



A Conversation with Dwight Bischel

**An Interview by
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Introduction

It was with great excitement and anticipation that we met with Dwight W. Bischel the author of the Wabanningo Lodge Emblem Handbook (1952) in September 1994. To the authors of this article Mr. Bischel had been a legend from the hobby's distant past. The thought of an interview and actually meeting with him would be like a baseball collector meeting and interviewing Babe Ruth.

We converged in the Midwest and drove to Mr. Bischel's home through some of the most spectacular farmland in the country. Dwight and Sally instantly made us feel at home. Sally cooked up a spectacular barbecue dinner. We only wish we could have stayed longer. We had a grand time talking patch stories into the wee hours of the night. We learned a tremendous amount that weekend, not so much about specific badges, as about the hobby's past and the life of a fascinating Arrowman.

While there are many badges that preceded the publication of the Wabanningo Lodge Emblem Handbook, the book marked the beginning of a recorded history in our hobby; all badges produced before publication are in a sense prehistoric. The book was not a history book, but rather one of current issues. It is the first book in a long line of books that have included the Arapaho series and this year shall see the publication of the much-anticipated Bluebook.

To this day our knowledge of the badges in the Wabanningo Lodge Emblem Handbook and those issued afterward are almost completely understood and catalogued. Our knowledge of the 35+ years prior to its publication remains largely in mystery.

The following is the actual taped and transcribed conversation:

Biography of Dwight Bischel

The Journal: Why don't we start with a little bit of background, when you got into Scouting, where you were and so forth.

Dwight: Well I became a Scout in Chicago, and then during the War years I moved with my family to Bay City, Michigan. It was there that I got my Eagle and the Silver Palm and all that, and became a member of the Order of the Arrow. It was with Gimogash Lodge. I was Lodge Chief with that Brotherhood there.

The Journal: You were Lodge Chief?

Dwight: Yes

The Journal: What years, approximately?

Dwight: 1945. Let's see, I left in September 1946 to go to college. So I was Lodge Chief until I left for Northwestern. It was a relatively new lodge. There weren't very many members. Some people have questioned the spelling of the Lodge name, but that's what the name was at the time. The reason I think there had been a shift in some publications is that it was properly spelled as I recall in about the 1950 or 1948 edition of the Lodge Listings by National. The 1951 listing misspelled it with an m at the end instead of an h. It was a typo, and the typo continued on for some time.

The Journal: Were you aware that Gimogash was a national organization with a lot of different councils?

Dwight: No, I was not, there was no mention of it at the time.

The Journal: Apparently what happened in the early 1940's, the honor society in Bay City converted from the Toledo national organization to the Order of the Arrow. They never spoke to you about any older history prior to the Order of the Arrow?

Dwight: No.

The Journal: It was considered a new lodge?

Dwight: It was relatively new. It started in '42, '43. It had that name from the start. I had no reason to question that. I got into the organization. We had the patch. Mostly what you wore was the little arrow ribbon and the sash on occasion. It's a funny thing, I hadn't even thought about the name until I happened to get your publication [The Journal] from a friend of mine, Gordon Draper in Detroit. I started to think just a little bit, and then I just set the Journal aside. and then after a while I said, 'I wonder who these guys are?' So I said, 'well, maybe I'll call'. It's a funny thing, too, after that a guy out of Northbrook found me -- Bruce Shelley. Actually he came a couple of weeks ago to say hello, for a couple hours. It was nice of him... he sent me the Arapaho II update book. I've never seen that before. So I've been getting a liberal education for the last months, seeing your book [First Flaps], for which I thank you, and also your Journals, and then Bruce's interest.

The Journal: Where did you go after Gimogash Lodge?

Dwight: I went to Northwestern University. I transferred to the Wabaningo Lodge. I was on staff of Camp Wabaningo for four years, developed their patch.

In 1948 I went to the Region 7 Hoe-down which was a regional gathering of leaders. We were supposed to bring something from our group, and so we brought neckerchief slides that we'd made up. So we had a bunch of these to pass out and trade for, and we got patches of all sorts. Mostly neckerchief slides. A few patches. Conference patches. There weren't too many -- of course Chicago Council always had a lot of patches going for themselves. So I became involved in developing a patch for Wabaningo Lodge, the first round patch that they had. I started working with the Chicago Embroidery Company. They produced our patches.

