

Chikopi Chant

December 2004

Although it feels like a long time ago, it seems like only yesterday that we were ending the summer season, leaving camp and closing things up. Now we are looking at closing up the year – 2004. But the good thing is that the end of one year is the opening up of a new year. It is to 2005 that we are committed to “Ride the Chikopi wave”, and re-create the experience and continue the traditions that we all value so dearly. Olympic swimming coach and Chikopi’s Founder, Matt Mann II, would be 120 years old this year. It is encouraging to know that many of his traditions, programs, values and teachings are what inspire Chikopi today. Chikopi remains a summer oasis in the mist of a busy, complicated society. At Chikopi, values are clear, fitness of the body and mind are given a chance to flourish and social skills can be improved every day in every situation where there is a group of guys together.

Do not let next summer of 2005 go by without making Chikopi a part of your schedule. Camp dates are June 29 – August 17 (4A: June 29-July 27, 4B: July 20-Aug 17).

The best time to sign up is now! Give the enclosed flyer to your parents right now. There are benefits in the flyer for your folks and you. Take advantage of them. We want to see you back next summer for another challenging, fun-filled and exciting Chikopi experience.

What a beautiful Fall Season Chikopi experienced this year after you left camp. It stayed warm right up until late October. The leaves on the trees went from summer green to Fall red, orange and yellow and then twirled to the ground signaling the start of winter. The fields of grass once again turned green as September rains dumped on July and August’s parched lands. As the forest prepared for winter by shedding its leaves and opening up hundreds of tree trunks to the eye, the Indian translation of Chikopi became apparent – “Land of White Birch.” Every other tree was a white birch, unseen through summer’s forest foliage.

Bob, Colette, Teagan and Oreo completed many tasks for next year’s season. With occasional visiting help from Neil and Sherri, Colin and Blair, Leslie MacDougall and Dave MacNeil, all 24 leaky cedar strip canoes were repaired and made water – tight. A new living facility for the camp cooks was erected, (under the very able supervision of Colette’s dad, visiting from Scotland for a few weeks). Old cabin 9, whose use was terminated last fall during a severe windstorm, which felled a tree on its roof, was cut in half so that the good half could be moved to another side of camp to become a storage shed. The bad half of the cabin has become firewood. A new Cabin 9 will be built after the winter snow has melted next spring. A number of less obvious jobs were also completed.

Now Chikopi sits dormant for the winter. Doors are locked, windows are boarded, the new camp sign has been taken down from camp’s entranceway and the chain is stretched across the camp roadway.

Deer and moose are roaming freely on Chikopi fields and the lake is getting colder and colder before it turns to ice, usually so thick by February that you can drive your car on it. Eight inches of snow recently fell covering the rooftops and grounds and turning everything a pristine white. In the winter, Chikopi looks like a deserted wasteland, discarded in the eyes of nature. Little does anyone know if they saw it now for the first time that Chikopi will transform next June into a living legend of personal and sport development for the 86th time. Wow – 86 years!!

As you read through this issue of the Chikopi chant, you will see articles written by Buck describing his travels this Fall as well as selected days of Chikopi experiences taken from Kamil’s Camp Chikopi Journal 2004. Above all, return your Chikopi application right away for next summer. Our next issue of the Chant will outline what is planned for next year and you do not want to miss it.

New Programs For 2005

It has always been Chikopi's philosophy to add new facilities or program each summer.

Two new additions that we can talk about now include fitness training and horseback riding.

Coach, Bill Griffin has designed a six station fitness training area to be constructed in front of the barn. It will include Diversified exercise platforms on which to perform fitness maneuvers. The are could be used for early bird conditioning, team comp competition and morning activity sessions. We will keep you posted.

Only 10 miles on the other side of Ahmic Lake is the Icelandic Horse Ranch, the only on of its kind in Canada. Bob, Colette and Buck visited the ranch in October and are impressed with the site. The following is Bucks written description of the ranch and what it can offer to us.

