

Camping in Pennsylvania and the East

Camp Agape Near Pittsburgh, PA

At this printing, little has been gathered about the camping program known as Agape other than that for several years it served a number of congregations in the Pittsburgh, PA, and area.

The camp originally consisted of 291 acres and served Junior High campers and families from congregations near the Pittsburgh, PA, area. It was located near

Hickory, PA.

Pastor Dave Thoreson provided leadership to the camp in the late sixties and early seventies and offered summer camping programs, and to a degree, family camp and retreat activities. The camp served small groups. In 1966, for example, 79 campers were served during the summer season.

Koinonia Community Highland Lake, New York

Thirty-five congregations incorporated the Martin Luther Camp Corporation in 1962 that gave birth to Koinonia. The camp, located in the Catskill Mountains near Highland Lake, New York, is an extension of their parish ministry.

Marie Ronning, a member of Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Staten Island, left her estate to the congregation. Rev. Bob Nervig, her pastor, believed in the value of camping among urban children and youth. In turn, this parish offered \$100,000 for a new camp if the whole group of congregations would agree to participate in an every member visit fund drive. \$440,000 was reached over and above the challenge gift, and Koinonia was born.

The metropolitan New York churches had a strong commitment to youth and outdoor Ministry. Camp Norge had served for many years as a Bible Camp location for their urban youth before Koinonia but the church did not own it. Ultimately, 60 congregations joined in the work of Koinonia. They were located in New Jersey, Metro New York, and Long Island.

Jerry Manlove was called to be the first director. Under his guidance, the camp was designed and developed, both as a facility, but more important, as a program concept and ministry uniquely equipped to challenge the constituent youth and adult population of Koinonia.

A magnificent wilderness site of 1200 acres, including two mountain lakes,

was purchased. A master plan was developed that has served the constituency since its inception. From the beginning, the theme of spacious, wild places for small groups of decentralized campers was maintained. The wilderness setting was to be preserved: Youth camping would be primitive, using tents and cooking over an open fire. Small groups were affirmed. All buildings would be winterized and be designed for multiple uses. Six year-round retreat centers were developed which have served over 50,000 youth and family members during the first 25 years.

John and Dorothy Asdal were called to serve as the first resident managers and they provided faithful service for 18 years.

Work camps for older high school youth involved them and other friends in gaining a sense of personal ownership in Koinonia. Canoeing the Delaware River has always been a part of Koinonia. Off site high adventure trips have been included in annual program offerings. Family tent and trailer camping has also been part of the Koinonia community, with 45 sites developed with utility hook ups.

In 1967 Burt Locker became the second camp director. Overseas boat trips were added plus camping for physically challenged campers and Title One programs. In 1972 Bob Nervig became the third director and served for many years. He had previously been on the camp board during Manlove's tenure as camp director.

In 1973 the Rafters, a family camp program center, was completed. The

following year, the farm, garden, and orchard were started. The youth group Walk-a-thons sponsored the barn raising for the farm. The Leni-Lenape Village was begun as a program site inspired by the Native Americans who originally inhabited the land. Commitment Homestead was also built and included a log cabin, blacksmith shop and craft area.

The Creation Learning Center, a field center for environmental education, was launched serving Lutheran Schools. Today, over 2000 students come to this center to experience the wonder of creation.

In 1976 the Future Mountain Village program center began. A geodesic dome was built as a core unit and a Yurt was added as a resource center for camp life.

A fund appeal for a new conference center was launched in 1978. \$900,000 was raised for the \$1.3 million center. The main dining room and kitchen were completed in 1980. Twenty guest rooms with private baths, meeting rooms, and a resource center were completed in 1982. The facility hosts adults and families and is especially designed for congregational retreats and elder hostel programs. Four weekend Advent festivals have been extremely popular. The center also has hosted conferences for youth leaders and has enabled Koinonia to expand its environmental education program.

In 1981 the Wilderness School, an accredited alternative high school, was opened. This program has given many young boys a second chance in life. Major funding came from the Commodity

Brokers Christian Fund. Partnership was established with Long Island Luther High School and Suffolk Luther High School.

A community center for the intentional young adults that serve and staff Koinonia was built in 1982. It is equipped with apartments, dorm rooms, chapel, dark room, education center, and work room. About 25 youth, which includes some foreign students, have been a part of the permanent community each year.

Lutherock Boone, NC

The idea of a camp near Boone, North Carolina, began in 1957 when V. O. Sipe donated 50 acres to ALC congregations in the area. The camp association was actually formed in the mid sixties as the NoCarAlc Association.

About the same time, 355 additional acres were purchased. The property owned by the camp is particularly beautiful and lent itself nicely to small groups of campers. The facilities that were developed were used in many different ways, combining sleeping rooms in a dining hall. Soon a lodge, several

The worship life of the Koinonia community has been shaped by the relationship with the Taize community in France. For a five-year period, 20 Koinonia staff members have taken a Holy Week pilgrimage to Taize.

The Koinonia community maintains its strong urban commitment and tie to inner city parishes. Koinonia understands itself as a holy place of renewal, prayer, reflection, and pilgrimage.

rustic cabins and a residence were constructed.

Rev. Mark Radloff became Director of Lutherock in 1984. Plans were initiated to develop adventure based camping in the area. This would lead to programs for backpacking, whitewater rafting, rock climbing and spelunking.

Following the formation of the ELCA in 1987, the corporation became part of Lutheridge /Lutherock ministries. Its high adventure program was launched successfully in 1988.

The Camps of the Central States

Among the achievements of Lutheran leaders in the central states of The American Lutheran Church was their willingness to experiment with new models for camping. Those who lived in Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado were willing to gather Lutheran resources from both the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America to deliver quality outdoor ministry programs to children, youth, and adults.

Distance is a factor in these states with large geographic areas to serve. There was also a difference in the geography and livelihood of people living in the eastern sections of Kansas and Nebraska and those living in the west, which was a ranching economy. These people often found Colorado easier to get to.

It may also be significant to sense the impact of the Dust Bowl Days on this part of the country. Life in the plains was extremely difficult during with drought and high winds; parts of Kansas and Oklahoma contributed to the great western movement of people seeking to improve their lives. Some of the remaining churches did not have the resources to join the great decade when Lutherans established camps in the early and mid forties. As a result, camp corporations were established in the mid sixties.

As I write this introduction, I serve as Executive Director of Lutheran Ranches of the Rockies, the organization that now owns Sky Ranch. I once spoke in a small church in western Nebraska and began my presentation by asking, "have any of you ever been to Sky Ranch?" To my surprise, virtually every hand from those who were over 55 years of age was raised. One gentleman began to tell the story of how he and his neighbor had donated Sky Ranch's first tractor. He concluded his story by telling his friends that it had taken three days to drive it to Sky Ranch.

Camping may have gotten off to a late start, but it was a faithful and enthusiastic beginning.

Camping in Nebraska

Camping in Nebraska was established relatively recently – in the mid sixties. This provided the new camping organization with the benefit of year round leadership early on in the development of the new Circle R Ranch. Lutherans in general were willing to work cooperatively in Nebraska. After only a dozen years, Circle R became part of a camping organization that also included ownership by the LCA. Together, a vibrant ministry has been developed to serve the Lutheran community of Nebraska.

Nebraska is a state with a sizeable population base in the east, near Omaha and Lincoln. Churches in the western part of the state became affiliated with Sky Ranch in Colorado at approximately the same time as Circle R was developed. The communities on the rising plains had much in common with their Colorado neighbors and the states were located in the same District of the ALC.

Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Ashland, Nebraska

In 1963 and 1964 land was purchased for Circle R Bible Camp. The camp was owned by eight eastern conferences in Nebraska of the Central District of The American Lutheran Church. In 1964-65 the main lodge and director's apartment was built. A dining hall with bunkrooms to sleep 36 people was also completed. In 1965 the first campers were served at Circle R with Mr. Stan Anderson as the part-time director. Rev. Paul Pfankuck was hired as the first full time director in 1969. In 1975 Rev. Garrett Van Hunnik became the second director.

The Nebraska Synod of the Lutheran Church in America united its camping programs with Circle R Camp in 1975 to create Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, Inc. George and Irene Holling donated Carol Joy Holling Camp near Ashland, NE, to the synod. Part of the purpose of the new

corporation was to determine how the two camps might cooperatively serve the needs of Lutherans of both synods in the state of Nebraska. Joint planning began immediately.

Rev. Wayne Jarvis was called as Executive Director of NLOM in 1979. That summer the first campers utilized Carol Joy Holling Camp. The facilities included a dining hall, manager's home, seven tent platforms, outdoor pavilion, shower house, and outhouse. Six wagons were rebuilt and four new tepees were purchased for camp use. Circle R camp continued as an active winter retreat facility. During the summer of 1979 there were 356 campers served.

An outdoor chapel was built in 1980 and two additional tepees were purchased. That summer 633 campers were served and 18 pastors attended camp with their church groups.

The following year, Crystal Springs

Lake was constructed through donations of money, labor, and earth-moving machines. This lake, created on the grounds of Carol Joy Holling Camp, greatly increased the program opportunities at the camp. A new toilet facility and three additional tent platforms were also added. 744 campers and 27 pastors were served in 1981. In 1982 two bunkhouses were built for the future ranch camp. The family campground was laid out and roads and camp areas were developed.

The Long range Planning Committee of NLOM recommended selling Circle R and moving all activities to Carol Joy Holling. This decision to sell the camp was adopted at the annual meeting and a pledge was made to build a retreat center at Carol Joy Holling Camp with its proceeds. All camping activities were moved to the site at Carol Joy Holling Camp. During the summer of 1982 there were 837 campers served along with 36 pastors.

In 1983 Carol Joy Holling Camp opened with horse and animal programs. Immanuel House (donated by Immanuel Medical Center) was moved from Circle R camp to Carol Joy Holling to be used as a retreat facility and living quarters. The camp office was moved from Circle R to Immanuel House. Two additional bunkhouses and a winterized shower house were added to the ranch facility. The farmhouse was converted to the ranch dining hall-kitchen. That summer 987 campers and 43 pastors were served.

The following year, the retreat center's first phase was built and called the Circle R Retreat Center in honor of

the traditions built at the camp, now no longer used. Three additional bunkhouses, a new barn, and corrals were constructed for the ranch. A new maintenance shop was added and the hay shed was moved. Two cottages were added to the family campground. During the summer, 1047 campers and 55 pastors attended camp programs.

The retreat center began operation in August with 1572 people in 81 groups serviced the first four months of operation. No major construction took place in 1985, but a challenge course was added and the farmhouse was converted to a crafts building. During the summer of 1985 attendance moved up slightly to 1077 campers. The retreat center continued to prosper with 2733 guests from 124 groups.

During 1986 the family camp cottages were reconstructed and an 80 X 200 foot riding arena was added. The Circle R Camp was sold. During the summer of 1986, there were 1211 campers served plus 77 pastors. The Circle R Retreat center served 3200 guests from 157 groups. The American Camping Association accredited Carol Joy Holling Camp this year.

In 1987 a new campfire ring and worship area was added at Inspiration Point. Three beehives were added to the ranch program. Water and electrical hookups were added to the family campground. Two additional animal stalls were added to the barn. An assistant director was added to the staff in 1987. Camper participation exceeded 1300 guests.

Camping in Kansas & Colorado

Camping congregations in Kansas sought programs in neighboring states or leased facilities to conduct early youth activities. A small camp in Kansas, locally owned Camp Alumbro, did offer programs for several years. A few of the western churches of the ALC banded together with Colorado prairie congregations and the churches serving the Front Range of Colorado to help establish Sky Ranch, west of Ft. Collins, CO.

As camping developed in Colorado it was done so with the full cooperation of these congregations located on the plains of western Nebraska and Kansas. The former Central District of the American Lutheran Church was a large geographic area. Pioneers of camping remember long hours of travel to attend meetings. Many of the congregations served large ranches and were rural in nature. Yet they had a generous spirit to help both in terms of labor, through their gifts (including food and used materials) and with their time.

Camp Alumbro Dodge City, Kansas

Several congregations in the Dodge City, KS, area owned a small camp located on the north shore of Cedar Bluffs reservoir in Kansas. It included 25 acres and provided for small group camping activities for local parishes. Programs included confirmation camping, senior high youth activities and a small retreat

center that was available to congregational leaders. Reports filed with the ALC indicated that it was available for programs throughout the year and had a manager and caretaker but did not hire camp counselors. In 1966, 80 campers were served.

Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp Fort Collins, Colorado

The history of Sky Ranch can be traced to the effort of early key leaders from the Fort Collins area. Rev. Alton Schwandt, Alvoy Ekblad, Reynold Olsen, and John Kotchenberger were among the camping pioneers who located the original 107-acre property and purchased it for \$62,500.

