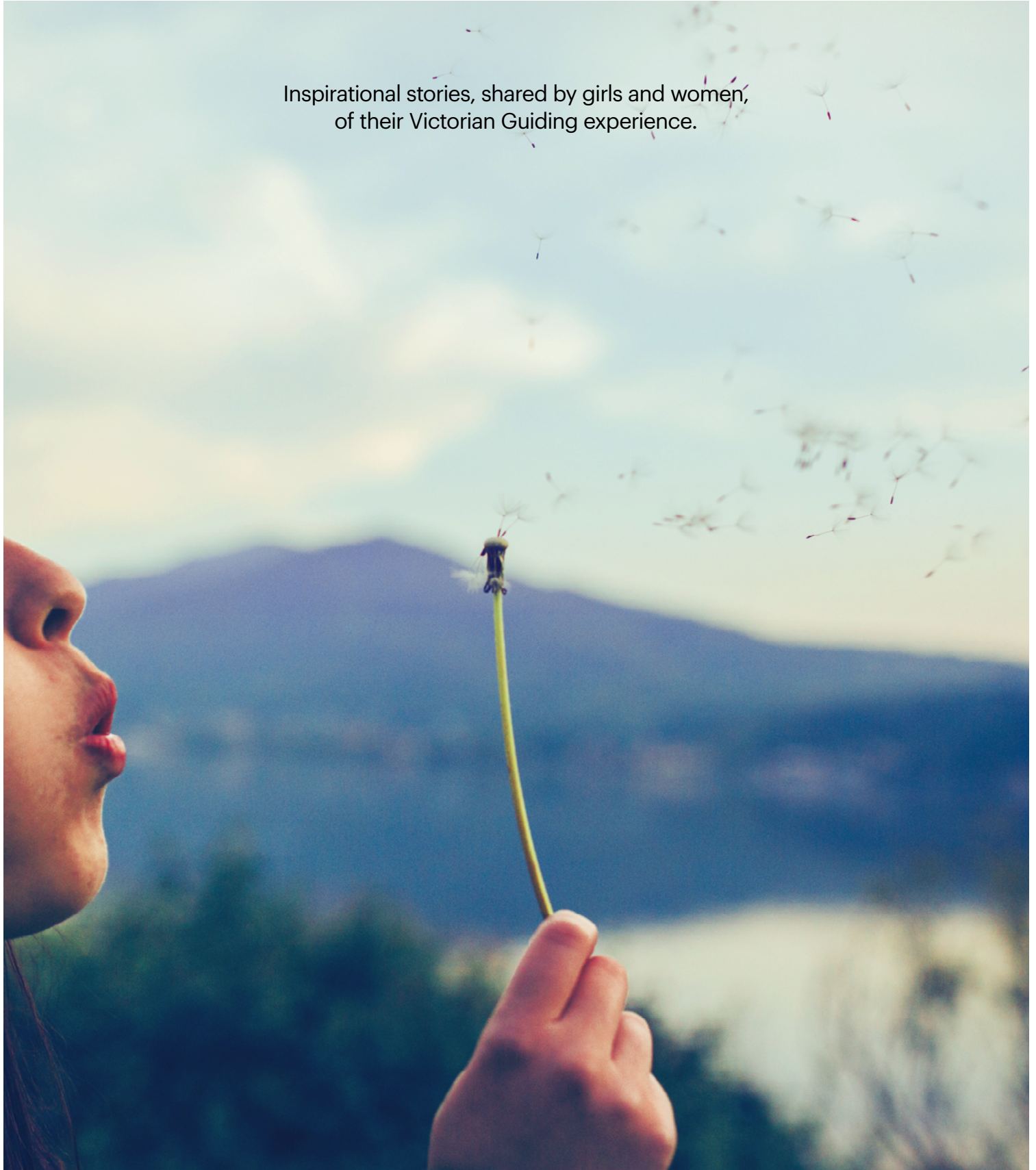


GIRL GUIDES VICTORIA

# Guiding Stories

Inspirational stories, shared by girls and women,  
of their Victorian Guiding experience.



# Foreword

Guiding has incredible stories to tell. In 2014 the Victorian State Government commissioned a book to be developed called Inspiring Stories by Young Victorians. The result was a collection of 64 inspiring stories from people under the age of 25. Girl Guides Victoria had two Girls and two Leaders represented in this book.

Following on from this publication we decided to create our own collection of Guiding stories. This electronic publication is the result. Comprising 24 stories from girls and leaders this book is a celebration of the rich tapestry that is Guiding today.

Everyone in Guiding has a story to tell and the people in this inaugural collection of stories are happy to share their story. We encourage everyone who has a story that they would like to share to send it to us so that we can capture these stories and share them with others.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this book – your stories are fabulous and your willingness to share them will hopefully inspire others to share their stories too.

~

Girl Guides Victoria  
January 2015



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**G** Guide    **L** Leader

# Erin Atalla

DISTRICT ~  
Whitehorse

REGION ~  
Eastern

DATE ~  
January 2015



Girl Guides Victoria

Hi, my name is Erin Atalla, I am eleven years old and have been a Girl Guide for six years. It is my most treasured activity as it allows me to follow my deepest passion, which is to make world a better place. Since I can remember I have wanted to help other people and make a difference. Guides gives me the skills, support and ongoing inspiration to do this.

Girl Guides has been so important to me because they teach about being good people and contributing to the community.

Currently I am Patrol Leader of Possum Patrol. This means I have to be organised, set a good example and think of my Patrol members and how I can help them. One of the best things about Guides is that I never feel alone, because every Guide is my sister.

This year I was honoured to take part in the Anzac Day March in Melbourne where I carried signs and flags to honour the soldiers and families of people who went to war.

At Guides we are encouraged to take on personal challenges which also benefit other people. My greatest personal accomplishments at Guides have been the 100 year badge and the Junior BP Award. To achieve these I have been involved in earning money for various charities including the Cancer Council of Australia, RSPCA, Oxfam and hospitals. I have also been involved in volunteer work including helping mothers caring for young children, working for Bicycle Victoria, Cleaning

up Australia, tree planting, and singing at retirement villages. In addition I organised and presented a number of activities

for my fellow Guides including recycling projects and learning about different nationalities. I think these activities improve our understanding of differences and similarities and make us more united. Currently, my Unit and I are beginning work on ‘Because I am a Girl’, which is about helping girls overseas.

Increased confidence from Guiding has inspired me to be more involved in my community and to lead by example. I have joined Nippers Life Savers. I have attended Leader Training with Guides. I have also participated in a leadership school holiday program where I earned the only prize; it was for ‘Attitude and Behaviour’.

I would like to acknowledge the amazing Guide Leaders that we have all around the world. Sarah, is my current Unit Leader and is extremely amazing! She manages to take care of everything that our Unit needs, while taking care of children of her own and working! ‘Wonga’ is Faye’s Guiding name.

Wonga is a very dedicated, long-serving Leader in Guiding. She taught me about being “self-controlled in all I think, say and do”.

I have also been led by Nintarka and Bullara who are part of a great Guiding family, which constantly give generously of themselves to help others.

**‘I have got a lot out of Guides and I know I will get much more in the years to come.’**

Erin Wicking is a Leader and also works at Guides Victoria. She is one

of my heroes! Erin works in the area of Community Development which includes human rights advocacy. Due to Guides, I have the opportunity to work with Erin in this area, which I am really passionate and excited about.

