

Newsletter



We once again remind you of how quickly you should deal with the contents of our first Newsletter of the Session:

Needs immediate attention

Needs your early attention

Don't leave it too long

belfastbb.org.uk



**The Boys' Brigade
Belfast Battalion**

BB House
14 May Street
Belfast BT1 4NR

T: 028 9032 4853
F: 028 9031 4661





find us on **facebook**

follow us **twitter**

As we are still recovering from the highs of our 'Norn Iron' football team at the Euro 2016 Championship Finals in June and are in throes of Olympic fever and soon to be Paralympics, it is hard to believe that we are just about to enter yet another Session of Boys' Brigade but, here we are all set and ready to go. To help you in your planning, we hope that you find the contents of our latest Circular helpful. As we welcome you to the first Battalion Newsletter of the 2016/2017 B.B. Session, it is hoped that the content of our Newsletters will alert you to upcoming events, provide you with opportunities to avail of to extend your weekly Programme and record the success and achievement of those made known to us. You will have noticed that your September envelope is somewhat lighter than usual. Following feedback received from a greater number of Captains and Leaders, we will no longer send out entry forms or registration forms as these are all now available on our Battalion website. Over recent years we have been striving to make greater use of our Battalion website: belfastbb.org.uk together with Social Media and have now taken the huge step to have everything that you will need available on the website where you can access entry/registration forms for all events. Just click on the Resources Tab on the front page, then Forms, and you will find all forms etc. listed.

But, don't panic if you do not have access to the internet via a computer, tablet or smart phone! If you need a particular form please contact us here in B.B. House and we'll happily provide you with the necessary forms you require. We will still issue some items from time to time but it is hoped that everything you will need will be available on-line to include ALL SECTIONS. Our website will also have regular updates posted throughout the Session along with our Facebook pages and Twitter feeds. Other plans for greater communication with BB Leaders are in the pipeline! In what is described as a significant year of Commemoration, attention was very much focused on remembering the commencement of the Battle of the Somme in July and we thank 16th Newtownabbey B.B. Company for representing the Battalion at the Cenotaph in Belfast on the morning of 1st July.

For your immediate attention we enclose ...(* * * * *)

-  Our President's Message for the year ahead
-  Your Battalion Calendar of Events (with more copies available on request so that you can give one to every Officer and N.C.O. in your Company)
-  A up-dated version of the Battalion Handbook (which already has been amended since it was printed)
-  A new-look check list to guide you through your preparations for the new Session.

Events Section

A Time to Remember and Re-Commit (* * * *)

Our annual Drumhead Service and Service of acknowledgement and Commitment will be held on the afternoon of Sunday 25th September at Ganaway. These Services are open to all of your staff, family members and friends. With YOUR presence we will celebrate the past years of Advancing Christ's Kingdom through The Boys' Brigade in Ireland and give thanks for the many men and women who influenced our lives and re-commit ourselves to serving the Youth of today. This Service is very poignant and is a

source of comfort and support to so many of our BB family. In addition to the Service, you will have the added opportunity of being able to visit The B.B. Heritage Museum. A special poster is enclosed for Notice Boards and is aimed at ALL Sections.

TurningPoint 2017 (* * * *)

Plans are already underway for our Turning Point Youth Festival which will be held at our Ganaway Activity Centre. This ever popular event will take place from the Friday 28th to Sunday 30th April 2017. Although running into the May Day bank holiday weekend, all the usual favourite activities as well as some exciting new ones will be on offer. If you find that attending the event for

the full weekend doesn't suit, why not bring your Group along as day visitors on the Saturday and you can enjoy all the same activities as those staying for the weekend? It would be great to see a strong turnout from Boys' and Girls' Brigade Companies at this year's event. An information leaflet has been included with this Newsletter for your information and don't forget to book your accommodation soon to avoid disappointment.



General Section

Institute for the Disabled (***)

Details are enclosed for this year's House to House Collection. Last year's Collection almost topped £11,000, a magnificent achievement by all those Companies whose Boys and Officers gave of their time in the cause of others but, there are a large number of Companies not participating in the 'Door to Door'. What could our total be if we have 100% participation from all of our Battalion Companies in this regard?!

Stedfast Supplies (***)

The enclosed poster for your Notice Board indicates that our BB Shop will be open from 9.30am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday and 9.30am to 1.00pm on Saturdays - 24th September, 1st October 2016, 11th March and 25th March 2017. We're also open on St Patrick's Day too!! Why not e-mail through your order in advance? We'll make every reasonable effort to have your order ready for you to collect. Send your e-mail to belfast@boys-brigade.org.uk

Enrolment Services (***)

Please give consideration to devoting income from your Enrolment Service to our Battalion Charity Fund. What we can distribute from the Fund depends heavily on your response to this appeal.

