



History Of Scouting Unit Hương Đạo Trường Sơn - 680



Camp Pendleton
First Scout Unit Lạc Việt

35mm Negative

014-1281-318-5-75
MCB
Camp Pendleton, California
13Jul75 Photo By: Sgt. R.O. Wilkins

A Vietnamese Boy Scout Flag, made
by the scouts aboard the Marine
Corps Base, will fly over the
refugee area at Camp Pendleton,
California.

DEFENSE DEPT. PHOTO (MARINE CORPS)
ECC A357496

The end of the Vietnam Civil War in April 1975 forced many South Vietnamese in a mass exodus in search of freedom, taking refuge and making new life in many other countries. In the Marine Base Camp Pendleton, California, a temporary home prepared for 75,000 Vietnamese refugees, a Scouting Unit named Lạc Việt was formed by Scout Leader Trương Trọng Trác with the intention of helping fellow refugees in their new life. Along with Leader Trương Trọng Trác, Leaders Nguyễn Đoàn, Nguyễn Bôn, Nguyễn Thế Thanh, and Lê Minh Lý continued the Vietnamese Scouting movement in the camp base until its closure of the Vietnamese Refugee campsite, when all its temporary residence had been sponsored by U.S. citizens, charity organizations and churches.

In February 1976, Leaders Nguyễn Thế Thanh and Lê Minh Lý, along with other leaders met together, planned, and in April 1976 formed Explorer Post Hương Việt, under the leadership of Lê Văn Lân, and assisted by leaders Nguyễn Thế Thanh, Đỗ Hữu Tâm and Nguyễn Văn Lượm. Post Hương Việt, then with more than 50 Vietnamese co-ed Scouts, registered as Explorer Post 304 with Boy Scouts of America; the post number signified the day South Vietnam was lost to the Communist Party and the mass exodus of the Vietnamese people. As there was no program developed to obtain the Eagle Scout ranking, Explorer Post 304 met weekly at La Palma Park in the city of Anaheim, with primary activities revolving around competitive games, skit performances, and Scouts skills.

At the end of September 1978, Explorer Post 304 intended to form Rover Troop Hương Việt.

Unfortunately the plan was not developed and due to lack of transportation, busy schedules with school and work, and the challenges of the new life in America, the leaders decided to discontinue active participation of Post 304. However, in the days and weeks after the unit's termination, a number of its members, with nostalgia, continued to informally meet, but under no leadership.

Early 1979, a group of Explorers residing in Santa Ana and Orange, with the advice and support of Leaders Lê Minh Lý and Đỗ Hữu Tâm, met and formed Explorer Post Chi Lăng. Scouts residing in Anaheim, Fullerton and Garden Grove met and began active participation with Leader Nguyễn Thế



Post 304 - Hương Việt

Thanh. The latter group went camping on several occasions and continued to meet at La Palma Park. The group chose the name Lửa Việt but did not register with Boy Scouts of America since the registration under Explorer Post 304 was still effective until July 1979. Once again, Lửa Việt disbanded in March 1979 as a result of low participation due to lack of transportation, scheduling, family obligations, and more importantly lack of leadership. Some members of this group joined Explorer Post Chi Lăng, while others continued again to meet informally and without leadership.

In the Spring of 1980, leader Hạ Quốc Khiêm, then an Explorer Scout, ran into Leader Cường and Nam, a young man with a high spirit of community services, at Fullerton College. Talks began and eventually lead to the idea of forming a Scout unit. Leader Khiêm contacted other scouts including Hồ văn Quang, Tòng Chánh, Nguyễn Long, Nguyễn Bảy, etc. with the idea and reached out to local high schools in Fullerton, Anaheim, and Santiago for recruitment. After several months of active participation with camping trips and weekly meeting, Leader Cường requested to back out as he is now busy with the reunion of this family from Vietnam; Nam also withdrew from participation due to his busy schedule with work and school. Therefore, the group did not meet regularly, but yet continued to keep the group's existence with Scouts Hạ Khiêm, Hồ Quang, Nguyễn Long, Tòng Chánh, and Nguyễn Bảy.

The above group returned to active status in June of 1980, with several other Explorers, still without a leader. In August 1980, the group, arranged by Leader Cường, invited Leaders Nguyễn Đoàn and Nguyễn Bôn to join them. These two leaders were active for several months with Explorer Post Hướng Việt in 1978 and were simultaneously active in Lạc Việt Family and former Lạc Việt Scout Unit in Camp Pendleton. Several weeks later, Explorer Post 680 Trường Sơn was formed, under the leadership of Explorer Postmaster Nguyễn Bôn. Explorer Post 680 officially registered with Boy Scouts of America. Post 680 was used to signify the month and year when the group officially met in June 1980.

