



# Sounds from the South



Rushen Silver Band Newsletter  
April 2019



## Rushen Silver Band 70th Anniversary Service - Fleshwick Beach on Good Friday

This year, 2019, marks 70 years since the Surby Silver Band changed its name to Rushen Silver Band. Various events are happening during the year to mark this, including recording a CD, an Anniversary Concert in October, and the return to some venues that the band has not visited for many years.



In the small village of Surby in the south of the Island, there is a row of cottages. On one of these, there is a plaque marking the place the Surby Band started. In the same block is Liverpool Cottage. Through his involvement with the Sailors Chapel Mission, a gentleman called Ted Hughes used this cottage in the Second World War to accommodate parties of young people from Liverpool for a break from the bombings and other wartime hardships.



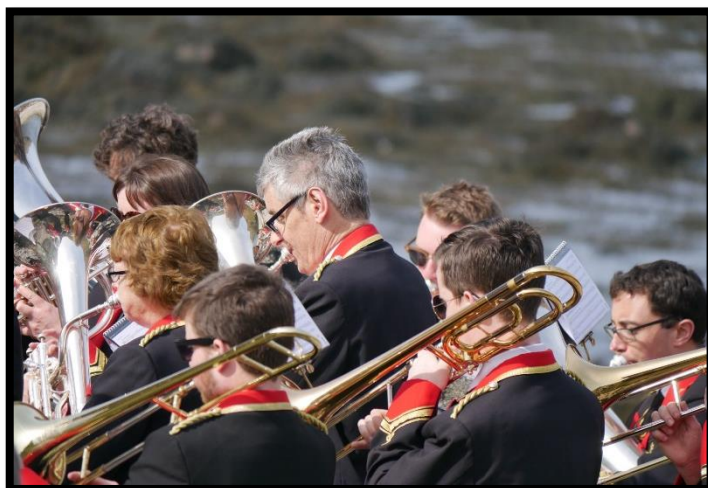
The Sailors Chapel had a band that supported their work, and at Easter they would visit the Island, playing at various venues to raise funds for their work. On Good Friday, they would march down to Fleshwick Beach and then hold a short service. After the service the locals in attendance would take the opportunity to roll their hard-boiled eggs down the steep banks.



When the Sailors Chapel ceased visiting, the young Surby Silver Band decided to carry on the tradition of Fleshwick on Good Friday. There are photographs from the event in 1946 and 1947. In the 1940s, Good Friday was a particularly busy day for the Band, as after events at Fleshwick the players would travel to Foxdale to lead the Sunday School procession and service.



The band has changed much in the 70 years since 1949, but is still very much a community Band, and is very aware of its roots.



As one of the events to celebrate the band's rich history, the Band returned to Fleshwick this Good Friday, for a short service. The Band were joined by about 150 people to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary at this beautiful location, and the lovely weather really helped to mark the occasion. Music during the service included Ellan Vannin and The Manx Fisherman's Evening Hymn, as well as an item featuring the Flitter Dance, a tune associated with the tradition of eating fish on Good Friday.

*Article compiled by band chairman Tom Sinden with the help of Life Member Jim Crebbin.*

The Band would like to say a huge thank you to Tom Sinden, Chairman, for his work organising this special event, and to Daniel Crompton who provided mini bus transport to get people to Fleshwick.



### **Cheque presentation**

The Band's concert at Rowany Golf Club on 1<sup>st</sup> March raised the brilliant total of £800 for the Rushen Endowment Fund.

The photograph shows Band President, Pat Crebbin, with members of the Golf Club and the Rushen Endowment Committee. Thanks to everyone that supported the event.



## Annual Dinner and Awards Evening 2019

The Band's Annual Dinner, Dance and Awards Ceremony took place on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at the Bradda Glen Restaurant in Port Erin, the first event to be held at the premises since it moved under new ownership. The award winners for 2017/18 were as follows: -

- Gilrea Corlett Trophy – for the best attendance with the Senior Band for players aged under 18 – Lucy Norbury;
- The Preston Shield – for the best attendance with the Senior Band – Matthew Callister, John Kinley and Tom Sinden;
- Ernie Broadbent Trophy – for the most improved player aged under 16 within the Band – Lucy Norbury;
- Bandsman of the Year – for the person(s) the Band members believe had contributed the most over the past year – Matthew Callister and Tom Sinden;
- The Keith McArd Trophy – awarded by the Musical Director to the person(s) showing outstanding dedication, commitment or playing ability at both concerts and practices during the year as a member of the Senior Band – Robert Woodford;
- The John Crebbin Trophy (also known as 'The Didds') - awarded by the Musical Director to the person(s) showing outstanding dedication, commitment or playing ability at both concerts and practices during the year as a member of the Training Band or as a learner – Keira Trustrum;
- The Dave Smith Memorial Shield – for their contribution and services to the Band – Helen Cole and Matthew Callister.

