

MERIT BADGE SERIES



SCOUTING HERITAGE



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

HOW TO USE THIS PAMPHLET

The secret to successfully earning a merit badge is for you to use both the pamphlet and the suggestions of your counselor.

Your counselor can be as important to you as a coach is to an athlete. Use all of the resources your counselor can make available to you. This may be the best chance you will have to learn about this particular subject. Make it count.

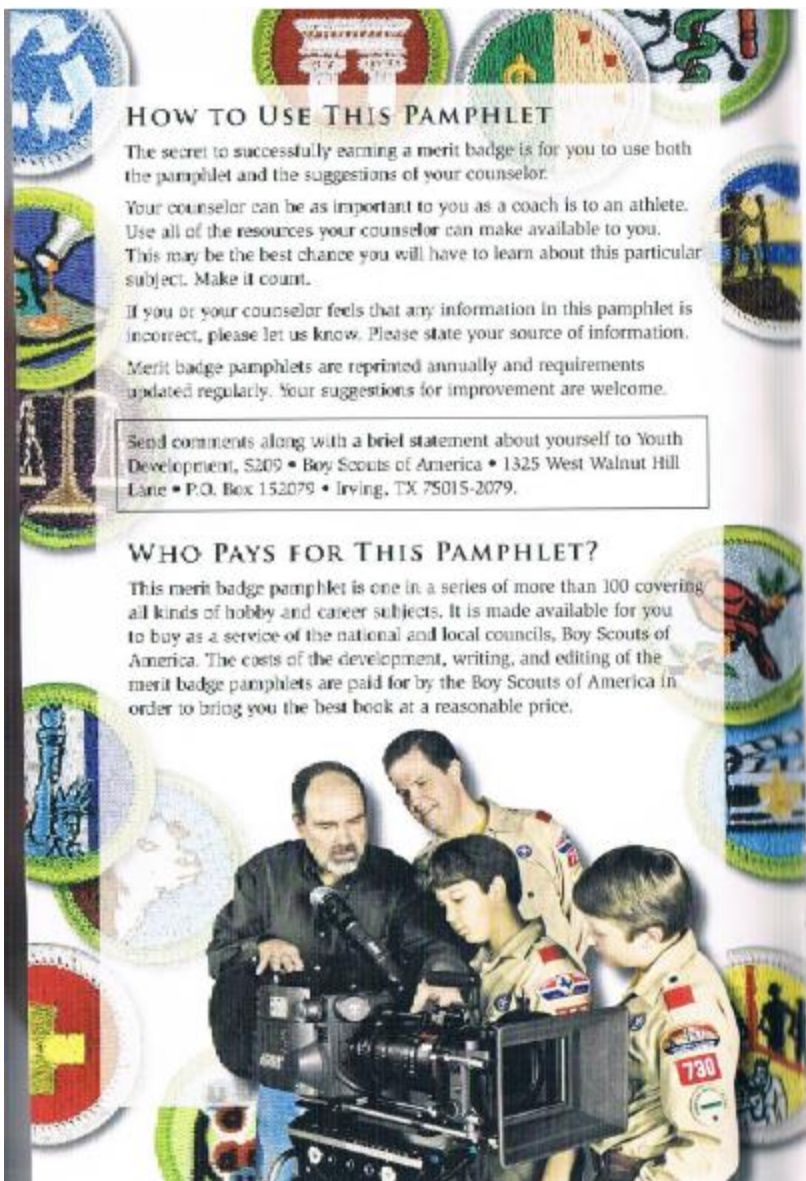
If you or your counselor feels that any information in this pamphlet is incorrect, please let us know. Please state your source of information.

Merit badge pamphlets are reprinted annually and requirements updated regularly. Your suggestions for improvement are welcome.

Send comments along with a brief statement about yourself to Youth Development, S209 • Boy Scouts of America • 1325 West Walnut Hill Lane • P.O. Box 152079 • Irving, TX 75015-2079.

WHO PAYS FOR THIS PAMPHLET?

This merit badge pamphlet is one in a series of more than 100 covering all kinds of hobby and career subjects. It is made available for you to buy as a service of the national and local councils, Boy Scouts of America. The costs of the development, writing, and editing of the merit badge pamphlets are paid for by the Boy Scouts of America in order to bring you the best book at a reasonable price.



