

CLACTON-ON-SEA BAND

Twenty-first Anniversary Magazine

FOUNDERS

ERNEST W. HALL

B. J. EDWARDS

THE LATE CAPTAIN J. NIMMO

A Brief History of the Band

By E. W. HALL

(Musical Director of the Clacton Concert Orchestra)

The Band, as it is today, was first formed in the summer of 1948 under the name of Clacton Town Silver Band. After a meeting of the three founders, the late Captain J. Nimmo, Mr. E. W. Hall and Mr. J. B. Edwards, it was agreed to contact all known brass instrumentalists in the district.

The officials elected at the ensuing meeting were: Bandmaster, Captain Nimmo; Deputy Bandmaster, Mr. B. J. Edwards; Secretary, Mr. E. W. Hall; Treasurer, Major A. H. Coney.

A set of good secondhand instruments was purchased for around £1,300, together with new uniforms costing about £500. A loan from the bank was obtained and the Band was now in readiness to play.

The first rehearsal was held at the Essoldo Cinema, and subsequent ones at the Brotherhood Hall, where they are held to this day. Clacton Brotherhood gave the Band free rehearsal facilities for the period during which the bank loan was being repaid. This was invaluable help at a time when it was most needed.

Right from the time of its formation the Band had most generous financial support from its Supporters' Club who, by their giving and hard work, must have raised some £3,000 in the twenty years of its history.

The main source of the income has always been the summer concerts at the Band Pavilion, promoted by the Clacton Urban District Council.

The Musical Directors have been the late Captain J. Nimmo (1948–1950), Mr. E. W. Hall (1950–1963), Mr. D. Cawdell (1963–1966) and Mr. J. G. Ewell (1966–1967). The present Bandmaster is Mr. E. Stewart.

The Band at the present time has a very keen and able youth section which has won many prizes in solo contests and quartet competitions. These young people are taught by that veritable youth enthusiast, Mr. Eric Stewart. With such a young and enthusiastic section the Band's future should be assured.

Early Days

By J. B. EDWARDS, *former Councillor Clacton U.D.C.*

Mr. Edwards was the first Deputy Bandmaster, conducting on several occasions when the late Captain Nimmo was absent.

He says: 'The first committee was formed at my house, which was Myrtle Lodge, Rosemary Road, at which Mr. Les Cox, *East Anglian* correspondent, attended.

'A great deal of hard work, money and worry was entailed in its formation, especially as at that time I was challenged that a band could not be started because there was not sufficient interest in the town.

'However, having been connected with the musical fraternity for many years, and especially in the Brass Band movement throughout the country, I was determined to find a complement of men which, with Captain Nimmo's and Ernest Hall's endeavours, was accomplished.

'The first instruments belonged to the De Havilland Works Band, and we managed to buy them when that band broke up, also their music library.

'At that time I was also the conductor of the Brotherhood Male Voice Choir, of some thirty men, and attended at the Chairman's Command Performance at the Town Hall.'

Mr. Edwards also states that he played the soprano cornet for a number of years in the Band.

Past Instrumentalists

By F. W. SEYMOUR (*Hon. Treasurer Supporters' Club*)

Throughout the past twenty years there have been many instrumentalists who, for one reason or other, have left the Band, and to these we take this opportunity of expressing our appreciation and thanks for their services in providing entertainment for the people of Clacton and visitors to the town during the summer season.

Snapshots of the Members

ANN HEADWORTH. A busy housewife with three children, Ann has been in the band for nineteen years, having been taught to play by her father, Arthur Whitehead. As a former treasurer and secretary she has given yeoman service to the band.

ERIC WHITE. Born in Great Bentley, Essex, Eric has been in the band for twenty years. He learned to play in the local village band, joined the Clacton Band on its formation, and was quickly promoted to solo cornet, which position in the band he has this year relinquished to Ann Headworth. Eric is a gifted musician who could play in any championship band.

MICHAEL HODGSON has played solo cornet for two years with the band. His only hobby is music and he comes from Waltham Abbey on the borders of Epping Forest. He used to play with the Lucton Band at Loughton, Essex, and in 1962 toured the Continent with that band.

