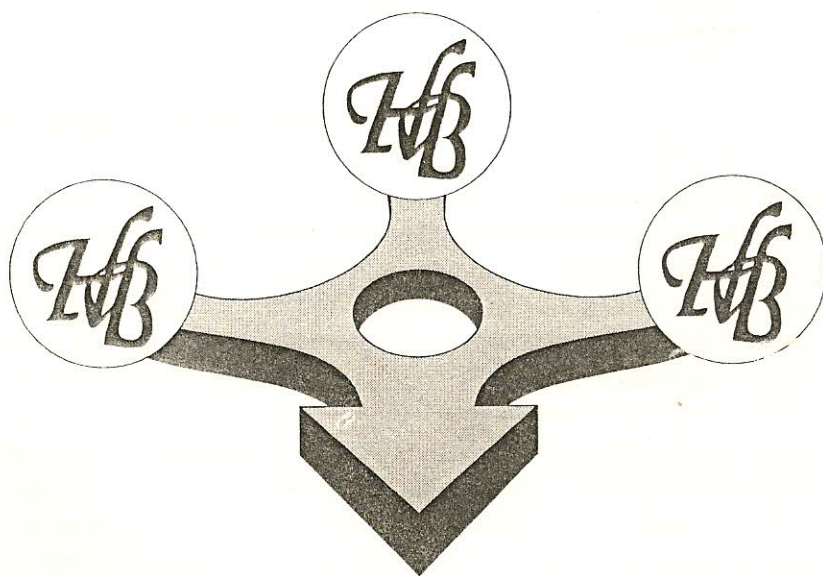


# *The Harrogate Band* on the Internet

[www.harrogate.co.uk/harrogate-band/](http://www.harrogate.co.uk/harrogate-band/)



# THE HARROGATE BAND

*The premier brass band in the Harrogate District*

## Contents

- News
- History
- Musical Director (David Lancaster)
- Contesting
- Engagements
- Recordings
- Prague Tour
- Players
- Contacts
- Brass Band reference material
- Links - Organisations - UK bands - Overseas bands - other



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## NEWS Latest news from the Bandroom

The Harrogate Band has heaped success on success recently. Starting with 2nd placing in the Northern Region Brass Band Championships (3rd Section) - this ensured a place at the National Brass Band Championships Finals in Cardiff in September. This was followed by a hugely enjoyable and successful tour to Prague in the Czech Republic. Then, the Band took two 1st prizes and one 2nd prize in the 1st Section at the annual contest of the Yorkshire & Humberside Brass Band Association in Scarborough. Most recently, the band won first place at the Ripon Festival Tetley Bitter Brass Band Contest

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## History of The Harrogate Band

The Harrogate Band was formed in April 1970 from a nucleus of former school pupils who wanted to continue their playing after leaving the school. It was the first brass band in Harrogate since the Harrogate Borough Band folded in the 1930's. The Band's first conductor, Neil Richmond, led it to success at its first contest in November 1970 at York - the first of many contest successes over the last 26 years. By September 1971 there was a full Band of over 25 players, and it had started to purchase its own instruments. Concerts that first year included the first of a regular series of concerts in the Valley Gardens in Harrogate.


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The Band has, over the years, established itself as the premier brass band in the local area. It performs over 30 concert engagements each year and enters around 6 contests. The Band has been involved in a wide range of engagements over the years, including joint concerts with choirs, commercial functions, garden parties, fetes, weddings, church services, carol concerts and carol playing in the town, small groups of players, fanfare trumpets, sporting events, agricultural shows, radio broadcasts, marches and processions, charity concerts, massed band concerts and many others! It currently has over 650 sets of music in its library. Our printed stationery, quite aptly we think, includes the caption "Brass music for any occasion".

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Since 1970 the membership of the Band has changed considerably, but one of the the original members, Andrew Jackson, still plays with the Band, and another founder member is the Band Librarian, Les Mackown.

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The Band has undertaken five overseas concert tours. It has travelled to Bergen in Norway  as the guests of Sandvikens Ungdomskorps Band in 1977 and 1984, hosting their trip to Harrogate in 1975. It has also



been to Bad Hersfeld in Germany as the guests of the Stadt Musikverein Band (SMV) in 1981, 1986 and 1990, and hosted SMV's trips to Harrogate in 1982, 1987 and 1993. Its latest overseas tour has been to Prague in the Czech Republic in 1996.

