

# GODALMING BAND OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Hi Everyone

Hope you all really enjoyed the beautiful warm and sunny weather that has blessed our summer season this year. After a busy and very eventful 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year in 2012, the Senior Band had planned to have slightly fewer summer engagements this year. However that was not to be.

Our annual Spring Concert with St. Hilary's School, followed by the SCABA Spring contest, this year at Crawley, got us underway. Then we learned of David Wright's decision to stand down as our musical director in mid-May after 25 years with the Band.

Both of our bands owe a great debt of gratitude to David for all of the work and commitment that he gave to us during his tenure as MD and I'm sure that with us you would wish him well in his chosen path for the future.

David's resignation led the Band committee to go through the process of advertising, auditioning and selecting a new leader. I am pleased to say that this process was successfully negotiated and in which all Band members had the opportunity to express their view, a clear choice emerged. In mid-July we welcomed James Haigh as our new, young and very enthusiastic

MD. Although there is an initial trial period for James and the Band, I am confident that the way in which we have settled in together over the past 2/3 months is a sign of a long and fruitful partnership.

David Loftus amazed us all by the speed of his recovery from his amputation surgery and return to the leadership of our Youth Band. Such strength of character, determination and commitment has to be greatly admired and the youngsters in the band were delighted to have him back at the helm in time for the Godalming Music Festival. We all greatly appreciate David's work with our young bandsmen and it was good to see the recent arrival of 'The Beast', a specialized vehicle which has greatly improved his pattern of life and mobility. David comments on his new circumstances below.

As we now move into the Autumn and Winter periods our bands will be preparing for various upcoming events, including the usual busy Christmas period. Don't forget to come along and support us at our concerts and public events.

-Ray Pont, Chairman, Godalming Band

## THANK YOU FROM DAVID LOFTUS

The last twelve months have been a bit of a challenge for me. Recurrent infection in my right leg, several stays in hospital and of course the amputation of my leg on 30<sup>th</sup> March this year meant becoming a bilateral amputee fully wheelchair dependent.

I express sincere appreciation to everyone for words of encouragement or practical support during this time: in particular to David Wright for standing in for me – often at short notice – to Andy who got me to and from Youth Band when I was unable to drive and to everyone for their understanding.

It may seem strange to say but insofar as my health is concerned I am much better off without the leg and all the infection and the

associated pain it was causing me.

Life has also become much easier since taking delivery of our new vehicle (I have heard it was referred to as “The Beast” by some of the Youth Band!) which enables me to drive from my electric wheelchair. This gives me so much more independence and avoids all the transfers I used to have to perform between chair and car or vice versa, making life safer as well.

So again a big Thank You to everyone concerned; it was a great encouragement to receive emails, texts, cards etc. when I was laid low but it is even better to be back with the Youth Band.

-David E Loftus MBE  
Youth Band MD



## THE YOUTH BAND

We started back for the new term at the beginning of September and were soon getting to grips with some new, and challenging, music. With not only a new term, but also a new academic year, there are some members of the Youth Band who faced significant changes as they started at new schools or colleges and needed to settle into the new demands these changes raised. Some of these changes affected their role within the Youth Band but they have all managed these transitions well and managed to maintain their music making with us.

So what lies ahead?

Some of the Youth Band will be again attending the National Brass Band Championships at the Royal Albert Hall in October. This is an opportunity to hear some of the premier brass bands in England, Wales and Scotland, giving the youngsters something to aspire to.

The local Broadwater Care UK Residential Home is our first Concert Venue at the end of October. The Manager was very positive about us going there and I'm sure we will be well received and hopefully we may be able to

make regular visits to them during the year. At the end of November we will be making our annual sojourn to the Elmbridge Retirement Village where we are always well looked after and able to provide an afternoon's entertainment in their Community Hall. This venue has a family feel as we have got to know a number of residents of the village over the years whilst there are some relatives of Youth Band members who live there. On December 7<sup>th</sup> we will be sharing in the joint Christmas Concert with the Senior Band in Godalming. This is always a great occasion as both Bands have a rare opportunity to share a stage. Then we will have our usual session of Christmas Carols outside of Waitrose before retiring inside to take over the cafe for our End of Term social with well-deserved hot chocolate.

There is a possibility of an engagement at a Royal Residence but as this is still being worked on I cannot reveal anything further at this point.

Then what else is there to look forward to?

