



SUMMER 2021

# Stedfast News

The Newsletter for former Members, Serving Officers, Associates and Friends of The Boys' Brigade in Brighton Hove and District

## The Object of The Stedfast Association

To further the Object of The Boys' Brigade and to foster the spirit of Comradeship between past and present Members of the Brigade and to render Service to Others

## The Object of The Boys' Brigade

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

## Stedfast Committee

### PRESIDENT

Peter Ford

### VICE PRESIDENT

Vacant

### CHAIRMAN

Ray Eaves

### CHAPLAIN

Rev. Ian Suttie

### TREASURER

Alan Caperon

### SECRETARY

Alan Caperon

### MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Ann Austen

### COMMITTEE

Dick Kent  
Dave Norman  
Terry Pomfrey  
Les Russell  
Sue Standen  
Paul Simmons

## Dear Stedfast Members,

Cold or hot - so what? Wet or dry - why sigh? Our climate, particularly now, is cold and hot, wet and dry- often all on the same day! This has enabled us to live successfully in every part of the World.

Paul teaches that the important thing is not to be lukewarm in anything. The B.B. was founded with a stedfast attempt to achieve The Object; 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. What is your Object? Whatever it is bring to it the same Christlike Spirit that young William Smith brought to founding the B.B. in the backstreets of Glasgow.



Those who remember the Centenary Celebrations in 1983 will never forget them. Look up the video on Google to remind yourself.

We must believe that the best days are yet to be for the B.B. It is flourishing in every part of the World and the opportunities are increasing year by year and must be seized.

From the ashes of the pandemic must appear a rejuvenated Brigade in which young people will be encouraged to achieve what would formerly have been impossible.

Think of the incredible dedication and skill not only of the Olympic Medal Winners but of all those who took part and those who were pipped at the post of gaining a place in their Olympic Team.

The harvest needs workers and every B.B. Company would benefit from the knowledge and understanding that you possess. Please contact a Company at this important time and then use whatever talents you possess - they are all needed- maybe in Recruiting, maybe in Retention but never in Retiring.

Summer thoughts naturally turn to the hot days playing sports on the beautiful fields of Glynde Park, marching with the Camp Band down to the village swimming pool, the Drumhead Services and devouring haute cuisine in the Mess Tent or noisily keeping the night guard awake and therefore able to do their job of keeping us quiet.

Whatever our memories let us also pray that next year Glynde 2022 will provide more great memories and beforehand that we will have another memorable Reunion on 16 January 2022.

With Stedfast Greetings,  
**Peter Ford Stedfast Association President**

## Editorial

I do hope that most if not all of you have kept clear of the Covid Virus and you are keeping safe and well. For those of you suffering in any way, for whatever reason, I send my best to you all, and trust all will go well for you.

It has been another difficult time for us all but hopefully we are moving towards a solution of the virus problem that has lasted for so long.

I am writing this on the day that the Government's restrictions have been removed, our Secretary is now in the process of putting together the renewal of events that we have had to cancel during the lock-down period. We will be giving details in this Edition, care will be taken to ensure that whatever is planned every care will be taken to keep everyone safe.

As Editor I recently received a copy of the Manchester Newsletter, with a request that we reciprocate and send a copy of our own Newsletter so that we can share news that are of interest to them or us. This was apparent when they published an article re BB stamps and our Secretary was most interested and we will share this with you in a separate article. Do not forget I am happy to receive any memories you may like to share with us of BB Days.

You will obviously realise that we hope that as many members as possible will be able to support any of the events. Your committee will be meeting as soon as possible to put together details of meetings over the next few months, watch out for further details elsewhere in this edition.

Whatever occurs in the future months meet or not, depending on the situation at the time, I trust you will be able to get outside enjoy, hopefully, the summer sun, and get refreshed for the autumn and winter ahead.

My very best wishes to you all. Stay safe and I trust you keep well.

