

CSREES/Families, 4-H & Nutrition



O. H. Benson
Wright County, Iowa School Superintendent

4-H Efforts: Benson helped to establish agriculture and domestic science in Wright County Iowa schools. Along with Jessie Field in Page County, he began to use a 3 leaf clover symbol in his youth work. At the Farmers' Cooperative Extension Work office in Washington, he helped to establish the 4-H clover symbol and the meaning of Head, Heart, Hands and Health.

"The Boys' and Girls' Demonstration work represents a 'four-Square' training of the members of the 'Four-Square' needs of citizenship and home- life. The four H's represent the equal training of the head, heart, hands, and health of every child." - From a 1912 circular prepared by O.H. Benson and O.B. Martin.

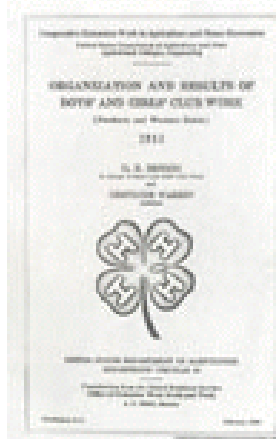
Hometown: Delaware County, Iowa.
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

Oscar H. Benson became Wright County school superintendent in 1906. As a school teacher, Benson was recognized for introducing agriculture and domestic science into his teaching. While superintendent, he pushed to include agriculture and domestic science into elementary school work. He encouraged students to exhibit their work at school fairs, much as 4-H'ers do today. Benson and Jessie Field in Page County created a 3 leaf clover symbol on pins and pennants awarded to students. In 1909 the clover design included an "H" on each leaf for Head, Heart, and Hand, and an ear of corn at the center. Benson went to work at the Farmers' Cooperative Extension Work office in Washington, DC in 1911.

As Benson traveled the country for Cooperative Extension and spoke to groups, he began to speak of a fourth H - "Hustle." Boys and girls club leaders meeting in Washington adopted the 4-H symbol in spring of 1911, along with O.B. Martin's suggestion that the fourth "H" stand for Health. Benson later created 4-H clover pins for youth demonstration work. Benson moved to the Office of Farm Management in 1912 as the first federal agent employed to develop boys' and girls' club work in the North and West. He established some cooperative agreements with state youth programs, leading to the inclusion of youth work in the 1914 legislation that created the Cooperative Extension Service.



O. H. Benson at his
USDA office.
[Archives photo no.
33-P-4-15421]



"Organization and Results of
Boys' and Girls' Club Work" by
O. H. Benson, 1918.
[Archives photo no. 33-A-13-5]



Benson's 3-leaf clover pin for
Wright County.



Hometown: Victor, Iowa
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

Fannie Buchanan
Writer of 4-H Songs

4-H Efforts: Fannie Buchanan became involved in the 4-H music program in the 1920's. She wrote five 4-H songs, including "The Plowing Song" dedicated to farm boys and "Dreaming" for 4-H girls. Both were introduced at the National 4-H Club Camp in 1927. In 1930 she joined the Iowa State College Extension Staff.

4-H Honors: Buchanan received a citation for distinguished service at the 1941 National 4-H Club Camp and recognition at the closing assembly of the 1944 National 4-H Club Congress.

Fannie Buchanan earned a degree in music from Grinnell College, Iowa. During World War I, she organized music and recreation activities with War Camp Community Service. Eventually she joined the Victor Talking Machine Company as a Rural Specialist. As she traveled, she came in more contact with 4-H members and leaders and became involved in the 4-H music program. She wrote the words to five 4-H songs, set to music by her college friend Rena Parish, including "The Plowing Song" dedicated to farm boys and "Dreaming" that captured the daydreams of 4-H girls that she met during her cross country travels.

These songs were introduced at the National 4-H Club Camp in 1927. The members of the Federal Extension Service and National Committee on Boys and Girls Club Work helped to carry her songs throughout the country and encouraged their singing by 4-H clubs. In 1930, Buchanan joined the Iowa State College extension staff. She received a citation for distinguished service at the 1941 National 4-H Club Camp and was recognized at the closing assembly of the 1944 National 4-H Club Congress.



