



The Bradwell Bugle

Newsletter of the Bradwell Silver Band

January 2018

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From the Editor

Hi Everyone!

A Happy New Year to all our readers and I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas.

Welcome to the first edition of 2018 which contains reports on all of the engagements undertaken by the Band during a busy December. Well done to all the players and especially the collectors who helped raise an amazing amount of money that will be used towards keeping the Band going throughout the coming year.

January is usually a quiet month for reporting activities. There are no formal engagements for the Band as attention turns towards preparation for the area contest in March.

So I am inviting you all to send me a contribution for the February edition of the newsletter. It doesn't have to be just about the Band. I am sure that there are many interesting things our members get up to that we would all like to hear about!

Sarah-Jayne

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Thursday 4th January - Practices Re commence

Saturday 20th January - Band Christmas Party

Saturday 24th February - Oxford Contest, Marlborough School, Woodstock

Sunday 18th March - Regional Contest, Stevenage.

Notes From The M.D.

This Christmas has seen the Band once again perform to many hundreds of people bringing much enjoyment to them with their fine playing and entertainment. Can we say a massive well done to Fraser and Luke our soloists who have made many more fans with their playing.

This time of year also requires special thank you to many others as well:

To Robin who has organised all our engagements and made sure all plans were in place.

To Sam who helped Robin and made sure we were all kept informed on the Snowy Sunday

To James & Martin and everyone who helped with the trailer and especially the people who helped at short notice get all the kit to Two Mile Ash School concert

To Steph for producing posters and programmes for St James as well as items for the Two Mile Ash and Newport Singers programmes and of course publicising the Band in many ways.

To Karen who has the hardest task of everyone counting donations, banking and making sure we are all kept informed.

To Peter and Sue who add so much to our side club concert as well as their continued support

To everyone who has collected on behalf of the Band, we would not have a Band without you and the funds collected allow us to teach young players free of charge.

To Keith who conducts the Band in my absence as well as producing two excellent performances with the Development Band. I feel very guilty that my injury stops me attending every engagement but at the same time I am very happy that the Band is in Keith's capable hands.

To our families for their understanding and support at this busy time

Finally to the players who have all been fantastic, to those who changed instruments and parts which was a massive help.

2018 will see many changes in the Band but also many exciting events starting with our Christmas party in January which we hope you will all attend.

Happy New Year

Brian



New Year Social



After a busy 2017, we are looking forward to our Band Social which will enable us all to get together and let our hair down as well as welcome in the New Year. Milton Keynes Village Hall has been booked for the evening of Saturday 20th January and there will be a live band 'Brighton Riot' (a Northamptonshire 4 piece band playing popular Mod and Rock songs) to provide the entertainment. Everyone is asked to bring along their own alcoholic drinks (soft drinks will be supplied), along with an item or two of food for a 'Bring and share' buffet (sandwiches, sausage rolls, crisps, dessert etc). Cost for the evening will be £5 per person over the age of 16, £10 per family. It should be noted that all children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult and it is hoped that everyone will bring along their families to say a big thank you to everyone involved in the band both directly and in support.

MK Village Hall has stipulated a limit of 100, so please confirm your attendance by responding with the number of people attending, as places will be on a 'first come, first served' basis.

To book your place, make sure that payment is made in an envelope with the Band/Dev Band member's name, number of people attending and handed to either Karen Wilson or Steph Chappell by 9th January.

To recap:-

Saturday 20th January 2018
Milton Keynes and Broughton Village Hall
Willen Road
Milton Keynes Village
MK10 9AF

Starts at 7:00pm with live music at 8:00pm.

Engagement Report

Friday 1st December

Stoke Goldington

The senior band's first Christmas engagement was at the Stoke Goldington Village Hall. A small group entertained a large audience with some items from the pads and carols from the red book. We did ask several of the players present to write a report for the Bugle but we have not received anything.