Officers Luncheon Club

meets every month (second Tuesday) at 1.00 p.m. in May Street Presbyterian Church over soup, sandwiches etc. (and all for £5.50) Please mention this to your staff, Old Boys and B.B. friends and place the enclosed letter and schedule from the Club's Chairman on your Company and Church Notice Board.

The Stedfast Association for Northern Ireland

will soon again be under way in the new Session and is open to all present and former members over 18 years old including Serving Officers. The Stedfast Association seeks to bring together those whom have served or are presently serving in The Boys' Brigade and all are invited to join. The Northern Ireland Stedfast Association meets bi-monthly in Immanuel Presbyterian Church Hall on the third Thursday of the September, November, January, March and May. The Association also holds an Annual Dinner which in 2017 will be held on Friday 3rd February in Newforge Country Club. Perhaps your Company could book a table! Contact names and addresses are contained in the Handbook should you require further details. What a great way for former and present members to keep in touch with folk who share the same interest!

Online Brigade Manager (OBM)

By now you should be aware that The Brigade is moving to an online management system. As one Leader quoted "this will totally transform the way we work and take all the hassle out of administration". As with all systems, OBM will

only be as good for you insofar as you will want and make use of it. It contains a host of features that will make your BB administration so much easier allowing users to deliver quick and easy record keeping, attendance registers, badge records and programme activities from a vast bank of Programme resources. There is also a function that will allow you to communicate directly with parents via e-mail and SMS.

A number of workshops were held prior to the summer and the system is now live. More information is available in the Spring/Summer edition of The BB Gazette that you will have received in recent days.

Around The Sections

Anchor Boys & Junior Section

Officers in Charge will soon be receiving their new format Section specific circulars and we will use this portion of our Battalion Newsletter to highlight recent successes and achievements in all Sections. Please send us details of success and achievements for inclusion.



Company Section

Details are now available (***)

from our Battalion website for a number of Competitions and events planned for the new Session. Please enter by the required date so as not to disappoint your Boys when you are refused entry having missed the deadline!

Bible Class Syllabus - Inter Company Bible Quiz - Christian Faith Exam

A Belfast Battalion Bible Class Programme for this Session based on the latter chapters of the Gospel of Matthew is available by prior arrangement with B.B. House with the cost retained at £5.00. Following on from last year, we are most grateful to Ian Marshall of the 1st Bangor B.B. Company for his hard work in supplying us with this excellent material. A letter from the Company Section Committee (which is available on our website) sets out details of the arrangements for this Session's Christian Faith Examination and Inter-Company Bible Quiz.

Our Moon Walk (***)

and Session opener will take place on Friday 14th October in the Hollywood Hills. Not to be confused by its West Coast of America counterpart (it has two LL's), a form giving further details of this very popular event is available from our website and you are asked to pay special attention to the closing date for registration of Friday 30th September. We are told that late entries will not be accepted!

Is it a Fantasy or (***)

but those ready to take up the challenge can be part of our Fantasy Football League and details of the plans for '16 / '17 are available from our website.

Football Secretaries (***)

must be present at their annual meeting which this year will be held at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 19th September at Belvoir. It is very important that every Company either Junior Section or Company Section wishing to enter this Session's football events is represented on this evening to discuss and plan for the Season ahead.

Training Section

Extending your Programme! (***)

That's what's on offer at this year's Training Fair. Organised by the Battalion's Training Committee for Wednesday 28 September in Bloomfield Presbyterian Church, attendees will have the opportunity to meet with and to hear from a number of external agencies who can offer their services to your Section providing you with something additional to your normal week-to-week Programme. Registration forms can be downloaded from the Battalion Website. Early registration is advised so as not to miss out!

Essential B.B. Training (***)

Details and registration forms for Skills for Queen's Badge and Officer Training (Youth Leader Training) are now available to download from our Battalion website. Details of the Building Your Skills Training requirement for President's Badge will be issued later but the dates and venues of these courses together with other training opportunities are contained within the Battalion Calendar of Events. With regard to Queen's Badge, please be mindful of the requirement of a 6 month period between Skills for Queen's Badge and the Queen's Badge Residential courses – if not to be embarrassed at a later stage! A quick reminder of the dates:

Skills for Queen's Badge (1)

14 – 16 October 2016 (Ganaway)

(2)

16 – 18 June 2017 (Ganaway)

Youth Leader Training Residential

27 – 29 January 2017 (Ganaway)

Queen's Badge Residential

17 – 19 March 2017 (Ganaway)

New Captains Training (***)

This year's Captain's Element Training, which is compulsory for all newly appointed Captains, will be held on Friday 14 – Saturday 15 October 2016 at Ganaway. Those concerned will have previously received their registration forms but further copies are available from the website.

