



# Sounds from the South

Newsletter of Rushen Silver Band

September 2014



## 'An Island Journey' with Alan Fernie

Rushen Silver Band premiered their new commissioned work by renowned composer/arranger Alan Fernie at their concert at Rushen Primary School in July. The work was commissioned by the Band for the Island's Year of Culture 2014, and has been kindly supported by the Gough Ritchie Charitable Trust. Alan conducted the piece in public at this concert for the first time which also involved the Band's training band, Ballafesson Brass.

The work has three movements, all of which are based around the railways of the Island. 'Rattle down from the North' details the composers ride on the MER from Ramsey to Douglas when he visited the Island last year. The second movement, 'The Seven Kingdoms' refers to the Snaefell Mountain Railway ride from Laxey to Snaefell, whilst the final movement, 'Steaming to the South' of course relates to the Steam Railway journey from Douglas to Port Erin.

Tom Sinden, Chairman, Rushen Silver Band: "We were again most appreciative of the help of the Gough Ritchie Charitable Trust who have covered virtually all the costs for the commissioned work which will help the Band continue its invaluable community work."

An extremely appreciative audience provided a resounding round of applause at the end of the work and you can expect to hear the piece at a number of our concerts over the next 12 months.



## Fundraising Coffee Morning

The Friends of Rushen Silver Band are holding a Coffee Morning on  
**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September** from 10am to 11.30am  
at St Catherine's Church Hall, Port Erin.

We hope you can join us ☺





## Talking to a Band Groupie!

*Bette Crebbin recently retired as the Secretary to the Friends of the Band after over 30 years in the role. Bette has also been President of the Band and a regular supporter (or Band groupie!!) of both the Band and the brass band music scene for many years. We talk more to Bette...*

### **How did you become associated with Rushen Silver Band?**

**BC:** My first association with Rushen Silver Band was in the 1950s, when I met Jim (Crebbin). But earlier than that, probably during the 1940s, I became aware of the sound of a brass band on hearing the Castletown Metropolitan Silver Band playing carols around the houses. My knowledge of the instruments was negligible but the sound made a big impression on me.

### **You've listened to brass bands for many years, but have you never wanted to play a brass instrument yourself?**

**BC:** You're right. I have preferred to listen and enjoy the sounds of brass bands. At the time, I may have picked up an instrument, but I didn't have the time being involved with other activities.

### **What's your earliest memory of Rushen Silver Band?**

**BC:** My earliest memories of the Band are them playing in many events around Port Erin & Port St Mary. During the summer months, the Band was out playing sometimes two or three times a week. Every organisation seemed to hold a parade or sports day and invited the Band to take part. The Bradda Glen and the Promenade Hotels in Port Erin (Belle Vue/Royal, Ocean Castle etc.) held concerts not just on Sunday evenings but weekdays too. I remember the Band parading down the Promenade with local policeman Phil Quayle leading the parade. However he only agreed to do so if the Band played 'Sussex by the Sea'!

### **What changes have you seen within the Band during the years you have been supporting them?**

**BC:** After so many years, there have been numerous changes in the Band. In the 1950s and 1960s, the repertoire consisted mainly of marches, hymn tunes and arrangements of well-known songs, such as 'Drink to Me Only' and selections like 'Scottish Waltz Medley'. It was quite a big step forward when the fantasia 'Dawn of Spring' appeared. The music being played now is of a very high standard that years ago the players then would only have dreamt of playing.

Another change is the tuition programme. Years ago as Jim will tell you, learners were given an instrument and tutor book and told to come back when you can play it! Now there is a properly constructed programme. This does rely on many Band members giving up their time to put this into operation. It is easy to see the success of this, with so many young people coming into Ballafesson Brass and then into the senior Band. This programme has also led to many young people going on to attending colleges of Island and going on to a career in music.

One thing that hasn't changed is the Band's connection with Ballafesson Chapel. In the early days, many of the Band members also attended the Chapel. The Band of course still plays at least twice a year at the Chapel, including the annual Christmas Concert, which is now ticket only due to its popularity, and for other services during the year. Long may this continue. At one time the Band used to be able to play on the platform in the hall - nowadays it now takes up about a third of the actual floor area!!

## You were Secretary of the Friends of the Band for many years, what can you tell us about this organisation?

**BC:** The Friends as an organisation began its life in the 1960s as 'The Ladies Committee'. Its purpose then was to arrange events to raise funds for instruments, uniforms and music; much the same as today really. If I remember correctly, these events were mainly jumble sales and later a summer fayre. For some reason that I can't remember, these activities fizzled out in the 1970s.

Then when building a Bandroom was being considered, it was decided to reform and the name changed to the 'Friends of Rushen Silver Band' around 1982. I was Treasurer at the time; looking back through my records, the first event was a jumble sale at Port Erin Methodist Hall that raised £132.50, quite a sum at that time. Later that year there was a 'Singalong' (£142.82), Coffee Evening at the home of Mrs Muriel Howlett (£161.10) and a garden party at Bradda Glen (£250.00). Around the same time, it was decided to sell band souvenirs (pens, pencils, diaries, note books etc.) obtained from Airedale Products in Halifax. There was one slight problem with the first delivery - all the items were printed with "Rushden Silver Band"!

The opening of the Bandroom in November 1983 was a proud day for everyone, a real highlight in the life of the Band. So many people were involved in the building work, including many of the band members themselves. Even the young members at the time all played their part. I just hope today's members who have joined since those days realise the time and effort given by so many to bring this about.

With the opening of the Bandroom, coffee mornings, jumble sales and slide shows (given by Bob and Millie Broadhurst) were held at the premises. However soon afterwards, attendances increased to the level where we had to use other premises in the south to hold Friends events.

Last year I decided it was time to put away my secretary's pen and notebook, and hand over to someone else. Looking back, I have enjoyed every minute spent supporting the Band. It has been great to join in all the activities including trips off Island (Spennymoar, Gateshead, Chester and Yorkshire). And I have had so much pleasure seeing youngsters joining the Band and developing and playing their part in what is now a much bigger organisation than 50/60 years ago.

Personally my proudest moment has to be being made an Honorary Life Member of the Band, closely followed by being awarded the shield for services to the Band. And although now not in office, I hope I can look forward to many more years of following and supporting Rushen Silver Band.



### Richard Evans Weekend

The Band are pleased to advise that brass band luminary and our Band's Musical Adviser, Richard Evans, will be making another trip to the Island later in the year. This year, rather than holding a concert, the Band will be utilising Richard over a workshop weekend taking place between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October. As a culmination of the weekend, the band will be holding a Workshop Concert taking place at Rushen Primary School on the afternoon of **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October**, the concert starting at 4pm and lasting about an hour in length. The concert will be free to attend but you may be asked to make a donation to band funds as you are leaving.



## Dates for your Diary



Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> September	<b>Last Night of the Proms Concert</b> at Erin Arts Centre, Port Erin	7.30pm
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> September	<b>Band Concert</b> at Ballafesson Chapel	8.00pm
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> September	<b>Villa-Gaiety Summer Season Concert</b> at Villa Marina Arcade, Douglas	8.00pm
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>Workshop Concert with Richard Evans</b> at Rushen Primary School	4.00pm
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October	<b>Rushen Parish Commissioners Concert for the Island of Culture Year</b> at Ballafesson Hall	8.00pm
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>Poppy Appeal Concert with Castletown Metropolitan Silver Band</b> at Victoria Road School, Castletown	7.30pm
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>Remembrance Sunday March</b> (from Port Erin Royal British Legion Hall to Rushen Parish Church)	10.00am
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November	<b>Ballafesson Brass in Concert</b> at Southlands Resource Centre	2.30pm
Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>Band Christmas Concert</b> (Venue To be confirmed)	7.30pm



### Last Night of the Proms

The Band were pleased to be asked to play at a Last Night of the Proms concert that will be taking place on **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September**. The concert at the Erin Arts Centre in Port Erin starts at 7.30pm and will include items from 4 times Cleveland Medallist, Mandy Griffin. The concert will include many of the items that those who attend the actual Last Night of the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall would both hear and participate in!!

Tickets are priced at £8 with under 18s at £1 and available from the Centre Box Office.



For more information about Rushen Silver Band or suggestions for the Sounds from the South newsletter, please contact the Band Secretary – Peter Faragher, 16 Close Cam, Port Erin, IM9 6NB.  
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