



## Queanbeyan Age

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# Girls give guides a go

LOCAL mums and daughters are invited to come along and try Girl Guides next month. **Ben Hope** caught up with one Queanbeyan family where Girl Guides is a way of life.

**A**S a young girl living in Papua New Guinea Jo Shilling found Girl Guides the ideal way to learn life skills and get to know her community.

When her local troupe found itself without a leader it was her mum, Dorothy Jamieson, who decided to step up and take charge.

It was a role she relished, returning to Australia and leading Queanbeyan Girl Guides for nearly three decades.

Now the Second Queanbeyan Girl Guides leader, Mrs Shilling can look back on almost 42 years with the association.

Following in the family tradition her daughter Rochelle, 15, is also well on her way to leading a troupe.

Looking back on more than four decades with Guides Mrs Shilling said the skills and values she had learned along the way had been invaluable.

The association helps girls build confidence and learn life skills while growing into confident, self-respecting and responsible community members.

As an 18-year-old Mrs Shilling was a guide leader with her Port Moresby troupe, balancing native traditions with the values of the global association.

"The focus was the same but there were different cultural aspects that we needed to be aware of. They had their own culture that you had to be aware of so we didn't offend anybody," Mrs Shilling said.

"Coming back to Australia in 1978 I brought back a lot of the culture and introduced that to my girls. They

are very aware of Guides as a world association." The association has a 75-year history in the city, teaching girls aged from five to 18 life skills in survival, crafts, service and fellowship.

Members are also encouraged to reach their potential by challenging themselves, serving the community and working to earn badges.

They also regularly have the opportunity to attend camps, ski trips, water activity days and special events such as the Taronga Zoo Guide Sleepover.

"A lot of the time you form a very strong bond of friendship when you are involved in Girl Guides," Mrs Shilling said.

"It teaches a lot of life skills as well as developing leadership potential. We do heaps of outdoor stuff like camping, archery, canoeing and all that sort of stuff. I'm sure I wouldn't have done all of that if I wasn't involved in Guides."

For Rochelle, Girl Guides has also given her a range of skills and experiences. Starting as a young girl in Brownies she is now in senior Guides. She now hopes to follow in her mother and grandmother's footsteps and work toward becomes a leader.

Throughout February Girls Guides across the country are inviting mums and daughters to come along and join in the fun with one of the Brownie or Girl Guide units.

For details about your local Girl Guides group phone 6299 8812 or visit

[www.girlguides-nswact.org.au](http://www.girlguides-nswact.org.au)