



# The Bradwell Bugle



Newsletter of the Bradwell Silver Band

March 2025

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## Tug Turns 60!

*Recently, one of our long-time Players celebrated a milestone birthday.*

*David "Tug" Wilson turned 60 years young at the end of February.*

*Tug joined the Band 50 years ago in 1975 and although he's had breaks during that time, he has always been a Brad'll boy at heart and given us many years of dedicated membership.*

*Everyone associated with the Band hopes you had a lovely time celebrating this special occasion with your nearest and dearest.*



## From the Editor

Hi Everyone!

Welcome to the March issue of the Band's monthly newsletter. This month will see the first public performance by the Band in 2025 as they take part in the Regional Championships being held in Stevenage on Sunday 16th March. The Band has been working hard on the Test Piece and is determined to give a good account of themselves on the day. Inside this issue you will hopefully find out everything you need to know about the contest. A full report on the day's activities will appear in the April edition of the newsletter.

This year the Band will be travelling to Stevenage by coach. There will be spare seats available for anyone wanting to experience the delights of Stevenage on a Spring Sunday! Please contact Sam or Gareth to reserve your seat.

On the same day our near neighbours and friends at Olney Brass will be competing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Section while Milton Keynes Brass will be taking part in the Championship Section that follows on after the results of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Section have been announced. We wish them both well.

Looking further forward there are some interesting engagements announced for the Spring/Summer season and a list of these appears inside this issue.

I thank Chas for his contribution this month. If you would like to send me something for inclusion in future editions this will be gratefully received.

Sarah-Jayne



## Area Contest

The London & Southern Counties Regional Committee have announced an entry of 78 bands for the 2025 Regional Championships at Stevenage Arts & Leisure Centre on the weekend of the 15th & 16th March. Two bands will qualify for the Championship Section Royal Albert Hall final, with appropriate qualification for Cheltenham in the others depending on the number of competing bands.



Due to the large number of entries all sections apart from the Championship will have a split draw to determine the order of play. This is a sensible measure taken to avoid all the Bands arriving at the same time and makes travel planning a little bit easier.

Bradwell Silver Band will be competing in the Third Section which has 17 entrants. This is to take place in the Gordon Craig Theatre.

The first draw for order of play will be made at 8:00 a.m. with the second draw at 10:45 a.m. with the band drawn number one commencing play at 9:30 a.m.

Bradwell have been advised by the organisers that we will be in the second draw.

### **Admission Tickets**

Players will be issued with a competitor's ticket which must be produced at registration and to gain entry to the playing area.

The ticket prices for non-players are as follows:

Adult £18  
 Over 60s £16  
 Under 16s £16  
 Family (\*1) £29  
 Weekend (\*2) £20  
 Competitor Day Exchange Ticket (\*3) £6  
 Competitor Weekend Exchange Ticket (\*4) £12

Notes:

1. **A family ticket admits a single adult and children to any section on one day (either Saturday or Sunday).**
2. **A weekend ticket is valid for entry to all sections on both the Saturday and Sunday**
3. **A competitor may exchange their competitor's ticket to a full day ticket. Either a competitor's ticket or day ticket *must* be shown at registration.**
4. **A competitor may exchange their competitor's ticket to a weekend ticket. Either a competitor's ticket or day ticket *must* be shown at registration.**

Tickets will be available from the Box Office prior to the contest and may also be purchased on the day. Exchange tickets may be purchased at the Programmes Desk not the Box Office.

[www.bradwellband.co.uk](http://www.bradwellband.co.uk)

## Area Contest

**PARKING:** Due to on-going construction works in the town centre you should allow plenty of time to get to the venue and park in the nearby public car parks.

**DOORS:** The main entrance to the building will be open to the public at 7:30am on both days. Entry to the Contest Halls will be permitted approximately 15 minutes before the start of each section.

**COMPETITORS TICKETS:** These should be collected from the Programmes Desk in the foyer on production of the ticket collection authorisation form.

**REHEARSALS:** Bands are advised to make their own rehearsal arrangements.

**REFRESHMENTS:** Various facilities, including bars and vending machines, are available at the Centre.

**TRADE STANDS:** There will be several trade stands situated in the foyer and gallery offering a wide range of merchandise, music and other band-related services. Please pay them a visit during the weekend.

