

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

## Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100000884

Date Listed: 4/17/2017

Property Name: Walther League Camp--Camp Arcadia

County: Manistee

State: MI

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This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation

*Patrick Andrus*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

*4/17/2017*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

National Register Criteria Consideration A was not checked on the nomination form. This SLR amends the form to indicate that Criteria Consideration A applies to the nominated property

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The MICHIGAN SHPO was notified of this amendment.

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**DISTRIBUTION:**

**National Register property file**

**Nominating Authority** (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Walther League Camp/Camp Arcadia  
Other names/site number: Walther League Summer Conference Camp  
Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 3046 Oak Street  
City or town: Arcadia Township State: Michigan (MI) County: Manistee (101)  
Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this x nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets  
the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic  
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.  
I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following  
level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local  
Applicable National Register Criteria:  
X A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D

Martha M. [Signature] 2/23/17  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date  
MI SHPO  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
Signature of commenting official: Date  
Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
 determined eligible for the National Register  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  
 removed from the National Register  
 other (explain:)

*Patricia Andrews*  
Signature of the Keeper

*4/17/2017*  
Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:   
Public – Local   
Public – State   
Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)   
District   
Site   
Structure   
Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: Camp

Recreation and Culture: Outdoor Recreation

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: Camp

Recreation and Culture: Outdoor Recreation

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Colonial Revival

Craftsman

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Vinyl, Wood, Asphalt Shingles

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Camp Arcadia is a summer camp that, established by the Walther League of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the early 1920s, is located on the shores of Lake Michigan in Arcadia Township in Manistee County, Michigan. The central camp area is bounded by Oak Street to the south, Forestview Drive to the east, Weiherman Drive to the north, and Lake Michigan to the west. This area encompasses approximately eight acres of the one hundred ten acres associated with Camp Arcadia and contains three main buildings, the Assembly (old administration building), the Inn, and the Wigwam (new administration building). These buildings are located around a central patio area and are oriented to face Lake Michigan. They are of wood frame construction with a vernacular feel, but having some elements of Colonial Revival and Arts-and-Crafts or Craftsman design. The main buildings were built from 1923 to 1947. The central camp also contains a craft shop, caretaker's quarters, tennis court, and a large forested area. Around the central camp area stands a community of cottages whose owners are closely connected to the camp, additional recreational facilities owned by the camp, and more forested areas. The small business district of the village of Arcadia is located within walking distance of the camp.

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Overall, the central area of the camp looks very much like it did when the first camp director left in 1963. Camp Arcadia continues to operate as a summer camp.

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## **Narrative Description**

### **Arriving at Camp Arcadia:**

Camp Arcadia is located along the shoreline of Lake Michigan. Visitors approach the camp along state highway M-22 and turn down the paved Oak Street, which dead-ends into camp property. The approach along Oak Street is lined with small cabins (some of which are owned by the camp – many more are not) and houses of residents of the town of Arcadia. Camp Arcadia is located very close to the handful of businesses that line M-22. In fact, many campers walk or ride bikes to visit these businesses. As a visitor crosses Spruce Street near the end of Oak Street, they enter camp property. There is a forested area on the east side of the camp's main block. Visitors park in a clearing on the south side of Oak Street opposite the caretaker's cottage. A series of pathways extends from Oak Street in front and behind the main camp buildings.

The area between the main camp buildings and the lake has few trees. Most of the sandy beach is covered in beach grass, one of the efforts to keep the Lake Michigan shore from washing away. A series of jetties lining the shore is another manifestation of the long struggle to control erosion. These efforts began as early as 1929 when the eroding shoreline threatened to destroy the camp buildings. Over time, the jetties were extended and replaced as better materials and construction options became available.

As mentioned earlier, there is a forested area to the east of the main camp buildings. This area contains a variety of hardwood trees. A trail through this forested area was laid out by Chief Weiherman, the first camp director. This trail extends across Forestview Drive (the easternmost boundary of the nominated area) and circles the cottage colony (a series of cabins on land once owned by Camp Arcadia, but sold to raise money for building projects). The forested area also contains one small clearing that currently contains an archery range. The main camp buildings, the tennis court, a patio, and a grassy area used for recreational activities are all located west of the forested area and east of Lake Michigan.

### **Contributing Buildings:**

#### **Assembly:**

The Assembly building is oriented facing Lake Michigan and nestled between a tennis court to the north and central patio to the south. This Colonial Revival building was designed by William N. Bowman of Denver, Colorado, and construction was completed in 1923.<sup>1</sup> The current structure is a one hundred foot, north-south, by fifty foot, east-west, one-story building with white vinyl siding, a red asphalt shingle roof, and green trim. It stands with its long side fronting

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<sup>1</sup> "Walther League Summer Camp Arcadia Michigan - William N. Bowman Company" Architectural Drawing, Concordia Scan Collection, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan.

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on the beach. There is a wooden ramp leading up to the central beach-side front doorway, which stands beneath a gabled porch with a square column at each front corner. The building has a gable roof, with jerkinhead gables at the north and south ends, and a square-plan central cupola with belcast roof. The west side (front) of the building has eight arch-top windows, the east side twelve arch-top windows, and the north side four more plus a central entry, with a small gabled porch and poured concrete steps. The south side of the building has two arch-head windows to the right of a covered entryway reached by a wooden ramp.

The interior of the building is divided into seven rooms. The largest room is a meeting room that takes up slightly less than half of the south side of the building. This room has a small stage against the south wall. Upon entering the front door, this room is located to the right or south. Straight ahead from the front door in the center of the east side is a room used as a classroom or boys dormitory depending on what is needed. To the lobby's left/north is a hallway leading to three more classrooms/boys dormitories, two on the left/west side of the hallway and one on the right/east. There is a single stall men's and single stall women's handicap-accessible bathroom located between the two classrooms on the east side of the building.

The original interior layout of the building was very different. In the original design, the whole east side of the building formed one room that was divided by sliding wood panels and the west side of the building contained several rooms. From north to south these rooms were the reading room, the manager's office, the entry hall/registration area (into which a snack shop was incorporated), and a medium-sized gathering room with a fireplace.

Many of the changes to this building took place during the period of significance when the Wigwam was constructed and activities moved to the new building. As early as 1925, part of the large eastern room was being used for boys' dormitories. In 1927 a snack bar was installed in the building near the registration desk and manager's office. In 1947 the manager's office, snack bar, and registration area were converted into more men's dormitories.<sup>2</sup> In 1949 the fireplace in the southeast reading room was torn out due to deterioration.<sup>3</sup>

Several further changes were made to this building that did not happen during the period of significance. In the 1980's the wall between the small and larger meeting rooms was removed expanding the larger meeting room. In 1997 the temporary sliding walls were replaced with permanent walls. At this time the walls in the Assembly were finished in dry-wall and the bathrooms renovated to make them handicap-accessible.

In 1997 renovations also addressed the outside of the administration building. When it was built, this building had siding; this was most likely wood siding, though sources are not clear on the material. In 1940 the exterior was resided with asbestos siding due to the deterioration of the

<sup>2</sup> Frank W. Miller. *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*, (Wilmette, IL: J.B. Publications, 1982) 41, 54-5.

<sup>3</sup> W.F. Weiherman "Camp Manager's Report 1949" Annual Report Collection, FPF, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.

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original siding from weather conditions.<sup>4</sup> During the 1997 renovations, this asbestos siding was replaced with vinyl siding. The roof now has asphalt shingles rather than the asbestos shingles installed in 1939.<sup>5</sup> Despite these recent renovations, the Assembly building maintains integrity. This building has its original windows, original flooring, and maintains the same exterior architecture and feel.

### **Inn:**

The Inn building was the second major building constructed at Camp Arcadia. Colonial and Arts-and-Crafts in feeling, it was completed in 1926. The building is located on a rise south of the Assembly and patio and north of Oak Street and has an irregular L-shaped footprint, with the longer axis running north-south and a shorter wing extending east from near the south end. The west-facing front of the building appears to have two stories, but the east-projecting wing at the south end of the building (toward the back) has three stories. For the purposes of this description, the first floor of the building is the level that you enter from the west/beach side. The floor above that will be known as the second floor. The floor that can only be accessed from the back (east side) of the building will be known as the ground floor. The Inn has white vinyl siding and a red asphalt shingled hip roof. The long west (front) side of the building displays a projecting broad gable-front middle section whose second story overhangs an open first-floor porch supported on four square brick piers (the porch's north third is now enclosed and forms a sunroom). South of the gabled mid-section containing the main front entry the front displays a square-column shed-roof porch across the front, while the north end has no porch. The front façade displays mostly single double-hung windows, but there are paired ones in the gable-front center area's second story and a triple one behind the porch in the ground story. These windows have green shutters and the building trim is also green. The gable above the projecting central section of the second floor has a classical pediment.

