

## FINDING AID

### Administrative Records of the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Fonds

#### Series 520/1 Church Camps

- 520/1/1 United Church Fresh Air Camps
- 520/1/2 Rock Lake United Church Camp
- 520/1/3 Belair United Church Christian Education Camp
- 520/1/4 Portage Presbytery Camps

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United Church of Canada Archives  
Winnipeg

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**500 Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference fonds. -- 1917 - 2004; predominant 1954-1993. -- 43m of textual records and other material.**

The Conference of Manitoba came into existence in June of 1925 with the creation of The United Church of Canada through the union of the Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational and Local Union Churches of Canada. The name was changed in 1980 to the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario as a result of a successful petition to the General Council of the United Church by Cambrian Presbytery. The Conference encompasses the entire province of Manitoba and the area of Northwestern Ontario drained by the Rainy River and Winnipeg River systems as far east as Marathon, Ontario and south to the United States border.

The Conference has an administrative as well as a geographic meaning. The thirteen conferences within The United Church of Canada function as a governing body or court of the church. Very simply, they are composed of members of the Order of Ministry on the roll of Presbyteries within the geographical bounds of the Conference and lay persons under appointment to administrative or staff positions within the Conference by a court of the church or the United Church General Council. These are matched by an equal number of lay representatives elected from the Pastoral Charges within the Conference. Chairpersons of Conference Committees and the President of the Conference United Church Women are also members of Conference. In addition to the obligation to meet annually and to appoint a Conference Executive, the Conference was charged with appointing Standing and Special Committees to carry out the day to day work of the Conference. In 1925 these were Education and Students, Evangelism and Social Service, Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Pensions, Publications, Religious Education, Missionary and Maintenance Fund, Church Property, Settlement, Statistics, Historical and Obituaries.

With a few exceptions, the structure of Conference remained essentially the same until 1972 when a major realignment of the administrative structure of the United Church at the General Council (National) and Conference levels took place. In 1972, the Boards of Home Missions, Evangelism and Social Service and Christian Education had ceased to exist along with the staff positions associated with that work. New paid staff positions which made their first appearance around this time were Regional Director of Broadcasting in 1971 (lasting only until 1972), the positions of Conference Personnel and Conference Administrative Support in 1972 and the positions of Leadership Development and Program Resource in 1973. In 1975 and 1976, and again from 1989 to 1993, a staff position for Communications was added. In 1983, the Conference staff position of Christian Development and Outreach was created and, in 1986, an Evangelism and Social Action staff person as well as a full time Conference Archivist was hired.

The changes in National and Conference administrative structure, which resulted from a move towards more regional and local control of church programs, were reflected in the evolution of Conference Committees. The powerful Conference Home Missions Committee and its sub-committees, responsible for overseeing the mission initiatives of Conference and the administration of mission grants according to Board of Home Missions directives, had been replaced by the Administrative Support Committee (briefly called the Congregational Support Committee) by 1973. Another major reorganisation of the Conference committee structure took place in 1983 when a system for the division of the work of Conference committees among four Councils (Stewardship, Worship and Education, Ministry and Personnel, Evangelism and Social Action) was devised. Committee chairs reported to their respective Councils that in turn were represented on the Conference Executive.

Another major reorganisation of Conference Structure took place in 1993. At that time, the pressure of meeting current demands with dwindling resources resulted in a move to reduce the number of Presbyteries from eight to six. The work previously allocated among four Conference Councils was then divided between three Program Units (Education and Justice, Ministry and Personnel, and Stewardship and Mission). The number of Committees reporting to the Program Units, and through them to the Conference Executive was reduced. Salaried staff were also decreased and reorganised to include the positions of Executive Secretary, Education and Justice staff person, Stewardship and Mission staff

person, Personnel staff person and Conference Archivist. Further changes to the Conference Structure were made in 2005.

Many of the materials which make up this Conference fonds had been stored in the basement of the Conference administrative offices at 120 Maryland Street in Winnipeg in an ad hoc manner for varying lengths of time over a period of approximately forty years before coming into the Archives. Generally, the records of Conference executive, staff and committee chairs were transferred to the basement at the end of their term of office. Renovations to and rearrangement of the basement area resulted in the movement of the materials around the storage area on more than one occasion. It is probable that space constraints resulted in the unrecorded disposal of an undetermined number of documents and other materials throughout the storage period. Administrative records in storage at 120 Maryland were formally transferred to the Archives in 1989. The movement of the Conference administrative offices to a new address in the fall of 1996 precipitated an inventory and the relocation of those records in 1995 prior to the move. The balance of the fonds consists of record series that had been accessioned by the Archives at various periods prior to 1995. The provenance of records accessioned prior to 1976 is often obscure.

The fonds consists of textual and other materials generated by the Conference, the Conference Executive, Conference Staff Associates and Conference Committee members in the fulfilment of their mandate as outlined in *The Manual of The United Church of Canada* from 1925 to 1994. Throughout the life of the fonds, several Conference staff members have served in more than one church or community administration simultaneously while keeping unified files. This has resulted in materials from other administrative jurisdictions being interspersed among the fonds.

Fonds are composed of the following series: Conference Annual Meetings, 1925-1993; Conference Executive, 1925-2002; Conference Offices, 1958-1989; Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups Answering to the Executive and Sub-Executive, 1968-1993; Manitoba Conference Branch of The United Church Woman's Missionary Society, 1918-1962; Manitoba Conference Branch Woman's Missionary Society Archives Collection, [ca.1885-ca.1960]; Manitoba Conference Lay Association, [ca.1910]-1962; District Council AOTS, 1964-1977; Conference Committee on Christian Education, 1927-1992; Conference Home Missions Committee, 1926-1973; Superintendents of Home Missions, 1926-1973; records of the Administration of Norway House Residential School, 1954-1967; Conference Hospitals, 1923-1982; Home Missions Inter-Conference and Ecumenical Groups, 1956-1969; Conference Evangelism and Social Service Committee, 1933-1976; Conference Congregational Life and Work, 1952-1979; Church in Society Committee, 1976-1983; Evangelsim and Social Action Council, 1983-1993; Inter-Conference and Ecumenical Groups reporting to the Evangelsim and Social Action Council , 1972-1999; Conference Communications, 1964-1992; Worship and Education Council, 1981-1994; Worship and Education Council Women's Groups, 1982-1992; Education and Justice Unit, 1987 - 2004 (predominately 1993 - 1998); Committee on Education, Students and Church Vocations, 1975-1978; Conference Education Committee, 1972-1983; [Interim] Placement Committee, 1970-1972; Conference Settlement Committee, 1971-1980; Conference Staff Committee, 1966-1992; Ministry and Personnel Council, 1982-1993; Conference Personnel Officer, 1972-1993; Conference Personnel Records, 1957-1993; records of the Conference Finance Committee, 1964-1974; records of Conference Administrative Support, 1973-1983; records of Administrative Support Staff, 1972-1993; Conference Stewardship, 1967-1993; Church Camps, 1918-1975; Church Home for Girls, 1945-1976; Women's Union, 1926-1958; Manitoba Conference Woman's Association, 1946-1962; Conference United Church Women, 1963-2002; Fellowship of Professional Women, 1949-1980; Manitoba Canadian Girls in Training, 1918-1990; and the Manitoba Student Christian Movement, 1923-1981.

