



WITH BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR TO ALL BAND MEMBERS, PATRONS AND SUPPORTERS



PRESIDENT'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Well, here we are at the end of another year – not, perhaps, quite so busy as the 350th Corps anniversary in 2014 but busy enough and I was pleased to see that we have managed to perform in most of our usual places – Worthing, Hedge End, Yeovil, Romsey Abbey, Portsmouth Guildhall and so on – and clearly with customary success.

I was absolutely delighted when our Chairman, Paddy Dunn, became an MBE in the Honours List – thoroughly deserved recognition for all he has done for the band in its first decade.

I must pay particular tribute to our new Director of Music, Tony Smallwood, who has stepped effortlessly into this appointment, previously held with distinction by Ted Whealing and David Cole. Much of our success this year has stemmed from his hard work and skilled planning; he is obviously a demanding band trainer and the results, both in rehearsal and on the stage, are clear for all to appreciate. We look forward to seeing more of his expertise on the keyboard as well as with his baton.

Next year plans are afoot to celebrate our 10th birthday in the Autumn. The programme for the year seems to be developing well and I note that we are hoping to add Bath Abbey and Blackpool to our schedule. Furthermore, the Corps Reception at Lancaster

House after the Massed Bands' Beating Retreat on Horse Guards in the summer is firmly in the diary.

All in all, there will be fresh challenges ahead and I am most grateful to all members of the Band Committee who continue to work tirelessly to ensure the success

of each year. Above all, many congratulations to all the members of the band whose musicianship goes from strength to strength. Long may it continue.

I hope you all have a very happy Christmas and a successful and rewarding 2016.

Jock Slater



Sir Jock and Lady Slater are greeted by Wendy Yates at the Royal Marines Museum, Southsea, 28 October 2015

ROUND THE GIGS

Our thanks to Keith Tellick for many of the excellent photos reproduced in this edition. Lara Jelliff reports:

Southampton

In what was their third collaboration, a real musical finesse was achieved when the band were invited to join the Southampton Choral Society in concert for an *Opera Meets Broadway* spectacular. Under the direction of the choir's conductor, Peter Gambie in the combined items, the band achieved a suitable balance as familiar opera choruses such as *The March of the Toreadors* from Bizet's *Carmen* and *The Soldiers' Chorus* from Gounod's *Faust*



were introduced with true orchestral slickness and resonance. However, the band aptly contrasted its bold introductions with real sensitivity, enabling the combined choral voices to rightly take prominence and the soloists to break through.

But the audience still had an opportunity to experience the sustained full band sound! Major Tony Smallwood took up the baton in his own *Victory in Europe* tribute march followed by the breathtaking *Orpheus in the Underworld* overture by Offenbach and later currently one of the band's signature pieces, *Music from Bond* complete with unmissable solos from within the band.

A new feature of this concert, however, and a real tribute to the flexibility of Tony and the band was the contrasting accompaniment by a smaller band ensemble featuring the band's rhythm section and Tony himself on keyboard. In the choir's Broadway numbers such as *The Best of Duke Ellington* and a medley from *Les Miserables* the singers could not fail to enter into the full 'swing' of the music – the influence of the accompaniment playing its part in this!

Chelmsford

This year, appearing at the Civic Theatre in Chelmsford on 25 July, the band performed largely a nautically-themed programme interspersed by some well-chosen showstoppers from stage, screen and classical worlds. Notable features included the fitting tribute march *HMS Trinidad* written by RM Musician George Lloyd, who served on board this ill-fated cruiser on Arctic Convoys during World War II. The band also presented an arrangement of the much acclaimed Irish spectacular, *Riverdance*. Opening with the haunting sound of Sid Tanner's flute other players joined to form a Cèilidh band – notably Tony Smallwood on accordion, Rodney Preston on fiddle, Spence Bundy on soprano sax and Billy Monaghan and Jamie Woodford on percussion. As the momentum increased they too were then joined by the full band, who took the audience into the interval in a truly breath-taking finish!

Joined in this concert by the Military Wives choir from Portsmouth under the direction of Andrew Cleary, the audience was treated to a mix of delightful choral solos and pieces accompanied by the band; an aptly chosen Vera Lynn selection and the ever popular number *Wherever You Are* to name but a few.

In this concert too both band and choir felt the privilege of performing alongside their special guest, Normandy Veteran Jim Radford, who presented his own tribute pieces – the second, *Shores of Normandy*, sensitively accompanied by the band with the poignant finish leaving a hush over the theatre as band and audience were left in deep reflection.