Elsie Carper
National 4-H Staff

4-H Efforts: Worked for USDA Extension Service in 4-H, 1944-1983. Years of involvement in planning and conducting National 4-H Camp and National 4-H Conference and involved in the purchase and development of the National 4-H Center. Continues to be an historian of 4-H for staff, researchers and interested persons at National 4-H Council and USDA. Carper is the only person who has worked with every Deputy Administrator of the 4-H as either staff or volunteer.

4-H Honors: National Partner in 4-H Award for dedication, leadership, and personal commitment to shaping the national 4-H program; for providing valuable historical insight into current issues; and for tireless inspiration, enthusiasm and unselfish giving to the youth served by 4-H.

Home: Minnesota
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

In 1941, Elsie came to Washington DC from Minnesota to take a civilian job with the U.S. Marine Corps. Three years later, she began working for Extension Service at USDA with the Home Demonstration and 4-H Youth Development Unit. Part of the attraction for working in 4-H was the National 4-H Camp, which later became National 4-H Conference. Elsie was very involved in the purchase and development of the National 4-H Center in Maryland to provide a permanent home for Conference. Her involvement with National 4-H Conference continued, assisting with planning, announcing, staffing, registering delegates, the budget, and even scripting the meetings.

Starting in the early 1960's, Elsie compiled the state 4-H statistical data into a national enrollment report. She did much of the background research for the history of the 4-H program in 1980, the 4-H portion of the 75 year history of the Cooperative Extension System, and the 50th anniversary of NAE4-HA. Elsie retired in 1983, but she did not retire from the 4-H program. She took a part-time job at National 4-H Council working in the 4-H Reference and Resource Center, helping numerous researchers from across the U.S. volunteer, including tracking policy actions affecting 4-H and the 4-H Subcommittee of ECOP. Elsie is the living corporate memory of the 4-H program since 1944.



Elsie Carper receives Partner in 4-H from
Sec. of Agriculture Dan Glickman.



Home: Georgia
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

Mary Cresswell
First Woman in Federal Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work

4-H Efforts: Mary Cresswell was the first woman to serve in the Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work office. Working with state canning club agents, she expanded home canning programs to include other home arts, including work with farm youth in sewing, kitchen and other home subjects. Her efforts developed into 4-H programs for girls.

Mary E. Cresswell, while supervisor of home economics and school garden work at Georgia State Normal School in Athens, had been made a collaborator with the Department of Agriculture in 1911 to develop girls' canning programs in Georgia. She was later appointed to a position in Washington, becoming the first woman to serve in the Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work office. Her major task was to broaden the canning program into an all-year program for the farm home and family, with the help of state canning club leaders. This included working with farm youth in sewing, kitchen and other home subjects. At Cresswell's suggestion, all of the women Extension workers eventually were called home demonstration agents.



Under Cresswell, youth club work expanded beyond canning, like this sewing club in Maryland.



A canning club receives training - 1917.



Edward Aiton
Federal Extension Service

4-H Efforts: Director, Federal Extension Service Division of 4-H Club and Young Men's and Women's Programs and Assistant Administrator, FES. Proposed the idea of International exchanged that led to IFYE Program. Secured bank loan to help purchase facility for National 4-H Center. Strong proponent of the 4-H agent professional and the need to train these educators in youth development. Served as the first director of the National 4-H Foundation.

"While we were all, I think, quite well trained in the basics of agriculture, we had very little sociology, and no anthropology, no human development aspects to our training." - Aiton commented on the need for 4-H agents to learn about youth and human development.

Home: Itaska Co., Minnesota
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

After WWII, Aiton worked with other state and federal extension staff to develop "ten guideposts" to help develop youth. Aiton proposed the idea of international exchanges that became the IFYE Program. Aiton worked to co-sign a bank loan to the National 4-H Club Foundation that enabled the purchase the Chevy Chase Junior College to become the National 4-H Center. Aiton was a driving force in the profession of 4-H work and the training of 4-H agents in the social sciences in addition to agriculture or home economics. Aiton took a leave from USDA for a period to serve as the first director of the National 4-H Foundation.



