

## **History of Cousin Camp**

By Jo Anna Arnold

Cousin Camp began as an idea Susie Vincent (MaBean) thought of for her own children with their cousins – but it was only formally organized when she discussed it years later with her daughter, Jo Anna, and daughter-in-law, Tracy, for their children (her grandchildren) to better know each other. It would be four days of fun with the children from both Alabama and Georgia. Ma Bean took responsibility of the housing, food and laundry, with financial assistance from the moms, while Jo Anna and Tracy made plans for activities and organized games. Ma Bean was creative and designed an opening ceremony and flag to give it an official feel. It was also decided that t-shirts should be given to all campers, printed the first few years by Philip Arnold and later by Israel Sandoval.

Here in this history is a list of activities that took place each year. It is not listed in actual order of events at each camp and may not be an all-inclusive list but is to the best of the writer's memory. Traditions like Chuck E. Cheese, tea parties, and scrapbooks made their place in the camp. Having an annual theme also became a tradition to give each year's camp a unique identity and to help activities become learning experiences.

### **2001 “We Are a Happy Family” - Yellow**

Activities included:

Scavenger obstacle course at Green Pond Park

Water games in yard

Birmingham Zoo

Free movie at the Galleria Theater

Talent show

Air blown “worm” toy in basement

Makeovers (toe polish, etc.)

Decorate flowerpots

Scrapbook pages

### **2002 “I have Two Little Hands” (Service) - Red**

Activities included:

Chuck E. Cheese

Cleaning Church chairs in Primary room

Children's Hands On Museum (CHOMS) in Tuscaloosa

Water games in yard

Making puppets from socks

Mc Donald's

Making cookies to give to neighbors

Scrapbook pages

### **2003 “I’m a Little Monkey in Our Family Tree” (Family History) - Tan**

Extended Family was included this year whenever possible. This was also Ma Bean’s last Cousin Camp before her death in August. The camp was scheduled a little earlier in the year (during Spring break) to accommodate her declining health.

Activities included:

Family Home Evening conducted by Pa Bean (Ronnie Vincent) on Family History including a pictured family group sheet for each child.

Chuck E. Cheese

A day at the Birmingham Temple

Tour with Paw Paw Little to towns of his youth and to Cemetery for rubbings

CHOMS

Tea Party with Aunt Sarah –Disney themed

Roller-skating for older kids

Horseback riding with Aunt Jody and Jennifer

Celebrated Caleb and Devin’s First Birthday

Scrapbook pages

### **2004 “Make a Joyful Noise” (Music) - Purple**

This was the first Cousin Camp to be held in Georgia. Some Arnold cousins were included for the first time. We’ve all felt like family.

Activities included:

Music Hall of Fame in Macon

Garden Tea Party as insects with Aunt Sarah

Water games in yard

Chuck E. Cheese

Macon Park for lunch

Museum of Arts and Sciences and Animal Show

Middle Georgia College production of the musical “The Wizard of Oz”

Making instruments

Blue Rock Concert at the City Auditorium

Scrapbook pages

### **2005 “Preparing for a Rainy Day” (Preparedness) - Blue**

Held again in Alabama

Activities included:

Water slide in yard

Survivor game with Pa Bean

Learning about food storage at Brother and Sister Ross’s home including sealing food in Mylar bags

Visionland and Water Park

Trip to Tannehill with Paw Paw and Grandmother

Tea Party  
Camp Fire  
Chuck E. Cheese  
Scrapbook pages

**2006 “Children of the World” (Diversity) – White, tie-dyed**

Held in Georgia.  
Activities included:  
Tie-Dyed t-shirts  
Chuck E. Cheese  
Themed meals- Mexican, Chinese, English  
Water games, slide, and water baseball  
Crafts – English tea hats, sombreros, boomerangs, flags  
Piñata  
Presentations of countries by each family  
Habitat for Humanity’s Global Village in Americus, GA  
English tea party  
Scrapbook pages

**2007 “Experimenting with Science” (Science) - Orange**

Held at Tracy’s house in Alabama for the first time.  
Activities included:  
McWayne Center in Birmingham, AL, a science museum  
“God is a scientist” discussion with the sister missionaries  
Celebrating Grandmother and Pawpaw’s 79<sup>th</sup> birthday with them  
Green Pond Park  
Launching a rocket  
Visiting the Children’s Hands On Museum (CHOMs)  
Creating “inventions”  
Tea Party  
Ed’s demonstration of gases in outer space and other science “tricks”  
Swimming in Tracy’s pool  
Chuck E. Cheese  
Scrapbook pages

**2008 “We’re Going Places” (Transportation) – Safety Yellow**

Held in Georgia again. We had many mishaps during this Cousin Camp (family quarrelling, car troubles, planning problems, higher expenses, etc). We felt the “growing pains” of the family size and age. It was also the first time several of the planned activities were canceled. We felt a slight deviation from the gospel inspired themes from

previous years and felt a need to return to them next year. It was still memorable and fun for all involved.

Activities included:

Warner Robins Air Force Museum

Transportation games (wheel barrel relay, make your own transportation craft)

Tree of Life hike with Tea Party

Tybee Island Beach

Chuck E. Cheese

Scrapbook pages

Other planned activities that didn't make it –

River boat and train ride due to car troubles

Donkey rides due to problems

### **2009 “Be Strong, Just for the Health of It!” (Health) - Green**

Scheduled May 27-30

Cochran, GA

Theme: Word of Wisdom

Slogan: Be Strong, Just for the Health of It!

Song: In Our Lovely Deseret, hymn 307

Scripture: Doctrine and Covenants Section 89

T-shirts: green