SUMMER CAMPS IN THE BELGRADE LAKES REGION
A CASE STUDY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY
Danielle C. Sheppard  Summer 2010

HISTORICAL ORIGINS

• The Gunnery Camp
• Religious Camps
  YWCA/YMCA
• The American Camp Association

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TENSIONS

• What are the Socioeconomic Disparities between Permanent Belgraders and Summer Campers?
  Seasonal inhabitants contribute their disposable income to the local economy and engage in recreational activities.
  Local residents with generational ties to the region and to lake front property maintain Belgrade culture and depend on the lakes as a sustainable resource. There seems to be a symbiotic relationship between residents and summer visitors.

USE VALUE

• Back to Nature Movement
  Primitiveness
  Camps mimic Native American cultures
• Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance
  • Engages local residents and summer visitors in programs to protect the lakes for future generations
• The Traditional Camp Model
  Activities and infrastructure have fewer impacts on the lake.
  Newer camps value open spaces and motorized recreational activity over simplicity, conservation.

TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT

1842: Eastern Railroad Co. of MA constructs first railway from Boston to Portland
1849: Construction of Maine Central railway from Portland to Bangor
1904: Railway fare from Boston to Belgrade = $4.25
  Early 1900’s: rowboats, Stanley Steamer Bus and taxi cabs transport people from train depot to camp
1920’s: Trolley becomes a popular, more scenic mode of travel around the Belgrades

SUMMER CAMPS IN THE BELGRADES

TODAY

Camp Bomazeen
Camp Modin
Pine Island Camp
Birch Crest Camp
Coquaneock (NP)

New England Music Camp
Camp Motoaka
Maine Golf and Tennis Academy
Camp Belgrade:1937-1983
Kennebec Sr. and Jr. Camps

Camp Manitou
Camp Move It
Camp Runoia
Camp Abena (NP)
Camp Merryweather: closed in 1938 (NP)

HISTORICALLY

Camp Arcadia
Camp Somerset:1898-1986
Camp Arden (NP)
Birch Crest Camp

Camp Somer:1937-1983
Cedar Crest Camp

Coquaneock (NP)
Kennebec Sr. and Jr. Camps

RESEARCH METHODS

1. Environmental Anthropology:
   Examining the relationship between society and environment
2. Science, Technology and Society:
   Examining historical trends that connect the Belgrade region to national or international movements and processes
   • Personal interviews
   • Archival research: primary documents and images

CASE STUDIES

1. PINE ISLAND CAMP

1892: Florence Colby bought Pine Island from the state
1902: Clarence Colby founded Pine Island Camp
1907: Dr. Eugene L. Swan bought PIC for $6,000
1906: Founded as a camp
1970: Dr. Eugene L. Swan bought PIC for $6,000
1960: Founded as a camp
1900: The Cobb family buys Camp Runoia
2008: Runoia becomes LakeSmart Certified and is the 1st on Great Pond to do so

2. CAMP RUNOIA

1906: Founded as a camp
1960: The Cobb family buys Camp Runoia
2008: Runoia becomes LakeSmart Certified and is the 1st on Great Pond to do so

Works Cited

Author unknown. Published January 1980.

The First 100 Years of Swan Family Operation.
Eleanor Colby Swan. Published by Ben Swan, 2007.

The Cobb family buys Camp Runoia

The First 100 Years
Eleanor Eells. Published by Ben Swan, 2007.