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# THE TRANSVAAL NEWS SHEET



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## AFRICAN H.Q. COUNCIL

The meeting of the African H.Q. Council usually takes place early in January; this time on the 7th, and so it was an early start to the year. It was a well attended meeting, eight of the nine Divisions being represented. The Council met in Johannesburg and enjoyed the hospitality of the Community of the Resurrection at Rosettenville.

The Deputy Mayor of Johannesburg attended to open the meeting on behalf of His Worship the Mayor, who was in Europe on a goodwill mission. The Deputy Mayor emphasized the value of Scouting as a means of producing leaders, a most necessary thing as the whole future of South Africa depended on wise leadership. In thanking the City of Johannesburg, through the Deputy Mayor, the Chief Scout's Commissioner, Archdeacon S.P. Woodfield, referred to the splendid support the Scout Movement had always received from the City, that support being both moral and financial.

Of the various items that filled the agenda and were discussed in full, Training of Scouters and the Census occupied a prominent position. Like the other sections, the African shows an apparent drop in numbers, but this is not a real drop. It results from the exclusion of all recruits and probationers from the count. The value of the attainment and progress section had been instantly apparent, and gave a clear and very interesting picture of the real training of the boys. A feature of the African Census was the almost entire absence of a "lay" side. This is to be expected in this section seeing that nearly all Groups are "sponsored".

It is nothing new if we record that the spirit of the meeting was one of earnestness, enthusiasm and brotherliness, for this is always a feature of our African H.Q. meetings, but we do record it as it is the main part of a successful meeting, and helps to make attendance thereat so pleasurable. Nor need we hesitate to say that a very large percentage of that delightful spirit emanated from the Chairman - the Chief Scout's Commissioner.

From S.A.H.Q. Bulletin - January, 1954.

### THE WOOD BADGE COURSE

Our congratulations go to the following officers who have completed part of the Wood Badge Course:-

- (1) E. Montwedi of P.O. Box 13, Bergvlei, Alexandra, who has passed Course I and II. When he has completed Course III he will be fully qualified.
- (2) N. Magodiolo of Wallmasthal Settlement School, P.O. Pyramid, who has done Course I and II.
- (3) D.D. Kopane of 49, Sigcawu Avenue, Langa Location, Cape Town, who has completed Part I and II.

Our special congratulations go to Mr. William J.S. Blie of Morakeng Lads Hostel, Irene, who has done all three parts of the Course. His full certificate has been prepared. He is fully qualified and it now rests with the Transvaal Divisional Commissioner and his Council to award him the Wood Badge, the Certificate, the Scarf and the Woggle.

### SAFETY FIRST

Here are three more hints for cyclists:

22. How to Ride Uphill

If a hill is so steep that you start wobbling before you get to the top it is safer to get off and walk. This will reduce the risk of your being hit by another vehicle and will save you from becoming overtired, as walking rests the muscles used in riding.

23. On Down Grades, Control your Speed

If you travel fast downhill you will find it impossible to stop quickly in an emergency. Before descending a steep hill make sure, by a touch of the brakes, that they are working properly.

24. Apply Back Brake First

If the front brake is applied first it may cause a front-wheel skid.

### THE PLACE OF YARNS IN SCOUTING

Yarning can play an important part in our Scouting. We have only to turn the pages of "Scouting for Boys" or the "Wolf-Cub's Handbook" to have that fact impressed upon us. Yet some of us are diffident about making full use of this means of working through the imaginations of the boys; we doubt if we can tell a yarn well; we fear that we may break down half-way and our minds become blank; we think we shall forget the sequence of events. All the time we admire the Scouter who can reel off a yarn at a camp fire; we say, "It comes natural to him." While it is true that it is easier for some than for others to tell a story, there are no born story-tellers any more than there are any born liars; it is just that some are blessed - or cursed - with more vivid imaginations than others. But even these people have to practise their art - for it is an art; and anyone with practice and serious endeavour can become an acceptably good yarn-teller. Here we are not concerned with the maker-up of yarns, but with the re-teller.

We need yarns for several purposes.

1. For Explanation

The short incident or anecdote can bring to life a bit of instruction which otherwise might seem dull; it can show the value and use of the thing being taught. Numerous examples of this will be found in "Scouting for Boys". Thus at random I turn to page 137: "Camp Fire Yarn No. 12", on the subject of "Men's tracks", opens with a yarn about General Dodge and the Red Indians. Note, by the way, that the whole book is arranged as Camp Fire Yarns, not as Lessons!

