



Into the Second Half of the 20th Century

ALEX MORTIMER (1905-1976), like his elder brother, Harry, was born in Hebden Bridge and, along with the rest of the family, moved to Luton in 1910. He joined the Luton Red Cross Band, after the war playing under his father, Fred and the great William Halliwell. He shared in the band's successes, including the Crystal Palace win of 1923, but on 2nd euphonium. The committee refused the request of both conductors to promote him to solo euphonium, despite the fact that he had become a very fine player.

In the following year a vacancy for solo euphonium occurred at Foden's, one of Mr Halliwell's other bands. He recommended Alex and he got the job, playing with Foden's for the next 20 years, sharing in all the wonderful events of the 1930s - including the trip to South Africa - and with a full time job provided in the works.

Leaving Foden's in 1944, Alex became a professional musician, taking the post of principal tuba with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. After a few years here he became interested in conducting and accepted the post of musical director with the Scottish CWS Band. Within a few months of this appointment his brother, Harry - then professional conductor of Black Dyke - offered him the post of bandmaster there. He accepted, and remained with Black Dyke from 1949-1954.

Black Dyke completed its London hat trick in 1949 and was barred from competing in the following year. Then, in 1951, Alex took them to London, winning and making it four-in-a-row. This caused a bit of a rift between the two brothers, as Harry felt he had taken Black Dyke through a hat trick and had then been sacked. However, Black Dyke continued with Alex, winning third prize in the Nationals in 1952 and third at Belle Vue in the following year.

In 1954 Alex was offered the musical directorship of the CWS (Manchester) Band, joining forces with them shortly after the Yorkshire Area Contest, at which Black Dyke failed to qualify for the Finals - to the chagrin of the players.

The main chapter in the life of Alex Mortimer was now about to unfold. With Derek Garside on principal solo cornet and Lyndon Baglin on solo euphonium, he was to make this band into one of the most musically sensitive brass bands of all times - no doubt using some of his father's tactics from the

great Foden's days. Incidentally, like his father, Alex was a left-handed conductor.

Unfortunately, though he was able to make the band play to the highest of standards, he was not blessed with his father's, nor his elder brother's ability to impress the various adjudicators with his interpretations. In fact, he was something of a loose canon, and feelings after a CWS performance were often that, despite excellent playing and musicianship, the interpretation would put the band 'either right in or right out!' The consequence was that out of 17 performances at the Nationals, four were completely out of the prizes and only two were actual winners. Similarly at Belle Vue, though there were even more non-prize-winning performances here, there were just two wins.

Despite all of this, the playing standard of the band was at times quite phenomenal. It was in great demand for concerts and broadcasts and made ground-breaking contributions to commercial recordings of the time.

Away from his regular band, Alex had a measure of success in Scotland, starting with a win for Clydebank Burgh in the 1955 Scottish Championships. In 1957 he took first and second prizes, with Scottish CWS and Clydebank respectively,

repeating the feat in 1959 (there were no Scottish Championships in 1958) and winning again with Scottish CWS in 1960. 1964 saw him winning again with CWS, and in 1965 he once more took the top two places - with SCWS and Kinneil Colliery. This was a remarkable run of successes over the decade.

Closer to home, Alex incurred the wrath of his bosses in 1961 by taking Brighouse & Rastrick to the British Open and winning fourth prize with them, whilst his own band came a lowly sixth. There were no complaints the previous year when Brighouse were sixth and CWS won. However, it was now made clear to him that, as a full time employee of CWS, he was not to conduct any other band in competition with them in the future.

Alex Mortimer was a colourful character, would never suffer fools gladly and had a kind of love-hate relationship with many of his players. They admired him for his musicianship and teaching, but were not always happy with his methods. He was, nevertheless, one of the all-time greats amongst brass band conductors. He received a Baton of Honour following the 1963 National Championships.

STANLEY BODDINGTON MBE

(1905-1986) played the cornet as a boy, playing in a local Salvation Army band from the age of seven. He joined the well-known Kettering Salvation Army Band ten years later, playing in the solo cornet section.

On the formation of Munn & Felton's Works Band in Kettering in 1933, Stanley was appointed musical director, a position he held continuously for 42 years until his retirement in 1975. William Halliwell was the professional conductor during these early years and so successful were the two conductors at moulding the new band together that it won the National Championships at Crystal Palace in 1935, whilst still a mere two years old. In the following year it came second.

Following serious problems during the second World War, the band came back strongly to win third prizes both at Belle Vue and the Nationals (now held at the Royal Albert Hall) in 1946. There was a steady stream of lower placings for a few years but then, in 1954, Munn & Felton's made history at Belle Vue by winning first prize from the number one draw, the only time this has ever happened in the contest.

All of these successes were under the baton of Stanley Boddington, though



Alex Mortimer.

at some time during the 1950s Harry Mortimer was brought in as musical adviser and professional conductor. It was he who led the band to victory in the 1955 Nationals, apparently the only time that Stanley did not conduct in the post-war major contests.

There were four further wins in the Nationals, in 1957, 1960, 1964 and 1966, and a win in 1971 in the so-called World Championships. Most of the band's successes were in the London contests, as they attended Belle Vue only occasionally.

In addition to the contests, Munn & Felton's (GUS from 1962) was a great concert band, a regular broadcaster and produced a fine series of commercial recordings for EMI. As musical director Stanley conducted the band most of the time.

Other bands conducted at times by Stanley included Morris Motors and Rushden Temperance. There was also an appearance with Grimethorpe in 1977, after his 'retirement', when he took them to the National and European Championships, both held on the same weekend. They picked up third prize in the Nationals and second in the European.

Stanley Boddington was an accomplished pianist, holding the diploma of LRAM, and had several published arrangements to his credit. In 1966 he was awarded the Baton of Honour following the National Championships and in 1982 he was appointed MBE.

GEORGE THOMPSON MBE

(1907-1984) learned to play the cornet in a junior Salvation Army band, but joined the famous Callender's Cable Works Band on E flat bass in 1920. He studied musical theory under Dr Denis Wright and became the first recipient of the LGSM diploma in Brass Bandmastership in 1933, two years later achieving the BBCM. He conducted a succession of bands - Odhams Press from 1936, City of Coventry from 1940 - taking 5th prize at Belle Vue in his first years, and Grimethorpe Colliery from 1942-1947, leading them to second place at Belle Vue in 1945.

It was during this period that George founded the Grimethorpe Schoolboys' Band, which was to produce a number of high profile players, including soprano player Peter Roberts and Stan Lippeatt on flugelhorn.

George Thompson then moved south again, having a successful time with Hanwell. He returned to Grimethorpe in 1957, with 15 colourful years including many broadcasts and commercial recordings, before retiring, in 1972. He then worked with a number of lower section bands, in 1975 became Director of Examinations for the Bandsman's College of Music and two years later was awarded



Stanley Boddington.

the MBE. He was also in great demand during this period as an adjudicator.

George Thompson was a fine teacher and a great individualist as a conductor. With Hanwell he had a second place at Belle Vue in 1950, and with Grimethorpe he had a succession of lower placings there, including second place in 1963, winning in 1967 and 1969. Grimethorpe also won the National Championships in 1970, one of the years when there was also a World Championships, and they had an enviable record at the Finals of the National Coal Board contests in Blackpool. He is remembered for two particularly outstanding performances - *Rienzi* in the Yorkshire Area Contest of 1963 and *Spectrum* at the British Open Championships of 1969.

LEONARD LAMB (1910-1973)

played the cornet as a boy, later joining the Fairey Aviation Works Band. He conducted a number of local bands before being appointed bandmaster of Fairey's in 1956, where he worked under the guidance of the band's musical director, Harry Mortimer. Following HM's withdrawal from contest conducting after 1956 Leonard took the band, under Harry's guidance, to the major contests, though there were a number of years when they did not attend the Nationals.

Belle Vue results (now called the British Open) were quite impressive, with four wins and two second prizes in 12 attempts. The four wins were in quick succession, with a hat trick in the years 1961-1963 and a further win in 1965, following the year when they were barred owing to the hat trick. In that year (1965) they achieved their only Nationals win under Leonard, making it a

'double' year. During the year in which they were barred Leonard took Lindley (Huddersfield) to the Open and came away with the second prize.

The Fairey Band was also very busy during this period with engagements, broadcasts and recordings, and was also part of Harry Mortimer's 'Men of Brass'.

Towards the end of the decade Leonard's health was beginning to fade and in 1969 he handed over to Kenneth Dennison. He died in 1973 at the age of 63, but he had served Fairey's well for over 20 years, as cornet player and conductor.

GEORGE HESPE (1900-1967)

enlisted in the army as a band boy in 1914. In due course he took the bandmaster's course at Kneller Hall (1925-1928) and was appointed bandmaster of the Seaforth Highlanders. He held this post for five years before retiring from the army.

He then embarked on a musical career in civvy street but this was a chequered career, to say the least, and he seems never to have achieved his full potential. He had ten years conducting the Sheffield Police Band, following which he played tuba professionally, with the BBC Northern and Hallé orchestras, just for a couple of years.

In 1945 he conducted the newly-formed but short-lived St Hilda's Band (based in Bradford and not to be confused with St Hilda's Colliery Band), leading them to second place in the Area contest of that year. He then took Creswell Colliery for a short period during the early 1950s, before being appointed musical director of another new and short-lived band, Ferodo Works, based in Chapel-en-le-Frith in the Peak District. This band reached its peak in 1955 when it won the British Open Championships. There were also two other prizes there - a second in 1954 and a fourth in 1956.



George Thompson.

On the disbanding of Ferodo, George went to Ransome & Marles, taking some engagements in 1958 and being appointed professional conductor in the following year. Though quite successful at regional level, the band's only national successes were third and fourth prize in the early 1960s at the Royal Albert Hall. Early in 1964 Hespe was appointed professional conductor of Black Dyke, but his only contest with them was at the Area contest, in which they came fourth, thereby not qualifying for the Finals. Shortly after the contest he suffered a heart attack and never conducted again. George Hespe was a cultured musician and a fine conductor, perhaps deserving of more success in the brass band world than he achieved. He was also a competent composer, but produced only a handful of band pieces, the most notable of which was his suite, *The Three Musketeers*. This was the set test for the Belle Vue September contest of 1953 and was for many years a popular concert item.

Others names which link comfortably with this era include Alfred Ashpole, a popular adjudicator, conductor and teacher, with an emphasis on correspondence courses. Leonard Davies was also a conductor, adjudicator and a first class arranger. He was the principal of Parr School of Music and was the first secretary of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain.

Eric Bravington OBE will always be associated with Hanwell Silver Band. Having played solo cornet, he became the band's musical director, serving from 1957-67 and returning, briefly, shortly before his death in 1982, aged 61. Having played in the London Philharmonic Orchestra around the beginning of the war, he was in the band of the Welsh Guards from 1941-48, returning to the LPO then, as principal trumpet, a position he held until 1969. He was also the orchestra's managing director from 1959. In his later years, Eric Bravington was a regular brass band adjudicator at the highest level. He was appointed OBE in 1974

Eddie Williams was an outstanding tenor horn player. As a young man he played with Camborne Town Band, but later he was a member of Brighouse & Rastrick and Fairey's. After his return to Cornwall he formed and conducted St Dennis Youth Band, making them into one of the finest youth bands in the country.

T J (Tom) Powell is well remembered for a number of fine marches, including *The Contester* and *Castell Coch*, which brought him the title 'The Welsh March King'. But he was also a noted conductor and adjudicator. He collapsed and died in a BBC studio whilst conducting Cory's.

William (Bill) Scholes was a well-known Midlands conductor and adjudicator. His name will be linked particularly with Rushden Temperance and Kibworth bands.

James (Jimmy) Hickman conducted Slaithwaite and Carlton Main before the war, but is now chiefly remembered as the bandmaster of Brighouse & Rastrick in the 1960s. He had a typical Yorkshire wry sense of humour.

Rex Mortimer was the youngest of the three famous sons of Fred Mortimer. He was born in Luton and played in Luton Red Cross Band under his father. Along with most of the family, he moved to Sandbach in 1925 - two years after Luton's Nationals win. Joining Foden's, he played euphonium and E flat bass before becoming, in 1956, the band's musical director. He held this position for 22 years, directing the band's literally hundreds of concerts and broadcasts, along with tours and commercial recordings. Under his leadership the band appeared regularly in the prizes both at the Nationals and at the British Open, winning the former in 1958 and the latter in 1964. On his retirement in 1975 he had been with Foden's for 50 years.

Finally, of a number of first-rate euphonium players, Barrie Perrins, was four times Champion Euphonium Player of Great Britain. He played with Hendon Band for almost 20 years, building an international reputation, being particularly well know in the USA and Switzerland. He was a regular contributor to brass band magazines and compiled a book, 'Brass Band Digest'. Markus Cutts was, for many years, the euphonium soloist with Fairey's. He also played the tuba professionally.

BRASS LEGENDS

The late Dr Roy Newsome Part 10

The Administrators

EDWIN VAUGHAN MORRIS MBE (1901-1997), always known as Vaughan Morris, took over the running of the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain in 1945 when they were bought out from J H Iles by the national newspaper, 'The Daily Herald'. Vaughan Morris worked for the 'Herald' as a special events organiser and was to become a leading personality in the brass band movement. A formidable figure with strong ideas about what was right and what was wrong, he was given the title Administrator. Over the years he became involved in many controversial matters concerning the brass band movement.

His powers of organisation were immediately put to the test with the formation of eight regions - six in England, plus Wales and Scotland - with contests to decide which bands would represent their 'Area' in the Finals. There were three graded sections, plus a section for youth bands in some regions. These events became known as the 'Area Contests' and were held during the early part of the year. Two bands from each section in each region qualified for the Finals, held in the Autumn - those for the top section in the Royal Albert Hall, London and the others at Belle Vue, Manchester. For the Area contests Vaughan Morris obviously had to liaise with local experts, so regional secretaries were appointed and committees set up to organise the contests along the guidelines laid down by him.

All went well in the 1945 event. Bands were pleased to have such a comprehensive network of competitions under the umbrella of the Nationals. The Finals were a triumph for Vaughan Morris, with a specially constructed adjudicators' box in the Albert Hall, a specially composed test piece for the championship section and a magnificent trophy for the winners. Fairey Aviation won, conducted by Harry Mortimer. With a bit of fine-tuning here and there, the pattern was set for the running of the national championships almost as they are today.

From 1946, following the Royal Albert Hall contest, generally referred to as

'The Nationals', there was a glittering massed band concert - two of them, in fact - one at five o'clock and the other at eight, demand for tickets was so great. Eight bands performed massed - Fairey Aviation as reigning champions and the winning band from each of the seven area championship contests. (At the time, there were no championship section bands in the South West). Doctor (later



Edwin Vaughan Morris.

