

## Remembering Stan “Tink” Hayes

As many of you know Stan Hayes was a Scoutmaster for Troop 19 in Freeport in the late 50's, 60's and 70's. While he will long be remembered for the influence he had on 100's of boys that were a part of the troop including many Eagle Scouts, he also had a major impact on Canyon Camp. Below are memories of John Wurtzel a troop member, later assistant to Stan, of the early impact Stan had at Canyon Camp. While Stan is no longer with us he will be long be remembered by his scouts, his friends and at the Coon Lake Boat House that was dedicated to him a number of years ago. Thanks Stan for the impact you had on my life and the lives of so many.

Randy (Swede) Olson

### **1950s Coon Lake and the Dance Ring**

Some of Stan's presence at camp is very subtle and not easily recognized or noticed unless you realize what you are looking at. Prior to when the swimming pool was built, Coon Lake extended into the area now commonly known as the “Dance Ring”. After the pool was completed, that area of the lake was no longer needed for swimming so it was decided to fill it in. There was a dock that extended into that portion of the lake that had to be removed. Stan drove a caterpillar out onto the rickety old dock and used a chain attached to the caterpillar blade to pull out the dock posts one by one then backing up and repeating the process until the dock was dismantled and the caterpillar was back on solid ground. Stan did the original landscaping that now forms the Dance Ring.

As you walk in the area between the bell and the road, if you look carefully you will notice a slight ridge that runs parallel between the road and the dining hall that Stan placed there to divert water from running into the kitchen.

Stan also built a similar, but much larger ridge on the hill above the swimming pool to prevent rain water from flowing down the hill into the pool area. The sloped area that you sit on overlooking the pool is part of that ridge.

### **Spring 1961 (or maybe 62) Pine Trees**

Stan organized a group of troop 19 scouts to plant the pine grove located along Broadway at the Northeast corner of camp. Cold, cloudy, windy early spring Saturday morning, muddy field, old Ford tractor with a single bottom plow, bundles of pine seedlings in 5 gallon buckets, and a bunch of enthusiastic kids. I think of that day every time I hike through that area with a group of scouts, I always ask them how old they think the trees are, I get a variety of answers, It always comes down to the fact that I must obviously be older than dirt if I was there when they were planted.

### **1962 Freeport Fire Bell**

Anyone associated with Canyon Camp instantly recognizes the “Bell Logo” that has been used on T-shirts, cups, stationary and many other items over the years. The bell was originally affixed to the roof the Freeport City Hall. It had not been used for many years and was threatening to come crashing through the roof. The city authorities ask for bids to have it removed. I have been told the lowest bid was \$2000. That was considered to be way too much. It was decided to advertise that any one able to get it off the roof could have it. Stan organized a small group of Scouters that set up borrowed scaffolding along side of the City Hall building. They added planks and up the side of the building they went. They used a length of Troop 19 scout made rope to fashion a sling around the bell, then used a “come-a-long” to lower the bell from one plank down to the next until it was safely on the ground. It was quickly loaded and taken to camp and mounted on the pedestal that Stan had previously prepared. After many years of service the bell eventually cracked and was removed from service and stored. There are plans underway to display bell somewhere in the main area of camp.

### **Mid Sixties, (not sure of the year) New Campsites**

Stan brought a bulldozer to camp one weekend. By the time the weekend was over there were two new campsites: Over the Hill and far Horizons, plus the service road that runs diagonally down the hill behind the founders Lodge.

### **March 1964 The Well House Project**

Cold damp weather, frost still in the ground, snow and mud on the surface. Not sure what we were going to do, something about fixing a “well house”. Picked up by Stan in his old blue Studebaker, I remember John and Kathy Hayes were there, there were a few more people, But I don't remember who. The well house was located part way up the hill a couple of hundred feet east of the swimming pool. It was a concrete block structure about 8 ft square partially built underground. The sides were caving in from the pressure of the frozen ground. First objective was to dismantle the old structure, which involved using picks and shovels to dig through the frozen ground to allow removal of the old walls - one block at a time. They had to be lifted out of the hole and stacked, while being careful not break them or drop them in the mud. It was ok if we got wet and muddy, but the blocks had to be kept clean and unbroken because they were going to be used over to build the new well house. Stan had a major design change in mind for the new structure; it would be round, not square, which would solve the caving in problem. It also meant that two corners had to be carefully broken off of each block so they would fit together to form a circle. It must have been quite a sight, all that activity going on at once. Dismantling the old walls, removing the old mortar, breaking off corners, then mixing mortar and keeping Stan supplied with blocks while he built the new wall. I'm sure we all thought we were working hard, but looking back now from a different perspective, I realize effort that Stan put forth showing a bunch of kids what to do, how to do it while keeping the whole process

moving forward and somehow making it fun at the same time. Not an easy task. The job was complete by Sunday afternoon. Check it out the next time you're at camp, 46 years later it's still there.

That weekend spent building the well house was a defining moment in my young life, I had never thought much about where things like well houses came from – they were just there – if you even noticed them at all. As you walk around camp and take the time to notice, you begin to see all the things that blend in and become invisible, yet are an integral part of Canyon Camp built almost entirely by volunteers like Stan. He certainly set the example.

### **1965-66 Chapel**

Stan designed and built the chapel along with labor supplied by Order of the Arrow members.

### **Things Troop 19 Did**

Stan was an old river rat; he spent his entire life in and around the Pecatonica River. So if you were in Troop 19 that's what you did to. Many of our activities were in or near the river; canoe trips, running trap lines, digging clams, building boats, and many cow pasture campouts. Not necessarily normal scout fare, but it worked for us, I wouldn't trade those experiences for anything.

### **October canoe trips on the Pecatonica River**

These trips were usually held about six weeks into school year after the first hard frost when the mosquitoes would be gone and the fall colors would be out. The first one was in 1960. I was a first year scout. We camped in a cow pasture along the river and had "baker" tents with no floors and only a flap for a door. It turned cold Friday evening complete with snow flurries. That night in the baker tent is to this day the coldest I ever remember being, anywhere any time in my entire life. Morning wasn't much better, there was still snow in the air and the wind was blowing pretty hard. There was a cooking fire and a tarp stretched between two trees to form a makeshift windbreak. On one side of the tarp it was so smoky you could hardly breathe, and on the other side it was so cold you could hardly stand it. Eventually breakfast was finished, the dishes were washed and the canoes were in the water.

When it was finally time to leave, I slid down the riverbank and was covered in mud from head to foot before I ever made it to the canoe. It was the most miserable night and morning that I had ever experienced. Yet it never occurred to me not to go again. There was always that sense of adventure and excitement that kept me coming back. I certainly didn't want to miss anything. We all got better at keeping warm and taking care of ourselves and eventually earned enough money to buy some better tents. Under Stan's guidance we improved our skills and after awhile we didn't think it unusual at all to campout all year round, even in below zero weather. That night in the baker tent was still the coldest one ever for me.