Prior to purchasing the property, churches from the Northern Colorado

and western Kansas and Nebraska districts rented facilities south of Estes Park, CO, to conduct camps. Rev. Schwandt had heard that Sky Ranch was in receivership and would be available to the highest bidder.

Sky Ranch was once the homestead of Tom Bennett, a young man who hoped to carve a ranch livelihood underneath the "Mummy Range" of the Colorado

Rockies. The elevation was too high for successful ranching so odd jobs, including helping to build reservoirs for the water and ditch companies along with occasional guiding, kept him in the area.

Following the find of a single gold nugget, Bennett had a short lived but thriving business and decided to develop a dude ranch for those seeking the solitude of the mountains. The character of the camp lent itself nicely to mountain living underneath the "Mummies" within three miles of the north border of Rocky Mountain National Park.

Sky Ranch is located near the end of the Pingree Park road. Though only 55 miles from Fort Collins, the trip takes nearly two hours because of the rough switchback mountain roads that must be negotiated. Rev. Schwandt organized the search group to visit the camp in January. Taking an International Scout 4 X 4, the group got miserably stuck and walked the final two miles into the ranch. The snow was too deep to walk about the grounds so they took a quick look, saw the mountain grandeur and said, "let's buy it."

The four men, all from Trinity Lutheran Church, went back to Ft. Collins and placed immediate mortgages on their homes to gather the down payment. Then they sold the idea to other congregations. The area was familiar to many who supported the idea, because the camp borders the Pingree Park campus of owned by Colorado State University and used a teaching and research center.

The camp opened in the summer of 1963 with a ministry centered on Bible study, worship, hiking, fishing, and arts and crafts. In the late sixties, a

backpacking and hiking ministry began. A family campground was also built on the premises and from its early days, Sky Ranch has offered a rustic camping setting deep in the mountains at an elevation of 9200 feet.

Since its inception, the Sky Ranch offices were located at Trinity Lutheran Church in Fort Collins. Often staff from the congregation provided leadership to the camp. In some cases they served as director of youth programs at the church as well as Sky Ranch programs. Maynard Atik, a pastor at Trinity, also lent a hand directing programs at the camp. Two small Sunday School rooms housed the offices for many years.

The original buildings of the former Dude Ranch included a log sided lodge, an original homestead log cabin and several old forest service cabins that had been built near the camp. The cabins had once served guests who traveled to the Dude Ranch to hunt and fish.

The first part time Program Directors was Carl Guthals who led camp programs shortly after the purchase of Sky Ranch. Operating during the summer season due to the difficulty of access during the winter, Sky Ranch offered basic camping programs for youth and families. Campers were provided lodging in small 14 X 28 cabin units, recently built in sections below and hauled up the mountain for installation. Early volunteer workers had to shore up the old bridge spanning the South Branch of the Poudre River in order to transport building materials and equipment to the camp. This task was shared with City of Greeley water crews who have maintained roads

to reach their remote reservoirs past Sky Ranch. Greeley crews have always assisted Sky Ranch, providing gravel, road grading and help as needed.

Mr. Bill Hahn, "the colonel," led summer camp for several years in the late sixties, providing guidance to the staff that assisted in the program. Many camp leaders of Sky Ranch had their first experience under the "colonel."

Pastor Bob Kuehner was called to serve as the first Executive Director in 1974. Under Bob's leadership, Christ Center Lodge was constructed and dedicated in 1983. The backpacking program grew to a significant level, becoming the largest in The American Lutheran Church. In addition, a traveling day camp was launched and environmental education began.

Pastor Bob experimented with a winter community. Comprised of six to eight young adults, the community weathered a few winters in the harsh

environment to offer ski programs and small group activities. In addition, they followed patterns designed to help them grow in their Christian faith and life.

Following Pastor Bob's departure, Rev. Ron Letness was called to serve as Executive Director. During his tenure, participation at the main site, called "Circle of Life" nearly doubled. A new servant ministry called "Four Winds" developed by Program Director Greg Schairer was also begun which combined work and service ministries in such diverse locations as Habitat for Humanity of Loveland, the Pine Ridge and Wind River Indian Reservations, and the Border Ministries near Mexico.

By 1987, Sky Ranch was owned by nearly 80 congregations within Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and Wyoming and was serving youth from up to 30 states each year through their high wilderness and Four Winds Servant Camps

The Camps of Texas/Louisiana

Lutheran camping and retreat ministries in the Texas and Louisiana area of the United States has a rich tradition of service to youth, families, adults and congregational groups. The first recorded Lutheran camp had its beginning as early as 1929 when Lutherans rented a site near Round Rock, Texas. The camp, sponsored by the Augustana Synod, found its focus in a summer youth program.

This first attempt at camping has since multiplied in size many times over. Rented sites were used for two decades in the southwest, beginning in the late 40's. Over the years, five sites have been owned, and numerous programs were offered on rented sites through an organization that served up to 465 Lutheran congregations in Texas and Louisiana.

Over the years, Texans have developed a personality. Though only a generalization, Texans 'think big.' So it was with camping. What was once a modest and voluntary organization became one of the largest Lutheran organizations in the nation. Camp Chrysalis and Lutherhill are among the oldest camps in Texas and Chrysalis is now linked with a ranch facility called Ebert Ranch. In addition, day camps travel throughout Texas and Louisiana and Padre Island near Corpus Christi provides a spectacular setting of sand and ocean for beach camping!

Camps have come and gone in the southwest, but over the years some of the most creative camping projects had their roots in this organization. Travel camps took staff, gear, kitchen equipment, and program materials in a large truck to any site where they were needed. The 'camp ambassador' program had its roots in Texas. No event was too hard to pull off! And before Lutherans would learn to work together, Texas was doing it all along. This was the Texas way of getting it done.

Camp Chrysalis Kerrville, Texas

In 1949 the minutes of the Texas District of the American Lutheran Church showed a resolution passed in convention to "purchase and establish a camp for the Texas District." Great strides were made during the year that followed. The 1950 convention minutes include: "We have entered into negotiations for the purpose of purchasing Mirror Lake." During the same convention a "committee on Bible camp purchase matters" was established, which included pastors on the district youth committee of the ALC and eight lay delegates. There was almost unanimous agreement in favor of this property located outside of Kerrville, Texas, in the heart of the Hill County of Texas.

Mirror Lake was purchased by the Texas District at a cost of \$32,000, at 3 % percent interest. A per confirmed member fee was established. The campsite itself was a former dude ranch and consisted of 10 small cabins, a dining hall, and a large lodge, which were all, located on 42 acres on Turtle Creek, known as Mirror Lake. A beautiful and majestic bluff that the Comanche Indians used as an observation post to scout the wagon trains moving through the valleys highlights the site.

A Bible camp committee was charged with the task of administering the camp. It consisted of five people, two of whom were clergy. The selection of this committee was left to the executive committee of the Texas District. Controversy over the name selected for

the camp, Camp Chrysalis, began the day of the transfer of the deed and title. Questions were raised over the appropriateness of such a name for a Lutheran organization. The Luther League was asked to conduct a contest regarding the naming of the camp and the youth league affirmed the name of Camp Chrysalis. (The controversy continued and was not settled until 1962 when the name was changed to Lutheran Camp Chrysalis.)

The name itself was meant to provide the church with an important image - the chrysalis. The transformation of the cocoon to the butterfly was likened to the transformation of the spiritual lives of individuals from cocoon (confined) to butterfly (free) because of Jesus Christ.

The first camping season for youth at Chrysalis was in 1950. Volunteers from the Luther League and the Lutheran Men's Brotherhoods assisted in preparing the site for use. Within a short two-year period, camping sessions had been divided into eight different federations of congregations. Each federation became responsible for its own programming during their week at camp. This included enlisting volunteers who served as counselors, maintenance staff, cooks, and resource leaders. These camps were called conference camps.

The camp committee sought to establish guidelines for each camper who attended throughout the season. These guidelines brought a common focus to the

different weeks. This "code for the good camper" included that each camper would "help with kitchen duties, participate in two quiet activities, as well as in worship, and make two crafts each day."

The decade of the 50's at Camp Chrysalis were highlighted with several major milestones. The camp was paid in full in 1954. By 1957, 1772 campers used Camp Chrysalis during the eight one-week camp periods. The chapel was improved, a new water system installed, sewage systems created, two cabins were built, new kitchen equipment purchased, and the entire camp was fenced! Volunteers, in addition to the camp committee, were very much in evidence as people from congregations poured out their love by working at the site and giving leadership to the summer camps.

In 1957 a special committee report to the district convention recommended that the executive committee of the Texas District appoint a Bible camp board and that it become more self-governing. The rich decade of the 50's closed with the recommendation that a "Bible camp administration committee" draw up a master plan for future development. These early camping leaders demonstrated visionary leadership as well as loving care.

The decade of the sixties was highlighted by many major changes in the philosophy and direction of camping in the southwest. Camp Chrysalis was among the first Lutheran camps in the country to hire a full time camp director. The first camp director was Pastor Will Bigott. An early pioneer of camping, Pastor Bigott instituted many significant

changes which would propel Lutheran outdoor ministries in the southwest into a much larger and more comprehensive ministry. In his first season, he and a staff of 12 counselors served 1,500 youth.

Under pastor Bigott's leadership, paid summer camp counselors were hired and effectively trained to provide quality and continuity to the summer programs. Small group camping was emphasized, and many programs were extended off the campsite. For example, a beach camp was established on Padre Island, and a travel camp of summer counselors was sent to rented sites throughout the state of Texas, inaugurating confirmation camping. Because of a gift, Camp Shalom near Georgetown, Texas, was begun.

After Pastor Bigott's resignation in 1967, Pastor Wayne Jarvis was called to serve as camp director in 1968. The position title was quickly changed from camp director to *minister of camping*. Under Pastor Jarvis's leadership a new ranch program was established in 1971. The completion of a capital fund campaign to improve the facilities at Chrysalis enabled expansion to year round programs.

Jarvis created the *Camp Ambassador* program that enlisted over 200 people to spread the news of camp in Texas. Soon this program became part of most camp organizations across the country. And, Pastor Jarvis forged a cooperative ministry with the Lutheran Church in America during this time.

These were the seeds that would eventually result in a new camping organization, the Lutheran Association of Southwestern Camping (LAOSC).

Lutherhill Bible Camp LaGrange, Texas

The first site owned by Lutherans in Texas was known as Circle R and its 21 acres was located near Round Rock, Texas, on Brushy Creek. Camps were offered through this site for many years, beginning as early as the late 20's. These meager beginnings on a small site evolved into the purchase of Lutherhill near LaGrange, Texas, in 1954.

Essentially founded through the efforts of Pastor F. E. Eilers, the Lutherhill site quickly grew in popularity. In 1954, Pastor Eilers discovered that the Phillips Oil Company was prepared to sell its pumping station near LaGrange to the highest bidder based on closed bids. The United Lutheran Church in America made a bid of \$13,001 and thus gained the property because it had bid \$1 more than the next highest bidder!

The women of the Texas Synod supplied over \$3,000 toward the purchase of the new youth camp, and on July 1, 1954, Lutherhill was dedicated. Seventeen hundred people turned out for the dedication and barbecue. Charles Vorkoper is credited with having

contributed the name *Lutherhill*. The site consisted of a large oil pumping station building and four houses. The pumping station was converted into a meeting room, chapel, and dining room. Pastor Eilers served as the part-time manager for six weeks in the summer of 1955. Over 2000 volunteer hours were contributed in order to open the facility for campers during the summer of 1955.

Mr. L. L. Appelt added ten additional acres to the site in 1958 and a swimming pool was added in the same year. The support from the synod was strong through financial gifts from congregations and individuals who desired to see the camp successfully meet its purpose.

Lutherhill was the responsibility of the synod camp committee that was charged with overseeing the camp administration and maintenance. Many volunteers provided for program opportunities for early campers. The committee became known as the "Lutherhill committee" and consisted of six people in 1958.

Lutheran Association of Southwestern Camping Round Rock, Texas

In 1975, The American Lutheran Church (ALC) and the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) combined their camping efforts after several years of cooperative work. The Lutheran Association of Southwestern Camping

(LAOSC) now became an agency of both the LCA and the ALC. Wayne Jarvis became its first Executive Director to lend his skills to camping throughout the two state area.

By this time, Wayne Jarvis and

other staff had created many unique opportunities designed to serve Lutherans throughout the Texas and Louisiana area. A Traveling Camp had been developed so that staff, tents, equipment, food, and program supplies could be trucked to rented campsites throughout the Texas area. This brought the program to areas that were more easily reached in the long distances between Texas communities and did much to develop support for camping ministry throughout the state.

Jarvis also provided leadership for Camp Shalom and developed a unique Tree House ministry where campers lived high in the trees. This popular camp was to eventually be destroyed by fire.

