



It's FAB!

The Newsletter for Friends of Ayr Battalion Issue 78 January 2020

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a Very Happy New Year and wish good health and happiness for everyone in 2020. This will be a special year for Friends of Ayr Battalion as come September we will be celebrating our 20th Birthday. Being a member of Friends of the Battalion generates additional income for Battalion funds and helps ensure that we are in a position to provide the best for the Boys in all our Companies so thank you very much for your continuing support.

Battalion Council Update

Given the rather damp conditions which we have experienced this autumn planned exterior painting work for the Headquarters building has had to be postponed until next year. New members are continuing to join Friends of the Battalion but sadly a number have passed away during the past year. It is hoped to raise awareness of Friends and Council agreed to purchase more of the FAB buttonhole badges as supplies of them had run out. Boys from 1st Alloway, 2nd, 7th and 8th Ayr plus 1st Prestwick Companies had represented the Battalion selling poppies before Remembrance Sunday. During their shift in Ayr's High Street the Boys collected £754 so well done to all of them. On Remembrance Sunday the Battalion was represented at the Ayr War Memorial by Captain David Brown of 2nd Ayr and the 1st Girvan, 1st Prestwick and 1st Troon were also present at their local War Memorials for Remembrance Services. In addition Past Captains of 2nd Prestwick and FAB members Philip Craig and John Inglis sounded Last Post and Reveille at St Quivox Church Ayr, Kingcase Church Prestwick, Prestwick War Memorial (twice), the Polish War Memorial at the RAFA Club, Glenburn Cairn in Prestwick and lastly at the service in Biggart Hospital in Prestwick. It is good to see a Brigade presence at all these events as all too often today's youth gets bad press.

Anchor Boys

The Colouring-In Competition this year will feature a picture of Moses and these have been issued to Companies. The Anchor Boys Games Afternoon will be held on Saturday 15th February and I am sure that the Boys will have a great afternoon. The next Anchor Boy Meeting will be in Headquarters on Monday 17th February.

Junior Section

Eleven teams from eight Companies took part in the Junior Section Football Competition at the Old Racecourse in Ayr. First was 1st Troon, second were 1st Prestwick and third 1st Alloway. At the Battalion Swimming Gala on Saturday 30th November the Junior Section Relay for the Bryce Knox Trophy was won by 1st Prestwick A Team, second was a joint team from 1st Alloway and 1st Troon and third were 1st Prestwick B Team. The overall Junior Section placings for the Jakeman Trophy were first 1st Prestwick, second 1st Troon and third 1st Alloway.

Company Section

The Company Section Football Competition was held along with the Junior Section Event and the result were first 1st Troon, second 8th Ayr and third 2nd/4th Prestwick. At the Battalion Swimming Gals the Company Section Relay for the Dr Lee Memorial Trophy was won by a combined team from 1st Alloway / 4th Ayr / 1st Prestwick, second were 1st Alloway and third a combined team from 1st Alloway / 17th Ayr. The Alloway Cup for Best 11/13 year old was

won by Lewis McCarrell of the 1st Prestwick, the John Cunningham Award for best 14/15 year old was won by Ryan Hillier of the 1st Alloway and the Bone Medal for the best 16+ year old was won by Boyd Wilson of the 1st Alloway. The overall competition for the Wyburn Trophy was won by the 1st Alloway with 1st Prestwick second and 4th Ayr and 1st Troon joint third.

8th Ayr Company Holiday Weekend

Twelve Junior and Company Section Boys plus seven Officers from the 8th Ayr (St James) Company went on an activities weekend from Friday 30th August to Sunday 1st September. They went to Lapwing Lodge Outdoor Centre (near Paisley) which is owned by the Scout Association with transport being provided by mini-buses hired from South Ayrshire Community Transport. Unfortunately on arrival at the Centre it was raining and this continued overnight until Saturday morning. This caused a change in the schedule of activities which had been planned for the Saturday but luckily the weather did improve for the rest of the weekend. The range of activities undertaken by the Boys were climbing wall, escape room, sumo suits (wrestling), frisbie golf, kayaking, raft building, carpet bowls and a scavenger hunt. The Boys also enjoyed games of football and tag rugby. A most enjoyable weekend was had by all present and the Company are happy to recommend the Centre to other Companies.



