A Movement Begins

In the spring of 1912 in Savannah, Ga., Juliette Gordon Low announced to the world, “I have something for the girls of Savannah and all of the country.” It didn’t take long for the all-girl organization to take hold. In 1916, a Girl Scout lone troop with a few girls was formed in Hampton, Va. By 1918, there were two troops and they merged to form Troop 1 and had a membership of 15 girls. The troop met at a church on Queen Street in Hampton. Visiting Buckroe Beach was a favorite activity.

1920s

It would be eight years later in 1926 when a troop formed at Fort Monroe and was called the Blue Bonnet Troop. There were 33 girl members led by Mrs. F.D. Jones, and they met in casemates provided by the army post. Within a year, membership increased by threefold. This troop later became Troop 4 and was led by Mabel Marsh.

In 1928, the Blue Bonnet Troop won the lone troop contest of regiment 3 which earned a scholarship to National Training Camp for Girl Scout Captain Mabel Marsh.

1930s

In 1931, Lou Henry Hoover – Honorary National President of Girl Scouts – harnessed the airwaves to mobilize Girl Scouts, encouraging them to help families facing unemployment and other challenges caused by the depression. Girl Scouts’ quick and sincere action to help in their communities established a widespread reputation among grateful Americans as a service oriented organization. During the 1930s, Lou Henry Hoover would attend the Girl Scouts of the USA National Convention in Virginia Beach, which was attended by Girl Scouts from Fort Monroe.

A formal Girl Scout Committee was formed at the Fort in 1932, and in that same year Girl Scout volunteer Mrs. Hewins presented a Golden Eaglet Award to Girl Scout Marie Gazelle. In 1933, the first Mother and Daughter Tea was held in Hampton and Girl Scouts from Fort Monroe participated. President Franklin D. Roosevelt sent the 300 in attendance a telegram greeting.

That same year, all Girl Scout troops in Hampton, including those from Fort Monroe, marched in a parade on October 19, 1931 to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the British Surrender of Yorktown. President Herbert Hoover and First Lady Lou Henry Hoover attended the celebration and viewed the parade from the seat of their open car.

The Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award a girl may achieve in Girl Scouts, originally debuted in 1916 as the Golden Eaglet of Merit Award. In 1919, the award was renamed the Golden Eaglet Award. The award was changed in 1938 to the First Class Award. Two years later it became the Curve Bar Award but returned to First Class Award in 1968. The Gold Award was launched in 1980.

Outdoor activities were very popular and included camping and hiking at the Fort as well as within the larger community. In 1933, Girl Scouts from the Blue Bonnet Troop at Fort Monroe joined other troops on the Peninsula and in Norfolk for an all-day picnic at The Mariners’ Museum in Newport News.
1940s
In the 1940s, the Girl Scouts had three levels: Brownies (ages 7-9), Intermediates (ages 10-14) and Seniors (ages 14-18). Troops existed throughout the United States – and even flourished in the internment camps for Japanese-Americans. The official Girl Scout uniform of the 1940s consisted of a brown dress for Brownies, a medium green dress for Intermediates, and a darker green for Seniors. Mariner Girl Scouts (Girl Scouts who specialized in boating and water skills) had a special blue uniform. Wartime restrictions on the use of metals led to replacing the zippers in the uniforms with buttons.

Girl Scouts were very active on the US Home Front. The girls sold war bonds, conducted scrap drives and cultivated Victory Gardens. During the war, Girl Scouts collected 1.5 million items of clothing for war refugees. Many girls also worked as farm aides or operated bicycle courier services.

In 1942, the Girl Scouts started a hospital aide program for Senior girls. These high schoolers were trained to help in hospitals–feeding patients, performing clerical work, serving as messengers, making beds and preparing supplies and equipment. No official uniform was provided, but many girls made smocks of green-and-white striped cloth, or wore white smocks over their Girl Scout uniforms.

Rationing and shortages of sugar and butter meant a discontinuation of Girl Scout Cookies for the duration. While they were sold in 1942 and 1943, they were unavailable in 1944 and 1945. In 1944, the Girl Scouts first sold calendars on a nation-wide level to fill the funding hole.

1950s
After the war, community service remained an essential part of the Girl Scout program. Girl Scouts at Fort Monroe were involved in many service projects, including Operation Santa Claus and International Friendship programs.

