Here's to Dear Old Golden Lake

THE ORIGINS OF RED PINE CAMP INCORPORATED

By Gordon D. Campbell
Here's to Dear Old Golden Lake
— The Origins of Red Pine Camp Incorporated

North Alcona Twp., Benzie County, Ontario

Red Pine Camp
Property Sketch Map

NOT TO SCALE

- Current Boundary RPC Inc. Property
- Original RPC Boundary (Green/Sheep)

Gordon Campbell
June 2009
Here’s to Dear Old Golden Lake
THE ORIGINS OF RED PINE CAMP INCORPORATED

By Gordon D. Campbell

Early History of the Camp
1900–1967

Process of Incorporation
1968–1974

Growth and Development
1975–2008
Dedicated to all the families who have attended and enjoyed Red Pine Camp and to the staff and volunteers who have worked to make our family camp a cherished place.
Acknowledgements

I could not have undertaken this project without the help of many people and, in particular, my daughter Cathy for typing my handwritten manuscript and for managing the production of this book. I owe thanks to Red Pine neighbour Delia Coates, a talented graphic designer, for creating the final product. She was aided by our friend Barbara Barkley, who scanned photos and provided sage advice. I must also acknowledge my daughter Joni for proofreading the manuscript, long-time camper and artist Donna Edwards for sharing her artwork with us; artist Charles Spratt for providing permission to use a reproduction of his Dining Hall painting on the cover, and to Delia, Nick Scrivens and Carl Poirier for their photographs of Red Pine’s natural beauty.

Finally, I extend thanks to my wife Betty — for everything.
CONTENTS

Foreword .............................................................. vi
I. YMCA camping at Golden Lake ................................. 1
II. The Gathering Storm ............................................. 4
III. Survival .......................................................... 9
IV. The Way to the Future ........................................... 14
V. The Golden Lake Properties ..................................... 19
VI. The Birth of the Corporation ................................. 24
VII. Under New Management ....................................... 29
VIII. Conclusions .................................................... 38
IX. Activities ......................................................... 55–57
X. Postscript ......................................................... 58
References ......................................................... 63
Officers of Red Pine Camp Inc. 1973–2009 ..................... 64
Many current Red Pine Campers are unaware that throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, Red Pine Camp was experiencing a financial and administrative crisis that threatened its survival. Through this period, a core group of campers, supported by a larger group of volunteers, worked to craft a rescue strategy for Red Pine so it could continue to operate and then go on to thrive as the summer camping operation that we enjoy today.

My involvement in the rescue effort of Red Pine Camp was one of the most interesting and rewarding ventures in a lifetime of professional and personal challenges, which have for me yielded a great sense of satisfaction and a lifetime of happiness.

Scores of people have loved Red Pine Camp, profited from the good influences it bestowed on their families and contributed to the new beginning, which this institution enjoyed after 1974. It is not possible to identify all of these loyal and dedicated friends in this brief narrative for which I apologize. I must, however, dedicate this personal memoir to three friends and colleagues and to my wife, who shared in all aspects of this rescue effort with me.

**Earl Olmsted** was a Red Pine Camp regular, starting in 1938. In the 1972–74 crisis years, Earl had the vision and the will to make a great new future for the camp.

**Ivan Sparks** and his family first discovered RPC in 1953. Ivan stepped into the hot seat in 1969 to save the camp and recruit the people to rebuild the institution.

**Mike Sharp** became actively involved in Red Pine Camp with his family in 1952 and contributed his technical skills, administrative leadership and sound judgement to help reshape Red Pine Camp for a greater future.
My wife, Betty Campbell, helped complete the 1973 Business Manager’s work after his sudden death. She established the first Shareholder Register, acknowledged all share purchases and prepared all of the share certificates for 1973 transactions. She helped all of the Business Managers over a 20-year period by processing camper registrations each spring. Over those same years, she gave me essential personal support. She encouraged me to write this piece of RPC history, which had been requested by the current Board of Directors.

The three men are now dead and can’t correct or criticize my narrative but I cannot underestimate the debt of gratitude we owe to them. As for Betty, she continues to be an active and involved camper. I was a member of the Board of Directors for 21 years, Chair of the Operating Committee for four years and President of Red Pine Camp for four years, and I still continue to maintain an interest in the enterprise.

Others in leadership positions were mentioned in the text to illustrate the continuum of improvements by introducing specific changes to better the annual Red Pine experience. These citations in no way diminish the importance of other contributors and I recommend that all campers take time to review the plaques on the “Wall of Fame” in the camp Dining Hall, which were intended to record a history of achievement and personal involvement therein.

Gordon D. Campbell
Ottawa, October 2009.
To the trees! To the sky!
To the world in its glorious happiness!
To the lake! To the fire!
To the life that is moving and calling us!

– Words from Red Pine Camp Song
During the first decade of the 20th century, outtrippers from the Ottawa Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) came across a sandy beach with a mature stand of pine trees above it that formed a park-like plain overlooking Golden Lake. This site in North Algona Township, Renfrew County, Ontario was to become Red Pine Camp. The lumber companies of Ottawa had already harvested much of the prime red and white pine in the area surrounding Golden Lake and had transported the valuable logs down the Bonnechere and Ottawa rivers for processing. The government was also subdividing potential agricultural land into 100-acre farm properties and settling homesteaders on accessible properties in the area.

Lumbering and agriculture had not appreciably altered the natural beauty and resources of this wilderness which was now accessible by railway trains from Ottawa to Golden Lake Village and from there to our campsite by canoe. The Ottawa YMCA thus used the Red Pine Camp property increasingly for outtripping and camping until 1908 when it acquired the title to the 10-acre property where its boys' camp “On-Da-Da-Waks” was established. This initial campsite included what is now referred to as the Grove and the Ball Field and presently contains the Dining Hall and Kitchen, Workshop, Tuck Shop, camper cabins 1–23, staff cabins, office buildings and the Rec Hall.
After World War One ended, the Y Camp was gradually transformed from tenting to wooden cabins, while assembly and eating facilities were housed in a post-and-beam Dining Hall building, which was transported in pieces from Canadian Military Camp Petawawa.

The boys’ camp operated in July and, to take advantage of this excellent site and facilities, some members of the Ottawa YMCA organized Red Pine Camp for families and young single adults beginning in August 1924.

Camp On-Da-Da-Waks and Red Pine Camp were each organized and managed by separate committees operating under a camping coordinator and reporting to the Board of Directors of the Ottawa YMCA. Both camps prospered for many years under this arrangement and were generally well-attended and subject to annual improvements in facilities and programs. To accommodate increasing numbers of campers, the shorestrip was purchased in 1936 from neighbour Dan Yourth’s farm. This narrow strip of waterfront land now contains camper cabins 28 to 43. Both the boys’ camp and Red Pine Camp became well known and respected institutions in the Ottawa Valley and beyond and, over the years, served many thousands of people of all ages.

From its inception, Red Pine Camp was managed by camper volunteers with some assistance and oversight by Y staff. From 1928 onward, Red Pine Camp was governed by an official constitution, approved by the YMCA Board of Directors. Campers were elected each week during August to serve on a 28-person Council which met each month from October to June to approve the programs and improvements for the summer camping season. At the time, the camp ran during long weekends in May, July 1, Labour Day and Thanksgiving in addition to the four-week period in August. The Red Pine Camp Council also selected from its members a six-person Executive Committee and a chairperson. The Chair was responsible for the general supervision of the affairs of Red Pine Camp and was accountable for the operation and served as principal spokesperson. Each of the Committee members managed a specific portfolio such as Food
Services, Program, Waterfront or Property. The Chair presented the annual budget to the Board of Directors of the YMCA for approval.

Since the formal establishment of Red Pine Camp in 1928, the operation had been entirely self-supporting and all physical improvements to the Golden Lake property had been made from excess revenues from camper fees or from voluntary labour of the campers. Early agreements with the Ottawa YMCA Board of Directors established that all excess revenues could be used by the campers for the improvement of facilities, and this principle was reconfirmed by the YMCA Directors at several points in the camp’s history.
1967 could be considered the critical turning point in the history of Red Pine Camp. The vacation period of that year was focused on the World’s Fair “Expo 67” in Montreal and celebrations throughout Canada commemorating the 100th anniversary of Confederation – one nation indivisible from coast to coast to coast. Canada was prospering; arts and culture were changing; car ownership grew rapidly and governments invested heavily in improved streets and highways as well as affordable networks of rapid air travel services. Millions of people spent their vacation time and money in Montreal, while other resorts and favoured holiday and tourist destinations suffered. This change in summer vacation plans was carried forward into upcoming years.