I have got a lot out of Guides and I know I will get much more in the years to come. Guides provides me with Leaders, as role models, for the kind of person I want to be. When I grow up, I want to continue being a part of Guides, whether I am a Leader, or involved in another of the many parts of Guiding!

I hope you enjoyed reading this.



# Natalie Axford

DISTRICT ~  
Baw Baw

REGION ~  
Gippsland

DATE ~  
January 2015



Girl Guides is very close to my heart. As I have been a member for almost all of my schooling life, not only has this movement given me experiences that I will never forget, it has shaped me and formed me to become the person I am today.

As a little gumnut just starting grade one at school, I was very quiet, often whispering what I

wanted to say to my friend for her to say out loud. However if you were to compare that quiet little gumnut to the 17 year old Ranger Guide today, I would be almost unrecognizable. Guiding has helped to form me into the confident leader I am today. Through guiding I have come out of my shell and have learnt many life skills such as teamwork, leadership, how to speak out and to join in on group discussions.

The Promise and Law have become my values and morals which I stand by. I am always polite and considerate and I try to see the best in every situation and person.

Without my guiding journey I feel that I would not have these skills that will help me throughout my life.

Guiding has given me many experiences that I will never forget, and has ignited my passion in areas I may not have, had I not been a girl guide. The camping aspect of girl guides has had a huge influence on

me. I love camping and getting outdoors and these guide camps have ignited my passion in camping, and relying on myself.

**‘The main reason that I love the guiding movement is because it has shaped me, through promises, laws and just general experience.**

The Guiding movement has also shown me the importance of charity and volunteer work, another area that I am quite passionate about.

Every term, our unit does volunteer work.

This year we have also raised funds to start up a guiding unit in Cambodia. I find that both of these opportunities and experiences always leave me grateful that I am able to do something that makes a difference to someone else’s life.

This is why guiding is important to me, not just because it’s fun and you make a lot of friends and get to do cool activities each week.

The main reason that I love the guiding movement is because it has shaped me, through promises, laws and just general experience, to help me become the

**‘Guiding has helped me to become the confident young woman I am today and also because of the many amazing experiences that are open to me.**

confident young woman I am today and also because of the many amazing experiences that are open to me.

# Elizabeth Butler

DISTRICT ~  
Bairnsdale

REGION ~  
Gippsland

DATE ~  
January 2015



My story begins 8 years ago when I was introduced to this amazing organisation at a recruitment drive at my primary school.

I joined Guides in 2006 and made my promise on the 20th of August (which also happens to be my birthday). As a 10 year old, I didn't really understand the extent of the promise I had made but I knew that it was really important. Only now, having completed my Queens Guide Award, do I have a better understanding of what I promised 8 years ago. This promise is not only a connection between all other guides but also a promise to be the best people we can be in our community and the world.

**‘One thing that has stood out to me the most in guides is that though we may come from different parts of the state, country or world we each share a common interest and that binds us in ways I could never have imagined.**

In my time at Guides I have been a part of 3 groups, attended countless camps and events, and met so many people that I have lost count as to all friends that I made.

But the one thing that has stood out to me the most in guides is that though we may come from different parts of the state, country or world we each share a common interest and that binds us in ways I could never have imagined.

These friendships are made in 5 minutes at an event and can last a lifetime and even 4 years down the track you will be able to chat like old friends.

My proudest achievement as a guide would have to be the 4 years I have spent in rangers in which I assisted with the re-establishment of the Bairnsdale branch of rangers. At the beginning of 2011, a group of three of us began meeting with our leader once a fortnight in order to do some different activities in order to keep us enjoying guides. In the middle of 2012 with the unit having swelled to 8 girls we decided it was necessary to properly name and establish the unit.

I have seen the unit grow from being just me and some friends meeting with our leader to now being a fully functioning unit with big plans for the future.

**‘Friendships made in 5 minutes at an event can last a lifetime.**

Guides has helped me achieve so much in my life whether it was my Queens Guide Award or the best way to build a campfire or even the title of Young Citizen of the year 2014 for East Gippsland Shire.

# Natasha Chen

DISTRICT ~  
Booroondara

REGION ~  
Eastern

DATE ~  
January 2015



I have been in guides since I was 7. This year will be my 9th. It has always been my favourite activity during the week. Being a Guide has taught me many skills and also helped me to understand more about my role in society. I love guides because of this. Not only do I get to participate in fun activities and challenge myself, but I also learn many life skills.

My favourite and most memorable experience would be the Cradle Mountain Hike during the FanTAStic Jamboree in 2013. Due to weather conditions, we were unable to do an overnight hike so we

**‘Being a Guide has taught me many skills and also helped me to understand more about my role in society.**

decided to just do a day hike up to one of the look outs. As we walked up, we sang songs and chatted, getting to know the other guides in our group better. Naturally, we got really warm, hiking up the mountain and started taking off our jackets and thermals. What we didn’t realise was we were walking inside the clouds.

When we stopped for lunch, it had started drizzling, so we put on our raincoats and ate our lunch.

**‘What we didn’t realise was we were walking inside the clouds.**

As we stood there taking in the view, many of us found that we were very cold. Our t-shirts and shorts had become soaked and we were doing nothing to keep warm. We quickly packed up and headed back down the mountain. When we got back to the bus shelter, we took off our wet clothes and put on some dry thermals. A few of us sat wrapped in silver space blankets, while the rest of the group sang some more songs and moved around trying to get warm. Finally the bus arrived and we all piled in, sighing as we felt the heater unfreezing our toes and fingers.

**‘As we walked up, we sang songs and chatted, getting to know the other guides in our group better.**

That night, it snowed on the mountain leaving snow on the trees and on top of our tent. Although we almost ended frozen, this hike was most definitely the best experience I have had.

# Alice Csabi

DISTRICT ~  
Maroondah

REGION ~  
Eastern

DATE ~  
January 2015



Since finishing secondary school I have been studying a Bachelor of Primary Education and Music at Deakin University, while working as an instrumental music teacher. I am currently in my final year of study and I am looking forward to educating the youth of tomorrow. While I am not studying or working I spend my time volunteering as a Guide Leader of 2 Guide Groups – one Unit for girls aged 10-14 years, and the other for Guides aged 5-7 years. I am also on the production team for Whitehorse Showtime, a Guide and Scout Musical in my area, and the co-coordinator for the Victorian Girl Guide Choir formed this year.

From the age of 5 I have been a member of Girl Guides in my local area. I have had many opportunities growing up to develop my communication skills, leadership abilities and initiative through my time in Guides. From an early age camping has been a huge part of my life. Going on camp provided me with opportunities to make new friends, try activities that I would

never have dared to try and experience the wonderful outdoors.

When I was 7 and had my first experience of abseiling. I can remember being so terrified and not wanting to come down, but with the encouragement of my Leaders and fellow Guides I managed to come down

the tree with a big smile on my face. Recently I have taken up Abseiling. Now it is my turn to help young

children to face their fears and abseil for the first time.

When I was 17 I had the opportunity to travel with the Australian Contingent to the Philippines for the Asia Pacific Region Summit in 2009. I had just completed my Queens Guide Award and was honored to be chosen to be one of two Australian Youth Representatives at the Summit. I assisted with the running of the International Campfire and was involved in discussions about the future of Guiding for Youth Members in the Asia Pacific Region and around the world.