Pastor Ernie Lantz was hired as the minister of camping to replace Pastor Jarvis in 1975, a post Lantz was to hold until 1983. Under Pastor Lantz new programs continued to develop, and increased depth and mission was established. The retreat ministry of the organization took major steps forward, and the number of retreat guests finally surpassed summer campers.

In April 1983, a national ALC and LCA evaluation team came to Texas to study the strengths and weaknesses of the LAOSC ministry and to consult with the

Camp Georgetown Georgetown, Texas

The Southern District of the ALC owned a camp near Georgetown and sponsored camps for junior high youth. The camp is no longer in existence but

constituent members. Upon the recommendation of this team, the Board of Directors consisting of nine persons, 3 from the board, 3 from the ALC, and 3 from the LCA created a long-range task force. The nine people met for a year and developed long range plans for LAOSC programs, financial plans, public relations efforts and administration.

The implementation of this plan began in February 1984, when Mr. Armond Paulson was brought in to serve as Executive Director of LAOSC. Under his leadership, LAOSC began to prepare itself for future service in the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which would begin a few years later.

Pastors Art Weiss and Gary Stevenson, staff members of LAOSC, were involved in these future oriented plans. A revitalized progressive camping program for youth was developed utilizing the strengths of past programs; a new retreat ministry was established; new plans for financial development and management were installed; the administrative systems of the multi site corporation were developed and refined. LAOSC was, in effect, prepared to deliver high quality programs when the ELCA was formed in 1988.

served Lutherans for several years until encroachment made the site unusable for camping purposes.

The Camps of the Southwest

The spectacular geography of the Southwest and California has lent itself well to camping. Adventures in the mountains, viewing desert stars or catching the breezes of the ocean mark many of the creative programs developed by Lutherans in the Southwest. The camping story of the southwest began in California where Lutherans organized camping programs at rented sites before building their own outdoor ministry centers.

The Lutheran community in California has been challenged to serve diverse populations from their urban areas for many years. It seems as if there has always been effort to develop effective centers to serve people of all ages and colors. And several creative ventures, including beach camping and day camping, have helped Californians work together across Lutheran lines.

The Nevada churches around Las Vegas have developed their camping effort more recently. The gifts they have received in land were originally part of an effort to extend California camping programs into this area. It is now managed effectively by a new organization on behalf of an area that is seeing much growth.

Camping in Nevada

The development of a camping site in Nevada is relatively new in terms of its history. Las Vegas has become a large metropolitan area in recent years with strong Lutheran congregations. The history of camping that developed from the Las Vegas area had less than a dozen years of history with the former American Lutheran Church. Its vision was shaped by its natural resources and its plans for family camping taking advantage of its pool of new volunteers.

John A. Mogren, former Treasure of the organization, submitted the story of the Lutheran Camping Association of the SW. I thank him for wishing to include this important history in this volume.

Lutheran Camping Association of the SW Las Vegas, Nevada

In 1975, the Lutheran Camping Association of Southern California began receiving gifts of 10, 20, and 40-acre parcels of land in Utah near the area of Long Valley Junction. Located near the intersection of highway 14 and 89, the land is in the middle of southern Utah's park and recreational lands. Bryce Canyon is only an hour east; beautiful Zion National Park is one hour to the west, and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon is just over two hours to the south. Also near the parcels is excellent hunting and fishing in the surrounding Dixie National Forest. Many people have summer cabins in the area because the high altitude of 7,400 feet and absence of industry provides an escape from the desert heat. And in the winter, there are numerous ski resorts for people to enjoy.

The site, however, was not suitable for people living in Southern California. Development was difficult because of travel, and the site was initially quite primitive. A two-bedroom mobile home

was donated and placed on the site. A pit toilet was dug and a solar shower was constructed. Because the land was not under full time use for church purposes, there was the additional burden of taxes each year that had to be paid for out of the California operating budget.

In 1982 the property, which now consisted of 820 acres, was offered to a group of laypersons in Las Vegas, Nevada. The gift was conditional; the formation of a non-profit corporation to manage and develop the lands for camping and retreat ministries was required. The corporation was registered in the state of Nevada and was called Lutheran Camping Association of the Southwest.

Development of the site was slow to begin. Without a full time director, the new organization relied on laity who would use their spare time or take vacation time to work and provide for services at the campsite. However, great expectations for the future were quickly

established.

Shortly after the camp association was established, two additional mobile homes were donated and placed on the property. In the summer of 1987, a contractor was hired to gravel and improve the access road from the main highway. A well permit was obtained and plans to dig the well were made. The challenge of providing special treatment for sewage disposal was significant as the lands include the headwaters of the Sevier River. Negotiations for the plan were worked out with the Utah State Health Department; meanwhile, a large holding tank was used to storage and regular pumping was required.

In October 1987, Mr. Paul Fjare of Brauer & Associates Ltd. visited the campsite. Mr. Fjare studied the property and made many recommendations for proposed use of the property. Additional donations to the property have brought the acreage to over 1200 acres. Much of

it is in primitive condition, and the overall goal is to continue its natural state for future generations. Deer, elk, golden eagles, rabbit, blue birds, sage grouse, and coyotes are prominent species on the property. Local residents have informed the camp board that bear had also been seen on the property. Some grazing of cattle is allowed through an arrangement with a local cattle company that leased a portion of the site. Three natural springs have been found on the property, and have been tapped to provide water for wildlife.

Future plans for the facility have included a lodge for travelers who wish to stay for a week's visit, with the camp providing transportation to the many scenic areas surrounding the property. A recreational vehicle park is being planned. It is the intent of the association to provide new and exciting experiences in faith and fellowship when the future campsites are completed.

Camping in California

Lutheran camping on the West Coast developed as the cooperative venture of various Lutheran bodies working together on behalf of youth and families. These cooperative ventures were often years ahead of other forms of church cooperation. Camping was well organized prior to the purchase of sites. In some cases, camping was viewed as one of the only viable forms of unified mission during years when Lutherans were divided into several groupings.

Great changes have affected camping in California. The diversity of the urban areas served by the Lutheran camps challenged the programs to remain open to a wide array of groups and organizations with many types of needs. In many ways, camping leaders in California have lived among new trends that would eventually affect camps in other areas of America.

The importance of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Southern California (and its predecessor organization, the Lutheran Bible Camp Association of Southern California) should not be overlooked. Whereas many coordinating camping organizations in the country were formed after camps were purchased, these organizations were created prior to land purchases, offering hundreds of programs at rental sites and generally coordinating youth and family camping efforts in Southern California.

Source material for this history of this organization as well as its camps, including Camp El Camino Pines, is taken from an historical paper developed by Colleen Tucker on 5/23/89. A copy is stored in the Camp History Archives. I express my appreciation to her for her excellent research. I also thank Connie Wolff, a recent director, for sharing California camping information with me.

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Northern California Mount Cross Bible Camp Felton, CA

Following World War II, a small group of pastors and laity in northern California concluded that it would be advisable to obtain suitable land for a Lutheran Bible Camp and Retreat Center. Rental facilities had previously been used for Lutheran camping but they were becoming worn out and over utilized, making it difficult to reserve satisfactory dates for their programs. Accordingly, the congregations these individuals

represented affiliated with the National Lutheran Council and organized a Camp Committee to represent them.

After making a thorough investigation of available sites throughout northern California, the committee reported that it had selected a 135-acre site (later reduced to 107 acres) on Highway 9 between Felton and Ben Lomond in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The cost of the timbered property was

\$35,000, and the committee negotiated for necessary loans to cover the purchase price and the immediate expenses of developing the site. The first camping program was conducted in 1948 on this new location.

About this time the Lutheran Bible Camp Association of Northern California was organized to own and operate the camp. This organization included church bodies that would eventually form The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America; thus the effort was pan Lutheran.

The name unanimously selected for the camp came as a natural consequence of its location. The camp lies in the heart of the Santa Cruz Mountains, which is Spanish for "Holy Cross." The cross of Christ has always been at the heart of Lutheran theology. It was the concern of the founders that this message would provide the focus for the new camping ministry. In the hopes that the Bible Camp experience would influence campers throughout their lives, the new camp was called Mount Cross.

The early founders wrote upon dedication: "This is a project great enough to test our faith, great enough to challenge our best efforts. This project invites us...to work in a common purpose for a common good."

New buildings and facilities were constructed. Eventually, the site contained a kitchen and dining hall to serve 195 campers, a hall with seating for 300 people, three dormitory buildings with accommodations for 56 each, seven small cabins, and a 30 by 60 foot swimming pool.

When the site had been in use for about 20 years, the Lutheran Bible Camp Association began to experience financial difficulties. The high cost of maintaining the many facilities and management costs were combined with dwindling interest from many parishes. The camp also had a large indebtedness and there were pressures from encroaching civilization. The Board of Directors and the judicatories involved began to have serious doubts about the future of Mount Cross.

In 1969, Rev. Richard Borrud, a field service director in camping for The American Lutheran Church, wrote in his study of camping in California: "Taking all the assets and liabilities of this site, it appears there would be good reason to dispose of this site." Utilization of the camp continued to drop during the next several years, and the grounds and buildings suffered for lack of adequate care. At the same time there was a general dissatisfaction with the summer staff and the program that was being offered.

In the spring of 1973, the Board of Directors called W. C. Crouser to serve as the Executive Director. In order for Mount Cross to survive, the judicatories promised a supportive relationship while the local pastors agreed to participate at the camp in future years. New interest developed in the programs offered at Mount Cross as the camp was cleaned and remodeled to provide meeting space for adult retreat groups.

An intensive public relations campaign was launched with visits to many congregations. Presentations were

made at meetings, conferences, and conventions. The number of summer campers began to increase each year, and the camp became a member of the American Camping Association to insure compliance with the highest standards available in camping.

Though historically affiliated with The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, conversations began in the early eighties to develop relationships with the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod's camping association known as the Sierra Pacific Lutheran Camp Association. This organization owned several sites but had no regular camping program and labored under a considerable debt. Articles of Agreement were drawn up that allowed the two associations to share the services of one Executive Director.

Within a couple of years it became evident that there was no need for two separate Lutheran camping associations serving the same area. The Sierra Pacific Association decided to disband, sell its sites to reduce its debts, and become part of the Lutheran Bible Camp Association, bringing its limited assets with it into the inter-Lutheran organization. At the same time, the name of the new association was changed to Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Northern California. The constitution was revised in 1982 to add the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod as a member of the corporation.

Support has increased yearly, as has the number of summer campers and retreat groups using the campsite. Improvements were made as the number of tent and recreational vehicles has increased; new seating was provided at both the outdoor chapel and the campfire area; trails into the wilderness portion of the grounds were developed; a solar heating system was installed at the swimming pool and security lighting was increased. Buildings were improved with the addition of new heating systems, carpets, beds, and furnishings.

Replacement of kitchen equipment and remodeling of one of the dormitory buildings for higher comfort space has provided for quality adult facilities. There are two residences on the grounds, both of which have been improved, and a third home was given to the camp and is located on the edge of the camp boundaries. Efforts to expand office space began in 1985 and completed in 1987. A special event in the history of the camp was the burning of the mortgage on Memorial Day 1982.

Following the departure of Executive Director Crouser, Pastor Gary Stevenson became the new Executive Director until 1996. Under his leadership numerous programs were initiated and staff was expanded to handle the many program requests. Among these new programs were day camping and off site experiences.

Lutheran Bible Camp Association of Southern California

Lutheran Bible Camping in

Southern California began at Radford

Camp, a small camp facility owned by the city of Los Angeles. Minutes dated October 14, 1941, record the Radford Lutheran Bible Camp Council activity, which was an inter-synodical effort including the American Lutheran Church, the Augustana Synod, the Norwegian Lutheran Church, and the Danish Lutheran Church.

These minutes record that a camp lasting seven days would be held at a cost of seven dollars per camper. The Norwegian Lutheran Church was to provide the Bible Teacher for the week, a Rev. Oscar Hansen. The camp was also coed. Two years later, on November 30, 1943, a decision was made to extend a camp offering for families the following summer. There was reference to another family camp in existence at the time, which had been going of for "forty years in the desert." It is not known whether this was a Biblical pun by the secretary or true.

Discussions about purchasing and owning a camp were held during the mid to late forties. A motion was made on February 21, 1950, to purchase a Presbyterian Conference grounds located at Big Bear Lake for \$75,000. Camping programs had increased to two weeks of family camping and one week for youth. The programs were held at a rented facility called Camp Seeley. No progress was immediately made on a purchase. Thus the programs of the camping council were offered for many years using leased camps.

On February 10, 1953, the board recommended camping cooperation with the United Evangelical Lutheran Church

(UELC) and on April 6 the Bible Camp Board met with the District Presidents for the purpose of considering joint ministry with the UELC at their new camp near Redlands. Dr. Koosman recommended that the camping movement be statewide and that the UELC be asked to cooperate at Mt. Cross in Northern California in the same manner that cooperation might take place in Southern California.

