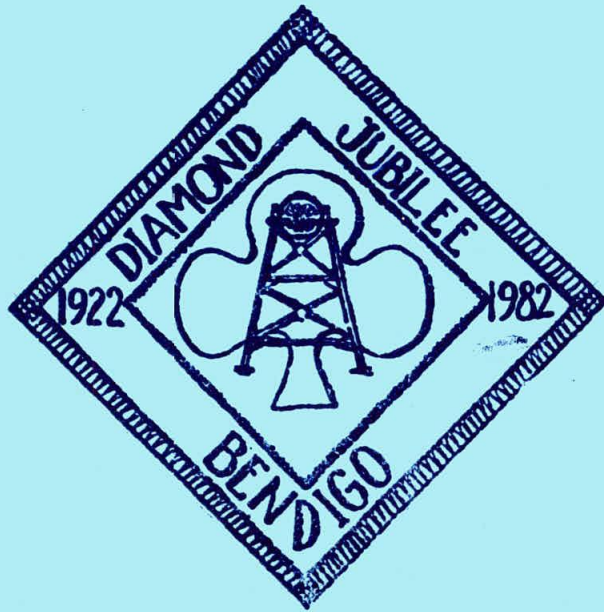


HISTORY OF BENDIGO DISTRICT



Girl Guides Association of Victoria

GIRL GUIDES ASSOCIATION
VICTORIA
HISTORY OF BENDIGO DISTRICT



22ND AUGUST 1922

TO

22ND AUGUST 1982

RESEARCHED BY

Margaret Baker
Bette McLaughlin
Berry Wallace
Agnes Watson
Norma Young



TREFOIL GUILD

*To Margaret
from Norma
Christmas 1982.*

WARMEST GREETINGS TO YOU ALL ON THE OCCASION
OF THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF THE BENDIGO DISTRICT.
THIS REGION ACKNOWLEDGES THE VISION AND
DEDICATION OF OUR EARLY PIONEERS WHO COMMENCED
GUIDING IN BENDIGO.

BECAUSE OF THE SOUND BASIS UPON WHICH THEY FOUNDED
GUIDING, IT HAS CONTINUED TO INFLUENCE GIRLS FOR
60 YEARS. I HAVE NO DOUBT TODAY'S MEMBERS WILL
CONTINUE IN THE TRADITION OF THE FOUNDERS WHOSE
AIM, IN TRAINING THE GIRLS, WAS THE EDUCATION AND
DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER AND WHICH CANNOT FAIL TO
BE OF CONTINUING VALUE TO THE NATION.

IT IS HOPED THIS HISTORY WILL EVOKE MANY HAPPY
MEMORIES AND I CONGRATULATE THE MEMBERS OF THE
MERLE BUSH TREFOIL GUILD WHO UNDERTOOK THE RESEARCH
NECESSARY TO COMPILE THE BOOKLET.



MRS. MAREN CHANDLER,
NORTH CENTRAL REGION COMMISSIONER.

GUIDING WAS STARTED IN BENDIGO BY A REMARKABLE YOUNG WOMAN,
MISS M.E. BUSH.

SHE CAME TO BE KNOWN AS MERLE, OR, BUSH.

THE GUIDE ASSOCIATION'S AIMS AND METHODS OF TRAINING GIRLS
AND WOMEN APPEALED TO MERLE'S OUTSTANDING PERSONAL QUALITIES.
SHE GAVE OF HERSELF UNSTINTINGLY TO THE BENDIGO GUIDES AND
VERY SOON BECAME INVOLVED IN OPENING NEW UNITS.

IT CAN BE SEEN THAT THIS HISTORY COULD HAVE EASILY BECOME
A RECORD OF ONE PERSON'S ENTHUSIASM AND VISION. MERLE'S
NATURAL RETICENCE WOULD NOT HAVE ALLOWED IT, AND POSTERITY
DEMANDS RECOGNITION OF THE HUNDREDS OF OTHER DEDICATED
WOMEN WHO EAGERLY FOLLOWED MERLE'S EXAMPLE.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE A BRIEF ACCOUNTING OF THEIR
COMBINED ACHIEVEMENTS.

Our story commences on the 22nd August, 1922, when, at the request of Archdeacon Haynes, Miss Merle Bush held the first meeting of the 1st Bendigo Company at St. Paul's School Room.

The twelve girls present were -

SUNFLOWER PATROL - Gladys Gardner
Frances Gardner
Marie Hamilton
Marjery Haynes
Maude Warren
Elva Worner

VIOLET PATROL - Amy Bolton
Ethel Carter
Pearle Grohbrugge
Lillian O'Connor
Marjorie Turner
Olive Wright

Miss Bush was given permission to open the company by Miss R. Hamilton, State Secretary for Victoria. She received her Captain's Warrant on 12th December, 1922, from the State Commissioner, Lady Stradbroke at the first State Rally, State Government House, Melbourne. The first enrolment on 2nd June, 1923, saw the following 18 girls make their Promise.

Marjery Haynes	Stella Anderson
Frances Gardner	Olive Howard
Marie Hamilton	Lilly Koska
Evelyn Lamb	Olive Wright
Dora Smith	Jean Thurman
Elsie Sydes	Madge Welch
Ena Wright	Marjorie Turner
Ethel Carter	Gwen Long
Maude Warren	Elise Maxwell

The Minutes of the First Court of Honour of the Company are brief and to the point but the discussion must have been very wide!

"First Court of Honour, 22nd February, 1923.

Present - Miss Bush (Captain in chair),
M. Haynes, E. Carter, O. Wright.

The meeting opened with a short prayer and Court of Honour Promise.

Business - This being the first meeting, general matters of the company were discussed, such as arrangements for the 1st Parade, new girls, patrols, patrol corners and emblems, accounts, Roll Call books, orderly work, company rules, etc."

The 'etc.' is rather intriguing - after all what else could be left?

Early 1st Bendigo Guides - photograph 1.

Back row - Colour Party. Ethel Carter, Olive Wright,
Marion Henderson.

Next row - Stella Anderson, Gwen Long, Ethel French,
Marjorie Turner, Evelyn Lamb.

3rd row - Marie Hamilton, Beverley Lansell, Beth Beischer,
Ena Wright, Merle Bush, Vivien Stephens, Elsie Sydes, Frances Gardner.

Front row - Lilly Koska, Amy Bolton, Madge Welch, Nancy Hamilton, Jean Thurman, Lola Dickson, Arlene Woods, Doris French.

In 1923 there were 9 Divisions in Victoria - Melbourne and suburbs, North Eastern, North Central, Northern, Gippsland, Wimmera, Western, Central and Mallee.

Our first Division Commissioner for the Northern Division was Mrs. L.V. Lansell and she and Miss Bush (being chauffeured everywhere by Mr. Leonard Lansell) travelled extensively opening up Guiding to girls throughout the country.

However, this is a History of Bendigo Guiding, so let us proceed -

Mrs. M.G. Guidice became first District Commissioner for Bendigo in May, 1923, and on the 8th June she called a meeting of representative ladies of the City with a view to forming a Local Association. Miss E.K. Robinson from Imperial Headquarters in London addressed the meeting and the following ladies formed the first L.A.

Executive Chairman - Mrs. M.G. Guidice, District Commissioner.
Vice-Chairman, - Mrs. L.V. Lansell.
Vice-Presidents, - Mrs. D. Baker, Mrs. L.V. Lansell.
Hon. Treasurer, - Mrs. Ewing.
Hon. Secretary. - Miss M.E. Bush.

Committee - Mesdames Nankervis, A.B. Wood, W.J. Miller, Tilley, G.W. Lansell, Misses L. McGillivray and A.L. Burton.

Other members were - Mesdames J.H. Craig, Herring, Frew, G. Mackay, Thurman, Haynes, Misses A. Hunter, M. Warren and Broughton.

Two days later Miss Robinson addressed a public meeting in the Bendigo Town Hall where she gave an "interesting address on the Aims and Ideals of the Girl Guide Movement, and musical items were rendered".