**‘Guiding presents you with many opportunities and helps you to develop as an individual.**

It was determined that ‘Intergenerational and cross cultural connections would have huge benefits for the movement’. This can also be used when thinking about the communities in which we are a part of.

After returning from the summit I spoke about my experiences and the idea of Peer Education in relation to adolescent health, education and wellbeing, at various functions including the Melbourne International Women’s Day Breakfast in 2010 and a Public Address at the Victorian Parliament House. I continued to help with National Projects and conferences including ‘Be the Change’ an advocacy focused conference addressing the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, run by Girl Guides Australia.

**‘I strive to be able to empower the girls in my unit and around the state to believe that they can make a difference in this world no matter how small.**

As soon as I turned 18 I started my leadership qualifications so that I could give back what I got out of Guiding to others. I was keen to become involved in the outdoors and started to volunteer as

a leader on the State School Holiday Program Camps. I now am qualified to take girls camping indoors, outdoors in tents and also hiking expeditions.

In 2014 the Victorian Girl Guide Choir was formed giving girls the opportunity to perform at a variety of functions. They take part in fortnightly rehearsals and sing both traditional Guiding and Popular songs. We hope to expand both in numbers and repertoire in the coming years.

Without Guides I believe I would be a very different person. Girl Guides has helped me to grow into a ‘confident,

self-respecting, and responsible community member’ (GGA). Guiding presents you with many opportunities and helps you to develop as an individual. I strive to be

able to empower the girls in my unit and around the state to believe that they can make a difference in this world no matter how small.



# Sissi Dewing

DISTRICT ~  
Stonnington  
  
REGION ~  
Southern  
  
DATE ~  
January 2015



I first went to my brother’s Sea Scouts unit in East Fremantle with my mother when I was a baby. I loved playing pirates with him and his friends on the boats and sailing to Rottnest and Carnac Islands in WA.

When I was 5, I joined the Kardinya Guide Unit; the Leaders knew how much I loved craftwork and games. When we moved closer to PLC I transferred to the Floreat Guide Unit near Lake Monger WA. This unit was in the middle of a large parkland with a bird sanctuary and I remember the outdoor activities and games.

After this, when my mother got very busy with study, I went to Cottesloe Scouts at Cottesloe

**‘I met a lot of people and realized I was an adventurer when it came to outdoor activities.**

**‘I am happiest when we are all playing games. We all get to join in and play with being leaders, followers, inventors, gigglers and team-players.**

Civic Centre, which was nearby. I remember the camps I attended at all the units Down South and at York, and all the incredible activities on the Swan River, like at Pelican Point, Point Walter and Freshwater Bay. I met a lot of people and realized I was an adventurer when it came to outdoor activities. I got to see a lot of Western Australia’s wildlife and country. When my family moved to Melbourne, I started going to the Guides with Pat and Shelby. I always like camps and enjoy the friendships and activities that we all do together. I am happiest when we are all playing games. We all get to join in and play with being leaders, followers, inventors, gigglers and team-players. We can make things up and even design a skirt out of Alfoil, or design vile meals that taste great.

Earlier this year I represented my unit in Canberra at the PLAN International Congress addressing girl’s issues through BIAAGC

(Because I am a Girl Campaign) with Parliament. This was the scariest thing for me, but I wanted to see how change happens at Federal Government level. I met Thanushi and other really interesting Guides there.

It was affirming and eye-opening for me to see that learning about games, camping-out and playing fairly and happily with people at Guiding can lead to such a meaningful and seriously powerful outcome that can make the world better for girls, therefore everyone.

After 4 years competing for the Lady Stradbroke Cup our team won the Up and Coming Star Award this year (2014). I hope I can continue Guiding somehow now that I am 14 and at Boarding School.

At present I am thinking about how to support Malali’s UN Nobel Peace Prize Speech while I am at boarding school next year. I really wanted to complete

**‘It was affirming and eye-opening for me to see that learning about games, camping-out and playing fairly and happily with people at Guiding can make the world better for girls, therefore everyone.**

my BP while there and the school are happy to support me in this, which is lucky.



# Jennifer Elcock

DISTRICT ~  
Stonnington  
  
REGION ~  
Southern  
  
DATE ~  
January 2015



My name is Jennifer, I’m 14 and in year 10. I enjoy Taekwondo, hip hop dancing, playing the drums and going to Girl Guides. My favourite subjects at school are maths, woodwork and psychology. I’ve got a pretty big family and we have three cats, a dog and two budgies.

I started going to Guides when I was 7 or 8. My parents had heard about it at my school and they asked my sisters and I if we wanted to try it. After the first day I started going to the junior unit regularly with my twin. It wasn’t too long before we made new friends and we always had a great time. At Guides we learn all kinds of outdoor skills, like how to make bush donuts, put up tents and of course, we learn how to tie knots. We do lots of craft, like make gifts for mothers’ and fathers’ day, and we play unit games. We also go to lots of camps and state Guide events.

In the junior unit I earned numerous badges for knowledge or skill in areas such as the arts, food, water, numbers and time management and I also earned my Junior B.P. badge. To earn the Junior B.P. I had to complete at least two tasks in each of the six categories. This included helping to lead a campfire, cooking a meal outdoors, learning a Guiding game from another country and putting together a ‘Be Prepared’ kit.

In this unit I also got the opportunity to be a Patrol Leader and was able to participate in Clean Up Australia Day, ANZAC Day and Australia Day events.

When I turned 10 I was able to move up into the senior unit.

In the senior unit I have been to outdoor cooking nights, Guide celebrations and even a week-long state camp last year which was an amazing experience. I was a Patrol Leader every year until I moved into the Honey Eaters patrol (13 years and older) and now I often assist my unit’s Guide Leader, Alex, to run the evening’s activities. I also earned my B.P. badge, which is the next level up from the Junior B.P.

At Guides I have been given the opportunity to carry the Australian National Flag at an Australia Day ceremony and a Victoria Flag at ANZAC Day marches.

In the past few months I have started working on my Queen’s Guide badge which is the peak achievement award for Girl Guides Australia. The tasks and activities required to achieve the Queen’s Guide badge cover a very wide range

**‘I have met many new people and been given so many great opportunities. I intend to continue Guides until I am 18 and maybe even become a Guide Leader in the future.**

of challenges including gaining a formal outdoor qualification or certificate, researching a part of guiding history, attending a residential youth leadership skills event and committing to a three-month community service project. I also have to develop a new or existing interest for at least three months and choose an area in which I would like to undertake a six month project in order to demonstrate my understanding and appreciation of the field.

Guides has taught me many important skills, not only for the outdoors but it has also helped me become a better citizen. I have met many new people and been given so many great opportunities. I intend to continue Guides until I am 18 and maybe even become a Guide Leader in the future.

# Nicole Elsegood

DISTRICT ~  
Boroondara

REGION ~  
Eastern

DATE ~  
January 2015



Girl Guides has been a part of my family history, and growing up my parents were strong advocates for the skills and values which are encouraged through Guiding. As a child I wasn't involved in Guides, but in Year 12 I was given the opportunity to assist with the unit run through the Junior School at Independent School I wasn't really sure what was involved, but knew that I wanted to be a part of an organisation dedicated to enhancing the life skills and confidence of young people.

