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Journal

Fall/Winter 2024 – 2025

79 Years of Joyful Community, Stewardship, and Nature Connection



As we see campers eagerly signing up for our 80th summer in 2025, I'm thinking a lot about what Camp Glen Brook is, what has been consistent over the past 79 years, and what sustains us now and into the future. One way of piecing up the whole is in these four parts:

Our participants and staff: The campers, various schools' students, families, gap participants, and dedicated staff who choose to come here.

Our identity: Our mission, philosophy, and the spirit of the place.

The physical space: The forests, fields, waters, and buildings that make up our campus.

Our broader community: Our alumni and all of those who have been impacted by, and who have helped shape Glen Brook.

The first three items in this list are the focus of our work day-in and day-out: we always have and always will focus first and foremost on serving the participants who are here in front of us while we consider how Glen Brook can do the most good in the world. It's not always as straightforward for our broader community to know exactly how and when to be involved, and to take part in what Glen Brook is. As we prepare to celebrate 80 incredible years, and look to the countless decades ahead of us, we are inspired to better include our broader community in more immediate and meaningful ways.

This is why we are so excited to be offering an alumni weekend for Garden City graduates in 2025, and an 80th anniversary celebration in 2026 for all former campers and staff, as a way to maintain our connection with all those who are an integral part of Glen Brook's identity.

Glen Brook would not exist without each of these four parts. As I think about our broader community, I am so grateful for the way that each member of our community carries Glen Brook inside of them, and is a better person for having spent time here. It is also our community whose philanthropy and donations allow Glen Brook to flourish: our ongoing Sustainability Initiative has been incredibly impactful, alongside our annual fund that allows campers in need to receive financial aid. Glen Brook would not be the thriving and diverse community it is without your support: **thank you.**

I'm excited to share the work ahead of us as we look to the next 80 years, including plans to make Glen Brook more accessible in perpetuity. Imagine a world in which tuition was never a barrier to a child attending a Glen Brook program!

I hope to welcome you here in the near future: to share stories of Glen Brook's past, to enjoy Glen Brook in the present, and to dream together about Glen Brook's future.

 Mark Stehlik • Executive Director



Farm-to-Table: Mystery Basket

Cooking can be a lot of fun, especially when you're creating farm-to-table meals. Farm-to-table cooking here at Glen Brook means using fresh ingredients that come directly from Gabriel's Field, which allows me to create healthier meals and experiment with all kinds of vegetables, fruits, and meats. Each week, I receive a variety of seasonal ingredients, meaning our menus can change based on what's available.

Each day, I walk into a big kitchen, smelling the fresh herbs and seeing the vibrant vegetables straight from the garden. The sight of this colorful produce makes my mouth water! The experience reminds me of being in culinary school, where I learned to make delicious food using fresh ingredients straight from local farms. In culinary school, we often had Mystery Basket Challenges, which were like final exams. I would receive a basket filled with unknown ingredients, and I would have five hours to prepare a five-course meal using everything in the basket. The thrill of not knowing what I would get made it feel like I was a contestant on a real cooking competition.

When I opened the mystery basket, it was always a surprise. Sometimes, I would find unusual ingredients like exotic fruits, strange vegetables, or even unique spices. I had to think quickly and creatively about how to use everything. This was where my culinary skills really came into play; I needed to balance flavors, colors, and textures.

It was always incredibly satisfying to see how I transformed a basket of mystery ingredients into a beautiful meal. Cooking farm-to-table meals at Camp Glen Brook has allowed me to experience this joy every day. Using fresh ingredients, combined with the thrill of the mystery basket, makes every meal feel like a culinary adventure. Looking back, I realize that this experience was much more than just cooking; it was about teamwork and the joy of food. It taught me not just how to cook, but also the importance of creativity and making the most of what I had. Just like in culinary school, every meal here is an opportunity to learn and grow.