## 2. For Enlightenment

Much general information can be best put in yarn-form. Let us suppose that we want to give our Scouts some idea of how the world was explored; this could be done very efficiently by lectures, but it may safely be said that little would be remembered. But put in the form of yarns about the early explorers and settlers, and a very different result may be expected. At once the dead material takes on life; the boy can picture actual people doing things. His imagination is awakened; he sees himself taking part in the exploits of the pioneers; they become heroes worth imitating. So we are able to enlighten him on all kinds of subjects which put in stiffer form would bore him.

The main difference between these two types is that the first consists usually of an incident; the second of a longer yarn giving a series of events and adventures.

## 3. For Encouragement

The carrying out of the Scout Law is a stiff task at times; we need encouragement from the experiences of others. The Cub or Scout or Rover is in real need of such help; how can it best be given? Personal example is, of course, the best of all means, but there must also be the spoken word. Our Scouts Own is a special way of doing this, but not the only opportunity. The difficulty is to hit just the right note. If the moral is stressed too much, the result may well be poor; it is rather like telling a boy to eat up his rice pudding because "it is good for you" - this may easily give him a life-long distaste for rice! We are all curious creatures in this matter of moral-teaching; we do not like being preached at, and we are somewhat suspicious of beings who are too perfect to be human.

The boy learns much of his conduct by imitation; so we need to fill his day-dreams, his private make-believe world, with the figures of real men, not dummies. It follows therefore that the yarn for encouragement must have grip in it - it must be virile. We want to encourage our boys to imitate fine men.

## 4. For Entertainment

It is not suggested that the three previous types of yarn cannot include much that is entertaining, but there are occasions, such as camp fires, when our main purpose is to bring colour and romance into the scene. There is always the danger of forgetting that Scouting is for fun as well as for more serious objects. Some Packs and Troops end their meetings with a short yarn of this fun-type; by fun here is meant something more than funny; it includes the satisfying of the love of adventure which brings so many boys into the Movement. The range of possibilities here is almost unlimited and there need never be any lack of material for camp-fire yarns.

From "Jamboree"  
Journal of World Scouting

### THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

LOOK WIDE: ABOVE ALL LOOK UP.

## NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS

### INAUGURATION OF A NEW TROOP IN PRETORIA

On the 26th November, 1953, I was invited to attend the opening ceremony of the 1st Bantuli Troop, Pretoria, under the Salvation Army Mission Church. The ceremony started with a hymn and prayer at 7.30 p.m.

#### Present were:

Major H. Mead (member of the Transvaal Divisional Council), E. Masiuana, D/C Pretoria; Brigadier J.T. Usher and Mrs. Usher; Captain (Miss) K.B. Zehm (Trainer of the Troop); Captain Mamponi; Brigadier T.H. Lewis; Aaron Sehloho, the Scout Master; Steve Makgobotloane, the A/S/M; and a large gathering of parents and spectators.

#### The Troop

Captain Zehm (a lady from America) presented the Troop which she had, for three months, taken the trouble to train. The boys, 32 in number, appeared very smart in a neat uniform and blue berets. From the way in which they answered questions one could judge that they were very well trained. Every boy stood smartly at the alert and knew exactly what to do when called upon. The inaugural ceremony was performed by Major Mead who afterwards led the Troop in games and physical exercises.

#### Speeches

Speakers were Major Mead, Brigadier Lewis, D.C. Marivate, E.J. Masiuana and Brigadier J.T. Usher. The latter assured the meeting that henceforth all schools under the Salvation Army were going to be authorized to open Troops all over the country. Scouting in the Salvation Army, he said, had come to stay.

#### Officers

Miss (Captain) Zehm has only started the Troop; she has now handed over to Messrs. Sehloho and Magobotloane and we shall expect them to carry on the good work that has been started.

#### Collection:

After prayer, which was led by A/S/M Makgobotloane, a collection was taken. The sum of exactly 10/- was realized, This will go into the funds of the Troop.

#### Camp Fire

The ceremony ended with a camp fire.

By D.C. Marivate

## THE WITBANK AREA

This is a very large area with a number of schools dotted all over the place, the majority being in the Witbank Location. The saddest thing is that, although there are so many schools, Scouting has very little attention given to it in most schools.

