

*There's a
Long,
Long
Trail
a
Winding*

A Look Back at Camp Tosebo
Volume One

By Tosebo Alumni
Edited by David Wallace

DEDICATION

As a Tosebo camper, it wasn't difficult to realize that for those of us still living there is one man who profoundly shaped our summers then, and likely does, in many ways, our lives today. With respect and admiration, this book is dedicated to "Coach" Roskie.

As a friend, I would like to dedicate my efforts towards this book to my Tosebo buddy, Donald Bogie. Always a reminder to me of what a Tosebo camper should be, he also reminds me that we should never lose track of our friends, lest it someday be too late.

INTRODUCTION

How do you describe a place that has been closed for almost thirty years? Where do you start to relate the history that was part of your childhood? This was the challenge presented to us by several of our guests. So many stories and adventures from sixty-five years of summer camping. What are the stories behind all the memorabilia in the Clubhouse and around the property? Why did all these boys come to Camp Tosebo for so many summers?

With such a long history, we thought it best to not have Tosebo's story come from just one "voice." While our nation struggled with a World War, a Depression, another World War, the Korean conflict, the Viet Nam war, and the clashes for civil rights, Camp Tosebo persevered to provide a meaningful summer experience for boys ages six to fifteen. Fathers were followed by sons and brothers followed brothers to come to Camp Tosebo for summers full of adventure. So, we have brought many "voices" to bring the Camp Tosebo experience in this book for you.

Our thanks go to the alumni – campers, counselors, and owners – who have recalled moments of happiness, sadness, nostalgia, and history that made Tosebo a special place for them.

PROLOGUE

There is no logical explanation for why I now have the privilege to be one of the "caretakers" (as we owners refer to ourselves) of Camp Tosebo. I wasn't a Tosebo camper the longest. I didn't have any brothers to help instill some legend in the family name. My abilities and achievements at Tosebo were sometimes more in my head than ever displayed on the field. I won't, however, waiver in my love for Camp Tosebo and all that it meant to me. I have always been interested in history and history is so much easier to understand when you are a part of it. I recall helping Pete Donahue with the preparations for the annual Camp banquet in 1961 that celebrated the 50th anniversary of Tosebo. That was my first glimpse at the old photos that told stories of this special place. Fortunately, much of that photographic history has survived and is a reminder of days long ago. My hope in this volume is to bring out some of the "flavor" of Tosebo camping so that you might let your imagination take you through the "HO FOR TOSEBOLAND" arch to a magical place.

Dave Wallace
March 2006

Tosebo Timeline

1892 – Noble Hill purchased the **TO**dd **SE**minary for **BO**ys located in Woodstock, Illinois. The name is changed to Todd School for Boys, but the Camp name comes from the original name. Hill already had property in Wisconsin for a camp, but the desire for “big water sailing” prompted Hill to look to Michigan.

1894 – Clubhouse built as a one story community center/dance hall to promote the development of the Red Park summer cottages.

1896 – Beehive cottage built as a private residence. The Beehive was purchased by Tosebo in 1943.

1902 - Crow’s Nest cottage built. Used by General Johnson and later for youngest campers. The building was gone by 1960.

1905 – Vista built. And was the residence for Noble Hill and family. The Vista was torn down about 1970.

1910 – Welcome House built as a private residence and purchased by Tosebo in 1912. Originally had a carriage house/garage that was hauled down to Red Park (1930’s) and is now occupied by Larry Fox.

1912 – Noble Hill purchases Clubhouse and property to the west and Boathouse with Portage Lake frontage. Noble Hill (“The King”) brings boys up from the Todd School for the summer.

1914 – A.E. Johnson (“The General”) begins 41 year career at Todd School and CampTosebo as teacher, principal, and program director.

1925 – Cabin 1-2-3 built facing the tennis court.

1929 – Anthony “Coach” Roskie hired at Todd School and begins 42 year career at Tosebo in 1930.

1931 – Cabin 4-5-6 built facing the flagpole

1934 – Indian Council Ring created with assistance from Chief Whirling Thunder (Winnebago Tribe). Stage built. Stage destroyed about 1998.

1939 – Boathouse dragged from water (on cribs) to current location

1945 – Noble Hill turns operation of Tosebo over to his daughter, Carol Fawcett. Craft Shop built.

1953 – Todd School closes, but Camp Tosebo goes on.

1955 – Carol Fawcett turns operation of Tosebo over to her son, Ross Taylor.

1963 - Camp Tosebo sold to Hal and Jane Tonkins after 51 years of family ownership.

1973 – Camp Tosebo sold to Pat and John Allmand.

1977 – Camp Tosebo closes as a summer boy’s camp.

1983 – Camp Tosebo purchased by Dr. David Wild for a family retreat.

1995-6 – Restoration of the Clubhouse, Welcome House and Trunk House done by David Wild Jr. and Lulu Gargiulo. Clubhouse operates as a bed & breakfast with Dan & Marie Baker as hosts.

2004 – Camp Tosebo purchased by Tosebo Clubhouse LLC – Steve and Kris Darpel, Joe and Kim Perrin, Mark and Martha Schrock, and Dave and Fran Wallace. Restoration of the Boathouse completed.

2005 – First ever Camp Tosebo Reunion held with “boys” who attended Tosebo from six different decades.

Start With a Good Foundation

This Tosebo family picture that was taken in the summer of 1948, the last time that Noble Hill came to Tosebo. He was in the Midwest to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Todd School. In the first row from left to right are Caryl Roskie, Noble Hill, Barbara Roskie, and Nellie Hill. In the second row from left to right are Kay Roskie, Noble Taylor, Roger "Skipper" Hill, Carol Hill Taylor Fawcett, Hortense Hill, and Coach Roskie. I particularly like this picture because it shows the two families (The Hill's and the Roskie's) that had the greatest influence on Tosebo over the years.

Noble Hill founded Tosebo in 1912 as the summer home of the Todd School for Boy in Woodstock, Illinois. The name TOSEBO came from the school's former name (TOdd SEminary for BOys). From the Tosebo motto "There is Nothing so Kingly as Kindness" Noble Hill became known as "the King" and Nellie Hill was known as "the Queen."

Noble Hill had originally planned to locate Tosebo in northern Wisconsin. In fact, he had shipped boats up there. The Hill family had spent summers in the Vista cottage (now torn down) across the road from the Clubhouse. Noble Hill loved the woods and his son, "Skipper" Hill loved the water. Skipper especially loved the beauty of Lake Portage, the clear water, the sandy beaches and the access to Lake Michigan. He told his father that he would not go to Wisconsin; instead he would go back to Portage Lake. That persuaded Noble Hill to locate Tosebo where it is.

Noble Hill directed Tosebo for about 30 years and then he handed it over to Carol Fawcett who directed Tosebo for 10 years. Then she turned Tosebo over to Ross Taylor who directed it for 10 years. After being in the Hill family for over 50 years, Tosebo was sold to Harold Tonkins in 1963.

Coach Roskie served as Tosebo Program Director for many years, beginning in the Noble Hill era and concluding in the Tonkins era. He shaped the Tosebo program in ways that made it a great camp for boys. The many former campers at the Tosebo reunion last summer can attest to that.

Ross Taylor
1927 – 1962

Camp TOSEBO - 1956 - 1958 General Structure & Grounds

Camp started each year with an inspection of last summer's clothing, with an order through Marshall Field's in Chicago for replacements. Name tags had to be sewn in, and I remember for my last year, my mother running a single stitch through the middle of the pre-printed tags, rather than going completely around the edges. Everything was fit into a "steamer trunk," and Railroad Express-ed to TOSEBO. We were supplied a check list, which was approximately 5 pairs of underwear and white (?) Socks, 5 TOSEBO T-Shirts, 3 pairs of green shorts, 3 pairs of blue jeans, a jacket, 1 pair of tennis shoes and 1 pair of "hard" shoes, 2 "Army" blankets and one "Indian" blanket, 1 tennis racket, 1 fishing rod, 1 "Bridgeport" one-piece hatchet and 1- 4 blade pocket knife, flashlight (I remember a "Delta" brand combination spotlight with flashing warning lamp, that used a large, square battery. We usually left the battery inside over the winter, which was always corroded by the next summer,) toothbrush, comb, plastic water glass and soap dish, towels and washcloths and a cigar box for storage.

In 1956, Camp was divided into a 3 week section, followed by a 4 week session. Only a few campers left after the first 3 weeks, with usually a greater number attending the last 4 weeks. From 1957 on, there were two consecutive 4 week sessions. Most campers did the whole summer.

The cabins each had 2 sets of bunk beds along each side wall, with a storage closet between the bunks. In the middle of the room was a bed for the resident counselor, if used. The door was screened, as were the windows, with cover doors hinged at the top, and usually held open by a stick. There were wooden built in ladders at the foot side of the bunks for access to the top. There was a set of book shelves along the far wall, with two campers each sharing a shelf. (I seem to remember cabin three having 2 sets of bunk beds, and 4 or 5 single cots.)

The tents were set up in a row on individual wooden platforms, with common "fence" rails between adjoining tents for securing side ropes. Tents were basic canvas "wall" construction, with canvas "fly's." There were front and rear vertical poles and a center ridge pole. The sides could be rolled up and secured

with cloth straps. Each tent had four steel cots and a book shelf in the back with a shelf for each occupant. Tents were assigned by age with a "resident" counselor bunking in one every two tents. At the far end of the field, separating the upper cabins from the tents, was the "Craft Activity and Indian Lore" building (also with internal electricity.) In front of the Craft building was the flag pole. North of this building was the archery range, and a small campfire circle at the edge of the bank, with railings and benches. This was used, as I recall, for Coach Roskie to tell stories to the younger campers, and as a site for "picnic" dinners. Behind the archery range, and on top of the hill, was the old "Crow's Nest," an old house for the very youngest campers, which was last used about 1952 (?) By 1958, it had begun collapsing. It was always "Off-Limits," as was the areas north of the tents and campfire circle.

South of cabin one was the "miniature golf" course, which was overgrown in 1956, but cleared out and rehabilitated in 1957 as part of the "Athletics Activity" Group training. There was even a sign for the area: "Putt-Putt Golf" from probably the 1930's.

.Between the far tennis court and the golf course was a path to the theater, which also continued down to the horse corral and stables. (I remember an old tree stump in the middle of the corral, where we once hid our flag during a game of "Capture the Flag.") The Theater building had a fire ring in front of it.

The road to the main building was about 150 yards long, with the shower building on the North side, along with open faucets and washbasins outside. On the South side of the road, in the same area, was a large, two story building for storing the camper's trunks, clothing, and a couple of rooms upstairs for counselors. The ground floor of the main lodge contained the kitchen to the West, the dining hall in the middle, and the game room to the East, with a large covered porch. There was a small covered porch on the South side, permitting entry into the dining room from the outside. The Infirmary and nurse's quarters were upstairs.

The dirt road in front of the main lodge ran north, crossing the paved highway, and continuing through "Red Park" down to the boathouse/beach. Between the main lodge and highway was an open "Gazebo," owned by the camp (?) but seldom, if ever, used. (There was a "Caution - Slow Campers" sign near the highway crossing.) There was a center park area between the facing rows of cottages along the road to Portage Lake, with a small fountain/fish tank. (Excursions off of the dirt road were a punishable offense!) The road wound through a small stretch of brush before reaching the boathouse.

The boathouse was a two story wooden structure, with a wooden deck/walkway around most of the outside. The main entrance was on the West side, with the counselor's room to the left as one entered. There were benches in the large open room for changing, with hooks around the outside where swimming suits or clothing was hung. The top floor of the boathouse had a flush toilet (usually either out-of-service, or with continual running water to its tank, and no idea where it discharged it's sewage to,) a room for counselors/C.I.T.'s, and a large open area for hanging and drying sails.

From the North boathouse deck, there was a wooden plank walkway out into the lake. There was a "seawall" around the boathouse foundation, and a sand beach to the west. There was a swampy area to the west and south, which was fed by springs (?) and was usually the source of frogs and snakes. To the west of the walkway, tied between two posts, was an old military rubber pontoon raft, with a "solid" cover top, but with air tube segments underneath that could be "squeezed up into (another No-No!) King of the raft was a most popular game. A stretched rope between posts demarcated the outward limit for non-swimmers.

Out further was the floating "wooden raft," located with anchors at the edge of the "drop-off." On this raft was wooden decking with a diving board on the deep side and a lifeguard tower. ("No diving from the tower, or swimming beneath the raft." - Right!) I remember once my last summer having a SCUBA outfit and finally getting a good look at the drop-off. I can also remember fishing for perch and bluegill from the raft, but don't remember what became of "the catch."

Further out and to the west were the 4 buoys for the "Snipe" class, 14 foot sailboats. (This was apparently a popular "class" on Portage Lake during that period, as there were regular races throughout the summer around the lake.) I remember two older green and white, open cockpit Snipes with hinged, retractable centerboards, and a black and red newer Snipe, originally owned by the Buckingham's, with a more closed cockpit and steel "dagger board." (I remember being involved with capsizing this boat, and loosing the dagger board by not having it "tied" in its well.)

Eight foot single sail "Prams" were kept on the beach next to the boathouse, along with rowing Prams, rowboats, and both cloth skinned/wood ribbed and aluminum canoes. There was also an outboard powered (or should I say, "under-powered." by a 25 hp Johnson) runabout boat affectionately named, "The Skunk," that was used for "Aqua-planing" and water skiing, as well as sailboat rescue.

The riding stables had a tack room at one end, and were like most stalls I've ever seen. The main riding trail took off towards the West from behind the stable, going to some large open former farm ground with abandoned barns and occasional fence lines. I remember always galloping or cantering in the out-bound direction, but always trying to keep at a walk or trot coming back in. I remember there being about nine horses, and always having them trail in the same order. "Peggy," "Dolly," "The Colt," "Duke," "King," "Queen," "Cappy," and "Tigger." The main horse trail also served as the southern boundary for the camp, with crossing another, "No-No."

The basic social structure was based on "Activity Groups," determined by age (and possibly, maturity.) There were about 7-8 boys in each Group, all housed together in the cabins, or adjoining tents. There were usually some "older" campers, identified as "C.I.T.'s" that acted as a group, but fell outside of the normal routine. Each week, the Groups rotated through the various activities, with one week designated as "Wilderness Week" (canoe trip, etc.) **The other important division was the two Indian "Tribes."** Each summer, every camper was given a graduated "rank" (Papoose, Brave, Warrior, and finally, Chief) an Indian name, and assigned to one of two tribes; either "Blackfoot," or "Chippewa," with a third tribe, "Shawnee," dropped prior to 1956. Most competitions throughout the summer were based on tribe affiliation. One important given Indian name was "Babbling Brook," usually given to a new camper that irresponsibly called attention to himself during the early weeks. This was NOT an honor, and the person with this given name was usually the brunt of boyish "cruelty" for most of the summer. At the end of the summer, a "winning" tribe was determined based on some un-known scoring scale.

