The Order’s outstretched hand to Native America

By TIMOTHY C. BROWN
National Order of the Arrow Subcommittee
Recognition, Awards, History & Preservation

Since it began, the Order of the Arrow has included an almost spiritual relationship with the histories and traditions of the American Indians. This kindred spirit endures through the OA’s ceremonies, its symbols, and name. Influenced by culture and crafts from the American Indian, the Order accepted an obligation to maintain the highest standards of authenticity and sensitivity. However, this relationship did not always exist. Donald C. “Don” Thom served as a pioneer recognizing the Order’s need to understand American Indian culture.

Born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, during the height of the Great Depression, as an only child, he tended to keep to himself. At the urging of his father, he agreed to visit a local Scout troop. Soon enough he overcame his shyness and became active in Troop 85 earning both the God and Country and Eagle Scout Awards in 1943. A gifted leader, Don held nearly every youth leadership position within his troop and served as an assistant Scoutmaster. Joining the U. S. Naval Reserves as a high school senior, his unit activated in June 1944, immediately after his graduation. By May the following year he found himself aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Ticonderoga in the South Pacific. By now the Japanese fleet was in shambles, but the carrier continued attacks against enemy airfields and patrolling the waters. On September 6th, four days after the formal surrender ceremonies on board the battleship U.S.S. Missouri, the U.S.S. Ticonderoga entered Tokyo Bay, the first American carrier to do so.

After military service he served as Scoutmaster until 1959. Inducted into the former Zit-Kala-Sha Lodge in 1946, he received Brotherhood in 1949 and the Vigil Honor in 1952 with the name “Lively One.” As a young adult, Don served two terms as lodge chief, immediately followed by 20 consecutive years (1952-1972) as lodge advisor. In addition, he served an unprecedented 30 consecutive years (1953-1982) as advisor for Area 4B, Area 4A, and Section SE-IIB.

Don attended the 1948 NOAC where he first saw Scouts performing American Indian dancing. Enthralled with the hoop dance, he and Bob Poppe tried to mimic the techniques back in their dorm room by fastening together wire coat hangers into a large hoop. The following summer Zit-Kala-Sha started the Wawoyaka Dance Team, which in Sioux means “Story Teller.” By the next national conference with Don as lodge chief, he and Bob Poppe tried to mimic the techniques back in their dorm room by fastening together wire coat hangers into a large hoop.

Don Thom in the U.S. Navy, 1945

Dukeman appointed OA Specialist

By MARTY TSCHELLER
Class of 1996

Starting in September 2012, Matt Dukeman became the OA Specialist at the national office working with OA Director Clyde Mayer. Matt grew up in Eureka, California, and served as chapter, lodge, and section chief in 2000. The year before as section vice chief, he played an integral part helping to plan the conclave held at Yosemite National Park that included a service project with over 500 Arrowmen.

An Eagle Scout, Matt attended OA Trail Crew the inaugural year in 1995, returned as a foreman, assistant director, director in 2003, and received the DSA in 2004. He earned a political science degree from Sonoma State University and entered professional Scouting in 2004.

Matt Dukeman

Campaign button used by Joe Brunton (Class of 1946) when he successfully ran for National Lodge Chief at the 1938 National Meeting at Irondale Scout Reservation. He later served as the Chief Scout Executive from 1960-1966.

At the December 1962 national conference planning meeting, Eagle Scout Randy Scott from Pennsylvania (Class of 1969) became the first African American selected as a deputy conference vice chief.

At the December 1987 national conference planning meeting, David Erb (Class of 1988) and his officers completed their two-year terms. Starting this year, elections of national officers changed to one-year terms.
LEADERSHIP

RAY CAPP
National Chairman, Class of 1973

MICHAEL THOMPSON
Vice Chairman, Class of 2006
Recognitions and Awards

CRAIG SALAZAR
Vice Chairman, Class of 1994
Communications and Marketing

CLYDE MAYER
Director, Class of 1998

MATT DUKEMAN
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JOHN REHM
National Chief

PRESTON MARQUIS
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MARTY TSCHEtTER
Editor, Class of 1996

JEFFREY ST. CYR
Layout Editor, Class of 2012

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The University of Kansas hosted the 1958 NOAC, pictured is the Allen Fieldhouse where the shows, ceremonies, and Indian dancing occurred. Photo taken by Dr. Louis Marchetti (Class of 1961) and part of the OA Archive collection. The 1958 National Conference Chief Jim Kolka recently donated his personal notes, letters, and various documents. Note the article on page 4.