Long Service Awards were also presented to Martha Sinden (10 years), Mark Faragher (35 years) and Peter Faragher (40 years). It is still amazing to see the length of time members of the Band have been part of the Rushen Silver Band family.

Band Chairman, Tom Sinden, provided a summary of the Band's achievements over the past twelve months and looked ahead to the events already planned to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the band becoming Rushen Silver Band.



The Band would like to thank the Bradda Glen Restaurant for their hospitality, excellent food and venue for what was again a great evening for those present. A special thanks was also extended to Chris Weldon for organising the event, and to Tony James, the DJ on the night, for once again providing a great selection of music for everybody to dance to.



## Show me the money!

*Helen Cole is one of the longest serving Band members and holds the purse strings for the Band finances. We find out more about Helen and her work as Band Treasurer...*

## What brought you into the world of music and brass bands in particular?

I have always enjoyed music and I had piano lessons as a young girl, played recorder at junior school and violin in Castle Rushen High School orchestra.

In 1977 I bumped into John Watterson and mentioned I was looking for a hobby to fill in time before studying for my final accountancy exams.



Next day John delivered a baritone and a Tune a Day Book

and invited me to attend Band rehearsals when I could play.

After some weeks of practice, I plucked up enough courage to go to a rehearsal in the Bandroom at Port St Mary and that was me hooked on brass bands! So, I am a self-taught brass player and still learning on the job 40 years later.

## Who do you believe you got your musical talents from?

This is probably more from my mother's side of the family. My mother, Rosa Corkill, played the organ at the Howe Chapel as a young girl and enjoyed singing. We grew up constantly listening to her collection of Jim Reeves and Mantovani & his Orchestra records.

## What do you enjoy about Band?

Playing music is what I enjoy most about Band. Rehearsals spent sight reading new music can be challenging but also great fun. The added bonus is the appreciation shown to the Band by audiences at our concerts. Also, where else can you find such a diverse age range of people, currently 13 to 80+ years, happily joining in together.

## Do you have any particular favourite types of music?

I enjoy listening to most types of music but certainly not bagpipes. In the Band, I particularly like playing marches. I also enjoy attempting to play classic band pieces selected by Mr Richard Evans on his annual visits, such as Academic Festival Overture and Die Felsenmuhle. These can be difficult to play but provide a contrast to the more popular easy listening music we play throughout the year.

## What are your earliest Band memories?

As a player, one of my earliest memories is of the Band winning the March class in The Guild on St Georges Day, 1978, playing the Standard of St George, after a final rehearsal in St Georges Hall, Douglas.



My brother, David, played in the Band until he moved off island to work in 1972 and I remember him winning the junior brass quartet class in The Guild in 1968 with John Watterson, Ricky Broadbent and Phillip Quayle.



**You've been part of the Band Committee now for a few years, can you tell us about the role you carry out as a Committee member?**

No sooner had I joined the Band in 1977 I found myself appointed assistant secretary. The following year I was appointed Treasurer, a role I have held ever since apart from 9 years break in the 1990's. As Treasurer I pay the Band's expenses, bank receipts from concerts and donations and prepare the annual accounts. I also attend our regular committee meetings.

Looking back over the past 40 years I am amazed at how much the Band has achieved, including building the Bandroom and its later extension, replacement of all instruments with new professional standard instruments, purchase of several band vans, new uniforms in 1986 and 2002, and three CD recordings. This has been made possible by the enthusiasm and dedication of committee members past and present. We have also had a lot of help from the Friends of RSB and most importantly the generosity of our supporters and the local community.



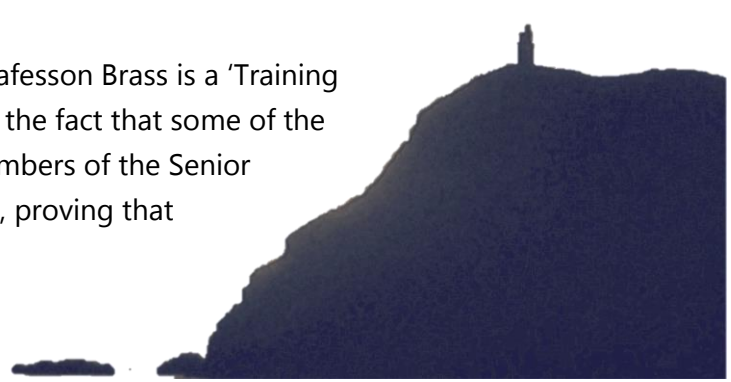
**Ballafesson Brass – Learning more about our Learners**

