



Band News
Winter 2025-26
Number 43

Christmas Music in Hathern

Sunday 14 December was the day we entertained the people of Hathern “on the streets”. Three groups toured the village playing Christmas music and collecting for our funds. This year thankfully the weather was kind. A big thankyou not only to our players, but also the many volunteers that accompanied the groups collecting at the doors. We raised £885 which will help to buy more instruments for our trainees.



A welcome pit stop for refuelling in Anchor Lane

Christmas Concert at Hodson Hall

by Gill Norris

For me, one of the Heralds of the Christmas Season is the Hathern Band Christmas Concert. It's a rousing start to the festivities. This year's Concert started with a Christmas Medley of 'Joy to the World', 'The First Nowell', and 'Away in a Manger'. 'The Rocking Carol', a personal favourite of mine, with a cornet solo by Seb Burrows was a gentle change of pace in which the rhythm of a rocking cradle is echoed. Audience participation ensured that we didn't nod off though as all we sang 'Once in Royal David's City' next.

'It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas', with a tenor horn solo by Sam Peak, showcased more of the Band members' talents. The goodly number of people in the audience then showed off their varying vocal talent by singing 'O Come All Ye Faithful' and we finished at the same time as the Band too!!

Hannah Peak, the euphonium soloist, came up through the ranks of the Training and Youth Bands like the two previous soloists. Their hard work and dedication were praised by the Conductor, David Newman as proof that the system (and his own nagging - his words!) works. Hannah's talents showed comprehensively in 'O Holy Night'.



Seb



Sam



Hannah

To fit the Youth and Training Bands on the stage was a feat of engineering and ingenuity in itself! How lovely to see eager youngsters ready to play. Their enthusiasm translated into a melodic 'Santa's Sleigh Ride', followed by 'Jingle Bells'. There were fifty-one youngsters from ages 5½ to 18 and their supporters gave them rousing cheers after both songs.



Hathern Youth and Concert Brass, conducted by Chris Groom, played 'Shining Star', a new one for me, with parts of well-known carols included in it. Next 'O Little Blue Town' is the Nativity story from the donkey's point of view written by Band member Dean Onyion. Rhythms of the donkey's steps, the Cha Cha, Blues and Swing melodies made this a very interesting piece to enjoy. 'Silver Bells' brought a delighted response from the audience.



The Hathern Senior Band necessitated changes of personnel on the stage before launching into the Christmas favourite 'The Christmas Song' or 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas'. The audience's last chance to sing was 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing', which we did, with great enthusiasm, if not always accuracy!

Just as I thought my lack of physical preparation for this concert would slip by unnoticed, one of the last songs was Schneewalzer. Again, some people had clearly been practising as music and movement flowed together - for them! And they still had breath and co-ordination to whoop and cheer!! The last song was 'White Christmas', a long-term favourite.



The Tom Dennis Award was given to Charlie for the Most Improved Player and the Harry Smith Trophy, which rewards and recognises the member of the Band who has made outstanding progress and effort was given to soprano cornet player George.



Charlie



George



Once again, our sincere thanks to all to all Band members and those who work so hard throughout the year, in front and behind the scenes, to produce such amazing results which we, the audience, thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated. Thank you!

Gill Norris

Arran Hargrave, Hathern Band

This was an article in our Summer 2020 newsletter. Guess what!!

Another Future Cornet Player?

Many congratulations to our front row cornet player, Susan Hargrave and husband Dale, on the birth of their second son, Arran, a brother for Dylan. Arran arrived at 7.30pm on 22 July weighing in at eight pounds.



Arran played at the Christmas concert as part of the Training Band. Well done, Arran.





Youth and Concert Brass at Shephed Baptist Church on 11 December



Always popular.

The Senior Band at Lessons and Carols, Hathern Church on 21 December



A Senior Band group at the New Inn, Griffydam on a very wet 15 December

It was a bit drier in the Needle and Pin in Loughborough the following evening





Youth and Concert Brass at the Manor House, Quorn rounded off our Christmas engagements

NEMBBA Success

The Senior Band took part in the North East Midlands Brass Band Association contest on 16 November and came out winners of the Second Section. The Band played Oliver Waespi's The Raid under the direction of conductor Gary Wyatt. Well done to all. Some of the Band are pictured below with the shield.



Hathern Band 170 years

We were formed in 1856 and for 170 years Hathern Band has been making music for the people of Hathern and beyond - the oldest brass band in the Midlands, We will be producing a special extra newsletter to commemorate this event, so an appeal to players and supporters. Do you have any particular memories or anecdotes from yesteryear? Please let us know, we'd love to include your story in the newsletter.

Contact Dave at daveneville1947@gmail.com before the end of February, please.

