

A History of the Schenectady County Council



Schenectady County Council, Inc.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

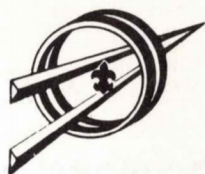
**A History of the
Schenectady County Council**

by

ROBERT P. CACNER

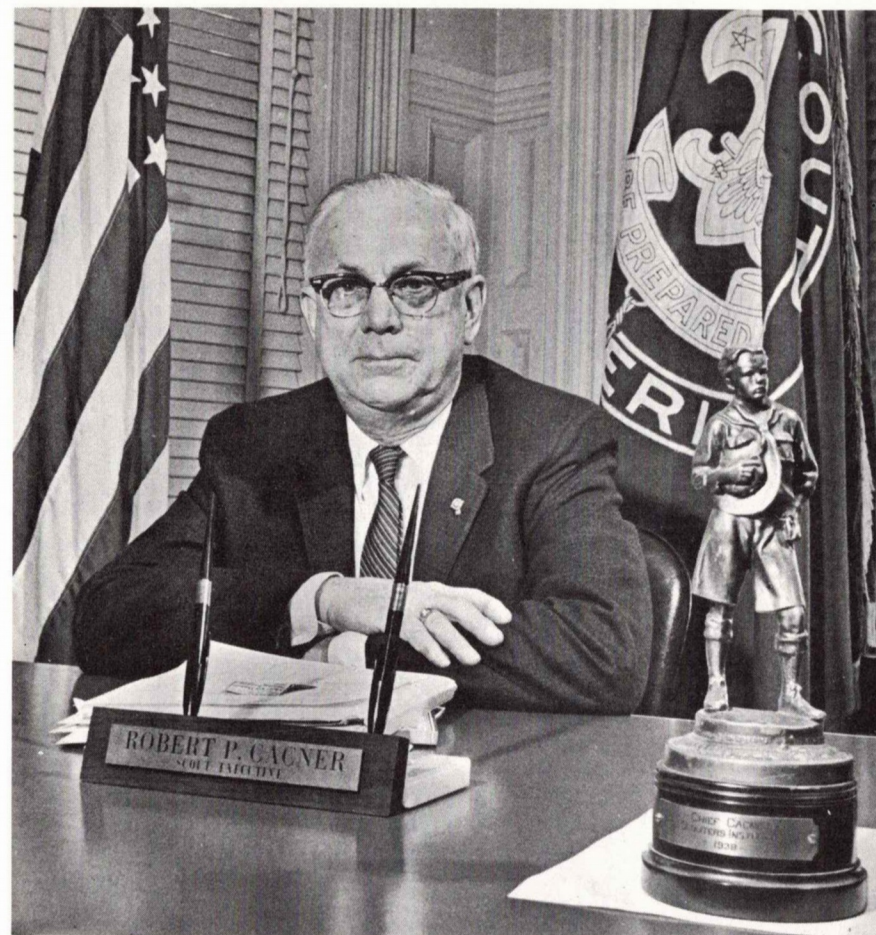
Scout Executive

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Bob Cacner
Council Scout Executive

SCHENECTADY COUNTY COUNCIL, INC., B. S. A.

YEAR	UNITS	BOYS	EXECUTIVES	PRESIDENT
1917	22	390	Clyde R. Moulton	Willis T. Hanson
1918	24	560	Clyde R. Moulton	Laurence A. Hawkins
1919	22	514	Clark M. Gray	Laurence A. Hawkins
1920	34	696	Clark M. Gray	Frank W. Peters
1921	31	631	Clark M. Gray	Frank W. Peters
1922	29	618	Clark M. Gray	Frank W. Peters
1923	26	555	Clark M. Gray	Frank G. Vaughen
1924	27	583	Clark M. Gray	Frank G. Vaughen
1925	36	781	Robroy Price	Frank G. Vaughen
1926	43	1004	Robroy Price	Harold H. Mapelsden
1927	49	1101	Robroy Price	John Alexander
1928	57	1238	Robroy Price	John Alexander
1929	58	1300	Robroy Price	Burton L. Delack
1930	59	1390	Robroy Price	Burton L. Delack
1931	57	1358	Robroy Price	Burton L. Delack
1932	79	1461	Robroy Price	Peter I. Wold
1933	70	1481	Forest W. White	Peter I. Wold
1934	62	1570	Arthur F. Baker	Peter I. Wold
1935	63	1483	Arthur F. Baker	Peter I. Wold
1936	57	1437	Arthur F. Baker	John E. Brobst
1937	55	1504	Arthur F. Baker	John E. Brobst
1938	55	1650	Arthur F. Baker	Herbert R. Kinkaid
1939	55	1749	Arthur F. Baker	Joseph M. Coffey
1940	58	1714	Arthur F. Baker	Joseph M. Coffey
1941	57	1562	Frederick D. Quinn	Edward R. O'Neill
1942	56	1576	Frederick D. Quinn	Edward R. O'Neill
1943	64	1800	Frederick D. Quinn	Edward R. O'Neill
1944	76	2012	Robert P. Cacner	William M. Denny
1945	80	1901	Robert P. Cacner	William M. Denny
1946	90	2016	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1947	93	2133	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1948	102	2315	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1949	110	2832	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1950	104	2787	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1951	97	2949	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1952	103	3221	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1953	102	3324	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1954	113	3883	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1955	123	4128	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1956	130	6060	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1957	128	5715	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1958	121	5597	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1959	125	5541	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1960	121	5493	Robert P. Cacner	Ralph E. Carter
1961	121	5330	Robert P. Cacner	Herbert E. Neil, Sr.
1962	128	5652	Robert P. Cacner	Herbert E. Neil, Sr.
1963	125	5647	R. Cacner-W. Horsley	Herbert E. Neil, Sr.
1964	124	5835	Walter Horsley	Harry L. White



Bob Cacner welcomes you
To The Scout Service Center
At 2 Union Street

A HISTORY OF SCHENECTADY COUNTY COUNCIL

By Robert P. Cacner

First, to start the history of the Schenectady County Council, Boy Scouts of America, rather than recite the statistics, which go back as far as 1917, a sheet has been prepared which lists the number of units, the number of boys, and also the Scout Executives and Council Presidents up to the present time, preceeding the information on the history.

My feeling is that Schenectady has been a very outstanding Council, primarily because of the type of men who have given us leadership. That, of course, changes from time to time but we have been most fortunate in having a very fine group of capable individuals, who have been so unselfish of their time that we have been able to accomplish some real results.