Saturday 2nd December

St. James Christmas Tree Festival

This week-end saw the Parish Church of St. James Christmas Tree Festival decorated with a display of trees supplied and dressed by many of the local organisations including one from the Band. As well as admiring the trees, refreshments were available and there was also a variety of musical entertainment on offer. There is not the usual space available for us to perform so Musical Director Brian Keech chose to take a smaller group of 15 players for a 45 minute programme of music from this year's Christmas repertoire plus some Carols from the red books. We opened with "Merry Christmas Everyone" followed by "Christmas Swingalong" before using the carol books for "Jingle Bells" and "Here We Come A Wassailing". Back to the pads for "Ding Dong Christmas" and "Rocking Around The Christmas Tree" which Sam videoed and posted on the Band's Facebook page. We performed the more traditional Carols "Who Is He?" and "We Three Kings of Orient Are" before "All I Want For Christmas Is You" and "Christmas Candle" were giving an airing. We then played "The Holly And The Ivy" and both versions of "Sweet Chiming Christmas Bells". The final two items from the pads were "I Saw Three Merry Gentlemen" and "Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer". We ended with a verse of "We Wish You A Merry Christmas".

It had been a good performance and it was nice to see the Church busy with people enjoying looking at the trees and partaking of refreshments as they listened to the Band in an informal setting.

Thursday 7th December

Christmas Concert with Two Mile Ash School

Tonight the Band were at the Stantonbury Theatre for the long standing annual Christmas concert with Harmonize, who are the choir from the Two Mile Ash School led by Emily Marshall and assisted by her colleague Sally Moisii. After just one rehearsal with the choir, the Band was to provide musical accompaniment for a number of the songs tonight as well as featuring some music from this year's festive repertoire. The tone for the evening was set from the very first item with the Band and Choir combining for "Merry Christmas Everybody". The choir was more than 90 strong with the youngest being from Year 3. They had all dressed for the occasion and wore tinsel in their hair which was very suitable for their first song "Sparkle and Shine". The Band's first solo item was "Ding Dong Christmas" which is the Carol 'Ding Dong Merrily On High' arranged by Derek Broadbent in the style of the Floral Dance.

The choir performed "Winter Carol" and then combined with the Band for "Christmas Candle", a lively short song that originated in Russia. The Band played "I Saw Three Merry Gentlemen" written by our own John Lee who cleverly combines the two Christmas Carols 'I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In' and 'God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen'.

Engagement Report

Then it was the choir's turn to perform "Together At Christmas" before the Band accompanied them in "It Feels Like Christmas" which is a song from the Muppet Christmas Carol. The last two items of the first half were the traditional carol "Away In A Manger" sung with the band followed by the band playing "Rocking Around The Christmas Tree".

After an interval the second half opened with Band and choir performing "When Children Ruled The World" which featured in the musical Whistle Down the Wind composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber based on the 1961 film, whose source novel was written by Mary Hayley Bell in 1959.

The choir sang "Love Shines Down" and this was followed by a very sensitive rendition of "Somewhere Only We Know". This is a song originally performed by the English alternative rock Keane and released as their third commercial single in 2004. In 2013 the song was covered by Lily Allen for the John Lewis Christmas advert. Her version surpassed the success of the original in the UK, topping the UK Singles Chart.

The Band then had the chance to play their first public performance of the "Shepherd's Pipe Carol" which was to feature in the concert with the Newport Pagnell Singers a couple of days later. The choir thoroughly enjoyed singing "Winter Wonderland" before they and the audience got involved in a bit of physical activity by swaying to "Schneewalzer". This is not really a celebration of Christmas but always seems to be one of the highlights enjoyed by our audiences.

The choir's final solo item was "What Christmas Means To Me" which led to the grand finale with Band, choir and audience combining for the old favourites "Jingle Bells", "Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer", and of course "We Wish You A Merry Christmas". There followed some words of thanks from Emily for the choir, the Band and her colleague Sally. Head Teacher Sarah Bennett also spoke to say how much the children really enjoyed the experience of performing in a theatre with the Band and added that this concert always marks the start of her personal Christmas.

