

ERNEST V. OWEN TRUST FOR CAMBRIDGE SCOUTING

I joined the Cambridge Council on July 1, 1983.

In a few weeks, I was informed that the council would be receiving funds from the Ernest V. Owen Trust. The council had been anticipating receipt of the funds since 1972.

Minutes of a 1972 Executive Board meeting show that the board approved using funds from the Owen Estate for the purchase of a pick-up truck for Camp Quinapoxet. A search was conducted to obtain the right truck at the right price. The truck was never purchased because the Owen Trust was not in a position to distribute funds as per the trust agreement,

No one associated with the Cambridge Council had any knowledge of Mr. Owen. After checking with many Cambridge residents, community organizations and the religious community, Ernest V. Owen was a complete unknown to everyone in the Cambridge community.

The Ernest V. Owen Trust designated five organizations to receive funds from his trust upon his demise and the demise of his two sisters living in California.

The 5 organizations named were:

Cambridge Council, Boy Scouts of America

Cambridge YMCA

Mount Auburn Hospital

Harvard University

and a Protestant Church

The Ernest V. Owen Trust was administered by the Old Colony Trust Division of the The First National Bank of Boston. I was well acquainted with the staff of the Old Colony Trust as my former employer, the Boston BSA, had the Parker Trust and Magee Trust funds placed with the Old Colony Trust. When I began service in the Cambridge Council I was able to regularly call my contact at the Old Colony Trust for an up-date.

All she was able to tell me was that the Owen Trust was increasing in value and that distributions were continuing to be paid according to the terms of the trust.

We had no idea who the two sisters were or where they lived.

Russ Hagley, President of the Council from the approximately 1987 to 1991 often stated at a board meeting "Dan and I should go to California and take the two Owen sisters dancing." A fun way of letting the board know that the president and executive were keeping the board informed as to the status of the Owen Trust.

I retired from the Cambridge Council and the BSA on May 1, 1997 after 35 years of service. I remained to assist the council as an employee until February 1, 1998.

When the council realized that I would retire and with the possibility of the council facing a "merger" with the Boston Minuteman Council, a process began to "protect" the assets of Cambridge Council. Upon the recommendations of Attorney's Michael Sullivan and Daniel Crane, contact was established with Hemenway & Barnes LLP at 75 State Street, Boston.

All the facts and desires of the Cambridge Council (CC) Executive Board were presented to the staff of Hemenway & Barnes. The CC realized that Camp Quinapoxet and the CC office at One Scouting Way, would not be maintained and probably sold by the Boston Minuteman Council. In addition, the CC desired to protect the funds destined to come to the CC from the Owen Trust.

The officers and members of the CC Executive Board had three assets they wanted to protect for the benefit of Cambridge Scouting, Cambridge youth, etc. That was the purpose of working with Hemenway and Barnes.

1. Camp Quinapoxet, Rindge, New Hampshire
2. The Anna Lyon Council office at One Scouting Way
3. The Ernest V. Owen Trust

After a series of meetings at Hemenway & Barnes and discussions in the council the ERNEST V. OWEN TRUST FOR CAMBRIDGE SCOUTING was approved by the CC officers and board on or about September 20, 2000, with CC President Jim Kelley signing the official documents.

One of the attorneys the CC worked with at Hemenway & Barnes was Charles Fayerweather. He disclosed that his family heritage began in Cambridge on what today is known as Fayerweather Street. As of July, 2025, Attorney Fayerweather is a Senior Vice President and Partner at Hemenway & Barnes.

I was a volunteer Scouter of the Cambridge Council when the proceeds of the Owen Trust were received by the council and placed in the Cambridge Trust as the trustee. I had no role in receiving or administering the funds.

I forget the amount that was received but I remember being amazed with the total amount that had grown considerably since the council was informed of the Owen estate in 1972.

The distribution of funds from the Owen Trust was modified because no record of the church could be found. The church no longer existed. Therefore, the funds destined for the church were distributed to the four remaining organizations. The Cambridge Council was one of the four to receive 25% of the amount designated for the church.

Since this distribution was made many years after the Cambridge Council was absorbed by the Boston Minuteman Council, I the volunteers of the Cambridge BSA agreed to allow those funds to flow to the Boston Minuteman Council rather than into the Owen Trust at Cambridge Trust Co.

I believe the ERNEST V. OWEN TRUST FOR CAMBRIDGE SCOUTING at the Cambridge Trust Company was funded as follows:

 \$\$ Funds from the Owen estate.

 \$400,000 from the \$500,000 sale of Camp Quinapoxet

 (\$100,000 of the sale was applied to the Anna Lyon Trust)

Later, I began to receive inquiries from volunteer and executive leaders of the Boston Minuteman Council. They wanted to know:

1. Was I aware of the Owen Trust document?
2. What was the intent of forming the Owen Trust?
3. Did I have a role in formatting the Owen Trust document?
4. Can we merge the Owen Trust with other trusts for better control?
5. Who can we talk to about moving the Owen Trust?
6. Had I informed the national / regional office of the Owen Trust?
7. Did I receive any benefit from the funds from the Owen Trust?

All questions were focusing on the effort to have the Owen Trust become a part of the Boston Minuteman Council. I politely told them to contact Attorney Ken Simmons.

I must state that prior to becoming the Scout Executive of the Cambridge Council, I was a member of the Boston Minuteman Council staff for 14 years.

I received a call from Attorney Larry DiCara, a good friend when I was on the Boston BSA staff. Larry a dedicated Scouting volunteer, wanted to know who he could speak to regarding moving the Owen Trust to the trust officers who handled the Boston BSA trust funds. Again, I referred Larry to Ken Simmons. Later, Ken told me he had a nice conversation with Larry, explaining that the Owen Trust will remain with Cambridge Trust, forever.

I was shocked when I heard from Jim Kelley that the BSA found a way to “raid” the funds placed in the Owen Trust at the Cambridge Trust! I had no knowledge of this activity

I stand by the above statement and will answer any question asked!

Dan O’Neill July 26, 2025

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