

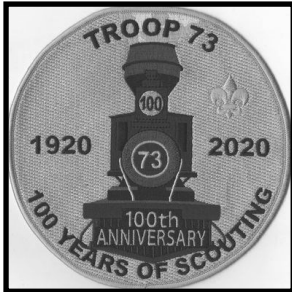


THE SENTINEL

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The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Fall 2020



Patch designed by local scout. (Facebook)

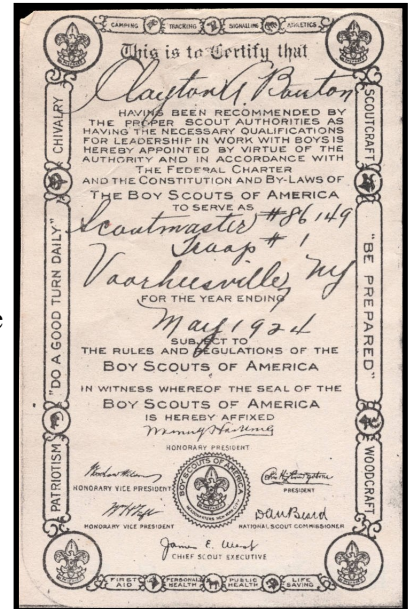
BOY SCOUT TROOP 73: CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF SCOUTING

By Sherry Burgoon, Editor

PART 1

The Boy Scouts of America, now known as BSA, is the largest youth organization in America established in 1910, when the scouting movement was taking place all over the country and world. The BSA's mission is to help youth make ethical and moral choices over their lifetime. Through participation in a wide range of outdoor activities and educational programs, participants are trained in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance.

While many people in the community know of Clayton A. Bouton's contribution to the school system, most may not be aware that he brought the Boy Scouts to the area when a certificate appointed him Scoutmaster of Troop 1 in 1924, signed by Warren Harding, Woodrow Wilson, and Howard Taft. (Troop 1 changed to Troop 73 around 1928.) His leadership of the troop was contingent on completing a scouting course followed by an Advanced Scoutmastership certification. An early entry in the *Altamont Enterprise*, on May 30, 1930, reported the troop's annual hike on Saturday the 24th from the schoolhouse to Mr. Kling's woods. When the boys reached the campsite, they started by cleaning up the area. After the chore was completed, Scoutmaster Bouton, a testament to his understanding of adolescent boys, allowed the boys to play volleyball and baseball. It was no surprise that the scouts chowed down on hot dogs and cake when they were finished!



Certificate establishing Troop 1.



Husky Scouts founding troop.

An early testimonial, written by Ed Herwig, a writer for *The Knickerbocker Press-Albany Evening News* on March 6, 1929, reveals the attributes Mr. Bouton used to establish Troop 73's excellence from its beginning:

Dear Professor: I trust that you will surely reconsider your decision to resign as scoutmaster. There is no one else in this village that can do this work quite as well as you. It is of such tremendous importance to the boys + your direction has meant so much to them already-in fact I do not believe you quite realize just how much your leadership has aided them.....Continue to lead these youngsters-they need a real he-man like you so much. Sincerely, Ed Herwig

Herwig had two sons, Bruce and Harold, who were scouts in the troop.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I hope everyone is safe and we can avoid a second wave of the pandemic as we move into the fall. Our Town has been very cautious in its reopening plans and the Wyman Osterhout Community Center is not yet fully open to the public. The NSHA Board is still meeting remotely as of its September meeting. We have also delayed putting together a program schedule for the 2020-21 season until large gatherings are permissible.

Despite these setbacks NSHA is still forging ahead to preserve and make accessible New Scotland's history. The vast majority of our holdings are now in PastPerfect giving us greater control of and access to our collections than we ever have had. The Pomeroy grant we received in the spring has been used to purchase an enhanced software package from PastPerfect that will allow us ultimately to provide access to information about our collection online. We have also acquired more storage space and services from WIX, which hosts our website and are exploring using e-commerce functions on our website to allow people to sign-up for memberships online.

To compensate for a lack of a program season, we have put together a directory of virtual historic tours and museum visits in this issue of *The Sentinel*. We will continue to add to this list and post it on our website. NSHA and New Scotland were also featured on Bob Cudmore's podcast "The Historian." You can listen to Bob Parmenter, New Scotland Town Historian and me talk about NSHA and New Scotland at the following link. <https://soundcloud.com/obudmore/new-scotlandthe-historiansfriday-july-10-2020>

There are also still volunteer opportunities available with NSHA. We still need to fill our Corresponding Secretary position on the NSHA Board. If you are interested in getting more involved with NSHA, please let any of our Board members know. Together we will get through this period but NSHA can't do it without the support of our membership. So please try to stay connected.

