

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF LITTLEPORT BRASS BAND**  
**TUESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015 – 7:30PM**

**Present:** Andrew Keen (Chairman); Simon Sharpe (Vice-Chairman); Angela Revell (Treasurer); Nigel Markwell; Sue Peacock; Sarah Green; Tony Roberts and Sarah Bowe

**Apologies:** Sharon Sharpe, Jamie Clay, Clare Hall, Matt Ralph and Chris Burt

**Minutes of the Last Meeting** – were read by all present and agreed as true record and signed by the Chairman, Andrew Keen.

**Matters Arising**

- ◆ Assistant MD – everyone present agreed summer with Sue as Assistant MD was a success.
- ◆ Shaun Pope to be asked to see if he is still interested in re-establishing a band newsletter.
- ◆ Abbots Ripton was a success and we hope we may be asked to go back.
- ◆ Walking out uniforms – discussion followed. Would people wear them? Do we need them? How often would they be worn? Could we reuse the blazers we had several years ago if have enough? Were all discussed. No decision was reached so band will be asked for a show of hands as to whether the band has walking out jackets. Then a decision will be made by the Committee.

**Chairman's Report**

First of all where did 2014 go? One minute we seem to be absorbed in the area build up from Jan-March then it was carol playing outside Tesco, 2014 has definitely been and gone.

When reviewing 2014 as Chairman I can only say it has been a different type of year than previous. After a disappointing result at the areas it was then onto the summer program. Due to Nigel's summer hiatus it was strange having to look for a summer conductor. To be honest I was worried that a change would unsettle the band through this period, which didn't sit well as the autumn was going to be fairly busy with contests and concerts etc. I must though thank Nigel for his continuous commitment and focus and it was totally understandable why he needed the summer off.

A big thanks must go to Sue for taking on the role of Assistant Musical Director for this period, a thoroughly enjoyable summer banding and potential unrest to the band erased. Thanks Sue for taking the baton and doing a fantastic job. Thank you also to all players who attended through this period.

This year we had some new players join the ranks - welcome to Chris Burt & Sarah Bowe. Sadly Louise parted company, a member for many years and also Lorna I wish them both well. One other person who will be missed is Nathaniel, all the best at University Nat, look forward to you helping out in the summer.

2015 will obviously be another eventful year in banding for Littleport, area contest, joint concert with GUS, summer engagements, a new entertainments contest and Christmas concert these are all engagements that hopefully will keep members enjoying their hobby. Thank you to all

Committee members for their dedication and input throughout the year, Nigel for his consistent direction and to all players who attended and played a part in 2014.

I hope that 2015 will be a positive year for the band, and that players enjoy themselves through the future events.

### **Musical Director's Report**

Not a huge amount for my Report this year, as Sue Peacock kindly stood in for me over the summer period for which I would like to thank her for. I did manage to get to hear the band perform at March Park and was happy to hear the band on form. A big thank you again to the committee for your support and hard work during the last year, and also to a number of players who have switched seats and instruments to help fill positions that were left vacant.

The Regional contest seems to come round faster each year, and Howard Lorrigan's Cry Of The Mountain proved to be another real test, with the band only managing to come 12<sup>th</sup> just beating 2013 result of 13<sup>th</sup>, nerves once again got the better of some players, in particular a certain horn player (no longer with the band) who hadn't bothered coming to rehearsals, unfortunately the piece started with horns, it made the rest of the band anxious and it never really recovered, having said that it wasn't just because of a horn player, we didn't have one full rehearsal prior to the contest, not even on the very morning of the contest, I'm beginning to sound like a broken record, but unless the whole band are prepared to put in more effort the 2015 area result will be much the same.

I thought playing Les Preludes at Leicester was good for the band, it's a very difficult piece but I thought the band done a great Job, the performance was a memorable one and I think the whole band enjoyed the experience, shame the Adjudicator didn't think the same, I felt the band had made real progress since the Areas.

The 2015 Area contest is looming and we have another difficult piece, probably the most difficult we've had for a set piece, it is going to be a real test for soloists with four cadenzas to get through quite early on in the piece, and a big technical challenge for the whole band, we have our work cut out, but I know the band is capable of putting in a good performance, we need to do well or Littleport will be back in the second section next year. Preparations have started and rehearsals are going well, though I still haven't had a full band yet, but however much work we do in rehearsals it won't make any difference if we don't deliver on the day.

Looking ahead, the band has another joint concert with GUS coming up in April, and talk of Wychavon Entertainment contest for the Autumn, plus Christmas Concerts, and not forgetting the National Finals in September.

