**1st UXBRIDGE BOYS’ BRIGADE COMPANY REPORT 2012/2013**

Yet again another year has passed and once again we find ourselves at our annual awards evening at the end of our 2012/2013 session.

This session has been a year of change for us in the company with new leaders in both Anchor Boys and Company and Senior Section, and this has meant a new style of programme for the boys and both sections extending their meeting times by 15 minutes to accommodate more activities.

**Anchor Boys.**

Once again the Anchors have continued to have fun throughout the year. With a new leadership team of Denise Hinton and Louise Moran having taken over from Janice Hull, the Anchor Boys have enjoyed a varied programme of new ideas. They have had monthly themes helping them to enjoy their learning, and they have occasionally joined with the Junior Section for devotions. One of their highlights was a visit by the Hillingdon Fire Brigade. They got to hear about fire prevention, try on a fire helmet, climb inside the fire engine and have a go with the hose!!

Although, once again not many Battalion activities are organised for the Anchor boys they have still enjoyed a few, starting off in October with the joint Anchor Boy/Junior Section games and craft afternoon, and in November they joined the Juniors and Company Section over at Heathrow Bowl for a few hours 10 pin bowling. They have also taken part in and on a ‘summer’s day’ in June, a few braved the weather for the Battalion picnic at Gunnersbury Park, where they enjoyed a run-around in the playground and a few games of rounders. Unfortunately though the picnic had to be eaten in cars for fear of it getting soggy and blowing away!!

Denise and Louise have continued to have help this year from Emma Thompson (GB). Who will not be around next year as she starts at University. We thank her for all the help she has given over the past few years and wish her well in her studies. They have also been joined by our two senior boys, James Salma and Raghav Puri who have worked with the boys and sold them their tuck every week.

Our Anchor Section has also continued to increase in strength and all is good for the start of a new session next year.

**JUNIOR SECTION**

As in previous years our Juniors have once again enjoyed a good year. We welcomed Alan Hollaway into Junior Section staff having moved out of the older section last year. Our numbers have remained constant over the past year and this has meant that we have continued to enjoy better activities. We have again enjoyed a gym night once a month when our friends from 4th Hillingdon come and join us. Unfortunately this year there has been no football league due to a lack of teams across the Battalion, hopefully we will be able to sort some football out for next year. We did however take part in the 5 a side competition but let’s just say things didn’t go so well in that!

We had our usual day trip out in London for the Lord Mayors Show and although we only went with 4 (1 from 4th Hillingdon) a good time was had. The boys also enjoyed exploring the ***HMS Belfast*** in the afternoon. We entered the Battalion Bible quiz and this year came a very close third, just missing out on second place by a few points. Our big success this year came in March with the Battalion Figure Marching Competition. Since the start of the new year the boys had been working hard on their marching, something that I am pleased to say they enjoy doing, and it shows. With 9 boys in the section it meant that we could enter a team of our own boys and not have to ask others to join us. On the day every boy attended and they were all brilliant. Not only in their marching, as some of you will have seen at our recent display, but also in their turnout, only dropping 1 point overall in inspection. A big thank you to parents for getting the boys there and for making sure they all had smart uniform. This win meant that we continue to have a trophy in the cabinet. (or in this case by it. It’s too big to go in!!)

At the end of April the boys enjoyed a full on fun day at Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre where they enjoyed activities such as Climbing and Abseiling, Caving, High swing, Orienteering and more .Our final event of the year once again being our annual sleepover with the Junior Girls. This year we visited the Tower of London where the boys saw a re-enactment of the stealing of the crown jewels by Captain Blood! Afterwards we surprised them with a trip across the river on the cable car. Some of our group declined the offer preferring instead to travel further by train with the Girls’ Brigade Captain. Those that did go were glad they did. (Although may not go again!!)

**COMPANY/SENIOR SECTION**

In Company and Senior Sections Alan Hollaway handed over the leadership to Graham Hinton after many years of devoted service Boys in those Sections and Graeme Moran moved from Junior Section to join Graham. We introduced the uniform shirt and tie for parade-wear. Thank you, parents, for co-operating with that and for supporting your sons in BB throughout the session.

We have three Company Section Boys and 2 Seniors, all incredibly loyal and present on all occasions unless unavoidably prevented from being so. For their badgework this session Graeme has looked after the Company Section Boys and Graham the Seniors. Graeme has in particular brought amazing computer knowledge and skills to this – including things Graham had never heard of! All the Boys are now at the highest BB badge-level for their age, unless they’ve been prevented temporarily by illness or, in the case of the seniors, by sheer volume of work at the same time as GCSEs. They’ve also shown great interest in our devotional times, with some now being happy to lead prayers or, on one occasion, the entire time.

