



THE TRUMPETER

April 2000

TOTNES BAND

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Disappointment

Unfortunately the Band heard, on Christmas Eve, that this was not to be. The Arts Council were unable to support its application and after months of hard work and fund-raising the Band found themselves back at square one - about to play in the first section of the National Brass Band Championships with instruments that simply could not produce the range of notes required.

The last few months have, however, seen a lot of local support for the Band's efforts and, determined not to let itself or these supporters down, the Band has now made the first big step on its ambitious path. This week it purchased two new BBb basses at a cost of some £8,000 together with two cornets for the Training Band.

The Band want to say thank you to everyone who has donated money to its lottery appeal and assure them that their gift has helped in a very real way with the project - as evidenced by these first purchases. It hopes to reapply to the lottery later this year and members are also exploring all kinds of other ways of attracting the money they desperately need. So if you can help in any way - big or small - it would be music to their ears. Similarly if you want to play or want to learn do give them a ring. They rehearse on Mondays and Thursdays at St John's Church, Bridgetown, Totnes with the Training Band meeting on Thursdays too.

Contest Report

Totnes Band travelled to Bristol on Saturday 25th March, to make their debut in the first section of the National Brass Band Championships. Brass bands, like football teams, are graded according to their performance. Devon has no representatives in the Championship section but the Band's well earned promotion last season meant the county now fields two representatives in the first section; Totnes and nearby rivals Torbay.

In this competition each band in the section plays the same piece of music, a so-called test piece chosen to demonstrate the band's capabilities. Meanwhile, an adjudicator, ensconced in a kind of tent (so that he cannot see who is playing), judges the performance. Such occasions are always a test of nerves as well as musicianship. The first challenge for Totnes however was the early start. The coach left the town for Bristol at 5.30 am and the Band were on stage by 10.00am!

It was the first time out for some new signings and the first time out too for some new kit. In the last few weeks the Band has bought two new BBb basses at a cost of nearly £8,000. This is the first stage in what they had hoped would be a lottery-supported effort to equip them with new instruments. The most recent donation to their campaign has been a generous £1,500 received from the Town Council.

Lottery Latest

Background

In June 1999 Totnes Band applied to the Arts Council of England for £50,000 from the National Lottery.

Its chief aim was to fund new instruments. The current set, with the exception of a few recent purchases, has been assembled piecemeal since the Band's formation in 1971. With an average life expectancy of some 25 years many of its instruments were thus reaching pensionable age. But with, for example, a single BBb bass costing upwards of £4,000 they are not only too expensive for players to buy for themselves they also represent a financial mountain for the Band.

The Band hoped that with support from the National Lottery it could, for the first time in its history, own a matching set of instruments. It also hoped to present its existing instruments to the Training Band. This Band, some of whose members already play with the senior band as well, teaches people of all ages to play a brass instrument but again suffers from a dearth of decent instruments to hand out to learners. Learning is challenging enough without the additional problem of valves that stick or instruments that can't be tuned!

Nor did the Band's aspirations end there. It also hoped to commission Paul Norley, a professional musician who began his playing career with the Band, to write three pieces of music on their behalf. Together they had planned a march (Totnes Castle), a fanfare (Flourish for St John - after the Bridgetown Church where the Band rehearse) and a concert suite featuring local events.

Finally, it hoped to involve a local photographer to work alongside pupils from KEVICs to provide a photographic documentary of the Band. This would have given an insight into the 'life' of the Band and, mounted on display boards, hopefully served to capture interest and tell people more about the Band - wherever it played.

The hard work the Band has put in over the last few weeks stood them in good stead when they were placed twelfth out of the sixteen bands in the section, beating nearby rivals Torbay. This means that Totnes is the premier band in Devon. However, they will be looking to improve on this performance over the next few seasons. In the meantime they would like to say thank you to everyone locally who has helped support their lottery campaign. They still need to raise a considerable amount of money if they are to reach their £55,000 target so a big welcome would be extended not only to anyone interested in playing (or learning) but also to anyone interested in sponsoring the Band and seeing their name carried alongside that of Totnes as the Band travels around the region.

