

Two Rival Camps: 1980-89

By Peter Collinge

Starting in 1978, Massawepie had two camps operating: Mountaineer on Massawepie Lake and Forester on Deer Pond. The key difference was in food service: Mountaineer provided food cooked by a paid staff in a dining hall, while in Forester Scouts picked up food from a commissary and cooked it within their patrols. Many troops had strong feelings in favor of one system or the other, and there was a healthy (usually) rivalry between the two camps.

The Jack McDonough era continues: 1980-81

January, 1980, brought a "new old" face at Massawepie. Gary Smith, who lived in Childwold and had worked at camp part-time, was hired as a full-time ranger to assist Property Superintendent Loren Hakes. Meanwhile, Jack McDonough continued as Director of Camping and Massawepie Reservation Director in 1980, as he had been since 1976. That summer, Ed Wall would repeat as Mountaineer Camp Director, while Bob Willett took the helm at Forester. Dick Trier was Business Manager, and Jim Swart was Food Service Director. Loren Hakes continued as Property Superintendent.

Also in January, McDonough announced that the Scouts of St. Lawrence Council (headquartered in Canton) would use Massawepie for summer camp, rather than their traditional Camp Vigor. Previously, in 1977, St. Lawrence Council Scouts came to Massawepie summer camp and received patches saying "Camp Vigor at Massawepie." The 1980 arrangement may have lasted several years but by 1982 the St. Lawrence Council had merged with the Jefferson-Lewis Council to form Seaway Valley Council, so presumably their "home" summer camp was then Portaferry.

In February, the council announced a new "Skilled Trades Weekend" to be held at Massawepie in May. Skilled workers like roofers, electricians, and masons were recruited by coordinators Al Gerritz, Norman Snow, and Ron Sutherland. Scoutmasters were told in February that they would get a special recognition at the Here's How meetings on April 23 or 28 if 50% or more of their Scouts were registered for camp with a \$20 deposit paid by April 15. The Scouts so registered would also get an Early Bird patch. Eventually 30 troops qualified for this recognition.

In March, the *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle* newspaper ran a profile of Wesley Hoskyns, who helped with survival training at Massawepie and elsewhere. Hoskyns explained that his survival hobby grew out of his Mormon faith, since the church had encouraged families to stock food against disaster.

The "bear problem" at Massawepie was getting more attention, after some challenges the previous summer. Here's How leader meetings in April included a discussion and handout on bears. A separate orientation for new or inexperienced camp leaders was held at the council Servicenter (office) on June 18. Beaver Weekend to help get camp ready for summer was June 6-8, with bus transportation available to volunteers for \$10 round-trip, returning by Saturday midnight. Housing and meals were at Pioneer. Campership applications weren't due until June 12(!), and the Campership Dinner (fundraising) was June 19.

New offerings during the summer of 1980 included a Fishing Outpost and a Conservation Honor Roll for troops or Scouts doing projects. Also, the Emporium Lumber Company outpost was hands-on, now with woods tools of the early 20th century. (Note: That was a misnomer; the Emporium Lumber Company had operated in Pennsylvania, but the sister company that operated near Massawepie was the Emporium Forestry Company. "Forestry" was the modern, scientific version of "lumbering.") An Explorer Summerfest was held July 18 - August 3 in Pioneer for Explorers from all over the Northeast.

Summer attendance in 1980 was healthy, especially at Mountaineer. A September column by Scout Executive Jim Case in the *Smoke Signals* claimed that attendance had been up 5% from 1979. The

two camps each operated for six weeks: three 2-week periods, though troops could also opt to come for just one week. In October, the council announced that Mountaineer would add a seventh week in 1981 and attendance there would be limited to 300 Scouts and leaders per week, to eliminate overcrowding, especially in the dining hall.

Camp Recognition and Kickoff sessions were held Oct. 22 (at Baptist Temple in Brighton) and Oct. 23 (at Wesley United Methodist in Greece), with discussion about upcoming program changes. The new "Where to Go Camping" book (compiled by the Order of the Arrow, led by Wayne Sheeler and Dave Anderson) was distributed. Units in each district with the highest percentage of camp attendance were recognized, and refreshments were served!

By November, Mountaineer 3rd period (July 18 – Aug. 1) was full, and a new set of promotion slides with a recorded cassette, produced by Peter Scribner, was available. Fees for 1981 were announced as \$150 for two weeks or \$75 for one week, plus \$5/week for provisional Scouts (coming without their troop). Bus transportation cost \$15 for one way or \$24 for round trip.