The Band played "Jingle Bells" as the choir made their exit and brought an enjoyable evening to a close. The choir had been trained to their usual high standard of performance and showed how much enjoyment can be had by making music.

A special thank you to those members who at very short notice helped transport the percussion equipment, stands and larger instruments as Robin was not available to bring the trailer.

Friday 8th December

Conniburrow

A small group from the Band went to Conniburrow on a bitterly cold night to accompany some community singing after a lantern procession. Unfortunately there had been some miscommunication regarding the times and the singing was already in progress when we arrived. We only needed to play a handful of carols before the singers hastened away to try and get warm.

Engagement Report

Saturday 9th December

Christmas Concert with the Newport Pagnell Singers

Tonight the Bradwell Silver Band were guest performers at the Newport Pagnell Singers 2017 Christmas Concert. Held in the historic Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, the Singers Musical Director Roger Windmill in his programme notes said that his hopes were to present a concert which embraces the atmosphere and magic of the Christmas season with some old favourites as well as the less familiar. He was particularly looking forward to the singing of the David Willcocks descants for all the congregational carols which he said some people had missed hearing in previous years.

After these words of welcome the concert began with a Fanfare leading into "O Come All Ye Faithful". The choir were then featured in three items, "Masters In This Hall", a French carol arranged by David Willcocks, "Adam Lay Ybounden" based on a 15th century text relating the events of Genesis in which Adam was supposed to have remained in bonds with the other patriarchs in the limbus patrum from the time of his death until the crucifixion of Christ (the "4000 winters") and "I Saw A Maiden" which is An old Basque Noel.

The second communal carol was "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"

Then it was time for the Band's first solo spot and we played "Merry Christmas Everybody" and the first of two of John Lee's compositions "In The Blue Midwinter". There followed several humorous Christmas readings from Richard Duncombe. The choir were then in the spotlight again with two of John Rutter carols, "Noel Nouvelet" and "Nativity Carol".

The Band performed "For Unto Us" which is from Handel's Messiah but in a very modern and up tempo style and then "Schneewalzer" in which the choir join in with singing the chorus.

After an interval the raffle draw was announced and the second half opened with Band, Choir and audience combining for "Once In Royal David's City". The Band played "Ding Dong Christmas" followed by our soloist for this evening, Fraser with Adolphe Adam's "O Holy Night".

The choir sang "The Angels and The Shepherds" in which their Musical Director had recruited a young lady to play the sleigh bells with great enthusiasm. Roger Windmill conducted the Band and choir for John Rutter's composition "Shepherd's Pipe Carol" and this was followed by another reading from Richard Duncombe delivered in the style of Alan Bennett. The Band's final solo items were "I Saw Three Merry Gentlemen", and "Rocking Around The Christmas Tree".

Councillor Phil Windsor who was deputising for the Mayor gave a short speech and thanked everyone for attended on such a chilly evening and praised the local community spirit. He invited the audience to make further donations to this evening's charity which is the Mead Centre Redevelopment Project. This is currently the site of the church hall for the Newport Pagnell United Reformed Church and is used by a wide range of local groups. Unfortunately the building is seriously dilapidated and there are advanced plans to demolish this and replace it with a modern multi-purpose, accessible and flexible community facility. It will be called Mead Centre, named after Gordon and Glenys Mead who left a legacy that the started the fund for the new building.

Engagement Report

The councillor's words were followed by Roger Windmill thanking the choir, their accompanist Ed Tomlinson, the Band and the reader Richard Duncombe. He also thanked the audience for supporting this annual event. Roger conducted the Band for the last two items on the programme, the final carol "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" followed by a fanfare which led directly into "Hallelujah" from Handel's Messiah. This rousing chorus is one of the most famous pieces of Baroque choral music, and by far the most widely-known section of the work. Audiences tend to stand during performances – a tradition that allegedly began when King George II stood up during the chorus at the oratorio's debut London performance.

