



By
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Ten Mile River Scout Museum

I tagged along with my wife to a conference in Rhode Island in April and I was able to visit three council scouting museums, plus the Rockwell exhibit at the Medici Museum of Art near Warren, Ohio. We visited the Ten Mile River Scout Museum (Narrowsburg, NY) and the Casoni Museum

at Camp Squanto (Plymouth, MA) on our way to Rhode Island. I made a side trip to the June Norcross Webster SR (Ashford, CT) to see the Nathan Hale Heritage Museum. It was really good to be back on the road again, it feels like I am getting part of my life back after my illness.

MUSEUM OF THE QUARTER The Ten Mile River Scout Museum.

The Ten Mile River Scout Museum is a little different than most of the scouting museums that I have visited. It is a mix of a traditional Scouting museum, local history museum, archeology museum and a natural history museum. Many thanks to Glenn Pontier for opening the museum for my wife and me to visit. Glenn is a local historian that is on the staff of the museum, he brought a different perspective that I found very interesting. Special thanks to Dr. Gene Berman who helped set up my visit as well as providing invaluable information and input for this article.

Location: Ten Mile Rivers Headquarters Camp of the Ten Mile River Scout Camps 1481 County Road 26 (Crystal Lake Road), Narrowsburg, NY.

Contacts:

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Mitchell Slepian (Chairman, TMR Scout Museum) email: chairmantmrmuseum@gmail.com

Website: www.tmrmuseum.org

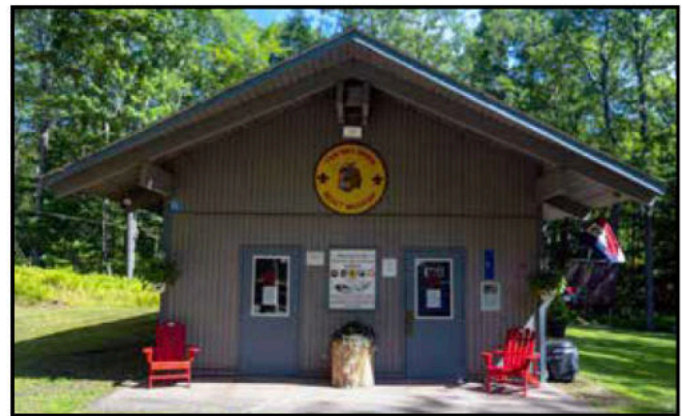
Facebook: www.facebook.com/TMRMuseum

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/tmrmuseum>

You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/@tenmileriverscoutmuseum493>

Hours of Operation: During the summer camp season: Sunday, Tues., Wed., Thurs., Fri., Sat. In May, June, September and October the museum is open for a few hours on Saturdays and Sundays and it is also open at special events and by appointment. The Museum is closed from November to April each year. Check the website for the current operating schedule.

Admission Fee: Free, but donations are always gratefully accepted. The museum also has an active museum membership program.



Brochure: A nice brochure is available which will probably be updated for 2024.

Patches: Many patches are available on the museum website and an even wider variety is available in the museum trading post. If you are a CSP Collector you will find an abundance of Greater New York Council SAPs. I picked up several needs while I was there.

Newsletter: Ten Mile River Smoke Signals – available monthly in digital format.

Store: There is an online store on the museum's website and also an extensive, well stocked trading post at the museum. Current patches are available as well as lots of vintage Scouting items.

Dr. Gene Berman shared that they have 1,500 plus visitors each year. David and Gene estimated that they have several thousand items in their permanent collection but only 1,000 or so items are on display at any one time. There are online archives of over 40,000 photos, documents and movies covering TMR, NYC Scouting, Dan Beard, and National Scouting. The museum is a member of the Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce and the Sullivan County Visitor's Association. The museum is owned by the Greater New York councils and operated by a volunteer museum committee.

History: Dr. Gene Berman founded the museum in July of 1997. Originally it was organized to spruce up the Main Trading Post as a way to attract scout troops and visitors to the area. After two seasons the museum took over and renovated an abandoned visitor's latrine located next to the trading post. The museum was briefly part of the TMR Alumni Association but became an independent operation at the beginning of the third season. In 2002 money was raised to add on to the museum, which doubled the size and a few years after, the third wing was added. Historically significant buildings from the closed camps were brought to the museum and restored in order to help preserve the history of Ten Mile River Scout Camps.



Museum Mission: "The Ten Mile River Scout Museum exists to preserve and promote the spirit and heritage of New York City Scouting at the Ten Mile River Scout Camps and selected venues through the creation of historical archives, displays, exhibits of photos, memorabilia, documents and tangible items, in both indoor and outdoor settings. We also recognize the local history in the vicinity of the Ten Mile River Scout camps."