As 1981 started, Forester 2nd period was full, and Mountaineer's 4th period was now full in addition to 3rd period that had filled earlier. (Mountaineer's 7th week was apparently inserted as a 1-week 2nd period July 11-18, so its later periods were out of phase with Forester.) A "full" camp was now being considered 275 Scouts, to avoid overcrowding as promised to leaders.

By February, over 130 troops were registered. As before, Scouts registered with a \$20 deposit by April 15 would get a colorful Early Bird patch, but this year leaders with 50% of their Scouts registered early would get a special hat. Staff and CITs were being sought as always. CITs, who must be 15 and First Class, would be at camp 4 weeks starting June 27.

After the April 15 registration deadline, 40 troops were recognized at the late April Here's How leaders' meetings for meeting the goal of having 50%+ of the Scouts signed up for camp. By that time, the only space remaining was in the first and last periods.

For years, camp food budgets were assisted by supplies of certain staples provided by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). In 1981, however, USDA peanut butter was not available due to a crop shortage. The Massawepie management decided to have less PB available since the price had also doubled and camp previously received about 70% of its PB needs from USDA, but that decision wasn't universally popular.

A couple of policies were tightened for 1981. The districts had hosted pre-camp swim tests in 1980, but for 1981 no pre-camp swim tests were used, because the conditions in a heated pool did not reproduce those found at camp, plus the turnout had been small. Also, for certain merit badges where some work must be done at home in advance the Council Advancement Committee decided that only official partial merit badge cards signed by a counselor would be accepted at camp.

The first Skilled Trades Weekend in 1980 had been successful, so it became an annual event in mid-May, followed by Beaver Weekend in early June. In addition to that weekend volunteer help with getting camp ready for summer in 1981, the US Army Engineers, 479th Battalion was also in camp for 2 weeks in May to do major projects including road work and construction of a new power line.

Jack McDonough's key staff for 1981 were himself as Reservation Director, Debra Salmon as Business Manager, Jim Swart back again as Food Service Director, Tom Meyering as Mountaineer Camp Director, and Bob Willett returning as Forester Camp Director.

The varied duties of camp staff gave the young staffers plenty of opportunity to grow, which also inevitably meant making occasional mistakes. During the summer of 1981, Jim Hanss helped Jerry

Turner, the Forester Quartermaster, by replacing the broken handles on a number of axes. When Jerry returned and saw the results, he gently told Jim that all of the axe heads were on upside down – oops! The previous summer, Kathy Hakes (the central camp clerk and Loren's daughter, now Kathy Elliott) was asked by a senior staffer to make a stencil for spray-painting "No Flames in Tents." The national BSA now required that message on all tents, and while the new tents arrived pre-marked, the older ones needed to have those words added. Kathy says she was surprised at the laughter that erupted when she showed the finished stencil. It said what she thought she heard: "No Flames Intense"!

The summer season was successful enough, with 1625 Scout campers from 124 units, that the council decided to offer the same seven-week schedule at both camps for 1982: four periods, with 2nd period one week long and the others all two weeks long with the option to come for only one week. Due to school calendars, the 1st period would start July 3, not June 26 as originally scheduled.

In October (1981) Jack McDonough was promoted to Scout Executive of the Schenectady County Council, and was replaced as Director of Camping Services by Max C. Thomas. Thomas came from the Del-Mar-Va Council where he was Director of Camping and Activities. In early November, Camp Promotion Kickoff meetings were scheduled by district. Leftover Massawepie items were being promoted as Christmas gifts: 1981 Massawepie t-shirts \$2.75, mugs \$1.25, hats \$2.25, bolo ties \$2.50, and belt buckles \$3.00.

The Max Thomas era: 1982-85

Max Thomas announced (in December, 1981) that the two-week camp fee for 1982 would remain at \$150, and bus fees would be unchanged, but the one-week camp fee would rise to \$80. Also, there would now be a leader fee of ½ of the camp fee for any leaders over 1 per 8 Scouts. By the end of the year, 3rd period was full at both camps.

The key 1982 summer staff would be: Max Thomas, Reservation Director; Debra Salmon, Business Manager; Bill Keymel, Food Service Manager (later replaced by Tim Smith before summer); Tom Meyering, Mountaineer Camp Director; and Kevin Fitzgibbon, Forester Camp Director.

In early 1982, the new fee for excess camp leaders was clarified. Each troop would be allowed two free leaders, regardless of the number of Scouts. Other than those two, any leaders over 1 per 8 Scouts would be charged ½ of the camp fee. Another change: the maximum number of Scouts per camp per week was raised from 275 to 300 Scouts. Both camps were still looking for senior staff, and Forester still needed some junior staff.

