

Nor'wester

A Newsletter from and for the Camp Nor'wester Community

Fall 2022

Note from the Director: A New Kind of Breakfast Club

For any of you out there who grew up in the 80's and 90's like me, you're familiar with some of the classic **films by John Hughes**. Or maybe you're just a hip young person who can appreciate the culture-shaping comedies and coming-of-age films that spanned a couple of decades. Thinking back on movies like *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, *Some Kind of Wonderful*, and *Sixteen Candles*, they clearly come from a white-centric perspective of both privilege and teetering blind idealism, but nevertheless, they seemed to have underlying memorable messages of human development, along with the ability to **inspire an innate hope for connection, creativity, spontaneity, and good**.

So, what does this have to do with Camp? Well, with the myriad of things that happen in a summer, **I'm always touched by the small moments that I get to witness**. One of the most poignant times was a quiet evening in the lodge when all the units were either on trips or overnights, and the only kids around were those who were quarantined due to COVID-19 (all with very mild symptoms, by the way). This lovely and diverse group of six campers requested to spend some time in the lodge and make s'mores after dinner since no one else was in Camp at that time. I was approaching them with additional supplies when I stopped part way between the kitchen and the fireplace, the firelight glowing in front of them and their silhouettes outlining their togetherness and marshmallow sticks in action. They were laughing and joking and most definitely enjoying the new-found camaraderie that comes from being put in an unexpected difficult situation together. I stood there silently reflecting on the unique experience that they were having. Six very different campers from five different units – creating memories that they will most likely remember through the course of their lives. My head immediately went to *The Breakfast Club* from 1985 (yes, 37 years ago) and how the characters in the film were also coming together without knowing each other, spending time navigating a situation and forming interesting bonds with each other.

While this touching moment at Camp holds a slightly different angle than that of the kids in the movie (who are serving detention on a Saturday), **the random serendipity of growth from encounters that are unexpected is very much in the same vein**. The labels and archetypes from *The Breakfast Club* (athlete, brain, artist, princess...) still exist in our wider culture, and continue to find their way to Camp within the fourteen units, which makes our job of prioritizing *belonging* and *inclusion* at every level an even greater need. **These campers rose above labels**

and identifying units and were able to invest and be present for the gift of a new and unexpected experience.

All of this to say, Camp Nor'wester aims to provide a fun and jubilant experience for every single person on Johns Island, and...**the underlying foundation of what we aspire to do is to provide a platform for growth and life lessons**. Watching the interaction between these campers from the Covid unit made me realize the importance of all the ways we try to bring our community together beyond the unit system. Whether that's through **meals** (we hope to get back to sitting "scramble amble" style this summer), **special days** (full community participation), or **trips** (where the campers get to spend several days with people outside of their unit), it's an essential part of Nor'wester life.



So, whether a camper is a competitive athlete, or a songwriter, or a comedian, or a poet, or a player of Magic: The Gathering, or an artist, or still searching for who they are, they will have a seat, always, at one of our red Nor'wester tables. Because together we are more vibrant, more interesting, and more poised to create moments that keep us in the present with a keen eye toward a bright future of continued connection.

"Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it." – *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*

Wishing you many moments of gratitude and presence throughout the holidays,

Sheila Tallmon
Executive Director

2023 Camp Dates

1st Session
June 25- July 22

2nd Session
July 26 - August 22

Family Camp
August 26 - 29

(Enrollment for Family Camp will open in the spring. Stay tuned for more information)

