

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF LITTLEPORT BRASS BAND**  
**MONDAY 4<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2013 – 7:30PM**

**Present:** Andrew Keen (Chairman); Simon Sharpe (Vice-Chairman); Sharon Sharpe (Secretary); Angela Revell (Treasurer); Clare Hall, Nigel Markwell, Rhiannon-Jane Smart, Louise Duffield, Shaun Pope, Jamie Clay, Yvonne Boyle, Sue Peacock and Sarah Green

**Apologies:** Matt Ralph, Lorna Delos Reyes Darias, Niki Williamson

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

**Matters Arising**

- ◆ Librarian – Sarah Green has taken on this role.
- ◆ Band recording – this would cost about £2,000 which the band cannot afford.
- ◆ Joint Concert – the Band are holding a charity concert with GUS later on in 2013.
- ◆ Veolia had stained the outside of the Bandroom. Simon had passed a letter of thanks to Veolia.
- ◆ Band t-shirts – Andrew had been in touch with Lloyd Shipp and they were too expensive. Further discussed in AOB.
- ◆ Headed notepaper – Sharon had prepared some and passed to Nigel.

**Chairman's Report**

2012 must have been one of the most varied years in recent times for me, as Chairman I have had a mixed bag of events and emotions which over the year has raised the question - is this hobby something I really want to do anymore?

I was very proud in March when the band achieved 1st section promotion and an invite to the Cheltenham Finals. This was testament to all the hard work put in by players, Committee and of course our super MD Nigel that made the first quarter of the year a big high. A historic moment which had eluded the band in previous years had finally arrived so well done to everyone.

The summer proved fruitful with various concerts, giving us the necessary funds to continue into 2013, and a big thank you to the Committee for their hard work through this busy time and all players who gave commitment where necessary. Trying new things like the St. Mary's Concert takes time and effort and an element of risk however it was a success. Another success for 2012 was keeping the cost of deps down, this was achieved by a team effort where necessary, excellent job. Another profitable Christmas concert and carol playing finished off the engagements in 2012 - thanks for everyone's hard work.

The last 4 months have been the hardest for the band in my opinion, although the finals didn't produce a win the band came home with a decent performance and the memory of a great weekend. Sadly in late October the band had to experience the very sad loss of Howard. A stalwart member of the band whose commitment, playing ability and character will never be replaced. A close friend of mine and others for 30+ years his love of Littleport Brass Band and his input will be missed without any doubt. I am proud of the support that the band has showed to Sue throughout this difficult time and I am so glad that she is back playing.

A warm welcome this year to Niki, Rhiannon and Lorna who are now part of the awesome team of Littleport Brass, it is always great to see new people joining, all the best to Amanda and Myles who recently left to pursue other avenues and especially Richard who had been a key member of the band for many years, I wish them well.

Well that's it for another year, has not been the best year for as Chairman if I am honest but 2013 looks brighter, with 1st section areas looming, various concerts planned and a full band things have started Well So back to my original question " is this hobby something I really want to do anymore?" You bet it is, thanks for all your support and I look forward to this forthcoming year.

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

2012 got off to a flying start, with a well deserved 3<sup>rd</sup> placing at Stevenage, and an invitation to the National Finals and promotion to the First section 2013. Cross Pattonce was a very hard piece chosen for the Second section Bands, and it certainly tested us with its technical and musical challenges.

The summer engagements were generally well played, despite the weather not being on our side, unfortunately having to cancel Hunstanton was disappointing, but a good Concert at St Marys Church Ely was well received, and I would like to do more of these types of Concerts in the future. Rehearsal attendance was not good after the Area contest which I found very frustrating, and it is not really acceptable, its difficult enough trying to get a program of music together with only one rehearsal per week, it is therefore vital that we have full attendance at these rehearsals, the kind of music we like to play now is much more demanding, and no longer just relies on the principle players, everyone has an important part to play, I cannot rehearse an empty chair.

The Finals approach and still rehearsals are not well attended by all? This is the second time I have taken the band to the Finals and again I find that the Band is not over enthused. I know it wasn't a great test piece to rehearse, but we don't have a say in what piece to play. Unfortunately Howard's health was not good and reluctantly both Howard and Sue had to pull out. Tom was unavailable due to Harvesting, this is always going to be a problem for Tom at this time of year, and we should be more prepared for it. Having said that, I thought the band played reasonably well, but with us being a bit light in numbers, it was always going to make a difference come the results.

Sadly we had to say goodbye to Howard. I know some of you will have known Howard for a long time and in fact grown up with him in Littleport Band. I had known Howard for a long time, and first met him while playing for Soham Comrades. Howard often dept for the Band and he will always be remembered by me, for being a good musician and bandsman, and since taking up the baton here at Littleport, gave me his full support. Howard will be sadly missed by us all.

We decided to give Leicester Contest a miss this year under the circumstances, and concentrated our efforts towards the Christmas concert, which I thought was again very successful.

2013 Area Contest draws near, and already the band is working hard. The test piece is on target and I see no reason for the band not to do well at its first attempt in the first section. We

do need targets I think, and to qualify or even win would be fantastic, but if we can manage to get in the top half I will be more than happy.

