

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF LITTLEPORT BRASS BAND THURSDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2014 – 7:30PM

Present: Andrew Keen (Chairman); Simon Sharpe (Vice-Chairman); Sharon Sharpe (Secretary); Angela Revell (Treasurer); Nigel Markwell, Sue Peacock, Sarah Green AND Andrew Bateman

Apologies: Shaun Pope, Louise Duffield, Niki Bloom and Matt Ralph

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

Matters Arising

- ◆ Website – everyone was happy for Ryan Goodall to continue with this and the Committee will keep him updated with dates for the events calendar.
- ◆ Walking Out Uniform – there was some discussion about this and it was agreed that this would be discussed again at the AGM in 2015.
- ◆ Deps – some discussion about having a central list, either on paper in the Bandroom on a players pages on the website. If we went down the route of having players ringing up to get their own Deps would they actually do this? You would also lose a central point of contact and you would still need someone to co-ordinate the whole process. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman agreed it was less of a problem in 2013 but it is something that needs to be addressed, especially for those players who leave it until the last minute to confirm their attendance.
- ◆ Fundraising committee – everyone thought this would be a good idea in principle we have trouble enough getting a Committee together let alone a fundraising one.
- ◆ Instruments – Andrew Bateman had looked at 4 trombones out the back and these could be sold on eBay for around £70 each. There was some discussion at donating these to Eversden (youth band) but Sarah felt that as we are not in their catchment area it would not be beneficial for us. It was agreed to sell them as there is little or no possibility of a Junior Band starting up any time soon. Andrew Bateman agreed to look at the other instruments to see if anymore could be sold, he will pass the serial numbers onto Angie so they can be removed from the insurance.

Chairman's Report

First of all a big thank you to all who are in attendance at this evenings AGM, I won't thank you individually as this may take at least 2 minutes.

2013 has been another busy year for the band, from the Areas competition to summer engagements and finally the Christmas season. I don't really want to isolate all individual events so I would just like to say a big well done and thank you to everyone who played a part in the past 12 months successes.

My highlight of 2013 was the joint memorial concert with Virtuosi GUS. I am a great believer in teamwork and It is a great testament to the players and committee that this event will become one of Littleport brass's greatest memories. I am sure that Howard would have been pleased with the concert and it is fantastic that we were able to fulfil his wish? Everyone who played a part in this one off night should be proud of keeping focus and playing a great concert.

A massive thanks to Sue and Sarah for their major part in the organisation of this event and to Richard Duffield for his superb MC contribution.

2013 had new players coming in and some leaving, a warm welcome to Andrew, Charlie, Michelle, Duncan and Ron who are playing valued parts in the band. Sadly Ryan left the band in the summer after 20 years on Principle Cornet, I wish him well for the future.

A big thanks to Nigel who for another year has worked very hard to keep the band going forward and focused. Thanks Nigel for your continued commitment, direction and belief in Littleport Brass.

As 2014 is now upon us I am confident that another successful year in whatever form is looming. Have a great year banding, and don't forget that famous quote from Brassed Off... ..no not "it's a bloody euphonium" "its music that matters".

Musical Director's Report

The year started as usual with preparations under way for the Area contest held at Stevenage playing Brass Triumphant and for the first time in the first section. Generally not a bad performance, but not Littleport at its best I have to say. Rehearsals were not well attended on the whole; in fact, the first full rehearsal was again the morning of the contest. It was difficult to secure percussionists once more, and we cannot force deps to attend all rehearsals. Some parts were under rehearsed individually, which did reflect the outcome, with wrong and late entries here and there, we eventually finished in 13th place (out of 16). Although the adjudicator's attitude was not useful, after listening to the recording I would have been more surprised if we had we come any higher.

Over the weeks that followed Stevenage I did feel that the overall standard was starting to improve. Players were keen to develop their individual playing with several people coming to me for advice.

With the summer engagements looming, it was time to start putting together a suitable program. I always aim to make it light enough for the punters to enjoy, plus put one or two pieces in keeping the players happy and motivated. It's very easy to sit back and relax too much during the summer, and then it's hard work to get the standard back again for the autumn contest season. I felt we found a good balance this time, and the standard didn't slip back too much. Then there was the joint concert with GUS to look forward to. I thought the band worked really hard for this and it helped raise the standard a bit more. Well done to Sue and Sarah for doing such a good job at organising the concert and I think this is something the band should be doing more of. It doesn't necessarily have to be a joint concert; maybe invite a guest soloist or a small brass ensemble. Although park jobs are easy money in a way, because they involve less organising, a more formal concert is much more rewarding.

Leicester contest was next, and I thought it was a good idea to let the band decide on the test piece. We had been tinkering with a few pieces over the summer, and the band chose Essay by Edward Gregson, a sensible option. The piece was hard enough to challenge everyone, but also enjoyable to play. Although the band made a really good effort on the day, we still didn't come away with a great result. I really was expecting to come in the top 3 or 4 on this occasion. After listening to the recording, it sounded like a completely different band to the one

earlier in the year, there was some real quality to the playing, just the odd mistake here and there that spoiled it, but overall a huge improvement.