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The Band is successful in most of the contests it enters - over the last five years it has won 14 1st places, 15 2nd places and 6 3rd places. In 1990 it was the Northern Region Champions (4th Section). Recently, 2nd place in the 1996 Northern Championships (3rd Section) has given the band its fifth opportunity to compete in the National Championship Finals held this year in Cardiff. It has competed in the National Finals in 1985, 1990 and 1991 and 1992.

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The Band rehearses twice a week on Wednesday evenings (19:30 - 21:30) and Sunday mornings (10:30 - 12:30) in its band room at the ReadyDrive Warehouse in Harcourt Road, Harrogate. Visitors and players are always welcome.

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The Band is entirely self-supporting as an organisation, its funds coming from membership subscription, engagement fees and fund-raising activities.

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The Band is a member of the *British Federation of Brass Bands*, the *Yorkshire and Humberside Brass Band Association* and the *Bradford and District Brass Band Association*.

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## David Lancaster



The Musical Director of The Harrogate Band, David Lancaster, began playing the cornet at the age of 11 with the Pemberton Old Band from Wigan. He subsequently played for several bands in the North West and won the Alexander Owen Memorial Scholarship in 1976. David went on to study music at York and Cambridge Universities before moving South to take up the post of Composer in Residence at Charterhouse School (1985-88). During this time his compositions were played all around the UK and he worked as a freelance trumpet player in London and Paris. In 1990 David was invited to become the Musical Director of Runnymede Brass, in Surrey. Together they enjoyed many successes, qualifying for the National Championship Finals four times in succession and gaining promotion to the First Section. David returned to Yorkshire in 1994 to take up the post of Senior Music Lecturer at the University College of Ripon and York St John, and he looks forward to many more successes with the Harrogate Band in the future.

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## The Band





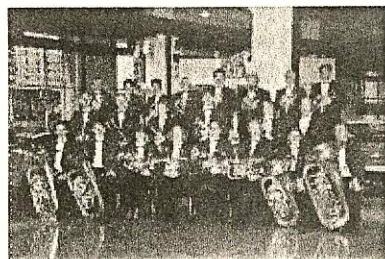
<i>Musical Director</i>	David Lancaster	<i>Baritones</i>	Ian Bristow
<i>Principal Cornet</i>	Robert Illsley		Catherine Worley
<i>Soprano Cornet</i>	Edmund Hallas	<i>Euphoniums</i>	Ian Whitwham
<i>Cornets</i>	Andrew Jackson		Philip Smith
	Sadie Randle	<i>Trombones</i>	Jonathan Wilson
	Mark Moorhouse		Peter Littlewood
	Neil Cole		Stephen Whitwham
	Peter Andrews	<i>Eb Basses</i>	Ron Eastwood
	Neil Cole		Gavin Holman
	David Cole	<i>BBb Basses</i>	Kevin Hamby
	Noel Taylor		Edward Fearnley
	David Pye	<i>Percussion</i>	Steve Morland
<i>Flugel Horn</i>	Eva Moorhouse	<i>President</i>	Michael Hymas
<i>Tenor Horns</i>	Elizabeth Rochester		
	Barry Whitwham		
	Elizabeth Lancaster		
	Roy Fletcher		

## Prague 1996

The Band travelled to Prague in the Czech Republic in April 1996. During the week's tour it gave concerts in several venues, including the Skoda Auto Museum in Mlada Boleslav, the Fakultni Nemocnice Hospital in Prague, the Staropramen Brewery (!) and the town of Kolin. Kolin is the location for an annual brass band festival (Kmoch's Kolin) celebrating the famous Bohemian brass-band conductor and composer Frantisek Kmoch (1848-1912) whose music played a large part in the national revival.



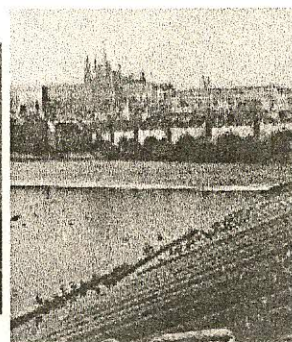
Pictures (click for larger images):



The Band at the Skoda Museum



Prague Castle & Cathedral




Charles Bridge over the river Vltava

## Contacts

Chairman - Steve Morland (+44 (0)1423 887996)

Secretary - Sue Morland (+44 (0)1423 887996)

Contest Secretary - Gavin Holman (+44 (0)1423 866454), Email 

For further information, to join the Band's mailing list or to discuss the Band's availability and services, please contact the Secretary.



