

## **Camp Olave - A Brief History**

Camp Olave, formerly the assembly camp of the Rat Portage Lumber Company, was a wilderness area with 2 cottages (Rose and Brock), stables built of huge logs, one or two shacks, and a half-wrecked wharf. In February 1930, after an assured water supply was confirmed, an agreement of sale was drawn up for \$10,000 with a down payment of \$2,000, an amazing act of courage and vision by those involved. Despite donations and numerous fundraising efforts, it was often difficult to meet the annual payments for the property, but eventually, by October 1935, the final payments *were* made and the property was owned free and clear (the price having been reduced to \$7,500).

The summer of 1930 saw the first full camping season enjoyed on this property. The camp was initially referred to as Camp Brock, then the Wilson Creek Camp, until it was renamed in 1961, to honour and with the permission of Lady Olave Baden-Powell.

By 1946 the guiding area of Greater Vancouver consisted of four Divisions. In late 1956, the different Divisions began to take responsibility for specific sites within the camp. By 1957, when the new agreement was entered into, the name of the camp committee became the Vancouver Girl Guide Council. Representatives from all Divisions sat on this Council and the Chairmen rotated from Division to Division.

Area boundaries were redrawn by the Provincial Council in 1971, so the North Shore Division became Lions Area, the Burnaby Division became Burnaby Royal Area, and the Richmond Divisions (Centennial, Heritage and Massey) became part of Fraser Delta Area and maintained their connection with Vancouver Area for camping activities.

By May 1978, following National's suggestion, the Greater Vancouver Camp Committee was disbanded and the Camp Olave Management Committee, chaired by Georgia Runcie, was formed and took over the management of the common areas. A minimum of two representatives from each of the four areas were to attend the meetings and the Areas retained responsibility for their own portions, continuing to administer them with their own Area Camp Committees.

As described in the 1985 (current) agreement, the Common Interest of Camp Olave was administered by the Camp Olave Management Committee, composed of at least two representatives each from Burnaby Royal, Fraser Delta (Richmond Divisions), Lions and Vancouver Areas.

Each Area also had its own land on which the rest of the sites sit: Burnaby Royal has 18.96 acres, Lions has 22.55 acres, Fraser Delta (Richmond) had 15.50 acres and Vancouver had 46.30 acres. The parcel of land north of the Highway consists of 28.83 acres. The total is 132.14 acres.

In 2008 BC Council began the process of amalgamation of Provincial areas from 18 to 10. Burnaby Royal, Vancouver and Fraser Delta become West Coast Area and with Lions Area continues to manage and support Camp Olave through the Camp Olave Management Committee (COMC). Representatives from Lions Area and from West Coast Area and their Area Commissioners as well as representatives from the Site Managers Committee vote at COMC. Common areas and all sites are the responsibility of COMC.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Establishment of the site at Wilson Creek required considerable effort by the early camp committee members. Work to purchase the land and subsequently develop and maintain the site has required that fund raising be an ongoing aspect of Camp Olave.

Early financial support for camp endeavours was provided by the Executive Council members themselves. Many came from socially prominent and wealthy families that were concerned with promoting Guiding activities, and they were able to contribute as was needed. Initially, funds from the sale of property at Eagle Harbour were donated by the Brock family in 1927 to purchase the land at Wilson Creek.

Fund raising efforts prior to World War II were of a genteel nature and included the types of activities that would appeal to influential Vancouverites. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Miss Pumphrey's dance and concert displays, held in the Orpheum Theatre, brought in up to \$1000.00 at one time, a tremendous amount of money in those pre-Depression days. At about the same time, an annual series of "Garden Fetes" or "Gardens Beautiful" tours was established. Patrons would be picked up at the nearest interurban streetcar stop and driven to the gracious homes of the Guiders in affluent neighbourhoods of Vancouver and West Vancouver where a wide variety of stalls and entertainment awaited them. These were discontinued during World War II due to gas rationing and were not resumed afterwards. A Girl Guide Cook Book was published in 1932 for sale at 50 cents, "proceeds to be used for camp purposes." As a money-raising venture the cookbooks were unsuccessful, selling only enough to cover costs, but they remain as a testimony to the hard work of the Guiders.

During 1942/43 two major changes influenced the fund raising efforts related to the camp. Firstly, the Greater Vancouver Guide Council became a member of the Welfare Federation (later known as the Community Chest) and began to receive an annual sum of \$250.00 for the maintenance of the campsite. Because ongoing funding was provided in this manner, raising funds was no longer the main obligation of the Executive Council. Divisions started to pay a share of the profits from the annual sale of Girl Guide cookies to a camp maintenance fund.

Notwithstanding the provision of ongoing maintenance funding, over the ensuing years, as each new project was started, a separate account was opened to cover the expenses (e.g., Brock Fund, Ranger Fund, and Hospital Fund). Different groups supported the individual projects and were challenged to find ways to raise the money required.

As early as 1935, the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire (I.O.D.E.) contributed generously towards the erection of a recreation hut. Mr. Don Carpenter, architect, donated his services to make a plan for the hut, which was initially built as a nucleus that could be (and was) enlarged from time to time as finances permitted. When it was built, the I.O.D.E. hut was the only building available to accommodate girls in wet weather. The Rotary Club donated funds in 1940 to double the size of the I.O.D.E. hut and make the outside appearance both more attractive and more useful, since the wide veranda and steps could now be used when overhead protection from the weather was required. At the same time, the I.O.D.E. supplied funds for a fireplace to be built. In 1941 The Rotary Club donated \$500.00, on the condition that 21 sleeping huts (with three sets of two-tier bunks in each) be built at once on campsites. So generous were the lumber merchants in the size of their donations that there was almost enough material remaining after the huts were built to construct a three-room cottage for the caretaker.

