

BE PREPARED

A BOY, A CUB PACK AND A SCOUT TROOP



DO A GOOD TURN DAILY

The Twenty-Five Years In The Scouting Movement Of Ib J. M. Mork with Pack and Troop 102 in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, NY and Troop 67 in Great Kills, Staten Island, NY.

Book III - Volume VII - Part I

A work in progress, which was modified on Wednesday 3 July 2013. One of nine volumes comprised of six books relating family and personal history.

These recollections and remembrances are written to honor the memory of those men who were my leaders in Scouting, the boys who were my fellow Cubs and Scouts, the young men who were my fellow Cub and Scout leaders, the Cubs and Scouts I was privileged to guide, lead and mentor, the men who served, also volunteers, as members of the Pack, Troop and Sea Scout Ship Committees, the volunteer Scouters of the Atlantic District and the ladies and women who served as Den Mothers and those who were mothers to all those in Scouting as well as the girlfriends and wives of those volunteer Scout Leaders, Committeemen and Atlantic District Scouters.

Special very thankful recognitions are extended to the sponsoring institutions; The Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, N.Y. and the Christ Lutheran Church of Great Kills, Staten Island, N.Y. Their sponsorships made possible the chartering of the Pack, Sea Scout Ship and Troops mentioned herein. Their facilities made it possible for these scouting units to have very good meeting places.

PROLOGUE

Almost every young boy and leader you will read about in this tale was destined to serve in the military during WW II and after coming home from that war was destined to disperse elsewhere from the neighborhoods in which they had grown up while helping to lead our nation to becoming the most generous and strongest nation in all of history. This was not the future they had envisioned nor planned. But it was the future they could not avoid. Most were entirely from among those born post WW I or during the "Roaring Twenties" and had

grown up during or experienced the "Great Depression" which lasted from 1930 until 1942. The young women they eventually married were of the same experience and generation.

All were children of the generation that had fought WW I and survived the "Spanish Influenza" pandemic of 1918. Their parents' generation had also coped as adults with the real hardships of that same long-lasting devastating depression including the repercussions from the also absolutely devastating 8 year Midwestern drought of the 1930's that caused thousands of families from the southern Plains States to migrate westward to California. The dust storms from this drought at times deposited the extremely fertile soils of our Midwest on the rooftops and streets of New York City and into the Atlantic Ocean where it also fell on the decks of ships at sea. Some of this dust even wind-travelled to Europe. They had seen first hand their parents struggling to provide for their families and to survive during the dire circumstances of that long 12 year period of economic blight brought about by the excesses and criminal conduct of the economic elite during the 1920s: just as has happened again during the 1990s and into the 2000s. They themselves had had to forego many even modest hopes and wishes. They had witnessed the same struggles taking place in the families of their kin, friends and neighbors.

They all hoped that the future would prove better. Unknowingly, they had all been bonded by their common background and the crucible of WW II that they all would experience would weld that bond even stronger. It is this commonality of having surmounted excruciating dire experiences of long duration that makes this generation that fought WW II, the greatest war of all time, one of the most special in the history of the U.S.A.

This is the generation that in the late 1990s has become known as "The Greatest Generation". As an immigrant from Denmark, brought to America in early March 1930 at an age of 5 years plus 8 months, it was my fate and great good fortune to become one of the members of that generation. I feel honored and humbled by that description and distinction.

CUB SCOUTING



A FUN WAY TO START IN SCOUTING

THE BEGINNING - CUB PACK 102 - DO YOUR BEST - THE CUB GIVES GOOD WILL

For some reason obscured from memory by the passage of time I decided in the Fall of 1935 to become a Boy Scout. So on 31 October 1935 I went to the church where I attended Sunday School, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd at 7420-Fourth Avenue, Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, NY, with my mother on one of Troop 102's Thursday meeting nights to apply for membership; your parents had to approve your membership by appearing in person with you and sign your application just as you yourself needed to do. There we learned that since I was 9 months shy of being 12 years old that I had to join the Cub Scouts and then become a Boy Scout after becoming 12 years of age.

Fortunately this church also sponsored a Cub Pack 102, which met on Tuesday nights from 7:00 to 8:00 P.M. So the following Tuesday evening 5 November 1935 my mother and I went to the Cub Pack meeting and I signed up to be a member of the Cub Scouts. This is the date, 5 November 1935, my scouting membership starts.

This happenstance was to be fortuitive because I got to start at an older age at the earliest membership level in Scouting (you could start in Cub Scouting at age 9 years then) and I also came to know and be befriended and mentored for many years by the Cubmaster Mr. Raymond L. Gilbert. Ray, as I eventually felt comfortable calling him, was one of the finest gentlemen I have had the privilege of knowing during my life. He was eminently qualified and suited to be a youth leader and model. He had been a Scout and had earned the prestigious rank of Eagle Scout. He had held all the leadership ranks, except Scoutmaster, in Troop 102.

Ray had also been a member of a National Guard Cavalry unit, which in those days used horses. Ray was an accomplished horseman. When I first met him he drove an electric delivery truck for the Silverbread company making deliveries of their bread to local stores in the neighborhood. He was, however, aiming to become a fireman in the N.Y.C. Fire Department; a goal he reached before long. He also, when I first met him, was newly married or got married shortly thereafter to a lovely young woman, and before long they started a family. It was my great good fortune to have this man be my Cubmaster and I honor him to this day for all the good influences he had on my development into manhood.

A Cub Pack, just as any other organization, requires a certain amount of funds in order to operate. Scouting is a non-profit organization and it keeps its expenses to a minimum so that the costs of being a member does not deter a boy from belonging. Among the expenses the Pack had was the yearly registration fee of 50 cents per Cub Scout paid to the Council

Office, costs for badges and pins given to the Cubs who earn them, Den Flags and poles, Pack and U.S.A. Flags and poles, record keeping forms of various types, test passing/advancement cards given to the Cubs for their use and other miscellaneous though minor expenses. To help offset these costs each Cub paid weekly dues of 5 cents per meeting during the 10 months of the Scouting year. During July and August no meetings were held. Special events might require each Cub to contribute a modest additional sum but no boy was ever denied participation in the Pack meetings or events due to lack of personal funds. Some way was found to obtain funds from other sources for such purposes when that was necessary. Sometimes there would be some spare cash in the Pack's savings account to help defray some of such expenses and sometimes the adult leaders and committeemen would chip in.

Advancement

The Pack had not been in existence for a long time and consisted of about 20 boys. I was assigned to Den #3, which fell into formation on the Cubmaster's right as he faced the Dens lined up facing him in the belowground Gym beneath the side wing of the church proper - the church Parish House. The Scouting movement in the U.S.A. was 25 years old at the time as well as very popular and was run, loosely and mildly, along military lines in some ways.

I had earned the rank of Bobcat Cub Scout on 5 November 1935 (having done some studying beforehand at the suggestion of Ted Endersen a Den Chief and neighbor) and I started passing additional tests at once. My first tests, Flag and Stunts, were passed on 26 November 1935. Not having much time to remain a Cub Scout I had to work quickly at passing tests if I were to achieve any noteworthy distinction. So I applied myself and by the time the Pack stopped having meetings during the 1936 summer school vacation months I had achieved in turn the ranks of Wolf Bronze Arrow on 21 January 1936, Bear Bronze Arrow on 18 June 1936 and Lion Bronze Arrow on 18 June 1936. Cub Scout. I had also been selected to the leadership rank of Den Flag Bearer but being selected for the position of Denner eluded me since my time in the Pack was so short. Denner is the equivalent to Patrol Leader in a Scout Troop.

Among the Den Chiefs who helped and guided me were Theodore (Ted) Endersen, Eugene (Gene) Evensen and Howard Haboush. All of them were Scouts of Troop 102. Of the three I can only recall to memory a clear mental picture of "Ted" who was very tall, lanky and of fair complexion with blonde hair and two or three years older than I. He attended Brooklyn Technical H.S. as I would eventually. He lived three houses up the street from me with his

older sister Eleanor - who was a Girl Scout in the Girl Scout Troop at Good Shepherd, his younger brother, by 4 or 5 years, Clifford ("Cliff") and his mother and father. They were of Norwegian heritage and all very tall and big persons but not heavyset. "Cliff" who was a year or so younger than me became a Cub and Boy Scout for awhile and also eventually attended Brooklyn Tech. "Ted" was at Scout Camp at Ten Mile River during one or two years during summer periods at the same time I was. I can still call up mental images of this whole family. Many the summer vacation times we played non-stop games of Monopoly seated at a table on their front porch with them and some of the other of the many kids (all told some 19) on the block.

Of Evensen and Haboush I have only the dimmest recollections but think I could identify them from photographs taken of them at the time. All three of these Den Chiefs were members of Troop 102, good Scouts and served as role models for me and they whetted my desire to become a Den Chief.

In all of this advancement in the Cub Scouts I had been encouraged and mentored by Ray Gilbert. If you had an interest in being a good Cub Scout he would help you to become among the best, Once, that I recall, he invited me to come along with him on his bread delivery route. That was a treat for a young boy. The electrically powered delivery truck was silent as the whirring wings of a hummingbird and you felt important helping to do a real job.

The seven months and three weeks as a Cub Scout went by very enjoyably and quickly and I asked Ray if I could come back after I became a Boy Scout and be a Den Chief. Ray said that would be fine with him as soon as I qualified for that leadership position. Properly and understandably there were certain qualifications to be met for every leadership position. Den Chiefs were Boy Scouts who assisted the Cubmaster with running the Pack and served as role models for the Cub Scouts and whose presence at Pack activities and meetings it was hoped would encourage the Cubs to become Boy Scouts. Additionally, it gave boys an opportunity to acquire and practice leadership skills. It was a meaningful and valuable experience.

Ray Gilbert was assisted by another young adult man whose name was Ray Weeks. Ray Weeks and his brother Wilber, a little later on, started and led a Sea Scout Ship crew for a number of years before WW II started. This Sea Scout Ship was also sponsored by the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church to help keep older boys connected to the church. I think their actual sailing vessel was named "Good Shepherd" or "Shepherd".

The Cub Scout Uniform

At the time that I became a Cub Scout the official uniform was made of a dark blue medium weight cotton. The long sleeved shirt which buttoned at the wrists was a standard design with a button-down flap pocket on each side of the chest. The pants were the knickers type with a modest blousing just at the knees. The belt for the pants was a web belt with standard simple friction buckle though a fancier buckle with the Cub Scout wolf head insignia was available for purchase. Knee length rib-knitted stockings were long enough to be turned down into two overlapping 3" folds just below the knee and these folds covered the knitted cuff of the knickers. The stockings were held in place by rubber bands or elastic garters hidden under the folds. If one wanted to be fancy one could buy bright yellow knitted wrap-around garters with tassel that would show beneath the fold. A large bright yellow neckerchief folded into a triangle and then folded 2 or 3 times along the long base of the triangle was worn around the neck on top of the shirt collar. The neckerchief was imprinted with a dark blue border design and the Cub Scout emblem was located where it would show on pointed area of the neckerchief which was exposed on the back of the neck of the Cub Scout. There was a blue and gold neckerchief slide formed in the shape of a Turks head Knot that was slid up the two long ends of the neckerchief to the 3rd shirt button from the shirt neck location which was the top button to be buttoned. The two loose ends of the neckerchief were tied together in a slipknot. There was also an Eton shaped cap with gold piping but this adornment was avoided by most Cubs then, as they preferred to be bareheaded. Black shoes, preferably, were to be worn with the uniform but many wore brown shoes. Sneakers were frowned upon. All parts of the uniform that were blue were color matched in the same dark blue.

SCOUT WEEK



CELEBRATING SCOUTING'S BIRTHDATE

That February of 1936, as during each February, Boy Scout Week was celebrated to mark the start of the Scouting movement in the U.S.A. This movement, which became worldwide, began in England as an idea put into action by Lord Baden Powell who began the Boy Guides there. During Boy Scout Week you were asked to wear your uniform to school and other functions. Doing so took a little courage because you could be subjected

to derision, which could lead to altercations. However, despite some trepidation, I wore my uniform to school.

On Sunday of Boy Scout Week our sponsoring church, like many others, always held a church service to mark the birthday of the movement and also to give special acknowledgement to the boys and the men who volunteered their time to lead them and serve on the units committee. This service you attended in your uniform and it was neat to show off in front of the parishioners and especially the girls. I was there in my Cub Scout uniform that year of 1936 and in the many years that followed in my Scout and then Scout Leaders uniform. As the Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Sea Scouts with their Leaders and Committee Members proceeded up the church's center aisle in the processional behind the several church choirs I felt very special. When we were at our places in the pews reserved for us at the front of the nave close to the altar I made certain I stood erect and sat with a straight back and didn't fidget. This special church service was a real honor extended to all of us in the Scouting movement.

During each year's Scout Week it was a tradition for both Pack 102 and Troop 102 to have their Parents' Night on their respective meeting nights. This was a major event during the Scout year. Special events were planned to demonstrate to the parents the various Scouting skills their sons had acquired. Achievement awards were presented to the Scouts who had earned them. Scouts being promoted to a higher leadership rank were also presented with their new leadership badge of rank. In the case of the Troop its prestigious Nick Cioci Award was presented to the Scout being so honored and its annual "Troop Log" newsletter issue was distributed. The evening ended with refreshments being served to all. These consisted of cake, bisque tortoni ice cream, coffee, milk, soda and tea. A number of the active mothers would get these refreshments ready and the Scouts did the serving. The program for the evening had been carefully planned and prepared in advance by the leaders and the boys had practiced their parts at several meeting prior. It was an evening looked forward to by the Scouts and leaders and much enjoyed by the parents each year.

SEA SCOUT SHIP



SCOUTS AT SEA

Seamanship and Those Who Go Down To the Sea in Ships

Prior to WW II Good Shepherd also sponsored a Sea Scout unit. This was a program that attracted older teenage boys who had an interest in the sea. This Sea Scout Ship was led by two young men the brothers Wilbur and Ray Weeks who both were fine leaders and men. Each had been a member of Troop 102 and Ray had been the Ass't. Cubmaster of Pack 102.

The crew was never very large having at most 8 members. They met in the Gym on Tuesday nights after the Cub Pack meeting. They had a storage locker in the space underneath the floor of the church altar area which large space was divided into storage lockers by wood board partitions.

The ship's crew learned about seamanship, sailing, sails - their making and repair - their rigging & raising and lowering & storage, navigation, rules of the sea, sea lore, flag signaling, sea courtesies, weather concerns at sea, the use of the sextant, ropes and knot-tying and many other skills necessary to sail a ship at sea.

Their uniforms mimicked those of the U.S. Navy. And they had their own sailing ship upon which to practice nautical skills. They named their ship "Good Shepherd". Most of the members of this ship went into the Navy to serve during WW II.

Post-war the ship did not reactivate which was strange for a neighborhood, which had so many Scandinavians (a seafaring people) living in it.

THE NEW EDUCATIONAL BUILDING



HISTORICAL GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

In May of that year of 1936 Good Shepherd held an event of historical importance in the life of this church, which had been founded in 1907 as well as of historical importance to the neighborhood it served as well as the Borough of Brooklyn. The church had purchased a large empty plot of land abutting it on the north and at this event held a groundbreaking

ceremony and church service to mark the start of the building of a new 3-story building to be known thenceforth as "The Educational Building". As well as being a decision of great foresight this was a decision of incredible courage and daring in the midst of those deep depression years.

I was there with the Cub Pack in my uniform and have a photograph of the event taken by my mother. In that photograph can be seen Ray Gilbert, Eric Buckleitner, Albert Decker, Bill Fleischman and myself; all members of Cub Pack 102. At the left side of this photo can be seen Pastor Sunday, Assistant Pastor Schweihart and the Choir Master Smathers standing at a table set up as a temporary altar. Flanking this table on one end was Adrian Van Dyck holding the _____ American Flag and at the other end was Ingolf Henriksen holding the _____ Flag

In another photograph taken of the same view but from a vantage point further back my mother's face is shown in the center foreground among the large numbers of parishioners in attendance with myself and the others further in the background. This building included a room at the lower basement level for the exclusive use of the Troop and Pack. Within one year this marvelous building had been erected and occupied. The concept for a building (4 levels) dedicated to the purposes of the religious education of the youth and adults, the meetings of the various organizations within the church and the holding of the many clerical, secular and social functions of this very active church was brilliant. The building stands to this day as a testament to the clarity, the vision and the validity of the ideas that brought it into being it having served its great and intended purposes for over 66 years for thousands of adults, children and youths.

In the basement of this new building one of the rooms was assigned to the Cubs and Scouts as their "Scout Room". (The Sea Scouts had their own equivalent area in a walk-in storage locker in the cellar under the altar area of the original church itself). The Scout Room was used as an office and meeting area by the Leaders on their respective meeting nights. The Scout Room was about 12' x 16' with a 10' high ceiling and had a lockable closet in one corner approximately 6' x 8' wherein records were stored in a file cabinet and equipment and gear in painted storage bins. Painted shelves were on the walls. All but the file cabinets were built by the leaders. The Pack and Den Flags and the Troop and Patrol Flags were also stored here.

In the Scout Room itself the Leaders also built in a fake fireplace and mantle with bookshelves on either side along the short length of the exterior wall of the room. The wall space above the centered fireplace was solid but above each flanking shelf tier was a steel

double hung window that opened onto a grated below ground areaway. They had also lined its walls with a doorway-height wood wainscot topped by a narrow horizontal 1" x 2" trim board. The mantle, shelves and wainscot had been stained a light maple color and then varnished. The lockable entrance door to this room was in the wall opposite the window wall in the corner adjacent to the closet corner. This entrance doorway was off a long central hallway and on the side of the hallway opposite the Scout Room was a door leading to a Men's Room off which, through an interior door, was access to a shower room.

After the war, while I was Cubmaster, I designed some combination 18" deep x 18" high lockable bench/locker seats. These were installed by two fathers of two Cubs along the opposing long walls and each extended for 8' from the window wall along these long walls of the room. Made of white pine boards they were stained and varnished to match the bookshelves, mantle and wainscot. It provided some additional needed storage binnage and seats. The appearance of the Scout Room always suitably reflected its Scouting purposes.

The Brownie and Girl Scout Troops had their own room a distance down the same long hallway, on the side opposing the Scout Room location, and abutting a ladies Room. Off this same hallway, on the Scout Room side, was a large kitchen and pantry completely furnished with appliances, ovens, sinks, stoves, countertops, base and wall cabinets and storage closet.

In 1998 I made a tour of my former church buildings and found the Scout Room and closet bare of all these built-ins. The space was now being used as a large custodian/janitor closet. All the Scouting organizations (Boys and Girls) had disbanded some number of years previously. This was saddening and shocking to me! I felt as if some part of myself had been cut out and thrown away.

BROOKLYN SUNDAY SCHOOL PARADE



ANNUAL EVENT CELEBRATED ONLY IN BROOKLYN

What was then an annual event took place that June of 1936 and it was the Brooklyn Sunday School Parade, which started at about 2:00 P.M. and lasted about 1 & 1/2 hours.

Sunday Schools from the local Protestant churches banded together to hold this parade in their various Brooklyn neighborhoods. This event was unique to the Borough of Brooklyn and was an official holiday in that Borough. The event being celebrated was formally known as the Brooklyn Protestant Sunday School Union, which had taken place in the year

The Sunday School children and teachers, choir members, the Boy, Brownie, Cub, Girl, and Sea Scouts marched, as did any adults and leaders available at the time of day the parade was held. Each church had its own contingent and Good Shepherd always had the Scouts at the head of theirs along with the flags of the nation and church. The Pastor and other church officers also marched near the head of their contingent. Each Sunday School Division of the church paraded with their banners and the Scouts carried their Troop, Patrol and Den flags. The mothers of Sunday School children would decorate baby carriages, bicycles, toy wagons and tricycles with different pastel colors of crepe paper strips. All this gave a real festive air to the parade. The parade route was a cross configuration with the long leg along Fourth Avenue from Ovington Avenue (70th Street) to 80th Street and the cross rail along Bay Ridge Parkway (75th Street) from halfway between 3rd and 4th Avenues to halfway between 4th and 5th Avenues.

This was an exciting event to be part of and was always anticipated with joy. Good Shepherd, as did the other churches participating, served their participants cake and ice cream after the event on the premises of their own churches. Every kid had a ball! Adults too! Since this event always fell on a Thursday some of the Boy Scouts of Good Shepherd stayed on at church and helped with the clean up. For this good deed they were rewarded with receiving the excess left over ice cream and cake which they then held until their evening Troop Meeting at which it was then served to the members present. Those were some of the glory days of my youth. I was in this 1936 parade as a Cub Scout where as before I was there as a Sunday School member. In all subsequent years, as a member of the Boy Scouts, I also marched up until 1958 except the years 1944 and 1945 when I was away in the U.S. Army.

After this parade took place there were only about one or two Troop or Pack meetings before the summer hiatus. And so at the end of these brief almost 7 months crammed with activity the summer vacation period began but my transfer from Cub Pack to Scout Troop had been arranged. As a matter of fact I had been invited to attend the next-to-last Troop Meeting of that season which I did. At it I was introduced by Ray Gilbert to the Troop leaders and by them to some of the boys in the Troop and also inducted as a Scout into Troop 102. The transition was made nicely and smoothly in this manner on 18 June 1936. On this same date I was awarded the rank of Tenderfoot Scout and the badge of that rank

which I had earned by passing all the required tests. I was proud of my achievements as a member of Pack 102 now I was determined to make a comparable record for myself as a member of Troop 102.

I was assigned to the Woodpigeon Patrol and my Patrol Leader was Charles (“Charlie”) Ahl who had Gene Evensen as his Assistant Patrol Leader. Gene was one of my Den Chiefs in Cub Pack 102.

BOY SCOUTING



A LONG AND FRUITFUL ASSOCIATION COMMENCES

BOY SCOUT TROOP 102

THE NEXT ADVENTURE



Ray Gilbert was an admirable and nice man of about 25 years of age. He was also friendly and easy to like and a handsome guy in a manly way. That summer he arranged to take those Pack members who wanted to go to Ebbets Field to watch the Brooklyn Dodgers play baseball. To a Brooklynite boy that was tantamount to going to heaven. I went and enjoyed myself and had a soda and a frankfurter. Don't remember anything about the game but I do remember going because my Cubmaster was dedicated enough to take the time to take us to the ball game. I was learning the fundamentals of leadership being taught by example.

The summer of 1936 passed and I looked forward to receiving the one-cent postal card in the mail announcing the first Troop Meeting of the next Scouting season. The Scouting season for Troop 102 usually started on the first Thursday after Labor Day. It came and I went and took my place in the Woodpigeon Patrol of which Ray had been a member and a

Patrol Leader when he was a boy. It was not by accident that I had been assigned to this Patrol because Ray was hoping I would follow in his Scouting footsteps. Ray had made the Patrol Flag out of blue-dyed suede leather with a white pigeon silhouette painted on both sides and it was the nicest one of the four patrol flags.

There were up to eight boys to a patrol though a patrol might not always be at full strength. The other patrols were the Flying Eagles, the Tigers and the Beavers. The Scoutmaster was Mr. John H. Schmidt Jr. a nice but no nonsense man of about 30 years of age. There were four Assistant Scoutmasters: Arthur ("Artie") Borch, John (cJack") W. Lauenstein, George W. Lyons and Earl Erikson. These Ass't. SMs. were about 22 years old. Troop 102 had a long history and it must have been an excellent one to attract such a number of fine young men. Artie was of Danish heritage, which immediately made him a standout in my grandmother's eyes. All of these men played a role in mentoring me and I am in their debt for that alone not to mention the friendships they extended to me and their ready acceptance of me into the leadership ranks as time passed and I earned my way.

My Patrol Leader Scout Charles Ahl was another fine though younger (about 15 years of age) role model for me. "Charlie" played a mean piano using a chords system besides being an O.K. guy. My Assistant Patrol Leader was Gene Evensen who was also an O.K. guy.

All the men noted above had been Boy Scouts in Troop 102, had above average leadership qualities and were the best role models one could have as a boy or man.

The weekly dues each Boy Scout paid were 10 cents. The annual registration fee for each Boy Scout was 50 cents. As in the Cub Pack this expense and the others akin to those mentioned above in connection with the Cub Pack came out of the accumulated weekly dues. Adult Leaders in both the Pack and Troop paid no dues but paid their own registration fee. Leaders also paid their own way on outings and camping trips.