Icelandic Horseback Riding at Chikopi
By Buck Dawson

New at Camp in 2005

Icelandic Horseback Riding**



When Buck began going to camp 75 years ago, almost all good private children's camps offered horseback riding at least as an optional activity. Now Chikopi is offering riding to our existing program of 25 sports related camp activities. The addition of this very special riding makes our camps the only camps in North America to feature Icelandic Horses for lessons and trail riding. *How can we do this?* Because we have discovered, just a few miles down our back road, a wonderful Icelandic Horse farm where riding is taught by the owners Otmar Fueth and Kordula Reinhartz. Otmar is the president of "*The Ontario Icelandic Horse Association*" and he describes below what there is different about Icelandic Horses and why they are such a special, exclusive addition to our program.

Otmar's Clear Lake Farm is fully equipped and will provide all instruction with trail riding, care and grooming, etc. (*No, we will not have stable cleaning as a pre-inspection added duty at camp.*) This will be an added activity offered to our campers 10 and over. It is fully insured with all equipment provided on site. Cabin groups will go once during their morning cabin group activity. And those that come especially for the riding will go more often. We are impressed with Otmar and Kordula and are enthusiastic about this opportunity to enrich our program. This is an option and will cost extra, approximately \$30.00 a session, added to your candy card.

Here is the explanation by Otmar on why and what is different about these rare Icelandic Horses.

Icelandic Horses are one of the purest horse breeds on earth. The horses came to Iceland in the 9th century when the Vikings settled the country. In 930 A.D. the further importation of horses to Iceland was prohibited by law. This law is still in effect. Centuries of isolation in Iceland has produced an extremely surefooted, intelligent, kind, willing, and naturally gaited horse. In addition to the traditional walk, trot and canter the Icelandic Horse performs two extra gaits, the tölt and flying pace. In tölt the horse has always either one or two feet on the ground. The feet are raised from the ground in the same sequence as in the walk, creating a clear four-beat gait. When you ride in tölt, it feels as if you are sitting in a rocking chair – you simply don't bounce about on the horse. The whole movement is flowing and incredibly smooth – that is why they have always bred tölting horses in Iceland. If you have to spend days on end driving sheep up in the highlands you want to ride in comfort, just as much as you do if you go out for a hack, or take your horse on the trails. You can tölt slowly, or very quickly, up to 20 mph. Depending on their breeding, many Icelandic Horses also show the flying pace. The pace is a lateral racing gait and horses may reach speeds up to 30 mph. Although Icelandic Horses are only 13 – 14 hands, they weigh between 800 – 1000 pounds and are riding horses for adults and children alike. Their character and versatility makes them ideal family companions.



Check out the Clear Lake Farm at www.icelandichorses.ca and The Ontario Icelandic Horse Association at www.oiha.ca

Kamil's Camp Journal 2004
Written by Swimming Coach Kamil Cepelak

Throughout the summer, Kamil recorded the days activities in a camp journal. Printed here are two days from the journal. See if you remember these days.

Day 20 Monday July 19th 2004

The beautiful sunshine woke most people up even before the bell rang for early bird. It was refreshing for the swimmers to dive into the lake water as well as for the runners to finish their distances. After a great breakfast the three morning classes included swimming, where most groups worked on their breast stroke.

Other classes included ultimate frisbee, lacrosse and soccer. After lunch and a shorter rest period, one of the most exciting events of Chikopi took place. RAMBO. This event is of the most popular activities and it was part of the team competition. This competition includes a 4 mile cross-forest run with your team. Each team had to find their way through the forest running as a group from camp to the near-by town of Magnetawan. The shortest route taken would result in the shortest time. Teams were started at 5 minute intervals. The Chikopi record of 46 minutes was not broken this time when the first team, The Coubertin Devils, arrived 1hour and 32 minutes after the start. Second group, Spitzfires, came only minutes after the first one. Almost 1 hour later came the third group the Torches but the last group, Monkeys, took their time and finished more than 3.5 hours after their start. When all teams had arrived at the finish they were all driven back to camp for dinner, which was a little later today. No activities were held after the dinner since the all day trip to Algonquin Park was scheduled for tomorrow. Counselors and coaches made some sandwiches for the next days trip and everyone was so tired after this great day that the entire camp went to bed.