Title based on contents of fonds.

The fonds also includes ephemera, photographs, slides, audio tape recordings, video tape recordings and 50 sets of blueprints, plans and architects' drawings.

Original order of many of the series of the fonds was substantially obscured during the storage period and many materials were in an extremely disorganised state with no original order or access points apparent; where necessary, order based on administrative function has been reconstructed by the arranging archivist.

Some restrictions on access; see series descriptions.

Finding Aids consist of series descriptions and box lists; some sub-series and file level description available.

Further accruals are expected.

**520/1 Church Camps. – 1918-1999. – 3m textual records + 270 photographs and other material.**

Since the first Fresh Air Camp was founded in 1905, the United Church has supported a variety of camping experiences within the Manitoba Conference. The United Church camping tradition encompassed summer institutes and leadership training camps, such as those sponsored by the Methodist Epworth League at Rock Lake. It also included the Fresh Air Camps at Gimli for disadvantaged urban children and their mothers that were affiliated with the Institutional Missions of Home Missions. Other early camps included 'Skinny Camp', held near Selkirk during the 1920s for working boys who were too old for Fresh Air Camps, and Kirkfield Camp, a mission education camp held on the banks of the Assiniboine seven miles west of Winnipeg during the 1940s. Successor camps in Manitoba included: Christian Education Church Vacation and Leadership Education Camps at locations such as Rock Lake, Wasaga, Totogan (Lynch's Point), Jackson Lake, Wellman Lake and Belair; the leadership development and mission education camps of the various Conference and Presbyterian women's groups; CGIT and Explorer Camps at Brereton; Tuxis and Trail Ranger Camps at Victoria Beach and Belair; and Winnipeg Presbytery's Maskwa Project Camp near Pine Falls. Camps in Northwestern Ontario included Camp Freeman at Atikokan, Duncan Memorial at Loon Lake near Thunder Bay, Goldpines near Red Lake and Sunny Cove Camp near Fort Frances.

It has generally been the case that Conference camps operated under the supervision of a camp board with ultimate oversight by the Presbytery in which the camp was located. Exceptions included Fresh Air Camps, which came under the oversight of Conference Home Missions until 1967, at which time supervision was delegated to Winnipeg Presbytery. Another exception was Camp Wasaga at Clear Lake, which had been operated by a Board that drew membership from the Presbyteries of Birtle, Brandon, Portage and Northland and which was re-developed in 1979 as a Conference camp. Attempts have been made over the years with varying degrees of success to institute Conference level control and co-ordination of all camping programs within the Conference. Camping had been a sub-committee of the Conference Christian Education Committee at least since the 1950s and by the 1960s, Conference Christian Education had moved towards the amalgamation of all Conference camping programs under one Conference Camping Committee. This committee had an erratic existence throughout the 1970s and ceased to exist after Conference restructuring in 1983 when responsibility for Conference Camping passed to the Worship and Education Council. The Conference Camping Committee was briefly reconstituted in 1985 and disbanded again in 1987.

Records have not yet been accessioned for all the camps mentioned above. Also, there are gaps in the records that have been accessioned and camping records are found in more than one series. Records that are described here include the following sub-series: Fresh Air Camps, 1920-1975; Rock Lake Camp, [ca.1902]-1996; Camp Belair, 1956-1976; and Portage Presbytery Camps, 1960-1980.

Title based on contents.

Items include 2 video tape recordings.

For records of CGIT and Explorer camps see the sub-series '540/1/4 Manitoba CGIT Camps' described as part of the series '540/1 Canadian Girls in Training' elsewhere in this fonds.

For minutes of the Conference Camping Committee for 1969/70 see the file 'Conference Camping Sub-Committee, 1958-1970' in the sub-series '508/1/3 Conference Committee on Christian Education Sub-Committees' described as part of the series '508/1 Conference Committee on Christian Education' elsewhere in this fonds. Other records are found in "516/1/4 Conference Camping Committee" described as part of the series "516/2 Worship and Education Council".

For other records pertaining to Conference Camping, see the records of the Conference Camping Consultation in the sub-series "511/1/1 Congregational Life and Work Committee", described as part of the series "511/1 Congregational Life and Work".

For later records of the Conference Camping Committee see the records of the Congregational Life and Work Committee and Conference Administrative Support (General Files of Ray Smith).

Records pertaining to camping may also be found among the records of the various Presbyteries of Conference.