**CONTEST RULES:** The National Rules (January 2025) will be used for this event and can be downloaded from the Kapitol website: [www.nationalbrassbandchampionships.com](http://www.nationalbrassbandchampionships.com)

### List Of Bands Entered

#### Third Section

**Test piece:** Arkansas by Jacob de Haan

**Adjudicators:** Stephanie Binns & Jack Capstaff

1	Betteshanger Colliery	M. West
2	Bradwell Silver	B. Keech
3	Chichester City	Hughes
4	Cold Ash Brass	Belfield
5	Crystal Palace	J. Lynch
6	Epping Forest	K. Schroeter
7	Great Yarmouth	C. Swaep
8	Hangleton	R. Baker
9	Hemel Hempstead	D. Shave
10	Hungerford Town	T. Crouter
11	Jubilee Brass (Oxford)	C. Sadler
12	Littleport	I. Johnson
13	Putney & Wimbledon	S. Topp
14	Regent Community Brass	S. Tong
15	Tadley Concert Band	P. Chapman
16	Watford	Graves
17	Yiewsley & West Drayton	B. Skrypka

## Area Contest

### The Bands

The London and Southern Counties area covers Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Channel Islands, East Sussex, Essex, Greater London, Hertfordshire, Kent, Norfolk, Oxfordshire, Suffolk, Surrey and West Sussex.

The entry list for this year is very similar to that of last year, 13 of the same bands with all but two having the same musical directors. The newcomers to the section are Chichester City and Epping Forest who have dropped down from the second section whilst Watford and Betteshanger Colliery have been promoted from the 4<sup>th</sup> section.

Norfolk has one representative with Great Yarmouth who have the greatest distance to travel of all today's entrants while Cambridgeshire has one representative with Littleport.

The Greater London area sees entries from five bands. Crystal Palace Band, Epping Forest, Regent Community Brass, Putney & Wimbledon and Yiewsley & West Drayton.

East Sussex has one representative in Hangleton and West Sussex one with Chichester City.

Berkshire will be providing two bands. Hungerford Town and Cold Ash and Kent have Betteshanger Colliery.

Oxfordshire will have Jubilee Brass and Hertfordshire has two Bands, Watford and Hemel Hempstead while Bradwell represent Buckinghamshire.

The odd one out is Tadley who are based in Hampshire and as such should really be in the West of England region. Historically they have competed in the London & Southern Region as they previously rehearsed just across the county border in Berkshire.

I am sure all of the Bands have been working hard on rehearsing the test piece and we hope that they all perform to the best of their abilities on the day. Most of the bands websites indicate they have vacancies for players but I am sure will be doing their best to have a full complement of players on the day.



## Area Contest

### The Adjudicators



**Stephanie Binns**

**Qualifications BMus (Hons), DipABRSM, PGCE**

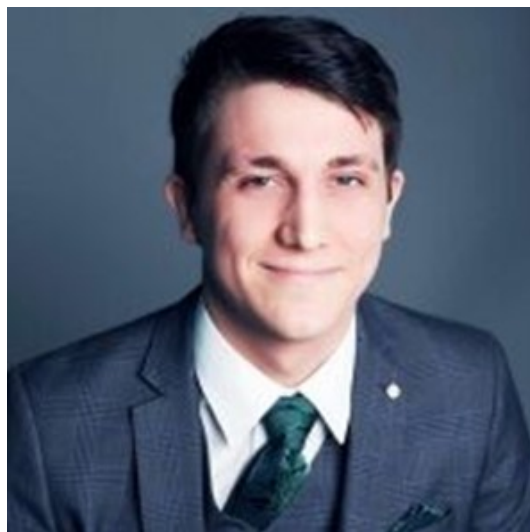
Steph's love of brass began in her native Cornwall when she started playing the cornet with the Mount Charles Youth Band. She quickly progressed through to the Principal Cornet, whilst also playing in St Austell Town Band and the senior Mount Charles Band. She was also a proud member of the Cornwall Youth Brass Band for 10 years. Steph returned to the band in 2019 as guest soloist for their Christmas course.

In 2011 Steph joined Cory Band where she enjoyed seven years as their Repiano Cornet and Flugelhorn player. Some of Steph's notable highlights were winning the 'Grand Slam' in 2016. This period of Steph's musical journey coincided with her studying at the Royal Welsh College (RWCMD), where she gained a BMus (Hons) Degree. She achieved notable successes during her time at RWCMD, including winning the Harry Mortimer Award for RWCMD's Outstanding Brass Musician.

