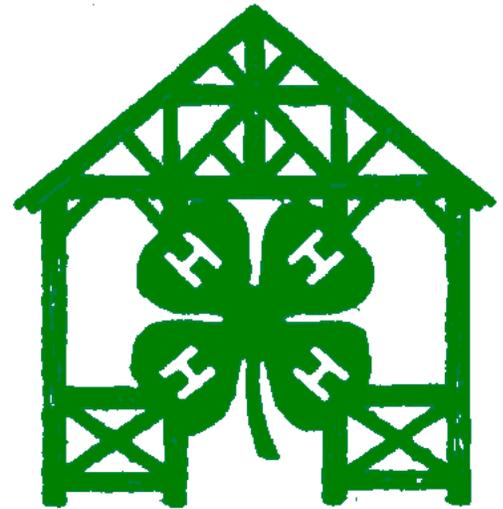


4-H Camp Sacandaga

When Congress voted to close the CCC, it approved \$8 million to liquidate the assets of the program. In other areas of the country, CCC camps were used in the war effort, but Camp Speculator was too remote. Some of the tools and vehicles associated with the camp were undoubtedly salvaged and reused, but the CCC buildings at Lake Pleasant remained closed for the balance of World War II. Before the war ended, the army offered the buildings to the Tri-county Council of the 4-H for use as a camp; this council included clubs in Fulton, Montgomery, and Herkimer Counties.

The 4-H mission was to provide informal out-of-school recreation for the children of farming families to help them gain practical skills and become productive members of society. The club motto (“Learn by Doing”) and cloverleaf emblem (“Head, Hands, Heart, and Health”) embody the holistic approach used by 4-H educators. The earliest clubs were described as “corn clubs and cooking clubs” and focused on specific agricultural projects, many involving raising animals and other aspects of farm life. Many clubs, for example, undertook gardening projects during the first world war.



On February 12, 1945, the army completed the transfer of the Lake Pleasant CCC buildings at the Army Depot in Scotia, NY. Ten weeks later, the 4-H camp opened for a three-week season. The program was described as a “*A fine program of sports, entertaining and inspiring programs, campfire meetings, special courses in handicraft, conservation, nature study, etc.*”. Swimming took place at Moffitt Beach. (At some point during the life of the camp, a special area of the beach was reserved for the 4-Hers with a special trail through the campground.)

The CCC camp buildings were essential to the mission of the 4-H camp, but the Tri-County 4-H Council did not own the underlying land. This became an increasingly important issue as Camp Sacandaga developed – or did not develop – over the next twenty-five years. In 1967, Frederick Rulison sold the land to 4-H Camp Sacandaga. Some of the counties participating in the camp were not financially able to continue their commitment once the land was bought. Hamilton County withdrew from the Camp Corporation in November 1967, leaving Fulton, Montgomery, Oneida, and Warren Counties to carry on the program.

Following the land purchase, it took the 4-H council several years to stabilize the existing buildings. From 1968 to 1970, roofs were repaired, dorms painted, and the Recreation Hall re-shingled. Waney-edged (live edged) structure became the prototype for the development of all later dorms. In the next five years, seven more dorms (Cabins 0-6) were built on the site of the CCC garages by the Glens Falls Seabees. This Navy reserve unit also tore down and rebuilt the old administration building in fall, 1979; the resulting Seabee Lodge is now the director’s cabin and camp office.

The 4-H camp closed after the end of the summer season in 2004. Cornell Cooperative Extension (which had acquired the property in 1993) was unable to sell the property for several years. However, the death of Frederick Rulison in 2007 cleared the title, and the property sold (at a much reduced price) in 2010 to Donald and Caroline Naysmith.