It would not be possible to put in many details and to include many of the things that have happened to individual boys.

Early Council Offices

First, going back to 1916, when the Council was established, the office was located briefly on Church Street and then in the old Union National Bank Building, 342 State Street. It was then moved to 126 Wall Street, later to the Patton and Hall Building, and then to 445 State Street, where it was located on the third floor. That was where the office was located when I came to Schenectady. We had a problem in that every time you wanted to carry equipment and information in and out you had to carry it two flights of stairs. This meant you couldn't park but had to carry your materials down to the street level, leave them, and then go get your car, come back and put them in the car, and the same when you returned. It was also difficult for people who had business to park and get to the office. May it be said that Schenectady Council probably has more people come to its' office than most other Councils in this Region because people are so close that Scout Headquarters becomes a real service station.

Present Scout Office

In 1947 Mr. Ralph E. Carter and several of us were coming from a meeting at the "YW" when we saw a "For Sale" sign on 2 Union Street. The house had been occupied by the Van Erben family for many, many years. The house is at least 150 years old and has a grand history. Some of the men coming out of the meeting said, "Wouldn't this make a fine place for an office. We would be close to everything."; so they started negotiations. The first man Mr. Carter brought in was Mr. Louis G. Banker, and he immediately felt that the Boy Scouts should have a place they could call home; a place that would bear the name of Boy Scouting where people could find information on Scouting. He never gave up the thought until the deed was signed in Mr. Chatfield T. Bates' office.

Mr. Banker continued with the development of the building after the papers were completed. For as long as he lived he was very much interested in what took place here. He visited many times and even drove around to see what was being done outside the building.

The job of repairing and putting the property in shape first became the job of the Executive Staff. William J. Geier, being about ready to go into Scouting, came to work with Russ Gallagher and myself. The old wallpaper was torn off, the house was cleared out of many things that had been left, and then put in shape for a thorough painting job inside. Over a period of years further developments took place.

Remodeling of the Scout Office

Mr. Carter had a very definite feeling that we should have a building which would be a fine demonstration of what a Scout Office ought to be like. It should be a business office, but should be a place where Scouting would be in the minds of people when they talked about The Schenectady County Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

He decided that there was a job for a committee and he secured Mr. Delbert Newman. He had been employed in application engineering by General Electric and was on disability retirement. Mr. Newman gathered around himself several men, Edwin Baehm for one and Andrew Starr for another, and went to work on what was needed.

One of the first jobs was to decide that the basement could be made into a very attractive meeting room and kitchen area. Over a period of years he recruited various people to come in and help. One of the first projects was to plan the kitchen. The area selected was previously a kitchen storage area and underneath was an 8 ft. by 8 ft. wine cellar. It was well stocked with wine and liquor when we looked at the house, but at the time we took possession it was just an empty hole in the floor. The first thing Mr. Newman did was to get a group of test engineers to come up to fill in that hole. They worked until the job was done and then, with the help of Andrew Starr, a concrete floor was poured. The back part, of what is now the conference room or pine room, never had a floor, just the original dirt, and that was also fixed at the same time. Later Mr. Newman got the Palma Lumber Company, Inc. to agree to donate all the pine. The construction firm of Christensen and Nielsen agreed to do the construction work. This, of course, was all donated. Carl J. Christensen, a good Kiwanian in Niskayuna, and one of his workers at the Company, came over at a slack time and put in this beautiful wall paneling.

The only other thing needed was to install a laboratory downstairs so it wouldn't be necessary to go up two floors when there were meetings in progress.

Then came the question of how this room would be fitted out and Mrs. Charlotte W. Marsh, Mr. Banker's sister, decided that she would like to do something in memory of her brother. She decided to buy the equipment which is now there, bearing in mind that this should be a room which would be open for a many meetings. The tables and chairs would need to stand a great deal of use and yet be comfortable. It should be the kind of a place that the Executive Board could meet, or a small training course, or any committee meetings could be held. We are able to do a great deal of work because of this particular room. Probably more Scouting is done in this one spot in the County than in any other place as far as planning, people talking up their particular jobs, and going out to complete them. This room has added a great deal to the Schenectady County Council and has served its purpose and served it well. This indicates the fine judgement of Messrs. Ralph Carter, Del Newman, Andy Starr, and Ed Baehm.

The kitchen was another problem. Del Newman talked to us about it and we thought if we could have just a hot plate and a sink we could have coffee for meals. Mr. Newman, being

acquainted with the General Electric Company, decided that something more was needed. He went to the G-E department that plans kitchens and came back with a very fine kitchen lay-out, suggesting colors and complete setup. As he traveled around from one installation in G. E. to another he would come back and say, "Well, Bob, you can expect a coffee maker" or "You can expect some shelving." So between Louisville, Erie, and Fort Wayne, and a number of other places, the kitchen was equipped. He and Ed Baehm did practically all the installation of this equipment. For the past several years the Board meetings have been held with a dinner starting at 5:30 p.m. and the meetings ending not later than 8:00 o'clock. That way men can come directly from work, do the important business of Scouting, and still have a good deal of the evening left for things that they might like to do with their families. This has proven to be a most worthwhile development and has been spoken of many times by people who have come to meet with us.

We decided it would be better to put linoleum on the second floor rather than try to keep varnished floors. We also put in new ceilings which added very much to the useability of the four rooms on the second floor. And, of necessity, we had to put in a new ceiling in the room used by the District Executives.

Development of the Banker Trust Fund

The building was dedicated as the Banker Scout Home on October 29, 1955, at which time public recognition was given to Mr. Banker. Mr. Banker produced the first down payment for the property and then later on gave a note which, in a period of ninety days, he cancelled. This amounted to almost \$10,000. He later arranged that a mortgage for the balance be taken out with the Ingersoll Home Endowment Fund which was later paid off from the income of the Banker Fund. Mr. Banker had so generously started this fund back in 1940. He gave something every year over a period of five or six years, hoping that more people would become interested. It was his hope that the day would come when an endowment would be built up for the Schenectady County Council. At Mr. Banker's death he left a quarter of his estate to the Council and the amount, at the time, was in the neighborhood of \$450,000. Today it has grown because of the fine stocks and bonds which were bought at that

time. The Board of Trustees decided that there were no individuals or group of men that could keep up with the proper supervision of that amount in stocks and bonds. After careful deliberation and consideration, and interviewing seven different companies that furnish service of this type, Standard and Poor's Corporation of New York was selected to handle the Fund. The Citizens Trust Company of Schenectady was chosen to be the custodian. Up to the present time no one has had anything but praise for the manner in which these two organizations have taken care of the Banker Trust Fund.