The north narrow end of the building has a wooden stairway leading to the second floor; the staircase's upper landing provides a cover for the entryway. In addition, a large wooden ramp makes this entrance handicap-accessible. The east side of the Inn has three two-story projections coming off the main building. The northerly two of these are small hip-roof bumpouts and contain bathrooms. The third is the large south wing that, coming off the main building's east side a little north of its south end, forms the base of the building's L footprint. In the wing's back corner a wooden staircase leads to the second story back porch and loading dock. The loading dock is made of wood and painted white to match the siding. To the south of the loading dock, the east façade of the main building is recessed back and there is an area with five windows and a fire exit. In the area where the wing and the main building meet, there is a small, square, two story projection with a staircase leading to the second floor. The south end of the main building features a wooden ramp leading to a side door and five double-hung windows.

<sup>4</sup> W. F. Weiherman "Camp Manager's Report 1940" Annual Report Collection, FPF, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan

<sup>5</sup> W. F. Weiherman "Camp Manager's Report 1939" Annual Report Collection, FPF, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan



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Inside the main entrance in the center of the building's long west side, a dogleg staircase to the left/north leads up to the second floor. It has a linen counter underneath. To the right/south is a dining room. This room is accessed through French doors. The interior has windows facing the lake and a row of five square posts runs north-south down the middle of the flat plastered ceiling. The room contains long rectangular wooden tables, with lathe-turned legs, lined on each side with simple wood chairs. Along the room's east wall are two swinging doors that lead back into the kitchen and a Dutch door leading to the staff dining room (known as the Shanty). On the east kitchen wall, a swinging door leads back to a hallway with a walk-in cooler, pantry, and walk-in freezer located along its right side. The hallway ends at an exit door leading to the loading dock on the east side of the building. On the north side of the hallway there are staircases leading up to second floor rooms and down to the laundry room area. There is also a staff bathroom and an office on the hallway's north side. On the north wall of the kitchen two sets of doors lead to the staff dining room. On the north wall of the staff dining room is a door leading to the wooden staircase outside the building and on the west wall is the previously mentioned Dutch door that leads to the dining room.

Besides the dining room and kitchen areas, the first floor of the Inn also contains recreation and guest rooms. East of the lobby are two rooms, a first aid room and a card room. North of the lobby to the east of the staircase and linen counter is a hallway leading to guest rooms and bathroom facilities. On the east side of the hallway from north to south are a men's restroom, four guest rooms, and a women's restroom. Along the west side of the hallway are five guest rooms facing Lake Michigan.

The second floor of the Inn contains more guest rooms located along two hallways. The north/south hallway is lined with thirty guest bedrooms and three bathrooms. At the midpoint of this hallway on the west side of the building is an alcove area that provides access to three of these guest rooms. There are six additional rooms to the north of the alcove and eight to its south. On the east side of this hallway from north to south are a bathroom, four guest rooms, a bathroom, seven guest rooms, an east/west hallway and two guest rooms. At the south end of the hallway is a fire escape. A set of fire doors separates the four southernmost rooms from the rest of the hallway in the east wing. These rooms all have private bathrooms unlike the rest of the Inn rooms. The east/west hallway leads to an additional five guest rooms, a bathroom and a shower room. The east side of the hallway has three guest rooms and a fire escape (the fire escape staircase also leads to the kitchen and the laundry room). The west side of this hallway, from west to east, contains a bathroom, shower room, and two guest rooms.

The ground floor, which can only be accessed from the rear of the building, contains a laundry room and sorting area, furnace room, another mechanical room, storage room for housekeeping supplies, and a walled-off fire-suppression room.

Besides the guest rooms with private bathrooms, each guest room has a sink, mirror, dresser, and between two and six beds. With the exception of the bathrooms, kitchen, and ground level this building has wood floors and all of the hallways have the original diagonal beaded-board wood paneling.

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This building has undergone some construction and remodeling, but as with the Assembly, most of the changes were made during the period of significance. The building as originally built had an L-shaped footprint. In 1929 an addition was constructed to the rear of the building, extending the L to the east to create living quarters for the staff, a laundry room, and storage areas. In 1937 the ladies' lounge on the second floor was converted into women's dorm rooms. In 1943 a staff dining room was built off the kitchen. In 1945 the three rooms to the east of the lobby were converted into recreation areas. This solved the problem of excessive noise coming from the dining room and disturbing guests in these rooms. In 1948 a portion of the front porch of the Inn was enclosed to create a sun room and a fire escape was added to the north entrance of the building.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, renovations in the mid-1950's installed plasterboard ceilings in all the rooms, covered over the exposed wood frame in the dining room, and rewired the building with more modern electrical wiring.<sup>7</sup>

Also, as with the Assembly, there have been some more recent renovations. In 1999 three small additions were made to the building. Two of these were the bumpouts built on the rear/east facade of the building. These additions expanded the bathroom areas and made it possible to install handicap-accessible shower facilities in the Inn. Up until then there were several tubs in the Inn, but shower facilities were located in the basement of the Wigwam and the showers were not handicap-accessible. The third addition expanded the kitchen area providing room for walk-in food storage and expanding the serving capacity of the dining room.

As with the Assembly, the Inn currently has vinyl siding and asphalt shingle roofing that were added during the most recent renovations. Also, like the Assembly building, the change in materials was necessary because of asbestos shingles being used during the renovations in 1939 and asbestos siding being used in 1940. From the very beginning, the Inn's rooms were equipped with sinks offering hot and cold running water. At some time, the plumbing was updated making it possible to install sinks with self-mixing taps, but it is unclear when this took place.

Despite these changes, the Inn maintains a high degree of integrity. With the exception of four new rooms and the combination of two guest rooms into one, the layout of the guest rooms remains the same as it was in 1963. The hallways have the original wood paneling, the linen counter is completely original, and the flooring is also original. The size and the amenities available in the guest rooms have not changed and neither has the view from the Inn. Thus, there is also a great integrity of feeling and location.

### **Wigwam:**

The Wigwam is the third main building at the Walther League Camp. Built in 1946, the Wigwam is located between the Assembly and Inn and, set back from them, is also orientated west facing Lake Michigan. This building was constructed on a rise, so there are two stories visible at the

<sup>6</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*, (Wilmette, IL: J.B. Publications, 1982) 41-5, 54-5.

<sup>7</sup> W.F. Weiherman "Camp Manager's Report 1956" Annual Report Collection, FPF, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.

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front of the building, but three stories visible at the back. The Wigwam is of wood frame construction with white vinyl siding and a red asphalt roof. The main part of the building has a hip roof, but there are also two one-story gable-roof wings angling outward from the northwest and southwest corners of the building. An open, paired-column shed-roof porch extends between the two wings, and has a broad gable fronting the main central west-facing entryway. A concrete path and wooden ramp lead from the patio fronting the building to the building's porch, under which five sets of double doors lead into the building. There are ten double-hung windows across the front on the second story of the main part of the building. Each wing has two triple windows facing toward the patio area. Each wing also has five windows on its end – one set facing southwest, the other northwest.

From the north side of the building, the different levels incorporated into the building can be seen. The eastern part of the north side of the building has three floors of exterior windows and a door leading outside. Above the door is a small gable-roof covering. The north side of the building also has a one-story area with a lean-to roof. This roof meets up with the roof of the northwest wing.

The east side of the building displays three stories, with a short projecting gable-roof wing in the façade's center. This wing's ground story has a recessed porch across its front, with three squared posts supporting the two upper stories. A sloped pathway leads around the building down to the double door entrance at the rear of the building. To the left/south of the entrance, a garage door leads to the maintenance shop area. The rear of the building has a total of fifty-nine double-hung windows in groups of two and three except for twelve double-hung windows that are grouped side-by-side above the garage entrance.

On the south side of the building, three doorways lead into the building, one located in the second floor at the top of a wooden staircase. This entrance is covered by a gable-roof overhang. To the west of this doorway is a ground level door leading into a semi-octagonal tower containing a circular staircase. The third entrance on this side of the building is located at the bottom of this tower. This side of the building displays twenty-eight double-hung windows.

For the purposes of the rest of this description, the first floor is the floor that is accessible by entering the west side main entrance. The floor that is below the first floor and is accessible from the back of the building will be known as the ground floor. The top floor will be known as the second floor.

The lobby area is the first space encountered upon entering the first floor. Directly ahead are the office area and a doorway leading to staircases to the second and ground floors. To the right/south is a large indoor recreation area known as the Round-Up. The Round-Up has a fireplace on the north wall and extends into the building's southern wing. On the south wall, a doorway leads to the spiral staircase, which also serves as an emergency exit. The east part of this room is raised above the rest of the room by one step and beyond this step there is a hallway leading back to men's and women's restrooms and a back door to the office. To the right of this hallway is a sun room. To the lobby's north is located a snack shop, known as the Trading Post.

