At our Shareholders’ Annual Meeting on Saturday, September 17, 2016 we will have three very special guest speakers from RDC’s past (the 1950’s and 1960’s). These guests, George Neilson, Gilbert Raiford and Reggie Bennett, have been invited here this weekend to help us preserve RDC’s rich past. They will be interviewed by Cindy Jones, a professional videographer and producer of documentaries. Segments of their recorded interviews will be displayed in the RDC Archive Center and potentially used in a documentary about RDC.
We are honored to have these remarkable men speak to us today just prior to announcing plans that will help us celebrate and mark the anniversary of the merging of Rockywold and Deephaven (1918-2018)… a proposed RDC Common located between the two camps with the new RDC Archive Center at the heart of the common.

Here is a brief background on our speakers. George Neilson, RDC’s Manager from 1960 to 1968, managed the Camps through a period of great transition(s). Dr. Gil Raiford, called “Trees” – the tall one in the photo, was an RDC employee in the early 1950’s and returned in 1960 to be the Deephaven Office Manager during George Neilson’s first year as RDC’s General Manager. We are told that George and his family lived above the Deephaven Office that year and formed a special bond with Gil. Gil met his future wife, Mildred Falcon, that season at RDC. Mildred was also a Hampton graduate and unfortunately cannot be here this weekend.

As a high school student, Reginald Bennett became RDC’s pastry chef in the 1950’s. This position may have propelled him to his distinguished career with the Food and Drug Administration as a food microbiologist with extensive knowledge in research and analysis of bacterial food poisoning. We shared this bit of information with our food service staff and asked them to be on their A-game this weekend!

There is a line in one of our history books that reads, “there were as many degrees in the kitchen as there were amongst the guest.” From reading the resumes of these individuals, we have a clearer understanding of what that person meant. We could fill the rest of this meeting listing the accomplishments of these distinguished men, but we will save some of that for their interviews.

For your enjoyment, and to be preserved in the RDC Archive Center, we have included in this booklet a few written recollections of RDC from George Neilson, Gilbert Raiford and Nathaniel Jackson, who could not be here this weekend.
FROM ZUBER TO HAMPTON INSTITUTE

By Gilbert Lancelot Raiford

In 1950, Negroes, as we were called then, were not allowed to use the dining car on the Silver Meteor that was taking me to Richmond where I would change to the B&O for Hampton. Mama knew this and had spent the previous night preparing not one but two shoeboxes chucked full of fried chicken, fried pork chop sandwiches, hard boil eggs (with tiny bags of salt and black pepper), two oranges and two apples, and several slices of pound cake.

It was September and I was really surprised to find that Hampton was as hot as Zuber and could hardly wait to write to tell mama that we had made a mistake by making all that fuss about an overcoat. (However, by November, I asked the Lord to Bless mama for having such great insight! I had never felt so cold in my entire life and now I could hardly wait to pull out that overcoat, the one I should have donated to the Smithsonian Museum. Not only was the coat full length, touching my ankles, it was form fitting – causing me to look like 6 o’clock! It was definitely the original maxi. No one at Hampton had ever seen such a spectacle and no one has ever forgotten!)

The first student I met when I arrived on campus was Bill Evans, a fellow basketball recruit who hailed from Connecticut. To celebrate our new status as emancipated minors, we decided to have our first alcoholic drank and we defied the laws of Virginia and went into a “Whites Only” bar in the City of Hampton. I had explained to Bill that he must do all the talking because they would think that we were Hampton students from the north and would not know about segregation. (At that time, you could not distinguish my own speech from that of Gomer Pyle, or Forrest Gump.) Anyway. We order a bottle of beer and a coke as a chaser – ugh! That was my first and last drink.