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BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Requirements

1. Discuss with your counselor the life and times of Lord Baden-Powell of Gilwell. Explain why he felt a program like Scouting would be good for the young men of his day. Include in your discussion how Scouting was introduced in the United States, and the origins of Boy Scouting and Cub Scouting under Baden-Powell.
2. Do the following:
 - a. Give a short biographical sketch of any TWO of the following, and tell of their roles in how Scouting developed and grew in the United States prior to 1940.
 - (1) Daniel Carter Beard
 - (2) William D. Boyce
 - (3) Waite Phillips
 - (4) Ernest Thompson Seton
 - (5) James E. West
 - b. Discuss the significance to Scouting of any TWO of the following:
 - (1) Brownsea Island
 - (2) The First World Scout Jamboree
 - (3) *Boy Scout Handbook*
 - (4) *Boys' Life* magazine
3. Discuss with your counselor how Scouting's programs have developed over time and been adapted to fit different age groups and interests (Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Exploring, Venturing).

4. Do ONE of the following:

- a. Attend either a BSA national jamboree, OR world Scout jamboree, OR a national BSA high-adventure base. While there, keep a journal documenting your day-to-day experiences. Upon your return, report to your counselor what you did, saw, and learned. You may include photos, brochures, and other documents in your report.
- b. Write or visit the National Scouting Museum in Irving, Texas.* Obtain information about this facility. Give a short report on what you think the role of this museum is in the Scouting program.

*If you visit the BSA's national traveling tour, Adventure Base 100, in 2010, you may use this experience to fulfill requirement 4b. Visit www.adventurebase100.org (with your parent's permission) for the schedule and for more information.



Brooklyn Dodgers players Whit Wyatt, left, and Charles Dressen sign autographs for Scouts at Ebbets Field, circa 1940.

5. Learn about the history of your unit or Scouting in your area. Interview at least two people (one from the past and one from the present) associated with your troop. These individuals could be adult unit leaders, Scouts, troop committee members, or representatives of your troop's chartered organization. Find out when your unit was originally chartered. Create a report of your findings on the history of your troop, and present it to your patrol or troop or at a court of honor, and then add it to the troop's library. This presentation could be in the form of an oral/written report, an exhibit, a scrapbook, or a computer presentation such as a slide show.
6. Make a collection of some of your personal patches and other Scouting memorabilia. With their permission, you may include items borrowed from family members or friends who have been in Scouting in the past, or you may include photographs of these items. Show this collection to your counselor, and share what you have learned about items in the collection. (There is no requirement regarding how large or small this collection must be.)
7. Reproduce the equipment for an old-time Scouting game such as those played at Brownsea Island. You may find one on your own (with your counselor's approval), or pick one from the *Scouting Heritage* merit badge pamphlet. Teach and play the game with other Scouts.
8. Interview at least three people (different from those you interviewed for requirement 5) over the age of 50 who were Scouts. Find out about their Scouting experiences. Ask about the impact that Scouting has had on their lives. Share what you learned with your counselor.

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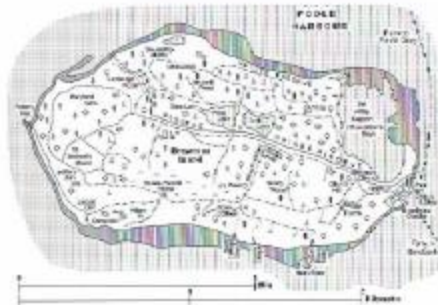
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These Scouts from the 1950s get a beachside whittling lesson.



Top, Scouts on Brownsea Island, circa 1907



Baden-Powell, Seton, Beard, and the Birth of Scouting

During the early years of the 20th century, growing numbers of people in England and America faced serious hardships. The divide between rich and poor was widening, and most families were poor or close to it. As people migrated to dirty, overcrowded cities, they were more likely to become sick and less likely to be able to enjoy nature or get physical exercise. In fact, when Britain went to war in 1899, more than half the men who volunteered for the army weren't fit enough to fight.

Children on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean suffered right along with their parents. Beyond the YMCA and some church-based programs, few organized activities or sports leagues were available for them to enjoy. Even worse, at least 1.7 million American children under the age of 16 worked full time—sometimes working as many as 12 hours a day in factories and on farms.

Many adults grew deeply concerned about the problems of English and American children. Among them were Robert Baden-Powell, Ernest Thompson Seton, and Daniel Carter Beard. Although these men grew up in different countries, they had much in common. They loved the outdoors, they were fascinated by other cultures, and they came completely by accident to the work of creating programs for boys and teens. First separately and then together, they laid the foundations for the Scouting movement.



Child laborer, circa early 20th century



**Robert S. S. Baden-Powell
(1857–1941)**

Known to his family as Stepe (pronounced “Stevie”), Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell was born in London, England, in 1857. He and his six siblings were raised by their mother after their father, a priest in the Church of England, died.

Baden-Powell attended a boarding school called Charterhouse. During his time there, he spent more time drawing, acting, playing soccer, and exploring the woods around the school than he did studying. Because his grades weren’t good enough for him to attend college, he joined the British Army in 1876.

