

CORNWALL YOUTH BRASS BAND

Winter Newsletter 2010

FROM THE CHAIRMAN.

I was glad to see that despite the weather problems the course went ahead and produced an enjoyable concert. It may not be known to many but Phillip had a call the week before from Garry Cutt saying he had to call off because he could not get his car out of the snow. Thankfully a flight was arranged and adjustments to the timetable made it possible. Yet more thanks due to our hard working secretary for handling the stress caused. The trombone section has improved enormously of late and to have a trombone soloist made sense. I hope that Lisa made a suitable impression on you all. We are continually striving to give you new experiences and to that end are working with Gwent Music Service to arrange a joint course/concert. I feel this is a very exciting development and hope you all give it your support.

Leonard Adams.

MUSIC CO-ORDINATOR'S MESSAGE.

I am writing this report having just returned from The Festival of Brass at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. During the weekend I attended Brass Band concerts by the six top bands in the UK, and amongst other events two solo recitals, one by David Childs and the other by David Thornton, the principal Euphonium player of Black Dyke Mills. Basically all of the top Bands, their conductors and many Brass Band composers were there, giving us a great opportunity to meet them, not only to reminisce, but also more importantly to look forward and speak to those people who might be suitable guests for future Youth Band courses.

I was able to chat to Garry Cutt who took the Christmas course and Bob Childs who will be taking our course next Christmas and our soloist for the Easter Course, Owen Farr.

You can be assured that personnel at the very top of their profession are very interested in the work being carried out in Cornwall, and the way which we approach our Youth Band courses in order to give you the very best musical education and experience available.

If we now look back at our Christmas course, it certainly was not without its problems, caused by the extreme weather conditions, but as Trustees we were determined not to cancel the course and thankfully a way was found to get Mr Cutt to Cornwall even though he was a day late.

In my capacity as Music Co-ordinator I undertook the task of leading the rehearsals on the first day and I felt that all the musicians worked very hard and I thank them for knuckling down to the task.

Mr Cutt is one of the most successful conductors of modern times and you cannot fail to admire the way he works with the young people, getting the very best out of them in a very short time. However the standards met by the Youth Band are also due to the work put in by local Tutors and I thank all of them for freely giving of their time.

In our efforts to continually strive to bring the very best conductors and soloists for our courses, I am sure you will agree that we have met the criteria for our Easter course. Our Guest Conductor is Richard Evans a doyen of the Brass Band movement and despite his 75 years he is always full of vigour, being lively and inspiring with energy defying his years. Our soloist is Owen Farr, the solo Horn player from the Cory Band and I am sure he will leave many of the players in awe and amazement at his versatility and mastery.

We will be dedicating our concert to Dr Goff Richards, our Music Advisor, in recognition of his unrivalled contribution to Brass Bands, not only in Cornwall but for his lifetimes work which is recognised world wide.

The Tutors meet regularly, always striving to be professional in the way we approach the running of the Band, and this year we felt that we should introduce auditions for all principal positions in the Band involving all Tutors on the Audition Panel. Players who wished to be considered for principal positions were auditioned and those chosen retain the position over the following two courses. This procedure will take place in August/September for the next year.

The music we play is also discussed by the Tutors in conjunction with the Guest Conductor, and whilst all pieces will not suit everyone's taste the programme will have been carefully chosen in order to give all players the best possible musical experience, which will always be our aim.

You can be assured that we do keep in touch with the Brass band world at large to ensure that Cornwall Youth Brass Band continues to be a Band of which you can be proud and certainly a Band that all young brass players will or should want to be part of.

THE CD of the CHRISTMAS CONCERT is now available. For the special Musicians price of £6, it must be ordered through Phillip only. Other orders are at the normal Retail price and should go to Paul Martyn at PM Sound on 01872 263300. The Annual Band Photograph taken on the Christmas Course is also available, price £6, and can be ordered from Phillip.

CYBB ON FILM. During the course Gorsedh Television filmed a nine minute report on the Band. This can be seen at www.gorsedhkernow.org.uk Scroll down and click onto Gorsedh TV.

