

PALATIANS



THE NEWSLETTER OF CRYSTAL PALACE BAND

Issue: 6 (Winter 2003)

There's only a few days now until Christmas – and are you ready for it?! Everyone in Crystal Palace Band has been incredibly busy over the past few weeks, in preparation for our annual Charity Gala Concert at St Bartholomew's church, Sydenham, on Saturday 6 December. Was it a success? You bet it was! Nearly £1,700 was raised for St Christopher's Hospice – what a fantastic end to 2003. A big thank you to all those who came along – and apologies to those who had to sit on the floor! We hope that 2003 was a good year for all of you too – and that 2004 is even better. Merry Christmas, and a happy new year!

Tenor horn player, Nicci Maher, takes an alternative look at Christmas...

So, Christmas is almost upon us - shopping days are running short and you can no longer enter a shop without getting accosted by someone wearing a Santa hat and a fake grin or getting yelled at that "here it is, merry Christmas" aren't we all having fun! I would grumble that decorations started going up in August, that the front of the man up the road's semi-detached house has more lights than Blackpool and that four months of stuffed Rudolphs and belly dancing Santa's wearing dark glasses in preparation for three days at the end of December is stupid and not the point at all but I'd hate you to think I'm a Killjoy...

Honestly, I do love Christmas- chocolate, presents, having my grandparents round for Christmas dinner, what's not to like? The smell of Christmas pudding is enough to get me nostalgic and excited even though I'm not too keen on the stuff really and I'd much prefer a mince pie with cream or a slice of Christmas cake, de-marzipaned of course (and don't let my mum tell you I'm a fussy eater). And whilst I'm on the subject, another great feeling of Christmas is turning around to point out the funny bits of the sort of programmes that are always repeated at Christmas, only to find a sofa full of relatives asleep in paper hats, all of them covered in sellotape, wrapping paper, splats of gravy and clutching tightly at a little plastic pack of golf tees or mini screwdrivers as if in case of disaster.

But before all that come the concerts, packed (we hope) with people with warm smiles:

~ Those wrapped up in their warmest clothes against the

- People bathed in warm and gentle fairy lights, singing their hearts out at the Wesley hall. People, perhaps including you - and this for me also makes my Christmas, doing something that is appreciated and enjoying myself as I do it. We play simply because we enjoy it and if you can make it to listen to us-more the merrier.

So whatever you're doing this holiday season, the Crystal Palace Band wish you a wonderful Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Band News...

- We've got two goodbyes in this issue - Laura Gregory (cornet) who's flying off to Washington DC after Christmas, and Adrienne Edmonds (Eb bass), who's returning to Fulham Brass Band. Keep in touch!
- But as two people leave, another one comes along. The band would like to welcome Elspeth Hackett on cornet, who has recently joined us from Croydon Brass Band.
- The band would like to say a big get well soon to one of its supporters, Ron Brown, who is currently recuperating at home after a recent operation. We hope you're

bitter wind on top of Horniman's hill, which didn't rain this year!

feeling better soon, Ron!
 • Please note that the band will sadly not be playing carols at the Glades shopping centre in Bromley this year. Apologies to all those who were hoping to attend.

Fixtures 2003/2004	.
Sunday 21st Dec	Carol Concert, Sydenham Methodist Church, 6.00 pm
Sunday 4th January	Epiphany Concert, St Michael's Church, 4.00 pm
Sunday 20th March	L&S Counties Regional Contest, Stevanage
Sunday 25th April	SCABA Spring Contest, Hove Town Hall
Sat/Sun 5th/6th June	Festival, Crystal Palace 150th Anniversary, Crystal Palace Park

Crystal Palace Band raises nearly £1,700 for St Christopher's Hospice in Gala Concert

What an amazing night it was! No-one could have anticipated what a huge success the concert would be. By about 6.30pm St Bartholomew's Church in Sydenham was half full - and then with ten minutes to go before the start of the concert we realised we were going to run out of chairs! Backstage, members of the band put down their instruments and joined the vicar in moving pews and searching for more seats.

And then the concert began. From the opening bars of Aida it was clear that this was going to be an electrifying performance. Offstage 'trumpeters' Laura Gregory and Elspeth Hackett welcomed in the audience latecomers - who were forced to sit in the front pews and risk being deafened! The quiz based on Quilter's 'Children's Overture' went smoothly, and then our three buglers, James Gordon, Roger Bleach and Maggie Stallybrass played superbly as ever in 'Bugler's Holiday'.

Next up were the children from St Anthony's RC Primary School who, under the direction of their teacher (and our trombonist) Lucy Rice, sang their pieces loudly and clearly. After Harry Potter it was time for the band's tribute to Nina Simone, with flugel horn player Sarah Smith growling on the low notes of 'Feeling Good'.

After 'Hodie', a selection of Christmas favourites, it was time to have a break - and try to fight through the crowds of people queuing for a cup of tea! Unbeknown to us the kitchen was being refurbished - but Janet, Jean and Brenda, our team of refreshment helpers, took it in their stride. Jugs of water were ferried around, mince pies passed from plate to plate, and the interval went smoothly.

The second half began with the Florentiner March, and then our first guest soloist, Caroline Lovett (wife of our Bb bass player, Richard), excelled herself in an arrangement of Corelli's oboe concerto. Following this was the raffle - and a chance to win one of eight prizes, including a luxury hamper, which included wine, chocolates and party poppers. Each member of the band had donated a prize or an item for the hamper, which meant that every penny of the £178 taken from the raffle went to

charity. Over 750 tickets were folded by Claire, Jill and Ross, our raffle organisers, so thank you! During the presentations, chairman Roger Clements took the opportunity to say a few thank yous, as did Rosemary Fairhurst, who was representing St Christopher's Hospice.

And then it was back on with the music, with the winner of the children's quiz conducting the band through Sleigh Ride, with extra percussion from the runners-up. Our second guest soloist, Emma Gray, joined us for the next item, Gershwin's Someone to Watch Over Me, and then stayed for Handel's Rejoice Greatly, which saw Caroline Lovett join the band on oboe again.

The finale of the evening was a new arrangement of festive singalongs from the band, entitled 'A Christmas Holiday Festival'. It was led by Emma Gray and Lauren Staddon and accompanied by the children from St Anthony's, and principal cornet James Gordon on Eb trumpet. It was a fantastic end to a hugely successful evening.

Everyone in Crystal Palace Band would like to thank all those who helped in any way with the concert – conductor Mike Gray, the raffle ticket sellers, those on the door, those who hunted down extra chairs, the children from St Anthony's – and especially the vicar of St Bartholomew's church, Mike Kingston, and the congregation, for all their help and support in organising the concert, and in particular for waiving the hire fee. And a big thanks to everyone who came along and supported us – and sorry to those of you who had to sit in the aisles!

Well done, everyone – and here's to next year!

If you wish to contact the editors, please do so via the following ways:

Email clarelipscombe@hotmail.com or ring on 020 8655 2511

If you have a general band enquiry (e.g. you would like to join the band, or would like to book the band) please contact the Secretary, Rachel Bleach, on 020 8776 2520, or riz.bleach@btinternet.com - or visit the website, www.crystalpalaceband.fsnet.co.uk

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