It was a joy to see Tom Rees and Christian Hinton presented in October by the Mayor of Hillindon with their Queen’s Badges – and to know that they are continuing with us as staff. Christian is now a Lieutenant; Tom has completed his Youth Leadership Training (along with Graham, who had to do it again due to many years having passed by!). Both will be at university in the coming session, but with us when they’re home.

Among our wider activities this session have been participation in the parade to Wesley’s Chapel for the Brigade Council weekend service, coming second in the Battalion Bible Quiz (very well done, men!), places in the London District Cross Country and Vaulting Competitions (the vaulting via the West London BB/GB Gym team – thank you Derek and Peter), going to the Trooping of the Colour and exchange visits with the 4th Hillingdon Company, Hayes End Methodist Church. 3 of our boys also spent a day at HOAC for water based and High ropes activities.

Our Seniors, James S and Raghav, have embarked on their Duke of Edinburgh Award Bronze Level. For the Volunteering Section, they’ve both done exemplary work as Young Leaders with our Anchor Boys and are completing their Skills and Recreation Sections. For Expedition Section they were joined by Daniel, who is part of Christ Church but not BB (the invitation’s there, Daniel), and then joined further with the 4th Barnet and the 1st Hoddesdon Companies to reach the required numbers. (It was minus 4 degrees on one of their nights under canvas!) We look forward to them completing all sections and receiving their awards.

The connection with 4th Barnet Company led to James B and Sam, with Graeme and Graham, joining their weekend camp at Boys’ Brigade Headquarters, near Hemel Hempstead. We are intending to re-introduce camping into our programme. We have recently re-introduced squad drill, as you will have seen if you were at our Company Display.

And now I really must mention Darryl – because it just happens he’s not mentioned above! He’s the fifth of our young men and equally committed and involved.

We look forward to building on all this in the new session from 6th September and to being joined by Thomas on promotion from our Junior Section.

**THE COMPANY TOGETHER**

Our Sponsor Day this year was a great success. It was difficult at the start of the year to decide on what we were going to do but after some thought the idea was put forward to do a Literary tour of London and so Alan Hollaway, as usual, set about sorting the route. We decided this year that we would have two charities to raise money for, both of which have a personal connection to our Company.

***‘Sarah Grace Boxes’*** was set up by Graeme and Louise Moran through personal reasons, providing care for families who have had a premature baby, had a baby rushed to special care with a poor prognosis, or who have lost a baby.

***‘Little Hearts Matter’*** was set up for Children who have had a life threatening diagnosis of Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome. Around 200 are diagnosed each year and this charity gives much needed support to parents. We have a couple in the Church, Michael and Louise George who have a daughter, Jessica who was diagnosed with this problem. She is now over a year old and doing great. Michael was a boy in the Company some years ago.

The day was a great success with a group of 29 on the day.

I am pleased to say that now all the money has been collected in and the final sums have been done we have raised a total of £900 meaning that £450 will go to each charity. We will be presenting the cheques at our Church Parade on Sunday. Once again a big thank you to everyone who was involved, especially to Alan Hollaway for making the whole thing possible.

Thomas Rees and Christian Hinton had the honour of being chosen to be stewards at one of the Buckingham Palace garden Party’s. I don’t think the weather was up to much but they had a very memorable day.

This year we took a group of boys up to see the trooping the colour 11 of us went up and after a very early start and a long wait we enjoyed the spectacle. At the end we walked down the Mall to Buckingham Palace where we were lucky enough to get a great view of the Royal Balcony and a great view of the fly past over our heads. Again another trip well worth doing.

Our 4 Coffee mornings this year have again helped with Company funds raising nearly £300. Thank you to everyone who helped by making cakes to sell and especially to Noelia Bowman and Claire Hook who gave their time to help out on the Saturday mornings.

This year we decided to take part in the Sainsbury’s Active Kids campaign an over the time thanks to everyone we managed to collect over 3000 tokens. We have not told the boys what equipment we are getting but we know that it is something that they have been asking for for a while. We will let everyone know when it arrives. Thank you to everyone for continuing to bring in the tokens.

Finally I would like to thank all the staff, Denise and Louise, Graham and Graeme, Tom and Christian and Alan for all they have done this year, thank you too to Tom’s mum Tracey for coming down on most Fridays to run Junior Section Tuck shop. My thanks also goes to all parents for your support throughout the year, for bringing the boys along on a Friday evening and for getting them to various activities.

As this year draws to an end we look forward to the 2013/14 session and all it brings.

Don’t forget you can keep up with all our news at our website <http://1uxbridge.boys-brigade.org.uk/> or on our facebook page at 1st Uxbridge Boys Brigade Company.

Don’t forget our end of session barbeque next Friday; we hope to see you there.

We start back on Friday 6th September

Have a good summer and thank you for your continued support.

**Paul Edgeworth**

Company Captain.