Daily & Weekly Routines

The daily routine, as best as I can remember, started with wake-up around 7:00 AM, possibly by the ringing of the camp bell. Dressing, bathroom and tooth brushing were next, followed by making of bed, straightening things up, etc. At approx. 7:30, the bugle call, "Reveille," was played over the loudspeakers, and everyone lined up in front of the flag pole for the raising ceremony, which was also accompanied by loudspeaker bugle music. This was followed by calisthenics (Table Waiters were excused from exercises, and left the formation at that time.) After exercises, everyone spread out in a line in front of the flag pole, and walked towards the main lodge, "policing" the area of any paper or trash.

Everyone walked at as brisk a pace as the counselors would allow, bent over, pretending to look for paper. (There may have been a requirement to produce some trash at the end of the road, before the washbasins. If so, the wiser campers always kept a stash of paper in their pants! It also seemed like there was always a "detail" sent up the direction of the tennis courts and past the theater - usually done out-of-sight of the counselors, and at a "dead run!") Everyone had to stop at the (cold water only) washbasins, and then pass a "Roskie Inspection" of the hands and behind the ears. Everyone then staged outside the lodge back door or in the game room, until permitted to enter the dining hall "en-mass" to their assigned seating.

In general, the table seating had an older camper, or counselor, at the head, and a junior camper at the other end (Not desirable, as this person was responsible for pouring drinks - usually "Kool-Aid" referred to as "Bug Juice.") Most items were set on the table prior to seating, but the main course was delivered by the waiters on platters. Each meal was started by the ringing of a small bell, followed by a silent prayer. Chaos broke loose soon after, as every table tried it's best to empty the platters and disperse the food, in order to get the waiter on his way back to the kitchen for re-fills. I can remember breakfast offering rotations of scrambled eggs, pancakes, French toast, sausage, and bacon, with oatmeal and cold cereal presented every morning. I can't remember if there were limits to either food or drinks.

There were three common distractions from the eating routine: It seems like a dropped eating utensil resulted in the offending party walking around his table holding the item above their head. Another manners violation was answered with, "Hausser, Hausser, strong and able. Get your elbows off the table!" And finally, the after meal game of, "This is table number one; where is number two?" It seemed like everyone at the table had to be finished, and then permission asked for everyone to be excused. Return to the cabins or tents for about a half hour of free time followed each meal.

I believe there was "free time" in the morning until about 10:30, which was the time for "mandatory" swimming. This was time spent with lessons or organized games in the water. I remember instructions in life saving (leading to Red Cross Certification?) involving the "fireman's carry," "across the shoulder" swimming carry, "tired swimmer" swimming carry (breast stroke while the "victim" lay on his back with stiff arms on your shoulders,) "Running straddle" (in order to keep a view of the victim) and "high" jump water entries, surface dives and underwater turn dives, artificial respiration, and "in-water" escape techniques (always easy when done with a fellow camper partner; damn near impossible when done during final testing with "Skip" Sage!)

Lunch followed, with everyone hungry. Usually "Mail Call" was held before the noon meal, with letters and packages distributed outside the dining hall door. A package from home, consisting of cookies or candy, was always a welcome surprise (as it always has been,) and letters eagerly awaited. The receipt of a package resulted in a sudden close relationship with one's bunkmates.

There was a short period of "rest time" after lunch, with a bell about 1:00 PM for a 1-1/2 hour "Activity" period. As mentioned above, each "Group" was assigned for a week's period to a specific "Activity," and rotated through all of them by the end of the summer. The bell ending "Activity" announced "free time" until dinner. Some boys would continue with their "Activity," but most took off towards their favorite thing at that time. I don't believe returning to one's tent or cabin was an option. This was the time that would occasionally result in campers going "too far" into the woods, or having "boat problems," and getting back to dinner late - and receiving harassment from the whole dining room!

After dinner excluded lake front activities or horseback riding, and most people stayed around the tent/cabin area, except for a few excursioners into the woods. At about 7:30, "Retreat" bugle call was played, for the lowering of the flag, with everyone expected to stop in place, and face the flag pole. Bedtime was soon after dark, with the playing of "Taps."

The routine differed on Friday night with the issuance of clean clothing and towels, and the weekly shower at the building west of the main lodge above the wash basins. Groups were called down from the living area by age, issued clothing, etc., sent to the shower, and returned the old clothing afterwards. There was usually some activity near the lodge to keep the "clean" campers at bay until all had completed the routine.

On Tuesday, clean underwear, socks, and one shirt were issued.

Saturday morning was the time of the weekly living quarter's inspection. After breakfast, everyone cleaned and straightened their cabin/tent and their personal belongings. They also were responsible for the area directly around their unit, and other designated "common" areas. There was a certain acceptable order to the personal items on the shelves (with other items discreetly moved to outside hiding spots!) Besides the spotlessly clean floor (almost impossible, considering the bare sand walkways in front and around the tents and cabins,) the making of the bed to "military specifications" was the most important item. Coach Roskie, and a counselor designate, would perform the inspection, with the campers knowing that a failing grade could entail extra duty, and possibly, the ultimate punishment, NO TRIP TO TOWN!

Assuming inspection was passed, a weekly spending allowance (established by the parents - about 35 -85 cents a week, and occasionally supplemented by money sent from home,) was issued and the campers were transported to downtown Onkama, Michigan, in the green, canvas covered stake truck. Traveling in this truck nowadays would probably violate a number of safety codes, but with a counselor at the rear gate, and strict rules about reaching through the side slats, etc., I can't remember anyone getting hurt. The youngest campers went in the first shuttle to town, and were deposited in front of the Onkama Drug Store. Most of the weekly allowance was spent there, usually slowed only by the line at the cash register, on such necessities as 10 cent comic books, candy bars, popsicles, and possibly soft drinks. The other place of business visited, was the hardware store across the street, for the purchase of nails and other "fort" building materials. There were some individual cases of shop-lifting, but in general, the chaos of our presence was probably the only downside to the businesses. Campers were shuttled back as the next group arrived.

There was free time upon return to camp, as well as after lunch. After dinner, however, was the big weekly campfire gathering at the theater area, where the Group having that activity during the week presented a play - usually light comedy or a mystery. (The play was sometimes re-played throughout the night, as the actor mumbled their lines in their sleep.)(I can remember "skit night," when we parodied the C.I.T.'s and I imitated Dick Buckingham saying his usual, "There goes another ripe zit!") Coach Roskie then presented

general announcements and the schedule for the next week. Then he announced the all important "Honors" awards for the week.

The fireside was ended with the playing of bugle "Taps," usually played live by a camper (I can remember the anticipation of messing up on the occasions I was the bugler.)

Sunday was generally a day of unstructured free time, with the Catholic campers trucked to the church in Onekama. After the noon meal, we were required to write the dreaded weekly letter home (later recalled in the Alan Sherman song, "Hello Mother, Hello Father.") There was usually an "All-Camp" softball game in the afternoon, and after dinner, "Vespers" was held in the main Lodge game room. Usually a local Protestant minister was invited to present some spiritual offerings, interspersed with the singing of Hymns (I remember "Follow the Grail" being one often repeated.)

Most firesides, Indian gatherings, etc., at night, were ended with the singing of "There's a Long, Long Trail." Coach Roskie would also lead us in famous camp songs such as, "99 Bottles of Beer," and "John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt." The counselors and older campers would teach us the more popular songs of, "Roll Me Over in the Clover," and the cheer, "Potato Chips, Potato Chips, Crunch, Crunch, Crunch. Ross Taylor, here's your lunch - Eat it Raw!"

At the end of the summer, the camp bus was used to transport campers back to Chicago, with stops in Benton Harbor and Holland, Michigan, for the purchase of wooden shoes.

Special Events

Three or four times a summer, an Indian council was held in the Indian ring west of the Craft Shop. All campers were led in by groups, wearing their Indian Blankets, and seated on the benches around the fire/dance ring. Complete silence was the rule. The campers all stood until the "Chiefs," "Squaws," and "Princesses" were seated. Coach Roskie would then beat on a Tom-Tom drum while one camper, dressed as an Indian, danced around the pile of wood in the middle of the circle. As the beating and dancing reached the desired fervor, the fire mysteriously burst into flames (by what method, I still don't know!) Occasionally, the Coach would have to add a little "fire water" to get it going again, and would add wood several times during the ceremony. The first Indian meeting of the summer involved the "un-burying of the Hatchet," signifying the start of the inter-tribal competitions. The final meeting of the summer involved burying the hatchet, and the fire was started by a flaming arrow (on a guide wire!) There were always Indian dances ("Toe-Heel," "Canoe Step," and "Running Toe Step.") presented by the various groups in the Indian Lore Activity, and stories of Indian Myths by Coach Roskie.

There were several competitions between the tribes. There was a day of "Athletic" events, with broad jumping, running races, standing jumps, "hop, skip, & jump," pull-ups (always won by Jim "Termite" Bergquist,) etc. There was a season end softball game. There was a tennis tournament and an archery tournament (with the final four top shooters facing off after the big picnic with targets located on the tennis courts. (I remember my first year in the finals, using a 35# bow with short arrows, that I could barely get the arrow to the target. The next year, I made sure I had the 50# bow with the longest set of arrows I could grab hold of.) Usually, two or three arrows in the target would secure the championship.

Most times, teams were identified by shirts being worn right side or wrong side out: "TOSEBO's" vs. "OBESOT's."

The last Indian meeting of the year usually had time devoted to the tribe chiefs bragging of victories, and justifying defeats, in the various events.

There were also softball games played against a camp (Camp Lookout?) on the other side of Portage Lake, usually won by them!

I can remember at least one summer of meeting most of the camp in a field on the "lakeside" road to Manistee, for a "horse" outing, where there were races, and various horsemanship games. (I can remember seeing old home movies taken and shown by Coach Roskie, of prior horse meets at the same area. I do look back and realize that all races seemed to finish in the same "horse order" as was used on the trail rides, with "Tigger" always last!

I can also remember an overnight horseback trip to roughly the same area, where we all slept in "Jungle Hammocks."

Another outing was a trip up to the "Look-out" at Pierport, a beach on Lake Michigan located about 10 miles North of Portage Lake. There were high sand dunes along the beach, with bird nest "caves" dug into the sand at a vertical ledge near the top. I can remember jumping off the ledge, thinking I would sink into soft sand when I hit, only to encounter hard pack sand, having my heels slip out from under me, and smack my tailbone against the hard sand. I limped around for several days after! It also seemed that this trip involved "clothing optional" swimming. There was a small "fort" overlook at one time at the top of the dunes, but this had been destroyed by the time I was in Camp.

The best outing, for me, was the annual canoe trip. These were done "by Group" and I got to canoe on the Big Manistee (wide, and smooth - no rapids - a "beginner's river,) the Little Manistee (Narrower, with some rapids,) and the Pere Marquette (very narrow, more rapids.) I can remember spending the night camped next to "Baldwin Bridge," when a car crossing the noisy wooden floor bridge lost its front universal joint, and its drive line dropped down and caught the approach to the bridge.

Canoe camping was exciting, with two campers and gear per canoe. All food, and any other outdoor meals, was usually from dehydrated "Trail Mix" menus. And the main cooking utensils were empty "Sexton" brand institutional sized tin cans. I believe it was later in life that I discovered that soap applied to the outside of utensils placed directly in the fire, are much easier to clean. I do remember that river sand serves as scouring powder! And that water fights between canoes usually shows up later as wet sleeping bags.

There were also trips to the Traverse City Cherry Days Festival, with a stop at Sleeping Bear Dunes State Park, and I believe I attended the Manistee County Fair one year. These events could not have been much fun, considering the money available to us. On these trips, we may have gone to a movie.

Another outing was a visit to either the Century Boat Works in Manistee, or the Morton Salt Plant in Manistee. Everyone returned with either color sales brochures from Century, dreaming of the top-of-the-line two seater run-abouts, or with a handful of salt pellets from Morton.

The older campers got to take a trip to Mackinac Island, but I missed out on that. The camp bus was used on such trips, with all the participants surprised at waking up after the trip in the parking space outside the dining room.

During my last year, a fellow camper, Jerry Hudson, from Oak Park, Illinois, developed what he concealed as "Project 10," which was "Gold Rush Day." He painted a number of rocks with gold paint and hid them all over the side of the hill behind cabins 4-6. All the campers searched the side of the hill and later exchanged each gold rock for paper money. Then every tent or cabin had a "business" trying to collect the most paper money. I remember a "kissing booth," staffed by the kitchen staff, a fishing pond, and numbers of games of chance. It actually worked out well, and I have wondered if it continued in later years.

Robert Hausser
1956 – 1958

The Camp Truck

When I was a camper at Tosebo the main form of transportation was in the camp truck. The part that the campers sat in was a large box that was open on the sides. It was like the open military trucks. The campers would sit around the sides on a bench and two of the counselors would sit at the ends. If there wasn't enough room a bench in the middle was added. There was no heat or A/C and if it rained then canvas flaps were rolled down on the sides so that you wouldn't get wet!! The truck could hold about thirty campers, which was about half of the camp. If you were a good camper you could ride in the front with the owner....Mr. Hal. That was always a real treat riding in the front. Mr. Hal had to really work hard to drive the truck. It didn't have any power steering and you had to double clutch every time that you shifted. The truck was a Chevy, built during WW 2 and only had a 4 cylinder engine!

I can still remember the sound and the smell of the truck as Mr. Hal got it started. The campers would pound their feet on the floor as the truck was starting out. It was our way of helping the old truck get

started; we were getting the rubber bands warmed up!! The truck didn't go real fast, but it got us where we needed to go.

To pass the time in the truck we spent most of the time singing songs and telling stories. It was a simpler time where kids didn't need video games, CD players and iPods to keep them occupied. We had each other and the love of singing!! The time went by fast and everyone had a great time singing songs and becoming part of a group! There were times that we were having so much fun singing and laughing that we didn't want to get out of the truck when we finally got to our destination. There were many songs that we sang, but the one that I remember the most is when we finally got to our destination we would sing.....WERE HERE, BECAUSE WERE HERE, BECAUSE WERE HERE, BECAUSE WERE HERE!!! We would sing that song over and over and over again. It would drive some of the counselors crazy!!

The last years that I was at Tosebo the truck had to be retired due to new safety regulations by the state of Michigan. The truck was replaced by a bus and the fun of getting places was lost forever!! When the truck was retired a big part of Tosebo died!!!!

Ben R. Taylor
1965-1975

The Factory of Dreams

Field trips were always a part of the summer program and one of my favorites was the trip to the Century Boat factory in Manistee. The sleek runabouts from Century Boat were similar to the classics from Chris Craft and the sight of a Century inboard knifing through the waters of Portage Lake would turn every camper head that way.

Century built wooden boats. Sleek speedboats – the Arabian, the Coronado, the Resorter, the Ski-Dart – nameplates that said this boat is fast, this boat is powerful, this boat is elegant. Wood boats, handcrafted from mahogany and teak, finished with gleaming brass and stainless steel fittings, these were the stuff dreams were made of. As we walked through the factory and saw the boatbuilding process, we could fantasize about which model would be ours. Century didn't give away samples, but we did load up on brochures and pictures to keep the dream alive. The factory also gave the camp a large box of scraps, so our Craft Shop projects, while not always the best, were done in materials fit for a king!

