

Willistown Troop 78

90th Anniversary Celebration

Eagle Court of Honor and Field Day



Willistown Troop 78 90th Anniversary Celebration

Eagle Court of Honor and Field Day

Program of Events

FIELD DAY EVENTS - 3:00 PM to about 4:30 PM at the Scout Cabin

Troop 78's patrols compete in various skill events as they attempt to win the coveted Field Day trophy. For 70 years, Troop 78 has been holding this Inter-Patrol competition to determine the top patrol in Scout skills. The events today are still much the same as those of years ago.

Events include:

- Log chopping
- Chariot race
- 9-knot sequence
- Water boiling
- Flint and steel
- String burning
- Knot relay

EAGLE AWARD CEREMONY 4:30 – 5:00 (promptly following Field Day Events)

ALUMNI and FAMILY PICNIC – about 5:00 PM (promptly following Eagle Award Ceremony)

Following Field Day and the Eagle presentations, Scouts, families and Alumni are invited to stay for food and conversation. Meet the other parents and adults involved with Troop 78. Roasted pig, hot dogs and hamburgers (including vegetarian burgers) will be served, along with family-provided salads and side dishes. Dessert consists of the traditional Eagle Scout cake.

Dear Willistown Troop 78 members, alumni, friends and families,

Welcome to Troop 78's 90th (plus 2!) anniversary celebration! After a two-year pandemic-related delay, we are happy to gather, in-person, to commemorate this landmark event.

We are also holding Field Day in concert with our celebration today. Field Day provides our Scouts with the opportunity to demonstrate the many Scouting skills that we practice throughout the Scout year. Scouts will "show their stuff" with flint-and-steel fire starting; nine knot tying; the heaving bar; and other Troop 78 Scouting traditions. These events are familiar to every Scout who has been in the Troop at any time over the past many decades. We take great pride in keeping our history alive through Patrols that also have been in existence for most of the Troop's years. We are pleased that so many of our alumni are joining us today to celebrate our Troop's past.



Field Day winner: Rattlesnake, 2015



Order of the Arrow tap out

As we honor our past, Troop 78 continues to evolve to meet the needs of today's youth. Our geographic footprint continues to grow as boys from across Chester County enter our program. From skiing in Vermont to historic trips to Virginia; from hiking the Appalachian Trail in New Jersey to summiting Philmont's Mount Baldy in New Mexico; from canoeing the wilds of Canada's Algonquin Provincial Park to conversing with Scouts from around the world in Switzerland's Kandersteg International Scout Centre; and of course, from our traditional 2 week summer sojourn to our beloved Camp Horseshoe in the loop of the Octoraro bend to our annual pilgrimage to Florida and Disney World, Troop 78 provides today's young people with both high adventure and new adventures. At the same time, we continue to serve our neighbors at the Radnor Races, The Willistown Conservation Trust, Main Line Animal Rescue and others, and to provide our local Cub packs with Den Chiefs. We take to heart our obligation to provide young people with leadership opportunities that will help them develop into committed and concerned

citizens.

We hope today will be the first day of continued engagement with our alumni and Troop friends. To that end, we have an active Alumni group that holds regular activities, and we invite you to participate in them. Learn more about the Troop 78 Alumni group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/170140313153085/?ref=share>.

Enjoy today's festivities. Thank you for joining us. And get ready for our Centennial celebration in just eight short years!

Yours in Scouting,

David Dondero Troop Committee Chair

Steve D'Antonio Scoutmaster

Ernie Heegard ASM and Scoutmaster Emeritus



Closing circle: Scoutmaster's Benediction

Reflections of a Troop 78 Alumnus

I always tell people that “All I ever needed to survive in life I learned in Boy Scouts.” And it was because of what I learned as a member of Willistown 78, that I have really enjoyed my life. There were so many wonderful moments growing up in the Troop: Going to the 1957 Jamboree at Valley Forge with 5 other members of our Troop; being on the first of the large expeditions to Algonquin (we'll forget about the five mile portage!); traveling to Philmont with five other 78ers; earning Eagle Scout with two of my best friends, Marc Gruss and Ron Walter; being the first in the Troop to earn the God & Country Award; serving in many leadership positions in the Troop; and for many years being a member of the Horseshoe Staff - always working with a great group of 78ers - including my last year when I served as Program Director under the best Camp Director of all time, Ernie Heegard.