The evening was completed with two verses of "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" It had been an entertaining evening and with just one run through with the choir prior to the concert and went very well. The carols we played were arranged in different keys from those we are used to playing and we were joined by the Church organ.

Sunday 10th December

Unfortunately the heavy snow that fell during the early hours of meant that the two engagements due to be performed that day at Bradwell Abbey and Two Mile Ash were cancelled. Although this was regrettable, it was clearly the most sensible decision, as all the local roads were extremely hazardous.

Saturday 16th December

Christmas Concert St. James New Bradwell

Tonight we were in the familiar surroundings of the Parish Church for our annual Christmas Concert. Over the past few years this has become a really well attended concert with extra chairs having to be found to seat all of the audience.

Under the leadership of Musical Director Brian Keech the concert began with "Merry Christmas Everybody" followed by the first of two soloists tonight, Fraser with "O Holy Night". Next up in quick succession were "For Unto Us", "It Feels Like Christmas" and "Shepherd's Pipe Carol". Then we invited the audience to joining in with the singing of three familiar carols, "The Holly and the Ivy", "Silent Night" and "We Three Kings". The Band then performed "Carol Of The Bells", "In The Blue Midwinter" and to finish off the first half "Rocking Around The Christmas Tree".

During the interval the Development Group took their places on stage ready for their short programme. We had to find extra chairs and music stands to accommodate the 35 players but eventually were ready to start. The Group's Musical Director Keith Jones and selected a programme of carols from around the world and started in the U.S.A, with "Jingle Bell Boogie".

Ben was acting as the announcer for this evening and he introduced the next item "Zither Carol" which originated in Bohemia which is now the Czech Republic. The word Zither is taken from the Latin word cithara, from which the modern word "guitar" also derives. Zithers are played by strumming or plucking the strings, either with the fingers or sometimes using a plectrum.

Engagement Report

The opening lines of the carol are:

*Girls and boys, leave your toys, make no noise,
Kneel at his crib and worship him.
For this shrine, child divine,
Is the sign, our Saviour's here.*

This was followed by “Gaudete” which is from Germany. The translation of the Latin title is Rejoice and it is thought to have been composed in the 16th century, but could easily have existed as a monophonic hymn in the late medieval period, with polyphonic Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts added during the 15th century, particularly due to its Medieval Latin lyrics.

Gaudete, gaudete! Christus est natus (*Rejoice, rejoice! Christ has born*)
Ex Maria virgine, gaudete! (*Out Of the Virgin Mary – rejoice!*)

We went to France for the next item which was “Il Est Ne” (English: “He is born”) which was published for the first time in 1862. The final item of the entertaining and contrasting programme was “Merry Christmas Calypso”. This is an arrangement of two well known Christmas songs, “We Wish You A Merry Christmas” and “Ding Dong Merrily On High” in the form of a Calypso which is a style of music that originated in Trinidad and Tobago during the 19th century and eventually spread to the rest of Caribbean. During this piece different sections take it in turns to stand up and at the end all of the group are standing (apart from the basses) with instrument bells pointing upwards. It had been an excellent effort from the largest group of developing players we have ever had the privilege of having on stage in one go. There were debut performances this evening for Jake, Baraka, Elisa and Ella so a special well done to them.

The results of the raffle were announced as the senior band returned for the second half of their performance. This began with “All I Want For Christmas Is You” before our second soloist of the evening Luke Colvin with “Frosty The Snowman” complete with inflatable Snowman. “Ding Dong Christmas” was next followed by three more carols “Once In Royal David’s City”, “O Come All Ye Faithful”, “While Shepherd’s Watched”.

We then performed “I Saw Three Merry Gentlemen” before inviting the audience to join in with “Schneewalzer”. The final item of the published programme was “Christmas Swingalong” which is a medley of three well known songs “Walking In A Winter Wonderland”, “All I Want For Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth” and “Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas”.