In the early 60’s, Jack Pearse had opened his new Camp Tawingo in the Muskoka district of Ontario, 350 kilometres from Ottawa. Pearse had been a dynamic program director at Red Pine Camp, and had organizational responsibility for the On-Da-Da-Waks boys’ camp of the Ottawa YMCA. His new camp started with modern facilities, and combined a boys’ and girls’ camp modelled on On-Da-Da-Waks and, some time later, he added a short family camp, not unlike Red Pine, at the end of the summer. He could easily service the Toronto area at a distance of 225 km and also a more distant Ottawa. Jack had the camping knowledge and experience to ensure success as well as financial backing and technical assistance from some Red Piners and Toronto area people of like interests.
Some On-Da-Da-Waks campers followed Jack Pearse to Tawingo and, by 1968, there had been a major movement of young campers to the newer Jack Pearse camp. It had larger capacity, much greater area, more modern facilities and upscale programs compared to those provided at the deteriorating Golden Lake establishment. As a result, the Ottawa Y boys’ camp wound up operations in 1968.

The third development that affected Red Pine Camp at that time was the amalgamation of the Ottawa YMCA and Ottawa YWCA and the movement of the combined organization into a single new modern building which could provide greatly enhanced services to the city. This development imposed new financial constraints on the YM-YWCA and a greater dependence on the grants from the United Way (Red Feather) collective charity.

With the demise of the On-Da-Da-Waks boys’ camp, Red Pine became the sole user of the Golden Lake property. Recognizing the dangers of losing Red Pine as a YM-YWCA program, longtime camper Ivan Sparks stepped in to once again become Chairman of the Camp during 1969. Ivan, Lorraine and the Sparks children
attended Red Pine annually after 1953 and Ivan was a long-time leader at the Camp, a Director of the Ottawa YMCA, a senior lay official in the United Church, Secretary-General of an international service organization, a philanthropist and owner of a major international moving company headquartered in Ottawa. Ivan convinced the YM-YWCA Board of Directors in 1969 to authorize the Red Pine Committee to operate a six-week camp in July and August instead of the previous four-week August camp. Ivan persuaded the Y Board that Red Pine Camp could grow and thrive with a rejuvenated Committee and Council. He then devoted the entire 1969 camping season to encouraging campers to participate in camp planning, programs and the recruitment of new customers. Ivan’s efforts resulted in competent new members for the RPC Council and Committee.

Throughout these difficult years of 1969–1972, Mike Sharp was a rallying point for the Red Pine Camp family. Mike was a University of Saskatchewan electrical engineering graduate. He was an officer in the Canadian Army during the Second World War. He was a very good athlete, recognized especially for basketball in Ottawa. He was the general manager of the Ottawa operations of a major electrical contracting company and was recognized across Canada for his expertise. Mike, Betty and their three children, Mike Jr., Debbie and Jim, attended Red Pine for at least 30 years starting in the 1950s. Mike Sr. served as a member of the Operating Committee from 1952 to 1960 and as Chairman of Red Pine Camp from 1961–1965. He was remembered by all campers for his guitar-playing skills and daily sing-songs after lunch. He was also the leader of a small band of experts who volunteered while at camp to repair buildings, fix kitchen equipment and keep the camp’s electrical system operating. Mike Sharp Sr. also served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Ottawa YM-YWCA and was very helpful to the RPC Committees during the difficult years in explaining Red Pine’s problems during budget deliberations.

Earl Olmsted and his wife Marjorie first attended Red Pine’s “Singles’ Camp” in 1938. After their marriage, Earl became a Canadian Army officer commanding an artillery unit overseas
from 1940–1945. After World War II, Earl held the rank of Colonel in the permanent Forces and had postings in Europe, as Base Commander at Churchill, Manitoba, and as a senior Canadian officer assigned to the North American Air Defence (NORAD) Command Headquarters in the U.S.A. While Earl missed a few years at Red Pine during the war and when on foreign postings after 1946, his wife Marjorie would take the children to camp alone. Earl and Marjorie accumulated an attendance record of outstanding proportions. Earl was headquartered in Ottawa for many years before retirement. During that time, he served on YMCA Red Pine Camp Council and on the Executive (Operating) Committee, where he held the Property portfolio. Earl thus, at the time, knew more than anyone else involved in Red Pine and the Ottawa Y about the Golden Lake properties, facilities and equipment. This knowledge, together with his great knowledge of the talents of a large circle of camper friends, allowed Earl to contribute valuable advice to those responsible for managing Red Pine Camp during the “difficult years.” Earl Olmsted was the man who had the vision of what the camp could become with a proper management structure.

Mike Sharp, second from the left, with a group of musicians in the Dining Hall, 1977.
Here's to Dear Old Golden Lake

— The Origins of Red Pine Camp Incorporated
Ivan Sparks guided Red Pine Camp to a relatively successful year in 1969. With revenues and expenditures of close to $58,000, the Y’s accounting showed only a small deficit of $270. However, there were no capital expenditures for improvements even though the buildings and equipment continued to deteriorate noticeably. Because of other commitments, Ivan had to relinquish his position as the Chairman of the RPC Operating Committee at the end of 1969 and, fortunately, past-chairman Don Martin agreed to take over that important job for the 1970 camping year.

Under the leadership of Don Martin, the 1970 RPC expenditures increased from $58,000 to $71,000. This increase was due to 1) inclusion of the total property maintenance budget, which had previously been combined with that of the boys’ camp and financed separately; 2) increased personnel costs and; 3) increased food costs resulting from growth in the number of campers. Fortunately, the charge for Y services (offices space, financial accounting services and part-time business manager) remained arbitrarily low at $2,000. With increased camper-fee revenue, RPC was credited with a $3,000 surplus in 1970. However, the buildings and equipment at Red Pine Camp continued to deteriorate and no capital funds were spent to properly maintain or replace obsolete kitchen stoves, the refrigerator, coffee maker, toasters, mechanical mixers, etc., nor boats, pumps or leaking roofs. Furthermore, the Ottawa YM-YWCA faced serious financial problems with a reported shortfall of $290,000 to operate
its new building for the year. In the fall of 1970, Don Martin retired from his position in the Government of Canada as well as from his volunteer management job with Red Pine Camp.

In December 1970, Ed Bickerton was elected Chair of the Red Pine Camp Operating Committee for 1971. Ed first attended Red Pine Camp in 1936 and attended in 17 of the following 35 years. He had served on the RPC Council and Committee for 11 years. By profession, he was a motor vehicle salesman. Not only was he a good salesman but also an excellent master of ceremonies and meeting moderator with a natural sense of humour. Ed was immediately greeted in his new RPC leadership role by a notice from Mary Hackett, Executive Director of the Ottawa YM-YWCA, that the camp would be subject to an administrative assessment increase from $2,000 to $11,290 in 1971. This new assessment resulted from a cost analysis requested by the United Appeal using its newly prescribed financial control procedures. The camp also learned that the United Appeal had reduced its grant to the Ottawa Y by $110,000 for 1971. Red Pine Camp would also be required to clear any spending proposal in excess of the budget limit with the Y’s Director of Administration. Further controls were imposed to ensure that total annual expenditures would not exceed budget. There was concern that the Y might curtail or abandon some of its camping programs or sell off some of its camping properties. In spite of these restrictions, the Red Pine Council decided on February 8, 1971 to operate the camp that year and to “make every effort possible to have a successful operation in order to assist the Ottawa YM-YWCA in its present financial plight.” RPC Chair Ed Bickerton attended numerous meetings at the Y Camping Commission, Program Committee, Board of Directors, Finance Committee, Summer Camp Coordination Group, etc. Ed was supported by a good Committee which included Barbara Horn, Ted Edwards Jr., Lorne Hooper and Norris Ready. In April 1971, the Ottawa Y appointed Al Syberg to serve as RPC Business Manager on a short-term basis. Ed Luloff and Bill Zieman were camp Custodians at Golden Lake. However, the Red Pine workload under very
difficult conditions imposed great strain on Ed. At the end of 1971, Mr. W.R. Luyendyk, President of the Ottawa YM-YWCA, advised that the Association was very satisfied with the RPC Committee efforts and the overall success of camp that year, noting that the budget deficit of $1,862 was somewhat less than anticipated. The Y wanted Red Pine to proceed with plans for 1972.

Ed Bickerton returned as Committee Chairman for camping year 1972. He was greeted by more severe budget restrictions and a further increase in the Y overhead charge to $13,930. The front dock at the waterfront sustained further damage from high winds and pack ice at spring break-up, such that a large section was so dangerous that it had to be barricaded to prevent diving. In the early spring, the Red Pine Business Manager Al Syberg died of a heart attack. Campers Barbara Horn and Betty Campbell volunteered to manage the camp office at the Ottawa Y and process all the camper registrations for the six weeks plus Canada Day and Labour Day long weekends and collect all deposits for the Y accounting office.

