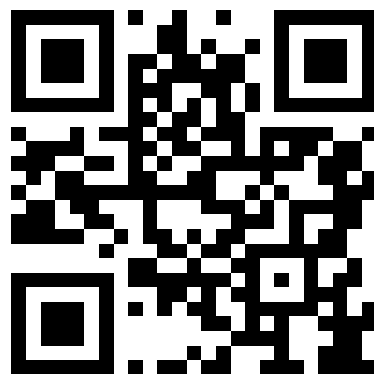


A  
Brief History  
of the  
Barnet Band:  
1889-2014

by  
Dr Peter Holmes



ABCo Design Ltd, London, NW9 6ES

Dedicated to all those who have served  
The Barnet Band over its 125 years  
both players and helpers

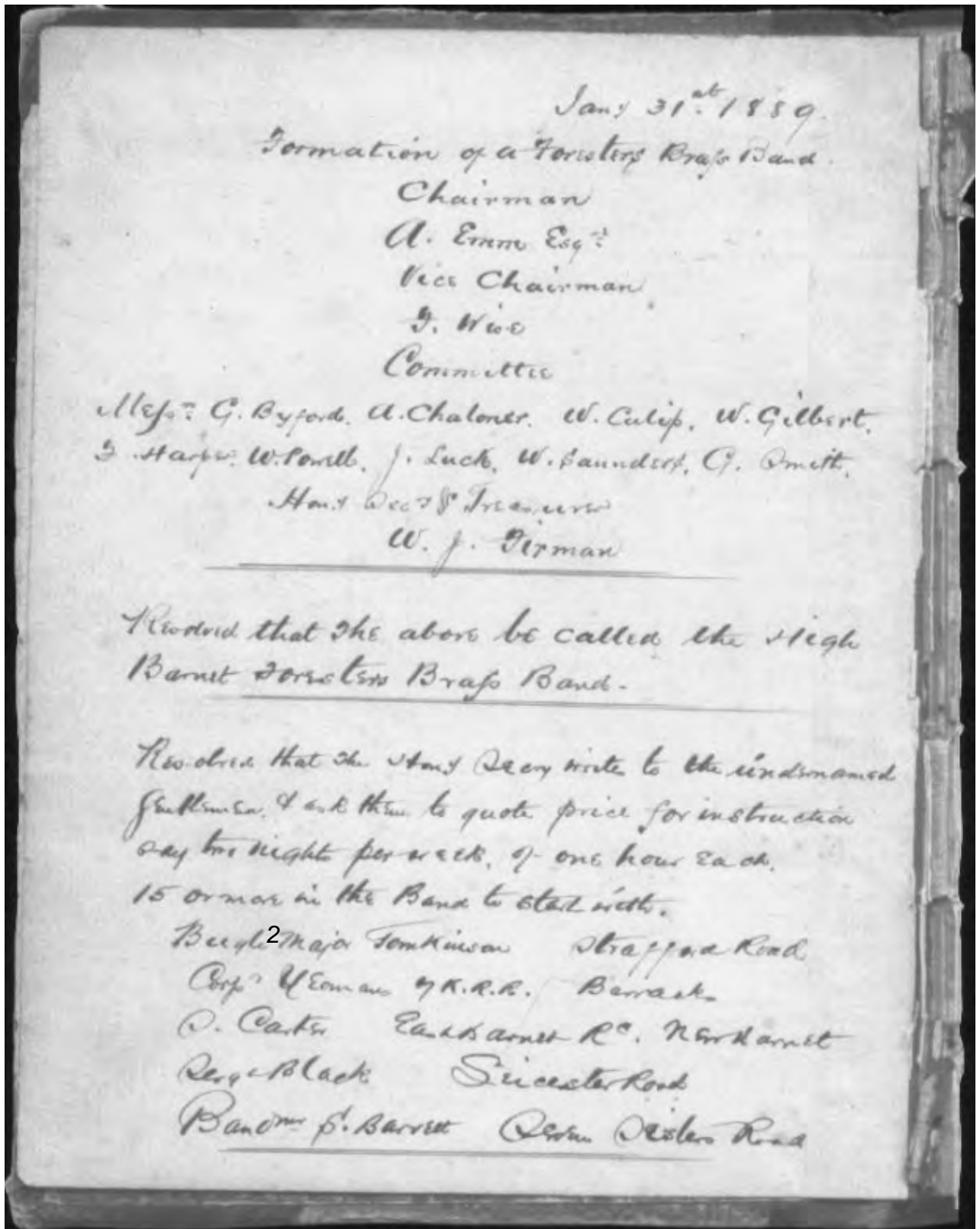
## Chapter I

# Formation of a Foresters' Brafs Band

The Band was formed on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1889, as the *High Barnet Foresters' Brass Band* by the Court Pride of Barnet Foresters. From the beginning, the band's committee kept records of the band's activities and most of the minute books of the band committee are available, right from the band's foundation to the present day, the only gap being of the Second World War years, 1940-44.

At the first meeting, the Secretary was instructed to write to 'instrumental gentlemen' to find out what the cost of one hour's instruction would be for two nights per week, the proposed band to be made up of fifteen or more bandsmen. The Secretary wrote to five people, two of whom quoted 3/- (three shillings or 15p.) per night and the others 4/- (20p.) and 5/- (25p.). A Corporal Yeomans of the 7th Kings Royal Rifles was one who quoted 3/- and it was proposed that he be appointed.

On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, it was agreed to print 400 circulars to advertise the band and a committee was set up to formulate the rules. Early meetings seem to have taken place at The Green Man Pub, 143 High Street but later meetings alternated between the Green Man and the Star Tavern, 108 High Street.



The Opening Entry from the Band's Minutes on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1889

On March 9<sup>th</sup> 1889, the list of instruments to be purchased, shown below, was drawn up.

prop by B<sup>r</sup>. Smith, rec'd by B<sup>r</sup>. Sucke that the list of instruments be adopted.

✓	E Flat Cornet		1. 12. 0
Thomas, Payr.	3 B ~ do ~	1/17/0	5. 14. 0
✓	3 E Flat Sax-horns	2/12/-	4. 16. 0
✓	1 B. S. Baritone		3. 0. 0
✓	1 B. S. Euphonium		4. 10. 0
✓	E. S. Bombard		5. 0. 0
Mapleton	✓ 2 B. S. Trom Slide Horn		2. 10. 0
✓	Cymbals		2. 10. 0
✓	Side-drum		2. 4. 0
✓	Drum		6. 0. 0
	Sticks		1. 5. 0
	Carriage		1. 9. 0
	Side drum sticks		1. 4. 0
	Carriage		1. 6. 0
			<hr/>
			£ 45. 0. 0

