

CHANGING THE WORLD TWO KIDS AT A TIME

TIMOTHY P. WILSON *and the* *Seeds of Peace*



Trudy Irene Scee

A TOPICAL BIOGRAPHY

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Trudy Irene Scee

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Cover by Mariah Cameron Scee

*This work is dedicated to our friends, families,
students, campers, and Seeds.*

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PREFACE

He's an enigma as a person. He's really interesting. He knows what he wants to do and does what he wants to do, but then is never really sure with it. ... I've known him for fifty years, but I don't know him well. I don't know what makes him tick, and that's a psychologist talking. I don't know what pushes him because he won't [communicate about that].

Stanley Waltzer about Timothy P. Wilson

Biography is a tricky thing, demanding in ways one might not expect. It demands that you metamorph into different personas, subtly change to meet the needs of different interviews, to make each person you interview comfortable enough with you so that they will truly talk to you—not just give you the basic facts but share their insights, their feelings, their lives. And to write about your subject you have to get close, but not too close. You bond with the subject, yet need to maintain some distance. You love the subject by the end, or perhaps in rare cases hate the subject, and only hope that you somehow understand them enough to write about them. Yet in understanding them, you have to not adopt their lives. You have to slip into some crack in their psyche, find that in them which matches you—you find the scars in them which match the scars in you; you find the beauty in them you are sometimes too unforgiving to find in yourself—and doing this, you have to be careful that biography does not slip into autobiography, however thickly veiled.

With Tim, the separation can be difficult to maintain. He pushes one away and pulls one close. He needs nothing and no one, yet sits on the edge of a couch with his head down and

speaks in sadness. He is a man of great beauty, physical and psychological, yet challenges one to dare get close to that beauty, or at least closer than he has determined one will get. He has accomplished much in his life, yet one senses that for him it is not enough, that it will never be enough. He has a masterful façade, and hidden pain one wants to shield from the world. One can see him both walking across stages to accept awards for his work, and flying down the hill on his brother's sled as a baby, laughing when a pile of snow shoots him up in the air. Either way, one knows he will land with humor. And then one can see him walking across an airport as a four year old, racial taunts being hurled at him, and for the boy one is afraid, even knowing the accomplishments of later years. One wants to protect him from his own difficulties as a father after his first divorce, even though one knows that in later years he will make peace with his children, that wounds never meant to be given will be healed. Time after time, one finds a bit of a story, a bit of a scar, and says "ah hah!" but, placing it with all the others, realizes that it is just one of a myriad of events, details, feelings, that comprise the man—even if it is one that matches one in you so closely. So then one is left with the central question of what one records, and what one leaves out.

Tim is a self-admitted difficult man at times, but he is, more than that, a man who epitomizes two traits he always praises: he is both kind and brave. Intelligence he admires also, but seemingly not as highly as the other two, but he is that also, although—though he might deny that it at times—he feels the sting of people who do not deem him such.

Sometimes it seems as though Tim is surprised by acts of kindness, as though he does not expect to be treated well, or perhaps it is just gratitude that all people are not as cruel or thoughtless as some he has encountered. He also deeply appreciates the risks some people along the way have taken in hiring or befriending a black man in times or places when and where doing so was not the norm, or normal as he knew it. He remembers the kindness shown him by everyone, from the

stewardess who voluntarily escorted him across that hostile airport almost sixty years ago to an old black man who took him under his wing in Arizona when he was just out of college, to the man who first hired him to work as a counselor in an all-white camp in Maine, to the queen of Egypt.

So I spoke to people, and wrote to people, of and about Tim over the course of eighteen years. And, of course, I spoke with Tim over those years, as well as having interviewed him a few times during the previous two years for another project. Sometimes he did not have the time or inclination to talk about certain events or experiences, and where that was true I had to rely more on other people, all the time aware that everyone remembers things in a slightly different way and often ascribe different meanings to the same event. And in the end, and along the way, I remembered my friend and one-time advisor in Montana, Harold Hampton, relating how he had worked on a biography for fifteen years, then finally put it aside because, he said, “I just couldn’t get a handle on the guy. I just didn’t understand him.” With Tim the question was not understanding him, for I had, at least in large part, from the first day I met him in 1999 in his consulting office in Portland, accepted him without question, much like one accepts one’s own motives, but whether I could relate the story of this man I so admired (but, do not get me wrong, he is capable of exacerbating me as much as I no doubt have exacerbated him at times) in a form that other people would want to read, or, more fundamentally, in a way that a publisher would want to publish, that was the question.

I chewed off little pieces at a time. I worked in blocks of time. I interviewed people, or traveled to places, until I got tired, needed a break to reorient myself, or until Tim—ever busy, especially after the events of September 11, 2001—could spare time to answer my many questions, then started in again. Each break and restart was worth the time away from the project, as each gave if not a new perspective at least room for a new study, a new perception. In addition, some sit-

uations and relationships changed over that period. I stayed mostly in Maine, but also traveled to such distant places as Nicosia, North Cyprus, where I stayed with a few participants in the Seeds of Peace, and fell in love with a country or, as most of the world has it, “territory under Turkish military occupation.” But even when in Maine it sometimes seemed that I traveled widely, as the people and the backgrounds of the people I interviewed or corresponded with were so diverse—as were some of the stories they had to tell of Tim. To all of them, I express my gratitude.

Stanley Waltzer, a long-time (decades long) acquaintance of Tim’s and a psychologist at Harvard (formerly a Seeds of Peace volunteer doctor as well) is one of the many people I spoke with during the course of researching the book. Stanley expressed both admiration and a sense of non-comprehension about Tim on the personal level—on issues pertaining to Tim’s personality and some of the choices he has made.

On Tim’s choosing to go to Camp Powhatan after his school years, Stanley observed, “Tim chose to become a leader in a white Jewish camp,” and ever since has been “working out of a state for many, many years that doesn’t really like blacks.” He said on further reflection that, “He’s a very complicated guy because he’s made so many contributions, but he can get up before a big crowd and talk about what they [his parents] said, but not about himself. His parents are a unique part of his life, especially his mother. Some people do this [place so much emphasis] on their parents] because of what they haven’t done.” In terms of his accomplishments, this would certainly seem not to be true of Timothy P. Wilson.

Stanley continued about Tim, “He’s an enigma as a person. He’s really interesting. He knows what he wants to do and does what he wants to do, but then is never really sure with it.” But, “He does a lot of amazing things, he’s has done remarkable things for a twentieth-century black man.” Furthermore, Stan stated, “I’ve known him for fifty years, but I don’t

know him well. I don't know what makes him tick, and that's a psychologist talking. I don't know what pushes him because he won't [communicate about that]."

"He's very hard to talk to in a sense, about finding out things about himself. I have never gotten beyond his parents when trying to learn about his background. I know there's more than that."

There is indeed much more than that about Tim Wilson. His parents were certainly crucial to the man Tim became, but his experiences along the way, helped shaped, if not an enigma, a complex, but richly so, individual. Listening to him praise a soccer team at the Seeds of Peace in 2004 after they lost a match to another camp, one hears the coach and counselor he became while still a teenager himself, and having watched him laugh the night before with one his sons over the food fights and other stunts they had pulled when his children were young and his wife away, one sees an unbroken line between what was and what is, and senses the growth which has taken place over the years. Timothy Paris Wilson yells loudly, laughs boisterously, and fixes things quietly, for his biological children, the generations of children who have come to him over the decades, and for his friends—however one defines them.

And then of course, the question arose as to how to best publish this biography. After checking with a couple of publishers—who wanted assurance that the Seeds of Peace as an organization would sell the book, even though I informed them that I did not write the book for the organization—the perfect venue arrived. Adam Fisher of the Maine State Library contacted me about the possibility of publishing one of my other works—he thought it was out of print—as an e-book through the library. And I quickly decided that was the way to publish this biography; as an e-book that kids and former kids who had worked with Tim throughout the decades could access for free throughout the world. Tim and I decided to donate the book as a labor of love, to them. As you read the book you will

understand why. So thank you Adam Fisher and staff at the Maine State Library. It has been a fine experience, and I have learned through it.

Thank you from us both, and, readers; we hope you enjoy the book,

Trudy Irene Scee and Timothy P. Wilson - the author and the often reluctant subject!



Tim Rings the Bell at Camp - For Decades

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

INTRODUCTION : STORM WARNING

“This, [the terrorist attack] makes our program far more necessary than before, because we’re trying to address the roots of terrorism and hatred wherever they are, not just the symptoms.”

John Wallach in telephone interview with author, autumn 2001

“There’s a storm coming. We need to get the kids into the lake and out of it again as quickly as possible,” the author overheard as one side of a radio conversation on August 10, 2001. The speaker, Timothy P. Wilson, spoke emphatically, conveying the urgency of having the kids celebrate the end of their two and one-half days of athletic and creative competition in their traditional manner—but to have them do so safely, before lightening storms hit Pleasant Lake. Fifteen minutes later, the last event of their Color Games finished, the kids themselves became a storm as they ran into the lake; a green and blue storm under dark skies, a storm for peace, a storm of 165 youth with blonde hair and brown hair and red hair and black hair, and hair covered in respect to the Islamic faith, all teenagers wearing the t-shirts of the Seeds of Peace. Among them were scattered the white t-shirts of counselors and facilitators and administrators, along with the blue and green shirts worn by the Color Games’ coaches. All of the kids were celebrating the cause of peace, all were aware of political storms raging throughout the world, but none of them were aware of the storm that would erupt over America—and over their camp’s administrative offices in New York and Washington—less than a month later.

Yet, due to their very reason for being in Otisfield, Maine, these children were probably more cognizant than the vast majority of Americans of the potential for terrorism in the United States, and the effects it might have on Americans and the rest of humanity. But although they could empathize with Americans following September 11, and feel dismay, sadness, and outrage over America's subsequent War on Terror in its myriad forms, for many these events were not central to their lives, in their own homelands violence and terrorism had long been endemic. Safety was in no way a given for most of these youth, and their time in Maine frequently served as a reprieve from danger as well as an educational and generally enjoyable experience.



*Tim Wilson, Bobbie Gottschaulk and John Wallach, Seeds
of Peace Flag-raising Ceremony, 2001*

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

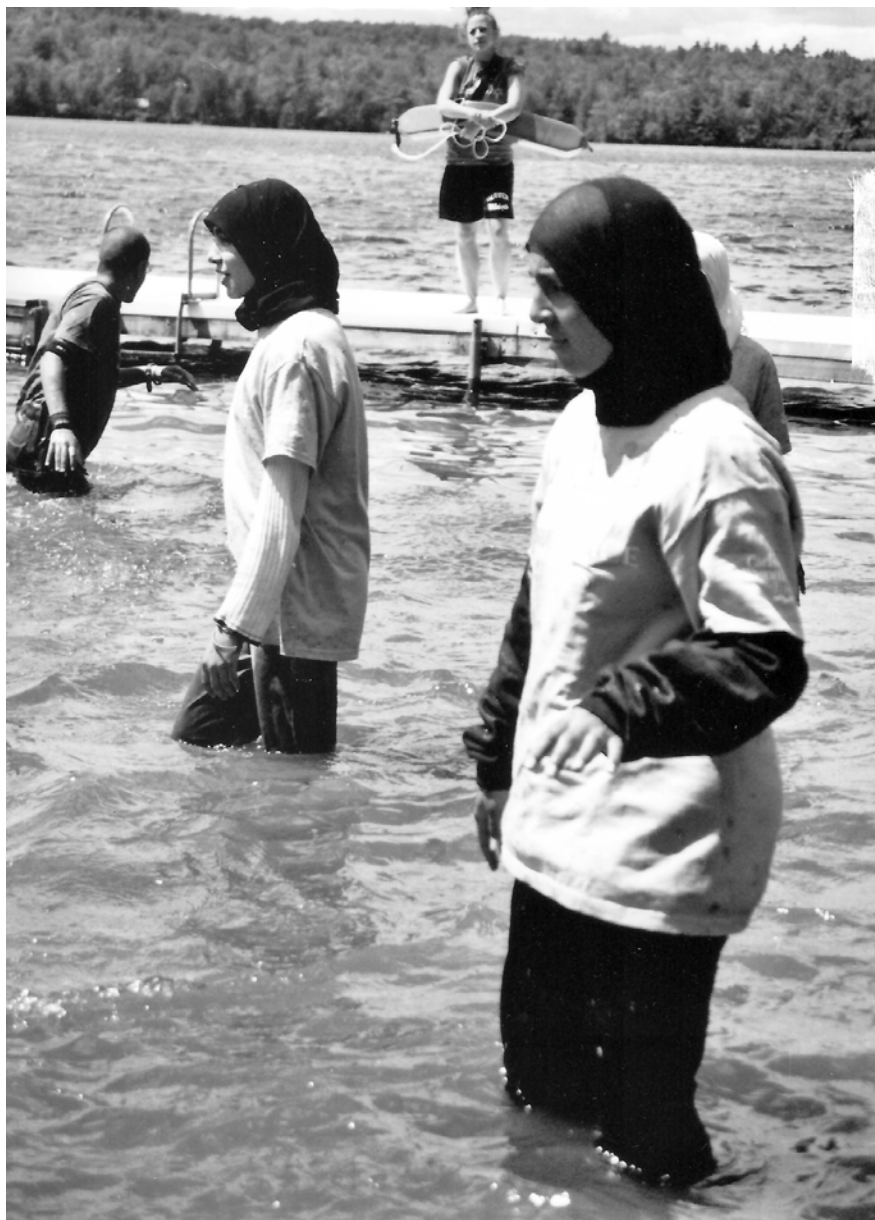
Even as this second session of 2001 campers ended their Color Games with camaraderie and even joy, a transition peri-

od in the Seeds of Peace Organization was underway, one that went beyond the impending tragedies of September 11 and the ensuing warfare. In summer 2001, as in previous years, Seeds of Peace founder John Wallach greeted new campers when they entered the gates of the Seeds of Peace, welcomed them at the opening flag ceremonies, and congratulated them when they concluded their Color Games. In 2002, Wallach was too ill with non-smokers lung cancer to attend the camp, and on July 10 word reached camp that John had died. The entire camp mourned John's passing even as they celebrated his life. One year later, under rainy skies once again, 170 campers rushed into Pleasant Lake concluding their Color Games, and a few hours later assembled in the basketball courthouse for a memorial service for John.



Celebration After the Color Games, Early 2000s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee



Respect - at the Color Games, Early 2000s
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Summer 2013 marked the twentieth anniversary of the Seeds of Peace Camp. John Wallach—award winning journalist, editor, and commentator on the Middle East—founded the organization in 1993 in the wake of the bombing of the World Trade Center. He did so with Bobbie Gottschalk, a woman with thirty years experience as a psychiatric social worker as executive vice-president, and Timothy P. Wilson of Portland, an educator, coach, State of Maine administrator, and human rights worker for as many years, as vice-president and camp director. Wilson, reportedly the first African American camp counselor for a white camp in New England, already served as co-director of former Camp Powhatan—where Seeds has held all but two of its summer programs. The name of the camp changed when Powhatan closed in 1996. By 1996, Wilson had devoted most of his summers to working with youth at the Pleasant Lake location, including the first Seeds, for the previous thirty years, and he would continue to do so over the next two decades.

Wallach, Gottschalk, and Wilson remained at the helm of the organization from 1993 to mid-2002, while the staff increased almost exponentially along with the number of youth attending the summer sessions in Otisfield. While Wallach concentrated on the political events surrounding the camp and the regions from which the teenagers come, often blending diplomacy with fundraising, Gottschalk and Wilson focused on the children and the camp on a more personnel level. Wilson held responsibility for all matters pertaining to the facilities, summer staff, and all aspects of the wellbeing and safety of the children. While Gottschalk and Wilson remained prominent at the camp in 2003 and beyond, there were some transitions. Aaron David Miller, formerly a Middle East specialist at the State Department, assumed the presidency of the organization in January 2003; Janet Wallach, writer and wife of John Wallach, had served as acting president since John's death. In 2009, Leslie Adelson Lewin, who had worked at the camp for years in various capacities, would be appointed to the executive director's position.

In 1993, Seeds of Peace's first season, Palestinian, Israeli, and Egyptian young men attended the camp. In 1994, young women began to attend, and Jordan joined the list of participating countries. By 2000, ten countries regularly sent students to the camp: Israel, Cyprus, Greece, six Arab nations, and the United States. The United States, Wilson says, has always been represented at, and important to, the Seeds of Peace. "Maine is an intricate part of what goes on," he said. Maine youth started attending camp sessions in 1997, and Wilson organized the Portland Project, a delegation composed primarily of refugee children living in the Portland area, in 2001. Several Balkan delegations joined Seeds of Peace in the early 2000s, as did Pakistan and India, and Afghanistan began sending delegations in 2002. After this, Wilson hoped to see Ireland and Nigeria join the program, and had been promoting their cause for some time. Seeds of Peace opened a center in East Jerusalem, on site acceptable to both Palestinians and Israelis, in 1999 to develop year-round peace-making or conflict resolution programs -- programs in which Muslims, Jews, Christians, and Druze would participate. The center closed with the outbreak of hostilities in the region in autumn 2000, but soon reopened and continued work there as well as sending representatives to other parts of the world. In November 2003, Wilson became acting director for the Jerusalem Center, and in 2004 accepted the position on a permanent basis while continuing to run the camp in Maine. He would eventually resign from the international post to focus on Maine and a new American program would grow substantively after 2010. In the meantime and thereafter, the nations participating in the camp program changed somewhat, as the world scene itself changed. The camp's core mission, however, remained the same.



Watching the Color Games, 2005

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

The Seeds of Peace program is multi-faceted with a wide variety of sports and activities such as one might find at any large New England summer camp combined with a unique co-existence (after 2004 known simply as “dialogue”) program in which teenagers from both sides of a given conflict meet with

one another under the guidance of trained facilitators to discuss problems in their homeland. The sessions are both political and personal, intellectual debates frequently devolving into emotional confrontations. However, some would argue, the emotional component is as important, if not more so, than the intellectual, allowing participants to explore their cultural conditioning and perhaps previously unacknowledged biases, hatreds, and fears.

Exposure to different religions aids the peace process, or so it would seem. Islamic services for Palestinian or other Muslims are available to campers, regardless of the situation in the outer world, as are Jewish and Christian services. Services are open to members of other faiths, and many campers, staff, and others in camp use the opportunity to learn more about the religions of different cultures. Respect on the part of visitors is both required and evident at each service. Islamic services are generally held, as are some of the others, in either the large or small recreation halls, with worshippers separated by gender and arranged according to Islamic law. The young women wear their religious garments, including appropriate head coverings. (Likewise, some traditional clothing and practices are evident at other services, or involving male participants.) Although it is not always the case, in many of the homelands of the children religious differences play a significant role, and experiencing the so called “enemy” in his or her religious setting takes away some of the mystery and hopefully the negative connotations of the religion and its practitioners.

Camp participants also interact with the local Maine community, sometimes participating, for example, in the Otisfield Fourth of July parade and Casco Days, a local celebration and fair. They regularly win first prizes at the parades dressed as they generally are in costumes, marching or dancing to lively music, often with homemade floats and sometimes carrying images or symbols taken from their native cultures. At the fairs and the parades, they tend to overwhelm the small, relatively homogeneous, rural Maine communities, but in so doing they

also tend to amuse the locals. Seeds likewise invite other summer camps to participate in their Sports Day to compete in soccer, baseball, and other events, engaging fully and parting on good terms, both sides benefiting from the interaction.

The Color Games—a three-day almost non-stop flurry of events in which the entire camp is divided into two teams, the green team and the blue team—close each session. Counselors assign teams such that young women and men compete against members of their own delegation alongside teenagers who, in their homelands, are often considered their enemy. The teams compete in everything from volleyball to baseball to ping pong to water skiing and an hilarious game called Steal the Kosher Turkey Bacon which resembles a fusion of soccer, Simon Says, and Twister. Poetry, art, creative writing, talent skits and music contests round off the sports events and provide a chance for less athletic campers to excel. The youngsters compete passionately, yet at the end of the games and an initial “hoo-rah!” no one really seems to care who won. As in their co-existence or dialogue sessions and their group challenge program in which traditional adversaries negotiate, in tandem, obstacle courses and technical climbing challenges, Color Games teach participants to work together for a common goal, to trust one another, and to rejoice in their common victories.



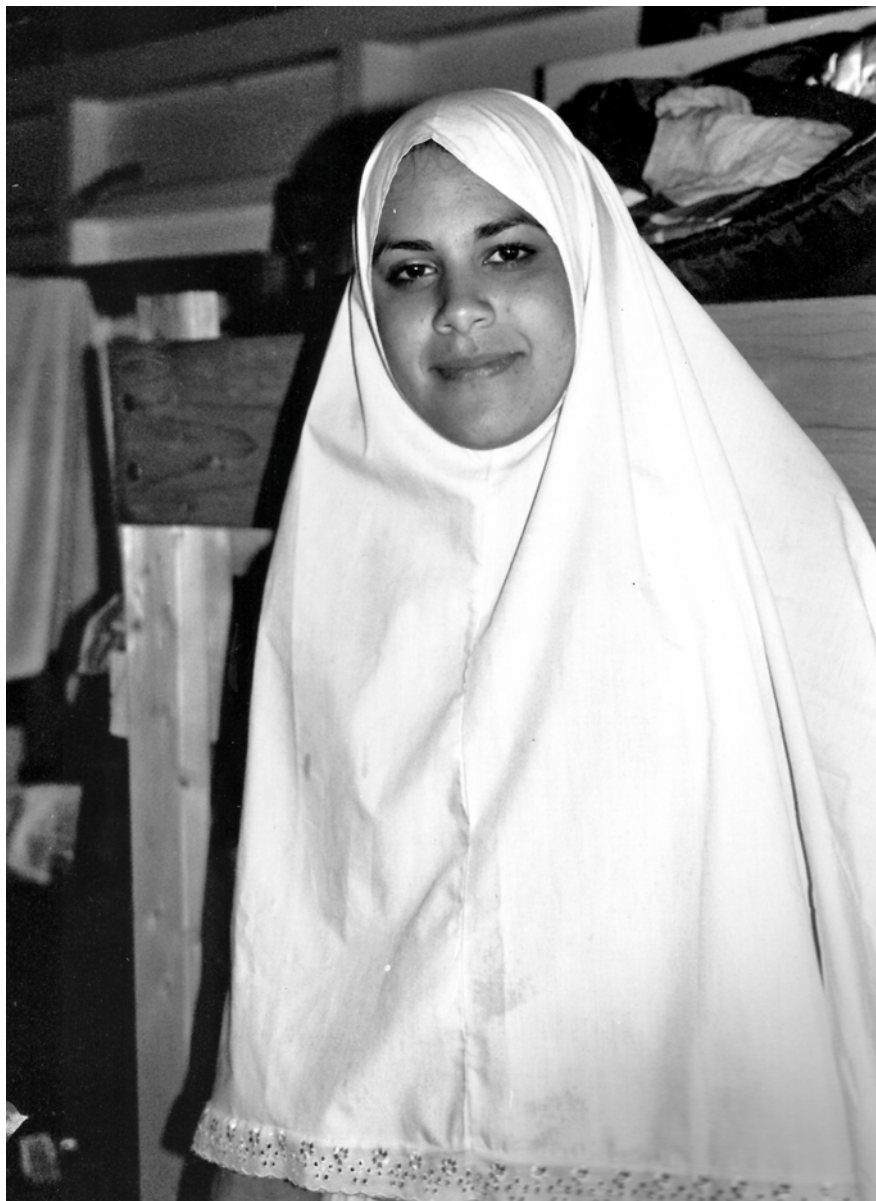
After the Color Games, 2007
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

After the winners of the Color Games are announced, the campers dash into Pleasant Lake cheering and come out hugging, holding hands, and otherwise showing their affection such as they did on August 10, 2001. Another 165 young people had run into the lake that July, at the end of the camp's first session. A third group would do the same near the close of the shorter, two-week session, that summer, and thousands more would do so over the following years. As some campers return as Peer Support—continuing to participate in camp life with the others but providing some guidance to new campers—some have engaged in more than one round of Color Games. And, as campers at Camp Powhatan had ended their four-day Color Wars (from which Wilson and staff took many aspects of the Color Games), although each camper's experience might be unique, they are also tied to a tradition of New England camping while undergoing a unique peace-oriented process. Although the Seeds in the early 2000s traveled together during the next few days to Portland to shop and often to see a baseball game, and thence to Washington to visit the White House, American political leaders, and the Holocaust Museum (a sometimes controversial stop, especially among some of the adults), the Color Games mark the end of the campers' time in Otisfield. The campers know that soon they will have to return home and face the challenges of maintaining new friendships and insights in a setting that often proves hostile to those very friendships and insights.

Establishing and maintaining friendships is a major challenge. Seeds of Peace founder John Wallach continually exhorted the teenagers to “make just one friend” early in the camp sessions, emphasizing that it was not necessary for them to make friends with everyone they encountered. So, too, did he state that peace is not an easy state to achieve, that it takes dedication. “We do not expect to raise a flag and sing a song, and make everything alright. Peace is hard work,” Wallach said at one of the summer's opening flag ceremonies, one of the last his health allowed him to attend. In some instances making friends and discussing peace seem almost counter to

one another. A number of teenagers interviewed said that, especially during the closing days, they did not want to speak out in co-existence sessions, that they did not want to jeopardize new friendships by speaking again of past injustices. Although some teens enjoyed the sessions and found them especially valuable, others did not. Most, however, felt the camp as a whole had benefited them enormously, some through the self-expression they gained through art, media, and other activities; some through the camaraderie they shared in sports; some through what they learned about themselves and their adversaries in co-existence; and, for seemingly all of them and central to the entire process, the trust and respect they developed for other people -- people with whom they might have previously felt diametrically opposed.

The Palestinian government did not send a formal delegation to the camp in 2001. With increased problems in the Middle East due to the Infada and the responses to it, the Palestinian government decided for the first time since 1993 that it would not have its youth participate in the Maine camp. Then at the last minute, Yasser Arafat decided to allow a delegation to attend the second summer session, but logistics made it impossible for the children to arrive in time. However, Palestinians were represented in 2001. Some 2001 campers, as in other years, considered themselves Palestinians living in Israel, and a few Palestinians from previous years returned to camp as counselors or in other capacities. In following years, the Palestinian government would again send delegations to Maine. In the meantime, the focus of co-existence sessions shifted, allowing Israeli campers to explore certain issues in greater depth, regardless of whether they were first time campers, while those Palestinians who made it to Otisfield, being largely returning campers, likewise followed a somewhat more intense program.



Getting Ready for Religious Services, Early 2000s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Only weeks after the camp closed in 2001, the terrorist attacks in America turned the US political scene upside down, as it did in many other parts of the world. Rather than feeling in any way defeated, committed Seeds and staff found the need for the organization greater than ever. John Wallach stated in a telephone interview September 12, 2001, that “This [the terrorist attack] makes our program far more necessary than before, because we’re trying to address the roots of terrorism and hatred wherever they are, not just the symptoms.” The Seeds of Peace, he stated, works as a form of “detoxification . . . it brings hatred out in the open where they [the kids] can confront it.” He said that this year one Pakistani girl came out of a co-existence session in tears. When he asked why she was crying she answered, “I didn’t know I had such hatred.” Wallach stated that the events of September 11 made the Seeds program “much more vital. It’s a tragedy that we’re the only one. There should be thousands [of camps and programs like this] around the world.”

Wallach also found fault with current congressional discussions. “Congress is about to approve \$40 billion for military measures, where is the money for human responses to try to deal with this, for understanding what happened?” [As unanimously passed by both Houses later that day, the measure allocated \$20 million for military spending and the balance for disaster relief.] At the same time, private individuals were considering economic aid to endeavors such as Seeds of Peace. The family of a hijacking victim requested that any donations in his memory be made to the Seeds of Peace. “This was someone totally unknown to us,” Wallach said. “His family thought it would be appropriate.”

Condolences also poured in. Wallach stated that Seeds was receiving forty or fifty e-mails each day from kids involved with the program, and the kids had been e-mailing each other daily on their own, secured, web site. In addition, the adult leaders of all twenty-two delegations of the time (the government of each nation, or in some cases the United States Em-

bassy, chooses adult delegates to accompany the children to America) sent condolences. Wallach stated that the first delegation to send a condolence was the Palestinian, followed by the Israeli.

In spite of all the condolences for America, some Seeds reacted with outrage to the American bombing of Afghanistan. One Cypriot youth, for example, stated when the author interviewed him in North Cyprus, that America was treating the people of Afghanistan no better than cattle. He extended this to include Muslims elsewhere, expressing a rage in no way evident when the author had spoken with him earlier during the summer at the SOP camp. Young women and men from his own delegation responded to his words, most attempting both to understand recent events and to encourage him to see that the potential for peace still existed, both in the Middle East and elsewhere. Conversations like these were held by other Seeds in other delegations. As events progressed over the next two years, frustration would again mount but hope would continue to assert itself.

Another Cypriot Seed, Arda, who had attended the camp in 2000 and 2001 and who later attended college in America, wrote to the author on October 28, after the beginning of America's bombing campaign, that although he fully condemned the events of September 11, he hoped that the United States "would rise and do what is hard, but what is right," that America would do the unexpected and cease the bombing.

Many of the youth interviewed viewed the attacks on America and the fighting in Afghanistan and the later US and English war with Iraq, as actions of misguided individuals and leaders, not as an end to the peace process. In spite of a largely negative piece on the October 28, 2001, broadcast (and a subsequent airing) of 60 Minutes, in which a few former Seeds indicated that they no longer held positive hopes for the future, the organization remained devoted to that end as did most of its participants. A large group of Seed alumni from 1993 to

2001 traveled to the United Nations on November 8, 2001, to meet with officials and present their views to world leaders. Beyond that, teenagers who had only recently joined Seeds of Peace spoke with great optimism of the future, both their own and the world's.

At the same time as condolences flowed in and out of Seeds of Peace headquarters in autumn 2001, Tim Wilson visited Maine schools to discuss the disaster with students. Like children and teenagers elsewhere, America's tragedy filled them with questions as well as sadness. For many members of the Portland Delegation (later part of what became the Maine Delegation), what happened in the United States during the autumn 2001 was much too reminiscent of what they had left behind in their native lands.

Linda, a fourteen-year-old whose parents came from Vietnam, stated on November 4, 2001, that she remained uncertain about the US response to the attacks in America. "I'm still confused about that ... I don't know what is wrong or right ... there are so many different perspectives, I don't know if I have one yet." Then a new Seed, she had attended the camp for the first time that summer. She said that she was very glad she had joined Seeds of Peace and the Portland Project. Some of the Muslims at her school, she stated, "experienced problems after September 11. I know Seeds of Peace was the best thing to join. I know more about both sides now" and thus she did not jump to conclusions about the guilt of any party. She said that after attending camp, and in spite of September 11 and its aftermath, "I think I am more hopeful [about peace]. Seeds of Peace let me know that enemies can sleep next to each other. I am more hopeful about it."



Leona at Camp, 2001
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Another then new Seed, fifteen-year-old Leona, adopted in the Philippines as an infant, lived near the camp as a teenager and found her first time there “amazing.” She had passed by the camp many, many times but did not really understand

what happened there until summer 2001. Although she said her school is not diverse in terms of the racial, ethnic, or religious backgrounds of its students, she believes her experiences with Seeds has helped her understand students at other Maine schools as well as given her new perspectives on problems at her own school. “Seeing the way people interacted was amazing,” she said. “Seeing the bond everyone had, and how with conflicts so big people were still trying to work them out, makes everything at my school seem so small.” (Leona became increasingly involved with SOP and the Portland Project over the next few years.) Leona also remained in contact with other Seeds in Portland, and knew that some of them had difficulties in the months following September 11.

One such student was Naima, a fourteen-year-old Muslim girl originally from Somalia. She said that although she had not been harassed at school, she had been harassed elsewhere following September 11. Having attended the camp in Otisfield for two years, her enthusiasm for the work it does seemed boundless. Of September 11, she said a few months later, “I was really scared . . . there were so many discussions at school about what was going on. Some of the kids were mean, wanting to blame someone. People came to me in a respectful way though [to ask questions]. I’m a Muslim, and people were saying that all Muslims were involved.” Her school, Portland High, had worked to educate students on current events and the Muslim faith, which had improved the situation. People continued to ask her questions months after the attacks in New York and Washington, but she said things were not as bad as they were just after September 11.

Other Seeds experienced similar things, as did Naima, in the wake of September 11. Then fifteen years old, Anthony, another member of the Portland Project, attended a different school that year and said that, after the events of September 11, “I was angry, confused, and looking for answers, all the while trying to comfort and educate the people around me. Many people in my school know about my involvement with Seeds of Peace

and many came to me, asking questions about the region and about the attacks. I answered every question I could, trying to come off as reassuring and confident, but I was just as shaken as everyone else.” Yet, he stated, The fact that people wanted to know more about the situation really made me feel great. Ignorance can be avoided by education.”

Anthony was confident that the Seeds of Peace would make a lasting impact, in terms of international relations and in his own life. The program, he said, “has changed my life for the better in countless ways. ... I am able to make a difference in my city. Seeds has affected the way I look at life, and I know that some of the things I learned will bring great opportunities in life.” Anthony remained confident about the value of SOP over the ensuing years.

So, too, did Naima remain positive. As to her own future, Naima said, “I feel like I should skip four years of school and college to study international law and then be able to go where I want.” She wanted to work as a counselor at the camp, or serve Seeds in some other capacity. “I am always going to be involved with Seeds of Peace,” she said. She was one of the Seeds chosen to go to the United Nations on November 8, 2001, and like a number of Seeds interviewed between 2001 and 2003, she remained active in SOP as well as in the Portland Project, and planned to enter international affairs in a professional capacity. Several alumni, including one interviewed briefly for the 60 Minutes show, attended college to that end. (The Seeds of Peace offers the campers advice on colleges, and about one-hundred “graduate” Seeds from other countries were enrolled in American colleges in 2003, including a number in Maine schools.)

Most of the teenagers the author interviewed after the 60 Minutes piece saw only a portion of the show, if that. They had, however, heard of it and felt that by and large the ideas expressed on the broadcast by a few former Seeds—that the participants were less than hopeful that peace could be

achieved in the Middle East, and for one or two that the camp had not been of great benefit—did not reflect their own thoughts. Seeds of Peace actually planned to use the show as an educational tool.

The organization, according to Tim Wilson, knew in advance that the show would be largely negative and has not altered its position. And, of course, as both the ever-growing list of nations participating in the Seeds of Peace and the words of the Seeds demonstrate, the work of the organization extends beyond the Middle East to other countries, including the United States. And when Afghani teens came to camp in 2003, they met in co-existence sessions with American Seeds, and wanted to know why America had bombed their country. By 2003 and into 2004, the focus for these and some other campers had shifted from why America has pursued some of its economic and other aid or involvement in the Middle East to an examination of its motives in directly attacking Afghanistan and Iraq in the wake of September 11. Then at the third session of the 2004 season, SOP started a new program, one aimed at fostering greater understanding between Arab and American teenagers, one which would start in America in Otisfield, Maine, but take the American campers to Arab nations in 2005.

In spite of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and in spite of the American bombing of Afghanistan, the war in Iraq, continued warfare in Israel and Palestine, and in spite of conflicts elsewhere and thereafter, the work of the Seeds of Peace continues. Not all participants can be expected to embrace the idea of peace, or to continue to do so years after they leave the organization, but even those who have doubts about the possibility of peace have at least considered the idea and have learned how to listen, at least for a time, to their so-called adversaries. As Wallach stated to the Seeds in 2001, “Peace is not easy.”



Jackson and Tim, 2002
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Peace would not prove easy. Wallach would not survive another year to continue his work, but Tim Wilson and others would struggle on in his absence, if not quite in his place, and the Seeds themselves would continue to seek solutions

to use in their homelands and communities. Americans may view events surrounding September 11, 2001, as a watershed in American history, but for most Seeds conflict in their own countries predated 2001, in many cases going back to the early to mid-twentieth century, some with underlying factors predating the twentieth century. Seeds from the Middle East, the Balkans, and other regions continue to face strife at home, and even in places where inroads have been made in the peace process, such as the 2003 opening of the gates between North and South Cyprus for the first time in almost thirty years, questions and severe problems remain. Co-existence between North and South Cypriots is not a given, especially in the light of economic hardship in the North, religious differences, historical conflict and social strife abetted by the governments of the north and the south, and an immigrant problem almost no one in government, and few in the culture, seem to want to resolve.

Recognizing the potential for conflict abroad and at home to possibly endanger the Seeds of Peace International Camp, for the first time in summer 2002, Maine State Police guarded the camp. They did so at Wilson's request. In 2003 and 2004, their presence intensified, they often dressed in SOP staff apparel, and they used dogs to search cabins, vehicles, and luggage for possible drugs or weapons. The state police have remained as unobtrusive as possible, but by the mid-2010s, their heightened presence at the camp was obvious and continual. Check-ins at the gate were mandatory, as they had been all along, but now a strong police force was evident. Yet, for many foreign teenagers their time in Maine is one of the only truly safe periods they have ever known and this has been true since 1993. Violence and terrorism are endemic to many of their lives. Letting the teenagers be teenagers is prerequisite for Wilson and many camp workers, and being safe, feeling safe, is fundamental to this.



Leslie After the Color Games, Early 2000s
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

With some conflicts waxing, others waning or staying almost unchanged, with hundreds of young women and men continuing to come to Otisfield each year (some 450 teenagers attended sessions in 2003 and similar numbers attended in following years), and with SOP's new president hoping for a day when, as Aaron Miller told the author, "We can run 1000 kids through a summer," the work continued after the death of John Wallach and the American strikes in Iraq and Afghanistan. And for many kids, most of whom experience Seeds of Peace first and foremost through their days in rural Maine—swimming in Pleasant lake, playing team sports, sharing bunks and dining tables with kids from other countries, participating in pranks of one type or another, attending campfire activities as well as co-existence sessions—one of the most, if not the most, endearing figure in the camp remains Timothy P. Wilson. This is especially true also for members of the Portland or Maine Project, who see Tim both at camp and in their schools. Even as Tim stepped down from the directorship at camp, he remained a beloved leader. Widely acknowledged as the person who kept camp running smoothly for the most part (at times, conflict did and does erupt between campers, and sometimes between staff, but so far, Wilson and crew, including his successors as camp director, have been able to keep camp free of outright war or physical combat), Tim Wilson started that first small session of boys from three countries in 1993 with a thorough background in camping, education, diversity issues, and administration which has served SOP admirably, although Wilson does have his detractors. John Wallach chose his camp director well, and it is unlikely that he could have found anyone more suited to the task. From his birth in a segregated Pittsburgh housing project to his education in predominantly white schools to his time in the Peace Corps, to his teaching and coaching experiences to his work for four Maine governors to his private consulting work, Wilson has brought unique insights and skills to SOP. And the Seeds of Peace has given Wilson an arena in which he can utilize them all. In spite of all his achievements in Maine and else-

where, no work has been more important to Wilson than his work with the Seeds of Peace, and even that, one senses, is not enough: seventy-three years old in 2004, Wilson still seemed haunted still by the things he had not yet accomplished. A decade later, he would remain focused on aiding youth in the world, and still struggle to accomplish ever more in his life. Age did not diminish Wilson's desire and need to improve the world around him.

A complicated, sometimes difficult man, Timothy P. Wilson epitomizes both the self-made man and the person who still struggles to realize that self, the not-yet-quite-made man. But, above and beyond all this, he is a man kids love, in Maine, in America, and around the world. His role at the Seeds of Peace would evolve over the years of 2005-2019, as he came to enlarge the Maine delegation to one with over 100 campers and its own sessions in 2014 and thereafter, and as he turned the daily reigns of the camp over to his assistant Leslie—and to some of his other former campers and aids—not long after the death of one his beloved campers, a Maine Seed. A few years later, Tim and the SOP would mourn the loss of a top counselor and an emerging state leader, one who Wilson had hired and who his family and he had essentially adopted as their son. Other Maine and international Seeds would make their way into adulthood during the twenty years the author studied the Seeds of Peace, and many of them would enter professional fields where they might, indeed, influence the future of peace. Law, medicine, and political science have proven some of more popular fields of study for the kids from Maine and elsewhere, many of whom secured places at universities and colleges through the aid of Tim Wilson and the Seeds of Peace, and many of whom would come to work with the SOP in one capacity or another.

Meanwhile, as the 2003 camping season started, Aaron Miller, in discussing John Wallach and Tim Wilson said that before John died, “He realized that the one indispensable part of this camp is Tim Wilson.” So, too, one suspects, is the

camp indispensable to Tim Wilson. In spite of a few motions about retiring and some transitions within the organization, Tim remains central to the camp. In 2105, the Maine State Legislature held a “Timothy P. Wilson Day,” honoring Tim’s contributions to the State of Maine, not only through his work for the Seeds of Peace, but also through his many years as a Maine educator, coach, and public servant. Angus King, with whom Tim had worked when King served as a Maine governor, read the “list” into the legislative record. The list is not complete.



Timothy P. Wilson as a young boy.

Wilson Family Photograph

CHAPTER ONE : EARLY YEARS

"We never knew which one was a Democrat, and which one a Republican. The two would deliberate on issues these guys [politicians] needed. People flocked from all over to confer with them"

Timothy Paris Wilson speaking of his parents in 2001

As Timothy Wilson recalls his childhood, he sees himself as a solitary child, even though he had an older sister and three older brothers. His mother was forty-six when she gave birth to Tim. Her age was important in the context of following years. As Wilson explained it, "I was a year old, about eleven months old, when World War II started, so when my brothers were in the war, I was her solace. My father thought it was good for me to be around then. I was really [in many ways] an only child." Tim's brothers, he said in early 2002, referring to two of them although there were three, "married right after the war." His sister had also moved away, she "had [attended] Oberlin, and worked in D.C. as a secretary for the Navy Department. She was singing and trying to get her start in opera, doing concerts in churches and so forth." Thus essentially an only child of older parents, Tim Wilson developed a closeness and protectiveness concerning his parents that perhaps exceeded that of most young children and which lasted until his parents died. He continues to speak frequently and fondly of them both.

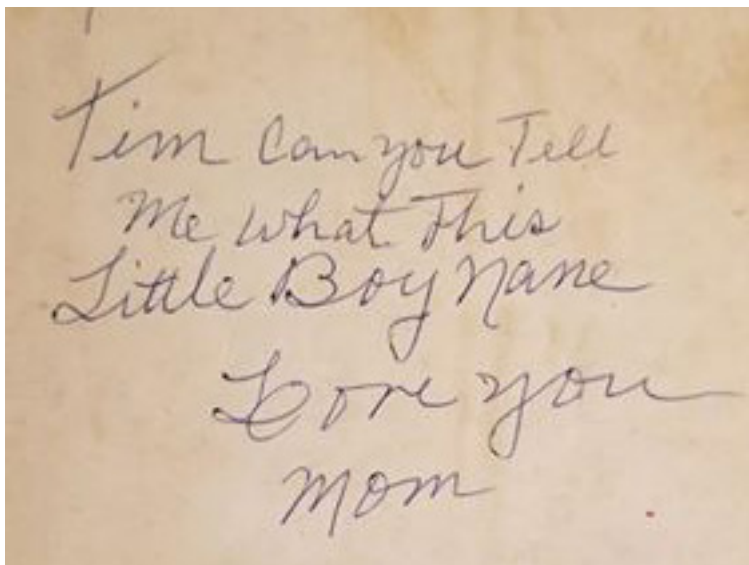
Tim's parents, Mamie and Henry Wilson, were married for sixty-one years, marrying in 1916. His mother had attended Bethune College, while his father had attended school only through the sixth grade. Both, however, were well read. Wil-

son stated in 2002 that “my father was better read than most people who went to college. One of my professors at Slippery Rock, Robert Duncan, would talk to my father for hours, especially about politics and history.”

Mamie and Henry Wilson moved to Pittsburgh in 1917 from Augusta, Georgia. Their first son Andrew, was born just after they arrived, followed Henry Emmett, Jr. “Emmett” in 1922, Roberta G. “Bert” in 1923, and Theodore “Ted” in 1928. A few years after the move north, Henry Wilson, Sr. started working for US Steel. He did so in 1921, and would work for the company for forty-three years as a janitor. One of the first blacks to work for the company, Tim commented in early 2003 that “He paid his bills, he kept his family, but he never got a chance to do anything else because of the times. That’s one of the things that makes me mad, but he held no grudges. He did what he had to do. That he provided so well for his family is proved by the way his children are; my brothers and sister are fine people.” Speaking of his father’s job, Wilson said, “I’d be remiss if I said that he loved his job, but he had no choice.” After several decades, “he retired because they decided to make him a sanitation engineer. He said, ‘I’m a janitor.’” The so-called promotion would not have given Henry Wilson more authority, only new clothes; it would just have been for show. He wanted no part of it. But he did want his children to excel in life, and gave them every opportunity he could to make certain that they did.

Early on in Pittsburgh, Mamie Wilson worked for Jewish families as a housekeeper and cleaning woman. During World War II she worked for Federal Enamel in Pittsburgh, making pots (of the now classic white-dots-on-blue design), then went to Suburban General Hospital in nearby Bellevue, where she was able to put her earlier training as a nurses’ aid to use. She worked as a nurses’ aid for a few years, then took charge of Central Supply for the hospital. After she retired, the hospital continued to call on her for help. Many years later, many of the hospital nurses, and other staff, attended her funeral. She

died in August 1994, and Tim related, “Dad died in 1978. He was eighty.”



Note from Tim's mother.

Wilson Family Photograph

Tim Wilson's mother had been born Mamie Mobley on St. Charles Island, the island located near the coast of South Carolina and in the river between South Carolina and Georgia. His father, Henry Emmett Wilson, came from outside Augusta. His grandfather on his mother's side, Andrew Mobley, had been a sleeping car porter, and later moved up to become a railroad fireman, "one of the first of the first of the first [of African Americans] to be given the job," as Tim Wilson described it. "He had a stepmother and half-siblings [half-brothers and sisters to him] who disappeared. She, [my mother], says it was because they 'passed.'" Although the Wilson family seldom saw these relatives who had apparently passed into the white culture, a few of them, then living in Harrisburg, would attend the 1950s funeral of one of Tim's brothers.

Tim's older brother by thirteen years, Ted, said of their parents in 2003, "My father was a little fellow, about 5' 6".

He never weighed more than 140 pounds. He was very dark, with a nose like a beak, hooked like a beak, real pointed. They used to say he looked like a black crow, ‘dengy’ in black terms. He had to put cream on so he wouldn’t be ashy. My mother was extremely light.” (According to Tim Wilson, their father weighed exactly 155 pounds for most of his life.) Either way, Henry Wilson was not, physically, a large man.

Tim’s maternal grandfather, Andrew Mobley, married three or four times. He had remarried after his first marriage to Tim’s mother’s mother. Tim explained that his mother was the only child by his grandfather’s first marriage, “then he remarried and she had a lot of half-brothers and sisters. My understanding,” Tim said of his grandmother, “was that she died when my mother was born.” Tim did not know either of his grandmothers, and said “that was never spoken about. They were Scots-Irish, French, Indian on Mom’s side of the family. It was a real mix. My [great] grandmother [born a Mobley] has Cherokee blood.” When Tim was a fifteen-year-old sophomore in high school, in 1955, his grandfather Mobley “came up to visit. He died the following year.” That was Tim’s only meeting with his grandfather.

Being older than Tim, Ted had more memories or knowledge of some family history. Concerning some of their mother’s relatives, he said, as Tim had, “There was a segment of the family that ‘passed.’ Their real name was Lovey, but after they passed I don’t know what name they took as I never saw them after I was eight or nine. Tim never saw them. They would write my mother, but they passed and they moved to Boston.” Ted said his mother would not share information about what happened, but his grandfather had done so. He had related that, “They never talked about it down in Savannah. She [Tim and Ted’s grandfather’s mother] had a hotel. That’s what her father had given her. My grandfather never got anything, they [my grandfather and his family] got lost in the shuffle. My mother knew, but she only talked about certain portions of her father. He was a heavy drinker. I think he lived to be

ninety-three, and he was always a heavy drinker. He was a big man, a little taller than Tim, [who is well over 6 foot], jovial, really nice. He had been in the Spanish American War, in Teddy Roosevelt's Division." After the war, Andrew Mobley was given "a life-time job at the railroad because of his service, so he came to visit from Savannah, Georgia, every year to visit us." Perhaps equating the two men by size and looks, Ted said of their grandfather, "He was not moody...Tim is moody, he tends to be. People can hurt him ... people can't hurt me ... " Be that as it may, the family retained some secrets until they were apparently lost.

In terms of aunts and uncles and other relatives on his father's side of the family, distance was also characteristic. Tim's father had a sister in New York of whom Wilson said, "I met her once. That was it. I know very little about that side of the family. They were all in Georgia. No one really knows what happened, it was something you didn't talk about. Some might have been killed in things that happened in the South. ...[Like] my brothers didn't talk about the war--there are some things you just don't touch." Living in Pittsburgh, essentially without extended family, Henry and Mamie Wilson made their own children their first priority.

Twenty-four years after the birth of her first child in 1917, Mamie Wilson gave birth to her last. She did so on January 23, 1941. Timothy Paris Wilson was a big jovial baby who would grow into a big, sometimes jovial, sometimes quiet or withdrawn man; an athlete and an educator, a determined and strong man with a long memory. Sometimes called a difficult, moody, or stubborn man (which indeed he can be), as well as wonderful, hilarious, and fantastic (which he can also be), Tim Wilson the adult is a complex person, as one might expect from someone who has lived in numerous environments, worn many hats, shouldered many burdens and enjoyed many pleasures. His face is a well-formed, intelligent, pithy one, marked with his Northern European and Cherokee ancestry as well as his African heritage. Tim Wilson at birth,

however, seems to have been simply adorable, and he quickly became the center of the Wilson household, especially as his remaining older siblings moved out of the home.

Tim's first home was in one the new housing projects just starting to appear on the American landscape. Of the project, Tim says little unless asked directly. "We lived in a project in Pittsburgh, in Breckenridge, [Breckenridge was what people called the project, it was located in the Terrace Village area] built during the Second World War. My parents moved there from lower Pittsburgh because my brother was in the service, so it made sense for us to live there," Tim said in 2000. His parents had moved into the project from a house on Dinwoody Street, at the bottom of the Hill District.

In late 2002, Tim added that he had firm memories of the project. It consisted of a number of four-story brick units, essentially three individual buildings connected to one another. The all-black housing project was new when the Wilson family moved in, and "it was a different neighborhood then," Wilson observed. It was in the Hill District, and "that's just where people lived." In a subsequent discussion, he added that Terrace Village would today be called a low-rise ghetto. The Wilsons rented an apartment on the first floor of one of project's housing units. Two of Tim's brothers had left for the war by the time the family moved to the project, and the third would soon leave. His sister Bert had also moved away already. She had gone to college, to Oberlin College in Ohio, then moved on to Washington, D. C. Bert had, before the war and the family's move to Terrace Village, dated "a man she wanted to marry, but he was killed in the war, and she never married." When Andrew returned from the war, he and his wife Helyne stayed at the apartment until they became situated in their own place.

In the meantime, Tim said that when his mother worked for the Federal Enamel Factory, "the lady across the court babysat for me, I stayed with them in the evenings until Dad got home."

That family lived in a fourth-floor apartment, and their home life was different from the one Tim had known. “The wife was ill and the wife worked and she had a daughter. The females used to run around with no clothes on, with housecoats on, and that was something different for me. You know how you remember certain things when you’re a kid. I remember the man used to yell at them to put more clothes on,” Tim said in 2002. During the same interview, Tim laughed as he reminisced about a ruckus involving his mother and two other women.

As Tim recalls it, he was outside one day when he was four years old. A boy hit a girl from a nearby unit, and although Tim had not hit her, he received blame for the act. The girl’s mother came outside and hit Tim. Tim’s mother saw the woman hit her precious son, and out she came. A dispute ensued, and “the woman got smart with Mom, so Mom decked her.” The young woman had taken the first swing. Then her mother, the girl’s grandmother, got involved, “so Mom took them both on.” Tim’s mother had to go to court over the matter, and Tim remembers his brother picking him up and putting him on the judge’s desk as the judge wanted to ask Tim a few questions. “He wanted me to tell him what I saw.”

“The judge was a heavyset white man, and he kept trying not to laugh. Mom had to have been in her late forties then, she was about forty-seven. The other ladies, the younger one, she was in her twenties, and her mother was a few years younger than Mom. The judge thought it was funny.” As Tim’s brother later told him, “No one was going to mess with me. I was her favorite, her baby, and you didn’t want to mess with Mom. Mom could box, she grew up with brothers. She didn’t have a problem fighting.”

The story of the fight of the mothers illustrates something about Tim in his early sixties and later, as well as about his mother when she was in her forties. Tim always has another story, or an addition to a story, just waiting to be told—and

often one that sheds a new light or twist on a story as previously told. Tim had always talked of his mother in a way that certainly portrayed her as a strong woman, and nobody's fool. But it took him a few years to mention that the woman could and would engage in a neighborhood fight and show her mettle as a boxer should the occasion arise.

Tim, although young at the time, said of the end of World War II, "I remember my brothers coming home [from the war], my oldest brother coming home and getting married. I was about three or four then. I remember going and knocking on the door. This was in about 1944." As he later explained it, "I would sit outside their bedroom door and knock on it and ask her to come out and play. I liked her and I was a pain. ... She, [Helyne], was a WAC, and he was in the Army Air Force. They both got out that year. Andrew had started with Tuskegee Guys [the Tuskegee Air Crew], but he had a problem with heights." The couple had married December 7, 1944; Helyne would die on their fiftieth wedding anniversary, on December 7, 1994, one month to the day after Tim's mother died. Andrew would die in 1999. As the years passed, the family would remain close and Helyne and Andrew would come to stay with the Wilsons at a different address a few years after their stay in the project. Tim's sister Bert, almost 93, was still alive in early 2017, as was Ted, almost 90. (Wilson would visit his old neighborhood decades later. By that time, the University of Pittsburgh had acquired the property, and Wilson discovered that most of the former housing project had been boarded up in the 1990s.)

Jeffrey Wilson, one of Helyne and Andrew Wilson's sons, related something about the fight Tim's mother had gotten into in the housing project that his parents had related to him. Jeff recalled to the author that, "My dad said that the woman lived on the first floor, and that she had hit and scratched Tim. My mother said that Tim had beautiful skin when he was little, and grandma was upset. The window was open, and grandma pulled that woman right through the window. His dad was like

‘Uh, oh, she’s on the warpath.’” The rest of the story did not differ, but the part about his mom pulling the younger woman through her window was something Tim did not recall.

Born late in his parents’ lives, in addition to being the only child at home during most of World War II, Tim also entered the family as they were about to make other changes in their lives. They would soon move to the suburbs. “When they moved to this other world [to Bellevue from urban Pittsburgh] they were in their forties and had already raised children. I came along and here I was, a first grader in an all-white school.” His parents had been criticized by some family members and friends for moving to Bellevue. As a family, the Wilsons “had different views than my father. They could have political discussions, not religious ones—there were so many religions in our family.” Tim’s sister and brothers being adults by that time, they each had individual experiences and perspectives, and generally made them known.

The Wilsons were able to take advantage of a unique situation in Bellevue when they bought their home. Wilson said in 2000 that there were seven houses on the street that blacks were able to purchase. “They were built by this thin white guy.” Later, “he wanted to do something and the town wouldn’t let him, so he sold all the houses to black people. He was Jewish. My parents went there [to Bellevue] because they were able to get a good deal on the house and get a better education for me.” He added in 2003 that his brother Emmett was able to purchase the home on his GI Bill. It was 1946, and Emmett had “wanted my parents out” of the project and the city. Bellevue was close to Pittsburgh, however, lying just northwest of the city along the Ohio River.

In an earlier interview, Tim had said that, “My middle brother, Henry Emmett Wilson, was the one I was closest to when I was young. He let my parents use part of his GI bill to buy our home in Bellevue. We moved in January 1946. It was cold. My sister and my brother [Ted] are still living in that house.

My mother, she basically died there. The hospital [where she died] was just five doors down,” and the one in which she had started working in circa 1948 as a cleaning woman.

The Wilson’s new house quickly became the center of the family, and to some extent the neighborhood. During holidays, Wilson said, “everyone came to our house. They had political discussions and played Whisk, Mom at one end, Dad at the other. They would take on all comers. I never saw them lose even when I became an adult and played with my first wife. Dad talked, mom wouldn’t say a word. She had all the cards and would signal him when to talk.” This method of communication existed also during the many political discussions held in the Wilson household. “It was the same with political talks. She would capsule everything. When she said that was it, everyone knew it was over,” Tim said. However, “We never knew which one was a Democrat, and which one a Republican. The two would deliberate on issues these guys [politicians] needed. People flocked from all over to confer with them.”

Tim said his parents, even after their move from the city, were “known in Pittsburgh as well as in Bellevue.” She was called Mother Wilson or Miss Mamie, he was known as Father Wilson or Doc. “Everyone knew them. When I went back to teach [in Pittsburgh in the 1990s], the teachers all knew my parents, and the kids knew them. They did volunteer work, [like Meals on Wheels for the north side and various church jobs and programs]. It was just the kind of people they were. They had their own standards.”

Although the family lived in Bellevue, they remained connected to events in the city. In Pittsburgh, Wilson said, “The Hill district was the place [for African Americans], until Martin Luther King died. Then they burned it down, in April 1968, when he was killed. They killed off what many people thought was the center of the black community, they burned down what they themselves owned. What was left was minimal, so

they moved to other areas.” The black community dispersed and essentially disintegrated.



Tim with his Mother, Father and Siblings
Wilson Family Photograph

Tim said in January 2002 that, “My parents were a dominant fixture. There’s no way I can ever compare my life with theirs because they went through some things ... I don’t know how they did it. I look back now, understanding what they had to live through. The Jewish restaurants used to give her [my mother] bread three days old; she would throw it in the trash. I was told that during the Depression that they got the cheese [government surplus] but nothing else—they had a certain pride.” Tim’s father, he said, worked all through the Depression, “even for the minimal amount, but he worked. Mom did what she had to do, and they raised my brothers and sister, and they were not the only ones” who had to do this, who did do this. He remembers his father in later years taking the train to work, from Pittsburgh to Ambridge, home of U.S. Steel, and later taking the bus. Tim said in 2003 that he could remember hearing about how his father “used to hop the train during the Depression to get to work.” The family purchased their first

car in about 1955. “It was a Studebaker, one of those snob-nosed [models], it looked like a damn spaceship, it was gray.” His father purchased other cars after that, but the Studebaker is the one that Tim remembers best.

One of Tim Wilson’s earliest memories after the move is of an airplane trip he made alone to Washington, D.C. to see his sister Roberta, who was involved in the music industry as a singer at the time. He flew from Pittsburgh to Washington, during an era of segregation. “They put a little sign on me, and I was wearing a bow tie.” When he arrived in Washington, he had to walk through the long (he remembers it as about one-half mile) white section of the airport. “The white stewardess walked me over. She didn’t have to do it.” All along the way, people booed and hissed and yelled racist comments. “I was six years old.” That fifty-five years later he would remember the stewardess who helped him as much as he did the cruel actions of the bystanders says as much about the man he became as it does the impressions he had as six-year-old. Wilson credited the woman who had helped him much more than he denounced those who had yelled racial epithets at him, epithets he never identified in the interviews, just stating, “they made all sorts of noises, yelled out things. ...”

Another early memory, one that also had racial components, was of breaking his leg. “When I was about six, I broke my leg. I went to the movies, and was crossing the street, and a guy went through the red light and hit me. We went to the hospital near the house, and they said that there was nothing wrong. They didn’t treat ‘Negroes’ then. When we got to the other hospital we found out that my leg was broken in two places.”

The racial slurs and cruelty may have hurt young Tim, but the next major event was yet worse, much worse. Tim’s brother Henry committed suicide when Tim was ten years old. He did so in 1950. Wilson did not speak of the death early in his interviews with the author, except to say, “My brother Henry Emmett killed himself when he was 28. It broke my father’s

heart. I can remember him carrying me around on his shoulders. He was such a gentle man. I don't know what happened to him in the war, but it had something to do with why he killed himself." Asked about the incident after his brother Theodore, born April 4, 1928, had discussed it, Wilson said, in January 2002 over the telephone, that he remembered the death clearly: "Yup, I remember it. It was not fun. He put his head in an oven in New York. He used gas. He was supposed to be in a veteran's hospital. No one knew exactly what happened to him in World War II. They didn't know what went on, what he had gone through. ... He was home when I was in grade school. He was very nice to me. He was very protective of me because we had just moved to that neighborhood." Obviously having carried his love for his dead brother with him through life, he summed up the death with, "so that was that." Wilson added in 2003 that Maine Senator and former Secretary of State William Cohen and others had tried to find out what happened to Henry Emmett Wilson, Jr. during the war. "But, no one was ever really able to find out much."

Ted Wilson was older and initially recounted the story of Emmett's death in more detail, knowing Tim's reticence on some matters. Emmett had been in the navy, on submarine and PT boats. His experiences in the service "had changed him so much," Ted Wilson related in January 2002. "Something happened in the service. When he came back he was never right. They [my parents] could never get the VA to give him any psychological treatment." After WWII, Emmett went to college, but did not graduate. Ted said that his parents had then sent Emmett to stay with some relatives. "They thought the change might help him—it didn't, not at all." Ted Wilson said that Henry had been a fine athlete and had played trombone with a local jazz band; "He was a real neat guy."

All three of Timothy Wilson's older brothers worked for U. S. Steel at some point in their lives. "I'm the only one who did not," Tim said, "even Emmett did for a short period, after the war." Andrew worked there as a welder and later as a drafts-

man. A Jehovah's Witness, he wanted to be a teacher. He returned to school and earned a history degree from Pennsylvania State University. Unable to get a job teaching because of his race, he ended up back at U. S. Steel for most of his working life, as a draftsman. Ted worked at U. S. Steel in a design capacity for some time, but as Tim recalled the situation, "Ted left to go elsewhere. Andrew couldn't leave. He had a wife and a family [he had four sons], and he had to make that choice. He was brighter than me, and he had always wanted to be a teacher, but he never had a chance to do that sort of thing." He also related that Andrew had told him that after the war he had tried to get a job at the county court house, but that they gave the job to a German who could not even speak English instead of hiring a black man. "He said that it happened all over Pittsburgh, and he was angry." He told Tim, "I went to war. Your brothers went to war. And we couldn't even get a job. It was wrong, but I went about my business.' He didn't say much else about it."

After he retired, Andrew visited Tim in Augusta, Maine, where Tim was then living. As the brothers crossed the downtown bridge over the Androscoggin River one day, Andrew said, "I worked on this bridge." He had done so as a welder.

When Andrew was still a welder, and Tim a young boy, Tim remembers his brothers talking about US Steel, and about the river rats who inhabited the steel yard. His brothers talked of a cat who lived there also, and who went after the rats. "One night, the cat fell asleep and the river rats got him. I remember them [my brothers] telling the story when I was about seven or eight." He can also remember them talking about throwing the bolts up to Andrew when Andrew did the eye beams. Tim, at about this same time, said to his family, "I'm going to work at U.S. Steel.' Dad said, 'No, you're not,' and that conversation never came up again, not even with summer work." Henry Emmett Wilson, Sr. would make certain that one of his sons stayed away from company. As an adult, looking over the choices they had made in life, one day in an airport Andrew

told Tim that he, Tim, had taken risks the others had not. As his father had steered Tim away from U. S. Steel as a boy, he would later steer Tim onto other roadways, and into taking some of those risks.

Soon after Emmett's death, Tim's brother Andrew and his family came to stay with he and his parents. Their own home had been destroyed by a fire. Andrew and Helyne had moved to the nearby Knoxville Project in about 1947-48, and it was their apartment there that fire had destroyed. By 1953, Andrew and Helyne had two children, and a third, Randy, would be born at the Wilson home in Bellevue. As Tim later recalled it, "I used to baby-sit him. The other two boys were about nine and seven years old. Helyne had me baby-sit. It was my first experience with a small baby and it made a big difference with me. I remember changing his diaper, and I used to burp him. It taught me a lot about babies, so it helped me later." Tim would have been about eleven at the time. After that, the couple bought a house of their own "and lived there until they passed away."

In addition to his home experiences, during the summer, starting at age six, Tim went to a variety of camps, to black camps and mixed camps, because, he said, "my parents realized that it would further my growth." He joined the local Cub Scouts and the Boy Scouts and made it to the rank of Tenderfoot 1st Class, participating with the scouts from about age eight to fourteen. He joined the group he did, he said, because the leader, "a Mr. Finks, a white man, a big ole tall guy, he pushed it, he wanted me to be a part of his troop. I respected the guy . . . he took a chance. People would [look at our troop and] say 'why is this little Negro here?' ... whatever, things like that..." Tim credits the scout master with having taken a risk in bringing him in to be part of his group, one of the first such people to whom he gives that distinction. Tim went to scout camp, where he developed a fondness for snakes and secured his first pet snake, plus he attended a few other camps.

During most of his youth, the Wilsons attended the Mount Zion Baptist Church in Bellevue, located about 300 yards from his house. “At one time, Mom went to the African Methodist Avery Zion Church,” named for a white man who had worked for the underground railroad in the Ante-bellum South. This change “really started after my brother Henry passed away. I went to Sunday School at Mount Zion. There were some issues with my father [because of Emmett’s death]. My father stayed away [from the church] for twelve years. They would not bury him [my brother] from the church. They buried him from the funeral home down the street. My father was angry, and he would take us to church and wait for us—he never came in. After I went to college, he went back. Mom and Dad became fixtures. They were there since the 1970s and helped choose the present minister. We buried both my mom and my dad from that church.”

Like Tim, his bother Ted Wilson recalls a good and happy home life when he was a child. Besides Henry—and Tim, who would come along later—there was brother Andy, who was also in the military in WWII and almost became a member of the Ninety-second Airborne, making it through all but the last cut to join the Tuskegee Air Crew. (Tim later said he understood that the reason Andy had not made the final cut was that he had vertigo, so instead he became a part of the maintenance group for the crew.) Recalling the two brothers during their youth, Ted said, “They used to chase me out on the roof to try to get their money from me—I collected money from their paper routes for them. But, I wasn’t afraid of heights. Me and the dog “Boy Boy” would sit out there on the roof for a long time. Then they’d go away. Once they went away, and they went to an abandoned mine.” If they failed to get Ted off the roof, “they’d go tell my mother and father. If they got to my father I was in trouble.”

Ted said he himself was “a bad kid. I was never the kind of kid to do what I was told. I didn’t have a fear of things. . . . I was mischievous. If you can think of something you don’t

want your kid to do, we [me and my friend Bumpy], did it.” They would do things like “jump on the buggy of the grocery cart and ride up the hill—those kinds of things. Our favorite thing was to watch the boys and girls when they were sparking in the bushes.”

Tim, however, was not like this, according to his brother Ted. “Tim was one of those angel kinds of babies. He never cried. One of the worst beatings I ever got was because of him. My mother used to work for a company that made pots. She was called in on a Saturday and told me to watch the baby. . . . It had snowed, and they would pile all the snow up at the top of the hill. She [my mother] said, ‘you can take the baby out to make a snowman or something,’ but I was not to take him on the sled down the hill. I took Tim, I went for myself, but he wanted to ride too. He would hold onto the rope. He would fall and bounce and laugh. He would hold onto the rudders at the back. When we hit the bottom he would bounce up into the air. We hit the pile of snow, and he went up into the air and into the snow—laughing. I happened to look over, and there was my mother. . . . I got killed for that.” This was one of Ted’s favorite memories of his younger brother. Ted also said of Tim, “He was just the happiest baby in the world, and he was fat! He had great big cheeks, he was just plump.”

Ted said that although he was close to his family, “I was never what you would call a family child.” However, “Tim would talk to his father about everything, and his father gave advice which Tim would follow.” Tim in a subsequent interview said that during the 1960s and 1970s, “My father was my best friend, and my mother after that—my father said that would happen.” In later years, Tim and Ted would become increasingly close, and Roberta and Ted would share the family home.

Ted said, “My father, if he had been born later, would have been big-time. He loved to read and he could talk about just about everything. He had a beautiful mind. ... But, all the men in our family are dyslexic, I am, Tim is, Emit was, and Andy

was—but not like us, not as bad. My mother was, but not my father.” (Like Tim, Ted was able, in an age when treatments for dyslexia were virtually nonexistent, to “compensate” for the disease and eventually entered the engineering field as well as politics in Washington, D.C.)

Ted’s memories of early life also included his parents’ political discussions. He said in 2002, “My father would have these discussions at the house, he would beat up himself. He was for integration, his buddies were not, they said things like, “But Henry, you’re leaving too much on the table ... not leaving an opportunity for blacks to be in positions of authority ... an authority where blacks are in position to make policy.” “Unfortunately,” Ted said, “they were right,” and blacks thereafter lost positions in the South, and there was “no one to set the tone for black youngsters coming out of high school. In later years my father would say, “Those so and sos were right.”

Ted said his family would regularly play Whisk and other games, and his father would always win. “My oldest brother, Andy, would always switch to whatever position was winning, but we didn’t care.” It did not seem to affect the final results. By the time Tim was born and old enough to have remembered the family or neighborhood Whisk games, it seems the strategy had changed somewhat with the parents working together as a team.

In a humorous aside, Ted recalled that “my father would always go into the basement. He made crocks of wine—it wasn’t wine, it was vinegar, sheer vinegar, but his friends would give him their dandelion wine and take his vinegar. No one could understand why these people would take a gallon of that vinegar and give him good wine, but, they would use it on salads.” Tim remembered the wine also, laughing as he said, “It was terrible. He sold it to his buddies. He got the good stuff, [but] I guess he always thought his wine was good too.”