During camp in 1969, Ivan Sparks had recruited my wife Betty Campbell for membership in the Red Pine Camp Council. Betty and our three young daughters spent four weeks at Red Pine that summer while I worked long hours, joining the public service to organize a new branch of Transport Canada as Director General, Road and Motor Vehicle Traffic Safety. Betty had attended Red Pine's “Singles Camp” in 1948, ’49 and 51. In those years, I was studying civil engineering at the University of Manitoba and Purdue University. We were married in Ottawa in 1953, spent a couple of years more at Purdue University in Lafayette, Indiana, where I earned a PhD in Transportation Engineering. I then worked in highway research in Illinois and returned to Ottawa in 1957 to work for more than 10 years with the Transportation Association of Canada, organizing a Canadian highway research program and the creation of national road design standards. Although Betty and I camped at Red Pine in 1959 with a year-old daughter, it was not until 1969 that we began to
attend every season without fail. Betty, with help from Ivan, Earl and Mike, finally got me involved in the Red Pine Camp Council in 1971.

At the June 5, 1972 meeting of the Red Pine Camp Council, an Ad Hoc Planning Committee was appointed to explore the possibility of the campers purchasing the Golden Lake property and operating Red Pine Camp independently of the Ottawa YM-YWCA. This possible course of action, which would help ensure the continued operation of Red Pine in accordance with its traditions, had been recommended to the YM-YWCA Board of Directors by its Task Group on Camping. The Task Group had completed its report on outdoor programming the previous month. The RPC Council’s Ad Hoc Planning Committee was composed of: Gordon D. Campbell (Chairman), Donald L. Martin, Norris H. Ready and Earl A. Olmsted. Ed Bickerton was to be an advisor while Mike Sharp had to abstain because of the possible conflict of interest with his membership on the Ottawa Y Board of Directors. During the next five months, I researched the financial and administrative problems, identified the level of interest of camper families and sought their opinions on possible camp governance options. I also prepared drafts of the Ad Hoc committee report while committee members contributed through suggestions and discussions at numerous meetings.
Before the start of the 1972 camping season, Ed Bickerton had a serious heart attack. Certainly, the related stress of managing Red Pine Camp through a very challenging situation may have contributed to Ed's decline in health. As a result of my involvement in the RPC Council and its Planning Committee, and because of our need to talk to campers throughout all weeks of operation in order to quantify the overall support for continuing and improving the camp in the future, I tried to help reduce Ed Bickerton's day-to-day workload through his summer of convalescence with the support of the Operating Committee members.

The campers, Committee and Council members considered the 1972 season to have been very successful even though the Business Manager could not be replaced after the death of Al Syberg, and the later death of custodian Ed Luloff left only one maintenance man to keep the infrastructure functioning. Due to the hard work of the Committee, there was only a modest operating deficit of $1,841 despite increased camper fee revenues, a profitable Labour Day weekend and savings in staff salaries and benefits resulting from deaths. Nevertheless, it was not possible to cover the $2,600 increase in the Y overhead assessment.
In October 1972, the Ad Hoc Planning Committee completed its report “Red Pine Camp: Options for Future Management”, a 31-page document. On November 6, it was presented to the Red Pine Camp Council where it was approved for submission to the Executive Committee of the Ottawa YM-YWCA, which in turn made a presentation to its Board of Directors. The report acknowledged that the present method of camp operation had failed because the Ottawa Y had exercised its prerogative of establishing policy, controlling expenditures, reviewing and adjusting budgets and, thus, effectively removing management control from the camp’s Committee and thereby leaving it solely with operating responsibility. The report presented four separate plans – all of which were based on the essential principle of giving management responsibility and authority to one governing board or individual to establish objectives and goals and ensure that the operation would be organized and controlled to achieve results with stability, value for fees paid, facility improvement and a balanced operating budget. The four plans were: 1) camper owned; 2) camper leased; 3) fixed Y assessment; 4) operated by Y personnel. In approving the report, the RPC Council recommended that consideration be given to negotiating a lease between the Ottawa YM-YWCA and Red Pine Campers or if that was impractical to pursue sale of the RPC property to a duly constituted authority representing the campers.
On December 11, 1972, the RPC Council was advised that the report had been studied by the Y Board and its Outdoor Program Committee (Mrs. Oyen, chair) which recommended that the Y Board appoint a negotiating committee to meet with representatives of Red Pine Camp to discuss the sale of the camp as proposed in Plan No. 1. The Y negotiating committee’s designated chairman was W. R. Luyendyk, President, Ottawa YM-YWCA. Mr. Luyendyk was also a senior federal government official with considerable financial experience.

At that Dec. 11, 1972 meeting, the RPC Council elected Gordon Campbell as chairman of the RPC Operating Committee, with members: Ron Campbell, Lorne Hooper, Barbara Horn, Norris Ready and Bob Zacour. Days later, the Y Executive approved the hiring of a Business Manager for Red Pine Camp and appointed a search and selection committee composed of Gordon Campbell (chair), Lorne Hooper, representing camp Council, and Don Noble, representing Y management. On March 5, 1973, I reported to Council that George Armstrong, a Council member and a soon-to-be retired RCMP officer, had been selected and would assume the Business Manager duties in the Red Pine office of the Ottawa Y building on April 30, 1973.

At its Jan. 8, 1973 meeting, the RPC Council selected Mike Sharp Sr. as its President. Mike was most qualified by his Red Pine and YMCA experience to provide accurate information and reasoned advice to the YM-YWCA Board of Directors on which he would be serving during this critical period. On Jan. 8, 1973, the Council also appointed a committee to negotiate with the Y the possible purchase of its Golden Lake camping properties. The members of this negotiating committee were: Earl Olmsted (chair), Don Martin, Norris Ready and Gordon Campbell.

By March 1973, we had in place:

1) A Red Pine Camp Council with Mike Sharp as President to represent campers and to coordinate activities;

2) An Operating Committee with Gord Campbell as Chair to plan the 1973 camping program, hire staff and operate the camp from July 1 to Labour Day;
3) A Red Pine office in Ottawa with a paid business manager, George Armstrong, to secure the 1973 camper registrations;

4) A paid property manager, Bill Zieman and a new assistant on site at Golden Lake;

5) An approved YM-YWCA Operating Budget;

6) A plan for the purchase of the Golden Lake Property from the Y as well as reasonably good prospects that sufficient capital could be raised within the year from the sale of shares to campers;

7) A Red Pine Camper Committee, Earl Olmsted (chair), and a Y Committee, Walter Luyendyk (chair), to negotiate sale prices for camp land, buildings and equipment.


The 1973 goals were:

1. to run an efficient camp within budget with increased attendance, improved programs and services so that camper satisfaction would provide a good base from which to build future operations under new management;
2. to complete the negotiations on the terms of sale by June;
3. to obtain sufficient commitments to buy shares by September so that we could proceed with incorporation and sale of shares;
4. to buy the camp by January 1974;
5. to operate Red Pine Camp as an independent corporation under new management with old values in 1974.

During the January to July negotiating period the individuals who would become incorporating directors were faced with the all-important decision on the legal and financial structure to be adopted for purchasing and operating the camp. The choice was soon reduced to two basic alternatives:

a) A Public Share Capital company, requiring the filing for regulatory approval specific objectives, by-laws and prospectus; or

b) The formation of a non-share, non-profit company based on the sale of memberships, which would have values similar to shares.

The non-share, non-profit company charter could be obtained quickly and cheaply. Membership sales could provide funds for the purchase of the camp properties and annual fees could contribute to operating expenses. Corporate taxes would be avoided but in the event of organization failure or discontinuation of involvement in the facilities, members would not have any portion of their investment returned.

As a Public Share Capital company, campers could purchase shares and sell them or gift them privately when needed or desired. The camp would be owned by the shareholders, who would probably have more interest in using the camp and in protecting and enhancing its value. With good management, share values would increase with time. The ownership commitment to the company would more likely ensure the success of the enterprise than would membership in a club.

Continued discussions in 1973 led Red Pine Camp Council and the YM-YWCA Board of Directors to the conclusion that outright purchase of the Camp by the campers appeared to be the only reasonable solution. As a result, on Tuesday, July 10, 1973, the first
official meeting of the Incorporating Directors took place at 7:30 p.m. at the home of M.T. Sharp in Ottawa. Present were:

- Mike Sharp Sr.
- Gordon Campbell
- Loris Jordan
- Earl Olmsted
- A. Gordon Simester
- Ivan Sparks (consented but unavoidably absent)

Loris Jordan was a practising Registered Nurse with many years of varied service. She and her husband Tedd and six daughters had been Red Pine Campers for many years and she and Tedd had an active interest in trees, reforestation and environmental issues.

Gordon Simester was a lawyer who shared a relatively new law practice with one colleague. He was an active member of the Ottawa YM-YWCA and, with his wife, was a Red Pine Camper.

