



THE OCTORARO LOOP

The Horseshoe Scout Reservation Alumni Association (HSRAA) News

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HSRAA'S 13TH REUNION "ROCKS!"

Another great Reunion for the Horseshoe Scout Reservation at the Goodman Pavilion!

Thanks to Damon Sinclair videos from our "ancient and honorable" film files offered those who were reuniting a chance to get a glimpse of Horseshoe's early days of the 1930's, '40's and '88. We even had a chance to see some of our present day alumni who were filmed then and wow! what has happened since? We could view Ron Sykes (Handicraft Director in the '40's) applying his skills teaching the Scouts of another day; and, Ernie Heegard in an earlier day along with Johnny Rettew atop the lifeguard stand at the pool! My how our camp changed over the years but then again so have we all. No "Oscars" but a lot of fun and laughs seeing our Scouts and staff and camp at a different time.

In 1988 a lot was going on at Horseshoe in preparation for the arrival of 1200 Polish boy and girl scouts for their "Jamboree-in-exile" (more about this at a future Reunion and issue) as well as conducting our customary great summer camp. In addition, we were "rocking" camp with a "dig" lead by Penn State University and our Archeology merit badge program that summer. Thanks to film mogul Damon Sinclair (whose current day TV filming includes those on Philadelphia's past and present); we have a great record of the Buzzards Rock "dig" that summer. All enjoyed the presentation and what it revealed about the history of that part of our camp. Also, credit goes to Rich Foote who did the sound work.



Archaeologists from the state gave a technical name to the location ... The **Horseshoe Rock Shelter** which we call **Buzzards Rock**. The story revealed in the video mentioned that Native American Indians were out hunting looking for game and apparently stopped to use it for an overnight camping ground, mainly, because the rock formation provided weather cover. These Native Americans used it for around 15,000 years; and, of course, our Horseshoe Boy Scouts used it for around 85 years.

The Penn State people found a lot of Boy Scout remains at the site and many of the prehistoric Indian remains were mixed with those of the Scouts. What they found primarily were little broken chips from projectile points off of arrows and spears and also the pieces that were found after they sharpen their knives and cutting tools. Findings for the period between 1700 and 1730 included projectile point or arrowheads made of steel or copper. The archeologist believes these items were most likely made by the Susquehanna Indians who lived in this area made a metal arrowhead they would trade for from the Europeans. Indians would trade

Beaver pelts that were used for hats and for robes that were very popular at the time. For the metal items, things that look like Dutch ovens basically as well as hoes and axes were found.

As for that prehistoric period prior to Columbus' discovery of America, one of the projectile points was made of a rock made of Pennsylvania Jasper, which the Indians would have had to travel up to or trade with the Indians near Veracruz, Pennsylvania. That one that they found is a complete artifact that is very unusual find. The archeologist felt that perhaps it could've fallen down a crack in some rocks and couldn't be retrieved; therefore, the hunting party left it behind.

One of the more unusual things found was a piece of pottery that dated back to about 1200AD. It was a part of the rim of the top of a jar that probably was broken and then the pieces were left behind.

The spear points they found made of Quartz and Argillite, a stone found in Bucks County, indicates that again our natives would have had traded with the Native Americans from there to get that stone or perhaps traveled there ... a large complete point was found by our Boy Scouts... Clark Green, past Camp Director, used it to pique the interest of the archaeology department of the State Museum of Pennsylvania. And, thus they came and spent 6 weeks at Camp Horseshoe to do the dig.



Before clay they made pots out of soapstone or steatite around 3000 BC. Again, they found a part of a small pot that would have been used for cooking. With little grooves on it. Some more points were found about the site going to the early archaic period. Dates somewhere between 6000 BC to 8000 BC 8000 to 10,000 years ago or more. Another interesting item they found the end part of a smoking tobacco pipe. Often they would use a mixture of tobacco and other leaves which they called kninack. One of the other finds that was so exciting for them ... from the Palo period what would you describe it as either a bead or a button they would've used on their buckskin outfits again very unusual find.

They also found some projectile points or arrowheads that apparently were salted on the site some years back to increase the interest of young Boys Scouts. What raised questions were stones were not nearly hard enough and the Native Americans would never use serpentine. As Mark said "No Indian his right mind would make a projectile point out of a stone like serpentine." The Scoutmaster's name associated with this was Ernie Heegard.

