

# THE BOYS' BRIGADE

Northern Ireland District



OUR HERITAGE  
since 1883

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Photos front cover: Far left unknown,  
Centre, 2nd Greenisland Enrolment in 1965,  
Right, 1st Portadown, date unknown



Above left: 1st Portadown; right: the Johnston Brothers from 1st Lylehill BB: Reggie, George and Drew.

## Foreword

This Boys' Brigade Heritage Project has provided an opportunity for young people in the organisation to plan, manage and deliver a Heritage Programme, aimed at Company Section Boys in Northern Ireland. This resource is designed to complement, enhance and extend the existing BB Discover Programme. The young people who took part in this Heritage Project had the opportunity to develop management, research, presentation, finance and governance skills.

The central focus of the project was researching the history, tradition and development of The Boys' Brigade since its formation in Glasgow, in 1883 and its introduction to Ireland in 1888. The participants charted the history of the organisation against what was going on in Ireland, the United Kingdom and the World at the time, and developed links with other heritage organisations.

We record our thanks to the Youth Council for Northern Ireland for funding this project.

Rev Dr Trevor McCormick  
Vice-President of Northern Ireland District



The object of The Boys' Brigade is: '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.'

*'Obedience' was added in 1893; otherwise The Object has remained unchanged from the beginning.*

## Introduction

This Heritage Programme is for Company Section Boys aged 11 to 15 years. It contains ideas for games and activities to inform young people about the history of The Boys' Brigade and to celebrate the 125 years of work that took place from 1883 to 2013.

**Historical Snippets and Timelines:** The 125 years of The Boys' Brigade has been broken down into six time periods. For each period of time, we have compiled some Snippets of History along with a timeline which marks key events in The Boys' Brigade, Irish, UK and World history.

**Badge Classes Then and Now:** Eight historical badge classes have been selected. Boys can review the information on what had to be done to achieve badges in days gone by and compare that to equivalent Activities in the Discover Badge Programme today.



The Discover logo denotes a reference to the relevant section in the Discover File. It is intended that BB Company Section Boys would follow this Heritage Programme to learn about BB History by starting with the Historical Snippets for each time period, and then completing the 'Badge Classes Then and Now' section. We encourage those using the book to do their own research too.



The information icon denotes that supplemental resources can be found on The Boys' Brigade Northern Ireland website (Leaders' Section/Heritage Folder), and on the pen drive issued with this book. This includes a Certificate of Participation which can be printed off for Boys who take part.

## Introductory Badge

### Class: Old Boy Visit

Arrange for a selection of members from your Company over the years to visit the Company and share some of their memories of The Boys' Brigade, to allow comparison between different eras such as annual camp, Displays competitions, activities, uniform worn etc.

Encourage the Boys to ask questions about the visitor's time in The Boys' Brigade and what was going on in their area, school, home and work life at the time.

If your Company is relatively young and you do not have many ex members over a significant period of time, you could contact an older Company in your Battalion and ask them to suggest an older former member, who could come along and speak about their experiences in The Boys' Brigade.

## Sir William Alexander Smith, 1854 - 1914: The Legacy

William Smith was born in Thurso, Scotland on 27 October 1854; eldest son of Major David Smith and his wife Harriet. William came to Glasgow in 1869 when he was just 15 to work in his uncle's soft goods wholesale business. He joined the local Rifle Volunteers, rising to the rank of lieutenant by the time he was 19.

In 1874 he joined the Church of Scotland and became a Sunday School teacher. It was through his experience of trying to teach unruly 'bored' Boys in Sunday School that he had the idea of forming The Boys' Brigade – an organisation that could teach Christian discipline and combine it with filling a Boys need to be physically active and adventurous. On 4 October 1883, the first Boys' Brigade Company was formed in Glasgow in the Free Church Mission Hall on North

Woodside Road. The objective was: "The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among Boys and the promotion of habits of Reverence, Discipline, Self-respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness." The famous anchor badge was also used along with the motto 'Sure and Stedfast'; taken from Hebrews 6: 19 – *'Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast'*.

Semi-military discipline, drilling with dummy rifles, and dressing in military style uniforms was combined with Christian services, lessons, sports and games. Camping soon followed in the summer of 1886. William took the Boys to the small town of Tighnabruaich in Argyll to camp out in tents – this was a radical idea in 1886. Holidays were virtually unheard of and only people who had no choice

slept in tents. News of The Boys' Brigade spread rapidly. Other churches in Glasgow and throughout Scotland quickly started BB companies. By 1885 the first BB companies were formed in England. In 1888 William McVicker a Sunday School Superintendent at St Mary Magdalene Parish Church in Belfast read of the work of William Smith with Boys in Scotland. After travelling to Glasgow to see BB in action for himself he quickly formed the first Irish Company in his church.

Eventually Alexander Smith quit working to devote himself full time to The Boys' Brigade. He wrote a rule book, 'The Little Red Book' – How to Form and Conduct a Company – and founded and edited The Boys' Brigade Gazette. His work of regularly writing, collecting, and distributing resources to

youth workers set a standard for the support, development and encouragement of youth work that was way ahead of its time. Similar organisations were formed as a result of William Smith's work and vision: *The Church Lads' Brigade, The London Diocesan Church Lads' Brigade, The Catholic Boys' Brigade, The Jewish Lads' Brigade, The Boys' Life Brigade, and The Boy Scouts - all of whom acknowledged William Smith as the inspiration for their founding.*

William Smith was knighted in 1909 for his service to Boys. He continued to work for BB until his death on 10 May, 1914. Over 15,000 people lined the route for his funeral; 7,000 of them BB members. Whilst being Brigade Secretary, William Smith remained Captain of the 1st Glasgow company and rarely missed a meeting. His son George Stanley Smith, became Brigade Secretary in 1925.

*"If I am to be remembered by posterity I should like it to be as the man who taught people to spell Boy with a capital B", WA Smith*

## Period One: 1883 – 1910



Sir William Alexander Smith

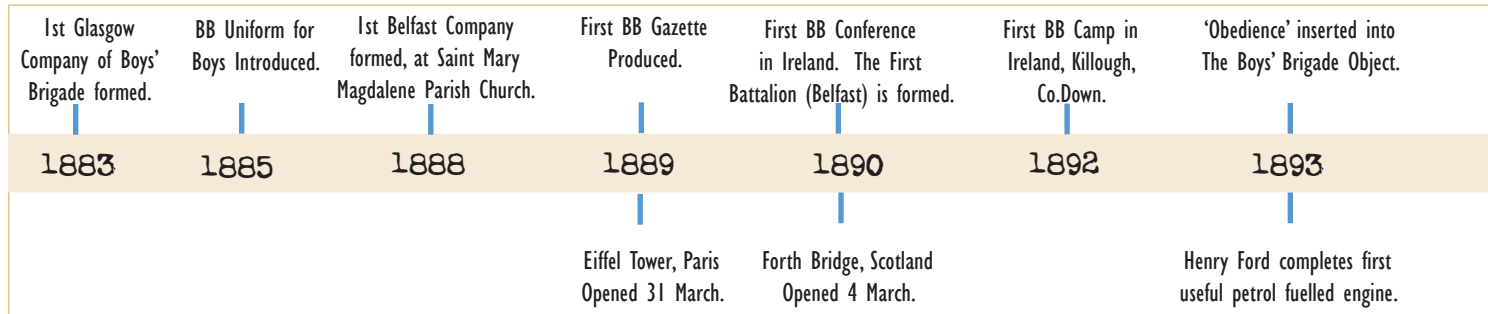
### Historical Snippets

- 1883** The Boys' Brigade was formed by William Alexander Smith in Glasgow on 4 October.
- 1885** The first uniform for Boys was introduced.
- 1888** 1st Belfast Company (*now 1st Irish Company*) was formed in Saint Mary Magdalene Parish, Church Donegall Pass, Belfast.
- 1897** HRH The Duke of York, (*crowned King in 1910*) became Brigade Patron.
- 1893** The word 'obedience' was inserted into the original object.
- 1909** A special uniform for Boys' Brigade Scouts was introduced (*discontinued in 1927*). William Alexander Smith, was knighted on 30 July 1909.

During this period the uniform consisted of a soft forage cap, a brown leather belt and a white duck haversack. Even at this early stage of Boys' Brigade, Companies were formed in different church denominations in Ireland: Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Congregational and Moravian Churches with several Mission Halls and Mountpottinger YMCA.

### Company Programme

A typical programme in the early years comprised Bible Class/ Sunday School, Drill, Gymnastics, Marching, and the 'Boys' Room', where ping pong, quoits, dominoes, darts and draughts were played. Boys' comics were also available. The Boys' Room was a very popular feature of the programme in every Company, as there were no cinemas or other forms of entertainment available.



