When Bob Cruickshank got an invitation to attend the opening of the 2013 National Jamboree and see a bridge at Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve dedicated in his honor, his first impulse was to decline. “I’d been to some of the jamborees before and slept in old leaky Army tents,” Cruickshank says. “I wasn’t interested in it.”

Then Cruickshank learned he’d be at the Greenbrier, a luxury resort in West Virginia not far from the jamboree grounds. So much for leaky tents. He also found that Amtrak’s Cardinal passenger train could take him directly to The Greenbrier from Huntington, W.Va., just across the Ohio River from his South Point, Ohio, home. That piqued his interest, especially since Cruickshank, the son of a railway employee, has a lifelong love of riding trains.

In the end, he was there to see the Robert G. Cruickshank Bridge open for traffic. And he says he’s glad he made it. “What a beautiful bridge!” he said upon seeing the span named in recognition of his financial and leadership support of Scouting. “What a surprise!”

He probably should not have been surprised, however. During the nearly three-quarters of a century since Cruickshank’s first encounter with Scouting, he says two steady companions have been his devotion to the movement and a conviction that he was born lucky. “Things in my life just seem to go amazingly the way they should,” he says.

Good fortune and Scouting crossed paths in Cruickshank’s life in Springfield, Ill., when he joined Troop 14. His railroad-father was Scoutmaster, setting an adult leadership example that never left the impressionable youngster. Cruickshank aged out of Scouts as an Eagle from Arlington Heights, Ill., and, after graduating from Ripon College in Wisconsin, earning a civil engineering degree from MIT and serving two years with the Army Corps of Engineers, he volunteered as an adult with the Army tents,” Cruickshank says. “Good fortune and Scouting continued to intersect with his life.”

Cruickshank’s first encounter with Scouting was making a little gift to the Boy Scouts, he says. Cruickshank contacted the national office with a simple request that did not include having a bridge named after him. “All I wanted was the federal tax identification number that the trust required,” he said. “And the correct mailing address so it would get to the right person or office.”

No one was more surprised when he was later asked if he’d like his name on a bridge at the Summit Bechtel Reserve. “Why me?” he wondered. “Many more people have given more in financial support or more years. And many have made a greater impact on Scouting.”

While it’s true that Scouting runs on the contributions of countless supporters, few have dedicated their lives as well as their fortunes to the movement as generously as Cruickshank. “All I can do is try,” he tells it, Scouting has given back every bit as much. “In 1944 I joined the Boy Scouts for fun and adventure,” he says. “I have not been disappointed.”

Just as Bob Cruickshank has helped Scouts bridge from boyhood to manhood thanks to his leadership in Scouting, the Robert G. Cruickshank Bridge stands to help visitors of the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve traverse the grounds within Scout Visitor Center. Cruickshank celebrated the opening of the bridge with Scouts and leaders of Troop 122 from the Tri-State Area Council in West Virginia.