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This area has booths, tables, and a bar. In 1950 the Trading Post was decorated in an American Indian motif.<sup>8</sup> Beyond the tables, in the northeast section of this area, is a store space. This area contains a small elevator and a door leading into the office area. Additionally, on the north wall, a door leads to a fire escape and stairs to the ground and second floors. The first floor of the Wigwam has wood floors. The Round-Up and the seating area in the trading post have permanent wood benches.

The second floor of the Wigwam houses staff living quarters. The rooms are arranged around the central staircase's upper landing. The second floor contains a total of eleven staff bedrooms, a men's bathroom, a women's bathroom, an elevator and two storage closets. In addition to the main staircase there is a staircase at the end of a hallway on the northeast side of the building that leads to a rear exit and the Trading Post and a staircase at the end of a hallway on the southwest side of the building that leads down the spiral staircase outside and to the Round-Up.

The ground floor of the Wigwam is most easily accessed from the east side of the building. It contains two main hallways – one running north and south and the other east and west. The east doorway on the east side of the building leads to the east/west hallway. To the right of this hallway is the maintenance garage, the left side of the hallway has two office spaces, and straight ahead is a door leading to the staircase up to the first floor. Before this door and across from the entrance to the maintenance garage, the north/south hallway meets with the east/west hallway. From north to south, the east side of this hallway fronts a staff lounge, an elevator, the boiler room, and a handicap restroom. There are two doors on the west side of the hallway. The northerly one leads to a men's shower room and the southernmost to a large storage area. On the northwest side of this storage area another door leads to a smaller storage area that currently houses the archive for the camp. The southwest wall of the large storage area also leads to another smaller storage room. On the southeast wall of the small storage room is a door leading to the guest laundry room and women's showers. Where these two rooms come together, there is also a door on the south wall that leads to the spiral staircase on the south side of the building.

Except for the ground floor, finished in concrete, the Wigwam has wood flooring, and many of the guest areas have wood paneling. The Wigwam remains relatively unchanged except for an addition made to the rear of the building in 2002. Most of this addition was to house staff living quarters. On the second floor bathrooms were added and the four staff rooms on the east wall were expanded but also moved back creating room for the central staircase. These additional staff rooms were necessary because of the increased number of staff needed to run the camp. The addition also provided more staff bedrooms and two bathrooms. On the first floor, the office was expanded, handicap bathrooms and a sunroom were added, and provision made for a store area for the trading post. On the ground floor, the garage area was expanded and staff offices and staff lounge were added and an elevator and handicap-accessible bathroom installed. At this time a staircase was also added leading from the ground floor to the first floor. During this construction,

<sup>8</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*, (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982) 55.

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as with the Assembly and Wigwam, vinyl siding and asphalt shingles were used on the exterior of the building to replace the original asbestos materials.

Overall, the Wigwam maintains good integrity despite these changes. The addition built in 2002 is the only substantial change and most of the areas affected are staff-only areas not accessible to the public. From the front of the building, the 2002 addition cannot be seen. Besides the siding, roofing, and addition all of the materials are original. In addition, all of the areas are still currently used for their original purposes and are even decorated the same way they were in 1963. The registration counter is original as are the benches in the Round-Up and the flooring throughout the guest areas. The setting of the building also remains the same as when the building was built. All of the guest areas of the Wigwam overlook the patio and Lake Michigan. This provides the same landscape and setting that was present in 1963.

### **Maintenance Shop/Craft Shop:**

The maintenance shop was built in 1944. The building is roughly twenty-five feet by thirty feet in ground dimensions. It is of basic wood frame construction with white siding and gable roof with exposed rafter ends. It was built on a knoll with a garage door leading to a lower level on the east side. The interior is unfinished, with the wood framework exposed to view. When the Wigwam was constructed in 1946, the maintenance shop was converted to a craft shop.<sup>9</sup> For a period of time, the lower level was also used as a nature center. The only changes to this building have been the addition of a ramp and patio area that makes the craft shop handicap-accessible and provides a place to sit outside the craft shop and also the addition of a staircase connecting the two floors.

### **Non-Building Contributing Features of the Property:**

#### **Patio:**

The Patio, located in front of the Wigwam and between the Assembly and Inn, has served as a gathering place for campers since it was created in 1947. The patio is a large area with poured concrete surface. Chairs and picnic and other tables and also some children's play equipment are set up in this open space directly overlooking Lake Michigan. While repairs have been made over the years where weather has caused deterioration, no significant changes have been made to this area.

#### **Tennis Courts:**

In 1924 a clay tennis court was constructed north of the Assembly. In 1927 a concrete tennis court was constructed south of the Assembly. Both of these courts had north/south orientations. The concrete tennis court south of the Assembly was used until the area was converted into the patio in 1946. At that time a second tennis court was created north of the assembly.<sup>10</sup> These tennis courts have been resurfaced using different materials, so they lack material integrity, but

<sup>9</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*, (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982) 50.

<sup>10</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*, (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982) 46-8, 54-5.

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maintain integrity of location, setting, and feeling as there have been tennis courts north of the Assembly since 1924.

**Noncontributing Features of the Property:**

**(Old) Cedar Cottage/Caretaker's House:**

The original Cedar Cottage was built in 1940 as a practice location for campers attending the music school at Arcadia so that the noise would not disturb other campers. This cottage was built east of the Inn along Oak Street. With the termination of the music school, this building was used for a short period of time to house campers with young children. In 1950 this cottage was renovated and winterized to serve as living quarters for the camp caretaker.<sup>11</sup> As a private residence, this building has been expanded and undergone several renovations and no longer retains its historic character.

<sup>11</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*, (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982) 50, 54-5.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Entertainment/Recreation

Social History

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1922-1963

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1923

1926

1946

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Tondu, Leo

Bowman, W.N.

Behrens, Al



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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Walther League Camp or Camp Arcadia is eligible for listing to the national register under criterion A because of its connection to the history of the community of Arcadia and the state of Michigan. The Walther League Camp has played an important role in the Arcadia community through its promotion of tourism in the area. This camp has also been part of the larger, statewide transition from an economy focused on the lumber industry to an economy that values tourism. Furthermore, the Walther League Camp was created during an era when there was a nationwide boom in the establishment of summer camps and is representative of the summer camp movement. In particular, the Walther League Camp provided a location where the children of families of German and Lutheran heritage could combine recreational activities on the Lake Michigan shore with participation in a Lutheran Church-oriented youth organization that reinforced their ethnic and religious heritage. The period of significance for the camp is from 1922 to 1963. This time period spans the establishment of the camp until the death of the first camp director W. F. "Chief" Weiherman. Chief Weiherman served the camp as director for forty-one years and had a hand in shaping the camp and establishing many camp traditions, thus his tenure is the most significant time period in the history of the camp. This site falls under criteria consideration A because it was owned by the Walther League, a youth organization affiliated with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and is currently operated by the Lutheran Camp Association.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**The Walther League:**

The Walther League Camp was established in 1922 by the Walther League, a youth organization connected with the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. The Missouri Synod was founded in 1847 as "The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States" and by the mid-twentieth century embraced nearly one-third of all American Lutherans.<sup>12</sup> Its origins may be said to date from the settlement of groups of German Lutherans in Missouri and nearby states beginning in 1839. One of the pioneers in this movement was the Rev. Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther. Walther (1811-87) was born in Saxony and, ordained in 1837, was part of the initial migration that arrived in 1839. Walther became pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in St. Louis, considered the mother church of the Missouri Synod, in 1841. Efforts to form a synod began in 1845 and two years later the synod was formally established. The initial twelve congregations grew to 1500 by the late 1880s. C. F. W. Walther was the synod's pre-eminent theologian until his death in 1887, having served as professor of theology at the synod's Concordia Seminary in

<sup>12</sup> Abdel Ross Wentz, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America*. Rev. ed. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1964, 202.

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St. Louis since his appointment in 1849.<sup>13</sup> Dr. Walther was an early proponent of the formation of societies for the young people of the synod and “published, two years before the outbreak of the Civil War, an appeal, circulated by the young men’s societies of Baltimore, urging the young people in all parts of the country to federate, and to establish an alliance which would inspire them with the strength and enthusiasm of united and concerted action.”

The Walther League was established in 1893. Its founding resulted from an invitation to Missouri Synod Lutheran young people’s societies to meet at Trinity Lutheran Church in Buffalo in May 1893. The meetings brought about the establishment of a “General Alliance of Young People’s and Young Men’s Societies of the Synodical Conference” that was soon renamed the Walther League in honor of Dr. Walther.<sup>14</sup> The Walther League was an attempt to create a youth organization whereby the children of these families could attend a youth group like their more Americanized peers, but still maintain their German heritage.<sup>15</sup> Author Jon Pahl explains that, “The Walther League was a catalyst in the process whereby Lutherans accommodated themselves to American culture.”<sup>16</sup> Members of the Walther League were involved in many endeavors from visiting the elderly, to assembling care packages for military troops (especially during World War I and World War II), to funding the Wheat Ridge Sanatorium, a tuberculosis sanatorium in Illinois.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the Walther League held contests and conventions and set up “hospices” (boarding houses) for members traveling to or moving to the city.<sup>18</sup> The organization grew from only sixty-nine societies as of 1910 to about 650 by the early 1920s.<sup>19</sup> (Maier, 433, in Dau). Camp Arcadia, the Walther League Camp, was the first and most popular of the summer camps sponsored by this organization and followed the design of many summer camps established during this time period.