Camper Creations

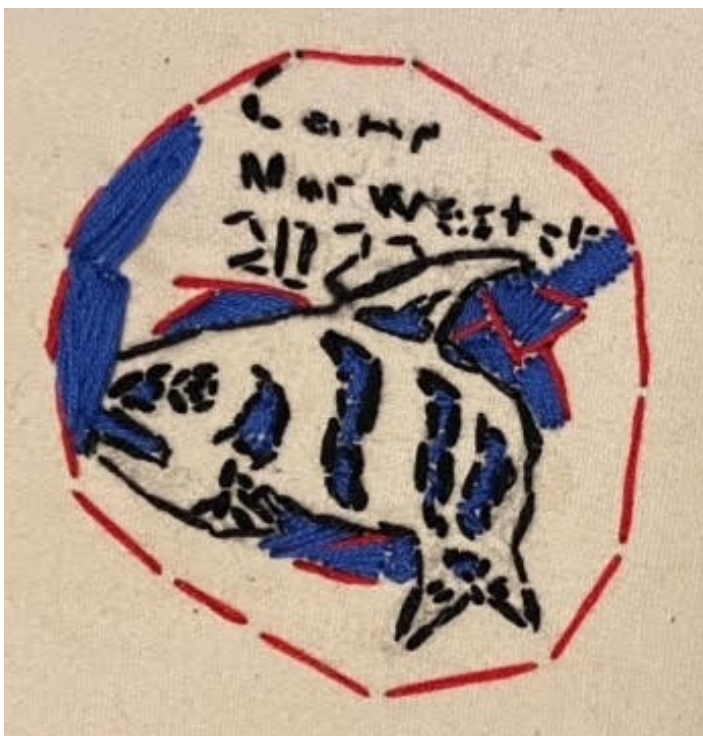
We love hearing stories from campers and families about how Nor'wester affects our campers the rest of the year. We've decided to highlight Camper Creations in this and future newsletters. We hope you enjoy and feel the Nor'wester spirit as you do!

Sinking Sun - Henry Walum (ISL 2022) - Submitted to *The New York Times* Tiny Memoir Competition

The trail forked, one path a boardwalk, and the other an uneven, overgrown, lawsuit waiting to happen. The crickets chirping and 'spsbh' of waves crashing steadily onto the shore set the scene for something greater. I decidedly took the first step onto the boardwalk; the salty breeze stung my nose. As our group of misfits trudged into the clearing, and the Patos Island lighthouse came into view, an overwhelming feeling of joy washed over me. I claimed my place on one of the rocks piled along the shoreline and contemplated the half visible sun that slowly sunk beneath the horizon.

Embroidery - Cole Schneidmiller (EXP 2022)

"Cole home from camp having sketched this fish design. He asked me to buy embroidery thread and a frame and he has been working on this little bits at a time before bed."



My Watershed Moment - Quinn Coulter (PIO 2022) - Submitted for a school assignment

My watershed moment was going to a camp in the San Juan Islands, Washington, near the Canadian border. The camp is a sleepaway camp for a month and you live off the land, and there are no devices (iPads, phones, etc.). You live in tipis with other people of the same gender and age as you...The main lodge is open to Puget Sound and only has three walls. You go sailing and hiking and you even go off-island on sleepaway trips. My favorite is always the craft shop or archery. There's also Camp Store where you can buy candy and camp merchandise. I like camp because it's unlike anything I've ever done before. For a one-month period, I get to bond with my unit and the other members of the camp community.

The first year I would have gone was cancelled by Covid 19, so last year [2021] was my first year. I was extremely nervous because I had never slept away from home for more than 1 day. Or more than 30 minute away from my house. But I was now 5-6 hours away, on the ocean, and I was sleeping away for 28 days. After going to camp I am more accepting of change and travel being on my own. After my first year, I missed camp life a lot so I went back this year. I saw my old friends and I met a lot of new friends. I'm looking forward to returning again in 2023. The camp experience truly changed my life and it is very special to me. I hope that some of the people reading this will go to the camp too.

Bouncing Back - Tristan Sciutto (FOR 2022) - Written for a school assignment and presented to the St. Albans Lower School at the National Cathedral Washington, DC in Oct 2022

For most of you, your first week of summer was probably spent doing things with family, going on vacation, or just sleeping. For me, my first week of summer was spent in a cast that went up to my hip, getting ready for surgery on my broken ankle. I injured myself in a skimboarding accident in Montauk, New York, while at the beach with my dad and brother.

How did this happen? Well, it was my first day using the skim-

Continued on Page 5

2023 Enrollment Information

2022 Camper Re-Enrollment: November 15 - January 6

All full-session campers who attended camp in 2022 will have the opportunity to re-enroll for 2023 between November 15 and January 6. All campers have a spot in their unit and their session if they wish. There is plenty of time allotted for families to make this decision.

NOTE: Switching Sessions

Campers wanting to switch sessions can apply starting on November 15. Their application will be held until the end of the 2022 Camper Re-Enrollment window and then they will be enrolled in the new session if space is available in their unit. Campers will have the option to stay in their previous unit if space is not available in their session of choice. Campers will be placed on the waitlist if space is not available in the new session.

