

Camp Momoweta

Mattituck, New York

1947 - 1968

Researched by Jeffrey M. Walden and Jerry Matovcik

Presentation created by Jerry Matovcik , July, 2014

Please contact Jeffrey Walden at the Mattituck-Laurel Library Reference Desk
if you have any photos, stories, or artifacts of the Camp that you would like to share.

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Jim Mulvihill Family, especially his daughter, Donna McMahon, for providing photos, slides, brochures, and information about the camp.

Thank you to George Cotellis and Tom Savage, two Camp Momoweta alumni, for their recent inquiries about the camp which rekindled our research efforts. We would also like to thank George Cotellis for providing postcards, brochures and information about the camp.



Major John H. Pupurca



Mrs. Ruth Smith Pupurca

Camp Momoweta

Camp Momoweta was a boys camp on Laurel Lake in Mattituck that opened in July, 1947. The camp was established by Major John H. Pupurca and his wife, Ruth. Mr. Pupurca was a reserve officer in the Marine Corps with a B.S.P.E. from Purdue University. Ruth was a graduate of Indiana State Teachers College.

The camp had ten cabins, a mess hall, infirmary, a central wash hall with showers, and the directors' cottage.

The camp had a newly seeded playing field, three-hole golf course, dock and diving float, swimming crib for beginners, and a fleet of small boats and canoes.

CAMP MOMOWETA FOR BOYS
AGES 5 - 15

"A summer your child will never forget"

Your boy has dreamed of a summer like this. Swimming, boating, canoeing, and fishing on a fresh water lake. All land sports on a 7 acre field. Also riflery and photography.

Wholesome food ★ Experienced counselors ★ Modern facilities. A non-sectarian camp located on a typical mountain lake yet so near to home.

Campers by the day, week, or month. \$35.00 weekly. Major and Mrs. John H. Papurca, Laurel Lake, Mattituck, L. I.

Phone Mattituck 8855

This camp advertisement appeared in *The Watchman* on July 17, 1947.

**What a Prominent Washington
Business Man Says of Jim—**

“Jim has a sincere love for and understanding of young boys. He knows camping thoroughly and most important keeps his camp on a high moral standard.”

W. F. NELSON
Past President of Kiwanis Club



JIM MULVIHILL
Owner and Director

Ten years experience as camp counselor and director. He majored in Child Guidance and holds B. S. and M. A. in this field. Former director of three of the largest boys clubs in the East.

**What an Outstanding Sociologist
Says of Jim—**

“He is a veteran camp administrator and a man of high moral character. Boys under his direction will be assured of being taught principles of righteousness, social participation, and good living.”

JAMES A. NOLAN,
Director—Washington Criminal
Justice Association

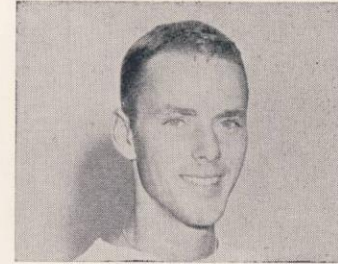
Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

In 1948, Jim Mulvihill assumed the ownership and directorship of Camp Momoweta.



PAT McCARTHY

One of several Guest Instructors
Graduate of Maryland University.
Former pro football player. All
Southern Conference End. Nine
years experience.



AL BOWKER
Waterfront Director

Last year, Al taught 95% of our
campers to swim. Has an amazing
record. Was voted the outstanding
Counselor here in 1948.



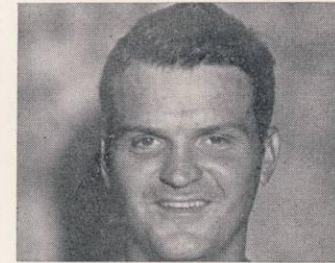
KEVIN CAVEY
Athletic Director

In fourth season at Momoweta.
Has marked ability in all sports
and has instructed campers to their
advantage in an efficient manner.



