

the **GIRLS'**
BRIGADE
ENGLAND & WALES



Winter 2023 round-up



A winter round-up of news and stories
from Girls' Brigade England & Wales

New CEO for GB Ministries

GB Ministries has appointed a new CEO – Judith Davey-Cole.

Judith started working in December and replaces Jules Murdy in the role. Judith is an experienced CEO who brings a wealth of experience. She's passionate about empowering girls and women, has a strong strategic approach and networking skills which will be key for the role moving forward. She's also very experienced in safeguarding and is current Chair of the Methodist Church's Safeguarding Committee.

Judith replaced previous Director Jules Murdy, who retired in January. Jules was



Director for 6 years and, before that, was Chair of the Trustee Board between 2012 and 2017, a trustee between 2009 and 2012.

Hayley scoops under 30s award

One of GB's leaders and trustees has been recognised as one of Lincolnshire's 30 Under 30.

Hayley Flint, from 4th Lincoln community group, attended a special reception and photo shoot at the Lincoln Museum, organised by The Lincolnite and MyLocal. The event, which is in its fifth year, aims to celebrate youth, innovation and community spirit in the county.

There were 191 nominations across Lincolnshire, taken down to 30 by a panel made up from sponsors of the event. Hayley was one of 13 women on the list. Previous winners include music prodigies, entrepreneurs, and professional athletes.



A bio shared about Hayley says 'Outside of her full-time job, Hayley's commitment to community service is exemplary. She became a member of the 4th Lincoln Girls' Brigade at age 7, progressing to a young leader at 15 and eventually a full leader. She completed the prestigious Queen's Award and has volunteered for the

Esther Generation Weekend, a programme aimed at discussing hard-hitting issues like gender justice and mental health stigma. Hayley's commitment to these causes led her to parliament, where she was invited for International Women's Day and also presented findings on a research project focused on mental health and loneliness.'

GB represented at carol concert hosted by Princess of Wales

GB Team Leader Carolyn Graham represented Girls' Brigade at a carol concert, hosted by HRH Princess of Wales, at Westminster Abbey.

Carolyn, of 1st Sutton, attended the prestigious event on the evening of Friday 8 December – the service was designed to thank those who support babies and young children, the youngest members of our society, such as GB's **n:vestigate** age group, and are therefore shaping the society of tomorrow. The carol concert was also broadcast on TV on Christmas Eve.

Carolyn says 'I was very privileged to be invited to represent Girls' Brigade. The theme for the service was Together at

Christmas and a heartfelt thank you to everyone across the UK who supports the very youngest members of our society. The Abbey was decorated with Christmas trees donated by the King from Windsor Great Park.'



A remarkable service to GB

Bristol District and 37th Bristol celebrated the GB service of GB Leader Julia Traill before the summer as she received her 50 years service to GB award.

GB leaders make a huge impact on those around them and Amy, a Leader at 37th



Bristol, recalls her memories and times spent with Julia at GB.

'When I first met Mrs Traill nearly 40 years ago I think it's fair to say I was a little frightened. She was a stickler for your uniform being present and correct and she saw and heard everything. Real old school, but who held a sense of respect.'

'Over the years I came to get to know Mrs Traill, Julia, and I can say she's an amazing GB leader. She's hard on the outside and soft in the middle.'

We're so honoured to have volunteers who give up hours, days, weeks, and even years to Girls' Brigade and thank Julia for all she's contributed to GB.

1st Leyton members share what GB uniform means to them

Four **n:counta** members from 1st Leyton have been involved in a project called Material Witnesses. The project used fashion and textiles to explore identity, community, sustainability, and spirituality. The 12-year-olds were interviewed about what their GB uniform means to them. Here are some of the things the young people shared:



Amaya: 'I think it's just how friendly everything is, and how everyone makes you feel welcome. When I first joined, it wasn't that hard for me to make friends, it was almost instant!'