Dave Wallace
1960-61, 64-65, 67

Horses and Orchards Don't Mix

Although every day was a great day at Tosebo, one of my least favorite activities was horseback riding. I became prejudiced against horses in day camp as a six-year old when a horse stepped on me. At the time, a horse appeared to be the size of an elephant and getting stepped on was excruciating. Definitely not something I wanted to experience again.

At age 12, I brought my anti-horse prejudice to Tosebo. I was bigger and the horses seemed smaller but, still, I didn't trust them. I was cautious but not really afraid when it was my week to ride. In fact, horseback overnight trips on the Lake Michigan beach were great. Riding on the sand and swimming the horses was tremendous fun. We ran up and down the dunes and into the water until we were exhausted. The only bad experience I recall mercifully involved not me but Dave Buckingham who had an unfortunate encounter with poison ivy when answering a call of nature (that's another story in itself).

The horses' true "dark side" emerged on trail rides from the stable through the woods. I'm not sure if we were on Tosebo property or on neighboring farms. However, more than once we wended our way through orchards where the trees were well-separated but the limbs hung close to the ground. The ride away from the stable was never a problem but all hell broke loose on the return trip. The horses must have had visions of getting rid of their saddles, leisure time and a meal. In any event, they would take off for home at a gallop. My horse had no problem going under the low-hanging limbs which was not true for me. By the time we reached the stable, I was beaten and bruised. Tosebo was the last time I ever got on a horse.

Coincidentally, some forty years later when Tosebo was being operated as a B&B, I made my first return visit. On the way north to Traverse City, I drove along the Lake Michigan shore and stopped at a scenic overlook with an observation platform. I noticed an elderly couple slowly climbing the stairs and

struck up a conversation with them. I happened to mention Tosebo and our long-ago lakeside horseback overnight trips—they replied that it was their farm property that we camped on! It's a small world.

Mark O'Reilly
1956 – 1958

Mr. Mike and Miss Lela

For all of the importance placed on an excellent program director, experienced and enthusiastic counselors, and well equipped facilities, the success of a summer camp comes down to the cook. Hot and nourishing food three times a day for sixty boys and another fifteen staff members was an absolute necessity. Camp Tosebo had been fortunate through the years to have several excellent cooks. Any kitchen has its quirks and Tosebo's was no different. In 1967, everything was in place and a good staff and cook were hired and ready for the summer to begin.

Days before the opening of camp the cook became ill and Tosebo was "cookless." A SOS went out to the neighbors and back came the suggestion to contact the Lamberts in nearby Onekama. We didn't know who they were, but we soon had Mike and Lela out to Camp to discuss our dilemma. Mike had been a chef in Chicago and they had retired up to Onekama. Their qualifications were the answer to our prayers and then came salary talk. Mr. Mike, in his delightful old European accent simply said, "Darling, you couldn't pay me what I'm worth, but for you, I'll cook."

Mike and Lela loved the little extras, like when a boy would proudly bring a fish to the kitchen. No matter the size, Mike would skillfully fillet it and make a presentation worthy of a five-star restaurant for that camper to enjoy at supper. So, thanks to Chief Good Cook and Squaw Yum-Yum for the great friendship and the good food for many years.

Jane Tonkins
1963 – 1972

The Other Son; a Fond Recollection

For those of us that trod the hallowed paths during the fifties, our first exposure to Carol Fawcett's sons was the occasional visit of Knobby. As I recall, he was named after Noble Hill. For those familiar with the history of Todd and the Hill family, that must have been a difficult image to live up to, for that name is as much a part of Todd as was that of Richard Kimball Todd, Roger, Coach, and General. I'm sure Ross could weigh in on the lineage....in any case; Knobby was an infrequent visitor, but whenever there, always made life interesting.

He loved the water...being in it, on it, whatever. While he never really integrated into the general activities, it was obvious that he shared his mother's love for nature, particularly where those forces were evidenced around water. I recall him as being in his late teens....and sadly, he seemed to be very troubled. I even recall him losing his temper and when he did, you did not want to be around him. While I never recall any violence, it was still scary.

One very rainy day, I was coming toward the Clubhouse from the barn and there in the middle of the road, about even with what was then the Roskie house, came across Knobby. In the middle of a serious and prolonged downpour, he was having a ball trying to build a dam to contain the water rushing down the crevice that was forever a part of that road. I stopped to watch, and within seconds was caught up in his exuberance for the project. It is difficult to remember how long we worked, but it seems as though we were there for at least 30 minutes, laughing as our efforts to contain the water were (of course) always overcome by the sheer volume cascading down the slope of that section....and that is how I remember him....happy, delighting in his efforts to deal with the forces so well understood by his mother...For those that knew him, I am sorry you did not get to see that side of him...but for the few other times we saw one another, that afternoon forever bound us in spirit...and spirit was what Tosebo was all about.

Fred Meyer
1946 – 1954

Working for The General

I came to Camp Tosebo as a counselor for a few years and then returned with my wife, Mary, and our 2½ year old daughter, Debbie, after a short hiatus from Camp.

We lived in the Crow's Nest, an old cottage located above the Craft Shop. It was a small space with a living room, dining room, bedroom, and bath on the first floor with a sleeping loft above. We had six young campers who lived with us and slept on cots in the loft.

One evening we invited Dottie and Dave Norbeck up for a visit. They were very amused when we lit a fire and the mice came out from under the old couch to play. It was a pretty little cottage and had been decorated in colorful Norse floral designs by the Thoresen sisters. They were from Todd School and took care of the youngest boys at camp in the early 1940's.

We only spent the summer of 1954 in the Crow's Nest and the next year we had a back room, sleeping porch, and a separate room for Debbie in the Clubhouse. We remember how we killed bats in the hallway that came out of the kitchen girl's rooms. Much screaming took place. Tennis racquets were (and still are) the weapon of choice!

Our daughter would get up early in the morning and we never knew where we might find her, which was very frightening. One morning after everyone had helped us look for her she was found in the horse corral calmly walking around in between and under the horses. Another time she went to the creek behind the General's cottage (the Vista), caught two small frogs and went looking for Arlene (General Johnson's granddaughter and Debbie's playmate) in their cottage. Instead of Debbie's room, however, she went into the General's bedroom and woke them up with a frog in each hand. We only found out about this at breakfast when Flora (Mrs. J.) came into the dining hall laughing about it.

At Todd School, the General (never called that to his face) was always Mr. Johnson, the principal of the school. He taught math and Latin and also had the print shop in the basement. The school printed many thing including the Mercury Shakespeare co-written by Roger Hill and Orson Welles. We had a Linotype and presses with folding and binding machines. This equipment could produce complete volumes under Mr. Johnson's direction. Roger Hill's son once said "The General can fix any machine!" and I believe that as he kept all those machines running.

While the General was my teacher at Todd School, my fondest memories are from Tosebo where we became good friends. We counselors came a week early to set up camp and stayed after to put it to bed. I carried pipe wrenches for water hook-ups, helped set up tents, painted Snipes (like Ford Motor had only black cars, the General always used "porch and deck green" paint), put the raft together, and one year we even sanded and refinished the maple floor in the Clubhouse – all under the General's direction. We were always glad to go to bed.

The camp truck was kept at Todd during the school year. Since it was a family business, things at Todd went to camp for the entire summer in the truck. The one year I drove from Woodstock, Illinois to Camp Tosebo, we loaded it with kitchen equipment, baggage, sports equipment, and tools, including the floor sanders! When the summer ended, it all went back into the truck for the journey back to Todd School.

My outstanding memory of the General at Camp Tosebo was his kindness to everyone. He was gruff and outspoken, but under that he would help anyone, be they kitchen crew, camp staff, or campers. Although Coach Roskie set up the camper's programs and Carol Fawcett supervised in the background, the General got the food, had the laundry done, heated the water for shower night and basically kept the place running all the during the summer. He had a system for everything, from loading the canoes on the truck for a canoe trip to storing the raft and the boats in the Boathouse in the winter. He taught me a lot by his example and I remember him fondly.

Peirce and Mary Erb
Peirce 1944-1950, 1954-1955
Mary 1954 - 1955

Trips to town...

Saturdays were special at Tosebo...first off it meant you were relatively clean from the prior Friday nights shower and if all went well, after super clean up, a rousing trip to town. I don't really remember what was more fun, the trip in the old green Tosebo truck or the actual arrival in Onekema itself. After getting the requisite fifty cents from Miss Jane after my fingernails passed inspection (the guys in the tents got a dollar which I thought was a rip until of course I made it to the age of living in the tents) we boarded the truck. If the weather was nice we rolled up the flaps and squished together and even had an extra bench down the middle that turned sideways if Mr. Hal made a too tight turn. Singing all the way to town as we belted out "100 bottles of beer on the wall" or "Young Folks Old Folks" for the bazillionth time.

As the exhaust cleared we came to a halting stop in the parking lot adjacent to the Dairy Delight and across the street from Vern's Drugstore. My heart was racing as the world was about to be mine. I clutched my 50 cents and careened across the road anxiously ready to part with my allowance in return for some licorice, musketeer bars, and the latest 12 cent Archie comic book. If I did some forward economic planning I just might have a dime (I'm not kidding...really...it was 1967 remember...) leftover for an ice-cream cone at the Dairy Queen. It was then back to the truck, bag of candy in hand trying nervously to avoid having my ice-cream be part of the pavement or worse yet become part of the daily menu of someone else's brand-clean Tosebo shirt. Singing all the way home as we rolled up past Welcome House we looked upon the next group's impatient faces getting ready to go. I wasn't quite hungry for lunch but knowing that Miss Lela and Mr. Mike were cooking up the standard Saturday lunch fare of grilled cheese and tomato soup I knew I'd find a way to make room in my candy filled stomach. After lunch we headed up the hill to enjoy the spoils of our trip to town during an extra long rest period since the Counselors always had their Saturday staff meeting...I didn't care...I had the latest Archie and Jughead comic and all was right with the world!

...ahhhhh...almost brings tears to my eyes as I relive my childhood...See ya guys!

Jay Deacon
1967 – 1977

Fire!!!

How many of you campers or counselors remember walking down to the lake and passing a dilapidated old two story house? It was located on the corner of Miller Road and Crescent Beach Road. The building was badly in need of paint and had many broken windows. Maybe you just remember the empty corner lot where a Camp Tosebo sign was and still is.

For many campers the neglected house was a source of curiosity. The counselors, being very creative, told the campers the house was haunted and to stay away from it. Then one cool and windy day, the house caught on fire. A frightened camper ran to tell Squaw Blue Bird (Carol Fawcett), that the house was on fire. After a quick evaluation, Onekema was called, only to be informed that they had no fire department. The Manistee fire department was then called. The message from them was they were that they were too far away and said, "Just let it burn out".

I remember the winds blowing very briskly off the lake and igniting the flames even more. Counselors were told to keep the boys either up on the hill or down at the lake. Mean while the kitchen crew, who were cleaning up after lunch, were told to fill up every bucket, pot or pan available with water. They were instructed to water down the Clubhouse roof. The Roskies lived on the second floor of the Clubhouse. At that time there was only one bathroom which everyone who lived there shared. I felt very important because I was told that my job was to fill the tub and two sinks with water. The fire had caught onto the tree branches and was creeping towards the Clubhouse.

Eventually the winds died down and the fire died out. Later the Red Park residents talked about seeing transients coming and going into the house during the evening hours. That seems to have provided an answer as to how the fire could have been ignited. Since then nothing has ever been constructed in place of the "haunted house".

Barbara Roskie Corbett
1937 – 1956

Special Recollections

As campers we learned a myriad of different and new “things” every year one would attend camp. These “things” could range from canoe trips to horsemanship, Indian lore to waterfront and everything in between. Although much of our time was involved in group activities, individual achievement was always encouraged. I recall after jumping through all the hoops of qualification, the feeling I had the first time I was allowed to sail the “Hurricane”. I was the captain of my own ship. Fifteen years old, at boys camp, a hot August afternoon and the largest sailing vessel is at your command. That’s right; I’ve just become the scourge of the seas, “Black Beard”. How about, John Paul Jones or perhaps a Viking? I think maybe an adventurer. A 15 year old adventurer discovering “summer”. And not wanting it to end.

Probably one of the most paramount moments involving team work would occur on outings while using the camp truck. Specifically those outings requiring driving up steep grades. If not for the participation of all campers “winding the rubber bands” we could very well still be stuck on some hill in “Gooberville”, Michigan.

I’d like to thank Steve Rathford for showing me the best spot to dig Sassafras roots and the odd characteristics of the plant so as to easily identify it. A “felt like” surface on top of the leaf. Tear the leaf and it smells like fresh cut lemons. The roots smell like root beer soda. The flavor is.....Sassafras of course.

I have to genuinely ring the dinner bell for the food. Mr. Mike and Miss Lela always put on a tasty meal as a rule. The real treat came when you managed to catch some fish or big frogs. As long as you did the cleaning, they did the cooking. It was great to have fresh fish or frog legs for dinner. Speaking of food I would like, just once more, to spend 30 cents for an olive burger with cheese, ketchup and onions. Just like the one from the ice cream place in Onekama.

I miss the Council Fire. The look in the eyes of the little kids. A ceremony with the regalia. The reverence and awe of the event. A huge moment of bonding for one and other as well as for the tribes to be as one. A time of spiritual growth and inner maturing. Powerful moments.

May the Great Spirit be with you...

Chief War Eagle.....

Woody Whitehead
1965 – 1968

An Unwanted Decision

One of the indelible Tosebo memories I have probably occurred in 1950 when I was ten years old. That summer I befriended Tommy Wheeler. He was from Chebanse, Illinois, near Kankakee. His mother was a friendly and kind woman. She brought him to camp, I remember, and he and I were quartered in one of those camper tents together, along with Loren Markus from Chicago and Carl Goodwin, I believe his name was, also from Chicago.

Tommy was the same age as I was. We hit it off right away. We hung out together, shared comic books bought in Onekema, checked out each other's care packages, admired the bracelets we made in Fred Gunther's crafts hour and tried to end up on the same softball or touch football team. There was talk of visiting one another in the fall.

One day we learned of something new on that evening's program: boxing. As I recall it had not been on the agenda the previous two summers. Anyway, they said we would have to get in the ring and box another boy. I was nervous about it. I didn't really know how to box, and I didn't want to look like a fool in the ring. I was scared of getting knocked out like Max Schmeling or something. Looking bad was not what I had planned on for the summer.

Well, the day wore on and evening came. We trotted down to the makeshift ring. Perhaps it was located where the tribal campfires were held. I watched the probably three or four fights that took place before I was up. I think the opponents were matched Chippewa vs. Blackfoot. The fights were interesting and also adrenalin provoking. I saw that I could probably get through a bout. I felt anxious and excited. I remember when my turn came. The master of ceremonies introduced me as “Yogi Jan.” I got in the ring and I saw that my opponent was my good friend, Tommy Wheeler!