Of Tim’s teenage years, as opposed to his jovial early ones, Ted had a different opinion. “He became extremely moody.

Teens are awful anyhow, because they don't know if they are cat, dog, or fish. Tim was an awful teen. I didn't know him for awhile, as I was in the service then."

Ted said that Tim was "pretty neat from elementary school to junior high. It was only when he was about thirteen to sixteen when he was really a moody kid. But he did like to work." When Tim was about twelve, Tim had a dog named Sputnik. According to Ted, Tim took the dog with him when he went to clean churches. "He cleaned two churches about two nights a week." Then, "he worked for a roofer, starting at about age fifteen, and even when he went to college he would work for this roofer."

Ted said that Tim's jobs, "gave him money to take out the girls—[plus,] with my father you had to work. Working was one of the Ten Commandments." Ted said of Tim that, "Robinson was the name of the girl he was crazy about. Her father owned one of the only black taverns, and her father didn't like Tim at all. Tim was still crazy about her when he went to college. She also graduated from college." Tim later verified the basic facts of his brother's account, but said that the girl, Joyce Ann Robinson, was a friend not a girlfriend, and that they were still friends in college, and that she earned a Masters of Science. The problem with Joyce's father when they were teenagers, Tim explained, was that "Her father didn't like me because my father was a janitor. When I went away to the Peace Corps and to Maine, her mother told me that she wished 'that you had dated.' But we ended up liking, respecting, each other. Her father looked up [when Joyce's mother expressed her view] and said, 'damn', but it [the earlier rejection] was just because my father was a janitor and not part of the upper class."

In terms of male friends, Ted remembers Tim as having had "three buddies all the way through school." Tim said that his friends were Ed McFarlane, (who would move to North Carolina) John Duggan (Georgia), Ron Falvo (Ohio), and Vince

Fung (California). Duggan was “a German kid,” and Vince and Tim “knew each other from grade school to high school: “a Chinese guy and a black guy in an all-white community.” In high school the five boys became, according to Tim, “a running pack . . . we all sort of hung out, there were also a couple of females in the group.” He saw a few of his friends at their high school reunion in 1978, and some hidden animosities apparently surfaced. His friend Vince said he felt their schoolmates always liked Tim. Tim responded, “Vince, they tolerated you like they tolerated me.”

Ed McFarlane went to college with Tim, as well as knowing him in high school. He said in 2003 that he remembered Tim very well, “We were very close friends.” Ed lived just four blocks away from Tim, but the two went to different elementary schools. He first remembers encountering Tim in seventh grade when they both entered a combined junior-senior high school. However, he really got to know Tim in high school “through the athletics program. I played basketball and Tim was on the team too. There was a group of us who ran together, and Tim was involved in that group. In our class, Tim was the only African American. He did everything with us, we were in and out of each others houses with not a thought to race.” Race did have some impact, however. McFarlane said their group included both boys and girls, and that some kids dated within the group. Tim did not. “I remember Tim dating in college, but not in high school. I am going to guess there were no black girls in our school, and in the 1950s I am guessing that Tim would not have ventured into a mixed relationship. Living in the 1950s in an all-white community [inter-racial dating] probably would have caused some comment.” McFarlane does not recall “anyone saying racial things to him [Tim], maybe because I was with him,” and thus no one would do so.

As far as McFarlane could ascertain, Tim felt comfortable within their group of friends, a group he said which was “not at all into alcohol. We would have parties at each others houses, but there was no drinking. We would go to Louis’s (a local

after-school hangout), we went to dances, we'd hang out on the main street of town, but we didn't get into any trouble. It was just a nice group of kids. There were about a dozen of us and Tim was in that group. Television was rather new, so we were outside a lot." He estimated that Bellevue had perhaps 10,000 residents at the time, "but people stayed pretty much in the suburb. There were lots of sports activities."

Tim may have had a fairly close group of friends, but Ted Wilson said that something back then "really messed him up." What Ted thought had made Tim moody as a teenager, was that "his teachers had told him that since he was black, there was no reason for him to go to college, no reason for him to take college preparatory classes or he wouldn't be able to get a job." As Tim recalls the situation, the teacher, a Miss Victoria Taylor, told his mother this first. She said that there was no need for Tim to go to college because he would just end up going to work in a mill. He later added that his teacher had decided that "like any black kid I'd end up cleaning stairs or something. My mother said, 'No, he's not. He's going to college.' It was great to have someone believe in me." His father would have gone in to the school the day of the confrontation also, but he worked the day shift and so Tim's mother who worked nights went alone. In spite of any concerns his teachers in the white school might have had about his future, Tim said, "I had good grades, they couldn't hold me back," and when he graduated, "the whole high school stood up and applauded."

In addition to his teacher's negative prediction about Tim's future, Ted Wilson thought that a neighbor's situation might have depressed Tim. The Wilsons had a neighbor, Henry Lewis, who had studied engineering in college, and it had taken him twelve years to get an engineering job in Pittsburgh. Tim however, disagrees with his brother's assessment. He said to the author in 2003 that the neighbor, who was "an African American but whiter than you are" and nicknamed "Foots," had nothing to do with his mindset during those years.

But, Tim did verify that his brother was right about his moodiness having set in during this period of his life. During the summer before his senior year, Tim had worked as a counselor at a YMCA camp in Lichtman, West Virginia. Camp Lichtman, in Prince George's Forest, he said in 2003, "was where I grew up." The YMCA affiliated camp was segregated, with white campers staying on one side of the river, black campers on the other. The swim coach at Howard University, a Mr. Morgan, who lived next door to Tim's sister Bert, had asked Tim to take the job, and not to say that he was still in high school, as the other counselors were all in college, and black colleges like Howard regularly sent students there as campers for two-week sessions. Tim served as a counselor for college juniors, as a cabin and a general camp counselor. The age issue in itself was not a problem for Tim, as he was already a large young man and probably looked as mature as the others, although when the other counselors found out that he was only sixteen several of them were indeed angry.

The problem for Tim was race. "I came home after that summer after seeing segregation in the camp. I saw how some of the kids were treated, [and after that] I wasn't going to just be Mr. Smiley when people said something to me," Tim stated. "Everybody saw it. I was a different person. I was the same in college. I was not the happy-go-lucky person they thought I was. I didn't really want to be around white people, but doing so was the only way to get things done. We have to be around them, have to know what they they're thinking about, but they don't have to know what we're thinking about. They never took the time to know anything about us except what a few blacks had to say." In 2003, he added that he had "come back" from the camp "a sixteen-year-old black man, a football player and athlete, who didn't want anything from white people except respect. It affected my personality, even to this day." His camping experience was a hard lesson for a young man, and one about which Tim seldom speaks. More than once during the interview process, Tim stated, "I talk about things with you that I never speak about, you bring up things

that I don't like to think about." Race relations on a personal level were one of those things, but not the only one. Moreover, it seems that although numerous people had reacted to Tim during his childhood and early teens based on his race, even to the point of screaming taunts at him in an airport and denying him medical treatment at age six, it was only when he saw such injustices levied against other kids that it he became truly angry.

Ted thought it was their sister, Bert, who had gotten Tim "out of this" (although he perhaps did not know exactly what "this" was), or that "maybe it was Joel Blum," who a few years later hired Tim to work as a counselor in a white boys camp in Maine, who pulled Tim out of that hole. "I know Joel helped him immensely during that period," Ted said. Although Tim credits Joel Blum with many things, as he does members of his family, Tim stated that his family and neighborhood friends had nothing to do with what happened. Instead, he explained, "I think what got me out of it was graduating from high school and going to college." A fight he had with his brother Ted also dissipated some of his frustration.

By his late teens, Tim was already political (as well as cantankerous), according to Ted, and the two brothers eventually came to blows. As Ted remembered it, "The first time I punched him in his mouth he was seventeen, it was a political fight." Ted said he and Tim were having a dispute, "and my mother made us get out of the house." Ted said he no longer had the foggiest idea exactly what the fight was about, except that it was political in nature. Then, "the following year, through some subterfuge he got me in another argument and he punched me in the mouth--and in the same street in front of the same neighbors."

Once again, Tim's version of the past differs in some respects from his brother's. Tim stated that the fight had began during his junior year of high school, "and during my senior year I beat the crap out of him. My mother came out with the

broom and broke it up. I was tired of him, I'd put up with him all of my life, with his mouth, and I'd had enough of it." He did not ascribe any political motive or reason for the fight. Rather he said that his brother had resented his being born. "He was fourteen when I came along, and he didn't like it. He was a motor mouth. He threw me in a pool when I was four years old and told me to swim. He left me in my carriage in the rain once when he was with some girl. So when I was a senior in high school he came down [to visit]. It was the same old stuff. I didn't just punch him in the mouth, I beat the crap out of him. My Dad had told my Mom that I was going to do it," that it was really only a matter of time.

Tim, however, is not proud of any fighting he has done, although he does seem to feel that long ago battle was unavoidable, and appears pleased that if he had to fight it that he did indeed "win" it. He said, "my fights were the kind where people who saw them remembered them." But, he also said that he had only been in a few fights in his life. There were about three with his brother Ted, one with a kid in high school, one with an assistant coach in college, and another one on the football field, also in college. "The one I regret most was the fight with the assistant coach. I was hurt and he kept picking at me, so I went after him. I apologized to him at his house in front of his wife. I went there to apologize; I just lost my temper. It was wrong."

Tim added, "I still have a temper. I have to control myself. That's a part of my personality that most people don't know about." He said that his mother had the same kind of temper, that she had "beat the hell" out of the two women in the project after one of them hit him. But his parents had taught him that he could control his temper. "I'm a very difficult person," he stated in 2003, as he had more than once in the past. "It is said that I don't like being wrong, but it's really that I don't mind answering for things that I've done wrong; but I hate it when people look at me and assume I'm stupid." Moreover, "I'm arrogant. A lot of white people, and black people too, re-

sent this. I've been told that I take over a room when I enter it. Some people don't like that."

Tim said that his parents had seen this in him, his ability both to attract attention and his impatience with the way some people treated him. "My mom and dad held this in check, they made me aware that I could do it too, that I would do that. But that doesn't mean it makes me more accepting of the bullshit I've had to take because of color."

In terms of problems because of his rank in the family, Timothy Wilson remembers his brother Emit, and later Andrew, as sticking up for him during the few years they had together. He said that, "Emit used to protect me from Ted when I was young, just after the war. But even in the late 1940s I remember them having a set-to about me. Andrew couldn't put up with Ted's mouth. He told him to leave me alone."

Of Tim's adult years, when asked if he thought Tim had close friends, Ted Wilson said, "That's a good one. When he was younger, he truly had people that would go to the mat for him.... As he got older, he acquired very few friends that I can recall that would go to the mat for him. Most of the people who truly helped him, he made in that period [his early adulthood]. In the last ten to twelve years he has made very few lasting friends, those he made twenty-five or thirty years ago are the ones who would go to the mat for him."

But, before he reached high school, and those friends, Tim had to get through elementary and middle school. Tim said that people still tell stories about how he was the only black male in his schools from first through tenth grades, "then another male came." Wilson said that although many people credited him for handling the situation well, such credit really belonged to his parents, to "how they handled situations, they could have gone ape but they didn't." Some family members had not wanted him to go to schools in Bellevue, where the community was more than predominantly white, but his father thought it best that he do so. He did attend a school with

a significant black population in Pittsburgh for kindergarten and the beginning of first grade, the Leo Wald Elementary School “just downhill from the project.”

After the family moved to Bellevue, Tim attended the Jackson School through sixth grade, where, in spite of a sometimes difficult environment, “there were a couple of teachers who really cared for me, who tried to work with me.” Two of those he credits for this are “Miss Rocky, the principal, and Miss Zimmer, my first grade teacher.” When it comes to the names of people Tim admires, his memory is long.

In the seventh grade Tim had a teacher he would long remember, a Miss Valerie Shoemaker. “She was a b_ _ _,” he said, using the term in an affectionate way. “She had red hair, and drove a Corvette” and taught him English in the seventh and ninth grades. “She was in her forties or early fifties when I had her. She visited me in Thailand when I was in the Peace Corps.” At a different time Tim said that as their seventh-grade teacher, she called my best buddy a wap-dego in class. She called me some names too. She was trying to get us used to what people would call us.” One day, “she threw an inkwell at my head and hit the guy behind me. We loved her. She called my parents when I was teaching in Thailand. She taught school until the 1970s. She was a fantastic lady, and taught me a lot about people; that some people are good, others are dogs.”

Wilson said that Valerie Shoemaker was “everything a teacher ought to be. She was tough.” He told one story in two separate interviews: “We had to do book reports in the ninth grade, everybody had to do one about their own holiday, their own Bible or Holy Book. We had to read and do an extensive report on it. That’s where I really learned about religious tolerance: she played no favorites. And this was in 1955. She also made us talk about our relationships. She did things you couldn’t do today.”

Shoemaker “had a guy by the name of Shoat, the history teacher. He tried his best not to get into slavery. He was a tough bird. He was bound and determined to teach the kids about slavery but not offend me. I asked him later if what he had said coincided with what my father told me.” Shoat had spoken with Mr. Wilson and done extra reading about the subject. He then told Tim, “everything I learned [as a student] was crap.” Shoat, Tim said, “taught me how to look at books, history.” This type of skepticism “just wasn’t [heard of] in those days. This guy was admitting to that, he was trying his darnedest to get us to read other things” than the standard curriculum.

A Mrs. Bonnell taught Wilson English as a sophomore. “She taught me about bullfighting. She was from Texas. She was so interesting—she just made my day.” Bonnell introduced Wilson to Tom Lea’s *Brave Bull* and Earnest Hemingway’s *Death in the Afternoon*. Tim later spent some time studying bullfighting, and when he lived in Arizona he went to see the bull fights in Nogales, Mexico, a few times.

Wilson also remembers Bill Neily as an important teacher and person in his life. Neily taught Tim science “in middle-school, high school, and college. He was a neat guy,” Wilson said in January 2002.

In addition to his academic studies, sports early on became important to Tim. He said in January 2002 that his mother always watched him play sports, “But dad didn’t see me play until high school. After my sophomore year he never missed a game.” He remembers one particular football game in which, he said, “I caught a ball on the seventeenth-yard line, and I ran eighty-three yards for a touch-down, weighing 220 pounds at 5’ 10” (he would later pass 6’ 2” but identify himself as being 6’ 1” in 2018), my father running down the side line yelling, ‘You can make it!’ I sort of fell onto the finish line. My dad was 5’ 6”, never over 155 pounds, but he was like a truck—so solid and so strong. When I was in the eighth grade was the last time I

could wear anything of his. Earlier, in the sixth grade, I wore his tuxedo in a play, 'Froggie the Prince.' It was the last time I really wore anything of his. The play was stereotyped, I was the butler."

Wilson stated in 2000 that, concerning his high school, and his neighborhood, "there was always a small black community at that school. A few other black kids, athletes, came out ahead of me." In addition, within the neighborhood lived the aforementioned Henry "Foots" Lewis who had "graduated from Pittsburgh Engineering in the 1930s: and his wife who was a nurse." There was also "a man up the street, his wife's name was Gladys, who played football. He was a great player in the 1930s, and he became a barber. His shop was on the corner of Lincoln and Meade. We would get our hair cut there."

Another local man who both influenced Tim and watched the progress of his early life, was Phil King. King, also an African American, had been "a great basketball player at Bellevue High school in the 1950s. He died young." The Kings had moved to the end of the Wilson's block when Tim was a kid. Tim said in 2003 that Phil King had been in school long before him, but "I saw him play when I was in grade school." King did not go on to higher education, but "I went on and went to college and graduated, I did something Phil didn't do. Because of my accomplishments, his family respected me. Phil did more later in his life, but he died earlier than he should have." Wilson said that he had liked King considerably, and that King had always been kind to him.

There were also, by high school, a few other black kids in the neighborhood. However, they were a few years behind Tim. He recalls one family in particular, the Eskridges. One of the children was named Darrell, and he had a close friend named Donny Black, "an unbelievable football player." After Tim left for college, a few of the local kids, kids Wilson said, "who wanted to be like me, and would have been," in terms of moving forward with their education—scholastic and oth-

er—climbed a fence to swim in a pool. Donny Black drowned, “and Darrell was never the same.” Speaking of both Darrell and of one of his own sons who would lose a teenage friend to an accident years later, Wilson said, “they never really get over it,” an early loss of a best friend.

Almost alone as a black student of his age in Bellevue in the late 1950s, Wilson participated in sports and music as well as his academic work. He sang with a mixed ensemble in high school, and he made another trip to Washington, D.C. to see his sister during his sophomore year. Bert was in a musical that year, and Tim went to the studio to watch her practice. She was going over a song when Tim arrived. Todd Duncan was her voice coach, and had been the first Porgy of the Porgy and Bess show. He had a German accent. In his studio, he asked Tim’s sister and another woman, a white woman, to sing a scale. He then said that Tim’s sister sang from her lungs, while the other woman sang from her throat. Duncan told the white woman that she could come back when she learned to sing like Tim’s sister. According to Tim, he then “asked who I was, then asked, ‘do you play football?’ Duncan then said, ‘I also hear that you sing.’ He asked me to sing a scale. I did. Then Duncan said, ‘don’t stop playing football.’ It ended any idea I had of singing as well as my sister, but I did still sing with choirs, churches, I sang tenor pieces in high school. It was neat. The musical director [Dean Streeter] was really nice to me.” Streeter and his wife, a pianist, “had no children and really made an effort to be nice to me. They knew I liked music.”

As to his sister’s musical career, Tim said, “My sister lived there [DC] until 1964 or 1965. She worked in downtown Washington. In the late ‘50s she had an operation, and her career was over. She had a tumor, and they cut out part of the lining of her stomach. It affected her wind, so it was over ...” Bert would later return to Pittsburgh and the family home.

Another formative relationship Tim had in high school was with William “Pop” Storer, his football coach from the ninth to eleventh grades. He drove Wilson to games, and, “He taught me all the fundamentals. ... His way of teaching was probably the one I modeled myself after. He was extremely quiet, we never heard him scream until the sectionals. He even went to Slippery Rock. Storer left Bellevue during Tim’s junior year and returned to Slippery Rock as its Athletic Director, and Tim would soon be heading off to the college himself. “I can say that because of him I became a better player. I didn’t play well until my senior year [of college]. I had been injured, and wanted to finish on a good note. He always said that I was still growing; I went to college at seventeen. I had a great season, a lot of fun my senior year. I proved I really could play; I could have stayed another year. But two knee injuries and a bad shoulder was enough, my father said. After that I went to Camp Powhatan, then Arizona and the Peace Corps.”

In addition to Pop Storer, Wilson speculated that Bruce Adams was probably the person he modeled his own coaching style after in later years. Adams taught Wilson physical education throughout junior high school, then high-school basketball and baseball. He was a graduate of Slippery Rock, and together, Tim stated, “Pop and Bruce convinced my parents that I should go to Slippery Rock.”

The decision that Tim would go to Slippery Rock did not rest well with Wilson’s oldest brother, Andrew. Andrew believed that Tim should attend a black college. Tim had grown up in a predominantly white neighborhood and attended white public schools, and Andrew felt that as a young black man Tim should experience a black college education. Tim said in 2003, “I’m not sorry that I went to a white college, but it did leave scars.” First, however, came his high school graduation.

Wilson well remembers his graduation ceremony. “There were about eighty kids in my class,” he said. “Sixty-seven went to college. There was only about a .05 difference between us

[the entire class] in average [the average being close to 4.0]. I can remember the night they gave us our diplomas in 1958. My parents, and my sister, and my brothers and their wives were there. It was a sea of white with a few black faces among them.” When it came time for Tim to receive his diploma, the guest speaker from Notre Dame looked at him intensely, seemingly with surprise.” Then, “The principal shook hands with me and he wouldn’t let me go. The whole school could see it. The whole place stood up and applauded. I can still remember my parents and my brothers and sister saying how proud they were of me, but the credit really goes to my parents.” Tim Wilson almost always gives the credit to his parents. He did so in 2000, and he does so in 2019.

CHAPTER TWO : COLLEGE, THE NEWS- PAPER, THE PEACE CORPS, DEXTER, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

"If I hadn't gotten married I would probably have stayed in Thailand or somewhere in that part of the world. I'm not unhappy that I didn't stay, but that probably was what would have happened. I really enjoyed being there. I enjoyed it everywhere I went until I got to Italy and went to Naples and knew it was just as bad as being in the States. It was racist everywhere else I went. I wasn't a second-class citizen until I got to Europe, and you knew it."

Timothy P. Wilson referring to his time in the Peace Corps

At age seventeen Timothy Wilson left his hometown of Bellevue, Pennsylvania to attend Slippery Rock University where he majored in history, English, and science, even though some members of his family thought that he should attend a traditional black college. His brother Andrew had even opposed his father's earlier decision to send Tim to the essentially all-white public schools of Bellevue. But, Tim said in November 2000, "My father wanted me to be able to compete. He knew the world would be changing, and that Belleville High School was one of the better high schools in Pennsylvania." In 2003, Tim said that attending both Bellevue schools and Slippery Rock University did indeed help him to compete in the broader world, although each left scars. Yet, combined with his past history and his subsequent experiences in Thailand, Arizona, and Maryland, Wilson's years at Slippery Rock and at the Maine summer camp at which he would work during his summers in college, started the young man on a long, circuitous, sometimes spiraling path to becoming perhaps the ultimate

educator—be it in the classroom, the boardroom, or on the football field—in Maine and across the world.

The decision to attend Slippery Rock University was not made by Tim alone. “Unbeknownst to me, my parents and football coach William “Pop” Storer decided to send me to Slippery Rock. No black had graduated from there before. Pop Storer used to teach at Slippery Rock, and he and Mr. [Bruce] Adams used to drive me around to games and such. That’s probably why I wanted to coach.” Tim did not know it at the time, but “those guys sat down with my parents when I was in high school and told them if I did well enough, they’d make sure I went to Slippery Rock. I did well enough to go to other places, too.”

Wilson had to undergo a series of interviews in order to get into Slippery Rock, as well as have high enough grades and SAT scores to qualify. In 1958, roughly 800 students attended Slippery Rock State College, which had been Slippery Rock Teachers College. One of only a few blacks, Tim would serve as class president during his final year.

One of Wilson’s former high school teachers moved to Slippery Rock at the same time as Tim enrolled. Bill Neily had taught in Bellevue, and at Slippery Rock Wilson had him as an instructor in botany and field botany. “We stayed friends until I came to Maine in the 1970s.” After Tim married, for a number of years he and his family would visit with Neally when they visited Tim’s parents.

In addition, one of Tim’s friends from high school went to Slippery Rock with him. Ed McFarlane was a basketball player from Belleville, and his mother died when the two youths were in college. Tim said that his family and others’ tried extra hard to include Ed in their lives, to try to ease some of his difficulties with the death. In addition, when they were seniors, the two ran against one another for the position of president of the student body.

Ed's nomination for class president, according to Wilson in 2003, had been deliberately calculated to be anti-Wilsonian, as a certain group at the college did not want to have a black president. They thought McFarlane would be able to secure the votes of many jocks and young women, depleting Tim's base of support. "I won, but it was one of the reasons I never ran for office again." He had been president of his sophomore class in high school, and although that campaign had been less viciously waged, his college experience of "what people will say or do to be elected [or have their candidate elected]" tipped the scales such that he forever eschewed public office. Decades later, Governor Kenneth Curtis of Maine suggested that Tim, who had gained name recognition as the state's "energy tzar," might run for Maine Secretary of State. Tim declined.

Ed McFarlane, however, interviewed in 2003, asserted that he did not run against Tim for senior class president at Slippery Rock. He said that he did not run for any office that year, but that it was possible that some people might have thought he was going to run. Hearing of this later, Tim started laughing and said, "He's lying!" A crucial juncture in the life of one of the two young men, the other apparently managed to forget it altogether.

Wilson recalled that there were "a lot of interesting people" at Slippery Rock. Father Ford, a Catholic priest, became one of Wilson's friends. Most of the male students in his dorm could sing in Latin, as could Wilson. Ford, Wilson related, "used to make me go get them up to sing, all the football players." Wilson babysat for one of his professors' kids, and, "he had a slew of them." Another teacher, Wally Rose, coached baseball and football, and took Wilson literally in hand one day when he got into a fight with another coach. "He tackled me to the ground to keep me from killing the guy. It went back to the stage when I was younger and really had a bad temper." Tim regretted having lost his temper, and went to the coach's home to apologize.

During Tim's years at Slippery Rock, Todd Duncan ran the history department, and Tim and his father Henry would come to know Duncan quite well. "He just loved my father," Wilson said. "Dad would come to see me and the two of them would disappear somewhere and talk about history. He loved my father, and when I went back in 1976 he told me so."

When he was in his senior year of studies, the new class president met former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt when she visited the college, as well as Vincent Price, who came to visit a professor. Wilson recalls Roosevelt's visit most vividly. She came to speak, Tim related, and, "The woman who brought her to the college had been married to a senator. She drank straight bourbon and smoked. Mrs. Roosevelt had a little taste of the bourbon. We talked for awhile, then she said, 'I have to take a little nap.' She did—right there." Roosevelt awoke just before it was time to give her address, and Wilson recalls that she spoke well, and without notes or any obvious preparation. The year was 1962, and Eleanor Roosevelt died that December. When she died, Tim Wilson was just entering the Peace Corps, and the two events remain linked in his mind.

It was during Tim's college days that his father called to tell him that he'd been offered the title of sanitation engineer at US Steel, and rather than accept the position, he told his son, 'I resigned.' As he explained it to Tim, "I wear a green outfit, I push a broom. I'm not going to sit around and boss a bunch of people around." There was no real change in the actual job, just in what it was called and in a few matters of appearance. Tim stated in 2003 that "It was all a bunch of crap, like now everybody's a 'director,' it's an ego thing." Henry Wilson was not looking for an ego boost. He considered his position that of a janitor and wanted to keep that title, so he retired. That left him more time for making his dandelion wine.

Tim Wilson kept two black snakes at college. He caught flied mice for them, and although he usually kept them in jars (sometimes in the zoology lab), during vacations he let the

snakes loose in his room. There were three beds in the dorm rooms, the beds piled three-high. “I slept in the bottom bunk,” Tim explained. Most of the time the arrangements worked, but one time, his roommates came back before Wilson did. As he related it, “During spring break my freshman year, I had let the snakes out. When I got back, Dean Evans in the room below us told me to go upstairs. He said, ‘Your roommates are calling you every name in the book.’ The snakes were five feet long, and they [my roommates] didn’t know I had them. The whole dorm could hear those guys yelling,” Wilson laughed while remembering the ruckus. Tim also kept snakes at various other times during his life, including rattlesnakes, diamond backs, and boa constrictors, having caught his first snake—a timber rattlesnake—at age thirteen while a Boy Scout. He even made money as a snake “bounty-hunter” at one time, earning \$25 for each snake he caught, although he says he did it as much for fun as for the money. The snakes were mostly diamond backs, which he caught and sold for a few months at age twenty-one while living in Arizona.

Tim and his classmates had some other such fun. During his senior year, one of the team’s tacklers, Herbie Celeski, was going to watch his little brother make a television appearance. The guys referred to the brother as “Little Cel.” Everyone gathered around the television to watch the show, Captain Jim’s Popeye Club. As Tim described it, “The Captain said to Little Cel, ‘Hello, is there anyone you want to say hello to?’ Little Cel said, ‘Hello Mom, hello Dad,’ then ‘Hello Herbie—right here Herbie,’ and he shot the bird. There were sixty of us on the floor laughing—it was hysterical.” After that, according to Wilson, the team used to say “Right Here Herbie” when we were pissed. No one could figure out why were saying it until some girls squealed on us.”

Tim spoke of his high school and college friends with fondness and amusement decades after they left school. Ron Falvo was another friend of Tim’s from this part of his life. After not seeing him since school, in the early 1990s they would visit

once again. Falvo's father, Tim explained, "had been a street cleaner in town, his mother a homebody, and he [Ron] was the only child when he was growing up, so he had some idea about what Bellevue had been like for me." So, too, could Falvo understand Tim's situation at Slippery Rock. Wilson let his comments stop with those simple statements, declining to discuss the more painful portions of his college and high school years.

Other people from Wilson's past would reappear in the 1980s to early 2000s. One of Wilson's college roommates, Quentin Curry, called Wilson in 2002, and expressed his desire to visit Tim in Maine. Curry had coached at Dartmouth College and at West Point during his professional career. Curry's sister had also gone to college with Wilson, and Curry wanted to reestablish contact. He had come to visit Tim in Augusta, Maine, in the late 1970s, "and got to see the kids when they were young," Wilson stated in 2016. For another friend, Denny Davies, Tim had helped secure a counselor position in a Maine summer camp, and Davies would later work at East Stroudsburg in Eastern Pennsylvania in the football department. Tim would see him again, as he would Curry, in the early 2010s. Tim, over the years, would develop extensive athletic and educational connections throughout the country, connections which would sometimes prove invaluable to the thousands of kids Tim would work with over the years in various capacities, up through the mid-2010s.

In spite of some good memories, Wilson stated in December 2002 that he "didn't really like Slippery Rock. It was like high school; it was white. People thought, 'Oh, Tim loved it.' I didn't love it. I was treated like a second-class citizen, although these were nice people." The following year he added that although he was treated like a second-class citizen at Slippery Rock, "I got over it. I secured a good education there. Going to a white college helped me to compete, I was not wanting for anything." Yet, Wilson also stated that in spite of the advantages of the school itself, "To this day, Slippery Rock is not a nice town. [Back then] I couldn't even get a haircut there." At an-

other time he stated that his graduation from high school had meant something to him. However, “I’m really not that proud of graduating from Slippery Rock. There were things there I liked, people I’ll always respect, but I never felt like part of that community.” In 2016, he added that he had not wanted to go to his graduation at Slippery Rock; “I was done,” he said. He had a chance to be at Camp Powhatan, in Maine, and being at the camp meant more to him than attending the graduation. In this as other areas, Wilson remains ambivalent. Wilson did not attend his college graduation. He graduated in August instead of May, and by August he had already moved on to what would eventually be his home of many years, he was in Maine.

Tim had started working at Camp Powhatan in southwestern Maine in 1960, the summer before his junior year in college. Primarily a Jewish boy’s camp, its director, Joel Bloom, had visited Slippery Rock and hired Tim to work as his first African American counselor. Tim worked there on Pleasant Lake the following two summers, including the summer he graduated college, as a bunk counselor and as a sports counselor. Bloom and the campers quickly developed respect and affection for Tim, and Wilson would ultimately spend a good portion of his life working with youth at the camp, spending almost all of his summers there as long as it remained Powhatan, and later when it became the home of the Seeds of Peace.

Not long after leaving college and working for Joel Bloom at Powhatan for the summer, Wilson entered the Peace Corps, attending a special session in Seattle, Washington, starting in November 1962. The Peace Corps had asked him to attend an earlier session that year, but Wilson had prior commitments. Had he attended that earlier session, he would have been in the same group as his future first wife, Ida Marie Gamon. As it was, the meeting between the two would have to wait.

Before entering the Peace Corps, Wilson had been considering doing some graduate work during the upcoming year. He had met Eunice Shriver and some of the Kennedy family in

Pennsylvania, and Eunice asked him if he would be interested in the type of work the Peace Corps was then undertaking. "I said I'd do it," Tim recalled in 2002. He promptly forgot about it, he said, "Then my parents called, and said the FBI was checking up on me with everybody in the neighborhood." Tim quickly remembered.

The Peace Corps inducted three groups of volunteers in 1962. Tim was in group three, which assembled in November, although the request had originally come that he attend group two, the group that Ida Gammon attended. Tim had declined the second group as he had already committed himself to the Maine summer camp by the time the Peace Corps extended its offer. Then, not certain what his near future held, from Camp Powhatan Wilson had gone to Phoenix, Arizona. He would ultimately fly to Seattle from Arizona. "That fit my schedule, and my parents understood it," he said in 2016 of his unfolding journeys.

In Phoenix, Tim worked for W. A. Robinson. Robinson, who Wilson refers to simply as "W. A.," owned a local newspaper. Earlier, Robinson had served as the first black principal of the city's first black high school, the Phoenix Union High School. "He ran a tremendous school, then he put together the newspaper after he retired," Wilson later reminisced. "I used to help W. A. at the paper, delivering papers, sorting them, that sort of thing. ... I drove the car for him." After living in a rooming house for some time, Wilson went to live with W.A. "He was in his seventies then," Wilson said. "He was a nice old man." (Robinson was also Earl Foley's grandfather, one of the boxers who challenged Mohamed Ali.)

Wilson credited Robinson with having given him a further education in "how the minorities are treated by the majority," as well as introducing him to Senator Barry Goldwater. Robinson had continual arguments with Goldwater. The two men attended different branches, one liberal or reformed and one conservative, of the Episcopalian Church. The two churches

sometimes met as one congregation, and the two men would wage their latest battle, albeit peacefully, at these united church services. Wilson would accompany W. A. to church, thus meeting Goldwater and getting involved, at least as an observer, in the running debates. “W. A. would argue with Senator Goldwater all the time. It was hilarious to watch, but Senator Goldwater had great respect for W. A.” Robinson was outspoken in seemingly everything he did, and Wilson said that he “was one of the first people I met, other than my parents, who truly did not care what people thought of him.” Such an approach to life, and to race issues, had a great impact on the young Wilson.

Wilson said that W. A. “taught me a lot about education. He gave me an opportunity to see Indian tribes there because of because I was also substitute teaching in the county, [Maricopa County] near Phoenix.” Wilson taught both in tribal schools and in Phoenix public schools, often teaching for a half-day in one school and a half-day in another. In addition, he worked in a bar part-time and caught snakes to add a bit to his income. This period of work lasted only a short while, however, as he was getting ready to go back to school when his parents called and told him that the Peace Corps once again wanted him.

“My parents called,” Tim recalled. “They said the Peace Corps wanted me to train in Washington state to go to Thailand with [ultimately] forty-four other people in my group.” Fifty people had been in the group to start, their initial meeting place being the Wilsonian Hotel in Seattle. In the end, forty-three people made it all the way to Thailand. Tim went as a teacher, as did the rest of his group, and years later a number of them would track Tim down after seeing him on television. Wilson was offered the choice of going to Africa, Thailand, or South America. He chose Thailand in spite of expectations that being black he would prefer to go to Africa. He would not regret his choice.

Some of the group would—as would Tim—marry while in Thailand. “Some,” Tim related, “stayed there. It was a very eclectic group. We have lost some of them.” Tim remembers the deaths of some of these people, just as he remembers myriad of details about hundreds if not thousands of people he has known during his lifetime. The late 1990s ambassador to Thailand, Darrel Thompson, served with Tim’s group in the Peace Corps during 1962-65. In early 2003, the group organized a forty-year reunion, “and a bunch of the group went over there for the reunion,” Tim later said, but was himself unable to attend.

Training in the Peace Corps in 1962 and 1963 was seemingly more intense than that of some later years, at least in Wilson’s estimation. His group had to take swimming lessons, learn life-saving techniques, attain a certain proficiency in the language of the host country, and undergo a selection process, a physical one, “to see if you could really cut it.” After this, the inductees were voted on as to their suitability. The vote was cast by natives of the country or region in which the inductee would be serving, Peace Corps training staff, and others. Of the original fifty or so inductees in Tim’s group, forty-three ultimately made it through the process and went to Thailand in February 1963.

Timothy Wilson had the distinction of being one of the few volunteers at the time to go, while serving, from a major city to the countryside. (He was also, a friend would note years later, the youngest of his group and the only African American.) He initially worked as an instructor at a teachers’ college in Bangkok, teaching American history, American literature, and creative writing, and he served as head basketball coach, at Prasarnmitr College. He met Ida Gammon, a daughter of the “black bourgeoisie” of the American Southwest, in Bangkok, where she had been teaching at a military school. Soon thereafter, Ida moved to the country to teach in a small village. Tim eventually taught law and, to a lesser extent, architecture students as well as education majors—especially

when loaned out from his base at Prasarnmitr—in Bangkok, teaching regularly at Thamasa and Chulakorn colleges. Looking back in the early 2000s, he said that most of the faculty at the colleges “spoke brilliant English” and that as a group of educators “there was no way I was in the same class as them.”

Be that as it may, Ida and Tim decided to marry soon after they met. They did so in June 1963 at the American Embassy. Tim explained, “We decided to get married and her parents never knew we got married until we got back. We sent them a telegram, but they never received it,” partly, he thought, “because they lived in the South. [So], they found out from my parents.” According to Wilson, when he and Ida decided to marry while they were still overseas, “It had a lot to do with not having a lot of people around. They [Ida’s parents] would have wanted to have it on television.” Ida came from a well-connected wealthy black family in Arkansas, and her father, Tim said more than once “was the man people came to get things done.” Ida Wilson, although young, was already an accomplished woman, and had entered Fisk University at age fifteen. Although a few people would later think that Tim had in some way deceived Ida about having been in love with her simply for who she was and not for her family’s position in Arkansas, and that had caused problems between the two families, Tim said that was far from the truth. The real story, he said, was that “My father never spoke to her father because her father had sharecroppers and my father had no use for that. He felt he [John Gammon] exploited people of color, and my father’s attitude never changed; we were married for seventeen years and they never spoke.”

Wilson said that he himself never shared his father’s perception of Ida’s father. “Her father was a brilliant man,” Wilson said, “a man well-known in Democratic circles. He started school programs for black kids, he helped them a lot.” Years later, after Tim had himself entered civic service in Maine, Maine Governor Kenneth Curtis “spoke at one of John’s fish fries, and President Clinton [then the state Governor] spoke

there too, and at a reception dinner in John's honor before he died. I had nothing but respect for Ida's father," Wilson asserted.

Tim offered to move to Arkansas to help his father-in-law some years before his death. But, Tim related, "He said it was not the place for me to be. We went to the bank there once, and they called him 'Boy.' I was ready to jump across the counter and wring the guy's neck." His father-in-law restrained him. In another instance, Tim recalled, "We went to see [Arkansas] Governor Wilbur Farbus." Farbus had a negative reputation in terms of race relations in some quarters. "We went in the back door," Tim said, "and he [John] gave Farbus some white lightening. Farbus gave him a box of Cuban cigars." John Gammon then said to Tim, "You saw him. He's not that bad a guy' and he wasn't." Gammon, to some degree, had helped get Farbus elected.

In spite of the distance between the two fathers-in-law, Ida's mother did meet with Tim's parents on occasion, and visited the older Wilsons in Pittsburgh. "It didn't go over too well at the time," Tim said. His father in particular had resented some of Mrs. Gammon's ideas and behaviorisms." Tim once said of Ida's mother, Hazel, that "she was very bright, and the mother gave this to the daughter." Both women, Wilson said, "were gorgeous." Hazel, Wilson said, as a southern woman, "was very arrogant." At times Wilson struggles to not say anything more negative, but did state that "my brother [Ted] said she'll dance upon my grave."

In the meantime, Ida and Tim Wilson set up housekeeping together in Thailand. Tim moved to where Ida was working. This was, Tim explained in 2002, "because she worked for a princess and I worked for a commoner. We had thought she'd be coming down and we'd both be working at universities like I'd been doing. Instead, her headmistress, Aijahn Yai at Nar-reerat girl's school [had it arranged] so we ended up living in that town, Phrae." (Phrae is also the name of the county in

which the school and town were located.) “I had moved up there, and became the teacher at the boy’s school, Phiryalai.”

Phiryalai served as a school for boys of ages roughly fourteen to eighteen. There Wilson initially taught primarily ninth and twelfth grades, instructing the youth in English as a second language, as it later would be called. Wilson eventually became the assistant superintendent to the school district as well as being a teacher. In addition, he became the advisor for the Thai teams at the Southeast Asia Games and the Supervisor of Athletic Programs for the state of Phrae, and coached basketball at the school where he taught.

During his time in the region, Wilson said, “I got to learn about the country, and I became very good speaker of Thai.” Wilson had not needed to learn the language in-depth while living in Bangkok, but speaking Thai fluently was paramount in the countryside where he lived with Ida. Although some of the teachers in Phrae spoke English, neither the majority of his students nor the general community did. Wilson maintained his Thai language skills, and stated in 2002 that, “I can still speak it. My vocabulary is less [extensive], but I am still considered a good speaker.”

The population of the Wilsons’ village was about 5-6,000 in the early 1960s. Transportation modes ranged from buffalo carts to buses to taxis. To travel out of the village, the young couple had to take a taxicab to the nearest train station, roughly a one-hour ride, and take a train from there. At home, the Wilsons lived next door to a Buddhist temple.

Wilson said that the move from the city to the country, which he reiterated was very rare in the Peace Corps, “made me a better volunteer.” He worked hard, “but I learned more from people there than they learned from me. I was just too young, but it made a difference in my life.” He said at another time that he was glad that he and Ida “had to move up country. I had a ball.”

While in the Peace Corps, Tim sent a number of letters to Joel Bloom. In one of them, in blue ink on a blue fold-up air-mail form, he wrote from Bangkok to his friends Joel and Evelyn, Joel's spouse, and to the rest of the camp,

Dear Joel and Eve (staff, campers),

I miss you all very much. Right now, school is in session. I'm teaching twenty-five hours a week, that includes coaching basketball. I'm teaching American Literature also.

NEWS! June 19, 1963 I MARRIED Miss Ida Marie Gamon at 11:00 a.m. at the American Embassy. Now what happens? As of August 26, my new teaching assignment will be at this address:

Piriyalai Boys School

Phrae, Thailand

Reason for the change: my wife now teaches at the girls' school there, I'll teach at the boys school. How's camp? Is everyone in good health? Lew, I miss that morning bell! Bob Juceam, your stamps will be sent as soon as I get your home address. Ira, thanks again for your letter. Joel and Eve, instead of going to Bermuda this year come to Thailand. "Acky," are you worried yet?

Tell Walter I miss his cigars and his steaks. One big favor will be, someone give a "G" for me in the dining hall. To be serious for a second, Camp Powhatan is one of the finest things that happened to me in my short life. I can do a better job here in Thailand due to the things I learned from Joel, Lew, Ira. Maybe this sounds like a sermon, but I sincerely mean it. Campers and new staff take heed of things you'll learn from these men, they're tops. Bob Juceam is also included in that group. Best of luck—write soon—I'll try to answer. Have a good Red and Gray.

-Tim Wilson

An informative letter in terms of what Tim was doing in Thailand, it also carried statements about what he learned at Powhatan from its founder Ira, from Ira's son Joel, currently the camp director, and from others who would continue to play a role in Wilson's life, as would the camp. Tim signed off with a wish that the campers enjoy their up and coming Red and Gray Color Wars, an athletic competition one version or another of which Wilson would be involved on and off for the next fifty plus years. And, Tim would eventually be the bell ringer for thousands of young men and women.

Differences in how cultures deal with issues of race was one of the things Wilson learned more about while in the Peace Corps. "In Thailand," Wilson said in 2003, "I was considered a first-class citizen." He considered that generally true also for Maine and all of South East Asia. Speaking of Thailand, he said that the only time racism affected him there "was when southern [US] whites went there. Then we began being called the same names we get called in the United States." For Tim, this happened after Americans began building a damn in the region, but in general, his time in Thailand was rewarding on many levels.

Wilson served in the Peace Corps for two and one-half years. He stated in early 2002 that, "If I hadn't gotten married I would probably have stayed in Thailand or somewhere in that part of the world. I'm not unhappy that I didn't stay, but that probably was what would have happened. I really enjoyed being there. I enjoyed it everywhere I went until I got to Italy and went to Naples and knew it was just as bad as being in the States. It was racist everywhere else I went. I wasn't a second-class citizen until I got to Europe, and you knew it."

After returning from the Peace Corps and Europe, Tim and Ida moved to Salisbury, Maryland. Their son Craig was born there, and, overall, the Wilsons enjoyed the community. Tim taught at Salisbury High School during 1965 and 1966. He wrote to thank Joel Bloom for the offer of a job that first sum-

mer back in the states, but added, “our little one will be born sometime in July or early August.” He also said that, regarding his new address, “Since February 1, I have been teaching English and Journalism at Salisbury Sr. High.” In addition to his classroom activities while at Salisbury, he eventually served as the head football coach and as the assistant basketball and the assistant baseball coach. Furthermore, as he wrote Bloom in December 1965, “We have had many good things happen to us since we have returned to the states. But having our own home and a chance to be my own boss next fall [as the head football coach] is pretty wonderful.” He asked Bloom to remember him to his wife Evelyn and to all the campers, and he thanked Joel again for all the aid he had provided, stating, “I wouldn’t have had so much success as I have had without your help.” He also invited the Blooms to visit his new family.

Wilson said in early 2002 regarding his time at Salisbury that, “I really enjoyed the teaching staff there. There were so many talented teachers. Then the board decided to make it a vocational school. They broke it up and sent the faculty and the black kids elsewhere.” The students were sent to three different schools, and the faculty either went elsewhere or “they let them go.” In Wilson’s case, “people [in the school district] wanted me to teach at what would be the new high school, but instead the board sent me to Nanacoke. I was to be the assistant principal and track coach.” Wilson said in a later interview that he had wanted to go to the other school to coach, that both the black and the white parents had wanted him to be transferred there, but that the school board was not amenable to that idea. “The school board,” he said, “thought I was too uppity a black to teach little white boys, so they sent me to be a disciplinarian and teach basketball.”

As he had described part of the situation in a letter to Joel Bloom following his first year at Salisbury, “We have had a so-so year. Teaching is alright, but in a segregated school system, it is tough—but I needed the experience.” Coaching he relayed, “was my worst endeavor ... the boys have learned a

great deal about the game of football, but the record shows we must have been terrible: 1-7-1. It was a long season.” He sent a picture and word about the new baby, Craig, who, “as you can see ... is pretty large. He is five months old, twenty pounds, and thirty inches. He keeps Ida Marie quite busy.” Tim also queried Joel about the staff situation at Powhatan for the coming year: “Sir, if you find yourself short of counselors this summer, and you need two and 1/3, let us know. Ida Marie is especially good in Dramatics.”

Tim Wilson did return to the camp that year with his family, and soon found his life taking him in a new direction. As he explained it in 2002, “It so happens that when I came to Maine in 1966 [to be at Powhatan for the summer] I applied at Dexter High School” for a teaching position. He did so with Bloom’s support.

At the time Tim applied to Dexter, a small town in northwestern Maine, Woody Fletcher, later the superintendent of another school district, was teaching and coaching there. One of the football coaches had recently quit and left for another school. “Woody asked me to apply. I said, ‘You’re crazy, they’re not going to hire a Negro.’ But I sent a letter and information to the superintendent. Then I called Woody and told him that I hadn’t said anything about race [in my letter]. Joel Bloom was the head of the Camping Association for Maine as well as the National Association at the time,” and gave Tim a hearty endorsement.

Before he went for his interview, Tim reminisced decades later, “I told them I was a Negro as I didn’t want the school board or whomever to flip out when they interviewed me. The superintendent interviewed me, and it was quite the interview. The biggest thing was that they wanted to know if I could live way out in the backwoods. I told them that we had lived in Thailand. Years later, I found out that the superintendent had called the Salisbury school district and asked about me. He [the Salisbury superintendent] had said, ‘Oh, he does

a good job. If you find a place for any more n_ _ _ _s up there let me know. We'd love to send some more." This is the only time Wilson specified that he had ever been called that, and even then, he used the word in the plural. It is apparent, however, that Tim had heard the term, and worse, used before, both in reference to African Americans in general and to himself in particular.

The Dexter school board decided to hire Wilson, something he credits to risk taking, as he does Joel Bloom's appointing him the first, so he was told, black counselor in an all white camp in New England in 1960. Wilson said of the board in 2000, "they didn't have to hire me, ... all they asked me was if I could coach."

Tim stayed in Dexter for six years; years Tim referred to fondly in later decades and which he felt were important, formative, years for him. He coached football, wrestling, and cheerleading. He made numerous friends in Dexter, and his family found the community generally welcoming, although Ida, Tim thought, would have preferred having some other people of color, especially women, nearby. Two of Wilson's three sons—he also has a daughter—were born while Tim was teaching in Dexter.

Wilson and his family formed deep ties with the community and Wilson still speaks warmly of the town. He related how the local inn would call him to let him know whenever his father arrived in town to visit, so that Tim could meet him. Both Tim's father and his mother expressed their belief that Maine was the place Tim should be. And, years after he first coached in Dexter, he would return again as a man entering his late sixties to coach there again. He returned to Dexter in 2006, and stayed there until 2010. Tim said in 2016 that he was able to work with the grandchildren of students he had taught in Dexter all those years ago, although he did not have the opportunity to coach any grandchildren of his former players. He also interacted with the children of some his friends from

1966-72--and with some of their grandchildren--when he returned to Dexter in 2006.

Unlike his experience teaching in Salisbury, the small-town Maine education district proved rather progressive. According to Wilson, "The school board was a different group. John Fogler was chairman of the school board. Dexter was ahead of its time. There were some tremendous teachers, and I just happened to be along for the ride. I was so lucky to be around."

Yet, things were rough the first years, but the difficulties mostly pertained to deaths at the school and in the community and a few problems with the athletics programs. "Henry Mathew, the principle," Tim related, "had a heart attack and died. He died too soon. He was a nice man. His daughter Karen was a cheerleader, his son, Al, an athlete." Also while Tim was in Dexter, the head of the history department, Ted Clark, and his wife Jeanie were in a car accident. Jeanie died. "I heard it on the radio; it was like being kicked in the gut. They had already lost their son Teddy. They were so nice to our kids. She was a Human Rights Commissioner with me. She was of French heritage. Ted was a good baseball coach. He overspent his budget and ended up getting fired for it. There were a lot of people in Dexter who were wonderful like this." For example, his student Mike Kiles' great uncles, Harold and Red, would go to all the football games to critique Wilson's performance. "Red would tap me on the shoulder and say, 'You're doing OK,'" Tim remembered.

Wilson remembered several other associates from Dexter thirty years later as well. Of Frank "Spook" Spizuoco, he said in 2002, "He helped me [later] at Hyde too. He became close to my brother. When he [my brother] was sick [with cancer], Frank was my assistant football coach. He talked to me about wrestling. Then I went off to Springfield and learned more, so I was a professional football coach, too, and Frank left coaching to become a farmer--he has been a farmer ever since." Spi-

zuoco had helped Tim with coaching in 1967-68, and would do so again later.

Spizuoco remembered just about everything about Tim or “Timmy” as he called him and his years in Dexter. Interviewed in early 2005, Spizuoco spoke in a rush about Tim and all that he had brought to Maine with him. “He came here during the black rage of the ‘60s, and that was quite something. Maine is 97 percent white, so there’s probably a lot of people who had never even seen a black person ‘live.’”

Spizuoco recalled that one of the men instrumental in hiring Wilson had stopped to talk to him, Frank, by the side of the road (it was haying season) and told him that they had only had ten days left to hire a coach. Frank had previously done some coaching for the town, and was aware of the search for someone to fill the coaching as well as the academic vacancies. The board member told Frank that they had interviewed a promising assistant from Camp Powhatan. He told Frank, “You won’t believe it, but we hired the guy. He came in for an interview, and the guy’s black.” The school board had decided to call around town “and see what folks think.” According to Spizuoco, “Martin Luther King was just walking [in the 1960s’ civil rights marches] and this was a big thing.” One townsman, recently in from Canada, when queried said, “I don’t care, unless he’s a damn Frenchman,” and that, Spizuoco opined, “broke the ice.” Tim moved to Dexter, started practicing his crafts, and with only a few mishaps the school’s teams started pulling down victories. Frank did not work with Wilson his first year or so at the school, as he was busy with his farm and other work. (Spizuoco holds a couple of different college degrees, including one in forestry, and has worked in various capacities.)

Another acquaintance Tim made in Dexter, Ed Gurski, came to the school during Tim’s tenure. Gurski helped with the football team, and, Tim said, “was a great basketball coach.” Although they worked together successfully for a short time, in

1967 he told Tim that “he’d never work with me again. He said, ‘You’re a bright guy, but you have to do it all yourself.’” Tim subsequently spoke with Gurski again, then at the University of Southern Maine in Portland, and he came to the Wilsons’ home in the spring of 1968. The two men revisited the subject, and Gurski told Tim, “You try to give kids everything they need and you don’t trust white people, I understand it, but...” He said, ‘you’re trying to prove yourself because of the color you are, but you need to trust us. The rest of us, we can’t handle you. Some people still want to work with you, but I don’t.’ He said, ‘I’m not going to coach with you again.’ He told me to go see Frank [Spizuoco]. Frank was building a pole barn. I climbed up the ladder and we talked all day. We decided that I would work on offense, he would work on defense. I had been doing defense.”

Spizuoco volunteered in 2005 that, as Parker had said to Wilson, he thought that Tim did come to Maine with some preconceptions or concerns, or even, as he termed it, “some prejudice” about the way the community might relate to him. Spizuoco had learned of the local school superintendent’s conversation with his Salisbury counterpart. Spizuoco had been told that the Salisbury superintendent, after stating that he had “too many damn blacks” where he was, had offered, “I’ll send you a dozen of them.”

With such experiences behind him, Spizuoco thought Wilson had indeed come to Dexter expecting some negative reactions or interactions. Spizuoco stated that, “In 1967 he treated us like shit, but from that day [the day we spoke at his barn] he changed. He’s got the ability to rise above things.”

Spizuoco expanded his commentary to explain part of the problem, and its resolution. “He never let us help him much at all,” Frank said, when it came to Tim’s duties when he first arrived in Dexter. Then, one of the people involved with the school athletics program called Spizuoco up and said, “He just thinks that we’re against him, and all I want to do is help

him with the kids... I can't put up with this." The man reportedly then informed Tim that he needed to work as a team with Frank or someone else. Frank spoke with Tim, and as he recalled it, told him, "I don't care what color you are, you've got to let me give what I've got ... so I went back and he found out that he could trust me. It was a total trust and after that, it really was good." He eventually got rid of his inferiority complex."

An inferiority complex is probably not a term Wilson would use to describe his actions or motivations, but both men agree that their discussions subsequent to what had become almost an impasse resolved the main issues. By all accounts things did proceed smoother once Wilson became more acclimated to his surroundings and after he allowed other people to help him with the coaching duties at Dexter.

What came out of the discord was that, in the short run, Tim surmised in 2003, "I became a cheer leading coach." He said that the kids were great, but "they were terrible" in terms of cheering skills when he started working with them. "But then, I came from Slippery Rock and there the cheerleaders were athletes, acrobats, people would stay [during intermissions] to watch them." Using what he knew about coaching in general as well as of the growth of cheerleading elsewhere, Wilson, in a day when cheering competitions did not yet exist, says that they progressed, to where "there was no question that they were the best in the state. Some went on to the University of Maine and became cheerleaders there. We had some good people, they were bright women." Wilson kept track of the careers of several of them, and said, "they were all good people."

One of the young women who worked with Tim as a student and graduated from the Dexter high school in 1969, Sharon Beaudoin (nee Worden), said of Tim, "He inspired me to change myself and learn for myself. He brought so much from the Peace Corps and his other experiences, so much that was different in the culture of a small town like Dexter." Beaudoin

was in Wilson's history class, and said that she loved it, she loved learning about Africa and various countries about which she would otherwise probably not have learned, she related in early 2005.

Knowing something of Tim's work in the 1990s and beyond, Beaudoin said of his international peace work, "I can see him setting boundaries—and he's not going to settle for anything less. He was like that in the classroom and as a coach." Tim she observed, has the ability to understand who he needs to bring aboard something he wants to accomplish and to determine how to "get them aboard." He brought those skills to Dexter, even as he was probably learning to hone them.

In the meantime, in the 1960s, Beaudoin joined Tim's cheerleading team (she had already shown interest in playing basketball but was not able to participate that year), and said that she "wanted to learn those jumps, those cheerleading skills." She had some doubts as to her abilities, and was feeling "pins and needles" at the tryouts, but made the team. She said of Tim's skills, "I don't know how he knew how to coach us. I don't know how he knew how to do what he did, but our cheering squad was unbelievable. We were not doing all the pyramids they are doing now, but [otherwise] we were cutting our teeth on what they're doing now" in terms of the tumbling. "He told us, 'I believe in you, you can do it.'" Wilson made it obvious to the kids that, "we were all striving for the same goal."

Beaudoin thought that for many people in the town and the state, Wilson "planted the first seeds of cheering being physical, gymnastic, co-educational, hard." As to her own team, she said, "It was a bunch of girls pouring their heart and souls into it. We worked for hours and sometimes we fought, sometimes we were the closest of friends. We girls were doing cartwheels, roundoffs, splits—and this was before 1970."

Tim would get quiet at times, both in the classroom—Beaudoin had Wilson as a physical education teacher as well as a

history instructor and track coach—and on the field. He was taking and giving what Beaudoin called “think time,” time which she thought did encourage the students to consider what they were doing and learning, “and that was good.”

In terms of her own goals, Sharon Beaudoin wanted to go to college to become a physical education teacher, but did not know if she and her parents would be able to pay for higher education, or how her family would even “comprehend it.” Timothy Wilson was one of the people who encouraged her to go to college, and with their help she was able to win two large scholarships and eventually did become a physical education teacher, and also earned a degree in health. Tim, she said, was one of those people “who helped me become who I am.”

Frank Spizuoco agreed that Tim proved invaluable to a number of Dexter’s youth, as he would continue to do for other kids in following years. “He’s great with kids. He has this charisma. He did great things in Dexter; he helped kids that weren’t even on a sports team.” Spizuoco being more involved with sports than academics, the emphasis is understandable.

Wilson had written to Bloom in March that year about his family and his teaching and coaching. He wrote that he, Ida, and Craig were all fine, and “are just awaiting for the new arrival.” He said that he had been in touch with Woody, who seemed fine, and that “my wrestling team won the State Title again. It was a tremendous feeling to win it again—two years in a row—wow!” He told Joel that he would miss Lew, who “did a lot for me last year. This year his guidance helped me when I was coaching.” By the close of the academic year, Wilson was coming into his own as a high school coach in Dexter, much as he had done as a boys’ coach at Powhatan a few years earlier, and to where he soon returned for that summer and subsequent ones.

After camp that year, 1968, according to Wilson, he started to “play around with football. Fountain Parker had been a camper of mine years before, in the early 1960s. He was in

college then, and with Frank we wound up changing everything. We turned the corner and almost won the state championships that year, all because of a little speech by Ed Gurski. I always remember that talk—[about giving up] micromanaging—now I just let people have jobs and do them.” Wilson explained further in a later interview that, “Frank came down here [to camp] and we discussed things. He said, ‘let me take the defense, and you create the offense you want.’” Tim did so with the help of Fountain, who would eventually be the second black man to head the camp, Wilson first becoming manager for some years. Parker would later earn a Ph.D. and become fairly well known in the health field.

Parker came to Camp Powhatan during summer 1968, and, he said, “We worked on my [football] ends and we worked on an offense no one had ever seen there before. We had a great season that year, and set the stage for the next year, and we added to that the following year.” The defense “was something different from what people had seen, it was not what other coaches around here ran. We ran a ‘wishbone,’ and people didn’t know about it here. I bastardized it, but we would use it for three years. At the same time, I coached wrestling and the kids won the state championships.” Wilson explained that at the time, it was not unusual for a school coach to perform many duties, and work at different schools. He said, “We all helped each other out that way. Back then, you’d be a head coach at one place, an assistant somewhere else.”

Wilson said that he was a much better coach after learning to let other people help out by doing their own jobs. “I feel sorry about my first two years at Dexter. We might have won a few more games. But I really enjoyed Dexter. Craig was nine months old when we arrived. The other boys were born there. Because the boys [were there much of the time] they practiced with me, carried footballs...”

“I really enjoyed that community. I don’t know if they ever knew how much I did. Some of the students ended up doing

some amazing things, it's unbelievable." One of his male students became an artist and entrepreneur, another would run the town's maintenance department, one would serve as the superintendent of schools in Waterville, Maine, and a female student became a noted optometrist. "These were just good people. The kids were neat, and the parents were very supportive of what I wanted to do."

Another student Wilson remembers is Bobby Clucky, whose older brother Rusty had played football under Wilson. Their father died when Bobby was at the school, and he ended up spending a lot of time with Tim while Rusty attended the University of Maine. Wilson voiced frustration about the way things were then run at the university, where he himself would later coach, when he spoke of some of his students' and others' experiences there. About Rusty he said, "Because he was not very big or from New Jersey, the staff at UM would not let him play his senior year, so he quit. That's one thing that depressed me; a lot of kids could have played but weren't allowed to because they did not have the right pedigree."

Another, and related, thing about high school sports that bothered Wilson in the late 1960s and 1970s and even later was that coaches from the smaller schools often did not get the recognition they deserved. He himself was awarded the John Bapst Eastern Maine Coach for Football in 1969, then in 1970 was named Coach of the Year in Wrestling, the first recipient of the award. He said that he "didn't realize how important it was to many people until years later. Then I realized how unfair it was that coaches in other levels [non-A level teams] didn't get the recognition they deserved. Now they are starting to recognize people not from the A--the large--schools, some of whom are better coaches" than the more recognized ones, and with budget and other problems they often had larger obstacles to face. Wilson credited Ted Clark of Dexter as being "one of these, he was a phenomenal coach." Tim was also named Teacher of the Year for his school district in 1972.

During his time in Dexter, Tim became acquainted with a married couple living in Portland with whom he would over the years become best friends, Lenny and Mary Jane Cummings. According to Lenny in September 2003, the two first learned of Tim's presence in Maine "through the newspaper," in press coverage of Tim's work as a coach. "We tried to reach him by telephone, that was the initial contact, to offer him the support of knowing there was someone else like him here, to let him know that if there was anything we could do to assist him, we were here." A professional African-American couple (both worked for Verizon Telephone, Lenny as a telephone communications manager, Mary Jane as a special services clerical worker, both retired now) in a state in which the vast majority of citizens were white (the major exception being members of Maine's four Native American tribes), the Cummings wanted to offer Wilson whatever support they could. Both Portland natives, Lenny and Mary Jane as well as their children would become close to Tim, and get to know his family.

Mary Jane recalls their first in-person meeting as being at an NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored Persons) meeting where Tim spoke on the tracking system then used in many public schools. Wilson had attended a New England National Educators Conference on the subject of tracking, and spoke to the need for parents to be aware of the system for although it worked well for some children it "destroys others." Mary Jane said, "What we thought at the time was that it was geared toward black people or affected us. Tim alerted us not to let that happen. We tried to protect ourselves from and against it." In her opinion, after knowing Wilson for over thirty years, "One of Tim's best qualities is he is willing to share what information he has, especially to help children of color.... At the time, he had to walk a fine line to keep his own position yet share with the community." Lenny said that he had watched Tim mature through the many steps he took from the late 1960s on, through teaching and politics, and "at each step he gave 100 percent, he never forgot where

he came from and how he did it, he never forgot the lessons that life taught him.” Furthermore, “in Pittsburgh, in wrestling, in camp, etceteras, his commitment never wavered. ... His commitment remains the same,” as it was years ago, Lenny said, “It just becomes richer and richer.” The Cummings see Wilson in the 1960s and 1970s as having been, as a black man in Maine—and as he continues to be—“a trailblazer, a pioneer, a magnet,” in Mary Jane’s words. (Lenny and Mary Jane would themselves take the lead a few years later in having the life and work of Martin Luther King, Jr. honored in Maine by starting the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast celebration in Portland in the 1980s, which was larger and stronger than ever in the 2010s.)

The Cummings’s children “all got to know Tim through Camp Powhatan, and the girls would baby-sit his kids in the summer, “ Mary Jane said, for while teaching in Dexter, Wilson had continued to counsel at Camp Powhatan in the summers. In 1969, Wilson became the camp’s administrative assistant and head counselor.

Soon thereafter, Wilson entered public service in a new way. He helped establish Maine’s Human Rights Commission, one of the first such bodies in the United States. He became interim chair in 1969-1970 while the commission was being organized, then chair in 1971. “We met with a lot of people. We put together a really interesting first group,” Tim said. “There was a poor white woman; a Native (Passamaquoddy) American, Wayne Newall; a Quaker, Phil Bradley, a lawyer, David Kee; and a Franco American woman from Dexter, Jeanie Clark. During the same period as he served on the Human Rights Commission, Tim also served as the New England chairman of the Minority Involvement in Education section of the National Minority in Education Association.

Although Wilson was proud of the work the Maine Human Rights Commission did in the 1970s—being its chair during 1971-77—their work in later decades is another matter. By

2003 Wilson had come to feel that the Commission no longer undertook the issues that it should, remaining aloof from the Somalian situation in Portland and especially Lewiston—which received national attention in early 2000s as the previously essentially racially homogeneous urban areas adjusted to an influx of African immigrants and refugees—and by allowing such civil rights work as the school-oriented Civil Rights Team Project, established by Attorney General Andrew Ketterer, to remain under the Attorney General’s Office. In 2016, Wilson provided further insight. He stated that, the Commission was doing what it had to do, but that, “the people I was working for [earlier] and the goals had changed.” By 2016, “It had become more regulatory, a policy type of group. They had changed some of their policies. I always felt that the Commission should teach as well as respond to issues. The Civil Rights Teams should have come out of there,” and not out of the Office of the Attorney General. “Even now I feel that in many things the organization should be a leader, and it is not,” Wilson continued. “Some of the people there now are afraid for their funding, and of politics, and of Augusta.” Matters such as “transgender issues, Islamophobia, homophobia ..., all these could be addressed educationally. It doesn’t make them [members of the current Commission] wrong, but I thought they should have been teachers as well as regulators.”

Some of the issues Wilson wanted to see addressed by the Maine Human Rights Commission in the mid-2010s were not as at the forefront of public awareness as they would later be before 2000, but Wilson had already believed by 2003 that the Commission had changed substantially from its formative years. “I don’t know how to put it...I’m more upset with what it’s become. It’s not something I’m proud of now,” Wilson said in 2003. Of the early years, Wilson said in 2003, “We got in trouble because we went after people. I wasn’t an activist person, and people didn’t like the way I did things. I would basically carve you up if I had to, if I thought you were being unfair to people who were different.” He said that, “James Longley flipped out when I went after the University [of Maine], back

in the 1970s because they weren't doing anything." Wilson became active in recruiting minorities at the University of Maine in Orono after he left Dexter, and he said in 2003 that, "there were more black people there in the 1970s than there are now. The Commission is supposed to be responsible for education, but they don't do anything." In 2016 he added that Governor James Longley had not wanted him to chair the Commission in the same way that Governor Ken Curtis had, stating, He removed me and appointed someone else." Yet, Wilson would in some ways remained involved with the organization, from both within and without it, into the 2010s.

Frustrated at times with the slow pace of change, or the lack of positive changes, Wilson never seems to truly appreciate all the good he has done in his adopted state from his early days in Dexter and Powhatan to his time with the Human Rights Commission and his relationship with the NAACP. Years later he would say that he felt that it was harder for his siblings and parents in Pennsylvania and his family in other places "to fight the good fight," than it was for him to do so in Maine. This was not simply a late-in-life observation, however. Frank Spizuoco said that he had gone to visit Tim at his home after Martin Luther King's assassination in 1968 (and three years after Malcolm X's murder), and Tim had expressed not only his own dismay, but stated, "My friends in Pittsburgh call me Uncle Tom because I'm not there." Where to fight the "good fight" is an issue Tim seems to have agonized over when he first came to Maine, but also, it would seem from the memories he carried with him from his days as a boy in Pittsburgh through his years in the Peace Corps and his time in Salisbury. Decades later he would again be fighting the good fight on an international scale.

And, as much as Wilson values the time he spent teaching and coaching in Dexter, some incidents did occur which highlighted his position in an essentially all-white community, incidents Wilson himself never mentioned in many years of on-again, off-again, interviews. Frank Spizuoco recalled in 2005

that soon after Wilson arrived in the area he went to a local barbershop for a haircut. When the barber said that he could or would not cut Tim's hair, according to Spizuoco, another guy who was getting his haircut at the time said, "If you can't cut his hair, you can't cut mine," and got up and left, his haircut unfinished.

In another incident, one member of a wealthy family which frequently contributed to local causes when asked to donate to one local academic fund replied, "We came up here from N---- ---- to get away from those n-----s and Jews, and here they're coming right into town." Another member of the family, however, felt horrible about the statement and donated generously. As horrible indeed as the n-word is here, and in the one instance Tim used the term, it nevertheless indicates some early challenges Tim faced in his teaching career, and, even if not so enunciated, may have faced later, although he consistently highlights the good people wished and did for him, only grumbling once in awhile when depressed over the situation some people face. If Wilson did bring some negative expectations to Maine, they were apparently justified upon occasion.

Spizuoco stated that he tried to take some sting out of race issues by jesting with Tim, in public and in private. He also stated that Tim had a good understanding of the racial situation in Maine once he had been in the state a short while. He watched Tim's work in the 1960s and 1970s, and would see Tim manage people, both students and adults, with an astute guidance during the 1980s at the Hyde School. Spizuoco opined that, perhaps in some ways related and in other ways not, "had Tim played his cards right he probably would have been Governor."

While Tim Wilson had continued to develop his career after leaving the Peace Corps and moving to Maine, he had also remained very close with his family in Pittsburgh. Although Tim's nephew, Jeffery Wilson, son of Andrew and Helene Wil-

son, was born almost twenty years later than Tim, he presents valuable insights into Tim's family during their early years in Maine, as well as adding to the overall Wilson family history. Of his grandparents, Tim's mother and father, he simply stated in September 2004, that, "They were very special people."

When he and his siblings visited their grandparents in Bellevue, Jeff said, "There are things that we always liked to do. If you felt a little sick, grandma would fix you up a little toddy. We would say to each other, 'If you just fake it enough, grandma will give you some whiskey.'" Jeff said of his grandmother, "She was just a beautiful person. She was very quiet, the typical grandmother—but you didn't get her mad."