Baden-Powell loved army life and moved quickly through the ranks. By the time Great Britain went to war against the Boers in South Africa in 1899, he was a colonel. That October, he was in charge of a town called Mafeking when the Boers laid siege to it.

Baden-Powell also kept up the spirits of soldiers and townspeople with plays and athletic contests. In addition, he turned the boys of the town into a cadet corps to run errands and serve as lookouts.

For the next 217 days, his force of 800 soldiers held out against several thousand Boers. Baden-Powell tricked the Boers into thinking he had a much larger force by making fake cannons out of wood and moving his real guns around town to fire in different directions.

After successfully defending the city in the Siege of Mafeking in May 1900, Baden-Powell became an instant celebrity back home. Boys throughout England began buying an army manual he had written, called *Aids to Scouting*, and started playing soldier in their towns and neighborhoods.



This postcard, circa 1903, depicts Baden-Powell as a national hero.



Commemorative stone at Brownsea Island campsite

This surprised Baden-Powell when he returned home in 1903, and he began thinking about ways to adapt *Aids to Scouting* to a younger audience. Over the next few years, he observed youth programs like the Boys’ Brigade (which combined interdenominational Christianity with military training), talked to experts from the YMCA (founded in London in 1844), and even studied codes of conduct used by the ancient Greeks and by the knights of the Middle Ages.

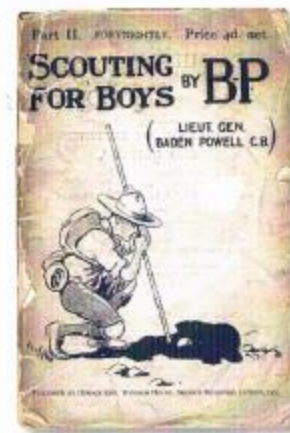
In 1906, Baden-Powell put what he’d learned into a paper called “The Boy Scouts —A Suggestion.” The next summer, he held an experimental camp on England’s Brownsea Island to test his ideas. The year after that, he published *Scouting for Boys*, the first Boy Scout handbook—and Scouting was born.

Scouting quickly spread through England, the British colonies, and beyond. As early as 1908, people in America were buying copies of *Scouting for Boys* and starting their own troops. A woman in Burnside, Kentucky, started a group she called the “Eagle Troop” that year.

In 1909, a missionary from the Church of England founded a troop in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, to serve American Indians. Throughout the country, boys started their own troops and recruited their own adult leaders—or did without.

This all happened before there was an official American Scouting organization. There were no Boy Scouts of America, no local councils, no camps, or other facilities. Those things would come later.

Lieutenant-General Baden-Powell was made a baron in 1929 and became known as Lord Baden-Powell of Gilwell.





Ernest Thompson Seton (1860–1946)

One of the experts Baden-Powell talked with in 1906 was Ernest Thompson Seton, a British-born Canadian citizen who'd recently founded the Society of Woodcraft Indians in Connecticut.

Seton grew up on his family's Ontario farm and later worked for his older brothers on a farm they ran in Manitoba. He didn't care much for farming, but he loved learning about nature down to the tiniest detail. Once, for example, he worked by candlelight to count every feather on a grackle's wing.

Seton taught this tribe of neighborhood boys everything from identifying birds to swimming and canoeing.



From Seton's book *Wild Animals I Have Known*

Even though farming did not hold Seton's interest, art did. A talented artist, Seton studied art in London and New York City, and he quickly established himself as a wildlife artist in the 1880s. In 1885, he produced 1,000 mammal drawings for the new *Century Dictionary*, and soon he began successfully writing about animals—not just drawing them. It was the success of his 1898 book *Wild Animals I Have Known*, a collection of stories he wrote about animal heroes and villains, that allowed him to build a small estate in Cos Cob, Connecticut.

It was there on his Connecticut estate in 1902 that Seton's journey to Boy Scouting began. It started when he invited a group of neighborhood boys who tore down part of his fence to camp on his property over spring break. Seton, who was fascinated by American Indian culture, declared the boys a tribe, had them elect their own leaders, and taught them all sorts of Scouting skills. Soon that camp evolved into the Woodcraft Indians, which he launched in July 1902.

Four years later, Seton published a handbook for the group called *The Birch-Bark Roll of the Woodcraft Indians*. He sent a copy to Baden-Powell, who used it as inspiration for his own handbook and boys' program. But that wouldn't be Seton's last connection with Scouting—it would be only the start.

Daniel Carter Beard (1850–1941)

Ten years older than Seton, Daniel Carter Beard grew up in Covington, Kentucky, just across the Ohio River from Cincinnati. He loved the outdoors, and he spent long hours exploring the woods and drawing nature sketches. He also loved hearing stories of American frontier life and could remember watching Conestoga wagons rolling west through Cincinnati.

