



The Boys' Brigade

ANNUAL REPORT 2001-2002

INTRODUCTION

Young people have never been so prominent on the political agenda. Their whole moral well-being is regularly reported as central to the future of our society. As a consensus is sought as to how best to serve our young people, a sure voice is needed from those of a Christian faith to help build a society with sound values. In taking the larger view of life, there is a tension between opportunities for individual discovery and wider considerations of community wholeness and public safety.

It is not surprising that youth organisations, such as the BB, are expected to help contribute to the development of young people towards mature adulthood. This report gives an overview of the work with young people carried out by local companies, on a regular weekly basis across UK and Eire. It illustrates how the Brigade is seeking to be relevant to young people in helping them understand and tackle issues that confront them throughout their formative years. This work is underpinned by a living faith, which undergirds our Christian objectives. The Executive is keen to seize the opportunities of the future by building on our sound achievements to date.

THE BRIGADE EXECUTIVE

The Brigade Executive has met on four occasions this session. It has made some consolidation of its duties, after having more closely considered its role and purpose. It is clear that such a strategic body has to manage its time effectively and is reliant upon the efficient work of ad-hoc working groups. There is an ongoing process to develop a working practice that meets the needs of the Brigade and ensures that all members of the Executive are involved.

The continued policy of publishing a summary of business after each meeting, which is distributed to Battalion Secretaries within a few days of the meeting and published in the next available Gazette, is contributing to an open flow of information.

REGIONAL COMMITTEES

The role of Regional Committees and their function, in relation to the Executive, has been developing to different degrees. The linkage is strengthened and maintained by the elected members of the Executive being drawn from Regional Committees.

There is a growing need to clarify the future relationship and working practice. This will be made more challenging by the difference in identities being created by the Regional Assemblies. An opportunity will be made available to the Brigade nationally, in developing an inclusive vision whilst enabling regional interpretation. The Brigade's structure is such that a greater degree of devolution, within a clear overall policy, is within our scope. Flexibility to shape that which we offer to young people, churches and



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communities, to more accurately meet their needs, is something that must be addressed.

The current restrictive position created by a lack of resources has imposed severe constraints on the range of initiatives that could be undertaken. The effectiveness of the Brigade nationally will depend, in some measure, on the Regional Committees working with their respective Regional Assemblies.

MISSION STATEMENT AND BUSINESS PLAN

The time-cycle of the current Business Plan is coming to an end. It is good to note that a credible amount of the objectives have been achieved. Where there has been slippage, some things are still in progress and others have been limited through lack of resources. A full report will be produced to document the achievements and outcomes of the objectives set out in the Business Plan.

There is strong evidence of:- increased youth participation in managing the Brigade; sustained input to the awareness-raising of our young people in national and global issues; ongoing development of opportunities and ways to share our Christian faith; greater involvement in the Youth Leader Training Programme and a remarkable interest in the review of Programmes.

It is the task of the Executive to lead the thinking towards reviewing the Mission Statement and drafting a new Business Plan. This will take place over the next few months.

BRIGADE STAFF

This session has seen the departure of **Mr Sydney Jones, OBE**, Brigade Secretary who retired in April 2002. The Executive pays tribute to his fourteen years' service to the Brigade and wishes him a long and happy retirement. Sydney saw the Brigade through a difficult time in its history but took every opportunity to remind officers and leaders at all levels that the BB was still reaching out to boys and attracting them across the door step of the local church and that the quality of what we do matters to young people. Under Sydney's leadership Firm Foundations and Crossover, events presenting the challenge of the Christian Gospel to young people originated. Other Brigade initiatives that gave young people space to develop their skills and abilities as well as grow in faith, such as New Horizons, KJC and International Team were dear to his heart, as was KGVI of which he himself was once a cadet. The Brigade has much for which to thank Sydney thus ensuring we remain focussed to achieve our Object. Sydney was appointed as a Brigade Honorary Vice President on his retirement.

The Brigade welcomed **Mr Don McLaren** as the new Brigade Secretary who is the Chief Executive Officer. Don has an extensive knowledge and experience of youth work and is especially up to date with recent government initiatives. He was recently employed by Buckinghamshire County Council and for seven years seconded to Buckinghamshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services as Executive Officer. In this role he has developed links between the statutory and voluntary youth services and more recently undertook a seven-month secondment to the Government Office South East Connexions Unit as voluntary sector development officer. We wish him well and assure him of our prayers as he faces many challenges ahead.