By April, Mountaineer was also full for first period. Third period was in such demand that troops were warned that if they didn't confirm their reservation by submitting boy cards and deposits (due April 15), they could lose their space. 51 troops met the boy card goal of having 50%+ of their troop signed up.

Volunteers were needed as usual for Skilled Trades & Beaver Weekends. New mugs were available for the first 250 Beavers signed up. But an article in the *Smoke Signals* newsletters warned the Eager Beavers, tongue-in-cheek, that they "can't eat any trees unless they are dead."

Summer camp busses again left from and returned to Culver-Ridge Plaza on Saturdays in 1982. Scouts were told to arrive by 7:30 AM for an 8 AM departure, and the return was planned for 5:30 PM.

Since 1982 was the 30th anniversary of Massawepie's opening in 1952, there were a few recognitions that summer, including a reservation patch and neckerchief with a map showing most of the property's water bodies and saying "30 Years of Adventure," though not on the individual camp patches.

After the 1982 season, when more and more troops were camping for one week, the council did away with the two-week camp periods and just referred to "Week 1" through "Week 7." Troops could still sign up for one or two weeks. For 1983, Mountaineer would be closed at 40 patrols per week, and Forester at 45 patrols. By October, weeks 3-5 were filling up. The council told troops that the cost of summer camp might qualify for the child-care income-tax credit, and announced Fred Heier, Jr., as the new Council Camp Promotion Chairman.

By the end of 1982, 121 troops were registered for summer 1983, with an estimated 1833 Scouts. Forester was closed for Week 4, and Mountaineer for Weeks 2-4. Camp fees increased \$5 per week to \$85 for one week, \$160 for two weeks. Bus fees increased to \$26 for round-trip, with all adults beyond one per troop (down from two) paying the full bus fee, though each troop still got two free leaders at camp and one per eight Scouts in larger units. Key staff for 1983 would be: Max Thomas, Reservation Director; Tim Smith, Food Service Manager; Dick Stahl, Business Manager & Asst. Reservation Director; Steve Quinn, Mountaineer Camp Director; and Kevin Fitzgibbon, Forester Camp Director. Stahl and Quinn were new in these positions.

Over the winter, a new location for Massawepie bus loading was announced: Henrietta Plaza, at the northeast corner of Route 15A and Jefferson Road. Early Bird patches were available starting in January once boy cards and \$20 deposits were submitted, with an April 15 deadline for those patches and for leader hats (for signing up 50%+ of their Scouts). Meanwhile, the council was looking for volunteers with technical knowledge to help prepare two-way radios for camp.

The Adirondack Adventure Area was offering seven-day Voyageur treks for up to 10 boys plus a leader and Voyageur guide, for \$110-150 per Scout. Treks were housed at a variety of base camps, and featured canoeing, backpacking, fishing, sailing, water skiing, kayaking, rock climbing, spelunking, rappelling, snorkeling, orienteering, and/or white-water rafting.

By March, Forester was full for Weeks 2-4, and Mountaineer was sold out for Weeks 2-5. After the April 15 deadline, there were pleas for troops to turn in remaining boy cards to allow planning for staff, food, and supplies. The usual April Here's How Leader Meetings, May Skilled Trades Weekend, and June Beaver Weekend were held, followed by a June New Leader Orientation.

For much of the early 1980s, unlike many other Massawepie eras, food service operations were handled "in house" by Scout staff rather than being contracted out to a food service company. Tim Smith was the Food Service Manager in 1982 and 1983, preceded by Jim Swart and followed by Dick Stahl. Tim remembers:

The Chef/Cook at Mountaineer and the Commissary Director at Forester were hired by the respective Camp Directors. There was also a Central Cook (Kathy Hakes for 1982 and 1983; later Doris Turner for a number of years) who cooked three meals per day for the Central program support staff, rangers and the Property Superintendent, and Reservation staff. Staff families and medical staff and families were given "basic" food items for breakfast and lunch (bread, milk, cereal, juice, luncheon meats, tuna, etc.). The Central Cook also provided meals for Scout trek groups at the start and end of a Trek program. When requested, we could accommodate for kosher diets.

Food was delivered to the Warehouse by SYSCO out of Syracuse twice each week, Monday and Thursday. We ordered food for use in the dining halls as well as food for patrols of eight for the Forester Commissary to repack. Each Thursday, "Big Blue" (an older heavy duty stake truck) was loaded at the Warehouse with food for the next 7 days and delivered to the Commissary at Forester. The commissary staff would then pack "grub buckets" with the food for a patrol for each meal. Deliveries to Mountaineer were generally every other day. Milk and bread were delivered to Pioneer, Forester & Mountaineer every other day by local distributors.