## A brief introduction to the origin of the brass band

The origins of band music are uncertain, but it is generally agreed that the earliest bands were formed from town waits, which were groups of musicians founded in medieval times to provide music on ceremonial occasions. These town waits were disbanded in 1835, but many of the players continued their music in village and church bands. In these early years of the 19th century, the whole pattern of life was changing as the industrial revolution took hold. Towns and cities grew rapidly, with new workers coming from the surrounding countryside. This new workforce found itself without the social and recreational life it had previously enjoyed and one of the answers to this was an increasing involvement in music playing. The formation of bands linked to local communities and specific industrial companies (mills, pits, foundries and so on) provided a rapidly accepted form of recreation and entertainment.

Many bands naturally had working class sympathies and supported campaigns for political reform. As early as 1819 the Stalybridge Old Band was engaged to play at a reform meeting on St Peter's Field in Manchester - an occasion which won infamy as the Peterloo Massacre. But brass bands played at all manner of events. They were a popular choice for railway openings - the Yarm band played at the opening of the Stockton to Darlington line in 1829. Bands were in demand to perform in public parks and seaside resorts. When the Victorian working classes discovered the seaside, they did not go for their health, as did fashionable society, but for entertainment, and they liked nothing better than to stroll along the promenade to the sound of brass bands. A lucrative summer season at a seaside resort was much prized by bands, and the repertoire of music, including very popular and tuneful overtures, was ideally suited to the blustery seafronts.

The first fully recorded band contest was held in 1845 at Burton Constable, near Hull, between five bands, including Lord Yarborough's Brocklesby Yeomanry Band, and Hull Flax and Cotton Mills Band. The winning band received £12 prize money. Since that time the band contest has become an integral part of the brass band scene, as a means of achieving and measuring high levels of performance. Feelings, even today, can run high during contests, but accounts of events in the early years indicate that more than reputations were at stake. At one contest in Lincoln, in 1892, the spectators gave chase to the judge, who had to run across country to avoid being thrown into a lake. He had been careless enough to read out the names of the winning bands in the wrong order!

There were an estimated 40,000 amateur brass bands in the British Isles in 1889 - one musical instrument maker had over 10,000 bands on his books. By 1900 there were over 200 contests running each year. Today there are less than 2,000 bands in the UK, but a similar number of contests are run. The number of bands actually belonging to works and companies has reduced dramatically over the years, but sponsorship from industry and commerce still provides much needed support to many of the amateur bands in the country.

The popularity of band contests was such that it was not unusual to see thousands in the audience for these events. At one contest in Skegness in 1937 the largest crowds ever seen in the resort resulted when 33 trains and a fleets of motor coaches poured into the town for the event. The Bellevue contest in 1853, which attracted crowds of 16,000, is also remembered as the occasion when the winning band had a matched set of the new valved brass instruments invented by Adolphe Sax. The days of the older types of brass instruments were now numbered. Prior to this time bands had gradually become all brass, but still used variations of a mix of earlier instruments, for example - the finger-stopped serpent, the keyed bugle, the ophicleide, and the cornopean. The brass band movement gathered momentum from this point, and the instrumentation of bands and number of players, 25, had settled down to more or less its present configuration by the late 1870s.

Brass instruments in bands today are mainly pitched in the key of Bb, and the traditional line up consists of - a soprano cornet in Eb, four solo cornets, one repiano (or supporting) cornet, two second and two third cornets. In the middle range of the band there is a flugel horn, three tenor horns in Eb, two baritone horns and two euphoniums. Two tenor trombones, a bass trombone in G, two Eb bass tubas, or bomardons, and two Bb bass tubas complete the 25 brass players to which is added one or two percussion players.



[Back to Home Page](#)



# Brass Bands

A short introduction into their history

Brass banding is a truly British phenomena which has its roots in the working class, something which many forms of music are without. It is unique in its principally amateur status and remains a home for amateur music makers the length and breadth of the country.

## The derivation of brass bands, and their link with the working class.

### Origins of the brass band movement.

The brass band movement has its roots in the industrial revolution at the turn of the nineteenth century. Brass bands flourished in any town or city where there was organised industry, and not just in the North of England as is commonly believed. The bands usually formed away from the big conurbations at the heart of many industrial cities but tended towards the surrounding villages. In these villages there was less in the way of entertainment than in the cities. Therefore a small, close knit community of about a thousand could easily form a large band.

