

# Stedfast News



The Newsletter for former members, serving officers, associates and friends of The Boys' Brigade in Brighton Hove and District [www.brightonstedfast.org.uk](http://www.brightonstedfast.org.uk).

## Summer 2024

### 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 ;** Geoff Fitch

**Chairman;** - Geoff Fitch

**Chaplain;** Vacant

**Treasurer;** Alan Caperon

**Secretary;** Alan Caperon

**Membership Secretary;** Vacant

#### Committee;

Les Russell, Sue Standen,  
Paul Simmons, Dave Norman,

**Newsletter Editor,** Terry Pomfrey



The mysteries of successfully erecting a tent above  
And when it is done correctly below



**Dear Stedfast members,**

Summer is here, and just in case you didn't catch that, Summer is here! Say it several times until it really hits home! How you say it is all important. You can say it with enthusiasm or with tiredness, with encouragement or with criticism, with enlightenment or casting a sombre shadow.

What we say is of great importance, but how we say it is of even greater importance.

After a long dark winter we have emerged into sunlight and joy and we must hold on to it for dear life.

The Christian life is like that. After the dismal trials and tribulations, we receive New Life. Our job is to pass that on and to rejoice with the young people of today especially with those in The B.B.

The B.B. in Brighton, from the youngest Member to the oldest, need to be awake to the opportunities that are available today; opportunities that can be embraced for good or trampled under foot with scorn.

At this critical time in our Battalion's history the opportunity is there for us to go backwards in despair and bemoan how wonderful it was and how lucky we were to have been part of it, or to grasp the present and the future and play our part to have a pride in our past, but even more, to have a Plan and a Purpose and a Determination to ensure that the future is God's Will and His alone.

Just a few short weeks ago Sheila and I were invited to Glynde to present the five-a-side football trophy to the winning tent. The weather was beautiful, the sky was blue and once again we were able to breathe the fresh air of Glynde and walk on the hallowed grass. Great however as that was, it was the spirit and exuberance of the Camp that we shall always remember. The Camp was a credit to The Boys' Brigade and especially to Isaac Conroy, the Commanding Officer, and to all his very able staff. It was especially good to see so many younger officers performing their duties so efficiently and well.

The programme was full of variety and interest and I am confident that the boys and girls will want to be back for Glynde 2025. Sadly May Slater has decided to retire from an active role this year. Auntie May will be fondly remembered for her understanding and encouragement and I am sure she will visit Camp in the years to come.

Talking of events to come, have you booked your seat for this year's Founder's Day Dinner on 4th October? This is not to be missed! It will seem strange without Ray Eaves and Angela Eaves being present due to Ray's health but we shall remember them and hope that they will be back next year. Once again our grateful thanks to Les Russell for all his preparations for such a happy event.

It was a privilege to be present for the Battalion Annual General Meeting at St. Andrews in the Summer and especially good news that Lynn Burtenshaw agreed and was elected to stand as Battalion President for another Session. Lynn is doing a wonderful job in exceptionally difficult circumstances and deserves all the support that The Stedfast Association can give to her and her colleagues.

The World seems to be a very dark place at the moment and wherever you look there appear to be massive problems. We must always remember that darkness is nothing, just the absence of light. Jesus Christ is the Light of the world and in him there is no darkness at all.

With Stedfast Greetings,

**Peter Ford**

**President**

**The Brighton, Hove and District Stedfast Association**



## EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

The sun is out and at last some welcome warmth for now at least. Things always seem easier when the sun is shining.

There is still war in the Ukraine and the Middle East, and elsewhere. We need to pray for the ending of these situations. Our reunion and AGM on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024, seems so long ago now, but I feel it was a great success, please spread the word so that others can join us next year.

This year was an Olympic year and I for one followed the games with a keen eye, its great when our athletes win gold, but it is the taking part that is most important, and a great life lesson for us all.

The Boys' Brigade may well be at camp or on their summer break, but there will be others who will be busy preparing for all their various activities, for the next session.

In September the trees and bushes will be full of ripening fruit, the farmers will be starting to gather in their crops and so it will be that the plans made this summer for the new 2024-2025 session will move into action and it all starts again with all the anticipation and excitement that this brings, and we pray that the plans are good for all who participate in them.

Stedfastly Yours Terry

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## IN MEMORIAM

Bob (Robert) Cunningham

Bob Cunningham (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Southwick BB Cos) passed away on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024 after a short illness at the age of 91.