Location: Box 520/1-1; Box 520/1-2; Box 520/1-3; Sound and Moving Images Shelf; Box 543

**520/1/1 United Church Fresh Air Camps. – 1918-1975. – 1m textual records and other material.**

The first Fresh Air Camps were organised in England around 1877 in order to give the children of London's Whitechapel district a country holiday away from the slum conditions of the city. The deaconesses of Winnipeg's All Peoples' Mission are credited with establishing the first Fresh Air Camp in Western Canada in the then pastoral Norwood Flats area of Winnipeg, which the children reached by streetcar, in 1905. The Fresh Air Camp movement in Winnipeg was likewise a response to the miserable slum conditions that existed in Winnipeg's north end at the turn of the century where summer epidemics of typhoid were an annual occurrence. Within a year, the camp moved west to the Sturgeon Creek area and in 1907 to the Gimli area on Lake Winnipeg where it was known as All Peoples' Gimli Camp, and later Camp Sparling. In 1911, the Presbyterian urban mission of Robertson Memorial Institute opened another Fresh Air Camp nearby at Loni Beach, known as Camp Robertson. Campers were also sent to Camp Robertson from the Presbyterian Ruthenian and Jewish Missions. These two camps were amalgamated in 1949 on the Camp Robertson site under the name United Church Fresh Air Camp when shore erosion made Camp Sparling unusable. Other Winnipeg faith groups and service clubs operated similar camps, all of which were located on the west shore of Lake Winnipeg. These included Sandy Hook (Salvation Army), Husavick (B'Nai B'Rith Camp), Lakeside Memorial Camp (Gyro Service Club) and Camp Morton (Roman Catholic). This Fresh Air Camp work was co-ordinated through the Associated Winnipeg Fresh Air Camps Board. This Board had ceased to function as a co-ordinating body by 1949. Over the years, the Fresh Air Camps provided a one or two-week summer vacation to disadvantaged children alone or with their mothers and senior citizens. The Fresh Air camps also pioneered 'Hospital Camp' with special facilities for those recovering from an illness or suffering from a chronic disease or disability. Over the years, this proved to be one of the most popular camping programs. Rising costs and the growth of other camping opportunities led to the 1974 closure and eventual sale of the Fresh Air Camp facility.

Prior to 1925, a committee of Winnipeg Presbytery administered Camp Robertson and the Deaconess Board of the Methodist Church supervised the All Peoples' Gimli Camp. After Union, a request was made to unite the Fresh Air Camps under one Board supervised by Conference. This Board would then have the privilege of Conference-wide appeals for camp support. The new Board came into being in 1926 and at that time the name of the Gimli Fresh Air Camp was changed to Sparling Fresh Air Camp. Thereafter, according to the records of the Robertson Memorial Institute, Robertson staff had responsibility for day to day administration of the camps. Initially, the full Fresh Air Camps Board had forty-two members and met semi-annually with the Executive meeting more often, approximately every three months or as often as every two weeks if required. Members were appointed by Conference. In 1956, the size of the Fresh Air Camp Board was reduced. Throughout its existence, places were reserved on the Fresh Air Camp Board for the Presidents of the Women's Union, the Conference Branch Woman's Missionary Society (WMS) and the Woman's Association (WA) as well as representatives from the Winnipeg Presbyterian WMS and WA. The Winnipeg Women's Union was a stalwart supporter of the Fresh Air Camps program for many years, organising and hosting the Women's Union Camp Picnic and later Camp Tea fundraisers. The Fresh Air Camps Board reported directly to the entire Conference until 1967, when Fresh Air Camps were placed under the oversight of Winnipeg Presbytery.

The provenance of these records is not always clear. It is known that Nelson Rajotte, a member of the Fresh Air Camp Board, [ca.1972]-1974, brought several items to the Conference Archives in 1982. Many of the items appear to have been collected for and used as part of a commemorative display of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of United Church Fresh Air Camps in 1974.

Records of the Fresh Air Camps described here include: Gimli Fresh Air Camp Pamphlets, 1918-1923; and records pertaining to Camp Robertson, 1920-1924; minutes of the Fresh Air Camps Board and Executive, 1936-1974; Annual and other Reports, 1928-1974; Camp Constitution, 1963; records of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, 1966-1970; Preliminary Report of the Property Committee, 1971; Plans and Drawings, [before 1970]; Correspondence, 1920-1975; Financial statements and reports, 1925-1975; Cash Books, 1972-1975; a Manual for Leaders, [before 1950]; Job Descriptions, [after 1950]; miscellaneous lists and plans, 1932-1961; a Camp Accreditation Workbook, 1969; records pertaining to the Winnipeg Presbytery Research and Planning Council Camping Study, 1973-1974; Fresh Air Camps Concert material, 1933-1954; Pamphlets, flyers and brochures, 1925-1974; historical material and clippings, ca.1920-1967.

Title based on contents.

Records include 249 photographs and slides pertaining to the United Church Fresh Air Camps and their predecessors that have been described as part of the Conference and Church Camps Photograph Collection.

Some items included in accession 1982-26 have been affixed to cards for display and cannot be removed without damage to the item.

A folder containing owner's manuals and warranty information for various pieces of camp equipment and a sales prospectus describing the Roman Catholic Fresh Air Camp, Camp Morton were discarded from accession 1986-31 when these records were described for this Finding Aid.

Some restrictions on access; see item level descriptions.

File level description; box lists available.

Records pertaining to Fresh Air Camps may also be found with the Charge records for All Peoples' Mission and Robertson Memorial Institute. See the Annual Reports of All Peoples' Mission/ later North Winnipeg Mission for 1908/09 to 1948 (File #1, All Peoples' Box B) and 'Camp Information' (File #26, All Peoples' Box B) and reports of Boy's Work throughout the 1920s. Also see the Annual Reports of Robertson Memorial Church and House for 1911 to 1961 (File #1, Robertson Memorial Church Box B), 'Robertson Memorial Notes', which includes two descriptions of Gimli Fresh Air Camp in typewritten excerpts from the *Reports of the General Assembly, 1916* (Robertson Memorial Church Box B) and 'Fresh Air Camp Accounts Notebook', 1935-1946 (Robertson Memorial Church Box B).

Further records pertaining to Fresh Air Camps may be found with the records of Property Grants and Loans described as part of the series '509/2 Records of the Superintendents of Home Missions' and with the records of Winnipeg Presbytery.

Accession: 1982-26; 1986-31; and others.



**File Description**

1. Gimli Fresh Air Camp Pamphlets. – 1918-1923. – 1 folder.

These pamphlets were accessioned with accession 1982-26 and appear to have been collected for use in a Fresh Air Camp 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary display, ca.1974.

Items found here include two examples of pamphlets produced by the Manitoba Conference of the Methodist Church (Manitoba Conference Deaconess Board) for the purpose of raising funds towards the operation of the Gimli Fresh Air Camp. They include photographs of campers engaged in camp activities, a history of camp activities and lists of subscribers.

Title based on contents.