Day 48, Monday August 16th 2004

The beginning of the last week of this great camp took place as early as 7:15 with the early bird bell and regular activities. After breakfast, the daily schedule was a little bit changed due to Star Work. Star work is an individual testing in all possible sports that were taught at camp, ranking all campers in their age group for bronze, silver or gold star. This testing and evaluating of campers took most of the morning as well as the afternoon. With the remaining time in the afternoon, the campers and counselors played various games as elective time. After dinner and Five and Dime store hours, the dark walk around the entire camp was lead by Bob. After the tennis court hand shake, we all continued our walk to the Chikopi Point where we started a camp fire. This was a special event because this fire was lit by our own human power and our own will without any matches or lighter. The spark came from the deep ground center of the earth when we all concentrated on it to happen. Campers had a chance to burn the cat tails as well and say whatever they wanted to say to all the other campers around the fire. Some very interesting points were mentioned which will be remembered for a long time. After each speech, campers were allowed to eat the birch bark and drink the warm tea. This was a long day and everyone was so tired that it was a good decision to end here and return to the cabins, for bed. Tomorrow will be camps final full day of activities.



The 2004 Fall Adventures of Buck Dawson

Chikopi's owner emeritus, historian and athletic ambassador Buck Dawson has written over 18 books on many subjects. In this newsletter, we are printing in it entirety Bucks written account of his after – camp travels in September and October. You will find it very interesting and entertaining reading. It is full of Chikopi and Ak-o-Mak names and alumni. Written as if Buck were talking directly to you, here we go:

I've been all over the place since Camp went out and will try to give a fairly short summary of what, when, where, and how much I missed you.

On Labor Day weekend while so many of my friends were beginning their incredible round of Hurricanes in Florida, I escaped northward to Hudson's Bay with Tommie Kirksmith, Jane Lawrence and Brook Thompson. We had a ball in Cockrane and Moosinee, our usual, annual Polar Bear Express train run.

The big new addition this year is the Polar Bear Habitat at Cockrane, where we walked into a huge glass cage surrounded by water and saw Polar Bears swim right up to our faces and do perfect flip-turns with incredible push offs, a great sight for swimmers learning to do a flip-turn. Lots of other incredible polar bear stunts to see on this Mosinee train trip. With its tour of the Moose Factory, one of the oldest towns in Canada, and the site of the original Hudson's Bay Company in the 1600's it's quite an adventure.

We returned for the last days of the post-camp camps – the Western Ontario canoe and sailing camps, with Glen Belfry and Bob Barney.

On September 14th only the Canadian Geese remained on our fields as Renee drove me to Burks falls to catch the Northern Limo for Toronto Airport. From there it was space available and buddy-pass flying with my band of nephews,(or as Bill put it, “Van Der Brothers”) to Amsterdam for the 60th Anniversary of WWII's ‘D’ Day, September 17th at Nijmegen, Holland, the largest airborne, parachute and glider operation ever. It was a wonderful experience. No naps for old ‘Bucko’. My nephews who took great care of me, but enjoyed their dinners, starting at 9pm and winding up about 2am in the Hotel bar, drinking good Dutch draught beer. Each nephew had a specialty. Communicator Frank came right from Finland with half a dozen Nokia experimental gadgets which enabled him to call everybody. Bill, the youngest Captain in our Navy, was taking the oldest Captain in the family (Army, not Navy) on this “cruise”. And there is Ed, who has fired more shots than any of our military types through his early career as a pistol-packing Police officer. And North West Pilot Charlie, who had arranged all flight plans and used his buddy pass privileges and patience, which ended us up in first class. And of course, we missed Sam, the real fighting man who we would only talk with occasionally by cell phone in Afghanistan.

Excitement began on the flight out of Detroit, when several people noticed my "82nd Airborne" sweater. Our seats were all over the plane, but Charlie tapped me on the arm to ask if I knew a Hugo Olson.

“Do I know Hugo Olson?” I said. “Do you know Hettie Vanderharten?”