Bob was a Life Boy in the 40's/50's and a member of Stedfast – attending the reunions for as long as I can remember. You may remember him as being one of a pair – his identical twin brother John passed away about 6 years ago.

He was my wife's cousin and we have been his close companions for many years and it was myself who called the ambulance and now his executor so plenty to do. Bob had been a church member at Southwick Methodist Church since 1951.

Regards Phil Webb

Michael Bryan

Michael Bryan of the 1<sup>st</sup> Lingfield, passed to higher service on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2024. Michael was in a care home for the past 3 and half years. Michael prepared his own funeral some years ago and asked Terry Ward to speak about the B.B. The B.B. was inspirational to him.

### **New minister at Southwick Methodist Church**

The Revd Ian Couchman has taken over from Rev. Frank Okai Sam as the Minister of Southwick Methodist Church. Below is his introduction to the members of the Church;

Friends at Southwick, as a new connexional year starts I am looking forward to taking over as Minister of the church. I look forward to journeying with you all as we explore what God has in store for us in the coming year.



I am married to Pam who is a member at Southwick; we have five grandchildren who are in the southeast. I enjoy real ale and single malt scotch whisky, so most Friday nights we can be found at a local ale house enjoying their beer. I do sometimes frequent the ale house in my clerical shirt and have been surprised by the conversations I have with the regulars.

I look forward to venturing into Southwick to see what the beer is like.

I consider myself to be a collaborative minister who values being alongside individuals and sharing in their joys and challenges. You will come to realise that I have a terrible memory for names, so please don't be offended if I either call you the wrong name or chat generally to you; I will get there eventually, I promise.

I will shy away from the idea of having name badges printed. Before I candidated for ministry I was a support worker for individuals who have intellectual disabilities. I spent nearly ten years working in a care home for eighteen residents which is where my passions for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion come from. I was constantly amazed at how God talked words of wisdom through the residents, which shouldn't have surprised me because God chooses to speak through the most unexpected situations in life.

I am a strong believer in sharing the workload; we have all been given gifts and talents by God to be used to further God's kingdom. I realise we are all busy people, but if we all took on one activity then those who are wearing many hats and at times, I'm sure feel overburdened, would have a less hectic church life.

Finally, one more heads-up, I do find myself in the kitchen quite a lot, I stack chairs and tables and have even been known to sweep the floor. I see this as part of my ministry as this enables me to have conversations with those who shy away from being in the limelight and again some fascinating conversations have been had in such places.

I come with my gifts and faults which you will no doubt get to know and recognise; in acknowledging these, I hope to enable people to see me as no better or worse than anyone else. I look forward to the conversations and fellowship we will have together.

Blessings,  
Ian

## SECRETARY AND TREASURER REPORT

### **FORTHCOMING EVENT-Founder's dinner 4 October 2024**

Please support the Founder's dinner as advertised in this newsletter

### **Reunion 6 April 2025**

The Committee have already commenced the tasks for the 2025 reunion and you will receive updates in the Winter newsletter which we intend to send you in January 2025 with your invitation in the Spring 2025 newsletter which we intend to send to you in early March 2025.

Updates will also appear on our website at <http://brightonstedfast.org.uk>

### **2023 Stedfast Association accounts**

The Stedfast Association accounts for the year to 31 December 2023 have been approved by the Independent Examiner and are included in the newsletter.

### **Membership**

Our Stedfast membership subscriptions were maintained in 2024 with 73 members so far paying subs, the same number at this stage in 2023. A few members pay their subs between now and December 2024 so we expect the subs to increase.

### **Brighton BB Battalion**

We made a donation of £300 to Glynde Camp. Lynn Burtenshaw was re-elected as President of our Battalion and we wish her all the very best for 2024/25.

### **Federation of Stedfast Associations**

We received a donation from the Federation of £376.67 which has now ceased its activities. This donation was payable since our association has been a full member of the Federation. The final accounts of the Federation are currently being reviewed by the Independent Examiner and will then be available.

### **Website**

Please visit our website at <http://brightonstedfast.org.uk> for news of future events including photos of the recent Reunion, all previous Stedfast newsletters are also available and next years Reunion will be held at Southwick Methodist Church on Sunday afternoon 6 April 2025.

