

Appendix N – The Tribe of the Black Arrow

Otena Lodge History

Order of the Arrow

Note: The Otena Lodge consolidated with the Kotso Lodge, Abilene, on January 1, 2004 and formed a new Penateka Lodge #561 as part of the Texas Trails Council, BSA. The history of Otena Lodge goes to January 17, 2004 and their final Annual Banquet.

Tribe of the Black Arrow

The seed for the organization of the Otena Lodge, Order of the Arrow, was sown some seventeen years before the lodge was chartered. This seed was the result of a Scout Troop 2 going to another council's summer camp for a week of fun and adventure in 1928. This troop spent much of their free time working with Chief Red Eagle on Indian lore. Little did they know that this camp would eventually affect hundreds of Scouts in the next 75 years.

The Tribe of the Black Arrow was the very first Indian organization in the council. Gaitha Browning, along with C. L. Pouncey, were the organizers of the group. In a letter dated February 18, 1973, Browning said that "This group did much to hold Scouting together in this area, going to many places to perform. It also produced several outstanding Indian Lore experts who got jobs with summer camps from Wisconsin to Florida, Georgia, Texas and over the South, 12:14 PM 12/17/99 thus spreading the once thin line of dancers to other places." The idea for the Black Arrow organization came from the many hours Scouts spent at summer camp with Jim Red Eagle and his wife Inez. Browning said "He was a fine craftsman and we learned that from him. His programs by the campfire were wonderful indeed to a boy, and he held them spellbound each night with dances and really fine legends. It was the magic spell we needed before a night's sleep."

It was from this group of Scouts who enjoyed Indian lore with Jim Red Eagle that the Tribe of the Black Arrow was organized. It started out in Troop 2 of Brownwood of which C. L. Pouncey was Scoutmaster and Gaitha Browning and Stuart Painter were Scouts. After they returned from summer camp at Camp Fawcett, they began to build Indian costumes and put on ceremonies.



Photo of the Tribe of the Black Arrow taken in 1934 in the Troop 2 Scout Hut at Lucas Pecan farm. Left to right, back row: Gaither Browning, 5th, with horn bonnet, Stuart Painter to right of him. Front row: Kneeling with bow, Lowell Pouncey; with drum.

In August 1930, at their newly completed Scout cabin at Lucas Pecan Farm, they had one of the best ceremonies yet put on by the troop. Pouncey introduced each person with their Indian name such as Chief Running Elk (Gaitha Browning), Thundering Buffalo (Stuart Painter), Slow Turtle (Lowell Pouncey), Fleetfoot (Earl Baker), Blue Arrow (Jack Schlueter) and Sapwood (Larkey Fowery). They had dancing to a drum, fire lighting ceremony, talking in Indian sign language, and other ceremonies that night. After the ceremony was over, pictures of the boys were taken around the fire and several spent the night in the cabin.

When C. L. Pouncey became the Acting Scout Executive of the Pecan Valley Council, the following month, he took that same group of boys from his troop, all friends of his sons, and organized what he called the "Council of Black Arrow" to promote Indian Lore and stimulate interest in Scouting around the council.

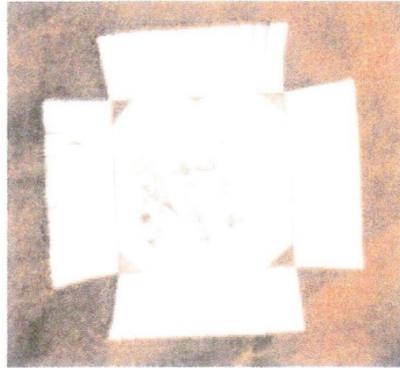
The group was first used in September 26, 1930, when they had a special council campout at Paint Rock. A few days later he took some of the group to Lampasas to put on an Indian ceremony to stimulate the troop there. They later became known as the "Black Arrow Society."

