**Pilling Band News Summary 2016**

**December 2016**

Goosnargh - The audience at Goosnargh enjoyed the mix of festive songs and carols and we enjoyed the lovely buffet they provided. Some of the band members also played at the Knott End lights so it was a busy day. The countdown continues with 2 private functions this week. 'Tis the season to be jolly.....

**November 2016**

On 24th October the band attended the Rochdale contest. Nine band were entered in our section, however one withdrew leaving eight on the day. This was an "Own Choice" event and we chose to play the Purcell Variations, a piece which is quite difficult and towards the limit of our band's ability. The event was held in Rochdale Town Hall, a very impressive venue with an acoustic which is more like a large church. We were reasonably happy with our performance and found that we had been placed fourth out of eight bands so, just in the top half.

On Saturday 12th November we gave a concert at Stalmine, a first for as long as anyone in the band can remember. This was appreciated by a packed house so hopefully we may return. The following day was Remembrance Sunday when the band led the traditional parades in Garstang and Preesall, this year the weather being kind compared to last when it poured down.

In December we start a busy Christmas season, appearing at Knott End Xmas tree lighting on 3rd followed by a concert in Goosnargh Church, Pilling Xmas tree lighting on 5th, Trinity Hospice and Stalmine Church on 11th, Garstang Victorian Festival on 12th and 13th, and finally Out Rawcliffe and Hambleton carol services on the 18th. In amongst that are also three private engagements so we shall be ready for our Christmas dinners.

We have been asked by our President Jim Redman to include the following item.

It is with great sadness that I have to tell all our friends that the Band has suffered a malicious attack to the floodlighting on our Bandroom car park .This lighting is there to make it safe for everyone using the car park especially with the dark nights. One of the LED security lights has been destroyed by some mindless person using an air rifle, and there is evidence to show that there were at least 6 holes made in the floodlight. This is an extremely serious thing to have done, the police are involved and we will press charges if the person responsible is found. Also during a recent rehearsal a green strobe light was shone through the window, these are dangerous and you wonder at the reasons why this is happening

We have to find the money for new lights etc but I would ask anyone who knows who is doing these stupid things (someone must know) to get in touch with me now on 01253 811430 . As Band President I want to avoid anyone getting hurt - someone can be blinded by things like this. This must be stopped before it is too late.

Readers will be aware that Band Treasurer Michael Hallett suffered a serious illness a few months ago and his family have asked me to include the following.

Mike, Lynda, Shelley and Emily would like to thank Ben Duke for doing the Great North Run half marathon and ALL his many generous sponsors. A grand total of Two Thousand Pounds (£2000) has been received by Victoria Hospital Blue Skies Fund for the Intensive Care Unit.

With grateful thanks to all at the Intensive Care Unit, Mike has just attended and played at his first concert with the band at Stalmine in November since his life threatening illness back in June.

Nov 26th - Some of our band were in action today helping St Aidan's school band at the school Christmas Fair. It is great when bands can support each other and especially to help young brass players to gain confidence when performing in front of an audience. We are looking forward to our concert at Goosnargh followed by several private and public performances throughout December. We hope to see you at some of them.

Nov 13th - The concert last night at Stalmine was a great success. The programme contained some modern pieces as well as the more traditional. It is always difficult playing something to suit everyone but we might just have done that last night based on the comments we received. We are now looking forward to our Christmas engagements and carol services.

Nov 13th - A Remembrance parade at Preesall this afternoon. The weather was much kinder this year so there was a good parade and lots of sectors from the community were there to pay their respects. Pilling band is always keen to support local events as well as those further afield.

Nov 13th - Some pictures of us at the Parade in Garstang this morning. It was a well attended procession as can be seen and it was good to be part of a community event to remember those who fell in conflicts since 1914.

**September 2016**

On Saturday 10th September the band was in concert at Pilling Methodist Chapel, it was a lovely evening so plenty of people turned out to hear a varied programme of music including solos from Andy Hall, Danny Jones and Ethan Whittaker. The Horn Section gave an unusual arrangement for brass of the adagio from Winter, which forms part of Vivaldi's Four Seasons suite. One piece which impressed several people I have spoken to was the very moving Hymn to the Fallen, which is taken from the sound track of the film Saving Private Ryan. The band was welcomed by Graham Curwen who spoke warmly of the part that the band plays in the local community.

