

Kennebec Journal 8-22-60

# Unusual Camp Bearnstow Aids Mount Vernon School

**MOUNT VERNON** — An unusual children's camp on the east shore of Parker Pond in Mt. Vernon is rustic Camp Bearnstow.

It is a co-ed camp, without tribes, awards, trophies, or any kind of intra-camp competition. It is religiously and racially integrated.

Camps have a basic lesson to teach all of their children, generally, and Bearnstow is no exception. Through self-development and hard work Bearnstow campers are given a "standard which they can follow and use to their benefit in later life," according to owner-director Ruth Grauert, of New Jersey.

Typical of Bearnstow activity is the program presented Saturday, for the benefit of the new Mt. Vernon school.

From 2-4:30 p.m. Bearnstow opened its doors to children for a fair, including rides, exhibits, and special sales. During the evening everyone was invited to a concert and jazz ballet; orchestra selections, under the direction of Belle K. Greene, Mt. Vernon music teacher, and social dancing.

Mrs. Greene teaches music at Bearnstow twice a week. Under her suggestion the children of the camp were encouraged to aid the music and fine arts departments in the new school. The campers, working on their own, sold paintings, offered piano concerts every 15 minutes, shined shoes, sold driftwood, and entertained visitors. A nominal fee was charged for each event.

This unique program by the Bearnstow campers is a reflection of themselves. Chosen by camp director and co-director Ruth Grauert and Frances Reid, "they are above average in intelligence, suitable for the well-rounded program offered."

In a unique curriculum which emphasizes music and the arts as much as land athletics and water activities, the Bearnstow directors can "explore the children outwardly with their problems," according to the directors.

The camp is designed for reflective comfort. Children may find

nooks and corners to read up-to-date literature of all kinds. They are given as much free time as possible to pursue individual and group interests.

For a camp of its size, 38 children from 5-16 years of age, Bearnstow has a surprisingly high staff-camper ratio - a little over one to three. Not forgetting their goal of a "well rounded child," Bearnstow instructors annually send several campers to the Junior Maine Guide trials. They are always successful.

To emphasize the arts, usually absent or glossed over at most children's camps, professional dancers and musicians are part of the Bearnstow staff. All instruments are taught as well as water color, oil and other art techniques. In a spacious theatre, all forms of the dance are instructed.

It is development of these talents which enabled the Bearnstow campers to present Saturday evening's entertainment program.

Dancers presented tap, ballet and modern jazz performances. Choreography was by co-director Reid and an instructor, Sally Cohen.