

Kirkby Stephen Silver Band

Chairman's Annual Report 2016

It is a pleasure to present this year's annual report.

We have been busy once more. A full list of engagements is displayed on the notice board for anyone who is interested (and has been emailed to those of you with an email address). The list is very similar to last years tally although we did cancel our Spring Concert as a result of the upheavals in membership at the time. A wise decision in retrospect I think.

We have been a little careless and have managed to come up with a net loss of players this year. These things happen.

We lost Megan as a result of dentistry, and there is too long a list of players "taking a rest" from the bandsome of whom have reappeared and some of whom may be lost forever. On the plus side we saw a welcome reappearance of Sandy but we really will have to do something about recruitment in the coming year. We have only a couple of beginners on the way up and we need a concerted effort to "grow some more of our own". I have been a little distracted this year by my own health issues and so we have not run a schools workshop but I have agreed a pilot project with the Grammar School whereby we will provide Brass tuition for an hour a week at the school in the hope that this might attract some new players. I hope that we can start this in the autumn.

This year also saw a change in Musical Director. We are very grateful indeed to Ian for his dedication and hard work over the last few years. We have benefitted musically and have appreciated his approachable style and friendly encouragement. I am pleased to have this opportunity to formally offer him our gratitude. We have a small token of our appreciation to present.

We are fortunate indeed to have a man of David's ability and character to take over and are indebted to him. It's great that Ian has been able to plug the gap left by Ernie in the trombone section, and the only downside of the rearrangement is the gaping hole left in the front row cornets produced by David vacating that seat.

Your hard working committee have introduced the innovation of sectional rehearsals this year and these seem to me to have been a great success. It is a great strength of the band that we have a team of members all working hard to improve our performance. Ian, David and John are making a great difference. The committee has also grappled with such issues as which local events we play for free and what constitutes a local event! We have also taken suggestions from members and discussed the possibility of a waterproof uniform but have decided not to go ahead with that one in the meantime.

Financially we are in good health. The hard work that we all put in over Christmas continues to make a difference. The issue of the possible sale of the bowling club is still under discussion and may or may not happen. The club have

made a formal offer but unfortunately the offer is less than half of the valuation we had commissioned 5 years ago so there is still some way to go on that one. We will keep you abreast of developments. Pauline has ably looked after our finances and will report on them shortly. Pauline has decided not to stand as treasurer for another year and we should all be grateful to her for doing what can be a thankless task.

Thanks to our Bandmaster Ruth for continuing to ensure that engagements run smoothly and looking after all the logistics that our performances rely on. Ruth also takes responsibility for building maintenance and helps with teaching beginners. All above duties performed cheerfully and uncomplainingly. Thank you Ruth.

John continues to devote himself to the betterment of the band. We have all noticed the diligence applied to looking after the music catalogue. John also looks after Child Protection issues and I use this opportunity every year to remind members that we have a child protection policy and that it is available on our website or by hard copy on application, and that it behoves us all to abide by it.

We are also grateful to John for looking after the Silver Lotto. This generates us income and I encourage any of you who are not members of the scheme to get involved. Membership is a great way to support the Band.

It is great this year to have had a Band Secretary rather than just a minutes secretary and I am particularly grateful to Jane for coordinating the planning of the sectional rehearsals.

Many people help in the running of the band and we should not forget to thank William for his work in grounds maintenance in the last year. Sadly William is finding the grass-cutting a bit much these days and is fantastic to have Thomas step into the breach and take this over. I have not yet explained to Thomas that the minimum time served in this post averages at about 10 years but I'll get round to it! I notice that other folk have quietly done their bit as well from time to time.

There is also a set of folk who clean the band room. This is a very small list and we are grateful to those volunteers. Can I remind you that there is a rota on the band notice board and that we are short of volunteers so if you can spare half an hour from time to time we would welcome more volunteers.

You will note that the milk at tea time doesn't appear by magic and that the washing up at the end of the evening doesn't do itself and the music stands don't put themselves out ! All of these contributions should be recognised.

Gordon has kindly continued to look after the band instruments and attempt to keep track of who has what. Thank you Gordon – and please note folks that you don't have to be a committee member to take on these tasks.

I must also – on your behalf- thank those folk who turned up to the band hut maintenance day in the autumn. I hope to rely on your support for another session this year.

We have managed to fit in a couple of more social events this year. We enjoyed being asked to play our annual Bowls session with the bowling club, and we had our usual Band Annual Dinner in the Autumn. Both very enjoyable events.

Can I again urge members to make more use of our web presence.

We have a website that I reckon is underused by members.

Those members for whom we have an email address with have received a couple of newsletters to keep you abreast of things (something that I hope to continue with in the coming year).

We have a facebook site. About 70 people are seeing these posts and it would be great to hit 100 this year so if you are on facebook have a look at it. There are pictures and posts on the facebook site that you won't find anywhere else.

We are also using twitter.

Finally it is very useful to be able to update members at short notice with a text message so if you have a mobile phone number please make sure that we know what it is!

It has been an honour to represent you this year. We are still a great asset to the community of Kirkby Stephen and I look forward to our further improvement in the next 12 months.