Like many groups of its time, they became a very popular organization and had over 100 Scouts participating in the group. They created three "ranks" in the Tribe- Hunter, Brave and Warrior. To be a member of the Tribe one had to make leggings, breech clout, brow band and moccasins. One coup feather was presented to the new member by the Chief. In addition, they had to know all of the Second Class Indian Sign language, know toe--heel and single snake dance steps and make a fire by flint and steel.

The Society was used over the next several years to put on Indian Ceremonies in various towns and

at special activities. Some of them taught Indian lore at Scout camp. They continued to be active until they again talked Pouncey into organizing the Kunieh Tribe in 1934.

Kunieh Tribe

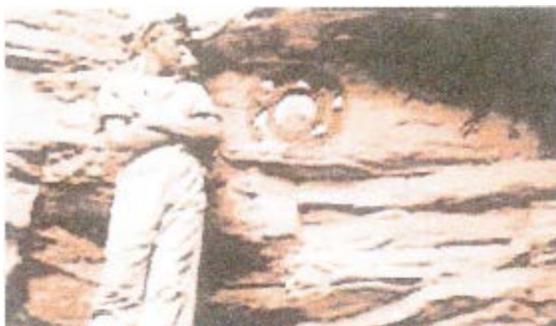


Leather patch given to Kunieh Tribe members.

Ernie A. Meyer, a former Lodge Chief of the Otena Lodge, provided the following information concerning the Kunieh Tribe in the Comanche Trail Council. "The Kunieh Tribe was started at the original camp (Camp Billy Gibbons) in 1934. Gaitha Browning had been a member in the Waco (Scout) Camp, came back and discussed this with Mr. C.L. Pouncey, who was then (Acting) Scout Executive (and his former Scoutmaster). Mr. Pouncey got the necessary materials from the National Office and the first meetings were held in the first Billy Gibbons Camp at the mouth of Brady Creek in the summer of 1934. The canyon, where the ceremonies were held, was known as Kunieh Draw and it circled the campfire area in the same way as the canyon does at the current Camp Billy Gibbons.

The organization continued to be well organized up until the time the National Scout Office replaced this with the Order of the Arrow in 1945. Shown on the left is Eagle Scout Winston Bowles of Eastland when he was "Fire Lighter" during a Kunieh ceremony.

"The two organizations are similar, except Kunieh was more Indian oriented, using many Indian Legends and Indian Poetry in their ceremonies. The Kunieh and Order did differ in that the members of the Kunieh Lodge selected the candidates, whereas in OA, the Troops choose the candidates. Also, Kunieh induction and calling out ceremonies were not open to the non-members.



"Besides this, there was no official national patch (in this council), or official lodge name. Many of the old Kunieh leaders went on to become Scout leaders, and at least one was a Scout Executive for many years. Several were killed in WWII. A few still lived in Brownwood - Mr. C.L. Pouncey, his sons Lowell and Glen (all deceased), Gaitha Browning, Manley Webb, and John Wood.

"The first meeting place of the Kunieh was up on a rocky canyon South of the old Scout Camp. There an altar was built, and many paintings done on the rocks telling the story on the Kunieh organization. Gaitha Browning painted these rock pictures in Indian fashion and some of them may still be there." According to James B. White, M.D., "The paintings were placed in a rocky overhang and shaded by scrub trees so that they are never touched by sunlight or rain."

Gaitha Browning confirmed Mayer's account of the Kunieh Society in his letter of February 18, 1973, when he wrote: "When the first honor organization was organized by Dad (C. L. Pouncey) and I, I painted the insignia and story on the cliff where the meetings were. I was very proud of this as I was the first honor Scout in the Council, having been taken into this organization on a teaching trip in camp at Waco, then I came back and Dad and I went to work and organized the Kunieh. Now those paintings on the cliff are regarded as 'old Indian' by everyone. They have weathered beautifully and were done on the style of the early cliff paintings - so, the story of this has now become legend, after a short 40 or 45 years. It belongs to legend for it is truly part of the land and the people.'

For additional information on the Tribe of Kunieh go to David Eby's excellent history of this group found at <http://www.usscouts.org/usscouts/honorsociety/kunieh.html>.