

Where did the Camp L-Kee-Ta name come from?

The Girl Scout camp was officially named Camp L-Kee-Ta in a dedication ceremony that took place on July 20, 1947. A little girl named Karen Wilson suggested the name because she said it meant "Elk" in a Native American language.

In the early 1940s', Girl Scouts in south eastern Iowa were using the local Boy Scout Camp for their camping needs. As Girl Scouting grew, the need to acquire a camp of their own also grew. In 1945, thanks to a generous gift from the local Elks Club, the Girl Scouts' dream of acquiring their own camp came true. The Girl Scout camp was officially named Camp L-Kee-Ta in a dedication ceremony that took place on July 20, 1947. A little girl named Karen Wilson suggested the name because she said it meant "Elk" in a Native American language.

The 150-acre land is nestled between the Skunk River and the small community of Danville, Iowa, about 12 miles from Burlington, Iowa. It is a pristine, wooded outdoor paradise. It is full of lush vegetation, large oak and hickory trees, a meadow and a creek that winds lazily through the property.

In the early days, the lodge was constructed by a group of camp volunteers, which served as a dining hall. The cooking was done on an outdoor fireplace, which is still there today. On rainy days, staff would cover it with a tarp and cook away. Later, a lean-to was connected to serve as a kitchen. In 1951, Oak trees were sold off the property to pay for the drilling of an 80-foot well, for electricity to run into the camp and for a phone line.

In 1954, Lydia Dankwardt donated money to be used for the building of a new lodge at the camp. This lodge is still used today and is home to a large, full service kitchen with lots of storage, a Dining Hall that easily seats 100 people, an office for the camp Director and a bathroom for the staff.

Throughout the year many organizations, including the Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, Rotary Club of Mt. Pleasant and The Elks Club, have donated money for several additions to the camp to make it more modern. Several buildings were constructed and some were purchased from the neighboring Iowa Ordinance Plant, including the Bungalow, which houses the Ranger Site Manager.

In 1990, a capital campaign to raise \$400,000 began, headed by Dorothy Meyers. It was given the name "Tradition with a Future" with plans to construct a new Troop House, Tree Houses, Log Cabins and an activity area.

In the 2000's Huts were constructed as well as a Wellness Center that was built to be used as a nurse's office during resident camp and another facility for troop camping. During this time, camp added a new riding arena along with a new tack house that was dedicated in memory of Dorothy Meyers, a long time Girl Scout supporter. Soon after, plans for a large maintenance building were made, and carried out in the Fall of 2008.

Since 1945, Camp L-Kee-Ta has been a home away from home for many girls over the years. The memories that are made here are never forgotten.