

SPLIT NOTES

Number 26

News from The Harrogate Band

December 2003



Festive Engagements

Our major Christmas concerts this year are for St Michael's Hospice at their *Light a Life* service on Sunday 14th December, 3pm, and then the annual Fire Brigade Charity concert at the Harrogate International Centre, which this year includes Lucy Rhodes (BBC Radio 2 Chorister of the Year), on Sunday 21st December, 7.30pm at the Harrogate International Centre.

Brides in the Bath

New Year's Eve, ITV1, 9.00pm – The Harrogate Band makes its latest television appearance as members of an army band in *Brides in the Bath*, a TV drama which was recorded at Ripley Castle earlier in the year. The story of the serial killer George Joseph Smith, who married three wealthy women and then drowned them in their baths, the drama stars Martin Kemp, and it should be worth watching for that alone even without the added attraction of the Band!

Christmas is Coming

We know that is obvious! However this is not just a reminder that December 25th is rapidly approaching, but the launch of the Band's new CD of the same name. *Christmas is Coming* is an ideal present to give or keep! It contains a mixture of seasonal music, carols and arrangements, with the icing on this particular Christmas cake being

the vocal contributions of Lucy Rhodes (BBC Radio2 Young Chorister of the Year), who is a particular friend of the Band. The CD costs £10 and is available from any Band member, at our engagements or

by post via the address at the end. Sound samples of some of the tracks are available on the website.

The band assembled at St John Fisher Church in Harrogate at the end of August to make the recording - some wearing "Santa Claus" hats, one even sporting musical carol socks, and accompanied by a supply of mince pies and Christmas cake. Hopefully some of this strange behaviour helped to ensure there was a real Christmas feel to the recording!

And don't forget the Band's earlier CD "**Made in Harrogate**" which contains a selection of music from Harrogate composers and others associated with the town, together with three items from *The Harrogate Song Book* which illustrates life in the spa town in the early years of the last century.



Thank you for the Music!

A major concert festival is being held at the Majestic Hotel on 15th February

2004. The Harrogate Band together with St Andrew's Players will remember Michael Hymas, who had supported both organizations so fully before his death earlier this year. As President of the Band, a long-time patron of the Band, St Andrews Players and other organisations in Harrogate, his friendship and guidance is greatly missed. Two concerts will be held, a matinée at 2.30pm and a Gala evening concert at 7.30pm. Further details will be available nearer the time. Please make a date in your diary!

Malton Triumph

With a performance that had the adjudicator, Roy Sparkes, searching for second and third place bands from the very start, Harrogate Band took the top prize at the Malton Brass 2003 Entertainment Contest. In addition the Band's Principal Cornet player, Robert Illsley, was awarded the "best soloist" trophy for his performance of *Hello Dolly*. Other items in the Band's programme were *La Mourisque* by Susato, Shostakovich's *Festive Overture*, *All Around the World* by Alexander Owen, *'Mid All the Traffic* and the jazzy, New Orleans style of *Hallelujah Parade*.



MD David Lancaster with our trophy!

New Band President

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Neil Richmond as our Honorary President. Neil is well known locally as a dedicated teacher and conductor, and has been involved with the Band since the very beginning, as it was he who in 1970 formed the band from former Granby School Band players who wished to continue their playing after leaving school. Neil was the Band's first Musical Director, and quickly led it to success at its first contest in November 1970 at York - the first of many contest successes over the last 33 years. Neil handed over the reins to John Higginson in the late 1970s, but maintained a high local profile as he continued his renowned work with Granby High School Concert Band, helping to launch the musical careers of many youngsters, several of whom have moved on to The Harrogate Band over the years. Neil has retained his links with the Band throughout, and since his retirement from teaching has been able to add further value to our activities - particularly via his research into local music. This work formed the basis of our *Made in Harrogate* concert, held in aid of the Royal Hall restoration, and also the CD of the same name. His arrangements of the pieces unearthed, some featured on the CD, have been received with great interest from the band, which is forever on the lookout for new and interesting material.

In inviting Neil to be our Honorary President, The Harrogate Band recognises not only Neil's continuing support, but more significantly the immense contribution made to the

band and its members past and present through it's founding and formative years.