We have lost a couple of players, Miles, who just has too many other commitments and Amanda, who doesn't feel she can cope with the type of commitment and quality of playing that is now required.

I would like to say a big thank you to the band and its committee for your support over the year, and look forward to another great year of banding with Littleport Brass

### **Treasurer's Report**

After initial uncertainty given the current financial climate, we were pleased to be welcomed back to March Park and Kings Lynn Park and Hunstanton. These engagements are funded from council budgets and can no longer be taken for granted.

Given the dreadful weather we suffered last year, we were fortunate to make any money at all last summer. We just about got away with it though! Hunstanton was cancelled of course, which was a disappointment and we were lucky to be offered the use of the church hall in March, otherwise that would've been a washout too. I know these concerts aren't always the most fun to do, but they are important as they do make money for the band and raise our profile too.

We do continue to look for other opportunities and this year we not only organised the Christmas concert, but also branched out to St Mary's church and the Ex-servicemen's club to stage concerts of our own. Each of these was successful in raising much needed funds for the band. In fact one couple, not local to the area, made a donation of £50.00 just to hear 'Mood Indigo' played at the Ex-servicemen's concert.

Engagements earned us a total of £1200.09, which is significantly down on the previous year, due mainly to the fact that Hunstanton had to be cancelled and we did not have Sutton Proms, Ely Scout Parade or Ridgeon's.

Carol playing collections were up however, thanks to an invitation to play at the Wisbech Horsefair in December and a last minute slot at Tesco the Saturday before Christmas. Although due to the weather, we were unable to play on Christmas Eve, I'd like to give my thanks to Bruce Frost who would have (yet again) been willing to squeeze into the fairy costume to help the cause.

Subscriptions collected this year totalled £1631.00

Money raised from subs continues to be paid into the 'uniform' account, which is where we hold money while trying to save for more costly purchases, such as instruments. This is an ideal of course, as keeping up with the regular expenses of insurance, heat and light, registration fees and the odd new jacket here and there all have to be paid for too and in the lean months some of these funds do have to be drawn on.

Amazingly, the cost of heat and light was down last year. The efficiency of the new system has really come into play now, and despite a long and extremely time consuming battle with British Gas, the gas metre has finally been removed and money reimbursed retrospectively.

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: Andrew Keen

Chairman: Andrew Keen

Proposed: Shaun Pope

Seconded: Sarah Green

Vice-Chairman: Simon Sharpe

Proposed: Andrew Keen

Seconded: Shaun Pope

Treasurer: Angela Revell

Proposed: Sharon Sharpe

Seconded: Louise Duffield

Secretary: Sharon Sharpe

Proposed: Nigel Markwell

Seconded: Louise Duffield

Musical Director: Nigel Bramley

Proposed: Nigel Markwell

Seconded: Eleanor Sharpe

Contest Secretary: Nigel Markwell

Proposed: Sharon Sharpe

Seconded: Sarah Green

Jackets Secretary: Yvonne Boyle

Proposed: Simon Sharpe

Seconded: Shaun Pope

Publicist/PR: Shaun Pope

Proposed: Sarah Green

Seconded: Sharon Sharpe

Librarian: Sarah Green

Proposed: Shaun Pope

Seconded: Andrew Keen

Committee: Clare Hall

## Any Other Business

- ◆ Website – this had improved in the last 12 months and everyone agreed it does look very professional compared to other Bands. It needs to be kept up to date with engagement dates/times/venues. There was some discussion as to what else could be done to the website and these ideas will be put to Ryan.

- Biography of players
- Repertoire of what the Band is playing
- Concert reviews
- Hit counter
- Better Twitter and Facebook links

Clare expressed an interest in helping Ryan to manage the website and she will get in contact with him. Shaun also expressed an interest as this would coincide with his Publicist role.

- ◆ Uniform for summer – Shaun suggested that the Band wear something less formal for summer/outside engagements ie plain black open necked shirt. There was some discussion about this and it was put to the vote and the majority all favoured wearing full band uniform. Nigel Markwell stated that it would look good for everyone to have a Band t-shirt, Simon is look into prices.

### **ACTION: SIMON**

- ◆ Andrew read out an email from Matt Ralph and he suggested that it might be an idea to get a new logo and some new banners to reflect this. Louise Duffield stated that the logo was picked because it was simple and will not date. Everyone agreed that it would be too costly to change the banners.
- ◆ There was some discussion about Daps and having a central database of all names/contact numbers – this will be discussed at the next full committee meeting.
- ◆ Sarah Green asked how the organisation of the joint concert with GUS was progressing and after some discussion it was agreed that Sarah and Sue would form a sub-committee to organise the concert, the full committee would help as and when required.
- ◆ Fundraising committee – Andrew Keen's wife Jude had suggested this and she would be interested in helping – again this will be discussed at a full committee meeting.
- ◆ Instrument insurance – Andrew and Simon to look at all the old instruments in the Bandroom and put together a full list of instruments that are worth keeping.

### **ACTION: SIMON/ANDREW**

- ◆ Simon mentioned that Veolia had offered to stain the outside of the Bandroom again this year. Simon had accepted on the bands behalf – he will organise dates etc.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9:00pm.