At that first meeting, the incorporating Board of Directors agreed to proceed to incorporate as an Ontario Public Share Capital Company and to obtain the approval of the Ontario Securities Commission to sell an initial offering of 750 shares to known Red Pine Campers each valued at $100. The sale would limit the purchase to a maximum of 10 shares per person in order to ensure maximum participation in the new venture. The monies from initial sales would be held in trust so they could be refunded in full to purchasers should the purchase of the camp not proceed. To accomplish this, Earl Olmsted and I offered to cover any interim expenses which might be incurred.
By June 1973, both the YM-YWCA management and Red Pine Campers had agreed that the outright sale of the core properties of Red Pine Camp was the only practical solution to ensure the continuation of this important institution. Intense negotiations from January to June 1973 had produced tentative terms of sale. The properties comprising the YM-YWCA Red Pine Camp included:

1. The original 10-acre plot with 1,100 ft lake frontage which included the Grove, Ball Field and RPC embankment (see property sketch map on the inside front cover) purchased in 1908 from the property which was to become the farm owned by Ed and Mildred Luloff at the time of their marriage in the 1940s;

2. The narrow 2.5 acre strip of shoreline property with 900 ft lake frontage purchased in 1936 from Dan Yourth's farm, which was used to build cabins 28 to 43;

3. The Wood Lot of 60 acres north of Hwy 60 which was also purchased from Dan Yourth and became known as “Sunset Hill.” This property had an old abandoned log home, which campers called the Haunted House. This property was acquired as a source of firewood and as an entertainment destination within walking distance of camp for very young campers;

4. A four-acre lot treed with second growth Red Pines which was adjacent to the Ball Field. It was leased to the YMCA by
Ed Luloff so that the boys’ camp and Red Pine could build a “hospital” in which the volunteer camp doctor and nurse could provide basic first-aid and rest to staff and campers. The leased land was also used to build the first shower building (mens and ladies), Kiddy Korner, a boys’ camp council ring and nature trail.

5. Three outtrip properties which could be accessed by canoe from camp.

i. Dan’s Beach located within sight of the camp’s main dock in a northwestern direction across the bay near Big Island. This property had 16.83 acres with 2,700 ft lake frontage having a sandy beach and a small basic cabin suitable for cookouts and overnights for young children who could be paddled there in war canoes. It was not accessible by road.

ii. Connor’s Rock located on Big Golden Lake about five miles from the RPC campsite. This property consisted of 0.80 acres of granite rock with 350 ft frontage protruding into the lake with a vertical drop of more than 10 feet to the water. The cliff was ideal for diving into a clear deep pool. Connor’s Rock had very few trees, no shelter or toilet facilities. It was used for cookouts by adults and mature youth, who would paddle there and back in war canoes. The property could be reached by dirt road crossing private property at the owner’s pleasure. The views from the rock over and around the lake were very attractive.

iii. Square Lake located on the Bonnechere River half way between Golden Lake and Round Lake about 15 miles distance from Red Pine Camp. The property was 2.90 acres with 900 ft lake frontage. For the boys’ camp, this was an overnight trip by canoe. Adult Red Pine Campers could lunch at Square Lake while paddling there and back to camp in a war canoe between breakfast and dinner. Most Red Pine Campers preferred to drive to the Square Lake property for the cookout lunches. The property afforded good swimming and had a fairly large one-room cabin and an outhouse. Land access involved use of a private dirt road.
At the commencement of negotiations with the YM-YWCA for the sale of the camp, the Red Pine Campers’ negotiation committee of Earl Olmsted, Don Martin, Norris Ready and myself were very familiar with all of the properties and the condition of all buildings and equipment. The Y negotiating committee, consisting of about six members chaired by Walter Luyendyk, had very little first-hand knowledge of Red Pine Camp. As soon as weather permitted, the group visited the camp and remote properties and inspected facilities with the help of their property manager Bill Zieman. They relied on annual financial statements and a 1972 appraisal covering all Ottawa YM-YWCA properties to indicate the possible values of the Red Pine Camp properties. It appeared to us that members of the Y Committee were impressed by the size, scope and locations of the camp properties and there was some mention that the total camp might be worth as much as $150,000.

With the approval of our negotiating committee, I hired a very experienced property assessor with whom I was acquainted. He was officially retired and his charges were very modest. I escorted him around the camp and we inspected buildings with care. The assessment report noted that the cabins were very old, in poor condition, too small to serve as cottages and were generally a liability rather
than an asset when considering most potential uses for the property. He also noted that the kitchen was totally obsolete and the dining hall was in need of extensive repair and renovation if considered for any new commercial use. He stressed the fact that the camp did not have any reliable fresh water wells and that the cesspools should be destroyed and septic tank waste water disposal technology should be provided for all bathroom and kitchen installations. The shore strip properties had insufficient depth to accommodate cottages and the property title had a permanent easement condition. The overall conclusion was that the best possible commercial use of the property would be as a trailer park when valuing the property. The demolition and construction costs of such a development would be so high that the land value would have to be minimal. Consequently, the Red Pine Camp negotiating committee concluded that the current sale price of the camp should be in the order of $50,000 plus depreciated value of equipment in recognition that very large sums of money would have to be invested in the camp over the following 10 to 20 years to keep operating and remain competitive as a seasonal holiday destination.

The final agreement between the YM-YWCA and the Incorporating Directors of Red Pine Camp Inc. was for a total purchase price for the camp plus inventory of $62,060. Not included in this price was the powerboat and two cedar strip canoes, which the Y transferred for use to the Y’s Camp Davern. Furthermore, Red Pine Camp Inc. decided not to purchase Connor’s Rock (est. value $7,000) or Dan’s Beach and Square Lake (combined asking price $4,000) because of the cost of upkeep and anticipated low usage. The YM-YWCA retained title to Sunset Hill for possible future sale and also facilitated the transfer of its land leases with Mildred Libby (formerly Mildred Luloff) to Red Pine Camp Inc.

The camp purchase agreements with the Y were finally signed Feb. 1, 1974. The cash payment to the Y on acquisition in March was $23,000. The Y accepted a $40,000 mortgage, amortized over 20 years but due in five years, payable at approximately $4,000 per year. The Ottawa YM-YWCA also had the right to exercise an irrevocable option until the 31st of December 1993 to repurchase the property
if Red Pine Camp Inc. ceased to operate as a family camp. Supplementary agreements also authorized the new corporation to use the name Red Pine Camp and to use Connor's Rock for cookouts until the property was sold, leased or occupied for alternative use by the Y. Agreement was also reached for the YM-YWCA to retain Bill Zieman as a full-time employee until retirement age because of his length of service and his investment in Y pension and employment benefits. Mr. Zieman would be assigned to work as property manager at Red Pine Camp and RPC Inc. would reimburse the Y for all costs associated with his employment. RPC Inc. immediately adjusted Mr. Zieman's wages up in accordance with prevailing wage rates for comparable work.

On Dec. 16, 1988, the Board of Directors of Red Pine Camp Inc. paid in full the remainder of the camp's mortgage with a $30,858 cheque to the Ottawa YM-YWCA. At year end 1988, the corporation still had a healthy cash balance of over $80,000 due to commercial success and prudent financial management.
VI
The Birth of the Corporation

In July 1973, the Incorporating Directors consisted of six members: Mike Sharp Sr., Gordon Campbell, Loris Jordan, Earl Olmsted, Gordon Simester and Ivan Sparks. It was agreed that the initial capitalization of the company would be $75,000 with 750 shares being offered at $100 each. To give all interested campers an opportunity to participate in this venture, it was agreed that the number of shares which could be purchased by any one person would be limited to ten in the initial offering ending in September. It was
also agreed that if $40,000 worth of shares could be sold by Oc-
tober 1, the Directors would proceed immediately to prepare the
application for incorporation by the Ontario government and the
submission to the Ontario Securities Commission for authority to
issue shares.

An information bulletin prepared by Earl Olmsted was approved
by the Incorporating Directors and mailed to all active Red Pine
Campers of record in early July 1973. In this bulletin, campers were
requested to demonstrate support for the purchase of the camp by
subscribing for one or more shares to a maximum of 10 and to submit
it as soon as possible to the campers’ lawyer and secretary-treasurer
accompanied by a cheque made out to "A. Gordon Simester in Trust."
The subscription could be mailed to Mr. Simester’s office or given to
one of the Incorporating Directors at camp. Each week of camp one
of the Directors made a brief announcement on their objectives and
progress following the dinner meal and then received campers at a
table in the Grove near the front door of the Dining Hall to answer
questions and receive subscriptions. Shareholders were promised pre-
ferred registration and accommodation at camp every year as well as
voting rights and participation at all annual and special meetings of
the corporation. They were advised that in the foreseeable future all
excess revenues would be invested in the camp property and services.
While the new Red Pine Camp would be incorporated as a Public
Share Capital Company under the Ontario Business Corporations Act,
no dividends on these investments were planned or promised but
increases in share value would be anticipated in private transactions.

