

Journey of a lifetime

OHA EXHIBIT

HIGHLIGHTS THE
LOCAL TIES TO THE
100TH ANNIVERSARY
OF GIRL SCOUTS

| BY ELIZABETH CAREY

It's not all about the cookies.

For 2.3 million Girl Scouts, 50 million alumnae and 880,000 active volunteers, it's about creating self-reliant, community-minded women. With a century's worth of milestones under their belts, they're ready to share their stories with Central New York.

Rita Chirumbolo Ernstrom — board member of the NYPENN Pathways Girl Scout Council and a former Girl Scout troop leader — oversees the archives of regional troops. Those who know little more about Girl Scouts than Thin Mints and Samoas, she says, are often blown away by the historical exhibits she curates.

"They see these exhibits and say, 'I did not know that. Whoa, that is really powerful,'" she explains. They do not realize, she says, the role Girl Scouts plays in women's history.

These stories and more from across the region will be on display at the Onondaga Historical Association from March 7 to Aug. 31. The exhibit, "Journey of a Lifetime: A Celebration of 100 Years of Girl Scouting," showcases the world's largest girl's organization and celebrates the Girl Scouts' 100th anniversary. It highlights the roots of the NYPENN Pathways ▶



PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE GABEL

Three Girl Scouts model vintage Scout uniforms. Left to right, Kerri Lewis, 9, wears a replica of a 1926 Brownie uniform; Catherine Lynch, 11, wears a 1914 Girl Scout uniform; and Hannah Lynch, 9, wears a 1960s Girl Scout uniform. Catherine Lynch, a sixth-grader at Baldwinsville's Ray Middle School, is in Girl Scout Troop 10380; Kerri Lewis and Hannah Lynch, fourth-graders at Reynolds Elementary School, also in Baldwinsville, are in Girl Scout Troop 10130.

Girl Scout Council, which oversees the Girl Scout program in 24 counties in New York and two in Pennsylvania.

Local historic connections to world-famous female figures abound. Take, for example, the first Native American troop: the Onondaga Nation, 1922. Or the first woman to pilot a space shuttle and command a space mission: Lt. Eileen Collins from Elmira, who carried a Girl Scout badge up into space.

With artifacts and photos, "Journey of a Lifetime" compiles a living history. It is an 800-square-foot interactive timeline of uniforms, photos and badges — complete with a campfire ring.

The shiniest artifact on display is a solid 18-karat gold pin that embodies the Girl Scouts' evergreen mission. Until 1939, it was the highest award bestowed upon a select few of the most exemplary Scouts. ➤



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Camp Comstock, Tompkins County, 1939.



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Top to bottom, Camp Yaiewano,
Cayuga County, 1971; Syracuse Girl
Scouts greet national president
Margaret Price, 1965; cookie sales in
the late 1960s or early 1970s; the first
Binghamton Girl Scout troop, 1918.