

## **Walked to Windermere to meet with other Guides at Orrest Head Eileen Mark was born in 1906 and interviewed in 1990**

My father had gone to watch the Mayor's Sunday Procession and saw the Guides. When he came home he said I had to join. I joined the First Kendal Guides in December 1917 and I enjoyed my Guide life all the time.

In those days the uniform was a navy blue serge dress, a big-rimmed hat. We used a damp cloth and iron it round the brim to keep it stiff. For the First Kendal Guides we had a pale blue tie plus our belt and lanyard of course. We met in an old Post Office in Gulfs Road on Wednesdays at 7.00pm to 9.00. Our Guide Captains were Miss O'Brien, she became Mrs Leadbetter, Connie Barrack, she lived in Castle Street and Muriel Wilson who lived up Beast Banks. There was a Second Kendal Guides who met in the Parish Hall in Kirkland.

We moved our meeting place several times until we eventually ended up in the YWCA House in Stricklandgate, Prince Charlie's House. There was a cottage there in the grounds and they allowed the Guides to use it. On the little field we were allowed to make fires for cooking. We used to go on a Saturday night and have a sing song, camp fire songs, and games.

We went to our Camp. It was a cottage in Kentmere and we enjoyed it very much and then, each year after, we went to Crook on a farm. I remember one Crook Camp the tents were set up in an orchard and there was some calves in the orchard and they got in one tent and chewed a pair of legs off the one of the girls pyjamas and we had to put the blankets in the farm dam to get them clean.

In the First World War there was a hospital for wounded soldiers in the Friends Sunday School. We used to go round the allotments begging for vegetables to take to the hospital. Then on a Saturday six of us used to take it in turns to go to the hospital to scrub bed tables and they had to be really white, else you had to do them over again. It was hard work but I enjoyed every minute of it. In the Second World War the older girls assembled gas masks in the Quaker Chapel in Stramongate and distributed them.

In the First Kendal Guides we had four patrols. I was in the "Forget-me-nots." The others were Pimpernel, Violet, and Primrose.

We used to go about once a month to the Parish Church for a service and we always went on the Mayor's Sunday Parade always with the Scouts. We also used to walk to Windermere to meet the First Windermere Guides and go up Orrest Head and have a "Guides Own" which was a kind of religious little meeting where we had prayers and readings. We used to have our tea afterwards and then walk back. We were tired but we enjoyed it.

I got lots of badges. An elderly lady, Mrs Simpson, used to teach us handicrafts such as basket making and embroidery. Then there was Laundress, as well as Housekeeper, First Aid, Sick Nursing and Child Nursing badges. I also got my Needlewoman's, Milliners and Cooks badges and "All Round Cords which changed to today's "Queen's Award."

We had to leave the Guides at 18 and become a Ranger. The older First Kendal Guides and Second Kendal Guides joined together and became members of the Fifth Kendal Rangers. I became a Ranger Captain and then a Guider until after I was married. We met in the Kendal Library. We had a room underneath, down those steps at the side

We had a lovely County Camp at Endmoor one time that was for Windermere, Ambleside and Kendal. Then about 1960 Lady Baden-Powell came and we had a County Camp just outside Windermere.

Lady Baden-Powell came in to the grounds of the High School on Thorny Hills and we once went to Appleby Castle when she was there. She also came once to Kendal Town Hall so we

saw quite a lot of her. She was a very nice lady and she would always remember me. She always could remember a face and where she'd seen you. One time I went to London with the Rangers and we were in a shop she was in and she came up to me and said "You're from Kendal aren't you?"

After I finished guiding I started a shop and I made quite a lot of money for the Girl Guide Association selling books and uniforms. I enjoyed every minute of my Guiding life.

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