

The History of Gilray Scout Camp

Gilray is named in honour of [Carl Rayner](#) (Scout name 'Serpent') and his wife Doris (Scout name '[Gilkela](#)') by the combining of **Gilkela** and **Rayner**.

Carl Rayner was the Divisional Secretary at the time and was very supportive of the Coloured Scout Association and assisted in acquiring the lease from the Cape Town City Council around 1954.

Carl and Doris were the founder members and instructors of the South African Adult Training Team for many years. Initially the training took place in their backyard in Diep River or Gilcape as it was called - 'Gilwell in the Cape' and then later the Wood Badge training courses for Coloureds were held at Gilray.



Opening by the Cape Town Mayor

Gilray was officially opened by the Cape Town Mayor Mrs Joyce Newton-Thompson in 1958 (unfortunately the actual date is not known).

Over the years many volunteers and Groups have assisted in the ongoing development at Gilray.

To encourage this development the Ogle Trophy was introduced and is awarded annually at the Provincial Awards Ceremony to the Group assisting the most in maintaining Gilray over a year.

Major development of Gilray during the 1950's can be attributed to Alex 'Jakala' Philander – and it was said that [Alex](#) was Gilray!

The Gilray Hall was opened in 1958 and was named after the then Chief Scouts Commissioner of the Coloured Association, Charles Thebus, as the Charles Thebus Hall.



Charles Thebus Hall

For Thirty Two years Mr Dennis Dooling was warden of Gilray and he and his family lived on the premises, playing a vital role in the administration and maintenance of the property. In 2006 Leon Meder and his family took over from the Dooling family in overseeing Gilray together with the Gilray Committee.

In November 2009 the Moss family moved into Gilray. Since then with much prayer and determination criminal activity is at an all-time low. Gilray has a resident church, two scout groups, and paintball using the site.

Many people who pass through marvel at the peace and solace one finds on this property. Many an evening one finds the community using the hall or braai facilities as life is once again breathed into Gilray.



Entrance to Gilray

The property is still on lease and not owned by the Scout Association. With recent developments and the way things are handled by Council, how much longer this prime property will remain usable by the Scout Association is not really known for sure.

With faith and tenacity Scouting will survive . . . it's the BP way.