My heart sank. I would have to try to beat up Tommy. How horrible! What a bind I was in. If I beat him we might not have a friendship any longer. But even worse, if he beat me, I would be shamed in front of everyone. I was on the spot. It seemed like I had no choice. No way to back out of this one. It felt like the whole world was waiting for me. I had to just get in there and slug away as hard as I could.

So I did. I beat him up. I remember my winner's hand being raised afterward. I did like that. But I saw the look on Tommy's face, and I felt sorry for him and wished that he could have won the bout.

We never visited each other in the fall. Tommy didn't come back to camp the next year. I never heard from him again.

Jan Unna
1948 – 1952

Opportunities for a Song

My favorite camp song-which Coach had officially outlawed in 1952-was (and I spell phonetically) "Ki-Yi-Ki-Yikus." We always sang the camper composed parody--I can only recall fragments. . . . Ki Yi Ki Yikus, nobody likes us, We are the boys of OBESOT! (the second line here is proper). . . Always a winning, always a grinning, always feeling fine. (The bridge into the 2nd verse went - in three dominant beats--with heels pounding on the floor). . . Ki Yi Yi . . . and then on to the next verse.

Another popular one set to the tune of "On Wisconsin" went like this:
Camp Tosebo, Camp Tosebo - Loud thy praise we'll sing - We will start the echoes rolling - Make the rafters ring - TO-SE-BO (yell) - We are loyal, we are loyal - To the colors Green and White - And when we have a chance - For them we'll fight.

I quickly tired of "99 bottles of beer on the wall" during long rides in the back of the camp truck.

An Indian hymn sung (by a soloist) at the close of Indian council fires was: (once again this is a 50 year recollection) Wa Kon Da Day Do, Wa Pon Da Ah Do Nay. It was difficult to sing because it was in a Native American language. In 1952-54 Camper "Doc Holmes" sang it. In '55 Bill Fearing sang it. Bill also owned a cornet or trumpet and played taps many nights.

Once--and only once--when I was sitting at Coach's dining table, he stood up and led us in the song Pie Pie, we all love pie, coconut and cherry, peach and huckleberry, Apple pie is mighty fine. . . and I sang the last line-pretty loud. . . that's the way we love to die. An immediate reprimand and loss of my good camper honor was the price I paid, and I don't remember how the pie tasted.

The clubhouse piano got a good work out every day before meals. The two most popular tunes were Chopsticks and Heart and Soul. A new popular song was Tennessee Waltz, which we played on the black keys. Mrs. Keiser, a summer person in the cottage just north of the Beehive came to the Clubhouse to play the piano and involve campers in singing. I think she was the official pianist at Vesper services. Her son, Lincoln (Linc), was a junior counselor and counselor. I believe Mrs. Keiser passed away after the 1955 camping season.

Counselors Ron Messner and Fred Meyer had some songs worked out together which they sometimes sang on Saturday nights before the play. Ron played Ukulele accompaniment.

George Hausser
1952-1955

Ghost Riders

After taps, and in hushed tones, many the night our counselors (when we had been good) favored us with tales of the supernatural...or at least those of us "older" and able to deal with the scary visions created....and when those of us fortunate enough to have become counselors assumed the mantle, we continued the tradition.

One summer, in our young (and, in reflection, foolhardy) state of mind, Ron Messner, Linc Keiser and I conjured up an idea to strike terror (or something) into the hearts of the campers. Why not, we thought, stage an occurrence to give credence to some of the tales told over the years. Why not create, relate and make happen the "Tale of the Ghost Riders?"

For the weeks preceding our ride, we suggested, hinted, and then related the tale of the headless ghost riders that once a year appeared, rode across the hill, and then vanished into the night, terrorizing any that appeared out of their tent or cabin. Weeks (or at least hours) of careful planning led to a handful of us making it happen. Few knew of our plans; it was kept from Coach and any other counselors. Only the most trusted of the barn gang were made aware of what and how. "When" was dependent on many things.....and finally the "right" night arrived.

Gathering the six of us at the barn, we prepared the horses for the happening. Saddling and then mounting, we draped ourselves in the ghost apparel that we knew would become legendary in the annals of Tosebolore. Quietly we made our way up the trail from the barn, past the stage, pausing at the basketball court (such as it was) across from Cabin One. It was a pitch black night, perfect for what we intended. We pulled the flashlights, preparing to add the final touch to what we knew would terrorize the campers.

Within nanoseconds of their being turned on, and just as we emerged from the trees, we were hit with what seemed like a tidal wave of water. Somehow, the cover had been blown.

The scene for the next 3-5 minutes can best be described as totally chaotic. The fact that no one was seriously injured was a miracle. Cantering out into the ball field, at every turn we were hit with more water. The good news is that the horses didn't panic or run someone down, and that our riding skills were up to the challenge. Hooping and yelling (of course the campers all were out of their beds, but fortunately wise enough to stay in their tents and cabins), we raced around the field trying to avoid the endless streams being directed toward us. Finally, wet and disorganized, we retreated to the sanctuary of our home base.

We never did find out how our cover was blown....Coach pleaded ignorance (he was really good at that), General totally ignored it...but the other counselors delighted (for the balance of the summer) in telling their version of the ghost rider tale.

Fred Meyer
1946 -1954

Camp Tosebo = People

People make up most of my memories of Camp Tosebo and Coach Roskie obviously dominates that list. How could anyone who came to Camp that many years not dominate? Yet, there were some other important figures. Good food obviously was part of Camp life and for many years, Mike and Lela Lambert prepared that food.

For those of you who did not know them, Mike was a certified chef (not a cook) in Europe in the days before Hitler rose to power. I actually saw his Journeyman's book – the book he took with him as he traveled from great hotel to great hotel, learning his trade from other master chefs. The book contained comments and recommendations from many European chefs.

Mike understood Hitler would create problems, so he got out of Europe. He came to Chicago and worked at several hotels on the "Magnificent Mile" for about 40 years. There he met Lela, and they married and worked together for about half that time.

Mike and Lela retired to Onekama and were persuaded to work at Tosebo for several years, putting great food on the tables. They did, however, have a bit of help sometimes. As I would take campers riding to the west of the barn, we found a field with blackberries growing on the edge. Once a couple of campers ate a few too many and visited the Camp nurse with stomach aches. To solve the problem, in the future, berries were picked and taken to the kitchen. There Lela turned them into the best blackberry pies, and those who picked received pie for their desert at dinner.

Bob Low
1967 - 1972

HO FOR TOSEBOLAND

It was mid-May 1921 – I was at Todd School in Woodstock, Illinois and six years old. At the noon meal, Noble Hill stood up to make some announcements, and as he finished, he said he would like to see John Dexter in his office immediately after lunch. I thought, why???? So, after lunch I trotted over to his office and awaited my fate. Fate came very easy that day when the "King" announced that he had spoken with my Dad, and a decision was made that I could attend Camp Tosebo that summer. I was not immediately excited nor was I dejected, but I missed my Dad. Mother had passed away just months earlier, and I was still adjusting to the shock, and I guess both the King and my Dad felt it best for me to go to Tosebo – and that was a super decision.

After school let out for the summer, I went to Chicago (me and my trunk.) (I still have that trunk that was to be with me the rest of my life.) My trunk was packed with all new duds and new name tags and we were on our way to Toseboland. Took a train to Milwaukee, walked across town to the docks, and boarded the "Nevada", a large passenger ship and hauler of products across Lake Michigan and then northward to other ports. I stood on the bow and watched as we moved out of the Milwaukee channel and into a lake so big I assumed it must be an ocean. We had something to eat, but I was so excited, I don't know what I ate. Soon I was asleep on the upper bunk and don't remember a thing until all of a sudden the sun was shining in my eyes. I looked out the porthole and saw giant piles of sand (dunes) with beautiful trees on top. I dressed quickly and ran to the upper deck. WOW, fresh air, pines, hemlock and beech. The King always said that Michigan had a greater assortment of trees than any other state. After the lumbermen finished cutting, many new species were planted.

I arose just in time to see us wend our way between the pier heads and up to a long dock at Ludington. We kinda sidled up to the dock, lines were heaved all over the place, and we were snugly tied up. Then I noticed a camp truck and General Johnson was there. It was years later that he was named the "General." Maybe about 1930. (Insert – he was named the "General" because of his commands. We tore down an old boat house and pier at the north end of Manistee Lake, and then built 12 stalls and corral at camp for the horses being shipped from the Todd School. One of the boys said, "Boy, he's like a General" – that's where it started.) General Johnson had lots of doughnuts, milk and coffee for us. He took off with some counselors and lots of bags and baggage. The rest of us boarded the "Harriet B.K.", on of Gus Kitzinger's tramp steamers (60 feet long and beamy) and away we went out into Lake Michigan and around Point Betsie. It was very, very rough and I believe we were all sick except maybe the crew members. As we rounded Point Betsie, we ran full steam into the biggest waves I had ever seen. There were giant barrels of something that broke loose and began rolling all around. We jumped up on the crude wooden seats until the crew and counselors could secure the entire shipment. About three hours later, the seas calmed and one of the counselors said, "Portage dead ahead." I ran to the bow and watched as we moved between the pier heads. It was beautiful as the waters calmed and ahead were beautiful trees that acted as sentinels guarding Portage Lake, blue-green in color, and a lake I would love the rest of my life. One of our counselors yelled out, "There's Camp Tosebo." And there stood that big yellow boathouse which still stands today as one of Portage Lake's famous landmarks.

Next to the boathouse just to the east, jutting out a large pier; seemed like it was built of telephone poles, up high and with heavy planks for decking.

Out on the dock was a large crowd to greet us. Lines were tossed and the Harriet B.K. was securely tied up for unloading at Red Park. A team of horses was there to haul most everything up to the campground, and thus, our travels were over. (I might add that there were several ways to get to Toseboland – by train and boat from Chicago – by car from Chicago, Detroit, Cincinnati which would take 3 days and approximately 5 tires. It was also possible from Chicago's Navy Pier to the Portage Point Inn on "The Puritan" or "The Manitou".)

But, the work of putting camp together was about to begin. After unloading, etc., we were advised to clean up for dinner, and believe me, we were all hungry (very little grub on board the boats.) Prior to dinner, we were all assigned where to bunk for the night and plans for the next day. Being a camper, I was not assigned to any work crews, but after breakfast, I wandered down to the beach. On my way, I noticed a big cottage on the southwest corner of the main east-west road, and in front of this cottage was a huge pool with a pipe stick up and spewing water from an artesian well; then I noticed a large fish (first fish I had ever seen – approx. 36"), just sunning himself until I prodded him with a stick, and he scooted around the pool a hundred miles an hour. Just then, a boy dressed in corduroys came out on the porch and said, "What are you doing to my Grandfather's Great Northern Pike?" His name was John Noud Kelly (9 years old and future President of Manistee National Bank.) We became life-long friends until his death in 2002.

I then proceeded to the beach and boathouse and there I met the beachfront counselor. We got acquainted and he asked if I would help him. I said "sure", not knowing my duties. He said, "First of all, we have to get all the paddles for the canoes and then all the oars for our rowboats, place them on the racks over there, then we'll sand them and then spar varnish them." Little did I know that I would be doing most of the work. I sanded for two days, my hands got rougher than the sandpaper – this was the beginning of my wonderful experiences at Camp Tosebo, starting when I was 6 years old.

Following are examples of some of those experiences:

- Morning sessions in nature, studying with field trips
- Manual training, featuring the building of a 30" Sloop
- Basket weaving
- Swimming and Life Saving classes
- All water sports, including detailed instruction in Sailing
- Dramatics
- Indian Lore
- Horsemanship
- Bed Making – after Sunday breakfast, we changed our beds (cots) which were inspected by our counselors. I always got "first place" because of my counselor – he would flip a dime in the air, and if it didn't bounce off the cot, I would have to remake it.

Somewhere in this tales, I must relate to a man who had great influences on my life. Noble Hill was the only man I ever met who was named appropriately. He was indeed a noble man. When my Dad and I got off the train in Woodstock, Noble Hill was there to meet us. He talked briefly to my Dad, then shook hands and turned his attention to me, and taking my hand in his, we took off for the Todd Campus. His hand was very large, and as I reflected later in life, it seemed like some of his strength and power were transferred to me. We walked to the school some six blocks away. That evening at dinner, I couldn't handle it anymore and I broke down and began bawling. Ms. Collins was immediately at my side and escorted me out of the dining hall. The King was also in attendance, and I felt from that day forward I was a part of the Todd School.

Noble Hill was a New Englander, and as a young man, he sailed before the mast on large sailing ships that would be at sea long periods of time until their holds were full of fish. As he became acquainted with these fellows, I believe he realized that a lot of attention was needed in the upbringing and education of the young men; thus, he decided he would earn enough to start his school. He finally found the right school and began his life's work. He told my Dad, as well as many other parents, that if he could have their son for schooling for 16 years, he would make them into a fine young man. Noble Hill soon figured out that he needed that boy under his care in summer as well as the full school year; thus, Camp Tosebo. Tosebo was named after "The Todd Seminary for Boys" – TO for Todd - SE for Seminary and BO for Boys. Most folks around Manistee County, Michigan thought TOSEBO was an Indian name, so that was good and the story remains.

John C. Dexter
1921 - 1933

Counselor Hide-Out

One of the summer's special games was the counselor hide-out, which was supposed to be a simple contest of hide and go seek. Why, however, would campers or counselors want to keep it simple when deception, trickery and technology can enhance the excitement of the hunt? Mr. Hal began the announcement of the game by moving a couple of the oldest campers (I was one of them) over to the counselor's side, just to give the campers more to look for. The remaining campers were feeling particularly feisty and determined, with the aid of a pair of walkie-talkies, to systematically sweep the forest and quickly find the counselors.

The counselors, however, were not about to just wear bright clothing and make noise to assist the well organized campers. One of the important qualities of a good counselor is to be a good listener and it wasn't long before the counselors knew the strategy of the campers and counter-measures were devised to foil their plans.

At the sound of the whistle, the counselors (plus two campers) dashed into the woods hoping to find a secure place that would offer both cover and observation. I stuck with Steve Buck and Doug Parmenter and followed their footsteps into the woods. They seemed to know where they wanted to go and arriving at a high spot, we were met by a stranger with a suitcase! A lost woodsman? No, Bobby Hughes from down in Red Park met us with his own bag full of tricks. We had blankets for camouflage, a few snacks for the wait, a beer or two for the counselors, and our secret weapon – another walkie talkie. The chatty campers announced where they were at all times so we monitored their search and knew exactly when to hide and when to take cover as they walked right by us. It was almost too easy.

Finally the bell rang signaling the game was over. We thanked Bobby and he retreated down the Hill back to the Park. Triumphant, we marched into camp and just smiled when they asked where we were hiding. Just because we knew where they were looking didn't mean they needed to know how close they were!

Dave Wallace
1960-61, 64-65, 67

Memories indelibly etched in the mind of Chief War Eagle Freeman - 1975 Blackfoot Tribe, couldn't be prouder.....

