

## **Chairman's Report 2009**

This year we have had another hard working year:

At the West of England Contest in Torquay-Although we were slightly disappointed coming 3<sup>rd</sup> to Camborne and Verwood, it was still an excellent result –and we should all be extremely proud of it. We have unfortunately missed promotion to the first section by half a point for 2010 –but are very well placed for Torquay next year- right at the top of the section.

Some memorable dates during the year have been Alan's Memorial Concert in Amesbury in March, the joint concert with Hyde at the City Hall in May and the recent sell-out concert here at the Methodist Church which everyone seemed to enjoy enormously.

We have continued to work with the Royal British Legion and Veterans at a number of events.

This year we have welcomed Jo Miller and David Pearce to the horn section and Emily Neve has moved up from training band to the main band on cornet and Alex has recently joined on trombone.

On the flip side we have unfortunately lost Adrian Henson due to work commitments and also Geoffrey and Suzi Saunders and Sam Reid –plus we have also had some players taking temporary breaks including Naomi, Nigel, Martin Smith and Michelle and Dave Coombes -we hope they will be back playing with us in the future as losing this number of players, even temporarily, has had an obvious impact on the band.

On a positive note Alan Johnson should be back with us in the next few weeks after his shoulder surgery as should Chris Friend following knee operations –we hope that Tina will also be back with us at some point hopefully in the not too distant future.

Looking forward, we do plan if possible, next year to compete at Bugle in June and we will see how the new format Wessex Contest goes on 28<sup>th</sup> November and decide from there whether we continue to support the event going forward.

Entertainments Contests do seem to be the way forward as an enjoyable event for the band and a way of establishing a very varied repertoire of music.

Thank you's –as always a long list.....

Thanks as always go to:

- Peter, the Vice Presidents and trustees for all their support throughout the year.
- The committee for their amazing work -I would like to mention Tim Becky and Naomi who resigned during the course of the year and also Jo Miller, Barry Allen and Andy Mitchenall who are standing down and taking a break from this point onwards.
- A big thank you to the re-elected members for continuing on with the committee –the effort that you all put in is fabulous!
- I also welcome the new committee members on board some new faces and some old ones returning!

Also thanks go to:

- Our tea ladies and helpers at concerts
- Dunfords for storage and use of transport and especially Tim and Simon for driving the van
- Sarah and Charlie at the George for their great support
- The Church here, and all the helpers at the recent concert
- The people of Shrewton for their ongoing enthusiasm
- Dave and Mary Ridout for the annual table top sale-a fantastic effort this year
- Stan Lippeatt for his hard work in December and March
- Any deps who have helped during the year -especially at the moment I would like to mention Kevin and Laura from Downton who, due to the current shortage of players, are helping us for the Weymouth contest.
- Lastly and above all I would like to say a big thank you to Mike who has worked through another hard year often not knowing if there will be 9 or 39 people at practice, he has taken training band, lugged percussion equipment, music and stands around and kept us going!

As I just mentioned Barry is standing down from the committee after many years' service as the band secretary-thank you Barry-we have a small gift here for you.

Right –sorry about this it's time for the serious stuff.....

I do have some concerns at the moment about the band and the future of the band - we have seriously struggled during the year for players both at practices and events. This has an impact on Mike and on all the other players who do attend –and I have to say I suspect that there is probably not one of us who hasn't thought at some point of jacking it all in and not bothering -we cannot let this happen –Shrewton has had a band in it's midst for 180 years this year coming and we have an amazing group of very talented people, capable of so much –we just all need to make the

effort to attend, communicate a bit more effectively and work together as a team.

The process of gaining promotion into the first section is going to be harder from 2010 due to changes in the structure of the sections which are being introduced from January –the Championship section will only consist of 10 bands and there will be some bands forced down a section by this ruling –this in turn will put pressure on those bands looking for promotion.

So, to make the massive step in to the first section and more importantly to maintain ourselves in that section, we need action now –we firstly need more people at more practices (not that old chestnut I hear groans from the band) –we find that we are continually repeating what we do on a Monday again on a Thursday because we have a totally different set of people at practice - the people attending both practices are not challenged by this and I am sure some do not attend both practices because of this. There is no obvious solution -and we all accept that people have commitments outside band, which do affect the ability of some to attend both practices –however I think there are times when more effort can be made to attend.

Secondly –we need to continue building a constantly changing programme of music which challenges and develops players and which the band enjoys playing- again we can only do this if more people attend more practices

-Thirdly, we probably need less engagements overall, but better quality engagements- planned better and more in advance, However we must do this without cutting ourselves off from the communities who support us so admirably through the year.

-We as a committee need to discuss the way forward for the band –we need to find a way of signing more players so that important seats are always covered and we develop healthy competition in the band and lastly, we also need to get all the players, from the least to the most experienced, and our audience too, to feedback to us and to Mike their thoughts, likes and dislikes –so that practices and events are an enjoyable experience for everyone.

It's not all doom and gloom !

-Socials this year have included curry nights, a win at skittles over Downton and the recent dinner dance at the Red Lion.

-Training band continues to grow –and we all enjoyed their pieces at the recent concert here in Shrewton.

-Century Club under control of Jon is doing well but we could do with a few more members –currently 85 members and aiming for 100. The total profit made during the year was £454.

-The website has recently been re-launched and Jon is gradually repopulating it with information and photos.

On the fundraising front, I apologise for the cancellation of the jumble sale in July and the Christmas Bazaar –but timings have just not worked in our favour on both of these days and we would have struggled to get enough helpers.

We hope to fit in something in Durrington or Shrewton before the end of the year if one of the halls is free and we have enough helpers available. We need to clear Dave's garage of all the bric-a-brac asap!

Lastly Some Congratulations to band members!!

We send Dave and Michelle our very best wishes for their wedding in December and congratulations go to Roxy and Mark, Martin and Rosy Smith and Tim and Jenny on their respective new arrivals –all boys! during the course of the year.

Congratulations also go to James, Andrew and Frankie on their GCSE results and getting the schools and college places they wanted.

And also to Emily on passing her Grade 4 so well.

Thank you again to everyone for their support!

And thank you very much for coming to the meeting.

Katy Walker  
October 2009