



West Anglia Steadfast Association Newsletter

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In This Issue

- Welcome
- 1st Bletchley 80th birthday
- 2nd Bedford 50th Anniversary
- GIANT SLEEPOVER 2006
- Newport Pagnell Amicus 10th Anniversary

Regular Features

- "I remember the good old days in BB when..."

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Any items or opinions displayed in the newsletter are that of the individual and do not represent that of the Editorial Team or The Boys' Brigade.

Welcome to the fourth edition of West Anglia Steadfast Association

The West Anglia Battalion consists currently of eleven active companies from Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes. This relatively new battalion was formed by a merger of the old Bedford & district, Luton & district and Milton Keynes Battalions in 2001.

This newsletter hopefully will be an effective way to stay in touch with current & former officers, helpers and ex-members and aid to form a Steadfast Association.

The main aim being to **"Further the Object of the "BB" and to foster the spirit of comradeship between past and present members of the Brigade and to render service to others."**

1st Bletchley 80th Birthday

What a great few weeks we had in September - celebrating 80 years of 1st Bletchley. It was a great opportunity to meet old faces, to re-ignite distance memories, for old members to meet current members and to promote both the Girls' and Boys' Brigades in our local area.

On the 23rd September we had an ex-members memory evening. This took the form of numerous displays of memorabilia, a short photographic presentation of old pictures and of course great food and conversation. The presentation took the form of a huge projection of old photographs - using modern technology to display a mix of old press cuttings, company events and members. Just prior to this event we also persuaded a few old members to get together for a band practice - this was amazingly good and in tune! Because of this we are now considering getting everyone together, possibly for an event during the summer of 2007.

During the same weekend as our ex-members evening, we also had a Sunday morning Celebration Service and Enrolment. Once again this was attended by both old and new members - some with several generations from the same family. It was a great opportunity for our church (Spurgeons Baptist) to see the 1st Bletchley Companies through the years.

Tuesday 26th September was the evening for our current members to celebrate with fun, games and an 80th birthday cake. Games for all ages were arranged followed by a fish and chip supper (how do you remove the smell of 50 portions of chips from a church building?!). This was a real fun party that I am sure we will remember for some time.

Then finally on Saturday 30th September we had a family fun day at the Water Eaton Church Centre. This again was attended by ex-members, current members, members of our church and also many other people from our local community. The focus of this event was a huge outdoor

"I remember the good old days in BB when...working for badges and at the end of your life as a Boy, having an array of badges to show"

**Alasdair McFarlane
Captain, 23rd Luton**

**If you "remember the good old days in BB when..." contact us!
[contact details can be found on the front page]**

climbing wall, a couple of bouncy castles, a coconut shy, numerous table top games, a very popular home made cake stall and of course a candy floss machine! Throughout the whole 80th celebration period we also sold tickets for our great balloon race. In total we then released 250 helium balloons into the skies of Milton Keynes. We are still receiving them back at the moment - with one even reaching Belgium! (several did only make it into the garden adjacent to the release site though!!). We will soon be announcing the winners of the competition and be presenting them with either a dvd player, some Tesco vouchers or a nights stay in a local hotel. What a great day we had!

And so that was our 80th celebrations at 1st Bletchley. All in all it was a great success and we are now thinking about keeping up a regular newsletter to all those that made contact with us - along with arranging several other reunion events next year. If anyone would like to hear more about what we did - or would just like some tips on arranging a mammoth event like this - then please feel free to make contact with me : Geoff Bond, geoffbond@hotmail.com , 07775 797902.

Geoff Bond, 1st Bletchley

*Do you have any questions current or past BB wise?
Contact us and we will try to answer your questions*

2nd Bedford's 50th Anniversary

Sat 23rd Sept: We started the build up with a trip to Woburn Safari park (joint BB/GB) for school years 1-6. All thoroughly enjoyed it, especially when the Monkey broke the aerial off our bus!

