

# Godalming Band Newsletter

9th October 2016

## Chairman's corner

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Hi everyone—I hope that you have all enjoyed a good relaxing summer, especially the great sunshine that we have enjoyed over the past few weeks.

It is some time since we published our last newsletter and during this period both of our bands have been very busy with their various regular and also several new events.

These events include the senior band's first appearance at the Alresford Watercress Festival and undertaking a recording session for a CD. Also there was the amazingly successful Spring Godalming Festival for the Youth Band. More details about these events later in this newsletter

As we return from the summer holidays refreshed and full of vigour our bands will be preparing for a very busy upcoming Autumn and Christmas periods. Full details of all of the engagements during this period are shown later in the newsletter.

We hope that you will continue to support our bands in their endeavours and cordially invite you to join us at as many of the events as you can. Have you thought about spreading the news about our bands by inviting your friends and neighbours to come and listen to us.

Happy reading – Ray Pont

## Christmas season

19/12/15

It's been a while since our last Christmas season, but we had a particularly busy run-up with both Godalming Band and our Youth Band.

We've been out and about in the local area, up and down the high street, to residential homes and churches to play carols and bring some Christmas spirit. This included some new events at Guildford United Reformed Church and at Wonersh Cricket Club, which we look forward to visiting again in 2016.



The season culminated in our Christmas Concert, held at the United Church in Godalming. We featured both bands and the evening finished in style with the two bands playing and wishing everybody a "Merry Christmas". We hope if you attended that you had an enjoyable evening!

The date for this year's Christmas concert will be Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2016 from 7pm at Godalming United Church.



In an entertaining evening at Godalming Music Festival this year, our own Godalming Youth Band were delighted to top all three classes they entered and won a collection of silverware.

With fifteen members from age seven upwards, and bolstered by two new recruits this year, the band under Musical Director David Loftus MBE played a range of ambitious and entertaining music for the audience at Godalming Borough Hall on Thursday 3rd March.

*“I believe that is the best set of results we have ever obtained and the band did themselves proud. The attention to detail and concentration resulted in such a great band and an excellent evening.” – David Loftus.*

In the “Band Open” class, the band played St. Andrew’s Variations, a technically challenging piece as it features eight movements in very different styles with a common motif. This earned them 88 points, and first place to win the Jericho Cup.

Next, and against stiff competition from a range of bands from local schools, the Youth Band entered the Large Ensemble (up to Year 13) class with Three Dance Movements – a combination of jazz and dance pieces. Again earning 88 points, the win had special meaning for the band as they won and took home the John Boot Trophy, named after the former Godalming Band trombonist.

Saving the best to last, the band featured music from the film Pirates of the Caribbean. The band was transformed into the rag-tag crew of the Black Pearl and through a combination of short, exciting passages, tricky fingering and narration from the musicians to tell the story of Elizabeth Swann, Will Turner and their gold medallion.



It was the highlight of the evening, with the band being awarded 90 points from adjudicator Gillian Johnston, who commented on the band making it a true entertainment contest, and highly enjoyable for the audience.

Individual members of the Youth Band were also participating in the Godalming Music Festival throughout the week, and not always on brass instruments! Four of the band entered solo classes and achieved a mix of high placements and wins.

The band will return to the stage for the Music Festival next year, on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017.



## May Music in the Park

08/05/16



Godalming Band opened the Music in the Park season with an unusually glorious spring day. As can be seen in the photo, it brought us a packed park for the occasion!

Below you'll find a few more photos and reports from our events this summer. Some of those we didn't have room for included the Youth Band and senior band at the Godalming Spring Fair in May, Woking bandstand in June and a double-billing in Woneresh for the Fete and Songs in Praise in July.

## Alresford Watercress Festival

15/05/16



A new event for the band this year, we were invited to entertain at Alresford in Hampshire, as they hosted their own food festival. The town was packed for the event, and we very much enjoyed being a part of it!

## From the studio

11/06/16

It's been over twenty years since Godalming Band released an album, but now we're back with *The Festive Season* to be released for the 2016 Christmas season. The band spent months preparing and rehearsing the music at the start of the year ready for a marathon recording session over a weekend in June.