The Local Association was registered on 30th July, 1923, and in that year the film 'Girl Guides to the Fore' was shown at a special matinee in the Lyric Theatre through the generosity of the Mayer, Cr. M.G. Guidice.

1st Bendigo Brownie Pack opened on 9th May, 1924, at St. Pauls with Miss M.E. Bush as Brown Owl. On the 25th July, 1925, the 1st and 2nd Guide companies provided afternoon tea to Mothers who attended the first brownie enrolment.

Enrolled were - Elizabeth (Betty) Alfred, Jean Wood, Phyllis Thurman, Joan Henderson, Hazel Jones, Gladys Parker and Jean Wright.

Photograph 5 shows a happy group with Brown Owl Mrs. Richardson in 1946.

Back row - Mary Cambridge, Marie Emmerson, Brown Owl, Gay Young, Janet Cambridge.

Middle row - Sally Hall, Pam Barton, Mary McCallum, Ann Wilson, Jill Goodman.

Front row - Joyce Long, Joanna Hall, Judith Ewing, Julie Sandner.

There does not seem to be any record of a 2nd Bendigo pack but 3rd Bendigo was opened at All Saints on 16th June, 1930, with Miss A. Woods, as Brown Owl.

4th Bendigo Pack followed closely on 26th August, 1930, with Miss Marion Henderson as Brown Owl, a position she held for many years. The pack met at St. Andrews.

5th Bendigo Pack with Miss D.C. Heritage, first met on 11th February, 1961, and by this time the companies and packs were meeting at 'Ccoinda', the Guide Hall in Howard Place, Bendigo.

Bendigo packs flourished in the sixties and 6th Bendigo was opened on 8th April, 1961, with Miss B. Yates as Brown Owl. Mrs. E. Arnold was Brown Owl of 7th Bendigo when it had its first meeting on 10th June, 1961, and 8th Bendigo opened on 13th June, 1962, under the care of Mrs. P. Johnson.

Mrs. J. Tweed was Brown Owl to the girls in 9th Bendigo when the pack opened on 21st June, 1962, and 1st East Bendigo was led by Miss D.C. Heritage.

This pack was also known as 5th Bendigo.

2nd East Bendigo was registered on 25th September, 1963, with Miss Carol Robins as Brown Owl and the pack later amalgamated with 6th Bendigo. Carol, now Mrs. Fenselau, has continued with her guiding and worked continuously with Brownies in the new White Hills District and was also a Brownie Leader Trainer.

Photograph 21 shows 1st Bendigo Pack, December, 1931.

Guess who was the first Ranger Captain? Yes, Miss Merle Bush. With Miss Elsie Henderson as Lieutenant she opened 1st Bendigo Rangers on 23rd June, 1927. The original members were -

Lilly Koska, Madge Welch, Stella Anderson, Gwen Long, Doris French, Elsie Sydes, Olive Wright, Doris Beall, Beth Beischer, Melva Everett, Olive Howard, Marjorie Collins and Amy Bolton.

Again there is no record of a 2nd Bendigo Ranger Unit and it seems 1st Bendigo Pack sent girls to both guide companies at St. Pauls and the two companies then became the nucleus of the one ranger company.

3rd Bendigo Ranger Unit opened in 1927 with Mrs. Hamilton as Captain and their first enrolment took place on 25th July, 1928.

Miss M. McKie was first Captain of the 4th Bendigo Rangers which commenced on 17th August, 1932.

By 9th May, 1935, the three ranger units had combined into a Bendigo District Ranger Company under the leadership of Miss Leila Castell.

During the 2nd World War years, rangers were in the care of Miss Clare Fraser and in 1945 the Home Emergency Armlet was awarded to the Bendigo District Rangers - the only one awarded in Victoria.

On 4th March, 1955, the Bendigo District Land Ranger Company was re-opened by Miss Beverley Young and Miss Rosemary Carbery. This later became the Bendigo District Sea Ranger Crew 'Curlew' under Mrs. Judy Scarratt.

These then, were the units over the past 60 years.

* * * * *

The District Commissioners who led them were -

Mrs. M.G. Guidice	Mrs. H.N. Butt
Miss Dorothy Hyett	Mrs. McNeil Ferguson
Mrs. C.W. Baker	Mrs. N. Shellam
Mrs. Jean Every	Mrs. Clarice Bolton
Mrs. Joyce Rowe	Mrs. Margaret Beaumont
Mrs. Zelma Miller	and, currently,
	Mrs. Erma Hoare.

The first Division Commissioner was Mrs. L.V. Lansell and following her retirement in 1948, the Northern Division was divided into several divisions and later the regions were formed within the State system.

Other Division Commissioners covering the Bendigo area have been -

Mrs. E.T. Coutts	Mrs. C.W. (Margaret) Baker
Mrs. J.R. (Gwen) Haughton	Miss Norma Young
Mrs. Barbara Sawyer	Mrs. Kaye Fisher, Mrs. W. Baker
Mrs. Jean Goodrich	Mrs. Carol Agnew.
The present holders are -	Mrs. Margaret Taylor, the Bendigo Northern Division and Mrs. Joan Cooper, the Bendigo Southern Division Commissioners.

North Central Region Commissioners were -

Mrs. Margaret Baker Mrs. Margery Fenton
Mrs. Barbara Sawyer and, currently,
Mrs. Maren Chandler.

* * * * *

An exciting day for the guides of 1st Bendigo company was the dedication by Archdeacon Herring in St. Pauls on the 24th August, 1924, of their new Union Jack presented to them by Mrs. L.V. Lansell in December, 1923. The honour granted to guides to officially carry their country's flag, in addition to the Guide World Flag, has always been appreciated and treated with great respect in the Bendigo guiding district.



The guides have always been included in Royal occasions and both companies were represented at the Rally held at Government House on 21st April, 1927, for the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York. The Duchess was escorted by Miss Merle Bush. Photograph 7. Bendigo guides paraded for the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester in 1934. Photograph 9 shows Mrs. L.V. Lansell with the Duchess of Gloucester in Rosalind Park, Bendigo.

The happy guiders in photograph 8 - are Jean Plowman of 4th Bendigo, Jill Hardeman of 6th Bendigo, Amy Bush of 1st Bendigo and Clare Fraser of Rangers. They escorted the girls in 1947 to the Melbourne Rally.

In 1954 excited guides turned out for the visit to Bendigo of H.R.H. Queen Elizabeth II and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh.

Various parades for the visits of State Governors and Governors-General were well attended and photograph 10 shows a rally at the Queen Elizabeth Oval (then called the Upper Reserve) in 1947 when Miss Amy Bush escorted Sir Winston Duggan, Governor of Victoria.

A highlight in Bendigo history was the visit of the World Chief Guide, Lady Baden-Powell, to Bendigo in 1947. She spoke to a

public meeting at Girton College hall and attended a rally at Somers Hill. Photograph 11 shows - Sylvia Aldridge, Mrs. Richardson, Norma Young, Mrs. C.O. Fairbairn, State Ccmmissioner, Clare Fraser and Lady Baden-Powell.

The Chief Guide spoke to all ranks of the local Guide and Scout Association, seen in photograph 12, and all were given the opportunity to view her personal standard.

Photograph 13. Colour Party - Elaine Aldridge, Beverley Young, and Beverley McGuinness.

Lord and Lady Baden-Powell visited Victoria in 1935 and the Bendigo girls attended the Rally at Frankston. In 1947 they also attended the State Rally for Lady Baden-Powell and again on her visits in 1957 at Lancefield and 1967 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

* * * * *

Fill Golden Days,
With Golden Deeds,



Guide Greetings —

This small greeting card was found among Miss Bush's papers. The inscription inside reads - "To 1st Bendigo Ranger Company
From,
2nd Bendigo Guide Company,
Xmas, 1927".

