

THE CLOCK TOWER TIMES

Alumni Newsletter

Echoes of the Chimes of our Times

Spring 2010

Camp Billings Board of Directors

President - Mike Lemme, Paterson, NJ
Vice -President - Vicki Smith, Lyme, NH
Treasurer - Ted Rossi, Moscow, VT
*Secretary - Rev. Penny Rich Smith,
Bennington, VT*

Carolyn Sylvester Churchill, Durham, NH
Jonathan Cone, Larkspur, CO
Larry Drew, Bradford, VT
Jeff Fehrs, Williston, VT
Anne Wallstrom Freitas, Newton, MA
John Freitas, Newton, MA
Bob Green, Coral Springs, FL
Molly Hazen, New York, NY
Wendy Lance, Lititz, PA
John Lisak, Rochester, NY
Philippe Lortie, The Hague, Netherlands
Ken Payson, Santa Fe, NM
Dr. Jessica Pepitone, Rumford, RI

Dear Alumni,

Hopefully, winter is almost over in New England. I will be heading up to camp next weekend for our board meeting. I always look forward to this time...I get to visit with old friends and often spend a few hours at camp. It is always good to see that it has made it through a long winter.

A year from now we will be getting ready to welcome alumni back for our 105th reunion. Plans are already in the works and I hope you will all save time for this very special chance to come back, visit Billings and get in touch with old friends. Once again it will be a time to reconnect with camp and enjoy a weekend on the shores of Lake Fairlee. I will let you know more in the next newsletter. Please call if you would like to help out. I have already heard from some of you.

Jon Cone is putting together an on line store where you will be able to purchase t-shirts, sweatshirts, and other Camp Billings items. You will be able to get to it through the Camp Billings web site. Please look for it after May 1st.

If you're in the area this summer, please stop in and say "Hello" to Bob Green and visit our alumni room... pick the key up at the office and enjoy all the new things going on at camp.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Churchill
Alumni Committee Co-Chair

To send alumni updates:

Elissa Malcolm
24 Wheatley Street
Lebanon, NH 03766 USA

campbillings@gmail.com

Anne & John Freitas
57 Hawthorne Avenue
Auburndale, MA 02466

annejohnf@aol.com

To send address changes:

Marti Warren
5 Carriage Road
Amherst, NH 03031 USA

martiwarren@comcast.net

To send donations:

Ted Rossi
PO Box 3539
Stowe, VT 05672 USA

tedrossi@msn.com

Greetings from the Board . . .

By Michael Lemme, Board President

My mother Virginia Nelson first came to camp in 1938. That was a historical year because only a month after camp closed something BIG happened at Camp Billings. On September 21, 1938, the Great New England Hurricane ripped through Vermont with wind speeds of 160 mph. The storm came right up the Connecticut River Valley, criss crossing the state to Burlington leaving Camp Billings to face the full brunt of the most destructive easterly winds. One structure was so heavily damaged that it even took on a new name, and this cottage is now known as the "Guest House". But when originally built back in 1908, the Guest House had a great big cupola that capped its roof, which provided light and ventilation. Unfortunately the hurricane force winds were so strong that the cupola was blown right off! It has never been replaced, leaving the 2nd floor living space nothing more than a dimly lit, run down storage area. And this is how Cupalo Cottage became known as the Guest House. The board is pleased to let you know that it will be restored, cupola and all just in time for the start of camp!

This is just one of four major projects the Board has slated to complete over the next two years, and that's all thanks to you, our alumni, who so generously donated to our 100th Anniversary Campaign, and who continue to give, most recently to our Uncle Ralph Memorial Fund. Uncle Ralph's favorite program area was the craft shop and so the Board created this fund in his honor to expand the Craft Shop and support the arts programs at Camp Billings. Uncle Ralph bequeathed his home to camp, and we are happy to announce that his home has just been sold and plans are underway to double the size of the Craft Shop in time for next summer! Also for 2011, a new camper program area will begin, and one that will be a huge hit for campers of all ages. A Ropes Challenge Course will be built across the road behind



Rainshadow Field. Rope bridges, Zip Lines, Climbing Towers, Rappelling and Rope Swings will be just some of the features. This new program area will help campers develop team building skills like cooperation, trust, effective communication, commitment and leadership. All in the true Camp Billings spirit!

And our fourth major project will be the restoration of camp's largest cottage Pinewold. We are now in the process of obtaining the necessary permits from the State of Vermont's Historic Preservation and Environmental Commissions.

Camp is looking better than ever, from restored structures to new program areas, and again we owe it all to you, our alumni! It is your generosity that allows Camp Billings to continue to provide an excellent camping experience for children, and your Board wants to say thanks! Please make it a point to stop by and visit your "dear old camp," and as the Board's new President I encourage you to pass along all comments and suggestions by either calling me direct at 973.460.1055 or emailing me at mgl1001@aol.com. Have a great summer!

Mike Lemme
Board President



Historic photos of the Guest House (previously known as Cupalo Cottage). Ma Hurd is sitting on the porch in the photo on the right.



“It’s A Small World After All...”

By Bob Green, Director

I’ve said it at the start of each of the past nine seasons: every summer is different. There is a different energy, a different rhythm and sound track that defines each year at Billings. While last summer was truly extraordinary, and one of the best seasons in 103 years of continuous operation, it would have been a mistake to pick up exactly where we left off last summer. If we had hired the same staff, and the expectations remained the same, we would have continued on June 27 what we were doing last August 21st. But each summer our community gets to re-define what we will be remembered for, and create it’s own unique and lasting imprint upon the legacy that we will leave for generations to come. That’s the excitement of each summer, and creates the anticipation of “what’s next” when you

drive around the curve on Route 244, spot the Clock Tower, and drive through the white gates.

One of the things that has made Camp Billings such a cherished experience is the relationships that are developed with people from all around the world. One of my first summers back in the day I had a counselor from Austria, Christian Krenner, who was the tennis instructor and a really patient and kind human being. He was the individual who encouraged me to play tennis, an activity I enjoy to this day. During the time the Viet Nam War divided our country, Uncle Ralph hired a counselor who was originally from South Viet Nam, Vince Chao. His presence at camp put a face to this horrible chapter in American history, and provided unique insight for both campers and staff alike.

Over the past decade we have been blessed with some wonderful international staff, many of whom had life-changing experiences while they were with us, and some of whom created new lives for themselves by remaining in the United States (legally, of course). Our annual days off chart is dedicated each year to Brad Annakin of Perth, Australia, who spent four summers at camp. Brad had one of the most memorable days off ever taken back in 2004, and while I won’t go into details, let’s just say it ended shortly after camp and rhymes with carriage. Brad’s life-long friend Adam Jenkins moved to Boston permanently after a number of years at Billings, married a beautiful American nurse, and we now await the arrival of his children at camp sometime in the not-too-distant future.

This summer, the geographic diversity of our staff is one of the elements that will add definition and depth to how this summer is remembered. We will have 18 foreign counselors and staff with us in 2010. Our four kitchen assistants are from Ghana(2), Turkey, and Poland. We are fortunate to have four senior counselors from Montreal this summer, including Ethan Kraus finally returning to Billings to join his brother Raph, forming the finest bugling duo ever heard on the shores of Lake Fairlee. We have staff members returning from England, Wales, Australia(2) and New Zealand who have been a part of our family not just last summer, but in a couple of cases for many seasons prior. We have a sailing instructor from New Zealand; two British girls, one of whom will run the craft shop and the other who will lead our drama program and also teach martial arts, since she is a black belt. We have an Australian girl who many of our staff who have traveled over there already know, as she is a friend of Ryan McArdle, who returns as our Athletics Director. And for the first time in Camp Billings history, we welcome a young girl to our staff from Israel, recently out of the Israeli army, who will assist with backpacking and teach gymnastic/aerobics this summer.

In a summer when the World Cup will dominate the international sports scene, citizens from around the world will gather together on the shores of Lake Fairlee to work and play together, because “it’s a small world after all...”



Pas Game de Copier les French-Canadians! Translation: Dare you to copy the French-Canadians!



By Jasmine St-Laurent

Following the passing of our dear Uncle Ralphy, Philippe Canac-Marquis had the idea to contribute to camp in a special way and under his leadership, we frenchies decided to set up a trust fund to send a kid from Quebec to camp every summer.

For all of us French-Canadians, the experience of coming to camp was not only life-changing in all of the ways it was for everyone else in terms of learning new skills, being included in a family, gaining a sense of autonomy and leadership and growing up generally speaking. Going to camp was also an important mind opening cultural exchange experience for us coming from Quebec. Not only did we practice and improve our English speaking skills, we also met people from the United States and from around the world through our friendships with foreign campers and staff. Ralph always made us feel special, as part of the French-canadian contingent, saying that we traced our mythical lineage back to François and Gigi Duckett.

While many alumni honoured Ralphy by donating to camp last year, we all reflected on how privileged we had been to have this experience at Billings and as such, decided to make it possible for a french-canadian kid who could not afford to come to Billings otherwise. Canac Sr. set up a fund to cover the cost

of tuition, getting a passport, medical insurance, a sleeping bag, flashlight and a waterski/camp store allowance to which the people listed below contributed. He just informed us that Derek Lefebvre will be going to camp in July 2010. He was suggested by a non-profit organization called Pignon Bleu which raises funds to send underprivileged children to summer camps. MA, AI, Canac and his son Justin have met Derek and his father to talk to this 11 year old boy and offer him a session at camp. He seemed happy with the opportunity and will be brought to camp by Canac Sr. when he drops off his son Justin. Derek is apparently quite athletic and looks forward to helping Billings win all its meets during second session.

Inspired by the frenchies, Paul Behar, Luke Gebb and Yutaka Tamura mused about doing the same for a kid in the NYC area. This article is in fact meant to keep them to their word, and perhaps inspire other regional or generational crews to send special kids to the best camp in the world!

French-Canadian Fund Contributors: Philippe Canac-Marquis, Rosalie Lemay, Jasmine St-Laurent, François Canac-Marquis, Sophie Gingras, Anne-Isabelle Gingras, Jeff Cantin, Marc-André Lafleur, Julie Beaulieu, Ariane Delisle, Paule Dupuis, Annie Vallières et Josh Novis, François Mainguy, Mathieu Paquette, Mathieu Turgeon, Chloé Deraiche et Isabelle Guay.

Upload your camp photos...

We now have an online Camp Billings Alumni Room. Like our real alumni room located in Dartt Hall on our campus, this virtual room is home to the visual memories of our camp. Our goal is to collect as many pictures of camp life over our 100 plus years as we can. If you would like to contribute to the project, please contact our website administrator at: webmaster@campbillings.org. To see the photos that have already been posted, please visit the Camp Billings Alumni Room in the alumni section of the Camp Billings website.

ALUMNI NEWS

Tim Wallstrom - Tim and his fiancée, Jennifer, were married this spring in Lebanon, NH. Three generations of camp alumni were in attendance from the Wallstrom clan!

Dave Peterson - "I have nothing but great memories of my one summer as counsellor at Camp Billings. I believe it was 1973 (give or take a year). That summer I was in charge of the rifle safety and training program in

the mornings, and was a ski instructor in the afternoons.

On your website, there was a great picture of 1973 camp director, Ralph. I still admire him! I noticed the current camp director is named Bob Green. I might be nuts, but I think he was also a counsellor in 1973, and a Notre Dame graduate! If it's the same guy, I can still picture him 37 years later!"

Please send us your news!

Where in The World? Camp Billings Mini-Reunions

Over the past few years social networking websites, such as Facebook, have connected and re-connected generations of Camp Billings campers and staff. There are many pages dedicated to this activity, including one, started by Casey Huling and Tyler Gardner called "Camp Billings Mini-Reunions" where people can post stories about random gatherings around the world.

This winter, in the spirit of Olympic competition, Casey and Tyler challenged Billings alumni to share their best mini-reunion story (planned or chance meeting). The winner was promised a block of ice cut from the Shallow End of the CB swim area that Casey promised to FedEx to the winner's location.

The contest winner was Jonas Cole, originally of Thetford, Vermont. He has graciously allowed his story to be shared in the Clock Tower Times. Even though the contest is over please continue to share your own mini-reunion stories! You can post them on the Camp Billings Mini-Reunion Facebook page, or email or mail them to Elissa Malcolm (contact info on the front page of the newsletter).

Here is the award winning mini-reunion story (chance encounter from March 2009) from Jonas Cole:

"I sat on the balcony of my hostel in Quito, Ecuador, sipping a beer (which I can legally do in Ecuador) and watching the little pedestrian traffic there was on that quiet Sunday afternoon. Below me I see a fellow in an Oregon sweatshirt and as I prepare to ask, "Hey, Oregon! Where are you from?" the man looks up at me and asks, "Jonas?" Turns out that this fellow was Daniel Ontaneda, a kitchen assistant at Billings during the summers of 2004 and 2006 who is originally from Quito. What is really crazy is that he lives 5 blocks from the hostel I was staying at with his American fiancée Ali, who had given him the Oregon sweatshirt. Dan, Ali, and I proceeded to check out a local market, go back to their place for some drinks, and then go out for pizza. A few weeks later when my dad came down to travel with me for ten days, I introduced him to Dan and Ali and he took us all out to dinner. Small world."

The Ol' Camp Billings Store - Online!

Visit the Camp Billings website and check out the newest way to add to your CB paraphernalia - Camp Store Online! We're starting with t-shirts and cozy sweatshirts in sizes 2T to XXL and plan to expand to include a broad selection of CB items. Payment can be made by check or Paypal.

Email cbcampstore@gmail.com for more info. Jon Cone, who is on the Board of Directors, is managing the store.

Visit the CB website! www.campbillings.org



Adrian Doyle, Perrin Cothran Chick, and Mike Harley at the 100th Reunion.



Trouble: Hutton Moffit, Jeff Mote, Mike Flintosh, and Sean Kiley at the 100th.

105TH REUNION - JUNE 2011

2011 will be a great year for Camp Billings... we will be 105 years old!! It is the time we all look forward to reconnect with old friends, leave the craziness of life behind and head back to that very special spot on Lake Fairlee. It is time to pull out the shorts, bathing suits and tennis rackets, but don't forget the long pants and raincoats!! It is time to get out your email addresses and phone numbers and connect with old friends. It is time to take out your song books and bone up on your hidden talents, as we think about Square dances and camp fires.

Please get out your calendars and mark next June... 2011 as the time to head back to Billings. Make plans to meet old friends at the green bench and as always catch up with Bob Green, Anne and John Freitas and all the people that come to mind when you think of camp. This is the year we will be making plans to welcome you all back and help you spend the weekend of your life doing the things you remember best, well most of the things you remember best!!!! Come spend a weekend in the life of camp as you remember it... with swimming, craft shop, fishing and of course camp duties. If a weekend is too long, plan on coming for the day We will have a special ceremony to mark our 105th year.

There will be lots more info coming out as the reunion committee makes its final plans. Please watch your newsletter for more info and registration materials and send back your info early, as camp is limited to the numbers we can accommodate for the whole weekend.

Coming back to Billings will be one of the best things you can do for yourself and your family next year. As always, the minute you round the corner of Lake Fairlee and see the familiar pine trees and brown cottages of camp you will know you have come home!

If you would like any more info please contact Carolyn Churchill at 603-988-9397 or email me at shlseekr@aol.com. As always, I look forward to seeing you all.

DONORS

The Camp Billings Board of Trustees would like to thank everyone who has donated to Camp Billings. Below is a list of those who have contributed to Camp Billings.

The Uncle Ralph Memorial Fund

Terry Backstrom
Carolyn Chapman Bishop
Marie Cincotta
Barbara Crowley -
in memory of Charles Crowley
Connie Hutchins Dubie
Gigi Duckett
Guy Duckett
Jane Fehrs
Beth Gilpin
Jon Green
Michael Hayes
Betsy M. Johnson
Anne Martin
Joan Mason
Henry Meyer
Lorraine and Mike Riley
Ernest Stevens
Lee Abbey Wyker

Camperships

Kay Sabens Ellis -
in memory of Wayne &
Gertrude Sabens
Diane Levine
Susana Rey-Alvarez
Helen Wallstrom -
in memory of Jack Wallstrom

General Donations

Bill & Betty Ann Aldrich
Jean Hennig Baarson

Reunion Romance

Camp Billings Donors, Continued

Philippe Canac-Marquis wrote in to share this wonderful story.

“Here are pictures of Anne Hebert (camper and staff - 90’s) who recently got married to Ryan Coppola (staff - 2006). They met at the 100th anniversary reunion weekend in 2006! Anne and her son Roman have packed their bags and are moving to Australia at the end of August to join Ryan in their new family home. I wished to share this news in order to show you that these reunions have all sorts of direct and indirect results!”



Chevron Mankind Matching Gift Program - from the Patrick G. Harley Foundation
Richard C. Colby
Al Couture
Austin & Fagan Hart
Marshall J. Kidder -
in memory of Dad Hurd
Karen Lauterbach & Mark Powers
Peter and Deborah Magowan Family Foundation c/o Anton Malko
Priscilla Page
Mr. Bertram Rowley
Richard Sawyer
Rick Thompson -
in memory of Uncle Ralph
Ms. Annie Tymann
Helena F. Warburg
Robert Zampieri

The Billings Connection

By Patti Green-Lachance (camper/staff '66-77)

In the scheme of social gatherings, you’ve got your high school reunions, your college reunions, your family reunions, military reunions, sports team reunions, and then the mother of all reunions – the Camp Billings anniversary reunions. Not to downplay these other reunions, but they pale in comparison to the emotional connection that Billings alumni have to each other and to the place. These reunions have afforded a way to celebrate the best times of our lives. For many of us, they’ve provided a long path in which to walk down memory lane. As we immerse ourselves back into the camp culture for a weekend of activities that remind us why we love the serenity of the campus and lake, and how much we valued the friendships of so many, we rejoice in the simplest pleasures of such a complex world. We remember how easy it was just to be.

