

For Russers... Camp a Family Affair

"We grew up with the camp," said Mrs. Clarence Young recently of herself, her brother and sisters. Their father, Max Russer, purchased the land for Camp Stella Maris, keeping the caretaker's cottage for the family's use each summer.

Russer had become involved in the project after Msgr. Gerald Lambert had gone to the Russer home in 1926, asking if their son, Max, would like to attend a camp on Conesus Lake at McPherson's Point. Mrs. Young said that she "can remember the day Msgr. Lambert came" to their home, and her father's interest in the idea. As a result, Russer sought land for a permanent site for the camp, purchasing the property only after spending many evenings, according to Mrs. Young, persuading the owner to sell.

Mrs. Young remembers vividly the camp season with the family attending campfires, and the counselors finding their way to the Russer kitchen for some home-cooked meals and baked goods. Mrs. Young said that the contact with the camp and the counselors was a real joy for her mother, Eleanor.

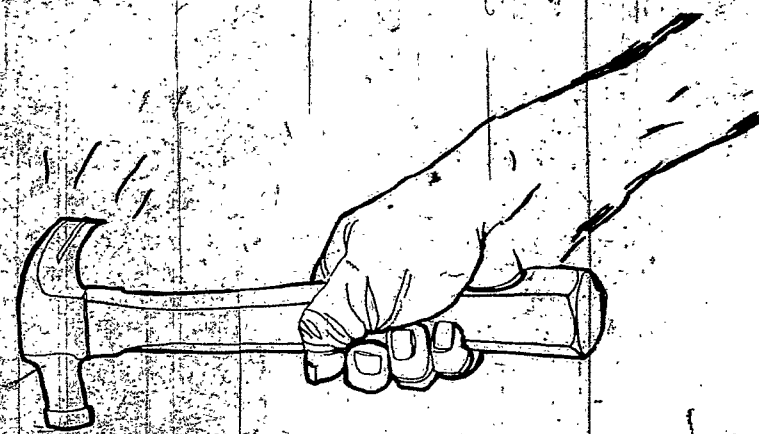
Eleanor Russer, who died recently, was a long-time patron of the camp, organizing a social at the conclusion of each season to raise funds. Mrs. Young said that her "greatest memory" is "helping at the socials, cleaning the camp, and collecting flowers from the area for decorations."

A special joy for the family, Mrs. Young said, was the construction of a chapel at the camp in 1937, a facility previously lacking.



Important Moment In Camp's History

Bishop James E. Kearney blessed this new cabin in August 1964 at Camp Stella Maris to honor the late Max Russer, donor of the camp site. Mrs. Max Russer is shown accepting a bouquet of roses presented by campers. Earlier that day Bishop Kearney celebrated Mass and spoke on the significance of the Blessed Virgin Mary's title Stella Maris — Star of the Sea. The cabin in the background, like many of the facilities at Camp Stella Maris, has become known simply by the last name of its namesake — "Russer."



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