

## CAMPFIRE GIRLS IN COLBY

Tinega Camp of the Campfire Girls was organized in Colby in 1925 with Inez Connelly as Guardian. Mrs. Wayne Munn served as assistant guardian. Inez served about a year as Guardian until her marriage to Pete Ziegler. Mrs. Tom Berg (Coila) then became the Guardian and with Mrs. Munn's help the Campfire Girls became a very active organization.

When joining the organization each girl had a Ceremonial Gown, tan in color with fringe on it, to represent an Indian dress. Each girl chose an Indian name and was required to make a beaded headband with the Indian name on it.

Periodically the Ceremony was held and the girls wore their Indian attire as they received their badges and awards they had earned as they progressed through the ranks of WOODGATHERER, FIREMAKER, AND TORCHBEARER. This Ceremony was held around a campfire in a wooded area. After the business meeting was completed the girls sat around the campfire singing their special songs until the fire went out.

Most of the awards were colorful wooden beads and represented skills and tasks completed. Swimming awards were represented by a Pollywog, Frog, or Fish, made in the likeness of brown suede. The girls fastened their awards to their Ceremonial Gown and/or wore their beads around their neck as a necklace when they held their Ceremonials.

Each Campfire Girl tried to live up to these guidelines: SEEK BEAUTY; GIVE SERVICE; PURSUE KNOWLEDGE; BE TRUSTWORTHY; HOLD UNTO HEALTH; GLORIFY WORK; and BE HAPPY.

The girls gave community service and was sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary. One of their tasks was to help with the annual poppy sale and was considered very important and necessary at that time in history.

The Colby Campfire Girls were entirely self-supporting and worked hard each year to earn money to go camping. In 1927 they were able to spend ten days in Colorado springs after holding many bake sales and putting on entertainments between shows at the theater to earn money. As it is today, the theater was owned by the Phillips Family and they were very community-minded. We could always depend upon Prof. Phillips to help us out by letting us perform at the theater for a fee.

After acquiring sufficient funds for the trip to Colorado, Mr. Harrison Ramey, father of Sadie (Ramey) Harper, volunteered to take the group to Colorado in his International farm truck. By using filled wooden canned goods boxes and home-made boxes to carry the luggage in the group was able to arrange the boxes around the truck bed for seating. The girls wore blue overalls with red insets in the bottom of the legs with red sashes. Their straw hats had ball fringe around the edge. Thus attired, the eighteen eager girls left Colby at 4:00 A.M. one summer morning singing, "Hail, Hail, The Gang's All Here." In twelve hours the girls reached McLaughlin's Lodge in Colorado springs where they spent the next ten happy days.

Some of the attractions the girls enjoyed were: Seven Falls; Garden of the Gods; Cave of the Winds; Van Briggles Pottery and Crystal Lake. They did lots of hiking and some horseback riding. Of course they did their own cooking and housekeeping in the log cabins. One day some Boy Scouts from Louisiana, who were camping near by, entertained the group with a southern cooked meal. The girls, in turn, held a watermelon feed for the Scouts.

Everything about the trip went well until the group neared Stratton, Colorado, on the way home. Something broke on the steering part of the truck and it ended up in the ditch by the side of the road. The canned goods boxes slid to the side of the truck bed and the girls escaped injury except for Amy Jasperson who ended up with a broken collarbone.

In 1927 it was possible to catch a train home and a few of the girls did go home by train, but the majority of the girls stayed with the truck until it was repaired and went home the next day after camping out in the garage where the truck was fixed. They came into town singing, "Hail, Hail, We're All Here Now."

From 1929 to 1930 Mrs. Clarence Roberts took over the guardianship with Mrs. Munn's assistance. In 1929 the group camped near Burlington, Colorado, on the Republican River and they were fortunate to secure the services of a Red Cross Life Guard who was home for the summer from Colorado University. The highlight of this trip was the swimming instructions the girls received. They were eager to pass their swimming requirements to become a pollywog, frog, or fish.

In 1930 the Tinega Camp returned to McLaughlin's Lodge in Colorado Springs for their yearly camp out with Mrs. Frances Olson as Guardian and Mrs. Munn as assistant. This time the girls traveled in a farm truck owned by Claude Schnellbacher (father of Helen Schnellbacher Frahm). The truck was driven by Vernie Olson who had resigned from the Colby School System as a football coach that year. Both he and Mrs. Olson had been teachers in the Colby Schools and retired to run a dry cleaning establishment in Colby for several years.

During the late '20's and '30's the Campfire Girls were a very active organization in Colby and a second camp the Co-Sasnak was organized in the early '30's. After Vida Nelson Toburen reached the rank of Torchbearer she organized a third camp, this was called the Lewa Camp, and Vida served as the first Guardian.

Besides places in Colorado the Campfire Girls camped several times at Tasco near Selden. This camping site also had a swimming pool and a stream where they could do some boating.

By the time we entered World War II the Campfire Girls had disbanded in Colby because of lack of leadership. Today the organization is known as just "CAMPFIRE" and both girls and boys belong to this group.

Today these are some names we remember who belonged to one of the three CAMPS:

Osa Beck Gordon	Lena Beck Novak
Thelma Beck Ballard	Alberta Bergman McGinley
Helen Bergman Misner	Ann Connelly Griggs
Bessie Dawes Calliham	Amy Jaspersen Jalonen
Geraldine Kirkendall Query	Maxine Lowis Myers
Eva Mae Miller McPherson	Beth Munn Taylor
Gwen Nelson Sloan	Vida Nelson Toburen
Sadie Ramey Harper	Elva Richards Powell
Clara Schnellbacher Barrett	Helen Schnellbacher Frahm
Julia Schroeder Anderson	Irene Souders Hamill
Alice Syble Harrison	Betty Taylor Hess
Louise Taylor Moore	Mara Dee Turner Donelan
Velma Voisin Cooper	