Mt. Baden Powell is the mountain in Southern California which is dedicated to one of the founders of the Scout Movement, Baden Powell.

Once known as East Twin or North Baldy, it was dedicated to Baden Powell in 1931. At 9,399 feet, it is the second highest peak in the San Gabriel Mountain Range. It is the in Antelope-Fremont Valley Watershed, in Los Angeles County.

It is a favorite hiking location, approached either from Mt. Islip Saddle or the Vincent Gap Trail, a climb which can become strenuous. Along the Vincent Gap Trail are some of the most beautiful trees in California including pines, Ponderosas, Lodgeoles, Cedars, and the ancient Limber Pines, some of which are up to 2,000 years ago.

The mountain was dedicated to Baden-Powell by Major Frederick Russell Burnham, another strong influence on the Scout Movement. Below is a portion of the arresting language he used to describe this region in his speech dedicating Mt. Baden Powell:

”You are now standing on one of the sentinels of the mighty Sierras which holds back the frowning desert from all our homes. This mountain closed the Sierras leaving only a space of such dimensions that it made of it the Khyber Pass of the West and held back forever those demons of the desert—thirst, storms and the creeping dunes that have in various parts of the world, again and again, blotted out whole civilizations.

Way back in geological time this implacable desert drove strange monsters far down into the valleys below. You have all seen them in the La Brea pits or as skeletons mounted in our museums. Along the road you traveled today once padded softly in dead of night saber-toothed tigers, long-fanged wolves, and lions of enormous size. Down those winding canyons ponderous mastodons wound their way. High on these crags sat condors and eagles watching for some huge mammal that might be slain, or die of thirst. Herds of ancient camels, horses and many lesser animals passed between these walls of granite long ages before the first barefoot track of savage man left its imprint in the dust.

Then came the soft and silent tread of the moccasined Indian and, ere long, the clanking spur and shining armor of the Spaniard. Then, from desertward came the tall sinewy, blue-eyed and skin-clad trapper, and, just behind him, almost within signaling distance, rumbled the heavy wagons of the pioneers. These were soon followed by the iron horse and ribbons of steel. Today you roll on air, while overhead these gleaming Scouts of the Sky, driven by fire, are now circling this mountain to pay a tribute of honor to the Chief. All this thrilling pageantry of life down through the centuries could not have been, had

this mountain rampart given away."

In true Scout spirit, Baden-Powell sent Burnham a letter shortly after the dedication. About Burnham's moving account of his friend, his friend wrote back,"…It makes feel I ought to buck up and nearly try to deserve the high status you have accorded me….." An adjoining mountain, Mt. Burnham, was dedicated to the Major in 1951.

The location of Mt. Baden Powell is one of the reasons our national headquarters is in Los Angeles. We get to experience the beautiful landscape Major Burnham describes above and our Scouts can come from all over to hike up Mt. Baden Powell, one of the activities and Challenges our Scouts take part in. Mt. Baden Powell is part of the history of the Scout Movement and the present of our Scout Programs today.