By mid-September 1973, share sales amounted to $60,000
from approximately 225 shareholders representing 175 families.
The Directors were now confident of complete success and agreed
that the application for incorporation and the share sale prospectus
should be completed by the end of October if we were to complete
the purchase and organize the 1974 camp early in the new year. It
was soon realized that these tasks were more complex and time con-
suming than had been anticipated and that additional help from Red
Pine volunteers was needed to achieve deadlines and keep costs down.
Betty Campbell assumed responsibility for all of the administrative work associated with share sales and shareholder communication in Mr. Simester’s office. Over several months, she tabulated all share subscriptions and verified names and addresses against Red Pine records, prepared mailing lists and an initial shareholder directory. She recorded all cheques and deposited them in Mr. Simester’s trust account where they started accumulating interest which would offset the interest payable on the $30,000 bank loan arranged for incorporation expenses. She prepared and mailed receipts for all share purchases and prepared final share certificates for signature. Betty also prepared the mailing of the second information bulletin drafted and printed by Earl Olmsted in September.

Bernice D. (Bea) Begin with her family became Red Pine Campers in 1961. She had been a member of the Red Pine Camp Council of the Ottawa YM-YWCA and was always interested and active in its affairs. Bea was a highly trained and experienced law clerk with responsibility for corporate law in a prominent Ottawa legal firm where she was associated with law partner Robert E. Murray, Q.C., a friend of the camp. In September 1973, Bea accepted an invitation to help the Incorporating Board of Directors of Red Pine Camp Inc. draft the company by-laws. During October and November, Bea Begin prepared the by-laws in legal form in close consultation with myself to ensure compliance with the Directors’ decisions on the operation and governance of the Corporation. Bea’s by-laws were reviewed and approved by Bob Murray pro bono. On December 1, 1973, Bernice D. Begin was unanimously confirmed as the 7th member of the Incorporating Board of Directors and subsequently assisted with valuable advice on legal issues and contributed to the preparation of the prospectus, which was not finalized until the end of March 1974. Bea Begin, with Earl Olmsted, Mike Sharp and Gordon Simester, signed the Prospectus on behalf of the Board of Directors before submission to the Ontario Securities Commission.

George Armstrong became Business Manager of Red Pine Camp as an employee of the Ottawa YM-YWCA on April 30, 1973. He accepted the position with full expectation that within one year he
would continue the job as an employee of Red Pine Camp Inc. In September 1973, the Y Board of Directors decided that Red Pine Camp should find office accommodation outside of the Y building because sale of the camp by early 1974 was almost a certainty, physical separation from the Y for a number of months would help public awareness of the change of ownership and the Y was in need of additional office space. The Incorporating Directors decided that an uptown area was preferred as an office location. I had occupied an office in a building owned by Scrivens Insurance at 270 MacLaren Street a few years earlier and a telephone call to Bruce Scrivens quickly revealed that he had space available which might be suitable. Bruce Scrivens and his wife had been Red Pine Campers. A one-year lease for a spacious office in the Scrivens Building at $50 per month was signed in early December 1973. George moved all Red Pine Camp records to the new location in January and furnished the office with government surplus furniture and a new copy machine all at minimal cost. George had excellent organizational skills, good business connections and a frugal nature. He gave Red Pine Camp Inc. a head start so that the camp was up and running in March before the purchase was complete and all corporate legal conditions were satisfied.

By the end of December 1973, the Incorporating Directors had selected the Bank of Montreal for its accounts and investments and George A. Welch & Co. as official auditors. On December 17, 1973, the Ontario government approved the application for incorporation of Red Pine Camp. Earl Olmsted had supplied our lawyer Gordon Simester with all of the information necessary to prepare the Prospectus by which the Ontario Securities Commission could authorize the camp to issue the full 750 shares and allow the subscribed funds being held in trust to be deposited in the company’s operating account. On March 25, 1974, the final prospectus, revised to accommodate all OSC questions, was signed by four directors and submitted. Approval followed quickly.

The auditors prepared a January 1, 1974 pro forma balance sheet and five-year forecast of revenue and expenditure for the information of shareholders. All of the documents concerning the
sale of Red Pine Camp were with the YM-YWCA solicitor and would be signed by the Y officials before the end of March. Because of the short period of time between the date of incorporation and end of the 1973 fiscal year on December 31, no corporate income tax return was necessary until 1975. The Directors agreed that no annual meeting of shareholders could be held until April 1975 when first-year financial statements from the auditors would be available. However, an interim auditor’s report would be issued in September to indicate the anticipated success of the 1974 operation. The seven Incorporating Directors would serve as the Interim Board of Directors to approve improvement plans, staff contracts and policies until the 1975 annual meeting when the first slate of directors would be elected by shareholders.
The Operating Committee for the 1974 camping year as appointed by the Interim Board of Directors, consisted of Gordon Campbell (chair), Lorne Hooper, Barbara Horn, Bill Mitchell and Bob Zacour. The Senior Staff contracted by the Board consisted of George Armstrong – Business Manager; Ted Edwards Jr. – Program Manager; Bill Zieman – Property Manager. Effective March 1, 1974, Rick Zieman was hired as a full-time assistant to the Property Manager.
The Operating Committee’s strategy for the 1974 camping season was to invest a significant amount of money to improve the appearance, comfort and safety of the entire camp in a way that would be very visible to all shareholders and old campers. After many years without new investments in property and equipment
and sub-standard maintenance of facilities, the Board of Directors authorized capital expenditures of $20,000 and the purchase of over $10,000 in maintenance supplies. The first camp-owned truck (used) was purchased, painted red and identified with ownership name on the doors. A new rescue motor boat and trailer were purchased along with an outboard motor for general camp use. Two new sail boats and paddle boats were acquired. To improve food services, new kitchen equipment included two cook stoves, a pot sink, toaster and meat slicer. More money was invested in an improved menu. Extra efforts were made during work parties to clean up the buildings and grounds. Cabin windows and doors were repaired and 100 new mattresses were purchased for camper cabins. The most noticeable change was the exterior painting of all cabins and the Dining Hall with uniform oxide red stain which became the standard for the camp. The interior of the Dining Hall was completely painted in a nice clean ivory.

To complement the new and improved facilities, Ted Edwards Jr. implemented a new breakfast-to-bedtime program of activities for campers of all ages. To provide some excitement on the camp opening weekend, long-time camper Russ Barker married Judy Paget on June 29, 1974 in our “Chapel in the Pines.” The young children spent all day collecting wildflowers which the adults arranged for the colourful service. The eight children of the new partners stood up for the bride and groom. The chapel was packed as was the Dining Hall at suppertime which was turned into a wedding feast complete with complimentary wine at every table and a giant cake decorated with a paddle tennis player and a trophy queen. Music and dancing followed. The regular camp concluded by adding a seventh week which in that year, was specially programmed for campers of Chinese origin involving a large number of residents of Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto who were relatives, friends and acquaintances of the organizing committee.

A special gathering to celebrate Chinese heritage in Canada was repeated in August 1975, thus again constituting a seventh week of Red Pine camping. After five successful years, the special Chinese heritage camp had fulfilled its objective in 1978 and was terminated and replaced in 1979 by a seventh week of regular RPC operation.
On the 1974 Labour Day weekend we were joined by a much larger than normal contingent of holidayers from the North Toronto Ski Club which added to the financial success of our first year of corporate management. The ski club continued this activity for several years and thus contributed to the popularity of the Labour Day weekend at Red Pine Camp.

1974 turned out to be an all-time record year in attendance and revenue. As a result of the success of the first year of Red Pine Camp Inc. management, decisions were taken at the end of that year which defined the scope of operation followed to the present time.

On April 5, 1975, the first regular annual meeting of Red Pine Camp Inc. took place in Ottawa. At this meeting, the interim Board of 1974 was replaced by the first shareholder elected Board of Directors consisting of Earl Olmsted (President), Gordon Campbell (Director responsible for the Operating Committee), Bernice Begin (secretary), Ivan Sparks, Loris Jordan, Norris Ready and Bill Beairsto.
The Board of Directors subsequently appointed the 1975 Operating Committee composed of Gordon Campbell (chair), Barbara Horn, Lorne Hooper, Bill Mitchell and Spike MacFarlane.

The Senior Staff contracted by the Board again consisted of George Armstrong (Business Manager), Ted Edwards Jr., (Program Manager), and Bill Zieman (Property Manager.)

