

Camp Nelson Dodd

Ohio-West Virginia YMCA
November, 2011



Nelson Dodd alumni are re-connecting to the Ohio-West Virginia YMCA. Recent email comments are included in this newsletter.

Nelson Dodd will be honored as part of the Ohio-West Virginia YMCA's new Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership being created near Latham in southern Ohio. A building or at least a major conference room will be named in honor of Nelson Dodd and Camp Nelson Dodd. Photos, postcards, and other Camp Nelson Dodd memorabilia will tell the story of the camp and the Dodd family. Anyone looking for a place to donate photos, postcards and other Nelson Dodd items, we will welcome your items! Cave Lake will continue the legacy of Nelson Dodd with new facilities, programs for youth, families and adults. Click on our website, www.hi-y.org, to see this beautiful place and exciting plans for one of the nation's finest facilities and programs. Steve Evans and Doug White are co-chairing the Cave Lake Committee. Nelson Dodd alumni **James Kirsch**, **Ben Rose** and **David King** are involved. Other Nelson Dodd alumni are welcome to join in.

HI-Y updates –

- **HI-Y Youth in Governments** in both Ohio and West Virginia were successful! Teenagers learned the role and process of their state's government by serving as legislators, Supreme Court justices, officers, lobbyists, press or pages.
- **HI-Y Model United Nations** gives today's teenagers a window on the world and an international perspective on issues impacting their communities and our nation. March 5 – 7, 2010, is our next UN.
- **Quilt Camps** at Horseshoe are scheduled two times each year. Please pass this along to anyone you know who wants to learn or is an experienced quilter. Our age range for Quilt Camp has been 18 – 80.
- **HI-Y Camps at Horseshoe** this June brought Ohio and WV teens together for a great week of learning, new friends and all the good times we remember from our Nelson Dodd HI-Y camps. Horseshoe continues Nelson Dodd's closing ceremony tradition in our middle school HI-Y Camp.

Stop and Visit – Whenever you're nearby – stop at one of our locations to see today's programming and operations.

- **Ohio-West Virginia YMCA** headquarters office – 400 Main Street, Pl. Pleasant, WV (right beside the Mothman statue). We're upstairs. Pt. Pleasant is on the Ohio River, just across from Gallipolis, Ohio.
- **YMCA Camp Horseshoe** – 3309 Horseshoe Run Road, Parsons, WV – near Leadmine in Tucker County, WV. We're 4 hours west of Washington DC, 3 hours south of Pittsburgh, near Elkins.
- **Cave Lake** – 1132 Bell Hollow Road, Latham, Ohio, in Pike County south of Columbus and west of Cincinnati. This 700 + acre property is one of Ohio and the nation's premier sites – this place is beautiful!



Pictures of Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership, Latham, Ohio

Leadership
Character
Service

Camper's Comments

We appreciate the comments we get from previous Camp Nelson Dodd campers. Below are camper's notes that we have received since our last newsletter.

Tony O. Albright, La Mesa, CA - *I spent one week in the summer of 1958 and 1959. I still have great memories of hunting snakes, scary story about the ice pick man, swimming, and canoeing in the Mohican River.*

