

## THE BANNERS OF GIRLGUIDING BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

The history of the Banners can be traced back to the early 1920's when permission was given for the Guide Association to make "Standards" or as they became known in Buckinghamshire "Banners" after this term was used for the first Banner Service.

The first Banner was made in 1922 and was for 1<sup>st</sup> Chesham Rangers, followed by one made in secret and was presented to our first County Commissioner Mrs Evelyn Bernard in 1926. This Banner is now laid up in the county Archive collection.

In late 1927 it was agreed to 'design and make' District Banners for the annual competition known as the County Shield. The object of this challenge was to encourage needlework and interest in local history. In 1928 the first Banner Service was held in Aylesbury Parish Church where 12 Banners were paraded to and from the church and all were dedicated at the service. This service has continued every year since with the exception of several years during WW2 and of course last year due to Covid19. For many years it has taken place at RAF Halton.

From that first service more Districts started making their own Banners all of which are approved by the Heraldry Department at Guide HQ. They must each have the current Guiding Trefoil by the pole, the County Emblem (which in our case is the Buckinghamshire Swan), the motto band (in most cases this is Be Prepared) and on the reverse is often the name of District or Division. Then comes the 'Fly' on which symbols depicting the area they belong to, are embroidered. The Banner has then been dedicated usually at a Banner Service, carried at other services or put-on display at events.

The second Buckinghamshire County Banner was made in 1946 and when this was showing signs of wear this Banner was laid up when the current one was made in 1976.

To date Girlguiding Buckinghamshire has 7 Division Banners, 40 District Banners and 14 Banners which have been laid up due to age, fragility or the fact that geographical boundaries have changed and they are no longer in the County or Districts do not exist.

There are "Standards" held in other Counties and Regions, but only Girlguiding Buckinghamshire can boast so many at District and Division level as well as the County Banner.