Sir) Malcolm Sargent was the guest conductor and the soloists were Eileen Joyce - internationally renowned concert pianist, Gwen Catley - a well-known soprano singer and Harry Mortimer.

In 1947 a fourth section was added to the original three and in 1954 all the lower sections were moved to London, each occupying different halls, all within a few miles of the Albert Hall and all taking place on the same day.

The National Brass Band Contesting Council was formed in 1951, with Vaughan Morris as honorary general secretary. Its brief was to discuss, revue and improve any aspects of the Nationals. It was also responsible for setting up the national registry.

There was concern in 1964 when 'The Daily Herald' closed down. Happily a Sunday newspaper, 'The People' took over the ownership of the Nationals and Vaughan Morris continued as Administrator. There was controversy when, at the start of 1967, 'The People' withdrew its support of the Areas. Vaughan Morris announced that there would be no more Area contests and that he would invite bands of his choice to the Finals. Eventually he relented and agreed to the running of Area contests by the local committees, but only in accordance with his

conditions. Later in the same year Vaughan Morris retired from his job with 'The People', but he then became the owner of the Nationals and its sole administrator.

There was further controversy in 1968 and 1969 when he renamed the contest the 'World and National Championships', throwing the door open to national champions from other countries. Only one such band took up the challenge and it was from Holland. He went even further in 1970 and 1971, when he separated the two events, inviting six English bands (Black Dyke, Brighouse, CWS (Manchester), Fairey's, Foden's and GUS) to take part in the World Championships, plus any other overseas band which could claim to be a national champion in its own country. The 'Nationals' went ahead, but without the 'big six'.

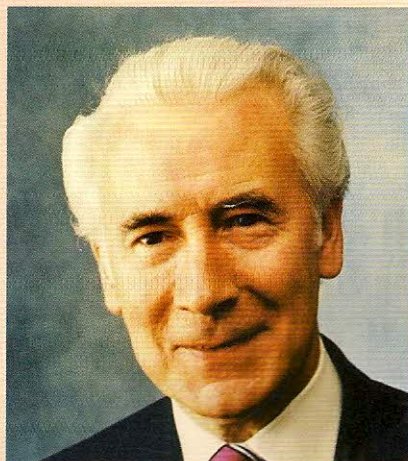
In the following year Vaughan Morris retired and R Smith & Co became the owners of the Nationals.

Edwin Vaughan Morris was appointed MBE in 1968. Following his retirement from the Nationals he began a partnership with Decca recording company. They produced a number of brass band recordings, including those in the 'Sounding Brass' series. He spent his later years in Australia, living with his daughter and her family and dying in 1997, at the age of 96.

PETER WILSON (1936-2010) was born into a Scottish Salvation Army family and had a life-long connection with all things 'brass band'. When, in 1971, Geoffrey Brand invited him to leave his beloved Scotland and move to London as the organising secretary of the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain, he knew what he was doing.

Peter was playing the cornet by the time

he was eight, but it was the euphonium on which he first made his name, as soloist with the highly successful Scottish CWS Band. Several years of success here led to him taking an interest in conducting and amongst the bands to benefit from his skills with the baton was Kirkintilloch Silver, which he



Peter Wilson.

raised from a lowly 3rd section status to championship level. He had already been runner-up in a competition for conductors organised by the National Association of Brass Band Conductors and it was through this organisation that Peter gained his first experiences in administration, becoming the secretary of the Scottish region and organising a number of courses.

Thus, he came to London as an experienced player and conductor, with a good knowledge of the business side of banding. He remained as organising secretary of the Nationals throughout six highly eventful years. The first task was to dispense with the 'World Championships', introduced by Vaughan Morris in 1970. From 1972 the status quo was back and the Nationals were run as they had been in earlier years. Commissions were made, both for the contest and for the gala concerts, and there were to be great changes in the organisation of the youth championships.

These had had a chequered existence since 1945. They had been through a number of 'stop-start' periods, but in 1968 they were started up again - permanently, as it turned out. They were now run as Finals only and held in Chelsea Town Hall. They were very much the responsibility of Peter, as organising secretary of the Nationals. A massive change came in 1974, when Butlins Holiday Camps became the main sponsors. There were now Area contests as well as Finals, which were moved into the Royal Albert Hall, displacing the five o' clock concert. Up to 50 players were allowed, including the use of percussion, adjudication was to be open - that is, no adjudicator's box and only the eight Area winners were invited. Butlins remained the principal sponsors until 1982.

By now Peter had moved on, becoming editor of the *British Bandsman*, a highly demanding position which he held with distinction from 1977 to 2000. In addition to the weekly business of meeting deadlines, keeping readers interested and attracting revenue through advertising and sales, there was one particularly demanding period, and that was in 1987 when the magazine celebrated its centenary. There was a 72-page edition of the 'Bandsman', published to coincide with the actual date; there was also a 'Concert of the Century', held in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, with Black Dyke, Besses and Yorkshire Imperial and guest stars the Childs Brothers. There was a new piece by Elgar Howarth called *Legends* (now there's a coincidence!!), featuring Phillip McCann, Jim Shepherd, Maurice Murphy and Willie Lang - the current principal and three former legendary principal cornet players of Black Dyke. There was also a very unusual competition, for municipal floral displays throughout the country, to publicise the centenary. All of this was a

tribute not only to the magazine for its 100 years, but also to the vision of its current editor, Peter Wilson.

Always a good ambassador for British brass bands, during the early 1980s Peter was invited to America, along with Denzil Stephens, to make a presentation about them. The success of this venture lies in the fact that the development of the North American Brass Band Association (NABBA) grew directly from this visit.

There was still one more string to Peter's bow - music publishing. In 1977 the *British Bandsman* was bought by Trevor Austin, owner of Rosehill Music. Initially the company specialised in selling musical instruments, but in due course they started publishing brass band music. Peter Wilson was a key personality in this development and, particularly after retiring from the editorship of the *British Bandsman*, he played a big part in the company's success, persuading new composers to write for them and publishing to a very high standard.

Peter died on 6th August 2010 after a short illness, but he left a huge legacy of his tireless work for the brass band movement and is remembered fondly by all who were privileged to know him.

FRANK WRIGHT MBE (1901-1970),

Australian by birth, came to live in England in 1933. He was a former Australian cornet champion and had acquired a fine reputation both as a conductor and an adjudicator. Amongst his conducting appointments during his first year in England were some concerts with St Hilda's professional band. A year later he completed a remarkable hat trick. He had adjudicated the Australian Nationals in 1932, those of New Zealand a year later and then, in 1934, he adjudicated at the British Nationals at Crystal Palace. A year later he took on the important job of Music Director to London County Council's parks department.

During the early post-war years Frank Wright developed into a highly influential figure on the British band scene. He became Professor of Brass and Military Band Scoring at the Guildhall School of Music, an examiner for the School's Diploma in Brass Band Conducting and was also the editor of the National Association of Brass Band Conductors' quarterly magazine, 'The Conductor'. He became a key figure in the National Championships, was a regular adjudicator (Areas and Finals, all sections), was often an

associate conductor in the gala concerts in the Royal Albert Hall, and between 1952 and 1970 had a hand in scoring or transcribing ten of the test pieces for the Finals or World Championships. There were, of course, other transcriptions and a few original pieces.

In 1965 Frank Wright was awarded an Honorary Fellowship of Trinity College, a year later being appointed MBE. He was due to adjudicate at the Finals in 1970, but had to withdraw due to ill health. He then received the great honour of being elected Master of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. Sadly, he died a few days after the announcement.

Frank Wright was indeed a legend in his own lifetime. I've included him amongst the Administrators because it is inconceivable that he did not play a leading role behind the scenes, advising Vaughan Morris on musical matters. Through his adjudicating he was familiar with the levels of bands in all sections. It must also be seen as significant that he never became involved with any of the competing bands.

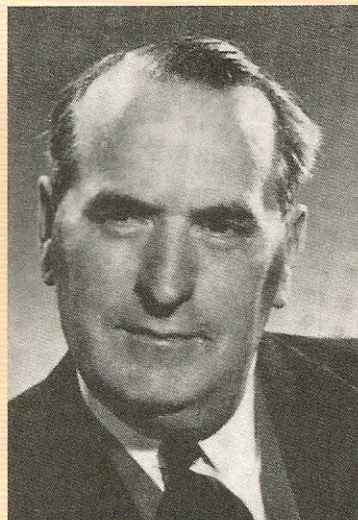
EDWARD C BUTTRESS (1917-

1994), known to all as 'Ted' came into prominence when he became the conductor of Clayton Aniline Works Band, based near Manchester. This was formed in December 1943 and Ted was its conductor from early in 1944 until it disbanded in 1956. Though never in the top flight of bands it appeared regularly in the Belle Vue September contests, made a number of broadcasts and in 1951 became possibly the first brass band to appear on television.

Ted was a leading figure in the North West Area Brass Band Association, was its chairman from 1950 to 1956 and a great organiser, running many courses and contests. There were over 100 bands in the Association and Ted developed close links with the Lancashire County Council, enabling bands to apply for assistance with

payment of conductors. He was also a regular adjudicator.

In 1959 a new brass band magazine was founded, the 'British Mouthpiece'. This provided alternative reading to the 'British Bandsman' and also often expressed 'alternative' views. By now, Vaughan Morris was not popular in all quarters and against this background a new organisation arose, the Council of Brass Band Associations (COBBA). This was



Frank Wright.

strongly supported by both the North West Association and the 'Mouthpiece'. Ted Buttress was still heavily into Association matters and was to become editor of the new magazine. From 1964 the 'Mouthpiece' became 'The Official Organ of the Council of Brass Band Associations'.

Harry Mortimer was elected president, but initially withdrew on the grounds that there could be a conflict of interests through his work at the BBC. After his retirement there he took the job on again. Later in the decade the British Federation of Brass Bands was established, with its roots in COBBA. All of these moves were seen by many in the brass band world as decisive, even though the stated aims and objectives of the new organisation made a great deal of sense.

In 1969 it was announced that there was to be a new national contest, with regional preliminaries and a national Final. There would, however, be no regionals for leading bands. They would appear by invitation in a section known as the 'Champion of Champions'. It would be sponsored by the tobacco company, W D & H O Wills, would be staged in association with COBBA and organised by Ted Buttress. The contest ran for only three years, but it caused a great rift within the band world. This seemed to

focus on COBBA and the BFBB headed by Ted Buttress and the National Contesting Council headed by Vaughan Morris. Things became quite acrimonious and ended in a serious court case. Without going into detail, Buttress came off second best and this was more or less the end of COBBA though, mercifully, the Federation survived.

In due course, as Ted Buttress got older, the British Mouthpiece folded and Ted ended his days in an old people's home. Despite all the controversy, he was a hero in many people's eyes and is therefore included as a legend.

With the exception of Vaughan Morris, others discussed above have also been noted conductors, despite the title of the article. Two other 'specialist' conductors are brought in here.

Trevor Walmsley DFC played cornet in his younger days but served as a pilot in the RAF during the war, being awarded the DFC. (The Distinguished Flying Cross is awarded for acts of valour, courage or devotion to duty whilst on active service.) During the post-war years he took up conducting and his first major appointment came in 1956 when he became musical director of Brighouse & Rastrick. He was with this band until 1965. He then took up a similar position with Yorkshire Imperial, leading them to wins in the British Open

Championships of 1970 and 1971. In 1976 he moved to CWS (Manchester) and three years later to Ever Ready. His last major appointment was as resident conductor of Black Dyke - in 1982-83. In 1984 he was made a consultant with the newly formed Boosey & Hawkes' advisory service. There were a number of other conducting contracts, notably with Ransomes and Carlton Main.

Ernest Woodhouse began cornet lessons when only seven and was conducting at the early age of 14. During the 1950s and 1960s, for 16 years he was musical director of Creswell Colliery Band. In later years he conducted both Desford and Grimethorpe. Ernest was also a well-respected adjudicator and for a number of years was Director of Examinations for the Bandsman's College of Music.

You can follow us



BRASS LEGENDS

Five Real Characters

The late Dr Roy
Newsome Part 11



JACK ATHERTON (1909-1983) was born into a brass banding family. His father, Fred, was a fine E flat bass player and was a member of the Harton Colliery Band when it won the Belle Vue September Contest in 1919. Fred was Jack's first teacher and Jack joined Harton as a boy, on tenor horn. He was then taught by George Hawkins, the famous conductor of Harton and at the age of 15 became the band's 1st baritone player.

At 22 he moved to London and joined Hanwell Silver Band, returning to Harton in 1939 as musical director. He remained there until 1950. Harton enjoyed a particularly good run at regional level during the post-war period, with a second prize at the 1946 Area Contest and wins in 1947, 1948 and 1949 - a hat trick which earned them a bye to the Finals of 1950. However, the only reward at national level during the period was a sixth place in the Finals of 1948.

Something of a nomad for the next few years, Atherton was appointed bandmaster at Fairey's in 1950, moved south to take Enfield Central in 1951, but in 1953 returned north to become musical director of CWS (Manchester) alongside professional conductor, Eric Ball. Eric conducted CWS's winning performance at Belle Vue in 1952, but it was Jack Atherton conducting when they took second prize a year later. He was soon on the move again, this time to Yorkshire, taking sole musical charge of Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band from 1954, remaining there until 1969.

As a conductor, Jack Atherton was extrovert and individualistic. He was an excellent band trainer, but often had strange ideas regarding interpretation. He could be something of a martinet and often crossed swords with his players. It took a couple of years for Carlton Main to settle down to his unique style, but they did well between 1956 and 1960, winning the difficult Yorkshire Area contest in 1957 and the even more difficult British Open in 1958. There were also five second prizes in the three main contests (Area, Open and Nationals) during the period, as well as four thirds. Apart from a fourth prize at the British Open of 1963 there were no other rewards during the Atherton years. However, under his direction Carlton Main built a fine reputation for concerts and broadcasts. The dearth of contest successes after 1960 was due, it has been suggested, to the defection to Grimethorpe of a number of key players.



Major George Willcocks.

Jack Atherton remained with Carlton Main until 1969, though from 1967 he was also conducting Mirrlees Works Band in Lancashire. However, in the early 1970s Jack suffered a stroke and had to retire from conducting. He could be seen at the Belle Vue contest for several more years, but the stroke had taken his speech and it became increasingly difficult to hold a conversation with him. He died in 1983 in a Stockport hospital, aged 74.

MAJOR GEORGE H WILLCOCKS MVO MBE (1899-1962) was Director of Music, the Band of the Irish Guards and Senior Director of Music, the Brigade of Guards. When he left the army, in 1949, he took up an appointment with the Ford Motor Works Military Band, based in Dagenham. He had joined the army as a band boy at the age of 15, playing with and conducting several bands, before being commissioned as Director of Music, the Band of the Irish Guards, in 1938.

