

# SPLIT $\equiv$ NOTES

Number 21

News from The Harrogate Band

May 2001

## Champions Again!!

The Band became the First Section North of England Regional Champions by winning first place in the contest held at Darlington in March. Eric Ball's seldom heard tone poem *The Undaunted* was the test piece which proved to be a popular choice with bands and audiences. This win qualifies the band to compete once again in the National Brass Band Championship Finals, which this year are being held in the Guild Hall, Preston on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> September. It will be the Band's seventh appearance at the National Finals since 1985. Rehearsals have just started on the Finals test piece – *A Fantasy for Brass Band* by Malcolm Arnold - a challenging composition for the band to master, but one which will be enjoyable to play and listen to. Anyone who would like to accompany the Band to the Finals should let us know as soon as possible.

## Concerts coming up

Saturday 9th June, 7.30pm - *Music from the Stage and Screen* - a concert with the soprano Deborah Richardson at Christchurch Centre, The Stray, Harrogate. Tickets £5.00 (including refreshments) - available from 01423 508918 or on the door.

Tuesday 5th June, 7.30pm - A major concert with the **Houston Choral Society**, directed by Betty Devine, as part of their UK tour, at Ripon Cathedral. The programme includes *Overture - Force of Destiny*, *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, *Tricot Rouge*, *Heroic Elegy*, *Year of the Dragon*, *Cortege from Mlada*, *Elsa's Procession to the Minster*. Proceeds in aid of St Anne's Shelter and Housing Charity. Tickets £5 and £3.

Friday 3rd August, 7.30pm - a concert in the grounds of **Fountains Abbey**. Come and hear the band in the evocative and historical surroundings of this magnificent ruin.

## Champions Yet Again!!

A new format to the Yorkshire and Humberside Brass Band Association's annual contest in Scarborough was welcomed by all participating bands. Harrogate continued their run of success with a convincing, if slender, win over stiff competition in the Premier "A" section. The performance of our chosen programme of the hymn tune *Stella*, march *Bramwyn* and test piece *Year of the Dragon* persuaded the adjudicator to award the band the first prize, even if the final movement of *Year of the Dragon* was a little hurried! In all we gathered **FOUR** trophies to add to our bulging cabinet - including one for the day's "best conductor".

A further trophy was won by Daniel Dickinson for the best trombone player - a well deserved accolade for his sterling work in leading the band in the solo passages in the second movement of the piece. Daniel also is to be congratulated on being the runner-up in the "Young Driver of the Year" competition - nothing to do with brass bands!

## Anniversary Concert

To conclude the celebrations of our 30th anniversary year we presented a special joint concert with the Granby High School Concert Band in March. Former players in the HGS Concert Band were responsible for the formation of the Harrogate Band back in 1970. The concert included pieces chosen and conducted by the Band's previous Musical



Directors (Neil Richmond, John Higginson and Peter Wells); *Dragon Parade* - a piece specially composed for the band's 30th anniversary and a nostalgic reminder of music from the 1970's when The Harrogate Band was very young!; and of course a performance by the Granby High School Band themselves. A musical tribute to the memory of John Hallums followed the announcement of the donation of a trophy in his name, which was subsequently awarded at the Northern Region Championships. We were especially pleased that Joan Hallums, together with her daughter Catherine and several other family members were able to attend the concert.

## Brass Class and Tewit

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We have recently amalgamated the Brass Class with the Junior Band and Training Group of the Tewit Youth Band. It was becoming increasingly difficult for the trainers in the Harrogate Band, whose commitments had changed, to give sufficient time to ensure the Brass Class flourished and that the children were given enough support. We are very pleased that Tewit Band were able to accommodate the Brass Class members, and the Harrogate Band will carry on its support of the youth training programme through its continued friendly links with the Tewit Band and provision of spare instruments. We are planning a major concert at Harrogate Ladies College on 30 November featuring both bands together with members of James Shepherd Versatile Brass.

## John Hallums

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John Hallums died in hospital on the 9th January, aged 81, following a short illness. Always a brass band enthusiast - though never a player - John was involved at the formation of The Harrogate Band in 1970 and subsequently became its chairman, a position he held for 16 years. He was an active committee member of the Bradford and District, Harrogate and Yorkshire and

Humberside Brass Band Associations and was one of the many 'unseen workers' of the brass band world. John's chairmanship of The Harrogate Band covered the tenure of five conductors and spanned a period of steady musical and economic progress. He was still an active member of the Band in his 80's and participated in the Band's millennium tour of Holland.

An ensemble from the Band provided a fitting musical tribute at John's funeral, and the standard of the Dunkirk Veterans' Association was lowered as the Last Post was sounded. He is survived by his wife Joan, his two children and four grandchildren.

## Publicity

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The Band continues to obtain good coverage in the local media and on the internet. An article on the band is due to appear on the new **[www.4barsrest.com](http://www.4barsrest.com)** brass band news website.

A recent visitor from the USA spent the evening with us at a band rehearsal. Steve Sherrill from the Georgia Brass Band and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra was keen to meet us during his UK visit, having seen all about us on the internet, and even brought his parents along!

## Further plans

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We aim to record a new CD later on this year, and possibly also a second recording together with a choir of Christmas music.

The Royal Hall in Harrogate is still under threat, and we are hoping to promote a major concert, probably early in 2002, in support of the appeal. This will include other Harrogate musical groups and feature music of composers from or associated with the Harrogate area - of whom there are a surprising number. Arthur Wood, for example, is most famous for *Barwick Green* (the theme tune to "The Archers") from his *My Native Heath* suite. His *Three Dale Dances* are also well known, and we have



recently discovered *Three More Dale Dances* which comprise 1) Wharfedale - Ilkley Moor, 2) Nidderdale - Knaresborough, 3) Airedale - Fountains Abbey.

