



Vol. 28 Dedicated to Preserving the Memories of T.M.R. Campers #3

The Newsletter of the Ten Mile River Scout Museum - July 2025

This issue features information about our grant, an update on the drainage project and a walk through Kunatah.

If you have a TMR memory you would like to share please email it to us.

[Join the TMR Scout Museum](#)

From the Chairman - Mitchell Slepian

Today is the first day of Ten Mile River Scout Camps' 2025 season. I remember, as a teen, sitting in school in September, thinking back about what a great summer finished the semester with a smile on my face, knowing I had passed my Regents and that nothing was going to stop me from going to camp. I miss that. Not the Regents. But going off to TMR. I also dearly miss 112's ordeals and, of course, my lodge.

As you scroll through this edition of "Smoke Signals," you will learn about our grant and updates to our facility.

We are always looking for new volunteers or trustees. If you cannot commit to being a trustee, I hope you can commit to doing some volunteer work with us. Work can include website development (**a major need**), attending trade-o-rees, and maintaining our buildings. There is a lot that can be done during the summer camp season. Email me at chairmantmrmuseum@gmail.com to learn more.



Museum Gets Grant Sullivan 180 Award for Phase 1 of Site Improvement

By Michael Drillinger, chairman emeritus

Thanks to the efforts of Ed Winters and Dorothy Browne of the GNYC office, the Ten Mile River Scout Museum has been awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Sullivan 180 organization. This money will be used for Phase 1 of our site improvement plan. This phase will address the water and drainage issues on the west side of the museum site.

Sullivan 180 works to address community health and promote innovative ways for all Sullivan County residents to lead healthier lifestyles. This encompasses not only physical but also mental, spiritual, economic, and environmental health. They are addressing the social determinants of health through prevention, access to healthy food, opportunities for physical activity, a sense of purpose, and connection to family and community.

Through a competitive grant process, Sullivan 180 provides funding, technical assistance, and other resources to support the development of beautiful, active communities in Sullivan County, NY.

We were greatly assisted in developing our grant application by Shannon Cilento, Director of Community Development, Sullivan 180.

A significant part of our grant application was letters of support from other Sullivan County organizations. We want to thank the following people especially:

Ashley Bartels, Business Developer, Sullivan County Visitors Bureau
Ashley Leavitt, President & CEO, Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce
Thomas LaDuke, PH.D., East Stroudsburg University
Ben Johnson, Supervisor, Town of Tusten

Ed is inviting all of the people mentioned above to our Alumni Day gathering, where he will publicly thank them for their support. Ed has also invited Jane Luchsinger, Historian of the Town of Tusten, who is another Sullivan 180 grant recipient.

Update on Phase 1 of the Museum Site Improvement Project

By Michael Drillinger, chairman emeritus

Bob Chiusano has been working tirelessly to bring together the various physical and engineering pieces of the drainage and grading part of the museum site improvement project. In an unexpected moment of good timing and good luck, Chizzy met a fellow with 20 years of experience designing and building golf courses. Our drainage needs are not so different. When Chizzy explained the plan, this fellow offered a less costly and easier alternative. Chizzy immediately acted upon these recommendations and shifted our material needs accordingly.

Chizzy and I were supposed to meet with Head Ranger Jim Loeffle. Unfortunately, there was a timing issue, and I was the only one who got to meet with both Jim and Frank Rickenbaugh. The good news is that Jim committed to doing all the pre-excavation site work Chizzy has identified, including removing several trees and stumps. Chizzy marked the trees and also staked the course of the excavation and drainage pipe work.

No work will be done until after camp. We expect the work will begin at the end of August or the beginning of September.

The images illustrate what we are doing.



A Recent Walk Through Kunatah

By Michael Drillinger, chairman emeritus

On May 8th, I attended a meeting at the museum with Bob Chiusano, Bob Viggiano, Frank Rickenbaugh, Mike Herbert, and Jim Loeffle. We discussed the drainage project, and I helped Chizzy with marking the site for future work.