### **The Lumber Industry, the Building of the Walther League Summer Conference and its Impact on the Surrounding Area:**

In 1922 the Walther League Camp was established on thirty acres of land donated by Charles J. Starke, the son of Henry Starke who founded the Starke Land and Lumber Company in Arcadia,

<sup>13</sup> W. H. Dau, ed. *Ebenezer. Reviews of the Work of the Missouri Synod during Three Quarters of a Century*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1922, 25-31.

<sup>14</sup> Rev. Walter Maier, “The Young People in the Missouri Synod,” 432, in W. H. Dau, ed. *Ebenezer*.

<sup>15</sup> Jon Pahl, *The Hopes and Dreams of All: The International Walther League and Lutheran Youth in American Culture, 1893-1993*, Chicago: Wheat Ridge Ministries, 1993, 8-10.

<sup>16</sup> Jon Pahl, *Youth Ministry in Modern America: 1930 to the Present*. (Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000, 19.

<sup>17</sup> The Walther League, *Fifty years of Christian Service to Lutheran Youth: A Survey of the History of the International Walther League 1893-1943*, Chicago: The Walther League, 1943.

<sup>18</sup> Jon Pahl, *Youth Ministry in Modern America: 1930 to the Present*. (Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000, 20.

<sup>19</sup> Rev. Walter Maier, “The Young People in the Missouri Synod,” 433, in W. H. Dau, ed., *Ebenezer*.

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Michigan.<sup>20</sup> Henry Starke was a prominent figure in Arcadia's early days and the historical society of Arcadia credits Henry Starke with the founding of the town of Arcadia.<sup>21</sup> In 1880 Starke, along with his and several other German families, moved from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Arcadia. Starke (1827-98), a native of Hannover, Germany, had settled in Milwaukee with a brother in 1847 and beginning in 1849 entered into a contracting business that specialized in marine work and also operated a marine towing business whose tugs operated in Milwaukee and also Manistee. Starke had made his first investment in the Arcadia area's timberlands in 1866, and in 1880-81 developed a sawmill, dock, and other buildings and began a settlement that, initially named Starkeville, soon acquired the name Arcadia after the township, founded in 1870, in which it is located. Starke was a devout Lutheran and wanted his new home to have a Lutheran church; during 1880 Trinity Lutheran Church had been established in Arcadia, largely through Starke's encouragement.<sup>22</sup> In 1898 Henry Starke died, leaving the lumber company to his heirs, including his stepson Charles J. Starke. The Starke Land and Lumber Company sawmill burned in 1906, but Charles Starke then built the Arcadia Furniture Company factory in its place; it operated until 1952. By the time of the 1906 fire nearly all of the pine timber in the area had been logged. But despite extensive logging, the property owned by the Starke family had not been cleared of its hardwood trees.<sup>23</sup> Thus, a part of the area of land later donated for the purpose of the camp was still forested. And this parcel of land contained one and a half miles of Lake Michigan shoreline.<sup>24</sup>

The founding history of the camp is extensively reported in Frank W. Miller's *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years* (1982). Miller's primary source is an account by the Rev. Walter Maier, the author of the above cited "The Young People in the Missouri Synod," who was a witness to the events. Maier, who was part of a group that had attended a Walther League rally in nearby Ludington that included Charles J. Starke, stated that Starke came up with the idea of a Lutheran camp at Arcadia in 1921 after the group chanced upon the Epworth Heights resort outside Ludington established by the Methodist Episcopal Church. Quoting Maier: Seeing Epworth Heights, "Right then and there we began to wish and wonder. Why is it, we thought, that other churches have such facilities for their young people while we have nothing of this kind to offer? Would it not be splendid if our Church and League could establish similar institutions which would help to arouse a greater Lutheran consciousness in the hearts and lives of our young men and women?" In the wake of this informal discussion coming back from Ludington, Starke soon offered thirty acres as a conference/camp site to the Walther League. Starke's idea for a Walther

<sup>20</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*. (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982), 15.

<sup>21</sup> "Timeline for the Arcadia, Michigan Area" Arcadia Area Historical Museum. <http://www.arcadiami.com/Timeline/timelinedearlytown.htm> (accessed March 12, 2013).

<sup>22</sup> "The Lutheran Church" Arcadia Area Historical Museum. <http://www.arcadiami.com/index.php/exhibits/exh-lutheran-church> (accessed March 12, 2013)

<sup>23</sup> Shannon McRae, *Images of America: Manistee County*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006) 86.

<sup>24</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*. (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982), 15.

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League camp and his offer of land for it were presented to the annual Walther League convention in Omaha in 1922 and approved and accepted. Later in the year a newly formed Arcadia Summer Conference Association purchased an additional eighty acres adjoining the rest, part of the purchase price having been donated by Mrs. Maria Starke, Henry's widow. The camp opened in the summer of 1923 with guests primarily from the Midwest states of Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, and Michigan but also as far away as New York and Oklahoma. Charles J. Starke was very closely tied to the creation of the Walther League Camp and served as an advisor to Walther League leaders. He also provided loans for the construction of the buildings and his company provided many of the supplies for construction.

The founding of the Walther League Camp was big news throughout Manistee County. In the early years of the camp, newspapers regularly ran articles about the camp. On July 29, 1924, the *Arcadia Argus* had a front page article about a tennis tournament held at the camp: "There's always a special and particular feature at Walther League Camp. A report of the interesting tennis tournament may be welcome to the readers of this paper."<sup>25</sup> Day-to-day events were reported not just to the town of Arcadia, but also throughout Manistee County. Twenty miles from Arcadia, in Kaleva, Michigan, the *Kaleva Chronicle* ran an article on the opening of the second season of the camp on July 1, 1924:

Arcadia, July 1 – The Walther League Summer Conference Camp opened this morning, July 1<sup>st</sup> with a large number of young people of the Walther League, an organization of 50,000 young people of the Lutheran Church of America. The camp, which opened only last year, became so popular that Mr. F. W. Weiherman of St. Louis, Mo. who is manager of the establishment reports a capacity crowd before many days of the new month are passed. Reservations have been coming in daily on an average of 10 to 12 a day so that at this time 150 guests have made applications to spend two weeks "on the company's time" on the many vacation possibilities offered at the Lutheran camp.<sup>26</sup>

This article also illustrates the popularity of the Walther League Camp. In Onekama, located ten miles from Arcadia, the *Onekama Lake Breeze* ran a series of articles about the construction of new building and the opening and closing dates of camp. In addition, on July 31, 1925, this paper ran a story about a series of baseball games that had been played at the camp.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the publicity through area newspapers and the connection to the surrounding area through the Starke family, the Walther League Camp has been connected to the surrounding community in other ways. The Walther League Camp is located a short distance from the heart of the village of Arcadia. Until the Inn was built in 1926, the campers stayed at Foster House, a hotel the camp rented in Arcadia, and walked to camp property for events. In addition, campers paid frequent visits to the downtown area to visit the soda fountain at Martineau's Drug Store

<sup>25</sup> "Walther League Camp" *The Arcadia Argus*, July 29, 1924.

<sup>26</sup> "Walther League Camp Opens Second Season" *The Kelva Chronicle*, July 1, 1924

<sup>27</sup> "Walter League Camp is Lively" *Onekama Lake Breeze*, July 31, 1925.

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(until it was closed in the 1940's) and the Big Apple Bar which opened in 1937.<sup>28</sup> In 1937 the Walther League Camp became connected to the surrounding area in an even larger way when W. F. "Chief" Weiherman, the first camp director, agreed to lease part of the lakefront to the township to create a public beach.<sup>29</sup> This public beach was later sold to the township and is still in use by community members today.