## The Boys' Brigade in Ireland

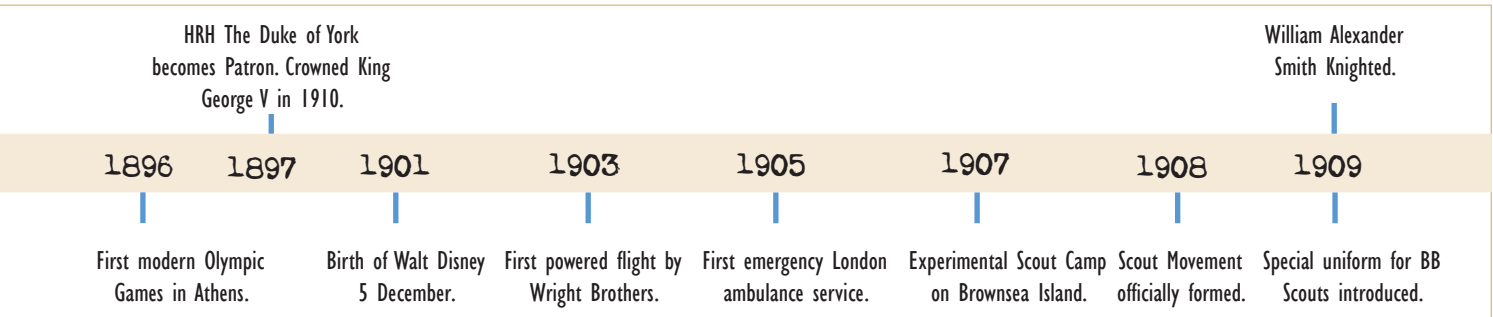
William McVicker formed BB in Ireland in 1888 when there was civil unrest and political strife; military style drilling was against the law. The Boys' Brigade was actually an illegal assembly! Legal advice was sought from the Government in Dublin Castle for a ruling followed by a personal approach to the Lord Lieutenant. Finding it impossible to get any firm decision William McVicker could wait no longer and had the Company enrolled. The movement caught on quickly and spread throughout the country. In 1890 he decided to arrange a conference of all Officers at which brief Company reports would be presented and from which encouragement could be drawn. The conference was held in the YMCA on Saturday, 22nd February 1890; it was decided to seek approval from The Brigade in Glasgow for the formation of the Belfast Battalion. The first ever

Boys' Brigade Camp in Ireland was organised by the 1st Belfast (*Saint Mary Magdalene Parish Church*) in 1892 at Killough, Co. Down, in a large granary kindly lent by Lord Bangor. A good contingent from the 12th Belfast Company (*St Thomas' Parish Church*) and a few Boys from the 9th Belfast Company (*Fitzroy Avenue Presbyterian Church*) also attended bringing the numbers to almost 60.



### Community Section >E1> My Town>Activity 3 What was your town like at this time?

Create a timeline similar to the one below to document the history of your local area between 1883 and 1910.



## Uniform: 1883 - 1910

The Boys' Brigade started on 4 October 1883 and by the first Inspection in March 1884 the uniform consisted of a red ribbon rosette, worn in the buttonhole, made by William Smith's wife. This first uniform was always worn over ordinary clothing of the day.

By 1885, a soft forage cap (Pillbox) with two rings of white braid was worn. A belt was introduced in the 1st Glasgow Company made of brown leather with an 'S' shaped buckle. This was worn with a large single strapped white duck haversack (for lunch on excursions only), later adapted for parade uniform (worn folded when not in use). As more companies were formed, a small silver metal Company number was introduced and attached to a more robust stiff cap. This uniform was to serve the BB with few alterations for almost a century.

The traditional brown leather and brass buckle Boys' belt was introduced around 1885/86, and remained the same through the 20th century; the only modification was a cross added behind the anchor on the buckle emblem after the union of Boys' Brigade with the Boys' Life Brigade. In the early 1900s a chin strap and one inch button was added on top of the cap.

In 1909, a special uniform for The Boys' Brigade Scouts was introduced. This consisted of a light brown Scouts' hat, with an embroidered oval Brigade Crest on the front, a Scout knapsack, and regulation Brigade belt. An optional Scouts' shirt in navy blue, was also worn. This uniform was only worn by BB Scouts and was discontinued in 1927.





1st Belfast Company, First Session 1888 - 1898



12th Belfast St Thomas Parish 1892



Inspection Day at Castlerock Camp in 1910



Camp Guard at Castlerock 1910

## Period Two: 1911 – 1929

### Historical Snippets

- 1914** NI District Council established.
- 1914** Sir William Alexander Smith died on 10 May.
- 1915** First King's Badge awarded in Ireland
- 1917** The Boy Reserves started (later called the Junior Section).
- 1921** First BB Week
- 1926** The Boys' Brigade merged with The Boys' Life Brigade.
- 1926** The Boy Reserves became The Life Boys.

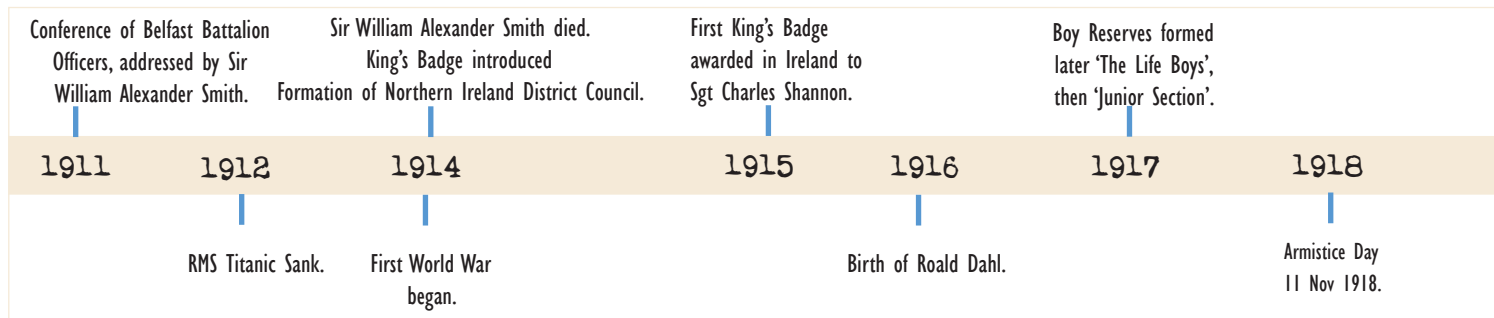
### Scouting Activities (1900s)

In the course of the decade there is a record of Standing Committees being formed, including a Scouting Committee designed to create interest in scouting activities in parallel with similar work undertaken by the Boy Scout Movement, founded by Robert Baden-Powell in 1908.

### Formation of The NI District Council

A Conference of (Belfast) Battalion Officers held in May 1911 was addressed by the Brigade Secretary, Sir William Smith. The Founder paid a further visit to Belfast in February 1914 with a view to establishing a District Council. This would appear to have been the first attempt at organising The Boys' Brigade on a District basis, thereby bringing into the Battalion fellowship those BB Companies which were functioning geographically outside Belfast. Belfast Battalion's first representatives on the Northern Ireland District Council were W McVicker, H McKibbin, and SJ Platt.

WH McVicker, took over the Captaincy of 1st Belfast after the death of his father William McVicker. In 1926 he resigned his appointment in Queen's University, Belfast, to work for BB full time, as the Secretary of the Belfast Battalion in an honorary capacity. He joined the Brigade HQ staff in 1933 and was the Overseas and Life Boy Secre-



tary for many years. He carried out invaluable work in the development of the Brigade overseas.

## Inauguration of The King's Badge (1913)

His Majesty King George VI graciously approved the introduction of The King's Badge into the Brigade Badge Structure in 1913. It was and still is (now known as The Queen's Badge) the highest BB award a Boy can gain. The very first King's Badge to be awarded in Ireland went to Sgt Charles Shannon of 39th Belfast Boys' Brigade Company, who was presented with the badge by Viscount Pirrie at the Belfast Shipyard in 1915.



First Antrim Company of The Boys' Brigade in 1912, pictured at Massereene School. Seated in the centre is the 12th Viscount of Massereene, next to him is the Rev. Cannon Collis and then Joseph Tuff. The rest of the company are all unknown.

First  
BB Week.

1921

1922

First BBC  
Broadcast.

1923

Inner Tomb of  
Tutankhamun opened.

The Founder's son  
G. Stanley Smith, becomes  
Brigade Secretary.