“What's that got to do with it?” he said, about our favorite lady in Los Vegas, whose rose bush, Charlie proclaims, I landed in when we liberated Nijmegen Holland, (her home town) on the greatest airborne invasion ever. This guy two rows back, some sort of relative of Hugo's, sat in amazement as the world got smaller by the minute. Poor old Hugo, who has gone to the great parachute landing zone in the sky, since Normandy's “D” Day Reunion last June, was General Gavin's #1 Aide in Normandy and Holland and a lucky guy to almost be “Mr. Hettie Vanderharten” Ha! Ha! The general staff were very young, as was he, and their hang-out, when they could get away from their DeckerWald, “Champion Forward” 82nd HQ in Operation Market Garden, was the home of Hettie and her other beautiful sisters. I was an hour late and a gelder short, as usual and so became Hettie's adopted brother, a roll I have enjoyed ever since.

Amsterdam has no traffic lights, just bike paths, sidewalks, trolley cars and various stock-car racing lanes, all of which are mixed and crossing one another along the yellow bricked streets. If you are on foot and make it across, you come to a beautiful canal with unique long water buses, all racing to be first through the one lane tunnels passing under the two lane bridges which span the canal.

After an afternoon and a night of this, we mounted a huge rental car and headed for Nijmegen, one hundred and 50km inland. During this trip we studied our maps and argued our itinerary, settling finally on a plan to hit the Dutch Airborne Museum first and then on to the newspaper, “De Gelderlander”. I wanted to go to the 100 year old newspaper first, since we liberated it after being closed for two years by the Nazi. I was concerned, as the afternoon was approaching, that no one would be left around at the paper after 3 pm. The nephews prevailed and we stopped at the museum first and never stopped anywhere very long after that. My name-sake nephew ran out of the museum's library/book store with a fresh new copy of the All American Paraglide, the 82nd Newspaper which I had started with its very first issue out of Nijmegen, 60 years ago. The Paraglide he held was a 50th Anniversary reprint issued just 10 years ago, still being sold as a souvenir, 10 years later. With this in hand, and after a huge reception at the Museum, during which I sold all the books (Stand Up

and Hook Up) I had brought from the States to gift or sell. The charming lady, Esalyne Dobbelman, who seemed to be running the Brit Reunion at the Museum, offered to lead us to the Newspaper, which had obviously moved since 1944.

I excitedly walked in and showed the paper in hand to the receptionist and said we had sort of an appointment with a reporter called earlier by nephew Frank on one of his Nokia devices. Resulting interview was exciting as I pulled out various relics of my 60 year old original visit. The photographer took me down to get a picture of me looking wistfully at the lower Rhine, with its' magnificent bridge in the background, as I appeared to be reading one of the original Paraglides. It worked beautifully. Front page picture and story. As I had hoped, someone had called in to locate me, as my memory of

names and faces have long since dimmed. Frank again handled the phone the next morning and talked to the reporter at the paper, who announced that a woman had just called in and wanted to locate her old friend Buck Dawson. I had hoped it was the family who had adopted me when I first landed September 17th 1944. Frank didn't know who it was but arranged for us to meet at her home at 10:30am. She wanted time for her oldest son to get in from a near by town to meet me. Frank was all excited about the possible implications. I thanked him a lot and we were off to the address.

We were greeted on our arrival by Harry Peters, age 88 and his wife Titia and her two marvelous sisters. They were singing the "All American Soldier" which had been and still is the "82nd Airborne" fighting song. They had us in for tea and introduced us to a dining room table full of scrapbooks and pictures, featuring their old friend, Buck Dawson, vintage Sept. 1944. The nephews were impressed at last! We all had a wonderful time and told stories. Then Harry took us on a day long trip to the various drop zones and landing fields, and the monument where General Gavin actually landed. From there I could orient the fields around me to show where I had actually landed. My glider had crashed into the sugar beet field.

