

# Historical Background



Sleeping Lady and the land it occupies enjoy a rich and storied past. From the area's Native American roots, to the 1930s when it was home to the Civilian Conservation Corps, to its role today as a leading Northwest destination – Sleeping Lady continues to embody the natural beauty and history of Leavenworth and the Wenatchee Valley.

## **1800s to 1900s: Na-sik-elt**

Known as “Na-sik-elt”, or Narrow Bottom Canyon, families of the Yakama and P’squosa Native American tribes were the first human inhabitants of the land that eventually became Sleeping Lady. The P’squosa tribe is now recognized by the Yakama name for them – Wenatchi. For generations, the tribes enjoyed some of the richest fishing grounds in the mid-Columbia River basin. Over time, circumstance forced them to leave the canyon, however there are many Native Americans who continue to have deep historical ties to the area.

Sleeping Lady is nestled at the foot of the spectacular Stuart Range in the Cascade foothills. Upstream, Icicle Creek has carved a deep, rugged canyon through this mountainous terrain where native peoples once fished for salmon. Upon reaching Sleeping Lady, the creek opens into a broader valley before joining the Wenatchee River, just north of the resort.

White settlers came to the valley in the late 1800s. These included George and William Brisky, Mr. & Mrs. F. D. Estes, Nicholas Kincherf, David C. Wilson, Miss Mary Ralston and Franklin A. Losekamp, who built the Icicle Post Office and store on the south side of the Wenatchee/Icicle River confluence.

## **1930s to 1940s: Civilian Conservation Corps “Camp Icicle”**

From 1934 to 1942, the site was known as Camp Icicle and was home to the 983rd Company of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Camp Icicle was constructed with help from local residents and carpenters. The barracks and buildings housed 200 young men and many of these structures remain today. During their time, the 983rd Company constructed the ski lodge at Leavenworth and the original lodge at Stevens Pass, as well as 22 local buildings, 20 bridges along with the placement of over 1,000 signs and markers.

## **1940s to 1950s: Icicle River Ranch**

In 1946, the CCC cabins were redeveloped into a private, family-oriented ranch named Icicle River Ranch. Its owners, Wilfred and Geraldine Davy, remodeled some of the barracks by removing ends or middle sections to create smaller cabins. A stay for the “summer ranchers” at the Icicle River Ranch included organized pack team trips on horseback to the high country with cooks, guides and even musicians. Horses were kept in the large meadow during the summer and moved down to the Columbia Basin in winter.

## **1950s to 1990s: Camp Field**

The property was sold in 1957 to the Yakima Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church and renamed Camp Field. The site operated as a camp for young people ages eight and up from 1957 to 1982. The chapel and seven new dormitories were constructed between 1964 and 1965 and the Camp Icicle cabins were again renovated. These renovations allowed the camp to begin dual operations as both a summer camp and an off-season retreat for adults.

About the time Camp Field began operations, Father Joseph O’Grady from Boston, a young Irish priest, was banished to the upper Leavenworth Valley for permitting students to question their theology in the Spokane high school where he taught.

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Far from wasting away, Father O'Grady thrived and breathed new life into Camp Field. Before long the camp was alive with children. There were horses in the pastures, a swimming pool, a ball field, an archery range and a camp fire circle for outdoor services. Every child who brought a musical instrument to camp was encouraged to bring it to the chapel to accompany Sunday Mass.

Father O'Grady, referred to by some as the "hippie priest," was widely loved. He welcomed everybody to communion, regardless of denomination and performed marriages for anyone, as long as he was sure they were committed to each other. He held barbecues for the children and joined in their outdoor activities. For all who knew him, he inspired spiritual reverence along with compassion, wisdom, fun and humor. When he died in 1983, the valley mourned.

The Diocese discontinued operation of the summer camp in 1982 and began operating the site year-round as the Camp Field Retreat and Conference Center. Camp Field was the site of many family reunions, non-profit retreats and religious gatherings.

### **1990s to Present: Sleeping Lady**

The Diocese put the property up for sale in 1991 and Harriet Bullitt, longtime owner of neighboring property, purchased the 67 acres to preserve the land. She then made plans to redevelop the older buildings into an environmentally friendly conference facility and mountain retreat. She engaged Jones & Jones Architects and landscape architects to design the retreat.

Bullitt named Sleeping Lady after the mountain profile above the narrow valley. Eighteen original Camp Field buildings were kept in the new site plan for historical and environmental considerations. Five of these buildings, including the Eyrie, Rookery, Grotto, Chapel and Flicker, remain in their original locations. The remaining 13 buildings were moved to new locations on site. All of the buildings were remodeled to meet or exceed current building and energy codes. New buildings were constructed to blend in with the original architectural style and the site was landscaped with native vegetation.

**In January 1993**, the business was incorporated as Sleeping Lady, Inc. and in April 1994, restoration and construction began. The 18 buildings that were original to the site remain today with new construction bringing the total to 44 finished buildings.

Sleeping Lady opened in **August 1995** by hosting Icicle Creek Music Center's first annual Icicle Creek Chamber Music Festival. Since that auspicious beginning, there have been 1,000's of events and happenings at Sleeping Lady including concerts, conferences, meetings, and theatrical performances.

A second phase of development began in **1998** with the addition of the Fountain Cluster which included ten additional housing rooms, along with an expansion of Kingfisher Dining Lodge to accommodate 40 additional dining spaces and the addition of the Quail and Tadpole meeting rooms, which created meeting space for up to 140 people. The Grasshopper Fitness Room was also added and O'Grady's Pantry opened to the public.

**In 2001**, the development of the Icicle Creek Music Center (ICMC) facility began. The development was completed in **2003** and involved a remodeled and expanded office for the ICMC and the Icicle Fund, including meeting rooms and practice spaces for staff and students. The development also included the Canyon Wren Recital Hall, three ensemble practice rooms, three solo practice rooms, eight housing units, and parking for the various functions and activities.

**In 2003**, O'Grady's was expanded to accommodate increased use and KOHO Broadcasting Studios, a local radio station housed on site and owned by Harriet Bullitt, added a news room and sales office. The organic garden was improved to create greater access for guests and to increase the supply of organic herbs, salad greens, vegetables and berries used in Sleeping Lady's kitchens. **In 2004**, a greenhouse was constructed to extend the growing season of the organic garden.

The fitness room was relocated to a more central location for Sleeping Lady's guests **in 2007**.

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The Mercantile, an extension of the gift shop, opened in the former fitness space adjacent to O'Grady's Pantry.

Over time, all of the major facilities on the 67 acre campus of Sleeping Lady and the Icicle Creek Music Center have been connected with fiber optics for the efficient use of internet connections as well as communications and fire detection systems.

**In October of 2008** Harriet met with Johnpaul Jones of Jones and Jones Architects to explore the idea of redefining the Kingfisher Dining Lodge and the Front Desk area along with the possibility of building a new recreational building. As those ideas took shape a plan was put in place to remodel the Kingfisher Dining Lodge with work to commence in the **spring and summer of 2009**, followed by the front desk remodel.

The Kingfisher Dining Lodge remodel was completed in **July of 2009**. Some of the features include the addition of a bar, the replacement of the serving line with a serpentine copper and stainless steel servery, a LaCornue range and oven and a bread/pizza oven behind the line. A separate salad bar and dessert bar were added to enhance the dining experience as well.

**In late summer of 2009**, the resort entered into a partnership with Solstice Spa to add additional spa services for our guests. The existing sauna was removed from the building and a new white cedar dry heat sauna was built on the deck of the existing building.

The front desk remodel was completed in **mid September of 2009**. The guest service area was opened up, creating a more relaxed and efficient area for check in and check out. The gift shop has been recreated to offer the guests a boutique area for purchases, and a business center was added.

Excavation and construction began on the Play Barn in **October of 2009**. This building offers recreation opportunities for guests of all ages. The building features a small stage for children to act out puppet shows or plays. There is an area for board games as well as billiards and table tennis.

**In September 2011**, Icicle Creek Music Center (ICMC) broadened its scope changing its name from Icicle Creek Music Center (ICMC) to Icicle Creek Center for the Arts (ICCA).

Icicle Creek Center for the Arts (ICCA) broke ground on the Snowy Owl Theater in **spring 2012**. The 240-seat theater is designed to be used as a performing arts space, educational center and for a variety of community and special events. The theater opened in **April 2013**.

**In June 2012**, Harriet Bullitt bought the KPQ building at the corner of Mission and First streets in Wenatchee. The site was renovated in the summer of 2012.

Extensive tree work was completed to eradicate a Pine Beetle infestation in **fall 2012**.

**In November 2012**, dirt work began on a new Stone Terrace at the entrance to the Salmon Gallery. The Stone Terrace provides seating for up to 60 guests for outdoor dining. A waterfall and a series of pools welcomes guests for private outdoor dining events.

Icicle Broadcasting's KOHO (101.1 FM) and Smooth (94.7 FM) moved to a new location in **late February 2013**. The move provided better service to greater Wenatchee and surrounding areas.

The former KOHO building was renovated in **late 2013**, and reopened as Aspen Leaf Day Spa in **April 2014**. The spa caters to locals of North Central Washington, and provides overflow for the resort spa when needed.

**In 2015**, O'Grady's was remodeled adding a kitchen, bar and an expanded patio; all with table service. Sleeping Lady celebrated its 20th anniversary in **August 2015** with a commissioned calendar by Heather Murphy, local wildlife biologist, nature journalist and artist.

Bullitt transferred ownership of the Sleeping Lady business to the Icicle Fund effective **January 1, 2019**. The profits go directly into the Fund, thus ensuring the continued support of non-profits dedicated to the environment, the arts and history in North Central Washington.