



ABERGAVENNY BOROUGH BAND

Registered Charity No. 512871

ANNUAL REPORT 2012

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Treasurer: Philip Bull

Musical Director: Craig Roberts

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Abergavenny Borough Band at the Olympic Park - Sept 2012

1. FOREWORD – Mayor of Abergavenny Cllr. Samantha Dodd

It gives me great pleasure, as Mayor of Abergavenny, to contribute to the Annual Report of the Abergavenny Borough Band.

I was born and raised in Abergavenny and I have had the wonderful opportunity to appreciate the work of the band over the years. It makes me extremely proud to have such a wonderful historic organisation in our town.

The band makes such a wonderful contribution to our town and has excelled in all of their performances and competitions, gaining many awards. The band's success has flourished during my year in Office, with their performances at the Paralympics closing ceremony, at the Senydd to welcome home our Olympic heroes, to name but a few.

As Mayor of Abergavenny I have experienced the opportunity to hear the band on numerous occasions and their performances are always outstanding. I very much appreciate the band for their contribution to the Mayors installation ceremony, civic service and their continued support at the Armistice Day Parade, which is appreciated by all those who line the streets for this occasion. I would also like to thank the band for their contribution to the Mayors Charity Concert, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience.

I would like to wish Abergavenny Borough Band every success for the future and very much look forward to attending their performances in the future.

Cllr Sam Dodd
Mayor of Abergavenny



Town Mayor - Cllr Sam Dodd

2. CHAIRMANS REPORT – Chairman Mr Andrew Richards

I blew my first note on a cornet when I was 9 years old. That was almost 50 years ago and I can honestly say I have never known the band have such a busy and exciting year than it did in 2012. Details of what we got up to are given later in this report so I won't repeat them here but, I have to say, what a great privilege it is to belong to such a vibrant and dynamic group of amateur musicians and to share in such a successful year of banding.

The Youth Band continues to flourish; growing in numbers and ability, representing the band and town in its own right at concerts and contests under the leadership of Lana Tingay and Colin Roberts. Well done all for your hard work and achievements during the year.

Sadly the Senior band has seen players leave but it is gratifying that new ones join. We are also extremely grateful to friends from other bands who have helped out at concerts and contests during the year. But we seem to be stabilising with only one or two vacancies left to fill...it is essential that we attract new players to ensure we have a sustainable line up for

engagements. The Youth Band will have its part to play in this and I hope to see more attending senior band rehearsals in 2013.

Recent experience has confirmed what we have known for a long time...that competition to attract players is intense in South Wales. And although contests form a vital part of our annual diary and are an important recruiting tool, raising the standard of band and individual players, they are only one pane in what should be our shop window. To offer new and exciting experiences, playing at prestigious venues and occasions can also reap rewards and I hope we can build on what was an amazing year in this respect.

I am proud to represent the band; to sit in the Youth Band and marvel at their enthusiasm and obvious joy in playing music together, and to play in the Senior Band and share in the challenges Craig presents us with and to be immersed in some incredibly good music making by all.

Let's not forget how to enjoy our banding. I echo Craig's views on the future and urge us all to work that bit harder to improve. But let's all do this in such a way as to fulfil our enjoyment of making music together and sharing some more amazing experiences in 2013 and beyond.

I wish to conclude by thanking everyone for their hard work in 2012, the Committee members for their extra support and dedication to the band but in particular, Gareth Havard who has decided to stand down as Secretary after nearly 10 years' service. He and his wife Sharon have both been incredible servants for the band for which we are all grateful.

Andrew Richards
Chairman

3. MUSICAL DIRECTORS REPORT – Mr Craig Roberts



The progress which the band had made over the past 12 months, though it may not always seem it, is excellent.

When I came to the band nearly 2 years ago now, we had no stamina, low morale, considerable player gaps, a low profile outside the locality and an almost palpable fear of the stage. The band is now strong, confident, and has excelled itself in performance recently (though results may not always reflect it) on both the contest & concert stage.

Over the past 12 months Abergavenny have performed at the Brangwyn Hall, BBC Hoddinott Hall at the Wales Millennium Centre, the Millennium Stadium, and the Dora Stouzker Hall of the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, the London 2012 Olympic Park, the Senedd Welsh Assembly Government Building, the National Museum of Wales and St David's Hall.