1925

Union of BB and The Boys' Life Brigade. The Cross  
was added behind the Anchor in the BB Badge.

1926

Birth of Queen  
Elizabeth II.

1929

Birth of Martin Luther King.

## Boy Reserves - 1917

The most notable event of this period was the formation of the BB Boy Reserves. It was formed by the Brigade Executive at a time when the whole nation was anxious, war-weary and youth work was at a low ebb. The Scouts already had their Wolf Cubs for eight year olds, and some BB Officers had been running 'play hours' for the younger Boys before Mr FC Carrey Longmore of Warley in Essex submitted a scheme for BB Boy Reserves aged 9 to 12. Approval of Brigade Council was obtained and Carrey Longmore along with Douglas Smith (*second son of the Founder*) devised a programme for younger Boys based on the four areas of mental, moral, physical and spiritual development. The name 'Boy Reserves' in the course of time changed, to 'The Life Boys' and latterly to 'The Junior Section'.

## Inauguration of BB Week - 1921

In recognition that a steady income would be necessary if the organisation was to develop and widen its sphere of influence among Boys, the Brigade Headquarters inaugurated BB Week in 1921. Each Company taking part in this annual collection paid a portion of its total to HQ and retained the balance for Company funds.

## Boys' Life Brigade - 1926

The Boys' Brigade and The Boys' Life Brigade amalgamated in 1926, effected at Brigade Council in September of that year. The Boys' Brigade uniform and name was adopted for the united body, and the BB Anchor and the BLB Red Cross formed the new crest. The junior movements also united; the BB 'Boy Reserves' and the BLB 'Life Boys' became known as 'The Life Boys', with the combined emblem of anchor and life-buoy as their new crest.

## Uniform

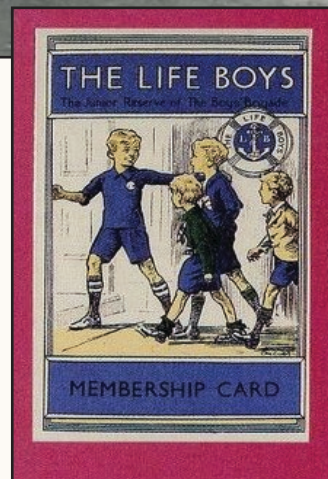
A Buttonhole Badge was introduced in 1911 but this was only for use when out of uniform. By 1921 this Buttonhole Badge could be worn with uniform at the discretion of the Company Captain. Upon union with The Boys' Life Brigade in 1926, the anchor badge had the cross added behind the anchor. At this time various versions of the uniform were being worn.



The Anchor Badges through the years.



On this page: Various images of The Life Boys and Junior Section Boys



## Period Three: 1930 – 1949

### Historical Snippets

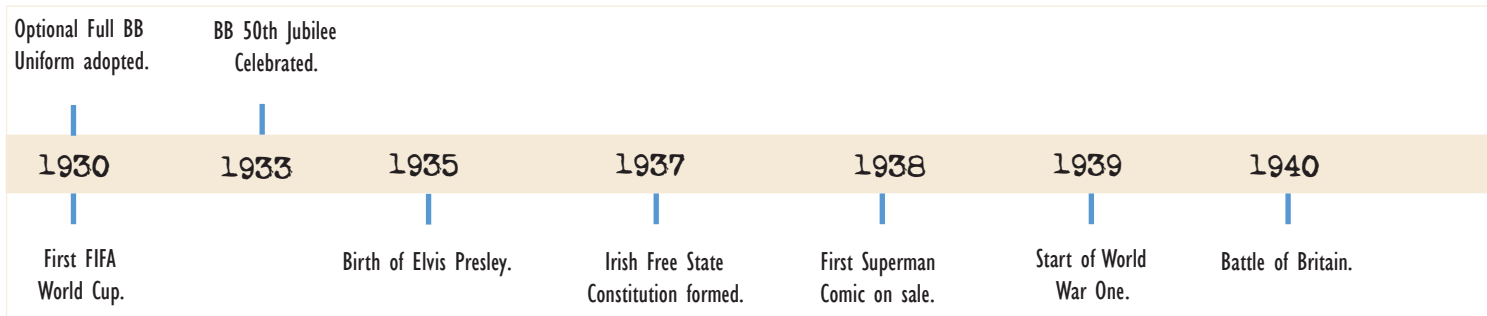
- 1930** Optional Full BB Uniform adopted
- 1933** BB 50th Jubilee Anniversary Celebrated
- 1943** The Boys' Brigade celebrated its 60th Anniversary, Reviewed by King George VI.
- 1946** Athletics Badge Introduced.
- 1949** Felten Lodge opened  
*(now Brigade UK and ROI Headquarters).*

### Uniform

In 1930 full uniform was adopted by the whole Brigade with the following changes: royal blue tie, plain navy blue shirt with no piping, black socks with two white rings, shoulder titles and numerals with royal blue lettering, and black or brown belt. This uniform remained in use until the 1980s in some areas.



King George VI and Queen Elizabeth greeting BB members. It is thought that this photo was taken in Glasgow at the 50th Jubilee of The Boys' Brigade in 1933.





1st Antrim Boys' Brigade football team pictured in 1947 in Antrim Castle Grounds: Back row l-r: Wilf, Bob Fawcett, Master Carson, Chris Quigley, Master McCullough, Unknown, W.E. Charles, Mr Johnston. Seated l-r: Unknown, Unknown, Jim Carson, Tommy Rodgers and Unknown. On the ground are Unknown and Master Hannon.



3rd Ballymena at Summer Camp, Carnlough July 1946  
Clockwise: parading to church on Sunday Morning, Bob Fawcett going for the high jump and tent no 4.



BB 60th Anniversary, Inspection at Windsor Castle by King George VI.

Introduction of Athletics Badge.

Opening of Felden Lodge, now Brigade UK & ROI Headquarters.

1942

1943

1944

1945

1946

1947

1949

1950

Muhammad Ali born.

D-Day. US drop nuclear bomb on Hiroshima.

Birth of Arnold Schwarzenegger.

First personal computer goes on sale.

## Period Four: 1950 – 1969

### Historical Snippets

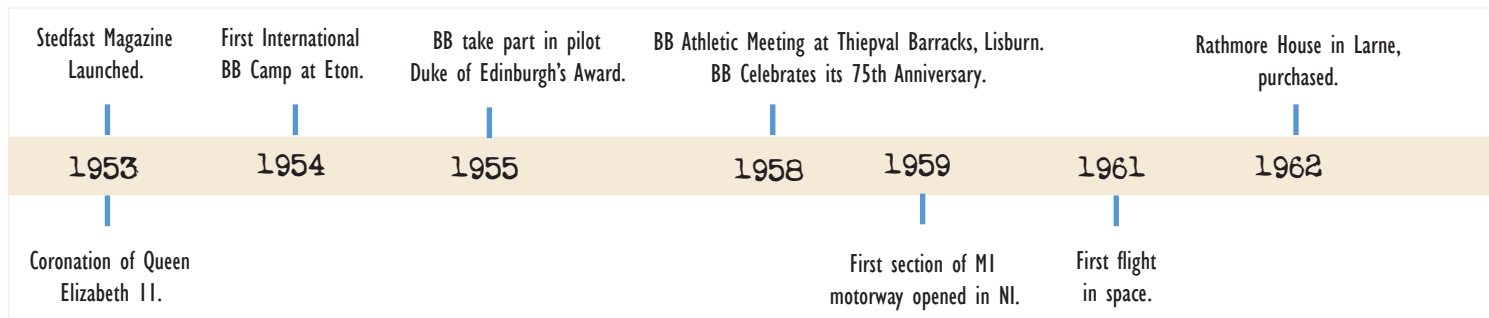
- 1953** Stedfast Magazine launched.
- 1954** The Boys' Brigade held its first International Camp at Eton on the Centenary of the Founder's birth.
- 1955** 450 entrants for a Scripture Knowledge exam; 400 for Wayfaring; 300 for First Aid; 230 for Educational subjects, 240 for Fireman's certificates and badges.
- 1958** Athletics meeting held at Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn
- 1962** Rathmore House (*Northern Ireland District Headquarters Training and Conference Centre*) was purchased.
- 1963** The BB World Conference was founded.
- 1964** 'The Robins' was established in Northern Ireland.
- 1966** Restructuring of The Brigade.
- 1968** World Conference held in Rathmore House Larne  
Series 2 Badge programme introduced.  
The President's Badge Launched.

### Rathmore House, Larne

Rathmore House was purchased during the summer months of 1962 and was ready for use in October. A series of specialised training courses were held in the new centre in the ensuing months and it was officially opened in 1963.