### **Lake Michigan Tourism, the Walther League Camp, and the Arcadia Cottage Colony Association:**

The Walther League Camp is important in the context of the rise of the tourism industry in this area of western Lower Michigan's Lake Michigan shoreline. Because of the presence of the Arcadia Furniture Company, the lumber and wood products industries retained a presence in Arcadia until the 1950's, long after the heyday of Michigan's hardwoods lumbering industry in the early twentieth century; however, from the 1920's on, tourism was important to the community. According to Shannon McRae, author of *Images of America: Manistee County*, "In the early 1900's fashionable tourists from Milwaukee and Chicago came across Lake Michigan on steamers to stroll along the grand streets of Manistee, Onekama, and Arcadia."<sup>30</sup> Later in this book, she discusses summer camps and their connection to this tourism industry, specifically mentioning Camp Tosebo, an all-boy summer camp on nearby Portage Lake, founded by the Todd Seminary for Boys. Camp Tosebo is currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

In promoting Camp Arcadia, leaders of the Walther League used strategies that promoted Michigan as a tourist destination. Early promotional posters advertise "Glorious Breeze-Swept Lake Bounded Michigan"<sup>31</sup> and "Summer's Favorite Playground – Arcadia Michigan."<sup>32</sup> Additionally, these promotional materials targeted the same groups as did the larger Michigan tourism community. The West Michigan Tourist Association was founded in 1917 and was created to promote the western side of the state as a tourist destination, particularly to audiences in Chicago and St. Louis.<sup>33</sup> In 1927 approximately twenty percent of the guests at Camp Arcadia were from Chicago and an additional eighteen percent were from St. Louis. Milwaukee and Detroit were the next two most highly represented cities with approximately ten and eighteen percent of overall attendance respectively.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*. (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982), 113.

<sup>29</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*. (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982), 65.

<sup>30</sup> Shannon McReae, *Images of America: Manistee County*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 9.

<sup>31</sup> "19<sup>th</sup> Season" Camp Arcadia Poster Collection. Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.

<sup>32</sup> "18<sup>th</sup> Season" Camp Arcadia Poster Collection. Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.

<sup>33</sup> M. Christine Byron. "Hugh J. Gray, 'Dean of Michigan Tourist Activity.'" West Michigan Tourist Association, 2008, <http://www.wmta.org/wmta-history-364/> (accessed April 1, 2013).

<sup>34</sup> W. F. Weiherman "Camp Manager's Report 1927" Annual Report Collection, FPF, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.

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These visitors to the camp were not only youth and teens, but entire families. Unlike other summer camps, the Walther League Camp was open for families and did not require membership to the Walther League. Thus, the Walther League Camp became a popular family vacation spot. In fact, in his annual report from 1926, Chief Weiherman recommended that the camp "Accept families and non-Leaguers only during the early and later part of the season when there is room" and that the board should, "encourage families to build cottages."<sup>35</sup> There is no evidence that the first recommendation was ever acted upon, but the second recommendation was.

In 1927 the Walther League Camp began a lot leasing policy in order to raise money and provide a way for families connected with the camp to build private long-term quarters. Land was leased to a person for ninety-nine years for an initial payment of \$150 and a yearly rental fee of \$15 under the condition that a cottage would be built on the land within three years. The first cottage under this plan was built in 1927 by W. C. Schneider and was located south of the camp. By 1928 two more cottages had been built north of camp. In 1964 the cottage owners banded together to form the Arcadia Cottage Colony Association (ACCA) to negotiate with the Walther League about matters concerning the cottages.

At the same time, the camp was headed for some problems. After managing the camp for forty-one years, Weiherman died in 1963. The several camp directors that followed served very short terms. In 1966 the camp was under the direction of Paul Fernhaber. In an effort to revitalize the camp's image, he did away with many of the camp traditions, destroyed camp documents, and sold off camp memorabilia. A group of long time camp members, concerned with the direction the camp was taking, then formed the Lutheran Camp Association (LCA) and approached the Walther League about purchasing the Walther League Camp. In 1968 the LCA purchased the camp for \$241,000.<sup>36</sup> The new organization brought back many of the old camp traditions and gathered memorabilia (which individual members had purchased when it was sold). LCA continues to run the camp to this day.

With the change in the ownership of the Walther League Camp, the Arcadia Cottage Colony Association approached the LCA about purchasing the cottages. The LCA agreed to this and made more areas of the property available for purchase by camp families. Currently there are approximately fifty cottages that are located on the property that was originally owned by the Walther League. The owners of these cottages are families that are connected to the camp and pay a fee to use the camp facilities.

### **The Walther League Camp and the Summer Camp Movement:**

In addition to having connections with the history of the lumber industry and Michigan tourism, the Walther League Camp is also connected to the larger summer camp movement. Walther League leaders were inspired to create a youth summer camp while at a conference in Ludington,

<sup>35</sup> Frank W. Miller. *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*. (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982), 23.

<sup>36</sup> "Real Estate Transfer Valuation Affidavit" Sale of Camp to LCA, Legal Documents, FPF8, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan.

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Michigan. While they were at this conference, they visited Epworth Heights, a Methodist summer camp resort near the city, and decided to use that as a model.<sup>37</sup> Early letters between Walther League leaders talk about a national trend of religiously oriented summer camps. In a letter to Rev. Paul G. Prokopy, Dr. N. J. Harwish wrote, "I was pleased to see the two familiar faces of Mr. and Mrs. Starke who are so willing to aid our young people to establish a Lutheran summer resort, which will be well in line with the movement of other denominations and which has proved very successful."<sup>38</sup> In this way, Camp Arcadia is associated with the larger camp movement.

In her book *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth 1890-1960*, Abigail A. Van Slyck describes some trends among youth summer camps. While the Walther League camp also served an adult audience, several of these trends are still visible within the landscape of the camp.

According to Van Slyck, summer camps run by organizations were created for the middle-class and were located in areas with easy transportation.<sup>39</sup> This is true of the Walter League Camp. There were a variety of ways to reach the camp including the Arcadia and Betsey River Railway, a narrow gauge railway that had been converted to a standard gauge in 1893 and connected to the Pere Marquette Railway,<sup>40</sup> by car or bus on the West Michigan Pike and State Trunkline M-22, or by ferry across Lake Michigan.<sup>41</sup>

Van Slyck also explains that the layouts of summer camps were often decided upon by camp directors who based designs off other camps they had seen and only occasionally employed architects.<sup>42</sup> The Walther League Camp did employ an architect during the planning stages, W. N. Bowman from Colorado, who drew up the original plans for the camp. (William N. Bowman had a successful practice in Denver from 1910 to 1943, but had Michigan connections through architectural work with firms in Detroit and Grand Rapids and through his wife, Alice Kay Kniffin, who was from Grand Rapids.)<sup>43</sup> But his plans were only used for the Assembly

<sup>37</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*. (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982), 15.

<sup>38</sup> N. J. Harwish, letter to Paul G. Prokopy, Concordia Scans Collection, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan.

<sup>39</sup> Abigail A. Van Slyck, *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth 1890-1960*. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), XXVII.

<sup>40</sup> "Timeline for the Arcadia, Michigan Area" Arcadia Area Historical Museum. <http://www.arcadiami.com/Timeline/timelinedearlytown.htm> (accessed March 12, 2013).

<sup>41</sup> W.F. Weiherman "Camp Manager's Report 1927" Annual Report Collection, FPF, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan.

<sup>42</sup> Abigail A. Van Slyck, *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890-1960*. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), XXIX.

<sup>43</sup> "Bowman, William N." Architects of Colorado. Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society, 2008. [www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Guides/Architects/bowman.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Guides/Architects/bowman.pdf). Accessed 9/14/2016.

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building, the first building constructed in 1923.<sup>44</sup> In Bowman's plan all of the buildings would have faced Lake Michigan focusing on the natural beauty of the area. Orientation towards a lake was not uncommon in summer camps of this period. Although the orientation to the lake Bowman posited was followed, his specific plan was not followed after the construction of the Assembly building because the Walther League decided to construct buildings as the money became available for them. By the time they had enough money for a second building they realized that they needed to combine the dormitory building and the dining hall because it would be more cost effective and both buildings were needed as soon as possible. Local builders were responsible for the construction of the Walther League Camp. Most significant from this group is Leo Tondou, who also built many of the Cottage Colony cottages and later became the camp caretaker.

Finally, the Walther League Camp followed the trend of other summer camps in using Native American Motifs at the camp. Van Slyck notes that in the interwar period "playing Indian" became popular at summer camps. Photos from this period show teepees pitched on the beaches. These temporary structures no longer exist at Camp Arcadia, but the idea of using Indian symbolism was employed at the Walther League Camp in a more permanent way. In 1950 "Chief" Weiherman's daughter Rinkie painted the Trading Post and the exterior of the new building, named the Wigwam, with Native American Symbols.

### **The Walther League Camp Landscape, the Great Depression, and World War II:**

The very arrangement of Camp Arcadia reveals important information about the motivations behind the summer camp. Comparing the original plans for the camp with what was actually built illustrates the effects of the economic crash in 1929 and subsequent years of rationing due to World War II. The original plans drafted by William N. Bowman called for two dormitory buildings (one for women and one for men) with a centrally located dining hall, an assembly building, two staff cottages, and two hundred thirteen lots for individual cabins. When these plans were drawn up, the intention was to construct the buildings as the funds became available based on which buildings were most necessary for the function of the camp. To this end, the first building constructed was the Assembly building. It is interesting to note that a place for camp members to gather was viewed as more important than dormitories for campers to sleep in. The first dormitory buildings were not completed until three years later; campers stayed in tents and at a hotel in town rented by the camp for the first couple years.

