

## Memories of Drift Creek Camp

Kathy Krehbiel Yoder

As a longtime member of Albany Mennonite Church, I feel I am part of one of the pioneering families of Drift Creek Camp.

I have dim recollections of 'no cabins,' Old Lodge' and tent camping BEFORE the Old Lodge. I recall adults washing the dishes in outdoor 'trough' sinks. Outhouses until the New Lodge. My dad tiled the showers in the big lodge.

Seems the softball field, tetherball and horseshoes were there from the beginning.

I used to dream of getting a helicopter ride into camp, rather than brave those wonderful logging roads. (Imagine!) I suffered car-sickness, but I really did want to get there.

In about 1965, my sister, aged 4, and I, 7, stepped on a bee/wasp nest and were stung multiple times. We both had severe reactions and were flown (by Dad's car) down the mountain to a hospital.

One year I had a near-death experience during music camp. My pet rat and I went head first into my sleeping bag. It was nearly the last thing I did. My dad reported hearing something, and saw my sleeping bag rising up like a caterpillar. He realized my problem and AGAIN rescued me from asphyxiation.

I didn't let misfortunes keep me away! Always loved DCC. Always went barefoot despite all injury. Attended many summer camps and several family music camps; some before the big lodge was built. I'll sure miss those cabins.

Swimming in snow melt is just not as rewarding anywhere else. Crawdads and periwinkles exist only in Drift Creek. We sometimes caught minnows and took them home. I still dream of 'tubing' Drift Creek.

One of my teen years at summer camp, Paula Miller draped her swimming towel over the woodstove in the cabin, and set the place on fire.

I brought cousins and school friends to camp, be they agnostic, Jewish, whatever. They loved it! Hiking, swimming, singing, competitions, CRAFTS!

Nowhere else does "How Great Thou Art" live as in Drift Creek Camp.

I suppose the beards of Forest Primeval moss are gone from our island by now... kids find them much too interesting.

As I understand, maidenhair ferns are rare except in the Coast Range. I do hope the Trillium still holds on in our forest. Surely there are still large land snails; how about salamanders? Also love those mushrooms and tree fungi. Not so crazy about the mosquitos and deer flies.

Douglas Fir cones have the 'mouse running for cover" on each petal. Hemlock tops are bent. I.D.-ing Blue Spruce, Cedar, Ponderosa Pine's puzzle-bark... I learned most of this on nature hikes at DCC. Adored Huckleberries, Salmonberries (fold down the top segment of a leaf, and you have a green butterfly) and especially Thimbleberries.

A major formative musical experience for me was our family music camp performance of Haydn's "Creation." Outdoors, of course.

I had the opportunity to sing, play flute and lots of recorder at music camps. A small sing group consisting of Carmen Kenagy on guitar, Susan Kenagy, several others and I called ourselves "The DC-8."

Who could forget Lynn Hershey's story of his rescue of the unfinished Lodge from fire - at his own physical expense. Especially his description of the burnt skin of his hand slipping off like a glove when he turned the hose on. Yike. He was my hero. Hey, it was an accident.

What summer camp would be complete without the likes of Elvon Kauffman and his guitar and folk songs? We adored him.

More than almost any other place, Drift Creek made me yearn for a camera.

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