What our Troop gave me, and so many others, was a chance to find out who we were and what we were able to do. There was always a history of excellence in the Troop that we all wanted to perpetuate. I feel we did that, and that excellence still continues to this day. There has always been the talk of how “you never get the dust of Horseshoe out of your moccasins; but I also feel that you never get the sense of pride that you feel as a member of Willistown Troop 78 out of each one of us that has been lucky enough to wear that 78 on our uniform sleeve.

Congratulations to Willistown Troop 78 on their 90+2 Anniversary.

John Souder, Flying Eagle Patrol, 1955



Pasta Night: Joe Cady, Bill Trowill



Nathan S, David L, Bill P, Julian L



Rehoboth: Mr. D. and Jake Schallack



Chester County Council Camporee



Radnor Races: Nate Motel, Francis Purcell

92 Years of Troop (and World!) History in Review

When Troop 78 was founded in Willistown in 1930, the world, to say the least, was a very different place. Here, we look back and consider some of the major events in the history of Troop, and juxtapose them with happenings in the region, in the US, and in the world:

1930 – Troop: Troop 78 is founded, with Donald Hughs as Scoutmaster; Ossie Spellman is SPL; Troop is sponsored by the Green Tree Consolidated School, Home and School League (later to become the PTA). World: Philadelphia A's win 2nd straight World Series; Pluto discovered

1931 – Troop: First Eagle Scout rank awarded to Elwood "Ossie" Spellman; John Simpson becomes Scoutmaster. World: Empire State Building opens; "Star-Spangled Banner" becomes US national anthem

1935 – Scouts: First National Jamboree canceled due to polio outbreak. World: Italy invades Ethiopia

1937 – Troop: Elwood "Ossie" Spellman becomes Scoutmaster. World: First National Jamboree held in Washington DC; Ford employees unionize

1938 – Scouts: Philmont Scout Ranch opens. World: Nazi Germany annexes Austria and Sudetenland

1939 – Troop: 2nd Eagle Scout awarded. World: Nazis invade Poland and spark World War II

1940 – Troop: 3rd Eagle Scout awarded. World: PA Turnpike opens; Churchill becomes Prime Minister of UK, which then endures "the Blitz"

1941 – Troop: John Simpson returns as Scoutmaster. World: Williams bats .400; DiMaggio hits in 56 straight games; Japan attacks Pearl Harbor

1944 – Troop: Richard "Link" Rice becomes Scoutmaster; Patrol names are changed to Flying Eagle and Stag; The Troop is now sponsored by "A Group of Citizens" and the VFW Post 5203. World: D-Day landings

1947 – Troop: Moose Patrol is added; The Troop moves to a former summer house on the VFW property, which will be "home" until 2002. World: Jackie Robinson integrates baseball; Yeager breaks sound barrier

1948 – Troop: First Patrol of the Year is awarded to the Moose Patrol under PL Ernie Heegard. World: Eagles win first NFL championship; Truman defeats Dewey

1949 – Troop: Ernie Heegard wins first Scout of the Year award. World: Communists win Chinese Civil War

1950 – Troop: Ernie Heegard becomes Troop's 4th Eagle Scout, and is first recipient of consecutive Scout of the Year awards. World: 2nd National Jamboree held in Valley Forge; "Whiz Kid" Phillies win NL pennant; Korean War erupts





Troop 78 at Gettysburg

1951 – Troop: Eagle Scout ranks 5 and 6 awarded; Emil Vogely becomes Scoutmaster; Moose Patrol wins first Field Day; Ernie Heegard first to complete two years as SPL. World: Truman fires MacArthur

1952 – Troop: 7th Eagle Scout rank awarded. World: Ike elected US President

1953 – Troop: 78 wins first of 69 (and counting) straight Clean Camp Awards at Horseshoe; Eagle Scouts 8 through 10 recognized; T. Edgar Walter, Jr. becomes Scoutmaster. World: Ceasefire halts Korean War; Mount Everest summited