The Assembly building was the only building that was completed somewhat to the original specifications. By 1925 a portion of this building had been designated to serve as a dormitory for boys. The next building that leaders believed was necessary was a dining room; however, by this time they also wanted to begin constructing dormitory buildings, so they began to think about combining these two uses. It was also during that time that there was a discussion among Walther League leaders and Charles Starke about deviating from the dormitory arrangement and

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<sup>44</sup> Charles Starke, letter to E. J. Gallmeyer, Concordia Scans Collection, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan.



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building cabins that would hold a small number of campers. Starke was very much against this plan, at least as far as housing female campers was concerned:

The next thing on the program will be a building for kitchen and dining room. Possibly with accommodations for the girls in rooms upstairs. Candidly, Rev. Prokopy, I believe it will be a great mistake to house the girls in cottages, they can get more comfort and can be better accommodated in one large building. You must admit that it is different with the girls than with the boys, and I believe that most parents would permit their daughters to visit them housed together with others in a large dormitory in which proper discipline can be maintained than in separate cottages housing perhaps 4 or more, where [with] the nature of things it will be much difficult to maintain discipline. You need a dining room and kitchen of considerable capacity, and it will be [more economical] if the League erects this building so that it will have two stories and use the upper one for girls quarters having about 20 rooms of sufficient size to accommodate two girls in each room. Put an elderly lady in charge of this building to maintain order and then you have settled the girl question, which in your camp is a vital one.<sup>45</sup>

Starke's plan eventually became the concept used in planning the Inn; however, rooms were also placed on the first floor and there was a total of forty-five rooms in the Inn.<sup>46</sup> The Inn was completed by 1926. In 1929 an addition was made to the back of the Inn to provide staff living quarters.

From 1929 until 1943 there was a series of small building improvements, but the funds and the materials to construct the third large camp building would not be acquired until 1946 after the depression and World War II. The third large camp building, the Wigwam, was completed in 1947. The completion of this building was one of the largest changes to the camp as the building had an office, indoor recreation areas, a trading post, staff quarters, and improved shower facilities. These functions could then be moved out of the Assembly building and the areas that housed them were converted into additional living quarters for boys. In addition, a patio was constructed between the three buildings, which created another gathering space for guests.

The Assembly, the Inn, and the Wigwam are the three most prominent buildings on the camp property, but other buildings and features add to what the landscape of the camp can tell about the summer camp movement. The craft shop and the tennis courts are important in explaining the function of the camp. The first tennis court was built on camp property in 1924. This tennis court was located north of the Administration building and had a north/south orientation. This is the same location as the current tennis courts and is in fact the same tennis court, though it has been resurfaced several times.

<sup>45</sup> Charles Starke, Letter to Paul G. Prokopy, September 8, 1923, Concordia Scans Collection, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan.

<sup>46</sup> Frank W. Miller, *Camp Arcadia Archives: The First Sixty Years*. (Wilmette, IL: JB Publications, 1982), 54.

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Today's craft shop was built in 1944 as a maintenance garage for the camp caretaker. Two years later the Wigwam was built. The Wigwam contained a shop space and the maintenance garage was converted into a craft shop to be used by the guests. Both the tennis courts and the craft shop show a focus on recreation, education, and relaxation.

**The Walther League Camp under the Lutheran Camp Association:**

As mentioned earlier, the Lutheran Camp Association bought the Walther League Camp in 1968. Much of the camp remains the same as it was when Weiherman died in 1963, and it is still used as a summer camp. However, for two weeks out of the year it is used as a youth summer camp, which carries stricter safety regulation, so there have been changes to bring the camp in compliance with safety codes required to operate a youth summer camp. Additions were made to the rear of the Wigwam and Inn in order to make the restroom facilities handicap-accessible and to provide showers in the Inn. Additionally, the number of staff members has increased, so the addition to the Wigwam also allowed for expanding the staff living quarters and the office area. In order to increase seating capacity in the dining room and expand the kitchen facilities, an addition was made to the south side of the Inn – this addition created four more guest rooms on the second floor. When these additions were built, asbestos siding and roofing was removed from the buildings and replaced with vinyl and asphalt, respectively. Despite these changes, Camp Arcadia retains sufficient integrity as a summer camp established during the summer camp movement and that has promoted tourism in Michigan from the time when Michigan tourism was in its infancy, and as an institution that has remained closely connected to the surrounding Arcadia Community.

Camp Arcadia/Walther League Camp

Manistee County,  
Michigan  
County and State

Name of Property

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

### Works Cited

- Arcadia Centennial Book Committee. *The History of Arcadia*. Arcadia, MI: Arcadia Township Historical Commission, 1993 [reprint: Arcadia Township Board, 1980].
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- McRae, Shannon. *Images of America: Manistee County*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006.
- Miller, Frank W. *Camp Arcadia: The First Sixty Years*. Wilmette, IL: J.B. Publishing, 1982.
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- “Real Estate Transfer Valuation Affidavit” Sale of Camp to LCA, Legal Documents, FPF8, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan.
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- “Walther League Camp is Lively.” *Onkama Lake Breeze*, July 31, 1925.
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- “Walther League Summer Camp Arcadia Michigan – William N. Bowman Company.” Architectural Drawing, Concordia Scan Collection, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia Michigan.
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- Weiherman, W. F. “Annual Report of the Manager – 1940.” Annual Report Collection, FPF, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.
- Weiherman, W. F. “Annual Report of the Manager – 1949.” Annual Report Collection, FPF, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.
- Weiherman, W. F. “Annual Report of the Manager – 1956.” Annual Report Collection, FPF, Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.

Camp Arcadia/Walther League Camp

Manistee County,  
Michigan

Name of Property

Wentz, Abdel Ross. *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America*. Rev. ed. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1964  
[originally published 1955].

**Additional Resources**

Weiherman, W. F. Camp Report Collection. FPF Files. Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan  
Concordia Historical Institute Scans Collection. Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.  
Camp Arcadia Blueprint Collection. Flat File. Camp Arcadia Archives, Arcadia, Michigan.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: Camp Arcadia Archives

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** 8 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 44.497122

Longitude: -86.240847

Camp Arcadia/Walther League Camp

Manistee County,  
Michigan  
County and State

Name of Property

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2. Latitude: 44.496646 | Longitude: -86.238895 |
| 3. Latitude: 44.495116 | Longitude: -86.239968 |
| 4. Latitude: 44.495093 | Longitude: -86.241725 |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

This nomination is for the central part of the camp bounded by north line of Oak Street to the south, west line of Forestview Drive on the east, a line 80 feet south of south edge of Weiherman Drive to the north (extending west to Lake Michigan), and Lake Michigan to the west.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries were chosen because they separate the main camp area, where the majority of the camp activities take place, from the surrounding area. Camp Arcadia owns property beyond these boundary lines but these areas are used less frequently. Weiherman Drive is a road that services the Arcadia Cottage Colony and while these cottages were originally part of the camp property and are still closely connection with the camp, they are not operated by the Lutheran Camp Association, but instead by the Arcadia Cottage Colony Association. This area contains cottages that are privately owned. The north boundary for this nomination

Camp Arcadia/Walther League Camp

Manistee County,  
Michigan  
County and State

Name of Property

is set at eighty feet south of Weiherman Drive to reflect the boundary line between the camp proper and the colony association property. The Lutheran Camp Association also owns property east of Forestview Drive, but this area is not a central camp area and the use of the area has undergone changes as the activities it is used for have changed. The Lutheran Camp Association owns some land south of Oak Street as well. The majority of this is beachfront property that was rented to the local government for a public beach and ultimately sold to Arcadia Township, so it is no longer camp property.