His first 'encounter' with brass bands was in 1952, when he became an examiner for the Bandsman's College of Music, an organisation of which he had also become a vice president.

'The Major', as he was affectionately known, was an excellent conductor, a fine musician and a joy to watch. Harry Mortimer knew him well through his regular broadcasting and when he (Harry) found that through his BBC commitments he would be unable to conduct Fairey's in the Nationals of 1956, he asked Major Willcocks to stand in

for him. He was so effective as a stand-in that the band won first prize.

Shortly after this he was 'head-hunted' by Black Dyke, who were in need of a professional conductor. He conducted them at the British Open championships of 1957, leaving the audience spellbound with their refined playing of *Carnival* (Helen Perkins) and leaving no doubt that this was the winning performance. The Willcocks/Black Dyke combination won the three Yorkshire Area Contests which they attended (1958, 1959 and 1961), the latter of the three being another memorable performance, of *Les Preludes* (Liszt, arranged William Rimmer). They went on to convert the 1959 and 1961 wins to National titles, again with memorable performances - of Lalo's overture *Le Roi d'Ys* (perhaps the most memorable performance of them all) and Berlioz's *Judges of the Secret Court*.

The latter proved to be The Major's swan song on the contest platform. It attracted a winning band broadcast on the BBC and he travelled to Leeds to conduct it. Shortly after this he suffered a severe heart attack. He died on 12th January 1962 at the age of 62. His death was a devastating loss to the whole brass band movement, but particularly to Black Dyke Mills Band. As its professional conductor he had taken part in a few concerts and broadcasts, and had appeared on two of the band's commercial recordings. But it is chiefly for his contest-winning performances that Major George H Willcocks will be remembered by all who saw him in action.

WALTER B HARGREAVES (1907-1998) was born in Glasgow and is said to have been 'playing' the cornet when aged only four. Later, he studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music, with tuition on french horn, trumpet and piano. After graduating he played the trumpet professionally - with various symphony orchestra, in the theatre and also as a member of a ship's orchestra. He also gave some lectures on brass instruments at Edinburgh University.

Over the years he worked with many brass bands. His first appointment was with the City of Edinburgh Band, starting in 1944. It was during a BBC recording session with them that he was 'spotted' by Harry Mortimer, who recommended him to Cory's, who were in need of a conductor. HM thought that Walter's talents would be put to better use in Wales. He remained with Cory until 1952,



Walter Hargreaves.

when he became professor of trumpet and cornet at the Royal Marines School of Music in Deal, Kent. He remained in this post for many years, whilst at the same time regularly conducting brass bands, mainly at weekends. It was in Deal that his nickname, 'The Wee Professor' was coined. He had a very quick wit and a sharp tongue. Verbal assassination of players was not unusual.

He had acquired a good reputation for preparing contest performances and was mainly engaged by bands specifically to take them to contests. He conducted Brighouse & Rastrick from 1963 to 1973, leading them to the title of World and National Champions in 1968 and 1969. There was little other reward at the top level, with just one second prize in each of the Open and the Nationals, and two in the Yorkshire Area. There were also a handful of thirds. 'WB', as he was often called, maintained that for Brighouse &

Rastrick the toughest thing about winning in London was getting through the Area contest! Other bands that had success under him during the 1960s included Crookhall, Kibworth, Tredegar and Markham Main, all of which did well in their respective Area contests.

Of course, he was still teaching at the Marines School of Music. He was also doing some adjudicating and in 1973 travelled to Australia to adjudicate at their Nationals - along with the usual seminars, rehearsals, and so on. He suffered a serious illness later that year and spent some time in hospital.

From 1970, whilst still visiting Brighouse, WB became professional conductor of the newly-formed Stanshawe Band (later to become Sun Life). He quickly moulded them into a high class combination, picking up second prizes at the 1975 Nationals and the 1976 British Open. In the South West Area Contest there were five placings in six years, including two wins. During this period he was also having success with Parc & Dare, winning the Welsh Area contest in 1970, 1975, 1976 and 1978 with them, and being Welsh champions from 1976 to 1978.

Later WB took up an appointment as professional conductor of Ever Ready Band, but within a few months had gone to take over at Fairey's, remaining there until 1981 and winning two of their four Area contests, the British Open of 1979 and third prize in the Nationals of 1980. The Scottish band Kirkintilloch was another band with which he had Area successes in 1984 and 1985. Other bands benefiting from his experience during the 1980s included Carlton Main and Roneo (Hanwell).

He was now approaching 80 and running out of steam. He lived on, however, with Katie, his inseparable wife, in their home in Deal. He died in 1998, aged 91.

MAJOR ARTHUR KENNEY (1919-1994) was born in the village of Iver, in Buckinghamshire. He was educated at Wells Cathedral School, attending there from 1925 to 1934. He then enlisted in the Somerset Light Infantry, originally as a band boy. During the war he served as an infantryman. He took the Kneller Hall Bandmasters' course between 1944 and 1947, being awarded a number of special prizes. Becoming bandmaster of the Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry in 1949, in 1960 he was commissioned and appointed Director of Music the Royal Artillery (Plymouth) Band. Two years later, as Captain Arthur Kenney, he took over the Welsh Guards. He was promoted to Major in 1968, but left the army a year later.

His first brass band engagement was taking Yorkshire Imperial Metals to the Area contest of 1965, whilst still with the Guards. Once out of the army, he was approached by Cory's and invited to become their musical director. He met with immediate success, taking them to the Finals of the Coal Board Contest (CISWO) and earning first prize. In fact Cory, under Kenney, won this contest again in the following two years, making a hat trick. Another important win for the new partnership was at the new Granada Band of the Year competition, for which the first prize was a programme on Granada television.

Major Kenney remained with Cory's in this first period until 1975. Further successes during these years included a second prize and two firsts in the Welsh Area contest and a win in the National Championships of Great Britain at the Royal Albert Hall in 1974. This was the first time a non-English band had won this competition.

On leaving Cory's the Major moved into Yorkshire and for two years conducted Carlton Main. He then had a three-year contract working in Tripoli, founding a school for military musicians something along the lines of Kneller Hall.

Back in England, he took City of Coventry to the British Open Championships and won. But in 1982 he returned to Cory's and led them through one of their most successful periods, winning the National Championships again, three years in succession - 1982 to 1984 - a famous hat trick. Happily, the hat trick year coincided with the band's centenary. At around this time, the band became Radio Wales Band of the Year and also the Champion Band of Wales.

During 1987 Arthur Kenney went to New Zealand to conduct the champion band, Continental Airlines Auckland. During the following year he had a stroke and retired from conducting. He returned to Cory's briefly in 1992, but with



Major Arthur Kenney and The Cory Band celebrate winning the 1974 National Brass Band Championship.



Geoffrey Whitham.

further bouts of ill health he now retired completely. He died on 20th July 1994, aged 75.

GEOFFREY WHITHAM (1932-2009)

was born in Queensbury, the home of Black Dyke Mills and their famous band. He commenced his playing in a school band, on euphonium, but joined Black Dyke Juniors when he was ten years old. After five years here he was moved into the senior band, on 2nd baritone. A year later he moved to 1st baritone and in 1950 became the band's solo euphonium player. During his early years with the band he played under Arthur O Pearce and Harry Mortimer. Following the retirement of Mr Pearce, Alex Mortimer took charge and Geoffrey learned a great deal about euphonium playing from him. He also experienced the thrill of winning the National Championships - four times in fact, in 1947, 1948, 1949 and 1951. Amongst the many concert engagements there was one very special event, when the band appeared in a celebrity concert at the famous London Palladium.

In 1957 Maurice Murphy joined the band on principal cornet and Major Willcocks became professional conductor. There was now another golden period, with wins at the British Open (1957) and the Nationals (1959 and 1961). Perhaps Geoffrey's finest hour was during the 1959 performance of *Le Roi d'Ys*, with its notoriously difficult euphonium solo.

Following the death of Major Willcocks and the departure of Maurice Murphy - who became a professional orchestral trumpet player - Black Dyke went through a period of rebuilding and in 1963 appointed Geoffrey Whitham bandmaster. Major Jaeger became professional conductor and Jim Shepherd took over on solo cornet. However, during 1965 Geoffrey Whitham was offered the position of musical director of

Hammonds' Sauce Works. He accepted, left Black Dyke and went to conduct the Shipley-based band, remaining with them until 1984. As a free lance conductor he then took on a range of bands at different times - Grimethorpe, Fairey's, Desford and James Shepherd Versatile Brass.

In 1988 he returned to Hammonds, remaining there for five years. On retiring this time he began taking on more adjudicating work and also conducted Wingates and Ever Ready. He also became joint founder conductor of Kings of Brass, a band made up of current and former stars of the brass band world.

Throughout his playing and conducting careers he had been involved in hundreds of concerts and broadcasts and also in the making of several commercial recordings. During his Black Dyke days he worked as a wool sorter in the Black Dyke Mills. After this he became involved in teaching, not only with private pupils, but also in schools in Bradford and the West Riding of Yorkshire, and in the universities of Huddersfield and Salford.

Following a brief illness, Geoffrey Whitham died in 2009.

Other names linked with this period include **Albert Chappell**, remembered chiefly for work with City of Coventry and the Cornwall Youth Band, but he also conducted Desford and had played solo trombone in the RA (Woolwich) Band, 1942-47. **John Harrison** conducted a whole procession of bands, including Brighouse & Rastrick, Wingates, St Dennis, Cory's, Harton, Whitburn and Crossley's Carpet Works. In old age he conducted Elland Silver.

Gordon Sutcliffe was a renowned tenor horn player with Black Dyke, playing solo horn from 1947-65. **Bernard Bygraves** was principal cornet with Black Dyke in the early 1950s. He also played with Brighouse & Rastrick and Crossley's



Maurice Murphy.



Brian Evans.

before emigrating to Australia and making his mark as a conductor.

Emlyn Bryant was a Welsh born soprano cornet player. He played with Cory's for a time but made his name with Munn & Felton's/GUS. He was the first of three great soprano players from this era, the other two being **Tommy Waterman** and **Brian Evans**. Tommy served Black Dyke for about 25 years but Brian, one of the all-time great soprano players, moved around quite a lot, playing with CWS (Manchester), Fairey's, Wingates, Black Dyke and Brighouse & Rastrick.

Maurice Murphy, one of the greatest of our cornet players who also became a world class orchestral trumpeter, served with Yorkshire Imperial, Fairey's and Black Dyke, giving wonderful service in a relatively short brass band career. He left Black Dyke in 1961 and became a member of the BBC Northern Orchestra, prior to moving to London and principal trumpet of the London Symphony Orchestra. Maurice died on 28th October 2010.

David James was born in South Wales and played cornet in a local band. He joined the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, becoming its leader. After studies at the Royal College of Music he became principal trumpet with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. Having conducted a number of bands, he left the orchestra in 1978, moving into Yorkshire to take over at Carlton Main. He later conducted Grimethorpe Colliery, leading it to wins in the two entertainment contests, Granada Band of the Year and Brass in Concert. He worked with a number of other bands before returning to Scotland in 1991. David has been a highly successful teacher of trumpet and cornet, specialising in curing embouchure problems. He was one of the first instrumental teachers on the Salford course in Band Musicianship and following his return to Scotland, taught for the Grampian Authority.

BRASS LEGENDS

Living Legends - Part 1

The late Dr Roy
Newsome Part 12

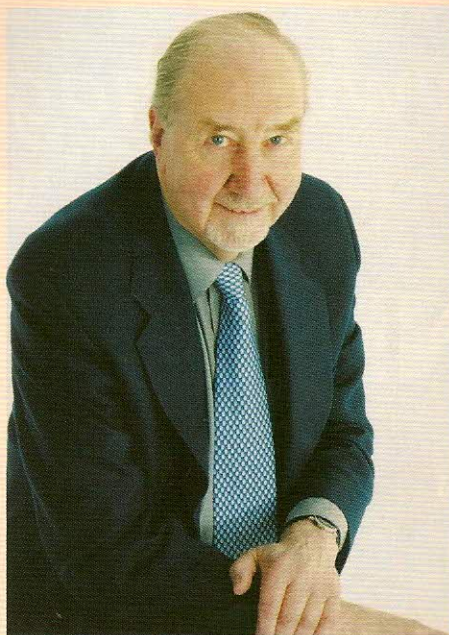


Gone are the days when a handful of conductors commanded the whole range of top-line bands. The demands made by modern bands on the conductor preparing them for a contest make it difficult for him/her to cope with even two bands in the same contest. Conversely, there has been considerable movement of conductors from one band to another. There are, to my reckoning, getting on for 20 conductors, still more or less active, who may lay claim to being regarded as legendary. They have each had some impact on the history of bands, many of them initially as performers, some also as adjudicators. There are others who have achieved legendary status primarily through adjudicating or through administrative roles. These are discussed during the final five articles in this series.

Others, mainly instrumentalists, have contributed significantly to the advancement of brass bands and some of these are mentioned in the later stages of each article, together with short, biographical notes. Again, I apologise for any blatant omissions, of which I'm sure there will be some.

GEOFFREY BRAND came to the fore as a conductor in the mid-1960s, though his name was already well known through other musical activities. He has a Salvation Army background, played cornet in his formative years and was one of several who began their musical careers in brass bands, moved into the music profession and later returned to the brass band scene, bringing professional musical experience with them. Geoffrey studied trumpet and conducting at the Royal Academy of Music. After military service he played with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and then in the orchestra of the Royal Opera House. In 1955 he became a BBC music producer, taking on responsibility for all band broadcasts. From the early 1960s he was conducting a number of brass bands, both in this country and abroad.

1967 was a pivotal year for Geoffrey. He left the BBC, became Music Adviser of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, editor of the *British Bandsman* and professional conductor of Black Dyke Mills Band. His work here led to wins at the National Brass Band Championships of 1967, the British Open of 1968, the so-called World Championships of 1970 and achieving the rare double of wins both at the Open and the Nationals in 1972.



Geoffrey Brand.

He also secured prestigious engagements and recording contracts for the band and was largely responsible for Black Dyke, along with CWS (Manchester), Fairey's and GUS going to Canada for the 1972 Canadian Brass Band Festival.

His work with the NYBBGB was also productive, with commissions and the introduction of high-profile guest conductors. Editorship of the *British Bandsman* led to a parallel appointment as managing director of R. Smith & Co., which also carried responsibility for the running of the National Championships. This also incorporated some responsibility for Area contests and for the gala

concerts which, in those days, followed the Nationals - with the selection and/or commissioning of test pieces and new concert works.