A full scholarship meant only room and board and tuition. For books and other expenses, we were given our choice of campus jobs. Being from Zuber, I enjoyed eating. So, I opted to work in the kitchen at Virginia/Cleveland Hall, a cafeteria located in one of the females’ dormitories. I was introduced to two foods I had never even heard of – scrapple and rhubarb pie. I really enjoyed these new foods until I found out that rhubarb pie has never been anywhere near a fruit but was merely made out of a plant! And as for scrapple, I found out that it was a combination of unidentified scrap meat and grain. With this knowledge, I lost my taste for both, never to regain it. Anyway, the dietician was a very affable and maternal woman we called Mama Nizer. Well, the day before I was to leave to return to Zuber for the Christmas break, Mama Nizer called me into her office and presented me with a huge box which contained a very large caramel icing cake and said that I should take it to mama. (That was our first time eating such a delicious cake.)

I was brought to Hampton to play basketball but I went to Hampton to get an education. For me, the two different goals conflicted. At first, there was no problem. Coach Buck Neilson, a fatherly type of guy, had a reasonable practice schedule – one that allowed me adequate time to study. When he was promoted to athletic director, a new coach was brought in. Morehead was a stubborn dictator who did not seem to realize that he was coaching students, not professionals who made their living playing. One day before a rigorous exam, I called him to say that I would be a couple of hours late for practice – that I had not yet finished preparing for an exam that was to be taken the next morning. He insisted that I forego study and be on time for practice. Scholarship or no scholarship, I was not about to let Morehead determine my future. It turned out to be no scholarship because Morehead exercised his right to rescind the scholarship. This was toward the end of my sophomore year and I had resigned myself to the reality that I would not leave Hampton with a degree.

Now, in Zuber we were taught to be particularly engaging with elderly people who seemed lonely. There was one white woman who lived in a two-story building near the front of the entrance to the campus. You would usually see her sitting on the front porch in a rocking chair. The first day I saw her, I went and sat on the steps and spent close to two hours with her. Her name was Maria Phenix and she was the widow of Hampton’s last next to white president. She had known the founder, General Samuel Armstrong, as well as the two major financial supporters (Samuel Huntington and Ogden) of this college where the first public reading of the Emancipation Proclamation took place. I made it a practice to stop by and spend time with her practically everyday. So, when I was packing up to leave Hampton forever, I came to say goodbye to her. Although she was 85 years old, she understood that I could not have graduated so quickly and I had to tell her the reason why I would not be back. She told me that I could remain at Hampton through graduation; that she had a solution. She invited me upstairs and showed me a furnished
apartment attached to her own and said that I could have it rent-free. For tuition, she arranged for me to go to a residential family camp in New Hampshire and work for Mrs. Howe, the only daughter of General Armstrong and his second wife. (At that time, Mrs., Armstrong was still alive but not active.) I would be paid at the end of the summer and it was more than enough to cover tuition for the year, mainly because the tips were extremely liberal.

Mrs. Phenix had a white maid and a black maid and when the white maid balked at cleaning my apartment, she was asked if she wanted her job. She did. Mrs. Phenix also took me to her bank downtown to register my signature on her account, much to the horror of the white banker. She reminded him that she might not always be able to write her checks and that I should be in the position to conduct her business. (Remember, this was in 1952). Mrs. Phenix also gave me an allowance of $10 a week, as well as paid for my monthly meal card. When Marion Anderson came to give a concert at Hampton, she stayed with us. Mrs. Phenix seemed totally oblivious to race.

The next article will continue the Hampton saga.

THE HIDDEN GEM ON SQUAM LAKE

By Dr. Gilbert Lancelot Raiford, staff alumnus ’51,’52, ’53, and ’60.

Nettled between the famous White Mountains and Squam Lake lies Rocywold-Deephaven Camps. In the beginning, it was just Deephaven, a residential family camp founded and owned by Alice Mable Bacon, a writer and an educator who was born in New Haven, Connecticut. Ms. Bacon was very sympathetic to the educational needs of the newly freed slaves and went to teach at Hampton Institute with General Armstrong in 1883. However, she was more than a teacher – she was a crusader. So, when the white establishment refused to admit African American students to train in the local hospital, she sought and received assistance from General Armstrong to found Dixie Hospital that would train African American nurses. She was also entrepreneurial. She purchased several acres of land on and around Asquam Lake and built Deephaven in 1887.