### Pre-Junior Groups

Concern was expressed from time to time at the existence of unofficial pre-Life Boy groups for Boys aged 6-8 years going under a variety of names – Cabin Boys, Robins, Junior Patrols, etc. Attempts were made to disassociate these groups from the official Life Boy Organisation. Initially these were frowned upon by the Life Boy Area Executive, but the number of such units steadily increased to the point where official recognition became inevitable.



Supported by a unanimous request from 80 Chaplains who attended a Chaplain's Conference, the Battalion Council voted in favour of official recognition at its meeting in January 1964. 'The Robins' was officially born in Northern Ireland, and functioned as an integral part of The Boys' Brigade Northern Ireland District from September 1964.

## Restructuring

The restructuring of The Brigade as detailed in the Haynes Report became effective on 17 September 1966. From that date The Life Boys became known as the Junior Section of The Boys' Brigade and the Life Boy Motto, the Life Boy Object, and the Life Boy Salute were superseded by the BB equivalents. All Leaders-in-Charge and Leaders were ranked as BB Officers for service in the Junior Section. The age grouping was the same as in the Life Boys. The Junior Section continued to work apart from the Company Section, but were encouraged to participate in a combined Enrolment Service for

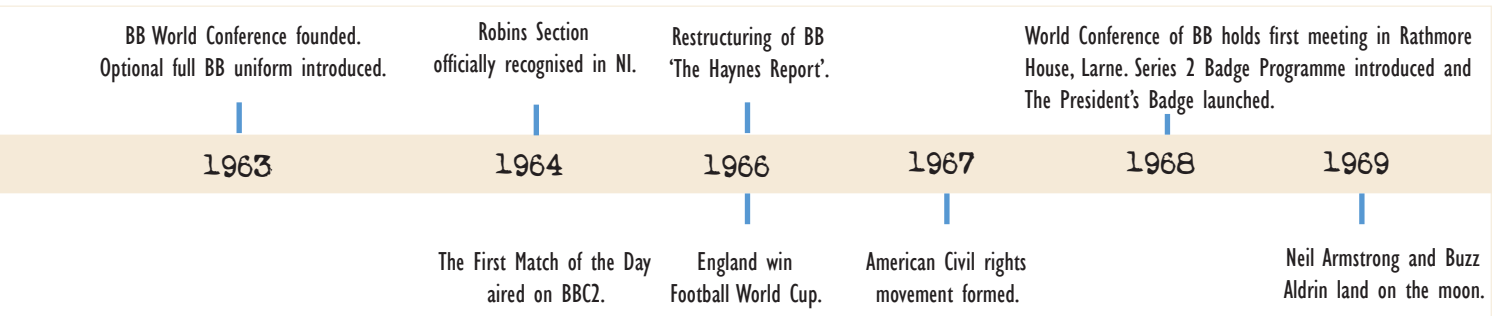
all sections. Companies could operate a combined Company Section for 11-18 year olds or form a Senior Section for 16-18 year olds.

## Adventure Hikes

Interest in outdoor activities increased at this time. In particular the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme with its emphasis on outdoor pursuits became popular at Company level. Sponsored walks, adventure hikes, and cycle rallies were attracting large entries from BB Boys. Adventure hikes were an option for those doing The Queen's Badge.

## Brigade Council 1968

At the conclusion of Brigade Council the newly constituted World Conference Committee of The Boys' Brigade held its first meeting at Rathmore House, Larne.



## Uniform Amendments 1950 - 1969

An 'Optional Full Uniform' was introduced in 1963 and consisted of navy blue shirt, white lanyard, royal blue tie with either navy blue shorts or long trousers for Seniors. The shirt had Brigade Titles sewn on at the top of the sleeve and this was worn with either the pillbox, forage or field service cap, waist belt and haversack.

In 1964 the Haynes Committee Report referred to the need to resolve the different points of view which existed throughout the Brigade on uniform. Subsequently a sub-committee of Brigade Executive proposed a full-dress uniform. The belt and haversack was to be retained, but it was proposed that the pillbox would be replaced with a field service cap. However, the 'full dress' was not popular being expensive and not very practical in cold, inclement weather.

In 1967 Boys in Senior Sections wore the Staff Sergeant's Cap and two lapel badges to match the cap badge. These were worn over ordinary clothing, but preferably with a dark blue suit with white shirt

and black tie, or the 1963 full uniform, minus haversack. With this, no badges or designation of rank were worn.

In 1969 Brigade Council accepted a recommendation from Brigade Executive that the only change should be that all sections of the Company should wear a field service type cap with effect from session 1970-71. The badge surround for each section had its own distinguishing colour – gold for the Junior Section, red for the Company Section and blue for the Senior Section. The decision to adopt the new style cap did not meet with universal acceptance. To many, parting with the pillbox and the sergeant's peaked cap was like parting with old friends, having been designed by Sir William Alexander Smith and his colleagues and worn by BB boys for 87 years. However, change was inevitable over time and the Brigade recognised the need to adapt, improve and move forward.



Reception at Balmoral Castle by HM The Queen and HRH Prince Philip to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Brigade in 1958.



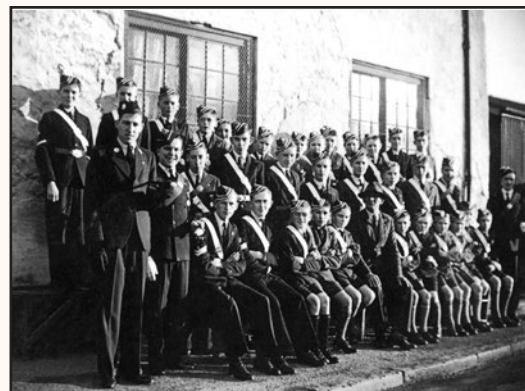
1968 - Brigade World Conference meeting hosted by NI District.



1st Antrim Company of the Boy's Brigade Bugle Band pictured in 1956. Back row l-r: Walter Chambers, Harry Clarke, John Creighton, Bobby Paisley, Norman Purdy, Scott McIlrea. Front row l-r: Jim Beresford, George Nicholl, Jim Baird, Jim Purdy, Sammy Wallace, Lyndsey Peacock, Alfie Beresford.



34th Belfast BB football team based at Ulsterville Presbyterian Church pictured Christmas 1961



Boys' Brigade members pictured at Castle Street in Antrim. It is thought this was taken in the middle of the 20th Century!



Rathmore House, Larne

## Period Five: 1970 - 1989

### Historical Snippets

- 1977** Pre-Junior Section was formed UK wide (now Anchor Boys).
- 1983** The Boys' Brigade was reviewed by The Queen at Holyrood Palace in its Centenary Year. Series 3 badge programme 'Get the Credit' introduced.
- 1988** Irish Centenary celebrations

### Pre-Junior Groups

At the annual meeting of Brigade Council in Aberdeen in September 1977 a motion in the name of the Northern Ireland District was carried to amend the Brigade's Constitution to include a pre-Junior Section, known as The Robins in Northern Ireland District, as an

integral part of the organisation across the UK effective from 1st September 1977. From that date 'The Robins' groups which had operated for a number of years in Northern Ireland became the pre-Junior Section of the Company. Each administrative District was given discretion in determining a name and in Northern Ireland it remained as 'The Robins'; now known across the regions as the 'Anchor Boys'.

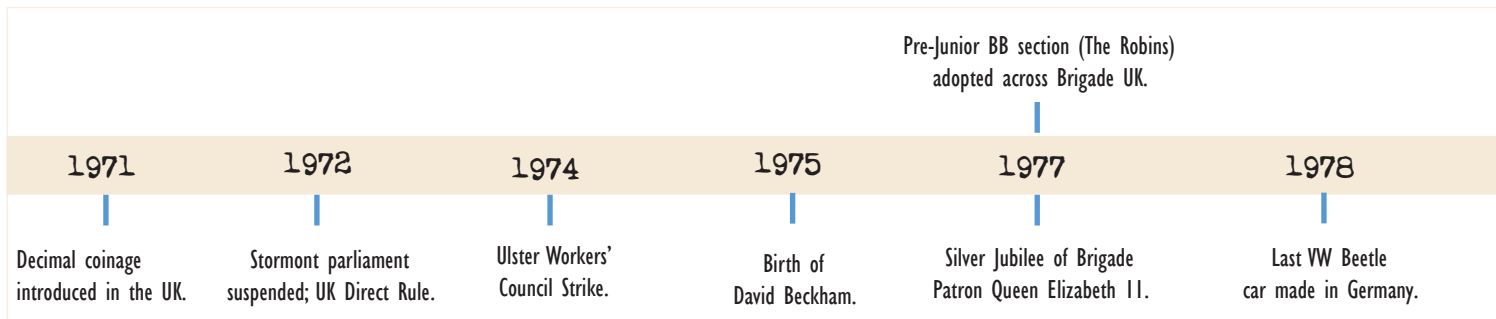
### Uniform

The new 'Field Service' hat was introduced in 1970. It was made of blue terylene/cotton with a new chrome plated BB Hat badge and red plastic surround for Company Section

Boys and Blue for Seniors. Numerals to signify the company number were attached on the lower part of this surround. In 1982 'Ordinary Clothing' was defined as dark blue or black jacket, plain dark blue or plain dark grey trousers, white shirt, black tie, navy blue socks and black shoes.