Concerts

Lexington Brass Band.

On May 30th there will be a rare opportunity to hear the Lexington Brass Band in concert, at the Riviera Centre Torquay.

The Lexington Brass Band was founded in 1992 by a group of college professors keen to explore the riches of the British brass band repertoire. The band has received national and international acclaim through its invitational performances at such events as the annual convention of the International Trumpet Guild, the prestigious Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, and the Great American Brass Band Festival. Their tour of England is centred in another honour, an invitation to be the feature guest band at the Gala Concert of the All England Master Brass Band Championships in Cambridge. A non-competitive member of The North American Brass Band Association [NABBA], they are the first member band of NABBA to be so honoured at a major British brass festival.

A notable aspect of the Lexington Brass Band is that its key players are drawn from the brass faculties of nine area colleges and universities (Asbury College, Cambellsville University, Centre College, Cumberland College, Eastern Kentucky University, Georgetown College, Kentucky State University, Morehead State University, and University of Kentucky). In addition, the band includes outstanding public school music educators, students, and talented amateurs from a variety of professions. Incorporated as a non-profit arts ensemble, the band presents a yearly subscription concert series which has featured some of the world's finest soloists, including Philip Smith, Vincent DiMartino, Daniel Perantoni, Roger Webster, and Brian Bowman. During this tour the band is particularly pleased to welcome back as its featured soloist, their former principal cornet, Terry Everson, one of America's finest brass soloists. The tickets are available from the box Riviera Box office. 01803 299992.

Massed Band Concert with Lypstone.

We are very pleased to be associated with the National 4th section champions, Lypstone. We are holding a joint concert on Saturday June 24th, in the Civic Hall, Totnes starting at 7.45pm. The programme should suit most people's tastes.

Boat Trip

This year our annual musical cruise down the river will be on Sun 30th July. For the first time we will be using the Baltic Star, a very luxurious boat that is covered in case of rain. The boat will leave from Baltic Warf at 9.30am and should return by about 7.15pm. The band will be giving a concert in the bandstand at Dartmouth at 3.00pm. Tickets will be available

soon from members of the band or at the information centre, Totnes. Numbers are limited so don't leave it too late before getting your tickets!

Band Diary

April		
	Tue 25 th	Anzac Day Service. 7pm.
May		
	Sun 7 th	Teignmouth Sea front.
	Sun 21 st	Concert/Procession. 8pm. Millennium Festival.
	Mon 29 th	Songs of Praise. Millennium Festival.
	Tue 30 th	Lexington Band Concert. English Riviera Centre. Torquay. 7.30pm
June		
	Sat 17 th	Bugle Contest
	Sat 24 th	Concert/Lypstone
	Sun 25 th	Dartmouth Bandstand 2 - 4pm
July		
	Sun 2 nd	Galmpton Gooseberry Fair. 12.30pm.
	Sun 9 th	Kingsbridge Bandstand. 3pm
	Sat 29 th	Marldon Apple Pie Fair. 12.45pm
	Sun 30 th	Boat Trip. Leave Baltic Warf 9.30am Concert. Dartmouth Bandstand. 3pm
August		
	Sat 5 th	Ashprington Fete. 2.30 - 5.00pm.
	Sun 6 th	Afternoon party. 2.30 - 4.30pm Puddavine House.
	Tue 15 th	Floral Dance. 7pm.
	Thu 17 th	Dawlish Carnival. 7pm.
	Sat 19 th	Bovey Tracey Flower Show. 1.30 - 4.15pm Totnes Carnival. 6.45pm
	Mon 28 th	Staverton fare. 12.45 - 3.45pm
September		
	Sat 9 th	Brass Band Festival. Exmouth
November		
	Sat 4 th	Annual Championships. Torquay.
	Sun 12 th	Remembrance Day Parade/Service. 10.30am.

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Riviera Centre. Torquay. Tuesday 30th May. 7.30pm