

# d for 40 years with Scouts



■ Mary Griffiths, aged 81, is celebrating 40 years of volunteering with the Scouts and has received a Silver Acorn award for her services

CONTRIBUTOR BY ANDREW JAMES

A SCOUT leader who has racked up 40 years of service says she is grateful for the opportunity.

Mary Griffiths, who estimates she has seen at least 1,000 youngsters in her units during her time with the Scouts, marked the milestone with a special celebration last week.

She was awarded a Silver Acorn on behalf of Chief Scout and TV presenter Bear Grylls for her "specially distinguished service to Scouting".

Originally starting her service at a unit in Rimney in Cardiff, Mary and friend Eileen Hallett set up a new unit in Trowbridge more than 30 years ago.

And Mary, who serves in the Trowbridge unit to this day, said she still bumps into many of those who have been members of her units over the years.

"They never ever pass me by - if they see me they shout 'Akela,' the 81-year-old said.

"Scouting is very popular and we never get less than 24 Cubs a week, they are lovely boys and girls, all of them.

"If you are going to be Scout leader you have to put your time, effort and love into those boys and girls to help them lead a good life. We do our best. If you can be a Scout you will end up a good citizen.

"The best thing for me is to see a child come up and ask to be invested as a Scout - to go right through as a Beaver, a Cub and a Scout and maybe a leader. It's wonderful to watch the growth and progression of these children.

"And when they bring their own children to join us you are very proud. You

do think you have done something right."

Mary has been at the heart of the community for decades having lived in Trowbridge for 50 years. She was brought up in Adamdown.

Scouting runs in the family, with two sons and late husband Ron all playing leading roles in the organisation.

After 40 years' service many others might be thinking of hanging up their neckerchief and woggle - but not Mary.

She said: "Until they tell me 'That's it, Mary' I shall be a Cub leader of some sort.

"It's been a very happy journey. I am not only proud but very grateful because all those parents trust us. It's been a way of life for us and a very happy time we have had."

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