*Matthew Callister gives us an introduction to Ballafesson Brass*

For those who are new to the Band family or are not aware of how we got to where we are now, Ballafesson Brass is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year. It was officially formed in 2009 following a decision by the Band to develop its training programme, in order to ensure that players gain experience of playing in an ensemble on a regular basis prior to joining the Senior Band. Prior to this, the training Band would meet occasionally to prepare for specific engagements, but there were no regular rehearsals taking place for those learning to play, meaning the transition to the Senior Band could sometimes prove to be a rather huge learning curve. The following article is intended to give you a bit of background as to what is involved in developing the future of Rushen Silver Band.



An important distinction should be made in that Ballafesson Brass is a 'Training Band', rather than a Junior Band. This is testament to the fact that some of the members fall outside the 'Youth' category! Many members of the Senior Band today are former members of Ballafesson Brass, proving that



Ballafesson Brass is meeting its aim of securing the future of the Band. Currently there are around 20 members of Ballafesson Brass. This number rises nearer to 30 when taking in to account the number of Senior Band members who attend on a regular basis to support the development of the next generation of players.

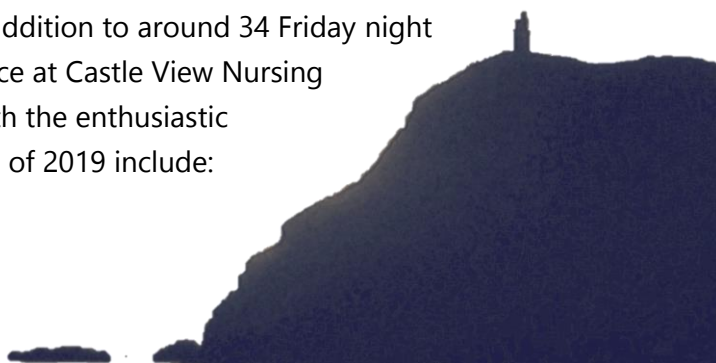
Our Friday night timetable:

- **7:00-7:30pm:** 1:1 lessons for beginners - this involves teaching the basics of embouchure (how the mouth forms inside the mouthpiece to produce notes), fingering (which valve combinations produce each note), reading music and playing in time to a regular beat.
- **7:30-8:00pm:** 1:1 lessons for intermediate players - this involves teaching about dynamics (volume), key signatures (where certain notes are either 'sharp' or 'flat'), tempo (speed) and harmony (more than one part being played at the same time).
- **8:00-8:30pm:** Ballafesson Brass Group 1 (including all except beginners) - this involves teaching players how to follow the conductor, including knowing how the movement of the baton affects what the Band does. Examples include recognising the position of the baton for each beat in a bar, associating sharp baton movements with the need to produced notes clearly and precisely (e.g. in marches) and associating flowing baton movements with the need to produce notes more smoothly (e.g. in hymns).
- **8:30-9:00pm:** Ballafesson Brass Group 2 (for more experienced players) - In addition to playing more challenging music, this session involves teaching further examples of how the conductor communicates their intentions. Examples include associating smaller baton movements with quieter dynamics and larger baton movements with louder dynamics, as well as learning about the many other body language cues given by the conductor to aid the performance of a piece of music.

There is a lot of overlap between Ballafesson Brass and the Senior Band in terms of the structure and content of rehearsals, and the progressive structure of the tuition system is designed to ensure that there are no 'shocks' when players move from Ballafesson Brass in to the Senior Band. When players join the Senior Band, they also remain as members of Ballafesson Brass for a time. This gives them the opportunity to sit next to and learn from more experienced players during their early days in the Senior Band, and also the chance to take on the additional challenge and responsibility by playing in 'principle' seats in Ballafesson Brass.



Ballafesson Brass performs its own engagements on a regular basis throughout the year and by the end of this year we will have performed 5 engagements, in addition to around 34 Friday night rehearsals. The first engagement of the year took place at Castle View Nursing Home, Peel in January and was as popular as ever with the enthusiastic residents. Engagements currently booked for the rest of 2019 include:



- Castletown Methodist Church - Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May, 7:30pm
- Howe Methodist Chapel - Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October, 7:00pm
- Joint 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Concert with the Senior Band - Details to follow
- Colby RBL Poppy Concert - Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November - 7:30pm

We have made it our policy to aim for the Senior Band and Ballafesson Brass to play together in a concert at least once every year. This enables the members of Ballafesson Brass to see where they are aiming for, and also gives members of the Senior Band an opportunity to see (and hear) the future of the Band. As you will see from the engagements detailed above, this year is a very special year for Rushen Silver Band and it is fantastic that all members of the band, right through from beginners to the most experienced players will have the opportunity to perform together to celebrate our 70<sup>th</sup> year.

