The First Camp Osceola Patch - 1930

The 1930 camp patch was red felt about 2.5 inches round with a white crossed shovel and axe. The Shovel and axe were used to symbolize all the work that had been done prior to camp getting the site ready and suitable, and for all the work the campers put in during the summer continuing these efforts. The camp issued different felt patches between 1930 and 1943. These early patches are not dated and do not reference the camp's name. Written records describing early local issues are not generally found. Much of what is known about early memorabilia comes from oral history and speculation.

Oral history is getting harder and harder to collect. A first year camper in 1932 would be 90 years old today. Finding scouting alumni of that era that attended camp and can remember what happened can be hard.

Speculation is done by looking at collections as a whole. Scouts could earn honor patches that were dated and those patches generally match the material and stitching of that's years patch. Patches from the same year were generally sewn on the back of sashes close to each other. For example the 1932 patch was a chain stitched fish jumping; earlier felts had the figures in felt sewn on the patch. The honor issues for 1932 are all chain stitched, while the 1930 and 1931 issues had felt letters and number sewn on the patch. It makes sense that all chain stitch patches were done the same year.

I think one of the most common questions I am asked is "what is some piece of scouting memorabilia worth?" My normal response is like other collectables, scouting memorabilia is worth what someone will pay for it. That said mint felt camp patches are hard to find. Most have been sewn on the back of sashes and eaten by moths. Making it more difficult to judge the price, most issues sell on the back of a sash, and remain on the sash. Local collectors value the first Osceola issues in the $75-125 range, and later camp issue in the $25-100 range. A number of things can affect the price of a patch, but generally poor condition can make a valuable patch worthless.

If you are interested in scouting memorabilia please visit the 2012 KC Scout Swap Meet and Memorabilia show. I try to put out a Collecting Kansas City newsletter monthly. If you are interested or have questions about Kansas City scouting memorabilia please email Ryan Meador at meadorre@yahoo.com. Thanks to Matt Perryn and Andy Dubill for their help with this issue.