This induction into Troop 102 of myself was to start a very long association that was only interrupted by my call to serve in the military during WW II. Troop 102, I was to learn, had an outstanding reputation in the scouting movement of the Atlantic District of Brooklyn as well as in the Brooklyn Council of the Boy Scouts of America. This Troop was formed and chartered by the National Council BSA in 1919. The national organization of the Boy Scouts of America was chartered by the US Congress on 8 February 1910.

As a result the members of Troop 102 were permitted to wear their own unique Troop Numeral Badge on their sleeves. It was in the shape of a shield made of light blue felt or

flannel with white embroidered numerals. The standard numeral badge was rectangular of bright red flannel with white embroidered border and numerals. They were also the only Troop permitted to wear their Scout Neckerchief under their Scout Shirt collar. When the official color of the neckerchief to be worn by the Scouts of Brooklyn was changed to maroon the Scouts of Troop 102 were permitted to continue wearing their original neckerchief of dark blue. Such was their prestige in the scouting world of Brooklyn.

These special uniform considerations had immense morale value for all Troop members. These were only learned about after you became a member and were never used as a recruitment tool. Their excellent reputation had been earned over time because of dedicated and talented leadership at both the Troop and Troop Committee levels as well as the oversight exercised by the sponsoring institution, which was led by a brilliant man, Pastor William F. Sunday.

And certainly some of that excellent reputation had been achieved by the boys in the Troop as well. Group effort had brought about this favorable evaluation by the Brooklyn Council, Boy Scout of America Headquarters located in downtown Brooklyn then at 114-Remsen Street, then sometime later moving to 191-Joralemon Street (Tel. TRiangle 5-9453), then to 189 Montague Street and still later to 105 Court Street. Group effort, pride and respect would keep it so for many years to come. It was fate and good fortune for me that I joined this Troop and to this day I am grateful for all that was given and taught to me because of my association with Troop 102, B.S.A. The leaders and boys of this Troop became my second family and I still think of them in that light.

Scout Uniform

The Scout uniform of those days consisted of a hat, a shirt, a neckerchief with slide, pants with web belt and a buckle and stockings. The khaki color was olive tan and made of medium weight cotton. The hat was the campaign style shape of stiff felt like State Troopers or Forest Rangers wear. Scouts were not often seen wearing hats but at special outdoor events you might see a few. Occasionally a formal official event might require the hat. The shirt was long sleeved with buttons at the cuffs and front and had a collar and chest pockets with button-down flaps (just as the Cub Scout shirt). The pants were the jodhpur or cavalry type riding britches style with modest flaring. They were laced below the knee to about mid-calf. The web belt had a simple buckle though others were available with the scouting emblem on it. The knee-high stockings were rib-knitted and long enough to double fold at the top, as did the Cub Scouts. They were held in place just like the Cub Scouts and tassel type garters could be purchased in colors to match the neckerchief. These

stockings covered over the lacings on the britches.

The large square neckerchief came in dark colors and each Scout Council decided the official color for the Troops in that Council. It was also bordered but with white imprinting and the Scout Symbol of the fleur-de-lis showed on the triangular tip when worn. The neckerchief was a larger size square than the Cub Scouts since it was intended to also serve, when folded properly for each of these purposes, as a bandage, sling or tourniquet.. The two loose ends were also tied in a slipknot. The neckerchief slide was shaped in the same Turks head type of knot as the Cubs but formally the color was to match the neckerchief color. Brown shoes were the preference though black was acceptable but sneakers were not.

Some Scouts who were handy carved their own slides out of wood or small diameter tree branches or made them from different materials such as twine, metal, leather, lacing, deer vertebra, cow horn, bead work, antlers, etc. Many were painted with designs and colors; leather was often burnished with designs. American Indian motifs were often used in their creation. Only the Scout's imagination and skills were limiting in these regards and these creative touches individualized the uniform for the Scout and were encouraged.

COLLECTIONS AND COLLECTORS

The Scouting Movement was like many young peoples organizations in that some members stayed only a short time, some a medium length of time and others for a long period of membership. Most stayed for a medium length of time; until they started high school or dating at around 14 to 15 years of age.

Those who stayed the longest were also those most active and most prone to become leaders and this would be natural to be so. Of these a number became collectors and earners of various cloth and metal badges, camp emblems, awards, etc. and took up the hobby of assembling and earning collections of various scouting memorabilia. Items collected varied with individuals but they included: hats, neckerchiefs, neckerchief slides, belts, buckles, tassel garters, badges, emblems, insignia, pins, hiking staffs and knives. These types of items were obtained through earning, making, purchase or swapping/trading. At some Jamborees parts of the uniforms themselves were swapped. This was particularly true at national or international jamborees.

Articles such as these did not adorn the official scouting attire at formal official events. In fact, effective 1 January 1945, new regulations concerning the wearing of such items were issued by the National Council, BSA. They were promulgated to eliminate the use of the uniform and merit badge sash as a "walking bulletin board". Thus was started the custom of

Scouts and Scouters wearing collected items on separate vests or jackets These were seen on hikes, camping trips, at summer camp, at camporees, jamborees and trekorees during which, at times, informal attire was acceptable . These were also the events at which existed the most opportunities to acquire new items.

While I was not an avid collector I do have a small and varied collection.

Fortunately, some Scouts and Scouters also collected documents, photographs and publications. Many of these, or copies thereof, have been donated to the TMR Museum located near the TMR Scout Camps HQs building in Tusten, NY. Those items are extremely important as archival materials and most instructive and interesting to view.

Some Outstanding Scouts I Have Known

The Scouts mentioned hereafter began to show their potentials for becoming outstanding right from their beginnings in Scouting. They are not necessarily those who advanced the furthest in Advancement or in Leadership Positions. But rather they warrant the accolade of being " Outstanding Scouts "because of their overall excellent performances as Scouts. They came into Scouting with good leadership potentials, likable personalities, undeveloped skills and talents that all were obvious to the ear and eye. In Scouting they took the afforded opportunities to hone and practice those natural gifts. They went on to having noteworthy careers and to serving their communities in commendable ways.

Charles Ahl

John Aram

William Fleischman

Edward Krauss

Kim Mork

William Oathout

Donald Mollicone

Richard Mollicone

Donald Plenkens

Einar Stang

Walter Swanson

Robert Szutarsky

These were Scouts who, in my estimation, in the way they conducted themselves upheld the Scout Oath, Scout Law and Scout Motto. They gave more than they received and behaved honorably and righteously. I am extremely lucky and proud to have had them as my fellow Scouts and friends.

SPRUCE POND SCOUT CAMP



SHORT TERM CAMPING

I almost immediately started having exciting adventures. That Fall of 1936 I went on my first of what were to become many overnight camping trips, which usually took in the weekend, to Spruce Pond Boy Scout Reservation located near the hamlet of Southfields, N.Y. in Orange County. Spruce Pond was the favorite short-term camping area of the Scouts of Troop 102.

We called these trips Overnight Hikes that was only partly descriptive of this activity. Back before the 1950s there were many fewer 3-day weekends since holidays fell on their actual historical dates regardless of what day of the week that happened to be. (Shortly after WW II Congress began scheduling certain National Holidays so that a 3-day weekend would occur). However, back then there would occasionally occur a 3-day weekend and T 102 tried to schedule a 2-night overnighter camping trip to Spruce Pond to take advantage of this occurrence. Then such a 3-day camping trip was a real treat because it didn't happen often.

To get there we would meet very early on a Saturday morning in front of the church with our packs filled with our clothes, camping and sleeping gear. Many of the Scouts, like myself, had our bedroll (blankets rolled and tied inside a water repellent sheet - pup tent half or oil cloth - no plastic then) coiled horseshoe-shaped around the top and two sides of the pack and tied to it using the brass d-rings of the pack provided for such purposes. At the appointed departure time, usually 6:00 AM, we took the BMT Subway 4th Avenue Local train into Manhattan and got off at the Cortland Street stop from where we walked the short distance west to the Hudson River. We then took the Erie Lackawanna Ferry to the Erie Lackawanna Railroad station in Hoboken, N.J. There we boarded the morning milk run train travelling north and got off at Southfields, N.Y. Southfields was a flag stop station for passengers boarding and getting off.

From the train stop we then hiked with our packs on our backs along Route 17 south for a 1/2 mile to a road/trailhead on the west side of the road. Then it was up the mountainside along this steep (avg. 22 % grade) barely car-wide switch backing narrow road for about a mile until we reached the summit at elevation 850 feet where the lean-tos were spread about. This "Wagon Road" which ended at the summit area was one car wide and was used then by the camp caretakers to haul out debris and garbage and truck in materials for maintenance. About 350' up along this roadway was a relatively level area at 550' Elev. where campers' cars could be parked. The Campmaster was permitted to take his car to the summit and park it next to his Lodge.

There was a much steeper shortcut to the summit via the "Goat Trail" which had a 44 % average slope. Its trailhead was off the "Wagon Road" just a little ways before the aforementioned parking area. This was a narrow footpath only (no cars) that most Scouts and Scouters used because it was a challenge as well as shorter way to the summit. It was about one half the length of the "Wagon Road" but much harder on the body especially when carrying your fully loaded pack plus other items in your hands or loaded onto your pack.

Once at the summit you would see 13 Lean-tos spread about among the trees of this forested and rock strewn camping area. These structures were laid out around the 850' +/- high perimeter of the terrain that formed the upper rim of the hollow containing Spruce Pond. There was also a Campmaster's Lodge, two Latrines (Willys), a hand operated Water Pump and a Garbage Area with metal garbage cans with lids. Spruce Pond itself was downhill in the hollow bottom at an elevation of 650' at its water surface. The water surface of the pond measured approximately 1/10 mile wide by 1/8 mile long and the surrounding bog/swamp area in which the pond sat measured approximately 1/5 mile wide

by 3/8 mile long; both sets of measurements taken at the widest and longest points. The pond and the swamp area were very irregular ovoids in shapes

Usually at least one other roundtrip was made from camp to Southfields the first day in order to buy food, milk and supplies at the general store in the hamlet since we couldn't backpack all our needs from Bay Ridge. This corner store was located at the northern end of the hamlet and eastward a very short distance from Route 17 towards the railway tracks, which lay on the eastern side of the hamlet. We hiked along the road that went by this store after debarking the train. The building in which this store was located is still standing but the type of store is now different. Some of the senior leaders would drive up by car bringing their own and the Troop's camping gear and at times might instead drive a few miles south to an A & P in the town of Tuxedo for the same purpose. This A & P is no longer located in this stone building on the west side of Route #17 having moved elsewhere in the late 1980s or early 1990s. Its former space is now occupied by offices. In either instance the older boys and leaders still had to haul by their backpacks the supplies up the mountain by the same trail since no cars were allowed up to or in the camp other than the Campmaster's automobile as I recall. The hike to and from shopping was usually via the "Goat Trail".

Those who made the trip to Southfields or Tuxedo to help with backpacking the purchased supplies up to Spruce Pond also had the opportunity to stop at the Red Apple Rest to buy some "goodies". So it wasn't hard to get volunteers once that became known.

Sometime before WW II our Troop rented a locker at Spruce Pond in which was stored the cooking and other camping equipment needed on these overnight camping trips. This arrangement was very practical for it eliminated the need to tote this heavy equipment back and forth on the many trips the Troop made each year to Spruce Pond. The cost per year for the locker was about \$5.00. As I recall this locker space was built-in as part of the Campmaster's Lodge for security purposes.

A hand drawn map of Spruce Pond issued by the Brooklyn Council 10 Dec. 1953 on letter size paper indicates on its backside some of the following about camping at Spruce Pond:

Telephone Number - Tuxedo, N.Y. 4-9840 - this was the number of the phone in the Campmaster's Lodge;

Getting There:

By Auto - Geo. Washington Bridge, Route 17 to Southfields,

By Bus - Short Line from P.A. Bldg. @ 41st & 8th Ave. or Adirondack Transit from Dixie Terminal 241 W. 42nd St. - for Schedules Tel: LO 4-8484 Short Line & WI 7-5300 Dixie Bus and the Fare \$1.54 One-way & \$2.81 Round-trip;

By Train - Erie Railroad from Jersey City to Southfields - Fare \$1.58 One-way & \$2.83 Round - trip, call BA 7-6500 for Schedule.

Permit for Sat. & Sun. Only - Check Out by 4:00 P.M. Sunday. No Firearms in camp. Leave supply of wood in lean-to for next Unit. Have Campmaster inspect your site prior to checkout. Report accidents and fires to Campmaster immediately.

Coal available during cooler weather @ \$1.00 per bag payable to Campmaster.

Church Services at nearby Catholic and Protestant Churches - see Campmaster for Schedules.

CAMPERS' CODE - READ IT, DISCUSS IT WITH YOUR SCOUTS.

At this date Charles F. Emmeluth was Director of Year Round camping and the offices of the Camping and Activities Service of the Greater New York Councils, Boy Scouts of America was at 33 West 60th St., N.Y., N.Y. 23; Tel: PLaza 7-1905.

Depending on number of Scouts who were going on the overnight camping trip the Troop obtained a permit, at Brooklyn Scout HQs, for the use of one or two lean-tos. The cost per lean-to was \$2.00 or \$3.00 for the weekend. These permits, obtained at Brooklyn Council HQs, were given to the Campmaster upon our arrival. The lean-tos were 3-sided square structures with a sloping-to-rear roof and a raised wood plank floor. The sides were of logs sawed lengthwise in half with the sawed side facing inward. Its size was approximately 16 feet side-to-side and front to back. The height at front was about 6 feet and at rear 4 feet. Its open front could be closed over by a tarp provided for that purpose in wintertime and a steel stove was provided then too. We usually tried to get a permit to use Lean-tos No.7 and/or 8 because they were located off the beaten path but reasonably close to the water pump, the latrine ("willy" as we Scouts called it) and Spruce Pond itself which was downhill a ways and they weren't too close to the Campmaster's Lodge.

Spruce Pond was used for swimming in the mild weather months and for ice-skating when

frozen over in wintertime. A wide area surrounding it was bog/swamp. The water was dark tea colored from the natural tannins that steeped into it and at times could contain many leeches. It had a short dock extending out into the water with an attached swimming crib. This crib, in deep water, was an area of about 30 feet by 30 feet by about 4 feet deep. It was enclosed on its 4 sides by horizontal 2" x 6" timbers spaced about 6 inches apart and had a similar wood timber floor where the boards were spaced about 1/2 inch apart. This crib was for use by non-swimmers and was also used for giving swimming lessons and for practicing swimming.

A certified lifeguard, an older Scout or Scouter provided by HQs filled this role or sometimes it was the Campmaster, was required to be on duty before any swimming activity could take place outside the crib. And the crib was equipped with a lifebuoy ring with rope and a long life saving pole. If you had passed your 1st Class Scout Swimming Test you were allowed to swim in the deep water outside the crib area but the lifeguard-manned rowboat with oars had to patrol the deep-water area where the swimmers were. If one of your leaders had passed the Life Saving Merit Badge, was a Red Cross Certified Lifeguard or had passed the Red Cross Life Saving Course he could fill the role of the required lifeguard during the swimming period providing he had evidence with him to certify that.

Troop 102 usually went on overnight camps on Columbus Day Weekends, during the Christmas vacation period from schools, on Lincoln's or Washington's Birthday Weekends, during the Easter Week vacation from schools and then the Memorial Day weekend. This schedule fit with the scout's school schedules as well as the work schedules of the adult leaders who were required to be along on all these trips. You had to be at least 18 and an Assistant Scoutmaster to lead these trips. Ah h h those were wonderful days to be a boy!

Unfortunately the Spruce Pond property is no longer used by the Greater New York Council of the B.S.A. It had been rented by them for many years from the Palisades Interstate Park Commission. Sometime during the mid 1980s the Park Commission informed the Council that expensive and extensive improvements had to be made to the property to put it into conformity with the many new environmental laws and regulations. Very sadly no way was found to fund these improvements and the Boy Scouts had to cease leasing and using this premier short term camping ground. Chances are that even had the improvements been funded that the new rent amount would have been prohibitively too high for the Boy Scouts to afford. 'tis a darn shame!

Camping and Hiking Gear and Camp Activities

To get ready for this first camping adventure I had to assemble some camping gear from scratch. Some items such as the pack, the mess kit and canteen were bought at Levison's Army and Navy and Sporting Goods store located on the west side of 5th Avenue between 83rd and 84th Streets in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, N.Y. The address was 8304 Fifth Avenue and their telephone number was SHore Road 8-5600. This store was an Official Boy Scout Outfitter and it was here my mother had purchased both my Cub and Scout uniforms. In addition to being told what items of necessity to bring on the trip we had been shown, at a Troop meeting prior to the trip, how to pack a pack and how to make a sleeping bag using 2 blankets and blanket pins. So I used blankets from home and only needed to buy six blanket pins for this purpose. Blanket Pins are oversized safety pins about 4 & 1/2 inches long made from about 1/16 " diameter brass or chromed brass wire.

On this first trip I borrowed half a pup tent from the Troop's equipment stores to use as the outer wrapping of my blanket roll which roll I formed into a horseshoe shape around the two sides and top of my pack and tied it thereto and as the ground cover under and around the blanket sleeping bag to keep the ground moisture and dew from seeping into the sleeping bag. The canvas of this pup tent half also served to seal out wind and rain. It all worked fine. In winter we increased the blanket count to 3 or 4.

Over time, of course, we added to my camping gear such items as folding scout knife, hunting knife, camp ax, hiking boots and such. These were usually wishes that were fulfilled as presents at birthdays and Christmases. It wasn't until after my return from the Army after WW II that I purchased Army surplus items such as a down sleeping bag, a ski trooper's backpack and a poncho at the Triangle Store located at 182 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, NY.

Our activities on the trip were varied and kept us busy. There were instructions given in the various outdoor related scout tests and those who felt ready could take and try to pass these tests.

Help was needed to gather firewood (dead wood only) and to chop some of it to usable lengths, to make the cooking fires and spits, to help with the cooking and to do the K.P. of the pots and pans. Each scout cleaned his own mess kit in the hot soapy water and hot rinsing water made available as one of the chores that was done by the scouts.

Garbage had to be taken to the garbage disposal area and there placed in the tightly covered 55-gallon steel drums. The used tin cans and milk bottles were put in burlap bags and taken down to the trailhead on Sundays as part of the hike that started the trip home. These were

recycled by the Spruce Pond maintenance crew. Reasonably clean paper products were burned.

The outdoor larder/pantry had to be kept in order and out of harms' way. In the hot weather items that needed cooling were hung in burlap bags from trees with a canvas bucket above it slowly dripping its water onto it to provide evaporative cooling.

One of the leaders would often take those willing on a hike through the woods during which he would talk about conservation, nature study and woodsman lore and identify different trees and growth to them. Some of the scouts would collect leaves from the various trees and shrubs to study and memorize for future identification by them. Some made scrapbooks using these leaves. In transferring their knowledge and skills the leaders were helpful but did not force feed believing that the Scouts must also apply and exert themselves independently at their individual learning rate and thus become not only knowledgeable but self-sufficient, a very worthy trait.

Weather permitting there would be a swim period or two in the pond. In winter ice-skating or an ice hockey game might take place on the iced-over pond. Saturday evening there was usually story telling and a songfest while sitting around the campfire. Due to all the excitement of the days events, most of the scouts fell easily to sleep around 9 P.M. Some however were too excited to fall asleep at that hour and kept awake talking to a buddy much later into the night. But they all were invariably up very, very early however and this could be a trial for the leaders.

Sunday morning, after breakfast, one of the leaders would conduct a religious service for the Protestant scouts. Those who were Catholic would be taken by another leader on a hike to Tuxedo where they would attend Mass at the Catholic Church. This was approximately an 8-mile roundtrip hike; though most times they hitched rides. Times were different then and personal safety was not such a critical concern as now.

Other Activities at Spruce Pond

Saturdays were almost totally filled with planned activities whereas Sundays had most of the day allotted to free time for the boys to enjoy whatever constructive activities they wished to pursue.

The First Class Scout 14 Mile Hike test I passed at Spruce Pond on a Saturday morning, after breakfast, on one of our overnight camping trips there. I wore a full pack and had a

hiking pole along. Jack and Charlie hiked with me down the mountain from Spruce Pond to where Route 17 intersects Route 17A which leads to Greenwood Lake 8 miles away. At that point I was on my own to hike towards Greenwood Lake for a distance of 7 miles and then return to the starting point. I was on my honor to complete the whole hike without getting a lift and I kept my honor intact. I was instructed to report about a specific item I would see at the 7-mile mark. Spruce Pond was a great place to pass outdoor tests though not all Scouts, despite encouragements, took advantage of that opportunity.

On Saturdays lunch and supper were prepared and eaten and on Sundays it was breakfast and lunch. All the meals were cooked over the open fire and the Troop's Coleman stove by the leaders. Scouts took turns helping so they would learn from the experience.

During swimming season we would schedule lunch early enough on Sundays so that after waiting an hour after eating there would still be time for a swim period before having to start packing for the return trip back home. This swim period also served as a chance to soap up and bathe using Ivory Soap, which floated. Being around campfires and charred wood gets you gritty.

At about 2:30 P.M. on Sundays the work of getting ready to leave camp would begin. This involved not only each scout in packing his own gear but also in helping to clean the grounds around the lean-to, sweeping out the lean-to (or a second lean-to if that had been needed for the numbers on the trip), putting out the cooking and camp fires properly and leaving a supply of firewood inside each lean-to that had been used for use by the next group to use it. The fire pits were rings of stone with an opening at the front. These were cleared of ashes, etc. and then crossed unburned branches placed inside the stone ring to indicate that no accidental fire could have started there. Great care was taken to make certain that no glowing embers were left behind. We were required to get the Campmaster to inspect our sites and give us approval of our efforts before leaving. The leaders also took part in all of this work and they were the ones who carried the Troop's gear down the mountain and got it home in addition to their personal equipment. At the trailhead the leaders put this stuff into whomever's leader's car was in use for the trip. Cars could temporarily park at this off-road trailhead area though it was not a large space or if they had parked at the campers' parking area up the "Wagon Road" the car was loaded there since the "Goat Trail" came out at this spot. If necessary the cars could use the south end of the large parking lot of the Red Apple Rest, which was across Route 17 but about a 50 yards north of the trailhead location.

The start down had to begin no later than at 3:30 P.M. in order to meet the Red and Tan Bus

Line or perhaps it was the Short Line bus at the trailhead on Route 17 and still leave time for the Scouts to buy some goodies at the Red Apple Rest across the road and a 300 feet north of the trailhead. This timeout for refreshments was a must and a tradition. No overnigher could meet approval unless this diversion was included.

The bus would arrive at around 5 P.M. and after waving it to a stop we would pile aboard after the backpacks had been stored in the luggage compartments in the lower part of the bus below the seating area. The trip to the bus depot in Manhattan took about an hour and then it was onto the subway train for the ride to Bay Ridge. Each of us would get off at the stop nearest our home. Sometimes Scouts were meeting their parents in front of the church in which case a leader would go with them to make certain they got picked up. All of us would be home by 7 or 7:30 P.M. tired but happy and looking forward to the next camping trip. By the time I went into the Army at the end of June 1943, I estimate that I had gone on at least 30 Overnight Hikes.

A WINTER OVERNIGHT HIKE TO REMEMBER

During the Christmas 1939 break in the school year Troop 102 went on an overnight hike to Spruce Pond. It was cold up there and snow was on the ground. Spruce Pond itself was frozen over with ice thick enough to safely ice skate on.

This was a 3-day trip and during one of those days some of the older Scouts decided to play some ice hockey. I hadn't brought my ice skates so I didn't participate. Not all the players had brought hockey sticks so some branches were cut from some short weed trees growing near the pond's edge from which to make hockey sticks for those needing them. These branches they shaped into reasonably facsimile hockey sticks using their scout knives; peeling the bark as necessary. Then the game took place and was greatly enjoyed.

At the following Thursday night Troop Meeting some of these Scouts showed up with bad cases of Poison Sumac or Poison Oak. I recall that Charles Ahl was wearing white cotton gloves to help keep his affliction from spreading any further. It had already showed up on his private parts as well as on his hands and arms. Unknowingly the branches that had been cut, shaped and peeled were from Poison Oak or Sumac bushes.

Of course in a way this was poetic justice because the live branches should not have been cut from the trees in the first place.

BIKE HIKE

Bicycle Trek to Spruce Pond - An Ultimate Adventure

In the early Spring of 1943, during the Easter school recess, three Scouts and myself laid plans to peddle our bicycles to Spruce Pond where we would meet up with other Scouts and ASMs from the Troop for a overnight camping experience on a Saturday and Sunday. This was during the short time frame when we young 18 year old ASMs, who were just out of high school but working and waiting to be drafted, were in charge of the Troop since the older ASMs and the SM had been drafted into the military by then.

