

Isolation Brings Life-Changing Encounters With God



Isolation. It is a word we have heard a lot in recent weeks. When we commenced Boys' Brigade last September, no one could have imagined the year ending with parade nights, annual displays and other events cancelled, officers and members living in isolation.

Unlike school, Boys' Brigade is a voluntary organisation and I am satisfied we acted at the right time – just before the closure of schools – when we suspended all activities. That decision was not taken lightly but in the interest of all our members, officers and their families. Our thoughts are with those who have lost loved ones.

We were not the first people to find ourselves isolated and without things we find familiar. In Genesis 32, we read how Jacob sent his wives, sons and servants to the other side of the river with all his possessions. 'So Jacob was left alone...' (v 24) but it was during this time of isolation that he had a life-changing encounter. He wrestled

with God until daybreak and was so broken he walked with a limp forever but it was through this process that he discovered his true identity. 'Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel...' (v 28).

Until now, the word isolation carried negative connotations for most of us: separation, segregation, loneliness. But I hope you have discovered that there can be just as many positives in moments spent alone: time and space to be still, to reflect, to embark upon or renew your relationship with Jesus. Elijah discovered God not in the wind, the earthquake or the fire but in the gentle whisper that followed. Strange though it may sound, I am grateful for the period of isolation and opportunity it has brought for life-changing encounters with our sure and steadfast God, the anchor in every storm.

Yours in Boys' Brigade,
 David Blevins
 Northern Ireland District President

Congratulations to 1st Greenisland

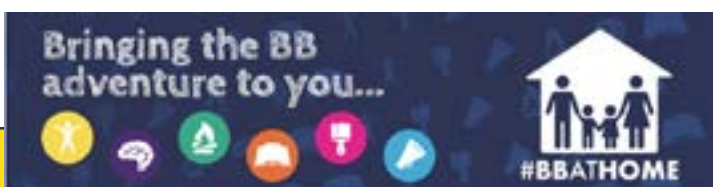


Congratulations to 1st Greenisland 'A' team who were the winners of the National Top Team Challenge 2019/2020. L-R: Jakob McComb, Joshua Rayot, Josh McKinney and Aaron Douglas who all attained their Queen's Badge this year as well. They are pictured here all dressed up for another occasion at their BB Company night, just before social distancing measures were introduced.

NID AGM: 14/09/2020
 At Newport • 7.45pm

**BRIGADE CONFERENCE
 '2020 & Beyond'**
 05/09/2020 • Birmingham
 More info and book online at
<https://bit.ly/BBConference20>

Subject to change depending on government guidance social distancing.



<https://bit.ly/bbathome>



Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, face to face meetings with over 40,000 children and young people in Brigade across England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and ROI were suspended until 1 June 2020, subject to review following Government guidance. In response BB at Home was promptly launched on Friday 20th March 2020 to help Companies and members continue do BB from home and provide something they could pass the time doing.

BB at Home provides interesting, fun and challenging weekly activities attractively presented for all ages to learn, grow and discover; covering all the various components of the usual balanced BB Programme: Get Active, Get Learning, Get Adventurous, Get into the Bible, Get Creative, and Get Involved. Full details of the BB at Home Programme can be found at <https://bit.ly/bbathome>

FREE WEEKLY ACTIVITY PACKS
FOR ALL SECTIONS
WITH BADGES, COMPETITIONS
& DEVOTIONALS

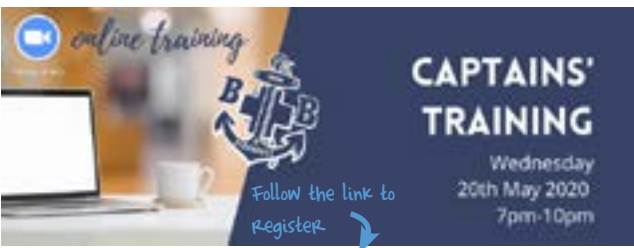


2ND BALLYNAHINCH
Even though they could not meet up with their BB members, as usual on a company night, due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the Leaders posted a reminder on their Facebook Page to their members of our BB Motto from Hebrews 6v19.