HELPERS WELCOME. The major reason that the cost of the CYBB Courses is so reasonable is that everyone involved from Cornwall is a volunteer. This is particularly important in the Catering Department, the fact that Jim has a team of willing helpers means that this major cost can be kept very low, whilst at the same time providing an attractive choice of Menu. We would however like to welcome a few more volunteers to help with the basic tasks of serving and

washing up. Just a few hours on one or more days can make a difference. If you would like to assist please give Phillip a call for full details.

FALL IN AND FOLLOW ME. When The British Army Brass Band visited us last February they offered the chance to any Musicians interested a place on an Army Insight Course. Bethany Telling decided to take up their offer and recounts her experiences for us.

“It covers everything between Jazz, Rock and Classical. It is the largest employer of musicians in the UK. Steady, rewarding career; expert tuition and a chance to travel and perform all over the world. Sounds like a dream? Welcome to the Corps of Army Music.

It seems hard to comprehend the absolute force of talent within the Corps of Army Music, even harder to realize the sheer amount of opportunity if taken as a career path. Get through basic training and soon you'll be getting paid to practice, what more can a player ask for? This all sounded pretty fantastic to me, as soon as I heard there was an Insight Course available for a week with the Royal Signals Band, I couldn't wait to go.

It suddenly felt very real after we arrived at Royal Signals military base Blandford Camp, going through security with gates guarded by soldiers with guns doesn't do much for nerves. Almost immediately we were all assigned basic training barracks, and as soon as I'd dumped my suitcase and Euphonium I was taken to a room to be kitted out. Heavy boots, water canister, camouflage trousers and shirt, water proof trousers and coat. Everything was too big. Boots, trousers and shirt to be worn at all times except after 8.00pm when 'civvies' were allowed.

After brief introductions we were taught how to march and how to be a part of drill to the standard of a 'proper soldier'. Head up, shoulders back, eyes front, arms straight and so on. Exhausted already, not only this but once we had fallen out in the morning we literally had to march everywhere, keeping rank and keeping up with the fierce pace. Arms and legs were burning from just going to the mess hall. In the mornings getting up at the crack of dawn to grab a shower and get ready for the brutal room inspection, on the first morning five pairs of shoes, a mattress and several coats had been chucked out the window. If we weren't out of the barracks on time we had to run for punishment. Barring that, all the bandsmen were very friendly, and it was nice during our breaks just to relax in the band social room. In the evenings we watched films, chatted and one night went bowling, there is an on site bowling area, and we were also allowed to go to the shop. All escorted of course.

All the Army Bands at some point have to do the duty of participating in ceremonial events, while the insight course was running the Royal Signals were called to rehearse for a few events. We got on a mini bus and went to Bristol to watch one rehearsal then went all the way to London for another. This might sound boring but it was actually good because we all got to know each other more and had the chance to see for real what we would have to do if we joined as an army musician. Over the week we managed to fit in doing a crash course in outdoor survival and having a go in the shooting gallery. Also we did the fitness test to see if any of us would have been fit enough to join at that moment, unsurprisingly none of us were. The best part of the week was without a doubt the night exercise, faces covered in camouflage paint we were briefed quickly with what we had to achieve and with a map drawn in literally, well, mud.

Playing wise? We didn't do all that much, one rehearsal and a short concert for the parents, the insight course was more about the army side of the profession. Overall we all had a really great time, absolutely shattered though. Drill for hours and training exercises? Not for everyone, maybe not for me. If considering joining you will without doubt have to fit the slogan. Army, be the best “.

EASTER EXCITEMENT. At the Easter Course the Band will be giving at least two World Premieres, Three Cornish Legends by Darrol Barry, dedicated to Goff Richards and a new Horn Solo, Devil Dance, written for Owen Farr. The Course will feature a good deal of Music by our Music Advisor, Goff Richards, who hopes to be joining us at the Concert. Tickets in advance @ £6, Children under 14 FOC, from the Secretary. Please send cheque, made out to CYBB, with SAE to 12 Longmeadow Road, Saltash, Cornwall PL12 6DW.