Stage and Screen

A feast of music from films, television, musicals and opera delighted a crowded St Peter's Church in Harrogate in September. From the sublime such as *Silent Worship* from Handel's Ptolemy to the (not quite) ridiculous *The Simpsons* theme tune, via a whole range of show music from the likes of Gershwin, Berlin, Bernstein and John Williams. The Band was delighted to welcome guest soprano vocalist Claire Cave who sang several songs accompanied by Katie Illsley on the piano. Solo items by various members of the band were featured during the concert - in particular Jo Campbell's appearance as James Bond in her soprano cornet solo performance of *Live and Let Die* was excellent. A double act of Rachel Higginson (flugel) and MD David Lancaster re-enacted the scene from *Brassed Off* where Gloria arrives at the band rehearsal and, unrehearsed, plays the Adagio from Rodrigo's *Concerto d'Aranjuez*. Rachel's rendition was, of course, wonderful - but it has to be said that the duo's acting was a little on the hammy side! We were also very pleased to see Leighton Rich in the audience. The founder of Harrogate's Tewit Youth Band, Leighton had for many years conducted the very successful Hampshire County Youth Brass Band.

People

We're delighted to welcome Cliff and David Smith on cornet, Phil Harris -

horn, Adrian Gibbs - Eb Bass, Malcolm Holmes - BBb Bass and Craig Stevenson - cornet. Departures include Gemma Pitt who has taken up First Horn with Rothwell Temperance Band, Neil Davidson who is having a gap year in South America and Precious Lowe - we thank them all for their support of the band over the years and wish them the best for the future. Welcome back to Lynne Stobbart, cornet, from her Antipodean adventures.

Dragon Music

Dragon Music Publishing has been formed to market and supply the original brass band music and arrangements by the Musical Director of the Harrogate Band, David Lancaster, together with other composers and arrangers associated with the Band. A wide selection of music for all tastes and occasions, and to suite bands of various abilities, can be ordered at www.dragonmusicpublishing.com. Samples of the music and scores can be played online.



St Helens - Wilkinson Northern Championships

For once the band was not drawn number 1 in a contest - playing 10 of 12 - from an original field of 17, the Band's performance of *Exodus* by Eric Ball unfortunately failed to inspire the adjudicator, David Read. The Wilkinson Northern Open Championships this year had asked all competing bands to select an own-choice test piece by Eric Ball, in honour of the centenary of his birth. As

a result the day was a feast of some of the best of writing for brass bands.

Friends of the Band

This new group has been set up for those supporters of the band who wish to be kept up to date with what the band is up to, and also for those who would like to support the band in any of the many ways that can help us.

Of course, receiving this issue of Split Notes means you are already on our mailing list, but if you'd like to play a more active part in supporting the band – there are a whole range of possibilities, you don't need to be able to play an instrument! –

then please let us know. Further details can be found on the website or you can contact Gavin Holman.



Email News

If you would like to receive occasional news from the Band via email, just send a message with your name and email address to Gavin Holman - see below.

Future Engagements

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| 13-Dec-02 | Victoria Centre, Harrogate, 10-12 and 1-3pm |
| 14-Dec-03 | Light up a Life Service, St Michael's Hospice, 3pm |
| 20-Dec-03 | Market Place, Harrogate, 10-12 and 1-3pm |
| 20-Dec-03 | Victoria Centre, Harrogate, 10-12 and 1-3pm |

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| 21-Dec-03 | New Life Church Carol Service, St Aidan's Chapel, 11am |
| 21-Dec-03 | Fire Brigade Charity Concert, (Harrogate Conference Centre), 7.30pm |
| 24-Dec-03 | Carols round the lamp post - Kielder Oval, Harrogate, 7pm |
| 8-Feb-04 | Brass at the Guild Contest – Preston Guild Hall |
| 15-Feb-04 | Thank you for the Music - Majestic Hotel, 2.30 & 7.30pm |
| 17-Mar-04 | Starbeck Methodist Church |
| 21-Mar-04 | Northern Championships – Darlington |
| 25-Apr-04 | Wetherby Races |
| 23-May-04 | Centre Vale Park, Todmorden, 3pm |
| 27-Jun-04 | Recreation Ground, Pateley Bridge, 2.30pm (tbc) |
| 25-Jul-04 | Golden Acre Park, Leeds, 2.30pm |
| 1-Aug-04 | Valley Gardens, Harrogate, 3pm (tbc) |

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 world-famous website:

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 Liz Lancaster on 01423-522643, for any other information contact Gavin Holman.



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