State Rallies and functions have always been well attended and Miss Bush was at the first State Rally at Government House in December, 1922. The second State Rally also at Government House, Melbourne, was held on 3rd October, 1925, and both 1st and 2nd Bendigo companies were represented. About 1,600 guides were present and were inspected by Lady Stradbroke.

Clive Wright, a 1st Bendigo guide was chosen to attend the first Interstate Camp held at Camden, N.S.W. on 16th January, 1926.



Again, this delightful sketch was among Miss Bush's papers.

Camping has always been popular from the first camp mentioned earlier, to representation at 'Thaba', the first State Camp at Britannia Park in January, 1959. Photograph 23 is a group at a District Camp at Taradale, in 1947.

1st Bendigo is probably unique in guide companies in that during the first 30 years of its existence, i.e. from 1922 to 1952 every Captain has been a guide in the company. These guiders were -

Miss Merle Bush, Miss Margaret Sydes, Miss Marion Henderson, Miss Lilly Koska, Miss Maude Koska, Miss Valda Roberts, Mrs. Blanche Cambridge, Miss Amy Bush, Miss Beryl Mathers and Miss Peggy Smith.

It is pleasing to note that the present Leader of 1st Bendigo Company is carrying on the tradition. Mrs. Rhonda Bowles was a Queen's Guide Badge awardee as Rhonda Harvey with 1st Bendigo.

Hiking has always been a favourite past-time and it is fun to note that in the early records when the guides wrote reports on each activity, that the word is spelt "hyke". Photographs 17 and 18 show early hike activities at Grassy Flat Reservoir, Kennington, and other hike photographs are 14, 15 and 16, the latter showing Jean Wright, Olive Webster, Sylvia Koska and Violet Farmer.

From 1930 onwards, Somers Hill has been a favourite hike destination. This property was accepted by the State Commissioner, Lady Somers on 15th October, 1930, from Mr. H. Keck, MLC. Mr. Keck had always shown a keen interest in Girl Guiding and his grand-daughter Blanche, was later to become a Captain of 1st Bendigo - Mrs. Blanche Cambridge.

The property was named Somers Hill after Lady Somers and in 1932 Mr. Keck laid the foundation stone of the stone hut to be built from material quarried on the land. Photograph 19.

The stone reads -

GIRL GUIDES. This stone was laid by
Mr. H. Keck, MLC - 11/6/1932.

The hut was opened on 1st October, 1932, by the State Commissioner Lady Chauvel and State Secretary, Miss Sybil Irving.

Unfortunately, the hut was wrecked by vandals in the 1970's.

The hut and grounds have been used for many guiding activities over the years including hikes and camping. The two guides from 4th Bendigo pictured at Somers Hill in photograph 20 are Betty Nankervis and June Ferguson.

Perhaps the largest single undertaking in the district in the 60 years was the Guide Shop which, during World War 11, operated as a means of raising funds to help provide clothing for refugees and comforts for men and women in the Services.

Members of the Local Association met at the home of Mrs. McN. Ferguson to discuss the project and a shop was opened in Hargreaves Street on 6th September, 1940. After 6 months, through the generosity of Mr. M.G. Guidice who provided the premises rent free, it moved to the Lyric Buildings and for the next few years the 'Guide Shop' became a well known feature in Bendigo.

Open each Friday, manned by volunteers and stocked by volunteer labour, it was instrumental in the raising of £4,000 before closing early in 1949. This money provided a regular cheque towards Red Cross funds as well as comforts for the troops, in particular the men in small ships, especially HMAS Bendigo.



Over the years, 10,000 jars of jam were made and sold - (a special ration of sugar was allowed). Guides collected jam jars to be filled. Macedon and Daylesford guides picked

many pounds of blackberries and fruit as they came into season. Gifts of a table, a preserving pan, jars, etc., were very much appreciated by the energetic band who turned these efforts into saleable products. There was little difficulty in selling jams, also flowers, vegetables, soup, cakes, dolls' clothes and a variety of other articles.

The Captain, the officers and men of 'HMAS Bendigo' had such a high regard for the efforts of the local guides that in 1945 they sent to this City a full-size regulation British Navy White Ensign autographed with the names of the crew then on board. This Ensign was hung in the Guide Hall until October 14th, 1979, when it was presented to the City, by Mrs. McNeil Ferguson, on behalf of the Guides of Bendigo.

Another war-time activity was the delivery of Christmas parcels for the Post Office in 1940/42. Miss Mollie Hoffmeyer took charge of the organisation and Rangers and Guides ensured that people received their Christmas parcels in spite of the manpower shortage. The £200 earned was given to Lady Baden-Powell's Blanket Fund. Photograph 27 shows Berry Richardson (Wallace), Jill Hardeman, Letty Runnalls and Miss Hoffmeyer in 1940. Photograph 28 - Girl Guides Cycle Corps ready to work in 1942, also delivering parcels but mainly set up to carry out special emergency work.

In the mid-1940's Joyce Veitch and Norma Young passed the tests for inclusion in a Guide International Service team but for various reasons neither went overseas.

For the girls, the opening of their own home, 'Cooinda' in Howard Place, Bendigo, on 5th March, 1961, was a highlight. The hall was opened by the Assistant State Commissioner, Mrs. R.G. Orr, who was formerly Beverley Lansell, a guide in 1st Bendigo and daughter of the Division Commissioner, Mrs. L.V. Lansell.

The Rotary Cup presented by the Rotary Club of Bendigo in 1949 when Mr. Arthur Davies was Club President, has been contested every year since. The type of competition is varied each year to cover some part of guide activity and this day of fellowship and fun is enjoyed by all.

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The distribution of all the units around Bendigo is very different nowadays and shows how guiding moves with the times.

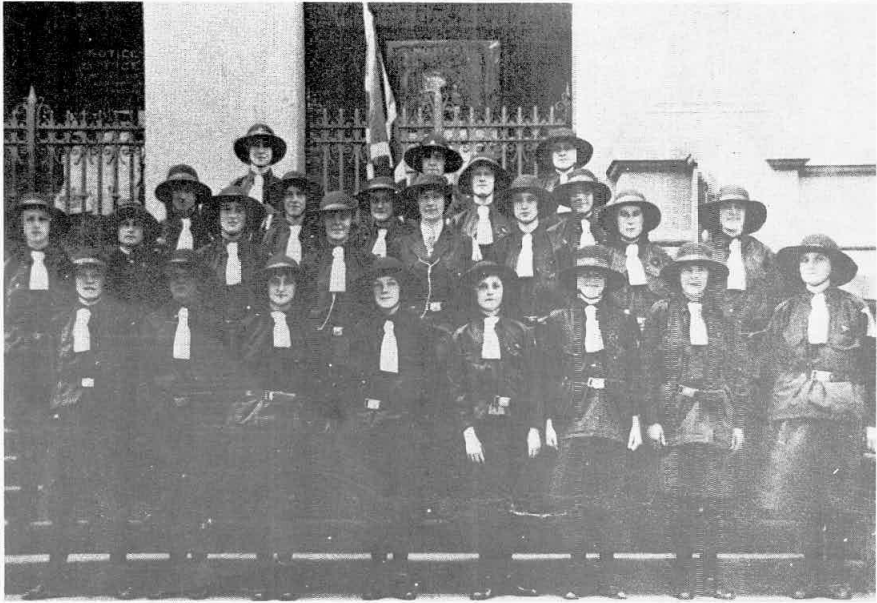
The break-up of the Northern Division into smaller divisions put the dividing line between Bendigo Northern Division and Bendigo Southern Division right across the City. The growth of Bendigo meant the young people were now living in the suburbs and outskirts of the City so instead of one Bendigo District we now have Bendigo Central, Golden Square, Bendigo South, Strathfieldsaye, White Hills and Eaglehawk.

The Bendigo Central District now consists of 1st Bendigo Guide Company, 1st Bendigo Brownie-guide pack, 2nd Bendigo Brownie-guide pack, and Bendigo 'Curlew' Ranger Unit. Always helping, of course - the Bendigo Central Local Association.

