

WOOLER SCOUTS

1955-68

IT ALL STARTED HERE

Scouting started in Canada around 1907, inspired by Robert Baden-Powell's work to encourage boys to learn outdoor skills such as tracking, wilderness navigation, hiking, and camping. It offered adventures with knives, axes, tents, and canoes, and lots of fun around campfires for boys aged 8 to 19.

Scouting in Ontario was given a boost in 1955 when Canada hosted the Eighth World Scout Jamboree in Niagara-on-the-Lake, featuring 11,000 Scouts from 71 countries. With a World Jamboree just hours away, it was probably not a coincidence that Jack May invited parents and boys to a public meeting at the Wooler Town Hall in the spring of 1955 to launch Scouting in Wooler.

1ST WOOLER TROUP

The official 1st Wooler Scout Group Charter recognizes that the group was formed on 14 April 1955, and lists the names of 35 Wolf Cub Pack members aged 8 to 12. The first Cub Leader was Wallace Reid, supported by Mac Anderson and James Scott. A condition of the Charter was that the community name "at least three representative citizens" to a "Group Committee" that would provide oversight for Scouting activities in accordance with the policies of The Boy Scouts Association.



1st Wooler Scouts- 1955

Back Row: left to right: Donald Smith, Michael Lloyd, Phillip Forsythe, Raymond Casselman, Laird Nelson, Bill Demille, Teddy Crews, Gary Radcliffe (behind), Gary Adams, Jack May, Ed Smith.
Front Row: left to right, Jerry Casselman, Jerry Anderson, Allan Thrower, Ralph Richards, Boyd Nelson, Peter Gabourie, Douglas Adams, Stephen May, Ross Chambers.



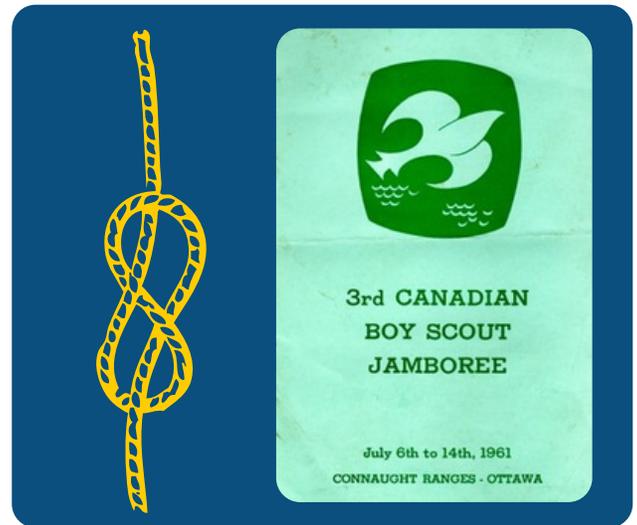
1st Wooler Cubs- 1960

Back Row: Left to Right, Elgie Lawson, Henry Twyman, Lea Palmer, Everett Dalmas, Brain Branscombe, Mike Smith, Eon McCallum.
Front Row: Carl Dorland, Sidney Van Vaals, Danny Reid, David Fox, Bob Crowe, Fed Lindy, Tom Leavett, Harry Harrison, Alfred Thrower.

1ST WOOLER FINDS A HOME

Much like any minor hockey association, the new 1st Wooler Group Committee was largely made up of parents who oversaw the operations of its Cub and Scout groups and raised funds to support their activities. The Charter lists Hilliard Morrow as the Group Chair, Faeola Crosby as the Secretary, and Vaughn Adams as a member. A number of these first Wooler Cubs would go on to become Leaders and Group Committee members over the years such as, Earl Arthur, Doug Adams, Noble Crosby, Dale Mallory, and Laird Nelson.

The Wooler School quickly offered its second story classrooms to 1st Wooler for their meetings, recently vacated by students now attending the new East Northumberland Secondary School in Brighton. The first meeting of the "Wooler Scouts and Cubs Women's Auxiliary" was held on 3 March 1958 and was focused on attracting new members and raising funds for scouting activities. By early 1959 the Group Committee had raised enough money to buy camping equipment and pay for Scouting insurance. Success at fundraising kept costs down for boys and their families, with typical membership costing about 1 to 2 dollars per year.