Traditions of Troop #4
The following are the activities of the troop which we suggest be carried out each year if possible.
1. The troop meetings should be opened with the flag ceremony. A horseshoe is formed, and the salutes are given to the American flag and the Girl Scout flag. Songs may also be sung when desired.
2. The troop meeting should be closed with the friendship circle. Taps is sung, and the Girl Scout wish is passed from one girl to the next.
3. At Christmas some project should be done to bring Christmas to someone. This year we did our operation Santa Claus for the children of Korea. Then, the girls have their own Christmas party when refreshments are served and gifts are exchanged.
4. The troop had a spring dance with the local Boy Scouts.
5. Some activity should be carried out with the mothers in observance of Mother’s Day. (tea, mother-daughter banquet, etc.)
6. Girl Scout Week should be observed; this year we did it with a Folk Dance Festival and the Girl Scout Sunday.
7. The yearly Court of Awards is usually held in May or June when all of the ranks and proficiency badges are awarded.
8. During the summer it would be fun to have a father-daughter cook-out.

Betsy McCachern
Organization of Girl Scout Membership
Girl Scouts at Fort Monroe became part of the Peninsula Girl Scout Community Committee in 1933. Later, in 1941, the Peninsula Girl Scout Community Committee formed to create the Elizabeth City County Girl Scout Council. More mergers of troops and areas would create the Hampton Girl Scout Council in 1952. In 1960, Girl Scouts at Fort Monroe received separate district designation, still remaining part of the Hampton Girl Scout Council. In 1963, the Newport News-Warwick City Girl Scout Council merged with Hampton Girl Scout Council to form the Heritage Girl Scout Council.

1960s
In 1967, Girl Scouts at Fort Monroe attended an area International Fair. Understanding and respecting cultural diversity is an important part of the Girl Scout program and is reflected in the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

1970s
There were several Girl Scout troops at Fort Monroe in the 1970s. Troop 139 started as Brownies in 1967 and had a fly up ceremony to Girl Scout Juniors in 1970. Like Girl Scouts throughout the years, they enjoyed activities in the outdoors, community service and having fun at special events, such as mother and daughter teas.
1980s
A popular week-long day camp organized and ran by Hampton Girl Scout volunteers took place at Gosnold’s Hope Park in Hampton. Day camps were also held at Fort Monroe.

1990s
Serving God and Country is part of the Girl Scout Promise. Helping girls become responsible citizens has always been a priority in Girl Scouts. Fort Monroe Girl Scouts took part in ceremonies and special national day recognitions.

Community service always played a big role for Girl Scouts at Fort Monroe. From environmental clean-up days to planting beach grass to help stabilize dunes at Buckroe Beach, girls were involved in helping make their world a better place. Beautification projects, such as planting flowers in front of the Girl Scout House that was located on Pratt Street, was also part of their community service efforts.

2000 to present
Girl Scouting was part of life at Fort Monroe until the last years leading up to the decommissioning which took place in 2011. Training and Doctrine Command headquarters relocated to nearby Fort Eustis, Va., ending four centuries of British and American military activity at Fort Monroe on this strategic peninsula at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay.

The Girl Scout Promise
On my honor, I will try:
To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

The Girl Scout Law
I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong,
and responsible for what I say and do,
and to
respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place,
and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Remember what it was like as a kid to discover something new and exciting?
In Girl Scouts, girls are discovering their universe and their talents. They’re connecting with others locally and globally and taking action through community service. Take time to find out about Girl Scouts today. You’ll find the Girl Scout Leadership Experience that is introducing girls to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), teaching them financial literacy and encouraging them to develop healthy living lifestyles.

Serving girls in K-12 grades and welcoming adults of all ages! No matter what your schedule or talent, there’s a place for you to make a difference in girls’ lives.

Building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.
The items included in this supplement originate from the 1926 Fort Monroe Girl Scouts Scrapbook of Troop 4. This drawing depicts the casemate in which the girls held their meetings. This casemate is located directly to the left of the flagstaff bastion.
This photograph from the 1930s depicts a Girl Scout canoeing, one of the Blue Bonnet Troop’s favorite pastimes.

Seen here in the 1930s, the Blue Bonnet’s pose for a troop picture in Trophy Park. The Chapel of the Centurion is clearly visible to the right.
Boating and sailing were popular activities for Fort Monroe Girl Scouts. Photograph circa 1930.

Five Fort Monroe Girl Scouts are seen in front of the Coast Artillery School Building circa 1928.
This photograph was taken in front of the Girl Scout’s casemate circa 1930. The drawing on page 5 depicts this.