Ms. Bacon met Mary Alice Ford Armstrong when they were fellow teachers at Hampton Institute. Ms. Ford was 21 years old when she left her home in a rural village in New Hampshire for the first time and came to work for General Armstrong at Hampton. The General’s first wife had died and in 1890, he married Ms. Ford. General and Mrs. Armstrong had two children, Margaret and Daniel. The General only lived about three years after the marriage, leaving Mrs. Armstrong to raise the two children as a single mother.

Alice and Mary became very good friends and it was natural for Mrs. Armstrong and her small children to spend their summers at Deephaven Camp. As for Ms. Bacon, who now had become very interested in teaching English to Japanese students, she needed a trusted person to manage the camp while she went to work and live in Japan for
two years. Mrs. Armstrong was that person. However, Mrs. Armstrong saw this opportunity as a chance to establish her own business venture and purchased 27 acres of land, contiguous to Deephaven, on which she built two cabins, the first one being Brown Betty. Upon her return to New Hampshire, Ms. Bacon and Mrs., Armstrong merged their camps and created Rockywold-Deephaven.

It was in the last semester of my first year at Hampton when Mrs. Maria Phenix, the widow of the next to last white president of Hampton and also a contemporary of Alice and Mary, spoke to me about spending my summer working at Rockywold-Deephaven. (I was born and raised in the backwoods of Florida and the idea of going to New England, for any reason whatsoever, was very intriguing and I would have gladly worked for free – just to see the mountains!)

I took the B & O train from Hampton to Richmond and changed to the Silver Meteor, which would take me to Boston. From Boston, I arrived in Plymouth N.H. on the greyhound or the Adirondacks bus (do not have a clear memory of which), just as the sun was going down over the “Old Man On The Mountain”. It was a most magnificent sight!

I was met at the bus station my Captain John Smith, a Washington, D.C. cab driver who spent his summer months working at Rockywold-Deephaven as a driver as well as a supervisor of the young men who comprised the “outdoor” crew. I was assigned to work in the Deephaven section of the camp but first; I would have to pay my respects to Mrs. Mary Alice Armstrong who lived in Rockywold. It was already past her bedtime but protocol dictated that I was to be taken to her bedroom for an introduction by Claire. Mrs. Armstrong was propped up on a large four-poster bed and was wearing a nightcap, in the true fashion of a proper New England lady. The greeting was brief and I delivered the person message from her long term friend, Mrs. Phenix, and accompanied Claire to the kitchen where I was given a light supper.

When I think of Claire now, I think of Madame Giry of the play “The phantom of the Opera.” She was tall and regal– with a no nonsense disposition. Like Madame Giry, she was fond of wearing a long black dress. During her non-summer months, Claire was a schoolteacher in Alabama, with a clear identifying accent. Claire was the unofficial “boss” of all the African American employees – even those who worked and lived in Deephaven. (She was also the unofficial spy and informant, meaning that, with her own network of spies, she knew practically everything that was going on in both camps and kept the administration informed. The information was used to make decisions about which staff members would be invited to return the following year. If you received a Christmas card, you were, unofficially, invited to return. I was always happy to receive my Christmas card.)

During those days, in the early 1950’s, all non-administrative staff members were Black. Except for John and Harold Smith from Virginia and Lola from Des Moines, the staff was comprised of schoolteachers, university students and adults who had attended a university. The majority of the students came from Hampton Institute but a proliferation of HBCU’s was represented. These included: Johnson C.. Smith, Virginia State, Virginia Union, St. Paul, Spellman, FAMU, Tuskegee, Prairie View, Howard, Alabama State, and Alcorn. Only one non-HBCU was represented. That was Montpelier College and Angela McDaniel, a niece of Harold Ball, represented it. If you were accepted for employment, you would be sent enough money to purchase travel to and from New Hampshire. Our salary was way below what would have been the minimum wage if that policy had obtained during that time. However, the tips were bountiful and between the two, it was possible to cover the entire cost of college tuition for the coming academic year. Also, we were given quite adequate accommodation and free meals.