Explorer Post 680 Trường Sơn developed and greatly grew in size in the years from 1980 to 1988 with over 100 boy scouts and girl scouts. Explorer Post Trường Sơn formed Rover Scout Troop Hoàn Sơn, followed by Cub Scout Pack Trường Sơn in 1981; Boy Scout Troop Trường Sơn was formed in 1982. From then, Explorer Post Trường Sơn became a multi-level Scouting Unit Liên Đoàn Trường Sơn (LDTS), with leader Nguyễn Bôn as the Unit Leader (Liên Đoàn Trưởng). The Unit followed the Vietnamese Scouting program, with Vietnamese as the primary language spoken, since knowledge of the English language and of the advancement program of the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America was still limited at this time.

Scouting Units from Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties participate in the Annual Vietnamese Camporee (Trại Liên Kết). It should be noted that Liên Đoàn Trường Sơn often visited, went camping with other Scouting Units, and also open its doors with open arms to many organizations in the community, including Vietnamese Student Associations, Buddhist Family, and Catholic Youth Group.



Camp Pendleton HĐVN

014-1281-304-1-75 35mm Negative
MCB
Camp Pendleton, California
6Jul75 Photo By: Sgt. R.W. Rydberg

Cub Scout Mike Mahoney, Pack 678 of San Marcos, Ca., presents an American Flag, formerly owned by Cub Scout Pack 4011 of Pleasant Hill, Ca., to Lau Nguyen Thieu, a Cub Scout of Refugee Camp #4. The flag, presented during ceremonies, was witnessed by (l to r) Njoc Nguyen Thi Hong, Vietnamese Cub Scout leader, Trac Truong Trong, former National Scout Leader in Vietnam, Nguget Tonnu Thuig, Vietnamese Scout Leader, and Jack Mahoney, Cub Scout Master, at Camp Pendleton, California.



First Trường Sơn Unit Flag



014-1281-256-3-75
MCB
Camp Pendleton, California
8Jun75 Photo By: Cpl. C.M. Parish, Jr.
35mm Negative
Vietnamese Refugee Boy Scouts (background) were registered into the Boy Scouts of America during a recent Scout ceremony held in Refugee Camp #4, aboard Camp Pendleton, California.
DEFENSE DEPT. PHOTO (MARINE CORPS) ECC A357473

At the end of 1988, LÐTS discontinued its regular meetings and did not register with BSA in 1989. Although there was no longer any leader to lead, a small number of Scouts from Scout patrols Đê Thám, Bàn Sơn as well as Rover Troop Hoàn Sơn continued to meet on weekends, went on camping trips and participated in Vietnamese Camporees.

In the Summer of 1990, the group attended Camporee Thăng Tiến III in San Jose, California. During the days at this Camporee, the idea to return and try to bring LÐTS to active status once again developed; on their journey, passing through San Francisco and Lake Tahoe, back to Orange County, scouts Nguyễn Bình, Trần Thanh, Nguyễn Bảy, Phan Đức Hùng, and Phạm Hội An nurtured this idea. In the months that followed, with the help of Leader Nguyễn Tấn Đệ from BSA Orange Council, this group moved forward with many meetings, with the presence and support of Scout leaders and Rover Scouts. At this time, the group decided on starting the unit with age group from the Boy Scouts level. In November 1990, Boy Scout Troop 680 Trường Sơn was formed and registered with BSA under the leadership of Leaders Trần Thanh, Phan Đức Hùng, and Phạm Hội An. The leaders before this time (1980-1988) were part of Rover and Explorer Scouts of LÐTS. At the same time that Troop 680 was formed, rather than being chartered by other corporations, Trường Sơn was self-chartered. Elden Gillespie Park in Westminster was designated as the Troop's regular meeting

place initially on Sundays and later changed to Saturdays.

In June 1991, Leader Nguyễn Đoàn returned to Troop Trường Sơn and at the same time many new Scouts registered. Pack Trường Sơn was formed as Pack 680 and Trường Sơn thus became once again a multi-level Scouting Unit, Liên Đoàn Trường Sơn. Leader Nguyễn Đoàn was entrusted and became the Unit Leader.

Many families saw a need for their daughters to be similarly involved. Towards the end of 1993, parent Trần Hồng Bích accepted the invitation to form a Girl Scout Troop. Girl Scout Trường Sơn officially registered with Girl Scouts of United States of America (GSUSA) as Troop 2194. 194 signified the month (January) and year (1994) the Troop was formed. The number 2 acknowledged the requirement that a troop must have a minimum of two leaders. Leader Trần Hồng Bích was assisted by Leaders Nguyễn Liên Hương, Phạm Hội An, and Nguyễn Đoàn.