(Editor JB's note: At one time (circa 1946 -48 period) I recall that there was an extensive collection of arrow and spear points as well as other artifacts found on the Horseshoe property in our camp's earlier years that resided in the Spellman White House.)

Following a great barbecue and desert, songs were enjoyed and plaudits given for the films all enjoyed. A brief business meeting concluded our Reunion.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW – 2013 – OUR 14TH REUNION IS JULY 13, 2013!



Dave Woodward and John Kemmerer compare notes

LOOKING FORWARD WITH JOHN KEMMERER

Dear HSRAA Member,

As the work of our association continues, we welcome your interest and need your support. I trust you'll enjoy this issue of The Horseshoe Loop where our Editor has again put together an engaging mix of articles and photos that span the history of the reservation. As a reminder, our website (www.hsraa.org) has an ever-growing Virtual Museum that includes links to past issues of the newsletter as well as thousands of artifacts spanning the history of our camps.

We recently sent out our annual membership renewal mailing. For those of you that have responded already, we are very appreciative of both your contribution and your prompt response. If you did not receive the mailing or would like to refer a friend to HSRAA, you can find information on our web site. As always, the primary use of funds we generate from annual memberships is our projects.

On the project front, we've continued on with the development of the Horseshoe Nursery and we're moving into high gear on a new major project. After many hours of planning and deliberation, we have tabled our Picnic Grove project due to the complexity of the storm water management issues in that area. The Picnic Grove will remain on our list of priorities for the future, but we have turned our attention to a related project at Camp Horseshoe that we feel will similarly impact a focal area of the camp. The objective of the new project is to enhance the Camp Horseshoe trading post (Trader Bill's) and the surrounding area. While the details of This project are still being worked out, it is our

intention that it will include an "Alumni Porch" and landscaping enhancements in the broader vicinity.

Other key initiatives for the association this year include recruitment of additional board members, more focus on attracting younger alums to our association, the elimination of hard copy mailing for members willing to receive news via e-mail only, and, of course, our annual reunion that will take place on Saturday July 13th, 2013. I hope you'll take a minute now to add that date to your calendar and that you'll be able to join us.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with your ideas for our association or if you'd like to be more involved.

Yours in Scouting,

John Kemmerer, Chairman

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IMAGES OF THE CAMP PAST



Early '40's Morrison Health Lodge building takes shape



1950's "Bug House" is Nature Center



1988 Polish Scouts hear Native Americans in new OA Circle

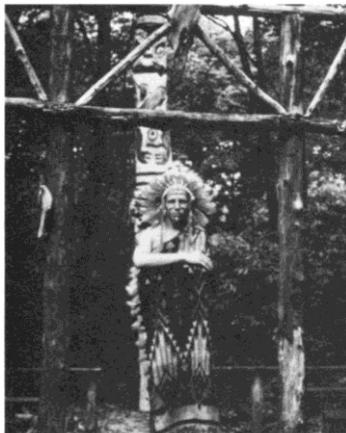
Ronald Sykes Camp Horseshoe Camper and Staff now HSRAA Member 1942 -2012



Ron Sykes with John Rettew and Ernie Heegard at HSRAA



Ronald Sykes @ at OA National Conference in 1950's



Skull Gate

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS...

RONALD E. SYKES TODAY?

(Editor JB Rettew's note: In early issues of the Octoraro Loop, I enjoyed searching out and writing about past Horseshoe staffers or campers who made an impact on our Horseshoe Scout Reservation's history or the camp scene while they were in camp, to hear about their involvement in their "time" and learn how their life may have been influenced by the Horseshoe experience. So it has been for Ron Sykes, my bunkmate in 1947 in the Trading Post that sits at the head of the Parade Field. Ron's story appears here in our Fall 2012 issue and will be carried over to the Spring 2013 issue. The first part of Ron's story begins in those first days as a camper from Troop 14 in 1942 and the second part will pick up after being promoted to the Horseshoe Handicraft Director and OA Sakima.)

**HOW CAMP HORSESHOE SHAPED MY LIFE – PART 1
BY DR. RONALD E. SYKES**

It wasn't until John Rettew asked me to put in writing some of my experiences with Camp Horseshoe that I began to realize what a tremendous impact Camp Horseshoe and the Order of the Arrow had on my life.

I came to West Chester part way through third grade and was in, what we called, the 'Demonstration School' at West Chester State Teachers College. Because all of the other students had started their school experience there from the beginning, they viewed and treated me as an outsider. That whole atmosphere tended to prevail into Junior High School. Even the Troop 14 I was in at the Methodist Church had the same boys in it and the same attitude. As you will see, Camp Horseshoe changed a lot of things in my life.

