

Scouts' Own

From an older GS USA publication, Ceremonies in Girl Scouting: [see bottom of page for an excellent resource on the Internet.]

"The idea of Girl Scouts' Own came from the founder of Girl Scouting, Juliette Low. It is a special ceremony for Girl Scouts and it is a tradition, an important time when Girl Scouts can reflect on their experiences in Girl Scouting. It is not a religious ceremony or service, but an inspirational occasion where Girl Scouts of every faith and creed can participate.

A Girl Scouts' Own is based upon the beliefs and ideals of Girl Scouting. It allows girls to express their thoughts and feelings in a truly meaningful way. The main purpose of a Girl Scouts' Own is to elaborate on a theme. Usually associated with Girl Scouting, the theme can be related to the troop, badges the girls have worked on, or experiences they have shared. The ceremony can be held at any time and can take place at a troop meeting, an inter-troop gathering, in camp, etc. Words, music, simple drama, visual art, lovely surroundings, moments of quiet may be part of a Scouts' Own. Traditionally, Girl Scouts walk in silence to and from the Scouts' Own site."

What truly makes a Scouts Own especially unique is that each and every ceremony is original and truly what the girls conducting the ceremony feel. It can be whatever the girls want it to be.

Usually, at Camporee, the Scouts' Own takes about 10 to 15 minutes. One word of caution, due to the large number of people at Camporee, it is cumbersome and very lengthy to go around a circle of everyone present and talk about what they liked best---there will be approximately 185 - 210 people at your Camporee! Hence, we would discourage that being done. However, the girls presenting the ceremony could certainly do that and ask the audience to silently join in with their own reflection. We would also like to discourage reference to "friendly competition." An emphasis is being made to think of Camporee as a gathering of Girl Scouts, some already known, some new to meet, all experiencing Outdoor Skills and Girl Scout camaraderie for an entire weekend together.

Here are ideas from the past:

- meaningful thoughts about being together have been presented
- poem recited reflecting some theme (out in the woods, citizenship, etc)
- thoughts about Camporee
- musical instrument accompanied recitation or played as the campers arrived or departed
- on Mother's Day a "thank you" presentation to mothers & leaders

Possible themes from Ceremonies in Girl Scouting: (notice how much is similar to the GS Promise and Law, the core values of GS)

- service to others
- duty to God or country
- responsibility
- honor
- loyalty
- nature
- peace
- friendship
- cheerfulness

So you see, the ceremony is whatever the girls would like it to be: their own unique creation.

**** <http://www.scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/Traditions/Ceremonies.htm>
click on "Scouts Own"