

BRIEF HISTORY OF WYNNEWOOD PINE TREE TROOP # 1  
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The Wynnewood Pine Tree Troop # 1 was organized and Chartered on December 12th. 1922 under the Sponsorship of All Saints Episcopal Church at Wynnewood Penna. The Sponsor was J. Gibson Bell Rector of the Church

The first Troop Committee was composed of the following;

Franklin D'Olier  
J.A.Saxone  
R.B.W.Hutt  
J.A.Lafore  
J.A.McCall Jr.  
M.H.Birkhead

The first Scout Master was David Spratt who was also the Organist of the Church

The Troop started out with a membership of twenty-five boys

From its very beginning the Scouts felt that they belonged to a real organization and they felt that all of the emblems of office should be enforced at all times. For example they felt that if they were to become members of such an organization that they should be clad in the regalia prescribed. At every meeting all of the Scouts wore his Scout Uniform and the Scout Master was likewise properly dressed. This rule was always observed and the success of the Troop followed this ruling. The Scouts were punctual at meetings, eager to learn all they could and their progress was pleasing and rapid. It only took a year or so for many of them to accomplish the necessary merits ( 21 ) to make them EAGLE SCOUTS )

After two years of service as Scout Master Mr. Spratt's business affairs became so pressing that he was obliged to resign as Scout Master.

Harry Clayhauser became the second Scout Master in 1924 Under his administration the Troop continued to thrive, but owing to a change of Residence he was obliged to resign in 1926

James Foster followed him using as his Assistant his son Jack Foster. Jack had gained much information about Scouting having been a member of the Narberth Troop # 1 Success continued under the able guidance of these men. Through their guidance many pleasant activities were taken up. First: Each Sunday morning several members of the Troop ( Fully regaled in Uniform were stationed in front of the Church to open the doors of the approaching Automobiles and rigs that were bringing members of the Church to Service.

The Troop also placed upon themselves to help in the Red Cross Drives and the Welfare Drives. Through their effort many thousands of dollars were collected for these worthy purposes.

Father and Son Foster finally felt the pressure of business and in 1929 they resigned as Scout Master and Assistant Scout Master.

Proctor Wetherill was then chosen to fill this important post, he stayed just a year and finding the work too laborious he resigned, to take up his scholarship at College.

Jack Foster returned in 1930 and again brought new honors to the Troop. It was about this time that the Troop felt that they wanted to do something outstanding for themselves. Through various drives and other generous subscriptions the Troop were fully outfitted with distinctive uniforms, large snare drums and bugles. For a number of years they were known as the best drum and bugle corps in the whole organization. In 1931 Jack Foster became associated with the Headquarters of the Delaware and Montgomery County Boy Scout ~~HEADQUARTERS~~ Organization and this required his full time. He resigned in favor of Edward J. Bubb, Ass't Rector of the Church. Mr. Bubb held the office of Scout Master for one year and then was transferred to another Church.

In 1932 George A. Mahl became Scout Master. During his term of office many interesting things happened. Many trips were taken by the Troop, among them were Dr. Wests Ranche at Browns' Mills N.J. where we spent a long week end from Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon, several trips to Delmont, a most enjoyable trip to the farm of Mr. Love and others.

It was in 1934 that All Saints Church felt that they needed the Chapel, in which the Troop met for other purposes this made it necessary for us to move to other quarters. We moved to the Hall of the Narberth Fire Department, we were there for just two months. The Scouts being very healthy, strong and full of Pep, enjoyed their Basket Ball and other games. The men at the Fire House could not stand the noise so we had to look elsewhere for quarters. Through the fine efforts of Mr. Walter A. Fox we were able to transfer to the Narberth Presbyterian Church, who already had a Troop Meeting at the Church. Their Church Sponsored Troop # 2 Narberth, the Troops met on different nights so it worked out well for all.

Mr. Mahl was made Chairman of the Troop Committee and Mr. Richard S. Knoll was made Scout Master in 1935. Up to this time ever since the Troop was organized, there was always a waiting list of boys that wanted to join the Troop. Mr. Knoll enjoyed a most successful period of Administration for several years, resigning in 1939 because of a transfer of his business activities.