During this Saturday and Sunday, engineers from the renowned World of Sound came to record all sixteen tracks with the band at King Edward's in Witley.



The band went the extra mile on the weekend working to a high standard right to the very end, and even finished ahead of schedule.

Now that the summer season's come to an end, we'll be dusting the Christmas tunes off and preparing the album for launch at our special *Festive Season* launch concert on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November in Cranleigh. We do hope you can join us to hear the results of our hard work!

The CD itself will be on sale from November, and we think it will make a great Godalming-themed gift for Christmas. It can be purchased from the band at our concerts or most of our events, else please contact our supporters' secretary.

## Farncombe Day Centre Fete

18/06/16

Godalming Youth Band played at two new events this summer, both a short distance from the band room in Farncombe. First was the Farncombe Day Centre Fete – an organisation that we have a long history with, as our players regularly visit at Christmas. The band played a set at Bowring's Field and received lots of positive feedback.

Another successful job followed a few weeks later where the band headed to the Farncombe Infant School Fete. We hope to visit both events again next year.







We joined Haslemere Town Band out at the Albury Produce Show this July – another warm one! Since our massed band concert with Haslemere and Farnham in 2015, and David Wright becoming MD there, the ties between the bands have strengthened, allowing players from all bands to help each other out at events such as this.

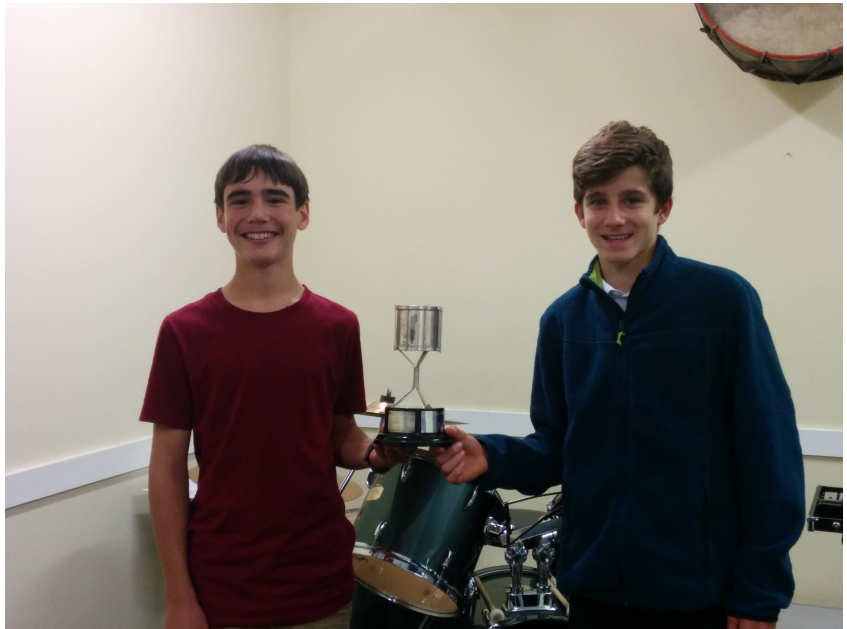
## SCABA Autumn Contest

25/09/16

Our band came third today in the SCABA Autumn Contest (2nd section), winning the Bill Digance Memorial Cup, but our percussion section (William and Jacob, pictured below) stormed to the top.

They won the Antony Spurgin Memorial Trophy for Best Percussion section and William outdid himself, winning the John Carman Memorial Cup for Best Instrumentalist. Well done to both!

The band played a new composition, Americana, by Martin Cordner. It was originally written for the Salvation Army New York Staff Band, but the band received special permission to play it. The piece is made up of two parts – an introduction to Native America featuring singing in native languages, mysterious chords and percussion, followed by a picture of the modern day USA and some familiar themes.



## News about Band Members

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### **Matt Newberry**

It is with some sadness that I report that Matt has decided to stand down from banding as a player.

This is partially due to his health problems, but also because of the need for him to spend an increasing amount of time caring for his wife.

Matt has been a good servant to Godalming Band since joining us from Alder Valley Band a few years ago and has during his lifetime been greatly involved in the world of brass ever since his military days in the Guards Band as a euphonium player. In recent years he will be remembered for setting up and running the 'Sounding Brass' sextet.

