**1st UXBRIDGE BOYS’ BRIGADE**

**COMPANY REPORT 2016/2017**

With another year passed it is time once again to look back on the past year and reflect what we have been up to.

As usual each section has been busy.

**In our Anchor Section** this year we have seen a small section with just four boys.  Mrs Moran has been deftly supported by some of the Young Leaders from our Girls Brigade, to whom we are very grateful. This has allowed us to do lots of fun and energetic activities on a Friday night.  They have learned about the Ten Commandments, practised circus skills, (which they showed off at our display). They have made their own fidget spinners, created personalised mugs and candles as gifts, baked for Coffee Mornings, learned new games and even invented our own card game as part of our badgework. They have also enjoyed a whole company outing to Jump In for a sponsored bounce at the beginning of the session and a section outing to Creams for giant ice creams!

This summer sees two of our boys, Daniel and Isaac, moving up into Juniors, where they will be able to do even more and develop their skills further. We wish them all the best in the next part of their journey through the BB. Next year will be a difficult time for our anchor section and where we go will depend on the number of boys registering for next term. We are also in need of more staff and our ongoing hunt continues.

**In our Junior Section** the boys have enjoyed another good year with plenty of varied activities.

Unfortunately, due to certain circumstances we have not been able to hold our regular monthly gym sessions. The boys have missed this and all being well we will be able to offer this again from September.

We had a good, although quite wet, trip to the Lord mayors show, followed by a visit to the City of London museum, and enjoyed a fantastic fireworks display on the river at the end of the day.

Our boys took part in the usual competitions again this year with the main competitions being the Bible Quiz (in December) and the Figure Marching & Simple Drill Competition (in March). We had a team of three boys enter the Bible quiz, a competition that in the past we had had some success in. once again. not expecting much, the boys duly answered their questions and at the end of the quiz came out as winners. (more of this later.) The other main competition, the Figure Marching and Simple Drill is one that we have been most successful in over the recent years. The boys start practicing their marching early in the year and by the time the competition comes around they are pretty competent. This year was no exception, but unfortunately the boys just missed out on winning again (So close again!!) We were not able to take part in the simple drill this year due to lack of age group boys.

In May they had our annual Sleepover along with the girls and again enjoyed a good time together. This year we visited Windsor Castle and enjoyed a trip on the river.

This year the Juniors will be saying goodbye to Archie who is being promoted into Company section and we wish him all the best as he continues his time in BB. (With his smart marching, he will be a great asset to the Drill squad).

We welcome Daniel and Isaac into Juniors from the Anchor Section and we hope that they will enjoy their time with us.

**In Our Company and Senior Section** it has been very busy for our boys.   At the beginning of the session many boys took part in a sponsored jump to raise funds for our sponsor child Saidou, who lives in The Gambia.  It was a great 'whole company' event to start the term. In October, some of the boys enjoyed another action packed activity day at Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre, and in November they joined the girls for a day of Paintballing ‘fun’!

 The boys were a great help at our fireworks evening, serving baked potatoes, hot drinks and snacks to the other sections and parents who attended.

In December, the boys took part in the annual Company & Seniors Bible Quiz and we won!  It was the first time (that I can remember) we had won the trophy and it was made sweeter by the fact that the Juniors also won their competition - double winners! Our trophies stand proudly in our Trophy Cabinet in the vestibule of the church for all to see.

In January, the boys began working on their drill skills with a view to entering the London District Drill Competition in March. It had been a number of years since we had entered a team due to lack of boys and interest so simply turning up and taking part was an achievement for the boys.  Many said they would like to enter again next year so look out for an update next July!

Another important event which took place this year was our Easter 'camp' on a canal boat.  In preparation for the trip, some boys joined the officers in volunteering at the Hillingdon Narrowboat Association one Sunday morning.  After they did a very efficient job of sanding and varnishing the windowsills of one of the boats, we enjoyed a quick (quick - ha!) trip up the canal to Rickmansworth and back.

The actual trip itself took place at the beginning of the Easter holidays.  The boys met in Harefield on a Friday night and we travelled up the canal as far as Hemel Hempstead before returning to Harefield by Sunday evening.  During the trip, all the boys got the chance to steer the boat and as well as operate the locks, prepare meals, wash up and relax, of course!  The boys really enjoyed themselves and we are looking to make next year's trip even better.