It is my hope that there will be a real effort on the part of the Finance Committee and the Executive Board to do something further in promoting such gifts. There are a number of things that can be done and it would seem wise that this should be continued. It is estimated that under the present economy the Council ought to be looking forward to an endowment fund of \$2,000,000, which would adequately take care of the operation.

However, Mr. Banker's fund was really started to make sure that there would always be a camp for the boys of the Schenectady County Council. While he did not state this in his will, it was his intention that the income should be used for the development of the camp and to see that it was always kept in shape. However, there has been some deviation in that the Community Chest has felt that an agency involved in the Chest should turn in the earning from any endowment they had toward operating expenses. After several meetings with the Chest, it was agreed that until the full development of Camp Boyhaven, which had been under way since 1940, the endowment fund should be continued, and only 25 percent would be taken out of earnings of the Banker Fund and turned over to the Council's operating account. This is as it is today and as late as March, 1963, a Committee visited the Chest and informed them of the progress that had been made, as well as the plans for developing Camp Boyhaven. The original development of Boyhaven is interesting and I shall take that up to try to trace the history of this camp of the Schenectady County Council.

My Tenth Year

One very interesting development, at least to me, was after I had been in Schenectady for ten years Mr. Carter came in

one afternoon, at a regular meeting of the Executive Board, and said to me, "Would you have time between now and the time we go to dinner with the Board to see Walt Reagles about a painting which he is doing?" It illustrated that all boys were entitled to join Scouting. The title was "The Rising Tide." We went to Mr. Reagles' office and spent some time there and then Mr. Carter said, "Now there's nothing you have to go back to the office for, is there?" and I said, "No, we can go right to the meeting." We visited a little further with Mr. Reagles and then went to our meeting. When we got there I was surprised to see the Regional Executive, Dwight Ramsay. He explained that he was over in Albany and decided to come to our meeting. Well, after the meeting was over, Mr. Carter stayed back a little bit and finally drove over to Headquarters to drop me off where I could pick up my car. He had difficulty in finding a parking space and finally drove over into the "YW" lot. As we entered the room, which was my own office, the background was dark and when turning on the lights the whole Executive Board was assembled. They came from the Board Meeting and all were in place by the time Mr. Carter and I entered. The interesting thing was it was the tenth anniversary of my coming to Schenectady. In appreciation, in the hours between 4:30 and 9:00 p.m., the Board had men come in and put in all new furniture, new wall to wall carpeting, telephones, and carry out all the old furniture and desks. The Scout Executive's office had been all refurnished with new furniture. This was certainly appreciated and gave me more zip and zeal to carry on to the time of my retirement.

This is the type of thing that was always happening under the leadership of Mr. Carter and the Executive Board which made life so very pleasant. A very understanding group of people, people of foresightedness in the interest of boys. They have a very great desire that Scouting should do its utmost to improve and to help develop the boy life of the Country.

This was just one of many things that made it a pleasure for the Executive and added greatly to the real development of the building. Later on other new furniture was bought and in 1961 the entire outside of the house was repainted. All this work has been done, keeping in mind the beauty of the old building and the period of time which it represents as part of Schenectady's great Stockade Area. Nothing has been spoiled and yet it is probably one of the most useable buildings of any Scout

Office. And, by the way, it might be of interest to know that we were the fourth Council in the country to have our own office building. It was a development which certainly added a great deal to the whole operation as far as we are concerned in Schenectady.

Relationship with Our Community Agencies

With the fine equipment and with the personnel which we have in Schenectady, it would seem to me that a creditable job has been done. The county has certainly received its value for the money invested. It has been the desire of the Scout Executive that there should be no waste but never a loss of opportunity to do a good job. Our relations have been fine with all of the other agencies, a most cooperative group of people over the years. Many have had a number of changes in the time that I was here and it has been my pleasure to work with each of them. A close relationship was enjoyed with the YMCA, the Boys' Club and the Jewish Community Center. The Jewish Community Center has sponsored one of the oldest troops in Schenectady, No. 19. I have also enjoyed my association with the troop at the Boys' Club sponsored by the Schenectady Kiwanis Club. These, of course, are a few of the things that have happened over the period of years. It is important that we continue to have that kind of relationship with the other organizations and our cooperation with them, I think, has shown them our appreciation of the things which we have been able to do together.

In the earlier days, before the operation of Community Welfare Council and a paid Executive in the Community Chest the people of the school system and people from the agencies got together and had what was known as a Related Activities Committee. Through this group there were studies made as to needs in the community. Each organization took it upon itself to see that these needs were filled. I remember one incident which is indicative of the approach to things that speaks well for the type of people we have in Schenectady agencies. There was an effort on the part of some people in the VanVranken area to take over an old hall on Raymond Street and to develop a branch YMCA. Jim Bunting, who was the Executive Secretary of the "Y" at that time, said, "Bob, what do you have in operation around the VanVranken area?", I said, "Well, we have a number of units that are operating up there, why

don't you come up and take a look at our map and let's talk about the area to see exactly how we're covering it." There had been a great deal of newspaper publicity prior to this time with pictures. After talking this matter over with Mr. Bunting he came to the conclusion that there was no need for a Branch "Y" because the boys in that area were taken care of largely by Boy Scout Troops. He had a definite feeling that, as far as the "Y" was concerned, it would be feasible to develop a branch in that area. This, and other meetings with group of people, made it possible to see the whole picture as far as Schenectady was concerned and to use the collective judgement of these very fine people, who were capable and well trained to do this particular kind of job. However, with the coming of the Community Welfare Council and its employed staff and the Community Chest with an employed professional they have taken over that kind of planning. The agencies no longer get into the grass-roots type of information, The information is all put together and then presented to the Agencies.