On behalf of St. James the Reverend Nicola Martin-Beck thanked the Band for the concert and extended an invitation to the audience to attend their services over the Festive Season. As an encore we played “Jingle Bells” before ending in the traditional manner with “We Wish You A Merry Christmas”. It had been a good concert with both soloists performing to a very high standard.

“Another fantastic evening listening to Bradwell Silver Band - well done to the juniors you were Brilliant!”

Engagement Report

Sunday 17th December

Stantonbury Sports & Social Club

Tonight we were at the Side Club in New Bradwell for another long established engagement for the Bradwell Silver Band. The proper title is now the Stantonbury Sports and Social Club but most of us will probably always refer to it as the Side Club. This was one of two working men's clubs that there used to be in New Bradwell, the other building on the Newport Road is now the home of the Milton Keynes Dance Centre. The Club has recently been refurbished and there was a large audience of mainly family groups gathered to hear the Band. Under the leadership of Musical Director Brian Keech we used mostly the same music as played in St. James on the previous evening and the Carols sung were "Joy To The World", "The Holly And The Ivy", "Silent Night", "Once In Royal David's City", "We Three Kings", "O Little Town of Bethlehem", "O Come All Ye Faithful" and "While Shepherd's Watched Their Flocks". There was a special appearance from Father Christmas who happily posed for numerous photographs. It was a good concert with some fine singing of the carols from the audience. We thank guest players Jack and Emily. Jack and Tug entertained the audience after the concert with a Post Horn duet.

"First time to side club show and it was amazing"

Tuesday 19th December

Street Carolling - Bradville

It was a cold and slightly damp evening as we met at the junction of Althorpe Crescent and Bradwell Road for the first of our three street carolling evenings. We had 18 players led by Keith and with five collectors we were able to cover the largest area we have managed for quite a few years. We began playing in Bradwell Road outside the Old Vicarage and made stops in Althorpe Crescent, Edwards Croft, Stanton Avenue, Abbey Way and Bradvue Crescent and the whole length of Mercers Drive and still managed to finish playing before the 9:00 p.m. deadline. This was an excellent start to our street carolling with some fine playing and lots of people coming to their doors to listen and followed us as we made our way round. Our collectors for this evening were Peter our president, Martin's wife Helen as well as Sarah, Penny and Nicola who are the parents of some of our younger players. We are extremely grateful to them for giving up their evening at such a busy time of the year to help raise funds for the Band.

Thursday 21st December

Street Carolling - New Bradwell

On a surprisingly mild and slightly damp night Keith had a band of 15 players as we started our playing in Spencer Street where we received a very warm welcome. We moved on to School Street and then had stops in the High Street, North Street, Thompson Street, Harwood Street and Chipperfield Close. There was a long walk from there to the eastern end of Newport Road opposite St. Peter's Way and back towards Wolverton. Once again we were delighted to be offered a full range of festive food and drinks where a huge number of people had gathered for a party especially organised to hear the Band play. Thomas, one of our Development Band members was there as a guest and Keith invited him to conduct the band for "Carol Of The Drum".

Engagement Report

Our thanks go to Paula for arranging this and for her generous hospitality. From there we moved along to the corner of Wooton Court and our final stop was by the Cuba. We had made excellent progress because of the collectors who turned up on the night and our special thanks go to Peter, Nicola, Doug and Anne. The collection was 20% up on last year as we managed to squeeze in a bigger area. There was a lovely moment when a lady asked Peter if he had seen the concert at the Side Club last Sunday and what a fantastic Santa Claus there was!

The playing had been very good and we were delighted to play a request from someone in the U.S.A. who was listening to the Band via the internet.

Saturday 23rd December

Street Carolling - Stony Stratford

The Band was today playing in the High Street of the historic town of Stony Stratford. As this was a marathon session of playing Musical Director Brian Keech had split the Band into two groups based on availability on this last Saturday before Christmas. Playing started at 10:00am led by Brian and created a lot of interest from the people out and about on the last full shopping day before the festivities commence. We played from the red carol books with a mixture of traditional carols along with some of the less familiar. The second group of players took over at 12:30pm led by Keith and continued playing until 2:30pm by which time there were noticeably less people about.