Emily-May: 'I think it's a bit necessary to wear the uniform because it kind of represents our family as it is, we are definitely a family!'

Jumana: 'To me, when I hear the word faith, I think about religion and I think about Islam 'cos that's my religion. Faith also has other meanings, so 'have faith in me'. Do the people around me have faith in me? And am I surrounding myself with good people? It doesn't feel weird to be coming here as a Muslim.'

Alfiya: 'And the leaders make us feel comfortable, like they don't leave us out because we're Muslims. They include us.'

GB volunteer receives Coronation Champion award

A Girls' Brigade volunteer from Leeds has been awarded a Coronation Champion award.

Margaret Martin, Vice President of Leeds District received the award as part of the Coronation celebrations.

Only 500 awards were given out across the country and we were thrilled to hear that Margaret received one for her outstanding commitment to volunteering.



District Team Leader Julie Roper says, 'So deserved! Ever since I can remember, Margaret has volunteered with one organisation or another – Girls' Brigade, Foodbank, Forget me Not Trust, dementia cafe, white rose initiative, the list goes on – not to mention the ad hoc care for people in the local community. Always doing the hard graft week in week out but never taking credit. A true role model for all GB girls and leaders.'

A new chapter for 1st Hurstpierpoint group



A local Girls' Brigade group celebrated its 88th anniversary last year – and also moved from Hurstpierpoint to Burgess Hill.

In July, past and present members of 1st Hurstpierpoint spent a very special weekend celebrating 88 years of GB in the village and an important milestone as the group closed, ready to re-launch as 4th Burgess Hill.

There was an afternoon tea on the Saturday with memorabilia, photos from the group's history, and many stories shared.

On the Sunday, a service was held as they thanked God for 88 years and the 800+ girls that have been a part of the group, which has been a consistent feature of the Hurstpierpoint village in West Sussex, giving girls and young women a safe and fun place to be themselves and engage with the community.

At the service they also prayed for the group and leaders as they prepared to move, and Team Leader Margaret Taylor was presented with her 40 years' service award.

1st Timperley leader honoured in float parade

1st Timperley Girls' Brigade & 2nd Altrincham Boys' Brigade were thrilled on Saturday 1 July to be the first-ever winners of the Rosalinda Fazackerley Memorial Award for Best Float in Show, as well as the community trophy, at Altrincham Festival.

Altrincham Festival started in 1977 and, for 21 years, 1st Timperley prepared and entered a float. In 1998 it came to the end of an era, however, 1st Timperley Team Leader, Rosalinda Fazackerley, continued to serve on the Altrincham Festival committee.

In February this year, Rosalinda signed up the group for this year's festival when it made a return.

Unfortunately, on Easter Sunday, God had other plans for Rosalinda and she passed away. So in her honour, the group continued to make her dream come true... and with the Boys' Brigade on board, they created their own 'Secret Garden' dedicated to Rosalinda's wonderful life.



Life-saver honoured in Essex



A member of 1st Shoeburyness GB community group has been given an award for saving her brother's life in a swimming pool.

In 2019, Kyrea, now 13, saw her brother was in trouble in the swimming pool when they were on holiday. She didn't hesitate to jump in and kept his head above water until help came.

She's belatedly been presented with a GB Distinguished Service Medal (1st degree) awarded when a child/young person saves a life at risk of their own.

One of the GB leaders at Kyrea's group, Denise Douglas, says 'This was truly a very selfless and brave act at such a young age. Congratulations Kyrea!'

Girls' Brigade fundraising event for new community defibrillator in Fareham

If you look around you right now, you might see a fire extinguisher. But you may not see a defibrillator. When the 1st Fareham Girls' Brigade leaders completed their first aid training course this year, they learned that defibrillators should be as common as fire extinguishers, cared for and readily available.

At their recent first aid course, after learning about the importance of the defibrillator, the leaders were told to check an app for their nearest one, and as a church on a busy dual carriageway – the nearest two defibrillators were a car ride away.