The List of Proposed Instruments for the Start of the Band

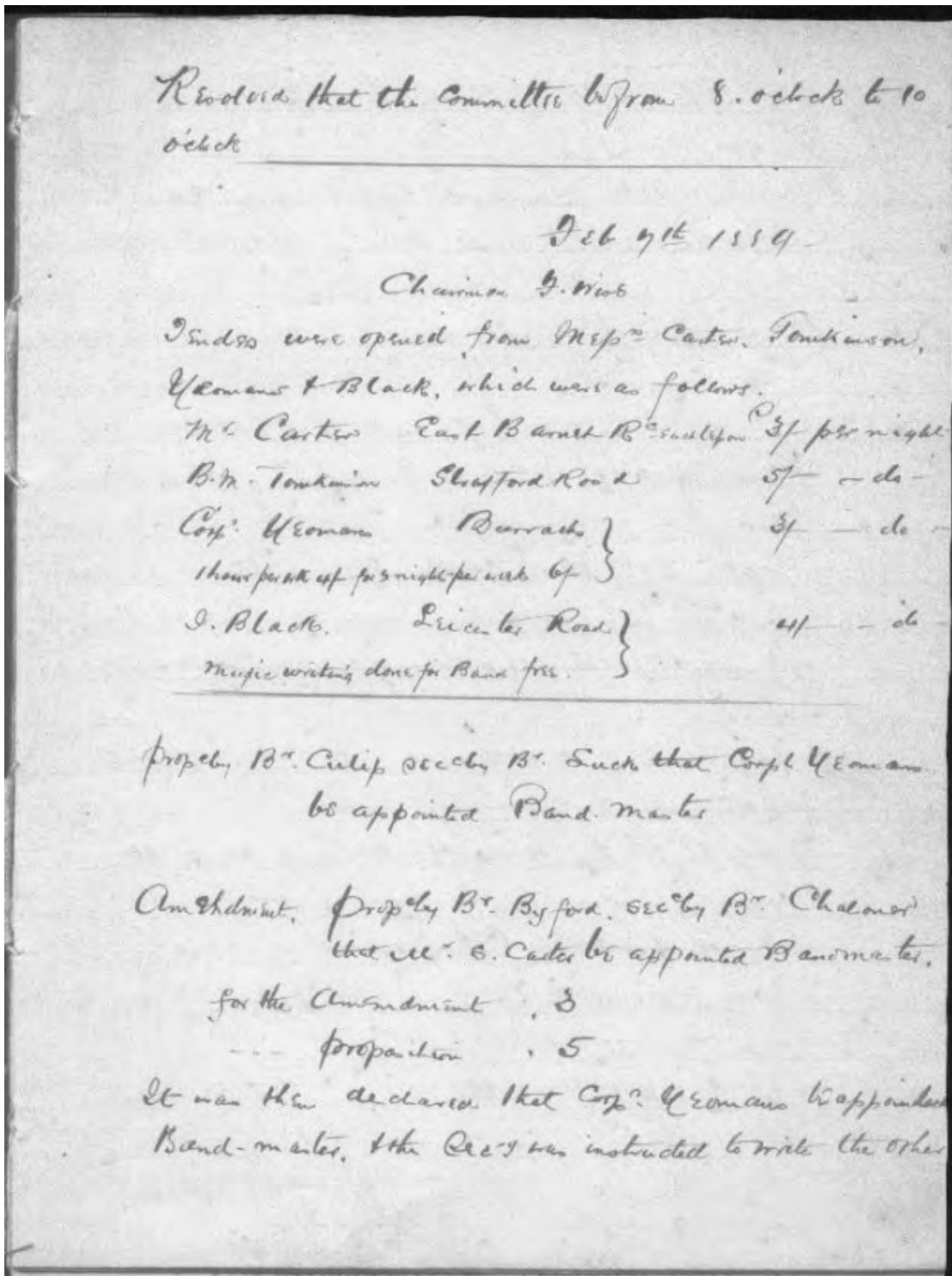
It is interesting to note that the instruments which are now referred to as tenor horns were referred, in this list as sax-horns and that the two instruments termed slide horns were, presumably trombones. It is also interesting to look at the relative prices of the instruments with a pair of cymbals costing more than any of the cornets and pretty much the same as the saxhorns. It's not recorded what make of instruments were subsequently purchased but they may have been Lafleur as a minute of March 1898 speaks of the Lafleur agent seeking 'further business'.

At that stage of its development, the band had little in the way of funds, the records showing a sum of £4-17-11 (£4.90) in the kitty. Brother Emm stepped in, therefore, and agreed to pay for the instruments, on the understanding that they remained his property until paid for in full by the band. It is not too clear where these funds had come from but some 5/6 (27p.) is shown as coming from subscriptions.

Mr. Arthur Emm was the Chairman of the band at the time of its formation and Mr. Frank Wise Vice-chairman. Corporal Yeomans, of the 7th K.R.R., was elected the first Conductor of the Band.

A Brief History of The Barnet Band

While Corporal Yeomans was appointed as the band's first Musical Director at the Committee Meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup> 1889, his appointment was not unopposed (see below).



A Section of the Band Minutes at which Corporal Yeomans was Elected Musical Director

It was decided that practice nights would be Mondays and Fridays and the first of these was held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 1889. In some accounts of the band's early days, it is stated that the band's first engagement was at The Green Man on March 18<sup>th</sup> 1889 but this seems unlikely. By the end of that month, the band had appointed a 'Captain'. It's not clear what his duties were but they may well have included the policing of attendance, as one of the early rules stated that presence at every practice was a condition of band membership and that members who failed to attend would be fined.

In March 1889, the band was able to repay the sum of £8 to Mr Emm, as a first instalment of the debt owing to him.

On May 21<sup>st</sup>, it was suggested that the Loyal Wrotham Lodge of Oddfellows were about to form a brass band and they were contacted to see if they wished to combine forces. Clearly, this amalgamation was approved and the band was renamed on June 14<sup>th</sup> as the *Amalgamated Brass Band, Foresters and Oddfellows*. Also at that time, rules were made to ensure that both organisations had equal representation among the band's players.

A source of income for the band was from contribution boxes which had been placed in The Green Man, The Prussia, The Salisbury, The Star Tavern, The Edinburgh Castle, The Crown and Anchor, The Black Horse, The Albion, The Queens Arms, The White Hart, The Two Brewers and The Three Elms.

In July, when these were opened, the sum of £2-5-6 (£2.26) had been collected. At that time, the bandmaster was instructed to purchase an 'E-flat bass instrument' for 85/- (£4-5-0, £4.25).

Early attendances at band practice were clearly a problem as, by August, members were being written to asking them to return their instruments as they had not been attending practice.

It appears that the band may have made its first tentative performance by October as, at the committee meeting of 31<sup>st</sup> October 1889, a vote of thanks was sent to 'the band and bandmaster for their very creditable performance at the Foresters' Dinner on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October'.

As the nights got darker, the committee turned its attention to lighting and decided to get ten lamps made – no street lighting in those days. By January, the order had been increased to eighteen lamps at 15/- (75p.) per dozen.

The collecting boxes raised 20/10 (£1.05).

In February 1890, a further sum of five pounds was paid off from the instrument loan account.

By the 24<sup>th</sup> March, the band's first concert had raised £10 and a further £10-10-0 (£10.50) was paid to Mr Emm and the spending of 10/- (50p.) on music was approved.

The first paid engagement was mooted when the band was asked to play at a demonstration in East Barnet on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 1890 and the sum of £6-0-0 (£6.00) was quoted for 20 players, giving an indication of the size of the band at that time.

## *A Brief History of The Barnet Band*

Collection Boxes raised 15/9½ (77p.)

About this time, the first instrument repairs were mentioned and a new mouthpiece purchased. Mention of the band appearing 'in uniform' was made in August but no references had been made to uniforms prior to this.

At the beginning of September, the band appears to have developed an identity separate from its founders, the Foresters. It refused to play at their church parade for less than 50/- (£2.50). Clearly, this caused some disgruntlement as the committee immediately fired the bandmaster, Corporal Yeomans. The committee met the band at the Green Man 'Court Room' and, following this meeting, rescinded the sacking.

At the meeting where this was decided, the committee opened up the band to all comers, provided they were 'respectable'. The band's name remained unchanged.

By October, there were three vacancies in the band and an advert was placed in The Barnet Press for new members.

Stands and lamps still seemed to be occupying the committee by December, and a member of the committee was asked to get samples 'from London' in order for the committee to approve them for purchase. At this time, Barnet was separated from London by countryside but had good connections over the ten miles or so from the coach service. As a staging post along the Great North Way, some 150 stage coaches per day passed through the town.

On March 6th, 1895, Corporal Yeomans seems to have finally vacated his post and George Byford was appointed Conductor of the Band at a salary of 3s (15p.) per week. He was to hold this position until 1907.

The first contest that the band attended was at Hitchin, on Whit Monday, 1897 the test pieces being the Selection *Cinq Mars* and the march *Collingwood*. It's not known how the band got on in this contest but the two pieces were included in the programme for the 1939 Golden Jubilee concert.