1975 was the 50th anniversary of Red Pine Camp and again broke the record as the most successful year in its long history, operating on two long weekends (Canada Day and Labour Day) and a six-week main camp at more than 90 per cent of practical capacity. While the 50th anniversary was celebrated through the entire summer, special events commemorating this milestone were concentrated on the July 1st long weekend. On that occasion, the RCMP band, in full uniform, provided a concert from the Dining Hall porch, while the boys’ camp Hall-of-Fame pictures were restored and hung with those of past chairpersons in the Dining Hall. In addition, memorial red pine trees were planted in the grove in honour of six outstanding deceased Red Piners: Ed Luloff, Harry Blaedow and Dan Yourth, all of Golden Lake, and Ernie Leslie, Bob Douglas Sr. and Ralph Duclos of Ottawa.
The single most important improvement involved construction of a new main dock during February at a cost in excess of $21,000. This involved driving steel piles to bedrock approximately 40 feet below water level and welding a steel platform frame on this foundation. A wooden deck, largely salvaged from the previous dock, was constructed on the frame. The new dock was 30 ft by 144 ft and was approximately 60 per cent larger in area than the old rock crib structure over which it was built. The new dock was protected by an air bubbler system installed at a cost of $1,000. The bubbler prevented ice formation around the structure throughout the winter, thus avoiding ice pressure.

Construction begins, February 1975

Gord Campbell standing beside steel completed for new dock, February 1975.
Further capital investment involved completion of the exterior building painting program, major improvements in the kitchen, acquisition of a new chainsaw with ice-cutting blade and installation of a second main lake water pump to increase capacity and provide emergency fire protection. Total new capital expenditures for 1975 exceeded $29,000. With the largest number of camper weeks ever, revenues exceeded expectations and the year-end financial picture was very encouraging. It was evident that the corporation's operational organization and policies should be maintained to pay off the mortgage and gradually revitalize the property while keeping camper rates as low as possible.

With all the problems and delays of becoming incorporated behind it, the Board of Directors was able to turn its attention to longer range financial planning and the acquisition of additional land. This land was needed to ensure improved protection of camper health and safety and also to ensure the integrity of the complete Red Pine Camp site in the future.

In 1976, Red Pine Camp increased camper accommodation and was able for the third consecutive year under independent operation to generate a revenue surplus. A $15,000 investment in capital improvements was made, including the installation of a septic tank to receive all effluent from the kitchen together with a weeping tile bed in the Ball Field to disperse the liquid, free of solids, from the septic tank. This system replaced obsolete and unsanitary cesspools. Equally important to the future of Red Pine Camp was the acquisition of Sunset Hill from the Ottawa YM-YWCA. The purchase of this 60-acre property was negotiated by Earl Olmsted at a cost of $6,200 so that it could be exchanged with the camp's neighbour Nelson Yourth for the valuable field behind the shore strip cabins 28 to 43. This field would become a green recreation area with a central shower and toilet building to serve 15 improved lakefront cabins.

At the end of 1976, I concluded my four-year term as chairman of the Red Pine Camp Operating Committee with a comfortable feeling that the camp would operate prosperously for a great many more
decades. However, I chose to continue my membership on the RPC Inc. Board of Directors so I could help plan and manage the development of the new infrastructure which would be required to support a safe, healthy and attractive camp of the future.
With the Red Pine Camp corporation soundly established, the Board of Directors set out to fulfill its original principal objectives by a strategy of increasing its land area so that the camp could be modernized through a series of five-year plans. These plans would resolve problems in order of priority related to the health, safety, comfort and enjoyment of the Red Pine Camp experience. In the past, some plots of land had been leased from adjacent farms for toilets, showers, and waste water disposal but now owned land was needed to build new facilities meeting modern health, safety, environmental and fire protection standards. In the first few years after 1975, most of the revenue in excess of operational expenses was being used to maintain and restore buildings and equipment, but the principal preoccupation for the Directors was the purchase of property as soon as possible.

President Earl Olmsted had arranged the purchase of Sunset Hill from the Y in 1976 with the objective of exchanging that woodlot for the hay field behind cabins 29 to 43 owned by Nelson Yourth. The negotiations between Nelson and Earl over the size and boundaries of the field to be traded were time-consuming. The camp lawyer Robert E. Murray, Q.C., also encountered delays with land titles and completing the property exchange with registration of the new title documents. Thus it wasn’t until May 1978 that RPC Inc. took possession of the hay field so that a new fence could be installed and
the property prepared in anticipation of constructing a new shower and toilet building and the drilling of a pure water supply well. Bob Murray very generously contributed his legal services to help Red Pine Camp as he did when the camp was purchased and later when other properties were acquired.

By 1978, Earl Olmsted and Ivan Sparks (President and Vice-President of RPC Inc.) had entered into discussions with Mildred Libby about acquisition of a large tract of her farm land surrounding the eastern boundary of the camp. Mildred and her first husband Ed Luloff were close friends of Red Pine Campers for many years and Ed worked at camp when not attending to his cattle and crops.

They had leased land at nominal annual rates to the camp for toilets, showers, drainage and buildings. It’s not unreasonable to believe that the Luloffs may have discussed sale of the land to the camp when they were finished farming. Mildred deferred consideration of land sales for a year because of the death of her second husband and problems related thereto. In 1979, Earl re-opened discussions with Mildred and by April had reached an agreement with her to sell all of the farm, excluding her house, barn and a small acreage of surrounding land to the camp for $25,000. On April 28, 1979, the Board of Directors approved an offer of purchase of approximately 60 acres for $25,000 and sent it to Mildred Libby with a cheque for $2,500. The offer was accepted and land surveys were undertaken. Camp solicitor Robert Murray again undertook the legal work and attended severance meetings at which approval was granted after the camp provided a letter of commitment that the new property would not be used for parking trailers or for tenting, which might be harmful to adjacent cottages and homes. In September 1980, the purchase was completed when President Ivan Sparks delivered a cheque for $2,500 to Mildred Libby, representing the remainder of the $5,000 deposit. Mrs. Libby's $20,000 mortgage plus interest was paid off in 1982 when I was President of RPC Inc.
By 1985, there remained one property problem for RPC. This involved an unopened 66-foot wide north-south municipal road allowance dividing our shorestrip properties and an easement contained in the deeds to Golden Lake waterfront properties beyond cabin 43. This allowed neighbouring cottage property owners to drive along a path behind and close to cabins 29 through 43 to travel from Island View Drive to their property. The municipal road allowance ended in
a sharp rocky drop to the water level but represented one of the very few public accesses to Golden Lake, even though it was unlikely, if not impossible, to ever be used for that purpose. The road allowance and easement across Red Pine property represented for the three cottage owners (Bill Milks, Finlayson family, Harold Yourth) the only guaranteed legal access to their properties from Highway 60 and Island View Drive. Red Pine Camp’s problem was that we wanted ownership title to the north-south municipal road allowance because it divided our property and because cabins 28, 29 and 30 had been built on it. We wanted revocation of the cottagers’ easement east-west along our shore front so we could have clear title to the green space for parkland, planting, maintenance, recreation and underground infrastructure.

I devised a solution which would solve all of these problems for Red Pine, the private cottagers, Nelson Yourth on his farm property and the Municipality of North Algona Township. The solution involved:

1. Red Pine Camp owned a 300-foot long, 50-foot deep beautiful sandy beach between Golden Lake and Island View Drive opposite to the southern end of the property we acquired from the Libby Farm. This beach was remote from the camp development and of little value to our programs and hence difficult to maintain;

2. Red Pine Camp had use but not title to an unopened 66-foot wide east-west municipal road allowance inside the land purchased in 1978 from Nelson Yourth’s farm which intersected Island View Drive and the cottagers’ waterfront road.
The solution involved exchanging our beach for the Township road allowance property which would give the Township its only useable public access to Golden Lake to serve swimming programs, boat launches and picnics. Red Pine Camp would build at its expense a private road on our east-west road allowance with new gated entrances to Milks property and the other cottage roads. This new road would be shorter, have superior design and guaranteed legal access because of its location on the public road allowance and a gate to enter the farm. Red Pine Camp would share the cost of maintaining the gravel surface and ditch drainage all in exchange for the cottages surrendering their easement of access across our waterfront green parkland. It took me nine years (1985 to 1994) to convince the Township Council, Red Pine Camp Board of Directors, four cottagers and one farmer to all agree at one time to this solution and to have the new cottage access road built and all of the legal problems of exchanging property and amending land titles resolved. But when these shorestip problems were resolved and with the YM-YWCA mortgage paid off on Dec. 16, 1988, Red Pine Camp Inc. had clear ownership title to about 75 acres of continuous property and all of our neighbours were and continue to be happy. This achievement could not have been possible without the vast amount of work and advice of lawyer Gordon McKechnie, a colleague of the camp’s attorney Robert Murray. Like Bob Murray, Gordon McKechnie generously contributed valuable time over a long period to help Red Pine Camp succeed. With Nelson Yourth building the cottage access road in return for his out-of-pocket costs of materials only and with legal and negotiating work contributed voluntarily, this last property problem was solved at a corporation cost of only a few hundred dollars. To document the consolidated land titles, I prepared a camp property plan for the corporation’s records which defined each of the six constituent properties with their tax roll identification numbers.