But firstly, why brass bands? The first bands that came into existence around 1815, and were principally brass and wind bands, more akin to our modern day military bands. The most important development for all brass bands was the invention of the valve for brass instruments in 1815. Once applied to the cornet, it enabled the brass to have what would become a leading melody instrument in the ensemble. Second in importance was the invention of the saxhorn family by the renowned instrument maker, Adolphe Sax, in the 1840's. The saxhorn family gave the brass a complete set of instruments from the highest treble to the deepest bass. An instrument that satisfyingly supplied the bass to the ensemble was always a problem, the ophicleide was too weak and hadn't the deep lower notes needed. The primitive tubas used in orchestras at the time were still too weak to support an ensemble. The answer came with the lowest member of the saxhorn family, the BB flat bass, which is now so closely related to the tuba that had become synonymous with it. So with these two developments, the brass had a choir which was homogenous in tone, and so the wind gradually fell out of use in the band.

The music they played were almost exclusively arrangements of classical works of the day, usually opera or symphony related, and published accordingly. The publishing companies themselves were very successful at the height of the brass banding's popularity, although original compositions for band didn't come 'in vogue' till early in the twentieth century.

Bands were usually formed as the result of a large group of people having common interests and needs coming together. The obvious place is the work place. Bands were formed in two ways, either the bands which were self-initiated by the workers themselves or those which were given help by their employers. Those that started off without any help were usually supported by the whole community, by means of subscriptions from fellow work members and people from higher up the social ladder alike. The ones with company sponsorship, or rarely, private patronage were usually the more successful due to the higher money they would have. The more money a band had, the more attractive it became to players, in return bands could 'poach' players from rival bands by promises of new instruments and the like.

Bandsmen were often trained and conducted by someone with a 'proper' musical backing. Many did it for a wage that could only be described as expenses, some even less. The conductor and bandmaster were responsible for the organisation of the band as a musical force. Only later did subsidiary positions such as secretary, treasurer and the like come into force. These positions would normally be filled by band members.

The bands attained some of their prestige from concerts and more importantly contests. The concerts were usually in public halls to local people. Only bands of some note or fame could fill concert venues in other towns. The contests, though, provided a great avenue for the players to compete against bands not only in their town or city, but nation-wide. Around the turn of the century contests would have audiences of seventy to eighty thousand people in venues such as Belle Vue, Manchester. The contest material would be either own choice or a set piece. They would usually be selections of composers famous works, overtures or opera compilations. In this way, bands of all standards had something to aim for, whether it be to impress at local concert halls or national contests in front of mass audiences.



## What was the attraction of brass bands to the working class?

Organised music making of any kind may not be the most obvious activity for a group of workers, but it stems from the working classes at the time having very little distractions from their work. As whole communities would be employed and housed by the same employer, there were no rich cultural diversifications in their societies, the whole street would consist of the same families with the men doing the same jobs. Therefore to do something which was different was seen in good eyes. Some workers, especially those who had had musical parents or relations from the folk traditions of the eighteenth century helped to give brass bandmen their principals as well as their hereditary talent. The being in a band gave its members a sense of higher status in the community, more so if the band was a public subscription one. It also had obvious social consequences, so that the like-minded individuals at the band could socialise after rehearsals over a beverage at their favourite local public house. Some bands, more now than in the nineteenth century, actually rehearsed in cellars or spare rooms of public bars with a unwritten agreement that the members would become patrons of the bar. Also there is the factor that banding is thirsty work, something which many public houses capitalised on!

Bands often had a nucleus of one or two families in their ranks, something which had helped bands survive as long as it has. Children of members or band enthusiasts would have a cornet or a horn placed in their hands the same time they would have a pencil or a book. The child would often be encouraged to practice for long stretches by their parents or other relations. Harry Mortimer, recognised as one of the finest cornet players and musicians of his day, is quoted as saying:

*"I don't think I was even asked if I wanted to learn - it was as much a matter of course as cleaning my teeth or polishing my boots."*

With myself a third generation product of a brass banding family, I know how Harry Mortimer feels. As soon as the young fledgling bandsman could hold a cornet or horn and knew his fingerings, he was invited to the band, usually on third cornet or second horn. The bands were structured so that players could see the seats they would occupy when they improved. The usual method was working up the ranks for a cornet or horn player. If a player failed on these two instruments, then they were usually introduced to the lower members of the band until their ideal instrument was found. I myself am a product of such a system. Some bands had junior or 'B' bands which help to maintain the flow of talent into their ranks when players departed.

Another plus in favour of the creation of brass bands, and any music groups for that matter, was the fact that in small villages the nearest theatre, saloon or music halls may have been a lengthy walk away. Instead they could go to a band, make music for two hours and then share a drink with their fellow musicians afterwards. Not only better for the soul, but better for their wallets one would imagine, too. One other point of note is that the membership of brass bands were made up of almost entirely men. To get away from the wife and children of a night may have been more an inspiration than playing the greatest works of Rossini.