Jeff observed that Tim, "is built like his mom [big boned], while Tim's father was slight." Tim's son Craig, Jeff thought, he looked a lot like their grandfather. Jeff, like Tim and his sons, is tall, 6'3". (Andrew, Jeff said, had been a short man like his father. Jeff's mother used to tell him about how in high school, "I used to see this little fellow coming out with his cello, and he was not much bigger than his cello, and that was your dad." The two did not get together, however, until they were both in the military.)

"The Wilson side of our family, they are private people. There are things that my dad did, as far as being a Tuskegee Airman in World War II," of which no one spoke. The same was true of his Uncles Henry's time in the Navy. "There were things you heard years later..." (Years later, one of Tim's sons, Carl, would speak of the things Tim had done which he himself did not hear about until years later.)

Jeff said that when he was little, he and his family frequently spent time with his grandparents, in particular when family members from out of town visited. Tim's eating abilities, as well as those of Jeff's older brother Rodney, five years younger than Tim, had already become the stuff of legends in the Wilson family. "My older brother and Tim were both football players," and both probably weighed over 200 pounds at the

time. The two were known to eat pretty much everything in sight when they were in college, “and even when Tim was in the Peace Corps he was still a big eater. My grandfather [always] got stuck between his son and grandson, and got mad about all the food,” Jeff said. “Anytime they were in town, we would go to my grandmother’s, and no matter what she fixed, it wouldn’t stay around long.”

While his older brother challenged Tim in devouring food, including the family legend of the two of them eating an entire turkey before anyone else even had a chance to sit down to dinner, Jeff said, “Me, I was always trying to beat him at checkers. When he came in from the Peace Corps, I was about eight or nine years old. I have pictures of he and I in the middle of the floor playing checkers. When he was in town, I’d have my checker board under my arm and head over to grandma’s.” It was only after Tim moved to Maine that Jeff was able to beat him, once. The year was 1968 or 1969, Paul Wilson was a baby, and, Jeff said, “It was my first trip to Maine and we played checkers and I beat him and I ran away ... That was the highlight, then he didn’t want to play any more.”

Checker tournaments apparently over, Tim then played basketball and softball with his brother’s children (there were four of them: Rodney, then Gregory, Randy, and Jeffrey—Jeff being the youngest by several years), as well as with his own kids. Jeff visited Tim in Dexter twice, then again when Tim was in Augusta working for the Governor Ken Curtis. Jeff visited Maine for the last time as a child in about 1977. By then, Rodney was married and had his own children. After that, until he returned to Maine to visit as an adult, Jeff remembers Tim primarily through his many visits to Pittsburgh.

In autumn 1972, just entering his thirties, Wilson moved from Dexter to the University of Maine in Orono. It was from his position as a coach at the university that he would enter state office, and thereafter be called upon by almost every gov-

error for the next thirty years to serve in one capacity or another.

While Tim was still working in Dexter, University of Maine athletic director Harold Westerman and John “Jack” Butterfield (a baseball and assistant football coach) had asked Wilson to come to the university. Tim accepted the offer. When he arrived at UMO, Westerman showed Tim “how to be a college coach,” Tim said. Ultimately however, Tim related, “Westerman was the reason I decided to leave coaching. He said I was too bright, that coaching was not going to hold my attention, and that I should be doing other things. He was right.” In the meantime, Westerman recommended Wilson for a variety of jobs, jobs that would be steps up the academic ladder, including coaching jobs at Amherst and Dartmouth College, but Wilson decided to stay in Maine. Amherst’s president wrote to Tim on June 28, 1973 stating that he was disappointed that Tim had decided not to accept his job offer, and that “We could have used a person of your character and integrity, but then so can Maine.”

The second year Tim worked at the university, almost one hundred kids played football, and, Wilson related, “the freshman team won and won good.” Wilson had eight or nine assistant coaches. These were graduate students. One of them, Carl Parker—a young man from Lincoln, Maine—Wilson remembered fondly. Although Parker subsequently became a lawyer in California, he aided Tim substantively while at the University of Maine. As with his campers and students from earlier years, Wilson kept track of a surprising number of his former associates and football players at the university.

Wilson was able to make some changes in terms of university demographics, because the university president, Howard Newall, found the money for Wilson to recruit more minority students, both male and female. Wilson said in 2002 that more minority students entered the university “than they’d

ever seen before,” both as students in general and as athletic students.

One of the “majority” students Wilson helped recruit while he coached at the University of Maine, John “Jack” Cosgrove, was one of Wilson’s quarterbacks in 1973. As Wilson described him, “He’s now at UM as the head football coach. He was a wide eyed kid then, but he could throw a football!” In a separate interview, Wilson told of how he had recruited Jack while he was coaching at the university. Jack and his parents had come to visit the campus. Bobby Capola was one of the residents of the dorm Jack would live in, and Tim gave Jack and his father a tour. It was the beginning of co-educational bathrooms, and “Jack’s father had to use the restroom. A girl came out of the shower when he was at the urinal. He came out and said, ‘please don’t tell my wife that this is co-ed.’” Wilson also said of Cosgrove that “he was simply a nice young man,” and that he was fortunate to have had him on the team.

Cosgrove, in early 2004, said that Wilson probably did have something to do with his coming to Maine and that although he did not know the story of the co-ed bathroom, it could well have happened. What Cosgrove did clearly recall decades later was Tim’s ability to motivate his players. As Tim primarily coached defense while another coach covered offense when Cosgrove came to UM, as Cosgrove recalls the situation, “I was a quarterback, and probably that kept me from working with him closely ... he wasn’t actually coaching me, but I do know I felt his presence. He was energetic, emotionally charged, a highly motivated guy.” Cosgrove said that, “As a coach, I think that his greatest attribute was that he was highly motivated himself and able to be a good motivator in daily practice and in games. He carried himself in that energetic way.” Cosgrove would enjoy a long and productive career at the University of Maine, and long after his days as a student would serve as head football coach. A very popular coach, Cosgrove led the Maine Black Bears through many successful seasons. In 2015 he stepped down from his coaching position to enter an ad-

ministrative role at the university, with some of his new responsibilities echoing work Tim had done over the years in leadership and sports training and organization.

Jack Cosgrove, said, too, that he and Tim Wilson had an informal history of working together in the decades after Tim left the university. They spoke over the years on different issues, such as “the state of Maine in general, my job as head coach, [and] color [as pertaining to] athletes—and as an African American from outside Maine who has lived here he’s been a great advisor in that regard to me.” In recent years, Wilson and Cosgrove had also spoken about, Cosgrove said, ‘his Seeds of Peace and what he has done there. In many ways, he’s been a great asset to me.’

Wilson, while making connections in Orono that would last for decades, had also retained his ties to secondary school athletics while at the University of Maine and would do so thereafter. For example, he served as the secretary/treasurer of the Maine Wrestling Coaches Association from 1971-1976. He also served as the Girls’ State Speaker for 1973-1989. In addition, Wilson was a Little League coach for several years—and was named their coach of the year in 1977 in Augusta. Although his next professional move would cause him to step down from his position as Camp Powhatan’s administrative assistant and head counselor in 1973, Tim’s ties to youth and athletics would continue, as would his relationship with the camp. In the meantime, Maine Governor Kenneth Curtis came looking for Timothy P. Wilson.

CHAPTER THREE : ENTERING THE MID-YEARS

Civil Rights and Other Work For the Maine State Government, Death & Family Changes

“Some people put me on a pedestal, but in comparison, my family did more than I ever did; they fought the great fight at home, and that’s a great deal tougher than fighting it in Maine.”

Timothy P. Wilson

In late 1973, while coaching football at the University of Maine in Orono, another opportunity to serve his adopted state came to Timothy Wilson; came sloshing through the mud on a rainy day.

Wilson was out in the field holding a practice session with his team in the pouring rain when campus police interrupted the session and informed Wilson that the president of the university wanted to speak with him. Wilson had no idea what the president wanted, but rode with the campus police to the president’s office. Governor Kenneth Curtis was seated at the president’s desk. The university president, Howard Neville, soon left the office.

Wilson said in 2002, “I came into the office muddy. I was about to take my shoes off when the Governor said, ‘come on in.’ Curtis then said to Wilson, “I’ve got a job for you. I need you to come and work for me.” Curtis asked Wilson to serve as the director of the Civil Emergency Preparedness Office for the State of Maine. The Governor was looking for someone he could count on to help allocate state resources. Curtis knew that there was going to be an oil embargo and was preparing

to face the difficult times ahead. Curtis told Wilson that he wanted him for the job because, Wilson related in 1999, “I know that no one can influence you.” Wilson added later that the Governor had said, “I need you to come down and meet the Executive Committee. I want you to be head of Civil Defense.”

Following his university meeting with Governor Curtis, Wilson spoke with Senator Edward Muskie (Secretary of State in the 1980s) about the position, and Muskie advised Wilson that he thought it would be a good for him to accept the position. Wilson had met Muskie while serving as a Human Rights Commissioner. Wilson said of Muskie and the situation in 2002, “I knew he was a good man, not part of either party.”

Wilson drove to Augusta to meet with the Executive Committee. At that time, the Executive Committee served as an integral part of Maine State Government, one of their duties being to oversee appointments to high-ranking positions. The committee had roughly eight or nine members, “a mixed group, many of them leaders in the state,” Wilson stated. “These guys all knew me,” he said. “They were all sitting there talking about football and camping with me.” For example, one of the members, Chuck Cianchette, Wilson knew from Pittsfield and he would later become a close friend. Another member, a woman from Newport, knew of Wilson from his teaching days in Dexter. In addition, a member of Curtis’s staff, Charlie Jacobs, had parents who had taught with Wilson in Dexter. “I asked when I was to take on the job if I accepted it. They said, ‘in about two weeks.’” The committee then voted Wilson the next head of Maine’s Department of Civil Defense, the title being changed to that of Civil Emergency Preparedness a month later.

Wilson finished coaching on November 7, 1973. On his last day as coach, his team played the University of Delaware. It was a cold day, and the team almost won the game. “A lot of the kids hugged me,” Wilson stated in 2002. They had

just played Bridgton Academy the day before “and clobbered them.” Two buses took the entire team to that last Maine game, and “even the injured kids came. About eighty to ninety kids came altogether. We were given the old worn-out jerseys worn in 1965 [during the season’s championship games] to wear. This was honoring the kids, but also honoring me. The kids had a ball. We used to say, ‘it’s better to eat steak than hamburgers.’ On the road [when they had to get hamburgers] they said they would rather have a good steak, and that when they had enough money they’d buy themselves steak.” Wilson later explained that the saying meant that “they never had to settle for second best; those kids were that good, they were just good people.” As Tim related it, after that game on November 6, they ate at Bridgton Academy, and by coincidence, the school fed them steak. In 2002 Wilson said of that day, “It was quite a time.” In 2003, he added that he had always considered the Bridgton game the last game he coached for the next decade or so. At Bridgton, he had been the head coach, the freshman coach. At the game with Delaware the following day, he was simply an assistant coach. But still, most of the kids hugged him goodbye.

After saying goodbye to his team and the university on November 7, Wilson immediately began a forty-eight hour crash course in energy. He started his new job on November 9, 1973. His experiences in the office were diverse and have remained valuable to him. Wilson reminisced from his Portland office in 1999 and 2000 upon time spent in the Fort Kent area immediately after entering the position as being a “real awakening as to how desolate it was up there and what the people there need.”

Wilson credits Olympia Snowe (then in the State Legislature but later a U. S. Senator), George Mitchell (judge and later a U.S. Senator), and Edward Muskie with working toward getting a dam built in the region to prevent the river from flooding. (After Muskie became Secretary of State, Mitchell was nominated to fill the rest of his term in the Senate, and

worked there with Maine Senator William Cohen to get the bridge built.) In 1973, however, long before the bridge became a reality, severe rains hit the region. In December, according to Wilson, the river flooded, and “that water froze, and we had to go up and deal with it. Down this way there were floods all over. I can remember floods on State Street in Augusta.... At the same time, we didn’t have any oil.” Governor Curtis, he said, “was a great man, he gave me all the help I needed . . . we didn’t lose anybody in the oil crisis, that’s because of the people I had working with me, a really unique group of people.” He said the group was young and “they stayed up many nights keeping people warm.”

Governor Curtis in an interview with the author in August 2001, said that in some ways his memory of the days Tim came to work for him were a bit vague, but that he had already known of Tim’s work as a coach. It was during the Carter Administration, and “I don’t know if he first asked me for a job, or if I offered him one, but I made him part of my staff. I traveled with him a lot; I consulted him a lot. What he became most known for [in my administration] was for Fuel Allocation out of Civil Defense. He did an outstanding job with it” in 1973-74.

Governor Curtis said, “I thought very highly of Tim. He had common sense, a view [or understanding] of people in need. As different issues were being considered, he’d have a very strong viewpoint that people in need had to be cared for, and that an attempt would be made to do so.” Furthermore, his respect for Tim and his work was such that, “Tim traveled with us, he went to all the Governors’ Conferences, the New England ones which had a lot to do with energy. He went to the national ones also. I usually had about four or five people who went with me.” Tim was one of them.

Curtis explained that the fuel needs of the state, as elsewhere in America, were urgent. “We were almost day to day in our fuel supply. Those who suffered the most were people living

in mobile homes who burned kerosene. It was difficult to get enough of a supply for them.” Curtis said he knew of two or three times where Tim interceded directly for an individual or a family. In one case, Curtis related, “There was a woman with a mobile home running out” of kerosene, and “he literally took three gallons to her” to get her through.

In addition to this type of on-hands management, part of Tim’s job involved keeping in almost daily contact with the Maine Petroleum Association, then the Maine Oil Dealers or MOD, according to Curtis. The association was for service stations. Like his other responsibilities, Curtis said Wilson performed this one as well as, if not better than, anyone else could have. Curtis credited Wilson with “having the common sense to work out a system so that no one would run out. I don’t think anyone did run out.” However, “had anyone been able to hoard supplies there would have been people who did run out.”

His job performance as Maine’s “energy czar” being deemed commendable, it was also in some ways unique. Wilson had stated in an early interview that he was essentially one of the first energy people in the United States. He said that the people involved in energy at the time, “had the beginnings of a [workable national] policy in place from 1974 into the 1980s, but Reagan’s policy basically killed it. The big businesses didn’t want it to happen,” nor did some others in influential positions. Wilson had met Jimmy Carter a few times, the first being when Carter had visited Maine in 1974 for the democratic convention, and Tim had rode up in the plane with him. Also, Carter had been at a Governors’ Convention Wilson attended with Ken Curtis, and they met “a few different times since.” Wilson had been under consideration for a federal job in energy during the Carter Presidential Administration, but a job offer was not forthcoming, largely, he thought, because of some his other political views.

Former Governor Ken Curtis said that he had seen Wilson many times since he had left office some twenty-six years earlier, at which time he had opened a law firm in Portland, Maine. Curtis also served as the Chair of the Democratic Committee and then Ambassador to Canada under Carter, and later served as the president of the Maine Maritime Academy. Curtis said that Tim had continued to “be helpful,” in the years after he left Augusta, especially in the Susan Curtis Foundation, which the governor started some forty years ago in memory of his daughter Susan. Curtis himself, originally from Curtis Corner in Maine, had moved away then returned to Maine in 1955, attended the Maine Maritime Academy and served in the U.S. Navy (Tim said Curtis also worked in a doughnut shop at one time) before entering public life. In more recent years, Wilson had spoken to Curtis about the Seeds of Peace Camp, and of Wilson, Curtis said, “I have probably stayed in touch with him as much as with any of the other former staff.”

Asked about his own role in the Susan Curtis Camp, Wilson described, in early 2003, an airplane flight to Washington, D. C. According to Wilson, basically “everyone major in the Democratic Party in the state was on that plane,” the governor’s plane, known as Yellowbird. Edmund Muskie had just decided to drop out of the race for President of the United States. The year was 1972, and Muskie, Curtis, Cianchette, Scott Hutchinson, Charlie Jacobs, Wilson, and others were talking, trying to think of something fitting to honor the memory of Susan Curtis, who had died in 1970—while still a teenager—of cystic fibrosis. (Her sister would die of the same disease in the mid-1990s at age thirty-five).

Wilson said that the camp started “in the back of a plane with a few people drinking.” As the story went, Wilson related, “I said, ‘have a camp,’ they liked the idea, so we moved on from there.” Wilson worked with Joel Bloom on numerous aspects of getting the camp up and running, and served on the camp’s first board of directors. Wilson wrote a grant to secure funding from the Department of Labor, via the CETA program, to fix

the camp up, “put it together, and the next thing you know it was a camp.” He hired the first camp director, Tom LaGinte, a man who had worked with him in the past. Chuck Cianchette of Cianbro Brothers, Inc. built the roads. The property borders the White Forest, and the Forest Service helped the group to secure the land. Of the camp as a whole, which continues to operate in the twenty-first century as a camp for Maine youth, many from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, Wilson said the camp was set up “for everyone.” Looking back, Tim said, “I was really happy with what happened with it.”

Wilson stresses the honorability of many people in the state government and state politics over the years. He credits Governor James Longley, who followed Curtis in office, with having taught him how to be a manager. He speaks fondly of how Longley came to his father’s funeral and helped him with his children and his ex-wife. Wilson says that he knew a different side of Longley than did most people, a side he continued to respect and admire decades after he served in Longley’s administration.

Wilson underwent, or rather started, one of the roughest periods of his life near the close of the Longley administration. In April 1978, Tim was in his home in Augusta, Maine, in the master bedroom on the third floor. At 2:00 in the morning, he said, “I got up. I was sick. The bathroom was on the next level. I crawled there and threw up and threw up. My brother called me a little later and said that I had to come, that Mom had taken Dad to the hospital.” As Tim told the story in 2001, the Maine State Police flew him to Boston, and from there Tim flew to Pittsburgh. “They thought at first that his appendix must have burst, but then they found that he had cancer of the colon.”

Tim went back to Pittsburgh a few times in April and May, and again in June and August 1978. He had talked to his father every day that he wasn’t home in Pittsburgh, and his mother had been at the hospital every day with her husband Henry, so

Tim was continually in close contact with his parents during his father's illness.

In August 1978, Tim's old team from Slippery Rock had a football reunion in Butler, Pennsylvania that Tim attended. He then went back to his family home the next day. His father had left the hospital and was using a walker. When Tim left, he said, "My father walked me to my car, hugged me, and whispered in my ear. He thanked me for being the kind of son he wanted."

Tim said that before he left that day, "My father made me promise him I'd come home and take care of my mother when the time came. I never saw him again. There was an energy conference in Virginia at the end of October. I tried to get a plane to Pittsburgh [from there] but couldn't. It was raining so hard there was wind sheer, and the plane had to take a coastal route. I couldn't get to Pittsburgh because of the situation. Then, I planned to come home in November, but he passed away."

In late October, his father had gone back into the hospital. "The doctors called me. They had decided to put him in a nursing home, but he died the same night, November 22. The doctor told me, 'Your Mom was really keeping your dad alive. He just couldn't say goodbye.'"

Governor James Longley knew what was happening with Tim's parents. The Governor had spoken with Mamie and Henry Wilson on the telephone a number of times, and Tim's mother had spoken with Mrs. James (Helen) Longley. The governor had said of the Wilsons, "'They're good people,'" according to Tim, and the governor flew to Pennsylvania for Mr. Wilson's funeral. "The State Police motorcaded him over from Allegheny Airport," Tim said. "He went to the church and the graveyard, he was a part of everything. The thing was, my parents knew [during this time period that] Governor Longley was ill, and he died about two years later of cancer. I'll never forget that he came."

“I didn’t really grieve the normal way when my father passed away,” Tim stated years later. “I was the last to leave his grave. When I buried him part of me died, I was without a rudder. It affected my marriage, and the 1980s. I did a lot of good things, but I was no longer the same person. There was still a part of me that just wasn’t right. I think that’s why I went home in ’90 to take care of my mother. I was beginning to get back to where I was in the late 70’s, caring about people, wanting to do more. The 80’s were not good for me. I hurt some people, I just wasn’t understanding sometimes.”

Those he apparently had difficulties with during the era included his four children. “I don’t consider myself a great father. I did the best I could, and they’re still wonderful people—in spite of all the crap. My daughter got the worst of it, being the youngest at the time. It took some effort for us to get back together,” he reflected in 2000. But Tim’s children and he did get back together, and remained close in the 2010s, by which time, not surprisingly, Tim was also a grandfather, and a very attentive grandfather.

In spite of the sadness he still feels over the loss of his parents, Tim ever credits them for his own many accomplishments. In 2003, speaking of how his parents wanted him to experience a variety of summer camps as a boy, both African-American and mixed race ones, he said that his parents had wanted him to go to these camps and to boy scout camp, which was virtually all white, because they realized his growth would be greatly augmented by so doing. For the same reason, his father had urged him to join the Peace Corps “and see the world so my horizons would be broader. He told me to never live in Pittsburgh, and [when he was sick] he did not want me to leave Maine. He told me to never leave here; my only obligation would be to take care of my mother.” Tim of course was there for his mother when she became ill, but thinking of his father’s words twenty-five years after his death, Tim said, “It’s funny how that all comes back now.”

Tim had never stopped his visits to his parents when they were both alive, and during the following years he would continue to visit. His nephew Jeffrey visited Tim and his family a number of times—a few times in Dexter and once in Augusta. In 2004, he recalled those visits and how his grandparents had been later in their lives. “Tim would come down periodically when his kids were growing up. Whenever he came to town, my mother would make lasagna. My mother would fix it every time he came down. He would call and say, ‘Helyne, I have a small request.’ He loved her cooking,” Jeff related. By that time, as Tim’s children were growing older, his mother was not cooking as much as she had when she was younger, so the family would have a big dinner at Helene and Andrew’s home.

While they were all alive and together, they all enjoyed a good debate. Jeff said that if Tim came to visit, then Ted would come, and his own father Andrew would go over, and with Henry Wilson, Sr., “You would have four people who loved to argue. Their favorite arguments were about politics.” One would start, then they all would join in. And, Jeff said, “When the Wilsons fight, it’s not quiet. Nostrils are flaring, eyes are wide open—that’s just how we argue. You could get them going over something political in a heartbeat. My grandfather always had the last word. He could always prove what he was talking about.” One of the Wilson brothers would say, “No Pop,” and he would say, “Yes, I’ve got it in a book.’ He would go down into the basement, then throw a book on the table, and say, ‘Don’t tell me I don’t know what I’m talking about.’ Most of the time he could prove it.”

Jeff then surmised, “I think a lot of Tim comes from the great debates that would happen at that house, and we had the same thing going on in our house. We learned very early how to talk and how to defend ourselves in a very intelligent way. I remember being over there and watching those fireworks—Saturdays, Sundays, anytime anyone came into town.” After

his father died, Tim would continue to return to Pittsburgh to visit his mother, eventually moving back to help care for her.

Back in Maine and still dealing with the death of his father, Wilson had a more difficult transition when Joseph Brennan became Governor than he had when Longley had taken the reigns from Curtis. The difficulty, on the professional level, involved making the shift from an independent working atmosphere to one of party politics. Wilson said that “Brennan was a Democrat with a capital ‘D,’ so I learned a lot from that standpoint.” Altogether, Wilson—an Independent—served in the cabinet of three different governors, (and worked with others) and, he says, “My experiences in government were unique.” His experiences in teaching and other fields since then, he said, helped him keep his government experiences in perspective: “Most of the time it’s not about you and me, it’s about them.” But he believes the three governors he worked with did “truly care about Maine.” He describes such political figures as Bill Cohen, Edmund Muskie, Neil Rolde, Olympia Snowe, and George Mitchell as already being “giants” in his early years with the state, while in contrast, “I was only a young kid running around.” He credits his time in the three governors’ cabinets as having taught him a lot about peoples’ needs, especially needs connected with health care. His only regret it seems is that he cannot take what he’s learned since and use it back then: “If I only knew then what I know now maybe I’d be able to do some good.” Although of course, he did do some good.

Wilson’s learning experiences in state government during 1973 to 1983 included—in addition to those already mentioned—serving as the Director of Community Services of Maine, as a Maine State Ombudsman, and as the Associate Commissioner of Maine Departments of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Corrections, as well as his time as Director of the Civil Emergency Preparedness Office which lasted until December 1983. He also continued to serve as Chair of the Maine Human Rights Commission until 1977. (He had

started this position in 1971 while still teaching and coaching in Dexter.)

The variety of tasks Wilson undertook in the above capacities from 1973 to 1983 is extensive. As director of Community Services, then part of the executive department (and variously known as the OEO (Office of Economic Opportunity) and CAP (Community Action Program) for example, he oversaw all federal programs. One of these was the Youth Conservation Corps or YCC, which employed young men and women in community work, particularly in the forest in northern states. Wilson said in 2003 that his office had kids working in the woods in the Katahdin region (the Baxter State Park area). He said that he would go into the field from time-to-time to check on them, but did not actually stay in the woods with them, and of course he could not have done so. He had many other people and programs to guide. (It is interesting however, that Wilson found time away from the desk to do what he continually enjoyed doing in life: working with youth in an outside and in some ways athletic or physical and educational setting.) It is at this point in Wilson's life that state legislator Neil Rolde, with whom Wilson would later work, first recalls meeting Wilson, although Wilson said that they had met earlier, when Wilson wrote human rights legislation in 1968-69 under Governor Curtis.

In another of his state government positions, Wilson was brought into the Department of Mental Health and Corrections to facilitate separating Mental Health from Corrections. He worked in the department for four years, starting under Commissioner Kevin Concannon (who had recently retired from the Department of Human Services) focusing on correction issues for the first year and a half, in particular on the lockdown of Thomaston Prison and the Pineland Consent Decree.

With Mental Health, as Assistant Commissioner, Tim spent much of his time meeting with the superintendents of the

mental health facilities or hospitals of Bangor and Augusta, and had charge of all programming. “The bureau chiefs met with me; Kevin had something to say, but Ron Martell and I were the ones really responsible for the department—Kevin was busy with the government,” Wilson related. Ron Martell had charge of the money side, Wilson said, while he himself took charge of the “program side.” Martell, he stated, “was a very committed man. He was great to work with, the kind of man they need now. He was one of the brightest men I’ve ever been around about money issues.”

The issue Wilson and his department addressed with Pineland was essentially the wholesale warehousing of children with mental retardation at the facility in Pownal, Maine. Although some children did well there, others did not. “Just like with adults,” Wilson said, sometimes institutionalization “helps them, sometimes it doesn’t.” The issue he addressed was that of establishing guidelines for which young people would be institutionalized, at Pineland or elsewhere, and which would not. Eventually, they “broke up” the facility, and the Libra Foundation subsequently took much of the space over for offices.

Wilson entered the department just as a riot broke out in Thomaston Prison. The prison riot lasted for about a month, and ultimately turned into a major problem for the state as it resulted in a lawsuit against the government. As Wilson described it in 2004, “I had to step in and help resolve the problem.”

Perhaps a larger problem was the planned separation of the Department of Mental Health and Corrections into two sectors, mental health and corrections. Although Tim had been hired in part to facilitate such a division, after he researched the subject he recommended that it not be done. Wilson toured a number of prisons in New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, plus a few correctional facilities in North Carolina and other states in order to make

informed recommendations to the department and the State. As he summarized it in 2004, “Everybody I met with told me not to separate mental health from corrections. Many prisoners have mental health issues and drug issues. When I left in 1983, they split them. I thought it was a mistake and I told this to Joe Brennan. But, the deal was already cut.” Wilson also located someone he thought should head the corrections department, be it separated from mental health or not, a black woman from Rikers. State politics lead to another selection for the job.

Wilson also worked with the Maine Youth Center while serving as Assistant Commissioner of Mental Health and Corrections. Here, too, he felt “there were a lot of things that could have been changed.” He testified in chambers to U. S. Judge Jueneau in Portland about conditions at the youth facility, but once again found governmental inertia a problem. “It’s one of the reasons I left state government. They wouldn’t change. They changed some stuff,” but not enough, according to Wilson.

Governor Longley had wanted Timothy Wilson to stay involved in government work at the close of his administration, and supposedly created the position of Maine Ombudsman to this end. The Governor’s Office issued a news release on September 24, 1975, which stated that Longley had signed an executive order re-naming the Office of Economic Opportunity to the Division of Community Services, which Wilson would head as director, just as he had the OEO. The Governor likewise indicated that he was pleased that Wilson had decided to stay in state government, which he had previously indicated he would be leaving for “personal reasons.” Moreover, the news release stated that Wilson would be “assuming responsibility of developing and implementing an Ombudsman Program for the executive branch.” In addition, Wilson would be “aiding the Governor with Industrial and state coordination.” When Longley prepared to leave office, he wrote to Wilson on January 3, 1979, that: “I simply want to say to you that no

Governor or public official could have had a more outstanding Cabinet than I have been privileged to have surrounding me. You have been a valuable and important part of that Cabinet, and I couldn't be more grateful for your services to this Administration and to the people of Maine." James B. Longley also wrote that although their formal association was ending, "I want you to know that I will always value the assistance, counsel, and friendship you extended me In that regard I hope you will always feel free to call on me if there is any way I can be of assistance to you and your family in the future."

A number of other people had written to Wilson over the years expressing their appreciation for his work, particularly as director of the OEO or Division of Community Services, and in the Civil Emergency Preparedness. People sent in numerous letters simply stating, and at least one did so literally, that they admired him for "having the balls to tell it like it is." A number of people wrote about his work with Senator William Cohen in resettling Vietnamese Refugees. People within the government—state, regional, and national—wrote to express concerns every time Tim switched offices, expressing both disappointment that he was leaving, and respect for what he had accomplished to date. This would be particularly true when he left state government in terms of direct employment.

Meanwhile, after Longley left office in 1979, Wilson continued to hold the position of Maine Ombudsman, which he had himself had charge of developing, under Governor Joseph Brennan. Wilson filled a number of niches as Ombudsman. The major task as he described in 2004 was that, "Commissioners sometimes got complaints as did other state employees; I was the person who deflected this sort of thing for the Governor." One issues Tim became deeply involved was zoning, particularly lakeside zoning. Wilson would mediate battles over zoning, and help create clearer ordinances where possible. He credits much of the success he had to the people who worked with him.

Wilson's friends Lenny and Mary Jane Cummings who knew Tim throughout this period think that although he held some impressive titles, Mary Jane said in mid-2003, "I think a lot of the good Tim has done for the state of Maine was done quietly," be it "in working with parents, young people, or in the state government." She mentioned in particular, in terms of his state work, his time as an Ombudsman under Governor Joseph Brennan. Lenny added, "He came in at a time when he was an enrichment for the state," entering areas and positions "where blacks had not entered before."

The Cummings also witnessed some of the changes Wilson underwent in terms of his family during this period of his life. The Cummings visited Tim, his wife Ida, and their four children—Craig, Carl, Paul, and Paula—in Augusta more than once, and in a humorous aside, told of how they stopped by one day in the mid-1970s when Paula was a baby. Mary Jane said, "Carl brought down a box of gerbils or hamsters. Tim told us the baby had just gone to sleep. We were trying to be quiet, but [seeing what Carl had in the box], I let out a scream." She did not remember if Paula woke up.

Although the Cummings thought that Tim and Ida Wilson were well matched in many ways and Mary Jane said, "they were great together," and seemed "totally relaxed" with one another when the couple visited the Wilson home on Western Avenue in Augusta in the late 1970s, Tim and Ida divorced a few years later. Tim subsequently married three more times, two of the marriages rather brief in duration during the 1980s, the third, entered in the 1990s, more lasting. Lenny thought that the divorce and Tim's next two marriages (to Caucasian women) might have been attributable at least in part, "to pressures from society itself." Lenny said, "I don't know how he achieved as much as he did, ... he was one peg on a board otherwise full of white." Of his fourth marriage, Mary Jane said, "Tim and Jacquie both have a strong sense of family, they both grew up in Pittsburgh and know each other's families, I think it's one of the bonds that keeps them together. Although

Tim's second and third wives were not women of color, Jacquie is. The two met when Tim left returned to Pennsylvania for a few years, after he had left the state government and his next professional position.

At the same time as Wilson worked in Maine's government, he became involved in a few developments outside the state. One of these was with his brother, Ted Wilson. Ted Wilson worked for Bechtel Engineering in Washington, D.C. (specializing in the subway system for much of his career) and served as an area engineer for the D. C. government for about eight years. He worked essentially as a civil and mechanical engineer, although he did not have an engineering degree. He worked primarily on sub-aqueous projects, especially bridges and tunnels, the last tunnel he worked on being the Fort McHenry Tunnel across the Chesapeake River. Ted had attended college, taken the appropriate exams, and was bonded.

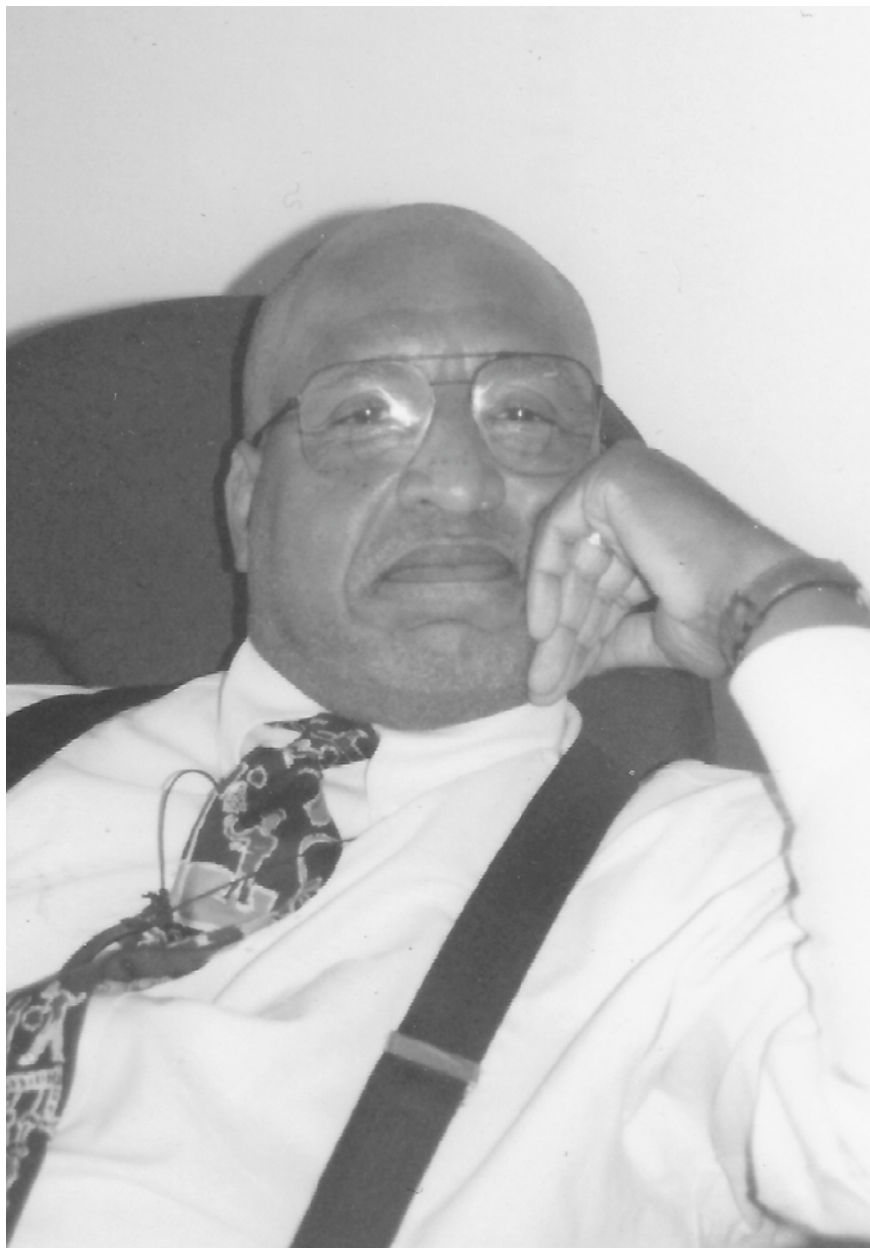
Ted Wilson went to work for the D.C. government under its council system, before they had an elected mayor. The council had at the time asked about any professional black employees, and as a result Wilson was "farmed out to the D. C. government," as he described it in early 2002, from Bechtel Engineering. He had been, he explained, "only supposed to be there one year, but I really liked it, and stayed eighteen months." He then landed another appointment, and continued working for the government in a somewhat different capacity.

"Tim and I worked together on one bill, one for home rule for the D. C. government, for statehood, and it almost passed," Ted Wilson related. "The guy who started it was from Chicago, and it was the closest D. C. ever came to statehood. Marion Barry [later a D.C. mayor] was a council person then. He had recently been elected, in the first elected government for D.C." Ted's younger brother soon became involved.

Tim Wilson remembers the effort quite well. He said in 2003 that he worked on the campaign during his time in Governor Longley's administration in Maine. Tim Wilson regularly at-

tended the National Governors Association Conference, and became involved in numerous issues thereof. He said the motion for home rule “was killed on the floor of the National Governors Conference.” All governors of the United States and its territories are invited to its spring and winter conferences to consider and vote “on those things germane to governors.” Meetings at the time occurred primarily in DC and in Seattle, Washington. Supporters of the home rule legislation wanted the District of Columbia recognized as a state. Ted and he had lobbied for the bill, and Wilson said, that those who opposed were largely southerners, Jimmy Carter being the most noted. “What happened was that Carter and a few other governors voted against it. If Carter and another governor had voted for it, D.C. would be recognized as a state by the Governors Conference, then they could put pressure on the [U.S.] legislature to do what they had to do.”

When Wilson left state government—at least temporarily—in 1983 he returned to education and athletics, serving as assistant headmaster of Hyde School in Bath as well as director of admissions of Maine Central Institute in Pittsfield and as a member of the Commission on Undergraduate Education at the University of Maine in Orono. He said he left state government when he did largely because, he stated in February 2002, “I had been there ten years, and I didn’t want to become a bureaucrat. Plus, the politics of governing had changed for me. I had been with Curtis and with Longley; Longley was an Independent. For me, party politics plays too big a part for the good of all. I could not tolerate this. It was time for me to leave.”



Tim Wilson in his office at Pierce Atwood in Portland, 1999

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Wilson said in 2003 that he considers his last direct action in state government to have been helping secure passage of the bill to get Martin Luther King Day established in Maine in 1986. He related that while working for the bill's passage, "I was called everything under the sun." One of the state senators stood up in the legislature and called Wilson a communist, asserting that Wilson was trying to twist everyone's arm to force passage of the bill. "Then Pat McGowan, [at the time] a representative from Pittsfield, got up and spoke in my defense." McGowan stated that what the representative had just said about Wilson was inappropriate, and that he knew something about Tim's character and history. "The bill passed. I was up in the gallery while all this was going on," Tim recounted. "I was awed that someone would do that, stand up and say something like that. It was pretty nice, real classy at the time."

When he had left government employment in 1983, Wilson started at Hyde School as assistant headmaster, but soon became interim headmaster. Hyde at the time was going through a troublesome period in regards to its management and direction. Wilson was essentially brought in as a troubleshooter, as a person previously serving as headmaster had, as Wilson described it, "screwed up—so I became interim headmaster to help keep the school afloat." The administration voted to sell the school to Joel Gall who had originally founded the school and directed it for some time. The school had ousted Gall in the 1980s to secure another headmaster, and then brought Wilson in partially, it seems, to step in to help Gall get the school back on track. As Wilson described the partnership, "They kept him on the road and I ran the day-to-day stuff." Wilson had charge of discipline, which he said made it "like being the principal." He served as interim headmaster until Joel Gall returned full-time with his son Malcolm to assist him. "They asked me to stay on as comptroller, but I didn't. If I had my way it would have become a black private school. But, I didn't have the votes [on the board] or the money," Tim said. However, "They have created a very good school at Hyde and one in Connecticut and one in Washington. But, as Joel

says, I kept them running, put them on the map; they would have closed down otherwise.”

During his time at Hyde School, in his second year, Wilson brought his old friend and fellow coach from Dexter, Frank Spizuoco, to work with him. According to Spizuoco, the school was indeed undergoing some major difficulties, difficulties including students—“damaged kids”—who had problematic relationships both in and outside the educational system as well as difficulties with the actual facility, which needed numerous repairs.

In terms of the grounds, Spizuoco related in 2005 that among other things the porch of the main building had deteriorated to the point that it was totally unusable, with the brickwork crumbling and the floor reduced to “a mass of rubble. It looked like a bomb had hit it.” Spizuoco said that he found a contractor who wanted \$28,000 to rebuild the porch. The price was out of Wilson’s range, so they started the work with the help of the students, and eventually hired the contractor—who did just part of the work, and reduced his price for that portion in return for an iron gate. The students helped throughout. As Spizuoco told it, “We had about half a dozen pouring cement, and kids working with wheelbarrows. And, the parents were up visiting that weekend.” The parents were amazed to see the kids working so energetically, “and Timmy passed the hat and got \$4,000 for school projects.” On a regular basis, Spizuoco stated, “We included the kids in things others would not have. ... We got the kids painting—my kids who visited and the other kids too. All of a sudden they were doing things, constructing things.”

Wilson used his straightforward approach with the students at the Hyde School to the benefit of many. Spizuoco stated that the two of them did wonderful things together at Hyde. One story he related concerned a boy who had drug problems and whose father regularly “forgot about his kids.” The young man played on the football team while Tim was running the

school and “his problems didn’t show up.” The team went to a game in New Hampshire. “His father came in a trench coat and said that he had just flown in for the game. He saw his son playing, and he [the son] got hurt and put on the sidelines. He came over to Timmy, and went back in with the team, and his father came over and said, “What did you do with my son?”” Spizuoco thought there was going to be a problem with the father, but instead the man said, “Even when he got hurt, he wanted back in. This isn’t the kid I knew.’ He [the father] was in our pocket after that. He didn’t understand how we could instill such changes in {his son}. We never won a game that year ... but it was probably the best year we ever had. We made some major changes in those kids.” One mother, Spizuoco recalled, told him, “He [Tim] turned my son’s life around, ... he saved my son’s life.”

Most of the kids at Hyde at the time were from wealthy out-of-state families, although there were also ten or twelve inner-city kids. The inner-city kids there on scholarships did not seem to have the same types of problems as did the wealthy students, nor, Spizuoco thought, did the twenty or so kids from Maine. They might have had some problems, but not as serious ones as did some of the others. Spizuoco said that he had been “appalled” at the way some of the parents treated their kids, or rather, the way they failed to interact with their kids.

At the same time as he had served at Hyde School, Wilson again did some work, in a informal way, with his brother Ted. As Ted Wilson described it, after the bill for home rule for Washington, “The next time we had an opportunity to work together, he was recruiting for a school, trying to put together a girl’s basketball team. I got him a couple of girls at Hyde School also, and that was fun too.” Tim Wilson explained that when he served as interim headmaster of Hyde School in the 1980s, he “would go to DC and look for kids for the Maine Central Institute.” Tim’s love for youth athletics again augmented his other responsibilities.

In 1989 Wilson left Maine for Pennsylvania to help care for his mother who had cancer. While there, he returned to school to study to be a chef. However, back problems and the increasing amount of time Tim spent with his mother, and his sister who was also ill, caused him to leave school. His mother and his minister both wanted him to teach once again, and although at first he “thought they were crazy,” teach he did. And, according to a number of people, Wilson made substantial inroads in helping turn around, for the good, an inner-city school.

“The ‘90s were a good time,” Tim reminisced, “but both my mother and my sister got sick. I became a house-frau. I went to culinary arts school and had a ball. Then my mother and our church minister said I needed to do something in the community.” On their urging, Tim began teaching at Allegheny Middle School in 1991, and said that it was “very good for me. There were gang wars going on and I mediated a lot of stuff.” He became involved with some “great teachers,” about whom he said, “I don’t know how they did it. A lot of them were white teachers in a black school, and they cared.”

Moreover, Wilson said, when he returned to the Pittsburgh area, he found that his parents and his brothers were “so well thought of by the minority community that I had kids in school whose parents knew them. When they found out I was Mamie’s son, or Pap’s brother or Ted’s brother, that gave me a great standing. In the case of his mother’s popularity, by association, Tim said, “some people put me on a pedestal, but in comparison, my family did more than I ever did; they fought the great fight at home, and that’s a great deal tougher than fighting it in Maine.”

Wilson taught in at the middle school until he received a telephone call from one of his sons saying that his presence was required in Maine; a friend in need wanted him to return to Camp Powhatan where he had first worked twenty years earlier to help run the camp. He returned and served as co-di-

rector of the camp until 1996, overlapping his work for the older camp with that of the new Seeds of Peace International Camp, which had held its first session at the Powhatan site in 1993, after the end of the regular Camp Powhatan summer season.

Wilson's work with the government of Maine had not ended for good in 1983, however. He continued to aid various governors in various capacities. While working with the Seeds of Peace in the late 1990s into the new century, Wilson aided the administration of Governor Angus King as a consultant. Before he started work for the Governor himself, however, Timothy Paris Wilson worked for Maine's Attorney General's Office.

After Andrew Ketterer became Maine's attorney general in the mid-1990s, he restructured his department to achieve greater efficiency. Seeing himself, based on his personal and professional life, as a champion of the disadvantaged, be the disadvantage due to age, race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or other factors, Ketterer became involved in sexual assault and domestic abuse prosecution, denouncing all violence, sexual or other, against women. As part of his message to children as well as adults that "you should never resort to violence" of any form, Ketterer became increasingly involved in civil rights law and initiated his Civil Rights Team Project. Tim Wilson would work with Ketterer on his Civil Rights Team Project, as well as on various diversity issues.

According to Maine Civil Rights Legislation, c. 379, 1993, passed in 1992:

A person has the right to engage in lawful activities without being subject to physical force or violence, damage or destruction of property, trespass on property or the threat of physical force or violence, damage or destruction of property or trespass on property motivated by reason of race, color, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.

Previous to 1992, in addition to being less inclusive, Maine's Civil Rights Act could only be triggered when a hate crime was committed against a person engaged in a federal activity such as voting, serving jury duty, and so forth. In 1992, Maine expanded this to cover threats or assaults against a person engaged in the exercise of any lawful activity, when said threats or assaults were motivated by the victim's minority status. Ketterer—who had helped secure the bill's passage while serving in the Maine House of Representatives and the Judiciary Committee in 1992—made enforcing this legislation (increasingly identified as some of the, if not the, most progressive in the nation) one of his highest priorities.

During his years as Maine's Attorney General, and as President of the National Association of Attorneys General, Ketterer often took center stage in judicial and educational forums regarding civil rights in the United States. In April 1999, President Bill Clinton invited Ketterer to Washington to support the introduction of federal legislation aimed at strengthening existing civil rights legislation through a new hate crimes bill introduced by Senator Edward Kennedy. The proposed legislation, then cited as the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1999," essentially aimed to create on the federal level legislation that Maine had enacted in 1992. The proposed legislation would have expanded hate crimes legislation to include physical and mental disabilities, sexual orientation, and gender.

In the meantime, Maine's Department of the Attorney General developed a "two pronged," approach to civil rights, as Ketterer explained in 1999. When Ketterer assumed office, Maine had an enforcement component already in place. Ketterer then developed a second component, that of education and early intervention. This second component exists independently from the judicial system and can be emulated in other states, even those without Maine's relatively inclusive hate crimes legislation. Ketterer developed the second prong after reviewing statistics for Maine's hate crimes and finding that most were anti-African American or anti-Hispanic, and

there was a high incidence of teen perpetrators. He decided to create a voluntary program for youth.

The program Ketterer developed utilizes peer support in getting students to recognize hate crime actions and to intervene in potentially serious situations. Ketterer had determined that most problems with teenagers did not start with overt acts of violence, but rather with name calling followed by an escalation to something like knocking a student's books out their arms and making them pick them up, and then if unchecked escalated to another, more violent or hurtful, level. The young victims invariably just wanted the incident to be over, and seldom reported such incidences to the school personnel. They often did, however, mention the incident to a classmate. Ketterer said that he thought that if peers were available within the schools to listen to their classmates and then report to the principal, early problems could be addressed before they escalated into more serious actions. The offending students could be asked to read pertinent literature, be informed of the legal actions that can result from hate crimes, and so forth. Team members participate in educating other members of their school on civil rights through such activities as distributing brochures, staging various presentations, and organizing "diversity days" in which schools devote a day to educating the student body about multiculturalism.

The Civil Rights Team Project educates students on the Maine Civil Rights Hate Crime Act. The program does not remedy all situations, and problems addressed have to fall within the parameters of the program. The program does, however, have numerous merits. It is inexpensive, focuses on early intervention, is proactive, and overall it is effective, Ketterer stated in 1999. In the late 1990s—after starting with eighteen schools in 1996—the program spread rapidly. By late 1999, over one hundred Maine middle and high schools were involved in the program with another fifty awaiting enrollment. The program continued to operate until the Attorney General's office into

the late-2010s, by which time over 150 schools had enrolled in the program.

Ketterer explained his various programs to the author in 1999 while he remained Attorney General of Maine. In 2001, after he had left political office, he recalled how Tim Wilson had come to work for the Civil Rights Team Project.

Ketterer had a speaking engagement in Dover on domestic violence in October, 1997, and Tim was in the audience. (Tim's daughter-in-law, Sophia, was currently co-director of the area women's center and Tim had attended the talk with his son Carl largely to hear her presentation.) According to Ketterer, Wilson had approached him after the talk and said, "No one else had the guts to do what you're doing," referring to Ketterer's work on race, women, and so forth. Wilson also told Ketterer, "If there's anything I can do, call me." He gave Ketterer his business card.

At the time, Ketterer was not interested in Wilson in terms of the youth program as much as he was in getting people of color into the Attorney General's Office. "In the traditional setup, the chances of getting African Americans" into the department was "basically nil," Ketterer stated in 2001. He had wanted to recruit minority lawyers into the department, but had found it a very difficult objective to accomplish, and he told Wilson that he could definitely use his help.

The AG decided to hire Wilson as a consultant. He told Wilson that although he sought minority lawyers, he also welcomed the opportunity to hire minorities for other positions, for clerical work on up such that they achieved representation on all levels of the department. He said that Tim brought a few clerical workers into the department and brought numerous law students to meet the attorney general and discuss possible positions in the department. "Then Tim would come to the office with a van, and take them to visit other people, take them shopping at L.L.Bean, etceteras. It worked well, although there was not a high yield with those [law students] we went

after. He did help staff our schools, even though that was not the main reason for the work.”

Ketterer believed that one of the key issues the department, and Wilson as a consultant, faced was that of gaining “acceptance of the people who did come here to work, I don’t know if they were always made to feel welcome.” In terms of Tim’s work, the former attorney general stated that “Tim was good. He said he would support me if I decided to run for anything [in the future]. But, I knew something Tim didn’t: I’m not really into politics.”



Andrew Ketterer, Maine Attorney General, 1999

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Wilson also started speaking at Maine schools about the Civil Rights Team Project. He began to do so in 1997 and continued to do so until well after 2000. Wilson traveled to numerous towns, addressing students at over forty-eight schools during the 1998-99 academic year alone. Wilson generally spoke about the history of hate crimes in Maine, and what he has seen of hate crime in Maine. Although he subsequently became less involved with the program, for a time, Wilson said in autumn 1999 that “I enjoy doing it and will continue doing it if they want me to.” One of program leaders, Steve Wesler of the Attorney General’s Office, often accompanied Wilson. Wesler had been a camper of Wilson’s at Powhatan, and Wesler’s son Seth would subsequently become involved with the Seeds of Peace, first as a camper and later as a counselor. Seth Wesler would continue to be active in justice issues after he left college and entered the larger work force, and Tim Wilson would remain connected, in one way or another, with the Civil Rights Teams until the late 2010s.

After Ketterer left office, the Civil Rights Team Program continued to function. But, Ketterer stated in 2001, the program suffered from a lack of political support. Roughly 40 percent of Maine’s legislators failed to support the project, and according to Ketterer the program needed to secure some minority leadership. The state had been able to secure federal funding for the program for three years, and Ketterer said he had essentially begged the state legislature to continue supporting the program thereafter. The program continued to operate in 2001 under Steve Rowe’s tenure as attorney general, but perhaps lacked the driving force Ketterer had given it. However, the social and political climate following the 2016 Presidential and Congressional elections situated the program with a key opportunities and challenges in addressing core civil rights issues in following years.

Although Wilson did consulting work for the attorney general in the late 1990s, he was not yet working at P.A. Strategies, the consulting firm he would join soon thereafter and

stay with into 2004. He subsequently, in late 2002, said of Ketterer that, “He took some risks and I admire him for that.” He talked again of working with Steve Wesller on the Civil Rights Team Project, and said that he also made civil rights presentations at various organizations and corporations and then went on to the governor’s office. Of his work during this time period, Wilson said that he hoped he had “made some differences in some people’s attitudes.” He worked with the AG’s Office for about two years before working with Governor Angus King.

As noted earlier, by the turn of the century Wilson had come to feel that the Maine Human Rights Commission, on which he had served for seven years as chair in the 1970s, had numerous shortcomings, primarily—as he perceived it—its lack of initiative in recent years. One place he thought the Commission had failed to do its duty was in its allowing programs like the Civil Rights Team Project to proceed under the Office of the Attorney General: “They should be running the Civil Rights teams, but the Attorney General does.” He remained concerned about this in 2017. Wilson stopped working with the program when Steve Wesller left the program—just before Ketterer’s tenure as attorney general ended. He thought that the program was not given enough support, inferring that the Human Rights Commission had failed in this area also: “The Civil Rights Teams didn’t get any substance, they needed to give them more.” (Tim went on to relate this to the teenagers involved in Seeds of Peace: “It’s the same with Seeds. We need to do a better job with following up on them,” on their lives after they leave the camp. “I don’t think anyone really understands what goes on with kids—with people—in a war situation.”) As time passed, programs would develop to focus on some of the issues Tim advocated, especially by the mid-2010s, while the Civil Rights Teams would continue to spread throughout into 2018, at which time Attorney General Janet T. Mills would express great pride in the work they did, and in their diversity, much of which could be traced back directly to Tim Wilson.

Wilson's disappointment in some of the civil rights activities he and others have been involved in showed when he continued: "I'm tired of talking about stuff because people think they know what's going on and they don't. They don't have a clue, they never had and never will." Yet, on a daily basis Wilson continued to work on just that, on giving people a clue. When he finished his work for the Attorney General, he worked directly with Maine Governor Angus King, with whom he would maintain an association until King left office in January 2003. By this time, Wilson had joined P. A. Strategies (later Pierce Atwood Consulting) of Portland as a consultant (bringing in his own clientele) as well as continuing his camping work with teenagers.

Wilson described his work for King, an Independent (like Wilson), in mid-2002, soon before the election of a new governor, that of former Congressman John Baldacci, the first Democrat to hold the office in seventeen years. "Along with King's staff I worked on making sure his administration had people of color and that whatever changes are made will go into the next governor's administration. Changes of policy will also go into the next administration. I also went out and found him some good people, people he could count on to stay here [in Maine]. I also helped him hire other people who were here all along, helped look at the opportunities for them too." Wilson stated in a separate interview that Governor King had not had any people of color working for him before Tim became involved and, "He got chewed up pretty bad by some people for that."

Angus King had a very favorable impression of Tim and the work he did. In late 2003 he commented on how he had known Tim for about twenty years, and said, "Everybody in Maine knows Tim." King thought he had met Tim while Tim was still working for Governor Longley, "my predecessor as an Independent." As governor, King said that he had asked Tim "to head up a crew to recruit minorities into the Maine government." Tim, he related, networked with the National

Association for the Advancement of Colored Persons, the various branches of the military, and other groups to locate qualified minorities, a job with which King seemed quite satisfied. He would also encounter and work with Tim concerning the Seeds of Peace, and he observed that, “Tim is this amazing guy, he’s quiet and self-effacing, but he gets things done. He has a force of personality without being loud. I just think he’s a remarkable guy. He’s a doer. He’s much more interested in results than in talking.” Such a quality might present difficulties when the goal is to get Tim discussing anything he has a reluctance to discuss, but in terms of performing work for a governmental agency or for the state as a whole, it has served Tim well.

Governor King had become much closer acquainted with Wilson when he served as governor, and said, “I consider him as a guy I respect and admire. He’s very able politically—and I mean that in a favorable way. He’s cognizant of what works, how things happen.” Furthermore, King said, “He doesn’t play the race card.” In terms of Tim’s work for the state—at which King said “he did a great job and we have a better record than we did before”—and with the Seeds of Peace, King said, “He’s the Director of Seeds of Peace and happens to be black. He is who he is; I think that’s why he’s so effective. In Maine, it’s very important. If one is only going to meet a few black men, it’s great if Tim Wilson is one of them.” As a US Senator in subsequent years, King would continue to have contact with Tim Wilson.

Governor John Baldacci likewise offered many kind words about Timothy Wilson in late 2003. He had known Tim from his work running Governor Curtis’s “Boys Task Force”—which Tim explained as a task force on children’s issues—as well as from Tim’s days as a teacher and coach in the 1970s, when Tim would stop in at Mama Baldacci’s—the family restaurant started by the Governor’s family in 1933 and which closed in the early 2000s, not long after the death of Paul Baldacci, the brother of the governor and the one who had of re-

cent years been most active in running the business. Baldacci stated that, “When Tim was traveling by he would stop for a plate of spaghetti or a cup of coffee. I’ve always liked Tim’s warm smile and chuckle, he’s very impressive and engaging.” No matter the context and his work, Baldacci said, “He’s always the same person, and I appreciate that.” Baldacci said that he also appreciated that “he’s a gentleman,” and that Wilson over the years has always “shown passion,” especially concerning kids. Furthermore, Baldacci stated, “He’s good at bringing good people into an organization or into the government.”



John E. Baldacci, former Maine Governor

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Wilson did not foresee himself working directly with the Baldacci administration in mid-2003. He had favorable opinions of the then-new governor himself, and would do whatever work was required of him as a consultant, but did not foresee a further alignment developing. In early 2003, with some of Wilson previous hires still in place in the state government (Wilson had spoken with some of the incoming administration about staffing before the transition), perhaps the need for

his services was not as urgent. He said some of Baldacci's people would touch bases with him from time to time as circumstances necessitated. "It's an interesting situation," he said, "in that some people want to know what I have to say, some don't. Many of the Democrats there now are liberals who talk out of both sides of their mouths. I don't really have any interest in that and I know it, so that's where that's at."

One issue Tim had was that he wanted to see the Baldacci Administration do was to work more with Native American issues in the state, Tim said in late 2016. He had hoped that one of the formers Seeds, a Passamaquoddy, would be hired at the state level, but that did not happen. Nor did it happen during the LePage Administration that followed. LePage would be deemed by many a less progressive governor than the previous two, but he would maintain a cordial relationship with Wilson. "In general," Tim said of the governor, in late 2016, "We've talked to each other. He's polite to me. He's the governor and he chooses to be polite to me; so be it. A couple of his people have been very supportive of what the Seeds are doing."

What perhaps had made the situation with the Baldacci Administration more "interesting" is that by the time John Baldacci had taken office, his brother, Robert Baldacci, had taken over the leadership of Pierce Atwood Consulting. On one level or another, Tim continued to work with the Bangor-based family he had met decades earlier while teaching and coaching in Dexter. In 2003 and 2004, Tim continued his work at Pierce Atwood as Director of Multicultural Programs, advising such diverse clients as the University of Maine; Mannattenville College in Purchase, New York; a number of Maine school districts and superintendents; and as an agent for professional athletes (Tim speaks to the athletes about their rights and responsibilities). As he summed it up, "My work here has to do with cultural differences. I work with clients of the law firm about cultural issues." At the same time, Tim worked full-time for the Seeds of Peace.

In late 2003, when another subject came up which had Governor Baldacci's attention, Wilson quipped, "John's too busy with other things to worry about that." Wilson might have had some misgivings about some aspects of the Baldacci administration, but he clearly appreciated the demands of the office on John Baldacci. In 2004, Baldacci would address the Seeds of Peace, speaking to both Maine campers and campers involved in a new, Arab and American, program. By that time, however, Wilson's position as a consultant, for both public and private organizations, would have shifted yet again.



Tim and Jacquie Wilson at the Seeds of Peace Camp, 2006

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

CHAPTER FOUR : FATHERHOOD

"I can see why he does what he does, and why it gives him a good feeling. It seems to me that if you help someone, you don't feel that there was an opportunity missed."

Craig Wilson

Speaking of His Father, 2002

In the personal realm, Timothy Wilson has also lived a varied life. He married four times, twice to black women, twice to white women. His four children, however, all had the same biological mother, Tim's first wife Ida Gammon Wilson. Both Tim and his children have both happy and painful memories of their childhood, and the children, now adults, had much to say about their father as a father, and also as an educator, a semi-politician, a husband, and a single man. They provide some of the most amusing stories about the man so many others see as an accomplished, beloved yet often distant, professional. Tim also counts among his family a stepson who remains close to one of his biological children. In addition, Tim and his fourth wife, Jacquie, would also essentially "adopt" one of the young men who came to work at the Seeds of Peace, and who would become a leader and educator in his own right. In addition, Tim has essentially served as a surrogate father to countless students and campers during the course of his life, and in 2017 he continued to do so, as well, by then, as taking pride in not just his own children but also his grandchildren, including the daughter of the young man he and Jacquie had welcomed into their family, and then his grandson, born in early 2017. In some ways, Wilson has served as a surrogate fa-

ther to hundreds if not thousands of his students and campers over the years.

Leadership and education were large components in Tim's family, from Wilson's parents' home through Tim's children and grandchildren lives. These qualities were also key to the work Tim has done with youth throughout his work life, from his days in the Peace Corps to his days teaching in Maine and Pennsylvania, to his work with Camp Powhatan and the Seeds of Peace and even encompassing much of his work with the government.

Just as Timothy Wilson had sent cheerful letters to Joel Bloom and other friends announcing the birth and early growth of his children when he was a young man working in Maryland and later in Maine, so, too, did he speak of them with pleasure decades later. About his children, Wilson's pride is obvious, although he views the four as having distinct personalities.

The situations surrounding their births also varied. Reminiscing about their births, he said in 2001, "When the first [Craig] was born, in 1965, I was painting in Salisbury, Maryland, for the school district when the call came. I went in to see my wife and they said it would be a while—to go get a haircut. I did." When Tim came back, "He [the baby] was pushing himself off the gurney, every one was awed by it. She [Ida] had to stay in the hospital, so I had him longer by myself than I did with the others. Each of them was different."

About Paul, the second child and born in 1967, Tim said, "He was born in Dexter. It was really a long birth. Ida was in labor a long time. It was a hard birth."



Tim and Jacquie Wilson with part of the Wilson family at camp

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

“Carl [the third baby] was the most traumatic,” Tim recalled. “He wasn’t supposed to live. He was three months premature, and back then most babies that age did not survive. She [my wife] was on her back because she had hemorrhaged. She went to Portland. I used to drive back and forth. I came to see her at night. He was born August 24, 1970. He was three and one-half months premature, at four pounds and a couple of ounces. He’s a big man now.”

Before, Paula, the youngest, was born (some eight years later), Tim said, the doctors informed his wife that she “wasn’t supposed to have more children. But, [in spite of the warnings] it was a natural birth. I got to hold her [Paula]. She was tiny compared to the boys,” Tim related. Born last, Paula was also to live the shortest period of time with her father, and have probably the most difficult relationship with him, at least into her young adulthood.

Looking back at his marriage to Ida, Wilson said in 2000 that, “The boys were mine, and she had a hard time with this.” The boys were indeed very involved with their father, who often served as a coach and a buddy to them as much as he might a standard father figure, however one might define that. Two of the three “boys” were married with children of their own by 2004, and had been for some time. Of the third, Tim’s middle son Paul, Tim said he had asked him once if he was ever going to get married. His son answered, “Maybe when I grow up Dad.” Paula, likewise, remained single into 2019.

Long before the children reached their majorities, however, the Wilsons instilled some of their own values into their children. All four would grow into intelligent adults, and very active ones, and these traits no doubt reflect some of their early childhood experiences. Most of their early childhoods were spent in Maine—in Dexter, Orono, and then Augusta. After their parents divorce, Paula would spend some of her time in Arkansas.

With both parents having been teachers in Thailand—and Tim continuing to teach in America—and both excelling in English, reading was a tool and a pleasure they passed on to all their children. Tim acknowledged in 2001 that although he sees his kids as being like him in various ways, they also “got a lot from their mother. We’re readers, and I’m proud of that. I hope my grandchildren will be the same way.” According to the Wilson children, their parents not only encouraged them to read, they also took pains to make certain that the children were careful with their diction.

Not only English and communication were deemed crucial, however. Learning in general was highly valued by the Wilsons (just as had been true with Tim’s parents) and Ida and Tim made certain that their four children each acquired a solid education. They made educational decisions for each child based on the individual child’s needs and their living circumstances at the time. Two of the children ultimately attended

private schools, while two attended public ones. As adults, none of the children expressed any regrets over their schooling, although more than one commented that living in Maine as they did for most of their early years, they were frequently the only minority students in their grade, and, sometimes, in their school. As Paul stated in 2004, “Me and my brother, we were it. We were the black community.” Yet, in spite of such challenges, the children would all develop expertise in their own craft or profession by the time they were young adults: Paul in culinary arts, Paula in performing arts, Carl in teaching, and Craig in environmental engineering. Each would enter those fields by the early 2000s, and remain in them in 2019.

In order to maintain their academic work as well as participate in other school activities, the Wilsons, and perhaps Tim in particular, made the children make advised choices. Paula, who was 23 in 2001, stated that year that, “My dad made me make a choice” in the sixth grade, “about pursuing either athletics or theater.” Tim had told her that she could commit to only one or the other, not both. She chose theater, in which she remains involved. With the boys, Tim said, “It was sports. I told them, ‘If you sign up you have to finish.’” It was the same with everything, “You have to finish what you start.”

Before his divorce from their mother and the period leading to it, all four children had good memories of their home-life, although like most children they remember their parents arguing at times —sometimes heatedly so — and do not all agree on which of the two had the better parenting skills. They each retain memories of their father as being someone who was often full of fun, and involved in the sports and other activities in which they themselves became involved.

Referring to his childhood, Craig Wilson, the oldest of Wilson’s children, said of Tim, “I don’t think he realizes that he was the good thing we ran to. A lot of the time he was gone, but when he was home he was home with us 100 percent.”

(At the time, Tim often had to be away on state or other business.) Being the oldest, Craig said, “I was around him more than Paul, Paula, or Carl.” He said that when he was young and Tim was coaching and teaching in Dexter, Tim sometimes took him to school on a snowmobile and then picked him up after hockey practice. “Prior to the third grade, he was there all the time.” However, “Once he started working with the state government my time with him was more limited, but, then I could [simply] walk across the street from Lincoln School to his office.” In addition, two to three times a week Tim would get up early and do Craig’s paper route with him. Craig said that in his memory, “My father was always there for me.”

“It probably wasn’t until I was thirteen to fourteen years of age when my parents got divorced that I didn’t get to see him much,” Craig recalled. But, at the time, he said he was himself otherwise busy “playing hockey on two or three teams, working,” and so forth, and said he really didn’t see much of the family at all during that period. In other words, the divorce came at a time when Craig was deeply involved in his own activities, and his memories of his father were essentially quite positive.

Carl, the third born of the Wilson children, recalls his father serving as a coach for him in childhood, and acting differently when their mother was away from home. “When we were young he would coach us, and when Mother was away on business trips it was like another guy came to stay. He would laugh, wrestle with us, play basketball, and none of us were good except Craig. When it was just Dad it was really great. ... All the good times were just Dad and us. When it was just us it was fine.” It was not that life with his mother did not have its rewards also, it was just that Carl enjoyed the changes his father displayed when he was the sole parent in the home.

He recalled one specific incident that involved his older brother in particular. Tim and the kids were in the car, with Craig driving. As Carl related it, “Craig was driving the car too

fast and blew the transmission. Dad was asleep.” When he woke up in the midst of the commotion, “He bought Craig’s story, he bought Craig’s story that he’d hit a bump, but he had [actually] blown up the engine and the whole car jumped.” Tim only found out what really happened years later, Carl said, when he “was driving to his wedding [to Jacquie] in Pittsburgh with Craig.”

Another humorous, and telling in its own way, memory of his father was his occasional tormenting of the family, or just Carl, in the car. “We would drive in the Toyota and he would make us roll the windows up. It would be hot, and he’d sneeze so hard it’d scare you,” or he would otherwise perform for the kids. (Tim would sometimes set the kids up by saying, “Guess what? I’ve got something for you...””) “He turned the car once so much it went up on two wheels. Anyone else would have crashed, but he went around the corner on two wheels going ‘w-h-o-o, w-h-o-o,’ and we were like, ‘Oh my God!’”

One event that both father and son recall with amusement is that of “the sunglasses.” As Carl told the story in 2004, his father had recently purchased an expensive pair of sunglasses of which he was quite fond. Carl was about seven or eight years old, and his parents were still married. Carl had a ventriloquist’s dummy, a black version he said was popular in the 1970s. One day when his dad was away he and a friend of his, Brent, were playing. Brent was outside the Wilson home, and Carl decided to see how the new sunglasses looked on his doll. He put the glasses on the dummy and held them up to the window to show Brent. He made the doll do this and that for a few minutes with the cool new shades on, then when Carl moved on to something else, he forgot all about the glasses-wearing dummy and left it in the window.

Tim came home and started looking for his glasses. He asked Carl where they were, and Carl said he did not know. After some rummaging about the house with no success and getting frustrated, Tim decided that Brent might know. Tim went to

Brent's house, and Brent told him what had happened and where the glasses were. Tim returned home, and "he grabbed that doll," and asked Carl about it. "Just tell me the truth," his father told him. Carl tried to run off, and said he did not remember, or something to that effect. He then got into trouble with his father, not because of his playing with the glasses, but for denying what he had done with them and trying to run off. The moral of the story, as he remembered it almost thirty years later, was "Don't lie."

