

PRESENTATION OF HISTORIC SCOUTING MATERIAL TO THE AFRICANA
MUSEUM : FEBRUARY 13, 1970.

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Mr. Geach, Chief Scout of the Boy Scouts of South Africa,
Lady Baden-Powell, World Chief Guide, Members of the Boy
Scout and Girl Guide Movements, Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen :

This is indeed a proud occasion for me, to accept, on behalf of this City, the historic collection of material concerning the late Lord Baden-Powell, Lady Baden-Powell and the Scouting and Guiding Movements. It is a proud moment, not only to receive this collection, but to know it is being handed over in the presence of such a distinguished gathering as we have here this afternoon, and that you, Lady Baden-Powell, and members of your family, should be with us to add lustre to the occasion.

We in South Africa feel we have a unique role in the Scouting Movement, because there is no doubt that the Founder's

Page 2/..

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contact with the boys of Mafeking was very much in his thoughts when he was exploring and planning the possibility of creating some activities to provide worthwhile outlets for boys' energy outside school hours. One of his early statements, after his return to Great Britain, was "There are 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ million boys in the country at present outside the range of good influences, mostly drifting towards hooliganism for want of a helping hand". There is a well-known saying that 'mighty oaks from little acorns grow', but I wonder if ⁱⁿ 1908 the Founder, in his wildest dreams, visualised that the plans he was formulating for scouting would become worldwide, and that one day there would be 12 million scouts in 150 separate territories, and 6 million girl guides in 87 countries. At that time he had not visualised that scouting would appeal to girls.

I want to thank the members of the Boy Scouts of South Africa for entrusting their collection to us. Our Africana Museum has many items in its own collection of scouting material.

Page 3/..

There are uniforms and badges, some of which, I understand, date back as far as 1909; invitation cards which were issued to Lord Baden-Powell when he visited Johannesburg in 1908; programmes of special scouting services, and photographs, including several of the 1st Braamfontein Troop in 1909, the Pietersburg Troop of 1913 and the Transvaal Boy Scouts Camp at Lourenco Marques in 1915.

Johannesburg is justly proud of its association with the Movement, and has, I believe, demonstrated its support by the granting of areas of land in its parks for the erection of Scout Halls, and I believe the recent allocation of five acres at Delta to the Boy Scouts, and a further five acres to the Girl Guides, is a big step forward, and will add materially to the development of the Movements.

This evening we shall have the pleasure of entertaining the World Chief Guide, and it is on that occasion that I will say more about our honoured guest of this afternoon.

Page 4/..

There is, however, one thing I must say - in fact Miss Anna Smith, the Director of the Africana Museum, would not forgive me if I did not say it. In our Africana Museum we have a wealth of material collected, loaned and donated over a long period. Unfortunately, owing to limitation of space, we are not able to adequately display even a fraction of the material available to us. In the great cities of Europe and America, grateful citizens, with civic pride, have benefited posterity by benefactions which have made the display of such collections possible. Is it too much to hope that some of those born here, or who arrived on our shores in very humble circumstances, and who have amassed great fortunes in this country, will now provide the wherewithal to enable this wealth of Africana to be adequately housed and displayed.

Mr. Geach, once again our grateful thanks. I wish you and the Scouting Movement great success, and I thank you

Page 5/..

for all you and your fellow-officers are doing for Scouting in South Africa, and to you, Lady Baden-Powell, and the members of your family, thank you for gracing us with your presence here today.

JOHANNESBURG:

February 13, 1970.

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