NCO Training, at Rathmore 1972

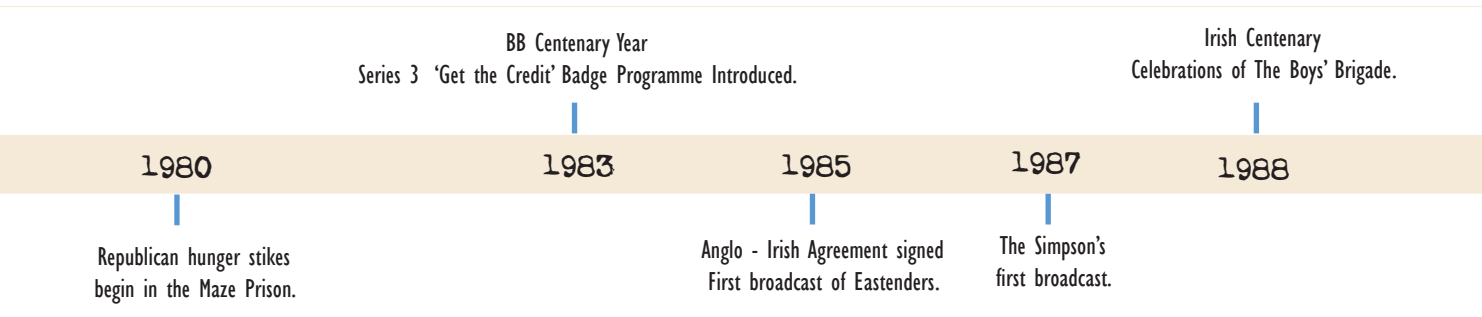




The Boys' Brigade NI District Football team who played in The Milk Cup in 1988



Irish Centenary Parade in Belfast, 1988

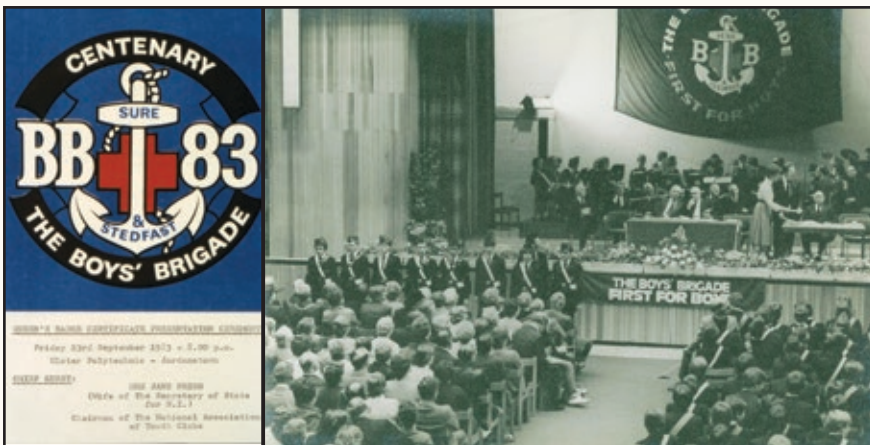


## Brigade Centenary Celebrations in Ballymoney Show Grounds 1983



## Anchor Boy and Junior Section Fun Day for Irish Centenary in 1988, Ballymena Show Grounds





Queen's Badge Presentation Ceremony 23 September 1983 in The Ulster Polytechnic Jordanstown, with Chief Guest, Mrs Jane Prior wife of James Prior, Secretary of State for NI 1981 - 1984.



Lord Elgin, Brigade President with The Queen at The Royal Review at Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh in 1983 to mark 100 years of The Boys' Brigade.



Northern Ireland celebrated the Irish Centenary in 1988. The Centenary logo was based on designs submitted in a competition by the Boys. The winning design selected was drawn by Geoffrey Brown from 1st Larne.



L-R Dr G Humphreys NI President, Bill McVicker, Lord.Thurso Brigade Secretary, John McVicker, Jim Boden former Captain of 1st Belfast and a young corporal from 10th Bangor pictured at the unveiling of the commemorative plaque for William McVicker in 1988 at a special Centenary Service in St Anne's Cathedral, 10 October 1988.

## Period Six: 1990 – 2013

### Historical Snippets

- 1993** Junior Section (previously the 'Life Boys') celebrated their 75th Anniversary.
- 2002** The BB World Conference was renamed the Global Fellowship of Christian Youth.
- 2007** Discover Badge Programme Introduced.
- 2008** The Boys' Brigade celebrated its 125th Anniversary.

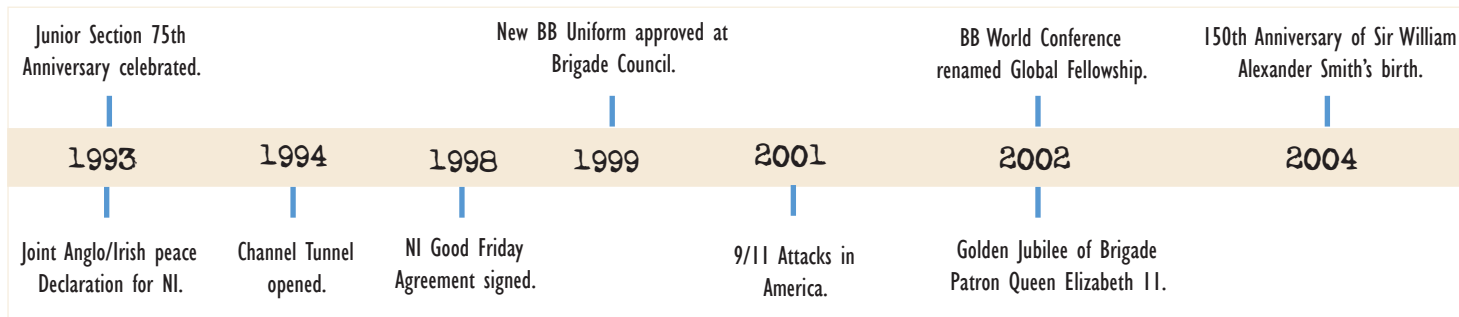
### Uniform

Company Section uniform underwent a radical change. A new uniform was approved at Brigade Council in 1999 and since 2006 all members have been wearing the new uniform. The new uniform is a navy blue Boys' Brigade sweatshirt, either a blue Boys' Brigade polo shirt or navy blue Boys' Brigade shirt, Boys' Brigade tie, plain dark trousers, a black leather belt with chrome Boys' Brigade buckle and

plain dark shoes. An arm band is worn on the right arm above the elbow; awards gained are pinned on this along with a sewn on tape showing the company name. At the discretion of the relevant Company Leadership, Boys may wear the hat with hat badges and surrounds of the 1970-2000 uniform.



On Parade at The Queen's Badge presentation in Peatlands Park in 2000.





Top left: Celebrating 100 yrs of The Queen's Award (originally The King's Award) in St James' Palace with HRH The Duke of York.  
 Top Centre: Members of The Londonderry Battalion with the Baton containing the Queen's Message celebrating The Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

Top right: The Boys' Brigade NI District Anchor Boys celebrated 125 years of BB with a fun day at W5, Belfast.

Bottom: Brigade UK marks the 125th Anniversary of The Boys' Brigade at the Guildhall in London.

Discover Badge Programme introduced.

125th Anniversary of BB.

125th Anniversary of camping in BB.

125th Anniversary of BB Northern Ireland District.  
 NIHQ Rathmore House sold.

2005

2007

2008

2011

2012

2013



YouTube launched.

Diamond Jubilee of Brigade Patron Queen Elizabeth II.  
 London Olympic & Paralympic Games.

Derry/Londonderry City of Culture.



Sir William Alexander Smith established the first Boys' Brigade unit in 1883 as a way of making Sabbath School both more attractive to Boys and Young Men and to give structure to the work. His model of Bible Teaching amidst physical activity, camp, and drill to reach Boys for Christ has stood the test of time.



