

CHOPAWAMSIC RECREATIONAL DEMONSTRATION AREA -
CABIN CAMP 1, UNIT LODGE C
(Prince William Forest Park Cabin Camp 1 - Goodwill, Building C12)
Prince William Forest Park
Prince William Forest Park
Triangle
Prince William County
Virginia

HABS VA-1494-L
HABS VA-1494-L

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

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CHOPAWASMIC RECREATIONAL DEMONSTRATION AREA – CABIN CAMP 1,
UNIT LODGE C

(Prince William Forest Park Cabin Camp 1 – Goodwill, Building C12)

HABS No. VA-1494-L

- Location: Prince William Forest Park, Triangle, Prince William County, Virginia
- 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: Unit Lodge C (Building C12) served as the communal building for approximately 26 campers housed in the C Unit cabins. Each cabin unit had a lodge to encourage smaller group activities within the larger camp. During the 1930s the unit approach was a shift in summer camp administration away from large scale, structured activities for the campers. Unit Lodge C 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, Unit Lodge C 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. Each of the four Camp 1 units had a similar, but not identical, unit lodge.
- Historian: Lisa Pfueller Davidson, Ph.D., HABS Staff Historian

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: begun May 1936
2. Architect: National Park Service architects, engineers, and landscape architects
3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses: Unit Lodge C 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, Unit Lodge C 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 Unit Lodge C 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, wood siding, stone and gravel.
5. Original plans and construction: Camp 1's Unit Lodge C 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*. This unit lodge is likely the Chopawamsic example published in Good with a photograph and plan (Figure 1).² Unit Lodge C closely resembles Unit Lodge D, but is not identical.
6. Alterations and additions: Unit Lodge C 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 Unit Lodge C in 1942-43. Compared to the plan published in Good, the exterior stair at the east end of the rear porch has been reoriented and a door in this area removed.

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].

² 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 III, 152-53.

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. The other three Camp 1 Unit Lodges are documented as: HABS No. VA-1494-J (Unit Lodge A), HABS No. VA-1494-K (Unit Lodge B), and HABS No. VA-1494-M (Unit Lodge D).

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.³ Unit Lodge C served as communal building for approximately 26 campers in the C Unit cabins. 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.⁴ Unit Lodge C at Camp 1 and other Chopawamsic buildings are indicative of this approach.

Excavations for Unit Lodge C were finished by May 30, 1936.⁵ The C Unit cabins and Unit Lodge were completed later that summer. Unit Lodge C was featured on the 1938 brochure for Camp Lichtman (Figure 2). Other than the interruption of Office of Strategic Services use during World War II, Unit Lodge C was used by camping groups for many decades. After a 1970s use study, it was decided to rehabilitate Unit Lodge C and many other Camp 1 buildings, but replace the camper cabins and most unit latrines.⁶ Unit Lodge C was renovated c. 1980.⁷ 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.⁸ An expanded National Register nomination was approved in April 2012, with Unit Lodge C as a contributing structure in the Camp 1 Historic District.⁹ 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

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

⁴ Good, Volume I, 4, 6-7.

⁵ "Project Manager's Report," (30 May 1936), Box 122, Entry 100, RG 79, NARA II.

⁶ "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.

⁷ Saylor Moss, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory - Prince William Forest Park, Camp 1," (Cultural Landscapes Program, National Capital Region, National Park Service, 2011), 48. See Drawing No. 860/41021, Building No. 112 Lodge C-12, (8 November 1979), PRWI Archives.

⁸ 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 7, 5.

⁹ Patti Kuhn and John Bedell, "Prince William Forest Park Historic District," Prince William County, Virginia. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (draft), 2010. (U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, DC).

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: Unit Lodge C is a one-story log and heavy timber building with a rectangular plan. Its rustic appearance is 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. The porches have log posts and the roof was originally covered with wood shingles. A large stone fireplace with external chimney is located at one end of the lodge. An outdoor kitchen at the side porch includes a fieldstone floor, cabinets, and a grill incorporated into the fireplace chimney.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 49 feet, 1/2 inch by 28 feet, 8 1/8 inches
2. Foundations: Unit Lodge C sits on concrete piers with galvanized iron sheeting termite shields across the top.
3. Walls: The exterior walls are covered with horizontal waney edge wood siding. There are sections of vertical siding below the window openings and large peeled quarter logs at the corners. The openings are flanked by vertical log face timbers.
4. Structural system, framing: Unit Lodge C has a load-bearing timber frame with heavy rafters and concrete foundation piers. Four simple trusses are formed by linking the rafters with a collar beam at a bolted end-lap joint. A triangular wedge fills the top of the truss at the ridge beam.
5. Porches: Unit Lodge C has two porches. One porch is located across the south, or rear façade and contained under the main roof slope with an unfinished ceiling. This porch has concrete piers supporting a wood plank floor and is accessed via five wood steps on the east end rising from a concrete slab. There is another fieldstone pad nearby that supported the porch stairs in their original orientation, as shown on the published plan. Peeled log posts support the roof and are incorporated into a log and plank railing. The top rail is a thinner round log and the lower rail a larger log-faced timber. Short thick logs serve as additional vertical supports between the full posts.

