

Godalming Band Newsletter

12th February 2017

Chairman's corner

Welcome to our first newsletter of this New Year.

2017 will be a special year for our band as we will be celebrating the 80th anniversary of the formation of the band in its current form.

During the year there will be several special events, activities and band projects to help mark this special occasion. Details of these events will be sent to you and we hope that you will be able to join with us in the celebration of your band's continuing service to the local area and community.

The first of these special events will be a Spring Concert to be held on Saturday 4th March at the United Church, Godalming (more details at the end of this newsletter).

We will be inviting as many former members of the band as we can contact to join us on that day, so if you know anyone who used play with us we urge you to contact them and encourage them to join us for this event.

Wishing everyone a really good 2017 and the band much success in this year.

Ray Pont – Chairman

Torchlight and Remembrance Sunday

04/11/16, 13/11/16

It's unusual for Godalming Band to march at all – it's not a skill that comes naturally to most of us! In November we were seen marching down the high street on two occasions, with the band first leading Godalming's torchlight procession for the Firework Extravaganza event.



(photo courtesy of Get Surrey, see <http://tinyurl.com/godalming-torchlight> for the video)

Two weeks later the band returned to the High Street for Remembrance Sunday, as it took its traditional place at the head of the parade.



(photo courtesy of Dave King)

Youth Band visiting Elmbridge

06/11/16

Godalming Youth Band made an appearance at the Elmbridge Retirement Village in Cranleigh with a packed programme of WWII, Gershwin and Big Band classics in November.

As you can see from the photos, they played to a full hall and were delighted to have along with them new members of the band, playing out for the first time.



Launch of “The Festive Season”

19/11/16

Godalming Band's major achievement in 2016 was undoubtedly its CD, *The Festive Season*. Recorded during the summer (see October's newsletter), the band hosted a launch concert at Cranleigh Methodist Church in November to release the album for the Christmas season.

The CD features 16 tracks spanning many different musical styles, from classical carols to jazz, covering almost 600 years of Christmas and “festive” music. It includes three never-before recorded pieces, one of which, *Heavenly Peace*, was specially composed for the album by Musical Director James Haigh.



(Members of the band celebrate a successful launch with Cranleigh Parish Councillor Rowena Tyler, Musical Director James Haigh, and Band Chairman Raymond Pont.)

With the CD available at all of the band's events throughout the Christmas season, our “sales target” was exceeded and we're delighted to have distributed so many copies of the CD. We believe copies have been sent to friends and relatives of the band throughout the world!

The CD was key to the band's current drive to raise its profile in the area, and to support the band financially in the task of raising funds for the purchase of new uniforms this coming year, in the band's 80th anniversary.

A few videos of our recordings and the chance to purchase your own copy is available on our website, at www.godalmingband.org.uk.

A busy Christmas season

December 2016

From the end of November through to Christmas eve, both bands have been out across Godalming, Guildford, Cranleigh and surrounding villages.



Top to bottom: at Guildford United Church's carol concert, Godalming's Christmas lights switch-on, Christmas Together at the Peppercot

This group of players from the band [retired or available in the day] get together during the run up to Christmas to undertake a series of carolling jobs for the older members of our community. This year we visited Farncombe Day Centre, Eastlake Residential Home, The Meath Epilepsy Centre and Milford Day Centre. These visits provided festive entertainment and the opportunity for the older members of our community to participate in the carols, often with much pleasure and gusto.

There has been a lot of positive feedback from these visits making our efforts really worthwhile.

So my thanks go to everyone involved for giving up their time in support of this project.

- Ray Pont

Christmas concert

17/12/16

A week before Christmas, Godalming Band and Godalming Youth Band took to the stage at Godalming United Church for the annual Christmas concert. It was a particularly large audience this year, so it was a delight playing to such a keen crowd. We hope the band's extra activities this year helped to bring people along. Thank you to Richard August for the wonderful photos.





News about Band Members

On the good news from we are delighted that another Youth band player Hannah Tate [Eb bass] has joined us at senior band rehearsals, giving us another family group in our numbers as she joins Matthew [solo cornet] and dad Peter [Eb bass]. What amazing work David Loftus continues to do with or youngsters in developing their playing skills for our future benefit.

Since Christmas we have been sad to learn that Valerie Gardener [tutti solo cornet] is leaving us. Val who joined us quite a few years ago from Farnham Band is changing jobs and is relocating, with her family, to the Nottinghamshire area. We wish her well with this venture, hoping that she settles well into her new environment and finds a local band to continue her music making.

We are sorry to report that Matt Newberry passed away peacefully last week, after being in and out of hospital since the beginning of December. Matt's enthusiasm for playing at Godalming Band and other groups in the area will be greatly missed. We ask you to also think of his wife Jill, who also needs a full time carer, at this very difficult time. A service will be held at Wonersh United Church.

- Ray Pont

Upcoming engagements

Our summer schedule is nearing completion, featuring our two Godalming bandstand concerts in the summer. As part of our anniversary celebrations, the band will also be leading the Proms in the Park in September – so do come on down and join us with your flags!

Sooner than that though, we're holding an Anniversary Celebration concert on Saturday 4th March in conjunction with Godalming United Church which is celebrating its 40th year. Tickets are from either Julie Rowling (supporters' secretary) or Dominic Cleal (01483 355129).

Preliminary schedule for the summer:

- Saturday 4th March, 7pm – **Anniversary Celebration Concert** (Godalming United Church)
- Thursday 16th March, evening – Godalming Music Festival (Youth Band, Godalming Town Hall)
- Saturday 29th April, afternoon – Spring Fair (Youth and Senior Band, Burys Field, Godalming)
- Sunday 30th April – SCABA Spring Contest (The Hawth, Crawley)
- Sunday 21st May – Watercress Festival, Alresford, Hampshire
- Sunday 18th June, afternoon – Godalming and Farncombe Bowls Club 150th anniversary
- Sunday 2nd July, afternoon – Wonersh Fete (Wonersh Cricket Club)
- Sunday 2nd July, evening – Songs of Praise (Wonersh United Reformed Church)
- Saturday 8th July, afternoon – Rectory Fete (St. Nicolas' Church, Cranleigh)
- Sunday 23rd July, 3pm – Music in the Park (Godalming Bandstand)
- Saturday 9th September, 5pm – **Proms in the Park** (Godalming Bandstand)
- Saturday 16th September, afternoon – Summer Sounds (Woking Bandstand)

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

Band history: Through the war—1937 to 1950

A 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.

The history of the current band begins in 1937; formation of the band coming about after an appeal from the council. Godalming planned celebrations and parades for the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth and this was to be one of their first engagements.

So in the late 1930's the Godalming & Borough Band, under Walter Radlett's leadership, became an established part of town life.

During the years of WW2, about half of the bandmen were called up for active service. Sadly one young tenor horn player was lost at sea on HMS Berwick.

Following the death of Walter Radlett around 1941, Jack Thomas led the band during this difficult period, when at one stage the band strength was reduced to six players. However with young members and those too old to serve in the armed forces, Jack continued to maintain the band.

Following the end of the war in the second half of the 1940's, the band gained in strength and was involved in many celebratory parades, fetes and concerts. In 1946 the band undertook its first trip 'abroad' to the Isle of Wight. Later that year the British Legion wanted to take over the band, but the members voted to stay as an independent organisation, a status that continues to this day.

Later during this period the band became known as the Godalming and District Silver Band.
