

SPLIT NOTES

Harrogate Band Newsletter

May 1989

Issue # 1

Welcome!

Welcome to the first issue of Split Notes, which we hope will be produced on a semi-regular basis in the future. Hopefully the only place we find split notes will be in here! It is intended, primarily, to provide information on the future and past activities of the Harrogate Band, but we also hope to include other items of general interest relating to bands and banding. For example, we could include any anecdotes you may have on brass band topics (such as the time a certain player played the first part of the test piece in an Area Contest with his valves the wrong way round!)?

If you have any contributions for this newsletter, or any suggestions/criticisms on its format and/or content, please pass them on to any member of the Committee. Suggestions for future issues? - Profiles of band members (learn the truth about Mr X!) - who would you like to see a profile of? yourself? - A "letters" column, where you can sound off in public?

Committee Briefs

Notes from recent committee meetings - Investigations are under way to look at the feasibility of the Band acquiring a full new (second-hand) set of instruments. If a full set replacement still does not look feasible in October, then we will look at replacement of sections of the Band.

New regulations, drawn up by the British Federation of Brass Bands, for the collection of returns for the Performing Rights Society (PRS) mean a much simplified operation for bands - we no longer have to record details of each piece we play on engagements, we merely have to pay a "standard" charge based on the type of our band and its activity. Incidentally, the charge levied is more or less the same as it was previously.

Visit to Bad Hersfeld 1990 as guests of SMV (Sport und Musik-Verein) - We will be corresponding with SMV in the near future to start the planning process. Dates have not yet been discussed, but it is likely to be sometime in August 1990.

200 Club - Thank you for your recent efforts in selling the unsold shares in the club. However we still have about 20 tickets which are "spare" and need selling individually each week. Please, please see if you can find a buyer for these.

A Suggestions Book will soon appear in the Band Room, for any Band members to make suggestions, contribute ideas, or even enter criticisms. All entries will be discussed by the Committee and the appropriate response recorded in the book. Apart from general suggestions on Band activities, ideas for new music will also be encouraged.

What's On

Wed 10 May	Crown Hotel (Conference), Harrogate
Fri 19 May	Harrogate Band Social Evening, CEGB
Sun 28 May	Valley Gardens, Harrogate
Mon 29 May	Allerton Park
Sun 4 June	Meanwood Park, Leeds
Sun 11 June	Spa Gardens & Market Place, Ripon
Sat 17 June	Hunsingore Gala, Little Ribston
Sat 24 June	Eldwick & Gilstead Gala
Sun 25 June	Castle Yard, Knaresborough
Sat 8 July	Burton Leonard Feast
Sun 9 July	Aldbrough Church Fete
Sun 23 July	Lotherton Hall
Sat 5 August	Tockwith Show
Sat 12 August	Ripley Show
Sun 27 August	Valley Gardens, Harrogate

Unconfirmed dates:

Sun 10 September	Hardrow Scar Contest
Sun 5 November	BDBBA Contest, Keighley
Sun 26 November	Malton Brass Contest

What's On Elsewhere

Yorkshire Imperial Brass Band - Harrogate Festival - 8 August 1989
Fairey Engineering - Royal Hall - 20 May - with Choral Society

Reminders

Rehearsals on Wednesdays (19:15 to 21:15) and Sundays (11:00 to 12:30) are quite often marred by unpunctuality. The Band is not ready to start on time on most occasions. Please make every effort to ensure that you arrive early for practices. If you cannot attend a rehearsal then notify either John Lofthouse (521639) or Peter Wells (886186) as soon as possible.

With all the summer jobs forthcoming, it is VERY IMPORTANT that EVERY player indicates his/her availability or non-availability for ALL the engagements - AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE. We do not want to have to cancel any jobs at the last minute through lack of support, both for financial reasons and also for the lack of credibility it causes.

Social Evening

Friday 19 May - 8:00 'til late at the CEGB. Tickets free to Band members and children under 12, others £3.50.

Personnel

Congratulations to John Lofthouse on being elevated to Life Membership of the Harrogate Band - joining Les Mackown in these hallowed ranks.

Sadly we have heard that Lynn Nozedar will be going back into hospital again soon and will probably not be able to play with us again until the autumn. We wish her all the very best and a speedy recovery.

Under the Baton

Our band, like many others, has problems with tuning. It is primarily a personal responsibility to be in tune with the ensemble, not just on the tuning note but throughout the range of the instrument. Accepting that we have some fairly antique instruments, what can we do to improve the situation?

