



Birmingham Broadsheet

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Brownies

In the West Midlands born and raised, lived two girls called Darcey and Millie. They loved dancing, they loved singing but most of all they loved to be silly. They loved Brownies with all the world as it's the perfect place for little girls, you join when seven and leave when eleven and treasure memories like pearls. The leaders care with heart and soul and they are fun with a mind of gold. The personalities are different in every way which makes it exciting to see them on Thursday.

Now this parts about Snowy, both good and bad, she brings us memories and make us glad, like when the time she threw out Jodie, out into the cold outside. Or when she blew off right next to me but to her it seemed like pride. We are glad you are working with us here at Brownies, oh Snowy Owl we are.

Now heres to Brown owl, (both good and bad) and Buffy too,

We appreciate your work and what you do. Your smile makes the whole room glow, we will be lost without you when we go, you sprinkle magic to every Brownies hearts and you and us will never be apart. We are glad you are part of the Brownie pack, Oh owls we are we are.

We shouldn't forget Blossom and Hedgehog, as they are totally top dog! They are cool and funny and really kind, and they show interest in all of us!

We are glad!

You are;

Joining us!

Every evening!

Oh yes, we are!

Poem by Darcey & Millie

Youth United Community Day October 2013

On 31st October Girlguiding Birmingham joined the Fire Cadets, St John Ambulance, Air Cadets, Army Cadets and the Sea Cadets to take over Centenary Square in Birmingham for a big Youth Activity Event. Around the square young people could take part in activities that showcased the best of each organisation such as trying out a climbing wall, having a go in a flight simulator, making some rope, trying their hand at making and using juggling balls, joining Fire Cadets to try hose and water target practice, and learning first aid skills. Girlguiding was supported by Birmingham FA who ran football skills sessions, and girls from guiding groups across the city showcased the skills they had developed on previous activity days run by the FA.

The event was officially opened by The Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Mike Leddy. The Lord Mayor spent the whole morning at the event, taking time to meet young people and representatives from all of the organisations.

The event was a huge success, everyone was seemed to be having a great time and the Girlguiding tent was by far the busiest throughout the day! Thanks to everyone who helped it to be the success it was.

Laura Price



*** Save the Date *** Save the Date *** Save the Date *** Save the Date ***

International Opportunities Overnight Camp at Goodrest Campsite 12th & 13th April 2014

Come and join us to find out more about representing Girlguiding Birmingham at International events during 2015! (for girls who will be aged 14+ in the summer of 2015) Application forms will be available in the New Year.

Leaders Selection Event at Girlguiding Midlands HQ, Ashby de la Zouch Sunday 2nd March 2014

An opportunity for leaders who would like to represent County or Region on International Trips in 2015. Details will follow in the New Year.

Please get in touch if you have any questions. Thanks. **Rachel McMaster**. County International Adviser

mcmasterrachel@gmail.com *** Save the Date *** Save the Date *** Save the Date *** Save the Date ***



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County Commissioner's Column

As most of you are probably aware by now Maggie is not well, and so I am writing this report from both of us

We would both like to start by thanking you all for all your support and continued dedication and tireless work on behalf of Girlguiding Birmingham.

What an incredible half term week we had: Football at Futsal Centre, Mother and Daughter Day, Go for it Creativity Day, Community Day, and the Christmas Crafts Fair at the NEC. A big thank you to the Arts Team who worked really hard that week and everyone who was involved in all of these brilliant events.

The Senior Section Team Leaders were not to be outdone with a raft of events for and involving our vibrant Senior Section girls; these included a Cricket Session, Murder Mystery Evening, Bonfire Night, Weoley Rangers marshalling at the Birmingham half marathon, an exciting International presentation evening and helping at the Lord Mayor's Quiz Night! Phew!!

Welcome to Rachel McMaster as our new International Adviser and a big thank you Claire Storrie for all her hard work over the last five years.

We would like to thank Mandy Quale and her team for organising the Baden Powell weekend and bake off and Tracey Hill for the Rainbows Bears Bedtime Sleepover.

A huge amount of work has been going on with recruitment and the start up of new units this year, thanks to Laura Division Commissioners and the Training Team.

Congratulations to Janet Jones and Wendy Fear who recently received Chief Commissioner Awards from Sally Illsley.