The Evanston Council had an Honor Campers Society before it became an Order of the Arrow lodge. Their Honor Camper patch was round and it had some symbols to it, I'll show that to you. It was basically the genesis of the first Order of the Arrow patch of ours. It was the honor camper patch that preceded the Order of the Arrow. Camp Wabaningo was on Duck Lake, therefore, the duck.

The Journal: That's dark brown or maroon.

Dwight: Look at it closely. There's a pine tree up there. It was the lone pine, which was a pine tree that was a landmark for lake traders, it was actually on the Lake Michigan side, and Duck Lake had an outlet to Lake Michigan. So we used, basically, the same identification pieces. They're still valid today.

The Journal: Let me ask this question. The Wabaningo Lodge probably started in 1944.

Dwight: '43.

The Journal: Okay. This patch [248 R1] came out in 1949 or 50.

Dwight: I would say that's pretty close.

The Journal: That's the cut edge round. Is it possible that this [felt round] was issued by the OA lodge sometime between 1943 and 1949?

Dwight: That's a question that I'm trying to resolve in my own mind. It's possible, yes. I'd say it's definitely possible.

The Journal: Because if this were a pre-OA patch, that would put it pre-1943 at that point. Is it that old?

Dwight: That patch? Apparently they had a stock of them when they got them. They only gave out, the honor camper, one per troop up there, 6 troops per [session of camp].

So I designed the patch in about 1949. Then, in 1950 we went to both the National Jamboree and also the Order of the Arrow Conference, for a full summer.

The Journal: Did you receive your Vigil in Gimogash Lodge or Wabaningo Lodge?

Dwight: I was the first Vigil in Wabaningo Lodge.

The Journal: Do you remember your Vigil name?

Dwight: Yes. It is Bambil Lekhiket, Honorable author or bookwriter, or something like that.

The Journal: So were you sort of notorious in your own lodge for having written the handbook?

Dwight: I don't know if I was notorious. They say a person isn't honored in his own lodge for what he does, something like that, and I didn't expect it. Like everyone else, I was just doing what I was interested in. Well, they knew I wrote it, but it just wasn't important to them.

The Journal: We think that your handbook is probably more important today than when it was written. As important as it was then, it was just the first book. It was the catalog to collect by. Today it has all this historical significance that goes with it.

Dwight: I wasn't aware of that. It was in the mid-70's when a guy came to visit me; a Dennis Sydloski, and I said, 'I'm not really collecting anymore, but it would be nice if I had an emblem from every lodge'. He said, 'I'll be happy to -- how would you like to swap some of your old lodge emblems for new ones'. I said, 'I don't care'. So he pulled the ones he wanted, which were probably the most valuable ones in the collection. But it didn't mean anything to me. He gave me a lot of badges. He loaded me down. He just kept sending badges.

What tweaked my memory was that I got your Journal, and started reading it and said, 'Oh, that's worth something'. So I thought maybe I ought to look these things up and then I said how do I identify these things? Some of the nomenclature I wasn't familiar with, and that's why it didn't really mean anything to me. Until I sort of figured it out. "S" had to be a solid. I just had to go through the process. Then Bruce [Shelley] was kind enough to send me a copy of the Arapaho II, which had listings and errors in it.

The Journal: We're working on a new listing.

Dwight: Errors that need to be changed in it. Some Lodges had some badges listed from 1950, when because of my research I knew they didn't have any until after the handbook was published.

The Journal: right.

Dwight: Allegedly I dropped out of sight, mainly because I moved places in Evanston, although I stayed in Evanston, and after '56 I wasn't going to the National Conferences. I didn't have the time. Starting in 1960 I had to drop the Troop 21 as Scoutmaster because I started doing the 6 and 10 o'clock news, on Channel 7 in Chicago -- television. So that took all night meetings out, you know.

The Journal: How many years did you do that?

Dwight: I was in television from 1950 until I retired, but I went into corporate television in '74. Went to Illinois Bell, helped put their corporate television on a professional basis.

I started working for NBC, doing Channel 5 in Chicago in 1950, and got in the news area, and worked with Alex Dryer who was a newscaster. In 1960 we moved to ABC in Chicago. I was a Director with them for 5 years and then helped put a UHF station on the air (WFLD). I was with them for 8 years, and then went into corporate television.