Carl said his father did not know anything about hockey, "so he could coach it." An odd observation, perhaps, but Tim coached hockey for all his kids' teams when they were young. He coached the Mites, Squirts, Pee Wees, and the Bantams. He said that there was no one present at their schools to do it, so he learned all the rules and took on the job, one by which both the kids and Tim benefited. He coached the goalies because "nobody else wanted to do it." In future years, Tim would put this newfound knowledge to good use with other young people, especially his campers on Pleasant Lake.

Moreover, besides his father having coached his teams earlier on, Carl said, "In my senior year of football, ... I just wanted to be a player on the team. He let me do that, and I had a good season. It was a good experience and it allowed me to be a better coach later on." Carl would subsequently coach football for John Bapst High School—a school he had attended himself for a short period when his father had taught there—and at Hampden Academy to make ends meet while attending the University of Maine (Carl played for the university for all of six days before determining that the strain it would put on his study time and, in the short run, his economic situation, was simply not worth it. At the time, Tim was in Pittsburgh studying to be a chef, but his own old football injuries made him realize that although he finished his classes and graduated, his legs would not permit him to stand all day and cook.) When in his thirties, Carl would also serve as an assistant football coach in Dexter, coaching the same team as his father had

decades earlier. And his father would go back and coach the team again years after that.

Tim's sports abilities continued to impress Carl long after his own high school days. Several years ago, according to Carl, Tim's athletic prowess was evident at a father/son football game in which they played. "He did curls, caught the ball to a side and ran it to the end zone like it was nothing. Gosh, he was in his fifties then, and it was probably the hardest game we ever played. One of the other fathers was a professional football player, and it turned out a lot of them played college football. In the end we beat them, but only because we were younger." The game lasted two hours, and, Carl said, "We won by two points because we had plays they didn't. ... As memories go of your Dad making you proud. ... He was as Dad as you can get." Tying this into his earlier memories, Carl continued, "There's a whole bunch that you don't understand when you're seven years old, [and] it's especially important for kids whose fathers are CEOs to see them running around in raggedy old college uniforms."



Paula Wilson at Seeds of Peace Camp, 2003

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee



Wil Smith at Seeds of Peace Camp, Tim's adopted son, mid-2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Of his childhood, Paul Wilson also remembers sports as playing a major role, of being a bonding agent. Paul said in 2001, “I remember lots of trips to hockey games, we’d just go...” Paul later added, from his observations as a child and later in life, “He’s a gifted coach.” When Paul and his siblings were younger, he said, Tim often served as “our conditioning coach [in hockey]. He’d show up in a long leather jacket, and a suit from work. He’d be on the ice yelling ‘Up! Down!’” Here again, the Wilson children shared memories, but each with a different perspective. Yet, Paul saw himself as a distant child in terms of his family; “I wasn’t there much. I was one of those kids who got up, ate breakfast, and left until 10:00 [p.m.]” He would get grounded on occasion, but his dad said, “All you have to do is call and tell us where you are.” Much of the time, Paul said, he was at a nearby playground, one the family could see from their house. Yet, he continued, “I spent most of my life trying to get out of the house.”

As a disciplinarian, Tim overall was a lenient parent. Spanking was simply not his thing. But, if the children pushed, he would push back. His children have varying memories of any punishments given, but none of them remembers as Tim being especially harsh. Indeed, some of them seem rather amused by Tim in that regard.

Paul remembers the house on Western Avenue in Augusta as being the place where his father “last spanked us.” But regarding such punishment, Paul said, “He couldn’t hit us hard enough to hurt us. It hurt him more. We felt bad for him.” In this instance, Paul said, “We’d trashed the house, and his wife [my mother] was mad.” Hence, he spanked the children, but felt horrible about it and would simply not do it again.

Craig said, however, that he did not remember “any shouting matches, any spankings. I was a wise mouth but probably no worse than that.” He added that “even as kid I knew what I wanted to do” and went about doing it. So, if their father had occasion to spank the boys, such occasions were rare and not deemed as unfair by his children.

Related both to the family home and to sports, Paul Wilson said that one of the “classic” sorts of things he remembers is that his father would be sleeping in front of the television, but, “If you would change the channel he’d say ‘I’m watching that.’ He’d always wake up. I think he just wanted to know the score” of whatever game or event he was supposedly watching.

One of Paul’s clearest memories of a family event was that of a “fiasco of a summer vacation.” As Paul tells the story, “We rented a camper and drove to Pittsburgh on one of the hottest summers on record for the Fourth of July. I found out years later that I had fallen out of a swing the day before and had a concussion. I faded in and out. My older brother [Craig] had the flue and puked the whole way, so we were in this hot stinky box. My father got to the point where he just got quiet for two days. We were going to Slippery Rock for some kind of

reunion and he didn't really want to be there either. The best part was getting ice cream at some stand where he grew up."

Of his own work and his approach to life, Paul said, "I kind of go along." A talented cook, he did not like to call himself a chef. Indeed, in the early 2000s, he called himself a "cook-slut" in the winters, saying, "I don't work anywhere, but I always have work." At the time, he worked at Moche Restaurant during the tourist season, and helped put together menus for other establishments. (As Paul was too modest to state, he had earlier opened a restaurant in Bar Harbor, and had aided others in establishing restaurants, and would be known for his culinary talents into the 2010s.) Paul said of his father, "He was a really good cook, goulash and stuff like that, and he still cooks." Like Carl, his mother's culinary skill brought different memories: "My mom was a health nut, so she always had these drink mixes that tasted like cement, and goats' milk." When she was away, Paul said, Tim would give the kids things like beans and hot dogs for a welcome change.

Paul also related the family tale that his sister Paula had been named Paula because of the family car's license plate. According to Paul, the license plate was "CPCIT," for "Craig, Paul, Carl, Ida, Tim," and in order to keep it the same, Tim and Ida decided to name their daughter Paula. Tim Wilson, however, said in 2003 that it was just a family joke, and that they had already picked out the name Paula regardless of the license. Furthermore, had Carl have been a girl he would have been named Carla; the parents simply liked the idea of related names. In addition, Paula was named Paula Marie after her mother, Ida Marie, so the name repeated more than one family moniker.

Paula, being the youngest, did not recall Tim as being present in her early life to the same extent as did the boys, and after she reached her majority the two would have to work to repair the breaks in their relationship. The breaks were caused at least in part by events during and following the divorce, by

Tim's subsequent two marriages, and the actual physical separation of father and daughter, as Tim and Ida divorced when Paula was only three years old.

Having been so young when her parents divorced, the stories Paula related occurred after her parents separated. She did remember some one-on-one time her father, even after the divorce. "I remember sledding with him at age seven, just before we moved to Arkansas," she said. Tim and Paula went to a big hill, one that "took about two hours to get up, twenty-five seconds to get down. Dad had a big inner tube, and he told me to get on his back. We went into the woods. We hit everything. I kept getting flipped off. We were bleeding, bruised. It was a bonding moment, but not particularly pleasant."

Paula stated that she really did not like going to visit her father in the years after her parents divorced, although of Tim's next two wives she did prefer one to the other. As to Wilson's current wife, whom Tim married when Paula was in her mid-teens, Paula said, "I get along well with Jacquie." Paula formed a solid relationship with Jacquie over time, although as a teenager she had wanted people to understand that Ida was her biological mother. Paula also had a troubled period with her father during her teenage years, in part due to a misunderstanding they had when Paula was enrolled in a summer program in Massachusetts.

Father and daughter also held different perceptions of why Tim and Ida had married and why they divorced, and of the context of that divorce. While Tim discusses such things as little as possible, he did say that he had tried to leave his daughter room to work things out for herself. This may have contributed to his having had, in some ways, the rockiest relationship with his daughter.

In 2000, when Paula was finishing her college studies in theater at Pomona College in California, as well as working in New York in dance and theater, Wilson said, "I finally realized

that kids who are a bit older make the decisions—and do it better”—seemingly better than the adults in their lives.

In October 2000, as Tim explained, “I traveled to the Middle East and I called her at college to let her know I would be going again. [He called the rest of his family also, and makes it a practice now to do so before any lengthy journeys.] It was the beginning of our getting back together. Some people say it was like nothing ever happened,” but it will take us a long time to become really close.” They would work on developing, or redeveloping, that closeness over the next few years.

As Paula related the story of the proposed Middle East trip, “He called me on the telephone. I was a sophomore [in college] and was typing a science final. The phone rang, and it was an ‘outside’ phone ring. I was expecting it to be Mom. He said ‘Hello,’ I said, ‘Hello Craig.’ He said, ‘This is your father.’” Then there was silence, after which her dad told her that he was leaving for the Middle East, and “I just want you to know that if I die, I love you.’ And then he hung up, that’s all he said. ... How as I supposed to go back to studying after that?” (According to Tim, he had said to Paula, “I’m going to the Middle East, and in case something should happen there ...” whereas Paula recalled there having been a direct threat to his life mentioned.) Regardless of the exact wording of the call, during a 1999 trip Tim had almost been shot by soldiers at a border check in Gaza because, he said, “I didn’t like the way they were treating a friend of mine, and I said something about it, and they didn’t like it.” So, any concerns were justified.

After the phone call, Paula said that her brothers had to fill her in on what Tim had been doing for the Seeds of Peace. “They, [Seeds], did not send him overseas [that time]. Then we started talking.” They started out talking a few times a year. In spring 2003, Tim said of their estrangement that he thought that Paula had done what she thought she had to do, that she had made a choice based on her closeness to her mother.

As Tim and his daughter became reacquainted, they came closer together in other ways. At the close of the 1990s, Paula started doing summer work with Seeds of Peace, holding dance workshops for both campers and counselors. She taught participants dance movements and helped them perform for the rest of the camp. She also began spending time with Tim when he went to New York for Seeds functions, often accompanying him. For example, she attended a January 2003 celebrity auction hosted by comedienne Janeane Garofalo with her father. The Canadian rock group the Barenaked Ladies performed, and President William Clinton supported the cause as both a speaker and one of the auctioned-off celebrities: talk-show host Caroline Rhea paid \$22,000 into the Seeds of Peace coffers for the opportunity to play a round of golf with the former President.

In spite of all the celebrities present, Wilson boasted two weeks later of how one or two members of the press had only had eyes for Paula. Subsequent to the fundraiser, a photograph of father and daughter appeared in the Sunday *New York Times*, a photograph Tim shared with friends with happiness and pride.

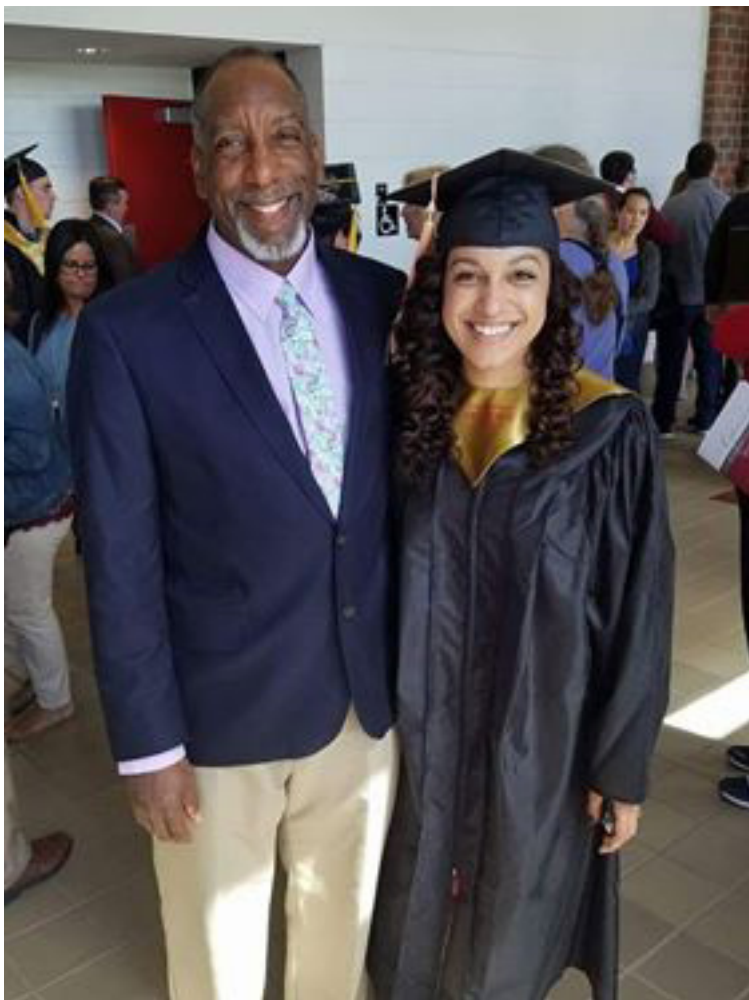


At Samantha's Graduation
Wilson Family Photo

That summer, 2003, Paula spent an entire session working with Tim at the camp. She worked as a co-facilitator with Wesley or ‘Wes’ Days, leading the kids in non-verbal skills as well as discussing problems in American culture and elsewhere with them, a facilitation group many participants anticipated being repeated in 2004. However, professional commitments in New York prevented her from returning to camp. Her brother Paul Wilson, however, would be at the camp in 2004 as part of the support staff. Her career in dance and performance arts in general took off soon after she spent that time at Seeds, and she began traveling internationally.

Paula, in spite of some unpleasant memories of her own, felt in the early 2000s that her brother Paul had the most difficult time of it, in terms of his childhood and his relations with his parents. As Paula described it, after stating that, “We all have had very different experiences with him [Tim]; I think they [my parents, intentionally or not] both gave Paul short shift, they both thought the other was taking care of him.” Tim later explained that Paul was a sophomore in high school when he and Ida divorced, in college preparatory school for the next year, and then was off on his own. Hence, that Paul might be or appear to have been somewhat overlooked to Paula is plausible. In addition, Paul maintains that he was always an independent child, and he remains an independent adult, checking in with his family, but still off doing his own thing. Craig, the oldest, was already heading off to college the autumn after the Wilsons divorced, while Carl, going into seventh grade, had decided to live with his father.

Either way, Paula recalled how Paul once “came to visit us in Arkansas. He looked so much like my uncle [my mother’s brother] that had died that it was freaky. Everybody [there were a few elderly people present who had Alzheimer’s] called him ‘J.B.’ They honestly thought that he was our uncle.”



At Samantha's Graduation
Wilson Family Photograph

Paula's oldest brother, Craig, perhaps looks the most like their father; at least he does according to his sister. Paula said that she had a picture of her parents in Thailand. She pointed it out to her niece, Samantha, Craig's daughter, when she was a young child and Samantha started to cry. "She wanted to know who her father was marrying," Paula related.

Meanwhile, Paula's own career progressed. At age 23 in 2001, Paula was screen-testing in New York City for a talent agency, as well as working as an Equity Union stage manager and a scenic artist. At Tribeca Performing Arts Center, Paula Wilson served as operations assistant, as well as working as a dancer. As to Timothy Wilson's frequently referring to her as a dancer, she said that she'd only been dancing for a short time, and "Dad's always been kind of grandiose about what we do." (He was perhaps, simply a proud parent.) Paula anticipated needing a hip replacement sometime in the future, expected that her career in dance therefore was limited, and thus had lately been concentrating on learning dance management so that she would not have to rely as much upon dancing herself. By 2004, she had left Tribeca to pursue other career avenues, and had landed a few television and commercial roles.

Paula's career in the performing arts continued to develop in the following years. In the mid-2010s, she served as the Artistic Director of the International Dance Intensive Dance Intensive for Adults in New York City. She also started her own company, Pepsqually Voice and Sound Design, which among other things provided clients with voiceovers in sixteen languages, and she worked as a stage and company manager in the dance world, and danced and performed internationally in the late-2010s.

The second youngest of Wilson's children is Carl, born in 1970. Married with two children, his views differ from his siblings, just as they differ from one another. Carl met his wife Sophie because of his father; Tim had helped Sophie transfer to Maine Central Institute in 1987. Tim Wilson, as director of admissions for the school, recruited Sophie when her former school near Vassalboro, Maine, closed its doors.

Carl entered education in his early adult years as had his father, although from a different angle. He lived in Dover-Foxcroft for a number of years in the early 2000s and worked with Jobs for Me through the local school district, a program

helping “kids who want and need to learn job skills, who want to be better than they are or to manage themselves better,” as he described the program in autumn 2001. “I help them deal with their friends, parents—although some don’t really have parents. ... I might show them how to write a cover letter, teach them about values and survival, how to interact with other kids.” He worked with high schools students, freshmen to seniors, and once the students graduated he did follow-up work with them for a year, working with employers if necessary. He also worked with school faculty, sometimes educating them as to the reasons for and benefits of his program, and continued to enjoy his work into the 2004-05 academic year and beyond. Then, after he and his wife Sophie moved to Orono where Sophie served as the Town Manager, Carl worked more independently in education and also, his father described it in 2016, was something of a “house frau,” maintaining responsibility for the children and the home as well as continuing to do some work with students.

In his educational work, Carl said that he often told his students that his father had given him a couple of good pieces of advice: “You ought to go out with that girl Sophie,” and “Be yourself and everything will be O.K., just be your best.” Carl added, “I guess that [the latter] is my favorite piece of advice.”

As had Paula, Carl stated that, “For a long time I did not see him [my father].” From the age of twelve, he said, he had problems with his parents in their roles as parents, but, at his choice, lived with his father until he graduated from high school. As to his current relationship with his father, he stated, “The length and breath of our relationship now is based on my being an adult.” Carl explained that his relationship to his family since Tim married Jacquie “is really back to where I was a child.” The divorce between his parents did take a toll on his early relationship with his father. He added that, “In teaching you look back at your own life and see how kids relate to parents, what they wanted but found in other people. My parents were busy trying to take care of themselves after

being married seventeen years and going through a divorce.” As with the other children, Tim would continue to strengthen his relationship with Carl over the following years. Carl’s wife Sophie stated that, “I think when Tim and Jacquie came back to Maine and [decided they] were going to make us important, we decided that we were going to go forward and not keep stuff bottled up.” Such openness apparently strengthened the relationships of all involved.

When asked in the early 2000s if he thought he was very much like his father, Carl responded, “Mmm, no. Maybe I have some of the same mannerisms. I don’t think any of us are very much like him. [We’re] not like either of our parents. ... When they both went away [Ida to Arkansas when he was a teenager, Tim to Pittsburgh when he was in college], I made those last connections of how I want to be, having a child did the rest.”

Carl does think that he shares ideals with his father, however. “We both want the children we work with to be the best they can be. And like my father I can babble on for hours about nothing,” Carl observed. Still, he said, “I do not think of myself [as being] like my father, but I picked the best of him” to emulate.

After Tim returned to Maine with Jacquie, and Carl and Sophie moved to Dover-Foxcroft after graduating from the University of Maine in Orono, Tim brought the couple “a U-Haul full of stuff, his furniture... a washer and dryer.” Said Sophie, “The best part of Tim is his little surprises.” The couple also appreciates that Tim drove up to Bangor when their son Isiah was borne, and stayed with them “from 5:30 a.m. to 10:00 at night.” Isiah started kindergarten in autumn 2004, and enjoyed it immensely. As with Tim’s other grandchildren, young adulthood was fast approaching, or had arrived, by 2019.

Carl said that his father came one year to speak with his students. The students all knew one another, “so they were unafraid to ask any questions. One kid said, ‘Mr. Wilson, did you

ever have an Afro?” Carl laughed thinking of his students and how of all the questions they might have asked that was the one thing at least one student most wanted to know. In part it amused him because it reminded him of other facets of being black in a white state.

For example, according to Carl, petroleum jelly played something of an important role in their family. “We were an eclectic family. My mother had this thing about petroleum jelly. She made us put it on our faces to keep our skin from getting dry. The [other] kids must have thought, ‘Black people smell funny.’”

Carl likewise recalled of his mother that, “She also had a thing about health food,” which he was not alone in finding less than desirable. Instead, like the other boys, he preferred it when his father cooked. Carl mentioned how some members of his family could cook better than others, especially his brother Paul. Each family member had certain talents, some of which they shared in common.

The gift of dance, however, was one they did not all share. Carl said, “I saw my father dance with my mother once, at one of my high school dances. Craig can dance. I can’t dance to save my life. But he [my dad] can boogie, when he’s in shape. When he’s feeling better he’s definitely more athletic than most guys his age.” All the Wilson children, like Tim, are athletic. And Paula of course excels at dance.

In regards to his father’s work, Carl had several observations to make. “Seeds of Peace makes him happy. I’m proud of the work he does, and glad that he’s happy, but I [also] like what he does at P.A. Strategies [later Pierce Atwood Consultants]. I know he’s safe there; when he goes places where people are trying to kill us [Americans], I’m not happy. Once he didn’t call for two weeks [when traveling], I was annoyed. Now he’s better.”

Timothy Wilson assumed new responsibilities in 2003 with the Seeds of Peace, responsibilities that would keep him away from America and in the Middle East for much of the year. Of that development, Carl said in autumn 2004, “I don’t really like this aspect of his job at all, but it’s important to him. And he says that he does take precautions.” And, not longer after this, Tim would step down, for the most part, from his work at P.A. Strategies to devote more time to the Seeds of Peace, including more international travel and work. By the mid-2010s, Tim was no longer affiliated with Peirce Atwood, although he was professionally active and busy.

Carl, like Wilson’s other children, and indeed perhaps most of the people who know him, does not realize the extent of Wilson’s work, of what he has done over the years. “Once,” Carl recalled, “he was telling a story about being in Thailand. I was astounded. He asked why I was looking at him that way. I said, ‘I didn’t know you had done that.’” His father replied, “‘I must have told you that.’ Maybe he told Craig or Paul, but I’m the youngest” of the brothers, Carl explained. Carl also had not known until he was well into adulthood that his father had lived in Arizona for a while. “He said it was ‘all beer and rattlesnakes.’ He’s not the easiest man to deal with, he’s not mean but he is difficult. It’s like getting a new video, and then only doing this video, only this video, then when it’s done he’ll do something else. Everything he’s ever done has always been to the fullest extent,” Carl said of his father.

By way of explanation, Carl pointed to one chapter of Tim’s teaching career. “He taught at John Baptist [in Bangor, Maine] one year.” [Tim taught English, and Carl was in high school at the time (1975-76) and was one of Tim’s students.] He wanted to expand every kid’s mind, yet he was also being a bachelor. Mix the two together, and it makes for a very interesting situation. It was very funny because he had all these grandiose ideas, then the reality crept in that we were really not that smart. The kids reading Main Street were pissed about the ones reading *The Great Gatsby* or *Moby Dick*. They had to

read three pieces by an author, and compare them. He realized that it wasn't a whole lot of fun anymore. All I remember is he gave us a big assignment. He had a waterbed then and the papers were on the floor, and he had some water." Carl heard Tim start yelling suddenly, "I spilled the f'ing water all over the papers, what am I going to do?" 'Give everyone an 'A,' Carl yelled back. "He did."

Carl related how his father had "guy buddies" during his bachelor days, and they did "guy buddy stuff" together. Tim came home once and told Carl, "We were dancing and met some ladies. You want to meet the ladies, smell good. Women like men who smell good." Soon thereafter, according to Carl, Tim did some work for Christie Associates in Augusta. "They gave him a car, and he had this woman who had a crush on him." The two were in the car together, "and she jumped on him. He jumped and got the car clipped. There was about \$1,000 in damages." One suspects that Tim's exploits as a bachelor were as humorous as they were anything else.

Carl lived alone with Tim during this period. He was alone with his father for about a year, and food, like Tim's bachelor and teaching experiences, sometimes created a unique or humorous home situation. As Carl explained it, "He would do this thing where he'd buy a lot of food, stuff the apartment full, then not buy food for a long time. I'd take a steak from the freezer, put butter and salt and pepper on it, and just cook it, and put a can of corn on the stove. Then I would put all that on a plate. I'd eat the steak and vegetables and whatever else I had made, while he was off doing his guy thing." Carl seemed as much amused as anything by this. Carl said that during this time period also, his older brother Craig and his wife Lisa "went through a stretch where they didn't have much money. I'd call them and they'd come right over." Sometimes they'd cook, "and I'd just cobble it up." Lisa would watch him eat while Craig laughed at him. "I had terrible eating habits. I was lonely, they were hungry, and I had lots of food," as Carl explained their interactions. Carl also invented "a base-

ball laundry game. He didn't approve of it, and came in once asking 'what are you doing?' when I was throwing the clothes around." Tim obviously spent time with his son during this time, but perhaps not as much as his son would have liked.

Soon thereafter, Tim remarried and Carl made a lifelong friend in his father's third wife's son, Todd. The two remain close to the present day. Then, when Tim's third marriage ended, and Tim and Carl eventually moved into a place of their own, alone, once again.

In spite of humorous and difficult periods during the years after Tim and his first wife divorced, Carl stated that his father has several sterling qualities. One of these is the relationship he has with grandchildren, and beginning in the later 2010s, his great-grandchildren—or great-grandchild. "He's an excellent grandfather," Carl observed with true happiness. To this Sophie added, "And Jacquie's a wonderful grandmother."

In addition, Carl said in 2004, "Sophie and I have done well. Dad has been a part of that for the last couple of years. For the most part, since he's been back [from Pittsburgh] it's been good for me. He has some clout with people here still, and can use it to help kids. He's always saying and I tell my students, 'You never get anywhere without someone helping you—your parents, etc.' If a parent can help, you should take that opportunity. I have no problem taking my father's help with most things. But his advice may be excellent and not help me, I need to be above the political stuff. Sometimes I can take his advice and turn it into something better."

Carl and Sophie moved to Orono a few years later, as Sophie had secured a position as the town manager of Orono. Carl worked with local schools and education programs in the region, as well as being what his father called, in late 2016, a "professional house frau." Carl took on more of the domestic responsibilities of the family while Sophie devoted increasing attention to her career demands, while Carl maintained his educational networks long-term.

Wilson's second oldest child, Paul, was born in 1968. Like Paula, he lived primarily with his mother after his parents divorced, although he was away in school for most of the short time between the divorce and his graduation from high school. Like Paula also, there had been some rather large gaps between visits with his father before the early 2000s. In mid-2001, Paul said that he had eye surgery some one and one-half years before and had seen his family then, but that previously he had often not seen the family for somewhat long periods of time. However, he saw his family during the time of his eye surgery, and in the not-so-distant past, "My Dad showed up when I had a real bad accident, but I have no memory of that." Tim showed up whenever his son needed him, but left Paul his desired "space" when he needed it. (Tim said, regarding this particular incident, that Paul had a sports accident, went into a coma, and that he and Jacquie had driven to Bangor to stay with Paul while he was hospitalized.) Paul played quite a bit of hockey growing up and continued to do so as a young adult, the source of his eye and various other injuries. Paul played on his high school hockey team, then for a team in Vermont, and in the early 2000s played for the Dead River team of Bangor.

Not seeing his family regularly during some stretches of time, sometimes his father's presence came as a surprise. Paul said in 2003 that, years earlier, he had seen his father, "by accident once. I was walking by a storefront" and saw him on a store television. "I said, 'Oh my God, that's my Dad.' A bunch of people looked at me like I was crazy." When asked later if he knew of the incident, Tim Wilson laughed and said "no," but clearly found the story amusing. Tim had seemingly been on television that time for his work at the Seeds of Peace.

Perhaps the most reticent of Tim's children to discuss his father, Paul slowly warmed up to the interview process. Asked directly if he thought he was like his father, Paul Wilson responded, "I have no idea," but expressed admiration for his father's work and his way of relating to people. "It's neat how he can get things done, the way he has networked his life so

that he can get things done.” He later stated, “I like his perspective on the world. There are things we don’t see eye to eye on, but we know we are here today, gone tomorrow.”

Furthermore, he said, “I always envy his public speaking. My brothers are good at it too, not me.” Paul does not like being center stage, and said that when he played hockey in the past, “I couldn’t look at the stands or I couldn’t play.”

Having earlier stated that as a child he was always trying to get out of the house, Paul indicated that he had done a bit of moving about as a young adult also. He changed his place of residence frequently in the late 1980s and early 1990s, before settling in Bar Harbor in 1994. He worked as a commercial fisher in Maine before moving and switching to culinary arts in Vermont, then returning to Maine. He would work with his father for a time at the Seeds of Peace, and later move to Florida. He would move back in the late 2010s when his mother became ill.

After their parents divorced, Paul and Paula had lived primarily with their mother. Paul felt that he took on much of the responsibility for his younger sister when he was in high school and said, “It was just, kind of like me and Paula, and I would baby-sit for days. One day me and four friends and my kid sister went to Old Orchard Beach. We played hide-n-seek, etc. It’s amazing how well Paula turned out in spite of me.”

Although Tim speaks frequently of his parents now, according to Paul, when he was growing up, “He (my Dad) didn’t really talk about his parents.” Of his grandmother, Paul observed, “His mother was really cool. She could be really funny. The last time I saw her was about a month before she died, I took the train down.” Paul likewise remembered flying to his paternal grandfather’s funeral “on the governor’s plane,” and he remembers then Governor Bill Clinton speaking at his maternal grandfather’s funeral,” although, he said, “we didn’t get to meet him.” Some of the children, however, did state that they had met Clinton albeit at a different time.

In 2003, Tim Wilson, who talks of his parents frequently in private and public, said that if his children did not remember him talking about his parents as much as he might have wished, it was for a reason, and that they knew them through association if not continually through their father's words. He said that he had indeed talked about his parents with the kids, "But I did so when we were away from my wife. She [Ida] didn't put my parents down, but she made her parents seem like more." Her parents were both college educated, while Tim's father had only a sixth grade education, and his parents and were not as obviously well connected. Although Tim respected his wife's parents, and especially appreciated his father-in-law, he had a sometimes problematic relationship with his first mother-in-law. In addition, there was an obstacle between the two sets of grandparents: Tim's father had a major problem with Ida's father, or at least his livelihood. As Tim stated it: "My dad didn't like her dad because he had [black] sharecroppers, and he came from that." Tim's father could not relate to a man who he felt oppressed other African Americans.

Wilson said that his children knew his parents even if he spoke less about them at home than he might have had circumstances been different. The family made numerous trips to Pennsylvania to visit the elder Wilsons. They drove there four or five times in the late 1960s and 1970s when the kids were young to spend Christmas. "We'd go down when they were little, take the crib down and take it with us. They saw their [paternal] grandparents, especially the two older boys."

Although he says he does not know how much he is like his father, Paul remembers events that would seem to make the two similar in some ways. In addition to Paul's cooking—Tim sometimes refers to him as a chef—speaking of his father as a cook, he also speaks of himself as wanting to escape the house as a child, and of his moves as an adult, Paul remembers Tim as taking the family many places, and stated of his father that, like himself, "He has wanderlust. He likes to travel. I don't

think he likes being stuck on planes, but he's fine once he gets there." And they are both extremely independent men.

In 1988, Paul went to see the rock group Grateful Dead in concert in Portland and needed a place to stay overnight, so he went to Camp Powhatan, where Tim was working during the summer. Paul said he had camped at Powhatan as a boy. "All three of us were there [Paula would not have been able to attend as it was a boys-only camp], and it was fun. You'd hear him [Dad] wake you up, see him walk through the camp with a bullhorn, and see him at dinner. When we were kids we stayed in the house there with him, but in the bunks otherwise." Paul said that his father was good at running the camp, and "When he speaks he commands respect, and that's what you need with five hundred unruly kids." Although the number five hundred is a bit of an exaggeration, Paul pointed out that for much of its history Powhatan in reality was not just a Jewish camp as "everybody in the 1970s sent kids camping," and, Jewish or not, many such kids camped at Powhatan.

Paul would soon have an opportunity to return to Powhatan, or rather to the Seeds of Peace camp on the site of former Camp Powhatan. In 2004, Paul worked at the camp, doing carpentry and other jobs. His father, he said in July 2004, had learned that his life was "a mess" and had convinced him to accept a position at the camp. Not only did the experience bring him back to the scene of many childhood memories, it also brought him back into close—daily if not hourly—contact with his father. Although Paul seemed to keep a respectful distance from much of the camping activity, he was able to work with his father and proved very popular to staff and campers alike. At age 37, Paul made friends with some of his father's friends, came to understand the rhythm of his father's days, and had the opportunity to spend time with his brother Craig and his family when they came to the camp. (Carl had visited frequently with his family during previous summers, but in 2003 Sophie had a car accident and was still recuperating in summer 2004.) Jacquie likewise visited the camp, as

did Paul's cousin, Jeffrey Wilson, son of Tim's brother Andrew, with his family. As Jeffrey and Tim joked about the time they had demolished a whole turkey at their grandmother's house before anyone else could have any, and about when they had made similar culinary pests of themselves years ago, Paul and Craig were able to see their father in the role of a favored uncle, albeit one not as much older than his nephew as many uncles are.

In August 2004, Tim and Paul sat on the opposite ends of a table at the Seeds of Peace eating dinner and reminiscing over their antics when Paul and his siblings had been children. Laughing with glee, and looking rather like bookends, they each practically fell off the bench at more than one point. They laughed over tales of feeding the dog then blaming him as he sat on the couch with them for being the one to issue some rather suspicious and offensive odors. They laughed about the huge pots of lasagna and other things Tim would make and the kids would eat—after they threw out the nutritious fare the kids' mom had made. At one point Paul told of how his father had taken him into the basement supposedly to spank him one day, but instead of doing so, made a few loud noises as though the deed were being done, then told Paul to go back upstairs. So much for discipline...

With Tim's reuniting with Carl in the early 1990s, with his daughter after 2000, and with Paul soon thereafter, normalcy was essentially re-established with all four of his children. With his first-born, the connection was perhaps always there, albeit perhaps weaker in some years than others.

Tim's oldest child, Craig, is an environmental consultant. He established Icon Environmental Consultants in 1996 in Augusta, Maine, and runs it to the present day. As with the other three Wilson children, Craig finds much to admire in his father. When asked in late 2001 what he felt was most important about Tim, he answered, "his generosity of spirit." To this he added, "A lot of people talk about helping others, but

actually find it difficult [to do]. He does it without thought.” He included in this all the good his father has done for youth at Camp Powhatan, the Seeds of Peace, and his many students over the years. “People keep in constant contact with him. He can start a conversation of five years ago as though it was yesterday.” Some of Craig’s friends even consider “my Dad their dad—they still refer to him, need his support, and there are probably hundreds more I don’t know about. There are different tie-ins over the years. Many people lose people over the years, he not only does not lose people over the years but will gain them, [such as] the friends of friends. ... The core of him is quite good.”

In a related but lighter statement, Craig said that “despite the scowl on his face,” his father was very generous and kind. “When we were kids, we used to make the same face to see if he noticed. He didn’t seem to.”



Paul, Tim, Craig and Carl Wilson
Wilson Family Photograph

“It’s very enjoyable watching him with our kids now,” Craig stated, referring to his daughter Samantha born in 1995 and son Cameron, born in 1999, and echoing some of Carl’s words: “He does some of the same things [he did with us]. It’s great to see it again as an adult. He’s one of the few people who re-

members how to be a kid. He's like a big kid to us." And Tim Wilson has some fond memories of his grandchildren's births. "At Sam's birth," he said, "I was invited in. I got to hold her right off; we shared a lot. I was there for the other births too, but Sam's was absolutely wonderful." Tim's relationships with his grandchildren, both Carl's and Craig's children, appears a healing factor for all concerned.

Family and family history are especially important to Tim and Craig for a crucial reason. In 2000, physicians diagnosed Tim as having prostate cancer and Craig not long thereafter with a repeating brain tumor. Craig had fluid in his cranium spinal cord, and had to struggle through radiation. He survived the radiation, but believed in 2001 that his long-term prognosis was not good. (Craig felt the same way almost three years later, although he continued to keep his business running smoothly.) Craig felt that his father wanted his own history recorded for his children and grandchildren, as "He realizes that he may not be here forever, and my health problems have highlighted this," making for another reason. "We talked about this while I was in the hospital. He wanted me to relax, but for what I have there is no prognosis that is good. I'll do whatever I can to convey my thoughts. ... I don't have forty years to make my message known—but, then, maybe I will. I'm willing to put out the effort. My kids don't know what is going on. They just know I was sick and now I'm better. They just know I have a bad hairdo." He also commented that at six foot he is "the shortest guy in the family," his father being six foot three inches. In the later 2010s Craig is still going strong.

Craig stated that he is known as "Craig Wilson in northern Maine, and as Tim Wilson's son Craig in southern Maine. I do a lot of work in the northern part of the state. Here ... I'm just a regular guy from Dexter, Maine, although I may not look the part, nor sound it. (In regards to his diction, he said that his parents would correct his speech when he was young; "They didn't want us to sound like we were from anywhere," to have a discernible accent of any type.)

Craig is passing his parents' insistence on correct speech to his own children. He stated that, "It is important that my children know how to speak properly, react properly, be as good if not better than the guy sitting next to them." He wants people to see him as "Craig Wilson," not "Craig Wilson that black guy," and "that's probably another thing my parents, especially my father, pushed for when I was a kid." Like the other Wilsons, he says little about race relations in Maine, but did state that one of his siblings had said, after some contemplation, that an employer of his in Maine was a bigot, "and I have to agree with him, unfortunately there's no other way to explain it," the way the man acted.

Craig recalled how when he attended his maternal grandfather's funeral in Arkansas, then Governor Bill Clinton approached him and said, "If you ever need anything, call me. I'm going to be bigger than this." And, Craig observed, "He was bright enough to know how to get there." Craig was also fortunate enough to meet President Jimmy Carter, whom he also considered "very bright," when Tim traveled on the same flight to Bangor with then Governor Carter before he made his presidential bid. Tim had become engaged in conversation with Carter, who then met Wilson's family before going on to the Maine Democratic Convention with him.

"Some people," Craig said, "for whatever reason have that magic number, are able to convince other people that whatever they are doing that with a little input it makes everything ten times better, and makes you feel so much better that you can go on," people who know just the right thing to say to make things better. Craig sees that quality in his father -- that Tim is able to give kids "that tiny little bit of confidence" that makes a difference. "I can see why he does what he does, and why it gives him a good feeling. It seems to me that if you help someone, you don't feel that there was an opportunity missed."

The Wilson children have different memories of their father, and vary in some ways almost in direct relation to their age--

and the age they were when their parents divorced. As times passes, however, each has become closer to their father, the two oldest forming relationships which now include their own children, while the younger two have simply come to know their father better in recent years, and to spend time with him once again. One of their cousins has also developed a unique relationship with Tim.

Tim's nephew Jeffrey Wilson has a different perspective on Tim as both an uncle and as a father. Jeffrey had visited the Wilsons in Maine when he was himself a boy, only a few years older than Craig, and could well remember Tim playing checkers with him plus playing softball, basketball, and other games and sports with him and with his cousins. His memories of Tim from that period were of Tim as a father who was very much present, both in Maine and in Pittsburgh when Tim would visit with his family. Tim continued to visit frequently over the following years, and brought his children with him when he could. In the early years the entire Wilson family would gather and Mamie and Henry Wilson's home, and later at Jeff's parents'—Andrew and Helyne Wilson's—home. (Jeff's mother would die in 1994, the same year as Tim's mom, and his father in 1999. Jeff's brothers, each with children, were all alive and doing well in 2004, Greg, like Jeff lives in Pittsburgh and has a son and a daughter; Randy lives in North Carolina and has three grown children, and Rodney has three daughters, also grown. Jeff and his wife Leah have been married for over twenty years and have a son, Evan, and a daughter, Jasmine.)

As a father, Jeff Wilson sees Tim as being similar to the way his own father, Andrew, had been. As Tim grew older, Jeff saw the same changes in him that his father had gone through. As he said of Tim in 2004, "He's older and I'm getting older [45] and I look at things differently, but I see—and he probably wouldn't agree—but I think he's getting a little mellow. I think that's because he's a grandfather. I compare it to my father. He was very much a disciplinarian. My father wanted

to teach history. When he could go to college, Duquane, he did. At that time, they didn't pay teachers a lot—especially black men—in the 1940s. He had to get a job to support his family.” With his father, Jeff said, “You had to read, you had to get an education, you had to better yourself, you had to be able to take care of yourself, ... and Tim's like that.”

Jeff visited Tim at the Seeds of Peace in 2004, driving to camp with his cousin, Tim's son, Craig, and his family. He said of their arrival, “There he is with his bad knees, his hat on, barking out commands to the kids. He reminded me of my dad. If it had been a different time, my dad would have done the same thing. He loved history, but he was not allowed to have that teaching job, but he had that same passion for teaching that Tim has. When Tim saw us, he just kind of kept on. He was doing his thing, and he reminded me of his dad. My dad would have done the same thing if he'd have had the opportunity.” Like Tim, Jeff can see the line of education and teaching which runs through the Wilsons, most notable to date in Tim, but clearly being passed on to another generation. Certainly Tim instilled a profound respect for knowledge in his children just as his siblings did for theirs, and which his children are doing in theirs.

Being the youngest, and coming along late in his parents lives as Tim had done in his, Jeff said that what he remembers most, the period he remembers most regarding his parents, was when they had reached their fifties. “Looking at Tim at the same age as my dad was, kind of mellowing, not the same dad as I had in elementary or even high school. Having grandkids, I think just being a granddad, makes you just a bit more mellow.”

Mellower or not, Timothy P. Wilson is certainly involved in his grandchildren's lives. In late 2004, when the question of his own health came up, he muttered, “I don't care, I just want to see my kids and my grandchildren.” He wanted to see his grandchildren grow into adulthood, and to see his

own children grow older in good health and in good spirits. By late 2016, his older grandchildren were starting college, while Cameron, Craig's oldest son, was almost of that age, and becoming a local hockey star, and playing on a very successful team and would win awards that year and in 2017. Isaiah, Carl's son, was becoming proficient on the French horn, while the youngest grandchild, Clare or Laney as they now call her, still in grade school at age ten in 2016, was charming the world around her with her personality, and continues to do so.

The 2010s would see Tim faced with further health challenges, but he would remain actively involved with his grandchildren and become increasingly involved with all of his own children, and he and Jacquie and the rest of the Wilsons would also take into their homes and hearts Wil Smith, his daughter Olivia, and in 2017 Olivia's newborn son. Tim told a group of Seeds in summer 2016 of how Wil had been at his bedside everyday when he was hospitalized earlier, and in late 2016, after time had taken one of the family, Tim said that Olivia—then a student at Howard University, while Samantha was studying at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, the two being almost the same age and having grown up almost as sisters—“is my fifth grandchild.” Her child would become Tim's first great grandchild.

Overall, the Wilson children's memories of and feelings for their father are positive, and as time passes they become more accepting, even where problems existed in the past. Wilson recognizes that “they have different views of me.” Craig and Paul lived with him longest in terms of their childhood before the divorce of their parents, and thus had somewhat different memories and experiences. After the divorce, Carl lived with his father alone for several years, whereas Paula saw him least often. Her young age and, for some years, her life in Arkansas, complicated the situation. The doctors did not expect Carl to live when he was born, nor did they think Ida should have a fourth child, so in some ways Carl and Paula were great bonuses for Timothy and Ida Wilson, even if their marriage had

started to deteriorate by the time of their births. The family relationships each of Tim's four children experienced within the family varied substantially, both as children and as adults. Wilson observed in 2010 that, "I have four kids who are individuals. I admire them and they know it. They've seen the worst of it, and despite all of that they're pretty wonderful human beings. They're marvelous people." He continued to feel the same way a decade or so later, when --as a family--they continued to grow closer through the growth of the Wilson grandchildren, and as Jacquie proved to be a devoted grandmother and to become increasingly involved with Tim's work with Maine and other youth. New decades brought new and sometimes deeper emotions for the Wilsons.

CHAPTER FIVE : CAMP POWHATAN

Eventual Home of the Seeds of Peace Camp and the Training Ground for Tim Wilson

"I have seen him do amazing things at our camp with kids who have behavior problems... I've seen him do amazing things with kids who are falling apart and put them back on their feet. So I can be critical, but I can also be complimentary. His skills are many and varied."

Joel Bloom Speaking of Tim Wilson

Long before Timothy Wilson went to work for the Seeds of Peace organization, he worked at Camp Powhatan, established in 1921 by Ira Bloom as a Jewish, boys' camp and later home of the Seeds of Peace International Camp. Wilson started at Powhatan as a college student in 1960, more than thirty years before Seeds of Peace was established, and carried lessons learned at Powhatan to his later work. Joel Bloom, son of Ira, owned and managed Powhatan during Tim's years there. Some of the traditions of Powhatan would eventually pass to the Seeds of Peace. Tim and Joel would together manage the Seeds of Peace Camp in 1993 and 1994, its first two years.

A large and rustic camp on Pleasant Lake, Ira Bloom had started Powhatan after his years at Columbia University. In Columbia's physical education program, Bloom had worked with Dr. George L. Meylan, one of the founders of the American Camping Association. Meylan had established a boys camp in Maine on Sebago Lake, and a girl's camp, Acadia, on Pleasant Lake. According to Bloom's son, Joel, seventy years later, Meylan "said to my father one day, 'Ira, I think you would make a good [camp] director and there is a need for

camps that will accept Jewish children.’ At that point there were no camps that would accept Jewish children, and my father expressed an interest and raised a few thousand dollars to buy a piece of property on Pleasant Lake that Dr. Meylan thought would make a good camp.” Meylan, Joel Bloom told the author, then proceeded to help Ira Bloom plan the layout of the new camp, down to the plumbing: “Dr. Meylan designed the septic system still in effect seventy-six years later,” Joel stated with some pride. Moreover, “Meylan took my father into Portland to where he did his own shopping and introduced his friend and said he expected them to give him the same treatment and discount that they gave him.” Joel Bloom said that the two men remained close friends for years afterward. Meylan’s two granddaughters still run his girls’ camp on Pleasant Lake.

Ira Bloom started his camp in 1921 with twenty-six boys, a nurse, and a small staff of counselors. The kids purportedly enjoyed the camp immensely, and it slowly grew. During World War II, Ira had to close the camp for about three years because of the difficulty he experienced trying to secure camp supplies. His son Joel would soon become involved in the camp, and help it to far surpass its pre-war size in terms of the numbers of campers each year eventually peaking at about 175 kids per year in the late twentieth century.

Joel Bloom had earned a doctorate in education after returning from World War II, writing a dissertation on interest motivation in boys’ summer programs, and had put his research to work when he returned home to the camp his father had established decades earlier. At the time he wrote his thesis, Bloom said, “Progressives were against the idea of competition,” while Bloom considered it important in theory and in the system he developed at Powhatan. He almost did not get his doctorate thesis through his committee however, as, he said, he did not include even one footnote in his first draft, no applicable studies having been done at the time. Bloom continued his scholarly work on camping after he took over Pow-

hatan, and remained very active in camping associations into the twenty-first century (he ran various programs, including at least five certification programs for camp directors), at which time, in his late eighties, he also became active in protecting Pleasant Lake from milfoil and other foreign aquatic plants then threatening Maine's waters.

Although Powhatan had started as a camp for Jewish boys, Bloom said in September 2003 that as the years passed the boys liked the camp so much that they would recommend it "to kids who were not Jewish, and these families would recommend the camp to other non-Jewish families." And so camp demographics evolved over the years.

Joel Bloom hired Tim to work at Camp Powhatan in 1960. Tim said in early 2003 that Joel had hired him off the Slippery Rock football field. Tim was entering his junior year and undergoing spring training. Joel Bloom went to the house where Tim was proctoring first, then found him on the field. After Bloom offered Tim the position, Tim called his father about the job, and his father, he said "told me to do it." Bloom had come to Pennsylvania just for the interview. "He interviewed everyone [he hired]. He chose his staff on the basis of his interviews. I learned a lot from him about how to get staff hired, about the importance of interviews."

About Bloom's decision to hire him, Wilson stated, "for me to be considered for a job when he had never hired anyone like me before [was something special] ... He had hired blacks before, but I was the first real [black] counselor, the first one to be with the kids all the time. The others had been more half-kitchen, half-this or that. It's always interesting when you think about him. He made a choice to talk to me. It was nice of him."

Bloom had sent job applications to Slippery Rock's Dean Evans, according to Wilson, who in turn told Tim to apply. "I wrote [to Bloom]," and I told him, "I don't know if you really want to hire me or not, because I'm a Negro."



Seeds of Peace Docks at Pleasant Lake

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Bloom did indeed want to hire Tim, and he never regretted the decision. He told the author in September 2003 that it had been his policy to write to coaches and athletic departments each year “in trying to enlist new staff. I’d describe our camp and the kind of people we were looking for, the salary range, and [tell him] his opinion would be a major consideration.’ He said that after writing to Slippery Rock, “I got back a letter from Tim Wilson. He said his coach had showed him the letter [I had written] and he said he was very interested, but would it be possible because he was a Negro? I said it didn’t make any difference.”

Joel went to Slippery Rock to interview Tim as he did other candidates at various colleges and universities. He would travel within New England and outside the region to try to find good matches for Camp Powhatan, which by 1960 had developed a reputation for athletics as well as camp camaraderie.

Tim recalls his early years at Camp Powhatan with pleasure. His first year at the camp, there was one counselor from Hungary, Jean Birdie, “who had been a boxer, in the Olympics, a great guy. He was my co-counselor, a neat man. He used to get upset with me because he felt I was too stern with the kids. Some of the kids in the bunk were from Hungary, others spoke Spanish.” Tim said that some the kids, ages about seven to eight, tried to keep him “out of the know.” Others, however, would translate and the kids who tried to circumvent their new counselor, Tim reminisced, were never quite certain just how much he did know, plus some of them could not understand what the others were up to; “There’s nothing I could ever say about how much fun it was.”

At the end of that first season, Bloom told Tim that he hoped that he would return to the camp the following summer. That first year, according to Wilson, there were about 120-125 kids at the camp. The next summer, there were roughly 150. When Tim left in 1973 there were 225 campers, apparently one of the camp’s highest enrollments.

“It was very interesting that I was there,” Tim said about his earliest years. “Later I got more responsibilities. Each year he [Joel] gave me something else to do. I could never thank him enough for having the kind of strength he had. A lot of people don’t always understand how people who made stands [on race] like he did, because they think the world is so nice, it wasn’t.” Another time Tim stated, “I was always awed by him taking the stand, I just never expected anyone to do what he did. He was such a nice man. I’m always awed by some people.”

In his turn, the young college man impressed more than just Bloom. Boys and staff alike quickly came to respect, admire, and simply enjoy having Tim there. He became a member of the Block P Fraternity of Camp Powhatan, elected to the fraternity in 1960. He was inducted his second year at the camp, which he considered important as only two persons were in-

vited to join each year. Inductees were chosen by fraternal members only and generally only after having served as staff for a number of years. Tim was also chosen to be a Red and Gray coach early on, leading part of the “Color Wars,” a series of athletic competitions, which Tim explained as being “difficult [in part] because they mixed seventh and eighth graders with high school juniors and seniors.” An intense three days of rugged competition, the Color Wars, in spite of their less than irenic name, were precursors to the Seeds of Peace Color Games.

“The first years of the camp I was still a kid,” Tim said. “That was in ’60, ’61, ’62, ’63. Each year he would allow me to do more, which was neat.” Having Tim assume ever greater responsibilities benefited Joel as well as Tim.

Joel recalled that Tim worked as a regular counselor the first few years “under men he greatly respected. One of them had been my counselor when I was at Camp Powhatan, and he treated me like I was no one special. Tim appreciated him.” Bloom agreed with Tim’s assessment of his own duties: “Each year I gave him more responsibilities, and he handled them exceptionally well.” After Tim’s first year, “he finished school early and asked if there was any work he could do getting the camp ready [for the summer]. I told him I didn’t have a cook yet. He said, ‘I can handle my own cooking.’ I told him my maintenance crew was there and would tell him what to do. He learned a lot about getting a camp ready.” Years later numerous comments would be made that Tim was unique in that unlike most camp directors he knew all the nuts and bolts of the camp, about everything a camp in general needed to have done physically to prepare it for campers.

“Later”, Joel said, “I moved him up to be a division leader, in charge of several groups of bunks, and he was still a counselor in one bunk. It was quite apparent to me that he had excellent skills and he was a natural leader, instructor and coach, and that he was a pretty straight guy. He set standards for his

bunk. They [the campers] were somewhat in awe of him, but as a result of his involvement with him, they came to really respect him.”

Bloom stated of Tim that over the years, “I have seen him do amazing things at our camp with kids who have behavior problems... I’ve seen him do amazing things with kids who are falling apart and put them back on their feet. So I can be critical, but I can also be complimentary. His skills are many and varied.”

Another skill Bloom mentioned Tim as having was that of finding good quality people for a given position. Bloom said that throughout the years Tim served at Powhatan that “he frequently recommended counselors. And after two to three seasons they were the most successful ones, and anyone he recommended in the future I almost always hired, and they almost always worked out well. That’s important.”

One of the most meaningful memories of the camp for Tim in his early years involved one particular camper. “There was a young man who was emotionally challenged, Bruce, a little older than the other kids.” He had a certain kind of keen intelligence, but his condition plus events at home made it very difficult for him to communicate, to relate to the other boys. “The kids picked on him some,” Tim said, “and during my second year, I was coaching the Color Wars, I think I was red. We were playing softball, and all the bases were loaded.” It was the final event of the Color Wars, and “Bruce came up to bat with all the bases loaded. All we needed was a ball to win.” Tim talked to Bruce, who had never been able to bat, and told him to image that he was swinging on the rope over the water like he liked to do, “but like the swing was his arm. He laughed, and hit a ball over everyone’s head. Everyone started to run, but Bruce ran in the wrong direction, from third to first, and we lost the game.” Tim told all the other boys to support what Bruce had been able to accomplish, and “I gave him a big hug, and told him, ‘I’m really proud of you.’ His grandmother was

there, she was in her eighties, and she cried. It was the first time, she told me, that she had seen him act like any other kid.” Later, when the whole camp was at the waterfront after the games ended, the woman came up to Tim and tried to give him a tip (apparently many people tried to tip counselors), “But I wouldn’t take it. I was really proud of him.’ Years later, Bruce as a man would come back and visit Tim. “He was a very interesting man. That was one of the moments I’ve always felt was special.”

Another fond memory of Tim’s of the kids in the early years was coaching a group of nine-year-old boys in baseball. The camp did not have a baseball diamond at the time, so Tim and the boys built one, they did some clearing, built benches, painted the lines, and so forth. Other camps came to play against Tim’s team on their new field. “All of them were nine years old, but they could beat other teams of kids ages up to eleven and twelve. We made the field really nice, and watching those kids play was really enjoyable. They were neat kids,” Tim recounted in 2004.

Bloom recalled that after Tim graduated from college, “There was a period when he was looking for something to do and he opted to go out in the fall to spend some time at my sister’s house. He had become friendly with [her] son who was a camper and he had met them [my sister and her husband] at camp and my sister invited him out. They were very impressed with him.”

Joel subsequently wrote a letter of recommendation to the Peace Corps when Tim applied to join. Tim later “wrote to tell me he’d got the job and that they were working his butt off. I got several letters from him in Thailand.” Moreover, Bloom also said that when Tim joined the Peace Corps, “There were campers and counselors who took up a collection and sent a check to him.” They did not want their friend and counselor to have to do without, even so far away. Bloom remarked that “Tim was the only Negro and the youngest person in his Peace

Corps division,” factors Tim himself did not mention in discussions.

Then, Bloom recalled, “When he returned to the states he brought with him his wife, Ida Marie, and he got a job as a teacher and coach in Maryland, and being black in a southern state it was not an easy role to fulfill. He did his best, then decided he wanted to move up north.” While Tim was teaching, Bloom said, “He did return to camp in the summer. Then while he was at camp I recommended him very highly to a family in Dexter, Maine, whose son was also on my staff and they said there was an opening for a teacher and coach at Dexter School ... Tim got the job, and he coached everything... over a three year period he ended up having his wrestling team and his football team state champions, and was elected outstanding teacher for that area.”

During this time, Tim remained connected to Camp Powhatan, and Bloom, now deceased, had his own version of how Tim ended up in state government. “At the time he was teaching and coaching [in Dexter], Governor [Kenneth] Curtis became aware of Tim. Governor Curtis used to have a baseball or softball team that traveled around. Tim invited him to come to our camp and he did. It helped Tim cement his relationship with Governor Curtis—he was impressed with Tim and they maintained a relationship for a few years.” During that period, “Tim moved up to head counselor.” In the meantime, Bloom had started to “build a building on the property [for the Wilsons to live in during the summers]. His wife had their first baby. She ran an adult facility at our camp, and of all the people I have had do this, she did the best job of anyone.”

“One of the years Ida wasn’t working because she was very pregnant, and the youngest boy [Carl] was born when she was at camp, she went to the Maine Medical Center. It was a nice thing.” The Wilsons did not move into the house Bloom had built, however, as Curtis at that point offered Tim the position of head of Human Resources: “He was the first black man in

the job. It was said that Curtis was questioned about why he had hired a black man. Tim was in this job for about a year, then the governor made him Commissioner of Energy and he had to deal with the Energy Crisis. Curtis was under pressure about this, and said that he [Tim] understands the people and knows who needs help.”

Although he was proud of Tim’s work for Governor Curtis, Joel did acknowledge that, “I lost him while he was working for the governor.” Wilson’s job with the state did not allow time to return to Powhatan for the summer season. “His replacement was another young black man [Fountain] I had hired, he’d been recommended... this guy was top notch, but the time came when he was got a job as an instructor at North East Missouri State, and he kept moving up there to an Assistant Professorship, and a position in a medical school, too, when working on his doctorate. While he was doing this he was on a nine month calendar, but then he went to full time, so that’s how I was able to get Tim back.” (Although Bloom did not mention it, two young men served as head counselor between the time when Tim left and Fountain started, according to Wilson.)

When Tim had left the camp, he had written, Joel said, “a nice letter, and said that if I ever needed him to let him know and he would be there for me.” Faced with the loss of Tim’s replacement at Powhatan, “I called Tim up and at the time Tim had been through some rather discouraging enterprises, he’d worked with a business firm he wasn’t too happy with and had a position as the director of the Hyde School.” He and Ida had divorced, and Tim had remarried. “As a result of some things that went on at the Hyde School, there were a couple of groups trying to take over the school,” Bloom explained. A group with which Tim had not been affiliated won the struggle, “and Tim lost his job.” This is when Tim returned to Pittsburgh, to teach at, as Bloom saw it, “one of the worst black schools at the time. He worked very hard, and in a couple of years he raised that school up to one of the best in the area.”



Boats at the Seeds of Peace Camp

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Bloom telephoned Wilson at that point. “I spoke with him, told him my other counselor had to retire from our place. He thought about it for a few minutes, said, ‘I’ll do it,’ and he came back. He did a good job. During that three to four year period [when he was teaching in Pittsburgh] he began to come up from Pittsburgh during the fall and winter. I’d meet him at the airport and we’d interview campers’ families and get some new prospects, and he’d learn about this. My technique has always been to identify with the child first, to direct the interview to the child.”

Bloom said that the campers’ parents were impressed with Tim, “and when we went to see families not recommended by our families we were a very good team, a one-two punch, we did very well. I was hopeful. By that time I’d indicated to Tim that I was close to eighty, and my three kids knew their mother was working as the bookkeeper, doing the accounting almost since I’d met her. They were after me to retire so that their mother could retire.”

While Bloom considered retiring in the early 1990s, Tim continued to work with the boys at the camp, and every summer he made lasting impressions on both new and returning campers. One such camper, Chris O' Connor, born and raised in New York City, started at Powhatan at age 13 or 14. By age 22 in mid-2001 he had spent a decade camping, in one way or another, under the supervision of Wilson. He first came to Camp Powhatan in 1990 and spent the next five summers as a camper. Chris does not remember his first encounter with Tim at Powhatan, but did state that, "We were all sort of leery of him, we didn't really mess with him at first. We had freedom (the way Tim ran the camp), but there were certain things we had to abide by." Within a few years, however, Wilson would become, he said, "very much involved in my life. He's been a part of my life and my family for so many years."

The first encounter Chris described involving Tim concerned a boxing match his first year at Powhatan. As Chris described it, "There was this fat kid, an obnoxious guy from Newton. The whole summer he thought he could get the best of me, get my goat, because we were one year younger." The kids decided to hold a boxing match, but just as they were about to start fighting, "Tim walked in. He said, 'If you're gonna do it, do it right.'" He set the boys up with three three-minute rounds. As Chris recalled it, "I ended up beating the kid, and he fought dirty, . . . but that was the way of it. Tim's all about 'if you're gonna do it, do it right.' He's like that."

Chris' relationship with Tim grew over the next few years. "Tim taught me some football. He saw that I had some athletic potential and he tried to work with it. My first summer at camp I talked to him about a couple of things, and I realized he was alright. My second summer with him, I won the best junior athlete award. It was meaningful because Tim presented it to me." Tim responded in 2003 that he was able to present the award because he himself was a member of the camp's Block P Fraternity of Camp Powhatan, which, as noted earlier, he had been elected to in 1960.

Chris did differentiate between how Wilson managed Camp Powhatan and later the SOP camp. “Tim’s a mentor, a coach, he can’t really do it here the same way. [At Powhatan] he would ride us, use public humiliation, the kinds of things guys need. Now it’s cool. I realize he was a lot like me growing up, he pulled stuff, and I did that growing up. I think he thinks it’s funny. The last time [I was a camper there] we put a tin house on a floating dock and called it ‘Tim’s House.’ He thought it was funny. It was also well done, well put together.”

Powhatan campers sometimes had rather unique assignments. Once, O’Connor said, “we had to take one-hundred rocks out of the lake, put them on the shore, then put them back in the lake—one by one.” That too was fun, Chris said, at least in retrospect, and part of a rapport the camp shared, a “sense of tradition” which allowed for all sorts of antics, by both staff and campers. Tim, however, said that an incident behind the task had been a serious one, and that it had, in terms of responsibility, involved a couple of boys, neither of them Chris, who “were being stupid. Instead of throwing them out of camp, I had them do that. I saw that type of thing at Hyde, and it doesn’t agree with me, but, the boys involved had played pranks, and some of the pranks got out of hand.” He did not agree with humiliation as a form of punishment, but said, “I might have been harder on them, the kids at Powhatan, because some of them were spoiled and had no discipline, so I pushed them harder.” The kids he would work with later at SOP, in general, “have much more discipline, more responsibilities and are more respectful to authority.”

In terms of Tim’s being a mentor, Chris said, “He started taking me under his wing when I went through hard times [because of family issues]. He became involved—he probably talked to my mother, things went on that I don’t know about.” Chris had also developed a close relationship with Stanley Waltzer (the physician who worked at Powhatan and later Seeds of Peace). From sentiments expressed by O’Connor and other campers—people who had attended the camps when

both men were active—it is clear that the two were very effective in relating to youth, that they were more than a competent team. (Tim later said that he had indeed taken Chris under his wing, much as he had “AC” and Ethan and Matt: they were just good kids.” Wilson said as if that alone might explain the friendship he extended to the boys—a bond which other camp leaders do not necessarily extend to their own campers—which for him of course it probably does.)

Chris spent a few years in boarding school, and later would attend Brandeis University. He said in 2001 that he had not really cared for school when younger, that “it kind of irritated me.” In Maine, however, he “had a blast” as a camper at Powhatan, which was one of the reasons he would decide to return to the site as a counselor a few years later.

O’Connor said of Powhatan in 2003, “The Color Wars are a tradition, a legacy some of the older guys around here share. I connect with them because I have some of the same experiences. Describing the Color Wars at Powhatan while sitting on Tim’s porch at what was now the SOP, Chris said that they started four weeks after camp began. “The potential coaches got up and started doing cheers. There was a list of guys who got called up first, rookie counselors who might or might not get picked.” The counselors would perform skits, rip off their shirts, get on the tables, “all sorts of stuff.” Then, “the kids voted on the coaches, three for Red and three for Gray.” In the midst of more commotion, the kids found out who the coaches were—they announced themselves in various ways, one once flew down in a plane, another was brought in under arrest. Shirts are then made, and then “Joel would give the same old speech” about how the wars were really about friendship, “about how everything would be washed away in the lake.”

After this, the “choose-up” began, youngest to oldest, with Powhatan campers in the same family always grouped together, according to O’Connor. Next, “there were opening ceremonies, and two guys held the hatchet talks—talking about

taking their hatchets out for grinding.” Joel would talk about how whomever won would be the champions, and the hatchets would be thrown to see whose went furthest. “There would be a huge bonfire, ten to twelve feet high, and the next day would be the rope tug.” During all this, the kids “didn’t speak to anyone from the other team.” The teams met separately, “the Red team by the big hall, the Gray by the big tree by the tennis courts. The coaches would do all sorts of antics and tactics to try to get us motivated. The coaches were up all night, and had captains.”

O’Connor said that, “After two nights, everyone went back into the big hall, started chanting and cheering. It was crazy, out of control; those were the biggest events. Everyone had to play, to participate. We were all rooting for each other, there was lots of bonding. ...It was very competitive, not the pansy-ass shit that goes on now. It was alright to kick ass.”

Chris related that during his years as a camper, “The last event was the softball game.” Then, scores were tallied, the winners decided, and whoever won “took their shoes off and ran into the lake. The other team waited until later, then meandered into the lake. Then they [the two teams] exchanged shirts, and everyone was friends. Then there was the shirt ceremony where the coaches gave away their shirts.” The teams later met at separate campfires, “the winners at a huge winners’ fire and the losers at a small losers’ fire.” Yet, “the ultimate thing was about doing your best, challenging yourself, working together as a team.”

Although the competition was fierce, O’Connor said that the kids would go to the various activities and be rated on them all—on tennis, basketball, football, track, baseball, etc. “Everything was balanced.” Within the bunks, the kids would know who was ranked best in the various sports or activities, and when split into teams, they would be split into divisions: junior, senior, and intermediate, depending on rank, so kids of roughly equal abilities competed against each other when

possible. The games were tough, “but it was like an initiation, you became part of a clan, people came up just for this, and in the friendships you made you were friends for life.” Chris still saw some of his former teammates years later, when they came to Pleasant Lake to visit.



The same place, the same camp, Seeds of Peace kids in the same water

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Although some camps held Color Wars or similar competitions as inter-camp tournaments, at Powhatan, Chris said, “It was solely Powhatan. We had all sorts of games, matches, tournaments [with other camps, however]. More often than not we won, we had our rivals, but ...” He said, “Powhatan was a testosterone filled, hard-core, intensity driven camp, but it wasn’t exclusive, because even the nebs (the non-athletic kids) kept coming back. Joel created an environment where kids became friends for life. Every year a group of kids would go to Montreal, kids would go to the bars, it was a rite of passage—like stealing the Samoset [camp] sign and tormenting that camp. Powhatan was about tradition, legacy.”

Joel Bloom stated that some camps do not run their Color Wars wisely, if they have them, but at camps like Powhatan was, they are “so well organized that the poorest athletes enjoy them sometimes more than or at least as much as the athletes.” At Powhatan it was organized so that “Each boy played in every sport, everyone contributed in some measure to the team score,” and the youth were encouraged to contribute as much as they could, and encouraged with the idea that every tiny bit they did aided their team.

Another Powhatan camper, and later a counselor at the Seeds of Peace, likewise had fond memories of Tim and the camp, and in this instance his father did also; Ethan Schechter talked in 2004 of how his father had been a counselor at Powhatan under Tim in 1971 or 1972, working primarily on the waterfront. Ethan’s father had told him a story that fed into the perception of Tim as having an almost magical knowledge of everything going on at Powhatan, and later at the Seeds of Peace. According to Ethan, his father had gone out on a date one night with Joel Bloom’s daughter. The couple had tried to sneak back onto the grounds when they returned hours after curfew, and thought that no one knew about it. “He thought he had got away with it,” Ethan recalled, “then Tim called him out on it in the morning.” So, too, did Tim’s knowledge seem to be all encompassing when Ethan came to Powhatan as a camper during 1992-1996. He said that, “As a teenager, I thought that Tim was infallible.”

Ethan came to camp during Fountain’s first year as head counselor, and then Tim returned after having been away for several years. Ethan thought that necessary funding was not being put into the camp, so enrollment began to drop. No matter which—if either—came first, either way, in Ethan’s perception during the mid-1990s the situation became such that most campers came from families who already enjoyed long histories with Powhatan. He also stated that, “To be considered part of the camp you had to be here for a couple of years. After about five years, you were really accepted.”

As to what he considered later “rumors” or speculation, Ethan said, “It’s kind of mythological here, these stories that go around. They’re so blown out of proportion. Some people at Seeds of Peace think Powhatan was a free-for-all, a wild place, and to some extent you had to be tough. It was a camp for tough kids, but it was a sports camp, it was very focused on sports.” He, too, observed that some things from Powhatan carried over to Seeds of Peace, such as the link between Color Wars and the later Color Games, and the former War Canoe later being called the Peace Canoe. He also indicated that the transition from one camp to the other proved beneficial to Tim, and that Tim, he thought, would find greater satisfaction or happiness after the mid-1990s.

By the early to mid-1990s, Bloom was considering retirement. Although things were going fine and he loved what he was doing, and even though he had fought the realities of his age and his kids urging that he retire for a long time, he soon came to realize that it was indeed nearing the time for him to step down from his work at Powhatan. He wanted Tim to take over the camp, to carry on for him. “I laid out a proposal that would make Tim a partner in the business,” he said. “At first, I’d take 52 percent, Tim 48. After a year or so Tim would get the major profit, and my wife and I get just living expenses.” This is what Bloom had in mind when he sold the camp to Robert Toll. “He is now the biggest homebuilder in America, [but] had been a [Powhatan] camper then a counselor,” and currently had a house just down the road from the Blooms and the Seeds of Peace. “There are now nine alumni with houses on the lake, Stanley Waltzer [camp psychiatrist and physician for many years] is one too.” According to Bloom, Toll had wanted to buy the camp for several years, “But I kept turning him down. I thought he would chop it up for houses and the camp would be gone. He knew that he had to give me a guarantee, and he finally did.” Under their agreement, Bloom said, “I would continue to operate the camp for as long as I wished for \$1 per year, plus I’d have to pay the taxes and insurance. I told him before I closed the deal that I had to talk to Tim, I

think it was 1993. Tim told me that yes, he would stay with me as long as I wanted to keep running the camp.”

