

Inventory of the

**Camp Fire Girls,
Salt Creek Council**
La Grange, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 274

INTRODUCTION

Ann C. Weller, Interim Director of the Special Collections Department, University of Illinois at Chicago donated the records of the Salt Creek Council of the Camp Fire Girls to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on May 17, 2006.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 12.75
Number of containers: 21 boxes
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 274

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Camp Fire Girls, Salt Creek Council Collection contains material dating from 1911 to 2006, with the majority of items from the 1950's, 1960's and early 1970's. These materials document the functions, activities, and philosophy of the Camp Fire Girls, especially the Salt Creek Council chapter from La Grange, Illinois. The materials are arranged into three series. Series I contains material on the Salt Creek Council, its various activities, and other local Councils. The materials in Series II, National Camp Fire Girls, is comprised almost exclusively of materials printed by the National Organization. Series III contains Artifacts and Clothing. The many artifacts in the collection add a visual dimension to the activities of the Camp Fire Girls. The collection includes: histories of the Salt Creek Council and National Camp Fire Girls, by-laws, annual reports, minutes, newsletters, financial papers, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, photographs, citations, membership lists, conference materials, songbooks, magazines, handbooks, pins, beads, official clothing, and other artifacts. A large portion of the material contained in this collection originated with two generations of Camp Fire leaders, Ruth "Dixie" Elder, and her daughter, Louise Gillispie. Victoria T. "Vicky" Wilson, who served as Historian of the Salt Creek Council, also donated materials.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Camp Fire was the first non-sectarian organization for girls in the United States. It was founded March 17, 1910 by Dr. Luther H. Gulick, and his wife Charlotte. It was incorporated as Camp Fire Girls of America March 15, 1912, with Dr. Gulick as its first president. Others instrumental in the founding of Camp Fire Girls were Chauncey Langdon, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest T. Seton, Lina Beard, Mrs. Charles H. Farnsworth, and Mary Schenk Woolman.

In 1913 the "Blue Bird" program was introduced for younger girls. A major change occurred in 1975 when boys were invited to join the organization, and the name became just Camp Fire, then Camp Fire Boys and Girls, and finally Camp Fire USA. It has programs for

youth from pre-kindergarten through age 21. The “Junior High” level for twelve and thirteen year-old girls had been introduced in 1962. It was changed to “Discovery” with the inclusion of boys. In 1983 the “Adventure” program for third through fifth-graders was introduced. The “Blue Bird” level became known as “Starflight” in 1989. “Little Stars,” designed for children age three to five was introduced in 2005, when 46% of all Camp Fire USA members were boys.

In 1912 La Grange, Illinois became the first Camp Fire west of New York State. Miss Lucy Babcock, a zoology teacher at Lyons Township High School, had been a counselor at Sebago-WoHeLo, the Gulick’s first Camp Fire Girl camp on Lake Sebago in Maine in 1910. Miss Babcock organized the “Owaissa” group in La Grange, which held its first meeting June 13, 1912. Soon after the “Chippewa” group was formed by Miss Helen Strong of Cossitt School who served as guardian. Both groups were chartered August 28, 1912. Mrs. Vicky Wilson, who had a long association with Camp Fire, was a member of the “Chippawa” group in 1913.

In April 1926 the “Shu-deha” and “Eluta-kata” groups were chartered in La Grange. The first for high school girls and the second for grade school girls. Both groups were led by Ethel Trainer. The “Rainbow” group was the first Blue Birds chartered on October 26, 1928, under the leadership of Miss Betty Collins and Miss Reva Ebert, both of whom lived in the Cossitt School area in La Grange. The first Horizon Club, the Blue and Gold of La Grange High School, was chartered December 6, 1946, with Ruth “Dixie” Elder as advisor. Dixie Elder’s association with Camp Fire began January 25, 1918 when she first became a guardian, and she continued to be active in Camp Fire into the 1970’s. Mrs. Elder received the Luther Halsey Gulick Award for her many years of service to the La Grange Camp Fire Girls on January 21, 1954. She received the “Wo-He-Lo Order,” the highest honor of the Camp Fire Girls at the Golden Jubilee Convention of the organization in New York City, on November 2, 1960.

By 1949 there were seven Blue Bird groups, four Camp Fire groups, and one Horizon Club under the jurisdiction of the La Grange District. In January 1951 a charter was granted to establish the La Grange Council of Camp Fire Girls, separating them from the Chicago Area Council. Offices were set up in the basement of Mrs. Elder, with Mrs. Lydia Sasa serving as part-time director, and Mrs. Vicky Wilson as President of the Executive Board. The membership at this time was 271 girls and 19 leaders.

