

OH2020.036
Hildebrand, Chris
Kayt Gochenaur
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Interview Log for edited version

Phone Interview. Interviewed by Kayt Gochenaur.

2:00 Intro: Name and age.

2:34 Was camper at Eagle Island (when owned by Girl Scouts) for 5 years in 1950s, was counselor 1961 - 1963, then attended women's weekend in late 90s. In 2006, she was involved in trying to save the island from being sold.

7:15 2015: started Friends of Eagle Island group.

7:46 Experience as a camper? What does it mean to you? Anecdote about response when reaching out to people. "People love that camp." It was rustic, taught them about nature. Remembering ten day canoe trip down Fulton Chain. Mariner Unit learning to sail (said it changed her life). Attended camp from 6th grade through 10th. Then was a counselor age 18-20.

14:48 Discussion of camp region: open for girls from Maple Wood NJ area first. Was not a troop camp. Not allowed to be publicized outside NJ area, but people could still attend from other areas.

17:48 Favorite memory: Mariner boathouse. Camp rededication ceremony, which happened every year since it was first dedicated. Ceremony reenacts legends/history of the camp. Legend of Chip Eagle, a mohawk man who lived there.

21:00 Was an 8 week camp with 4 sessions, two weeks each. (Attended for the full 8 weeks when she was a camper).

21:46 Number of campers? About 130 max campers about 50 staff. Asked about caretakers. Said when the Graves owned it they had caretakers checking in.

23:27 Winterization? Guides cottage/infirmary partially winterized.

25:25 Camp experience change in 90s: The spirit was the same but some changes. When she was attending, girls were restricted in the other parts of their life. No sports, not allowed to wear shorts or even jeans. At Eagle Island you could wear whatever you wanted, and you were taught leadership and living with land.

27:40 Was diversified in terms of religion but not racially in the 1950s. The camp is now much more racially diverse.

32:00 Work that needed to be done to restore the camp. Needed new roofs.

35:51 Response of alumni? Speaks about finding names from Facebook and the Friends of Eagle Island Website

39:00 Similarities and differences with the Girl Scout camp? Friends of Eagle Island still has emphasis on outdoors/ water recreation etc.

42:50 Impact of COVID: Day camp in 2019 b/c water/sewage problem couldn't do sleep away camp. Planned sleep away camp in 2020. Couldn't happen because of COVID.

What you learned about history from other alumni? She remembers old chapel on Chapel Island burning down 1956. Other alumni remembers famous Shakespeare actor watching their production of Midsummer nights Dream. Talks about the camp logs with entries every day from 1938 until camp shut down in the 2000s (check these dates). Camp in session during depression, WWII, the say WWII ended, Vietnam, Moon Landing, etc. Talks about evolution of music sung at camp. Singing was a big part of life there.

1:00:20 Reunions every year. Talks about Friday reunion celebration.

1:04:30 Talks about camp newspaper and the camp counsel