BDN

CELEBRATING OUR 95TH SEASON

CAMP ROOSEVELT

A look at the history of one of Maine's premiere Boy Scout camps



A MILESTONE FOR CAMP ROOSEVELT

This year marks a milestone for the Katahdin Area Council's Camp Roosevelt. Celebrating its 95th anniversay, Camp Roosevelt is nestled on more than 1,800 acres at the base of Black Cap Mountain, including 300-acre Little Fitts Pond.

Camp Roosevelt has served as Katahdin Area Council's outdoor classroom since 1921 and is named in honor of U.S. President and conservationist Theodore Roosevelt.

The information included in this section is part of a larger historical record compiled by Gordon E. Reynolds.

THE STORY OF CAMP ROOSEVELT

- 1909 A Boy Scout Troop was formed in Brewer (Troop 1) directly from England.
- 1920 Penobscot Council was organized
- 1921 50 acres land at Little Fitts Pond, Clifton by George Crafts, et al. and the first buildings were erected at Camp Roosevelt
- Sept. 26, 1926 Penobscot Council receives deed to the above 50 acres.
- Feb. 18, 1929 50 acres from Eastman, Powell & Pineo
- March 9, 1939 66 acres from Brooks Brick Co.
- Aug. 23, 1944 60 acres from George
- July 14, 1955 344 acres from Earle Young
- Nov. 30, 1955 379 acres from K&E Laughlin
- Sept. 11, 1958 130 acres from Quincy Peabody; nearly 1 acre sold to Bangor Hydro Electric; 19 acres sold to Peabody
- March 26, 1976 15 acres sold to Ellen Kelley
- Dec. 29, 1981 21 Acres from R. L. Williams

- 1993 520 Acres from The Sylvan Corp. — Camp Roosevelt now includes the whole lake
- 1925 Construction of the second dining hall, referenced as The Pavilion
- 1927 Name of Boy Scouts Council changed to Katahdin Council
- 1928 The big fireplace in the log lodge was originally built in the Pavilion dining hall
- 1928 National Boy Scouts of America announces adoption of the "Overseas" or "Garrison" style hat.
- 1929 Decision made to build a new log dining lodge. Construction began in May.
- 1936 First Cub Pack organized in Bangor on March 11 at Hammond Street Church
- 1937 Camp Roosevelt reopens using patrol method but camp leadership
- 1941 Order of The Arrow is organized at camp
- 1947 Electricity comes to camp and camp road improved
- 1949 As of Sept. 1 National Council has lowered membership age by one year



An early delivery truck is loaded with Scouts going to camp. Notice the chains on the rear tires ... a very necessary item in wet weather. The Scouts in the real early days of camp had to hike in from where the camp road comes out to Route 46. Later on they were able to ride in as far as what used to be the Ranger's home, across from the red barn.

- 1952 Horseback riding and skeet shooting added to camp program
- 1952 Major improvements in camp road. 1988 National Boy Scouts of America
- Feb. 7, 1959 The area is named "Katahdin Scout Reservation" and includes Camp Roosevelt
- 1972 Tree Farm at Katahdin Scout Reservation is certified
- authorizes women to be Scoutmasters
- 1976-2000 Several new buildings erected





REMEMBERING...

A couple of my memories of Camp Roosevelt are: the summer of '68 when we had the Water Competition, including a "greased watermelon" race where the object was for two members of each troop to try to get the watermelon into the rowboat before any other troop. The two scouts from our troop were very cagey. One put the watermelon down between his legs and the other scout said it "went under the boat" and started to go around. All the other participants went with him and the scout lifted the watermelon up from between his legs and put it in the boat, which then capsized and everyone realized they had been had.

Another memory was when the older scouts decided to sneak down to the parking lot and put the Scoutmaster's car up on blocks. They had two wheels up and were working on the third when the Scoutmaster caught them. What a scene! Of course they put the car back down and came back to the campsite. [I also recall] one night a scout had some snack food in his tent by his sleeping bag and woke up screaming because two raccoons were on his sleeping bag fighting over the food!

> **Gary Noyes** Troop 47 Orono

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATAHDIN AREA COUNCIL

For some years, there has been a World War I veterans grave marker and flag displayed in front of The Pamola Lodge flagpole at Camp Roosevelt. Observant scouts and leaders ask about this grave marker and the story is told that when some local soldiers came back from WWI, they wanted to establish local Boy Scouts. Of course, Boy Scouts need a camp, so these forward-thinking veterans established what is now Camp Roosevelt. To honor their vision, a grave marker was placed in front of Pamola Lodge to remember their legacy.



THE LONG ROAD TO CAMP

Yes, even the road has an interesting history. In 1921, when Camp Roosevelt saw its first campers, the trail in was a mere woods road. I assume it was wide enough for a horse and wagon and used for logging, probably in the winter. Logging roads were winter roads as they then were usually snow packed and easy for horses to pull sleds loaded with logs. In the spring, the roads were "mud holes" so logging usually ended before the thaw. The Scouts had to walk in and out, and all supplies had to be packed in — no delivery trucks in the early years.

According to Fred Otto of Orono, it was 1952 that major improvements were made on the road. Perry Jackson was the council executive and a capital fundraising campaign had taken place. Although motor vehicles came in prior to this time, it was one-way traffic with turnouts at various spots for on-coming traffic. Perry had the road widened.

the road comes from J. Richard Tonini, camp ranger from 1958 until 1974, sometimes affectionately known as "that Mean mean, really very kind hearted.