The initial group of four bicyclers were Robert (Bob) Frank, William (Billy) Oathout, Einar (Oscar) Stang and myself. Near the last minute Bob Frank could not go on the trip so only three of us went on this grand adventure, which turned out to be more of an adventure than we had anticipated.

The four of us had done some careful prior planning for this adventure for the logistics and the route to be taken. We wanted to leave very early to avoid as much traffic along our way as possible (even though in those days there was nowhere near the volume of road traffic one encounters today) since bicycles are no match for autos, buses or trucks. We also wanted to travel what we believed were the roads less travelled wherever possible while still taking as direct and shorter route as possible. Also since we were going to meet other leaders and the Scouts not biking at Spruce Pond at midmorning we planned to arrive there at about the same time as they would using the Erie RR. This meant an arrival there at about 9:30 AM. We figured it would take us about 4 to 5 hours to bike ride to Spruce Pond; about 4 times as long as it took to go there by car.

Should also mention that at that time the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel, the Garden State Parkway, the New Jersey Turnpike, the New York Thruway, the Palisades Parkway and the Tappan Zee Bridge did not exist.

We would prepare our bikes to put them in good shape and we would have our knapsacks and other gear with us though reduced in quantity as much as could be practical. We would have snacks and first aid kits and bicycle repair kits and a tire pump with us. Of course our canteens would also be with us filled with water.

Thus it was, as prearranged, that the three of us met on the sidewalk in front of the Educational Building on 4th Ave at 4:30 A.M. We each had biked there from our respective homes. After checking with each other to ascertain we each had brought what was required for the trip, that each of our bikes were in shape for the triip, that whatever was tied to the bike (to handle bars, to package carrier over the rear wheels, etc.) and that packs being

toted on our backs were comfortably and properly in place we started off down 4th Ave.

As expected there was hardly any other road traffic with which to contend at that early hour and that pleased us. Traveling in a generally northeasterly direction along 4th Ave. we got to the point in downtown Brooklyn where 4th Ave intersects with Flatbush Ave. at the point where 4th Ave. and Flatbush Ave end and where the Flatbush Ave Extension begins.

Taking Flatbush Ave. Ext. in a generally northwesterly direction we biked until we came to Fulton St. where we turned left onto it in a westerly direction and biked along it until we came to Adams St. onto which we turned right in a northerly direction towards the Brooklyn Bridge. Traffic was still light as we crossed the bridge riding our bikes and soon we were riding in Manhattan.

Once in Manhattan we first biked a very short distance north along Centre St. and then turned left on Chambers St. riding on it in a westerly direction until it intersected Broadway a block away. We turned our bikes right onto Broadway and now started the next long haul north on it until we reached Dyckman St. near the northern tip of Manhattan Island. At this point we turned left and rode westerly downhill towards the Dyckman St. Ferry (no longer in existence since at least the completion of the Tappan Zee Bridge). We sailed along with our bikes across the Hudson River on the ferry to the New Jersey side where we debarked. We were now at the bottom of the very tall Englewood Cliffs, which are part of the Palisades. The trek to the top was too steep to ride our bikes and so we pushed them along the steep and winding path. This was the most arduous part of the trip thus far.

Once at the top we could ride our bikes again and proceeded westerly until we came to Route 4, which we took in a northwesterly direction. For this short distance we used our maps to guide us. By this time traffic volume had picked up and Route 4 then as now was a busy road though not as heavily travelled then as today. Nevertheless we decided to take some side streets while biking our way to Route 17. This seemed sensible to us and we again used the maps we had brought along to help us find our way.

Once at Route 17 we turned northerly onto it. We were now near Paramus and travelling towards Suffern on Route 17. So far so good. We were pretty much on schedule timewise. We hadn't travelled too far along Route 17 when it began to snow. This was a late season snowfall and was unexpected at this time of year though it happened once in awhile. At first the snow fell lightly and in very small flakes and we managed to keep pedaling along. We comforted each other by saying this was probably a snowfall of short duration and soon it would stop. But it didn't! The wind picked up, the snowflakes became larger, wetter and

heavier, the rate of snowfall increased and it started to stick and build up on the roadway.

Our visibility was diminished, snow was blown in our eyes, our progress slowed considerably and before long we could only dismount and walk our bikes. We were also getting chilled and wet though we had brought outerwear suitable for this time of year. We were plodding through increasingly deeper snow and getting a little dispirited. There wasn't a lot of traffic at that time of day along Route 17 where we were and that was both a blessing and a curse. It diminished our hazards from traffic but also reduced the likelihood of getting a lift. We also started to worry about the other leaders and scouts who were depending on us to get to them on time. Though they had the Spruce Pond Leanto Permits I had the money with which to buy foods and groceries.

We had been struggling along for a long while in wet and heavy snow that was by now six to eight inches deep when fate smiled upon us. A man driving a small stakebed truck north along Route 17 pulled off, stopped and offered us a ride. He was driving to some place north of Southfields and would be glad to take us to and drop us off there. We didn't need a second invitation to such salvation. We loaded our bikes onto the truck's stakebed and squeezed into the cab; all three of us made ourselves fit next to our good samaritan driver.

Getting the lift had put grins on our faces and the warmth of the truck's cab put smiles on our hearts. The driver had to maintain a slower speed than normal because of the driving conditions. Sometime and somewhere between where we were picked up and our arrival in Southfields the snowing abated and then stopped. Upon getting to Southfields the sun was shining and its light and rays reflecting off crystalline and sparkling white snow. Luck was turning in our favor again.

Up ahead as we closed in on Southfields we saw the other leaders and Scouts on the west side of Route 17 at foot of the "Goat Trail" trailhead. We asked our helpful ride giver to stop across Route 17 from where they were impatiently and worriedly waiting for us. That he did and we got out of his cab and unloaded our bikes from his truck. We gave him our profuse and sincere thanks and he drove off with waves from the three of us.

We, of course had to explain events to our waiting compatriots, which we did and they marveled at and also understood why we were about 2 hours late. They had been waiting with emptied packs to haul our purchases from the Southfields' grocery store up to Spruce Pond. Their trip had not been delayed and they had already checked in and setup camp at and in the lean-tos. The hike up to Spruce Pond from Route 17 in the snow had been their only hardship but sliding down had been a joy.

Since we bikers had decided to ask the proprietors of the grocery store to let us temporarily store our bikes with them all of us headed there north along Route 17. The store's proprietors were gracious enough to consent to letting us store our bikes for as long as we required after we explained to them our predicament. We told them that if road conditions were such that we couldn't bike back to the city on the next day that we could have one of the biker's fathers drive up and get the bikes within a week. So they allowed us to store the 3 bikes in the cellar of the store.

The purchasing of foodstuffs and groceries took place just as listed on the purchasing list and all of us headed back towards Spruce Pond. We bikers toted our packs etc. and the others toted the purchases in their now full packs. The trek up to Spruce Pond was somewhat arduous though we took the "Wagon Road". The rest of the overnigher was normal with the added spice of having snow in which to camp and play.

Sunday we all took the bus back to Manhattan and the subway to our homes as usual. Of course we bikers had a real adventure to relate at home and to the Scouts at the next Troop meeting who hadn't gone on the hike. This adventure has remained in my mind through all the years since then and I still get a thrill from thinking about it. I imagine it has been the same for the other two-biker hikers.

At the very next Troop meeting our bikes were brought to it by Mr. Oathout, Bill Oathout's father, who had made the trip to Southfields with his car to pick them up and get them back to us. A good deed indeed.

As long as I was involved with trips to Spruce Pond thereafter I always made certain that some purchases were made at this grocery store in Southfields. That was the least I could do for their freely given and kind help.

HIKING AS FRONTIERSMEN

Cross-Country Hike - Destination Spruce Pond

In 1952 or thereabouts, while I was SM of Troop 102, I led about 8 of the Scouts on a cross-country hike to Spruce Pond. I can't recall the names of all the Scouts who ventured on this trip but I believe that Donald and Richard Mollicone were among them.

Early on a Saturday morning we took the subway to Manhattan and there took a bus to the outskirts of Suffern, NY. We all carried packs with our camping gear and some food. The plan was to hike cross-country from there to Spruce Pond where we had a permit to stay overnight in a lean-to and return home our usual way from there on Sunday. Our plan was also to purchase the needed food for the stay at Spruce Pond from the grocery store in Southfields.

I had a map to help guide us and we sought to find the first trailhead for the trail leading towards our destination. With some directional help from some kind people at a very nice large home, built of river stone, located not far from our bus drop-off spot we got on our way. Despite the help from the people at the house I had some difficulty finding the trail but finally thought I had found it. Cross-country we headed in a generally NNW direction. I would use my compass every so far to verify we were heading in the right direction and to pick out the next landmark towards which to head. It was rough terrain and up and down hills. Every once in awhile we lost the trail and had to proceed without a clearly blazed trail. In fact that was our experience most of the way. The Catskills' landscape is littered with boulders and rocks. There seems to be more of these than trees and one gets the feeling that rocks and boulders are a crop.

Lots of time was eaten up, much more than I had expected, and as dusk fell I decided we had to camp out along the non-trail that night. We sought out a likely spot to make camp on a slight somewhat soft mound in a small clearing. There we cooked a simple meal from a few canned goods I and some older Scouts were toting and then we sacked out in our bedrolls or sleeping bags. It was pitch black deep in those dense woods and we kept the campfire low as a forest fire safety precaution and then made certain it was out before I went to sleep. It was summertime and mild so we had no discomfort from any chill or cold.

We awoke at dawn and found that our campsite mound was an anthill. We hastily broke camp and shared some candy bars for breakfast on the non-trail. First order of business was to orient ourselves for we had to get to Spruce Pond in time to catch the late afternoon bus back to the city. Using the map and compass I headed us in the direction of a power line cut shown on the map. It was rough going with no trails but after an hour or so we found it. We followed the cut, which was a little easier going, and eventually it intersected a road as the map indicated. I decided we should follow roads to our destination in order not to be lost again and so as not to run out of time.

We made it to the Spruce Pond trailhead on Route 17 with time to spare before the bus

arrived. This was fortuitous since it gave us all a chance to use the toilets and to buy some grub at the Red Apple Rest. We were hungry! The bus came, we got on and the trip home was as normal: uneventful. Of course this adventure, with its tough hiking ground, unplanned detours and problems to overcome, was the topic of excited conversation on the bus trip home as it was undoubtedly also when the Scout got home to his parents. It has probably made a wonderful tale for those Scouts to tell to their children and grandchildren in the years that followed. It did for me. We had all had a small taste of what it must have been like to be a frontiersman.

Never did get to use that lean-to permit. Still "All's well that ends well!" At the following Troop Meeting I refunded the hikers their share of the unexpended funds that they had contributed towards the costs.

Advancement in Troop 102

I was very happy being a Boy Scout and wanted to make a good record for myself. Therefore I also worked at passing the various tests required to advance in the achievement ranks. Eventually I became a Life Scout with 20 Merit Badges. This was one shy of the 21 needed to earn the Rank of Eagle Scout in those days. The merit badge I lacked was the Pathfinding Badge; one of those required for Eagle Scout rank. My advancement towards trying to become an Eagle Scout was as follows; Tenderfoot Scout 18 June 1936, Second Class Scout 31 October 1937, First Class Scout 17 November 1938, Star Scout 19 October 1939 and Life Scout 6 June 1942. I let the Eagle Scout rank elude me to my everlasting regret.

I also wanted to advance in the leadership positions and strove to show I had leadership qualities and eventually became the Scoutmaster and before that the Cubmaster. In all of this I was encouraged and helped by many mentors who also became my friends. But the expectations of me, which I sensed in my family and my leaders, also played a role. Dedication, effort and enthusiasm can take one a long way but seldom is anything worthwhile achieved without encouragement and support. Along with these successes I was also fortunate to be awarded several honorary awards.

I became a Den Chief on 18 November 1937, a Senior Den Chief on 8 February 1940, Assistant Cubmaster on 10 September 1942 and Cubmaster on 30 April 1946 after my return from military service. I held the Cubmaster position until 30 April 1950.

I became Assistant Patrol Leader on 12 October 1937, Patrol Leader on 16 June 1938,

Senior Patrol Leader on 8 February 1940, Junior Assistant Scoutmaster on 24 April 1941, and Assistant Scoutmaster on 10 September 1942. I held this position until 29 June 1943 when I was drafted into active military service; though from March 1943 until then I was "Acting" Scoutmaster since I was the last of the leaders to go into military service. During the leaders' years in the military their annual registrations were kept current and the Troop was run by John Whatley, a father of one of the Scouts, and 16 year old Scouts under the eyes of the Troop Committeemen. Ray Gilbert continued as Cubmaster since his job as a Fireman kept him deferred.

On 30 April 1946 I again became active as an Assistant Scoutmaster. This was after returning from 34 months of military service, from 15 June 1943 to 15 April 1946, in the U.S. Army of which the last 14 months were served in the European Theater of Operations (ETO). I became Scoutmaster in April 1950.

Due to my increasing responsibilities at work while also attending night classes at Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn to earn a degree in Civil Engineering I relinquished the Scoutmaster position on 30 April 1954 and became a Troop Committeeman at that time. I held the Committeeman position until 30 April 1959. Jack Lauenstein the immediately prior Scoutmaster took over as Scoutmaster again.

It interesting for me to note in the records that on the 20 January 1938 when I was 13 and 1/2 years old I was 5 feet plus 1/2 inch tall and weighed 107 and 1/2 pounds. On 20 April 1939 at 14 years plus 9 months I was 5 feet and 3 and 1/2 inches tall and weighed 120 pounds. On 1 May 1941 at 16 years plus 10 months I was 5 feet and 6 inches tall and weighed 135 pounds.

There is a lot of reading and studying to do on your own in order to pass the requirements set for advancement through the grades of Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. Most of that reading and studying is of the Boy Scout Handbook and then of the Merit Badge Pamphlets published for each merit badge. The Scout may also research other books and publications including the wonderful Boys Life Magazine published by National BSA organization. Perforce a lot of the practical coaching help comes from your leaders and other scouters or scouts who demonstrate and explain the skills you are trying to master. In this way over time the scouting knowledge is passed to each succeeding wave of scouts.

My Tenderfoot Scout tests were given to me by the Ass't. Scoutmasters; Artie Borch, Jack Lauenstein, George Lyons and Earl Erikson.

I can recall going to the Propect YMCA, located on the north side of 9th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues, with Jack, George and Charlie a few times so they could help me with my swimming skills so I could pass the Swimming test which was one of the requirements for becoming a First Class Scout.

SECOND CLASS SCOUT TESTPASSING RECORD

- 30 Day Service - 10-22-36; J.L.
- First Aid - 10-17-37; A.B.
- Signaling - 9-16-37; E.E.
- Tracking - 1-14-37; J.L.
- Pace - 10-22-36; J.L.
- Knife and Axe - 8-30-37; E.K.
- Fire Making - 4-10-37; G.E.
- Cooking - 4-10-37; G.E. (Boil water and boil a potato)
- Thrift - 10-22-36; J.L.
- Compass - 10-22-36; J.L.
- Oath and Law - 1-21-37; J.L.
- Safety - 1-14-37; J.L.

Indoor tests were usually taken at Troop Meetings and outdoor tests on hikes, other outings or at summer camp. Sometimes your Patrol Leader would meet you at a neighborhood empty lot where you could try to pass Firebuilding and Cooking or other outdoor tests.

FIRST CLASS SCOUT TESTPASSING RECORD

- 60-Day Service - 1-5-37
- Swimming - 8-17-38; E.W. @ T.M.R. Scout Camp
- Thrift - 12-16-37; J.L. & J.E.K.
- Signaling - 8-12-38; W.B, @ T.M.R. Scout Camp
- Hike - 10-21-37; A.C.B. @ Spruce Pond & J.E.K.
- First Aid - 12-15-37; J.E.K.
- Cooking - 8-38; J.E.K. @ TMR (Bacon, Pancakes, Oatmeal)
- Map Reading and Map Making - 8-4-38; K.S. @ TMR
- Handicraft - 3-17-38; G.W.L.
- Judging - 1-6-38; G.W.L. & 8-21-38; J.E.K. @ TMR
- Nature - 8-38; O.B. @ T.M.R. Scout Camp & 8-38 J.E.K. @ TMR (Trees)
- Oath and Law - 8-17-38; I.J.M.

Sometime after I started taking the First Class Scout Tests there were some changes made to the requirements and this is why there are two dates and different names of those who gave the tests on some of the tests. You were required to pass the new requirements as long as you had not achieved First Class Scout Rank prior to the changes.

The items you prepared in all cooking tests had not only to pass taste tests by the one giving you the test but you also had to eat all you prepared.

TEST PASSING GIVERS IDENTITIES

- J.L. = Jack Lauenstein
- A.B. or A.C.B. = Arthur C. Borch
- E.E. = Earl Erikson

- E.K. or J.E.K. = John (Ed) Krauss
- G.E. = Gene Evensen
- G.W.L. = George W. Lyons
- O.B. = Ogman Baumer
- W.B. = William Beechel
- E.W. = Ed Wegkvaar
- K.S. = Ken Stod
- I.J.M. = Ib J. Mork (the revised requirements mandated that you attest to your qualifications to become a First Class Scout)

MERIT BADGE PASSING RECORD

- Personal Health - 8-18-39; J.A. @ TMR
- Safety - 8-18-39; J.A. @ TMR
- Public Health - 8-19-39; J.A. @ TMR
- Handicraft - 8-26-39; A.S. & J.A. @ TMR
- First Aid - J.A. & J.E.K; 8-27-39 @ TMR
- Scholarship - 11-16-39; A.L.C.
- Reading - 2-15-40; H.A.
- Civics - 4-11-40; H.A.
- Blacksmithing - 6-7-40; F.D.
- Metal Work - 6-12-40; J.F.K.
- Firemanship - 3-4-41; R.L.G.
- Horsemanship - 3-8-41; C.F.
- Cooking - 8-23-41; J.M. @ TMR

- Pioneering - 8-23-41; J.M. @ TMR
- Camping - 8-23-41; J.M. @ TMR
- Athletics - 6-9-42; Ben. N.
- Reptile Study - 7-24-42; W.B. @ TMR
- Bird Study - 8-21-42 ; B.N. @ TMR
- Swimming - 8-29-42; B.G. @ TMR
- Life Saving - 8-29-42; A.B. @ TMR

MERIT BADGE COUNSELLORS

- J.A. = John Albertine - Prov'l. SM @ TMR
- A.S. = Arthur (Artie) Seale - Prov'l. SM @ TMR
- J.E.K. = John Edward (Ed) Krauss - ASM Troop 102
- A.L.C. = Albert L. Colston - Principal of Brooklyn Technical High School
- H.A. = H. Adlerstein - Teacher @ Brooklyn Technical High School
- F.D. = Frank Dellert - Teacher @ Brooklyn Technical High School
- J.F.K. = John F. (Pop) Krauss - Teacher @ Brooklyn Technical High School
- R.L.G. = Raymond L. Gilbert - Cubmaster Pack 102
- C.F. = Carlos J. Freddi - Captain NYC Mounted Police
- J.M. = J. (Sal) Marasciullo - Hikemaster @ TMR
- Ben.N. = Ben Nathan - Teacher @ Brooklyn Technical High School
- B.N. = William (Bill) Nash - Naturalist @ TMR
- W.B. = William Bierschenk - Ass't. Naturalist @ TMR
- B.G. = Bob Gallagher - Prov'l. ASM @ TMR
- A.B. = Arthur (Bindi) Buettner - Waterfrontman @ TMR

Charlie Ahl, Ed Krauss and Bill Nash had been Junior Staff members at TMR, Division IV during the 1938 camping season. As such I saw them there when I was a camper @ TMR during the 4th Period of 1938. In 1938 I spent two weeks at TMR whereas in 1937, my first time at summer camp, I was at TMR for one week.

Troop Meetings

Troop 102 met on Thursday nights in the downstairs gym under the church parish hall from 7:30 until 9:30 P.M. and started and closed on time. Dues were 10 cents per week and if a boy had a difficulty in paying that then he could pay whatever he could whenever he could. No issue was made of it. If need be the adult leaders would make up the deficits in the Troop budget if any.

Similarly, if a boy couldn't afford to buy his uniform then there was usually some used uniforms in good condition in storage in the Troop Room Closet one of which would fit him just fine. These were uniforms that other Scouts had grown out of and had donated for just such needs. Again no big deal was made of it. Such situations were handled very matter of factly. No boy was ever humiliated because he had economic problems nor would the leaders allow such problems to prevent any boy from full participation in Troop activities. The members of the Troop Committee also helped in these regards. (The Cub Pack followed the same pattern). Matters such as these were kept very, very private.

Troop meetings followed a standard schedule. The opening ceremony (Pledge of Allegiance and Scout Oath recitations with American and Troop Flags front and center) was followed by taking attendance and collecting the dues. Then there was a period for test instructions and test passing. Then there might be demonstrations and practices for upcoming Camp-O-Rees, Scout-O-Ramas or Trek-O-Rees followed by games.

Practices were also held in anticipation of competitions or demonstrations at upcoming Fathers', Mothers' or Parents' Nights. These were special "Nights" when the Scouts strutted their stuff and received any badges of advancement or leadership rank promotions or other awards they had achieved. Such special evenings always ended with refreshments set up and served by the Scouts to their family member guests.

Regular meetings ended with announcements and the closing ceremony (The two flags front and center and the recitation of the Scout Law and Moto). To be the flag bearers at the opening and closing ceremonies was a real honor and these assignments were rotated among the scouts.

Into this program was fitted, as needed, inductions. Sometimes a visiting Scout Executive would say a few words. If an event, outing or an overnight hike was coming up time was scheduled to coordinate the planning for that activity.

Once each Scouting year there would be a Fathers' Night, a Mothers' Night and a Parents' Night. If some boy needed a father for that night a leader would fill the role. If a boy were without a mother he would be asked to bring an older sister, an aunt or a grandmother. No boy was allowed to feel neglected.

Once the formal meeting was over there were always some matters about which the leaders had to consult. They also tried to fit in a 1/2 hour of basketball if possible. Then they would adjoin to a nearby diner for "coffee and". These were dedicated volunteer youth leaders who thoroughly enjoyed what they were doing and also enjoyed each other's companionship. They were friends and pals. Most had been Cubs and/or Scouts in Pack 102 and Troop 102.

Most of the record keeping, and it was extensive, was done in the Troop Room during the meetings by leaders not running the program on the meeting floor. However, at times they also found it necessary to meet at one of their homes in order to coordinate and plan for the Troop's activities, business and operations so that these would proceed smoothly. Usually one such meeting took place each mid-summer at one of the leaders houses to plan the next scouting season program and make and take assignments. They succeeded beyond expectations and really achieved magnificent accomplishments. They were professionals at doing a volunteer job. To each it was only doing what you were expected to do. They were too modest to believe otherwise. There was among them and within them a no nonsense attitude coupled with a having fun too aim.

All of this experience gave them confidence and preparation for when they went into the military though they didn't realize that beforehand.

The "TROOP LOG"

Once a year the Troop issued a small newsletter titled "TROOP LOG". It was given out at the June Parents' Night meeting. It was printed on an 8 and 1/2" x 11" sheet of white paper folded so as to make four sides, each 5 and 1/2" x 11". Some issues were 8 pages this size. All the contents were provided by the various leaders and put together by the senior leaders. Once ready the master copy was given to a local printer to offset print the required number of copies.

It contained news of the Troop's activities during the year, news about each Patrol, listed those Scouts who had advanced in rank or had been promoted to a leadership position.

To help defray its expense and to raise some funds for the Troop, sponsorships were solicited by the Scouts at the cost of 10 cents per signature. The sponsor signed their signature on a very small and thin slip of provided paper, which was then placed in its own small manila envelope with the donation. Signatures and the donations were turned in to the Scout Leaders. All of these signatures were then reproduced by the printer in the Troop Log using the photo-offset method. He tried to print as many signatures as compatible with legibility on a page of the Troop Log. If enough signatures had been obtained then an additional page would be needed.

I don't know when the first issue of the "Troop Log" was issued but its issuance continued up until about 1943 at which time, due to WW II shortages, it ceased being issued. It was never issued again except for one time in the 1960s but that attempt at resurrection did not succeed.

