



THE CONISTON CHRONICLE

THE NEWSLETTER FOR CAMP CONISTON CAMPERS, STAFF AND ALUMNI • WINTER 2007



Mission Accomplished!

Camp Coniston
Preserved for the Future!

Yesssss! Well done! That's what we really want to say ... the job is done, the land is ours ... and we all did it.

There's no way we could express our thanks to the Coniston supporters who stepped up and made this possible... the parents who sent donations because they knew what Camp meant to their kids ... local businesses who gave their time and expertise ... major donors who helped bring us much closer to our goal.



The Parcel

Directly opposite Camp, the 130-acre hillside went on the market in 2005, and right away there was interest from developers—the plan was to build 22 house sites, most of which would be clearly visible from Camp. When we learned of this, it became obvious that despite the \$550,000 pricetag,

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No worries here ... a beautiful hillside preserved for Camp's future.



Donor Focus

"It's The Best Part of Life"

**Stefan
Timbrell**
New London, NH



In the 1970's Stefan Timbrell was a four-year Coniston camper " ... boy, I really wanted that five-year pin!" he recalls.

Stefan grew up in New London and attended Audubon day camps, but this was his first and only experience with a sleepover camp. "I can really relate to my Camp experiences when I look at my own kids, how stimulated they are from so many different directions, tv, video games, cellphones, internet... The four weeks that they'll get to immerse themselves in Camp, and slow down and take in that pace, and be there 100% without the distractions ... it was powerful for me then, and I can see it will be even more powerful for them now."

In his teen years Stefan took a series of summer jobs at Twin Lake Villa on Little Lake Sunapee, "a great old summer hotel and cabins that are still as they were 100 years ago", but looking back, he clearly sees the value of his time at Coniston. "Camp is a foundation, a basis that travels with you as you interact with people. It's as simple as getting up every morning and making your bed, or having a cabin inspection so you can win 'cleanest cabin'. I went on to the Air Force academy, and believe it or not, the disciplines we practiced at Camp were very much a part of life there."

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A Publication of
YMCA CAMP CONISTON
for Campers, Alumni
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I was really lucky this year.

Four or five years ago, in order to accommodate more campers and serve more kids, we started a new CIT program at Coniston. The West Coast CIT program was a direct outgrowth of everything we build in our East Coast program over the years.

In 2002 I had taken a very emotional trip up Mount Washington with an

"You can't imagine the heat!" ... West Coasters heading into the Canyon



Stefan Timbrell

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"Those kinds of skillsets, the *confidence-building* ... it's very much a part of me.

"Here's a simple analogy ... the swimming program. When you're out there in the morning on that concrete dock, it's *cold*, and the last thing you want to do is jump in the water! But it's that feeling that you're there, and you gotta do it ... and you *do* it, you jump off the dock, and before you know it, you're having fun! It's that anticipation that people carry forward into their daily lives, 'can I do it, should I take the chance?' Those Camp experiences give you the confidence that you'll be able to get it done—that's what life's about."

Years later, as owner/partner of Country Houses Real Estate in New Lon-

Director's 2c

A Walk Through Grand Canyon

incredible group of East Coast CITs, but I never had the chance to get out to the West Coast and visit with the CITs there.

This year, I was lucky to be able to hike the Grand Canyon with another fantastic group of young people ... to see the challenge of the heat and the hike, and to see the rewards of the feelings of accomplishment and friendship on their faces at the end.

It was so meaningful because I knew the future of Coniston lay in the hands of young people like these. I

have no doubt that the future of Camp is brighter than the past. But I also felt so fulfilled to see the impact the trip had on these kids.

None of this would be possible without the support of many people, to allow us to run programs like these. We're lucky we can meet this mission ... but more than that, through meeting our mission, we can actually make dreams come true.

don, Stefan helped John Tilley buy his house. "I went back to visit Camp and saw it was the same place but so much better ... it really helped me reconnect. Not long after Coniston began looking at this property, and being in real estate I said, "John, I don't want to see this place change, and this is such a pivotal piece ... I'd love to help you with this."