Never before or since had I ever eaten such high quality and well-prepared food as was served at Rockywold-Deephaven. Regarding camp policy, staff were fed the very same food as the paying guests. The policy also dictated that staff were to enjoy all the benefits of the guests – within a confined schedule. Thursdays were designated as staff days, during which time we had access to all camp facilities, including the “Play House” where we could have modified parties and dances. We had access to the tennis and basketball courts as well as the canoes and the picnic islands. Males performed all of the outdoor work and females did the indoor cottage work. The females also did the laundry for both staff and guests and were able to charge the guests and keep the money. Males also cooked and served the food. I was assigned to work in the kitchen as an assistant to the chef, a 20-year-old student from Johnson C. Smith. My special assignment was that of “picnic chef”, meaning that I would make carryout lunches for guests and staff who requested such. The request would be made the night
before, complete with items to be included. I took this assignment quite seriously and would always add an extra item such as a piece of fruit, a hard-boiled egg, homemade cookies, or just an additional sandwich. (I was usually rewarded with a very large tip, which I put in the pool to share with the other fellows who worked in the kitchen.)

The head chef at Rockywold-Deephaven was Josh Baldwin. Josh was in his mid-teens and a student at Hampton when Mrs. Armstrong, selected him to be the first paid employee of the camp and taught him the rudiments of cooking. He turned out to be a natural born cook and really could have taught Julia Childs, Martha Steward, and Aunt Jemima a thing or two. Not only was he a great chef, he was also a fantastic cooking instructor. In no time at all, he taught Charles “Buddy” Morris how to duplicate everything that Josh cooked. In the same amount of time, he taught Reginald Bennett how to make pastry that would shame Betty Crocker and Pepperidge Farms. Consequently, all the meals that were served at Deephaven were absolutely identical, in every respect, to those that were served at Rockywold. Joining the three of us in the kitchen was Pollard Lawrence Dunbar, a student from St. Paul College. We were in our late teens but you could not tell because our production was highly professional.

During that first year, only two of the students had “white collar” jobs. They were Betty Brown from Hampton and Jean Brown from Spellman. They were given the job of billers and ran the offices of Deephaven and Rockywold, respectively. Lola was the senior office manager and worked in Rockywold, which was also the location of the administration. Most of the elderly staff, meaning the teachers, worked at Rockywold. Of course, it was much more fun to live and work at Deephaven because there was less surveillance and the young college student felt less constrained.

The titular manager was Arthur Howe, Sr. Mr. Howe had been a great athlete. He was the quarterback at Yale University the year that school won the national championship. He was graduated in 1912. Four years later, he married Margaret, General Armstrong’s daughter, on Asquam Lake. In 1930, he became the last white president of Hampton Institute and remained in that position for nearly 10 years. In 1973, twenty-two years after his death, he was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame.

At the time I arrived at camp, Mr. Howe was not yet an old man. In fact, he was quite robust. He had spent the winter months cutting and harvesting large ice blocks, which were put in sawdust and used throughout the summer months. He had also cut and compiled hardwood logs to heat the cottages during the cool nights of summer. His only discernible health problem was that of hearing – for which he occasionally used an ear horn. At first glance, one would consider Mr. Howe to be decidedly taciturn and humorless. That would be a mistake. He was a very accommodating man with a keen sense of humor – the deadpan variety. He was charged with giving the newly arrived staff an orientation regarding the rules, regulations, and unequivocal expectations. He wanted us to know that ours was a working vacation. He talked at length about the lake and encouraged us to make use of it via the many canoes that were scattered among the different piers. He stressed the hidden dangers inherent in careless use and explained how very easy it was to fall out of one of those flimsy canoes, adding: “If you happen to fall out of the canoe, whatever you do, grab and hang on to that boat! I paid $300 for that canoe!” He also made arrangements for us to go into town on weekends in the Rockywold-Deephaven van. Additionally, Mr. Howe would organize group outings and take us into the valley below the “Great Stone Face” as a kind of field trip.

To make sure that we had adequate time to enjoy camp life, our respective schedules included ample free time. Those of us who worked in the kitchen alternated in being off every other day after lunch was served. The workday for the females ended at 3 p.m., meaning that none of us were over-worked. (Just under-paid, maybe).