We also had government surplus food to use. Canned pork, canned chicken, spaghetti, elbow macaroni, canned tomatoes, dried prunes, canned apple butter, canned peanut butter, 30-lb. blocks of cheddar cheese, 30-lb. cases of butter (1-lb. blocks), 30-lb. cases of American cheese (5-lb. blocks), canned peanuts, 50-lb. bags of flour and 30-lb. bags of rice were some of the items. The canned items were in #10 cans (institutional size).

We served meals for seven weeks to youth and leaders, and two more weeks for staff at the beginning and end of the camp season. The three food operations combined served between 200 and 1000 people per meal, three meals per day, seven days per week. We served 50,000+ meals each summer!

Tim also remembered an incident where, the night before the National BSA Camp "Visitation" (inspection), Dave Mitchell (the council's volunteer Vice President of Camping) saw a mouse in the Pioneer kitchen. Keeping mice out of camp buildings a never-ending battle, even when a kitchen is spotless after every meal, so Dave and Tim pursued the mouse around the kitchen with brooms. They didn't manage to catch or kill it, but they did chase it out and hoped it would stay out!

During the summer of 1983, 1816 Scouts spent 2618 boy-weeks at Massawepie. Of Otetiana Council troops, 70% attended Massawepie, and 81% did some long-term camping. Keystone District was highest, with 92% of troops doing long-term camping and 80% at Massawepie. Overall, 50% of Otetiana Scouts camped long-term, with 42% of Scouts at Massawepie. Arrowhead District was highest for individual Scouts, with 56% of Scouts camping long-term and 45% at Massawepie.

Adult leaders and Senior Patrol Leaders (SPLs) were invited to Camp Kickoff meetings 11/15 in Fairport and 11/17 in Brockport, including a spaghetti dinner for \$2 each. The deadline for camp boy cards and deposits for Early Bird recognition was moved from April 15 to March 15. Also, the camping season was reduced from seven weeks to six for 1984. That allowed the Family Camping season, when camp facilities were available for rental by families after summer camp was over, to be expanded from three weeks to four. By the end of 1983, Forester was sold out for Weeks 4 & 5, and Mountaineer was full for Weeks 3 & 4. Members of troops with a 10%+ increase in boys in camp from 1983 would receive a 3" blue beaver patch. Meanwhile, a new "Massawepie/Cutler Winter Camping 1983-84" patch was now available.

For 1984, the CIT program was expanded from 4 weeks to 5 weeks. By April, Weeks 3-6 were sold out in Mountaineer, and Weeks 3-4 were full in Forester. Troops rosters were due in the office 21 working days before camp, to allow for planning for busses.

The new earlier week of Family Camping (Aug. 12-19) proved popular, with all cabins reserved quickly. Voyageur Lodge was also quickly reserved for all four Family Camping weeks. During that same time period (Aug. 11-18), several council-organized Adirondack Adventure Area treks were planned. Also in August, a "Varsity Adventure Camp" for Varsity Scouts featured five different treks.

No sign-ups for 1985 were done at camp during the summer of 1984. Instead, two sign-up meetings were held in late October. According to Camp Promotion Chairman Dick Fox, each troop would get an informational mailing before these meetings. A new camp promotion multi-media presentation, "Massawepie – A Special Place," made by Kodak volunteers would be shown at the meetings and was now available on film or videotape (Beta or VHS). Promotion letters would be mailed to all Scouts in the Spring, with wording depending on whether their unit was registered for camp. The Camping Committee assured units that it was reviewing the information from the camp questionnaires and would use and appreciate the feedback. One resulting change was that campership applications would now be evaluated for approval as soon as they were received, to help Scouts pay for camp.

Two-week troops wanted improvements in the middle weekend program, and Forester troops were less interested than Mountaineer troops in a mandatory trail day.

By December, 1984, Week 5 was sold out for Forester, and Week 3 for Mountaineer. Camp fees would be \$90 for one week and \$170 for two weeks. Unfortunately, an Okpik winter training course in December had to be cancelled due to problems with the Voyageur water system. The key camp staff for 1985 were announced as: Max Thomas, Reservation Director; Russell Woodling, Business Manager; David Anderson, Mountaineer Camp Director; and Mike King, Forester Camp Director. In exciting news for Mountaineer, a new 8-point rifle range would be constructed in the location of the then-current archery range, making the rifle range much more convenient than the previous one that more recently has been the Camp Pioneer Shotgun Range. The new rifle range would be dedicated to the late Paul S. VonBacho, Jr., a key organizer in building the original camp rifle ranges.

