

CHOPAWAMSIC RECREATIONAL DEMONSTRATION AREA -
CABIN CAMP 1, BATH HOUSE A
(Prince William Forest Park Cabin Camp 1 - Goodwill, Building A10)
Prince William Forest Park
Prince William Forest Park
Triangle
Prince William County
Virginia

HABS VA-1494-I
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

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- Location:** Prince William Forest Park, Triangle, Prince William County, Virginia
- The coordinates for Camp 1 are 77.212159 W and 38.354944 N, and they were obtained through Google Earth in November 2011 with, it is assumed, WGS 1984. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.
- Present Owner:** National Park Service, US Department of the Interior
- Present Occupant:** National Park Service, US Department of the Interior
- Present Use:** Recreational/Camping Facilities
- Significance:** Bath House A (Building A10) served as the latrine for Cabin Unit A. It was built by the National Park Service with Civilian Conservation Corps labor as part of the development of Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA) in 1935-38. The RDA program was a New Deal initiative which repurposed underutilized agricultural land near urban centers into outdoor recreational areas. The five cabin camps at Chopawamsic were intended to serve social service groups in Washington, DC that offered group camping experiences to underprivileged children. Camp 1 was used as Camp Lichtman for many years, hosting groups of African-American boys from the Twelfth Street YMCA in Washington, DC. By the 1960s, Camp 1 was used as co-ed and integrated Camp Goodwill by Family and Child Services of Washington, DC.
- Like the other historic Camp 1 buildings, Bath House A features rustic log and heavy timber construction representative of the National Park Service/Civilian Conservation Corps aesthetic of the 1930s. Characteristic features include waney-edge siding that retains the irregular profile of the log and is applied in vertical and horizontal sections. Bath House A is located just east of the A Unit cabins.
- Historian:** Lisa Pfueller Davidson, Ph.D., HABS Staff Historian

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: March - May 1936.
2. Architect: National Park Service architects, engineers, and landscape architects
3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses: Bath House A at Camp 1 has been owned by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service since its construction in 1936. Starting in 1942 during World War II, Bath House A was part of the Area C Communications Branch training facility of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), a precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency. It was returned to NPS control and camping use in 1946.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Using Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) funding, Camp 1 Bath House A was built by CCC enrollees living on site at Camp SP-22-VA and by Local Experienced Men (LEMs) hired with WPA relief funds to provide skilled labor. Much of the construction material was acquired and processed on site, including the timber, siding, and gravel.
5. Original plans and construction: Camp 1's Bath House A was designed by NPS architects likely following the publication "Typical Layout Studies for Organized Camp."¹ Characteristic rustic details include the use of log-faced timbers, peeled log posts, and waney-edge siding. Camp 1 structures reflect the recommendations codified in consulting architect Albert Good's 1938 book *Park and Recreation Structures*. Bath House A was identical to the other three Camp 1 unit latrines, but is the only one still extant.
6. Alterations and additions: Bath House A originally had a wood shake roof, but it was replaced with mottled grey asphalt shingles in 1942 and updated with similar materials over the decades. The light creosote stain finish on the exteriors has been replaced by a darker brown stain. The OSS winterized Bath House A in 1942-43. The original glazed casement windows were replaced by fixed louvers c. 1980. The interior of the bathrooms also was completely renovated c. 1980 including adding a shower stall.²

B. Historical Context:

¹ The regional office was sending copies of this publication to the project office in November 1935. See correspondence in Folder 600-01 Land Use Study, Master Plan, 1935-40, Box 124, Entry 100 Recreational Demonstration Area Program Files, 1934-47 (formerly Entry 47), RG 79 Records of the National Park Service, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, MD [hereafter Entry 100, RG 79, NARA II].

²² See Drawing No. 860/41021, Building No. 77 Latrine A-10, (8 November 1979), PRWI Archives.

See HABS report HABS No. VA-1494, Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area - Cabin Camp 1 for an overview context and list of additional individual building reports.

