

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and those cultures we celebrate as among the oldest continuing cultures in human history. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

I would like to acknowledge our President Jane Prentice, Vice Presidents John Pearn and Kirsty Brown, Chair Gavin Brady. Welcome too to all the Youth Members and to our tireless volunteer Leaders.

Founders Day is the day that we take time to remember the 22 February the birth date of the founder of Scouting Robert Stephenson Smythe Baden Powell, 166 years ago.

Robert Baden-Powell was a career soldier who served in many overseas and domestic postings.

Baden Powell returned from Africa in March 1903, the hero of Boer War and found that his 1899 book "Aids to Scouting for NCOs and Men" had become a best seller and was being used by religious and other youth groups.

Baden Powell was concerned about the general unfitness of the young male population and the lack of character training and believed that the education system was failing the nation.

By 1905 he had decided to rewrite Aids to Scouting directed at boy level and initially produced pamphlets on his idea for Scouting: Boy Scouts: A Suggestion, Boy Scouts: Summary of a Scheme.

In 1907 Baden Powell had further evolved his thinking and introduced them to twenty boys from diverse backgrounds at the now historic Brownsea Island camp.

In 1908 he published these modifications in fortnightly parts under the title of Scouting for Boys. This publication was a major factor in starting the Scout Movement and sold 150 Million copies and was the 4th highest selling book in the 20th Century. Imaging today that number of You Tube downloads /hits being recorded.

Spontaneous formations of small groups of boys who enthusiastically carried out the activities outlined in his publications started appeared in the UK.

In Queensland Scouting started a little differently. In August 1908, the first patrols of Scouts in Queensland originated from within churches, and they were initiated by adults within those churches:

- Charles Smethurst Snow, a boy's club leader in his 20s formed **a patrol** at the Kangaroo Point Church of England
- Lesleigh J Williams, a Sunday School Teacher at the Bowen Hills Congregation Church started **a patrol** which met at New Farm
- Leonard Lovejoy from the Methodist Church Gordon Club at Ashgrove started **a patrol** which called itself the Ithaca Patrol and

- Middle aged Septimus Davis who conducted a boy's club at St Thomas Church of England Toowong

How appropriate that "patrol" still resonates today and is the basis of our Scout program. Charles Snow went on to become a noteworthy influence on Scouting in Queensland particularly as Chief Commissioner 1909 – 1922 and 1924 – 1943. This is a total of 34 Years!!!

So Scouts today is as strong as ever in 173 countries, with some 60M Members worldwide, 70000 in Australia and 10000 Youth Members and 3500 Adult Members in Queensland.

In Queensland the Scout Program is delivered through 220 Scout Groups including twelve Groups started or reopened in the past three years.

Today, our Scout Program is as relevant as it ever was and we need to thank the considerable foresight of our Founder Lord Robert Baden Powell for the enduring foundations that he laid for Scouting way back in 1907. I am sure if he were still alive, that he would be very impressed with where his ideas to address lack of character training and a belief that the education system was failing the nation have expanded to.

This Scout Program is reliant as it always has been on the incredible efforts of the volunteer Leaders who give one of the more valuable gifts that any person can give - their time - in providing the challenge, the exciting activities and the fun that Scouting is all about.

Our Strategic Plan 2023-2028 recently launched encompasses 4 pillars.

- Member Experience
- People and Culture
- Sustainability
- Operations

With a clear focus on delivery of the youth program

In fact, you have a placemat on your table this evening – which highlights the components of the plan.

In closing I would like to remind all of us about the Purpose of Scouting which is to contribute to the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual potentials as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national, and international communities.

Scouting delivers to our communities, resilient young people who have gained leadership experience are physically active and who care for others.

Scouting in Queensland is vibrant, we are moving forward and I think that Robert Baden Powell would very proud.