In later years Geoffrey successfully took over the roles of professional conductor with Brighthouse & Rastrick, Fairey's, GUS and Grimethorpe. He also worked extensively as both an educator and a conductor in other countries, notably Australia, America and Japan. Continuing his educational work, he was music director of the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland for some 21 years, continuing his commissioning policy and becoming a very influential person north of the border. In addition to all of this, Geoffrey was a noted international adjudicator.

JAMES SCOTT was the son of a former member of Besses o' th' Barn Band. He was something of a prodigy, becoming principal cornet with Ibstock at 12, City of Coventry at 15 and Grimethorpe at 18. In 1959 he became Champion Soloist of Great Britain, after having joined Munn & Felton's.

He was Cornet Champion again in 1960, but now he moved north and embarked on a conducting career as musical director of the newly-formed Cammell Laird Works Band. The band had notable successes, particularly in the difficult North West Area contests, along with a 2nd prize in the 1965 Nationals. Whilst in this post he also gained orchestral trumpet experience with the professional orchestras in the region.



James Scott.



Major Peter Parkes receiving the British Open shield from Harry Mortimer in 1976.

Later bands of which James was musical director/professional conductor included Brighthouse & Rastrick, Yorkshire Imperial Metals, Fodens, Grimethorpe and Wingates. He led Brighthouse to wins in the 1973 Nationals and the European Championships of 1981.

He has also been a leading international adjudicator and, following the death of Harry Mortimer in 1992, was musical advisor of the Pontins Championships. In 1995 James Scott became a founder member and co-conductor of Kings of Brass, a band assembled from many of the playing giants of past and present. A true gentleman of the brass band world, Jim' is revered throughout the movement.

PETER PARKES entered the world of brass bands in 1975 when he succeeded Geoffrey Brand as professional conductor of Black Dyke. He was to become the most successful conductor of modern times, mainly through his work with Black Dyke. He was initially an army musician - a clarinettist, but had risen to the position of Director of Music of the Band of the Grenadier Guards with the rank of major. He retired from the army in 1979.

During his 14 years with Black Dyke he helped them to 18 major titles, including hat tricks at both the Nationals and the European championships, three doubles of British Open and Nationals and one triple of European, Open and Nationals. There were seven European titles in all, including four wins in succession (1982-1985). Peter also toured extensively with Dyke and made a large number of broadcasts and recordings.

After leaving Black Dyke in 1989 he moved to Fairey's, conducting them until 1995, then to Grimethorpe, whom he conducted from 1995 to 1998. By

the year 2000 he had extended his tally of major titles to 21. He also had considerable success with a large number of other bands, including City of Coventry, Desford, Ever Ready, Ransomes, Whitburn and Yorkshire Imperial and, in Switzerland, with Treize Etoiles. In 1984 he took five bands to their respective Area contests, all of them qualifying for the Finals (Black Dyke having been given a bye). He also conducted a number of youth bands.

Peter Parkes was also in demand as an adjudicator throughout Britain, and visited Australia and New Zealand, twice each, as chief adjudicator in the National Championships. He was a key figure in the Association of Brass Band Adjudicators from its inception in 1999. In 1984 he became President of the British Federation of Brass Bands and in 1993 Chairman of the Brass Band Heritage Trust. From 1988 he was head of the brass band course run by Barnsley College.

ELGAR HOWARTH played the cornet as a boy, winning the Alexander Owen Memorial Fund Scholarship in 1951 at the age of 16. By this time he was playing solo cornet in Barton Hall Works Band, conducted by his father, Oliver. On leaving school he studied composition at Manchester University and the Royal Manchester College of Music, whilst during National Service, he played cornet with the Central Band of the Royal Air Force.

Though later in life he was to become involved again with brass bands, his life's work has been with orchestras and in opera. As a trumpet player he was in the orchestra of the Royal Opera House from 1958-1963, was principal trumpet with the Royal Philharmonic from 1963-1969, the London Sinfonietta from 1968-1971 and was a member of the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble, as player, composer, arranger and conductor, from 1965-1976.

His first orchestral conducting appointment was with the London Sinfonietta in 1969; since then he has conducted virtually all the major symphony orchestras in Britain and many of those abroad. He has also been heavily involved in opera, premiering many 20th century works. In 1997 he received the prestigious Oliver Award for Achievements in Opera. He received honorary doctorates from the universities of Keele and York, and fellowships from the Royal Academy of Music and Salford University, with which he has had a long association, and where he was composer-in-residence 1986-1989.

Elgar Howarth became Grimethorpe Colliery Band's music advisor in 1972 and his contacts outside of brass bands

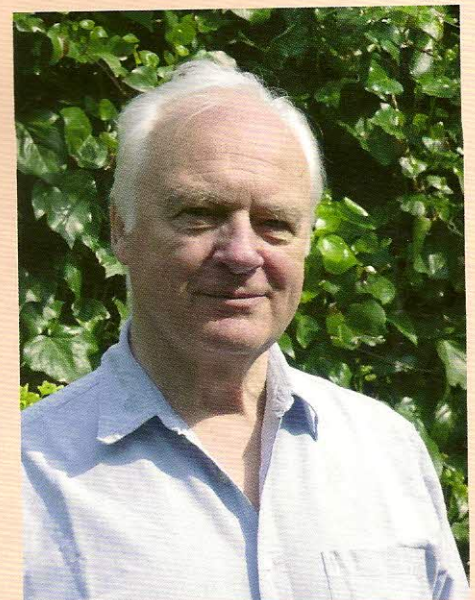
immediately bore a rich harvest. He obtained and presented a series of programmes for Granada Television, shown during 1974/1975. During the same period he 'fixed' two appearances of Grimethorpe and Black Dyke in the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts in the Royal Albert Hall. He took Grimethorpe on several tours, appearing with them in famous and prestigious international music festivals, breaking new ground for the brass band.

Much of his success with bands was due to his individual approach to programming and also to his compositions, both as Elgar Howarth and those in lighter vein, for which he used the pseudonym 'W Hogarth Lear', (see my 'History of the Brass Band Repertoire' part 11 - in *The Brass Herald*, Issue 26 of December 2008-January 2009 and part 15 - Issue 31 of December 2009-January 2010). He also introduced composers of international standing to the brass band. These included Harrison Birtwistle, Hans Werner Henze and Derek Bourgeois.

Grimethorpe had limited success under Howarth in traditional contests, with just two 2nd prizes. However, through his programming and writing he made Grimethorpe into the most successful and versatile concert band of the time - a position they hold to this day.

In 1975 he organised a highly successful summer school at Lancaster University and in the same year composed the test piece for the British Open Championships, *Fireworks*. He joined the adjudicating panel, the only time he has ever judged a brass band contest.

Later in the century his association with brass bands diminished, though he did become involved in a number of projects. He prepared a 'History of Brass Band Music' which he demonstrated in concert at York University and which he later



Elgar Howarth.

committed to a set of CD recordings, and was Artistic Director of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain from 2001-2005.

Elgar Howarth is one of the most distinguished conductors to come from brass band roots and his contributions have contributed significantly to the recognition of the brass band as a serious musical medium outside of its own boundaries.

DENZIL STEPHENS was born in Guernsey and as a boy played euphonium in a Salvation Army band. During the war he was evacuated and lived in Halifax and became a member of Black Dyke Mills Band. He took 2nd prize in the Alexander Owen Memorial Fund Scholarship of 1945, a year later becoming the All England Junior Solo Champion.

In 1950 he joined the RAF as a bandsman. In 1972 he qualified as a director of music, with the rank of Squadron Leader. He moved around the country, conducting different RAF bands, but also conducting several brass bands. These included Ransomes, Point of Ayr, Hammonds, BTM and Parc & Dare.

Denzil left the RAF in 1978 and became musical editor of Wright & Round. Also, after a brief spell with Carlton Main he took over as musical director of Cory's. He had a very successful time here, the band becoming Welsh Champions and Radio Band of Wales. They took 2nd prizes both in the Nationals and European Championships in 1979, winning the Europeans a year later. He left Cory's in 1981, but later returned for a couple of years.

He already had a large number of compositions and arrangements to his name and in 1985 formed his own publishing company - Sarnia. In the same year he became Director of Examinations for the now defunct Bandsman's College of Music. He also regularly adjudicated



Derek Garside.

and continued working with a range of bands, including Fairey's and Britannia Building Society.

Denzil had thus become a leading figure in the brass band movement. In the early 1990s he 'retired' and went to live in Cornwall. He continues conducting and playing, helping out with numerous bands.¹ In 2007 he published his autobiography, 'Banding is my Life'.

ROY NEWSOME has been labelled by some as a legend - not for me to comment! Anyone reading articles about me in previous issues of *The Brass Herald* will not need any further comment.

Of the 'extra' personalities in this group we begin with another distinguished orchestral musician who began his musical career in brass bands. **William (Bill) Relton**, a member of Brighouse & Rastrick during his early teens, went

on to study the trumpet and played with many leading British professional orchestras. He then joined the BBC as a music producer, one of his briefs being the supervising of band broadcasts. From here he moved on to become *Orchestral Manager* and later *General Manger* of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Meanwhile, he maintained strong links with brass bands, being guest conductor in high-profile concerts and establishing a formidable reputation as an adjudicator throughout Britain and Europe.

There are two giants amongst an array of instrumentalists during this period. **Derek Garside** hails from Brighouse, home of Brighouse & Rastrick Band, of which he was a member from 1942-1947. However, it was as principal cornet player with CWS (Manchester), under Alex Mortimer, that he achieved legendary status during 25 years of distinguished service. Later he conducted CWS and Foden's as well as doing a considerable amount of teaching, but it is his leadership of CWS for which he is chiefly remembered.

Gordon Higginbottom was winning solo contests by the time he was eight and at 16 was playing with CWS, also under Alex Mortimer. He was one of the first to promote the tenor horn as a solo instrument and several pieces were composed for him. He played with a number of leading bands, but is chiefly remembered as a member of JSVB - its horn and mellophium soloist and humorist for over 20 years. He worked for Boosey & Hawkes and then Yamaha in developing and marketing new models of tenor horn, was one of the founders of the Tenor Horn Society and for many years was administrator for the Brass Band Summer School.

Jack Emmott was Black Dyke's bandmaster from 1956-1963. He was a former Dyke euphonium player but had also been in the army, where he received



Roy Newsome conducting the Sun Life Band.

his training in bandmastership. He later emigrated to New Zealand, but after his death and cremation his ashes were returned to Queensbury.

Lyndon Baglin, hailed from Gloucestershire but came to the fore as a euphonium player in 1961, when he became Solo Champion of Great Britain and also a member of CWS (Manchester) Band. Due to his work he had to move around the country periodically and because of this, his later bands included Black Dyke, Brighouse & Rastrick, Fairey's, Sun Life and Cory's. Lyndon was named Euphonium Player of the Year in 1984. He has also conducted several local bands.

Herbert (Bert) Howarth, now in his 80s, played with CWS (Manchester) from 1952, then for Fairey's from 1957 to the late 1960s. After a brief spell with Mirrlees he returned to Fairey's for another four years. Following this he conducted Wingates. He also conducted several local bands and taught many young players.

Roy Roe followed Charlie Cook as soprano cornet player with Foden's. Then, after a short spell with Grimethorpe, he played with Fairey's, helping them win the 'double' in 1965. Following a spell with Yorkshire Imperial his final move as a player was to Brighouse & Rastrick.

Since 'hanging up his soprano' he has conducted several local bands and is a regular adjudicator.

John Berryman, at the age of 13, was the youngest member of Camborne Town Band and was leader of the NYBBGB on eight courses. He left Cornwall in 1959 to join Munn & Feltons (called GUS from 1962), playing principal cornet from 1960-69. This was one of the band's most successful periods, taking three National titles - in no small way due to John's sensitive leadership. He has done much teaching, conducting and adjudicating since, but it was his fine cornet playing which made him into a legend.

Betty Anderson won many competitions as a teenager. She played tenor horn with Leicester Imperial and later conducted them. She moved to Kibworth, playing solo horn and becoming its first lady 'bandmaster'. Later, conducting Ratby Band, several members of which she had taught to play, she became the first lady to conduct at the British Open Championships. For many years she was 'chair' of the NYBBGB.

John Slinger was a member of Black Dyke for 45 years, 28 of them on 1st baritone, bringing considerable prestige to the instrument. A versatile bandsman, he was competent on tenor and bass

trombone, as well as on any valve instrument.

Maxwell Thornton played solo trombone with Munn & Felton's/GUS for over 20 years. He came to the band during the mid-1950s from the famous Clydebank Burgh Band in Scotland.

Derek Jackson was a long-serving member of Black Dyke, famous for his deep and sonorous sound on BB flat bass. This is a sound which many bands enjoy in later years.

John Maines began his playing career on tenor horn but, then moving on to trombone, he played with Cammell Laird, St Austell, Bodmin, Stanshawe, Fairey's, Men o' Brass and Black Dyke. A former member and tutor and now Librarian of the NYBBGB, he was at one time Champion Trombonist of Great Britain. He is now in demand as a conductor, adjudicator and concert presenter, with his own weekly radio programme.

It was during this period that percussion playing started to be taken seriously in brass bands. Three outstanding percussionists were **Jack Miles** of GUS, **Colin Waggott** of CWS (Manchester) and **Philip Gee**, also of CWS, but later playing with Black Dyke.

¹ For further information about Denzil, see his 'Banding is my Life', (Sarnia 2007).

BRASS LEGENDS

Living Legends - Part 2

The late Dr Roy
Newsome Part 13



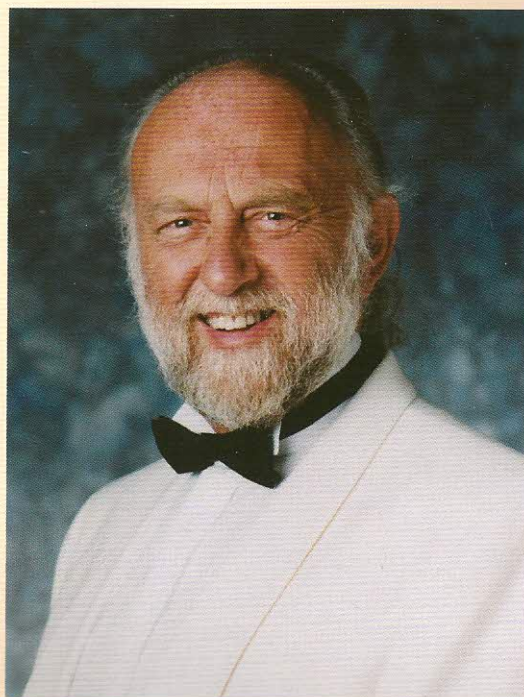
RICHARD EVANS was born in Aldershot into a military family. Some of his early years were spent in India, but after the family's return to England and his father's 'demob', the family eventually settled in the Lancashire town of Leyland.