We were very pleased to have playing with us Nick Davy who used to be a member of the Band and is now a professional military musician. The collectors really did us proud and we owe them massive thanks for all their hard work: Peter and Sue (dressed as Mr and Mrs Christmas), Liz, Nicola & Doug, Robin & Sam (resplendent in a fantastic Christmas tree hat), Clare (Jennifer's mum) and Helen. We make a special mention to Tug, Louis and Nick who were present for the whole four and a half hours that we were there.

Sunday 24th December

Street Carolling - New Bradwell

A group of 18 players met at the school for the traditional Christmas Eve tour around the streets of New Bradwell. On a mild but windy evening we started in Bounty Street and weaved our way along Queen Anne Street, King Edward Street, St. James Street, St. Mary Street, Church Street, Newport Road, Wood Street, Caledonian Road and Wallace Street. We had a good number of collectors and thus ensured swift progress. There were many groups of people out in the streets to listen to the Band in the final countdown to Christmas Day and it helped create a wonderful atmosphere. We were served with mulled wine and sweets at one of the houses on the Newport Road.

Many thanks to our splendid collectors, Peter, Sue and Major (Mrs Christmas' dog), Jess, Nicola, John and George, well done all of you were absolute stars! We were also extremely grateful to Emily for her playing support.

"It would not be Christmas without the band playing. It was great to hear the band tonight"

Engagement Report

Monday 25th December

Street Carolling - Christmas Day

A dry, mild but windy Christmas morning saw the Band meet at the Clock Tower to continue the tradition started in 1901 of playing carols around the streets of New Bradwell. We had a group of 25 players led by Keith to start off at 6:00 a.m. with "Christians Awake" at the junction of Caledonian Road and Wallace Street. We had lots of people looking out of windows and standing in their doorways to wish us a Merry Christmas as we made our way around Wood Street, Queen Anne Street, St. Mary Street, St. Giles Street, King Edward Street, Bounty Street, School Street, High Street, North Street, Thompson Street, Harwood Street, Chipperfield Close, Bradwell Road, Stanton Avenue, Althorpe Crescent and Bradvue Crescent. We were fortunate to be offered three lots of refreshment today, the first in Thompson Street where mince pies and drinks were offered. When we reached Bradville, Fraser's Dad came out with a tray of drinks to help us on our way and at our final spot in Bradvue Crescent there were further drinks and food ready for us from a generous local resident who always looks forward to the Band playing outside his house. All that was left for the Banding year was the long walk down the hill to where we had left the cars. We were delighted that we were joined today by guest players Jack, Emily, Amy, George and Louis who was home from university for the holidays. We think we may have had a first today - three generations of the same family out carolling at the same time with Robin, Sam and Jess who was out for her first Christmas morning.

A special thought goes to our Musical Director Brian Keech who had to miss leading us on Christmas Morning because of his injured legs, the first time in forty years of being associated with the Band that he was unable to play an active part. He still managed to come out to support us and followed us around a couple of streets.

We'll do it all again next year! There are a number of video clips and photographs of the Band playing around the streets on the Facebook page of "I Grew Up In New/Old Bradwell" along with many kind comments as well as some fond memories of Christmas Past in New Bradwell and Bradville.

We should be proud to be able to play a part in helping to maintain this long standing tradition which is so greatly appreciated by the local people.

"It's still dark when they play down my road, at 6:am on the dot! Love 'em."

"What a wonderful tradition....been going each year since 1901! Thank you all and Merry Christmas"

"Brings back childhood memories - not allowed to get up & open our parcels till we have heard the band & we lived in Bridge street, they played under street light on the corner".

"Every Christmas Day at 6am the Bradwell Silver Band plays Christians Awake in my street. It's magical. Merry Christmas to the band! Thank you for your service! Christmas wouldn't be the same without you."