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In October 2001, **Mr Ben Mizen**, Amicus Project Manager, left to take up an appointment as a church youth minister in St Albans, Hertfordshire. In addition to Amicus, Ben played an important position in Firm Foundations and New Horizons. The Executive wishes him well in his new role and thanks him for his service to the Brigade.

Mr Hilton Rowlings, based at the Business Centre, looked after the IT for the Brigade until his planned redundancy at the end of last year. We are grateful to Hilton for helping us through many problems that computers provide. **Mr Grant Joiner** was appointed in November 2001 as the IT Manager based at Headquarters to develop and oversee the new membership database. Grant comes from a background in IT having formerly worked for Freeserve.com.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The process of introducing criminal records checks has been a challenging one. The Criminal Records Bureau has had a changing time frame and is not yet fully up to speed. We will be initiating checks on all officer registrations from the early part of the next session.

The Brigade's central database has been introduced this year and when fully operational will be an important resource in managing our membership information.

The Brigade Executive decided to relocate the Business Centre and Supplies to Felden Lodge and the move should be completed in the late summer of 2002.

BB Supplies will be housed in the Thurso Centre, which means that the Thurso Centre will no longer be available for companies to use for self-catering weekends or holidays. This is, of course, to be regretted but the number of companies using the facilities had dwindled quite considerably. A number of existing staff from St Neots will relocate to Felden and replacement staff will be recruited locally for the new Business Centre and Supplies departments. We are grateful to the staff at St Neots who will not be joining us at Felden for their service to the Brigade. It is proposed to look at possibilities of developing camping facilities at Felden for the future.

The considerable pressures placed on administrative staff at Headquarters, the Business Centre and the Regional Headquarters have continued but this is not a sustainable position for the long term.

The Executive wishes to thank all staff involved in this field and to express its appreciation for all their work throughout the year.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership data is shown in the table at the end of this report and shows a small decrease. Again, it has to be reported that the totals are only estimates because of the late or non-return of statistics. It will be a great asset to the Brigade to be able to include all of the work carried out by companies. We do need to be able to account our members and accredit service to all of our work to enable it to flourish and develop. There appears to be a growing interest shown in the work of the Brigade and in using the

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long established expertise of developing programmes. The growth of youth participation led curricula by many agencies including the Government, is a strength of the Brigade that is becoming more widely recognised. An example of this is the success of the Millennium Volunteers programme, operated nationally across England & Wales by the Brigade, in bringing recognition from a range of sources. The young people who now proudly wear their MV badge are keen advocates for the scheme. Their contribution is enhanced as they have become ambassadors for the Brigade in a wider context.

It is encouraging to note the high regard in which our work with young people is held. We need to keep pressing forward in this work in order that The Boys' Brigade remains a substantial participant to Christian Youth work.

OBITUARY

We give thanks for the faithful witness and devoted service of the following who have died during the year and whose service has been recorded in the Gazette, together with those whose deaths were not notified

Bryan Arnold	Southampton
Major Douglas E Blayney MC	Northampton
The Revd R E Bristow Shetland	
James Bruce	Glasgow
Robert G Bryson	Glasgow
Bryan Currell	Leigh on Sea, Essex
Denis Cotton	Northampton
John Entwistle	London
Alexander J Fulton	Enniskillen, N Ireland
Arthur and Elizabeth Gardner	Hampshire
Mrs F Gillings	Peterborough
Matthew Hanks	Swindon
Gerald Lee	Chelmsford
Mrs Madaleine C McLoughlin	Bolton
Fred Mansfield, MBE	Derby
Joseph H Matthews	Dublin
Walter Moulding	Manchester
Steven Muir	Prestwick
Herbert G Pearson	Redbridge, Essex
Albert C Peters	Newcastle
The Revd Norman Riley	Ashton-under-Lyne
Stephen N Scott	Leeds
Arthur Smith	Thatcham, Berks
A William Smoker, MBE	London
Graham Southworth	Blackpool
Alec L Sparks	Caerphilly, Wales
Robert G Swan	Manchester

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A Thomas	Sutton Coldfield
Mrs Joy Webb	Northampton
Miss Madge White, MBE	London
Jonathan Wiffen	Chelmsford
Asa-Hartford Williamson	London
John Young	Glasgow

HONOURS

We congratulate the following who were honoured by Her Majesty The Queen during the year.

