



# *It's FAB!*

## *The Newsletter for Friends of Ayr Battalion Issue 101 October 2025*

### **Battalion Update**

Welcome to the first Newsletter for this session and our 101<sup>st</sup> edition. Last session we celebrated reaching the milestone of our 100<sup>th</sup> edition and had a total of 84 members joining. It is now that time of year where your annual membership is due for renewal and we have kept the fee as last year at £15 per person. A renewal form is also included with this newsletter. It would be great if you could reach out to others who could be interested in joining

The Executive Committee of the Battalion have met this session already. One of the main decisions was the external work required at our Headquarters building, as we have dampness evidence in both internal fireplace walls. Quotes ranged from £5400 to £6900 to replace the existing roof coverings, which would have meant having to apply for grant funding. A local roofer suggested that they could do repair work at a cost of £470, so it was agreed to get this done meantime. They completed this work on 15<sup>th</sup> October and are confident that this should resolve any further issues. We will look at the internal fireplace walls next spring, to review this properly.

We have decided not to have a Thanksgiving service this autumn, due to low attendance for the last two years. We will be collecting again for the Poppy Appeal in Ayr Town Centre, Prestwick Town Centre and Heathfield Retail Park on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2025 from 11am until 1pm. It is good to support this worthwhile cause again. We will also be represented at the Cenotaph during the Service of Remembrance in Ayr on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November. We hand out orders of service and lay a wreath on behalf of the Battalion.

This session we have two fundraising events planned. Santa's Sleigh in Ayr Town Centre, probably on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2025. Also looking to do this at an earlier time than last year, to hopefully raise more money. Also looking at having a race night in March, with further details to follow. A lot of FAB members supported our quiz night earlier this year so hoping they can do the same next year at our race night.

Next year the Battalion will be celebrating our 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, when we hope to have some events to celebrate this. More details to follow nearer the time.

We are also going to meet up sometime with representatives from both East & North Ayrshire Battalions. This will look at our current arrangements of sharing activities plus look to the future, where we could consider having one Battalion for Ayrshire.

In this issue we highlight the achievements of some of our Company Leaders at the South Ayrshire Awards Night in June. We also pay tribute to Graham Law, former Treasurer and Supplies Manager who passed away at the end of last year. We have also included the new process of registering a Leader in the Boys' Brigade nowadays. They must be fully registered with the Boys' Brigade and be fully approved in the PVG scheme, before they can start volunteering in a Company. In the next issue we will introduce a Company Spotlight feature, giving readers a chance to find out what happens in a Boys' Brigade Company nowadays.

## **South Ayrshire Volunteer Awards Night**

South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership and Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA) held this awards night in Ayr Town Hall on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2025. This is to recognise the service of people who have had many years of service in the voluntary sector. The two categories of award are twenty-five years and forty years. The Battalion nominated several Leaders for these awards, as detailed below. We wish to pass on our congratulations to them as they all thoroughly deserved this recognition for volunteering in the Boys' Brigade locally. The Award winners are pictured below, but some couldn't attend due to other commitments.

### **40 YEARS**

David Brown, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ayr Company  
Gillian Hay, 8<sup>th</sup> Ayr Company  
Ian Queen, 17<sup>th</sup> Ayr Company  
Pat Simpson, 1<sup>st</sup> Prestwick Company  
Elizabeth Donald, 1<sup>st</sup> Troon Company  
George Powell, 1<sup>st</sup> Troon Company

### **25 YEARS**

Margaret Graham, 17<sup>th</sup> Ayr Company  
Ellen Peden, 1<sup>st</sup> Coylton Company  
Sam Gilmour, 1<sup>st</sup> Prestwick Company  
Carrie Lamont, 1<sup>st</sup> Prestwick Company  
Tom Simpson, 1<sup>st</sup> Prestwick Company  
Gillian Kerr, 1<sup>st</sup> Troon Company  
Agnes McKinnell, 1<sup>st</sup> Troon Company  
Ian Nicoll, 1<sup>st</sup> Troon Company



We hope that these Awards nights will continue in the future, thus giving us a chance to nominate more Leaders, once they have completed these years of service in the Boys' Brigade.