Camping expanded in 1954 to include a separate camp for junior high youth as well as one for senior high youth. An additional program of family camp was offered at Forest Home to complement the camp that was already offered at Camp Seeley.

The efforts placed into camping ministry began to expand at this time. There was a request from the Evangelical Lutheran Church to conduct a Sunday School Teacher's Institute under the leadership of Sadie Austin. This would be incorporated into the family week. In addition, a Church Worker's Institute was promoted. In the mid fifties, staffing was expanded and discussions about camping philosophy, a permanent camp director, paid staff, and long range planning were also held throughout the church. Soon camps were offered during three weeks at Camp Seeley, one week at Cedarcrest, and a week at Forest Home. The Board also began to participate in the American Camping Association, which pointed out the need for proper medical care and supervision of campers.

A Long Range Planning committee was created with representatives from various parts of California. It held its first meeting on January 31, 1958. Reports of

the various camping efforts were shared. For example, minutes indicate a report was given about Mt. Cross at Felton, which was purchased in 1948 and included 101 acres, serving 120 campers per week. The San Joaquin Valley Ministerial served 20 churches from Bakersville to Stockton and offered camps at Camp Sierra near Shaver Lake. Lutheran Men of the Valley, Inc., had also founded a camp called Camp New Hope.

Summer camps that were held in 1958 were developed under the leadership of the camp dean. A dean was responsible for an individual camp week for a specific conference. Responsibilities

Camp Hemohme Wrightwood, California

Camp Hemohme was purchased at a cost of \$76,000 on December 10, 1958. The Long Beach Campfire Girls had previously owned this camp. The purchase and debt reduction plan required approval and regulation by the United States Forest Service.

Owning a camp meant the development of year round opportunities for retreats and conferences in addition to expanded summer camps. This, in turn, forced the Board to recognize the need for more assistance through additional staffing. Still the new camp managed to function for seven years without a full time director.

On December 16, 1965, Rev. Bob Newcomb was called to serve as the first Executive Director of LBCASC. He was installed on March 14, 1966. His duties

included locating the registrar, developing name tags, placement of tents, choosing the recreational director, the dining hall and K.P. director, the store operator, song leader, and campfire director. The dean also trained the teaching staff and counselors, handled publicity and furnished program materials.

In the fall on 1958, many changes affecting the permanent status of camping in Southern California were made. Articles of Incorporation of the Lutheran Bible Camp Association of Southern California were approved October 20, 1958 and endorsed by the state on November 20, 1958.

included the administration of the camp philosophy and program, the development of a constituency of parishes that would offer support and use the camp programs, and to provide general camp leadership to all the functions required in managing the camp activities.

The camp philosophy included the 'unified-diversified' program. This concept offered a total camping program with the same philosophy, development and administration. Camping could take place not only on the camp premises, but also in many off-site locations. In the summer of 1966, the camp programs included opportunities on the beaches of Sand Clemente and La Jolla, backpacking near Sequoia, confirmation camps at El Camino Pines Camp (at this time, leased from the El Camino Conference

Brotherhood) and at Camp Hemohme.

Camping under this philosophy was extended to a wide range of participants. Rev. Paul Wee, under the auspices of the Economic Youth Opportunity Board, brought 80 youth from the City of Venice to summer camp for a week. Operation Commitment was born in 1968 as an all-summer day camp program in the urban areas of Los

Camp El Camino Pines Gorman, California

The ownership of El Camino Pines was centered in the men's groups of a number of churches in Southern California including Trinity Lutheran Church of Santa Barbara, Mt. Olive of Santa Monica, Trinity of Ventura, Our Redeemer of Bakersfield and other churches in Thousand Oaks, Northridge, North Hollywood, and Burbank to name a few. Representatives of the El Camino Pines Camp Board were meeting as an advisory board with Rev. Dick Borrud, a field service representative of the American Lutheran Church in the latter part of 1967.

Within a few months, the advisory committee recommended a merger of El Camino Pines and the Lutheran Bible Camp Association of Southern California. The vote approval took place on January 6, 1968, and took effect on March 1, 1968.

In 1971 a Camp Director was called whose job description included the development of a mission congregation for the community surrounding El

Angeles. The Amigos de las Americas program in 1969 involved 25 high school young people who paid \$325 to go to Guatemala in order to teach general hygiene, administer shots and promote public health to families in remote areas.

Because of the condition of Camp Hemohme, it was sold in late 1968 and primary camp operations were moved to El Camino Pines.

Camino Pines. Shortly thereafter, staff was added to provide outdoor education experiences for school children. A neighboring camp was purchased to add recreational vehicle space and additional retreat opportunities. Known as *Frontier Pines*, it added a rustic feel to camping at El Camino Pines.

Camping continued during this decade to include a wide range of creative programs for a diverse population base. Day Camping continued to offer programs for urban areas, and congregations underwent changes in makeup to become more diversified. Camping cooperation continued in the late seventies with the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Southern California (LCMS) program and with the Lutheran Church in America. Some joint promotional efforts were made and some program sharing was also developed.

Upon the creation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (1987), it became apparent that a more formal ownership pattern of camping was

required to coordinate camping in Southern California. The LCA and ALC camp programs joined together in March of 1989. Thus there would be one administration in the new church

Shepherd by the Sea Retreat Malibu, California

Because of the need for retreat centers for California Lutherans, several private and church facilities received regular use by congregations. Sensing the need for retreat ministries in the Malibu area, the church council of Shepherd by the Sea Lutheran Church in Malibu worked out plans for a retreat center at their site. The facilities were offered to LBCASC so that their staff could

managing the programs fostered through El Camino Pines, Frontier Pines, Camp Yolijsa, and the Lofthus Retreat Center near San Diego.

coordinate activities and plan events.

The 24 person retreat center included the remodeled 'sheep hut,' a landmark in Malibu. It was shaped as an octagon and had two stories. It was used by retreat groups and in the summer served as a base for beach camps until zoning changes in the community made the site unavailable.

The Camps of Montana & Idaho

Camping in Montana and Idaho has a long and faithful history. The effort to organize camping was initiated to develop programs that would help reach young people with Christian education and inspiration. Because resources were often at a premium, these stories are particularly meaningful. The lengths to which camping pioneers went to develop their camps in locations that were often inaccessible in the winter were great.

There are several sources of good records for these histories. I had the opportunity to review a large box of minutes, notes and letters from Rev. Amon Johnson. His daughter kept these records for years. It was by chance that she discovered I was interested in camp history and loaned me the box. It was a treasure chest of information about the early days of Flathead Lake Bible Camp, including drafts of contracts for the first property manager and personal letters and notes about the issues faced by the fledgling organization.

The resources available to these "mountain camps" are plentiful. To have a number of camps located high in the northern Rockies or beside the cold-water lakes of the Canadian border is a gift to the church. These histories represent stories of grace for the camps were built on faith and a shoestring.

Camping in Montana

The Montana camps were considered "jewels in the mountains" to those who owned and developed them. From the wide-open spaces of prairie wheat farms, the mountains had lured visitors and vacationers for years. It is no surprise that Lutherans would locate some of the most beautiful land in America to develop into camps.

Montana is blessed with two existing camps that can be traced to their ALC roots: Flathead Lake Bible Camp and Christikon. The natural resources at their doorstep has enticed several generations of people to their camp facilities, offering a wide range of outdoors activities. In addition other campsites were leased in early years and a church owned one camp near Plentywood, Montana, on the eastern plains.

Flathead Lake Bible Camp Kalispell, Montana

Congregations of the Norwegian Lutheran Church located in northwestern Montana first held a Bible camp at the Kalispell Lions Club Youth Camp on Bitterroot Lake in 1941. Located in the beautiful mountain area 23 miles northwest of Kalispell in the heart of the Rockies, the camp offered excellent outdoor attractions.

"The altitude of Bitterroot Lake guarantees good, fresh mountain air - cool enough at nights for blankets, but days are delightfully warm."

The camp consisted of four large barracks tents with double-deck beds, a main lodge with two fireplaces, and a commissary...

"Camp Rates depend upon number in party and length of stay. But be assured that the rates are more than reasonable, as the KALISPELL LIONS CLUB does not wish to make any profit from its guests."

(The information above is quoted from a 1941 camp flyer describing the Lions Club Youth Camp).

Pastors who brought youth to the camp included Rev. Field of Kalispell, Rev. Jacobson of Missoula, Rev. Bergeland of Whitefish, Rev. Nelson of Polson, and others. The following year, these men agreed to hold another camp at a Methodist facility on Lake Kalispell. Rev. Field was called to Iowa, and other changes

in the clergy roster proved to slow the development of a camp facility owned on behalf of Lutherans. In addition, the high cost of land made the project seem impossible. Nonetheless, a search was launched in 1942 and early 1943 to locate a piece of property on Lake Kalispell.

The Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Kalispell where Amon Johnson served as pastor spearheaded the search. In addition, Ernest Iverson, Hans Larson, and J. M. Carlson agreed to assist with the search for the right location. They enlisted the services of Guy Kao, a member of the Christian Church with a "hearty and generous soul." According to memoirs of Amon Johnson,

"We told him he could find more sites in three days with him than in three years by ourselves. Guy was wonderful, bless his soul."

As the group traveled around Lake Kalispell (no small feat in those days for the lake is of sizeable dimensions) they were joined by Rev. Jacobson of Whitefish and Oscar Engbretson of Kalispell. Several sites were rejected within a week. But one evening the group was resting from a weary day and looked across a small bay toward a wild and prominent shoreline. Suggesting the possibility of exploring the area, Mr. Guy suggested that he did not believe it would work since the "going was tough."

The following day, Guy led the

group through the native forests and rocky hillside. It had been the roughest walk of all the explored sites. But when they saw the seemingly virgin timber and a rocky point stretching a hundred feet into the lake, they declared it "breathtaking." The group asked Guy to see if he could negotiate a price for the property.

Mr. Kao located the owner in Butte and was given a price of \$1000 to purchase a total of 68 acres that included 3006 feet of shoreline. The group was unprepared to purchase such a large tract of property but liked the property so much. They agreed to attempt to raise the money, but within two days the owner sent another letter to Mr. Kao raising the price to \$2000. Pastor Johnson told him "the deal is off, we cannot raise that kind of money." Mr. Kao, upon contacting the owner, was informed that he would stand by his first offer of sale at a cost of \$1000.

Raising the money took strategic planning. It was a time of war and the pastors involved had minimal salaries. However, with the help of Ernest Iverson, Dr. Brasslet, Hans Larson, and Chriss Larssen, Pastor Johnson borrowed \$200 from the Edmiston's bank and made the down payment. The land then belonged to this group of individuals.

In early 1943, the men faced the difficulties of putting in a road, electricity and buildings that would enable the camp to begin. A

preliminary planning meeting was held on February 15, 1943, to make plans and promote the concept. Pastors Amon Johnson, Orlando Lee, Ocee Johnson, and R. Ylvisaker attended the February 15 meeting in Kalispell, and the next day, Pastors H. M. Rye, John Laver, and Jacobson met in Polson.

Hans Larson, Ernest Iverson, Chriss Larssen, Dr. Brassett and Rev. Amon Johnson held the actual ownership since no corporation or association was yet formed. Two conferences were slowly becoming involved in the project and at their assemblies the following statement was approved:

"That the Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp association operate the Camp. The said association to be composed of representatives of congregations of the churches of the American Lutheran Conference in the territory served by the Camp. Also that in case of failure of the Camp to operate successfully, that ownership revert to the original owners, or to the corporation of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church. The original purchasers having made the Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Kalispell, Montana the owner of the tract of land in question."

Upon approval, this decision was placed before the individual owners at the home of Amon Johnson and accepted.

At an April 12, 43, meeting of the association, a number of recommendations were made. Plans

for a 25 by 70 foot building to be used as a chapel, dining hall, and kitchen were drawn by R. Daehlin. The Ladies Aid was asked to make tick covers. It was also moved that "we do our level best to construct ten cabins." The new association also voted to incorporate under the name of The Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. The camp was granted incorporation by the Secretary of State on September 17, 1943. The first camp fee was also set at \$6, and \$20 was spent on athletic equipment.

Early in 1943, the road was bulldozed into the land and electricity was installed. Pastor Amon Johnson was allowed by the Kalispell Bethlehem Lutheran Trustees to take a six-week absence from parish duties in order to supervise the creation of lumber from trees that were felled on the property. The selected trees yielded 50,000 board feet of lumber, all sawn on site by Mr. Shoemaker with scores of helpers. The pine boards were 8 to 24 inches in width and up to 24 feet long and were carefully stacked for future construction projects. Pastor Johnson remembered, "Boy, that was beautiful stuff to lay up for roof boards."