Summertime Meetings of Leaders

At this leaders' meeting during the summer they planned each new seasons' program in detail. Their joint and individual experiences as Scouts and Leaders made them fully qualified to take on this task successfully. Three weeks prior to any overnight hike they would meet in the Troop Room after the meeting and plan the events of the overnigher and make up the menu and shopping list. Then an estimate of costs would be made and the amount of money each boy going on the hike would have to contribute would be determined. In those days this usually turned out to be 2 or 3 dollars to cover all expenses including travel and food costs. Again no boy who wanted to go was ever prevented from taking the trip if he lacked the resources.

Assignments were made and usually handed out because someone volunteered to take on that particular chore. This was an efficient organization well oiled by camaraderie and a desire to serve.

Three weeks prior to any hike it would be announced at the Troop Meeting along with the cost amount needed from each Scout who wanted to go. A tally and list of those intending to go was made. The Scouts were requested to bring their money to the following meeting. If at the next meeting some Scout who had said he intended to go but then didn't bring his money discreet and private inquiries were made of him to determine if it was forgetfulness

or if there was a money or equipment problem. If there were the latter problems they were enabled to go anyway. There was always enough spare camping gear in storage in the Troop Room or from other sources (the leaders) to outfit a boy or two. Also if it was noticed that a Scout never showed an interest in going similar discreet and private inquiries were made to make certain that the reasons were something the Troop couldn't cure. I don't recall any Scout not being able to go on any kind of outing because he had economic or equipment problems. Troop 102 had a tradition that every Scout would be given the chance to participate as fully as he desired. If it was forgetfulness the boy was told to bring the money to his nearest leaders house or to bring it on the trip.

If there were a surplus after all the hike expenses had been paid then that surplus would go into the Troop Treasury to help offset any future deficits. Over time the pluses and minuses tended to balance out. Surpluses were not very large from any trip since the leaders experience made them good at estimating costs.

Conducting the Pack's or Troop's Business

The conducting of the Pack's or Troop's business was similar though there was more involved with the running of the Troop because of the greater extent and range of its programs.

There was record keeping of membership rolls, attendance and dues payments. Preparation of the annual and interim registration of the Troop and its members had to be prepared and submitted to Scout Headquarters. Test passing and rank advancements were recorded. Badges and insignias to award had to be determined and then purchased at H.Q.'s. Annual and weekly programs had to be planned in detail. Hikes and overnights and their programs had to be planned and kept records about. Menus and buying lists for the provisions involved had to be made and all costs estimated and then the purchases of these provisions made. Troop equipment to take on these outings had to be determined as well as who would be responsible for bringing such along. The costs of these outings had to be promulgated, announced and collected in a timely manner.

Father's, Mother's and Parent's Nights program had to be planned in detail and assignments for execution made. The "Troop Log", an in-house small but comprehensive newsletter, issued at the annual Parent's Night had to be prepared with news about the Troop and its members and then sent to and picked up from the printer. This also involved having the Scouts solicit booster donations of 10 cents each with the donor signing a tissue thin small piece of paper from which the signature would be reproduced in the printed Troop Log.

Similar planning, purchasing, assigning of tasks and execution had to be conducted in participating in the camp-o-rees, jamborees, scout-o-ramas and trekorees held by either Atlantic District, the Brooklyn Council or the Greater NYC Councils.

Each year, during the first or second meeting in September at the beginning of the new Scouting Season, an examination, inspection and written inventory would be made of all the equipment, gear and items owned by the Troop. This was compared to last years records of the same kind to determine what might be missing, what needed repair and what needed replacement. It also helped to highlight, in light of the past seasons experiences, what new items should be considered for purchase.

Over all this presided the Cubmaster for the Pack and the Scoutmaster for the Troop. Both of these individuals met with the members of their Pack or Troop Committee Members several times a year. These leaders would also meet with the parents of boys applying for membership for the first time as well as with parents who had questions or needed assurances about their boy's participation in the activities with the Pack or Troop. They also met with any Cubs or Scouts who had problems or needed guidance. These positions are ones of extraordinary responsibilities and they are filled by volunteers.

The Troop Committeemen, Leaders and Scouters

Over the passage of time it is inevitable and natural that the individuals serving as Committeemen, Leaders or Scouters would change. The one constant in life is change and Pack and Troop Committees and Leadership and Scouters ranks are not exempt.

I don't know nor can recall the names of every Committeeman or Scout Leader who volunteered his efforts, talents and time on behalf of the Scout Movement at Good Shepherd, in the Atlantic District or at the Brooklyn Council. There might be a record to research somewhere but I haven't gotten there as yet.

At the Brooklyn Council level I recall the names of the Council Chief Scout Executive L.F. Kimball. And clearly I remember Phil Wagner who was a great favorite of mine. L.F. Kimball was pre WW II and Philip F. Wagner was also pre WW II. Phil served with distinction for 15 years as Field Executive and Assistant Scout Executive. On 12 April 1944 he assumed the post of Scout Executive of the Manhattan Council. Phil Wagner was esteemed and liked by all he encountered in the Scouting movement. As Field Executive he was fairly frequently seen at the Troop 102 meetings and at some of its special events. It was Phil who suggested that I consider a career as a professional Scouter.

The Brooklyn Council (Scout HQs) was the nerve center of scouting in Brooklyn. It published the newsletter "Council Ring", first issue in 1929, which contained news about all the Council's, Districts' and Troops' doings, the events to be held, leadership classes to be held and the like. It cost 25 cents per year, in 1935, to have it mailed to your home. It was published weekly. In 1935 when I joined Cub Pack 102 the offices of the Brooklyn Council, BSA were located at 114 Remsen Street and then moved to 191 Joralemon Street. By 1940 it had its offices at 189 Montague Street (Tel: TRiangle 5-7495) and by 1946 it was at 105 Court Street. These locations are all in downtown Brooklyn, N.Y. at the periphery of what has always been a highly desirable residential neighborhood called Brooklyn Heights.

An Official Scout Outfitters store called "The Cabin" was associated with it where Official Scout Equipment, Uniforms and camping gear and handbooks were sold. The Cabin was located at 101 Court Street and then at 66 Court Street, Tel. TRiangle 5-2343. In 1949 it relocated to 105 Court Street into the same building as Council HQs. One of the very likable sales persons at The Cabin was "Uncle Julie".

At Council Hqs. itself was where you went to purchase badges of rank and leadership, upon showing the proper paperwork and scout registration. At Hqs. as well were purchased permits to camp at Spruce Pond, Alpine and Pouch Camps. And Hqs. was where you registered for summer camp and where you sent your Pack/Troop/Ship annual and interim registrations of members, leaders and committeemen.

At the Atlantic District level I recall Horace G. Foulkes sometime in early 1943; Joseph R Cooke and then Gerry Coleman, both after WW II; they all served as Field Executives for the Brooklyn Council and we would see them at Troop meetings every two months or so. These Field Executives led the Round Table Meetings held, in Atlantic District's case, at Christ Church, Ridge Boulevard and 73rd Street, Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, NY on the 4th Monday at 8 PM. ; by April 1944 these meetings were being held at Kings County Lighting Company, 4th Avenue and Senator Street on 4th Mondays at 8PM. By June 1944 they were again being held at Christ Church. These meetings were convened for the benefit of Scouters and all Scouters were invited to attend to learn about new developments, coming events and opportunities for leadership training courses. Questions were answered, problems presented and discussed and suggested remedies preferred.

Ray Gilbert was the Cubmaster of Pack 102 when I joined in 1935 and stayed at it until I replaced him in early 1946 after I came home from WW II.

John H. Schmidt, Jr. was Scoutmaster of Troop 102 when I joined in 1936 (he was the S.M. from 1934 to 1939 and prior to then from 1923 to 1930). Mr. Schmidt was replaced by Arthur (Artie) C. Borch around June of 1939 and he was replaced by John W. (Jack) Lauenstein in the middle of 1941 when Artie's company (Dutch Boy Paints) transferred him to Chicago. Jack served until sometime in late 1942 when he was drafted into the Army. For a short while he was replaced by J. Edward (Ed) Krauss who in turn was replaced in early 1943, also briefly, by myself as Acting S.M. since I was not 21 years old but shy of 19 years of age. We were both drafted into the Army. I left for the Army on 29 June 1943.

Artie had been an Ass't. Scoutmaster when I joined in 1936 as had Jack Lauenstein, George Lyons and Earl Eriksen. George and Earl stayed as A.S.M.s until sometime in 1942 when they went into the Army. The Scouts of the Troop dubbed them the "Four Musketeers".

After WW II Jack, George and myself came back to serve as leaders again along with Bill Fleischman and Walter Swanson. I served first as Cubmaster (and ASM at the same time) then as Scoutmaster (replacing Jack for awhile). Jack took over again from me when I had to step aside (work and night college overloads) at which point I went on to the Troop Committee as Jack had done while I was Scoutmaster. At the time I became Scoutmaster, George who had been an A.S.M. went onto the Troop Committee and served as its Chairman and also led the Explorer Post for a while.

Post WW II some of the prewar Troop 102 junior leaders also came back from military service to serve as ASMs; namely Bill Fleischman and Walter Swanson. Floyd Sykes, not a former Scout but the brother-in-law of George Lyons, came aboard to help me as my Ass't. Cubmaster. While I was Scoutmaster, Harold Stewart, a former Cub and Scout of Pack and Troop 102 for a few years, came on board to be my ASM along with Wayne Raaberg, a former T 102 Scout, also serving as ASM. These two were of great help to me but after two (2) years or so had to give up their Scouting activities due to increased responsibilities elsewhere. Therefore, in 1952, 1953 and until I stepped down as SM in 1954 John Aram, Jack Lauenstein and Don Plenkens became the ASMs and did fine jobs too.

When I moved to Staten Island in August 1958 I went off the Troop Committee. At that time Jack was still serving as Scoutmaster with John Aram as his ASM. George Lyons was still on the Troop Committee as Chairman.

Earl Erikson never came back to work with Troop 102 after WW II. Charlie Ahl who had been a leader prior to WW II did not come back to Troop 102 either. Neither did Ed Krauss who became a teacher at Brooklyn Technical H.S. like his Dad - "Pop" Krauss. However, Bob Szutarsky, who had been a junior leader pre WW II came back and served on the Troop Committee for a few years. Bob had changed his name to Starski by the time he returned from military service.

Prior to WW II John F. "Pop" Krauss had served on the Troop Committee along with Monroe Larsen. Both were fine men and good Scouting companions. They both had sons in T 102. Monroe Larsen had an auburn hint to his hair. They were regular guys and good for Scouting. Each served terms as Chairman of the Troop Committee at times. "Pop" was an Electrical Shop Teacher at Brooklyn Technical High School and the father of Ed Krauss and sometimes came on the overnight trips with the troop. He was called "Pop" with great affection and enjoyed that nickname that the Scouts had bestowed on him which I think they picked up from hearing his son Ed call him that.

Post WW II Robert "Bob" Aram served on the Troop Committee, sometimes as Chairman, for a number of years. He would also, at times, come on the overnight trips with the Troop. But unlike "Pop" who slept in the lean-tos "Bob" stayed at a then newly-built "Tuxedo Motel" just off the west side of Rt.17 in Southfields. This motel still functions these days. "Pop" Krauss was a portly set man but not excessively so. "Bob" was very, very overweight as were his sons John and George who were both Scouts in Troop 102 for quite a few years. But all were good Scouts, smart and helpful.

Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts of Pack 102, Troop 102 and Troop 67

During the twenty-five years that I was active in the Scouting movement I estimate that I became acquainted with between approximately 180 to 200 different boys. I truly wish I could remember each of their names and recall to mind an image of each of them. But sadly I can't and records aren't available to research for this information.

Some of these boys were outstanding Scouts, most were average Scouts and a very, very few were a royal pain. But at heart all were good Scouts.

My own records are of some little help in listing all these names of the boys I met in Scouting but most of their names are lost in the mists of my memory. Hereafter are some that I can recall:

Pre WW II there were:

Charles "Charlie" Ahl,
 William "Bill" Beechel,
 Leroy "Leaky" Brubaker,
 Erik Buckleitner,
 Paul Danish,
 Albert Decker,
 Clifford "Cliff " Endersen,
 Theodore "Ted" Endersen,
 Howard "Howie" Epple,
 Eugene "Gene" Evensen,
 William "Bill" Fleischman,
 Robert "Bob" Frank,
 William Haboush,
 Edward "Ed" Hansen,
 Walter "Walt" Hansen,
 Ingolf Henriksen,
 John Edward "Ed" Krauss (whom the younger Scouts secretly named 'Sauer Kraut'),
 _____ Larsen,
 Frederik "Fred" Mathisen,
 William "Billy" Oathout,
 Donald "Don" Plenkens,
 John "Bud" Renner,
 Roy Renner,
 Kenneth "Kenny" Schubert,
 Einar "Oskar" Stang,
 Harold Stewart,
 Frank Stewart,
 Walter "Swanny" Swanson,
 Robert "Bob" Szutarsky,
 Adrian "Van" Van Dyke,
 _____ Whatley,
 _____ .

Post WW II there were:

George Aram,
 John Aram,
 George Bentzen,

Erik Domaas,
Finn Domaas,
George Falk,
Niels Falk,
James "Jimmy" Martin,
Bruce Minor,
Donald "Don" Mollicone,
Richard "Richie" Mollicone,
Robert "Bob" Nelson,
Arthur "Artie" F. Schmitt, Jr.,
Douglas "Doug" Westerberg,

Troop 67 Post WW II:

James "Jimmy" Bottomly
Kim M. Mork (my son)
Thomas "Tommy" Uebel

BE PREPARED

A BOY, A CUB PACK AND A SCOUT TROOP



DO A GOOD TURN DAILY

BOOK III - VOLUME VII - PART II

A work in progress modified on Wednesday 3 July 2013. One of nine volumes comprised of six books relating family and personal history.

Troop Equipment

The Troop had, over time, become possessor of very adequate amounts of Troop camping and cooking gear through gifts or purchases. Large pots and skillets, water containers (collapsible canvas bucket, i.e.), large size chef's forks, knives and spoons, etc. Tarps, pup tents and the like. Large camping axes and saws, short trenching shovel and picks and ropes were also part of the Troop's camping equipment. Other handy items were a Coleman two-burner camping stove and Coleman single mantle lantern both fueled by white gasoline as well as a couple of kerosene burning lanterns. Included were also several flashlights and battery torch lights.

The Troop also owned a large 12' x 12' x 8' wall tent which could serve special purposes as needed. This tent served as the Troop's HQs tent at Camp-O-Rees. It was a Troop well equipped to function effectively both in the field and at Troop Meetings.

There were at least 5 overnights taken each season plus at least one Camp-O-Ree so this equipment was handy to have in preparing meals and camps for from 12 to 18 Scouts.

Other equipment included several sets of Semaphore and Morse Code Flags, some Morse Code Sending and Receiving Keys, Flint Firemaking Kits (Flints, Metal Striking Bar to strike sparks from flint, wood wool or fine shavings ignition material), Friction Firemaking Kits (Short Bow, thin small wood board with cutouts, Friction Stick to twirl in the cutouts with the bow and wood ignition materials).

Extra Boy Scout Manuals were available as were many Merit Badge Booklets as well as Red Cross First Aid and Life Saving Manuals. There were a great many of the items a Scout needed to pass the various Achievement Tests.

The Troop also had sports equipment such as basketballs, baseballs, softballs, bats, footballs, large boxing gloves and volleyballs and net. A popular Troop Meeting event was Tug-of-War for which was used a 1" diameter by 100' long manila hemp rope with a rag tied to it at its midpoint. These items were used at troop meetings during the time set aside for games and sports.

Many games not requiring equipment were also played. Among these were Horse and Rider, Buck -Buck How Many Fingers Are Up, Potato Sack Relay Race, Three-Legged Relay Race, Human Wheel Barrow Relay Race, Orange Under the Chin Relay Race, Egg On A Spoon Relay Race and Running Backward Relay Race. Some games were more popular than others and at times the Scouts were polled to see which games they wanted to play at that meeting. But all the games were played by the Scouts with their natural youthful exuberance.

And of course it was in possession of a well-stocked first aid kit. This kit was contained in a large khaki colored canvas bag with a shoulder strap.

The Troop had their American and Troop Flags along with the flag slings with pole sockets so the flags could be properly carried in parades. Floor stands for these flags existed so the flags could be placed aside in the Scout Room during the Scout meeting or displayed at events. When not held by flag bearers in the opening and closing ceremonies. There was also a Troop bugle (short cavalry type) used infrequently. Each Patrol had their own Patrol Flag mounted on an 8 foot by 1-inch diameter oak wood stave. There were extra staves available so that stretchers could be put together using the staves and scout shirts or blankets or shelter halves.

Settling Altercations

Very infrequently some bad blood would flare-up between a pair of Scouts. That was when the heavy __ oz. boxing gloves were brought out. The two battlers would each have a pair of gloves laced on and then the square ring was formed by the rest of the Scouts. Each fighter was assigned a corner and one of the Leaders would act as the referee. Another Leader would act as the timekeeper. Each round was one minute with 30 seconds between rounds. The Marquis of Queensberry (John Sholto Douglas) boxing rules applied. There were only three rounds fought and the match usually ended in a draw and always with handshakes. Most of the time the heavy weight of these large boxing gloves wore out the arm strengths of the battlers. And before the fight came to its end the two fighters had lost their enthusiasm for physical combat. The most the boys suffered were a reddened ear or cheek. I can't recall any of the boys who fought in this conflict resolution manner ever getting into conflict again with anyone. And during my many years in scouting I can recall only three times it was necessary to resort to this way of solving conflict that had gone too far.

Test Passing

The first Achievement Rank you can attain as a Boy Scout is the Tenderfoot Scout rank and I passed all four of the tests required while still a Cub Scout. Those tests were Oath and Law, Flag, Badge and Knots. You had to recite from memory the Scout Oath and Law, the Motto and Slogan and explain what each meant. You needed to recite from memory the Pledge of Allegiance (No "under God" words in it then) and to know the history of our flag and explain what the colors, stars and stripes represent. You had to explain the meaning of

the various symbols of the Scout Badge and you had to demonstrate that you knew how to tie a Slip Knot and Square Knot.

In all test passing endeavors you are helped by your Assistant Patrol Leader (A.P.L.) and Patrol Leader (P.L.) and for the higher badges by older as well as adult leaders. For Merit Badges you often consult with a Merit Badge Counselor who usually also gives you the test for the badge when you say you are ready.

Bear in mind that the requirements to attain this rank and others were different then than now. The Scouting program has changed and evolved over time to suit the times. Some of those changes I witnessed while I was active, at the Troop level, for 25 years between 1936 and 1966. Of those I witnessed some were for the better, some not and some appeared to be changes for change sake only.

Changes made since 1966 undoubtedly follow similar patterns. If things are not broken why fix them? To me it appeared in many instances, and one sees this not just in the Scouting movement, that Scout Executives put in place changes just because they felt they were expected to do so to justify their positions in the executive hierarchy and to obtain promotions. Many changes have made it much too easy for scouts to advance in the achievement ranks and thereby cheapened the value of those ranks. There has also been such a proliferation of awards that awards themselves have become almost meaningless. It is akin to the countless medals and ribbons seen on the uniformed chests of Russian and now also on U.S. military officers so that the cloth of the uniform is obscured. There seems to be an award for anything and everything.

It is my suspicion that part of what drives this witless trend is the equally destructive educational philosophy that now pervades our society that no one must be made to feel bad by having their feelings hurt (feel good education). That if the aspirants cannot meet the standards then the standards must be lowered. One has a right to advancement and high marks thus one does not have to earn them. This kind of thinking put into action is a real disservice to those to whom it is applied as well as to our society and to our nation. The real world doesn't work like that and neither should it nor must it! Everyone doesn't get a lollypop.

The next rank to earn is the Second Class Scout level. This involves passing a series of tests of a higher skill level than those required for the Tenderfoot Scout Rank. Again your APL and PL are your guides and helpers.

Next is the First Class Scout Rank with tests to pass that are of a still higher level of skill. You are now also helped by your Sr. Patrol Leader and Jr. Assistant Scoutmaster. At each step your helpers, among the junior leaders, are at least of the rank you are trying to obtain.

Ahead lie the Star Scout, Life Scout and Eagle Scout ranks. Star Scout required you to earn five Merit Badges. Life Scout required earning a total of ten Merit badges (5 required ones and 5 selected at your option from the list of approved Merit Badges). Earning the Eagle Scout rank involved earning twenty-one Merit Badges of which eleven were required and ten your choice. At that time earning the Eagle Scout rank was considered the equivalent of having completed one year of college. Of course, if you desired, you could earn Merit Badges beyond the count of twenty-one.

The required Merit Badges were: _____.

I earned a total of twenty Merit Badges; of the ten ones required for Eagle Scout rank I earned all except Pathfinding plus _____. This earned me the Life Scout rank. Then military service during WW II intervened and when I returned home I was 3 months shy of being 22 years old and thus too old to be awarded the Eagle Scout Badge. You had to be no older than 21 in those days to be awarded the Eagle Scout badge. Perhaps an exception could have been made in cases such as mine but I never pursued that avenue.

Board of Review/Court of Honor

The Board of Review and Court of Honor for the ranks of Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class were held by each Troop at their meeting places on a Troop Meeting night. Usually the Chairman of the Troop Committee called these special meetings and the Committeeman who Chaired the Troop's Advancement Committee convened these conclaves, which the Scoutmaster attended along with the Scout or Scouts applying for advancement to their next higher rank.

The meeting was opened with ceremony - the Scout Oath and Pledge of Allegiance were recited and the American and Troop Flags flanked the table at which the Troop Committeemen attending sat on one side and the Scout or Scouts with the Scoutmaster sat on the opposite side. The Scout(s) presented his fully signed Test Advancement Record card and the Scoutmaster verified that the Scout or Scouts had passed all the required tests. A few questions might be asked the Scout(s) about what they had learned from or liked about the tests they had passed. When they had answered the designated committeeman countersigned the Scout(s) records in the Troop's master records. The Scout(s) was given back his Test Passing Record card now signed by his Scoutmaster as verifying that the

Scout(s) had achieved the new rank. The Scout(s) were then congratulated and the meeting closed by reciting the Scout Law.

The badge for the new rank was usually given the Scout(s) at the close of the Troop Meeting that same evening in front of all the Troop members present. Sometimes this was done at a Mothers', Fathers' or Parents' Night if one of these were to be held a week or so later. If that was the case the Scout(s) was provided with a yellow metal replica of his newly attained rank to give to his mother, father or jointly to his parents.

The Board of Review/Court of Honor for Merit Badges passed and for the ranks of Star, Life and Eagle Scout were held at the Atlantic District level and followed a similar pattern as the one described above. However, the Board was made up of District Scouters and Merit Badge Counselors and the Scout(s) came from the entire district. Usually the Scoutmaster(s) were not present for the Merit Badge reviews but was for the Star, Life and Eagle ranks. Once back at the Troop the Scout would be presented with his badge in front of the Troop and parent's if it were a Star, Life or Eagle achievement.

Atlantic District held these sessions on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:30 PM at Flag Court, 72nd Street and Ridge Boulevard, Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, NY. By April 1944 these meetings were being held at the Kings County Lighting Company Building, 4th Avenue and Senator Street, on the 4th Thursday of the month at 8:00 PM.

Leadership Advancement

Concurrently I was making my way up the leadership ladder. First as Patrol Flag Bearer, then APL, followed by PL, on to Sr. PL (SPL) followed by Jr. Assistant Scoutmaster (JASM) and then Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM).

I had also participated in the Cub Pack activities as planned and after passing the _____ Class Scout rank and taking and passing the Den Chief's Course was appointed a Den Chief. After that I was appointed Sr. Den Chief, then Jr. Assistant Cubmaster (JACM) and on to Ass't. Cubmaster (ACM). You had to be 18 years of age to become an ASM or an ACM and twenty-one years old to hold the Scoutmaster or Cubmaster positions.

There were many courses given that pertained specifically to the various leadership positions. I took some of these courses as I advanced into these various leadership positions.

Time passed, something we all acknowledge. In addition to my scouting activities there was school and homework and some playtime with my friends on my street. Then came two years of Confirmation Classes from 1937 to 1939 which were held on Saturday mornings or Wednesdays during released time from public school. Thus if I had an overnight weekend hike I could go to class on Wednesday and still make the weekend hike.

In January 1939 I graduated from public elementary school P.S. 170 and started attending Brooklyn Technical High School. Brooklyn Tech was a premier public high school, which required you to pass their entrance examination in addition to having an exemplary elementary school record. It was a tough school to which to get admission and a tough school in which to stay. The school and its building were very new when I started attending it. It had been especially designed and built under one of FDR's New Deal programs. As explained in another webpage, the facilities in this school for giving a basic engineering/technical education were extraordinary.

On Confirmation Sunday in the Spring of 1939 I was confirmed. My ranking in the class was fourth after three girls. No rankings after 4th were acknowledged so I was the only boy to be confirmed with honors. Some of the boys in the Confirmation Class were fellow members of Troop 102.

During all these years at Troop 102 there occurred the Fathers Nights, Mothers Nights, Parents Nights, Scout Sundays, Sunday School Parades each year. Of course the overnight hikes were also taken. There were also special events at the Troop level, the Atlantic District level and the Brooklyn Council level. The boys in the Troop twice rehearsed and performed a Troop Minstrel Show performed on the stage of the Great Hall in the new Educational Building. They participated in several Brooklyn Council Camp-O-Rees and Atlantic District Trek-O-Rees. And one year, 1940, there was a fantastic spectacular called a Scout-O-Rama performed in the (old) Madison Square Garden in which Troop 102 participated along with scout troops from all the five boroughs of NYC. This event was spearheaded by the Greater NYC Councils. Practices for this event were held by each Troop on their home grounds and then by all the Troops of each District at some location within that District adequate in size.

TEN MILE RIVER SCOUT CAMPS



BROOKLYN SCOUT CAMPS

Long Term Camping

This huge 14,000 + acre Scout Camps reservations is located in Tusten, Sullivan County, New York east of Narrowsburg, N.Y. which lies on the Delaware River. It lies around the hamlet known as Tusten and such is its official Post Office address.

My first experience at summer scout camp was during the summer of 1937. This involved additional expenses for my mother to purchase me some summer scout uniforms as well as the cost of the camp itself. I think she got some help from my aunts and uncles.

During those years, in recognition of the bad economic circumstances most families were enduring, a scout could attend a one-week stay at the Ten Mile River Scout Camps for the cost of \$8.00. A two-week stay cost \$15.00. I went for one week. My mother, a single Mom) was probably earning \$12.00 a week at the time so some sacrifices were truly necessary on her part. I think bus fares were additional, perhaps \$1.75 roundtrip.

That first summer camp stay I chose to be there during this last week of the last period which coincides roughly with the last two weeks in August. Why I can't remember but that was the period I also selected for scout camp for the next 4 summers. The buses left on Mondays from the area in downtown Brooklyn that is known as Cadman Plaza, specifically at Fulton and Clinton Streets across from the Post Office. The buses departed at 8:00 AM sharp so I and my mother arrived early, as advised, so as to have plenty of time to have your camping gear stowed in the storage compartments of the bus to which you were assigned. You would also be assigned a seat on that bus.

Each borough had their own very large camp area at the Ten Mile River Scout Camps reservation and these were so far spread apart that one would never know others were there. The Brooklyn Camps were located around Rock Lake which is long and narrow - approx. 2/3 of a mile long and 1/6 of a mile wide - with an undulating shoreline along which dense stands of trees grew. It is at the approximate elevation of 1,200 feet. It length runs in a generally east west direction.

The Brooklyn Camps were divided into four divisions; Divisions I, II III and IV. In the Div.

IV general area was Camp Waramaug at Davis Lake (its own swimming lake) which was a camp operated and owned by Troop 123, Atlantic District, Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, NY.

Divisions I and II served Kosher Certified Food and were known as the Kosher Camps. Divisions I, II and III were located inland from and parallel to the southern shoreline of Rock Lake. So located that they were not visible from the lake nor from each other. Only their boat and swim docks were on the lake each with their Waterfront Man's building nearby and inland but visible.

Div. I was the farthest west, then Div. II a distance east from it and then Div. III still more east of it. Div. IV was off by itself northeasterly of the lake and far uphill and well hidden. Its dock was on the lake at its northeast shoreline along with its Waterman's building. Divisions III and IV were known as the General Camps. When at full capacity the Brooklyn Camps could house 4,000 Scouts during the 8-week season (4 two - week periods); some 1,000 per Division for the season. This meant about 250 Scouts per Division per 2-week period; The Divisions were not always at full capacity during any or each period, especially prior to 1943. However, it was relatively easy to increase capacity since tent platforms with tents on them were quickly erected and the increase in meals to be prepared was not too hard to overcome.

The central headquarters building for the Brooklyn Camps, called Tahlequah, also served as the central Dining Hall for Div. IV. It was located at the eastern end of Rock Lake uphill from the lake. This was a very large and long two-story log built structure with a covered front porch, which faced west and overlooked the long and narrow Rock Lake, as it is still known today. Its outlet at a small dam at the western end of the lake is where Ten Mile River itself begins flowing its steep downhill meandering course, along a rock and boulder strewn bed, westerly towards the Delaware River at whose east bank it gushingly empties into about __ miles southerly of Narrowsburg. At one time in the past there had been a sawmill located at this small dam.

The Tahlequah building was some 4 feet above the ground with sets of steps at either end leading to the first floor porch. Besides the large and high ceiled 100' x 50' Dining Hall centered in the building this structure also contained the 50' x 50' kitchen at its northern end and a 50' x 50' area at its southern end for offices and storage. Offices as well as sleeping quarters were on the second level for the HQs camp administrators and personnel. This second level also had a covered front porch running the length of this 200 feet x 50 feet building that sat on a rise high above the lake.

The front of this building overlooked a large expanse of lawn that ended at the eastern end

of Rock Lake. The back and easterly facing part of the building also had covered porches on the 1st and 2nd floor levels and pretty much was identical in appearance to the front side. The views from the front porches were magnificent particularly at sunset. Military bugle calls, blown by a Scout bugler, sounded over a huge amplifying metal horn, that was eventually replaced by outdoor loudspeakers, to signal the start and end of each day as well as various daily activities at the times such were scheduled. Also, near the large metal horn, was a large iron gong to be rung for the start of mealtimes at the lodge. There was a separate entrance and loading dock to the kitchen area at its north end. It was a grand looking structure; very imposing and in every way suitable for its use and location.

Very sadly Tahlequah, the largest structure on the TMR reservation, burned to the ground on Wednesday 26th of June 1940 just before the start of the summer camping season and was, also very sadly, never to be replaced. Its former location can still be discerned today. Vast amounts of athletic and camp equipment, food and records were destroyed along with belongings of the HQs Staff members. The building had been in use as the HQs building of the Brooklyn Camps since 1927. In the week left before the 1,000 or so Scouts would arrive at the Brooklyn Camps to start the summer camping season temporary structures were built to house and provide offices for the HQs staff. A new Div. IV Dining Hall was built near Mahl's Pond as a replacement for the Central Dining Hall lost in the fire. The fire was caused by _____.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, long a good friend of Scouting, had been very instrumental in obtaining this property (assembling some 14,000 acres) for the NYC scouts in 1927 shortly before he became Governor of New York State. He and some friends had arranged to purchase various parcels of land keeping the true purpose of the purchases hidden and using various surrogates to cloak their ultimate plans for the acreage being assembled. This tactic helped keep the purchase prices within reason. In fact he had made a visit there after the Greater NYC Councils took possession and had sat on the front porch and addressed the assembled. FDR was a great champion of the Boy Scout movement and involved in commission at the City level. The Tahlequah property had once served as a tuberculosis sanitarium.

Set off a short distance from the kitchen end of the Tahlequah Lodge, and downhill in a NNW direction, were three separate structures; two of about the same size and one smaller one and all built of logs. The larger was the camps' Trading Post where many sweet and cold goodies and other sundry articles were for sale. The frozen Milky Way was a real treat and I can still close my eyes and taste that delicious candy bar. Most items were 5 cents each.

The next structure, of slightly smaller size, was the Post Office and Bank cabin. It was about 16' x 16' whereas the Trading Post was about 20' x 20'.

The smaller structure was the location of the Eternal Fire which was kept burning all summer by members of the Order of the Arrow camping honor society. At the end of the season a singed piece of wood or two and charred smaller wood pieces from the fire were saved and used to help start the Eternal Fire the following year.

That first summer camp experience sold me on going the following years and I was at Ten Mile River Scout Camps for two weeks in 1938, 1939, 1940 and 1941. In the years 1937, 1938, 1939 and 1940 I was placed in camp Tuscarora. In 1941 I was in Camp Wapoga because Tuscarora was being partially used as a Home Troop camp and Home Troops were using two of its four cabins all located between Camps Wapoga and Wyandotte. This Home Troop Camp was a new concept being tried out. Camps Apelachi and Tippiie-Canoe (this latter with its own Swimming Dock V on Davis Lake) were still being used as the standard "Provisional" camps for Scouts attending as individuals as were Wapoga and Wyandotte.

My stay at TMR in 1938 was particularly memorable because some of my family came up by bus to visit me on the Sunday of the first week. Buses for this purpose had been engaged by the Brooklyn Council so the bus fare was very reasonable. My mother, my Uncles Ejner and Axel and my Aunt Mary came visiting and it was a delight to see them and show them about. They arrived at about 11 AM and left at about 4 PM. They ate lunch with the Scout Campers in the Dining Hall of the Tahlequah building. They were well pleased with what they witnessed.

Whenever I think of TMR and my camping days there my face and heart smile at the pleasant memories that come to fore. It will be ever thus.

Then in 1942, which turned out to be my last summer camp ever at Ten Mile River and was the year before I was drafted into the Army, I was up there for the whole summer because I had applied for and been accepted as a member of the staff as a dishwasher. We reported to the camps on 30 June six days before the regular season started in order to set up the camps. We got a small stipend plus room and board. That set-up week, being a dishwasher, I helped set up the kitchen and dining hall plus washing dishes, pans and pots, etc. Also the cleaning of the dining hall and kitchen each day, including mopping floors, was on the chores schedule. After the campers arrived they would rotate "setting up" the Dining Hall for each meal.

Despite this we also had time to help set up the camps themselves; Camps Apelachi, Tippie-Canoe, Tuscarora, Wapoga and Wyandotte comprised the Division 4 Brooklyn Camps. Camp Tippie-Canoe used Dock 5 on Davis Lake the other 4 camps used the dock at Rock Lake. These camps were all located north "up the hill" from Rock Lake. Preparing the camps for campers involved sweeping out the sleeping cabins, getting the single size spring cots from storage into the cabins and then filling clean muslin cotton ticks with fresh straw (nice odor) and placing one on each cot to serve as the mattress. This arrangement was surprisingly comfortable. Each Scout brought his own blankets, pillow and pillowcase and sheets; some preferred no sheets and some slept in their sleeping bags. In the subsequent camping periods of that summer each new scout arriving made up his own straw tick from new materials and replaced the previous one, which most likely had been removed for the mulching of the straw and the laundering of the tick by the scout leaving for home.

We also helped set up the Crafts, Hiking, Nature and Waterfront Lodges. The Waterfront Lodge had the lifesaving equipment, canoes, rowboats and oars. The other lodges had the equipment, materials and tools needed to serve their functions as well as First Aid Kits as did the cabin or platform tents used by the SM and ASMs for their quarters.

The first period campers arrived 6 July and for a week after their arrival I still did my job as a dishwasher. Beginning the second week after their arrival week I was promoted to be a Provisional ASM of Camp Wapoga. This was a little disturbing, though still exciting, because my heart lay with Camp Tuscarora but I soon got over it. Starting this season all of Camp Tuscarora was to be regularly and fully serving as a camp for Scouts who attended camp under their own Troop Leadership (Home Troop Camping) and therefore this camp didn't require leaders provided by Ten Mile River other than as available advisors. This new concept was not something with which I was in agreement nor enthused about.

This new summer camping program involving having "home troop leaders" provide the leadership for the Scouts who went to camp together as a Troop Unit with their own home Troop leadership instead of individually at various times of the season, may have been dictated by economic conditions, or an increasing difficulty in obtaining staff (due to the military drafting of young males) as much as by philosophical theories. In my opinion going to camp as an independent individual and being thus much more exposed to others and their ideas (cross pollination) from outside your home troop has advantages far outweighing what occurs with the "home troop camping" concept which Scouts get enough of during the rest of the Scout Year when they go on camping trips with their troop.

Getting to TMR

From the year it opened in 1928 Scouts travelled to and from summer camp at TMR by the Erie RR. In the mid 1930s they started travelling by buses hired by their Council HQs for that purpose. So, as all others, I did the same in 1937 through 1942. The trip to camp was obviously one that filled the Scouts with joyous anticipation and excitement on the way to camp and with somewhat dampened ardor travelling back home two weeks or more later.

One of the much-anticipated experiences on the bus trip to camp was the rest stop at the Red Apple Rest on Route 17 in Southfields, N.Y. Most of the Scouts were familiar with this restaurant from their overnight trips to Spruce Pond. But the stop, for our Red and Tan buses, on the way to TMR for a half hour was special in its own way. It also provided a much-needed respite from the bus ride at what was approximately the halfway point in the 3-hour trip. _____

The second much anticipated experience occurred along Route 97 just a short distance north of Port Jervis, N.Y. Here, very high above the Delaware River seen below on the west, this road takes a series of serpentine curves of various sharpness and the bus drivers would invariably drive along these turns at speeds that gave the Scouts a sense of being on a roller coaster and they reacted with delightful screams and shouts of added thrills.

When the Scouts left for home at the end of their TMR stays they were much subdued compared to their demeanor on the way to camp. Camp was over; return to school lay ahead as did life in the city. And they were sad to leave camp and newfound friends. And in their minds they were reliving the high points of their time in camp. So they were introspective of mood. Thus the heightened thrills of the serpentine curves along Route 97 and the rest stop at the Red Apple Rest were not as exciting. Nevertheless, youthful exuberance and resilience being what it is, by the time they got off the bus back in downtown Brooklyn they were upbeat again and greeted their awaiting parents with joy and bombardments of their short and tall tales of life at TMR.

In 1943, 1944 and 1945 however the wartime shortages made it necessary to again use the railroad to get there. Scouts would travel to Hoboken, NJ where they would board Erie RR trains that took them to Narrowsburg, NY. There they would detrain and then hike to TMR but their carry-on camping gear would be trucked to camp. The heavier camp footlockers or trunks would have been sent ahead by RR Express. The excited emotional temperaments of the Scouts remained as they had been on the bus trips going to and leaving from TMR. Use of buses resumed in 1946.

Summer at TMR - 1942

The Staff of Division IV, just like the Staffs at the other Divisions, were ready when the Scout Campers arrived for the start of the 1942 camping season on Monday July 6th. The myriads of details, large and small, had pretty much been dealt with and problems solved. And so the Brooklyn Camps were prepared to begin its 15th season at TMR.

The Brooklyn Camp Director was Philip F. Wagner and the Program Director was Fred Smith, Brooklyn Field Executive. The popular Nick Dale was the Administrative Director. William Matthews had been appointed Div. IV Campmaster and William Radke was once again the Post Office Clerk with Fred J. Heller as his assistant. Richard Roth and Herbert Lowe were respectively the Chief Clerk and Assistant Chief Clerk. Donald Marsh had been selected as the Trading Post Chief for Divisions III and IV.

The Naturalist for Div. IV was William (Bill) Nash and his assistant was William Bierschenk. The Hikemaster was Stephen Berger. The Waterfront man (Aquatic Leader) was Arthur (Bindy) Buettner and his assistant Frank Rizza. The Handicraft Man of Div. IV was George Morrison and Jordan baruch and Robert Barbera were his assistants. The Chef for Div. IV was Eugene Kerwin. Donald Rudden was the Provisional Scoutmaster of Wapoga and Allen Berdan the Provisional Scoutmaster of Wyandotte. Robert Gallagher and Ib Mork became the Provisional Assistant Scoutmasters of Wapoga after camp had been open a week or so.

Wilber Roman became the Waterfront man at Mahl's Pond. "Wil" was a classmate of mine at Brooklyn Tech and we became good friends that summer at camp. His brother Ted Roman had been the Chef in 1941.

Another friend of mine, Charles Kogan, was an Aquatic Assistant at Div. II.

Another Dishwasher that season at Div. IV was John Herrman. He was a classmate of mine at Brooklyn Tech and we were very good friends.

Morty Hyman had gone into the Army a few days after 20 May 1942 so he was not at camp that summer or for the three summers that followed. Morty was a very familiar, well liked and thought- of outstanding Scouter known to hundreds of Scouts and Leaders. He had been very prominent in the Council camp set-up for many years.

I met Don Rudden for the first time when I became one of his Provisional ASMs of

Wapoga. He was a Brotherhood Honor Executive Board member of Shu-Shu-Gah Lodge No. 24, OA. In the latter part of that May he had been operated upon for an abdominal hernia and wore an elastic abdominal girdle to help him fully recover without incidence. At his home Troop #44 of the Flatbush District he was an ASM. Don was 18 years old.

That summer he was serving as the Provisional SM of Camp Wapoga. He was a fine Scout and young leader, very athletic, dynamic and charismatic. He was very mature for his age. His life goal was to become a catholic priest. After summer camp ended he started the path to that goal by becoming a Brother at the Greymore Friars at their friary in Garrison, NY. He allowed no cursing in his presence and we all respected his wishes in that regard. He and I became very good friends during that summer.

His other Provisional ASM was Robert (Bob) Gallagher a fellow member of Don's at their Troop #44. Bob was a very likable young Scout who looked much younger than his almost 18 years of age. He made a good ASM. Bob was a skinny, reddish-haired and freckled lad and highly competent with water related activities. He was my Merit Badge Counselor when I passed the Swimming Merit Badge that summer at TMR.

Some of the memories I have of that summer involve earning Merit Badges, being selected for and inducted into the Brotherhood Honor of the OA, Other memories are of making many new friends, helping to lead and teach the approximately 182 Boy Scouts who came to Camp Wapoga during that eight week camping season, Indian Hand Wrestling with Steve Berger, going on overnight hikes to the Indian Cliffs and visiting the Donut Farm and the Council Fires.

Additional memories are of running a lap in a 400 yard relay, going to the camp hospital for an overnight stay, leading cheers and songs in the Dining Hall and at the Council Fires and bunking in the Bird Cage cabin which was the sleeping quarters for Wapoga's provisional leaders.

The Bird Cage was a very unique small cabin in which to bunk. It was narrow and short and resembled a steeped roofed bird box or cage; thus its name. It was one of the older cabins at Wapoga and was built of unpeeled logs. It slept four; one bunk in each corner with the long side of the bunks oriented along the long side of the cabin. Placed in the spaces between the bunks, along its long sides, was a desk area on one side of the cabin and a clothes hanging and storage area on the opposing long side. The upper half of each of the four walls were open to the air with 2 steps leading up to its entrance on one of the ends. Its floor was of wood boards and was 24" above the ground level. The cabin was

approximately 12' x 20' in size and about 16' feet from the floor to the ridge of the peaked roof. The underside of the roof was exposed on the inside. It was a cozy place to bunk and those who did were envied for their luck.

Steve Berger was almost unbeatable at Indian Hand Wrestling. He had developed the skill of quickly bending his knees so that his center of gravity was much lower than his opponents and thus he was in the best position to throw his opponent off balance. I finally did beat him, however only twice out of many contests outside the Bird Gage. He shared the Bird Cage with Don, Bob and I. Steve spoke with a slight accent that made me believe he was from a Greek family even though his name was very American.

One hike to the Indian Cliffs is especially memorable because, as I usually chose, I brought up the rear. But on this particular hike, as last man on the trail, I came upon a rattlesnake sunning itself on a flat rock in the middle of the trail. The Scouts and other leaders of Wapoga had long since passed this point because I gave them a half hour head start. There was no easy way around this critter and I contemplated my options. I had kept alert on the trail and so I had stopped a safe distance from the snake. Finally I made my move by picking up a small stone and throwing it at the snake so as to have the rock land near the snake hoping to disturb it enough to make it slither into woods. My stratagem worked - the snake slithered away - and I, after allowing a comfortable time to lapse, continued the hike.

A couple of hours later it was lunchtime and I decided to eat my box lunch on a platform located up high on a power line pole. I climbed up to the platform using the foot spikes imbedded in the pole and sat on the platform with my legs dangling over its edge. I unpacked my lunch and started to eat. As I did I heard a buzzing sound coming from down around my legs which were bare from the boot tops up to mid-thighs where my Scout shorts started. Looking down I saw I had disturbed a bees' nest hanging on the underside of the platform and they were excited as could be. This was not good I thought to myself and started to think of the best way to get the heck out of this predicament. I had on a short-sleeved shirt and was bareheaded too. I didn't have too many ways to escape unscathed. First I repacked my lunch very slowly and kept my legs from moving. Then I sat very still for what seemed forever. The bees became less agitated during this time and then very slowly with careful sloth like moves I climbed down to the ground unharmed.

It had taken a lot of willpower to make this descent this way and without panicking particularly as my head passed through the swarm. I moved only just my eyes to get a better look at the hive. It was the size of a large cantaloupe melon. I took a deep sigh as I slowly walked ahead on the trail for a hundred feet or so until I felt I could safely return to

my normal stride.

When I reached the Indian Cliffs, without encountering any more dangers and without meeting up any Scouts needing help, there was much to tell Don and Bob about my misadventures and I did just that while I pitched camp. The Scouts had already pitched their tents and were busy exploring the surrounding area and collecting dead wood for the cooking and camp fires.

After the supper that night which we cooked over open fires we all sat around the campfire and told stories, sang songs and vocalized different cheers. I now had the chance to tell all the Scouts about my encounters on the trail that day. Then it was bedtime and a few at a time the Scouts fell asleep quickly after that active and busy day.

Sitting there in the darkness and the dimming glow of the dying campfire we three leaders stayed awake for a while chatting. I don't remember the entirety of the conversations but do recall we looked up at the dark black sky and saw a billion stars such as we never could in the city and were moved to verbalize our awe at what we saw. The fire self-extinguished and we were in a darkness that can only be described as black. We sat there a little longer in silence and as we did we heard the wail of a steam locomotive whistle coming to our ears from the far distance across the Delaware River as it rounded the big bend in the tracks that followed the bend in the river. We tried to discern the train way down below the cliffs on the opposite riverbank. It could barely be made out from its shining headlamp and its glowing coal tender and furnace.

I thought and said aloud that that train whistle sound was both a very eerie lonely and very warmly comforting sound to hear. With that the train sounded its whistle twice more. Each time the sound came from further away and then it ceased. We turned in and went to sleep.

Morning comes early when you are among young Scouts. It's up and at 'em at the crack of dawn. Soon after breakfast we cleaned up the campsite, struck camp and headed back to Wapoga in time to eat lunch there.

One of the very best treats to take in while at TMR was a visit to the Donut Farm. This great place for fresh homemade donuts and ice cold milk was on the west side of Route 97 almost directly across from the road that led into Camp Brooklyn and that took you to the Div. IV end of Rock Lake and from there along internal roads to the other three Divs. Getting there from Div. IV was mostly downhill and not an exceedingly long hike. Getting back was a bit more strenuous but not overly so for young men. One very memorable visit

to the Donut Farm that I made that summer of 1942 on one of my days off sticks in my mind because it involved not only eating some delicious donuts and drinking some ice cold milk on a hot summer day after a long trek from camp to it but also because I had a very long conversation with a very pretty blond girl while we were sitting on a stone wall near the then bridge that spanned the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. This bridge was located not too far north of the Donut Farm (a home of which part had been converted to the donut business). The low stonewall upon which we sat lined the edge of the roadway that led down from Route 97 to the bridge. This bridge has since been removed and a replacement built further upriver. But at that time the bridge was at the deep narrows gorge of the river and some adventurous spirits had hung a thick rope from its underside with a rubber car tire fastened to its free end. The rope was attached to the bridge at a point just beyond the edge of the cliff so that you needed a hooked stick to pull it towards you as you stood at the cliffs edge. While this lovely blond girl and I spoke we also watched young boys grab the rope and hold on to the tire as they swung out over the river and then at the far offshore end of their swing let go and drop into the swift flowing river below. They would then surface, swim to shore and climb the cliff to do it all over again time and time again. It was fascinating to watch but not as fascinating as I thought was this very pretty blond girl that I was engaging in conversation. She was a member of the household that owned and operated the Donut Farm.

Camp Brooklyn held a Scout-O-Lympiad during one period that summer. This was an exciting event wherein the four divisions competed against each other in various land and water athletic events. It was in this event that I ran a lap in the 400-yard relay. The Division with the most points won first place. There were 2nd, 3rd and 4th place winners also.

Camp Brooklyn had a building which was its Dispensary, First Aid Station, Clinic and Hospital all rolled into one. A Nurse was on duty there and a Doctor on call. A Doctor also made the rounds at this building at least once per day.

Scouts do a lot of cheers and singing when at camp. The first is done for joy and competition and the second for enjoyment. It was my joy to lead Camp Wapoga and Div. IV in may cheers and songs that summer camping season both in the Dining Hall and at the Council Fires.

The privilege of being the Indian who lit the Camp Brooklyn Council Fire was mine once that summer. I was selected to do that special deed shortly after I had become a Brotherhood Honor OA member.

The '42 Camping Season came to an end on Monday 31 August. On that day, after having lunch, all the 4th Period campers boarded buses and were driven to Brooklyn where they were dropped off at the same place they had boarded buses to be driven to camp two weeks or earlier.

Some Scouts were fortunate in being able to be at TMR for more than one period. One Scout at Wapoga, "Buddy" Eilers, was at camp the whole eight weeks. His sister was Sally Eilers, a Hollywood starlet, who acted in "B" movies during the 1930s (mostly in Westerns).

We staffers stayed on another 3 days finishing the work of closing the camp; work we had started a few days before when practical. For some reasons it always seemed easier and quicker to close camp than to open it. The job of winterizing would be left to the maintenance force who were local people. So on Thursday 3 September 1942 we staffers were bused to Brooklyn and dropped off at the same spot from which we had left on the 30th of June.

All we staffers had been chosen under the direction and guidance of Brooklyn Camp Director Phil Wagner. He had accomplished the incredible feat of putting on staff an assemblage of extremely dedicated, skilled, special and talented persons from the Brooklyn Scouting movement. They had each done their job in a most laudable manner. Very many of these staffers were then the young persons of the generation which would some 55 years later become known as "The Greatest Generation". That this was such an auspicious season of camping at TMR was the result of 15 years (14 of which had been under Phil Wagner's oversight) of improving, of planning, of trial and error experiments to the camping experience by the Brooklyn Council beginning in 1927. It was the grand culmination of all that effort which had involved programs at Troop, District and Council levels.

The Brooklyn Camps had had a total of 3586 campers during the 1942 season of which approximately 886 had been at Div. IV. These totals were noticeably higher than prior years and most likely reflective of the better times that the wartime economy had brought. The increases in employment and incomes during wartime was showing in the pocketbooks of the Scouts' families. It was the beginning year of the golden years of Scouting.

Don, Bob and myself were reluctant to let the special friendships we had made end without a last hurrah. We arranged to make a trip to the beach at Riis Park, Brooklyn during the week after Labor Day, Mon. 7th Sept. Therefore, on the appointed day before school started, I pedaled my bicycle to Don's home where I met up with Don and Bob in the

morning. I left my bicycle chained up inside the hallway of his building and we three took buses to Riis Park. We spent most of a sunny and warm day at the sand beach and took a swim or two or three. We dried off with and sat on towels we had brought along. Our swimming trunks we wore under our pants. Having also brought our packed lunches we ate it and drank a beverage there.

This day together was a fitting salute to our summer of comradeship. It was both a glad and sad as well as a bitter and sweet get together. We were glad to be meeting once more and it was sweet to review our memories of our summer at TMR and our hopes for our futures despite the war. Unspoken lay the realization that our boyhoods had come to an end at TMR the summer just past and that was sad. Adulthood lay just ahead for us in our nation now having been at war for ten months with no end to that war in sight and that was bitter to silently contemplate.

Our real pleasant day at the beach as friends enjoying the day and our time together came to a close. We took the buses back to Don's home and there we parted company for what turned out to be the last time. We gave each other the usual parting words: "Take care of yourself!" "Good luck!" "Keep in touch!" "Don't take any wooden nickels!" as much to comfort and enliven a serious moment for the others as for ourselves.

I unchained my bike and pedaled it back to my home in Bay Ridge with somber thoughts that lifted by the time the roughly one hour ride ended.

I never saw Don nor Bob again, I did correspond with Don for many years including the time I was in the Army. In 1945 from the Saint Bernadette's Grotto under the Cathedral in Lourdes, France I obtained a small bottle of the water flowing from the underground spring and sent it to him. Despite the bottle having its own reed wrapping and my careful cushioned packing of it inside a wooden box, the bottle had broken enroute and the water gone by the time he received it. He appreciated my efforts nevertheless. During part of Don's priesthood he served in Rome at the Vatican. He was also assigned to a post in Wash. D.C. for a while. Don was a highly intelligent man. Sometime during the 1980s I lost contact with him.

With Bob I never had contact again so I do not know his fate.

One week shy of ten months later I was in the Army taking Basic Training with the Combat Engineers at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. After that the Army sent me to college at the University of Illinois, Champaign - Urbana, Illinois. When that ASTP program was ended six months after I started in it I was sent to train with the Signal Corps at Camp Crowder,

Missouri. Then I shipped overseas with my Signal Corps unit and was in the ETO for 14 months. I was honorably discharged right thereafter from Fort Dix, NJ on 15 April 1946 with the rank of Staff Sergeant-Technical (T/3) after having spent a total of 34 months in the Army.

Summer Camp Council Fire at the Tahlequah Council Ring

My most vivid and warmest memories of that first 1937 short one week summer camp stay are of the wonderful smell that fills your nostrils as you enter a pine grove (to this day when I sense the smell of pine from trees my thoughts turn fondly to my first summer at Scout camp), of improving my swimming skills and passing some tests.

The most impressive and thrilling memory was being at the weekly Thursday night Council Fire, which started just after darkness had fallen, with all the Scouts from all of the Brooklyn Ten Mile River Division Camps (Divisions 1 thru 4) there and of seeing the council fire lit by an Order of the Arrow member dressed in full American Plains' Chief Indian regalia. This Brave would approach the fire dancing first around it and then he would stop, face the large semicircle of eight to nine hundred scouts, raise his Peace Pipe to the directions of the four winds and speak some chanted words. He then turned and walked to the Scout Executive behind him and presented the Peace Pipe to him. The Scout Executive would also raise the pipe to the four cardinal directions and return it to the Brave who put the pipe into his belt. Then he would produce an arrow from his quiver and place it in his bow. Bending over the prepared council fire he would shoot the arrow into its center whereby in that moment, when the night had just gotten pitch dark, the fire flared up and sprung to life like magic. You could now see, but dimly lit by the dancing flames from the council fire, the faces and figures of all there in that council ring space sitting in semicircles and ringed by a dense circle of mixed types of tall evergreen trees randomly planted by man and nature.

The very large Council Ring area was uphill from Rock Lake in the generally NNE direction of the Division 4 camps. You could not see it from the outside because it was completely screened around its perimeter by dense evergreens. Within that screening were two semicircular seating locations made of rocks and stones around the central fire area and facing each other in arcs at opposite sides of the ring. The smaller arc on the western side was for the guests, the scout executives and Camp HQs staff sitting on seats with backs made of natural stone and mortar on which they placed folded blankets before sitting. Over the Big Chiefs seat back was a large cement sculpture of the Great Blue Heron, which is the symbol of the Shu-Shu-Gah Lodge of the Order of the Arrow WWW.

Along the eastern side were semicircular arcs of individual flat rocks, arcs longer by far and in several rows deep, that served as the seating for the scout campers and their camp leaders who sat on these flat rocks or the ground. Behind those inner ground seats, at the perimeter close to the screening tress, were stands of bleacher seats constructed of birch logs. The seating arrangement of the Scouts was such that each Division had its own seating location. When viewed from where the Scout Hqs. Staff sat, Div. 1 was on the left, then to its right was Div. 2, to the right of it was Div. 3 and then to its right Div. 4 along with Camp Waramaug. The Scouts had walked from their various Division Campgrounds to get here. Complete silence was maintained in entering and leaving the council fire area and the use of flashlights, lanterns, etc. was not permitted within it. The Council Fire area was considered sacred ground and off limits except on the night the council fire was held or for repairs and maintenance. It is extremely regrettable that this Tahlequah Council Ring, which has become legendary, was demolished in the 1960s.

Then came the introductions of and greetings to the guests and the assembled from the Scout Executives and Camp Executives which were followed by acknowledgements and responses from the guests all happening to the cheers from the scouts. Announcements would be made after which the nights' program of songs, skits and cheers would then commence. The cheers and songs were led by various staff members selected from a pre-prepared list from among the camp leaders by the Council Fire Big Chief who was sometimes the Chief Scout Executive of the Brooklyn Council on a visit. He would introduce each such leader to all there. In those days the Big Chief was most often the much admired Field Executive and then Assistant Scout Executive of the Brooklyn Council the professional Scouter Philip F. Wagner who also served as Brooklyn Camp Director. After 15 years of esteemed work at the Brooklyn Council Phil Wagner assumed the post of Scout Executive for the Manhattan Council on 12 April 1943. This esteemed gentleman in every respect was sorely missed. Phil Wagner, a former Brooklyn Scout himself, subsequently became the Scout Executive of the Westchester Council.

Skits were interspersed between the songs and cheers and were presented by the members of the various camps who had practiced them beforehand. The selection of which camps were to present skits or cheers was rotated among the camps over the course of the 8 week summer camping season. Led by their Provisional SM and ASMs usually 2 or 3 camps presented their skits and 2 or 3 others their cheers at each council fire since there was not time for every camp to perform a skit or cheer at each weekly council fire. Also at each Council Fire, at different moments during the Council Fire, one Provisional Camp SM or ASM from each of the four divisions would be selected to lead all of the Scouts present in a

song or cheer.

And the last event was the tapping out ceremony for those voted (by secret ballot) into the Order of the Arrow by their fellow campers from among those eligible for that singular honor. After they had been led to the center of the Council Ring the closing ceremony took place.

The Council Fire which had started at around 7:30 PM lasted about two hours and ended as it began with a Scout ceremony. Then Taps was played by a bugler from the near distance; another bugler further away then repeated that mournful tune and then a third bugler still further away sounded the final doleful and solemn Taps melody. Meanwhile the Council Fire was extinguished and then in the total darkness everyone left the Council Ring in thoughtful silence.

I also remember that when that very first and single week of my very first summer camp experience was up and I was sitting on the bus as it drove away amid the cheers and shouts of the Staff Scouts staying on that my eyes filled with tears as they would each summer when camp was at an end for me. I had had a wonderful time and was sad it was over. I had also come to love that place and the camaraderie found there.

There was a strange phenomenon that would occur to me each year when I reached home after summer camp. The furnishings in the house would seem so much smaller than I remembered them. This sensation lasted for a couple of hours and then I was back to normal. It of course was an optical illusion brought about by my having been living in the wide-open spaces of summer camp.

ORDER OF THE ARROW - WWW



SCOUTING'S NATIONAL CAMPER HONOR SOCIETY DEDICATED TO SERVICE

This highly esteemed and respected Honor and Service Society conferred three degrees; Ordeal Honor, Brotherhood Honor and Vigil Honor in that ascending order. These were

sometimes referred to as 1st, 2nd and 3rd Degrees.

Certain requirements had to be fulfilled before one was eligible for consideration for this honor. Any Scout who attended Scout Camp for a number of summers aspired to be voted into the Order of the Arrow WWW. It was not a hope that you verbally expressed but rather a goal you silently held and tried to earn by your behavior and example.

The Brooklyn Council Order of the Arrow was organized into the main Shu-Shu-Gah Lodge # 24 and its six Chapters: Talequah for Hqs.; Iphetonga for Div. 4; Osetah for Div. 3; Accaponac for Div. 2; Sacut for Div. 1 and Waramaug for Camp Waramaug.

At a Brooklyn Council Fire during 1939 while I was spending 2 weeks at camp I was tapped out by the Braves of the Iphetonga Chapter of the Shu-Shu-Gah Lodge of the OA. I was awed, glad, honored and stunned. From that second on through the ordeal that followed I and the others tapped out were to maintain complete silence. No speaking under any circumstances.

The Chief of the Shu-Shu-Gah Lodge and 12 OA Braves had silently appeared just west of the Council Fire and the Chief asked for silence. Then he asked all the Campers present to stand and declared that a OA tapping out ceremony was now about to take place. The 12 Braves were from the six chapters that make up the Lodge; two from each.

The OA Braves then walked to where the secretly elected candidates from their Chapter were standing in semicircular rows mixed among the many other campers. They moved with softly deliberate solemnity and said nothing. The only sound in the Council Ring was that of a slight breeze gently moving the pine branches on the trees and it was charged with anticipation and awe.

The campers had been asked to keep facing and looking towards the Chief still standing by the fire. One Brave walked in front and one in back of those standing. When they reached a candidate for their lodge the one in back held up two feathers, one black and one orange, over and behind the head of the Scout who had been voted into the OA. Since all eyes were looking forward each candidate was completely stunned and surprised since the first indication a candidate had that he had been elected was when the Brave at his front gave the chosen Scout a hard shoulder tap and push into the arms of the one behind who grabbed his arms, put one hand over the candidate's mouth, strongly cautioned him to not speak and led him to a spot by the Council Fire near the Chief. When all those tapped out in this manner had been assembled together they were told to maintain silence and led away.

Once outside the Council Ring they were instructed to return to their cabins, pick up their blankets and ground cover and then report to their swimming dock without undue delay. Again they were reminded to remain silent and told that, no matter what happened, if they "broke" silence, even if all alone, they were honor bound to report it to their Taskmaster. All communications, if necessary at all, were to be conducted by them in writing or sign language. Only a true life or death situation might be excepted from this Ordeal of Silence. Breaking silence meant you had disqualified yourself and so you were informed; you were not to speak until after the 24 hour Ordeal was over and you had been inducted. You were also told who your Taskmasters were and that you were to follow their instructions.

The Ordeal Honor

The Tapping Out Ceremony had been the next to last item at the Council Fire just before the Closing Ceremony so when the OA candidates returned to their cabins they sometimes encountered the other campers who had not been tapped out. These other campers respected the vow of silence that now bound the candidates to being mute. Nevertheless some couldn't help but expressing congratulations and good luck to the candidates. Thus a candidate encountered his first test of their ordeal now in progress.

At the dock they were met by their Taskmasters still dressed as Indian Braves. The next part of the Ordeal was to sleep out in the open in the woods by yourself. The Div. 4 candidates were led along its dock at Rock Lake and placed in the very large and long War Canoes. The canoes were paddled west on the lake about 1/2 way its length at which point the canoes were landed and the candidates were deposited on the north shore of it. Then they were led into the dense and dark woods and assigned a spot to sleep; each spot was distant from any other so that in the deep darkness no candidate was able to see any other. There they were left to sleep overnight with no lighting except what moonlight, if any, might filter through the leafy canopy.

The next morning the Taskmasters awoke them by placing their hand over each candidate's mouth. Then by War Canoe they were returned to the dock and there each was given their Ordeal Work Assignment. Another candidate and myself were assigned to work in the kitchen of the Talequah Lodge at whatever tasks were given to us by an OA member of the kitchen staff.

While the two of us were at work at an assignment to clean the metal milk cans in which milk was delivered by a local dairy the other candidate had an accident. The can he was

hosing clean slipped from his grasp and fell over and in trying to grab it the hose slipped out of his hand and started spraying a heavy stream of very hot water every which way in a confined space of that portion of the loading dock area that was enclosed.

I had my back turned and he loudly uttered something; perhaps it was a warning the words of which I can't recall. The excitement of the moment caused him to "break" and I almost "broke" too but stopped myself in time. My words would have been a surprised "You Broke". This sad Scout righted the fallen milk can, shut off the water to the hose and then went to his Taskmaster to tell him what happened. He did not get inducted into the OA that summer and I don't know if he ever did get inducted another season. That left it to me to mop up all the spilled water and so forth.

Another part of the ordeal was the Fasting Ordeal. You were allowed all the water you wished to drink but four slices of white bread were your total ration at breakfast, at lunch and at supper. That was 12 slices for an entire day.

After completing your after supper work assignment you were to report to the Eternal Fire location and wait while still not speaking. OA Braves appeared and led you to a secret OA location where the secret induction ceremony was performed deep in the woods. The Council Fires were held Thursday evenings and so now it was Friday evening. The ceremony took place after 8:00 PM around a council fire lit for the occasion. When it was over we were told it was now OK to speak.

In that same moment I felt myself grabbed from behind and being given hearty congratulations by Charles "Charlie" Ahl, Edward "Ed" Krause and John "Jack" Lauenstein from my Troop 102. Respectively they were ASM, ASM and SM of Troop 102. They had been informed by the Camp Staff of my impending induction and had driven up to be at the ceremony. These guys were themselves members of the OA and were delighted that I was now a member too. I was dumbstruck and completely surprised at this warm display of good friendship for I had not expected them to be present. It was a true display of comradeship on their part. My 24 hours of silence was now a habit so I couldn't bring words forth quickly to thank them but later that evening I did so with grateful sincerity.

Ordeal Honor Induction Council Fire and Brotherhood Honor

The ORDEAL HONOR (1st Degree) induction council fire was also deep in the woods below a high ridge on which sat the lodge building of the Shu-Shu-Gah Lodge. During the induction ceremony, among other things, you were told a brief history of the OA and its purposes, the words that WWW represent and their meaning, the secret password and

shown the secret handshake.

After the induction ceremony all at the ceremony walked up the steep path to the lodge building inside of which was held a very festive and delicious dinner. Words of congratulations and welcome were extended to the new members and then what seemed to me to be the biggest and best tasting hamburgers I'd ever seen or eaten were served along with delicious French fries, fresh tomatoes and onions and fixings.

After having eaten we new Ordeal Degree members were each asked to say a word about our recent experience. When my turn came I confessed to an inability to adequately summon any words due the events of the last 24 hours with its imposed silence all of which I viewed with awe but said I could manage to think of the words "How about some more hamburger and fries" which evoked a good laugh.

Among those assembled were the lodge officers, camp staff members and campers who were OA members as well as my three comrades, I was now entitled to wear the OA Sash that had been draped over my left shoulder to right hip during the induction ceremony.

BROTHERHOOD HONOR (2nd Degree)

During the summer camping season of 1942, I was a camp staff member for the entire season and it turned out to be my last time ever at the Ten Mile River Scout Camps. That summer I was selected by the Brotherhood Honor members to be elevated to this degree. This honor was also totally unexpected by me but it certainly made me humble and grateful to be considered worthy. The service requirement to be completed for this level of OA membership was a camp improvement project selected by the candidate. I decided to make the extensive repairs needed by the Brooklyn Division 4 Camp Wapoga baseball field's wide and tall backstop. The ball field lay a distance ENE always from Camp Wapoga itself and the work was done by me in my off-duty time and was completed over about two weeks.

Then came the Brotherhood Honor conferring council fire and dinner and speeches. I was now entitled to wear my OA sash over my right shoulder to left hip. I remember very little about that special event.

The OA sash is all made of flannel or felt. The sash is white and about 2 inches wide. On the front half section is a red arrow about 30 inches long with the arrowhead facing upward and feathers at the opposite end. The Vigil Honor sash differs in that it has a red equilateral triangle, about 6 inches to a side, superimposed over and centered on the shaft of the arrow

with one apex of the triangle pointing up towards the arrowhead. The triangle has a white arrow along each side. That was then and some changes have been made in the interim.

I still feel extraordinarily honored and proud that my fellow campers and peers felt I had earned and was worthy enough to be selected for these privileged awards of camping honor. I am also humbled by their respect for my efforts to be of service. Knights of yore must have felt similarly when their knighthood was conferred.

National Convention - OA - WWW - 1940

The convention was held at Camp Twin Echo, Ligonier, Pennsylvania in the early Fall of 1940. Charlie Ahl, Ed Krauss, Jack Lauenstein and I attended. While I remember very little, if anything, about the convention program I do remember some things about we four attendees.

We drove out and back by car in, I think, Jack's automobile which was large enough to contain we four plus our camping equipment and food for the weekend. We arrived Friday night and pitched our tents in the darkness. Ed had a very lightweight canvas pup tent with an integral bottom and zippered front flaps which I shared with him. Those design features of his tent assembly, while still keeping the inside impervious, greatly intrigued me. Charlie and Jack shared a standard weight pup tent. We properly dug ditches around the tents to drain away water if it happened to rain, which luckily it didn't.

We cooked over open fires and a Coleman white gasoline camp stove. One evening Ed set up his collapsible reflector oven and baked some corn bread using it. Spread with butter and eaten along with a cup of coffee it was extremely delicious. It was my first taste of corn bread (thereafter not my last) and the first time I had seen a reflector oven in use.

I know I enjoyed this event and the camping it involved very much. I still have the special neckerchief each of we attendees was given. It is of sturdy somewhat shiny silver colored cloth with the conventions logo embroidered in one corner in bright red thread. This logo shows in the smaller triangle created when you fold the neckerchief in the standard manner as you do a regular scout neckerchief.

SENIOR DEGREE HONOR SOCIETY



DISTRICT BASED ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO SERVICE

To merit this award and honor you had to have demonstrated leadership qualities, advancement in the achievement ranks and a willingness to serve others and the Scouting movement. Senior Degree units were Scout District located. In 19__ I was inducted into the one in the Atlantic District of Brooklyn, NY. Their purpose was to have that Senior Degree unit through its members provide services to the local Scouting movement and the local community. I held it a great honor to have been selected.

NICK CIOCI MEDAL AWARD



HONOR BESTOWED BY TROOP 102

This was the most prestigious award given by Troop 102 in its name. It was an annual award.

Nick Cioci had been a Scout of Troop 102 and had died while still a Scout before I joined the Troop. Nicolas A. Cioce (as sometimes spelled) died November 30, 1928 at age 14. He had been highly and well thought of by his fellow Scouts and his Leaders. He was a Scout's Scout. At some point he developed an illness that made it difficult for him to move about and it also caused him pain when he did move. Even the vibrations from someone moving near him caused him pain. As this fatal disease progressed the pain worsened.

Despite these trials and tribulations Nick persisted in coming to the Troop Meetings, for as long as he could bear it, so he could participate in Scouting. It got to the point where he had to be carried to and from the meetings; an exercise that alone was painful. Throughout this tragic and sad journey Nick participated in Scouting as best his illness would allow and over time that participation perforce became less and less. Nick never lost his Scout Spirit nor his good humor. To the end he was an exemplary human being and Scout.

After his demise the Troop Committee and Leaders decided to award the "Nick Cioci Medal" to that Scout who during the past Troop Scouting Year had best demonstrated the fine Scouting Spirit and Qualities that Nick had shown. Each year Scouts were considered for the award by former recipients and Troop Leaders who then made their recommendation to the Troop Committee who had final approval. Some years the medal was not awarded. This medal was not lightly given out. The standards were high and not many were chosen for this fine and great honor. At the Parent's Night at the end of the 1940 Troop Season I was awarded the Nick Cioci Medal. I cried.

Both my mother and grandmother were in attendance at this Parents' Night. As we walked home after it was over both of them told me they were very proud that I had been honored by this singular award. We were speaking in Danish as we often did in private family conversations especially in my grandmother's presence. My mother emphasized to me that it was beholden of me to keep making certain that I was worthy of this honor. My grandmother concurred and added that such an honor bestowed lifelong obligations upon me to not dishonor the award nor that for what it stood. I have tried during my whole life since then to do as they cautioned.

The Senior Leaders of the Troop had personally known Nick Cioci. Thus his story told each time the medal was conferred came from the personal experiences of John Schmidt Jr. - SM, Artie Borch - ASM, Jack Lauenstein - ASM, and Earl Erikson - ASM. At each award ceremony a different one of them told his story.

This award was first given in 1935 and the recipient had been selected by the Senior Leaders. After that those who had received the medal, if still active in the Troop, participated in the selection process that led to the determination of the recipient from any candidates proposed. Some years it was determined that there was no suitable candidate and the medal was not awarded.

NICK CIOCI MEDAL HOLDERS

- 1935 - Adrian Van Dyke
- 1936 - John Edward Krauss
- 1937 - Charles Ahl

- 1938 - Theodore Endersen
- 1939 - Walter Hansen
- 1940 - Ib J. Mork
- 1941 - Robert Szutarsky
- 1942 - Donald Plenkens
- 1943 - Richard Meyer
- 1944 - not awarded
- 1945 - Erik Domaas
- 1946 - John Foss
- 1947 - not awarded
- 1948 - John R. Aram
- 1949 - George Lofmark
- 1950 - Bradley Buck
- 1951 - Finn Domaas
- 1952 - not awarded
- 1953 - not awarded
- 1954 - George R. Aram
- 1955 - William Jensen
- 1956 - George Bentzen
- 1957 - not awarded
- 1958 - not awarded
- 1959 -

Nick Cioci Medal Holder- Special Gold Award

- 1955 - John W. Lauenstein

"Mr. Troop 102" - John 'Jack' W. Lauenstein

No one deserved being given this special version of this coveted and prestigious award more than Jack. To countless boys he represented the finest kind of Scout Leader. His dedication, devotion, faithfulness, goodwill and loyalty to Troop 102 and Scouting are not easily matched. This award was given to him on Parent's Night in the 30th anniversary year of his membership in Troop 102 and the BSA. Imagine the countless hours he expended to further the best interests of the Scouts in the Troop over those years. Imagine how many boys' lives he had touched for the better. He was much admired and rightfully so. He was much liked and rightfully so. I know that I admired and liked Jack.