History of the Wabanningo Lodge Emblem Handbook

The Journal: How did the Wabanningo Lodge Emblem Handbook come about? Was it from your experiences at the 1950 Jamboree and National Conference?

Dwight: It was there that I first really began to be aware of Order of the Arrow patches per se, as patches. There were a number of them that we could not identify. People would say 'what is that? I didn't know. It's an Order of the Arrow patch. It doesn't look like one.' So I got curious, I said, 'well how are we going to figure this out?' If a person says this particular one is an Order of the Arrow patch but it doesn't look like one, it looks like a squirrel with a scroll around it and it's on felt, and it's embroidered; it could be anything. I got curious about that, and then I found out that a lot of Lodges really didn't know too much about their history as far as what their lodge name meant and so forth. So I said maybe I'll do a book. And that's what got me started.

Then what I did, I wrote Dick Wilson who was the Executive Director of the Order of the Arrow at the time.

The Journal: He was out of Chimalus [Lodge 242], I think. He was a fairly young guy -- We're going to make you very self-conscious here.

Dwight: That's all right. I'll try to endure it. I got a lodge listing from him. I think I got it from him first, but I saw one at the Conference and then I was able to get it... there were some heartflutters there. Then I started writing to lodges. I told Dick what I was doing, that I had an interest in developing a book which would help Order of the Arrow members know what the other lodges were, where they were, what they were about, what their name was, what the meaning of their name was, what their lodge totem was, and if they had an emblem, what was it. Then I had to get the photographs of their emblems for the book. So I started sending letters out.

The Journal: Who did you think was going to buy this book? Who did you think would be interested?

Dwight: The lodges. People in the lodges, because they wanted to know and there was a great need to know what the emblems were. Were they real? You look through some of the emblems in your book there [First Flaps] and you notice some of them do not have any identification at all, as far as Order of the Arrow, or Boy Scouts of America.

The Journal: Right. We know in California that there are several of these sateen badges in here, and most of those have nothing to identify them as Order of the Arrow. Particularly the first badge from our Lodge which is a little sun [Tamet Lodge 225]. That badge has nothing on it -- no W's, no arrow. It's a pure form of heraldry.

Dwight: That's right.

The Journal: Our Scout Executive, was the one who sent that badge to you, I guess after you wrote him a letter.

Dwight: I wrote a letter to all of the Scout Executives and then they would pass it down.

The Journal: Now as a result of what you did, a number of people started writing to council offices, as it turns out, and that created kind of a problem. I don't know if you were aware of this, but eventually the National Office said, 'don't write council offices, no one can write council offices anymore.' But that probably started with you.

Dwight: Could have. But I got a good response. It was the first time it was done. So I just kept a list on some accounting pads. I still have the list, that's about the only thing I have, except all the negatives. I have all the negatives that we ever shot for the book.

The Journal: Do you still have a copy of the original letter that you sent to the lodges?

Dwight: No. I don't

The Journal: What did you ask for then, in that letter?

Dwight: I told them what I was doing. I was developing a lodge emblem handbook, and I wanted to know several things. One: I wanted to know what their lodge name meant, and, if possible, what language it was in. Two: what their lodge totem was. Three: if they have an emblem would they send me one so I could photograph it and include it in the book. And I got a pretty good response.

The Journal: You did. Now did you find that some of the lodges did not know what their name meant?

Dwight: Yes.

The Journal: Did you find that surprising?

Dwight: I would have thought no. I didn't know first what my lodge name meant at the time. I know what Wabaningo was about. Many of them didn't know what their lodge name meant. So what I did, I started to do research. I picked up books from the Bureau of American Ethnology. First I went to the library to find them. Then I went to used bookstores and ordered them; they can search for books. One book that was extremely helpful was a two-volume set called The Bulletin Thirty of the Bureau of American Ethnology. And then there were others. And then I was able to get enough, and then of course a Leni Lenape Dictionary, and I was able to get a copy of that. It was out of print, but again I got it through a bookstore, searched for it. Then I started going through all these names and all these dictionaries. And that's how I came up with a lot of them.