Comment by Chief Probation Officer

The Scouting development, as you can see in the figures given at the start of this history, has followed pretty largely the development of the Schenectady area. While the population in the city itself has decreased some, the areas on every side have developed suburban types of organizations. As the families were settling in various developments, the Boy Scout program was expanding through the new institutions. An interesting thing that happened about four years ago (1959) was one day the telephone rang and Abraham Livingston, who is the Chief Probation Officer in the county, said, "Bob, how has your organization been keeping up with the trends of moving from the center of Schenectady out through the County?" I told him we had followed promptly in every direction and had units practically on the outskirts of all these developments. He then made what I think is a very significant statement. He said the Judge and he were just talking about the low rate of juvenile delinquency in the County of Schenectady and they had come to the conclusion that the Scout program probably has been responsible for keeping this figure where it is. That is a tremendous tribute to sponsoring institutions and to the men and women who have been giving so unselfishly of their time to make sure that the boys have the Cub program, the Scout program and the Explorer program even in the newest of our areas. Some-

times they found it difficult to get meeting places because they didn't have the old established institutions as they moved out toward Carman, parts of Rotterdam, into Glenville hills, beyond the then established Niskayuna, and down the Troy Road. This is a tremendous compliment to the men and women of the Council, and especially to the Executive Board and leadership of the Council who had the foresight to provide the necessary staff and equipment.

Visual Aid Development

Another development which has meant a great deal to Scouting has been the fact that from the very beginning we developed a visual aid department. According to Mr. Abe Gill of the Visual Education Department, National Headquarters in New Brunswick, we have always been one of the leading Councils in seeing that we kept abreast of developments. About three years ago we received two bequests totaling about \$5,000 and it was decided that this money should be put into a visual education fund which would be used to replace vitally needed equipment. We have now a well equipped visual education department with record players, film strip machines, and movie projectors. With the development of a new plan at National we have obtained, for a cost of \$210, all new film strips and movies that come out each year. We have been subscribing to that over the past several years, even before we set aside this fund, so that we now have in our library everything that is current. This has meant a great deal to the Leadership Training Committee and the Commissioner's Staff because almost every problem that comes up in the operation of a unit can be answered by a film strip or a movie. Also, the Organization and Extension Committee has films showing some of the reasons for the program. As was said in an early Board meeting this year we ought to aim for a thousand new boys. I am certainly in agreement and know that it can be done with the devotion and active participation of every member of the Board. We have sufficient manpower to get started and all we have to do is to add the necessary additional manpower to complete the job. There are people in the Council area who can be approached to do this particular kind of organization work. The group we have is certainly doing yeoman's service.

Council Organization

The first Council organization when I came to Schenectady was what was known then as the "service area," divided into six districts and presided over by a Commissioner and his staff. About five years ago the Board felt that it would be a good idea to go into the regular operation which is known as District Operation which has been going on throughout the country. The original reason that Schenectady did not go into this was that on the basis of a study made by the National Council, B S. A., they had decided that, because of the geography of Schenectady and the industrial location people were largely brought together at a central point, so it would not be feasible at that time. But after a later study it was decided that we should have four districts. The Eastern Mohawk, Mohican, Sacandaga, and Southwest Districts were developed. It so happened that these districts practically came out even in units and also for future potential. This operation made it necessary to change the constitution and by-laws. This was done and the President of the Council has the total responsibility of appointing the District Chairman and then the District Chairman has the responsibility of obtaining the District Operating Committees and appointing the District Commissioner. This has been operating for five years and there has yet to be a fully complete setup. This requires, in my estimation, further study and probably it will be worked out in our long-range planning program. We should be able to operate as well as we did before the District system when strong Operating Committees had been doing such a fine job. We should retain the present District setup for Commissioner service, which is the group that gets close to the operation of the units and where you can develop some spirit on a District basis. This development probably will require more study.

Early Troops

In 1960 the Boy Scouts of America celebrated the 50th Anniversary and here in Schenectady Troop 1, sponsored by the Second Reformed Church, had a history of fifty years and celebrated its 50th Anniversary. It happened that our President, Ralph Carter, had been a member of the Troop Committee and his son, Ellis Carter, (who is now doing finance work in Washington, D. C., for the Boy Scouts of America) was a member of that troop. This was a fine affair and brought

out that there were many very important people who were responsible for the development of Scouting from the very first. While it is not possible to name all of these people, there are one or two I should note. Clarence E. Gregg, who spent a great deal of time at the camp at Pilot Knob and also in Boyhaven and who gave a great deal of his time and effort to Scouting, was one of the men to be associated with that unit in the early days. Lewis Sebring, Jr., also a long time Scout and Scouter, was a member of that unit and still takes great pride in recalling his Scouting days. One of Schenectady's outstanding citizens, Dr. Irving Langmuir, was one of the first Scoutmasters in Schenectady. Dr. Langmuir became a member of the National Court of Honor and also was recognized by National Council with the Silver Buffalo Award and by the local Council with the Silver Beaver. Dr. George J. Fisher, who was second in command of the Boy Scouts of America, came to Schenectady and made the presentation of the Silver Buffalo to Dr. Langmuir. At Dr. Langmuir's death, these two Scouting recognitions were put in the General Electric Research Laboratory museum and are there with the other presentations and awards of distinction which had been made to him for his very successful life as a scientist with the General Electric Company. There were many other men that could be mentioned. Troop 21 of Scotia — probably we will be able to establish the fact that it was a fifty-year group in 1960 and, if not, certainly by 1961. Mr. James C. Perham was one of the outstanding persons there and was also a member of the first Council in Schenectady and served as Commissioner. There are many other names that probably should be mentioned but it is impossible to try to mention everybody.

Pilot Knob

I think probably that now I should like to talk about camping and how Schenectady has had a very glorious past in the camping field. One of my earliest recollections of hearing about Schenectady was that for a few years they conducted at one time five different camps — one at Boyhaven, one at Pilot Knob, and three others which were out on Adirondack Trails (where boys worked for the Conservation Department part time and spent the rest of the time in camping at its recreational facilities). The camp at Pilot Knob, which is known as Camp Rotary as far as the Boy Scouts are concerned and Camp Chingachgook as far as the YMCA is concerned, goes back to

