

Preserving Our Past - A Girl Scout History Interest Project Award Program Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee

Learn the history of Girl Scouts of the United States of America and Girl Scouts in Middle Tennessee.

GSUSA has implemented an alternative format for completing interest project patches. You may earn the IP as presently outlined in *Interest Projects for Girls 11-17* OR, you may choose to follow a similar version of the new format:

- ◆ Do two “Skill Builders” activities of your choice.
- ◆ Do two activities of your choice from the four categories (selected activities cannot be from the same category).
- ◆ Design and do one goal of your own (must be a SMART goal).
- ◆ Prepare a short REFLECTION describing what part(s) of the Promise and Law relates to what you did while earning the IP.

For more information regarding the new format go to:

http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gs_central/insignia/online/ips11_17/

Skill Builders

1. Research our Founder, Juliette Gordon Low. Try to discover what personal characteristics enabled her to set in motion the largest voluntary organization for girls and women in the world. Learn something about her relationships with her family and friends. What obstacles did she overcome, what honors and acclaim have been awarded her?
2. Visit the birthplace of Girl Scouting in the U.S.A. - Savannah, Georgia (either in person, or by interviewing someone who has been there and has photos and materials to share). The Juliette Gordon Low National Center (the “Birthplace” and her childhood home), the First Headquarters (owned and operated by the Girl Scout Council of Savannah), and the Andrew Low House (Juliette Low’s home in Savannah as an adult, owned and operated by the Colonial Dames) are all sites of interest - as are Christ Episcopal Church (Juliette Low’s family church and site of her baptism, confirmation, wedding, and funeral) and Laurel Grove Cemetery (where Juliette Low is buried).
3. Learn more about early Girl Scout history - where it came from, how it was organized, how it was funded, and some of the influential people who gave it momentum. What is the foundation of this organization? Read excerpts from the Constitution of the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and our Congressional Charter (see the Leader’s Digest).
4. Research, then contrast and compare the highest awards in Girl Scouting through the years. Correlate your achievements in Girl Scouting with those that would qualify you for awards in years past.
5. Complete activities to earn a badge from the past, or do a variety of activities suggested in old handbooks.
6. Visit a Girl Scout memorabilia swap meet, show or sale. Or, arrange for a private collector to share her collection with you. Ask about the current value of these items, and where and how collectors obtain their items. Discuss why collecting Girl Scout memorabilia is so popular, and what value it has (beyond monetary value). Find out what motivates private collectors and what they do with their collections.
7. Learn techniques for preserving historic Girl Scout materials - papers, photos, uniforms, books, etc. How are these materials stored and filed? What special precautions must be taken when handling or using them?
8. Discover how to do an “oral history.” Practice your interviewing technique with family and friends.

Technology

1. Use technology to help preserve Girl Scout history in your area. Arrange to interview someone who was involved in Girl Scouting in years past. Besides taking notes, you could use a video or still camera and/or a tape recorder to preserve the information. Share your information with the Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee archives or Girl Scouts in your area.
2. Use the internet to research Girl Scouting (read and sign the Online Safety Pledge found in *Safety-Wise*). First, visit GSUSA's website (www.girlscouts.org). Then, visit several council websites, including Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee's (www.gsmidtn.org). See if you can find individual service unit, troop, or individual member web pages. What type of information do they all have in common? Do they all present a positive picture of Girl Scouting? What features make some sites more attractive/useful than others?
3. Visit the GSUSA virtual museum on the internet. Tour all the "rooms" and read about the items on display. Then, visit the Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee's historic display (or a local display of vintage 65 items). How do the two experiences compare? (To schedule a tour, call 615-383-0490/800-395-5318).
4. Use old Girl Scout handbooks/badge books to compare technological badges and activities of the past with those of today. Make sure to use handbooks from at least three different decades. How has Girl Scouting kept pace with advances in science and technology? (Books are available for check out through the Nashville Girl Scout office).

Service

1. Share your knowledge of Girl Scout history with other Girl Scouts. Plan and carry out an event for younger girls that focuses on Girl Scout history, or help a Brownie Girl Scout or Junior Girl Scout troop earn a Girl Scout history related Try-It or Badge.
2. Promote Girl Scout history in your community. Set up a historical exhibit at your local library, civic center, or other public area. You may choose to do this during March in celebration of Girl Scout week, or you may wish to set up an exhibit honoring Juliette Low during October for Founder's Day (October 31). You may also choose another time to set up your display if it has special significance to your troop or area.
3. Volunteer to help in the Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee archive or as a guide for girls visiting the Girl Scout Nashville Service Center to tour the Historic Gallery and exhibits.
4. Assist in preserving Girl Scout history in your area. Here are some ideas: compile information on those involved in Girl Scouts in your area, collect histories of your own troop and others, clip newspaper articles that feature Girl Scouts, take photos of Girl Scout events in your area. If your service unit or area has a Girl Scout historian, you could give these materials to her. Make copies to donate to the Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee archives.

Career Exploration

1. Girl Scouting is, historically, a volunteer based organization. Find out about opportunities to work for Girl Scouts as an adult volunteer. What are the procedures volunteers must go through to have their services accepted/approved. Find out what opportunities you have as a Cadette or Senior Girl Scout to volunteer your services. What are the requirements and procedures you must follow?
2. Arrange to interview someone who works for the Girl Scout organization in a paid position. Ask about her job description, her qualifications and background, salary range, benefits. etc. What path led her to work for this organization? Was she involved in Girl Scouting as a girl?
3. Historic preservation is an interesting career. Interview someone who works either as a paid professional in this field, or as a volunteer. You may consult with our historic/archival committee members or with other museum staff/volunteers in your area. Many historic homes open to the public have staff and volunteer positions in this field. Discover what special training/education they have had.
4. Girl Scouts is a non-profit organization. Choose another non-profit organization and compare it with Girl Scouts. How are the two groups funded? How are they staffed? Research colleges that offer degrees toward working in the non-profit sector. Find out what special courses they offer.

Preserving Our Past Interest Project Patch Resources

Website Resources:

www.girlscouts.org

www.gsmidtn.org

www.girlscouts.org/birthplace

www.vintagegirlscout.com

Resources available through the Girl Scout office in Nashville for check out:

Historical uniforms

Historical Girl Scout handbooks

Girl Scout Collector's Guides

Please contact members of the Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee archival committee/staff, through the Girl Scout office in Nashville for assistance in completing this IP.

Girl Scout Customer Service Center-Nashville

Phone: (615) 383.0490 or (800) 395.5318

Email: info@gsmidtn.org

This interest project was designed for Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts by Cindy Robinson, Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee Archivist/Historian, and is dedicated with grateful affection to Ellie Vermillion for her tireless efforts in "preserving our past."