2. Camp Robertson. – 1920-1924. –2 folders.

These folders contain descriptions of the planned Camp Robertson program for 1920 and 1922 as well as budgets for 1920, 1921 and 1923 and the annual report for 1924. Also found here are examples of flyers, brochures and circular letters describing the Camp Robertson program and soliciting funds for the Camp's operation.

Title based in contents.

At various times Camp Robertson was also known as the Robertson Presbyterian Fresh Air Camp and the Gimli Fresh Air Camp [of the Presbyterian Church]. Around 1920 the name was changed to Camp Robertson to avoid confusion with the Methodist Fresh Air Camp also operating in the area (File 12c, Winnipeg Presbytery Correspondence Box C).

3. Minutes of the Board and Executive Committee of the United Church Fresh Air Camps Board. - 29 April 1936-3 November 1955. – 1 volume.

The existence of a volume of minutes which covers the period prior to April, 1936 is alluded to in the minutes of April 29<sup>th</sup>, however, this volume has not yet been accessioned.

Title taken from the first page of the volume.

4. Minutes of the United Church Fresh Air Camp Board and Executive. – 1955-1974. – 2 folders.

Items found here include an incomplete run of the minutes of the United Church Fresh Air Camp Board and Executive.

Title based on contents.

Order has been reconstructed from various files accessioned as part of 1986-31.

**5. Reports. -- 1928-1974. – 2 folders.**

These folders contain an incomplete run of annual and other reports of United Church Fresh Air Camp operations for the years 1928 through to 1974. Annual reports of the United Church Fresh Air Camps for the 1940s and 1960s periods have yet to be accessioned. Also found here is a copy of the annual report for the Associated Winnipeg Fresh Air Camps for 1943.

Title based on contents.

**6. Constitution. – ca.1963. – 1 folder.**

Items found here include two copies of the 1963 version of the United Church Fresh Air Camp Board Constitution and a copy labelled Revised Constitution.

Title based on contents.

**7. Buildings and Grounds Committee. – 1966-1970. – 1 folder.**

Items found here include committee minutes, annual reports, correspondence and other materials generated by the Buildings and Grounds Committee of the Board of the United Church Fresh Air Camps.

Title based on contents.

**8. Preliminary Report of the Property Committee. – 1971. – 1 folder.**

Items found here include the report of the committee that replaced the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Title taken from heading of report.

**9. Plans and Drawings. – [before 1970]. – 1 folder.**

Items found here include various plans, blueprints and drawings of camp buildings and facilities.

Title based on contents.

**10. Correspondence. – 1920-1975. – 3 folders.**

These folders contain correspondence generated and received by the United Church Fresh Air Camps Board. This correspondence consists of various appeal letters soliciting donations from individuals, congregations and other groups; letters pertaining to bequests to the Fresh Air Camps; letters pertaining to the issue of hospital patient costs, ca.1926; items pertaining to the construction of a breakwater at camp Sparling, ca.1936-1939; communications to and from funding or regulatory agencies such as Community Chest and the Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg; letters pertaining to the sale of Camp Sparling, ca.1950; the New Capital Funds Appeal of Winnipeg Presbytery, ca.1962; correspondence pertaining to a row boat and the camp van, ca.1971; a proposal for the 'Kalimat' program, ca.1972; and items pertaining to the decision to cease operations at Camp Robertson in 1975.

Title based on contents.

**11. Financial statements and reports. – 1925-1975. – 2 folders.**

These folders include financial statements as well as lists of expenses; summaries of salaries, ca.1951; and lists of donors.

Title based on contents.

Due to the presence of identifying information concerning individuals, access to this file may be restricted.

TD-1 returns for 1951 have been culled.

**12. Cash Books. – 1972-1975. – 1 volume + 1 folder.**

Included here are detailed accounts of receipts and disbursements for the United Church Fresh Air Camp for the period from 1972-1975.

Title based on contents.

**13. Manual for Leaders. – [before 1950]. – 1 folder.**

Items found here include two copies of the pamphlet titled Manual for Leaders for use at the United Church Fresh Air camps of Camp Robertson and Camp Sparling.

Title taken from pamphlet cover.

**14. Job Descriptions. – [after 1950]. – 1 folder.**

Title based on contents.

**15. Lists and plans. -- 1932-1961. – 1 folder.**

Records found here include items such as lists of camping parties for Camp Sparling and Camp Robertson, lists of Camp Hospital Parties, ca.1960-1961, lists of camp staff, and inventories of supplies on hand. Also found here is a survey, ca.1932, and an undated plan for what appears to be the Camp Robertson hospital building.

Title based on contents.

Due to the presence of identifying information concerning individuals, access to this file may be restricted.

**16. Camp Accreditation Workbook. – 1969. – 1 booklet.**

Items found here include a completed copy of the workbook 'Desirable Camping Practices Leading to Accreditation of Resident Camps' published by the Manitoba Camping Association and apparently used for a self-assessment of the Camp Robertson program.

Title based on contents.

**17. Winnipeg Presbytery Research and Planning Council Camping Study. – 1973-1974. – 1 folder.**

Items found here include materials pertaining to the Winnipeg Presbytery Research and Planning Council's study 'The Future Role of Camping in Winnipeg Presbytery'. Items include an outline of the proposed camping study and interim drafts of the final report as well as a list of names and addresses, apparently of those persons consulted regarding the report.

Title based on contents.

**18. Fresh Air Camps Concert material. – 1933-1954. – 1 folder.**

From the time it was constituted in 1925/26, the United Church Fresh Air Camp Board mounted an annual fund-raising concert and variety program. This was known as 'The Sunshine Review' from 1935 on. The last review took place in 1954.

Items found here include concert programs, tickets, an undated clipping pertaining to the 25<sup>th</sup> concert and a letter announcing the end of the annual concert reviews.

Title based on contents.

The clipping has been photocopied and the original has been discarded.

**19. Pamphlets, flyers and brochures. – 1925-1974. – 1 folder.**

Included here are examples of various publicity flyers, fund-raising brochures and envelopes, and registration forms for the United Church Fresh Air Camps.

Title based on contents.

**20. Histories. – [after 1925]. – 1 folder.**

Items found here include written reminiscences pertaining to the Fresh Air Camp movement and the United Church Fresh Air Camps (Camp Sparling and Camp Robertson).

Title based on contents.

