

18/08/2004

Book on ex-Girl Guides Commissioner

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - It took three years to convince former Girl Guides Commissioner Datuk Hendon Din that a book should be written about her life and work.

Former teacher Saroja Dev Param, the author of *A Guiding Light: The Life and Work of Datuk Hajah Hendon Din*, had to coax and cajole the then 78-year-old into the effort.

In 2001, the former Girl Guides deputy chief commissioner, who is herself in her 70s, started gathering and compiling information on Hendon with the help of friends and associates.

The book, chronicling Hendon's work with women and girls, was launched today at the Royal Lake Club by Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, wife of former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Hendon's association with the two target groups will not stop here.

All proceeds from the sale of the book will go towards women and children in need nationwide.

Hendon, who is still active in the Girl Guides movement, can hardly believe a book about her has been written.

"I was approached about five years ago by Saroja, a very dear friend of mine, to have a book written on my life and work," she said, adding that she was hesitant at the time.

The book is on sale at RM49.95 a copy at leading bookstores.

Born in Parit Buntar, Perak, in 1923, Hendon became a trainee teacher on a monthly salary of RM15 in the 1930s.

In 1941, she was chosen to enter the Women Teachers' Training College in Malacca, the only institution of higher learning for trainee teachers then.

After the Second World War, Hendon served as a teacher, school principal and then as supervisor of the Malay Girls' School (now Tunku Kurshiah College) in Seremban, Negri Sembilan.

She had been a member of the Girl Guides movement since 13 and a Girl Guides Commissioner between 1973 and 1983.

She was also a panel member of the Seremban Juvenile Court, a Universiti Malaya Council member and a member of the disciplinary committee of the Women's Hockey Association since 1989.

A mother of 13, Hendon has 40 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

(END)