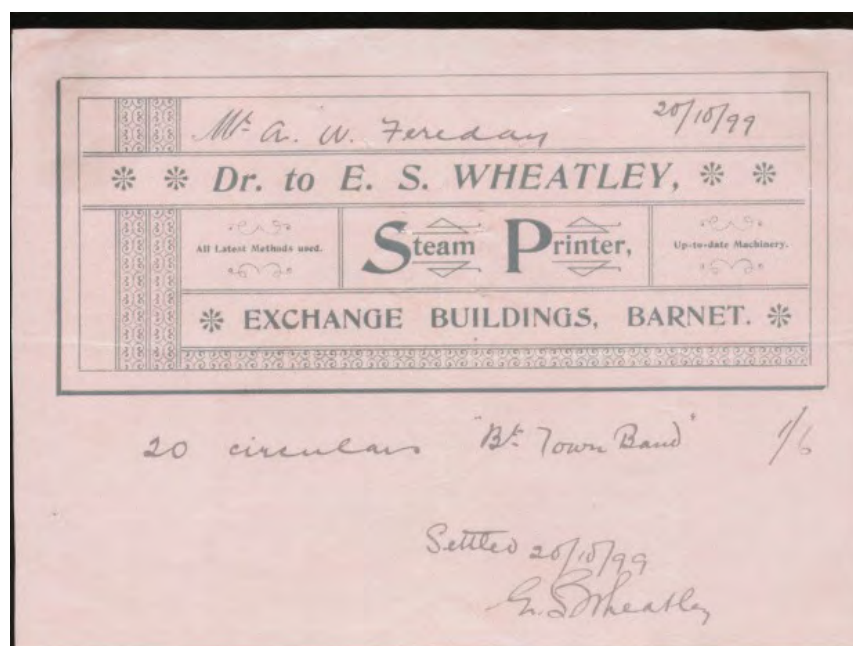
On May 4<sup>th</sup> 1892, in a long entry in the minutes which discussed a series of rule changes, a reference was made to 'the new name of the band' but no indication was given of what that name was. It was not until January 13<sup>th</sup> 1893 that an entry appears headed 'Barnet Town Band' and this is reflected on a receipt for the printing of 20 circulars by Barnet's Steam Printer, E. S. Wheatley, which was issued in 1899.

In May 1893, the committee agreed a move of rehearsals to Christ Church Schools at a fee of 2 guineas (£2-2-0, £2.10) per year, plus 6<sup>D</sup> (2½p.) per night for the caretaker. Rehearsals were set for every Monday and Friday, the final rehearsal at The Green Man taking place on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May 1893 and the first one at Christ Church Schools on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May 1893. Because of the pecuniary state of the band, the move was only made possible by Mr Emm's contribution of £2 towards the rent.

In March 1898, the committee set about obtaining a new set of Higham instruments through the medium Charles E Foot of 4 Soho Street, London, W.

The instruments to be purchased are shown on the following table.





A Receipt for the Printing of Circulars made out to The Barnet Town Band

No. Off	Instrument	Serial No.	Cost		
			£	s	d
1	E-Flat Soprano Cornet	50408	8	8	0
6	B-Flat Cornets	50536, 50538, 50560, 50561, 50564, 50566			
3	B-Flat Flugel Horns	50605, 50606, 50475	25	4	0
3	E-Flat Tenor Horns	50275, 50461, 50462	28	7	0
2	B-Flat Baritones	50029, 50270	23	2	0
1	B-Flat Euphonium, 4 valves	50324	14	14	0
1	B-Flat Euphonium, 3 Valves	50187	12	12	0
2	B-Flat Slide Trombones	50416, 50417	14	14	0
1	G Bass Trombone	50422	8	8	0
2	E-Flat Bombardons	50191, 50193	31	10	0
1	BB-Flat Monster	50628	26	0	0
Total			269	13	0
Discount			53	18	0
Cash on Account			25	0	0
Final Total			190	15	0

## A Brief History of The Barnet Band

A representative of Highams of Strangeways, Manchester, attended the committee meeting of March 11<sup>th</sup> 1898 to present the deal to the band. Under this, the band would rent 24 instruments from Highams for three years with a deposit of £30, followed by payments at the rate of £6 per month, starting on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 1898.

On completion of the three-year period, the band would be able to continue to hire the instruments and, on having paid the sum of £162 by instalments, would be able to pay a final sum of £23/15- (£23.75) and, thereupon, take ownership of the instruments. The deal was agreed by the committee. A further £5 was to be paid on receipt of the goods.

A dinner was held at the Star on April 18<sup>th</sup> 1898 at which the new instruments were to be presented. Tickets for the dinner were sold at 3/- (15p.) each, a report of the dinner appearing in The Barnet Press.

Apr 18/1898

**BARNET TOWN BAND.**

**PRESENTATION OF NEW INSTRUMENTS.**

The presentation of the new instruments to the Town Band took place at a dinner held at the Star Hotel, High-street, Barnet, on Monday evening. W. O. Boyes, Esq., LL.M., C.C., presided over a large company, amongst whom were the following:—Messrs. W. James (vice-chairman), H. W. Poole, T. Parsloe, A. Emm, R. J. Frank, C. Nicholas, G. E. Jenkinson, C. A. Webb, H. Nickolds, and Sowden. The room was prettily decorated, and the dinner was prepared and served in Host Harriott's best style. In proposing the toast, "The Queen," the Chairman referred to the fact that she had reigned for two-thirds of the nineteenth century, and the outburst of loyalty last year was an evidence of how much she was beloved. (Applause.)—"The toast having been drunk, the Band played "God save the Queen."—The Chairman then gave "The Navy and Army," which was responded to by Mr C. Nicholas, "a member of the Reserve Forces," and drunk with enthusiasm.—Mr Clarkson, to the accompaniment of Mr Ransome on the pianoforte, sang "Thy sentinel am I."—The Chairman said they had a duty to discharge which had a very legal sound about it, and he was sorry that his friend Mr Poole had gone, because he thought the appointment of trustees would require the services of more than one lawyer. (Laughter.) It was necessary to appoint trustees, because the second rule of the Band said that the ownership of the property of the Band should be vested in six trustees, three of whom were to be selected by the Band and three by the subscribers. The three selected by the Band were Messrs. Wise, Harriott, and Nickolds, and he would be glad to receive names of three subscribers.—Mr Tear (band secretary) said the names of the Chairman (Mr W. O. Boyes), Mr Jenkinson, and Mr Webb (or Mr Frank) had been suggested. Under Rule 14, the Band could not be broken up so long as there were six members opposed to it; and if the Band were broken up the property would be sold publicly, and could not be seized by any one individual.—The Chairman: They won't seize the trustees, will they? (Laughter.)—Mr A. Webb said it was no doubt good to have a lawyer like the chairman to advise them without the charge of 6s 3d, but he wanted to know what would happen supposing there was a debt of £150 on the instruments which could not be met.—Mr Tear explained that the instruments were obtained on the hire system, so that the makers were quite safe.—The names of the Chairman and Messrs. Jenkinson and A. Webb were then put to the meeting and unani-

