



FOR RELEASE  
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## **Yukon Girl Guides honoured during Women's History Month**

WHITEHORSE—In celebration of Women's History Month in October and the International Day of the Girl on October 11, Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate Elaine Taylor is unveiling a poster today commemorating the start of the centenary of Girl Guides of Canada—Guides du Canada, in Yukon.

"It is fitting to be celebrating the International Day of the Girl with one of the oldest organizations for girls, the Girl Guides of Canada," Taylor said. "The Yukon Area Girl Guides are entering their 100th year of guiding in Yukon and we are excited to start off today's celebration with them."

Girl Guides have a rich history in Yukon and their achievements include contributing to community development, playing a role as international ambassadors and performing at ceremonial functions.

"The Girl Guides organization enables girls to be confident, resourceful and courageous and to make a difference in the world," Taylor added. "Thank you to guiding volunteers in Yukon for imparting these values and helping to shape thousands of young girls who have participated in guiding programs, many of whom have become exceptional leaders."

"Throughout its history, Girl Guides of Canada has prepared girls to meet the challenges that they face in their lives head on," said Yukon Area Girl Guides commissioner Kerri Scholz. "Whether it was girls learning to bandage wounds during the First World War, or girls today working on their anti-bullying badge, guiding continually evolves to reflect the needs and interests of contemporary girls and women. Today, guiding's innovative programming is helping the next generation of Canadian girls become confident, courageous and resourceful leaders. Yukon Area Girl Guides have touched many women's lives in Yukon. Many former Girl Guides have made an impact on the history of Yukon, and have gone on to become government leaders, ministers, managers, directors, teachers, and many other successful careers."

The Women's Directorate also helped sponsor the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre's screening yesterday of the documentary, *Girl Rising*, which tells the stories of nine girls facing injustices in different parts of the world.

Minister Taylor will attend a special concert this evening at Mount McIntyre Recreation Centre featuring Yukon artists who are raising funds for International Plan's Because I am a Girl campaign. The global initiative is aimed at ending gender inequality, promoting girls' rights and lifting millions of girls—and everyone around them—out of poverty.

Commemorative posters of the Yukon Area Council Girl Guides are available through the Women's Directorate or may be downloaded at [womensdirectorate.gov.yk.ca](http://womensdirectorate.gov.yk.ca).

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See backgrounder below.

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**Backgrounder: about girl guiding in Yukon**

Girl guiding in Yukon began in Dawson City in 1914 when parents, wanting more for their daughters, arranged a first gathering of 25 ten to 12-year-old girls at St. Paul's Cathedral. Martha Black was their patron and Harriet Osborne was their leader.

The first uniforms were described as "a navy blue serge skirt with khaki middie and dark green three-cornered tie held in front with a leather ring". For gym work they wore huge navy blue serge bloomers, and in camp Levi bib overalls because of the mosquitos. The early groups met at school and church and did their marching drills by the federal government building. They spent two weeks each summer at Rock Creek on the Klondike River. They borrowed tents from the Royal North West Mounted Police and slept on spruce bough beds with Hudson Bay blankets. Tents were smudged nightly to detract mosquitos.

During the war years they made candy and cookies, knit long blue stockings for soldiers overseas and raised funds for the Red Cross.

In 1953, 19-year-old Lena Tizya from Old Crow was chosen by the Commonwealth Youth Movement to represent Yukon and Alberta Girl Guides in London at the coronation of Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II. In 1959, Brownies and Guides joined Scouts and Cubs at Whitehorse airport to welcome the Queen and Prince Phillip during their royal tour.

In 1967, 40 Girl Guides helped form the honour guard to welcome Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra to Yukon as part of Canada's centennial celebrations. The guides also greeted and attended celebrations with Her Royal Highness Princess Anne when she came to Whitehorse in 1982.

By the 1960s, extensive guide camping was taking place and the land for Sprucewind, the campsite at McClintock Bay at Marsh Lake, was leased from the territorial government. In 1987, the campsite it was purchased outright. Overtime, hundreds of Girl Guides, Brownies and guiders have camped there from across North America.

Yukon Guides won the 1974 Sourdough Rendezvous Best Group Float and were an integral part of the community response to the 1979 Dawson City flood. They have also been international ambassadors, hosting four Malaysian cadets in 1987.

For more information about girl guiding in Yukon visit [yukonguides.wordpress.com](http://yukonguides.wordpress.com).

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