

## **Peak Summer Camp Years: 1960-69**

By Peter Collinge

The 1960s were a period of relative stability at Massawepie, if not in the rest of the country, at least until 1969. Camp attendance continued to gradually increase, reflecting the overall Scouting membership growth in the peak years of the post-WWII Baby Boom. By 1961, the existing three camps (Pioneer, Mountaineer, and Voyageur) could accommodate 3000 Scouts (250 per period, for four two-week periods in each camp), which was enough to meet demand until the late 1960s. And for much of the 1960s, the consuming project for the Otetiana Council leadership was buying and building the “new” Camp Cutler in the Bristol Hills, rather than further developing Massawepie.

### **The Early 1960s**

Since Elgin Deering was the General Camp Manager for 1955-60, and D. Stuart “Stu” Smith, Jr. and Ralph Spaulding were repeating from 1959 as directors of Pioneer & Voyageur, the summer of 1960 was largely a continuation of previous summers. Having 148 troops registered was a new record. A Showando for camp leaders was held at Camp Cutler (in Webster) in April; each troop was asked to bring a patrol of adults. Districts were urged to send at least 15 men to Beaver Weekend in June, where the project list included putting up tents, painting boats, repairing docks, tables & benches, hooking up water lines, and cleaning kitchens. The council estimated that these volunteers would save the camp \$1500-2000, big money when each Scout paid \$49 to attend camp for two weeks.

One innovation in 1960 was that troop summer camping at Cutler was offered again, with some program offerings, as an alternative to traveling to Massawepie. A handful of troops participated, including Troop 78 which served Scouts with physical disabilities. Meanwhile, Massawepie expanded by 705 acres on July 22, when a strip of land along the southeast edge of the property (where Camp Forester would eventually be built) was added through a \$4000 purchase from the Niagara Mohawk Power Company. Apparently it was helpful that the president of Niagara Mohawk was a friend of one of the Otetiana Council Executive Board members.

Another first-time program was an Explorer Week using camp facilities in late August, after the Boy Scout season. Plans included Air Force survival training, seaplane flights, coed activities, water-skiing, skin-diving, etc. (It’s unclear whether the hoped-for Senior Girl Scout participation actually happened.) The \$35 fee included 21 meals. Director of Exploring Don Terry, who had been the Mountaineer Camp Director in 1959, now directed the Explorer Week.

The Order of the Arrow Section II-E Conclave, which rotated among camps of the Section, followed immediately over Labor Day Weekend at Massawepie. Robert Miles from Perry, NY, was a leader at the conclave. He said, “Mid to late teenagers, though still full of play, can have moments of seriousness ... Their exchange of ideas, swapping of stories and collectables, was punctuated with the non-stop eating habits of that age group. I was happy to have been with them...”

In September, the Elgin Deering era at Massawepie ended as he left to become Director of Camping for the National Capital Area Council in D.C., the fifth largest council in the country. Don Stevens replaced him (briefly) as the Director of Camping and Activities. Also in September, long-time volunteer Sumner Fay announced that he had set up a \$170,000 Living Trust to benefit the council and to support a “central lodge” at Massawepie. The council announced that the Pioneer Dining Hall would be named “Fay Lodge” in memory of his parents. Fay had been on the staff of Camp Otetiana on Canandaigua Lake from 1918-22, and a supporter of Scout camping ever since then.

Troop sign-ups for 1961 went well, with 4 of the 12 periods in the three camps filled by November. By December, second and third periods were full in all three camps. (The start and end of the summer always seem to be somewhat less popular.) As usual, troops were encouraged to promote camp, but

this year they were also offered a camp promotion kit and the ability to borrow a new promotional film narrated by well-known sports commentator Tom Decker and with many of its scenes shot at Massawepie by well-known nature photographer Earl Hilfiker.

A new Camp Program Conference on May 24 replaced the Showando as the information session for camp leaders. For Beaver Weekend in June, the council offered to charter a bus if 40 men signed up and paid \$6 each. (Nice idea, but it probably didn't actually happen for a few more years.) One project planned for Beaver Weekend: finishing expanding Camp Voyageur's sites to accommodate a full 250 Scouts like the other two camps, to accommodate the robust registration for the summer. There were also plans to improve some sites in Pioneer and Mountaineer for 1961, including better patrol areas.

By June, 1961, Don Stevens had resigned without ever directing a season at Massawepie, and D. Stuart Smith, Jr. (who had been a Massawepie camp director the previous four summers) was appointed as Director of Camping and Activities. With Stu Smith moving up, only Ralph Spaulding was returning in 1961 as an experienced camp director, and he was moving from camp Voyageur to Pioneer, but other district executives were also assigned that summer as assistant camp directors.