A few months ago you may remember reading about one of our players, Mike Hallett, who was taken seriously ill and spent some time in the Intensive Care Unit at Blackpool Victoria Hospital. His son-in-law, Ben Duke, who also plays in the band, took part in The Great North Run on Sunday 11th September to raise funds for the Critical Care Unit as a “Thank-You" on behalf of the family. He decided against using Mo Farrah as a pace maker as this was his first attempt at a half-marathon and didn’t want to end up needing medical attention himself! He completed the race in 2hrs 41mins and at the time of writing he has collected nearly £1000 for the Critical Care Unit and still has more to collect. He wants to thank everybody who sponsored him.

Our next appearance will be at St John's Church, Pilling on the occasion of their Harvest Festival on Sunday 2nd October, meanwhile we are still rehearsing for the coming contest in Rochdale on 23rd October.

**August 2016**

News is a bit thin on the ground this month. We enjoyed great weather for Pilling Coffee Feast which was a welcome change, in fact we marched in shirt sleeve order! Since then the school holiday season has been upon us, resulting in inevitable poorer attendances at rehearsals. We have been down to 10 or 12 most of the time, however this has given us the chance to look at different music, some of which will no doubt feature in future concert programmes.

Our most recent job has been the annual Churches Together Songs of Praise, which is held at Stella Maris on Garstang Road Pilling.

This was well attended and over £1000 was raised for the Trinity Hospice by the Fylde Country Life Preservation Society and Mrs Ethyl Davies who hosted the event.

On Saturday 10th September the band will be appearing in concert at the Pilling Wesleyan Chapel. This is now an annual event which promises a great evening of entertainment.

Once the holidays are over, we shall be working on our next contest piece for Rochdale in October, back to some serious banding.

**July 2016**

The news this month starts with the Kirkby Lonsdale entertainment contest which was made more difficult for us this year by the illness of Mike Hallett, band treasurer and bass trombone player. Mike was taken seriously ill the week before and at the time of the contest was in intensive care. Three other members of the family are also players who, understandably, needed to be at the hospital. This left us four players short with the difficulty of finding substitutes at short notice which were acceptable to the organisers of the contest. The day was dull and threatening rain, which did just hold off until after we played. There were nine bands competing and trophies were awarded for various features of the event. Pilling Band came away with four of these for Deportment in Marching, Best Entertainment Programme, Best Musical Director and Best Band Overall. Other trophies were won by Tarleton and Greenalls.

The following Sunday saw us at Happy Mount Park Morecambe, where the weather behaved as usual. We started to play to a small crowd a little early at 2:20 and by 2:45 it had started to rain. We retired to the pub. This venue is definitely jinxed for us, however, two weeks on and we played for a Garden Party at the Leonard Cheshire Home in Garstang. Here the sun shone and it was a real pleasure to play in the beautiful surroundings. Preesall Gala was another story. This year the start time was advanced by an hour to 12:00 when, guess what, it was raining. Later it did come fine but only after we had got soaked yet again.

On Sunday 14th August we shall be playing for the charity Songs of Praise at Stella Maris on Garstang Road Pilling which is hosted every year by Ethel Davies. Please come and support this worthy event.

In closing, Mike Hallett and family would like to thank everyone for their kind enquiries, prayers, good wishes and cards received during his recent stay in the wonderful ICU at Blackpool Victoria Hospital. We are all glad that he is now home and recuperating well.

**June 2016**

Last month, the band attended the annual Whit Friday March Contest which is held at various venues around the eastern side of Manchester. The format involves bands arriving at a venue, playing a short introductory march as they enter the village, then standing in a pre-determined area whilst performing a contest march which is marked by an adjudicator. Bands travel between venues by coach and aim to reach up to six venues during the evening.

We left Pilling at 4:00pm on an afternoon which threatened rain and, true to form, before the evening was out we got wet! Our usual coach, Avalon Travel, was unavailable, so owner Mike kindly arranged for a substitute. The driver was not familiar with the territory, which probably explains why we only managed to attend four venues, in fact at one point we got stuck up a narrow street for at least 20 minutes. All considered we had a pretty good result, bands are not segregated, so lower section bands find themselves playing next to higher section ones or even championship bands such as Brighouse & Rastrick. Our results were as follows:

Grotton 27th out of 47 bands

Lydgate 41st out of 71 bands

Friezland 15th out of 47 bands

Uppermill 14th out of 52 bands

One may conclude that we must have beaten a few good bands from a higher section. The adjudicators remarks were all positive, indicating that Pilling Band has much good music to offer.

During July we continue our round of Galas at Eagland Hill, Preesall and Pilling as well as a Garden Party at the Leonard Cheshire Home and a Songs of Praise at Whitechapel.

