

THE BOYS' BRIGADE

3rd ENFIELD COMPANY

Christ Church U.R.C., Chase Side, Enfield.

"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"

112 Sheldon Road
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OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

SUMMER 1992

Dear Friends,

You will have noticed that a great deal of time has passed since the appearance of the last newsletter. Initially problems at work and then the sudden death of my Father contributed to this. I can only apologise but trust you will understand. I would like to take this opportunity in thanking those who telephoned me or wrote offering words of sympathy and support. They have all been greatly appreciated and have helped me to come to terms with my loss - Thank You.

There is quite a lot of news to relate, so here we go !

The Company did extremely well in all fields of competition running up to the Summer. We retained ALL Enfield Battalion and North London Zone Band Trophies as well as the Battalion Colours, followed by an outstanding win in the London District Drum Team Competition. The season ended with a nail biting finish to the Athletics Competition, which many Old Boys' will remember as Whit Monday Sports. These days, the oldest trophy in the Battalion (99 years old this year) is competed for at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium at Carterhatch Lane. The Boys' put in a supreme effort beating the 2nd Enfield into second place - that was on the hottest afternoon of this otherwise disastrous summer.

With the Competition season behind, the Company set off for another successful camp at Rhossilli. This camp set a record with the number of visits to the local hospital! Four Boys were taken to be seen to for various ailments the most serious of which was W/O Mark Bullock who aggravated an old knee injury and had to go home. That aside, a good time was had by all and (almost) everyone came home feeling greatly refreshed.

Elsewhere in the newsletter you will find several articles by Bill Hutchings who comes to my aid every time by thrusting a fistfull of literary masterpieces at me - Thanks Bill! But surely, Bill is not the only one of you with a memory, so howabout a few of you putting pen to paper and sending me some of your memories of Camps, Competitions, Royal Albert Hall Displays etc etc. They can be witty, or they can simply bring back fond memories like for example Harold Dye's "Look Back Through a Lifetime" series. Over to you....

Our 103rd session began on September 7th with a record number of 7 Boys moving up from the Junior Section. In addition to that, one brand new member joined us on that night plus another two a week later, so it's all systems go! This means that the Company Section strength is now almost 30.

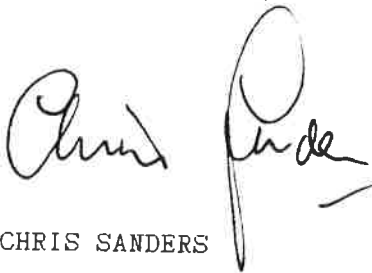
With Junior Section and Anchor Boys at around 20 apiece, the Company is in its strongest position for many years. We are aiming for 35 this session - almost enough for a 'Daily Telegraph' platoon! Please pray for the Officers, Staff and Boys in our endeavours.

Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the Boys v Old Boys Cricket match, but I understand that a good time was had by all with the Old Boys winning by a few runs. We shall have a return match next summer. It has not been possible to arrange an Old Boys Supper this year, but hopefully we should be able to arrange this for the early Spring.

Friday 29th October 1993 sees the opening of a new exhibition at Forty Hall tracing the History of the Boys' Brigade in Enfield. There will be a Dinner and Dance also at Forty Hall on the evening of Saturday November 6th. This will be open to the whole of the Battalion, so tickets will be limited. More details will follow early next year, but at least you can pencil the date in your diaries.

The next newsletter is scheduled for mid November. PLEASE delve into your memories and send me some of your reminiscences. I will be extremely grateful!

With Best Wishes,



CHRIS SANDERS



"You're always asking me what I do all day,
so today I didn't do it"

BENEATH

MY



PILLBOX

by
BILL HUTCHINGS

COMPANY CHARACTERS

From the many, many characters featured in the historical pages of the 3rd we must start with T.R. Plowman, captain par excellence. Now what follows may be

apochryphal but it was handed down the years for every member to revere.

At the junction of Chase Side and Gordon Road from which area many a fine B.B. boy hailed, there used to be a pond where now is a grassy mound behind a low brick wall. The 3rd were marching up Chase Side and approaching the Six Bells public house. Outside this establishment on this sunny Sunday morn a few of the imbibers began chanting:-

"Here comes the Boys' Brigade
Covered in marmalade
A tuppennyh'penny pill box
And half a yard of braid."

Tom Plowman broke ranks without breaking his regulation 120 paces to the minute, grabbed the ring-leader firmly by the scruff of the neck and deposited him in the pond.

I didn't know T.R.P. obviously but I did know Johnny Williams a brilliant bugler and the bane of the Band master's life. Arthur Pegrum would be marching his band around the old British Hall during the rendering (meaning to tear apart) "Ganges" or another masterpiece in the repertoire of this accomplished ensemble when from the bell of Johnny's bugle would come the first few raucous bars of Bugle Call Rag. Every note seemed to fit in harmoniously which was amazing or annoying according to the point of view.