Captain's Guidelines Booklet (**)

Trying to remember all the little (and not so little) items that have to be planned for in the coming Session? In addition to the guide through planning for the new session, the Captain's Guidelines Booklet, specially written by us for you, can be purchased in Stedfast Supplies here in May Street.

Vaulting Gymnastics & Physical Activity (***)

Following on from previous successful training courses, plans are being finalised for this year's Course which will have an element of Physical Activity to be held over the week-end of 21 – 22 October '16 at Ganaway. Past participants have told us that this was a great way to learn new ideas and to share others.

I'm a Senior ...

Get Me in There!!! (**)

Our annual Senior Activity weekend at Ganaway over the weekend of Friday 10 – Sunday 12 February 2017 and is open to both BOYS AND GIRLS from B.B. and other youth groups. Alongside the planned activities that will include archery, zip-line, caving, high level ropes course, climbing, Seniors will experience so much more as together they meet with their like-minded peers and enjoy team-building skills, night

activities to ensure that all who participate, experience a very enjoyable weekend. Boys working towards their President's Badge can also fulfil their residential experience and Building your Skills modules by their attendance at this weekend. Registration forms are available to download from the Battalion website.

Opportunities Section

Company Funds (**)

are never easy to raise and have to be constantly worked at particularly in today's harsh financial climate. One of the best ways to raise funds is B.B. Week and the material you need to make your efforts a success is available from Stedfast Supplies in B.B. House.

Battle of the

Somme World War I (***)

In this significant year of Remembrance, The Royal British Legion has produced some wonderful resource material which will be very helpful if you are planning to have your Boys take part in a WWI Project in the coming months (or the coming years for that matter!). While they no longer post this direct to those who are registered with their Schools and Education Programme, you can avail of their educational resources by contacting: The Director Corporate Communications, The Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, LONDON, SE1 1AA or hbhll@britishlegion.org.uk

And don't forget about the special B.B. commemorative badge that can be awarded to Boys completing a B.B.-led Project on World War One. These can be purchased from your B.B. Shop here in May Street.

Go Wild 2016

Belfast Hills Partnership is planning a 'Go Wild' event at Cave Hill Country Park on Saturday 24th September. The event will be aimed at young people ages 11+. They will be promoting healthy living and biodiversity through activities such as Bushcraft, archery, climbing, parkour, digital media, native wildlife inspired art and more. Two sessions are planned, one morning and one afternoon. Participating groups can book in for a 2.5 hour session, where they'll get to try a variety of different activities. The most important point is that it's all free of charge, for further details and information contact Jo Boylan on 90603466 or jo.boylan@belfasthills.org

Coming Up

You Need To (***)

Give your early attention to the enclosed COMPANY QUESTIONNAIRE AND INVOICE FORM. To overlook these could result in elimination from Battalion and Group Competitions. Please remember that the figures are based on your Company strength for 2015/16 and NOT in the present Session.

You said and we've acted! This year, we have completed Page 5 of the Statistical Return for you based on the information provided with your 2015/16 Return. Should there be any amendments, please indicate these on Page 5. Further instructions are provided on the cover page of your COMPANY QUESTIONNAIRE AND INVOICE FORM.

We would SPECIALLY DRAW YOUR ATTENTION to the fact that the Battalion registration of any Company which has not made its Battalion returns on time to B.B. House will be regarded as CANCELLED. This has serious implications for your church by way of Child Protection Legislation.

Don't Forget

That if you are using any fun and recreational Centres etc. outside Boys' Brigade you should carry out your own RISK ASSESSMENT of the facilities. To assist you in this regard you should consider as essential reading The Boys' Brigade Safety Handbook which contains many items that require all our attention. The Handbook is available from Stedfast Supplies. We will continue to bring such facilities to your attention but it is up to you to judge what you see.

Don't forget if any Section is going away overnight notification must be provided to N.I.H.Q. to keep themselves right for insurance purposes. Parents consent forms are needed for activities at the Centres as they are for all Company Programmes.