Since 1952, the Scouts had been riding to camp on city or school busses, usually with a stop somewhere (Mexico High School or later Camp Drum, now Fort Drum) for a bathroom break. The busses now left from Cobbs Hill Park. Gear was hauled separately on trucks. That worked well, except at the end of the second period in 1962, when one of the two tractor-trailers carrying gear jack-knifed and turned over on Route 104. The driver (William Duffy, Jr.) said that the load had shifted as he rounded a curve west of Oswego, causing the accident. Fortunately, the gear was headed back to Rochester from camp, so there was no delay in the camp program (though families were presumably waiting), but Route 104 was closed for 3 hours until the other truck, driven by Duffy's brother, was able to right the first rig so that they could proceed.

On a more positive note, the total of 2634 Boy Scouts attending Massawepie from 155 troops in 1961 was a new record, and Explorer Week expanded nicely with over 140 Explorers participating. And to help with facilities, a bequest from Bonn W.A. Brown of Brockport enabled building another cabin along Catamount Pond, named the Bonn Brown Cabin (or Cabin 13, or later MC-18). It was initially reserved for use by families of leaders of Brockport units camped at Massawepie. A later agreement with Brockport Scouters relinquished summer use to the staff, but maintained the option for Brockport volunteers to stay there during Beaver Weekend.

Summer camp registration was looking good for 1962. By Oct. 13, third period was full for all three camps, and only Voyageur had space left in second period. In November, the council announced that Chuck Burgdorf, son of Massawepie Property Superintendent Harley Burgdorf, was being appointed Ranger for Warren Cutler Reservation. Burgdorf, who had previously served at Massawepie on both the summer camp staff and the ranger staff, moved into the ranger's house at the Cutler property in Webster with his wife and 2 children. At the same time, the council announced that they had agreed to sell Cutler to Monroe County for \$560,000 to become part of Webster Park, and that a new larger camp would soon be purchased in the Bristol Hills.

Summer registration continued strong, with only first period having openings by March, 1962, and 146 troops registered by April. The council kept pushing, trying to improve past trends where typically 25% of troops and 50% of Boy Scouts did not attend summer camp. The pre-camp leaders' meetings were split into two parts: May 28 for troops attending 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> periods, and May 29 for the rest, both at Brighton High School. Stu Smith announced improved and expanded trail programs this year, and said that last year, merit badges earned increased by 20%. The A.L. Mathias Co., RIT's food service, was contracted to direct the summer camp kitchen operation. All three camps had new directors for 1962, though Gus Potter at Voyageur had experience directing Mountaineer the previous summer.

A highlight for the summer occurred on Sunday, August 19 when five Scouts from Troop 15 of Brick Presbyterian Church in downtown Rochester walked in "singing and looking fine" after hiking 440 miles over 22 days from Rochester! Eight Scouts started the hike, and three dropped out along the way, but Wilson Maneiro, Gary Budd, Haywood Bagley, Augustine Ramos, and Carmelo Torres completed the trip. They generally followed the canal to Albany, then the Hudson River to the Adirondacks, buying their food each day (spending a total of \$146) and sleeping under a large plastic sheet. They sent a letter home daily with their progress, and each week a different Scout would call home. Near the end, they were two days behind schedule due to cold rainy weather, so they hiked 85 miles without any rest from Saturday morning to Sunday at 12:40 PM when they arrived in camp.

Four Massawepie Scouts avoided a more tragic fate a week later after they were given a ride when hitchhiking from Tupper Lake to Massawepie about midnight on August 26 (1962). The driver lost control while rounding a curve on Route 3 in Piercefild "at an excessive rate of speed" (according to the State Police). The car crashed through a guard rail and apparently tumbled end over end, and the driver was thrown from the car and killed. Somehow, three of the Massawepie Scouts were uninjured, while 16-year-old Edwin Stewart of Pittsford ended up in "good condition" in a hospital with shoulder and spine injuries. Explorer Week ran August 25-31, helped by Army personnel running radio communication and Air Force staff teaching survival skills, so perhaps these hitch-hiking Scouts were Explorers?