**God Bless Dick Kent (Editor)**

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## Chairman's Report

Stedfast greeting to you all, I hope you are all keeping well and are in good spirits.

As lockdown restrictions begin to lift I hope and pray that those of you that are able will be getting out and about in what we hope will be good weather.

Your committee are hoping that they will be able to meet up again to arrange the Founder's Day Dinner in October and the long awaited Annual Reunion next January 2022.

I hope that all being well these events will go ahead and I will look forward with the rest of the Committee to welcoming you. Dates will be advised once we know that it will be safe to go ahead with these.

I wish you all well and hope that you all have a very enjoyable Summer.

With Stedfast greetings and Blessings.

**Ray Eaves, Stedfast Committee Chair**

## Glynde Camp 2021

Hello All,

Firstly, I wish to thank everyone who made a personal donation to our new bell tent appeal it was very nice of you and very much appreciated we hope to be able to buy 5 out of the 15 new bells that we need. In my last message to you I said I would write to those who had donated unfortunately I have not been able to get everyone's address from the association due to GDPR but I do hope that this will suffice.



Glynde camp was very different this year due to covid as we were planning all year long with restrictions playing a massive part of our planning with lots of different scenarios and thoughts as restrictions may change at any time. Four days before camp was due to start, the rules had changed again but we had made our choice on how to run camp.



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So, Glynde 2021 was going to run as two smaller camps one for the senior age groups with 25 lads and a younger camp with 20 lads both groups were going to get 4 days in total at camp which is shorter than normal but it meant everyone had some kind of BB camp.



If we had a normal camp as in previous years this would have been our largest camp in years.

Camp started on Friday night for the senior age groups with a packed programme and finished on the Tuesday late afternoon and the younger camp started on the Tuesday evening and finished on Saturday afternoon.

We took lots of precautions whilst at camp with testing everyone on camp when they arrived and then every two days and before they went home. We are lucky to say we had no covid cases whilst we were at camp.



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The programme was fully packed for both groups with swimming at Glynde pool, inflatables, nerf wars, Olympic themed day and lots of sports as the lads competed for the Laurel Crown. We also ran our normal prayer session in the mornings and evenings with prayer activities running during the day if the lads wanted something else to do. We had 5 young people give their lives to Jesus during camp with 3 feeling comfortable writing in the commitment book.



So far, we have such positive feed back from all the lads about camp and parents appreciated all the hard work that went into camp so the lads had an amazing time. For our younger age group none of the lads had ever been to camp and for some this was their first experience of staying away from home due to lots of things being cancelled over the last 2 years.

I personally want to thank all the staff who had the hard task of planning camp but a special mention to Isaac (Administrator) and Chris (C.O.) for all the late nights reading guidelines, planning and moving things at short notice.

Gary Picket

**Battalion President**

As restrictions have eased, I have been having some meetings with our Goring Church Family and Children's Worker. We've been sitting at the outside tables of our local coffee shop – part of a national chain. We must have been making our presence felt because, on our last visit, the 'Barista' asked me if I would like one of their Coffee Club cards. All I would need to do would be to register the card online and sign it; I would then be open to receive all sorts of special offers! Returning home, I tried to register the card; I duly typed in all my details until there was only my email address to add. I added in 'ian.suttie@methodist.org.uk' and immediately there jumped out of the screen at me in bold red letters 'Nice Try! This is not a proper email address!' I started again and got the same scary result. I had one more try using my other email address: [revian.suttie@gmail.com](mailto:revian.suttie@gmail.com). The same alarming message in bold red letters popped up: 'Nice Try! This is not a proper email address!' I'm not sure whether this means that 'revs' especially Methodist ones are not welcome at this particular coffee chain or whether it's just Sutties! Those of us who belong to churches which use the common lectionary for the Sunday readings will know that just recently the Gospel passages have been based on St. John's account of the feeding of the five thousand and the subsequent reflections on that event. I have taken heart from these readings that even if the coffee shop in question won't let me have their coffees and pastries until my email address conforms to their expectations, Jesus welcomes me unreservedly to his table with the great declaration: 'I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

The sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel begins with the account of the feeding of the five thousand and continues with several conversations between Jesus and his disciples and the crowds who milled around him following on from that event. The first reaction of the crowd who experienced this 'sign' (as miracles are described in John's Gospel) was to take Jesus by force and make him their king. St. John tells us that when this happened Jesus slipped away from them. However, the crowds were not going to let him escape! They followed him round the Sea of Galilee wanting more. No doubt their amazement about what had happened, and perhaps their desire to experience even greater 'signs,' meant that they were not going to let Jesus go! What they failed to see was that the sign of the feeding of the five thousand was pointing to the need for a deeper kind of feeding. Jesus was, of course, concerned for their well-being; he did physically feed them. St. John suggests, however, that Jesus wanted them also to find the spiritual sustenance that he was offering so that their inner resources would be strengthened to go about the work of God: 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

We still need the sustenance Christ offers us to strengthen our inner resources and empower us to go about sharing in the work of God today. Many of us will have been watching the Olympic Games and marvelling at the self-discipline of athletes who train and train and train to be in tip top condition for their events. We need the self-discipline of prayer (be it on our own or with others), reading and reflecting on the Scriptures and meeting the Lord and one another at His Table to be in tip top condition to fulfil our calling to be faithful disciples today.

Every blessing,

**Ian Suttie**

## BB Stamps

You may have seen the request that we received from the Manchester Stedfast Association to exchange copies of our Newsletters, and an article on Post Office Stamps.

I must confess that I was unaware of the issue of these stamps that celebrated the anniversaries of Youth Organisations which included ourselves.

### Were you aware of the issue of these stamps?

In 1982 The Scouts celebrated their 75th Anniversary and administrations around the world over issued stamps to mark the occasion.

In Great Britain this was done and incorporated the Girl Guides, the Girls Brigade and The Boys' Brigade. The BB and GB Stamps as you will see show a drummer (a side drummer for the BB and a Bass Drummer for the GB), along with a junior member of the BB) It maybe that this latter inclusion was to indicate that the Bands were a tribute to the fact that both

organisations are much thought of in relationship to their involvement with Bands. Statistics show that 40,169,000 Boys' Brigade stamps were issued as part of this set.

The stamps are sized 30 X 47mm and were designed by Brian Sanders. There is a Church shown on the BB Set which indicated that we are a Christian Organisation.

Our Secretary Alan purchased the first day covers for the BB Stamps and are pictured here. These stamps were issued on 24 March 1982 and he purchased both English and Scottish envelopes. The interesting fact was that the BB was founded in 1883 and these stamps were issued as part of the Scouts 75th Anniversary but this coincided with virtually the BB Centenary and other Youth Organisations were included By The Post Office in support of the Youth Organisations in Great Britain.

**Dick**



## SECRETARY'S SUMMER REPORT

### Brighton and Hove Boys' Brigade Battalion update

By the time you read this Summer newsletter, the Brighton and Hove Boys' Brigade Battalion Glynde Camp would have taken place and on your behalf we donated £350 towards the camp costs and the new tents.

#### **Stedfast Association events**

Regrettably, due to Covid-19, we have been unable to keep our Stedfast Association website up to date although there have been some updates on our Facebook page. Email and post remain the main methods of contact with the membership so please keep an eye on your emails/post for updates during 2021.

We will have to let all members know in due course whether the Founder's dinner will take place on 4 October 2021. I expect that Les Russell will make contact by email and or by telephone throughout the period up to that date.

We are sure that the Remembrance services in Brighton, Hove and elsewhere in Sussex will take place in November 2021 but it is still too early to know the arrangements. Brighton and Hove City Council adverts will appear and it is probably better that you view the adverts yourselves.