Christmas was a bit of a let-down really. I much preferred us doing our own Christmas Concert, and I didn't think doing the Concert in the week worked, and so early in December either.

We are now preparing for 2014 Area contest, and already the piece is starting to come together. We deserve to be in the first section, and I will be expecting a much better result this time. The band still has a lot to do though, and it's not easy playing in a section with better bands. Don't forget some of the bands would have just come down from the top section.

After much thought, I have decided to take a short break. Some of you will know I have a business, NB Carpentry Ltd, which has been in hibernation since the recession took hold but things are starting to move again now, and I am trying to get the business moving again. The company is already a member of Fair Trade and Trust Mark and is in the process of being accredited with constructionline, all of which should open up more tendering opportunities for us, but these things take time. I intend on rehearsing the band up to the end of April, by which time we should have a program ready for the summer, and then I would like to start again in the autumn. At the moment I still have a full time Job as well as trying to move the business on, plus the GUS band and family commitments. Sally would like me to spend a bit more time at home, and I still have a lot of work to do on the house. Fascia's, bargeboards and guttering all need replacing to name a few, and it's just impossible to fit everything in. I hope you will understand, and I do have every intention of returning later in the year as I believe the band still has much more potential. Should the band qualify for the finals, I will arrange a weekend during the summer of intense rehearsals on the set piece. However, should you decide on appointing a new full time MD, I will fully understand and accept your decision.

Treasurer's Report

Last summer was busy in terms of paid concerts; we were pleased to be welcomed back to March Park and Kings Lynn Park and Hunstanton. We were also invited back to the prom concert in Sutton church. Engagements earned us a total of £2230.00 in 2013, up from £1200.09 in 2012.

The big feature of 2013 was Howard's memorial concert with GUS. I know It was important to everyone involved with the band that as much money could be raised for the Amyloidosis Research fund as possible. The concert was extremely well organised by Sue and Sarah who planned everything in meticulous detail, it was also extremely well supported and because of this the band was able to present a cheque to the fund for £1939.91.

December was another busy month, being invited to play at a Carol service organised by Ridgeon's as well as the Littleport Society concert meant that we did less in the way of traditional Carol playing. However, thanks to another opportunity to play at Wisbech and two dates at Tesco in Ely, the total collected was £598.44 (£698.44), up from £352.49.

Subscriptions collected this year totalled £1933.00. 2013 was the first year that the band paid Bandmaster's expenses. This amount totalled £840.00. Even with this additional expense, the subs are allowing us to ensure there is money available not only to help with more costly purchases, such as instruments and jackets, but also to 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 up last year and the cost of insurance was slightly down.

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: Andrew Keen
Seconded: Sharon Sharpe

Chairman: Andrew Keen
Proposed: Sharon Sharpe
Seconded: Nigel Markwell

Vice-Chairman: Simon Sharpe
Proposed: Sarah Green
Seconded: Sue Peacock

Treasurer: Angela Revell
Proposed: Sharon Sharpe
Seconded: Sue Peacock

Secretary: Sharon Sharpe
Proposed: Andrew Keen
Seconded: Sarah Green

Musical Director: Nigel Bramley
Proposed: Andrew Bateman
Seconded: Sue Peacock

Contest Secretary: Nigel Markwell
Proposed: Sarah Green
Seconded: Sharon Sharpe

Band Sargent: Andrew Bateman
Proposed: Simon Sharpe
Seconded: Andrew Keen

Publicist/PR: Shaun Pope
Proposed: Andrew Keen
Seconded: Simon Sharpe

Librarian: Sarah Green
Proposed: Sue Peacock
Seconded: Andrew Keen

Committee: Sue Peacock

Any Other Business

- ◆ There was some discussion regarding the MD's decision to take off the summer months. Andrew Bateman suggested that we could advertise for an Assistant MD and that we need to advertise it positively. It was agreed that it will be opened up to Band Members to see if anyone is interested. Sue Peacock also suggested the MD at King's Lynn might be interested (details to be obtained). It was also agreed that anyone applying for the position would have to do an audition. It was agreed that the following needed clarification from Nigel Bramley:-
 - o What are the exact dates for finishing in April and starting again in the autumn?
 - o Does NB have anyone in mind that could take on the role?
 - o Will NB want a part in choosing the new Assistant MD?The advert would go in 4BarsRest, local newspapers and also on the Facebook page.
- ◆ Shaun Pope is standing down from the Committee due to other commitments. He is more than happy to carry on with the PR role – everyone agreed that this would be acceptable. Simon Sharpe mentioned that the only thing he would like to see reintroduced is the Band Newsletter and Shaun will be asked if it is possible for him to produce one quarterly.
- ◆ Sharon Sharpe mentioned that we have been asked to do Ely Park and everyone present felt we should do this, especially as we have not got King's Lynn Park.
- ◆ Sharon Sharpe also mentioned that she had received an email from Rosemary Maskell (previous vicar in Littleport). She is now Vicar in the Abbots/Kings Ripton area and wondered if the Band would like to play 5 hymns at the outdoor church service for the Abbots Ripton Garden Show. Everyone present felt that this would be an excellent opportunity for the Band to play outside the area at this well attended event.

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