After working for awhile as an engineer and surveyor, Beard moved to New York City to attend art school. He provided illustrations for many books and magazines, including the first edition of Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* in 1889.

It was there in New York that a chance encounter on a city street pushed Beard toward an interest in young people. One cold winter day, he happened on a group of newsboys—boys who sold newspapers instead of going to school—sleeping on the pavement beneath a statue of Benjamin Franklin. That sight convinced him to begin what he called his "lifelong crusade for American boyhood."

In 1905, in the pages of *Recreation* magazine, Beard created a boys' program called the Sons of Daniel Boone. It taught many of the same camping and nature skills as Seton's Woodcraft Indians, but Beard used frontier language instead of Indian terms. Members organized themselves in "forts" and "stockades" and took on the names of such heroes as Daniel Boone (president), Kit Carson (treasurer), and Davy Crockett (secretary).

When Beard moved to *Pictorial Review* magazine after spending some time at *Woman's Home Companion*, he renamed the group the Boy Pioneers of America. Then in 1909 he published a handbook, *Boy Pioneers and Sons of Daniel Boone*. Just like Seton, Beard would soon play a role in the Scouting movement.



Seton, Baden-Powell, and Beard



Boyce, the Birth of the BSA, and West

In the early 1900s, all sorts of programs were cropping up to serve American boys—including the Boy Scouts, the Woodcraft Indians, and the Sons of Daniel Boone. Soon, a man named William D. Boyce would stumble into the picture and forge these and other groups into the Boy Scouts of America, the country's largest and most enduring youth organization.

William D. Boyce (1858–1929)

William Dickson Boyce could not have been more different from Baden-Powell, Seton, and Beard. Although he enjoyed big-game hunting, he was not much of an outdoorsman. Instead, he was a hardheaded businessman.

After leaving the Pennsylvania farm where he had grown up, Boyce established himself in business, eventually becoming a successful newspaper publisher in Chicago. By the early 1900s, his *Saturday Blade* was the largest weekly paper in America. He lived in a four-story mansion and earned an estimated \$350,000 a year (about \$7.6 million in today's dollars).

Boyce believed in treating his newsboys right and that their job of selling newspapers taught them about responsibility and manners and helped prepare them for the future.





One reason for Boyce's success was the army of up to 30,000 newsboys he employed across the country. He felt responsible for their welfare and saw the work as a way they could gain valuable skills and become self-sufficient.

In 1909, Boyce was in London, preparing for an African safari, when he lost his way in a thick fog. A boy of about 12 walked up and led him to his destination. Boyce offered him a tip, but the boy declined, explaining that he was just doing his daily good turn as a Boy Scout.



Boyce was so impressed by the Scout that he decided to investigate further. He picked up a trunkful of publications at Scout headquarters and studied them during his safari. Six months later, on Feb. 8, 1910, he incorporated the Boy Scouts of America.

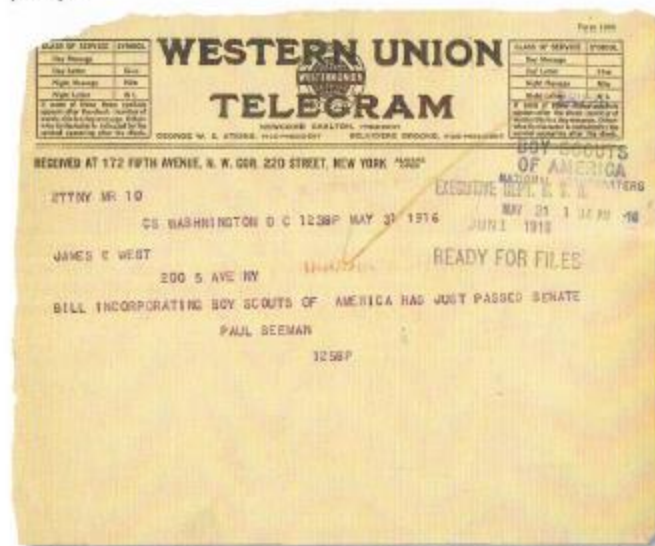
Despite his interest in Scouting, Boyce had no interest in running the BSA. He quickly turned its leadership over to Edgar M. Robinson, the senior boys' work secretary of the YMCA's International Committee in New York. Boyce agreed to give the BSA \$1,000 per month for operating expenses—provided that boys of all races and religions be included—but that was the extent of his involvement.



The Early Days of the BSA

As Robinson and other prominent leaders worked to get the BSA organized, they reached out to Seton and Beard, along with two other men who'd started their own Scouting programs. All four agreed to merge their organizations into the BSA.

