



Arizona Scouting Museum Newsletter

Vol: 2 No: 1

First Quarter 2006

CUB SCOUTING THROUGH THE YEARS 1930-2005 75TH Anniversary of Cub Scouting

Last year the Boy Scouts of America celebrated the **75th** anniversary of the Cub Scout program, which began as a controlled experiment in 1930. Unlike the Boy Scout program, Cub Scouting has gone through many major changes since its inception. Nevertheless, it has continued to provide a quality program to younger boys and helped them develop new skills, learn to work with others, and of course, have fun!

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JUNE * 2005 Jeff Barraclough, Editor.

NEED FOR A YOUNGER BOY PROGRAM

Soon after the Scouting movement began, the need for a younger boy program was recognized. In 1914, Lord Robert Baden-Powell started Wolf Cubbing in England, a scouting program for younger boys based on Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book*. The program soon spread to other European countries. In the United States, Chief Scout Executive James E. West secured the rights to print the *Wolf Cub's Handbook* and some Wolf Cub Packs were formed. These Wolf Packs served as "junior troops", but the program was never officially adopted, in part because its activities differed very little from Boy Scouting and it was felt that this would take the edge off the boy's later experiences. There was also significant resistance to the idea of a program for younger boys from the national office. Some felt that a second program would burden the movement with new problems while the movement itself was still in its adolescence.

Nevertheless, calls for a program for younger boys continued and in 1924, the National Executive Board proposed that a younger boy program be adopted at the earliest date possible. The board insisted that such a program be kept entirely distinct from Boy Scouting yet prepare boys to become Boy Scouts. Three years later, an advisory committee made up of top specialists in child psychology and family life was appointed to develop such a program. The research was made available through a grant of \$50,000 from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Foundation. Based on the recommendations of the committee, the National Executive Board approved the first demonstration Cub units in 1929.

On February 10, 1930, the Executive Board approved the Cub program as a "controlled experiment." Cubbing originally consisted of three ranks: Wolf for nine-year-old boys. Bear for ten-year-olds, and Lion for eleven-year-olds. At age twelve, Cubs would graduate into a Boy Scout troop. Upon joining, a Cub would complete the requirements for Bobcat, allowing him to wear the Cub uniform and cap. Bobcat was not considered a rank, but consisted of learning the Cub Promise, Law of the Pack, Motto, Sign. Handclasp, and meaning of Webelos.

The original Wolf, Bear, and Lion rank badges were embroidered on red felt and had a wide felt edge which extended beyond the embroidered diamond. Cub rank badges have always been diamond shaped, reflective of part of the original Cub Scout promise, "A Cub is Square." A Bobcat pin for "civilian" wear was introduced in 1938, but it could not be worn on the official Cub uniform until 1959.

Cubs remained a three-year program for over fifty years. This new program solved the problem that the British Wolf Cubs faced, in that it had an entirely different focus. In the first years of the program, the BSA stressed the need to keep Cubbing and Boy Scouting separate. "Cubbing is different. It must be kept different. It should be different, for boys at Cub age are different from what they will be when they reach Scout age three years later."¹ The following is a description of the uniqueness of Cub Scouting from *Scouting* magazine.

*Our Cub Scouting Program ... is different from the younger boy programs of any other country in the world, because it is home and neighborhood-centered and is built around "between-meeting" time activities. The program suggests a wide range of attractive things for the Cub Scout and his natural neighborhood play group to do, with the encouragement of parents and neighbors. It suggests things that youngsters enjoy doing "on their own" when not under adult direction. These activities are particularly suited to the boy of Cub Scout age and must be kept quite different from those he will encounter as a Boy Scout... .The aim is not technical skill but rather through exploratory efforts to help boys discover hobbies.*²

The first Cub Pack was registered in May 1930 and in its first year Cubbing grew rapidly. In October 1930, there were 64 Packs with 1503 Cubs registered throughout the United States. By February 1931 there were 370 Packs with 7919 Cubs. On May 25, 1933, all experimental restrictions were removed and Cubbing became an official program of the BSA.

EARLY CHANGES

Cubbing was aggressively promoted and grew rapidly during its first decade. By the early 1940s, there was one Cub for every two Boy Scouts. Cub Scouts became quite prominent during World II, making significant contributions to the war effort by selling war bonds and war stamps, collecting grease, newspapers and milkweed floss, and planting victory gardens. It was also at this time that the program began to see its first changes.