mously accepted.—Mr Carter sang "The story of a musical box."—The Chairman then said he had to discharge the most important duty of presenting the instruments to the Barnet Town Band. It was no doubt a more or less formal business, but it was a very pleasing one to him. It naturally brought them to the consideration of the subject of music. He thought there were three things which contributed more than anything else to the happiness of social life, and they were children, flowers, and music. Most of them liked to see children toddling about their gardens and to listen to their prattle; and one of the first delights of children was to pluck flowers, and to listen to music, if it were only the sound of a penny trumpet. (Laughter.) So that a love of music grew upon them from their earliest infancy. In their cathedrals and churches their souls were lifted up by the sounds of sweet music. Music had now reached to the dignity of an art and a science, and degrees were conferred by the Universities for proficiency in music. At Barnet Church, the organist (Mr Nicholson, son of Sir Charles and Lady Nicholson) wore a hood which had been conferred upon him because of his ability as a musician, and the degree was now an acknowledged honour. Music exercised a wonderful power over men. He was told of an instance of a number of soldiers in the Crimea who were almost starving for want of food, and had looted a village and found some chickens. In searching for wood to make a fire to cook them with they found a cottage pianoforte, and hungry as they were, they called upon the Corporal, who was a musician, to play "Auld Lang Syne" before they broke up the instrument to use it for firewood. (Applause.) For some time Barnet was dependent on that very good man Father Bamfield—(applause)—for providing them with music, and afterwards a Band was formed by the Court Pride of Barnet Foresters, who purchased instruments for £40. Afterwards the Loyal Wrotham Lodge of Oddfellows amalgamated with them, but there was still not sufficient musical talent to carry on a Band. But latterly a gentleman, Mr G. Byford, had come upon the scene—(loud applause)—who had taken up the matter with great spirit. Still, the Band was heavily handicapped, and could not perform satisfactorily at such band contests as those at Hittelin, Luton, and Stratford, because the instruments were so inferior. It was determined, therefore, to purchase a better set of instruments, and for £250 the Band had now got a complete set of contesting brass instruments, for which they would have to pay £6 per month for three years before (as the lawyers said) they could be handed over "free from all encumbrances." In a town like Barnet there ought to be little difficulty in getting the money—(applause)—and a paper would be sent round the room for gentlemen to put down their names as annual subscribers. (Hear, hear.) He had given a donation, and he would be happy to be an annual subscriber for one guinea; and Mr J. L. Pank, his colleague on the County Council, had intimated his intention of subscribing annually half-a-guinea. (Applause.) He hoped the District Council would give every facility for the Band to play in the Recreation Ground—(applause)—so that the people might enjoy the music. (Applause.) The Chairman then handed to Band Captain Rutson the double B flat bass instrument amid applause.—A cornet duet, "I dreamt of a lowly fisher's home," was then played by Bandmaster Byford and Mr Pursell.—The Vice-Chairman gave the toast "Success to the Town Band," and in doing so said that the members of the District Council would be willing, under certain regulations, to allow the Band to play in the Recreation Ground. (Applause.)—Mr E. Stevens then sang "By the fountain," and was heartily encored.—Mr A. Emm (the band treasurer) having briefly responded to the toast, Mr T. Parsloe, who was received with applause, in a humorous and complimentary speech proposed the health of the Chairman. He remarked upon the fact that Mr Boyes sprang from a business family; and his father, like all wise parents, didn't put him at the top of the ladder to fall down, but put him at the bottom, and he had climbed to the top by his own exertions. (Applause.) He complimented the chairman on his having come to his (Mr Parsloe's) end of the town to obtain his wife, and humorously suggested that if the young men present wanted good wives they should come below Barnet Church for them. (Laughter and applause.)—The toast was drunk with musical honours.—Mr Jones sang "That's what touches the spot," and then the Chairman responded briefly to the toast. He spoke of the contest which he had recently been engaged in to obtain a seat on the County Council, and said that, whilst he had not one word to say against the way in which his opponent fought the election, he did protest against the insinuations in the local Press that he was disqualified from serving because he was a Magistrate's Clerk. He had the opinion of the Clerk of the Peace that it was perfectly legal for him to sit as a County Councillor, and that opinion agreed with the opinion of the Attorney General given eight years ago, though he did not know it at the time. In one county (Durham) there were two Magistrates' Clerks elected, and in another county one. (Applause.) He would not neglect their interests, but would on all occasions do his utmost to promote the interests of the town. He thanked them very much for the way they had received the toast, and especially Mr Parsloe for the way he had spoken of his family.—The other toasts were "The Vice-Chairman," proposed by Mr C. A. Webb; "The Press," proposed by Mr Frank, and responded to by Mr T. N. Campbell ("Barnet Press"); and "Our Host," proposed by the Chairman, and responded to by Mr Harriott.

### Presentation of the New Instruments

Soon after this the Band started winning prizes, capturing the First Prize at the Fulham Contest of that year. That was also the year in which the London and Home Counties Amateur Bands Association was formed and Barnet Town Band was one of its founder members.

During the South African War (1899-1902), a number of concerts were given for war charities. At that time, the Brothers Starbuck were prominent members of the band, one as Secretary and the other as solo euphonium. Mr. A. Starbuck, who won many medals for his playing was still a member of the Committee at the time of the Golden Jubilee Concert in 1939 and conducted one of the pieces on the programme.

Prior to 1902, the band had been giving regular Sunday concerts but discontinued these at the request of the players. However, these had clearly been vital sources of funding as they were resumed in order to alleviate the band's *financial distress*. Concerts were mainly held outdoors in the Ravenscroft Park Recreation Ground; but also in Dr. Boyes' garden and the Boys' Grammar School Playing Field.

In 1905, the band is recorded as attending the football matches of the Barnet Alston F.C. at Underhill and, in the same year, the first set of uniforms was purchased. These uniforms were made by Mr. Wynne, the Barnet tailor.

At this time, prizes were regularly being won by the Band, many individual members also winning medals. In 1905, the Band started playing on Hadley Green and in the High Sreet, Barnet, and these programmes were continued each summer until the 1930s when the traffic problem became so acute that it was dangerous to perform in the High Street.

Mr. Byford left the Band in 1907 and his position as Resident Conductor was taken by Mr. T. A. Cheek. The band did, however, still contain a Mr Byford as the minutes of May 1907 report: 'As Mr Byford has outgrown his uniform, it was resolved to allow him ten shillings (50p.) for his old uniform, provided it is in good condition and give him permission to have a new one on the usual terms'. Even today the band needs to consider the delicate matter of the size of its players. As this version of the history is being written, the committee is grappling with the task of allocating a size 52" (132cm) band jumper, after a player left the band and handed this back. One suggestion was to recruit two small players who played the same instrument and, At this time, a considerable amount of professional tuition was given the band by Mr. T. Ogden, a well-known Luton professional trainer, with very good results, as the many contests prizes won in that period attest.

At this time, the band appears to have played a very-different role in member's lives. At the end of 1928, when one of its members died, the committee designated one of its regular Sunday Concerts at the Barnet Cinema as being on behalf of the member's widow. The concert made a profit of £42-10-0 (£42.50) and the committee decided to pay this to the widow at the rate of 15/- (75p.) per week.

## *A Brief History of The Barnet Band*

In 1930, Mr. Fred Dimmock, F.N.C.M., was appointed Professional Conductor to the Band, and Mr. J. D. Kenny was appointed Resident Conductor in 1932. The latter was another promotion of a member who had joined the Band as a beginner. Under the training of Mr. Dimmock, ably assisted by Mr. Kenny, the Band gained outstanding awards: in the East Ham Contest, two first prizes; at Paddington, two first prizes; Lewisham, first prize; Walthamstow, first prize. Needless to say, these prizes were won against some of the finest bands in the South of England. As had become the tradition, two of the test pieces of the two East Ham Contests, *Songs Without Words* and *Northern Rhapsody*, were played at the Golden Jubilee Concert.

The band entered smaller groups in contests as well as the entire band and the photo below shows a quintet, along with their prize. By the time of this photo, the cap of the uniform had been changed although the cuffs still bore their braiding.



*Barnet Town Prize Band in 1907*

At this time, a considerable amount of professional tuition was given the band by Mr. T. Ogden, a well-known Luton professional trainer, with very good results, as the many contest prizes won in that period attest.

Mr. Cheek, who had started his musical career playing as a beginner in the Band, was very successful as its conductor from 1908 to 1930, with the exception of the Great War period, when he was in the Army. During the early part of his tenure, the band was meeting at The Mitre Pub.

While the Band won many prizes under Mr. Cheek, 1909 year stands out as the most successful, as, after winning 2nd Prize at Bromley and 1st Prize at Dartford, the crowning glory of that year was undoubtedly the First Prize at Crystal Palace at the Association Contest. The test piece of that contest was also included in the 1939 Golden Jubilee Concert, being conducted by Mr. Cheek.



*Barnet Town Prize Band in 1910*

In 1911, a new set of silver-plated instruments was purchased but no details of these are forthcoming from the minutes.