Two such composers will be featured in our concert with the *Houston Choral Society* on 5th June. John Farrar, wrote a number of pieces of music before being killed at the Battle of the Somme. We will play his last work, *Heroic Elegy*, specially arranged by Neil Richmond. Wilfred Heaton, also a Harrogate resident, will be represented with his march written for Tewit Youth Band, *Tricot Rouge*.

## A Big Day

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Looking ahead to the National Championship Finals in Preston in September, we have been approached by a television company making a documentary series about people preparing for a "big day". One of the programmes will feature the Harrogate Band and the contest in Preston. It is hoped the series will be broadcast early in 2002. Watch this space!

## People

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A very warm welcome to Gemma Pitt (tenor horn) who has joined us from the Vernon Building Society (Poynton) Band, and Helen Worley and Precious Lowe (cornet) who have also joined us since the last *Split Notes*. We are also very pleased to welcome back Nick Garrett and Steven Whitwham on cornet and trombone respectively.

Catherine Morland's excellent work on baritone was recognised at the recent band AGM where she was presented with the award for the "most improved player" by David Lancaster.

David Lancaster has been appointed an External Examiner for Music at the University of Salford. This work brings him into regular contact with a number of other tutors, players and figures in the brass band scene, as Salford

is perhaps the major centre for brass band studies in the UK.

Gavin Holman recently took part in a gala celebration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cheshire Youth Brass Band. Not quite a founder member, by a few months, he joined some 150 existing and past members at a rousing (in all senses of the word) concert.

## Good start to 2001

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Our first contest of the new (true) millennium pitted the band against a very strong combined contingent of eleven bands from the Championship and 1st Sections. *Year of the Dragon* won us fifth place which, against such competition, was a very good achievement. Congratulations to the contest organisers - their last minute rearrangements worked perfectly and produced a very enjoyable event.

January 2001 saw the band promoted into the First Section of the National Brass Band Championships for the first time in its 30-year history. This step represents a huge challenge for the Band, but we are working hard to continue the run of successes which the band has enjoyed over the last few years. So far so good!!

## More 2000 Highlights

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Some highlights of last year include another memorable concert given in the Royal Hall in December in aid of the Fire Services Benevolent Fund. The band shared the stage with the choir from St Aidans' School in Harrogate and formed the highlight of the festive season for many in the audience and the band.

Second place in the First Section at the Hartlepool Borough Brass Band Contest in December was a great achievement for the Band. We fought off stiff competition from seasoned residents of this section in a close competition which the adjudicator, Alan Exeley, judged to be of high standard. The Band had entered the First Section, rather than the Second Section which was held the



previous weekend, due to a clash with a long standing concert engagement (which in the event was cancelled at the last minute). The contest at Hartlepool was brought to a close with an excellent concert by the Ever Ready Band in lieu of the Championship Section contest which was abandoned due to a number of withdrawals. Another superb result in what is our most successful and enjoyable competition - over the eight years of the contest's history the Band has won 5 first places, 2 seconds and 1 third - never being out of the prizes - and on two of those occasions playing in a section above our national grading. Unfortunately this contest is unlikely to run in 2001.

The Band visited the Harrogate Grammar School in November for the first time to play in a joint concert with the school's concert bands and musical groups. A highly enjoyable evening was spent and we were all very impressed with the verve and proficiency of the school musicians. Two of our leading cornet players, Neil Cole and Karen Shore, are fairly recent ex-Grammarians and we hope this event will be the first of many similar and that closer links are maintained between us.

## Come Follow The Harrogate Band

Copies of this recording are available (£10 CD, £5 cassette) from the Band at most engagements, or contact Gavin Holman - see below.

## Future Engagements

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|-----------|--|
| 27-May-01 | Nostell Priory Yorkshire Challenge Contest Final, 3pm                      |
| 5-Jun-01  | Houston Choral Society, Ripon Cathedral, 7.30pm                            |
| 9-Jun-01  | Stage & Screen concert - Christchurch Centre, The Stray, Harrogate, 7.30pm |

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| 16-Jun-01 | Harrogate Band Race Evening, The Bandroom               |
| 23-Jun-01 | "Picnic in the Park", Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, 7pm   |
| 24-Jun-01 | Central Park, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, 2pm         |
| 1-Jul-01  | Recreation Field, Pateley Bridge, 3pm                   |
| 21-Jul-01 | Ripon Races, 1.30pm                                     |
| 22-Jul-01 | Wetherby Bandstand, 2pm                                 |
| 28-Jul-01 | Proms at Mowbray House, Kirkby Malzeard                 |
| 3-Aug-01  | Fountains Abbey, 7.30pm                                 |
| 2-Sep-01  | Harrogate Allotments Society Show, Valley Gardens, 12pm |
| 23-Sep-01 | National Finals, Preston Guild Hall                     |
| 4-Nov-01  | Malton Brass 2001                                       |
| 17-Nov-01 | Starbeck Methodist Church, 7.30pm                       |
| 30-Nov-01 | St Andrews Day Concert - Harrogate Ladies College       |
| 13-Dec-01 | ASDA, Harrogate   |
| 20-Dec-01 | ASDA, Harrogate   |

These are confirmed public engagements. For further details of any of these, please see the website or contact the Band via the numbers below.

## Keeping in touch

For further information see the Band's award-winning and world-famous website:

**[www.harrogateband.org](http://www.harrogateband.org)**

If you have any news or information you would like to see in future issues, please let the Editor know. For queries about our engagements or to book the band, please contact Sue Morland on 01423-887996, for any other information contact Gavin Holman.



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