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



December

£30 Geoff Wood
£24 Brian Fletcher
£15 Andy Bestwick
£12 Charlene Freeman
£6 The Ainsworths

January

£30 Lesley Bentley
£24 Jeremy Pratt
£15 Dave Neville
£12 Dave Newman
£6 Michael Pearson

February

£30 Colin and Marion
£24 Simon Baum
£15 The O'Neills
£12 Mary Sibson
£6 Ian Bartrum

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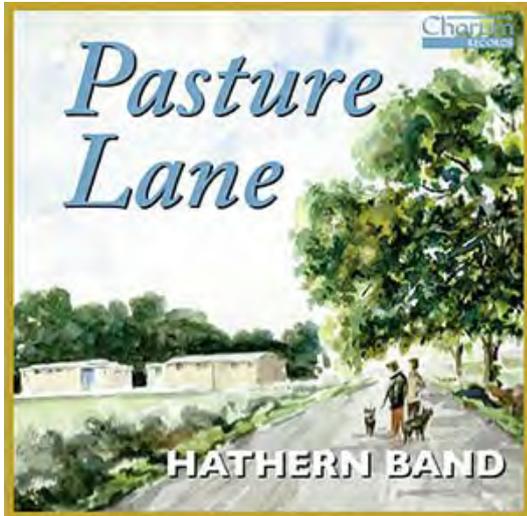
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A big thank you to all those that have provided photos for this edition, with a particular thank you to Sarah Browne, mother of Jack in the Senior Band, who takes photos at many events during the year. Also thank you to Gill Norris, grandmother of Anya in the Training Band, for her annual Christmas Concert article.

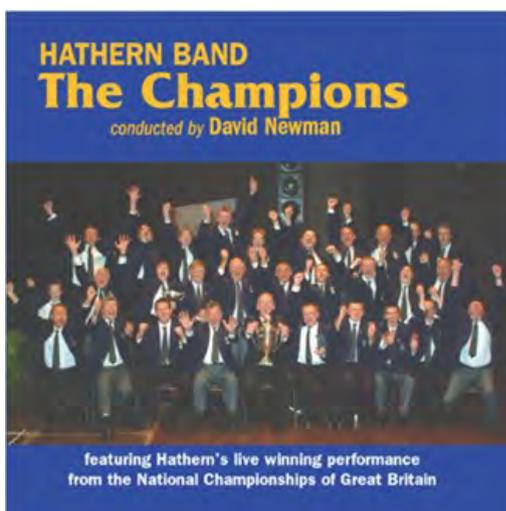
Hathern Band Recordings

Hathern Band first became recording artists in 1994 with a cassette called Closer to Home, followed by On the Track on CD in 1997 and Christmas Cracker on cassette in 1998. Since then the Band has produced several CDs which are still available for £10.

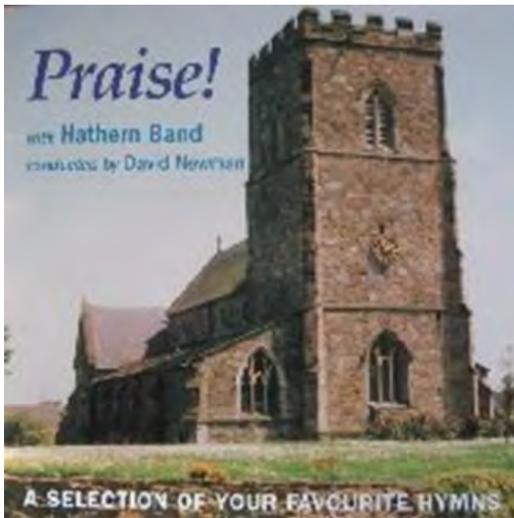


Pasture Lane was recorded in 2014 and features the piece of music Pasture Lane composed by former band member Richard Sandham. Another home-grown number is Droplets composed by band member Sam Garton. Four tracks include vocal accompaniment from soprano Jenny Saunders.

Much of the popular music played by the Bands at Christmastime is featured on this CD from 2007. The 17 tracks range from Jingle Bells and White Christmas to carols such as Away in a Manger and Who is He? For those who wish to practise the movements to Schneewalzer, featured at every Christmas concert, then this is the CD for you!



Probably the proudest moment in the Band's history was when we won the National Championship (Second Section) in 2004. The test piece was Chaucer's Tunes by Michael Ball (the composer, not the singer). That winning performance is included on this CD together with a rendition of Kaleidoscope by Philip Sparke. That was the test piece when the Band won the Midlands Area Championship, which sent the Band on its way to the national final. Nine other pieces of music make this a first-class CD.



Recorded in 2002, Praise includes 16 favourite hymns. Solo performances are from Lesley Bentley on flugelhorn playing Share My Yoke, and from Mike Wood on cornet with Crimond. The version of Cwm Rhonda was arranged by Dave Newman.

We've included the On the Track CD though unfortunately it's now out of stock. Recorded in 1997 to celebrate promotion to the Championship section, tracks include John Baum on trombone playing The Acrobat and Jeremy Bowman on xylophone playing On the Track. Also included is Concerto de Aranjuez played by Lesley Bentley on flugelhorn. If you know the film Brassed Off, this piece of music is the one Gloria, played by Tara Fitzgerald, played when she auditioned for Grimley Band. It was actually played by Grimethorpe's Paul Hughes.



Midlands Area Contest



As we're back in the First Section, the test piece at the Midlands Area Contest is that little bit more challenging. This year it's Variations on Was Lebet composed by Andrew Wainwright in 2017. It is based on a German Chorale work Was Lebet and contains five contrasting variations. The contest takes place on Saturday 7 March in the afternoon at the Civic Hall, Bedworth CV12 8NF.

Needless to say the Band is practising hard under the guidance of contest conductor, Gary Wyatt.

Bluebell Service

Youth and Concert Brass will again be playing at the Bluebell service held in Swithland Woods.

It's on Sunday 26 April at 3.00pm.