Auditions have started for the Lord Mayor's Show and we have already seen some incredible talent—but we do need more!! Please contact Pat Broughton or more details email: p.broughton@tesco.net

Maggie and I would like to wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and New Year and look forward to an exciting 2014

Maggie Jones Birmingham County Commissioner



Friends of Girlguiding Birmingham

Is there something that your unit would like to do - but is being held back through lack of funds?

Friends of Girlguiding Birmingham exists to help girls throughout Birmingham with their Guiding activities. We have helped individual girls to join their friends on a pack holiday when their parents couldn't afford to pay; we have purchased equipment for Units and for use at Trefoil House; and we have supported units to allow them to organise activities within their communities.

If there is anything that you plan to do - that could be improved/made possible by a grant from FoGB please do contact us. We have some very generous Friends who give money every year just to support the activities of Girlguiding Birmingham and we would like this money to reach everybody who needs it.

Please email caroline.raynor@hotmail.com or girlguidingbham@btconnect.com for an application form.



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Claire Storrie International Adviser

Wow...time sure does fly when your having fun! It only seems like five minutes ago when I received a phone call in 2008 from Sarah Trinder (the then County Commissioner for Girlguiding Birmingham) offering me the role as International Adviser for the County. I had such a mixture of emotions - excitement for such a wonderful opportunity and nervousness - how could I possibly follow in the footsteps of Karen Edwards who had done such an amazing job before me! However eventually my answer was 'yes', I could not decline such an exciting opportunity.

Despite it being a very busy role with various challenges and difficulties along the way, on the whole it has been an amazing and very enjoyable five years. From all the fun and laughter we have had on the international selection days/ weekends with girls and leaders alike, to the various reactions you get from girls when they are offered a place on an international trip - from squeals of excitement to silence and tears of disbelief that they have actually been selected...it's priceless! During the five years in my role as International Adviser I have been very fortunate to be able to send girls and leaders on a wide variety of trips to a variety of different countries around the world and the highlight of my calendar each year is always the County International Presentation Evening. Listening to all the fantastic and memorable adventures that participants have had, made me realise just what a very privileged role I was part of!

Like any role though, I was not on my own and I would like to express my sincere thanks to my 'international team'; Annette Armstrong, Linda Bateman, Karen Edwards and Jo Pearson for all their help and support over the last five years.

As I hand over the reigns to Rachel McMasters, I would like to wish her all the very best and I know that Rachel will continue to take International guiding and its many opportunities forward within Girlguiding Birmingham.

Claire Storrie



"Senior Section members have had busy couple of months attending various county events - including an evening at **Edgbaston Cricket Ground** where we were taught the techniques of cricket by 'real coaches' and participated in a energetic tournament to round off the evening. We also held the '**Great British Bonfire**' which involved making 'edible fireworks', consuming copious quantities of toasted marshmallows, competing in a donut eating competition as well as lots of chat around the bonfire, having set fire to our model 'guide fawkes' (how cruel!) oh and a few fire-works too!

There was also our first event for the 18-30s only - '**a Murder Mystery Evening**' where we cross-questioned some of our scouting friends who were acting out the various character roles at the murder scene in order to find out 'who done it'!

Weoley rangers once again volunteered to undertake marshalling duties at the Birmingham Half marathon, assisting at the 'start line' of the childrens' races, handing out goodie bags and de-chipping tags from runners' trainers at the finish line. Some of the unit also made their promise on the finish line too





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A day in London for the GFI (Go For It) review Day at CHQ

Anne - When I spotted an application on Girlguiding's website to join other Guiders for the day at CHQ to discuss and review some of the oldest GFI's, I thought why not give it a go. I was very pleasantly surprised to learn I had been accepted and was asked to bring along 2 Guides to give their opinions as well. So consequently, I found myself standing at New Street station at 7.15am one Saturday morning with 2 very excited Guides, Alex and Lucy, wondering what the day would bring.

Anne - having only ever been to Icando before, it was interesting to see behind the scenes and we were made to feel extremely welcome. Drinks and biscuits were offered as we walked in and we quickly got talking to the other Leaders and Guides as there arrived. The Guides were then left in the board room whilst the Leaders were asked to go into different rooms where there was a choice of 3 GFI's to discuss in each session. In each session the GFI in discussion was gone through by each activity and we were asked what was good, what was bad, what we liked to see more off and we thought it lacked. The hour session was not long enough given all the opinions!!

Alex and Lucy - we walked in and got a cup of tea and started to look at the GFI's. We assessed 3 GFI's in the 1st session, followed by another 3 in the 2nd session. We were asked what we liked and what we didn't as well as what we would like to see more of as well. We finished for a break and went to the shop where we bought badges and a scrapbook and were looking at the new style interest badges and the GFI badges.