When we return in January we will be working towards the

Godalming Music Festival both as individuals and as a Band in various classes. This is always a great occasion as we support our own local Music Festival.

We also had a brief discussion recently about having a “Continental Tour”. This is very much in the embryonic stage at the moment but would certainly be great fun as well as a great challenge!!

Amongst our number we have had a number of successes in various music examinations and everyone who has sat them is to be encouraged and congratulated for their efforts.

We are on the lookout for some new members so if you are reading this and know of any youngster who may be interested please do pass on contact details or bring them along to the Bandroom on a Monday evening between 6.00 – 7.50 pm just to have a look and listen as a taster!

Whilst David Wright has stood down from the Senior Band I am delighted that he is willing to cover for me should I need to be absent from the Youth Band. Hopefully I will not have to call on David too often but it is good to know there is someone able to stand in if the need arises.

-David E Loftus MBE  
Youth Band MD

### **GODALMING BAND SELECTS NEW MUSICAL DIRECTOR**

James Haigh has been appointed as the new Musical Director of Godalming Band. James has an extensive background in brass music, both as a player and a conductor. His musical career began at age seven, and after a brief flirtation with strings, took up the cornet with Guildford Citadel Senior Band, at age ten. At thirteen James moved to soprano cornet, and in his late teens discovered his passion for conducting.

In addition to conducting the Guildford Citadel and playing with a variety of brass groups, James assumed the post of MD at Farnham. James’s interest in

conducting continued to grow, and led him to study for a degree in music from Bournemouth University and Plymouth University, earning his degree in 2010. While at university James formed a connection with Verwood Concert Brass, progressing from Soprano Cornet to Principal Cornet, and soon becoming MD of the newly formed Verwood “B” band. James then returned to the Godalming area, working as IT Network Manager at King Edward’s School in Witley, as well as Assistant Housemaster. James is also conducting at Guildford

Citadel Salvation Army Band, a position he has resumed recently. James has a long connection with Godalming Band as a player, and met his future wife, Jennifer, while on a Godalming Band trip to Herpen, the Netherlands. They are the parents of Nicholas, who

is already showing signs of a healthy musical interest. James says, "I am really excited to be able to take the position of Musical director here at Godalming Band and continue the long tradition this band holds in the community."

## **SPRING CONCERT, GODALMING UNITED CHURCH**

Godalming Band and St Hilary's School presented their annual joint concert at Godalming United Church last Saturday evening, March 2. Once again St Hilary's students displayed a remarkable range of talent as soloists and in ensembles. David Wright, Music Director of Godalming Band, personally started the evening by playing one of three trumpet parts of Benjamin Britten's Fanfare for St Edmundsbury, accompanied by Principal Cornet David Sargeant and band member Simon Brennan. Commemoration marked some of David's musical choices Saturday, as 2013 is the centenary of Britten's birth. Two other pieces, Verdi's Prelude to La Traviata and Niebelungen March, based on Wagner's music, paid homage to these composers born two hundred years ago. An Olympic Fanfare by John Williams and The Champions both gave a nod to the great events of last summer. A crowd

pleaser was Best of ABBA Selections with wall- projected lyrics, giving the audience, and especially the school choirs, a chance to belt out some tunes which predated them by decades. Several girls from St Hilary's featured as soloists on piano, cello and violin, while old girl Ameilia Hinton-Carroll gave a wonderful rendition of Moffat's violin solo, Intrada. The Senior Choir sang two songs, Before You and Phantom of Pan, composed and conducted by Isabelle Michalakis, St Hilary's Head of Music. Finally the Flute and Hand Chime Ensemble and the Flute and Recorder Group presented brief but entertaining works.

The finale brought the Band and School Choir together for Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious and So Long, Goodbye from the Sound of Music, a fitting way to end a very entertaining evening.

## **MD DAVID WRIGHT RETIRES FROM GODALMING BAND**

Note: this article originally appeared in *The Surrey Advertiser* this Spring

Godalming Band will be entering a new era with the retirement of its long- serving Music Director, David Wright. David first took up the Godalming baton in 1988, his directorship spanning one third of the Band's seventy – five year existence. During his tenure, the Band has enjoyed numerous successes, including several first place prizes in Southern Counties Brass Band Association competitions, as well as local contests, and an appearance in the National Brass Band finals. Several musical works were also commissioned by the Band. More importantly, however, Godalming Band has expanded its presence throughout the Waverley area, playing at local fetes, community events, special musical occasions, concerts, and making regular appearances at Godalming bandstand.