Camp registrations continued to grow for 1963, with Mountaineer fully booked by November and the other two camps full for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> periods. In March, 1963, the council announced that summer camp fees would go up \$1/week to \$51 for two weeks for Scouts with troop leadership eating in the Dining Hall, the first increase in three years. In April, the council's *Smoke Signals* newsletter promoted several out-of-camp trips in the Cranberry Lake area that would allow some Scouts to hike while others canoed. Also in April it was revealed that Stu Smith would be returning to his "preferred" position as Field Director as soon as a new Director of Camping was hired. (In March, 1964, Smith was promoted to Assistant Scout Executive of the Morris Sussex Council in New Jersey.)

The usual Beaver Weekend volunteers in 1963 were supplemented by a crew of Naval Reserve Seabees (4 officers and 56 men) who helped to repair the Health Lodge and survey the camp boundaries. Their project list also included "welding steel safety covers on dried-up wells," but it's unclear where that work was.

### **The Delesky Years (1963 – 1968)**

Shortly before summer, 1963, Leonard J. "Ski" Delesky was announced as the new Director of Camping, and Massawepie General Manager, with responsibility also for overseeing development of the new Bristol Hills camp (now Cutler). Delesky had been Assistant Scout Executive and Director of Camping for the Mauwehu Council in Connecticut. Unfortunately, the plan to have Stu Smith orient Delesky before summer didn't work out, since Smith ended up in the hospital for the month of June after a lawnmower accident. But the 1963 summer season went well, perhaps partly because two of the three camp directors were returning, though George "Bud" Frank moved from Mountaineer to Voyageur while Robert Baldwin stayed at Pioneer.

During one of Delesky's first summers at Massawepie, there was a forest fire near Mt. Matumbula, a few miles east of Massawepie. The forest rangers from the NY Conservation Department asked for volunteers to help fight the fire, so some adult staff members from Massawepie spent several days working there. Since Matumbula, the highest peak in St. Lawrence County at 2688 ft., is privately owned, this was a rare chance for Massawepie folks to see some of that property.

Delesky, who enjoyed promoting camp, tried a few new things in the lead-up to the 1964 season. In the January issue of *Smoke Signals*, an article no doubt written by Delesky quoted Jack Dailor,

Scoutmaster of St. John the Evangelist Troop 37 saying that they bring 40+ boys & a team of leaders to Massawepie each summer. "Unless the Scouts are offered camping, nothing else will take its place," said Dailor. Don Stubbs, Scoutmaster of Greece Baptist troop 48, gave a similar plug in the February issue.

Delesky planned a special Massawepie Camps Leaders' Conference for March 31, 1964, at St. John Fisher College, where each troop would receive a Leader Guide Book and Program Planning info. That would be followed by four meetings on separate nights in late April – May, separated according to the period that the troop would attend camp. Each troop also received a copy of a new booklet "Trails of Massawepie," prepared by the Massawepie Trails Staff, which described the 17 maintained trails, and canoe carries and out-of-camp trips. Explorer Posts and Ships were also offered the chance to take a 7-day out-of-camp "high adventure" trip for \$25/person including food and use of tents, cook gear, and canoes.

Meanwhile, Delesky was also managing the development of "new Camp Cutler" (as it was finally being called in mid-1964) in the Bristol Hills. The final layout was approved in May, and by June 1 Ranger Chuck Burgdorf and his family had moved from "old Cutler" to the new property. Delesky would spend the 1964 summer season at Massawepie again, but Council Executive Fred Wellington was starting to see the disadvantages of having his Director of Camping up in the Adirondacks all summer while so much was happening at Cutler.

Delesky also tried several new things for the summer of 1964. First, he hired Trailways busses to take the Scouts to camp (rather than the former city or school busses), which meant that the gear could also go on the bus and not need to be trucked separately. Troops were told to arrive at the Genesee Valley Regional Market by 7:15 AM. (Long-time Scoutmaster John Pusey of Troop 230 in Penfield always told the parents to pack two lunches for their Scouts for the bus. "They'll eat the first lunch before they're out of Monroe County, so the second lunch is for lunchtime.") The busses still all unloaded at Pioneer; Scouts hiked from there to the other camps and gear was transported by truck. The road to Mountaineer was definitely not ready for busses yet!

Delesky also tried a different approach to leadership of the three camps in 1964. He noticed that sometimes a group of troops from the same district would attend the same camp during the same period. Delesky decided to offer the various district executives the opportunity to be camp director in a camp for whatever period(s) their district had the most troops in camp. Delesky hired the camp staffs, and there was still an assistant camp director who was in each camp for the entire summer. It's unclear how well this experiment worked in 1964, or even if it ran all summer, but Massawepie returned to the previous system of summer-long (usually) camp directors in 1965.