After 2 years working with this unit I was asked to take on the responsibility of developing the program and running

**'I knew that I wanted to be a part of an organisation dedicated to enhancing the life skills and confidence of young people.'**

**'The opportunity to be involved in Guides has been a life changing and valuable experience for me.'**

the unit myself. At the time this was an overwhelming proposal, but co-ordinating the Guides unit has enabled me to see what I am capable of achieving when I work with dedication and use my resources. I now have a fantastic team of leaders, all of whom are current students or graduates from the school. They each bring different ideas and perspectives to our meetings to create a fun and stimulating environment.

Having no experience with Guiding traditions proved somewhat difficult in the beginning, but over the years we have formed our own traditions, with a focus on personal reflection and development. The Guiding community within the school is supported by the teachers and often our new members are recruited through word of mouth. The girls look forward to our special events, such as the Sleepover and Outing, and we involve the school

community in our fundraising efforts. This is also a great way for us to showcase the potential of Guiding!

I am very grateful to be able to give back to the community and the school through an organisation with such a great wealth of knowledge, resources and support. The opportunity to be involved in Guides has been a life changing and valuable experience for me.

I believe there is a huge potential for Guides to expand through schools to create new and relevant ways for young girls to learn together. Guides has allowed me to "Be the change that you want to see in the world". I hope I am able to continue teaching my Guides to also strive to be the best person that they can be.

**'Guides has allowed me to "Be the change that you want to see in the world"'**

# Phoebe Finegan

DISTRICT ~  
Maroondah

REGION ~  
Eastern

DATE ~  
January 2015



Girl Guides Victoria

**H**i, my name is Pheobe Finegan. I am currently a volunteer Girl Guide Leader. My Guide Unit consists of 10-14 year olds who are from the Maroondah District.

My Guiding life began as a shy 7 year old in 1991 when I attended a "Bring a Friend" night at 1st Croydon West Brownie Guides. I progressed to Guides at Croydon West when I turned 10 and stayed until I was 18. During my time at Guides I was presented with lots of opportunities to attend camps, participate in service projects within the community and I also achieved my Baden Powell Award. When I turned 18 years old I accepted the challenge to run the Unit and have been doing so for the past 14 years. Great experiences gave me the confidence to rise to this challenge.

In 2002 I travelled to New Zealand for an International Guiding Event called CLAN and in 2004 I was honoured to be the Contingent Leader taking 4 Guides to

Canada for an International Event called SOAR. I am hopeful that we can attend The Great Bunya Gathering in Queensland in 2015, an interstate guiding event which is a new experience for me even after 23 years in Guiding.

I've made lifelong friends of all ages and back grounds from all around the world. It's given me a valued appreciation and love for the outdoors, the willingness to give back to the community and the inspiration to lead the girls of today to be the best they can be.

**'It's given me a valued appreciation and love for the outdoors, the willingness to give back to the community and the inspiration to lead the girls of today to be the best they can be.'**

It's so rewarding as a leader to work with the Guides as they conquer their fears, challenge themselves, and learn skills that will

help them on their way to becoming confident, responsible members of the community. A highlight is my Unit's involvement in the annual Royal Children's Hospital Appeal. The enthusiasm and commitment the girls in my Unit display when collecting for this worthy cause is heart-warming; young girls who already want to give to those less fortunate than themselves!

My passion for Guiding requires me to manage my time and responsibilities of running my home as well as my employment with Victoria Police. Guiding is dynamic and I never stop growing with increased life skills as well as seizing every opportunity to develop myself and help others.

Girl Guides is still is a huge, positive part of my life.

**'It's so rewarding as a leader to work with the Guides as they conquer their fears, challenge themselves, and learn skills that will help them on their way to becoming confident, responsible members of the community.'**



# Lillian Fry-McBean

DISTRICT ~  
Mt Alexander

REGION ~  
Loddon Mallee

DATE ~  
January 2015



Girl Guides Victoria

**M**y name is Lillian Fry-McBean, I am a 20 year old student at Federation University Ballarat, studying Primary Education and I am a passionate Girl Guide Leader. I have been a Girl Guide Victoria member for almost a decade after my twin sister joined and convinced me and my whole family to join. Since then Guiding has changed my life.

**‘Girl Guiding is not just about our individual journeys, it is about how our actions and commitments inspire others around us.**

Girl Guides has helped me grow from a cautious tween into the assertive young woman I am today. Guiding is constantly compelling me to meet new people, test my abilities, develop my self-confidence and help me to step outside the restraints of my comfort zone. Girl Guiding in the country town of Castlemaine taught me to trust myself and has helped me make lifelong friends. When I began Guiding, I was a very shy Brownie Guide but as I grew up in Girl Guides, graduating to ‘Castlemaine Golden Guide’ then proceeded into the Rangers Guides, I slowly began to understand the fundamentals of Guiding and how the Girl Guide Promise and Laws affected my life, opening my eyes to what I was capable of.

But Girl Guiding is not just about our individual journeys, it is about how our actions and commitments inspire others around us. On my Girl Guiding journey, I have attended many events and met

many Girl Guide members that have demonstrated the essences of Girl Guides and have inspired me by showing me what is possible. It is exceptional when my

sisters in Guiding go out of their way to show appreciation and recognise others achievements, when they spend countless hours of their own time organising events and when they express their determination and love of Girl Guides. These passionate girls and women are living and breathing the Girl Guiding spirit and this inspires me.

Girl Guiding is a very important part of my life, showing me to give back to the community and to Girl Guides. I am a unit leader of twenty 6-10 years old Brownies, aspects of my job at weekly meetings include planning, running a program and having responsibility. My aim is to not only create and run an enjoyable

program with my fellow leaders, but it is to attempt to inspire the members like I have been inspired by others. Recently, I have achieved my Outdoor Camping Qualifications which made it possible for me to run, plan, program and evaluate the District ‘Outer-Space’ outdoors camp with 40 girls attending. This was challenging but a very successful weekend.

**‘... facing my fears showed me that they were just boundaries that my mind had created. This is why Guiding has changed my life.**

In 2013 I attended a National Leadership Seminar and weeklong camp called ‘Leading Edge’ with 15 other 16-20 year old Girl Guides from around Australia. This event was held at a Girl Guide Victoria Campsite Britannia Park and focused on many aspect of building personal development, confidence and leadership abilities. I met many of the women who inspire me at this event which helped me create my ‘Leading Edge’ project called “The Learn, Laugh and Lend-a-Hand” (3 Ls) Program. The 3 Ls Program aims to educate my district about poverty for Girl Guides in developing countries and to participate in district hike to raise money for an African

Girl Guide Unit in Senegal. We have raised approximately \$1000 and the units are now using Pen Pal communication to create friendships and understanding for both countries.

During my Guiding I have constantly challenged myself to achieve and it has taught me what I can accomplished. As a girl I achieve minor badges and awards

but one challenge that was especially difficult and extremely gratifying for me was the Girl Guide peak achievement award the Queens Guide Award. During the course of completing this award I matured enormously; often when I was forced to do things that I had never done before. I felt like that shy Brownie who didn’t want to do anything but in actual fact, when I was volunteering at the library or being assessed for camping qualifications, I was a blossoming butterfly of self-confidence because facing my fears showed me that they were just boundaries that my mind had created.

