



THE OCTORARO LOOP

The Horseshoe Scout Reservation Alumni Association (HSRAA) News

Issue No. 2 - Volume 14 - SUMMER 2013 - On Line - WWW.HSRAA.ORG

OUR FOURTEENTH ANNUAL HSRAA REUNION

RONALD SYKES DAY. Welcome all to Reunion as we celebrate Ronald Sykes Day along Karen. - A 1942 first year camper from Troop 14 of As the two articles that have preceded this in the Loop commented, Ron became an Eagle Scout several capacities on the Horseshoe staff in summers, we welcome Ron back and hearing about days he and others shared on the Staff. He even was staff member to live in the Trading Post built in replace the Kindness Center TP. Return with us exciting days of yesterday! Ron is to be honored after supper! It is also the introduction of our new HSRAA patch along with a special recognition for a 2013 Camp Horseshoe Staff member.



this year's with his wife, West Chester. Octoraro serving in succeeding some of those the newest 1947 to now to those

ACTIVITIES. We have a bevy of activities to interest and delight all during the Reunion and following a great barbecue! You will want to take time to visit the displays, the Virtual Museum and view some of the pictures and memorabilia of the past! And, if you are so inclined, there are events at the Heistand Pool where you can cheer for the boys of Boonsboro or Crockett or another Stockade! The Water Carnival and camp tours take place from 1 PM to 4 PM. But that's not all!

HSRAA MASTERS CHALLENGE - A REUNION FIRST THIS YEAR! *The HSRAA Masters Challenge will take place between 2:00 pm and 3:30 pm. willing participants are invited to try their hand at 5 traditional scout field events. Event winners, decade "team" winners, and an overall individual winner will be acknowledged at dinner with the overall winner having their name recorded for posterity on a trophy inspired by HSR traditions.*

MASTERS EVENT - NOTE: "self-run design" but not expected to where someone has to run it all on a schedule. It is hoped that it may evolve in a way that people are watching and cheering but can only commit to setting it up in a manner where the events are self-administered. Participants are to get their own timer/judge and record their scores.



- **THE PICTURES OF EACH CLASS WILL BE TAKEN AT 4:30 PM AT GOODMAN**
- **RETREAT AT 5:45**
- **BARBEQUE SUPPER FOLLOWS WITH SING ALONG & AWARDS!**

**THE INTERNATIONAL POLISH
SCOUTS-IN-EXILE JAMBOREE! ...
A 25 YEAR LOOK BACK!**



**WOULD YOU BELIEVE MORE THAN 1200 POLISH
SCOUTS AND OUR LEADERS FILLED NEWLY
FINISHED ACHGEKETUM CIRCLE?**



If one were to ask our Scouts and many leaders today, we doubt that they would be aware of the fact that the Horseshoe Scout Reservation, both John H. Ware, 3rd and Horseshoe for one ‘glowing’ period in the 1988 year in August was the focal point of many continents, countries around the world - a site where 1200 boy and girl scouts from as far away as Australia, Great Britain, Poland and parts of Russia controlled countries in Europe plus USA and Canada met. It was at a time in history when communist influences had a great role in the governments of many of these countries – we of the Chester County Council played a major role in hosting this event. It is quite a story and many of our staff and leaders played a role!

Why was our camp selected? That seems to be a part of the intrigue. Bill Hess, our Camp Business Manager (now deceased), was the primary contact. The story is told that the International organization had deliberated for some time on location and it was our being close to a town that had some meaning to the Polish. The fact that we had a mailing address of “Rising Sun” made the difference. Apparently, the relevance to Rising Sun to their ambitions or their philosophical scheme, gave us the event. But, more than likely it was the reference to Rising Sun in their country’s song...

Our role was one of the host for the event...providing camp facilities, aquatics availability at both our camps, location to Philadelphia, Washington, DC and environs which were close to major Catholic dioceses plus the ability to camp the female Scouts at Ware and the male scouts at Horseshoe, yet having a good common meeting ground access. The first week was to be spent “in camp” taking advantage of programs, etc. The second week provided them opportunities to visit major cities



The Boy Scout contingent parade at Horseshoe with bands and flags a-fluttering!

