Decades Fact Sheet

1960

The 1960s opened and closed with Scouting firsts. In 1960, John F. Kennedy became the first former Scout to be elected president of the United States. Nine years later, Eagle Scout Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon, fulfilling the martyred president's dream of exploring space.

More than 56,000 Scouts came together at the 1960 National Scout Jamboree to celebrate Scouting's golden jubilee. Many would soon struggle to apply Scouting's unchanging values in rapidly changing times. Some would live out the Scout Law's tenth point—"A Scout is brave"—by fighting for their country in Vietnam. Others, like Cleveland Sellers, would live it out by fighting for civil rights at home. Caught up in the 1968 Orangeburg Massacre, Sellers would spend seven months in prison and receive his long-delayed Eagle Scout badge in 2007.

1960.1. 1967 World Jamboree

The BSA responded to changing times in 1965 by creating the Inner City–Rural Program to expand Scouting beyond the suburbs. Scouting officials created storefront Scout centers, paid inner-city Scout leaders, and worked aggressively to bring Scouting to public housing projects—sometimes competing directly with gang leaders to win recruits.

The decade ended as it had begun—with a National Scout Jamboree. Without a doubt, the highlight of the closing arena show was a simple radio message from Neil Armstrong: "Hello to all my fellow Scouts at Farragut State Park in Idaho having a National Jamboree there this week; Apollo 11 would like to send them best wishes."

PHOTOS

1960.2. 1964 Jamboree

1960.3. President Kennedy

1960.4. Golden Jubilee

1960.5. Scout skills

1960.6. 1960 Jamboree

1960.7. Older Scouts

1960.8. Parade day

1960.9. Scoutmaster Humphrey

1960.10. President Johnson

VIDEO

1960.V1. The Apollo 11 moon landing became one small step for some famous former Scouts.

1960.V2. A troop takes in the sights at the 1964 World's Fair in New York.

1960.V3. Scouts enjoy all the outdoor possibilities at Philmont.