FRED RICHARDSON
Riflery Instructor

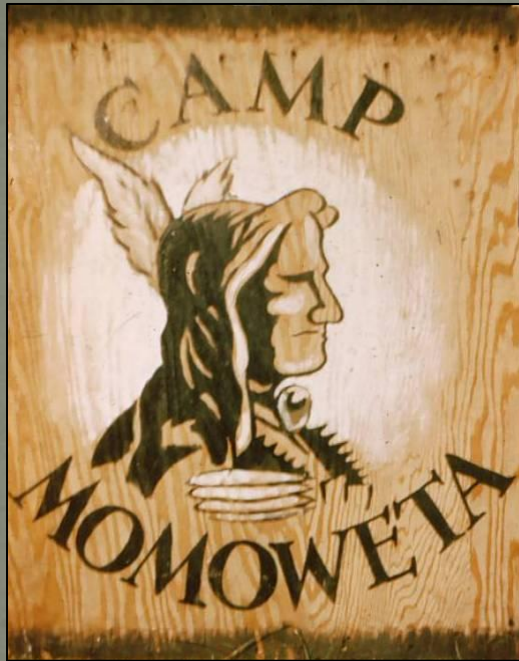
Seven years in Boys Camps. Fine
record in Riflery. Has perfect
safety record and is well liked by
all campers here.



JOE DOWLING
Assistant Program Director
Joe has had eight years in Boys
Camps. Graduate of Georgetown
University. Wonderful disposition
for children. Has well planned
program.

Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Many of the program directors, hand-picked by Mr. Mulvihill, were outstanding athletes in their own right.



Camp Sign made on plywood.

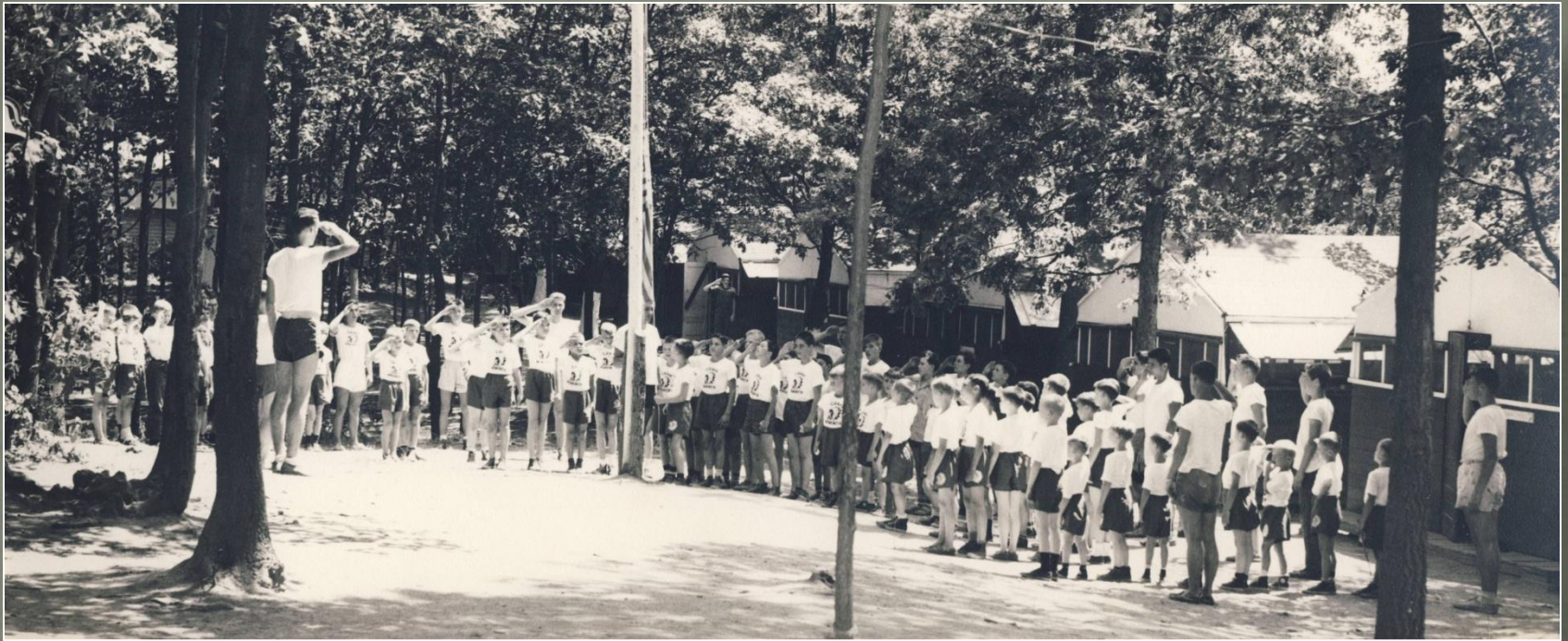
The camp took its name from the Indian name for the lake. According to William Wallace Tooker, in his book *Indian Place Names of Long Island*, the lake was named Lake Momoweta after a Sachem of the Corchaug people.