At the beginning of our 70<sup>th</sup> year, our Conductor Emeritus, Jim Crebbin recently addressed members of the Senior Band at a rehearsal. He reminded us all about the humble beginnings of the Band, recalling rehearsing in a loft above the Old Bakehouse in Ballafesson and contrasting this with our current Bandroom and facilities which, as Jim rightly pointed out, would be the envy of many other bands. The fact that we have so much space in which to carry out the tuition of players is one of the main reasons we are able to enjoy such a large membership, and this is something we should always remain grateful for to those who built the Bandroom.

I like to think that the future of the Band is in very good shape and consider it a privilege to be able to play a part in developing our players. We have a fantastic group of tutors, including some of our younger members who have been through our tuition system as learners and members of Ballafesson Brass and have returned as members of the Senior Band to give something back. Without their time, talent and dedication there would be no future for RSB, so I would like to personally thank them for everything they do each week.

The Band has certainly come a long way in how it develops new players and undertakes succession planning to ensure a continued healthy membership. I will always remember myself as a young learner being told by Jim, "When I was your age, we were just given an instrument and told to go home and come back when you can play the thing!" How things have changed...

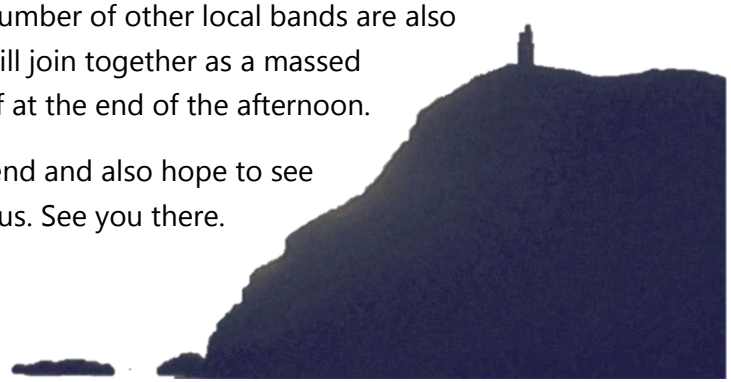
### **"Prash Laxaa"**

The Band are looking forward to participating in this year's "Prash Laxaa" brass band festival. This will be taking place on the afternoon of Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May around Laxey village.



Although confirmation is still awaited, we believe the Band will be performing a short programme each of 20 minutes at three locations around the Village. A number of other local bands are also participating and the proposal is that all the bands will join together as a massed band to play one or two pieces to finish the event off at the end of the afternoon.

We're hoping for weather similar to the Easter weekend and also hope to see some of our supporters enjoying the afternoon with us. See you there.



## Dates for your diary...



Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Laxey Festival</b> (at Laxey Village)	1.30pm
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Ballafesson Brass Concert</b> (at Castletown Methodist Church)	7.30pm
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Mona's Queen III Memorial Service</b> (at The Point, Port St Mary)	7.30pm
Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>Friends of the Band Coffee Morning</b> (at Ballafesson Chapel Hall)	10.00am
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>Ballakilpheric Open Air Anniversary Service</b> (at Ballakilpheric Chapel)	3.00pm
Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>Ballafesson Chapel Anniversary Concert</b> (at Ballafesson Chapel)	8.00pm
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>Brassed Off Event</b> (in Ramsey)	Afternoon
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>IOM Arts Council Summer Season Concert</b> (at Villa Marina Arcade, Douglas)	8.00pm
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Open Air Summer Concert (TBC)</b> at Happy Valley, Port St Mary	3.00pm
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> August	<b>Cliff Top Concert</b> at Groudle Glen Café, Onchan	2.00pm

Details of concerts the Band and Ballafesson Brass have been asked to participate in from September onwards can be found on the website ([www.rushensilverband.org.im/engagements](http://www.rushensilverband.org.im/engagements))



# Happy Easter

## from all at Rushen Silver Band



For more information about Rushen Silver Band or suggestions for the Sounds from the South newsletter, please contact the Band Secretary: Peter Faragher, 16 Close Cam, Port Erin, IM9 6NB. Tel: 493193. Email: [enquiries@rushensilverband.org.im](mailto:enquiries@rushensilverband.org.im)

Find us on FACEBOOK  
[www.facebook.com/rushensilverband/](http://www.facebook.com/rushensilverband/)