Richard learned to play the cornet as a junior member of Leyland British Legion Band. Later he progressed to Leyland Motors where the legendary Harold Moss, the band's conductor, was amongst his teachers. He was a founder member of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, becoming one of its early Leaders (principal solo cornet players). After national service as a bandsman and serving in Berlin, Richard played for a short time in Black Dyke Mills Band.

He studied trumpet at the Northern School of Music, following which he played in a number of groups and also became a full time music teacher. His ambition to become a conductor received a boost when he won a competition organised by the National Association of Brass Band Conductors. Some of his early conducting experiences were with local choirs and whilst working with one of these he received an invitation to audition for the post of musical director with Wingates. Not only did he pass the audition, but on one of his first outings he led the band to first place in the 1975 British Open Championships. This provided the platform from which Richard, with his colourful and charismatic personality, was able to launch himself into a career as a brass band conductor

From Wingates he moved to Fairey's, but in 1978 the offer of a lifetime came his way - the opportunity of a full-time appointment as musical director of Leyland Vehicles Band, charged with restoring what was now a second class band to full championship status.

The band's break-through into the upper echelons of banding began in 1979 when, by winning the second section Finals of the Nationals, it gained entry into top section banding. The rise continued with victory in the BBC North West's knock-out competition, 'Champion Brass'. It continued in 1981 with a win at the Grand Shield contest, enabling the band to compete in the British Open Championships. Here, they won an almost unprecedented 2nd prize at their first attempt.

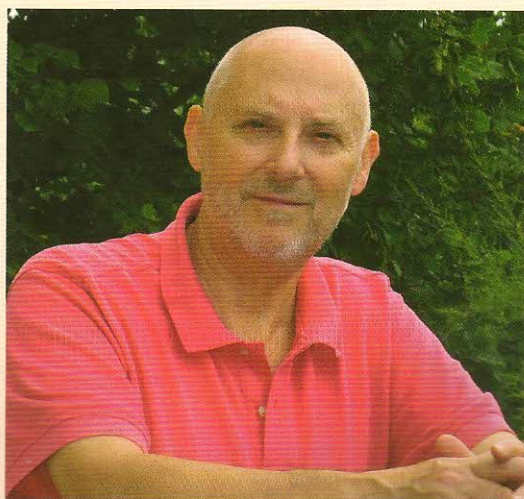


Richard Evans.

Leyland Vehicles became, effectively, Richard's band, but with a succession of changes in sponsorship it also underwent several name change - Leyland Vehicles, Leyland DAF, BNFL, JJB Sports Leyland and finally, in 2000, simply 'The Leyland Band'.

The lack of real success in traditional contests was often disappointing to Richard and the band. Though there were regular podium places, the only actual wins at national level were at the British Open of 1994 and the All England Masters in 1989 and 1992.

However, Richard and his band acquired a reputation second to none for their entertaining concerts. This was not only at home but also in their many overseas tours, which included Japan and America,



Howard Snell.

and was also reflected in their success rate at 'Brass in Concert', the leading entertainment contest.

It was here that Richard proved himself to be the master, with his personal flair and imaginative programming. Between 1982 - their first appearance at 'Brass in Concert' - and 2001, the last time Richard took them, they were never out of the top five places, except during the two years when they were unable to attend. More significantly, they won the contest four times during a period dominated by Desford and Grimethorpe.

Since his departure from Leyland Richard Evans has become an international figure in the band world, conducting regularly in Japan, Australia, New Zealand and throughout Europe, as well as being in demand in Britain. His magical touch in the entertainment contest has remained with him and he led Grimethorpe to two wins whilst he was their resident conductor, since when he has also led Brighouse & Rastrick to two wins.

Of the many non-conducting engagements Richard has undertaken, he is one of the most sought-after adjudicators, was Director of Examinations for the Alexander Owen Memorial Fund Scholarship for a number of years, and he founded and headed a distance-learning degree course in Band Musicianship at Accrington & Rossendale College.

Despite this and much more he is still in demand as a conductor. He has been guest conductor of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain a number of times, music director of the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland for many years and has successfully led numerous 'lesser' bands both in concert and contest. His name remains one of the most popular on the brass band scene.¹

HOWARD SNELL is another musician who began his musical career in a brass band, went on to become a high-profile professional musician and in later life returned to banding.

He studied trumpet at the Royal Academy of Music, shortly after which he joined the London Symphony Orchestra. Later he became principal trumpet and orchestral chairman. He left the LSO in 1978 in order to develop a career in conducting.

In addition to appearing as guest conductor with a number of leading London orchestras, forming and conducting the Wren Orchestra, he also conducted the LSO Brass and the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble. As a result of his association with the latter, Elgar Howarth asked him to do some conducting with Grimethorpe. Thus, in 1973, his return to the banding scene took place.

He had some successes with Grimethorpe before taking up a more permanent appointment as musical director of Desford Colliery. He remained there until 1986, turning it from a relatively unknown band into one of considerable quality, with a number of podium places in the British Open and the National Championships, and their biggest success, a win at the 1986 European Championships.

Of more significance, however, was the string of successes in entertainment contests, with four wins in Granada Band of the Year and a further three at Brass in Concert. There was also success in the BBC knock-out competition, 'Best of Brass'. Achievement in all of these was largely due to Howard's imaginative programming - his transcriptions and witty arrangements, which were to become his hallmark. For details of these see my 'History of the Brass Band Repertoire' Part 10 in Brass Herald, Issue 32 (February-April 2010).

Howard remained with Desford until 1986, though in 1980 he had taken up the position of musical director with Foden's, seeing it through a number of name changes due to changes in sponsorship. From the long-standing name of Foden's Motor Works it became Foden's OTS, then Britannia Building Society Foden's and finally Britannia Building Society. Howard had limited success in the two major contests with this band, though they achieved a 2nd prize at the British Open and three at the Nationals. In the All England Masters competition, however, there were four wins.

1990 was a peak year for Howard, leading the then Britannia Building Society Band to wins at Brass in Concert, the short-lived UK Entertainment Contest and the All England Masters. They were also declared BBC Band of the Year and, for good measure, were runners-up in the Nationals.

From 1987 Howard had an on-going association with Eikanger-Bjørsvik in Norway, not only taking the 'European' title with them twice, but regularly winning the Norwegian National Championships as well as Siddis - Norway's equivalent to Brass in Concert.



James Watson.

He made Eikanger into one of the finest bands in Europe, with prestigious concerts, broadcasts and an enviable collection of CD recordings.

Howard also had brief spells conducting CWS (Glasgow), winning the 1996 Nationals with them. In more recent times he has worked with Wingates and Fairey's.

Though not undertaking a great many adjudicating appointments, Howard is highly respected in this field and in 1989 adjudicated at the New Zealand National Championships. He recently came out of retirement to officiate at the Scottish Open Championships. Also in 1989, he founded Rakeway Music - publishing his own music, and the Howard Snell Brass, a ten-piece all-star brass ensemble.

It would be impossible to list all of Howard's 'fringe' activities, but these have included the commissioning of new works by leading composers, playing a leading role in the revival of Wilfred Heaton's music, organising conferences and appearing as guest conductor in a number of gala concerts in the Royal Albert Hall.

On the educational front, Howard was Head of Brass at the Royal Northern College of Music from 1983-1994 and in 1999 became Professor of Trumpet at the Royal Academy of Music. In 2005 he published his landmark book, 'The Trumpet - its Practice and Performance'.

In 2004 Howard 'emigrated' to France, having previously lived in the Isle of Man for a few years. Never one to avoid controversy, he has often been quite outspoken about happenings in the brass band world. He has a website, where a search for his comments under 'To see ourselves as others see us' is well worth the time spent searching for it.

JAMES WATSON was something of a child prodigy, becoming principal cornet of Desford Colliery Band at the age of 11. He performed a hat trick of wins in the Junior Solo Championships of Great Britain, and at the age of 14 won both the Junior and Senior titles.

Later, he studied trumpet at the Royal Academy of Music and whilst doing this became principal cornet of the City of London Band, formed by Geoffrey Brand and made up mainly of students from various London colleges.

On leaving the Royal Academy, James became principal trumpet with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the London Sinfonietta, but left these posts to build a solo career and also to become a leading member of the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble. He returned to his orchestral career in 1983, becoming principal trumpet of the orchestra of the Royal Opera House.

By now he was taking an interest in conducting and after 'guesting' with a number of bands became professional conductor of Brighouse & Rastrick, a position he held from 1983-1986, picking up a couple of prizes with them in the British Open Championships.

In 1987 he returned to his former band, Desford, as musical director, incredibly leading them to a hat trick of first prizes in the National Championships in his first three years and returning to take the title again in 1991, having been given a bye following the hat trick.

James Watson then became principal conductor of Black Dyke Mills Band, serving from 1992-2000. The early years were possibly the most turbulent in the band's history, with sackings, resignations, the loss of the parent company (John Foster & Son Ltd) and the introduction of ladies into what had previously always been an all-male band.

Contest successes continued to come Jim's way, with three podium places and a win in the British Open, and two wins and a 3rd prize in the Nationals. 1995 was his peak contesting year, with wins at the European Championships, the Open and Nationals - the 'Grand Slam'.

But contest successes were the least important part of James Watson's visionary contribution to the band's history. The closure of John Foster's in 1994 led to a new and lucrative sponsorship deal with Bradford & Bingley Building Society and a name change to The Black Dyke Band. There were now new and exciting recording and television contracts, tours and revolutionary changes in the style of the band's programmes, designed to attract a wider audience.



Alan Morrison.

On a visit to Sierra Leone the band narrowly missed being involved in a coup in which the president was deposed. In New York the band performed in the famous Carnegie Hall and gave masterclasses in the prestigious Julliard School of Music. There were television appearances on such programmes as Alan Titchmarsh's 'Ground Force' and with stars such as Sir Elton John. There were ground-breaking broadcasts and recordings with the music of Sir William Walton and Edward Gregson, and a solo album featuring James Watson as trumpet soloist. There were newly commissioned works, Nigel Clarke was appointed composer-in-residence, and Philip Wilby and Peter Graham became musical associates of the band.

These were heady times for Black Dyke, but in 2000 James Watson resigned. He was to continue his rise in the music profession, furthering his career as a free lance trumpet player and continuing in his post as professor of trumpet at the Royal Academy. Here he rose to the position of Head of Brass and also received the highly prestigious Fellowship. In 2006 he was appointed Professor of Music by the University of London.

Whilst still at Black Dyke he had been the Artistic Director of the National Youth Brass Band of Wales and had also appeared on a couple of occasions as guest conductor with the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain. He had also begun an association with bands of the Salvation Army, doing joint concerts with Black Dyke and Enfield Citadel bands. (Sadly James Watson passed away in February 2011, after this article had been written).

Coupled with these are two legendary cornet players. Jim

Shepherd was born in Northumberland. Moving to Yorkshire in 1960, he became principal cornet of Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band before taking up a similar position with Black Dyke in 1964. Solo Champion of Great Britain in 1962, 63, 64, he remained with Black Dyke for ten years as one of the leading cornettists of his generation. He also started up the Queensbury Music Centre Band, many of his own pupils playing in it. On leaving Black Dyke he founded his James Shepherd Versatile Brass, a ten piece group that received rave reviews for concerts, recordings and tours. Jim remains one of the most revered cornet players around today and is passing on his experience through a number of conducting appointments.

Alan Morrison was born in Middlesborough and started playing the cornet at the age of seven. He became a member of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, attending 11 courses, the last two as leader. By the age of 15 he was playing principal cornet in a top section band in the North East. In 1976 he became Champion Soloist of Great Britain, two years later winning an international solo competition in Australia. He joined Grimethorpe in 1980, becoming principal cornet in 1982. He left in 1994, having helped the band to many awards, played in hundreds of concerts and broadcasts, toured extensively and made several solo CDs. Alan is now in demand as soloist, conductor and adjudicator.

Two euphonium players to emerge at this time were **Trevor Groom** and **John Clough**. Trevor was the long-serving solo euphonium of Munn & Felton's/GUS. He also played in Kettering Salvation Army Band. John was formerly a cornet player - solo cornet of Bradford Victoria and a founder member of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain. He joined the solo cornet bench of Black Dyke in 1960 but, via 3rd cornet and 2nd baritone, he became the band's solo euphonium player in 1963, succeeding Geoffrey Whitham and remaining in the position for 25



Trevor Groom.

years, earning a world-wide reputation for his band playing and his solos. Since leaving Black Dyke John has played with several bands, generally on baritone

John Hudson came to the fore in the late 1960s as Derek Garside's number two at CWS (Manchester). When Derek stood down in 1972 John became principal cornet. Five years later he took the 'hot seat' at Leyland under Richard Evans, remaining there until 1983, when he moved to Foden's as principal cornet and assistant conductor to Howard Snell. He left this position in 1990 to become resident conductor of CWS (Glasgow), of which Howard was professional conductor. Taking them to the Nationals, they won 1st prize. John conducted a number of bands during the 1990s, helping Tredegar to second place in the 1993 Nationals and Wingates to an Area win in 1995. However, in 2000 he and his family moved to Norway, where he has since built up a career in conducting and teaching.

Meanwhile, the 15-year-old **Ian Bousfield** was making a name for himself as the trombone soloist of Yorkshire Imperial. He also won, at this time, an LSO Music Scholarship worth £3,000. He remained with the 'Imps' until he

departed for music college. Half way through his course he applied for an audition for the post of principal trombone with the Hallé Orchestra. Offered the job, he had to decide whether to take it or complete his course. He opted for the former and started a distinguished orchestral career, taking him from the Hallé to the London Symphony Orchestra and from there to the Vienna Philharmonic.

Stephen Sykes was the E flat bass tuba soloist of Grimethorpe from 1978-1982,



Ian Bousfield soloing with the London Symphony Orchestra.

earning a worldwide reputation for his musicianship and being amongst the first to turn the tuba into an acknowledged solo instrument. Since then he has developed a career as soloist, clinician, conductor, adjudicator and arranger. He has formed his own publishing company and publishes his own arrangements.

Keith Wilkinson played euphonium and was a member of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain for a number of years. He played for a time in GUS and was assistant conductor to Geoffrey Brand, becoming musical director when Geoffrey left. He held this post from 1978-1985, after which he took up a similar appointment with William Davis Construction Band. By profession he lectured in mathematics, but in 1991 he gave up his university job in order to devote all his time to his brass band work. This also included the making of some very successful transcriptions. In 1996 Keith emigrated to Ohio in the USA, as the Divisional Music Director for the Salvation Army. Since then he has conducted a number of American brass bands.