Of special note, our Horseshoe Reservation has entertained foreign Scouts and dignitaries over its 86 year history. While this particular piece is about, the Polish Scouts in Exile, we also have entertained among others: a Norwegian Scout contingent whose leader was originally a member of Troop 78,

Willistown. In 2000,



we had over 100 Scouts and leaders at Camp John H. Ware, 3rd in an Irish 2000 encampment. Each of these events have their own stories but that of the present subject is perhaps the most intriguing because it was supported by so many of our own Council Staff and Volunteers.

The timing was unique...summer following an active season of our own Scouts. Fifty of our more seasoned staff were invited to stay on to form the basis for the camp leadership. Recruited were some 110 volunteers from the Council's Unit Service and Executive Board group...a group of seasoned and experienced leaders. Under the leadership of Bill Hess, JB Rettew (newly elected Council President) and Hab Butler (newly elected Council Commissioner, a cadre of committed volunteers were on hand throughout all or most of the two week period.

Upon arrival the female contingent set up at Ware with the male group at Horseshoe. The signs and the "shouts" called attention to the theme of the event – "CZU WAJ" which was literally interpreted as the equivalent of the BSA motto "Be Prepared" to mean "Be Alert". The aim of the Jamboree was to keep alive the tradition of Polish Scouting in spite of the fact that Scouting in Poland was challenged by the Communist party.

Events planned during the week included Olympic sporting events, camp wide field games, orienteering events, campfire programs, rallies, etc. The Scouts were a very close knit group...loved the singing...cheering...and the camaraderie of the get together!

Reading from the "Spirit of the Horseshoe", the feeling this event created for all the workers from our Council is clear: *"For many of our 110 volunteers and 50 Reservation staff members, this was a truly 'unforgettable experience.' The sights and sounds of the 'Zlot' (Jamboree) were memorable and, at times emotional. Few will forget the opening march onto the Horseshoe Parade Field when over 1000 Scouts marched onto the field to the sound of drums, bugles and whistles.*



Leading the way, the many multi-colored flags of the various international Polish scout groups - the first singing of the Polish Scouting song - the tearful reunion of past jamboree groups on the Horseshoe field. The haunting melodies of the evening campfires and Catholic masses in the pine grove - and finally, that special moment on closing day when each Scouting unit marched passed and saluted the President of the Polish government in exile."



Bill Hess did an exceptional job in coordinating the event and devoting many long hours both in preparation for the Jamboree and at Camp to insure its success. He officially greeted the Jamboree at the Opening Ceremonies and was joined by Council President Rettew. The

Commissioners Staff, under Hab Butler's leadership, was always prepared and willing to serve. Many friendships between our service crews and the Polish Scouters were made during the encampment. Even serving for several days at the hectic Trading Post was the Council President's wife, Ellie Rettew along with Sue Crouch and Sue Fisher. Ellie had a great time conversing in Polish with many of the Scouts.

There was a brief problem that had been unanticipated. The weather was hot as only Horseshoe can be in August. The Polish organization had delayed qualifying all their Scouts - boys and girls - for their swim tests. The result was that the showers were in continuous use for the first several days! As Bill Moffet on the service Staff put it: "Oh! Oh! No Water!" Well, thanks to some quick thinking and help from Camp Ranger Roy Cole, Bill and others, a water line was run to a remote well and we soon were filling the tanks at both camps. In the meantime, some restrictions had to be enforced... paper plates for meals and the ladies' hair washing had to be halted briefly.



When talking with all the staff members who were there and the members of the Commissioners' Unit Service group like Hab Butler, one will get a real sense of the impact it had on the lives of all who served.



Row! Row! Your Boat! On the Bend...

YOU'VE GOT MAIL...



Our illustrious Chairman talks on Camp

Dear HSR Alums,

Summer is upon us and, for me, the extended daylight and hot humid days bring back fond memories of summers in my distant past, spent at the camps of the Horseshoe Scout Reservation. As I write this, the camps have just opened for the 86th summer season and the first batch of anxious first-year campers are about to become alumni themselves!

