

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society

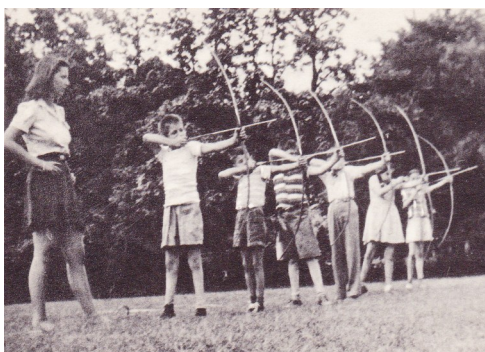


Buckingham Lodge-1861

The Story of Camp Livingston

From 1919 until 1968 Camp Livingston for children ages 6-16 flourished on north Given Road, at the site of current day soccer/ lacrosse fields and Livingston Lodge. The camp, located on the banks of the Little Miami River, provided valuable experiences for about 300 youths each summer.

Originally named the Helen Trounstone Camp, its name was changed in 1920, when H. S. Livingston established a memorial for his only son, Lt. Robert Krohn Livingston, who died during the influenza epidemic after World War I. He wanted to establish a camp where children could experience growth and maturation in a trusting, caring environment. He equipped the site with barrack style buildings and funded the conversion of the land to athletic fields. The campus was nestled between the hillside and the river.



More than 15,000 campers, mostly Jewish came “from the crowded West End... to enjoy a few days of vacation and taste of life in the open... with pure air and open spaces”. For the first 20 years the boys and girls had separate sessions, but in the 1940s the camp became co-educational. Activity choices included a wide variety of sports, drama, canoeing, handicrafts, nature study, and photography. The camp grew to 25 acres, and a swimming pool was constructed for the required swimming lessons. There were tennis courts, ball fields, and two camp-fire areas.

Camp group projects included building a duck pond, a chicken coop, and a primitive outdoor chapel of tree stumps. There was more emphasis on learning to work together than on competition. Daily inspections, flag ceremonies, and songfests were part of the experience, along with skit night, amateur night, and an occasional overnight camping trip to Camp Friedlander. Campers developed an appreciation of the outdoors, grew in self-esteem, and formed lifelong friendships.

Though Camp Livingston had mostly Jewish campers, children of other faiths attended. Most were from Cincinnati, but some came from Michigan, Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia. There was no religious curriculum, although informal services were held on the Sabbath, and Kosher style food was served in the Mess Hall. Some scholarships were available to cover the 1940s cost of \$7 per week per camper.

Livingston Lodge was the Rec Hall, and Elliott House was the Director's residence. Four cabins for girls (nicknamed “The Alps”) were on the hillside, and three boys' bunkhouses were located across Given Road. Each camper had a bed and an orange crate to use as a dresser. A favorite dinner item was fresh corn fritters. Other buildings were a small barn for horses, a Hobby House, and a canteen where campers could buy candy or postcards.



Camp Livingston was rustic, but former campers remember it as having a “special magnetic field”. Now based in Indiana, the camp has a 90 year history. When it was located in Indian Hill, beside the Little Miami River, campers and counselors agreed with the motto that *Living's Fun at Livingston*.