Mr Ray Bowker, 7 th Altrincham	MBE
Mr Alan Kilbey, 2 nd Chelmsford	MBE
Mr Michael J Mason, 1 st Kendal	MBE

AWARDS

The Brigade President's Commendation has been awarded to:

James Allwork	1 st Beddington
Jonathan Coggan	1 st South Woodham Ferrers
Niall Heitzman	3 rd Trafford
Daniel Lambert	17 th West Kent
Jason Lamont	1 st Cookstown
David McFarlane	2 nd Campsie
Brian Roberts	1 st Bluestone
Neil Wright	3 rd Portadown

MARKING THE GOLDEN JUBILEE

The Boys' Brigade nationally had an opportunity to participate in the main celebrations on 4th June in London, which included many organisation contingents processing from Horseguards Parade to Buckingham Palace. The theme of the procession was 'Past, Present and Future'. The BB contingent of 150 included boys dressed in the uniform current at the Silver Jubilee while the majority wore the new uniform.

It was an exciting and memorable day for those taking part. The whole day was widely covered on television and the BB was clearly visible. A spectacular flypast featuring among others, The Red Arrows and Concorde concluded the celebrations. London District provided a colourful float bearing both the Queen's Badge and DEA emblems with boys depicting our varied programme. Companies who participated in the pageant were: 1st Enfield, 10th Enfield, 10th Brighton, 1st Polesworth, 10th Bangor, 1st Kilrea, 39th Nottingham, 10th Mid Suffolk, 2nd Strood, 7th Doncaster, 14th West Kent, 11th North Suffolk, 1st Market Weighton, 6th North Staffs, 2nd Alton, 10th London, 4th London, 1st Barnet, 1st Aylesbury, 1st Barrhead, 7th Nottingham, 5th Swansea, 1st Penarth, 9th Waltham Forest, 17th

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Waltham Forest, 1st Tewkesbury.

A special Jubilee cloth badge was produced which was presented with a certificate to everyone who took part.

The event was a truly memorable occasion and every BB member who took part will have their own memories. No one who was present in and around the Mall on 4th June will ever forget the atmosphere, excitement and pride they felt being there on that special day when the BB honoured its Patron. A parchment containing a greeting to Her Majesty to mark her 50 years' reign was prepared and presented by the BB stewards who were chosen to carry out duties at the Buckingham Palace Garden Party on 9th July.

As well as the national event, companies throughout the regions celebrated the Golden Jubilee with special events, some of which are published in the Gazette.

TRAINING

Projects completed this session:

Youth Leader Training- first year of operation

Youth Leader training completed its first session as the core training for officers and a survey was carried out among the first group of leaders to have gone through the new scheme. The feedback showed that people found the participative style effective and gave evidence of using the competencies back in their companies. The survey also showed up the need to continually develop resources to support leaders in the area of faith development among boys and young people.

Company Development Scheme

A new scheme to support companies in the areas of programme development, staffing and training is due to be launched in September. Several training days around the UK have already been held with more planned for the autumn and spring of the 2002/3 session. Every company in the UK and Ireland will be sent a 'Company Development File' in the August Captain's mailing, with a covering letter promoting the associated training. This project has been part funded by a DfES grant which was focussed on improving the quality of youth work.

Training Directory 2002/3

For inclusion in the Company Development File, companies in England and Wales will also be sent a new-look training directory funded by a DfES grant with details of training organised by HQ and battalions. The directory is intended to promote training and link training needs to company development plans (hence the reason for keeping both documents together in the one file). Scotland and Northern Ireland will have the opportunity to promote their training in a similar way in the 2003/4 session. There are some new training courses on offer at HQ next session, namely:

- The Use of Email and the Internet (for beginners)
- Working with Challenging Behaviour in Children and Young People
- Conflict Management, Stress Management and Assertiveness Skills

Captain's Training

A new one-day Captain's Training module will be launched in September, aimed at existing captains and anyone else who would like to develop their skills in this area. Again, the trainers will be given the new materials at the meeting in September, so courses can be planned for the 2003/4 session.

Holiday Leadership

The new training materials to support the revised Camp and Holiday regulations are being finalised now.