Robert C. Bader, Germantown, TN - *My father, Adrian C. Bader, was the Executor Director of the Mt. Vernon, Ohio YMCA from 1942 until 1958. Maybe some of you remember him. He passed away in 1999 at 92. Our Y was the closest to Camp Nelson Dodd. I can remember knowing about the Camp and wanting badly to attend before I was the minimum age of nine at that time. I was a camper for six years, one week when I was nine, and two weeks for the next five years. I then worked at Camp for three years 1954 - 1956 at the pool. I was Aquatic Director the last year. I remember the 3 day, 90 mile canoe trips down river and sleeping in the city park in Coshocton. The Camp truck, a light green Dodge, picked us up downriver and carried the campers and the canoes back to Brinkhaven. The counselors had Wednesday evening off, so the green truck, provided transportation to Mt. Vernon to go to the Keynote Dance at the Y. My Dad was always there keeping an eye on things, which I did not mind. My Mt. Vernon High Reunion is held every five years. I visited what used to be our Camp in 2001 by invitation of the new owner. It was a Church Camp at that time. I found out that the Area Office had sold it to the Church. Everything I knew about Camp was gone. The cabins, administration building, the swimming pool, the KYBO at the end of the pool, the kitchen and mess hall. It was very sad. I was sorry that I had not kept up with what was going on with the Camp after I heard that it had been closed. Even an Airlines Passenger Sales Manager could have come up with the selling price. How cool would that have been. I have the fondest of memories about Camp Nelson Dodd. What a wonderful place to spend time during your younger years. Dave Jones was the Director at the time I was there. He was a Y Secretary in Northern Ohio. Used to smoke a pipe. Denise and Earnie ran the kitchen. They were from Ohio Wesleyan in Delaware. I think they cooked in a fraternity house. If the counselors were especially nice to them, they would cook pizza after hours for the staff. What a lovely couple. I worked with Pete Dull, Celina, OH for two years. He was the best man in our wedding in 1964. Pete went to Ohio Wesleyan, and Ohio State and became an aeronautical engineer. Pete and I see each other every year at the Indy 500. He has had the same seats for over 30 years. Bill and Babs Stafford were also on the staff when I worked there. Tom Ricketts, one of my friends in Memphis who owns two hotels, was a camper at Nelson Dodd as well. What a small world it really is. When I went back to Camp in 2001, I emptied a new bottle of water in front of the spring that is still running on the right as you enter, and filled it with cold spring water for Tom. My wife Emily took pictures so Tom would be sure it was real. David Allan Arnold from Lima, OH was also a counselor when I was there. At camp, we knew him as Al. When I got to Miami as a freshman in McBride Hall, who was the upper class counselor in the room next door, Dave Arnold, as he was known in college. He sponsored me into the Alpha Chapter of Phi Kappa Tau and was my big brother. I have lost track of Dave and can't find him on the internet. What else can I say. Camp Nelson Dodd obviously had a very lasting impression on my life. I wish it was still open so the youth of today could experience all the positive lessons we all learned.*

George A. Bartley, Ashland, OH - *I was a camper at the Camp in the early 1960s. I met John Glenn when he visited Camp Nelson Dodd in 1963.*

Philip Baxter, Castle Rock, CO - *I was a summer camper for 3 or 4 summers. I went on the Lake Timagami Canoe Trip my last year. I thought that place would be there forever. It was fantastic. I am really disappointed to hear that the Y could not continue it. Big mistake.*

Donald P. Berger, Philadelphia, PA - *I was a camper at Nelson Dodd between 1945 and 1946. In addition to that, I was counselor at the camp in 1947 and 1948. I have one letter from Alvin R. Deiss telling me about the remuneration, \$12.50 a week. He was the camp director. I also have a senior course in life saving, dated Aug. 4, 1947.*

Jill M. Combs, West Union, OH - *My father went there. Just this morning I decided to go thru some old paperwork and found a letter he had written to my grandmother and grandfather of his stay*

there. The envelope is dated 23JUL54 with CAMP NELSON DODD in the return address spot. The letter inside is on camp stationary.

