



**Golden Arrow District
Boy Scout Roundtable Topic - Sept 2013
Junior Leader Lesson:
The Troop Historian - A Real Leader**

"The true value of a good Historian does not show up until years later."

The Historian provides material for displays and presentations of current activities.

In addition, the work of the Historian provides a link with the past.

The troop position of Historian is often left unfilled in smaller troops and thought of as a 'bogus' position in many other troops. Scouts that take on the Historian job may find that they have nothing to do for 6 months except put a newspaper clipping or two in an old scrapbook.

It doesn't have to be that way. Every troop leadership position can and should have real leadership responsibilities.

Leadership doesn't need to be demonstrated in a charismatic, up-in-front, "Follow Me!" manner. There is a whole lot of leadership that can happen behind the scenes or in quiet, supportive roles. And, opportunities to get in front of the troop should be added to every leadership role.

To ensure the Historian job is a real leadership position, you may wish to include the following responsibilities in his list of duties.

- **Main Role** - document and archive activities of the troop - via Scrapbooks, Journals, web or other means.
- Maintain and add to the troop history record on the web site (Team him up with your Webmaster). Add an archive section for each year that contains information and photos about each campout and troop event.
- Write about troop awards, recognitions, advancement, service, and special events in the troop record. This may be being done in a newsletter or just Troop announcements - add these to the "permanent record" on the web. Team him up with the newsletter editor or publicist for the Troop.
- Update troop information, such as new eagle scouts and troop leaders - have a web page that lists eagle scouts and their projects and a page listing all positions and who has or held them.
- Publish photographs from troop activities on the web site - a photo gallery package lets the Scout organize photos by event and you can use it to control access to only those you invite/or whom register after invitation. Also post some video clips.
- Submit at least two articles about troop events to the local newspapers or hyperlocal web sites (NeighborsGo.com, Bubblelife.com, PaprboyPress.com, Starlocalnews.com, etc.). - in Plano, a town of 270,000+ the papers and web sites are still willing to publish lots of 'feel good' articles and photos. It's great publicity and more clippings to put in the old scrapbook.

- Keep historic items safe such as ribbons, awards, and memorabilia - all this gets stored in scrapbooks and a big box. Make a display of these items and enter it in Camporee or other contests where you compete against other Troops.
- Give a presentation to the troop in the last month of his term about the history of the troop - this gets the Historian in front of the troop and gives him a reason to go through the old stuff and learn something about the troop. It also gives the newer scouts a connection to the past.
- Two Personal Goals - the Historian should also be asked to develop and fulfill two goals of his own. This might be starting a new scrapbook, archiving old ribbons off the troop flag, or anything else he feels would benefit the troop.
- Fulfill the requirements of this position for 6 months - or the troop's chosen term of office.

Although he "technically" reports to an Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, The Historian should meet with the Scoutmaster and/or Senior Patrol Leader at least every 2 months to report on and discuss his progress towards his goals. This ensures he is fulfilling his duties and will receive rank advancement credit. The Historian also should have an adult mentor that he can go to with ideas and for help or advice.

Troop web sites are becoming a key method of communication for Troop members and families, as well as for recruitment - having an up-to-date history and chronicle of events can help make your troop much more attractive in a town where there are some 30+ troops vying for attention.

Other possible Historian duties:

- Keep a journal of all Troop events for historical purposes and info to add to the web site/scrapbooks.
- Include in journal entries the place and time of the event, a few paragraphs about the event, and a list of attendees.
- Document journal entries with photographs and maps when possible.
- Gather pictures and facts about past activities of the Troop and keep them in scrapbooks, web based sites, wall displays or information files.
 - Make or maintain a scrapbook of Troop activities and keep it up to date.
 - Make sure that someone takes pictures at every Troop event.
 - Maintain the Troop record archive with things such as Quality Unit awards and Troop recharter certificates.
- Bring recent Scrapbooks to each Court of Honor so that Troop members may review it.
- Take care of Troop trophies and keepsakes.
 - Collect all troop awards and keep them in a safe place.
 - Collect Troop flag banners
- Keep information about Troop alumni.
 - Make or maintain a scrapbook or web page about Troop alumni, especially Eagle Scouts and their projects