

Scout Spirit Ashes

Legend has it that Lord Baden-Powell would always take a small amount of cool ashes from the night before's campfire and spread them into the next campfire as part of its opening. This tradition began during his days in the British Army. He did this until his death on January 8th, 1941. Its purpose, he said, was to bring all scouts and scouters the international aspect of the world brotherhood of scouting.

Other scouts and scouters would place the end of their staves in the fire's embers to hold on to the spirit felt there and help them remember the event. Some feel that the ashes themselves contain the essence of the scout spirit they felt as the campfires' brilliant flames turned to glowing embers.

Thus, ashes taken from a campfire and sprinkled into the flames of the next could have a written pedigree through scout spirit and brotherhood.

Normally it is traditional that only those present at the campfire ceremony carry those ashes, when stirred and cooled, to the next fire. If, by chance, more than one scout or scouter brings ashes to the same campfire, the pedigree lists are pooled, with all dates and places recorded and passed on. In many places all those who wish to participate or carry away ashes must each bring a small stick, pinecone or acorn for the fire.

A charge should be included in the ceremony when these old ashes are sprinkled into the new flames of your fire. Any ceremony or charge can be used. If you wish to use any of these provided, just add the ashes at the pause in each charge.

This charge is rumored to be written by B-P himself and could be added to any ash ceremony.

"We carry our friendship with us in these ashes from other campfires with comrades in other lands. May the joining of the dead fires with the leaping flames symbolize once more the unbroken chain that binds scouts and guides around the world." . . . "With greetings from scouts of all nations everywhere."