

11. THE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On November 15, 1995 a group of 4 people met for the first time to start planning the 50th Anniversary Celebrations for Camp Nemo. This committee was a sub committee of the Property committee and was chaired by Rick Elop..

During the first meeting the founding members of the Anniversary Committee brainstormed for 2 hours on the major objectives of the celebrations.

Recorded in the minutes of that meeting were the following 5 major objectives:

1. History - research, preserve, understand and communicate the rich history of Camp Nemo..
2. Public Relations - external (increase the public awareness of Scouting) and internal (ensure that all members of Scouting feel proud of what they have)
3. The opportunity for all current youth and adult members to participate. In addition former leaders and youth members should also have the opportunity to take part in the celebrations.
4. Leave Camp Nemo a better place at the conclusion of the celebration
5. Fund raising - natural tie in with the above objectives

From these objectives many ideas were generated - some of which ended up happening and some which never got off the drawing board. The minutes from the next few meetings reveal some of the following ideas:

- Reception/Open House (past and present people)
- Replacing Spectator Lodge
- "Wall of Fame"
- Time capsule
- Ensure all routine maintenance is up to date
- Develop a good camp map

Camp Book of "light" Camp Nemo stories and memories.

- Having areas/groups adopt a building for the year to ensure all maintenance and painting was up to date.
- Finalize the Conservation plan for camp
- Develop a trail system
- Increase "signage"
- Slide show at annual banquet
- Gather all the history
- Develop quick fact sheets for all buildings
- Photo display to be used at district events
- Develop a camp crest and logo
- Market souvenir items
- Special push with an anniversary tie-in for the distinguished donor's program
- External Media at the open house and grand opening of the proposed new lodge
- Special edition of The Scouter's Dispatch
- Camp Nemo Anniversary presence at all district events

It became apparent that many of the ideas were not the responsibility of the Anniversary Committee and some of the ideas were forwarded to other committees. We realized additional resource people were needed and the original committee grew in size. During the Anniversary Celebrations the following people were members of the Anniversary Committee

Rick Elop (Chair)

George Guest

Carmen Harvey

Bette Kinnaird

Mike Lethbridge

Catherine Martin

Bob Miller

Jim Russell

Dave Wands

The success of the Anniversary celebrations was the result of countless hours given by these people to organize the event.

As always there were contributions of time and talent by over a 100 other volunteers who worked a specific project such as baking a cake for the birthday party, painting a building, tending a to barbecue, greeting and directing guests etc.

Listed below are many of the events or accomplishments that took place during the anniversary celebrations

ANNUAL MEETING

On March 4, 1996 the annual Hamilton Wentworth District meeting was held. This was the first time that the 50th anniversary message was introduced to members of Hamilton Wentworth Scouting.

A static display board showing many of the old camp crests and pictures welcomed everyone to the meeting. This display was used throughout 1996 to showcase the history of Camp Nemo



2 panels from the table center piece

On each table there was a folded brochure that gave everyone at the annual meeting an outline of what was going to be happening over the coming year.

This brochure:

- Introduced the anniversary logo (as illustrated on the back cover of this book)
- Announced the Anniversary Lodge project
- Introduced the Anniversary Wall project
- Contained a “Did you Know?” section testing everyone’s knowledge of Camp Nemo
- Gave an overview of other “Items of Interest” that would be happening during the celebrations.

The printed program for the evening featured the anniversary crest as illustrated on the front cover of this book.

The Anniversary Committee also gave a visual presentation of one of the potential improvements that could take place at Camp Nemo in 1996.

What follows is the text of that presentation:

What do you think of when you hear the following:

Rain, Mud, Wet Clothes, sun burn, more mud, spelunking, flashlights, a little more mud, a 2nd thunder shower, camp fires, no sleep, wet boots, just a little more mud

If you are still confused let me help you. From “the New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language” we find the following description of the word MUD.

