

Brass Bands Ephemera & Memorabilia



Volume 2 – Medals

Gavin Holman, 21 February 2022

Cover photograph: The trophy won by Blandford Town Brass Band for their first place at the Great National Contest at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham on 28th July 1863, conducted by Robert Eyers. This was one of the earliest “national” contests, arranged by Enderby Jackson, establishing the model for the next 150 years.

Introduction

Brass bands and their music, as with all other social activities, attract and use a wide variety of physical objects to assist them in their purposes. These may be practical (e.g. for performances and rehearsal), promotional (advertising and marketing), information (programmes and leaflets), presentation (trophies and awards), identifying (uniforms and badges). Many of these have been lost over the years, sometimes due to their ephemeral nature and lack of perceived value beyond the band itself or the related event. Some have survived and now exist in personal collections, with bands themselves, or in archives and museums.

This document displays some examples of such items, as an indicative introduction to the breadth and wealth of such material – most of which will have a story behind it, if only to remind us of the band or event associated with it.

Medals

Brass band contests have had a tradition of awarding medals to individual winning competitors as well as trophies, instruments and monetary prizes to the successful bands. These medals were more prevalent in the later 19th and early 20th centuries and were given either to all the members of the winning band or as prizes for “best soloist” or similar in the contest. There were also the solo instrument, duet and quartet competitions, which often resulted in medals in addition to or instead of cash prizes. Medals were sometimes presented as recognition of attending or competing in a particular event. The following are some examples of the thousands that have been awarded or presented over the years.



1st prize awarded to Squire Greenwood, conductor of Dewsbury Brass Band at the National Brass Band Contest, Leeds, 18th May 1855

First Prize awarded to Joseph Turner, member of W.L. Marriner's Band, Keighley, at the National Brass Band Contest in the Royal Gardens, Leeds, 29th May 1855



Pomona Gardens Contest, Manchester – 1st Prize, Meltham Mills Band – 6th July 1874 [Conductor John Gladney, playing “Satanella”]



Royal Pomona Palace & Gardens, Manchester, Second Annual Brass Band Contest – 1st Prize – Nelson Band, 5th July 1875



Scarborough Contest – 1st place – Besses o' th' Barn Band, 6th August 1892 [Conductor Alexander Owen, playing “Il Giuramento”]



Presented by Joseph Higham – Loughton Contest – July 27th 1895. Awarded to Tottenham Town Band, Bandmaster J.H. Maddison



First prize – Greenwoods Brass Band Contest, 18th November 1897 – Leigh Public [Leigh Public Band played “Smiles and Tears”]



Wakefield Musical Festival – Village Band Competition – J. Sisson, 28 April 1897



Champion - Northants Band League 1898 – H.F.T.B. – H. Wright [1st Northants contest at Wollaston, 23rd July 1898, won by Higham Ferrers Town Band, conducted by Jeremiah Holdsworth, playing “Moses in Egypt”]



London & Home Counties Band Association Northern Section, July 1899, 1st prize, H. Everett, St Albans City [Contest at Apsley, 1st July 1899, playing “The Bohemian Girl”]



Walthamstow Silver Prize Band – Solo Cornet – W.J. Dibby, silver medallist, L.H.C.B.A. People's Palace, 1st July 1899 [Conducted by John Thomas Ogden, playing “England”]



The Brass Band News Gold Medal, presented to the conductor of the 1st prize band at Belle Vue (Manchester) Band Contest, July 8th 1899. Presented by Wright & Round, to A. Owen [Alexander Owen, conducted Rochdale Old Band, playing “Undine”]

Medals



Crystal Palace Contest, London, 1900. Under the direction of Mr J.H. Iles – The British Bandsman [National Brass Band Championship Finals, 21st July 1900, won by Denton Original Band, conductor Alexander Owen, playing “Gems from Sullivan’s Operas, No. 1”]



The British Bandsman Medal of Honour – A. Broome, for Solo Euphonium – 1901, Chepstow [Princes End Band, took 2nd prize - Chepstow contest 28th May 1901, playing “Gems from Sullivan’s Operas, No. 2”]



Thames Band Contest, 2nd prize quickstep – Reg. Sgt. Mjr Robertson, Newton Brass Band [New Zealand] 1902



Jubilee Champion Brass Band Contest – presented to C. Carter, member of the Pemberton Old Prize Band – 1902 [British Open Contest, 1st September 1902, Pemberton gained 2nd place, conducted by John Gladney, playing “L’Ebreo”]



