

## The Sarah Hazard Nomer Museum Patch

### A history of Girl Scouts of Rhode Island and Southeastern New England

The Sarah Hazard Nomer Museum opened in 1990 in the newly built House-by-the-Side-of-the-Road. A Museum Committee was formed and tasked with the management of the collections and the archive. Mrs. Nomer and her daughter participated in Girl Scouts in New York and Rhode Island.

#### Steps:

1. A Look at Our Roots
2. People in Our Past
3. Our Council Attic: The Museum Collections
4. Our Camps



**Purpose:** To learn some of the history of the local Girl Scout organization, tour the Sarah Hazard Nomer Museum at Camp Hoffman, West Kingston, Rhode Island, and visit a Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England camp. The patch can be completed with a half-day outing, as part of a camping trip to Camp Hoffman or at troop meetings that culminate with a museum visit. Patches can be purchased in the GSSNE shop.

Complete one activity from each of the steps in any order.

#### Step 1 - A Look at Our Roots:

Learn about the beginnings of scouting in Rhode Island and southeast Massachusetts. Take a guided tour of the Sarah Hazard Nomer Museum. Discover the roots of local scouting through the photos and memorabilia on display. To schedule a tour (plan 40 minutes for each group of 10 or fewer), contact the GSSNE Troop Camping Registrar at 401-331-4500, ext. 1204.

#### Step 2 - People in Our Past:

Learn more about one of these women who had an impact on Girl Scouting in our area. Information is available at GSSNE.org. Ask your museum docent about the person your troop is interested in.

- Mira Hoffman (1865-1944), one of the 5 founding incorporators and served as treasurer and commissioner for Girl Scouts of Rhode Island, Inc. She established Camp Hoffman and in 1928 became the national organization's fifth president.
- Emma R. Hall (1865-1949), formed the first council in Massachusetts, was first commissioner for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and joined the National Executive Board in 1919.
- Marie Gaudette (1894-1966), created some of Girl Scouts' favorite songs while a director at Camp Hoffman. Her camp name was "Big Chief." She became a trainer and nature writer for the national organization.
- Edith Ballinger Price (1897-1997), was one of the first Brownie leaders in Rhode Island who went on to help build the national program. She was a prolific author and illustrator. She wrote the first Brownie handbook and was the first Great Brown Owl in the U.S.A.
- Catherine "Kit" Hammett (1902-1998), was the first nationally registered Girl Scout in Rhode Island. She was a junior counselor at the first statewide camp, and as an adult trained 14,000

volunteers in 46 states in how to camp. She was an author, world traveler for Girl Scouts and WAGGS, and a founding member of the SHN Museum.

### Step 3 - Our Council Attic

The Museum Collections: The collections include a wide range of donated uniforms, books and troop and camp memorabilia. *CHOOSE ONE TO INVESTIGATE.*

- a. Borrow a GSSNE Museum Program Box. Explore the treasures found within one of the boxes. Then compare a Legacy badge from your Girl's Guide to a similar badge in an old handbook. Choose and complete at least one activity. Contact the GSSNE office for a program box.
- b. Uniforms. Compare uniforms for style, comfort and color from at least three decades, then design a uniform of the future. You can borrow uniforms through from the GSSNE office or add this step to your museum tour. Just ask your docent.
- c. Photos and Scrapbooks. Someone once said, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Ask family members if they have a photograph or scrapbook from when they were a Girl Scout. Try to find out something about the picture and share its history with other Girl Scouts. Where and when was it taken? Alternately you can add this step to your museum tour and study photos and scrapbooks in the collection. Ask who, what, when, where, and why?

### Step 4 - Our Camps

Become familiar with a Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England property and learn some of its history. *CHOOSE ONE:*

- a. Take a History Hike at Camp Hoffman (established 1921). Take a self-guided *Hike Through History* tour and explore the common areas of the main camp. Scripts are available in the yellow program backpack in the kitchen closet in House-by-the-Side-of the-Road, from a ranger or museum docent. Alternatively, Daisies and Brownies may complete the letterboxing course installed at Camp Hoffman by Southgansett Troop 80. Clues to the fact-filled boxes are located in the first "birdhouse" at the info board near the gate. Be prepared for walking/hiking on natural terrain.

*An accompanying adult must have Outdoor Day training and submit a Troop Outdoor Day Reservation form to the council office prior to the two week deadline.*

- b. Visit a GSSNE Camp Property. Plan a troop outing, outdoor day or camping weekend so you can explore one of these properties:
  - Camp Rocky Farm, Newport, R.I. established in 1950 by Newport County Girl Scout Council
  - Camp Cookie, Glocester, R.I. established in 1956 by Providence-Cranston Girl Scout Council
  - Camp Promising Acres, Swansea, Mass. established in 1968 by Girl Scouts of RI, Inc.

*Check all training requirements for the accompanying adults and the Safety Activity Checkpoints. Submit the appropriate reservation form to the council office prior to the established deadline. Camp histories are available at each camps' lodge in the program backpack. Don't forget your nose-bag lunch and sit-upon.*

### IF YOU WISH TO EXPLORE MORE

- a. For a timeline of our Council history and some early photos, go to GSSNE.org > Our History [gssne.org/aboutUs\\_OurHistory.html](http://gssne.org/aboutUs_OurHistory.html)
- b. Classmates Juliette Gordon Low and Abby Lippitt Hunter, daughter of Rhode Island Governor Henry Lippitt, were close friends throughout their lives. Visit the Lippitt House Museum in Providence and walk the same halls Juliette did. For information, contact Preserve Rhode Island 401-272-5101 [preserveri.org](http://preserveri.org) - [www.preserveri.org/content/gov-henry-lippitt-house-museum-history](http://www.preserveri.org/content/gov-henry-lippitt-house-museum-history).

- c. Watch the 1918 black and white silent film "[The Golden Eaglet: The Story of a Girl Scout.](#)"
- d. Many of Edith Ballinger Price's books can be found on-line. [View her artwork](#) at the Special Collections & University Archives, Univ. of Oregon Libraries.
- e. Start a troop, trip or camp scrapbook on your own or as a group. Include photos, drawings, newspaper clippings, flyers, programs and ticket stubs. Add journaling with memories and dates. You might also investigate acid-free, archival scrapbook materials.

(Revised August 2015)