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Cambray Sampson  
organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: 6559 Hospital Rd  
city or town: Freeland state: MI zip code: 48623  
e-mail cambraysampson@gmail.com  
telephone: (989)482-9785  
date: 2/22/15

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Camp Arcadia/Walther League Camp

Manistee County,  
Michigan  
County and State

Name of Property

Name of Property: Camp Arcadia  
City or Vicinity: Arcadia, MI  
County: Manistee  
State: MI  
Photographer: Cambray Sampson  
Date Photographed: October 2014, July 2015, October 2016  
Location of Original Digital Files: 6559 Hospital Rd Freeland, MI 48623  
Number of Photographs: 42

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0001  
Assembly west façade (left) and south façade (right) – camera facing northeast, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0002  
Assembly main entrance south façade – camera facing northeast, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0003  
Assembly east and north façades – camera facing northwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0004  
Assembly large meeting room interior – camera facing southwest, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0005  
Wigwam west façade – camera facing east, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0006  
Wigwam northwest west wing north and northeast façades – camera facing southwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0007  
Wigwam north/northeast façades – camera facing southwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0008  
Wigwam east façade – camera facing northwest, July 2015

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0009  
Wigwam south façade – camera facing northeast, July 2015

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0010  
Wigwam northwest wing (left), west façade (center), and southwest wing (right) – camera facing northeast, July 2015

Camp Arcadia/Walther League Camp

Manistee County,  
Michigan  
County and State

Name of Property

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0011

Wigwam interior southwest wing Roundup interior – camera facing southwest, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0012

Wigwam interior southwest wing Roundup interior – camera facing northwest, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0013

Wigwam interior northwest wing trading post – camera facing northwest, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0014

Wigwam interior northwest wing trading post – camera facing west, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0015

Inn west façade – camera facing southeast, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0016

Inn west façade main entrance – camera facing east, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0017

Inn west façade south of main entrance – camera facing southeast, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0018

Inn north façade (right) and east façade (left) camera facing northwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0019

Inn rear façade – camera facing northwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0020

Inn rear façade – camera facing southwest, Oct. 2014



Camp Arcadia/Walther League Camp

Manistee County,  
Michigan  
County and State

Name of Property

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0021

Inn north façade and patio in foreground – camera facing south, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0022

Inn interior first floor hallway – camera facing south, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0023

Inn interior lobby – camera facing southwest, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0024

Inn interior lobby – camera facing northeast, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0025

Inn interior dining room – camera facing northwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0026

Inn interior staff dining room – camera facing northwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0027

Inn interior second floor hallway – camera facing south, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0028

Inn interior second floor east-west hallway – camera facing east, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0029

Inn interior second floor room (50) – camera facing west, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0030

Inn interior first floor room (10) – camera facing northeast, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0031

Inn interior guest lounge – camera facing south, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0032

Craft Shop west façade – camera facing east, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0033

Craft Shop interior – camera facing southwest, Oct. 2016

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0034

Tennis Courts (foreground) and Assembly north façade (background) – camera facing southwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0035

Camp Arcadia/Walther League Camp

Manistee County,  
Michigan  
County and State

Name of Property

Windy day, patio from second floor of the Wigwam – camera facing west, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0036

Northeast boundary line – camera facing southwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0037

Caretaker's House (noncontributing) – camera facing northeast, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0038

Wigwam west façade (left), Inn north façade (right) and patio – camera facing southeast, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0039

Inn east façade (left) and Wigwam south façade (right) camera facing northwest, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0040

Shoreline, Assembly west façade (right) camera facing north, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0041

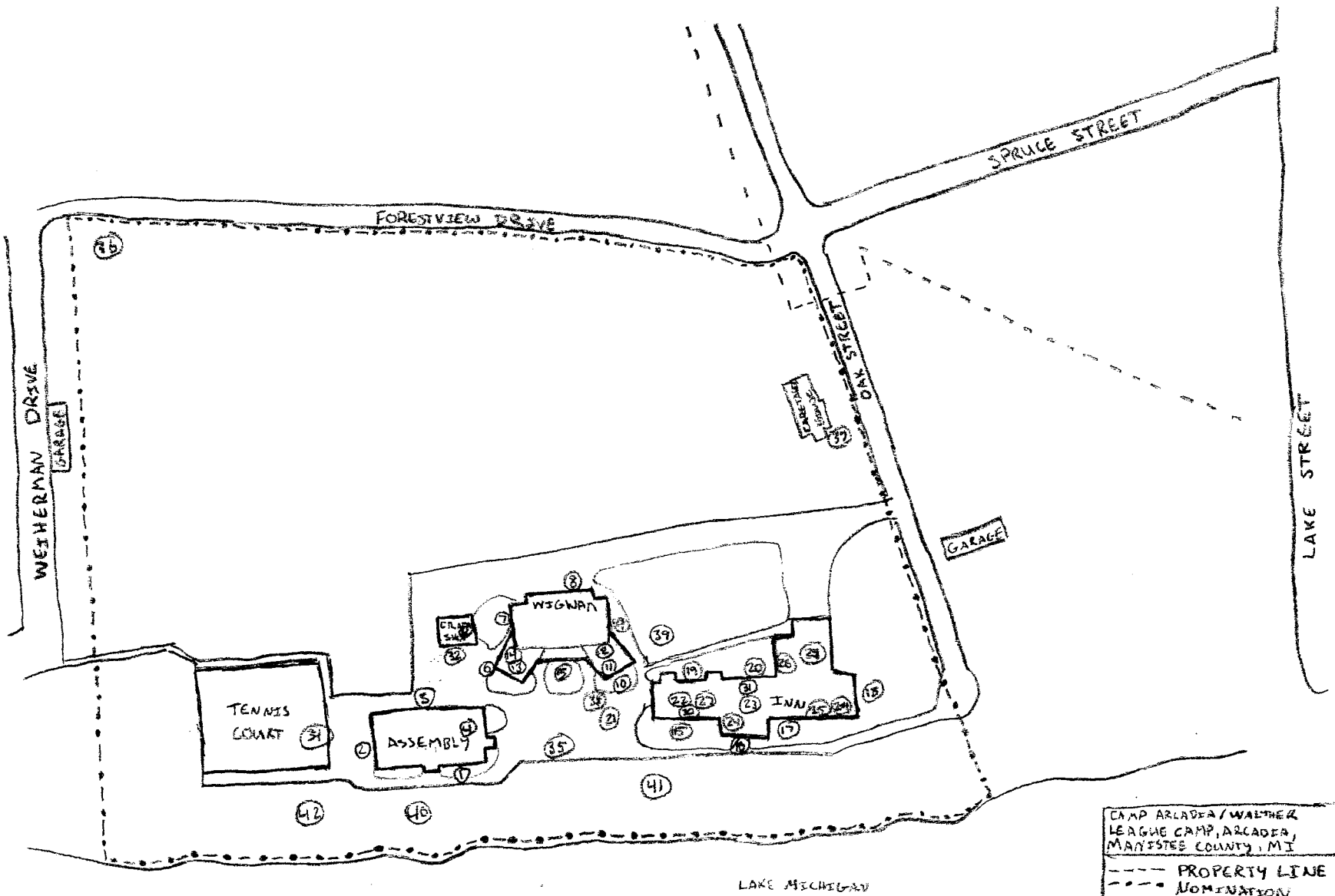
Shoreline, Assembly north façade (left) camera facing south, Oct. 2014

MI\_ManisteeCounty\_CampArcadia\_0042

Shoreline, Wigwam west facade (right) and Inn west façade (center) – camera facing south, Oct. 2014