This is why Guiding has changed my life.

# Bianca Gerrard (Panda)

DISTRICT ~  
Pyrenees  
  
REGION ~  
Grampians  
  
DATE ~  
January 2015



Over the past 11 years, Girl guides has played a huge roll in my life. Since the age of 5 I have loved every minute of guides, challenged myself, made lifelong friends and gained many valuable skills.

Guides has offered me many amazing opportunities. Some highlights for me include ACE camp and the experience of having 2 Korean exchanges stay with us.

Another highlight was completing the Gold Centenary Challenge and then I fundraised and attended ski camp at Perisher.

Other highlights have been our weekly guide meetings where I have participated in a huge number of activities including cooking, craft, sport,

**‘I have gained so many skills in guides like confidence, leadership, patience and respect. These skills help me in my everyday life.**

**‘This 6 month project won me the Premiers Spirit of Anzac Prize and a war study tour of Lemnos, Gallipoli, Belgium and France.**

that I have done in guides and my most valuable achievement. I completed my Gold Endeavour, 2 interests, piano and saxophone, as well as my Arts, Leadership and Outdoors Focuses. As part of my Arts focus I completed a textiles project of a wall hanging on the Anzac spirit.

leadership, world guiding activities, outdoor and camping skills, cake decorating, art, fundraising, and games, just to name a few.

My Queens Guide Award is the most challenging thing

This 6 month project won me the Premiers Spirit of Anzac Prize and a war study tour of Lemnos, Gallipoli, Belgium and France. This was the most amazing experience I have ever had. I learnt so much, made new friends and got the opportunity to travel overseas, while learning the stories behind our Anzac’s. I now have a real passion for war history and the Anzac spirit.

Being a Junior Leader is definitely the most rewarding part of my guiding. I have been a Junior Leader for 2 years and mainly work with the 5-10 year old Guides. I have taken these girls camping, been the junior leader on Grampians Region Camps, helped the girls at their weekly meetings and with their badge work.

**‘Being able to help the girls and put a smile on their face makes me feel great.**

Leader I have realised that I love working with children and that my ambition is to become a Primary School teacher.

I have gained so many skills in guides like confidence, leadership, patience and respect. These skills help me in my everyday life.

Guides is an important part of my life and I encourage all girls to take every experience handed to them in guides, make the most of it and have fun.

Being able to help the girls and put a smile on their face makes me feel great. As a Junior

# Sarah Grace

DISTRICT ~  
Greater Geelong

REGION ~  
Barwon South Western

DATE ~  
January 2015



My name is Sarah Grace and I am an 18 year old Unit Leader with a Junior Guide Unit in the Greater Geelong District.

Guiding has been a significant part of my life for almost ten years. It all began when my parents encouraged me to join a local Junior Guide Unit when I was 9. Back then, I saw Guides as the place where I would make friends outside of school, earn badges and have fun. It is only now as I have become older however, that I have come to realise that Girl Guides is a whole lot more than that! Every badge that I completed, every award that I earned and every opportunity that I was a part of has given me the confidence and the different life skills that makes me the person I am today. Girl Guides and the values and morals it promotes, has helped me grow into a self-respecting community member.

**‘Since I have been involved in Guides, every year has been memorable, whether it be events or camps that I have attended or awards that I have earned. 2014 however, has been the most exciting so far!’**

This year I was one of 16 Victorian recipients to be presented with Girl Guides Australia’s peak youth achievement award, the Queen’s Guide Award; a journey that has been challenging and not always easy,

**‘I am so grateful that I was selected to be with an amazing group of young women, all who shared the same passion and love for Guides as I do.’**

Since I have been involved in Guides, every year has been memorable, whether it be events or camps that I have attended or awards that I have earned. 2014 however, has been the most exciting so far!

yet has allowed me to reach my full potential, embrace many incredible opportunities, and grow, develop and learn as a young

woman in Guiding. Through completing this award, I have experienced unique and unforgettable challenges and memories.

In 2014, I was also fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to attend Guide’s Australia’s leadership seminar ‘Leading Edge’ in New South Wales, a week long camp with 15 other young women aged 16-20 from Australia and New Zealand. The focus of Leading Edge was to allow participants to develop self- confidence, build self-esteem and provide each and every one of us with an opportunity to enhance various aspects of our personal development. Without a doubt, Leading Edge has been one of my most memorable Guiding experiences.

I am so grateful that I was selected to be with an amazing group of young women, all who shared the same passion and love for Guides as I do.

I look forward to being a part of the future of Guiding because after all, Guides has the ability to shape us as individuals and influence the people we become.

**‘I look forward to being a part of the future of Guiding because after all, Guides has the ability to shape us as individuals and influence the people we become.’**



# Clare Grigg

DISTRICT ~  
Baw Baw  
  
REGION ~  
Gippsland  
  
DATE ~  
January 2015



## What my guiding unit has done...

I have been a Girl Guide for over 10 years. In these years my unit has done many exciting activities where I have had the opportunity to get to know others, experience new places, grow in confidence and improve my leadership skills.

Some of the things we have done include camps to Darwin and Alice Springs as well as local district and region camps. My unit enjoys planning the term program and this has lead us to doing ice cream and hamburger runs, writing to pen pals in

Scotland, craft nights, movie nights, service around our local area, water nights and ice blocking.

## 'All my Guiding challenges and experiences have helped me grow...

All these challenges assisted me in gaining my Queens Guide Award which has been the most memorable part of my guiding adventure so far. All my Guiding challenges and

experiences have helped me grow from the small, quiet gumnut who wore a cute little red apron to a confident, self-respecting, responsible young woman who lives each day by the promise and law.

## '...from the small, quiet gumnut who wore a cute little red apron to a confident, self-respecting, responsible young woman who lives each day by the promise and law.

# Louise Hobbs

DISTRICT ~  
Baw Baw West Wimmera

REGION ~  
Grampians

DATE ~  
January 2015



People often ask me “Aren’t you too old for Guides?” When I was in year 6 I thought I’d just do Guides for 1 more year, because girls always left our unit before high school...But now I can see that there is so much more to guiding, and being in that older age group has just meant there have been so many more opportunities.

**‘... it’s helped me to see that if you want to see change you need to be part of the solution.**

When I first joined Guides 9 year ago (2006) I never realized the impact guiding would have on my life, including achieving my Queens Guide, Baden Powell Award, Visiting guide units

**‘I feel that I can be part of the solution, which I honestly think is amazing.**

in the UK, and giving me many skills that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

Guiding has helped me develop my confidence in so many ways, and it’s helped me to see that if you want to see change you need to be part of the solution. In 2014 my unit was involved in ‘Free Being Me’ where I had the privilege to run the 11-14 program.

Stamping out the image myth was something I had been passionate about for a very long time and I felt that this was a fantastic opportunity, to be part of the solution. It was amazing to see that by the end of the program the girls were body confident and weren’t comparing themselves to models and celebrities. Running this program showed me that if I was passionate about something, I could do something about it.

I am very passionate about science and I want more girls to share this love. Science is always portrayed as a very male dominated field and I think many girls are hesitant because of this.

**‘I think one of the reasons why I love guiding is because I feel I’m making a difference in girls lives.**

This year I have been selected to attend a 3 week residential science school. From this I am planning on running a science program in the school holidays, open to girls from year 3-8 to get them enthused about science, and possibly considering a career in the field. I think one of the reasons why I love guiding is because I feel I’m making a difference in girls lives and I feel that I can be part of the solution, which I honestly think is amazing.