This medal was created for boys to honor the memory of a young boy and Scout of Troop 102 who inspired his peers by his bravery, perseverance and good spirits in the face of personal painful adversity. I believe he would smile upon having this special version of that medal given to Jack.

Jack and I had kept in touch by mail during the war years and after I moved to Staten Island in 1958 and was no longer active in Troop 102 we exchanged Christmas cards each year with their brief messages. Sometime in the late 1970s I stopped getting Christmas cards from Jack. This would have been about the time he would have retired. I have been informed by John Aram, who also lost touch with him, that Jack moved to someplace in lower upstate New York to be near his children and that Jack is dead. John Aram does not know where he is buried. I wish I knew where that is because I would go there and pay my respects to a fine man, a great Scout and Scout Leader and my friend.

Nick Cioci Medal Description

The medal is elegant in its simplicity of design. It is a standard medal created by the BSA for purposes such as the Nick Cioci medal. It is made of cast bronze medal metal and plated with a silver colored coating. Its obverse side has a raised laurel wreath inside of which is the Scouting Emblem/Seal. The reverse side has a small raised 5/16" diameter seal of the BSA, HQs, NYNY at its lower edge the rest is entirely blank to permit an inscription to be engraved thereon. The inscription on my medal reads "NICK CIOCI Award 1940 Ib Mork".

It hangs from a shiny royal blue ribbon, which has the standard safety type pin clasp with which to attach it to your uniform. The medal itself is about 1 and 1/4" in size and its shape

is hexagonal. The ribbon is about 1 and 1/2" long and 1 and 1/4" wide. The ribbon is attached to the medal by two small rings, one smaller than the other with the smaller one at the bottom and engaged into the hanging hole appended to the top of the medal. The medal was to be hung over your right scout uniform shirt pocket.

The medal itself has no intrinsic material value. Its great true value is in what it represents and symbolizes and how those values resonate with each holder. I look at mine from time to time and my spirits are uplifted, my fond memories of long, long ago warmed and I silently rededicate myself to the ideals, which this medal represents.

MINSTREL SHOW



A TROOP 102 PRODUCTION

SCOUTS IN SHOW BUSINESS

THE GREAT HALL

I took part in the first minstrel show put on by the Troop in the Great Hall of the new Educational Building. This hall was a below street level very large and tall two-story room with a real and fairly deep stage with two dressing rooms at one side of this stage on the west end of the room. The stage was also accessible from short stairs at either side of its front and beneath it were short swinging doors that opened and closed upon below-stage storage space for folding chairs and ten-person round tables whose legs folded. These items each had their own types of rolling flat carts upon which they could be stacked and push-rolled into and from the storage space. From the stage side of the proscenium arch hung two sets of center-parting stage curtains; the outer one towards the audience of heavy dense material and the inner one of more lightweight and thinner material.

On the south and long side of the room were in and out doors leading to and from the large Pantry and Kitchen both of which were fully equipped for their purposes. On this side were also a pair of doors leading to a long corridor off which were a door to an exit stairway, doors to the men's and women bathrooms and showers, door to the kitchen and a Janitors

Closet as well as doors to the Boy Scout and Girl Scout Rooms. At the far end of this corridor were fire doors leading to a narrow exit stair and alley to the street level and a door to the old gym beneath the old parish hall.

At the Great Hall's east end were alcoves in each corner and in its center a pair of doors leading to the double stairway that led to the street level as well as the second and third floors. The north side of the Great Hall was blank except for full size clerestory windows along its top whose sills were about three feet above street level. These windows were protected by heavy gauge wire mesh screens. This room was meant to be used for stage events, church dinners, large meetings and dances. Like the rest of the building the colors were light creams and tans with woodwork of natural colored oak. The heavy stage curtain was of a dark tan color.

REHEARSALS AND OPENING NIGHT

Practices and rehearsals for the minstrel show commenced in the Spring of 1937 and continued over the Summer into the early fall. All in anticipation that the new building would be completed on time which it was by the early summer of 1937.

Some of the rehearsals for individuals took place at "Charlie" Ahl's house whose father had some performing and stage experience and who was a member of the Troop Committee. His father played the accordion and was the director of the show and 'Charlie' played the piano.

I was to sing the song "Alexander's Ragtime Band" a catchy and lively tune from the Gay Nineties.

All went well including the dress rehearsal in the Great hall with the band hired for the show. Came showtime and everything was going fine with all the acts. My turn came and my performance was also going fine up to a point. The song was sung verse, refrain, verse, and refrain like most tunes. When we hit the second verse the band played counterpoint to my singing expecting me to carry the basic tune. We had never practiced it that way and I became instantly nonplussed and silent. When the band picked up the refrain the second time playing the basic melody I was able to join in again. The faux pas was very noticeable and I felt completely embarrassed. The second night's performance went off without hitch because the band now knew my limitations.

When another minstrel show was put on in some later year I was not in it but for reasons, forgotten now, not having to do with the unfortunate happenstance at the first show.

CAMP-O-REES / JAMBOREES / RALLIES / TREK-O-REES



DEMONSTRATING AND MEASURING A TROOP'S CAMPING COMPETANCE

If memory serves me well, I believe the first Camp-O-Ree that I attended was in 1937 and it took place at Miller Field on Staten Island, New York. To travel there we first met at the church and hiked to Third Avenue where we boarded a trolley car which took us to Bay Ridge Avenue (69th Street). There we used our transfers and boarded another trolley down 69th St. to Shore Road from where it was but a very short distance to the 69th St. Ferry. On to the ferry and the ride across the bay to St. George, S.I. At this point we took the S.I. train to the New Dorp Station where we got off. The hike from the station to Miller Field was not long. The trolley and ferry fares were 5 cents each and the transfer was free. The train in Staten Island was 10 cents.

This Army Air Corps installation was then under the control of the Department of the Army. These were weekend events at which Troops could start checking in on Friday evenings if desired. The purpose was for the Scouts of each Troop to demonstrate their camping competence and skills and then have those measured and rated against a set of standards. Inspections for those purposes were made by adult Scouters not affiliated with the Troop they were rating. The Scouts were prepared for this event at several meetings before the event and were pretty much left to their own devices at the Camp-O-Ree itself. Having some senior Boy Scouts of the Troop at a Camp-O-Ree greatly helped the Scouts to achieve high ratings. Troop Scout Leaders served as rating inspectors and were assigned to inspect units whose locations were far removed from their own Troop's home turf.

Camp-O-Rees were usually held by Scout Districts and this one was the Atlantic District Camp-O-Ree of which Troop 102 was part. Upon arrival a Troop was checked-in by their Leader and were then assigned the area where they were to set up camp. Troop 102 had their own tents; these were tent camping events. Troops had preregistered their intent to participate. At this particular Camp-O-Ree Troop 102 was assigned an area about 25 feet

from fencing that ran parallel to Hylan Boulevard and that was on that side of Miller Field that lay closets to Hylan Blvd. It was at this location we pitched camp.

Some of the camping skills graded were: how well and taut tents were pitched and trenched around to drain rain away from the tent; how the tent opening was oriented relative to ground slope so as to prevent rain from flowing into the tent; proper storage of and methods of preserving foods; drinking water availability and storage; neatness of camp area and interior of tents.

Other camping skills rated were: firebuilding and ax handling and wood chopping safety; sanitary measures used in preparing foods and in washing mess kits, pots and pans and utensils; First Aid Kit availability; posting of duty rosters and days activities with times scheduled; personal cleanliness and neatness of each Scout; flashlight and other types of lighting availability and locations for any after dark activities; how fire rings were built and located.

The overall rating a Troop received would be one of three that in ascending order were: Active, Experienced, Outstanding. Each Scout received a ribbon of a color reflecting the rating the Troop earned and the Troop received a ribbon streamer to hang on the Troop flagstaff of matching color. Both were imprinted with gilt lettering that stated, "Atlantic District Camp-O-Ree 1937", I don't recall the three ribbon colors though they might have been green, red and blue. On the Troops' streamers additionally was imprinted the rating achieved.

Another event that comes to mind was an Atlantic District Rally held at the Poly Prep School Field located at _____. It was held 2 June 1942 starting at 6: 00 PM and the entrance fee was \$1.00 for the 1st Patrol and 50 cents for each additional Patrol. The District Activities Commissioner with whom each Troop needed to pre-register was Julius Loewenthal. It was a rally that included Standard Scout Crafts. Troop 102 was there but I don't remember any of the details.

Can't remember in how many of these different events, over time, the Troop or myself participated but the Troop flagstaff, just below the brass scout emblem on its top end, eventually became festooned and crowded with these streamers.

Some of these events were: 1940 - Camporee, 1942 - Camporee at Alpine Scout Camp, May 1952 -Scout-O-Rama at Madison Square Garden, December 1952 - NYC Planetarium Visit, _____

ALPINE SCOUT CAMP, NEW JERSEY



SHORT TERM CAMPING

Sometime during 1942 the Greater New York Councils, BSA acquired a very large camping ground in Alpine, New Jersey. It became ready for Troop Camping for units with their own tents on 1 July 1942 and it cost 50 cents per Patrol (up to 8 Scouts) for an overnight experience. This camp still exists today. It lay close by and westerly of Route 9W (the Interstate Palisades Parkway was started to be built in 1947).

An Atlantic District Camp-O-Ree was scheduled to be held there on the Columbus Day (3-day) Weekend of Sat. 10 Oct. thru Mon. 12 Oct. and Troop 102, always active and having their own tentage, decided to attend. Two reasons were behind this decision; the first was to keep the Troop active and competitive and the second was a curiosity about seeing the new camp area. We took the subway and a bus to get there and the bus let us off on Route 9W at the entrance to the camp. The Camp-O-Ree itself was standard and by this time Troop 102 was experienced and it showed. The consensus among those attending from Troop 102 was that Alpine Scout Camp was nice but flat and too near civilization. It was agreed that we much preferred Spruce Pond and would continue to use it. We would only go to Alpine Scout Camp if District or other official events were held there. We kept our word.

This one of the last camping trips, if not the last, that SM Jack Lauenstein went on before being drafted into the Army.

The attendance of Troop 102 members on Overnight Hikes/Camping and Camp-O-Rees, etc. varied from between about 12 to 17 including leaders. This represents between 33 to 50 per cent of the Troop's average registration. There were almost always 2 to 3 adult leaders on these camp-outs. The depth of experienced adult leadership was one of the strengths of Troop 102 and it also meant that there were always leaders available to lead camping trips even though not every leader was able to go on every trip.

POUCH SCOUT CAMP



STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK - SHORT TERM CAMPING

Another Camp-O-Ree we attended before WW II was at Pouch which was not named that then. I think the name then was Flagg Scout Camp and Ohrbach Lake was named Flagg Pond. The trip to it followed the same travel route as used to get to Miller Field except for Miller Field we hiked down to below Hylan Boulevard where as to this camp we hiked up to Richmond Road then along it to Rockland Avenue then right on it to Manor Road and right turn up steep Manor Road to the Camp entrance.

Whereas Miller Field had been flat and treeless this camp was very wooded and hilly. You felt more as if you were in a forest. The pond had the same dock and crib layout as at Spruce Pond and the lean-tos were of the same design as there too. Nevertheless Troop 102 was smitten with Spruce Pond and went there unless official events took them elsewhere.

After WW II the leaders of the Troop had an overnight camping trip at Pouch for the leaders only. It was taken for reasons of camaraderie, nostalgia and because we realized that the realities of our adulthood were taking us in different directions and we would soon (and for some already had) be losing direct contact with each other. It was sort of a last hurrah.

SCOUT-O-RAMA - 3 and 4 MAY 1940



TROOPS FROM ALL OF NEW YORK CITY SHOW THEIR STUFF AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

A Boy Scout-O-Rama had taken place at the old Madison Square Garden on 27 and 28 March 1936. Madison Square Garden then was located at a different location than the newer one is these days. I did not actively participate in the 1936 event but visited it one

evening with other members of Pack 102 and saw the demonstrations on the Garden's floor put on by the various Scout Troops. We were taken there on the night that Troop 102 was showing its stuff by our Cubmaster Ray Gilbert. We sat in the viewing seats and wore our Cub Scout uniforms and had a grand time especially when we recognized one of our Den Chiefs out on the Garden floor.

Travel to and from the event was by the dependable BMT Fourth Avenue subway line. 5 cents fare each way for this most efficient, practicable and speedy mode of transport.

Then on the 3 and 4 May 1940 (or it may have been on the 17 and 18 of May) a Scout-O-Rama was held at Madison Square Garden that I attended as a participant along with other members of Troop 102. Again we travelled by subway and were led by our Troop Leaders and wore our Scout uniforms. As at the prior O-Rama different Scouting events and skills were demonstrated by the participating scouts of the various troops of NYC. These demonstrations showed off the activities that scouts participated in and learned and were those that lent themselves to being visually presented such as: Firemaking and Cooking, First Aid skills, Pioneering skills such as tower and bridge building with logs, Signaling with Morse and Semaphore Flags, Tent Pitching and the like. The Order of the Arrow put on displays of Native American dancing wearing American Indian costumes and demonstrated some Archery target shooting. Some Explorer Troops demonstrated their Horsemanship skills and some Sea Scout units showed how they rigged and raised sails on their ships.

I was part of a group of Scouts from Troop 102 who erected a log-signaling tower and then demonstrated signaling with flags from its top. I also remember that it was a very exciting and huge Scouting event in which to be a participant.

These Scout-O-Ramas were put on to keep the boys and leaders in Scouting enthused, to encourage other boys and adults to join and to help draw support for Scouting from the community at large. At this these O-Ramas must be judged as having been successful.

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR 1939 and 1940



SCOUT ENCAMPMENT AND SERVICE AT THE FAIR

This World's Fair was a fantastic exciting extravaganza. It was awing, educational, entertaining, inspiring, interesting and classy and sassy. It was a fun place to be and the New York World's Fair of 1964-1965 didn't hold a candle to it.

I was extremely fortunate to be among the very few in the world to live at the New York World's Fair 1939-1940. Not many can say that! From 21 July to 28 July 1939 I was a member of the Boy Scout Service Camp at the Fair for that one week (I also went to Ten Mile River Scout Camps for two weeks later that summer).

We were quartered in a roped-off area of the Fair in large Army tents that each held about 8 Scouts. We slept on Army canvas cots and there was a Mess Tent where we ate. Our blankets, etc. we brought from home. Each Scout was issued two neckerchiefs especially designed for the Fair Camp; one was orange and one was dark blue. A special neckerchief slide was also issued, as was a cloth badge to hang from the button of one of your shirt pockets.

The uniform you had to wear was the Scout summer uniform. These were of lightweight cotton in the standard Scout uniform color. The shirt was short-sleeved with a v-neck front and with no collar and was buttoned down the front. It had the two standard chest pockets. The pants were short with button front fly and side and back pockets. Stockings were knee-high and held in place with hidden garters or woolen wrap-arounds whose tassel showed in a blue color. The shoes had to be brown and shined. When on duty you had to wear the campaign style hat and the orange neckerchief. Off duty you wore no hat and the blue neckerchief.

On duty you patrolled your assigned area of the Fair, in pairs, and acted as sources of information and as guides. You studied Fair maps and other information to make you knowledgeable about the fair and the locations of buildings. You also provided emergency first aid when necessary.

Once a day some of those on duty would publically perform in an open area of the scout camp a special close order drill revolving around knowing your left from your right and passing on the right not the left. This clever drill which we were taught and practiced had been created for this World's Fair by an Army Officer, _____, who was involved in Scouting. I brought this drill back to Troop 102 and taught it for a number of years to the Scouts.

Off duty you were on your own and could roam the Fair and take in the sights and visit the exhibits and buildings. Many of these were free and among those that cost Scouts were given a discount. You were expected to stay out of trouble and be helpful if asked. Nevertheless it was a great opportunity to talk to pretty girls and do a little innocent flirting!

I have never forgotten this unique experience and never will!

TROOP 102 AND WORLD WAR TWO



RUMBLINGS LEAD TO WAR - MILITARY SERVICE - WAR SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

The Scouts of Troop 102 as well as the Cubs of Pack 102 and the Sea Scouts of Ship 102 were as aware as everyone else of the ominous signs of a coming war emanating from Europe and Asia. Their premonitions were confirmed by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Sunday, 7 December 1941. Thereafter events swept them up in war related programs and the older Scouts, the Leaders and the Scouters, were soon required to register for the draft if they hadn't already been so required.

At the start of 1942 that draft was drastically beginning to thin Scouting of Scouts, Leaders and Scouters and they were not to return from military service until late 1945 and 1946.

1942 also saw an increase in the war-related programs and the tempo of those programs which were being promulgated by Scoutings' National HQs for execution at the Council and Troop levels. Troop 102, as Troops nationwide, took part in metal, paper and rubber collection drives both by donating and collecting these types of items. It helped distribute brochures, leaflets and posters, provided by Federal government departments, in the neighborhood encouraging the collection drives, war bond sales, rationing compliance, price control information and other war related causes, needs and programs. It solicited pledges to buy war bonds.

The Scouts, nationwide, were so successful at these undertakings that they were wooed by

every government agency because whatever the 1,500,000 Boy Scouts and Cubs tackled the results reached astronomical statistics of success.

The shortages of gasoline and rubber made it necessary in 1943, 1944 and 1945 to use trains instead of buses to transport Scouts and Scouters to and from summer camp at TMR. An Erie RR train would be boarded in Hoboken, N.J. that would take the campers to Narrowsburg, NY. After debarking there the campers would hike to the Brooklyn Camps at TMR. Heavy luggage would be handled by trucks. The reverse would take place upon going home.

Another change wrought by wartime shortages was an increase in the price of the Boys Life magazine to \$1.00 per year for subscriptions made in groups of 5 or more (8 and 1/2 cents per issue). This was due to increased production costs and a dwindling of advertisers. Some advertisers faced material shortages and therefore could not fill orders and so they cut back on advertising.

However, in August 1942 it was announced that Scouts and Scouters in the armed forces would not have to pay a registration or reregistration fee while in the military. Their registered status would be maintained for free for the duration of their service thus keeping their tenure in Scouting intact. The registration form on which these person's names were listed was to be noted with "In Military Service" after the name.

I was drafted into the Army in late June 1943 and was honorably discharged mid-April 1946 just after having come back from 14 months overseas duty in the ETO with the Signal Corps. Thus I was part of the Troop's war support activities for only about 18 months.

1943 - 25th Anniversary Year of Troop 102

This is Boy Scout Sunday and we welcome to our services our own Troop 102, which was organized in September 1918. The first meeting of it was held in a small room over an Ice Cream Parlor adjoining the Loew's Bay Ridge Theatre (NW Cor. 72nd St. and 3rd Ave.). In that time more than 500 boys have been trained in Scouting with the Troop. Presently (Feb. 1943) there are 38 boys in the Troop and 50 Ex-members of the Troop are in the Armed Services of our Country. Among them is Lt. Col. Raymond W. Rumph now holding a responsible post in the mid-Pacific area. There are many trophies, which symbolize the excellence of the work done by our Scouts over the years. In this the 25th Anniversary Year of the founding of Troop 102, Good Shepherd Church extends congratulations upon a splendid record and best wishes for the future.

Thus was the announcement (here paraphrased) printed in the church's Sunday Bulletin that was given to each attendee at the Sunday church service on Scout Sunday in February 1943. It was also read from the lectern during the service. This announcement included a list of those who had been Scoutmasters of Troop 102 up until that point (up to and including John E. Krauss).

PEACE AT LAST



SCOUTS NOW VETERANS AND YOUNG MEN COME HOME

War had taken a long time to come to the door of the U.S.A. but when it came it did swiftly with the attack at Pearl Harbor. Peace had also been a long time in arriving and it came in rapid succession with "Unconditional Surrender" of the Germans on 8th May 1945 and then the Japanese on 14 August 1945.

The blind lottery driven draft system had been judged fair by the vast majority of the American people including those who were drafted. The system set up to determine in what order you would be discharged was also deemed fair by the veterans and the general public. Those with the longest service, the most time overseas and the most time in combat became those discharged first, under the point system devised to determine those factors. And the veterans started coming home in increasing numbers. So it was that the former members of Troop 102 came home starting in late 1945 until mid 1946.

Those who got back into Scouting with Pack and Troop 102 had an easier time adjusting to civilian life. Just as their Scouting skills had helped them in the military their military skills helped them in Scouting as leaders. Being war veterans they were also looked upon as special by the Cubs and Scouts; heroes if you will. These returned war veterans spoke little of their experiences during the war other than citing their branch of service, their length of service and where that service had taken them. They really didn't look upon themselves as special but only one of 16,000,000 who had done their duty for their country, helped win the war and come home.

Their military service had matured them sooner in life to a degree that served them

exceedingly well in their civilian pursuits whether that first be college or work. For all but the most seriously harmed and wounded the return to civilian life went remarkably smoothly. A grateful nation had created programs to pay them while they searched for work, pay for their higher education or skills training if they wanted that, ease their way into a business of their own and make it relatively easy for them to own a home. All this resulted in the best return on investment ever made by the people of the U.S.A and the Federal, State and City governments.

The invisible bonds of shared and similar experiences as fellow Scouts and now as fellow war veterans were so palpable and strong that they were almost made visible.

TROOP 102 AFTER THE WAR



CHANGED BOYS NOW MEN LEAD A CHANGING SCOUTING MOVEMENT IN THE PACK AND TROOP

Troop 102 had for many years been able to produce excellent leaders from within its members. This was true not only of the leaders but also of the Committeemen.

In 1935 when I joined John H. Schmidt, Jr. was the Scoutmaster. I didn't know if he had been a scout in Troop 102 (I have a suspicion he had) or how long he had been Scoutmaster by then. He relinquished that position in 1939 for reasons unknown to me.

From 19 October 1939 to 4 March 1941 Arthur C. Borch (Artie) was the Scoutmaster. He was a Life Scout from Troop 102 and had been one of the four Assistant Scoutmasters. He worked, as a junior executive then, for the Dutch Boy paint company and was transferred to Chicago, which precipitated his relinquishing the Scoutmastership.

John W. Lauenstein (Jack) then became Scoutmaster from 1941 until into 1942 when he was drafted into the U.S. Army. When he came home from the service in 1945 he took the Scoutmastership again and held it until 1950. He again became Scoutmaster in 1954. He had been a scout in Troop 102 and one of the four Assistant Scoutmasters - one of the "Four Musketeers" along with Artie, Earl and George.

John E. Krauss (Ed) then took over from "Jack" as Scoutmaster for several months from mid 1942 until March 1943. During that period the Scouts dubbed him "Sourkrauss" for reasons known only to themselves. At that moment in time "Ed" was drafted into the Army and was gone. Ed was a Life Scout from Troop 102. After returning from the war he participated in the Scouting Movement at the District level as a Merit Badge Counselor and became a teacher of Electrical Engineering at Brooklyn Technical High School just as his father John F. Krauss ("Pop") had been.

"Pop" Krauss, as the Scouts all called him with fond respect, was for many years before the war a Troop Committeeman and often was the Chairman of this Committee. While he was on the stout side he often went on the overnight hiking trips with the Troop. He was a very well-liked gentleman, a regular guy and a no-nonsense disciplinarian whom you respected. He was a great asset to Scouting and Troop 102.

For a little over three months, from mid-March to 29 June 1943, Ib J. Mork took over from "Ed" as "Acting" Scoutmaster since he was only almost 19 years of age but you had to be 21 years old to be the official Scoutmaster.

Then the "Greetings" from FDR put Ib in the U.S. Army. He was a Life Scout of Troop 102. When he returned from the Army in mid-April 1946 he became the Cubmaster as well as one of the Assistant Scoutmasters. He relinquished the Cubmasters position in 1950 to become the Scoutmaster and held that position until 1954 at which time he became a Troop Committeeman; a position he kept until 1958 when he moved to Staten Island.

For the year of 1954 Ib also became a Merit Badge Counselor for the Camping, Cooking and Pioneering Merit Badges but had few Scouts to counsel.