- As I remember, everyday we would get either a clean t-shirt or underwear at the trunk house after breakfast. To try to explain the story, you must understand the long legacy of nicknames I believe started by Ken Lacy as "Under Waterman" Ken would dive down "underwater" and pinch kids' butts during open swim. When we got a clean shirt or underwear, you would carry it up the hill, change then on your next

trip down bring your dirty clothes with you. Benny Taylor would get his underwear wait until there was a crowd that had gotten theirs as well then he'd throw his clean underwear on his head, scream "It's Underwear Man" and bolt up the hill running as fast as he could. We would get the little kids going telling them they needed to chase him and before you know it everyone was running after Benny with his underwear on his head. Since this cut in to clean up time, Benny usually got extra running around the bases. "Underwear Man" was born".

- On that same note, I have fond memories of Mr. John with broom in hand swatting at Benny and getting him to run fast and faster around the bases on the hill – all of us egging Benny on to continue to smart mouth Mr. John and then we'd egg Mr. John on to get after B.T. Round and round he would go to our delight!

- During rest hour in the Hogan, we were allowed to listen to music. Someone had a cassette player circa: 1970 you know the kind where it's about a foot long, about six inches wide, weights about nine pounds and has a small speaker and of course the plastic top that once was there to cover the cassette area is broken off. But sound came out of it as long as there was a Bic pen cap stuck in the side of the knob to hold it on play. It didn't matter because it was during those summers that Buffalo Springfield "For What It's Worth", Jackson Browne "For Everyman" and Elton John "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road" all came to life. New in those days now "classics" for sure!

- One of the rites of passage at camp was when you were old enough you would rotate with others your age sitting with the night watch counselor. When it was your night I remember feeling special. We'd drag a bench where ever the counselor wanted to sit and watch the stars and talk and smack mosquitoes. Every once in a while we'd get up and shine a flashlight in some kids face and tell them to go to sleep. Then when you got the nod from the counselor, you'd walk down the hill to get a snack and deliver it to sit and enjoy it, just you and the counselor....knowing nobody else in camp was eating except you. If the snack was of especially high quality, you could boast about it in the morning.

- Benny Taylor and I became friends almost instantly my first year at camp. Since he had been there for 11 years already (I was 10 he was 11) I figured he knew his way around. OK, his only fault is that he's a lifetime Chippewa and I'm a lifetime member of the Blackfoot tribe. But he couldn't help it. It must have been after my second year at camp that we started to stay in touch. Both of us being former "Chattering Chipmunks" we had and still have the gift of gab. So rather than writing letters to each other, we'd record cassettes and send them in the mail. We did this for a long time to stay in touch. For a couple of years I would go to Minneapolis over Christmas break and stay at Ross and Doris' huge house on Lake of the Isles. Ben had the entire third floor to himself and coming from a three bedroom ranch, which was livin' large to me. Those trips and times at Tosebo have cemented a life long friendship between us. Years ago we were best men at each others weddings and we stay in touch through our memories of Tosebo.

- Steve Buckingham was running the waterfront when I got to camp. He taught me like many others to ski but there was one unique quality about Steve. It appeared that he was one of the older counselors, certainly he had spent summer after summer at Tosebo but it was hard to discern who was having more fun, us as campers or him. Two things among hundreds of experiences with Steve stand out. First is that me, Benny and Steve were at a table together I think just one time. They cut us off after that. Steve was married to Carolyn (as in Tonkins, the owner's daughter) at the time and we did everything we could to get to her. We saw it a victory if we get her so steamed that she'd get up and leave the table all three of us giggling in victory – at the reunion last year we laughed about that. Also, when it was raining (cheap excuse) or when the gas can needed to be hauled from the tank above Welcome House to the waterfront (more realistic excuse) Steve would get Benny and me to haul the gas can. We'd stick a long steel pole through the handle and each take a side. Those were the longest walks through Red Park ever but the payoff was Steve would pull us skiing. Over time, we skied a lot, we were late for lunch a lot and Steve got reprimanded a few times by Mr. Hal but it didn't stop him. We penned the line "Let the 3 B's do a little W.S. down at the W.F." When that came up, we were off. (The three B's Benny, Bob and Buckingham do a little water skiing down at the water front). Rain or shine we were there – thanks Buck!

- I was walking on the trail from the Indian Council one day after a down pour with Steve Buckingham. It was a bit of a tradition after a rain while walking on a trail to yank the branch as you passed under it to see if you could soak the person behind you. I was in the lead, Steve was following carrying a huge log – for what who knows what? I thought I was so smart, I yanked a branch and he got wet and I was so proud of myself. It wasn't 20 feet later Steve stopped me then proceeded to launch a chest pass of that log into the trunk of the sapling I was under, as I got a total shower, Buckingham just stood there and laughed. At the reunion last summer as we walked along the trail from the Craft Shop to the Indian Council, Steve and I

laughed about that and about the Budweiser commercial that has aired on TV recently where the Clydesdale's are throwing snow balls then the biggest horse of all goes over and knocks the tree with his body covering the other horses and just snickers....classic times, classic memories!

- I loved the horses and worked hard for my riding and horsemanship bars. Mr. Mike Kelly came to the riding program after Mr. Bob and he had a western swagger about him. Going to college in Colorado made him a cowboy in my mind even if he was from the Chicago area. An excellent rider and horseman, Mike taught me so much about riding and I have never forgotten that. The times we would saddle up with a small group and do a horseback overnight to Mosquito Junction were a blast. After an extended ride we'd stop and set up camp, tend to the horses and make dinner. After dinner I remember riding bareback through the hills and valleys back there until dark – what a blast.

- Canoe trips on the Pine were awesome. I remember for a number of trips Jody Struebing and I shared a canoe, Jody the bowman, me in the stern. As we became more accomplished on the river, we would do bridge jumps. At the time there were a few bridges along the river that were small and low the water. We'd approach slowly, Jody would jump on the bridge while I slowly pushed the canoe under the bridge, he'd jump back in the canoe and guide it so I could go up and over. A bit like a Chinese fire drill, not sure why we did it but it was fun!

- The memories flow as fast as I can type – I haven't talked about Indian Council and dancing, running through the woods barefooted in a loin cloth, face and body painted, screaming at the top of our lungs and jumping over benches and people to land in the ring to begin a dance – the secret of the council fire and so much more. The responsibilities to yourself and your tribe as a team or individual and more and more and more – you just can't write enough. There are no words to describe the sacred Indian Lore learned and respected at Camp Tosebo.

If you are a visitor to Tosebo and reading this, there really is no way to describe what summers meant to me at camp. Up until the summer of 2005 I really didn't understand how to explain or share those memories until the reunion. There I realized that regardless of what decade you attended Tosebo, the only real way to share the experience is to surround yourself with others who had done the same. We're in a very, very special fraternity and the ties bind tightly. As Steve said "Ho to the winds" and tossed the coals from the last fire of 1977 back into the reunion fire of 2005 and all of a sudden the still night stirred with a gust of wind and the Tosebo Gods spoke back– we all knew the spirit of so many that Tosebo touched is alive and well to be preserved forever.

Bob Freeman
1970-1975

Simple Times, Simple Pleasures

So many camp memories involve trips back to much simpler times without the concerns confronted by today's kids on every turn... the simpler times when excursions might only be structured around the meal and the return in time for Taps. I remember trips to the Outpost as that kind of trip, with the freedom to just be there. And I remember the wonderful taste of the burned hot dogs and the bug juice. Ah... the bug juice. And where did the water come from? We dug a hole in the beach sand until we hit water and then dipped the water out with a # 10 can. Can you imagine doing that now?

I was with the last group to take a canoe trip on the Pere Marquette River. Apparently it silted in enough that it was considered better to use other rivers for the camp trips. Skip Sage didn't go on the later canoe trips but I remember him on that one. He was probably the biggest kid of all, particularly on the first day. We set up camp and then took the trucks farther upstream so we could paddle empty canoes back to the campsite. I think it was Skip who encouraged some to get ahead of the others and hide around a bend. Then we'd sneak back and hide along the bank or in overhanging trees and drop into the water beside the slower canoes and swamp them. There'd be lots of yelling as one group was trying to drain their canoe and the other was rushing back to their hidden canoe. But the trips also had quiet times around the campfire and while pulled off on sandbanks for lunch. After all these years, I still can imagine the feel of the sun soaking into my skin and taste of the water or bug juice and Spam sandwiches with lots of mustard.

My greatest excursions were those early ones on the Snipes. I was 11 years old when I first came to camp and that was the first time I sailed. From the very first time, sailing has been in my blood and it is the sole passion that I have kept. Sailing a small boat on Portage Lake is still one of the most pleasant ways I could possibly spend a day. The freedom and peacefulness of being under sail is a magical thing for me

and learning to skipper a boat was a wonderful growth experience. I can still remember the swelling in my chest and joy through my entire body when I received my Skipper bar.

There are so many wonderful memories I have of my camp experiences. Small parts of them pop into my conscious mind at the oddest of times. It's not these individual memories that are most important to me. Rather it's the cumulative effect of all of them in the molding of me into who I am today. They gave me the ability to find joy in the simplest of things because of having time to slowly and safely savor them long ago. They give me the comfort of a bank of memories to cushion some of the less pleasant things that have come along since. They help remind me of what is truly important in life and encourage me to do all I can to make similar memories for my children and grandchildren.

Steven Scherschel
1957 – 1966

The Mysterious Journey.....of the Half-Moon (Outhouse)

Sometimes the gods that watched over Camp Tosebo chose to evidence themselves in mysterious ways. Why, I remember an event that the campers awakened to that had everyone chuckling....fortunately including Coach, but even more importantly, General....because that was one person you didn't want to distress.

Of course, "I wasn't involved," but I certainly can speculate on what might have happened that fateful night. Why, even the gods had a right to do a fun thing. Little did they know that, once having done the deed they would create a need for further action on the part of some of the beleaguered counselors.

For those campers that attended post 1957 (or maybe '56), prior to that time there was a "two seater" located on the trail coming down from the stage to the Clubhouse. While still structurally sound, it had not been used in years. The "half moon" reference was to that open design located prominently on its side. Well, one night after the above mentioned gods had spent some time in the company of some of their friends at "The Point" (if you don't know, I won't go into details), they returned to a camp deep in slumber. Exiting their chariots (and in a quietly boisterous mood), they commented on how it would be wonderful if the campers would journey down the hill the following morning and see the "half moon" in a more prominent spot....like in the middle of the road (but just off to the side enough to not be a hazard) where it intersected the road at General's house.

It is said that this required quite an effort. First, the outhouse had to be detached from its base, then carefully (and quietly, so as not to awaken the Roskies) brought down a hill that, given the size of the structure, must have been quite challenging. The eight or so gods that must have been involved worked long and hard to achieve this, finally placing the building in "just the right spot." As a crowning gesture, the "Ho for Toseboland" sign was taken down (the only time in Camp History where it was not hanging while camp was in session) and placed atop the building.

Imagine the laughter the next morning as the campers came streaming down the hill. Why, all were shocked....shocked ...at how such a thing could have happened. The minutes spent on and around the octagon before breakfast were filled with comments speculating on just that. Of course, some of us were still doing our morning chores at the barn, and only became aware of the displacement as we made our way toward the Clubhouse. Filing into breakfast, we wondered how such an event would be perceived....and more importantly, what questions might be asked...and to whom...and by whom.

Breakfast proceeded normally. Coach arose for the morning announcements, made them, and sat down. As usual, General then arose for his morning briefing....and in what was one of the greatest, coolest, most ingenious handlings of a "situation" I have ever seen, addressed the "presence" of the building now located in the road less than 50 yards from where he was standing.

For those who never had the great fortune to be exposed to this brilliant, kind, resourceful man, you missed knowing someone that falls into "the most unforgettable..." category. In his quiet way, he had much to do with the success of both Todd School and the Camp. His gentle demeanor, wise words and knack for getting the job done was something to behold. After his addressing routine matters, he (almost in passing) mentioned that the outhouse seemed to have gravitated to a new location and, as long as it had, presented an opportunity to move it to where he thought it might go...which was on the manure pile behind the barn. He then suggested a group of eight (naming to a man those that might have been involved had not the gods

done the deed) to help move it there...immediately after breakfast....stating that he was certain the group would do a fine job in disposing of the structure in the afore mentioned manner. With no further ado, the next word, as always the case when he finished, was "rise."

We filed out, thinking to ourselves that had we been the ones that moved the house in the first place, we had (once again) been outfoxed by the fox. The next hour was spent, with him supervising) moving the building to its final resting place.

A brilliant man, a fun time...and another wonderful memory.....and of course, a celebration when we re-hung the sign....and nothing more was ever said.

Fred Meyer
1946-1954

Softball

One of my favorite activities on the hill was just a good old fashioned softball game and since "the Hill was really a hill, it meant running up-hill to first base and kind of down-hill to home plate. Nevertheless when you were 9 like I was, in cabin 2 in 1967, the field looked as big as Tiger stadium. I marveled at how the counselors could hit these towering fly balls that never seemed to come down. As I got older and returned to camp every year I eventually was picked to be in the all important campers vs. counselors softball game. The campers took it quite seriously as we plotted our strategy in the batting order, positions in the field etc...little did the counselors know that Mr. Hal (who always pitched) played for the campers and if I live to be 100 I'll never forget how he could hit the tar out of the ball. He could hit from the right side in which the ball would end up near the BB range or Tom Thumb golf course, or he could lefty in which the ball could roll to the archery targets or even the craft shop steps. I remember one particular game when the counselors tried to outsmart us and had their leftfielder play in the woods BEHIND the golf course and their rightfielder played about next to the craft shop...well this didn't stop Hal...he hit the ball up the middle where it landed well beyond the brick bar-b-que and was thus lost in the leaves forever! When I came back as a counselor one of my favorite things to do as an after dinner activity was to hit fly balls to kids deep in the outfield trying to bounce them off the roof of either cabin 4 or 5. Well, one night I guess the wind was just right as I must have hit 5 in a row off the cabins upon which a group of young Mexican campers came running out the door screaming Spanish pleasantries complaining that the dust was raining upon them in the cabin with each time the roof was bonked. I laughed hysterically which probably would not have been the case if my Spanish was better...

Jay Deacon
1967-1977

Tosebo Nature Lore

Not many campers would list Nature Lore as their favorite activity (with possibly the exception of Dick Isom (56 – 59)), but like many of the skills learned in our summers, it has had lasting effects.

The counselor that I most remember was Gordon Bigalke (56-57.) He provided a knowledge and excitement that certainly invigorated me to the subject. I remember having it as an activity my first year, but am not certain if it ever repeated later. It may have only been an activity for the younger campers?

In my time, Nature Lore occupied cabins One and Two, along with the storage of various other sporting and camping equipment. Our introduction started with a guided nature collection hike, armed with long handled capture nets and lidded Mason jars. We probably also carried our four bladed Boy Scout knives, in spite of the only danger being ourselves. The rest of the hour was spent with the short hike to the circular field area near the council ring, trying to nab every flying critter encountered, most of which, were transferred into the Mason jars. A successful outing was perhaps not measured in the number of specimens, but in an absence of broken net shafts not broken in sword fights! Upon returning to the cabins, small doses of ether were poured into the jars - probably the favorite part - with intense staring at the result. Then the collections were dumped onto the work table (This was in the days before volatile fluids in a confined space were truly appreciated by kids!) and attempts were made to spear each insect with a straight pin for later mounting on a cardboard display slat. Most items were probably too small to survive the pins!

