

From the Ministry Team

informing encouraging equipping



Special addition - Calendar-girlz

There are a few anniversaries coming up this year which you may wish to consider including in your IFG programme.

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❖ *10 June is Girls' Brigade's birthday.*

This year we celebrate 125 Years of Girls' Brigade Internationally and 90 Years of GB in New Zealand

So it is a big year for our parent organisation, the Girls' Brigade. At one of the roadshows IFG leaders were wanting to know about the history of Girls' Brigade. The information in the initial IFG leaders training pack is included here:

A Brief History of the Girls' Brigade



The beginning

It was a particularly cold Saturday afternoon in Dublin, Ireland and the girls of the Sandymount Presbyterian Church were practicing for the upcoming choral singing competitions. However the girls were finding it really difficult to sing through their shivers so their leader, Miss Margaret Lyttle, suggested that they should do some physical exercises to warm up, and this did the trick. The girls enjoyed doing the exercises so much that they asked if this could be included every week. One of the girls had a brother in The Boys' Brigade so suggested that their group could be called The Girls' Brigade. The year was 1893. This was the same year as New Zealand women won the right to vote in the Parliamentary General Elections.

Similar organisations were established for girls in Scotland (The Girls' Guildry) in 1900 and in England (The Girls' Life Brigade) in 1902. In 1964 these three groups amalgamated and became known as The Girls' Brigade.

Girls' Life Brigade Comes to New Zealand

The first Girls' Life Brigade Company (GLB) began at the Caversham Baptist Church in Dunedin in 1928. There is still a Girls' Brigade Company called 1st Dunedin there today (2018). On the roll of the founding members the name of the Sunday School attended is included. There were 2 Presbyterians, 8 Baptist, 10 Methodists, 1 Salvation Army and 1 Brethren.

The couple responsible for founding this GLB Company were Horace and Ada Grocott.

The Grocotts had spent five years as missionaries in Bolivia but the high altitude and the primitive living conditions had taken a heavy toll on their health and they were required in return to NZ bitterly disappointed but expecting in faith that God would open new doors for them. Horace had a real heart for providing positive recreational opportunities for boys in Caversham eventually opening a Boy's Life Brigade Company. With the boys now sorted Horace began to work on his wife, a quiet retiring person, to establish a GLB Company. Girls were also asking for a girls' version of the Boys' Brigade for themselves. You may be surprised to know that there was strong opposition from the ladies of the church who considered it unseemly for girls to take part in any sort of physical activities.



GLB National Council Dunedin circa 1935. Ada Grocott front row, second from right.

The Growth Years

Although she was not really a front line person, and it was actually her daughter who stepped into the role of Company Captain (Senior Leader), today we would describe Ada as having the gift of administration, and it was her dream to have GLB Companies throughout NZ. She spent much time writing and dispatching leaflets to churches, but it was two long years before a second Company was established. From then on the network expanded and in 1963 just before the amalgamation there were 368 Companies in NZ with 17,256 girls and 1,229 leaders.

Recent times

The number of Girls' Brigade Companies in NZ has been in decline in recent years, having reduced to 90 Companies at the time the new iconz4girlz programme was introduced in 2009; and down to 70 Companies by 2014.

iconz4girlz espouses the same aims and principles as GB and honours the pioneers of the movement by sharing their vision for the girls of New Zealand based on their motto 'Seek, serve and follow Christ'.



20 September is Women's Suffrage Day in NZ

This year we celebrate 125 Years of Women's Suffrage in New Zealand

September this year will mark 125 years since women were granted the right to vote in New Zealand. We have a badge for this and it depicts the symbol of those who supported the campaign - a white camellia. The written programme can be found in the Optional Programme book sent to your Unit at the end of last year. It is also in the Programmes section of Leaders Resources on the IFG website under Optional Programmes.

04 November - 100 years since the liberation of Le Quesnoy in Northern France by New Zealand soldiers.

*11 November - 100 years since the end of World War I.
(Armistice Day)*

The updated ANZACZ Badge programme has been completed and has been loaded under "Programmes" on the IFG website. It is lengthy, but designed for you to pull out the bits you want. Has ideas for one-session activities in the years you are not doing the actual ANZACZ Badge. Although Anzac Day is over for this year, on 04 November

there will be a BIG celebration in Le Quesnoy to mark 100 years since liberation of the town by Kiwi soldiers and 11 November will mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. No doubt you will find something in the ANZACZ programme to utilize - includes a special Le Quesnoy story, some new devotions and how to do drill.