Seton signed on as Chief Scout, while the other three agreed to serve as national commissioners. "Uncle Dan" Beard helped establish the outdoor skills that are still at the heart of Boy Scouting, and Seton wrote a temporary handbook that combined his *Birch-Bark Roll* with Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys*.



In 1916, the U.S. Congress voted unanimously to give the BSA a federal charter, which would protect the program from such groups as William Randolph Hearst's United States Boy Scouts.



West is credited with persuading the BSA to add "brave, clean, and reverent" to the Scout Law.

The organizers' most important task, however, was to find a permanent leader for the BSA. The man they found had a deep interest in the welfare of young people—and virtually no contact with camping, nature, or other outdoor pursuits. His name was James E. West.

James E. West (1876–1948)

Orphaned at age 6 and crippled by tuberculosis, James Edward West didn't have much of a childhood. He had to fight for permission to attend school outside his orphanage—and only then if he kept up his many chores. He worked hard, graduating from high school with honors and then working his way through law school.

Not surprisingly, West focused on children's issues. He pushed for the creation of a juvenile court, worked for organizations like the YMCA and the Washington Playground Association, and convinced President Theodore Roosevelt to convene a children's conference at the White House. He even volunteered to defend a boy in court who had stolen his car!

Given his background, West was a natural choice to serve as the first Chief Scout Executive. He agreed to take the job for up to six months and stayed on for 32 years.

With West in place, the BSA was ready to grow from a scattered collection of independent troops into the country's largest and strongest youth organization.

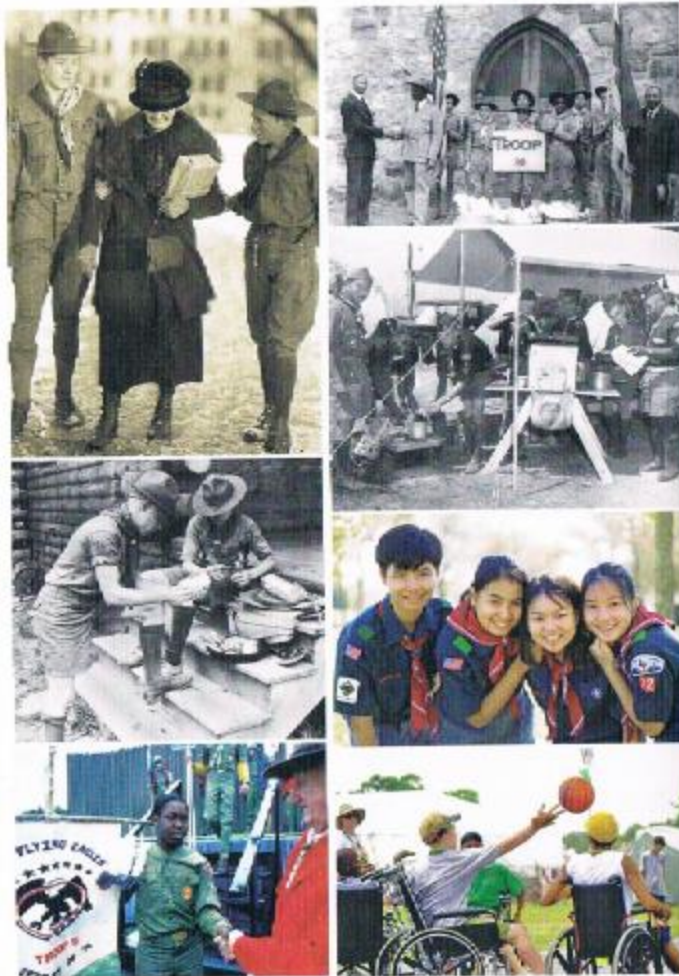
West appeared on the cover of *TIME* magazine, which did an article about the logistical challenges of the first national Scout jamboree in 1937. This portrait of him, by Albert A. Rose, had been commissioned by the BSA in honor of West's 25 years as Chief Scout Executive.



Seated, left to right, are Chief Scout Executive James E. West, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Walter W. Head, BSA national president, in the Oval Office. This photo was taken during a radio address to the nation, announcing the 1937 National Scout Jamboree.

Participants in the 1937 National Scout Jamboree gathered at the foot of the Washington Monument. There, they paraded with hundreds of American flags. Thus, began a tradition that has continued at every subsequent national jamboree.





A Century of Scouting

It would take many, many pages to trace the history of Scouting from 1910 until today. This chapter will highlight just a few of the key events that happened in each decade since the BSA was founded.

1910s

Scouting's first decade was a busy one. *Boys' Life* and *Scouting* magazines published their first issues. In addition, the BSA held its first national Good Turn (promoting a safe and sane Fourth of July), and the Order of the Arrow was founded.