Becky J. (Cummings) Conger, Jackson, OH - *I attended camp there for 3 summers in the mid 60s. Best memories of my childhood! I would love to be able to go back and visit.*

John L. Cummings, San Carlos, CA - *Spent 2 glorious summers, 2 weeks each at Nelson Dodd in the 1950s. Remember everything just like it was just yesterday. Remember a camp counselor named "Renfro", playing capture the flag, roaring huge fires on the athletic field, crossing the river on the pontoon bridge, making 16 strand landyards, "bug juice" at meal time and all the singing during and after eating, overnight canoe trips, making the little boats with a candle and launching them the night before leaving, horse back riding, playing basketball, volleyball, and the main camp lodge with its big wrap-around porch; memories from my youth that I will never forget and cherish always.*

Roger C. Danner, Bradenton, OH - *I went to camp each Summer from 1943 thru 1945. I was in camp when WWII ended, 12 yrs old, sure wanted to get back to Wooster, Ohio because even at that young age I knew there was a big celebration going on, but alas, I missed it.*

Mark A. Diller, Defiance, OH - *I had Mom over for supper tonight and she didn't want to go home right away. So I had some work to do on my laptop and she was curious on what I was doing and I showed her how you could get on the internet and look up any thing. I decided to see what there was out there for Camp Nelson Dodd and to my surprise we found so many names that brought back some of our fondest memories. Mom started reading the alumni blog and she smiled like I haven't seen for a while. Back in the early 60s Dad and Mom, Bob and Janice Diller, helped at the camp during the summer as camp managers. After the both of us kept reading we kept coming across names that made us remember "Great Times". Dad passed away in 1984 in a traffic accident. Mom lives right next door to me. I am one of Bob and Jan's boys. I have an older brother named Charles and a younger sister named Robin. I remember meeting John Glenn and seeing his name carved in one of the cabinets in the mess hall. I started thinking about items to list on the blog: My favorite horse's name was Sailor and my next favorite thing was the Friday night camp fire. It's late here and I need to quit for the night but as I was reading there are requests for pictures and other items from camp. I am going to mom's to pull out as many pictures as I can. I still have an ash tray that I hammered out of a can lid. Does that bring back memories?*

Eric L. Doner, San Jose, CA - *I am originally from Mansfield, OH, and was a camper at Camp Nelson Dodd every summer from the time I was 10 (1953) until I was 16 (1959). I think of the camp often; in fact just today, as I was enjoying the pool where I live - since I learned to become a strong swimmer at CND. I was sorry to learn that it closed when I was still a resident of Ohio. I have great memories of canoeing on the Mohican River, long hikes, overnight camping (with great songs and ghost stories), archery, rifle range, camp staff skits and swimming. I had some great counselors who were good leaders and great role models. My last two years I was in the O.B.U. (Older Boys Unit) which was called the "Old Baggy Underwear" by the younger campers. In 1958 we traveled to Michigan and in 1959 to Canada for extended canoe trips. I attribute my experiences at Camp Nelson Dodd to shaping my character and subsequent career success and my interest in volunteering with several civic and professional associations over the past several years.*

Deborah L. (Schmidt) Eschenbacher, Columbus, OH - *During the summer of 1965, I worked at Camp Nelson Dodd. I was a counselor for the several weeks dedicated to Girls' Camp at the beginning of the camping season, and then worked in the "Dish Room" for the rest of the summer. Many years before I was there, Senator and Astronaut, John Glenn, worked in the "Dish Room" and when I met him in 1998, we talked about our experiences at Camp Nelson Dodd!*

Randall L. Evans, Maineville, OH - *In 1961 I attended a HI-Y officers training session. It was a memorable and the best camp experience I ever had. Our adult leader was Jerry Tulley from West Virginia. Good canoeing in nearby Mohican river between Brinkhaven and Greer. Must have been great I still remember it all, even the two bee stings at once, in my ear and on my arm at a washup basin. Camp nurse was not happy having to get up early to give me attention.*

Judy Garver, West Bloomfield, MI - *My father, Gerald N. Garver, went to Camp Nelson Dodd in the 20s. He was from Kenton, Ohio, and graduated from Kenton HS in 1927, so he must have gone to*

the camp before that. I will check to see if there is a picture. He carved a stick there with the HI-Y emblem and the initials of people who were there (we assume). My dad is deceased now, so we cannot ask him any details.