They have been written to reflect the standards of the Sport, Recreation and Allied Occupations National Training Organisation (SPRITO), so can be part of a nationally recognised award at some point if we decide to have it accredited. These new training materials will be introduced to our volunteer trainers in the Autumn.

Disability Advice Network

As part of our Equal Opportunities strategy, which was agreed by the Brigade Executive in November, we are launching a network of experienced, trained advisers around the UK. The network meets for the first time in July when we will define a remit and ways of working. The advisers will be available to give information, support and guidance to anyone working with children and young people with disabilities and impairments. The aim is to extend access to BB companies to young people of all abilities, and to ensure a high quality of experience for all.

PROGRAMME REVIEW

The Brigade has embarked upon a wide-ranging review of its sectional programmes for the various age groups. **Mr Martyn Waters** has been appointed by the Executive to the post of Director for Programmes to oversee this work, which will take place over the next two sessions with a report to Council in 2004. The review is being funded in part by the DfES NVYO grant scheme. Part of this review will be to explore and promote best practice in the use of BB and non-BB programme resources, to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the current material and schemes and to think widely and creatively about the needs of current and future members and so ensure that our programmes are exciting and relevant to children and young people. In addition to the review of our various award programmes, work will be undertaken on leadership and NCO training to promote active participation by young people in planning activities and managing their BB companies and sections.

TRAINING CENTRES

Felden Lodge

The Executive is pleased to report that additional funds were received to enable the refurbishment of the kitchen and domestic areas of the main house to be completed. Over the past ten years much has been done to upgrade the accommodation and the public areas of Felden Lodge.

The main target at present is to increase the amount of residential and conference business at Felden and maximise the use of the house and facilities to generate more revenue, especially when it is not being used for BB purposes. We continually welcome many church and youth groups back to Felden year after year and hope to continue this in the future. We were also pleased to welcome such BB groups as

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Birmingham Battalion for part of its centenary celebrations, North West Kent Battalion, West London Battalion, both London and Birmingham for their Queen's Badge Completion Courses and many internal training courses. One of the annual highlights is Firm Foundations, which again this year with over 1000 people visiting Felden, was a great success.

Carronvale House

The training centre has again enjoyed a very busy year with many BB groups using the facilities. Brigade training, particularly at weekends, has enjoyed a good year and non-BB groups continue to utilise the facilities. The Brigade is grateful to the house staff for their commitment thus enabling the centre to contribute to Brigade funds.

Plans for the refurbishment are progressing. The final stage of fundraising to complete the desired programme is under way. The work entails removal of the felt tiles used to re-roof the building in 1947 and replacing them with red clay tiles; installing disabled access and facilities and installing en-suite facilities in most of the bedrooms; repainting inside and out and upgrading the furnishings. The house will be open throughout the refurbishment.

The 'Friends' of Carronvale continue to support the house by funding replacement of soft furnishings, small equipment and providing plants for the gardens. Their interest and support is greatly appreciated.

Rathmore House

We are grateful to those battalions, companies and individuals for their ongoing financial support. Bookings from other groups/organisations have decreased during the year. No local authority approval has yet been given to our application for outline planning to protect the present and future value of the Rathmore site.

NATIONAL COMPETITIONS

The Executive is grateful for the work undertaken by the three competition co-ordinators, Walter Lambe (Northern Ireland Region), Bob Baillie (Scotland Region) and David Martin (England and Wales Regions) who arrange and co-ordinate the National competitions across the nations. The results are as follows:

Masterteam	3 rd Gourock
Five a side Football	11 th Warrington
Chess	1 st Maidstone
Table Tennis	1 st Grangemouth
Badminton	4 th Newtownabbey

In response to a recent review of these events, a new competition is being run for 2002/03 – Under 15s football.