Open Enrollment Lottery: January 16 - 31

The application window to be considered for the open enrollment lottery is from 9 am on January 16 until midnight on January 31 (all times Pacific time). This application window applies to:

- New campers, including new campers applying for Financial Aid
- Returning campers from years previous

- Siblings of current campers
- Campers from the waitlists from previous seasons
- Family Camp campers

There will be no timestamp taken into consideration, so applications can be submitted at any point throughout these three weeks. At the end of the application window, the office staff will facilitate a lottery for each unit and each session, starting on the first of February. Some units will have plenty of space and others will be quite limited, so we appreciate your understanding as we then make efforts to establish waitlists and communicate enrollment. Applicants will be notified of their enrollment status by the end of the first week of February.

Applications Received after January 31

Any application that comes in after the Open Enrollment Lottery window closes will then be date-stamped and placed accordingly, either in their specified unit if there is space, or on the waitlist in order after those from the Open Enrollment Lottery.

Contact kathleen@norwester.org with any questions about enrollment.

Wish List: Items & Initiatives

For those alumni and friends who want to contribute to our ongoing program needs, this list is for you! **We are now including both specific items and estimated costs, as well as larger initiatives we are working into our program.** We welcome all levels of support for initiatives. To support these needs, please donate to our Norwester Fund and contact info@norwester.org to share your request for which item(s) you'd like to cover with your donation. Thank you for your support!

- Small electric power washer - \$200
- Hose reel for steam cleaner - \$350
- Hardware storage trays (6) - \$30 each
- Firefighting tools - \$500
- Laundry facilities upgrades - \$\$\$
- Putt-Putt Whaler overhaul (engine, etc.) - \$6,000
- TreeMaster rigging rope (2) - \$170 each
- Battery-powered maintenance equipment (chainsaw, leaf blower, trimmer, plus batteries) - \$3000



Current Priority Initiatives

- On-site Staff recuperation amenities (yurt & staff-only space expansions TBD)
- Staff Time Off lodging accommodation support (ask us more about this!)
- Plaque installations to share contextual & historical information on property for all art, carvings, totems, and at the Bighouse
- Engaging with a DEI Consultant & exploring creation of a DEI position on the Year-Round Team

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF OUR PROGRAM!

Donors Spotlight: Why do YOU choose to support Camp Nor'wester?

We asked several recent donors to share the reasons they choose to contribute each year to the Nor'wester program. Here are some of the stories they had to share:

I tell people that I learned everything I needed to know at camp. I credit camp for my love of the out of doors, my ability to work cooperatively with others, my leadership skills, and for many of the outdoor skills I have. I learned to swim, sail, and canoe and ride horses. I learned to love hiking, eat sandy baked potatoes, sleep in tents, tepees, and on the ground. I enjoyed living and playing with a group of girls. I became a teacher because I loved being a counselor. I taught anthropology because I loved the Native American arts and culture I was exposed to at camp... I donate every year to camp because I want others to have the experiences I had. I don't know of a better place to learn and mature as a child.

- Marie Stanislaw (Camper 1956-61, Staff 70-71, Parent 94-96, 00-02)

I choose to support Camp Nor'wester because I don't want to stop being a part of the camp community! As a camper, a staff member, and a volunteer, Nor'wester provided me with many of the most influential experiences in my life; not to mention some of my best and longest friendships. I can only believe that it does so for many others as well and I want to do what I can to keep it going!

- Olin Berger (Camper 1995-96, 2001, Staff 04-06, 08, 12)



All three of my boys attended camp and, to date, two of them have gotten that all-important first job there too. In the years since that first send off and post camp life, my boys have grown tremendously. They are headed in various directions, but their camp experiences wove some of the strongest threads in the fabric of their lives... They are enthusiastic hikers and campers – a rarity in this wired world. They have an understanding and appreciation for the land and the people who populated this area well before white settlers arrived that far exceeds that of the newer arrivals who have settled here in the various tech booms. The gifts that my children received from camp - love of music, a community of friends, appreciation for the environment, better understanding of social issues, and so many others - far outweigh any financial donation I can give to camp. If I can provide one more child with such an experience it will have a positive influence not only on that child individually, but on society as a whole.