Miller retires after 36 years of service

Recently retired

OA Specialist Carey Miller started to work for our Order in 1998, retiring this past spring. A native of Eastover, South Carolina, he earned a degree in business administration from Benedict College and a master’s degree in human services and leadership from Murray State University. He served professional Scouting for 36 years including assignments in Roanoke, Virginia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Columbia, South Carolina, and in St. Louis, Missouri. Carey received the DSA in 2002.

The Silver Arrowhead is distributed two times each year via electronic communication to recipients of the Order of the Arrow Distinguished Service Award. Articles, photographs, and updates may be sent to stephanie.jordan@scouting.org.
From the Chairman, Ray Capp

My Brothers,

What a great national conference at Michigan State - the second largest attendance ever! Congratulations to our 69 new Distinguished Service Award recipients and to our brother, Ed Pease, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award. To cap it off, the BSA Key-3, National President Wayne Perry, National Commissioner Tico Perez, and Chief Scout Executive Wayne Brock attended.

We held a successful “Meet the Man” session and introduced new tools for units, chapters, and lodges to ease their program delivery. We introduced new opportunities for Arrowmen and Scout alumni to support the OA endowment with special trading post items, the Legacy Fellowship, and the Goodman Society. If you were unable to attend the national conference, please take a look at our new initiatives:

- Unit, Chapter, and Lodge Support Resources: www.oa-bsa.org/resources/ucl.htm
- National OA Endowment: www.endowment.oa-bsa.org

We hosted the National Eagle Scout Association for a joint celebration of 100 years of the Eagle Scout Award. A grand banquet culminated this fabulous collaboration, which I hope will continue over the years.

The OA Center for History and Preservation was a pilgrimage site for many. We unveiled the latest Csatari painting to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of our Order in 2015. The online history timeline is now active at http://history.oa-bsa.org.

As we approach our 100th Anniversary, you will receive more information about our efforts reaching out to OA alumni across the country. I continue to seek new ideas to help us reunite with former members. Please send me your suggestions at ray.capp@oa-bsa.org.

Until we meet again down the old Scouting trail, I remain devotedly yours,

Ray Capp
National Chairman
He briefly attended the 1961 National Conference to install Ron Temple as chief, then got in his car and returned to school. Followed by several years of rigorous academic studies, busy starting a professional career and family, he just moved on in life until we reached out to him. Thrilled with the reconnection, Ray Capp mailed The Brotherhood of Cheerful Service: A History of the Order of the Arrow by Ken Davis.

Jim earned a BS political science degree (economics and chemistry minors) in 1960 from the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire, then a JD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School in 1963. He was admitted to the Wisconsin State Bar, followed by a PhD in political science and international affairs from the University of Kansas in 1969. Presently he works as an international legal consultant based in Atlanta, Georgia.

Interestingly, while Tim Brown researched the article about Don Thom, he located a beautiful scrapbook of 1950’s photographs taken by a Scouter from Louisville. One photograph happened to be Jim Kolka’s Wisconsin lodge performing the opening ceremony at the 1956 NOAC. Without meeting Jim, quite easily the identification of the ceremony team might remain a mystery. Our passion as an organization to engage the past by tracking down photographs, documents, and people illustrates a powerful application of public history.

Youth recipients, not just the national officers

At each national conference, a number of youthful Arrowmen receive our award. The question to answer: Are youthful recipients primarily the national chief, vice chief, and region chiefs? As mentioned in previous articles for purposes of this analysis, recipients under age 30 are defined as “youthful.” Typically, recognition is acknowledged at the conference following completion of one’s youth leadership role. The first region chief elections occurred in December of 1974, and those elected served a two-year term. Therefore, this analysis starts with the 1977 national conference - the first slate with the modern scheme.