Anne - lunch was excellent. The afternoon session were the same and it was interesting to learn that at the end of the day, the opinions of the Guides and Leaders were similar, and in the case of 2 GFI's almost identical. It was the end of the day and it was the usual thing of the Guiders by then were all chatting and the Guides already had their coats on waiting to go. We were lucky we were only travelling to Birmingham, as there were Guiders and guides from Somerset, Yorkshire, Scotland (as well as many others) as well as a leader from Germany representing BGIFC.

Alex and Lucy - we had a lot of fun and looked at 12 GFI's in total, we concentrated on 4 in particular and we liked GFI Communicate the best. When it was time to leave, we asked Anne if we could look for some smoothie drinks on the way home as there were some special editions with woolly hats and she said yes. We looked in every shop we could find on the way back to Euston and found them only at Euston. We had to look in every shop to see if there were any different hats though.

Anne - The day had been great and it's fantastic to know that Guides and Guiders opinions will be helping to shape the programme. We've been told this will happen in 2014.

Anne McGibbon, Alex Ford and Lucy Lewis, 172nd Birmingham Guides, Edgbaston





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Trefoil Guild goes International - AGAIN!

One Saturday in October over 350 T. G. members from across the Region met at Drayton Manor for our annual International Day Event. The Birmingham contingent was joined by Rachel McMaster, our new County International Adviser, and it was lovely to have her with us.

We were welcomed by Jo Dowling, the Region chairman, and after the opening reflections and the lighting of the Peace Candle and Lanterns, "we were off to Kenya"! Maureen Recine, CC from Staffordshire, told, and showed, us about the several projects she and members of Girlguiding in Staffs have been involved in. These began in 2003 and to date 5 projects have taken place in that country with another one in the planning for 2014. Two small villages were identified as being in desperate need of education and health facilities. A training programme was set up whereby GG members aged between 18 & 25 learned building, plumbing, carpentry and painting skills as well as doing some fund-raising!

Once in Kenya they worked alongside the village residents plus Kenyan guides and scouts, building, re-building and equipping 2 schools. Over the years further work has been done in furnishing a library and providing washing and toilet facilities.

Each project takes about 2 years in planning and in that time sponsorships, donations and fund-raising has resulted in the amazing total of more than £200,000 being raised. A truly wonderful initiative on the part of Girlguiding.

After our lunch Warwickshire guides presented highlights of their Jailbreak experience of 3 B(ee)S in Brussels, Bordeaux and Barcelona and how that was a 'learning curve' for them which resulted in a memorable experience.

To round off the day Helen Johnson also took us back to Kenya when she told and showed us of her time as a teacher for a while in that country and of the contacts she made with Kenyan guides.

The day, once again, demonstrated and informed us of the many ways Trefoil Guild can Go International, either by going abroad ourselves, as we do, and/or by supporting GG members going abroad on behalf of our Movement.

Midlands T. G. has recently launched an International Challenge with links to Girlguiding and WAGGGS. Full details can be found on any of the Guiding, T.G. or WAGGGS websites.

Thinking Day Celebration Invitation

T.G. Thinking Day celebration - Sunday 23rd February
1.30 for 2pm @ Trefoil House.

A warm invitation is extended to all Guiding members to this event.

Joan Caine (T.G. Birmingham PRA)

Lord Mayors Quiz Night Senior Section volunteers Charlotte Goodman, Crystal Hughes, Frances James, Charlotte O'Donnell, Connie Peach, Christine Turner and Katie Warwick did a fantastic job assisting at the Lord Mayor's Big Charity Quiz on 28th November, along with scouting members they acted as runners and collected quiz sheets etc. The girls were commended by the Lord Mayor for being so helpful and enthusiastic during the evening. A big thank you to Sally Betteridge for acting as the co-ordinator for Girlguiding Birmingham at this event.
Karen Edwards



Since 2007 72nd Birmingham (St John's) Brownies have been visiting 2 retirement homes in Harborne to provide Christmas entertainment. The entertainment has included carols, traditional campfire songs and individual performances by the girls of singing, instrumental pieces, poetry and dance. This year they put on a more traditional nativity and thanks to a kind donation from Friends of Birmingham Guiding were able to purchase some costumes to put on a the performance.

The girls always make small gifts to take along and the resulting evenings have been great fun for all concerned.

Emma James