

SPLIT NOTES

The Harrogate Band Newsletter

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Contesting

It has been three months since the last issue of Split Notes and the Band has taken part in two contests in that period. The first of these was the annual open, open-air contest at Hardraw Scar. Unlike last year the weather was not hot and sunny, it rained cats and dogs (or mouthpieces and lyres?) for most of the day. This did not dampen the participants' enthusiasm however, and the contest went ahead as planned, under cover of canvas - with audience and bands crammed into a large marquee. The Harrogate Band once again performed well, winning the Best Third Section Band prize and coming 5th overall - beating a 1st and two 2nd section bands into lower places.

Then, at the beginning of October, the Band travelled to London to compete in the National Championship Finals (3rd Section) at the Wembley Conference Centre. We travelled down on the Saturday morning, arriving for lunch at our hotel in Hatfield. After a rehearsal, we set off for Wembley and, despite a coach driver who seemed to have mistaken north for south, arrived to be greeted with the news that we had drawn number 17 out of 20 and would not be on stage until late in the evening. Our performance went very well and we were rewarded with 5th place - another very good result for the Band. Philip Wilby played with the Band in the percussion section, alongside his daughter Anna, in our performance, a fact that did not go unnoticed by the band press as it was his composition - *The New Jerusalem* - that had been chosen as the Championship Section Test Piece for the National Finals. After returning to the hotel on the Saturday evening, we set off for home on Sunday with a very pleasant lunch stop in Cambridge.

We had a near disaster a few days before the trip to London when our principal cornet player, Sally Drinkwater, handed in her resignation and left the Band. Fortunately Andrew Jackson had been covering the part in previous rehearsals and led the Band as its principal cornet through its final rehearsals and its contest performance. Congratulations for a job well done go especially to Andrew, and of course to Peter Wells for all the hard work in preparing the Band for these contests. All eyes are now on the Malton Contest on 15 November!

Stadt-Musik-Verein Bad Hersfeld

Our invitation to the SMV band from Bad Hersfeld in Germany was accepted recently, and they will be coming to Harrogate as our guests from 28 July to 2 August 1993. This visit reciprocates our last visit to Bad Hersfeld as their guests in 1990. The Committee will soon be making provisional plans for their stay in Harrogate and would welcome any suggestions for concert venues and/or places of interest for our guests to visit, and events that could be put on for their entertainment. Their party is likely to number around 50 people of whom there may well be a good proportion of youngsters. We also need to find accommodation for them during their stay and will be asking Members and friends of the Band to put one or more of the SMV band up in their homes - please start to think how you can help with this! For previous visits of SMV to Harrogate we have managed to house most of the band between ourselves and our friends/relatives - as they have done for us in the past.

Future Engagements

Sunday 15 November	Malton '92 Contest
Sunday 22 November	Recording session
Thursday 3 December	Victoria Gardens, Harrogate (6.30-9pm)
Saturday 5 December	Victoria Gardens Fun Day
Thursday 10 December	Victoria Gardens, Harrogate (6.30-9)
Saturday 12 December	Market Place, Harrogate (10.30-1pm)
Saturday 12 December	Carol Service - St John's Church, Bilton
Thursday 17 December	Victoria Gardens, Harrogate (6.30-9pm)
Saturday 19 December	Market Place, Harrogate (1-4.30pm)
Sunday 20 December	Bilton Cricket Club
Thursday 24 December	Keilder Oval, Harrogate
Thursday 24 December	Oakdale Golf Club, Harrogate
1993 Saturday 20 February	Woodlands Church, Harrogate
Saturday 20 March	Northern Area Contest, Darlington
Sunday 21 March	Harrogate Competitive Music Festival
Sunday 2 May	YHBBA Annual Contest, Scunthorpe
Saturday 10 July	Burton Leonard Feast Day
Saturday 17 July	RAOB, Grove House, Harrogate
Wednesday 28 July	Visit of SMV Bad Hersfeld (until 2 Aug)
Monday 30 August	Sicklinghall Fete

Recording

On Sunday 22 November the Band is making a recording of a number of pieces of music which it intends to produce on cassette in the near future. The recording session will be held at Granby School. We are hoping to

attract sponsors for this recording, whose names would appear on the cassette liners, and would ask any Member or friend of the Band who may know of a potential sponsor to let one of the Committee know as soon as possible. For as little as £25 you, your friend, or your organisation/business could be associated with our first official recording.