While I consider every Billings alumnus as a kind of camp “kin,” it’s the alums of my generation that have been a constant force at every reunion for the past 25+ years. I’m not sure why, perhaps because we’ve been around that long and... are still alive, or perhaps it’s the aging baby boomer thing, or more probably because there’s a rather large group of us who have stayed closely in touch for over 33 years. We grew up in the 60’s and 70’s, sharing all the trials and tribulations of a turbulent time, and coming of age in a chaotic, changing world. Camp was the one constant in our lives. Through elementary school, middle school, high school and college, we lived every summer day as if it were the last day of school. We lived it with each other, embracing every moment we had together at Billings, and familiar to every camp generation, we cried on the clocktower lawn on the last day (or week), and began counting the days until the next first day of camp. So, reunions for us have been a way to reconnect our continual friendship with the physical place. We’re a tight group. We email, call, text, facebook, twitter (even us aging boomers are socially networking) and skype. We talk about family, work, politics, and world news. We talk about buying a summer home together and reliving the best days of our lives, or simply living out the rest of our lives in uncomplicated fashion. Though a bit of a pipe dream well beyond our means or expectations right now, we live the dream through Camp Billings reunions – one weekend every five years. Actually, some of us have been meeting in Post Mills every year for a weekend together. Why wait for an official reunion!

So, as we look toward the 105th anniversary of Camp Billings, bring it on. Gather all your camp friends, collect all your memories, organize all your photos, and come to Lake Fairlee - the real happiest place on earth.

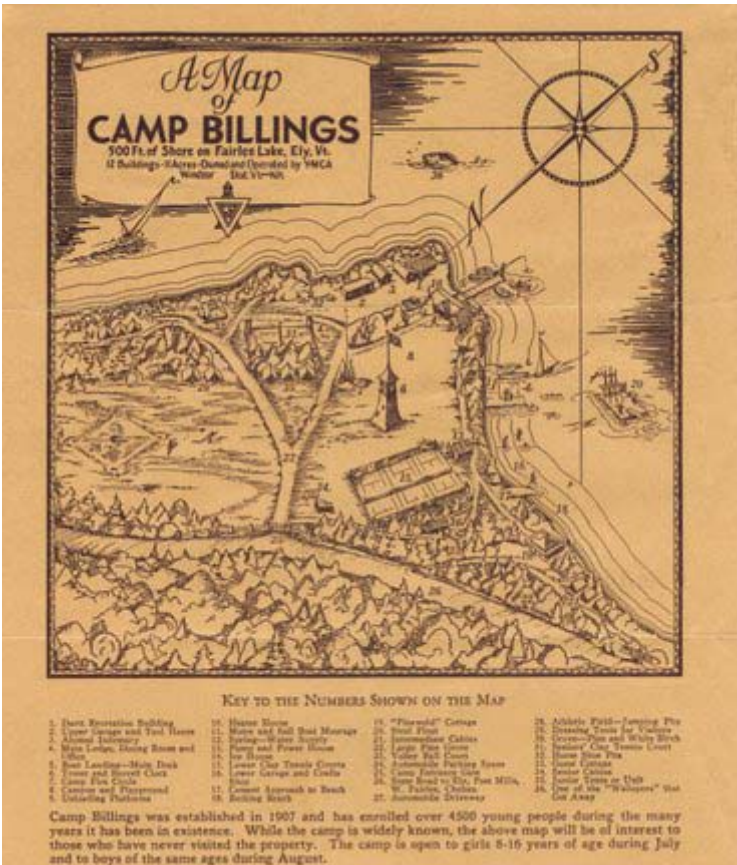
In the photo: Left to right – Stephen Connors, Laura Bussey, Michael Lemme, Raelyn Silva, Vicki Powers, Patti Green-Lachance
*missing: Chip Henderson, Paul Levine, and many others from “That Billings Generation.”



Camp Billings, Inc.
 1452 Route 244
 Fairlee, Vermont 05045-9620

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org
 US Postage Paid
 PERMIT #86
 Wht Riv Jct. VT



YOU ARE HERE...

... for the 105th Camp Billings Reunion in June 2011! Read more about the upcoming reunion inside and stay tuned for more info to come this fall.