

May – June, 2006



Boy Scout Kevin Espelien and Girl Scout Julianne Heil cut the ribbon to open the new North Star Museum of Boy Scouting and Girl Scouting in North St. Paul, Minnesota

Museum Grand Opening: A Great Affair

No longer is the North Star Museum collection stored in a basement or hampered by lack of space for permanent displays! Yes, after more than 30 years of existence, the North Star Museum of Boy Scouting and Girl Scouting opened in its new permanent home with a weekend of Grand Opening events April 21-23, 2006.

Museum members celebrated with a private “members only” dinner on Friday evening, April 21. There was an opportunity for a sneak preview of the museum displays and entertaining and informative talks on the origin and history of the museum by Russ Edlund, Jim Rupert, John Guthmann and Claudia Nicholson. A highlight of the evening was the chance to see two original Norman Rockwell paintings lent by Brown & Bigelow.

The public kick-off began on Saturday with a Dutch oven cooking demonstration by Gregg Peterson, public tours and “make and take” activities for kids. The ribbon cutting occurred at 11:00 AM with officials from Ramsey County, the local Boy Scout and Girl Scout councils and the Museum. On Saturday afternoon there was a Scouting Collectibles “Roadshow” with items being evaluated by George Cuhaj, Rudy Dioszegi, Bob Pettitt, and Bob Hannah. The Northern Lights Girl Scout Clown club entertained the crowd, who also sampled malts and watched films. Juliette Gordon Low was brought to life by Mary Ellen Brue, and Michael Salzberg channeled Lord Baden-Powell. The activities continued on Sunday.

Grand Opening – By the Numbers

- Number of visitors over the weekend: 800
- Photographs on exhibit: 110
- Original Rockwell painting on display: 2
- “Roadshow” and malt tickets sold: \$151
- New members generated: 8
- Gift shop sales: \$466.66
- Number of costumed interpreters: 2
- Money raised to support Grand Opening: \$24,743.86
- Films shown on Saturday: 5
- People who saw themselves in the 1937 Jamboree film: 1
- Unique page views at website during April: 3887
- Color guard for flag raising: 7
- Members and guests at dinner: 75
- Law Enforcement Explorer Scouts who attended Rockwell paintings: 3
- Volunteers for the weekend: 70

North Star Photo Collection Reveals Exciting Visual History

Since September 2005, independent photo curator Bonnie Wilson has been volunteering with the museum, working exclusively with the photo collection, arranging and rehousing it so that it is available for research and exhibitions. Eventually the collection will be cataloged on a database system, but for now it is arranged into some sub-collections such as individual photos, sets of photos, and photo albums.

While arranging the collection, Wilson has found some great images that tell the story of scouting history as only photographs can. For example, among the troop photos is a wonderful group portrait of Troop 17 from St. Anthony Park Congregational Church, St. Paul, 1931. Each member is dressed in Indian clothing and, best of all, each member is identified by name. Many of the members are wearing chief and warrior headdresses, and the young man identified as Gordon Nelson has a finely beaded vest and bag. Wilson wonders for what event they painted their faces and dressed so elaborately. We would welcome more help with identification.

Another great find is a photo album entitled "Scouts' Memory Book," containing snapshots of scouting activities from 1920 through 1946. In 140 pages it shows a great variety of camps and scouting activities and illustrates how much has changed and yet stayed the same for scouts of all ages. It is an especially good resource for those interested in Square Lake Camp, Balsam Lake Camp, Sunrise Camp, St. Croix Camp, Beaver Valley Camp, and the Boundary Waters.

There is much work left to be done. Volunteer Bob Albright will work with Wilson to create a database for cataloging the photos. Volunteers are needed to label photos and enter information into the database. If you like old photos and detailed work, the collection could really use your help. Contact director Claudia Nicholson, at 651-748-2880, for more information.



An example of one of the many old photographs in the museum collection

Skunk Reunion

The Annual Skunk Reunion was held May 30, 2006 at the Museum, instead of its usual venue at Fred C. Andersen Scout Camp.

"Skunks" are members of the Museum who have served 15 years or more as a registered Scouter in the Boy Scouts of America, or were registered in the Boy Scouts of America as either an adult or youth member at least twenty years prior to applying for North Star membership, or were dues-paying members of North Star Scouting Memorabilia, Inc. on or before May 1, 1989.