James R. Kuhfahl, Tamarac, FL - My dad is John P. Kuhfahl, he worked for the Ohio-West Virginia YMCA in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Because of dad's work with HY-Y and TRI HY-Y we spent a lot of time at both Camp Nelson Dodd and Camp Horseshoe. I was also a camper at Nelson Dodd several times in the early 60s. The overnite horseback riding-camping trips were fun, the pool water always cold and the bug juice they served in the dining hall was great. I remember being picked by the camp director Leforest Smith to get up early and sound reveille several times. I also enjoyed all of the arts and crafts and the sing alongs at the campfires. It is very sad that the young people of today will never have the chance to experience a camp like Nelson Dodd. I am glad to have the memories.

Peggy B. Lavender, St. Louis, MO - My father Robert Lance was camp director from 1947 until we moved to St. Louis in 1953. We lived in the director's cabin every summer and had wonderful memories, Jerry Honniker (spelling ?) and Dan Fitch were some of dad's assistants. We loved it all.

Eddie Linser, Gastonia, NC - I attended camp in 1944, 1945 and 1946. If I remember during WWII for 2 weeks it was \$25 and because of rationing 5 lbs of sugar and 1 lb of butter. I remember the hikes to "Buzzard's Rock, Fossil Cliff and the sand mine, also making small boats with lit candles hoping they would float all the way to the dam in Brinkhaven. My time at Camp Nelson Dodd is one of my fondest memories of my youth.

Dr. Frederick E. Livesay, Martinsville, IN - The entire Cub Scout Den my brother and I were in went to Camp Nelson Dodd the summer of 1948 or 1949. The next year we went to Camp Alfred Willson at Bellefontaine. I remember lots of activities at both camps, but can't separate which activity at which camp...too long ago. Afraid many members of the Cub Den are now gone. I'm 71, brother is 69, both in good health. I do remember that I learned how to play baseball at one of the camps. Our camp counselor was from Pakistan, the first foreign born person I met. One of the camp staff was a pro wrestler from Columbus. We each swam across the lake nude to get our swimming activity. Went on to be in Boy Scouts, almost got Eagle, went to 8th World Jamboree in Canada in '55 and Ph.D in 77. Maybe all because of Camp Nelson Dodd !!

Frank W. MacLean, Frederick, MD - CIT and Counselor at Nelson Dodd, in 1965, 1966. Worked with the horses, swimming pool and went on the canoe trips to Ontario, I believe it was Timmagami area (probably not spelled correctly). Went by my nickname then: Skip.

Donn E. McGinnis, Pinehurst, NC - I lived in Massillon, OH and attended Camp Nelson Dodd for 4 yrs...1942-1945. This experience was one the best highlights of my boyhood and I clearly remember it today. I can't recall the total amt. we paid but I do remember collecting Ohio sales tax receipts which were accepted as partial payment of my camp fee. In addition to the fee, I had to take a pound of sugar as sugar was rationed during the war. Fond memories include early morning swims in the pool before breakfast, the "kaibo" (outhouse), making lanyards & belts, canoeing on the Mohican River & hiking up to Buzzards Rocks... plus shooting the 22 rifle on the range. (How could I have known then that I would later join the FBI as Special Agent and become Expert Firearms Instructor at the FBI Academy in Quantico). My favorite memory was of the final night at camp when we walked the pontoon bridge across the river to a giant bonfire, and afterwards, each cabin set a handcrafted boat with lit candle afloat in the river while re-crossing the bridge. I still get goose bumps as I picture the flickering lights and remember the camaraderie. To say I loved my camp experiences would be an understatement of huge proportions. I truly feel it helped shape me to become a man. Thanks for the memories!

Joseph R. McNamara, Williamsburg, VA - Can you still drive to Camp Nelson Dodd site?