The Blue Bonnet Troop is seen here in a meeting outside of their Casemate. Circa 1935
The ability to make stretchers and tie knots were activities for Fort Monroe Girl Scouts, seen here showing off their skills. Circa 1935

A group photograph of the Fort Monroe Girl Scouts circa 1935. The flagstaff bastion is seen in the background.
COURT OF AWARDS
BLUE BONNET TROOP, GIRL SCOUTS
FORTRESS MONROE, VIRGINIA

I
PLAY - "THE PRINCESS AND THE BANDIT."
1. The Prologue
2. The Play.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.
The Beginner ................. Annette Davis
The Page .................... Mary Belle Gardner
Alan, King of Stephany ....... Geraldine Grafe
Ann, Duchess of Ender ....... Doris Hartman
Lady Phyllis ................. Helen Hill
Lady Noel .................... Mary Waters
Lady Rosalie ................. Mary Jane Campbell
Prince Michael of Ender .... Betty Bertlett
Captain Jerrold .............. Jeanne Jackson
Hillary, The Bandit ........... Marne McGeorge
Joanna, The Inn Keeper's Daughter Helen Crichlow
Princess Moony St. David of Stephany Alice Robinson

II
AWARD OF BADGES

Y.M.C.A. Auditorium,
Fort Monroe, Virginia December 15th, 1935.
February 18, 1930.

My dear Mrs. Mountford:

Mrs. Hoover has asked me to thank you and the Girl Scouts of Fortress Monroe for the charming calendar.

Assuring you of her appreciation and Girl Scout greetings to your Girl Scouts, I am

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
Secretary to Mrs. Hoover.

Mrs. Frederick A. Mountford,
Fortress Monroe,
Virginia.

Copy of a letter sent to the Fort Monroe Girl Scouts by First Lady Hoover’s Secretary
GIRL SCOUT RALLY

Saint John’s Parish House
November 23, 1928

1. -AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL.
2. -PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG.
3. -GIRL SCOUT PROMISE AND LAWS.
4. -BROWNIE PROMISE AND LAWS.
5. -PRESENTATIONS:
   1st and 2nd Class awards by Mrs. Edward Kimmel.
   Merit Badges by Mrs. Frank W. Darling.
   Golden Eaglet by Mrs. J. L. Buck.
   To: Scout Margaret McAllister, Hampton Troop No. 1.
6. -Demonstration of Scout Work:
   First Aid Camp Accidents: Fort Monroe Troop No. 1.
   Bandaging: Hampton Troop No. 1.
   Knot Tying: Hampton Troop No. 2.
7. -STAR SPANGLED BANNER.

Program from the Girl Scout Rally held at Saint John’s Parish House in Hampton
Program from an awards ceremony. Commander of the Coast Artillery School, General Callan presented the first Golden Eaglet award for the Fort Monroe Girl Scouts.
“Our Valentine Tea For Our Mothers”, 1955. Seen here are Mrs. Hand, Roberta Skaggs and Susan Hand.

“Our Valentine Tea For Our Mothers”, 1955. Pictured are Natalie Pope playing the piano, Roberta Skaggs, Patty Eckols, Susan Hand and Nancy Gildart.
Three Girl Scouts carry a box of food likely for donation at Christmas. Circa 1950
“Good Grooming Badge Fashion Show”, December 8th, 1956. Pictured left to right are Bonnie Simenson, Linda Dillender, Barbara Calkins and Susan Podufaly.

Roster for Troop Number 4, 1963-63
Mrs. George McSolely
Cadet Girl Scout Troop #4
Quarters T509
Apartment 2
Fort Monroe, Virginia

Dear Mrs. McSolely:

Because of your generosity the veterans at VA Center, Hampton, had a very festive holiday. We are sure yours was happier for having helped make it so for so many others.

Our world situation today makes us ever conscious of the price paid by the men who have fought our wars. In behalf of each veteran at this Center, please accept our heartfelt appreciation for the true spirit of Christmas which you bestowed on them.

Sincerely,

MARVIN A. CHAPMAN
Director

This letter is evidence of how the Fort Monroe Girl Scouts performed service projects for the local community.
Seen here circa 1969 are left to right, back row: Ann Bartley (Sr. Aide), Katie Bartley, and Kathy Fitzgerald; middle row: Cathy Wallace, Holly Dix and Brenda Ashley; front row: Lynn Reudelhuber, Patty Krise, Debbie Smead and Barbara Hamilton.
These photographs show the Girl Scouts in the Wherry Quarter of the Fort.
Girl Scouts of the Colonial Coast and the Fort Monroe Authority’s Casemate Museum offer our sincere thanks to Top Guard Security for their generous donation for the exhibit and reception.

The Sisterhood on the Fort booklet may be found on the Girl Scouts of the Colonial Coast website at www.ggcc.org. See the About Us page on the website.