1954 – Troop: J. Anderson Wilson becomes Scoutmaster. World: Army-McCarthy hearings

1955 – Troop: Ernie Heegard becomes Scoutmaster; Stag Patrol wins third straight Field Day to set standing record. World: first polio vaccine

1956 – Troop: Stan Burkey becomes second consecutive SPL to serve two years. World: Elvis on Ed Sullivan Show shown on TV from waist up

1957 – Troop: 11th Eagle Scout rank awarded; Panther Patrol added; Scouts attend Valley Forge Jamboree and Philmont Scout Ranch. World: Soviets launch Sputnik

1958 – Troop: 12th Eagle Scout; Rattlesnake Patrol added; Troop takes first trip to Algonquin Park; first year at Dan Beard campsite; four 78 Scouts visit Philmont. World: Edsel flops; hula hoop craze sweeps US

1959 – Troop: Troop takes road trip to New Orleans; Ernie leads 9 Scouts on trek to Philmont. World: Alaska and Hawaii become 49th and 50th US states; Castro assumes power in Cuba

1960 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 13, 14, and 15. World: JFK bests Nixon in first televised Presidential debate; US U-2 spy plane shot down over Soviet Union

1961 – Troop: 16th Eagle Scout; Ronald Walter becomes first three-time Scout of the Year recipient. World: JFK elected US President; Bay of Pigs invasion fails

1964 – Troop: 17th Eagle Scout; Scouts attend Valley Forge Jamboree. World: Beatles on Ed Sullivan; Gulf of Tonkin incident (Vietnam War)

1965 – Troop: 18th Eagle Scout; David Jones becomes only winner of 3 straight Scout of the Year awards. World: Voting Rights Act enacted; first spacewalks

1966 – Troop: 19th Eagle Scout; Troop buys first bus - a faded yellow 1953 International later painted blue and white - nicknamed "Old Blue." World: Joe Paterno becomes Penn State football coach; construction starts on World Trade Center in Manhattan

1967 – Troop: First Spring break trip to Florida with a Troop bus. World: Philadelphia Flyers join NHL; 76ers win NBA championship; fire on Apollo 1 kills 3 astronauts; Beatles release Sgt. Pepper

1969 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 20, 21, and 22. World: Woodstock; Apollo 11 lands on Moon



OA project: Mr. D, Rob Duff, Jim Fox, Pete Motel, Ernie



1970 – Troop: 23rd and 24th Eagle Scouts; Cougar becomes 6th Troop patrol; Rattlesnake takes First Place at Council Camporee. World: Connie Mack Stadium closes; Penn Central Railroad goes bankrupt; Beatles break up

1971 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 25 through 28 – including Steve D’Antonio (# 26) – new record of 4 Eagles in a year; 40 Scouts and leaders take the first trip to Kandersteg International Scout Centre. World: Veterans Stadium opens; Pentagon Papers; Disney World (Magic Kingdom) opens

1972 – Troop: First Oil heater installed in cabin; First Troop trip to Disney World. World: Hurricane Agnes devastates Horseshoe and East Coast; Watergate break-in occurs

1973 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 29, 30, and 31. World: Vietnam War ends; Arab Oil Embargo; Agnew resigns as VP and is replaced by Eagle Scout Gerald Ford

1974 – Troop: 32nd, 33rd, and 34th Eagle Scouts; Geoff Ellison sets Nine-Knot Sequence record at Field Day (0:20.2). World: Flyers win first Stanley Cup; Nixon resigns; Ford becomes US President



Appalachian Trail

1975 – Troop: 35th Eagle Scout; “Old Blue” is sold for \$500 and a Troop purchases a 1966 International for \$3,057. World: Flyers win 2nd Stanley Cup; SNL debuts

1976 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 36 and 37. World: US celebrates Bicentennial



1977 – Troop: 38th and 39th Eagle Scouts. World: Star Wars, Saturday Night Fever debut at the movies

1978 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 40 to 43; 34 Scouts and 18 adults make first Virgin Islands trip; Troop begins driveway coating as fundraiser and pays off all debts. World: Atlantic City gambling debuts; “Year of Three Popes”; Camp David Accords; Panama Canal Treaties ratified