We will update you in the Winter Newsletter with regard to the 16 January 2022 Annual Reunion. I am sure that our membership are as knowledgeable as we are so I will not go into details in the Summer Newsletter since it is too soon to start making any provisional arrangements.

#### **Federation of Stedfast Associations**

There were 9 Stedfast Associations represented at the AGM on 14 May 2021 with representatives from Edinburgh Leith and District, Elland, Glasgow, Inverness and District, Manchester, Liverpool, Norfolk, Northern Ireland and Brighton, Hove and District.

The next Federation event will be held in Glasgow, Scotland at the same venue as this year's event which was postponed. The 2022 Annual Council Meeting will be held at the Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel, Clydebank, Glasgow over the weekend of 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Further details will be provided in our Winter Newsletter.

The Federation AGM minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2021, together with the reports and accounts for the Federation are available to members on request.

#### **Stedfast Committee**

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, your committee has been making decisions by email since we have not been able to meet in person since the last reunion in January 2020. The committee would hope to have met before you read this Summer newsletter. The plan is to start the process of discussing our 2022 reunion arrangements since these will have to include strict Covid-19 health and safety conditions.

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## TREASURER'S SUMMER REPORT

### Stedfast Association Budget for 2021

(compared to the certified accounts to 31 December 2020)

I would like to thank the members that have made extra donations this year to Stedfast funds which enabled this camp donation to be made, especially when income is down due to the cancellation of the January 2021 reunion due to Covid-19. Majority of members pay subs on that Sunday afternoon and this explains why subs are down on last year.

Please see our Stedfast Association income and expenditure budget for 2021 as follows:-

	2021 £ estimate	2020 accounts £
<b>Income</b>		
Paid up Members	63	<i>Paid up Members 115</i>
Subscriptions to date	989	1,533
Reunion collections	N/A	349
Donations	175	340
Founder's dinner raffle for BB	uncertain	No event
<b>Total income</b>	<b>1,164</b>	<b>2,222</b>
<b>Expenditure estimated</b>		
BB-Glynde donation	(350)	<i>No camp in 2020</i>
Southwick Methodist Church	To be considered	(500)
Federation subscription to be paid	(45)	(45)
Preston Bowls Club donation re Founder's dinner in Oct 2021	To be considered	N/A
Stedfast Band	To be considered	<i>No events</i>
Website costs (estimate)	To be considered	(100)
Remembrance wreaths (estimate)	To be considered	(50)
Newsletter costs-Spring	(132)	(339)
Insurance	(69)	(69)
Reunion costs	N/A	(304)
St John's Ambulance donation	(58)	(58)
BOBS donation	N/A	(35)
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>(654)</b>	<b>(1,500)</b>
<b>Estimated surplus</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>722</b>
Newsletter costs-estimated costs Summer and Winter	(200)	
<b>Surplus available for Donations and expenses to be considered</b>	<b>(310)</b>	
<b>Bank balance B/F</b>	<b>2,774</b>	<b>2,052</b>
<b>Bank balance C/F</b>	<b>2,774</b>	<b>2,774</b>

The Committee would like to thank the 63 members who have paid their 2021 subs with many of you increasing your subs with donations. Members subs are down on 2020 as explained above so if you have not yet paid and still wish to do so, please send your subs to me at 72 Poulterers Lane, Worthing West Sussex, BN14 7SZ. An increase in members' subs would enable the Committee to take this into account with the decisions to be made on the proposed donations mentioned above still to be considered for 2021.

