April 12th- Have four new men today. Things have really started. Guess I'm going to be real busy checking on jobs and getting men organized to have charge of each project.

April 14th- Have 20 men working now. Got a latrine up on foundation. Have 3 others finished.

April 16th- Brownlee came in with tractor trailer load of materials for new buildings. Les Price went out with load of used lumber for Pulaski.

April 18th- Started foundations on cooking shelters this a.m.

April 22nd- Most all fill is in dining hall. Getting along very well with foundation on cooking sites. Bill Johnson (son of Chet Johnson) has started construction of wood on shower house.

April 23rd Lake Bros. Sawmill will mill our logs for us and get them out at once. Lee started on framework on dining hall today. Johnson has framing of shower house very near up. Coming fair on piers of cooking units (shelters). Been wetting down fill at dining hall today.

April 26th- Got started with posts on cooking shelters.

April 27th- Bob Parkinson, Ethel and Jack Pappas in at 5:30 pm.

April 28th- Started wood construction on cooking shelters. Dozer clearing stumps from service road to dining hall.

April 29th- Hauling hemlock lumber from Lake Bros. mill. Putting rafters on cooking shelters. Fred Wellington and Jack Merrill in at 5 pm. Parky, Jim and I laid out some latrine sites.

April 30th- Joe Bishop (National Engineering Serv.) been over all jobs. I took Parky, Jack and Joe Bishop over new road location. Think they were impressed. (Mountaineer road)

May 3rd- Started graveling service road to dining hall.

May 5th- I think we are running ahead of schedule. Jim works out very good in the office. The adding machine from the council office comes in very hand.

May 6th- Austin Lee has started work on the kitchen part of the dining hall. Only a few tent platforms left to build.

May 16th- Cliff Carberry finished setting up platforms on hill sites. (Ridge north of Catamount outlet.) Tomahawk Dist. men and families came in tonight about 60 strong.

1952, cont.

May 17th- Fred Wellington, Sumner Fay, Tom Lee, Elmer Fairchild and Frank Quinlin here today and staying overnight. Went over new road with them also on work progress.

May 19th- Got started on new road around lake. Built a wooden culvert at entrance.

May 21st- Finished platforms. On north road struck some spring holes and changed location. Some think we are going to have a bad time with the water.

May 22nd- 2/3 shingles on kitchen. Floyd finished waterfront tower.

May 25th- Staked out wash rack locations.

May 26th- Chet Johnson started on dining hall tile field. Dining hall construction completed. Austin Lee started work on cooks quarters. Started laying out pipe for water line. (galvanized pipe)

May 27th- Went over north road today and measured it. A little over 1 ½ miles right to Manhattan camp. (Mountaineer)

May 28th- Got foundation dug for water tank.

May 29th- Howard Patton from regional office, Charley Bartlett (St. Lawrence council scout executive) and District Executive Foster Chase to look over site. St. Lawrence are making a development also.

June 3rd- Power hooked up to dining hall. Cliff and men are putting culverts and bridge on north road.

June 4th- Finished up cooking shelter. Austin is working on trading post.

June 5th- Kitchen equipment came in.

June 6th- Parky and Dewey Sawyer came in today. Getting along with water pipe line good. Les Price is tearing down bath house. Started laying cable for pump house.

June 7th- Holderly came in to set up kitchen equipment. Finished up most of water line. Load of aluminum canoes came in.

June 9th- Laid foundation for pump (water). Got some urinals today. Will get rest of them tomorrow. Went to Saranac Lake to see Telephone Co.

June 11th- Fred Holderly coming along with the kitchen very good. Got everything about ready including walk-in.

June 12th- Started graveling road to dining hall Fred Wellington and Pete Bleyler came. Went over all jobs. Settled on a lot of things that we can go ahead with.

June 13th- Price bulldozed off beach. Think they got by bad hole on road job. Started working on cooking shelter tables. Ham has crew building pier sections.

June 16th- Five more men came to work. Been very busy chasing here and there. Placing suction line (water) in lake. Urinals in toilets etc.

June 17th- Put some of the pier sections in.

June 18th- Getting grading done around dining hall. Will clean up tomorrow. A pile of groceries came in. Think we will make it on time if we don't have too much rain. We can have some of Johnson's men if needed.

June 19th- Got staff site in. Les Price is coming along fine on taking down buildings.

June 20th- Will lay off a bunch of men tomorrow.

June 21st- Cook came in. Kitchen is ready.

June 22nd- We had a wonderful dinner in dining hall tonight. First meal. Met all the staff.