Located approximately thirty-five miles south of Washington, D.C., Camp 1 (or Camp Goodwill) at Prince William Forest Park was one of five cabin camps constructed by the National Park Service at this site during the 1930s. The area was originally known as the Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA) and viewed as a model project for bringing the character-building benefits of group camping to underprivileged urban children. The site consisted of roughly 11,000 acres of Piedmont forest along the watershed of Quantico Creek, which when the RDA was established included an abandoned pyrite mine and submarginal farmland. Civilian Conservation Corps work took place at Chopawamsic RDA from May 13, 1935 to April 25, 1942. Camp SP-22-VA was located at the northern edge of the site and primarily responsible for construction of Camp 1.³ CCC Company No. 1374 arrived in March 1935, and Camp SP-22-VA was officially established May 13, 1935. WPA funds also were used to hire skilled workmen to supplement the labor force. The CCC enrollees simultaneously worked on constructing roads and trails, and on site preparation for the group cabin camps such as grading, clearing brush, and improving drainage.⁴

At Chopawamsic each camp was planned for approximately 100-150 people and subdivided into smaller cabin units for about thirty campers each. Each unit within the camp included camper cabins, leaders' cabins, a unit lodge, and a unit bath house/latrine.⁵ Bath House A served as the latrine for 26 campers in nearby Cabin Unit A. These deliberately rustic buildings utilized local wood and stone, as well as a set of modern standards for building types and site planning at an organized camp. The rustic aesthetic associated with National Park Service buildings during this period was being developed and codified by NPS architects and others around the country. Consulting architect Albert H. Good prepared a small volume in 1935 entitled *Park Structures and Facilities*, and a three-volume edition entitled *Park and Recreation Structures* in 1938. New buildings were to be subordinate to their environment and executed in earth tone materials such as peeled logs with the knots and texture preserved.⁶ Bath House A at Camp 1 and other Chopawamsic buildings are indicative of this approach. Bath House A also follows the sanitary recommendations in Good with features such as concrete floors and flush toilets (rather than pit).⁷

Construction of Camp 1 buildings began in early 1936 with the camper and leader cabins for Units A and B. Bath House A was part of this initial construction campaign and completed

³ See Lisa Pfueller Davidson and James A. Jacobs, "Civilian Conservation Corps Activities in the National Capital Region of the National Park Service," HABS No. DC-858. Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2004.

⁴ Sara Amy Leach, "Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) Architecture at Prince William Forest Park, Multiple Property Documentation," Prince William County, Virginia. (National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1988. U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, DC), Section E, 13.

⁵ *Recreational Demonstration Projects: As Illustrated by Chopawamsic, Virginia*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, c. 1936), 3-4.

⁶ Albert H. Good, *Park and Recreation Structures* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1938, reprint Boulder, CO: Graybooks, 1990), Volume I, 4, 6-7.

⁷ Good Volume III, 122.

by May 30, 1936.⁸ A partial set of buildings was available for the Boys' Club of Washington during July and August 1936, including the dining hall, 15 camper cabins, three leader cabins, two unit lodges, three latrines, and a central bath house, in addition to the water and septic system.⁹ Bath House A originally was referred to as a latrine and built at the same time as an identical one for Unit B. As built, Bath House A had a sink, urinal and two toilets. Like all the Chopawamsic buildings, Bath House A was constructed with locally-produced wood structural members and siding, and other store-bought materials such as window sash, Portland cement, and plumbing fixtures. For both the A and B unit latrines, the CCC enrollees contributed 590 man days and skilled labor was paid \$146.85. The final cost of both latrines was listed as \$622.41.¹⁰

Camp 1 was fully completed for the 1938 camping season. Four cabin units were available, each with six four-camper cabins and one two-person leader cabin. Each unit had a finished lodge and bath house/latrine, in addition to the central bath house with showers for campers and counselors. The administrative group buildings were also complete, including the staff bath house, help's quarters, administration building, infirmary, dining hall, staff quarters, and main crafts lodge.¹¹ Starting on June 27, 1938, Camp 1 became home to Camp Lichtman, a program of the Twelfth Street YMCA in Washington, DC. The camp program for 8 to 17 year-old African-American boys was sponsored by white Jewish theater owner Abe Lichtman.¹²

The approach of World War II and the gradual shift of the CCC towards defense-related projects signaled the end of CCC recreational projects at Chopawamsic. After several months of negotiations, the War Department obtained a retroactive use permit for the entire area on May 16, 1942, including the former CCC camps and the recreational camps. The camping permits to various groups were canceled and other arrangements had to be made. Camp Lichtman was moved to Blue Knob RDA in central Pennsylvania for the duration of the war.¹³

When the War Department personnel moved in, Chopawamsic went from being a public park to a heavily guarded and controlled military outpost. Chopawamsic and Catoclin RDA in Thurmont, Maryland were to be training areas for a new top secret program - the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Considered a precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency and Special Forces, many aspects of the OSS's wartime activities remained shrouded in secrecy until recent years. Communications Branch training took place at Area C, 4,000 acres in the northeastern

⁸ "Project Manager's Report," (30 May 1936), Box 122, Entry 100, RG 79, NARA II.