### Certified Stedfast accounts to 31 December 2020

Please note that the accounts for the year to 31 December 2020 were certified by Christine Townsend, Chartered Accountant on 28 June 2021. The accounts cannot be considered for adoption by members until the next AGM but the full accounts (with comparative figures) are shown below:-

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STEDFAST ASSOCIATION BRIGHTON HOVE AND DISTRICT BRANCH			
2019	2019	ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2020	2020
Members	114 members	INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT	Members paid subs
£	£	INCOME	£
	<b>1,528.50</b>	<b>Total Subscriptions</b>	<b>1,533.00</b>
	<b>349.00</b>	<b>Reunion collections</b>	<b>349.40</b>
<b>230.00</b>		Reunion service collection for Southwick Methodist Church	<b>224.70</b>
<b>119.00</b>		Reunion tea collection	<b>124.70</b>
	<b>160.00</b>	<b>Donations to Stedfast Association</b>	<b>340.00</b>
<b>160.00</b>		RSM-donation for costs of the Spring and Winter newsletters	<b>150.00</b>
<b>nil</b>		Other donations-members	<b>190.00</b>
	<b>15.00</b>	<b>Founder's day raffle for Glynde Camp</b>	<b>nil</b>
	<b>2,052.50</b>	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,222.40</b>
		<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
<b>9.00</b>		<b>Stock c/f</b>	<b>9.00</b>
	<b>328.12</b>	<b>Newsletter costs</b>	<b>339.22</b>
<b>9.64</b>		Stationery/envelopes	<b>29.62</b>
<b>78.88</b>		Postage	<b>97.60</b>
<b>160.00</b>		Printing Summer newsletters- Portland Road Methodist Church	<b>62.00</b>
<b>79.60</b>		Printing -newsletters Spring and Winter issues	<b>150.00</b>
	<b>465.41</b>	<b>Reunion 2020 costs</b>	<b>336.95</b>
<b>310.25</b>		Reunion tea and refreshments costs	<b>279.35</b>
<b>95.16</b>		Reunion-St John Ambulance	<b>57.60</b>
<b>60.00</b>		Printing order of service (no charge made by the church)	<b>nil</b>
	<b>180.25</b>	<b>Other costs</b>	<b>168.80</b>
<b>9.20</b>		Oldest and Youngest medals	
<b>98.25</b>		Computer software and website	<b>100.00</b>
<b>4.00</b>		Pens no longer saleable	<b>nil</b>
<b>68.80</b>		Insurance	<b>68.80</b>
<b>nil</b>			
	<b>1,045.00</b>	<b>Donations</b>	<b>654.70</b>
<b>100.00</b>		Stedfast Band-donation for Worthing Carnival event costs	<b>No event</b>
<b>45.00</b>		Federation of Stedfast Association- Subscription	<b>45.00</b>
<b>70.00</b>		Wreaths- Remembrance Sunday for British Legion	<b>50.00</b>
<b>75.00</b>		Brighton Boys Brigade-KGVI officer training	<b>nil</b>
		BOBS donation	<b>35.00</b>
<b>235.00</b>		Brighton Boys Brigade camp-donation	<b>No camp</b>
<b>500.00</b>		Southwick Methodist Church-donation £300, plus at reunion	<b>524.70</b>
<b>20.00</b>		Preston Bowls Club-donation	<b>No Founder's dinner</b>
	<b>2,018.78</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1,499.67</b>
		<b>TOTAL INCOME LESS EXPENDITURE</b>	
	<b>33.72</b>	<b>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>722.73</b>
	<b>2,018.24</b>	<b>Surplus funds brought forward</b>	<b>2,051.96</b>
	<b>2,051.96</b>	<b>Surplus funds carried forward</b>	<b>2,774.69</b>
		<b>STEDFAST ASSOCIATION BRIGHTON HOVE AND DISTRICT BRANCH</b>	
		<b>ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2020</b>	
	<b>2018</b>		<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2020</b>	
	<b>2,006.76</b>	<b>Cash at Bank</b>	<b>2,095.75</b>
		Cash at Bank	<b>620.32</b>
	<b>(86.26)</b>	<b>Creditors for website costs to be paid</b>	<b>(100.00)</b>
	<b>122.46</b>	<b>Cash in hand</b>	<b>149.62</b>
	<b>9.00</b>	<b>Stock of Stedfast badges for sale</b>	<b>9.00</b>
	<b>2,051.96</b>	<b>Surplus funds carried forward</b>	<b>2,774.69</b>
		<b>ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT</b>	
		I have examined the Stedfast Association-Brighton, Hove and District branch's books and records and confirm that the Accounts set out above are in accordance therewith for the year ended 31 December 2020.	
		<b>Christine Townsend</b>	
		<b>Chartered Accountant</b>	
		Dated 28 June 2021	