Brigade Conference - Belfast (*****)

Being held in Belfast over the weekend of 2 – 4 September 2016 in the Assembly Buildings, Fisherwick place Belfast. The Programme will include activities and workshops as well as the Annual General Meeting of The Boys' Brigade. It's your opportunity to meet with and to share with Brigade personnel from BB HQ along with others from across The UK and ROI. More details are available at www.bbni.org.uk/nibrigadeconference.htm

Don't Overlook (*****)

ENTRIES DUE BY

Friday 16 September

C.S. Tag Rugby
Training fair

Friday 23 September

Senior Football & K.O. Cup
Junior Football & K.O. Cup
Volleyball League
Coarse Fishing
Captain's Element

Skills for Queen's Badge (October Course)

Fantasy Football
Code Academy (for Company section)
J/Sept Twin Peaks Challenge

Friday 30 September

Friday 7 October

Moon Walk
Vaulting & Gymnastics
& Physical Activities

Wednesday 2 November

Social Media &
'The Boy' – Training Issues
Table Quiz

Thursday 3 November

**ALL ENTRY/REGISTRATION FORMS NOW AVAILABLE
FROM OUR BATTALION WEBSITE**

Congratulations to

Our Battalion Representative Football Teams. Both Teams reached their respective finals with our Senior Team emerging victorious, for the fourth time in a row, and our Junior Team runners-up. To all involved we extend our best thanks.

Also to Chris Elliott (20th Belfast) who along with four friends represented Northern Ireland at the Neymar JR Soccer Fives finals held recently in Brazil. The Northern Ireland Final was held at half-time during Northern Ireland's final home game ahead of Euro 2016. The Instituto Projeto Neymar Jr was opened in 2014 and is the second 'FutbolNet' program in Brazil in partnership with FC Barcelona Foundation after a first was set up in the favelas in Rio de Janeiro two years earlier. As Northern Ireland Champions, they joined 49 other teams representing 46 Countries from across the globe and enjoyed the experience of a lifetime. And to George Lunn and Derick Hunter who were both named in HM The Queen's Birthday Honours List to become recipients of a British Empire Medal in recognition of the work in their local community.

Passed to Higher Service

Norman Berts (94th Belfast)

Gave a lifetime of service to The Boys' Brigade as Boy, Officer and Captain in East Belfast. Highly respected by Boys and Staff throughout the Battalion, Norman has been described as a True Gentleman. Encouraging Boys in all aspects of our Organisation to reach their pinnacle in life especially spiritually Norman will long be remembered for his particular skills in organising Swimming Galas, camps and bringing 'Fun' to Captains' Conferences.

An Army Colonel on hearing of Norman's Passing has paid tribute to the positive influence he was on him growing up in Easy Belfast.

Donald Fry

Perhaps not as well known to present B.B. Leaders, in former years, Donald was known to many as Mr B.B. Football. Donald spent all of his adult life organising the football leagues of The B.B. Old Boys'. As a young enthusiastic footballer in the 22nd Belfast, he quickly found himself organising the plans for his own team, then the Club and soon the league in which his teams were competing. He was even known to be organising fixtures and schedules on the morning of his wedding such was his interest in the beautiful game and to ensure that nothing was missed. At one time The B.B. Old Boys' Football League was considered to have been the largest Amateur Football league in the UK comprising over 100 teams of which Donald was responsible for all of the fixture scheduling, pitches and referees engagements. Recently Donald was awarded a British Empire Medal in HM The Queen's Birthday Honours.

David Catherwood

Affectionately known as 'Our Davy', we were all shocked and saddened at the news of Davy's Passing as the result of a tragic accident. Davy was a member and later became Captain of 10th Belfast B.B. Company serving the Company for many years up until he stepped down at the end of the 2015 Session. Known for his wit, hard work ethic and charitable work, he would have literally given the shirt of his back if he found someone in need of it. He was such an influence on our TurningPoint Management team offering his help whenever he was available often turning up to assist without ever having to be reminded. A man of strong faith he encouraged so many Boys during his time as a BB Captain and along with his alarm business, found time to be a governor on the Board of Ashfield Girls' School. Such was his standing in the community that those fortunate to make it to the Service of Thanksgiving for David will have witnessed the huge gathering, where it was standing room only, to pay their respects to David. To Janet and the family circle we extend our deepest sympathy. Davy's untimely Passing has numbed us all and he will be greatly missed.

E-mail sign up

To enable us to communicate more effectively with you, please send us up to-date e-mail address to belfast@boys-brigade.org.uk

The B.B. Object

The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among Boys and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness. The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among Boys and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness.