



Sounds from the South



Newsletter of Rushen Silver Band

November 2011

Welcome to our bumper, festive edition of 'Sounds of the South'

The carol books have been dusted off and are back on the music stands, the Rushen Silver Band Christmas Cards are on sale, and we're counting down to the Christmas holidays...

This is a busy time of year for the Band, carolling around the local area and appearing at numerous engagements, but nothing sounds more Christmassy than a carol played by a brass band.

Last year, the Christmas diary of events was badly affected by the extreme weather conditions, although it did mean we had some good photographs for the Band's Christmas cards! Let's hope the snow doesn't affect the carolling and concerts too much this year.



Last Night of the Proms in Castletown...

On the 1st October, Rushen Silver Band and the Musicale Choir combined for a special event at Castle Rushen High School. The 'Last Night of the Proms' themed concert celebrated the 90th anniversary of the Royal British Legion, for the Castletown branch of the charity.

As well as the standard Proms pieces of Land of Hope and Glory, Fantasia on British Sea Songs and Jerusalem performed by both band and choir with added audience participation, both groups performed their own mini programme of pieces to an appreciative audience.

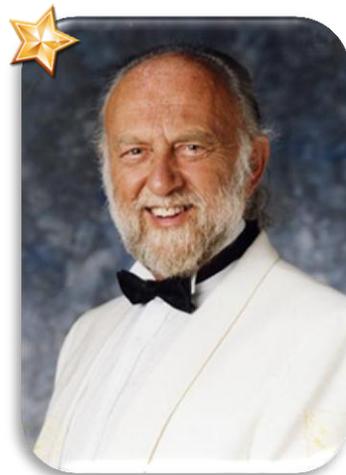
In total over £600 was raised from the concert for the Castletown branch of the Royal British Legion.



Catching up with Richard Evans...



"Richard Evans is one of the most colourful and flamboyant characters on the British brass band scene today. With a unique ability to instil pride and passion into every player, he is ultimately the driving force behind each band he conducts."



...Rushen Silver Band's Mentor and Guest Conductor

What initially brought you into the world of music?

RE: After spending two years of my early childhood in India, my father stayed on as a serving soldier there and my mother, sister and I returned to the UK and lived in Plymouth where we were blitzed and evacuated out to Dartmoor. When father was discharged medically unfit, in 1944 we all moved north to Preston. Father became groundsman and steward of Leyland Golf Club and used his one free evening a week to visit the Leyland British Legion Club.

A notice appeared on the wall in the club stating: "Any member's sons (?) wishing to learn to play a brass instrument, report next Tuesday night, cost, 1 shilling weekly." My father wasn't aware the club had a band and nobody questioned the sexist line in the notice "member's sons". After a disappointing 5 weeks of turning up with my shilling and boringly writing or copying a scale which was written on the blackboard and watching the number of would-be brass players dwindle from 30 to 6, at last the teacher-tutor announced "let's get the instruments out". Seemingly there were only 6 spare instruments!!

I was handed a cornet, well it was the shape of a cornet, how old it was nobody knew. I placed the mouthpiece to my lips and produced my first sound. I would liken the noise to one of a very sick camel. I hurried home anxious to show my non-musical father. In his stern ex company sergeant major's voice he commanded me to play. From the time I had left the British Legion Club to the time I had to play for my father I can honestly report my sound had not improved!! He thought hard as he heard my offering then announced: "You are not playing that instrument in the house, you must practice outdoors". And that was that!!

Some weeks later, after suffering bad weather during my rehearsals on parts of the golf course I begged father to hear me again. I think out of sympathy, he said I could play in the house, but not when he was in. So that was my initiation into the world of music, and brass bands especially.

How did you become involved as a conductor?



RE: My playing had enabled me to join some very good bands, and I had spent my National Service as a bandsman studying in Berlin as a trumpet player. Black Dyke was a wonderful band to be in and my best friend Maurice Murphy made sure I was up to the job. I did conduct the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain when I was 19, but that was a one-off award from the management of NYBB for being a good boy!

So I had virtually no training in the art when I was contacted by a quartet of players from Coppull Band, near Wigan, who asked me to become their conductor. My son, Tim, was 2 years old, so it was 1962. I was honoured to be asked but I quickly explained how little I knew about directing a band. They told me the band was not in good shape and was desperate to have a leader.

Before I was married to Sylvia, she was a member of Coppull Band and I often played with them so I could be with her!! Now, married to her with a two year old son I was being offered a chance to go back and direct them. So I said I would go to a rehearsal and see how we went on, see if they liked me and I liked them.

The minute I walked in the practice room I realised it was a big job. There were 13 players and they had the appearance of the "Raggie-arsed-militia"! They were green, I was green and for the next six years we built a great band together.

If you could conduct in any venue with any piece of music, what would you choose and why?

RE: If it meant I could have complete freedom of choice then it would be Verdi's "Requiem" with full orchestra, all soloists and full chorus in the Arena, Verona. His requiem is really grand opera and there is nowhere on earth as spectacular as the Arena.

My second choice would be conducting the American band, Brass Band Battle Creek in the Royal Albert Hall on their super finale number, "Sing Sing Sing".



In the eight years you have been assisting the Rushen Silver Band, what improvements do you think have been made in that time?

RE: The improvements have been gradual and very effective. In my opinion the main reason Rushen Band is much better now is the fact that the younger members have developed so well, the older members have appreciated this. Jenny has at last realised her work is beginning to reach its intended targets and the lovely atmosphere of friendliness and family is retained.



The youth band is our future and you have proved it works!

How does the Brass Band scene in the Isle of Man compare with that in the UK?

RE: Well, there's very little difference. Local rivalry exists in both, which is good. But as long as it doesn't turn to hatred as is sometimes experienced in the UK all is well. Neither Isle of Man or UK enjoy full audiences so both need to work on marketing otherwise in a few years we could be both looking at a dinosaur syndrome.

What general advice would you give the members and supporters of RSB from your wealth of experience in the Brass Band world?

RE: Love and cherish your band. It may be exciting to enter competitions and win awards and rise rapidly in the rankings of other bands, but that comes at a great cost - the loss of atmosphere and love, friendship and happiness.

I have rarely experienced such a warm, welcoming feeling like the one as you walk into the Rushen Silver Band bandroom. Guard that with your lives, it's very precious, and not that common. You have a great solid, well run outfit. Enjoy it.



(As this newsletter goes to press, it has just been announced that Richard Evans has just lead Leyland Band to win the '2011 Brass in Concert' title – this is the world's premier brass band entertainment contest! Well done to Richard and all at Leyland Band ☺)

Rushen Silver Band Christmas Celebration

This year the Band are hosting their Christmas concert at the Living Hope Church in Port St Mary.

The concert will feature Meadowside Choral Society.

Tickets are selling fast for this evening of festive entertainment...don't miss out!

For tickets or more information, please contact the Band Secretary on 493193.



**Rushen
Silver Band**
present a
Christmas Celebration
with Meadowside Choral Society
Saturday 3rd December 2011
7.30pm
at
Living Hope Church, Port St Mary
Tickets £5
(over 65/under 16) £3
For more information,
please contact the
Band Secretary on 493193



Have you met your deliver 'boy'?

Most recent editions of the 'Sounds of the South' newsletter have been delivered by foot to help keep our costs low – but have you seen our willing and able delivery 'boy' Oscar? We thought we'd ask Oscar what he thinks of his new role...



Do you enjoy helping to deliver the newsletters?

Oscar: Any excuse for a walk and my tail is wagging...I've helped deliver newsletters in Port Erin, Port St Mary, and Castletown. Although my legs are getting shorter from all this walking...

Are you happy to deliver newsletters in all weathers?

Oscar: I don't like going out if it's raining, especially if my Daddy puts my silly high-visibility coat on to keep me dry – it's not good for my street-cred! Looking forward to the winter snow again though as I love chasing snowballs! Woof!

What's your favourite part of helping with the deliveries?

Oscar: I get to meet lots of people and get a bit of fuss. And I especially like to meet all my doggy friends on the way! Once I've finished, I curl up on my rug and fall asleep, dreaming of chasing pussy cats...

National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain Summer Course 2011

Report by Bobby Corkish, Solo Horn

This year's NYBB summer course took us to Repton School in Derbyshire where I had the pleasure of being tutored by Martin Armstrong, an extremely well known and respected horn player. Martin has played solo horn for Black Dyke, Fodens and Grimethorpe Colliery Band winning many contests.



The NYBB were also extremely lucky to welcome guest conductor Allan Withington, one of the most sort after brass band conductors in the world. Among many achievements, Allan has conducted Fodens Band and played lead trumpet for the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra.

The week's course consisted of just under 10 hours playing each day, switching between sectionals and full band rehearsals. This ensured the concerts at the end of the week were produced to the highest level.

The concerts took us to the Albert Hall, Nottingham on Friday 29th July and the Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent on Saturday 30th July where we were joined by guest baritone soloist Katrina Marzella. Katrina has won numerous solo championships and currently plays solo baritone for the Leyland Band.

The concert programme included Enigma Variations - Elgar arr. Ball, Power of the Soul - Hamers and Concerto for Baritone - Ellerby which was written especially for Katrina.

Annual Band Dinner, Dance and Awards Evening 2012

The Annual Band Dinner will take place on Saturday 28th January at the Falcon's Nest Hotel, Port Erin. Doors will open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. It would be great to see as many of the Band's members, friends and supporters as possible at the event. Tickets are £21, and are available from Gill Weldon on 835166. When booking a ticket, please let Gill know your choices from the menu below:



Home Made Vegetable Soup

with a crusty bread roll

or

Smoked Salmon Stack

with Cream Cheese and Chives

Carvery of Roast Meats

or

Nut Roast

both served with traditional accompaniments and a selection of fresh seasonal vegetables and potatoes

Apple Crumble

with Custard

or

Lemon Meringue Pie

with Manx dairy cream

Can you help?

Every year members of Rushen Silver Band give up their time to play carols around Port Erin and Port St Mary during December. For the Band, this is an essential time of year, not only to promote itself locally, but it is also the way that the Band raises funds to keep itself going.

As part of sorting out of arrangements in advance, the Band are once again looking for willing volunteers who would be able to perform collecting duties while the Band play carols to the general public in Port Erin and Port St Mary on certain nights in December.

If you could spare an hour or two to help with this important fund raising role, please contact Graeme Easton on 834147 or easton@manx.net.



Thanks to Phil Woodford for the fantastic cartoon

Rushen Silver Band AGM – Wednesday 16th November

At the AGM, the Chairman, Tom Sinden, presented a full report on the past year. Within this, mention was made of the positive publicity that the concert with the Leyland Band had brought the Band, as well as the experience the members will always have of playing a concert alongside (and in part sitting next to) Championship Section players. The Chairman also thanked the Friends of the Band for their donation of £3,500 to the Band to pay for 3 instruments; and noted that even with the extreme weather we experienced last December when a number of engagements and carolling nights had to be cancelled, the Band still had 43 public performances to play at during the year.

In addition, the following is the make-up of the Band Committee for the forthcoming year:

President:	Jim Crebbin	Chairman:	Thomas Sinden
Musical Director:	John Kinley	Secretary:	Peter Faragher
Deputy Musical Director:	John Collings	Treasurer:	Helen Cole
Committee:	Ian Bell, Matthew Callister, Alan Crebbin, Jim Crebbin, Mark Faragher, Gillian Lowey, Robert Woodford		

Ballafesson Brass at the Howe Chapel



Friday 11th November saw Ballafesson Brass return to the Howe Chapel to take part in their annual Youth Concert. The evening featured Ballafesson Brass and the Scoill Phurt Le Moirrey Choir.

The Band played a wide selection of music from 'Largo' from Dvorak's New World Symphony to Robbie Williams' 'Let Me Entertain You'. One of the Band's most popular selections included popular television themes from Postman Pat, Batman, and Bob the Builder – the latter proving very popular with the choir who took the opportunity to warm up their voices with very enthusiastic interjections of "YES WE CAN!"

In what has become a Howe tradition, the band played the popular Beatles hit 'Yellow Submarine' to give the rest of the audience a chance to exercise their vocal chords. The band ended their section of the concert with the 'Can Can' and received an extremely warm applause from the appreciative audience.

Congratulations must also go to those members who made their first public appearance with the Band, who did themselves proud. Several members of the audience commented on how great it was to see so many young people in the band and it is a positive sign that brass banding is something that can appeal to all ages.

After a brilliant performance by the choir, another Howe tradition was observed with the serving of an excellent tea and cake supper, which was appreciated by all!



Ballafesson Brass would like to thank everybody at the Howe Chapel for once again inviting them to take part in the concert. We would also like to thank the organisers for their very generous decision to donate half of the proceeds from the concert to the Band.

Come in from the cold...

to the Friends of the Band Christmas Coffee Morning

Please join us on Saturday 10th December at 10am at St Catherine's Church Hall, for a nice warming cup of coffee.

The Friends will have their usual festive stalls and of course the raffle; and you'll also be treated to a few carols from the Band.



Dates for your Diary



Friday 2 nd December	Port St Mary Commissioners Christmas Celebration at Living Hope Church, Port St Mary	7.30pm
Saturday 3 rd December	Rushen Silver Band Christmas Celebration Concert at Living Hope Church, Port St Mary	7.30pm
Monday 5 th December	Ballabeg Christmas Tree Lights Switch On at the Village Hall, Ballabeg	6.30pm
Monday 5 th December	Ballabeg WI Christmas Concert at the Village Hall, Ballabeg	8.00pm
Wed. 7 th December	Ballafesson Chapel Christmas Concert at Ballafesson Chapel	7.30pm
Saturday 10 th December	Friends of the Band Christmas Coffee Morning at St Catherine's Church Hall	10.00am
Sunday 11 th December	Port St Mary RNLI Carol Service at Port St Mary RNLI Lifeboat House	3.00pm
Monday 12 th December	Ballasalla School Christmas Concert at Ballasalla School	7.15pm
Thurs. 15 th December	Port Erin Commissioners Carol Service at St Catherine's Church, Port Erin	7.00pm
Sunday 18 th December	St Columba's Christmas Nativity Service at St Columba's Church, Port Erin	3.00pm
Wednesday 4 th January	Kerrowkeil Oeil Voirrey Service at Kerrowkeil Chapel	7.30pm
Saturday 28 th January	Annual Band Dinner at the Falcon's Nest, Port Erin	7.30pm



Rushen Silver Band

**would like to send their best wishes for the Festive Season
and wish everyone a Happy New Year!**



For more information about Rushen Silver Band
or suggestions for the Sounds from the South newsletter,
please contact the Band Secretary – Peter Faragher, 28 Pairk Beg, Port Erin, IM9 6NQ.
Tel 832644/493193. Email secretary@rushensilverband.org.im