**21.** Clippings. – ca.1920-1967. – 1 folder.

Items found here include a number of clippings from a variety of newspapers and periodicals pertaining to the United Church Fresh Air Camps history and programs.

Title based on contents.

These clippings have been photocopied and the originals have been discarded.

**520/1/2 Rock Lake United Church Camp. – [ca.1902]-1996. – 1.5m textual records + other material.**

Rock Lake United Church camp began life as the Epworth League Summer Institutes that were held in and near Killarney beginning in 1898. The purpose of the summer institutes was to promote “a more healthy, enthusiastic, and intelligent co-operation of the Leagues in the work of the Church, and to a more intimate acquaintanceship with Methodist history, doctrine and usages...” (Rev. A. W. Kenner. “Rock Lake Summer School: The Story of Its Commencement in 1897-8”, p.2.) A Rock Lake site was first used for the Institutes in 1904. Initially, the campsite was rented but in 1908 it was decided to purchase property from the Honourable Thomas Greenway. Brush was cleared in 1909 and the first Institute was held on the new site in 1910. The Rock Lake program included bible and mission study and later evolved to include Evangelism and Social Service and Religious Education studies. In the early years, speakers were invited out to Rock Lake to speak on Indian Missions and All Peoples’ as well as foreign mission work.

By 1925, attendance at the summer school as previously constituted had fallen off and the Young Peoples’ Board of Manitoba Conference was asked to hold a Leadership Training Camp that would share the summer with Boys and Girls Camps sponsored by the district. In the 1950s, Carman Presbyterial initiated a “Fellowship Camp for Church Women” at Rock Lake involving women from Carman and Rock Lake. This camp continued into the 1960s. The Rock Lake site is still in use as a United Church Camp.

Records pertaining to Rock Lake that have been accessioned are relatively few. Peter Kidd, one time Chair of the Rock Lake Camp Board, brought a number of records to the Conference Archives in 1985. Included among this accession were the records of Rev. Howard B. Gibson of Pilot Mound, Manitoba who at one time acted as Rock Lake Camp Director.

Records described here include Minutes of the Camp Board, 1957-1992; Reports and Evaluations, 1952-1985; Records of Title and Incorporation, [ca.1902-ca.1984]; [Camp Manager’s] Correspondence, [ca.1954]-1985; Board Correspondence, 1976-1991; Program and Financial Records, 1953-1992; Treasurer’s Correspondence, 1983-1990; Rock Lake Camp Manager’s Accounts, 1946-1954; Camp Brochures, [ca.1980-ca.1985]; Program Materials, [ca.1955-ca.1970]; Newsletters, 1935, 1938; and Histories, [ca.1930-ca.1985].

Title based on contents.

Records include 48 colour snapshots (8.5 x 12.5 cm; 3 ½ x 5), unidentified and undated (ca.1975-1985) of camp facilities, camp personnel and camper activities; 8 b&w snapshots (6.25 x 8.75 cm, 2 ½ x 3 ½; to 7 x 11.5 cm, 2 ¾ x 4 ½) of the camp site and campers, ca.1938, subjects identified verso; and one Video Tape titled ‘Open House & Reunion of 1925-1950 Campers, Sept. 4-6, 1998’ (T-120 VHS), running time unknown. An aerial view of Rock Lake Camp was accessioned in 2001.

Records also include 16 photographs pertaining to Rock Lake United Church Camp that have been described as part of the Conference and Church Camps Photograph Collection.

The records described here were accessioned in a disorganised state and in many cases order has been imposed by the arranging archivist; two issues of the periodical 'Canadian Camping' found among the minutes, duplicate minutes, Source Deduction records for c1988, 1991, a receipt book dated 1984-1987, brochures from unrelated agencies, cash books, camper registration slips and an incomplete set of camper lists from the 1980s have been discarded; the Fellowship Camp for Church Women Scrapbook accessioned with these records is now housed with the records of Carman Presbyterial WMS/UCW (WO4).

File level description; box lists available.

Accession: 1985-44; 1998-15; 1999-61; 1999-74; 2006 - 33

**File Description**

**1. Minutes. – 1957-1992. – 6 folders.**

These folders contain an incomplete series of minutes of the meetings of the Rock Lake United Church Camp Board for the period from 1957 to 1989. Minutes for the period prior to 1957 and from 1966 to 1975 have not yet been accessioned. Also found interspersed among the minutes are various periodic and annual reports of camp operations; circular letters; camp programs; items of correspondence, and insurance documents.

Title based on contents.

The Camp Board was known as the Camp Committee.

Chronological order has been imposed by the arranging archivist.

**2. Reports and Evaluations. – 1952-1996. – 4 folders.**

These folders contain summary reports of seasonal activities, camper's impressions and evaluations, year end reports and evaluations by the camp coordinator and issues of the annual camp newsletter that summarised camp activities.

Title based on contents.

**3. Records of Title and Incorporation. – [ca.1902]-1992. – 3 folders.**

Included here are copies of legal documents pertaining to the ownership of the Rock Lake Camp property and incorporation of the Camp ca.1960. Also included here are copies of a Constitution for the Rock Lake United Church Camping Society prepared in anticipation of the incorporation of the Camp in 1960; a set of minutes of a Committee on a Philosophy for Church Camping; a copy of 'The Camp Philosophy to be Tested'; and a copy of the site plan. As well, there is a copy of the proposed Rock Lake United Church Camp, Inc. by-laws dated ca.1984. Copies of land transfers, certificates of title, site plans, proposed by-laws, insurance agreements and correspondence regarding property were accessioned in 2001.

Title based on contents.

Records of title and incorporation are photocopies.

**4. [Camp Manager's] Correspondence. – [ca.1954]-1985, predominant [ca.1954]-1963. --1 folder.**

This folder largely contains the incoming and outgoing correspondence of Rev. Howard B. Gibson, volunteer camp manager from 1954 to 1963. Topics include the proposed diversion of Northern Avenue around the camp buildings in 1955; the dedication of the new camp centre in 1957; and the water quality of Rock Lake in 1962.

Title based on contents.