## GRAHAM LAW

We take this opportunity to remember Graham Law (Honorary Officer), who sadly passed away in December 2024.

Graham was an Officer in the 9<sup>th</sup> Ayr Company (Wallacetown Church) when Alex Somerville was Company Captain. He then started helping in Ayr Battalion taking on the roles of Battalion Treasurer and Supplies Manager. When he moved to England the Battalion appointed him as an Honorary Officer, in recognition of his hard work and dedication in these roles.

He was also a keen supporter of FAB, especially as he stayed down in England, this keeping him up to date with the Battalion for many years. You will remember that he submitted various articles in FAB Newsletters during 2022 & 2023, regarding the history of our Supplies depot, for which he was very instrumental in getting started.

The priority was to establish a headquarters building for the Battalion, which he did successfully with help from George Courtney, George Smith & Margaret Grassom. This involved a strategic plan which had to be approved at an EGM. The building was at 8 Limekiln Road, Ayr and required a lot of work, as the previous tenant had left in a hurry. Thanks to the Law and Courtney families and many others this work was completed successfully. Also, with the additional help of grants applied for by Graham. Thereafter the Supplies depot was then approved, stocked and then opened for trading. All the profits from the Supplies depot covered the running costs of the Headquarters, which unfortunately is not the case nowadays.

It is testament to the work that Graham and others started that we still have our headquarters building and still run a supplies depot on Saturday mornings during the year. He visited a few years ago (probably before Covid) and was delighted that we kept the Supplies depot going plus also the work carried out at that time to headquarters to ensure it was of a good standard.

He is missed by many, his family, but also by George and May Courtney as they had become friends for many years.

## New Safer Recruitment Process

**From 1st June 2025, The Boys' Brigade will manage the process for the appointment of new leaders, including taking up references and the PVG check** (which has been in place since May last year).

This new Safer Recruitment process will involve (after a conversation with the applicant determining their suitability and willingness to be a leader):

- **The applicant** completes parts 1 to 4 of the [LREG1-SCOT form](#) and sends the reference request link (see info below) to their two referees.
- **The Company Captain/Correspondent** completes part 5 of the form and then sends it to the Congregational Safeguarding Coordinator of the associated Church.
- **The Congregational Safeguarding Coordinator** arranges for part 6 to be completed and signed by the Minister or Session Clerk and returned to the Company Captain/Correspondent. The affirmation of the nomination should be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the Kirk Session.
- **The Company Captain/Correspondent** is responsible for returning the completed LREG form to BBHQ.

- **Checking Identity:** Identity documents belonging to the applicant will need to be checked by the Company Captain/Correspondent or Battalion Secretary/President/Vice-President/Treasurer and a [PVG ID Checking Form](#) completed.
- **BBHQ** will then support the applicant to complete and submit the PVG Scheme membership application.
- **BBHQ** will ensure that all steps of the Safer Recruitment process (which also includes mandatory Safeguarding & Managing Risk e-learning modules) are successfully completed before the applicant is approved as a leader.

## References

The applicant must provide the details of two referees on the LREG form (part 4).

- Referees must be over 18 years.
- Referees should not be family members, and the two named referees should not be related to each other. In addition, the Captain/Correspondent completing the Company Nomination should not be a referee.
- Only one referee can be a current BB leader, or member of the Church leadership team. Best practice is both referees are independent of BB and the Church.
- Referees should know the applicant well, for a minimum of two years.
- They should understand the role that the individual is applying for and that they will be working with children and young people.

**The applicant is responsible for contacting referees and asking them to submit the reference request online**

Thought this may be of interest, detailing the many processes required to get a new Leader registered. It should take approx. 4-6 weeks to get completed from start to end, this including the applicant completing the two online modules and the PVG application, which is also online.

## Thought for the Day



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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