The Band would like to say how much we appreciate the support we have had from so many people to complete the new road to the Bandroom, and 2/3rds of the new car park, but also in an 18 month period £1400.00 has been raised for Macmillan Nurses Cancer Support, £350.00 for the Susan Harding Leukaemia Blue Sky Appeal at Blackpool Victoria Hospital, £150.00 for the Parkinsons Disease Society (local Branch), £400.00 for the St Oswald's Parish Hall Fund, £300.00 for the UTUGI Children's Centre in Kenya and £343.00 for C.R.Y (Cardiac Risk in the in the Young).

**April 2016**

Blackpool Contest

The band took part in the North West Area qualifying heats of the National Brass Band Championships on Sunday 28th February, when we awoke to a frosty early morning in order to make our way to our rehearsal room in Blackpool for a 07:30 start. There was a time many years ago when we had the use of the old Melody Ballroom for rehearsal, where host Ken Raynor provided tea and bacon butties, sadly no such luxury these days. We gathered at the Winter Gardens at 08:30 in time to learn that Jim Redman had drawn us ninth in the order of play, which meant that we wouldn't be required for a couple of hours. This sort of hanging about is typical of contest days so, whilst some went to listen to other bands (not recommended), others took themselves off to find some breakfast, definitely the better option. We re-convened at 10:30 when we went through the registration process, changing, more waiting before going on to play in the Empress Ballroom at about 11:00. We all thought that we had played fairly well, though not a winning performance, however, when the results were announced we found that we had been placed 11th out of 19 bands competing in our section of the contest. Our colleagues from Blackpool Brass came second again, as they did at Preston in January, whilst Thornton Band, who have not competed for some time and play in the section below us, won their group. Congratulations to both of these bands who qualify to go to Cheltenham in September, as we did in 2013.

Pilling Band Development Fund

The Band has two Patrons, Canon Pam Wilding MBE and County Coun Vivien Taylor who do excellent work both for the Band and local communities.

The Band's 80th anniversary concert on May 4th last year was a very popular event and so Bank Holiday Monday the 2nd May at the Parish Hall Preesall is a day not to miss.

At 2.00pm, to support Canon Pam's travel plans to Kenya with a team of helpers to the UTUGI Boys Home - there will be a presentation with slides to show what has been done over the years.

2.30pm. A presentation with a film "Our New Road - Start to Finish"

3.00pm An afternoon tea to enjoy with a raffle etc.

3.45pm Musical Memories - several soloists from the Band, with piano.

7.00pm The Band will be Marching & Waltzing Through The Years with a Guest Artist.

The Band's percussion section have new Timpani at a cost of £2600.00 and our other patron Vivien Taylor obtained a Local Members Grant to help fund the purchase)

Tickets for the 2pm event £5 and for the 7pm concert £6. From Knott End Post Office.

Further information from Jim Redman 01253 811430.

**February 2016**

Our only news this month is that of the outcome of the "Brass at the Guild" contest which was held in Preston on Sunday 24th January last. We met at the bandroom at 10am for a last rehearsal, after which we took ourselves off to Preston, where we had arranged to meet at 12:15pm. A feature of these events is the inordinate time one spends hanging around and this one was no exception. For some reason, our section was running 30 minutes late so, after the formalities of registration etc it was 1:45pm when we eventually got on to the stage of the Charter Theatre. In common with most other bands in our section, we had chosen to play "A Cambrian Suite" by Michael Ball, which is the set piece for the forthcoming National Championship heats in Blackpool in February. The performance went well enough, but was only sufficient to gain us fifth place out eight bands competing. Congratulations go to our colleagues at Blackpool Brass for their second place.

So, rehearsals continue, "onwards and upwards" as MD Len Charnock says, as we look forwards to Blackpool on 28th February.

We are beginning to look at music for the Kirkby Lonsdale open air contest which is held in June and which will also feature in our next concert, details of which will follow when available.

**January 2016**

Since a well earned rest over the Festive Season, the band has been concentrating on rehearsals in preparation for the contest at the Guild Hall, Preston on 24th January. We have chosen to play "A Cambrian Suite" by Michael Ball, which is based on three traditional Welsh melodies. This is the set piece for bands in our section at the qualifying heats for the National Championships which will take place in Blackpool in February. I shall report on the outcome of the Preston contest next month

The only other event to report has been the band's annual meal and party which, this year, was held at the Golden Ball Hotel, Pilling. A record number of about forty members and guests attended, where a sumptuous meal was served, followed by a quiz and other jollifications. As it was snowing that evening, it felt quite like Christmas all over again.

We are pleased to welcome into our ranks Steve and Lynn Preston. Steve, who plays trombone, has played with us previously and has now returned while his wife Lynn plays tenor horn. We are still short of a few players so, if anyone out there is interested, please feel free to contact us. You will receive a warm welcome.