CAMP HORSESHOE 1942. It's the unusual things that stick in your mind, such as having to fill a huge bag full of straw at the straw hut so that I would have a tick on my bunk to lie on in Sherwood Forest. Fortunately, I had an upper bunk so it was less susceptible to rain if it should start during the night.

I quickly identified with George "Reds" Russell, the Sherwood Stockade Leader. He became my first ideal. I remember on one occasion, on a particularly hot day, I was passing the dining hall and I went to the water cooler and filled up one of those cone-shaped paper cups so that I could take "Reds" Russell back a cold drink of water, which he couldn't get just from the latrine. As I look back on it, I was very naïve because not only my hand warmed the water, but also the air temperature certainly made it very warm by the time I got back to Sherwood. But "Reds" Russell accepted the cup of water graciously in the spirit it was intended.

CAMP STAFF DAYS – HEAD DISHWASHER. After two summers of experience as a camper, I wanted to somehow be part of the

staff. I had great visions of what they might assign me, but when it came to a position, I was assigned the position of Head Dishwasher. I certainly can't complain about the \$75 for eight weeks' work, especially in view of the fact that I was a stocking clerk at the Co-op Store on the corner of Market and Church Streets in West Chester, where I got paid .10 an hour for my labors Friday after school and Saturday. I was embarrassed about how little I earned there because some of my friends claimed they were earning .25 cents an hour. I did have one advantage – I could eat all I wanted! Now back to Camp Horseshoe.

Being in charge of other campers who simply got a free week at Camp Horseshoe and were my Assistants in the dish washing department did teach me some leadership and management skills, which I didn't realize at the time. Two years later, in 1946, when I had become an Eagle Scout, the position of Handicraft Director opened up and I held that job for the next five summers (1946-1950).

HANDICRAFT DIRECTOR. I had some leanings towards art as the result of instruction in the elementary school, encouragement from William Palmer Lear (Lear was a prominent Horseshoe Staff member for many years) who was my junior high school art teacher, and the art materials that my parents had given me, but this was the first meaningful opportunity I had where I could teach others how to do various crafts. This whole five-year experience as Handicraft Director was the major influence on the career that I selected, namely, to become an art educator for the rest of my life.

Part of my job as Handicraft Director was to help campers complete kits that they had purchased in the New Camp Headquarters store, but most of my time was spent teaching them skills in various craft activities. During this period, I was progressing through the different levels of the Order of the Arrow, and I was asked to head up the Tap Out Team. I made a portable seat/table combination that I could take outside and spend at least part of my time in the sun in order to get a deep tan so that I would make a much more realistic looking Indian.

Some of my more memorable experiences in handicraft were both funny and also interesting.

At that point, I didn't have sufficient experience with cans of paint to appreciate the necessity of making sure that the last user had pressed the lid on tight. A camper asked me for some paint. I got the can out, shook it for him, and the lid flew off and the paint flew out of the can all over me. What a mess I had to clean up! It's one of those learning experiences you have.

THE GOLD RUSH! Using paint became an important activity because I was asked to make

'gold'. There was to be a camp "Gold Rush" and my task was to come up with how to make the 'gold'.



I went down to the Octoraro and found places in the streambed where pebbles had been well rounded and I picked them up by the hundreds. I painted them a gold color and put them out on newspaper to dry. Eventually I had to distribute the 'gold' in an area near the boat docks where the Gold Rush was to take place.

The campers' task was to find the gold in the stream and then have it weighed. I don't remember what the reward was for the camper, but the motivation was sufficient so that there was a huge participation among the campers. (Motivated by the "fun" of panning for gold in the Octoraro Creek was the fact that once a camper's "poke" had been gathered, he could turn it in at the Assayer's Office, and in exchange receive "cash" for that evening's "Boom Town" in Kindness Center. Here the camper was enticed –by the Staff- to spend it on games of skill and chance and "bug juice" to swill down!)



That gold paint served another purpose; the Camp Ranger, George Cole, asked me to use it to repaint the letters on the directional signs that were posted on the camp road - I felt like I was leaving a permanent mark on Camp Horseshoe.



Ron Sykes created the first (known) Horseshoe Staff neckerchief in 1948 period using his art skills.