*Continued on next page*

**Stedfast Association committee decisions, office bearers and appointments**

We would like to thank Ray Eaves for his loyal service to the association as well as his role as Chairman of the association where you will have seen Ray carrying out many duties at our reunions. Ray has decided to retire and we wish him well and hope he will be able to attend our events in future. We are pleased to report that Geoff Fitch agreed to take on the role of Chairman and will also continue as Vice President.

I would add that I have been suffering poor health in recent months and had a spell in hospital. Whilst I am now back to full health, it was touch and go for a couple of months and therefore I must take better care of myself in future and not take on too much responsibility.

**Alan Caperon,  
Secretary and Treasurer**

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**Chairman's Report – May 2024**

A few months ago I offered to stand in as Vice President as there had not been any nominations for the past two AGM's. At the Reunion this year I was confirmed as VP. This is not an arduous position as Peter Ford, as President has defined responsibilities at the Reunion and AGM as did Ray Eaves, the Chairman, both of whom did great work to deliver a good event.

I didn't have any defined responsibilities as such but I did secure the services of Bryan Pickard as our speaker at the AGM and did suggest inviting Encorps, the group from the Salvation Army in Eastbourne both of which were a great success.

I enjoyed camping with Bryan at Glynde over a number of years and knew he would deliver a message that would resonate with members. He didn't disappoint.

We had a committee meeting in May and agreed that Encorp were a success and that we would invite them back next year. I extended the invitation to Pauline Peagam-Phillips, their leader and I'm pleased to say that they have accepted.

Sadly, Ray Eaves has some health concerns and has decided to resign as Chairman. Alan asked if I would step in as chairman, I agreed and with the committees support I have chaired my first meeting. Terry has covered this in another part of the newsletter.

I'm sure you will all join the committee in praying for Ray's continuing recovery.

**Geoff Fitch**

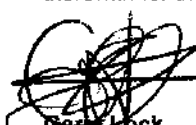
2022		Dec-22		STEDFAST ASSOCIATION BRIGHTON HOVE AND DISTRICT BRANCH ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2023		2023		2023	
		75		INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT				75	
					Members paid subs				
					<b>INCOME</b>				
		1,277.00			<b>Total Subscriptions and members donations 2023</b>				1,147.00
					<b>Reunion collections</b>				
145.05		242.99			Reunion service collection	242.40			380.86
97.94					Reunion tea collection	138.46			
		0.00			<b>Donations to Stedfast Association</b>				22.30
0.00					Donation-re King coronation badges	12.30			
0.00					Other donations-members	10.00			
		<b>1,519.99</b>			<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>				<b>1,550.16</b>
					<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
		276.04			<b>Newsletter costs</b>				142.54
66.04					Stationery/stamps to date	52.54			
100.00					Printing -newsletters Spring	30.00			
50.00					Printing -newsletters Summer	60.00			
60.00					Printing -newsletter Winter c/f to 2024				
		293.76			<b>Reunion 2023</b>				406.72
174.00					Reunion tea and refreshments costs	230.00			
0.00					Reunion music	50.00			
27.60					Reunion-adverts	0.00			
92.16					Reunion-St John Ambulance etc	126.72			
		195.55			<b>Other costs</b>				208.93
100.65					Website subscription	100.66			
0.00					Email subscription	14.39			
26.10					Stedfast plaques	20.60			
68.80					Insurance	73.28			
		622.99			<b>Donations</b>				805.86
45.00					Federation of Stedfast Association- Subscription	20.00			
50.00					Wreaths- Remembrance Sunday for British Legion	70.00			
250.00					Brighton Boys Brigade camp-donation	300.00			
242.99					Southwich Methodist Church-donation	380.86			
35.00					Preston Bowls Club-donation	35.00			
		<b>1,388.34</b>			<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>				<b>1,564.05</b>
		<b>131.65</b>			<b>(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR</b>				<b>(13.89)</b>
		3,163.19			Surplus funds brought forward				3,294.84
		<b>3,294.84</b>			<b>Surplus funds carried forward</b>				<b>3,280.95</b>

**STEDFAST ASSOCIATION BRIGHTON HOVE AND DISTRICT BRANCH  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2023**

TOTAL		BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2023		TOTAL	
2,479.75	Cash at Bank			old	2,651.75
994.34	Cash at Bank			new	
	Less Cheque to clear			650.20	
	Donation Brighton Battalion			(21.00)	629.20
-86.26	Creditors for website costs-2020				
-50.00	Subs in advance for 2023				
-60.00	Winter newsletter 2022				
11.01	CASH IN HAND				
6.00	Stock				
<b>3,294.84</b>	<b>Surplus funds carried forward</b>				<b>3,280.95</b>

**ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT**

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 2023.