The most prized insects were the butterfly family - Monarchs, Black and Yellow Swallowtails, and those little white ones. The ultimate goal was a Luna Moth (moths have furry antenna, while butterflies don't.) which, to my knowledge, only Dick Isom ever caught one. Any large beetle or multi-legged object was

equally a badge of honor. I suppose that Gordie did his best to identify many of the observed insects, but apparently it went over my head!

Another field trip was to the swampy area behind the boathouse. We were always told that natural flowing springs created this wonderland, but in later life, I suspect other sources were also involved! The main channel into it from the beach had a narrow sandy bottom, but any diversion to the sides usually resulted in a black mud coating on one's only pair of athletic shoes. The search was usually for tadpoles and green or leopard frogs, although occasionally, a turtle was found. The ultimate, of course, was a water snake! If ever captured, it was proudly shown to every other camper, before used to torment the female kitchen staff. The average life of such snakes was similar to that of a Snickers bar making it to the end of a week!

Usually there was a hike up on the hills for plant identification. Most of us were more interested in visiting the ruins of forts past, or of threatening the less experienced campers with poison ivy. This activity, like the horse corral, probably demanded long pants! By the end of the week, I was familiar with the leaves of the various maples, oaks, strawberries, wintergreen, sassafras, hemlocks and pines, and the numerous ground covers. I doubt if I've ever encountered False Solomon's Seal since, but am surprised by how many tree species I can identify. Unfortunately, all my attempts at sassafras tea have been failures.

The summer culminated in the Nature Scavenger Hunt. A display board was posted with about 50 various plant leaves, and every camper was turned loose to find examples of each one. Although I don't remember all 50 ever being achieved, I do remember Joel Bergquist winning the competition one year, with just short of the maximum.

I also don't remember what the requirements were for a Nature Lore Bar, or anyone, with, again the exception of Isom, ever getting that Bar for their Shield.

The other related activity to Nature Lore was the building of forts or cabins in the woods. At one time before mine, as evidenced in the old home movies viewed on rainy Sundays, some pretty elaborate forts were constructed. In the immediate years after, those sites became a good source of construction material for new locations, as the downing of live standing trees was sacredly prohibited. In my summers, several campers came with the prestigious Bridgeport one piece hatchet, with leather belt carrying case. In retrospect, these were probably constructed of pot metal and weighed under a pound! Even if they could have taken an edge, none of us were capable, or patient enough to produce it. The only camp implement truly capable of cutting wood was probably the axe used by the Coach prior to the Indian Councils. However, I never remember an instance of the Bridgeport ever breaking in its usual use of being thrown to stick in a tree. Although initial talk centered on over-nights spent within the safety of our structure, I never remember achieving more than three logs height!

It was a ritual to carve one's initials into the bark of a birch tree. I should be somewhat embarrassed by that years later, but "J.B" was much more active than I was. Besides, there were two other "Hausser's" to be blamed!

Bob "Running Deer" Hausser
1956 - 1958

Summers of Dedication

The following letter was written to the editor of the Woodstock, Illinois newspaper to support the naming of the high school baseball field in honor of Anthony C. Roskie – the man most knew as "Coach."

June 25, 1991

Don Beasley, Editor
Woodstock Independent
Woodstock, Illinois

Dear Mr. Beasley,

Your readers may be interested in a brief reflection on Coach A.C. Roskie's summertime activities at Camp Tosebo. Coach occasionally sends me news clippings with reminiscences about his teams at the old Todd

School, Woodstock High School, or other aspects of his rich involvement in Illinois athletics and his beloved Woodstock community. But rarely is there a mention of Tosebo where, for 42 summers, he also helped create better citizens.

Noble Hill established Camp Tosebo in 1912 as the summer home for the Todd Seminary for Boys in Onekama, Michigan on Portage Lake, which channels into Lake Michigan. Amidst the Michigan woods, he and his heirs and their talented staff created a successful boys camp for the realization of his vision of nurturing the “Boy Citizen.” For 7-8 weeks, Todd faculty and students, and eventually others from throughout the U.S. and a few foreign countries, said goodbye to noise and city and reunited themselves with fresh air and the ways of the woods. In the Todd tradition of innovation and excellence, campers developed skills in all sports, outdoor living, nature study, play productions, crafts, horsemanship, canoeing, and lifetime attitudes of loyalty and service. Coach brought his now legendary athletic skill and positive outlook on life into this setting in 1930, having joined Todd in the autumn of 1929,

Teamwork characterized the spirit of Tosebo from its beginning, and as summers passed and the formal Todd connections with the camp diminished, not surprisingly Coach became the leader of the team. He taught from sunrise to sundown, and for counselors, often into the night. He coordinated all camp activities from the assignment of dining tables and canoe trips to the designation of Indian names and oversight of the tribal games which after 1935 were the heart of camp activities. He taught, umpired, life-guarded, counseled, inspired and gave the Camp its “pep.” He and Mrs. Roskie (whose first season was 1932) taught by example of the Tosebo motto: “There is Nothing so Kingly as Kindness.”

As Chief White Cloud, he officially opened and closed the Camp with the Indian council fires that signaled the beginning and ending of summer. Fifty to 60 boys, and a dozen or so counselors, families, cooks and friends of the Camp were always renewed by the crackle of the fires lit by the Great Spirit and the dancers who, after hours of training, must have felt the rhythms of the earth pass through their feet. Chief White Cloud’s preparations and steady drumming at the council ring in the deep woods gave both vitality and peace to the Camp and lessons for life.

While the effects of Coach’s lessons on those who learned from him at Tosebo are inestimable, the lessons themselves are very clear. Fair play and respect for others, sharing in chores, learning to respect nature, being responsible for one’s actions, and how to leave a place cleaner than you found it were some of them. All were hallmarks of the Roskie-way. The results were often the loss of fears and the growth of self-confidence and courage.

Last Christmas, at my request, Coach sent me a picture of himself as Chief White Cloud at Tosebo’s sacred council ring inscribed to “a close colleague from the glory days at Camp Tosebo.” It was clear to me that during my years at Camp (1957-1961) that he had many friends and colleagues who were close, and that the Tosebo days, no doubt like those at Todd, were mostly glory days. It is also clearer to me now that the glory days of Tosebo will never be over as long as the lessons that were taught there continue to bear fruit.

As always, the final word about his activities will have to come from Coach himself, but I hope the above reflections from just one who worked closely with him at Tosebo may offer some clues for an interested reporter or columnist to follow. It is a story worth reporting. The Tosebo experience and Coach’s influence in shaping it from 1930-1972 are significant to those who were taught by him during 42 summers when he was away from Woodstock up in the North Michigan woods.

Sincerely,

Kim P. Sebaly
1957 -1961

The Jokes

When you get a bunch of boys together you’re going to have a bunch of jokes and laughs. Most of the jokes were in good taste and no one was ever trying to hurt anyone. It was our way of being boys and having fun!!

Short sheeting a bed was always a favorite joke. The bed would be made so that when you got in it, your legs would only be able to go half way down the bed. The only way to fix the problem was to remake the bed. It was always fun watching someone make their bed at 10:00 p.m. when all they wanted to do was go to sleep!! At the Tosebo reunion, that took place in June of 2005, someone short sheeted my bed. I was

really surprised the first night when I couldn't put my legs all the way down the bed. I thought...don't these guys know how to make a bed...and then I realized that it was a joke. It took me several days to figure out who done it!! Oh well, I guess there are some things that you never forget how to do and although we are all grown men there is still a little camper boy in all of us!!!

Another favorite joke was to carry a camper's bed, while they were sleeping, and put it out in the middle of the field. They would wake up and have to figure out where they were. This joke was easy to do because we slept on army beds that were on tent plat forms. All you had to do was get a few people to lift the bed up and carry it off the tent plat form. This joke was great, but we needed a little more excitement. One night we got the idea to carry a camper's bed out to Tee-Pee town. Tee-Pee town was a little clearing in the woods where you could build fires. It was about two blocks from the craft shop. We were successful at carrying out this joke. The camper woke up in the morning and didn't know where he was. Since we were such nice campers we left his shoes and a note so that he didn't think that he died and went to heaven. I still remember that the camper never made it to breakfast....he slept in!!!

Ben R. Taylor
1965-1975

The Pine River

In the mid 60's there were three canoe trips that Tosebo campers could look forward to. The Big Manistee was a beginner's river, very wide with little current, almost like paddling on Portage Lake. I do recall we caught a snake (a Blue Racer?) on that trip which provided much excitement when we returned with it to Camp. The Little Manistee could be either exciting or a replay of its big brother depending on the water level that affected the limited rapids. The Pine, however, with length and respectable rapids was ready for the oldest campers to test. The mighty Pine!

The Pine River trip was designed to be a half day of paddling to an overnight camping spot, then a full day of paddling with camping at Peterson's Bridge (close to M-55 and M-37), and finally a short morning paddle to the "log jam", where we would be picked up by Mr. Hal in the truck. The Pine was narrow and had a good current to it. There were always fallen logs partially in the water and many large boulders to maneuver around. The entire trip was said to be about 50 miles, but that may have been more myth than truth. Whatever the distance, this was the big canoe trip!!

The first year I did the Pine, it was strictly by the book. The group stayed together, we took breaks along the way, found our campsites, slept under the stars and enjoyed our open fire meals. We navigated the rapids and felt accomplished when we returned to the routine back at Tosebo. The next year the Pine was once again waiting for Group One and we were anxious to take up the challenge. Our counselors added a new challenge to the adventure – let's not stop at the first campsite, let's keep paddling!

Energized by the idea without knowing quite what that meant, we all agreed and tried to pick up the pace since we now had to go all the way to Peterson's Bridge for the next available campsite. We also managed to forget that the really good rapids on the Pine are just before Peterson's Bridge. We would be paddling into them in the early evening and rocks would be more difficult to see. It was actually dark by the time we straggled into the Peterson's Bridge campground and we were exhausted and soon asleep.

The next day we realized we had a whole day to do nothing. Some chose to climb up under the Bridge to view the legendary verse, "The Blackberry Patch", scrawled on the concrete, the kind of verse that only a 15 year old boy can get excited about. Others took a float in the river and some went frog hunting in the nearby swamp. That afternoon we went out to the highway and thumbed a ride on a logging truck to the nearby intersection where we spent the money we weren't supposed to have and enjoyed some non-camp treats from the gas station and diner at the highway intersection.

Peterson's Bridge is a good 100' over the Pine River and late that night we took all the rope we had and artistically suspended a garbage can from the top of the bridge over the river. In the morning we saw the can gently swaying in the breeze as we paddled under it on our way to the "log jam." The "log jam" is not all that one might imagine and we had no difficulty reaching our landing to be picked up.

I'm not sure that Mr. Hal ever knew about our schedule change and we had to convince him that another group had raided our campsite and stolen all our tent ropes and other lines. However, given how anxious boys are to tell of their adventures, he probably knew by dinner time.

Dave Wallace
1960-61, 64-65, 67

Horse Challenges

An important program at Tosebo was Horseback Riding. Horses were not always the most predictable. One year we bought a horse, went to pick it up and could not get it trailered, so no deal.

We had an old horse named King. King could open the corral gate – not to get out – but just to prove he could. The other horses didn't see it that way and used the open gate to explore the neighbor's property. Frantic phone calls led to round up time.

And then one summer a horse “expired” in the corral on a Sunday morning. The horse counselor brought the news to Mr. Hal in the dining hall among all the boys. Mr. Hal quietly said to me, “Keep the boys here in the dining hall while I take care of this.” So we started singing and we kept on singing, and singing, and singing. Mr. Hal, meanwhile, went up the road to Max Millarch's farm and enlisted Max and his tractor to remove the horse. With the corral clear, the marathon songfest ended and the boys went on with their day, unaware of an exciting morning

Jane Tonkins
1963-1972

Long Bus Ride Home

The end of summer camp was usually an exciting time. Camp was great, but there was always the anticipation of a new school year and getting back together with my neighborhood friends. Going home also meant being back with my family, my good mattress, hot showers anytime I wanted, and a much less regimented eating schedule. The down side to the end of camp was the bus ride home. Nine hours to Chicago through every little town along the Lake Michigan shore and then I still had to find my Mother in the Chicago bus terminal. It never took long, however, to transition back to life in suburbia and soon Camp became a memory. As much as I liked being home, by the time spring rolled around, the letter announcing the next camp season always rekindled the same excitement. Immediately, I would dig out my camp pictures and begin dreaming of the perfect summer soon to be mine.

This particular year did not begin any differently. The pre-season letter arrived with news of new activities and returning staff. From my first year as a lowly Papoose, I had always looked up to the older boys. Now my summers as a Papoose, then a Brave, and then a Warrior were behind me. Now I was older and I would be Chief of one of the two tribes. My camp uniforms had that cherished faded look that left no doubt that I was a veteran. The summer was as good as any had been. Much was the same. The Camp truck still had to always go the long way around because it couldn't go up the hill on Miller Road. Chiefs still gave the little Papooses numerous piggy-back rides up from the Lake. The Craft Shop was lined with unfinished projects waiting for their makers to return. Coach sat diligently with his pipe and newspaper tending the boiler each Friday so we could have hot showers that night. And the Council Ring ceremonies were still full of mystery and reverence that only Chief White Cloud could create.

Just like in the years before, in the last days of camp I began to think about home again. It was intensified this year by my sixteenth birthday on the last day of camp, and the thought of a driver's license when I got home. The last morning began as it always had. A six-thirty breakfast ended when the bus turned into the camp. I grabbed my jacket and a couple of old magazines and began to climb aboard. Then suddenly it was different. Looking back at the other campers and counselors I realized what was wrong. This was my last bus trip home. There would be no letter next spring for I would be too old. Camp was really over and I fought to hold back the tears. I didn't notice all the campers around me. Being sixteen didn't seem so important and I would have traded a driver's license for one more long bus ride home.

Dave Wallace
1960-61, 64-65, 67

International Smugglers

In 1961, Coach Roskie was brave enough to take the older campers on a trip to Mackinac Island and Sault St Marie. The trip was great in the old open truck, with loud singing above the wind noise.

Passing Traverse City, and seeing signs about the annual Cherry Festival, brought many jokes about the Cherry Queen (of course.)

We visited Fort Michilimackinac and Mackinac Island where we biked around the island and ate lots of fudge. We camped near the shore of Lake Superior, testing the water with our toes, we discovered that it made Portage Lake feel like bath water.

We walked across the bridge to Sault St, Marie, Canada where we all bought firecrackers. Many hours were spent trying to find the best hiding places for the contraband. Successfully crossing back through Customs, we all felt so smug that we were able to sneak fireworks into the U.S. When we camped that night, Coach insisted we blow up all the firecrackers or throw them away. I later learned from Skip Sage that Coach had arranged with the border guards to allow us through with the promise of safely using them up that night.....Smart cookie that Coach Roskie!!!!