For many, if not all, of us, Rockywold-Deephaven represents a very important relay station on our way to maturity and professional goal attainments. Several of us, including myself, found and married our life-long spouse at Rockywold-Deephaven. As we went our separate ways, we became doctors, lawyers, deans and department heads, university presidents, judges, social workers, mathematicians, scientists, university professors, policemen, and more. We all look back on our summers at Rockywold-Deephaven as being among the best in our individual lives. Through the years, we have maintained the sentiment that bonded us those summers and I know that I speak for all of us when pray that God preserve and protect Rockywold-Deephaven.

Sunday, December 6, 2015
MEMORIES OF ROCKYWOLD/DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

Beginning in the summer of 1960, I began my tutoring under Margaret Howe who was planning to retire a Manager. We were being groomed to take over the following year and this was a very different role from my background in educational administration except that, again, I would be dealing with a variety of individuals posing lots of issues. The summer staff was entirely black from the Southeastern cornr of the United States. All of the heads of the various departments had been in their roles for many years and were a real help as I learned of camp traditions. Guests also reiterated what had been expected in their many years of residency each summer. Between the Help and the Guests who had a long history at the camps along with Paul Needham, heading up maintenance and who also had some tenure, things seemed to run very smoothly. So, that first summer became a crash course in taking it all in as my RDC 101.

My first challenge was trying to determine why the Camps were not profitable. The rates were ridiculously low by design so a stay during the summer could be enjoyed by those at the lower end of the salary scale (A Lodge room, shared bath, with three meals cost $7 a day) but the more obvious problem was the declining rate of occupancy. A guest often would have occupied a large cottage for years and had a priority to continue to do so. The cottage rate schedule varied according to the size of the accommodation and meals were charged separately as consumed. In going over the previous year’s correspondence, I saw in several instances of renting a large cottage that the guest had apologized about the low occupancy of the previous summer and the promise that things would be better in the next year. BUT, the record showed that did not happen. This led to my changing the pricing to tie the cottage rental and meal expectation together. The so called, “American Plan.” It worked. The same individual who continued to say occupancy would get better in the new year wrote back, when seeing the new arrangement, that he would like a smaller cottage and our occupancy numbers jumped as did our profitability. The priority method of allocating accommodations was also defined and published so all guests new the options.

Mrs. Howe had been fortunate in having a number of former employees in positions of leadership in Southern Negro colleges and they were a major source of recommending summer staff. Past times were also beneficial because the better students still were having trouble finding summer employment. That combination produced a high caliber of black Southern help for RDC. An example was the young man, who was black, working in the Deephaven office my first year who was given a full cost scholarship at Yale Law School and graduated. BUT, times were changing. The recommenders at the colleges retired and, fortunately for them, job markets in business and industry were opening up for the brighter black student. Accordingly, I found myself, along with Grace at times, visiting the Southern black colleges to interview prospective candidates. I particularly remember going to Morehouse college and getting Red Carpet treatment from Benjamin Mays, its President, who
had been a former ‘Wood and Ice Boy’ at the Camps. Quality black students were harder and harder to recruit.

The integration problem in the states from which we recruited summer staff was festering in the 60’s and the problem carried over to RDC. We had very few black guests and black staff began to think that they were just servants to white folks and forgetting that they were lucky to have work and earning school tuition money. Josh Baldwin, black head Chef, would use one of his many bon mots to the complainers, “You’re reaching for the top but you’ve no bottom to stand on.” A change became obvious and Arty Howe, then Dean of Admission at Yale, found six white male scholarship students to join the next year’s staff. They were given kitchen duty, which was the most arduous of all the positions, hopefully to change the outlook of the black staff. There was some progress in that area but another problem erupted. Some Southern guests had problems with the integration and particularly with white boys getting friendly with black girls. When white girls were introduced, and the opposite occurred, that issue escalated. Fortunately, over time, things settled down and the ratio of white staff to black increased.