1979 – Troop: 44th and 45th Eagle Scouts; Todd Bettenhausen and Charlie Fry set Water Boiling record at Field Day (5:00). New bus engine purchased for \$750; Scout cabin broken into and much equipment taken. World: Revolution and hostage crisis in Iran

1980 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 46 and 47; Derek Shackelford sets Fire by Friction record at Field Day (0:24.34). World: Phillies win first World Series; “Miracle on Ice”; US boycotts Moscow Olympics; Solidarity labor union formed in Poland

1981 – Troop: 48th Eagle Scout. World: President Reagan shot and survives; AIDS pandemic

1982 – Troop: Second Virgin Islands trip; first Troop hoagie sale. World: 1 millionth Eagle Scout rank awarded; Vietnam Memorial completed; Falklands War

1983 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 49 and 50. World: 76ers win NBA title; Beirut barracks bombing; Grenada invasion

1984 – Troop: First Recruit of the Year award goes to Tim Spritzer; 51st Eagle Scout awarded. The 1966 bus is sold for \$2000 and a 1974 International bus is purchased for \$6,500. World: “Where’s the beef?” commercial airs; Soviets boycott LA Olympics

1985 – Troop: 52nd Eagle Scout; Chet Darlington and Jeff Palmer set String-Burning record at Field Day (4:05). World: Live AID in Philly and London; Titanic wreck located

1986 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 53, 54, and 55; second trip to KISC. World: Chernobyl nuclear meltdown

1987 – Troop: 56th, 57th, and 58th Eagle Scouts. World: Reagan delivers “Tear down this wall” speech

1988 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 59 and 60; Troop returns to Virgin Islands. World: Soviets withdraw from Afghanistan; Pan Am 103 Lockerbie bombing

1989 – Troop: 61st and 62nd Eagle Scouts; Troop assists with Radnor Races for the first time. World: Berlin Wall falls; Tiananmen Square; The Simpsons debuts; World Wide Web founded

1990 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 63, 64, and 65. World: Germany reunified; Nelson Mandela released from jail

1991 – Troop: 66th Eagle Scout; unparalleled four-way tie for Recruit of the Year. World: Operation Desert Storm; USSR collapses

1992 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 67, 68, and 69. World: Dream Team dominates Olympic hoops

1993 – Troop: 70th and 71st Eagle Scouts; 23 Scouts and Leaders journey to the Virgin Islands. Bus number 4 is purchased, a 1984 model International. World: World Trade Center bombed

1994 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 72 through 76 – new record of 5 Eagles in a year; Steve D’Antonio becomes Scoutmaster. World: Strike cancels World Series; apartheid ends in South Africa



Dance Team

1995 – Troop: 77th, 78th, and 79th Eagle Scouts; ACHGEKETUM AWARD, given to Outstanding Junior Leader of Willistown Troop 78, established in Honor of G. Ernest Heegard; first recipient is SPL Brian Williams; Brian Lutz sets Flint and Steel record (0:04) as Moose patrol wins Field Day for third consecutive year. World: Oklahoma City bombing

1996 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 80 and 81. World: Taliban takes power in Afghanistan

1997 – Troop: A.J. DiAntonio first to win two Achgeketum Awards; Eagle Scouts # 82 to 86. World: Tiger Woods wins first Masters; Princess Diana dies; first Harry Potter book



1998 – Troop: 87th and 88th Eagle Scouts. Trip to Virgin Islands includes night snorkeling with “Ernest” from the Jamaican Bobsled team. World: Bill Clinton impeached; Good Friday Accords in Northern Ireland

1999 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 89 through 93. Brochure developed to solicit funds for a new Scout cabin. World: Lance Armstrong wins first Tour de France; EU adopts Euro as official currency

2000 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 94 to 99 – new record of 6 Eagles in a year. World: Bush v. Gore; dot-com bubble bursts

2001 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 100 to 103; Friends of Troop 78 teams with VFW Post 5203 co-sponsor Troop; new cabin is constructed at 15 Mill Road. World: 9/11 attacks

2002 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 104 to 106; new cabin is dedicated. World: Tom Brady wins first Super Bowl