Some parents of campers would visit them during the middle weekend of the two-week period, which was sometimes called "Parents' Weekend." The camps also ran several special program events during that weekend while Delesky was in charge. At least a few times, probably ending in 1965, they assembled Scouts from all three camps at Pioneer for a colorful "review of the troops." Other times, the competitive Water Carnival at each camp was a favorite program for the parents to watch and the Scouts to participate in. After traditional boating and swimming races, and less traditional events like the swamped rowboat race, the carnival often ended with the "Greased Watermelon" event where Scouts tried to get a slippery watermelon (usually coated with government-surplus lard that was available free to camps along with other commodities) over a finish line by brute force in a free-for-all of Scouts from various troops. Fun events also helped encourage any homesick Scouts to stay in camp for the second week rather than leaving with their visiting parents.

It may have been in 1964, or one of the next years, when Delesky shot a black bear at camp. In that era, Massawepie had its own "dump" on the property, in a little-traveled location up the Russell Road from the central office. The rangers would dig a hole with a backhoe or the camp bulldozer, and

garbage bags would be tossed in. The bears liked to visit before the trash was buried. Most bears stayed away from the staff dumping garbage, but one bear started becoming too aggressive. The Conservation Department tried to trap it, but this bear broke the trap. The Conservation Department agreed that the bear needed to be dispatched, so Delesky and ranger Harley Burgdorf and Bud Frank and Childwold tavern proprietor Walt Dumas headed to the dump. Delesky shot the bear, and after it seemed dead he went over to the carcass. The bear twitched, scaring Delesky, but it was dead, and one of the rangers soon buried it with the bulldozer.

By fall, Delesky was in full camp-promotion mode for 1965. He and Jack Stern, the new high-energy Camping Committee Chairman, were promising new equipment and a renewed emphasis on patrol camping for the next summer. At this time, the national BSA organization was trying to emphasize the patrol method and continue to move away from the army-style "one big circle of tents" that may have become popular as so many WWII veterans became Scout leaders. To promote attendance and make space in the dining halls, they offered a lakeside campsite and a fee of \$20 for two weeks for "Frontier" troops who would cook their own meals and use their own equipment. The dining hall troop fee of \$51 for two weeks would remain in 1965, with multiple reminders that this only applied to Scouts from troops that supplied their own leadership, since provisional Scouts paid more.

By February, 1965, *Smoke Signals* said that the senior camp staff for summer was hired, but there were still openings for junior staff (16- and 17-year olds). Almost 500 Scouters attended the Massawepie Leaders' Orientation at St. John Fisher College on March 22, 1965. They received manuals, forms, and supplies, including baggage tags. New equipment that had been purchased for camp was on display. The subsequent leader meetings in May & June, by camp period, were now named "Here's How" meetings. They were advertised as a place for leaders to meet others at camp the same period and work out their troop's specific camp program.

Starting in the summer of 1965, Len Delesky deferred to Fred Wellington's wishes and mostly stayed in Rochester. He'd be at the bus loading at Genesee Valley Regional Market, then head up to Massawepie for the first couple of days of each period. He liked to roam the camps after dark to observe and to chat with leaders and pick up on the mood of the troops. But Bud Frank was now the General Manager of Massawepie for the summer, along with a Business Manager and the three camp directors.

There was a bit of excitement during the first week of camp in 1965, when 12-year-old Charles Miceli became lost in the woods for about 16 hours. Charles was a member of Troop 91 from St. Augustine's Church in Rochester. From the 1950s through the 1980s, each camp's dining hall closed for 24 hours to give the cook crew, and most of the camp staff, a day off while the troops hiked and cooked their own food. It was probably during one of these "Trail Days" that Troop 91 headed for nearby Moosehead Mountain, elevation 2070 ft., to camp out for the night of Wednesday, July 7. (A somewhat-maintained trail led from Massawepie through Childwold to Moosehead for years, until the fire tower there was closed in 1969 and removed in the early 1980s. As a side note, using a compass for direction on that trail was questionable due to the iron deposits in the area.) At about 3 PM Charles asked one of the three leaders for permission to visit a nearby spring, but after he finished drinking he was unable to find the trail back. About 35 men from the camp staff, accompanied by state troopers, forest rangers, and two dogs, search for him in rain showers until 2 AM. They started searching again at 6 AM, but at about 7 AM Thursday Charles walked back into camp, a bit shaken but otherwise none the worse for the experience. Several other Massawepie Scouts have spent an unplanned night in the woods in the years since then, but all have been located within 24 hours.

