

DeerPark Lodge  
Spider Lake

Rita Anderson  
Summer Employee 1955-1960

Rita started working at Deer Park Lodge in the summer of 1955 as a teenager, and returned for the following four summers. At the time of her employment, Ben and Ruth Epstein were the owners.

Rita's very first job at Deer Park was cleaning cabins. She did that for 2 weeks before moving to a more pleasurable job as Lobby Girl. Duties as Lobby Girl included cleaning the lobby, bathrooms, bar room and cocktail lounge.

Another job which Rita had was Play School Manager. Taking care of the kids was fun work and did not have too many hours. The children ate separate from parents at lunch time so Rita was with the kids at 11 a.m. to order lunch. They all ordered anything they wanted off the menu. This was a treat for a staff member because they were normally served less expensive staff food. After lunch, Rita had all afternoon off. At 5 p.m. she returned to help the kids with dinner and stayed with them until 7 pm.

In the evening, staff members had the option of babysitting if parents wanted to go out. The adults enjoyed a traveling orchestra. This orchestra would visit other resorts in the area and give lessons to the lodge clients.

Rita also had a waitress job at Deer Park Lodge. Her wage was \$60/mo. Plus room and board and tips. Waitresses would have the same families/tables to wait on each day for however long the family stayed. Each waitress had 6 tables. The kitchen staff had off every other Sunday afternoon. Rita enjoyed working with the kitchen help. The main

workers in the kitchen were the Chef, First Cook, Fry Cook, and Salad Man. Rita remembers the salad man, John Now. He was very talented and would sculpt ice and food for the lodge guests. But he was a sort of mystery man. He would never leave the lodge and the men that visited him always had fancy suits on. Maybe he was in trouble??

Another worker Rita remembers as a mystery was the laundry man. Rumor was he had served time in Alcatraz. He was a bit strange and was quoted as saying he would “get all the girls”.

Rita really enjoyed the group she worked with. Mr. Epstein did not keep a real tight rein on the kids. They could go to the rec. hall for entertainment. Mr. Epstein also gave them a lodge car on Sundays to go to church.

Living conditions were good. The girls/women lived in the upstairs of the staff house. It was one big room plus a separate bathroom with hot water. The boys/men were downstairs.

Ben Epstein was a good boss. He was also very watchful of the lodge. At night he slept in a screened-in porch near the road so he could hear if anyone was coming or going.

Before the lodge was open for the summer, Ben would open up for conventions. Mostly doctors. For the summer months, most of his guests were Jewish.

Ben and Ruth Epstein had 3 children, two boys, Frank & Steve and one girl, Lynn. Rita Frank, and another friend Susie would group together to go boating.

The five years at Deer Park Lodge were fun and memorable for Rita.