Please keep sharing what you are doing #bbathome

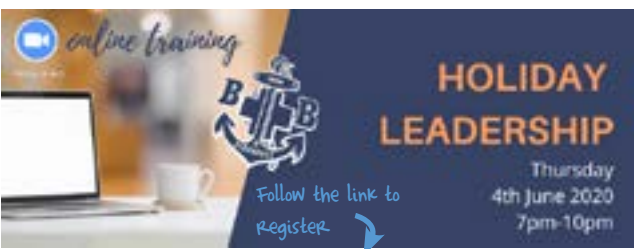
NID Training Continues Virtually!

Following a successful trial of running Holiday Leadership online we have two more virtual sessions on Zoom planned for May and June. If you have any queries please email: david.penney@boys-brigade.org.uk



CAPTAINS' TRAINING
Wednesday 20th May 2020 7pm-10pm
Follow the link to register

<https://bit.ly/Capt20520>



HOLIDAY LEADERSHIP
Thursday 4th June 2020 7pm-10pm
Follow the link to register

<https://bit.ly/holiday4620>

Staying Connected - Virtual Sessions

Brigade has produced some guidance for Leaders connecting virtually with their members. Please check this out at: <https://bit.ly/stayingconnected2020>

Continuing Queens' Badge Whilst Social Distancing

We have produced a PDF resource for Queen's Badge Advisors, Captains and Young People for guidance on how to continue with their Queen's Badge work during Covid-19. This will be emailed to Queen's Badge Advisors, and is available to download from our website at <https://bit.ly/ContinuingQB>

Queen's Badge Celebrations!
292 young men achieved their Queen's Badge this year. We could not meet up as planned in Belfast's City Hall on Thursday 9 April to present our Queen's Men with their certificates and give them the celebration they deserve. Instead we marked the occasion with a virtual celebration video, released on social media with a congratulatory message from our President David Blevins - you can view it here: <https://youtu.be/rpwmuBQvBA4>

A commemorative programme and certificate will be sent out to all the Award Recipients in due course.

Thanks to all those who took part in the Special Thanks video for key workers and those who have entered BB's Got Talent.



Commonwealth Day Service



Boys from 1st Knocknamuckley BB attended this year's Commonwealth Service in Westminster Abbey to represent The Boys' Brigade in NI: Josh Gracey, Noah Davison and Jamie Davison. Commonwealth Day is an annual celebration observed by people all over the Commonwealth in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Americas, the Pacific and Europe. The theme was 'Delivering a Common Future', highlighting how the 54 member countries in the Commonwealth are 'innovating, connecting and transforming' to help protect natural resources and boost trade.

ANCHORS PROJECT
2019-20



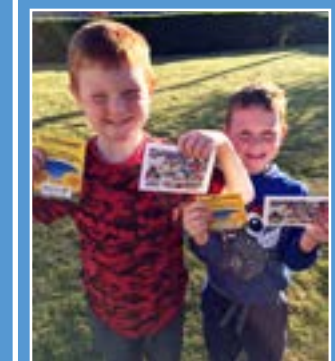
The Anchors Project for this session was Angel Eyes NI which seeks to improve the lives of children with a visual impairment in NI. If you have collected money throughout the session for the project please forward this to NIHQ by 31 August 2020. Please see page 4 for the various payment options available to you at this time when staff are not working from the office at Newport. Thank you all in advance.

#BBATHOME - 4TH DROMORE



Setting up a Pop Up Restaurant was one of the activities for the Company Section and Seniors in week 5 of BB at Home. One of the Anchor Boys from 4th Dromore was very taken with this idea and set up a Pop Up Restaurant for his mum at home.

#BBATHOME - 7TH BALLYMENA



7th Ballymena Anchor Boy Leaders posted sunflower seeds to their Anchor Boys, encouraging them to plant the seeds and compete to see who grows the tallest flowers along with cards with this message:
'So as you can tell we are all thinking about you during this time. We have enclosed a packet of sunflower seeds so that we can have a competition to see who can grow the biggest one! The GB have also taken up the challenge, so let's see if we can grow bigger ones than them lol.'

More from BB at Home!



Art Competition on theme 'Life to the Full' - John 10:10
We want to see loads of entries from BB in NI! Enter by 29 May 2020. Full details at https://bit.ly/bbathome_art

19/20 SESSION REVIEW
by Sharon Mackey, JS Chair

SWIMMING GALA - Congratulations to 1st Muckamore who won the Gala, held in Roe Valley Leisure Centre, Limavady at the end of February. Medals were won by boys from a good number of companies.