When World War I started, Scouts sprang into action.

In support of the war effort, they accomplished the following:

- Planted 12,000 victory gardens
- Collected 100 railroad cars of nut hulls and peach pits for the manufacture of gas-masks
- Located 21 million board feet of black walnut trees for gunstocks and airplane propeller
- Distributed more than 300 million pieces of government literature
- Sold more than \$355 million worth of Liberty Loan bonds and war savings stamps (That's more than \$5 billion in 2009 dollars.)

In 1912, Barton sold *Boys' Life* to the BSA for \$6,000 (\$1 for each subscriber). The first *Boys' Life* magazine edited by James E. West, then Chief Scout Executive, was the July 1912 issue.



A Brief History of Boys' Life Magazine

In 1911, George S. Barton of Somerville, Massachusetts, founded, edited, and published the first edition of *Boys' Life*, calling it the "Boys' and Boy Scouts' Magazine." He was not referring to the Scouts we know today, but to the three major competing Scouting organizations of the time: the American Boy Scouts, New England Boy Scouts, and the Boy Scouts of America.

Barton's first issue of *Boys' Life* filled eight pages and was published in January 1911. It featured articles such as "Things All Scouts Should Know," about haversack packing and making a drinking-water filter. However, very few of the 5,000 printed copies actually reached the public. The more commonly accepted first edition was published in March 1911. It featured 48 pages and a two-color cover.

Barton listed two goals in starting *Boys' Life*: first, to give Scouts a publication they could call their own; and second, to place in the hands of all boys a magazine "which they will not be afraid to have their parents see them reading."

Those goals are reflected in today's *Boys' Life*, with its mix of news, nature, sports, history, fiction, science, comics, and Scouting. The magazine continues to offer entertaining stories and useful information to help its Scout readers achieve rank advancements faster.



Scouts tending a WWI victory garden



During WWI, Scouts sold more than \$355 million worth of Liberty Loan bonds and war savings stamps. In today's currency, that would be worth about \$5 billion.

What Are War Bonds?

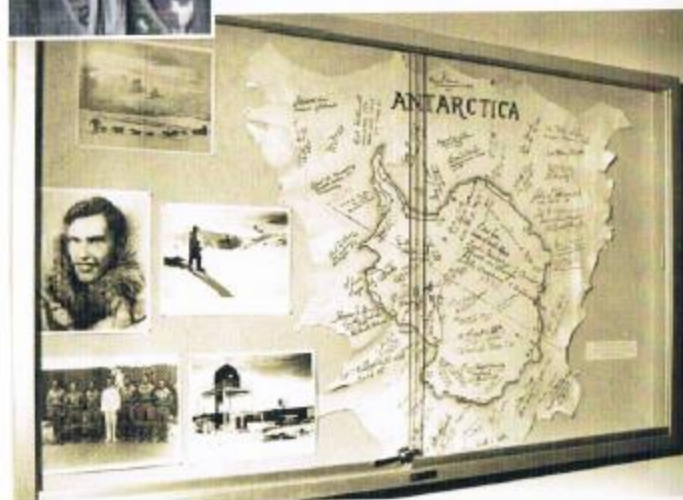
Wars are expensive to fight. By 1918, World War I was costing about \$10 million an hour. To raise money for the war effort, the United States government borrowed from individual citizens by selling them war bonds and stamps. An advertising poster for Liberty Bonds read: "If you can't enlist—invest. Buy a Liberty Bond, Defend your country with your dollars." Scouts sold bonds under the slogan "Every Scout to Save a Soldier."



1920s

American Scouts started exploring the world during the 1920s. Scouts from every state attended the First World Scout Jamboree in 1920. In 1923, the program that would become the Northern Tier National High Adventure Bases began in Minnesota. In 1928, Sea Scout Paul Siple accompanied Commander Richard E. Byrd on an 18-month voyage to Antarctica, starting a tradition that lives on in the BSA Antarctic Scientific Program.

Paul Siple, circa 1928



During the 1920s, the BSA also started reaching out to young people in the African American, Native American, Hispanic, and Japanese communities. The racist Ku Klux Klan attacked the BSA for serving blacks, Catholics, and Jews.

1930s

The 1930s saw new opportunities for younger brothers and older Scouts alike. In 1930, the Cub Scout program began. In 1935, the BSA created Senior Scouting for the older boys. As one of the program options, Senior Scouts in troops were called Explorers. In 1938, Oklahoma oilman Waite Phillips began donating the land that later became the Philmont Scout Ranch.



Philmont, circa 1939

The Great Depression gripped America through the decade. Scouts responded, helping those in need by collecting 1.8 million items of clothing, household furnishings, foodstuffs, and supplies.