MOIRA LODER. One of Eric Stewart's pupils she has been in the band for four and a half years. Moira is a member of the National Youth Band and has recently come into the prize list at the solo contests, beating the boys of the band at the post.

BILL STIRLING. Bill usually plays solo cornet but has just recently taken over soprano cornet. He hails from Scotland, has been in the band for a year and has taken over the position of secretary.

BARRY ALDOUS. A pupil of Clacton County High School, Barry has been with the band four and a half years. He is another of Eric Stewart's pupils, is a member of the National Youth Band and a prize winner at the solo contests.

JOSIE HOOKER. Josie has been with the band for four years and is yet another pupil of Eric Stewart. Her hobbies are playing the mouth organ, recorder and piano. She is at the Clacton Secondary School for Girls and hopes to become a music teacher when she leaves.

VERDUN BROWNE. Charlie, as he is generally known, was born in Brixton, London. He was taught to play by Mr. Clark, the bandmaster of the old Clacton Town Band in 1937. Charlie likes his bottle of Guinness and his hobby is wine-making. His wife is one of the leading lights of the Band Supporters' Club.

MARTIN DAVEY. Born in London and taught to play by Eric Stewart, Martin has won many solo contests and is the present Southern Area (under 14 years) champion. He is the Band's assistant librarian and a member of the Youth Band committee. Martin was the first Clacton player to be accepted into the National Youth Band.

LYNNETTE WHITEHEAD. Born in Clacton, Lyn is now aged 15. She is yet another of Eric Stewart's pupils and has been in the band for three years. Lyn is interested in sailing but her ambition is to be a shorthand typist. She is another member of the National Youth Band.

CHRIS BALL. Chris is an insurance agent for the Co-op. and is always looking for business. He has a wife and two children and has been in the band for many years.

ARTHUR AUSTIN. Born in Thorpe-le-Soken, Arthur has been a member of the band for eighteen years and chairman of the band committee, handing over to the present chairman, Mr. Frank Higgins, at the last A.G.M. Arthur gives Eric Stewart a hand with the youngsters and devotes hours of his time to the band.

PETER COLEMAN. Born in London, Peter has been in the band for four years. He plays trombone, also Bb bass if required. Peter has been heard playing string bass and the clarinet and drums, but his ambition is to be a good trombone player.

EDWIN SMYTH. Born in Yorkshire, Edwin has been with the band for three and a half years. He is also a Salvation Army bandsman, is a sign-writer by profession and has a wife and son. His other hobby he says is 'Mucking about with tape-recorders'.

FRANK HIGGINS. Born in Markgate, Bedfordshire, Frank is a builder by trade, has built many houses in Clacton, and his only son is in the business with him. Frank is the present Chairman of the Band committee, also chairman of the Clacton Swimming Club and interested in the Clacton Sailing Club. He was a former member of the Tottenham Town, the Middlesex Regiment and North London Excelsior Bands.

MURRAY BOOKER. Murray is 16 years old and still at school. With his expressive eyebrows he is one of the characters of the band. He was one of the first Clacton youngsters to be accepted into the National Youth Band. In addition to winning many solo prizes he has held the Southern Area (under fourteen) championship for two years. (This is now held by Martin Davey). Murray is another pupil of Eric Stewart.

PAUL DEBNAM. Paul is 15 years of age and was taught by Eric Stewart. He came into the band last year and would like to be a naval pilot.

JACKIE DAVEY. Born in London, Jackie was taught by Eric Stewart and has been with the band for four and a half years. She is still at school and hopes to be a P.T. teacher or a policewoman. Entering solo contests she has been placed fourth, then third, then second, and finally first, thereby beating her brother Martin and Murray Booker. Jackie is secretary of the newly formed Youth Band committee.

BURT COLLINS. Burt has been the secretary and then the treasurer of the band until the last A.G.M. (The present treasurer is Michael Hodgson.) Boxing and football were his other hobbies, but a knee operation put him out of these sports. It is said that to get money out of him while he was the band's treasurer was like trying to get blood out of a stone.