2003 – Troop: Brett D’Antonio awarded the inaugural Compass Award for continuous leadership and commitment to the Troop as a junior leader, making him first Recruit/Scout of the Year, Achgeketum and Compass Award winner in Troop history; Eagle Scouts # 107 to 112, including a record 5 in one day; bus number 5 is purchased, a 2003 model International with a diesel engine; “Order of the Old Loon” established by Troop Committee members. World: US and international coalition invade Iraq

2004 – Troop: 113th, 114th, and 115th Eagle Scouts; first caving trip to Laurel Caverns; first Pasta Night at the new cabin; first poinsettia sale. World: Facebook founded; earthquake and tsunami rock Indian Ocean

2005 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 116, 117, and 118; celebration of Troop’s 75th birthday; Ernie’s 60th consecutive year at Horseshoe. World: Hurricane Katrina

2006 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 119 to 124; Mike Spritzer retires as newsletter editor after 20+ years; Camp Horseshoe hammered by rain. World: Pluto loses status as planet

2007 – Troop: 125th Eagle Scout; Pole Barn completed. World: First iPhone released

2008 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 126 through 129; third trip to KISC. World: Phillies win World Series; Barack Obama becomes first Black person elected US President



Rainy Radnor



Pasta Night



Getting ready for backpacking



Council First Aid Meet

2009 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 130 to 133. World: “Miracle on the Hudson”; swine flu pandemic

2010 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 134 to 143, including 6 in one afternoon – both new Troop records. A seventh patrol (Badger) is added when 20 new Scouts join. World: BSA turns 100; BP oil spill

2011 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 144 to 149; long-time beloved ASM Bill (Doc) Lenker dies. World: SEAL Team Six kills bin Laden; Space Shuttle retired

2012 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 150 through 153; fourth trip to KISC. Troop attends invitation-only West Point Camporee; Jim Donnelly throws out the first pitch at 78’s Reading Phillies game outing; Scout cabin on Grubb Rd. demolished by township. World: Hurricane Sandy devastates East Coast; Costa Concordia wrecks off of Italian coast

2013 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 154 to 159; Compass Award named in honor of James J. Donnelly on the occasion of his 90th birthday, in recognition of six decades of Troop 78 leadership; Troop visits the 9/11 memorial in NYC and tours the Freedom Tower under construction; Troop takes first SCUBA trip to Florida Seabase; Troop sells hoagies for 30th year, topping 42,000 in total sales; BSA opens Summit Bechtel Reserve in WV. World: Boston Marathon bombing

2014 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 160 to 167; Troop assists with Radnor Races for 25th year; Mr. D recognized for 20 years of service as Scoutmaster. World: Russia annexes Crimea

2015 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 168 to 172; 2nd Florida Seabase trip. World: US resumes diplomatic ties with Cuba; Paris Climate Agreement signed

2016 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 173 to 180; fifth trip to KISC; Troop buys bus number 6, a 2008 rear engine Activity Bus with air conditioning, for \$27,500. World: Brexit vote

2017 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 181 to 185. New cabin is named Achgekatum Lodge in honor of Ernie Heegard; Troop sweeps top 5 slots at Council First Aid meet; Sea Base trip #3. World: Solar eclipse visible across eastern US

2018 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 186 through 190. Troop makes first ski trip to Vermont; Troop donates and builds all new tent platforms for Dan Beard campsite; Troop holds first annual International Food festival celebrating multi-cultural heritage. World: Eagles win Super Bowl LII; US holds first summit with North Korea

2019 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 191 to 197; second Vermont Ski trip; Troop attends Chester Co. Council’s 100th Anniversary Camporee; Ernie is honored as Chester Co. Council Citizen of the Year World: Fire guts Notre Dame Cathedral

2020 – Troop: 198th, 199th, and 200th Eagle Scouts; Many Scouting events go virtual after Covid shutdowns, Troop holds first Virtual campout, meetings later resume outdoors; Luke Fox sets Heaving Bar record at Field Day (0:21);

Nick Opeilski sets Junior Heaving Bar record at Field Day (0:23.25). Troop's 90th anniversary celebration postponed
World: COVID-19 pandemic; vaccine distribution begins by year's end

2021 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 201 through 205; Troop alumni hold “Franksgiving” gathering at Cabin. World: US Capitol riot occurs; COVID-19 vaccine becomes widely available

2022 – Troop: Eagle Scouts # 206 to 210; third Vermont Ski trip; 6th trip to KISC in August; 90th (+2) anniversary celebration in June. World: Inflation, supply chain issues; Russia invades Ukraine.