The Journal: That was undoubtedly the first time that had ever been done. I think probably in the early years of the Order of the arrow, in the 1920's when there were just a handful of lodges, the different lodges probably knew what each others names meant because it was still fresh in their mind. Certainly by 1950, I don't think that there was any general understanding.

Dwight: The genesis of the names came right out of the Leni Lenape dictionary. You can tell by the spelling. And they're all out of Pennsylvania, for the most part. Because that's where Goodman [E. Urner Goodman] started. The problem became that the book was out of print. So a lot of them didn't have it available. I think that it was subsequently reprinted by somebody.

The Journal: Now in some cases, in the back of the book there are certain lodge listings and then you said that no emblem is available. In those situations, did the lodge write back and say we have a patch but we're not going to send it to you, or we can't send it to you. What were the circumstances?

Dwight: It probably said no information.

The Journal: Some of them said no information. A couple of entries, like 131 for example, which says 'Lodge totem Pine Tree, emblem not available' [Wab at Pg. 80]. So did you encounter some situation where people just said 'we can't send you the emblem'?

Dwight: Or we don't have any more.

The Journal: Or you had seen it in someone else's collection?

Dwight: No.

The Journal: When you wrote the book, did you look at anyone else's badge collection, for reference?

Dwight: No.

The Journal: So it was 100% your own original research, every part of it.

Dwight: Yes

The Journal: For you to do this on your own like this, this whole subject must have really struck you in some way. You must have been really interested in this topic to pursue a project like this.

Dwight: I guess it happens to everybody at some time, you get really interested in something. It happened to me the same way with my hobby of photography. I was vacationing out in the Colorado Rocky Mountain National Park where I was most of the time. The ranch I stayed at was about 8000 feet up. I'd ask about these flowers and they didn't know what they were. I'd taken a course in Botany in school, so I said I'd better find out what these were all about. I started reading up on them and I started taking pictures of them. Then I wanted to make prints so the people at the lodge would be able to know what the flowers were, I decided I would make a little book out of it. Not a printed book, but just actual photographs. I set it up by colors.

But anyhow, I would take the slide in and have it reproduced on to a print and they were done automatically. If you had a delicate yellow flower against a dark background, they'd average it and wipe it out. So I said I'd rather do it myself. I got into color photography, as far as doing my own printing was concerned with color negatives.

The same thing happened with the Order of the Arrow book in a sense. I had a 'need to know'. The information wasn't available, so I thought I'd make the information available. It became an avocation.

The Journal: We understand that, having written a book on the same subject [First Flaps], so we know what the process is like. But, I'll tell you that book was so much work, that if we didn't have each other to bounce off of, to pick each other up when the other one was feeling like just saying the hell with it, I don't know if our book ever would have been published; doing it alone. I think you really have to have a lot of singleness of purpose to put a book together.

Dwight: I guess I thought it was fun. If it isn't fun you don't want to do it anyway.

The Journal: Now how many copies of the book did you print?

Dwight: 2,000

The Journal: 2,000! And how long did it take for all those copies to be sold?

Dwight: Under a year.

The Journal: Under a year!

Dwight: What I did was, I would write to the lodges and I sent a second letter out, and the second letter said we're going to be under production. When I found out what the price was going to be, because I had to figure out what the costs were -- a friend of mine at Northwestern -- his father was a printer in Bettenberg, Iowa. So I called him up and said, 'hey, I want to do this book and would he do it for me'. I told him what it was going to be about and we started working on it. When we got to the point where we knew what it would cost, I wrote a letter to all the lodges and said it's in production and if you'd like to reserve some copies, we can do it at a discount. I took off a quarter, or whatever it was.

The Journal: What did the book sell for retail

Dwight: A dollar and a half. I'd give a discount on quantity, but I wouldn't take any money from them. I said, 'send it in'. I gave them a regular reservation form, and said, 'okay, when the book is published I'll let you know. I'll send you a postcard. Send in your check and you'll get the books in the next mail. I told the printer who had the publishing house; 'I'll probably be able to pay this thing off in six to nine months'. He sort of doubted it, but he wasn't worried. Sure enough, about half of them sold before I published, and in nine months, I'd sold them all.

The Journal: Now what about a second edition?