Perhaps Miceli didn't receive the "Trail Camping Orientation." Peter Collinge, then a first-year camper at Voyageur, remembers the staff talking about preparation for the Trail Day overnight camp, with helpful hints such as recommending that Scouts roll their sleeping bags tight because, "there's no need to carry extra air; there will be plenty where you are going." Voyageur was also notable that

summer of 1965 for having two Model T cars belonging to camp staff members, which probably caught the attention of campers more than any merit badge class.

A bit later in the summer of 1965, the camp's newest building was dedicated. Long-time Scouting supporter Sumner Fay had donated funds to build a guest lodge at camp, "to aid council officers in entertaining select visitors to expand their interest by seeing Scouting in action." The new chalet-style lodge, on Massawepie Lake along the town road south of Voyageur in a location that formerly held 3 or 4 "honeymoon cottages" during the hotel era, was dedicated on July 17. Later, it was named for long-time Council Scout Executive Fred Wellington (who oversaw the purchase and development of Massawepie) as "Wellington Lodge."

The Massawepie property would be a bit larger for the summer of 1966. In January, the council bought about 32 acres from Theodore and Mary Staves for \$30,000. This property was between Catamount Pond and NY Route 3, plus some more acreage across Route 3 where the Staves retained life use of a house, in the hamlet of Gale. In fact, the Staves had bought the property from the Gale family, who had erected a small hotel there in the 1800s known as Gale's Lake View House, which was a smaller competitor on Catamount Pond to the Hotel Childwold on Massawepie Lake. A Gale descendant later tore down the hotel and erected some small tourist cabins. The Otetiana Council hoped to use those cabins for a family camp serving families of troops and staff at Massawepie. However, the cabins proved to be a bit too rustic even for that. Kathleen Delesky, wife of Leonard, said that camp was a great place for her kids, but she didn't appreciate sharing those cabins with mice when she was housed there while visiting. Eventually the council disposed of those cabins (while keeping the land) and some of them were sold and ended up behind the Dumas Bar and Grill (now the Thirsty Moose) in nearby Childwold.

The usual Leader Orientation and Here's How meetings were again held at St. John Fisher College, and Beaver Weekend was June 10-12. Bud Frank was back as General Manager for the summer of 1966. The Fall and Winter of 1965-66 had been spent promoting camp, apparently continuing Delesky's successful efforts since the attendance increased again. About 2800 Scouts and 500 leaders attended summer camp in 1966, up from 2325 Scouts in 1963. During the summer, 715 Scouts became swimmers, and 337 went from non-swimmer to beginner. Also earned: 4140 merit badges, and over 900 First & Second Class ranks.

On July 23, the new Jewish Chapel along the Mountaineer Road just before entering that camp was dedicated. Herman Cohn, past president of Otetiana Council and active in the 1951 and 1958 capital campaigns, was honored with the Shofar Award by the National Jewish Relationships Committee at the dedication. Like the Protestant and Catholic Chapels, the Jewish Chapel had a small cabin with a slope cleared behind it with benches for the worshippers. Offering religious services was perhaps more important in an era when all Scouts attended camp for two weeks, including two Sundays or two Friday evenings. After that era, the benches were eventually removed, and the cabins used for staff housing. The Jewish Chapel became the Mountaineer Camp Director's cabin after Massawepie no longer had a resident Jewish Chaplain.

In November, 1966, Property Superintendent Harley Burgdorf retired, after 15 years at Massawepie. Burgdorf jumped into the job in 1951 by moving to Massawepie with his family and building Camp Pioneer over the winter and spring, and later also supervised the building of Camps Mountaineer and Voyageur. Burgdorf received a tribute at the November Executive Board meeting for his service. Camping Committee Chairman Jack Stern announced the hiring of Loren Hakes as Camp Ranger starting November 1. Hakes was a Scouting volunteer from Longhorn District who had a background in construction and maintenance, and would eventually work at Massawepie even longer than Burgdorf did. Chuck Burgdorf, Harley's son and the ranger at Camp Cutler, had been interested in succeeding his father at Massawepie, but Hakes was chosen instead. (Chuck Burgdorf eventually left to become the long-time ranger for Goshen Scout Reservation of the National Capital Area Council.)

The camp promotion twist for the 1967 summer season was a new “colorful, non-uniform ‘special collector’s’ patch” issued for each Scout if his boy card and \$5 deposit were received by February 17. Perhaps it worked; the number of troops registered by February exceeded the total from 1966, and by April the number of Scouts registered had exceeded the initial estimates from the troops. A special “Trail Camping Open House” was held May 8 in addition to the usual Leader Orientation and Here's How meetings. Improvements announced for summer were that Massawepie would have intensified commissioner service, with a commissioner and junior aide living among 3-4 troops and helping them, and troop sites would have patrol tables and flys.