O. J. Kern
Superintendent of Schools, Winnebago County, Illinois

4-H Efforts: Kern worked with the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station to spread the word about new seed corn varieties. He organized the Farm Boys Experiment Club in 1905, in cooperation with the agricultural college. These were a forerunner of 4-H clubs, designed to transfer agriculture technology to farmers through youth.

"Why not a course of training in the country school for the country boy which shall teach him more about the country life around him? Along with his study of the kangaroo and cockatoo, why not study the animals on the farm and a proper feeding standard for them?" - Kern's thinking led to the Farm Boys Experiment Clubs, a forerunner of 4-H clubs.

Home: Winnebago County, Illinois
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

O.J. Kern, Superintendent of Schools in Winnebago County, Illinois, worked with the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station to spread the word about new seed corn varieties. He organized the Farm Boys Experiment Club in 1905, in cooperation with the agricultural college, to help to introduce new corn varieties and methods through the youth. His activities were contemporary to similar work being done by A. B. Graham in Ohio. Kern wanted to provide practical education for rural boys that included study of animals on the farm and farm economics to connect textbook learning to practical application. He lectured, printed annual reports and wrote a book about his work. Similar groups started soon after in Texas and in Iowa. These were a forerunner of 4-H clubs.

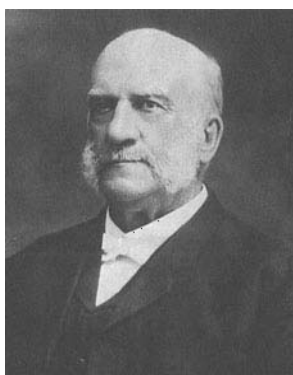
J. O. Knapp
Helped Establish the National 4-H Club Center
and the National 4-H Club Foundation

4-H Efforts: Knapp was a founder of the West Virginia 4-H Clubs, and he was recognized nationally and internationally for his work in rural education for both youth and adults. He was also instrumental in promoting programs for rural electrification in West Virginia. He was a pioneer in the establishment of the National 4-H Club Center, and he was one of the original incorporators of the National 4-H Club Foundation.

Home: West Virginia
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

J. O. Knapp served 45 years in West Virginia Cooperative Extension as County Agent, District Agent, and Director. He was a pioneer in the establishment of the National 4-H Club Center. He was one of the original incorporators of the National 4-H Club Foundation and served as chairman of the Incorporator's meeting.

Knapp helped locate the site for the Center and co-signed the bank loan to acquire the property. He served as chair of the Board of Trustees of the National 4-H Club Foundation. One of his most memorable occasions was participating with President Eisenhower at the dedication of the National 4-H Center. Knapp chaired the 1960 conference on Effective Utilization of Private Support for Extension Youth Work.



Hometown: Essex Co., New York
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

Seaman Knapp
"Father of Cooperative Extension"

4-H Efforts: Knapp's ideas in agriculture and education later became the Agricultural Experiment Stations and Cooperative Extension Service. In 1906 Knapp organized boys' cotton and corn clubs to promote his agricultural ideas and in 1910 a girls' corn and poultry club was added. These were some of what later became known as 4-H Clubs.

Knapp graduated with a B.A. from Union College at Schenectady, New York in 1856. He married and later moved to Benton County, Iowa, where they purchased a small sheep farm. While superintendent of the Iowa State School for the Blind, he organized and became the first president of the Iowa Improved Stock Breeders Association. In 1876 he began publishing the Western Stock Journal and Farmer, which talked about modern farm methods and some of his farm experiments. His farming renown led to his selection as professor of agriculture at Iowa State College of Agriculture at Ames, Iowa, in 1879. He served as president of the college from 1883 to 1884.