The youthful selections from 1977 to 2012 resulted in 388 recipients. Out of this number, how many were presented to national officers? Former national officers accounted for 197 youthful recipients. A bit surprising, the remaining 191 youthful recipients made their mark on the Order through different opportunities for service. In this 37-year period, youthful recipients not national officers, equate to a little more than 10 per biennial national conference.

Because nearly half of the youthful recipients did not hold a national office, how many served as a conference vice chief (or a vice chief position at a national event)? Even more surprising, only 85 recipients served in this position out of the 191 non-national officers.

Wondering how this group of young men warranted recognition, the research revealed a variety of reasons: OA high adventure leaders, National Bulletin youth editors, key OA shows staff, multi-year section chiefs, regional OA trainers, and other roles. One more interesting statistic surfaced: between 1977 and 2012, 388 awards went to youthful recipients out of 695 total presentations, or 56 percent.

In short, it is apparent that the Distinguished Service Award exists for youth who demonstrate the traits of servant leadership, without requiring a youth to have served as a national officer.
the adviser, the team competed and won a couple national champion dance team competitions. Boys’ Life Magazine featured the team several times and the 1955 edition of the Indian Lore Merit Badge booklet featured Don wearing his dance regalia. The pursuit of cultural authenticity led him to acknowledge the need to study and respect American Indian culture.

Starting at the 1950 NOAC, Don became involved with Indian events. At the following NOAC, he observed that only the shows staff retained continuity from conference to conference. The other program areas randomly assigned staff for support. Therefore, he decided to build a group of knowledgeable Arrowmen for Indian events. This core group stayed together for subsequent national events, contributing greatly to the success of the Indian events program.

Extremely active as a young adult throughout the NOACs of the 1950s, Don embodied servant leadership. OA committee members noticed his commitment and tapped him to serve as an assistant Scoutmaster for the 1960 National Jamboree OA Service Corps. The following year Don and Charles Weber became the first recipients from Kentucky to receive the Distinguished Service Award. He continued to serve in leadership positions with the service corps over the next 30 years, and directed the OA Indian Village at the 1993 National Jamboree.

Though closely engaged with Indian events, Brother Thom occasionally observed OA members misrepresenting American Indian mannerisms and dress. Over the years this portrayal increasingly became offensive and he worried that if members did not learn to develop respect for American Indian culture, in the near future it could be discontinued. Therefore, the Order’s quest for better understanding and awareness of the American Indian culture developed into the National Indian Seminar, first hosted in 1974 at Philmont. National OA Committee member Maury Clancy (Class of 1971) served as the adviser and initial driving force, but he passed away in the middle of December. Although Don missed the inaugural event, the national OA committee selected Don to replace Clancy, who represented American Indian Affairs. Almost immediately, Don changed the subcommittee’s name to American Indian Events (AIE). When asked why he adjusted the name, he responded, “Scouts don’t have affairs, they have events.” From that time forward he took ownership of the AIE program including all the national conferences from 1975 through 1996, and the 1978, 1980, 1982, and 1984 National Indian Seminars, the 1987 National OA Pow Wow, and the 1995 Philmont Retreat. Don remained on the national OA committee for 25 consecutive years.

In early 1975, Don and the OA National Executive Secretary Bill Downs learned that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (F&W) planned to show up unannounced at the upcoming NOAC to confiscate feathers and animal parts that dance team members illegally possessed. To avoid a huge embarrassment, Don and Bill conducted a preemptive meeting with the F&W to find a better solution. As a result, Fish and Wildlife agents came to the conference to provide educational programs for the dancers and advisers, rather than for law enforcement purposes. In return, the OA agreed to establish a policy prohibiting the use of illegal feathers and animal parts in regalia. Subsequently in 1976, the OA developed its “Protected Feathers Clarification Policy.” Don played an integral role drafting the policy, which restricted the use of feathers and animal parts to only domestic and game birds. This policy kept the BSA and the OA in good standing with the federal agency ever since.

As AIE lead adviser, Brother Thom took the lead role in developing a strong relationship with the American Indian Scouting Association (AISA). A national organization within the American Indian community and formed by tribal elders with Scouting experience, the AISA supports American Indian youth in the program. Don personally dedicated himself to this group, and in so doing brought that commitment to the Order.