🍁 Robyn Morin • Culinary Director

A Special Year of Appreciation

It dawned on me a couple of weeks before summer camp opened in late June that this was a milestone year for me with my relationship to Glen Brook: It has been fifty years since my mother first drove my sister and me up Horse Hill Road into a whole new world which I would come to learn and relate to for many eras to come. I could not help but think soon afterwards: That's not bad for someone who is just "passing through" as the song goes. And I would add to that phrase: "mostly happy!"

More aptly, I would say that I've been mostly fortunate. Very fortunate, in fact! With all modesty, I feel that I have lived in enough cool places, and done enough interesting things away from Glen Brook to have the fullest appreciation for all of the obvious and hidden perks in working there. (I did have some 15 years away from Glen Brook before moving there in 2003 with my wife.) Sometimes it feels like I'm being fed by the littlest things over the course of each day that, to many people's senses, would go completely unnoticed.

When I was in twelfth grade and returning to WSGC, I lived with Jeff (class of '64) and Judy Stark. In a moment of needed consult, Jeff said to me, "Life is relationships." At the time, I took that statement to mean person to person. What Glen Brook has taught me is that life is relating not just to other people, but also to the things that surround us, both living and non-living. The care that we afford the tools with which we do our work is important. The care we afford our living and working spaces, equally so. The interest we bring to not just the functionality but the appearance of the 250 acres we inhabit relates directly to the activity of my day and the involvement of a lot of other people. And the lessons we learn from the work we do in those efforts is essential to our own growth.

Glen Brook is a beautiful place. That it serves humanity as it does makes it even more beautiful, and that because so many people have been graced by its existence brings it to an even higher level of beauty for me. Knowing the facility for so long makes it easy to have empathy for all the sometimes challenging nooks and crannies, tree lines and trails, basements and roofs — that make Glen Brook what it is.

There's another angle to the quote Jeff gave me those many years ago: The most important relationship is the one with oneself. Glen Brook has given me the space to learn what I've only recently discovered: I can be my own best teacher and student. I've watched a lot of people come and go — all relating to Glen Brook and to themselves in different ways. I could fill many articles with the names and lessons I've gleaned from so many impactful personalities. The hidden competitor in me is always seeking out how to hone a better relationship to myself and to Glen Brook. With a clean shop and a positive mindset, the sky is the limit!

So thank you, Glen Brook. Thank you, Waldorf School of Garden City. And thank you to everyone who has pledged their good will to either or both places.



🍁 Grant Butler • Facilities Director



If you'd like to be featured in a future spotlight article, email us at office@glenbrook.org!

A Return to Magic

When I left Camp Glen Brook in January 2016 on my final trip with my class from the Waldorf School of Garden City, I truthfully did not know if I would ever find myself back in Marlborough. Glen Brook had long been a place that meant so much to me, and it would always be in my heart, but I imagined it would now be a place I would love and appreciate from afar.

Life, however, has its own plans, and I found myself joining Glen Brook's year-round staff this summer. The minute I stood on the front porch of the Main House after eight years, I immediately felt at home and sensed the Glen Brook magic so many people speak of. We use the word "magic" when we talk about Glen Brook because the way we feel when we come here doesn't quite feel real: the connectedness, the joy, the comfort—it is magical, and it was surreal to feel it so palpably once again.

For the first few days, I wandered the campus and wondered what it was that made this place home-like and comfortable so quickly. There was plenty that was familiar to me, yet a lot that was new. Over the years, the camp has continued to evolve and become a better and more sustainable place; yet the buildings that stood all those years ago when I was a camper at Glen Brook were the same. The feeling I had when I walked through the doors was identical.

There is something so special about the physical spaces here at Camp Glen Brook and the opportunities they allow. There is a certain sense of joy when you gaze out on the view of Mt. Monadnock from the front porch, of pride when you help harvest vegetables for your dinner that evening, and of satisfaction that comes from a challenging, yet enjoyable, stewardship project. Those things alone, I thought, were what create the Glen Brook magic. But now, having been here for four months and watched a few hundred people come through Camp, I realize that this unique feeling we speak of is about all of this and then some.