In March 1976, the Board of Directors approved its first five-year plan of Red Pine Camp Inc. The structure and contents of the plan document were conceived and developed by Board member Bill Beairsto in consultation with myself. Bill was a professional engineer and recognized...
expert in corporate management and financial planning. He was associated with a prominent Ottawa consulting company. Bill holidayed with his family at Red Pine Camp for many years. The structure of the first five-year plan has been maintained for over 30 years with comprehensive updates published, tabled and approved at every fifth corporate annual meeting. These plans have been invaluable in establishing annual budgets, setting camper fee schedules, maintaining safe levels of working capital to protect long-term operation and adjusting insurance coverage.

In 1980, after acquisition of the Libby farm property, I prepared a Land Use Plan for the entire property. Acceptance of this plan resulted in the construction of new parking lots away from the cabins, buildings and play areas. Roadways were relocated and sites for possible new buildings identified. Corridors were left for the location of underground electrical cables and water distribution lines. Rows of Red Pine trees were planted all along exposed outside property lines. Small clusters of various native tree species were planted in the big open pastures. A large area of grazing land between Island View Drive and the Ontario Hydro power line was planted as Red Pine reforestation. A tree nursery was established.

Red Pine Camp is blessed by a beautiful waterfront with clean sandy beach and clear fresh water as well as granular soil for good drainage, an accessible groundwater table of fresh drinkable water and a mature forest of red pine, white pine and deciduous trees. Loss or destruction of any of these natural features could be a disaster for the camp. The trees are most vulnerable but are protected to some degree by a policy that on camp property no trees may be cut, removed or planted without approval of the RPC Board of Directors. It was Tedd Jordan who provided the leadership in tree planting and forest management adopted in the Land Use Plan. Tedd procured the seedlings from the Ontario tree nursery at Kemptville and, with the help of Rick Zieman, Tom Sauer and others, planted hundreds of Red Pine trees on the property. He also directed the removal of dead or stunted trees and undesirable species from camp woodlands. He worked in partnership with his wife, Loris Jordan, a member of the Board of Directors, who continued his work after Tedd died. Other
guardians of the RPC forest included Mike Saker and George Armstrong, both past presidents of the camp, as well as Chuck Ross and myself, all of whom watch for disease and vandalism damage as well as participate in planting for erosion control.

In January 1981, the Board of Directors decided to raise additional capital through the sale of further shares. With the assistance of George Toller, a camper and Ottawa stock broker, and the corporation’s solicitor Robert Murray, the prospectus was prepared by Bea Begin to obtain authority from the Ontario Securities Commission to sell up to 250 shares of capital stock each valued at $250 (a price based on the increased value of the original shares appreciation resulting from camp improvement and property acquisitions.) The proceeds of this sale would be used for construction of a shore strip building housing showers and toilets served by a deep ground water well and septic tank with tile beds for waste disposal. Ontario Securities Commission approval was obtained to sell shares during the 12-month period July 16, 1981 to July 15, 1982 and actual sales solicitation was undertaken in October during the first year of my term as corporation President. The first 21 shares for issue were approved in February 1982 after receipt of full payment. By the end
of the authorized sale period July 15, 1982, a total of 154 new shares had been sold. The shore strip toilet and shower building was constructed in 1983.

Every year since the corporation assumed control of Red Pine Camp in 1974, there have been significant capital investments in buildings, kitchen equipment, boats, water supply, sewage disposal, trees and roadways – all executed by the hard work of members of the Board of Directors and the Operating Committee. The corporation’s success is indicated by revenue growth from $145,000 in 1975 to over $900,000 in 2008 while net income also increased in that time period from $10,000 to over $40,000. These statistics suggest that the camp kept up with inflation while minimizing camper fees in accordance with long-standing policy. Many of these investments have resulted in landmark changes with which campers can identify and which give cause for celebration. In addition to those already described, I must mention a few others by date.

1984: The introduction of the LIT program by Jack Wilson and camp coordinator Doug Murray. Leaders in Training was designed for 13, 14 and 15-year-old boys and girls who were introduced to work mixed with fellowship activities which, in part, pre-qualified them for RPC Junior Staff positions at age 16. The LITs were happier campers, became well-trained Junior Staff members and many went on at ages 19 and older to become our Senior Staff who managed the camp.

1987: Pierre Fortier, a very well-known camper, Ottawa lawyer and political insider, contracted the complete food catering service during his term as Chair of the RPC Operating Committee. Previously, the camp had purchased the food, hired most of the kitchen staff and contracted for the employment of 1 to 3 cooks. Pierre realized that we could get a better product at a lower price by means of a single tendered contract with an established company to manage the entire kitchen operation while supplying meals prescribed for the entire summer by the camp. The food improved, the service was superior and dependable and the total cost was reasonable. The camp Committee was relieved from micro-managing a kitchen operation
and staff for which they were not qualified. G.B. Catering submitted the successful bid and was awarded the 1987 contract for $115,000. They have renewed that contract annually despite competitor challenges. The head chef, Mike Poels, continues to serve us well each year.

1988: Pierre Fortier celebrated the completion of the new multi-purpose RPC Assembly Hall which he first proposed to the Board of Directors in 1986. This ‘Rec Hall’ would have a stage and moveable seating for camper shows, space and equipment for wet weather programs and storage for camp equipment in the off season. In 1987, Pierre presented the Board with a plan for a 40 by 80 foot building, a proposed location and a cost estimate with which he convinced the Board to proceed with the project. The Board appointed an Assembly Hall construction subcommittee composed of Gordon Campbell, Tom Oosterhoff and Tony Gumpert to evaluate the proposal and report its recommendations at the next meeting with the objective of a possible start in the spring of 1988. After examining five different design options, the subcommittee recommended a plan and budget which was approved Feb. 22, 1988. Tom and I finalized the design, prepared the specifications, requested contractor proposals and prepared and signed the $70,564 contract with Bryan Fraser Contracting of Golden Lake, Ontario, on March 30. An unusually early spring and warm weather enabled a construction start on April 6 with completion on June 11. As I had just retired from Transport Canada in January, I agreed to carry out necessary inspection during construction, resolve any problems, administer progress payments, liaise with the township building inspector and make the final acceptance of the structure with final payment which took place on July 1. During June work parties, campers painted the exterior oxide red to match all other buildings and sealed the concrete floor. The building was well received and well used by campers that summer.
Construction of the Rec Hall, May 10, 1988

Construction of the Rec Hall, April – June 1988

The newly painted Rec Hall, June 11, 1988
1993: Jack Wilson became President of the Board of Red Pine Camp in 1991. Jack was an accountant by profession and a senior manager with Statistics Canada. Jack had vast experience in the administration of Red Pine Camp Inc., starting as a member of the Operating Committee in 1977, serving as its chairperson from 1981 to 1985 before moving to the Board of Directors. Jack knew that the accounting systems and financial reports were in need of improvement as well as the camper registration systems and records. He set out immediately on taking office to improve the design of the systems and their implementation with assistance of an independent consultant and the cooperation of Elaine Hopkins, the chair of the Operating Committee. New computers were installed and the business manager was given training on how to use the new system. By 1993, the changes had been implemented and the improvements and efficiencies were apparent in more timely, accurate and useful reports. The campers benefited in better services while management was better equipped to make decisions and keep shareholders informed.
1977 Operating Committee from left: Jack Wilson, Glen Yungblut, Mo Praine, Lorne Hooper and Barb Horn.

1994: Bob Douglas was concerned about the condition of the Dining Hall when Friday night dances had to be moved to the Rec Hall in 1989 because of the apparent weakness of the floor systems. There were also concerns about the load-carrying capacity of the roof structure in winter snow accumulation. Bob joined the Operating Committee in 1991 with responsibility for property. He immediately addressed the Dining Hall problem and was instrumental in having a consulting engineering firm with expertise in timber construction evaluate the building. This resulted in construction of a new floor and reinforcement of the Dining Hall superstructure. By 1994, this meant good news for campers who much preferred dances and other evening programs taking place in the more suitably sized old building with superior acoustics and lighting.
2006: President Mike Saker was keenly aware of the problem of camper access from the shore strip cabins to the camp waterfront facilities. He also recognized the serious problems of erosion on the embankment above the lake. Under his direction, a boardwalk was constructed with Tamarac timbers by an experienced contractor. In addition, based on recommendations in a report from a consulting forester retained by the camp, an aggressive program of shrub and tree planting on the eroding slopes was undertaken above the boardwalk. This new feature represented a major improvement in the camping experience of shorestrip campers and became a pleasant walking path for Red Piners.

The success of Red Pine Camp Inc. can be attributed to dedication and voluntary participation of the campers who return year after year to enjoy the improving facilities and continuing fellowship for which Red Pine is noted.