Mr. Halvor Stordok was engaged to construct the main building. Stordok was a carpenter from Missoula. Oscar Engebretson cleared the location and laid foundations on the site of the first building. Thirty men from Kalispell turned out on a regular basis to work into the evenings, often showing up at work the next day like

“bronco busters.” Members of the Conrad parish joined in, under the encouragement of Pastor Ocee Johnson. Rev. Ylvisaker came with men from Cutbank, Montana, and also members of the Whitefish, Galata, and other locales.

In order to raise money for construction, lots on the beautiful shoreline were sold. Thus the early camp association was able to pay their way as construction progressed. The actual ownership of Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp property was assigned to Hans and Mrs. Larson, and Chriss Larssen. This enabled them to give title to those who purchased the lots that were part of the *Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp Villa Sites* without the need for cumbersome special association meetings. The lots were sold at around \$200 each, and a few of the early purchasers included Dr. Brassett and Ernest Iverson.

Eventually, contributions from congregations began to arrive, thanks to the urging of Pastor Amon Johnson, the elected Secretary Treasurer. Johnson recollected the difficulty of procrastinating in his regular epistles seeking assistance and providing information to churches:

“Anyway peppy letters flattering me into high speed kept things rolling with Duffy Ylvisaker and Ocee Johnson and their like accompanying the epistles with checks that cheered us all like war paint on an Indian of old.”

Rev. R.E. Ylvisaker organized camping efforts during the first year. A large tent was purchased for under \$50 that would serve as a housing unit for 30 youth. Makeshift beds and sleeping bags, along with washbasins and outhouses were the order of the day. Some slept under the trees. In the first year of camping, Hans Larson announced at the barbershop,

“that 200 or more campers were having the time of their lives. A bit dusty maybe, but the food was good and the program had everyone enthusiastic with a great faculty with ball games, swimming, fishing, volley ball, and every outdoor enjoyment.”

Pastor Amon Johnson and O.C. Johnson were elected to share the position of President in 1944. Oliver Engebretson served as Secretary - Treasurer, R.E. Ylvisaker as 1st Director, R.A. Daehlin as 2nd Director, and T.T. I. Bergee as 3rd Director. At the annual meeting, special thanks were directed toward the men from Bethlehem Lutheran in Kalispell who located the land and took the risk of its purchase. Special thanks were offered to Mr. Guy Kao.

By 1945, camp registrations brought in \$1811.92 while offerings received were \$146.29 from the public services held each Sunday. General improvements to the camp continued to be made. But it was in 1946 when the Men's Brotherhoods of the congregations encouraged the Board to

reach out to churches in other Synods in the Rocky Mountain region. They envisioned a camp that would become a symbol for Lutheran cooperation and unity. It was felt that a broader base of support was also needed in order to encourage the extension of God's Kingdom.

Upon approval of the Board, invitations to a general meeting of all synods were sent. Numerous people attended who were not yet active in the project, and a presentation on the camp's history, its by-laws and other documents were presented. Rev. Charles Johnson and Rev. Mackensen of the Missouri Synod responded with personal pledges to support a unified effort. A special task force was established to review the by laws and make recommendations. The committee was composed of one layperson and one pastor from each of the church bodies present at the meeting. This included the United Lutheran Church, the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, the Augustana Synod Lutheran Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church (of which the Norwegian Lutheran Church which founded the camp had become a part).

The Intermountain Circuit Week held their camp at Flathead Lake Lutheran Bible Camp during the week of July 8-15, 1946. The camp brochure displayed a beautiful picture of two sailboats and a pleasure boat on Flathead Lake overlooking the Mission Mountains to the east. It is a typical

view from the lakeshore of the camp. The Bible study leader was Rev. Eugene Stime of the Seattle Lutheran Bible Institute. The Mission study leader was Rev. Herbert Loddigs who had been imprisoned in the Philippines with Lutheran missionaries during Word War II.

Camps began on Monday and ran 7 days, ending with a Parents Day on Sunday when a festive worship was held. Congregations were also invited to come on Sunday to join the youth. A typical camp day included rising at 7 AM, with breakfast at 7:30. Following a housekeeping time, three classes were held in the morning, featuring the guest speakers. Lunch was held at 12:15, followed by a rest hour.

From 2 PM till 5 PM, campers were engaged in swimming, baseball, fishing, badminton, horseshoes, hiking, and a host of other activities. Each evening at 7:30 an inspiration hour was held followed by a campfire. Lights out were to be promptly at 10:15, a time which was challenged by many a camper. The cost of the week was \$7.

A revised constitution was adopted in early 1947 that opened the camp to further membership. Additional improvements to the camp included the construction of a permanent dock, several boats, recreation and athletic equipment, several new cabins, new bedding, electrical improvements to all the cabins, a new veranda along the dining hall, purchase of tables and

construction of lounge chairs. Finances were low but through judicious borrowing, the camp managed to stay ahead.

Camp participation was increasing, too, as new communities brought additional youth to camp. Congregations from Great Falls, Shelby, Butte, Columbia Falls, Havre, and other communities were becoming involved. In the 1948 camping season, which included 6 summer weeklong camps, over 800 people attended the camps. At one of the conference weeks, Rev. Loyal Tallakson of United Lutheran Church in Grand Forks served as Bible Study leader. Local pastors of the conference led missions, youth work, and the Question Box series.

In 1949, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Fladstol became the camp administrators with power to act on behalf of camp development. This was a major step in the development of the camp, to have a person work throughout the year. In a letter sent to Amon Johnson from Fladstol, dated September 12, 1949, Fladstol said:

"I have been pondering over the Bible Camp job. And am sending you some of my offers. I have drawn up a few items to consider in paragraphs.

1st Salary. App. \$1800 per year, pay when ever you have the money. In exchange, I'll be the camp keeper, head carpenter, and overseer over volunteers. Doing all odd carpenturing, cement, stuccoing, wiring,

and painting.

2nd Free house. Need not be elaborate. Bath room is nice but not nessessary (sic) we can use outside facilities.

3rd Free wood & water. I will rustle and cut all wood. Would like pressure as much as possible. When its too cold and must drain the pipes, I can carry it.

4th Free Electricity. We must have a electric stove & Frigedair which uses quite a bit of electricity. In turn I have Power tools and when used, will be wholly to the interest of the camp."

The total receipts for the year were \$4,129.15 with \$3,918.77 in expenses of which only \$1800 was used for the salary of Mr. Fladstol.

Amon Johnson summed up the first decade of camping at Flathead in one of his epistles from 1950:

"The past eight years of Bible Camp development have been remarkable. Today we realize a camp ground valued at approximately \$50,000, including real estate and physical equipment. Nine years ago we were using the Methodist-Episcopal camp ground, and, incidentally, we owe a debt of thanks for the courtesy extended..."

Next, Johnson summarized the feats of the first decade already noted in this history. He concluded with some inspirational comments:

"There is much that could be added. And endless list of names that have contributed to the success of the camp, and the present

prospect of a development that can easily challenge any similar project in any section of the U.S., Canada, or the continent of North America, we believe...

The interest in our young people has been the prime factor in moving our church people to contribute generously. Our treasurer, Mr. Oliver Engebretson, who has served enthusiastically throughout the history of the camp, will bear me out, I am sure, in this position. The spirit of giving has been good.

When you visit the camp you will realize how much it means to keep up this

Christikon McLeod, Montana

The history of Christikon officially began in 1951 but includes a story that goes back several decades prior. Christikon's current site just north of Yellowstone National Park was first staked as a homestead claim in the early years of the 20th century. Don Cowles, who later came to be called "the cowboy druggist of Livingston," may have originally envisioned his 83-acre claim would provide him an agricultural return. But he soon found his location to be a convenient stop over point for workers, merchants, and others heading up the road toward the Independence Mine. Knowing the value of mountain hospitality, he began welcoming them for meals and lodging at very affordable prices.

Although the area's mining

constant building program just at present. It looks like another camp entirely. It will require a more strenuous effort and we are sure that the generous response of our people will be equal to this opportunity...We do not have extravagant plans, but a certain amount of comfort is necessary for best results."

"May God bless the Bible Camp Association richly in an advance that will glorify His name and prove a blessing to the many groups that come to worship and to learn of God and His plans here in the glorious out-of-doors."

activity wound down after World War I, national interest in the Park and its surrounding terrain brought increasing numbers of people pursuing recreational and leisure sports. "Daddy Cowles" hospitality skills were polished to appeal to this new clientele. With his son, Don Jr., he started in earnest to create a rustic guest ranch that would appeal particularly to the eastern tourist.

By the early thirties, they had built two lodges and numerous cabins, using local timber and the skills of some of the best log construction workers in the area. With the management savvy of Anna Rutledge, the facility was operated as the Lazy Day Ranch until the late 40's, when changing times and a remote location led the Cowles family to put the place

up for sale.

It would prove to be an opportune time to bring the guest ranch and the church together. From Bozeman on the west, to Hardin on the east, to Cody, Wyoming on the south, congregations in the Billings Circuit in the old Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC) had been doing cooperative camping during the summer for a number of years. These churches rented sites and moved from location to location. Leaders in these churches were convinced that the time had come for them to organize for outdoor ministries.

They had been considering an offer of free land at the base of the Crazy Mountains, about 70 miles north of the current site. But with a developed guest ranch now available, interested congregational leaders began contacting individuals and groups for support. They held up the vision of this lovely mountain setting for use by Lutherans in the years to come.

In 1951, the former guest ranch became the focus of the Luther Lodge Bible Camp Association that would later be incorporated as Lutheran Bible Camp, Inc. Congregations were now able to do Bible camps and other conference activities at a place they could call their own. They added a few new buildings during the next fifteen years, remodeled the existing structures as needed, and arranged for a summer caretaker each year.

By the late 60's, camp leaders

recognized the need for more focused programs and leadership in their camping ministry. In 1968 a call was issued to Pastor Stan West, a pastor from Livingston, Montana, to serve as part time camp director. Stan was known for his story telling skills and one of his published novels, Amos, became a television film. Stan introduced a camping program with leadership focused on staff training and the development of the camp counselor. During his seven years as camp director, he began the camp's first organized backpacking trips into the beautiful mountains surrounding Christikon.

The name *Christikon* was adopted in 1971 to lift up the importance of its camp mission. A coined Greek word, *Christikon* means *that which belongs to Christ* or *those who belong to Christ*. This message continues to characterize the camp's orientation and mission as an arm of ministry on behalf of its congregations.

In 1975, Pastor Robert Quam was called to serve as director of Christikon part time with a congregation in Billings. The arrangement was renewed in 1978 with a different Billings congregation. In 1986, Quam became full time with Christikon to serve the growing ministry of the camp.

Many faithful people have been involved in the mission of Christikon. One such person was Charlie Rasnick, a long-time area prospector. Until his

death in 1983, Charlie lived at his wilderness cabin about two miles up the trail from the camp. He welcomed Christikon folks to his cabin innumerable times. While he had no formal connection with the camp, Charlie was always a gracious host, a good friend and a gracious role model. He was a fascinating conduit to the area history and his stories entertained hundreds of campers and staff.

During the past several decades the ministry of Christikon has been extended to include many people from other states, both in its residential camp

Brush Lake Bible Camp Plentywood, Montana

Brush Lake Bible Camp was a 42 acre camp located near Reserve, Montana, and owned by congregations in the conference surrounding the community of Plentywood, Montana, near the North Dakota border. In 1966, the ALC reported a camper

programs and through its fine backpacking trips into the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Area that surrounds the camp. Christikon is known for its “mountain hospitality” and has served youth in grades five through twelve. It also provides space for families and adults, developmentally challenged persons and many others from throughout the nation.

Christikon looks forward to continued faithfulness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as a place and people of vision and hospitality.

population of 295 junior and senior high campers.

Summer staff members were seldom hired; mainly pastors or group leaders who sponsored activities at Brush Lake Bible Camp ran the program.

Camping in Idaho

Lutherhaven Bible Camp Inland Empire Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

In the 1940's a group of men from the Spokane area Lutheran churches organized themselves into the Spokane Lutheran Men's Club. These men were from all of the Lutheran synods in the area and united together in order to work, sing, enjoy Christian fellowship and be engaged in service. Howard Fetz, a club member, presented them with an opportunity to purchase property on Lake Coeur d'Alene. It was decided to sound out the interest of all Lutheran churches in the Inland Empire, since the property would be central to so many communities. This early decision had the effect of broadening support for a worthy cause.

In 1945 a group known as the Inland Empire Lutheran Men's Association was formed. It was their specific dream to establish a summer camp for use by returning servicemen and for use of families of Lutherans in the Spokane area. It would be many years before this dream of family camping would become a reality.

The organization located 16 acres overlooking Mica Bay on Lake Coeur d'Alene in Idaho and purchased the property. Also purchased was an

old CCC camp for \$500. The eight buildings from this camp beyond Avery, Idaho, were moved some 150 miles and reassembled on the camp property, which was still virgin timber. The camp was called *Lutherhaven*.

