



Celebrating the Island Experiment



by Terry McGowan

Slowly the boy wakens. The smell of the sea is present. He hears the slight rustle of long grass in the wind, the gentle movements of the tide, and the slapping of a rope against the canvas. Half sitting he looks over his still-sleeping chums and through the open flap. He is facing east. As it has

every day of the last week, the sun is slowly burning off the early morning mist over the channel separating them from the now-emerging village, across the harbour, on the nearby mainland. He sees the outline of the small, early morning ferry as it cuts through the gentle swell towards the island.

In those moments between sleep and full-wakening, the boy recalls the adventures of the past days, the joy of working and learning with his patrol, and the tales told by the fire last night. The chants, “Eeengonyama – gonyama,” “Invooboo, Ya bo!, Invooboo,” had woven themselves through his dreams.

At the edge of his vision a lean man, wearing a trilby hat, tends a small fire and the smell of cooking bacon begins to compete with the smell of the sea. As the fire dwindled last evening the man suggested that he thought their “experiment” a success and voiced out loud that perhaps he should write a small book describing the past few day’s events. While the prospect of farewells this afternoon is sad, the idea of continuing this experience at home is cheering.

Perhaps if he arises, washes, and dresses quickly he can help with the preparation of breakfast. Perhaps he will be allowed to sound the morning horn – what was it called? A Kudu horn; that was it.



It is August, 1907. The village across the harbour is Poole, Dorset. The island is Brownsea. The man in the trilby hat is Sir Robert Baden-

Powell. The book will become “Scouting for Boys” and the “experiment” was Scouting.

As a result of that simple experiment, and a few articles which later became a book, Baden-Powell launched a world-wide Movement. The opportuni-

ties. If ever Scouting had an opportunity to renew its partnerships with youth and the communities it serves, it is now!

If ever Scouting had a reason to celebrate, it is now!

Let’s plan a year-long Birthday Party heard by our communities, our cities, and the world. Let’s plan a year-long Birthday Party in which we remember and celebrate our past, increase awareness of Scouting’s place within its communities, and built a vibrant and relevant Scouting for the future.

Let’s renew our dedication and our purpose.

Let’s participate. Let’s sound the Kudu horn in celebration.

Let’s plan to share our enthusiasm and spread the word to the world that Scouting is as needed, as meaningful, and as relevant now as it was in 1907.

Every youth deserves the opportunity to awake with enthusiasm and great memories. Let’s make it happen! Have a great Scouting year! X

– Terrance McGowan is the Council Commissioner for Greater Toronto Council, who have developed an extensive Centenary Celebratory Program. Watch for more details in a future issue of *The Leader*.



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ties for learning and service resonated. Spontaneous adoption of the “Scouting” program for youth occurred. Both youth and community support for the program spread.

As we begin this new Scouting year, a year which will begin the celebration of Scouting’s 100th anniversary, we should strive to re-acquaint ourselves with Scouting’s history and its significance within our communi-

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