

The St. Nicholas Lead

Camp Cherry Valley Alumni Association Newsletter

Spring 2003

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

By Ron Wood

Though I joined Scouting for fun and adventure, later in life I realized more occurred during those Scouting years.

In a 1940 HANDBOOK FOR BOYS, Boy Scouts of America, I read about the official Boy Scout Uniform:

"Dashing, trim, symbolic of the great Scout Movement, the Boy Scout Uniform is your passport to Scouting honors and the nation's esteem. Everybody knows about Scouting and the ideals of its action-packed program for red-blooded boys. That's why the nation admires the boy in the Boy Scout uniform. The nation knows the noble heritage that Scouts carry on, the knightly code by which Scouts live, the Oath and Law to which Scouts pledge themselves. The spirit of Washington is in every Scout's fibre, the blood of pioneers and explorers in their veins. No wonder doors are open to Scouts. No wonder the Official Boy Scout Uniform is an immediate passport to honors and esteem."

. . . and later talking about Boy Scout Badges: "while intrinsically of little value, are important because they represent essentially personal achievement; or, in the case of some of our Insignia, qualities of personality and character which warrant designation for specific responsibility for leadership."

Yes, through Scouting adventure largely at camp, honor, esteem, qualities of personality and character are developed. We have a responsibility to continue that awesome tradition. Be a part; you will be a winner, too.

See you in camp. Ron.

(Written while crewing aboard the 48' motor yacht PAU HANA II while on 1200 mile adventure to Canada.)

NEWS FROM CAMP

By Bill Hartley

We've been busy!

The late fall and winter months at Cherry were some of the nicest I've seen. Very little rain, moderate temperatures, and only a few windy days. We had hoped to begin the second phase of the water tank project early in the late fall, or no later than mid-winter in order to have everything completed prior to camp beginning this spring. Because of the potential for erosion occurring during heavy rains, the County would not allow us to begin the project until mid spring. So the push to have everything completed before summer camp is underway.

While we were waiting to start the water tank, Mark and I kept busy by doing several major projects and many minor ones. The first project to get going was the replacement of Commissioner Cabin #3 which we have just received occupancy approval from the County. This cabin will hold up to 12 people, has screened and canvassed windows, comes with an electric outlet and interior lights, a lighted front porch and a second emergency exit door.

We spent over a month working around program trying to install 200' of K-rail (freeway center dividers) across the beach from the Beach House towards Sea Breeze. This will help prevent beach erosion and stabilized the beach. Over time as the bigger rocks are relocated, our beach surface will become more sandy.

The Trading Post received a face-lift this spring and has fewer holes in the walls, new paint, and new flooring. This was done in the one half that has not been used this spring. Hopefully we will be able to do the other side soon.

With these projects out of the way and many other smaller projects completed, we were able to get prepared for program and are looking forward to a good program season. To help in that regard, camp has a new stake bed truck and a new utility vehicle.

Mark Bower and friends put together a nice Ford truck with a utility box on the back and a lift gate, for the camp. This truck is ideal for using around camp, making minor repairs, and supporting major projects by carrying almost everything we need to fix or repair CCV.

We have been very fortunate this spring to be able to hire an Assistant Ranger. Jessica Stettler joined the facility team in March and has done a great job for us. She has handled our regular routine (cleaning all the public restrooms, trash and debris collecting and dump runs, and 7 gear runs a week), and many of the annual maintenance items like weed eating, painting, and repairs. She has also jumped into working on the major projects with us. Oh yeah, did I mention she is also the second Cook during summer camp? A very talented person.

Kyle Barrus and Neil Obray, last year's summer resident camp High Adventure Directors, visited us this spring. For room and board they worked very hard for us repainting the resident house, cutting acres of weeds, installing fences, and more. Thanks guys.

I also wanted to tell you about a guy that has come to the camp three times and accomplished the almost impossible. Ray Vasquez, Foreman for Doty Brothers, installed the new lift station behind the Dining Hall two years ago, then last spring while we ran program installed the underground pipes we need from the beach to the water tank for the new utility system. Now he is putting in the water tank. Ray's talent for getting the job done right is second to none. The guys on his crews are the best and have become friends with most of the staff. Thank you, Ray, and all the Doty Brothers.