James Madison, Chouteau, OK - I, happily, am the reason that Harry Miller went into his profession. My father was on the board of the Ohio/West Virginia Area YMCA. He was also on the board of the Newark, Ohio YMCA. I started at Nelson Dodd when I was 6, for two weeks in the old Fireside Village. I cried all the way home at the end of the 2 weeks and that bought me full summers at Camp for the remainder of my childhood. When I got too old to be a camper, Bob Miller, Director of the Ohio/WVa Area and Camp Superintendent offered me CIT and the following year, paid me to

help in the kitchen with June and Joan. In all, I spent 10 summers and after serving in the US Army, was hired to go up in the Spring and begin to get the camp ready, filling the pool, grading the road and taking care of weekend visitors sent up by the Newark YMCA. For the older readers, I still believe in Hiawatha...

Chuck Markle, Newark, OH - *I was at Camp Nelson Dodd in 1969 for 6th grade camp from Woodside Elementary in Newark, Ohio. We were only there a couple of days. The rain had swollen the river and there was a bunch of kids on the swinging bridge watching the river flow beneath them. As more kids got on the bridge and the river rose they were able to dangle their feet in the water. As it happened the current was very strong and the force of the water against the kids' feet flipped the bridge and sent several children into the near flood level Muskegon River. I was just seconds from getting on that bridge myself. I know for sure that one girl drowned but something tells me there may have been a second girl from another school that perished as well. Needless to say we were all bussed home in the middle of the night after the tragedy. It was a sad experience for all. I don't mean to put a damper on the fond memories of the Camp, but I do want people to remember what happened back in the Spring of 1969, and set the record straight as to the tragedy that happened there.*

Leonard M. Matz, New Castle, PA - *From 1959 or 1960 until 1965 or 1966, I attended multiple sessions each summer (pretty much the entire summer). Have lots of strong memories of hiking, canoeing and horseback riding. Would love to visit the site.*

Timothy W. Merrill, Jr, Sewickley, PA - *I was a counselor in 1961 and 1962, having the younger kids under my care, I believe. I went to Michigan for the Ausable canoe trip in '62, and certainly went down the Mohican a number of times. I also remember tearing down the original cabins, the introduction of the Ranch on the far hill, running up that hill (to Buzzard's Rock?) to get in shape for football, and certainly, the closing ceremonies. We had a good Executive Director (Smith?) and assistant (whose face I can conjure up but not his name), some great fellow counselors I'd love to know what happened to (Ben Orme, Rich White, Harold Miller, and the memories fuzz. . .)*

Catherine J. Milam, Columbus, OH - *Our family spent weekends at Camp Nelson Dodd with our church Sunday School class in the 1950s It was a YWCA camp. We loved it. They had canoeing, hiking, ball courts, fishing, horseback riding, cabins to sleep in and a furnished rec hall.*

Gary Nicholson, Santa Fe, NM - *I was a counselor for part of one season. I believe that it was 1965.*

Kate J. Parker, Manchester, NH - *My father, David H. Jones, was camp director in the 1950s at Nelson Dodd and I was his little shadow there. I visited the camp yesterday and was taken on a nostalgic journey. If possible, I would like to secure copies of any pictures of him there and would pay for any copies of pictures with him in them and I will attempt to locate pictures of him there and send them to you. Where would I send them... please advise? Sincere thanks! Kate Jones Parker*

Mark A. Reed, Lynnfield, MA - *Upon my father's passing last year at 93 years of age I took upon myself to digitize all our family photos which is a huge undertaking for preservation. My father was born in 1915 in Barnesville, OH and went to school there until his education took him to service in WWII and then finally settling here in Lynnfield MA where my mother and rest of siblings live. My father, fortunately before his passing documented all his old photos and where they were taken. I have pictures of your camp taken around 1926 or so. Do you have a roster list of those who attended camp around this time? Pictures that my father took included his camp friends which I would be happy to pass on to their surviving family members and to you. My father's name was William B. Reed. Would love to talk to someone at camp if possible.*