Nearly fifty veteran Scouters attended this year's reunion. The Skunk of the Year award was presented to David Klinkhammer. The Skunk of the Year award for 2005 was officially presented to last year's winner, Hugh Gwin, who had been unable to attend last year's reunion.

The Skunks had the opportunity to enjoy the Museum displays and reminisce with old friends. They also enjoyed the traditional chicken dinner. After dinner John Andrews, Scout Executive of Northern Star Council, spoke on the history of Indianhead and Viking Councils and the old Region 10. John also talked about the importance of veteran Scouters and the need to maintain the early history of Scouting. The evening ended with a visit by Lord Baden-Powell (brought to life by Charles Huntley).

Grand Opening Memories

April 21-23, 2006



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From the Director

When I think about the museum, the first word that comes to mind is *passion* — the passion shown by all the people who have been deeply involved with the museum over the years. Not simply passion for the artifacts or the educational mission, but for the Boy Scout and Girl Scout programs too. The people who supported the museum over the years are indeed a passionate bunch.

The second word that comes to mind is the word *volunteer*. For 27 of the 30 years of the museum's existence, it was completely volunteer-run. This is an astonishing fact when you think about it. Many, many people poured hours of their time each year into the museum's work—to ensure that the collection was cared for; to bring the museum's collection out to its public through its portable display program; to serve on the board and guide the museum. All of these things were so very important to keeping the North Star Museum going.

Dick Carroll was one of these passionate volunteers, and I am sure that there will never be a complete accounting of the hours that he gave to the museum. Many of the rest of you know how much time you have given in the past.

I need to tell you that the presence of a paid staff person does not *lessen* the need for volunteers for this museum. Far from it. I have been given a charge by the board that amounts to nothing less than a wholesale transformation of the way the museum does business. The board wishes us to become a professionally-run museum—and so it shall. That means exhibits and programs must be developed; our new building needs to be staffed during its open hours; we must staff special programs, especially those for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts; the collection must be inventoried and cared for according to professional museum standards; the beautiful new building that we occupy must be maintained; we must develop policies and procedures to account for our collection, and our finances; we must reach out to new communities, and develop a marketing and communications plan that spreads the word far and wide; we must continue our “Museum without

Walls” program; we must become a source of information for research into the Scouting world; we must build our membership and support base; and we must raise the funds to make this all work.

The museum has wonderful volunteers. Some give many hours a month to our efforts. We have been fortunate, as well, to have attracted some high-powered volunteers with very specific abilities that we need now. If you visited the museum building when it was empty, and have come back since, you will see the results of those volunteer efforts. Likewise, the board of directors contributes a great deal of time and energy to the museum's work.

But the museum needs you too—your talents, and your time. Currently, we have a grant project that we are obliged to wrap up by the end of this year—it will require people to inventory, number, describe, and safely store the patches in the collection. Several people have stepped forward, but we need more. I have volunteer opportunities posted on our website, but there are more tasks that need doing. And if the position description at the website does not quite fit your requirements, but you are still interested, call me. Because we have so many tasks and needs, I am flexible about just about everything!

We did not get to the place we are now without the help of many individuals. We will not get to the place we wish to be without the help of many more. Call me today, and let's see what volunteer opportunities await you.

Claudia J. Nicholson
Executive Director



Member News

The following became new, first-time members of the museum since February of 2006:

Calvin Miner	George Cuhaj
Jamie Dunn	John King
Tom Jacobson	Rob Vernon
Charleen Haugen	Allen Hoppe
Rudy Dioszegi	Connie Stanton
Sandra Craighead	Phyllis Kiihn
Charles and Joan Schwoch	Helen Grooms
Kortney Jendro	Timothy Barrett

Remember the North Star Museum in your will!

Summer Hours

The Museum will be open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 AM to 5 PM. The Museum will be closed on Sunday and Monday.

Contact the Executive Director

You can contact Claudia at the Museum by calling 651-748-2880 or reach her by email her at cnicholson@nssm.org.

Editor: John Raymond.

North Star Scouting Memorabilia Inc. is a Minnesota non-profit corporation, a member of the American Association of Museums, Association of Midwest Museums, and the Association of Scout Museums International. We are a 501(c)(3) dedicated to the preservation of the historic items of Scouting. We adhere to the Code of Ethics of the American Association of Museums and the Donor Bill of Rights.

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