NEXT SPRING OCTORARO LOOP ...LOOK FOR - Ron's story to continue in the Spring 2013 issue of the Octoraro Loop where he becomes the Octoraro Lodge 22 Sakima and becomes a delegate to the National OA Conference.

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HSRAA SAYS “ OUR NEW PATCH IS HERE...SOON!”

We’ve talked about it and we’re now designing it...our own patch to proudly identify us as unique members of the HSRAA.

Our design committee has been working diligently and we expect to have patches available soon in the new year!

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HIGH WATER MARK WITH PLAQUE FROM 1942 FLOOD PLACED JUST BELOW KINDNESS CENTER

HURRICANES NOW AND PAST

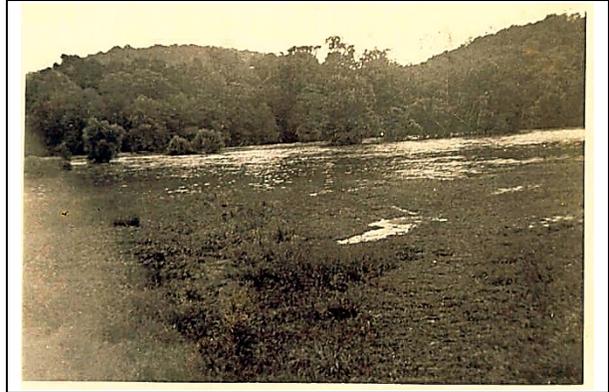
The recent arrival of Hurricane “Sandy” turned a lot of the east coast from Cape May to Long Island and New England upside down. The northeastern part of the U.S. is still reeling with the effects of that super storm! Thank goodness our camp was spared this time; but, other areas were not so fortunate. Our Octoraro Lodge 22 and Horseshoe Staff put out a call to help in Bucks County, at Camp Ockanickon, where their area was severely hit – hundreds of trees were knocked down causing considerable damage..

It reminds this editor of one of many storms that had an impact on our Camps as well as surrounding states. 1942’s storm happened after the camp season. However, there was one in 1972 right before camp opened. It was the tail end of a storm known as hurricane “Agnes”. I am sure there are still Staff and OA members still around that remember.

In those days, the main road from Route 1 into camp was an old rutted road that ran alongside of the Octoraro Creek. Actually, it was a beautiful ride by the Creek and got one in the “mood for a great camping experience”!

In 1972, we got funds to pave the road right before camp started to make it smoother for all the parents and buses bring campers to Horseshoe. A macadam surface was laid into camp...a real plus in those days!

An asphalt surface was laid several days before Camp opened...but...the remnants of “Agnes” swept into camp...the water rose, the floods came. The bucolic Octoraro broke its banks flooding the athletic field. Eagle and Scouter Groves and the Heistand swimming pool (just as it happened in 1942). Only the tip of the diving board could be seen and the trees surrounding our pool!



1942 FLOOD INUNDATES ATHLETIC FIELD

While we viewed this as a real challenge, we also, found that the Creek’s rampant waters had another impact...the water forced and lifted the macadam road that had just been laid...the underlying road was eaten away...we had some real problems now!

But never fear!! Camp Director Ernie and his minions surveyed the situation and set priorities...! Within hours of the storm’s damage, the call went out to OA members to organize and come to help the Camp Staff deal with the damage. It was a do or die situation ...the opening of camp was in jeopardy!

It was not long that crews of helpers were there to do as much repair to the road possible to open camp along with many assorted projects for the clean-up. Within days hard work and organization helped to open camp ON TIME!

The pool was another situation – it had to be emptied of mud and Creek water (and fish and turtles, etc., scrubbed and acid washed. All this took time and muscle...and, besides we had to procure fresh, clean water to truck in. It was fortunate that one of the parents of a Devon troop headed up a tanker company...they helped provide pumps and clean water to replenish the pool. All in all the pool opened only a few days later than camp opened.

What a great adventure with teams of Scouters, Scouts, parents and OA members working in teams...proving that a Scout is helpful and resourceful!

HSRAA PROJECT PLANS AND VIRTUAL MUSEUM

In prior issues, we have talked of the “Picnic Grove” renovation project. After meetings with the Council’s Camping Committee, it has been decided to delay further discussion of this project pending

review of plans submitted by the HSRAA Project Committee.

In lieu of this project, the HSRAA Committee has agreed to support the renovation of the **Bill Hess Trading Post**. The Camping Committee has a major renovation planned for the interior of the Trading Post. In concert with their project the HSRAA has proposed a revision in the exterior part (porch) of the Trading Post to make it more accessible for the customer Scouts and Leaders. The project has received a preliminary OK by HSRAA for the porch and surrounding space to be modified to comply with those plans being developed by the Council.

Once approvals have been secured and agreements finalized, work should begin in the spring before the opening of summer camp.

Our **Virtual Museum** project is continuing. If You've had a chance to view the work of Dave Woodward, you will be impressed with the number of artifacts and the accessibility of delving into the depths of the museum. Kudos to Dave!

SUMMER CAMP ... OLDER SCOUT PROGRAMS – TRY IT! YOU'LL LIKE IT!

Last summer a program was introduced to appeal to the older Scouts coming to camp with their troops, focusing upon those whose advancement work towards Eagle may have been completed or nearly completed.



It should be noted that our Camp attempts to satisfy the needs of the older Scouts with the C.O.P.E. course, merit badges that are not easily secured in the home troop situation, etc. Camp Director Mike Berkiheiser is continually working on

ways to meet the needs of these Scouts in a meaningful way.

This past year the “Mason-Dixon” adventure was one of such attempts. While it received modest attention, the following is an article provided by Dave’s son Woody Woodward which may inspire further thinking to satisfy the older scouts needs.

MASON - DIXON ADVENTURE

I've been going to Camp Horseshoe every summer for six years now. Since I was 12, I've been having lots of fun for the week out of each summer that I go there. This year was my last year at camp as a scout, and I decided to try something different. That “something” was the Mason Dixon Adventure, and it was the most fun I've had at camp in a while.

The idea behind the Adventure is to prepare older scouts for high adventure programs, such as Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

Along the way, you practice many skills that would be used on a trip like Philmont. In addition to learning these skills, you also have some fun with side activities, like spar pole climbing, black powder rifle shooting, and tomahawk throwing. It's easily the most enjoyable trip that I've been on in a long while.

You start the week at Camp Horseshoe, like any other week. Then, on Monday morning, you shop for the week's food and head out of camp for five days of backpacking. Each night you make camp, eat, get ready for the next day, and head to bed around sunset. On Friday, you head back to camp and rejoin your troop until Sunday. It really offers a different experience than what you're used to at Horseshoe. Sure, you don't get the great dining hall meals, but the food you have is still great and keeps you going for the whole week. It's a fair trade for what you get out of it.



My favorite activity from the trip was definitely the spar pole climbing on Tuesday. A ranger comes out to set you up with the straps and equipment, and then everyone belays for you. We ended up going up the tree about 30 feet, which is way higher in person than how it sounds.

I'm normally afraid of heights, but I had so much fun with it. The other activities were great, too. Tyler and I both enjoyed the black powder rifles and the tomahawk throwing. Tyler came out on top in shooting, while I was the tomahawk throwing champion of the week.

The best part of the whole experience is the leadership. Our guides, Doug and Chris, are probably two of the nicest guys that I've met at Camp Horseshoe. They know how to have fun, and really know their stuff about backpacking. One



thing that they teach is learning from your mistakes, so they let you lead the way on the hikes. They always know where they're going, and will give you some more direction if you get really off track, but for the most part it's the scouts leading the hikes. It's much better than having your hand held the whole time.

I definitely recommend any older Scouts who want to try something new rather than normal summer camp to go on the Adventure. It's one of the best scouting experiences I've had in a long time, and I don't think that I would have wanted to spend that week any other way.

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FOR MEMBERSHIP DETAILS**

**SERVE ON THE
HSRAA BOARD - GET INVOLVED!**

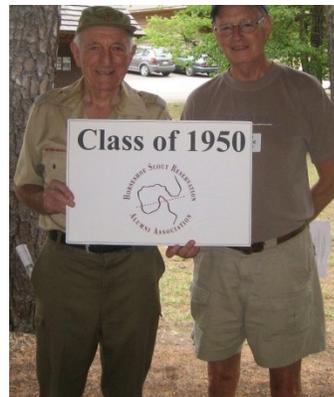
13th REUNION REFLECTIONS



CLASSES BELOW... 1930 + 1940



THE "GANG'S" ALL HERE FOR THE 13TH ANNUAL REUNION!



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Secretary....Stuart Watson
LOOP Editors... JB Rettew, Ellie Rettew**

**Vice Chairman...Jake Segal
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