At Iowa State, Knapp started the concept of a demonstration farm. He drafted a bill to establish agriculture experiment stations at agricultural college that became the Hatch Act of 1887. He left Iowa in 1886 to work in the South. In 1906 Knapp initiated the county-agent plan, and he organized boys' cotton and corn growing clubs to promote his agricultural ideas. In 1910 a girls' corn and poultry club was added - the forerunners of the modern 4-H Clubs. Knapp came to Washington DC in 1907 and served at USDA until his death in 1911. His early efforts led to the Smith-Lever Act that established Cooperative Extension Service in 1914.



Seaman Knapp with USDA officials and
Sec. Wilson in Texas, 1903.
[Archives photo no. 33-HF-6-2]



Hometown: State Center, Iowa
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

Guy Noble
National Committee on Boys' and Girls' Club Work

4-H Efforts: Started the first private financial partnerships with early 4-H Clubs. Organized the National Committee on Boys' and Girls' Club Work. Their efforts to give financial support to club youth to attend the Chicago International Live Stock Exposition developed into the National 4-H Congress, which continued for decades to meet in Chicago. Promoted federal legislation to increase funding for Extension and 4-H.

Guy Noble was an early corporate supporter to 4-H. An employee of Armour Packing Company, he proposed to the company that they support trips for state club winners to the 1919 Chicago International Live Stock Exposition. He arranged tours and entertainment for their guests. After several of these successful annual tours, it became clear that private businesses had a role in supporting club work. In 1921, Noble took a leave of absence from Armour to organize the National Committee on Boys' and Girls' Club Work, which had its first meeting in Chicago.

The first few years the committee struggled but gained financial support from the Chicago Board of Trade and Montgomery Ward built momentum. In 1923 it was suggested that the annual tour in Chicago be designated as a "club congress." That year 1,600 youth attended, which overwhelmed the event and led to a limit of not more than 50 per state. National 4-H Congress continues to this day, having convened in Chicago for many years. Noble retired from the Committee in 1958. The Committee merged with the National 4-H Foundation to form National 4-H Council.



Guy Noble makes a presentation at National 4-H Club Congress, 1946.



Guy Noble presents a 4-H painting to M. L. Wilson, FES Director, in 1948. The painting would be in the 1949 National 4-H Calendar.



Guy Noble at his desk, 1956.



Gertrude Warren
Federal Extension Service

4-H Efforts: Warren is often called the "Mother of 4-H." She helped to establish the official use of the name 4-H Club, developed the concept of a 4-H project, and promoted 4-H programs internationally.

4-H Honors: Presented Order of the Three Stars from Latvia for fostering 4-H work there. USDA Superior Service Award, 1949. Warren Hall at National 4-H Center named in her honor. President of the Women's National Farm and Garden Association.

"...other tasks of like nature are now being performed by members of the 4-H Clubs with interest, pride and efficiency." - Warren deliberately used the term 4-H Clubs in the 1918 bulletin "Organization and Results of Boy's and Girl's Club Work" to promote use of the 4-H name for Extension youth clubs. This statement was the first use of the 4-H name in a federal document.

Hometown: Pendleton, New York
Nominated by: CSREES/USDA
Year Inducted: 2002

Gertrude Warren was introduced to Extension when teaching home economics at Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York. She came to Washington in 1917 to give leadership to USDA girls canning programs. She soon expanded these to cover other subjects and developed the model for 4-H club project work. She wrote many bulletins and publications and is credited with first using the 4-H name in a federal publication in 1918. Warren visited many foreign countries to help them establish their own 4-H programs and was instrumental in the development of the International 4-H Youth Exchange. She was involved in the establishment of the National 4-H Foundation and National 4-H Center.



Warren (F-R) and other Extension leaders surround Maryland 4-H member Gladys Bull who spoke to Congress about 4-H.



Gertrude Warren (back row) among delegates to the first International 4-H Leadership Congress in MA - 1923.



Gertrude admires the dedication plaque on Warren Hall, National 4-H Center.