We wish to thank him not only for his service as a player, but also for his generosity to the band in helping to pay for the refurbishment of one of our Eb basses and for the donation of his new baritone to the band when he retired.

We will keep in touch with him through his membership of our Supporters Group.

### **Norman Every**

For several years Norman, tenor horn, has been commuting between Cranleigh and Cornwall because he has a family in both places. Now finally, earlier this year, the draw of the West Country and its sunshine have won the day and Norman and Sandra have made a permanent move to that beautiful county. Norman is already well integrated into his new area playing in the local band as well singing in a male voice choir and helping at his local church.

However this is not the end of the story because as president of SCABA (the Southern Counties Band Association), Norman will from time to time be commuting in the opposite direction for various meetings and band events. So he may well drop to play with us from time to time.

We wish him and Sandra well in their new home and thank them for all they have done for our band both through Norman's playing and assistance in conducting when our MDs have been away, together with Sandra's willing help at concerts and other social events.

- Ray Pont

### **Caleb Rowan**

*We recently heard from Caleb, one of our former Youth Band players who's been back in touch with the band as he's progressed through his degree in London. Together we hope to work on a new composition in the future. We asked if he'd mind sharing a few memories with you, and to hear how he's getting on since then.*

My name is Caleb Rowan and I am currently studying a degree in Music and Drama at Royal Holloway University of London, which I owe a lot to my time spent under the baton of David Loftus in the Godalming Youth Band. My time is spent flitting between the concert hall and the theatre, and somehow I manage to find the time to do both while sustaining a normal life in-between! I have acted in plays and composed works for musicians, and pretty much have been spending as much time as possible being as creative as possible.

My time spent in the Brass Band kick-started my interest in music; I had always enjoyed singing or humming along to a tune beforehand, but the language and mechanics of music had always eluded

me. It wasn't until I fumbled my way through a C Major scale on the cornet that suddenly a light was shone on the whole process.

Some of my fondest memories were from my time at the Band, playing concerts and shows, and even attending the Brass Band Championships at The Royal Albert Hall—where with my giant, A3 score, I tried to follow along the music and predict the judges' feedback.

Since then I have gone on to compose many works and even the score to a play or two, but even now I get flashbacks to my time in the Band—the small hints and tips that seemed mysterious to me back then, but invaluable to me now. If it hadn't had been for my involvement in the Band I am certain my life would have turned out very differently. It comforts me to know that no matter where I go in the future, the Brass Band will always be there, inspiring more kids like me to embrace the world of music, and to learn the difference between Tuba and a Trombone.

*David Loftus also notes that Caleb was also a bit of a Thespian in his days at Rodborough School taking leading roles in several of the school's productions!*

## SCABA Youth Band

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Norman Every, who started the original and very successful National Methodist Youth Band some years ago, had felt for some time that there was a need for an area Youth Brass Band in this part of the world. So when he took over as the SCABA area president 2/3 years ago he decided that he would be set one up a band for young players.

This band has brought together a very talented group of male and female young players from all over the South East of England who now meet on a monthly basis to rehearse.

We are delighted that four of our current Youth Band, Matthew Tate, Daniel Baumberg, Charles Steele and William Rowling are members of this group and are enjoying this musical fellowship and playing of a very high standard.

In April Norman, on behalf of SCABA, organises a residential music school for this group at St. Catherine's School, Bramley. Everybody who attended the free evening concert at the end of these courses is staggered by amazing standard of playing achieved.

I understand from Norman that there is likely to be similar course next April so I suggest you put a reminder in your diary and join us in support of these very talented youngsters.

– Ray Pont

## Upcoming engagements

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As usual, both bands will be all around the area throughout November and December at a variety of events, but we have two highlights this season:

On Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016, it's the glitzy launch of our new Christmas album at the Cranleigh Methodist Church. The album features a range of exciting arrangements from traditional carols through to Christmas-themed pieces, which we'll be playing at this concert.

We'll also be holding our traditional Christmas concert on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December from 7pm at Godalming United Church, Bridge Street. This will feature Godalming Youth Band and Godalming Band in joint concert, with soloists from both bands.

