

# *Looking Back Over Seventy Years*

by Lucille M. Peterson



Seventy years ago I worked at Timberlane Resort on Long Lake. I had finished my first year at Waldorf College, a college of the Lutheran Church in Forest City, IA. A good friend, Marguerite Johnson, had seen an advertisement for two young women to work as waitresses at Timberlane Resort near Park Rapids, MN. We were hired for the job which

was to begin July 1. We traveled to my home near Westbrook, MN when school ended in late May. We taught Bible School for two weeks, Marguerite in a school one mile from our farm, and I at a school two miles in the other direction. Then we went by bus to Marguerite's home near Luck, WI., not too far from Minneapolis, where we stayed until we took a bus to Minneapolis and on to Park Rapids where we arrived on July 1.

We were met there by the general handyman at Timberlane. His name was Andy and he lived in the area. We learned that this was the second year for Timberlane Resort. Chris Redberg had built the resort from scratch. It had a large beautiful lodge which still stands as it did all those years ago. I remember the resort as having four cottages that faced the lake with all glass fronts facing the lake. There was an outdoor swimming pool between the lodge and the cabin area. There was a building a small distance from the lodge where the five of us girls lived. There were three girls from Concordia College who worked as cabin cleaners.



Front view of Lodge in 1952



Back view of Lodge



Concordia friends at pool

Marguerite and I waited on tables in the dining hall for each meal. Mr. Redberg was a wonderful cook. There wasn't anything he couldn't make. The meals were a part of the total package and we were not to be tipped. I can't remember what our hours were for breakfast and lunch, but I do remember the dinner hour as being from 5:30 to 7:30. One evening Marguerite and I waited in the kitchen these two hours but Mr. and Mrs. Redberg did not come in. They were entertaining their guests in the lounge. We walked back to our rooms and watched out the window which looked into the kitchen area, thinking they would call us to come in. At 9:30 they came into the kitchen, made dinner and served it themselves. Nothing was said the next morning.

Another day Mr. Redberg said he wanted to take the guests into Park Rapids for dinner. Two of the families had small children. They asked if anyone would babysit so they could go. Always wanting to make some money, I took the job. There were four children, two about three years old and two babies. One of the babies cried and cried and that set the other baby crying also. After over an hour of this constant crying, I feared something was wrong with this child, and I needed to get in touch with the parents. This meant walking back to the lodge where there was a phone. So with a baby in each arm and one child hanging onto me on either side, I walked

back to the lodge. I'd say it was about a quarter of a mile.

The parents came home quickly after I called. All I remember is that my arms ached for days.

It seems that we had worked for only three weeks or so when one morning Mr. Redberg called us all together and said he was closing. He wrote each of us a check and said goodbye to us. The girls from Concordia had someone come to pick them up. Marguerite and I didn't know what to do. Then Andy, the handyman, came and told us that he had expected this and had gone and found another job at Cool Ridge Resort on Big Sand and it just



Goofing off

happened that the resort needed two waitresses. First Andy took us to Park Rapids where we cashed our checks. We heard later that the girls from Concordia College had waited until they were home before they cashed their checks and they bounced.

We enjoyed our work at Cool Ridge Resort on Big Sand. Many of the guests were from the Chicago area and came year after year. In our spare time we sun tanned and read. I remember reading "Gone With the Wind."

At the end of August my parents came and brought us home. They took us first to Itasca National Park. I know I've seen a picture of the two of us girls crossing on the rocks, but I can't find that picture. I do have this picture of my mother Lillian, Marguerite and I having a picnic dinner there.

After a short time at our farm, we went back for our second year at Waldorf College.

The present owners of Timberlane are Lee and Kathy Zaczkowski. They have been the owners since 1988. They stopped serving meals in 1999 and have updated the cabins with kitchens. In 2006 or 2007 they built the golf course which is very popular. We saw many customers come in as we visited with Kathy Zaczkowski this summer. Kathy asked us not to take any pictures of the cabins, but to go to their website [www.Timberlaneresort.com](http://www.Timberlaneresort.com) for pictures.

Kathy Zaczkowski also told us that several years ago someone came with the ashes of Chris Redberg, Timberlane's first owner, and asked to spread the ashes on the grounds of Timberlane.



Goodbye picture of workers at Timberlane



At Itasca