The camp was officially dedicated on a beautiful Sunday afternoon on May 26, 1946. Over 1000 people were in attendance. The first camp was hosted in June 1946. As Pastor William A. Foege of Chewelah remembers:

"The first Bible camp held at Lutherhaven was in June of 1946. I was there. It was a great camp. It was a busy camp. A camp with real cooperation. The one person who had worked hard and long was Pastor Edward Wagner, at the time, pastor at Reardan, Washington."

In 1946, 650 campers enjoyed camp at Lutherhaven. By 1948 the camper attendance had more than doubled. Along with this growth came some unique challenges to lodge, provide food service, and care for the growing number of campers. Many people shared interest in expansion of the camp.

During the first six years, Howard Fetz had faithfully managed the camp. But the Board of Directors was fearful that the camp premises and facilities would deteriorate unless new sources of support were found. Their need for financial support was met by the Lutherhaven Ladies Auxiliary, which pulled the men out of trouble.

Shortly before 1956, after the first decade of Lutherhaven's existence, twenty additional acres north to the country road were annexed. And many new concepts in camping began to find their way into the plans for the camp program. Between 1956 and 1966, new cabins designed to provide small group space for 8-12 campers were constructed. Camp counselors began to use small groups for Bible study and programs during these years.

In 1970 the Board of Directors decided to sell the timber on the grounds for an estimated \$32,000. In addition, a canvas of all Lutheran congregations in the area was planned with a goal of \$25,000. Preparations for a Silver Jubilee were made. By 1973 family camping was established, as land was cleared and sites developed for

Tollgate Luthercrest Weston, Oregon

This 33-acre site was located near Weston, OR, and was owned by the Mid-Columbia and Blue Mountain conferences of the ALC.

tents and recreational vehicles. A new program called *Camp Ambassadors* was launched which would help spread the word about camp to the many Lutheran congregational members involved.

Guidelines for the organization were reaffirmed and Lutherhaven began to be known as Inland Empire Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, which encouraged a broader concept of camping, retreats, and outdoor ministry programs.

The theme for 1976 was "Burn the Mortgage" on the new Pinecrest Retreat Center. Many people worked on fund raising programs such as the Cast-Away Fair and a Bike-a-thon which helped accomplish the goal. In 1979, the Board authorized the exchange of the Tollgate-Luthercrest property in Oregon for the Columbia River Property.

The fortieth anniversary celebration was held in 1986, which marked the beginning of the fifth decade of camping for Lutherhaven. Founders met to celebrate the many changes that had occurred over the years.

Little is known about the camp as of this writing. A booklet published by the ALC describes its program for Junior and Senior High youth including

trail hiking, horseback riding and skiing. In 1966, 160 campers used the facility.

The camp was winterized and had a caretaker but it appears no counselors were hired for summer duties.

At some point, the conferences that owned Tollgate Luthercrest joined

Luther Heights Ketchum, Idaho

The Intermountain Lutheran Camp Association was incorporated in Idaho in 1953 as a nonprofit corporation to provide camping and religious activities for Lutheran youth. The original directors were Theo H. Wegner, Boise -- Augustana; Samuel E. Running, Twin Falls -- ALC; Ervin E. Miller, Boise -- ULCA; H. P. LeLand, Ogden, Utah -- Augustana; and Harry Johnson, Shelley -- Augustana. Pastoral advisors were P. W. Funk -- Augustana; Elmer Carlson -- Augustana; and Rev. Keller -- ALC.

A choice of two campsites was offered by the Forest Service near Lake Alturas in the Stanley Basin of the Sawtooth Mountains. The present site of 11 acres was selected by the committee and plans made to begin youth camping with tents in 1954. New members on the Board of Directors included Rev. Carl E. Samuelson, John A. Yeates, and Rex Johnson. During the first years of the camp organization, Ted Wegner served

with Inland Empire Lutheran Outdoor Ministry. It was then managed by the organization until its sale in 1979. The proceeds were used to purchase land on the Columbia River that would eventually become a center for small group, adventure based camping.

as board chairman. Upon his death, Ervin Miller assumed this position and continued during the next 20 years of development.

Rev. Carl Samuelson, known as Sammy, took the lead in obtaining surplus CCC tents, picnic benches, steel dinner trays, silverware, cooking utensils, and a cooking range from the local camp, which was closed down by the government. Thus the Bible camp began with primitive equipment and basic camping concepts.

Toilet facilities were constructed of small log buildings with concrete walled pits and floors. Pastor Hermanson, Pastor Samuelson, and John Yeates constructed the first foundation-pit in 1954. It is assumed it was blessed and duly dedicated. Water facilities consisted of a gravity water system designed by Ervin Miller. It piped water from a nearby spring on the mountain above the campsite.

When a name was needed for the new camp, Pastor Luther

Samuelson of Blackfoot, Idaho, suggested *Luther Heights Bible Camp*, and it was agreed to be acceptable.

Pastor Samuelson had also pressed the Board to install the water system, and he hauled many heavy 10-foot sections of galvanized pipe on a ski rack mounted on his Studebaker sedan. It was a hazardous trip of 280 miles from Idaho Falls to camp over a rough road partly under construction.

Plans for a lodge and cabins were developed by John Yeates and approved by the Board before architect Perry Bruvold began the work of creating blueprints. The goal for the camp was a capacity of 100 campers. The Forest Service also approved the architectural plans. Five and six inch sawed logs were obtained from the "South" sawmill in Island Park, Idaho, and hauled by church members 370 miles to camp.

Two sessions of camp were run in 1955 using primitive facilities. 144 youth attended these first sessions of camp at Luther Heights.

During the summer of 1955, construction of the lodge began. The Rex Johnson Construction Company of Twin Falls, Idaho, donated construction equipment and craft personnel and the foundations and floor slab were placed. Wall and roof construction continued into the following year.

During the following winter of 1956-57 disaster struck. The heavy snow load of approximately five feet

caused an unbalance on the lodge roof, resulting in its collapse. A major effort was required in 1957 to salvage trusses and logs in order to rebuild the roof. Cross bracing was added to overcome the original stress problem.

Since those original projects, staff and volunteers have built many sleeping cabins and an administrative cabin. A 120-240 volt aerial distribution electrical system was installed in order to electrify all the buildings.

Camper registration numbered 261 campers during three weeks of camping in 1958. This slowly increased to five weeks of camping plus retreat weekends for confirmation youth, couples, women and families.

In the mid eighties, a centrally located environmental compost toilet was added. A shower facility followed. And a 20 yearlong range plan for expansion has been developed and presented to the Forest Service that must approve all development.

Throughout the development of Luther Heights, a financial philosophy of "pay as you go" has prevailed. No excessive debts have been incurred.

The original purpose of proclaiming the gospel of Christ and strengthening the Christian faith of youth has been given highest priority. It is considered the foundation of the camp's success.

The Camps of Oregon & Washington

It is unfortunate to report that camping in Oregon and Washington has fallen from its once illustrious past. Events have forced the closure of camps that were dear to the heart of many. There were at one time seven camps and a ship (and several governing organizations) in these two states that were related to the ALC. Today there are two.

A combination of factors contributed to this loss, including lack of funding, encroachment and the deliberate decision to keep one program over another. However, one should not underestimate the power of the programs these camps had during their lifetime. There are many testimonies to the impact that camps like Camp Colton in Oregon or Tollgate Luthercrest had on people. And in their prime, they offered everything from horseback riding to badminton.

The source material I used for the camps in Oregon and Washington currently lacks information about the sites that no longer exist, particularly Lutherland, Olympic Lutherhaven and Tollgate Luthercrest. I have relied on interviews with Jerry Manlove, former Executive Director of Camping for the ALC, Mr. Alan Rogstad, recent director at Lutherwood in Washington and Jim Liefeld, former Executive of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Oregon.

(Please note that the history I have obtained on Tollgate Luthercrest (Weston, Oregon) is contained in the previous section under the state of Idaho, since it eventually became part of the Inland Empire Lutheran Outdoor Ministry organization).

The Camps of Oregon

Among the most complete histories located of all the camps in this volume is the booklet written by Hilma Anderson that tells the story of Camp Colton. The booklet is filled with memories and deep emotions. The copy was loaned to me by Rod Boriack, former assistant director for camping in the ELCA (and former employee at Camp Colton). He hoped it would help me write this shorter summary.

Among those whose lives were touched by Camp Colton is an arranger from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, who dedicated a beautiful piano arrangement titled "Children of the Light" in honor of her memory of Camp Colton. The words to the song are particularly appropriate for camping: "I want to be a child of the light, I want to be like Jesus."

Camp Colton, Colton, Oregon

Camp Colton was one of the earliest Lutheran camps to be established. In 1927, the Carlsborg Lutheran Church (known as the "Colton church") was without a pastor. Fortunately, a young medical student named Regner Kullberg arrived on the scene. He had worked in the western states and noticing the value of children's camping he had seen, agreed to serve as a lay pastor during the interim period that Carlsborg was without clergy.

One of his first obligations was to assist in planning the Luther League District Convention that had been previously scheduled to take place in Colton. A large crowd was expected, as the primary speaker was Dr. Sebelius of Rock Island. Also, a young man from India was to be there for a day. This had been organized by Pastor E.

Sundeen, the previous pastor who had recently moved to Powell Valley (now Gresham, OR).

Mr. Kullberg conceived the idea of holding the 1927 convention in the beautiful forests that surrounded Colton. These lands had reminded him of youth camps he had witnessed in other parts of the west. The date selected was August, and the weather would be warm with the woods cool and inviting.

He had Ingemar and Vincent Hill explored an area across the road from Canyon Creek Garage and finding a likely spot, cleared the brush and arranged a rustic altar and organ platform. Mr. Kullberg drew upon the musical interests of the youth attending and designed a well-rounded program. This first gathering was such a success that the group decided to meet their

again the next year and approved a plan for a week long Bible Institute to be held right after the Luther League Convention. A vague glimpse of future Camp Colton could be seen in these steps.

Living in Colton, Miss Hilma Olson had established a reputation as a generous spirited woman. She had moved from Stanton, Iowa, in order to be happy in the far west. She had purchased 30 acres of land in Colton, thanks to her friendship with a college friend, Anna Hult Renhard, whose husband was a leader of a Carlsborg Colonization company. Her land was found to have tall trees, ferns, and two tumbling creeks.

Young people liked her and she opened her home to the youth who enjoyed her laugh and wisdom. She watched with great interest the young people who gathered at the Canyon Creek Cathedral (as the Forest Chapel was now known). In November of 1929, Hilma Olson discussed the idea of donating part of her land to the church youth for a permanent home. Pastor Sakrison arranged for a trip to Oregon City where she formally deeded over nine acres to the Augustana Luther League of the Portland District.

Pastor Sakrison told the youth attending a rally in Portland,

"We have a new home now," "given by Hilma Olson. A natural park it is...two clear, cool mountain streams meet almost in the center of it, one merrily leaping over a little fall just as it joins hands with the others."

The camp took shape through the help of many local volunteers. During the first summer, a girls' cabin was built for 15 girls. But since the older women had trouble sleeping in tents, the girls had to give it up. Land was smoothed for tent villages. Homes in Colton were signed up for visitors and guests.

In the early thirties, the camp saw much development as trails, camping areas, and footbridges over the streams were built. Small cabins were built. Many people drove from throughout the west to see the new camp and enjoy its program. Guest speakers came from places as far as Wisconsin and California. Looking for inexpensive vacations (the camp was free to all), people came to donate their skills and talents to help the young Bible Institutes that were held on the grounds.

A new day was dawning in terms of unification of Lutheran camping interests. In 1933, representatives of a number of Lutheran bodies met in the Colton parsonage to discuss working together. Cooperation seemed necessary and natural. As a result of this positive discussion, the following Lutheran bodies began to work together in the "Colton Institute" as it was being called: American Lutherans, Norwegian Lutherans, Free Church, United Danish Lutherans, and the Augustana Lutherans.

That year the primary project was to build a swimming pool - by

hand! Hundreds of rocks, roots, logs, and debris were removed before the pit could be dug. Horse drawn fresnos were used along with mules, hand picks, shovels, and hands. A trench from Bee Creek brought cold water into the 125 X 90 foot pool.

During the Great Depression, when work was hard to find, Rev. Sakrison applied for a W. P. A. Labor contract. The request was granted and the government paid \$1000 in wages for a fence, park entrance, two car bridges, and a diversion dam.

In 1935 a dining hall was built (previously, meals had been served in the church basement at a modest cost to guests). During the end of this decade, many camp traditions were developed, such as the annual Pillow Fight winners. Attendance during the weeks averaged about 65 campers.