Under new BSA requirements for 1985, all youth at camp would require a Class II medical form, with a physical exam within 36 months of camp. (Adults needed a physical exam within 12 months.) The deadline for submitting boy cards to get the Early Bird patch was March 15, and the required deposit was now up to \$25 per Scout. By April, Forester was sold out for Weeks 3-5 and Mountaineer was full for Weeks 1-5. In May, troops were warned that units that hadn't submitted boy cards and deposits for 75% of their registered attendance could be bumped. Trading post tokens were earned if full camp fees were paid by the June 14 deadline.

According to *Smoke Signals* newsletter, camp was looking for donations of TVs "19-inch+, preferably color" for use with video tapes for junior staff on evenings off. And Beaver Weekend Chairman Bill Galloway was looking for volunteers for June 7-9, including (as a first-time request) "Lady Scouters." Volunteers who attended would get a special Diamond Jubilee Beaver Mug, since 1985 was the 75th anniversary of the BSA. The Early Bird patch had a diamond shape, the reservation patch and neckerchief featured the Diamond Jubilee, and the complete set of camp patches formed a diamond.

As mentioned in the 1970s chapter, the Adirondack Trek Program debuted in 1979 as pilot program under the Association of Adirondack Scout Camps (AASC), which was an organization of Scout Camps (including Eagle Island Girl Scout Camp on Upper Saranac Lake) in the Adirondack region of New York State. Starting in 1980, there were treks in and out of several Scout camps throughout the Adirondacks. During 1979-1984, the Trek Program was headquartered at several Scout camps other than Massawepie. According to Mark Kurtz, the 1985-87 Trek Director, by 1985 the AASC had limited resources to continue the support of the Trek Program. Bruce Russell, then the Otetiana Council president, committed Otetiana Council to the continued success of the treks, and the Trek Program became based at Massawepie starting in 1985.

The new Paul S. VonBacho, Jr., Rifle Range at Camp Mountaineer was dedicated on July 12. It was built in the months before summer camp, mostly by Beaver Weekend volunteers, and funded by friends of the VonBacho family. A few weeks later, on July 25, Scout Christopher Meisenzahl (who had recently earned Lifesaving merit badge) helped to save his father's life while swimming in Massawepie Lake, according to a Letter to the Editor from his father Roy, printed in the *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle* on Labor Day.

After the 1985 summer camp season, Varsity High Adventure Treks ran August 10-17. Starting in August, there were 4 weeks of Family Camping, with Week 3 running 8 days Sunday – Monday to include Labor Day. Tents were available, or cabins for \$125/week (\$150 for Week 3) or Voyageur Lodge for \$175/week (\$200 for Week 3). Later in September, skilled trades & chain saw volunteers were at camp for a Special Skills Weekend and pre-camp inspection.

For the 1986 season, summer camp troops sign-ups were moved to the November (1985) district roundtables, rather than at separate meetings. The camp season was cut from six weeks to five due

to decreased attendance. Troops were asked to submit a first and second choice of week and camp, plus a \$30 deposit and an accurate estimate of their camp attendance.

Director of Camping Max C. Thomas retired November 1 after 20 years with the BSA and four years with Otetiana Council. Richard Trier, who had served seven years in the council as Field Director and Exploring Director, became Director of Camping. Trier, an Eagle Scout, had previously been Business Manager and Food Service Director at Massawepie.

The Dick Trier era: 1986-89

Camp fees for 1986 would be \$95 for one week (up \$5) and \$170 for two weeks (flat), so the 2nd week became an even better deal. Provisional campers would pay \$200 for two weeks, \$125 for a week, or \$100 to stay an extra week after first week with their troop. Key staff, in addition to Dick Trier as Reservation Director, would be: Dave Anderson returning as Mountaineer Camp Director, Brett Elliott as Forester Camp Director, and Mark Kurtz directing the Adirondack Trek program. Brett Elliott asked for help (in the *Smoke Signals* newsletter) in locating an RV that he could borrow for the summer so that he and his wife could stay in Forester. Meanwhile, Property Superintendent Loren Hakes was asking for help in acquiring a planer, and a Steam Jenny for use in cleaning vehicles and equipment.

Trier, in his first months in his new position, had to deal with some new requirements from the St. Lawrence County Health Department. These were intended to ensure that leaders were carefully vetted, partly due to a concern about an overly strict leader in 1984. As of 1986, every adult coming to camp had to qualify as a counselor by having a high school diploma or equivalent, experience in camping and supervision of children or completion of training, and a completed background check. Any group leaving the main camp (for example, to an outpost or outside of Massawepie) also needed to have a qualified trip leader (also competent in the activity being undertaken, plus have standard first aid or better), and a 1:8 ratio of adults to campers. The council was required to review and keep records of leader qualifications. The council undertook considerable effort during Winter & Spring of 1986 in educating leaders and implementing these new requirements. To "sweeten the pot" for adults fulfilling the trip leader requirement, each of them would receive a special Trip Leader hat.