Over the years the Band also took part in many fund-raising events for local and national charities, often in collaboration with figures from television, theatre, and the music world.

Last year was particularly busy for the Band. David organised a special musical tribute for the Jubilee, deftly coordinated with the gala evening fireworks. A few weeks later saw the Band's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, which brought to Godalming bands from Godalming's twinning towns, Mayen, Germany, and Joigny, France, for a series of musical events, including two concerts, appearances on the High Street, a march, and several informal occasions for socialising. While under David's direction Godalming Band has also paid visits to Mayen and Joigny, as well as Herpen, Holland.

David migrated, as it were, from Glasgow to Charterhouse where he took up a position as a music master in 1988, and soon after came to the Band. David did not leave behind his Scots roots, however, humorously describing himself as a missionary of Scottish culture. True to his intention, David's last appearance at Godalming bandstand in mid-May was practically a Scottish festival. On this occasion the Band presented David with several gifts acknowledging his long service to the Band.

Godalming Mayor Tom Martin also warmly thanked David on behalf of the town for his efforts over the last twenty-five years.

David was always at ease with an audience, and revelled in his role as compere. His humour, wit, and stage presence materially raised the enjoyment of audiences, and his presence will be missed. The Band is deeply grateful for all of David's work with us, and we wish him

continued happiness.

### **SAINT JOHN'S FETE, THE BURYS, SATURDAY, 4 MAY**

Both Bands enjoyed a sunny and windy afternoon at this staple of our playing schedule. Of all our engagements, this may very well be the oldest of all, dating back many years. The fete is a real

community event, with all the traditional features: vintage cars, stalls by community groups and local charities, the ice cream van, children's games, maypole dancing, et. al. For the Bands, it marked the beginning of summer.

### **CHURCH CROOKHAM FETE, SATURDAY, 1 JUNE**

Saturday 1 June saw the band undertaking one of its most regular and long standing engagements, the Christ Church Crookham fete. This is an engagement that the band has undertaken for as long as most of us can remember. It is a good old fashioned, traditional fete, whose format hasn't changed one iota over the years, with the exactly the same stalls and arena events each and every year. Nonetheless

the fete is always very well attended by the local community & raises a good sum for charity. This year was no different, even if there seemed to be a few less people in attendance at the official opening. However the sun came out and so did the crowds, and I am assured that it was another successful fete for the organisers.

-Wendy Ball

### **SHAMLEY GREEN FETE, SATURDAY, 8 JUNE**

The 'fete' season was well and truly upon us and Saturday 8 June saw the Band attending the annual fete at Shamley Green. This is something of a new event for the Band, having only been invited to play here for the first time last year.

We were greeted by a village green festooned in stalls and side shows together with a small queue of dogs waiting patiently to enter their own dog show, scheduled to take place later in

the afternoon. There was also a healthy crowd of people in attendance who all were very willing to participate in everything on offer.

The fete organisers had very kindly provided the band with their own little tent to play in, which offered us protection from the elements, which on this occasion was the sun, but it so easily could have been rain, wind or hail (am I beginning to sound a little weather obsessed?).

The band played two forty-five minute sessions, which seemed to be very well received by our passing audience. So well received in fact that we have

been invited back again next year! -Wendy Ball

### **WONERSH SONGS OF PRAISE, SUNDAY, 7 JULY**

It had been a good day. The sun was still out, which it had been all day (something of a rarity in recent months), and Andy Murray had just won the Wimbledon championships in three straight sets, which was something of a relief for us all, avoiding the necessity of us having to sit through the agonising emotional rollercoaster of one of his five-set matches. So we all arrived in Wonersh in pretty good spirits and feeling just a tad patriotic and proud to be British.

This theme continued as we settled ourselves on the lawn in front of the United Reformed Church in Wonersh in readiness for an evening of popular hymns that had been chosen by some of

the members of the congregation, who had come from a wide variety of churches in the surrounding area.

Across the road a cricket match was well underway and between the hymns and readings we heard the gentle thud of ball on bat and the occasional cry of 'out!' What could be more traditional than this – brass band, cricket on the green and the first men's Wimbledon champion in 77 years?

