



Curators Corner

Steven Buckley, Curator NJSM

OUR MISSION

To preserve artifacts relating to the history of Both Boy and Girl Scouting in New Jersey and to educate the public about Scouting's role in our communities and nation in developing young people into responsible citizens and leaders.

Well it's been three and a half years since we opened. I have been the Curator for only the last few months. It is part of my task as Curator to help all Scouts in the state of New Jersey feel that this is their museum and to encourage them to consider making contributions of artifacts relating to the history of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts in our state. We are an independent non profit organization. We are incorporated with the state of New Jersey. We have Federal 501(c) 3 status so people who make gifts can get a tax deduction.

It is definitely a daunting task as Curator to oversee the thousands of scouting artifacts we have so far. I could even say we have just begun the task of cataloging what we have and then to provide suitable displays that would educate the public about Scouting in our state. I'm learning as we move forward.

I want to provide an update on the status of the Dave Wolverton collection that we received from his estate in the second half of last year. We have opened all the boxes and we have done a rough sorting of all of them except the ones containing books and printed materials. We now have on display in Dave's original three ring note books most of his patch collection. We have one full book case of patches devoted to New Jersey and a second one devoted to other areas of interest outside of New Jersey. I hope to have a little more

of his collection on display by early February but it will take a very long time before we completely understand everything we have received and then subsequently develop suitable ways of displaying the items. Right now I am waiting on a donation of several book cases from a member of our operating committee which will allow us to display about 40 boxes of books.



Almost no month goes by without my being notified of someone's collection both large and small which might be given to us in time. The Museums Collection is growing and as Curator I'm looking forward to larger and better Museum facility some time in the future where we can do a much better job of displaying these wonderful artifacts and that has better public access.

Please remember that the museum is open on most Wednesday evenings from mid September through mid June. If you are coming any distance at all I would ask you to call me in advance at 732-544-1131 to confirm that the museum will be open to avoid any disappointments. Our docents are all volunteers and some nights we just can't find someone to be there. We can try and arrange visits at other times on request.

We are looking for invitations to participate in activities around the state. If you know of any suitable events please let us know or invite us. We have been at a "Trade Show of Scouting", Council & District annual dinners, Commissioner training, Scout Fairs, historical & museum association

related events and others as examples. Any event where we can bring our table display would be great.

We recently sent our fall 2007 issue of the museum news letter to the various Boy Scout Councils around the state and we will shortly do the same with the Girl Scouts. This distribution includes a cover letter introducing ourselves and our Mission. In 2008 we are trying to get every Scouting Council in New Jersey to think of us as their museum and to have them spread the word within their territory about us.

I encourage giving your Scouting Memorabilia to the NJ Scout Museum. I would be very happy to discuss Donations and Loans to our collection. We also will provide a service of assistance with the selling of memorabilia for income if that is needed. Many people ask "What is needed by the Museum?" The answer simply stated is "Anything related to the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts that will help tell the story of Scouting in New Jersey, and to a lesser extent Scouting in general", is of interest to us.

Please consider how you might fit into our efforts it's a lot of work but also it's a lot of fun

The Girl Scout Corner

By Randall Holden

The Girl Scouts have reduced the number of councils nationwide from 332 (in 1992) to 109. That reduction has been felt here in New Jersey where that number went from 13 and is down to the present day six. There are three councils that will be merging into one in 2008. A naming contest for the merger of Washington Rock, Greater Essex & Hudson Counties, and Rolling Hills is underway as we speak.

The demographics are more stretched out than the Boy Scouts right now. Even the names are sounding familiar. The new councils are: Northern New Jersey (4-1/2 counties), Central and Southern New Jersey (9 counties), Jersey Shore (2 counties), and 'to be named' council (5-1/2 counties)

As a new trustee of New Jersey Scout Museum, I noticed that the history of New Jersey Girl Scouts was really lacking. After finishing a pretty exhaustive research project on the New Jersey Boy Scout camps, I thought I would change venues and try the Girl Scouts. I wanted to do the council and

camp history along the same lines that I have done for the Boy Scouts. I never expected the scarcity of information available for both the council and the camps.

A visit to the National Headquarters in New York City proved to be a dead end for the information I was seeking. I even tried using the Golden Eaglet Award (Girl Scouts' highest award from 1913 to 1938) to identify the councils of that time period. Much to my surprise and dismay, the archivist changed the listing to present day councils (or at least those of 1999 when the list was created from the card files).

Upon visiting the six present council offices, I ran into a real lack of information available. None seem to have any printed histories of the predecessor councils and camps. The individual council websites revealed a small amount of current information about the present camps but nothing about those that have closed for one reason or another.

If any of our readers, members or visitors has any information that they would like to share, please feel free to contact the curator, Steven Buckley.



www.NJScoutMuseum.org

New Jersey Scout Museum, Inc. is not affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America or the Girl Scouts of the USA

New Jersey Scout Museum Newsletter
Editor, Greg Crow © 2008 NJSM