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Take A Look Into The Past





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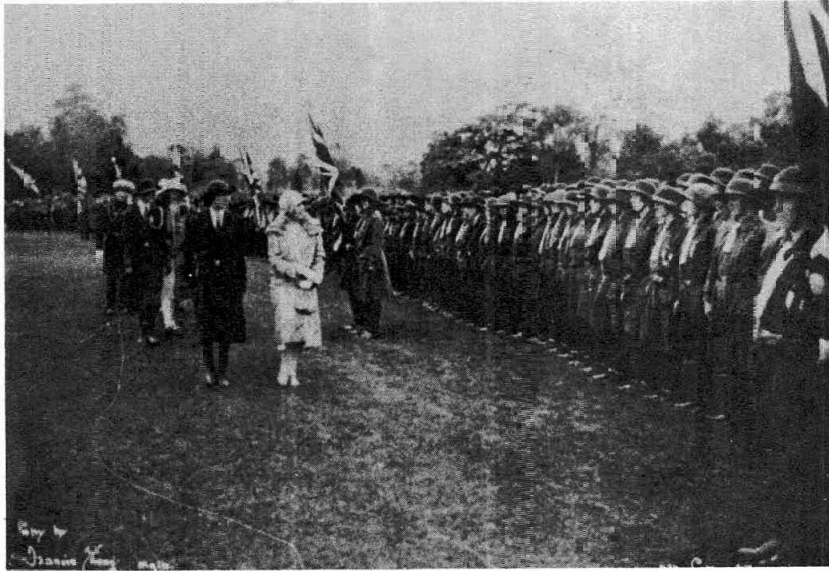
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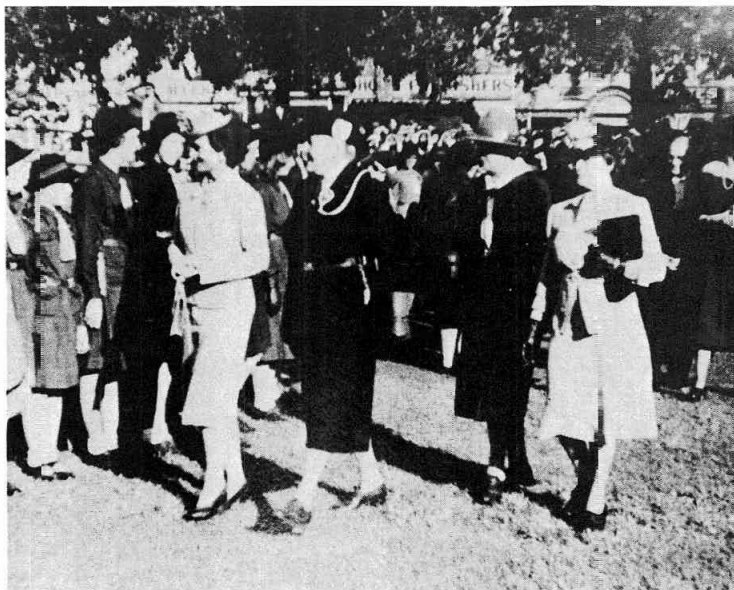
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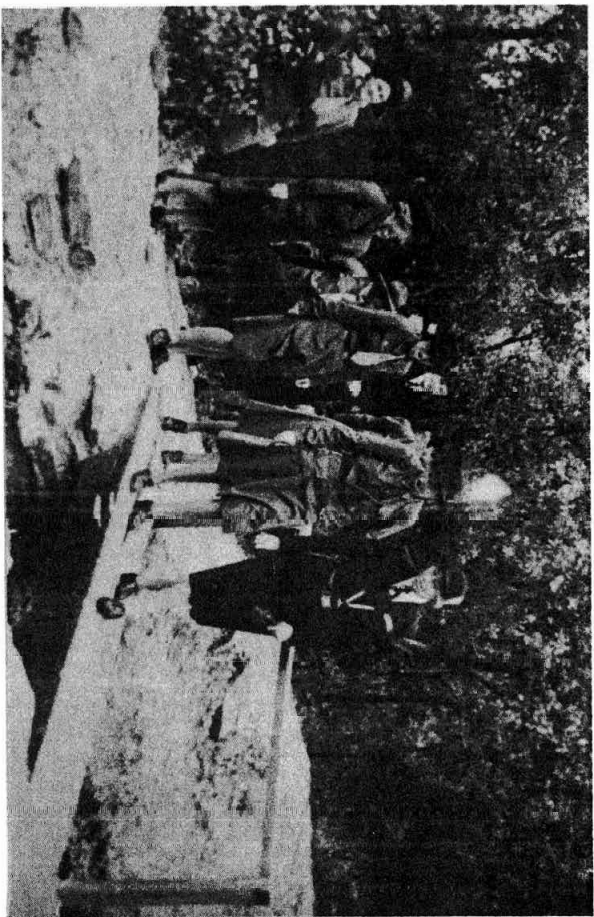
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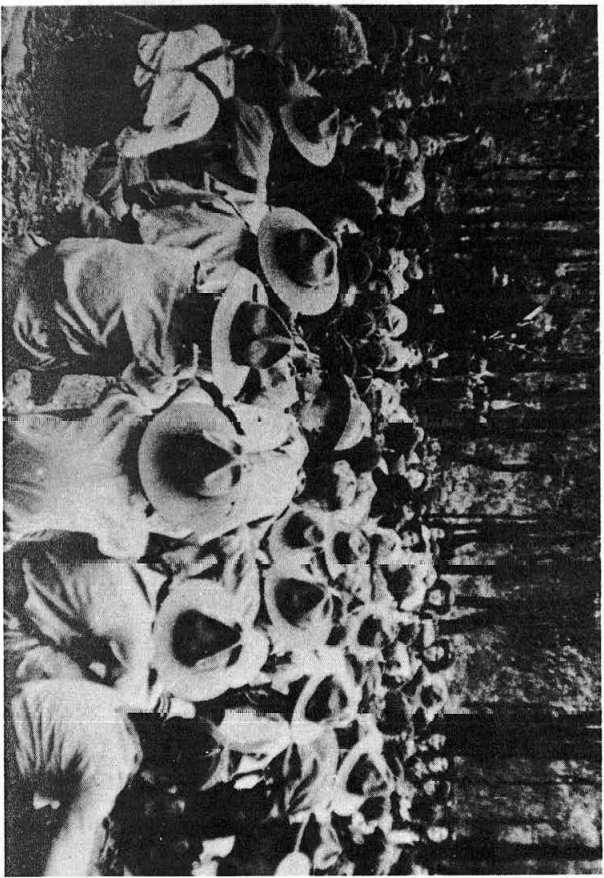
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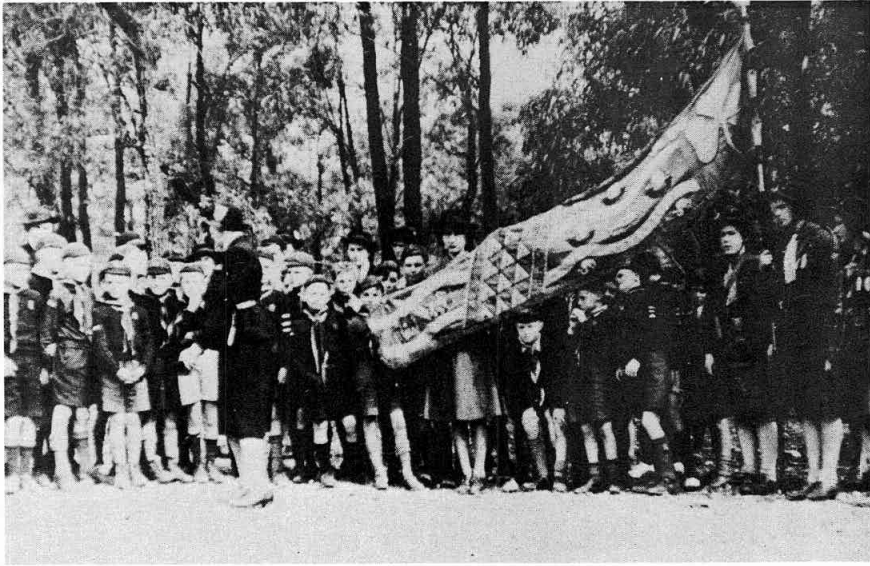