Other activities throughout the year as part of their badgework, included electronics, remote controlled cars, Airfix, making fidget spinners, bridge building, homemade burgers and lots of games of 'hide & seek'!

It has been great this year that the attendance has been good as it makes a big difference when all 7 boys are there.

We can now look forward to September and welcome Archie into the Section.

**In the Company Together** We have continued to hold our usual Coffee mornings at Christ Church and this session have raised **£393** for company funds. A big thank you to those who have helped out, especially Mrs Bowman who has helped in the kitchen, and all those who have made cakes for us to sell, especially ‘Nanny’ Newell, Luke and Nathans nan, who has continued to provide us with top class cakes.

We again collected Sainsbury’s Active Kids vouchers, managing to gather together **2557** in all. A few more than last year. Thank you to everyone for shopping at Sainsbury’s.

We have continued to tend our Company garden and have planted a few more bulbs to be seen soon.

We are planning more things for next year and we are already thinking about our next application for a grant to fund more activities, so watch this space. Saidou update:

Our fundraiser Trampoline outing at the start of this year allowed us to pay Saidou's school fees, send a Christmas box filled with both fun items for him and essential first aid and household items (as well as some food) out at the end of the year and also supply a sack of rice, which last approximately six months!  Cups of rice are often traded with other families to get things you need, and gifted to friends at festival times, so rice is the best gift a family can hope to receive.  Our friends in the Gambia make it even more exciting by delivering the sacks of rice secretly during the night, so the family wakes up to a lovely surprise - imagine waking one morning to find your main groceries for the next six months free on your doorstep!

Saidou continues to do well in his school and I believe is moving up to the next stage in a different school - a bit like the move from infants to juniors here.  His attendance and behaviour are commended by his teachers.  His mother was very unwell earlier this year, and due to the unrest with the Gambian presidential riots she was moved out of the country for medical care and Saidou was left with an aunt for an extended period.  He continued to work hard and thankfully the family has since been reunited and the new president has maintained his place, overthrowing the riots and bringing peace to the area for now.  We have once again provided the funds needed for fees, uniform and school supplies, and sent out some school shoes!  It is currently the rainy season in the Gambia, and flood waters are high - we rarely think about barriers to education but when we do it is usually poverty, hunger or distance from a school, we don't often consider the weather as something that can stop everything.  With this weather will come the increase in the mosquito population, which can be deadly, so our next gift will hopefully be a family sized mosquito net, impregnated with a chemical deterrent, for the house.

We are proud of what we are doing to support Saidou and his family and would ask that you continue to keep them in your prayers over the coming year.  Our Company makes a real difference to his life every day, and you are all a part of that.

The one downside to this session has been the lack of attendance at church parades. While we understand that some boys attend their own church the attendance from other boys has not been good and I would ask and encourage more boys to attend our monthly Church Parades next session.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has been involved with us over the past year. Thank you to all the staff, Louise & Graeme Moran, Alan Hollaway, and Denise & Graham Hinton for all they have done over the past year. Thank you to Alan and Graham for their continued work with the Duke of Edinburgh achievement scheme and to Noellia Bowman for her help with both D of E and our coffee mornings.

 Last but not least a big thank you too 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 I have said in the past, and will continue to say, I consider our company very lucky that we have parents who support us the way that you do.

Thank you too to our chaplain Nick and to members of Christ Church for your support and prayers throughout the year.

**THANK YOU ALL.**

As this year draws to an end we look forward to the 2017/18 session and all it brings. We pray that the following year will be a good one and we can continue to Advance Christs Kingdom among Boys.

Don’t forget you can keep up with all our news at our website **www.**[**1uxbridge.boys-brigade.org.uk**](http://1uxbridge.boys-brigade.org.uk/)or on our Facebook page at **1st Uxbridge Boys Brigade Company.** And on twitter **@1stuxbridgebb**

***ALSO, IF YOU ARE AN ‘ONLINE SHOPPER’ YOU CAN ORDER THROUGH THE EASY FUNDRAISING WEB SITE (AT NO EXTRA COST) AND THE COMPANY WILL BENEFIT EVERY TIME YOU PURCHASE. ASK FOR MORE DETAILS***

**Our new session starts on**

 **Friday 7th September 2017**

**Have a good summer and thank you**

**for your continued support.**

**Paul m. Edgeworth**

**COMPANY CAPTAIN**