  
 Gary Lock  
 Chartered Accountant  
 Dated 10 May 2024

Signed accounts for  
 STEDFAST ASSOCIATION BRIGHTON HOVE AND DISTRICT  
 BRANCH ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

## Glynde Camp 2024

I camped at Glynde as a boy, helper and officer for a number of years, my first being in 1959 but had never visited the 'new' site in Moor Lane. I was therefore pleased that as Chairman and Vice President of the Stedfast Association, I was invited to dinner on Sunday night (28<sup>th</sup> July). I was told that there were 45 dining on roast beef with all the trimmings. I thought this was very ambitious but it was excellent with strawberries and cream for dessert.

I arrived late in the afternoon whilst the volleyball and football competitions were taking place and sat talking to two of the officers. It was a nice warm day and perfect for camping.

I expected changes as I had not visited the camp for at least 12 years and considerably more since I camped there as an officer. There were surprisingly few. There was however one major change. Girls now camp with the Boys, in separate tents of course but I see a future when there may well be more girls.

The Mess Tent still had the box where everyone chants 'whoops a daisy' when anyone gets up to speak. The laurel crown and the TOTO sign are still affixed to the main pole but the Mess President seemed a lot less scary than when I was a boy.

I didn't hear any limericks so thankfully they have been consigned to history. I never could do them anyway.

Bugle calls still signal warnings that the meal is imminent and the boys (and girls) form up in their camp companies of Arabs, Buffaloes, Cowboys and Diggers. I saw a couple of boys wearing hats but they were respectfully removed before entering the mess tent.

The mess tent, supply tent and cook house were very familiar to me as I spent a good many years in the cook house. The layout is much the same with the parade ground in front of the mess tent, the cook house and supply tent adjacent to that.

Chemical toilets have replaced the old latrines which used to be dug by the advanced party and electric light powered by a generator have replaced the old hurricane lamps.

The young people were very kind and respectful toward me so I could see the old values have not changed. Maybe they could see I was struggling as I now walk with a stick but I prefer to think that they are being taught the same values I was taught back in the 60's when I was a boy.

I hope they make friends as I did in the BB, particularly at camp. I still keep in touch with Alan Ollis, who's father Harold also camped with Brian Griffin and Dennis Brooker. Alan was a good footballer and he, John Bishop, who had trials at Chelsea and I would always tent together to have a stab at winning the inter tent 5 a side football which we often did.

Walking that field, although not the same field I camped in brought the memories flooding back. Rambles with your officers on a Sunday, the Drum Head Service, the treasure hunt and the camp concert. Oh how I hated that. I learned to play stoolball at Glynde camp and became quite a decent player, playing for Brighton Outlaws in the Sussex league. Its such a shame that it has not grown as a sport.

I hope those boys and girls take away as many memories and gain as many friends as I did from Glynde.

**Geoff Fitch**

**FOUNDER`S DAY DINNER,  
FRIDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2024, 7pm for 7.30pm  
PRESTON BOWLS CLUB  
Menu : £30 per head:**

## **Starters:**

Homemade Soup of the day.  
Prawn Cocktail,  
Liver Pate served with warm toast,  
King Prawns in breadcrumbs served with sweet chilli sauce.

## **Main Course;**

Chicken Breast in white wine and mushroom sauce.  
Grilled Sirloin Steak with optional pepper sauce,  
Lamb kleftiko, slow roasted lamb in herbs & wine.  
Grilled Sea Bass fillet with lemon and olive oil drizzle.  
All served with Fresh vegetables and potatoes.

## **Desserts:**

Fruit salad/, Apple Pie with Ice cream./ Toffee & pecan Roulade or Cheese & biscuits.

I need to have your personal details as we are required by law to add them as guests at The Club. If you wish to bring additional guests there is -plenty of room and **Parking is Free.**

To confirm your place at the dinner contact Les Russell on e-mail  
[at;lc.russell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lc.russell@hotmail.co.uk)

or by text; 07833 531069, or by phone; 01273 757896, or post; 10 Beechwood, Curwen  
Place, London Road, Brighton BN1 6UJ

## Looking Back

As we grow older we have a tendency to look back at friendships and events from our past.