IN MEMORY OF NORMA WALLEY

By Judith Kimes

With fondness and appreciation the NSHA remembers Norma Walley who passed away on July 26, 2020. Born and raised in Feura Bush, Norma resided there for almost all of her 96 years. For as long as she was able, Norma actively participated in our programs and projects. Her recollections of what life was like in her beloved hamlet were treasures. Thankfully, many of Norma's memories have been preserved. She was a contributing writer for the *Images of America: New Scotland Township book*. Also, through NSHA's Oral History Project, through photos she donated, and through information she provided for many *Sentinel* articles, the local history she witnessed remains. In 2007 Norma received the Arthur Pound Award for helping to promote and preserve the history of New Scotland. We are grateful for the legacy Norma has given us.

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On December 31, 1930, the Fort Orange Council, Inc., Boy Scouts of America in Albany, received a letter from Scoutmaster Bouton recounting the heroism of two local Boy Scouts:

“Too much cannot be said in praise of those two Scouts. It is to be hoped that the community will make application for certain forms of recognition which undoubtedly those two Scouts have earned....I think you will be interested in the fact that two of our Scouts, Stuart McLaury and Delosse Gainsley, saved the lives of a pair of twin boys Saturday night by breaking in the window of a burning house and taking the children out. (The letter continues to reveal that a third child could not be located and perished in the fire.) ...so without a doubt all would have burned to death had it not been for the quick actions of the boys.”

The scouters’ actions clearly exemplified a motto of the Boy Scouts **Be Prepared: Do A Good Turn Daily** which can found on Kenneth Jacobson’s registration card stamped May 1938.

While the exact year is uncertain, a **Big Contest in Scouting, Odd Fellow’s Hall** was held. Scouters from Selkirk, South Bethlehem, Delmar, and Altamont assembled to compete in Signaling, First Aid, Bandaging, Knot-tying, Artificial Respiration, and Woodcraft. Clearly, local communities had embraced the scouting program. On February 16, 1933(?) the Odd Fellow’s Hall again hosted the **Voorheesville Boy Scout Jamboree**. Senator William T. Byne would address the community on the Boy Scout Movement.

See For Yourself What Our Boys are Doing
Obedient Cheerful Thrifty Brave Clean Reverent

(Odd Fellow’s Hall is now American Legion Post 1493 which continues to be the sponsor of Troop 73.)

The Voorheesville scouting community, begun by Clayton A. Bouton, continued to thrive under the leadership of numerous dads and moms who continued his legacy. In the next issue, the continued successes of Troop 73 will be shared.



Part of registration card 1938.

Sources: nyshistoricalnewspaper.org *Altamont Enterprise* articles

New York Heritage digital collections <https://voorheesvillelibrary.org/pdfs/LHTroop73.pdf>

Editor’s note: The Voorheesville Public Library houses an extensive collection of Troop 73 archives donated by Robin Coughtry, son of longtime Scoutmaster Howard Coughtry. As I undertook the writing of Troop 73’s rich 100 year history, I was astounded by the wealth of information which could be shared. In the next issue of *The Sentinel*, I will focus on sharing the continued work of Bill Morrison, Howard Coughtry, and Ray Ginter, along with many other scoutmasters who have continued to enrich the hundreds of scouters under their dedicated leadership.

DOING WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE,PART 2 VJ DAY AN THE END OF WWII

By Judith Kimes

Seventy-five years ago, on September 2, 1945, formal surrender documents were signed aboard the USS Missouri designating the day as the official Victory Over Japan Day and therefore the end of World War II. Imperial Japan actually surrendered on August 15, 1945, and this day brought joyful, yet in some ways, sober celebration throughout our land.

On August 17, 1945, the *Altamont Enterprise* wrote above its title banner, "Peace Returns to a War-Torn World!" A front-page article with the heading "History's Most Terrible Avalanche of Death and Destruction Concludes with Japan's Unconditional Surrender," credited the surrender to: 1) the use of the first atomic bomb and 2) Russia's entry into the Far Eastern Conflict on the side of the Allies. Quoting President Truman: "This is the day for democracies. This is the day when we can start on our real task of implementation of free government in the world."