"People feel aligned and protective of the things that move them emotionally," Stefan said. "Camp is one of those rare experiences that is so powerful, that resonates so strongly ... looking back, it's the best part of life.

"You feel like you want to help out, because it's so important, and so instrumental. I think the feelings that people have about Coniston are really what made this campaign work." —J

Mission Accomplished!

CONT'D FROM PG 1

the only solution was to raise the money and buy the land. "We didn't see this as an option," said John Tilley. "Almost everyone I spoke to—board members, parents, grandparents, staff—said almost the same thing. It wasn't an option, it was a *must*, we gotta do it."

What We Bought

What we were able to buy, quite simply, was the future of Camp—the ability to control our facility so that kids could benefit in perpetuity. But it is so much more than that:

- ▼ A protected lake front, and control of our own security
- ▼ An exceptional hiking and overnight camping destination
- ▼ Perhaps a wilderness experience base camp

All we need to do now is take on the burden of responsibility to preserve it and use it for the community, kids and Camp.

What We Got: the bonus!

We all know the benefits that the land purchase brings. But the real bonus was a quite incredible 360-degree view of all the forest surrounding Lake Coniston ... and quite a bit beyond. There are unobstructed views of Mts. Sunapee and Kearsarge in NH, and Ascutey and Okemo Mts. in VT—and all the surrounding mountains in NH, Vermont and Massachusetts can be easily seen.



No photo can possibly do this view justice ... you have to come and walk it for yourself.

This is the spot where we'll be hosting overnights for our campers—in fact, right now we're extending the Coniston trail system to connect with the new camping area. This is also an exceptional opportunity for day hikes ... a knockout day experience without ever leaving Camp.

Anyone who knows NH will tell you this view is a rare find ... it's very hard to find anything like it for sale anywhere in the state. A fine bonus indeed!

To the Future John says, "I remember the day Stefan Timbrell and I sat on the lake and looked up at the property, saying it would be really shortsighted *not* to make this purchase. We had some real concerns at that point ... are we going to be able to raise enough to make this happen?"

No worries, John ... we've got this one covered. —

Coniston Afterschool Programs

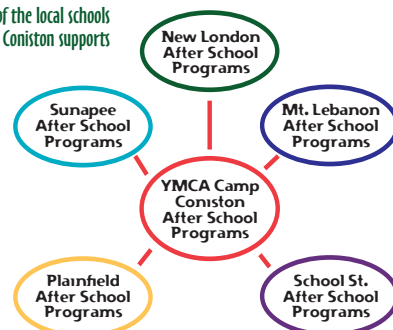


Our Afterschool kids "getting a taste of Camp!"

Camp Coniston brings "a little bit of Camp" to over 150 local families every year through our Afterschool programs, providing safe, affordable afterschool care for their children.

In addition to donating funds, YMCA Camp Coniston also gave out over \$25,000 in credits to help local families afford afterschool care last year, ensuring our kids with a safe and nurturing (and fun!) environment.

Just a few of the local schools that Coniston supports



Coniston afterschool programs are one way we say thanks to our local communities ... a way to 'give back' to our neighbors who need it. —

The Summer!



JD Looks Back on '07's Best!



Traditions ... where would Camp be without them?! Campers and staff look forward to them every year. They mark milestones, and they mark community.

Every tradition has a starting point ... we have been hiking Mt. Washington since the 30's when we were named Soangetaha, but no one ran into the lake until about 60 years later! Did you know that the boys' campfire/ vespers ring used to be located in the current skeet range until 2000 ... closing fireworks began in 2002 ... and we have only been dancing in the dining hall for 5 years!

With the opening of the new Chapel overlooking Cranberry Pond during summer 2007, it was time to examine the Sunday Schedule and consider some new ceremonies that many of us have been interested in starting. Sunday's now include breakfast snacks for each cabin, then morning Chapel.