1914 when the YMCA started using it. Mr. Mason Hall, who very much interested in the YMCA, took an option on a piece of property on Lake George which was close to Pilot Knob, one of the peaks near Lake George. He had hoped that he would be able to secure this for the YMCA but ran into some difficulties on financing. I will relate that story a little later. But to go back to 1918, Mr. Hall rented the area for the Boy Scouts to use as a summer camp. They were to pay \$200 for the use of this property in August. In 1919 they used the property for a \$200 rental for July and August and in 1920 they used it again. By 1921 there was a desire on the part of some of the people to participate in this camp and Mr. Hall had found it was almost impossible to carry through the deal on his own and give the camp to the "Y" as had been his desire. There were some people on the Council who were interested and decided that they would combine this fund raising with the regular fund raising for general operational purposes of the Council, adding \$4,500 to this campaign. The old Board of Trade, the forerunner to the Chamber of Commerce, had agreed to help in this campaign. The campaign turned out to be less than successful and they were not able to follow through, at least with that part of it. But that didn't deter the Council to follow through on its plans. They talked among themselves and when the Schenectady Rotary Club raised the necessary \$4,500, the YMCA and the Boy Scouts became point owners of Pilot Knob camp grounds in 1921, as they are today. The Council had a feeling that they did not want the National Council, B. S. A., to be able to take over this property but that it should always be kept here for the boys of this area. As a result they formed a separate corporation known as the Camping Association of Schenectady County Council just to hold this property. About 1935 they started to dissolve the Camping Association, feeling that this should be held by the Council. They found out, of course, that the National Council, B. S. A., does not take over property, and that if the Council ceases to exist the first thing that they do is to see that all bills are paid and that a group of local citizens would decide what should be done with this property and monies that belong to the Council. In other words, it would try to keep the property and money for the boys of the county in which the money was given. After finding this out the group decided that they should dissolve the Camping Association and that they should then turn this over to the Schenectady County Council. This started in 1935 but for some reason wasn't done because of death or change of leader-

ship until 1945 when William M. Denny, who was President at that time, earned himself the title of "judge" because of the work to get this matter straightened out. The Schenectady Trust Company, which was holding the papers, had a very difficult time in finding all the papers and information. Finally it was completed. After serving notices on the people who were original members of the Association they got together and voted to dissolve. The property was turned over to the Schenectady County Council, Incorporated, B. S. A., and the YMCA. In about 1942 or 1943, it became difficult to obtain gasoline for transportation because of the War. The Schenectady County Council decided they would put all their camping efforts into Boyhaven. They entered into an agreement with the YMCA in which the "Y" would use the property for the entire summer. Up to this time it had been a matter of the "Y" using it for one month, July or August, and the Boy Scouts using it the other month. Since 1944 this agreement has been in effect and the Boy Scouts still hold an undivided half-interest in the property at Pilot Knob but the YMCA has full use of it and has to cover the camp with necessary liability insurance. The agreement stipulates that, if the Boy Scouts want to come back, they would have to pay half the amount of money put into camp development as determined by a committee which would make such a study. It was further stated in the original agreement that if either party wanted to sell out to the other the price would be \$2,500. There have been several developments: Since the Boy Scouts have not used the property for summer camping, let me insert here that there has been useage Spring and Fall by individual units, the "Y" being appraised of the group going up and permission obtained so that we would not interfere in any way with the program of the "Y". We found a group of people that own property beyond the camp wanted to have the access road to use the Andrews property for development of a summer home. The old original road, which had gone through in 1940, would have cut through the shallow end of the bay at Pilot Knob and the group wanted to change the road. It was finally decided that the town of Fort Ann would put in the road, put up a certain amount of money, and the Boy Scout Council and the Schenectady "Y" would put up an equal amount. The road would be changed so that access could be given to the people who wanted to build cottages. When this was done it was found that necessary transfers in deeds had not been made and, to get it straightened out legally, more money was advanced by both organizations. The proper

deeds have been drawn and recorded so that at the present time it is all complete. Presently there is a request from the President of the YMCA that the "Y" would like to buy the Scout interest in Chingachgook. The Board decided that this matter could not be concluded or intelligently approached until after the committee on long-range planning had made its report and the "Y" was so notified.

Development at Camp Boyhaven

And now to go to another area of camping which is the development of Boyhaven. Back in 1922 and 1923 the Schenectady County Council decided that it needed a place close to home where groups could hike or do unit camping. A committee scoured the area and finally came to the banks of the Kayderosseras Creek at Middle Grove. The committee, headed by Ben Fisher, decided on a piece of property which is now known as the "lower area" at Boyhaven. In 1924 this property was purchased and our Scouts first used Boyhaven. At that time there was a trolley line running from Ballston Lake and, of course, a line from Schenectady to Saratoga. This line ran from Ballston Lake to Middle Grove and the boys would take this method of getting up to Camp Boyhaven. One of the traditions that has come out of that particular trolley line is that later on as camp was developed many, many boys rode the trolley, which was known as the Toonerville Trolley. (You will see on some of the neckerchiefs that Boyhaven has used the old Toonerville Trolley which was a car with a truck in the center.) The boys used to get on the rear end of this and by bouncing up and down would throw the front wheel of the trolley off the track and then they would have to get out and help the Skipper put it back on. The operator of the car was known as the "Skipper," apparently a real sport because he entered into the fun these fellows on the trips to and from Boyhaven. On the Fourth of July the first car arrived around half past four or five in the morning. This run not only carried passengers but milk and other freight to Middle Grove. It is hard to imagine that this was the method of getting people, produce and products up to Middle Grove but, nevertheless, it was. The line ran, along what is now known as the Creek Road, on the opposite side of the Kayderosseras Creek. On the Fourth of July the Skipper on his first trip, would come over and either blow a bugle or set off big firecrackers which would wake up the camp. This is one of the traditions in which you find the Skipper mentioned

in the Boyhaven song. This song was written by Kenneth B. Spear (now Assistant Director of Field Operations of the National Council) a Scoutmaster in the Bellevue area of Schenectady. He was released from his work at General Electric to help operate the camp one summer and then given a year's leave of absence to help as a Field Executive. He later went into Scouting professionally, serving in Ithaca and then in Washington, D. C.

Another person who has had an interest in Boyhaven is Adam Shidell, a member of the Region II Staff at the present time, and has served as a District Executive in Buffalo and Scout Executive at the Sir William Johnson Council. One of my early recollections of the loss of the original dam on the Kayderosseras Creek, the spot which the boys used to use for swimming when the camp was in the "lower area," was told to me by Ben Fisher, who was a member of the Camp Committee in 1944. Adam Shidell didn't get down fast enough to pull off the two top boards and to let the water go down when he realized that a real summer downpour was coming. The boards pulled the dam apart and it was out until it was fixed by the Army Engineers some several years back. These are just a few of the things that happened in relationship to Boyhaven.