⁹ "Project Manager's Report," (30 June 1936 and 15 July 1936), Box 122, Entry 100, RG 79, NARA II.

¹⁰ "Camp 1-B Groups A and B, Unit Latrine, Job Application and Completion Record," (27 July 1937), File 2694, PRWI Archives.

¹¹ "Report of Organized Camp Facilities - Camp 1-B Chopawamsic," (15 March 1938), Box 122, Entry 100, RG 79, NARA II.

¹² Patti Kuhn and John Bedell, "Prince William Forest Park Historic District," (Prince William County, Virginia. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2011. U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, DC), 112. Lichtman's employees and customers were predominantly African-American and he became a staunch advocate of economic racial equality. He sponsored several African-American sports teams and established Camp Lichtman at George Washington National Forest in 1932.

¹³ See File 600 Lands, Buildings, Roads and Trails, 1935-42, Memorandum, (16 June 1942), Box 124, Entry 100, RG 79, NARA II.

section of Chopawamsic including Camps 1 and 4.¹⁴

The Communications Branch began preparing Camps 1 and 4 for expanded training programs during the fall of 1942. NPS Site Manager Ira Lykes reported in early October 1942 that a contract had been let by the Army for winterizing Camps 1 and 4.¹⁵ The winterizing efforts including placing glazed window sash in buildings currently only having screens, installing Celotex-lined tongue and groove wainscoting, heating stoves, and asphalt shingle roofs.¹⁶ Camp 1 served as the administrative and maintenance facilities for Area C, as well as housing the commanding officer and his staff.¹⁷

As the war drew to a close, the War Department needed to declare the Chopawamsic property surplus in order to transfer it back to the NPS. The temporary buildings built by the War Department were removed and sold for salvage where possible. These efforts were complete by January 1946 and it was agreed that the property would be transferred back to the Department of the Interior “without further restoration, provided that the additional buildings which have been erected, and the alterations and improvements which have been made, are permitted to remain.”¹⁸

Organized camping resumed in spring 1946 and work began on improving the park road system, and day use areas. Camp Lichtman returned to Camp 1 that year. On August 20, 1948, the park name was changed from Chopawamsic RDA to Prince William Forest Park.¹⁹ In 1950, the recreational camps were in high demand, with Camp 1 still leased to the Twelfth Street YMCA for Camp Lichtman, Camp 2 to the Camp Fire Girls, Camps 3 and 4 to the Washington Family Service Association for low income white and black groups, respectively, and Camp 5 to the Salvation Army.²⁰

A shift towards desegregated camp use at Prince William began around 1956 when the camps began to be used interchangeably rather than strictly designated by race. Camp 1 began to be known as Camp Goodwill of the Washington Family and Child Services around this time. The Twelfth Street YMCA continued to operate Camp Lichtman at Chopawamsic until 1964 when it was discontinued in favor of integrating YMCA Camp Letts in Edgewater, Maryland. Physically Camp 1 had been changed very little in these years, except for the addition of a concrete in-ground swimming pool in 1956 and upgraded bathroom and kitchen fixtures. The

¹⁴ John Whiteclay Chambers II. *OSS Training in National Parks and Abroad in World War II*, (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2008) 42, 46-47.

¹⁵ Ira B. Lykes, Manager, "Narrative Report, Month of September 1942, Chopawamsic RDA, National Capital Parks", Box 125, Entry 100, RG 79, NARA II. Lykes also was pleased with the forest fighting equipment the Army was able to provide and their efforts to acquire remaining private tracts.

¹⁶ Ira B. Lykes, Manager, "Narrative Report, Month of October, 1942, Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area, National Capital Parks," File 6665, PRWI Archives. A permit was issued in June 1943 allowing the Marines to use 4,862 acres of parkland south of Joplin Road for six months past the duration of the war. See Chambers, 178

¹⁷ Chambers, 166.

¹⁸ "Declaration of Surplus Real Property - Chopawamsic RDA," (23 January 1946), File 6530, PRWI Archives.

¹⁹ Public Law 736, 80th Congress, Chapter 596, 2D Session, (22 June 1948), copy in Box 6, Entry 13, RG 79, NARA II.