Dwight: I realized that what had happened was that while publishing this book, I found out that a number of lodges were about to do an emblem. Some of the lodges said, 'we have it on the drawing board' and they drew me a diagram of what it was like. I included some of those in this book. Subsequently, they did it, and I saw by the way it was going that this was going to cause a lot more lodges to have emblems. I said, 'okay, two years down the road, I may start to think about doing the revised edition, because a lot more lodges will decide to have patches.'

The Journal: Was the goal to have a current badge from each lodge, or any emblem from each lodge?

Dwight: Well my own feeling was I didn't really care about old badges, I was just thinking what the current badge was, because that was what would be current for the guys who were trading at the time. I wasn't really looking for an expansion of this whole thing. It just sort of grew like topsy. So I planned to, at the next conference to set up a booth; I got permission for that, so that I could take down the changes, any changes that they wanted to make in their lodge information, or if they happened to have a new badge, but I was looking more for the lodges that didn't have badges. So I

figured how I could do it. I had all this stuff at hand and then all I would do is add some and put it all together and send out a revised version.

That was 1954. What happened in 1954 was that National Council said, 'here's where you are going to put'em [pointing to right shirt pocket flap]. As I looked at that, I said wow, that means I have to do the whole thing over, I can't add on. I'll have to revise everything in order to do this and I don't know how long it's going to take, how fast this revision is going to come out because everybody changed so fast. They were changing them all the time. Everybody had to go to the pocket flap, or was supposed to go to the pocket flap; it got more difficult. What happened to me was an unfortunate accident. I had a notebook, special handbook with all sorts of papers, with my notes collected in the last days and it was stolen. All my notes were gone.

The Journal: This was at the National Conference in 1954?

Dwight: Yes.

The Journal: Now that raises a couple of questions for us. One is, you must have been on pretty good terms with the people in the National Office for them to actually sanction you to have a booth at the National Conference to do this work. And the second question; going back a little bit further to when you started the project in 1950 or 51 and there were some pocket flap shaped badges back in that era, and what were your thoughts about those badges at that time, since that was a new and novel thing.

Dwight: It was new and novel because most of the people had badges for the pocket. Several of them; Delmont [Lodge 43] was one of course and what was it, Ajapeu, 33? They had their special badges. That's one of the things. We weren't really sure whether that was an OA patch at all, at the beginning. I knew Delmont because a friend of mine was an advisor of that lodge. He said this is what it is. So I was aware of that.

The Journal: Did they ever give any reason for why they decided to make a badge that fit the pocket flap?

Dwight: No, not to my knowledge.

The Journal: How did they come up with that idea?

Dwight: I don't know. I thought it was a very good idea. You know how big it was [33F1] and they made it so that the person could turn it under and sew it around on the flap and so it just fit neatly on whatever size of a flap the shirt had. It's kind of nice, but it's a lot of work to do, when you think about it, what you have to do, you'd have to have somebody who's a pretty good seamstress to do it.

The Journal: Well, we're pretty sure from our research that Ajapeu Lodge was the first lodge that came out with the badge that shape.

Dwight: That's my opinion

The Journal: We're interested in it from the standpoint of our book. Actually, in a way, we ended up writing the supplement to your book. With all those new flaps coming out, and that's what would have

been the current emblem for your second edition, it took forty years before someone recorded what the first flap badge was, the majority of which came out in the era immediately following your book.

Dwight: That's right

The Journal: Amazingly enough, and it is amazing when you think about it, as the flaps came in, which is after you did your original work, there's the whole era between 1954 and 1960, let's say, where all the flaps came in, that had never been documented and recorded anywhere. There was no information on it. So there was your book and then there was nothing for a long time and that's when all the flaps came in. It was not until the 1970's when any book approached the sophistication of your book in scope.

Dwight: I've seen some of those.

The Journal: We don't know if you're aware of it, but people refer to the badges issued between 1949 and 1953 as the 'Wab' era.

Dwight: I saw that in your publication, had a little chuckle over that. Nothing surprises me.

The Journal: The badges are called 'Wabs' to this day. If the badge is in your book they are referred to as the 'Wab' (pronounced wob).

Dwight: Did you start that?

The Journal: No, we picked it up by word of mouth.