Starting in 1963, the council had a program to start new units in the inner city of Rochester, under the leadership of Director of Relationships Fred Harris. Those efforts were redoubled after the 1964 racial disturbances in Rochester's Third and Seventh Wards. By 1965, quite a few of the Scouts from those new units were attending Massawepie and experiencing Scouting in the outdoors, while adding some diversity to the camp population. In October, 1965 Fred Harris was promoted to do similar work in Washington, DC. In April, 1966, Howard Logan, was hired in the “Ranger staff” (perhaps the only BSA category for paraprofessionals at the time) to help in Longhorn District in the city and to promote “Operation Adventure” to increase the number of inner-city youth at Massawepie.

Howard Logan did yeoman work on getting city Scouts to camp for a number of years, sometimes taking groups of inexperienced Scouts to Massawepie himself as their leader. And as time went on, sometimes he was even taking non-Scouts who had been recruited to go to camp in hopes of whetting their appetite to join Scouting. Occasionally this became challenging when he ended up with too many Scouts (or non-Scouts) without an adequate number of other adult leaders, though often some staff members noticed the problem and visited to help out during their time off. Ron DeBose, a youth who attended in 1967 with a group selected by the Action for a Better Community agency from the Baden Street/Hanover Projects neighborhood, remembered the experience fondly (mostly) later as an adult. He described hiking up Mt. Arab, picking blueberries, archery practice, and swimming in a lake as “exhilarating,” though he was less enthusiastic initially about the tents and latrines. Overall, Ron said this was one of his “most memorable childhood experiences.” Many other Massawepie Scouts could say the same!

The summer camp attendance for 1967 was 3136 Scouts, the highest on record. (Final numbers for the next few years are not available.) About 500 inner-city Scouts attended, up about 200 from 1966. The camp commissioner service and new equipment was appreciated, and more new site equipment & boats was being ordered for 1968. For BSA councils with cities between 300,000 and 500,000 in population, Otetiana had the highest percentage (82.8%) of troops doing long-term camping (5+ consecutive nights), and the 5<sup>th</sup> highest percentage (49.8%) of Boy Scouts having a long-term camp.

Shortly after camp, Fred Wellington, who served as Scout Executive for 20 years including during the acquisition and development of both Massawepie and “new” Camp Cutler, retired at the end of August. M. Gene Cruse became the Otetiana Council Scout Executive on Sept. 1. He had been Deputy Regional Scout Executive for Region 2, which covered New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

### **The late 1960s**

Camp registration for summer, 1968, was again strong. The Massawepie Orientation in March, 1968 was held at a new location: Rush-Henrietta High School on East Henrietta Road. Over 300 Scouters were expected for Beaver Weekend June 7-9. A new warehouse was being built for food and program supplies. “Beavers” would do the warehouse wiring and finish it for use.

In April, the council announced that Leonard Delesky (who had been Director of Camping since March, 1963) would be leaving to become Council Executive for Otschodela Council in Oneonta on May 1. Edward P. Black, who had been Director of Training and Activities for the Greater New York Councils, succeeded Delesky as Director of Camping.

Fortunately for Black, the summer camp leadership was already in place, with Bud Frank returning as General Manager, Tom Van Griethuysen as Business Manager, and two experienced camp directors: Bob Rein turning at Voyageur and Wilfred "Whitey" LeBlanc moving from Pioneer to Mountaineer. The summer apparently went well, since on the BSA Region Two inspection, Pioneer received an "A" pennant with 99 points; Voyageur (98) and Mountaineer (97) got "B" pennants.

The Otetiana Council was starting to consider adding a separate patrol cooking operation, and there had also been talk about enhancing the camp's high adventure offerings. To pilot both of these ideas, an experimental program was offered during 4<sup>th</sup> period of 1968. About 35 experienced Scouts paid an extra \$55 to stay at camp for two more weeks, under the guidance of Scoutmaster Dick Wyland, who was a commissioner in Voyageur that summer, along with Pat Gleason, Gary Chard, and Jud Rockcastle. They camped in Voyageur and cooked their own food in patrols, using brand new equipment such as wood-fired Shepherd stoves, which were later used at Camp Forester for years. At a time when the camp did not yet have any permanent rifle range, they shot .22s near the new warehouse. And to try the high adventure idea, the group was split in half and each half took an extended canoe trip and backpacking trip. Jeff Backus remembered that his group canoed from Blue Mountain Lake to Long Lake, and then backpacked from Wanakena into Sand Lake. Jeff also remembered, "Being that Sand Lake was miles from any road or civilization, we never heard any man-made noise which was impressive for a suburban kid," and "Our trail food on both trips was the standard Gumpert's brand food that was only appetizing when you were really, really hungry."