Here at camp Mark and I continue to plug away at things. We're happy.

C.O.R.E. STAFF REPORT

By Yolanda Hernandez

Rain, rain, rain is gone.

BB guns are cleaned, ready to be filled with BBs, to be shot and hit their targets.

New strings on bows, arrows waiting to fly in the air into a bale of hay.

Kayaks, tadpoles, canoes, cleaned and washed, waiting for campers to sit in them and glide into the water.

Pirate's Cove, its water glistening, fish are swimming, waiting for campers to snorkel and swim with them.

Silver mine eager to have its stories told.

Dining Hall anxious to have campers sit at its tables and have a meal.

Night waiting to have the sky light up from campfire to fill the night with stories, skits and laughter.

Staff eager to work.

Yes, we're back! CCV Weekend Camp!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

By Rick Scobey

Your membership is needed in the Camp Cherry Valley Alumni Association. If you have not paid your dues yet this year, now is the time to do so. Dues are still \$25 per year. Life Membership is available for \$250. Junior Membership is \$10 (ages 16-20). If you were on Summer Staff, CORE Staff, or Cub Staff last year, your dues are free for this year.

Due to increasing costs, The St. Nicholas Lead, the Camp Cherry Valley Alumni Association's newsletter, will no longer be mailed out to non-current members except for the first issue of the year. Non-members will need to renew their membership to continue receiving the newsletter via U.S. mail. Current members will continue receiving the newsletter. Remember that the newsletter can always be downloaded from our web site, www.ccvaa.org.

If you have moved, plan on moving, or have updated membership information, please contact us. It is difficult and expensive to track Alumni members and your contact information is important to us. We want

to be able to contact you for important functions. If you have not done so in the past, please take a minute and fill out the membership form and return it to us so we can update our database, even if you don't plan on becoming an Alumni Member. The Membership form can be found in the newsletter and also on our web site.

Don't forget to visit our web site, www.ccvaa.org. We'd appreciate any ideas, suggestions or comments that you might have. If you have any pictures, documents, memories or anything else that you want posted on the CCVAA web site, or want to help work on the web site, please contact us.

Hope to see you soon!

A Brief History of Camp Cherry Valley*

By Dave Minnihan

With the founding of the BSA in 1910, the first goal of the program was to organize as many troops as possible. Paid professionals, many of who were YMCA leaders, were recruited to help spread the Scouting program. They were sent out into the field to organize troops and recruit leaders.

As the level of Scouting increased in a community and there was sufficient financial support, a local administrative unit, the Council could then be formed. The first of the BSA councils to be organized in Southern California was the Los Angeles Council in 1914. The Los Angeles Council had jurisdiction over the Pasadena area.

Scouts from the Los Angeles Council camped at Banning Beach in 1918 and possibly one or more years prior to that. Banning Beach was located just around the point from Sugar Loaf, a famous rock blasted away when the built the Casino in Avalon. There is also a possibility that Scouts also camped at White's Landing.

By 1919, there were 9 troops functioning in the Pasadena area and it was decided that there was enough interest and financial support to establish a separate council. The Pasadena Council was chartered in January 1919. In those days, a district council (also known as a section council) was not what we consider to be a district now. Rather, it was a designation by the BSA that a council covered more than one city or town, but less than a county.

Tallman Trask was hired to be the Scout Executive of the new Pasadena District Council. Trask had been a professional for the Los Angeles Council, serving as the District Executive for the Pasadena District. Trask had also served as Los Angeles' Camp Director. Prior to joining the BSA, Trask was an executive for the YMCA and had run several camps for them.

William Wrigley had a residence in Pasadena, which is now the Tournament of Roses House. He was one of the original members of the Pasadena District Council's Board of Directors. Sometime in 1919, Wrigley purchased the Catalina Island Company, and so became owner of Catalina Island.