Kandersteg International Scout Centre



Troop 78 at the Matterhorn



Super Hero Captain Jake, ready for the belly flop contest



Rays Hill Tunnel abandoned section of the PA Turnpike

“In the Loop of the Octoraro Bend”: Three Eagle Scouts Reflect on Troop 78’s Summer Camp Experience

Every summer since its founding in 1930 (except 2020), Troop 78 has traveled to western Chester County and spent two weeks at Camp Horseshoe on the Octoraro River. It is hard to figure out whether more things have changed or stayed constant over the years at Horseshoe. Awhile back, three Eagle Scouts and longtime Scouters from Troop 78 – Ernie Heegard, Jack Bilson, and Michael Bennett – compared notes and attempted to answer that question. The three soon found that they had at least one thing in common – they had all attended Summer Camp with Ernie! “Ern”, as he is widely known in the Troop, has not missed a Summer Camp since his first two-week stay at Horseshoe in 1946 – first as a Scout (1946-52), then as an Assistant Scoutmaster (1952-55), then for nearly four decades as Scoutmaster (1955-94), and most recently as Scoutmaster Emeritus (1994-present). For 29 years while he was Scoutmaster, Ernie served as Camp Director.



Flag raising in Dan Beard campsite



Marching practice

The initial changes the Willistown trio noted were physical. When Ernie had arrived at Horseshoe in 1946, the camp road (now Old Camp Road) crossed the Octoraro at the Blue Bridge and then wound up the river’s east bank, culminating in the Loop Road. By the time the elder Bilson (whose son, Ethan, would later also join the ranks of Willistown 78 Eagle Scouts) arrived as a first-year Scout in 1983, the New Camp Road winding over the hills of Cecil and Chester Counties had been built, as had the Dan Beard campsite. The Loop Road, however, was still there, and Jack Bilson remembers it well – his family circled it for a full half-hour before finding Dan Beard! By the time Michael spent his first week at Horseshoe in 2006, the camp had largely assumed its current appearance, with a few striking exceptions. Most notably, the Dining Hall was smaller and did not yet sport any outside hand-washing stations, as it would starting in the summer of 2009.



Quiet time at the Dan Beard Adirondack

When Ernie first attended Camp Horseshoe, Scouts arriving for their then-standard two-week stay were divided up by campsite, not by Troop. This tradition lives on at retreat as each Senior Patrol Leader announces their Troop’s campsite. By contrast, both Jack Bilson and Michael Bennett stayed with their fellow 78’ers, both under Ernie’s watchful eye. Although Scouts from Troop 78 tended to sleep in almost until 8 AM breakfast in the 1980s – Jack Bilson recalled literally pulling some Rip Van Winkles out of their bunks – this had changed by the early 2010s, as Michael and fellow senior Scouts made sure everyone was up by 7 AM for Troop inspection. By contrast, the three Scouters’ experiences once inside the Dining Hall were remarkably similar.



Fresh paint



Ernie leads the dining hall in song

Ernie recollected all sorts of cheers and jeers from his tenure as a Scout, such as: Two bits, four bits, six bits, a dollar! All those for Crockett – stand up and holler!

Another favorite came whenever a waiter dropped something: Johnny, get the drip pan! Johnny, get the drip pan! 46, 47, 48, 49 - razz-berries!

Jack Bilson also recalled many exciting cheers from his days in the Troop; in fact, many of them were still in use when his son Ethan attended Summer Camp alongside Michael years later.

The conversation finally turned to the program of activities offered at Horseshoe over the years. During his time as a Scout, Ernie remembered, each campsite was home to a specific program area. For example, Boonesboro was home to Campcraft, while Taylor housed Aquatics. Only one nature merit badge was offered at the time – specifically, Bird Study – and, decades later, Ernie still clearly recollected the “agony” of waking up at 4:30 AM to observe bird calls. While the programs had generally shifted to their modern-day areas by the time Jack Bilson got to Horseshoe, Trailblazers did not yet exist, and the COPE course had not yet been constructed. Instead, rappelling walls that he described as “a little taller than they should have been” stood in Campcraft. Throughout Michael’s Scouting tenure, Horseshoe generally had the same program areas it does today, although young Bennett personally heard Ernie’s 4:30 AM reveille story with no little envy. Michael remembered well a midnight wake-up call for an Emergency Preparedness drill.



