



Here beginneth the log of...

SPRING 2022

THE NEWSLETTER OF BRANTWOOD CAMP • PO Box 3350 • Peterborough, NH 03458 • (603) 924-3542 • www.brantwood.org

BRANTWOOD SET FOR SUMMER 2022

Greetings to the Brantwood Community!

As winter has given way to spring and April showers have brought May flowers, I hope your thoughts are turning to the summer ahead and a new season of Brantwood Camp. We are looking forward to resuming three terms this summer for both boys and girls. The health and safety of our campers and staff will continue to be our top priority and in consultation with our medical advisors, we will make program adjustments as needed to keep everyone safe. We hope to again host some of the international counselors who have enriched our program in past years, as well.

There are also changes afoot. As I reported to you previously, Doug Sutherland, our Executive Director, moved on to other opportunities in January and Bill Gurney is now serving as Interim Executive Director. Many of you know Mr. Gurney. Bill came to Brantwood as a young camper and has been an important part of camp life ever since, as a counselor, director, camper parent, and most recently, President of the Board of Trustees. Bill's presence at camp will ensure the continuity of the Brantwood traditions that we treasure while the search for a new Executive Director is underway.

Commentators have remarked that alongside the numerous painful losses caused by the pandemic, many people have experienced an unexpected gain: a fresh appreciation for what they value in life. For me, and I hope for you, Brantwood ranks high on that list.

For Brantwood We Stand,

Noelle Leonard
Interim Board President

Congratulations

to last summer's cup winners. We are so proud of your accomplishments. Looking forward to another successful Brantwood summer!



Session Dates for Summer 2022

- Term 1** July 2–July 15
- Term 2** July 17– July 30
- Term 3** August 1– August 14

My Brantwood Experience

An eleven year-old camper shares her Brantwood story

Brantwood for Girls is a meaningful place that will change you forever. You will meet new people, try new things and have the best experience possible.

On July 28, 2021 my Brantwood experience started. I was fully packed and excited for the next two weeks. The drive was long but I watched movies to make it shorter. When we arrived, I said my goodbyes to my family and then was brought to the nature shack. There were three counselors and another camper. The counselors taught us how to make a bracelet. I wasn't very good; in fact it was so bad it eventually wound up in the trash. Then I was brought to the basketball court where we played an awkward game of knee tag and light sabers.

Later I went to see my cabin and meet my roommates. I was put in Minnewaska. There were eight of us including me. It was hard to talk to them at first because they were just strangers unpacking clothes. Eventually, conversation flowed easily. We had two cabin counselors that were both funny, kind, and caring. The rest of the day went on with awkward conversations and some bonding.

On day two I learned about the way Brantwood works. I learned about our schedule, the competition, Olympics, Spirit, Inspection, campfire, cups and the B jerseys.

Basically everything you do at camp goes towards the B's. They're hard to earn and challenges play a big part in winning the B's. Every camper is given challenges based on if you're a third or second class camper, you get different challenges. I was a third class camper because it was my first year at Brantwood. Challenges were a struggle for me and some nights I would pass three challenges other times I wouldn't pass any. My favorite challenge was learning the ideals. This was my favorite because this challenge helped me throughout the rest of the term to make good decisions. I was constantly asking myself if I was following the ideals of

honesty, loyalty, cooperation, good sportsmanship, and unselfishness.

Some of my favorite moments from camp were going on a hike and eating Doritos with my friends on a mountain, playing capture the counselor, and stepping in mud. I also enjoyed learning new cheers. Another favorite moment was starting off as a shallow end swimmer then becoming a deep end swimmer. Before camp, I couldn't swim at all. A moment that all my cabinmates enjoyed was making a poster for shack appreciation and singing at chapel and campfire.

Every day was a new adventure whether it was going on the catwalk at the ropes course or going to Silver Lake... until prize night came. On prize night I was told I won the long jump competition and my cabin won spirit so I got two ribbons. My cabin also won the B jerseys which was so special to every Minnewaskian; most of us cried. I also won a hat for passing all my challenges and a cup. I immediately started crying when my counselor said,

Brantwood is a Special Place

Reflections from a former camper/counselor

I take great pride in being a Brantwood Girl because it has shaped me into the person I am today. I can rely on myself and my capabilities in the outside world because Brantwood taught me how to be strong. I talk about Brantwood to pretty much everyone I can. In any job interview I tend to bring up my experience as a camp counselor because more often than not it creates a sense of relatability to my personality, but it also shows whoever I am speaking to that I can be trusted to persevere in challenging situations and create positive environments for the people around me.

I began my Brantwood career as a thirteen year old camper and continue my relationship with it seven summers later behind the scenes in continuous support of

“Aviah Mendes; Best New Girl.” They gave me a certificate which came pre-framed (which I thought was super cool) and said that I won the Cook-Hall-Pierce cup for being the best new girl of the summer. I also ended up being awarded a stayover which means I get to go to camp next summer for free. After all the hard work me and my cabin put into winning the B's I'm proud of us. After all the awards were handed out, we watched a slideshow of all the moments from camp. Everyone was crying at this point. We weren't crying because we won awards but that did matter, we were crying because we may never get to see each other again. We all made an impact in each other's life and created such great friendships. Overall, prize night was the best night ever!!

To end this I want to clarify that even though term 2 of 2021 is over, my Brantwood experience isn't over. In fact, it's just the beginning because in 2022, I'm coming back as a second class camper, ready for a thrilling summer once again, and you should come too!

– **Aviah Mendes**, age 11
from New Bedford, MA

the mission and ideals of one of my favorite places on Earth. Surprisingly enough, my first summer was less than ideal. None of my cabin could seem to cooperate with each other causing an unfortunate environment for camp life, but because of the fact that I loved being able to participate in the kinds of activities I did not have access to at home or through my school, I returned. The fact that Brantwood can provide the experience it does to kids that come from families of any financial status is really special.