June 23rd- Parky's staff helped us put in water line this a.m. and put in water from piers in p.m. Buster Carberry and Chuck started work today and did very well. Going to put in telephone line tomorrow.

June 28th- The big day has arrived and we are ready for them. Just got the sign up, (entrance) 10 minutes before the boys came. Also the same with the flag. They came in with 9 buses. Everything worked like clockwork. Was a great sight to see them line up for retreat.

1952, cont.

July 8th- Went over to Manhattan (Mountaineer) and looked over sites with Fred and Jack Merrill.

July 12th- Manhattan road was finished today.

July 15th- Chet and Bill Johnson were down today. Going over plans for new house, maintenance area and also work at Manhattan.

July 20th- Went over house location, new road and dining hall with Cleo Ross, Marv Forester and Mort Wadsworth.

July 22nd- Boys (maint.) Started cutting timber today.

July 31st- Cliff and gang doing good job logging.

August 4th- Looked over red pine cutting on point across from island

August 12th- Russ Woods and Chet Johnson gave me estimate on Supt. House: \$8500 building & basement; \$2100 plumbing & heating; \$425 wiring & fixtures

August 13th- Childwold Church held its supper. Did very well. More than 215 people – lot of boys and staff members.

August 15th- Ed clearing for house and service area construction. Fred says OK to go ahead on house and service building construction.

August 16th- Checked logging jobs with Pete Bleyler and Carey Brown.

August 18th- Left camp at 5:30 a.m. with Fred and Chet and went to Rochester – arrived 10 a.m. Went directly to office. Did some work on plans. Lunch at Chamber of Commerce with Camping and Development Committee: Elmer Fairchild, Tom Lee, Pete Bleyler, Berry Huntly, Frank Quinlan, and George Williams. Went over plans of dining hall, house, etc. Siding on all buildings will be board and batten.

August 19th- Ground broken for house and service building this a.m.

August 20th- Parky, Bill Johnson and I checked on tile field and building layouts on Site “B” (Mountaineer)

August 21st- Started digging foundation for house.

August 22nd- Have all the old buildings down.

August 23rd- Very near a frost. Staff started closing up camp Bulldozer man got road into dining hall at “B” site.

September 4th- Bill Johnson started foundation on service building.

September 5th- Finished laying wall at new house. Started woodwork.

September 8th- Heavy frost. Took another load of lumber to be planed. (Pine-Hemlock-Spruce logs cut at camp were milled, planed, & used in construction of Pioneer and Mountaineer.) Bill Johnson poured foundation for service building. Been ripping lumber and building toilets.

September 12th- Fixed road into log pile at Manhattan; also into last setback at Massawepie.

September 16th- Put roof boards on house. House enclosed.

September 19th- Tommy Rowe and group coming into staff camp tonight.

September 27th- Jim, Chuck, and I scaled logs at first setback.

September 30th- Putting shingles on house today. Ruth and I went over toward Potsdam to look at sandstone for fireplace. Stones have to be dug out of ground.

October 1st- Sent men to Potsdam to get stone for fireplace. Have part of the roof boards on the service building.

October 9th- Harvey is doing good job on the fireplace. Woods started plumbing on house.

October 10th- Started foundation at Mountaineer dining hall. Dewey Sawyer came in about 7 p.m.

October 14th- Finished stonework on fireplace.

October 15th- Boys putting siding on service building.

October 16th- Telephone put in house today. Chimney should be finished by tomorrow.

1952, cont.

October 18th- Men poured cement footings of casino. Jim and Chuck scaled logs at Manhattan – cold and snow.

October 21st- Inside work going on at house. Earl and Ed digging water line for house. (note: with shovels)

October 22nd- All footing poured at dining hall

October 23rd- Started laying block at Manhattan. (note: Mountaineer dining hall)

October 29th- Got electric cable and water line into house. Putting new roof on casino.

October 30th- Power on in house today.

November 3rd- Looked over logging job at Pine Pond.

November 5th- Woods installed the furnace and there is heat in the house. Marv Forester and Roy Selbert have come to work on the canvas.

November 6th- Men have been unloading lumber at Manhattan. 5000 BF of 2x4's and 2x6's. Johnson pouring concrete at service building.

November 7th- Mike Sabin wiring garage and shop (service area).

November 10th- Lloyd got a load of flooring from Oval Wood Dish Co. for the house.

November 11th- Chet Johnson sent estimate of \$680.00 for foundation of showerhouse, \$18.00 per pier for other bldgs. (Mountaineer)

November 25th- Loggers moved horses to barn at Park House. They are going to work down by Long Pond. Bill Johnson has been staking out other buildings at Manhattan.