From top: Chelmsford: Steve Tanner solos during David Cole's arrangement of James Bond music; Riverdance, Portsmouth Military Wives Choir in the background; Sian Brace (oboe) solos Caccini's Ave Maria; Jim Radford, Normandy Veteran, tells it like it was.



Above:
Bognor: Amanda Goldthorpe-Hall sings Songs That Won the War, and leads the singing in Rule Britannia.

Right and below:
Romsey Abbey: the Brass line-up; with the Portsmouth Military Wives Choir.



Bognor Regis

A gloriously bright summer's day dawned for the band's visit to the Alexandra Theatre on the seafront on 6 September. This concert, definitively billed as a *Last Night of the Proms* spectacular, opened with some nautical favourites contrasted by well-chosen classical masterpieces. These included the beautifully lyrical *Ave Maria* by Caccini played as an oboe solo by Sian Brace, a full band version of *Greensleeves*, and the mighty and majestic symphonic tone poem, *Finlandia* by Sibelius, as the closing number for the first half.

Special mention, however, should be given to two further soloists: Steve Tanner impressed the audience with his swift finger work and unmistakably powerful piccolo sound in *The Shanghai Sailor*, and Amanda Goldthorpe-Hall showed her impressive versatility, leading the audience in a wonderful reminiscence in *Songs That Won the War* then later filling the packed auditorium with her rendition of *Nessun Dorma*, sensitively accompanied by the band. But the finale certainly didn't disappoint. Opening this last part of the concert with a locally patriotic number, *Sussex by the Sea*, the band launched into their own version of *Fantasia on British Sea Songs* before being re-joined by Amanda in *Jerusalem*. Following some time for reflection in *Prelude* and *Sunset*, she returned again to lead in *Land of Hope and Glory*, the central theme of the band's *Britannic Salute* arrangement.

Romsey Abbey

On 12 September we revisited Romsey with Portsmouth's Military Wives Choir. Our Director, Tony Smallwood, chose his programme well to match the grand surrounds of the abbey. As well as band favourites such as the opening march *Soldiers of the Sea* and Mac McDermott's atmospheric and moving piece *The Seafarers*, regular band soloists Sian Brace and Steve Tanner were joined in this concert by Rodney Preston who showed his true versatility by swapping his clarinet, his regular instrument in the band, for the violin and presented to the audience a beautifully controlled performance of *The Ashokan Farewell*. But the choir were equally in fine form and matched the versatility of the band as favourites such as *Rhythm of Life* and a *Vera Lynn Medley* which were contrasted in the second half, first with a beautiful rendition of *On My Own* followed by the more upbeat soul song *Lean On Me* with the band's rhythm section.

For the finale and all the *Last Night of the Proms* pomp and circumstance as expected the abbey was awash with the waving of flags and programmes as Tony led the band, receptive audience and choir through the usual favourites before an aptly timed period of prayer and reflection for the evening hymn, *Crimond* followed by *Sunset*. For the band especially this proved a truly moving and apt tribute to the recent passing of our beloved tuba player, Albert Hall.

Portsmouth Guildhall

Next, on 4 October, the band were delighted to be invited once again to join their long-time friends, the Milton Glee Choir, in concert at the Guildhall. A performance which was entitled *Sing!!* included a pleasing contrast of choral solos by the choir and their guests, the Bath Chorus, and a notable number of joint items with band accompaniment. In these the band provided a fitting balance and, when required, real sensitivity as well as performing significant numbers in their own right. These included *Victory in Europe*, Mac McDermott's symphonic tone poem for band *The Seafarers*, and the spectacular Farr arrangement of the Bach classic *Tocatta in D Minor*.



Royal Marines Museum

Finally, what better way to mark the Corps' 351st birthday than a tribute concert at the Royal Marines Museum on 28 October. Packed tightly into the band's magnificent rehearsal room (arguably the world's finest!), the large audience was aptly treated to a nautically themed concert, ably supported by their

Above:

Portsmouth Guildhall: with the Milton Glee Choir and Bath Chorus; percussionists Billy Monaghan and Jamie Woodford at work; David L Cole solos on alto.

Below:

Royal Marines Museum: Tony Smallwood conducts.