In 1985 again he became aware that the American Indian community had concerns with the OA’s representation of dancing and culture. At a national AISA meeting held in Philadelphia, Mississippi, Don listened to their concerns. He explained the Order’s goal to teach members respect for American Indian culture. He emphasized the program did not include religious connotations and focused on social fellowship. In addition, he announced the OA’s intention to end the use of face and body paint, a long-term contentious point with American Indians. Strengthening the growing rapport and aiding open communication, AISA members started staffing Indian seminars and national conferences. Brother Thom served on the group’s board of directors for many years and in 1993, received the AISA’s Grey Wolf Award acknowledging his stewardship and service to American Indian youth. His relationship with the organization healed old wounds of misunderstanding and significantly formed a permanent bond between the Order of the Arrow and the American Indian community.

Don’s wife, Carolyn, also a longtime affiliate supporting the Order’s mission, received the Red Arrow Award in 1992. An Arrowman since 1946, Don has provided exemplary servant leadership in our Order. His lifetime of service forever linked the OA’s mission with American Indian heritage, on which it was founded.

Left to right: Bill Strode (1956 Area 4B Chief sitting), Don Thom (Area 4B Adviser standing), and Bill Schreiber (Director, Camp Covered Bridge) and Marion Disborough (Scout Executive, Old Kentucky Home Council). From the Art Hoerter collection.

Don Thom, Circa early 1970’s.

The Zit-Kala-Sha Lodge Wawoyaka Dancers. Budd Allison, Charles Wetherell, Art Hoerter, J. R. Routt, and Don Thom. Circa mid 1950s. From the Art Hoerter collection.
National OA Endowment supports annual program

Since its modest launch more than 30 years ago, the endowment provides financial support for all OA high adventure programs, Josh R. Sain Memorial Scholarships, national Scout jamboree programs like the Mysterium Compass, and lodge service grants supporting lodges to serve their local councils.

Along with 26 councils, the BSA Asset Management monitors the fund allowing for significant savings in management and trust fees, while providing professional oversight. Since 2009 the national OA endowment value increased by $1,318,478 through positive change in market value. At the end of 2011 endowment assets totaled $4,143,551, excluding gifts designated in the estate planning of Goodman Society members.

Goodman Society
Members who wish to make a significant contribution of at least $10,000 to the national OA endowment may become members of the Goodman Society. This gift may be a onetime cash gift, or the national OA endowment may be included as part of the members estate planning.

Order of the Arrow Discover Card®
Just introduced this past summer, the Order of the Arrow Discover credit card is available, along with a debit card with parental controls for youth. A portion of each transaction will benefit your local council, the national council, and the national OA endowment.

For more information about the Goodman Society or the Order of the Arrow Discover credit card, visit www.endowment.oa-bsa.org or email Tony Steinhardt at tony.steinhardt@gmail.com.

Outreach to Vigil Honor and Founder’s Award recipients

By JASON HOOD
Class of 1986

We need your help with an important project to reach out and re-engage Arrowmen who received recognition for their dedication to the highest ideals of the Order of the Arrow and the Boy Scouts of America, but who may no longer be active in Scouting or with whom we may have lost contact. Arrowmen recognized with the Vigil Honor or with the Founder’s Award represent a great potential resource to lodges and councils in a variety of roles. At the very least, we want the opportunity to keep them informed about Scouting activities.

The national office maintains a list of Vigil Honor and Founder’s Award recipients. However, our records do not include individual contact information such as addresses and email information. You can help us “round up” this information by sending the contact information of Vigil Honor members to vigil@oa-bsa.org and Founder’s Award recipients to founders@oa-bsa.org. To update contact information for recipients of the Distinguished Service Award, please send a message to DSA@oa-bsa.org.

We have provided each lodge with a list of Vigil Honor members and Founder’s Award recipients asking for their help too, so we can maintain communication with our brothers. Your assistance with this project would be most appreciated. Wouldn’t it be nice if these brothers could receive information similar to what you receive in The Silver Arrowhead?

If for some reason you would prefer not to receive information from us about the Order of the Arrow and Boy Scouts of America and request removal from our lists, please let us know by sending a message to alumni@oa-bsa.org and DSA@oa-bsa.org. Otherwise, we will continue our efforts to keep you informed and share additional information about our programs.

Visit the new timeline at www.history.oa-bsa.org