A very big thank you to the United Church for inviting the Band to be part this joyous occasion – hopefully we'll be invited back again next year.  
- Wendy Ball

### **BANDSTAND CONCERT, SUNDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER**

Although legend has it that Godalming Band never gets rained off at Sunday in the Park concerts, the myth dissolved in a steady rainfall on the day, which forced us into the parish church. Somewhat surprisingly, we had a

respectably sized audience for a pleasant afternoon of entertaining music. James Haigh, our recently appointed MD, did well filling the role of David Wright. James had clearly prepared for the afternoon, providing detailed



commentary on almost all the pieces we played. One advantage of playing in the church was an improved acoustical quality, which added to the enjoyment of

our listeners. This was an excellent way to end our summer Godalming appearances.

### **DAVID WRIGHT'S LEAVING DO**

Godalming Community Centre in Broadwater Park was the setting for a final farewell to David Wright after twenty-five years as Godalming Music Director. Members of the Band and their families, former members, and other guests were on hand on Sunday afternoon, 22 September, for this bittersweet event. Band members who played under David's leadership were invited to join in the farewell. We were delighted that Bryony Dyer (Cooper) and her brother Damian, together with Greg Lowes and his family were able to join us on the day. Greetings and messages of goodwill for David were also received from Roy and Bryony Hancock, David and Liz Lancaster, David and Claire Pitt, Darren Killick, Jo and Jenny Martin and Christine Caple. Band Chairman Ray Pont expressed the Band's gratitude to David for his service to the Band,

noting the exceptional length of David's tenure with Godalming. Norman Every, on behalf of SCABBA, also noted David's continuous service of forty years to the brass band movement. David Sargent then outlined the many achievements of the Band under David's leadership. Perhaps the highlight of David's career with the Band was the Jubilee concert of 2012, in which the Band coordinated a medley of stirring music arranged by David with a spectacular fireworks display before an audience of several thousand. Finally the honoured guest spoke of his affection for the Band and the great pleasure he received from leading us for a quarter century. David was presented with a large photograph of the three bands who gathered for Godalming Band's seventy-fifth anniversary celebration last year as a farewell present.

### **AUTUMN ROTARY CONFERENCE, EASTBOURNE**

Godalming Band travelled to Eastbourne on Sunday, 29 September, to play at the induction of Michael Goodridge,

our Band president, as president of Southeast Rotary. Michael has been a great friend of the Band, and this was something we felt

we could do to express our gratitude to him.

The Band left by coach at 7 AM, arriving in Eastbourne at 9. The Rotary proceedings were at Eastbourne's Winter Gardens, and the Band was called upon to provide appropriate music for the opening, which was religious in flavour. The Band had a welcome encounter with breakfast post service, of coffee, tea, and bacon butties, fortifying us for the next event, an open-air concert on the seafront, in the very impressive

bandstand. After an hour and a half of more music to an appreciative and varied audience, it was back to the Winter Garden to provide the Rotary with music for their Sunday lunch. The Band played until a little after 2 PM, then had an hour to explore the delights of Eastbourne. At 3:15 it was back on the coach, and so to Godalming, where we arrived at 5:30. This was a very busy and fulfilling day of music, ably managed by our new MD, James Haigh.

### **HARVEST CELEBRATION**

Our most recent engagement was on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October when we were invited by the Cranleigh Methodist Church to assist them with their harvest celebrations. A smaller band undertook this engagement which was to give some musical entertainment after

#### **A TRIBUTE TO STAN WILLIS, FORMER MD**

Stan Willis was with the band for a relatively short time, we think 2 to 3 years, but his dedication to the band could not be faulted. He travelled twice a week from his home in Dorset, and was never late for a rehearsal. He also never missed an engagement. One of the things he taught the band was how to get a rhythm into their heads, "have a cup of tea" for a certain march, and this phrase has stuck in the minds of several players for some time. Rehearsals on test pieces were very precise, and we would probably rarely play right through the piece at a

traditional Harvest Supper. It proved to be a most enjoyable informal evening with quite a few of the band also enjoying a delicious three course supper before getting down to the playing.

rehearsal, but what we learned **stuck!** Stan had played trombone with many top bands, including

Munn & Feltons, which later became GUS Footwear Band. Even though we were only a Fourth Section Band, Stan gave his all and was every happy with us. After he left we got an occasional telephone call, saying how happy his time with Godalming Band had been, and was always interested in what was happening.