Slimy sediment

Wet or soft earth

Can I be referring to anything other but Mt. Nemo Scout Camp?

In November of this year , our very own Camp Nemo will be 50 years old. To many of us in this room, it is hard to believe that we have reached this milestone.

We are very fortunate in this region to have such a magnificent camp as Nemo. Only a stones throw away from Hamilton in the shadow of the Niagara Escarpment, Camp Nemo offers so much to each group that uses the facility.

Your own thoughts of Camp Nemo probably run the gamete.

To parents, a weekend at Nemo has meant 48 hours of peace and quiet on the home front. There is a small price to pay for this peace and quiet. This price could be a ¼ inch of mud everywhere in the back seat of the car. It could be Johnny arriving home with an extra 5 pounds of clothing caused entirely by the mud indiscriminately found everywhere. It could be the cost of distance phone call that you made Sunday evening to Tide - saying I have the perfect test for your next commercial.

For Leaders, Nemo had provided the opportunity to see the "out" in Scouting and the smiles it brings to our youth members when they see what the great outdoors has to offer. However, these smiles will never cure the leaders headache as they wonder - "Where did all this mud come from?" or "How am I going to explain this to the parents?" or "Am I ever going to get this building clean?"

To the kids a weekend at Camp Nemo means memories of searching out and finding the largest puddle and likely stepping in it. Pillow fights, night hikes, getting along in a group and just maybe accidentally on purpose staying awake all night.

To mark the 50th Anniversary, we are planning on having a very special year. In the interest of time I will tell you that many of the highlights are listed on the special table centre piece. In addition a Anniversary Edition of the Scouter's Dispatch will be coming listing many more details.

But I would like to tell you of one special plan. One of the objectives of the camp anniversary committee is to leave the camp a better place at the conclusion of the year. We have discussed many ways in which we could do this. We considered adding running water to all of the buildings (complete with flush toilets) but this would just be too expensive. We thought of paving an area in the main field to be used as a basketball court or road hockey surface in the good weather and as an outdoor skating surface in the winter. What about the idea of adding a jungle gym and swing set for every building?

Close your eyes and imagine if you will - you are camping at Nemo for the weekend. It pours with rain all week long. Thankfully it stops raining just as you

gather at your meeting hall before heading out for the weekend. It's Saturday morning and the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Venturers and Rovers have been given their mission. Camp Nemo, "the Final Frontier." Your two day mission is to seek out and find every puddle or patch of mud. To boldly go where no one has gone before.

The mission is a success. Everyone is covered in mud. Jackets, clothes, body and even hair have Nemo grade A mud caked on. What would you do to be "zestfully" clean?

Imagine no longer. After hours of deliberation and planning, poring over blue prints, countless revisions, on behalf of the anniversary committee I am happy to unveil, on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Mount Nemo Scout Camp the :

Acme 2 portable Shower

(At this point in time a 45 gallon drum - complete with shower head, drain and door was uncovered and everyone enjoyed a good laugh.)

This shower will be mass produced in the summer once we have registered all trademarks and patents with the government. We plan on having 25 of these showers available for use by all members. These showers come with running hot and cold water (just hook them up with hoses that will be supplied.)

At the conclusion of the meeting feel free to take a better look at this prototype.

You will be hearing much more in the months to come about this shower, the new Anniversary Lodge, the 50th birthday party, the Anniversary wall. Please join us over the coming months as we celebrate 50 years of great camping at Camp Nemo!

SOUVENIRS

The celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of Camp Nemo was a perfect lead into a full launch of souvenir items available at Scout House and at various anniversary events.

The anniversary logo or crest designed by Bob Miller was proudly displayed on the souvenir items.

The following items were sold during the year:

Jumbo corded pen
10 oz. travel mug
Flippy Flyers (cloth Frisbee)
Metal Dog Tag
Sports water bottle
Crest (logo design)
T-shirts with the camp crest
Baseball Caps

Over 2,500 items were ordered and sold during the 50th anniversary celebrations. The success of the metal dog tags caught everyone by surprise and the 250 ordered disappeared very quickly.