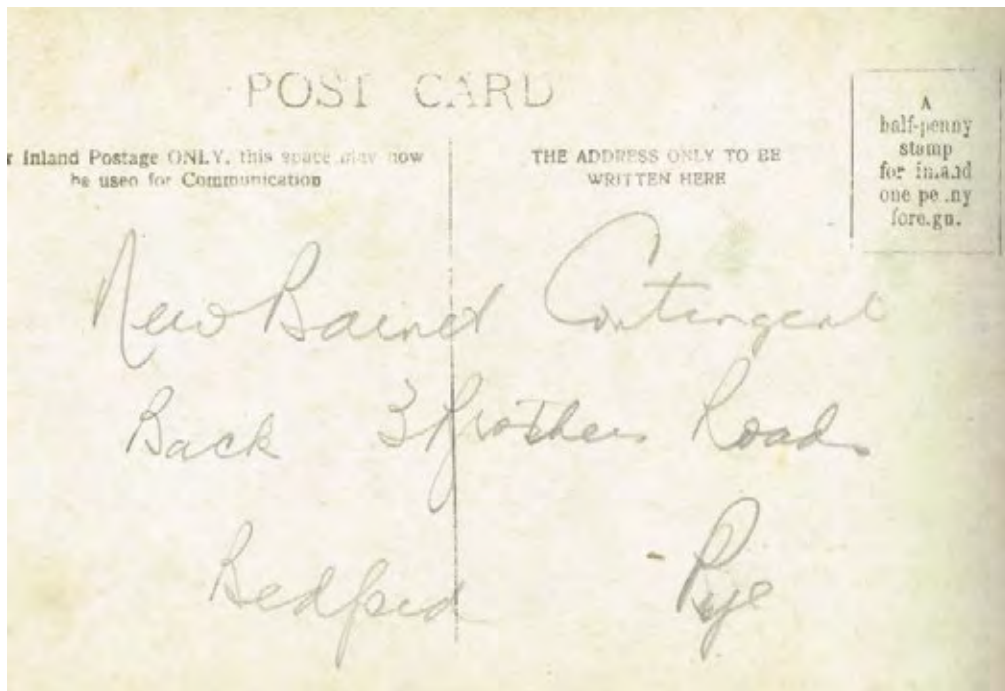
During the Great War, Mr. A. R. Whitfield conducted the Band, being ably supported by Mr. J. D. Kenny and Mr. J. Richards and, together, they enabled the band to carry on throughout the war. During this period, the Band assisted the Volunteer Training Corps on their marches and parades and gave concerts at the military hospitals. Special Concerts were also given in Barnet Cinema and, in two of these, they were supported by Mr. Douglas Furber's, then-famous, *Glad Eyes Concert Party*. Two pieces, *A Soldier's Life* and *A Sailor's Life* were very popular band items at these concerts and a Mr. Whitfield conducted the latter piece at the Golden Jubilee Concert.

*A Brief History of The Barnet Band*



*A Postcard from around 1920*

Above is a postcard which came from Jack Kenny's archive. It is not dated but inscribed on the rear as shown below:



*The Rear of the Above Postcard*

What has not been reproduced on this image is the name of the printer, W. Redland & Son, New Barnet. I was unable to find any trace of this company but the container for the stamp called for a half-penny stamp for inland postage. This rate was increased in 1918, thus dating the postcard to sometime before this date. As it was in the archive received from Mr Kenny's wife, it is likely to date from after he joined the band in 1907.

Another postcard, probably of the same date ,shows a cornet player posing in his band uniform. While this seems most likely to be the same player as in the quintet, he has gained himself three medals since the earlier photograph.



*A Pre-First World War Cornetist of The Barnet Town Band*





## Chapter 2

# After the War to End all Wars

**W**ith the return of members after the War the band resumed its activities in the life of the Town, started "contesting" again, and was soon adding further prizes to its long list.

The band played at the unveiling of the town War Memorial in 1921, and each year until the Second World War, provided the music at the Remembrance Sunday Service. The band can be seen at the bottom left in the photo overleaf during the opening ceremony.

The band was also present at the opening of The Old Court House Recreation Grounds in 1926 and, for a few years, gave a number of concerts in these Grounds. Unfortunately, the income from these concerts was very poor, and so they had to be discontinued.

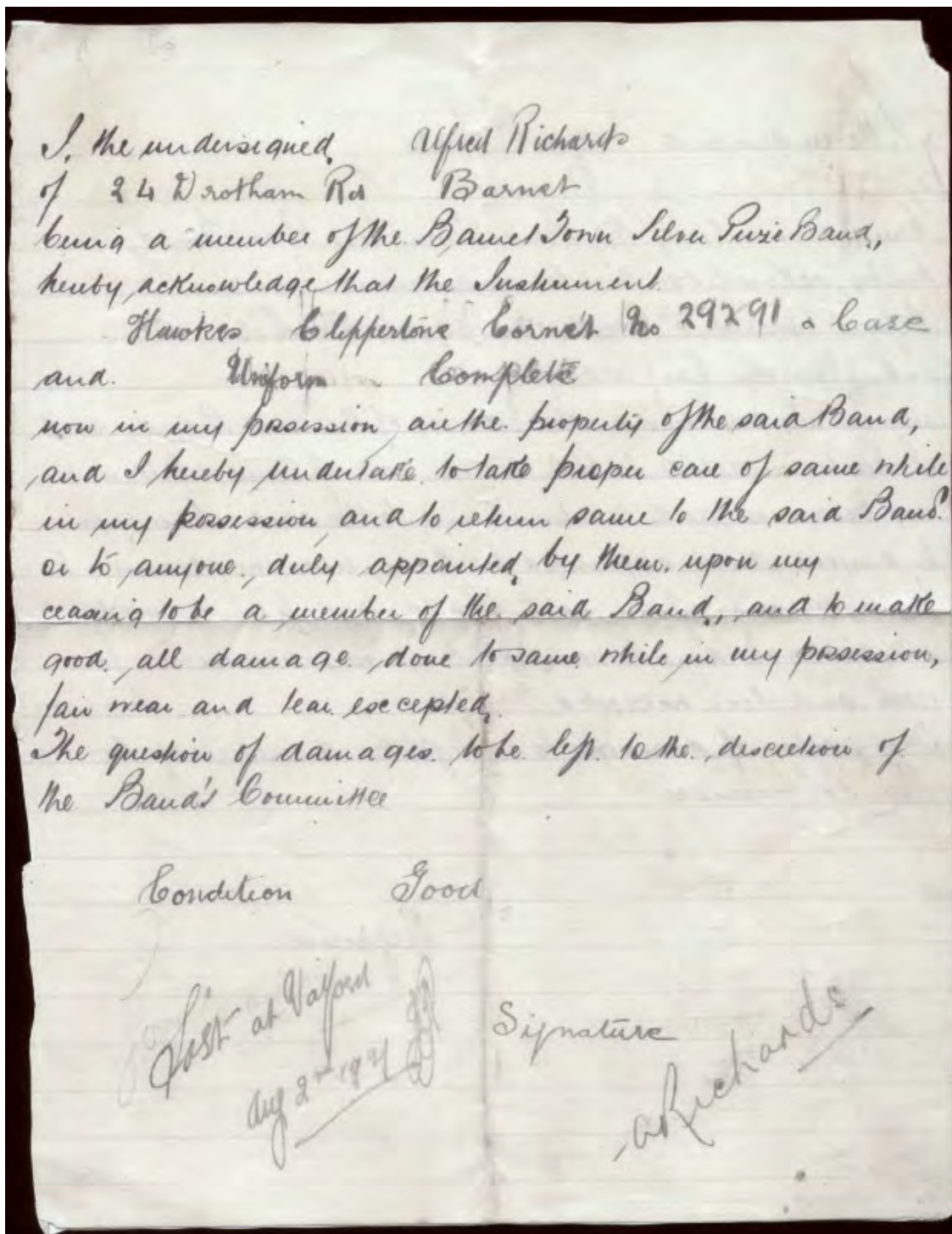


*The Consecration of Barnet War Memorial with the Barnet Town Band in Attendance*

Financing of the band was by contributions from rich donors but also from collections taken at concerts. These were used for band expenses such as uniforms and instruments. It was the tradition at that time for a band to own all the instruments and to lend them out to band members. This is described in the receipt for the loan of a band cornet by Alfred Richards in 1921, a time when the band was known as The Barnet Town Silver Prize Band.

Massed bands performances were arranged with St. Albans British Legion Band, and also Wood Green Excelsior and on another occasion three Hertfordshire Bands, St. Albans City, Welwyn Garden City, and the Barnet band, combined for double performances for the Durham Distress Fund. These performances were very successful and popular.