By 1948, the camp included a private rifle range, and a photographic and developing room. Activities included archery, badminton, softball, football, basketball, swimming, dramatics, volleyball, and boxing.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

As you could imagine, swimming in the cool spring fed waters of Laurel Lake was an important camp activity.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

The camp day officially started with “assembly for colors.”

"HOLD IT LIKE THIS"



Bob Mulvihill, former All-Eastern choice at Fordham and pro ball player, shows Juniors a few pointers.

Bob Mulvihill, Jim's younger brother, was one of the original members of the outstanding sports staff .

Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.



Camp Monowee ta

1959

Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Counselors instruct boys in basic swimming strokes near the base of cement stairs at the shallow edge of Laurel Lake.



Courtesy of George Cotellis

Boys claim their swimming partners.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

The large athletic fields behind the cabins was another center of camp activity.



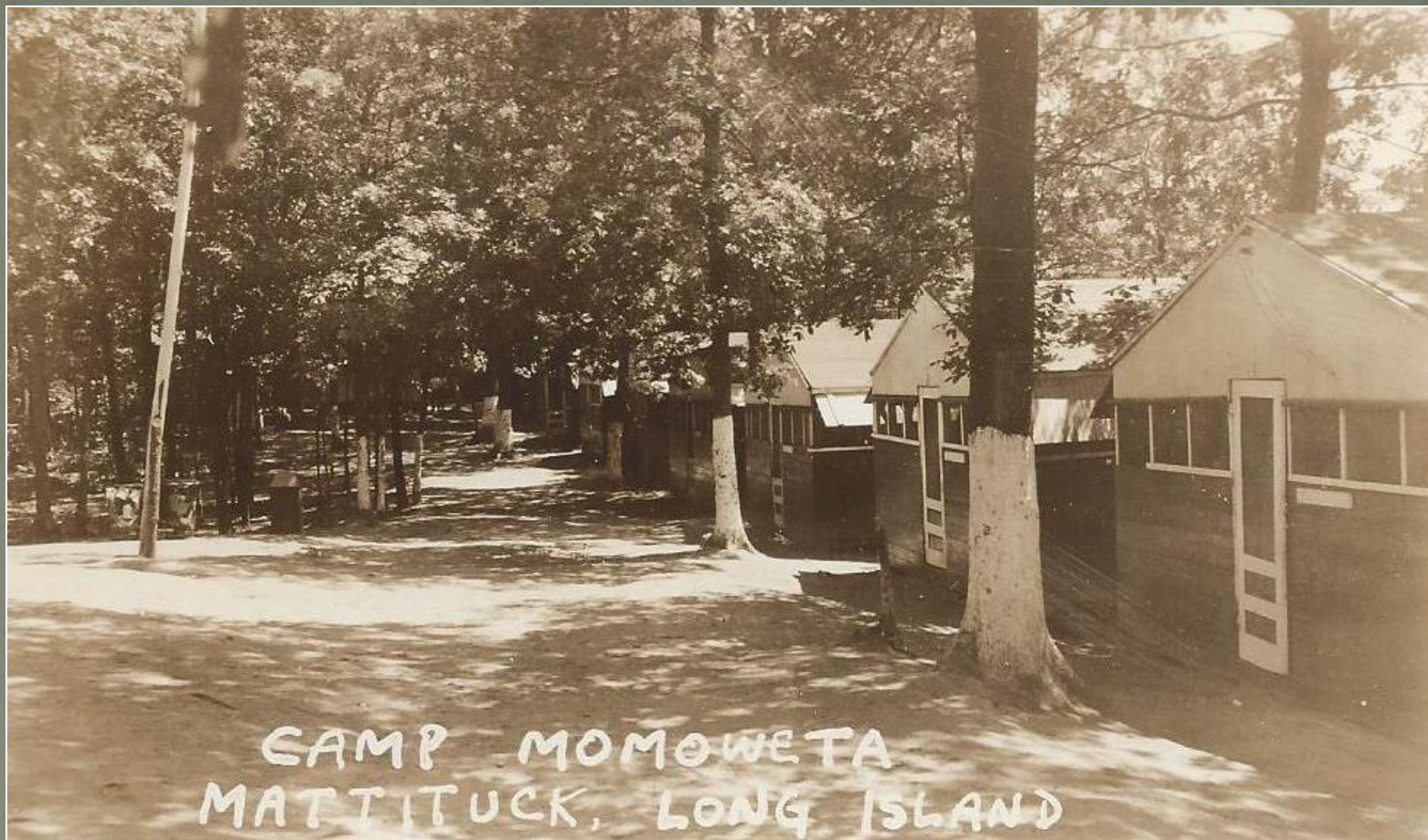
Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Campers practice some baseball fundamentals.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Counselors teach boys how to bunt.