By 1996, the Girl Scout Troop grew from just one Brownie Troop 2194 to include Junior Troop 3194, Cadette Troop 4194, and Senior Troop 5194. Liên Đoàn Trường Sơn also reformed and re-registered Explorer Post 680, and eventually became Venture Crew 680.

With the growth of LÐTS and as a Patrol/Scout run multi-level Scouting Unit, Liên Đoàn Trường Sơn named each of the Scout Level as follow:

- *Sơn Ca – Brownie Troop 2194*
- *Hướng Dương – Junior Troop 3194*
- *Phù Đồng – Cub Scout Pack 680*
- *Âu Cơ – Cadette Troop 4194*
- *Lạc Long Quân – Boy Scouts Troop 680*
- *Bắc Đẩu – Senior Troop 5194 and Explorer Post 680*

In 1999, Rover Troop Hoàn Sơn reformed during LÐTS's first camp "Về Nguồn" camp (Back to the Origins) at Firestone Scout Reservation, California.

Girl Scout Daisy Troop (Kindergarten age group) was born, with 3 members, registered and grouped with Troop 2194. On March 29, 2004, LÐTS filed as a non-profit corporation. LÐTS re-organized with the formation of Liên Đoàn Văn Lang in May 2004, and Crew Bạch Đằng Giang in October of the same year. In 2014, LÐTS re-

organized again with the formation of Liên Đoàn Trùng Dương.

At the present time in 2015, the estimated number of registered Scouts and leaders by level as follows:

- Brownie Troop 2194: 2 leaders, 18 Scouts
- Junior Troop 3194: 2 leaders, 18 Scouts
- Cadette Troop 4194: 3 leaders, 17 Scouts
- Senior Troop 5194: 3 leaders, 20 Scouts
- Cub Scout Pack 680: 7 leaders, 35 Scouts
- Boy Scout Troop 680: 5 leaders, 50 Scouts
- Venture/Crew 680: 5 leaders, 20 Scouts
- Rover Scout 680: 2 leaders, 7 Scouts

Time Line

Overseas Scouting directly associated with LDTs:

- Spring 1975: LD Lạc Việt with leaders Trương Trọng Trác, Nguyễn Đoàn, Nguyễn Bôn, Nguyễn Thế Thanh, Lê Minh Lý, and other leaders
- April 1976: Explorer Post Hướng Việt with leaders Lê Văn Lân, Lê Minh Lý, Đỗ Hữu Tâm, Nguyễn Thế Thanh, Ngô Văn Lượm
- September 1978: Explorer Post Hướng Việt ceased activities. A number of scouts continued to meet with leader Nguyễn Thế Thanh
- Summer 1980: Explorer Troop Trường Sơn formed under the leadership of leader Nguyễn Bôn
- 1981: Explorer Troop Trường Sơn became Multi-Level Unit Liên Đoàn Trường Sơn with Rover Troop Hoàn Sơn, Cub Scout Pack Trường Sơn, under the leadership of leaders Nguyễn Vinh Thọ and Trần Quốc Thắng
- 1982: Boy Scout Troop Trường Sơn formed
- 1988: LDTs ceased activities; an independent group met and participated in camping trips in the Scout spirit
- November 1990: Re-establishment of Boy Scout Troop Trường Sơn, Troop 680
- June 1991: Re-establishment of Cub Scout Pack Trường Sơn, Pack 680
- January 1994: Birth of GS Troop 2194, registered under GSUSA
- 1996: From GS Troop 2194 stemmed Brownie Troop 2194, Junior Troop 3194, Cadette Troop 4194, and Senior Troop 5194
- 1996: Explorer Post 680 was formed and registered with BSA. Explorer Post 680 later became Venture Crew 680
- 1999: Re-establishment of Rover Scout Troop Hoàn Sơn
- 2001: Girl Scout Daisy Troop was formed under Troop 2194
- March 29, 2004, LDTs filed as a non-profit corporation
- 2004: LDTs re-organized with the formation of Liên Đoàn Văn Lang in May and Crew Bạch Đằng Giang in October
- 2014: LDTs re-organized again with the formation of Liên Đoàn Trùng Dương



014-1281-256-2-75 35mm Negative
MCB
Camp Pendleton, California
8Jun75 Photo By: Cpl. C.M.
Parish, Jr.

Mr. John W. Ackerman, Scouting
Executive of the San Diego
County Council, Boy Scouts of
America, tries fitting a Viet-
namese Refugee Cub Scout with
a pair of trousers. Scout
uniforms were donated by the
local organizations during a
ceremony when Vietnamese Scouts
were registered with the Boy
Scouts of America.

DEFENSE DEPT. PHOTO (MARINE CORPS)
ECC A357472