

CCA CHURCH CAMP

In 1955, the churches of the Metropolitan New York area and eastern Pennsylvania began Renting a children's camp facility, Camp Lebanon, in Lebanon, NJ. I was serving an internship with the "Go Ye" Chapel Mission, Inc, the Summer fo 1955 and served in that week Of camp. If memory serves correctly these many years later the camp was owned by the Episcopal Churches. In 1960The drinking water became polluted. Many campers and staff became ill with vomiting

And diarrhea. Veda Rand was Camp Nurse that week. She called her husband, a physician on Long Island and he advised her to contact the New Jersey Department of Health. Representatives from that Department were soon at the Camp. They questioned All about food, sanitation, etc. Then they closed the Camp and ordered all to return to their homes. I didn't get sick until I got home, and for about three days it was pretty tough.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Falke, longtime members of First Church of Christ in Maspeth, Queens sent word that they would like to donate, in their words, "a couple of acres of land in the Catskill Mountains" for a Church Camp. In September, 1960, Charles Faust, Freda Masteller, J.W. "Mike" Klages and Jim Plunkett and I made The first of hundreds of trips up the New York Thruway to look at the site the Falkes were offering. The property is located in the Town of Lexington, though the address and telephone number are from the Town of Prattsville. The property is also located in Green County.

Upon arriving at the Falke Farm we were treated to a bountiful and delicious dinner.

Again, if memory serves correctly, among those present were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Falke,

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Falke who lived at the end of Falke Road. At that time they operated a dairy farm. And, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Falke . Memory fails if there were others. After the meal, the men took us on a walk of the pasture land that would become Catskill Christian Assembly by 1962. The boundaries to be that were pointed out were (east) the center of the Schoarie Creek, (south) the stone wall out beyond the present Boy's Cabins, (west) the logging trail that runs up the mountain, and (south) the stream Bed alongside the present driveway. Said streambed is dry much of the year, but in the early Spring with snow melt and rains can become rushing torrent of water.

AT this point let me share a bit of the known history of the property. The mountain on which CCA is located is known as Kipp Hill. The elevation where the Main Building sits is more than 1700 feet above sea level. The top of the mountain is about 2200 feet above sea level.

Arthur Rappleya , the father of Mrs. Herbert (Eula) Falke who died in 1984 at the age of 94 told me that when he was a lad of 15 the camp property was an apple orchard. He picked apples there and was paid a nickel for each bushel he picked. The apples were loaded in wagons, taken to Catskill where they were shipped by boat to NYC.

Austin Dymond, who had an auto repair shop on Beech Ridge 1 told me that in the 40's the property was farmed. It grew potatoes and buckwheat.

As mentioned, the east boundary is the Schoarie Creek. The Schoarie is rather unusual in that it flows north. The NYC Watershed Commission has a dam on the Schoarie in Gilboa. There water is piped 150 miles to the silver Lake Reservoir on Staten Island, NYC. CCA is in the NYC Watershed District and subject to all rules and regulations of

That Commission.

THE grove of pine trees one sees as he comes in Falke Road from County Route 2 was planted by WPA workers in 1935. Marvin Howard, who lived for many years in Little Westskill, told that his brother was a member of the crew that planted the pines.

In the woods beyond the Girl's Cabins were the remains of a foundation of a long ago cabin. No other information is known about this.

When we dug the test site (1975, Or 76) for the percolation test to enlarge the waste water disposal system about 2 feet down we hit the remains of what had once been a large fire.

We would guess it had been an Indian fire in the distant past.

On _____ representatives met at the Hicksville Church of Christ to accept the gift of 28 acres of land from Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Falke. THE name Catskill Christian Assembly was accepted to be the name of the Christian service Camp that would be owned and operated by the Churches of Christ/ Christians Churches of the Metropolitan area. Initially the New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania Churches decided to not become a part of CCA.

THE first order of work was to have a roadway constructed from Falke Road up the hill to the area of the Main Building

By 1961 construction was begun on the Main Building, which was to contain the Kitchen, Dining Hall and three small rooms for staff. Also begun was the restroom building with two rooms on the second floor for staff housing.

Ralph Byers, minister of the East Northport Church of Christ was our first Building Chairman and did a masterful job in getting the construction underway. Roy Anderson, minister of the West Islip congregation was the first Corporation President and oversaw

the legal work necessary to incorporate CCA in the State of New York. Catskill Christian Assembly, Inc. was incorporated in NYS on September 19, 1961.

The incorporating churches were:

Greenpoint Church of Christ

First Church of Christ, Maspeth

Hicksville Church of Christ

Nesconset Church of Christ

West Islip Church of Christ

East Northport Church of Christ

Glen Cove Church of Christ

Bridgeport, CT Church of Christ (now Newtown Christian Church)

When CCA began, there was hardly any funds available so Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Falke loaned CCA the sum of \$3,000.00 to begin construction. Because of weight restrictions on the Mosquito Point Bridge, it was necessary to have the concrete blocks dropped across the other side then we would load them on a farm truck loaned by Herbert Falke and haul smaller loads up to the camp site. During those early days of construction a group of us would leave Long Island about 4 am on a Saturday morning, Mr. Kile would fill his VW van with workers, drive to the camp site, get our work schedule organized while Bill Heuman prepared a breakfast and then labor all day. About supper time we would begin the trip back home

Our first camp season was 1962. There were three weeks of camp. Deans were Charles Faust, Senior Week, Leland Short, Intermediate Week, and Dave Miller, Junior Week.

The dining hall area was divided into three sections; dining area, chapel area and boy's

dorm that first year. Girls dorm were the two rooms over the restroom building.

Some of the roof was completed after the girls were in the dorm. The same in the dinig
hall area. Windows were installed after the room was in use. The fireplace opening in the
dining hall was not yet completed and a large tarp covered the opening that first summer.