

Boy Scouts of America Troop 280



Summer Camp at Bowman

Part One

The big trip of the year has come! Troop 280 spent the 2015-2016 Scouting Year's one-week summer camp at Camp Bowman of the Goshen Scout Reservation in Goshen, Virginia! The six campsites in the reserve are placed around the 42-acre Lake Merriweather. You can read more about this place at:

http://www.ncacbsa.org/members/group_content_view.asp?group=119323&id=282458

We began our nearly eight hour drive at 6:30 A.M. on Saturday, the 27th. There were a little over ten scouts present at this point, and three cars transported us. Rain began and did not stop until an hour past noon, a foreboding of the week to come. After making various stops and breaks, we arrived at 2:30 to our site in Bowman, Camp Robinson. This spot was deep in



the woods, and had room for four patrols: two were scout patrols, one was for the PLC, and one was for adults. The site lay at the end of a winding road over and under hills and a stream, far from the central area of Bowman. Through intermittent showers, the troop checked in, took a tour, and ate a dinner made by the camp.



The view over the lake is truly magnificent. All around are mountains, even

Tom Garback-Troop Historian
June 27th-July 4th, 2015

Boy Scouts of America Troop 280

though the ones behind you cannot be seen. The lake stretches on as a single mirror, valleys visible where the mountains drop. On a foggy morning, you can witness the clouds tear and grind against the smooth peaks in the sky, tumbling down the slopes in airy apparitions.

At Bowman, there is a point system based on the cleanliness and safety of the campsites. The highest-scoring troop wins a trophy-like



paddle at the end of each day. Through the course of the week, we began averagely, rose, and fell only slightly on the last day of inspection. Overall, Bowman is strict. The troops were given meals and



cooking equipment to cook their own food, but this apparently came with the price of being observed very closely. It is slightly ironic because the camp is not in the highest quality of things to begin with.

Over the week, there were a few aspects of life that remained constant. Meals were held between two patrols, the PLC and adults merging into them. There was lots of orange juice, milk, eggs, bread, cheese, and apples throughout the meals. The menu was satisfying, and not difficult to handle. The time from cooking gave quality bonding for scouts. The first patrol was quick and fun, the second had delicious food and good conversation. There were three classes in the morning after breakfast, and then lunch. Siesta was held after that for a rest, though many were

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June 27th-July 4th, 2015

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filled with things to work on for badges and other matters. Two classes followed, and then dinner came. After one final night badge, there was the flag lowering ceremony with announcements and the daily site inspection award.



On Sunday, the scheduled swim test was cancelled due to flooding in the lake. It was then considered mandatory only for those taking an aquatic merit badge. The weather was beautiful with a slightly cold morning, and only afternoon merit badges were held. The Bowman campfire took place by the lake with an abundance of skits and songs, all of which were either hilarious or eye-roll-inducing, depending on

one's opinion. Monday delivered three scouts that arrived a day into the week, a sunny sky, and a full run of the merit badge program (which allowed seven in a full schedule). That night, there was an Astronomy hike for those taking the



badge. It lasted until half past midnight and was under a mostly clear sky. On Tuesday night, Goshen held an early 4th of July fireworks show by the main offices and check-in hill over the lake. There were many things to buy, and the fireworks were grand; however, the storm visible

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over the mountains crashed the party and everyone entered emergency evacuation mode. All ended well, of course.

Around this time in the week, the troop began our service project: a flagpole. The same item was constructed at Ockinickon the year before, so it must be turning into our trademark of some sense. Wednesday evening began the overnighter for those taking Wilderness Survival, where scary stories were told. One of them reflected stomping in the nighttime, heard by numerous scouts and staff members for years. I actually investigated an area where such was heard in our site, and found pine saplings sliced in halves for no apparent reason. So, who knows? A CPR training course was also held for those who needed it to complete a requirement in a badge. Finally, Jack held a flag retirement ceremony.



(Completed in Part Two...)



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