Bill Farnham
1958-1960

Unforgettable Days

The married couple who ran the Crow's Nest in 1954 was Peirce and Mary Erb. Peirce was the sailing counselor and Mary was the camp nurse. They returned in 1955 though I think they lived upstairs in the clubhouse. Peirce was a student and a teacher at the Todd school for Boys. I spent a lot of time with him at the waterfront listening to his stories of the old days at Tosebo and Todd School.

One story I remember was about a motor launch owned by the camp--predated the skunk--had an inboard engine--possibly a steam engine. It was stored in the boathouse, unused for some years. Campers would pee in the bow of the boat which caused it to become rotten. The solution was to tow the launch out in the middle of the lake and scuttle it.

In 1952 the skunk was powered by a pre-WWII Montgomery Wards-Riverside 5HP engine which was notoriously undependable. The last week of camp Ross's brother "Knobby" rented a 7½ HP Mercury outboard motor so the skunk could pull us around on the surfboard. Knobby had charisma, liked kids, and was expert at everything the camp had to offer. He worked for the railroad and I believe he was killed in an automobile crash during the winter of 1952. 1952 was the last year Carol Fawcett--Knobby and Ross's Mother-- ran the camp. She lived in the Beehive. She was the sister of "Skipper" Hill, the headmaster of Todd School. Skipper Hill came to Tosebo in 1953 for a few days--sailed up from Woodstock, Illinois in his schooner. I was in awe of him--sailing a schooner was the most important thing in life to me at that time. Skipper's wife--Mrs. Hill spent the summer of '53 in the Crow's Nest with her 3 granddaughters and two other girls. Mrs. Hill was the craft shop counselor--and did a good job. The 5 girls were a novelty. . . maybe a curiosity to the campers.

The oldest horse was Dolly (Originally was Mrs. Hill's own riding horse) who was the mother of Cappy and Coffee. Coffee was 2 years old in '52. I think Coffee was called "The Colt" for many years. During the '53 Rodeo a heavyweight camper named Denny Burke rode Dolly through a timed obstacle course, whipping her flanks with the reins the whole way. I was sitting behind Mrs. Hill in the bleachers. "Why, that's my horse, Dolly he's whipping" she exclaimed. Denny Burke was on her list the rest of the summer.

Four years ago my wife and I spent 2 nights at the Old Camp Tosebo Bed and Breakfast. The owners--David Wild and Lulu Garguilo were there from Seattle. David told me he wanted to have a reunion of old campers at the old campgrounds sometime--motor homes, tents, RV's etc. They did have a list of old Tosebo people who had either stopped by or had stayed in the B&B. Some names I remember were Ross and Doris, Peirce and Mary Erb (living at Walloon Lake) and Tom Crampton. Also they reported that Skip Sage had called to inquire about the B&B. They also had made contact with Larry Meyer (in Washington DC) and had contacted Fred Meyer (living in North Carolina, I believe.) Fred and Ron Messner (went to Oberlin) were the horse counselors--they ran a tight ship. When you earned the Horsemanship Bar, you probably didn't have much time to earn many other bars that year.

I think I might have liked school if my parents had sent me to the Todd School. I believe it closed in 1954. Todd had a farm--the kids made hay, planted gardens, rode the Tosebo horses. Todd had a "winter outpost" in the Florida Keys. Skipper Hill owned (I think) a small key--near Marathon and the whole school spent at least a month at the Todd Key--they took the 8' prams to the Key in the winter--and back to Michigan in the summer.

Dramatics was big at Todd. The school had two greyhound type buses, set up as camper/sleepers that took the drama students around the country putting on plays in theaters. As you probably know Orson Welles was a drama student at Todd and visited Tosebo several times in the 1930's. I understand that the last word that Orson sighed as he died was not Rosebud-- but Tosebo. No idea if it's true, but it makes a good story.

In my writings I have referenced the "Todd School" several times. It was originally properly called the Todd Seminary for Boys. . . . Hence the SE in Tosebo. The influence of Todd was considerable in my time at Tosebo. Many of the Tosebo staff were Todd faculty and employees. A prominent couple from Todd and Tosebo was "The General" and Mrs. Johnson. They lived in the first house (The VISTA) across the road from the clubhouse near the Gazebo.

There was a sulphurous spring gurgling out of a pipe in the yard near their house. The General was the Principal of the Todd School and also taught mathematics and Latin. He had a gruff countenance-imitated by campers and counselors alike. If you were late to a meal you had to go to his table to explain your tardiness. In his gruff voice he would greet you with "Buddy, You're late" Mrs. Johnson was a proper grandmotherly woman who was the camp dietitian. I thrived on the camp food and proper table manners were practiced-particularly during the week you sat at the Johnson's table. The Johnson's granddaughter, Diane, (probably 59 years old now) was at the camp with them. She was a nice girl-fun to be with-I remember her for her pleasant personality. The General had a 1938 (I believe) Dodge pickup truck that remained at the camp year round-spent the winter in the "Trunk House?" where our clothes and baggage were stored-counselors cubicles upstairs. The Dodge was pretty much at the end of the line--the General would round up campers to push start it. I last saw the truck parked in a little junkyard back of the horse barn. You will see that truck in pre 1955 camp photos. It had Camp Tosebo painted on the doors. The truck we all remember-that the General drove and took care of- was the 1942 Chevy 1 1/2 ton that hauled campers to Onekama, Manistee, to canoeing drop-off points, etc. Until the closing of Todd, the General drove the truck back to Todd each fall. Afterward it remained at Tosebo during the winter. 1942 was a rare year for trucks-with WWII shortages of materials, the truck had a painted grille and front bumper, unlike the chrome on the 1941 models. Riding in the back, it seemed we were flying, though I was usually looking over the Generals shoulder. . . . 35 to 40 MPH was tops. About 1973 I briefly stopped at Tosebo. There it was-parked in the yard below the clubhouse-tears welled up in my eyes when I saw it. The engine block was cracked-due to negligent winter maintenance. Otherwise it was in decent un-restored condition. Each year from 1942 on, the General had written the mileage on the dashboard (for oil change and lube records) until 1955 when he retired from Tosebo. At that time I thought he (the General) was about 80 years old. Hell, for all I know he was no older than I am now. When I returned again to the Tosebo B&B 5 years ago they told me the '42 Chevy truck was still in possession of the camp owners - in storage - awaiting possible restoration.

I spoke of the General's granddaughter who was at the camp between '52 and '55. I said her name was Diane . . . that's wrong-pretty sure it was Arlene. The General was a class act-drove up from Woodstock IL as soon as school was out to open the camp for the summer-supervised the rebuilding of the dock every year-and reassembling the wooden raft and sliding board. He was the brains that held the physical facility together. In my time there he was the one who stoked the coal-fired boiler on Saturday for the showers and kept us moving through the shower house quickly so no one stood under the hot shower too long. Honestly, I don't know why most of us kids needed that weekly shower--those of us who spent most of our time at the lakefront were pretty clean--maybe the stable hands and those who specialized in baseball and tennis needed them.

At the end of season awards banquet the last night of camp the General presented the most highly coveted honor--the Noble Hill award. The General gave a detailed speech about the life and high ideals of Noble Hill, founder of our camp. The General held Noble Hill in high esteem. They must have had a long and close association.

I enjoy thinking back at the ways seniority and ranks were established. You could be a 16 year old-most valuable all around athlete-first year camper, and still your title was Papoose, while a 9 year old, 97 pound bench warmer, third year camper was addressed as Warrior. Well do I remember the humiliation a couple of 16 year old, first year campers endured having to wear a one feather head dress to Indian council meetings and being addressed as Papoose when the weekly honors were read. Each year there was always a new little kid in camp with a big mouth and an obnoxious presence. When Indian names were given out, that kid was given the name Chattering Chipmunk. Steve Rathbun in 1953 bore that name-it was a death knell. He was hazed, initiated, short sheeted, picked on, beat up, and brutalized in every manner. Kids can be very cruel.

I remember during my first year at camp, while swimming I made a self important remark to camper Steve Hoffman that I was allowed to swim out to the wooden raft while he had to stay inside the life line in shallow water.

Steve replied "This is my third year Hausser." He had the last word--being a third year camper carried more status than being a deep water swimmer. A word about Steve Hoffman (from Manitowoc Wisconsin): He was a quality person then as I expect he is now--attended camp at least seven years, was a chief at least once.

George Hausser
Warrior Tooting Owl
1952 - 1955

The Demise and Resting Place of “The Tosebo”

It was about 1928 or 1929 when Roger Hill (alias the Skipper) arrived at camp with a new purchase of an old Coast Guard powered life boat. He appropriately drove through the channel with horns ablazing and sailed right up to the dock at camp. Of course, a large entourage awaited him as this was the camp’s only powered piece of floating equipment.

At dinner that evening, he advised that he and a crew (to be named) would drop the 27 foot “Tosebo” from her slings in the boat house and tow her out into Lake Michigan for a proper burial at sea. And at this point, I must remind all of you campers still alive, that the “Tosebo”, with her fringe on the top and a one-lung engine, had been in slings for many a year. Host of campers had piddled on her bow, both port and starboard, for low these many years.

The following day, Skipper had notified Herb Knowles (a lakefront counselor) , Bob Crane and yours truly that we would make up the crew for the proper burial at sea. A crew helped as we lowered the “Tosebo” into the water, and, of course, she leaked like a sieve, and several buckets aboard barely could keep up. So, the Skipper advised we would let her soak up overnight and then tow her to sea the next day – a brilliant decision, I might add .

The next day we found that she wasn’t leaking as much so we began our journey to sea. Herb Knowles was at the bow steering the “Tosebo” on her last cruise and the Skipper leading the tow out toward the channel. As we arrived at the channel, the entire bow end (piddled on for years) gave way with Knowles still holding the steering wheel in his hand, and nothing else, yelling at Skipper, who went sailing along out to sea with just the bow of the “Tosebo” in tow. We three rushed to the stern which stayed afloat because of an air pocket.

The Skipper eventually realized the problem, but continued out into Lake Michigan where he cut loose the bow and she sank.

Upon returning to the other portion of his problem, we tied on and the Skipper towed us just inside the north pier head and half way to what is today the Portage Lake Yacht Club. And there the “Tosebo” rests today.

As the years wore on, the wreck of the “Tosebo” has become famous as a place to take little tykes fishing for sunfish, perch bluegills, etc. So any parents wanting to start their kids into the wonderful world of fishing, begin at the “Tosebo.” In fact, Portage Lake is, was, and will continue to be one of Michigan’s finest fishing lakes – and Ho for Toseboland!

John Dexter
1921 - 1933

Streaming Memories

Once a week we loaded up the TOSEBO truck and drove to Onekama to the store. We bought a couple of comic books and a candy bar. Some money management was learned as our allowance was small.

Driving up from downtown Chicago on the old bus was great. You could lie down and sleep if you chose. Also, it was a chance to get acquainted with some kids before arrival at camp.

My parents came to visit my brother and me at least once each summer. They brought cherries and berries. We never wanted to leave camp to “eat out” with them, but rather tried to incorporate them into the camp rituals. It was emotional when they left, but friends soon filled the gap.

The assembly line at the shower house was always fun, though occasionally kind of nippy. With all the swimming we did it’s hard to imagine we remained dirty for long, but the clean clothes sure felt good.

Cantering horses on the Lake Michigan beach at sunset.

The pangs at summer’s end, wondering if we’d ever see each other again.

I often play the piano and sing the camp songs, as the melodies are those of popular songs from the early 20th century. Not the same as around the council fire or after a play at the theater, however.

The love of tennis that developed on those courts carried me to the ISHSA state tourney, the freshman NU team, and then the tournament trail around Chicago in the late 90’s. And I shot a buffalo in Montana last summer with my bow and arrow – another TOSEBO learned skill.

The first meal I ate up there we sang the pie song. I just sang it again tonight for a fresh pumpkin pie.

Seeing some of the gang last summer reminded me of why we were best friends then – because they were the best friends anyone could have as friends. Amazing to pick up in mid-sentence where you left off 50 years before.

I still have belts and whistle chains made in the Craft Shop.

Harlan Bogie
1955 - 1956

The Games

During my many years as a camper we played many different games. One game that I really enjoyed was the camper/counselor hide out. In this game the counselors would hide in the woods and the campers had to find them. If the camper found a counselor then that counselor had to do something for that camper; like make his bed for a week!

Most of the time the senior campers would join the counselors in hiding. I remember one hide out where I found one of the senior campers during the first few minutes. I was a very young camper. I took the trail behind the stage and starting walking. I wasn't on the trail more than a minute, when I heard someone yelling...HELP, HELP, HELP!!! I was a little worried, so I started running towards the yelling. When I got there I saw one of the senior campers, Woody Whitehead, tied to a tree. Woody told me that the counselors had tied him to the tree as a joke. I don't think that Woody thought it was that great of a joke when he had to make a bunch of beds for a week.

Woody was at the Tosebo reunion in 2005 and I talked to him about this story. He told me that he didn't remember it, but I think that he did!!

When I finally became a senior camper it was my turn to go out and hide. I was teamed up with another counselor who didn't like hiding in the woods with a bunch of bugs. He had the idea of hiding on the North side of the club house. It was within the boundaries and we weren't hiding in a building! It worked out to be a great spot. We sat around and talked for several hours and we weren't eaten by any bugs. I remember that during that hide out game most of the counselors were found...but not us!! We had an excellent hiding spot and no one came close to finding us!! Everyone wanted to know where our special spot was but we didn't tell them...it was our little secret!!!

Ben R. Taylor
1965-1975

The Creek...That Almost Wasn't...

One of the (for most, fond) memories shared by campers through the years are those of their journey down Bear Creek. The wonderful overnight was for many their first real overnight. Oh sure, prior to the trip we might have spent a night in the woods...but away from the possibility of a quick return? Other than the horseback gang, few had really disappeared into the deep woods...and that is why (I think in '54 or '55) a journey for a handful of us took place that was for most the Tosebo canoe trip of the decade.

I don't remember how it started; all I remember is that the plan was to put in where we normally were taken out and continue down the creek through an area (it was my understanding) never before traveled by Tosebo campers...and for two nights rather than one. As I also recall, once we started, there would be no opportunity to come out anywhere other than the planned spot. For whatever reason, Coach did not make the trip, the only time I can recall him not spending some time on that Creek.

As was always the case, General supervised the loading...the only difference being we all did a serious check on our food supplies. However many hours later, we unloaded, put the canoes into the water, turned, waved goodbye and began the trip.

The first day was fun, but otherwise rather routine. We had all done the upper creek and knew what to expect, but at each bend on this trip the scenario was new. Barbed wire across the water, log jams requiring minor portages, mild rapids, gorgeous wooded areas not normally traveled...it was glorious. We scouted for a good spot and stopped for lunch, took a brief swim, and continued along the creek for what I recall was a

relatively routine (but fun) day. While we of course played, any thought of the usual canoe tipping antics were not part of the plan. Later, having found a good overnight spot, we stopped and set up our first camp.