## Badge Classes Then And Now

1. Company Section Proficiency Badges and Programmes
2. Scout's Badge
3. Ambulance/First Aid Badge
4. Education/Citizenship Badge
5. Gymnastics/Athletics Badge
6. Arts and Crafts Badge
7. Bandsman Badge
8. Wayfarer's Badge

**i** Have a go at making your own 'Lenny and Les' BB Cartoon Strip! There is a template in the Heritage Folder in the Leaders' section of [www.bbni.org.uk](http://www.bbni.org.uk) and on the pen drive issued with this book.

# 1. Company Section Proficiency Badges & Programmes

## Series One: Badges pre - 1968

The first proficiency badge was a woven cloth Ambulance Badge dating between 1891 and 1893. By 1893 this was replaced by a nickel badge and this was the beginnings of the first award badges in the Boys' Brigade. Badges pre 1939 were generally given a frosted finish with raised areas being polished. The number continued to grow until the last one, the Expedition Badge, was introduced in 1964. These nickel badges had an average weight between 6g - 8g. This whole scheme was withdrawn in 1968.



Badges pre 1968

## Series Two: Badges 1968 - 1984

This was the second award scheme available to Boys in the Company Section. There was 24 barrel shaped badges, originally aluminium anodised with a bronze finish then changed to plastic in 1976; discontinued in August 1984. The regulations regarding these badges were generally in keeping with the spirit of the previous structure and the title of the Badge. The barrel badges were discontinued in 1984.



*A full list of badges pre 1968 can be found in the Heritage Folder in the Leaders' section at [www.bbni.org.uk](http://www.bbni.org.uk) and on the pen drive issued with this book.*

## Series Three: 1983 - 2007

A major revision of the awards system took place in the centenary year of 1983. Five new badges (Adventure, Leadership, Community, Interests, and Physical) replaced the 24 awards, and 46 metallic foil stickers (Credits) that accompanied them. When a Boy gained two credits in a category, he gained the badge. A further two credits and he received a red plastic surround and with one further credit he gained a blue surround. Generally, these badges were made of metal covered with a 'cold enamel' coloured coating, although some are decals covered with clear epoxy resin. The badges were discontinued in 2007.



Series Three Badges



Series Two Badges

## Series Four: 2007 onwards

**The Discover Award Scheme** is the fourth programme scheme to be used in the Company Section with Boys aged 11 to 15. The Compass Badge, is for new recruits awarded in the Boy's first session in the Company Section at any age. The programme material is the same; therefore a Boy joining later in a session or in a subsequent session may work with those of the same age group on the same activities and be presented with the Compass Award as soon as he fulfils the requirements.

A Community, Recreation or Skills badge is awarded for completing a set number of activities from each respective zone - awarded at four stages. The highest stage of each badge is worn on an armband. There are special awards available to Boys at the end of Year 9 (Discovery Badge) and Year 11 (President's Badge) that involve participation in other activities in addition to the Discover Programme. All Brigade activities are underpinned by the Christian Faith, and relevant Christian Faith topics and resources are provided in each of the zones.

The Challenge Plus Programme is for Seniors aged 15-18 and requires each young person to undertake in-depth projects and challenges of their own choice, which they work on at their own initiative, with assistance from the Leaders when required. There are 3 zones (Community, Leisure & Recreation and Lifeskills) and 3 levels of progression: Bronze (10pts), Silver (20pts) and Gold (30 pts).

## Discover Award Activity Zones

### Community:

Local & National | Nature & Environment | International

### Recreation:

Outdoor & Adventure Activities | Sports & Games | Health & Lifestyle

**Skills:** Skills & Interests | Creativity | Trips & Visits

### Discover Badges Stage 1



Community



Recreation



Skills

### Challenge Plus Badges



Compass Badge



Discovery Badge



President's Badge

## 2. Scout's Badge: 1909 - 1968



**Aim: To introduce young people to The Scouts' Badge.**

### **Background:**

The Scouts' Major General RSS Baden-Powell was a great friend of Sir William Smith and was made an Honorary Vice-President of the Brigade in 1903. By 1904 he suggested that some sort of Scout Training would be popular with the Boys and in 1906 Baden-Powell gave The Boys' Brigade the manuscript of 'Scouting for Boys'. An experimental Scout Camp was

held in 1907 with a group of 10 Boys from Boys' Brigade Companies in Bournemouth and Poole and 10 Boys from public schools.

Scouting was originally intended for use within existing organisations, but by 1908 the 'Boy Scouts' had become an organisation in its own right. Scouting still existed as part of the programme in other organisations for some thirty years. A Boys' Brigade 'Scouts Badge' was introduced in 1909. It was originally silver coloured, and was followed in 1911 with a new gold Scout's Badge. This was the top level award and the silver badge became the 2nd Class award (gained prior to the gold). In 1917 the gold was discontinued and the silver became the first class status.

**The test to gain the Scout Badge included:**

1. Write from memory the BB Object.
2. Know the composition of the Union Flag.
3. Tie four out of five specified knots.
4. Swim 25 yards.
5. Name 15 out of 20 objects viewed for 30 seconds.
6. Semaphore signal the alphabet/numbers.

*Scouting within The Boys' Brigade was discontinued in 1927 on the union of The Boys' Brigade with The Boys' Life Brigade. Most of the activities were included in the Signallers' and Wayfarers' Badges.*

## 1: Tying Knots

*Activity Time: 30mins | Group Size: Any*

**Aim:** Tie four knots in less than 30 seconds.

**Equipment:** Rope, Computer/Laptop

### Instructions:

Tie four of the following knots in less than 30 seconds per knot:

- Bowline
- Fisherman's Bend
- Reef Knot
- Clove Hitch
- Sheet Bend

For information, instructions and video tutorials go to: [www.animatedknots.com](http://www.animatedknots.com)



*\*Templates for the Semaphore Signalling can be found in the Heritage Folder in the Leaders' section at [www.bbni.org.uk](http://www.bbni.org.uk) and on the pen drive issued with this book.*

## 2: Memory Test

*Activity Time: 20mins | Group Size: Any*

**Aim:** Name 15 out of a collection of 20 assorted articles observed for 30 seconds.

**Equipment:** 20 assorted articles, tray, towel or table cloth, table.

### Instructions:

1. Place several small objects on a tray.
2. Allow Boys to observe the objects for 30 seconds.
3. Cover the tray.
4. See how many objects the Boys can recall.
5. This could be done in a 'Generation Game' style.

*Think of modern equivalents of quick messaging such as Twitter, Text messaging and Emoticons. Try converting your chosen message into these formats.*



## 3: Semaphore Signalling

*Activity Time: 30mins | Group Size: Any*

*The Semaphore flag signalling system is an alphabet signalling system based on the waving of a pair of hand-held flags in a particular pattern.*

**Aim:** Read and send alphabet and figures by Semaphore Signalling at the rate of 30 letters per minute (*1908 Badge Standard*).

**Equipment:** Two Semaphore flags for each Boy, Stopwatch, Semaphore Template and Semaphore Instructions sheet.

### Instructions:

1. Make the flags using the 'Semaphore Signalling' template\*.
2. Learn the code using the Semaphore Signalling Signals sheet.
3. Divide the Boys into 2 teams. Give each team a turn at sending and receiving a coded message.
4. Have a competition - who can send a standard message the quickest? Who can translate the message most accurately?

### 3. Ambulance/First Aid Badge: 1893 - 1968



**Aim:** To give young people some basic skills as an introduction to Emergency Aid.

This was the first metal Boys' Brigade Proficiency Badge, introduced about 1893 and probably based upon the design of a Police Ambulance Badge. Larger than all other subsequent proficiency badges it was worn below these and above the Three Year Anchor, on the right arm. It was changed for a smaller badge around 1923. This was also the first

badge to be enamelled. Its title was changed to First Aid Badge in 1956. The Boys' Brigade course was followed by a three part examination: written, oral, and practical. Subsequent advanced certificates were introduced for higher standards, denoted by coloured felt cloths behind the badge.

**Tips/Advice:** Keep the training as practical as possible.

#### **Additional Resources:**

British Red Cross – <http://www.redcross.org.uk/>

St John's Ambulance – <http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/default.aspx>

British Heart Foundation (Heartstart) - <http://www.bhf.org.uk/>

**Please check out the NHS website at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) for the latest guidance on CPR. At time of printing the NHS recommend only doing chest compressions, with no rescue breath, for those who are not trained in CPR.**



## Emergency Aid Skills Section > L1 & L2

Activity 1: Introduction to First Aid

Activity 2: Resuscitation

Activity 3: Recovery Position



## 4. Education/Citizenship Badge: 1927 - 1968

The title changed to Citizenship in 1959/60, with the introduction of the Scripture Knowledge Badge. Certificates in three out of five topics were required for the Education Badge; one gained each session.

