



Hathern Band

Newsletter No. 4

Spring 2016

Andrea Steps Down

Andrea Allen has stepped down as Concert Brass musical director after six years in the post. After four years as Musical Director of Melbourne Town Band Andrea originally joined us in 2007 on principal trombone with husband Colin on baritone. The desire to return to conducting followed a year later with a short spell as Musical Director for The Melton Band before taking a maternity break. Andrea was then appointed Musical Director for Concert Brass in 2010.

An important aspect of our Concert Brass is that players who have graduated from the Youth Band continue to develop with the aim of eventually progressing to the main Band. In this Dave Newman and Andrea have worked closely together and the young players who have come through to the main Band are testament to the great support Andrea has given our up and coming musicians.

We are fortunate to have two great bands, and even though Concert Brass isn't a contesting band, its competence and quality has been obvious to all. This was confirmed in 2014 when Concert Brass came third in the unregistered section of the Leicestershire Brass Band Association Annual Contest.

We will all miss Andrea as conductor. Her engaging personality and amusing stories have added to our enjoyment of Concert Brass concerts. However Andrea will still guest with the Band on trombone, and Colin has joined the main Band on Bb Bass.



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Last Night of the Proms



Hathern Band played at the Kegworth Last Night of the Proms at St. Andrew's Church on 9 April. This annual concert is organised jointly by Shepshed Charnwood Rotary and the Church. This year the proceeds were donated to Diabetes UK. The programme included eight pieces performed by the Band for the first time.

The band started the evening with National Emblem, a rousing march written by Edwin Eugene Bagley. Dave Newman adds to the enjoyment of the performances by giving us snippets of information about music and composers, and told us that this piece was almost lost. The composer didn't like it and threw it into the bin, where it was retrieved by members of his band. Next came John Williams' Olympic Spirit, composed for the 1988 Olympics, and then some Mozart. Dave remarked that Mozart didn't write very much for brass bands, but some of his compositions work well for brass arrangement. Perhaps Amadeus could see into the future? It was the horn section which took centre stage to perform the second movement of the no.21 Piano Concerto.



Those of us of a certain age (OK, old) might remember a television programme, In Town Tonight. The Band performed Robert Farnon's Westminster Waltz - one of the pieces of music regularly featured. Then from the old to the new as the Band played perhaps one of its most modern pieces - Rey's Theme from Star Wars VII, which only came out last December. We have to thank Joe Southgate, our bass trombonist and percussionist for arranging this music for brass band. Life on Mars was a tribute to David Bowie, and the Band gave us Pharrel Williams' toe tapping Happy.

Sir Arthur Sullivan is probably best known for his collaboration with WS Gilbert, but was actually a prolific composer. The Band played The Lost Chord which Sullivan composed at the bedside of his dying brother. This was one of the first pieces of music to be recorded on Edison's phonograph in 1888. The Band then gave us two numbers by the leading brass band composer, Peter Graham – With Fire and Sword and Lady Stewart's Air. Then New York, New York. It's a well-known number, and I thought it was an old Frank Sinatra classic. Not so. It was written as recently as 1977, first recorded by Liza Minnelli before Sinatra's version two years later.



The next number was Kenneth Alford's xylophone duet, Two Imps. It was played by our two young imps, George Baum and Edward Hefferman making their debut "out in front". George and Edward have recently broken through into the main Band along with other youngsters Stephen Guerin and William Fairlamb (cornets). The audience gave George and Edward rousing applause for an excellent performance. Dave said the next challenge was for them to practise taking a bow!

Offenbach's Infernal Gallop from Orpheus in the Underworld - better known as the Can Can music came next. Then it was into the familiar Last Night of the Proms segment – Jerusalem, Fantasia on British Sea Songs (Dave made us sing Rule Britannia twice because we weren't very good), Pomp and Circumstance (Land of Hope and Glory) and the National Anthem. A great evening.

Farewell to Andy

Due to retirement plans, we're saying farewell to Andy McCormack who has played Bb bass in the main Band since January 2011. Andy currently works for Walkers Crisps but is planning to work share from next January to give him time for off road driving. Andy, who already trains fork lift drivers will be taking a British Off Road Drivers Association (BORDA) instructor's course. He'll be teaching people to drive a 4x4 across rough terrain, steep inclines etc.