The band had operated a junior band for many years and this gave its own concerts, one of these being recorded as having taken place on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 1938. However, starting in the first week of October 1928, the committee decided to introduce an additional new beginners' band. This was run on Monday evenings with the other junior band running on Wednesday evenings. The committee approved the expenditure of £20 on new instruments to enable the new class to be run.



A Bandsman's Receipt for his Band Instrument

Bands of this period could not rely upon working-class bandmen to have access to instrumental tuition and were, thus, important vehicles for musical education among working-class people. Even in the 1950s, when I started to play, this was still the case and I went along to Shirland Miners' Welfare Band, having no musical experience and no knowledge of playing a cornet. The band lent me a cornet and the bandmaster taught me to play.

In 1924, the Barnet Town Band uniform still retained the double row of buttons as shown on the postcard below.

*A Brief History of The Barnet Band*



*A Postcard of the Band in 1924: Source Jack Kenny Archive*

This postcard highlights how communications have changed, as it was used by Rupert Gale in Barnet to communicate with JD Kenny in Finchley. It was probably posted late on Tuesday, to be picked up on Wednesday morning and delivered on Thursday to confirm a meeting on Friday. No mobiles, twitter or texts then!



*Postcard from Rupert Gale to Jack Kenny in 1924*

At this time, the band appears to have played a very-different role in members' lives. At the end of 1928, when one of its members died, the committee designated one of its regular Sunday Concerts at the Barnet Cinema as being on behalf of the member's widow. The concert

## Chapter 2: After the War to End All Wars

made a profit of £42-10-0 (£42.50) and the committee decided to pay this to the widow at the rate of 15/- per week.

On February 12<sup>th</sup> 1929, a resolution was put to the Band General Meeting that the name of the band would be *The Barnet Town band*. This was agreed.

At this same meeting, it was also decided that 50% of the 'Football Collections be divided amongst those members attending matches'. The band played regularly, at that time, at Barnet FC matches and took a collection at these.

In 1930, Mr. Fred Dimmock, F.N.C.M., was appointed Professional Conductor to the Band, and Mr. J. D. Kenny was appointed Resident Conductor in 1932. The latter was another promotion of a member who had joined the Band as a beginner. Under the training of Mr. Dimmock, ably assisted by Mr. Kenny, the Band gained outstanding awards: in the East Ham Contest, two first prizes; at Paddington, two first prizes; Lewisham, first prize; Walthamstow, first prize. Needless to say, these prizes were won against some of the finest bands in the South of England. As had become the tradition, two of the test pieces of the two East Ham Contests, *Songs Without Words* and *Northern Rhapsody*, were played at the Golden Jubilee Concert.

The band entered smaller groups in contests as well as the entire band and the photo below shows a quintet, along with their prize. By the time of this photo, the cap of the uniform had been changed although the cuffs still bore their braiding.



*Part of The Barnet Town Band around 1930*

## *A Brief History of The Barnet Band*

We know of the whereabouts of only one cup from those heady days of competition glory and that is from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 1921 when the band won first prize at the High Wycombe Band Contest.



*The Annotation on the Cup for the First Prize at the High Wycombe Band Contest*

Just where the other prizes are can only be guessed at but the undated overleaf below shows some of the many trophies collected by the band.



*A Collection of the Trophies Won by the Band: Source Jack Kenny Archive*



*The Band in a more-informal setting in the 1930s: Source Jack Kenny Archive*

## *A Brief History of The Barnet Band*

At the end of 1937, Mr. Kenny found it necessary to resign his position as Conductor, but continued on the Committee and to play in the band. In 1938, the band found itself in financial straits and several proposals were made for raising cash. One of these was for the running of competitions which, it was considered, should raise £65 per annum. Mention is also made in the minutes of the band's Christmas Draw and the Derby and St Ledger Draws, all of which appear to have been running for some time and were clearly a source of income.

However, bandsmen also received a 'bonus' at that time and the committee decided that, were the target of £65 not to be raised, the shortfall would be recovered from the bandsmen's bonuses. For the year of 1939, this bonus amounted to £1 per member.

Mr. Arthur Irons, L.G.S.M., A.T.C.L. took over as Resident Conductor, coming from the Tottenham Borough Band. He was supported by Mr. J. Coleman as Deputy Conductor and Junior Band Instructor. Mr. F. Dimmock, F.N.C.M. continued to act as the band's Professional Conductor.

At this time, the Band was engaged by the Regal and Zonophone Gramophone Record Company to play with the famous St. Hilda Colliery Band and other Bands to make records of *The 1812 Overture* and eight marches. Amongst these marches was *Under the Banner of Victory*, which Mr. J Coleman conducted during the Golden Jubilee Concert, part of the programme of which is shown overleaf.

Very shortly after this concert, the band's Resident Conductor, Mr Irons, resigned, having taken up a similar, but presumably better-paid, position at the Crystal Palace Band. At that time, the committee advertised in the Barnet Press, the Finchley Press and the British Bandsman for a new conductor.



BARNET TOWN SILVER PRIZE BAND

President - W. A. BOYES, Esq.

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Programme of  
GOLDEN JUBILEE  
1889-1939

CONCERT

to be held in the

ODEON CINEMA

on

SUNDAY, MARCH 12th

Doors Open 7.30 p.m.

Commence 8 p.m.

---

PROGRAMME - THREEPENCE

---

Professional Conductor - MR. F. DIMMOCK, F.N.C.M.

Resident Conductor, MR. A. G. IRONS, L.G.S.M., A.T.C.L.

Hon. Sec., R. S. GALE, 42, Milton Avenue, Barnet

PRINTED AT THE "BARNET PRESS" OFFICE.

*Programme for the Golden Jubilee Concert of 1939*

Very shortly after this concert, the band's Resident Conductor, Mr Irons, resigned, having taken up a similar, but presumably better-paid, position at the Crystal Palace Band. At that time, the committee advertised in the Barnet Press, The Finchley Press and the British Bandsman for a new conductor.



<p>1. SELECTION "Cinq Mars" Gounod Conductor : MR. FRED DIMMOCK, F.N.C.M.</p> <p>2. SONG "One Fine Day" Puccini MISS BETTY CALKIN</p> <p>3. MARCH "Collingwood" Petlee Conductor : MR. ALFRED H. STARBUCK</p> <p>4. SPANISH SERENADE "Lolita" Buzzi-Peccia MR. ROBERT KING</p> <p>5. EXCERPTS FROM SULLIVAN'S WORKS Arr. Ord Hume Conductor : MR. T. A. CHEEK</p> <p>6. SONG "Softly Awakes My Heart" Saint-Saens MISS DORIS ROWLEY</p> <p>7. FANTASIA "The Life of a Sailor" Arr. Sheriff Conductor : MR. ARTHUR WHITFIELD</p> <p><small>SYNOPSIS: Leaving Port; Anchor Up; Good-bye, Sweetheart, Good-bye; On the Ocean; Saturday Night on the Fo'castle; Hornpipe; A Storm Approaches; Storm; Prayer after the Storm; Song--Sailing; Enemy in Sight; In Action; Finale.</small></p>	<p>8. SELECTION "Songs Without Words" Mendelssohn Conductor : MR. JOHN D. KENNY</p> <p>9. NEGRO CONVICT SONG "Water Boy" Arr. Robinson MR. ROBERT KING</p> <p>10. "A Northern Rhapsody" Dr. Keighley Conductor : MR. FRED DIMMOCK, F.N.C.M.</p> <p>11. RECITAL "Rubinstein's Piano" Adams MR. GEORGE MACKINLAY</p> <p>12. MARCH "Under the Banner of Victory" Von Blon Conductor : MR. JOHN COLEMAN</p> <p>13. DUET "Venetian Boat Song" Blumenthal MISS BETTY CALKIN AND MISS DORIS ROWLEY</p> <p>14. DESCRIPTIVE "A Military Church Parade" Hume Conductor : MR. ARTHUR IRONS, L.G.S.M., A.T.C.L.</p> <p><small>SYNOPSIS: Sabbath Morn--Fall in for Divine Service; Hark! the Bonny Christ Church Bells; Commanding Officer's Inspection March; Regiment March to Church; Soldiers of Christ, Arise; At Divine Service; A Soldier's Hymn; Return Home; Finale.</small></p> <p style="text-align: center;">" GOD SAVE THE KING "</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Accompanist ..... MR. FRANK LUNNON</p>
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### What was Played at the Jubilee Concert of 1939

In the years up to the Second World war, the band looked to council engagements outside Barnet for funding and was regularly engaged by the London County Council, Wembley and Leyton Borough Councils, and Enfield Urban District Council.