Waiting for Retreat

In the end, the three Troop 78 Eagle Scouts agreed that, while the setting and the details of the Troop 78 Horseshoe experience had changed from the 1940s to the 1980s to the 2010s, the essence of the experience itself had stayed constant. Although adults were always available to step in and give guidance, the boys themselves made up heart of the experience. Older, more mature Scouts led the Troop by example, modeling upstanding behavior for younger Scouts, mentoring them, and, ultimately, handing the reins over to them as they grew into the Troop's next generation of leaders. While there have always plenty of chances to grow and personally develop throughout the Scouting year, Ernie, Jack, and Michael all agreed that the weeks they had spent at Camp Horseshoe had been among the most formative of their youths. None of them would have wanted it any other way, and all hoped that the next 90 years of Scouting in Willistown would give generations of Troop 78 Scouts to come the same opportunities.



Marching trophy 2017: Andrew B, Jay M, Nate M



Winter Camp at Browning Lodge



The "new" bus



Rainout indoor Water Carnival



OA work project

Field day

By Brian Herb

Since the reunion will be held on a Field Day, I thought it appropriate to recount stories of Field Day's past. Personally, winning Field Day with the Rattlesnake patrol back in 1992 was one of my proudest moments as a scout. The competition was very close that year, but with the help of Chip Childers and the rest of the patrol, we narrowly beat the Moose patrol. Moose patrol was very strong that year, with Brian Williams at the helm, assisted by Brian "Bucket head" Lutz and James "Jim Bob" Pine - who took a little too long on the square knot during the knot relay, arguing the mechanics of the knot with the judge.

Well, Moose patrol would recover, and go on to win the next three years, helped greatly by their mastery in fire events. Brian Lutz perfected the flint and steel - his technique was to strike the quartz rock once, assuming it would spark, then grab the nest and throw it in the air, lighting along the way (hence the 4 second record). Moose patrol also got creative with the water boiling one year. I believe Brian Williams either found or hid a dead Christmas tree in the woods around the cabin. By May, that tree was very dry, and they essentially grabbed the tree, placed the water bucket in the middle and lit the whole tree in a great conflagration. I don't see this on the troop record, so perhaps they were disqualified, but that water boiled in 2 minutes. Needless to say, Christmas trees were banned after that.



Field Day winner 2019, Stag Patrol

Kandersteg

By Chris Duncan

Although I have a tragically bad memory, there are still moments from Troop 78 outings, meetings and minutia that I think of often. One large memory that stands out is the troop's trip to Kandersteg in 2012, more specifically the small crew that journeyed up to Fründen Glacier and Fründenhutte for an overnight stay. To begin, we took a gondola from street level up to the beautiful Oeschinensee, a pristine lake fed by melting snow from the mountains that surround it. This ensured that our suffering would be limited throughout the repeated switchbacks that climbed 1000m over just a 2km distance, or about 3300 feet in 1.25 miles for the real Americans.



Ice face in Switzerland
Eli Bravo, Chris Duncan

After ascending what seemed like an infinite set of perilous rock stairs, we arrived exhausted, and the hike was well worth it. The views looked over the town of Kandersteg, and were simply impeccable. We had the chance to ice climb and practice rescues on the glacier itself, which was all too much fun, but Fründenhutte had a picture of the glacier from about 50 years earlier, and it was evident that climate change had taken its toll on the landscape before us. I won't forget looking out, in awe of what I saw, so happy to be in that moment, and yet reminded of my small place in our ever-evolving world.

Someone not from Troop 78 celebrated their birthday that evening in the hut, and as a grand diplomatic gesture from the Troop, Mr. Bennett gifted her \$10 in cold hard American cash.



Giant Chess at Kandersteg



In London 2008



Harper's Ferry 2007