Following Mr. Knoll's period of office the high standards were eased up and the Scouts did not wear their uniforms and they otherwise slipped, causing a lack of interest.

In 1940 the Wynnewood Troop still enjoying much good interest and activity was approached by a Committee from the Narberth Methodist Church with a most urgent desire to have Wynnewood Troop join with them at the Methodist Church. The Methodist Church were then Sponsoring the Narberth Troop # 1 but this Troop had become much weakened through various changes and it was thought that the combined Troops would renew interest in the organization.

The move was made and for a while things went on with much gusto, but, outside activities soon took hold upon the Troop and it began to weaken.

In 1940 or thereabouts a survey was made by one of the Headquarters Commissioners and he reported to Headquarters that there was a lack of interest.

An effort was made to revive the interest and a new Scout Master was chosen Robert Mason, who had been a former members of the Troop. He served for one year and business interests took him away. Following his term the Troop elected John Fox, a former member. The Troop took on new life and thrived. Mr. Fox's business interests required more of his time and he had to resign. Then followed a term with Ray Shank in 1945 followed by R. Wayne Deaves and in 1946 William F. Emmons.

The above History is given in brief but is only half of the story so we will try to give below a brief outline of some of the interesting facts in connection with the Troop.

First: a review of the roster over the life of the Troop brings many pleasant pictures. Of the first list of boys, who were in the first Troop and so on down through twenty years the Scouts have taken their place in business and industry and are now Leaders of Industry. During the second World War many of our Wynnewood men have held the Commission of Rank from Lieutenant to Colonel and some have won Distinction in the Service.

Second: for a number of years Wynnewood Troop held the distinction of having more Eagle Scouts than any other Troop

Third: A review of letters, some years ago, which came from prominent people in our neighborhood show how the Public generally look upon our Scouts.

Fourth: Wynnewood Troop has always been blessed with a Committee of men than which there are no better.

Fifth: Early in the life of the Troop a beautiful banner was designed, by interested parties, to be awarded to the Troop that had accomplished the best record for the year. The Banner was won by Wynnewood Troop, the first year of the competition and remained in its possession continually, until it was withdrawn because some feeling had arisen among other Troops.

All in all, it was considered a real honor to be a member of Wynnewood Troop, which accounted for the fact that for almost twenty years they had a waiting list of prospective Scouts.

I hesitate to mention any names of Scouts that have made Wynnewood Troop L an outstanding example of Scouting lest I might overlook some one that has earned much credit for the Troop. The mere mention of Foot-Ball, Basket-Ball, Base Ball, Branches of Higher Learning, in connection with the Public Schools, High Schools and Colleges, will bring to mind many of the members of this Troop.

In competition with other Troops Wynnewood Troop 1 almost always came out on top, because of their thorough training. Many prizes and trophies were deposited in the Troop Archives for years showing their great ability in Knot Tying, Tent Pitching, Fire Building, Trail Blazing, Swimming, Life Saving, etc etc.

I fear that I have said much about the good side of the Scouts of this Troop without mentioning some of their short comings. They were not Angels by any means, they often had to be held in by strong methods. I recall one cold wintery night, after the meeting had closed, a group of Scouts on the way home, resorted to snow-ball throwing, and molesting some of the Residents of the neighborhood. At one home, they threw snow-balls at the front door, the tenant of the house came to the door to find out what the commotion was, when he opened the door one of the snow-balls struck him in the face. Without, even putting on his coat or hat ( in his shirt sleeves ) he came at once to the Chapel. I had not left, in heated anger he told me what he thought of the Scouts and the Troop and assured me that he would make an example of us all. He was going to have the boys arrested and then report the whole thing to Headquarters. I calmed him down as best I could, but even my humble apology was not satisfactory, he left in a very much troubled state. The next meeting night, after opening exercises, I asked the boys who were guilty of this roudy deed to come forward at once ( knowing full well that they would not disclose their identity ) but, much to my surprise five Scouts came forward. I was so surprised in seeing such loyalty that I could not, on the spur of the moment, mete out a suitable punishment. I took their names and told them to see me after the meeting. Meeting over, they came forward, I told them to go at once to the home of the man that they had abused and apologize and to report to me the next meeting night and let me know the result accomplished. I did not have to wait until the next meeting night for the answer, before I left the building, the man, himself, came in, he told me that the boys had been at his home and that they had apologized and that their manly deed had touched him very greatly, he asked what he could do to show his gratitude for such a manly act and said from then on he would help in any way he could to boost Wynnewood Troop L.