In 1994 and 1995 Wilson worked at Powhatan as the assistant director, then as co-director, and Bloom said he did some of the interviewing of campers and their families, new prospects. Camp enrollment had fallen off in recent years, and he had hoped Tim would help him bring in new campers. But, he said Tim was not really comfortable in some of the interviewing situations, especially without him present.

His plans for the future in place in his own mind, Bloom said, rather sadly, “I don’t know what prompted Tim to arrive at a condition to turn down the offer I was considering for him, but I had come to recognize that for a black man to take over and operate a predominantly white middle class and upper class boys’ camp was a difficult situation for anyone to handle on their own, competing against long-standing camps like our own with high clientele that he would have to compete with for enrollments. In my mind, to make that work, I had a white counselor who wanted to be a camp director, he tried to buy the camp but his father couldn’t come up with the money. I talked to Tim about teaming up with him—with Tim in charge. I let [the counselor] know that Tim was the number one man and that if he took the job he had to recognize that Tim was the boss. He understood that, but it did not work out. Tim and the counselor did not work well together, apparently, and according to Bloom, “It blew up with only two weeks to go in the summer.” Tim’s second wife had charge of the adult dining at the time, “and she and this young man got into a terrible verbal disagreement, and his wife said, ‘Either he goes or I go.’ Tim said to me, ‘If she goes I have to go.’” The counselor however could not leave right away as his home had been rented out for the summer and his family would have nowhere to go in the short term. Bloom said he explained this to Tim and the two worked it out. “This was typical. In the eleven or so years he’d worked for me we’d never had a disagreement, I never had to discipline him or express displeasure. If things

went wrong we'd find a way to settle it." It was partly for this reason that it came as a surprise to him that Tim turned down his offer to take over the camp.

Tim, questioned about the matter later, said that the reason he had turned down the offer was that it was never an economically viable option. As conditions existed at the time at the camp, he would not have been able to make a go of it.

Bloom had acknowledged in an interview that enrollment had kept dropping at the end, and at age eighty he and his family were sometimes using their savings to keep the camp operating. As Joel explained it, "Most of my enrolling I did when I was young was through people I knew. They'd send their kids, plus I didn't do any public advertising, I was against that." Powhatan it seems had always been about "families," and Bloom apparently did not feel that one went out and advertised for a family.

In the meantime, as Joel considered his options, and before Tim declined the offer to take over management of Powhatan, John Wallach started the Seeds of Peace. He did so in 1993. His son Michael had been a camper at Powhatan for eight seasons, and as Joel described it, "I visited my campers in their homes every year, plus sometimes they'd come up to visit," so he kept in fairly close contact with them. Michael Wallach he later said, "was one of our most outstanding campers." By the early 1990s, Bloom had started a scholarship program, for as he described it, "blacks and minority students. I'd always thought I was non-denominational, but I'd never had a black camper before then." After the World Trade Center in New York was bombed that year, Wallach contacted Bloom and asked him if he would be interested in holding a fifteen day program at the camp, a primarily recreational one. "I said, 'It sounds like something I'd really like to do, but I need to speak to Tim first, he's part of my team and I would need him to be a part of this.' I accepted the thing against the advice of some

people who said all sorts of problems would occur. We set up a program.”

According to Bloom, he along with Tim devised a program for the first Seeds of Peace session, one primarily recreational, “but in the last few days -- days twelve to thirteen -- we’d have Red and Gray Color Wars. I knew and Tim knew that it [the Color Wars] was a fantastic experience. Just about all the campers learned to love the games. They were highly competitive but designed so that even the non-competitive members loved it, because the athletic members of the team coached them and encouraged them so that they got more involvement than anytime in the summer, so win or lose they’d run into the lake with their clothes on and hug each other and be back to being friends.”

Wilson and Bloom devised a two-day Color War session (later renamed Color Games) versus the traditional three-day Color Wars at Powhatan, “to get them to reach that point” where athletics brought the kids closer together, but “with kids from Israel, kids from Gaza Strip, Palestinians...” The challenges were many. Some of the kids were fairly athletic, but many were not. “We had to get these kids to the point where they’d have sufficient skills to compete or it’d be a lost cause. We worked the 46 kids and their counselors so hard it was unimaginable. My counselors that had worked regular sessions never complained. We were using every minute of daylight to teach them skills, the skills they wanted.” The Palestinians, Israelis, and Egyptians learned in groups with one another. “This,” Bloom said, “was our design and Tim was working his ass off, teaching them how to play tennis, flag football,” and other sports. “Soccer many of them already knew.” He later added, “I had the boys [his former campers and counselors] show them how to swim.” (One Olympic swimmer came to camp as a delegation leader, but most of the kids could not swim.)

The campers put in hour after hour in “making the progress they made in acquiring the skills they needed to compete in this Color War,” Bloom said. In agreeing to take on the program, he stated, “I made a decision that as these were kids were coming from places of the world where there were no camps for kids, I wanted some of my best campers in the bunks so they could help these kids adjust.” He felt it had worked wonderfully. For one thing, the campers as made life-long friends; and also, “they [the staff] got these kids so fired up that they had the same spirit in competition that our kids did. They loved it.” Tim ran the Color Wars that first year as he did subsequent years, and according to Bloom the wars were close: “one team won, the others were heartbroken, but they ran into the lake as friends.”

In terms of group discussions, Bloom recalled that John Wallach “had hired professional facilitators for discussion groups, and had wanted to have lots of coexistence sessions. I told him he could only do it after daylight” had ended. “I needed to get them to where they were hugging each other. By the end of the second [coexistence] discussion, there was a fight between a Palestinian and an Israeli, and other kids started to jump in. Tim got down there in time to break it up.” Bloom stated that after only two days, “one of the coexistence leaders had given the kids an assignment to draw pictures of the other side, and it was how they envisioned them that had caused the fight.”

After the fight, Bloom said that he had told Wallach, “We’re going to have to stop these sessions for a few days to give the kids a chance to calm down and when they resume [co-existence sessions] give them something more positive, like ‘take what you have learned about others that gives you different thoughts of them,’ so they did.” At the time, Yasser Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin, and William Clinton were conducting peace talks pertaining specifically to the creation of a Palestinian State, and Bloom said that was a question given to the kids as well as the adults who accompanied them to camp and the

discussion leaders. “Each group decided what they thought should happen, then all three groups got together, came together, for one proposition, and it was presented. All three agreed that there should be a permanent Palestinian State. But not until there had been sufficient infrastructure formed to have a permanent state—it almost made you cry, it was more liberal than what they shook hands on in the Rose Garden They went [to the White House after the session at Powhatan], Tim went, I went. Clinton told the kids that they were the most important ones at the ceremony that day.”

Bloom in the early 2000s continued to see Tim as crucial to the direction of the Seeds of Peace that first year and thereafter. “Tim was really so vital in carrying out this program, and if it was to [be successful] he knew and I knew it was important that he be firm and strict, and if we were to accomplish what we had to do in fifteen days. Tim was perfect at doing this. He had to have a translator to do it, a Palestinian boy would translate it to his group—I’m telling you, it did work.”

By the end of that first session, according to Bloom, when the kids gathered at the customary Powhatan campfire before leaving, “Those kids who were so much in awe of Tim had learned to admire and respect him—he had helped so many of them to improve their skills it was unbelievable.”

By the next year, after Powhatan once again held its regular sessions, the size of the Seeds group had more than doubled, to about 106, and 32 or 33 of them, some four bunks of them, were girls. As Bloom remembers it, “That was a new experience for me. It was a wonderful experience. The girls impressed me, how quickly they responded to the program.”

Then, potential disaster struck. Tim’s cabin, called the Jilson, burned down on the third or fourth day of the SOP session, early in the morning. Tim had his bedroom in the back of the two-floor building. No one was upstairs. It was one of the coldest camping nights ever, and Tim had stayed up late into the night. There had been a meeting in the Jilson earlier in the

night, and a counselor had started a fire in the main room's fireplace. Tim went to bed. As Bloom described what followed, "I guess he awoke from the smoke, at about 4:30 or 5:00, and realized the house was on fire. He tried to put it out, but the smoke was too thick. He had someone call me and tell me the Jilson was on fire and he had to get out, he was choking from the smoke. I drove down and saw that there was no way of saving the building."

Some of the girls were sleeping just five to eight yards away, and Bloom recalled, "I thanked God there wasn't a breath of wind. They had to take Tim away in an ambulance, and we moved the girls into the big hall, then everyone went to breakfast." Instead of breaking the routine of the camp, "The kids went to their activities exactly as if nothing had happened."

According to Wilson, the chimney in the cabin had not been cleaned. And, despite some reports to the contrary, he had not been taken away by the ambulance. He had refused anything but cursory attention, and then gone to work trying to help restore the camp to functional order.

Ethan Schechter also remembers being at the camp that night, as an older camper helping out, and that he woke up "to people running up and down and yelling, 'Fire!'" When he awoke, "The place was just bursting into flames. The nurse had the side building [off the Jilson] and it held oxygen tanks and ammunition. ... Tim was lucky to get out alive. We got a lot of hoses and buckets of water from the lake. It was too late. Then the fireman finally got there." Ethan recalls, too, that, "Some of the kids thought that it was a terrorist attack, and then the bullets started going off. We had to move the kids away from the area." Ethan remembers that there were some hard feelings about the fire, as some SOP money had burned, along with some traditional Palestinian dresses and other items.



Running by the dining hall - Camp Powhatan transitions to the Seeds of Peace

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

The session proceeded as ever after the fire. However, as Joel said, “At the end of that second summer, John Wallach

decided he wanted to move to another camp, to Camp Androscoggin. They were there for two years. They wanted Tim to go up and run the program.” Stanley Waltzer, who, Bloom stated, “volunteered his services at Seeds of Peace the way he had at my camp,” also went to Androscoggin. Joel said of Stan, “The kids love him. He seeks out kids who are far away from home, who are lonesome.” The kids responded to him well, both “the athletic ones and the non-athletic ones.” According to Bloom, Waltzer did not think the Androscoggin camp was as well run as Powhatan. (Waltzer would retire from Seeds of Peace in 2003.)

The following year, 1996, at the end of the camping year, “Tim was still on my staff and he finally said to me, near the end of the season, that he wasn’t going to continue with Powhatan. That came as a surprise to me. He knew or suspected that he was being considered for a full-time job at Seeds of Peace. Tim never told me why and I never asked him. I have some ideas. But Tim loved what happened with those kids in fifteen days.” Yet, in spite of his initial disappointment, the Seeds of Peace Camp did prove rewarding to Bloom.

Listening to a group of the boys, Palestinian, Egyptian, and Israeli, talking to CBS reporters at the close of the first session, Bloom remembered, “I stood and listened to the questions” given the youth and their answers, “about how they loved the camp. They said they were working their pants off or something to that effect. And asked if they would come to understand each other, the boys answered ‘yes.’ ‘Why?’ ‘Because we eat together, play together, talk together, and we’re finding out that they’re very similar to us, and we’re beginning to be friends.’” So Bloom paraphrased one or more of the youths’ responses. When asked next if they thought it would be easier for them to do a better job establishing peace than their parents and grandfathers had done, they answered to the effect that “‘We’re learning that maybe, by making communications with one another and working together that maybe we can do a better job.’”

Bloom recalled, “I started to cry. In fifteen days we proved to the world what could be done. I think that this is what keeps Tim going. I think when he gets frustrated and wants to throw in the towel, Stanley calms him down. I used to do the same thing. It was a pretty good one-two-three we had, and it worked as well at Seeds of Peace as it did at my camp.”

After the Seeds returned to Powhatan, they negotiated a contract with the Toll family for a ten year lease. In 2003, they negotiated another lease. Bloom said that after it had become clear that Tim Wilson would not be taking over Powhatan, that there was another person who was interested in the camp, but that Toll’s wife, Jane, who was involved in a few social issues, convinced her husband not to turn the camp over to that individual but to instead lease it to the Seeds of Peace. “That came as such a blow to me. I’d worked all my life in the camp and I so wanted it to continue. This man and Bob [Toll] would have made a success of it and I would have helped them. It was one of the toughest things I ever had to go through in my life. Two to three months later I had to write to all the Powhatans and tell them. Neither Toll nor Tim liked the letter, or [at least] one part of it.”

Bloom stated about the SOP camp that, “I guess Tim has felt that, and feels that, this is his baby and he has changed a number of things from what we did the first two years. I don’t agree with all the changes, but I understand. When he worked for me he knew what I wanted done and he did it so well, but when he left and his boss was John Wallach, he [Wallach] never recognized that what made the program so successful was not the discussion groups—the recreation program made it possible for the kids to like each other, communicate with each other—but Tim had to do what he was told.” One might question whether Wilson actually did so.

Bloom continued, “I think that this [2003] is the first year [in a long while] that Tim spent an hour with me and Evelyn.” Joel said he had asked Tim question after question, and that

Tim answered his questions one after the other. In Bloom's opinion, "He does feel that the new director [Aaron Miller] has given him the OK to run the program the way it should be run. From a distance, listening to the noises, cheering, etc. I knew that he was once again involved with activities with the kids, which under Wallach he backed away from doing." Bloom felt that Tim had not previously engaged in as much actively with the campers as the two of them had done during the first two years, and that "I think he's much happier now. There's no one that can do it better than he." He credited the diverse experiences Tim had during his years at Powhatan for part of this ability.

Joel would continue to admire Tim until his death several years ago, as would Stanley Waltzer, who would die a few years after Joel Bloom. Both men exerted a presence at the SOP camp for many years, and Jane Bloom continued to admire Tim's work into late-2010s, although she no longer lived on Lake Pleasant, as the Blooms had sold their house to the Tolls. The Blooms had also ultimately sold the land on both sides of the camp and the main road to the Tolls. The Toll Brothers, however, continued to support the work being done at the Seeds of Peace International Camp into the late 2010s, while Tim Wilson remained critical to that ongoing work.

CHAPTER SIX : THE SEEDS OF PEACE

Early Years and Developments

When my mother passed away in 1994, every kid that was in the program sent this huge flower arrangement, every one of them signed it. My mother made me promise to stay with it [SOP] as long as I believed in it, as long as my health allowed it, because she believed in it.

Timothy P. Wilson, 2001

When we walk through those gates, we're a new nation. ... But, you can't just sing a song and plant a tree and be at peace, you have to work hard for peace.

John Wallach, 2001

The Seeds of Peace would open its gates to teenagers from throughout the world on the shores of Pleasant Lake at Camp Powhatan in 1993. As discussed previously, the Seeds of Peace had its roots at Camp Powhatan, and although it would temporarily move its location in the early years, the organization and its founder, journalist and author John Wallach, soon determined that Powhatan was indeed the place best suited to SOP's needs and goals, and established the camp there permanently. Although Powhatan passed on some of its traditions as well as its actual facilities, the new organization, the Seeds of Peace, would develop its own traditions and curriculum over the years, starting at its very first session. Common and crucial to both camps from the 1960s through the 2010s, and serving in various capacities, was the eventual or sometime director of both, Timothy P. Wilson.

As to the inner workings of the Seeds of Peace International Camp, Tim Wilson, as its director from the beginning, had

some different perspectives and insights than did Joel Bloom, who had owned Powhatan when Tim underwent his training there, and who witnessed much of Wilson's early work with SOP. Bloom had also participated in much of the early SOP camp work, as the regular Powhatan camping sessions and SOP shared the same facility during the SOP's early years. Wilson said in 2001 that the first summer of Seeds of Peace "was chaotic" but it worked out alright. "The first day forty-five boys arrived. They'd been in New York. I went down there to meet them and we came to Maine. The hard part," however, "was not the logistics of getting the boys to camp and settled therein," but in "trying to get people on the same page, when some of the staff were against the whole idea of having the kids together in New York. Some of the adults with them had their own ideas on how to do things. People had preconceived ideas and sometimes still do."

Part of the problem with such preconceived ideas was that many of the adults apparently extended them to Tim and his role in the organization. Even as Wilson and the rest of the staff struggled to get the new program or camp established, tension existed over Wilson's status and talents. As Tim recalled the situation, "A lot of people figured that I was some jock. Yes, I played football in college, but I went there for an education. ... I had an English major, a history major, and a science major. I was a teacher, not a PE [Physical Education] instructor. There's nothing wrong with PE, but sometimes people think you have no brains. Some people saw a big black football player and thought I had nothing to say."

Tim did have something to say, however, as the new campers ascertained quite quickly. "They were just interested. When we'd travel we'd sit in the back of the bus and talk about race in the United States, about the positions the US government took on some issues," Tim said of those initial campers or Seeds—as the campers would be called as they progressed through the program. Tim recalled that, "At first it was [largely] about my learning about them and their learning more

about being here, but it was also about sharing—my learning how to respect boys from that part of the world, and their learning how to respect me as an authority for this part of the world.”

“Forty-five kids,” Wilson said of the initial season, “was not a big camp. It was like being in a classroom, but I was Teacher, Principal, and Guidance Counselor in one. Like anyone else, we were getting an education by working through the problems we had.” The staff was learning along with the youth, “learning what we could do, should do, shouldn’t do, so it was fun.”

Bobbie Gottschaulk, like Wilson, played a major role in Seeds of Peace from the beginning, coming to the organization with a background in social work social and as a top supervisor of the Jewish Social Service Agency of Washington, D.C. Gottschaulk remembered the original three delegations in a somewhat different manner. Like Joel Bloom, for whom Wilson served as camp director of Powhatan that year, she recalled some of the inter-delegation problems.

“When the camp was held for the first time in 1993,” Gottschaulk related in summer 2003 at a memorial service, “there were three delegations: Palestinians, Israeli, and Egyptian.” The kids were chosen in different ways in their homelands, with the Israelis sending their top students, choosing campers to go to the American camp based on education. The Palestinians chose to send kids on a more casual basis, using various criteria, and one was a boy who was only nine years old when he came to camp. Bobbie said that, “The Egyptians and Israelis got along; the Palestinians felt left out. John felt he had to do something to level the situation, and started praising the Palestinians for just about anything.”

Gottschaulk said that the Israeli and Egyptians had sent some competitive swimmers, with Olympic training, while the Palestinians had no such skilled swimmers. She herself was “horrificed” by the diverse skills and the potential conflict

it posed, but, “John had a way of getting a situation the way he wanted it to be.” In short, she said “the Palestinians excelled.” The hard work camp staff put into teaching the kids skills, as Bloom had earlier explained it, perhaps accounts for much of the success. “Since that time,” Bobbie continued, “we have tried our best to make everyone be on an equal footing as soon as possible.” Wilson and his staff worked to assure that happened year after year over the next two decades.

Stanley Waltzer, MD, the Harvard Psychiatrist who worked with youth both at Powhatan and at SOP, addressed another aspect of the first sessions of camp. He recorded his observations of Wilson’s leadership style and the sports program at SOP in a June 2001 letter to the Portland School District. Walzer focused on Wilson’s plan for the structure of activities at the camp. As Waltzer explained it:

His design of the program’s athletic elements required the assignment of specific groups of children, mixed with respect to delegation membership, to the various athletic activities. The athletic program emphasized the improvement of the children’s skills through knowledgeable coaching and team play. At a planning session with the counselors aimed at developing the athletic program, several of them expressed their views that an elective programming option should replace Mr. Wilson’s structured approach. Thus, in their proposed design each child would be entirely free to select the activities he/she wanted for the day. However, the counselors had considerable difficulty achieving consensus on this issue and turned to him for more information to facilitate their discussion. He only provided specific factual information to help facilitate consensus.

Mr. Wilson suggested to the group that, with the elective option, children in the same delegation would tend to choose the same activity so that they could be with their friends. Furthermore, while at the activity they would tend to speak to each other in their native language rather than in English. Thus, there would be little opportunity for interaction between the children of different delegations. This piece of factual infor-

mation supplied by Mr. Wilson helped the counselor group achieve consensus for the structured approach to programming. When the counselor group had completed the task of building the athletic program, the end result did not differ significantly from the program originally presented by him. Furthermore, he was able to include many of their suggestions into the program plan.

The basic SOP sports program established, and the first season deemed a success, in 1994, girls came for the first time. As noted earlier, the camp quickly adjusted to the situation, and enjoyed, the girls' presence. However, there were a few incidences of note.



Seeds of Peace benches in front of Pleasant Lake

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

During the first years, the campers did not have the regulation Seeds of Peace T-shirts that they had thereafter. One morning, as Waltzer described the situation, “All the teenagers in the Palestinian delegation appeared at their first activity

wearing professionally manufactured shirts with a large map of Israel appearing on the front. Text above the map read: 'PALESTINE--WITH ITS CAPITAL - JERUSALEM.' In addition, all the girls wore small pendants shaped like the State of Israel, with the word 'Palestine' stamped across it."

Both items were absolutely unacceptable. The camp forbid the wearing of such, as the delegation leaders of all campers knew. The Israeli campers reacted with fury, and as Waltzer described what followed, "Mr. Wilson arrived on the scene and, in obvious anger at the provocative nature and fully aware that the origin of this piece of acting-out did not lay with the children but with the adult delegation leaders, he demanded that the offending items be removed immediately and taken out of the camp." According to Waltzer, a "stunned silence" followed Wilson's demand, and two SOP "foundation staff" tried to "soften his approach." They suggested that instead of issuing a demand, that negotiation be employed. "Mr. Wilson glared at them and repeated his demand. The delegation escort, sensing she was in deep trouble, had the children immediately remove the items. She, in turn, removed these items from the campsite. We never again experienced this type of behavior."

Even after the incident, some SOP staff expressed their displeasure about Wilson's unilateral demand that the items be immediately taken out of the camp, but no matter. Wilson's method worked, and continued to work.

In 1995 and 1996, the third and fourth years, the SOP camp was located not in Otisfield at Powhatan, but at Camp Androscoggin, located in the same part of Maine. The organization moved the location of its camping session because Wallach had arranged a "better deal" than Bloom was able to offer. As Wilson recalled the impact of the move, "In 1995 it was difficult because I came to their shop--they had their own counselors, so I was running the camp with their staff." There were "pluses and minuses" to the situation. "Androscoggin is huge,

so they had more space. For me it was just another experience that I look at as a growing one.” Wilson sometimes had different ideas on how things should be run than did other people that year (as he would in subsequent years). As he explained it, “There are some philosophies I have that are different, that sometimes grate on people.” There are also certain issues on which Wilson simply will not compromise, “issues on running a camp for children,” he explained. Wilson needed a lot of convincing before modifying his approach to such issues. He said differences arose those first years especially about “how to act in certain situations.”

In spite of some differences he had at Androscoggin, the situation ultimately worked out. As Tim said in the late 1990s, “The people who owned the camp, Stanley Hirsch and his wife Barbara, and I became friends over the years. They’re in their seventies now. My philosophy was different from theirs when we started out. We were able to work it out. We did OK.” (The Hirschs remained involved with SOP and served on the board of directors in following years.) In 1997, presented with the opportunity to establish the camp permanently on Pleasant Lake, SOP signed a lease with the Tolls, who now owned the facility, and returned to Camp Powhatan.

Tim related that people in SOP have had over the years to decide what they are willing to give up in order to reach a “certain place.” “We have so many people coming from different places. There are always issues of rich versus poor, American versus others,” and these issues continued to be a factor during the mid-1990s and beyond.

Race remained an issue at the turn of the century. Some of the people who have been involved with SOP, Wilson said in 2001, “have no use for someone like me because I’m black. Some people say it’s because they don’t like me, some people feel this way because they just don’t think I have a brain.” Racism was a factor at Androscoggin, and remained one, to some degree, after the return to the Pleasant Lake location.

Some of the people who had been at the Androscoggin location had never had contact with people of color, according to Wilson. “They didn’t want to have contact with people of color, and here I am—the boss.” In addition, during the early of the camp, Wilson said that he had three or four people who worked for him at SOP, “who will not work with me. They think they can get by me by talking to John, or whatever. That’s fine. Does it bother me? ... Only when I can’t have what I need out of them.” Soon after this, however, trying to go through John Wallach would no longer be an option. In his position as director, Tim was deeply involved in the hiring process for staff. He said, “I know who will make the best kind of employee. I might miss a few [less than desirable ones] because I’m not paying attention.”

Moreover, Wilson asserted, “There are a lot of Jews who don’t like blacks—period. Some of the people in New York [SOP headquarters] have a problem with me. I don’t care, I’m not intimate with them. Some I just don’t like, they’re paternalistic. Here [in camp] it’s not a big thing. [They’re] not physically here. ... I respect them for what they have to offer, but they don’t know what I’m thinking. I can read people pretty well, because of my mother.” Wilson said that although people who deal directly with the camp understand his position, “People above this don’t really know. ... I don’t really like sitting down with them, they take too much time.” Time, Wilson said, that his cancer in the early 2000s no longer afforded him.

Perhaps a bigger problem, although in some instances perhaps a related problem, in terms of the SOP organization, involves people “who want to communicate—but they don’t communicate, maybe they don’t know how to communicate, or choose not to. This has always been a problem for me.” This is sometimes a factor at the headquarters as well as at camp.

Related to communication, in this case specifically in camp, during the first years the campers did not need to be profi-

cient in English, and in many instances kids came to camp with minimal English skills. By the close of the 1990s, SOP required fundamental English proficiency. English became the language of the camp, the only one campers were supposed to speak outside certain, specified situations. Requiring all staff and campers to speak the same language aids mutual understanding and helps prevent concerns that one's so-called enemies are plotting in another language or in any way talking in an objectionable manner without one's knowledge.



The campers at lineup, Wil Smith addressing them

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Yet, language and technique together created some problems early on. Hadara Rosenblum—who in her own country, Israel, held a prominent position in the Ministry of Education—offered another perspective on certain aspects of the camp's early years and Wilson's relationships with campers, staff, and delegation leaders. At the Seeds of Peace Camp, Rosenblum has served as a facilitator and a delegation leader.

She had been involved with SOP since the first year of operations.

“I met Tim at the very beginning,” she said in 2001 about 1993, the first camping season. “The first year we met, I think he didn’t like me very much. But, I came with twenty kids from Israel. Some [of them] were very young. No one told us what was going to happen in camp, and I felt like it [my position via the camp] was a very big responsibility. On the one hand, the kids were very attached to me. On the other hand, Tim wouldn’t let me see them. When I asked to see them he would kind of laugh at me. He wanted me to rely on him, but I didn’t really know him.”

The situation irked her for a few reasons. “In Israel, I’m the Director of Youth Counsel. I have responsibility for 720 high schools, 20,000 kids, 800 facilitators.” The Israeli schools elect students for the counsel, and “The kids [are sent] to the cities, there are Youth Counsels in the cities, kids from everywhere. They elect representatives ... and (about 45) go to the National Youth Counsel [and are] involved in all the ministry offices.” They “sit in on meetings on all subjects thought to involve youth” as well as serving their country in other capacities.

Thus, Rosenblum explained, “I developed a very beautiful program [for youth] in my country, and I came to this country and he [Tim] says, ‘Don’t cross this bridge.’” [Wilson had referred to the physical bridge just beyond the dining hall that symbolically separates the adult delegation facilities from the campers. The dining hall itself is divided, with campers and counselors eating on one side, facilitators and delegation leaders on the other.]

Hadara first came to the camp in 1993 as a facilitator, although she pointed out that the system was different then than it would be a decade later. In 1993, she said, there were three facilitators for her delegation, adults who wanted to stay with their kids all the time. “The facilitators struggled with the

process, but by 1994 we [me and Tim] were already friends.” Of Tim and those first years she said, “I really admire Tim. He was so assertive. I defended him from others [the delegation leaders, then called escorts] because they were worried that they couldn’t see the kids. I said, ‘Don’t worry. He knows what he does.’”

Hadara mentioned that during the first few years Tim was the person “to take the delegation leaders to discotheques, out for coffee, and so forth,” a situation she had clearly enjoyed. She said that once on the way back, Tim fell asleep. (Tim later explained that one of the delegation leaders, from Egypt, had taken the wheel and driven about one-half the way to camp that night.) “In camp,” Hadara asserted, “He’s never asleep.” By 2002, Tim no longer did the same sorts of things with the delegation leaders as he once had. Previously, he had taken leaders to various locations “so they would have some fun, things that were spontaneous.” He would take the delegation leaders to clubs in Lewiston “so they’d have a good time. It was a lot of fun. The first year I’d take them out after I’d put the kids to bed. We’d go to L.L.Bean, and then dancing. The next year they essentially expected it, so I did it until Barbara Zasloff became the head of the delegation group. In 1997 she came in and put together a program, before that it was just myself and whoever else was available. Barbara created the educational component and so forth.” Delegation leaders, be they from Egypt, Palestine, Cyprus, or elsewhere, continue to visit various Maine locations when they accompany their kids to the camp.

Hadara did not go to the camp in 1995, but in 1996 she attended as “head” delegation leader. She returned again in 1997. “There were terrible bombs in Jerusalem that year,” she said. “The kids bought newspapers [while in Maine]; they thought people were keeping things from them.” In 1998, Hadara went with a group of twenty teenagers to Switzerland. At that meeting, she related, “Tim was the only one that I felt I could really speak with.” There was a problem at the meeting,

wherein she felt at odds with the other leaders there. It seemed that Seeds of Peace would not be supported in her region anymore, and that sentiment, she said, “was stronger than me.” Tim spent “an hour with me, we were both crying. He spoke with such wisdom, he was so open minded; it was great.”

The following year, 1999, Hadara came to camp for just four days. She came to the United States with her husband, and arranged for him to meet Tim. “He became one of the admirers [of Tim] in that year he came to visit.” Tim also visited Jerusalem in 1999. Hadara said that she “arranged for a big welcome in Jerusalem, all the kids from all the years” of the camp. “Some of the kids said that they didn’t want to talk about Seeds of Peace anymore, but when I called it ‘A Meeting with Tim Wilson,’ the kids came. Some came out of the army for the hours. Tim was just like a baby, tears rolling down. Everyone was very happy to see him, so happy.”

Tim stayed in Jerusalem for a week, and Hadara—who remained in charge of the delegations in Israel into the 2010s—took him to meet her boss, the Minister of Education. Her boss said that, “He felt such a chemistry with Tim, a sudden thing . . . there was such a warm atmosphere in the room.” She said they made certain that Tim was taken to see the churches in Galilee. As Tim later explained it, he met with Rosenblum’s supervisor, Oded Cohen, essentially the second in command in the ministry, and the two got along quite well. In addition, Nabil Tannus took him to see churches and other places. Tannus took him to see Nazareth, Tim said, where things “were bombed and chewed up.”

Tim stayed at the home of Ruven Barns in Jerusalem. While he was there, he said he saw a building going up across the street. “I climbed a fence to look at it. An Arab-Israeli woman owned it. I gave the information to Bobbie and John, and said, ‘You have to do this,’ and that’s how the [Jerusalem] Center got started.” Soon thereafter, “John and Allen Kinsberg [a SOP board member] went and looked at it, and decided it was

a good thing to do. That's how the Center got started in the fall of '99." Within a few years, Tim would spend increasing amounts of time at the Center. Hadara, meanwhile remained in charge of the Israel side of things, in Israel, into early 2017, although it looked as though she would be retiring in the near future.

In the meantime, before SOP established the Jerusalem Center, at which the organization conducted both on-site and outreach programs, Wilson and staff continued to address needs in camp. Long before 1999, they had established the basic format of the camp, not just in terms of athletics, but in other areas as well.

The camp has a rhythm, according to Wilson. During the first week the kids are excited about the whole experience. The second week, however, "is hump time. They wonder, "What do I have to talk to these people for?" The third week they are "adjusted in, trying to figure out what they need to do next." A pattern is clear in terms of their sports abilities as well; the first week, "Their tongues are hanging out, the second week is the pinnacle," and after that "it doesn't hurt so much."

The rhythm of the camp starts as soon as the kids arrive, generally by bus from New York or other parts of entry for non-American campers. After traveling, for some, across the world (it takes the Israelis and Palestinians about twenty-four hours, and a few kids and adults travel for even longer periods), SOP staff meet the campers at the airport. Initially New York was the major transportation center, but after 2000 Boston and New York became the primary terminals. Staff then transport the kids to Maine, generally via bus. The kids are given a couple of days to start to acclimate themselves to their new environment, and then the serious work of the camp begins, starting symbolically with the opening ceremonies.



Wil and Tim at Camp
Wilson Family Photograph

Opening ceremonies at the Seeds of Peace are both simple and elaborate, and spirit-lifting. The opening ceremony of session one, 2001 was typical for those of the era. (Opening ceremonies are held for each camp session, of which there were three per year by the late 1990s.) The press attended the June 2001 ceremony as it does other ceremonies. (Indeed, the press are part of the story at this point, their numbers often being large—especially when new delegations are added and/or world events highlight the need for organizations such as Seeds of Peace—and their presence quite noticeable.) A few Maine politicians also attended the 2001 ceremony, as is frequently the case.

The first 2001 ceremony, as true for others, was held a few days after the kids arrived in camp, so they had already had a chance to get somewhat settled in, and for the first-year campers to get a feel for the camp and its mission. Fittingly, on the day of the ceremony, United Nations forces removed S. Milosovitch from his Belgrade prison to be taken to the Hague to stand trial for war crimes committed during the Bosnian war. Colin Powell also arrived in Jerusalem that day for a late-night meeting with Ariel Sharon, and had just spoken

with Yasser Arafat. Attempts at peace and reconciliation were progressing outside as well as inside the camp that day, and while the teenagers are in camp, events continue to transpire in the outside world which affect the campers personally and philosophically even as they work toward understanding one another at SOP. In some instances, tragedy strikes, and the entire camp stops to acknowledge what has happened and to try to offer solace to the campers most affected. Bombs have been dropped and on-the-ground attacks have occurred in their homelands and towns while the young men and women are in Maine, removed physically but not emotionally or psychologically from such events.

John Wallach started off the first opening ceremony of 2001 with a brief explanation of the ceremony. “We do this,” he said, “to recognize that you all have a national identity.” It is symbolic, however, that “When the gates open ... we all go in together as a new nation, a nation of peace, but you never leave behind who you are. Today we recognize the identity of each of your countries.”

Wallach informed the kids in summer 2001, as he did at various talks he gave at camp and elsewhere at other times, with some of his pronouns or timeframes modified, that “The world is looking at you ... and at what you can achieve in the next three weeks. ... It’s up to you.” He told the campers, “Making peace in the real world is what Seeds is about.”

Wallach entreated the campers to “Make a friend while at Seeds of Peace, even if it is just one friend.” He would say this to them repeatedly over the next three weeks. At the ceremony, he encouraged them to make a friend who would be a friend for life.

In 2001, John Wallach informed all the campers that summer some of the first delegations had come to camp from the Balkans, as had the first individual campers from India and Pakistan. (However, only a few months later, after the events of September 11, India and Pakistan would once again be on

the brink of war.) In some instances, like that with India and Pakistan in 2001, and as would be true for the one youth to make it to camp from Afghanistan the following year, a few teenagers from a nation or region of the world in conflict might make it to camp unaccompanied by a regular delegation.

Campers also speak at the flag-raising ceremonies, usually one or two of them to represent each nation. Bosnia was the first country so recognized at June 2001 ceremony. The young woman who spoke for the Bosnian delegation stated that, “We are so happy to be here today, some of us [a few individual campers] were here last summer,” and related how important “our visions of self-destiny,” were during their war. Wallach stated that, “This is the first time the Bosnia flag is being raised here, [and] maybe the first time it is being raised in America.” Everyone stood at respectful attention when the Bosnian flag was raised, as they would for all the flags raised on that and other opening days. Those few who knew it sang the Bosnian national anthem. (Most of the speakers during this part of the ceremony were return campers, also known as Peer Support or PS’s, or had some experience with SOP before arriving in 2001.)

The flags of Canada and Croatia went up next that day, and one of the campers from each spoke briefly. Except for that of the United States, the Canadian anthem was perhaps the most well-known and sung national anthem of the day. The Croatian speaker that day said that he thought that SOP was “a very beautiful organization [which provides] an opportunity to [work with] people who are in conflict ... to make peace between the countries.”

The young woman who spoke for the Egyptian delegation said that she was particularly pleased that her country could send a delegation—as had Morocco, Jordan, and Israel—and noted, like others would that day and later in the summer, that although no delegation had arrived from Palestine that the camp did have a few Palestinians present. Arafat’s deci-

sion not to send a delegation, she said, made her particularly glad that the Jordanian as well as the Egyptian government had decided to maintain its ties with SOP, as, she thought, the camp in Otisfield was “the only place where [members of the five nations] are together today.” The Egyptian delegation was very vocal after their flag-raising, giving cheers of celebration for their country, it seems, and of determination.

Sarah from India next spoke, and expressed her gratitude at being in the camp. At this point, John Wallach briefly mentioned the many trips one SOP staff member had made to India and to Pakistan to make it possible for the Indian and Pakistani delegations to come to the session.

The Indian delegation and flag raising was followed by those of Israel. Two kids spoke for the Israeli delegation: one an Arab Israeli and one a Jewish Israeli. Israel had sent the largest delegation to camp that session, and SOP wanted to recognize “both identities” of its members. The young man, Terek, who spoke for the Arab Israelis said that he calls himself “a Palestinian living in Israel,” and that “I’m lost between two worlds... It makes me think I should be a bridge between the two worlds. I believe in Seeds of Peace and I believe that it can make a big difference.” Mira, the second member of the delegation to speak, said that, “We are sorry that the Palestinians are not here” and spoke about the resulting lost opportunity.

Mohammed from Jordan thanked his king and queen personally for sending his delegation, for their peace treaty of 1995 (which Jordan’s King Hussein had signed with Israel’s Minister Rabin following the 1993 peace accords signed between Rabin and Palestine’s Arafat). Mohammed said that 2001 was his second year, and “I came back because I believe in peace and my country believes in peace.”

Momo said that, “In the continent where I come from, Africa, a lot of people die everyday ... I feel shame for those old ... people who find it honorable to kill each other... Peace be upon you all.” Few people present knew his national anthem,

but with his as with others, listening to the kids sing in their native languages, hearing those who had little singing “ability” mixed with those with well-trained voices, some in very small groups, others in relatively large ones, was quite touching.

Amal from Pakistan spoke soon thereafter, and said, “I thought I was coming to argue with a couple of kids from India, but I now realize that was my greatest mistake....I am looking through the eyes of the so-called enemy, and I do not see any hatred.”

Before the last flags went up, Wallach introduced Joel Bloom who had run Camp Powhatan before the site became the home of the Seeds of Peace, and had been at SOP “since the very beginning.” So, too, had a Palestine delegation been at the camp since the very beginning, this being the first time without one, and so the camp would raise the Palestinian flag “and those who want to sing will sing.” Several campers and adults did just that. Although a delegation from the Palestinian government would not arrive that year, the Palestinians would be recognized in both opening ceremonies and throughout both sessions.

Naima of the Portland delegation, a delegation Wilson had played the pivotal role in creating and which established a close link between SOP and the state of Maine, offered thanks to Tim Wilson and Merle Nelson (heavily involved with the project) for establishing the Portland Project. She said that it was her second year at the camp, and that the Portland Project had “accomplished so much in the past year.” She thanked SOP for the opportunities that had been given her delegation.

The American host delegation, composed of teenagers from throughout the United States, including Maine kids who were not part of the Portland Project and some who were (Wilson had played a pivotal role in establishing the Maine Ambassadors Program for the Maine kids in 1998), had a young woman speak as did the Yugoslavian delegation. The last flag, however, raised at opening 2001 ceremony, as at other opening

ceremonies, was the Seeds of Peace flag with its trademark olive branch and three-youth silhouette on a green background. After the raising of the SOP flag, the entire camp would enter through the gates and, Wallach stated, “When we walk through those gates we’re a new nation.” But, he added, “You can’t just sing a song and plant a tree and be at peace, you have to work hard for peace.” This, like his statement that the eyes of the world were upon the campers, was one of Wallach’s most frequently voiced sentiments. “What we try to do in the next three weeks is to create a new nation, a new community where we understand each other.... It’s not an easy job.” In following years, it would fall to Tim Wilson and others to impart these messages to the hundreds of teenagers who come to Otisfield each summer.

Timothy Wilson made the last comments before the SOP flag-raising, speaking of the hard work the campers would undertake and the many rewards they find in doing so, but stated that “only one person really speaks for the camp, John Wallach.” Wilson also called Bobbie Gottschaulk up and praised her work, and then did the same with virtually the entire staff, crediting them all for their efforts. The entire camp then sang the Seeds of Peace song with its refrain “I am a seed of peace, a seed of peace” with arms interlocked and bodies swaying, and then, with much joy on many faces, entered the camp still singing.

Once they enter the gates, the campers, the new Seeds, as they are called after their first session at camp, move quickly into their daily activities. After a brief “lineup”—a gathering in front of the lake where announcements are made and short talks usually given about the day’s work or accomplishments, and where Tim and later other staff generally remind campers of such basic things as to wear sunscreen, bug repellent, and drink lots of water—half of the camp generally go to their first co-existence session (or dialogue group after 2004). The other half move into various activity sessions.

Activities follow a general pattern at SOP, ones with which staff and campers quickly become familiar. Sandy Hartwiger, a counselor for five years and SOP athletic director in 2000 and part of 2003, offered a brief “insider’s” description of the daily program. His relatively long tenure as a counselor, teaching ultimate Frisbee then soccer, and as athletic director with responsibility for organizing sports days with local camps and making certain that campers have all necessary equipment, gave him a strong feel for the camp. Sandy said that he felt comfortable “working with kids either inside the classroom [he has been a high school teacher] or on the field.” He observed in July 2001 that, “There are similarities with all kids; all over the world they don’t want to sit still. Kids know when you’re organized and they know when you’re fumbling.” At SOP, he observed, “Everyday is different, you never know what is going to occur. It might not turn out good, but you know the next day will be different.”



Young Campers in Native Dress for a Special Event

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Although each day has its unique qualities, during the early 2000s, Sandy offered a description of a typical day at the camp during the era: “Tim rings the bell and shouts ‘all up’ and wakes up the whole camp—as far as I know, he has never missed a day.” Tim wakes the campers up at 7:00 am, and they have breakfast. After breakfast the campers have clean-up in their bunks, then move on to a special activity session. This is usually an activity that the kids really like, Sandy explained, and they sign up for five days to start, then they switch. They might choose to swing-dance, sing acapella, play guitar, water-ski, take swimming lessons, creative meditation, climbing (technical), basketball, cricket, baseball, and so forth. The kids are given an opportunity to learn a new sport or skill. At 10:15 they leave that period, and have a “regular activity period.” Some have co-existence or facilitation sessions at this time, others have them in the evening. Those not in co-existence might have art, computer, soccer, or other scheduled activities. Then comes lunch followed by one-half hour of rest. Everybody has to be in their bunks during the rest period, but they can sleep, read, listen to music, or talk if they so desire.

Afternoon activities start at 2:30 and last until 4:00. At 4:00 to 5:00 the camp has a general swim, and “everyone is expected to be there although they don’t all swim.” Next comes dinner (preceded by lineup as are other meals), followed by half the kids going to co-existence while the group that went in the morning had scheduled activities. After this, the camp “wraps it all up with an evening activity,” such as a scavenger hunt, an art program, talent show, and so forth. Closing the day, the kids have bedtime at 10:00 so that “they get a decent night’s sleep.”

Sandy’s schedule did indeed reflect the daily rhythm of the camp, but perhaps not its excitement. Energy is everywhere present at SOP, not surprising in that it is full of teenagers and young counselors full of aspirations, hopes, and sometimes fears. This is as true in the late 2010s as it was in the late 1990s.

The daily schedule of the camp was also, to a large extent, Tim's daily schedule, with a few important exceptions. Tim was the person who got up first to ring the bell, who stayed up last to tell everyone it was lights out time, and it was also Tim who drove around on his gulf cart night after night just listening to the camp. Other staff members might also have been looking and listening, might have been up at dawn also, but the responsibility of campers, staff, and the adults in camp who were delegation leaders or visitors, fell to Tim. Time after time people stated they had no idea when Tim slept, and this mystery lasted for years. When queried in 2004, Wilson said that he was up at about 4:00 or 4:30 a.m. and went to bed after he met with the state police, usually at about 12:00 or 1:00 a.m., the next day. Although Tim had a bit more leeway in the schedule before he asked the state police to provide additional security at the camp in 2000, he still stayed up past mid-night as necessary. He tried to take a short nap in the afternoon, but an observer could readily note that time was often unavailable, as Tim was subject to being called out to provide aid to campers and staff, to resolve issues ranging from the nightly program to a problem in the cafeteria to a sports injury, and to meet with anyone who required his attention. No matter the time of day or night, if needed Tim was ready and alert.

The bell that Tim rang at the Seeds of Peace is the same bell he rang for years at Camp Powhatan. The bell is over fifty years old, having replaced the original camp bell at the close of the 1960s. The large bell that the casual observer might say resembles a small Liberty Bell is about three feet or more in height, a couple of feet in diameter, and can be heard from virtually anywhere in camp. The previous camp bell, Tim said in 2004, was a smaller one and rung down on the shore near bunks 8 or 9. It was hung on a tree. Powhatan acquired the current bell when the camp grew in size and numbers of campers. In 2004, staff built a "tower" of moderate size for the bell, raising it several feet into the air.

Tim also yelled out the orders or schedules between ringing the bell. His voice reached the bunks and other camper areas, but probably not the facilitators and delegation housing. “Lineup! Breakfast! Go to your next activity!” and other directions boomed out from Tim to the teenagers throughout the day, after he rang the bell. His voice traveled hundred of yards across the field to the bunks and the shore as well as to the various athletic fields, music hall, art shack, and so forth. As the schedule is pretty much set, even if a person could not understand all of Tim’s words from more distant parts of the camp, campers and staff pretty much knew what he was saying.

Most staff members recognize the unique roles and responsibilities Wilson shouldered during the camping season, and some realize how invaluable his past has been in his work at SOP. Sandy Hartwiger echoed the comments of other SOP staff when he stated that in addition to having “such a wealth of experience,” ... “Tim gets the utmost respect from the counselors because he makes it clear how important the kids are, that their happiness and safety is the most important thing here, he never compromises on that.” Although he stated that the organization does have some administrative problems, SOP had an “administrative staff from the president and down with ‘the vision’” necessary to achieve crucial goals. After Tim stepped down as the active camp director, his recommended successor at the camp, Leslie Adelson (later Lewin), whom he had wanted in the position both for the skills she had developed largely at the camp under Tim’s tutelage and because he wanted the campers from more restrictive nations to see a strong woman in charge, did much of the same work under much the same schedule as Tim had, while Tim continued to come to camp every summer, especially as the Maine Seeds program he had started continued to grow, and in the late 2010s, Sarah B became camp director.

In spite of the rule that English be the only language spoken at camp, this is not always the case. Sometimes the in-

ternational campers, and probably some of the adults too, simply slip into their native tongue. But, at certain times an entire group uses their native language. In one situation, this is allowed. For example, in one 2001 Israeli delegation meeting attended by the author, the campers and their delegation leaders spoke in Hebrew. They were gathered in a large circle, and singing, clapping, and whooping punctuated the meeting. Both adults and teenagers became excited during the meeting, and a tape from home was played—which contained pretty much the only English heard during the gathering. And, this centered on such messages as, “Have a good time, bye-bye,” spoken by a family member of one camper, to “Hello, we love you,” directed at another Seed. Delegation leaders and parents had recorded their messages to the Israeli campers before they came to America, and the campers at times became quite emotional when the tape was being played. There was some clapping, quite a bit of laughter, a lot of “oohs,” and one girl cried.

Wilson later confirmed that Seeds were allowed to speak in the native language when an encounter involved only their delegation, specifically at delegation meetings. There it might be that the adults as well as the teens might have a difficult time conveying complex ideas in a second language. Whenever kids from different delegations are together, however, be it in a small group or a large one, or simply in one another’s presence, “They are to speak English.” Period.

Early in the camp’s history, a problem arose with one staff member in regards to the English-only rule. He was so insistent that the campers speak only English that he put signs on kids who slipped into their own language reading “Speak English.” Tim said, “We got rid of him. He was actually a nice guy, but it was the wrong job for him.” Although the campers might slip from time-to-time, slipping into one’s native tongue does not generally require disciplinary measures.

As previously discussed, the Color Games at Seeds of Peace had their origins in the Color Wars held at Camp Powhatan and similar athletic tournaments at New England summer camps. Timothy P. Wilson having served as director at Powhatan (and continuing to do so as the Seeds camp began), and as promoter of the first Color Games, much of their spirit as well as their form were determined by Wilson, with Joel Bloom closely involved for the first two years.

In 2001, Bobbie Gottschalk had referred specifically to the Color Games and Wilson's role in getting them accepted and established. She stated that, "Holding the Color Games is something he insisted on in 1993, when the facilitators thought that it was going to be a very bad idea, that it was too competitive." The fear for most was that the kids would see the games as a type of national competition, pitting one nation against another. However, Bobbie said, "Tim knew that if we channeled it correctly, it would pay off. And it does." As Bloom had stated, the kids and the staff put everything into making those first games a success. Since that time, the Color Games have been a favorite part of the camp and the SOP experience for many of the campers.

Wilson led the struggle to make the games a major part of the camp experience. As he stated in July 2003, one day after the end of that year's first games (the Blue Team won, but no matter as it constituents had no continuity with previous or subsequent Blue teams), "In 1993, no one wanted to do it, they thought the kids would kill each one another." Wilson and his supporters won the battle over the wars or games, however, and Wilson modified the traditional Color War games to fit the new circumstances. Besides some people's concerns over inter-national conflict reaching a breaking point, Wilson recognized that most of the kids were in no condition to compete with the same intensity as had generations of Powhatan boys. In addition to modifying some of the events, Wilson and crew reduced the athletic competition from a four-day to a one and one-half-day event. By 2003, the games ran for two and one-

half days, with a two-day game period common for the shorter third session of camp.

In 1995, the camp had renamed the Color War competition the Color Games, largely due to the negative connotations of the term “War” in a peace camp. By 1995 also, the games had been further modified such that some of the activities were less competitive, the games took gender into consideration, and they included new competitions such as one in poetry. Since then, Wilson said, “We have added stuff each year, come up with a format that works for us.”

Chris O’Connor, a former Powhatan camper and a counselor at SOP for several years before becoming a financial advisor for the Morgan Stanley company, after speaking of the camaraderie and demanding nature of the Color Wars as they had been waged at Powhatan, commented on the Color Games as they existed at the turn of the twenty-first century. “The Seeds of Peace version is much more feel-good and liberal. There are no [long-held] traditions, and people don’t come back for it. It’s much more immediate: everyone wants to bring everyone together.”

O’Connor observed that many of the people involved in the Color Games at SOP did not come from a tradition of athletics and competition in a camp atmosphere, as had many Powhatan campers and staff. “They don’t know how strong it was,” O’Connor stated. “Legacy was very important at Powhatan. This place is much more intellectual. I wouldn’t say it’s worse, it’s just different.”

And different it is. Not having had the opportunity to watch the Color Wars at Powhatan, several years of kids fully engaged in the Color Games at Seeds of Peace were watched, cheered on, laughed over, photographed, and studied by the author—if one can call moving about taking notes and clapping and giggling, studying. The games are delightful to watch, and are so on so many levels. If anything substantive has been lost since the Powhatan Color Wars, the Seeds of Peace camp-

ers do not seem to miss it. The kids often paint parts of their bodies blue or green to correspond to the color team on which they are playing, and along with the vivid green or blue paint, they wear T-shirts of the same vibrant hues. Some wear shorts or pants of the same color, or have their legs painted in part or full. Faces might sport painted designs or messages, often the kids painting one-another, such as the camper Israeli Shiran painting a huge peace sign on the face of one her teammates—, a Palestinian youth, a supposed enemy at home, in summer 2001. Colored ribbons, homemade capes, and other fabric accessories or additions are common.

Hair is often decorated or arranged for a more festive or fierce appearance, and some of the young adults carry signs cheering on their teams, signs that they shake and wave along with frequent cheers of “Go Blue!” or “Go Green!” Elaborate cheers are issued as well as the shorter ones. Some team cheers are made up fresh each session, others adapted from those of previous years, and both types are shouted out frequently during the two and one-half days of competition.

As developed by Wilson’s staff and continuing much the same into the late-2010s, the teams start their Color Game adventures late in the night, not so differently from the way Powhatan boys had. Sometimes, as one camper related of her 2001 experience, counselors pull the kids out of their bunks and into the night. The camper, an Israeli girl, stated, “Last night we went to bed, then at about 10:00 they called a fire drill and we all had to go to the fire pit. Tim led the rally, and the counselors [the white team] were already dressed for the games.” She had been in camp the preceding year, and knew what was happening, but many of the campers did not.

Sometimes things proceed in a different manner. In 2003, during the third session, for example, following the talent show presented by the campers, Wilson instructed them to go down to the lake, to where lineup is generally held, to the large bonfire awaiting them. As they left the big hall where the

talent show was held, their way was lit with torches held by the counselors who formed a line from the big hall to the lake, cheering on the campers. Once they arrived at the lake, the game spirit took over, the same as it does when other methods of getting the kids there are used.

Once the kids make their way to the campfire, be it from their bunks or elsewhere, cheers and buoyant talks continue for some time, then teams are read out, player by player, as campers are told which team they will play on—Blue or Green—and who their coaches will be. All-night strategy sessions are sometimes held (at least for the coaches), and everything that happens between the announcements and the next morning remains a secret. In the morning, Tim rings the bell and the games begin. They begin with the rope-pull, another former Powhatan tradition, with the green team and the blue team playing tug-of-war, or tug-of-peace, with an incredibly long rope, some 400 feet of it. Then it is off to breakfast and two or more days of Blue versus Green.

The Color Games end, as they start, with an event in which every camper takes part. Instead of all pulling for their team side-by-side as in the rope pull, however, campers each contribute a unique skill. Over the previous days, campers may have competed in basketball, art, swimming, soccer, climbing, dancing, singing, street hockey, softball, tennis, ping-pong, or other events, with various events taking place simultaneously. During the final race or Message for Hajime, the last competition of the Color Games, each camper participates, and a couple of things might be going on at the same time, but each camper's contribution directly determines the one score given to each team for the event. A fantastic and involved relay race, the event starts on the camp float where two swimmers, one from each team, jump into the water and swim as fast as they can to reach the specified dock, at which point they pass their team baton to a runner, who then runs to the next station. There are generally sixty, seventy, or more stations and "runs"—although the runs include swimming, boating,

three-legged races, art projects, and the like—to give each camper a chance to participate. One camper might make a clay vessel that can hold water, such as was true for the third session of 2004, and the next camper run to a distant part of the camp with the baton when the clay vessel is finished and proven to work. One camper might wrap a bandage around a staff member once the baton reaches him or her, then pass the baton to a runner. Other campers might shoot hoops, put on seven Seeds t-shirts as fast as possible, and so forth. At the end of the race, one camper will recite a long “message” to the camp director—first Tim and later Leslie, then Sarah.

Throughout the Race to Hajime, the camp is full of excitement and cheers, and sometimes confusion as campers yell out, “Who is winning?” or “Where is Blue?” or “What happened to Green?” Coaches cheer the campers on as do their team members, and staff follow runners by bicycle and foot (as do some campers at times), and such orders as “Get out of the road!” are frequently heard. Even when it seems that one team is clearly ahead, it is difficult if not impossible to be certain. The last activity or two are held out of sight of the campers, and Tim, during his tenure, would delay letting the teams know who first completed the message delivery until both teams have finished. Both teams would wait in a circle some distance from the big hall, where the messages are delivered, inside, to Tim.

Yet, even when Tim or his successors would come out and announce the winner of the race, the ultimate winner of the Color Games would remain a secret. After a certain point in the Color Games, winners of some events are not announced, so that the campers are never quite certain which team is ahead during the final hours. For that information, they must go to the lake.

After Wilson announced the winner of the Race to Hajime, he would, as would others later, tell the campers to go to the beach. There, the two teams separate themselves for the last

time to listen to the final scores. Tim and the staff let them know who has won what events, then the campers are told the total score for each team. Yells and cheering are heard, then, the winning team first, followed by the other team and the coaches, everyone—unless they have a religious, cultural, medical, or other reason—runs into Pleasant Lake, and then they are made to feel welcome by receiving hugs and spirited embraces on the shore. Hugging, yelling, and other displays of affection and joy are evident in the water, and out. The campers enter the water as teams and come out as one camp, much as weeks before they had come to camp as citizens of different cities, states, and nations, and entered the gate symbolically as one camp. Weeks of discussion, challenge, sports, and other activities, culminate in the rush into the lake, after which the remaining day or two of camp seems for many only a summing up and a preparation for parting, a parting which few are happy to make.

Yet, for many campers the Color Games are the highlight of their time in camp. Camper after camper spoke of how fantastic they felt the games are. Even second or third-year campers say that although it is no longer such a surprise, the experience is one of their favorite aspects of the camp. Making new friends perhaps is only the more popular facet of the camp although co-existence or facilitation sessions are paramount for some. Shira from Israel summed up her experience with the games in 2001, during the second day of the games. She said, “Last year, the Color games were a total surprise. This year, for me, since I’ve been here before, the Color Games symbolize the end of camp. I have to [bring out] the best that I can on the field with my friends, for I know that I’ll be leaving soon.” She felt that she had to make the most of the games as, “In Washington, I don’t remember having free time, having any chance to speak with my friends.”

A friend of Shira’s in camp, Mariam, a returning camper from Egypt, agreed with Shira about the games. Mariam’s delegation in 2001 consisted of only nine members. “This year,”

she said, “we were supposed to be all returning campers,” but someone in SOP was able to get a few new campers involved. She added that being a first time camper was difficult, and that “they [her government] did not want first year kids killing each other in co-existence.” Unlike many returning campers that year or in others, she said the Color Games were not as much fun for her this time as, “Last year they were a total surprise.”



Wesley Days at Camp, 2007

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Shira and Mariam discussed other aspects of the camp, the organization, and Wilson. Both girls had “met” numerous campers through SOP’s Seedsnet, a website set up specifically for the Seeds to communicate with one another and providing a venue for maintaining friendships once camp ends and, for some like Mariam, to meet other Seeds before they even come to camp or between camp sessions. Mariam said that on coming to camp, “It was great to meet them in person.” When she returned to camp for the second time, “There were so many people I already knew. It was great to see them again.”

Shira said of Seedsnet “Everyday we get a big letter, [comprised] of all the letters anyone sent in. We talk about the situation, about what’s going on. We share our opinions. It’s not really arguments, but like the co-existence sessions in camp. But [when I read the letters] I can’t look into his [the writer’s] eyes and see what it is he means. It’s really important to be able to look at them when they say those things. This is why it was important for me to come again.” Yet, she said, “Sometimes I need to be alone. Sometimes I am hurt.” (Bobbie Gottschalk has maintained the site for most of its existence, endeavoring to get just the type of interaction as that of which Mariam and Shira spoke.)

Shira had attended the Otisfield camp in 1999 and between then and her return in 2001, she had been active at the SOP International Center in Jerusalem, spending, she said, the entire summer of 2000 there. “It is even more fun than camp,” the sixteen-year old stated.

“Seeds of Peace changed my life completely,” Shira stated. “It changed my way of thinking, [and this] has influenced [just] about my whole life. This is a good thing and a bad thing. I can understand as much about the other side as about my own. There are situations where I can’t decide who is right. I have friends and family members who say, ‘Fine, you understand them but they don’t understand you.’”

But, she said, “The people you see fighting with [our] soldiers are the same people [who] used to live in our same bunks, eat with us. Our focus [at SOP] is trying to build bridges. There used to be a very big gap between us.” Now she has friends who “come here year after year, until they have to join the army. These are third-year campers, part of the Peer Support (PS) and Program Leader (PL) Programs. We only have PS now.”

Shira said that she kept a diary her first time at camp. One entry said, “I talked to Tim today. He’s so smart. He told me I was a special person.’ I don’t really have the words to tell you

how impressed I am with him.” Shira has a great fondness for Tim, and said, “I love him. He reminds me a lot of my grandfather, he gives me the feeling that he can help me. ... He seems so smart. Tim is a teacher, and I think teachers and educators are different.” Shira’s grandfather was also “an educator and a sports teacher.”



Female Delegation Leader / Counselor

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

“Coming back for the second time it’s so strange. I wish I could come again for the first time, this second time I know what to expect, and it’s going to break my heart going home. Everyone going home after the first time is so depressed, knowing what’s going to happen is so depressing for me, but I’m still glad I could come.” (However, over the next two weeks, she certainly seemed to be having a fine time). She said it was good “to see friends again. I saw one I met here, one I met in Cairo, one I met in Jerusalem.”

Shira later added that, “Before Seeds of Peace, ever since I can remember myself, I wanted to be a doctor. ... Ever since Seeds of Peace I have been thinking of international things, of getting into politics, of becoming an ambassador. I want

to be a teacher, to educate kids to be human beings, ... not to change their political views, but sometimes they don't know what respect is." Respect is one of the great messages of Seeds of Peace and of Wilson, who has spent a life trying to get that one value instilled in youth and adults, be it as a teacher, a coach, a state employee or as a private consultant.

A few other campers interviewed expressed similar views. The author spoke briefly with two girls she met walking down the road. One identified herself as an Arab Israeli, the other called herself a Jewish Israeli. Both teens were returning for their second visit, both had previously attended in 1999. Both said that this year was different (largely because of the absence of a Palestinian delegation), and that they could not compare the two years. Both, however, said that they were enjoying themselves.

Two other friends from the same region, Tamer, an Arab Israeli boy, and Mia, a Jewish Israeli girl, had also returned for their second session in 2001. One stated, and the other agreed, that, "Camp is a lot different this year. Because of the Intifada, we don't have the Palestinians." Tamer said about being a "minority" in camp in 2001 that, "Every Arab Israeli feels like a minority in Israel." Both said that they getting as much out of co-existence, but in a different way, as when they had been in camp previously with the Palestinians. Mia said that co-existence was more personal for her in 2001. Tamer said that, he was learning the difficulties of being a Seed in the Intifada; "Seeds of Peace is a big part of my heart, but I really had a hard time in my town being a Seed, even with my relatives."

Mia likewise was experiencing some difficulties in her country, but less than Tamer it seems. She said that, "It's difficult for the Jewish Israelis. Where I live most of my friends' views are like mine. ... They know it [SOP] is important to me." Mia and Tamer belong to the same Seeds group at home, and Mia said, "Our villages are very close." "Yes, Tamer, agreed, "we're

like neighbors.” Although Mia had not had any personal encounters with the camp director, Tamer had and said of Tim, “He knows me and I know him.” Tamer had also become acquainted with the SOP founder, John Wallach, while Mia said she did not really know John. The two teens had not known each other before coming to camp.

Tamer, who lived near the West Bank, said, also, “I am one of the Arab Israelis who sees myself as an Israeli and a Palestinian.” Tamer said he had been very nervous the first time he came to the Seeds of Peace Camp. Mia, however, said, “I don’t think I really was. The first time I met a Palestinian I was like, more nervous, but that changed in one day.

Tamer said that both the sport components and the co-existence sessions were important to him, and Mia added, “They’re both connected, they build each other.” When she attended the camp earlier, Mia said, “There was no Intifada at first [and Palestine was here], so we dealt with the problems of the Palestinians. This year we are focusing more on Arab-Israeli problems, on the problems of Arabs [living] in Israel.”

Mia, like just about every other first-year Seed interviewed during or after the 2001 sessions, said that she would like to return again, so without the PL program, “It might not be an option.” Both planned to continue to be active with SOP. Tamer was thinking of attending college in the United States, possibly MIT.

Hadara Rosenblum, who had worked with the Israeli delegation since 1993, did not attend a session in 2000, and in 2001 could stay in Maine for only twelve days of the three-week session. “This time is different,” she said about the session, as Yasser Arafat had not decided to send campers until it was too late logistically for them to make it to the session. “The Palestinians are not here—with whom we were going to negotiate? ... It’s not real.” She thought that one SOP worker in the Middle East had been partially responsible for the situa-

tion through some comments made in public, and, she stated, “People are saying Seeds of Peace is a political organization. I tell people it isn’t.” According to Wilson that year, the person in question, irrespective of Hadara’s viewpoint, had been working for diligently for the Seeds of Peace, and continued to do so in the next few years. In regards to whether the Seeds of Peace is a political organization, Wilson said in 2001, “It depends on who you ask.”

Although the Palestine decided not to send campers that session, Rosenblum said, “The Minister of Education asked me to come. She said, ‘Please, at least go for ten days,’ and I’m still thinking of what will be the future with us with Seeds of Peace. On the one hand, I love this program. On the other hand, I have reservations—not about what is going on in camp but about what happens to kids after the camp and how some people in this organization think—it is not true—if the Palestinians ask for something they [people in the organization] will go to the moon, but not for us.” (Speaking to other people in the camp over the years, it is clear that some people feel the opposite—that the organization goes too far to accommodate the Israelis.)

Hadara does not have such concerns about Tim Wilson. “We have long talks. I have met his wife, his boys, and his grandchildren. I love to talk to him. The kids [the Seeds] were really sad when he was sick. We [Israeli Seeds as well as her own family] would love to have him again in Israel. We promise him that if he comes we will give him a good time. We have people from all over the world who would love to talk to him—about the dialogue we’ve had and about what he’s done. As the years go by we’ve both become older.” Speaking of the lineup that morning, and Wilson’s messages to the kids, she said, “They look at him, kids from the Middle East look at him, and he’s like sort of a god for them.” She then added, “Tim is a situational leader. When he wants to be nice, he’s nice. When he thinks he has to be authoritative, he’s authoritative.”



Getting Ready for the Otisfield Parade

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Of the trip to Washington, D.C. for each group of campers, she recalled one such trip, in 1996, one on which her daughter, who was 21 in 2001, accompanied them. Her daughter had been attending a camp in Denver, and was given permission to come to Otisfield and participate for the last ten days of the final session. Hadara's husband was away, and her son was serving his time in the army. Hadara met her daughter in Portland and brought her to the camp. The young woman formed a "high impression" of Tim while in camp, and says of him—according to her mother—"He's such a human being, and you respect him for being such a nice human being."



One Seeds of Peace Camper who Became a Counselor, "Moose" or Mustata

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

The group made a visit to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, still a regular event for campers before they began their trip home. “Some of the Arabs wanted to bring slides [to show].” Bobby or Tim said they could not combine the Holocaust Museum visit with slides about the Palestinian experience. “But, Tim came and talked about black people. I remember some of the Palestinian kids said that in the territories some of the Israeli soldiers are so cruel. My daughter said, ‘My brother is a soldier, and he was not raised with hate, but if people start throwing stones, if they are always teasing him, he has to defend himself. If he wants to live and take care of his obligations, he has to use his gun sometimes. Tim then explained what the difference is between the Holocaust and the Intifada.”

Before the trip to Washington in the early 2000s, there were other special events before camp ended. In addition to the regular camp activities, the Seeds, depending on their session, as noted earlier, frequently attended and participated in, the July 4th Otisfield parade, the August Casco Days, during the early 2000s, as well as attending a Seadog baseball game in Portland, and each session they hosted Sports Days. These activities at their core did not differ appreciably from the activities Powhatan and other Maine camps participated in. However, attending the Seadog games started when Tim’s friends of many years, Mary Jane and Lenny Cummings, donated tickets for all the kids to attend. They did so for a few years, until the numbers of kids at SOP, with three sessions held each year, made it impossible for them to continue, at which time the stadium donated the tickets. The campers continued in 2017 to ride buses to the games, the whole thing carefully orchestrated by Wilson and then other staff. Originally, the campers sat in a section reserved for them amongst the general audience. After the turn of the century, a picnic area became available near the outfield. There the Seeds can enjoy lunch at picnic tables then watch the game from nearby bleachers. In addition, in the post 9-11 era, the separate area allows for greater security for the campers, as they (and oth-

ers) pass through a security check. They are allowed into the general area to purchase souvenirs and the like, but must be accompanied by counselors when leaving the reserved area.

Just before going to Washington, the kids made another trip in the early 2000s, one that, theoretically at least, tired them out so they would relax and hopefully sleep on their long bus ride to the capital. They went shopping. Staff and Seeds traveled to the Portland Mall, generally on the last day of camp, and the kids shopped for a few hours. Oftentimes, Tim could be located in a central spot in the mall, bags piled all around him as the kids left their goodies from one part of the mall with him before running off to another.

The kids enjoyed the shopping (and money was allocated to those who needed it, to rather balance things out), and hopefully the shopping expedition would make them sleepy by the time they boarded the bus for Washington or elsewhere late that night. Destination sometimes changed. For example, in 2004, with a new program in place, the third session kids would go to Boston for a couple of days and fly home from there. Other variations would occur in following years. No matter their next destination, the Seeds' Portland shopping trip and other trips could have broad effects.

Certainly the simple presence of all the kids of various nationalities and ethnic groups in the Maine Mall must have surprised many local shoppers. However, it could also have a telling impact on individuals who saw the international teens shopping for the same types of things their own teenagers desired.

