



# Band News

## Winter 2024-25

### Number 39

## Looking Backwards and Forwards

Well here we are in 2025 and Hathern Band goes from strength to strength. I wonder if that group of framework knitters who formed the band in 1856 could ever have thought that their band would still be here in 2025, our 170th year and the oldest brass band in the Midlands. We have little information about those first years. The date 1856 as the band's formation comes from an obituary of one of its founders, William Widdowson. The first public performance we know of was in 1860 in Nottingham.

How was it that a group of framework knitters were able to obtain brass instruments? We have no evidence, but a possible theory is that the Rev. Edward March-Phillips, a great philanthropist in Hathern might have been involved.



Fast forward to 1985. The band moved back to Hathern School from Shepshed and the decision was made to build a band room. Apart from the shell, all the work was carried out by band members, friends and family. It was opened 40 years ago on 24 August. Since then it's been extended three times.

Forty years on, things are well with Hathern Band. Under the direction of Dave, Gary and Chris, the bands in the Hathern Band family improve and progress. The "grow our own" policy has paid dividends, with youngsters who were in the training band not that long ago, shining in Youth/Concert Brass and the Senior Band. And there are lots more coming through.

We'll be having a special concert in Shepshed on 14 June to celebrate our anniversaries (including ten years of this newsletter!) Details on page 12.

# Hathern Band Christmas Concert

## By Gillian Norris

Last year I decided that the Hathern Band Christmas Concert was a new tradition for our family. So, looking forward to this year's concert is now all part of our Christmas preparations.

'Joy to the World' (arranged by Darrol Barry) was a rousing start to this year's festive programme. A very apt carol in today's world when joy is seriously lacking in so many places. 'The Proclamation of Christmas' is a clear and lively piece which features snippets of five traditional carols seamlessly blended together with changes of tempo and pace. David Newman, the conductor acknowledged "It was not an easy piece.", however it was fun recognising the carols.

John Rutter is the voice of Christmas for many and his haunting and lyrical 'Candlelight Carol' (arranged by Chris Mallet) was gentle, calm and uplifting and very much in the spirit of Christmas. These first three carols reminded us of the talents of the musicians who work so hard to play for us. Many had already a very busy schedule of concerts and the two weeks left before 25<sup>th</sup> December were going to be equally packed. 'Once in Royal David's City' gave us in the audience our chance to test our carolling voices. We may not have been hundreds in number but we all tired our best with this rousing and much-loved carol.



Movement on stage after this spiked our interest as a instrument was placed in position for the next carol 'Carol of the Bell', featuring the multi-talented Inigo Tristante on the vibraphone, a percussion instrument that is played by striking metal bars with mallets. Inigo is on his way to becoming a musician par excellence. He plays in the Training and Youth Bands of the Hathern Band both brass instruments and timpani, as well as regularly playing the organ in St Peter and St Paul's in Hathern.

The very pure notes Inigo coaxed from the vibraphone were an absolute joy – the whole sound a fusion of brass instruments and an electronic one.

'O Come All Ye Faithful' was the audience's chance to wonder once again if they could manage the descant notes. Thankfully the Band were able to do this most competently when some of our voices failed.

'Who is He?' (arranged by Richard Phillips,) started hauntingly with the lone notes of a cornet. Hathern Band introduced me to this unique carol, for which I am forever grateful. Unusually, it tells the full story of the baby refugee to the tortured man who died on a cross to his Resurrection.

The mood completely changed for the next piece of music, which was 'Journey to Lapland' by Richard Sandham. Richard used to be a long-time member of Hathern Band who after playing music in and composing pieces for the Royal Air Force Band, moved to Australia to live and teach music. We are lucky that he played in the band while visiting his family in Hathern this year. The lovely piece conjured pictures of chattering, excited children on the train to Lapland; the sound of the train wheels on the tracks and even the children's dreams and hopes of presents. Ending on a quieter note the music let us hear the expectation of seeing Father Christmas when the train arrived at its destination.



The Hathern Youth and Training Band were next with their beautifully decorated instruments in a piece by Chris North called 'Santa's Sleigh Ride'. Combining the two bands gave a full, rich sound to the beat of the reindeer hooves as they raced by on their most important journey. The traditional 'Jingle Bells' brought a wonderful audience response to a lively performance of this classic Christmas song. All members of this section of the band are doing well and working hard. Once again this is completely unbiased opinion, just ask any of the Band's supporters who were cheering madly!

The next three pieces of music were performed by the Youth and Concert Brass. 'The Carollers' by R E Holz is one of quick, lively tempo and once again we played "Spot That Carol". This Salvation Army stalwart was a wonderful showcase for the growing expertise of the young players.

Another John Rutter song came next, 'The Nativity Carol' was gentle and evocative with notes swelling and fading in Rutter's usual musical style chimes.

'A Christmas Bolero' (arranged by Darrol Barry) was next and last for the Concert Brass. The tempo of the Ravel's Bolero with the potential for the crashing finale, built up in the very subtle melody of a quickening pace to the abrupt crescendo of the end. It was marvellous and I am sure I saw a flash of lavender or purple and a dramatic fall on the ice out of the corner of my mind. (Showing my age there, I think!!)

'The First Nowell' again called for enthusiastic audience vocal participation.



The Tom Dennis Award for the most improved player of the year was awarded to Lewis Haines to much enthusiastic applause.



'The Christmas Song' by Mel Tormé and Robert Wells is for many THE Christmas tune. It showcased the talents of all the members of The Senior Band, with their gentle, meaningful and heartfelt playing. A carol with a descant came next and again the Band covered up any slight lack of audience vocal talent as 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' was a rousing end to our vocal participation.