Dwight: You know, I was asked how come you call the material 'sateen'. They didn't know what it was at the time. It's a type of material. And the reason I knew that material was that at Northwestern I had done some theater and that was a material in costuming. It's not satin, it's sateen. It's a cheap satin.

The Journal: And those badges are referred to as the 'sateens'.

The first time either one of us became familiar with your book, or even heard of it, was probably about 1968, and I was going through the file drawers at my Council office, and I ran across a file that had the National O.A. Bulletins in it. I was reading through it and it was very fascinating. We had this collection of National O.A. Bulletins going back to 1943. Someone in our lodge had actually saved them

Dwight: Your lodge was lucky.

The Journal: Along about 1951 or 1952 in one of those National Bulletins from that time period, I see this little blurb about your book, that was actually promoted in the National O.A. Bulletin. I had never heard of it and didn't know anyone that had heard of it from the area conferences and so forth that I had gone to. I'd never seen a copy of it. I knew nothing about it. What was interesting about that was, in the 16 years that had passed since you published your book, it had disappeared. It was not only 16 years out of print, but no one who was still around collecting badges was aware of it. So what I did was I wrote a letter to you at the address that was in that National O.A. Bulletin which must have been your address at Northwestern.

Dwight: Yes, when I was a student at Northwestern.

The Journal: Hoping that I could get a copy of this book that I had never seen or heard of. Of course, the letter was returned and I was very disappointed.

It was a couple of years before I actually saw a copy of your book, after that point. I was of course very curious about it, and then subsequent to that I ended up getting a really nice copy of it for my library.

Dwight: How did you find it?

The Journal: They started to surface in the trading community. People would sell your book or it would come from a collector, someone who had it, that it actually came with their patches as part of a collection. And then some people tore your book apart and reproduced it, then it started to become more widespread again in sort of the modern era. But it really was like the Lost Scrolls. It just disappeared. So it was pretty amazing. And then of course stories that would circulate about, well what happened to your patch collection. The most popular story was that your patch collection was stolen at the 1953 National Jamboree. I guess that's a partial truth, because your notes were stolen.

Dwight: It was in '54 at the National Conference.

The Journal: So there was a lot of mystery about what all was going on with this stuff. It's still mysterious to this day. When we put out our article in The Journal a lot of people are just going to be fascinated, to tie up some of the loose ends on this thing. But one of the big questions is that you dropped out of sight. You disappeared shortly after you published the Wab book.

Dwight: Well, I really didn't leave. I was a Scoutmaster in Evanston from the 1950's until 1960.

The Journal: Did you collect badges throughout that period?

Dwight: Not actively. The only time I'd get involved was if I'd go to a conference. So I never made a real big effort. What happened was in '54 I had this thing that wiped me out; both psychologically and literally. What I really saw was there were so many changes that were going to take place in the next few years that I'd hold off. I'd be spinning my wheels. So I said, I'll wait a couple of years, and then I'll pick it up, and send out letters again, and by that time things will have settled down and I could start all over. Then my job got me busy, I got tied up with that, my interests changed slightly. I didn't have time. I was running a Scout troop, going hot and heavy, it was taking all my spare time. They gave me the Silver Beaver and Vigil.

The Journal: And Allan Paro helped you?

Dwight: Allan was an associate of mine; we were in scouting together, and he had a camera. He had a Graphic Camera. So I asked him if he would help me with these things, and so he did. I got really interested and I got myself a Graphic Camera; it was a Crown Graphic. Allan, he went off someplace and so I finished the work for the book

Dwight: I haven't seen him in years. I haven't kept in touch with him. So what I did, I got my own Crown Graphic, borrowed the money from the bank and got an enlarger and I also got filters. The

reason some of those pictures show up was because I filtered those shots. If you don't filter them you wind up with one black mess

The Journal: How accurate did you find the National Listings? Did you find a lot of typos and wrong names, or did you find that generally their information was right?

Dwight: For the most part it was all right. Where they had their problems was where they had a lodge secretary who couldn't spell or somebody else who couldn't spell.

The Journal: We take it that the mailing list of people who bought the book doesn't exist anymore.

Dwight: No. What usually happened on that was that the lodge or council would buy them. I'd get council checks.

I had kept the letters. I had a full file cabinet full of nothing but correspondence. It was all separated by lodges, so I had a file for every lodge.

