

## The Birth of Guiding

It was almost one hundred years ago when six teenage girls turned up at a Boy Scout rally in Crystal Palace wearing their brothers' Scout uniforms, and demanded to participate in the activities. On 4 September 1909 these young women persuaded Robert Baden-Powell to establish a space for girls. One year later, the Guide Movement was founded.

One of the pioneering girls recalled that they marched up to the entrance of the rally but were told quite firmly that they could not join in. Instead of arguing with the steward, they waited for the next troop of boys and slipped in with them unnoticed.

The girls joined 11,000 boys in the arena and were soon spotted by Robert Baden-Powell himself. When asked what they were doing, the girls replied that they wanted the same thing as the boys. Baden-Powell promised to go away and think about it. In the end, he decided to adapt the Scout programme for girls. He decided to name them Girl Guides after the famous corps of Guides in India who were renowned for their resourcefulness and courage.

In 1910 Baden-Powell asked his elder sister Agnes to undertake the project, and that year the Girl Guide Movement was formally founded, with the establishment of the Girl Guide Association in the United Kingdom.

In 1918 Baden-Powell's wife, Olave was appointed UK Chief Guide and later in 1930 she became the first and only World Chief Guide.

One hundred years on and millions of girls and young women continue to enjoy Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting, participating in programmes which develop leadership and life skills through self-development, challenge and adventure.

## Notes to editor

### **About WAGGGS**

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts is the official umbrella organization for national Girl Guide and Girl Scout organizations in the world. It comprises 144 Member Organizations, which are organized into five regions – Africa, Arab, Asia Pacific, Europe and Western Hemisphere. Altogether, WAGGGS has approximately 10 million individual members.

Through its Member Organizations, WAGGGS provides girls and young women with a high quality non-formal educational programme, including training in life skills, leadership and decision making.

WAGGGS offers projects and programmes at an international level that enable Girl Guides and Girl Scouts to be responsible world citizens, through teamwork, service and action in the community and to influence issues that affect them. For more information visit [www.wagggsworld.org](http://www.wagggsworld.org)

### **Centenary 2010-21012**

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts will celebrate the birth of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting from 2010 to 2012. Girl Guiding was founded in 1910. Girl Scouting was founded in the USA in 1912 by Juliette Low.

By 1912 Girl Guiding had already gained a foothold in nine other countries, namely Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland, Portugal and Norway.