

Scouting in Canada—a reason to be proud

Acton groups active

by Jennifer Rowe
Throughout the year, various articles on members of the Scout and Guide movement are featured in the paper. However this week, Scout and Guide week, is especially important for the organization.

This is a time when instead of being in the limelight for what they are doing, they are seen for what they are and the great history that is a vital part of every boy and girl in the movement.

Acton is fortunate to have Brownie and Cub packs, Scout and Venturer troops, Guide Companies, and Beaver Colonies.

The hard work of the Scout and Guide movement, that has earned them their good name, is not only in Acton but spread throughout the world. The dedication of leaders in the organization is what makes this possible. These leaders spend much of their own time to make it possible for the youth to develop into strong, responsible citizens, following the good example of their founder Lord Baden-Powell and their leaders.

In Acton there is one Scout troop with about 20 boys aged 11 to 14 meeting Thursday evenings. The program is divided into four areas, service, personal achievement, outdoors and citizenship. The boys work to acquire badges in the different areas. Scoutmaster of the 1st Acton Scout troop is John Sharples, assistant scoutmaster Mark Rowe and Scout-In-Training, Rob Paterson.

After forming Scouts, Lord Baden-Powell decided there was a need to have a group for younger boys. He described Cubs as "...a junior branch of the Scout movement in order to meet the eagerness of a large number of small boys who want to be Scouts and who are as yet too young."

Cubs began in Acton in 1932. The idea is to prepare boys 8-11 years of age for the challenge of Scouts. Cubs encourages the boys to become responsible citizens through community involvement and working with boys their own age. The program includes a balance of handicrafts, games, athletic fun, skills and service.

In Acton there are two Cub packs who meet every Monday and Thursday evening. Akela on Monday night is Patricia Garton with James Boyle, James Phillips and Mike Walton assisting with the 30 boys.

Thursday night Cubs, B pack, also has about 30 boys. Akela is Harold Todd, with Brian Alder, Brian Stewart and Jerry Waskalk assisting.

In 1910, Lord Baden-Powell and his sister visited Canada to start Guiding, a division for girls 10-15 years. The first Guide Company was opened in St. Catharines. In Acton the First Acton Guide company began about 1928, sponsored by St. Alban's Church.

Guiding promotes good citizenship and a wide variety of topics are explored through badge work. Most of the tests originally were based on household skills, however now this idea has broadened to include outdoor activities, sports and interests that are important to boys as well as girls.

There are now two Guide Companies in Acton. Monday night Guides includes about 30 girls under the direction of Captain Jean Vaughan and Lieutenants Glynis Nornington and Marg Hamilton.

Wednesday night Guide leaders are Captain Alison Ginn and Lieutenant Pauline Barlowe. There are about 20 girls in the Company.

After the formation of Guides in 1910, the younger sisters of Guides wanted to join the organization. For this reason the Rosebuds were formed with the Canadian counterparts, the Brownies arising. Brownies are for girls ages seven to ten with the program based around the symbol of the toadstool and the wise owl.

There are four Brownie Packs in Acton.

Brown Owl of the 1st Acton Brownies is Pat van der Eyken with assistants Mrs. Pat Peterson and Miss Karen van der Eyken. Second Acton Brownies is under the leadership of Brown Owl Heather Homer, Mrs. Erika Matthews and Mrs. Nancy Little.

The third Acton Brownie Pack is headed by Brown Owl June Payne, with Miss Mary Elliott, Mrs. Jan Soutiere and Mrs. Cora Kelly assisting.

The fourth Acton Brownie Pack is lead by Brown Owl Lynn Waterhouse, with assistants, Mrs. Linda Widdish and Miss Debbie Ryder.

The newest addition to the Scouting movement was in 1974 with the Beaver Colony for boys aged 5-8. Canada is

the only country in the world with Beaver colonies, with the exception of Germany where Beaver colonies are set up for the sons of men from the Canadian Armed Forces.

The Beavers are based on a story called Friends of the Forest. The story stresses the importance of love and understanding of nature. Beavers is designed to start young boys developing an awareness of nature and the people around them. Their motto is very straightforward yet it says all that the Beavers stand for, Sharing, Sharing, Sharing.

In the Beaver colony there are no head beavers or leaders; instead everyone is on an equal basis. In place of badges the Beavers are given tails to sew on their hats. These tails are given according to age. A blue tail is for a five year old Beaver and represents discovery. The red tail is significant of the exploring nature of a six year old. The white tail shows a helpful seven year old. Beavers are held Monday

and Wednesday evening in Acton.

