

CITY OF DERBY

LEADERS OF VALLEY SCOUTING



Warren Whittum (left, above), president of Housatonic Council, Boy Scouts of America, and Frank Gates, holder of the Silver Antelope regional award in recognition of his years of interest in fostering Scouting in this area from its earliest days.

10,000 Boys Have Benefited From Scouting in Housatonic Council in the Past 36 Years

Since 1917, Boy Scouting has been a vital force in organized work among boys in the valley towns and cities, many of whom have become prominent citizens, active in the industrial and business life of the community, and foremost in those undertakings in which high ideals are practiced, most notably, good citizenship and love for God and country. It is estimated that some 10,000 boys have benefited from Scout training during which Housatonic Council has functioned as the supervisory and directing agency serving the valley towns and cities, all learning valuable lessons and taking advantages of the training that has armed them in taking their place in their chosen life's work. Some of these are not only leaders in the community but they have maintained their interest and activity in Scout work throughout the years, being adult leaders, anxious to help in providing boys of today with the same high type training from which they themselves have benefited.

This week, Boy Scout Week, marks the 43rd anniversary of the founding of the Boy Scouts of America. From small beginnings the movement, imported from England, has shown a steady and remarkable growth until today there are 3,250,000 Scouts and Scout leaders in this country with 84,

bership of 822, the largest ever registered in the council. The membership is divided as follows: Cubs 365; Scouts 380; Explorers 79.

The council has 260 participating adults, who devote some of their time and energies to the work of Scouting. They are mostly busy men and they comprise the council officers, the council board and serve on various committees of the council. They plan the innumerable events which are intended to make the council and its units an active force in the community and as council leaders they usually take active parts in these events.

According to present figures there are ten Cub Scout Packs, an all time high, 14 Boy Scout Troops, compared with 18 in 1947, and four Explorer Posts. The Explorer Posts conduct programs, more advanced and challenging, for the older boys whose ages range from 14 to 18. A survey has shown that 159 Scout members of the council receive the official magazine, Boys' Life, while one of the objectives of the council is to get a 50 per cent subscription in the council to this worthwhile boys' magazine.

Annual Boy Crop

Not all the boys in the valley cities and towns are Scouts. Many of them for one reason or another never get to join the movement.

land, has shown a steady and remarkable growth until today there are 3,250,000 Scouts and Scout leaders in this country with 84,000 units of all types. Scouting is organized in every state in the Union and in all the possessions of the United States. The president of the United States is the honorary president of the Boy Scout movement and before entering the White House, President Eisenhower was a member of the national executive board of the Scouts.

Housatonic Council

Housatonic Council, as the official group sponsoring Boy Scouting in the valley communities, was organized as a second class council, on November 17, 1917.

Elgin Sherk was first president of the council and Archibald Peck, the first secretary. The council originally embraced only Derby and Shelton.

On January 25, 1923, Housatonic Council became a first class council with Ansonia and Seymour being included in its jurisdiction. Those who have served as presidents of the council in the intervening years are: Richard T. Tobin, James B. Atwater, Frederick F. Abbott, Malcolm M. Eckhardt, Raymond Carter, William Whitney, Thurston Merriman, Lucien L. Desaulniers, James Halpin, Frederick G. Space, Howard A. Reffelt, Lawrence E. Potter, Franklin S. Harris and Warren C. Whittum, incumbent president.

A member of the Executive Board from the beginning, Frank H. Gates has always been an active member of the council and greatly interested in Boy Scout work. Mr. Gates is honorary president of the council and has been national council representative since 1936, attending nearly all national council meetings in the interim. He was the first member of the local council to receive the Silver Beaver, the council's authorized honorary recognition for outstanding work for Boy Scouting. Mr. Gates also received in 1937, the Silver Antelope, a regional award for his work on behalf of Scouting.

Silver Beavers

Some of the members of Housatonic Council who have received Silver Beavers for their services in behalf of Scouting include Saul Steinman, Edmund D. Strang, Howard A. Reffelt, D. Lester Johns, Walter E. Beach, James B. Atwater, L. Raymond Darling, Thomas J. Manning, Thomas W. Millea, Frederick G. Space, Henry S. Douglas and Lucien L. Desaulniers.

Scout Executives

Executives who have served the council are: William B. Sharat from 1923 to 1925; Clarence O. Ward from 1925 to 1927; Jerome A. Higgins from 1927 to 1931; Harry S. Hanson from 1932 to 1940; Henry Donohue from 1940 to 1944; C. Murray Cott from 1944 to 1948, and Earle R. Minton, incumbent executive, since 1948. The Council maintains its office in the Loomer Building on Main Street, with Mrs. Marjorie P. Steeves as office secretary. Mr. Minton and Mrs. Steeves are the two full time workers employed by the council.

Support

Support of the local council is from allocations from the Derby and Shelton Community Chest and the Ansonia Community Chest while a drive is conducted each

Not all the boys in the valley cities and towns are Scouts. Many of them for one reason or another never get to join the movement. If they did there would be more Cub, Scout and Explorer Posts. The "eligibles" for Scouting in the area based on a survey of the 1950 census shows that there are approximately 3,000 boys, in the three age groups, eight through ten, eleven through 13 and from 14 to 18, who should be Scouts. The age for Cubs ranges from eight through ten, for Scouts 11 to 13 inclusive and for Explorers 14 to 18. Increased Scout troops and membership means, of course, increased expenses in conducting the council and additional adult leaders.

"The Unknown Scout"

Boy Scouting had its official beginning in England in 1909, when it was founded by Sir Robert Baden-Powell, then a brigadier-general in the English army, who later became chief Scout of the world. It was introduced into this country on February 10, 1910, by William D. Boyce, a Chicago publisher. Mr. Boyce was on a visit sometime before in England and became lost in the London fog one night. He inquired his way of a young boy who took Mr. Boyce to the place he was seeking. When Mr. Boyce tried to tip the youngster for his trouble the boy gave the Scout salute and said "A Scout doesn't take a tip for a good deed."

So impressed was Mr. Boyce that next day he made it a point to visit the Scout headquarters in London where he told of the incident and began a study and inquiry into Scouting. As a result, when he returned to this country, it was with a complete knowledge of Scouting, literature, insignia and other material. He set about at once to organize Scouting in America.

Thus, it was through a simple incident, that Scouting was introduced into this country. "The Unknown Scout" made a deep impression on Mr. Boyce. It also made an impression on Scouting in England for the boy, who never became known, is immortalized in a statue in London which is called "The Unknown Scout," typifying him and Scouts the world over as standing for high ideals and a willingness to help at all times.