As for my future with the band I am still undecided, I have mentioned several times about my disappointment with the commitment from some band members and feel it may be time for me to call it a day, but I also believe the band still has a lot of potential and really would like to be part of it, I have also a lot on with GUS this year and Business is picking up again at last. Whatever I decide, you will get plenty of notice. For now let's concentrate on putting in a good show at Stevenage and securing our position in the first section.

### **Assistant Musical Director's Report**

I began the role of Assistant Conductor in May when Nigel left for a break May September 2014. I felt that my primary role was to maintain stability and standards during his period of absence.

We had a fairly busy summer of concerts to work towards, including some traditional and tried venues and some newer more experimental events, including the service at Abbots Ripton Garden Show and our own concert in Littleport Church.

A selection of new music needed to be rehearsed for the summer programmes alongside more traditional material used in church services and of course the Sutton Proms concert.

I think that all the concerts we performed were generally well played and received enthusiastically. My own favourite was the Sutton Proms Concert as it offered an opportunity to perform some more challenging pieces. In addition, for the first time, we included a singer to lead some of the audience participation pieces. Thank you to Judith Keen who did this so well.

One of the most challenging issues for us as a first section band is finding music which continues to challenge and motivate our players but also to reflect our national status. Unfortunately, this also means that finding depts to cover parts when necessary, becomes increasingly difficult and I would like to thank all those players from other bands who came to support us.

Finally, I would like to thank Andrew and Sarah who kept me sane(ish) and of course to all players who remained committed, patient and very supportive.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Last summer was busy in terms of paid concerts; we were pleased to be welcomed back to March Park, Jubilee Gardens and Hunstanton. We were also invited back to the prom concert in Sutton church, increased our involvement at the St George's Day Scout parade and were invited to perform at a garden party in Abbots Ripton. Engagements earned us a total of £2211.11 in 2014, very slightly down from £2233 in 2013.

December was again quite busy. We were invited back to play at a Carol services organised by Ridgeon's, as well as being asked by the Littleport Society to play carols and other pieces at their December meeting. We also managed to fit in 3 carol playing stints, which earned us £413.69, down from £598.44 in 2013.

Subscriptions collected this year totalled £1915. Bandmaster's expenses totalled £615, down from £840 in 2014. The offer was made, but Sue chose not to accept expenses when she took the helm during the summer. The subs allow us to ensure that there is money available not only to help with more costly purchases, such as instruments and jackets, but also help with all the regular expenses of insurance, heat and light, registration fees etc during the lean months.

The cost of heat and light was slightly down last year at a total of £249.27 compared to £283.09 in 2013 and the cost of insurance was also down, £1089.13 compared to £1124.73 in 2014.

One other notable expense in 2015 was the purchase of 5 new jackets, totalling £888.

Overall in 2014 we spent a bit more than we earned, but we start 2015 with enough money in the bank to see us through the usually lean months leading up to the summer.

I'd like to give my thanks to Ann Garwood for auditing the books for us once again.

### **Election of Officers**

President: Tony Roberts

Proposed: Simon Sharpe

Seconded: Nigel Markwell

Chairman: Andrew Keen

Proposed: Sarah Green

Seconded: Sue Peacock

Vice-Chairman: Simon Sharpe

Proposed: Sue Peacock

Seconded: Sarah Green

Treasurer: Angela Revell

Proposed: Andrew Keen

Seconded: Simon Sharpe

Secretary: Sharon Sharpe

Proposed: Sarah Green

Seconded: Tony Roberts

Musical Director: Nigel Bramley

Proposed: Sue Peacock

Seconded: Nigel Markwell

Contest Secretary: Nigel Markwell

Proposed: Sarah Green

Seconded: Andrew Keen

Librarian: Sarah Green

Proposed: Sue Peacock

Seconded: Andrew Keen

Committee: Sue Peacock and Sarah Green

### **Any Other Business**

- ◆ A few players had questioned why we didn't have a Christmas Concert etc. This will be addressed in 2015 as we hope to have one. It is sometimes difficult to organise many different events with such a small Committee as time is factor for everyone involved.

However, the Committee does have plans for several different concerts/contests in 2015 so hopefully these will be well received by all involved.

- ◆ A discussion followed about attendance. Overall it was felt that the attendance at rehearsals was pretty good. People generally have a good reason if they can't make rehearsal; however we do need to keep encouraging attendance whenever possible.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:45pm.