The morning of day two started as we would like it to. Great weather, full stomachs, and another fun day ahead. The log jams were becoming more frequent; while there were fewer wire barriers across the river, they were more formidable. Whoever put them up did not want us there....but we were Tosebo Campers, undaunted and unafraid.

I don't recall when we came to the first divide in the creek, but sometime after lunch we experienced a series of them. With no map to guide us, we were forced to make a number of choices as to which leg to take....and therein lies the tale of the rest of the afternoon....where by about three we found ourselves swamp-bound. In water were the canoes could barely float (we were of course out of them and pushing through swamp-grass, log jams, whatever), we faced a dilemma; turn back or push on ahead. We had clearly lost the main stream. What to do?

After "circling the wagons (canoes)," we branched out (each pushing our canoe) through the swamp, staying within sight or shouting distance, searching for a way out (read as any water moving as opposed to just standing). What seemed like hours later, we found an opening in the reeds no more than six inches wide. Pushing the canoe along, we yelled to the others to join us....first pushing and carrying, then steering as the opening widened, then walking alongside as the canoes finally started floating, then finally able to get back in and kind of pole until we could once again start paddling. Of course, the question in our minds was "had we really found the main stream?"

By the time we started to worry about finding a campsite, we were comfortable in thinking we had. Dinner never tasted as good as it did that night....and we all slept very well. The third day was fun and as challenging as the first, but after what we had encountered the afternoon of the second day, somewhat anticlimactic. The flip side was that we knew we had experienced something that few others had, and in having done so, attained a sense of satisfaction that would stay with us for years to come.

By that afternoon, as we rounded the curve and saw General and the truck awaiting us, we knew we had taken a serious canoe trip.

Fred Meyer
1946-1954

Lessons Learned Well

Dear Mr. Wallace,

Thanks you for your letter of July 9th with the snapshot of the Tosebo Boathouse.

I had a fine time at Camp Tosebo and understand that I cried when it was time to go home.

My great pleasure was the cookies after swimming session.

Roger Hill, whom I much admired, gave us seamanship classes in the Boathouse and I learned to "box the compass." This proved useful later on, at the helm of a Liberty ship, zigzagging back and forth across the Pacific.

I can remember the yawl, Beachcomber, although I was never aboard her under sail.

Another pleasant memory is the Sandenburg Store at Red Park and the penny candy assortment.

I am very pleased that you are restoring Camp Tosebo

*My best wishes
Dick Smith*

Richard Smith
1915 – 1916

The End of Summers, Camp and My Innocence

EVERY SUMMER at the end of June, I got on a bus on the South Side of Chicago and rode north to a summer camp in Michigan where I knew - I knew at the time — that I was as happy as I would ever be.

They started in 1952 when I was 10 and ended when I was 17, these summers of the kind that can haunt people for the rest of their lives. Not that they were part of a lost era of a world of manners and splendor or anything that grand. Although we had some fancy boats call from time to time on our little lake — which was connected by a narrow channel to Lake Michigan — the setting was rustic and the manners were Midwestern straightforward.

Nor am I going to make the usual claim that the significance of those summers lay in what I learned about life. Those summers shaped my character, teaching me about grit, perseverance, fair play and so on. But the main thing I learned - even though I didn't understand how central the lesson was to life until much later - was that golden moments in any form are just that; they don't last.

My first summer there was 34 years ago, but I still play scenes from camp in my mind like favored old movies. It seems strange that a 44-year-old man should keep going back to what happened so long ago. But I suspect that I am not alone. Summer was the time when I broke free of the restraints that held me in check - school and all the anxieties and responsibilities that that meant; my parents; moving in a narrow world that did not allow me to spread out, expand and be the person that I secretly believed I was.

Here I am teeing off on a 2-1 pitch and driving it over the center fielder's head for a grand slam home run; there is the look of shock on Stevie Hoffman's face as I return his forehand drive back at his feet on my way to deposing him as the camp tennis champion; now I'm galloping down a logging trail, feeling the power of the horse beneath me, ducking branches and feeling — why be restrained about it — joy. Is it a sign of immaturity, of my eternal youthfulness, that these pictures are so clear in my mind?

The camp I went to, Tosebo, was founded as the summer headquarters of the Todd Seminary for Boys, a reasonably fancy prep school in Woodstock, Illinois. Todd was all right academically as far as I could tell, but its long suit was an insistence that boys get off their duff and do things. Todd owned a schooner, two Pullman buses, a stable of serviceable horses, a place down on the water in Florida and Tosebo. Todd students learned to sail, to ride, to play ball, and so on. The idea of the summer camp was that some of Todd's students, near as I can get it, had parents who really didn't want to see all that much of them. So the summer camp kept them occupied when school was out.

The spot the school picked for this camp was beautiful: Lake Portage, in the middle of the woods about a mile off Lake Michigan. The woods were full of white birch and aspen as well as pine, oak and maple and Lake Portage is one of the loveliest lakes anywhere in the world.

Except for the younger campers, those under 10, everyone slept on World War II surplus Army and Navy cots in four-man "Baker" tents. We had no heat, of course, no electricity and two lavatories with flush toilets for 60 boys and another 10 counselors. We washed in cold water, with hot showers once a week. The craft shop had electricity, which allowed us to listen to the All Star game (a big deal then) and Detroit Tiger baseball (not a big deal at all for me; I was a diehard Chicago White Sox fan.)

Not everyone, of course, loved the lack of amenities. We all complained, but most of us felt it told us we could take it, that we were tough, that we were becoming men.

The campground and the baseball diamond were on what we called "The Hill." A batter had to run uphill to first and second, down to third (being careful not to round third too wide for fear of running into the backstop behind the adjoining tennis court) and then downhill to home. The field was surrounded by woods in such a way that center field, rather than being the deepest field, was the shallowest. As a result, the left fielder, when playing deep, could not see the right fielder.

Somewhere in center field was a tree that was a marker of some sort. Balls hit to the right of it were ground rule doubles, while balls hit to the other side were good for whatever you could get. I have a feeling that some summers the sides were reversed.

We played on Sunday nights after the picnic on the hill (there were picnic benches under the trees in center field — another hazard). The games were supposed to be seven innings, but in late July and August, we seldom made it because it got dark too early. These games were all-out affairs. We played 12-inch ("kitty") ball: fast, underhand pitching, stealing bases, sliding, and called balls and strikes. Scoring was done carefully and batting averages were posted, which is how I know I batted over .700 the summer I won my baseball bat, batting third, in front of my brother, six years my elder, who for once found little to criticize in my performance.

I was also the catcher, which was not a natural position for me because I was a runt, relatively speaking. I had two qualities that recommended me for catching: I could catch the ball almost no matter what — an important consideration when runners could steal bases if the ball got away; and I was a gritty kid, sometimes foolishly so, but then that's what shedding boyhood is all about.

For eight summers that was my world. Camp at first had meant games for me, insurance that I would never be left — as I had been so often in the city - with nothing to do and no one to do it with; then it

had become a matter of challenges, of tests to find out what I was capable of doing; by the time I was 16, my seventh summer, camp was freedom. Maybe the moment I felt free was when I had to leave, and spend the rest of my life in a world where nobody ever gets to feel free like that.

But all that came later. Who could imagine a world larger than camp? In the early years I found myself rubbing shoulders with living monuments and legends. Someone had hit a ball to the far limits of left field; someone else had swum across the lake or wrestled a horse to the ground or eaten 100 pieces of toast in a single sitting. My brother was a monument to me, but he was not the grandest of monuments. That would have been Anthony C. Roskie — known simply to young and old alike as "Coach."

I had known him since my brother had first started going to camp, some five years before me. When I got there Coach Roskie was program director of Camp Tosebo. People said he had been little All-American in football and basketball at Lake Forest College and had lettered in track as well. We never asked, but we believed it. There was talk that he could have been a major league baseball player as well but chose instead to get married. I have no idea. All I know is that he was one of the most charismatic people I have ever met, born to lead and inspire.

Coach walked with a stoop, which, legend had it, came from his colliding with a wall-mounted drinking fountain during a basketball game with the Harlem Globetrotters. In any event, I never saw him move at anything faster than an animated walk. He threw a baseball only short distances and limited himself to hitting grounders during infield practice.

It wasn't in sports that Coach distinguished himself, but in his handling of boys, of knowing exactly what to say to get them to do the right thing, of never losing his enthusiasm, of tolerating mischief and boisterousness because he knew what boys were like, of knowing when they needed to blow off steam and when to restrain them.

As I look back I realize that with each summer. Coach's authority was diminished. First his house was taken away from him by the camp owner, who gave him a smaller, less comfortable place across the road. One summer I noticed that where he could make decisions before, now he had to check. Still, he was the one who made things happen — who conducted the morning meeting every day, who set up the Saturday night campfire and who put on his buckskin suit and Indian headdress four or five times a summer and became Chief White Cloud, presiding over the Indian councils.

But as he changed, I changed too, and he understood that, maybe because he understood the lesson I hadn't learned yet, about how everything ends.

The summer I was 15 I lived in a tent with another 15-year-old — Weissman. We were friends from Chicago and spent the summer raising hell — staying up late to talk about girls and other important matters, sneaking in smokes when we could, racing horses — my horse was a high-spirited mare we believed to be at least part quarter horse — down the beach on Lake Michigan (which was probably illegal). Our tent was located away from the other campers and, to distinguish ourselves, we had found two oversize beds with wrought iron headboards.

The morning Coach was scheduled to leave on a three-day canoe trip, Weissman and I were lying on our beds fantasizing about how good it would be with Coach away. With him gone, we told each other, we would get away with murder — leave our beds unmade, do no work, sleep in the afternoon and indulge our every whimsy.

Our fantasy was interrupted by a voice — Coach's — summoning us by name to the spot in rightfield where he was standing. Wearing our blue work shirts, which were decidedly non-camper, we sauntered down.

"Men," he said, "I'm going to be gone for three days. Now, Meyer, when your brother used to be here and I'd go off on a trip, I'd ask him to keep an eye on things for me, make sure that everything stayed on track. Your brother's not here now, so I'd like to ask you to take over the responsibility. And, Weissman, you, too. Help him out. Can I count on you men to do that for me?"

Weissman and I couldn't look at each other. If we felt ourselves to be above it all, Coach had played right to our vanity, while making the one appeal he knew would work, to our respect and affection for him. We could not say no; and we could not say yes to him and then not honor our promise.

We trudged off to make our beds, so that we would be setting the proper example.

I would not want to leave that impression that those summers were pristine idylls full of appeals to moral pride. The following summer — by then I was a junior counselor — I ran into a 16-year-old girl who was, in Tom Lehrer's phrase "similarly inclined," and spent every night I could on the beach with her. I'm not sure what else we had in common because once we discovered our mutual interest, and got over our terror at the wonder and power of it, we didn't have many conversations.

Some things promised to stay stainless, however: not just in memory but in fact.

Once a summer at least, as a treat for the campers and for me when I got old enough to lead trail rides, we would ride out to a spot overlooking Lake Michigan that we called the "Top of the World." To reach the Top of the World, we had to ride up an old logging trail that wound through the woods until suddenly we emerged in a hilly pasture surrounded on three sides by woods. On the fourth side was a steep, sandy slope that led down to the wide beach of Lake Michigan. On a sunny day, emerging from the woods, you could see the water shimmering in the sunlight and hear the waves pounding on the shore.

For me, going to the Top of the World was something akin to a spiritual experience. My brother and the other riding counselor had conveyed that sense to me years before, and we had kept the tradition. No houses, no signs of civilization marred the beauty and serenity of that pasture. It was as if God had designed it and left it there as a secret we treasured. We tried to be selective about whom we brought there. Knaves and fools of whatever age would not appreciate it; limiting our visits kept the experience special.

When I was 17, a high school graduate spending my last summer at camp before I went off to college, I was made the riding counselor. I wasn't entirely anxious to go to camp that year. For one thing, I had fallen in love with a blonde goddess. I knew it was love because we had spent endless hours together and hadn't even kissed yet. That summer was agony for me. I missed her terribly. The only outlet for my loneliness was physical activity. I couldn't even bear to take out rides, a task I delegated to the 15-year-old boy who was helping me out. In past summers, I had found a thrill in galloping down logging trails on my quarter horse. Now I chose to stay behind and clean out the stalls and the corral, hoping the time would pass by more quickly. The object of my lust from the summer before came for a week, but we'd lost interest in each other. She, too, was in love with someone back home.

Coach was there, but his stature by now had been substantially reduced. The camp owner had arrogated to himself all the little symbols and perquisites of Coach's authority. I spent most nights, that last summer, in his living room, sitting by the fireplace with him, his wife and daughter and another counselor or two, listening to a ballgame or talking about the "old days." The old days!

Somewhere near the end of that summer, while a friend and I were fixing a roof on top of one of the cabins, we hit on the idea of getting Hillerich and Bradsby to make a special "Louisville Slugger" to mark Coach's 25th anniversary at Camp Tosebo. It was too late to arrange that summer, but we said we would do it the following year, and sure enough, my friend did, but by that time, I was gone for good.

I didn't go up to the Top of the World until one of the last rides of the summer. Was I saving it? Was I hoping it would save me? We trotted up the old logging trail and came to the clearing, looking at the water that roared and shone all the way out to the horizon. Then I saw the stakes and the cinderblocks and the foundations. They had subdivided the Top of the World. It was a lesson I have learned over and over again, but that was the first time.

Later on, when the letter came to me in my college dorm from the camp owner offering me a job the next summer, he added as a postscript that he had sold my horse. I could have gone back, but then it would have been just a job for me. I know this now, having learned it over and over again. The pleasure, the joy of summer and camp was in not knowing — in not having to know. If I'd known, I would have had no innocence to lose.

Lawrence Meyer
1952-1959

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Reunion 2005

Bobbie and I made two trips to the Midwest this summer. We spent a week making a driving trip to Indiana to attend my 40th high school reunion and a second trip to Michigan to attend a reunion of campers from the boy's camp my brothers and I attended from the late forties to the early seventies. The camp is located in one of the few desirable areas of the Midwest where nature is progressing at a faster rate than development. If one were looking for an exception to the saying, "You can't go home again," they would have found it at Portage Lake during the second week in June.

Some 45 boys, pretending on arrival to be men, collected at Camp Tosebo for a weekend of nostalgia and recollection. Encouraged by the graciousness of Mother Nature, coddled by our hosts, and inspired by memory of a more simple time, an older, heavier, less tanned and much less agile group of campers did what boys are want to do when beyond the earshot and observable range of those who choose to dwell on the many reasons why a person can't instead of the one reason that a person can. A swim in the lake, a hike in the woods, a boisterous meal in the camp dining room, engaging in behavior so common but yet so human, we once again shared in the activities that bonded us by common experience as life-long friends. For a weekend in June, a campfire once again burned in the woods overlooking Portage Lake, lighted to celebrate those who could return and to honor, by tearful remembrance, those who will never return again.

Steve Buckingham
1953-1972