- The other porch has a gable roof and projects from the east end of the building. The north slope of the porch roof is integrated into the main roof and extends beyond it. This porch contains an outdoor kitchen with a stone grill projecting from the chimney and cabinets on the east and south sides along the railing. The porch floor is fieldstone embedded into concrete. Peeled log posts support the roof at the corners and on the east and north sides. The railing is a mix of logs and timbers like the one on the south porch. There is an opening in the railing at the west side; the main access to the porch is from the interior of Unit Lodge C. This doorway has a single log step.
6. Chimneys: Unit Lodge C has a large gray fieldstone chimney visible at the east end of the building. The outside of the chimney forms the stone grill for the outdoor kitchen on the east porch.
 7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Unit Lodge C has three exterior doorways located at the center of the front and rear facades and at the east end façade next to the chimney. The side door is located at the outdoor kitchen porch. These doorways are flanked by log-face structural timbers and have replacement vertical wood board doors. They are accessed via a log step at the front and east doorways. The front (north) doorway step rests on a fieldstone and concrete pad.
 - b. Windows: Window openings are located on the north, south, and west façades. The windows on each façade share a plain wood sill and do not have additional trim. There are arranged in a one/three/one pattern separated by a simple wood mullion on the north and south and a one/two/one pattern on the west. The windows are eight light wood casements.
 8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Unit Lodge C has a side gable roof with a change in pitch for the south slope just below the ridge and a lower gable extension for the east side porch. The roof is covered with brown asphalt composite shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Unit Lodge C has open eaves with exposed rafter ends and a moderate overhang. The west gable peak and east porch gable peak have fixed wood louvers. The structure does not have gutters. There is a metal drip guard over the front doorway.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Unit Lodge C has one large room with an outdoor kitchen space on the side porch.
2. Stairways: None.

3. Flooring: Unit Lodge C has random width wood plank floors that have probably been replaced.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The interior walls are paneled with random width vertical boards with v-notch seams. Several areas of paneling have recently been replaced. There are no baseboards. The ceiling is unfinished with visible trusses, rafters, and roof decking.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There are no additional interior doors. The insides of the exterior doors do not have any trim or molding.
 - b. Windows: The window interiors do not have any trim or molding. The metal stays for the casements are visible. The wood frame screens hang on the inside.
6. Decorative features and trim: The interior of Unit Lodge C is dominated by a large gray fieldstone fireplace at the east end of the room. The exposed chimney breast tapers slightly toward the ceiling. A stone ledge at the front holds a simple wood board mantel. There is a stone relieving arch at the opening with a prominent keystone. The hearth is also stone and the firebox lined with large yellow bricks. At the outdoor kitchen the chimney has an integrated grill which extends into the space.

There is a simple built-in window seat at the west end of the room. The seat is built between two tall cabinets. Each cabinet has a two-leaf door below with HL hinges and metal swinging latch. The upper section contains shelves.

There are built-in cabinets with a copper sheathed top on two sides of the outdoor kitchen porch.
7. Hardware: The door at the east porch has a metal keyhole and strap hinges. The casement windows have external pin hinges and metal stays.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Unit Lodge C is heated by the fireplace only and naturally ventilated.
 - b. Lighting: The structure has external electrical conduit leading to porcelain single incandescent bulb light fixtures mounted on the bottom of the truss cross beams.
 - c. Plumbing: Unit Lodge C does not have plumbing except a sink incorporated into the outdoor kitchen counter.

D. Site:

1. Historic landscape design: Unit Lodge C is located at the south edge of C Unit in order to function as a key communal structure for 25-30 campers housed in the nearby cabins.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: This unit lodge is likely the Chopawamsic example published in Good.¹⁰ A schematic plan from the 1952 inventory (File 2674) and a renovation drawing from 1979 are located in the PRWI Archives.
- B. Early Views: The published example of a Chopawamsic unit lodge includes a perspective view photograph. An exterior photograph of Unit Lodge C from a 1952 inventory is located in the PRWI Archives (File 2673) (Figure 3).
- 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.

Publications and Secondary Sources:

Davidson, Lisa Pfueller 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.

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

Kuhn, Patti and John Bedell. "Prince William Forest Park Historic District," Prince William County, Virginia. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (draft), 2010. U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, DC.

Leach, Sara Amy. "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.

¹⁰ 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 III, 152-53.