Most of the planned ceremonies were dominated by the Brits as they came in their wheelchairs etc. on the relatively short trip from the UK. to Holland. There were very few Americans there and I was made to feel like a hero. The climax of the events was a parade with about 100,000 grateful Dutchman, clapping as we drove in WWII vehicles. It was sort of a Dutch National Guard, dressed in reproductions of 82nd WWII uniforms and jump boots, complete with 82nd insignia and their own Dutch decorations. They drove the restored WWII vehicles. For the first time I realized that we were sort of the catalytic agent in their liberation and that they themselves, the fathers and grandfathers of the current 100,000 lined along the parade route, touring over the great Nijmegen Bridge, were the real heroes. I reached out of my jeep as little kids ran from the sidelines to High-five me and mothers jumped out to grab their kids and kiss me. It was quite a thrill being a hero again. Remembering the first time I crossed that bridge and reliving what amounted to an international love affair. It was the largest single span bridge of that time in Europe, the first crossing of the Waal (or lower Rhine) at least 4 months before General Paton claimed the first crossing. I looked up into the massive super structure of the bridge above me and remembered that 44 German snipers had been shot before and as we crossed in 1944. One man had climbed part way up and was shooting pictures. I told him it was dangerous and everybody laughed as we bantered and the parade went on.

My jeep driver, Robert Braam, and uniformed buddies, Dick (Dek) deValk and Jon Leesberg were companions throughout the trip. Dick and John were much younger than me, but along with the previously mentioned Harry Peters, had witnessed and participated in the parachute landings, the Wall Bridge, Grave, Grossbeck and Bergendahl landings and fights, 60 years ago. For some reason or another, there were few Americans at the 60th Anniversary. Probably because most had come to the earlier reunion in June of "D" Day Normandy. "D" Day Holland was a great experience for me. I had been lucky enough to be awarded the Willam's Ord which is the highest and the first awarded to Foreign Troops. I also had the Orange Armband, representing the Dutch Underground. I really felt proud realizing that there were so many people represented in this great greeting. In

reality I was just a very small piece of the 1944 whole but it made me proud to stand for all the great friends that I was standing in for.

The band of nephews split up again in Amsterdam on there way home to various corners of the earth and I arrived back in Detroit and then back to camp, still in a daze of tiredness and bliss from my week with the Dutch people who really love us and certainly don't think of us as UGLY AMERICANS!

After a day to partial rest and answering phone calls, "Hey Buck! What's really going on down at the Hall of Fame?", I took off again, this time with Bob Duenkel by car at 6:00am, to Ann Arbor for possibly the last of the Matt Mann Swimmers Reunion. Revisiting these guys was wonderful. At least half of them spoke of Camp Chikopi as the start of their swimming experience with Matt Mann. And I had Marcie's name-sakes, Marti, Sue and Karen along with Maggie Stevens, Michigan's first official woman Letter winner, all sitting in a little island representing Matt's slogan, "You have 2 arms and 2 legs, same as he does. Never let a punker beat ya!" Modern Akomak chant, "Beat the boys, beat the boys!" Pat made an appearance with Jodi and did a wonderful job of representing Camp Akomak and developing a current relationship with these vital Alumni of both Camps. And, of course, Matty did a great job speaking about his father.

Bob and I attended the Jon Urbanchek Retirement Dinner the following night and again it overflowed with "Chikopi, Chikopi, Chikopi", and "RoseMary I Don't Know!"

Many of the old guard are now famous. Bob and I had a wonderful sit down conversation with Mike Barrowman who had flown in directly from the Cayman Islands, where the hurricane had completely destroyed his house and new Mercedes. He seemed to be taking it in stride, the same way he won those Olympic Gold Medals. Bob has a complete list of Chikopi's former Michigan Captains, National Champ, World Record Holders and Olympians, etc. that we met on this great weekend, not to mention being in the Big House (Michigan Stadium) where 112,000 people watched Michigan beat Iowa. Even the old Football Team honored during half time, a champion of the early 1950's, had 2 of my old fraternity brothers who I hadn't seen in 30 years.

When I got back to Camp again, pretty well exhausted, I called Camp Billowood to arrange a trip up there, and found that Tom Ludwig's bachelor son had just been married the day before, with 300 people at a camp celebration where the wedding party came in tuxedos by red canoes and landed on Vesper Rock for an incredible camp based wedding. Tom said he would be at home in Blind River until the end of October if we wanted to drive up to visit. The invitation is open to all but time is flying and it doesn't look good for this year but maybe next. Dale Ruohomaki is still trying to figure out how the three Ludwigs beat him and Chuck Fairbanks, his immortal coach, 3 years in a row in football.

