

THE GIRLS' BRIGADE SINGAPORE ANNUAL REPORT 2012

Reported by: *Charlotte Lee, Honorary Secretary*

The year 2012 saw the 85th year of Girls' Brigade in Singapore (GBS). The special year started with an exercise to rebrand and remodel ourselves in line with our core values; an intentional effort to align with our stakeholders and serve the community around us.

The new tagline for GBS from 2012 is "*Growing Girls, Becoming Leaders Beyond Generations & Borders*".

A HIGHLIGHTS OF 2012

1 *Installation of new Patron*

This year GBS also welcomed our new Patron when Mrs Mary Tan, wife of Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, President of the Republic of Singapore, was installed on 12 May 2012. We wish to acknowledge the contribution of our former Patron Mrs S R Nathan who served from 2007.

2 *National Competition 2012*

The Girls' Brigade Singapore is the first uniformed group in Singapore to embark on cheerleading as a national competition for all GB companies. Excitement filled the air on 17 March at Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School where the Creative Cheer Challenge 2012 was held. This was graced by Guest-of-Honour, Mr Chan Chun Sing, Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports.

Important values such as resilience and encouragement were taught and learnt throughout the competition as girls in high spirits cheered one another on and walked away with tears and trophy in hand, knowing that they did it!

Months of intensive training not only stretched the girls but also officers as everyone stepped out of her comfort zone to learn this brand new activity. The high energy on the competition day is deeply entrenched in the minds and hearts of all present.

Results were as follows:

Division	Award	Team Name	Company
Primary Small Division	Gold	St Margaret's Primary School	25 th
Secondary Small Division	Gold	Methodist Girls' School	1 st
Primary Large Division	Gold	Balestier Hill Primary School	72 nd
Secondary Large Division	Gold	Christ Church Secondary School	18 th

3 *Awards Ceremony & Trooping of Colours*

Awards Ceremony is an annual event held in recognition of the achievements of our GB companies. This year, the ceremony was held on Saturday, 21 April at Singapore Chinese

Girls' School. The Guest-of-Honour, Ms Ho Peng, Director-General of Education, Ministry of Education Singapore was ushered in by bagpipers from 45th Company.

In celebration of the 85th Anniversary of The Girls' Brigade Singapore, we also trooped the Colours. Carried by officers, the National Colours, Brigade Colours and 60 Company Colours flew high and proud as they marched to the beat of the music provided by the 3rd Company Alumni Fife Band. The Guard-of-Honour Contingent was made up of girls from 39 Secondary Companies.

Besides the regular awards, we were especially proud to present 15 Sustained Gold Awards to GB Companies which have sustained five or ten consecutive years of Gold Award ([Annex A](#)).

Company Colours were presented to 3rd P, 4th P and 75th Companies. Awards were also given for Brigade Fortnight 2012 our annual fund-raising event. The new Brigade Council 2012 – 2014 was dedicated at this ceremony as well

4 **85th Anniversary Celebrations**

4.1 Celebration Dinner

It was a memorable evening for the 1,000 guests gathered together to celebrate the birthday of a grand dame, our 85th Anniversary Celebration Dinner, held on 22 July at Raffles City Convention Centre, Fairmont Ballroom.

The dinner was graced by our Guest-of-honour, President Tony Tan Keng Yam and Mrs Mary Tan, our Brigade Patron. For the past 85 years, The Girls' Brigade Singapore has been focusing on advancing God's Kingdom through our work with girls and women. How apt it was then to have the celebration centred around our new tagline "Growing Girls, Becoming Leaders, Beyond Generations and Borders".

At the dinner, Ms Hee Piang Chin was also honoured for her 45 years of unwavering commitment to the organisation and for being an inspiration to many girls and officers. Ms Hee received a rousing standing ovation as she received the award from President Tony Tan Keng Yam.

To further celebrate this milestone, a series of 12 commemorative banners were unveiled. As the dinner drew to a close with the hymn "To God be the Glory", we truly praised God for His faithfulness and goodness these 85 years.

