



## PROMOTED !!!!

The Midlands area contest was held on 15 March at the Civic Hall in Bedworth. Under the direction of Gary Wyatt, The Senior Band had put in weeks of practice and were confident of playing well. All entrants in a section play the same piece of music. This year the test piece was Friendly Takeover by Oliver Waespi, a three movement piece composed for the Swiss Wind Band Convention in Montreux in 2016. Supporters were able to listen to the Band at an open rehearsal held on 2 March in Hathern Church.

The Band played really well on the day and achieved a creditable 5th place. Promotion and relegation is based on a three year average and fifth place was enough to ensure promotion back to the First Section from 2026.

A big thank you to Gary and Dave for all the hard work and guidance which meant the Band gave one of their best performances. And of course a big thank you to everyone in the Band for their commitment and dedication which has made everyone very proud.



# How We Built a Band Room by Dave Bentley

The idea originally arose around 1980 due to the inadequate practice facilities the band was experiencing in Shepshed. Hall Croft School was being closed, and the Hind Leys evening class arrangement wasn't working out at all well. Bob Shore (Head Teacher at Hathern) kindly offered the Band an unused room at the Old School (the doctors surgery now!) which was used for about four years from 1981 up to 1985.

Around 1982 the band coincidentally played at the opening ceremony of the new Hathern School Community Room and somehow managed to impress the then Director of Education for Leicestershire. He advocated that Leicestershire County Council might provide £10,000 Funding towards a Bandroom Extension at the new school – this seemed a fortune - at the time the Band was turning out at Garden Fetes etc. for £25!

Nine months went by with the Band waiting on County Hall architects to submit drawings to us. When these finally arrived, the cost was around £30,000 (1982) and Leicestershire also late on demanded daily use of the new Room. This was way beyond our means & the window of opportunity to employ this money in the same financial year was closing rapidly.

Hence, we quickly discontinued our arrangement with Leicestershire County Council and went into limbo for a few months.

During that time Mike Fletcher (Geoff's Brother) who was playing for the band produced a design for a Band Room and Hathern Parish Council were approached for a lease arrangement on some part of their land allocation & on which we could build.

Prominent villagers such as Stan Goodacre, Austin Webb, Tom Dennis were Parish Council members at the time and backed the project resulting in a site being designated on the edge of the existing football field - and we started to get excited.

Plans were passed and the design of the band room was put out to tender with local building companies - we eventually teamed up with Reed & Witherbed (Hathern-based). Fund raising continued apace for 2-3 years by means of Christmas carol playing, concerts & several extra out of the area engagements.

Two carol playing teams were out every night for the 2-3 weeks prior to Christmas doing the local pubs. To maximise the "take" the teams finished every night at Donington Manor & Yew Lodge Kegworth – both of which always staged large Christmas office do's every night before the holiday. Most Band members fell into bed just before midnight on Christmas Eve and slept for the next two days!

Particularly memorable was a four mile route March from Leicester Forest East to Kirby Muxloe in temperatures around 30+ Deg C when a young James Fletcher (he's now done approx. 30 years with Grimethorpe!) had to be revived by the roadside.



**A fund raising social held at the King's Arms January 1982 with the Abba tribute group.**

**Stuart Evans as Agnetha,  
Christine Sturgess as Frieda.  
Mike "Mouse" Sturgess as  
Benny and John Beard as  
Bjorn.**

having suffered heat exhaustion. The marches "Slaidburn" & "Voice of the Guns" were played consistently for around an hour and a quarter - very limited repertoire & demanding Bass Drum parts (but I managed them!).

Also noteworthy was a march to the Garden Fete site at Quorn. When the Band proudly entered the field the Left hand + Centre file wheeled left and the Right Hand File (led by Dave Newman's Father on Bass Trom) wheeled right. The totally unrehearsed but perfectly synchronised effect was much admired at the time – I think we got away with it!