Now that the camp had a warehouse, it was easier to accept and store quantities of donated items. In the summer of 1968, a manufacturer gave hundreds of cases of an unsuccessful breakfast cereal that came in plastic containers shaped as "puppets," rather than typical cereal boxes. The cereal appeared at camp breakfasts for several years, and the plastic puppet containers popped up all over camp: as floats at the waterfront, as targets at archery, etc.. The same year, the camp received many cases of donated dill pickles, which also began appearing regularly with dining hall meals.

The Camping Committee decided to try an early-morning troop registration for summer, 1969, starting at 7:30 AM on Saturday, Oct. 5 (1968), with free breakfast provided starting at 6:30 AM. The experiment was apparently successful but never repeated. George Sanford, SM of Henrietta Troop 153 was the first in line (at 4:30 AM) for breakfast (over 200 Scouters came) and to sign up for Massawepie. 126 troop signed up with an estimated 2717 Scouts. The Order of the Arrow helped serve breakfast and set up camping displays on the lawn. Afterwards, periods 2 & 3 were full at all 3 camps, and period 1 at Voyageur & Mountaineer.

In the December, 1968, *Smoke Signals* newsletter, Camping Chairman George Gulick, Jr. announced development of a 4<sup>th</sup> camp for 1969, with patrols cooking their food "Jamboree-style." Each patrol would have a dining tarp and a kitchen tarp with a Shepherd stove and all cooking equipment furnished by the camp. The new camp would offer all of the program features of the other camps. By January, the site was announced as being on Deer Pond, and five troops per period were being accepted for the first year. Suggestions were being accepted for the camp name, which was announced in February as Forester. Eight troops had signed up as of February, and more later.

Interrupting Bud Frank's long streak as head of Massawepie (for one year, as it turned out), Ed Black was announced as the overall Director for 1969, with Jack Connor as the Business Manager. Whitey LeBlanc would return as Mountaineer Director, Joe Helly would move from Pioneer to Voyageur, and

newcomer John Hunt would be Massawepie's first African-American camp director. Robert Wood was announced as the director of the new 4<sup>th</sup> camp, even before it had a name.

Equipment like tent platforms and patrol boxes for the new camp was constructed over the winter of 1968-69. When spring came, contractors built two buildings: a large commissary and a showerhouse. The commissary housed the food distribution operation, the trading post, the quartermaster, and for the first two years, the camp office. According to legend, when Property Superintendent Loren Hakes (who had worked as a carpenter) first saw the plans developed by the national BSA Engineering Service for the commissary, he declared that it would be crushed within the first few winters by the Adirondack snow load. Additional structural support was added to the design before the commissary was built. Contractors also built the water system, drawing water from Deer Pond, chlorinating it, and pumping it up to a water tank on the highest hill near the main camp. A power line was extended to Forester from the Wellington Lodge area, much of it supported on insulators screwed into trees. (That system caused problems for years as trees fell, and was gradually replaced by using power poles.) Beaver Weekend volunteers helped finish many of the smaller tasks for the camp, including making sure that the first six campsites were ready for troops.

Some troops at Massawepie had done their own cooking right from the start in 1952, but having an entire patrol cooking camp was quite different. Forester Camp Director Bob Wood had to be flexible and creative in making the small new camp, somewhat remote from the rest of the Massawepie operation, function. For example, initially only one person (Steve Levy) was hired to run the food distribution from the commissary, and he also had other duties. Wood quickly figured out that maintaining a food inventory and distributing it accurately was a much bigger job, and added another staffer. Fortunately, the troops that signed up for Forester that first year considered themselves pioneers, and some prided themselves in working around small hiccups.

The summer of 1969 saw many other innovations. In addition to Forester, a formal Counselor-in-Training (CIT) program began in 1969. CITs are older Scouts who are interested in potentially serving on staff, but are not old enough yet. There had been some individual and informal CITs at Massawepie over the years before 1969, and there was even an attempt to start a formal CIT program in 1953, which apparently never got off the ground. But now with four camp staffs to fill each year, the council saw the need for a "feeder" path for future staff. The 1969 program started with 46 CITs, all at least 15 years old, who signed on for the eight weeks of camp (though some got brief releases for special events like Philmont or the 1969 National Jamboree in Idaho). Dick Wyland was the Scoutmaster, and Pat Gleason was his assistant, and they recruited some of the 1968 Troop X Scouts as CITs.