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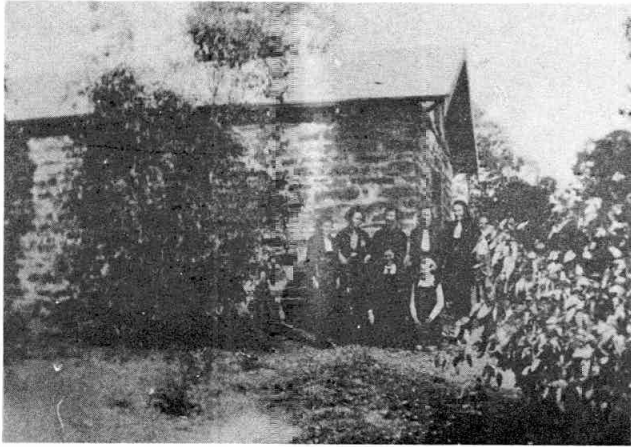
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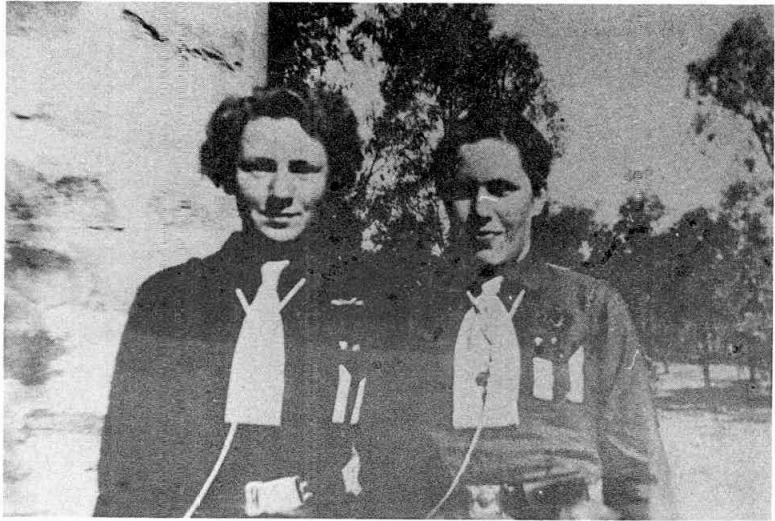
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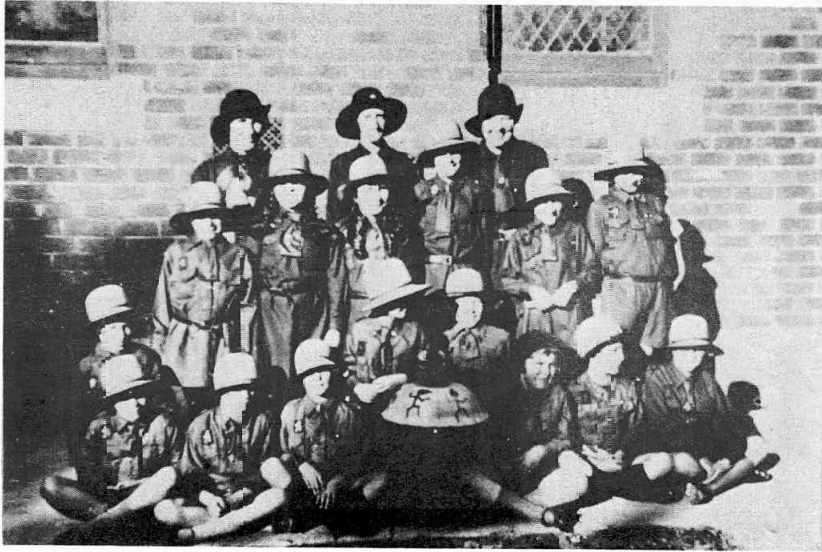
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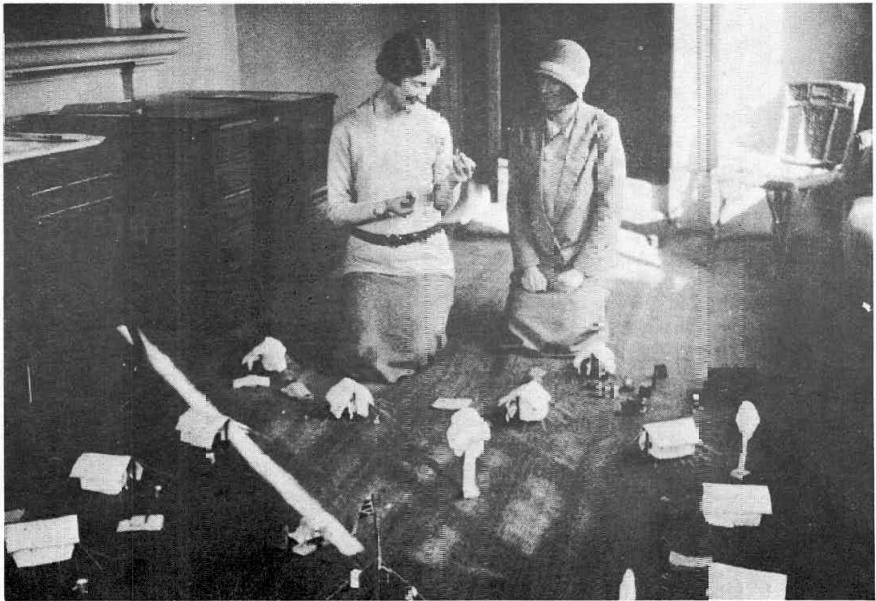
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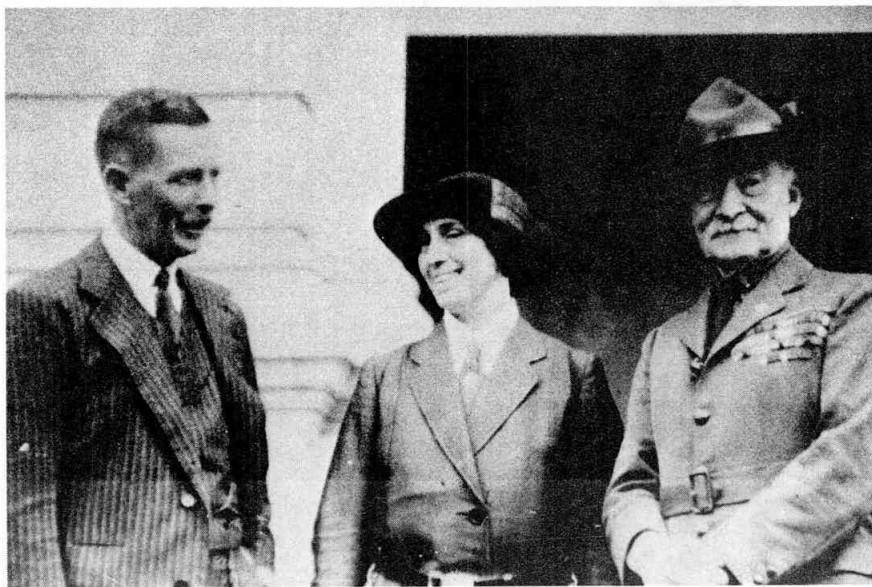
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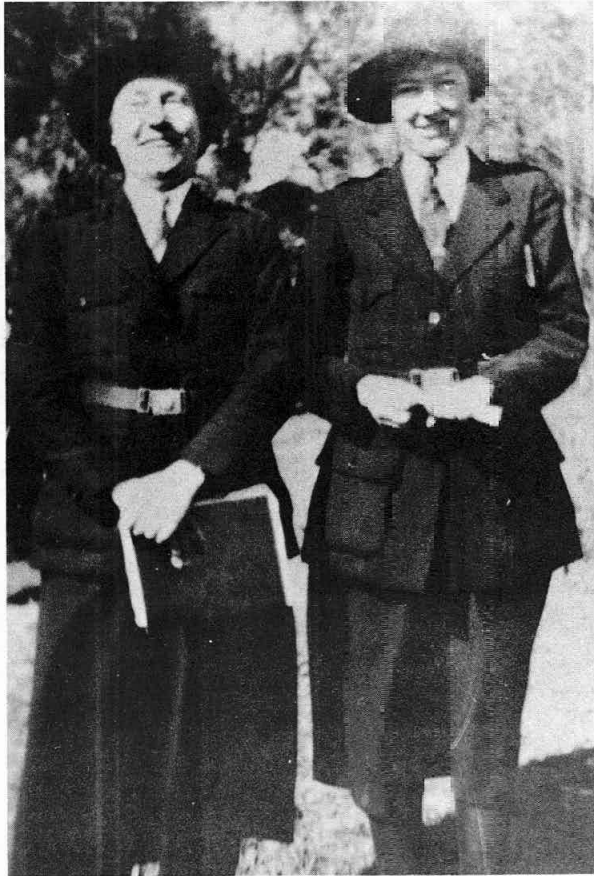