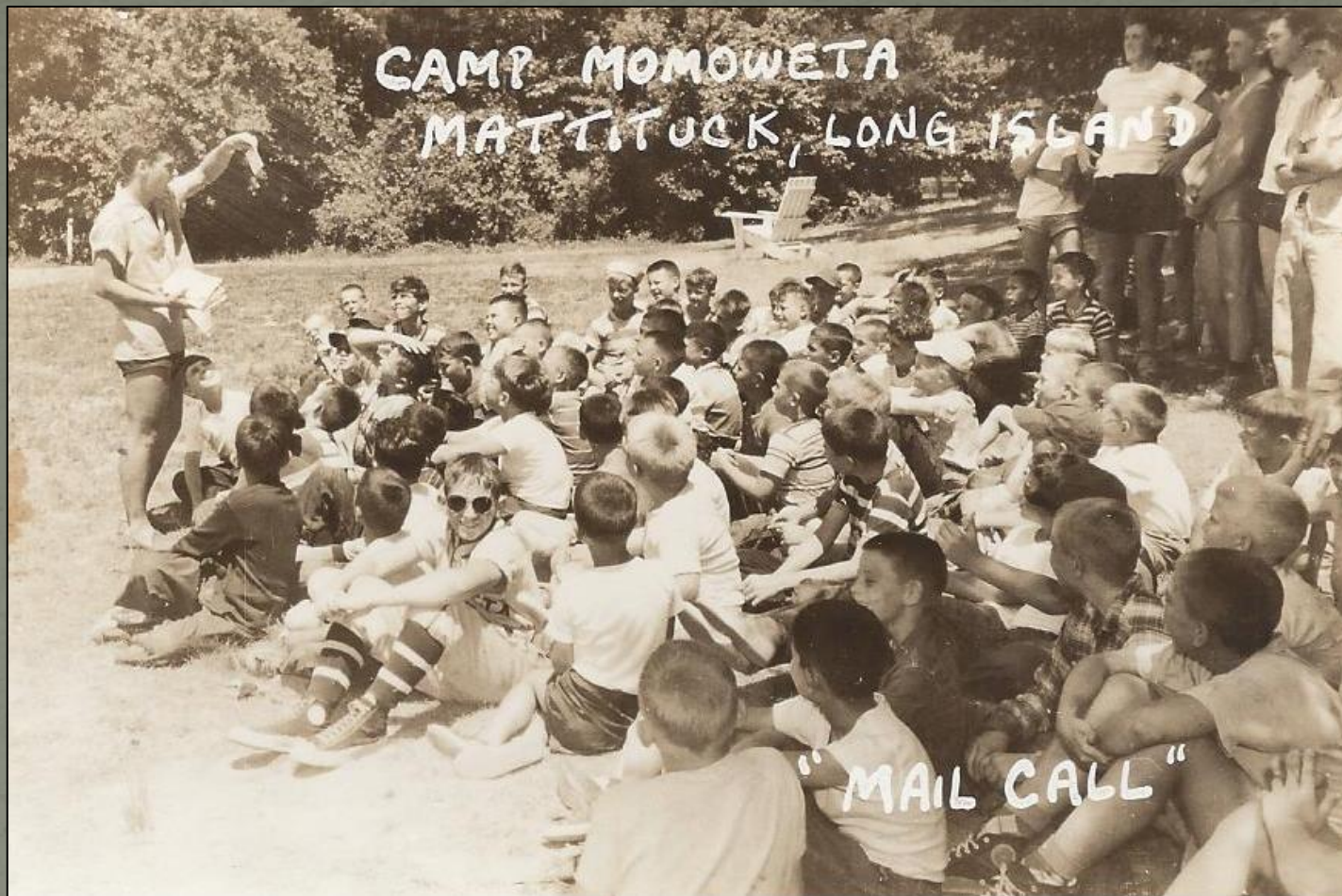
Courtesy of George Cotellis

A nice view of the cabins in the woods.



Courtesy of George Cotellis

A postcard with a photo of campers enjoying the raft.



Courtesy of George Cotellis

A favorite time in every camper's day - "Mail Call."



Courtesy of George Cotellis

“Competent instruction and safety are the keynotes of Riflery at Camp Momoweta.”



Camp Momoweta

Laurel Lake, Mattituck, New York

This is to certify that *Don Shaw* has,
during the camp season of *1960*, success-
fully met performance standards as required
by *Camp Momoweta* in *Rifery*
Signed by *Mike Lawrence* *Aug. 29*, *1960*

come to

CAMP MOMOWETA

a summer YOUR BOY will never forget



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.



Courtesy of George Cotellis

Archery was another popular camp activity.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

The vivid colors in these kodachrome slides convey all that was good about camp life: the bright sunshine, the fresh blue water, the green fields, and the clear, open skies.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Campers and counselors file past the mess hall down to the lake.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

What can be more fun than diving into a crystal clear lake?



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

The lake looks cool and refreshing in the summer.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Swim instruction was an important daily activity since many of the younger boys were unable to swim when they arrived at camp.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

The hand-held megaphone broadcasts clear instructions.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

A field trip or fishing on a tranquil lake provide lingering memories of summer.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Preparing for a summer sail.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

This is how to swing a bat.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Cars park on the edge of the field so parents could watch a game.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Hoop Dreams.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

What would summer camp be like without horseback riding and wood-working skills?



The camp infirmary and the camp nurse.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

Entering the mess hall for some delicious summer camp fare.