Colony A Beavers are lead by Sharon Deforest, Mary McVeigh, Sue Walton and Rick Gibson.

Colony B Beavers is lead by Carolyn Collatin, Carol Gillis, Joan Phillips, Anne Steware and Ina Boyle.

North Halton District Commissioner for Scouting is Murray Harrison. Assistant District Commissioner for Scouts is Gord Douglas, for Cubs, Steve Thompson, Ed McGrath for Venturers and Andrea Sharples for Beavers.

District Commissioner for Acton Guiding and Brownies is Pat van der Eyken, deputy Jean Vaughan, treasurer Mrs. Helen Rowe, secretary Mrs. Evelyn Cadenhead, Badge secretary Mrs. Bonnie Dunne and District Guide Mrs. Bea Ginger.

Everyone in the organization spends many hours because they care, not only about their individual group, but about children and people in general. A group for older boys,

SCOUT-GUIDE WEEK



known as the Venturers, is also active in town. The group is designed for boys after Scouts, aged 14-17 years.

Venturers gives the boys a chance to open doors to things they can't do on their own. It allows them to work with other boys their own age and

set up a system where they make their own decisions and rules. The boys are responsible for planning their own program with the help of an advisor when needed.

Advisor for the Acton Venturer Troop is Rick Saville.

by Mark Rowe

It was in 1908, that Major General Robert Baden-Powell published his book, Scouting for Boys. He had found that many boys in England were reading and enjoying his earlier book Aids to Scouting. This first book, however, was written to help army scouts in searching out and spying on the enemy.

He used basically the same ideas in his second book but organized this training around a program run in patrols in troops. After Scouting For Boys was published, new scout troops sprang up not only in Great Britain, but as soon as the book reached overseas in the rest of the Empire.

The new Scouting movement grew in leaps and bounds in all different ways. Finally in 1911, his late Majesty King Edward VII requested that Baden-Powell resign from the army and devote his full energies to organizing this movement which had swept the Empire. This Baden-Powell did, not

only in England but he visited many Dominions and colonies in the Empire.

In 1914, The Canadian Parliament officially incorporated the Boy Scouts of Canada in a charter. Two years later the Wolf Cubs were added.

The Free Press reported that in October, 1915 Scoutmaster Hammond of Toronto came to speak at St. Alban's.

"Reverend Mr. Smith spoke strongly in favor of the organization of a corps of Boy Scouts for Acton..." That sparked off enthusiasm in town. The paper of November 11, 1915 said, "A meeting of the local council of the Boy Scouts Association was held in the parish hall on Monday night. Captain A.O.T. Beardmore presided. It was decided to start a troop in town—to be known as the Acton troop—open to all boys in town aged ten years to 18 years. Rev. C.H.E. Smith, M.A. was appointed Scoutmaster with S. George assistant."

The troop's first duty was a paper drive on December 2,

1915 for the war effort. The new troop soon brought honor to their home village when, at the Toronto Exhibition, the Duke of Connaught chose them as the best dressed group and gave them the honor of being the color party in the grand parade.

Wolf Cubs began meeting about 1932 in Acton. Girl Guides were formed soon after in town.

On October 28, 1949, all Acton proudly witnessed the opening of the new Scout hall. It was built under the direction of secretary of the group committee William Middleton, committee chairman John Goy and scoutmaster Dave Dills. The children of the war years soon reached cubbing and scouting ales and Acton boomed. In the middle fifties two large Cub packs and two Scout troops shared the hall with Brownies and Guides.

In 1968, the Boy Scouts of Canada revamped the Scouting program. Scouts were thereafter aged from 11 years to 14 years. A new section named Venturers looked after former Scouts from 15 to

18 years. Kevin Conroy ran the first Venturer company.

The Beaver program which was officially recognized as part of the Boy Scouts of Canada in 1974 began in Acton the same year. Andrea Sharples, Linda McGrenere and Elizabeth Gough began the section for five to seven year olds.

Such growth demanded the construction of an addition to the old Scout hall. Therefore on February 22, 1976, Hodonawnee two was officially opened by the chairman of the project, Donald MacDonald, assisted by Barbara Murchinson.

Today, Acton boasts two Beaver colonies, four Brownie packs, two Cub packs, two Guide companies, one Scout troop and one Venturer company.

After 70 years of Scouting in Canada and 63 years of Scouting in Acton one has a right to be proud. All Scouters and all their charges in the past have a right this week to be proud of their involvement, however short, with the largest youth organization in the world.



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