The first major change to the Cubbing program came in 1941 with the creation of the Webelos rank for 11 ½ year old boys who had earned the Lion Rank. Webelos requirements were designed to prepare a boy to join a troop, and included learning the skills required for the Boy Scout rank of Tenderfoot. The design of the Webelos badge was described as an "arrow of light" and is still in use today as the Arrow of Light award. The word Webelos first appeared in the original 1930 handbook, in which Akela is introduced as chief of the "Webelos" tribe whose totem was the "arrow of light". The name was derived from the progression of ranks through Cub Scouts: Wolf, Bear, Lion, Scout (W-B-L-S). In addition to this meaning of Webelos, the early Cub handbooks described "another inner meaning — We'll Be Loyal — which is one of the important things a Cub stands for. He is loyal to his country, his home and his God."³ This "inner meaning" was dropped from later editions of the Cub handbooks until 1967 when the Lion rank was eliminated and this became the only meaning of Webelos.

Other changes also occurred during the program's second decade. In 1941, accumulated badges could be worn on the Cub Scout uniform. Prior to this, only one rank could be worn at a time. The title of "Cubbing" was changed in 1945 to "Cub Scouting". In 1949, the age requirements for the Scouting programs were lowered by one year, so the age levels for Cub Scouting changed to eight, nine, and ten, with boys entering Boy Scouts at age eleven instead of twelve. By 1950, the twentieth year of Cub Scouting, there were over one million boys registered in the program.

NEW LOOK IN CUB SCOUTING

In September 1967, some major changes in the Cub Scout advancement program went into effect. New editions of all Cub handbooks were printed with several changes made to the Wolf and Bear achievements. The biggest change, however, was the discontinuation of the Lion Rank.

In 1954, the Lion book had been changed to the *Lion--Webelos Cub Scout* Book and Webelos dens were created for those boys who were 10 ½ and had earned the Lion rank. The 1967 changes eliminated the Lion altogether, replacing it with a one-year Webelos program. Instead of achievements and electives, fifteen activity badges were created for Webelos to earn based on hobby and vocational subjects. It was believed that the creation of Webelos Scouts would "have tremendous appeal for the 10-year-old boy. The Webelos den will provide him with more challenging activities in a pattern that will help him adjust to the activities he will find at 11 when he becomes a Boy Scout."⁴

The Webelos Award, however, did not change. Its requirements and purpose remained the same: to prepare a boy for graduation into a Troop. Activity badges were not required to earn the Webelos badge. The new Webelos program also included an outdoor component to prepare Webelos Scouts for the extensive camping and other outdoor activities of Boy Scouting. The Webelos uniform consisted of the blue Cub Scout uniform with a green, gold, and red plaid neckerchief. It also included the Webelos badge colors - a metal bar with three tabs of green, gold, and red cloth onto which the silver activity badges could be pinned. Finally, with the elimination of the Lion Rank, the meaning of the word Webelos changed to mean "We'll Be Loyal Scouts".

Five years later in 1972, new embroidered badges were created for the Wolf and Bear ranks, as well as the first Bobcat badge, replacing the Bobcat pin. Also at this time, the Webelos award began to be identified in Scouting literature as the Arrow of Light Award. In 1977, a new rank - the Webelos rank - was introduced which required earning three activity badges. The new rank was created as a form of recognition and to encourage Webelos to earn activity badges. The new Webelos badge was to be worn on the lower part of the left uniform shirt pocket, thus completing the diamond of Cub Scout ranks. There were now five established Cub Scout ranks: Bobcat, Wolf, Bear, Webelos, and Arrow of Light.

EXPANDED CUB SCOUT PROGRAM - Tigers

By the end of the 1980s, Cub Scouting had expanded from a three year program to a five year program. The first expansion came with the start of Tiger Cubs. Tiger Cubs BSA was launched in 1982 as a new program for seven-year-old boys. Tiger Cubs was designed as a family oriented program to bring adult and child closer together and introduce them to Scouting. Tiger groups met once a month and an adult partner was required to register with each Tiger Cub. Tiger Cub groups were only loosely attached to a pack and did not regularly attend Pack meetings. Unlike Cub dens, adults shared leadership and there were initially no Tiger den leaders or other officers. The only uniform was an iron-on emblem of the Tiger logo, which a boy could wear on a T-shirt or jacket.

The Tiger Cub program became very popular and well established in Cub Scout Packs throughout the country and continues to evolve, with many changes to the program occurring within the last few years. These changes have resulted in making Tigers a more integral part of the Pack structure. In 1995, Tiger Cub groups became Tiger Cub Dens and a year later the Tiger Cubs BSA strip was created for boys to wear who have graduated into Cub Scouting. Belt totems for Tigers were also introduced in 1996, providing instant recognition for the boys. In 2001, Tiger Cub became an official Cub Scout Rank. The advancement program was overhauled, replacing Tiger Tracks with Tiger achievements and electives. Also issued were the Tiger Cub handbook and rank badge, which could optionally be worn on the Cub Scout uniform instead of the Webelos rank badge. (The optional oval Webelos badge was introduced to be worn on the tan Webelos uniform at this time.) The most recent changes to Tiger Cubs came in 2004 when the official Tiger Cub uniform changed from the orange T-shirt to the standard blue Cub Scout uniform with orange neckerchief.