Another character from the days of the British Hall was our Drill Officer, one Mr. Ettridge. Either we all stood in awe of him or discipline was of such a standard that I cannot ever remember hearing his christian name. It was platoon drill with a vengeance in those days. There were three sections and drill was in fours. Thirty nine boys and as many complicated movements. The Platoon Commander had only a quarter of an hour (I believe) to study the paper. Sometimes we were so bemused by its

intricacies that Mr. Ettridge used to hop up and down in frustration. If it all got too much for him his walking stick, usually carried under his left arm, would be flung tempestuously to the ground and stood a one in four chance of snapping in half. It must have cost him a fortune in replacements but at least it eased the tension on both sides. Funnily enough, the drill always seemed to improve no end after that.

Ken Chesson was a character I admired greatly. He was a member of the gym and a more unlikely gymnast you couldn't imagine. He was a mister five by five when he first came to us and every apparatus was a real effort for him. But, undeterred by his failure to execute any vault with the grace so needed or to perform even the simplest of exercises on the parallel bars without a great deal of huffing and puffing he was there week after week giving his all with great humour. After about three years of this battle against nature Ken stopped his outward growth and began to grow upwards. His rotundity retreated and he became a well-proportioned and accomplished member of the senior gym. His reward was to make the team which represented the Company in the Battalion Competition. Many another youngster would have given up within a matter of weeks - but not Ken.

There was a time when we featured an harmonica band amongst our activities. The leader of this symphonic conglomeration was Archie Gore - a great lad. Now, as far as I know Archie neither played the mouthorgan nor able to read music. But I can categorically state that that made absolutely no difference to the quality of the sound we produced. In all honesty, he wasn't an announcer in the mould of the pre-war BBC people. He'd turn to our audience and abruptly say "Old to Dream". Frank Head would gently mention that the name of the tune was "When I grow too old to dream". Archie did master the subtle difference eventually but by then we were too old to play it.

A PAGE OF HISTORY

LIFE is full of little surprises. It was while I was perusing the local paper for an item of interest that I came across one of a series of articles by that stalwart of the Third, Arthur Page. In it he proclaimed the fascination of Hilly Fields and his love of it. Although I came a few years after Arthur I have the same affection for this lovely open space.

Many a fine summer's evening suffered the strains of a 3rd Enfield B.B. bugle echoing around the magnificent oaks and stately hornbeams as a new recruit practised his calls in preparation for the coming session. Well, he had to. There was so much competition to get into the band - only a third of the company strength was permitted to be a member of this elite body - that only the dedicated got any where near the privilege of cleaning an instrument.

Again in the summer, as soon as the make-up of the tents for our annual camp was announced there'd be small groups dotted about Hillys developing or being introduced to the intricacies of that most famous of all camp competitions, puddocks. Always a keenly contested affair throughout the week, the culmination was the Boys versus Staff match when, invariably, no matter who won, the Staff took the Boys into the canteen for refreshment.

Arthur mentions "dags" which was the ancient sport of jumping across the brook which ran at the bottom of the fields. Dear old Jim Fresson Bubbles, as he was affectionately known (see the Autumn 1991 Newsletter) will always be synonymous with dags. Most times, after Bible Class a group of us would wander along the brook and without warning, one of us would "do a dag" - the rest naturally followed. Now Jim was always a bit of a joker in his own quiet way and during one particular dag where the water below was pretty deep, he came belting upto the edge pretending to jump but intending to stop on the bank. Sadly his momentum caused him to teeter at the last minute and with agonising, slow motion he plopped into the gently flowing current. If that wasn't bad enough, he was sporting a particularly good suit we usually wore our best for Bible Class ("You quaint old things" I can hear the modern member mutter) and for the next hour or so he squelched along beside us - a bubble burst as you might say.

In the winter there was the tobogganing down the steepest slopes. Not that there were many fancy toboggans in sight, mainly tin trays and other such make-do equipment. I'm sure it was Jim Piner - a great one for sport - who sped from top to bottom at such a rate that even he couldn't change direction and prevent the vehicle from making a head-long dive into the water taking him with it.

That little putting green nestled in the corner next to Clay Hill was always such a delight especially when the light warm evenings began to appear. All of us N.C.O.s used to meet and enjoy a friendly and often hilarious tournament for the princely sum of 3d. The aforementioned hilarity was provided by the arid slopes of the green. When putting uphill the "dirty little pill" would, often, find the gradient so lacking in grip that it rolled down again almost to the teeing off spot. Some of us keen ones didn't find it so funny after playing our ninth shot and still no nearer to sinking the contrary object. Shame the council had no option but to close it down because it was so little used in later years.

Yes Arthur, Hilly Fields played quite a role in the life of every Enfield youngster but even more so in that of the 3rd B.B. boy. Thanks for reminding me of it and helping to bring back those precious memories that are locked away until something like your article prompts them to the surface.