After our work and meetings, I decided to take a drive over to Kunatah to see what I could see regarding the work on the Rock Lake dam and what was being done to Mahl's Pond. Before the Council can complete the sale of the section of TMR that includes Rock Lake and Davis Lake, it must rebuild the dams on both of those lakes. Rather than incurring the cost of replacing the earthen dam at Mahl's Pond, the plan is to simply remove the dam and drain the pond.

I found Mahl's Pond Road was pretty beat up but still drivable. There were numerous construction vehicles either actively working or staged for future work. I first parked by what used to be the earthen dam of Mahl's Pond. The dam is gone, and what used to be the pond is now a mudflat. See the before and after pictures. I understand the economic reasons for removing the dam, but it's still sad to see it go.

Camp Ihpetonga was between Grassy Swamp Pond and Mahl's Pond. Across the dam and up a steep hill lay the ball field and, at one time, a set of solar-heated showers. I remember coming off a boggy hike on Grassy Swamp Pond and trudging up the hill from Mahl's Pond to use the showers to rinse off before heading back to Kunatah. Twenty years later, old age and TMR winters rusted the showers to the ground. After another ten years, the once-open ball field was again a forest.



I continued to Rock Lake, parking, as I usually do, down by what was the Camp Ihpetonga waterfront. Later, in the late 1960s, the Rock Lake cabins were used as a family camp, and that waterfront area was the family camp's waterfront. When I arrived, I could see that Cochection Turnpike was completely dominated by heavy construction equipment, obviously being used on the dam construction project.

I decided to make my way towards the dam on the south side of Rock Lake, avoiding Cochection Turnpike altogether. I know the south side route all too well. The rhododendron forest has completely overtaken the shoreline. Unfortunately, they were not yet in bloom. I made my way past the Kunatah waterfront, onto the Chappagat waterfront, and then further on to Kotohke and, finally, the earliest waterfront, which was practically by the dam.

There was a substantial amount of construction underway. A great deal of concrete had already been poured, and work was proceeding to receive even more concrete. I skirted well away from where the work was happening. You can see in my photo the rebar and forms being placed. I was pleasantly surprised to see the lake still quite full. I had expected it to be lower to accommodate the work. The finished dam will be very impressive.

From there, I continued up the hill, basically bushwhacking, to get to Kotohke and the Indian Cliffs. By the time I got to Picture Window, there was a great deal of thunder. Not wanting to get caught in a downpour and lightning, I gave up on the Indian Cliffs and started back down to Kunatah.

I'm used to seeing changes at TMR, especially in the landscape, but things can still take me by surprise. Nature and forest succession are ongoing processes. Nevertheless, seeing the Kunatah baseball backstop engulfed in a growing forest was quite impressive.

The images show some of the work being done.

Tusten Postcards Exhibit

By David Malatzky

See the new *"Tusten Postcards"* exhibit this summer at the Ten Mile River Scout Museum. It tells the story of the TMR area and local region through more than 200 picture postcards. The early years of the 20th century were known as the *"Golden Age of Postcards."* Millions of picture postcards were purchased and mailed to family, friends, and relatives. To satisfy the demand, almost every significant public building, lake, river, boarding house, and hotel in Tusten had postcards produced for them. This exhibit has many of them, including nearly 25 postcards of the Ten Mile River and almost 20 postcards of the Half Moon Lake Hotel and its predecessors. Many postcards show properties later incorporated into TMR. For those unable to visit the Museum, the exhibit guidebook is for sale on the Museum's website store: <https://www.tmrnmuseum.org/online-museum-store>.