Thinking back to year 6, when I thought I’d leave because girls always left before high school. Well... let’s just say I’m glad I stayed.

# Nellie Mair

DISTRICT ~  
Yarra Ranges  
  
REGION ~  
Eastern  
  
DATE ~  
January 2015



Dedicating time each week to badge work has been one of the best things I’ve chosen to do as a Leader.

I often say I wish the parents could be flies on the walls of the guide hall because the personal growth I observe is amazing. Each week I’m privileged to witness brave and open communication between young people; something few adults have the privilege of these days.

**‘Watching these youth learn to set goals, work hard to achieve them and learn to celebrate their successes as well as failures along the way is one of my greatest pleasures of being a Leader.**

It simply amazes me how our Girl Guides speak in front of their peers of their triumphs

**‘I often say I wish the parents could be flies on the walls of the guide hall...**

Watching these youth learn to set goals, work hard to achieve them and learn to celebrate their successes as well as failures along the way is one of my greatest pleasures of being a Leader.

and challenges and how their peers have learnt to provide positive encouragement and constructive feedback.

**‘Each week I’m privileged to witness brave and open communication between young people.**



# Clancie McCarthy

DISTRICT ~  
Yarra Ranges  
  
REGION ~  
Eastern  
  
DATE ~  
January 2015



I have been a Guide for just over 11 years. I started when I was a very shy not so confident 9 year old at Chiltern Guides and after completing year 12 at Victory College in Wodonga in 2013 I have moved to Monbulk in the Dandenong Ranges.

Girl Guides has offered me so many opportunities and has given me the confidence, enthusiasm and passion to do the best I possibly can always.

**‘I love working with my girls and I really enjoy seeing my 10-14 year old Guides grow in confidence within themselves and mature into beautiful young women!’**

I love working with my girls and I really enjoy seeing my 10-14 year old Guides grow in confidence within themselves and mature into beautiful young women. Most of all I like to see them having fun and using their abilities to come up with such awesome programs.

When I was 11 years old I completed my Junior BP, at 15 I completed my BP and when I was 18 I completed my Queens

Guide, this was quite difficult and challenged me in many ways, I learnt so much during this time and was pushed outside of my comfort zone on many occasions but this only led me to strive harder to achieve my goals.

I have a very strong passion for Flag Etiquette and Colour Parties and I gained that passion during my time at Chiltern Guides, I try very hard to instill that passion into my Guides at Monbulk.

**‘One goal is to ensure these opportunities are made available for young people within my Guiding community as I believe everyone deserves a say.’**

When I was 16 I was asked to speak at the Annual General Meeting of Girl Guides Victoria about my Queen’s Guide and especially

about my passion for Flag Etiquette and it amazed me how many leaders were still so interested but just didn’t put it forward within their own units. I was amazed when I was told recently by a very experienced Guide Leader who heard me speak that day that she had been thinking that maybe it was time to let some of the traditions go but when she heard me speak it made her realise that girls were still interested in the tradition of Flags and Colour Parties.

After speaking at that meeting opportunities within Guiding just kept popping up for me. I was accepted to go to Switzerland in 2013 and had such an amazing time with such amazing people, I learnt so much about myself and it was there I realised that I wanted to continue in Guides as a leader, so I did, and here I am today.

I set goals in my personal and in my Guiding life to keep striving and improving.

One goal is to ensure these opportunities are made available for young people within my Guiding community as I believe everyone deserves a say and no matter how big or small your dreams are you should grasp them with both hands and always give it your 100%.

**‘...no matter how big or small your dreams are you should grasp them with both hands and always give it your 100%’**

# Indigo McKinnon

DISTRICT ~  
Banyule  
  
REGION ~  
North West  
  
DATE ~  
January 2015



**My** name is Indigo McKinnon and I am a ranger guide. My time in guiding has included 9 years, 3 districts and way too many camps to count. Guiding has allowed me to make friends from all over the country and a few from overseas. It seems no matter what guide event I attend, I can always find someone I know. It is the connections and opportunities that guides has given me that make it so enjoyable and rewarding.

Guiding has given me so many opportunities and new skills,

**‘How could a week spent with friends, doing fun activities and eating lots of good food not be great?’**

**‘My time in guiding has taught me to be resilient, persevere and always give things a go.’**

from international camps to being a junior leader, there is always something new to try. Most recently, I was accepted as one of 80 Victorian school students to travel to Turkey next year for the centenary of ANZAC Day. I believe that my service and community involvement though guides were the qualities in my application that got me selected.

Some of my favourite experiences with guides are of state Jamborees. How could a week spent with friends, doing fun activities and eating lots of good food not be great? More recently, after becoming a ranger I have found that the friends and the food take prominence at most guide events and state jamborees are no exception.

A major part of guides for me is service. From the beginning of my time in guides, I have taken up every opportunity I can to give something back. Whether it be picking up rubbish for Clean-up Australia day or holding flags in the ANZAC day march, service gives back much more than you put in.

**‘Guiding has and will continue to play a major role in my life and I am proud to call myself a guide.’**

My time in guiding has taught me to be resilient, persevere and always give things a go.

I have found these and many other skills to be useful in all areas of my life. Guiding has given me opportunities and adventures that I never would have had.

Guiding has and will continue to play a major role in my life and I am proud to call myself a guide.

# Rebecca Nielsen

DISTRICT ~  
Monash

REGION ~  
Eastern

DATE ~  
January 2015



Girl Guides Victoria

**M**y name is Rebecca Nielsen and I'm 15. I participated in the Girl Guide program which has provided me with so many opportunities to discover new things, chase skills, participate in adventures and excursions and meet really amazing people.

I got involved in Guiding when I was seven years old.

During the past eight years of Guiding I've had soooooo many opportunities. Guides change as the people change – leaders and participants – but that's what makes it so great. We have a fantastic new kitchen so we can include cooking, dinners and basic catering in our program.

In my time of being a Guide, I've been a member of three different units. A highlight for me in Guides is the outdoors because I love camping. Another part which I am heavily involved with and love is the service we do, which ranges from Anzac Day to Clean Up Australia Day, door knocking and many other things within our local

community. Our program is full of a wide range of activities, such as games, karaoke and penny hikes. Anything we think of or we think we can do at Guides (well almost), the leaders will help us to achieve.

**With Guides I've learned I can be resilient and will bounce back and, although I'm not the best or the smartest or the greatest, I can do almost anything I put my mind to.**

I am also a junior leader one night a week and love it!! Being a junior leader has provided me with so much opportunity and allowed me to become much more mature and confident.

I have attended many camps, state events and regional events over my years, even a canoeing day. I have also been lucky enough to attend two international camps which were amazing. I've achieved many badges, including my Junior BP and BP Award. I also received a district award last year. I am currently working on my Queen's Guide Award.

From Guides I have learned to organize events, speak to the public and work with children. I've also learned lots of practical skills like cooking, camping, first aid and

being prepared – things I use in all parts of my life. I have learned to follow my instincts, weigh up my choices and make decisions. I don't always make the right ones but I make them and cope with the fall out. The biggest thing I have taken out of Guides is the people you meet. If it wasn't for some of them I wouldn't be who I am today. They bring out the best in me and take away the worst. They have taught me to just be myself because that's who you are best suited for.