The second expansion of the Cub Scout program resulted in the Webelos program being extended to two years. In 1984, a study group determined that a majority of people wanted to see Cub Scouting extended to serve younger boys. The creation of an entirely new program was considered, but since Tigers was already a brand new program, it was decided that the best solution would be an age roll-back to allow boys to enter Cub Scouts at a younger age and expand Webelos into a two-year program. School grade level, rather than age, would be used as the primary determinate for membership.

The expanded Cub Scout program was launched in 1986 and phased in over a four-year period. It lowered the age of entry into Tigers, Cubs, and Webelos by one year, so all first grade boys could become Tiger Cubs, second graders would be Wolves, third graders would be Bears, and fourth and fifth graders would be Webelos Scouts. Cub Scouting was now be a five-year program, serving all five elementary school grades.

As part of the expanded Webelos program, a new Webelos Scout Book was introduced and five additional Webelos activity badges were added: Communicator, Family Member, Fitness, Handyman, and Readyman. Second Year Webelos, which first appeared in 1989, were encouraged to frequently participate with Boy Scout Troops in outdoor activities. Also around this time, Webelos dens were given the option of wearing a Boy Scout style uniform rather than the blue Cub uniform.

The early years of a boy's life are crucial for molding character and developing values. For seventy-five years, the BSA has been doing just that through the Cub Scouting program. Cubbing has grown from an idea to offer a separate Scouting program for younger boys to a nation-wide program with 1.8 million members. Let us join those Cub Scouts throughout the country as they celebrate their 75th birthday.

1 *Scouting*. April 1931, p. 9.

2 *Scouting*, January 1952.

3 *The Wolf Cubbook*, c.1938 (1941 printing), p. 18.

4 *Scouting*, Sept. 19⁶⁷, p. 17.

Items We Are In Need Of

Camp Geronimo—3 Inch Patches

I Did It All = Years 1, 4 & 5

First Edition Scoutmaster Handbook

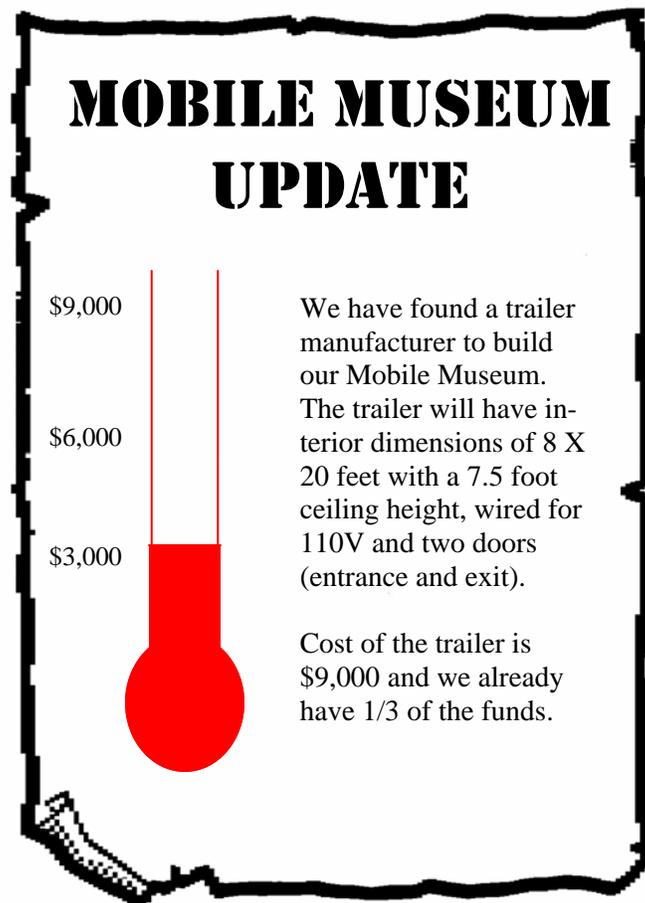
First Edition Boy Scout Handbook (1910)

First Edition Boy Scout Handbook (1911)

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Our mission is to promote Scouting through the preservation and display of Scouting Memorabilia and teaching of the history of Scouting in the United States.

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