There are very few schools where the Scout Movement is at its best. In most schools Scouting is under lock and key; in some it appears Scouting is something that was never known to be in existence. During the year 1953 there have been Troops which appeared to be quite promising, namely the 1st Blackhill Troop, which has been brought into life again, and the Minaar Troop, which is just trying to form itself. The Oogies Troop was promising though it was not yet in action. There are many others in the district which, like the Oogies Troop, are promising Troops. It is through the hard work of the D.C. that these Troops are coming into the light of the movement, and we thus owe much gratitude to him for his efforts.

There are many things which contribute towards this great lack of troops in this area. Firstly the majority of teachers are not interested in the movement. As far as I have observed it is very difficult to inspire most of them to start the movement in schools where they are teaching.

Secondly most boys are not interested in joining the movement. I contacted quite a lot of them and spoke to them about joining the movement. Most of them told me that they preferred working and earning money after school hours to remaining in school grounds for the sake of scouting, where they gain no penny. But fortunately, when I started the movement in the school where I am teaching, I had well over 100 boys on the very first day, Scouts and Cubs combined. Before I actually started with the movement, I had several talks with the boys explaining to them what Scouting is and means to each one of them as individuals. I suppose that is the reason why I had so many boys on the very first day.

Thirdly there is very little activity in the area for those who are Scouts. Thus there is very little enjoyment. Activities such as Scout camping, rallies, picnics, competitions among troops, etc., are very much lacking in the area as a whole. During the year the H.Q. twice made an attempt to arrange for some camping for Scouts in this area, but on both occasions was forced to postpone it owing to the lack of sufficient applicants for the camp. On the one hand the H.Q. is justified in its postponement, but on the other hand it is very discouraging, not only to those who are Scouts but also to those who are non-Scouts but are intending joining the movement. The boys are very keen to attend the camp as most of them do not know what camping is. Unfortunately the privilege of camping has not yet been fairly extended to them. The parents on the other hand get very much discouraged too to hear, after their hard labour in preparing for the boys to attend the camp, that the camp has been postponed. We suffered quite a lot of blows and disappointments from many parents because of this; and as a result there are very few at the moment who are prepared to respond to our next suggestion on camping.

The boys in this area appear to be quite remote from boys in other areas. They have never, as far as I know, come into contact with other boys from different areas to see what they look like and their attitude towards the Scout movement. Visits to Scouts in different areas are, on the whole, not known. Visits of other troops to this area are never dreamed of.

There are various other facts which contribute towards the great lack of this great movement in this enormous area. The question is not who is to blame but how to widen our net to draw in more fish.

The Scout work on the whole is still at its lowest. There is hardly one boy, as far as I have observed, with a second class badge, and there are very few with tenderfoot badges. In January, 1954, there is a hope of enrolling about 25 boys as tenderfoots and at least 20 Cubs in the Blackhill Troop.

I earnestly and sincerely feel that there is a great need for more Scouters in this area and also more people who are interested in the movement, for the betterment of Scouting and up-liftment of the movement.

By Frank Dikeledi, S.M. 1st Blackhill Troop.

#### FAR EAST RAND AREA

Because of illness the Rev. A.W. Wood has been forced to resign from his post as D.C. We wish him a speedy recovery. We welcome Mr. H. Mbambo who has been A.D.C. of this area for a long time as the new D.C. We wish him a long and happy term of office.

#### HEADQUARTERS NOTICES

##### THE SHOP

We now have in stock:

Tenderpad, Tenderfoot and 2nd Class cloth badges;  
Cub and Tenderfoot buttonhole badges;  
Woggles;  
Scout membership cards;  
Scout diaries;  
"Wolf Cubs" by Gilcroft;  
Wolf Cub handbooks;  
Snapshots of Archdeacon S.P. Woodfield.

##### WARRANTS

Scouters who have applied for Scout warrants please note that normally such applications are considered by the Transvaal Council of the African Scouts at its meetings. The last one was held on Tuesday, 6th October, and the date of the next has not yet been fixed.

##### DIVISIONAL EMBLEM

As previously advised, H.Q. ask every Scout and Scouter to make suggestions for an emblem for this Division.

##### CENSUS

H.Q. is naturally disappointed because some of the troops have not up to now sent in their returns which are long overdue. Please do send them without further delay!

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