Money was also raised through regular Supper & Song Benefit Concerts held at Hathern School. Local "Artistes" in the shape of Tony Croft (Albert & the Lion), a Local Barber Shop Group & The Magnificent Seven Brass Ensemble, Lesley (as a good time girl!), Dave Newman (as a cowboy with an arrow through his head) , John Watt, Eddie Atkin, Colin Garratt, John Webb and Mouse - Mike Sturgess (as Davy Crocket) appeared in the all star line ups. The Magnificent Seven even managed to get a couple of unexpected local engagements.

Photographic records still exist with Dave Bentley – interested parties should call him with open cheque books at the ready.

In 1984 the Band qualified for the 4<sup>th</sup> Section National Finals which uniquely that year were held at the Royal Albert Hall for all the different sections. Hathern Band at the Albert Hall – who could believe it! To finance both the trip and the new Bandroom a Booklet was produced with the Band History carefully written by Geoff Fletcher.

In the very September week of our departure for London the footings of the new bandroom went in – courtesy of Reed & Witherbed. The Band took possession of the original watertight shell (30 x 30 ft - no services!) around the start of December 1984 – after the wettest Autumn for years.

More or less everyone pitched in over the next nine months including...

Stuart Evans – Plumbing / Gary Taylor - Electrics / Roy Atkin – Clerk of the Works / Andrew Haworth – Band Chairman / Dave Newman , Mouse, Eddie Atkin (he of the dinky wheelbarrow) Dave Curtis & me! – General Labourers / Lesley – Tea, cake & General Supervisory duties. Giant redundant radiators (from Leicestershire Health Service) appeared magically and had to be manhandled into position – the whole scene at times resembled the building of the Pyramids. Trenches were dug for the services and we had to obtain a partial closure of Pasture Lane to connect up to Severn-Trent outside the school gates. Eventually we had services and after running de-humidifiers for about a month we had walls that would take a coat of paint.

Thoughts then turned to an auspicious opening ceremony and after a flirtation with Harry Mortimer the Band settled on the world's best cornet player – Philip McCann of Black Dyke Mills Band . Posh local dignitaries and former players were all invited and the great event took place in August 1985.. For those who have never seen the full Terry Cox CD version it is definitely worth a watch – the way we were!



### **The Magnificent Seven (1986 version)**

**Front row Mike (Mouse)  
Sturgess and Dave Newman.**

**Middle row John Webb, Colin  
Garratt, John Watt and Lesley  
Bentley**

**with Edward Atkin at the back**





**Margaret Atkin, wife of secretary Les. Definitely the real clerk of the works**

**Philip McCann (centre right) speaks at the band room opening**

**24 August 1985**

**Andrew Haworth with the neat bow tie was chairman then**



**Playing at the opening**

**Dave Newman with the shield presented by the Loughborough Echo to mark the opening of the band room. The trophy to be awarded annually to the most improved junior player**



# Playing with Grimethorpe

On 29 March, three of our young players, Seb, Charlie and George took part in the National Youth Brass Band Championships playing for Grimethorpe Youth Band under the baton of former Hathern player, Jim Fletcher. The contest was held at Hymer's College in Hull. Each band had to play an 11 minute piece - Fanfares, Songs and Dances by Philip Sparke, followed by up to 10 minutes of own choice , which was Starburst and Glow. The band put in a fine performance and were rewarded by a silver award. ."



On 16 March, Grimethorpe Colliery Band played to a sell out audience at Loughborough Town Hall. We were delighted that Seb played in the cornet section. Grimethorpe wanted to include him in their Loughborough concert to give him the opportunity to play with the band in his home town. Seb had a rehearsal at Grimethorpe the previous week, then another the day before the concert. Seb said, "I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and felt honoured to share the stage with them."



Charlie (left), Hugh and Isaac were among 50 youngsters who took part in the Grimethorpe Youth Band Spring Workshop held on 22 March at Barnsley Civic. An inspiring day filled with music and fun for young players of all levels of experience getting the chance to play alongside members of Grimethorpe Colliery Band and finishing with a short concert for parents.

Grimethorpe's Musical Director, Ben Dixon said, "Education is an integral part of what we do as a band and these workshop days are vital in inspiring the next generation of players. It's fantastic to see young players pushing themselves with more challenging music and we look forward to welcoming them again in the summer."





# George's NYBBGB Easter Adventure

I play soprano cornet with the Band. Last summer, I decided to audition for the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain (NYBBGB) after someone recommended it to me. Honestly, I didn't feel very prepared and didn't think the audition had gone that well — so I was really surprised (and very happy!) when I found out I'd been accepted.

The NYBBGB is a band made up of young brass players from all over the country. We go on a residential course for a week, rehearse loads of amazing music, and get to learn from some of the best conductors and players out there. It's hard work, but it's also loads of fun — and by the end, you've made great friends and get to perform in a big concert together. This Easter, I went on the NYBBGB course — and it was honestly one of the best weeks I've ever had. We played about eight hours of music every day, which sounds like loads, but it was so much fun it didn't feel like work at all. I made loads of new friends and caught up with people I hadn't seen for a while, and the breaks gave us time to just hang out and relax.

At the start of the week, we had seating auditions. I was really happy to get second out of the three soprano cornets. I got to sit next to Nayan, who's an amazing player and someone I really look up to — I learned loads just by sitting next to him!

The course was held at Pangbourne College in Berkshire, and it was such a nice place to stay. At the end of the week, we went to the Tidworth Garrison Theatre (because NYBBGB has strong links with the Corps of Army Music) and did a big final concert there, which was absolutely brilliant. It felt so good to perform after working so hard all week.

I'm really grateful I got the chance to be part of NYBBGB, and I'm already counting down to the summer course — can't wait! One of the best weeks I've ever had! **George**



**The end-of-course concert was conducted by Colonel David Barringer British Army.**



**The full band on stage at the final concert.**

# National Youth Brass Band Course 1970

Over the years, we've had players taking part in National Youth Brass Band courses and our photo shows a course 55 years ago. The conductor was Herbert Møller from Denmark who became the first overseas conductor to direct a National Youth Brass Band course. Look closely - there are two current members of Hathern Band on this photo. Only clue is that they might now have less hair than they had in 1970! Answer on page 11.



**Why not join our 200 Club?** It provides welcome funds for our bands as well as paying out cash prizes to the lucky winners. It's only £1 per number per month by standing order. If you'd like to join, please contact Sam Peak  
Email: [sambigfootg@hotmail.com](mailto:sambigfootg@hotmail.com)

**200 club**  
**Got your number?**

## March

£30 John Baum  
£24 Jim Gisborn  
£15 Joan Newman  
£12 Jeremy Pratt  
£6.50 Dave Neville

## April

£30 Sam Hambleton  
£24 Dave Walker  
£15 Mike Jones  
£12 Will Fairlamb  
£6.50 Bridget Plimmer

## May

£30 Simon Baum  
£24 John Laurance  
£15 Andy Bestwick  
£12 Mike Hale  
£6.50 Mike Wood



# Hafsa Jalisi

We were delighted to see our Hafsa Jalisi on television singing at the Holocaust Memorial Day Ceremony on 27 January at the Guildhall. We asked her to tell us about herself.

"I'm Hafsa. I currently play the Eb bass in Hathern Band. I graduated from medical school in 2023 in London then made my way to Leicester to complete my Foundation Training (the first two years of working as a doctor after graduating, where you change departments every four months).

I grew up in North West London in the borough of Brent. When I was around 10 years old, the music service put on an assembly about an "endangered species" of musical instruments (lower brass did not have a high uptake in my area). This is where I saw the tuba for the first time! I had already started playing on the recorder and baritone horn a few years before. After that, I said to my music teacher that I wanted to try "the big one". I've been playing tuba ever since. Initially I attended the junior music service orchestra afterschool. As I progressed on tuba, I upgraded to the senior 'Brent Concert Band', which I played in throughout high school. We competed in the National Concert Band Festivals every year with great success, leading us to reach the World Music Championships in Kerkrade, 2017. I kept up tuba in university, playing in the Medics' Music Society's orchestra, jazz band, and brass quintet (or dectet, depending on who was free!).