Then in 1934 the "upper area," the farm and the White House became a part of Boyhaven. The Board then decided they would build a swimming lake and made one from Frink's Brook. In 1952, realizing that people were looking for places to camp and feeling that Camp Boyhaven needed to be protected, three pieces of property were bought under the leadership of Council President Carter — 1) - the Purvey property now known as the "south gate" which extends along the Boyhaven road and across Route 29, 2) - the Smith property, opposite the lower camp entrance, which extends across Route 29 and up as far as you can see where Route 29 surves to the left, and 3) - the Dakes (of Middle Grove) property along the Kayderosseras that could be made into sites for one or two individual camps. This was done in 1952 and brought the total property acreage to 310 acres which is the present size of the Camp. Over the period of years a very interesting development has taken place. In the first place, in the early days of the Mothers' auxiliaries of units built what was known as cook shacks and the units would go up by patrols and use these for their camping. In 1940 these were drawn together and a

kitchen was erected just opposite the lower well at the Banker 2 site. This remained until 1945. During this period camping increased and there were more buildings because Boyhaven was made an all-year-around camp with winterized buildings. The red building back of the White House, which is known as Winter Barracks, originally an old pig sty, was turned into the first winterized overnight facility. It was very well done as you can see today. There is a fireplace, which has been there for many years, and the back end of the building has been raised for head room for the cooking equipment. It can now house thirty people.

About the same time the Order of the Arrow became interested in the two front rooms of the White House. They raised the money, obtained the materials and built the "Order" room. They have been able to keep it up over the period of years and this has added much to the camp. While the room was built by the Order of the Arrow, it is also used for Committee meetings and during the summer camp for many other uses.

Then there came need for further development of Boyhaven and in 1945 the old buildings that had been put together to make the cook shack and dining hall were pulled to the top of the hill and attached to Norris Hall. Norris Hall had originally been built for a recreational hall in honor of Burton H. Norris, who had been one of the outstanding Scouters in the community. He had been connected with Troop 29, sponsored by the Brandywine School. This was on top of the hill and had a most beautiful view of the evening sunset. In 1945 these buildings became the kitchen storage area. Then the need for refrigeration developed. Two men took the real leadership for this, Fred Oyer, who was then Council Commissioner, and Bill Whyte, who was District Commissioner. These versatile individuals planned and carried out the building of the walk-in refrigerator. The only thing that was bought was the refrigerator door and compressor system. Everything else was built from scratch on weekends, vacations and going up night after night. They would leave Schenectady after work and come back about 1:00 o'clock in the morning. This is part of the devotion in the development of Boyhaven. As I have often said, Boyhaven has been built in the Chinese fashion — with little money but lots and lots of sweat and blood on the part of many, many loyal Scouters. So Fred Oyer and Bill Whyte gathered around

them different individuals and finished the job. It is in operation today and can be in operation for many years, showing that they did an excellent job. One of the interesting things about it was that at that particular time, because of the war demand in 1945, there was no asbestos available for lining, but the freezer has operated and has kept to as low a temperature without the use of this extra insulation. This is proof of how well these fellows planned and worked.

The Banker Buildings

Then there came a greater demand, of course, for winter camping and Mr. Banker, who has been mentioned before, did so much to help with this need. When he read in the minutes or when he attended Board meetings and found there was a need he would call the Camp Chairman and say, "Why don't you bring me your plans as to what you need?" Mr. Banker was never asked to make a contribution but he was a man with so much interest in boys and the mental capacity to plan these things that he would call and ask what could be done. In this particular manner the Banker 1, Banker 2 Lodges were developed. Later when we needed more storage space the metal storage building behind the White House was built. Mr. Banker said, "Well, if we need it why don't we build it?" and then made funds available for it to be built. And by the way, that is the only building up to the present that was completely built by a contractor. In the Banker buildings money for materials was furnished and some framing work done but most of the work done by the Gophers. At this point let me talk about the Gophers.

Gophers — "I'll go for that"

In 1944 there was a problem in that the swimming area, which was built on Frink's Brook, had been growing weeds and bushes were growing in from the sides. At an Executive Board meeting there was discussion on this point. It was decided that if we could secure a fire hose and some men who would go to Boyhaven and spend the weekend, or perhaps a day, they could flush the silt out of the pool. It was learned a number of men were willing to go and a pump could be borrowed from the City through the efforts of Morris Cohn, who was then in charge of the City Health Department, and later became the Manager. This equipment was borrowed and the men went to

Boyhaven. Mr. Earl O. Shreve, who was a Vice President of General Electric and present that night, said, "Well, if you'll do this then I'll buy steaks and cook them for you." One man said, "I'll go for that" and that's the way the name of "Gophers" came about. This created a tremendous amount of interest on the part of the two newspapers. There were two young ladies, one reporting for the *Union Star* and one for the *Gazette*, who were very much interested in the term Gophers and many good articles were written on the subject. In May, 1944, this was the first activity of the Gophers, and they have been in existence ever since that time. To develop the thought of Gophering, Brad Wilson, who was manager for General Electric and a member of the Camp Committee at the time, and Joe Overstreet, who was the Camping Chairman, drew up the picture that you will see on the Gopher certificate. For a number of years Brad hand painted the certificates as the men earned them. This could be earned by fifteen hours work at Boyhaven or by contributing \$25. After the first certificate is given, each year of service is recognized by a star, which would indicate the year. The persons who gave \$25 for camp development work received a gold star. Thus, all of the work that has been done "Chinese fashion" has been done by this organization of Gophers. There's been no problem that's been too large or too complicated for these fellows to tackle. They have not only kept up maintenance but have built many, many buildings. The camp could not have been developed if it hadn't been for this kind of service. The Chief Gopher is elected each year from among the Gophers, as well as the secretary. These people have worked hard to get the necessary group to do the work that had to be done. Normally there would be two weekends in the Spring and two weekends in the Fall, but there never has been a time when a job had to be done that extra weekends could not be arranged to complete the work. Many times there have been 30 to 45 Gophers who have spent an entire weekend working at Boyhaven. Certainly there is no camp that has been kept in better shape through the years and has had less depreciation in equipment and in buildings than Boyhaven. I know this because of being close to inspection and looking at many other camps. For a number of years I served as an inspector in going around and looking at camps with different groups of men from other Councils. This, to me, has been one of the highlights and these men, of course, have had fun doing it.

To attend a Gophers' work session is as good as going to any show. To see the enthusiasm and hear the stories and to catch some of the spirit of these people who are doing things because they like to do it is a real delight. They are doing it for a real purpose. Well, so much for the Gophers.