Keith Tellick Photography

guests for the occasion, the Corps of Drums from the Royal Hospital School, Holbrook. The impressive drum static performed by the young drummers set the tone of the concert which included other notable solos by members of the band particularly Tim Mulkern who performed a beautiful lyrical arrangement of *Nessun Dorma* on trumpet. Then the baton was handed to former RM Director of Music Richard Harvey, now the school's Bandmaster, who directed the band in a special request piece, *Irish Tune from County Derry*, and the now famous *Riverdance* featuring Rodney Preston (violin), Tony Smallwood (piano accordion), Steve Tanner (flute) and Spencer Bundy (soprano saxophone).

The concert, however, was significantly marked by real moments of poignance. The closing piece of the first half, David Cole's arrangement of *Final Countdown* and *Love Changes Everything*, recalled the 11 Royal Marines musicians who tragically lost their lives at the time of the IRA bombing of the Royal Marines School of Music in Deal on 22 September 1989. Later in the second half, *HMS Trinidad March* was followed by an original composition in words and music *Am Sailing to Westward* by Richard Harvey, which movingly depicts the fateful story of HMS *Trinidad*. Overall a perfectly programmed concert of tribute, remembrance and celebration.

Clockwise from right:
 Royal Marines Museum: Rodney Preston following his Ashokan Farewell solo; the Corps of Drums from the Royal Hospital School, Holbrook; a precision display from the Corps of Drums; the Corps with the Band President and Director of Music; Riverdance, Major Richard Harvey conducting; Bob Scarrett, librarian, doing a roaring trade at the sales counter.



It is with the greatest sorrow we announce that Albert Hall, principal tuba, passed away peacefully on Sunday 6th September. He was 85.

Albert was one of our founder members and rarely missed a concert or rehearsal. Musically, of course, he had impeccable credentials following a distinguished career in the Royal Marines Band Service having joined in March 1946 and achieved the rank of Bandmaster by the time of his retirement from the Corps. During training at the Royal Naval School of Music at Burford he was awarded the Cassel prize for his instrument and all-round musicianship. Quite recently Albert provided a lovely photo of himself on parade with his tuba serenading Noel Coward, who paid a visit to the school in 1948. Someone asked him what he had played on that occasion. "Coward's own composition *Mad About The Boy* of course!" said he with a chuckle!



for the Queen's wedding to Prince Philip. Subsequently he served in HMSS *Duke of York*, *Implacable* and *Glory*, in the Far East for the Korean war, at Deal, Stonehouse Barracks and also in HMSS *Newfoundland*, *Ceylon*, *Albion*, *Bulwark*, *Belfast* and *Daedalus*.

In his second career Albert became a civil servant in the Naval Pay and Pensions Division at HMS *Centurion* but he continued to play in various bands and was the Music Director of the Gosport Operatic Society. He was also a member of HMS *Sultan's* Volunteer Band, coordinator of the Gosport Silver Band and

principal bass in the Hampshire ex-Servicemens' Concert Band. He was a committed member of the Royal Marines family and a considerable inspiration to all members of his immediate family particularly his grandson Dale who joined the Corps in 2009 – but not as a musician!

We all have affectionate and happy memories of Albert which will remain with us for years. We miss him enormously not least because he stood out as a tower of strength and stability in our band, and in his very quiet and determined way was a highly respected friend and colleague to all of us.

At his funeral, which was attended by many friends and colleagues including former Principal Director of Music Lt Col Jim Mason and Staff Bandmaster Michael Hutton who had also joined up with Albert at Burford, the RMA Brass Quintet led by Jon Yates played as the congregation assembled and dispersed. During the service Jon paid an especially moving tribute to Albert on behalf of his family and friends.



After initial induction at the Royal Naval School of Music in Scarborough Albert joined 98 Squad at Howstrake Camp, Isle of Man, the last squad to join there. Training continued at Burford where he was selected to augment the band of HMS *Illustrious* for the Royal Fleet Review on the Clyde in 1947. The following year saw him street lining in Trafalgar Square





I was born in Chichester in 1965 and attended Broadbridge Heath primary school where I attempted to learn the recorder – which I disliked! My grandfather was an accomplished ‘cellist who had played with the Syd Lawrence orchestra so I suppose music was in my blood. At the Weald school in Billingshurst when I was eleven I had another go and asked the county brass music teacher, Graham Johnson, if I could learn the trumpet. He told me my lips were too big (!) and then produced an old brown leather case that looked like a wind sock and suggested I have a go with it. I took this ‘peashooter’ home and that night blew it as much as I could in the first position until bedtime.

