



# Band News

## Spring 2020

**Number 20**

Well this isn't what we expected! As with most organisations, Hathern Band is completely non-operational at present and we can only look forward to happier times ahead. Members of the band send their very best wishes to all of our friends and we hope that you are keeping safe and well. When it all blows over we will blow for you again.

### From the Chairman

Dear friends,

#### EXTENSION TO THE BAND ROOM

I thought that it would be good to bring you up to date with our progress with the extension.

Firstly, our appeal for financial help in February was very well supported and, as a result, we have had Patrons who have given by becoming Life Patrons, others who have given a donation and many anonymous gifts, too. To everyone of you, I'd like to say a big and heartfelt "thank you".

Secondly, where are we now? We have all the plans passed, all consents given, materials and labour promised. But of course, the lock-down with the current Coronavirus Pandemic has meant that we are unable to proceed at the moment. However everything is in place for a speedy start as soon as restrictions are lifted. We are raring to go!

So, for now, keep safe, keep isolating and distancing, until we return to normal times again.

Yours sincerely,

John Worsfold  
Chairman



# Midlands Area First Section Contest

## From Musical Director, Colonel Stephen Barnwell

We arrived in Bedworth for the Midlands Area Contest with high hopes of doing very well, but all did not go as well as expected. At rehearsals everything had gone according to plan and the band was sounding like accomplished contenders with the promise of doing very well indeed. The chosen Test Piece, "Legacy", suited us well. A lot of the demands the piece places upon players matched almost all of the particular strengths in existence within the band's current makeup. We had everything to look forward to and I'm sure many of us even secretly dared to hope.

When the moment came for us to perform however I think it is fair to say to a certain extent we "choked". Unlike at the Leicestershire Brass Band Association Contest, where there were no expectations at all and we gave our best possible performance, here emotions were running high and strange things happened from the off. One or two unpredictable mistakes occurred early on and it began to unnerve some and sow the seeds of doubt in others. Heartbreakingly, just when the band needed me most to calm the situation, I was having issues of my own with a tipping conductor's stand and trying to hang on to the music score.

To my mind, what we lacked most on the day was a strong element of self-belief and the absolute confidence to seize the moment. Instead of smiles this time, it was huge disappointment. We knew we had underperformed and it hurt. The adjudicators' notes brought some comfort however. Their comments judged us to have the best Horn Section on the day and there were other positives. They identified moments when the band really showed its true potential – sadly, not enough of them.

In summary, we just need to challenge ourselves more and get better acquainted to performing under pressure, to start believing in what we already are – a musical "tour de force" to be reckoned with at contests.



## **Reflections on the Contest by Ian Bartram (Euphonium)**

We walk out on stage. I feel confident, relaxed but excited in anticipation of our performance to come. Everyone else seems in the same frame of mind. Last night's play through was the best yet. This one had to be even better.

We have been well prepared by home practice, section sessions and full rehearsals superbly led by Stephen and Dave. Remember the six Ps of the SAS: "Proper Preparation Prevents ..." i.e. good preparation deserves a good performance.

The only thing bothering me a little is the exposed top D straight after the bottom Bbs. I've been hitting it about 8 out of 10 times but that's not a good enough batting average for me. It will need cold steel nerve and determination.

I have a ritual I go through on stage before the start:

Position chair comfortably.

Adjust stand position and height, tighten screws. Position music on stand checking the pages.

Blow water out of instrument.

Take a few deep diaphragm breaths exhaling slowly through my instrument.

Run my tongue around gums to produce saliva to prevent dry mouth.

Finally: FOCUS. Shut everything else out. Only the music matters.



**Ian Practising Trombone During Lockdown**

This all helps me relax and focus. It's what my first teacher and band conductor Harry Essex called "Setting Your Stall Out Lad". That may be a bit colloquial but it makes good sense.

I was still at No. 4 when the bell went and suddenly we're off! Heck!

I didn't hear the cornets start and when I did hear them they sounded miles away in that hall acoustic. With their repetitive figures in cross rhythms I can't tell where we are. Instinctively I look for Stephen's beat and yes, there's the clear downbeat. But which bar? Hannah starts and I join on the second note of our theme. Are we right? Doubt creeps in and throws me, it doesn't seem right. It's a bad start.

Musical discipline drilled into me all those decades ago instantly kicks in. It's saved me before: Get a Grip. Don't Look Back. The poor start can't be altered - make everything else diamond bright. Save the inquest for later. FOCUS. I then actually enjoy the performance. I'm conscious of a few mistakes around the band but I ignore them. Hannah and I both hit the top D - bull's eye!

Straight off stage I apologise to Stephen about my lapse at the start but he's telling me about his music falling off his stand! I hadn't noticed, such was my concentration. Colonel Barnwell is the consummate professional. The score was in his head so his head didn't have to be in the score. He had got us through regardless of the incident.

Let's not be discouraged by a disappointing performance. Let's learn from it and do better next time.

We need to do more contests after this wretched lockdown is over. And concerts!

We enjoy good team spirit with no cliques – in banding that's surprisingly rare but essential.

Our band has great leadership both musically and administratively.

I'm reminded of a line from of Rudyard Kipling's magnificent poem "If":

***"If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster and treat those two imposters just the same ..."***

... then we shall be a great band!

## **Our Youngsters Are Practising!**

It's so hard for youngsters not being at school and missing out from meeting with friends and family. To keep in touch, and to encourage them to keep practising, we asked our Training Band members to send us a photo of them playing.

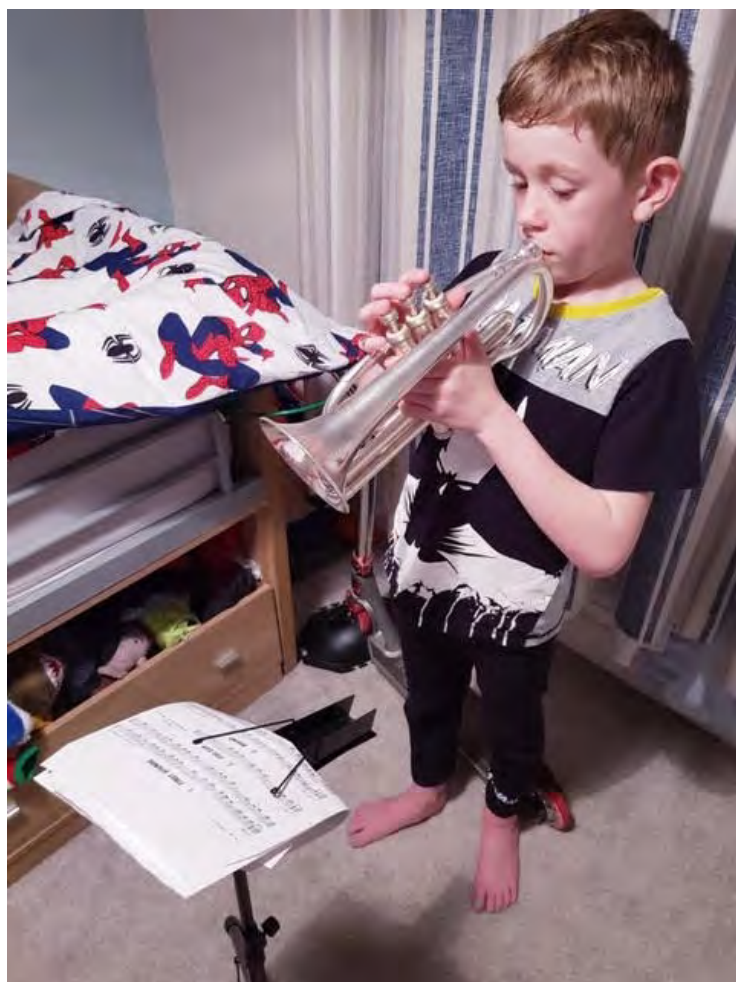
Well done everyone, keep it up!





**George**

**Inigo and Mikael**



**Reuben**





**Tate and Mima**



**Beba**



**Julia**





**Mabel**



**Hugh and Isaac**



**Paddy**





**George**



**Anya**

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