



# The Bradwell Bugle



Newsletter of the Bradwell Silver Band

February 2015

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## From the Editor

Hi Everyone!

I don't know about you but I am not a great fan of the recent cold weather!

Well here we are in February and 2015 is already shaping up to be another busy year for the Bradwell Silver Band with lots of engagements being provisionally booked. A list of these can be found inside this edition and will be updated as and when there are changes notified.

My thanks go to Steph for her contribution this month. Maybe this will inspire someone else to follow suit?

*Sarah-Jayne*



## Bass Players Wanted!

Bradwell Silver Band is actively seeking to recruit bass players to complete our line up for the area contest in March and ongoing concerts. The actual positions are negotiable and instruments are available free of charge for immediate use to suitable applicants. If you know of anyone with suitable experience who may be looking for a new challenge or perhaps a return to playing in a brass band please inform our Secretary Robin or Musical Director Brian.

On the subject of bass players, it was good to have Dave Sanderson with us at some of our recent rehearsals. Dave was back in the area for a few weeks as his son Matthew was getting married. Some of you will know Matthew as he was also a member of the Band during his teenage years. We send our very best wishes to Matthew and Tiffany who tied the knot in the Newport Pagnell Parish Church on the 24<sup>th</sup> January.

## Test Piece

Most of you will know that as well as performing concerts throughout the year, many brass bands also like to attend contests where they compete against other bands of a similar standard. These are not compulsory but it is a useful guide to how the bands are progressing in terms of musical performance. The most important of these is the Nationals which are brass banding's equivalent of the football league – a first-past-the-post Championship involving some 600 bands in eight 'Regional' qualifying heats staged up and down the UK, plus two 'Finals' events.

The National Brass Band Championships, which have existed since 1945 in their current format, are split into five sections – Championship Section, and 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th sections – and eight qualifying regions in the UK. These are the London and Southern Counties Region, the Midlands, the North of England, the North West, Scotland, Wales, the West of England and Yorkshire. Depending upon the number of bands entered into each section in each region, the top two, three and sometimes four placed bands qualify for a place in the 'Finals', held in the autumn each year.

The Lower Section Finals, showcasing sections 1 – 4, are held at the Centaur in Cheltenham in September, and the Championship Section Final is held in London's prestigious Royal Albert Hall, in October. The first four bands in the Championship Final secure automatic entry for the following year's equivalent event and the results of the Regional Championships not only determine the bands that qualify for an invitation to the National Finals, but also their grading for the following year's Regional Championships.

This year's London and Southern regional contest takes place in Stevenage over the weekend of 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> March. The test piece selected for the fourth section is "An English Pastorale" by Dean Jones. The definition of Pastorale is an indication to play with simple contentment; to conjure the sentimental ambiance of a peaceful, "pastoral" environment. When writing this music the composer realised a long-time ambition to write a descriptive piece in a pastorale style. The following are his explanations of how the music should be approached.

The idea of depicting the seasons and reflecting some of the grandeur of the English scenery proved an inspiring source to write this four movement piece. After the dignified initial theme 'Heralding the Dawn' is established (two variations of this theme are restated in the fourth movement), the piece moves naturally into the 1st movement 'Autumn on the Plains'. The 12/8 rhythm sets out to depict a light, joyful scene. There are two small themes running through this movement and are initially employed at sections A and B. There are moments of modal harmony that are there to be enjoyed by the players and conveyed accurately and confidently. Any time an accidental is seen in the copy, it needs to be cleanly presented. There are many such instances throughout the work. The movement builds momentum but in doing so, it is essential that a solid rhythmic poise is maintained throughout. Always ensure the melody is clearly stated at all times. There are plenty of articulations to ensure are brought out accurately and the two themes need to convey a sense of contrast - the first being more bouncy in feel and the second more of a legato feel. Awareness of momentum, accuracy of intonation and rhythmic poise are key to this first movement.

## *Test Piece (Cont'd...)*

'Winter in the Dales' has a more mysterious and contains a somewhat darker feel in the minor key. Again, it is hoped there are plenty of strong harmonic moments as well as a melody which allows scope for expression. There is dynamic contrast in the introduction which needs to be cleanly presented and not overblown. Strive for a true balance of the harmonies - there is always something to be gained from ensuring the 2nd and 3rd parts give their true proportion of the chords. The Cornet section is prominent at the *piu mosso* section which is the main theme to this movement. The ending gives plenty of time for the final major chord to be beautifully presented.

'Spring on the Lakes' is a flowing, scenic movement. There are moments to sense the Autumnal sunshine as well as the patterns in the water. Again, through soloists and the various ensembles used, there is opportunity to portray colourful and expressive music. There is a somewhat dream-like feeling to this movement and accuracy of accidentals is once again crucial. There is a little moment of tension with the Horns, 5 bars from the conclusion of the movement before the resolution immediately found in the next bar. Overall there should be a feeling of calm and serenity to this movement.