Plans for our reunion on July 13th have been finalized and we're waiting to hear that YOU will be there. We'll keep the web site reservations open as long as we can (www.hsraa.org). In addition to the usual fellowship and camaraderie, we'll be honoring Class of 1942 alum Ron Sykes as well as unveiling the 2013 HSRAA promotional patch. The patch is intended to raise awareness of HSRAA among current campers. Elsewhere in this issue, you'll find more details on our planned activities for the reunion.

The reunion is also the time when we approve our board of directors for the upcoming year. Most of the current board members have served for many years and would welcome, and stick around to support, a new generation of volunteers. We are especially looking for internet-savvy folks as we continue to evolve. If you, or someone you know, might be interested in serving on the board, please contact our

Nominating Committee Chairman at Neil_Chippendale@msn.com.

We have begun using conference call technology for our meetings so board members need not be physically near Chester County.

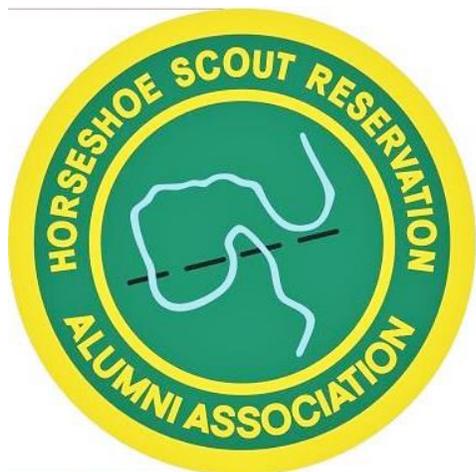
On the project front, we've been frustrated in our efforts to commence work on our proposed projects in the central area of Camp Horseshoe. We continue to work with the council's Camping Committee to address the broader storm water management issues and fulfill our vision for the Picnic Grove. In the meantime, the HSRAA Nursery is literally thriving, thanks to the tireless efforts of Dick Bensing.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with your ideas for our association or to discuss how you'd like to get involved. I look forward to seeing you at the reunion.

Yours in Scouting,



John Kemmerer, HSRAA Chairman
johnkemmerer@gmail.com



HOT NEWS! VIRTUAL MUSEUM PROVIDING FUN AND FACT!

At every Reunion, Dave "Woody" Woodward, HSRAA Executive Committee, has been diligently working on the concept introduced several years ago in the Loop. This was the creation of our on line "history center" or as it is termed – a Virtual Museum (VM). The "Museum" is accessed through the our HSRAA

.org website by logging in on your computer as an HSRAA Member viewer. More than 5,250 artifacts – sounds, sights, motion or static await the viewer...and perhaps you will even find friends you made in your camp days! Seek and you shall find...!



1942 Horseshoe Staff Party...Larry Phelan top 2nd from left

UP TO DATE - THIS SUMMER!

I have been watching on the Camp Horseshoe webcam between the raindrops (whoops! The liquid dust of camp). Actually, judging from reports, it has been a pretty good week for Scouts at camp...only a few "hard cover" alerts! That webcam is great fun and a way mom and dad to keep up with the kids!

I checked in with my Devon 50 Scouts who had an exciting week before going to Horseshoe. They had over 350 alumni and troop visitors at their camp Jarvis to dedicate their new Phelan Lodge. Larry Phelan was a 1943 Eagle Scout in Devon 50 and was camp Horseshoe Aquatics Director in 1944. (see above photo) Well, Devon 50 had over 74 Scouts in camp plus staff! All in all it was a fun week for our Scouts...and, more coming for the second week!

Both Camp Horseshoe and Camp John H. Ware, 3rd have good showings to kick off summer camp.

This will be a unique summer for many Scouts in the Council. There will be crews off going cross country to the Philmont Scout Ranch for the traditional programs there! Then, there are many others off to the mountains and forests of West Virginia to "Go Big, Get Wild" experience at the National Scout Jamboree at the "Scott Summit Center" in southern West Virginia! We cannot wait to learn about the exciting times there!

