

Da Capo Winds

Newsletter No 9 December 2011

Editor: Brian Richardson

From the Rostrum - (1 Dec 2011)

As I write I look back on the two and a half years since the band became fully independent and I have to say that I am so very pleased with the progress made. We are now able to tackle some relatively complicated music with various challenges and make a good job of things. Our recent excursions include some five time (Mission Impossible) and a brief encounter with all five flats in the key of Db Major (Theme from Heyken's Serenade). This is something that we could only have dreamed of back in 2009.

Preparations are going well for our Christmas Concert scheduled for 17 December, hopefully without all the snow disruption that we had last year. Again it looks as if it will be a great show with lots of good music and of course some fun for the children (and adults). The newly acquired instruments for the flute section (a crate of beer bottles and a set of colourful kazoos) have proved to be quite a challenge and I look forward to the performance with some trepidation ...!

I do have to say a big "thank you" to all band members. As you know I am using the Kodaly approach to train the band and I am grateful to all members for doing the musicianship exercises as I ask you to each week with such a good heart. The end result is that the band plays better in tune and with better balance. Singing the 'Do scale' in Db was not so difficult and certainly helped greatly with getting to grips with the sound

of this key. Sometimes people will say that they just don't have time to do this sort of quality training. My point of view is that we just don't have time not to do it. Think of all the time saved in not having to stop rehearsals for bad tuning and poor balance. Think of the improvement to every piece of music we will ever play as a result of our improved tuning and balance. Once these skills are mastered they improve all music making.

I feel that the band is continuing to make good progress and I would like to thank all concerned for the continued work that you all do. I do understand what a big effort is being put in on a Monday evening and I am extremely pleased with the end result. We can all look forward to a well earned Christmas break with a view to coming back in January with batteries fully charged for what ever challenges I might come up with next ...!

Dayas Foundation

The Dayas foundation provides financial support for adults wishing to study music. This can include instrumental lessons and possibly other associated costs (supporting theory lessons, travel, purchase of music etc.) To qualify you need to be an adult living in Hampshire. For more details contact Hampshire Music Services on 023 8065 2037 or music.service@hants.gov.uk The following from their information sheet "Scholarships will be awarded annually to enable musicians to undertake studies or projects in connection with composition, conducting, instrumental performance,

singing, music in education and musicology”

From the Chair



Our 2011 Christmas Concert was held on Saturday 17 December, and, as usual, we had a very large, enthusiastic audience!

One of the highlights was a performance of Heyken’s Serenade, which featured a recorder duet, a slowing-down gramophone – (remember them?) – and a tune played on beer bottles. Other features included the theme from the Great Escape played on kazoos, some strange headgear, the usual carols and audience participation with percussion instruments, and lots of free cake (which sadly ran out before everyone had been served).

We also held a successful barn dance this term, featuring the band Saxon Drain. It made a small profit (£88) and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. In fact one 5-year-old boy had such a good time that he has asked his parents to book the same band for his next birthday! Thanks go to everyone who helped with the organisation, and especially to Sheila and her team for the fantastic food.

We must thank everyone who regularly helps to organise refreshments, the raffle, front of house, setting up for concerts, transport and storage of percussion instruments, plus all those who provide cakes and raffle prizes. We couldn’t do it without you!

New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members who joined us this term:

Sylvia King (alto sax)
Stella Gibbons (clarinet)

Exam Successes

The following band members have passed their grade exams in music:

Brian Richardson (our editor - clarinet) - Grade 1 with merit

Kathryn Hurford (bassoon) - Grade 2 with merit

Amy Goodison (clarinet) - grade 4 singing with merit and Grade 4 saxophone with distinction

Rebecca Russell (percussion) - Grade 3 piano with merit and Grade 1 violin pass

Declan Carroll (clarinet) grade 3 pass

We extend hearty congratulations to them and wish them every success in the future.

Best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year

Carole and Tina

Get some Music in your life

What does making music mean to you? Do you hum along to the radio, strum a few chords, blast out a rocking riff or enjoying playing or listening to good music?

I started playing my clarinet when my youngest son was about a year old, so I've been doing it for about 3 years now. As my two boys became less demanding I wanted a hobby that I could fit in around them. I'm a stay at home mum and needed something to re-engage my sleep deprived baby-brain, but wasn't sure what.

My husband had always wanted to learn to play Baker Street on a saxophone so he bought himself one. However, finding time to play it was difficult as it was too loud to play in the evenings when the boys were in bed. Inspired by this and on a whim, I bought a clarinet and hijacked his dream! I

had played a bit of recorder as a child but had no music training and couldn't even read music. I got a couple of "teach yourself" books with tunes that I knew in them and began a hobby that has opened new doors and started a really big thing in my life now – ME – THE MUSICIAN!

I play just about every day – maybe just a few minutes whilst the potatoes are cooking or serenade the family with show tunes when my husband is bathing the boys. I absolutely love playing.

When I'd been playing for around a year I happened to mention it to the boy's music school teacher, Len, and he told me about Da Capo Winds and said I should come along. Rather hesitatingly, I did. At that time there were about 20 musicians practising for a Christmas concert. Now there are over 50 of us and we are officially a concert band, practising for another Christmas concert. This'll be my 7th concert with them and it is certain to be another good one for the whole family.

Then I was asked to join my church's music group, again something that I now love to do and I have recently taken over organising the group – getting copies of music prepared for the service, arranging and leading rehearsals and such.

Not bad for a whim eh? New doors, new friends and a new passion.

So what does music mean for me? I am proud of my achievements and thankful for my newly found talent. I know I'll never be brilliant at it. I don't wish to take exams – it's purely for my enjoyment. When I play in the wind band or the church music group I'm a small part of something much larger. But my soul sings as we play. I hope it shows sometimes that I'm loving what I'm doing – playing, having fun and doing it as

well as I can.

Susan Chard
errers@hotmail.com

P.S. (from Len)

As the newsletter has not yet been distributed and as we have now performed our Christmas concert I thought I would take the opportunity to add a little extra piece about our most recent event.

I could not have been more delighted with the end result. We played to a sell out audience of friend and families and also the general public. The age range was great with a number of babes in arms as well as lots of toddlers and young children. The adult section of the audience clearly covered all age groups and I can safely say that everyone seemed to have a really good time. I was able to speak to a number of people during the afternoon and all said that they thought the concert was excellent. From my perspective I felt that the musical side of things went extremely well and that the band sounded good in all items. I was particularly pleased with "Mission Impossible" and I have to say that this was the best we ever played it. The whole band seemed to get to grips with the idea of five time as if it was something we have been doing for years. The production of "Heyken's Serenade" was first class. The German band with all the swaying was a particularly good effect. I wish you all a great Christmas and New Year and I feel that you can all be congratulated on producing a first class Christmas concert.

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