A thoroughly deserved set of Thank Yous came next with gifts presented for all those who do so much to ensure the success of the Bands in so many ways. Thanks were also given to all Patrons of the Band as their regular financial contributions ensure that the aims of the Band continue to be carried out. Last, and not least, thanks were given to Lesley and David, the cornerstone of all the efforts all year round.

I thought I had practised sufficiently for the audience participation of 'Schneewalzer', (arranged by W J Duthoit) but all the swaying and popping up and down in rhythm proved beyond my arthritic knees and back. Not a pretty or coordinated sight, I was struggling to stand up when other nimbler folk had recommenced swaying and bobbing! The joy of the piece shines through the whole time as the Band enthusiastically played and finished to tumultuous cheers and applause. They sway, bob and stand too as well as play their instruments!!

Irving Berlin's 'White Christmas' (arranged by W J Duthoit) was the final piece to bring us into the Christmas spirit, with some of the audience singing along as well. The whole tuneful evening finished with a rendition of 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas' a fantastic, positive, thoroughly enjoyable time having been had by all.

My sincere thanks to all who took part, who practised (even on the days when they really didn't want to), who encouraged, prepared and sorted out all that is necessary throughout the year, to make the Hathern Band Christmas Concert another glorious success. Roll on 2025!



# Christmas Concert - Behind the Scenes



**Donia, Luke and Rebecca**



**Bridget and Jenny**



**Rosemary and John**



**Vanessa and Mike**



**Joan Newman  
(Dave's mum) has  
been attending  
Hathern Band  
Christmas Concerts  
since 1979**

# On the Streets

On 15 December, three groups toured the village playing Christmas music.



At a "refreshment station", Paddy from the training band serves coffee to Hannah Peak, while Ken Powell looks on.

The Sticky Ginger Cake proved very popular.

If anyone wants the recipe please email Dave at [davenville1947@gmail.com](mailto:davenville1947@gmail.com)

**Playing outside Oaklands  
in Kegworth**





**Youth and Concert Brass played at the Manor House at Quorn**



**Lessons and Carols at Hathern Parish Church rounded off the season for the Senior Band**

**George, Charlie, Seb and George played with the Grimethorpe Colliery North of England Youth Band at Grimethorpe's Christmas Concert at Sheffield Cathedral.**

**They are pictured with James Fletcher, first horn with Grimethorpe who conducts the Youth Band. James learnt to play with Hathern Band**





# Melton Christmas Tree Festival

Every year we are invited to play at the Melton Christmas Tree festival held at St. Mary's Church and once again the Senior Band played to a packed house and 230 trees on 8 December.



It was a very special day for Sophie as this concert was the first time she had played with the Senior Band.

Sophie is pictured with her proud parents, Adrian and Jenny.

# Contests

We took part in the Leicestershire Brass Band Association contest on 24 November and were placed ninth, which was a tad disappointing. That's behind us now and it's onwards and upwards towards our next contest which will be the Midland Area contest on 15 March held at the Civic Hall in Bedworth. The test piece is Friendly Takeover by Oliver Waespi, a three movement piece composed for the Swiss Wind Band Convention in Montreux in 2016.



On the day of the LBBA contest the sound of a brass band could be heard in Hathern Church. But it wasn't Hathern Band. Stannington Brass Band, who were taking part in the championship contest, used the church for rehearsal.

It's always great to say hello to former members of Hathern Band. Stuart and Jenny Croft from Hathern learnt to play with the band. (Their parents are patrons, Tony and Anne). Joanne joined Hathern Band when she came to the area on a placement, and married Stuart. Now they, with their daughter Amber, play for Stannington - Stuart on tenor horn, Joanne on cornet and 16 year old Amber plays repiano cornet. (Amber also plays in the Grimethorpe North of England Youth Band alongside the Hathern Band youngsters). Jenny's husband Richard came to Sutton Bonington as a student, joined Hathern Band and married Jenny! Jenny and her twin sons, Gilbert and Edward play for Chapeltown Silver Prize Band who also took part in the contest. Gilbert plays percussion, while Jenny and Edward play bass trombone. Jenny and Gilbert came over to Hathern after their performance.



**Joanne, Stuart and Amber**



**Jenny and Gilbert**



**Remembrance Day  
Youth and Concert Brass  
played at the service held  
at Queen's Park,  
Loughborough.**

## **Band Manager Appointed**

Hannah Peak is well known as Principal Euphonium in the Senior Band, Now Hannah has taken on additional responsibilities as Band Manager. In this role, Hannah will be responsible for arranging and overseeing the transportation to venues, and will support the officers to ensure that the band runs smoothly.

Hannah said "A large part of my role will be to liaise with band members to ensure that any issues are understood, and communicated with the officers and committee."



## **200 Club Results**

### **December Winners**

£30 Louise Haworth  
£24 Chris Berry  
£15 John Baum  
£12 Steve and Lynn Plant  
£7 Lucy Ruddy

### **January Winners**

£30 Mary Sibson  
£24 Claire Hemsley  
£15 Michael Pearson  
£12 Rowland and C Tatton  
£7 Hannah Peak

### **February Winners**

£30 Lesley Bentley  
£24 Bridget Plimmer  
£15 Sue and Ted Rea  
£12 John Worsfold  
£7 Laura Moore

**Congratulations All!**

# Flooded Again!



We didn't escape the recent floods and a year on from the last flood the band room was flooded again.

A big thank you to all who rallied round mopping and cleaning, and getting the band room back into action so quickly.

From Gary Taylor and John Baum

Following our previous email last year regarding the forthcoming celebration concert, opposite is the poster with more details and how to obtain tickets.

If you are able to display the poster, please let us know and we will send a file which can be printed off.

All the profit from this concert will be given to the band in support of the amazing work they carry out in the promotion of live music and teaching the upcoming generations.