A couple of years ago Pam Alston-Cummings, a daughter of Mary Jane and Lenny Cummings and a mother of two Seeds, wrote a letter to Wilson about her experience with the shopping expedition. After stating that her children's lives had been "changed and touched FOREVER" from their experiences with SOP, she wrote of how she had been sitting in her "parked cart on that scorching hot August day carefully exam-

ining the bus-bound teens” as they left the mall. “Initially,” she wrote, “I attempted to identify those children who were affiliated with terrorist [groups] or those personally affected by the brutality and violence of the Middle East. I am not sure when, Tim, but at some point, my heart changed from one filled with judgment to one that was conflicted and tormented.”

Pam Alston-Cummings wrote of how she had watched the Seeds leave with happiness on their faces, and that—as SOP has helped young people to see over the years, that the opposition or enemy “has a face”—she suddenly saw the “face” of the Middle East, “and that face was the face of these teens. ... My torment came with the thought of these faces and people returning to their war-torn regions. ... No one person has the right to deny these children the right to live in peace.”

Through her words demonstrating how the message of Seeds of Peace reaches the adults and others in their lives, and not just they themselves, Alston-Cummings stated she came to understand that, “These teens were just like any other kid their age. I have a young son who is addicted to footwear. I thought he was the only one with this problem. To my surprise almost every boy who came out of that mall had bags from sporting goods stores. I saw microwaves, boom boxes, piano keyboards ... and then the young ladies, all coming out with their fashion finds. ... Tim, that moment was magical, a moment that changed me.” Ever since, as it does for others who come to know the Seeds, hearing of violence in the Middle East and other lands horrified her.

Alston-Cummings concluded her letter by thanking Tim for everything he had done for her and her family, calling him a “gift from God” to them all. “I will always love, respect and admire you for what you are doing in Maine, your country, the world in which we live and in the lives of my children. Thank-you Tim for everything.” Her sentiments are shared by many.

Although he is concerned with the success of all parts of the program, Wilson remains particularly concerned with

the program he started in Portland, the Portland Project, in 1999. He did so after securing a 1998 grant of \$28,000 from the Maine State Legislature to start the Maine Ambassadors Program, as SOP did not have the necessary funding to initiate such a program. Wilson, however, had been adamant that with Maine serving as the camp's host state, Maine teenagers had to be involved.

Taking this further, he threw his energies into creating the Portland Project. In 2001, the Portland Project included three middle schools in Portland and about thirty campers. Within a few years, the Portland Project would also be referred to as the Portland and Lewiston Project or, eventually, simply the Maine Project, as its numbers grew and it reached into other portions of the state, spreading first into the Lewiston area where tensions had developed between incoming Somalians and part of the Maine citizenry. Pam Alston-Cummings' children were part of the Portland Project.

In 2001, recognizing his seemingly ceaseless work and his many accomplishments, Seeds of Peace made Wilson an Executive Vice-President. Of this new title, he said in 2001, "It's bull crap. I'm just a camper, not part of a hierarchy with Seeds of Peace, I choose not to be." He said he had great respect for John Wallach, for John's fundraising efforts, and what the organization stands for, although the two men sometimes disagreed. He saw both Wallach and Bobbie Gottschaulk as his bosses in some ways, but in other respects seemed to see their relationships more as lateral ones, each of the three in charge of one sector of the organization. "Ultimately," he concluded, "when it's time for me to move on, they'll tell me." (Yet, listening to the advice Wilson gave—via telephone and in person—to other "branches" of the organization, to how much he played the coach for the administrative sectors as well as for camp staff, addressing hard policy issues such as one concerning Arafat's too-late decision about sending a delegation to Otisfield in 2001, it became obvious that his role even before 2002 was broader than he perhaps acknowledged.)



"The Arts!" Female Camper with Mask

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

“The vision is really John’s,” Wilson said in 2001. “I have ideas of what I think the kids need, but as far as where the camp is going, I leave that to John. For me, I hope that we’re able to put the camp together in a way that it portrays what is going on in the real world. I think we’re doing that now. We do what we can with the kids we get, that’s really what it’s about.” A year later, John Wallach would die, and the camp and the organization would undergo some pains of loss and of growth. John Wallach, however, would remain the original visionary for Wilson and others.

In 2000, Tim had said that “John is real spatial. He gets real tunnel, sometimes he will talk (in terms of interviews), sometimes he will not.” But, “John is at the top, and my father taught me—and life has reinforced it along the way—that if you don’t like the man at the top then it’s time to get out of Dodge.”

Wilson had also said in autumn 2000 that, “Seeds is a good program. It does a great job, and I know what my place in it is, but I think that a lot of its supporters do not see what it is. I see Seeds as a place where we’d mess with the Balkans, and have done some stuff with cities. We can do a lot with it, but I don’t think people reach for it. But, there are many good people involved, people who care for kids no matter where they are.”

The staff will discuss problems involving the kids, about how to resolve them. But, Tim said that there are “certain issues [over which] I’d just boot the kid out ... I’m not that liberal. ...” One specific problem involved a camper who continually lied as well as getting into trouble. About this one, Tim said, “I hope the kid makes it, but I don’t think she can, she’s too much of a liar, she’s just a twit.” Harsh words, perhaps, but the responsibility for the entire body of campers fell to Wilson, and certain disruptions or infractions endanger more than just the “guilty” party. And of course, like anyone, Wilson’s patience can be tried.

People sometimes ask him why he gripes about the program, but his gripes Wilson said, are administrative, ones like everyone might have about a given organization. His complaints, he said in May 2001, were not with the program; “The program has been successful, and I’ve been a part of that success.”

Tim Wilson said of the camp and staff in summer 2001, “Everyone else deals with the kids, but the overall health and safety of the kids is mine. It’s really very important to me, it’s where my head is all the time. Sometimes I get upset when I miss something because I’m involved with something else, that’s when I check myself. ... I back up and look at what I’m doing because I’m not as sharp as I want to be sometimes, [but] I have a good staff that fills in the gaps. Things that I used to be able to do before, I can’t do now—people say I expect them to do them as well as I do, but that would be egotistical. Part of it is being tired and such; you begin to question yourself and your own motives, to wonder what you should tell kids because we’ve screwed up the world so bad—that’s what scares me sometimes.”

Speaking of some of the administrative problems that have arisen, and the fact that he feels the executive committee of SOP looks at him “a bit differently,” Wilson, six months after his cancer surgery, said he was not worried about it. Instead, he said, at this point in his life he wanted, “to be able to put both feet on the floor and say ‘I’m alive today.’” Everyday I can say that is a good day. I think the hardest thing for me is I was virile for a longtime, I was passionate in a lot of ways. Now I can’t do that. It’s frustrating as Hell—that plays on you. Part of it plays on me, but part of it doesn’t because there are a whole lot of guys like me that are dead.” In following years, Wilson would face other health issues, but remain involved with SOP.

Following his digression from camp politics and administration, he said, “I see so many people who don’t know how to show they love people or care, I am lucky because I have so

many people who love and care.” He said that although people in general love their siblings, my brother [Ted] and my sister [Bert]—I really love those two because they are so compassionate about things, and it rubs off on me.” This is of course, essentially the same thing as countless campers, friends, and acquaintances say about Wilson. Attributes of goodness and compassion Wilson continually assigns to his family are the very things other people assign to Wilson, although he does, of course, have detractors.

Tim said in early 2001 that, “When my mother passed away in 1994, every kid that was in the program sent this huge flower arrangement, every one of them signed it. My mother made me promise to stay with it [SOP] as long as I believed in it, as long as my health allowed it, because she believed in it.” By 2002, in spite of difficulties along the way, Wilson remained irrefutably “with” Seeds of Peace. The camp would undergo changes in the next few years as new programs were added, new administrators named, and new circumstances confronted, but Mamie and Henry Wilson’s son remained at the helm in Maine, and elsewhere.



Partial Painting of Seeds of Peace Campus Getting Ready for an Event
Painting by Mariah Cameron Scee, Seeds of Peace Counselor
and Art Instructor, Early 2000s

CHAPTER SEVEN : SEEDS OF PEACE CAMP - LATTER YEARS AND DEVELOPMENTS

Tim Wilson's Changing Roles

"It takes a rare person to do something like this. The one memory the Seeds will take home with them besides of one another will be of Tim."

Aaron Miller, SOP President, July 4, 2003

The Seeds of Peace International Camp on Pleasant Lake in Otisfield, Maine, is a place full of energy. That energy was in some ways changing in 2003 and 2004 and then again a decade or more later as some of its leadership and its programs changed, and as some of the delegations participating changed, yet the basic atmosphere remained unchanged. With hundreds of teenagers from various nations meeting in perhaps as close to a physically safe and neutral—in terms of national or cultural politics—environment as they might find anywhere in the world, in addition to the emotionally and intellectually charged work they come to undertake, having hundreds of teenagers and numerous staff in their late teens and early twenties in one location is bound to result in an abundance of energy. Although things do not always run as smoothly as some personnel might like, the camp nonetheless is a place of great optimism and energy as kids and adults alike challenge themselves to learning new skills—be they intellectual, athletic or artistic—to further the cause of peace, and sometimes, it seems, just to have fun. Just as he had supervised all operations at the camp during its formative period in the 1990s, Timothy P. Wilson would continue to run

the camp well into the twenty-first century. He would also, by late 2003, play a major role in the organization's work in the Middle East.

John Wallach was ill with cancer at the opening of the 2002 session, and died before the summer ended. Tim Wilson addressed John's absence and the concerns of the camp for him when he spoke at the opening ceremonies that summer, essentially taking on part of John's role as well as his own. The mood was more austere than it had been the previous year, yet all concerned attempted both to honor Wallach and to ensure that the campers did not suffer unduly for the absence and later the loss of Wallach as the Seeds of Peace president. As a friend, however, the absence was felt for years afterward, and Wilson and the staff remembered him frequently in private and before the campers.

By summer 2003, Aaron Miller had taken on the role of SOP president, Janet Wallach, John's wife, having served as acting president from John's death the summer before. Miller spoke with campers, staff, press, and visitors at the opening ceremonies when he was in Maine. At the first opening ceremony of his tenure, in late June 2003, a change was obvious even before one entered the camp. A police blockade had been set up about one-quarter of a mile down the road from the camp, a response to Tim Wilson's call for greater security. (Wilson had brought in the Maine State Police in 2000 at the request of Maine Governor Angus King, who wanted, like Wilson, to ensure the safety of the campers. After the events of 2001, Wilson had requested enhanced security and the police doubled their numbers and greatly increased their visibility.)

Miller, Wilson, and Bobbie Gottschaulk spoke to the changes as well as the continuity at Seeds of Peace at the flag ceremony, and one or two campers of each delegation spoke to those assembled. Abdul of Egypt spoke first, followed by Rashda of India. Rashda spoke of the conflict between India and Pakistan. She said of coming to the Maine camp, "Someone once

told me that Heaven is right here on this earth. I know now that this is true.”

Campers from Jordan, Morocco, and Pakistan next spoke and sang their national anthems. A young woman from Pakistan said, “All my life I believed what I was taught ... that the Indians are my enemies, my oppressors.” She said SOP had not “asked me to question my beliefs, but gave me the ability to choose to change my beliefs.”



Tim and Bobbie by the Dining Hall, Mid-2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

A few of the Seeds who spoke that day highlighted the changes in the camp by speaking of Tim and Bobbie in ways some of them might previously have spoken of John Wallach. Sami of Palestine, for example, said that he had come to camp the previous year concerned only about his grades at school, but by the second day Tim’s message, that “we should respect each other more than anything,” had begun to effect him. By the third day, he said, “Bobbie and Tim were saying to make

just one friend.” The years Wallach was in camp during the author’s research, he had repeatedly told the campers, at opening ceremonies, camp lineups, and before some activities to “just make one friend.” While Wilson and Gottschaulk had supported this in numerous ways, especially in creating a climate in which friendship could grow, Wilson had more often used terms like “respect,” “fairness,” and “work hard,” to encompass a similar philosophy, knowing that those traits allowed for friendships to form.

Campers from Yemen had arrived just the day before the June 2002 opening ceremony, and a young man speaking for the delegation spoke to the issue of image versus reality, the absence of Yemen from the camp since 1999 (there were three campers from Yemen that year, and five in 2004, so it remained a small delegation), and said of John Wallach, “May his soul rest in peace.”

Adrian of the American delegation spoke last. Wilson had stood to the back of the crowd by himself during most of the ceremony, then came forward, or rather the crowd of kids and he both moved toward one another, and led the campers and staff in the SOP song, “I am a seed of peace, a seed of peace,” as once again, as with other years and delegations, the campers and staff interlocked arms and voices and swayed to the song, then shouted out at the end, and finally passed into camp through the main gate.

After the ceremony, the campers met at the lakeside and Tim informed them that for many they would have their first co-existence session that day. He told the campers, “Work on it, get it out, get it on the table. Let’s do it, let’s do it right.” Furthermore, he told the kids, “I saw some of you with stuff around your neck [necklaces identifying their countries]. Once you enter the gate, whatever you have on belongs under your T-shirt. You’re mine for twenty-one days, and you’ll play by my rules. If you have a problem with it, come talk about

it. ... We have work to do ... and many people don't have the heart to do it."

Later that day, back at the lakeside after morning activities, Tim congratulated the kids on the job they had done that morning at the flag ceremony and at their first co-existence sessions. In these co-existence session, later called facilitation, facilitators and campers discussed issues affecting the kids in their own countries, regions, or cities, including issues such as religious and social stereotypes and who they believed had "caused" a given conflict. All of this with members of the opposition, their traditional "enemies" or adversaries, sitting down with them as each side addresses the subjects raised. In their co-existence sessions, teenagers tackled issues which, in many instances, adults have not been able to speak openly about, or resolve, in years if not decades or longer.



John Wallach was no longer present in person, but his legacy at Seeds of Peace continued

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

After acknowledging their efforts, Wilson reminded them to wear their sunscreen and hats, and, after Leslie Addleson made the afternoon's announcements, informed the campers that at 4:00 there would be a general swim, and "ALL girls, I repeat ALL girls will be down here, and ALL boys at the boys' dock. This is not optional, Wilson informed the campers that they could read or do something else quietly if they did not wish to swim. Later, he talked briefly to them about the upcoming Otisfield parade, and told the campers, "John always said, 'We are the parade.'" And that they generally were. In spite of the hard work they undertake at Seeds of Peace, Wilson and staff try to never lose sight of the fact that the kids are just that; they need to have fun and to be protected from some of the more simple threats in life such as getting severe sunscreen or dangerously over-heated. Even in Maine people succumb to the sun if they fail to take proper precautions.

Aaron Miller, who assumed the position of SOP president in January 2003, was still learning the ropes of how the camp operated during the next two summers. He was quickly learning just how difficult it was to operate the camp in 2003, and said that although he had long known John Wallach and the work of the Seeds of Peace, "running the camp was one piece I was never exposed to a sustained way." In addition to the difficulty of running a summer camp in general, he noted, "Just one mistake, one misjudgment, with political consequences, and you can end up with a serious conflict. It reflects first on Tim and then on the staff that we have never had a serious problem in ten years. As the days go by, I see how difficult it is. Tim is on 24-7, and responsible 24-7." Miller said he had first met Tim in Washington, DC soon after the first Seeds sessions at what was then Camp Powhatan.

Aaron had provided aid to John Wallach for a number of years from his position in the State Department. He said, "There's a great difference between being involved and being *involved*. Camp is a new part, camp is the departure point to what has to be year round work, not just in Maine." He was

then doing a lot of work in Jerusalem. His wife, Lindsay, had been a board member and full-time staff in the SOP offices in Washington, D.C. (She continued for some time to work with the organization and for a time was SOP Vice President.) Aaron's contact with SOP came first through Lindsay and then through John Wallach. Eventually, Aaron had spoken to the kids at camp and at the State Department in DC. Since January, he had a "total immersion" in SOP.

When John Wallach died, Aaron served on the SOP board of directors. John had previously asked him if he would step in as president. "After thinking about this for about three months, I made the decision to do it. John and I had talked about this. He said that nothing would make him happier, but I couldn't conceive of the time when John wouldn't be here. So, I thought about it and decided that I wanted to devote myself to it. I've devoted myself to Arab-Israeli peace-making, this is just another—and critical—dimension of it." Negotiations are crucial, Miller stated, "But we will not have real peace without a way for kids to humanize kids where they have denounced them before. The Israeli [campers] will never be the same as after they meet and deal with the Palestinian kids; and it is the same for the Palestinians. Once you recognize [another's] humanity, it is awful hard to de-recognize it."

In regards to Tim Wilson's abilities, Aaron agrees that Tim is unique in his ability to meet the needs of the camp. "It takes a rare person to do something like this. The one memory the Seeds will take home with them besides of one another will be of Tim," Miller said on July 4, 2003, soon after the campers returned from the Otisfield parade. For the parade, the kids had dressed in handmade costumes representing their bunks, and had once again swelled the parade almost exponentially from what it would have been without them. For years the Seeds comprised the biggest contingent in the parade, repeatedly taking home first prizes, having the largest participating group, and often the most excited group—one bursting with energy, singing, yelling, and being altogether rambunctious.

That day being Aaron's first experience with the kids being in the parade, he said he thought it was simply the most fantastic thing ever. Just after the parade, Tim had told the kids that their being in Otisfield swelled the town population by about three times. He also told them, "John said, 'We are the parade.'" Following this, the teenagers, dressed again in their regular green SOP T-shirts, cheered and clapped, endorsing their own fun and Wilson's appraisal of the situation, and, for many, the memory of John Wallach.

As to his own goals for the camp and the organization, in 2003 Miller stated that he would like in the future to have a second camp, "and run 1000 kids through a summer, not just 450." He realized that with former Presidents William Jefferson Clinton and George Bush, Sr. currently on the SOP advisory committee as well as a number of world leaders, particularly Middle-Eastern leaders such as Queen Noor Al Hussein, that SOP had established its credibility as a force. "People recognize that we're honest and real." However, although the organization generally enjoyed favorable media through the 1990s, Miller said that, "we're still victim, to some extent, of the media." Furthermore, he surmised, "One of the obstacles we face is a lack of resources, it's the only thing that keeps this program from being a true global force of change."

Miller said he would like to develop a program for American and Arab youth only. To take sixty to seventy fifteen and sixteen year-old kids and have them spend two weeks in the United States and one week in a place like Morocco, someplace where American parents would let their teenagers go. First, however, "It would have to pass the Tim Wilson Test," to determine if it would work. The idea would in following months pass the "Tim Wilson Test," and the new program would be underway the following year.

In terms of the camp's host state, Miller said, "We pour money into the state of Maine. They provide us with an incredible environment. I told the governor [John Baldacci], that we are

sort of Maine's ambassadors. What Maine has provided, more than anything, is an incredible environment, accessible but still isolated enough. I'm not certain this could happen anywhere else. It has to be where we have common ground."

Miller did not spend all of summer 2003 at the camp, nor would he do so in 2004. He rotated his time between Maine, fundraising and speaking at various locations, and at the Jerusalem Center. Six months later, Tim would be spending half of his time in Jerusalem. In the meantime, Tim Wilson continued to focus on the camp.

His health improved by 2003, and the situation at camp evolving, Wilson again increased his physical presence at the camp—if indeed that was possible. For example, in 2003 Tim marched or half danced down the street during Casco Days, the other celebration the Seeds regularly attend each year. The event taking place during June, the first session campers were able to partake in Casco Days, including sometimes a smaller parade, while second session campers took part in the Forth of July festivities in Otisfield.

In camp also, Tim seemed more active than he had the previous two years in terms of being on the field with the kids more often. During the Color Games of the last session, Tim served as the touch-football coach, keeping an eagle eye on everything everyone was doing. Moving rather quickly although a hip problem remained in evidence, Tim traveled the center of the field, his whistle in constant use, his voice booming. When one of the staff, one serving as a referee, stated, "He's just making up the rules as he goes along," Tim heard the young man from about 50 feet away, and said, "Do you know how long I've been doing this? I have been doing this since before you were born!" Then he calmly returned to the center of the field. The young man then said, "He's certainly got good ears." Yes, he does. It is Tim's job to listen, amongst other things.

Wilson continued to supervise much of the minutia of camp, including the food. For years, the staff had recognized the necessity of providing both proper nutrition to campers and foods that were compatible with any cultural or religious strictures. Vegetarian options are always available for campers as well as delegation leaders, facilitators and others on both sides of the dining hall, as are kosher and other dietary selections. While typical American foods can be found, so, too, can a variety of vegetables, salads, olives, and etceteras, from or with roots in other nations.

The camp is, however, a camp. While meeting the sometimes-unusual (for a Maine or American summer camp) basic culinary requirements, the quality and variety of food has varied over the years. In 2003, Tim hired back Marty Dupue as head cook in charge of the kitchen, hiring him out of his retirement. Like Tim, Marty had a rather unique background as an African American in working early on in Maine summer camps. He had worked at Powhatan for three years at one point, Joel Bloom having “wooed me from Camp Samoset,” as Marty described it in August 2004. Two of Marty’s children had been born at Samoset; much like Wilson had young children during part of his career at Powhatan. Dupue had worked in other types of institutions as well, such as serving as a production manager at Colby College.

When Wilson hired Dupue to return to Pleasant Lake for 2003, Marty said he did it because, “Having worked with me for those three years, he knew what I could do and what I was capable of doing. ... He asked me to agree to come for two years, I said, ‘I don’t know.’” Dupue returned in 2004, much to the delight of many SOP members, and would make his decision about returning for the 2005 season within the next few months. Soon thereafter, however, Jacquie Wilson, Tim’s partner in life and in much of his work, being herself very devoted to the SOP and the Maine Seeds Program, took over the management of the kitchen and dining halls (then known as food services), and would serve in that capacity for

several years. The 2010s would see other management, but the emphasis on healthy food from a variety of cultures remained the focus. Jacquie Wilson, however, remained active with SOP, and in 2019 still worked closely with Tim with the Maine groups.



Tim Wilson with Glen Pastore, mid-2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Glen Pastore, maintenance man and jack-of-all-trades at the Seeds of Peace Camp since 1993, voiced his appreciation both of the work being done at the camp and about Tim's performance as director. He said of himself that being "American-born and American-raised, I haven't followed the Middle East thing, but it draws you in," what one experiences at the camp, watching the teens who come to the camp. He said of Tim, "His bite is not as bad as his bark. He can be intimidating but he gets things done. The kids look up to him because he's neutral. He's not an Israeli and we get a lot of them here." Tim had interviewed Glen for the job in March 1993, and had him on the payroll year-round as Glen stays at the camp after it closes each year. He said in 2002, "Me and Tim are the only guys here in winter." In general, he said of Wilson, "He's the big dog," which became actually a nickname for Tim as the years passed, and kids could be heard yelling, "here comes the Big Dog!" well into the 2010s. Glen remained in his position at the close of the studied period, a well respected, and invaluable staff member.

Just as a few former Powhatan campers (by definition all were male) served as counselors at the Seeds of Peace Camp, so, too, did former Seeds of Peace campers, male and female, come to serve as counselors after the turn of the century after reaching their majorities. "We get some of our kids back. We have summits which bring kids back to deal with specific programs," Wilson said of the Seeds in general in 2002. In 2001, the older Seeds met to hold a tribute to a camper killed in Israel. In addition to attending special summits and such, some campers eventually return as counselors. "Eventually," Wilson anticipated, "we will probably have 25 percent of our counselors be old campers. But, we have to keep everyone's prejudices out of this, even the ones who are ours [who were campers before staff members] still have their own views."

One example of a Seed-turned-counselor is Amit. Amit, from Israel, attended camp twice as a camper, and returned to camp as an administrative aid in 2003. For her, the expe-

rience of staying in camp “for two whole months” was a great addition to her time as a camper. However, for Amit as for most Middle Eastern youth, the choice of what to do following her time with SOP was not as open as that for the American Seeds-turned-staff.



Two Camp Counselors Watching the Campers, Early 2000s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Amit, like other Israeli youth, in spite of any misgivings, “had” to enter military service. She would do so in February 2004. As a female, her service time would be two years, males served for three. She was apprehensive about the compulsory service, but said in late September 2003 that, “I have mixed feelings about it, about being part of an occupying army, but I’m comfortable with it too, it’s my duty and also in order to have a say in what is going on, I have to do it. It’s sort of like a rite of passage. I’m still not doing it happily, but I have made up my mind 100 percent.” She said that Israeli youth did have some choice, that there was a conscientious objector exemption, but that taking one would have a severe negative impact

on the boy or girl's future, in terms of job opportunities and respect within the community.

Asked about the effectiveness of Seeds of Peace in helping create leaders for the future, and if she thought such would happen in her country, Amit considered carefully. She then responded, "I see all of us becoming leaders, but not necessarily political leaders. We will become important to our communities, but not all of us in politics—[we are] people who will be key voices."

About Tim, Amit said she felt that she did have a close friendship with him "although we might not speak on the telephone or send emails, but then, maybe everyone thinks they have a special friendship with Tim. Maybe that is something special about Tim, that everyone has a different kind of bond with him."

Seeds take their experiences with Tim and the Seeds of Peace Camp with them into their futures in various ways. Some of the Seeds have furthered their own skills and the message of Seeds of Peace by making films about the camp, one of which was regularly used by the public and the organization in the early 2000s, and some schools want to use their interactive educational CD Rom or the Peace of Mind video documentary made in 1997-98 as part of the school curriculum. Subsequent projects have furthered their educational tools, such as a New England Cable Company documentary of 2003. As the 2010s opened, the ties between numerous schools and the SOP became more established and solidified. Much of this was due to campers, to expanding programs at SOP, and to Wilson.

Some Seeds of course returned to the camp after they reached their majorities. However, whether they spend their time in compulsory military service, in college, or working in other positions after leaving as campers, there is necessarily a delay before campers might return as workers to the camp, as most SOP staff members are twenty or older. And, regardless of how many elected to remain with the SOP, as counselors or

in other capacities, as Wilson posited in May 2001, even if the present campers are not active in the future, “We are going to have a different camp, the kids now are coming out of a dramatic situation.” (He noted in a separate interview in summer 2001 that Arafat in the midst of increasing hostilities had said that the ceasefire was over. Tim said he had his own “feelings on that, but I’ll leave it alone.”) This change was true for the 2001 campers in which it ultimately turned out that the Palestinian delegation never arrived, and would be even more so, it would seem, for the campers of 2002 through 2004 following the renewed, or intensified, violence in Palestine and Israel, as well as the United States’ War on Terror following the attacks in September 2001, only weeks after the 2001 campers had returned home.



Counselor and Art Shack Director, Mariah, with a Camper, Early 2000s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Wilson said in the early 2000s that the students who apply for SOP (now generally through the Seeds of Peace website) are in the seventh or eighth grades, and “kids are easier to work with in that age bracket. They’re easier to be around.”

He enjoys the work with the regular campers as well as working with local schools. After one interview with the author in 2001, he was going to meet with Boys and Girls Clubs at King Middle School in Portland. He said, "It's just so much fun because they're trying so hard to learn. It's just a lot of fun."

Returning campers might be in the eighth or ninth grades, as might some of the older first-year campers. Wilson said that, "there is still time to work" on their ideas at these ages, but, "juniors and seniors in high school generally have their opinions formed."

As an extra benefit, returning kids show new campers the ropes in more ways than one. Tim quipped in early 2001 that, "The older kids tell the new kids they'd better do what Tim tells them." Watching the dynamics of the camp for even a day, one might easily conclude that such warnings are quite unnecessary. Most of the teens have an almost instinctive respect of Tim, and few seem willing to attempt any outright mutiny.

Although campers and counselors continued to enjoy the purely fun aspects of Tim as well as his qualities as a "friend," Tim could not, it seems, have been any more serious in late 2002 and thereafter than he had been before John Wallach died. Still, subtle changes were apparent, as Tim mourned his friend, his sometime sparring partner, and the founder of SOP. At his office in Portland in February 2003, Tim said, "I talked to John about two weeks before he died, and to Janet every day after. Michael [John's son] wanted me to go to New York before he died, but I couldn't get away. There was stuff going on in Maine; I couldn't risk leaving camp then. I think his father understood that. Sometimes I think I should have gone, but that's hindsight now."

Tim said that John knew he was dying the last times they spoke. "He was taking a turn for the worse, but I think he was hoping he'd get back to camp one more time. I was hoping so, too. There were a lot of things good happening at camp, and

I wanted him to see it. There were kids from Palestine again, and the new kids wanted to see him, and the kids from last year, too.”

At a public talk Tim gave later that year on the northern Maine coast on September 11, 2003, Tim told his audience that, “John used to say that he hoped Seeds of Peace is still going in twenty years, with the presidents of Palestine, Israel, and America sitting around the table, and they would all be Seeds.” Tim told his audience of how John Wallach had convinced the leaders of the three original delegations to send him their kids, a total of forty-five, “to a camp I’m going to start,” for just a few weeks, and how since then the camp had essentially become, “a mini-U.N.” John had believed, Tim related, “that if you put a bunch of kids in a room and told the adults to shut up, that great things would happen, and they usually do.”



Another Flag Raising Ceremony, Mid-2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

His voice breaking, Tim told his rural Maine audience after September 11th, that, “There is no way I could ever explain these eleven years of my life. It’s hard to put them [the Seeds] on a plane; we know we’re going to lose some of them. It’s got to stop, it’s enough, it’s enough.” Although some of Tim’s views over the years would evolve, these sentiments about the campers and the world they lived in would never change. He then told his audience on that night in 2003 of how he had himself become involved. That first summer, when John Wallach and Bobbie Gottschaulk were putting together their plans for the camp, “Bobbie said, ‘You have to run this, for two weeks.’” Tim had other obligations, he was supposed to go back to Pittsburgh to start coaching, and, he said, “Joel called my mom. She was a different kind of lady; you didn’t argue with her. She said something to Joel [who had explained what was going on], and told him to put me on the phone. She said, ‘You’re not coming home, you’re staying there.’” His mother would subsequently get a chance to meet some of the kids. And John Wallach, in following years, would call Maine, “The Peace State,” Tim related.

John Wallach and Timothy Wilson had often disagreed about things. Sometimes, when the kids wanted something, Tim said of John in early 2003, “I would say ‘no,’ and he’d be like a grandpa and say ‘yes.’ Sometimes we disagreed, but the man had foresight and knew what he wanted. We wouldn’t have had a Maine project without him. He stood up for it when many people [in SOP] didn’t want it. He has made a difference in this state.”

As Wallach had made a difference in Maine, so, too, did Wilson continue to make a difference. As the years passed, the state—as well as people and organizations outside the state—increasingly recognized the contributions Wilson made both before 2003 and after. He had received numerous teaching and coaching awards long before the Seeds of Peace was established, as well as being awarded such Maine honors as the Maine Disabilities Award in late 1983 from the Maine

Planning and Advisory Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Governor's Commendation for Service in 1980, and the National Association Award for Community Services Director or of the Year Award in 1979. Formal recognition for his work was not new to Wilson. However, the awards he received after the mid-1990s generally recognized his work with the Seeds of Peace, often in conjunction with his other activities over the years.

Just before the turn of the twenty-first century, Wilson received the Halsey Gulick Award for Camp Director of the Year. Considered a highly prestigious award within the camping community, the Maine Youth Camping Association selects a camp director each year from throughout the entire state. Wilson was the 1999 recipient of the award, the first black recipient, of all Maine youth camps. Specifically, the award was presented, "For Distinguished Service to the Organized Camping Movement in Maine."

The camping association, through the Halsey Gulick Award, recognized Wilson for his "dedication and contributions to Maine camping," not just to the Seeds of Peace and Powhatan camps, but also for his involvement "in the establishment of Camp Susan Curtis for disadvantaged Maine children in the early 1970s," as well as his service on that camp's board of trustees, and even recognized his work for three Maine governors and his having served as the headmaster of the Hyde School.

Similarly, Wilson, as director of both the Seeds of Peace and Camp Powhatan, had received the American Camping Foundation's Eleanor P. Eells Award for Program Excellence for "the Seeds of Peace/Camp Powhatan," as the camping association had referred to the new SOP program as held at the Powhatan facility. The association conferred the award in 1995, when the SOP camp was still in its early formative period. Over the next decade the camp, Wallach, and Wilson would receive similar recognition numerous times by various

organizations, several of which hang in Wilson's rebuilt camp home, the Jilson. (Although not in the same category, as noted previously the camp received numerous plaques over the years for first prizes in the local parade and these also hang in the Jilson, which serves not only as the camp director's home but also as a meeting center and a place kids can come to ask questions and make requests.)



Leslie at Camp, Mid-2010s
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Wilson received the International Peacemaker Award with United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 1999, also

known as the Ruth Miller Award for its founder. Ruth Ratner Miller was the mother of Aaron Miller, who was with the State Department at the time Wilson received the award. Ruth Miller died in 1996, after a life spent in urban planning, social work, education, and politics, and was an early supporter of SOP. Maine Governor Angus King spoke at the International Peacemaker Award ceremony, as did SOP founder John Wallach. Earlier, when Tim's nomination for the award was announced at camp, the entire camp had cheered. As Wilson once described the situation over the telephone, "King Hussein and Bill Clinton have the same award I have." The honor is generally awarded to two individuals each year, one a celebrated world leader, the other a perhaps lesser-known yet distinguished honoree. King Hussein of Jordan won the award in 1997, Madeleine Albright of the United States did so in 1998, and Bill Clinton won it in 2001. Wilson stated in 2001, "Last year, Mrs. Rabin, Madeleine Albright, Kofi Annan, and Anwar Sadat of Egypt and his wife" were on the stage together. In 2000, it was Mrs. Rabin and Mrs. Sadat" who received the award." Illustrious company indeed.

The following year, in January 2002, the members of the Maine State Senate and the Maine House of Representatives recognized Timothy P. Wilson for his work with the Seeds of Peace International Camp. The two houses joined in recognizing Wilson in his roles as director of the camp and a vice president of SOP in Otisfield, a camp which "promotes peace among children whose homelands are war zones," the SOP being, as the formal sentiment described it, "a nonprofit, nonpolitical organization that helps teenagers from regions of conflict learn the skills of making peace." The two Maine bodies extended their "appreciation to Mr. Wilson for his dedication and commitment to the youth of the world and extend our best wishes for the camp's continued success," and ordered their "expression of sentiment be sent forthwith on behalf of the 120th Legislature of the people of the State of Maine." A decade later, Tim Wilson would literally have his own day in the State of Maine, as declared by the Maine State Legislature.

In a final honor of the early 2000s, in May 2003, Wilson received the Distinguished Achievement Award from the University of Southern Maine. The university recognized Wilson for his “forty year career dedicated to public service, education, and human rights.” They noted Wilson’s career as a high school language arts and history teacher, his coaching endeavors, his service on the first Maine Human Rights Council during 1970-77, his work with Seeds of Peace in general and his creation of the Portland Project specifically. In sum, as the award stated, “The University of Southern Maine is pleased to recognize Tim Wilson for his inspiring example to Maine and the world.”



After Lunch, Mid-2010s
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Changes were occurring at SOP in the early 2000s even as Wilson received increasing recognition for his role with the organization. Although some of the changes were due perhaps to Tim’s “inspiring example” to Seeds and staff, with other changes he had less to do. A number of counselors expressed

concerns that the organization was focusing more attention than it had in recent years on the Middle East, as opposed to the increasing inclusion of other conflict regions as had been true of what one might call the second phase of the SOP—the period between when it first established itself on Pleasant Lake and welcomed its initial delegations and looked to address issues in such places as Cyprus, India and Pakistan, and the Balkans, to the death of John Wallach. This would be a matter of degree, however, as the Middle East had always been a core focus of SOP, and other conflict areas continued to be included in the organization's work. Yet, there was indeed a certain shift, but one which economics and world conditions helped influence.

Ethan Schechter, a former camper at Powhatan and a Seeds of Peace counselor, opined in August 2004 that, "Since John died, the organizations is changing, in some ways for the better, in some ways for the worse. The focus is going back to being on the Middle East, which I think is a bad idea. In other ways, it's developing more structure which John would not allow, so [the camp] doesn't have to recreate [itself] every year." Several people, in and outside of the organization, had previously stated that in recent years Wilson had more freedom or responsibility in running the camp. Certainly during 2003 and 2004 he addressed numerous issues which included organizational structure—both in Maine and elsewhere.

While Wilson remained solid in his support of delegations beyond the Middle East, his position within the organization continued to evolve. John Wallach had recognized Tim's great value to SOP, even though the two did not see eye-to-eye on every issue. So, too, did Bobbie Gottschalk recognize Tim's continuing value, and what she considered changes in Tim since Wallach's death.

"I think Tim has really come into his own in the last two years," Bobbie stated in summer 2003. "Part of it, I think, is that he naturally just got better at being the camp director. He

knew what his responsibilities were, and ... he reclaimed many responsibilities a camp director should have.” Tim had essentially taken on responsibilities the organization had tried to keep via its board of directors, but that had not always worked as smoothly as it might. However, Bobbie stated, “When John became ill he needed Tim to take over more and more, and Tim was ready to do so. Now Tim is more in control of what’s going on here, and a lot of the changes are because of his great ideas he’d had on the back burner, not just about the physical plant—and that’s really at a new level—but also the staffing of the camp is at a much higher level.”



Color Game Coaches, 2005

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Seeds of Peace had recently undergone an accreditation process with the American Camping Association, and received an “almost perfect score.” Tim had overseen the changes needed to bring this about. Gottschalk posited that, “Interpersonally, I think that as much as John Wallach controlled the organization, it was still odd having two men in charge. So, when a

vacuum was created by John's illness and death, Tim was able to take over."

As to her own position, Bobbie said that she used to serve as "kind of the liaison between Tim and John, and it started changing when Tim started dealing with John directly. But, I was also John's Number 2 person, and Tim and I worked as colleagues all along. I had experience in camping, and my role focused on individual kids and their needs." She said that she currently felt she needed to make sure that any new programs fit in with both SOP needs and the needs of the individual children." In the late-2010s, Gottschalk continued to do a lot of work behind the scenes, working with campers before and after their time in Otisfield, as well as working with SOP publications. She would also be recognized then as a co-founder of the organization.

While Tim increased his responsibilities with SOP during and after 2002, he continued to serve as a consultant for Pierce Atwood Consulting in Portland in 2003. Robert Baldacci, long involved in economic development in the state, assumed much of the leadership of the firm in February 2002. He had known George Campbell, his predecessor, and Tim Wilson for decades. He observed in 2003 that he did not think that Tim had changed significantly since his days as a teacher and coach in Dexter, having met Tim numerous times there when Wilson brought his team in to eat at his family's restaurant in Bangor; "He's the same guy I knew throwing footballs to his students, he has not gotten arrogant because of his work." Baldacci said that he had followed Wilson's career when he had worked for Governors Longley, Brennan, and Curtis, and commented that then, as now, "Tim's ability to communicate and connect with people allows him to cut through the bullshit and get right to the heart of the matter. He identifies the issue and then works toward progress with his ideas. He is one of the guys who will work to make things happen. He's a great asset [to Pierce Atwood] and a great friend." Tim's style as a consultant, as elsewhere, was one of independence,

Baldacci said, and Tim had proved of great value during the transition from Governor Angus King's administration to that of his brother, John Baldacci. "He was very helpful with the transition with people hired under Angus King," Baldacci said. "He was involved during the campaign, and very helpful to John and I."



Getting the Blue on at the Color Games

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Although Tim was always involved in matters outside of Seeds of Peace during 1993-2017, when asked how much time she thought Timothy Wilson devoted to the Seeds of Peace in the early 2000s, his wife Jacquie said that Tim devotes 100 percent of his time to SOP: “There’s nothing he lets go by. ... He’s always talking about it. It never goes away.” However, she also stated that although his consulting position with Pierce-Atwood might not be as demanding in some ways, “He’s 100 percent for them too.” Sometimes there was indeed an overlap in time and energy spent, but Tim’s high visibility in the state benefited both organizations. A few years later, when Tim started going overseas regularly for the SOP, he started wrapping up his time with Pierce-Atwood; doing both jobs full-time was simply too much. Wilson said in 2016 that, “I did not think it was fair to Pierce-Atwood to continue working for them” at that point.

Wilson spends part of his time urging people to get involved in SOP as donors if not in a more direct, hands-on, manner. In some instances he is approached about the best way to make a contribution count, and is creative about the way contributions can be made. The camp itself always needs something. Maine individuals and industries support the camp in a variety of ways, from monetary donations to services, and—as is true with Andy Nixon and the Dead River Company—sometimes both. In addition to direct monetary contributions, donations have ranged from a truckload of Dexter shoes for the kids by Harold Alfond in 1996, to phone service and T-shirts by Verizon into 2004, T-shirts from Carlson Hewlett Travel in 2004, lumber and entire building donations from Hancock Lumber and the donation of the camp’s main office by the Schiavi Company of Oxford, to laundry service by Pratt Abbott in the 2010s, and later by another service. Wilson as a consultant has done a great deal of work over the years for the government as well as the private sector, which has no doubt eased or aided the camp’s relationship with the government. Pierce-Atwood of Portland has supported SOP in a variety of ways, including letting kids meet in their offices. As Wilson told one potential

contributor in 2002 via the telephone: “Most of the big guys here do something for us.” Queried about a good contribution area for Maine kids, Tim steered the person in question to the possibility of establishing a scholarship for expenses not generally covered by regular scholarships such as transportation money. Bowdoin College, with which Wilson has had a long relationship, has a scholarship program for Seeds, and Wil Smith of Seeds—and by then an adopted member of the Wilson family—served on the faculty at Bowdoin during the early to mid-2010s, and aided the work of SOP tremendously in both capacities. However, transportation, books, and supplies, are generally not covered in scholarships and various community donations.

The Seeds of Peace raises funds in a variety of ways, some which involve dignitaries and celebrities from across the nation and around the world. It holds gala events that have brought in large amounts of money. Some individuals give thousands of dollars to help kids attend camp. The State Department supports some of the program, as Tim said, “It wants people getting together to talk.” Funding, however, seems relatively low on Wilson’s priority list, and he stated in early 2001 that, “The cornerstone is at Otisfield, and as long as they don’t tinker with that I’m fine.” In subsequent years, as Tim’s position in the organization changed, he would have less direct involvement in fundraising efforts, until the mid-2010s at least, at which time he would engage full steam to raise money to bring more and more Maine youth to the camp and to various Seeds related activities.

Sometimes there is an overlap between donations and camp use. For example, before camp opened in 2003 for the summer, fifty kids and their adult supervisors came from Oakville, Illinois, just out side Chicago, on a multi-denomination retreat. They came for a week, and helped prepare the camp for summer session. In 2004, a group from North Carolina would do the same. Wilson arrived at camp before it officially opened for the summer, and was onsite to work with the volunteers.

Previous to the early 2010s, when camp was in session, Wilson spent all his time there. And he seemed to have more hours in a day to devote to the camp than most people might, something numerous people commented upon, the expression “Tim never sleeps” being heard more than once. Tim admitted to spending all hours of the day and night riding around on his golf cart checking on the kids, and said in summer 2001, “When I’m in camp mode I’m just going, it’s like 24-7 for fifty days, that how Jacquie sees it.” Other people agreed.



Going for Green at the Color Games, early 2000s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Even when camp is not in session, nor are any activities of the Portland Project underway, Tim still spent a great deal of time with the organization and with current or former campers and continues to do so in the mid-2010s. For example, in November 2002, Tim and Jacquie both attended a Thanksgiving-time retreat in Lakeville, Connecticut, at the home of Janet Wallach.



Blue and Green Meet, Color Games c. 2005-2006

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Sixty Seeds attended the retreat, held during the American Thanksgiving weekend and soon after Ramadan. Tim, Leslie, Bobbie, and Janet Wallach, serving as acting president of Seeds of Peace after the death of her husband John that summer, attended. Each attended for various lengths of time. Janet could stay only an hour or two, Bobbie for a day. Tim and Jacquie, who had volunteered to go to help out, attended much of the retreat, which for the kids lasted from Wednesday to Sunday. The purpose of the session was to allow the Seeds a chance to get together and talk about their experiences in American colleges and universities, and about how they

were explaining Seeds of Peace to people at their respective schools. The retreat also gave them a chance to get together while much of America was feasting with family and friends and schools were closed for the holiday. Tim said of the retreat, that although there have been other gatherings, “there has been nothing truly like it since.”



Green Runs at the Color Games, 2005

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Wilson himself could irritate people in both his contemporary SOP positions. Sometimes, it was difficult to tell who irritated who the most, and Tim often thought in the early 2000s that people in his environment wanted to get rid of him or would like to see him step down. Convinced that his approach was best, he seldom compromised and in general maintained that characteristic into the late-2010s. As camp and then Maine Seeds director and to some degree in his other work, he sometimes saw and sees himself as cleaning up situations or messes for various people, be it their lack of leadership ability or their inability to recognize problems soon enough to fix

them without his aid. Often this relates to such things as how adults interact with children and teenagers, or how adults relate to people of different ethnic or racial backgrounds. The position—in terms of political, social, or political power—of the person in question matters little. He gives praise where he thinks it is due however, tries to set the record straight when the people behind the scenes are slighted, and works diligently—if sometimes grudgingly—to correct problems even if he intimates that the problem should not have been allowed to develop.

The Seeds of Peace, like some of his previous work, brought Wilson into contact with numerous world leaders, sometimes into quite close contact. When visiting Washington with the campers each summer, he had the opportunity to renew his acquaintance with Bill and Hilary Clinton, an acquaintance that dated back to his early marriage to Ida Gammon and their visits to Arkansas. When the administration changed, Wilson would encounter new U.S. leaders. So, too, did he meet internationally with several renowned individuals.

For example, as part of his work and travels with the Seeds of Peace, Timothy Wilson has had the opportunity to meet Queen Noor Al Hussein numerous times. His estimation of her is very high, and he said in 2002 that, “She’s a nice lady, an exceptional human being, a person with class.” He said he first met with her after King Hussein died in early 1999. Both the King, whom Wilson first met in 1997 when the King received the International Peacemaker Award in New York. The Queen and King of Jordan had been great supporters of the Seeds of Peace from its 1993 inception.

Wilson was touring the Middle East when he met Queen Noor after her husband’s death. “She was just very gracious to me. We stepped off to the side of the room and talked for a good deal of time. She told me about how her family was doing, her perceptions about various things.” Wilson said he considers her “ten times the person [of many politicians]. She

did so much more for her country [than did, say, Grace Kelly for Monaco, a American woman placed in a similar situation]. She has done tremendous things for society. I have great respect for her, and she showed me great respect also.”



And the Blue Team Takes It, Color Games 2005

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

In contrast to a common assertion that Noor is a “cold” person, Wilson has found her very much the opposite. “We talked the whole evening, and that conversation has continued through the years. She always makes an effort to speak to me, and she does.” Reiterating the great respect he has for her, Wilson also said that he had tremendous respect for her husband also, as well as for Prime Minister Rabin and his wife, calling them, also, “great human beings.”

Wilson stated in mid-2003 that he had met many people in life who are leaders, whether in business, in their countries, or in their communities, “who are just great—in spite of all the trappings they remain great human beings. You get human beings sometimes who get lost in this world, but they’re still

human beings.” It is this approach to looking at people as individuals, seeing their individual merits apart from any political or social standing, that has made Wilson so successful with the hundreds of young people who come to the Seeds of Peace each summer to learn, to play, and to begin to understand how they in turn can relate to people, be they their “traditional enemies” or not, with respect, even when they disagree about their cultural histories or their current interpretations of national or international policy. Wilson’s success is due in part to his understanding of history, and his knowledge of various religions, something that he sometimes indicates is less than acknowledged.



Tim in the Water after the Color Games

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

During a difficult period with SOP in 2001, before Wallach died and when Wilson was himself recovering from surgery, Tim stated, “I’m good at what I do and I’m arrogant enough to get away with it.” Furthermore, he said about his attitude toward certain Seeds of Peace administrators, that, “I never wanted to be someone who just got along, and I’m never

gonna be that way. I'm not going to go out like that." Seeds of Peace could let him go if they wanted to, but, the message was clear, he did not intend to change. Wilson did adjust to changes after Wallach's death, and those of following years, but although some people feel he has "mellowed," few think he has changed in any significant, fundamental, way. In the meantime, the work of the organization continued both in the United States and abroad—including work in the lesser known conflicts in places like Cyprus -- did the programs in which Wilson became perhaps inextricably involved, including the Portland Project, soon to be known as the Maine Seeds Program.



Tim, Wil and Leslie at Camp, Mid 2010s

Photo by Bobbie Gottschalk

Looking at things from another perspective, Chris O'Connor stated in 2003 that John Wallach hadn't been "really in touch with the counselors," not the way Wilson had been and continued to be. Chris said that John had known his sister and his family to some extent. Furthermore, he said, "Mike Wallach was a Powhatan boy also. I don't think John was. I felt that we [the counselors] put so much into the camp, and I didn't understand why he didn't know who the players were, but he was always doing other stuff." Beyond this, Chris explained, "I was one of Tim's soldiers, so my allegiance was to him, not to John necessarily. John's goal was to sell the Seeds of Peace and push it to the next level."

As a counselor himself, Chris said, "Tim will talk to me. He doesn't send other people to talk to me. For the most part, whenever he's really had problems with something [about me] he'll pull me to the side and tell me to knock it off. It would happen just once or twice, and that would be it." That was all it took to get Chris back on track. And so it was for so many of Tim's students and campers over the decades. And those in Maine and in places like Cyprus each had their own unique experiences with the camp, and with Tim.

CHAPTER EIGHT : CYPRUS

A Close Look at One Conflict with the Emphasis on North Cyprus Campers and Adults

"When I have my Seeds T-shirt on, I feel like they cannot hit me. I am proud to be a member of Seeds of Peace."

Nisan, North Cypriot Seed

While Crossing the Busy Streets of Nicosia

February 2002

Experiences gained at the Seeds of Peace and memories of Tim Wilson remain important long after the kids leave camp at the close of the summer sessions. This is seemingly as true for the kids from outside of the United States as it is for the Portland Project participants and members of the American delegation. Some Seeds speak fondly of the camp and of Tim years after their initial experiences with one or the other, or both. The author met with some of the Seeds from North Cyprus in Nicosia, North Cyprus in February 2002, seven months after they left Maine. Although they did not think that the time in Maine had proved, at least to date, as positive or constructive for all of their delegation members as it had for them, they believed that most Cypriot Seeds had benefited in more than one way from the camp, and each of the four the author originally met with in North Cyprus wanted to return to Seeds of Peace the following year. They all lamented that only one return camper or PS would be chosen from their country. As it turned out, they were wrong.

North Cyprus or the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) has been controlled by Turkey since the mid-1970s' Turkish intercession (or invasion, depending on one's perspective) on the island following an unsuccessful coup (believed backed by Greece) following civil strife between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Following the Turkish military intervention, Cypriots underwent a forced division of their island, with most Turkish Cypriots settling in the North, Greek Cypriots in the South, and a heavily guarded wall between the two. In some cases, people had to flee from one end of the island to another. (One Cypriot informed the author of how she was smuggled to the north side in the trunk of a car.) The United Nations eventually established a buffer zone, in some places seemingly just a few yards wide, in other locations wide enough to encompass a village. A strong military presence is evident throughout the north. Moreover, substantial formerly private or public land has been commandeered by the army. Due to the political situation, and perhaps also due to a lesser extent to the depressed economic conditions in the "Occupied Territory" of the north, no American representatives from the Seeds of Peace had ever, to the youths' knowledge, visited North Cyprus for more than the one nine-hour-day pass allowed visitors to South Cyprus previous to the close of the first decade of the twenty-first century.

However, although it was previous to Cypriots coming to the Seeds of Peace camp, and before the SOP existed, Tim Wilson had visited Cyprus in 1965 while in the Peace Corps, before the civil conflict and political division of the island, and again in 2000, after the Cypriot program started at SOP in 1998, when youth from both North and South Cyprus, as well as smaller delegations from Turkey and Greece—a move encouraged by the US State Department and implemented with the aid of the Fulbright Commission and two grant foundations—came to the camp for the first time. As is customary for the organization, in 2000 Wilson stayed in the south and visited the north. He was in South Cyprus for a couple of weeks. His trips to North Cyprus, like those made by other SOP mem-

bers, were day trips, all that were then allowed by the two governments for visitors who stay in South Cyprus. Visitors to North Cyprus were not allowed to cross the border, unless, after spring 2003, they possess international press cards. (In 2003 also, the length of visit allowed to the north by South Cypriots or visitors who come via South Cyprus were extended to twenty-four hours.) In subsequent years, regulations relaxed a bit further, yet the island remains divided, with the Turkish government continuing to occupy the north.

That previous SOP visitors had devoted most of their time on the island to South Cyprus, or at least elected to enter through the South due to the political situation, was a matter of some importance to the teenagers, who were ages 15 and 16 in February 2002, but seemingly not a major concern. Like the Turkish Cypriot facilitators and delegation leaders, the teens met with the SOP representatives when they came to the North via South Cyprus. Perhaps more importantly in terms of their daily lives, the students interviewed met as a group with other campers from North Cyprus, including some campers from previous years, on a regular basis, sometimes with SOP facilitators or delegation leaders present. The students would organize a meeting, and then invite delegation leaders. The dates of the meetings depended on exam weeks, of which there were four each school year. The week before the author met with them, the North Cypriot campers had met with delegation leaders Ahmet Gurkan and Cemaliye Volkan, who had accompanied them to Maine in summer 2001, an experience both the adults and the teenagers found beneficial. The Seeds also maintained regular contact with SOP facilitator Sarper Ince, who had worked in Maine for a number of years. One of the older campers of those Seeds the author interviewed in Nicosia particularly enjoyed meeting with was Arda, a Turkish Cypriot who currently attended college in the United States and who remained very active in the Seeds of Peace. Of him, they almost immediately asked, "Have you met Arda?" Fortunately, the author could answer "yes." Moreover, Arda had written her after September 11, 2001 urging that the

United States do the right thing and find a peaceful means of addressing terrorism. A Seeds “graduate,” Arda had been able to tell the campers what to expect when they came to Maine as well as to amuse them, and they looked forward to seeing him again.



Nisan at the Seeds of Peace Camp, 2002

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

On occasion, the TRNC government, as headed by President Rauf Denktaş since the mid-1970s, allowed North Cypriot campers to pass into the buffer zone and meet South Cypriot campers as well as other Greek Cypriots. Seeds of Peace representatives, generally Cyprus citizens, attended such gatherings. Two of the North Cypriot Seeds, both young women, Halide and Nisan, had been active in peace activities before going to Maine, as was true for Volkan and Ince. One of them, Halide, had in this way met John Wallach’s son Michael in Cyprus in 2000. Unlike the young men, Con and Yasar, the young women had also been involved in bi-communal activities aimed at resolving the conflicts between North and South Cypriots before summer 2001. Con and Yasar, in contrast,

started to participate in bi-communal activities other than Seeds after attending the Maine camp. Bi-communal activities were held in the buffer zone, and the kids, as is true for adults, had their names recorded on either side of the border, and have their identification records held by the North when they enter the buffer zone. When they returned, soldiers or police quizzed them at military checkpoints as to where they had gone and with whom they had met. Once, “they would not let our bus cross, so we would have had to walk, but were [after the group called for help] able to use cars,” one of the students said. In addition, “There were many police [following] us. The secret police do not use different cars,” so they could all recognize the police. (On a subsequent visit to North Cyprus, the author would have her own experience with the “secret police.”)

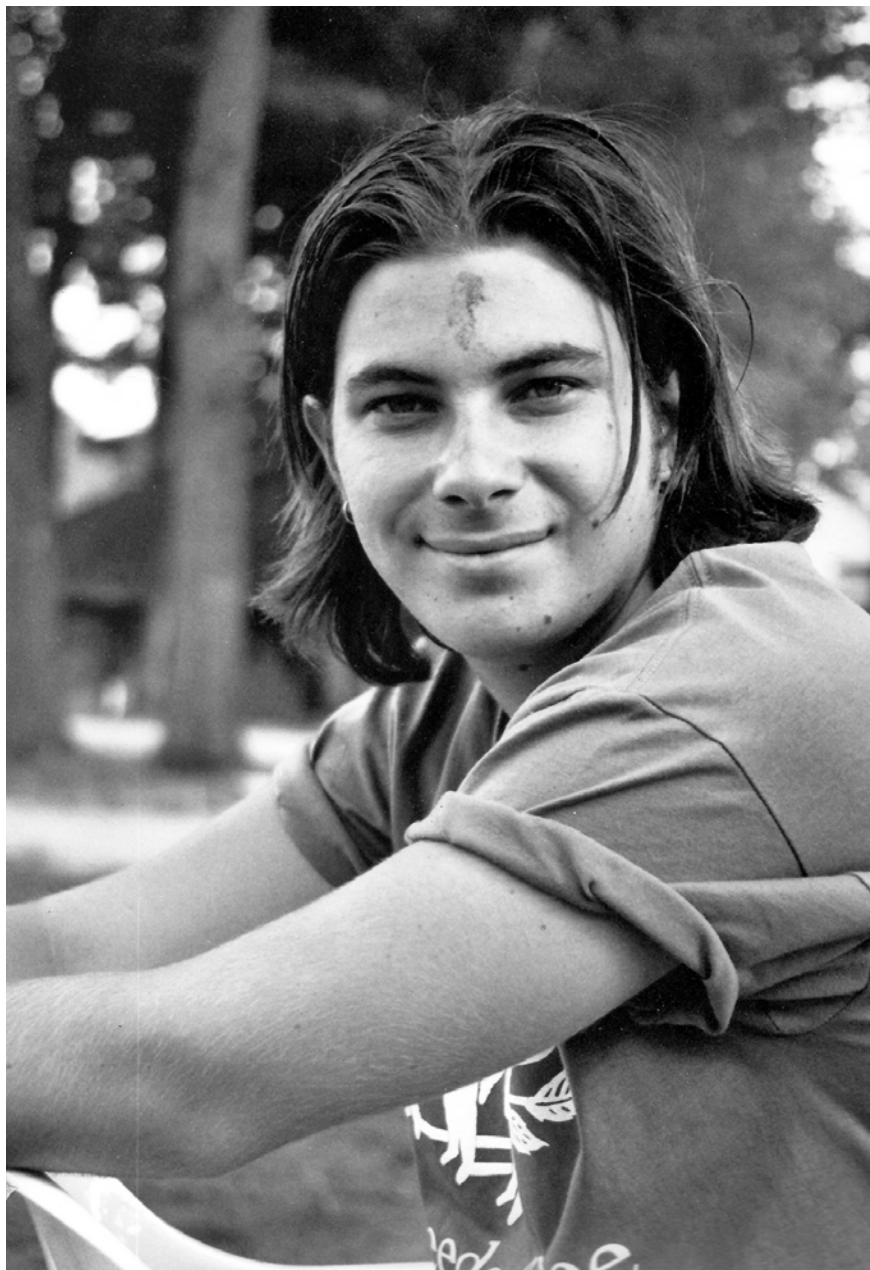
Halide stated in February 2002 that her feelings about peace and South Cypriots had not significantly changed because of her previous bi-communal activities. Nisan, who had more limited experiences in the bi-communal effort before summer 2001, stated that, “I have never thought bad things about Greek Cypriots. I wanted to go to camp to meet them, [and] I am still thinking good things about them.”

Con however, stated that his feelings had undergone a transition. “My opinions changed because the camp was the first time when I met with them. I hadn’t had a chance [to do so] before camp. My opinions really changed and I think my friends’ [other campers] thoughts have changed also for the better.” Halide admitted that, “We did have some friends who did not like the other side. Maybe they did not know that they would meet [with the South Cypriots at camp]. Fullbright had asked them to go, told them they would meet, [yet] some of them thought it would be like a big holiday” and that they would not have to interact with the Greek Cypriots to any major extent. Most of the South Cypriot campers, they believed, had positive feelings about meeting their “supposed enemies” as did they. Their experiences with Seeds of Peace remained

extremely important to them, although Halide noted that SOP was a “different thing” than other bi-communal groups, as “Seeds of Peace is a full experience.”

Both the male and female North Cypriot Seeds said that they had made friends with South Cypriots at camp, or with members of other delegations. Yasar said that the facilitators and delegation leaders had “tried to make us become closer.” Halide said that she made most of these friendships during Color Games, and that when she signed onto Seedsnet, although she often would not recognize a camper’s name she would then look their name up in the camp directory for the year and then realize that she did in fact know them. Nisan said that she had made friends through the organization’s internet chat program, which also provided a chance to further communicate with acquaintances made in camp. The students anticipated meeting with the new campers at their school or in Nicosia the following year, although in the autumn some of the 2001 campers would be in college. Halide herself anticipated going to college in Germany or the United States, and studying politics, or, more likely, biology or a science related to biology. Yasar wanted to attend a university in the United States and study civil engineering. Con hoped to study in Turkey, possibly medicine. Nisan also anticipated securing a higher education in Turkey, possibly studying medicine or chemistry. She wanted like “to earn good money, and good holidays.” Three of the students stated that they wanted to live in Cyprus after they attended college. The fourth Seed present that day, Yasar, said, “It’s up to my job and my wife,” causing the three others to burst out laughing. Yasar did not yet have a girlfriend, much less a wife.

Nisan said she talked with Bobbie Gottschalk [via the internet] about once a week, and Halide and Yasar also communicated with Bobbie, primarily about college options. Halide said that she could not believe that Bobbie “actually reads all those notes [emails], it would drive you crazy.”



North Cypriot Camper, 2002

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

When asked if they felt that the peace process would work on their island, they said yes, but believed its fruits would not be obvious for many years. Halide stated that even if Clerdes (then president of South Cyprus) and Denktaş reached an agreement on the situation later in 2002—negotiations were then underway—that peace itself would not come for several years, as “people will have to talk” to one another to resolve their conflicts, and that it would take more than an agreement between government leaders to bring about a real peace.

The Seeds or Seedlings talked about the selection process for SOP. The day before the group discussion, held in a small café, the author had spoken with Halide at her parents’ pharmacy. Halide had mentioned a friend who had wanted to attend the camp in 2001, but had just missed the grade average required by the Fulbright Commission. The girl came into the shop during the author’s visit, and verified that she had hoped to go to Maine, but had been denied the opportunity. The author invited her to come to the group interview and lunch the following day, but she eventually decided not to. However, under new requirements, the girl would qualify for camp, an opportunity she considered pursuing. Halide said of her, “She’s very clever, but doesn’t always study. They should give a chance to people in a lower [grade] level.” This echoed statements made by a few adult Cypriots involved with the SOP.

Camp participants from Cyprus, as from elsewhere, are required to have a working knowledge of English, English being the only language allowed in camp. According to the students the author met with, however, some campers were largely able to circumvent this requirement. “One girl,” they stated, “could only speak a few words.” A required essay apparently did not weed out all students with poor English skills. Halide stated that although in general she thought Fulbright did a good job with the selection process, she thought the interviews should be more efficient and eliminate all non-English speakers.

Under Fulbright requirements, in addition to having a grade average of 80 percent for 2002 (it had been 85 percent), participants must be Cypriot citizens and one parent should also be a citizen. (This would rule out the many thousands of immigrants who comprise a substantial part of the island's population, especially that of North Cyprus, and, the author suspects, might leave some gaps in the peace process, especially after any reunification. The requirement would also leave out many first-generation Cypriots. Wilson stated later that the organization was aware of such problems. The Cypriots met with the Turkish and Greek delegations while at camp, thus providing an opportunity for discussion about immigration problems and relations for both North and South, but still left out any actual immigrants.) The Seeds interviewed in Cyprus and in Maine seemed to have no problems with this requirement. Nor did they speak against the requirement that participants must have studied in Cyprus for the previous three years before attending camp, which effectively excludes teenagers sent away to school by their parents or whose parents had fled to European cities like London (a favorite relocation site for Cypriots, the island having been an English colony and some Cypriots having dual citizenship) for political or economic reasons.

The teenagers also seemed fine with the recent change in requirements from two letters of recommendation to one. A couple of the students, however, did not agree with the order of the selection process. Part of this involved the fact that Fulbright selected children for both Seeds of Peace (eighteen participants and two PSs) and another American peace camp located in Vermont, SIT (twenty participants). The teenagers can only attend one camp in any one year, and some feel that the matches of campers to camps were not always as good as they might have been; "They choose you according to ... I don't know what," one of the campers said. In addition, one of the four present said that she believed that the camp in Vermont functioned more like a summer school, and did not have "rules like our rules." So, too, did a couple of the camp-

ers feel that Fulbright should make the interview portion of the selection process more meaningful. Apparently, after the interviews, names for both camps are drawn, and concerns were expressed that some contestants should have been eliminated or steered toward one camp or the other before names were drawn. (Halide had applied twice before being selected for the Seeds of Peace camp.) In terms of who qualified or was selected for the camps in America, the Nicosia high school the four interviewed campers attended was a public and English speaking one, and accounted for a significant number of those selected. "Others [schools] are Turkish speaking, and so they're mainly eliminated." There were also "two private English schools in Nicosia," that regularly sent kids to the camps. In terms of residence, most of the campers came from Nicosia in 2001, along with four or five from Famagusta, two from Kyrenia (at least one of whom attended school in Kyrenia), and one student from Morphu who actually attended school in Nicosia.

Of the Seeds of Peace camp itself, the North Cypriots favored some parts more than others. Halide said that their co-existence sessions were very active, "it was good actually, we have workshops here, but not like at camp where the focus is on talking. Although we [sometimes] get bored in the co-existence sessions, I like them." Yasar added that, "We learned the feelings of our so-called enemies. I think it was a help to both sides." Con and Nisan likewise found the sessions helpful and relevant.

All North Cypriots did not experience the camp and the co-existence sessions the same way, nor did all South Cypriots. As with a few other national delegations, in some instances their experiences at camp varied to some degree due to the side of a given border on which they resided. Andreas, one of the 2001 South Cypriot campers, spoke with the author just before the basketball game of the Color Games, near the close of the session. It was Andreas's first time at the camp, and he said he was disappointed in the co-existence sessions,

to which he had been looking forward to before coming to Maine. “I expected a more intensive program in co-existence,” he said, “but it is OK. It may be that many people do not know history. There are five to six people who are more into things, who would like more time to discuss things. There are maybe twenty in our group.”

Andreas related that in co-existence the focus for the campers was the conflict in their own region. He said that he could see some progress in the sessions over the weeks, but still expressed disappointment. He said that SOP did not raise the Cypriot flag at the opening of the session, as “the Turkish Cypriots would feel isolated, they do not have their own flag.” (No other country may officially recognize the flag, but North Cyprus or TRNC does have a flag, a red and white one with a crescent moon, which varies only from the Turkish flag in the reversal of the flag’s colors.) Andreas recognized that the North did have a flag, and said that “both sides agreed to this,” to having no flag raised during the ceremony. When Turkish and Greek Cypriot leaders met in the neutral zone on Cyprus during the era, they generally did not display flags.

Andreas said that he thought that there were some concerns with the choice not to raise a flag or flags for Cyprus, that “some people feel we need a balance, but there is no other solution. Some people were unhappy. One solution was to make a flag of our own, but then it might seem like we had solved the problem. We want the politicians to solve the problem [on Cyprus],” and solve it so that “we can be together.” Andreas had become acquainted with Tim through the flag discussions, and found him open to dialogue.

In 2002, North and South Cypriot campers would decline to attend a flag raising ceremony because of the flag issue. Although they ultimately decided to attend the last portion of the ceremony, when the Seeds of Peace flag is raised and the Seeds song sung, their decision to reject most the ceremony instead of reaching a resolution before it, knowing that

the flag issue creates a continual challenge, struck discordant notes with many campers and staff. Wilson, however, had granted the Cypriot delegation the choice to attend the ceremony or remain in their bunks during it, rather than have the conflict potentially disrupt the ceremony for the entire camp.

At age fifteen, Andreas stated in 2001 that he would like to return to camp later, “if there is a more extensive co-existence” program. He had met most of his delegation a few times in the buffer zone before coming to Maine. In Maine, the kids had arrived at camp at different times, so they did not meet each other the same day. “We just woke up and found each other in the same room, so the first night was not a problem.”

Andreas stated something the author would later hear and witness in North Cyprus, that the secret service did pose a threat to some people. He thought that the Turkish Cypriot Seeds might have some fears in that regard for, he said, he had heard that the secret police even had agents the same age as the campers. “I do not know if this is true yet, but it may be the reason some [Turkish Cypriots] do not speak so much.” (No one directly expressed concerns about spies within the camp, however.) Although Andreas expressed concerns about the co-existence sessions, he did have some favorite activities at the camp. He especially liked group challenge, particularly the climbing exercises.

In the near future, Andreas anticipated serving the mandatory two years in the military the government of South Cyprus requires. In North Cyprus also, males are required to serve in the military after they finish their education, although they can be granted extensions if they are in college. Campers from both sides of the border make use of educational loopholes in the compulsory service requirement. But, like many Middle Eastern Seeds, most are ultimately forced to enter the military, knowing they may well face their former friends from SOP on the battlefield.

The four North Cypriot campers interviewed in their homeland did not have a problem with the camp dress code, although they said they knew campers who did. Yasar said that he did not like, “the fact that we had to go to bed early and get up early.” Halide stated that some people did not like the rules. The swimming and bathing restrictions were fine, but, “Some people say we have too little time to talk to our parents on the telephone [only fifteen minutes twice each week], and some kids cried because they couldn’t talk to their parents.” When the author asked why they thought the telephone restriction existed, Halide acknowledged that it might be to have the campers better “focus their energies.”

Halide early in her stay had a problem regarding food. Specifically, she had “brought some sweets with me, and Tim said ‘you cannot keep food in your room.’” She was unhappy about this, “but when he explained why—because of small animals—I was OK with it.” She invited her friends over to eat all the food that night.