- Allison Keeler (Parent 2011-21)

Donating to Nor'wester is one of the few constants in my life! As a former camper, staff, board member, and parent of five campers, I have experienced many summers at or associated with camp and there's nothing to compare to the personal growth, positive experiences and lasting relationships my entire family has gained there over decades. Seeing my daughter's confidence and joy return this summer having successfully summited Mt Baker, been Olympic blue team captain and having had "the best summer of my life", I have no doubt the Norwester magic remains!! Investing in future generations' chance to share in this magic seems a no brainer.

- Deb Gore (Camper 1977-78, 80-81, Staff 84, 89, 92-95, Parent 08-

22)

Movie Shows 2023

We are excited about the possibility of hosting in-person movie shows again after a break during the pandemic! Stay tuned for more information, and for the release of the Summer Movie!



The Nor'wester Fund

Will you help campers build meaningful connections at
Camp Nor'wester in 2023?

We kicked off our annual fundraiser, the Nor'wester Fund! Camp is dedicated to creating the best possible experience for our campers, and in 2023 we will focus on investing in what is at the heart of those relationships—*people*. We are focusing our fundraising efforts this year on recruiting and retaining engaged and skilled staff, increasing access to camp by creating pathways for campers of all means and backgrounds to join our community, and providing increased mental health support and awareness for every camper and staff.

Join us in reaching our fundraising goal of \$125,000 by December 31 to help Nor'wester provide an incredible experience for our campers and keep Camp accessible to more families.

Scan the QR code with your smartphone, mail your donation, or visit norwester.org/support-norwester/donate-to-camp to make your tax-deductible gift by 12/31/22.

Thank you!



Camper Creation Highlights - Continued from Page 2
board. If you don't know what skimboarding is, the way you do it is you wait for the wave to pull back after washing up, leaving a light film of water over the smooth sand. Then, you run as fast as you can and toss a large oval shaped skimboard onto the beach and you jump on. Then you ride it across the beach for a few seconds. I fell off on my first day of doing this, and as I fell my ankle twisted in such a way that I broke it in a very painful triplane fracture. I heard four distinct snaps as I fell down. Three of those snaps were three different breaks in my bone, one was my ankle dislocating. I needed surgery to repair it.

When I came out of surgery, I thought my summer was over. I thought that summer camp wouldn't be fun, I would have no fun on vacation, and I couldn't do anything physical. Nevertheless, I decided to try my summer out on crutches. Surprisingly, it went great. First off, I had worried that my vacation with my dad would be ruined, but it wasn't. My leg was annoying—it hurt—but I could still do things. While on crutches, I saw my dad's family. My dad, brother, and I sat on the couch and watched Stranger Things. They said I didn't really ruin the trip and they still found ways to have fun with me.

Second off, at first I didn't want to go to camp. It was far from home in the San Juan Islands in Washington State. Despite this, I decided to go anyway and I used a peg leg type thing that strapped onto my cast and helped me walk. I was given the nickname "peggy" by my friends. Kind of mean, but I used a

Continued on Page 6

Save The Date: Nor'wester's 13th Online Auction!

The 2023 Nor'wester Online Auction will run
February 24th - March 5th

Visit <https://auctria.events/campnorwester>
to register as a bidder or update your registration,
and to donate to the auction.

Last year, we had 80 donors, 198 items, and 98 bidders. Those of you who love the auction really love the auction! If you participated in the last auction, will you please think of at least one friend or family member who would like to participate in 2023 and share the link with them?
And please start thinking of items you can donate this year!

Email megan.coughlin@mac.com if you have questions or want a past donation copied.

Board President's Note

Dear Nor'wester Community,

It was great for Camp to be in full swing this summer after the past two years without visitors, and with other limitations on programming. The Year-Round team and summer staff worked hard to make the Nor'wester magic happen. The excitement and joy of campers returning, making memories, having personal growth and life shaping experiences was worth all the struggle the last few years have brought.

The board also reunited in October as we had our first in person retreat since 2019! It was great to gather, reconnect, sing a few camp songs, and continue to dig into our strategic plan and the work all our committees are doing. One important focus is our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work throughout our organization that helps realize our mission and vision. We are excited about our future and how this work will help us continue to grow and evolve. More to come!