Most of my challenges arise from being a junior leader. Going on camp with a large group of girls between the ages of five to 10 is never easy. There is a heap of work and not much sleep but when I am on camp I think about the leaders who did this for me when I was little. It's my turn to do it now. I also get faced with challenges when I am put in situations I'm not used to and unsure how to cope.

Let's say abseiling and I will NEVER be friends. Dealing with some girls is harder than others so you just have to try and work out what is best for the girl and you in those situations.

**'...if you want to do something you have to put your mind to it and face the challenges.**

With Guides I've learned I can be resilient and will bounce back and, although I'm not the best or the smartest or the greatest, I can do almost anything I put my mind to. I've learned that I enjoy being with people doing things, being challenged and yes, even failing at things we try. I have learned that things aren't always easy but can always be better and that if you want to do something you have to put your mind to it and face the challenges. Ultimately, I know there is a good side to everything.

As I say all the time I would not be the person I am today without Guides. It has made me a more caring and considerate person. It has taught me to be grateful for what you have and always lend a helping hand to somebody in need. Guides is an amazing program run for young girls becoming young women. And has shaped me for the best future I can have. Guides is GREAT!!

# Thanushi Peiris

DISTRICT ~  
Whitehorse

REGION ~  
Eastern

DATE ~  
January 2015



I started Girl Guiding when I was a painfully shy five year old who felt a bit like a goggling fish separated from the waters of my old home in Heathmont.

Dressed in plain yellow t-shirts, we Brownies played games, learnt about the world and had heaps of fun at unit meetings. Joining a small group of girls each week to

explore different things quickly made me realise that talking to new people was nothing like creeping into a haunted house; it was actually really rewarding!

Flash forward about a decade and I’m now a Ranger, relishing every moment of my guiding journey. As time has passed, I’ve found myself getting more and more involved in all sorts of guiding activities such as Stradbroke, Region Revels, Thinking Day, Daffodils Day, Clean Up Australia Day and Unit outings. I no longer hesitate to

decide between whether I should continue living in my own bubble of monotonous stability or try and bump into other ideas, people and projects as much as I can. Being

exposed to all these varied experiences has helped me to respect the amazing potential and complexity of the world and everyone who lives in it.

As part of this, I recently advocated for gender equality and the realisation of women’s rights worldwide to politicians in Canberra, as a delegate for Plan Australia’s Girl Delegation with the support of Girl Guides Victoria.

**‘One of the most important things I realised was how our actions, like stones thrown into a pond, create ripples that inspire the actions of people around us.**

Unleashing my passion for social justice, I ran extensive consultations with girls in my community, helped prepare a report called ‘Our Book of Ambitions’, participated in the 2014 Girls’ Leadership Summit and advocated for a world where gender doesn’t make choices for people.

It was a truly incredible experience from which I learnt so much, from global issues to creating social change. One of the most important things I realised was how our actions, like stones thrown into a pond, create ripples that inspire the actions of people around us and by interacting with others, can flow out of our reach to collectively create impacts far larger than we could have imagined. To me, this is where the strength of our Guiding community lies; a network of people with shared values and strengths who are each

willing to create ripples that eventually become far greater than the sum of their parts.

**‘Guiding; a network of people with shared values and strengths who are each willing to create ripples that eventually become far greater than the sum of their parts.**

I hope that this vibrant community continues to thrive and enhances many people’s lives, as it has done mine.



# Melissa Reoch (Emerald)

DISTRICT ~  
Whitehorse

REGION ~  
Eastern

DATE ~  
January 2015



Girl Guides Victoria

I was inspired to become a leader by my Grandmother Joan “Skip” who raised me with her Guiding life skills and interests. Although I didn’t attend Guides as a girl, I was raised as a Guide with a love of camping, nature and cooking as well as a strong set of beliefs that with determination I could achieve anything.

When my daughter Sammy turned 5, she became a Fairy Guide and that is when I wanted to be a part of an organisation that I could see was transforming children’s ability to believe in their endless possibilities.

Leading with Guide Unit, I have proudly developed a reputation as an exceptional Quarter Master, as well as growing a unit that is active in service, prolific in badge work and continues to grow in number. I am known by my Guiding name ‘Emerald’ because of my obsession with the colour green.

I have always loved seeing children realise their potential, however many are held back by their own self-limiting beliefs. I am very passionate about providing children with learning that develops positive self-esteem and gives them the capacity to reach their potential.

**‘I have always loved seeing children realise their potential, however many are held back by their own self-limiting beliefs.’**

When I was appointed the role of the Victorian “Free Being Me” Program Coordinator in 2014, I was excited to see that through a

structured body image curriculum Guiding could make a dramatic difference in building girls’ self-esteem. I attended the Free Being Me training with WAGGGS in Sydney and began to develop my vision for the huge potential and possibilities of this program.

Coordinating the pilot programs allowed me to see the diversity of the curriculum, running in both metropolitan, regional units

as well as covering key learning areas at Victoria’s first “Guides can change the world” event, in Melbourne in November 2014.

It was amazing to see the changes that were occurring, knowing this was just the beginning.

**‘I am looking forward to my future in this organisation and to see how I can make a difference to the lives of girls as well as continuing to develop and progress on my own journey.’**

**‘I am very passionate about providing children with learning that develops positive self-esteem and gives them the capacity to reach their potential.’**

In December 2014 I facilitated the “Free Being Me” session at the Asia Pacific Conference for Leaders of Youth for WAGGGS, and was incredibly inspired and a big highlight for me to be part of the

WAGGS training team. Presenting the sessions to over 150 Leaders from 22 countries, it was wonderful to see how inspired they were to take the program back to share and deliver the “Free Being Me” message in their countries.

Girl Guiding is a powerful organisation that provides opportunity for girls of all ages to fulfil their potential. I am looking forward to my future in this organisation and to see how I can make a difference to the lives of girls as well as continuing to develop and progress on my own journey.

# Emily Ross

DISTRICT ~  
Chiltern

REGION ~  
Hume

DATE ~  
January 2015



Girl Guides Victoria

**M**y guiding journey started when I was a shy seven year old. It was from my very first night of Guides, with my best friend by my side that we both fell in love with this ‘Guides thing’. I just felt so at home with guides, it was just becoming a part of my life.

Then my leader suggested I have a go of the Junior BP award, which I completed with such confidence. It was between my Junior BP and my BP that some older girls from my unit went to New Zealand. Ever since then, that feeling has stuck with me that one day I want to travel with Girl Guides.

**‘All I could think of was, this can’t be real! But next thing you know, my dream of traveling through Girl Guides could finally come true.**

Well then rolled around my BP award, I received this award with pride, but also knowing I had an even bigger journey yet to come... My Queens Guide Award! It was just before I began preparing for my Queens Guide Award that I walked into Guides one night ready for my usual Guiding night, and all of a sudden my best friend Clancie screamed to me ‘EMILY, DO YOU WANT TO GO TO SWITZERLAND?’ All I could think of was, this can’t be real! But next thing you know, my dream of traveling through Girl Guides could finally come true. I could

finally be the ‘Big Girl’ that could travel through Girl Guides. Then I was on my way to Switzerland.