The Girls' Brigade group, led by Wendy Townrow, set out to get a local defibrillator to fill in the gap and began thinking about how to ensure defibrillators are



in more public spaces. The girls hosted a cake stall and gathered donations from local businesses and grants from town councillors.

The money raised was put into a new local defibrillator in May that closed the gap between the available defibrillators on the busy dual carriage road. The group is running familiarisation sessions to help educate others and raise awareness for the importance of local defibrillators and how to use them in an emergency.

GB Team Leader scoops community spirit award

The Team Leader at 1st Hawkwell GB group has been recognised for her 25 years plus of volunteering with a community spirit award.

Sally Claydon was given her award by Rochford District Council as part of their Citizen of the Year 2023 Awards.



Grace says 'I am so proud of my wonderful Mum, who was celebrated for all her years of volunteering for GB. For more than 25 years she's dedicated her time to equipping, empowering and championing girls and young people, providing them with life-long memories, experiences, and opportunities.

The award was presented to Sally's daughter Grace, also a Leader at the group, at a civic dinner on 10 March 2023 – sadly Sally wasn't able to attend.

'It was an absolute honour to collect this award on behalf of my Mum. She absolutely deserves it, and I'm so proud to be her GB teammate and daughter.'

Awards aplenty for 1st Wallsend leaders

Two of the volunteers at 1st Wallsend have been recognised for their work with Girls' Brigade.

Leader Jean Trewick was awarded an MBE in the King's Birthday Honours 2023 and Team Leader Pamela Fender won a local newspaper's community hero award.

Jean, 63, was nominated for the MBE for services to voluntary organisations, including GB.

As well as GB, Jean, who is a Business Management Lead for the Department for Work and Pensions, has been involved in supporting charities through her job, has volunteered several times in Nicaragua working at feeding programmes for children and self-funding care packages

for patients in a maternity hospital, and she helped build a school in Zambia in 2009 with a group from GB and Scouts.

Jean nominated her fellow volunteer, Team Leader Pamela, for an *Evening Chronicle* Community Hero Award. Pamela was one of 20 local heroes chosen by a panel of judges to win a two-week Fred Olsen cruise to Scandinavia last summer.



GB represented at Coronation events



It was great to see Girls' Brigade represented at King Charles III's Coronation events last summer, with GB groups attending both the Coronation parade viewing and the concert at Windsor Castle.

GB members from 1st Laindon, 1st Hawkwell and 7th Brighton were invited, along with over 200 other young people, to watch the Coronation procession from a dedicated youth enclosure at Admiralty Arch. They had a front-row view of HM The King as he made his way from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey accompanied by the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, and watched the spectacular military procession on the return.

Madison and Poppy, 12, from 1st Hawkwell got up at 3.45am to travel to The Mall but both girls agreed it was worth the early start. 'This is a piece of history that I will be able to tell my friends and family about' said Madison. Poppy agreed adding 'this has been really fun and exciting!'

Members representing Girls' Brigade from 1st Burnham and 1st Uxbridge, along with Trustee Board members Carol and Sue had the honor of attending the Coronation Concert at Windsor Castle where they saw performances from Katy Perry, Lionel Ritchie and many more!

An **n:counta** member from 1st Uxbridge said 'The huge queues were worth it, and you got to meet all sorts of people while you were waiting. This, together with the fact that I was with my GB best friends, was probably my favourite aspect of the Coronation concert.

'Once the concert was underway, a highlight for the girls of 1st Uxbridge was, of course, the famous Katy Perry. We got not one, but two songs from her. Andrea Bocelli's *You'll Never Walk Alone* was just spine-tingling and the warm orange glow from our wristbands really set an incomparable mood.'



The Girls' Brigade England and Wales,
Cliff College, Calver, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S32 3XG
www.girlsbrigadeministries.org.uk



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