"When I landed at KSR, there wasn't any road that you could use in the spring. During the winter the first year I was there, the road would wash out. From the bridge at the end of the lake and down, the water would come down that road and wash that hill all out so that you could drive. So, we had to fix it. We got H.E. Sargent in there with some equipment, put in the culverts, and graveled the road."



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATAHDIN AREA COUNCIL Jim McClure of Bangor tells about his being a camp counselor in the 1920s. "One of my duties was ordering supplies for the camp chef. The supplies came in daily by jigger... horse and jigger.'

Ken Liberty tells of driving in to see To-An interesting observation regarding nini in the spring. He got in as far as the turn at the bottom of Black Cap. Walking the rest of the way, he looked back and saw his car sinking into the mud (all four Old Camp Ranger." He actually wasn't wheels) up to the axles. It took Tonini's WWII 4-wheel drive truck to get him out.

> Also during the early 50s the Seabees came in and assisted on the road and many of the buildings. One of them, Leslie Smith of Phippsburg, remembers when he and some others of his unit put in the bridge at the end of the pond.

"We had to take out the old bridge comhardly get up there with a four wheel pletely and it sure made the camp ranger nervous. His anxiety stemmed from the fact that while the bridge was out he had no fire protection from the town fire department."

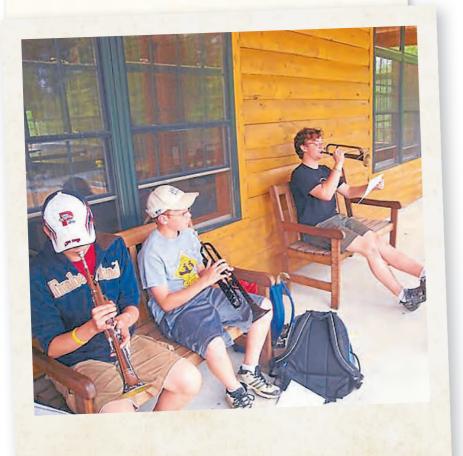


BUGLE CALLS

Bugle Calls have provided the scheduling for Camp Roosevelt activities ever since the beginnings with WWI veterans who were the camp builders and scoutmasters, starting and ending the day with the inspiring sound of the bugle. In the early days, the Camp Bugler blew the calls through a huge megaphone to amplify the sound for the whole camp to hear. In recent years, live buglers were fading away and electronic recordings were played over the camp speaker system. There has, however, been a bugling revival. When Scoutmaster and Bugler Pete Duston is on site, he brings a bag of bugles and aspiring buglers not only attempt scouting's rarest Merit Badge but a volunteer plays Retreat and Colors for the evening flag ceremony. Duston got his start as a Scout Bugler at age 12.

The buglers often like to practice on the lodge porch before lunch, and their attempts frequently drive away the scoutmasters who are trying to enjoy their coffee.





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BDN FILE PHOTO

A June 29, 1945 shows Boy Scout executives and camp staffers who watch over more than 1,000 Scouts during the summer at Camp Roosevelt at Little Fitts Pond, Eddington. The original caption did not indicate rows, but shown in the picture are: Warren Whitaker, Robert Morton, William Hill, all of Bangor; John Rowe, Milo; Norman Dionne, Millinocket; Wade Morse, Machias; Robert Carpenter, Bangor; Harold Buck, Millinocket; Lloyd Noyes, Old Town; Bernard Mann, Bangor; Melvin Kittredge, Milo; Dan Gough, Pembroke; Clarence Irivng, Ellsworth Falls; Richard Hatch, Houltpn; Warren Morang, Houltpn; Philip Kittredge, Milo; John Needham Jr., Orono; Richard Emery, Ellsworth; Lawrence Coolidge, Winterport; Earl Hayford, Rockland; Robert Watt, Ellsworth Falls; Richard White, Orrington; Arthur Hollands, Orono; Ralph Leonard, Old Town; Harry Houston, Brewer; Newall Ware, Lincoln; Clifford Reil, Ellsworth; David Dunphey, Bangor; Clyde Philbrick, Winterport; Dale Whitney, Milo; Burt Mann, Eddington; Charles Jackson, Houlton; John Jalbert, Fort Kent; George White, Orrington; Leonard Salisbury, Brewer; Fred Balke, Guilford; Loring Bridgham, Machias; Lawrence Gardner, East Machias; Cecil Richardson, Bradley.







BDN FILE PHOTO

Boy Scouts at Camp Roosevelt assemble in front of the main lodge and salute as the flag is lowered at the end of the day.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATAHDIN AREA COUNCIL Scouts lounge in front of the chef's cabin (upper left) and the Trading Post (upper right).



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATAHDIN AREA COUNCIL

Doc Mann looking at The Bear Trap, located off the trail to Snowshoe Pond. It was supposedly erected prior to the Revolutionary War. A large flat rock with pivots on both sides held the rock and enabled it to swing in. It was then held up by a short pole (we assume) and when the animal entered, it would knock the pole down and the rock would slam down inside and trap the bear. Large trees were laid on top to prevent the bear from exiting.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATAHDIN AREA COUNCIL A group of scouts practice their archery skills circa 1950.



207-989-3410



Congratulations to Camp Roosevelt

SUMMER CAMP

Summer Camp is the most important part of the Scouting year. A Scout will grow more in the week at Summer Camp managing his time, earning merit badges, bonding with other young people, and having great outdoor experiences than in the rest of his year of Scouting. And where better to have this incredible experience than in the beautiful Maine woods? For more information about Camp Roosevelt, visit katahdinareabsa.org.