

4. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMP

THE COMMITTEES

In the early days, there were 3 separate camps located at Mount Nemo Scout Camp. The Wolf Cub, Scout and Rover Camps were each operated by separate Camp Committees and worked with Tom Rogerson, A. D.C. Training. The Cub Camp was located on the west side of the B.P. Highway. The Scout Camp was located to the south of the Sports Field and the Rover Camp was located to the north of the Sports Field.

In the early 1950's this operation was replaced by one Camp Committee, with each member responsible for a building or other aspect of the camp. This concept continued well into the 1960's. In 1988, the Property Committee was formed to oversee the responsibility of all council properties, including Scout House, Ragged Falls Canoe Base and Mount Nemo Scout Camp.

THE PLANS

In 1960, a 20-year plan was proposed for the development of Camp Nemo. It included roads to the back fields, a total of 10 Cub Lodges, numerous campsites and a swimming pool.

In 1964, a report to the Executive Board recommended that the older buildings be replaced over time and that a new Field House be built in the Sports Field. Ram Inn would be burned down by accident, Gibson Hut and St. Giles were taken down, and the Rover Chalet and the two Panabodes were built. The Field House became Confederation Lodge.



Gordie Williams Lodge construction - 1970

In 1964, the Conservation Authority completed a study of Nemo Creek and announced plans to build a dam across the valley below B.P. Lodge, which would create a lake 28 feet in depth, and back the water up to the first tractor crossing on Bronte Creek. Plans did not proceed but in 1973-74, the council prepared plans to build its own dam. Plans were discontinued when the Camp Development Plan was being prepared.

On December 4, 1979, The Camp Development Plan was unveiled in a presentation at Scott Park Secondary School. Created by the Planistics Group in conjunction with the Camp Development Committee, the plan called for the development of many new facilities including a pool, new Cub Lodge, family camping area, training lodge, amphitheatre, new roads, a second entrance to the main part of camp and additional parking. The cost of the plan was never determined, nor were there resources to raise the necessary capital and operating funds.

Although the plan was never fully implemented, the early 1980's saw a period of development and activity at Camp Nemo which has never been duplicated. Under the guidance of Property Committee Chairman Ron Pine, many volunteers spent numerous Saturdays and Sundays rebuilding B.P. Lodge, the Stockade, finishing the basements in the Panabodes, moving water lines and the pump facilities, adding electricity to 3 more buildings, starting the tractor trail around the valley and adding an addition on the barn. When Ron's term was completed, many of the buildings had been updated, or had the plans in place to be updated. In addition the roads and parking had expanded.

During his tenure as Property Committee Chairman, Bill Phillips developed a 10 year capital plan for the development of camp. Although the funding was not obtained to finance the plan, many of the developments contemplated have been completed by subsequent committees.

Through successive Property Committee Chairmen, Brian Laing, Rick Elop and Mike Lethbridge, buildings have been modernized and brought up to modern building and fire code standards through countless hours of labour from many volunteers. The pace has been hectic at times as deadlines to finish buildings were reached.



Charterhouse - 1990

In 1995 the Council adopted the Conservation Plan for Mount Nemo Scout Camp. Under the guidance of Dr. Hague “Doc” Vaughan, a plan was developed with input from the youth for the future of Camp Nemo based on principles of Land Stewardship. The plan will develop over the next few years and will entitle the youth members to have an active role in creating natural habitat for wildlife, allow for sustainable growth and active use of the property and encourage a wide range of camping experiences for the membership. The plan has been recognized in the both Scouting and the outside world as a model for all camps to follow.

THE WATER SYSTEM

The lack of drinking water was one of the reasons we didn't purchase the Hermitage property for our camp in 1945. The purchase price was another reason! Unfortunately, drinking water has been an ongoing challenge to the development of Camp Nemo.

The first well was drilled 20 feet east of the Factors Lodge, 60 feet deep and cost \$500. The water turned out to be full of sulphur and unfit for drinking. The well was plugged with the trunk of a tree.

The second well was drilled 50 feet down at the rear of Apple Day Lodge. The cost was \$350. Water tests were favourable during the winter months but turned sour during the summer. The well and pump are still visible in the tree line behind Apple Day Lodge.

The third well was drilled 50 feet deep in front of B.P. Lodge. It cost \$500. The water was drinkable but often, the well ran dry and it was filled in during the reconstruction of B.P. Lodge.

Another well was drilled in the lower valley near the present tractor crossing near Hencher Den.



Remains of Well near Hencher Den

The final attempt at a well was drilled at the rear of the Bird Reserve or Campfire Hill. It turned out to be an artesian well which contained sulphur. The well pipe can still be found just south of the base of Fleur-de-lis Hill.



The Final attempt

For a brief time, each building had its own water tank. Tanks were donated by the Steel Company and were installed beginning in 1956. This method did not work because the water would turn sour in the summer months. Two of these tanks may still be seen. The one for the original Hencher Rover Den is in the tree line at the north side of Rover Field. The second may be seen in the side of the hill east of Apple Day Lodge.

Finally in 1961 a 5000 gallon drinking water tank was

constructed by Dave Peat at a cost of \$2,000. The water was pumped by a pump located in the Factors Lodge to stand pipes around the camp. Over time, those pipes corroded and were not replaced. The current system of water lines has been in place since 1982 when the pump was moved to the former Shower Shack, which had been built in 1972. That building was replaced by the current Pump House in the fall of 1993. Late in 1996, a chlorification system was required by the Halton Region Health Department and was installed in the Pump House.

REFORESTATION

The first trees were planted in the fall of 1946. Prior to that, very few trees were located on the property, as most of it, even the valley, had been part of the farm operation. Early photographs show the lack of trees across the property. Fleur-de-lis could be seen from a number of vantage points.



Fleur-de-lis - late 1960's

The Pines, located beside Apple Day, and the reforested areas in the Back Forty and Training Field show that early plantings were done in a straight line fashion. Successive groups on Conservation Courses continued to "green" the camp. In 1967, 25,000 trees were planted. After planting trees at Valens and Dundas Valley Conservation Areas in 1974 and 1975, Trees for

Canada moved to Camp Nemo in 1976 when 5000 trees were planted in Apple Day field. This event, now called Scoutrees, has been held at Camp Nemo ever since. Open areas began to be reforested. In 1990 we took over the south-west corner of the property which until then had been farmed by a neighbouring farmer. Efforts have been made to expand the tree lines as older species of hawthorn and poplar have died out. The size of open fields has been reduced by moving mature trees and allowing smaller trees to grow. Between 1976 and 1996, almost 250,000 trees have been planted at Mount Nemo Scout Camp through Scoutrees.

"Two things grow when we operate Scoutrees at Camp," says John Galloway, "Trees and kids! The kids all survive but fortunately all the trees don't. I say fortunately because if all the trees we have planted at Nemo since 1947 survived we would be wall-to-wall trees at camp!"



Michael Daigle and Norman Manning planting a tree at Trees for Canada

John is proud of what tree planting has contributed to the development of camp but is much prouder of the great feeling of accomplishment it has given thousands of Scouts. Camp Nemo now has a very different appearance as the result of the efforts of thousands of eager tree planters