UK NATIONAL BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS

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The third UK joint BB & GB Marching Band Competition took place on 8th June in Stoke-on-Trent with 44 bands taking part in the indoor and outdoor competitions; 850 young people took part in the various categories during the day. The event is organised by key volunteers from both organisations. The Executive wishes to express its appreciation to Mr John Hoddinott and his committee for their hard work in organising this event. The results are:

Beginners' Class	5 th Halifax
Novice Class	4 th Newcastle-upon-Tyne GB
Contest Class	51 st Birmingham BB/35 th Birmingham GB
Championship Class	2 nd Burntwood BB/1 st Burntwood GB
‘Showcase’:	
Cadet Class	4 th Glasgow BB
Open Class	13 th Bromley BB/1 st St Mary Cray GB

UK BRASS BAND CONTEST

The Association was unable to stage a Contest this session. Instead, the Association undertook one of its biggest ever projects. In September 2001, a nationally represented, 41-strong brass band was formed to record the Association's first ever CD, 'Naturally Brass'. It comprised volunteers from member bands throughout the UK. Rehearsals started on Saturday 22nd September in Derby, with further intense fortnightly rehearsals during October. The band recorded the CD in Doncaster on 3rd and 4th November 2001. The 19 tracks feature a wide variety of music which reveals the full versatility of the band. The CD was officially launched at a Gala Concert in March 2002 given by the National Brass Band at Chandlers Ford, Hampshire and over 3000 copies were sold in the first three months. Members of the Association are looking forward to performing at Brigade Council in Birmingham and at its own 'get-together' weekend in Hucknall on 29/30th October 2002.

AWARDS

The following awards have been gained during the year:

President's Badges	1539
Queen's Badges	857
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	
Bronze	241
Silver	112
Gold	46

INTERNATIONAL

The Brigade continues to participate in Global Fellowship and European Fellowship events and was represented in Neenah-Menahsa USA at the triennial committee meeting. Congratulations and a gift

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were delivered to the FDF in Denmark on the occasion of their centenary.

REGIONAL REPORTS

England and Wales

A successful application was made to the DfES NVYO scheme for funding for a three-year period for BB work in England. The Executive is pleased to report an increase in funding from £18,000 for 2001/02, to £31,206 for 2002/03. This grant will help part-fund the implementation of the Brigade's Equal Opportunities strategies to enable wider access to the organisation especially by children and young people. It will also part fund key training initiatives including the Company Development Scheme and the Programme Review. An additional amount of £9,950 has been notified for this current year to strengthen links between battalions in England and their local infrastructure groups such as CYVS's, and to promote the work of Connexions.

Joint working with The Girls' Brigade, England and Wales

The co-working with The Girls' Brigade in England and Wales continued during the session with members of our respective staffs and key volunteers meeting from time to time. The GB now plays a major part in the planning and running of Firm Foundations and the UK Marching Band Championships. Many of their members and leaders attended both events this year. A joint grant of £8,000 a year for three years has been received from the DfES to promote joint working between the two organisations.

Millennium Volunteers

The project has continued to gather pace and we are recruiting more volunteers. At the time of writing we have 876 young people enrolled on the scheme; we have awarded 196 certificates for 100 hours of volunteering and 121 Awards of Excellence for 200 hours of volunteering. Young people have enrolled from a number of organisations outside BB such as The Girls' Brigade, The Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade, Scouts, Guides, British Red Cross, St John Ambulance and a number of church congregations with no Brigade youth work. We have recently launched a partnership with the Diocese of Durham and hope to recruit a good number of volunteers from within the parishes of the Diocese.

The first National presentation was held within the precincts of the Houses of Parliament in Portcullis House. The evening was hosted by Viscount Thurso MP, the son of a former Brigade President. The Awards of Excellence were presented by the Rt Hon Ivan Lewis MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Other guests included the Brigade President, Judge Reg Lockett and The Revd Baroness Kathleen Richardson of Calow, President of The Girls' Brigade, England & Wales. The next National presentation will be held at Alton Towers in October 2002. A special badge has been produced for those gaining the Award of Excellence and the Executive has agreed that this can be worn by Seniors as part of their uniform.

A steering group of young people work with the Project workers and during the year they have produced new recruiting leaflets, BB certificates, a quarterly newsletter and have been fully involved in organising the Alton Towers presentation day. The Project workers are still very keen to visit companies and groups to publicise the scheme to young people.

Wales

All youth work in Wales is overseen by the Welsh Youth Agency (WYA) who acts on instructions from the National Assembly of Wales. The WYA has recently launched its Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales which suitably matches the programme that the BB uses. We are grateful to the National Assembly (through the WYA) for its continued financial support. BB Wales is currently developing a strategy for further development of the BB in parts of Wales currently not served by the BB.

