

Camp Becket For Boys

748 Hamilton Road

42° 17'27.29"N 73° 04'16.92"W elevation 1692 feet

The Young Men's Christian Association of Massachusetts and Rhode Island purchased 1,400 acres surrounding Rudd Pond, to bring urban children to the healthy, rural outdoors found in Becket. In 1903, a boy's camp was established. The next year Henry W. Gibson, a camping pioneer assumed the directorship, establishing Camp Becket for Boys as a rustic camping experience providing outdoor education along with character building. In 1927, when he "retired" from the prominent camp he had established, he moved a mile south of Camp Becket, to an old farm house with a large, four cornered chimney [[Camp Chimney-Corners](#)].

<https://www.bccymca.org/camp-becket-boys/home>



For further information email the Becket Historical Commission:

historical@townofbecket.org

Camp Chimney Corners For Girls

591 Hamilton Road

42° 17'01.16"N 73° 04'13.32"W elevation 1636 feet

After retiring as director of [Camp Becket for Boys](#) in 1927, Henry W. Gibson moved a mile south to an old farm house he called "Chimney Corners" after its' large, four-cornered fireplace chimney. The central feature of the original farmhouse was all that was left after he remodeled his house. As there were no YMCA camps for girls, the Gibson family took in a few girl campers, and in 1931, Camp Chimney Corners, a private camp was begun. Howard and Evelyn Smith then took over the camp after Henry's death in 1941. For the next 32 years, the Smith family put their energy and talents into enlarging the camp. In the early days' campers had to hike to Center Pond for water activities. In the 1960s one of Howard's dreams was accomplished with the creation of "Smith Pond" from a brook on the property.

In 1972, the Smith family sold Camp Chimney-Corners to Camp Becket for Boys, under the leadership of Don and Jeanne Shellenberger; thereby, merging the two camps under the YMCA banner. Don, the director of Camp Becket became the CEO of the Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA and Jeanne the first YMCA director at Camp Chimney Corners. During their tenure the International Camper Exchange Program (ICEP) was begun. It enables teenagers to travel to other YMCA's, exposing them to further cultures, to advance a world understanding. In addition, the Teen Leadership Program offers a wide range of opportunities at Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA.

In 1991, when the Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA moved their executive offices to Becket, a commitment was made to expand to a year-round program. Today, the Berkshire Outdoor Center has increased the number of leadership development programs, family camps and retreats; enabling 17,000 more participates each year. The Becket community is served by a day camp at the Berkshire Outdoor Center during the summer.

<https://bccymca.org/chimney>



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Camp Watitoh

1885 Main Street

42° 18'15.65"N 73° 03'55.40"W elevation 1550 feet

In the early 1900s the Turner farm at the north end of Center Pond, was a destination point for city travelers who arrived by train to enjoy the mountain air and natural surroundings found in Becket. In 1925, Dr. Arthur J. Logie and partners rented the lakeside property where they built the small, Camp Tekoa for boys. The camp only survived for a few years as a result of the Great Depression.

In 1936, Henry and Babette DeSola Mendes of New York bought the 50-acre property and in 1937 opened Camp Watitoh, a family-orientated, camp. The successful camp was sold in 1952 to Louis and Frieda Glickstein who made several improvements. In 1960, Shelly and Sandy Hoch bought Camp Watitoh. Two generations of the Hoch family ran the co-ed camp for the next five decades greatly expanding the facilities, activities and camper base. Britton and Drew Bitterman joined the Hoch's as co-directors in 2014.

Camp Watitoh was prevented from opening to their traditional campers in 2020 due to Covid-19 but did creatively open to Watitoh families on a limited basis. Families had their own cabins; food was prepared by the camp staff and meals were eaten outside on picnic tables when possible. The land and aquatic sports and other camp facilities were available to the families as well.

<https://www.campwatitoh.com/>



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Camp Greylock

1525 Main Street

42° 18'15.65"N 73° 03'55.40"W elevation 1550 feet

In 1915, Dr. Gabriel R. Mason, an eminent New York City educator, his two brothers George and Lou, along with family friend Lou Rab, came to Becket in search of land to build a summer camp for boys. They purchased the 300-acre Taylor farm, on the eastern shore of Center Pond, then owned by Helen Call. The property, bisected by the state highway, now Rt. 8, consisted of a working farm on the east and to the west virgin forests with a footpath to the water. Gabriel Mason later wrote: "What we beheld overpowered us with its breathtaking beauty, its serenity and its majesty." Through the years more neighboring acreage was added totaling nearly 1,000 acres.

Opened in 1916, Camp Greylock, named after the tallest mountain in Massachusetts, is one of the oldest privately owned, all-boys sport camps in the nation. The campers, arriving by railroad from Grand Central Station, NYC, were met at the Becket train station on Depot Street, from here townspeople then drove them to the camp. In 1949 the camp was purchased by Randolph Rosenbaum with the Mason's staying on as advisors. In 1950, former camper Bert Margolis, who had been associated with the camp since 1920, became co-director of Camp Greylock. About ten years later, a former head counselor, Irv Schwartz, joined the directorate. These three men ran the camp for many years: Rosenbaum retired in 1973; Schwartz passed away in 1987; while Margolis continued until selling the camp in 1994 to Michael Marcus and Lukas Horn, former counselors.

As a result of the pandemic, Camp Greylock offered Family Camp 2020, providing cabin accommodations, meals and their facility for individual family fun safe from Covid-19.

<https://www.campgreylock.com/>



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Camp Lenox

Route 8 South

42° 14'50.37"N 73° 07'20.83"W elevation 1348 feet

In 1918 Camp Lenox for boys, was established by the Sperling/Selverstone Family, on 170 acres overlooking Shaw Pond. The rustic camp had no electricity, only basic running water, and cabins were built from hand-hewn lumber with field stone foundations found on the property. Today, along with the forest and shoreline there are two historic farmhouses built in 1800 and 1890 on the property.

In 1964 Monty "Coach" and Judy Moss from Long Island purchased Camp Lenox; expanding camper enrollment and programs. In 1984, their son Richard "Rich" Moss, became a second-generation director/owner of Camp Lenox and in 1985 Camp Lenox for girls was founded. In 2003 Richard's wife Stephanie "Stef" came to Lenox as the Girls Camp Director. She and Rich married the following year and Stef joined the Lenox directorship. Together they run the camp year-round.

Camp Lenox hosts 400 campers a summer. Outside groups can now rent the camp in the off-season for special events, retreats and weddings.

<https://www.camplenox.com/>



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