Jim Davies was the distinguished solo cornet player of the Cory Band from 1972 until the mid-1980s. He was born in the Rhondda Valley and at the age of 15 was Champion Soloist of Wales. He helped Cory's to four National and one European titles and led them throughout their American tour of 1976. He also played with Brighouse & Rastrick, making a solo disc with them. He is currently a successful conductor and adjudicator, but it was his fine cornet playing which made Jim Davies famous.

(Footnotes)

¹ For further information about Richard, see 'Dick the Stick!' (*Jagrs* 2005).

See also Alan Morrison's article in 'Brass Legends - Richard Evans' in *The Brass Herald*, Issue 23 (October-November 2009).

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BRASS LEGENDS

Living Legends - Part 3

The late Dr Roy
Newsome Part 14



The previous two articles in this series have outlined the careers of conductors who have already made their most significant contributions. We now look at a group still in their respective primes, but who have already contributed sufficient to be classed as legendary.

RAY FARR had a Salvation Army background but studied at the Birmingham School of Music and the Royal Academy of Music. In 1969 he joined the BBC Midland Light Orchestra and played as an 'extra' in the CBSO. From here he moved to London and became a member of the BBC Radio Orchestra, remaining with this orchestra for ten years. He also conducted a number of brass bands within easy reach of the capital, including City of Coventry, Newham and Redbridge Youth.

Ray's first major conducting appointment was as resident conductor of Grimethorpe, a post he held for five years and during which he conducted at hundreds of concerts and took part in many prestigious music festivals and tours, including the band's celebrated tour of Australia. Grimethorpe also won a Granada Band of the Year title and were three times Brass in Concert Champions under Ray's direction.

After leaving Grimethorpe he worked as a free-lance conductor and arranger, his bands including CWS (Glasgow), Parc & Dare, Yorkshire Imperial and a return to City of Coventry.

In 1990 he moved, with his family, to Norway. Here he was the resident conductor of Eikanger-Bjørsvik but also conducted several other bands.

During all of this time he was producing high quality arrangements. Due to his work with the Radio Orchestra he had a particular flair for lighter music and



Ray Farr.

many of his successful arrangements reflected this. On the more serious side, his transcriptions included excerpts from Stravinsky's *Firebird* and several pieces by Sir Malcolm Arnold.

On returning to England in the late 1990s Ray accepted conducting engagements with several bands, including Desford, Fairey's and Yorkshire Imperial, and he led Fodens to victory at the 2000 Brass in Concert. He was, by now, also conducting professional orchestras both at home and abroad.

In 2003 Ray became Conductor-in-Residence at Durham University. Here, he has been able to build on his experience as performer, conductor, composer/arranger and teacher. He is recognised as a significant personality both locally, nationally and internationally.

The careers of our next two subjects are so inter-linked that they are considered in parallel with each other. **ROBERT** and **NICHOLAS CHILDS** both began their playing careers in Tredegar Juniors under the watchful eye of their father, John, conductor of Tredegar Town Band and himself a former euphonium player. Both were to progress to euphonium and into the senior band before going their separate ways. Both also played in the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain.

Robert (Bob), the elder of the two brothers, first flew the family nest when he moved to Kettering to become 2nd euphonium with the GUS Band, playing under Stanley Boddington and sitting next to the euphonium star, Trevor Groom. He also had lessons with the legendary euphonium soloist, Bert Sullivan.

Over the next few years Bob became a member, in turn, of Grimethorpe, Hammonds Sauce Works and Brighouse & Rastrick bands before, in 1988, succeeding John Clough as solo euphonium at Black Dyke, then conducted by David King. Two

years later he resigned in order to establish the duo known as 'The Childs Brothers' along with Nicholas.

Employment had been found for Bob while he was playing with GUS, Grimethorpe and Hammonds, but in 1989 he became a full time peripatetic instrumental teacher in Hull, where he also founded the City of Hull Band - later to become EYMS (East Yorkshire Motor Services). He remained with this band until 1997, as well as playing in Black Dyke, which he had rejoined in 1992.

Meanwhile Nicholas (Nick) followed his father to his next two bands, Brodsworth Colliery and Carlton Main. He then had a spell with Yorkshire Imperial and in 1982 joined Grimethorpe and remained there until 1988, when he joined Britannia Building Society Band, under Howard Snell. Five years later he metaphorically hung up his euphonium and became resident conductor of Yorkshire Building Society. He also did some conducting with Ever Ready and Desford, before becoming professional conductor of his old band, Tredegar. Under his guidance they became Welsh Champions. During this same period he led Wingates to success in the Grand Shield.

Nick then returned to what had become Fodens (Courtois) as its 'professional'. His previous conducting experience immediately bore fruit, with prizes in both the British Open and the Nationals, culminating in a win at the latter in 1999, his final year at Fodens'.

But to return to the 1980s and the establishment of 'The Childs Brothers'. Their first official engagement was in the gala concert following the National Championships of 1984. They quickly



Dr Robert Childs.



Dr Nicholas Childs.

came to the fore with concerts throughout Britain and regular tours - in Europe, America, Australia, Japan and even Russia. Wherever they went they promoted the 'British sound' of the euphonium. They also produced several CD recordings.

Before leaving the playing careers of the brothers, here's a brief mention of their contribution to euphonium literature. Hitherto, virtually the only serious euphonium solos available were the *Concerto* of Horowitz (1972) and a *Fantasy* by Sparke (1978). John Golland wrote the next two 'big' euphonium pieces. The first was his *Euphonium Concerto*, composed for Bob Childs and first performed during Grimethorpe's Australian tour in 1981. John's *Euphonium Concerto No 2* was composed in 1988 and first performed by Nick, also with Grimethorpe. Two later major euphonium pieces were composed for, and first performed by Bob - Philip Wilby's *Concerto*, containing the famous plate-smashing *Greek Dance* (1996) and Kenneth Downie's *Concerto* (2000).

In 1988 the brothers made an important departure, establishing the DOYEN recording company. Though managed by Nick and his wife, Alison, it was certainly a Childs Brothers initiative and both were involved in its founding.

In the next phase of the Childs history, though they each took different paths as conductors, there were remarkable similarities between the two careers. In terms of contest results, in the years 2000 to 2010, Nick and Black Dyke had 29 successes in the major championships, whilst Bob and Cory had 27. Each collected eight actual titles - Bob four at the Open, one at the Nationals and three European wins, whilst Nick had two wins at the Open, five at the Nationals and one European title.

In other band matters, Nick inherited policies established by James Watson, his predecessor at Black Dyke. Bob was actually at Black Dyke during practically all of the Watson era and was deputy conductor for the last three years. He therefore knew exactly what was happening there and Bob took some ideas with him to Cory (Buy As You View at the time).

2010 saw the completion of Nick's first decade at Black Dyke. It had begun with the devastating news that the band had lost its Bradford & Bingley sponsorship and was now facing its own 'credit crunch'. With a large amount of belt-tightening, some imaginative steps taken by the trustees and above all, Nick's business acumen, to everyone's credit the band has not only survived, but has flourished during the decade.

In addition to this, Nick found almost immediately that he needed a new set



David Childs.

of primary soloists - cornet, euphonium and trombone. In Roger Webster, David Thornton and Brett Baker, he enlisted a most worthy trio. During the decade Nick and the band gave over 500 concerts, completed some 30 overseas tours and commissioned a large number of new works. Commercial recording continued apace, Doyen and Obrasso (a Swiss company) producing a steady stream of CDs. Amongst the recordings were several dedicated to a particular composer and also some individual solo albums. One of the 'composer' discs featured the music of Elgar, on which *Severn Suite* was directed by the distinguished orchestral conductor Sir Colin Davis. A 'Young Composer in Residence' post was created, and one of the benefits accruing from a prestigious partnership with Leeds Metropolitan University was the founding of a Yorkshire Youth Brass Band. There were collaborations between Black Dyke and the International Staff Band. Virtually all of these innovations were inspired by Nick Childs.

Finally, Black Dyke's old rehearsal-room had become too small and, frankly, past its sell-by date. Following an official opening during the summer of 2010, the band now has a new rehearsal studio in the lower part of the building. The original bandroom is retained as a kind of museum.

Having taken Buy As You View Cory to a contest in Ebbw Vale early in 2000 and won, Bob Childs was offered the post of musical director. He accepted, having a some weeks earlier resigned from Black Dyke. Later in the year he led Cory to its first-ever victory in the British Open Championships. The year was then crowned with a win at the National Championships in the Royal Albert Hall.

The new partnership was, therefore, off to a flying start with this rare 'double'.

In addition to working hard for contests Bob tackled the band's attitude towards concerts, having seen what was possible with other bands with which he'd played. He increased the number of concerts undertaken whilst reducing the number of contests attended. He also introduced a commissioning policy and invited John Pickard to become the band's composer-in-residence. This led to the composition and performance of his much-discussed *Gaia Symphony*, premièred in the Cheltenham Festival and broadcast live on Radio 3.

By now Bob was on the staff of the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama and when invited to become music director of the National Youth Brass Band of Wales he saw immense possibilities for links between these two organisations and the Cory Band.

Though not playing in all local contests the band was now regularly attending the European Championships. A first-rate team of soloists - Ian Williams on cornet, Chris Thomas on trombone, Owen Farr on tenor horn and Bob's son, David, on euphonium - provided the basic strength of the band and was crucial to its success.

Bob also saw benefits in collaboration with other musicians. Links with male voice choirs were forged and even more important, the distinguished Welsh composer Karl Jenkins began to take an interest in Cory's, providing them with a steady stream of new music, including a most attractive *Euphonium Concerto*, dedicated to David Childs. David had become a vital part of the Cory machine whilst Lisa, his sister, was a member of the cornet section.

Another boost came in 2008, with a fine win at 'Brass in Concert'. Bob's earlier experience, particularly with Grimethorpe, stood the band in good stead for this event.

In 2009 the band celebrated its 125th anniversary, with extra concerts in more prestigious venues. Contest results were excellent, with a win at the British Open for the third time and the European title for the second year running.

Following the production of two successful CDs, the 125th anniversary concert took place in Cardiff's St David's Hall. The celebrated Morrision Orpheus Choir and the great American trombonist Wycliffe Gordon were guests of the band, and the concert was a glittering and highly-acclaimed event. Bob had achieved his ambition of creating a fine concert band as well as a successful contesting one.

To hammer home the competition status of the band, it next went to Kerkrade in Holland to attend the World Music

Festival. Once again it proved equal to the occasion and returned to Wales triumphantly, as World Champions.

Meanwhile, in addition to his work with Black Dyke, Nick also leads a hectic life elsewhere. He is still the managing director of Doyen Records and though his wife, Alison, looks after much of the day to day running of the company, Nick is heavily involved in decision-making and in maintaining contact with recording artists.

He is also Director of Band Studies at the RNCM. Many other bands have called on his services as conductor. These include CWS (Glasgow), Woodfalls, Mount Charles and Reg Vardy (Ever Ready) at home, and Gothenburg and Eikanger overseas. Nick was also music adviser for the TV series, 'A Band for Britain'.

Both Bob and Nick do a small amount of adjudicating (when time permits!) and both are still heavily involved with the NYBBGB, of which Bob is Chairman, and in Nick's case, also with the National Children's Brass Band of Great Britain, of which he is the Music Director and which was formed in 2004.

Of the 'extra' personalities in this group, **Nigel Boddice MBE** played cornet as a boy with his local band, Church Gresley, progressing to become leader of the NYBBGB. He studied trumpet at the Royal Academy of Music and became 1st trumpet of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. He conducted a number of Scottish bands and joined the staff of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama. Nigel now began accepting professional engagements as a conductor with orchestras and military bands, whilst his brass band work veered toward youth. He helped with the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland but, more particularly from 1984, with the West Lothian Schools Brass Band which, as musical director, he has brought up to a very high standard. He received the Mortimer Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians for services to young musicians.

David Hirst was in the solo cornet section of Yorkshire Imperial at 14 and two years later was the soprano cornet player of Black Dyke. Studying at Huddersfield University and taught by Maurice Murphy, after a spell with James Shepherd Versatile Brass, he returned to Black Dyke. After conducting several bands, David was again back with Black Dyke, as its resident conductor. From 1994 he spent 11 years in a similar capacity with Brighouse & Rastrick. He became Head of Band Studies at the Barnsley College but is now a free lance conductor and adjudicator.

Now to two distinguished members of Grimethorpe. **Stan Lippeatt**, a product of Grimethorpe Schoolboys' Band and taught by George Thompson, was for many years



Nick Hudson.

the flugel horn soloist of Grimethorpe Colliery. He was one of a small group of players who brought the flugel to the fore as a solo instrument, commissioning John Golland to write his *Concerto for Flugel Horn*, which he then premiered. Having been a full time peripatetic brass teacher, Stan has conducted a wide range of bands. He is also a popular adjudicator and the dynamic chairman of the Association of Brass Band Adjudicators. In 2003 Stan became Advisor to the new Butlins National Mineworkers' Open Brass Band Festival, held annually in Skegness.

Peter Roberts also came up through Grimethorpe Schoolboys' Band and he joined Grimethorpe Colliery Band in 1965. Here he received numerous awards, including the Granada Soloist Prize and became British Open Solo Champion in 1988. On medical advice he ceased playing in 1991 but after a two-year gap he returned, playing with various bands. He eventually settled with Yorkshire Building Society under David King, playing there from 1997-2004, when he made his final move as a player to Black Dyke, there completing a phenomenal playing career. His reputation was truly international and amongst his overseas bands was the Brass Band of Battle Creek, which boasts many of the top American professional brass players. He is now a respected adjudicator and his Autobiography was published in 2003. (For more information on Peter, see 'Peter Roberts, a Legend in his own Lifetime' Jagrins, 2003.)

Next, three very fine trombonists: **Chris Jeans** played for a time with Stanshawe before moving to Desford and sharing in their successes at the Nationals and in entertainment contests. Then, in each of two years with Rigid Containers he won the Brass in Concert Solo Prize. There were also periods with Black Dyke and Yorkshire Building Society, but already Youth Brass 2000 had been established

as the junior wing of Rigid Containers. Chris took this on and has had outstanding success in concert, contest and on CD. **Nicholas Hudson**, something of a child prodigy, became solo trombone player with Foden's at the age of 14. He remained there until 1996 (by which time it had become Britannia Building Society). He has since played with BNFL, Fairey's and YBS, whilst also building an impressive solo career and with a number of solo CDs to his credit. **Chris Thomas**, for the last decade or so the distinguished principal trombone player of Cory's, earlier played with two other Welsh bands, BTM and Tredegar. He became the British Open Solo Champion in the years 1992 and 1993, in the former year also being International Musician of the Year by virtue of winning the competition in Auckland, New Zealand. He then played with Fairey's before returning to Wales and joining Cory's.