BB Wales has been active in the last session in arranging training courses. These have included Leadership 3, Brigade Leadership and Queen's Badge Completion Courses as well as Youth Leader Training, Holiday Leadership and Campcraft courses. BB Wales has also been in discussions with the WYA regarding Quality Standards, and the Regional Committee still has this matter in hand.

Activities for boys form a large part of the work of BB Wales and these include 5-a-side football, cross country running, ten-in bowling, athletics, and junior sports events.

Scotland

Strategic Plan

Due to the reduction in staff in 2000, some parts of the plan have been delayed. The plan has been revisited and some of the objectives set aside but the six key aims remain:

- To develop programmes and activities that respond to the needs of young people and extend access to new members and volunteers.
- To raise the profile of the organisation in churches and communities in line with government policies and programmes.
- To identify, promote and support best practices.
- To be an open, efficient and learning organisation
- To provide a high quality, well used, national training and resource centre.

Elected Scotland members have taken responsibility for many of the individual objectives and progress is now being made.

Lord High Commissioner

Edinburgh, Leith and District Battalion traditionally provide a guard of honour for the Lord High Commissioner of the Church of Scotland. This was a special year because HM The Queen carried out the duties herself and inspected the Guard of Honour, making this a very special day for these boys.

Training

The effectiveness of recent training initiatives, particularly the introduction of Youth Leader Training, is evidenced by the manner in which battalions are working together to deliver the new training packages in a positive manner, which is directed at best meeting the needs of the trainees. The positive feedback from those attending the training and the assessment reports from those events visited confirms the progress made in national training.

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Band Work

Band work is one of the main activities of a number of Scottish companies. The highlight of the year is the Scottish Bands Contest. This is a high profile event attracting a large audience which offers an opportunity for fellowship and competition to Bugle, Trumpet, Pipe and Flute Bands.

The Scottish Champions for 2002 are:

Trumpet/Bugle	1 st Tulliallan
Pipes and Drums	47 th Aberdeen (Culter)
Flutes	2 nd Wishaw/4 th Carluke

The Bands sub-group offer workshops and direct support to bands throughout Scotland, and the Brigade benefits by the appearance before the public, of good quality bands. Pipe bands compete regularly in Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA) competitions. Bands come together every year to 'Beat the Retreat' at Edinburgh Castle esplanade, an event which attracts a very large audience the majority of whom are visitors. Bands also participate in Edinburgh's International Festival Cavalcade and numerous local events across the country.

Northern Ireland

Meeting the needs of young people

We continue to provide progressive programmes designed to offer interest and challenge to 15,705 boys and young men in 326 companies in Northern Ireland. In addition there are 2737 voluntary leaders helping to meet the ever more demanding needs of today's young people.

Youth Council for Northern Ireland

We are grateful to Y.C.N.I. for its continuing financial support and record our thanks to the Chairman, Director and members of Council who are continually seeking additional funding for the Voluntary Sector.

Community Relations

Simon Liggett completed his contract with us on 30th June. This post was funded by the European Union support scheme for Peace & Reconciliation through YOUTHNET. We hope to be successful in our application for further funding through Phase 2 of the European Union Special Programme for Peace & Reconciliation (EUSSPR).

Christian Education

A series of Chaplains' Breakfasts is being arranged for early next session and these will be followed by seminars for Captains and Officers. A new five-year Christian Education Programme has been produced by the Christian Education & Church Relationships Committee. The book together with worksheets will be available from August 2002.

Training

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Attendance at training courses reflects an organisation whose leaders understand the importance of being adequately prepared to engage effectively with children and young people in the pursuit of fulfilling the BB mission.

The Heartstart Boys' Brigade scheme in Northern Ireland has been making good progress in supporting its churches and local communities by providing trainers with emergency life support skills.

Competitions

The record of competitions held at District and National level provides some insight into the amount of work involved in administration and organisation. In addition, the hosting of National Finals intensifies the workload of the Activities Committee. Delegation of the work to the Anchor Boy and Junior Section Committees and Secretaries of Company Section competitions is vital in managing the programme. We are grateful to all those individuals who accepted responsibility for making sure that the programme of events was completed.

Platform - 'The Voice of BB Young People'

Although it has not met on a regular basis during the session, the group has now agreed a very important and interesting programme including: Drugs Education, Targeting Social need and Empowerment of young people. Having lost some members during the year we are pleased to welcome new members to the group and we look forward to their continuing impact and co-operation in the new session.