Tickets for both will be available a month prior to the event from either Julie Rowling (supporters' secretary) or Dominic Cleal (020 3355 0702).



Full schedule for Autumn and the Christmas period:

- Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November, 7pm – Godalming Fireworks Procession (High Street)
- Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November, 3pm – Godalming Youth Band at Elmbridge Retirement Village
- Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 10am – Godalming Remembrance Parade (High Street)
- Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November, 7pm – **“The Festive Season” CD Launch** (Cranleigh Methodist Church)
- Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November, 4pm – Godalming Christmas Lights (The Pepperpot)
- Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December, 6pm – Carols with Cranleigh Rotary Club (Cranleigh Village Hall)
- Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December, 4pm – Carols at Guildford United Reformed Church
- Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December, evening – Carols at Wonersh Cricket Club
- Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December, morning – Carols on Godalming High Street
- Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December, 7pm – **Godalming Band and Youth Band Christmas Concert** (Godalming United Church)
- Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December, evening – Carols with both bands at Godalming Waitrose (unconfirmed)
- Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2017, evening – Godalming Band Spring Concert

A list of engagements is also available on our website at [www.godalmingband.org.uk](http://www.godalmingband.org.uk) with any last-minute changes, and events are often posted on our Facebook page (search for Godalming Band).

## Newsletter and Supporters Group Changes

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For the last few years David Daniels has been the editor of our newsletter and also the membership secretary for our supporters group.

Whilst still being a member of Godalming Band, David has, over the past year, enjoyed playing regularly in the solo cornet section of The Cobham Band. Because of his commitment to this new band he has asked to stand down from his newsletter and supporters group duties.

I wish record our grateful thanks to him for his work with the newsletter and supporters as well as his work on the band committee in the past.

David has been a very loyal and most regular cornet player in our band for over 25 years and he still wishes to continue to be associated with our band but probably less regularly in an active capacity.

I am pleased to tell you that Dominic Cleal, our PRO has volunteered to take on the role of newsletter editor. I'm sure that with his technical and computer skills, which have already been displayed on our new Web Site, Facebook page and concert publicity material, he will enhance our future issues.

I am also delighted to tell you that Julie Rowling, who currently is running the Band / Supporters '100 club' has volunteered to also pick up the work of membership etc. for the supporters.

– Ray Pont

## Monthly draw winners

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Another successful year of raising money for Godalming Band has concluded with the 100 Club Monthly Draw, but this signals your opportunity to join in!

Half of the money raised goes to the Bands and the other half is divided between a first and second prize (two thirds and one third respectively). If we can sell all 100 squares, then we will raise £600 for the Band over the year, and the prizes will be £33.33 for the first prize and £16.67 for the second prize. That means if we sell all the squares you can recoup the cost of joining the 100 Club with just one second prize win!

If you're interested in purchasing a square, please contact Julie Rowling at [keithandjulie@rowling.plus.com](mailto:keithandjulie@rowling.plus.com).

This year's winners have been:

Month	1st Prize	2nd Prize
July 2015	Dana Daniels (51)	Ivy & Ron Gray (55)
August 2015	Tony Gordon-Smith (35)	Tony Gordon-Smith (37)
September 2015	Emma Scholar (11)	Val Gardner (88)
October 2015	Phil & Eve Kingsbury (69)	Ivy & Ron Gray (55)
November 2015	Cathy Gordon-Smith (14)	David & Lu Powell (17)
December 2015	Sam Honeysett (33)	David & Lu Powell (3)
January 2016	Christine Haigh (22)	Sam Honeysett (33)
February 2016	Fred Gardner (90)	David & Lu Powell (17)
March 2016	Gail Renaud (80)	Roger Humphrey (57)
April 2016	Robert Gosden (93)	Margaret Lloyd (89)
May 2016	Ann Heward (30)	Dominic Cleal (42)
June 2016	Jessica Sargeant (34)	Ray Pont (38)

## Band history: Our early years—1937 to 1939

*Our first in a little series of band history articles from the 2010 exhibition at the Godalming Museum. Kindly put together and recorded over many months by our band members. If you can add to our archive, please do get in contact. It feels only right to begin here...*

History shows that the anticipated coronation of Edward VIII on 12th May 1937 didn't happen because of his abdication in December 1936. The country had to change its plans but the date of May 12th was

still to be used for the coronation of Edward's brother, King George VI and for this event, the Band of the 2nd Dragoon Guards, known as the Queens Bays Band, had been booked.

