

Festive dates for Concert Band

LITTLEHAMPTON Concert Band has two shows lined up, the first being tonight (Thursday).

Organised by the Rotary Club of Littlehampton, tonight's event, at St Mary's Church, Church Street, Littlehampton, is in aid of HOMElink, and will start at 7pm. Admission is free, though a collection in aid of the charity will be made.

The band will also play at the Woodlands Centre, Woodlands Avenue, Rustington, on Saturday as part of the village's Christmas fun events. A raffle and refreshments will also be on offer, from 7.30pm. Admission is free.

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Concert dates for German band

LITTLEHAMPTON Concert Band is playing host to the Wurmshheim Musikverein, a talented community band from the town next to Littlehampton's German twin, Durmersheim.

While the visitors are in West Sussex they will play twice with the Littlehampton band, firstly tomorrow (Friday), at 7.30pm, at the Woodland Centre, Rustington (tickets on the door, price £5), and on Saturday at the Poling Village Pig Roast and Summer Feast, from 4pm (tickets £10). Both bands are looking forward to renewing friendships and to entertaining audiences with a variety of musical melodies.

The bands first met through Littlehampton Twinning Association trips to Durmersheim.

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SPRING MUSIC: At Littlehampton

SPRING music will raise money for charity on April 19, when the Littlehampton Concert Band will play in aid of HOMElink.

The show will be at St Mary's Church, Church Street, Littlehampton, from 7.30pm. Tickets, priced at £5, can be purchased by calling 01903 739669, or on the door. All proceeds will go to the charity.

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'Happy' band is 20 years young

MEMBERS of a Littlehampton band following a musical tradition dating **back more than two centuries** are **marching past their own milestone in good heart**

Littlehampton Concert Band is celebrating its 20th anniversary, but its musical ancestry goes back much further, with the Town Band in the first half of last century, another predecessor from the 19th century and a church band at St Mary's in the late 1700's

It's doubtful that any of these could match the strength of the current band, however, with 53 musicians playing in their smart, blue uniforms, led by director of music Bob Haselip. That's an impressive surge since Bob took up the baton just five years ago, when membership was in the 20s.

And chairman John Wyatt attributes much of that growth to the leadership of Bob, at 29 the youngest musical director in the band's history. "We are fortunate to have such a good conductor and musical director and we also have some very competent musicians. Word has got around that we are a good band and we are now attracting players from Chichester, Felpham, Midhurst and Worthing. The website also helps with that. At the same time, we now have a much wider repertoire, with more difficult works, and that has attracted more serious players who want to enhance their skills."

Not that playing more difficult pieces has in any way diminished the fun and enjoyment shared by members. Said Bob: "We have a great atmosphere. People come along to rehearsal night for the first time and feel welcome. It is a very friendly band and we do try to have a bit of fun at rehearsals."

These days, the band practises at St Mary's Church hall on Thursday nights, a nice historical touch given the musical roots it has inherited. It's known a church band played at St Mary's in 1778, but little is known after that until the arrival in Littlehampton, from Fawley, of a George Sainsbury, in the 1890s. He started a fife and drum band, which developed into the Littlehampton Sacred Brass Band. Within a decade, George emigrated to Canada, and the next musical mention comes in the 1930s, with the Littlehampton Town Band, mainly a marching group, which played for around 20 years, until disbanding in the early 1950s after losing its rehearsal venue.

Bob's late grandfather Samuel played in the town band, and his father John first became involved as a seven-year-old, watching rehearsals which were then held in an old mortuary at Fisherman's Quay and later becoming the music librarian, a role he also fulfils today. These days, John plays in the woodwind section and Bob's mother, Hazel is a clarinettist, typifying a band strong on family connections.

It is also proud of its links in the community, joining in twinning tours to France and Germany and playing at charity concerts which so far this year have raised £6,600. The band celebrated its birthday with a concert at the Woodland Centre, Rustington, last month and future performances include a concert for Chestnut Tree House children's hospice at Mewsbrook Park, Littlehampton, on June 15, from 2-3pm, and the highly popular Last Night of the Proms concerts at the Windmill, Littlehampton on September 12 and 13 and at East Preston Village Hall on October 4. For information on joining the band, contact Bob on 01903 213028.

As printed in the Littlehampton Gazette on Thursday, June 5, 2008



Band, Buffet and more

BARNEY's Charity Big Band Bash offers a fun-filled cabaret of musical entertainment, complete with two-course buffet supper and a glass of bubbly on arrival

In aid of Chestnut Tree House and St Barnabas House, the event, at Worthing's Assembly Hall on Saturday, March 29th, features the Littlehampton Concert Band and Phoenix Big Band. Worthing Chamber of Commerce members Bennett Griffin Solicitors and Lloyds TSB Bank are hosting this charity event.

Following supper, which will be serenaded by the Littlehampton Concert Band, there will be a charity auction, roulette and tombola, followed by dancing to the Phoenix Big Band. Co-event organiser Phil Gale from Lloyds TSB Bank, Worthing, said: "Some great prizes are being donated, including a 42inch plasma TV, so now we really want to see as many people as possible at the event all having a good time whilst raising funds for these two great local charities."

Tickets are £250 for a table of 10 or £29.50 each. Dress: black tie / dark lounge. Contact Peter Laverick or Charlotte Hammond at Bennett Griffin on 01903 229999 for tickets, or prize donations.

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