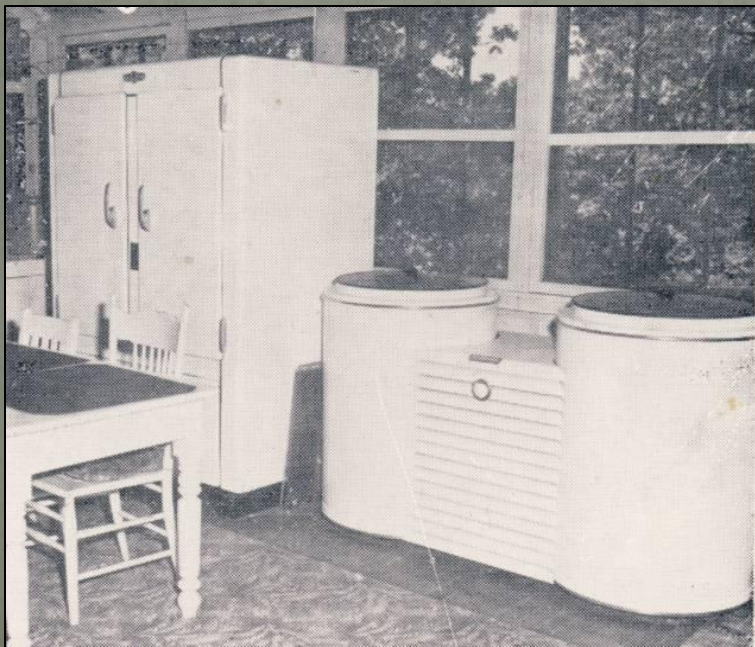


A TYPICAL MOMOWETA DAY

7:30 Reveille	10:30 Beginners' Swim
7:55 Assembly for Colors	Instruction
8:00 Breakfast	11:15 General Swim
8:45 Police-up	12:00 Prepare for Lunch
9:15 Inspection	12:30 Lunch
9:30 Morning Activity	1:30 Rest Period
2:00 Nature Study	5:40 Flag Lowering —
2:30 General Activity	Assembly
3:30 Beginners' Swim	5:45 Dinner
Instruction	6:30 Rest Period
4:15 General Swim	7:15 Evening Activity
5:00 All Out!	8:00 Surprise Period
5:15 Bed Inspection	9:00 Taps
5:30 Prepare for Dinner	

Clothing and Equipment

1 Pillow 2 Pillow Cases 3 Sheets 2 Blankets
 2 Laundry Bags 8 Towels 3 Wash Cloths
 1 Bath Robe 1 Pair Clogs (bath slippers)
 1 Pair Bedroom Slippers 1 Pair Sneakers or
 Moccasins 1 Pair Walking Shoes 1 Pair
 Rubbers 1 Poncho or Raincoat 1 Sweater or
 Jacket 3 Pairs Cotton Pajamas Handkerchiefs
 10 Pairs Socks 6 Pairs Under Shorts
 6 T Shirts (Polo Shirts) 1 Sweatshirt
 2 Pairs Dungarees 2 Pairs Swimming Trunks
 Comb Tooth Brush and Paste Soap
 Flashlight (Each article must be marked plainly
 with camper's name)



Typical Day's Menu

BREAKFAST —

Fruit Cup • Puffed Wheat • Fried Eggs and Bacon • Hot Biscuits, Jelly • Hot Chocolate.

LUNCH —

Baked Beans With Pork • Cole Slaw • Brown Bread • Applesauce • Milk.

DINNER —

Leg of Lamb • Mashed Potatoes • Peas • Lettuce and Tomato Salad • Ice Cream.

Menus are planned by a trained food expert.

Meals are prepared in a big modern kitchen by carefully selected cooks and kitchen personnel. The highest Standards of cleanliness and sanitation are maintained.

Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

The kitchen facilities.



Courtesy of Jim Mulvihill Family.

The lake is peaceful at the end of a camp day.

Memories of Camp Momoweta

“For a boy who was only nine at the time, spending the summer at Camp Momoweta was a great experience. I remember mostly the rifle range and baseball, and the afternoon swimming lessons. When I arrived at the camp in the summer of 1956, I could not swim, which meant I was not allowed to go out to the float with the diving board. I finally learned how to swim and passed the swimming test, and was then able to go out to the float. I remember swimming across the lake and back, the counselors following us in a boat. I registered for the two-week program, but I convinced my parents to let me stay for another four weeks. Prior to this, I had never gone from home for more than a night or two at my aunt’s house in NYC. My parents were going to send me back the following summer, but we took a family vacation to Florida. The next summer we moved to Bradenton, Florida, and I was not able to return to Camp Momoweta.”

~ recollections of camp from George Cotellis, who hailed from Brightwaters, Long Island, at the time.

Memories of Camp Momoweta

“In 1967, we were in the big cabin, Cabin 9, farthest from the flagpole. There were nine boys and Mike Mulvihill in the cabin as counselor. The wash house was tiny, and it was always crowded – long lines for showers and sinks. The sodas we drank were never brand names. They were from a local company, plain silver cans with plain lettering that read “BLACK CHERRY” and “KOLA” spelled with a “K”. And there were local potato chips, too, in big yellow metal cans.

