

## The Cost of Wood Badge

Have you ever wondered why Wood Badge is so expensive? After all, isn't "Thrifty" one of the twelve points of the Scout Law? What you may not realize is that being thrifty is exactly why you SHOULD take Wood Badge C7-129-11-01 this summer! If you were to take seminars covering the same subjects, it would cost you thousands of dollars! Compare these prices with a popular training company:

Course	Pryor Seminars®	Wood Badge
Course Title	Total Fee: \$1,600.00 over 9 days	Total Fee: \$250.00 over 6 days
Conflict Management	\$150.00	Included
Managing Multiple Priorities	\$150.00	Included
Leadership (2 day seminar)	\$400.00	Included
Ethical Leadership	\$200.00	Included
Project Management	\$200.00	Included
Coaching and Mentoring	\$150.00	Included
Communication	\$150.00	Included
Diversity	\$200.00	Included

And I'll bet you have to provide your own meals for those other seminars. At Wood Badge, meals are included along with a T-shirt and a hat! Besides, how many seminars allow you to spend six days and four nights at beautiful Camp Sol R. Crown and the premier Jadel Training Center playing Scout games? So where does your money go for Wood Badge? The fee covers all your training materials, plus the aforementioned perks, plus your neckerchief, woggle and beads, plus licensing for access to top-of-the-line training information, plus an excellent menu for you to feast upon. Realistically speaking, Wood Badge could be the best investment you make in your scouting and professional careers!

That being said, we do realize that \$250 is still a big chunk of change. Assistance is available:

- ★ The American Legion and VFW post offer scholarship opportunities for members specifically for Wood Badge. You may download an application from on the website (look under "Forms/Links" and select forms) <http://www.neic-woodbadge.org>
- ★ Your chartering organization may be willing to fund your Wood Badge experience. Ask your chartering organization representative about options.
- ★ Your employer may be willing to help pay for a portion or all of your Wood Badge training. If you need help convincing the boss, go to <http://www.neic-woodbadge.org> and download the "Letter to Employer". You can give that to your boss; it hardly mentions that this is a Boy Scout event!
- ★ Northeast Illinois Council Wood Badge Scholarship Application: on the website (look under "Forms/Links" and select forms) <http://www.neic-woodbadge.org>  
Download the application and send it to the address on the form.

Speaking of our course website, (say it with me now: <http://www.neic-woodbadge.org>), there are a lot of resources available to you on that site including some of the frequently asked questions about Wood Badge. Please take a few minutes and review the site and as always, if you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (847) 420-2964. You can also email me at [tim.mckeown@gmail.com](mailto:tim.mckeown@gmail.com).

Yours in Scouting

*Tim*

Tim McKeown  
C7-129-11-01 Course Director



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### What is a Gilwell?

The answer can be found in the following publications by The Scout Association, The Gilwell Book (10th edition, 1965) Gilwell Story (1969).

Below is an extract:

At the same time, Baden-Powell had met success in his efforts to find a suitable camping spot near London to serve urban youth as a campsite and Scoutmasters as a training ground. After securing the financial support of W. de Bois Maclaren, District Commissioner for Roseneath, Baden-Powell charged P.B. Nevill to find a suitable camp. Nevill describes his experience thus:

The entries in my diary show that Maclaren dined with me at Roland House - on the 20th November 1918. This was at the request of B.P., who sent him to me as he wanted to give a camping ground for the boys of East London. He said 'you find what you want and I will buy it.' I told him that what I wanted was a site adjoining Epping or Hainault Forests and I spent every available week-end on my motor bike touring the area, trying to find something. The small committee that had been set up viewed one or two sites suggested by agents. Gilwell was first mentioned to me by a young Assistant Scoutmaster in Bethnal Green, named Gayfer who said he had come across the estate whilst exploring for bird life. I went to Gilwell on Saturday, 8th March, 1919. I did

not know the extent of the estate at that time but I found the old notice board advertising its sale on the ground behind a hedge from this I managed to get the agent's name.

Negotiations were begun to purchase the estate containing 55 acres of land and a rather dilapidated Georgian country house. By Easter 1919, the purchase process was far enough along to secure permission for camping at the property, and on the Thursday before Easter a small group of Rovers from East London became the first Scout campers at Gillwell (note the spelling, which was in common use until Baden-Powell was created a baron and returned to the spelling of Gilwell as used in old documents related to the Estate, with three "l's"). Arriving in the rain, they spent their first night on the cement floor of the Pigsty, but pitched camp the next morning on the other side of the Orchard, near the Session Circle.

The purchase cost was £7,000, donated by Maclaren, who gave an additional £3,000 for improvements to the house. Opening ceremonies were held on July 26, 1919, including a rally of 700 Scouts. Mrs. Maclaren cut the ribbons and Baden-Powell presented Maclaren with the Silver Wolf.