The first national Scout jamboree was held in 1937 in the nation's capital, in the shadow of the Washington Monument. The 27,232 attendees enjoyed historical pageants, tours of Washington, D.C., landmarks, a three-game baseball series between the Washington Senators and the Boston Red Sox, and a review by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.



1937 National Scout Jamboree, Washington, D.C.



Scouts across the country collected 10 million used books for servicemen overseas and in stateside hospitals.

1940s

The biggest event of the 1940s was World War II, which affected every American family. Scouts were involved from the very start. Right after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Hawaiian Scouts set up first-aid stations and emergency kitchens, helped evacuate civilians, served as messengers, and manned 58 air-raid sirens around Honolulu. In 1942, Air Scouting, a program for boys 15 and older, was created in cooperation with the United States Army Air Corps.



During WWII, Scouts collected nearly 26,000 tons of scrap metal—pots, pans, even old keys—that would be turned into warplanes.

Throughout the war, the BSA responded to 69 government requests for assistance. Scouts collected 210,000 tons of scrap metal, 590,000 tons of wastepaper, and enough milkweed floss to make nearly 2 million lifejackets. They distributed millions of government posters, created 184,000 Victory gardens, and planted nearly 2 million trees to replace those harvested for the war effort.

1950s

Early in the 1950s, Scouting membership reached 3 million for the first time. A few years later, as the first postwar babies reached Cub Scout age, membership began growing by 200,000 or more a year.

Many of those new Cub Scouts tried out a new activity called the pinewood derby, which began in 1953. Boy Scouts also had the chance to participate in three national Scout jamborees. Explorers enjoyed an expanded program that let them explore careers and hobbies.



These Japanese American Scouts were interned with their families at Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming during WWII. Here, they conduct a morning flag raising ceremony.



The pinewood derby, which was created in 1953 by Cubmaster Don Murphy, remains one of Cub Scouting's most popular traditions.



Many Scout troops, like this one from Los Angeles, forged strong musical traditions.

During the 1950s, Scouts participated in several national Good Turns. They collected 2 million pounds of clothing for domestic and foreign relief, distributed 1 million posters and 30 million doorknob hangers as part of a get-out-the-vote campaign, and delivered 40 million emergency handbooks and 50,000 posters prepared by the Office of Civil Defense Mobilization.

1960s

The 1960s opened and closed with Scouting firsts. In 1960, John F. Kennedy became the first former Scout to be elected president of the United States. Nine years later, Eagle Scout Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon, fulfilling President Kennedy's dream of sending men into space.



Of the 12 men who would eventually walk on the moon, 11 were former Scouts.

John F. Kennedy was the first former Scout to become president of the United States.

The BSA responded to changing times in 1965 by creating the Inner-City/Rural program to expand Scouting beyond the suburbs. Scouting officials created storefront Scout centers and worked aggressively to bring Scouting to urban areas—sometimes competing directly with gang leaders to win recruits.



Scouting icon William "Green Bar Bill" Hillcourt shares a nature lesson with Scouts from five nations at the 1967 World Jamboree, which the BSA hosted.

1970s

As the 1970s dawned, BSA officials worried that Scouting was not in tune with the times, so they overhauled the Boy Scout program to put less emphasis on outdoor skills. The experiment didn't last long. In 1978, the program returned to its roots with revised requirements.

National Good Turns in the 1970s focused on the environment. Tens of thousands of Scouting units started recycling programs and planted trees to fight erosion. On one day alone in 1971, Scouts collected more than 1 million tons of litter.



These Scouts repair a footbridge across a mountain stream. Conservation work became even more visible with the launching of Scouting's Project SOAR (Save Our American Resources) in 1970.

In the 1980s, the BSA began tackling what it called "the five unacceptables": hunger, drug abuse, child abuse, illiteracy, and unemployment. In 1987, the BSA launched "Drugs: A Deadly Game," which became the nation's largest drug-abuse education campaign.



Even since its earliest days, Scouting has always welcomed members with disabilities and encouraged their mainstream participation in the program.

The BSA's high-adventure programs grew during the 1970s. In 1975, volunteers began a sailing program in Florida that would evolve into the Florida National High Adventure Sea Base.

1980s

The 1980s saw the creation of several enduring Scouting traditions. In 1981, the National Scout Jamboree moved to Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia, where the next eight jamborees would be held. In 1982, a new Scout uniform created by fashion designer Oscar de la Renta appeared; with minor changes it would remain the official uniform until 2008. Then in 1988, the BSA introduced the Scouting for Food National Good Turn, which collected 65 million containers of food in its first year alone.



Challenge courses became popular attractions at Scout camps in the 1980s. A typical course featured team-building games, zip lines, and challenges such as this fidget ladder.