In addition to the Childs Brothers, discussed above, **Steven Mead** stands at the head of a range of fine euphonium players who have graced the brass band in recent years. He studied music at Bristol University and from 1983 played with Stanshawe. From there he moved to Desford for a very productive period between 1984 and 1989. He was also now taking on important teaching appointments and building up a worldwide reputation as soloist and clinician. He has commissioned major works from a range of composers and has done much to bring the euphonium into prominence on the world stage. Apart from a short spell with CWS (Glasgow) during the late 1990s, Steven has done little actual band playing other than that connected with his recitals, masterclasses and teaching.

Sandy Smith has been at the forefront as a tenor horn soloist for over 30 years, taking up the mantle where Gordon Higginbottom left off (see Brass Legends 12). Leading the horn sections of Black Dyke, Fairey's and Grimethorpe, his experience is vast. A graduate of Huddersfield University who later became a part-time lecturer there, he has also acquired a reputation as a first class arranger of band music. In 2010 he moved into the conductors' world, becoming Brighouse & Rastrick's resident.

Simone Rebello has brought percussion playing within the brass band to new heights. Though primarily an orchestral percussionist, whilst studying at the RNCM she became involved with Foden's, adding a further dimension to Howard Snell's marvellous arrangements. She has also formed other professional ensembles - both all-percussion and mixed, is a regular recitalist and lecturer, and a much-respected adjudicator and presenter.

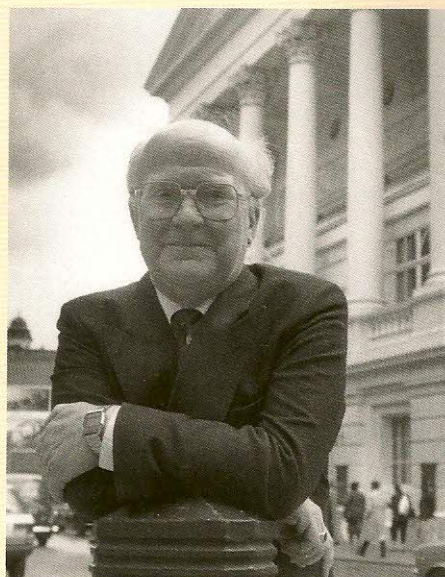
BRASS LEGENDS

Living Legends - Part 4

The late Dr Roy
Newsome Part 15



BRAM GAY was born in Treorchy, South Wales. He was the son of a coal miner, part of a Salvation Army family and, having been bought a cornet at the age of three, his first playing experience came with the local 'Army' band. He made rapid progress and was taken to play for Harry Mortimer at the age of 13. He was impressed, suggested that the teenager should move to Sandbach, which he did and a place was found for him in Foden's Motor Works Band. He played as assistant to Harry for two years before succeeding him as principal at around the time of the end of the war, Harry by then being more immersed in trumpet playing and conducting.



Bram Gay.

This all ended in 1949 when Bram was called up for National Service. In fact, he 'signed on' and served for four years in the band of the Scots Guards. During this period, living in London, he became hooked by the musical scene there and took an interest in the trumpet. Without any formal trumpet training, but helped by some lessons with the legendary Ernest Hall, he made a success of the 1st trumpet job in the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (the CBSO). From here he moved to Manchester and the Hallé Orchestra and from there to London and to the Royal Opera House. After playing 3rd trumpet for four years in its orchestra he became the Orchestral Director, responsible for liaising with Covent Garden's music director and visiting conductors, and for ensuring that the right orchestra was always there at the right time. He performed this job for 20 years before retiring in 1985.

But what about brass bands? He'd had a distressingly short career as a principal cornet player before joining a host of similarly promising youths who have escaped to the music profession. Many of these have never been heard of again in the brass band world, but not so Bram Gay.

Wherever his work has taken him he has connected with bands in the area. He has always had a facility for transcription, helped by his vast inside knowledge of the orchestral and operatic repertoire. Several major test pieces have come from his pen, as well as a full brass band version of Mozart's opera, The Magic Flute and a complete Beethoven Symphony No. 5. For many years Bram has been editor of the brass band music of Novello & Co. and was a co-editor of their erstwhile quarterly magazine, 'Sounding Brass'. He is also a member of the advisory panel connected with the British Open Championships.

Bram has regularly conducted brass bands, though his most significant appointment was a three-year stint as musical director of Cory's. Undoubtedly, his most important missionary work has been with Solna and Gothenburg Brass, in Sweden. He has also done quite a lot of adjudicating.

Despite all of the foregoing, it is probably as a promoter of high-profile contests and concerts that the present generation of band people will know Bram Gay. He was very much the driving force behind the Granada Band of the Year competition, which ran from 1971 to 1987. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, he promoted a series of band festivals in Manchester and Bristol, persuading five or six top bands to attend each one to deliver a 50-minute programme of serious music. These were played to a live audience and usually recorded by the BBC. They were forerunners of the gala concerts now mounted in Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on the afternoon of the Sunday following the British Open Championships. These have been running now for over a decade. They usually involve three leading bands and are highly successful and enjoyable events.

So this multi-talented musician, now living in France, joins my group of living legends. He has influenced the course of band music in many and varied ways and brought with him much of the professionalism that has been his life.

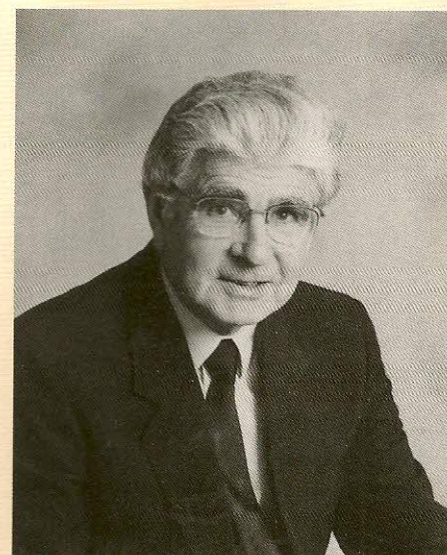
KENNETH DENNISON played trombone for Rothwell Temperance Band as a boy and in 1946 won the AOMF Scholarship. After a short spell with Brighouse & Rastrick he joined the forces, playing with the RAF Central Band.

He went to Fairey's in 1951, playing principal trombone for some 17 years before being appointed musical director, initially working alongside the band's mentor, Harry Mortimer. Ken remained there until 1976, giving 25 years' service to the band, whilst working in the personnel department of the company. During this time the band won five British Open and five National titles, including an Open hat trick and a 'double'.

Following his departure he became musical director of City of Coventry, serving from 1976-1979. After this, though still occasionally conducting, he took up no more regular appointments. He was, however, actively involved with the NABBC, the Southern Counties Brass Band Association and for a time was secretary of the British Federation of Brass Bands. He was also a highly respected adjudicator, fulfilling over 500 assignments during his career.

DAVID READ MBE, though born in South Wales, was brought up in South Yorkshire, in the heart of the Yorkshire coalfield and in the hotbed of northern brass bands. He was born into a mining family, became a miner himself and played with several colliery bands. Having served his banding 'apprenticeship' with Askern Colliery, he moved up a couple of sections to play with Carlton Main - commonly known as 'Frickley'. He was there from 1949 to 1953, playing under notable conductors including George Hespe and Eric Ball.

Next came National Service and a spell playing with the band of the Welsh Guards. He was already well known to Harry Mortimer, who invited him to play with Morris Motors and the Harry



David Read MBE.

Mortimer All-Star Band, whilst based in London with the guards.

On leaving the army David returned to Frickley, now under the direction of Jack Atherton. During the next few years, under his direction, they became British Open Champions in 1958, and were runner-up in 1957 and 1959.

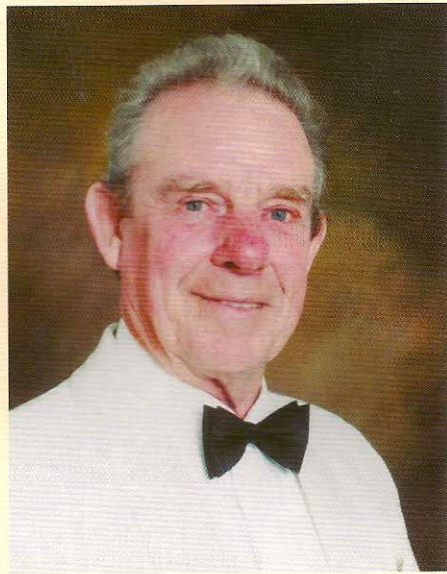
David left in 1960 to join Munn & Felton's, under Stanley Boddington. He was with this band for 14 years, during which time it became GUS. He was now to enjoy an even more successful time than that he'd experienced with Frickley. The band became National Champions three times - in 1960, 1964 and 1966 and World Champions in 1971. There were also another nine podium places in the London contests, as well as a couple of prizes in the British Open Championships.

During the same period, David himself became the Cornet Champion of Great Britain on three occasions, converting one of them to outright Solo Champion. He also played with the GUS Quartet in its famous hat trick in the Quartet Championships between 1966 and 1968, playing the three original Gilbert Vinter quartets.

As far back as 1967 David became a peripatetic brass teacher in the Huntingdon and Peterborough areas. Here he helped form the highly successful Huntingdon Youth Band. Away from GUS, David was able to concentrate more on his educational work and he now became the Senior Instrumental Teacher for Cambridgeshire. More success with youth bands followed and he also took on the conducting of Cambridge Co-op Band. Though not achieving any dizzy heights in national competition, the band nevertheless became a successful concert and broadcasting combination and, under David's guidance, made some interesting commissions.

In later years David was able to play with Grimethorpe Colliery on an 'as needed' basis, and also became a member of the Virtuosi Band and Kings of Brass - both made up of leading players from the present or recent past.

But perhaps the most important role in his life was still to come - that of a brass band adjudicator. This began in 1974, since when he has become one of the most sought-after of all adjudicators. He has officiated at all levels and possibly holds the record for the number of top level contests at which he has adjudicated. At the time of writing (January 2011) David has officiated 21 times at the Nationals, 18 times at the British Open and a further 18 times at the All England Masters. Surprisingly, he has adjudicated only once at the European Championships. When the Association



Derek Broadbent.

of Brass Band Adjudicators was formed in 1999, David Read was elected to be the first chairman. This reflects a multi-talented career and a worthy place in our Living Legends.¹

DEREK BROADBENT played cornet in his local band, near Blackpool, from an early age. He became an army musician, studying at Kneller Hall with the legendary Jack Mackintosh. After eight years' service he came out of the army and took a job as musical director at a holiday camp, developing his flair for light music, which was to be an important part of his banding life. Then came seven years as musical director of Slaithwaite Band.

His first major appointment, in 1973, was as resident conductor of Brighouse & Rastrick, a position he held for ten eventful years. The band was in the prizes regularly at the British Open, with a second prize in 1977, conducted by Derek himself and winning under Geoffrey Brand in the following year. There were two wins at the Nationals, in 1973 under James Scott and in 1980 under Derek. 1981 saw the band winning the European Championships under James Scott, no doubt ably supported by his resident conductor.

This was also the period of *The Floral Dance*, arranged by Derek and first recorded in 1975. It was promoted on



Frank Renton.

the radio by Terry Wogan and moved up to number two in the pop charts, with the band appearing on the television programme 'Top of the Pops'.

Derek then became resident conductor of Black Dyke, serving from 1983-1985, part of that golden period under Peter Parkes and including the winning of the so-called 'grand slam', when the band held all three major titles - Open, Nationals and European.

Several moves came now, including a spell back with Brighouse, as Musical Director, a period with Wingates as professional conductor and a move to Fairey's in 1992, with the grand title of 'Associate Professional Conductor'. Here, he teamed up once more with Peter Parkes. Other bands benefiting from Derek's experience included Marple, Flowers and Ransomes. He also took Manx Youth Band on its tour of New Zealand and for many years was in charge of the highly popular Wessex Summer School.

Derek was also involved in plenty of non-conducting activities. He became musical editor of Wright & Round in 1988, but had been producing a steady stream of compositions and arrangements. (See *The Brass Herald*, issues 30, October-November 2009 and 31, December 2009-January 2010 for more detail about these). There were also lots of masterclasses and adjudicating appointments and in 2006 Derek began a four-year stint as chairman of ABBA.

FRANK RENTON was born in Yorkshire to a family with no history of brass playing. However, he took up the cornet and progressed sufficiently well to become a member of Black Dyke Mills Band during his teens. He then switched to trumpet and studied at the RNCM before joining the army as a bandsman.

Always interested in conducting, he held increasingly important appointments in the army - Director of Music of the Parachute Regiment, the Royal Artillery Mounted Band, the Royal Artillery Woolwich Band and finally, with the rank of Lieut-Col., Director of Music at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall. He retired from the army on 1992.

Frank had won the NABBC's conducting competition of 1967 and from the early 1970s began thinking quite seriously about brass band conducting, working with Wingates, CWS (Manchester), Grimethorpe, Desford and the James Shepherd Versatile Brass.

He worked regularly with Grimethorpe from 1988 and in 1991 it became BBC Band of the Year and also won the British Open Championships. A year later the band was devastated with the miners' strike, the closure of many

pits and the possible demise of Grimethorpe Colliery Band. However, they battled on, even winning the National Championships. They not only survived, but maintained their enviable record as a leading band. There were other podium places in the two major contests and also what must have been a sickening run of 2nd prizes at 'Brass in Concert'.

Other bands to come under Frank's influence included Scotland's Kirkintilloch and Norway's Stavanger.

However, there was another important string to Frank's bow as a concert presenter and as host, since 1995, to BBC Radio 2's weekly 'Listen to the Band'. At around the same time he also took over as the presenter of 'Brass in Concert' - a key role in the event's success and one which he fulfils with distinction to this day. Frank is also a regular contributor to the band press and is a noted adjudicator.

One of the all-time great cornet players, **PHILLIP MCCANN** was born in Bo'ness, Scotland. He played with Kinniel Colliery Band, won numerous solo competitions and was leader of The National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain on ten courses. In 1963 he became principal cornet with Yorkshire Imperial and in 1967 took a similar position with Fairey's. From 1973, for over 20 years, he led Black Dyke Mills Band, sharing in contest successes, high-profile concerts, recordings and tours. His ground-breaking set of CDs - 'The World's Most Beautiful Melodies' - was begun with Black Dyke but completed by Sellers, one of many bands which he successfully conducted. Phillip has also been a great teacher, both privately and through his courses at the University of Huddersfield.

MARTIN WINTER was also a leader of The National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain and for several years was principal cornet with Desford. He then studied trumpet at the RNCM and whilst there became principal cornet of Britannia Building Society Band. Shortly after completing his studies he moved to Norway to become a member of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also



Phillip McCann.

played with and conducted a number of Norwegian bands, as well as keeping in touch with the brass band scene in Britain.