JIM BUSH. Born in Finsbury, North London, Jimmy was one of the founder members of the band in 1948 and is foreman in Morfey's yard in Clacton. Jim has won four prizes at solo contests, and playing darts and dancing are his main hobbies. He likes his drop of ale and can be seen before a concert with his mate, Arthur Whitehead, sampling the local brew.

JIM EWELL. Jim was born in New Malden, Surrey. He has been with the band one year, 1966-67, acting as Bandmaster, and is now playing Eb bass. He is an assistant manager in the Co-op grocery department. Jim was in the Hanwell Band before coming to Clacton.

ARTHUR WHITEHEAD. Born in Folkestone, Kent, Arthur has been in the band for nineteen years, having played in the Salvation Army Band at Folkestone at the age of 9 years. He has a wife and three daughters, two of whom are also in the Clacton Band. His ambition—brass band playing for fifty years!

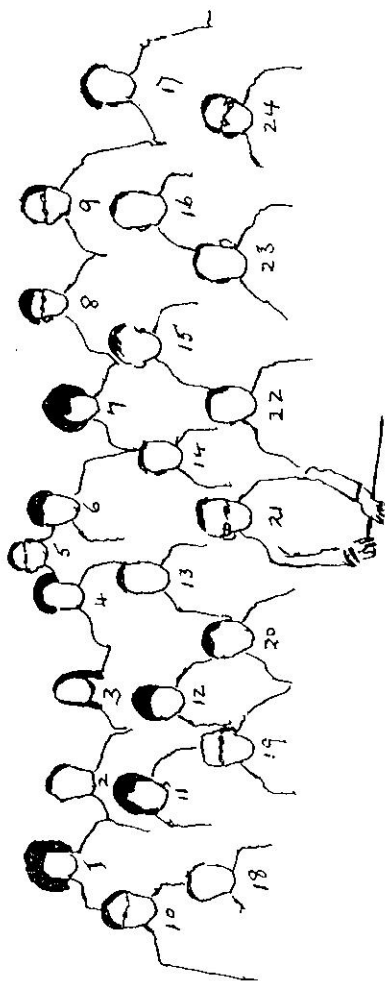
JO JAGGARD. A former member of the old Ardleigh village and Colchester bands, farmer Jo has been with the band for three years and his daughter, Ann Platten, sometimes sings at our concerts.

DOUG FULLYLOVE. Doug joined the band in 1965. He was only eight years of age when his father taught him the drums. He played in the Welsh National Orchestra at 15 and later came to London where he played professionally. During the war he was in the Royal Artillery Band.

ERIC STEWART. Last but by no means least, our Bandmaster. Born in London, Eric is very proud of his Scottish ancestry and his fighting spirit has done much to encourage the band. A bandsman of wide experience, he has played with the De Havilland Works, Barnet and St. Albans bands, and it is undoubtedly to his skilled tuition that the young members of the band owe their success—and they are the loudest in saying so.

THE CLACTON-ON-SEA BAND 1969





(1) Ann Headworth (2) Eric White (3) Josie Hooker (4) Bill Stirling (5) Doug Fullylove
 (6) Michael Hodgson (7) Moira Loder (8) Barry Aldous (9) Frank Higgins (10) Chris Ball
 (11) Lyn Whitehead (12) Jackie Davey (13) Burt Collins (14) Martin Davey (15) Paul
 Debnam (16) Edwin Smyth (17) Peter Coleman (18) Jo Jaggard (19) Jim Ewell (20) Murray
 Booker (21) Eric Stewart (22) Verdun Browne (23) Jim Bush (24) Arthur Whitehead

Sunday 21st September—THIRD ANNUAL BAND FESTIVAL
in the Princes Theatre from 11 am