Topics were:

- International Relations;
- Temperance;
- Gambling Evil;
- Scripture Knowledge and Citizenship.

With the change in title the topics became:

- Local Government;
- National Government;
- Judicial System;
- Social Responsibility;
- Church Organisation and Government.

An advanced certificate was also introduced.



### Who is My Neighbour? Community Section > G1

Activity 1: Poverty

Activity 2: It's Not fair


Activity 3: What can we do?



Citizenship Badge



Scripture Knowledge Badge

 An alternative Badge Class 'Easy as ABC' for this topic is in the Heritage Folder in the Leaders' section of [www.bbni.org.uk](http://www.bbni.org.uk) and on the pen drive issued with this book.

## 5. Gymnastic/Physical Training Badge: 1917 - 1946

### Athletic Badge: 1946 - 1968



Gymnastics is a long established activity in the Boys' Brigade. Some companies had gymnastic teams as early as the 1890s. As part of the award restructuring after the Second World War, physical activities were reviewed.



An Athletics Badge was introduced in 1946 and the Gymnastics Badge was renamed Physical Training Badge. The outdoor track and field events were now recognised in this new Athletics Badge. This badge was discontinued in 1968.



## Athletics



Practising Track & Field Events > Recreation Section > K1

Indoor Olympics > Recreation Section > K2

## How do you Measure Up?

Running		
Event	Laps Of Badminton Court*	Certificate Standard (1964)
100 yards (91.44 m)	≈ 02.25	0:13m
220 yards (201.17 m)	≈ 04.75	0:30m
440 yards (402.34 m)	≈ 09.75	1:10m
880 yards (804.67 m)	≈ 19.50	2:40m
100 yards hurdles	≈ 02.25	0:17m

\* One lap of a 40' x 22' badminton court, allowing for a 2 foot turning radius outside of the baselines, is approx 45.333 yards (41.45 m). | ≈ denotes approximately

Throwing		
Event	Certificate Standard (1964)	Metric (WR)*
Javelin (2.2 M)	85 ft (25.91 M)	98.48 M
Discus (1 Kg)	75 ft (22.86 M)	74.08 M
Hammer (4 Kg)	65 ft (19.81 M)	86.74 M
Shot-Put (4 Kg)	30 ft (9.14 M)	23.12 M

Jumping		
Event	Certificate Standard (1964)	Metric (WR)*
High Jump	4 ft 11" (1.50 m)	2.45 m
Long Jump	14 ft (4.27 m)	8.95 m

\*World Records (WR) correct as of 1st November 2012 for outdoor events, (International Association of Athletics Federations).

### Tips/Advice:


#### Safety Issues/Risk Assessment:

All physical activity should be preceded with a warm-up session (refer to the warm-up sessions topic in Recreation – Health & Lifestyle). Certain activities (such as Javelin, Discus, Hammer & Shot-put) require specific equipment and regulations prior to undertaking.

#### Why not...

Watch an athletics meeting?  
Take part in a competition?  
Get professional coaching?

#### Check It Out...

 Alternative resources for team games can be found in the Heritage Folder in the Leaders' section of [www.bbni.org.uk](http://www.bbni.org.uk) and on the pen drive issued with this book.

## 6. Arts & Crafts Badge: 1927 - 1968



This badge had its origins from 1912 in the Boys' Life Brigade.

Topics for this badge included:

- Singing,
- Drawing,
- Carpentry,
- Metalwork,
- Fencing,
- Photography, etc.



### Digital Photography Skills Section > E2

Activity 1: Practising with a Digital Camera

Activity 2 : Where was it taken?  
What is going on?

Activity 3: Create a BB Collage

### Video Production > Skills Section > E3

Activity 1: Planning your Documentary

Activity 2: Filming the Documentary

Activity 3: Editing the Documentary



Check out the Photography tips and advice in the Heritage Folder in the Leaders' section of [www.bbni.org.uk](http://www.bbni.org.uk) and on the pen drive issued with this book.

## 7. The Bandsman Badge: 1914 - 1968



There is a rich history of music in The Boys' Brigade. Although band badges were issued from the early years of the BB (usually being the cloth Lyre badge worn by the military) the first official BB Band Badge was not introduced until 1914. It could well have been the introduction of the Bugle Badge in 1909 that provided the incentive for this new

badge. It was originally awarded to players of instruments other than bugles, pipes or drums. It was worn in the same position on the armband as were the Drummers', Pipers' or Buglers' Badges. Boys could in fact, gain more than one badge provided they qualified for a further two sessions on a second instrument. Regulations for the badge depended upon each type of instrument.

Many top Brass/Silver Bands in Northern Ireland today were originally Boys' Brigade bands. 1st Larne Old Boys' Silver Band started life in the early 1960s as a Boys' Brigade Band attached to the 1st Larne BB Company. The First Old Boys Association Silver Band was formed in Belfast in 1946, with a membership drawn from the former members of the 1st Old Boys' Brigade Company, which dates from 1886; formed at St Mary Magdalene Church, Donegall Pass Belfast. 3rd Carrickfergus Band was formed in 1958, under the direction of Mr D J McCartney, as the 3rd Carrickfergus Boys' Brigade Band.



### Music in Worship > Skills Section > C2

Choosing Contemporary Music for Worship



NID Junior Section Musician of the Year Competition 2015

## 8. Wayfarer's Badge: 1927 - 1968




This was introduced in 1927 after the union with the Boys' Life Brigade who had a more extensive badge system than The Boys' Brigade. Post union activities had to reflect both organisations. Boys had to be a minimum of 13 years of age and hold the Wayfarer's Certificate.

### Tests involved:

1. Knowledge of knots and their uses.
2. Use of compass and protractors.
3. Working knowledge of a 1" OS map with reference to signs and contours.
4. The ability to identify various trees, flowers and birds.

Finally the Boy had to either walk a distance equal to his age, cycle 50 miles or climb a mountain to at least 2,000 feet in one day. Several changes of badge style occurred over the years, including the garments of the walker from knee breeches, to long trousers or shorts. This badge was discontinued in 1968.

 For further information on using ordnance survey maps go to [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/resources/map-reading/](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/resources/map-reading/)

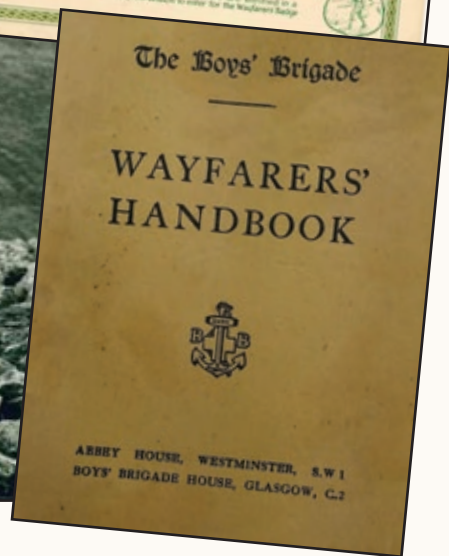
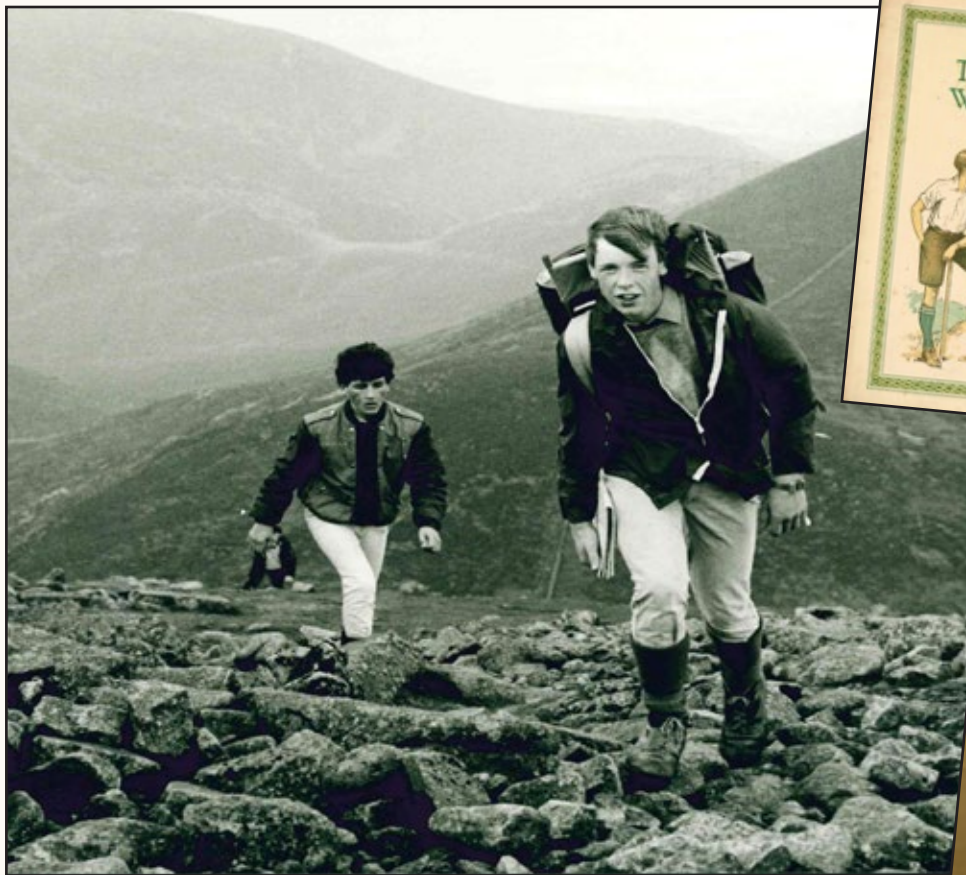