Museum Focus: History of the Ten Mile River Scout Camps, Greater New York Councils heritage, NYC OA lodges and the history of the surrounding Upper Delaware River area from late 1700's settlements.

Personnel: There are two paid camp staff members during the summer camp season, in addition there is a Board of Trustees and committee with about 30 volunteers.

INTERESTING FACTS

- In 1997 the museum was established in the old Main Trading Post, then moved to a renovated camp latrine in 1999. Since then, the museum building has been expanded twice and three historic camp buildings moved to the museum campus. Gene Berman says the Museum to expand with an old-style "willy" (latrine) and an old-style lean-to due to be added outside during the 2023 summer camp season.
- The museum is really a compound centered around the Main Museum Building, Camp Kernochan Blockhouse, last standing Camp Kotohke cabin (closed 1956), Wall of Fame, and a picnic area.
- The Woodstock Music and Art Fair (yes, that Woodstock) was held at a nearby dairy farm, in August of 1969. It was possible to hear music from Woodstock in some parts of the Ten Mile River Scout Camps.
- In 1927 Franklin D. Roosevelt and a group of prominent New York City citizens spearheaded a campaign to raise \$1,000,000 to purchase and develop the property for the



President Franklin D. Roosevelt's TMR visit (06/23/37)

TMR Scout Camps. The deal was kept closely guarded to prevent prices rising dramatically before all of the land was acquired.

- Several thousand acres of Ten Mile River Scout Reservation were recently sold to help fund the BSA Bankruptcy Trust Fund. The land was sold to the Conservation Fund and New York state and the land will be used for recreation purposes that will be open to the general public. It is expected that the museum will attract outside groups and the general public as a result.
- The museum has a very active promotional campaign which includes: brochure distribution through local businesses and tourism destinations; West Point Camporee each May, and several local events and a few trade shows. The museum is also on several sites that promote them to the general public – Scenic Wild Delaware River website, I Love New York website, Sullivan County Tourism website, and Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce website among others.
- The museum has received some matching grants for landscaping and special projects; like a Monarch Butterfly Exhibit.
- The 2014 Upper Delaware Bioblitz was held on 500 acres of Ten Mile River Scout Camps. Over 60 scientists and amateur naturalists did a 24 hour blitz on June 28-29, 2014. A total of 884 species were found, including over 100 species that were a first occurrence for Sullivan County where the camps are located. Illustrations of wildlife found by the Bioblitz are on display.



- During the height of the Covid Pandemic when the museum could not be open they did virtual talks on a site called "Go to Webinar". This allowed folks to keep abreast of the museum and participate in educational presentations even though the museum was closed to visitors.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.) walking tour takes visitors to key buildings and sites of the nearby C.C.C. Camp Ten Mile River which operated from 1933-36.
- The Ten Mile River Historical Trails award – minimum 10 mile hike anywhere on trails on camp property. A medal, mileage pins and a patch are available.



- Museum staff helps Scouts with requirements for Archeology, Indian Lore, Journalism, and Scout Heritage merit badges.
- Several outdoor programs are offered: maze to experience challenges facing individuals with visual impairment, volleyball and more!
- Several out-buildings around the museum: historical camp buildings - open air cabin (with displays) from the 1930's and 40's; Camp Kernochan Blockhouse (reproduction of pioneer –era block house), Camp Kunatah Trading Post (used for storage).
- Museum webinars on local history and wildlife topics.
- YouTube Channel with videos on TMR Camp history,

Museum Displays:

- Gene Berman says that the best items in the collection are old camp patches from the original TMR camps as well as predecessor camps such as Kanohwahke Scout Camps.
- Complete set of Slide Farm slides and bolos (Left). These were created by Roland and Louise Flora at their farm near Tusten, N Y over a 38 year period.
- In the summer of 2023 a new exhibit on Ernest Thompson Seton will be added.
- BIRDS OF PREY display – many mounted birds are on exhibit. They are on Permanent Loan to the Museum courtesy of Michael Herbert. The birds died on the property or were found dead elsewhere through accidents or illness. Beautifully suspended from the ceiling.



- Tiffany-style stained glass window from the former Catholic Chapel at Camp Man.
- Wildlife displays.
- A clever way to display mugs had been recently added – a series of pipes were mounted high on the wall perpendicular to the ceiling and the mugs hung from the pipes by hooks (below).



