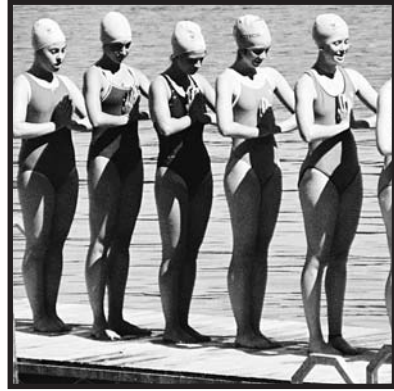
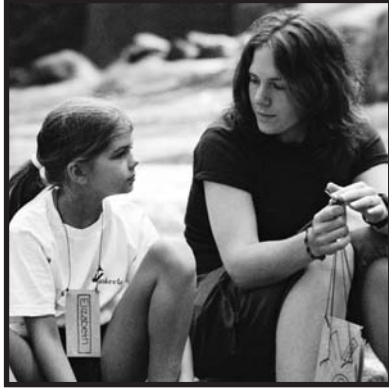


Table Of Contents



Introduction	20
Opening Day	23
Daily Life	33
Trips	71
Special Days	89
Traditions	115
Portraits	137

“Waukeela magic” is a very real thing to those who have spent summers in the Pine Grove growing up, yet it is nearly impossible to describe to those who have not experienced it for themselves. For a number of years I have tried to capture the special feel of a Waukeela summer in the long and somewhat labored letters I have written to camp parents and friends. These provide a literate, adult view of what goes on at camp, but cannot portray what camp feels like from a child’s perspective – the freedom that comes from being unweighted by the cares and concerns of family and school life back home; the powerful sense of belonging to a multi-age community characterized by friendship, laughter, adventure, and song; and the pure, unadulterated fun of waking each morning to “a day that is filled with surprises” and where at night “little folk are almost sure to see fairies, if they watch without flashing a light”.

At a bookstore two years ago I discovered a coffee-table book full of photos and short biographies of noted woman photographers of the 20th century. I read for the first time about Barbara Morgan, who came from the same town I then lived in (Scarsdale, New York). My curiosity was further piqued when I learned that in 1951 she published a book called “Summer’s Children: A Photographic Journal of Life at Camp”. I hadn’t yet seen the book, but the idea for doing something similar for Waukeela was officially born!!

I tracked the book down on the Internet. When I finally had it in hand, I was intrigued by the rustic black and white photographs, taken at a farm camp in the Adirondack Mountains which Morgan’s children attended in the late 1940s. The text, featuring snippets of camp songs and poems, was spare and simple - about as far away as possible from my-always-too-lengthy prose. The book had a timeless feel about it that transported me back to my days as a camper in Maine. More importantly, it suggested a better way to capture “Waukeela magic” on the printed page!

About this time I received a phone call from Anne Hayunga, who was researching camps for her 10 year old daughter, Cree. Anne lives now in New Mexico, but was raised on a farm in New Hampshire just a few miles from Waukeela. She and Cree loved the video which I sent them, and soon enough I received Cree’s 2005 registration form. It was only then that I learned Anne is a professional photographer, specializing in black and white portraits, and that she planned to be in New Hampshire visiting family for most of the summer. One thing led serendipitously to another, and it wasn’t long before she agreed to help turn my book dream into a reality.

If a picture is worth 1,000 words, Anne shot almost a million words worth last summer! This past fall we worked together to select, organize, and lay out the images that would best tell the story of a Waukeela summer, a job that was a lot easier to do in principle than in practice. (It’s not so hard to find the best pictures you have when you’re choosing from a bunch of amateur photographs, but when all of the images are professional quality, it is really difficult to pick the best ones out!!) When it finally came time to select the book’s text, however, I knew just how to proceed

– straight to Brita Zitin, a 14-season Waukeela alumna (and former Creative Writing counselor) who now promotes reading for a living at the Maine Humanities Council. Brita’s beautifully written “Introduction” and her selections from the Waukeela song book and other camp poems add an understated contextual elegance to Anne’s pictures and will elicit smiles of recognition and remembrance in their own right.

Published to coincide with Waukeela’s 85th anniversary season, this book is a tribute to five generations of Waukeela campers and staff members who have created and sustained camp’s special culture and traditions. In an increasingly divided, competitive, and confusing world, Waukeela remains a safe haven where children of every sort can return throughout the formative years of their lives; where they can explore and discover parts of the world and themselves that they have never known; where they can share those experiences and celebrate who they are becoming in a joy-filled community of their peers; and in so doing, are joined in a common bond with generations of spirited young women who have come before and will come after them.

Glory Waukeela, indeed – now and forever, let the echoes ring!

Phil Steele

Eaton Center, N.H.



One of the first rituals of every camp season at Waukeela is the panorama portrait. It's a very predictable event. No matter how many times we are told to wear white shirts, someone always shows up in green. No matter that the photographer patiently instructs us to remain still as the camera - prehistoric in its intricacy and bulk—pans past, someone always moves. Sometimes, a counselor will fall off the bench in the back row or someone will faint from standing still for too long. Typically, though, the portrait proceeds without incident and the framed print soon takes its rightful place in the dining room gallery, which is more remarkable for its consistency than its variety.

Just before dinner one evening during my first summer at Waukeela, some fellow Elves and I decided that it would be fun to try to take airborne action pictures of each other. We leapt and clicked and laughed a lot, but the task proved impossible. A good chunk of the photos I brought home from that first summer consist of nothing but someone's t-shirt billowed out from the motion, the shape of their mouth in an "o," or the bottom of their chin straining skyward.

Most of my pictures from Pixie summer, when I discovered hiking, consist of White Mountain vistas, untarnished by any human presence. It would take several more years of trips for me to realize that even the most scenic White Mountain photos are more interesting when there are girls in bandanas and boots in the foreground. As an adolescent, I spent winters poring over pictures of groups of girls taken on the last day of the summer. My school friends must have thought that all Waukeela girls had bright red faces with tear-streaked cheeks and smiles superimposed with great effort.

I first learned to develop my own photographs in the tiny, perpetually flooded darkroom beneath the Lodge. My counselor, Sarah, taught me how to shake the film canister, usually in time to a camp song, and how to light my path with glow-in-the-dark tape. How appropriate that I first experienced the alchemy of processing and developing at Waukeela, where the summer unfolds with a similar mix of careful formulas, precise timing, raucous singing, mystery, and pure luck.

All of which is to say that while summer camp is notoriously photogenic, it's not necessarily easy to capture on film. The photographs in this book are the product of the keen and highly trained eye of an artist Phil was fortunate to find. Her intuition enabled her to quickly grasp the composition of our summer, to find its tone, and focus on its subjects. The resulting pictures could have been taken in 1925 or 2005. Uniforms have evolved, the topography of the place has shifted, but there is something elemental and unchanging in the stubborn beauty of the images.

I have eavesdropped as campers avidly study at the panorama portraits in the dining room, following one camper's progress through the ranks or comparing hairstyles from various decades. All those pictures of Elf torsos still conjure up the thin light and perfect peace of a midsummer evening. When I think about where photographs come from, I am transported back to that damp basement darkroom. Looking through this book is much like looking through the albums in the camp archives: images of Waukeela summers peel off the pages and meet our memories halfway.

Brita Zitin
Portland, Maine