4.2 Thanksgiving Service

A total of 1,600 officers and girls attended the 85th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service on 17 November. The theme verse was taken from Ephesians 3:20-21 and the bible story of *Five Loaves & Two Fishes* was weaved throughout the service through worship, dances and a skit. Celebrating and making a joyful noise together with us were officers attending the GB Asia Officers' Conference in Singapore. Our Brigade Chaplain, the Rev Tan-Yeo Lay Suan gave a heart-warming and inspiring message. The service ended with everyone writing a personal note

of thanksgiving. These were collected and put into 12 baskets and brought before the Chaplains to be consecrated to God. A mini notepad depicting *Five Loaves & Two Fishes* was given to all girls and officers to commemorate this occasion.

5 ***Blessing the Community - GB Friendship Day***

The GB Friendship Day is GB Singapore's initiative to connect GB girls and officers to special segments of the Singapore community and to serve and befriend these people: the **L**onely, **E**lderly, **N**eedy and those with **S**pecial needs (LENS). This initiative was launched in 2011 when GBS played host to a lunch for 1000 LENS from the community.

This year the focus to reach out to the community culminated on 14 and 15 July 2012. Over 1,500 girls and officers from 47 companies worked seamlessly to play host to 5,000 needy elderly friends in celebration of the GB Friendship Day.

In partnership with Willing Hearts, a not-for-profit organisation that cooks and distributes meals to the needy, hundreds of GB girls whipped up lunch for our elderly guests, while others put up performances, served or hosted tables. The GB Friendship Day was graced by our Brigade Patron, Mrs Mary Tan on the first day and our Brigade President, Mrs Tay Poh Imm, the second day.

This project hopes to equip GB girls with skills through specially designed curriculum and for them to put into practice their learning through service. In the process, GB Singapore hopes the girls will also be able to demonstrate the values inculcated in the GB programme – values of humility, compassion, responsibility and service.

Earlier on from 28 Jan to 21 April, GB girls and officers were encouraged to set aside part of their lunch money in a Share Your Lunch Project to provide lunch under the LENS initiative. The project saw the girls learning to create savings boxes using recycled material and putting in what they had set aside. This project was also recognised and included in the Global Youth Service Day spearheaded in Singapore by TOUCH Community Services.

6 ***Other Brigade Events***

6.1 *GB Day*

GB Day was held on 16 July 2012. GB members turned up in GB uniform in the various schools to commemorate the Day as well as to hear the message from our Brigade President ([Annex B](#)) read.

6.2 *Chaplains Tea*

The objective of the BB-GB Chaplains' Tea is to thank our chaplains for their support and to dialogue about current affairs and future plans for the Boys' Brigade and the Girls' Brigade. It was also a time of fellowship and sharing.

The GB Brigade Chaplain, Rev Tan-Yeo Lay Suan gave the exhortation after a time of worship led by Mr Jonathan Tan, Assistant Chaplain of the BB and GB

companies in Church of Singapore. The Vice-President (Development) of BB, Dr Ho Yew Kee and the President of GB, Mrs Tay Poh Imm thanked the chaplains for their ministry among the boys and girls. The BB did a presentation on their work.

Ms Sandra Leong, GB Chaplain of 45th Company shared her experiences as a chaplain and how churches could be more involved in the GB ministry. After the Chaplains' Tea, it was encouraging to have some chaplains coming together to pray for the ministry.

6.3 Parades

6.3.1 *National Day Parade*

National Day Parade 2012 '*Loving Singapore Our Home*' saw 56 GB girls from 26 companies participating led by Contingent Commander Captain Yeo Yan Bing (65th Company) and Reserve Contingent Commander Lt Edaline Wee (47th Company). This year's "Majulah Moment" GB was represented by SSgt Esther Mak (1st Company) as 1st Flag Bearer and SSgt Joy Wong (71st Company) as 2nd Flag Bearer.

6.3.2 *Singapore Youth Festival*

Singapore Youth Festival 2012 '*Aspirations*' saw a participation of 37 GB girls from 21 companies. The contingent was led by 1st Contingent commander SSgt Amanda Tan (4thS Company) and 2nd Contingent commander SSgt Lau Kar Yin (6th Company). The 1st & 2nd Flag Bearers were SSgt Christina Koh (10th Company) and SSgt Joy Wong (71st Company) respectively.