In 2018, Steph moved to Greater Manchester and had a successful period as Principal Cornet at WEFL Fairey Band before a short stint at Grimethorpe Colliery Band on Repiano cornet, enjoying some innovative lockdown performances with the band. During 2020 and against the backdrop of the pandemic Steph accepted the invitation to join Black Dyke and continues to be a proud member of the band. Steph is a Geneva Performance and Development Artist, a Denis Wick Artist and also an endorsee for the Shhhmute practice mute range.

Steph completed AoBBA's Trainee Adjudicator scheme in 2022 and has since been in high demand, gaining a wealth of experience adjudicating throughout the country at all types of contest and levels. Outside of brass bands, Steph is Head of MADD (Music, Art, Dance and Drama) at a Special Needs Secondary school in Rochdale.

## ***Area Contest***



**Jack Capstaff**

### **Qualifications Bmus (Hons) RWCMD**

Jack Capstaff is a conductor and composer of a wide variety of musical genres and ensembles. Jack read Composition at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama under Peter Reynolds, John Hardy, Dr Robert Spearing, and Michael McCartney, as well as conducting under Dr John Traill, Anthony Negus and David Jones.

As a composer, Jack has been commissioned by some of the country's leading ensembles and awards bodies. In 2022 Jack worked with the Carlton Main Frickley Colliery band to put together a recording of *The Snow Queen*, a multi-media adaption of Hans Christian Anderson's tale of the same title, with narration by Frank Renton and animation by his wife Charlotte.

In 2018 Jack came 2nd in the BBCA (formerly NABBC) conductors conducting competition, which he matched in 2022, as well as taking the 'highest UK participant award'; he now holds the post of PRO with the BBC.

Alongside freelance orchestral conducting, and working with some of the county's top bands; Jack has held residencies with the South Yorkshire Police Band, Ripon City Band, as well as the Yorkshire Imperial Metals band and currently conducts Derwent Brass and the Hatfield and Askern Band.

Jack continues to work with the National Association of Brass Band adjudicators, with whom he has travelled country wide for regional, national, and entertainments contests while developing his adjudicating portfolio, as he hopes to help give input and advice to music creators further afield. He has most recently enjoyed adjudicating at Unibrass.

Since early 2022 Jack has begun studying and consulting with some of the country's top musical minds, studying conducting with Mark Heron, Frank Renton, and Ray Farr with composition advice from Philip Wilby.

## Area Contest

### The Composer

Jacob de Haan was born March 28, 1959 in Heerenveen, Holland. He received his musical education at the State Music Academy in Leeuwarden, where he studied organ and school music. Subsequently he lectured in arranging at the same academy.

Jacob de Haan lives in the city of Rotterdam, where he mainly works as a composer. Jacob de Haan is often invited as a guest conductor to perform his own works and as an adjudicator at international contests. As a guest conductor he worked among others in Australia, Switzerland, Slovenia, Austria, Germany, Italy, France and Belgium. Besides he produced various CD-recordings with professional concert bands at home and abroad.

Jacob de Haan grew up in a musically orientated family. Via his piano and trumpet lessons he was, at an early age, able to develop his creativity as a future composer. In the early eighties, when his first works were published, he gained his first successes as a composer of concert band music.

Very famous are his compositions based on soundtrack like combinations of styles. In this respect Oregon was his most successful piece. His repertoire for concert band consists besides of contest pieces in various grades, short concert pieces, popular music and a few marches. Additionally he wrote various arrangements of classical works and chorales.

This year's chosen Test Piece is a suite in three movements, based on a well-known folk tune from Arkansas. In the course of this varied work the folk song appears in its complete form and in fragments, in major and in minor, as a ballad in a lyrical orchestration, as a blues, accompanied by a jazzy rhythm and at the end again in its pure form. In the process, all instrumental groups of the brass band get their chance to shine.

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### The Test Piece (A Personal View!)

This year's choice as a test piece for Third Section is Jacob de Haan's "Arkansas".