In 1982, Alexander Holsinger of Normal, Illinois, became the millionth Eagle Scout.



In 1988, the BSA introduced the Scouting for Food national Good Turn.

Two Scouting programs got their start in the 1980s. Tiger Cubs began in 1982, and Varsity Scouting was officially adopted in 1984.

1990s

The biggest event of the 1990s was the creation of Venturing, a program for young men and young women, which took in the parts of the Exploring program that weren't career-related. Exploring became the worksite-based part of Learning for Life, which also includes the BSA's school-based programs.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, the BSA began helping to restart the Russian Scouting movement, which had been outlawed after the Russian Revolution in 1917. In 1993, the BSA's World Friendship Fund helped produce a new Russian Scout handbook.

Scouting's long-standing commitment to the environment took a big step forward in 1998, when the BSA adopted Leave No Trace as its guideline for protecting the environment while conducting outdoor activities.

In 1998, the BSA adopted Leave No Trace guidelines for protecting the environment while conducting all outdoor activities, including horseback riding.



Venturers, circa 1998



2000s

The Boy Scouts of America reached a notable milestone in 2000 when the 100-millionth Scout was registered.



Scouts in action with a Good Turn for America



In 2004, the BSA created the Good Turn for America program, joining forces with the Salvation Army, the American Red Cross, and Habitat for Humanity to address the issues of hunger, homelessness/inadequate housing, and poor health.

The decade's biggest service project was ArrowCorps⁵ (pronounced "arrow core five"). During the summer of 2008, some 3,800 members of the Order of the Arrow contributed more than \$5 million worth of labor on behalf of five national forests. It was the BSA's largest national service project since World War II and the largest such project ever to benefit the U.S. Forest Service.

In 2008, Scouts worked long, hard hours on the Order of the Arrow's monumental service project, ArrowCorps⁵.

Late in the decade, the BSA began planning for a new permanent location for the national Scout jamboree and a new high-adventure base in West Virginia. It also published the 12th edition of the *Boy Scout Handbook*, a book that will inspire the Scouts who will write the story of Scouting's second century.



The *Boy Scout Handbook*, 12th edition

In June 2009, Anthony Thomas of Lakeville, Minnesota, became the two-millionth Eagle Scout. Anthony, who was adopted from Korea, counsels Korean adoptees at a Korean cultural camp and has also assisted with Hurricane Katrina restoration in New Orleans.





Scouting for Every Age

When Scouting began, there was just one program—Boy Scouting—which served boys ages 12 through 17. That soon changed, however, as the BSA began developing programs first for teens and then for younger boys.



Boy Scouting

Pick up the 1911 *Handbook for Boys*, and you will find a program that is pretty similar to today's Boy Scout program. From its earliest days, Boy Scouting has featured the same basic advancement program, troop structure, leadership positions, and focus on outdoor skills.

That is not to say that things have stayed exactly the same, however.

In fact, many details have changed over the years.





Boy Scouts in uniform, circa 1928

Advancement

Originally, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class were considered the only ranks. There was no Scout badge, and Life Scout, Star Scout, and Eagle Scout (in that order!) were special awards that First Class Scouts could receive for earning extra merit badges.

The list of merit badges has changed many times to reflect changes in Scout skills, hobbies, and career interests. Early Scouts could earn merit badges in signaling, stalking (tracking), and taxidermy—in addition to such newfangled topics as automobiling and aviation. Scouts in the 1930s could earn a dozen or so merit badges related to agriculture, including Beef Production, Corn Farming, and Farm Layout and Building Arrangements. In the 1960s,

as times changed, Atomic Energy (now Nuclear Science), Computers, Electronics, and Space Exploration were introduced.

You can see a list of all the merit badges ever offered, along with the dates they were introduced and/or discontinued, at www.mascouter.com/usscouts/mb/history.asp.



Joining Requirements

At first, boys had to be 12 years old to join a Boy Scout troop. The minimum age was lowered to 11 in 1949, and in 1972 completion of the fifth grade was added as an option. Today, you must have completed the fifth grade and be at least 10 years old, or be 11 years old, or have earned the Arrow of Light Award in Cub Scouting and be at least 10 years old to become a Boy Scout.



For most of the BSA's history, boys had to complete the Tenderfoot rank requirements to become full-fledged Scouts. In 1972, however, a new set of joining requirements appeared. Prospective Scouts now had to understand the Scout Oath, Law, motto, slogan, salute, sign, handclasp, badge, and the Outdoor Code and complete a personal growth agreement conference (what we now call a Scoutmaster conference). Starting in 1978, Scouts who completed the joining requirements received the Boy Scout badge (which is not a rank, by the way).