The first thing, of course, is to listen, and if an unacceptable situation exists to do something about it. What to do depends on you knowing your instrument. How many of us know the effect of fingering 5th space E 0, 12 or 3? Try it! - away from the noisy warm-up atmosphere of the Bandroom. Essential to an improvement in our collective performance is an improvement in how we use our private practice time. We must work on intonation, tone quality and breath control. Don't spend all your time on "fancy" bits, get into a daily routine of long notes, slow lip slurs and tonguing exercises. Find out how you and your instrument react playing slow arpeggios, throughout the range of the instrument - you'll be amazed at the benefit. Incidentally, if you think you are good, borrow a tape recorder and listen to yourself!

As I type this, I can hear all kinds of moaning and excuses being made. If the Band is important to you, you will make time (ten minutes a day will stop you going backwards). To those who make excuses about the kids or the neighbours, think how the professionals survive. Garry Howarth once told me, when he was a player, that all his home practice in a London flat was done with a mute in - so you people with detached houses should be world-beaters!

Peter Wells

20th Anniversary

The Harrogate Band will be 20 years old in 1990! In advance of that auspicious date, have you any ideas for ways in which we could mark or celebrate the occasion?

Contesting

The Band continues to perform well in the contesting arena. Following our first prize (out of four bands) in the Harrogate Competitive Music Festival in March, we gained sixth place in the Northern Area Qualifying Contest in April (out of 14 bands). This was unfortunately not quite good enough to qualify for the National Championships in London (the first three bands qualified) but is nonetheless a very respectable result. More recently, in the Yorkshire Association Contest in Tadcaster, we won first prize in the hymn contest and took second prizes in the march and test-piece contests - which gave us two new trophies to display in the band-room.

Broadcast Bands

Listen to the Band	- Radio 2	- Wed 21:00-21:45
Contest Music	- Radio 3	- Wed 17:00-17:30
Great Northern Brass	- Radio York/Leeds	- Sat 18:05-20:00

Harrogate Band Administration

President	Frank Tombs
Chairman	Gavin Holman (Tel: 866454)
Secretary	Les Mackown (Tel: 562580)
Treasurer	Ian Bristow
Musical Director	Peter Wells
Assistant MD	Ian Davey
Bandmaster	John Lofthouse
Librarian	Geoff Grant
Committee	Tony Carter, John Hallums, Dave Pye, Bob Roper

Why Repiano?

The Repiano Cornet (or Ripieno) is so called for the part it plays in the band. It is physically identical to any other Bb cornet, but plays a supporting role to the solo cornets, only playing in the full passages. The name derives from the Italian "ripieno" meaning "full" which indicated that a passage was to be played by all instruments in the orchestra, not just the soloist(s).

Books on Bands

Brass Band Digest - Perrins,B - Egon - 1984
Brass Bands - Taylor,AR - Granada - 1979
Brass Bands in the 20th Century - Brand,G - Egon - 1979
Brass Bands of Yorkshire - Cooper,TL - Dalesman - 1974
Brass Triumphant - Bainbridge,C - Muller - 1980
Music on Record 1 (Brass Bands) - Gammond,P - PSL - 1980
Oh Listen to the Band - Cook,K - Hinrichsen - 1950
Rakeway Brass Band Yearbook - Littlemore,A - Rakeway - 1987
Village & Town Bands - Weir,C - Shire #61 - 1981
What a Performance - Howarth,E - Robson - 1988

Harrogate Band History

One of the leading exponents of early music heard in towns was Blind Jack of Knaresborough, an ex army bandsman said to have fought at the battle of Falkirk in 1745. Frequenting Harrogate, giving the best of his music on fiddle or oboe as fancy dictated, he played Romeo to the daughter of the landlord of the *Royal Oak Hotel* with some success for they ran away together on the eve of her wedding. Blind Jack's activities extended in many directions, building bridges and roads, true to line and form as with music. A character, as seen from the distance of time, he was the originator of Harrogate music.

More than a century was to pass before Harrogate became music conscious and the residents subscribed to provide a permanent band, appointing Sidney Jones, bandmaster of the Leeds Rifles, as its conductor. The demands on him were great. Each day at 7.30, a performance was given to arouse the ailing ones to take the "waters" and to shake off their early morning fatigue. Tall hats were de rigueur headgear for the bandmen in their four performances a day for a wage of not more than £1 a week. Jones, the indefatigable, bullied, cajoled and inveigled players and patrons alike until he got what he wanted, and what he did want placed Harrogate in the forefront of the musical world. He described himself as a cart horse but it was a horse of extraordinary sinew.

Working in early years with the brass bands for the joy of feeling metal produce music, and finding a quick mastery over the metal, he would take the trumpet part on the cornet and transpose the music while playing it. Trained at Kneller Hall after enlisting in the Dragoon Guards he acquired a proficiency to qualify as a bandmaster. Expanding his activities into Yorkshire, coaching brass bands before moving from Leeds Rifles to Harrogate and his life's work, he stayed the course until the age of 64 and his farewell concert.