The 1900's brought the final quest for the highest peaks on the planet. In 1913 the American, Hudson Stuck ascended Mount McKinley in Alaska which, at 20,320 feet is the highest peak in North America. It was followed by numerous explorers, adventurers and mountaineers who went on to climb the highest peaks on each continent. The toughest challenge was the granddaddy of them all, Mount Everest. The British made several attempts in the 1920's, but none were successful and many fatal. Finally, on May 29, 1953, the world's highest peak was reached at 29,029 feet by the New Zealander, Sir Edmund Hillary and the Nepali Sherpa, Tenzing Norgay. They truly stood on the top of the world.

Tonight we have with us a young man who has also climbed to the top of a mountain. That is the mountain of Cub Scouting. On his shoulder he proudly displays his Webelos Colors, which hold his Activity Badges. Each one represents a mountain he has climbed. We are going to ask him to describe his two favorite badges and what he did to earn them.

Each of these climbs prepared him for higher ascents, his Webelos rank and tonight his highest ascent, the Arrow of Light Award. This is the highest summit in Cub Scouting, but is it the highest summit you will reach in Scouting? (Response)

Many summits still stretch out before you, with the Mount Everest of Scouting at the end, the rank of Eagle Scout. We congratulate you tonight and wish you well on your further journey.

(Props: ropes coiled around the scout's shoulder, climbing pick or ice axe, Alpine hat if available)

Eric Christiansen, Wood Badge WE7-590-3-08

Mountaineering Arrow of Light Ceremony

Tonight we are going to climb mountains. (give props to boys) Throughout the ages, man has had the desire to climb mountains. Many have risen to the challenge, taking great risks and enduring great physical hardships to achieve their goal. Many have tried, and a select few have succeeded. And what did they achieve? A chance to stand on the top of the world.

We know that early man climbed the slopes of mountains. The body of one such climber was preserved in a glacier in the Alps at about 10,000 feet. The man dates back to about 5,300 years ago.

We know that Moses climbed the mountain in the wilderness to speak with the Lord and receive the Ten Commands.

The first recorded mountain ascent since the meridian of time was in A.D.121 the Roman Emperor Hadrian made his ascent up Mount Etna at almost 11,000 feet, and why? He wanted to see the sun rise.

Peter III of Aragon climbed to the top of Canigou in the Pyrenees in the last quarter of the 13th century, while at about the same time in the new world, members of a local tribe in Mexico made their ascent up the 17,800 peak of Popocatepetl.

In the mid 14th century the peaks of the Italian Alps were being summited, while in the late 14th and early 15th centuries in the new world the Incas climbed all through the Andes, building platforms, houses and alters. The highest peak known that they summited was 22,110.

In 1642, Darby Field made the first recorded ascent up what is now known as Mount Washington, New Hampshire. During that same century the use of ropes and ice axes were first used in the Swiss Alps. In the early 1800's the major peaks of the Alps were conquered. Thereafter, tourists began climbing and the whole field of Alpine guides was created. At the end of the 1800's Africa's Kilimanjaro was summited while close to home the Grand Teton in Wyoming was conquered.