The deadline to register individual Scouts for 1986 summer camp and get a 4-color Early Bird patch was moved back to April 15. Leaders also got the patch if they registered 75% of their estimated Scouts and themselves. Each Scout, Webelos, and leader received a beautiful new camp brochure, designed by Blair Advertising, in the mail. As usual, good candidates for CITs and staff were being eagerly sought.

Also as usual, Here's How leader meetings would be held in April in two sessions, on the east and west sides of Monroe County. The new Camp leader qualification forms were available, which needed approval from the unit committee chairman and the chartered organization. The New Leader Orientation was in early June, and Beaver Weekend during the first full weekend in June. One big project planned for Beaver Weekend was to build a rappelling area in both camps. By June, 105 troops were registered with an estimated 2412 boy-weeks. Forester was full for Weeks 2-4 and Mountaineer was full Weeks 2-5.

Along with 100+ troops, one non-traditional group attended Massawepie during the summer of 1986. Shared Adventures, a non-profit that worked with disabled adults, brought a group to Massawepie for six days. They introduced the group members to canoeing, rock climbing, and living outdoors. Leaders and observers came from as far as California, England, and Austria. Before each activity, the group would meet to discuss the efforts that would be needed and to organize supplies. Kent Winchester, Executive Director of Shared Adventures, saw these meetings and their camaraderie as perhaps more important than the actual activities, since his philosophy was "to bring different people together to work with their capabilities, not their disabilities."

In October, council VP of Camping Peter Harter announced that Pete Lounsbury had been appointed Massawepie Chairman, replacing John Berggren who served for two years. Lounsbury was a West Point graduate and Kodak employee who had been a Scoutmaster. In November, Lounsbury announced that Howard Beye would be the Camp Promotion Chairman, and would work with district Camp Promotion Chairmen to encourage year-round camping. Camp registration was again done during November roundtables, and by the end of the year Weeks 3 and 4 were full in both camps. The leader qualification requirements that were new in 1986 would continue for 1987.

In February, 1987, Varsity Scouts and Boy Scouts age 14+ were invited to stay in Gannett Lodge for the Varsity Scout Ski Trek. They could then ski downhill at Whiteface, or cross-country at Van Hoevenberg or within Massawepie. Later in February, the council offered a Trip Planning Seminar with information about requirements, logistics, and fees for Adirondack canoeing/hiking treks for Scout troops either during a week of summer camp or by staying an extra week.

By March, Mountaineer was full for Weeks 2-5, and Forester was still sold out for weeks 3-4. With camp weeks filling up, leaders were reminded that there are advantages to the Scouts when they attend during less busy weeks, such as shorter lines at the Trading Post! The council also reminded camp leaders that they needed to be approved, and that attending the April Here's How leader meetings could help fulfill that requirements.

Dick Trier named his key staff for summer 1987: Brett Elliott (Camp Director) and Brad Alexander (Program Director) would return to Forester, Doug Turner (Camp Director) and Mark Pulvino (Program Director) would run Mountaineer, and Mark Kurtz would direct the Adirondack Trek Program (a regional High Adventure base) for his third summer. Dave Anderson, who had been a popular Mountaineer Camp Director, was being promoted to the Greater New York City Council.

Early Bird patches, designed by volunteer Bill Keymel, were again available, but with a wrinkle: only 1200 were ordered, so they were available to the first 1200 Scouts registered with a \$25 deposit, or by April 15, whichever came first. Leaders were asked to update their attendance estimates so that the camp didn't have to turn other troops away unnecessarily. Busses for camp would leave from and return to Monroe Community College. Trier put a request in *Smoke Signals* asking for volunteers to come to camp for a week or two in the summer as a Scoutmaster, commissioner, or handyman. The latter may have been needed partly because long-time Property Superintendent Loren Hakes was having health problems.

Summer, 1987, saw one significant new program in camp: Conservation Camp was held August 8-15 in Camp Pioneer. It was aimed at Scouts interested in Conservation and Ecology, and was described as a physically- and mentally-demanding week based on projects, but with evening free time to enjoy other camp activities. The special "Massawepie Conservation Corps" patch showed a loon and a trillium. While the concept seemed promising, this program was not repeated after 1987.