The North Cypriot campers of 2001 had met several times since summer, the first meeting being held with the South Cypriot campers in Pyla two days after they returned from Maine, as well as some of them participating, or attempting to, in the bi-communal group YEP (Youth Encounter for Peace), started by South Cypriot Nicos Anistasou who had worked as a Seeds of Peace facilitator for several years. In addition, the students release news events to all newspapers, regardless of their stance on bi-communal activities, but are beginning to wonder about the wisdom of this. Regarding their activities with co-villages, villages with formerly both Greek and Turkish Cypriots, they said the government had been informed of the meetings, and then announced that certain things would be forbidden. Hence, some of those involved wondered if they should stop sending press releases to the nationalistic newspapers. They would like to see SOP organize more meetings with the South Cypriots, and perhaps help them “organize more things to do.”

Although the four North Cypriots did not have close relationships with Wilson at the camp, they did remember him with fondness and respect. Nisan was still happy to have had a chance to ride in with Tim in his gulf cart. She said she had told her delegation leaders that she really wanted to do so, and “on the last day of camp I got to ride around with him.” She showed the author pictures of the happy event as well as of her entire trip to the United States including photographs of the entire Cypriot delegation and of their trip to Washington, D.C. Nisan said, too, that she “liked the way Tim said hello to us: ‘Hello Ladies,’” he greeted them. She also enjoyed hearing him say, “Goodnight Bunk Seven.” Yasar brought a present to Tim, one from Cyprus, and said Tim was very surprised. He also said that he had several pictures taken with Tim. Each of the four admired the way the camp director managed things in general and the way he interacted with campers.

After leaving the Nicosia café, the author walked with the two girls to one of their homes. The street on which the café was located was a busy one, and the author told the girls of how she had spent ten minutes trying to cross a downtown Nicosia street the previous day, partly because of the traffic, partly because of the peculiarity of having to look the opposite direction for traffic than that to which she is familiar. The brain somehow has trouble making the switch. “Oh, it is terrible here,” Halide said, “it is always difficult to cross.” “Run!” said Nisan, seeing an opening. The three of us then ran giggling across the road holding hands, and Nisan laughed. “We are like three little children running,” she observed. After the successful crossing, she said, “When I have my Seeds T-shirt on I feel like they cannot hit me. I am proud to be a member of Seeds of Peace.”

As indicated, many adults involved with Seeds of Peace have long-term interactions with the organization, or with peace activities in their own communities. This is true for both women and men, and can be seen in the activities of some of the Cypriot delegation leaders and facilitators. This is true

for Sarper Ince, Cemeliya Volkan, and Nicos Anistasou, who began working with bi-communal groups in 1991, 1993, and 1994, respectively.

The author first met Cemeliya Volkan in camp, followed by the other adult members from North Cyprus: facilitator Ince and the second delegation leader, Ahmet Gurkan. What struck the author most forcibly were the impressive educational levels of each individual (each had a higher education in mathematics or science), but each of them worked either in a field other than that in which they had trained or at what might be viewed as a lower level than that for which they might be qualified. As the author learned more about the economic situation of North Cyprus, in which unemployment as well as underemployment is rife, the surprising thing perhaps is that each of the four had chosen to remain in their country as Volkan had suggested, other educated people were essentially fleeing the island. That does not, however, mean that all four individuals wanted to remain on Cyprus permanently under current economic and political conditions, which by mid-2002, in spite of talks between North and South Cypriot leaders, showed no signs of immediate improvement. (Mid-2003 would, however, bring some changes, as would subsequent years.)

Volkan was a trade unionist who worked to secure worker rights, and in 2001 and 2002 served as president of her union, Cag-sen, which included most municipal workers. Volkan is a chemist by training. Her male counterpart in 2001, Ahmet Gurkan, is an electrical engineer by training, while Sarper Ince is a mathematician who runs a small tutorial school. Although the author would subsequently meet with Volkan and Ince several times, in both Maine and Cyprus, the original interviews, being formal ones, were quite explicit.

Volkan provided some information on her selection for the camp in 2001. She said that she had been asked to attend based on her bi-communal work. She did not know any other

substantial information about her selection, but was grateful for the opportunity extended her.

The 2001 session Volcan and her delegation of nineteen attended, the second session, was Volcan's first time at Seeds of Peace. She said there was some sort of conflict surrounding the situation, that in 2001 the American Embassy had chosen the two delegation leaders because they were peace leaders in their own country. She said that before they came to Maine, "the kids had an orientation session with the Fulbright Center near the buffer zone, but the Turkish Cypriot [delegation] leaders were not allowed to go."

About Cyprus, Volcan said, "We have to unify our island, we have to have peace on our island because there are going to be many problems with our children [otherwise]. The Turkish government is against the process. They are politicians and establish their politics on the hatred. Our island is a very strategic place, everyone wants to have a [military] base on the island—Greece, Turkey, Russia, etceteras. And everyone on the island has a problem with the other superpowers."

Speaking of the post war 1970s on Cyprus and the existing political situation in North Cyprus, "It seems [like] there is a government, that we have elections, but the government and the soldiers together make decisions. We cannot travel the world without passports. [The world] doesn't recognize us. We have to have Turkish passports to travel around the world. But we do not want to have Turkish passports, we want to have our own identity. [Since] 1974, the population of Turkish Cyprus is being replaced by immigrants from Turkey. Turkish Cypriots are well educated people, they been going abroad and uneducated people from Turkey are coming in and replacing us. This is a problem. The economy is in a bad position because our government depends only on Turkey, although we were invited to join the European Union and other meetings in the world. Our government wants to integrate the

north side of the island with Turkey. Our people do not want this, because they [Turkey] are a big [military] country.”

At the Seeds of Peace camp, the situation is “very good,” Volkan believed, because “we are together with the other people [involved in] our conflict. In Maine and other places our kids meet with one another, they get together to discuss their problems, and they are now very good friends. The discussions they have in this camp will [continue] to the end. They recognize each other and have some common events. Our delegation leaders established a good climate and a good relationship. I think we will continue with this when we return to our country.”

In general, Volkan stated of the camp that, “It is good to be seeing that other people are paying attention to your problems . . . It [makes you] think you are not alone in the world [in trying] to make peace.” She also stated, “We are trying to do something as women. We don’t want war on our island anymore.”

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, every day in camp, delegation leaders met, generally at 9:00, to talk about the conflicts in their nations. For the Cypriots, that meant reports on and from Greece, Turkey, Greek Cypriots, and Turkish Cypriots. Volkan thought that the system had worked very well that year. Volkan stated that she had observed some problems in the camp with facilitators, saying that the Cypriot youth spent much time with non-Cypriot facilitators, who, she inferred, did a less than adequate job and did not know enough about the situation in Cyprus. She said that she had tried to offer suggestions, but that those involved did not seem to want them. She also thought that Wilson should spend more time meeting with delegation leaders while at camp. This, however, was not Wilson’s function at the camp, and he stated in January 2002 that he really no longer had much to do with delegation leaders anymore, not like he had during the first few years of the camp. In some ways Volkan’s concerns were

similar to those expressed by Hadara Rosenblum of the Israeli Ministry of Education, who had grave concerns during her first year as a delegation leader, but had later come to realize what Tim and SOP were trying to do in terms of focusing on the children's needs as opposed to those of the delegation leaders, who understandably want to ensure things are proceeding in the manner they see best. Conflicts between the two do seem to surface from time-to-time, but do not appear to create lasting problems.



Cypriot Delegation Leader, 2001

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

As delegation leaders do not interact with campers once they arrive in Otisfield with any regularity, in order to avoid any possible interference with biases on the part of the adults, they may indeed sometimes feel alienated. Facilitators meet with the kids on a regular basis, but primarily only in co-existence sessions and delegation meetings. The physical and symbolic bridge between the campers and adults exists for a reason, as does the divided dining hall. Facilitators, like delegation leaders, also sometimes feel their role is less extensive than it might be.

Ince and Volkan are Turkish Cypriots. Although the two may or may not be representative of their fellow North Cypriots in terms of their views and experiences, they do not appear to differ substantially from the second delegation leader and facilitator the author met in the 2001 session, in terms of political desires for their island and their wish for peaceful cooperation with South Cyprus, nor from other adults in subsequent delegations. Here as elsewhere, although sometimes conflicting personal styles and opinions do surface, these do not generally pose significant administrative or performance conflicts in view of their shared desire to unite their island and see a peaceful solution to the “Cyprus Problem.”

While Ince had great respect for the Seeds of Peace organization and its leadership, and he greatly enjoyed working with the Cypriot youth, he did have some long-standing concerns about both how the campers are chosen and the training of the facilitators. In terms of the facilitators, his concerns, like Volkan’s, seemed to center primarily upon non-Cypriots. He stated that in many instances facilitators do not know enough about the conflicts in the areas the campers come from, or the methods of conflict resolution that are most likely to work with each delegation. In numerous instances he thought facilitators (of various levels) tried to get the kids to work within a framework which in some cases was uncomfortable for the Seeds or, in other instances, simply non-productive. He

seems to feel American facilitators were least helpful, at least in terms of the “Cyprus Situation” during the early 2000s.

In terms of how campers were chosen, Ince expressed disagreement with how participants from North Cyprus were selected, concerns voiced too by some of the Seeds themselves. Ince stated in 2001 that he thought the Fulbright Commission placed too much emphasis on recruiting teenagers who maintained a specific grade-point average and school standing, qualifications which did not necessarily reflect which teenagers might actually best use what they learned at Seeds of Peace. He stated in Cyprus later that year that he believed that many students who were unhappy with their situation in Cyprus, and who might have had the most community spirit, were often weeded out of the selection process. Kids who are most content with the Cypriot status quo, and perhaps therefore more successful in the Cypriot school system—which relies heavily on private tutors to augment public and private school lessons, something that all Cypriot youth and their families cannot afford, and closely monitors student activities—were, he believed, more likely to be chosen by Fulbright which relied heavily on school performance. Teenagers who are most interested in reform, and who may already be engaged in reform or bi-communal activities, and who might if selected be more willing to engage in long-term peace activities, were not necessarily those most likely to make it through the selection process. Ince said he knew of a number of such students over the years who had failed to secure a place in one of the camps, even though they had already displayed a desire to bring peace and cooperation to the political situation on Cyprus.

Volkan, in an interview in Cyprus in late 2001, said that she essentially agreed with Ince on these matters, that some problems with the selection process did exist. In February 2002 in Cyprus, she expanded on this, specifically targeting the issue of wealth or class: after discussing various approaches to the problem, she stated that a major concern is that “wealthy kids

are chosen now, not the less-wealthy who might also contribute.”

Volkan reiterated that, “I loved to be there. I love to teach children.” But, she said that for some delegation leaders the price for attending the camp was a bit heavy, as they had to be away from their regular jobs for several weeks. Although SOP paid travel and hotel expenses, in addition to some delegation leaders having to give up their regular income, some also had to buy visas and such to enter the United States. For leaders from countries with poor economies, such expenses could pose a real problem.

Facilitators, however, like counselors, are paid for their work at SOP. Yet, many aid the organization and or the peace process in general in their own countries throughout the year without compensation. Ince and Nicos for example, were extremely active in organizing groups, including SOP campers, to meet in the buffer zone, including planning logistics and simply transporting people. Sometimes they work in tandem, Sarper Ince in the north, Nicos Anistasou in the south. Nicos started what is known in Cyprus as the YEP Program or simply as Nicos’s Project, an attempt to get all ages of Cypriots from the North and South to meet. He attempted to hold regular meeting in Pyla in the early 2000s, but according to Volkan, “The kids do not want to go to Pyla every weekend, and their families do not want them to” do so. Nicos later explained that each year he helps start a new YEP group, which will meet with the other YEP groups or members, then start projects of its own. One of the youth groups, he thought, had made history by establishing a bi-communal dance group, the first of its kind, which had performed for 5000 people in Istanbul on one occasion. Several YEP groups now exist.

For Nicos Anistasou, the Seeds of Peace presented a great peace-making opportunity, but one with a few built-in difficulties. In August 2002 he stated that at the camp, “People come and people go and there are new faces, friendships can

be very strong. This is a place of opportunity for people of different cultures, but there can also be a cultural clash as well as a religious one.” Anistasou felt that although co-existence sessions were basically helpful, in having to “recreate” situations, “Something is missing. Here there is something of a clash between American perceptions of relationships versus Middle Eastern perceptions.” For example, Anistasou stated that in co-existence, people often ask, “How do you feel?” In America, this “is normal, but it may be alien to people from the East, to campers as well as staff and facilitators, and sometimes creates further complications.” Although some campers benefit greatly from co-existence, other people need to internalize things alone or within a less formal setting. Methods of communication seem to have been the problem with co-existence sessions to Nicos. He later added that he was “not into group therapy,” because he thought one risked ending up with “group egocentrism.” He felt that one problem at the camp was that it “is so packed with activities that we cannot get anything done.”

Nicos saw his facilitation work at SOP “as a natural continuation” of the work he does year-round in Cyprus. He said, “I come here with a very specific agenda.” It is “a small part of the work in Cyprus. I come also as a peace activist.” His own background is in economics, and he felt he has learned about peace and results “in the trenches.” What he wanted to see is the current group (thirty new Cypriot campers and five Peer Support kids) view SOP as “a transforming experience, to have them go back and get involved with projects we already have going or to start some of their own. My methodology is grounded to that. I am results oriented.”

About Tim Wilson, Nicos Anistasou expressed respect and admiration. “I have the greatest respect for Tim, but here in camp we have our own responsibilities. Sometimes I may want to talk to him, but do not want to take up his time. ... I have great respect for all his concerns about people wherever they are and discrimination. ...I like the way in which he sees

the world as a bigger place. We can speak very comfortably if we find each other. In a different place, I think we [could] speak for hours, understanding each other, but I only see him in camp and I don't want to take his time."

So, too, did Anistasou feel confident that changes could come in his homeland. He believed that the populations of North and South were changing such that, in the North especially, people had become more open to the possibility of change. "It is a different dynamic than in the 1960s," he said, "when there was not a democratic experience, nothing to build on. ... Now they are open to democratic elections, there can be a different opinion. In the North, things are very different. "It's a police-army state, a pseudo state, all [the authorities] working together to discredit all bi-communal work, the people involved are often branded as traitors by people in high places." He found Şener Levent's North Cypriot paper *Avrupa* (now *Afrika*) commendable, stating that, "the fact that *Avrupa* wages this battle is very important, impressive, and they have the second biggest circulation there now." (Şener Levent, also interviewed, had been—and continues to be so in the late 2010s—at the forefront of denouncing the Turkish military occupation of North Cyprus, a fact that has landed him in jail for months at a time and cost him heavily in fines, and his printing press has been bombed, but he continues to struggle to keep his newspaper in publication. When the government relaxed border crossings after the early 2000s, Levant was still not allowed to cross to the South.)

Cypriot delegation leaders and facilitators, as do those elsewhere, read postings on Seedsnet and other pertinent publications and materials, throughout the year. They might also have attended meetings or conferences in other nations. When the SOP halted the Cypriot program, in terms of bringing campers to Maine, Seeds and others could still access Seedsnet, and eventually, in the 2010s, other opportunities for interaction would arise.

In February and March 2002, Volkan and Ince embarked on new avenues for them, in terms of Seeds of Peace. Volkan attended the 2002 delegation leader conference in Prague led by Tim Wilson that focused largely on the role of the media. At the conference, she said, “the media made problems.” She reported that one media member said that he or she had spoken with North Cypriot Seeds in the buffer zone and that they had told her that they did not benefit greatly from the camp, that they had said that, “they had co-existence and lunch, and that’s about it.” Volkan did not know who exactly these Seeds were, but did not agree with the journalist. She said that all the Seeds that she had met since becoming a delegation leader in summer 2001 had enjoyed the camp, and, as had those the author interviewed from North Cyprus, wanted to apply once again.

Other members of the media, which had numerous representatives at the conference, also caused conflict in Prague, Volkan stated, as they took sides in the Palestinian-Israeli confrontation then being waged in a violent manner in the Middle East as the two peoples continued over a year of conflict which had become increasing violent after autumn 2001. She purported that a female journalist at Prague had said that she went to Egypt and had heard men singing in the streets. While describing this, Volkan said she had used a term insulting to Egyptians and Palestinians. The Egyptians present at the conference, Volkan said, then objected, as did the Palestinians. Following this, the Israelis present objected to the objections. This lasted for about a half-hour. Volkan’s first delegation conference it would seem, was a learning experience for her, as it no doubt was for other delegation leaders. Here as elsewhere, individual interpretation was perhaps as important as the actual events.

At the same time as Volkan attended the Prague conference, Ince became part of the Fulbright selection team, whose work or process he had previously faulted. The process required a few weeks of setting the parameters for the following year and

interviewing candidates for the 2002 camp. After writing an essay in the morning, potential campers were given “group discussion evaluations” in groups of ten with both a Turkish Cypriot interviewer and a Greek Cypriot interviewer. The teenagers then underwent “individual interviews with American interviewers who are staying here for various reasons.” The grades, as a former camper had indicated in February, were indeed lowered from a required 85 percent to 80 percent for 2002. Another result of the Fulbright discussions, and Fulbright communications with SOP, was the decision to send two delegations to the camp that summer—one for each three-week session. This represented a departure from previous years, and attending both sessions would allow the delegation to send more teens to the camp.

Although Ince was confident in early 2002 that he would be asked to return to the SOP camp, Volkan was not. Ince was more comfortable with the process, and seemed to feel that as long as he performed his facilitation work as best he could, that he would be asked to return. In contrast, Volkan was still quite new to the process and felt that her being asked to return was seemingly based on personal likes—specifically on who might or might not like her. Either way, delegation leaders and facilitators are not chosen through the same process, and in the end it would not be the Seeds of Peace who would or would not invite Volkan to return.

Sarper Ince did return to camp in 2002, as did Nicos Anistassou. Cemaliye Volkan did not, but remained active in peace work in Cyprus, helping to form a new political party in 2003, one that preceded the opening of the gates between North and South later that spring. As the political and economic situation continued to shift, Volkan ultimately left her paid position as a trade union leader.

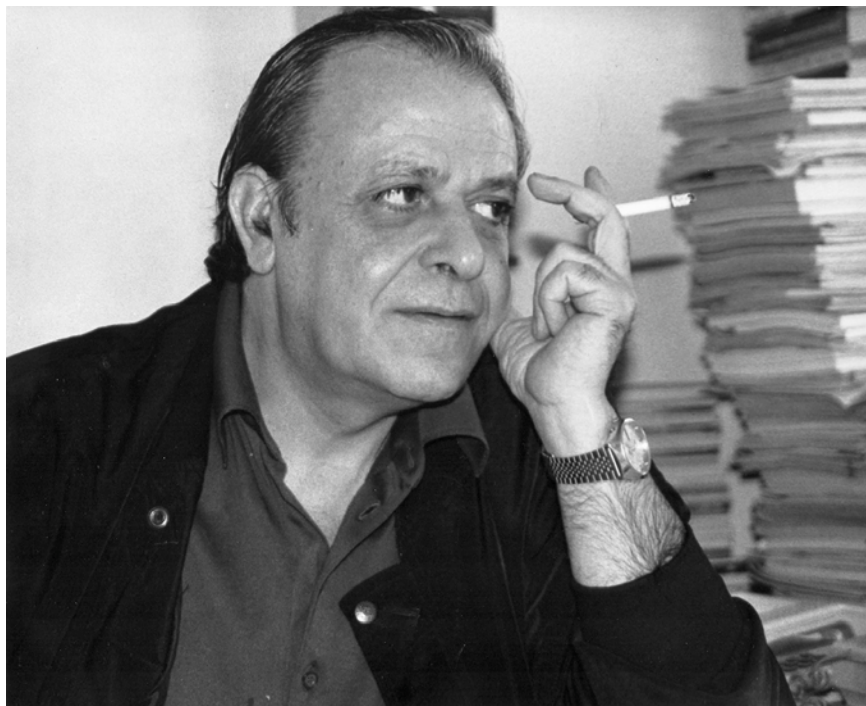
The author returned to North Cyprus for a third time in early June 2002. She met with Seeds there once again, and again they and their families showed great hospitality. The four

were busy with college concerns as well as hoping to be able to return to camp. They remained active in Seeds, keeping up-to-date on SOP events through Seeds Net, and Nisan had an article soon to be published in the SOP newsletter “The Olive Branch” about which she was very excited. One of the Seeds relayed a great story of food smuggled by one boy (not a Seed) in his pants into the buffer zone for a picnic, and one of the girls expressed a concern that the author might be asking too many questions in North Cyprus, and of the wrong people, as it could prove dangerous.

The author also met again with members of the opposition (or accused members of the opposition) to the government, and one of them, journalist Şener Levent of Afrika, would be jailed soon thereafter. In February, the author had attended a trial with Levant, as he answered to one of the hundreds of charges brought against by the government of TRNC, this one involving ownership of one of his newspaper’s printing machines. The court later found Levent guilty of another charge, printing an article “which could lead to the downfall of President Rauf Denktaş” (this three years after the article’s publication with Denktaş clearly still in power), as a second journalist explained after the arrest. Levent stayed in jail, along with the offending journalist, for close to three months, after which time he stated that the judicial system had realized that “Prison is not progress.” Thereafter, Levent continued in his work and with others expressed deep concern in late 2002 and in 2003 about the direction the move to join the European Union had taken. As Levent said in dismay over the telephone in mid-December 2002, “What are we going to do now, Trudy? We have no EU; we have nothing. How do we fight this? What are we going to do?”

Some changes did occur in following months. Although most North Cypriots as of spring 2003 could apply for new passports, other long-reaching goals had not been achieved, nor had the immigrant problem been adequately addressed in terms of reassuring either immigrants (of whom the author

had befriended several) or native Cypriots. The tentative acceptance into the EU had not freed the North from Turkish rule. The gates had opened, but the walls remained. Those who favored true reunification would have to wait.



Şener Levent, Journalist and Opposition Leader in North Cyprus, 2001

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

The author also interviewed the President of North Cyprus and one of TRNC's parliamentary leaders in summer 2003. The parliamentary leader, Mehmet Ali Talat, favored changes but said that his party [considered the largest "opposition" party] was willing to work through the existing political structure to make those changes, and recognized that reform would take much time. He spoke of the popularity his party had enjoyed in recent years and their efforts in helping reduce inflation which in the mid-1990s ran as high as 200 percent a year. Not unlike many Cypriots, his education was in the sci-

ences and he had run “a workshop in refrigeration, [worked in] electrical engineering” before rising in his party. Like the male Seeds, he too had been subject to compulsory military duty, finishing it in 1980. Rising in popularity in the party, which had gained numerous seats in Parliament by that time, Talat was appointed Education Minister in 1994.

Strictly military measures aside, Talat acknowledged that “our administration is a little bit racist, According to our laws, anyone with Greek blood or married to a Greek cannot come here.” Even those few Greeks who had not moved to the South, specifically those on the Carpas Peninsula “are not entitled to act as Turkish Cypriot citizens, they do not apply for citizenship because this is opposed to.” Talat said that about 25,000 Greek Cypriots had lived in Carpas “right after the revolution,” but now “at most there can be 500.” They are primarily Catholics. Talat also stated that President Denktaş’ “ultimate goal is to annex with Turkey.” Of this he said, and a reflection on the large numbers of Turkish immigrants in North Cyprus, most of them impoverished, “Integration is a desirable thing if you are integrating to a better situation. But if you are integrating into another society which has a lower national economy it is unacceptable.” For a solution to the Cyprus Problem, he asserted that, “We have to leave the old conception of sovereignty.” The solution rests in large part with the United States pressuring Turkey for a solution and Cyprus’s entry into the EU, and with Turkey in turn persuading Denktaş, as he has taken the center of the issue, and, “is controlling the intellectual negotiations, and everything, actually. Denktaş is the sole super-power of the Turkish Cypriot” situation, Talat stated.

President Rauf Denktaş, generally charming and a well spoken, Oxford educated man, a man quite happy to discuss canaries and photography and other subjects, took a hard line in his presidential office when the questions shifted to political matters. Graciously granting the author a one-on-one interview in mid-June 2002, he provided her with a copy of his photography book, some work by other authors on the Cyprus

Problem, and a glass of fresh orange juice. He discussed his birds (he has an aviary at home as well as a row of inhabited canary cages in his office) and the author instructed him on how to safely allow the canaries in his office free-flight. He discussed his dog and other pets, and the author told him of hers. He discussed photography, and photographed the author as she photographed him.



The Smiling Dictator, Rauf Denktaş, TRNC President, 2002

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

When the author shifted the conversation to politics, President Denktaş remained polite, indeed still flashing charm at some junctures, but overall became less socially engaged. He asserted that, regarding the Turkish intervention or invasion, “There would be no Turkish Cypriot left alive” if Turkey had not come in as their “savior” in the 1970s, and that Turkey retained a presence on the island in a peace-keeping capacity. And, he “assured” the author, after inquiring as to when she might come back to Cyprus, “No matter when you return, there will be no solution.” On the issue of independence for North Cyprus, he said he would “never compromise.” Subsequent events and pressures by the Turkish government may have forced an element of compromise, but Denktaş remained President for some time, and the island remained divided, the border open or not. As to the Seeds of Peace, Denktaş said, “I have never heard of them.”

Seeds of course continued to live in Denktaş’s country regardless of whether or not he acknowledges that they did. Three of the four North Cypriot youth interviewed in Cyprus were delighted to learn in June 2002 that they would indeed be able to return to the Seeds of Peace that summer. Halide, Nisan, and Con returned as Peer Support, giving them an opportunity to take on leadership roles with the new Cypriot campers as well as to further enjoy the camp, visit friends made the summer before, and to learn more about the peace process and diplomacy, experiences they would take to college with them one and two years later. When the author expressed her regret that Yaser had not been able to return, Nisan said, “Oh, but he did not apply.” Having been informed that only one camper could return, he felt his chances were slim and so opted not to try. The other three, however, were tremendously excited to be back in Maine, introduced the author to a few equally enthusiastic new campers, and again found their time in camp worthwhile and Tim still “really cool.”

Nisan said a few days later in August 2002 that she was enjoying her second year at camp but that “Things are different

this year. The camp and the kids do not seem as enthusiastic. There is less cheering at the games” and so on. The conversation occurred less than a month after the death of John Wallach, and a bit of melancholy did indeed infuse the camp at times even though staff tried to keep the atmosphere as positive and productive as possible. Sounding more like a teenager unburdened by international conflict, Nisan added that she had wanted to be on the blue team for the Color Games her second year so that she could finally get a blue T-shirt; “I have about fourteen green ones now.” At the close of the session, the lack of a blue shirt forgotten, Nisan said that she almost cried when Nicos addressed the entire North and South Cyprus delegation and spoke of the work that still needed to be done on the island and the things they might do to work for a peaceful solution when they returned home.

In 2003, the situation for Cyprus changed with Seeds of Peace, even as the political situation was changing on the island. The government of TRNC agreed to opening the gates in the spring, allowing for semi-free movement between the North and South for the first time in almost thirty years. At the same time, Fulbright removed some of its support for the SOP in terms of securing funding for Cypriot campers, according to Wilson that spring, while another SOP administrator, Chris Covey, stated in late July that the organization wrote a couple of grants for the funding each year and in 2003 had limited success. The delegation for 2003 was to be much smaller than that of previous years, and limited to returning campers. Only ten Cypriots, representing North and South Cyprus, would attend, and join the smaller, two-week, third session of camp along with members of the Maine or Portland Project, delegations from Greece and Turkey, and thirty-seven campers from the Balkans, who together represented ten Balkan ethnic groups. As the Balkan delegations grew in 2003, the Cypriot delegation shrunk. However, 2004 might again see an increase in the size of the Cypriot delegation. According to Covey, SOP would “wait and see.” (In early 2004, the future

of the Cypriot delegation remained obscure, although Wilson hoped that money would be found for them to return.)

Along with the decreased size of the 2003 delegation, it would also be one without long-time facilitators Ince and Anistasou, and a delegation without Cypriot delegation leaders. The ten Cypriots of 2003 all returned as Peer Support, and the organization determined that neither Cypriot leaders nor facilitators were necessary. The reason for the deletion was primarily financial, according to Wilson and Covey, but in terms of facilitators, there may have been another element. “Sarper and Nicos felt that they had a better way of doing things,” Wilson said earlier that year, after the decision had already been made. Nicos and Sarper had been involved deeply with the peace process on Cyprus, and did indeed have their own theories if not methods. Wilson thought that the two Cypriots more closely followed methods used at the peace camp in Vermont, compared to which he said, “we are much more structured,” as far as he could ascertain, and “I’m not comfortable with the way the Vermont camp is run.”

The Cypriots interviewed at camp in 2003, along with Greek and Turkish campers, expressed doubt as to whether the gates would remain open in Cyprus, theorizing that it depended on the economy, relations between Turkey and Greece, and any political incidents involving the border. A couple of South Cypriot youth expressed resentment at having to show their passports to enter the North. One said, “I have not gone because I do not want to show my passport; there may be some spin [to this] about having TRNC recognized.” Campers from both sides of the border saw the situation as being filled with tensions, and while some expressed doubts over President Denktaş allowing the gates to remain open, others saw it as a clear sign of progress. The South gained a new president in 2003, and a few Cypriot and Greek Seeds expressed hope that the change would prove beneficial in the long run.

The Cypriots in camp in 2003 expressed their concern that Cypriot delegations might not attend Seeds of Peace in the future. “We might be the last,” one of them volunteered with a bit of dismay in his voice, although officially no word had been given the campers. As a group, they said they enjoyed most of their 2003 experience, had found it beneficial to be able to return and meet some old friends, see Tim and other staff again, and try to work for the future of their island.

As it worked out, delegations for Cyprus did arrive at camp in summer 2004. They came after the flag ceremony of the second session, arriving in camp to the cheers and applause of the other campers who waited for them to exit their bus, campers who had already been in camp for a couple of days. Their delegation leaders stated that they had deliberately come late in order to avoid controversy over the flag issue.

Since the previous summer, Cyprus had entered the European Union, but entered without concessions to the Turkish Cypriots. Although Turkish Cypriots were eligible for EU passports and the border remained open for most Cypriots under stated regulations, most issues—such as land ownership, the status of immigrants, and island leadership versus “national” leadership—had not yet been resolved, and some of the North Cypriots interviewed over the previous years continued to express doubt and concern over political conditions. Moreover, an island-wide referendum had resulted in North Cypriots voting overwhelmingly for reunification, and South Cypriots voting against it, leading to further misunderstandings on both sides of the border. In the meantime, in the North, Tatalat’s party had gained additional seats in the Parliament (from six or seven to eighteen in the last election), and it appeared that the balance of power was shifting somewhat away from President Denktaş.

North Cypriot Delegation leader Bunyamin Altinok, a physics teacher in Nicosia, referring to the island-wide referendum, stated that, “In our sessions here, we are thinking about how

we can change that ‘no’ vote into a ‘yes.’ Otherwise, how can we help?” (In a somewhat humorous aside, he verified a 2003 camper’s assertion that soon after the border was opened, there was a run on cigarettes if not chickens in TRNC: “In the first thirty days, all cigarette supplies were exhausted.”) As to the 2004 decision to come to camp after the flag ceremony, he posited, “Why start with a fight when the whole point is to take three weeks to try to work on a resolution of problems?” Bunyamin said that he owed his application to SOP to Sarp-er Ince, former SOP facilitator, who had come to his school and asked him if he would be interested in applying then put him in contact with SOP’s Chris Covey. Ince had once been Bunyamin’s teacher. The TRNC is a small place.



Caught in the Middle, Esma of TRNC, Turkish Immigrant, 2002

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Both Bunyamin and his South Cypriot counterpoint, Mixelis Kirlisias, an art and history teacher, believed in 2004 that there were serious problems with the existing reunification

plan devised by Kofi Annan (a number of plans had been proposed and rejected). Mixalis stated, "It's a very bad plan, but it's the best plan we're going to get." He also stated that those who favored reunification had been naive, and those who organized against reunification "outmaneuvered us at every single junction." He felt that, "With an explanation of the Annan plan and a call to Cypriot people to make the plan work regardless of the negative clauses, we could have gotten a huge majority."

A third Cypriot delegation leader, Andria Antoniou, was formerly a North Cypriot but had moved south of the border, having fled there with her family years before, said that it currently appeared as though former land-owners would be able to get some portion of their lands back, perhaps one-third, and be compensated for the rest, but that details had not been determined. Part of the problem with the existing reunification plan she and the other delegates thought, was that it had not provided Greek Cypriots with a sense of security, it had not resolved crucial decisions regarding the Turkish troops in Cyprus, and after the vote many Greek Cypriots felt threatened by the perceived negative view of the world.

In terms of the current situation at SOP, Bunyamin related that Timothy Wilson "Has been a great contact and the kids love him. They respect him." Andria then commented that Tim is "very charismatic." Several days into the session, Bunyamin stated that he thought the Cypriots kids were operating as a team, and that "It is good to see them, to see them sharing their ideas. ... It is a good experience for them, not only for the negotiations [between North and South] but for the rest of their lives, for family situations, for work situations." He saw the SOP program as being invaluable, for even with a "solution" as to reunification, there would still be a need "to be able to integrate and work together. Ideally, we need a center of some sort in Cyprus. It would be ideal to have one central place in order to coordinate the work that is going on, otherwise it will not have the impact that it could have." Years later,

the SOP would host a few programs and conferences on the island.

Meanwhile, the Cypriot youth in camp for 2004 attended facilitation and other activities, as did the other campers. Those interviewed expressed their pleasure at being in camp, and their hopes for their co-existence work. Pavlina of South Cyprus, a sixteen year-old first-year camper, said that, “Co-existence is hard, but it’s really for a good thing.” She said that May one of her school teachers had told her about SOP and told her that it would be good for her “to learn about Turkish Cypriots and how they see things. This is not my first time I have spoken with them, but the first time we had conversations.” Like the rest of her delegation, she attended the American Academy in Larnika.

Funda, a fifteen-year-old girl from North Cyprus, essentially agreed with Pavlina’s statements, and said that she also had just become involved with Seeds of Peace near the end of the current school year. She had visited South Cyprus since the gates opened, and like Mamolis, a fifteen-year-old North Cypriot, lives in Nicosia. Both want to return to camp as PSSs, and the sooner the better. Mamolis said, “It’s fun. I don’t want to go home. I wish I had more time here.” About co-existence he said that at first he had not liked it, “but now it is becoming interesting. Now I wish I had more time with co-existence.” Although previous facilitators Nicos and Sarper did not return to SOP, the Cypriot kids did have one native of their island to help guide them in dialogue, Doga of North Cyprus and a recent graduate of Ducane University, had worked at SOP in 2002 and was working with another facilitator who was born in Iran and raised in England.

Once again, as the 2004 season ended the future status of Cyprus and Cypriot delegations to the Seeds of Peace remained uncertain. But, Cypriot delegation leaders, facilitators, and campers continued to find their SOP connections and work valuable and hoped they would continue. At the same time,

older Seeds such as Nisan of TRNC, then in college, remained in close contact with SOP, sharing their feelings and insights in conversations, e-mails, and, at least in Nisan's case, through publishing in the SOP magazine *The Olive Branch*.

Moreover, in terms of the continued participation of North Cyprus, Timothy Wilson expressed his and the organization's pleasure in September 2004 with the way the summer session had progressed and the efforts of the new facilitators and delegations leaders. As his own work took him into ever closer contact with the Middle East, including on-the-ground involvement in the organization's outreach programs, it appeared that Cyprus would in future be a meeting ground for SOP summits, and a few years later it would be. Meanwhile, a successful meeting of older Seeds from throughout the Middle East had been held in South Cyprus earlier in the year, and indications were good that a second gathering would be held there in the near future.

Long-time TRNC President Rauf Denktaş resigned in 2004 following a battle over unification with the south and resettlement issues, and Prime Minister Mehmet Ali Talat became the new leader of the government. Further developments occurred in the divided island, and Dervis Eroglu replaced Talat as President in 2010. The economy improved for many people in the North, however, unrest continued. Turkey retained a strong military presence, the government leadership changed again, and in autumn 2017 concerns were being expressed once more—although it seems on some levels that they never disappeared—that the Turkish government was trying to further influence politics on the island through illegal settlement of people from Turkey in North Cyprus. The secular Islamic country of TRNC continued to be “recognized” as a separate nation from the southern portion of the island. The Cypriot program at the Maine had ended, however. Yet, by the time it ended, over 250 Cypriot youth had come to the shores of Pleasant Lake to learn to work toward peace in their region of the world.

Under Tim's "successor" at camp and eventual SOP executive director, Leslie Adelson Lewin, the SOP presented a formal commitment to President William Clinton in support of his Commitment to Action and the Clinton Global Initiative established in 2015. The commitment provided for the SOP to launch two fellowship programs that would provide financial and technical support to some sixty educators, artists, and civic leaders who seek—and have the potential—to create positive changes in their communities and to advance the cause of peace. To this end, the SOP held an initial conference or program in Cyprus in 2015, as well as hosting a summit in Jordon with over two hundred "change-makers" later that year. Other plans for the programs and for Cyprus continued to evolve over the near future.

For those living in the North, things had changed a bit, but had not been resolved. As former Seeds delegation leader Volkan wrote in 2016 to the author, "Peace work goes slowly. Big powers [haven't] decided yet about Cyprus." Then, as so many Cypriots had done during the George W. Bush Presidency, she turned the questioning around, asking, "How about your elections? Hillary or Trump? I don't like ..." Volkan in 2016 was leading tours of North Cyprus with "Greek guides," those from south of the border. Sarper Ince continued to run a school or tutoring business in his home in 2019, while Şener Levent remained in North Cyprus, still working for freedom, still getting into difficulties with the government of TRNC and purportedly barely escaping being lynched in 2018 at his offices and the next year deciding to run once again for a political office.

Meanwhile, a number of the Cypriot Seeds interviewed early in the 2000s had gone on to successful college experiences and careers. Halide, for example, had earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in Kentucky majoring in Microbiology, immunology, and Molecular genetics for her PhD, awarded in 2012. She had started her BA program in 2002, right on schedule and reflecting her statements in Cyprus as to her

plans for the future. Seeds of Peace opened the door, in some ways, for that education. In 2016 she identified herself a “post-doctoral scholar,” working in the field of medical research at the University of Kentucky. She had co-authored a number of professional papers. By mid-2017, she had returned to North Cyprus, and was working as a faculty member at Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta, and in 2018 would relocate again. Nisan had also received a college education as she had planned, but chose to live in Cyprus. Andreas had attended the University of Surrey and University of Crete, had married, and lived in Nicosia once again.

Arda, also a Turkish Cypriot, attended retreats at camp subsequently to his camping season in 2001 and 2002, returning for one retreat from Minnesota, where he was then attending a private college. He, like many other Seeds who had gone to Otisfield, continued to benefit and express gratitude, for the time they had spent in Maine. Seeds from both North and South Cyprus were becoming leaders during the mid-2010s, which, of course, is a major goal of the Seeds of Peace. However, in recent months tensions had flared once again in the regions, with Mustafa Akinci now president of the TRNC

Discussing the Seeds of Peace with a small audience in Bangor, Maine, in May 2001, Wilson had talked briefly about the Cypriot political situation since the events of the 1960s and 1970s, and expressed some hope about the fact that not only North and South Cyprus sent delegations to the SOP camp, but that Greece and Turkey had also begun to do so, in 1999. Assessing the situation, however, for bad and for good, he concluded, “They still don’t talk over there—but over here they do.” They continued to do so over the next few years, in spite of political changes in their homeland and changes in the delegation selection process. The camp experience, however, had ended for Cypriot delegations for several years, if not for good.



Cypriot Camper with Counselor Jessie at Camp

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

CHAPTER NINE: THE PORTLAND PROJECT AND MAINE SEEDS PROGRAM

"The issue is about kids in a state that is 97 percent white, about what they will do and how the majority will adjust to their presence."

Timothy P. Wilson, June 2003

Like the Seeds of Peace International Camp, Timothy Wilson has been involved with the Portland Project—which would later, still under Tim's direction, expand into the Maine Seeds Program—since its establishment. Moreover, Wilson conceived the idea of the Seeds of Peace based Maine youth group, and proved the driving force behind its establishment.

In 1997, faced with a pressing need to address the increasing diversity, and to some extent social strife, in Portland and its schools Mary Jane McCalmon, Superintendent of Schools, spoke with Tim Wilson about some of the problems facing immigrant children and teens. Wilson had just returned from Pittsburgh, and was busy getting camp on Pleasant Lake ready for the summer. He introduced himself to McCalmon at a conference in Portland and the two began discussing the situation. McCalmon described the problems she was facing with the kids, and with the Department of Education, and, "I thought it might be good to create an immigrant kids' group, something like the Seeds of Peace," Wilson said in 2003. There were currently fifty-seven languages being spoken in Portland, with an appreciably larger number of ethnic groups residing in the relatively small city—albeit the largest city in the state. Soon, a few other prominent Mainers would come

together in helping establish the new youth group, as would an out-of-state foundation.

McCalmon had been Portland's school superintendent for two years in 1997, and was trying to address diversity issues facing the school system on various levels. She called Wilson after their initial meeting because, she said in 2003, "I knew that we had to do much higher quality work on diversity in the system. I needed to get the perspectives of people in the community who were familiar with those issues." Wilson was working as a private consultant at the time, and McCalmon eventually hired him to address a number of issues pertaining to school staff as well as to the student body.

In terms of Portland's diverse blend of students, McCalm-on said that although they were interacting in terms of the classroom, outside the classroom, during "downtime," they interacted minimally. At lunch, for example, there would be an array of "tables of kids of different colors and nationalities," none of them interacting. "We had children from all over the world in Portland schools, and nothing was being done to bring them [or their communities] together. Assimilation was not working. They weren't mixing well. They were not communicating." An after-school diversity club did exist, but it accomplished little. Signs of friction had begun to appear between Cambodian kids and American kids, and then between Afghan kids and American kids. Further frictions seemed imminent. There was not one central issue in Portland as there soon would be in Lewiston, Maine, with its influx of immigrants from the war torn nation of Somalia, rather, there "were just so many ethnic groups. There was no one incident or particular crisis that resulted in this idea [for a new organization]. Tim and I just knew that a high level of intervention had to occur."

For some time, McCalmon said, "We, [the school department], were meeting regularly and talking about diversity in Portland schools, and with Tim," she said, and "He can-

not not talk about Seeds of Peace. We decided that the two things needed to come together.” McCalmon had been familiar with the Seeds of Peace Camp before she started meeting with Wilson, as before serving as Portland’s Superintendent of Schools she had served as the superintendent of SAD 17, the school district encompassing Otisfield, home of the SOP camp in Maine. She had worked with SAD 17 during the first years of the camp, and was aware of how it worked. “Here we had this great camp on peacekeeping, and [in Portland] we had the same kinds of problems in a microcosm with a greater number of ethnic groups. ... Tim and I knew from the moment it clicked [the idea for a Portland youth group tied to SOP] that it was the right time, the right place, the right concept.” They knew they needed to develop student leadership in the community, and it had to be on a deep level and start with kids at an early age. “We knew they’d come out of Seeds of Peace with the commitment to make these connections. We wanted the kids to be the leaders.” She had hoped to see students begin building bridges across various racial and ethnic groups, bridging the cultures” between the peoples residing in Portland.

Soon after Tim began discussing the situation and the possible youth group with McCalmon, Debbie Khoudaury, daughter of Wilson’s close friends Mary Jane and Lenny Cummings, contacted Merle Royte Nelson, former member of the state legislature, and eventually helped get Nelson involved in the SOP. Wilson had not lived in Maine full-time for the previous seven years (having returned to Pennsylvania to care for his sick mother before she died, and living in Maine only in the summers as he worked with the SOP), so Merle helped reconnected him with the political structure in the state, especially in southern Maine. As Nelson became increasingly active with the SOP, a small group of people began meeting together and separately to discuss the immigrant situation in the state: Wilson, Nelson, Khoudaury, McCalmon, and Maine author, publisher, and former state legislator Neil Rolde.



Maine Seeds Soon After the Program Began, Early 2000s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Neil Rolde like Merle Nelson soon became a founding member of the Maine Friends, which slightly preceded the establishment of the Portland Project. Rolde said in summer 2003 that he had first visited the camp with Nelson, who would later join the SOP Board of Directors. Tim was, of course, at the camp and showed the two around. Discussion ensued, and later, according to Rolde, “Merle said to me, ‘What can we do to get this going in Maine?’ I said, ‘Let’s start a group—something like the Maine Friends of the Seeds of Peace Camp.’” We had a kick off party and we’d decided to get George Mitchell to come—this was at the time Mitchell was doing his work in Ireland and being praised all over.” Mitchell, who knew Tim Wilson from previous interactions, agreed to attend. Fifty to sixty people showed up, and Rolde said, “That’s when the organization [Maine Friends] was organized.” Wilson agreed with Rolde’s recollections, stating that the event “was a big deal.” Wilson attended the party, as did many other people already involved with SOP.

Soon thereafter, Wilson, Rolde, and Nelson “started kicking the idea around ” of a Maine youth group. According to Rolde, “Seeds of Peace had the technique developed which I thought could be of help anywhere in the world, especially where there are ethnic and racial problems.” Wilson, he said, “was enthusiastic, as he was already involved in the problems in Portland. Merle joined the national board—we wanted someone from Maine on it.”

Meanwhile, according to Wilson, “After about one or two years of conversations, McCalmon [still Portland’s Superintendent of Schools] came to the camp in 1998 and 1999. In 2000, we sent a proposal to the Four Friends,” a foundation established by a group of California film producers. The foundation contacted Wilson, and he and Rolde wrote a successful grant application, and the Four Friends “funded the first summer of the Portland Project.” McCalmon said she did indeed visit the camp in 1998 and 1999, and credits Tim with making the Portland Project a reality. “He worked very hard in the Seeds of Peace organization, because it [combining the camp with work in Portland] was not their [the board’s] focus, and we worked hard to get it going. ... He made the Portland Project happen. I doubt if anyone else could have gotten their [both SOP and the kids’] attention.”

According to Rolde, at about the time the various individuals were discussing a Maine-based youth program, there had been a fear that “Connecticut might steal it [the Seeds of Peace Camp] away, and we (especially Tim) wanted to anchor it in Maine.” (In 1999, the organization had held a third camp session at a Connecticut location that had expressed a desire to see the camp there again, hence the concern. Wilson—who had run the Connecticut session also—said that some board members thought that the organization could get more money from Connecticut, and some felt that the camp could be held almost anywhere given certain criteria.) Creating a youth group based in Maine would further SOP’s ties to the state. As Rolde—who would die in 2017—described it, “Merle went

down [to New York] and presented the idea [for the Maine group] and was shot down. Some members of the board are wealthy Jews and want to keep the focus on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.” Seeds of Peace founder John Wallach, however supported the concept of a Maine youth group, “and said it was fine if we raised enough money. So we went out and did it. So, this is the inside story, and the program proved tremendously successful.” Indeed it did.

As part of the national board, Tim Wilson was present at the meeting at which Nelson presented the idea of the Maine youth group. Wilson said he did not think that the board had treated Nelson fairly, and wrote a letter to John Wallach and some board members to that effect. It was then that Wallach approved the idea, and said that they simply needed to get the necessary funding before proceeding.

The original plan had been for ten teenagers to attend the first year, but, according to Wilson, “John Wallach was being given an honorary doctorate from the University of Southern Maine [that spring], and he said we had twenty kids coming, so we scurried around and signed up ten more kids.” The kids were all seventh graders going into eighth that autumn. They came from four Portland schools and included “Asians, North Africans, one Afghani girl, Jewish students and African Americans, plus “majority” [white] kids, a real mix. They arrived at camp and went through the same things other kids did. The first summer they were young, on purpose, [as] we knew we wanted them to come back,” Tim said. “All twenty did and we added ten more in 2001, so they were then what we considered graduating kids—kids about to enter high school.” Students of thirteen different nationalities attended the first session, many if not most of them refugees. Wilson said that the Portland kids, “accomplished so much, they became an integral part of Seeds of Peace. We created a year-round program dealing with Maine, [with] immigrant, minority, and majority people in Maine.” The program focused on how people could work together. The kids engaged in community

work, and “many pushed themselves, and many have become honor students, athletes, leaders of their class” since joining the Portland Project. In 2003 the Portland Project had sixty participants, forty from Portland and twenty from Lewiston [by then the center of Somalian settlement and rising interracial conflict which would soon bring national attention to the city], plus kids from elsewhere in Maine.

Enthusiasm for the new program remained high from the first summer of camping on. McCalmon left Portland for the Center for Educational Services in Auburn in July 2000, during the second summer of the program in terms of camping. When she left, she said, the Portland Project “was considered very innovative. It had deep meaning for the kids involved. It was a great motivation for the kids, and now many are leaders in their communities.” It would grow appreciably over the next fifteen years.

One such student was Lars. Lars had emigrated from Sudan to Portland in 1995 with part of his family, and he attended the first session of the Portland Project at the camp in 2000. Like fifteen others from the first camping season, Lars still remained active with the program in 2003. Lars, perhaps more active than some in the early 2000s, served as a summer staff member at age sixteen in 2003 and he continued to remain active into the 2010s, albeit in a different capacity. Lars spoke at John Wallach’s memorial service in July 2003, stating that Wallach was and remains “one of God’s favorite instruments.” He also said that if an angel, seemingly John, could speak to the people of the world’s war-torn nations, of which Lars named many, he would say, “Tell them that freedom is coming tomorrow.”

Lars said in 2003 that he first met Tim Wilson when Tim came to his school, King Middle School, to talk about the new program. Lars, then in the seventh grade, said that his teachers had thought that he might benefit from the program, but that he himself was skeptical. “I went with it anyway,” he said

in a seemingly shy and reticent manner, “and it turned out to be something meaningful.” His future would be shaped in part by his experiences as a Maine Seed and pioneer member of the Portland Project.



Lars at Camp, 2003
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

The kids who would attend that first session were able to meet one another before they left for Otisfield. They met in the King Middle School library, and introduced themselves to one another and talked about what they might expect at camp. At camp, they would bunk with teenagers from other delegations, as all SOP campers do, but they would have their own co-existence group in order to discuss issues directly affecting them and their communities.

Lars said that the summer proved a great one for him. “It was very interesting and it was my first experience of actually meeting with a very mixed diversity, of [people from many] places.” Warming to his topic, Lars stated that the most important part of the camping experience for him was “at the end when everyone realized the whole point of the thing.” After he returned to school in Portland, he found that for him the summer and his subsequent project activities “made a lot of difference. Friends changed, perspectives changed ... from the way people looked at things it was a whole different world, a step closer to accepting different nationalities.”

Besides attending Portland project meetings and activities and interacting with groups “with goals like Seeds,” Lars also conceived the idea of and helped found a new group, the YLO or Youth Leadership Organization. As he described it, “This is in Portland, working with kids from the inner city to keep them out of trouble, and working together to help give back to poor countries, doing fundraising and other meaningful stuff.” The YLO involves teenagers from fourteen to nineteen, and some of age about twenty.

Learning each year at the Seeds of Peace, Lars said that how he sees it is that “I come back every year to help Tim with anything he might need.” Speaking of John Wallach, which he frequently did in the present tense, even after 2003, he said that he thought that Wallach and Wilson had major differences, but complementary ones. “John is a big dreamer. John likes to envision things. Tim is ‘let’s do it, do it, do it.’ I think

they were the perfect combination. They learned to co-exist; their imperfections turned out to be perfect [together]. Without Tim this place would be a wreck.” And without John the place would not exist. Speaking on July 12, the day after the memorial service, Lars said that in essence the changes the Seeds of Peace and Portland Project experience brought to many of the Portland participants was that:

There have been good changes in some of my friends. They came to the memorial service [yesterday]. It was something they choose to do, to drive through the rain. They are kids who didn't have this sort of thing before camp, now [they] are very responsible and very considerate of other peoples' causes. We might not be changing a lot, but for a fact I know that within everyone of us, everyone transformed into a different person. It's a whole new world for them now. Kids are making choices. Most of the kids are thinking about going to private schools and getting a better education. Before Seeds most were thinking of getting through school or dropping out because it sucks.

Lars himself was about to enter a private high school in Augusta for two years after which (and after college) he thought he might want to travel and to write. Tim Wilson has helped numerous Maine teens enter private high schools in Portland and other parts of the state, and helped some students prepare for and enter college. Lars, one such Seed, would graduate from college in 2015, posing proudly with Tim and Jacquie Wilson in his cap and gown.

The Portland or Maine Seeds are able to interact with Wilson around the year, as Wilson attends as many of their meetings as possible as well as their group and individual community presentations and other functions. This continued through the late 2010s, and it seemed likely to continue to be the case. Kids throughout Seeds of Peace speak fondly of Wilson, but some of the Maine teens perhaps know him best, as do some who have attended SOP or the former Camp Powhatan and have since entered their twenties. Lars said of Timothy Wil-

son, after much blushing of dark cheek and searching for words:

“I just think he’s fighting beyond his capacity to keep going on. He’s fighting for freedom, peace, and equality between people because he’s not a person who wants to struggle for it physically. He knows if he’s calm and relaxed he can do it, and if he can’t he’ll make sure a new generation does it. I know he’s tired, and he’s struggling so hard. He’s very wise and he holds so much knowledge, and right now he’s trying to give that knowledge to kids, to eliminate this thing between black and white in this country, between poor and rich, between Mexicans and Cubans and [others]. He’s really careful in choosing, he’s always on the giving end and he’s always willing to help any kids who are willing to receive from him. I’d say he’s a giver. ... He’s got all the Maine Seeds to the right spot so far; all of us are going on to good places. ... We’re all going for the big picture now.”

The kids who had been in the Maine Project, Lars thought in 2003, had been transformed such that they now believed that they might go somewhere someday, do something in life beyond just surviving.

Personally, Lars felt even in the early 2000s that Tim had helped him very much. “I might have fallen into big trouble. When I have something good going he encourages me, when I’m doing something bad he’ll tell me to back off.” (A former camper at Powhatan, and later a counselor and athletics director at SOP, Chris O’Connor, had almost exactly the same words to describe Tim’s guidance.)

In general, Lars saw another great value in Tim’s work in that for the kids who come to camp from Maine, or from other states or nations, Wilson “wants to let the kids keep their culture, but still keep it [camp] peaceful. He does not want the kids to be brainwashed, Americanized. He respects every culture that sets foot on this ground. He allows them to do whatever they’d do at home, but without offending or upsetting anyone.” Lars indirectly linked this back to a characteristic he

saw as a fine counterpoint to Wallach's character, Tim "keeps business, business. It's the JOB you come to do," Wilson communicates, and "you'll do the JOB. Do it any way you want to do, just don't hurt anyone." Wilson and Wallach might both be or have been dreamers, but their combined approaches worked what seems like magic for many of the Seeds, no matter their origins. In later years, Seeds from Maine would have fond memories of Leslie Addison Lewin as camp director also, as she ran the basic program at camp, while Tim played an active role at camp with the Maine Seeds when they were in session, as well as remaining key in the schools, at local events, and at various meetings throughout the state regarding the Maine Seeds. In addition, the project itself would also evolve.

Another Maine Seed, Leona, came to the new Portland via a different route, but would also serve as a staff member in 2003, performing mostly clerical work. Leona had started with the Portland Project during its second year, beginning her experiences with SOP as a regular camper. As she said later that year, "I started this summer at camp. It was amazing. I finally went. I've seen it so many times as I live just down the road. Seeing the people interact, it's amazing seeing the bond everyone has, how the conflicts are so big and people are trying to work them out. It makes everything at school seem so small."

Leona had attended the regular camp session in 2000, not as part of the Portland Project but as a Maine Ambassador. Then fifteen, she had been adopted from the Philippines when she was fourteen months old. She had already developed a great appreciation for Wilson by late autumn 2000, stating, "We're pretty close. He always wants me to get involved with the Portland Project, they [the Portland kids] were at the same session I was." Leona did indeed get involved with the Portland Project soon thereafter, although she participated as a commuting member from Otisfield, and remained active in summer 2003 at age seventeen and about to enter her senior year of high school.

Summer 2004 found Leona still active in SOP. She had graduated in the spring, however, and looked forward to spending a year doing community service in different parts of the world, starting with a short period working with Habitat for Humanity, followed by work in the Middle East. Leona came to camp to visit during 2004, but had employment elsewhere, including heading up the organization of Casco Days which the Seeds would again enjoy. After her working tour ends, Leona planned to attend Bowdoin College and major in Education and International Studies.

One facet of camp not often talked about in interviews surfaced in discussions with Leona. As with adults, romance is not encouraged at Seeds of Peace, and is forbidden in certain situations. No sex is allowed in camp, even between consenting adults. Leona said that there are indeed romances in camp among some of the kids, “even though Tim is against it. He says, ‘It’s the Seeds of Peace, not of Love.’” Leona attended her junior prom with another Seed in spring 2003, however, with Siphath, whom she had met during her first summer at camp. Siphath was a member of the Portland Project with a Vietnamese background, and remained active with the program for some time, until he entered college. Leona explained, however, that the date was more about fun than romance. The date was at an opportune time, as it occurred during the first Portland Project retreat, held in June at the camp.

In May 2003, the Portland Project held its first retreat at the camp, more than a month before the camp opened for the summer sessions. The retreat focused on leadership issues, complete with art shops and various other activities. Wil Smith, former head of the male counselors, at Tim’s urging, ran the session which, in spite of a few humorous aspects was generally judged worthwhile and, in spite of a few energetic complaints, seemed enjoyable to most if not all of the Seeds attending.

Maine being Maine, even in late spring, the weather turned cold during that first retreat, and the bunks lacked any heat and initially lacked hot water. Complaints were rife, and Seth, one of the counselors and a former Maine Ambassador, said that the kids all threatened to move into Tim's cabin, the one open building with heat. On top of this, there were no food service personnel on duty. Tim went out for each meal, according to another participant, and for lunch one day left camp and "came back at 3:00 with buckets of fried chicken from Walmart and huge containers of coleslaw. For breakfast he had the local store make one hundred, breakfast sandwiches. For every meal he'd go off and come back a couple of hours later with huge amounts of food." (The comment rather echoes how Tim would bring home huge amounts of food for his son Paul years earlier. Being a long-time coach and camping director, Tim simply seemed to think in terms of feeding a crowd of hungry youngsters when it came to grocery shopping.) According to long-time Portland Project member Leona, who lived in the area and knew the local situation better than most, Tim called ahead and then picked up the food at the small store later. Leona went with Tim on at least one such trip, one for some forty to fifty sandwiches. She said, "They don't usually have such a big order [at the AG store], but they do have lots of camps in the area. ... They're a good friendly bunch of people." The store handled the large orders with little problem. Other sustenance-related comedy resulted from an abundance of coffee, none of it de-cafeinated.

Then, Wilson rented a popular movie and told Wil it was relevant. Wil supposedly played the film, then said, "Damn, he did it to me again." One of the Maine kids who saw the movie thought Tim had just told Wil the movie was pertinent so he could get something the kids would like, that Tim said it was about being the one white guy at a black college," but "the white guy was hardly in the film. Wil kept mumbling about it, and wouldn't use the film for other sessions." The relationships between Tim and Wil proved as amusing, in some aspects, as did the movies.

That June, Wilson said that he was pleased with how the retreat had gone, and that it would be repeated in the future. Leona said that she had been very happy with the turnout: about thirty-five to forty kids. “I was very surprised, very pleased.” She and her date had to leave camp for her prom, so she did miss a fair part of the retreat. One aspect she enjoyed was a specific meeting in the gym, “We sat down in groups and Wil would ask a question, and we had one minute to respond. We discussed who we saw as role models, what makes a leader a leader, [and we discussed] how we can be leaders in our own communities and lives.” Another long-time Portland project member, Lindsey, stated that she enjoyed the retreat, was not amused by the food situation, but that she herself was hardy enough to tolerate the cold, and definitely found the retreat worthwhile. As in most camping experiences, a few discomforts do not erase the benefits gleaned overall, and in this case, the educational and social components clearly won out over any temporary discomforts.

Members of the Portland Project met twice a month in the early 2000s, on the first and third Sunday of the month. They met at the Boys and Girls Club of Portland for the first two years, and during the third year (2003-2004) met at Chevrus, a private Jesuit School that offered the group a meeting space. “Chevrus is bigger and more central to where our kids are, so we moved,” Wilson later stated. Soon thereafter, the second and fourth Sundays would see meetings in Lewiston, at area schools. During the 2003-2004 school year, some of the five to six Seeds then attending Kent Hill in Augusta carpooled with one of the Seeds’ parents to Portland for meetings.

Although he does not mention it, the Portland Project kids have frequently used the Wilson house as a meeting place, especially when preparing for an event. This was particularly true during the first few years of the organization, but continued into the 2010s.



Aleigh in the Art Shack, 2004

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

After the Portland Project members stopped meeting at the Boys and Girls Club, they met regularly for a time in the common room in Tim's apartment building, and have done so since whenever the need for available space arises. As then fourteen-year-old Naima, originally from Somalia, explained in autumn 2001, they were then about to meet at Tim's house to discuss an upcoming presentation; "We're catching up on what we're doing, he wants to know what we've been doing in our schools and in our lives." The group met that day less than two months after the attacks of September 11, and Naima expressed her fear of what was occurring, especially as she was a Muslim at a time when much of America expressed suspicion about Muslims, especially immigrant Muslims, in the country. But Naima also said, "I still believe that we can find some peace with everyone. I'm still hanging in there. I'm not losing hope, no matter how difficult the situation is ... there's always something that can be done."

Naima continued, "my middle school years were horrible," but being part of the Seeds of Peace and the Portland group had helped greatly, and helped her to realize that, "you must never give up; you know what you need to do to get where you want to go." Several members of the Portland Project expressed their fears and hopes at the time, and the true value of the program is shown in that these young teens stayed in the program for years. Naima was one of two Maine Seeds chosen (Lars was the other) to go to the United Nations in November 2001 to discuss terrorism and peace with world leaders, and like Lars she remained very much involved in the program in 2003 and thereafter, and she attended the spring 2003 retreat.

The Portland Project served many students after the events of September 11 and the subsequent American War on Terrorism, both those students involved directly with the group and the many hundreds of students Tim and the Portland Seeds spoke to and with. Wilson visited numerous Maine schools in the wake of September 11, and the Maine Seed teenagers

continued to make formal presentations. One nineteen-year-old girl, whom the author met recently in a context outside of Seeds of Peace, said that the Portland Project kids had visited her former school in Winthrop after the events of September 11. She remembered both Wilson and the Seeds clearly and said of their presentation, “It was fantastic!” In addition to the formal presentations the Portland and Maine Seeds made that day, they allowed students to individually and privately ask questions they thought their peers in the SOP might be able to answer. Many of their questions were related specifically to the events surrounding September 11, while others involved more general Maine and American politics, events, and situations. At the same time, in the early 2000s the Portland or Maine Project provided direct support to Maine Seeds caught in the anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, atmosphere in which they sometimes found themselves, many of the Seeds being refugees or immigrants, several of them from Muslim countries. In the mid-2010s, with increased tensions in America once more, such work remained relevant if not even more important.

Along with establishing meetings further north so that more kids in the Lewiston-Auburn area might regularly attend meetings—previous to the 2003-04 school year, several kids had traveled to Portland from the Lewiston area to meet with other members of the group—the length and breath of the program was subsequently extended.

“The big thing now,” Wilson said in 2003 and relevant for following years, “is that kids go to camp for two years; the first year they learn about the program, the second year they serve as PS (Peer Support), the third year they will do community service, and the fourth year they have get an opportunity to do a two-week internship.” (Starting in 2004, for example, they would serve internships on a World Sea College boat—something which caused great excitement when some of the kids learned about it in camp in 2003.) Then, “during the fifth summer, they will go on a college tour.” (As the program

has been continually evolving since the first year, 2000, the kids have not necessarily followed this progression in order, or necessarily completed all the steps Wilson outlined.) Each phase of the program is generally a two-week session, but some participants would attend camp as Maine Ambassadors for a three-week session. When they attended one of the regular three-week camp sessions, they generally attended co-existence sessions (later known as facilitation) with campers from another country or region of the world.

For most, the program evolved such that in the early 2010s Portland Project members and then the Maine Seeds in general, attended the third, two-week camp session, had their own co-existence group, and might also, especially during their second year, attend meetings with Palestinian and Israeli kids, or campers from another region in conflict. Wilson said, as did various campers themselves, that they found this dual co-existence experience beneficial. Maine campers who do not participate in the Portland Project also generally go to another co-existence group instead of the Portland Project group. These arrangements would evolve further by the mid-2010s, such that the Maine campers would be meeting with other American delegations.

Like other Seeds, the limit for actually being campers on Pleasant Lake was two years for the Portland Project members during the early years of the program—although for everyone the particulars evolved over the years. Like other campers, Portland or Maine Project Seeds could become “ambassadors” and after their two years as campers spend a year—expenses paid—as ambassadors to a particular region of the world, as well as to the wider, yet local, community. (Originally, the thought was that the kids would be able to go to Israel and work with the Israeli-Palestinian program, according to one of the group, but the Intifada had made that generally impractical, although she, the camper, personally still had hopes that it would become a reality.) Initially, campers could return for

a third year as Program Leaders, but that was largely phased out over time.

The Portland or Maine Project has proved extremely successful in terms of the students enjoying it and staying active. For example, of the original twenty members in 2000, sixteen or seventeen remained active three years later: two of the original members had moved away, while one had left the program and another was considering leaving. This basic level of retention continued into the 2010s, although the number of participants increased substantially. In 2003 alone, another twenty kids joined the Portland or Maine Project. As Wilson later stated of all the members in early 2004, “We have lost very few of them.” Sadly, soon thereafter, they would lose one of their members to death. Subsequently, a few others would also die or disappear.

The Maine Project is diverse by almost any standard, much more so than the state as a whole in terms of demographics, and maintaining its members year after year is a significant achievement. After 2003 and early 2004, with some of the teens graduating from high school, the numbers of original members would begin to drop. However, although they might no longer attend a session at camp as a regular camper, even the older ones—such as Lars and Leona—would visit and keep in contact with Wilson and the Maine Seeds over the following decade and beyond. This high rate of retention and dedication would also prove true for kids who joined the program during more recent years.

According to Wilson in spring 2003, although the title ‘The Portland and Lewiston Project’ had eventually been adopted, the kids had wanted to call the program the Maine Project, as, Tim related, “We have minority kids all over Maine now, but the project is still referred to by the board [of SOP] as the Portland Project.” The kids and Wilson would soon get their wish regarding the name change, and in 2019 the program would still be known as the Maine Program or Project. Wilson

also stated that, “Some people see this as an urban project, but this is not an urban issue.” The issue, he said, is “about kids in a state that is 97 percent white, [about] what they will do and how the majority will adjust to their presence.” And, cultural conflicts are a statewide issue.

Maine Native Americans are beginning to take an interest in the SOP and the Maine Project. Wilson in the early 2000s attempted to recruit a daughter of the Penobscot Nation’s chief, but she declined. A Passamaquoddy youth, Cory, attended in 2002. Another Native American, possibly a Penobscot, living in Portland, Will, was part of the first Portland Project group and identified himself as an “Indian” while attending Deering High School. The Passamaquoddy tribe requested two slots for 2004, recognizing the program as a good opportunity for its teens and by inference the wider community. Engaging more Native students in the program remained a goal in the 2010s.

Although most or all expenses are paid for the returning Portland Project kids—largely through a grant from the Dexter Foundation—as well as for most of the international campers through separate funding, Maine and American Ambassadors do have to pay tuition, and tuition can be rather steep for Maine. The distinction between the Maine Ambassadors and the Portland Project members blurred during 2004-2010 as the Portland Project expanded to other parts of the state, and a camper who started as a Maine Ambassador might then become a member of the Portland Project or later the Maine Seeds. Campers generally had to pay for their second summer also, but during their third and fourth years, money raised for the program pays their fees. Tim was and remains heavily involved in that fundraising.

The Portland Project kids, and later the general Maine Seeds members, engage in various fundraising projects, one of the largest to date being the Beach to Beacon Race in Cape Elizabeth in August 2003. Joan Benoit Samuelson, Olympic gold

medalist, started the race along with Banknorth/Peoples Heritage Bank. The heavily attended and highly competitive race pulls in world-class runners as well as local athletes. Each year, race proceeds go to a different non-profit organization, with the chosen organization playing a vital role in helping organize and host the event. Several of the Portland and Lewiston Project teens were able to run in the race in 2003—and a few staff members did also—and some of the better-known runners visited the camp before the race and met with the campers. The Maine Seeds, enrolled racers or not, collected sponsors for runners (they had slots for 100 runners), set up booths and refreshment stands along the route, and proudly wore SOP t-shirts made especially for the race.

In addition to their meetings and fundraising efforts, students enrolled in the Portland Project or Maine Seeds, are otherwise active in their communities and region. The Portland and Lewiston Seeds regularly present programs to middle school students. Speaking of one specific presentation to seventh graders at Greeley Middle School in Cumberland, Maine, by two young women, Jackie and Sheena, Wilson said in early May 2001, “The kids were awed by them.” The Maine Seeds appeared before the Portland School Board in 2001 and a number of times thereafter to speak of the program and the continuing need for such programs in the school system.

Project members also spoke to the State Legislature in 2002 and 2003. They told Maine congressman about their experiences at Seeds of Peace, and expressed their convictions that the state should provide funding to allow more Maine kids to attend the camp. The organization, Wilson, and the kids were successful in these endeavors, and in 2002 the state appropriated \$50,000 to SOP, up from the \$21,000 and \$25,000 of the previous few years. Wilson accredited most if not all of the appropriations to Governor Angus King and the support he provided. In November 2003, King in a telephone interview spoke highly of Tim, SOP, and the Portland Project. He expressed his delight in the work being done in Maine, as Maine

with Senator George Mitchell and others had a proud history of peacemaking.