Another major change was in the vacation planning of guests. Summer no longer was the time to ‘Take it all then.’ Accordingly, stays at the Camps became shorter. Going far back in the Camp’s history, it was not unusual for a family to rent a cottage for the whole summer with the breadwinner commuting by train to Ashland and mail boat to RDC as he could fit in his vacation days. When I arrived, the average stay was down to three weeks and became shorter each year. This situation introduced new guests to the RDC experience complicating the reservation procedures. To attract longer stays, an incentive was introduced in the form of a discount for stays three weeks and longer: The square of the number of weeks of one’s stay was expressed as a percentage and reduced the guest’s last week billing.

The increase in occupancy created another issue. Ordering supplies was new to me so I looked at previous records. Webster Thomas & Co. in Boston provided staples of canned goods, sugar flour, etc. and only delivered twice a season. My first order was exactly what was ordered the prior year and we started to run short long before the scheduled second ordering. Meat, poultry and eggs were delivered weekly by Swift and Co., also in Boston. Ice cream, and milk came locally as did paper goods. First National Stores ran a Friday loss leader in sea food and we arranged with the store manager to order an extra supply for us. So adjustments, other than Webster Thomas, were less of a problem. Previously, menus for the week had often varied by what was available and sometimes planned on a daily basis. Grace, working with Josh, came up with a three week revolving menu for all meals to coincide with the average stay. This was a life saver. I now had a basis on which to order staples and placed that second order earlier than usual. With freezer space limited to ice cream, we used a lot of canned
goods but I did contract with local farmers to provide fresh vegetables as soon as New Hampshire climate would allowed. And, prices then were quite different. I remember negotiating with a local farmer over the price I would pay for delivered corn on the cob. We wavered between four and five cents an ear.

Some of the long standing traditions continued during my tenure:
- Ladies wore dresses and gentlemen jacket and tie at dinner.
- Friday evening square dances with around the lake neighbors also attending.
- Sunday afternoon tea was served by a guest who felt it an honor to be chosen.
- Sunday sunset Vespers at Pine Needle Point were conducted by various guests.
- Sunday softball games—Rockywold vs. Deephaven. At first: guests only and, in my later years, joined by staff.
- Fourth of July dinner with a very large salmon flown in from Washington state cooked and beautifully dressed as the whole fish and served at the buffet table by Management.
- Labor Day held a chicken cookout on the ball field prepared by local chicken farmer, Judy Coolege.
- Two to three every afternoon demanded complete quiet for an after lunch nap.
- Early morning fishermen rowed out from camp before starting their motors.

My biggest regret in my experience at the Camps was not recording the stories of Guests who were kids at Deephaven when the Camps were founded and its early years. They saw the evolution from tents to Fisher Huts to cabins. Their stories were priceless. Cabins with family names were built and occupied rent free for a period of time and then reverted back to Deephaven. Occupants still paid for meals. The Ewing and Birdsall heirs were still guests during my tenure. Meals served in a tent at the location now of Longhouse saw adult guests in formal attire at dinner. The replacement dining room in the same location burned and some crockery remnants could still be found buried in the sand at “Mother’s Beach.” Alcohol was forbidden and tails of hiding such from the help and of disposing of empty bottles was unique. One guest remembered, as a child, taking empty bottles with her mother out onto the lake for disposal and panicking when the mail boat came into view. The bottles were quickly thrown into the water but, unfilled, floated in view of the arriving guests. If you were caught with liquor, you would not get a Christmas card which meant, “Don’t bother to even apply for a visit next summer.” I worried about the possibility of lost mail when I mailed mine.

George Neilson June, 2015
Dear Dr. Raiford,

It was wonderful to receive your letter with your remembrances and the fascinating history of Rocywold-Deephaven. I very much enjoyed reading about Ms. Bacon, Mrs. and General Armstrong and the Hampton Institute, especially about how they helped the African American students obtain an education. I do not need to repeat what you have written, but I do want to tell you a little bit more about my own history and how I came to the camp.

I am very sorry that it has taken me so long to write back. Poor health has slowed me up and forced me to put some things on a waiting list. A stay in the hospital and resting up at my son’s house has helped me. I am still under the care of the doctors, but feeling better every day.