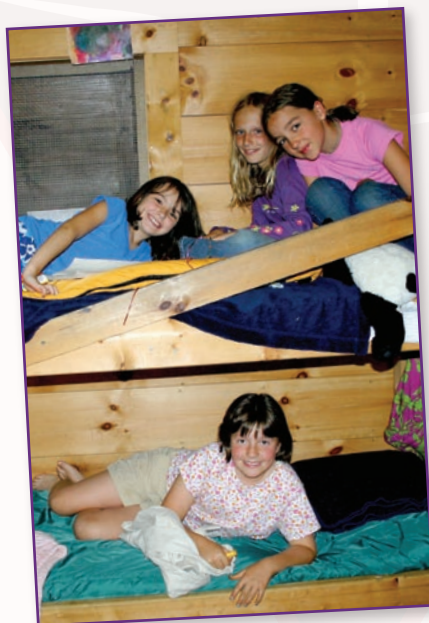
We still dress up for Chapel, but instead of a hamburger & hotdog cook out on the main lawn, sitting on the grass in skirts and ties... we have a fancy brunch



Dancing in the dining hall!



Staff at the Opening Campfire



Maxin' and relaxin' in the Girl's cabin



Set for evening activities at the Boy's cabin



Ready to ride at the Horse Barn



The first service in our new Chapel on Cranberry Pond



with table cloths and candles! The Sunday afternoon program and free time is the same, but we now include something new for our wonderful 1st year Conistonians.

Sunday Vespers has been added to recognize and celebrate our wonderful first year campers and staff. This ceremony is to welcome all new friends to camp and identify their importance and their success after their first full week.



The first Sunday Vespers, recognizing our first-year campers



Every 1st year Conistonian is recognized by reading his/her name and giving them a special pin that they can attach to their first year triangle on closing night.

The pin has the current year on it – all of us ‘older Conistonians’ are rather jealous that we don’t have pins with our first year! We will definitely continue this special acknowledgment year after year.



Coniston sails Lake Sunapee!



We then all regroup on main lawn for the traditional cook-out, but now in casual clothes so we can play volleyball, sit on the grass, play Frisbee, run around... it’s an amazing part of the day right before the ... yes, ICS ... the Ice Cream Social! We still have a whole-camp dance in the pavilion with amazing staff DJ’s like ZZ, Jill, Pippa ... even John Tilley tried his hand at the DJ booth!



CITs hangin’ at the ICS!



Campers and Staff, thanks for all the amazing memories of 2007, and the excitement over both new and old traditions. It is part of what makes us all so eager for summer to return! —

IN MEMORIAM

Judy Horton

Coniston Supporter
Board Member
CIT Believer

We were saddened by the passing of longtime Coniston supporter and former board member, Judy Horton. A steady presence at Camp for over 35 years, Judy had more than twenty years of service on Coniston's Board.

Every year, Judy would pay for *any* CIT who couldn't afford it. This gesture truly made Coniston a better place. She knew the Coniston CIT program changed her own kids' lives: during the past few years, her donations were in honor of her son Sherm and his wife Lynn, who met at Coniston in 1980 and married in '90 ... "a gesture to



Judy Horton at Coniston,
summer 1996

their happy marriage and to having connected here at Camp Coniston."

Judy saw countless kids come through the ranks at Coniston, and she valued the satisfaction they gained through the process. "I've watched them mature, gain new confidence, really come out of their shells," she said in a 2006 interview, "and I want to forward this experience to other kids."

Today, Judy's gifts are living on in the lives of the many counselors she's helped to train.

John Tilley says, "If you're thankful for the quality of the Coniston CITs, you have to thank Judy." —

Judy and grandson Walker in a
quiet summer moment



FROM ALL YOUR FRIENDS AT CAMP!
Happy Holidays!

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