SCOUT JAMBOREE 1961

By 1961, there were 41 1st Wooler Cubs and Scouts, and the group was able to send two Scouts, Laird Nelson and Doug Adams, to the 3rd Canadian Scout Jamboree held in July 1961 near Ottawa, attended by over 2,000 other boys. Doug Adams recalls the visit of the Governor General Vincent Massey to the Jamboree, and the Scouts from Ontario beating the Scouts from British Columbia in soccer. 1st Wooler also started making its mark at the District level, taking the trophy for top patrol attending the now annual Presqu'ile Scout Camporee in 1961, 62, and 63.

SCOUTING AND PRESQU'ILE

Scouting began in nearby Brighton in 1910, and Presqu'ile Park near Brighton became a popular camping location for Scouting groups after the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests granted the Scouts their own campsite in the Park. In May 1958 groups from Brighton, Consecon, Colborne, Frankford, Batawa, and Carrying Place formed the "Presqu'ile District Scout Committee," to share resources and encourage inter-group activities such as annual camps for Cubs and Scouts.



1ST WOOLER AT PRESQU'ILE PARK 1957

Allan Fox (left) and Scouter Jack May.

A ROVER CREW IS BORN

1st Wooler established a Rover Crew (ages 14-18) in 1959 with Bill McKee as the first 'Skipper' (leader). The new Rover Crew attracted 4 young men, including Laird Nelson, Doug Adams, and Gary Adams, who frequently helped out with the activities of the Cubs and Scouts. The 'second' Rover Crew, under Skipper Wilbur McColl starting in 1964, included Everett Dalmas, Mike Smith, Robyn May, and Dennis Turner. The Crew met at an old farm house on the Nelson's property just west of Wooler during these early years.

By 1964 there were 42 Cubs and Scouts, and in 1966 there were 13 Cubs, 15 Scouts, 6 Rovers, 24 Brownies, and 20 Guides being supported by the Group Committee. Scout Leaders in this period were: Jack May 1955-62; Bob Gibson 1962-64; Harry Tosit 1964-65, and, Perly Smith 1965-67. Cub Leaders were: Wally Reid, Mack Anderson and Jim Putman 1958-1963; and, Ray Palmer, Vaughn Adams and Bill Turncliffe 1963-64.

The 1st Wooler Brownie and Guides were initially started in 1964 by parents who approached the Group Committee. The Brownie and Guides would move in and out of the Group Committee's oversight over the next number of years. Lynn Scott was Brownie Leader, 1964-70, and the Guide Group was formed under Doreen Curry in 1966, and carried forward by Diane Ross 1967-70. The Group Committee voted in May 1966 to pay for childcare or transportation expenses for women who acted as 1st Wooler Leaders or Group Committee members.



SCOUT CAMP AT GAZLEY'S, MAY 22-24, 1966

Back Row: Rod Graham, Everett Dalmas.
Front Row: Paul Poland, Grant Gazley, Jim Turncliffe, Wayne Brisky.

A COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER

Much like farming around Wooler, the new Scouting community began to settle into an annual cycle of activities by the mid-1960s. The fall featured registration for the boys and girls as well as the recruitment of new leaders and Group Committee members. Activities would include hikes and camps, Halloween parties, badge work, and the occasional Father and Son fishing contest and cook out at Cold Creek. Periodic training in gun safety was provided, as some boys would be heading to family hunting camps.



(LEFT) CHURCH PARADE 1967
1st Wooler Scouts and Cubs

1ST WOOLER FUNDRAISING

Fundraising activities would be held such as Apple Day, Chocolate Bar Sales, or the recycling of scrap metal and paper using a small fleet of local pick-up trucks. Once the backs of trucks were cleared of farming materials (often straw and cow manure...), they were stuffed with boys enjoying an open-air ride along local roads to pick up materials – clearly before seat belts were required!