Yours Stedfastly

Alan Caperon, Treasurer and Secretary

## Founder's Dinner



**Monday 4th October 2021**  
**7pm for 7.30 (until 9pm)**

**Preston Bowls Club 189 Preston  
Road Brighton. BN16SA**

**Cost £20 per head**



It was so disappointing having to cancel the Founder's Day Dinner last year due to the pandemic. There was so much uncertainty regarding the opening and closure of the bowls club that cancellation was the only course of action.

It seems very likely that we shall be able to go ahead this year. The Chef at Preston Bowls club has agreed to let us have our, much enjoyed, menu choices that we have had in the past. He has put us into his diary for Monday October 4<sup>th</sup>, 7 for 7.30pm. at £20 per head.

It is an informal evening with friends and guests who wish to celebrate the foundation on The Boys' Brigade in 1883 by Sir William Smith. We look forward to meeting with so many of our members and friends at last

The club is large enough to enable us to socially distance if necessary.

The Club is operating safely for bowls both indoors and outdoors using the rules and advice of the EIBA and Bowls England. The provisions made to counter Covid have been inspected and passed by two separate local council inspectors. It is probably the safest venue for dining out in the County.

If you wish to register your wish to attend, or for more information please contact Les Russell. By e-mail at [lc.russell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lc.russell@hotmail.co.uk), by mobile phone or text on: -07833531069 or 01273 757896 or post at 10 Beechwood, Curwen Place, Brighton. BN1 6UJ

The dinner is open to all who wish to celebrate the foundation of The Boys' Brigade.



“We intend in this issue and in future issues to provide our members with some life stories of people that have devoted their Christian lives to the service of others, and in particular to The Boys’ Brigade.” If you knew someone with a BB story and you would like to include and share this in the Stedfast Newsletter, please let us know”

## **SYNOPSIS OF THE BOYS’ BRIGADE AND SOCIAL WORKS OF GEOFFREY A. HARRIS.**



BORN 30<sup>th</sup> October 1922.

PASSED TO HIGHER SERVICE ON 28 JUNE 2009 aged 86 years

Geoff was involved in various youth organisations before he joined the RAF age 17 and after the War he returned to Brighton to various employments but in his spare time renewed his connection with youth work. Geoff joined The Boys’ Brigade in the 20<sup>th</sup> Brighton BB Co (London Road Congregational Church) and then became a Lieutenant in 1944 and transferred to the 14<sup>th</sup> Brighton BB Co (Florence Road Baptist Church). Geoff became voluntary Battalion Press Officer and Events Organiser, starting a new magazine for Senior NCO’S called The Chevron, and editing Brighton Breezes Magazine for BB Boys.

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Returning to The Boys' Brigade in 1952 and moving to digs in Manchester, he took up a one of the FIRST full time employed posts as a **District Organiser for Lancashire and Cheshire**. In this post he travelled the length and breadth of the two counties often in the evenings to visit 250 BB Companies at their club meetings and meet the officers and boys at grass roots level.

In his capacity as **District Organiser** he organised events/displays/camps/badge work etc to bringing to many young lads opportunities that would not otherwise have come their way. He took the bold step in early 1950's of organising exchange and cultural visits for senior boys to Turkey/Austria/Denmark/Switzerland/Obramago. These trips were of huge significance to lads many of whom had never been outside Lancashire and Cheshire never mind abroad!!

The links with many of the countries, especially the Danish Girls and Boys' Brigades continue to this day as a testimony of those early International visits.