December 1st- Fair and cold. Bill Johnson and his men have the wall up for the showerhouse and the digging done for the trading post. Moved stove and saw to new shop.

December 2nd- Bill is pouring foundation at trading post. Stan has the storm windows on the house.

December 4th- Piers and foundation are all in at Manhattan except the office.

December 9th- Men started tearing down chimney (hotel).

December 15th- Two men shovelling snow off roofs. Rest of men putting insulation in service building.

December 17th- Moved into new house on Catamount Lake.

December 27th- Boys are getting along very good at Manhattan.

1953

January 1st- Ash Palmer and 7 Scouts from Troop 108 – Mohawk District came in. They are camping in tents at Long Pond.

January 2nd- Carpenters are sawing bats and fascia boards for mess hall. Will need more boards for siding.

January 3rd- Started moving rest of equipment and materials from old shop to new shop. Men shoveled 3½' of snow off Pioneer dining hall roof.

January 7th- Loggers started cutting birch today.

January 8th- Ed, Carl and I laid out 6 campsites and 1 play area at Manhattan.

January 10th- Ed's men are cutting logs and dead stuff at Manhattan clearing campsites.

January 23rd- Boys have cots about done – will start platforms tomorrow.

January 25th- Chuck and Jim scaled birch logs at Manhattan.

January 27th- Johnson started on trading post and office.

January 29th- Went to Manhattan, gave loggers dope on birch logs toward rocky point, also laid out rest of campsites for Ed to start clearing.

January 31st- Snowing, 30°. House warming – all the neighbors came – 40 strong – what a night.

1953, cont.

February 7th- Building platforms and benches.

February 9th- Ed's men been working painting cots, will finish tomorrow.

February 10th- Ed's men moved cots and have been cleaning up around shop at Park House so boys can tear it down.

February 11th- Bill Johnson is laying floor in camp office "B" (Mountaineer). Carpenters been planing lumber. Got most of lumber from Drapers (Tupper Lake) for platforms and toilets. Ed and Earl have been cleaning old shop and part of barn.

February 14th- Parky, Marv, and Art Bennett came in at 9 p.m. last night. They stayed in Park House. Today we went over campsite clearing – located craft and nature lodge at "A" site by creek. Parky and Art looked over explorer site in first setback.

February 20th- Marked trees to be cut along power line to "B".

February 23rd- Mike Sabin checked distances at "B" for power to bldgs.

February 26th- Cooks quarters about done at "B". Also trading post. Office done a couple of weeks ago.

March 5th- Joe Brier is fixing the booms for logging. Will put some more men on at once.

March 6th- Moved some latrines to "B" site. Carpenters working on platforms, latrines, washracks, etc.

March 7th- Bob Lines put road into setback to haul out logs.

March 9th- Most of barn down at Park House.

March 13th- Carpenters started work fixing up staff lounge.

March 14th- Fred Wellington and Pete Bleyler looking over projects in detail. Relocated craft lodge at "B".

March 19th- Platforms completed for "B".

March 20th- Started building pump house "B".

March 23rd- Road to "B" broke up bad after hauling out logs.

March 28th- Located latrine sites for "B".

March 31st- Dumping logs in lake to boom. Parky called – we are going to take down the Park House.

April 1st- Put some boats in water today to soak up. Ice out of Massawepie.

April 2nd- Chuck has been oiling bldgs., casino, etc. Load of boats came today from Adams Center for "B".

April 13th- Carpenters working on dining hall tables. Lloyd putting oarlocks on boats. Sold beaver pelts to H.J. Tormey for \$223.00. (Note: Beaver trapped at Boottree – 5; wine cellar (Vingo) – 6; Horseshoe – 5; Catamount – 4)

April 19th- Ruth and I took beaver to Jay to be mounted. (Note: beavers (2) were frozen until trip to Jay could be made.)

April 21st- 12" of snow – cold. Men building craft lodge benches and tables.

April 27th- Wet snow

April 29th- Mullens crew will finish setting platforms tomorrow.

April 30th- Bob Lines working on fire ring and fleet base at "B".

May 4th- Johnson resumed work at Manhattan – started floor on dining hall. Woods started plumbing.

May 6th- Started water line at "B". Pump house is near completion.

May 14th- Earl is working on waterline at "A", Miller on "B" and grading, etc. Ed has his men cleaning up around Park House and Annex. We unloaded reels of power line.

May 15th- Took rest of things from Park House and have made all necessary arrangements to burn it tomorrow.

1953, cont.

May 16th- Burned down Park House. Sumner Fay took some movies of it.

May 19th- Power men were here about 4 hrs. Set pole and transformer at Mnhattan and pole at road entrance. They will string cable tomorrow.

May 21st- Kitchen stuff came by tractor trailer. Planted some trees around house.

May 23rd- Holderly is here. Gave him some men. They are setting up kitchen equipment in "B" dining hall.

May 26th- Power men splicing cable. Log boom broke. Half of the logs are floating in the lake. Ed and I and 5 men worked all day with powerboat and rowboats gathering them up – still have more to get.

June 3rd- Black flies very thick. Still on water systems at camps. Miller laying pilelines. Ham and men working on latrines for visitors.

June 8th- Got all water hooked up at "A" camp. Guy Lake started hauling logs that we boomed in off lake. Harold building waterfront tower at "B". Reset and drove pipe deeper for well at house.

June 11th- Guy Lake is hauling logs from last setback and making road to same.

June 13th- Beaver weekend – got lots of work done.

June 14th- Boys (Jim and Chuck), Ruth and I went to Jay to get mounted beavers. Note from Chuck: The two mounted beavers, as I remember were in the sitting position each with a campaign hat and a canoe paddle over one shoulder. As I remember, my mother (Ruth) made the hats and my father (Harley) made the paddles. One beaver was pit on the fireplace mantel at Pioneer and the other on the mantel at Mountaineer. I do not know what happened to them. (Editorial note: a bedraggled beaver matching this description was still at Massawepie in 2004.)

June 15th- Finished booming logs today. Thanks the Lord. Lake will finish hauling logs tomorrow.

June 18th- Transformer for Mountaineer came in.

June 19th- Power at "B" tonight – telephone tomorrow.

June 20th- Graded on lake shore for canoe base.

June 22nd- Things shaping up fairly well. Boat docks, piers, etc. Carpenters got plenty of work to do yet.

June 25th- Got water to tank at "B".

June 26th- First meal in dining hall "B" – breakfast this a.m.

Note from Chuck: The remaining accounts of this year's diary pertain to normal upkeep and repairs to facilities and grounds. No construction was noted. **(end of 1953)**

1956

January, 1956- January work consisted of snow plowing, hauling lumber or having lumber delivered for construction of latrines, tables, benches. Logging also continued – work was started on camp "C" (Voyageur) clearing for buildings and power line.

February 11th- Elgin Deering and wife Jean here. We checked over sites of buildings, roads, etc. for "C".

February 14th- Border patrolmen were here checking on logging jobs for Canadian aliens. Men shoveling off casino and chalet.

February 16th- Laid carpenters off until Monday – no lumber.

February 17th- Guy Lake's mill burned this a.m. at 4.

Logging, delivery of cement blocks and lumber and construction of tables and latrines rounded out the month.

March 6th- Men started clearing for dining hall. Earl and I laid it out. Lakes hauled balance of lumber for dinig hall, also 2x8s for pier decking.

March 7th- Trusses and shingles came for dining hall. Carpenters started on pier sections.

1956, cont.

March 14th- Ruth and I went to Mountaineer and found roof on craft shelter about ready to cave in. Got men and we shoveled off both shelters in p.m. Pier sections complete.

March 27th- Chet and Bill came down and we staked out dining hall. Will start digging for foundation tomorrow. Also clearing for nature lodge.

March 29th- Guy Lake brought lumber for craft and nature lodges.

April 2nd- Men have been shoveling roofs at Mountaineer. Got 10 men coming tomorrow to shovel off all roofs. Johnson finished pouring foundation tonight for main part of dining hall.

April 5th- Johnson laying blocks on dining hall.

April 9th- Earl (Gilligan – Camp Ranger) and I cleared site for showerhouse. Took pictures of showerhouse and cooks qtrs. sites.

April 11th- To Tupper to get beaver set up. Johnson poured cap on main wall and finished block on rest of wall. Biege has trapped 8 beaver to date.

April 13th- Light snow. Fred Wellington here. Went over jobs and plans for staff cottages, office, etc. Ray Woods was down. We laid out grease pit system and tanks.

April 16th- Johnson started block work in showerhouse and footings for grease traps. Johnson has 4 trusses up on main part of dining hall.

April 18th- Snow, cold. Boys skidding logs from “C” site. Biege pulled beaver traps. Caught 14 beavers total.

April 21st- 2” new snow.

April 23rd- Johnson has roof very nearly done on west side of dining hall. Framing has started on showerhouse.

April 26th- Men clearing troopsites. Started framing kitchen part of dining hall.

April 30th- Got rafters all up on kitchen of dining hall and roof on showerhouse.

May 1st- Bob Lines came in with bulldozer – worked on tile bed and water lines.

May 3rd- Johnson started shingling roofs at “C”. Front of dining hall looks pretty good with terrace.

May 4th- 3” of snow – everything covered.

May 5th- Elgin and I staked out office road and infirmary.

May 8th- 20° last night. Started cutting trees at waterfront at “C”.

May 9th- Men started setting up latrines and continued clearing waterfront.

May 14th- Turning water on in camps. Ken Woods putting plumbing in kitchen.

May 15th- Bob Lines graded road to “C” dining hall. Electricians started working today on “C” bldgs.

May 22nd- Johnson pouring floor in kitchen. All men working on craft lodge. Bob Lines hauling gravel to nature lodge.

May 24th- I graded nature lodge area. Johnson finished pouring storage section of dining hall.

May 29th- Johnson pouring main floor in dining hall. Woods finished plumbing showerhouse. Johnson finished tile bed.

June 4th- Johnson started digging footers for Central office and staff cabin. Holderly came in to start on kitchen equipment.

June 5th- Johnson pouring footers at Central office. Earl on telephone line. Men on water line.

June 6th- Ruth and I went and got beaver. Holderly and his man setting up walk-in in “C” dining hall.

June 9th- Johnson putting tile field in at “B”. Our men on main 3” water line from pump house at “C”.

June 11th- Power co. came in today to set poles.

June 12th- Power on to staff site. Water on to dining hall. Johnson poured grease trap at Mountaineer. Took pictures of tile bed at (M).

1956, cont.

June 14th - Guy Lake hauled logs and set our tank at pump house.

June 15th - Black flies are terrible. Punkies are bad at night.

June 18th - Johnson started framing on Central office.

June 19th - Don Terry and family came in. Gas men, electrician and plumbers working in kitchen at "C".

June 20th - Bob Maurice and Dick Betz in tonight. Staff camp floor in. Roof started on central office. Blackflies still biting – using baby oil, works good.

June 22nd - Men treating dining hall floors.

June 27th - Things really piling up now.

June 28th - Cutting trees for Bob Fee in his fire circle at Voyageur

June 29th - They are cooking first meal in Voyageur dining hall tonight. Cabin #1 finished this p.m. – Elgin moving in. Rest of boats came today. Entrance sign won't be ready until tomorrow.

June 30th - Sure was a rush this a.m. Scouts came in with a bang at 12:30 p.m. Right on time.

July 7th - Put Bob Fee's float in, complete with ladders. Voyageur staff are going to work on the swimming piers tomorrow.

July 16th - Elgin moved clerk into new office this p.m.

July 20th - Going to lay off all men but Earl tomorrow.

July 28th - Kim (Wellington) and Dave (Deering) are staying with us tonight. Seems good to have two boys in house again.

August 1st - "Doc" Funk's troop have been oiling exterior of Central office. Earl sanding floor in office.

August 2nd - Dewey and Arlene Sawyer came in p.m. They are staying with Bob Fee. Really cold tonight. Ruth painted porch at Central office. Earl still sanding floor.

August 3rd - Sure doing a lot of rushing around getting flowers, etc. up outside of office bldg.

August 4th - Everything went off very good at the dedication of the new office building.

August 7th - "Doc" Funk's troop oiling Elgin's camp.

August 13th - Ted Taylor and family coming in tomorrow. Bob Fee got Voyageur closed up OK and quick.

August 27th - Banquet tonight for Pioneer and Mountaineer.

August 28th - Sure is beginning to be quiet around here.

September 9th - Fire burned up Cottage #2 last night. Piercefield and Tupper Lake fire departments here.

Note from Chuck: After camp closed down Dad and Earl were the only ones at Massawepie. A number of districts came for the weekends. On Oct. 13th Elgin and Dad staked out for the health lodge and some cottages. By Nov. 20th some footers had been poured for a cottage. By Dec. 7th all block piers were completed and ready for floor joists. Dad and Earl were doing this work. Floor joists completed on Dec. 12th and by Dec. 19th studs were up and ready for rafters.

1957

February 24th - They finished tearing down Cottage #5.

February 27th - Staff cottage completed.

March 1st - Earl and I finished clearing cottage sites – all six of them.

May 13th - Johnson has two cottages with roofs on – rafters on one other. He will have more men on next week.

June 18th - Johnson's men finished with staff cabins at 4:30 p.m.

June 19th - Professional staff comes in the p.m. Everything was ready for them at the cabins.

End of diary excerpts from Harley Burgdorf, Massawepie Property Superintendent, 1951 - 1966