SPRING COMPETITION – STOOL BALL 5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL
Congratulations to all the Junior Sections who won their Battalion heats and were planning to compete in the Finals of these competitions. All 13 Battalions were due to be represented in both finals, but unfortunately we were unable to run these due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and the cancellation of all BB events.

BB AT HOME - Please take a look at the activities which are being provided on a weekly basis and share these on company websites and Facebook pages. Weekly devotions for Leaders, Under 11s and Over 11s are also available to download.

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20/21 Dates for your Diary
Subject to change depending on government guidance on social distancing at the time.

JUNIOR SECTION OFFICERS' CONFERENCE
Saturday 7 November 2020
Sloan Street Presbyterian Church Halls, Lisburn

Quiz
First Round Friday 22 January 2021, 7.30pm
Final Saturday 6 February 2021, 2.30pm

MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR
Saturday 9 January 2021

SWIMMING GALA
Saturday 27 February 2021

SPRING COMPETITION – CHALLENGE EXTRAVAGANZA
Friday 15 & 29 January and Friday 12,19, 26 February
Final – Saturday 20 March 2021

5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL COMPETITION
Saturday 24 April 2021
Battalion entries due by 29 March 2021

** Please note there are a few differences to our normal annual dates.*

#BBATHOME

Thumbs up for 4th Newtownabbey Juniors who held their Annual Camp 'with a difference' - camping out whilst social distancing in their own back gardens - some of their family members joined in too!





GOD'S PROMISES

PRAYER POINTS:

'I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.' Psalm 57:1

Heavenly Father we thank you for being the great protector. We pray for courage, resilience, patience and understanding until the Coronavirus is no more. We trust you for healing. We give thanks for healing and protection.

We pray for all our key workers - keep them safe as they go about their daily lives, working to serve others - where staying at home is just not an option for them. Grant them courage and your peace which passes all understanding. We pray Lord that you would supply all their needs at this time.

We pray for our UK Government and the NI Executive at Stormont. Lord move among them that they would be guided by you as they decide how to lead us in the midst of this pandemic. We pray for wisdom and insight to make the right decisions that honour the truth, that honor the weak, the poor and those most in need.

We pray for our land and the world; that there would be new beginnings, with a fresh revival, that all hearts and minds would be on fire for God.

AMEN

New Funding Scheme Update



A new funding scheme for Regional (NIHQ) and Local Voluntary Youth Organisations (BB Companies and Battalions) was launched early 2020. Initial registration for the funding opened in Jan 2020 with a deadline to apply of 3 March 2020. We communicated this extensively at the time to Companies and Battalions on social media, a special e news edition and in the March/April NID News.

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic things have since changed. EA announced that funding for the 20/21 year would be continued based on previous funding and issued a new set of deadlines to work to.

Generic Non-Targeted Funding. BB Companies and Battalions are eligible to apply for this funding stream. The level of funding you may receive is based on the hours of programme delivered and average attendance of young people. You can use this funding as a contribution to your running costs such as heat and light, insurance and programme materials.

To account for the funding you need to provide an income and expenditure form and complete the Engagement Framework usually by 30 April every year.

EA is currently saying applications should be submitted by 28 August at 4pm.

Even though the application deadline is now 28 August, and that might seem some way off, please don't delay and proceed to complete the following as soon as possible:

1. Registration for the funding
2. The funding application

Both the registration and the application may be completed online but there is paper versions available too if necessary.

Full details may be found at <https://eani.smapply.org/>
If you need help please email alison.irvine@boys-brigade.org.uk

NIHQ Payment Options:

1. Paypal – www.paypal.me/bbnewport - **please note this is our preferred method of payment at the moment whilst NIHQ staff work from home.**



Our caretaker Nigel is working hard during this time of temporary closure at the centre sorting repairs, getting on with some painting and of course the ground maintenance in readiness for bookings and hopefully more great weekends at Newport in the not too distant future. Richard is happy to take provisional bookings for the Autumn and progress on the basis of government guidance at the time.
email richard.nelson@boys-brigade.org.uk



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W: www.bbni.org.uk



Follow us on our social media channels too!

Next NID News - Due out September 2020
If you have anything you would like considered for inclusion please email

alison.irvine@boys-brigade.org.uk by

Mon 27 July 2020



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.