Successful exchange visits with the FDF were fostered and in 1960 The District played host to the FDF Orchestra when it came to the UK on tour and again in 1963.

FDF officers were billeted at our home in Chorlton-Cum-Hardy, Manchester.

Geoff's wife Jean, a Life Boy Leader, designed the FDF music Banners. On one occasion when Jean couldn't attend the evening concert due to her two sons being poorly, the FDF Orchestra took a coach trip detour on route to their next venue and visited her house and in the quiet street, played "Sussex By The Sea" (Both Jean and Geoff were from Brighton), much to the amusement and delight of neighbours from all around!

Geoff arranged training courses for Officers and Boys for every conceivable facet of BB work. One of the highlights was the programme of Residential NCO Christian Leadership Courses started in the 1950's firstly in Liverpool at Heswell, then at Capernwray Hall near Carnforth. The N.W District Vice President, R.J. Kenworth noted, that "*...many officers and boys have accepted Jesus Christ as Friend and Saviour as a result of these Christian Leadership courses, the success of which was a living testimony for his early work*".

One interesting note is that the picture called "Decision" of a BB NCO kneeling before the Cross, my father designed and it has a number 14 on the hat badge, to mark his links to 14<sup>th</sup> Brighton BB to use at Capenwray, (the number 14 on the hat refers to the 14<sup>th</sup> Brighton BB Co.

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Specialised courses in Gymnastics, Duke of Edinburgh Badge Work, (at Hammarbank Nr.Windermere) ,camping and orienteering etc were unheard of in the 1950`s until Geoff brought in outside lecturers to run such courses . He set up the first District Camp at Criccieth, North Wales in 1953,other camps followed at Dyffryn Ardudwy, North Wales.

A huge success was **The Blackpool Display**, when in 1952 Geoff suggested that a concert/display be put on to showcase the work of Companies in their many activities.

In his typical go-go –go fashion Geoff managed to secure the huge Blackpool Concert Hall at the Blackpool Tower! With much effort and Geoff giving hours of work travelling to view and audition /organising/ and producing the shows were a fantastic success and still run after 57 years!!

A past Boys Brigade President, His Honour Judge Reg Lockett commented, *"Geoff was a fine Christian man but, more than that he led many others to a personal knowledge of Christ, his zeal was without bounds. There are many like me who are better for having known him."*

A past BB District Organiser for Yorkshire, Gerald Walker, wrote *" Thousands of men have been influenced as boys by Geoffrey, by his devotion and enthusiasm ...Officers in their hundreds have been inspired by his training and leadership,-what a record, what a man!"*

Being involved with Youth work he became involved with the planning and structure of **The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme** at an early stage and encouraged leadership in older teenagers with organised week-end courses combining fun /outdoor pursuits and leadership skills ....years ahead of its time!

In the 1950`s he organised BB camps for hundreds of BBboys at Keswick coincide with the Billy Graham evangelist conventions for senior Boys to attend and also and set up BB recruitment stands to showcase the work of The Brigades.

His wife Jean would assist with the catering together with head cook "Uncle Bob" who, having no teeth, would entertain the boys with gurning!

In his own "free time" he **joined the 43<sup>rd</sup> Manchester Boys Brigade Company** in Didsbury, Greater Manchester for Boys aged 11-18. This company thrived with many various activities for youngsters with limited opportunities and many were given confidence through participation to learn new skills in music/drama/first aid/camping/travel even cooking!!

## LOCAL WATFORD YEARS

Working in London but living in Watford, Geoff soon became invited to become Secretary, then President and subsequently Honorary President of **The SW Herts Battalion of The Boys' Brigade.**, and a member of **The Brigade National Executive** and later **Hon. Brigade Vice President.** In these various capacities for some 20 years he was to promote and organise many events for the local youngsters to enable a positive development in their teenage years.

Geoff and his wife Jean and sons Graham and Ian joined Leavesden Road Baptist Church in 1964. He and Jean were very active members and as a **Church Deacon** gave many years in stewardship. The fellowship of the Church was important and was to be much valued by both of them.

*Continued on next page*

Later in life in 1998 hearing of the need for **BB headquarters at Felden Lodge** struggling to raise funds for the building of elevators for the use of disabled guests Geoff aged 76, embarked on a project to organise a series of musical concerts to entertain local residents but to raise funds at the same time. He managed to stage three annual events and hand over a healthy cheque for the building work to be finished!

When Geoff suffered a stroke in 2000, Geoff moved into sheltered housing, but as you have seen, his local community efforts continued, organising quizzes and social events for his fellow residents!

In 2006 Geoff was awarded the prestigious Rotary International founders Paul Harris Award for services to the Local and International Community.

Also in 2006, his outstanding and selfless service to the town of Watford over a 42 year period was given recognition when the Mayor of Watford Dorothy Thornhill awarded Geoff

**The Mayors' Audentior Award.** As the Mayor commented, "*... his years of voluntary work and commitment to the Town have made a difference to the lives of so many, ...the Town says thank-you .*"

Some have joked that if Geoff ever had open heart surgery the surgeon would find an anchor and the letters BB inscribed on it,! Throughout his life he followed the aspirations of The Founder. In all things he could count on the immeasurable help and support of his wife Jean, they worked as partnership. Between them they gave the Brigade a joint service record of over 110 years !. This amazing achievement is commemorated with a memorial bench, gifted by The South West Herts Battalion, which stands in the grounds of Felden Lodge, a place they both loved.

Geoffrey Harris, died, aged 86 years, on Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup> 2009.  
He is survived by his two sons, Graham and Ian Harris.

Geoff's BB career was illustrious and illuminating, when in 1991 he was made a Brigade Hon. Vice President, he never stopped serving the BB, AND WHEN HE DIED IN 2009, HE HAD CLOCKED UP 75 years of service to the Brigade!

**Graham Harris**

## Reunion and Annual General Meeting

Our Next Reunion  
16 January 2022

at Southwick Methodist Church. Service starts 2.30pm Meeting from 2.00pm for enrolment.



If you are reading the Brighton Stedfast Association newsletter for the first time we hope that you have found it both interesting and informative. If you have any items that you think may be of interest to our members you can contact the Editor or secretary, (details inside this newsletter) or visit our web site;

<http://brightonstedfast.org.uk/>

**The Stedfast Association - Brighton** is an organisation for past members of The Boys' Brigade Brighton Hove & District Battalion. If you have been a boy or member of staff in any company past or present within our Battalion you are automatically a member. Past Members of The Boys' Brigade from all over the world are welcome to join our Association.

To register, contact our secretary:

**Alan Caperon 72 Poulterers Lane Worthing, West Sussex BN14 7SZ**  
**alan.caperon@hotmail.co.uk**

*To help with the association costs, we would suggest a donation of £10*  
*Associate members now welcome*  
*(cheques payable to the Stedfast Association)*



### Membership Form for 2021

May we remind you that subscriptions are due, the present recommended subscription for members and associate members is £10-00 per year (more/less if you wish).

Subscription/Contribution enclosed £

Cheques payable to "**Stedfast Association**" .. please

Company

Name

Address

Tel Number

Post Code

Confirm e-mail

Newsletter via email **OR** Hard copy by post Please indicate in one box

E mail	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Post	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Old Boy..... Officer.... ..... Helper ..... Friend /Supporter..... Band Member

Please return this completed form together with your subscription to:-

The Secretary

Alan Caperon

72 Poulter's Lane

Worthing

West Sussex BN14 7SZ

**If you wish to send any letter with a BB story for us to include in the newsletter, please tick this box:-**

Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Should you no longer wish to remain on our mailing list, would you also please inform the Secretary by email to [alan.caperon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:alan.caperon@hotmail.co.uk)