And, of course, what better way to prepare for these great adventures than to take of it that our Horseshoe Scout Reservation has to offer. You have heard it here!



CHESTER COUNTY COUNCIL, BSA DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN AWARD - PAUL W. WARE 2013

For some 12 years, the Council has presented key individuals with the above award. The first of these was Charles Swope, Eagle Scout of Troop 14, later a Bank President. James McErlane, Troop 7 Eagle Scout and prominent West Chester Lawyer was recognized in 2010.

My association with Paul began a number of years ago when I served as Council President in 1988 - 1990 and attended area Scouting functions. Predominantly, it was enhanced by a mutual interest in preserving the long history of the Chester County Council, his family and Scouting through the Scouting Museum in Valley Forge. This was about the time I had written "The Spirit of the Horseshoe" - the 75 year history of the Council in 1994 and then the establishment of the Horseshoe Scout Reservation Alumni Association (HSRAA) in 2000.

Paul Ware, prominent in Scouting and Business was honored this year. Not only has he had a distinguished commitment to Scouting but his family has been prominent in Chester County and well known as a benefactor of Chester County Council. And Paul to the Pennsylvania Dutch Area Council. His roots are well-grounded in Chester County as the following will attest in this piece written by your editor.

Scouting for Paul W. Ware has been a passion over his lifetime. His record is extensive

beginning with his step into Scouting as a Cub Scout and continuing for nearly 60 years...years of setting the pace for all about him...and being honored with some of the highest honors that can be bestowed on a Scout and an adult leader of men and women devoted to the Scouting program.

His life reflects the values and involvement represented by both his father, John H. Ware, 3rd, and his grandfather, John H. Ware, Jr. in Scouting and with youth over their lifetimes. Both of these men were involved in Chester County Scouting circles. Paul's Scouting experiences began with Cub Scouts in Oxford Pack 13 which ultimately lead to his joining Troop 13. It is here that he comes under the influence of Francis Maule, Scout Master. Today, he claims much of his love and enthusiasm for Scouting has been influenced by Scout Master Maule. (Maule according to many people I interviewed over the years have felt the marked influence of Francis).

Paul earned his Eagle, served on the Camp Horseshoe staff, became a member of the Octoraro Lodge 22. Ultimately, the record shows that Paul has earned many honors and recognitions over the year. These reflect his involvement on many levels of Scouting from a president of the Pennsylvania Dutch Council and positions on both Regional and National levels of the BSA! Also, he has been active internationally.

Paul has led a distinguished life in Scouting since those early years in Oxford Troop 13 in the Octoraro District.





GONE...BUT NOT FORGOTTEN!

Sadly, we report on the passing of a fellow HSRAA member this past month.

J. Edgar "Gumps" McComsey, a longtime member of the HSRAA passed away. Many of his friends and fellow Scouters attended his viewing and/or the memorial services.

A 1938 Eagle Scout with Troop 74, Gumps will long be remembered as a jovial friend to all with a ready smile for all! He was one of our oldest campers at Horseshoe from 1930. He loved the renewal of coming to the Reunions and the OA Banquet. Last year he was honored with a new Octoraro Lodge 22 award – The Wipunquoak Award...the Joseph H. Brinton Memorial Award for a lifetime of Cheerful Service.

He will be missed...JB Rettew, a friend.

OFFICERS OF THE HSRAA (ending 9/2013)

- John Kemmerer.....Chairman
- Richard T. Bensing.....Projects
- Donald Tyson.....Treasurer
- Neil Chippendale.....Treasurer/Membership
- Stuart Watson.....Secretary
- JB Rettew.....Editor, Octoraro Loop
- Ellie Rettew.....Reader/ Staff

PICTURES from Virtual Museum ATTIC



Flood at end of camping season...



Impactin athletic field by creek...



As shown from Chapel picture...



Swimming pool...well under water over high dive...Similar floods have happened in later years!

MAILING and New
Member Page