In the forties, money was tight and laborers few. Rationing during WWII had an effect on what could be accomplished. Many workers were gathering lumber for the war effort. Still camping continued at Colton. Land was purchased thanks to a mortgage taken out by the Colton congregation. And the women of the Ladies Aid continued to make

Camp Fridland Hoodland, Oregon

In the late sixties, shortly before the creation of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Oregon, members of the

improvements to the camp kitchens and dining hall.

Several clergymen would lead camp programs and supervise swimming in the pool or dipping in the creeks that ran through the property. The program was similar from year to year: morning devotion, followed by Bible Study, a panel discussion, and a Bible lecture after dinner. Outdoor sporting games were important with baseball, hiking, tennis, badminton, and swimming.

The camping programs at Colton became even more important when the war ended. The early fifties were exciting with many church leaders volunteering for teaching the youth who attended camp. Many of the early improvements were being updated, too. Of special interest is the fact that over the years, Sunday worship in the park has always been part of the Colton story. Local support and worship leadership has been an essential element of this outdoor ministry.

Hilma Anderson wrote a full history of Camp Colton in 1961. It was commissioned by the History Committee and published by the Camp Colton Development Council and is the basis of this early history.

former American Lutheran Church purchased a piece of property on Mt. Hood called Camp Fridland. The

camp was developed with a simple A frame cabin, some pit toilets and a few camping sites.

Local congregations normally led the camp program. Churches used the

site for Sunday morning worship and weekend camping.

The camp became a part of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Oregon upon its formation.

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Oregon Portland, Oregon

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Oregon was formed in the late sixties. It was created as a joint, comprehensive camping venture of the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, and Missouri Synod Lutherans. From the beginning its Board of Directors was pan Lutheran. Its first Executive Director was Pastor Frank Brocker.

Camp Colton and Camp Fridland became camps that were owned by LOM after it was formed. In addition, a gift of 40 acres of land on the Clackamas River near Barton, OR, was donated to the organization and called the Cedars.

Following the departure of Frank Brocker, Jerry Olstad became the Executive Director of LOMO in 1976. Mr. Rod Boriack was hired to serve as Program Director. Another camp, Lutherwood (located west of Eugene by Junction City) became involved in LOM at this time but its ownership was never transferred.

During this period, many efforts were made to make improvements to the aging facilities of the camps now owned by LOM. At the same time,

Olstad and Boriack launched a new program outreach of LOM in the form of traveling Day Camps. Through Day Camps, numerous congregations accepted teams of counselors to run camp programs in their local community. This was recognized as a pioneer approach to serving congregations that soon became a model for camping throughout the country.

When Olstad accepted a call to serve as Executive Director of Camps, Retreats, and Outdoor Ministries for the American Lutheran Church, Pastor Jim Liefeld accepted the position of Executive Director of LOM. The immediate challenge that Liefeld faced was financial. The cost of maintaining the camps and the limited amount of congregational support was catching up with Lutheran Outdoor Ministries.

Because of the age of many of the camping facilities owned by Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Oregon, LOMO began to face serious challenges with site redevelopment and renewal. A feasibility study was conducted of the camps owned by LOM, and among the participants of

the study team was Paul Fjare, a noted camp designer and landscape architect.

Two major recommendations came from the report offered by the study members. First, it was recommended that the financial resources needed to repair and operate Camp Colton were more than what could adequately be expected from member congregations and participants. The second recommendation was that since there were so many outdoor centers available in Oregon that could be rented and used by Lutherans, a new approach to camping could be reasonably developed. That approach was to sell Camp Colton and use the resources from the sale to develop camping programs using rented sites and locations in many different parts of the state.

When these recommendations were presented, they resulted in both acceptance and great anger. The local Lutheran congregation that had been instrumental in establishing Camp Colton subsequently hired an attorney to sue for the return of the camp so that it would not be sold. Meanwhile, the Board of Directors of LOM felt that they could not release the camp to the church and still be considered legally prudent as required of their positions on the Board and because they felt the new model for camping truly served Lutherans more effectively.

The litigation became more sensitive when the Lutheran Church in America filed an additional suit against

LOM to prevent the sale. The Board of Directors felt that because the responsibilities for leadership included the rule to be prudent and responsible for the total assets of the corporation, they had no choice but to further fight the suits.

During the controversy, the financial resources of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries dwindled. The lack of gifts during this period and fewer fees for programs led the Board of Directors to sell Camp Fridland in order to continue the efforts of LOM. It was hoped that the net from the sale would secure LOM during the litigation years and enable some new programmatic steps. However, the sale to new owners resulted in the immediate cut of a magnificent fir forest and this made many people who had a personal history with the camp to feel frustrated and alienated.

In the process of litigation over Camp Colton, the Board of Directors finally secured approval to sell Camp Colton. Those who invested in the camp turned it into an Artist's Colony for glass workers. Pastor Jim Liefeld resigned in 1985 in order to accept a call to a congregation. The sale left LOM with one camp - the Cedars.

By this time the Cedars needed major work. Located in a damp area, there was much rot and structural damage to repair. It became obvious to the Board of Directors that it could not raise the funds necessary for renewal of the property and so the Cedars was sold to Concordia University in

Portland. The Board of Directors finally voted Lutheran Outdoor

Ministries out of business in 1987 or 1988.

Lutherwood Junction City, Oregon

Lutherwood was located near Junction City, OR, and was owned by 80 congregations affiliate with the Lutheran Church in America and The American Lutheran Church. The location, west of Eugene, was easily accessible to many church leaders and their groups and the camp was operated in the summer season to serve youth.

Lutherwood became involved with Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Oregon as a partner without giving its ownership over to the organization. Instead, it allowed its facilities to be managed and programmed by staff from LOM while providing for its own maintenance and improvements. Thus when LOM ended its ministry, Lutherwood was able to continue to serve congregations in Oregon.

Camping in Washington

One of the grand programs related to camping in the ALC was the Ship Christian, operating out of Anacortes, WA. Featured in many national articles by the Lutheran Standard, the ship caught the imaginations of thousands of people across the country.

*Readers may also question why Holden Village, Chelan, WA, is not included in this history. Holden Village stands in a class by itself. During the time of the ALC, Holden chose not to be listed or considered a "camp." As a community, with its wide pan Lutheran base, Holden Village did not offer "camping programs" but high quality programs of adult education for its diverse community of adults and families. In the 1967 book published by Bible Camp Association of the ALC titled, *Camping in the American Lutheran Church, 1967*, no mention of Holden is recorded in its pages.*

Camp Lutherwood Bellingham, Washington

Rev. Thomas Allport can be credited with initiating the effort to develop a camp in the Bellingham area of northwest Washington State. In 1946, Allport began looking for a place to take children and youth on outings and discovered Captain Alexander Roy's fishing resort on Lake Samish, 8 miles south of Bellingham.

Rev. Allport, then pastor at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Bellingham, reported to the United Lutheran Church's Northern Conference of the Pacific Synod that Captain Roy was willing to consider a sale of his property for a Bible Camp. The synod approved but suggested that other Lutheran churches in the area be invited to join in the effort.

The land upon which the camp would be developed consisted of 45.6

acres, 1500 feet of shoreline, a five-room house, seven cabins, a tent house, barn and chicken coop. There were also swimming facilities, ten rowboats and a large playing field available on the property. The price was set at \$22,500.

An invitation for pastors to meet to discuss the development of a camp was issued. On October 28, 1946, steps were taken to form the Lutheran Camp Associates, Inc., a non-profit corporation to operate for the religious training and instruction of youth and to strengthen their moral and physical well being. Two of the men who incorporated the camp were T.B. "Tut" Asmundson, a local attorney, and Pastor Allport.

On March 19, 1947, people who invested or donated \$100 to purchase the camp property voted to elect

trustees. Church bodies that were represented at this early date were the United Lutheran Church in America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Augustana Lutheran Church, and the American Lutheran Church. Early officers included Rev. Phil Warmanen (Augustana), of Sedro Woolley as President; Rev. Allport (ULCA) as Vice President, Rev. Edwin Soiland (ELC) as Secretary and Rev. Edwin Bracher (ULCA) as treasurer.

Unable to gain enough funds for the purchase of the camp, the organization leased the camp for a year with an option to purchase. By January of 1948, \$10,000 was raised and a down payment was made. Captain Roy had received two additional offers for more money but Roy was sympathetic to the effort and made many contributions to the new organization. Certificates of interest were issued for about \$15,000 and enough funds secured to complete the transaction.

In 1947 and 1948 a large dining hall was constructed with labor donated and supervised by Pastors Soiland and Warmanen. A water system was purchased from the War Assets Administration at a reduced price. Andrew Bruland was hired as caretaker in the fall of 1947 and the house was remodeled for his use.

The first camping season ran from the last two weeks of June through the last week of August in 1948. The Lutherans involved used five of the ten weeks and leased the facilities to other denominations for the

rest of the summer season. Several weekend youth activities were also held at the camp.

Because of the success of the new camp, several improvements were studied. Surveys of needs were also looked at in the development plan. A modern stone and cement rest room building was constructed at a cost of \$3000. Better drainage to the site was developed and the recreation grounds were reseeded. A store was built near the camp entrance with an office area for registration.

By the early fifties, over 1000 people used the camp facilities and the Board of Directors began to plan for a new chapel. By the fall of 1953, sufficient funds were collected to finish the cement foundations and build the walls and roof structure. Carelton Tollefson of Spokane donated the chapel plans and a Seattle architect furnished the electrical plan. It is estimated that the cost of the chapel did not exceed \$10,000.

In 1957 the Brotherhoods of Burlington and Bow completed the tennis courts and an outdoor kitchen was built. And in the fall of 1958, an additional 20 acres was purchased for \$1000 and 40 acres was purchased for \$2000. In 1959 a staff cabin was begun with work completed by men from Edison and Burlington.

In 1961, the Board of Directors authorized a fund raising campaign and more than \$50,000 was given or pledged over a five year period. Professor Roger Larsen of Washington

State University completed a study and projection of facility needs so the development program could continue. A girl's lavatory was completed first, and in 1962, five new cabins were completed and the old cabins moved from the waterfront.

In 1963, the caretaker's house was moved and the state gave the camp permission to use 200 acres of land located above the camp for trail hikes into a beautiful lake. General improvements to the dock and swim area were completed in 1965. Many small but important improvements took place during the late sixties, including a bridge, the relocation of a nurse's cabin and a new drain field. Drainage of the camp property has always been a constant concern.

Lutherwood raised funds for many of its projects by developing a unique plan that allowed people to provide money to the camp while building personal estates. The camp would, in turn, pay annual insurance premiums to replace the donated funds in the person's estate. By working with the Farmers New World Life Insurance Company and Everman Organization, \$54,682.46 was raised. Instead of paying interest on the amount, the camp paid the insurance premiums.

By 1966, some camp leaders became concerned about the lower number of camp registrations. In 1967,

the Tri-Conference (Tri-C) was formed and Buzz Kahn was called to be the Director of Camping Ministries.

Lutherland, near Tacoma and Lutherhaven near Bremerton began to work with Lutherwood to develop more quality program opportunities. Up to this point, local pastors led camping at Lutherwood and most other programs were rentals.

Through the attempts of Tri-C, more joint program efforts were undertaken. Attention was given to staff training and the development of creative program opportunities.

Mike and Linda Waller directed Lutherwood's efforts in the early eighties and were followed by Bob and Karen Edwards. During these years Lutherwood continued its renewed programs during the summer season. Its retreat ministry, using six cabins with wood fired heat, also became very popular. Yet, the facilities began to show their age. New and stringent government regulations made the Board and its leaders aware of the need for higher quality construction and attention to operating details.

Nonetheless, Lutherwood continued to offer a full season of program opportunities and retreat activities. When the ELCA was formed in 1987, Lutherwood entered onto the roster of camps affiliated with the new church.

Lutherland Tacoma, Washington

Lutherland was an inter synodical camp located midway between Tacoma and Seattle that offered summer youth camping and winter retreat programs to youth, families and adults. The 60-acre site had sufficient facilities to house large numbers of campers. In 1966, Lutherland reported camper use of 3,421 youth and adults, making it one of the most active camps in the ALC during the year.

Olympic Lutherhaven Bremerton, Washington

Eight ALC congregations and one Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod congregation owned and developed Olympic Lutherhaven, located on the beautiful Olympic peninsula west of Bremerton, WA. The 40-acre site provided opportunities for youth and held a special focus on designing programs attractive to Senior High youth.

Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Association (LOMA) Anacortes, Washington

The primary predecessor organization of Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Association was the Tri-C Camping Association established in the mid sixties. Buzz Kahn served as director of this organization that offered camping programs for Lutherans to enjoy but owned no

In 1967, Lutherland became part of the Tri – C organization, a coordinating ministry organization owned by the three conferences that linked their camps into a single organization. In 1982, Lutherland was sold and the proceeds used to pay off the rising debt of the organization and purchase the retreat center located near Issaquah, Washington, called the LOMA Center for Renewal.

