

Collection #  
P 0578

## HILLTOP CAMP AND SUMMER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS PHOTOGRAPHS, CA. 1930S

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF  
COLLECTION: 1 folder of 4 photographs

COLLECTION  
DATES: Ca. 1930s

PROVENANCE: Gift from William R. Ehrich in 2004

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ACCESSION  
NUMBER: 2004.0199

NOTES:

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

In 1924 Kate Andrews opened the very first summer camp in Brown County, Indiana, on 20 acres at the top of Town Hill. It is noteworthy that it was a girls' camp, accredited by the state board of education. It was officially named Hilltop Camp and Summer School for Girls.

The American organized camping movement began in the 1870s, in response to the increasing urbanization of the population and the desire to offer children a wider range of experiences. The first camp for girls was founded in New Hampshire in 1902. By 1925 there were 125 camps for girls in the country.

The town of Town Hill is 790 feet above sea level. From the top of the hill one could see across the town and beyond. There were fewer than 500 people living in town at the time that Hilltop Camp opened, and most people in Brown County still traveled by horse and wagon.

Camp lasted a full two months. Campers could elect one of two four-week sessions, or stay for both. In 1938, the full two months cost \$135. One month was \$75. The girls rose at 6:30 a.m. and went to bed at 8:00 or 9:00 p.m. depending on their age. Campers ranged in age from six to twenty when the camp was in full operation.

Girls could elect to do advanced or remedial academic work. The most prominent activities were art and theater. Art classes met in the morning and included ceramics, loom weaving on different styles of looms, and tooled leather. Musette Stoddard, the art director, had a china kiln in her basement. Walter Griffiths, of Brown County Pottery, would fire the pottery.

The facilities eventually grew to include an outdoor theater, tennis courts, swings and seesaws, and trails. Activities included horseback riding, archery, dance class (tap, ballet, and ballroom), and Sunday morning services in the outdoor theater. *Kamp Kapers*, the camp newspaper, was written by the girls.

During the two months of camp, at least four plays were produced. They were performed on the last Saturday of each four-week term. Residents of nearby Nashville came to see the plays, sitting on wooden benches for a couple of hours twice a summer.

The girls lived in log cabins. At least two were moved from Weed Patch Hill in the Brown County State Park. The cabins were named and included: Lookout, Skyline, Bluebird, Wren (or Wrens Nest), Rush, Hoot Owl, Chipmunk, Pee Wee, Wood Thrush, Valley View, and Whippoorwill. Whippoorwill, the cabin nearest the stage, was not only home to the art director, but also the costume shop, prop collection, and green room. Skyline, where Kate Andrews and later Musette Stoddard stayed, was razed and replaced by a modern home in the 1960s, while all the other cabins remained.

There was an annual costume party at the Skyline cabin. Because campers made all the costumes for their plays, there were always old costumes available.

In 1933, Andrews added 80 acres of the nearby Linke farm, with its farmhouse, barn, pasture land, and meadow, to add a boys' camp. She closed Hilltop Camp during at least one year during World War II.

Kate Ferris Andrews was born on 26 November 1869 in Seymour, Indiana, and spent her girlhood there. She graduated from Wellesley College in Massachusetts, and did graduate work at Chicago and Columbia Universities, as well as in Europe. She taught for seven years at Western College in Oxford, Ohio, was the principal of the Seymour High School for 15 years, and served nine years as Dean of Women at Hanover College in southern Indiana.

She married Thomas J. Weaver in 1935. They lived in Chicago, but during the summers she continued to lead the camp in Brown County, until illness brought an end to her association with the camp around the mid-1940s. Musette Stoddard kept the camp open a few more years, but the camp closed permanently in 1947. Kate Andrews Weaver died 28 August 1951 and was buried in Seymour.

#### Sources:

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## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection consists of three photographs plus one duplicate. Each shows groups of people at the Hilltop Camp and Summer School for Girls in Brown County, Indiana, ca. 1930s. There are names written on the backs of the duplicate photos, but no indication is given as to which name belongs to which person. Two of the photos are of people on the camp's outdoor stage.

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### CONTENTS

Two copies of photograph of 38 women and girls outside of large cabin. Some names are written on the backs of each photo, but there is no indication as to which name goes with which person. In some cases hometowns are also named. The back of one copy indicates that this is Lookout cabin. Names include: Kate Andrews Weaver, Musette O. Stoddard, Harriet Mueller, Libby Rea, Helen Steffee (Evansville, Ind.), Mrs. Mae Gregg (Greenwood, Ind.), Evelyn A. Kramer, Anne Parker, Mabel C. Andrews, Emily J[?], Peggy Delaplane, Rosemary Russo (Highland Park, Ill.), Gertrude Buehler, Charlotte Thomas, Lillian Bohm, Ann Spalding (Louisville, Ky.), Jayne Standish ('35), Martha Millholland (Lawrenceburg, Ind.), Betty Hardin, Millie Jane Worland, Suds DePrez [?]. There are names of some males written on the back, also, even though there are no males in this photograph. They include T. J. Weaver [Kate Andrews' husband Thomas], Frank Linke [whose farm was used for the boys' camp], Albert Parker, [Claude] Curry Bohm, Edward Kur[?], Glen Smith [Versailles, Ind.).

Outdoor stage with 25 girls, boys, women, and men on it. One boy is wearing a dunce cap.

Outdoor stage with 31 women, men, boys, and girls gathered in groups on it. Some are seated at a table.

### CONTAINER

Photographs Box 1,  
Folder 1

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