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1ST BENDIGO CENTRAL GUIDE COMPANY - 1982

Front - left to right

Sherri McClure, Pauline Huthnance, Fiona Mason, Susan Davis, Carmel Pirfold, Julia Griffin, Michelle Bullock, Wendy Carmoly, Jacqueline Brown, Karen Barr.

Centre - Tonya McKinley, Katherine Ring, Cindy Carmody, Erma Hoare district commissioner, Rhonda Bowles leader, Barbara Davey assistant leader, Judith McClellan, Kylie Evans, Angela Eeles, Sally Mitchell.

Back - Raelene Allen, Lisa Griffin, Lucy Hoare, Joanne Huthnance, Rachael Moore, Marie McKinley, Helen Mollison, Claire Rowe, Catherine McClellan, Deanne Nixon.

Absent - Lisa Norden, Amanda Leonard, Camille Power, Janet Ross, Janet Chappel. Susan Muir, Heather Lyall assistant leader



Mrs. Maren Chandler,
North Central
Region Commissioner.





MISS MURIEL EVELYN BUSH - OBE

First Captain 1st Bendigo Guide company
 First Brown Owl 1st Bendigo Brownie pack
 First Captain 1st Bendigo Ranger Unit
 Local Association Honorary Secretary, 1923
 District Secretary 1923/27
 Division Secretary 1927
 Campers' Licence 1924
 Blue Cord Diploma for Training, 1924
 First in Victoria, in company with Miss Gwen Swinburne,
 Red Cord Diploma for Training, 1926
 Chief Guide's Diploma for Training, 1947 - the only
 one awarded in Australia.
 Medal of Merit and the only Life Member of the State
 Council of the Victorian Girl Guides Association.

Educated at Girton Church of England Grammar School, was Head Prefect in 1915 and did her Teacher Training at the School.

Her Order of the British Empire was awarded for her inspiration and practical assistance to the issuing of the Call to the People of Australia on 11th November, 1951. Photograph 30 shows her with Miss Freda Barfus and photograph 31 is the last photograph taken on 31/8/80 with Ena Ellis (nee Wright, one of the first guides in 1st Bendigo), Mrs. A.D. Young, Mrs. Betty Nicholls (nee Hockin, guide 1934/38). Miss Bush was born on the 9th March, 1897 and died on 12/1/1981.

* * * * *

THE END OF AN ERA

... Bendigo Advertiser
14th February, 1981.

A memorial service held recently to honor the memory of the late Miss Merle E. Bush, OBE, in St. Paul's Anglican Church, Bendigo, was attended by her family, friends and a large

number of early guiding friends and present day personnel of the movement.

Included were the Chief Commissioner for Australia, Mrs. R. Renshaw Jones, OBE, State Commissioner for Victoria, Mrs. J.N. West, Miss Jan Forrest, State Commissioner for South Australia, and the State Secretary for Victoria, Miss Peg Barr.

Through her late parents, Samuel Albert and Nina Marie Bush, Merle had vivid memories of the early days of Victoria, her paternal grandfather Albert Bush having established a large produce store in Bendigo which supplied a vast area of Northern Victoria and the southern Riverina, using paddle steamers along the Murray from Echuca.

Her maternal grandfather J.C. Dahlsen, had a similar business in Bairnsdale, building his own steamship, the 'J.C.D.' to trade through the Gippsland Lakes and coastal ports to Melbourne.

As a student, Merle attended Girton College which was then being established. She maintained an interest in Girton all through her life for she loved her old school and had many happy memories of it.

In 1923 Merle became deeply involved in the guiding movement, establishing the first Bendigo Guide Company. Among others, the Lansell family was a tower of strength. Mrs. Leonard Lansell was Division Commissioner of an area stretching from Benalla to Mildura and the Murray River to Essendon.

Further guide training continued in Melbourne by the visiting English trainers, and Merle herself became a trainer setting a very high standard and becoming an inspiration to all.

In 1939 Merle accepted the position of Acting Victorian State Secretary for a period of 3 months which eventually stretched to a period of eight years! During this time she gave outstanding and invaluable assistance to the States of South Australia and Queensland.

When the Chief Guide Lady Baden Powell visited Australia after the war, she honoured Merle by awarding her the Chief's Diploma - the highest guiding award in the movement - the first and only in Australia.

Just after the war years a document known as 'The Call to the People of Australia' and signed by the Governor-General and all State Governors, leaders of all the churches, and Chief Justices throughout Australia, was issued through voluntary 'Call Committees'.

Sir Edmund Herring, Chief Justice and Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, was largely responsible for the document, but it was known that Merle was an inspiration behind the scenes.

To the joy of her friends the Queen honoured Merle with the Order of the British Empire in 1954, and it was fitting that Merle was able to go to Buckingham Palace to receive the OBE from the Queen herself.

Merle Bush had a strong and simple faith, a wide and far reaching interest in her country's past, present and its future and a deep concern for civic matters in Bendigo.

Her interest in the education of the young never waned.

Her passing is the end of an era.



Mrs. L.V. Lansell - Division Commissioner, held her warrant as such from 1924 to 1948. Lady Stradbroke appealed to Mrs. Lansell for assistance during the visit of English trainer Miss K. Robinson to enable her to take guiding to the country. Thereafter Mr. and Mrs. Lansell travelled thousands of miles in the 24 years she was Division Commissioner. Only ill-health

made her relinquish her beloved Northern Division.

She was a member of the State Executive Committee 1924-1932, and was a keen and enthusiastic member of State Council from its inception until the last years of her life. She died on 16th April, 1959.

* * * * *

Mrs. R. Graeme Orr, OBE. (nee Beverley Lansell).

Beverley was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L.V. Lansell and enrolled in 1st Bendigo on 26/5/1924.

She was educated at Girton Bendigo, The Hermitage Geelong and St. Catherine's Toorak.

Her guiding activities included - Captain 1st Moulamein, NSW; District and Division Commissioner; Commissioner for Hospitality in Victoria 1938; State Council and State Executive 1939. State Commissioner 1948/53; President Memorial Headquarters Building Appeal 1949; Division Commissioner Inner Southern Suburbs 1958/59; Assistant State Commissioner 1959/62, and Acting Chief Commissioner for Australia on two occasions.

She was awarded the Coronation Medal in 1953; the Silver Fish in 1962, and the OBE 1965.

She died in 1979.

* * * * *



Lady Somers - after whom Somers Hill was named. She was County Commissioner for Hereford County, England, when her husband was appointed Governor of Victoria in 1926. She became State Commissioner for Victoria in that year until her husband's term ended in 1931 and they returned to England.

