



# ***Finding Home***

## *A Story of Belonging through Guiding*

New South Wales | Lindsay Tagg

The story that Lindsay Tagg tells of her Guiding journey is not one that others tell. Many in Guiding will tell a story of Lindsay that speaks of public accolades, high profile positions in the community, of being Youth Lord Mayor, of participating in national Government Committees or contributing to youth parliaments.

But this is not Lindsay's own story of Guiding.

Her story is one of finding a home.

Guiding for Lindsay started with a bunch of friends. "We were all at the same school - they were older and went to High School but we needed something we could keep doing together." Her friends were going to Girl Guides and invited Lindsay along to keep the connection.

*"I went along and knew from the first moment that this was the place for me"*

In reflecting upon her struggles growing up, Lindsay describes what Guiding provided for her and other girls and young women. "Guides provided the space where everyone is equal and you can mix with a range of girls in a vibrant environment"

In describing the role of Girl Guides in our Community, Lindsay reflects on her time as a leader of a Unit in Southern Sydney.



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“It gives a sense of belonging - if I look at girls in my Guide Unit they often weren't the most popular girls, or the greatest achievers.”

“There was a good mix of girls with a range of experiences of Guiding. We had the girls that were being bullied at school, the nerds and the over achievers. They all found a safe environment where you can be who you want to be because there is no judgement about where you have come from and which school you went to.”

“There were times when we all had difficult situations to deal with in the Unit - girls going through different life experiences. We went through it together and as a family. We are all one community and could all relate to each other.”

*“The sense of connection that you form with your friends in Guides lasts a lifetime. There is a real sense of being proud of where you come from as a Guide.”*

For Lindsay personally the constancy of Guides through her life as a girl was crucial for her wellbeing. She understands that for many girls the “Tuesday at 6pm” Unit meeting is a bed rock – “If I didn't have Guides I don't know where I would be today”.

For Lindsay, the movement has provided opportunities that to this day she shares and encourages other young Guides to explore and take advantage of.

“Guides go places and the opportunities for you to participate in a range of opportunities is amazing”

Lindsay recalls the first international camp that she went to in Sweden. “In 2007 another Guide and myself went to Jiingi Jamborree and met up with 25,000 other Guides. The concept of what a camp is was completely rewritten for me! It was phenomenal!” Lindsay remembers coming back one afternoon during the camp to find a queue of Guides lined up to meet her. “They were keen to meet someone from Australia who had travelled half way around the world to come to camp. When you talk to them there is no barrier – you have Guiding in common and this builds bridges.”

Whilst she no longer has her own Unit, she is still strongly connected to the women she mentored and worked with.



These days Lindsay takes time to talk to young Guides about pursuing their dreams and ambitions.

“Life is ever-changing and a lot of the time you can't control the things that happen. But you do have the chance to decide the direction that you want to take and who you want to be. You can make these decisions in Guiding. I look at the girls in my Unit and everyone is so dynamic and they all contribute to the whole. They all take different paths.

“In Guiding you can go from a Patrol leader to a world leader; you can go through the badges or not.”

“We are the platform for building world leaders, we have discussions on world issues with 5 year olds, and we are about progressing women. We provide a platform for self-development and the opportunity to support our girls chase whatever their dream is.”

For Lindsay, this commitment to support the realisation of the hopes and dreams of girls is a daily embodiment of the Guide Promise and Law.

“If we don't mentor and support young women then what are we doing? The Guide Laws are things that you do every day. It becomes so much a part of you that it is you and yet it is an unconscious part of your world.”

“In order for me to do my best, my role as a leader of girls and young women is understanding the different paths that people take and providing flexibility to deliver an experience that is meaningful to those girls.”

“Guiding is an opportunity for Girls and opens doors. It is the friends that you make and you are part of a family of 10 million people.”



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