The Glen Brook magic exists because every person that visits this place brings a little bit of it with them. It endures in the stories that are told while folks gather with hot cups of tea and handwork projects on the living room couches. It is present in the tears and hugs exchanged between campers at the end of a session. It resonates in the chorus of Circle Game, sung by a group of people ages ten, sixteen, twenty, and every year in between. And that is why no matter how long it has been since your last visit, Glen Brook will always feel magical: because it comes with each and every one of you. We here at Glen Brook thank you for being a part of this community and for bringing your magic with you when you come. We cannot wait to welcome you back soon.

🍁 Julia Gonzalez • Assistant Director



All That is Wild, Beautiful, and Good

At Glen Brook, we experience a call to stewardship and a reverence for the cycles of nature, tuning in to earth's rhythms as seasons change and plants come and go. Whether harvesting vegetables, gathering eggs, or preparing meals with seasonal ingredients, participants learn to view food not merely as disembodied leaves, shoots, roots, and boxes of unpronounceable ingredients on grocery store shelves, but as a gift from the earth to be cherished and respected. Through our intense work and care this season, we were able to produce over 10,000 pounds of produce, add nearly 1,500 pounds of meat to our freezers, and enjoy an abundance of eggs totaling in the neighborhood of 24,000. Our gardens, fields, and kitchens are beautiful places, but they do not remain so for lack of care. It is our work and responsibility to tend to and protect not just these places, but all that is wild, beautiful, and good.

Our farm-to-table experiences reinforce a sense of community, support local economies, promote small-scale farmers, and foster relationships between producers and consumers. By participating in

farm work and food preparation, everyone who comes here learns about the labor and love that goes into food, developing a deeper appreciation for the interconnected web of relationships that sustain us. Initiatives such as community meals, harvesting produce for local food banks and organizations like the Keene Community Kitchen, as well as Glen Brook's neighbors and friends, teach people at Glen Brook the importance of giving back and serving the needs of others, instilling values of empathy, compassion, and social responsibility. This season Glen Brook was able to donate over 1,500 pounds of food within our local community.

Experiences on the farm also provide a rich canvas for artistic expression, inviting people to explore the palette of color and texture around them. Whether crafting table settings from foraged flowers and woodland plants, to gathering bundles of corn and pumpkins to decorate porches in the autumn, and even dyeing yarn spun from the fleece of Glen Brook's friendly sheep, participants at Glen Brook discover the joy and beauty inherent in the act of creation. By integrating farm-to-table experiences into the artistic curriculum, we deepen our understanding of the interplay between culture, nature, and creativity.

By embracing the principles of Waldorf education and the values of environmental stewardship and sustainability, Camp Glen Brook provides people with a holistic and enriching experience that nurtures their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Integrating farm-to-table experiences helps people develop the connections and values needed to become compassionate, resilient, and empowered individuals who are inspired to make a positive difference in the world.

🍁 Samuel Gow • Farm Director



Planned and Legacy Giving

Glen Brook has an inspiring history of philanthropy and generosity. From humble beginnings, William Harrer purchased and created this incredible place for young people in 1946 and with his wife, Dorothy Harrer, built a camp where children could play, learn, and grow. They both believed in the magic of this hallowed place and the programs they began, and out of altruistic love to see their work continue, they gifted the Camp to their successor Peter Curran, who in turn gifted it to The Waldorf School of Garden City. Camp Glen Brook was founded from an impulse of philanthropy and continues to exist thanks to the generosity of those who love it.

We are incredibly grateful to all who support the mission of these inspiring visionaries and give a special thank you to the members of the William and Dorothy Harrer Legacy Foundation:

Susan Braun	Bill Hughes
Betty Curran	Susan Olson
Peter Curran	Mark Stehlik
Robert Hamshaw	Sadie Stehlik
Dorothy Harrer	Katherine Sydenham
William Harrer	David White
Karin Heine	Dr. Robert White
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Through your estate, you can ensure that Camp Glen Brook has the financial resources it needs to continue delivering its mission of connecting people with the natural world, regenerative communities, and personal responsibility.

If Glen Brook is remembered in your estate and you are not on this list, please contact us. If you are interested in being a member of the William and Dorothy Harrer Legacy Foundation, you can find more information at glenbrook.org/give.



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