No doubt you would find one of the anniversary travel mugs proudly holding a leader's coffee today.



Dog Tags

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY DISPATCH

In June 1996 a special Camp Nemo 50th Anniversary edition of 'the Scouter's Dispatch' was released. The front page had an artist's concept drawing of the new lodge that would replace Spectator Lodge.



The 10 page special edition also contained

- 15 classic pictures from the 50 years of camping
- over 10 articles highlighting such topics as
 - * Well, Well, Well ... - a story of the drinking water at camp.
 - * Camp Fire stories - a brief history of buildings lost to fire .
 - * Mud! - a look at what the soil of camp is made of .
- Pictures of 30 plus crests from the various regional, district, area, division and group camps held at Camp Nemo.
- 24 short "Did you know?" facts.

CAMP BIRTHDAY PARTY

One of the largest discussions held at anniversary committee meetings was how do we get current and past members involved with a large reunion. After much deliberation it was decided that a large birthday party would be held for all current members to serve as a nice start to the Scouting year and a reunion would be held for adults with the focus on past leaders and past youth members.

On Saturday October 5, 1996 the 50th Anniversary Birthday Party was held. It was hoped that over 250 people would attend and enjoy the festivities. The date was early in the Scouting year and many groups would have just started to meet. Registration came in very slowly but was slowly creeping up to the 250 mark. Then 48 hours before the party registration took off. The plans made had to be adjusted at the last minute and on the fly. It was difficult to estimate the number of people at the party but some guesses had close to 1000 people there. We do know 960 pieces of corn on the cob were bought with about 6 dozen left over. Thank goodness the fall weather had co-operated and there had not been a heavy frost to damage the corn crop. Even given the good weather most of the local farmers (or stores) could only supply 10 to 20 dozen cobs of corn. Five different farmer/stores eventually sold us their corn for our corn roast.

In addition to the corn on the cob, hamburgers and hot dogs were cooked on over 15 propane barbecues and our gigantic birthday cake made by Heather Martin was shared.



Birthday Cake - about 16" x 26"

During the afternoon of the birthday party there were over 25 events for youth members and leaders to enjoy. Many of these events were similar to what you would find at a Cub Fun Day, Victoria Day Weekend or a Beaver Chopperee such as:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Mini Golf | Fishing Pond |
| Tug of War | Horse Back Riding |
| Magic show | String Maze |
| Sucker Tree | Hay Rides |
| Aerial Runway | Bingo |
| Door prizes | Popcorn |

In addition to this Daryl Buckle was there to give a history lesson through his cartoon drawings. For people that wanted to know more about the history of Camp Nemo there was a display inside Confederation Lodge



Cooking area at birthday party - before the rush for dinner - 1996

Just before Dinner there was a brief ceremony where the Anniversary Wall (see below for more details) was unveiled for the first time. The ceremony concluded with the singing of "Happy Birthday" and the candles blown out on the Birthday cake.

As darkness fell Bev Carey led everyone in a sing-a-long around the campfire. At the conclusion of the sing-a-long fireworks brightened the sky to bring an end to the birthday celebrations.

The Hamilton Spectator had a photographer and reporter in attendance. On October 9 the Spectator published a large picture of Ted Burns standing next to the camp bell with the Headline – Mount Nemo celebration – Scouts honour 50th Anniversary of 'Swamp Nemo'. The article started out with Scout Garth Chapman, 12, stating "No matter what time the season, it's all mud." A number of other Scouts, leaders and former leaders were interviewed for this article.

OPEN HOUSE



Invitation from the Open House - 1997

Over 300 past and present Scouter's were in attendance on June 1, 1997 at the Open House at Camp Nemo. The weather was overcast with intermittent showers just to make sure everyone felt at home. The Open House was a chance for people to see the camp and compare it to their memories from years past. It was also hoped that people would share some of their memories with the "newer" generation. And with any luck some people would met former Scouting friends that they had lost touch with over the years.