Andy said " The highlight of my time with the Band was the 2011 national contest at Cheltenham and I've also enjoyed meeting up with old and new friends as you do in the band world." We wish Andy every success in the future.



Midlands Area Championship

The Midlands Area Contest took place on 12 March at Bedworth. Hathern competed in the First Section following last year's relegation from the Championship Section.

The test piece was *Essay* by Edward Gregson, a challenging piece commissioned as a brass band test piece in 1971. It is in three movements, the titles of which all have literary connotations. The first movement, *Dialogue* takes the form of 'conversations' between the instruments, based on the opening melody announced in unison on cornets and euphoniums. A second theme is introduced on the flugel horn and developed alongside this, creating a sonata form shell.

The second movement, *Soliloquy* is dedicated to the memory of Gilbert Vinter – a composer who did so much in the 1960s to bring the brass band into the modern world. The movement is poignant in mood, which is depicted by a cornet solo announced after a brief introduction. The middle section builds to a powerful climax, at which point the opening theme of the first movement is heard again. Tranquillity returns however, with a solo trombone now playing the original theme with other instruments adding decorative accompanying patterns.

The final movement, *Epigram*, creates strong rhythmic contrasts and exploits the more virtuoso character of the brass band. The middle section, with its changing time patterns and open expansive melody, suggests a 'big-country' style. A rhythmically charged coda concludes the work in exciting fashion.



In preparation for the contest, Duncan Beckley was asked to conduct the band for some practice sessions. Dave Newman said "It can be useful to have a guest conductor when preparing for a contest to get a different perspective." Duncan is a highly respected trainer, teacher, conductor and adjudicator and is Musical Director of Newstead Brass Band. He has a claim to fame as being the conductor of the brass band in the film *The Full Monty*.

4barsrest.com is the premier website for brass bands. Editor Iwan Fox made his predictions for the contest and felt it was a very open contest for our section, but identified Hathern as the dark horse. As to the band's performance on the day, 4barsrest said

There is a sense of style about the opening Dialogue with quality work from the trombones in particular. Rhythmic detail is good and the Musical Director is shaping the performance well leading to a driven conclusion to the opening movement.

The Soliloquy is both atmospheric and haunting with nicely controlled solo contributions and a glowing warmth to the band sound across all dynamic ranges. Tuning is good as we have heard today and the sensitivity and shading is finely done leading to a lovely close.

Epigram opens well and the higher end dynamics are kept well under control. The ending could be a touch bolder for us but there was a good deal to enjoy here.

Overall: A quality show from Hathern. Confident playing, expertly paced and delivered with accuracy and attention to detail.

In the end we were placed 5th out of 17, a highly creditable result. Dave Newman said

Initially the feeling was one of disappointment as, after the performance, we were fairly confident of a top three finish and a National Finals appearance. However, on reflection, any higher would have meant promotion back to the Championship section. We had a few changes for this contest with three excellent players coming in from Youth Band and Joe Southgate, a terrific percussionist moving on to bass trombone, so immediate promotion would have been a year too soon. Next year will be a different proposition!

Behind the Scenes

The Band is grateful to our supporters who help us out. Our volunteers can be seen providing refreshments, selling raffle and tombola tickets and manning stalls at concerts. We also have volunteers who aren't quite so visible and in this issue we feature Mike Hale. While the main Band is practising on Sunday and Tuesday evenings, Mike has been shut away in the back room. He has catalogued the extensive collection of music in a row of filing cabinets and repaired music stands and mutes.

Mike comes from South Kirkby in West Yorkshire, which is right next to Grimethorpe, home of the famous colliery band. He originally trained as a chef and worked for many years in the baking industry ending up as area manager for the Bakers Oven, which was acquired by Greggs. He moved to the Post Office and while working there 16 years ago, he started his own business, Knightthorpe Decorators. He learnt his skills from his grandfather in the days when you had to trim wallpaper edges and paint with distemper. Incidentally Mike and his son were two of the trades people who volunteered their services to Nick Knowles' DIY SOS when they transformed a home in Loughborough last year. Mike's lifelong passion has been football. He served 26 years as an official with Leicestershire and District Sunday Juniors League with many of those years as Chairman and has helped organise many football events.



