

## CHAPTER II

# *Growth of Md. 4-H Club Work*

### THE 4-H CLUB

As the Maryland 4-H Club work is an integral part of the National Organization, a brief background history of the origin of 4-H in the United States is necessary to make our history complete.

In the 1890's it was realized that there was a definite need in the rural schools for a program of education in the direction of appreciation of rural life opportunities. The origin and development of the 4-H program, as most educational movements, cannot be credited to any one individual or institution. It is the cumulative experience of many rural communities under many pioneer leaders.

Prior to 1890, classroom studies had directed the pupil's attention only to occupations and benefits of the cities. Too many rural youth were deciding to leave the farm. A beginning was made by introducing nature studies into the public schools. This was later taken up by the rural schools. Naturally this new system met difficulties. Most public school teachers were not prepared to teach agriculture. Superintendents of schools began taking an active interest in the project since they were closely associated with the development of Farmers' Institutes. A plan was developed whereby the boys and girls could conduct demonstrations on their farms. In many cases the county superintendents organized the young people, and the Farmers' Institute co-operated by supplying the material. The county fair associations then became interested and co-operated by offering prizes to boys and girls who exhibited their articles. As the Farmers' Institute interest increased, instruction was no longer restricted to the schoolroom—more of it was centered in the homes. Gradually the size of the projects increased and the keeping of records was begun.

In the years from 1900 to 1905 corn contests were started in Illinois and soon followed in Texas, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Ohio. The seriousness of the boll weevil situation in the South in 1903 produced a plan for the rotation of crops, better tillage and the production of home grown food and feed. Boys were enrolled as demonstrators and did satisfactory work. As a result, it was decided to give special attention to demonstrations with boys, and in 1907 the first Boys' Club work was organized as a county unit. The results were so satisfactory and so well received by the people that it was decided to extend this type of organization to several counties in a state. This proved so successful that it was decided to organize Club work with corn in selected counties in each of the Southern States.

In 1906 the Land Grant Colleges recognized the need and recommended the organization of a District Administrative Division in each of the colleges to direct the many Extension activities that were rapidly developing. By 1907, seven states had acted on the recommendation and by 1912 practically all the Southern States had organized Extension Departments or Extension Committees. The popularity and success of demonstration work in the South caused a demand for similar work in other sections of the country. As a result, Congress provided funds for similar work in the Northern and Western States. Demonstration work became well established in practically every state by 1913.

In 1914 the Smith-Lever Act went into effect. By it sufficient funds were provided to take over the entire work on a co-operative basis. It created a single Extension System through which Extension work of the State Agricultural Colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture was to be conducted.

Back in the "Nineties" there was a movement in Maryland toward projecting agricultural education through home projects by students. In a few sections actual Corn Clubs and Garden Clubs were organized in the schools. The organizational work of B. H. Crocheron, now Director of Extension Service in California, then principal of a progressive rural high school at Sparks, Maryland, became widely known. The publicity which these activities received, encouraged the Farmers' Institute Department and the Experiment Station of the Maryland College of Agriculture to develop definite Corn Club work about 1905.

In 1906, Mr. E. I. Oswald, then a student of agriculture at Maryland Agricultural College, was selected to assist with the Farmers' Institute county contests, the winner to receive a scholarship to the Agricultural College Short Course. This was the beginning of Boys' Club work in Maryland, for all of the counties participated, and twenty-three boys were sent to the Short Course.

On June 1, 1915, Reuben Brigham, then an editor for the Agricultural College, was appointed State Boys' Club Agent in charge of Boys' Club work in Maryland. During the next two years Mr. Brigham developed Club work widely, laying a foundation in policy and practice which has resulted in a very active organization. Mr. Brigham left Maryland in 1917 to take a position with the United States Department of Agriculture. Mr. Ralph F. McHenry, now County Agent of Allegany County, succeeded Mr. Brigham, but resigned in September of 1919. At this time, Mr. E. G. Jenkins, after completing the task of assisting in the organization of the Boys' Working Reserve in World War I, became Maryland Boys' State Club Agent.

## THE ALL STARS

In its infancy, the 4-H Club All Star Organization was composed of members from the Prize Winners Chorus, the Sphinx Club, and the Links of West

**MEMBERSHIP**—To recommend that the prospective member be a 4-H member in good standing; at least fifteen years of age with at least two years of good project records. He or she should have attended one previous state 4-H Club Conference or its equivalent, to be determined by the State 4-H Club Departments. Club members must not seek the honor, but should have it conferred upon them by the Chapter. Some provision shall be made for honorary membership in order to recognize outstanding adult leaders.

**OFFICERS**—The officers of the 4-H Club All Star Chapters should be: Big Chief, Lesser Chief, Scribe, and such others as may be necessary to carry on the work of the Chapter.

**MEETINGS**—At least one annual meeting, at which time the Consecration Service shall be held.

**A SYSTEM OF RECALL**—All Star Chapters shall be able to take the membership from any member found unworthy to wear the All Star emblem.

**TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**—Members changing their state residence shall be accommodated by the new state.

**A RITUAL OF INITIATION**—The Initiation Ceremony shall include an explanation of (1) the ideals and purposes of the organization, (2) the meaning of the pin, and (3) the hand clasp and password.

The All Star Chapters shall at no time, promote the expansion of the organization! If any group manifests its interest in establishing a chapter, information regarding the organization will be made available through the officers of the Inter-State 4-H Club All Star Organization.

The All Star pin may be secured through the Scribe or someone appointed by the Chief. The present pin was decided upon by the 1932 Inter-State Conference, and the following contract was made with the Balfour Company to furnish the pin:

1. The All Star pin is to be made of 10 karat gold.
2. The red enamel is to be triple baked.
3. A full facet white sapphire is to be used in the center of the pin.
4. Balfour Company is to copyright the pin in the name of the 4-H Club All Stars.
5. If the contract is to be broken, the All Star Chapters are to give the Balfour Company one year's notice.

The 1932 Inter-State Conference voted that an Advisory Council of All Stars be established with the 1932 voting delegates serving as charter members of the Council. The delegate serving the greatest number of years will preside as chairman. It was also voted that the duty of the chairman shall be to set the time and place for each annual meeting, holding the meeting in conjunction with the state meeting of one of the chapters. The Council shall rotate, holding its meeting with a different chapter each year.

At the present time the following committees work with the Council: Finance, Future Plans, Resolutions, and Continuation. The purpose of the annual conference shall be:

1. To foster an exchange of ideas between states that will promote the mutual understanding and the high ideals of 4-H Club All Stars.
2. To make readily available to other states, upon their request, information regarding 4-H Club All Stars.

The 1941 conference voted that a Continuation Committee be composed of the Big Chiefs of each State All Star organization or some All Star representing the Chief. The Continuation Committee shall elect the following officers from its own membership: chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and treasurer.



Remember?