In common with some of our BB old boys it may be the parade evenings (held on a Friday) from when we first joined the company sections of our respective companies.

I remember at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brighton/Hove Company the evening was mapped out with what to me at the time seemed like military precision and I seem to remember that the evenings standing orders were posted on the black board in the hall of our local Methodist Church Hall in Portland Road Hove. Our captain, Eddie Patching presided over the evening, the roll call was taken by one of the officers first the loud call of 'COMPANY' bringing us all to attention signalling the start of the parade and then falling into our squads.



(Photo Me, Left and my elder brother Dave, Right

Devotions, object, roll call and Inspection. The Inspection involved us in a lot of preparation at home prior to the parade, polishing our shoes shining the brass work whilst ensuring that the white haversacks were not marked by the Braso polish, then our hands the polish tended to make my hands go black and scrub as I might it would cling to every crevice of my fingernails. Then notices and fallout for Drill 1<sup>st</sup> aid or a number of other classes, later we would fall back in for prayers and formal dismissal. The Seniors would stay on for P.E, Darts and Snooker etc. It would be at these informal parts of the evening that friendships could flourish.

We also met on Monday evenings for band practice, we had a silver band and I was keen to join. Over the years I tried several instruments, cornet, Symbols, drum and Euphonium. I recall I was not very good but persistent and I still play an instrument. We practiced throughout the year and were able to play at many engagements.

This looking back is of course only a very brief glance at what took place in the company, there were also entering the competitions, "Drill P.E, Drafts Scripture etc." I recollect that at one time or other our company had won most of them.

The Highlight of our year, and the one that took most planning, was the annual camp at Cowfold held over the Whitsun weekend. It was from Friday to Monday with advanced and rear parties, occasionally it would be for a week I think that all those who attended, Officers, helpers and guest speakers for the Sunday bible class would have taken away memories that would stay with them for many years.

The boys who were with me in the company are now men of advanced years and I wonder how many of them look back at their time in The Boys' Brigade and how it may have influenced their lives.

**Editor**

## Guest Chaplain's message

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"I recently received this poem from my friend Terry Mitchell who was the captain of the 29th Bton and who has some great memories of Glynde camp. I hope you are blessed by it.  
Regards Rev Bryan Pickard

### "Laurel Leaves"

Straining every sinew, reaching for the line  
hoping for the pennant at tent inspection time.

Up with the reveille, walking through the mist,  
Among the trees that form God's house, Oh what perfect bliss!

Every team is trying hard and each day hears the score  
We'll have to try much harder or it will only be a draw.

And what prize do we run for, what will be our crown?  
A simple wreath of laurel leaves, from a tree cut down.

And what will be his reward for the part that he has played?  
A single leaf, signed with pride, one he'll never trade!

But that was oh so long ago, he's much older now.  
His knees are stiff, his body aches and sweat runs down his brow

And what of that laurel? Not one but two he has,  
Gently kept, stored with care, to remind him of the past.

But laurels fade and crumble however hard you try  
To keep them, even in a jar, on a shelf up high.

One day someone will find them as they clear away his treasure  
And they'll wonder why he kept them, how could they give such pleasure?

All but brown dust mouldering shapeless and forlorn  
Filled with happy memories, waiting to be reborn!

On laurel leaves won at Boys' Brigade Glynde camp and stored for years, now in an old honey jar!

Terry Mitchell,  
ex 29th Brighton.

## **110 Years since the Death of our Founder**

### **SIR WILLIAM A. SMITH**

Reproduced below is the forward to the funeral arrangements (a B.B. Archive publication).

While preserving such information might be considered by some as unimportant, or unnecessary, nevertheless it is interesting to read and consider the logistics of organising the detailed funeral arrangements that not only had to be drafted but printed and widely circulated within the space of a few days.

When looking back on history decades later, the importance and impact of people and events is often not fully appreciated. The huge turn-out to witness Sir William's funeral procession is something of an indicator of the high regard in which he was held. The sudden death of Sir William Smith was met with great shock and sadness throughout the British Empire. Not only was William Smith recognised as the Founder of the Brigade, he was acknowledged as 'the pioneer of youth work'. His vision in establishing The Boys' Brigade gave birth to many forms of youth organisations including Scouting. Accordingly, at the time, Smith's passing was considered a great loss to the wider society.