6.4 Remembrance Day

On 11 November, members of the SAF Veterans' League, the Ex-Services Association of Singapore, Uniformed Groups and the public paid tribute to those who sacrificed themselves during the World Wars. A total of 46 girls from 5 Companies, accompanied by Mdm Tay Pei Inn (Teacher, 13th Company), Ms Melissa Sim (Volunteer, 38th Company), Ms Serene Tan (Teacher, 46th Company), Ms Eileen Wong (Officer, 62nd Company), and Ms Esther Ong (Programmes Officer, Secondary Programme, GBHQ) attended the ceremonies at the Kranji War Memorial and embarked on a learning journey "Reflection@WWIISG" which retraced the tragic story of the Fall of Singapore. A total of 24 WWII sites were visited by the Uniformed Groups that participated.

B Training and Development Programmes

7 Fast Food & Fuzz

In 2012, the three Fast Food & Fuzz camps organised were held at the GB Centre. A total of 30 primary companies were represented and 171 girls attended. The girls slept in self-constructed cardboard houses instead of air-conditioned dormitories, and meals were simple fare of porridge with preserved vegetables and peanuts.

The girls learned about fasting and indeed fasted from elaborate food and all fuss from their parents and domestic helpers. This allowed them to experience through simulations, the conditions children from third world countries face daily. Girls were

taught to appreciate and not take for granted the things they have, giving thanks in all circumstances and praying for people in needs. The camp size was also kept at an optimal size so that officers can interact with more girls.

8 National Youth Achievement Award

This year we saw an encouraging number of girls from various companies receiving the NYAA Silver and Bronze Award.

Company	NYAA Silver Award	NYAA Bronze Award
3 rd S	-	17
7 th	-	5
9 th	1	12
23 rd	-	6
26 th	-	7
31 st	19	-
34 th	4	-
55 th	-	9
61 st	9	14
69 th	15	-
71 st	-	4
78 th	-	4

9 Officers' Retreat

A total of 189 participants comprising Exco members, officers, volunteers and staff had a fruitful weekend at YWCA Fort Canning Lodge Singapore on 1 & 2 September. The theme of the retreat was 'Women of His Story'. GB leaders participated in various sessions to share the plans for 2013.

The first day ended with "Special Night" presented by the four zones based on the plans for Community Quest 2013. It was a brainstorming session as participants learned about health, empathy, bridging language gaps, through games and laughter.

The following day, participants had a vigorous workout and bonding through two teambuilding sessions at the retreat: Learning on the Move and Crisis Simulation.

10 Drill Instructors' Qualifying Test & Course (Officers and Girls)

The Drill Instructors' Qualifying Test was conducted on 14 January 2012. A total of six girls passed the test, moving on to the Drill Instructor (DI) Course, held on 11 February, to qualify as assessors. The trainees had to take up various activities/events such as BOTC, Corporal's Camp and Drill Camp as their National Projects. Upon completion, they were presented the DI Badge.

11 Drill Camp

The Drill Camp was held on 27 October to equip newly formed companies, as well as companies that do not have officers or girls to teach drill. Through this camp, we managed to standardise drill movements and companies benefited from learning new movements.

12 *BOTC/ Basic Officers' Drill Course (BODC)*

The Drill Committee conducted Basic Drill for BOTC trainees in February and August 2012. During the drill session, trainees were given basic drill knowledge. This allows them to be exposed to GB drill, even if they were from different Uniformed Group background. BOTC Trainees benefitted from the session and enjoyed themselves, experiencing the training their GB girls go through.

C Grants & Finance

13 *Flag Day*

The aim of the GB Flag Day was to raise funds to support the GB activities of our GB companies. Some 2,000 GB girls and officers participated in the GB Flag Day held on 3 March. High-spirited participants walked the streets with the distinctive blue sling bags. Thanks to the commitment of the participants and the generosity of the public, the island wide fund-raising event successfully raised S\$95,726. Everyone worked extremely hard both in soliciting and counting until late into the night. It was truly a clear demonstration of the community spirit among girls, officers, volunteers and GBHQ staff. This project saw friendship built, team spirit enhanced and GB alumni members reconnected.