'Summer on the Quays' starts with some exciting fanfare-like qualities initially from the Cornets and Trombones, but then extra impetus is provided from the whole band. The first of the two variations on the initial 'Heralding the Dawn' theme are then presented in an up-tempo style with a sense of drive from the percussion. The second statement is in the *maestoso* style and is aimed as being a grand finale to the work. Again, the percussion keeps the sense of drive but in a more dignified approach. The music moves then into a dynamic and resounding conclusion with emphasis on cohesion in style and note-lengths as well as a feeling of momentum towards the final, triumphant chord.

### *The Composer*

Dean Jones graduated in 1998 at Kingston University with a BA Hons in Music and has been writing and working for The Salvation Army ever since. With now over 60 publications to his name and compositions on numerous CDs and DVDs, Dean has enjoyed a successful start to his writing career both within the Salvation Army where he is a frequent contributor of both brass and vocal music, and also within the Brass Band world, particularly in continental Europe. His piece *Glorifico Aeternum* (2003) was performed at the Royal Albert Hall, London, in July 2004 and since then the piece has been performed in concert halls around the world by bands both within Salvation Army circles and also the contesting Brass Band world. *Supremacy* (2006) was the title track of the International Staff Band's CD recording in 2007 and pieces such as *Night Before Battle*, *Solum Valeo* and *Faithful God* have also proved popular in the band repertoire.

Dean is a committed Christian and along with his wife, Emma, and their son, Finlay, they attend the Reading Lower Earley corps of The Salvation Army where Dean is the Songster Leader (Choir Leader). As well as being actively involved in the church locally, Dean is the Bandmaster of the South Western Divisional Youth Band and also runs an inspiring brass group called Salvation Brass.

## *New Music*

First of all many thanks to Sam, Steph, Julia and Jemma who came along to the school on a cold Saturday morning early in January to sort out the music folders from last year. We had more than 90 pieces of music in these and it took a lot of tidying up to put away the music we are not likely to be needing for the this year.

Although the area test piece will be naturally be occupying a prominent part at our rehearsals over the coming weeks, we have also been looking at other music with view to building up our repertoire for the coming season of engagements. Not all of this new music will be featured on a regular basis but it is fun to try out and play different music as the Musical Director looks to find a balanced programme for our audiences to enjoy.

The first of these pieces is another arrangement especially written for Bradwell Silver Band by our solo trombone player John Lee. The music is instantly recognisable as the tune used for the Open All Hours television comedy. The original title of the music is "Alice, Where Art Thou?" and was composed by Joseph Ascher in 1861. Ascher was Dutch by birth but later lived in Paris where he was tutor to the Empress Eugenie and then moved to London. With words written by the splendidly named Wellington Guernsey, this was a typical Victorian sentimental ballad telling the story of a melancholy man lamenting the departure of a girl taken too soon. It became one of the most popular songs of its time but like so many other pieces was overplayed and eventually sank into oblivion. That is until British film and television composer and arranger Max Harris adapted the tune to introduce the pilot episode of Ronnie Barker's 1973 season Seven of One. It wasn't long before Open All Hours took on a life of its own and ran for a number of series. It has also seen a recent return to our screens with "Still Open All Hours". As the shop is set in Yorkshire it was only natural that the theme tune is written in the style of a brass band for which they are so famous for.

Arrangements of popular music have always provided the basic ingredients for a band concert and these are often presented as a medley of the tunes as originally performed by a particular recording artist. We have been looking at "Queen Rocks" which is an arrangement by Steve Sykes of four of Queen's hits. 'Bohemian Rhapsody', 'We Will Rock You', 'Another One Bites The Dust' and 'We Are The Champions'. There is plenty for the percussion team to do as well as some foot stamping and handclapping for the rest of the band.

Our trombone section finds itself featured in "It's Not Unusual", a song written by Les Reed and Gordon Mills and first recorded by a then unknown Tom Jones, The song was first offered to Sandie Shaw and Tom Jones recorded what was intended to be a demo for her. When Sandie Shaw heard the recording she was so impressed with the delivery that she declined the song and recommended that Tom Jones released it himself. The rest as they say is history. The record reached number one in the UK Singles Chart in 1965. It was also the first hit for Jones in the US. The BBC initially refused to play the song because of Tom Jones's bad boy image, but it was played by UK pirate radio stations which were listened to by the majority of pop fans at the time.



## *Do You Know Who This Is?*



This lovely and rather unusual photograph from a few years ago shows one of our current members in the uniform of the Royal Welsh Regiment. The occasion was a gig for a charity that sent poorly kids to Disneyworld. It was taken at a British Airways hanger. The man on the right was one of the celebrities and at one time was in the record books as the tallest man in Great Britain at 7 ft 6  $\frac{1}{4}$  in height.

Note the spikey helmet and I am reliably informed shiny shoes were also being worn. The time spent in the military obviously had a profound effect on this player who has been proposing we adopt a goat to be used as a mascot ahead of our marching engagements!

Do you recognise the player? If you have a similar unusual photograph of a member past or present we would love to hear from you!

## Dirty Old Town - Steph Chappell

I was fortunate to have my parents visit over the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> December from their home town near Manchester. As it was the weekend of the Band's St James's and Side Club concerts they eagerly agreed to attend both – especially when dad heard there was a bar at the Side Club!

