

Appendix 5

Ceremonies

Scouts undoubtedly like a measure of ceremony and tradition, but they are rightly sceptical of meaningless ceremony and traditions which have no relevance today. Ceremonies should therefore be reduced to a minimum and should be short, simple and sincere. Scouts cannot remain solemn for long, so don't overstrain their patience.

An outdoor setting is desirable, if a suitable time and place can be found. All those taking part should be carefully briefed beforehand, so that they are confident that they know what to do.

Coming-Up from Cub Scout Pack:

If possible the Pack and the Troop should meet together. The Pack bids a simple farewell to its members, who are then welcomed into the Troop by the Scout Leader and to their new Patrols by the Patrol Leaders.

Investiture, or the making of the Scout Promise:

This is the most important of all Scout ceremonies and should be conducted according to the following suggested pattern.

The Patrol Leader conducts the Scout to the Scout Leader. The Scout is then asked if he/she knows the Scout Leader. He/she is then presented with his/her badges and given a brief explanation of their meaning. The ceremony is rarely improved by additions. Elaborate ritual with the Troop Flag, for instance, is quite unnecessary: the Scout promises on his/her honour, making the Scout Sign to signify this and these should be sufficient tokens of sincerity.

Investitures should not be held immediately after strenuous activity. The best time is at the start of the meeting, when everyone is fresh. The Investiture may then be followed by an appropriate short prayer. The alternative, but perhaps less satisfactory, time is at the end of the meeting, just before closing prayers.

The Investiture is very personal occasion for the Scout, Scout Leader and the Troop. The Scout is making a solemn promise, and they are going to help the Scout to keep it. It should therefore be conducted by the Scout Leader, not by a visiting Commissioner. Scouts should be invested singly, never in mass. If you must invest on the same occasion, take one or two at the start of the meeting and one or two at the end. Put the Troop at ease for a few moments between the individual Investitures. This ceremony should never be made into a public display; the parents of the Scout to be invested may however be invited.

Installation of a Patrol Leader:

The Scout Leader asks “Are you prepared to undertake the responsibility of leading the Patrol?” and perhaps also “Will you undertake to do your best to put your Patrol before yourself, to put the Troop before your Patrol, and to be a Scout worth following at all time?” It may then be appropriate for the new Patrol Leader to renew his Scout Promise (possibly from memory now) in token of his acceptance of his responsibilities.

Going-Up to the Venture Scout Unit:

If the Group has its own Unit a joint meeting may be practicable. If the Scout is going up a Unit shared with other Groups, the Troop should simply bid him farewell, with thanks for his past service and good wishes for his future Scouting. It should be borne in mind, however, that the Scout who join Venture Scout Unit which are organised on a local basis may well see fit to seek qualification in the service requirements of their Award scheme by acting as Instructors in the Pack or Troop of their old Group.

Presentation of Award and Proficiency Badges:

It is a pleasant tradition for a Troop to have its own form of cheers or yell to express its congratulations.