

Thanks so much, Sam Hoch!

Eagle Scout Spruce Up at 7 Cromwell Place



Come help with my Eagle Scout Project at the Percy Grainger House in White Plains. We will be installing a historic landmark sign and planting shrubs and flowers on the front and side of the house. What you will need to bring: Everyone must bring work gloves. It is optional to bring a shovel or a trowel, but please do if you have one.

—Sam Hoch, recruiting scouts for 7 Cromwell Place

The notice went out, and near-Eagle Scout Sam Hoch's troop, Troup 73, White Plains, and friends responded. On a lovely October afternoon, a group of hard working scouts (and their parents) came to work! After a year of planning, various revisions, and several consultations with the City of White Plains as well as native plant experts, the Boy Scouts

showed up in force to make a local historical landmark a better place.

At first, work was slow. There were boxwoods to be planted in the front and a set of hydrangeas planted in the side yard. Not everyone was sure what they were supposed to do. But, minute by minute, hour by hour, the boys pitched in whenever there was work to be done. A few last minute placement decisions, plus pizza and donuts, made sure their efforts were successful.

"I always knew I wanted to be an Eagle Scout from my first days in boy scouts," explained scout-of-the-hour Sam Hoch, "I had worked on projects that other guys had done. Sometimes it was hard, but it was always fun." Achieving the rank of Eagle requires the scout to earn merit badges and then demonstrate character, fitness, leadership, and citizenship in every facet of their scouting life. The signature requirement of earning the Eagle rank is the service project, which requires the scout to plan and develop a mission that is helpful to the scout's community. As Sam aptly demonstrated, the service project requires that the scout "lead others in the successful completion of the project."



The Percy Grainger House was open for the afternoon, of course, and many walking by on the sunny afternoon had questions. What was this old house, and why was it there? It is so striking, some would say out of place, in a neighborhood of offices and medical buildings, a last remnant of days-gone-by. The house often has visitors, many of whom just happened by and were simply curious.

One passerby turned out to be a former resident, now of Boston, in town for his 50th reunion at White Plains High School. He had grown up in an apartment building adjacent to the Grainger House and could see the Grainger house from his bedroom window when he was a child. He remembered listening to Percy play piano, and knew Percy was famous somehow. But mostly he remembered that he and his friends used the Grainger side yard for their football games. He said Percy and Ella were always kind, friendly, and nice and never said a mean word even when the football hit the house. The Graingers were regarded as kind, generous neighbors who let the kids growing up in the apartment buildings play in their yard. Happy to carry on the legacy of neighborhood support.