Further Development at Boyhaven

Now to the recent development at Camp. The first development, of course, was the old lean-tos which lasted from 1925 up to just a few years ago (1959) when the new ones were built. The decision to build new lean-tos instead of using tents was made by the Camp Committee because it was more economical to build new units. Because of the fine operation of our Gophers and our Camp Rangers (Bill Payne being the first one and then succeeded ten years ago by Leo Murray) they have been able to keep our equipment in tip-top shape. This doesn't mean that tenting had gone out of the picture because units may bring their own tentage and camp in Boyhaven. Tents are also furnished for the instructional periods in summer camp when Scouts are given instruction in packing, putting up, taking down, and proper care of tents. This equipment is loaned to them and they have a chance to do camping on a two-man tent basis, as well as overnight camping.

But back to the development of Boyhaven. Around 1946 or 1947 it was decided to enlarge the swimming lake by developing a higher dam. The lake was improved and has stayed that way until the present decision to make a still larger lake, do more dredging and add better controls. A second lake upstream 250 feet from Boyhaven road will be used entirely for boating and teaching the use of boats and canoes. This is probably one of the most important and necessary developments in the entire life of Boyhaven and should prove to be one of the outstanding developments at Camp.

Over the period of years, dating back as far as 1940, there was a plan for a dining hall. It would be a combination of a dining hall and a training center. It was delayed until we were financially able and the need became significant. Presently contracts are being let for a dining hall completed in 1964 in memory of Ralph Carter, who did so much for the development of Boyhaven; in fact for the development of the whole Council. He was a man who had great ability to select men for jobs and to enlist those who would obtain money for the develop-

ment and operation of the Council. With these developments Boyhaven has taken a great stride and should continue to serve the boys well.

Probably the next move in Boyhaven will be the acquisition of more land. As time goes on camping land gets more difficult to obtain. Perhaps the present planning committee will find what the needs will be in years to come for boy camp space. It would seem to me the best plan of development would be to buy land between Route 29 and the Middle Grove - East Galway Road because there is a tremendous amount of property that goes right up to the intersection of these two roads. This could be developed for camping and give a fine wooded area for nature study.

One of the unique things in the development of Boyhaven has been the Cub Scout picnic area. The Committee had a feeling that there should be a place where Cubs and their families could picnic, and Cubbing groups could go for training. Thus, a portion of Boyhaven away from the actual campsite areas was developed with tables, grills, toilets, and a well. This proved very popular and is used evenings and weekends from the beginning of good picnicing season until late into the Fall. This gives the younger boy an opportunity to see what's ahead as he grows into the desire to go further afield in camping and to enjoy what Boyhaven has to offer.

Camporees

While on the subject of camp, our Camporees have been outstanding affairs every year. Various types of Camporees have been tried from time to time. All have been interesting; all have made contributions. Before I came to Schenectady I had been told that the Camporees at Boyhaven were outstanding. In the last nineteen years there have been many held that would be considered outstanding.

National Jamborees

Another phase of camping has been the Jamborees. I can remember the group under the leadership of Scout Executive Art Baker in 1937 at Washington, D. C. There are some 35 mm moving pictures of the group which was ready to go from Schenectady in 1935, but were not able to because it was called off because of a polio epidemic. They are in the build-

ing at 2 Union Street and sometime would be of interest to see. One of the outstanding persons there would be George W. Barrie, recently retired from General Electric, who is one of the former leaders also of Troop 29, Brandywine School.

In 1950 at Valley Forge we had a fine representation of a unit and a half under the leadership of fine men. We traveled by train and furnished the planning for a train which was used by a number of Councils in this area.

In 1953 came the California Irvine Ranch Jamboree at which we had two troops. We have a record there to be proud of as our group really measured up as good campers. One of the outstanding persons I think at that time was Ray Yamrozy who gave leadership, as did Fay Secor and Andy Kozubal. For the California group Mr. Carter and myself had the privilege of arranging for a train comprising the Councils of this area. It had over 500 boys aboard. The other participating Councils joined Schenectady and one of the fine features was the fact that we were able to get a train to go up to the Northwest where the boys got over to British Columbia and then down through the middle of the coastal range to Santa Ana, California. This took some doing because the railroad was not running passenger trains on parts of the line and had to get special permission to put passenger service on what was only just a freight line. This was a memorable experience as many boys, under the leadership of Fay Secor, went to Tijuana, Mexico, and spent a day and came back, of course, with serapes and other Mexican souvenirs.

In 1957 we went back to Valley Forge. This time we traveled by bus and had an excellent group of fellows. Some of the leaders were Elwood J. Reber, John W. Dickson, John P. Butler, Jr. who did a fine job of planning this particular trip.

Then came the 1960 Jamboree in Colorado Springs when we again had a fine group of two units and again arranged for the rail transportation. Every Council around this area was trying to make arrangements and finally the railroad came to me and said, "Bob, we just can't meet the demands. Why can't we get together and why don't you see what you can do in getting these groups together?" We organized another fine train trip with sightseeing enroute and again had over 500 boys with excellent leadership at Colorado Springs.

At the present time there are eighty boys lined up to go to Valley Forge in 1964. The total over-all group has to be cut down because Valley Forge can only accomodate 50,000 while in Colorado Springs we had 56,000 and 53,000 in California. These Jamborees do something really fine for the development of boys even though it is a short period of three weeks. The fellowship and experience of traveling together, of seeing something of this great country of ours and associating with boys from all over the world at the Jamboree is one of the broadening experiences that comes to boys who are able to participate; may I also say come to the men who give leadership as well.

Philmont Scout Reservation

For the first time last year (1962) we were able to have as many as ten boys go to Philmont. This is the 137,000 acre Scout Reservation at Cimmaron, New Mexico. This year there will be another group going under our own leadership. They will travel on trains and should have a fine experience in visiting Philmont, seeing some of the great West, spending two days at Colorado Springs, going to Pike's Peak, going to the Air Force Academy and seeing a real western rodeo. This should be a top experience for the ten or eleven boys who are able to go from here in 1963 under the leadership of Herbert J. Roes.

Inspiration from the 1961 National Meeting

Well, these are all interesting memories; they are all things anyone would be proud to be connected with, and to realize the development that is going on. Again, it should be said that none of this could be done if it were not for the men who are giving of their time to give leadership to these boys. When you think that going to a Jamboree or going to Philmont takes a period of three weeks out of a man's busy life, and takes it away from his family, you can see the kind of devotion that men give in order that boys may develop under our system that we have in this country, and especially under the leadership of this great movement, the Boy Scouts of America. Having attended the last annual meeting in New York, I came away more convinced of the importance of Scouting and the importance of its support in listening to a panel of people including General Westmoreland of West Point; Harry Arsdale, Head of the Electrical Union of New York City, a top union leader; our good painter Norman Rockwell; Jinx Falkenberg, an

outstanding personality and a mother of a Cub and Boy Scout, who is always doing her part in New York City for the Boy Scout movement; and Ken Wells, head of the Freedoms Foundation, who is so concerned about what the future of America will be. Another member of this panel, under the leadership of John Charles Daley, was Wayne Johnson, president of the Illinois Central Railroad. All of these people showed the very importance of our program in the future of this country and made us feel that we could do nothing less than our very, very best to bring this program to every boy and to enlist every man who could give service to this great movement. These are the type of people who are keeping the organization of Scouting going in America.

Men Devoted to Scouting

Long service is not necessarily an indication of a man's real contribution to Scouting, but in Schenectady we had a man in 1940, Allan B. Mann, who had served fifty years in Scouting. He had been a Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, and at that time was serving as Merit Badge Counselor, as he is at the present time. A more devoted man couldn't be found than Allan and he still is as concerned about boys and he's willing to do what he can to develop the leadership of boys.

There is another man it was my privilege to become acquainted with in 1920 in Rome, New York, who later moved to Schenectady. He was one of the first men to greet me when I came to Schenectady; he is William O. Jones. He is serving as a Neighborhood Commissioner in the Eastern Mohawk District. Bill Jones served in Rome as a Scoutmaster at the same time I did and later became a Commissioner there. He came to Schenectady and continued his efforts, and it was my pleasure to know both of his sons who became Eagle Scouts. This man exemplifies over this extensive period, and, when many men feel that they should be resting, that one can still serve to his utmost and be tremendously concerned that every boy have the privilege of this fine program.

One of the things that has probably impressed me more than any other has been the thoroughness with which the members of Council Executive Board have taken in their approach to the development of the needs of Schenectady. I think this was indicated when we decided that we should do something about building a new dining hall because last year we

came to the limit of the capacity of Norris Hall. Before anything was done a committee of five (Herb Neil, Sr., Allen Bailey, Don Brereton, Harry White, Ray Yamrozy and myself) spent a great deal of their time during the past summer visiting camps, conferring with people, talking about the requirements, and then finally getting to the point of making plans. The same thorough approach was made to the development of two lakes at Boyhaven and again it was my pleasure to have been associated with these people.

I think in all probability that if I were to start on personalities I could develop this endlessly as I probably will never stop talking about the fine people and what they have done. As an example, the thousands and thousands of hours that volunteers have given. At one time I can remember Larry Hawkins, as Chairman of the Community Chest Drive, was trying to develop some facts that would appeal to the public and would loosen up the pocketbooks. He came to me and said, "Bob, how much time and how many people give to leadership in Scouting?" I said, "I can't tell you off hand, Larry, but I'll prepare an estimate." I did and put down various categories and persons and, being conservative as I felt I should be, I came up with something like 350,000 hours of service that had been given that past year. This was turned over to Larry and apparently it was just too staggering a figure to be used publicly, because he said it would be pretty difficult to convince people that men and women give that much time to this one particular organization. Nevertheless, it is true.

And when I think of the time that Ralph Carter gave as President, and of the hours that Ray Yamrozy has given to camp, taking his entire vacation doing Gopher work, also one year giving over eighty hours in Gopher work. And when I think of the times that Harry White and Don Brereton and John Woodman have given to the development of the various phases of the Council and the efforts they've put into Scouting it just makes me feel there's not a man or a woman in Schenectady that should not be asked to make a contribution to their community.

One of the highlights of Schenectady has been the fine associations that have been mine. First let me give you a little indication of why I am appreciative of the Schenectady people. I often read over a letter that Ralph Carter wrote to me at

the end of my tenth year and also recall the many conversations we had. When first coming here the situation was a little bit rough. The Scout Executive had been taken into the Marines and when I came here for interview he had gone and the Assistant Executive left within two weeks for the Navy. So here I was, and for a period of six months I could have packed my bag anytime and left without regrets. It was really a tough situation. Well, finally Fred Oyer, Bill Whyte, Bill Denny, Ralph Carter, Earl Shreve, Joe Overstreet, and Harry Linton one by one came into heavy support. Ralph Carter would say to me many times, "Well, now aren't you glad you stayed? Aren't you glad you stayed?" And I certainly am, because out of this particular situation there has come a great deal of comradeship with so many people because of the difficulties which we had to overcome. As I look back I wouldn't have wanted to change for anything else.

Sustaining Membership

When coming to Schenectady there were several people who every year made a contribution to the Boy Scouts. While it didn't amount to a great deal of money, it was enough to really make one aware of their interest. I found an old card which was dated in 1934 and it still is in the file of our Sustaining Membership. This old card is proof of the fact that Sustaining Membership went back as far as 1934. The Sustaining Membership campaign takes a good deal of promotion. It takes a good deal of time and service and determination on the part of many of our men to bring this about, but I am sure that it will eventually be really effective. The one last word I would like to say concerning finances is that we must give serious thought to the future. Let's continue to find a way to interest every last man on our Board and every citizen, both men and women, and let's make it our purpose to get to these people and sell them on the importance of this particular program. Finally, we need to make sure that we put across the kind of sustaining membership effort to do the kind of service that we really can do in this community.

. . . . and in closing

The things that I have said can be documented with dates and additional names inasmuch as there is in the Council office a real history. It is in the form of minutes starting back in

1916 and going to the present time. If anyone was interested in making a more complete history of the development in this Council it could be done. It would take a good deal of time and reading in order to add to this but there is the authentic information which is the legal document for the corporation. It carries with it all the information necessary to trace the past of this Council and to be guided, as is needed for the future.

Closing this little history I should like to say thanks to so many people for the nice things they've done, for the excellent support that has been given me in all of the things that I have tried to do here in Schenectady, and may this spirit which is so wonderful continue to grow so that more boys will have more opportunity. May I thank you for the opportunity of spending this time talking with you and if I can be of further help I should be happy to do so. Again, I refer you to the fact that there is in the minutes on the shelf in the Scout Executive's office from 1916 all of this information, and also in his safe there is a treatise on the development of Pilot Knob and there are the deeds and searches in the safe deposit box in the Citizens Trust Company. These all are a part of the history of this very fine Council, which it has been my privilege to serve as the Scout Executive for the past 19 years. And again thanks and good luck to all.