Campership and other funds in both West Coast and Lions Area as well as other private and corporate donations continue to provide funds for all girls and units to go camping.

It is impossible to give suitable credit to the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people who have made contributions of money, talent, time and hard labour to the development and maintenance of Camp Olave throughout the years. Families, groups and individuals regularly donate their time and labour to the seasonal work weekends and have contributed to such projects as roofing, painting, gardening, cutting fire wood, organizing equipment, cleaning sites, moving rocks, burning refuse, insulating cabins, undertaking repairs, building new structures, and many other tasks. Considerable time is also donated to serving on camp committees.

## **THE SITES**

**Ah Ah Wah Kie** (By the Sea) - an oceanside wooded site with a large kitchen/dining shelter with huts built in 1941. Huts with bunk beds were built, replaced with new in 1988/89. Wall tents added in 1999.

**Brock** - originally just one large room with a lean-to kitchen and verandas on two sides. Major renovations (including winterizing) were completed in 1969. Further updates have been done and it now has a modern kitchen with eating area.

**Brownie Hideaway** - officially opened in 1955, it is a cozy cabin with a dorm room, kitchen/dining area and common room with fireplace

**Galilana** (Water's Edge) – A cabin with washrooms, sleeping huts, tent sites and a great cooking/dining shelter, this site was set aside for pioneer camping in 1957 (local contractors and many volunteer hours) and officially opened in June, 1958. A modern washroom, The Royal Flush was added later.

**Field** - cleared in 1939 and now used as a day site for activities.

**Gingerbread House** - built in 1966, originally intended for Ranger and adult use, it has also served as home to the Summer Staff and for smaller groups.

**Hi Yu Win** (Place of High Winds) 1941 huts with bunk beds were built, replaced in 1988/89 and again in 2000, it now has a large modern shelter with fabulous kitchen and new sleeping huts.

**Kutawa** (Clearing in the forest) - 1941 huts with bunk beds were built, replaced with new in 1988/89. The tipis were erected in 1998 and were replaced with new Bunkhouses in 2015.

**Kwi Kwa** (Seagull) - opened in October 1990, this building accommodates 32 campers in 2,400 square feet. The lumber used in the construction was milled from trees taken down to clear the site. As with so many sites, a lot of volunteer labour was used.

**Nawilak** (Mischievous Spirit) – A comfortable cabin, first used in the summer of 1958. Indoor plumbing was added in 1967/8. Note the beautiful carved benches made by a local craftsman.

**Panabode** - constructed in 1964 this was used for overnight stays by Camp Advisers and Commissioners, it sleeps three.

**Pioneer** - By 1955 this site was cleared, water piped in and a narrow access road cut. In 1994 the gravel pads were built.

**Ranger** - funds were raised by Rangers to build this cabin. A road was cut to the site in 1946, but it was 1950 before the cabin was opened. Several pieces of furniture were made by the girls. Major renovations in 1995.

**Si Yay Lum** (Blue Skies and Fair Weather) – A forested tent site with a cooking/dining shelter. Thanks are due to the Canadian Order of Foresters whose members volunteered many hours to clear this site and erect a small shelter (1958). "Operation Upgrade" made it possible to build and equip the shelter.

**Tee Cseh** (Tall Trees) - a great tent site for pioneer camping.

**Tipi Wakin** (Medicine Hut) - built in 1951 as a hospital hut, by 1988 it began its new life as home to the Summer Staff.

### **SPECIAL PLACES**

**Amy Leigh Fitness circuit** - is located next to the Archery Range. It was named for Amy Leigh, Burnaby's first Guide and long-time Guider in Vancouver. Amy lived for over 100 years and remembered us in her will. The eight stations, a park bench and new signs complete the fitness circuit.

**Boat House** – was added to contain and protect the gear and boats and lifeguard equipment.

**Caretaker's Cottage** - the original cottage was only three rooms with no indoor water, plumbing or electricity. It was added to and remodeled twice before the current building was erected in 1973.

**Chapel** - Dedicated in 1949. It has benches and a set of chimes all set in a lovely forest area.

**Dude's Palace** - A Provincial Ranger camp in the 1950's with a western theme, entitled "Westward Ho", gave these lats their current name

**Enchanted Forest** – a wooded area for girls to put their imaginations to work with displays for others to enjoy.

**IODE** - started in 1936, designed to be enlarged as funds permitted. 1940 saw a doubling in size and a fireplace and wide veranda added. Extensive renovations were completed in 1964. It is used as a meeting and activity room

**Flagpoles** - erected to the memory of a wonderful friend, Mr. George Walker in 1948. He had played a very active role in the early days of the camp, building shelters and huts and was always available to help with the last-minute rush of breaking camp. The 40-foot pole was hewn from one of our own cedar trees.

**Nature House** - originally in a school portable (1973), the current building was not built until 1987 and houses a great nature display, games and activities

**Rose Cottage** - one of two original buildings when site was bought (the other was Brock), it is gone now but was located near the bus shelter.