14 *Brigade Fortnight*

Brigade Fortnight was held from 15 - 29 July. We are very thankful to all who donated and contributed to the collection of S\$631,532 to support the work of GB Singapore. Though we did not achieve our target of S\$700,000, we broke last year's record by 9.66%. We continue to look forward to more fervent support.

15 *Others*

We are grateful to the Ministry of Education for the Uniformed Group Training and Capitation Grants.

We also acknowledge with thanks a grant received from the National Population & Talent Division.

Our grateful thanks to all our GB supporters, partnering churches, parents of our members and well-wishers for their kind donations in cash and kind for our various projects.

D INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

16 *GB Asia Fellowship*

The GB Asia Fellowship (GBAF) Meeting was held from 23-24 August in Hong Kong, to coincide with the 50th Anniversary celebrations of Girls' Brigade Hong Kong. Present were representatives were from Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore. GBS was represented by Mrs Tay Poh Imm, Ms Evelyn Yip, Mrs Charlotte Lee

and Ms Chow Yuen Peng. Mrs Sally Chew, Immediate Past International Vice President of GBAF, and Ms Hee Piang Chin, Past President of GB International Council, were also present as advisors of GBAF and on the invitation of Ms Tnay Yong Hua, International Vice President of GBAF and Ms Pearl Chan, President of GB Hong Kong.

We had a fruitful time of prayer, discussion and training. Ms Hee Piang Chin conducted sessions on “Building Leadership Capacity”. The sessions were very well received and highly motivating.

17 GB Asia Officers’ Conference

“Growing Girls Becoming Leaders, Beyond Generations & Borders” was the theme for the 110 GB Asia Officers who came together to learn and bond with one another at the inaugural GB Asia Officers’ Conference from 13-17 November. They came from Brunei, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore.

Workshops and outdoor activities were conducted to the delight and enjoyment of everyone. We had the privilege of having Ms Seah Jiak Choo as our conference speaker throughout the whole conference as she drew many insights and wisdom from the Book of Ruth. Countries were also given an opportunity to showcase their country’s culture at the Cultural Dinner and Concert Night.

Praise the Lord for Mrs Evangeline Chong, Deputy Brigade Commissioner and her Committee for organising the Conference.

18 GB in Asia

GB Singapore continues to develop T-houses in Cambodia’s villages for women and children and the LifePlus Clubs, as well as work with the Methodist School in Cambodia on programmes and development of their girls in the GB Company in the school.

The Dr. Low Guat Tin Challenge supports 28 Cambodian children for schoolbooks, uniform, shoes and tuition; and the setting up of a dormitory known as the Susanna House. The Challenge Shield was awarded to 22nd Company, Wellington Primary School.

E MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

19 Membership

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
Girls	3,558	3,810	3,861	3,877	3,926
Officers, Chaplains, Teachers & Helpers	<u>547</u>	<u>543</u>	<u>557</u>	<u>583</u>	<u>614</u>
TOTAL	<u>4,105</u>	<u>4,353</u>	<u>4,418</u>	<u>4,460</u>	<u>4,540</u>
No. of Companies	79	80	80	81	82

20 Appointments

- We extend our welcome to nine newly appointed chaplains to 11 companies ([Annex C](#)).
- We congratulate eight officers who were given appointments as captains during the year ([Annex D](#)).
- We congratulate 28 officers who were promoted to the rank of Cadet Lieutenant and 22 to the rank of Lieutenant ([Annex E](#))

21 New Companies

We welcome two new companies, 85th and 86th Company which started this reporting year in Canberra Secondary School and Hougang Secondary School respectively; both sponsored by Faith Community Baptist Church.

List of GB Singapore Companies and membership can be found in [Annex F](#).

22 Meetings

The following meetings were held during the year:

Executive Committee Meeting	8
Council Meeting	4
Officers' Retreat	1
Executive Committee Retreat	1

F CONCLUSION

As we continue to grow girls to become leaders of worth in this society, beyond generations and borders, we are mindful of the distinctiveness of the GB ministry. There are five areas that mark our distinctiveness: Christian character of core values, holistic development of our fourfold programme, leadership development that encompasses mentoring, coaching, influencing lives and support, encouragement and bonding, our service to the communities and our gender-specific ministry. For these, we will continue to strive and not yield.

To God be the Glory!