Her practical guiding knowledge enabled her to be a tower of strength to Victoria during her stay with us and she had a real

interest in the workings of Companies and Packs and played a large part in the Administration of the Movement. She died in England, June, 1981. A memorial service was held in Melbourne to honour her.

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JUST A FEW OF THE MANY BIOGRAPHIES.

Mrs. Margaret Baker - Bendigo District Commissioner 1952/55. Bendigo Division Commissioner 1955/62. North Central Region Commissioner 1962/67. Region Training Adviser 1967/70. Member of Victorian State Council.

She is a keen and active member of a bowling club and a golf club. With the growth of Inner Wheel within the State her guiding experience was grasped by that organisation and from 1979 to 1981 she was Extension Chairman District A60. She is currently a member of the Merle Bush Trefoil Guild, Bendigo.

* * * * *

Miss Amy Bush. (a second cousin of Miss M.E. Bush). Amy was a brownie and a guide in 1st Bendigo Pack and Company. She became the Lieutenant in 1940 and then the Captain of 1st Bendigo 1944/49. Amy held a Training Certificate and was the first full time travelling trainer for Victorian Girl Guides Association in 1959.

In 1979 she was elected for a six year term as one of the 12 members of the International Council of the International Fellowship of Former Scouts and Guides - the only member from the Southern Hemisphere.

She is also the Australian representative on the Asia-Pacific Region Committee of IFOFSAG.

Within Australia, Amy is the Editor of 'Australian Fellowship News', the official publication of the Australian Fellowship of Former Scouts and Guides. This publication was formerly 'Australian Trefoil' which she edited from its inception in 1974 for the Trefoil Guilds of Australia.

Amy is also a member of the State Council of the Girl Guides Association of Victoria.

* * * * *

Councillor Margery Fenton, nee Grylls, commenced her guiding as a Lone Guide and joined 4th Bendigo when she came to the City to the Bendigo High School. Photograph 32. She trained as a teacher. Margery was the Lieutenant at 4th Bendigo with Miss Weller as Captain. When her family were growing up and becoming involved in the Movement, she became a Local Association member in Kerang. Later she was Kerang Division Commissioner and then the North Central Region Commissioner.

When her husband, a Shire Councillor died, Margery was elected to the Kerang Shire Council to fill the vacancy caused by his death. She has been actively involved in the Family and Community Services Programme, and is Chairman of the Mallee Family Care committee.

Margery represents the North Central Region as the representative from the region on State Council. In her spare time her hobbies are gardening and spinning.

* * * * *

DEFINITION OF AN OPTIMISTIC CAMPER - -

One who arrives with a pump but no li-lo.
(from Bush's papers)

Deaconess Elizabeth Alfred was enrolled as a Brownie in Bendigo Pack and then as a guide in 3rd Bendigo Company. She became a Ranger and has been a guide lieutenant, a ranger captain and a district commissioner over the years.

She taught at Girton College, Bendigo, for approximately three years and was Principal of the Deaconess Training House at Fairfield. She became Deaconess with the Anglican Church at Dandenong. She spent some years as Chaplain at the Women's Hospital, Melbourne.

Elizabeth was also the Melbourne Diocesan Representative on the State Council of the Victorian Girl Guides Association.

* * * * *

Miss Norma Young, A.M., J.P.

A brownie and a guide in 1st Bendigo Pack and Company. Norma was Captain of 6th Bendigo, 1945, and Captain of 3rd Bendigo 1946/7. She became the First Captain of 1st Eaglehawk, in 1947. She was awarded guiding's Medal of Merit on 22/2/1964. Currently President of the Merle Bush Trefoil Guild for 1981/82.

Norma was State Extension Adviser, 1965/70. She represented Australia at the International Conference on the Patrol System at Baarn in the Netherlands in 1953. She was National President of the Australian Federation of Business and Professional Women 1972/74 and was made a Justice of the Peace in 1976. Norma has been a member of the Committee of Management of Mirridong Home for the Blind, Bendigo, since 1950. Membership of the Civil Division of the Order of Australia was conferred on Norma on the 16th January, 1976.

* * * * *

Mrs. Aimee Ferguson. As President of the Local Association for 17 years in Bendigo, Mrs. Ferguson had a great talent of leadership and Guiding flourished at this time.

She was President of the Guide Patriotic Shop and a tireless worker from 1940 to 1949 when the shop closed.

For several years she was District Commissioner for Bendigo and during times when Bendigo did not have a District Commissioner she invited the guiders to hold their monthly district meeting at her home and so acted as the link between the leaders and the Local Association. Her three daughters - June, Nanette and Mary were guides in 4th Bendigo.

* * * * *

Deaconess Lucia (Lilly) Koska was one of the girls who attended the very first meeting of 1st Bendigo Guide Company.

She was also one of the first Rangers in 1st Bendigo Ranger Unit.

Later she was Captain of 1st Bendigo Company.

She became a Deaconess in the Anglican Church and spent many years in India.

Mrs. Jean Whitla. (nee Plowman).

Jean joined 4th Bendigo brownies at the age of 8 and flew up to 4th Bendigo guides where Miss Weller was Captain and Jean later became Captain of that company herself.

Her work took her to Melbourne after being an announcer on 3BO Bendigo. She married and had two children who in turn became a brownie and a cub. As a parent, she became very involved in transport of cubs, guides and scouts to various camps and activities and she later became a cub leader and tester for many proficiency badges. She was President of Wodonga Local Association.

Through her wonderful knowledge of and interest in Outback Australia (fostered from her father's involvement as the first patrol padre into outback Australia for the Rev. John Flynn), she has encouraged and taken many young people on camping trips and fostered a love of that vast land in many young hearts.

She has studied aboriginal archaeology and anthropology and carries out work on a volunteer basis for the Victorian Archaeological Survey and the NSW National Parks. Jean works under contract for the Australian Broadcasting Commission for their news division as their Wodonga correspondent.

* * * * *

1935 - Bendigo District owned 10 Paliasses!

'HMAS BENDIGO'

The story of the 'Bendigo' goes hand in hand with the story of the Girl Guides Patriotic Shop ... both came to life late in 1940.

The story of 'HMAS Bendigo' began in August, 1940, when the keel of the corvette was laid down at Cockatoo Dockyard in Sydney.

The story of the Patriotic Shop began with the official opening in September, 1940; the ceremony being performed by the then Mayoress, Mrs. G. Pethard. Mrs. L.V. Lansell, the Northern Division Commissioner, Mrs. F. McN. Ferguson, President and Mrs. H.L. Bolton, Secretary with Mrs. J.H.N. Langford as Treasurer, headed the executive committee.

Mrs. Lansell told the gathering of representatives and leaders of Bendigo women's organisations of the splendid work of guiders and guides all over the world who were contributing to the war effort. Funds from the shop were to support the evacuated children from London, the British seamen on trawlers, Red Cross and the Comforts Fund. These funds were to extend in the future to contribute to some unforeseen ends ... Prisoners of War, Blood Bank, Chinese famine relief, sheepskins for Russia, the Ambulance appeal and many more, amongst them the 'adoption' of three Royal Australian Navy corvettes.

Two corvettes, the 'Doomba' and the 'Orana' were adopted during 1941, and letters of thanks were being received by Mrs. Ferguson in 1942 for parcels of books, literature, comforts and necessities forwarded to the men.

The Committee in its turn was writing 'thank you' letters to the generous donors of sugar, jam jars, fruit, a pair of scales and, wonder of wonders, a much needed preserving pan. In one week 250 pots of plum jam were made. Guides picked all the fruit - "this being no small task".

"You will recall that during the war, an Australian built corvette was named 'HMAS Bendigo' after the City of Bendigo, Victoria. The vessel performed splendid service during the last war. Though it is the normal practice to sell bells of ships of war when they are disposed of, it was thought that the City of Bendigo might wish to secure the bell of this ship".