Another outstanding event comes to my mind when the Troop was called upon by the Lower Merion Police Dept. It seems that some man had disappeared, no trace had been found even though the Police had made diligent search for several days. They asked the Troop to assist them in their search.

A general alarm was sent out to the members of the Troop and within ten minutes every member of the Troop reported to the Scout House: The Patrols were given instructions and sent in different directions with their leader. Within an hour one of the Patrols in searching through the woods down in back of Wynnewood came across the missing man, hanging by the neck to a tree ( dead ) a detail was sent back to one of the policemen while the rest remained on guard. Soon the Police came and they took the body down. The Police Department were very generous in their praise of Wynnewood Troop 1

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A visit to " Pine Barrons " ( Dr. West's Ranche ) at Brown's Mills, N.J. developed a most interesting story which I like to tell. A group of Scouts were just returning from a canoe trip, coming through the woods a Black Racer Snake crossed their path, one of the Scouts happened to be an Eagle Scout and had made a special study of snakes, after much work the snake was cornered and brought back to the camp, itb was about five feet long and very lively. The eagle Scout explained most of the features that go to make up the framework of a snake, from the split lower jaw, to the aphis etc. all of the Scouts being much interested. He explained how useful this snake was in eating harmful insects and other things that ruin a farmers crops, in fact, the Black Snake was really useful. After the Eagle Scout had finished his talk he turned to me and said, What shall I do with it? I told him to take it back to the place where he had found it and let it go. This was done. That night the Troop had a very interesting Camp Fire and at nine thirty retired. In the middle of the night, every one was very tired and was sleeping very soundly, suddenly the Eagle Scout who had given the Snake lecture was startled by something smooth and slippery passing over his face, of course he was scared for a moment, but this scare was soon replaced by a feeling of alarm, for, after the Camp Fire the Scouts were sure that they had fully quenched the fire, however, a spark still remained, ( un-noticed ) and as minutes and hours passed by the spark sprang into flame and was about to burn fiercely, when the Eagle Scout was aroused by the snake. How fortunate that we decided not to kill the snake.

One night we played a trick on the Troop? I had driven my car down Gypsy Lane and parked it near the woods. One of the Patrol leaders was left inside the car, he had a pistol and was instructed to fire two shots when he saw the Troop approaching ( we had planned on having a cross country hike that night ) and our path crossed the way of the parked auto. The Troop were within fifty feet of the car when the shots were fired. Of all the scattering you ever have seen you should have seen those Scouts run. They came at once to the Scout House and told me all about it. I asked them what kind of a car it was, what the number was, what the state tag read. Not one of them could tell. Then I outlined to them how necessary it was to get all the information possible to assist the Police etc.

The question has arisen as to, where the name " Pine Tree Troop " came from, I have made diligent search to find this out but in vain. However, I think that this name was adopted after one of the fine trips to Dr. West's Ranche at Moor's Mills, in the Pine Barrons. The Scouts seemed to enjoy themselves more there than at any other place as Dr. West had five or six riding horses, half a dozen canoes, the Rancocus Creek ran through his Ranche and there were acres of fine woods in which to tramp and Camp.

Among some of the fine trips enjoyed by the Troop were:

Dr. West's Ranche at Moore's Mills

A week end at at Cape May ( sleeping on the sand )

A trip to David Holme's Farm for week end.

A trip to Mr. Love's farm for the week end.

many trips to Del-Mont

When-ever one of these trips was planned invariably the entire Troop were eager to go.

It is the feeling of this old SCOUT MASTER that the younger generation are really missing one of the chief joys of their life in not falling in line and taking advantage of all that Scouting has to offer.

General Eisenhauser, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Army once made the statement that nearly 80% of the U.S. Officers in the World-War 2 had made their real start in Scout Troops. They made real Leaders of men and Soldiers.

In closing this brief History of Wynnewood Troop I it is my urgent Prayer that she may continue to make real men and soldiers. The future has much to offer you.