## How did the bands survive?

Bands had two sources of income; the first was from performances and contests; the second from sponsorship and subscriptions. The money from performances naturally depended on the quality of the band and the prestige of the employment they attained. The more prestigious bands could fill the local halls and theatres for whatever fee they could command. A good secretary could get reasonable work for any band, especially those jobs where the band are there to provide background music such as fairs and carnivals. As no member of the band got paid, and only the conductor and guest players got paid, the expenses of the band could be capped easily.

Money and instruments could also be gained from contests. Apart from the considerable prestige associated with the band playing at the big contests in front of the large audiences, the money to be won was quite considerable. The main prizes were between seventy-five and a hundred pounds for the winners of the top section competitions, a good pay out at the turn of the century. Apart from the main prizes there were subsidiary awards made to best soloists, best euphonium, best horn section and other divisions which may have been cash, but could also have been instruments donated by an instrument making company supporting the event. In any case, a good contesting band found a rich harvest at contest time.

When a band was sponsored by its work place as in the colliery bands and the mill bands, the band would adopt the name of the company that was sponsoring it. Some employers realised that it would be a good thing if some of its members were involved in such an activity after work. They realised that if they were playing with the band, then they wouldn't be in the public bars drinking and



rendering themselves ineffective for work the next day. Nearly all of the employers treated the bands well, supplying instruments, music, conductors, trainers, and a decent bank balance. They also took pride in discussing their musical activities when discussing business with fellow entrepreneurs in meetings. A lot can be read into a band's history by its name; the bands which lost their backing either through sponsorship or subscription usually adopted the term 'prize band' or 'silver band', the reasons for using these particular terms are unknown.

### What and when did the band play?


Performances came in various forms. The first were those where the band is employed to provide background music and a secondary attraction at high profile events such as local fairs and garden parties. These jobs would pay quite well, payment usually coming from whoever was running the event. The event would always try to get the most local band to that event, this was strictly adhered to if the patron of the event was also a financial supporter of the band. The second performance jobs were the park jobs. The bands would play in bandstands at local parks where the public could listen to them at their leisure. They would gain payment either through the park owner employing them over a season for a number of public performances for a set fee, or from collections at the venue itself from the members of the public listening. These two traditions still exist today, despite the inclement weather so typical of a British summer. The third performance was the concert, where people would pay an entrance fee to a music hall or theatre to hear the bands play. The programmes would invariably consist of music from popular light classical works from the symphonic and operatic repertoire. A typical concert, this from a Black Dyke Mills Band concert on 26 June, 1911, shows the usual material performed at such concerts:

(Open with National Anthem : God Save the King.)  
 March Pomp and Circumstance Elgar (arr. Rimmer?)  
 Selection Gems of Schubert Arr. Rimmer  
 Largo New World Symphony Dvorak arr. (Jimmy) Nicholl  
 Overture Magic Flute Mozart arr. (Jimmy) Nicholl  
 Fugue in G minor J.S. Bach arr. (Jimmy) Nicholl  
 Tone Poem Finlandia Sibelius (arr.?)  
 Selection L'Africaine Meyerberr (arr.?)  
 Scotch Patrol Jamie Daere (arr.?)  
 Fantasia Rossini's Works Arr. Round

With the improving standard and number of brass bands, they needed music to play and perform. Often, the bandmaster would arrange specific pieces which the conductor would suggest, but most pieces were bought from specialist publishers such as Wright & Round. These publishing companies would have arrangers on their payroll, ready to arrange any popular classical works that came into the orchestral genre, like the Wagner example I mentioned earlier. At the height of the brass band's popularity at the turn of the century, the publishing companies involved in brass bands were large, profitable firms. Not only did the arrangers produce single works for tender, but they also produced whole volumes of works, usually a specific genre such as marches or waltzes, or whole concert programmes selected by the publishers. These books were affectionately known as 'Band Books'. These were attractive to the bandsmen of the time because of the price of delivery on single pieces was so high.

The main change to the banding repertoire came in 1913. A young composer, Percy Fletcher, was commissioned to write a piece for the forthcoming Crystal Palace contest. That piece, 'Labour and Love' broke the mould of brass band compositions as it was the first that the composer intended to be seen as a serious art work. The piece was such an outstanding work that it reshaped the ideology of the brass band canon. It encouraged the performance and writing of more original pieces to increase the brass band's musical and artist standing. Various other composers have made a good living and achieved artistic recognition as brass band composers; Eric Ball being arguably the most famous with his genre-defining 'Resurgam' tone poem for brass band. Edward Elgar and Gustav Holst have also written pieces specifically for bands.

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 Back to Home Page