Republic of Ireland

Membership

The session under review indicates a small decrease in membership with a total of 43 companies, 12 of which are in the East Region (Dublin Battalion) and 31 in the Provinces. These figures include five companies in Donegal, administered by the Northern Ireland Region as part of the West Ulster Battalion. Regrettably, we have to report that the 89th Dublin and 1st Donoughmore & Donard companies did not reopen this session.

Founder's Thanksgiving Service

Once again, one of the most notable events during the session was the Annual Founder's Thanksgiving Service in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. The Brigade Secretary, Sydney Jones OBE gave the address. Michael Glenfield, 22nd Dublin Company and Christopher McHugh, 1st Greystones Company read the lessons, with prayers led by the Revd Denis Campbell, Battalion Chaplain. As usual we had a capacity congregation and the offering amounting to £951.52 went to the Brigade International Extension Fund. The Stedfast Band provided music for the service along with the Cathedral choir. As always we are grateful to the Dean and Chapter for their continued support and co-operation with the service. Following the march past after the service, the salute was taken by the Battalion President, Mr Alex Thackaberry

Training and Activities

During the session events and competitions for Company and Senior Section boys included a Scripture

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Course and examination, Lewis Crosby and Elementary Drill competition, Swimming Gala and Indoor Football competitions.

Events and competitions for Junior Section Boys included a Scripture Course and Examination, Syllabus for the Cyril J Harpur Scripture Award, Drill and Figure Marching, Swimming Gala, Quiz, and indoor football competitions.

The Anchor Boys enjoyed a visit to the Fit Zone in Leopardstown and a Fun Day in Fort Lucan Adventure Playground. In addition they enjoyed a visit to the Lambert Puppet Theatre.

The Boy Activity weekend for all regions, held in Ovoca Manor still proves to be a popular event and was well supported with 45 boys in attendance, representing eight companies.

Training courses arranged this session included the very successful 'Company in Action' course held in Virginia and Carlow.

CMSI Ireland Mission Appeal

'Counting the Cost' was the name of the BB/CMS Ireland Mission Appeal Project for 2001/2002. This project was taken up by the BB in Ireland and was both informative and challenging. The 'Counting the Cost' project is based in Democratic Republic of Congo and aimed to provide Healthcare, Education and Employment for the people there who are currently suffering terribly from the after effects of war and a volcano.

National Competitions

We are delighted to report that the 7th Dublin Company again reached the National Finals of the Chess Competition held in Tonbridge, Kent, on Saturday 18th May 2002.

Finance

Our main sources of income continue to be membership contributions, some corporate and individual contributions which together with the very generous Department of Education Youth Service grant enable the promotion of our many and varied activities, especially in the areas of development, training and programme throughout the Region. We express our most grateful appreciation and thanks to the many kind friends who have supported us by contributing to our funds, despite the many financial demands being made on so many today. We also acknowledge the continued support from the Department of Education and Science Youth affairs Section for the substantial grant, which we continue to receive each year.

SPECIAL EVENTS

There continues to be many examples of good youth practice in the work companies do week by week.

There are other higher profile events at UK and regional levels, some of which have become annual activities and are growing in momentum with increasing numbers of young people attending. These events are at the heart of our Object and more young people than ever are being introduced to the

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Gospel of Jesus Christ through activities such as Firm Foundations, Crossover and others which are mentioned below.

Firm Foundations

Firm Foundations took place over the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend at the end of May/beginning of June in co-operation with The Girls' Brigade, England and Wales. Around 1000 young people and leaders attended the event with the majority camping in the grounds of Felden Lodge. For many it has become an important part of their annual programme providing an additional opportunity for a weekend away with plenty on offer, even late into the night. More importantly, the clear evangelistic focus of the event underlines and reinforces the week-by-week Christian message communicated in many BB companies. The highlights of the programme this year included the morning youth worship sessions led by the 1-2-1 Worship Band comprising BB young people, and b5, a group of 20 young BB and GB musicians from Birmingham who played on the Sunday afternoon. Firm Foundations is reliant upon several hundred volunteers, many of whom are young people who work tirelessly to ensure that the various parts of the programme take place at the appropriate time.

