# History

Eighty Years of Scouting and Service:
Short History of Troop 14
San Francisco, California

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## Beginnings

In San Francisco, as well as in other United States cities, Baden - Powell's 1908 SCOUTING FOR BOYS was read by individuals already involved in youth programs such as YMCA and other developing outdoor life activity organizations. By 1911, there were several thousand scouting 'troops' in the United States using a modified Scout Oath, Law, merit badge awards, and of course the framework of ranks. A national organization had been formally incorporated by William 0. Boyce in February, 1918 and quickly a Handbook of the Boy Scouts of America, two official magazines and other materials were available.

One avid reader of these publications was Raymond 0. Hanson who was director of activities for the San Francisco Young Mens Christian Association in 1914. Hanson was also a church leader for Calvary Presbyterian Church's Sunday School program. With 11 boys as YMCA members, Hanson developed a youth program using the Handbook and instructing a group of boys about basketball, map-making, signaling and nature studies. This organization held its first meeting on May 3, 1914, in the YMCA basement but did not wear Scout uniforms. Soon, popularity of these activities grew among boys, so Hanson decided to move the group's meetings to the large activity room in the basement of Calvary and enlist fellow church member Homer Bemiss as adult leader. In October of 1915, the Church received its first charter as a sponsoring organization for a Troop with Bemiss as first Scoutmaster. Hanson continued as the chairman of the three-man Troop Committee. Since no local BSA office had been established, the charter application had to be made through the Los Angeles Boy Scout Regional Office for National approval.

In 1916, a representative of the National BSA Council visited our city which had 10 new Troops with 198 boys as members. Several leading businessmen became very enthusiastic supporters and pledged the first year's salary for a local administrator and funds for an office. On January 16, 1916 in the Phelan Building on Market Street, Hanson became the first San Francisco Area Council Scout Executive which began his lifelong career in building BSA programs in our State. The San Francisco Council's area included most of the seven Bay Area counties and its first President was Jesse W. Lilienthal.

## Development

Troop 14's home base was Calvary Church and under leadership from SMs Bemiss, Elmer W. Roy, and Rolla B. Watt, extended hikes, summer camping sessions, merit badge work, and all of the basic Scouting activities took shape, attracting from 40 to 50 boys each year. In support of our Nation's role in World War I, Fourteeners participated in the National BSA "Emergency Corps" which included marching in "Liberty Bond" fund-raising parades and rallies, lead by Bemiss as an Emergency Corps camp official. These WWI era Scouting activities made the Boy Scout program a visible, positive, and attractive youth organization throughout the Nation. The contribution of the country's early Troops, including Troop 14, toward civilian war efforts highlighted the patriotism, energy, moral and personal fitness, and skills of Boy Scouts, individually and collectively, to the Nation.

After the conclusion of World War I, Herbert Moore, DDS, became Scoutmaster for several years and Troop 14 prospered in terms of Eagle Scouts (three of which were Dr. Moore's sons), many merit badges, and continued public service. The San Francisco Council newspaper "San Francisco Scout" circulated news of the Troops in San Francisco, Marin, San Mateo and East Bay counties. In the 1928's, the Council obtained locations for permanent summer camps in the Fairfax area of Marin County and on a tributary of the Russian River near Cazadero which Troop 14 utilized on a regular basis.