The use of the first atomic bomb was a decision that has caused many to wrestle with their consciences to this day. In her letter home dated 8 Aug. 1945, two days after the bombing of Hiroshima, Army Nurse Lt. Belva Gardiner of Westerlo, serving in a hospital near Paris, France, wrote the following::

"After reading about this atomic bomb, I feel a little shaky. Somehow I can't rejoice over it and sigh only a prayer of relief that we discovered it first. It will likely be a deciding factor in this war but what about the future? Is mankind destroying himself by his own hand? This harnessing of the powers of the universe sounds like comic strip nonsense or something pretty horrible since national greed and foul play will not cease because a war ends. It gives me a weird feeling and this war has been horrible enough."

On its website, the National World War II Museum offers the following as one consideration leading to the decision to use the atomic bomb:

"The battles for Iwo Jima and Okinawa during the first half of 1945 were marked by spectacular carnage, and America was chastened by the knowledge that Japan had never surrendered to a foreign power and that no Japanese military unit had surrendered during WWII."

And so, nine days after Hiroshima and seven days after Nagasaki, Imperial Japan surrendered.

Changes to the lives of Americans came almost immediately. In its August 17, 1945, issue the *Altamont Enterprise* reported that the printing of new ration books for food, gasoline, and shoes was canceled. Gas rationing would end the day after surrender. Also, the rationing of canned fruits and vegetables, fuel oil, and oil stoves came to an end. News, radio, and mail censorship would end on the official VJ Day (September 2, 1945).

Across the Atlantic, Army Nurse Lt. Belva Gardiner and her unit, who had been expecting orders to the CBI (the China-Burma-India Theater), continued caring for the wounded and prisoners of war at the First General Hospital set up in a repurposed school near Paris, France. On 2 September 1945, she wrote, "The injured and lame still arrive, so we will have to stay until some other unit comes to relieve us. Had it not been for the sudden favorable turn of events in the Pacific, I would have been Pacific-bound by now. Things sure exploded in a hurry over there. It means fewer broken bodies. I sometimes wonder if I could have survived another winter like last winter was. But I know I could have – human endurance is pretty elastic on necessity. V.J. Day over here was quiet compared to V.E. Day. It is so wonderful to have it all over."

(continued from page 4)



Aunt Belva (R.) and three of her friends standing in front of the hospital. The soldier is Belva's cousin, a paratrooper on leave who was sent to fight in the Pacific.



Two of Aunt Belva's fellow nurses in front of the school that had been turned into a hospital.

Belva's unit, First General Hospital, was relieved of duty by the 239th General Hospital on September 15, 1945. Due to Army ways and a dock strike, she finally docked in Boston on November 20 and arrived home on leave to Westerlo on November 26th.

World War II had come to an end. In that first *Altamont Enterprise* issue written after the surrender of Japan, the concluding paragraph of its editorial reads:

"Man dies to bring peace; he must cherish it. He must trust and have faith. He must not deceive. He must spread the doctrine of equality. He must guarantee that equality. In that guarantee all wars will end, and peace will endure." -Lansing Christman for the Editors of *The Enterprise*

Seventy-five years later, so be it.



Aunt Belva (L.) and a fellow nurse in front of the hospital sign.



The Canteen at the hospital. The walking wounded could go there for snacks and recreation. The women tending the snack bar are French citizens.

Sources:

The Altamont Enterprise: August 17, 1945.

Gardiner, Belva. *The Life and Times of an Army Nurse 1942-1946*. Self-published, 1986.

www.nationalww2museum.org.

With thanks to Donald Slingerland for providing photos from his Gardiner/Slingerland archives.

SUNSHINES CORNER
BUCKAROO STORY
By MaryBeth Felice

The days are long - but the nights are pretty short. The wrangler said, “Up at 4, breakfast at 5.” So here we are, mumbling, but moving.

Soldier Meadows Ranch – the most isolated place in the United States – 65 miles from the nearest paved road. There are no phones, no TV, no radio. The rancher has a little generator which makes electricity for the place. We had to drive for 4 hours from the Reno airport, half an hour across a flat sandy desert called “the Playa,” to get there. There were no roads, no signs, only tire tracks in the sand to lead us to our destination. And how close is the nearest town? Who knows?! It took an hour and a half to drive there; that’s where the closest phone was.



The work here is very hard – hardly a vacation. There are no trees, no trees, so we work directly in the sun all day. When the rancher said, “Up at 4, out at 5:30,” we know why. The sun comes rolling up by 6:30, hot and blazing.

The ranch is very desolate. It is so big....you just can’t imagine. There are some trees planted near the house, but they are the only trees around. The rest of the land is sage brush, gray and brown. In some places the sage is blooming, and there are sweet yellow flowers. But for the most part it looks like the surroundings are all the same color.

On our first day rounding up cows we saw a horny toad during a break. What a creature! He really is a little lizard, but he looks like a miniature dinosaur from ages past.

The ground here is dry, hard and rocky. It was formed by a volcano millions of years ago. There are large chunks of this black rock everywhere. How the horses are able to walk on it, I don’t know. There is no green, no grass. What do these critters eat? Suddenly, there goes a bunny. Even he is the color of the ground. If he had stood still we would never have seen him. He has long, long thin ears. They look like a dragonfly’s wings. What does he eat?

Yesterday morning we were on our horses and riding by 5:30 a.m. “ranch time.” We split into 2 groups to “gather” 2 different herds, join them up and move them to another pasture. Our head wrangler is a woman named Charmaine. She has long hair down to her shoulders from under her Stetson hat. Oh, it looks so hot! She can ride like the wind, and she is so fierce with those cows that they always run on ahead of her. And she wears a white long-sleeved shirt every day. We all wear long sleeves and long pants to hide us from the sun. But white? It is the color of dust when we return.

We each wear a “cowboy bandana.” When we are parched from the sun, we soak them from our water bottles, and tie them, dripping, on our necks. Oh, it feels so good.....our own little air conditioner!

The days of “pushing” cows are dusty. The wrangler says his son is 14 and has seen rain only twice in his life. When you are behind the herd, the dust clouds roll up. That’s when we take those bandanas and tie them over our nose and mouth; a private air filter. Those little colorful bandanas are very useful!

Tune in to the Winter 2020 issue to learn about the following days and events of the trip.

Research, virtual tours, and hiking suggestions during COVID-19

Since NSHA is unable to book programs at the community center at this time, we hope you find this guide helpful in maintaining your search and love of local history.

From AnnMarie Hess, NSHA Exhibits Chair

- 1) Historic Albany Foundation (HAF); virtual tour of 48 Hudson:
<https://www.historic-albany.org/48virtualtour>
- 2) The NYS Library (NYSL) is encouraging citizens to submit their COVID-19 journals to the NYSL.
<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/mssc/covid19/>
- 3) NYS Museum (NYSM) virtual tours:
<http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/programs/program-series/virtual-field-trips>
- 4) NYS Archives (NYSA) always features an online exhibit on their home page:
<http://www.archives.nysed.gov>

NYSA Digital Collections also features online exhibits. The current exhibit is "Public Health in New York State" <http://digitalcollections.archives.nysed.gov/index.php/Gallery/Index>

5) Ten Broeck Mansion is asking for submissions to "project postcard". Residents can write their experience, thoughts, etc. about living through the COVID pandemic on a postcard. Request a postcard kit: kathryn@tenbroeckmansion.org

- 6) <https://empirestateplaza.ny.gov/virtual-visit>

From Sarah Clark, Voorheesville Library Director: <https://www.iloveny.com/blog/post/new-york-states-best-online-events-virtual-tours-and-livecams/> Some of the museums and sites are reopening, and we are lending out our passes for those that are open. Many of them require reservations, but can accommodate the free library pass when you make the reservation. This is the list of museums we have passes to that are open: Mass MoCA, Hancock Shaker Village, Binghamton Zoo, Olana, Venfort Hall, Albany Institute of History and Art, Eric Carle (says it is only open to members), Arkell Museum, Bennington Museum, The Clark, Berkshire Museum.

Books to consider: "Native American and Pioneer Sites of Upstate New York," Sarah adds: . I requested "50 Hikes in the Upper Hudson Valley," because we have "50 Hikes in the Lower Hudson Valley," and it has a really helpful guide at the front of the book that includes historic information like "historic pathway," "historic mine," and "old cemetery." Call the reference desk for access to these titles.

From Sherry Burgoon: You Tube: "Deadliest Plague of the 20th Century: Flu of 1918" You Tube is a great resource for any topic you are looking to research.

Due to space limitations, we are unable to print the membership application. You may contact Amy Heebner at 518-765-2272 for information.

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Museum Hours

**Due to COVID-19 the
museum will be closed
until further notice**

THE SENTINEL

New Scotland Historical Association

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