Crossover

Over 700 people, representing groups from The Boys' Brigade, The Girls' Brigade and church youth groups, attended the fourth annual Crossover weekend at Broomlee Centre, West Linton. 'Baggage' was the theme for the weekend with young people and their leaders challenged to consider things which hold them back on their Christian journey. Workshops and activities kept everyone amused during the day and in the evening music to suit all tastes, a ceilidh, a disco, used up the little energy people had left. Thought provoking worship throughout the weekend helped to recharge the batteries for the days ahead. We are very grateful to the many volunteers who helped make the event such a success.

Keltic Faith

Members of Scotland's national worship group have seen a quieter year but have shared their faith at a number of events during the year. The group are always on the lookout for new members and opportunities to share their faith around the country. They look forward early next session to leading the closing worship at the St Ninian Festival in Whithorn, an honour previously filled by the London Community Gospel Choir.

KJC

KJC continues to provide opportunities for young leaders from the age of about sixteen who have an interest/talent in music, drama and who wish to express their faith by using these skills. Most members will testify to the boost their membership has given to their personal faith and for some their membership has significantly affected their choice of future career. New members are always welcome to join one of the weekend workshops held at Felden in October and February each year.

International Team

The work of the International Team has had a good year in securing further opportunities for young leaders to design and develop awareness projects based upon experiences gained from study trips, courses and working with young people. The Team is made up of young leaders between 16 and 25 who bring their talents, ideas and skills to the work. The team members take a full part in directing work

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and every year four representatives sit on the International Forum. The Team is a moving one as it is targeted at young leaders and accordingly, new members are always welcomed.

The awareness project for 2002/03 is called 'On the Edge' and was launched at Firm Foundations. The project is being supported by funding from the Department for International Development and resources will be issued to companies. The resources have been designed and prepared by the International Team members and include: 'programmes on a plate' resource materials, a website (www.on-the-edge.org.uk), a video and company visits.

BBCHALLENGE.COM is the follow on to the highly successful Millennium Games, and commenced in September 2001. The event is for 10-13 year olds and has travelled around the Brigade in England and Scotland. During the coming session events will be held in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Eire. Many boys have taken part, going around a circuit of 15 games, which present them with many different challenges. The event has been thoroughly enjoyed by those who have participated and a number of venues have included teams from The Girls' Brigade. Young people have delivered the event in the main with other volunteers and we are indebted to them for their support. Consideration is being given to a possible follow on programme when this one completes its run.

FINANCE

Summary Financial Statements/Accounts

The Balance Sheet and Statement of Financial Activities with comparative figures have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities.

The Statement of Financial Activities consolidates the results of all Brigade Restricted, Unrestricted and Endowment Funds.

Investments

Brigade funds not required for immediate use are invested in a spread of investments to provide income and capital appreciation.

Supplies Operation

Supplies turnover for the year was £711,687 (2001 - £954,336). After meeting all expenses the result was a surplus of £79,229 (2001 - £148,573).

Loans

Officers, friends and Brigade companies have supported the Brigade over many years with interest free loans. The amount held at 31st March 2002 was £26,830 (2001 - £26,830). The Executive wishes to record its thanks to all those who assisted in this way.

Grants Received

The Department for Education and Skills, and Scottish Office Education Department have continued to support the Brigade by grants received in the year to 31st March 2002 together with support from Local Authorities. The amount received was £205,094 (2001 - £134,636) and the Executive wishes to

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extend its grateful thanks.

Donations

The Brigade continues to receive donations towards its general work among young people and such generosity is greatly appreciated.

Gift Aid

The opportunities for tax-efficient giving under the Gift Aid scheme were introduced with effect from 6th April 2000. There is no longer a requirement for a minimum donation and a simple declaration is required once, which will cover all subsequent gifts. Details can be obtained from Headquarters.

Legacies

If an estate is valued over £250,000, which is not transferred to the spouse, the excess over this threshold is liable to 40% inheritance tax. Legacies in the deceased's will to charities reduce the value of the estate liable to this tax. The Exchequer, therefore, effectively gives 40% on top of the specific cash bequest.

CONCLUSION

The outcomes of youth work in general are often not obvious. But this is never going to be an easy road, missionary work never is. Changes in the lives of young people are not likely to make the national press but that does not diminish the worth and need for them. Good news is rarely reported loudly; however, it is the influence we have on the lives of future leaders and citizens that is important. Praise God for the work of the Brigade across this land.

Don McLaren
Brigade Secretary
30th August 2002