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



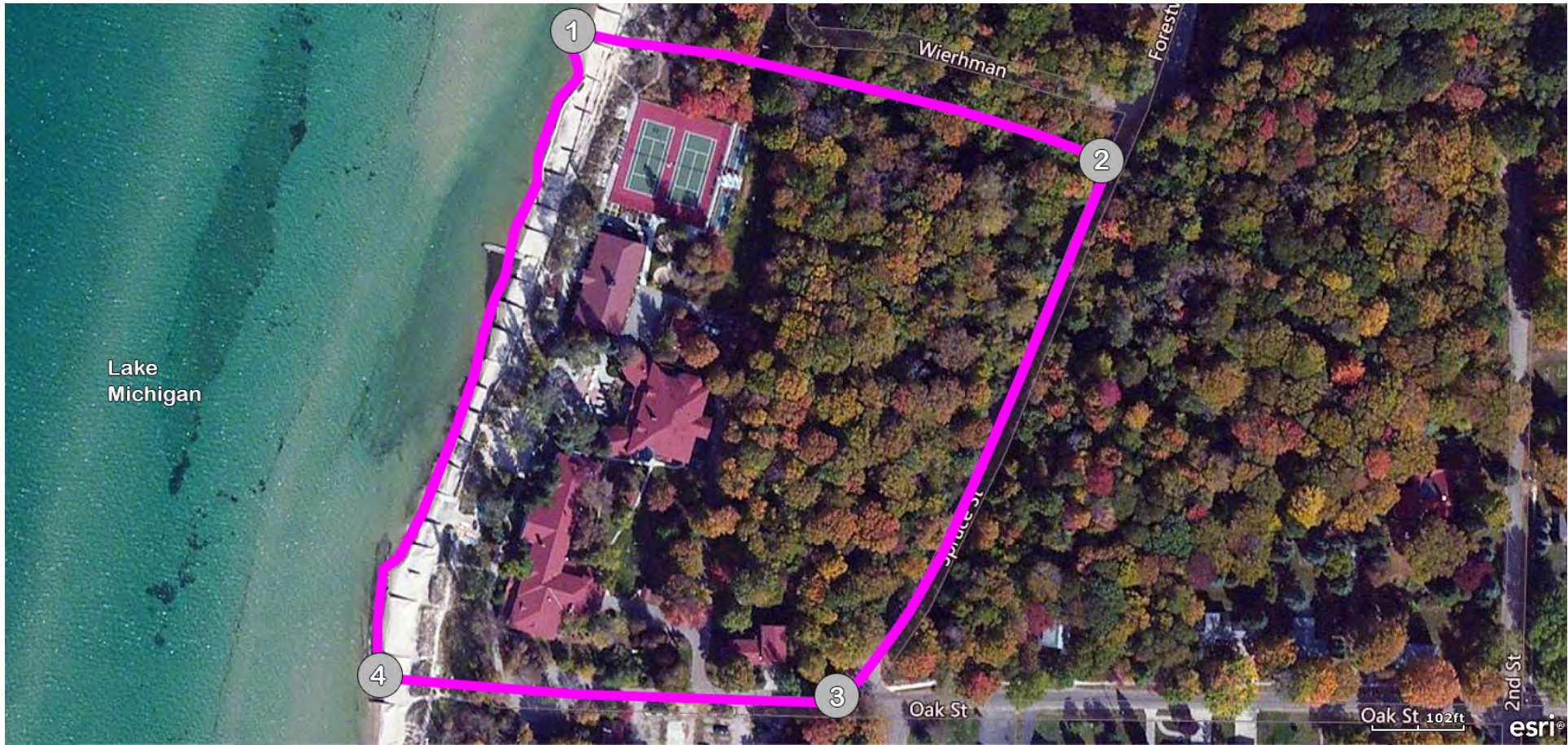
CAMP ARLDEA / WALKER  
LEAGUE CAMP, ARCADEA,  
MANISTEE COUNTY, MI

--- PROPERTY LINE  
 - - - NOMINATION  
 BOUNDARY  
 ——— NONCONTRIBUTING  
 ——— CONTRIBUTING

⊙ PHOTOGRAPH #  
 EX: ⊙ = MI. MANISTEE  
 COUNTY\_CAMP  
 ARLDEA\_0001  
 E

N  
 +  
 S  
 W





**Walther League Camp/Camp Arcadia**

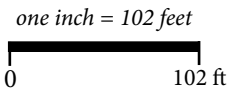
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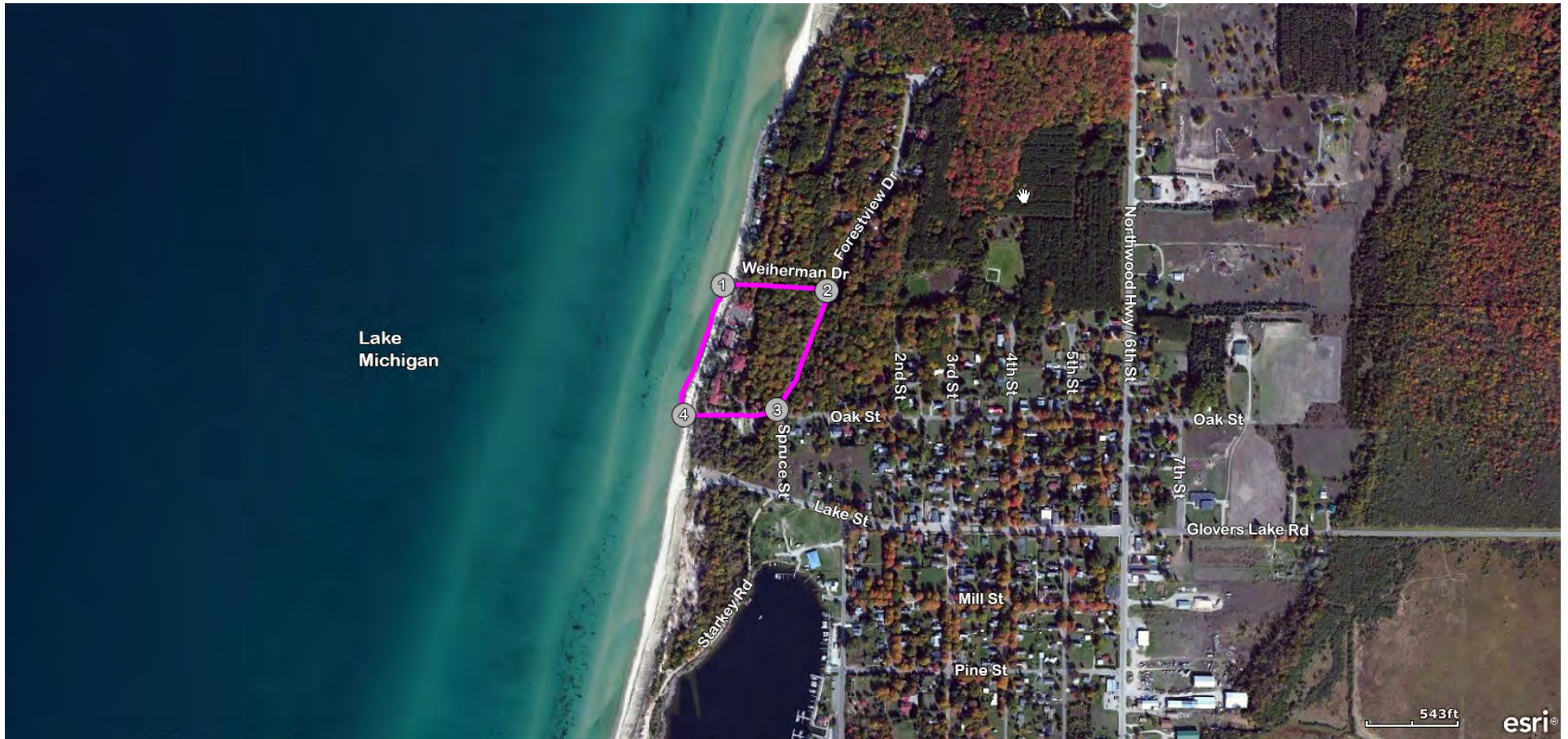
Lat./Long. 1: 44.497122 / -86.240847

Lat./Long. 2: 44.496646 / -86.238895

Lat./Long. 3: 44.495116 / -86.239968

Lat./Long. 4: 44.495093 / -86.241725





**Walther League Camp/Camp Arcadia**

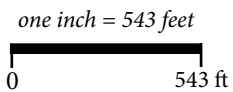
3046 Oak Street, Arcadia Township, Manistee County, Michigan

Lat./Long. 1: 44.497122 / -86.240847

Lat./Long. 2: 44.496646 / -86.238895

Lat./Long. 3: 44.495116 / -86.239968

Lat./Long. 4: 44.495093 / -86.241725

















RD







LAUNDRY  
&  
SHOPPING  
SERVICES

















*Camp Arcadia*











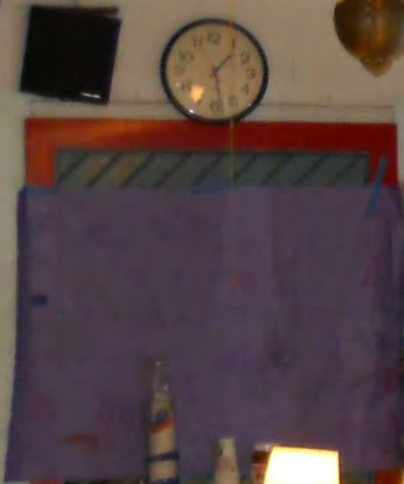


























A white, single-story cabin with a red roof and green-trimmed windows. The cabin has a wooden deck with a railing, a picnic table, and a slide. A large tree stands in front of the cabin.

A wooden deck with a railing, featuring a picnic table and a slide.

A wooden picnic table on the deck.

A white and green slide on the deck.

A wooden picnic table on the deck.

A wooden deck with a railing, featuring a set of stairs leading up to the cabin.

A white boat with red and blue stripes, sitting on a gravel surface.



Craftin'  
the  
day  
Away!

- PRIVATE
- CONSTRUCTION PAPER
- ELASTIC BAGS
- COLORED PENCILS
- STICKERS
- CONTACT PAPER
- ORIGAMI PAPER
- NOTE CARDS
- CARD STOCK PIECES
- PRIVATE
- STAMP PADS
- LARGE CARD STOCK



Marshmallow  
Shooter \$1.00

BE





















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Walther League Camp--Camp Arcadia

Multiple Name:

State & County: MICHIGAN, Manistee

Date Received: 3/3/2017      Date of Pending List:      Date of 16th Day:      Date of 45th Day: 4/17/2017      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG10000884

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

Accept       Return       Reject      4/17/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria      Accept, National Register Criterion A

Reviewer      Patrick Andrus Patrick Andrus      Discipline      Historian

Telephone      (202)354-2218      Date      4/17/2017

DOCUMENTATION:      see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : Yes

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.





RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



February 13, 2017

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Walther League Camp/Camp Arcadia, Arcadia Township, Manistee County, Michigan**, to the National Register of Historic Places. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to our forwarding this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Robert O. Christensen, National Register coordinator, at (517) 335-2719 or [christensenr@michigan.gov](mailto:christensenr@michigan.gov).

Sincerely yours,

Martha MacFarlane-Faes  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