As usual, there were plenty of lost-and-found items from summer camp, which were available to be claimed at the Scout Servicenter through October 15. The November district roundtables were billed as "1988 Camp Information and Sign-up Nights." 68 Otetiana troops signed up then, with an estimated 1496 Scouts. Fees for 1988 were announced as \$100 for the first week and \$90 for a second week. Bus transportation would be \$30 round-trip, or \$20 one-way. The camp season was being returned to six weeks, and camp staff salaries were being increased to help attract quality staff. Troops were reminded that serving on staff helps keep older Scouts active and involved.

Property Superintendent Loren Hakes retired in the fall, due to being disabled by medical problems after 20+ years at Massawepie, and moved to Childwold with his wife Cheryl. Dan Seaman, with Cathy, and daughter Katy, moved from Cutler (after 7 years) to Massawepie on May 1 to become the

new Property Superintendent. The timing on this promotion for Seaman was ironic, since he had just supervised the construction of a new house for the superintendent's family at Cutler, then had to live temporarily in Voyageur Lodge at Massawepie until Hakes could move to new quarters. (Don DeClerck became the new Cutler superintendent and inherited use of that new house.) Mike Alexander, 1987 Forester Archery Director, was hired to assist Seaman year-around at Massawepie.

Troops needed to pay a \$200 total deposit by Feb. 1, 1988, or they could be bumped from their chosen week. This deposit could be applied toward boy fees. The senior camp leadership under Dick Trier as Reservation Director were new in their positions for 1988. Mike Miller would direct Forester, Chuck Levengood would be the Mountaineer Camp Director, and Doug Turner would direct the Adirondack Trek Program of the Northeast Region/Association of Adirondack Scout Camps. Many staff were hired, and 60% of those were Eagle Scouts, but more were needed, as always.

By March, Forester was full for Week 2, and Mountaineer was full for Weeks 2-5. An article in *Smoke Signals* newsletter invited newer troops to attend camp during Week 6, when traditionally lighter attendance meant that they could get more staff attention and help. Early Bird patches were available for the first 1000 Scouts registered, though some were being saved for Webelos crossovers. Woodbadge scholarships were available for Massawepie camp leaders.

Units or individuals could "buy a platform" for \$70 to provide materials for a new tent platform (with an acknowledgement plaque) to replace a deteriorated one. Volunteer/summer staffer Mary Kolva was looking for donations for camp of kitchen/ household items, athletic equipment, puzzles & games, 4WD trucks, and 2 sets of washers & dryers. "Skills Weekend" was now an annual event in May. Beaver Weekend Chairman Gary Graziano was looking for volunteers, including help Friday night with check-in and at tent sites, and crew chiefs for Saturday. He offered the chance to see camp "b.k." (before kids).

The Campership Dinner was held June 1 at the Country Club of Rochester. George Beinetti, retired president of Rochester Telephone, received the "Distinguished Citizens Award." The first Otetiana Council Adirondack Trek (provisional) contingent was advertised for July 24-30. Scouts would sample Adirondack canoeing and backpacking opportunities, for a fee of \$200. Family camping was offered for August 10 – September 20, and the first week sold out quickly.

The summer of 1988 had an interesting twist on the typical rivalry between the Massawepie camps. An unusual number of camp staff resigned or were fired during the summer for some failing or misbehavior or other cause. (One hapless pair broke into the Central Office overnight, found little worth stealing, but left behind an identifiable knife that was their undoing.) Chuck Levengood (Mountaineer Camp Director) and Mike Miller (Forester Camp Director) regularly compared notes about who had lost more staffers. Fortunately, the remaining staff stepped up and gave the Scouts the camp program that they came for, but there were some very tired staffers by the end of the summer.

In a more positive form of rivalry, the Mountaineer and Forester staffs agreed to revive the tradition of "The Great Canoe Race." It involved two canoes from each camp with a Scout and staff member in each, racing from one camp to the other, and was held each week of camp. One of Camp Director Chuck Levengood's favorite memories was the time he and a young, strong, Aquatics staff member were the two Mountaineer staffers in the race. The canoe with the Aquatics staffer and his Scout took off fast and was far ahead, but when Chuck's canoe finished the race at the Forester waterfront the other canoe was nowhere to be seen. It arrived a half hour later; they had taken a wrong turn. In Chuck's words, "Slow and steady won, and young and overconfident got lost."