Memories of TMR

By Seth Walter, Chappy Staff, 1985

I attended a Spring Camporee this year, and during the campfire, I marveled that the Scouts' choices of songs and skits were entirely unfamiliar to me, except for "Patsy-Ori-Ori-Ay" (also known as "Working On The Railroad"), which was performed with gusto and received with enthusiasm by the troops present. This is not an "it was better in my day" rant, but an opportunity to reminisce about some of my (and maybe your) favorite TMR campfire experiences. As I prepare to take my troop on their week of summer camp, I think back on my years at TMR camping at Kernochan, Kunatah, and especially those on Chappy Hill, and I miss those multi-week adventures. I remember those times as if they were yesterday, even though they were 40 years or more ago, and I still laugh at them! Some of my favorite songs were Titanic, Rickety-Tickety-Tin, Salvation Army, Quartermaster Store, Mountain Dew, Shaving Cream, and Bill the Billboard Builder. Some of my favorite skits were German Interrogation, Japanese Submarine, Lawnmower, any variation on Kwame, any with Rodney, Candy Shop, Bumbling First Aid, and Hit Me with Great Exuberance! Let's not forget how we showed our appreciation with the Class A, Class B, and Class C claps or a healthy Bronx Cheer! One thing that remains the same today as it was then is that most campfires conclude with Scout Vespers and Taps.

1961 Jamboree Memories

By Michael Weinman

In 1961, I had the privilege of representing BSA as a member of US Troop 1 at the Third Canadian Jamboree in Ottawa, ON. Later that same summer, I represented the Achewen Schingue Chapter and Shu Shu Gah Lodge at the National Order of the Arrow Conference at Indiana University, Bloomington, IN. I even got my sash signed by either E. Urner Goodman or Carrol Edson - I can't recall which. The entertainment was singer Shelly Fabares. I was accompanied, if I remember, by brothers John Bianchi, Bob Ochab, and possibly others.

However, the most essential part of the trip for me was the train ride out to Indianapolis on the Pennsylvania Railroad's 31, The Spirit of St. Louis. We transferred to a Greyhound at Indi for the trip to Bloomington. The railroad was courteous in granting me the ability to ride the locomotive from Altoona to Pittsburgh, around Horseshoe Curve (where the train required helper locomotives for the grade) - my first ride in a road engine (and my first ride in a yard engine) was at the Ottawa jamboree when I and a friend went to the now long gone Ottawa West Yards of Canadian Pacific while the rest of US Troop 1 toured Parliament.

Indeed, a formative summer for a railroad career that's lasted 61 years (so far).

Michael Weinman, TMR Arrowhead member was a TMR camper at Kunatah and Davis Lake in the late 50s and early 60s. He attended the 1961 NOAC in Bloomington, IN and was active in Achewen Schingue Chapter of Shu Shu Gah Lodge #24.

ORDER OUR FAMOUS PEOPLE IN TMR CSPS, [Purchase Here](#). THERE ARE ONLY A FEW SETS OF THE GOLD BORDER PATCHES LEFT. WE WILL NOT MAKE MORE.

FAMOUS PEOPLE IN EARLY TMR HISTORY CSP SET



The Ten Mile River Scout Museum is pleased to announce we will be selling sets of CSPs honoring early famous people and places in TMR history starting some time in June. We are waiting for the patches to arrive and when they do, how-to-order information will be posted in Smoke Signals and on Social Media and be available to you. There will be two 10-CSP sets, one with different colored borders (above) and a very limited quantity special gold border set.

AUGUST 1-3, 2025



The Museum's Website Store

Did you know that the Museum sells a variety of T.M.R. and Museum merchandise from our [Website Store](#)?

This includes most every patch set issued by the Museum in recent years, the 2021 *Guide to Memorabilia of the Ten Mile River Scout Camps*, Indian Cliff puzzles, Scout Service Corps CSP's from 1996-2003, and the two new booklets on Brooklyn and Queens Council emblem histories.



TMR Wall of Fame

Do you want to recognize some individual, group or organization for their contributions to the Ten Mile River Scout Camps and/or New York City Scouting? A custom-

engraved tile on the T.M.R. Wall of Fame might be right for you.

[Wall of Fame - Learn More](#)

Donate Scouting Memorabilia

Donations of T.M.R. and other Scouting memorabilia to the Museum by individuals like you are the main way the Museum grows.

These include, but are not limited to: photos, color slides, 8-mm film, videos, patches, neckerchiefs, neckerchief slides, uniforms, banners, menus, paper items, etc. We can also photograph items and return them to you, or photograph notable items at your home.