The Band at the Senedd

We have performed under now officially the UK's most successful classical commercial composer in Paul Mealer, and premiered his work celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. We have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3, Radio Wales, BBC Wales, BBC London & Channel 4 television. We have worked with artists such as the renowned Cory Band and soloist David Childs, shared the stage with stars such as Peter Karrie, Sarah Lark, Katy Treharne & Mike Doyle, plus made links with our friends from the Jugend Symphonie Orchester & Oberschwaben Symphonic Brass of Ravensburg, Germany.

All of these incredible achievements have now resulted in the band being awarded, over all other musical societies in Wales - orchestras, bands, choirs, musical theatre & opera societies - the W.S. Gwynn Williams

Award from Music Centre Wales, Ty Cerdd as the Welsh musical society who has achieved most over the past 12-18 months. The award also brought with it a cheque for £1000.

Each & every member of the band deserves hearty congratulations for all of the above, and for their huge levels of commitment & hard work.

So what of the future? We clearly need to continue to build upon the successes of the past 12 months, and also recognise and address those areas in which we can improve. Contest success, though occasional, does continue to elude us for the most part. It is said that a band is only as good as its weakest player. I would challenge that slightly however and state instead that a band is only as good as its least prepared player.

Hopefully all of the band will have enjoyed the enhanced activity of the past year and more, and personally I'd like to see that continue, and - whilst maintaining our commitment to the locality - also pursuing additional, formal, paid concert engagements in theatres outside the local area.

I would encourage everyone to continue the sterling hard work & level of commitment, and where possible to raise it, be that with attendance, preparation or playing standard.

For any ups & downs it's been a tremendous year musically for Abergavenny. Maintain or improve the level and we'll see many more.

Craig Roberts
Musical Director

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 The Abergavenny Borough Band (The Band) is an Unincorporated Association of members. It is governed by its constitution (dated July 2008).

4.2 In accordance with its constitution, the Band elects at its Annual General meeting, a management committee of Charity Trustees (the Committee) to manage the affairs of the Band for the forthcoming year.

4.3 The Committee has the power to co-opt in year to any vacancies and for any particular skills it requires for the effective management of the organisation.

4.4 The Committee meets monthly.

4.5 In 2012 the elected members of the Committee were:-

Mr Andrew Richards (Chairman)	Mrs Sharon Havard
Mr Gareth Havard (Secretary)	Miss Jacqui Llewellyn
Mr Philip Bull (Treasurer)	Mr Colin Roberts
Mr David Mogford (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs Julia Aldous
Mr Geraint Thomas (Band Manager)	Mr Steve Ward

4.6 The Band holds an Annual General meeting each year at which the Financial Report, Auditors Statement and Officers reports are presented and the Auditors appointed for the year.

4.7 The band operates a training band (mostly under 18yrs) under the direction of Lana Tingay. Other members of the senior band participate in coaching the training band members; Mr Colin Roberts, Mr Andrew Richards, Evan Roberts, Richard Shorey and Steve Ward.

All tutors have CRB checks and the Band has a child protection policy in place. Lana Tingay is the Bands Child Protection officer and undertook child protection training through the NSPCC in 2010.

4.8 Reserves & Investment Policies

The Band is a small charity with an average annual income of around £15k much of which is used to run the organisation on a daily basis. Any surplus that is realised will be put into a reserve fund that will ensure the running costs can be met for up to one year should income reduce. This fund will also be used to finance the rolling programme of instrument refurbishment and replacement.

It is the policy of the Band to obtain maximum earnings from interest rates whilst maintaining a suitable level of liquidity of its funds that will enable it to comply with the reserves policy. The Band will comply with its policy statement by holding funds that equate to at least 12 months total expenditure. Longer-term investments will not meet the needs of the organisation. To date the Trustees have complied with this policy having maintained cash funds on deposit with Lloyds TSB bank and the Monmouthshire Building Society.

3.9 Holding Trustees

The property of the Band is vested in four Holding Trustees. These are:-

Mr Eric Powell
Mr Kevin Powell
Mr David Mogford
Mr Andrew Richards

4. PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

The stated objects of the Band are to educate the public in the Arts and Sciences, and in particular, the art and science of music, by the presentation of concerts and other activities.

Membership of the Band is open to all sections of the community and we have an active junior section for the training and education in music of young people. Junior membership is open to all under the age of 18yrs.

Beneficiaries include members of the public, local businesses, clubs, societies and schools.

