

Top Ten Coolest OA Patches

The ISCA Getting Started Collecting Series

OA patches are among the most popular of Scouting collectibles. All collectors have some pieces that they like more than others. With that in mind, here are my top ten coolest OA patches of all time.

10) 151 Marnoc J1. This is a large arrowhead shaped back patch with the image of a Native American chief. When I was a boy in Cuyahoga lodge in Ohio, long before I started collecting patches, someone from our neighboring

lodge, Marnoc, was at one of our fellowships, and he had a 151 J1 on his jacket. I thought it was the coolest patch that I had ever seen. It was the first patch that I ever wanted.



9) 364 Loon, S1. If you have ever been up to the boundary waters of Canada and Minnesota, home to Northern Tier, and sat on an island, looking over a glass-smooth lake just as the sun is setting, and watched a solitary loon swim by, you will know why I like patches with loons so much. It doesn't get any better than that. Loon lodge is in New York State.



8) 219 Calusa F1. This is a large blue flap with a flying eagle from a Florida lodge that disbanded in 1956. This was one of the most sought lodge flaps in the 1970's and remains one of the most difficult lodges from which to get a flap.



7) 67 Anicus chenille. The first chenilles from lodge 67 in Pennsylvania date to the 1930's, although this one is a bit more recent. They have a simple, yet elegant design of a chipmunk on an arrowhead. Seeing one brings to mind our rich and early history. There are many other cool chenilles from Pennsylvania and other states.



6) 227 Wetassa F2. This patch from Illinois has a log border and a raccoon, and in my opinion is one of the most striking flaps ever made.



5) 1 Unami R1. This is one of the earliest surviving OA pieces from our first lodge. The first patches from Unami lodge were felt green turtles that were used during the original inductions in 1915. They have unfortunately not survived. This patch dates to the late 1920's. Other very early patches include chenilles from Lodge 4 Ranachqua and Lodge 5 Minsi.



4) 33 Ajapeu

F1. This is *the* first flap.

Ajapeu lodge was the first lodge to create a flap-shaped OA patch to wear on the pocket flap.

Like early square merit badges, it

did not have a border. The cloth on the edge was folded under and sewn. This patch has a simple design, but it inspired so much. Like so many other cool OA patches, this patch is from Pennsylvania, the state where the OA began.



3) 17 Cuyahoga YS3.

Around 1960, my boyhood lodge, Cuyahoga 17, made a series of flaps, no one is sure how many, all with the same design, but with different colors to see what color combination people liked. Only one of each color combination was made. They have the same design as the S1-S3, which are common. The YS3 has light blue mountains and a white sky and is in my opinion much prettier than the brown sky and orange mountains that appeared in the standard patches and also much prettier than all of the other combinations in the other known YS issues.



2) 566 Malibu S1.

When this patch came out, it was the most colorful patch ever made and one of the most beautiful.

Malibu lodge flaps are among the most heavily produced, traded and sought after flaps. I have heard people joke that

the average household in America has 2.7 children and a Malibu flap. When most boys start collecting, one of the first flaps they want is a Malibu. Others have tried to make flaps this colorful and desirable, but no one has ever succeeded. Malibu Lodge is in California.



1) 411 Unilachtego S1. I know I am not alone when I say that I think that this is the most beautiful lodge flap ever made. This lodge is from New Jersey.



This list is very personal. It contains a few flaps that I think are pretty, one from my boyhood lodge that is very special to me, a patch from a neighboring lodge, and several that bring to mind our early OA history. It contains flaps, odd shapes, and a jacket patch. However, there are hundreds of very cool patches that are not mentioned here. If you were to ask anyone else to make a list like this, you would not get the same list as mine. In fact, it is unlikely that *any* two people would give you the same list. I would imagine that the 411 and 566 would be somewhere on most lists because of their beauty. Beyond that, I would not expect much agreement. Send me your lists and your reasons, and I will add your opinions to this article.

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