Together with his son, Barry, he formed a trombone quartet, and

several times competed in the scaba Quartet and Ensemble Contest. In recent years his health had deteriorated badly, and he

complained he could no longer play his beloved instrument.

- Ivy & Ron Gray

## COMINGS AND GOINGS

During the last few months Russell Burton (bass trombone) has decided to stand down from the Band. The lure of the sea and his boat has eventually won against the band.

Linda Wagner (soprano cornet) has also found it necessary to take a temporary break from playing due to family and work commitments.

Both will be greatly missed, but we wish them well and hope to see them back with us sometime in the not too distant future.

On the good news side we have some new arrivals in the band. Sam Honeysett (baritone) has been able to stay with us and is joined by his university friend Chris Melling (soprano cornet) who has now finished his university studies. Allister Dow (front row cornet) and David Powell (tenor horn) have joined us, both having recently moved into the area.

We welcome them all and hope that they will enjoy their banding and friendship with us for some time to come.

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW – AN UPDATE

Johnny Bloomfield Many of you know our friend Johnny, a member of Haslemere and Farnham bands, who regularly helped us out on tenor horn or baritone. Earlier this year during his usual winter break in Spain, he suffered a severe stroke and was admitted to hospital.

Following time in a Spanish hospital and the many difficulties of returning to England, he spent a long period in the Royal Surrey Hospital and latterly at the recovery unit in Milford Hospital. Although not fully recovered, Johnny has recently

left hospital and we were delighted to see him, be it in a wheelchair, at our final summer concert in the parish church. Because of his current incapacity Johnny and his wife Joyce have moved to more suitable accommodation in Woking. We wish him well in his efforts to make a successful recovery and I'm sure he would appreciate a phone call or a visit if you could find the time. I have his contact details.

In the last few days we have learned of the death of Diana Marshall, wife of Graham and

mother of Roland, Neil and Claire. As a family they were all very active with our Band during the late 1970's and 1980's and Neil (percussion) has helped us at various events over the years. Our thoughts are with the family at this difficult time.

Tom Martin, trombone, part of the Martin family who together with mother Rachel and sisters Jenny and Jo were deeply involved with both our Youth Band and our Senior Band, has moved onto higher things. This year Tom has the honour of being the Mayor of Godalming, probably one of the youngest on record, and following in the path previously trodden by father Peter. In recent years Tom has helped us out on occasions including the annual

Remembrance parade. Will he be joining us this year playing his trombone in full mayoral regalia at the front of the parade? Now that really would be a first!!

Jo Beresford, another product of our Youth Band, has obtained her university place and will be following in the footsteps of her father, studying chemical engineering at Imperial College.

Tom Archer, our former percussionist, left us to undertake studies at the ACM in Guildford. We remember him as the little lad who progressed through the Youth Band into the Senior Band. Now a strapping six feet plus, Tom has just gone off to start life at university, studying in the music field.

-Ray Pont

### **UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS, SENIOR AND YOUTH BANDS**

Sunday, 10 November Remembrance Sunday, Godalming Parish Church

Friday, 22 November Youth Band, Busbridge

Saturday, 30 November Christmas Lights Switch-on - play 4-4.45pm plus possibly accompanying carols afterwards

Wednesday, 4 December Carols, Masonic lodge, Godalming (small band)

Saturday, 7 December Christmas concert, Godalming United Church, Bridge Street, Senior and Youth Bands

Thursday, 12 December Christmas lunch, Farncombe Day Centre

Thursday, 12 December Ladies' Christmas Dinner - Windlesham Golf Club (small band)

Thursday, 19 December Waitrose carols, Youth and Senior Bands

Friday 20 December Little Tangle, Christmas carols

## **GODALMING BAND MONTHLY DRAW WINNERS**

**Remember you can always join the band lottery, at one pound per month. The chances of winning are presently one in thirty, a big improvement on the National Lottery's one in fourteen million! Simply**

**contact Ann Heward at [annaheward@yahoo.com](mailto:annaheward@yahoo.com) for more information. Half the money raised goes to Band support.**

December: Greta Edgington, John Waugh  
January: Cathy Gordon-Smith, David Daniels  
March: Julie Rowling, John Waugh  
April: Kevin Mulgrew, Dana Daniels  
May: Ivy Gray, Ray Pont  
June: Greta Edgington, David Daniels  
July: Ros Loftus, Phil Haigh  
August: Dominic Cleal, Louise Steele