So here is a bit about my story. In 1945 when World War II came to an end, many of my friends went back home. Some of them rushed to buy junk cars, some of them got married. I was late getting home. I was assigned to a hospital ship that brought the injured troops home. I got home in late August. I thought about re-upping and staying in the Navy but my father and sister had other plans. My sister had already filled out my college readmission paperwork and had everything ready for me to sign. Before I knew it I was back at A & T College.

I had a family friend called Mr. George River. While at college Mr. River and Mrs. River gave me a job working around their home on the weekends. He and Mrs. River graduated from the Hampton Institute. They told me about Ms. Bacon and the General and his family and how the camps came to be. That was how I found out about Rocywold and Deephaven Camps. They knew Mrs. Armstrong, who was a teacher at Hampton Institute. Mr. River encouraged me to write to Mrs. Armstrong and he also wrote a letter reminding them that he once worked there. He recommended me and said that I would be a good cook to work with Joshua Baldwin.

After some time went by, Mrs. Armstrong’s office sent me a letter, which was good news to me. They wanted to know about my cooking experience in the Navy. I replied and a few days after I sent my letter, I received a letter stating that my services were wanted and I would be working with the new Chef. He was also a retired Naval cook. I started working with him, but not for very long, because Joshua Baldwin came back.

Perhaps you know the story of the cook who was at Deephaven before the Naval cook. Mr. George Armstrong (son of Mrs. Armstrong) hired a chef that he had met at college during the winter. This didn’t work out very well for a variety of reasons - 1. He was a white man and did not know how to work with young African Americans. 2. He was a drinker. 3. He did not respect Mrs. Armstrong. One morning when he should have been down in the kitchen, he was drunk up in his room. Mrs. Armstrong sent for him and he was quite rude to her, so
he was drunk up in his room. Mrs. Armstrong sent for him and he was quite rude to her, so much so that she called George and told him to come up and fire him. George was a big man. He had the drunk chef put out of the camp. George was disappointed because he thought he had hired another Josh, but Josh was one of kind, no one could cook like him.

Chef Josh had retired during the winter of 1947 because didn't want to give up the job he did during the winter. It wasn't long before they realized that Josh was more than a cook. He was a real chef. He knew how to prepare all types of food. He was definitely a man with skills and cooking know-how. He couldn't be replaced by anyone.

The family of Mrs. Armstrong, many of the customers of the camp and the workers begged Josh to return. Josh returned back to the camp that same year and he selected me as his second cook. Josh and I worked together for 1 year and then he promoted me to be the chef of Deephaven Camp, where I worked with you as my sandwich cook. I stayed at Deephaven for three years.

Josh and I became extremely good friends and we used to buy lobsters and cook them up and go out and enjoy a good meal.

Then there was Clara. Clara was a very nice lady and I liked her very much, but as you made mention, she was a real stool pigeon. She was always walking by looking in the kitchen, especially when Josh wasn't there, so that she could tell Josh what took place when he was away. She was a schoolteacher in Alabama. I asked her one day if I could write to her principal for a job, she told me very politely "no" because I had spent so much time in the Northern part of the country and what she didn't realize was that my grandfather and my mother came from New England, so I would not be welcome in Alabama. Even though she was a stool pigeon, she had a heart of gold. Even though I was disappointed about not being able to ask for a job, I knew she was looking out for me.

Eventually, thanks to you, I found a job. In 1951 I departed from Deephaven and went to Ganado Mission as a missionary. I loved that job and am very grateful to you for helping me obtain it. I stayed at the Mission for 10 years and that is where I met my wife. I was surprised to learn that everybody else met their mates at Rocywold and Deephaven. (Smile).

By the way, I got a call from someone named John Jurcvynski. He invited me to the September 15th party. I told him that I am not sure that I can come because my family is planning a birthday party for me at that time, but I appreciated the invitation.

Dear Trees, it was so nice to hear from and I enjoyed your letter so much I sent it to my daughter. She was quite impressed with the story and the history that we have shared. I hope to talk to you soon and share more memories. In the meantime, please, please, please be kind to yourself.

May the best be yours always!

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Jackson