The CITs were divided into patrols, and after some initial training days, during each day a group of them would be sent to each of the camps to learn and help out. The central CIT campsite was in Pioneer, near what is now the "Indian" campsite. The CITs rotated between camps, and were transported to Forester (and sometimes Mountaineer), often in the back of a truck, though that is no longer allowed for safety reasons. A favorite thrill ride was on "Big Blue," a large flatbed truck with little to hold onto, going down the narrow, winding town road (with steep banks) toward Forester. Over the course of the summer, many CITs were hired to fill staff vacancies for the rest of the summer, though being under age 16 that required a trip to Tupper Lake High School to get a proper work permit.

Speaking of camp roads, by the late 1960s the Mountaineer road had been improved enough that sometimes the busses would drive up there. For several years, the bus company and the bus drivers' union would each send a representative to camp with the first busses of the season. Those two would jointly check the Mountaineer road, and agree on whether the busses would drive to Mountaineer, or drop the passengers and luggage at Pioneer. Needless to say, the ranger staff tried to keep the road in good enough shape to get a positive verdict; transporting all of the luggage both ways each period was a nuisance, and on rainy days it was no fun to have all of the Scouts hiking to Mountaineer. And

now there was the added challenge of getting people and gear to Forester. In Forester's early years, the camp had a school bus that would take the campers down the town road (known then as Townline Road, now Massawepie Road) several miles, to a turnaround above the south end of Deer Pond, and they would hike into Forester from there. The gear would be transported by truck, so it was very helpful if trucks were not also needed for the Mountaineer gear.

The Jack Stern Sailing Base also began operation in 1969. The base was dedicated July 4 in honor of Jack's long service to Scouting in the council. Equipment was made possible by donations to the council in Jack's name. The base was initially housed at the Vingo outpost, with Scouts hiking there to sail. The sailboats have been maintained over the years by volunteers from Tay House Troop 19, Jack Stern's troop.

Also new in 1969: a Cooperative Agreement for Massawepie between the NYS Conservation Department and the Otetiana Council, BSA. This agreement, signed July 12, offered technical help and stock (trees/shrubs/fish) from the Conservation Department, in exchange for allowing the public to hunt, fish, and trap on the Massawepie property (except during summer camp). No camping or fire building, and no use of power boats, would be allowed by the public. The Conservation Department would supply a master plan for managing fish and wildlife by March 15, 1970, but the council would have the right to reject particular projects.

The famous first moon landing by the Apollo 11 astronauts, led by Eagle Scout Neil Armstrong, happened on July 20. Mountaineer arranged for a TV in the dining hall so that the Scouts could watch the landing live. In Pioneer, a creative staffer took a metal window screen to the top of the trading post roof, and rigged it as an antenna with a wire down to a transistor radio. A runner carried moon landing updates back and forth from there to the assembled crowd of campers in the dining hall. Also, certificates printed on "ditto" machines (with the usual blue ink) were available to certify that a Scout had been at Massawepie for the big event.

The donated product arriving at the camp warehouse in 1969 was a shipment of sweatshirts promoting Fresh deodorant, saying "No Sweat" on one side. The 1969 Program Director at Pioneer, Paige Gorham, was a large man, so someone sewed three sweatshirts together for him into an XXXXL version that said, "No No Sweat Sweat." Paige also invented a new Water Carnival event where a 2x12" plank was tied to the dock, sticking out over the water like a pirate plank. Paige stood on the end, and one Scout from each troop took turns making a down-and-up cut in a growing slot on the plank with a saw. Eventually, the plank broke, Paige fell into the water, the lake rose, and the Scout who had sawed last scored points for his troop.

The original camp trading posts had used "counter service," that is, a Scout would step up to the counter and ask for the item they wished to purchase. The Forester trading post was built as "self-service," where Scouts entered the store and could choose items off the shelf and take them to the cash register. The other camp trading posts were also converted to self-service in that era. Business Manager Jack Connor offered a steak dinner to any Trading Post Manager who could break \$10,000 in total sales over the course of the summer, a feat that had not yet been accomplished, but did happen that summer.

As 1969 ended, things looked bright for Massawepie and its four camps. Troop sign-up for 1970 started well (though without a free 6:30 AM breakfast). Forester would be expanding into a larger camp. But significant changes were coming, though most of them were still over the horizon and not yet visible.