The Town Clerk was accordingly informed that the Commonwealth Government was prepared to present the Bell to the City as a gesture of appreciation for the kind and active interest taken in the welfare of the ship and the comfort of the ship's personnel when 'HMAS Bendigo' served as a unit of the Royal Australian Navy.

The Bell has been placed in the foyer of what is regarded as one of the City's finest buildings, the Bendigo City Hall.

The inscription reads -

THIS BELL
BELONGED TO
CORVETTE HMAS BENDIGO
AND WAS PRESENTED TO THE BENDIGO CITY COUNCIL
BY THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY
IN RECOGNITION OF THE VALIANT SERVICES OF THE
WARSHIP IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR
1941 - 1946

October, 1979. On the 14th October, 1979, a ceremony was held in the gardens adjoining the City Hall at which the British Navy White Ensign from 'HMAS Bendigo' was given into the custody of the City of Bendigo.

Present at the ceremony were former members of the crew, members of the Bendigo Ex-Navalmen's Club, Officers and Cadets of the Naval Reserve. With a Colour Party leading, the Girl Guides lead the cadets in a short march from Hargreaves Street to the gardens.

The Australian Flag was raised while the Marist Brothers College Band played 'God Save The Queen'. Mr. Phil. Harper, ex RANR gave an address on the history of the ship, and then the Mayor, Cr. R.L. Campbell, MBE, accepted the White Ensign and Commemorative Plaque on behalf of the City. The former President of the Girl Guides Patriotic Shop, Mrs. F.McN. Ferguson responded by saying that the Girl Guides Association of Bendigo had been proud to accept the Flag in 1945, and now gave it into the care and custody of the City.

The ceremony closed with the singing of 'Advance Australia Fair' and a procession took place into the Bendigo City Hall foyer to set the plaque in position. It is situated above the White Ensign which has been mounted and framed by members of the Bendigo Ex-Navalmen's Club.

The plaque reads -

ON THE 14TH OCTOBER, 1979
HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR CR. R.L. CAMPBELL
ACCEPTED ON BEHALF OF THE CITIZENS OF BENDIGO
FROM THE GIRL GUIDES ASSOCIATION
THIS BRITISH NAVY WHITE ENSIGN FROM 'HMAS BENDIGO'
WHICH SHE CARRIED WITH DISTINCTION DURING THE
PACIFIC AND ISLANDS CAMPAIGN
IN WORLD WAR 11.

* * * * *

22. 8. 1922	1st Bendigo guide company	9th to be registered in Victoria
5. 1923	Mrs. M.J. Guidicc	- 1st Bendigo District Csr.
8. 6. 1923	Bendigo Local Association	
9. 4. 1924	1st Bendigo brownie pack	
28. 6. 1924	2nd Bendigo guide company	
16. 1. 1926	Olive Wright represented district at 1st interstate camp at Camden, New South Wales.	
28. 4. 1927	Visit of Duke and Duchess of York	
23. 6. 1927	1st Bendigo Ranger company	
27. 6. 1927	3rd Bendigo guide company	
	3rd Bendigo ranger company	
15.10. 1928	First Bendigo Rally	
8. 6. 1929	1st Bendigo guides and rangers sent £1 as a Gift to the Nation to build the Shrine of Remembrance.	
30. 8. 1929	4th Bendigo guide company	
16. 6. 1930	3rd Bendigo brownie pack	
26. 8. 1930	4th Bendigo brownie pack	
24. 9. 1930	5th Bendigo guide company	
16.10. 1930	Somers Hill given by Mr. H. Keck, MLC and received on behalf of the Girl Guides Association by Lady Somers.	
1931	Miniature Camp presented to Lady Somers by Bendigo district as a farewell gift when she returned to England in 1931. Photograph 26.	
11. 6. 1932	Foundation Stone laid for hut at Somers Hill.	
17. 8. 1932	4th Bendigo rangers	
1.10. 1932	Hut at Somers Hill opened by Lady Chauvel	
9. 5. 1935	Ranger companies amalgamated to Bendigo district rangers	
1935	Visit of Lord and Lady Baden Powell to Victoria Photograph 29.	
1942	Girl Guide Cycle Corps set up for emergency work	
6. 9. 1940	Guide Patriotic Shop opened	

- 1940 Old Guides Club formed to sort and mind clothing for refugees
 1944 Home Emergency Armlet awarded to Bendigo District Rangers
 1945 White Ensign received from 'IMAS Bendigo'
12. 4. 1945 6th Bendigo Guide Company
17. 11. 1945 Rally at Government House for Duke and Duchess of Gloucester
 1947 Visit of Lady Baden Powell to Victoria and in particular to Bendigo
24. 4. 1947 1st Eaglehawk Guide Company
 1955 District represented on Good Neighbour Council until it ceased to operate in Bendigo about 1958.
8. 10. 1956 Mrs. J. Farthing elected as an L.A. representative on State Council
 1957 Visit of Lady Baden Powell to Victoria
 1957 B-P Centenary Functions
11. 2. 1961 5th Bendigo brownie pack, later 1st East Bendigo
5. 3. 1961 'Cooinda' opened by Assistant State Commissioner, Mrs. R.G. Orr and dedication service conducted by Deaconess Elizabeth Alfred
8. 4. 1961 6th Bendigo Brownie Pack
3. 5. 1961 7th Bendigo Guide Company, later 1st East Bendigo, later 1st Strathfieldsaye
10. 6. 1961 7th Bendigo Brownie Pack
13. 6. 1962 8th Bendigo Brownie Pack
21. 6. 1962 9th Bendigo Brownie Pack
25. 6. 1963 2nd East Bendigo Brownie Pack
25. 4. 1972 600 members of guiding at a Rally at Bendigo Showgrounds for visit of the State Commissioner Mrs. R. Renshaw Jones
14. 10. 1979 White Ensign from 'HMAS Bendigo' presented to Bendigo City to be displayed in the foyer of the City Hall.
2. 5. 1981 Guide Week. Region Rally at Rosalind Park. 600 girls. Photo 34.
- August 1981 Merle Bush Trefoil Guild
- August 1982 60 Years of Guiding in Bendigo. Diamond Jubilee Celebrated at St. Pauls Cathedral.

Our story commenced in 1922 but we cannot write 'The End' on this page as, if you look at photograph 33 you will see 1st Bendigo Company in July, 1982.

Front row, from left to right - Sherri McClure, Pauline Huthnance, Flora Mason, Susan Davis, Carmel Pinfold, Julia Griffin, Michelle Bullock, Wendy Carmody, Jacqueline Brown, Karen Barr.

Centre row, - Tonya McKinley, Katherine Ring, Cindy Carmody, Erma Hoare, district commissioner, Rhonda Bowles, Leader, Barbara Davey, Assistant Leader, Judith McClellan, Kylie Evans, Angela Eeles, Sally Mitchell.

Back Row - Raelene Allen, Lisa Griffin, Lucy Hoare, Joanne Huthnance, Rachael Moore, Marie McKinley, Helen Mollison, Claire Rowe, Catherine McClellan, Deanne Nixon.

Absent - Lisa Norden, Amanda Leonard, Camille Power, Janet Ross, Janet Chappel, Susan Muir, and Heather Lyall, Assistant Leader.

Guiding and Scouting have continued to prosper since 1909 and, looking at the happy faces in the photograph it is continuing to appeal to the young people of today.

The vision of the pioneer women has been perpetuated through 60 years as this record shows. Guiding has not stood still and the continual programme evaluation ensures that as each milestone is reached, the Guide Association will attract the girl of the day.

Your researchers therefore, close this booklet using the words traditionally said by the guides of 1st Bendigo Company to close special meetings -

"On the strength of each link in the cable
Dependeth the might of the chain
Who knowest when thou may be tested
So live that thou bearest the strain".

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Printed at the Victorian Girl Guide Association's Headquarters, 20 Russell Street, Melbourne. Details obtained from the Bendigo Advertiser columns, Miss Bush's personal papers and the Bendigo guide record books.