ROGER WEBSTER was born in Barnsley. He learned to play the piano and then the cornet, joining Grimethorpe Colliery Juniors. In 1988, after experience with a number of famous bands, he became principal cornet of Black Dyke. He remained there for five years before going free-lance, accepting guest solo engagements and occasionally playing trumpet with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. He returned to Black Dyke in 2000, but after a further five years returned to his roots as principal cornet of Grimethorpe Colliery. He holds a PhD in performance psychology and since 2008 has become a professional soloist, orchestral trumpeter and clinician. Roger has made several solo CDs.

MARK WILKINSON was principal cornet with Besses Boys during one of its most successful periods. He was also a member of the NYBB, twice being its leader. He was then principal cornet of Wingates before taking up a similar position with Britannia Building Society Band (now Foden's), under Howard Snell, in 1992. He has held this position with distinction to this day.

RUSSELL GRAY, Scottish-born, played with Clydebank Burgh and the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland, becoming its leader. Studying at Huddersfield



Roger Webster.

University and the RSAMD, he served Leyland and Black Dyke as assistant principal solo cornet player and Britannia Building Society as principal, becoming British Open Solo Champion in 1994. Five years later he embarked on a world tour as a cornet soloist. In 2000 he began his conducting career and accolades already earned for his bands include wins at the National Championships of 2005 with Leyland, at

the English Nationals of 2010 with Fairey's, and 2nd prizes at the Nationals of 2000 with Ransomes and at the British Open of 2010 with Fairey's.

IAN PORTHOUSE, yet another former leader of The National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, has held principal cornet positions with Cumbria Youth, Leyland, Desford, Black Dyke, St Kilda (New Zealand), Tredegar, Yorkshire Building Society and Fairey's, helping these bands to numerous major awards. His conducting career began with Pennine Brass and brought fame to Ian when he conducted Tredegar to victory in the 2010 British Open Championships. He is Director of Brass Band Studies at the Birmingham Conservatoire.

ALAN WYCHERLEY, an exceptional soprano cornet player, already a member of the NYBB, was playing with Fairey's at the age of 15. After some 15 years' distinguished service there he began moving around, playing with Desford, Leyland, JSVB and Foden's, before returning to Fairey's in 2010. He has also conducted several local bands.

KEVIN CROCKFORD is another exceptional soprano cornet player who, like Wycherley, is a former member of the NYBB. Bands to which Kevin has given distinguished service include Fairey's, Black Dyke and Grimethorpe.

SHEONA WHITE is Scottish-born, a former Junior Solo Champion of Scotland and former principal horn of the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland. A Salford University graduate, she has received numerous

awards, including being British Open Solo Champions and BBC Radio 2 Young Musician of the Year. She played principal horn with Yorkshire Building Society for 12 years, sharing in their many successes and recordings, and she made several solo CDs. Sheona is the horn tutor at the universities of Salford, Liverpool and Manchester, has also played with Foden's, Grimethorpe and the American Brass Band of Battle Creek, and is an internationally acclaimed tenor horn virtuoso.

LESLIE HOWIE, also Scottish, studied at the RNCM and has played with several leading bands, including Marple, Wingates and Foden's. She hit the headlines in 1999 by becoming the first female member of Black Dyke. Leslie has played with the Brass Band of Battle Creek in America, has recorded with Eikanger Bjørsvik in Norway, and has been responsible for commissioning and premièring several new works for the tenor horn.

¹ For further information about David, see his 'Beyond the Box', Jagrins, 2004.

BRASS LEGENDS

Living Legends - Part 5

The late Dr Roy Newsome Part 16



GARRY CUTT was one of the early students on the Band Studies course at Salford. At the time he was playing with CWS (Manchester) Band, during its twilight years. Cornet was his principal study at Salford until disaster struck as his embouchure collapsed - suddenly and without warning. Fortunately, he was also a good pianist, and his future studies were directed towards piano playing and conducting.



Garry Cutt.

He conducted one or two local bands before, in 1981, becoming the resident conductor of Wingates. Two years later he became the professional conductor and father-figure of Marple Band. Other bands that he conducted during this period included Yorkshire Imperial and Kennedy's Swinton. This was a band that David King had brought from 4th section to championship status within a few years, but he had now left to take up his position as professional conductor at Black Dyke. Swinton had also qualified to perform in the British Open Championships and Garry was invited to conduct them. He led them to an amazing first place, the first in a long line of successes for the young conductor at this highly prestigious event.

Though appointed resident conductor of Grimethorpe in 1991, he took Marple to the Open between 1992 and 1996, picking up two fourth prizes and culminating in yet another amazing win in 1996. Owing to the pressure of work at Grimethorpe he had to retire from Marple in the year 2000, as Grimethorpe was a full time salaried appointment (one of the few in the world of brass bands at this time). He remained with Grimethorpe

until 2002 and though contesting was not a normal part of his brief as resident conductor, he led them to three podium places at the British Open and five wins at 'Brass in Concert'.

He now moved to Foden's, to become musical director. His winning ways at 'Brass in Concert' continued, with wins in 2004 and 2008, along with three runners-up slots at the British Open Championships. There was also a win at the English Nationals in 2006, bringing the number of major titles to his credit to eleven.

In addition to all of this, Garry Cutt worked abroad quite regularly, bringing success to several of his bands, particularly in Scandinavia.

ALLAN WITHINGTON was born into a well-known brass banding family in Lancashire, with very strong links with Wingates. In 1976 he gave up his job and became a mature student, joining the first cohort on the new course in Band Studies at Salford. On completion of this he undertook a post-graduate performance course at the RNCM, studying trumpet with Howard Snell.

He then became a free-lance professional trumpet player before joining the orchestra of the Royal Ballet in London. Following this he moved to Norway and took a position in the trumpet section of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra.

Once established in Norway, Allan became involved in the brass band scene there and began conducting. In 1991 he was offered the post of professional conductor with Brighouse & Rastrick. He accepted this but retained his job with the Bergen Philharmonic, flying to Britain as and when required. His first notable accomplishment with Brighouse was winning the All England Masters in 1993. However, the most successful period came between 1997 and 1999, when they won the National Championships two years running, narrowly missing the hat trick by coming second in 1999. 1998 was Allan's peak year at Brighouse when, in addition to winning the Nationals, they also picked up the European Championships title, along with a further win at the All England Masters.

He then had a spell with Fairey's before moving to Grimethorpe. There were two Nationals wins with each of these two bands, bringing his tally of titles at the event to six. The successful combination of Grimethorpe and Withington also won the newly-founded English Championships

in 2007 and 2008, qualifying the band to appear in the European Championships and taking second place in the earlier year. Allan's most recent major success with Grimethorpe was at 'Brass in Concert', in November 2010. This was a reflection of his progressive outlook on programming, which he has been developing with his Norwegian bands and with which he has also had considerable success. In addition to his work with Grimethorpe (and his full time orchestral work) he is heavily involved with the Stavanger Band in Norway.

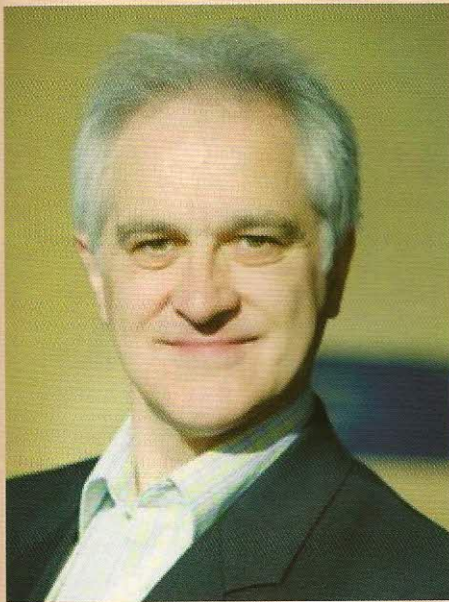
Allan has also organised some highly-acclaimed courses for conductors, adding to his own reputation as one of today's most successful conductors.



Allan Withington.

JAMES GOURLAY, born in Scotland, played bass with Tullis Russell before taking up studies at the Royal College of Music. In 1974, at the age of 18, he became principal tuba with the CBSO. In 1979 he took up a similar position with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and was also a member of the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble. It was around this time that he first tried his hand at conducting, taking on the brass band of the London College of Music and also conducting Hanwell and BTM bands. In 1988 he moved to Switzerland to become principal tubist with the orchestra of Zurich Opera. Whilst in Switzerland he became principal conductor of BBO (Brass Band Berner Oberland).

James was back in Britain in 1995, becoming principal conductor of Fairey's. Under him, they featured regularly in



James Gourlay.

the prize-lists of the major contests, winning 'Brass in Concert' in 1996, the All England Masters in 1996 and 1997 and the British Open Championships in 1998. He also led Stavanger to the title of Norwegian Champions in 1998. In this same year he became Head of Wind and Percussion at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester.

James left Fairey's in 2000, since when he has had several different appointments, notably a period as Deputy Principal and Music Director of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and stints as principal conductor with both Grimethorpe and Brighouse & Rastrick.

He achieved the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts at Salford University and was awarded Fellowships at the RNCM and London College of Music.

James's life-time work has, therefore, been shared between orchestral playing, brass band conducting and education. He recently took up an appointment as music director of the River City Brass Band in Pittsburgh, USA, though he still frequently visits Europe for his regular professional engagements, working in particular with the Swiss Treize Etoiles Band.

PROFESSOR DAVID KING, Australian by birth, came to England in 1882. He already had a BA degree, had studied trumpet and cornet at the Sydney Conservatorium and was the 1982 Australian Cornet Champion. He arrived in England as principal cornet player with Hawthorne City Band, who were competing in the British Open, but he came ostensibly to study on the Salford Band Studies course. On completion of this he was offered a lectureship.

He was also keen to become a part of the British band scene, both as player and conductor. His first move was to join Black Dyke as assistant principal to Phillip

McCann, but he was also quite soon conducting Swinton Concert Brass, a local fourth section band. Under his guidance they made rapid progress and within a few years had won the Grand Shield and the North West Area contest, beating Foden's, Fairey's and Leyland.

David's conducting career began in earnest in 1989, when he became the youngest-ever professional conductor of Black Dyke. During his two and a half years in the position he led them to the runners-up position in the 1989 Nationals, following which they became European Championship in both 1990 and 1991.

Meanwhile he was still playing the cornet, becoming North of England Solo Champion in 1984, 1985 and 1986, and British Solo Champion five years in succession, beginning in 1988. In 1992 he flew to New Zealand and won the title 'International Brass Musician of the Year'.

In 1993 David became principal conductor of Yorkshire Building Society Band, making them into the most successful band of the decade, with four British Open and eight European titles (to add to the two he had won with Black Dyke). He also commissioned some of the works that led to the European titles and revolutionised his major concert programmes with themed programmes such as *Cry of the Celts* and *Windows of the World*, both by his Salford colleague, Peter Graham. He also championed Salvation Army music and amongst their array of ground-breaking CD recordings, YBS became the first non-SA band to record a full CD of SA works.

At Salford, he had become Head of Band Studies in 1989 and was appointed Professor of Musical Performance in 2000, having gained the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts.



Bramwell Tovey.



David King.

Professor King was also having considerable success with Manger Musikklag, leading them to success in the Norwegian Championships four years in succession (1994-1997). He followed this with two wins in succession with Stavanger (2003-2004).

Not heavily into adjudicating because of his total commitment to performing and teaching, David nevertheless flew to New Zealand in 1999 to be chief adjudicator at their National Championships. Since then he has also adjudicated at the European Championships and the Nationals of both Great Britain and Australia

In 2005 Professor King took YBS on a tour of Australia, after which important changes to his life-style took place. He resigned from YBS, but through his work at Salford became Conductor Laureate to the Band of the Coldstream Guards. He also became a consultant in instrumental design with Yamaha. In 2009 he took early retirement from Salford and established a new home in Australia. He is now involved in all kinds of initiatives, both in Australia and New Zealand, and divides his time between England, the Antipodes, Norway and Japan. In England he has become the principal conductor of Brighouse & Rastrick and has already led them to the titles of Yorkshire Champions and Champions Band of Great Britain.

Professor David King's legendary status is, quite obviously, on at least three levels - teaching, performing and conducting.

BRAMWELL TOVEY comes from a Salvation Army background and, following early interest in the tuba, veered towards becoming a professional player. He studied at the University of London and the Royal Academy of Music, having specialist tuba lessons with the legendary John Fletcher.

Conducting was always going to be important to him and he accepted his first professional engagement in 1975. His big break came in 1986 when, at 24

hours' notice, he successfully conducted a London Symphony Orchestra concert, attracting rave reviews. He then appeared with several British orchestras as guest conductor, before being appointed artistic director of Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra in 1989. In 2000 he moved to the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, which is still his principal appointment. All of this time he has been regularly appearing as guest conductor in Britain, on the continent and in the USA, where he regularly appears with such world-class orchestras as the Los Angeles Philharmonic and New York Philharmonic.

Mr Tovey's brass band activities were spasmodic at first. The first conducting appointment came his way when he became professional conductor of Hanwell, from 1974-1976. In 1985 he took GUS to the National Finals and then, three years later, conducted their winning performance at the British Open Championships. He also had a brief association with Desford.

Since he moved to Vancouver he has had a closer involvement with brass bands, notably with Foden's since 2000, and as Artistic Director of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain since 2006. He met with but modest success in contests in his early years with Foden's



Richard Marshall.

and more latterly has concentrated his efforts on recordings and some of the band's more prestigious concert engagements. He has also conducted brass bands in Canada and the USA.

Since taking on the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain he has directed almost every one of its twice-yearly residential courses and he takes a close interest in anything to do with the band.

He often states that this appointment gives him more joy than anything else he has done.

Mr Tovey is also a fine composer and an accomplished jazz pianist. Amongst his brass band works are his *Coventry Variations* and, commissioned for the British Open Championships of 2005, *A Night to Sing*, inspired by celebrations connected with the end of the Second World War. He is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music and holds several honorary doctorates.

There are a number of outstanding young players at the moment worthy of inclusion in this series. However, in view of their youthful ages, I'd prefer to call them 'Legends of the Future' - for I'm sure that's what they will become. They include Richards Marshall (cornet, Black Dyke), Brett Baker (trombone, Black Dyke), Joseph Cook, (E flat bass, Black Dyke), Helen Williams (flugel horn, Foden's), Glyn Williams (euphonium, Foden's), David Childs (euphonium, Cory's), Owen Farr (tenor horn, Cory's) and Katrina Marzella (baritone) and Les Neish (E flat bass) - both currently free-lance. An even younger generation is already under way, including such prodigies as Paul Duffy and Zoe Hancock at Black Dyke, James Fountain at GUS, Stephen Sykes (junior) at Tredegar and Matthew White at Fairey's.