**5. Board Correspondence. – 1976-1994. – 4 folders.**

Items found here include the incoming and outgoing correspondence of the Chair, Secretary and other members of the Rock Lake United Church Camp Board from 1976-1985. Topics include an inspection of facilities by the Public Health Inspector in 1976; responses to request for information by the National [Church] Advisory Group on Camping, ca.1983; materials pertaining to incorporation of the Camp, ca.1984; the Camp's Capital Assistance Loan, ca.1987-1989; Registered Charities Returns; correspondence pertaining to insurance; and other items of correspondence pertaining to camp operations.

Title based on contents.

**6. Program and Financial. – 1953-1992. – 5 folders + 2 video tapes.**

These folders contain material pertaining to the annual program of activities offered at Rock Lake United Church Camp from 1953 to 1991 including circular letters and posters. Also found here are miscellaneous financial records including financial statements and reports; notes pertaining to camp operation and maintenance of facilities; permits; and documents pertaining to insurance coverage, ca. 1956, 1979 to 1991. Correspondence pertaining to fundraising, health and safety of the camp facilities and environment, and a camp manual were accessioned in 2001. This material included 2 video tapes of the Rock Lake Quilt Auction in 1994 and 1996.

Title based on contents.

**7. Treasurer's Correspondence. – 1983-1990. – 10 folders.**

Incoming and outgoing items of correspondence pertaining to receipts for such items as fees, donations and bequests made to the Camp as well as items of correspondence pertaining to disbursements for items such as taxes, professional fees, advertising and camp maintenance.

Title based on contents.

**8. Rock Lake Camp Manager's Accounts. – 1946-1954. – 1 volume.**

This volume details receipts and expenditures for Rock Lake Camp from 1946 to 1954.

Title taken from front piece of volume.

**9. Camp Brochures. – [ca.1980]-1995. – 2 folders.**

Items found here include samples of brochures produced to promote Rock Lake United Church Camp. Also found here are samples of brochures produced by the Conference Camp Committee produced to promote Church camps in the entire Conference area.

Title based on contents.

**10. Program Materials.** – [ca.1955-ca.1970]. – 1 folder.

Included in this folder are various materials pertaining to the annual program of activities offered at Rock Lake United Church Camp such as daily camp programs, song sheets, and camp rules.

Title based on contents.

**11. Newsletters.** – 1935, 1938. – 1 folder.

Items found here include two issues of the annual Rock Lake Camp Newsletter, the 'Newsance'/'Nuisance'.

Title based on contents.

**12. Histories.** – [ca.1930]-1994. – 4 folders.

These folders contain several accounts of the founding of Rock Lake Camp in the late 1890s and camp programs over the years written by former campers and camp staff. Rev. A. W. Kenner, Anne Alsop, B. M. Allison, D. R. Patterson and Mrs. Naomi Jasper are among those identified as contributors. The authors of two accounts are unidentified. Also found here is a history of Rock Lake United Church Camp: 1884-1984 written to commemorate the Camp's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Newspaper clippings, a camp history dating from 1994 and a newsletter dating from 1933 were accessioned in 2001.

Title based on contents.

**520/1/3 Belair United Church Christian Education Camp. -- 1956-1976. -- 25cm textual records.**

Camp Belair was conceived as the 'Christian Education Camp' of Winnipeg Presbytery. The Presbytery had searched for an appropriate site for many years before land was purchased at Belair in 1956. The Sub-Executive of General Council approved the camp on 18 January 1957 and the Executive concurred on 10 June 1957. Camp Belair was incorporated 13 February 1957. Belair was described as a United Church Christian Education Camp. Christian Education camps were considered as one of the best ways for teaching the Christian 'way of life' and training Christian leaders including candidates for ministry (Brief to Winnipeg Presbytery, ca.1956). As the United Churches of Winnipeg Presbytery sponsored Belair Camp it was advertised in and drew campers mainly from Winnipeg and Selkirk Presbyteries. The camp was also used by Girls' Explorer and CGIT groups and by Boys' groups. Construction of the first camp building, the main lodge, was undertaken in 1957 largely with volunteer labour co-ordinated by the District Council AOTS. The Woman's Association also contributed practical necessities for camp operation. AOTS continued to provide volunteer labour for subsequent building programs. Cottage developments encroaching on the site and the loss of lakefront due to rising water levels on Lake Winnipeg led to a decision to close the camp and sell the property around 1970. The sale was concluded in 1973 and proceeds were ear marked for future camping initiatives.

Most of the time, clergy supplied the camp leadership. In 1964 the Inner City Council appointed Ken Metcalfe as part-time camp manager. A Board of Directors aided by committees that included, at various times, Girls' Camp, Boys' Camp, Building, Volunteer Labour and Finance administered Belair Camp. A Camp Operations Committee was added later to arrange for general camp management, hire staff, and deal with other operational decisions. The committee structure was reorganised in 1959 and job descriptions were written for Finance, Property, Publicity, Management and Policy & Program Committees. A House Committee (to look after equipment as opposed to structures) was added 1961.

The provenance of these records is unclear. A number of items were accessioned by the Conference Archives in 1985. Although the name of the donor is not recorded they appear to be the records of the Secretary Treasurer of the Camp Belair Board.

Items described here include Minutes and Reports, 1956-1974; Records of Title and Incorporation, 1956-1959; Correspondence, 1956-1976; and Financial Statements and Reports, 1957-1971.

Title based on contents.

File level description; box list available.

For records of the Belair Camp Sale Committee dating from 1971, see Treasurer's Files in "519/2/2 Administrative Support Committee" described as part of "519/2 Records of Conference Administrative Support".

Accession: 1985-56; and others.

**File Description**

**1. Minutes and Reports. – 1956-1974. -- 2 folders + 1 notebook.**

Records described here include minutes of Board of Directors from 1959 with statements of receipts and disbursements and auditor's reports interspersed throughout. There is also an incomplete run of mimeographed minutes and reports of the various camp committees as well as the camp manager; and an incomplete run of minutes for the Annual General Meetings. Also interspersed here are copies of camp publicity and registration materials as well as statistics pertaining to camp use and sundry items of correspondence, especially concerning the sale of the camp property. As well there is the secretary's notebook containing hand-written minutes of the Board and Sub-Committees dating from 1962 to 1969. Reference is made in the minutes of the Annual General meeting to a minute book that has not yet been accessioned.

Title based on contents.

Chronological order has been imposed by the processing archivist.

