



## T L Storer Scout Camp Summer 2002



*Welcome to camp!*

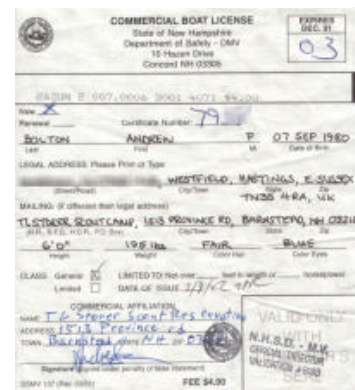
T L Storer Scout Camp is based in New Hampshire, around forty minutes drive from Concord and about two hours from Boston. Set in acres of forest (I never did work out how much) it surrounds one pond and borders another with a waterfront on both. The camp also boasts eighteen campsites, a COPE course (Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience – a high ropes course, climbing wall and abseil tower formed part of this), archery, shotgun, and rifles as well as areas for scoutcraft, nature and sports.

I arrived in the States at Boston Logan Airport and was picked up by the Camp Director's wife and spent the first night at their house before heading for camp the following day. In true style, it was raining when I arrived – not just drizzle, but full-on rain. I was shown my tent and I unpacked my stuff. Fortunately, the tents on the site were all on raised platforms and with proper bunks, so living in one for eight weeks isn't quite like living in a patrol tent at home for the same length of time!



*The pent suite, otherwise known as my tent*

Our first week was spent as staff week, getting to know the staff, setting up camp and doing some training in our areas. It was a week of long days – breakfast was at 7am for a couple of days and we didn't tend to finish until fairly late. We had canvas to put up in some campsites, although fortunately much of it had already been done before we arrived. This didn't stop us from having to equip each tent with a pair of (heavy!) metal bunks and mattresses. Other training included various methods of teaching, first aid and CPR and running campfires.



*NH Commercial Boat Drivers' License: Useful.*

Then the first week of campers arrived – a fairly small week of about 120. I was to work on the Wild Goose Pond waterfront, teaching sailing and waterskiing. The waterskiing didn't happen until week 3 as we had problems with the boat and I also had to pass the New Hampshire Commercial Boat Drivers' License – an interesting affair involving (trying!) to learn a load of navigation symbols and rules that I'd probably never need driving a 40hp boat round a small pond.

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A typical camp day ended up running along these lines:

6:30-7am Polar Bear swim at Adam's Pond Waterfront.

Fortunately we only had to work three out of the four each week. The waterfront was still a good ten minutes walk from the staff site, though...

7:50 Line up for breakfast followed by flag raising.

The Union Flag made it up the flag pole as well... Various songs were sung as the staff walked out – this was the case for all line ups. Mainly campfire type songs.



*Line up and flag*

8:00 Breakfast.

More singing after the meal. Again, this happened after most meals.

9:15-12noon Morning activity periods. Most of the merit badge classes (roughly equivalent to the UK activity badges) took place in the morning – there were three sessions, each lasting 45 minutes with a fifteen minute break between them to allow people to get from one to the other – for example, Goose Pond Waterfront was at least ten minutes walk from the dining hall.

12:20pm Line up for lunch

12:30 Lunch

Followed by siesta

2:15-5:00 Afternoon sessions.

Similar to the morning, except these tended to be Troop activities rather than merit badges. Activities at the Adam's Pond waterfront included the eliminator – basically a large inflated balloon that you



*Wild Goose Pond and waterfront*

got launched off by someone jumping onto the other end and watermelon tussle – get a watermelon, cover it in grease and pretty much play rugby with it in the water.

5:45 Line up.

6:00 Evening meal.

7:15-8pm Evening activity.

This varied from night to night: Monday and Thursday the programme areas were open as during the day, Tuesday saw the Magee Patrol Competition (a series of races/challenges for the patrols) and Wednesdays the Adams versus Goose Ultimate Frisbee game (Adam's Pond and Wild Goose were the two subcamps).



*Campfire*

Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays were different: Friday afternoon was the campwide games – a series of challenges while we tried to light a barbecue and sign blue cards (blue cards were what merit badges were signed off on) followed by the closing campfire in the evening. Saturday was departure day – we had breakfast, sang the best last day song in the world... ever (OK, sounds over the top now, but it's still true. The song is

Rise and Shine) and then the Troops departed. We then had from 11am to 11am Sunday off. Sunday was arrival day – after signing back on at 11am, we sometimes

had some brief site work to do – moving bunks or similar – we then had to check all the campers in. Working on the waterfront, we had to run swim checks for everyone. The day was rounded off by staff introductions and the opening campfire.

Each Thursday we had a call out ceremony for the Order of the Arrow (OA). The OA is the Boy Scouts of America's national honour society and recognises both Scouts and adults. Each Scout Council has its own OA Lodge, Boston Minuteman's lodge is Moswetuset Lodge 52. To become a member, a Scout must be elected by his Troop and have a minimum rank of First Class (most Scouts will have earned this within a year or so of joining the Troop). The result of the election is kept secret, so the only way a Scout knows if he has been elected is at the call out.



*Mike and I swap uniforms.  
Because we can.*

Working on the waterfront had to be one of the best places to work. Out of the two waterfronts, Wild Goose was the quieter one (probably to do with the fact we were so far away from everything else!) so we enjoyed a nice relaxed atmosphere. The lake was warm and clear – very useful when it starts to hit 90° and the humidity starts to get to you! I also helped out in a few other areas – each week I would help out with the wilderness survival merit badge overnight. Basically, we walked to the other side of camp and each Scout had to build themselves a shelter using whatever they could find and sleep in it. No sleeping bags allowed!



*The Dining Hall from across the  
parade field*

I was the only international member of staff, so ever camper seemed to know my name – once a week at staff introductions we had the “Look what we’ve got! A Brit” routine (although Ed, the Waterfront Director, only did to wind me up) and I managed to pretty much fill my campfire blanket.

The final few weeks of camp saw a bit of a change – we had some Girl Scouts using the Wild Goose waterfront for two weeks which meant we had to work during our siesta. We did (usually!) get time off during the afternoon, though.

For the last two weeks of camp, we hosted the New England Deaf Camp. This was an interesting experience as I had never worked with deaf people before, let alone learnt and sign language! We were taught a few useful phrases, although fortunately they had translators with them. The second week of Deaf Camp was also our final week there, so we were also taking down the rest of camp, such as the canvas and the programme areas that weren't going to be used.

The final night of camp we had a barbeque on the Adam's Waterfront beach as well as the class A swim – basically jump in the pond and swim while wearing your full Scout Uniform. Leaving so many friends the next day was tough – it seemed so strange that eight weeks ago I knew none of them. After staying with



*Looking across the parade field*

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my tent mate in Boston for a few days, I headed off the Washington DC and New York before returning home.



*Adam's Pond waterfront, including the Eliminator – the big multicoloured balloon.*

The summer has left me with many memories of camp – cowering under a tarpaulin at the waterfront during a massive thunderstorm that cut off our electricity, the passing the National Camping School inspection and dropping just one point, the bugs dive-bombing me at any possible opportunity, the many trips to Wal\*Mart and the mall (definitely not as exciting by the end of camp as it was at the start!) and, generally, the feeling of being part of what was unanimously declared as the ‘best staff... ever’. A summer not to be forgotten!

Andrew Bolton

Boston Minuteman Scout Council – <http://www.bsaboston.org>

*Head to the camping section for a map of T L Storer.*

More photos: [http://www.geocities.com/andy\\_bolton/storer](http://www.geocities.com/andy_bolton/storer)

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