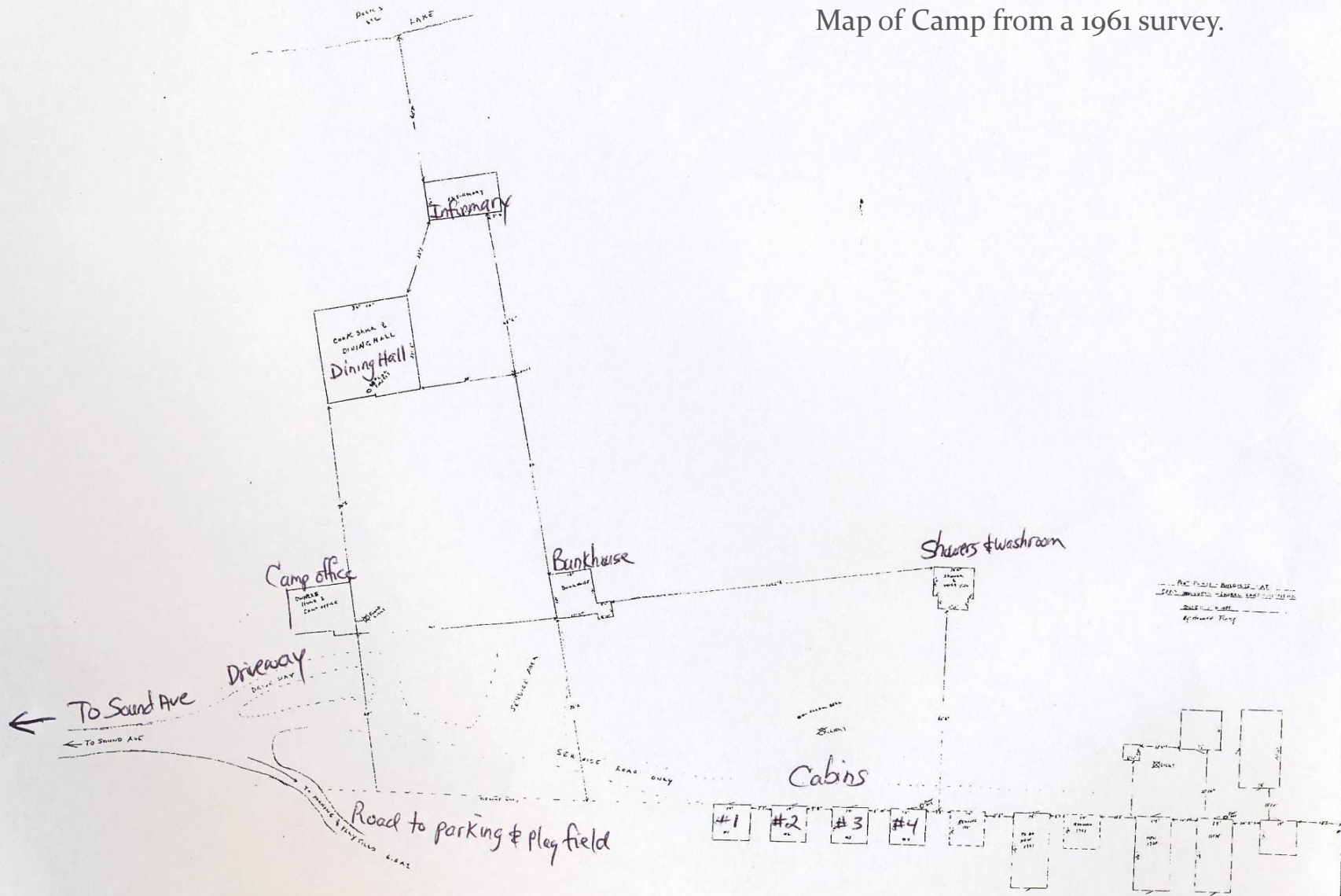
The infirmary was across from the mess hall. I was there once with a splinter in my foot, and there was a woman there, a nurse, who came daily but didn't stay there overnight.