²⁰ "Report of Camp Operations - Prince William Forest Park," (1950), File 6796, PRWI Archives.

pool was built by Family and Child Services with a donation and continued to be used into the 1980s.²¹

After a 1970s use study, it was decided to rehabilitate Bath House A and many other Camp 1 buildings, but replace the camper cabins and other unit latrines.²² Bath House A was renovated c. 1983, including installing the current tile and fixtures.²³ Camp 1, along with Camps 2, 3, and 4, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989 in recognition of its historic New Deal origins. An expanded National Register nomination was approved in April 2012, with Bath House A as a contributing structure in the Camp 1 Historic District. Season-long group camping continued through the 1980s, but now most rentals are for short term groups. Currently the non-profit group Nature Bridge is planning to expand its educational programs to the East Coast at Prince William Forest Park. Plans are being developed to use Camp 1 for year-round environmental and science education programs, a change that will necessitate some new winterizing and upgrading of the historic facility. Today Prince William Forest Park is the largest Piedmont forest in the National Park system and the largest green space in the Washington, DC metropolitan region, continuing a legacy of accessible nature recreation begun in the 1930s.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Bath House A is a rustic one-story wood timber building with a rectangular plan and gable roof.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 15 feet, 5 3/4 inches by 11 feet, 11 1/4 inches
2. Foundations: Bath House A sits on a concrete slab.
3. Walls: The walls are horizontal waney-edge siding with large peeled quarter log corner posts and log-faced timbers at the doorway.

²¹ Susan Cary Strickland, *Prince William Forest Park: An Administrative History* (Washington, D.C.: History Division, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, January 1986), 88. Silt problems in the nearby lake had made it unsuitable for swimming.

²² "Visitor Use and Facilities Survey Cabin Camps 1-5, Prince William Forest Park," (February 1984), 1, PRWI Archives; "Rehab Cabin Camp 1, Phase 4 - Drawing No. 862-41,029 (7 sheets)," (February 1983), File 14268, PRWI Archives.

²³ Saylor Moss, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory - Prince William Forest Park, Camp 1," (Cultural Landscapes Program, National Capital Region, National Park Service, 2011), 49. See Drawing No. 860/41021, Building No. 77 Latrine A-10, (8 November 1979), PRWI Archives.

4. Structural system, framing: Bath House A has a load bearing timber frame on a concrete slab with a peeled log rafter roof structure.
5. Porches: None.
6. Chimneys: None.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Bath House A has one exterior doorway located at the center of the long east façade. The wood door has wood planks in the lower half and wire mesh in the top. It is framed vertically by log-faced timbers.
 - b. Windows: Bath House A has a continuous row of window openings with fixed wood louvers on all four elevations. The original glazed casements are visible in a photograph from 1951 (Figure 1).²⁴ There are also louvered openings at the gable peaks.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The Bath House has a side gable roof with a moderate pitch.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: The open eaves have a moderate overhang and exposed log rafter ends. The end of the ridge beam projects at the gable peak. The Bath House does not have gutters, but there is a V of flashing on the roof at the doorway for redirecting rain water.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The Bath House is one rectangular room with toilet and shower stalls on the south side and sinks on the north.
2. Stairways: None.
3. Flooring: The concrete sub-floor is covered with one-inch mosaic ceramic tiles (c. 1983). The tiles are shades of tan laid in a random pattern. There is a marble threshold at the door.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Bath House A has yellow painted vertical wood plank paneling with v-notch seams on the walls. The ceiling is unfinished with visible log rafters and roof decking. There is a recent three-quarter height wood partition wall (unpainted) between the toilet and shower stalls.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Bath House A does not have any interior doorways.

²⁴ "Camp 1 Inventory - Latrine 1-A, B, C, D-10," (August 1951), File 2708, PRWI Archives.

- b. Windows: The inside of the windows and gable peak openings have wood frame screens and no additional trim or molding.
6. Decorative features and trim: None.
7. Hardware: None.
8. Mechanical equipment:
- a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: The Bath House is unheated and naturally ventilated.
 - b. Lighting: The fluorescent tube light fixtures are mounted on the ridge beam and served by external conduits.
 - c. Plumbing: There are two wall-mounted porcelain coated cast iron sinks with mixer faucets and X handles. An electric hot water heater is located in the corner near the sinks. There are two toilet stalls with recent plastic partitions and vitreous china toilets. There is one shower with a recent white plastic liner surround and base with a curtain. The inner walls of the surround are scored to look like square ceramic tiles.

D. Site:

- 1. Historic landscape design: Bath House A is located in close proximity to the camper and leader cabins of Unit A.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: Original architectural drawings for Bath House A have not been located. A schematic plan from the 1951 inventory (File 2708) and a 1979 renovation drawing are located in the PRWI Archives.
- B. Early Views: Exterior photographs of Bath House A are located in the PRWI Archives (File 2709) as part of the 1951 inventory.
- C. Bibliography:

Manuscript/Photographic Collections:

RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, MD.