5. OBJECTIVES & ACTIVITIES

The Band in 2012 participated in many events within the Borough of Abergavenny including; civic parades and functions, performances in the local parks, concerts and engagements with other local societies. The Band also participates in contests in S E Wales and other areas for the benefit of all members for the advancement of musical skills and expertise.

The Band also undertook several fundraising activities throughout the year which included street collections, paid engagements and fundraising concerts.

6. ACHIEVEMENTS

- Our Youth Band -

2012 was another strong year for the youth band and one that provided many opportunities for public performance. Membership is slightly reduced compared to last year but is steady at about 30 highly committed players ranging from absolute beginners to accomplished musicians.

Highlights from our performance calendar in 2012 and early 2013 featured the following:

- Fete at Glaslyn Care Home, Gilwern
- Abergavenny steam rally
- Town-centre fundraiser where we deputised for the senior band
- Concert at Gilwern Church
- Carols at Abergavenny Library



Playing at the Environment & Community Fair

- Concert at the Abergavenny Environment & Community Fair
- Christmas concert at Borough Theatre
- Silver award-winning performance at Gloucester BBA contest in February 2013

In addition to these events several members of the band took part in the annual Greater Gwent Solos, Quartets and Ensembles competition in June. Congratulations to Erin Shorey who won the 11-and-under slow melody category and to Evan Roberts who took first place in the 14 and 15-year-old air varie. It was another great day for our quartet as well, taking the honours in both their age group and the open categories. Congratulations to Richard Ward, Evan and Anna Roberts, and Bethan Cooke.



Erin Shorey

Our members maintain a high level of participation in Gwent Music Support Service (GMSS) activities, several taking part in their first annual course at Christmas 2012. Erin Shorey picked up yet another award as the outstanding participant in the intermediate band course.

GMSS is shortly to suffer huge cuts in its funding from Newport and Blaenau Gwent councils. The full effects of the cuts are not yet known but services will surely be significantly affected. This may place a higher level of responsibility on our youth band and others to provide opportunities for young people to learn to play brass instruments.



Richard Ward

At national level Richard Ward has gained a place in the National Youth Brass Band of Wales and will participate in its summer course and concert in 2013. Many congratulations to Richard.

After a period of meeting only once a week, the youth band is now rehearsing regularly on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The extra rehearsals have already brought about a significant improvement in the band's sound and we hope that twice-weekly rehearsals will be a permanent fixture. It is also intended to commence a beginner session before the main Tuesday rehearsal.

Thanks are due, of course, for the continued commitment of youth band conductor Lana Tingay and to the other senior band members who give freely of their time to make the youth band the successful organisation that it is. As always, we look forward to continuing this success during the coming year.

Plans are already in place for several performances, including a collaboration with AAODS and other local performing arts organisations at the Borough Theatre in June. Despite these austere times and local authority cuts to the youth music service, the youth band remains strong and very optimistic about its future prospects.

- The Senior Band -

The Band entered five contests in 2012 finishing 9th in Porthcawl, 4th in the regional contest at Swansea, 3rd in Fishguard and 4th in Blaenavon. The band withdrew from the Ebbw Vale contest.

The band would have been amazed if it knew what opportunities were heading its way in 2012. The fact that it was the Olympic year would give the band an international stage upon which to play and represent the town and indeed Wales.

But not long into the year it became clear that it was going to be an exceptional one. The band soon came to realise that we were looking at some exciting opportunities to play at a variety of prestigious venues and events which would enhance the banding experience for us all and give us an appetite for more.

In February we were invited to play for the 21st Anniversary concert for Hospice of the Valleys and shared the stage with choirs and local artistes. There was a mesmerising performance by 15yrs old Isata



Isata Kanneh-Mason

Kanneh-Mason who's virtuoso piano playing was met with a well-deserved standing ovation. Band and massed choir (Abertillery, Ebbw Vale, Cwm and Beaufort Male Voice) delivered a varied programme of traditional choir pieces and band arrangements of music from the movies. Katy Treharne (West End star of Phantom) who comes from Nantyglo, took the audience by storm with her solo performance and the evening was enhanced with singing duo, Kathleen Jenkins and Mark Chamberlain.



Katy Treharne

Another singer joined with the band in February when we performed at the Pavilion, Porthcawl for the Welsh Open Entertainments contest. This time we shared the stage with our very own “Bond Girl” Samantha Link who sang the theme tune “Surrender” written for Tomorrow Never Dies.