This year we all have felt the cost-of-living increase. It is affecting everyone, you at home and us at camp. It costs more for you to send your camper to camp, and it costs Nor'wester more to provide the experiences, support the well-being of our campers and staff, and to maintain camp. It is at times like these that our Annual Nor'wester Fund is so important. The money raised each year allows us to continue to offer these life-changing experiences for our campers. Thanks, to the many of you who have already generously contributed this year. If you have not yet contributed, please join me and the board in contributing to the Nor'wester fund. Your gift can make a difference.

In the spirit of Camp,



Mollie Montgomery
Board President



Tristan Sciuotto (FOR 2022) presenting his speech at the National Cathedral in DC.

Camper Creation Highlights - Continued from Page 5

leg, so they weren't wrong. Despite my injury, I still had so much fun during my month of camp, and it was the highlight of my summer. Thankfully, with the help of counselors and friends, I was able to keep focused on what I wanted to do.

Looking back, I think I had successfully turned my summer around and bounced back! At camp, my counselors said my broken ankle was an afterthought of my personality while there. It wasn't the main thing they thought of when they thought of me. On vacation, I could walk around in my medical boot with no problem. And when I was home, I was without a boot, fully healed! Looking back, I cannot deny that breaking my ankle was

no fun. But, it did not define my summer. What defined my summer was the fact that I did not spend the whole time sitting in bed feeling sorry for myself. Rather, I took my injury in stride and allowed myself to have fun.

The Bible is full of stories about moving forward through difficulties. St. Paul says in his letter to the Romans, "suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts." While suffering in and of itself might have no purpose, God can transform our suffering and setbacks when we let other people help us. When we choose to persevere instead of letting hard things define us, we can develop character and find hope. I feel like this passage really applied to my summer.

Lessons of perseverance can help us even in our school life. My experience this summer has changed the way I look at setbacks in school. If I fail something, or maybe I was late on an assignment, I try not to beat myself up about it. Instead, I do what I did with my ankle. I accept things the way they are, and then do better next time. If you have a setback this year in your classes, in sports, or with a friend I hope that you won't get discouraged. Remember that the setback doesn't have to define you. How other people support you and how you choose to respond to the setback are what matter most.

So did an ankle injury ruin my summer? No, not at all. It hurt, no doubt, but I found great ways to persevere and learned lessons that will stick with me for a long time.

From the C5 Committee: Our Tipi Transition

Creating Cultural Competency in our Camp Community (aka C5) has been a standing committee of the Board of Directors since the mid-2000s.

Nor'wester campers and staff have had the opportunity to live each summer in tipis since camp's inception in 1935, and we know that alumni remember them with affection. The light filtering through the canvas and the beautiful conical structures are ever-present in our Nor'wester memories and photographs over the years.

Some of you have heard that Nor'wester is transitioning away from tipis as our primary living structure. This decision was not made without deep consideration, and included many conversations over the last few years among staff, campers, the Board, and a taskforce comprised of staff and alumni over the last few years. It is true that we have agreed to gradually replace tipis with other structures.

We acknowledge this news may be upsetting to some, and so we want to communicate our thoughts behind this transition more clearly. The tipis stand out when boating past Nor'wester in the summer, and are inherently prominent in our visual marketing. While this might signal "welcome home" to some alumni and might be intriguing to some prospective camper families, it can also mean "this place is not for you" to others. It can also convey an assumption that we are using them without acknowledgment of the significance they hold to Plains Native American cultures.

We have had a Tipi Living Acknowledgement on our website for some time, but it is unlikely that a potential camp family will go digging for the information on our history with tipis. It is also important to acknowledge that the camping industry has an unsettling history of "playing Indian," that is, adopting and appropriating traditions that may or may not be authentic to Indigenous cultures and that camps likely don't have any authentic connection to. We must acknowledge that, however we describe our love for and use of tipis, they are not native to the Northwest, and their use can send a message that we are still "playing Indian."

We have outlined critical principles that have kept us living in tipis for so long. Future Structures should:

- be canvas, so the light filters in
- be floorless, so our feet are on the ground;
- not require permanent structures, so the land can return to its natural state for the nine months outside of summer use
- be functional for our weather, sturdy enough to survive multiple seasons of use, and ideally allow us to use and reuse resources available to us, like tipi poles and lacing pins

We set these principles with the intention of carrying forward the same opportunity for campers to develop outdoor-living experience that previous generations have had, and loved, at Nor'wester.