Fri 29th Sept: The Jubilee weekend started with a meal at The Barns. 4 captains past and present were there, including John Taylor 'JT' (our 70's Captain). We started with a Quiz of the last 50 years, making use of modern technology (PowerPoint and projector). The winning team consisted of a current member of staff (Andrew Ingram) and an ex-Queens man (Nigel Spratt). The meal was much enjoyed.

To round off the evening we were treated to a new song from JT. It recollected his time as Captain during the 70's (and will be included in our Jubilee book – out in 2007)

Sat 30th Sept: The much awaited Legends Football v 'current boys' match took place at Biddenham Upper School. This was the first time the company had tried to array a collection of 'ex-stars' and followed a conversation some months ago of just who was the best 2nd Bedford Footballer. One or two of these where unable to attend, and so the Legends called up a couple of 'sons' to help when the weary legs kicked in later in the game. We needn't have worried as the Legends powered at a 15-4 victory. We plan a re-match in a couple of year's time.

Dates to note
Sat 24th Feb:
Oasis Beach
Pool, Bedford
(The Big Splash
Returns!)
6:30 - 7:30pm
Tickets will be
£2 each (with
under 5's free)
Via Allan
Tresidder, 2nd
Bedford

125th
Anniversary
Special Event @
Bedford Corn
Exchange Sat 8th
November 2008
(pencil this date in
your diary's, more
details to follow)

If you have any dates
to note for inclusion in
this newsletter,
contact us!

Sat 30th Sept: In the evening, we hosted, The Golden Display.

Following hot on the heels of our May display and with only 3 weeks back from the start of the session, it was ambitious of us to even attempt such a display.

We welcomed Mr Steve Dickinson, The Brigade Secretary, as our special guest.

Mrs Hewitt had made a special cake and we welcomed Mr Frank Moss, a Life Boy leader from that first session 56-57 to cut the cake with three of the current membership (who won their respective sections merit cups).

We then asked Mr Dickinson to seal a time capsule, which contained memories and items from the past 50 years.

All the sections performed items, and the highlight being a BB Rhapsody (to the tune Bohemian Rhapsody). Written by Mr Ingram, it contained the history of the company. Some of the boys were given inflatable guitars and one lad definitely has a career in rock music ahead of him. ! The song finishes with the words 'BB really matters to me' This was a phrase that The Brigade Secretary picked up on as he addressed the boys in his speech.

It was great to see the old boys willing to join in the items, and the 'band reunion' was excellent. Totally unrehearsed, they played 3 pieces of music to perfection. Well, we did train them well at 2nd.

We finished by presenting special anniversary badges & a bible to every member. And then having a time to reflect and chat (which went on for a good couple of hours!).

I later found out that a lad from our first night was there amongst many others from the late 50's...

Sun 1st Oct: Both the Brigades joined in with the morning service at Brickhill, something that due to historical reasons, we have not done since the early 1990's.

Mon 2nd Oct: We took 75 children (school years 1-6) to Kids World, Bedford, where they climbed, clambered and slid all over the equipment for a couple of hours. A chance to let their hair down after the 3 weeks practicing for the display.

Tues 3rd Oct: Officers enjoy a night off ...

Allan Tresidder, 2nd Bedford

You old Boys!

- Do you have any BB stories you would like to share in this newsletter?
- Are you looking for any of your old mates or colleagues?

Why not write or email in to us to include in the next edition!



Burning Devotion (BD)
is a monthly
alternative youth
service for 11-25
year olds.

BD is held at
Kempston East
Methodist Church
usually every 4th
Sunday of the month
at 7:45pm-9pm

With our resident
band



the worship band

The next BD will be
on

Sunday 28th January

More information can
be found on the BD
website on
www.loadstar.org.uk/bd

GIANT SLEEPOVER 2006

23 boys and 4 staff from the West Anglia Battalion took part in the Giant Sleepover 2006. The Battalion event was held at Priory Methodist Church, Bedford, home of 3rd Bedford Company. From arriving at 7pm on the Saturday night, the boys were kept busy with a variety of activities before settling for the night.