## Maps > Recreation Section > C2

Activity 1: Finding out about Maps



1st Loughaghery Gold DofE Expedition 2015



## Looking Forward

### Points for Discussion with the Boys

What do you think will/should happen in The Boys' Brigade during the next 25 years?

What will your **Company** look like?

What do you think the **uniform** will/should look like?

What do you think the **badges** and **programmes** will/should look like?

**Ireland:** What do you think will happen in Ireland during the next 25 years?

**UK:** What do you think will happen in the UK during the next 25 years?

**World:** What do you think will happen in the world during the next 25 years? What technological advances could you predict?

## Summary Badge Class

*(Optional)*

### Reporting Back

Ask the Boys to prepare a five minute presentation on what they have learned about the history of The Boys' Brigade in this book. They can use this opportunity to include a section on the history of their own Company.

This can be in any format - perhaps a video, a PowerPoint presentation or a poster/noticeboard display. The Boys can report back to the Church or to their Section. If the group of Boys is big enough, they can be split into groups and present to each other.

Suitable feedback should be given on the set up of the presentation, how effective the communication is and how accurate the content is. Presentation skills are valuable in many jobs.

## Opening New Doors in 2014



### The next 100 yrs...

BBNI moved their headquarters to Newport, Culcavy, Hillsborough in March 2014 and embarked on an extensive renovation and extension project to provide modern administration, conference, training and residential facilities for future generations of Boys and Young Men. The Earl of Wessex paid a visit on 24

September 2014 to the new premises, to present BBNI with their DofE Operator's Licence.



## Conclusion



We hope that your Boys have enjoyed participating in our Heritage Project and that they learned something about our Brigade history, customs and traditions including a greater knowledge of the Brigade award structure. Finally, we hope the Boys have gained more knowledge on significant local, national and international events and even sparked an interest in heritage in general!

### Completion of the Project

A Certificate of Participation may be found on the accompanying resources in the Heritage Folder in the Leaders' section of [www.bbni.org.uk](http://www.bbni.org.uk). You can print one off for Boys who took part in this project.

### Additional Opportunities

If you are interested in finding out more about The Boys' Brigade in Northern Ireland or worldwide, we would encourage you to arrange a visit to The Boys' Brigade Heritage Centre in Ganaway, Millisle. Perhaps you could try some of the other historic BB badges and link them to current interests your Boys have such as a BB Camp (The Campers' Badge) or a BB/DofE Expedition (The Expedition Badge).

## Suggested Places to Visit

For further research on events in Ireland, in local communities and in The Boys' Brigade.

Visitor Attractions/Museums	County
Andrew Jackson Cottage   US Rangers Centre	Antrim
Address House	Armagh
Armagh County Museum	Armagh
Armagh Public Library	Armagh
Ballycastle Museum	Antrim
Ballymoney Museum	Antrim
Barn Museum, Craigavon	Armagh
Carrickfergus Museum	Antrim
Castle Ward	Down
Coleraine Museum	Londonderry
Craigavon Museum	Armagh
Down County Museum	Down
Downpatrick & County Down Railway	Down
FE McWilliam Gallery & Studio	Down
Fermanagh County Museum	Fermanagh
Flame: The Gasworks Museum of Ireland	Antrim
Florence Court	Fermanagh
Hezlett House	Londonderry
Inniskillings Museum, Enniskillen	Fermanagh

Visitor Attractions/Museums	County
Irish Linen Centre & Museum, Lisburn	Antrim
Larne Museum	Antrim
Limavady Museum	Londonderry
Mid-Antrim Museum, The Braid Centre	Antrim
Mount Stewart	Down
Newry and Mourne Museum	Down
North Down Museum	Down
Police Museum, Belfast	Antrim
Railway Preservation Society of Ireland	Antrim
Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum, Armagh	Armagh
Royal Ulster Rifles Museum, Belfast	Antrim
Sentry Hill	Antrim
Somme Heritage Centre	Down
Springhill House, Moneymore	Londonderry
Strabane District Council Museum Service	Tyrone
The Argory	Armagh
Tower Museum	Londonderry
Ulster American Folk Park	Tyrone
Ulster Folk & Transport Museum	Down
Ulster Museum	Antrim

### The Boys' Brigade Heritage Centre

Ganaway Training and Activity Centre,  
268 Ballywalter Road,  
Millisle, Co. Down,  
BT22 2LZ

For all enquiries and to book a visit:  
Tel: 028 9032 4853

*'The Centre collects, safeguards and conserves memorabilia and archive material relating to the formation, activities and development of The Boys' Brigade since its founding on 4th October 1883, and such non-BB memorabilia and archive material as may set in context the role of the BB since that date.'*

## More information:

### Websites:

- [1] [www.boys-brigade.org.uk](http://www.boys-brigade.org.uk)
- [2] [www.bbni.org.uk](http://www.bbni.org.uk)
- [3] [www.boysbrigadeformermembers.btck.co.uk/OurBBPast](http://www.boysbrigadeformermembers.btck.co.uk/OurBBPast)
- [4] [www.sallysbadges.com/shop.php?c=8](http://www.sallysbadges.com/shop.php?c=8)
- [5] <http://13edinburgh.boys-brigade.org.uk/Badgeweb/Series3.html>
- [6] [http://wendellhowe.blogspot.co.uk/2011\\_08\\_01\\_archive.html](http://wendellhowe.blogspot.co.uk/2011_08_01_archive.html)

### Publications:

- [1] **Boys of the Brigade - Volume I:** Robin Bolton; SB Publications 1991; ISBN 1870708504
- [2] **Boys of the Brigade - Volume II:** Robin Bolton; RB Publishing 1993; ISBN 0952138107
- [3] **Badges of the Brigade - Volume I:** Robin Bolton, Les Howie & Bob Mandry; RB Publishing 2000; ISBN 0952138115
- [4] **Sure & Stedfast:** A History of The Boys' Brigade 1883 to 1983, John Springhall, Brian Fraser & Michael Hoare; Collins 1983; ISBN 0004342801
- [5] **First for Boys:** Story of The Boys' Brigade, 1883-1983; Donald M. McFarlan; Collins 1982; ISBN 0004342798
- [6] **Pioneer of Boyhood:** Story of Sir William A. Smith, Founder of The Boys' Brigade; Roger S. Peacock, Boys' Brigade 1954; ASIN B0007J2MWI
- [7] **William A Smith of The Boys' Brigade**, F.P. Gibbon, Collins 1934
- [8] Roberts, Jonathan (2006). 'William Alexander Smith -the founder of The Boys' Brigade as a youth worker', the encyclopedia of informal education. [<http://infed.org/mobi/william-alexander-smith-the-founder-of-the-boys-brigade-as-a-youth-worker/>]. Retrieved: November 2015].
- [9] Brian Fraser, "Towards a True Christian Manliness", in eds., John Springhall, Brian Fraser, and Michael Hoare Sure and Stedfast. A History of The Boys' Brigade 1883-1983, (London: Collins, 1983), 46-71; 47.

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Several photos in this book of BB in Co Antrim are used with kind permission of Len Kinley:  
[www.downmemorylane.me.uk](http://www.downmemorylane.me.uk)



*'We're not keeping this to ourselves, we're passing it along to the next generation - God's fame and fortune, the marvelous things he has done.'* Psalm 78:4



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