It was the first time my dad had really looked at New Bradwell and the area we are so used to playing in. He commented that the streets around the church and club reminded him strongly of growing up in the terraced streets of Salford near Manchester. In the pub after the St James's concert dad reminisced about playing on the cobbles, running in and out of neighbour houses and generally being raised by the whole street. I shared that the community spirit I see whilst street carolling in New Bradwell is very strong and perhaps it's the close living that brings this to the front in towns like these.

Coincidentally whilst we were talking 'Dirty Old Town' was playing in the background. The version playing in the pub was made famous by The Pogues and is thought to be about Dublin. The song was actually written by Ewan MacColl about Salford and originally released in 1956. Just like my dad, Ewan MacColl grew up around the Salford terraced streets and the song is about his impressions of the industrial dockland town. Ewan MacColl was more famous for writing 'The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face' and being the father of the late Kirsty MacColl. Kirsty sang with The Pogues on 'Fairytale of New York' which the Band had performed in that evening's concert.

*I met my love by the gas works wall  
 Dreamed a dream by the old canal  
 Kissed a girl by the factory wall  
 Dirty old town  
 Dirty old town*

*Heard a siren from the docks  
 Saw a train set the night on fire  
 Smelled the spring on the smoky wind  
 Dirty old town  
 Dirty old town*



My dad had lots of Uncles, Aunties and cousins who all lived in the same or neighbouring street. My Great Uncle Charlie was the local 'knocker up'. In the time before alarm clocks Uncle Charlie, using a very long pole, would knock on your bedroom window letting you know it was time for work. Charlie would also light and put out the street gas lamps on his round.

In this picture of Charlie you can see the gap in the walls referred to in the lyrics of the song 'Saw a train set the night on fire'. Dad said the dock train cut straight through the middle of the streets and at night the coal fire in the train used to make the whole street glow and it was like the night was set on fire.

Here's a link to a video of an original recording of 'Dirty Old Town' with some archive images of just what Dad was trying to explain.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Wj7xZf8xm8&list=Srewan%20maccoll%20dirty%20old%20town>

Is dad right – can you see the similarities even through the distance of years and miles?

## *Development Band*

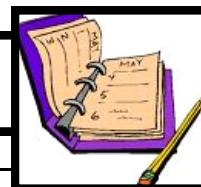
After their successful and enjoyable performance at the Christmas Concert in St. James, the Development group have resumed weekly rehearsals. We have a group of over 20 players at various stages of their development. This ranges from some who are already members of the senior band to those who have only been learning for a few months. We aim to encourage them in their music making by having them playing in an ensemble as soon as they are able to read some music and produce a reasonable sound. We have been working on some new music and expect to be taking part in the Spring Concert at St. James.

Bradwell Silver Band, like many other local bands, has always been active in teaching playing and the basics of music to anyone who shows an interest. What may be overlooked is the additional benefit that belonging to a band can have. There are very few barriers to access in regards of age, social status, gender, ability, or physical attributes. Instruments and tuition are provided completely free of charge and we have a thriving development group which we trust will produce the players of the future. We are introducing them to music making but there are much wider benefits that can be achieved by those willing to learn. These include a feeling of belonging and an understanding of collective and individual responsibility. It also teaches respect, discipline and the value of teamwork.

Playing in a musical group helps with artistic and creative development by opening minds and can enable innovation in later life. This also helps to prevent the narrowing of an individual's imagination and creativity which sadly can often be seen in many industries and professions. There are educational benefits to be gained with the implementation and application of learning and a raised academic attainment. This has a positive impact on behaviour and there is evidence that universities and employers look for candidates to demonstrate engagement in team based activities. A person who is able to demonstrate a better balanced view of the society in which they live is more likely to be considered for selection. Playing in a brass band helps create the sort of skills that can lead to employment such as teaching and for the very best players the chance of becoming a professional musician.



## Future Engagements



	<u>March</u>	
Sunday 22nd	Area Contest	
	<u>April</u>	
Saturday 25th	Concert - St James Church, New Bradwell	PM
Sunday 26th	Spratton Fete	PM
	<u>May</u>	
Monday 4th	May Day at the Mill	TBC
Saturday 9th	Concert - North Crawley Church	PM
Sunday 17th	Cosgrove Park	12-1pm 2-3pm
	<u>June</u>	
Sunday 7th	Big Lunch, Stony Stratford	TBC
Saturday 27th	Haversham Fete	PM
	<u>September</u>	
Saturday 5th	Cosgrove Park	12-1pm 2-3pm
Sunday 13th	Leighton Buzzard	3-5pm
	<u>October</u>	
Saturday 10th	Concert - St James, New Bradwell	PM
	<u>November</u>	
Sunday 8th	Remembrance Parade	TBC
	<u>December</u>	
Thursday 3rd	Two Mile Ash Concert - Stantonbury Theatre	PM
Saturday 5th	Christmas Tree Festival, St James Church	TBC
Saturday 12th	Newport Pagnell Singers	TBC
Saturday 19th	Concert - St James Church, New Bradwell	PM

## Contacts



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