Membership

As has already been noted above, we lost Sally Drinkwater from the Band at the end of September, and it was sad that she felt she had to leave the Band before the London Finals.

Stefan Märki, our visitor from Switzerland has now returned home from his studies in this country. During his stay he supported the Band on are virtually every concert and rehearsal occasion and we were sad to see him go, but wish him the best of luck in his future career.

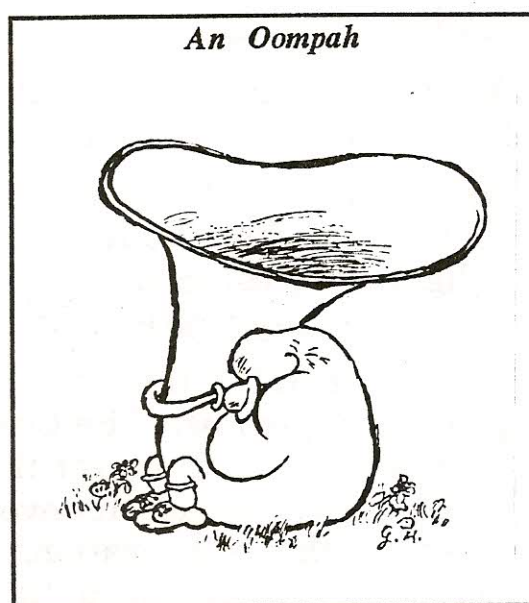
Welcome to Liz and Ray Rochester, on Tenor Horn and Eb Bass respectively, who are now Full Members of the Band.

Finances

The Band's funds are currently very low, our instrumental purchases and trip to London have made severe dents in our funds, and the running costs of the Band

are higher as each year goes by (rent, insurance, transport, contest fees etc.). We need to improve this situation to give us a firm foundation for 1993 and onwards. Some short term aids to this are: prompt payment of subscriptions from Full Members; good support from players over the Christmas period at our various fee-paying, collection and busking engagements - together with volunteer collectors (please ask your family and friends to help us in this).

Longer term we need to look at the Band's activities and determine how we can improve the quality of engagements and the revenue earned from them. This will be one of a range of topics that the Committee will be addressing in the near future in an attempt to focus more on planning of the Band's future to exploit its considerable, and demonstrated potential. If any Member has any views on the Band's future direction, or initiatives that could be taken, then please let the Committee know.



Recent engagements

Two recent events made use of the Band at relatively short notice. The first was the opening of the lower Market Hall in the new Victoria Gardens complex in Harrogate. The Band was asked to perform a fanfare for the ceremony. This was followed by an invitation to play during their Fun Day for Opening Celebrations of the whole building in December.

On 1 November, the Band took part in a service at Leeds University Conference Centre at which the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, gave the address. The Band had originally been asked by Philip Wilby to augment a brass group from the University, but when it was seen that most of the Band was willing to participate, the whole Band turned out to play music before and hymns during the service.

Brief Notes

A reminder that, from 1 February 1993, the Band uniform will consist of black trouser/skirts rather than the current grey shades.

Dave Cole, Bandmaster, has attended a short course organised by the YHBBA for band officials. It was found to be very interesting and enlightening especially on the various rules and procedures relating to contesting, registration etc.

The first AGM of the North of England Brass Band Championships took place in September. The three local band associations were not officially represented which meant that nominations for the Regional Committee could not be taken. However a start was made to bringing some more order to the organisation. A new National Championships Board is planned to be set up in 1994, but the full scope of its remit is not yet known.

The Band's recent contest results show that we are a first class outfit with considerable musical potential - but more could have been done! Lack of preparation for contests particularly, but concerts as well, is reflected in our performance. This is especially true for contests where we have the advantage of an written objective assessment of our performance. These remarks together with our own personal observations do highlight where things go wrong, and a good proportion of the problems are due to lack of rehearsal by the whole band as an ensemble. However hard Peter tries to prepare the Band for its engagements (and that is very hard), if players (especially key ones) are absent then the total musical preparation cannot be achieved, with the result that we cannot achieve our best performance and even fail to reach a satisfactory level on occasion. Please remember that every player in the Band is as important, in their own way, as the rest, and try not to be the one that lets the side down.