Patti S. Shanaberg, Newark, OH - *Camper around 1964, '65, '67? I attended at least 3 summers, the last was with my own horse - my friend Teri Wollins (now Lowinger) and I were the only campers who brought our own horses. Jumped for the first time - never wanted to stop after that! Wonderful memories!!!*

Grady W. Smith, Marietta, OH - *Attended '64 and '65, as a camper. Cabin was in Pioneer(?), up the ravine to the left when standing by pool looking at the mess hall. Counselor was Sam that took care of the horses. Lost glasses in Mohican River while canoeing, and walked around for a week practically*

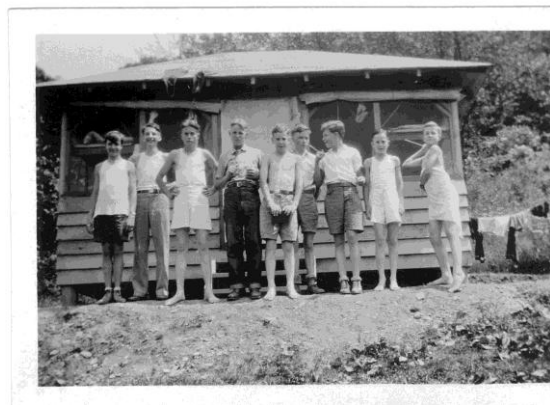
blind. Always wondered what happened to the old place, so did some investigating last weekend while at Apple Valley Resort, which is now in the vicinity. Called many businesses, and finally a nice lady at a camping/outfitting store said that she had heard of Nelson Dodd, and knew of an older gentleman that would most likely know of its location. She took my cell number and promised to call back if she could contact her friend, which she did do in less than a half hour. Followed her instructions to drive through Brinkhaven, to the "T" intersection, and turn left. The drive to the old camp location took less than twenty minutes, but what was found was sort of sad. ALL the old camp buildings that we older campers knew have been torn down, everything. Nothing old remains, but a bit of concrete from the swimming pool. New buildings dot the terrace (which is much steeper than I had remembered) where the old classic dining hall used to set. The demise of the Nelson Dodd was really sad. According to a fellow that seemed like the resident caretaker, in 1976 two campers drowned after falling/jumping from the pontoon bridge during a period of high water after a storm. The camp was dormant (read no maintenance) for approximately 18 years, until a church group purchased what was left of the property, about 750 acres for a retreat center. By this time, 1994, the old buildings were beyond salvage. The above has not been researched for facts, but sounds quite possible, give or take a few years.

Stephen W. Smith, South Lyon, MI - *I attended Camp Nelson Dodd in July of 1953. I just found a postcard with the caption "PONTOON BRIDGE AND ATHLETIC FIELD. CAMP NELSON DODD" that I had sent to my parents dated July 13, 1953.*

Linda S. Wentz, Springfield, OH - *I attended camp Nelson Dodd in 1969 as a camper and in 1976 as a counselor. I remember getting on the bus in front of Mound elementary and waving goodbye to my mom. I remember the swinging bridge, the green-giggy, and making/eating hamburgers with sliced potatoes wrapped in aluminum foil and placed in the fire. I also remember that my school and a school from Fairfield or Hamilton, Ohio, also went. What great memories!*

“A picture is worth a thousand words”

Such memories!!!! We're collecting Nelson Dodd pictures, programs and other materials. Anyone having mementoes, please email or send them to us at the address in the last paragraph. Below are some pictures that Mark Reed's father took during his stay at Camp Nelson Dodd. His father is pictured at top left and right.



NOTICE: We have emails for several Camp Nelson Dodd alumni. There are a few campers on our mailing list for whom we do not have email addresses. If you have not previously shared your email addresses with us, please send them to: Ohio-West Virginia YMCA, P.O. Box 239, Point Pleasant, WV 25550 or email them to hi-y@hi-y.org. This will enable us to more efficiently keep in contact. Also, please tell us if you do or do not want the email address shared with others.