Won by James Billam, for Best Cornet Soloist – Boston, August 20th 1904 [Billam was member of Gainsborough Britannia Band, conducted by Samuel Schofield, which took 3rd place in the Boston contest]



Souvenir of the visit of Besse o' th' Barn Band to France under the direction of Mr J. Henry Iles – L'entent cordiale, 1905 – J. Hardman



Winners of the Thousand Guinea Trophy – The Crystal Palace Band Championship – Won by Irwell Springs Prize Band, Baritone, 1905 – John H. Law [30th September 1905, conducted by William Rimmer, playing “Roland a Ronceveaux”]



Palmer's Works Band – presented to J. Dodds in honour of winning 5 cups, 1905 [at Tynemouth, Hebburn, Durham, and Edinburgh]

Medals



1906-7 World's Tour – Besses o' th' Barn Band.
Presented to J. Hardman, Committee, 18.11.07



Zoological Gardens Belle Vue - Palmer's Works Band,
Winners of 5th prize, Brass Band Contest, July 13th 1907
[Conducted by J.A. Greenwood, playing "Il Pirata"]



Won by J.H. Barrie – presented to Randwick Brass Band, by E. Hearne, Esq. 1907-1908 [Australia]



Presented by Barnet Town Band, 1908



Camelon Band Contest, won by D. Smith, 1908
[13th June 1908]



Petworth Band – Ramsnest Band Contest, 1908. P. Tate
[Percy Tate won the euphonium prize, Petworth took 2nd place, 15th August 1908]



Winners of the Thousand Guinea Trophy – The Crystal Palace Band Championship – won by Shaw Prize Band – E.F. Woodhead, solo trombone [25th September 1909, conducted by William Rimmer, playing "Der Fliegende Hollander"]



Winners of the Thousand Guinea Trophy – The Crystal Palace Band Championship – won by Shaw Prize Band – Francis Jones, solo cornet [25th September 1909, conducted by William Rimmer, playing "Der Fliegende Hollander"]

Medals



Blackpool Lifeboat Band – presented to J.T. Fish for past services, Feb. 15th 1910 – from Tom Wylie, bandmaster, and the Old Boys



St Pancras Schools – 1st prize National Band Contest 1911 – W.H. Singer, Bandmaster W. Woodland [Crystal Palace, 30th September 1911, Boys Section, conductor Owen Geary – playing “Lucia di Lammermoor”]



Winners of the Thousand Guinea Trophy – The Crystal Palace Band Championship – won by Robert Hutchinson, St Hilda Colliery Band, 28th September 1912 [Conducted by William Halliwell, playing “William Tell”]



Presented to W. Barraclough by the Hemsworth Colliery Prize Band, 1913



Band Association of S.A. [South Australia] Contests October 1919



With Concord of Sweet Sounds – Presented to Mr R. Fawcett, Resident Conductor Dick Kerr Band, Preston. Winners July Belle Vue Contest 1919 [Conducted by Richard Fawcett, playing “Lucia di Lammermoor”, 12th July 1919]



Crystal Palace 1922 – Bolsover Band [Bolsover Colliery Band, winners of the Juniot Cup, National Championships, 23rd September 1922, conducted by J.A. Greenwood, playing “Classic Gems No. 2”]



British Legion Band Contest 1923

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Palmerston North [contest] N.I.B.B.A. Baritone 2nd John Joseph Cosgrove [New Zealand National Championships, 17th February 1924]



Preston Town Band Solo Contest – J.W. Roberts (Best Local) – 1924



Preston Town Band Solo Contest – J.W. Roberts - 1924



1926 0918 - Falkirk Brass Band League 1926 – Best Cornet Section Won By – Presented by Douglas & Son Ltd, Glasgow [Banknock Colliery Band, conductor Robert Thompson, 18th September 1926, playing “The Amber Witch”]



Winners of the Thousand Guinea Trophy – The Crystal Palace Band Championship – won by John T. Taylor, St Hilda Colliery Band [25th September 1926, conducted by William Halliwell, playing “An Epic Symphony”]



Dumfries Band Contest 1927 [won by Carlisle St Stephens Band, conducted by William Lowes, 2nd July 1927]



British Legion Band Contest, 1928



Falmouth – Old bandsman’s cup, St Ives, 1926, 1928, 1929 - C.R. Allen

Medals



Winners of the July Belle Vue Contest, Brighthouse & Rastrick Band, July 13th 1929 [conducted by Fred Berry, playing "Oliver Cromwell"]