Alongside tuba lessons, I regularly sang both in school and outside of it. Every Saturday, my siblings and I would attend Bosnian school. Our mum is Bosnian so it was a great way for us to meet more Bosnian families and learn about our country together. During those weekends, we always had a cultural component, where we'd learn Bosnian songs and dances. This is where I got to learn more about traditional Bosnian music. My mum's mum (my grandma) is also a music professor, who led multiple singing concerts and competitions in Bosnia. I was always being taught a new song, and how best to sing it!







As a result of regularly singing at Bosnian school, I would often sing at the memorial events put on to commemorate the Srebrenica genocide and other crimes against humanity committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At one of the vigils, a team from the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) watched my performance. After that, they got in touch for me to perform for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the Auschwitz liberation. This, however, was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The HMDT team organised an online service, where a performance of me singing was filmed at a studio instead.

Fast forward a few years later, the HMDT team got back in touch with me to perform at the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Auschwitz liberation, which also coincided with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. It was an honour to represent my community on stage at the Guildhall, and to perform for genocide survivors in the audience and across the world. If you would like to read more about the Srebrenica genocide, you can read more on the Remembering Srebrenica website (<https://srebrenica.org.uk/>). You can also read more about how HMDT are working to preserve the history of the Holocaust on their website (<https://hmd.org.uk/>). “

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**[www.hathernband.co.uk](http://www.hathernband.co.uk)**

**If you do not wish to receive our newsletter please contact the secretary**

Check out the new **Hathern Band** Facebook Group

# Sue and Ted - Down Under Again!

Sue and Ted Rea from Youth and Concert Brass have been in Australia visiting relatives and attended the Australian National Band Championships held in Melbourne over Easter. Sue and Ted also did this in 2023. They were able to catch up with two ex-Hathern Band players, Antony Edwards-Sowards and Richard Sandham. Richard was over here last Christmas and took part in our Christmas Concert at Hodson Hall.

Richard is the Principal Cornet with Holroyd Brass Band who compete in the A section. Antony plays BBb Bass for Footscray-Yarraville City Band also in the A section. Footscray-Yarraville visited us in November 2018 when they took part in the Leicestershire Brass Band Association Contest. We were delighted to welcome them to Hathern, and many of us won't forget the evenings in the Three Crowns and the Dew Drop. 2025 turned out to be Footscray-Yarraville's year as they were crowned A section champions.



**Sue and Ted with  
Antony**

**and with  
Richard**





## Did You Spot Them??



Dave Newman

John Baum

# PATRONS CONCERT

Calling all Patrons. A date for your diary. Our Patrons Concert will take place on **Saturday 4th October** at Hathern Church. Before the concert, could Patrons please let Lesley know if they will be attending.

Please consider becoming a patron, if you're not already signed up. It only costs a minimum of £25 a year and our patrons provide welcome funds for us to continue training the musicians of tomorrow.

# Senior Band Engagements

- Brass & Voice Saturday 17 May, 7:30p.m. *Trinity Methodist Church,*

*Loughborough*

Concert with Loughborough Male Voice Choir TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM LESLEY - All 12.00

ALL £12 INCLUDING REFRESHMENTS - UNDER 12`s FREE

- Hathern Proms Concert

Saturday 7 June, 7:30p.m. *Pasture Lane Hathern LE12 5LJ*



- Birstall Proms Concert Saturday 21 June, 6:30p.m. *School Lane, Birstall*
- Oakham Bandstand Sunday 10 August, 2:30p.m. *Cutts Close, Oakham*
- Quorn Summer Concert Sunday 17 August, 3:00p.m. *Stafford Orchard, Quorn*