*"This concert work is based on a well-known folk tune from Arkansas. In the course of this varied work the folk song appears in its complete form and in fragments, in major and in minor, as a ballad in a lyrical orchestration, as a blues, accompanied by a jazzy rhythm and at the end again in its pure form. In the process, all instrumental groups of the brass band get their chance to shine!"*

There are only twelve notes in the chromatic scale and given how much music has been written over the years it is perhaps not surprising that most compositions have snatches in them which remind you of other pieces. The underlying theme in "Arkansas" takes me back to my early childhood days watching black and white westerns on the television or at the Saturday morning cinema showings. These were always accompanied by a musical sound track which ramped up the excitement where typically the tom tom beats announced the appearance of the Red Indians followed by the galloping horses of the rescuers.

## Area Contest

*(When Christopher Columbus reached America in 1492 he thought he was meeting with people of India. He decided to call the Native Americans "Indians". He soon realised his mistake and found out he wasn't in India at all but on a new continent but the name stuck. To distinguish them from people from the India subcontinent they became known as "Red Indians". )*

So my take on the test piece is that it tells a story based on the Wild West days with a dramatic and eerie opening leading to the main theme played in a minor key. It continues with the cornet picking up in a major key followed by the horns. The first movement ends with the trombone thrashing out the original theme with the percussion team doing their best horses hooves impression.

Movement two is the calm before the storm. It opens with cornets and trombones with cup mutes and the euphonium and baritones playing a lovely little melody reminding me of "Home On The Range". The tubular bell is used to create a peaceful and atmospheric scene and cup mutes are put back in to end the movement.

Then the excitement builds in the third movement which is Allegro Vivace. The percussion boys ramp up the tension with galloping horses and the main theme would not be out of place in a Star Wars or Superman movie. The horns then interject in a syncopated passage with more than a hint of Ravel's Bolero with the euphonium offering up a smoother melody (Ghost Riders in the Sky) This leads to the dramatic climax with chords out of the Saint Saens organ symphony.

All in all a nice enjoyable piece of music which is certainly going to test all of the bands on the day. And unlike music used in the last few contests which now gathers dust in the library, this is a piece that could happily be included in a concert!

### **Regional Championships Dates for Other Regions**

<b>Midlands</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> March Sections 3 & 1/9 <sup>th</sup> March Section 4 & Championship/15 <sup>th</sup> March Section 2
<b>North of England</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> -23 <sup>rd</sup> March
<b>North West</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> February (All Sections)
<b>Scotland</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Wales</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>West Of England</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Yorkshire</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> March



## From The Archive!

### FROM THE ARCHIVE –

*As we look forward to our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, this series delves into the band's archive for stories about its early history.*

### THE PRESENTATION TROMBONE



For many years an old trombone in a black leather case has sat on a high shelf in the band's storeroom. A label stuck to the case warns "*Presentation Trombone Not for General Use*". The trombone is silver plated with a floral design engraved on it where the tubing widens to form the bell. There is also some floral ornamentation on the joints of the bracing. There are two sets of inscriptions: one relating to the instrument's manufacturer, the other to the presentation it was purchased for.

On 22 November, 1902, the band committee approved the purchase of a trombone to be presented to Mr W Hardwick, the bandmaster. Hardwick had been appointed in June 1901, following the resignation of G Lock, the previous bandmaster. By November 1902 Hardwick had undertaken the role without payment or compensation for nearly eighteen months and the presentation was in recognition of this, hence the reference to his *Gratuitous Service* in the inscription on the bell.



*The inscription on the bell end reads,*

Presented to Mr W Hardwick  
By the members and friends of  
the  
Bradwell United Brass Band  
In recognition of his gratuitous  
services as Bandmaster  
Xmas 1902

As Sylvia Mead mentions in her 1996 history of the band, *Marching Out – The 95 Years of Bradwell Silver Band*, the trombone was to be presented at a social event due to take place in early 1903. In fact, as the band committee minutes show, the dance was postponed until September and the instrument was given to Mr Hardwick at a practice on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March in the presence of the band, the committee and "*a few friends*".



*The inscription on the bell tube reads -*

Class A,  
Exhibition Prize  
Medals, Awarded to J  
Higham Ltd, Makers,  
127 Strangeways,  
Manchester England  
51794 Contesting  
Model

The instrument was ordered from J Higham Ltd at a total cost of £11-1-0: the band's minutes record that the trombone itself was £7-10s and the silver plating an additional £2-10s. The engraving cost a further £1-1s. From the model number, 51794, it was probably made in 1900. J Higham Ltd was a noted instrument maker of the time. Established in 1842 in Manchester, it had premises at 127 Great Ducie Street, opposite the Assize court and Strangeways prison. Production was at its peak from about 1875 until the 1890s but by 1902, when the trombone was purchased, the company was beginning to lose out to competitors such as Boosey & Co.

