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S *A Century of* Stidhams* *and* Scouting

2010 is the 100th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America.

To celebrate that milestone, here are Stidhams* who have participated in that venerable tradition through the years.



AN ORGANIZATION THAT'S BEEN around for 100 years says something about its staying power, not to mention its appeal to a large segment of society. This year, as scouting crosses this threshold, it remains one of country's largest youth organizations. With over four million members on its current roster in the various age-related divisions, it has seen more than 110 million Americans pass through its membership since it's founding on February 8, 1910.

There can be no doubt, Stidham* families have been involved in scouting from the beginning, though proof of this from BSA official records are not publicly available. From records we *do* have from Stidham* families themselves, James Alonzo [4341] Stidham, Jr., appears to be the earliest Stidham* we know of, at least for now (more on this later).

His grandson, William Creswell, found his grandfather's Eagle badge in his belongings and notes the style of the badge is specific to the 1925-1927 period (see photo on next page). James Alonzo's family was living in Nashville, Tenn., at the time of the 1920 Fed-

eral census. By 1930, the family had relocated to Memphis, as that year's census shows.

Though James is our first, there's bound to be earlier Stidhams* (as well as many more after him than who appear below), as more family members send *their* scouting information in for inclusion in future issues (see Notes From the Editor's Desk, pages 3-4).

It's hard to argue with that organization's

goal of training youth for responsible citizenship, character development and self-reliance through participation in the outdoor activities and educational programs. Here then begins our list of Stidhams* who have made these important goals a part of their lives as Eagle Scouts, enriching all of us during the past century in the process.

—Richard L. Steadham, editor

Honor Roll of Stidhams* Who Have Earned the Eagle Scout Award

Eagle Scout is the highest rank attainable in the Boy Scouting program of the Boy Scouts of America. A Scout who attains this rank is called an Eagle Scout or Eagle. Since its introduction in 1911, the Eagle Scout rank has been earned by more than 2 million young men.

James Alonzo [4341] Stidham, Jr.

He probably was a Boy Scout in either Nashville, Tennessee (his family was living there at the time of the 1920 census), or Memphis (where they were living by 1930).

James W. Wright

Descended from Rebecca [144] Stedham Boy Scout in 1930, Eagle Scout in 1939 East Brunswick, New Jersey

George Lee [4484] Stidham

Son of George Washington [2190] Stidham, 3rd; TSS Member [DCM-117] Boy Scout Troop 162 Indian Nations Council Checotah, Oklahoma 17 Jan 1944

David Robert Stidham

Son of Jack [6214] Stidham, grandson of Omer E. [3250] Stidham TSS member DCM-1 Boy Scout Troop 155 Great Smoky Mountains Council Knoxville, Tennessee 4 Nov 1962

Brice Nist

Son of Joan Stidham Nist [DCM-107] Auburn, Alabama

Brent Nist

Son of Joan Stidham Nist [DCM-107] Auburn, Alabama

Phillip Hayes Stidham

Son of John Hower [6776] Stidham, grandson of Patrick Henry [3677] Stidham Boy Scout Troop 182, Middle Tennessee Council, Goodlettsville, Tennessee 3 Jul 1972

Joseph Scott Steadham

Son of Henry Arthur Steadham Steedman descendant Boy Scout Troop 151 Atlanta Area Council Covington, Georgia 23 Apr 1991

Richard Eugene Stedham

Son of Cecil W. Stedham Steedman descendant Troop 5 Greater Alabama Council Anniston, Alabama 16 Jul 1962

Daniel E. Stedem, Jr.

Unplaced Troop 704 Gulf Ridge Council Lakeland, Florida 29 Apr 1999



1920s-era Eagle badge of James Alonzo [4341] Stidham, Jr., now in the possession of his grandson, William Creswell.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WILLIAM CRESWELL

My Life in Scouting

By David R. Stidham

One day last summer I was sitting in the dining hall at Treasure Valley Boy Scout Camp in Rutland, Massachusetts with my son's scout troop, having lunch. After lunch, there was an announcement about an upcoming celebration of the 100th anniversary of Scouting to be held in 2010. As I sat listening to the announcement, it dawned on me it was almost exactly 50 years ago that I first joined the Boy Scouts. In commemoration of my own 50th anniversary in Scouting, my scouts and I led the camp in a song the next day, a camp song I had learned 50 years ago as a new Tenderfoot Boy Scout.

I joined Troop 155 at my church in Knoxville, Tennessee in 1959. I enjoyed the out-

door activities and eagerly learned scout craft skills. I especially enjoyed camping and hiking in the Great Smoky Mountains, which I continued into college (until cave exploring got my attention). I worked my way up to the Eagle rank by 1962, and helped organize an Explorers Post for the older scouts. When I turned 18, I became an Assistant Scoutmaster, and later served as Scoutmaster of Troop 155. I attribute my Scouting days to sparking an interest in my career field—forestry.

I served a short time after college as Scoutmaster for a troop in Carthage, Tennessee. After leaving Carthage, I left Scouting for several decades and did not renew interest until my youngest son joined Troop 28 in our hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts. I volunteered as Assistant Scoutmaster and have been the Scoutmaster for Troop 28 for several years now. My son, David, has achieved the Life rank.

Long time TSS member, Joan Stidham Nist DCM-107, had all four of her sons involved in the BSA, three of whom are pictured in the photo at right. Brice and Brent earned the rank of Eagle Scout. Blair achieved Life rank. Brian (not shown) was a Star.



Eagle Scout medal as published in the 1911, *Handbook for Boys*



Left to right: Brice, Blair and Brent Nist (1968)

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOAN NIST



The BSA By the Numbers

HEADQUARTERS:
Irving, Texas

FOUNDED:
February 8, 1910

FOUNDERS:
William D. Boyce,
Ernest Thompson
Seton and
Daniel Carter Beard

MEMBERSHIP:
Traditional:
2,832,636 youth
1,132,353 adults
120,262 units

Learning for Life:
1,342,222 youth
40,658 adults
12,796 units

Source: Boy Scouts of
America (2008)

Editor's Note: "Stidhams* and Scouting" will be an ongoing feature from this point forward. To include your family's scouting info in future issues, please email: RLSteadham@mac.com.