Andrew Burchell (20th Luton) & Colin Watts (3rd Bedford) with Junior Section lads collecting the award from the BT tower

On the Sunday morning we just finished breakfast in time to take part in the Aquafresh Minty Mouth Challenge, before finishing our sleepover with Church Parade. The group raised £976.80 for through sponsorship for Childline.

We were surprised to learn that our group raised the most money for Childline, and so were invited to attend the Giant Sleepover Award at the BT Tower on 12th October. We were only able to take four boys, so those who had raised the most money were invited to attend. The party consisted of Joshua Scrutton and Tyler Esnard (20th Luton), Grant Hayward (1st Flitwick) and Adam Stevens (3rd Bedford), accompanied by Andrew Burchell (20th Luton) and Colin Watts (3rd Bedford).

We travelled up to London by train, arriving bang on time at the BT Tower. After drinks and biscuits we went into the auditorium for the presentations. As President of ChildLine, Esther Rantzen was supposed to be handing over the certificates, but unfortunately she was taken ill.

After the presentations we were invited to the 34th floor where we had lunch in the revolving restaurant, looking out over London on a beautifully clear day.

The Boys' Brigade were well represented at the awards, the 1st Stevenston Company's World Cup theme won them the award for the Best Themed Sleepover.

Overall, the Giant Sleepover certainly lived up to its motto – Fun, Friendship and Fundraising – and set two new world records: the biggest simultaneous sleepover and the biggest simultaneous toothbrushing!

Next year's event is on 17th June. You can find out more at www.giantsleepover.com.

Andrew Burchell, 20th Luton

Seniors & Amicus Meeting

The first meeting for the Senior & Amicus (S&A) meeting was held on Friday 27th October 2006 at Flitwick Methodist Church. There were various topics of discussion including discussions about the battalion senior's competitions, battalion website and S&A Council.

What came from this meeting, was a call for a Seniors weekend away. This is planned sometime towards Easter 2007.

Watch this space for further updates!

Rob Ciantar

Development Officer

Up-to-date information on the Battalion Champions' Cup Competitions and Scores is available via the battalion website

<http://westanglia.boys-brigade.org.uk>

Newport Pagnell Amicus 10th Anniversary



Well, it's hard to believe that Amicus in Newport Pagnell has been running for 10 years. In that time we have seen some amazing things happen with the young people that have been through the group. We celebrated this anniversary by organising a reunion event which comprised of a service of praise, worship & sketches, followed by food and entertainment in the form of a live band made up of Amicus leaders and members past & present.

Here are some interesting facts & figures from the last 10 years: -

- Number of Baptisms 14
- Number of Marriages 7
- Number of Births 4 (leader's babies)
-

We are still a strong group and undertake projects within the church and community, as well as taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, and we are looking forward to taking the next generation of Amicus members through their teenage years.

Mark Nicholls, 1st Newport Pagnell

Battalion Champions' Cup Scores

| (As From 02/12/06) | Senior | Company | Junior | Anchor Boys |
|---------------------|--------|---------|--------|-------------|
| 1st Bletchley | 1B | 18 | | |
| 2nd Bedford | 2B | 31 | 52 | |
| 3rd Bedford | 3B | 18 | 48 | |
| 1st Flitwick | 1F | | 11 | |
| 1st Harlington | 1H | 14 | 50 | |
| 1st Kempston | 1K | 32 | 12 | |
| 15th Luton | 15L | | | |
| 20th Luton | 20L | 29 | 48 | |
| 22nd Luton | 22L | | | |
| 23rd Luton | 23L | 29 | 13 | |
| 1st Newport Pagnell | 1NP | 15 | 14 | |