Prince William Forest Park (PRWI) Archives, Turkey Run Education Center (TREC), Prince William Forest Park.

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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation of the Bath House A (Building A10) at Cabin Camp 1, Prince William Forest Park (PRWI) was undertaken in 2011-2012 by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Heritage Documentation Programs division of the National Park Service (Richard O'Connor, Chief). The project was sponsored by the NPS National Capital Region (NCR), Perry Wheelock, Chief, Cultural Resources. Project planning was coordinated by Catherine Lavoie, Chief, HABS; Robert Arzola, HABS Architect; and by Paul Petersen, Chief of Resource Management, PRWI. The field work was undertaken and the measured drawings were produced by HABS Architects Paul Davidson, Daniel De Sousa, and Jason W. McNatt. The historical reports were written by HABS Historian Lisa P. Davidson. The large-format photography was done by HABS Photographer James W. Rosenthal. Crucial assistance was provided by Superintendent Vidal Martinez, Cultural Resource Specialist Colette Carmouche, and by other PRWI staff.

PART V. ILLUSTRATIONS

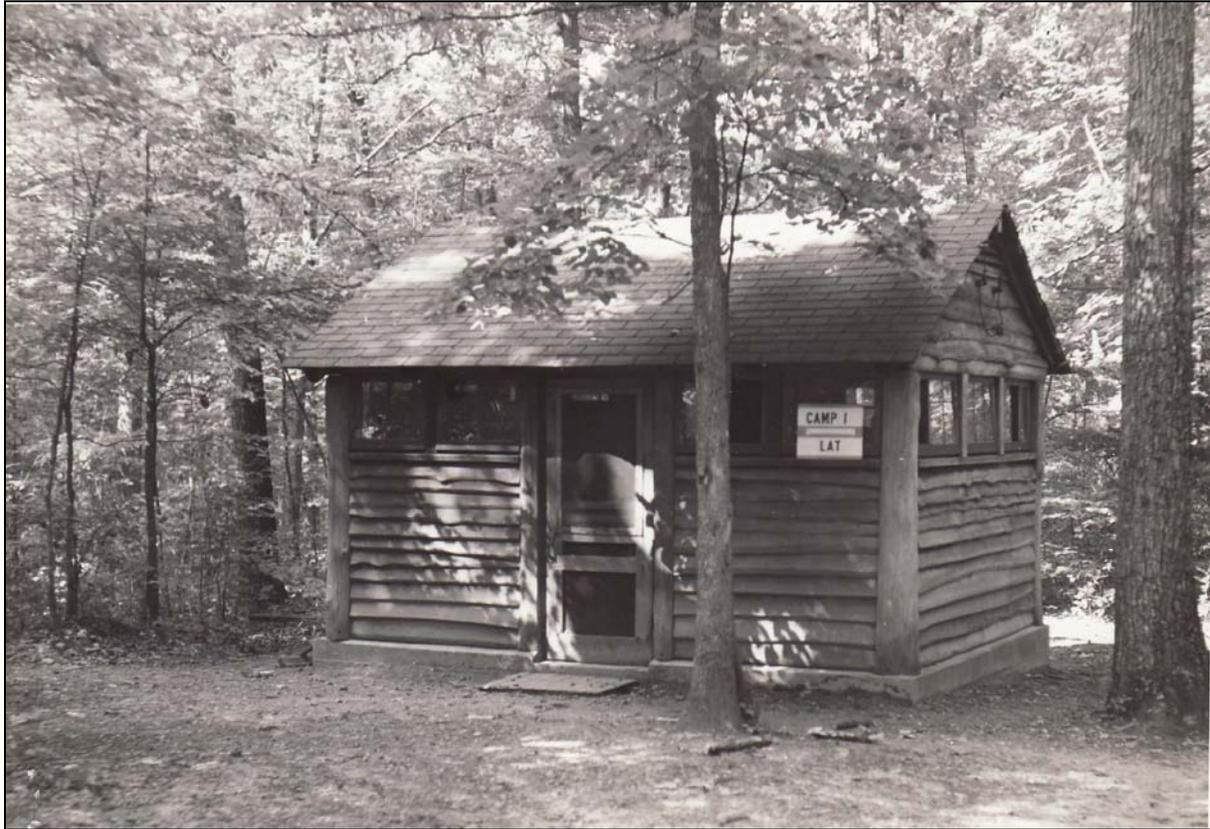


Figure 1: View of Camp 1 Unit A Latrine, 1951. Note glazed casement windows.
Source: File 2709, PRWI Archives.