In June 1954 the council was incorporated as the La Grange Council of Camp Fire Girls, Inc. under the General-Not-For-Profit Corporation Act of the State of Illinois. In May 1955 the Salt Creek Council purchased 6 1/4 acres south of Lisle for day and group camping. A cabin was built and dedicated in September 1956, and the camp was named Camp Kata’Kani, meaning “together outdoors.”

In January 1959 the Council’s name was changed to Salt Creek Council in recognition of the many neighboring communities now sharing responsibilities within the council. At this time districts were also established as provided by the National Council, each with its own District

Committee to oversee the needs and programs in its area. District I was comprised of Bellwood, Hodgkins, La Grange, La Grange Park, St. Cletus School, Westchester, and Willow Springs. District II covered Clarendon Hills, Downers Grove, Hinsdale, La Grange Highlands, St. John of the Cross School, and Western Springs. In September 1962 the Riverside-Brookfield Council merged with the Salt Creek Council, and District III was formed covering Brookfield, Hollywood, Riverside and North Riverside. District IV covering Naperville was established in January 1965, and in the fall of 1967 a Camp Fire group was started in Aurora which joined District IV. District V was established in September 1969 when Downers Grove and Bolingbrook separated from District II.

Salt Creek Council purchased 320 acres in Northland, Wisconsin in 1968 for eventual development as a Resident Camp. Named Camp Onitaca, the first two sessions of resident camp were held in 1970. Nancy Cech was the Executive Director of the Salt Creek Council of Camp Fire girls in 1975.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Camp Fire Girls
Elder, Ruth "Dixie"
Gillispie, Louise
LaGrange, Illinois
Salt Creek Council
Wilson, Vicky

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Series I. Salt Creek Council and other local councils		
1	1	La Grange, Illinois - Camp Fire Girl Histories, (1912-1965) Salt Creek Council:
	2	Annual Reports, (1946-1970)
	3	Board of Director's Manual [Dixie Elder], 1970-1971
	4	Stationary, n.d.
	5	Correspondence, (1950-1973)
	6	"Golden Jubilee Pageant of the Years," January 31, 1961
	7	"Project Grow and Glow," ca. early 1970's
	8	Events, (1962-1971)
	9	Publicity, 1969
	10	Horizon Club Minutes, 1960-1970
	11	Horizon Club, Photographs and Clippings, 1961-1965
	12	Visit Heath Candy Bar Factory, April 1969
	13	Heath Candy Bar Sales, 1972-1973
	14	Persons in the News, Coming and Going, includes article on Vicky and Alex Wilson, (1960-1975)
	15	Newspaper Clippings and Publicity Photographs, many unidentified, (ca. 1950's-1970's)
2	8 vols.	Scrapbooks, Publicity Clippings and Photographs, 1941-1962
3	1-7	Scrapbook Materials, Publicity Clippings and Photographs, 1963-1970
4	1-4	Scrapbook Materials, Publicity Clippings and Photographs, 1971-1972
	5	"Smoke Signals," Salt Creek Council, District III Newsletters, (1968-1971)
	6-9	"Tattler," Salt Creek Council Newsletter, (1966-1974)
5		Ruth Elder:
	1	Honors, 1954, 1960, 1973, 1974
	2	Charters and Citations, (1918-1960)
	3	Letters from Cossitt School Children, May 28, 1969
	4	Insignia Booklet, n.d.
	5	Volunteer Organizer's Kit, ca. 1958