Present-day Instrumentalists

ANN HEADWORTH solo cornet
ERIC WHITE assistant solo cornet
MICHAEL HODGSON assistant solo cornet
BILL STIRLING soprano cornet
BARRY ALDOUS flugel horn
MOIRA LODER repiano cornet
JOSIE HOOKER second cornet
VERDUN BROWNE third cornet
MARTIN DAVEY solo horn
LYN WHITEHEAD first horn
CHRIS BALL second horn
JACKIE DAVEY first baritone
BURT COLLINS second baritone
MURRAY BOOKER solo euphonium
PAUL DEBNAM second euphonium
ARTHUR AUSTIN solo trombone
PETER COLEMAN first trombone
EDWIN SMYTH second trombone
FRANK HIGGINS bass trombone
JIM BUSH Eb bass
JIM EWELL Eb bass
ARTHUR WHITEHEAD Bb bass
JO JAGGARD Bb bass
DOUG FULLYLOVE drums

The following instrumentalists (all regular players in the past) are now only available occasionally to fill a gap:

JEFF BRYANT soprano cornet
LINDA SCRUTTON assistant solo cornet
VALERIE SCRUTTON second cornet
MALCOLM HOOK solo euphonium
ROY THOMPSON Eb bass

The photograph on the centre pages depicts the majority of the players, but unfortunately there are a few who could not be present when it was taken because of short notice.

The First Lady of the Band

By ANN HEADWORTH

When I joined the Clacton-on-Sea Band nineteen years ago it was very unusual to see a girl playing a brass instrument. However, nowadays it is quite common to see members of the fair sex playing their part.

After fourteen years as the only girl in the Band, I have been joined by Linda, Moira, Valerie, Jackie, my sister Lyn, and last year Josie. So now we boast seven feminine members to bring some glamour to the band.

'Brass banding' is a most fulfilling and interesting hobby. We do a great deal of concert work and attend several contests throughout the year. This involves travelling all over the London and Home Counties, meeting many interesting people and, in the process, making many firm friendships.

Moira, Lyn and Jackie, we are very proud to say, are all in the National Youth Band of Great Britain, together with three of our boys, Barry Aldous, Martin Davey and Murray Booker. This is indeed a great honour and proves our girls' (and boys') playing ability.

We all enjoy wearing our uniforms, which are quite becoming, and we are all very proud to be part of the Clacton-on-Sea Band.

My First National Youth Band Course

By MARTIN DAVEY

It was quite a pleasant morning as we left for Harpendon. I was travelling with my parents and my sister by car. After an uneventful journey we at last arrived at the Harpendon Grammar School and soon, after bidding my farewells, I was alone—alone in a community which probably had never seen me, or I any of them before.

At first, in those early hours I felt like going home but then, suddenly, I made my first friend in Eric Johnson, and, I may now

add, he is my best friend in the N.Y.B. This was Eric's third course and so he was already an old hand. Anyway, now that I had a friend who would show me the ropes I felt a lot better.

That evening we were shown our dormitories and in mine there were eight beds. Eric, to my relief, was also with me. After tea we went for a walk, but we were back for supper at 10 p.m. and then we went to bed. That night in bed I lay awake thinking about my audition the next day.

In the morning after breakfast we had an assembly and then we all separated into our own groups and went for our auditions. My goal was to make sure that I didn't end up bottom of my section, but soon after hearing the first few players I thought that there wasn't much chance of avoiding it; then, to my joy, another horn player played a slow melody, so my hopes began to rise again.

All too soon my own turn came. I stood up and walked to the centre of the room. All eyes were fixed on me. I was already nervous, but seeing how they all looked at me made my legs turn to jelly. I started my piece a little shakily but I soon picked up as I got going. Soon I had forgotten about the others in the room; I just played on keeping my eyes on the music.

I felt quite satisfied with my performance afterwards but worse was to come. Mr. Carr, our tutor, gave me some sight reading. However, this didn't prove too bad and soon I had finished. I felt relieved after my audition and from then on I seemed to enjoy the course more.

That Sunday afternoon all the band members stood outside the main hall. The silence was unbelievable. You could have heard a pin drop. One by one the sections were called in, starting from the bottom and working up to the top.

Soon we came to the horn section—'Margaret Brown, Martin Davey . . .' I didn't listen to any other names for I had scored my goal and I wasn't the bottom horn in my section.

Later the first full rehearsal was under way. It was a splendid noise, all the sections blending and mingling their sound as if the whole band had been practising for weeks. From then on we played six hours each day and by Friday everything was perfect.