Later that year my mother found a band for me to play in – the Horsham Royal British Legion band – and I parked myself amongst the trombones. I recall that the first piece I attempted was Fucik’s *Entry of the Gladiators* to which I probably contributed nothing, but I slowly picked up my reading and coordination so that when I was 13 I was asked to join the West Sussex County Youth Concert Band, a much more demanding situation than I was used to. But I quickly got the taste for life as a musician when we played at the Markgronen beer festival in Germany. At 14 I was asked by Fred Woods (brother of David Woods RM) if I would like to join a big band he was setting up; this was a great experience for me to learn about big band playing in the different types of big band and jazz styles, so I felt very lucky to have this opportunity.

By the time I was 16 I considered joining the Services but eventually chose to leave school and started working in the printed circuit industry. Then sadly, with the competing demands of my career and girlfriends my trombone playing took an increasing back seat until I finally stopped when I was about 20. Four years later my boss died in an unfortunate boating accident and I was left running the company which eventually led me to start my own printed circuit firm, which I gradually built up to over 20 employees. In 2008 I merged my company with a bigger firm, GSPK Circuits, which was involved with manufacturing electronic parts for the Typhoon, and various other products for the Ministry of Defence even including bugle mouthpieces of a new design inspired by Jon Yates!

Meanwhile I had taken up playing my trombone again and was soon playing in a function band from 6pm to midnight. I also started playing for the Tony Strudwick Band where I met Dave Clackett. I owe a big thank you to Dave as he introduced me to playing at Warner’s Sinah Warren Holiday Camp in Hayling Island and later to the RMA Concert Band. But I wanted to learn the French horn and started playing that in 2010: I really enjoyed the challenge. After working hard to get my playing up to a good standard I was accepted and became a member of the RMA Band.



At Leeds Castle with the RMA Concert Band.

I feel very honoured and lucky to play alongside so many accomplished musicians. I currently play in the RMA Concert Band on French Horn, the RMA Dance band, Tickle in the Pickle Funk band, Mick Goulding’s Big Band, the Tony Strudwick Orchestra, No Jacket Required (Phil Collins Tribute Band) on trombone and with Derrick Garman’s 10 piece Jazz Band on Trumpet. And of course the Bugle at any of Arundel’s official commemoration services. Nothing like a bit of variety!

To me music is about audience enjoyment, the people and good friendships you make, and always doing your very hardest to get it right as playing in a band is a team game – practice at any opportunity and always look for ways to develop and improve. You’re never too old to learn.



At the Hurlingham Club with the RMA Dance Band.

SMALL ENSEMBLES



The Brass Quintet continues to be busy and most recently has performed several times in London – including at the Mansion House, the Tower of London, Guildhall and Greenwich – Southampton, on board HMS *Warrior*, at Goodwood, the Isle of Wight and Hove. They also visited Japan once again for the annual Barakura harvest festival at the English Gardens in Tatashina and called in at the British Embassy in Tokyo for an extra gig on the way back [How exhausting! – Ed]

The RMA Dance Band (led by Dave Clackett) and String Quartet (Rodney Preston) have also been similarly busy.



The RMA String Quartet at RM Barracks, Wandsworth.



The RMA Brass Quintet in Japan.

Follow the RMA Concert Band: concerts arranged for early 2016



For further details please also see our website at www.rmacb.org.uk

Date	Time	Venue	Box Office
Sunday 21st February	3.00 pm	Worthing, Assembly Hall <i>with Portsmouth Military Wives Choir</i>	01903 206206
Sunday 6th March	3.00 pm	Hedge End, Berry Theatre	01489 799499
Sunday 20th March	3.00 pm	Yeovil, Octagon Theatre <i>with Yeovilton Military Wives Choir</i>	01935 422884
Saturday 30th April	7.30 pm	Bath Abbey <i>with Bath Chorus</i>	01782 232631
Saturday 22nd May	3.00 pm	Portsmouth Guildhall <i>with Milton Glee Choir</i>	0844 8472362

WEBSITES



The RMA Concert Band website

Visit the RMA Concert Band website at www.rmacb.org.uk.

The Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund

This recently launched RM Charity is run by Royal Marines for Royal Marines particularly those seriously wounded on recent operations in Afghanistan. It aimed to raise £6M by 28th October 2014 to ensure proper support would be provided to them and their beneficiaries in the short, medium and long term. This target is now extended into the future. Visit their website at www.rmctf.org.uk.



The Royal Marines Museum

The home of the Royal Marines Association Concert Band which provides us with the world's finest band room!
www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk

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