In 1967, Olympic Lutherhaven became part of the Tri – C organization, a coordinating ministry organization owned by the three conferences that linked their camps into a single organization. In 1985, following a period of financial distress, Lutheran Outdoor Ministries returned Lutherhaven to its original owners.

property.

Kahn found growing enthusiasm for a central organization to provide camping programs in the many settings that were available in this beautiful area.

The camping program in these days managed to develop a ministry on

board the Ship Christian. Sailing the waters of Puget Sound, the ship offered retreats on board and camping on island sanctuaries in the beautiful waters of the sound. It operated out of Anacortes, Washington.

The unique and one of a kind program was costly. Not only was there substantial investment in the ship, but also regular maintenance and improvements and the limited length of season created great financial stresses on the organization.

Pastor Will Bigottt was called to serve as pastor and director of Tri-C in 1972. Under his leadership, the variety of programs and sites that served Lutherans was pulled together into a unified ministry open to all. Established in 1975, Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Association (LOMA) created a dedicated organization that offered a unified approach to Lutheran outdoor ministry programs in the Pacific Northwest.

Pastor Wayne Jarvis was called to head LOMA in 1977. By this time LOMA's indebtedness had reached over \$150,000. Some land owned by LOMA was sold to offset the debt, but it was not enough. The all-important relationships that had been created to form LOMA began to suffer. Despite a year in which the number of campers was at an all time high, 1977 was a year of loss for LOMA. The ship's skipper resigned. The organization slowed its progress in order to contemplate its future.

Yet enthusiasm for a LOMA

vision remained. Board members recognized the importance of outdoor ministry goals. A report to their members said,

"...outdoor ministry of the church has come to play an increasingly important role. The loneliness of crowds of busy people, preoccupied people, the numbing effect of unbroken routines, and the pressures of a hurry-up-and-wait mentality are shattered in the places and settings of the outdoor ministry."

Outdoor ministry was not simply a retreat from the world, but a strategic program that enabled guests to regroup and strengthen their spiritual resources. The task ahead for the LOMA board was not an easy one.

In 1979, Pastor Ron Nielson joined the organization as Executive Director.

LOMA continued to offer camping programs, but camper participation continued to decline and without dollars for improvements, facilities were deteriorating while operating costs increased. With a heavy debt and fewer gift dollars to work with, the congregational ownership of LOMA made the painful decision to sell Camp Lutherland in 1982. With the sale of the camp the organization paid its indebtedness and purchased what today is the LOMA Center for Renewal, an adult retreat facility 20 minutes from Seattle.

Pastor Don Taylor was called to be the skipper and director of the Ship Christian, moored in Anacortes, and

Pastor Ray K. Lester became the director of the retreat center. With Ray providing retreat leadership, Don was busy preparing the ship for a major overhaul and extension. Camping was up, and both the ship and the center were being used. The future at campsites looked bright based upon statistical data.

But once again, summer camping declined and failed to reach predicted levels, LOMA's corporation made another difficult move. LOMA's active involvement in summer camping was terminated in 1985. Operations and properties were turned back to congregational roots for summer site camping, and while ongoing interest in camping was pledged by the struggling corporation, no financial assistance could be made. The ownership and operation of the retreat center and ship was kept and would become the sole focus of LOMA.

Pastor Taylor continued to lead the ship ministry. Pastor Lester resigned from his position at the

LOMA Center for Renewal Issaquah, Washington

The LOMA Center for Renewal is a retreat center that bordered the Lutheran Bible Institute of Seattle. The center was purchased with the proceeds from the sale of Lutherland in 1982.

The facility can accommodate a wide variety of groups and ages. Adults have found the center to be a

LOMA center in 1985. Executive Ron Nielsen had moved earlier. LOMA decided against hiring another Executive Director.

The ship continued its ministry by providing summer youth camping weeks and activities during other sailing months. On board, the program included study, worship, and plenty of discussion. Developing financial resources continued to be a challenge, but the Board felt the unique ministry was important to continue.

The Ship Christian eventually needed repairs and regular mandated maintenance that proved too costly. The ship was eventually sold but has continued its use as a mission ship in the Alaskan islands.

The LOMA center, located near Issaquah, WA, continued to offer adult retreat programs and was open to all denominations. Personal retreat programs and a ministry providing support to ex-offenders were also established as part of its program of outreach.

remarkable facility for planning seminars, educational endeavors and group building. Its access to LBI has allowed groups to take advantage of both for personal growth and renewal.

The retreat center related to the ALC for only five years and then became part of the ELCA.

Sources and Reference Material

The basic substance of this historical volume was taken from the written vignettes provided by approximately 40% of the camps of the former American Lutheran Church. These sketches were provided by the Executive Directors or interested individuals associated with the camps included in this volume. In many other cases, I have used personal or phone interviews to obtain information. I have been, of course, dependent upon these people for their willingness to share their memories with me so they might be preserved.

Below is a listing of many of the sources and/or reference material I used in gathering the short histories of this book. Additional material is no doubt available from many people who have been overlooked.

People who assisted

I wish to thank many people who have assisted in this effort. Jerry Manlove and Paul A. Hanson (now deceased) have been true partners in the promotion of this volume, believing that the stories of those who began the camps of the ALC were worth recording in an orderly fashion. I am thankful for the many times they consulted with me and read drafts of the material that is part of this book.

Jerry and Paul introduced me to many camping leaders that I did not

know. Paul Ofstedal shared memories of his father's camping days in North Dakota.

I express appreciation to Jerry Olstad, former Executive Director of Outdoor Ministries in both The American Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the time we spent together. He provided advice and offered corrections that have been most helpful.

Dozens of Executive Directors and Camp Directors deserve thanks for preparing summaries of their camp histories, checking dates, spelling of names and providing information in logical format. I am thankful to Mark Gardner who began this effort and collected histories of many of the camps and put them into summary format. In many cases, the histories in this book are identical to those provided by Mark. In several, I was able to expand the histories with interviews or quotations from records in my possession.

Many directors of these camps have responded to calls to check on details. Several others sent excellent histories to summarize in this volume.

Camping in Minnesota

The Minnesota News, an insert to the *Lutheran Standard* provided several articles about the camps in

Minnesota, including Wilderness Canoe Base, Camp Onomia and others.

Original material was provided by Mark Gardner for Shetek Lutheran Bible Camp, revised by conversations with Jon Hoyme, Executive Director of Shetek.

Material for Green Lake Bible Camp includes interviews with Paul A. Hanson, written history from Green Lake Bible Camp, Dean Larsen, and many personal memories recorded by people who have been involved in the development of the camp. I thank Dave Eliassen for offering advice on what to include from these sources.

The Mt. Carmel story taken from a copy of the 1938 history of the camp called "Mt Carmel" by Dr. Samuel Miller, President of Lutheran Bible Institute, Minneapolis, MN.

Camp Knutson's history was recorded on a letter to Mark Gardner.

Pathways Camping Ministries has graciously provided written histories of all its camps and in addition, there is a tape recording of Dr. Frederick Schoitz, founder of Camp Emmaus.

I thank Ron Nielsen for his historical work on Luther Crest called "Fifty Years of Fact, Folk Lore, and Fiction." It is an excellent history of the camp.

The American Lutheran Memorial Camp has complete written histories and a chronology of the camp highlights, thanks to Rev. Bill Vogel, now deceased. I developed the history of Logos from personal memories and

involvement with the river canoe base on the St. Croix River.

Wilderness Canoe Base has many sources, including newspaper articles, written history, and a personal letter from Jerry Manlove to Paul Hanson regarding his experiences with Wilderness. Rev. Hamm Muus was instrumental in the development of many written materials to assist other directors and can be credited with developing many camping leaders in the church.

Crossroads Ministry has little in written historical materials but a filmstrip of its ministry has been preserved. I wrote the history based upon my involvement with Crossroads in its early days.

Thanks to Alana Butler for submitting a very fine written history of Camp Amnicon dated 1/14/1995 for inclusion in this booklet.

Camping in Wisconsin

Mark Gardner provided Lutherdale's history.

Camp Indian Sands history is the result of an interview with Pastor Jeff Barrow, former director of the camp.

Imago Dei Ministries and its camp is the result of research I did into its history while serving as Executive Director of the organization. There are many sources, written materials, and brochures I used in its development.

Mark Gardner provided Luther Park's history.

Pastor Ted Berkland provided a chronological summary of the history of Luther Point.

Lake Wapogasset has a well-developed history found in its booklet "*A Common Vision.*"

Mark Gardner provided Bethel Horizon's history.

Written historical materials were provided by Sugar Creek, dated 1987.

Camping in Illinois

I have in my possession a few copies of a newsletter called *Echoes* that were developed by the Chicago Circuit for their camping program. They are very complete and filled with colorful stories, songs, and poems.

Mark Gardner provided Green Wing's history.

Camping in Iowa

Okoboji Bible Camp has a complete *Chronological History* up to 1988 and it was used to develop their story.

Mark Gardner provided Riverside and Ewalu's history. However, Ewalu provided a number of remembrances from written by its early pioneers. Among these people are Al & Ethel Zwanzigar, Kathy Hallon, Dennis Statrud, Elmer Luloff, Henry Mathre, Christine Faust, George Strum, and Erwin and Bernard Philipp. I have a personal preference for the stories told by those who were instrumental in establishing our camps.

Camping in the Dakotas

The Badlands history is a result of a phone interview with their Executive Director Lowell Krogstad.

Metigoshe Ministries, Red Willow Bible Camp, and St. Olaf Retreat all had their histories provided by Mark Gardner. However, there are many references to these places in church publications.

Park River has perhaps the best written history of all the camps in this book. Their story is found in the book written by Darlene Hendrickson called "*We Shall Gather at the River...*" I am pleased to have been given a copy.

Camp of the Cross provided me with a variety of written material including a copy of their initial development booklet and Dedication Booklet. I wish to thank Jim Silrum for his assistance and conversation.

Arden Norum provided the history of Camp Shalom.

I am indebted to the many written histories of the camps of South Dakota for their story. Their anniversary booklets are consistent and filled with excellent information. "*A Time to Remember*" records the history of Outlaw Ranch and Atlantic Mountain Ranch. NeSoDak has its own history recorded in its anniversary book. I thank both Dave Brunkow and Paul Leslie, former directors of Lutherans Outdoors of South Dakota for their comment and assistance. Ray Engh also illuminated the importance of the first Board of Directors of Lutherans Outdoors and noted, properly, that its

lay and clergy Board members were the driving factor in creating this fine organization.

Camping in Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and North Carolina

Mark Gardner provided much of this material as collected from the Ohio camping staff. A booklet called "Celebration" was written by Luther Memorial Camp for their Golden Anniversary and provided many more details for this volume.

I regret that I was able to find very limited information about Camp Agape. Jerry Manlove reviewed the history of Koinonia.

Web site information from Lutheridge / Lutherock Outdoor Ministries and archive information from ALC camping records enabled me to piece together a history of Lutherock in Boone, NC.

Camping in Nebraska and the Central States

Mark Gardner provided basic information from his collection. As Executive Director of Sky Ranch, I had access to its archive information. ALC camping records provided limited information about the camps of Kansas.

Camping in Texas/Louisiana

Basic information was provided by Mark Gardner for the Texas

camping program but personal phone conversations and follow up letters of review from Jonathan Reid were most helpful.

Camping in the Southwest

A personal letter from John Mogren, Treasurer, helped define the history of Lutheran Camp Association of the Southwest, headquartered in Las Vegas. Mark Gardner had basic information about the camps in California but the supplemental material provided by Ms. Connie Wolfe was most helpful to the completion of this history.

Camping in Montana, Idaho, & the Pacific Northwest

I had a great deal of fun reviewing historical material from Flathead Lake Bible Camp provided to me by the daughters of Rev. Amon Johnson, one of its founders. The boxes were kept for many years and included personal correspondence, invoices, and other memories. As a result their history is written to depict the story of its people.

Lutherhaven has provided us with an anniversary booklet from 1986.

The history of Camp Colton was drawn from a book provided to me by Rod Boriack, a former staff member in Oregon camping program. Credit to the author is recorded in their history.

Rev. Jim Liefeld, former director, provided the remaining history of the Lutheran Outdoor

Ministries of Oregon from his personal notes. Included were copies of camp histories dated from 1963 - 1981 and include information about Colton, Fridland and the Cedars.

Thanks to Alan Rogstad, Executive Director of Camp Lutherwood, for his help in tracking down the history of camping in Washington from 1946 - 1967 and for

supplementing it with new materials since that date. There were many camping ventures in Washington, including Olympic Lutherhaven, Lutherland, the ship Christian, and the LOMA Center. This history was complicated to write and hopefully further research will provide a better picture of camping in Washington.