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	5
5	6-7	Leader Guide Books: Blue Bird 1962; Junior Camp Fire Girls, 1962; Horizon Club, 1962; and Junior High Camp Fire Guardians, 1963	
	8	“Shu-Ci-Luta” Songbook, Onondaga Council, n.d. (2)	
	9	Camp Kata’Kani Guest Register Books, 1958-1970	
6	1	Camp Fire Girls Registrations, La Grange District, (1941-1946)	
	2-4	Membership Lists, 1947-1965	
	5-6	Membership Tabulations, 1951-1972	
	7-9	Shawondasee Junior Hi Camp Fire Girls, Salt Creek Council, Record Books, 1965-1968	
7	1	Districts I-V, Additions and Corrections to Membership Lists, 1970	
	2	District I Membership Lists, 1969-1972	
	3	District II Membership Lists, 1969-1972	
	4	District III Membership Lists, 1969-1972	
	5	District IV Membership Lists, 1969-1972	
	6	District V Membership Lists, 1969-1972	
		Camp Onitaca, Northland Wisconsin:	
	7	Legal Matters concerning Property, including Wildlife Refuge, (1964-1971)	
	8	Resident Camp Development Committee, 1968-1970	
	9-10	Correspondence and Related Material, 1965-1975 (includes a history of Salt Creek Council Camping Activities, by Louise Gillespie, December 3, 1970)	
	11	Northland, WI, Maps, 1965, 1969	
	12	Equipment, Furnishings, Inventories, 1969-1970	
	13	Guest Book Register, November 1967-August 1976	
8	1	Camp Fire Girl Camps, (1968-1976, nd.)	
	2	Outdoor Suggestions, 1957, 1966, 1969	
	3	Other Summer Camp Material, (1963-1971, n.d.)	
	4	Conservation (Nature, Trees), 1955, 1968, n.d.	
	5	Nature Bulletins, Cook County Forest Preserve, 1956, 1958	
	6	Archery Booklet, ca. 1930's	
	7	Swimming Honors, 1955	
	8	Indian Articles and Booklets, (1944-1969)	
	9	Camp Fire Girls Poetry, 1964, n.d.	
	10	Camp Fire Girls in Westchester, ca. 1960	
	11	“Places to Go,” Chicagoland Area, (1962-1969, n.d.)	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	6
8	12	District I, Grand Council Fire Information, June 4, 1970	
	13	Region II Camp Fire Girl Conference, April 1966	
	14	Region II Camp Fire Girl Conference, March 1968	
	15	Camp Fire Girls, Chicago District, 1941, 1947, n.d.	
	16	Camp Fire Girls, Mishawaka [Indiana] Council, Annual Report, 1959	
	17	Camp Fire Girls, Goshen [Indiana] Council, Annual Report, 1962	
	18	Camp Fire Girls, Albuquerque [New Mexico] Council, Annual Report, 1964	
	19	Camp Fire Girls, Bluegrass Council, Proposed Budget, ca. 1966	
	20	Training Schedules, Reports, etc., 1956-1968	
	21	Training Materials, (1956-1966, n.d.)	
9	1	Camp Fire Girls photographs, Mrs. Vicky Wilson [as a young girl] in Chippawa group, La Grange, 1913; Mrs. Vicky Wilson, standing in ceremonial dress, n.d.; and Lucy Blair Tilley in ceremonial dress, Western Springs, 1916.	
	2	Newspaper Supplement from <i>Citizen Newspapers</i> , Women in Organization, September 29, 1960	
		Maps of "Camp Fire Girls, Northland, Wisconsin," August 1968 (3)	
		Study for a Master Plan, Maps of Camp Onitaca, Northland, Wisconsin, one black & white, one water colored, n.d.	
Series II. National Camp Fire Girls			
10	1	Camp Fire Girls, History, 1965, 2006	
	2	<u>We-He-Lo The Story of Camp Fire Girls 1910-1960</u> , 1961	
	3	Camp Fire Girls, National Council, Bylaws and National Policies, 1973	
	4	Camp Fire Girls, Inc., Program Information, 1962, n.d.	
	5	How We Are Organized to Serve, A Presentation of the Structure of a Camp Fire Girls Council, ca. 1964; Guiding Principles in the Organization of a Camp Fire Girls Council, 1966	
	6	<u>The Blue Bird Wish Comes True</u> , by Edith Sunley, 1960	
	7	The Camp Fire Club of America, Minnehaha Dinner, [Hotel Astor, New York], February 6, 1911	
	8	<u>Physical Education as Muscular Exercise</u> , by Luther Gulick [founder of Camp Fire Girls], 1912	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	7
11	1	Annual Reports, (1951-1964)	
	2	Reports, (1955-1970)	
	3	President's Bulletin, January 1967	
	4	National Poetry Conference, May 4-9, 1952	
	5	Jubilee Convention, New York, October 29-November 4, 1960	
	6	Quadrennial Conference, Seattle, October 30-November 2, 1971	
	7	"We the People," Camp Fire Girls Bicentennial Project, 1975-1977	
	8	Information for All Adult Camp Fire Girl Members, n.d.	
	9	Leadership - Program Studies, 1957	
	10	Handbook for Board Members, ca. 1965	
	11	Camp Fire Girls Training Manual, 1948; Committee Workshop, 1954; and Related Training Materials, (1951-1958)	
	12	Training in the Council, Booklets, 1957, 1963	
	13	Training Booklets, 1969, 1970, 1973	
12	1	"It's A New Day," Ad Hoc Planning Committee of the National Board of Directors, November 1974	
	2	Administration booklet, 1970	
	3	"Leaders of Handicapped Girls," 1971	
	4	"Adviser's Notebook," Discovery Club, 1971	
	5	Membership booklets, 1970 (5)	
	6	Committee CUES, n.d.	
	7	Manuals for Group Organizing Committee, 1957, 1965, 1966, n.d.	
	8	The Work of the Nominating Committee, December 1957	
	9	The Work of the Personnel Committee, February 1966, n.d.	
	10	Public Relations and Publicity, (1963-1967)	
	11	Publicity Material, examples, 1960, n.d.	
	12	Editorial Usage, 1962	
	13	Publications and Audio-Visual Materials booklet, 1966	
	14	The Work of the Program Committee, n.d.; Program Bulletins, 1956-1957	
	15	Program Guideline booklets, 1972, 1973	
	16	Picture Graph, Training Packet on Planning Program Activities, ca. 1960's	
	17	"Sew What for Camp Fire Girls," Sewing Project Sheets, ca. 1940's	
	18	The Work of the Camping Committee, ca. 1962	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	8
13	1	Camp Fire Girls and Blue Birds Song Books, (1913-1964) (10)	
	2	The Blue Bird Book, 1950, 1961	
	3	Blue Bird Leaders in Action, 1957, 1961; The Blue Bird Leader's Resource File, n.d.	
	4	Frontiers: Fun with Science for Camp Fire Girls, 1953	
	5	Discovery, 1971	
	6	Your Symbol Book, 1962	
	7	Honors and Emblems, 1971	
	8	Camping and Outdoor Booklets, 1960, ca. 1958 (3)	
	9	"Let's Talk About Life," 1970	
	10	National Projects, ca. Fall 1970	
		Books and Booklets:	
14		Camp Cookery Hints for Leaders, 1927; How We are Organized to Serve, 1955; Blue Bird Book for Leaders, 1966; Handbook for Guardians of Camp Fire Girls, 1963; Mary and You: A Booklet for Parents of Blue Birds, 1953; Poems by Camp Fire Girls, 1948; Advisor's Guide to Horizon Club, 1963; Honor to a Great Lady: The Story of Edith M. Kempthorne, ca. 1966; A Great Leader [Martha F. Allen], ca. 1966; The Out Door Book, 1947; Sponsorship of Camp Fire Girls Groups, 1956; Cabinets for Horizon Club and Junior Hi Camp Fire Girls, 1964; Camp Trails, 1940; The Name Book of Camp Fire Girls, 1964; Child Care Course, 1961; Working with Special Girls in a Special Way, A Pilot Project, 1964; Working with Special Girls in a Special Way, A Demonstration Project, 1965; Working with Special Girls in a Special Way Continued, Demonstration Project, 1967; Leadership for Horizon Club, 1947; Camp Fire Girls Library of the Seven Crafts: Your Symbol, 1935, Block Printing and Stenciling, 1930, The Rainbow Book, 1931, The Book of Ceremonials, 1940, Clay Craft, 1931, Book Craft, 1935, The Outdoor Book, 1934, Leathercraft and Beading, 1944; Book of the Camp Fire Girls, 1936, 1946, 1948, 1959, 1970; Handbook for Guardians of Camp Fire Girls, 1952, 1966; Her Junior Highness, 1954; Book of the Junior Hi Camp Fire Girls, 1968; Ceremonials for Camp Fire Girls, 1948, 1962, 1965.	
15		The Camp Fire Girl Magazine, (October 1957-October 1972, Vol. 37 No. 2-Vol. 52 No.1)	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
16		Today's Girl Magazine, September 1971-September 1972, Vol.1 No.1-Vol.2 No.1 Camp Fire Leadership Magazine, (Spring 1973-Fall 1975, Vol 52 No.3-Vol.55 No.1)
	1	Wo-He-Lo Dispatch [newsletter], (October 1958-January 1961)
	2	Camp Fire Girls, Brochures, ca. 1960-1969
	3	Camp Fire Girls, Field Services Bulletin, August 1963
	4	Camp Fire Girls Catalogs, (1950's -1973)
	5	Camp Fire Girls Postcards, 1959, n.d. (6)
	6	The Law of the Camp Fire Girls [on Ponderosa Pine], n.d.

Series III. Artifacts and Clothing

17		Leather Badges/Patches (18) Cloth Badges/Patches (13) Decorated Buttons/Beads (12) Bag of loose beads Necklaces/Strings of beads (10)
18		Knot tying instruction board Pins and medals (10) Cloth containing pins, medals, a ring, and a bracelet Beaded headbands, (2)
19		Two purses of Ruth Elder, blue denim with red Camp Fire logo, and blue canvas with plastic interior Two decorated vests Camp Fire Girls banner, white, blue and red felt Blue Birds flag, large, blue and white Salt Creek Council flag, very large, blue and white Two flag pole tips
20		Camp Fire Girls flag, large, blue, white and red Camp Fire Girls beanie, blue Blue Birds sailor hat, blue Camp Fire Girls sailor hat, blue Camp Hantesa sailor hat, white Camp Fire Girls knee socks, blue [new] Blue Birds suspenders, red and blue Camp Fire Girls arm bands, black with logo, and blue with logo

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	10
20		Beaded bolo tie/necklace Blue Birds blouse, white [new] Blue Birds vest, red and blue [new] Scarves, black (2), red (3, one with camp fire logo), turquoise	
21		Camp Fire Girls ceremonial dresses, (3)	