The rafts built



Tag rugby



The end of the weekend!

Smith Memorial Museum Update

I had mentioned in the last issue of the newsletter that Anne and I raised over £500 at our Golden Wedding celebrations to allow new LED lighting to be installed at the museum and I am delighted to be able to report that this work has now been completed.



John and Anne Inglis handing their donation to Captain Geddes of the 1st Thurso Company.



The new lighting installed in the museum

In addition to making the museum much brighter the new lighting enhances the material which is on display. There have been many visitors to the museum since the summer and all left impressed by the range of memorabilia which was on display.

Another major addition to the museum came in the form of a table gifted by the congregation of St John's Wood Presbyterian Church in London on the occasion of the Jubilee of 1st London Company on 23rd November 1935. This has been gifted to the museum by John Russell from Poole and joins the rest of his collection of memorabilia held by the museum and fittingly it is situated in front of the display of badges and medals donated to the museum by him. This large badge display was constructed by Ayr Battalion Past President John Inglis and has received many positive comments from visitors to the museum (see photo of cheque handover).



The table received from John Russell



The table in its new home. Incidentally the cut out figure is of John as a Sergeant.

Over the winter months I have been continuing to digitise many of the photographs held by the museum. We now have a catalogue of some 3,000 images which are fully indexed to allow easy retrieval if needed. This work will continue for some time to come and I am also hoping that some of the Battalion's own photographic archive can be included in it. I have been asked by Captain Geddes to convey thanks to the Battalion for all the work they have done and continue to do in the museum.

Did You Know?

Following publication in the previous issue about the Boys' Brigade rose readers were quick to respond with full details about this particular rosebush. First up was a reply from John Pritchard, editor of the Boys' Brigade Heritage Society's newsletter, to advise that it can be seen in the Boys' Brigade Garden within the National Memorial Arboretum and is recorded by the RHS. Next was a more local reply from FAB member Ian Lamberton who had a border of them in his previous house in Springfield Road, Ayr. He did lift a few when he moved house and still has one waiting to be planted out in the better weather if and when it comes. He did provide a link at <https://www.rosesuk.com/roses/boys-brigade> for further information and thought that his roses had been supplied by Cockers in Aberdeen.

Lastly through chance looking through a copy of Centenary Year in Pictures which I am sure everyone has a copy, towards the end of the publication I discovered a photograph of Marshal of the Royal Air Force, The Lord Cameron, naming a new deep red floribunda rose 'The Boys' Brigade' at the National Rose Society's Exhibition on 8th July 1983. So there you have it. Not only proof that your newsletter is being read but that it can also provide the answer to Boys' Brigade questions.



Marshal of the Royal Air Force naming the BB rose.

Thought for the Day

Amongst the many items which have passed through my hands recently was a copy of the London Stedfast Association's newsletter Onlooker dated from sometime in 1985. In it were six verses with no title which I have called "Skipper." There was no author quoted for this article but if you recognise it and know who the author was I will be happy to include recognition of his work in the next issue.

"Skipper"

*It was an autumn evening
The Skipper's work was done.
He sat down for a well earned rest
Counting blessings one by one.*

*He thought of all the faces
Who'd gathered through the years
And remembered many heartbreaks
- The hopes and joys and fears.*

*He looked through fading photos
And snaps from long ago.
The lists of many youthful names
- These men he'd helped to grow.*

*Now some had left the district
But still they kept in touch.
In their own way they loved this man
For them he'd done so much.*

*And some were lost completely
They'd each gone their separate way.
He'd never know how they turned out
But he prayed for them each day.*

*And some had joined Christ's Kingdom
Their names were in his heart.
The Boys' Brigade had done it's job
- Skipper had played his part.*

A Final Note from the Editor.

I am always looking out for pictures or stories about Company events and if you have any material available please pass it to me at the E Mail address below. Thanks.

Your points of contact for all the information you would like to see included in, or deleted from this newsletter or any comments about it are as follows:

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