- Scout memorabilia – mugs, patches, neckerchiefs and other items from Ten Mile River Camps and NYC OA lodges. Some National Scouting items are also displayed. Much of what you would expect to see in a Scouting museum.
- Original donut machine from the Donut Farm that closed in 1973; it is believed to be the last working machine of its kind. Also on display is the donut farm piano.
- A well-stocked reference library is available covering TMR and NYC Scouting history.
- Archeological exhibit – over 300 artifacts from excavation sites at the Ten Mile River Town of Tusten Settlement (late 1700s-1950s).
- Native American arrowheads and artifacts over 5,000 years old from three rock shelters on camp property.
- Geology of TMR exhibit.
- Bioblitz display from the June 2014 event held on camp property.
- Sea Scouting display.

Holy Grail: There is no one item that the museum is seeking. They would prefer to have 100 inexpensive items that scouts and leaders would enjoy rather than a “mega piece” that only a few visitors would appreciate.

Challenges:

- An upgrade in climate control is needed.
- Continued maintenance of the buildings.
- Adequate funding is always an uphill battle.
- Additional space is needed.
- More volunteers.
- Improving the accuracy of the museums inventory.

Future: Glenn said that future plans include making the museum climate-controlled, running water year round to the building, adding additional out buildings for storage. Gene Berman sees

the museum continuing to grow through their webinars and off site traveling displays. David Malatzky sees increased public usage when most of TMR opens as a State Forest in several years.

Sincere thanks to Gene Berman who supplied a lot of background information for this article and helped coordinate the visit. Special thanks to Glenn Pontier for making a special trip to open the museum for us. Thanks also to Associate Curator David Malatzky for his extensive input and help. In addition I heard from several members of the museum board offering help and insights.

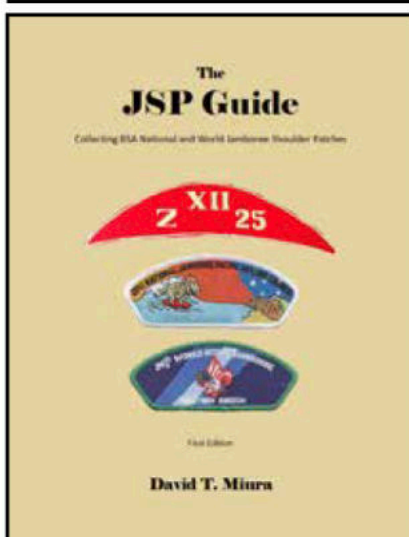
I don't think that I have seen any scouting museum do a better job of promoting themselves to the general public. The TMR Scout Museum is on a number of tourism websites and they seem to make a real effort to promote the museum at non-Scouting events.

The Ten Mile River Scout Camps are in a rural area northwest of New York City, so you won't have the city traffic to contend with. If you are a baseball fan, the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown is only 120 miles away. There are several trade-o-rees in the general area (Upstate New York TOR, Unami Lodge TOR, New England TOR, Friends of J N Webster TOR to name a few). Depending on where you are traveling from you might be able to make a detour on your way to see this museum. Make sure that you contact David Malatzky well before you plan to visit to see if the museum will be open or if you can make an appointment. You can also make an appointment to visit on the museum's website.

It is great to be on the road to scouting museums again. I will be traveling to Philmont at the end of July to serve as a volunteer docent at the National Museum. The National Scouting Museum has redesigned many of the exhibits. I am anxious to see the new layout, and I will give you a brief report on my docent experience in my next article.

Article Credits: Museum visit with Glenn Pointer in March. Many emails with Gene Berman provided great information and insights, significant input/editing from David Malatzky was greatly appreciated. Also the Ten Mile River Scout Museum brochure, TMR Smoke Signals newsletter and the TMR Scout museum website.

Photo Credits: David Malatzky, Rebecca Stewart, TMR Scout Museum website, Scenic Wild Delaware River website.



The JSP Guide Collecting BSA National and World Jamboree Shoulder Patches First Edition By David T. Miura

This is a much needed addition to every collector's library. Following on works of Albertus Hooegeveen and John Hice, this 632 page book focuses exclusively on JSPs and JSP shaped staff items.

The book is very easy to use. It is broken into two sections. The first section list JSPs by Jamboree and includes both council issued JSPs and Jamboree staff issues patches with a JSP shape. The second section lists JSPs by council.

Best of all, as the Journal goes to press, the book is free to download from the ISCA Members Section and the Chris Jensen's Streamwood.net website. It is anticipated that other collector websites may have the book available for download in the near future.

Dave has done an amazing job documenting JSPs and should be applauded for his efforts. I would encourage all collectors to download a copy of the JSP Guide for their library.