We as a Board and Year-Round Team feel strongly that remaining consistent with our values means that it is time to integrate other structures and new traditions. This transition will happen over some time, as we search for and perhaps even design the right living structures and will be phased in unit-by-unit. We hope you all will come with us on this journey, and that future campers' memories of Nor'wester will still be flooded with that special light that filters through natural canvas. Thank you for your continued support as we navigate these critical components of our future. And as always, please reach out to anyone on the Nor'wester Board or Year-Round team with questions or thoughts.

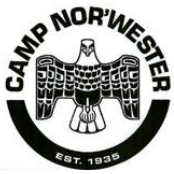
See the Tipi Living Acknowledgement (first published in 2019) at: <https://norwester.org/about/history-tradition/>

2023 Camp Nor'wester Board of Directors

Mollie Montgomery (President)	Libby Hulsey
Pete Flynn (Vice President)	Jonathan Lee
John D. Bunzel (Treasurer)	Carter Maser
Roger Alfred (Secretary)	Mike Poutiatine
Elizabeth Bayley	Cygnia Rapp
Kim Berhow	James Reinhardt
Janet Charnley	Donn Charnley (Emeritus)
Megan Coughlin	Paul Henriksen (Emeritus)
Jaina Bee Davis	Marty Holm (Emeritus)
Hillary Day	Bill Horder (Emeritus)
Peter Green	Read Langenbach (Emeritus)

Interested in Getting More Involved?

Our Advisory Committee is open to members of our community who are interested in getting more involved with Camp. We are looking for "big picture" people who understand the vital role Camp plays in the development of children, youth, and young adults; who are able to think broadly and strategically; and who are committed to advancing the mission and vision of Camp Nor'wester. Advisory Members may participate in Board-level committee work and/or be called on for special projects that need certain expertise. Contact Elizabeth Bayley at ecbayley@mac.com for more information.



Camp Nor'wester
PO Box 1055
Edmonds, WA 98020

Non-Profit
US Postage
Paid
Seattle, WA
Permit No 4

Life-Shaping Experiences for a Lifetime of Growth...



History Corner: The Founding of Camp (from Frank Henderson's Notes)

Research and photos contributed by Bill Horder

Frank Henderson founded San Juan International Camp in the summer of 1935. After witnessing boys from many nations camping together at Scout Jamborees in Europe and Australia, he dreamed of creating a similar camaraderie among Canadian and American boys. The idea dated back to at least 1929, when he discussed a joint camping project with the Secretary of the British Columbia Boy Scouts.

Frank found a home for the camp on San Juan Island's Westcott Bay, where he leased 120 acres from the Roche Harbor Lime and Cement Company. The area was blessed with "unspoiled scenery and a mild sunny climate." In the beginning, the site was very rustic and facilities were limited. Both campers and staff helped to build the needed infrastructure. Today the site is home to Westcott Bay Shellfish Company. At least one of the old buildings is still standing.

Frank advertised the camp as a place for "boys and young men" ages 6

to 20. The first year there were 32 campers, staying anywhere from a few days to the full summer. Most of the staff were people Frank knew through his work with the Boy Scouts. Frank married Lucile Townsend in 1938, and with her experience as a national leader in the Girl Scouts it was decided to open enrollment to girls in 1942. The first year ten girls enrolled in the new North Star Unit, and the next year there were nearly three times that many. Enrollment continued to grow for both camps.

In 1945, with the lease on the property expiring, it was necessary to find a new home for the camp. A dozen sites were explored, but Sperry Peninsula on Lopez Island was the only one that "looked like a camp." The owners were sought out and the property was purchased in January 1946. Then followed a scramble to move equipment to the new site, survey and lay out units, design and build the necessary buildings and develop a water supply, all in six months before the opening in June. A kitchen, dining room and office were built that spring, as well as a shower house for the boys. The girls' shower house was brought over from the old site by truck.



While Frank provided the vision and leadership for the camp, it took the efforts of many people to make it a reality. Without his years of work with the Boy Scouts, and the strong bonds of friendships he developed there, camp might never have been anything more than a dream.

This sketch of the lodge at Westcott Bay is from the 1936 brochure. Built of logs, the building featured a large circular fireplace and open air dining.