Early in 1937, the Queen's Bay Band informed the council that they had been ordered to play elsewhere and so would be unable to fulfil this booking. The council then approached Mr W J Radlett, the bandmaster at Charterhouse, and asked him to form a Special band for the occasion. Thunderstorms on the day completely washed out the event so it had to be rescheduled for one week later, Whit Monday.

To assemble his band notices were displayed locally, announcements made in the press and at a meeting in March 1937, 25 musicians volunteered their services, including four who had previously been members of the now-folded Godalming Town Band. Practices began at the Charterhouse School under the leadership of Mr Radlett.

Prior to the Coronation Day event, the new band undertook two public performances, one in the R.A.O.B club in Farncombe, the other in the Phillips Memorial Ground. On Whit Monday they marched in the parade (see photograph) and played at the festivities held at Farncombe Recreation Ground.

Mr Radlett's band was a success; the players wanted to continue with this new band so they appointed a secretary and called themselves 'Godalming Borough Band' (sometimes recorded as Godalming & Borough Band).

As various public engagements followed, mention was made in the local press of the band performing on the existing town bandstand.

*'could not the local council do something towards providing a bandstand at the Phillips memorial, there is already in existence a low concrete base'*

Their performance standard was considered sufficiently worthy to enter the Junior Section of the Reading Brass Band Contest in October 1937, and their rendition of IA. Green- woods 'A Welsh Garland' earned them second position out of six bands, an extremely commendable result.

Funding the running costs of a brass band proved hard. It's likely many players belonged to other bands and were using instruments belonging to those bands, so it was agreed that the new band should purchase their own instruments and uniforms and for this purpose a sum of around £340 was borrowed—an amount that proved difficult to repay.

Most of the band's income was being used for the new Instrument and Uniforms Fund, so Alderman P.C. Fletcher who was Mayor at that time started a special appeal fund that eventually raised £58. 9s 4d to help the band. The players then organised various door to door collections in the Borough by delivering envelopes and soliciting letters themselves, then returning to collect any donations a few days later.

Soon after the band's public performance for Coronation Day, they retrieved the original uniforms worn by the earlier Town Band, but they were not fit for purpose. A new set was purchased during the summer of 1938; smart navy blue with scarlet facings and brass buttons. They had their first public airing at a July concert at the Phillips Memorial bandstand where a regular season of summer concerts was being performed by the band – something that continues to this day.

These concerts were well attended by the public and at the July council meeting of that year it was agreed money should be put aside to turn the existing concrete base, built many years earlier by the Godalming Corporation, into a finished bandstand. With WW2 fast approaching, work on the bandstand did not take place. The base was repaired and even extended but it was to take a further 71 years before the bandstand was finally completed, during the summer of 2009.



The annual Reading Band Contest was the next to be entered and 'Kensington' by J.A.Greenwood earned the band 5th position out of 10 bands. Regular and well attended winter concerts were being held in the Regal Cinema, (this long demolished cinema was next to today's telephone exchange). In Feb 1939, the concerts attracted an audience of over 1000 people.

March 1939 brought a visit from the BBC's Mr Denis Wright, who came to assess the band's suitability for broadcasting. Whether successful or not is not known. All money raised was still being put into the 'Instrument & Uniform fund' but in August 1939, the band's finances prompted the secretary to write a begging letter to the Surrey Advertiser.

The cash held in the bank barely covered their next instalment to Boosey & Hawkes, the instrument manufacturer. In October there was still a debt of £180 and so the letter was a plea to the Godalming people to continue their support for the band. They had also wanted to enter the 'National Brass Band Championships' held at Alexandra Palace on the 23rd Sept, but for that a further £10 would be required.

Whether they cleared their debt, or entered the Nationals we don't know. Research so far takes us to the outbreak of WW2. What happened to those bandsmen during the war and learning about the earlier Godalming Band are subjects for further research.

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