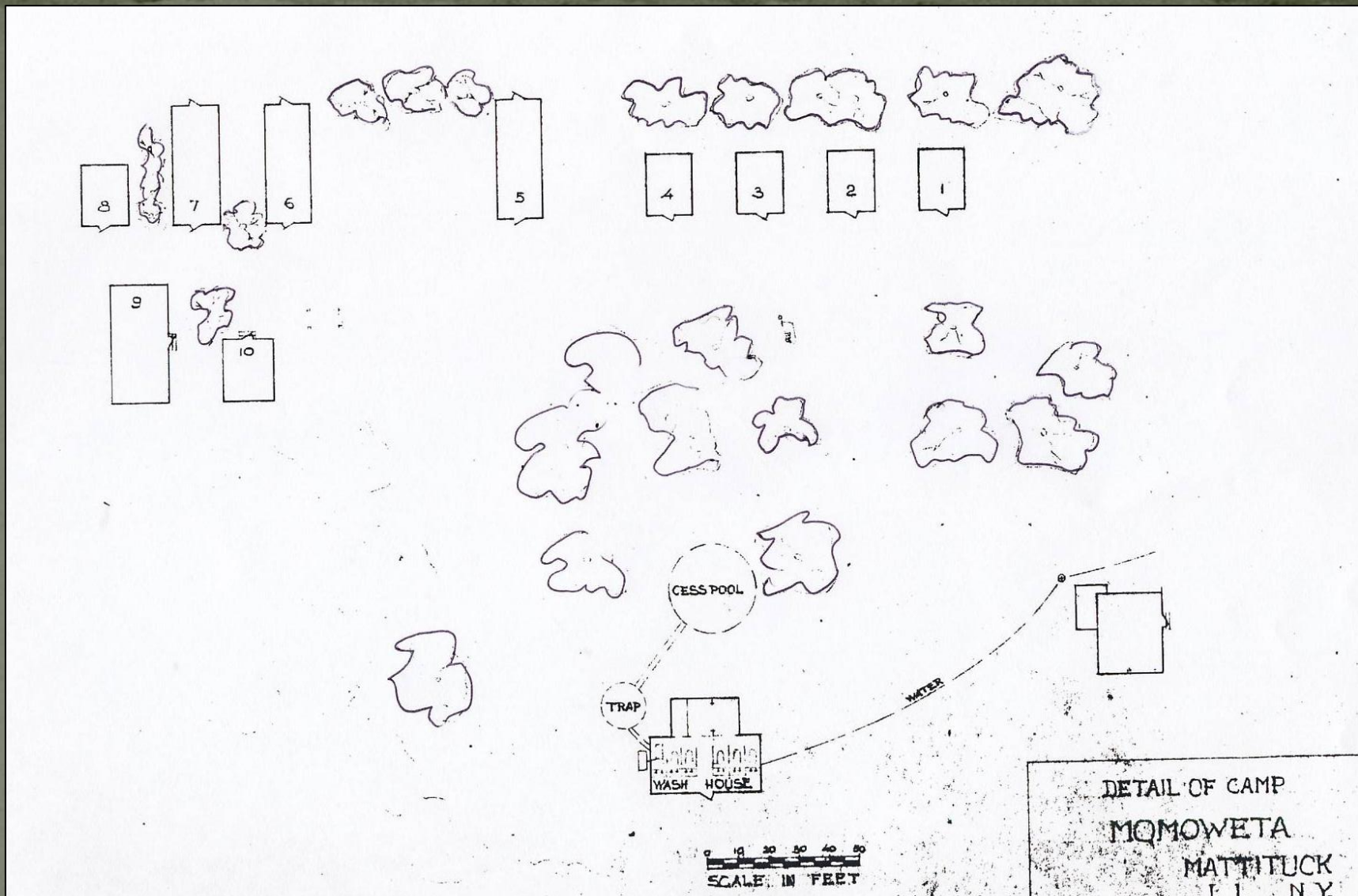
There was a clearing in the woods behind the wash house where we built fires in a circle of stones some nights. We sat around toasting marshmallows and telling ghost stories. The Catholic camp across the lake was closed by then – I remember that because one night a counselor told us a campfire story about how all the Catholic campers had been murdered two summer before by some guy with a hook for a hand, or whatever, and that's why the place was deserted, and if we ever tried to go over there, he'd get us too.”

~ Tom Andrew

Dock Lake

Map of Camp from a 1961 survey.





The cabins at Camp Momoweta from a 1961 survey.

Overnight camp at Camp Momoweta ended in 1968. Bobby and Donna Mulvihill ran a day camp in 1969 and 1970. The camp was also rented by the local 4H club for a few seasons. After 1971, there was no longer any activity at the camp and many of the buildings were taken down. In 1973, a large portion of the camp property was sold to Daniel Jacoby.

Camp Momoweta made a lasting impression upon the many young boys who were fortunate enough to have spent time there during its twenty years of existence under the dedicated direction of Jim Mulvihill and so many competent and caring staff members.