Wow, what an adventure, this is something that has stuck with me every day since. Every day I do something, whether it’s helping others, keeping an eye out for those who may need it, I always come back to that trip. I still can’t believe that me being a little 8 year old seeing those girls come back from New Zealand with so many life lessons, and instantly wanting to do that, finally did.

I received my Queens Guide award in 2014, 10 years of guiding later, and I feel so proud.

I am so grateful, never alter your dreams because you think they won’t happen, you never know, they just might one day.

**‘...I feel so proud. I am so grateful, never alter your dreams because you think they won’t happen, you never know, they just might one day.**

# Charlotte Sutherland

DISTRICT ~  
Monash

REGION ~  
Eastern

DATE ~  
January 2015



My name is Charlotte Sutherland, I’m fifteen and have been doing Girl Guides for five years now, I attend Ranger guides in the Monash district, and love every minute of it!

Without Guides I would be a different person as it’s helped me to achieve many things and learn new skills that will stick with me forever.

Through challenging myself by earning badges, going on camps, biscuit-selling, attending special events such as World Thinking Day and putting myself out there within my unit taking on Leadership roles and organising nights; I learnt confidence, persistence, communication and leadership skills, organisation and time management.

One of the most important and recent things that Girl Guides has helped me to achieve was becoming a Girl Delegate for Plan International’s Because I Am A Girl campaign and a representative for Girl Guides Victoria, at the 2014 Leadership Summit held at Parliament in Canberra,

at the beginning of October. The campaign was about gender equality and issues that dominantly affect women not only in Australia but also in developing countries and the rest of the world. I found out

about this amazing opportunity through an email sent out to Girl Guides in Victoria, it sparked my interest so I applied then a few weeks later I was

informed that I was selected as one of six Guides across Victoria to take part in this experience.

All together there were twenty three young women selected as delegates including the six Girl Guides ages ranging from thirteen to twenty-six, from all around Australia, we all had one thing in common; a passion for gender equality and women’s issues. Together we created ‘Our Book of Ambitions’ our call to action to put girls front and centre for the Post-2015 Agenda, the goals that will replace the Millennium Development Goals. In October we travelled to Canberra for two days and in

Parliament presented our call to action and talked to politicians such as Bill Shorten, Julie Bishop and Michaela Cash.

Without Girl Guides none of this would have been possible, they were the ones that worked with Plan to allow us to be delegates for them, the ones who planned all of it, paid for our trip and without leaders this would not have been possible and all the time and effort put into making our trip possible. Guides helped me to achieve this and strengthen my passion for these issues.

**‘One of the most important and recent things that Girl Guides has helped me to achieve was becoming a Girl Delegate for Plan International’s Because I Am A Girl campaign and a representative for Girl Guides.**

# Brooke Sutton

DISTRICT ~  
Brimbank

REGION ~  
North West

DATE ~  
January 2015



Girl Guides Victoria

**H**ello my name is Brooke Sutton I'm 15 years old I'm from the Brimbank District. I have been a Girl Guide for more than half my life; I started when I was 7 years old.

"Girl Guides has been a really big part of my life and has helped me become the young women I am now." I have done things that most 15 year old girl would not even think of doing.

When I was 8 I started Girl Guides as a shy timid young girl. I would not speak up if anything happened I would not talk to many people but as the years went on I gained my confidence.

At the age of 10, I spoke to biggest crowd that I have ever spoken to. In front of my school at assembly, I spoke about Guides and how it has changed me and made me more confident.

**'I want to thank my peers, my Girl Guide Leaders Heather and Julie, if it wasn't for them I wouldn't be who I am today. I wouldn't have had this fantastic opportunity to achieve the things I have.'**

During 2013 I raised money for Alopecia. Alopecia is a condition that makes your body think your hair is a germ and kills it off. I donated 45cm of my hair to Wigs for Kids.

This year I did something that changed my life forever. I received an email from Guides asking me if I would like to be a part of a delegation for Plan Australia and go to Canberra, Parliament House to speak about

girl's rights. I applied not thinking I would get in. A few weeks later, I received an email from Plan Australia saying that I was accepted. I was so happy. As the event got closer I became really nervous and anxious, not really knowing what to do or talk about when I get there. I was chosen to speak at Parliament House in front of Julie Bishop and other important Parliamentarians. I was so worried; I didn't know what to write. When I got up to talk I was shaking I was so nervous. I was relieved when it was over, everyone loved it. I was so thrilled that I got the opportunity and would love to do it again.

I want to thank my peers, my Girl Guide Leaders Heather and Julie, if it wasn't for them I wouldn't be who I am today.

I wouldn't have had this fantastic opportunity to achieve the things I have. I would also like to thank my Mum for keeping me in guides.

**'I would also like to thank my Mum for keeping me in guides.'**



# Victoria Waid

DISTRICT ~  
Melbourne

REGION ~  
North West

DATE ~  
January 2015



For as long as I can remember, I have always been that girl that stood out. Whether it was for my appearances, my beliefs or even my strength to stand up I don't know, however I felt like I never really found my place in this big and crazy world until recently.

Girl Guides has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember, and has enabled me to reach my full potential at such a young age. I have accomplished more than I ever thought possible.

I was given this amazing opportunity to travel to the World Centre in Sangam, India for the event 'Gifts for Change'. Here, I was

**'I have accomplished more than I ever thought possible**

**'Girl Guides has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember, and has enabled me to reach my full potential at such a young age**

really able to go inside myself, and truly discover who I was.

Here at this event, we ran activities with the local girls from the surrounding 'slums' and really focused on what we could do to help improve the state of the world (so to speak). We volunteered our time to a Community Leadership Development Project, where we

truly discovered real change - both in my own life, and the lives of those that were involved.

I cannot stress the impact that this opportunity gave to me. I was able to share my passion, with others who had that same one. - The passion to bring about real change in the world. This trip was breathtaking, and it really ignited my passion to change the world.

I was also selected to become a delegate for Plan's 'Because I am a Girl', that aims to unleash the incredible potential of girls and women all around the world. Being

a delegate for this campaign, I was able to travel to Canberra, where I (and the other 24 delegates) were able to present to the government, our 'Call to Action' that contains our heart and soul of why we were there - to help change the lives of girls and women all around the world. I was able to meet with the honourable Michaelia Cash. Julie Bishop, Claire Moore, Janet Rice, Cathy McGowan, and many more; as well as conduct interviews with Lucy Wicks, Adam Bandt and Kate Elis. I cannot tell you how honoured I was to represent both myself, but also Girl Guides Victoria, and in the process, 10 million amazing girls.

I owe all of this to the wonderful leaders who have truly helped bring out my passion, and ignite my love for social justice.

**'I owe all of this to the wonderful leaders who have truly helped bring out my passion, and ignite my love for social justice**

My name is Victoria, and I am changing the world.

## **Share your story with us and the world!**

**E**very Guide has a story to tell.

We invite you to share your experiences, insights  
and dreams for the future with us.

[SUBMIT YOUR STORY HERE](#)

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## **Support**

**T**he Guiding Light Fund is established in 2011 to support Girls and Young women (under the age of 25) to pursue their passion. In 2014 6 girls were funded through the Guiding Light Fund to attend the PLAN Conference in Canberra which was mentioned in a number of the stories in this publication.



The Guiding Light Fund is proud to support girls  
and young women in finding their passion.

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