For 1989, summer camp would again offer six weeks. Sign-ups would be taken at the district roundtables November 2 & 3. Meanwhile, a November (1988) *Smoke Signals* article said "Massawepie Can Use Your Help," and mentioned service opportunities for adults, plus projects that

can be done on site or at home, and the need for some household furnishings and vehicles that are in good shape. Projects available included: tent repair, varnishing paddles & oars, cot repair, and repairing dining hall tables & benches. Lodging for volunteers to do work at camp might be available. A storm in November took down many trees, so chain saw and bucket truck crews were especially needed. Troop 99 was later recognized for refinishing paddles and Troop 312 for repairing tents.

Camp fees for 1989 were increased significantly: the 1-week fee was \$120, plus \$100 for a 2nd week. Bus fees remained unchanged. Dick Trier announced that Brad Alexander (Forester Program Director the past 3 years) would direct Forester, and Chuck Levengod would return as Mountaineer Camp Director. Brett Elliott will be Forester Program Director and Bill Keymel will be Mountaineer Program Director. Mike Donaghue would be Assistant Reservation Director & Business Manager, and Doug Turner returned as Adirondack Trek Program Director.

Massawepie had two new buildings for the summer of 1989, mostly built by a contractor in the spring. Thanks to Troop 31, Camp Mountaineer had a new training/administration building near the parking lot. It also had a first aid room, camp clerk/reception area, and camp director's office. Due to a mix-up, the building was actually built rotated 180 degrees from the plan, but it was still very functional and a real improvement over the original Mountaineer office from 1953. Troop 31 funded the building with the proceeds from their annual Christmas tree sale. The troop dedicated this building to Herb Chamberlain, a long-time Scouter and board member on July 14. Frank Bouchard, council VP of Camping, served as Master of Ceremonies for the dedication ceremony, which was attended by various Troop 31 Scouts and alumni, including past council presidents Burt & Chuck August, along with then-president Bruce Russell. Troop 31 Scouts who were at camp presented the colors for the opening and closing.

The second new building that year was a showerhouse near the Camp Pioneer dining hall, which is still in use for adults at camp as of this writing. Along with new buildings, there was a semi-new program for 1989. The camps had offered a special program for first-year Scouts for several years, typically run by a commissioner in his/her "spare time" with help from camp leaders. In 1989, this program became more formal and acquired a new name: the Trail Blazer Program.

Massawepie attendance was hurt during the 1980s by both a decline in the youth population after the end of the Baby Boom, and by the shift from mostly two-week summer camp stays to predominately one-week camping. Boy-weeks at summer camp dropped from over 2500 early in the decade to less than 1600 toward the end. As a result, the Otetiana Council (and others) were looking for efficiencies in their camp operations, and the BSA Northeast Region was encouraging more cooperation among neighboring Scout camps in areas like the Adirondacks. A consultant who looked at several Adirondack camps suggested that Massawepie and Syracuse's Sabattis Scout Reservation should consider joining forces in some form.

Dick Trier (the Otetiana Director of Camping) and his Syracuse counterpart, Mike Surbaugh (who later became Chief Scout Executive of the national BSA), began talking about scenarios for cooperation between Sabattis and Massawepie, including the possibility of treks between the two properties. The two council Scout Executives, Jim Case of Otetiana and Donald Blacker of Hiawatha, were friends and before long invited their council presidents to join in discussions with themselves and Trier and Surbaugh. By 1989, the council presidents had decided to go ahead with a joint venture. They were optimistic and eager to move forward despite some concerns raised by some of the professionals that not enough of the details (especially involving finances) had yet been discussed and agreed to.

In the fall of 1989, Scout Executives Jim Case and Donald Blacker announced that the councils had entered into an agreement to join the operations of Massawepie and Sabattis to form Adirondack Scout Reservation (ASR). They selected Dave Boshea, with 38 years as a Scouting professional, most recently as Scout Executive in Lansing, MI, as the new Reservation Director effective November

1. A special mailing to unit leaders gave more details of this new program, and the ASR summer camp kickoff was held Wednesday, November 8 in Waterloo, NY.

The fees for ASR's first year in 1990 would be \$120 (one week) or \$210 (two weeks) at Mountaineer & Forester and \$105 (one week) or \$195 (two weeks) at Sabattis, plus \$35 (round trip) or \$22 (one-way) for busses to Massawepie only. Troops and staff were encouraged to be charter members of ASR. Approximately 140 paid staff (age 16+) positions were available. Camping Promotion Chairmen were available to help units. The camp management would be Dave Boshea, Reservation Director, with assistants Mike Donaghue and Dave Rennie; Forester Director Brad Alexander; Mountaineer Director Chuck Levengood; Sabattis Director Dave Rennie; and Adirondack Trek Director Doug Turner. In the end, ASR would operate for most (but not quite all) of the 1990s.

pc 12/2025
updated 2/2026