Portland Project members have been on local television and radio programs, and in 2002 went to the State House in Augusta when John Wallach addressed the combined Maine State Legislature and Maine House of Representatives. In recognition for his work in Maine and the world, the combined houses presented Wallach with a memorial plaque and the Maine Seeds cheered him on from the galley. One telling event about Wilson and his relations with the kids came after the presentation, however, when a young woman from the group came up to Tim upset or embarrassed and whispered that some of the others were going to go eat, and she could not join them. It seemed the problem may have been money, but either way, Tim quietly told her to stay with him; he would take care of it and make certain that she had a ride home. Wilson would continue this close and tender watch over the kids when they made various trips over following years.

In 2003, a new administration, that of Governor John Baldacci, held office in Augusta, and the camp did not receive state financial support. However, Baldacci did receive members of the Portland Project in his office, discussed a charter the kids had written with them, and planned to use it for an upcoming youth summit—which some of the Maine Project Seeds would attend and at which they would present their ideas. “They spent some time on it; I was really impressed,” he told the author of the Portland Project Charter in late 2003.

Baldacci was very much in support of SOP and the Maine Project, had known John Wallach quite well during his own days as a United States Senator, and had helped secure money for the Jerusalem Center. Baldacci has known Tim for decades. Like Angus King, Baldacci pointed with pride to the peace work of Maine citizens like George Mitchell’s work in Northern Ireland and the young Samantha Smith who in 1982 at age thirteen had written a celebrated letter to Soviet

Union leaders about peace. Baldacci also complimented the courageous teenagers from throughout the world who come to America and Maine to tackle peace issues. However, he simply did not feel that the state currently had the economic wherewithal to provide direct financial aid to SOP or the Maine Project. The future might prove different. But, he did think that the state could provide other types of support such as helping SOP “with supplies and such.” In 2004, Governor Baldacci visited the camp and spoke to the Seeds and he remained in contact with SOP throughout his administration. He would later, in 2012, after he left office, join Pierce Atwood after working under President Barack Obama on veteran’s issues. By that time, however, Tim Wilson no longer worked for that firm, having given it up after he started running the Jerusalem Center. Baldacci himself would soon move on to another position.

John Baldacci’s successor as Maine Governor, Paul LePage, elected in 2011, met with members of the Maine Seeds in January 2013 at the Maine Statehouse to discuss immigration and refugee issues, the Seeds’ community activities, and the impact of Seeds on their lives. LePage did not allocate money to support SOP, at least not previous to 2016, but he did recognize the importance of the work. Moreover, according to Tim Wilson in 2016, LePage knows him, readily acknowledges him in person, and is polite to him, and “If he chooses to be polite, so be it.” With both men still very active in 2017, opportunities to work together continued to exist. The political situation in Maine and elsewhere in the nation was heating up in late 2016 and into 2017, however, after the election of Donald J. Trump to the Presidency. Following that election, Tim posted to his Facebook account, as he had told his students and campers for decades, to “take the high ground.” He did privately, however, express his concerns with what was happening in America, especially regarding civil rights, and as the situation seemingly devolved further, he would speak out more in public and on social media.

In 2019, Janet Mills, a Democrat, who knew Tim from their previous interactions, became Maine's governor, likely fostering a further relationship with the SOP.

Competition for a few openings for Maine and Portland campers, as, in some cases, for the international campers, can be tough; even in 2003 over 100 kids applied for Maine Ambassadorships (the Maine Ambassadors are part of the American delegation.), for only eight openings. For the entire American delegation, there might be 200-350 applicants for just a handful of openings. The experience of attending the camp was something that was becoming especially sought over, and for some more valuable as the years progressed. Of one Portland youth, Hugo, the son of Irish immigrants and selected for the third, two-week, 2003 session, Wilson explained that he was to work with the Cypriots and Balkans, as well as participating in all the regular camp activities, so, "He gets the best of both worlds."

Hugo did work with the Cypriots and Balkans to some degree, but engaged more intensely in the non-verbal sessions facilitated by Paula Wilson and Wesley "Wes" Days. He said that autumn, "I loved all of it. I didn't get to go water-skiing, so I was kind of bummed about that." (Hugo had never water-skied before, and had anticipated doing so. However, he made a fine showing in other sports, and even played basketball against his high school team--of which he was a member--so he did indeed enjoy numerous sports events at camp.) Although Hugo entered the camp as a member of the American delegation at age sixteen, he subsequently joined the Portland Project.

As a member of the American delegation, Hugo said he did not think some of their co-existence sessions were the same as those for other campers. "Because we were all from America there was not much difficulty getting to know each other," he stated. The group met with members of the Cypriot delegation at times. However, Hugo said, "Many of them didn't feel com-

fortable talking to us, so they [the staff] scrapped that.” Most of the time only two of the Cypriots talked, and “No one else opened up until the last two minutes. We had wanted that to happen from the start.” The same situation developed when they met with kids from the Balkans later in the session. Hugo thought it would have been beneficial to go to another summer session (in terms of co-existence or facilitation), but clearly benefited from the one he did attend. “It did make a difference, but not as much as I thought it would,” he said. Many Seeds, however, find that the experience increases in value as the months or even years pass, and for some Seeds facilitation is simply not their favorite part of camp. But, Hugo said of his work with Paula and Wes, “I loved it. I usually hate things like this. ... We did a lot of exercises. We didn’t talk a lot. We put together a song and poem and performed it for the Cypriot kids. We did a lot of breathing exercises, yoga. We danced in the class a whole lot. We only started talking the last two or three sessions.” With both Wes Days and Paula Wilson being extremely health oriented, and with Paula’s being a dancer, Hugo’s experiences are not surprising.

Aleigh, then a resident of Albion, attended the same group sessions as did Hugo in 2003 as a Maine Ambassador, and likewise found them generally constructive—but in early 2004 noted similar frustrations with the way the talks with the Cypriots and Balkan delegates went at times: “But, [when they did not talk very much] we learned to do it differently. It went OK, but it was hard. We wanted to understand [things in their countries] but they got defensive.” The group worked out better communication skills as time passed, and although she said more than once that although the process “was hard” it did evolve and improve as the days passed. Like Hugo, Aleigh particularly enjoyed the non-verbal facilitation sessions run by Wes and Paula: “They were awesome.” Adopted in Texas as a baby, the fifteen-year-old African American said that when her family moved from New Hampshire to central Maine that she felt isolated. What she found most exciting in camp, “was meeting tons of people. I just love being around people.”



Aleigh and Hungo Outside the Infirmary, 2004

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

A truly vivacious young woman, Aleigh made the most of every opportunity to socialize at the camp, participating in sports, the Color Games, and talent shows with gusto (as had Hugo), making friends with kids from Maine and elsewhere, and she later joined the Portland Project. She said of the end of the session, “It was so hard leaving, I’m a different person for it.” She attended the closing of the camp workday for the Maine kids that autumn, and her father ferried her and a few other kids from Augusta to Portland during 2003 and 2004 so that they could attend the Portland meetings. (The group had planned to attend a Christmas or Holiday Party held in Portland for all the Maine kids in December, but was unable to do so because of a blizzard moving through the state. The Maine kids who did make it to the celebration had a good time, but reported that it ended two hours early because of the storm.) Hugo and Aleigh, meanwhile, would become close friends, spending time together in camp and communicating outside

of it. Tragedy would later pull apart their friendship, and sadden the entire Seeds of Peace community.

Alexandria, another new Seed in the early 2000s, likewise helped with the closing of the camp in autumn 2003, said that she felt that “every teenager, every kid, or anyone who gets to meet Tim is so lucky. There is no one else like him in the world.” She said in 2004 that, “at camp he tried to get to know everyone one-on-one,” and made the process so much better for having done so. A Portland native, she felt that for her and many other Americans one of the great blessings of the camp is the opportunity to learn “how different other countries are. You hear things, but you have no idea until you go and get to know these other people. It’s really important [to see] how one person can make such a difference in their countries. It’s a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.” She said she got to see things, “good and bad things,” about other people. “It changed the way I think. I don’t think other kids in high schools know this. It’s so much different going and hearing what these people have to say. They’re not just like you, but they are like you but also so different because of their culture.”

Fifteen-year-old Alexandria or Alex attended meetings regularly, and said it was like a family or a group of close friends. “We’re sort of like a big family who hasn’t seen each other for awhile,” she said of the twice-monthly meetings. Of the camp and meeting there, she said, “It’s a group of people that you really learn to trust. You really get to know each other in those two weeks. You’re not strangers when you meet again. It’s [the meetings] like a group of best friends getting together, people you can trust, who you know are really there, you can talk about anything.” The group—having grown in size and more diverse in age as the years passed since the first season of the Portland Project—generally divided into subgroups for part of the meetings, the older kids in one group and the younger in another. The older students would also talk with the younger ones about their experiences and their projects, and at the end of meeting everyone came back together “to discuss what is

going on.” Alex hoped to continue on with the Portland Project, become a counselor at camp someday, and hoped that her younger brother would later become a Seed.

Socializing is sometimes the original goal of some campers, but does not necessarily remain so. Many campers find that they get the best of more than one world without ever expecting to do so. One Portland Project member, a first generation immigrant, explained in 2002, a week after he arrived at camp for the first time, that he had come with the hope of making friends but had found much more. “I don’t really have very many friends,” he said, “so I thought that if I came here I might make some, kids with things in common with me. Then when I arrived I found out that it is about much more than that -- it’s about doing important work.” A week later he reiterated his feelings, and when his session ended, he came back to watch the next round of Color Games, and returned again in 2003.

Nhi—an immigrant to Maine from Vietnam—returned to camp for her second time in 2003. Although she enjoyed some things better about her first year, as, she said, “everything was new and exciting.” However, she liked the Color Games better in 2003. The games meant more for her the second time for, as she explained it: “I have trouble swimming, but somehow I got on the swim team. My coach really encouraged me.” Nhi found that having to compete in an activity she had thought one of her weakest skills, and the confidence she gained from doing so, meant more to her than simply competing in something in which she already excelled. While some kids find they have to accommodate less skilled athletes, others face different challenges.

It was something else that really touched Nhi about the camp and Wilson, however. Following an interview with the author one day, Tim told the assembled Seeds about how he had worked with Senator William Cohen on an initiative established by then Governor James Longley to bring several

Vietnam refugees to America following the end of the Vietnam War. With no Vietnamese delegations in camp, hearing about this took Nhi by surprise. “I was interested in that. For some reason it made me cry, hearing about him bringing Vietnamese people to the United States. It hit me, and I started crying; that could have been my family.”

Hugo, Aleigh, Nhi, Alex, and other Seeds returned to camp in 2004 as Peer Support. So, too, did other campers like Lindsey, age seventeen, and Bengich, age fifteen, both of Portland, both African Americans, although one had initially come to the United States as an immigrant. As returning campers, they each served as examples to new campers, and aided camp counselors as requested. Bengich and Lindsey, however, personified two diverse reactions to the Seeds of Peace’s new program, *Beyond Borders*, which brought delegations from six American cities together with six Arab delegations. *Beyond Borders*’ kids attended the third session with the Portland and Lewiston project campers, with the idea that the American kids would visit the Middle East the following spring.

Bengich had difficulties with some of the *Beyond Borders* campers, although he befriended others, and said that he had words with a few of them. He did not like the fact that the *Beyond Borders* kids wore different T-shirts, which had “*Beyond Borders*” instead of “*Seeds of Peace*” as their predominant lettering, something to which several of the Maine kids, not just those mentioned herein, objected. Bengich stated, “Last year, was OK. Everybody was the same.” This year, the kids wore different shirts, and he queried, “Why don’t they have the same shirt? Some of them think that just because they have a different shirt that they are different.” (Tim later explained that someone else had decided upon the t-shirts, and agreed that they had not proved a good idea.) A fine athlete, Bengich was enjoying most of his experiences at the camp, however, and said that in discussion groups, “This year is kind of about getting to know ourselves first, before going on to bigger problems.”

Lindsey, in camp for her fourth year, had a different perspective on the new program. After the close of the session, she stated that although many of the kids felt that the Beyond Borders campers ruined the camp, she herself believed that for most kids the problem was due to the shirts, and she stated of the Arab delegations, “I really enjoyed them. ... Just change the shirts and I’ll be happy.” Lindsey also felt that the organization of some of the facilitation groups created part of the difficulty. In one session she attended, a mixed session, “Everyone was frustrated and one of the girls stormed out. She said she wasn’t happy with her co-existence group [as] they were only talking about the media. I told her to discuss it with someone. The next day, they were picking at us, kids were crying, I’d never seen a co-existence session like this. It had been put into their minds to talk about the media and politics,” even though other issues might be more important to them.

Another issue, also related to the new program, was that many of the Maine kids were return campers and had been essentially segregated from the Beyond Borders kids. “We were in bunks full of PS’s, Lindsey related, and we weren’t in any activities with them. I think a lot of people were upset about this. We talked to them [the beyond Borders kids] more on the computer than at camp.”

Lindsey, however, had a unique perspective not just because of her long tenure as a Seed—she had attended four summer sessions to date—but because of her family’s close friendship with Tim Wilson, her grandparents being Mary Jane and Lenny Cummings. She said, “I look at Tim as a father role-model, and I was worried about him [during his recent travels and after he seemed more “tough” in front of others]. But, when I came back during the regular session, I realized that he hasn’t changed, he’s the same old Tim.”

She, herself, however, was not the “same old” Lindsey as she had once been. The Portland Project and her time at camp had changed her remarkably over the years. About the camp she

said, “It was weird when I first went. I was new and didn’t understand what was going on. As we get older, and as I’ve been to camp several times, I feel like all of us PS’s are stepping up and into the older kids’ places. In the beginning I was a follower... now that I know what’s going on, ... I understand that the new kids feel scarred and lost and I can relate to it because that’s how I felt when I was that age.” Having evolved from being quite shy, she said, “In the beginning, I didn’t have a lot of confidence in myself, I was soft spoken, and worried about what people thought of me.” However, Lindsey soon began to host a local television show and to model, and planned to major in communications in college. She said she currently felt very confident speaking in public, and, “At the New York communications conference [held for older Seeds], I had to speak in front of Queen Noor. I wasn’t nervous, and she said at the end that I did a great job. I thanked her and said, ‘Seeds of Peace made me into a new person.’” Speaking in front of a queen is certainly an unusual outcome of camping in Maine, but such opportunities have come to several Maine teens because of the Portland Project and the Maine Seeds Program. Lindsey anticipated that she would not return to Otisfield as a camper again, because of her age, but if asked to work in the office—like Niama did in 2004—she said would do so; “If Tim asks me, I will definitely do it.”

Hugo of Portland, who turned 17 at the beginning of the summer, likewise stayed involved in the program, and returned to camp in 2004. He had Wes and another facilitator for discussion group, and again said it was “definitely” worthwhile, as was being a Peer Support and helping with the new campers. Having been a big hit with his singing of the Beatles’ “Pretty Fine Girl” with background dancers the year before, Hugo did a few stints in the 2004 talent show—which the PSs put together—but again did not, however, have an opportunity to go water-skiing. He was able to speak with many members of the new program, and thought that they were nice, but believed that many of them “were here to have fun,” while others “didn’t really want to be here, they wanted to go to Boston.” As

a whole, however, the camp experience remained valuable, in particular the facilitation work.

Likewise, Aleigh of Albion, sixteen in 2004, again enjoyed the camp overall, but had some issues with the new program. She related that at one point during the Color Games there was a “blow up” between some of the kids, with one camper stating, “You’re not Beyond Borders, you’re not even Beyond Cities,” and then said, as some sort of explanation or justification, that “there were no Arabs in Maine.” (This is, of course, not true, and would seem to even miss the point of the entire Portland and Maine Project, which among other things examines differences and issues in and among numerous ethnic, national, and religious groups.) This perceived lack of comprehension about the Maine campers and the issues they faced was met with some agitation, Aleigh and others related. The issues of shirts came up, with some Beyond Borders campers apparently wanting separate shirts for the games beyond the traditional Green and Blue, to which one of the Maine Seeds responded, “No. This is our home—You’re at Seeds of Peace.” That was pretty interesting,” Aleigh summarized. Aleigh also believed that with campers from places like “Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan, the rules had to be a lot stricter. It was hard to adjust to at first.” Yet, even with the difficulties that session, the Maine Seeds clearly on some level benefited from the challenges posed by the existence of the Beyond Borders program, if only through having to address how their own issues related to those of teenagers from other parts of the United States or other Seeds in general.

A Maine resident, Aleigh nevertheless found the Peer Support camping trip which all PSs go on just after camp opens, difficult, as 2004’s third session’s involved poor weather and a couple of mountains to climb. Aleigh said, “It was really tough. We almost drowned in our tents. It rained for six hours straight.”



Hugo at the Color Games, 2004

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Facilitator Wes Days, soon to head off to California to pursue a Ph.D. and later to South America (returning to the United States in the mid-2010s and continuing all the while to stay in touch with the SOP community and with Tim Wilson, embarking on an art career which would embrace civil rights issues on various levels), was active with the Maine kids in 2004 as he had been in 2003, both as a facilitator and as one of the staff who accompanied the PSs on their outing. He also, according to the Maine kids, had accompanied Tim to their schools in autumn 2003. Aleigh commented that, “It was so funny seeing Wes all dressed up with his hair slicked back.” (Although Aleigh did not live in Portland where many of the kids at the time continued to meet, she attended meetings when she could and kept in touch by e-mail. In addition, Tim and Wes had come to her school in Augusta during the year.) Although she knew Tim would be flying off to the Middle East in two weeks, Aleigh noted in September 2004 that he had promised to try to come to one of her and Emelda’s basketball

games before the season ended, and that they were both really looking forward to it.

Although the 2004 session overall and the year that preceded it went well, in spite of concerns about the new program, tragedy did strike the Maine kids, and it would later do so again. Ashley of the Lewiston-Auburn region, who had moved to Chicago, died in an accident just as the summer season started. The entire camp held a memorial service for her at the end of the first session, and when the Maine kids had their talent show during the third session, Lindsey, Emelda, Kate, and Nghiem presented a special tribute to Ashley.

Lindsey said that the PS's always put on the regular talent show, and that in 2004 they emceed the show as though they were Olympic reporters. The kids were really excited. But, she said, "Ashley was supposed to be here with us this session. There was a group of us who are very close." The group had included Ashley, and they wanted to honor her. As Lindsey explained it, they wanted even the kids who had never met Ashley to understand who she was and "how special she was to us."

Each of the girls read a poem for Ashley, and Nghiem sang "Missing You," acapella style, while the other girls sang background. Lindsey held the microphone, and kept saying, "We miss you Ashley, we miss you Ashley." Lindsey said later, "It was amazing. You know Tim. He cries and he got really choked up about it." One young woman, she said, came up to her and said that her group did not know Ashley, but that they had all started crying, too.

Aleigh said of Ashley's death and the memorial performance, "I knew her and we had talked a few times. We were not close friends, but it's hard to understand" what happened to her. Of the girls' presentation, she said, "They were really good. Nghiem played music in the background, and everyone was teary eyed. I didn't know they were going to do it -- it was really awesome." Not too much later, it would be Tim's and

other Seeds' turns to cry for Aleigh, and for another Seed of their camping era, but first, they mourned someone else.

Siphat Chau, a kind and gentle soul—and the Maine Seed with whom Leona had once attended her prom—went missing on Christmas Eve Day in 2005. He was just starting college at the University of Maine, and was home visiting. Of Vietnamese descent, Siphath was only nineteen years old when he disappeared. He was never found, although in 2019 the search for him continued.

Then, tragedy struck again. Aleigh or Alexandria Mills, beloved by many of her fellow campers and the staff and Tim, and a great favorite (although one should not admit such) of the author, was viciously murdered in her home by an ex-boyfriend in 2007. She was only nineteen. Her high school, Kent, hosted a large memorial service for her, and Tim Wilson spoke of and cried over the young girl who had died so needlessly. Some of her fellow campers and friends spoke also, including Lars who was then attending college, as was Hugo, another of her camp friends. The author was momentarily confused when looking over a photographic display honoring Aleigh by seeing a photograph she knew she had taken at SOP. The photo was of Aleigh and Hugo laughing together in the art shack. The author then remembered that after taking photos on her own camera, that Aleigh had given her camera to take a few photographs. It is Aleigh's laughter and vibrancy that many will remember as two of her finest features. After the funeral, Tim flew immediately to the Middle East and work on this book came to a screeching halt. In the face of sorrow, peace work was ongoing, but optional projects were not. A decade after her death, Aleigh remains in the hearts of many. Her school established an annual Aleigh Mills Concert Series to support a scholarship in her honor.

The deaths of Seeds are mourned by their friends, the camp, and the entire organization. In 2017, the SOP recognized the seventeenth anniversary of the death of Asel Asleh, the Seed

who had been killed by Israeli police in his homeland. There is a stone bench at camp in his honor, and his is not the only bench or marker there. Others Seeds who have been lost continue to be remembered as well, in various ways.



Relaxing After Returning to Visit the Camp - Aleigh, Hugo and Friends, 2005

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Most Seeds however, not only survived but thrived in the years following their camp experiences from the 1990s to the later 2010s. The Maine and Portland kids came to the camp and the program with vastly different experiences and expectations, but almost all were profoundly influenced by their experiences, and almost all stayed with the program, reaching out to their schools, communities, and government to communicate what they had learned and how they thought they could improve the future. Those who started the program led by Tim Wilson wanted to address issues of diversity and social conflict in the state. The kids who joined over the years more than stepped up to that plate, and they continue to do so.

Neil Rolde said of the changing or increasing role and focus of the Portland Project in 2003 that “It happened to start in Portland. ... As soon as we saw a need in Lewiston we sent some people there” and then began looking at needs elsewhere in the state. As Wilson had stated previously, Rolde reiterated that “there are still problems with Maine’s Indian tribes [and their surrounding communities] and this could be part of the Maine project.” The Portland Project has “worked

here [in southern Maine] and could be replicated anywhere in the state.” Indeed, through the efforts of the kids involved as well as those of Wilson and other adults, the program is not so much as being replicated elsewhere in the state as spreading throughout the state.



The Maine Seeds at Community Conferences

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Community outreach for the Maine Seeds continued in the 2010s. Interaction with the broader world continued. The Maine Seeds held their own meetings and summits, establishing their Annual Maine Youth Summit as the 2010s opened. They likewise established a “Bridge to Peace” program and walk. At one walk, on September 14, 2014, they raised \$3,400 for the SOP, the walk being led by students from Kent Hill School and South Portland High School. In 2017, over 100 Seeds and supporters marched in the Bridge to Peace Walk. Other such activities likewise continued in following years. For example, the Maine Seeds held their Fourth Annual Maine Youth Summit in March 2015, as well as hosting a

New England Youth Identity Summit on the third day of their meetings, held at the Portland Public Library. The Maine Seeds did various exercises at the meetings, discussed current events, and presented their recommendations on such issues as education, gender, school staff diversity, and “Islamaphobia”—all of which would remain critical issues in the next few years—to Maine students and educators, as well as some community leaders. Timothy P. Wilson attended these meetings, as he would a myriad of them over the years.

By 2016, while Wilson continued to lead the Maine Seeds program, the recruitment process had changed somewhat. The Maine Seeds Program now had formal affiliations of “program partners” with nine schools in Cumberland County (Portland and Southern Maine), two in Androscoggin County (the Lewiston-Auburn area), two in Kennebec County (the general Augusta region), and with Dexter High School in Penobscot County. Plans for other schools to participate were in the works in 2017 and 2018. Students who wished to attend the SOP camp now, generally, had to apply through their “Seeds of Peace Advisor” and be nominated by their school. Seeds of Peace staff would make the final selections in March, and once they went to the camp they would no doubt meet Tim, and then come under his supervision in the overall Maine Seeds program. In the late 2010s, campers were technically not deemed Seeds until they had experienced a camping session on Pleasant Lake. In 2016, the Maine Seeds would attend the third session of the camp, lasting for two weeks in August. By 2019, the program was growing yet more. Fees for attending the camp were \$1500 per student, with SOP providing the balance of the actual expenses for a teenager to attend SOP. Fellowships were available so that no qualified student would be turned away due to an inability to pay. Sarah Brajbord, a former camper—part of the American Delegation in 2006 and active thereafter—served as the director of the relatively new US Based Programs organizational unit, and thus oversaw the recruitment process, although Tim continued to run the Maine Seeds Program for the students once they

became campers. Sarah soon became the camp director, and functioned as such in 2017 and thereafter.



Tim's Mid-2010s Self-proclaimed "Right Hand Woman and Maine Seed"
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee



Leona at Camp, Mid-2010s
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

CHAPTER TEN : CONCLUSION - WILSON IN MAINE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

"My father told me, 'You're not going to be a banker. You're not going to work in an insurance company. I know you. You're going to go out and try to change the world.' But, I didn't try to change the world—I'm becoming a part of it."

Timothy P. Wilson

Convocation Address, Slippery Rock University, April 2004

In April 2004, Timothy Paris Wilson stood before a group of academicians at his alma mater, Slippery Rock University, and delivered an invitational address. Having been one of only thirteen minority students when he attended the western Pennsylvania university, the school had since hired a number of African American administrators and professors, and Wilson's experiences and message had been deemed worthy of serious consideration by minority and majority educators and administrators. By April 2004, in addition to his previous history in coaching, education, and state government, not only was Wilson continuing his work as director of the Seeds of Peace International Camp and as a consultant for Pierce Atwood in Maine, he was also serving as director of the Seeds of Peace Jerusalem Center in Israel. Each of these positions was evolving as he spoke that April night, and one of them would end soon thereafter.

Wilson announced to those assembled at Slippery Rock to hear his address, titled "What is Your Legacy Going to Be?" that although many people his age were leaving their careers, he himself had been fortunate enough to have become

involved with a “special organization,” the Seeds of Peace, and, he stressed, “I’m not retiring.” Wilson told his audience, “Seeds of Peace becomes your life,” and indeed along with his family—to whom he had grown ever closer over the years in spite of professional demands—Seeds of Peace had indeed become central to his life, such that he actually would, soon thereafter, retire at least temporarily from one of his careers.

Tim stood tall before his alma mater and told those attending, as he had told thousands of campers and others over the years, “God gave you two ears and one mouth for a reason.” He challenged his audience to use those ears, to listen, to learn what is going on in the world, to become part of the world and not just slide by without doing anything to help improve the world. He also challenged Slippery Rock to create a college for the study conflict management. Speaking of his own life, Wilson said, “I could have made money.” But his parents had known that making money was not what their son was about, or would be about. He said that his father had told him, “You’re not going to work in a bank. You’re not going to work for an insurance company. ... You’re going to go out and try to change the world. I know you.” But, Wilson asserted, “I didn’t try to change the world, but I’m becoming a part of it.” One suspects that he has done more than a bit of both.

About his parents, Wilson related that one of the things that he had admired most was that, “They did not give up. They would not give up.” His parents refused to let the world around them dictate to them. His audience, he implied, should do the same.

“It’s easy to make money. It’s easy to slide by. We do a lot of that in this country,” Wilson stated. Looking back to another time, one in which his adopted state’s budget was in serious difficulty, Wilson said that Maine Governor James Longley had once given him thirty days to fire sixty people. Tim had questioned why it had fallen to him to do the job, and Longley responded that, “It needed to be done.” It was a hard task

but, for the greater good of the state's citizens, the job needed doing.

As with having had to fire those people years before, working for peace is hard work. Wilson told his audience, "You get fifteen kids in a room and try to talk about who controls Jerusalem and it's the same as with adults." People simply did not agree. The same thing was true about the situation regarding Indian and Pakistani teenagers discussing the situation in Kashmir. "We are all part of the world," Wilson stated, "and we each need to address that as part of our individual life legacy. We each need to find out what is going on, and do something about it," hence his challenge to open a conflict management center at Slippery Rock. Wilson explained that he used the term 'conflict management' rather than the more common 'conflict resolution' because, "You manage conflict; you seldom resolve it."



At the Gates of the Seeds of Peace

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Tim left Slippery Rock after his talk and returned to his conflict management work. He flew back to the Middle East later that month to tackle a number of issues at the SOP center in Jerusalem.

Tim had started serving as acting director of the center in late November, and spent much of the following six months in Israel and Palestine. He would stay two to two and one-half weeks in the Middle East, then return to the United States to take care of SOP and Pierce Atwood business in America, then fly back to the Jerusalem Center.

During Wilson's first working visit to the region, he went to Cairo, Egypt, as well as to Aargos, South Cyprus; Amman, Jordan; and to Haifa, Jerusalem; and Tel Aviv, Israel. He met with as many kids in the region as possible, and spent as much time with them as he could, to ascertain their needs and determine what changes needed to be made within the organization to meet those needs. During Wilson's second Middle East sojourn, he met with the center staff as much as possible, pursuing some of the same long-term goals.

During his initial time in Israel and Palestine, Wilson stayed at the Hyatt-Regency in Jerusalem, located "almost around the corner" from the center. A typical day might find him either at the center for most of the time, or in a transit (a truck type vehicle) headed to Ramallah (on the west Bank) or elsewhere, often using the transit to move kids or adults. Tim frequently drove, and on some days he might go to Mazda in the morning and to Gaza in the afternoon. Some days he would return to the center at mid-day, then head off to Tel Aviv or elsewhere to meet with staff or talk to teenagers. As he described it, "Sometimes I started at 6 a.m. and would be going until 10:00 or 11:00 at night." As to the dangers the job presented, he said, "I could get shot in this country as easily as I could get shot over there. If people don't like you, they don't like you."

At the close of the 2004 camping season in Maine, Tim planned to rent a place to live in the Middle East, as his wife Jacquie was to accompany him. They would remain in the Middle East until late spring 2005, then return to Maine to prepare camp for the summer. The Wilsons also anticipated returning to the United States for a short time in January to visit family and to allow Tim to interview potential camp counselors and facilitators. In America as in the Middle East, Wilson still practices the personal interview approach he had learned from Joel Bloom decades earlier at Camp Powhatan.

In February 2004, SOP president Aaron Miller appointed Tim director of the center, and Tim worked with the two center staff members who would be most involved in arranging the Israeli and Palestinian delegations for the 2004 summer camping season. Securing a Palestinian delegation proved most difficult. Tim had been meeting with the Israeli Minister of Education since December 2003, and in particular working out new codes of conduct. As Tim explained in June 2004, “We sat down with the people and let them know that we would follow their rules, but also worked with the Palestinians so they would know.” Both Palestinian and Israeli leaders needed to know how the camp would be operated that year, and where the organization would and would not be flexible. Wilson met with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, but not with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, as he explained that the Israeli government was set up differently than that of the Palestinians and that he did not have access to Sharon. “But,” he said, “I have access to people in the Middle East who are going to help us, and that’s more important.” He said that, “With Arafat, even with the Intifada he seems to look on us favorably.” Of course, Arafat had been involved with SOP as a government leader since the organization’s early days.



Counselor Wesley Day at the Seeds of Peace

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

During the same period, Wilson said he began to work more closely with the center staff about “what we need to do.” He spoke with the offices in New York and Washington about the changes in the Middle East—and corresponding changes which needed to be made within camp and the organization—because of the ongoing Intifada. As Wilson interpreted one topic of the discussions, “co-existence” is no longer the best term to use, “as people in power do not want to co-exist, and [some] groups do not want to have contact with the other side, and this puts a lot of stress on the kids. So, it’s important to work with the groups, bi-national groups. ... We want to do it [much of our outreach work] in the local areas now, and the kids are behind this—they want to work with their communities first, before they go outside.” Wilson said the center was dealing at different times with Palestinians in Palestine and with Palestinian groups in Israel, particularly about things that might be done to improve the situation before the two sides of the conflict even spoke with one-another. While the situation was not truly resolved in following years, it was soon after this that the SOP replaced “co-existence” with “facilitation” as the name of its discussion groups among the various delegations at camp.

Wilson said of some situations he had encountered in the Middle East, “You meet with people, you talk and you listen and you come to understand their mistrust.” He said he had met with representatives of the Israeli Department of Civil Law, and someone had commented to him that they had expected that Wilson would have wanted something from them. “I didn’t,” Wilson said, “I just wanted them to know who I was, ... that I was there to work with kids who were part of the organization, who knew of the Seeds of Peace. But, I needed for them not to change the rules in the middle of the situation.” It was necessary for SOP to reassess its goals in the region, Wilson asserted, as “for many people the term co-existence is not there. Getting people together in the same room to walk to the same drummer is just not going to happen. Just keeping it [the camp] going is going to be where my energy is

going for the next sixty-six days.” He said this just before the first campers of summer 2004 arrived.

Since the Intifada started in 2000, Wilson said in June 2004, “We now have a situation where people do not want to give up what they did before.” He wants to keep the kids safe by not placing them in a situation where more is expected of them than people in their communities are willing to grant them. In some cases that means that delegations or Seeds from communities in conflict may not be meeting face-to-face as they did before, but some Seeds in the region were still meeting. Seeds held a conference in Aragos, Cyprus, in spring 2004. Those who attended are now young adults, Seeds who attended camp from 1993 and 1994 up to 1999. They came from Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Cyprus, and Egypt. “They had a conference and they began to talk about the issues, about the sorts of things Seeds of Peace should or should not do. They are not kids now, they are 22, 23, 24 years old,” Wilson stated.

Just prior to the conference in Jordan, other Seeds attending colleges in the United States, Wilson said, met in March and determined that “they want to be an advisory group to the board of Seeds of Peace on what should be done for people in their countries.” In August, Tim said that the Seeds had recently made proposals to the board, and would continue with their work.

As Wilson sought to reorient the Jerusalem Center, which had about fifteen employees on-site or generally so, he found he had to tackle a number of personnel issues, and ultimately to let certain staff members go, including a few who had been with the organization for some time. This happened both before and during the 2004 summer sessions, and some grumbling could be heard around camp in the summer amongst staff and staff visitors, although this undertone did not disrupt the season for the campers.

Having spent over seven months directing the Jerusalem Center by summer 2004, Wilson said that the experience had

changed him and his work for Seeds in a number of ways. “I’m more self-directed about where we have to go. I realize that this time it is not on our terms. I have a problem with people saying it will happen ‘someday.’ For me it has to happen now. These kids deserve better, and I’m tired of people envisioning that it will happen in twenty or thirty years, when most of these kids have kids. Some of the kids from ten years ago have gone through things we didn’t.” Furthermore, Wilson later added, he felt as part of his increased self-direction the pressures on himself to make the situation work: “I only get a few chances, and if I screw this up it’s never going to come back—it’s what this is about now.”



Asel Asleh's Memorial Bench

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Wilson anticipated that with the changes in the Middle East and what kids there experience these days, as well as changes in the organization, “The kids we’re going to get are not going to be the same.... They will be smarter, tougher. If people just speak about it [the situation in the camp] as ‘it’s about making friends,’ I will say, ‘No. It’s about learning to communicate

with someone who has been your enemy.’ This summer is going to be tougher. We have better pre-seminars now [which campers attend], but most of them will be smarter, tougher, because of what’s going on [with the Intifada and other world situations]. That’s just the way it is.” Campers in Israel were selected through the school system, but with most other Middle East delegations the government chose who would come to Maine.

Wilson stated that the organization was finding it difficult to get kids involved in SOP in some regions “because of the situation and the feelings about the United States. There are people who do not want to send their kids here, who do not want to have anything to do with us.” Yet the camp anticipated adding kids from additional places for its new Beyond Borders program, as well as from some countries who had long sent campers to Maine.

In spite of his desire to help steer the SOP into new directions, Tim decided that his time with the organization was nearing its close. In May, at the time of the annual SOP gala, Wilson informed the board that he would be retiring in 2006 as camp director, after the summer sessions. “I feel that by that time there will be people ready to take over. I think I’ve done my time and it’s time for younger people to take over, to let them learn. I hope the good Lord will grant me the time to see it through and let me continue for the next two years—and when it’s over, it’s over.” As Wilson planned it, after the 2006 camping season another person would be taking over as director of the center in Jerusalem, and a new director would be appointed for the 2007 camping season. Later in the summer of 2004, Wilson commented that Aaron Miller suggested that perhaps Tim would retire from the directorship of the center, but stay director of the camp, but Wilson had no plans to do so. In 2004, Tim had no idea who might eventually take his place, but he did “have a couple of people I want to work with, and if they prove out.” Time and effort would tell. As it turned out, as Tim stepped back in mid-2006, Leslie Adelson Lewin

became camp director (a choice Tim advocated as he wanted campers to see a woman in charge) and Wil Smith became head counselor. Both had been hired and trained by Tim. Tim, however, never actually retired from the Seeds of Peace, and over a decade later it seems that he never will. Indeed, he had once promised his mother that he would stay with the program for as long as he can, and in 2017 Wilson increased his presence, if anything, especially by visiting schools throughout the state. And so he continues.

While Wilson planned his “retirement” from SOP, he also resigned from his position as a consultant for Pierce Atwood. Although he had been commuting from the Middle East in part to fulfill his duties with the Portland firm, by June 2004 the demands of filling both—or rather all three—positions was getting to be too much. He tendered his resignation in June for a few reasons, primarily because, he explained, “Seeds of Peace was really where my heart was, ... but I had a good five years [at Pierce Atwood], and worked with some wonderful people.” Wilson had done some private consulting before he joined Pierce Atwood, and did not rule out doing some again in the future.

Meanwhile, the camp opened for the 2004 and subsequent seasons. Absent from the 2004 season were campers from the Balkans, which had sent campers the previous few years, due to funding problems. Furthermore, Cypriot campers, all of whom attended the second session, arriving after the flag ceremony, reported that they had not known for certain if North and South Cyprus would be sending delegations in 2004, and so had, at least in the South, been alerted at the “last minute.” All the Cypriot campers from the south came from the same school, as did their delegation leader. The Cypriot program would indeed disappear from camp in subsequent years, although the organization and Tim would maintain a connection with the island, which in 2019 remained divided, although passage from one side to another was much simpler than it had been in the early 2000s.



Campers Dining Outside at Seeds of Peace Camp, Mid-2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

As both new and returning campers progressed through the sessions, Tim Wilson, Aaron Miller, and others spoke to them not just of the future and the present, but also reminded them of John Wallach, who had founded the organization and given them all—staff and campers alike—the opportunity to come together in Otisfield, and, for some, in their homelands. Those who had known Wallach continued to feel the loss of him, but celebrated his accomplishments. Perhaps the saddest part of the summer was the death of Maine Seed Ashley of Lewiston, who died in an out-of-state car accident just as the summer was getting underway. The staff and campers held a memorial service in her honor.

Ashley died that year, causing pain in the camp, but in terms of day-to-day routines, the first and second sessions proceeded generally as expected, and, as always, with some humor. For example, as always many of the kids went to either the Ot-

isfield parade or to Casco Days. Leona Merk, a former Maine Seed, had charge of organizing much of the 2004 Casco Days for the town, and after head counselor Leslie Addison let the campers know that the camp would be giving them \$10 each to spend at the small-town event, and let them know that they should all be on their best behavior at the “big city at the end of the lake,” one of the campers at line-up asked, “How big is it?” “Just a little bit smaller than New York City,” Leslie replied. Casco has a population of close to 4,000 people. The State Police, still providing twenty-four hour security for the camp—the only camp in Maine for which it does so—accompanied the youngsters to Casco (the kids split up and attended on alternate days), and the campers were all required to wear their name buttons. Israeli first-time campers Gil, Michal, and Ben, each later said that they were having a good and productive time at camp, Casco Days being—if not the highlight of their visit to Maine—at least a bit of a fun time. In addition to the full range of activities offered to campers, including, for the first two sessions, their visit to a Seadogs’ game in Portland, a few new activities were added, such as art night for the entire camp and an elective photography activity unit using cameras and darkroom equipment arranged and set up by counselors Mariah Scee and Joshua Freedman. Scee would serve as art director for the next summer, and subsequently serve a summer as head female counselor. One of her campers, Mustafa, would hold the position of art director in the mid-2010s, and remember Mariah fondly, while Eric Kopenka, also a counselor that year, would become communications director for the SOP and continue to spend part of each summer at camp into the late-2010s.

Campers in 2004 seemed to enjoy and comment on the same basic camp experiences as those of previous years, and as those who followed them would. Midway through the second session, Ma’moun of Jordan said, “I’ve never done anything like this before. I like it—everything.” When asked about particulars, the 16 year-old said that he especially liked canoeing and baseball, it being his first experience with the American

ball game. His fellow countryman, Laith, at age 14, also appreciated his first experiences with baseball, in addition to sailing on Pleasant Lake. In terms of co-existence sessions (which more campers referred to as simply their “discussion” groups), Ma’moun observed that for him co-existence with the Palestinians “is difficult, but it’s useful.” Laith agreed.

Also in second session, Edan of Israel said that at “15 1/2” he hoped that he would be able to return to the camp again, and his friend Rasha of Palestine commented that it was her first time also at camp, and “I am enjoying it. Everything is perfect—except the showers.” Regarding Tim Wilson, Edan commented, without going into explanation, that, “I was sick, and he took care of it.” Edan, in addition to Tim, particularly enjoyed playing baseball and group challenge.



Tim With His Grandchildren at Camp
Wilson Family Photo

The third session of 2004 saw campers from Maine as well as from other parts of the United States for the nascent Beyond Borders program. Delegations from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, and Jordan

teamed with delegations from Illinois, Georgia, California, Texas, New York, and Massachusetts. The American and Arab delegations, each with a total of thirty campers (the smallest being the delegation from Iraq which consisted of three young women), were brought together with the intent of having the campers learn about one another. In March 2005, the American delegations would travel to Jordan to meet with the Arab delegations in their territory. Meanwhile, discussions between the two groups took place in Otisfield. In camp, dialogue sessions typically lasted one hour, but when the discussion became intense enough, they would be extended to an hour and a half. Some sessions functioned essentially as open forums, others explored a predetermined topic or question. The sessions seem not to have differed substantially from previous co-existence sessions.

Both American and Arab delegation members expressed, in general, pleasure with the program and with the camp. Fifteen-year old Ryan of Boston said that camp had been, to date, “unbelievable.” Although the Beyond Borders campers wore different t-shirts than other SOP campers, in that their shirts had “Beyond Borders” printed on them, and they had facilitation sessions separately with each Arab nation being paired with an American delegation, in terms of most camp activities they had the same experiences as other summer 2004 Seeds. Ryan stated one week into the two-week session, “I think it’s a great success. Everyone has made so many friends, and people are excited about the interim program [between the end of camp and the Americans’ trip to Jordan], about bringing it back to their own schools.” She said of her own dialogue group—most of them composed of five Americans and five Arabs, that “it helps give the different perspectives. Some countries have different ideas. Some are more westernized than others, so they can have different views on topics.” Her delegation from Boston was paired with Jordan, and she said the two sister delegations had started “discussing what we will do and how to introduce this program to our communities. We’re debating over [presenting the program] through

art and music, technology, or something more physical—a physical representation to bring to our communities.”

Ryan, who planned to work in “something like the Foreign Service, or maybe the CIA, and certainly go to college,” said that Tim Wilson had told the campers that of the sixty Beyond Borders Seeds, thirty would be chosen to return as PSSs, “So to come back next year we have to do our best now.” Ryan said that Wilson “talks to us at lineups. He’s a very commanding personality; he knows what he’s doing. ... There’s no fooling around on his watch. He knows what we’re here for. We have the counselors to have fun, and Tim has his fun moments, but altogether he’s serious.” Ryan’s perceptions would remain essentially the same a week later. She said that she had made friends with several Maine kids.

Youssef of Saudi Arabia said that it was his first time in the United States, and “I really love the weather. It’s so nice, and everyone is friendly.” He enjoyed meeting new people and experiencing different cultures best of all. His dialogue group had started out discussing Israeli and Palestinian issues, moved on to 9/11 and who was responsible for the events of September 2001, and then had begun to discuss the war and current conditions in Iraq. He said that his city, Jeddah, had been paired with Los Angeles for the sister-city part of the program, and that he planned to go to the Jordan session in 2005.

Near the close of the third session, Yazeed of Yemen said that his discussion group had been particularly helpful, as had the camp in general. He said that although he had met some Americans in his home country, he had not been able to talk with them in the same way as he could speak with Americans in camp and hear their interpretations of things. Likewise, Yazeed did not know any Jewish people at home and had come to camp, he said, with all sorts of misconceptions about Jewish people. His dialogue group had proved especially valuable

in letting him speak face-to-face with some Jewish teenagers, and helping him to understand their culture.

One of the Beyond Borders campers developed a problem with his dialogue or facilitation group almost from the first day, and Tim Wilson stepped in to address the issue. MacKinley from Boston, an African American, explained that, "At first we were having discussions and I wasn't talking at all." When asked, he said that the subject was racism and that he did not like what some of the other campers were saying about race. The racism issue had come up in one of his group's open forums. Then, he said, "My counselor arranged a talk with Tim, and he took me around, talked to me, he helped me open up. That day in dialogue I opened up the discussion, and before that I hadn't talked in three days." Tim had spoken with the young man (he turned 14 in camp) for about two hours. MacKinley planned to go Jordan, and said his sister-city group was trying to decide how the Seeds could best maintain contact with one another until next March. His favorite activities at camp were football and basketball, but he had also come to appreciate group dialogue.

Jeremy of San Diego found dialogue sessions exciting right from the beginning. "I love our dialogue group," he said. "It gets to where we can put our feelings and stereotypes out there and find out what is true and what is not true, and they [our Arab members] can find out about it. We can see that other people have problems also." The reverse was equally true, and he found the mixture of members to be "perfect."

At the close of the session, Bill Taylor, the coordinator of facilitation, commented that thus far the Beyond Borders program was working well. He said that there were still some rough edges to be smoothed out, but that in general the program, including dialogue sessions, had gone quite well and the facilitators were in general pleased with the first session of the program. The program however, did not last. Instead, aspects of it would be incorporated into other programs.

The Portland or Maine Project had seventy campers for the third session, some twenty-six of them returning campers or PSs. As a group, they clearly enjoyed their time at camp and found it beneficial. But, some of them did not share the excitement over the new beyond Borders program that campers like Jeremy and Yazeed did, or at least they did not feel as connected to that program and group as, for the returning campers, some had with previous foreign delegations. While some Maine campers reported that they were able to interact with the Beyond Borders campers to a satisfactory extent, others felt that an artificial separation existed between the two groups, at least during the first half or more of camp.

Some staff members did express concerns that the Maine kids were not viewed as equally important by some organizational leaders, but they themselves understood clearly just how important the Portland or Maine Project remains with Tim, camp counselors, and most of the general staff. (Aaron Miller made a point of acknowledging the importance of the Maine Project to the campers at the session's opening ceremonies—one without a flag-raising component but with talks by himself, Tim, and returning campers, plus the traditional Seeds song and the symbolic entry through the gate). When the Beyond Borders campers left for Boston at the close of the session, the Maine kids returned home, but planned on having a celebratory party later in the year.

In spite of some concerns regarding their importance to the administration and their relation to Beyond Borders, as the kids became more familiar with one another through their group activities, bunks, sports days, and the Color Games, much of the discontent seems to have faded. The Color Games lasted only two days for the third session, and although the staff was pressed to include all the regular activities the participants certainly seemed to enjoy themselves. And, a rare thing in recent years, the games were able to close on a sunny day, including the celebratory run into the lake after Tim announced the winners—this time the green team.

The night the Color Games for the last session of 2004 ended, Wilson sat in his camp house advising one of the leaders of the Jerusalem Center about personnel and other changes at the center. He said (without revealing any of the pertinent personal information) that he had given those who had been asked to leave every opportunity to make that decision on their own. When the young man he was advising commented that he himself might have made an error or two in how he had addressed the personnel problem, Wilson told him, “That’s what being young is about. You learn.”

In the midst of the conversation, a counselor made a delivery to Wilson. The delivery consisted of several handmade cards from the Maine campers. The cards were simple drawings on white paper, with such messages as “thank-you for putting up with us, from bunk ---” and “thank you for considering our thoughts, from bunk ---” (Although Wilson may have been considering their thoughts, he had no intention of granting their request that he allow them to have a dance party. The denial he based on the fact that some of the Arab kids might be uncomfortable in such a situation. The Maine campers had then suggested that they hold parties in two locations, one with dancing, one without. This Wilson would also veto.) Smiling as he read the cards, Wilson pointed to a cabinet full of gifts and mementos from around the world, or at least the SOP world, and said, “These kids don’t have any money. These cards mean as much to me, or more, than those things do.”

Soon after receiving the cards, Wilson left the Jilson to speak to the youth at SOP. He congratulated them on their behavior during Color Games, and subtly (or not so subtly at times) asked them to consider what they had learned during their two weeks at camp.

“We’re not promised anything,” Wilson told the kids from Maine, America, and the Arab nations that night as they gathered at the bonfire (one which exceeded the 6’3” height of the counselor, Eric Kopenga, who built it). The air was crisp and

the moon almost full. Tim's son Paul stood listening quietly from the back while Tim talked of Ashley who had died that summer at age sixteen, and how when her younger sister had found a bag containing her Seeds t-shirts and sweatshirts. Ashley's mother had wanted to get rid of them, but her sister said, "No. Because I am going to Seeds of Peace in two years." Ashley ultimately did not attend the camp, but Tim remembers both sisters fondly, and other siblings who would join the program, especially via the Maine Seeds. Several sets of siblings from Maine (native to America or not) would participate in the Maine Seeds program by 2019.



Eric Farmer, Counselor and Seeds of Peace Communications Director, Late-2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Tim told the kids that taking over the running of the center in the Middle East had changed him. He now had a greater appreciation for what campers from that region would go home to, for the realities of their daily lives. Before the Beyond Borders program had started, Tim said he had heard that he would be getting a fantastic group of kids to work with, and

that they had not disappointed him, they had lived up to everything he had anticipated. About the Maine kids, he said that they remained very important to him and that he was sad not to be able to stay around throughout the year to work with them, especially to help guide the new Seeds, as he had been able to do over previous years. "Since 2000, the Maine kids have had me with them," he stated. Now they had to continue their work during the school year without him, as he well knew they could. (However, Tim would be back with them at their school meetings and year-round activities before long.)

No one knows how long they have to live, Wilson reminded the kids, who after Tim spoke and their coaches addressed them, would, or some would, begin the tears that for many Seeds mark the end of a camping session. Songs and tears, along with a spirit still full of fun and achievement from the Color Games, followed the evening talks. But first Tim told the kids that he was proud of the work they had done, and that as they went about their business after they left camp they should remember how short life could be. Ashley's early death had saddened him and the kids, in particular the Portland Project kids. Yet, Tim reminded them, theirs was a wonderful opportunity to learn and understand. He said that his life, too, had afforded great opportunity. "My parents," he said, "told me that there were people like you." His life, one could tell from the words Tim spoke, and the words he left unsaid, had been immeasurably enriched by having known the young Seeds.

Still working on a script partially provided by his mother and father and the advice they had given him, and downplaying his own role in developing that script, Tim would say good-bye personally to each teenager as they left the camp. Then, after finishing other camp business, Tim would fly off to the Middle East yet again. There, as in America, there would be teenagers looking for his guidance, his help, and simply the pleasure of his laughter. In spite of his worries, and sometimes his grievances, Timothy Paris Wilson was continuing to do just what his father had said he would do—he was going out and trying

to change the world even as he interpreted it, he was becoming part of the world. In both endeavors, perhaps inextricably linked, Timothy P. Wilson succeeds.

Camp changed after Tim left, in some ways. But Tim never truly left, and, just as importantly he had instilled ideals and work ethics that continued through with the people he had once hired, and had trained, and some who were his former campers. Lineup might be conducted by Leslie in the early to mid-2010s, or by Wil, and sometimes even by Tim, as Tim continued to visit the camp, especially during special event days or when the Maine Seeds and alumnae were there. Just as Tim had greeted the day with the ringing of the old bell, and then a resounding “Good Morning Everyone!” as the kids and staff assembled, or with similar greetings at lunch and dinner or other lineups on the shore of Pleasant Lake, so Leslie and Wil and eventually others started the day the same way, and lineup before meals continued.

On one such day, August 12, 2014, the new campers and returning ones, were greeted with a booming—but not quite as booming as Tim’s had been, “Good Morning Everyone!” To which everyone responded, “Good Morning Wil!” Wil—who had been part of the camp since 1999—wore a white baseball hat much as Tim had often worn a white or straw floppy one, with a SOP staff t-shirt, athletic pants not dissimilar to ones Tim had worn, a SOP sweatshirt wrapped around his waist and a walkie-talkie tucked in by his side. On his chest he wore a white pin one of the Seeds had made him (every session made name tags) with “WiL” written in dark green block letters and a tiny peace sign serving as the dot. He might have looked a bit peaked to some, but his smile when greeting Seeds and staff and visitors remained gentle, genuine, and sweet. By now, Tim was not only part of the Seed family; he and his daughter Olivia were also part of the Wilson family. Years before his daughter had played at camp with Tim’s grandchildren, particularly Craig’s daughter Samantha. Now, while Samantha and Olivia remained fast friends, the children of Leslie Ad-

dison, now married and using Lewin as her surname, played at camp. Wil, however, was battling a severe health threat—cancer—in 2014. Still, he went to camp and Olivia and the Wilsons would visit him there as elsewhere.



Tim Alone on Cart, Late 2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

By 2014, the success of many former Seeds and staff was evident. While Leslie served as camp director, Wil did not just serve as a head counselor during the era, he also had finished law school, taught at Bowdoin College and was raising his daughter. However, like Tim, he faced some health issues, and while when Tim recovered from one surgery during the era, Wil was often the first face he saw during the day, so, too, would Tim come to sit by Wil's bed. But before things worsened for the two, there was more to be accomplished, more kids to reach and teach, more of them for both men as well as for Leslie and other SOP staff.

Sessions that summer seemed quite similar to those of the past, in terms of camper experiences. For example, two female Seeds from Israel stated of their first time in camp, that they had met Tim and were pleased with what they saw in him. He had been addressing the Seeds about problems caused by the current wars. One of the two teenagers then commented that dialogue was difficult because, “It is all happening now.” One of them stated, “I think it is very important that we are here. I think it is very nice to meet other children, ones that I would not be able to meet elsewhere.” The girl’s English was not perfect, but she was still easily understood. Her friend added, “I think I understand better the other side. I understand why we have to come to an understanding because this situation cannot go on.”

Later that day, a first time counselor from Waterville, Alex, who was taking some of the female Seeds to use the phone during their allotted time, said that she did not know Tim before she had come to camp that year. She had known the SOP existed, but was not aware that Americans came as campers. Then, during her junior and senior at Colby College she became involved in peace studies, “and found out that this phenomenal place existed in my backyard.” She applied for a job with SOP and “was chosen,” she stated. Meanwhile, her bunk campers from Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan made their phone calls while crowding in to sit together and talk about the camp. One teen from Pakistan said that the camp was “amazing” and that she especially enjoyed waterskiing, while one of the girls from Afghanistan said that the best part of camp for her so far had been dialogue, to which the first girl stated, “Yes, dialogues are good too.” One of the campers added that, “The counselors here are really very interested. They will see it in your face [if there is a problem] and they will come up to you and ask what is wrong.”

As Tim Wilson continued to head the Maine Seeds program in the late-2010s, campers during 2014-19 reported on their current experiences with camp and Tim. Melissa, a Maine

Seed about to enter college, said that she had been Tim's "right hand man." She had been a camper in 2011 and a peer support camper in 2012, and has worked with the Maine Seeds since, including returning for alumni day in the 2010s and on other days, "just to visit." She said in 2014 that she had become very close with some of the Maine, and some of the Syracuse, NY campers while at camp. She had also been given the opportunity to get to know kids "I would never have known, who were just fifteen miles away from me, away from Yarmouth, a white affluent community" in which she lived. "I realized how small I am in the world. I learned how to shut my mouth and listen." Much of this she attributed to Tim, stating that, "Tim is so dedicated to this program. He does it from the bottom of his heart. I first met him in 2011, and he helped get me involved with the camp." She continued to aid, and then communicate with, the Maine Seeds into 2018.

Other changes had come to the Maine program, as elsewhere in the organization. By the late 2010s, some former Seeds, or still active—school age—ones, sat on their school boards as regular members or as student representatives. Tim continued with fundraising and helped add schools in Winslow, Waterville, and Hallowell to the program. He sought to bring more kids and schools into the Maine Seeds and have them participate in an expanded domestic program under development that included not just the Maine and Syracuse Seeds, but also Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles by the 2018 season. The year 2017 saw 160 new Maine Seeds at camp—180 counting the returning Peer Support campers. In 2018, Wilson stated of the Maine Seeds and the work they do: "We are not a club. The kids use what they learn at SOP to make their communities better, they use the skills they learn at dialogue to [promote facilitation] at their own schools." Wilson spent much of 2017-18 traveling throughout the state, trying to bring the Seeds program to more and more schools, more and more students.



Flag Raising Ceremony, 2017
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

The Maine Seeds continue to hold their summits in late March-early April, and, as a newer piece of the program, to take their findings to the University of Maine Law School. The Maine Seeds also celebrated a “Holiday of Holidays” each December 11, including all seasonal celebrations under its umbrella. They include elementary schools in this, Tim said in November 2016, “to show them the fun things we do.” Tim and Jacquie Wilson are integral to these events, as they are in recruiting new students into the Maine Seeds. The recruited students would then go to camp under other supervision, and then once they became Seeds (the term now used for the kids only after they had attended a summer session in Otisfield), but then they came under Tim’s direct supervision again.

At camp and elsewhere, co-existence sessions had become facilitation sessions, and then simply dialogue sessions, but, in each, no matter the shift in name, the goal was honest discussion of conflict, be the conflict in Maine, Egypt, or the West Bank. Over recent years too, Beyond Borders with its seemingly divisive aspects, essentially merged into other programs, and PSs had largely become part of a group of returning campers now embraced under the Advanced Leadership Program. Other programs likewise continued to grow and changed at the Seeds of Peace, both in Maine and elsewhere. However, the basic goal of Tim and the organization overall has not changed: creating generations of leaders who would someday help foster peace in the world. And, this is already beginning to happen, with former Seeds taking on leadership positions in their respective communities and nations, and, even, in the Seeds of Peace organization. The full scope of this, however, will not be known for another decade or so, as the former Seeds continue to mature. To date, almost 7,000 kids have attended the camp in Otisfield, Maine, learning and playing at the old home of Camp Powhatan, where Tim had so many years ago had started his career of camp leadership. In 2017, SOP celebrated its starting of twenty-five years on Pleasant Lake.



Phone Time Outside the Dining Hall, Mid-2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Some members of the staff, each of them having been with the program long-term, feel that the camp had become more singularly focused during recent years. One of those staff members is Mustafa, a former camper from Egypt who tended to go by the name “Moose.”

Mustafa said in 2015 that he been with Tim as a camper during Tim’s last full session. He had then started full time at Seeds in 2012. In 2010 and 2011 he had worked in the summers as the art shack director. His current role is U.S. based, and he serves as programs manager and assistant camp director.

For Mustafa or Moose, the impact of SOP as a camper was very personal. He said, “It allowed me a space to self-reflect and to understand my personality much more and to face the things I did not want to face. It opened doors to me to see my creative abilities, and my musical abilities, and to help oth-

ers. Seeds helped me to have more empathy with others. I am able now to put myself in their shoes and see where they are, based on my own experiences, rather than to try to figure out why they are doing what they are doing.” He added, that he had art shack under Mariah Scee when he was a camper, a staff member Tim had hired and mentored, and of Tim specifically Mustafa stated, “Tim is a little bit aloof and guarded himself. I can see why he is, and why he is trying to do what he is trying to do. He is trying to change things.” Mustafa, Like Tim, Leslie, Bobbie, and others, continued to work with the Seeds of Peace in 2019, each of them committed to the effort to bring peaceful resolutions to conflicts on the international level, and to foster cross-cultural understandings in America and elsewhere.

Sarah Brajtbord also works at SOP to the current day, and was a camper under Tim during Tim’s last session. She recently said of Tim, “He was larger than life. Because I was not a bad camper I did not know he even knew who I was. He was always telling us to do our JOBS. Then, when I came back for orientation in 2010, I [still] didn’t think he knew who I was, and so I just walked by. He said, ‘Who do you think you are Ms. Brajtbord, just walking by?’ He knew who I was all along. He has that intangible leadership [quality]. Now I am technically his supervisor. It is beyond irony. Leslie will tell me that I have to call Tim and tell him he has to do something. I am like, “I have to call Tim and tell HIM to do something ...”

Sarah said that having had “the opportunity to work with Tim and learn from him on a daily basis is beyond just an opportunity. Tim is still the ultimate authority on camping, and he shows me how to build relationships both professionally and personally. Things are more focused now, and [the Maine Program] is more focused.” It became more focused she thought, after the program was expanded in 2011. However, identifying one of Tim’s key traits she added, “Tim looks at the world in a different way. He looks at tangential issues and finds ways to integrate them in a way beyond my understand-

ing, he does them in ways to connect them all in and make sense. What seems random becomes an intricate web of issues and topics and themes [woven] into a program we can use.” Two years later, Sarah would be running the camp as the new camp director.



Mustafa and Sarah at the Art Shack, Mid-2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Other staff members who worked for the program in 2015 and beyond had also worked with Tim over the years and a number of them had been campers under him. However, except for one person, by 2016 all of the people involved from the first day of the Seeds of Peace, in terms of planning and starting the camp in Otisfield, were gone. Only Bobbie Gottschalk, like Tim Wilson, has been with Seeds since its very first session.



*Bobbie Gottschalk, Seeds of Peace Co-founder, First Executive
Director and Camp Photographer, Late-2010s*

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Like Tim, Bobbie continued to come to camp every year through 2019 (and was recognized by 2016 as a SOP co-founder) and on August 12, 2014, a warm breezy cloudy day on the lake, she said that camp was now, “much more intentional.

We don't just do things because it's fun or because we have always done it that way. Things have to fit directly with the program, not that we didn't do that before." Indeed, although some procedures might have changed, the intent to do the best job they could for the campers had certainly been the goal since the first day Tim and Joel Bloom had opened the facility at Camp Powhatan to the Seeds of Peace. They may have employed some different methods than others might have, but they did so based on decades of camp leadership. Gottschalk in 2014 seemed to have difficulty pinning down exactly what changes were truly changes, and not perhaps simple evolutions over time, for as the world continues to change the camp has to continue to change to reflect this.



After the Feasts, as the Campers Prepare to Leave, Ketchup and Mustard

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Bobbie thought, too, that the contemporary session with Seeds from Syracuse had, "Helped the Maine Seeds also. We used to be the odd-man out. Now, when put with the Syracuse

kids ... we have a focus on leadership development and issues like education, English for speakers of other languages, etc. The groups also discussed domestic violence and bullying. All of these had become part of the Maine Seeds program, which had some 139 campers that session. In total, the SOP had some 5300 Seeds to date, about three-quarters of whom remained in contact with the program. The next two years would add another thousand plus kids, with Seeds alumnae now working in at least twenty-seven nations to foster change.



Leaving Camp - The Bus Awaits, Late 2010s

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Bobbie said that these issues benefited the Maine and Syracuse campers, and that, with the tensions and wars breaking out in the Middle East, that getting Seeds from some places was again difficult. She said, “We had eight kids chosen from Gaza when the war broke out. We thought we would get none, so we were really happy to get those.” The camp also had a girl from Iraq recently, and then her family had to move to

Jordan, right after camp. “They had to leave because she had come here,” Bobbie related. They had also had “cases where families are targeted,” and believed that there might be some such issues after the current sessions had run. Other campers that summer included ones from Jordan as well as Southern Asia, India, Pakistan, Africa, Israel, Palestine, and the American and Maine delegations.



What Remains When Campers Have Left, 2018
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

Bobbie told the author that, “I think the Seeds of Peace is just an example of what can be done all over. I think peace education should be in all school systems. Some people think this is like spitting in the wind. I do not feel that way. There are two ways of looking at it; one way equals a continuation of war, the other is to strive for peace. I’d rather put all my focus on that [striving for peace], and the more people who can do that the better it will be.” Peace would have a better chance. Bobbie like Tim had “retired” by this time, she had she had retired about ten years previously. But, also like Tim, it is difficult to ascertain just how retired she truly was. She did think that Tim, with the changes in his role at Seeds of Peace and other life changes, was “in a better place, emotionally.” The situation at camp continued much the same through the 2019 camping sessions.

In some ways, Tim may have been in a better place emotionally in 2015 to 2018. In other ways he was not. After a long illness his adopted son Wil Smith died of colon cancer in February 2015. He was 46 years old, and had worked with Tim since 1999, since just before he graduated from Bowdoin College. He had served in the first Gulf War before this, and then, after college graduation, still as a single parent, he entered law school, graduating in 2006, and became the associate dean of multi-cultural programs. He worked for SOP summers during all this time, and became associate camp director in 2007, and worked summers there until the year before his death. The camp held a memorial for Wil during the summer session in 2016, near the close of camp, and Seeds from throughout the state came to it, and some from further away, including current Maine Seeds, and some older ones like Leona and Lars. Many spoke of Wil, sobs were heard at many junctures, and a teary Tim Wilson said, “I hired him.” Tim had hired Wil, had promoted him, had taken Wil and Oliva into his heart and home, and had shared so much else with him.

And then, in 2017, Tim’s beloved older sister Roberta, or Bert, died. Tim said, that it was the last day of the last session,

“and I didn’t say anything.” He contacted people, however, and the next day noted her passing on social media. He wrote:

At 6:20 am yesterday, my sister Roberta G. Wilson passed away. She was ninety-two. She had a long life. For me, she was a second mother. She taught me how to play tennis, was my little league baseball coach. But most of all, she schooled me about segregation when I would visit her in Washington, DC. Bert, that is what we called her, helped me to understand what it meant to be the best human being you can be. Our family will miss her.

One [final] story. When President Obama was campaigning for President the first time he stopped at her personal care home. She led a prayer circle with him. She had her arm in his as they prayed. I got a call. She gave me her classic description: “Nice man! Good husband and father.” When he was elected, she said, “I thought I would never see this happen in my time.”

All I can say is AMEN form your Baby-B.

Tim had helped move her Bert into a nursing home the year before, when her doctors had determined that she needed more care then her previous, personal care home could give her. She had fallen and broken her hip. Tim, speaking of her a couple of months later, again recalled how, “There is a photograph of her with Obama, from when he was running for office.” Right until the end, the Wilsons have an impact on the world around them. And up to the present time, Tim still gives his family the credit for so much of what he has done and who he is.

Tim’s older brother Theodore or Ted was still alive in late 2019, and looked to stay so for some time. He was ninety-two, and doing well, although an accident had slowed him down. He had been hit by a bus in 2006, and the bus had run over half of his body. He now uses a motorized wheelchair, but is still fully cognizant and offering his little brother advice, such as telling him get back to work with this author to get the

book finished! Unfortunately, Tim had one more loss during the close of the era. His old school friend Edward McFarlane died in September 2017. Tim said several kind things of him, including that he was, “a fantastic human being.” Tim had known him since 1952.



Tim Looking at the Campers at Flag Ceremony, 2017

Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

In the midst of sadness, Tim continued to receive recognition for his work, from not from public officials and from such organizations as the Peace Corps, and also from those he knows and loves. When photographed at Senator Susan Collins’s office in September 2017, Collins recognized his work

(and noted the two former Seeds on her staff), and a few people sent in telling comments. On social media, one wrote, “Mr. Wilson was one of the best teachers at Dexter High School. He knew how to get the best out of his students, no matter what class he taught,” and continued with a plea for Tim to keep the SOP moving forward. Tim’s son Craig wrote: “Dad, keep on making it happen, love you.” These statements pretty much says it all; with those he loves and respects behind him, Tim Wilson keeps making it happen.

In May 2019, Wilson was inducted into the University of Maine’s Sports Hall of Fame. His entire family showed up to see him recognized not just for his athletic accomplishments, but for a lifetime of service to his community. And that community is as broad as the world.

One former Seed, Lindsay C. (her initial is being used here used to differentiate her from a couple of other Seeds with similar spellings of the same first name) had been very active as a Portland Project and Maine Seed almost from day one, being at camp and/or an active Seed from 2000-2005. She was there during the early years when campers like Leona and Lars attended, and she, too, went on to acquire a solid education and continued with ideals if not generated by, then at least encouraged by, Tim Wilson and the SOP. She wrote to the author in summer 2016, from her post as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Philippines, of Tim Wilson and Seeds:

I joined Seeds of Peace when I was thirteen years old, one of the first delegates in the Maine Seeds program. I attended camp each summer until I was sixteen. My experience with Seeds of Peace was powerful, propelling me forward into the world to have experiences I never could have imagined possible. From a young age I learned about the world from the international community I cultivated as a Seed. I am proud to see the successes of my camp friends—journalists, political and security analysts, entrepreneurs, educators—the SOP family continues to inspire me today as it did when I was thirteen.

Of Tim specifically, Lindsay C. wrote:

I was close to Tim, but that was so long ago. He was always honest and encouraged us to pursue our ambitions. He was a great mentor and fostered an opportunity for me to grow in areas a conventional education couldn't. I did a lot of public speaking under Tim's tutelage and found my voice. I learned to be an advocate for people, for ideas, and for change. All the while, Tim was just the guide, creating the environment to foster young people's humanity, and giving us the stage to show it to everyone.

Lindsay offered to provide a specific quote for the book and about Tim. However, her less formal writing more than suffices.

Timothy P. Wilson, over his years as a coach, a teacher, a member of the Peace Corps, a counselor and the then director at Powhatan and then as the Camp Director of the Seeds of Peace, and under his various other titles, has indeed helped change the world, two or four or four hundred kids at a time. He has helped change the world around him, even as the world itself continued to change. Tim does not approve of some recent changes, some seemingly backward steps, in America and in the world, but he continues to face that world—armed with the knowledge his family has given him or helped him develop over the decades—to foster peace, and to further progress. The “P” in Timothy P. Wilson’s name may stand for “Paris,” but it might just as well stand for Peace. He has done as much for the cause of peace as anyone else, although he would never acknowledge it.



Maine Seeds at Camp, 2017
Photo by Trudy Irene Scee