On Saturday morning the band, under its brilliant conductor the late Dr. Denis Wright, made a B.B.C. radio recording for listeners overseas. After this the rest of the day was free till 6.30 p.m.

That afternoon I bought presents for my family but time flew by and all too soon I was preparing myself for the concert. At 6.45 p.m. we left Harpendon for London and by 7.25 we were all seated ready for the concert. The success of the course was obvious. The audience kept on applauding. Soon the concert was over and we were back at Harpendon having supper.

It was pretty late that night before I really got to sleep, but at last I did. The next morning all the good-byes were said. My parents picked me up and we were travelling back to Clacton after an experience which I would never forget.

How I became a Bandsman

By MURRAY BOOKER

A decision was made, several years ago, by the Clacton Band Committee to recruit some young people who were keen to learn music and play a brass instrument. The ultimate aim was that one day they would be able to take their place among the adult members of the band.

I was one of these youngsters who was able to take advantage of this decision and became a junior member. The task of teaching us was given to Eric Stewart, the then Deputy Bandmaster. This was a stroke of luck for all of us as it soon became clear that here we had a remarkable musician who was able and willing to teach us. Several other members of the senior band have given Mr. Stewart their assistance, notably Mr. Arthur Austin.

Most of us now play with the senior band and have done so for several years, and we are all very proud of this achievement.

We have also formed our own Youth Band, conducted of course by Eric Stewart. This band has already played at many engagements and has given a full Massed Youth Band concert at the Town Hall with other young players from Colchester, Harwich and Romford

joining us. We have also played at many solo, quartet and septet contests.

The number of trophies we have won individually must go to show what a fine teacher Mr. Stewart is. Six of us also play in the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain. Surely this is a record from one band!

What of the future? We have formed a Youth Band Committee and hope to raise money by holding pop dances and jumble sales in aid of the new instruments which the senior band has purchased with the help of a £2,000 loan.

None of us will ever regret joining the Band and neither will we forget all we owe to Mr. Stewart for the time and patience he has devoted to us. I hope that we shall make him proud of his Youth Band and may it last for ever.

A Bandsman's Wife

My husband has been a brass bandsman for many years and everything in our household and family life is geared to the band.

The grass grows to jungle-like proportions, gates totter on broken hinges, and ceilings fall with the strains of his cornet. The dog always accompanies his master.

On contest days I become a 'brass widow', seeing him off as early as 7 a.m., knowing that I shall be lucky if he returns before 1 a.m. the next day.

It's worse if the band wins because he returns in merry mood and wakes the whole household. We all eventually get some sleep, and the next morning the children start him off again by wanting to know, 'How did the band get on?' Doubtless they will join him in the band as soon as they can blow an instrument.

There is nothing for it but to give in gracefully. As they say, 'If you can't beat them, join them', and if I begin to beat the drum, I will make more noise than the rest of them put together!

One of the Band's Regular Singers

The sirens wailed, bombs exploded in the distance and the lights in the shelter suddenly failed. Faced with the necessity of keeping fifty or so schoolgirls from worry the mistresses asked each girl to entertain for about two minutes. The result was an interesting mixture of stories, poems, mimicry and, unexpectedly, a very deep contralto voice singing 'The Bells of St. Mary's'. This was Mary Every (now Mary Seymour) singing for the first time in public.

Until then no more than a violinist in the school orchestra and a chorister in the house choir, no one had particularly noticed this voice, but suddenly at the age of 14 it had matured.

There followed solo work at school, several Gilbert and Sullivan parts, Orpheus in Gluck's 'Orpheus and Euridice' and a local cinema talent contest at 15, with third prize.

Work at college interrupted this but after qualifying Mary joined the Royal Choral Society and sang for ten years under the baton of the late Sir Malcolm Sargent, also winning a bursary for Trinity College of Music with Joseph Dale Smith, whilst teaching at Queen Mary's Hospital School, Carshalton.

In 1953 Mary came to Clacton with her mother for a holiday and entered the weekly Band Pavilion contest, and won it. She stayed at Ebor Lodge Hotel and later married the proprietor, Alan Seymour. She thought that her singing would then more or less finish—but she's still around.