W.N.H.



There are stone-bonker certainties in most newspaper reports especially when it comes to marriages. Among them is the ability to spell the name wrong somewhere in the piece and the other is to produce a photograph from which, in the process of printing all the naturalness of the original has been completely lost.

Such was the case when Martin Stogden and Claire Gregory plighted their troth on 29th February of this leap year. But Stogden or or Stodgen, it was a very beautiful wedding. As always on these special occasions the church was full of relatives and friends; the choir rose magnificently to the joy of it all; a fine performance

at the organ by Stuart Bachelor; an eminently apt talk by our minister Adrian Bulley; you name it, it was there and rightly so for this very popular couple who have been so active in our church life.

Emerging onto the steps as Mr and Mrs there was a stirring greeting from the band prior to photographs, confetti and a reception at Burton Grange in Cheshunt. After the nosh Chris Sanders was soon surrounded by turntables, amplifiers and writhing gyrating bodies. A good time was had by all, especially those who were responsible for the art decor to their wee car.

We wish them blessings in abundance and good fortune in the future. We know their love, sown and nurtured in the christian faith will withstand the vicissitudes of these far from easy times.



The Boys' Brigade Prayer

Bless, O God, The Boys' Brigade, and give to it greater power to advance Your kingdom throughout the world. Grant in Your mercy, that every member, past and present, may prove steadfast in his fight against evil, and true in his allegiance to You. Help us in times of temptation; make us strong where we are weak; give us courage in difficulty, faithfulness in duty, loyalty in friendship; and finally, by Your mercy, bring us into Your everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN

BOYS OF THE BRIGADE

Have you purchased your copy of this fascinating book yet? It is a pictorial record of the history of the BB, the CLB, BLB and Jewish and Catholic Boys' Brigades. The book is a mine of information and author Robin Bolton has rendered a great service to youth work with this unique publication. Copies are £8.95 and obtainable from:

Mr Robin Bolton
116 Aldridge Road
Little Aston
Aldridge
Walsall WS9 0PF



BOOK THE DATE

The next London Display will be at Wembley on
Saturday March 27th 1993.

Volume two is being prepared and should be published in a few months time.

LOOK BACK THROUGH A LIFETIME.

After 3 years as a Staff Sergeant, I was asked if I would like to become a Lieutenant which I was pleased to accept. Soon after taking up my duties, Mr. Davis who had been the Bandmaster, decided to retire, and it was suggested that as I had been a Drummer, I would take over. The big drawback was that I can't read music. With help of Sgt. Gunton who could play the Piano, we managed quite well.

We were having our usual Thursday Band Practice when an old friend looked in. He incidentally was also a good pianist and in the course of conversation I spoke of our need for a proper Bugle Instructor, and he said could he help, an offer gladly accepted and everything went very smoothly from then on.

Although the 1st Enfield were our great rivals, their Instructors and I were great friends. We were often asked to judge other Battalion Band Competitions. I used to judge the Inspection and Marching, Mr. Purchase judged the Buglers and Mr. Page the Drummers, while Mr. Gatehouse did an overall job. I received a note from the South Essex Battalion asking us to judge their Band Competition. Mr. Gatehouse, who by the way was a Commercial Traveller, offered to drive us to the hall where the contest was being held, an offer which we were pleased to accept. He knew exactly where it was and we duly met and set off. We passed by Manor House and pulled up at the traffic lights. Another car pulled up behind us. When the light turned to amber we just started to move when without any warning Mr. Gatehouse slammed on his brakes and stopped dead. The car behind almost ran into the back of our car and he started sounding his horn. Our driver simply said "Listen" and stayed put. Before he could say another word, a car doing at least 60 - 70 miles an hour going against the red light, missed us by about a foot. Had we gone on there would have been a 4 car pile-up. The first car was being chased by another one only seconds between them. The first car would have hit us, the chasing car the one behind us. I asked our driver what made him stop. His reply was simply "Instinct". He knew by the sound of the engine that the car could never stop for the traffic lights. Luck or skill - take your choice!

The following year we were visiting South Essex again but at a different hall; again the 4 of us. We were going along a country road with another car coming from the opposite direction when from a side road, straight across the main road without even looking to see if there was any other traffic, an old farmer drove his tractor straight across to another side road opposite. We almost ran into him but with quick wits, our driver turned up the same way as he was going, jammed on the brakes and we finished up unharmed inches from a tree. The other driver was not so lucky - he went behind the tractor and finished up on the pathway jammed between a tree and the front wall of a house. He got away with only a few dents and some paintwork scratched.

Mr. Page said "Count me out next time you talk about South Essex. The 3rd time we may not be so lucky.

HAROLD J. DYE.

IF

If you can keep your head when all about you;
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same:
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings - nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling