



WERNETH CONCERT BAND 25th ANNIVERSARY NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2008

25 YEARS ON

FROM THE PODIUM

(Reproduced, with amendments, from the 25th Anniversary Concert, held at the Romiley Forum on the 17th May 2008)

“..... and they said it would never last!”

This is a quote from our 10th Anniversary Celebratory Brochure produced in 1993. Fifteen years on and celebrating our 25th Anniversary, the band continues to go from strength to strength.

In April 1983, I recognised a gap in the local amateur music making scene, namely a band catering for woodwind, brass and percussion players. With the help of friends and neighbours I set about canvassing for potential players. Over 40 enthusiastic local musicians attended a meeting, held at Hatherlow Church Hall on the 19th April 1983, and there was unanimous agreement to proceed with starting a new band. There was no time to lose and I set about “acquiring” the necessary music and music stands from anywhere and everywhere before its first rehearsal, just one week later, on 26th April 1983 at the same venue. I apologise if I have not yet returned all of these things back to their rightful owners. That first, and subsequent rehearsals, went so well, just 2 months later, on the 26th June, Werneth Concert Band gave its first concert at the Romiley Forum with guests, Cheshire Police Band, when a full and enthusiastic house contributed to a very special occasion.

Since those early days, the band has built up a reputation as one of the outstanding community wind bands in the country, borne out by its successes in the National Concert Bands Festival, where it has achieved 2 Gold Awards and numerous Silver Awards. The band performs each year at the prestigious Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester and, more locally, in and around the Stockport area including Stockport Town Hall, St George’s Church, St Joseph’s RC Church, Plaza Theatre and our “home base” the Romiley Forum. It has also performed regular outdoor concerts including special events at the Bluebell Centre, Gee Cross, Tatton Park, Lyme Park and Romiley Cricket Club. Every other year the band ventures further afield and undertakes concert tours, which have included visits to

North Wales (3 times), Germany, Portugal, Ireland and Spain (3 times). It has also hosted music groups from other countries.

In this, its 25th year the band has planned a wide range of events to celebrate our silver jubilee. For this year's performance at the Royal Northern College of Music in March, the band commissioned 2 new works. These were "A Werneth Celebration", a march written specially for the band by well-known composer Darrol Barry, funded by Sandra McRoberts, Romiley. Secondly, a 5 movement composition "Werneth Suite", written by ex Royal Northern College of Music Vice –Principal, Terence Greaves, father of a band member, and financially assisted by the Ida Carroll Trust. Both were also included in the 25th Anniversary Concert at the Romiley Forum in May. From the 24th-31st May the band undertook a 5-concert tour of Jersey, which included performances at the prestigious Jersey Opera House, St James Arts Centre, Durrell's Wildlife Centre and Howard Davis Park. Following our return, present and past members, together with friends and supporters attend a 25th Anniversary Dinner held at the Alma Lodge Hotel, Stockport, on Saturday, 21st June, when part of the entertainment was provided by Werneth Swing Band, made up of players from the main band. Finally, in November, the band will be recording its third CD, aptly named Celebration, which will be released prior to its Christmas Concert, again to be held at the Forum Theatre, Romiley, on Sunday, 21st December.

Twenty five years is a long time but it's been a pleasure and an honour to be associated with such a marvellous organisation, one which continues to offer its members an opportunity to come together to make music and, at the same time, contributing to the cultural life of the local community through its public performances. I am very proud of our achievements over the last twenty five years, long may they continue.

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped contribute to 25 successful years; I value the support you have given me and hope you will continue to enjoy many more years associated with the band.

".....and they said it would never last"

Allan Jones – Founder/Musical Director

25th ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Over 100 band members with family and friends attended a 25th Anniversary Dinner at the Alma Lodge on Saturday, 21st June 2008. They were joined by, invited guests, the Lady Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Stockport and local MP, Andrew Stunnell. To background music, provided by band supporter and DJ Quin Bennett, we all tucked in to a set meal of:

Fan of Melon with a fruit coulis

Etruscan style lamb, roasted and drizzled with rosemary and a hint of garlic

With seasonal vegetables and potatoes

Vegetarian option of Vegetable Tartlet

Exquisite Fruit Cheesecake

Coffee and Mints



Display of just some of the memorabilia collected during the 25 years.

In between each course, following a welcome and introductions by band chairman, Nick Bradley, presentations were made on behalf of the band. First of all, to Nick Bradley, Malcolm Cockerill, Sarah Quilliam, Geoff Walton, Kate Whittaker, and, of course Allan, all original members of the band. Unfortunately, Chris Shields another original member was unable to attend the Dinner and arrangements will be made for him to receive his engraved, presentation plaque.

A final presentation was made to our founder and musical director, Allan Jones without whose foresight, drive and patience the band would not have achieved this important landmark. Allan received a large original painting of himself surrounded by sections of the band from Nick. The band had specially commissioned professional artist, Don Glynn; you guessed it, brother of our John, to take on the project and were delighted with the end product. We were particularly pleased that Don was able to join us at the Dinner.



Allan expressing his thanks and joy at the presentation

After a quick reshuffle of some of the tables and a quick visit to the bar, we were all entertained by the Werneth Swing Band, made up of members of the main band. There was then plenty of time for everyone to let their hair down, easier for some than others, with the return of DJ Quin, whose wide choice of music kept everybody happy – and dancing until the early hours.

Everyone present agreed that the evening had been a great success and a fitting tribute to the success of the band. A great deal of time and effort was put in to the event and we would like to thank all those concerned, in particular:

The Dinner sub-committee – John Glynn, Liz Headon, Christine Murphy and Allan Jones

Joyce Glynn and Marjorie Bradley for setting up a band exhibition

Shelagh Humphries for preparing the 25 years PowerPoint presentation

Christine Murphy for overseeing the original band members' presentation

John Glynn for overseeing the presentation to Allan

And, finally, Nick Bradley, for presiding over the evening's events

CELEBRATION

The 3rd CD recording of Werneth Concert Band

As all band members will know, we are to record our third CD on Sundays the 2nd and 16th November. It is hoped that all playing members have these important dates in their diaries. Allan has put together a provisional list of pieces, which, at this stage, is, by no means, final.

With some trepidation and, dare I say completely out of character, Allan is sharing his thoughts with us all and asks for comments/suggestions/amendments/additions before he makes his final selection.

Now there's an offer you can't refuse and might never happen again, so if you want to take up his offer, will you e-mail any suggestions to him on

Aljonesbrass@aol.com

Allan promises not to hold a vendetta against anyone offering negative feedback, if you believe that you'll believe anything.

PROVISIONAL PLAYLIST

WERNETH CELEBRATION

WERNETH SUITE

CONVERGENCE

SCARBOROUGH FAIR

FOLK SONG SUITE

WHEN THE STARS BEGAN TO FALL

MARCH OF THE BELGIUM PARATROOPERS

ON WINGS OF SWALLOWS

SHOSTAKOVICH PIANO CONCERTO (2nd Mvt)

RAIDERS MARCH

JAZZ WALTZ

SELECTION (John Williams or Pirates of the Car.)

Approx. – 75 mins

WERNETH CONCERT BAND 25TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR Jersey May 2008.

We arrived after an uneventful though slightly delayed flight at the 'Hotel de Normandie'. This was a faded, rambling hotel close to the beach at Havre des Pas on the outskirts of St.Helier.

The staff were very friendly and helpful coming from countries as diverse as Portugal, Somalia and Kenya. They gradually became used to the Band and soon gave up on the idea of allocating us set places for the meals. There was a Fawlty Towers feel about the place, enhanced by the unexpected drenching received by some at dinner due to the heavy rain running in through the leaky flat roof. We delighted in the printed sign at the entrance which invited people to 'come for a meal and relax in our *brassière* after a workout in the gym'. The food was copious and tasty, the rooms pleasant, the water hot and the situation convenient.

Our first concert was held in the open-air courtyard at the Durrell centre. After a cloudy start to the day, the sun caught us out and we found ourselves playing in extremely sunny, hot conditions. It was our first attempt to play together with no rehearsal and distracting conditions. Not only were family groups strolling around, but there were weird animal cries and the red-necked laughing thrush obviously found us highly amusing and lived up to his name. However there was a happy, lively atmosphere and fortunately we had an indulgent audience who appeared to enjoy the music.



Our next venue was the splendid band-stand in the delightful Howard Davies Park. Again the weather was sunny and there was a good sized audience, many staying throughout the whole concert. The acoustics were such that the official seating was rather too near the band and our widely scattered audience could hear very comfortably at a distance. It was found that some of the audience had heard us the day before and had come back for a second dose!



We rehearsed and performed with the Jersey Island Singers at the splendid Opera House with its stunning chandelier. The acoustics here were very different and suited poor Allan who had been struggling with laryngitis all week. On this occasion we met Mary, who had been evacuated to Stockport during the war, and hopes to remake contact with the families she knew then as a result of our visit. We hope the local papers will take up her story. Allan dedicated the Little English Suite to her.



Our last full band concert was with the Jersey Premier Brass at the St. James Art Centre. The evening began with the Brass Band who played a technically demanding and attractive repertoire that had been prepared to competition standard. We wondered how we would follow this performance but should have had more faith in our mentor. Allan cunningly chose a repertoire that showed off the variety in sound and tone that only a wind-band can offer. The concert finished with a rumbustious rendition of Hootenanny by the combined bands!



The Swing Band gave us a rousing finish on the last night, followed by a highly successful karaoke into the small hours.

INTRODUCTION TO NEW(ISH) BAND MEMBERS

Bill Watson, first clarinet

I was asked to come along to WCB by Charles & Julie Parker, friends from church musical activities (I attend Levenshulme Baptist, where my wife, Andrea, and I give fund-raising charity concerts .. so if anyone would like to offer their free services, please have a word).

I came to Manchester from the Walsall area to study for a music degree (1975) & have stayed here ever since. Although classically trained (I had lessons at the RNCM) I've done lots of G & S and played in a Dixieland jazz band. I've taught music & RE for 23 years and conducted/arranged/composed various music/musicals with school bands & an Am Dram society in Salford. From 1989 I've been a piano tuner and I play clarinet (also alto sax) and piano & organ.

As for hobbies outside music & the church, I like to scour charity shops for very difficult jigsaw puzzles!

I'm willing to help raise funds for WCB by offering to arrange any music for anyone for free (and they can make a donation to funds).

Glenn Fairhall, third trumpet

I arrived at Werneth Concert Band via 15 or so years of playing the trumpet and cornet in Brighton, Leicester, Leeds and London. I moved to Stockport in January this year and was keen to find a band to play in. After doing a little bit of searching I found the WCB website – and from this discovered that the band was performing in a concert just down the road from me at St. Joseph's church. A couple of weeks later I decided to come along to a Tuesday rehearsal and have been coming every week since.

My most recent playing was with Southwark Concert Band in London (highlight was playing at the London Marathon), and before that Otley Brass Band and Leicester University Wind Band. As well as having great fun playing, I also met my fiancée (who may be my wife before this goes to press) in the Leicester band. I've been

working on getting her to join WCB too (she plays the flute), but she has other commitments on a Tuesday.

Aside from joining WCB (of course) the best thing about Stockport since January has been Stockport County winning the League Two playoffs. Actually, I'm not all that fussed about how County do, but promotion means I do have a game on my doorstep to watch the mighty Brighton and Hove Albion. I'll get my apology in now – the County v Albion game is on a Tuesday night so I'll be away from band that night!

Katrina Stephens

I've lived in Romiley for 4 ½ years, and in Greater Manchester since 1998, after coming here to University where I met my husband, James. Currently working for Salford City Council, but starting a new job with the Department of Health's Alcohol Harm Reduction National Support Team, in September. I started playing Clarinet at age 7, and also played piano and tenor sax while at school (in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire). I was in a range of orchestras, choirs and a swing band while at school, and was a member of the Choir and Orchestra Society at Manchester University. Prior to joining the band I hadn't really played clarinet at all since University. I found out about the band through Ruth Wadman in 2005, and told her that I would join later that year....two years later I finally attended my first rehearsal!

Better late than never!!

KATE WHITTAKER TOLD TO GET ON HER BIKE!

A small team of us within the Operational Risk department of the Co-operative Group are doing a sponsored bike ride of 120 miles from Brough in Cumbria to Altrincham over 2 days on 6th /7th September.

As the majority of us haven't been on a bike much since being children, this is a massive challenge for us and we are training very hard at the moment. It was rather a shock for me to get back on a bike, but to my surprise I'm loving it, which is an added bonus, although obviously 120 miles might not be that enjoyable!

We are hoping to raise about £4,000 for the Children's Adventure Farm Trust in Altrincham. This charity provides holidays and activities for terminally ill children at their location near Altrincham, Cheshire. Please visit their website www.caft.co.uk to get more information on the amazing work they carry out.

If anyone would like to sponsor us, I would be very grateful and am attaching the link to our JustGiving web page below. If not, please don't worry and best wishes to you all.

The link is <http://www.justgiving.com/Co-OperativeRiskyRiders>

If you would rather make a donation directly to me, I should be at the first rehearsal on the 9th September.

Thank you.

Kate Whittaker

2nd Clarinet

CONCERTS 2008

St Chad's Church
Saturday 18th October 2008
7.30pm
[Church Lane , Romiley, Stockport](#)

St Joseph's Christmas Concert
Saturday 13th December 2008
[St Petersgate Stockport](#)

Christmas Concert 2008
Sunday 21st December 2008
7.30pm
[Romiley Forum](#)

CONCERTS 2009

Summer Concert
Saturday, 20th June, 2009
7.30 p.m.
Romiley Forum

Christmas Concert
Sunday, 20th December, 2009
7.30 p.m.
Romiley Forum

Other dates to be confirmed