Hidden Treasures: Girl Scout shares a trove of tales

On Saturday, Sept. 14, at noon, Gabriella Karsch will talk about the early 1950s Girl Scout uniform she wore as a young girl (born Sally Anita Smith) in Middlebury. She recently donated the uniform to the Sheldon Museum’s vintage clothing collection. Gabriella will tell stories from her time as a Girl Scout in Middlebury and explain how Girl Scouts made an impact on her life. She will share highlights of her inspiring and varied careers — as a high fashion model (Gabrielle) in New York City and Los Angeles in the 1960s and serving in the USO in the 1960s and ’70s entertaining troops in the Vietnam War.

In 1977, Karsch co-founded Karsch & Co., an investment banking firm in Los Angeles and in 1994 started a tea import business, The Indochina Tea Company, Inc. In 1996 Karsch was named “Entrepreneurial Woman of the Year” by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, and she worked as Chief Operating Officer of the Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena, Calif., until her retirement. After retiring, she returned to her home state of Vermont.

The Girl Scout uniform is on view at the Sheldon just for the month of September as part of the Sheldon’s Hidden Treasure exhibit series. Accompanying the uniform is a contemporary Daisy uniform, a Brownie uniform, and a 1953 Girl Scout handbook on loan from Middlebury Girl Scout Troop 51875. Members from this troop will begin the program on Sept. 14 by reciting the Girl Scout Promise and the program will close with the traditional Girl Scout song “Make New Friends.”

Karsch’s talk on the 14th is free with museum admission. The Sheldon is located at 1 Park Street in downtown Middlebury across from the Ilsley Library. Museum hours: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sundays 12-4 p.m.; Research Center hours: Thurs. and Fri. 1-5 p.m. Admission to the museum is $5 for adults; $3 youth (6-18); $4.50 seniors; $12 family; $5 Research Center. Visit henrysheldonmuseum.org for information about the Hidden Treasures series schedule.