The Brantwood experience is remarkably unique to each person that walks down that 'long long trail', but those that love it can all agree that Brantwood Blue runs in our veins, informs every decision we make, and allows each of us to make the best of our lives in every way possible because it is a part of us in a way we can never lose.

– **West Nelson**

Margaret Cook Gurney

The entire Brantwood community was saddened to learn that Margaret Cook Gurney—the longest serving Associate Trustee in the history of the Camp and a much-beloved member of the Brantwood family—died on April 28, 2022, peacefully, after a long battle with cancer.

Margaret's involvement with Brantwood began at an early age, as she was the daughter of longtime Brantwood Director Charles T. Cook. When Brantwood established the program for girls in the summer of 1982, Ms. Cook served as the Camp's first Girls' Program Director, a pioneering role she filled again during Brantwood's second summer with girls. In 1983, Ms. Cook was elected an Associate Trustee of the Camp, the first woman to hold any official position on the Brantwood Board in more than sixty years. As formal Advisor to Brantwood for Girls in 1984, she helped facilitate the program's transition to its Camp Holiday site in Milford, NH.

That same summer, Margaret married then-Brantwood Director Bill Gurney, in a ceremony held on the deck of her parents' Dublin, NH home. Margaret and Bill's two sons—Henry and Charlie—would themselves go on to successful careers as Brantwood counselors.

Over the ensuing decades, Mrs. Gurney would continue to be an active supporter



of and contributor to the Brantwood experience. For many years she served as editor of the annual Brantwood newsletter. She was an advocate for the move of the girls' camp to Camp Quinapoxet in Rindge, NH, and then ultimately back to its current location on the original Brantwood hill on the Peterborough/Greenfield line. For almost forty years Mrs. Gurney taught Yoga at Brantwood, making new friends and continuing to inspire generations of Brantwood girls. And both in season and out she and her husband would welcome members of the Brantwood family to their Dublin home.

"Margaret's legacy and lifelong con-

tributions to Brantwood touched many of our lives," said Noelle Leonard, who was a staff member during those earliest summers of girls at Brantwood, served as Director of Brantwood for Girls from 1988 through 1995, and is currently interim President of the Brantwood Board.

Amy Willey, one of the very first campers at Brantwood for Girls and later both Director of the girls' camp and longtime Brantwood Executive Director, also remembered her dear friend and mentor. "Anyone who knew Margaret knows how close to her heart she held Brantwood and all the campers and staff who crossed paths with her over the years," wrote Ms. Willey in an open message to the Brantwood family. "She loved all of you, whether she ever met you or not. I don't think she ever missed the chance to stop by and check in on the happenings at Brantwood, or lead a yoga period, or tend to her lilies on the hill, or layout and edit a newsletter, or give love and advice to anyone who needed it. She once said that she never wanted to be a leader, yet she was just that. A quiet leader in the background who diligently watched over Brantwood and our community."

"A celebration of Margaret's life will be held at Brantwood Camp in October," added Ms. Leonard, "and the exact date and specific information will be provided soon. All of us in the Brantwood community grieve along with the Gurney family."

Save the Date!

2022 Alumni Day/ Gathering at Camp

**Sunday, August 21st,
9 am to 4 pm**

We will have coffee and light food options for breakfast and ask that attendees bring a picnic lunch. No overnight accommodations will be available at Camp



Henry W. Large

Former Brantwood Associate Trustee Henry Large, longtime teacher and coach at St. Mark's School, passed away on March 10. Mr. Large was a strong advocate for and supporter of the Brantwood experience. Two of his children—son Henry Jr. and daughter Storm—served successfully as Brantwood shack counselors. Our deepest sympathy and heartfelt condolences go out to Mr. Large's family and loved ones.



BRANTWOOD CAMP

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Supporting Brantwood

Spring is a time when things come alive, and I don't know about you, but every spring, there are a few things that spark joy and excitement, year after year as we look ahead to summer

For me, it still brings back memories as a counselor at Brantwood, and now as a Brantwood parent and trustee, it means a different kind of prepping and planning to get ready for camp. I love that my girls get just as excited about it...and that as soon as April vacation is over, we start talking about the long, long trail.

Camp is busy getting ready to welcome back a full slate of campers at each end of the Brantwood road. And, in addition to time, energy, and hard work, the one thing we know this takes is money. After a long New England winter, land needs tending



to, buildings need some TLC, and the very best staff needs to be hired.


Each year, we raise these much-needed funds to maintain camp, provide safe, high-quality programming with dedicated counselors and keep Brantwood accessible to all campers, especially those most in need.

This year, in addition to these annual costs, we have a few projects that need to be addressed, including a permanent bridge and road repair from last summer's flooding at the girls' camp, boy's camp pool repairs, and new, safe, energy-efficient exterior lighting on all buildings

With these necessary repairs and

upgrades, the ongoing increases in the cost of supplies, and continued measures to ensure the health and safety of our campers and staff, our Annual Appeal continues to be a critical factor in Brantwood's ability to provide the very best experience to ALL campers.

We are so very grateful for your continued support, and ask that you consider making a gift to Brantwood Camp again this year. We're making it easy to donate in whatever way you feel most comfortable:

- ▶ Scan with your smartphone: 
- ▶ Visit <https://brantwood.org/donate/>
- ▶ Or send a check to
Brantwood Camp, PO Box 3350,
Peterborough, NH 03458

Thank you for your generosity!

Maura

Maura Navin Webster, *Chair*
Development Committee