Note: The Silver Wolf is equivalent to the BSA's Silver Buffalo

# The Origins Of The Wood Badge



When Gilwell Park was purchased for the Scout Movement in 1919 and formal Leader Training introduced, Baden-Powell felt that 'Scout Officers' (as they were then called) who completed a training course, should receive some form of recognition. Originally he envisaged that those who passed through Gilwell should wear an ornamental tassel on their Scout hats but instead the alternative of two small beads attached to lacing on the hat or to a coat button-hole was instituted and designated the Wood Badge. Very soon the wearing of beads on the hat was discontinued and instead they were strung on a leather thong or bootlace around the neck, a tradition that continues to this day.

The first Wood Badges were made from beads taken from a necklace that had belonged to a Zulu chief named Dinizulu, which B-P had found during his time in the Zululand in 1888. On state occasions, Dinizulu would wear a necklace 12 feet long, containing, approximately 1,000 beads made from South African Acacia yellow wood. This wood has a soft central pith, which makes it easy for a rawhide lace to be threaded through from end to end and this is how the 1,000 beads were arranged. The beads themselves in size from tiny emblems to others 4 inches in length. The necklace was considered sacred, being the badge conferred on royalty and outstanding warriors.

When B-P was looking for some token to award to people who went through the Gilwell training course he remembered the Dinizulu necklace and the leather thong given to him by an elderly African at Mafeking. He took two of the smaller beads, drilled them through the centre, threaded

them onto the thong and called it the Wood Badge.

## THE LEATHER THONG

The other important part of the Wood Badge, apart from the beads, is the leather thong itself. Baden-Powell was originally given one during the course of the Siege of Mafeking in 1899/1900 when things were not going too well. An elderly man met him and asked him about his unusually depressed appearance. Then the man took the leather thong that he had been wearing from around his neck and placed it in B-P's hand. 'Wear this,' he said. 'My mother gave it to me for luck. Now it will bring you luck.' So from these two souvenirs of his military career in Africa, the leather thong from an old man at Mafeking and from Dinizulu's necklace, B-P fashioned what is now known all over the world as the Wood Badge.

## THE GILWELL SCARF

William de Bois Maclaren, a Scottish businessman and the District Commissioner for Rossneath, Dunbartonshire, paid £7,000 in 1919 to buy Gilwell Park, a 55-acre estate on the edge of Epping Forest, London, as a training center for Scouters and as a camp site for Scouts. He also paid another £3,000 to help put the White House into good repair, as the place had been abandoned for the previous 14 years and was virtually derelict. When Gilwell Park was officially opened on 26th July 1919 Mrs Maclaren cut ribbons in Scout colours (green and yellow) that were hung across the doorway to the White House to mark the opening. B-P then presented Maclaren with the Silver Wolf as a sign of the great debt that the Movement owed to him. Not much more is known about Maclaren, apart from the fact that he wrote several books including *Climbs and Changes*, *Chuckles from a Cheery Corner*, *The Rubber Tree Book* and *Word Pictures of War* (a book of poetry based on experiences of the First

World War). He died in 1921. In his honor the Gilwell staff wore a scarf made of Maclaren tartan. However to reduce the expense a scarf of dove grey cloth (the color of humility) with a warm red lining (to signify warmth of feeling) was substituted with a patch of Maclaren tartan on the point of the scarf and worn by those passing the Gilwell practical course. In 1924 use of the scarf became restricted to Wood Badge holders only. Today the scarf is more the earth tone color beige than grey but the reason and the date of this development has not been found.

## THE GILWELL WOGGLE

*For full details about the history of the woggle see the Archives Information Sheet The origins of the woggle.*

The woggle was first created in the early 1920s by Bill Shankley, a member of the Gilwell staff. He produced a two-strand Turk's head slide which was adopted as the official woggle. In 1943, John Thurman, the Camp Chief, wanted some form of recognition of the completion of each stage of the Leader Training program and it seemed logical to present some part of the Wood Badge insignia on the completion of what was then called Basic Training. So from 1943 until 1989 the Gilwell woggle was awarded on the completion of Basic Training and the Gilwell scarf and the Wood Badge beads on the completion of Advanced Training. The Gilwell woggle can still be bought by adults today for use

Our thanks to the **Archives Department, The Scout Information Center Gilwell Park Chingford London E4 7QW**, for providing the source information.

# Wood Badge in the U.S.

In 1936, an experimental Wood Badge course was conducted in the United States at the Schiff Scout Reservation. Then, in 1948, the first American Wood Badge course was introduced in the United States as advanced training for trainers of Boy Scout leaders. Later, the program was extended to include troop committee members, commissioners, and Explorer leaders.

Experiments began in the late 1960s with a leadership development Wood Badge course emphasizing 11 leadership skills or "competencies." This program was launched in 1972 in support of a major revision of the Boy Scout phase of the program. In 1978, an evaluation of the Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge course revealed a need for greater emphasis on the practical aspects of good troop operation. The result was the development of a course that would provide a blend of Scoutcraft skills and practical troop operation, mixed with a variety of leadership exercises.

In 2001, the new Wood Badge for the 21st Century was introduced. It was developed for all Scouters: Cub Scout leaders, Boy Scout leaders, Venturing leaders, and council and district leaders. The focus is on leadership skills, not outdoor skills. The first part of the new Wood Badge course reflects unit meetings, while the second part of the course uses a troop camping activity as its delivery model.

The new Wood Badge course is administered nationally by the Boy Scout Division