The day was a tremendous success. The visitor's registers that was signed by all indicates members from the past and present enjoyed the day. Some visitors indicated that their Scouting experience began in the 1930's.

Tony Sarson - 1934 - 26th Hamilton Cubs

Hugh Halley - 1931 - 5th Hamilton

Glen Tydd - 1930 - 5th Hamilton

Bill Millar - 1937 - 31st Scouts

Wilf Pugh - 1936 - 31st Hamilton

Fulton Seunarine - 1933 - 43rd Hamilton

Former leaders and youth members shared hundreds of stories with everyone in attendance. Jim Russell recorded many of them, some of which appear in this book. In addition the 21st Rovers used a video camera to record memories. People met former Scouting friends that they had not seen in years.

As with any open house conversation is the order of the day. To stimulate conversation the following was done:

1. All the old group records (registration information) were taken out to camp so that research could be done to help people remember who had been in their former groups. Photocopies were provided as a memento.
2. Pictures from the last 50 years were on display to bring back memories.
3. History boards of the buildings were provided.

Tours were provided to all of the buildings to remind and to "show off" the many changes that have taken place. (All buildings were spruced up the day before with SWAT cleaning teams).



Research team awaiting the start of the open house - 1997

ANNIVERSARY WALL

One of the major objectives of the celebrations was to get all youth and adult members a chance to participate. What started out as the "Wall of Fame" during the initial brainstorming sessions ended up as the "Anniversary Wall".

Bob Miller with help from Sharon Miller, Lynn Shedden, Roger Shedden and Gary Ralph collected the signature of each registered member in 1996 on a paper maple leaf. These leaves were shrunk in size, coloured and laminated for inclusion on one of 6 displays. These displays are now in Anniversary Lodge for all to enjoy.



Terry Elop pointing to an Anniversary Wall Plaque - 1999

ANNIVERSARY LODGE

One dream of the Anniversary Committee was to see a new building replace Spectator Lodge. Plans were drawn and approved. The estimated cost of the building if built by a contractor was in excess of \$70,000. In order to build the lodge, funding was needed. The Edith H. Turner Foundation was approached and after a formal presentation a grant was received for \$35,000. This amount was the estimated amount needed for materials. Labour was still needed to build the lodge. For the most part volunteer labour was used. Few of these volunteers has professional experience in construction but their collective skills and knowledge combined to build a lodge of which we can all be proud. Work done by volunteers was recorded in a log on the job site. On completion of the building the log indicated that:

- * over 64 people helped on the project
- * total hours exceeded 2,200 hours
- * the following people had over 200 hours on the project

Ben Boers

Rick Elop

George Lethbridge

Mike Lethbridge

Bruce Riddiough

Don Spog

Dave Wands



Anniversary Lodge under construction in front of Spectator Lodge just prior to its demolition - 1997

The new building was officially opened on Saturday October 24, 1998 - Cub Fun Day, with over 750 people in attendance. Dave Wands, President of Hamilton Wentworth District Scouts and a member of the Anniversary Committee presided over the ceremony. Ben Simpson represented the major donor - The Edith H. Turner Foundation and participated in the ribbon cutting. Many other donors were present and were recognized and thanked during the ceremony.

Everyone in attendance had the opportunity to take a tour of the building. The building is 24 x 60 ft one floor building that will comfortably accommodate 40 people. The building consists of a kitchen, 2 youth bedrooms and 2 leader bedrooms necessary for privacy with co-ed groups. A separate eating area was maintained to minimize the disruptions during the day and of course a large mud room is provided.



Interior of Anniversary Lodge - 1998



Ben Simpson representing the Edith H. Turner Foundation cutting the ribbon to officially open the building - 1998