**2. Records of Title and Incorporation. – 1956-1959. – 1 folder.**

Included here are copies of legal documents pertaining to the purchase of the camp property (including a copy of the mortgage), and the incorporation of the Belair Camp dating from 1956 and 1957. Also included here are drawings of proposed camp buildings dating from 1958 and 1959.

Title based on contents.

Records of Title and Incorporation are photocopies.

**3. Correspondence. – 1956-1976. -- 3 folders.**

Correspondence files include the Brief to Winnipeg Presbytery, ca.1956, explaining proposals for development of Belair Camp.

Title based on contents.

Items from the folder dated 1956-1972 were contaminated with mould; contaminated items have been photocopied and the originals have been discarded.

**4. Financial statements and reports. – 1957-1971. – 1 folder.**

Title based on contents.

**520/1/4 Portage Presbytery Camps. -- 1960-1980. -- 25cm textual records + other material.**

Portage Presbytery operated camps at several sites including at Delta on Lake Manitoba. The Totogan site (also known as Lynch's Point) on Lake Manitoba was used for junior camps and was also rented out to other religious and community organisations. Camp Jackson Wilderness Camp was used primarily by boys aged 12 to 15 years was located at Jackson Lake near Sidney. Camp Totogan opened ca.1968, although there appears to have been a Lynch's Point United Church Camp for junior girls operating from 1961. By 1977, church groups were making little use of both sites and they were largely rented out to other groups. Plans were made by 1976 to close the Totogan site and develop Jackson Lake as the only Presbytery camp. Ross Taylor of Trinity United Church in Portage la Prairie brought the records described here to the Conference Archives in 1989.

Records described here include Records of Camp Administration, 1960-1980; Cash Book, 1965-1975; and a Camp Log [for] Junior Girls Camp, 1961.

Title based on contents.

Records include 9 photographs described as part of the Conference and Church Camps Photograph Collection.

All classes of records, including minutes, correspondence and financial, were mixed together in files that were organised in a roughly chronological way and this arrangement has been left essentially intact; United Church General Council Camping and Manitoba Camping Association blank report forms, the 'Church Camping' Bulletin issued by the [General Council] Board of Christian Education, Christian Education Leader's Guides published by the United Church Board of Christian Education and the United Methodist Church and information on unrelated camping programs collected for reference have been discarded; records of the Manitoba Conference Consultation in Camping, ca.1970, have been re-housed with the records of the Congregational Life and Work Committee.

Accession: 1989-3; 2003-3.

**File Description**

1. Minutes. – 1960-1984. – 1 volume + 1 folder.

Items described here consist of minutes of the meetings of the Portage Presbytery United Church Camp Board of Directors. Generally, these meetings pertained to Camp Totogan, however, meetings also concerned Jackson Lake Camp. Correspondence and other documents are interspersed throughout.

Title based on contents.

2. Records of Camp Administration. -- 1960-1978, predominant 1974-1978. – 1 folder.

Included here are working files of the Camp Board Chairs Rev. Jim Scott and Isobel Heal including correspondence, camp leaders/director's reports, registration forms and clippings pertaining to both Camp Totogan and Jackson Lake.

Title based on contents.

Items have been removed from a loose-leaf binder and placed in a file folder.

Items are arranged in reverse chronological order.

3. Records of Camp Administration. -- 1964-1965. – 1 folder.

Records include items pertaining to personnel and insurance for both camps and the proposed constitution for Camp Totogan.

Title based on contents.

4. Records of Camp Administration. -- 1968-1972. – 1 folder.

Records described here pertain to both Camp Totogan and Jackson Lake. A large proportion pertain to the Camp Totogan Constitution.

Title based on contents.

5. Records of Camp Administration. -- 1969-1971. – 1 coil bound notebook + other materials.

Records include working files of member(s) of the Camp Board (including possibly Rev. Harold Ritchie) with the addition of registration forms and Manitoba Camping Association materials (correspondence, guidelines).

Title based on contents.

**6. Records of Camp Administration. -- 1969-1978, predominant 1972-1978. – 1 folder.**

Records found here appear to be the working files of member(s) of the Camp Board (including possibly Rev. Norman Quigley, Chair). Items include minutes of meetings of the Camp Totogan Board and Jackson Lake Camp Board, reports to Portage Presbytery and reports of Portage Presbytery Camp Board, job descriptions, development plans, and sundry correspondence. Also found here are bacteriological water reports for Lake Jackson, records pertaining to insurance coverage, drafts of lease agreements for Jackson Lake, copies of Totogan and Jackson Lake constitutions, grant applications and camp director's reports.

Title based on contents.

**7. Records of Camp Administration. -- 1971-1974. – 1 folder.**

Items found here include materials pertaining to plans for the development of Jackson Lake Camp and PEP Grant applications, leadership development, and lists of campers. Material is similar to that found in the binder dated 1974-1978.

Title based on contents.

**8. Records of Camp Administration. -- 1978-1980. -- 1 folder.**

Title based on contents.

**9. Records of Camp Administration. – 1972-1985. – 1 folder.**

Items described here consist of the correspondence of the Portage Presbytery Camp Board. Topics include camp programs and the rental of camp facilities as well as registrations. Items pertain to both camp Totogan and Jackson Lake.

Reverse chronological order.

Title based on contents.

**10. Records of Camp Administration. – 1974-1984. – 1 folder.**

Documents described here consist of correspondence pertaining to insurance coverage for both Camp Totogan and Jackson Lake.

Title based on contents.

**11. Records of Camp Administration. – 1974-1984. – 1 folder.**

Documents described here consist of job descriptions, promotional material and program material for both Camp Totogan and Jackson Lake.

Title based on contents.

**12. Reports. – 1972-1982. – 1 folder.**

Documents described here consist of reports and evaluations of the camping program at Camp Totogan and Jackson Lake.

Title based on contents.

**13. Cash Book. 1965-1975. – 1 volume.**

This volume contains records detailing receipts and expenditures for Camp Totogan for the period from 1965 to 1975.

Title based on contents.

**14. Camp Log Junior Girls Camp. – 1961. – 1 scrapbook.**

This item is a 10 x 12¼" fourteen page scrapbook into which has been entered the daily activities of the United Church Junior Girls Camp held at Lynch's Point in July of 1961. The names of the campers, organised into cabin groups are also found here.