The Group Committee voted \$2.00 towards the replacement of Scout Rob Graham's hat that, for reasons unexplained, was burned in a truck fire during a paper drive in 1964. Doug Adams recalls that Art Dorland would arrive with a truck loaded with scrap metal and artfully negotiate and try a few tricks with the scales to get a better price for 1st Wooler's recycled metal.



CHRISTMAS CONCERT 1964
"The Trial of Santa Clause"

FUN AND GAMES

Winter would see a focus on training and badge work, hikes and camps, as well as lots of indoor games. Christmas parties were held by each group, and a community-wide Christmas Concert or Christmas "Fun Fair" was often held at the Town Hall, featuring games, baked goods, crafts, used books, and the auctions of donated items. The 1964 Christmas concert featured the Scouts in a skit entitled "The Trial of Santa Clause," and the Rovers provided a mock fashion-show that included Skipper Wilbur McColl modelling a bikini. The Guides and Brownies would often visit Trenton Memorial Hospital for Christmas Caroling, and to deliver crafts they had made for patients. The odd hockey game was held, pitting the Scouts against the Rovers on Cold Creek or at the Frankford Arena.



(Above left) Paper Drive,
April 8, 1967

(left) Paper Drive Cartoon

1ST WOOLER FUNDRAISING

Adult and teen dances at the Wooler Town Hall were held 3-4 times per year, one of which featured a door prize of two dollars worth of gasoline donated from the local gas station – probably enough to fill up a gas-tank at that time. Easter saw the Guides delivering 65 baskets they had made to local nursing homes in 1967.

In the spring, attention would shift to new activities as well as preparations for the upcoming camping season. Old canvas tents were aired out and waterproofed, and camping skills sharpened. Local camping trips in April or May were used to prepare for the upcoming Presqu'île District camps in June, July or August. Canoe trips were often planned for the late spring. The 1st Wooler Guides attended summer camps for several years throughout this period.

An important part of each year for the 1st Wooler Cubs was participation in the annual District Cuboree held at Presqu'île Park each summer, under the leadership Cub Leaders Ted Poland (1964-68), and Vera Powell (1969-75). Harold Dalmas recalls that at the 1967 Cuboree he and other 1st Wooler Cubs brought stones from Wooler to contribute to a stone Centennial Cairn in Presqu'île Park erected by District Wolf Cub packs. Canada's Centennial year also saw Wooler Scout, Paul Poland, representing Presqu'île District at Expo 67.

1st Wooler Scouts won the 'Bata Trophy' for highest marks at District camp in Presqu'île Park in July 1968. Scouts Andrew McKee and Robin May attended the first Ontario Jamboree at the Kelso Conservation area near Milton in August 1968, but the camp is wiped out by a huge storm on the second last day of the Jamboree. Scout leaders during the last half of the 1960's were: Bob Dupuis 1967; Dale Mallory 1967; Edward Leffler; George Webb 1968-69; and, Allan Fox 1969-72.

FUN AND GAMES

Spring also tended to feature additional community fund-raising activities such as variety shows, pot-luck dinners, film nights, and the iconic Girl Guide Cookie sales. The annual 1st Wooler Father and Son banquets soon became a fixture in the Wooler Community Calendar. Mother and Daughter banquets were also held for several years during this time.

Attended by local dignitaries, many banquets were covered by local newspapers, providing an annual report on 1st Wooler's activities, often including a financial report. Speeches were delivered, badges awarded, and some form of fun provided. At the 1963 Banquet, Scouts Dale Mallory, Barry Crow, and Eric Lawson received Queen Scout Awards, the first Wooler Scouts to receive Scouting's highest honour.

The 1968 Banquet featured a film after dinner about the recent Idaho Jamboree, narrated by the Canadian born Hollywood Star of Bonanza, Lorne Green. The 1968 Banquet also announced that the new Venturer program for boys (14-17) would be introduced soon. However, the real news was the announcement that 1st Wooler had purchased the Wooler School, for which Mr. John Hoard, who had organized the deal, was presented with a plaque from a grateful Group Community.