

# **TROOP HISTORY**

## **THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TROOP 2**

**Troop 2 came into being shortly after World War II when, in 1946**, a group of parents asked Keith Monroe to become Scoutmaster of a troop in Santa Monica, California. Keith Monroe was chosen because his dad had been a professional Scout. In fact, Keith Monroe's father, through his visionary dream, had helped to create Emerald Bay on Santa Catalina Island.

Troop 2's first meeting took place in 1947 at Franklin Elementary School. The School PTA became its sponsor and continued to be the sponsor until Keith Monroe retired from the position of Scoutmaster over forty years later. Some of the first 17 boys to join Troop 2 included Mr. Stark who headed up the Troop 2 recruits for many years, Mr. Stewart of Fireside Market, and Thomas Reader of Santa Monica. During the second year of Troop 2, Bill Tobias, a water safety instructor, met Keith Monroe while they were both renewing their water safety instructor's certificates. Keith Monroe told him about Troop 2 and Bill Tobias joined him and remained for the next 40 years. Both of these men were outstanding lifeguard trainers at the time, and Keith Monroe, who was then a script writer for United States Presidents, had the time to devote to planning a program for Troop 2. The program consisted of: 1) Advancement; 2) Physical Training; 3) Camping; and 4) Swimming. They had added swimming to their program because both these men were excellent swimmers and enjoyed teaching others.

Over the years Troop 2 always had four or five boys on water polo teams. Several went on to the Olympic Swim Team, and one boy became captain of the Navy Swim team. The latter was on television seen shaking hands with President John F. Kennedy, but later died in action in Vietnam. Troop 2, under Keith Monroe and Bill Tobias' direction, emphasized the High Sierras for camping, Santa Catalina Island's Emerald Bay for swimming and the Jamboree for competition among other troops. When Troop 2 attended the 1954 Jamboree, Troop 2 won all the competitive events. Other troops were so discouraged that they wanted to ban Troop 2 from any further Jamboree competitions. The next year at Catalina's Emerald Bay, Troop 2 again won all the events.

Emphasizing advancements became a part of Troop 2, and boys began to learn that if you joined Troop 2 you would accomplish a lot through a lot of hard work.

Emphasizing first aid also became a part of Troop 2. All boys in the troop became good swimmers and also became knowledgeable in first aid. Troop 2 scouts and former scouts have saved at least one life for every year Troop 2 has been in existence. Troop 2 scouts have stepped in to help people during many emergencies, and their presence has helped to keep many accidents from becoming disasters.

When a boy joined Troop 2 whose father was an expert hand crafter, Keith was told that the troop could build its own canoes. Troop 2 now has 14 of our own canoes that older boys work on and repair when needed to keep them serviceable. Canoe expertise and competition became a part of Troop 2.

The next year at Emerald Bay, while Keith Monroe was watching his troop practice with the Emerald Bay large war canoes, he conceived the idea of canoeing around Santa Catalina Island. It had never been attempted before, and some people thought Keith was crazy to attempt this feat. Troop 2 rose to the challenge, accomplished the circumnavigation in three days, and Troop 2 has been canoeing around Catalina ever since.

In a search for High Sierras camping, Troop 2 has been to Shaver Lake, Huntington Lake, Jackass Meadows and Twin Lakes. Troop 2 searches out isolated areas with springs or lakes for canoeing, camping, mountain hiking and competition.

As a new scout you will have the opportunity and the duty to keep the traditions alive and to create an even more impressive history of Troop 2.

**You CAN DO it!**