The camp program encourages participation of all age groups and the response is unbelievably good. At camp, there are activities
for everyone from morning to night every day, including organized games for children, games and sports like paddle tennis, basketball, shuffleboard, horseshoes, talent shows, dances, swimming, sailing, waterskiing, outtrips by canoe, handicrafts and instructions for all by experienced leaders. There are also quiet areas for reading, conversation and card games.

Campers may volunteer to participate in advisory committees in the off-season and make themselves available to serve on the Operating Committee which plans and manages the programs for each camping season. Many campers like to contribute their time and talents by participating in the spring work parties to help ready the camp for summer.

A large number of campers invested money to purchase the camp, acquire additional land and improve the infrastructure. These shareholders meet annually to elect a Board of Directors and approve new company policies and financial management decisions. This core group of campers have special interests in enjoying their annual Red Pine holidays. They also welcome new campers to the Red Pine family.

Each year, the Operating Committee hires about 50 young people ages 16 and 17, generally drawn from the families who have been camping at Red Pine for several years to work at the camp from Canada Day to Labour Day, a period of about nine weeks. These staff members receive training and responsible work experience and develop long-lasting friendships. Many former staff members eventually return as campers with their families.

There are large numbers of campers who have attended Red Pine Camp for 25 to 60 years and there are now many families where three or four consecutive generations have been Red Pine Campers. Each summer, there are many campers representing shareholders, new campers, junior staff, senior staff, full-time employees, volunteer workers and visitors spending vacation time at Red Pine’s Golden Lake property. Considering that Red Pine started in 1925, there are literally thousands of people who have experienced this unique recreation facility and represent a large community to support its future success.
Each year, there are campers who return from all parts of Canada, the United States and overseas to enjoy reunions with the predominantly Ottawa-Toronto-Montreal camper population. The Ottawa-based campers provide a very large pool of dedicated, talented people willing to direct and manage the camp into the future.

It is particularly satisfying to see how the next generation has stepped forward after the incorporation of Red Pine to assume positions of authority in the management of the camp once occupied by a parent. Ted Edwards Jr. (President 1999–2001), son of Ted Edwards Sr., a chairman of the camp for the Y; Dan Wiseman (President 2002–2003), whose mother Etta was involved in Camp Council for many years; Bob Douglas (Chair, Operating Committee 1996–1999; President 2009–), whose father was the property person on the Committee when the camp was run by the Y and whose mother was a business manager of the camp during Y ownership; Barry Bickerton, whose father Ed was a former chair of RPC under the Y, went on to serve on the Operating Committee, including two years as chair; and two of my own children: Cathy, who was on the Operating Committee from 1997 to 2006 and served six years as Chair before joining the Board of Directors, and Joni, who was on the Operating Committee as program person from 2002–2007 and has worked for many years as a volunteer programmer. Ted, Dan, Bob, Barry, Cathy and Joni all grew up from childhood at Red Pine, worked on staff and brought their families to camp. Bob’s daughter, Jodi Sinclair, now a member of the Operating Committee, is the third generation of her family to serve the camp.
RPC 1978 Committee
from left: Greta Carnahan, Glenn Yungblut, Mo Praine, Jack Wilson, Barb Horn and George Armstrong.

1982 Committee:
Barry Dewis, Jim Lefebvre, Doreen Best, Jack Wilson, Pierre Fortier.

Annual Meeting
April 16, 1994,
Gord Campbell, Dan Wiseman, Tom Oosterhoff, Loris Jordan, M. Pugsley, Jack Wilson, Pierre Fortier.

1996 Committee,
from left: Reg Smith, Ron Kaden, Linda Short, Bob Douglas, Barry Bickerton.
Second Elected Board of Directors, from left: Earl Olmsted, Spike MacFarlane, Loris Jordan, Bill Beairsto, Gordon Campbell, Larry Johnston, Ivan Sparks.

Gord and Betty Campbell taken July 1, 1994 in front of cabin 13.

Linda Short and Bob Douglas place time capsule in the RPC chapel to commemorate 75th Anniversary of RPC, 1999.
The great variety of programs which occur throughout the camping season are illustrated in the following photographs. These include Folklore Night, camper shows, paddle tennis tournaments, theme weeks, sing-songs, cook-outs, staff reunions and more.
Here’s to Dear Old Golden Lake—The Origins of Red Pine Camp Incorporated
PRIZES still rough—fix with CRA
This history of Red Pine Camp has focused on the management of a unique recreational enterprise evolving over a long period of social and economic change in Canada. However, it is hoped that the reader will be left with some appreciation of the thousands of people who enjoyed Red Pine camping and contributed to the development of the institution and its strong family traditions cultivated over a century for our enjoyment today.

We must give credit to the leaders of the YMCA who discovered the campsite and developed the program where the natural beauty of our country could be appreciated. The YMCA Board and management had the foresight to create an elected council of campers to give direction to the program and facilities and to appoint a small executive committee to plan and organize the annual programs each camping season. The YMCA Board of Directors, camp Council and Executive Committee correspond to the RPC Corporation, Board of Directors and Operating Committee, which today provide governance. We must also recognize the cooperation and grace that the Ottawa YM-YWCA management exhibited when dealing with its economic problems that resulted in the sale of the camp, its name, traditions and goodwill to Red Pine Camp Inc. in 1974.

The people most closely involved in the creation of Red Pine Camp Inc. have been identified in this history but we must recognize that many more campers answered the call to serve on committees,
offer expert advice and participate in work parties at Golden Lake to make the new corporation a reality. Then there were more than 100 families who quickly offered support and money to become shareholders with ownership responsibility to ensure the survival of the camp without interruption. The families that have filled Red Pine Camp since 1973 are bound together by a shared history, tradition, friendship and love for the natural preserve of the Golden Lake site whether they experienced their stay in one year or 60 consecutive years. These people each have a Red Pine Camp story worth telling and all have the conviction that strong family units, whatever form they take, are the foundation of a great nation.

I undertook the writing of this document in the hope that Red Pine Campers and other friends might have a better understanding of the institution and that the shareholders, Directors, Operating Committee members and staff of the corporation may find the corporate history useful in managing Red Pine Camp in the future. — GDC
Here’s to Dear Old Golden Lake—The Origins of Red Pine Camp Incorporated


CHILDREN ARE PERMITTED AT THE WATERFRONT ONLY IF THEY ARE 12 YEARS OR OLDER, OR THEY HAVE THEIR RED LANYARD OR IF THEY ARE SUPERVISED BY AN ADULT.

WATERFRONT OPEN
7:45 AM to 9:30 AM
9:30 AM to 3:00 PM
3:00 PM to 7:15 PM
7:15 PM to DUSK

WATERFRONT CLOSED

PRIVATE PROPERTY
Here's to Dear Old Golden Lake — The Origins of Red Pine Camp Incorporated
References


Officers of Red Pine Camp Inc.

PRESIDENTS
1973–1974 M.T. (Mike) Sharp
1974–1979 Earl A. Olmsted
  1979–1981 Ivan Sparks
1981–1985 Gordon D. Campbell
1986–1990 George Armstrong
  1990– Glen Yungblut
1997–1998 Elaine Hopkins
2001–2004 Dan Wiseman
2004–2007 Mike Saker
2007–2009 Ron Kaden
  2009– Bob Douglas

Chairpersons Operating Committee
1973–1976 Gordon D. Campbell
1977–1979 Maurice Praine
  1980–1985 Jack Wilson
1986–1988 Pierre Fortier
1989–1991 Tony Gumpert
1992–1995 Elaine Hopkins
  1995–1999 Bob Douglas
1999–2002 Cathy Campbell
  2002–2003 Garry Fischl
2003–2006 Cathy Campbell
2007–2008 Barry Bickerton
2009– Brian Cornelius

Dates are based upon the fiscal year ending December 31. Appointments are confirmed at the Corporation’s Annual Meeting which takes place in Ottawa in the spring.
5. CAMP SONG

E. L. Merrill

Here's to dear old Golden Lake,
Shout till the rafters ring,
Red Pine Camp for thy dear sake,
Let every loyal camper sing.
Here's to all the happy days,
Here's to the fun galore,
And to thee we pledge our ways,
When back in city life once more.

To the trees! To the sky!
To the world in its glorious happiness!
To the Lake! To the fire!
To the life that is moving and calling us!
To the chief! To the staff!
To the campers who rank with the best
of them!

To the cook! To his men!
To the neighbours who help once again.
This book fills a long established need for a definitive history of Red Pine Camp through its transition from a YMCA camp to a camper-owned and managed facility. The pride of the camp spans a full century and Red Pine is a respected institution in the Ottawa Valley. Author Gordon D. Campbell has attended Red Pine with his family for many years and, like other Red Piners, considers camp a meaningful part of his life and that of his family.
Here’s to Dear Old Golden Lake

–

THE ORIGINS OF RED PINE CAMP INCORPORATED

By Gordon D. Campbell