## From The Archive!

One problem seems to have been that Higham Ltd invested and experimented with increasingly complex key and valve systems that did not prove popular - though 1914 may not have been the best year to launch a new system anyway. By 1920 the company was suffering from falling demand and production had dropped to a few hundred. The post-war period was also difficult generally for instrument makers, with workers commanding higher wages and the market focus shifting from contesting brass bands to dance bands, but Higham's seems to have also suffered a loss of reputation. In 1923 the Higham firm was acquired by the Manchester based firm of Mayers and Harrison.

The mouthpiece is not the original one and may not be as old as the trombone. From what I have been able to establish the *Kosikup* range of mouthpieces was originally made by Hawkes and Son. This company was established in 1865 and merged with Boosey & Co to form Boosey & Hawkes in 1930. They continued to produce the *Kosikup* range which was popular into the 1960s.

So how did the trombone end up back with the band? There is a reference in the committee minutes for late September 1950, that "*the trombone from Mr Hardwick be purchased, and that Mr A Pepper be handed the instrument*".

If it was used by Pepper, the mouthpiece may in fact have been his.



*The Mouthpiece is marked*

KOSIKUP, REGD 1½



Detail from a 1953 Band photo:  
A. Pepper is seated centre.

[Source: BSB Archive - Main Collection]

Apparently the trombone was given back on the understanding that it would never be played in a dance band. It remained in use until December 1970.

Is the trombone valuable? In 2007, a silver-plated Higham slide trombone made circa 1900, with intricate foliate engraving around the joints, sold at Bonham Auction for £300. In 2022 another J Higham Ltd trombone, but without decorative engravings, sold at Great Western Auctions for just £20. However as a link back to the early years of the band it is, to the band at least, priceless. Whatever its value the instrument has been catalogued in the band's archive and has been listed with the Galpin Society [<https://gs.galpinsociety.org/index.htm>] which maintains a register of surviving Higham instruments

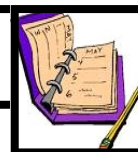
## Chas Leslie

When notified of the instrument, Prof. Arnold Myers, the President of the Galpin Society commented "*It appears to have been made in the same batch as trombone 51786 which I have here at home, and my estimated manufacture date of 1900 fits well with its presentation date of 1902*".

For information about J Higham Ltd I am indebted to the article *Made in Manchester: Instruments of the Higham Firm* Arnold Myers, *The Galpin Society Journal*, Vol. 71 (March 2018), pp. 161-178, 156-157

This information comes from a newspaper report of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner [BSB 2024 265] in March 1971, citing Harold Walters, then Secretary.

## Contacts



<i>Chairperson:</i>	Steph Chappell	chairman@bradwellband.co.uk
<i>Co-Secretaries:</i>	Sam Allen Gareth Mitchell	secretary@bradwellband.co.uk
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<i>Treasurer:</i>	Karen Wilson	treasurer@bradwellband.co.uk
<i>Librarian:</i>	Chey Wilson	-
<i>Press Officer:</i>	<b>VACANT</b>	-
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<i>Committee:</i>	Dave Sanderson	-

## Forthcoming Engagements

*Playing member are reminded that they should use Muzodo to indicate their availability.*

*If you have any questions about engagements or your availability, please speak with Sam as engagement secretary, Gareth as co-secretary, Brian or your section leader as appropriate. The earlier Sam and Gareth know deps are needed the better. Of course, if you can provide your own deputy that really helps but we know that some of us don't have a ready list of contacts making this difficult.*

*Please remember everyone is valuable, any missing part impacts on the performance, making deps important for all.*

*If you have any problems accessing Muzodo let us know (Sam & Steph). As administrators they can re-set passwords and add in responses on your behalf.*

Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> April	Spring Concert St. James New Bradwell	7:30pm
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> May	May Day At The Mill	
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Newport Pagnell Vintage Day	
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> June	Bands On The Green Bletchley	
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> June	<i>Private Event</i>	
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> July	Leighton Buzzard Bandstand	
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> July	St. James Patronal Service	
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> August	St. James Open Air Concert	