March was a very busy month. The band played at the Hoddinott Hall (home of the BBC Welsh National Orchestra) in the Wales Millennium Centre Cardiff, for the Music Nation Cymru Concert. This was the time when we were also concentrating on our performance at the Welsh Regional Championships in Swansea and the band did well to fit everything into a tight schedule of rehearsals for both events.



Flaming Brass at Abergavenny Castle

As a departure from our usual concert at the towns Borough Theatre, we decided to hold an open air concert in the beautiful grounds of Abergavenny Castle. On this occasion we were joined by the Ravensburg Youth Symphony Orchestra and the concert was scheduled to celebrate the arrival of the 2012 Olympic Torch in Abergavenny on 25th May 2012. Set in the majestic grounds of the, the concert programme featured brass and orchestral classics culminating in a spectacular arrangement of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture complete with synchronised fireworks!

One of the great days out for the Band was when we were asked to play at the Wales Millennium Stadium for the Wales V/s Barbarians Rugby match. It was a proud moment for us to play alongside a 1,000 massed male voice choir, the traditional musical fayre and to start the event off with the Welsh National Anthem.

We are dedicated to meeting our responsibilities to the town and support local events and civic occasions. Junior and Senior Bands combined to provide music at the annual Abergavenny Steam Rally in Bailey Park over the May Bank Holiday which, curiously, was in June due to the Jubilee Bank Holiday. We were also pleased to play at the town Mayors Installation ceremony and to give an open air concert at the Brewery Yard.

But for all members the years highlight was our trip to the Olympic Park in September to play at the Bandstand on the last day of the Paralympics. We joined Musicians across the UK who performed Coldplay's anthemic hit Viva La Vida as part of the London 2012 Festival finale. Our concert programme was shared by West End star of Phantom, Peter Karrie and we had the delighted crowd dancing and singing in the Olympic Park to the many hit numbers we performed together.



Peter Karrie & Band at the Olympic Park

To complete our Olympic experience the Band was privileged to play at the Senedd in Cardiff Bay for the return to Wales of our Olympic and Paralympic athletes. It was an exciting afternoon and thoroughly enjoyed by all.



Paul Mealor

Later in September saw the band participating in the "Making Music" Annual Conference at the Dora Stoutzker Hall in Cardiff. The programme included Paul Mealor's Christmas No1 "Wherever You Are" written for the Military Wives Choir as well as the world premiere of his "Jubilate! Jubilee!" a specially commissioned work by Making Music and the British Council in honour of the Diamond Jubilee.

The Bands Annual Dinner took place shortly after the Fishguard Contest in October where we came third and enjoyed a great social weekend. The guest of honour at our dinner was

the Town Mayor, Councillor Samantha Dodd who praised the band for all the hard work it has undertaken in the name of the town saying "the band has become an Icon of Abergavenny. To represent the town at the Olympic Park and at the Senedd was an achievement everyone is proud of".

The year started to draw to a close with the Festival of Remembrance at Ebbw Vale and the Sunday parade in Abergavenny closely followed by the final contest of the year at Blaenavon where a fourth place rewarded all our hard work and saw the band finish a creditable 3rd in the South East Wales Brass Band Association Championship table.

Our final even of the year was, of-course, the traditional Christmas Concert at the Borough Theatre, Abergavenny entitled "Christmas Crackers". The concert included our wonderful youth band under the direction of Lana Tingay and the very accomplished, Llanfoist Fawr Primary School Choir.

For more detailed accounts of 2012 events and activities, please visit our website www.abergavennyboroughband.org.uk

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Band wishes to thank the following individuals and organisations for their valued support in 2012.

Making Music Wales

The Mayor and Town Councillors, Abergavenny Town Council

Ty Cerdd

The Gwent Music Support Service – for all it does for our young players

The Rotary Club of Abergavenny

Mr Alan Griffiths of Griffiths Construction for his kind support.

Samantha Link, Harriet Whitehead, Peter Karrie, Paul Mealor

Superact – for the Olympic Park Experience

8. PLANS FOR 2013

The Band intends to intensify its efforts to fundraise in order to undertake instrument repairs and replacements and for the refurbishment of the Band Room.

The band is committed to contesting and will enter the Wales Association competitions, regional competitions as well as those in other areas. We will encourage the further development of the youth band, individual young players and engage with young people through our concerts and functions.