Wrigley allowed the Pasadena Council to establish a camp at Howlands Landing in 1919. Not much is known about this first camp except that it ran for one ten-day session with 60 campers. The cost was \$12.50. An interesting note is that the Pasadena Scouts were not the first to use their camp. Schools in the Los Angeles School District opened several weeks before the Pasadena schools, so Scouts from Los Angeles actually camped at Howlands Landing, under the direction of the Los Angeles Council, before the Pasadena Council got to use it.

After four seasons at Howlands Landing, it was apparent that the council needed larger facilities. Several locations were offered, including Emerald Bay. Cherry Valley was the ultimate choice. Skipper Robison once mentioned that the reason Cherry Valley was chosen was the tide pools. Because of the appearance and the smell of the tide pools, it was felt that no other group would want to come in and take the camp away from the BSA.

Cherry Valley opened in 1923. It was very primitive that first year. There was no pier so campers had to wade ashore or be shuttled from the Betty-O to shore via rowboats. Scouts ate at an "open air" Dining Hall and were plagued by yellow jackets. Much of the camp was covered with cactus and much time was spent that year clearing it away.

Things were improving in 1924. CCV got its first transportation system; two mules. A semi-permanent dining hall was constructed, with a gravel floor. Table scraps were simply washed into the gravel. CCV's chef was George Holland, chef for the Huntington family. During the summer, the Huntingtons would go back east, or to Europe, and would send their chef to help at Cherry Valley.

Throughout the 1920's-1930's, Scouts would travel via train from Pasadena to San Pedro, then take the Great White Steamer to Avalon. After arriving in Avalon, they would then travel up to Cherry Cove on the Betty-O. Upon their arrival in camp, they would be broken up into three provisional troops.

Camping was done on what is now the Parade Grounds. Originally they slept in pup tents on straw ticks. Each tent was light with a kerosene lantern. Around 1930, Mrs. Wrigley decided to visit the camp. She was impressed with camp overall, but horrified with the sleeping conditions. She asked Tallman Trask to order better tents immediately, and to send her the bill. Trask ordered a number of eight-man wall tents with bunk beds.

Camp life was more "military" oriented in the 1920's-1940's. All of the tents were set up in a "U" formation on what is now the parade grounds. A Scout was chosen each day to be the Officer of the Day. His job was to make sure that all activities ran on time. Evening Colors ceremony also featured a full dress inspection, including fingernail inspection.

Daily activities were somewhat similar to today's activities. The morning was taken up with the "Life's Problems" Class, followed by merit badge and Scout skills instructions. All Scouts were expected to advance at least one rank, or if they were 1st Class, earn at least one merit badge. All of the usual merit badges associated with summer camp were offered. Skipper Robison held every merit badge offered by the BSA and was a qualified examiner in each one as well. If a Scout wanted to earn a badge and was prepared to do so, Skipper was available to help him earn it.

Late mornings were devoted to "Swim Time". Everybody went swimming. Any Scouts who started the session as "non-swimmers" were "beginners" with the first few days. And by the end of the session, just about every "beginner" had become a "swimmer".

Afternoons were spent canoeing, fishing from the rowboats, or going on hikes. Each of the three camp troops would alternate daily with each activity. The camp got its first war canoe in 1927 when the Coupe family donated one in memory of their granddaughter, Patricia. This war canoe was named after their granddaughter. Over the next few years the camp would obtain more war canoes. These were known as the "Rainbow Fleet" as each one was painted a different color.

Evening was devoted to campfires. There were a number of special theme campfires; Indian Campfire, Pirate's Campfire, Circus Campfire, and the Witch's or Mystery Campfire. Skipper Robison was a gifted storyteller and many of the campfires included one of his tales.

A big part of camp was the Tribe of Torqua, the camp's honor society. Tallman Trask developed the Tribe in 1922 and started using it that year, the last year of Howland's Landing Camp.

Mutiny on the Bounty, with Clark Gable, Charles Laughton and Franchot Tone, was filmed in 1935 in Cherry Cove and the Isthmus. Several of the stars came by to visit the camp during the filming.