## Revitalizations With Traditions

In the late 1920s - early 1930's, Troop membership dropped but basic Scouting activities continued such as public "good turns" and summer camping sessions. During this time, it is said that attendance dwindled to only a hand-full of dedicated Scouts and no one stepping forward to be an energetic Scoutmaster. Down to one patrol, lead by PL Gault Davis, the Troop seemed on the edge of disbanding. But his personality and deep belief in the Scouting program carried him door-to-door in San Francisco to find an interested adult to at least sign charter papers - that was Paul Doty who later became Scoutmaster in 1932. But the leadership changed again in 1934 when Gault Davis was named Scoutmaster. Davis' natural leadership, boundless enthusiasm, skills as an athlete, and personal attractiveness drew many members to join. Some of the basic long-standing Troop traditions began under Gault Davis' period as SM. In 1935, he decided to take a job away from San Francisco and Davis knew that a replacement SM would not be easy, so he engineered to "enlist' a young teacher and Eagle Scout into the responsibility as an 'honorary' member of Troop 14 for a while. The result of this clever maneuver by Davis was that Bob Anino became Scoutmaster in 1938 and built upon the foundations started by Gault Davis and preceding Scoutmasters. Meanwhile, two young fellows had joined the Troop in 1936 - Fred Dickson and Joe Ehrman - to begin the trail to Eagle.

Membership rose under SM Anino, with at least two ASMs, a troop organization of about 68 Scouts in 7 patrols, two Junior Assistant Scoutmasters who were Frank and Roland Grannis and a first Senior Patrol Leader as composing the Scout leadership. Raymond 0. Hanson's son, Raymond L. Hanson, was Committee Chairman, making one of the first 'second generation' troop families. The Troop's scrapbook and photo archives were begun at this time and new ideas were developing into traditions.

But World War II soon impacted Troop 14; Anino, Ehrman and several other members joined the United States' military forces. Gault Davis was asked to return as Scoutmaster in 1943 which he continued through 1944, followed by Phillip Bush as Scoutmaster in 1945. The Troop pitched in to support various civilian war efforts as it had in World War I era, but also maintained vigorous Scouting activities.

Post War Growth

With the end of the terrible war, Anino returned to be Scoutmaster. The Troop was assigned color guard duties during the international meetings in the spring of 1945 which established the United Nations. Most of the Troops in San Francisco (48, 88, 11, 3 and 147) also participated in a variety of ways with Fourteen. One event which was widely reported In San Francisco newspapers was the March, 1948, snow storm in the Lassen area which trapped 22 Scouts of our troop with a Chico BSA Troop for several days. Newspaper articles described an airdrop of 450 pounds of food for the Scouts who did not seem to mind the extra days of snow activities! Finally, the storm subsided and the two Troops tramped their way to plowed roads, arriving home in early morning hours. Clearly, the post World War II period was a time for increased Troop membership, renewed level of outdoor activities and inspired leadership for several gears from SM Anino, assisted by dedicated young Scouters who were also alumni.

Because Bob Anino shifted teaching from Aptos Junior High School to Lowell High School in 1949, he chose to end his Fourteen Scoutmaster years and Roland Grannis was selected as Scoutmaster in that year, assisted by Joe Ehrman and Wesley Howell as ASMs. The 195os also ushered in several nationwide BSA programs such as the "National Good Turn", "Get Out The Vote", resource and wildlife conservation, and safety. Troop 14 participated in these national programs, as well as assisting in an Irwin Memorial Blood Bank drive in 1954. Members also earned money to attend the June - July 1953 National Jamboree.

When SM Grannis moved to San Mateo where he later became Scout-master of Troop 42, Joseph Ehrman III became Scoutmaster in the fall of 1952, beginning Joe's long and illustrious tenure. Fourteeners also attended National Jamborees in 1968 and 1973. Many honors, trophies, awards, and memorabilia now on view in the Troop Room show the high level of excellent performance and Scouting spirit during these decades.

A 1992 SCOUTING magazine issue featured 14 in an article entitled "The Trials and Triumphs of Troop 14". Among other adult Troop leaders who have assisted Joe in molding Fourteen into a contemporary, high quality unit over the years have been Assistant Scoutmasters Fred Dickson, Rollin Warner, and Scoutmaster Emeritus Anino. Since 1952 to present, approximately 280 Eagle badges have been awarded to Scouts by Troop 14 during Eagle Courts of Honor. Prior to 1952, records are not reliable but it is believed that about 350 Scouts have received this high honor since the Charter year of 1915.