Zoological Gardens, Belle Vue – Carlisle St Stephens Band, Winners of 4th Prize, Belle Vue Championship Brass Band Contest, 1st September 1930 [conducted by William Lowes, playing "Oriental Rhapsody"]



British Legion Band Contest, 2nd May 1931 [won by West Lewisham British Legion Band]



The Besson Medal of Honour – C.S. Newsome, Marsden, 1932



Scarborough Brass Band Contest – 1933 1st Prize Winners [Sowerby Bridge Band, conducted by Willie Wood, playing "Lorenzo"]



South Auckland Brass Band Contest, New Zealand, 1933



Presented to W. Bentley – Batley Contest, Jan 1934



British Legion Band Contest 1935 [won by Watford British Legion Band, conductor Willie Greenwood, playing "Labour and Love"]

Medals



Presented to W. Bentley – Greenfield Contest November 23rd 1935



South Auckland Brass Band Contest – Te Aroha 1935 [New Zealand]



Launceston City Band, est. 1876 – For 20 Years Service, awarded to A. Gray, enrolled 1917



Waterloo Band Festival, 1939 [Ontario, Canada]



Joe Mitchell, 1st Cornet 1943 [Sowerby Bridge Band]



Kaikorai Band, Dunedin – New Zealand Champions 1954 [conducted by Norman Thorn, 24th February 1954, Christchurch]



1965 – National Champions – The People – National Brass Band Festival – 4th Section [16th October 1965, Guildford Silver Band, conducted by Frank Renton]



1967 – National Champions – The People – National Brass Band Festival – 3rd Section [14th October 1967, Rhymney Workmen's Institute Band, conducted by Richard Nash]



1968 – National Champions – The People – National Brass Band Festival – 2nd Section [12th October 1968, Haydock Band, conducted by Harry Oakes]



International Spanish Band Festival, Madrid 1977



C.I.S.W.O. Brass Band Festival – Yorkshire Champions, 1st Section, 1968 [Grimethorpe Colliery Band, conductor George Thomson]



C.I.S.W.O. Brass Band Festival – Yorkshire Champions, 1st Section, 1980 [2nd March 1980, Grimethorpe Colliery Band, conductor James Scott]



C.I.S.W.O. Brass Band Festival – Yorkshire Champions, 1st Section, 1981 [1st March 1981, Grimethorpe Colliery Band, conductor Ray Farr]



Great American Brass Band Festival, Danville, Kentucky, June 16-18 1995



Victorian Bands League Solo & Party Championships 1996



Brighouse & Rastrick Band, National Champions 1997 [18th October 1997, conducted by Allan Withington]

Medals



The Pilkington Northern Brass Band Championships - St Helens, 1997



Commemorating 30 years of Brass Band Championships – Pontins – Prestatyn Sands 1973-2003



Butlins Mineworkers Open National Brass Band Festival – Skegness 2006



Celebrating 20th Great American Brass Band Festival 2009



Butlins Mineworkers Open National Brass Band Festival – Skegness 2010



Butlins Mineworkers Open National Brass Band Festival – Skegness 2011



Butlins Mineworkers Open National Brass Band Festival – Skegness 2012



Celebrating 10 Years - Butlins Mineworkers Open National Brass Band Festival – Skegness 2013

Undated medals



*Australian National Band Championships
Geelong, Victoria*



Zoological Gardens, Belle Vue



Zoological Gardens, Belle Vue



Bendigo Competitions - Australia



The Besson Medal of Honour



C.I.S.W.O. Band Contest



Cumberland Association of Brass Bands



East Anglian Brass Band Association



Florida District Band Contest



Hornchurch Band Contest



M.J.M. Wilson Professor of Music – Pianoforte and Brass Instrument Warehouse – Miltons, Nottingham ? and Talented Quadrille Brass Bands



The London & Home Counties Amateur Band Association



Manchester & District Amateur Brass Band Association



Manchester & District Amateur Brass Band Association



The Brass Band Organisation – North Western Area



North West Area Brass Band Association



Scottish Amateur Band Association



S.B.B.A. Scottish Champions



Yn Mhob Llafur Mae Elw – South Wales & Monmouthshire Brass Band Association



Tanunda Band Contest
Barossa Valley, South Australia



Royal Tunbridge Wells & District Band Federation
– Ever Forward



Medal advertising Conn cornets

Two examples of proud medal-wearing soloists



*R. Grant – Eb Cornet Champion of New South Wales –
Winner of 50 medals*



Alf Paxton (Hawthorn Band), c. 1926