The Lighthouse was erected in 1937. It was built in three sections at the old Camp Huntington, and then barged over to Cherry Valley. The Beach House was also built about this time. In addition to providing staff housing, this was also used for the nightly staff meeting and "Cast Iron Belly" (staff's nightly cracker barrel). Before the Beach House was built, the staff used the Mine for these activities.

Due to wartime travel restrictions and the threat of Japanese invasion, it was decided not to open camp in 1942. An "Evacuation" Camp was held during the Spring of 1942. A number of staff and some volunteers went to Cherry Valley and took most of the valuable items back to the mainland. Everything not taken was left in the Mine and the entrance sealed with a cement bulkhead. It was also decided to close the Council's other camp, Camp Blue Ridge. The equipment from the two camps was taken and used at the new camp on Mt. Baldy, Camp San Antonio. The Tribe of Torqua was continued at Camp San Antonio.

Although the war ended in 1945, Cherry Valley was not ready to be reopened until 1947. Scouts no longer traveled in the Great White Steamer and the Betty-O, but instead traveled directly from San Pedro to Cherry Cove on the H-10 water taxis. They would continue to travel via water taxi until 1973.

The post-war years brought a great increase to the population of Southern California and the San Gabriel Valley. The BSA and the San Gabriel Valley Council also increased significantly in membership. There was a need to increase the number of campers that could attend camp. There was also a change in the philosophy of camps; they were now trying to downplay the "military" flavor and instill a "back-to-nature" feeling. In 1955, all camping was moved up into the Cherry Grove. Campsites were designed to hold individual troops and Scouts camped with their own unit rather than a provisional one. The camp session was also reduced from ten to eight days, again to increase the number of Scouts who could attend. The Kybo facility was constructed in the grove in 1958. The old Kybo was converted into the Camp Store and Handicraft Lodge.

More changes were to come in the 1970s. The Lighthouse was painted red, white, and blue to resemble the American flag. The Land Ship was torn down and so was the Program Office/Leader's Lounge. The Camp Store was expanded to use both sides of the building. Handicraft was relocated to the Fig Tree for several years, then moved again to the foundation of the old Program Office.

Major improvements would come about in the 1980s with a new warehouse, a rebuilt Staff Village, new Beach House and Ranger's house, and a Sea Lab. The Henry Thompson Health Lodge was dedicated in 1996. The Lighthouse, symbol of the camp for over 60 years, was blown down in a storm in 1998. A new Lighthouse was built and dedicated in 2002 as Thomson's Light, in honor of Henry Thomson.

* The above material is taken from a work in progress, *A History of Camp Cherry Valley*, by Dave Minnihan. If you have knowledge of the Camp's history, personal recollections, or photos of camp, please contact Dave Minnihan, 2300 Fairview Rd. #G-202, Costa Mesa, CA 92626. (714)641-4845. Email dave.minnihan@bowne.com

ACTIVITIES

Staff Barbecue

Saturday, July 12, is the date for the annual steak barbecue for the staff. We'll be going over in the morning, get acquainted with the staff, enjoy some activities, and then cook up some steaks. If you're interested in coming, contact Dave Minnihan by July 6.

Old Goats Weekend

September 12-14 is the Old Goats Weekend. Alumni and their significant other/family are invited to come over for a fun weekend. The CORE Staff will be running a full program weekend, so you'll be able to do snorkeling, kayaking, archery, hiking, BB guns, handicraft, and campfires.

Cost of the weekend is \$25, plus your transportation. Most people will be going over on the Friday evening boat and returning on Sunday afternoon. Please make your travel reservations with Catalina Express (310)519-1212. Please RSVP to Dave Minnihan by Sept 8. Note: Unlike previous years, this will be our last newsletter before the Old Goats Weekend.

CALENDAR

July 12-13	Staff Barbecue at CCV
Sept. 8	Newsletter article deadline
Sept. 12-14	Old Goats Weekend at CCV

OFFICERS

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CCV Web Site: www.ccvaa.org

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