Earlier that fateful week Sir William had travelled to London to attend the Annual Demonstration of the London Battalion being held in the Albert Hall. Later, on 8th May 1914, while attending a meeting of the Brigade Executive, Sir William was taken ill and collapsed. He was rushed to St. Bartholomew's Hospital where, two days later, he died without regaining consciousness. The cause of his death was cerebral haemorrhage. The loss of Sir William Smith, in his sixtieth-year, was a huge blow to the Movement of which he had been so heavily involved in developing since its foundation in 1883. A telegram of sympathy, sent by the King to the Brigade President, Lord Guthrie, was followed by other tributes from numerous public figures.

The Brigade quickly arranged a Memorial Service in St. Paul's Cathedral, on 15th May 1914, attended by leaders of all the uniformed organisations and representatives of Church and State. Following the Service at St. Paul's, Sir William's body was ceremoniously transported by train from London to Glasgow for the Funeral Service in the College and Kelvingrove United Free Church - his home Church. Following the Funeral Service the huge cortege travelled the three-miles to the Western Necropolis, where his body would be interred - a route that would have been familiar to Sir William. It was estimated that over 164,000 members of the general public lined the streets to bid farewell and show respect to the Founder of The Boys' Brigade.

. J.N.C.

(Source: B.B. Archive publication No. 8)

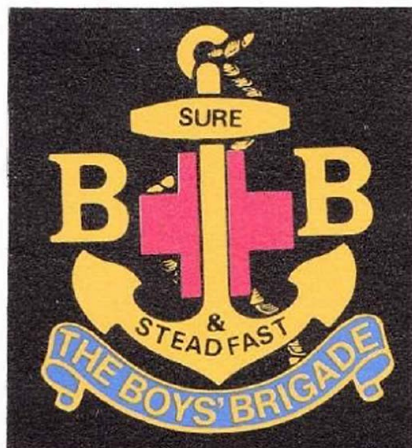
## The Boys' Brigade on Stamps – Nigeria

The last stamp issue of Centenary Year was from Nigeria, but this was not an issue for the centenary. The issue commemorated the 75th Anniversary of the Boys' Brigade in Nigeria, where BB work started in 1908. There were three stamps in the set: 10k, BB boys saluting the Nigerian flag 'National Awareness' 30k, BB boys working in the fields 'Towards Increasing Food Production' and 45k, BB boys working on a car engine 'Skill Training' - article. Articles with permission from Rob Kinnon-Brett (Manchester Stedfast Association)



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

14th OCTOBER 1983



75th ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE FOUNDING OF THE  
BOYS' BRIGADE IN NIGERIA



The Boys' Brigade on Stamps – Samoa

On 10 October 1983 the small pacific island of Samoa (formerly Western Samoa) produced a single stamp to mark the Centenary of the BB.

The stamp features a flag party, with two of the boys wearing the lava-lava, a traditional skirt worn by men on the island. You will notice the white stripes on the caps worn by the boys.

The Boys' Brigade came to Samoa in 1940 and has since spread from there to nearby American Samoa.



## 9<sup>th</sup> STEDFAST GAMES 2025 *Kuala Lumpur*



Dear Stedfast Comrades,

Greetings to all of you from Stedfast Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA and my name is Michael Yei. Currently, I am the President of Stedfast Kuala Lumpur (SAKL) and we were formed in 1995. Hence, we will be celebrating our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year in 2025 with many events lined-up.

Some of you may have heard or participated in the Stedfast International Convention which was initiated by Stedfast Singapore and it then went on to Perth Australia, followed by Manchester, England and then, travelled back to Kuching, Malaysia before it made it unexpected last stop which was Christchurch, New Zealand.

With the “demise” of the Stedfast International Convention after Christchurch, we, Stedfast Kuala Lumpur initiated the bi-Annual “Stedfast Regional Games” with Stedfast Kuching and Stedfast Singapore back in 2007.