During the war years of 1943, 1944 and 1945 the Troop was led by Mr. John Whatley, a father of one of its Scouts, with the assistance of young teenage boys of about sixteen years of age. One of these was LeRoy Brubaker ("Roy"). Another was Donald ("Don") Plenkens. Thanks to these fine persons the Troop was kept intact during the war years and was there to return to when the 'warriors' came home from the war. This was a true blessing for it greatly helped their transition back into civilian life.

Earl Eriksen, one of the four Assistant Scoutmasters, was a product of Troop 102. He was an ASM in the Troop when Ib became a Pack 102 member in 1935 and Troop member in 1936 and held that position until into 1942 when he went into the Army. After the war he did not come back to Troop 102.

George W. Lyons was an ASM when Ib joined the Pack in 1935 and the Troop in 1936. He held that position until sometime in 1942 when he was drafted into the Army. He hadn't been a Scout as far as I know but was a good and dependable leader. After returning from the wartime service sometime in 1945 he again became an ASM and stayed as ASM until around 1950 after which he went on the Troop Committee and served as its Chairman. He also served as the Advisor to the Explorer Post 102, which had been chartered post-war, from _____ to _____.

Artie, Earl, George and Jack had been friends for a long time. At some point George and Jack became brothers-in-laws because Jack married George's sister. They all were fine young men and outstanding Scout Leaders as well as very decent human beings.

I am very, very grateful to them for their mentoring and steadying hands as I progressed through Scouting. They willingly shared their Leadership, Scouting and Camping skills with me and the other Scouts. And their exemplary behavior as leaders and men was a guide to me for the rest of my life. I thank them with all of my heart.

George and Jack also became my good friends after we returned from the war.

Raymond ("Ray") Gilbert was a little older than the 4 ASMs and he was a product of Troop 102 where he had become an Eagle Scout. He was also for a time active with the N.Y. State National Guard Cavalry and was an excellent horseman. One of his peers was Raymond Rumph ("Ray") who was also an Eagle Scout from Troop 102. The two "Rays" were good friends from childhood.

Ray Rumph graduated from the U.S. Army Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. and became a career Army Officer who for a part of his career taught at West Point. Whenever a Scout from T 102 showed potential and an interest in the West Point Academy Ray Gilbert would arrange a trip to West Point for that Scout and personally introduce him to Ray Rumph. This way the Scout could meet another role model and benefit from some straight talk about life at West Point and as an Army Commissioned Officer. If the Scout wanted to try to be accepted at West Point Ray Rumph would give him guidance.

After WW II two Scouts, among several, from Troop 102 wanted to try for West Point. They were brothers and about 3 years apart in age. They both were above average Scouts and students and nice boys and young men. The oldest was Richard Mollicone and the youngest was Donald Mollicone. Both earned the Eagle Scout Award. They both met with Ray Rumph and both succeeded in going to and graduating from West Point as 2nd Lts.

Richard went into the Air Force and became a fighter pilot. He was shot down over Korea during the Korean War. He came from a very close-knit and mutually supportive family. I never even noticed petty sibling rivalry. The last time I saw Richard was when he visited with me and my wife Ruth at our home on 69th Street in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn sometime around 1954.

Donald became a career officer but I lost track of him. The last time I saw him was perhaps in 1952 when a group of us "oldtimer" leaders from Troop 102 went on an overnight trip and stayed in a cabin in Margarettsville, N.Y. owned by Jack's uncle. Recently I learned that Donald had become a 2nd Lt. Regular in the Air Force. He was killed in a crash landing in S. Vietnam on 20 December 1963 at the age of 26 years and was married. His widow, his parents and brother undoubtedly were devastated by this tragedy. Donald Allan Mollicone has his full name inscribed on "The Wall" of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Wash., D.C. on Panel 01E-Line 39.

Their father Mr. Anthony Mollicone served on the Troop Committee for a number of years while they were Scouts. And their mother was always a big help at Fathers' Nights, Mothers' Night and Parents' Nights. They were "good people".

When Ib J. Mork became Cubmaster in 1946 he had as his Assistant Cubmaster Roland Sykes who was the brother-in-law of George Lyons. George had married Floyd's sister. Roland was ACM until 1950 when Ib became Scoutmaster. Roland stayed on as ACM with the new Cubmaster for a while after which "Ro" just functioned as an ASM of the Troop a position he had also held while being the ACM.

The Cub Scouts, after the war, were promoting the active participation of mothers of Cubs as Den Mothers so there was not so much work directly with the Cub Scouts for the Cubmaster or his ACM to do. Even while the Cubmaster Ib was also active with the Troop as an ASM.

Mr. Martin, the father of Cub Scout Jimmy Martin and his brother, took over from Ib as the Cubmaster and he did a masterful job for a number of years while both his sons went through the Cub Scout program.

When Ib became Scoutmaster in 1950 he had the good fortune to be able to enlist Harold I. Stewart as his ASM. Harold had been in Pack 102 starting in 1936 and had also become a Scout in Troop 102. By about the time he started high school Harold had left scouting. He

had been in the Army during the war like Ib and many others. Because of that and their other contacts at church and because they both were fairly recent newlyweds whose wives were nurses and also knew each other from church they were able to partner leading Troop 102. Harold was a dependable and trustworthy Scout leader and did his job excellently. Harold graduated from the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey using the GI Bill. He received a degree in Mechanical Engineering and used it to become a successful salesman which job required a technical education. He lives in retirement with his wife Evelyn in Dunnellon, FL. She had been a RN at VA Hospitals for many years and earned her degree at Skidmore College in Saratoga, NY.

His older brother, by a couple of years, Frank had also been in the Pack in 1935 and then the Troop but had also dropped out about the time he entered high school. Frank was Ib's age and had also served during the war in the Army. Frank however had been seriously wounded in a battle on one of the Pacific Islands. Because of a serious head wound he was to wear a metal plate in his skull for the rest of his life. He also suffered greatly from combat fatigue and other mental traumas and was in the Army hospitals for a long time before being discharged. During his lifetime he has been in and out of VA Hospitals frequently and even recently. He is retired and lives with his wife Ruth in West Chester, PA. He graduated from Gettysburg College after the war using the GI Bill. I have not seen nor talked to Frank since he was a young Scout in Troop 102 or since we were in Confirmation Class together and from which we were confirmed in the Spring of 1939.

Ib was also fortunate in being able to recruit Wayne Raaberg as an ASM when Ib became SM. Wayne had been a Cub and Scout in P 102 and T 102. Wayne was working as the Manager of the local Seven Up bottling plant. He made a fine ASM while Ib was SM.

The recruitment of these new ASMs was made necessary because by the time Ib became SM the other returned WW II veterans who had been serving as ASMs had moved on with their lives. They had completed college or other training, were now starting their working careers in earnest, had gotten married and some had started having a family and others had moved out of their old neighborhood. As a result they were no longer available as Volunteer Scouters. It happened suddenly - one moment there was a surfeit of leadership and the next moment a scarcity. The Scouts in the Troop noticed it immediately and asked about it and were given straight answers. Fortunately this changeover in leaders did not result in any loss of Scouts but for a while the Scouts did miss their former leaders. The deep ranks of leadership that T 102 was so fortunate in having proved to be a saving source.

Two pre-war Scouts of Troop 102 who had become ASMs, not long before being drafted into the Army, in order to fill the gaps left when the older leaders were drafted ahead of them came back after serving in the Army and became ASMs once again.

One of them was Walter Swanson who was a sterling young man and a fine Scout. He was also an excellent leader. "Swanny" became a chum of his older mentor and SM Jack Lauenstein. Pre-war they had gone on a camping trip to the White Mountains of New Hampshire one-summer vacation. "Swanny" graduated from Brooklyn Technical H.S. having gone through the Chemical Engineering course and after the war he became a chemical engineer upon completing his degree studies under the G.I. Bill. He had for a while, pre-war, dated the girl I eventually married. He and I were real good scouting friends.

The other was William Fleischman who after the war served as best man at my wedding and I as his best man at his wedding also after the war. We married our wives in 1948 one month apart. My wedding was in early September and his in October. Bill had, on occasion been disruptive at Scout Meetings during his early teens to the point that one meeting night "Swanny" and I demanded of our SM Artie Borch that he throw Bill out of the Troop or we would quit. This ultimatum did not sit well with Artie and he told us so in no uncertain terms and told us to quit if we so decided. We were one-upped. This confrontation was smoothed over in some manner, I don't recall the details, but Bill started behaving much better thereafter and became an asset and a good leader.

What a treat to have him cook on some of the overnight trips he took with the Troop to Spruce Pond post-war. It had turned out that Bill and I became good friends before we were drafted and close friends after we came back. Bill was a cook and chef in the Army and after the war, under the G.I. Bill, trained to become a chef at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Manhattan, NY where he became a Souse Chef. He went on to become Executive Chef at the Fountainbleu Hotel in Miami Beach, Florida and subsequently at other fine hotels in Virginia and Florida. He died in 1981 in Florida at the age of 56 from a heart attack. As he wished his ashes were scattered at sea.

These two were among the pre-war Scouts who had returned to help lead T 102. But they were also among the ones whose lives naturally moved on. Therefore, I was very fortunate in having some older Scouts mature and become ASMs as the others were lost. Among these new batch of leaders who made themselves available were John Aram and Donald Plenkers. Both had fine leadership qualities and were a big help with the Troop.

John became a broadcast engineer for NBC TV for many years. He was very active in Scouting with Troop 102 for many years and then became active at the Atlantic District level also for many years. He was awarded the Silver Beaver Award for his efforts. John is retired and lives in Honesdale, PA. _____

Don was a very multi-talented person with a number of hobbies including Sword Swallowing, and Bull Whip use. He also had an abiding interest in Indian Lore, Dances and Dress and made many of his own Indian Costumes. For a number of years he led a group of interested Scouts from T 102 in re-enactments of Indian Dancing while dressed in authentically copied Indian Costumes that each in the group had made for himself. Don was also gifted musically and could expertly play the pipe organ though never having taken a lesson. He often volunteered to play at skating rinks. Once he was given the opportunity to play the immense organ at the Radio City Music Hall. He amazed the master organist at the Music Hall with his expertise. Don died quite alone and at a relatively young age somewhere in south New Jersey. _____

MEN WHO HAVE SERVED AS SCOUTMASTERS OF TROOP 102

- Edward C. Bunn - 1918-1920
- W. Anderson - 1920-1921
- Edward Finger - 1921-1923
- John H. Schmidt, Jr. - 1923-1930
- Henry Meyer - 1930-1933
- Charles Weadon - 1933-1934
- John H. Schmidt, Jr. - 1934-1939
- Arthur C. Borch - 1939-1941
- John W. Lauenstein - 1941-1942
- J. Edward Krauss - 1942-1943
- Ib J. Mork - 1943-1943 (Act'g. SM Mar. thru Jun.)

- John Whatley - 1943-1945
- John W. Lauenstein - 1945-1950
- Ib J. Mork - 1950-1954
- John W. Lauenstein - 1954-19__

Scouts of T 102 Who Were Brothers

- John and George Aram
- Erik and Finn Domaas
- Ted and Cliff Endersen
- George and Niel Falk
- Walter and Edward Hansen
- Richard and Donald Mollicone
- Frank and Harold Stewart

Eagle Scouts of T 102

- George Aram - ASM T 102
- Ray Gilbert - Cubmaster P 102
- Paul Jensen
- George Lofmark
- Donald Mollicone - West Point Graduate, 2nd Lt. Air Force
- Richard Millicone - West Point Graduate
- Ray Rumph - West Point Graduate
- Arthur Schmidt, Jr.

EXPLORER POST 102



A SENIOR SCOUT PROGRAM

An Explorer Post was established at Good Shepherd in the late 1940s in response to clamors from some of the older Scouts. It became an ill-fated attempt valiant though it was and its lifespan was short.

Its first adult Advisor was George Lyons former ASM, Troop Committeeman and at one time Chairman of that committee. He resigned in 1952 from it as well as Scouting because he became totally discouraged and disgusted with the Explorer Program. John Aram who was one of the boys who asked for the program and joined it became its Advisor later on,

The program was designed to interest older Scouts and thus keep them in the Scouting family. They pretty much ran their own affairs and selected the special projects they decided to pursue. Thus one Explorer Post might concentrate on Space another might zero in on Undersea Diving.

Explorer Post 102 started on _____ and ceased to exist _____.

TROOP 67, STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.

My Scoutmastership of this Troop was brief. I volunteered to take the position when the prior Scoutmaster had to resign. It was 1964 and my son had just joined this Troop and I hoped and wished he would take to Scouting long-term as I had. So I did it as much for him as for myself. As it turned out my son did not stay with Scouting beyond 1966 but that was because of events beyond his control.

While Scoutmaster of Troop 67 I instilled more discipline than had been demanded of the Scouts previously. And also I brought to them many of the leadership approaches and program events that I had absorbed from Troop 102 and that had worked so well there.

I had no assistant but that bothered me not. I was able to handle all the work for the Scouts in Troop 67 numbered about 16. We went camping at Spruce Pond and Pouch camps. We had Parents Night, Fathers Night and Mothers Night. I encouraged test passing and

advancement.

We had planned to have a Troop Camping experience at TMR during the summer of 1965 and a couple of fathers were coming along with me as leaders. However, unexpected demands at my workplace resulted in me not being able to go to TMR. The Troop went with the two fathers doing the leading without me. In January 1966 I had to resign as Scoutmaster for which a fuller explanation is written about later in this story.

George Lofmark, Eagle Scout and Assistant Scoutmaster

George was among the outstanding scouts of Troop 102. During his years of association with Troop 102 there were several other outstanding members of the Troop. Some were members of his Flying Eagle Patrol

He was born in 1931 and joined Troop 102 in late 1943. Having thus shortly before joined the Troop and while still 12 years old saved a toddler from drowning the summer of 1944. This happened at Upper Greenwood Lake, NY at his parents' summer place. For this act of bravery and selflessness he received a letter of commendation, dated October 16, 1944, from the National BSA HQs at 2 Park Ave., NYC.

Just prior to this emergency event, while George was reclining on the lake front lawn with his cousins and reading a comic book, he had silently been told to be on the lookout, to be watchful. What he describes as a silent voice speaking to him was what put him on the alert. He has stated that he has had this mysterious experience several times during his life. I have no doubt that such has happened to him.

George rapidly rose through the ranks as a leader (PL, SPL, JASM) and advanced on the achievement ladder. He quickly became a Tenderfoot in early 1944. Second Class (on Feb. 28, 1946), First Class Scout. And then in short order earned the Star, Life and Eagle Scout Badges. He received his Eagle Scout Rank on December 19, 1949.

Also in 1979 he was honored with the Nick Cioci Award. This is a solemn moment and like all prior honorees George was humble and serious during the award ceremony

He also became a member of the Explorer Post of Troop 102 and was certified as an Emergency Service Explorer.

George left the Troop in 1951 to attend college and start his adult life. He later on became an Assistant Scoutmaster of Troop 102 on April 30, 1957.

Most of his test passing was done at the Brooklyn TMR Scout Camps where he spent many summers as a Scout Camper and then as a Staff Member. TMR was a great place at which to pass tests, to acquire knowledge and skills and to enjoy the "out" in Scouting.

George became a YMCA Registered Life Saver, and a Certified Scout Life Guard. He was on the TMR Staff in 1947 as a Dishwasher and was paid \$18.75 for the summer camp season and was provided with food and lodging. In 1948 he was on the TMR Staff as an Assistant Scoutmaster and for this he was given Free Board. Then in 1951 he was on the TMR Staff as an Aquatic Assistant for which he received \$125.00 in compensation as well as food and lodging

He was also, as of August 9, 1947, a member of the Wimachtendienk W. W. Shu-Shu-Gah Lodge #24, Ihpetonga Chapter of the Order of the Arrow.

It is noteworthy that his son, a grandson and a nephew each became Eagle Scouts.

George Lofmark's Merit Badges - 26 Total

- Life Saving - 7-27-46 @ TMR
- Swimming - 7-27-46 @ TMR
- Pioneering - 8-25-47 @ TMR
- Rowing - 8-25-47 @ TMR
- Basketry - 8-27-47 @ TMR
- Athletics - 2-4-48 @ District
- Pathfinding - 4-9-48 @ District
- Personal Health - 7-22-48 @ TMR
- Cooking - 7-31-48 @ TMR
- Public Health - 8-4-48 @ TMR
- Camping - 8-14-48 @ TMR

- Conservation - 8-20-48 @ TMR
- First Aid - 8-20-48 @ TMR
- Forestry - 8-20-48 @ TMR
- Bird Study - 8-26-48 @ TMR
- Home Repairs - 8-28-48 @ TMR
- Safety - 2-4-49 @ District
- Civics - 6-23-49 @ District
- Woodwork - 3-11-49 @ District
- Carpentry - 3-30-49 @ District
- Reading - 7-5-49 @ District
- Physical Development - 7-6-49 @ District
- Firemanship & Woodcarving - 7-26-51 @ TMR
- Leathercraft - 7-30-51 @ TMR
- Canoeing - 8-27-51 @ TMR

The Merit Badge Counselors

- James C. Burns - Life Saving
- James C Burns - Swimming
- James C. McCobb - Pioneering
- Leonard Tockterman - Rowing
- H. Graber Basketry
- Joseph Kottman - Athletics
- H. G. Foulkes - Pathfinding
- J. P. Cullen - Personal Health
- Joel C. Holiber - Cooking

- J. P. Cullen - Public Health
- Joel C. Holiber - Camping
- George Falk - Conservation
- J. P. Cullen - First Aid
- George Falk - Forestry
- George Falk - Bird Study
- John Fischer - Home Repairs
- E. Smith - Safety
- H. Adlerstein - Civics
- M. Christensen - Woodwork
- D. M. McLean - Carpentry
- H. Adlerstein - Reading
- H. Adlerstein - Physical Development
- Sid Bernstein - Firemanship
- Harry Graber - Woodcarving & Leathercraft
- Herb Nolty - Canoeing

George Lofmark - Colleges and Careers

After leaving Troop 102 he attended colleges having also at that time graduated from Fort Hamilton High School of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, NY. At high school he was President of his Senior Class.

In 1949 and 1950 he did not attend TMR but served in the Naval Reserve where he served each year for a two-week training cruise aboard a US Navy destroyer. He served aboard the DD-USS Larson and also the DDR USS Ludlow.

Later, during the Korean War, for two continuous years, he served as an enlisted seaman (white hat) aboard the USS Saipan. Aboard this CVL 48 his "battle station" was below

decks. During his time aboard this ship sailed from Jacksonville, Florida to South America and then westward into and around the Yellow Sea where it spent nine months. The ship then left the Korean area and sailed westward back to the same port in Florida where its voyage had begun. While aboard this ship he lost most of his hearing due to causes as yet not identified. His discharge paper indicates that he is a "Disabled Combat Veteran".

George graduated from Pace College (now a University) with a BBA Degree. He then graduated from Southland University of California with a MA Degree. He also graduated from Concordia University of Wisconsin where he studied for the Ministry. At this latter university he also completed their 2000-hour requirement for "International Pastoral Care and Clinical Education" program.

He has also taught classes for many years, as an "Adjunct Professor", at both Concordia University in Bronxville, NY and at Iona College in New Rochelle, NY. During this period he was working at the Corporate Headquarters of NYNEX in White Plains, NY.

He got married to a young lady who was born in Norway. Her first name is Marit. They have five children; four girls and one boy as well as eleven grandchildren. Their youngest daughter was chosen as "Miss Norway of Greater New York" in 1986 in connection with the Norwegian Independence Day Parade, which takes place on or about May 17th.

George is of Scandinavian heritage. His mother was born in Norway and his father was of Swedish descent. On May 11, 2011 the 55-year reunion of his Fort Hamilton H.S. Class of 1951 was held at the Sons of Norway Nanson Lodge on Staten Island. This event was put together by George.

His initial career work was with NYTEL/NYNEX, then VERIZON, in communications. He was responsible for seeing to the communication requirements of the NYC broadcasters ABC, CBS, NBC, etc. He worked at this for about 30 years (1959-1989). Robert Aram, Troop 102 Committeeman, was the father of George's fellow Scout and friend John Aram. Bob Aram was helpful in getting George employed at this first job since Bob was an engineer there.

Then from about 1989 to 2009 he was a Professional Chaplain serving persons in hospitals and long term care facilities. After retiring from that chaplaincy he has served on a per diem basis for some visits, memorials and burials.

In February 2000 the Norwood Boy Scout Troop (Troop 120) issued their newsletter. One side reads as follows: "Thank you George Lofmark. George was involved with our Troop

for years. His son was an Eagle Scout. George would lead the 50 milers. After his son left scouting, George remained on the Troop Committee. When the Committee needed guidance with difficult situations, he was there for us. Due to a range of personal commitments, including being a hospital Chaplain, George has decided that he no longer has time to be with the Troop. He has made a donation to the Troop that will allow us to add much needed lanterns to the Troop equipment. George has been a guiding light for the Troop for years, and now his spirit will continue to do so on our camping trips. Thank you George. Come visit."

The other side states that George Lofmark is like the 12 Scout Laws which are quoted. It also quotes Lord Baden-Powell, founder of Scouting, in a statement wherein he likens the night sky to a darkening blanket pierced by large and small stars that represent good deeds done by mankind and urging Scouts to make their own holes in this blanket. There is also a Thank You to George for the light he has shed on the Troop throughout the years. Forty-seven signatures of the Troop's Scouts and Scouters are on this side of the newsletter tribute.

Is it coincidence that Troop 120 has the same numerals as Troop 102 or is it fate? Life can work in mysterious ways at times.

THOUGHTS AND AFTERTHOUGHTS



MY SCOUTING DAYS COME TO AN END

The end of my days in Scouting happened quickly and unexpectedly in a quiet murmur; a silent whisper that couldn't be heard fading away. There was no ceremony involved, no public thanks, no regrets expressed to me; just an end. This was due to the circumstances I was in at the time.

I had been Scoutmaster of Troop 67 in Staten Island for only a very short period of time. I had accepted that position sometime in 1964. Not enough time to build a record of results and prestige that could be recognized as I had done with Pack and Troop 102 in Bay Ridge over 23 years. I was also a relative newcomer to the sponsoring institution, Christ Lutheran

Church, of which we had become members in 1959 but whose church services I infrequently attended and so I was not well known to its membership. I was once again, as I had been a number of times growing up, the new boy on the block since we had moved to Staten Island in 1958.

The triggering event of my ending in the Scouting movement was work related. As a construction manager I was asked to move to the U.S., Virgin Islands to take charge of several very large construction projects there that the company which employed me had underway or was starting. It was an assignment and opportunity that I gladly accepted. These islands were formerly Danish and I was born in Denmark. They are exotic tropical locales with great appeal to the senses and my wife and four children would be moved there at company expense along with our car and furniture. (Now you understand what disrupted my son's membership in Scouting. By the time we returned from St. Croix, U.S.V.I. in late August 1967 he was 14+ years old and was no longer interested in Scouting). Those household items we didn't take with us would be put in storage stateside and all costs associated therewith paid by the company including the monthly storage fee.

The company would also pay all costs for the return to the mainland. Housing rental in St. Croix would be paid by the company and a salary increase was included. The time this assignment was to last was 12 to 18 months which I knew realistically would become 18 to 24 months. On a pre-bidding and bidding trip there in August 1965 (which was why I couldn't go to TMR with the Troop) I had become aware that I and my wife would totally enjoy living there for awhile. And so we moved there and were not disappointed.

It of course meant that I had to resign as Scoutmaster and my wife and I had to resign from responsibilities we had with a square dance group The children had to go to new schools and make new friends. Though this engendered regrets in us the excitement of moving to a tropical island overcame those regrets.

This move took place in January 1966 and we rented out our house in Staten Island for a monthly rental that slightly exceeded our mortgage payment.

By that point in time Scouting had changed and the boys becoming Scouts had changed. Not all of this change enamored me and so while I was disappointed that my Scouting days was ending I accepted that the time had come for me to say goodbye. Would the same have happened had I stayed in Bay Ridge with Troop 102? Probably but more sentiment, regrets and ceremony would have been involved. Troop 102 was disbanded sometime in the 1970s I think.

Some of the most exciting, gratifying and satisfactory moments in my life happened during my days in Scouting. What I learned during those years about leadership, logistics, managing, organizing, planning and their execution, and record keeping is priceless. The value of what I absorbed about decency, honor and service to others cannot be measured. What I found in comradeship and friendship defies description and expression in words. I do not have any siblings but I loved my Scouting companions as brothers and still do. Perhaps I lived in magical times that you can only experience once in your lifetime or that only occur once. I have been an extremely fortunate person! Everyone should be so blessed.