Bob and I were scheduled to attend the World Swimming Championships in Indianapolis, run by Chikopi's Dale Neuberger. But Bob had a last minute change of plans and I was off on my own, expecting to meet up with Pat at the other end but his car broke down a hundred miles out and he was delayed several days. Fortunately there were lots and lots of Chikopi and Akomak presence in Indianapolis. Dale had taken the new Conseco Field House, built for the Indiana Pacers NBA Basketball Games and set it up as a remarkable, temporary Swimming Pool Complex. It looked for all the world like a permanent pool in a 15,000 seat stadium. The excitement was all there and it was hard to believe that the whole thing was to be removed and the Field House was to be set up for the Women's National Gymnastics, 4 days later.

Thousands of teenage girls were everywhere getting autographs, waiting at the stage door, athlete's entrance, for autographs, screaming at the right moments, etc. And "Yes" for you non-swimming readers, we did meet Basketball Legend, Larry Bird. I was up in the V.I.P. section and could not get down on the deck, but it was pretty "heady" digs. Record crowds each night were over 10,000 and the highlight of my visit was seeing Mollie (Graves) DeLozier, who brought 6 of her swimmers, including her 2 daughters, to the meet, and

occupied the main glassed-in viewer's box, complete with all the goodies, deserved and reserved for the likes of the late Eli Lilly himself.

The pool was dedicated to the late Frank McKinney Jr. who was one of our Hall of Fame past Chairman of the Board and an Honoree Backstroker we saw for many years at the College Forum and then the Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale.

The ASCA World Clinic was held at the Marriott near by, and again everybody seemed to be there and had Chikopi/Akomak or Hall of Fame connections.

Jenny Thompson was swimming her last meet after 17 years, eight Olympic Gold Medals, etc. Michael Phelps was also there and won an event. Others I had a chance to revisit included, Chikopi's Richard Quick, Akomak's Donna de Verona and Stan Tinkum, everybody's Dick and Barbara Bower and many, many others.

Pat got there for the last night, but on our way back to camp, his car once again broke down and we had to go clear back to Grand Rapids for repair. We continued on to Camp from there with Jody and a rental car. After a quick visit with Brook in Toronto we arrived at Camp after mid-night. We drove into camp and a field of grazing deer (at least 12, maybe 20). The next morning the deer were gone, but the daily flock of migrating Canada Geese were busy chomping down the grass and re-fertilizing the field.

One high note to the World Championships was meeting the Dutch family from Eindoven whose daughter, Marleen Veldhuis won the 50m freestyle on the last day. I also re-met Ada Kok, the former Olympic Gold Butterflyer. I ran into Olympian Pete Williams on the street and he told me that Lori Jo is now helping him coach at Mersersburg.

In case you find a little gravy spilled on your news letter, it is gravy from the wild goose Renee cooked for me last night. Wild goose tastes a little like steak and I had it complete with homemade wild chokecherry jelly. A feast too good for a hermit, but certainly enjoyed by this one. It is quite beautiful looking out RoseMary's lake view window, but the water is getting cold. My old prostate aches on the morning swims. I guess I am getting ready to fly south with these Canada Geese, after one more Ann Arbor visit to help reinvent my old fraternity house. I'm staying with Harry Anderson, Olli Schoedinger, and "Easy" Vaughn, another version of the "Band of Brothers", this one vintage 1939.

The weather at Camp continues to be perfect. The leaves with their magnificent colors gave a great show through Canada's Thanksgiving, until the 3 day rain came. The rain and wind can quickly strip the trees of their fall ceremonial dress. It has been an exceptional fall. There is a lonely beauty with only wildlife and nature's noises to break the silence. Pat has gone but Brook and the crew are due back soon to put a new face on the climbing wall and rope course. We still hope to see the man with the Icelandic Horses, so we can add horse back riding to our program next year. I know I'll see many of you back here at camp next summer, but what a shame more don't embrace and enjoy the beautiful fall scenery and solitude of Camp after camp goes out. The deer, the geese, and the shroud of color that wraps the camp, are sights to behold. As I take one last walk into Rocky Reef, the rustle of the leaves underfoot, keep me saying, "So long for this year Kid. I'll see you 'round the campus!"

Love,

Buck "Captain Patch" Dawson