Since then, it has been renamed to just “STEDFAST GAMES” in 2015 with the main objectives to accommodate more interested Stedfast Associations who are keen to participate and it has grown from 3 to now 6 Stedfast Associations namely, STEDFAST Penang, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, Kuching, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Just before Covid-19 pandemic, the 7<sup>th</sup> STEDFAST GAMES was hosted by Kuching Stedfast in 2019 and London Stedfast did send their representative. And after Covid-19, we resume our bi-Annual Stedfast Games last year in 2023 and Hong Kong Stedfast hosted the 8<sup>th</sup> STEDFAST GAMES. They invited MACAU BB as guest participants.

*The 9<sup>th</sup> STEDFAST GAMES will be hosted next year by Stedfast Kuala Lumpur from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2025. And all host Stedfast Associations MUST organise the 6 compulsory games which we called “Anchor Games” and they are as follows :*

- 1) Badminton
- 2) Basketball
- 3) Carrom
- 4) Dart
- 5) Futsal
- 6) Table Tennis

And there is a “Free Throw Basketball” Novelty event for ages :

- (a) above 60 years old and
- (b) above 70 years old

*Continued on next page*

For the 6 Anchor Games mentioned above, there are COMPULSORY rules to cater for above 40 and 45 years old. So, it would not be a case of the young challenging the seniors!!

By 2025, this STEDFAST GAMES will have been 18 years old and the competitions all these years have been a lot of fun, bonding and fellowship amongst Stedfast members in this region with lots of food too. After the Competition. Prize Giving and Closing Ceremony, the host Association will organise a City Tour for all our guests.

Financial wise is very easy and straightforward, since we started back in 2007 when Kuala Lumpur initiated this STEDFAST GAMES. Whoever is the host for the STEDFAST GAMES, not only they do NOT charge any fees for participation, the host must also provide the :

- (1) Welcome Dinner
- (2) All Tournament Expenses like venues, facilities, referees, medals, drinks, food, etc
- (3) Closing Dinner

So, ALL PARTICIPANTS be it players or non players / supporters, they will only need to pay:

- (1) Their own air fare to the host country
- (2) Their hotel accommodation which the host will arrange near the games venue at a discounted price.
- (3) Their own pocket money and shopping.

Hence, any Stedfast Associations are most welcome to join us and participate in the 9<sup>th</sup> STEDFAST GAMES hosted by Stedfast Kuala Lumpur from Friday 27<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2025. They can either participate in any of the 6 games or even all the 6 games OR just to observe and support and be ready for the 10<sup>th</sup> STEDFAST GAMES in 2027 !!

For all of you, I would say, this is the right time to come to Malaysia by virtue of the strength of your Stirling Pound currency to Ringgit Malaysia. Every single thing here in Kuala Lumpur will be so cheap for all of you.

So, please feel free to contact me, Michael Yei at [mikeyei@gmail.com](mailto:mikeyei@gmail.com) or you can WhatsApp me @ +6016-3077 003. I will be most happy to answer any of your questions.

Meanwhile, you can check our website : [www.stedfastkl.org.my](http://www.stedfastkl.org.my) and PLEASE HELP TO CIRCULATE TO AS MANY PEOPLE THAT YOU KNOW. If they are the Secretary or President of their SA, please let me know also.

Thanking you in anticipation for your support and understanding. God's blessings to all.

Yours Stedfastly,

Michael Yei

President

Stedfast Kuala Lumpur

+6016-3077003



## Vice President; Geoff Fitch

My Journey – so far

I think it would have been 1956 or 1957 when I joined the Life Boys' with my Mates from Hornby Road in Lower Bevendean. Billy Dean, Alan Rollings and I would catch the 111 Southdown bus to Hartington Road, which was the stop for Lewes Road Congregational Church. I don't know why I joined. My Mum and Dad were not church goers but my Grandma Heasman was, having worshipped most of her life at Gloucester Place Baptist church.

The three of us enjoyed our time in the Life Boys under the leadership of Bert Hussey. Ian Sayers and Hilary Webber (later becoming Mrs. Adrian Ball). When the time came we all progressed to the Company section when we started to attend Bible class on Sundays as well as parade on Friday night, which was basically drill. If you achieved perfect attendance at Sunday morning bible class you received a BB Bible. I eventually got my bible but it took a few years. I remember the rule that if you didn't attend bible class you couldn't play football the following Saturday. I loved football, although I was never very good so this was a bitter pill.

I liked the badge work and attained badges for Camping, Wayfaring, Arts and Crafts (Judo & Fencing), the Fireman badge, Swimming and First Aid. I think I was one or two short to get a Queens Badge. In the 60's the battalion was strong with a large number of companies, the strongest being the 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and us, the 13<sup>th</sup>. We thought we were the best but I'm sure the 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and a good few others thought the same.