Title taken from item cover.

**Box List**

**Box 520/1-1 (previously Fresh Air Camps) Row 10, Shelf 5D  
Social, Pastoral and Educational Institutions Collection. Church Camps Series. Fresh Air Camps.**

**Accession 1982-26**

- Minutes of the Board and Executive Committee of the United Church Fresh Air Camps Board. - 29 April 1936-3 November 1955. – 1 volume.
- Reports. – 1928-1974. – 1 folder.
- Correspondence. – 1920-1939. – 1 folder.
- Correspondence. – 1940-1975. – 1 folder.
- Financial statements and reports. – 1925-1975. – 1 folder.
- Manual for Leaders. – [before 1950]. – 1 folder.
- Lists and plans. -- 1932-1961. – 1 folder.
- Winnipeg Presbytery Research and Planning Council Camping Study. – 1973-1974. – 1 folder.
- Fresh Air Camps Concert material. – 1933-1954. – 1 folder.
- Pamphlets, flyers and brochures. – 1925-1974. – 1 folder.
- Histories. – [after 1925]. – 1 folder.
- Clippings. – [ca.1920-1967]. – 1 folder.
- Gimli Fresh Air Camp. – 1918-1923. – 1 folder.
- Camp Robertson. – 1920-1924. –2 folders.

**Accession 1986-31**

- Minutes of the United Church Fresh Air Camp Board and Executive. – 1969-1972. – 1 folder.



- Minutes of the United Church Fresh Air Camp Board. – 1955-1974, predominant 1974. – 1 folder.
- Reports. -- 1969-1971. – 1 folder.
- Correspondence. – 1969-1971. – 1 folder.
- Buildings and Grounds Committee. – 1966-1970. – 1 folder.
- Plans and Drawings. – [before 1970]. – 1 folder.
- Preliminary Report of the Property Committee. – 1971. – 1 folder.
- Financial statements. – 1971-1973. – 1 folder.
- Cash Books. – 1972-1975. – 1 volume + 1 folder.
- Job Descriptions. – [after 1950]. – 1 folder.
- Camp Accreditation Workbook. – 1969. – 1 booklet.

Accession 2003-3

- Minutes. – 1960-1980. – 1 volume.
- Minutes. – 1974-1984. – 1 volume.
- Reports. – 1972-1982. – 1 folder.
- Records of Camp Administration. – 1972-1985. – 1 folder.
- Records of Camp Administration. – 1974-1984. – 1 folder.
- Records of Camp Administration. – 1974-1984. – 1 folder.
- General Ledger. – 1974-1983. – 1 volume.

**Box 520/1-2 (previously Rock Lake/Belair) Row 10, Shelf 5D**  
**Social, Pastoral and Educational Institutions Collection. Church Camps Series. Rock Lake Camp.**

Accession 1985-44

- Minutes. – 1957-1979, predominant 1957-1966. – 1 folder.
- Reports and evaluations. – 1952-1976. – 1 folder.
- Records of title and incorporation. – [ca.1902-ca.1960]. – 1 folder.
- Correspondence. – [ca.1954]-1985, predominant [ca.1954]-1963. --1 folder.
- Program and financial. – 1953-[ca.1971]. – 1 folder.
- Cash books and ledgers. 1942-1945. – 1 folder.
- Rock Lake Camp Manager's Accounts. – 1946-1954. – 1 volume.
- Program materials. – [ca.1955-ca.1970]. – 1 folder.
- Camper registrations. -- 1956-1959. – 1 folder.
- Newsletters. – 1935, 1938. – 1 folder.
- Histories. – [ca.1930-ca.1985]. – 1 folder.

**Social, Pastoral and Educational Institutions Collection. Church Camps Series. Belair United Church Christian Education Camp.**

Accession 1985-56

- Minutes and reports. – 1956-1974. -- 2 folders + 1 notebook.
- Records of title and incorporation. – 1956-1959. – 1 folder.
- Correspondence. – 1956-1976. -- 3 folders.
- Financial statements and reports. – 1957-1971. – 1 folder.

**Social, Pastoral and Educational Institutions Collection. Church Camps Series. Portage  
Presbytery camps.**

Accession 1989-3

- Records of Camp Administration. 1960-1980. – 7 folders.
- Cash book. 1965-1975. – 1 volume.
- Camp Log Junior Girls Camp. – 1961. – 1 scrapbook.

**Box 520/1-3 (previously Rock Lake B)**

**Social, Pastoral and Educational Institutions Collection. Church Camps Series. Rock  
Lake Camp.**

Accession 1998-15

- Minutes. – 1975-1989. – 3 folders.
- Reports and evaluations. – 1975-1984. – 2 folders.
- Records of title and incorporation. – [ca.1984]. – 1 folder.
- Board correspondence. – 1976-1991. – 4 folders.
- Program and financial. – 1979-1985. – 2 folders.
- Treasurer's correspondence. – 1983-1990. – 11 folders.
- Cash books and ledgers. -- 1978-1990. – 2 folders.
- Camp brochures. – [ca.1980-ca.1985]. – 1 folder.
- Photographs.

Accession 1999-61

- Histories. – [ca.1985]. – 1 folder

Accession 1999-74

- Histories. – [ca.1930-ca.1985]. – 1 folder.
- Photographs. -- 1938

Accession 2001-48

- Reports and evaluations. – 1982-1996. – 1 folder.
- Records of Title and Incorporation. – 1985-1992. – 1 folder.
- Board correspondence. – 1987-1994. – 1 folder.
- Program and financial. – 1987-1999. – 2 folders.
- Camp brochures. – 1985-1995. – 1 folder.
- Histories. – 1933-1993. – 2 folders.

Sound & Moving Images Shelf

**Social, Pastoral and Educational Institutions Collection. Church Camps Series. Rock  
Lake Camp.**

Accession 1999-74

- Video Tape. – 1998
- Video Tape. – 1994
- Video Tape. – 1996

**Box 543 (Off - Site)**

**Church Camps**

- Rock Lake Camp Minutes and Insurance Documents 1990 - 1991
- Rock Lake Camp Minutes November 1991 - October 1992 (n.i.); Insurance Policies 1992 - 1993; Correspondence 1991 - 1992