Recreational Demonstration Projects: As Illustrated by Chopawamsic, Virginia.
Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, c. 1936.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation of Unit Lodge C (Building C12) 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

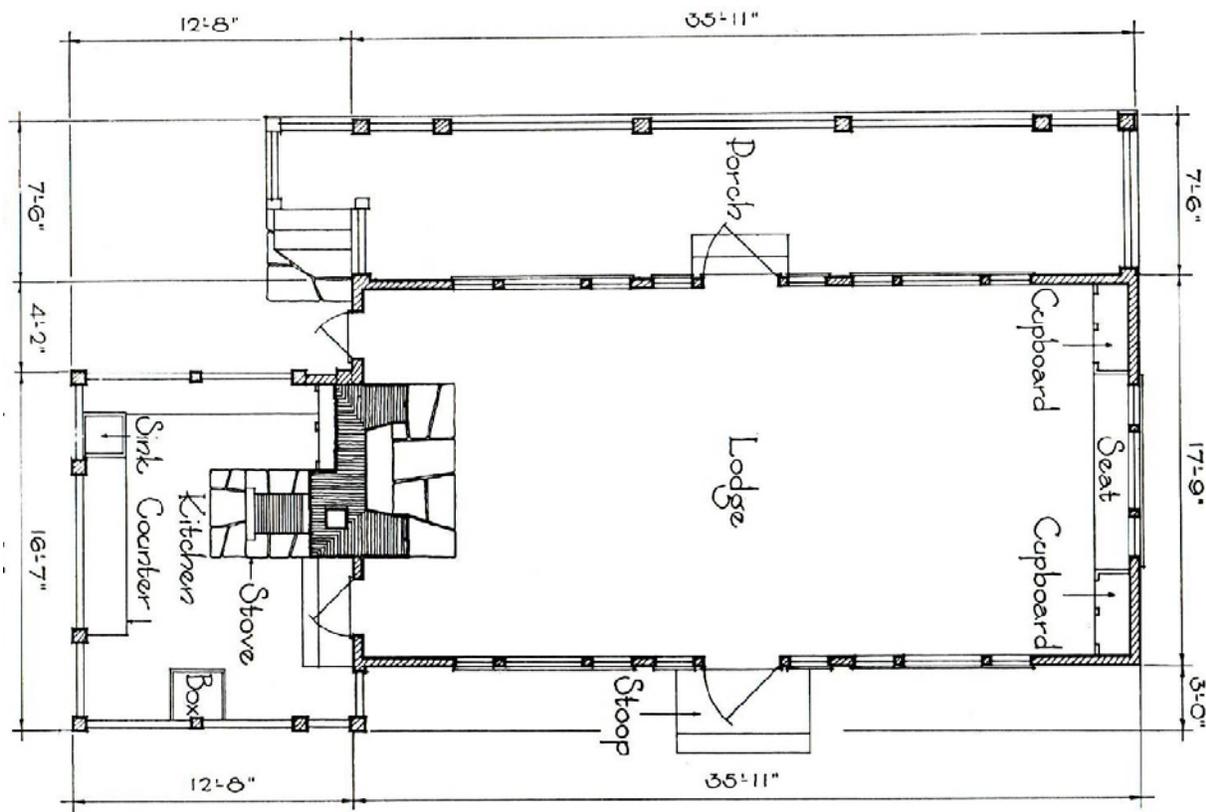


Figure 1: Chopawamsic RDA Unit Lodge (possibly Camp 1, Unit Lodge C).
Source: adapted from Good, *Park and Recreation Structures*.

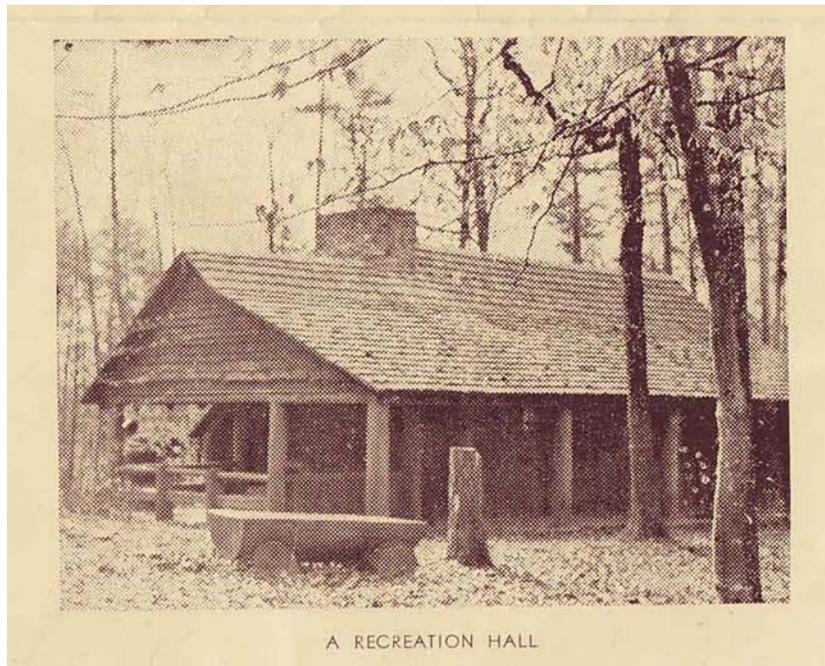


Figure 2: Camp Lichtman Brochure, 1938.
Source: Box 124, Entry 100, RG 79, NARA II.



Figure 3: View of Unit Lodge C, c. 1952.
Source: File 2673, PRWI Archives.