Now the first emblems I put in the book, by the way, were not really lodge badges. I started out with region badges.

The Journal: Way back then it was tough to get a set of region patches.

Dwight: Yes it was.

The Journal: So how did you manage to get your set of region patches?

Dwight: I swapped for them. I think I started out at the Jamboree, working on those.

The Journal: Today, unfortunately there's not much of an appreciation for Region patches. The regions have changed around.

Dwight: Oh yeah. The Councils have changed too, as you well know.

Concluding Comments

The Journal: Are you a little bit surprised at all of this after all of these years has come back and there's this interest in OA badges and yourself and so forth?

Dwight: Well, I just lost contact with it, and although I was still active in Scouting in certain ways, I wasn't really in touch with what was going on. I'm still a member of the Order of the Arrow now. I don't think there's two people in my lodge who know who I am. They know me for being at Woodbadge, but they don't know about the book.

The Journal: It's amazing.

Dwight: I think that's just as well. If people wish to contact me to ask questions, they should contact me through you.

The Journal: What are some of your ideas; what would you say about the value of collecting these badges, and what did that mean to you when you were doing it, and what does it mean to you now, after all these years?

Dwight: At the time it was a great part of my interests because it was as a teenage and young adult and I was so deeply involved in Scouting and the Order of the Arrow, and going to National Conferences. so anything to do with the Order of the Arrow had a great deal of interest to me. I'm somewhat of the old school in thinking that patch trading or any kind of trading has a value to it, if it's done in the right way. The value of getting to meet other Scouts at a National Conference or a National Jamboree situation that's a little more flexible. You're in the conference most of the time and you're out trading patches between sessions.

The Journal: And now they severely limit the trading.

Dwight: They did that specifically because it was getting out of hand. Kids would go down there to do one thing specifically, and it's because the concept got out of hand. Part of it is my fault, I think. Because I tried to do something for the Order of the Arrow perhaps, then it was an interest I wanted to pursue. I wanted to know about these things. I've always had a sort of probing mind that would -- if there was something I didn't know and I had a little bit of an interest and I'd try to find out. That's how the whole thing got started. That's probably the way you did your book [First Flaps], in a sense. There's a need to get things organized so you can better do your job -- in your case, your hobby of patch collecting.

Some Final Thoughts

Patch collecting has changed an incredible amount in the past forty years. This rare glimpse of the past has given us much to think about. The ways of trading has changed. Knowledge is more prevalent now than ever.

Dwight indicated in 1950 that lodges by and large did not know their own history, including what their badges were only a couple of years earlier. The knowledge known today of the badges issued prior to 1948 is so rare because in general it was not recorded and preserved. The Wabaningo Lodge Emblem Handbook was not a history book, but a tool to collect current issues with. The reason why the book was virtually unknown in the hobby 16 years after published in 1968 was because it was of little use for its intended purpose. The badges from the lodges, as they always have done, changed quickly and the book was very much out of date. Today the book is so much more significant because it is like a history book of so many rare badges.

Dwight could be called the father of number collecting if not Order of the Arrow collecting. Because his quest for his book was to obtain one badge from each lodge he dug into places for badges where there were no badge collectors. Consequently, in many cases he became the only collector in his era to obtain certain pieces. Imagine a collection with a two inch Tamet sun, a 370 old name jacket badge, a Wakoda, a 272 sateen, a Hannigus felt, a 95 chenille, a Siniawa brotherhood sateen, a 127 Tahquitz felt, a 271 Madockawando X1 felt and a 214 Gimogash felt (to mention only a few). No one in Dwight's time came close to having so many special, indeed sacred pieces. Without his seminal work the hobby would be so much less than what it is.

The "Wabingo Collection" is a part of the National Archive of Twentieth Century Scouting Insignia. The patches were reassembled over a thirty year period and represent the first time the collection has ever existed intact.

The collection contains the correct issue and variety of each patch pictured in the original Wabingo Emblem Handbook. In some cases, the correct patch is either unique or the only example known. Many patches are the actual patch that was photographed by Dwight Bischel for the book. The Gimogash Lodge 214 X2 in the collection belonged to Dwight Bischel and was earned by him when he was chief of that lodge.