Mike said, "We've been Patrons of the band for ten years and I offered my services. Lesley soon put me to work and when I've finished the current jobs, I know there will be more to do. I've really enjoyed helping out." Our thanks to Mike, and to all our volunteers. We couldn't manage without you.

Training Band

We have reported before on the success of our Training Band. We now have 32 youngsters learning to play and 8 have joined as a result of the publicity cards we distributed to eleven local primary schools. Another nine schools now have our cards and one, Oxley Primary in Shepshed invited members of the band to hold a music session for the whole school,



LBBA Spring Festival



Every year the Leicestershire Brass Band Association holds a Spring Festival Junior and Senior Solo, Duet and Quartet Contest. The junior contests are divided into age groups and it's a great opportunity for young musicians to get experience of competition in a friendly environment. Nine of our youngsters took part, most for the first time, and they performed brilliantly in front of proud parents and friends. How do they produce good sounds from instruments that are sometimes nearly as big as they are? Our Youth Band quartet of Amadeo Tristano (cornet), Sam Edwards (Eb bass), Jack Browne (Tenor Horn) and Oliver Simpson (cornet) took third place in the Junior Hymn Quartet with their rendition of Eventide. Well done to them and all our competitors. It won't be long before they'll be bagging some silverware.

Bass

As we've mentioned bass players in this issue, we thought we'd say a few words about their instruments.



The basses in the band are of two types: the Eb bass and the Bb bass. The Eb bass, is known as the tuba in an orchestra. Bases are the largest of the brass instruments and produce the lowest notes. There are many different patterns for these instruments, however the ones most often used in brass bands follow the upright pattern, constructed with four valves of the piston type. The Eb bass is pitched a fifth lower than the trombone or euphonium, and an octave lower than the horn. The Bb bass is the largest and lowest-pitched instrument in the brass band. It is pitched a fourth below the Eb bass and an octave below the euphonium.

As in any musical group, the role of the bass instruments in a brass band is to provide a foundation for the rest of the sound. An essential component of all good brass bands is a powerful bass section, which is sometimes felt rather than heard. The bass can be an effective melodic instrument, although solo bass passages are rare. The instrument isn't often used as a solo instrument, but some solos have been published over the years.

Our bass players in the Main Band are Andy McCormack, Colin Allen and Steve Hunnybun (Bb bass), Graeme King and Mark Tanser (Eb bass). In Concert Brass we have Ryan Sharpe (Bb bass) and Andrew Haworth (Eb bass). Sam Edwards plays Eb bass in the Youth Band and Concert Brass.

200 Club

Are you a member of our 200 Club? Income from the club helps to supplement band funds and gives participants the opportunity to win prize money in return. Numbers cost £1 each and a monthly draw takes place with up to six cash prizes to be won! Half the money raised goes directly to the band and the other half is split into prizes. Payments can be made via cheque (yearly or half yearly) or preferably standing order.

Patrons

Hathern Band is a non-sponsored organisation and relies on the continued support of its patrons. Every year the band says thank you by giving patrons their own concert in Hathern. It costs a minimum of £25 per annum to be a patron.

If you're not already a patron, could you consider supporting us in this way?

Forthcoming Engagements

Hathern Band

May 2016

- Brass & Voice

Saturday 21 May, 7:30p.m. *Hathern Church* Concert with Loughborough Male Voice Choir

June 2016

- Proms Concert

Saturday 11 June, 8:30p.m. *Wistow Park, Market Harborough*

- Gala and Proms Concert

Sunday 26 June, 7:30p.m. *School Lane, Birstall*

July 2016

- The Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations

Sunday 3 July, 2:00p.m. *Platts Recreation, Cossington*

August 2016

- Music on the Banks

Sunday 21 August, 3:00p.m. *Quorn*

Concert Brass

June 2016

- The Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations

Sunday 11 June, 12:00p.m. *Hathern Park* GROUP

July 2016

- Loughborough Park

Sunday 10 July, 2:00p.m. *Queen's Park, Loughborough*