1918 – Robert Sever Hale makes his land available. Mr. Hale granted permission to Clayton H. Ernst to bring his scout troops to Dover and invited them to camp, farm, and build shelters.

In the decade that followed, thousands of boys constructed cabins across the property. It came to be known as the Dover-Westwood Scout Reservation of the Boston Council, Inc.

1927 – The Trading Post opens. The original Trading Post—the stone building now known as Nelson House—provided book rentals, a supply shop, and a social atmosphere. At it, you would’ve seen “Bill Wood using a hammer industriously. Toff Fowler abiding by the fireplace, and Mac Rattner, a pint of beer in one hand and the other grasping the coin of the realm, profaned by a pretense.”

The ball on its top is among the oldest artifacts at Hale; it was cast shortly after the Civil War.

1941 – A leader is laid to rest. On December 31, 1941, Robert Sever Hale passed away. His left acres of estate, an unparalleled vision, and a legacy of generosity for generations to come.

1949 – Hale’s modern era begins. On June 27, 1949, Scouting’s managers voted to officially change the organization’s name to The Robert Sever Hale Camping Reservation to honor its late founder. The new name would be shortened to Hale Reservation four decades later.

1971 – Partnering with Boston Public Schools. In the early ‘70s, all BPS sixth graders attended Hale as part of an enrichment program aimed at introducing meaningful outdoor education experiences. The program continued for several years until budget restrictions made it impossible. Through the generosity of foundations and funding through mini-grants, Hale was able to sustain a scaled-down version. Today, Hale hosts nearly 10,000 students during the academic year.

1987 – Living our values. Summer staff members were required to make a pledge: “I accept the challenge of helping children increase their awareness of and responsibility to others and to the world of nature, helping them gain in self-confidence and self-concept, and of teaching them new skills.”

While no pledge is required today, staff members continue to live Hale’s core values through their work.

2001 – Passing the torch. After 32 years of Jim Earley’s leadership, Eric Arnold took the helm on April 1, 2001. He renewed Hale’s focus on serving urban youth. He began constructing the achievement and nature gaps, and launched long-term planning to preserve Hale’s acres of adventure for generations to come.

2010 – Hale Outdoor Learning Adventures begins. Hale’s partnership with Boston Public Schools was revitalized in 2011 when Hale Outdoor Learning Adventures—initially funded by a grant from the Wallace Foundation, now operating through a joint effort by BPS, Boston After School & Beyond, and Hale—was launched to combat the “summer learning slide.” The program serves up to 180 students per season and continues to grow.

2018 – Intrepid Academy at Hale (IAH) launches. After nearly a decade of ideation and planning, on January 29, Hale launched its signature semester school experience in partnership with Boston Public Schools. Each year, more than 100 high school students combine academics with experiential learning at Hale.

2013 – Run like Hale. Hale became an official Charity of the Boston Athletic Association in 2013. In six years, members of Team Hale have raised more than $11 million to bring urban youth into the great outdoors as they learn to live active and healthy lives. Cheer on this year’s team as they “run like Hale” in the Boston Marathon on Monday, April 16.