My home life was somewhat difficult so the B B was therefore an outlet for me and I found my father figure in Ted Benham, one of the greatest men I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. Even now, as a man in my late 70's I sometimes think 'What would Ted Benham have done'. I have written about my times at Glynde camp before so will not repeat them here.

I married my wife of 47 years and we bought our first house in Selba Drive, Moulsecoombe in 1977. We both had good jobs for Reuters News Agency in Fleet St and were soon able to move to a new house in Ringmer, where we lived for 27 years. I acquired a liking for Ringmer from spending many happy years at Glynde camp. Our house was a little over a mile away from the camp site.

Although we were well settled in the house, finding a church was not so easy. St.Mary's is a very popular parish church but I have never been one for the Anglican way of doing things. There was also the Ringmer Free Church run by Brian and Pauline Middleton, a couple who owned a small haberdashers shop in the village. Brian was another man who I looked up to. I always said he was a man who didn't just talk the talk, he walked the walk. It was a nice congregation but it never felt like home the way that Lewes Road did. We met in the village hall and it never quite seemed right so we attended the URC in Lewes for a few years where I became reacquainted with Geoffrey Whitfield, who I remember from St.Andrews and Mousecomb school. Geoffrey had retired and was living in Lewes. During this time we decided that it would be nice to attend Lewes Road but as it was a long way we would go once a month.

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After 27 years of living in our lovely house in Ringmer, I started to get problems with my knees. We decided that we should move to a bungalow but bungalows in Ringmer were few and far between. So in 2011 we decided that it didn't much matter where we lived. It could be a nice bungalow almost anywhere. Our preferred location was Seaford and we short listed three nice properties there. Unfortunately, as we took almost 9 months to sell due to our purchaser messing us about we lost all three and had to renew our search. We found our bungalow in Stone Cross, in 2011 a dot on the A22 between Eastbourne and Hailsham, now much larger. Having moved some 14 miles from Ringmer and 23 miles from Brighton we again had to think about where we would worship. Like Ringmer, Stone Cross has a very vibrant Anglican church and having tried it once, we didn't like it. We decided to try a few local churches and I had first pick. I suggested we try the Elim Pentecostal church as our leaders in Israel were both Pentecostal ministers. I remember the sermon. It was about getting into the deeper water (of faith).

The second week, Pearl said she would like to try the Salvation Army. We were greeted by so many people and made to feel welcome we felt at home. We helped in the Rebourne Centre, a day centre for the homeless and I drove the mini bus twice a week to bring people to the lunch club. We were blessed with great Majors (Leaders) in David and Linda Squirrell, followed by Ivan and Liz Oliver. After Ivan and Liz received their new posting to Dudley in the West Midlands we had a series of short term appointments and a long period without anyone. Without leadership we felt it was maybe time to move on.

On our frequent trips in and out of Eastbourne we noticed that a new church was being built in Upperton Road. Emanuel Church is an amalgamation of 4 local churches. Two URC and two Methodist, all of which have been sold to finance the new building. The new church opened in August last year and we gave it a try after it had been open a couple of weeks. We were made to feel welcome and we love it there.

To conclude this journey of faith from Lewes Road URC to Ringmer Baptist, Lewes URC, The Salvation Army and now finally Emanuel we feel we are back home. Each church and each leader has been there to guide us on our path. I've meet some new friends at Emanuel who were in the BB. One was an Officer in the 10<sup>th</sup>. Throughout my life I have trusted the Lord to guide me. He has always been there for me. Sometimes I feel lucky but when I think about it, I have prayed when big decisions have had to be made. I thank God for the people who have helped me along my path and been my mentors. I thank God that he has always led me to where I needed to be.





## The next Newsletter will be Winter 2024/25

Please submit all contributions as soon as possible, before the end of **December 2024**  
(electronically or typed if possible)

To Terry Pomfrey 148 Mile Oak Road Portslade Brighton BN41 2PL.

Email; Pomf3es@virginmedia.com

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## Welfare

Please let me know if you are aware of any of our members who are unwell or in need of Support. We will try and help  
(Contact Alan Caperon)

**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 Poulter's 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*  
*(cheque's payable to the Stedfast Association)*