In 1938, the band's total income was £408-19-9 (£408.99p.), of which £209-13-0 (£203.65p.) came from engagements and £13-1-3 (£13.6p.) from competitions which had cost £4-5-6 (£4.26p.) in entry fees. Tuition had cost £54-1-6 (£54.6p.) and room hire £26-4-10 (£26.22p.) with engagement expenses costing £60-11-0 (£60.55p.).

In the Golden Jubilee Concert programme, many of the earlier members were thanked, among them, Mr. J. J. Roads, who gave 35 years of his life to the band. He was outstanding as a cornet player and great-hearted as a man. Shortly after playing *The Lost Chord* as a cornet solo in the Old Court House Recreation Ground, he lost consciousness and died the next day.

The largest gap in the minute books occurs directly after this Jubilee Concert, between 20<sup>th</sup> April 1939 and 18<sup>th</sup> February 1940. At this latter meeting, the question of suspending the band was raised, because of 'the peculiar times under which the meeting was being held'. It was decided to suspend the rules for a period and to restrict meetings to Friday evenings. Mention is also made in the minutes of the Benevolent Fund, the imposition of a minimum subscription of 2p. per week and its extension to members serving in the armed forces.

In December 1939, the band dedicated its income from playing carols to the Bandsmen's Memorial Fund and a cheque for £15 was sent to the fund.

# Chapter 3

## After the Second Great War

**D**uring World War II, the band had continued but clearly in a very-reduced form. On Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May 1945, a meeting was called in the Jellicoe Hall, Moxon Street, Barnet. An extract from the minutes is given below:

*The meeting was called to place the organisation on a proper footing. The secretary gave a general outline of the position of the band throughout the period [of the war] so far as the Band Membership was concerned also the general financial position.*

*Twenty members had joined the forces, of the others, Norman Burton had been playing with De Havilands, J Baker and Norman Burton with Enfield Central. S Ackerman was with the N&S and J Flashman (?) with the ARP.*

*Mr JD Kenny and Les Parsonage had been the Trojans with the Beginners, starting with the ATC Boys & afterwards with our own class which was proving much more successful. J Wakefield also one of the Beginners had also considerably assisted.*

*The Band had suffered severe loss by the death of Mr J.S. Southam and Mr F Hunt. The Headquarters had changed the management twice & the rent of the practice room had been reduced by Mr Pope owing to the Band's thin financial position.*

*...When the war started the band was in debt to the extent of £89-12-0 (£89.60) but at present had a credit balance of £493-17-7 (£493.89) at Bank. This had been brought about by the energies of a few of the members, particularly so Mr J. Reed who had done marvels in this respect.*

As well as the losses in the war, one member, Harry Hodgkins was in a military hospital suffering from TB.

## *A Brief History of The Barnet Band*

This was the band's situation after the war, moderately okay financially but severely depleted in playing members as many of those who had served in the armed forces were not to be demobbed for some time. Nevertheless, at the end of the war, the band joined in the celebrations, marching from East Barnet War memorial to New Barnet War memorial to celebrate VE Day and then marching up the hill from the Barnet Odeon to Christ Church in Barnet to celebrate VJ Day.

In September 1945, the band committee's attention was turned to rebuilding the band and it advertised for four beginners, to add to the two already in classes. At this time, the bass drum was sold for £5 and a search put out for music stands.

The committee dealt with many issues which have long since disappeared from the modern agenda, such as in November 1945 when the secretary was given permission to purchase coal and logs. At the same time, the council was approached to seek permission for the band to rehearse in the Council Chamber on one evening in December, January, February and March. This request was subsequently granted.

Repercussions from the war continued long after the cessation of hostilities and, one year later, the band still had four members serving in the armed forces. Accommodation continued to be a problem and, in 1946, the band was still actively looking for a new band room. At this time, it also told Barnet Urban District Council (UDC) that it was no longer keen to play in the Old Court House Grounds for Box Collections and sought a new arrangement. The committee offered the band's services for a fee of 8 guineas (£8-8-0, £8.40) per performance but added that they would not be able to play in uniform because of clothes rationing.

The UDC responded by asking the band to play each Thursday evening in August at that rate.

The conditions in the aftermath of the war were highlighted when the band advertised for a new conductor and forty five people applied.

The band was able to purchase new uniforms in March 1947, ordering these from the Army and Navy Supply Stores. However, when these were received, the committee felt that these were a bit dull and ordered an investigation into the possibility of putting some red material behind the badges in order to jolly them up somewhat.

In October, the committee considered forming a 'Ladies Committee to arrange various items for mutual advantage'. It was felt too weighty a matter to decide outside a general meeting. Needless to say, a Ladies Committee was formed and in the following month, it was reported that they were to run a series of whist drives. These were obviously successful as they raised the sum of £20 over the coming months.



*The Barnet Band in September 1948: Resplendent in their New Uniforms*

After being members since its inception, the band committee voted in November 1947 to leave the London Home Counties Amateur Bands Association. This followed a long-running dispute when players who were registered with the association as playing with Barnet Band played for the Enfield Band. Matters became heated when one of these played in a contest which the band won. Barnet Town Band objected and the player was suspended. On appealing his suspension, the player was let off and Barnet Town Band was up in arms. When the association offered no acceptable explanation for their behaviour, the band committee voted on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 1947 to leave the association.



*The Band in the Late 40s with its First Female Member*

## *A Brief History of The Barnet Band*

In 1948, when a new conductor was sought, the post was offered to a Mr Stanyon, Deputy Conductor of Luton Band. That band was approached and they agreed to the move and Mr Stanyon was offered £50 p.a., plus travelling expenses, one month's notice and two weeks holidays. He accepted.

The problem of rehearsal space for the Junior Band was solved in December 1948 when Hertfordshire County Council offered space in Byng Road School, starting on the second Wednesday in January. At the same time, The British Legion agreed to giving the band use of the Jellicoe Hall each Monday and Thursday at a cost of 10/- (50p.) per week.

The band acquired its first Chaplain in February 1949 when the Rev. W.R. Farrer was appointed to this post.

1949 saw the Diamond Jubilee of the band and, to help it celebrate the occasion, it invited two other bands from St Albans and Watford to join in two Massed Band Concerts in The Old Court House Recreation Grounds.

In the programme for that event, it was reported:

Even when we were reduced to so few as six playing members we attended a Quartette Contest and obtained second prize. After this a class of Beginners was commenced, and the plaintive notes of these budding bandsmen were often accompanied by the wailing Syren, the Gun Barrage, and sometimes by the "crump" of Bombs. In spite of these we are now reaping the benefits of that great effort. Later, one of our junior members Mr. J. Wakefield gave valuable help with the young recruits.

With the ending of the second great war, the return of some of our old Members, and an influx of new members we are making strides towards getting together a Band of the standard that will do credit to itself and the Town.

### *Excerpts from the Concert Programme of the Diamond Jubilee Concert in 1949*

The front of the programme and the actual running order of the two performances are shown overleaf.

# BARNET TOWN BAND

1889 – 1949.

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## Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

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### MASSED BANDS

St. Albans City and British Legion Band

*Conductor : Mr. G. E. Longland.*

Watford Silver and British Legion Band

*Conductor : Mr. W. Greenwood.*

Barnet Town Band

*Conductor : Mr. J. R. Stanyon.*

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OLD COURT HOUSE RECREATION GROUND,

SUNDAY, 22nd MAY, 1949,

at 3 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

Admission to Enclosure by Programme 1/-

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*Hon. Sec.—R. S. GALE, 42, Milton Avenue, Barnet.*

Front Cover of the Concert Programme of the Diamond Jubilee Concert in 1949

## Afternoon Programme

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1. March "Sons of The Brave" *Bidgood*
2. Overture "Lustspiel" *Kela Bela*
3. Selection "Panorama of Famous Songs" *Arr.*  
Watford Silver *Denis Wright*
4. Cornet Solo "Una Voce Poco Fa" *Rossini*  
Soloist - Nelson Morris (St. Albans City)
5. Valse "Poem" *Fibich*
6. Petit Suite de Ballet *Eric Ball*  
St. Albans City.
7. Selection "Wilfrid Sanderson's Songs" *Arr.*  
Barnet Town. *Ord Hume*
8. Intermezzo "Bell of Ouseley" *Ord Hume*
9. Tone Poem "Loreley" *Nesvadba*

"God Save the King."

*Afternoon Programme of the Diamond Jubilee Concert in 1949*



## Evening Programme

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1. March "B. B. and C. F." *Ord Hume*
2. Overture "Pique Dance" *Suppe*
3. Trombone Solo "Joy Wheel" *Sutton*  
Soloist - Percy Bradbury (St. Albans City)
4. Selection "Sweethearts of Yesterday" *Hall*  
St. Albans City
5. Song "Dream of Olwen" *Williams*
6. Excerpts from 5th Symphony *Beethoven*  
Watford Silver
7. Cornet Solo "Bless This House" *Brahe*  
Boy Soloist, Mervyn Richards (Watford Silver)
8. Suit "Divertimento" *Eric Ball*  
Barnet Town
9. 1st. Movement, Unfinished Symphony *Schubert*
10. Hymn "Deep Harmony" *Parker*  
"God Save The King."

*Evening Programme of the Diamond Jubilee Concert in 1949*

## *A Brief History of The Barnet Band*

With the band having won so many prizes over the years, it's unfortunate that the only prize which survives is that from the High Wycombe Contest in 1921. The only other prize that can be identified, from a photograph, is that from the First Prize of the Manchester Section 3, Daily Herald Contest in 1953. It is shown below in the hands of RS



*Rupert Gale Holding the Cup for the First prize at the Daily Herald Contest (Date unknown): Source Jack Kenny Archive*

Overleaf is a newspaper report of the win which gives the names of all the winning players.



*Rupert Gale Receiving the Cup for the First prize at the Daily Herald Contest (Date unknown): Source Jack Kenny Archive*

This win clearly had a bit of a sting in the tail as 1954 saw Barnet Town Band in Section 2 of the championships: effectively the top section for amateur bands.

One of the features of the band's social life in the 1950s was the annual outing and, in 1957, this took place on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September, by train, to Folkestone. The minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> of October reported that this was a success and hoped that it wouldn't be the last. In the following spring, the band held a social on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January in the Jellicoe Hall on Moxon Street.

## Barnet Band Win National Trophy by 6-point Margin

**AN AMBITION REALISED.** Mr. R. S. Gale, secretary of Barnet Band for 37 years, receiving the national challenge vase and £50 from Ald. William Collingson, who was Lord Mayor of Manchester last year.

**B**ARNET Band, competing against 14 other bands in the national brass band finals at Belle Vue, Manchester, on Saturday, won first prize in their section. The band received the "Daily Herald" national challenge vase and £50.

Barnet Band was awarded 188 points. The nearest rivals among the area champions and runners - up from all over England, Scotland, and Wales were the Holme (Lancs) Silver Prize Band, with 182 points. Alloa Burgh Band was third with 176 points, and other placings were: Eccles Borough Band (172); Preston St. Davids Band (170), and Ammanford Silver Band (168).

The Barnet Band was trained and conducted by Mr. John R. Stanyon. In the comparatively short time that Mr. Stanyon has been the conductor the band has won five first prizes and one second. Before coming to Barnet, Mr. Stanyon was the deputy conductor of the Luton Band.

### WINNING PERFORMERS

The 25 Barnet bandsmen who gave the title-winning performance of "A Holiday Suite" were:—

C. R. Virco, G. R. Blishen, A. Toyne, R. Read, A. M. Thomson, B. Blishen, L. Fuller, B. Cook, A. West, T. Milton, A. Whyman, E. Douglass, J. D. Kenny, W. Northwood, W. McClure, L. Bennett, G. Green, F. Parsons, G. Mahn, E. Wakefield, S. Buey, S. Akerman, B. White, S. Cooper, and R. Bennett.

Mr. Kenny, who plays the 1st horn, has been a member of the Barnet Band for 54 years.

The Barnet Band appreciates the great assistance rendered by their many friends which made the trip to Manchester possible.

By their latest success the band gain automatic promotion to the next higher class, the second section, for the 1954 series of area championships.

Information about the day-to-day activities of the band comes from a variety of sources, one of these being an article published in the Barnet Press of Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September 1969, in a series entitled, "What Can I Join" and the headline: BARNET BAND IS STILL BLOWING STRONG AFTER 80 YEARS. The the article is shown overleaf but the accompanying photograph could not be reproduced to an adequate standard.



**E**VER since I took my trombone to a party and nobody asked me to play, I haven't liked to risk another disappointment. So when I went along to a Barnet Band practice for material for this feature I left my trombone at home. But when I arrived, they handed me a spare euphonium and insisted I play with them—which just shows what a friendly crowd they are.

There is something in brass banding which binds fellow

players together — a camaraderie which seems to break down the traditional English reserve and makes instant friends out of complete strangers. This is certainly true of Barnet Band, and anyone joining them is assured of an immediate warm welcome as well as the chance to play alongside some first-class musicians.

Speaking of his connections with Barnet Band over the years, Mr. Harry Mortimer, the distinguished musician and conductor and doyen of the brass band world, once said it was bands of the calibre of Barnet Band that were the very life blood of the brass band movement. Without them, he said, the big name bands would be unable to carry on.

## **80 YEARS OLD**

Barnet Band have a long and close relationship with the town and are certainly one of its oldest organisations. They were formed on January 31st, 1889, by the Court "Pride of Barnet" Foresters.

**By**

**Charles King**

In their early days the band gave their music programmes on Hadley Green and in Barnet High Street, but these ended as traffic increased. They then began to accept engagements to play in the London parks.

## **PARKS**

This season Barnet Band were engaged by the Greater London Council to give 10 programmes in various parks. They were also awarded four engagements to play in the royal parks, twice in Greenwich Park and twice in Kensington Gardens, which is quite an honour for any band.

For a town band they are not heard locally very often. So far this year they have played at the summer show in Bethune Park, Friern Barnet, and at Arkley Windmill fête.

The summer season is now practically over, but the band are active the whole year round. The winter months are spent taking part in competitions.

The band have a praiseworthy history of competition success. In their first 50 years they won 150 prizes, and many more have been added since.

## CHAMPIONS

One of their most memorable successes was at Belle Vue, Manchester, in 1953, when, under the baton of the late Mr. John Stanyon, they won the coveted national section championship.

But Barnet Band do not believe in resting on their laurels and they have won the championship of Hertfordshire for the last three years.

Their present musical director is Mr. Peter Wise, of Clive Close, Potters Bar — an experienced and accomplished musician. Connected with brass banding since childhood, he is principal euphonium player in the band of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues).

The band's secretary is Mr. R. S. Gale, of 42, Milton Avenue, Barnet. A member for 60 years, he has been secretary for 53 of them. Their president is Mr. Reginald Heath, a successful composer of band music.

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the band is by no means limited to residents of the town. Members travel from as far away as Luton, Dunstable and Welwyn Garden City to play.

At the moment, membership stands at 34, including an encouraging number of young people. All sorts belong — my companion on the euphonium bench at the practice was a Barnet policeman (and he never strayed from the beat once!).

The age of the players varies tremendously. At 62, Mr. Les Parsonage, of Berkeley Crescent, New Barnet, is the oldest playing member of the band. He joined when he was 17 and has been a member ever since. One of the youngest players is 12-year-old Stephen Watkins, of Bruce Road, Barnet. He plays third cornet.

Also in the band are two sets of brothers, a father and son, and a husband and wife.

Despite their obvious proficiency, Barnet Band are very flexible in the standard of playing they require from their members (they let me play with them, don't forget). Inexperienced players and beginners are welcome.

Instruments are provided when available, but players with their own instruments are particularly welcome. The band are at the moment gradually replacing their instruments. Their first set cost £42, the second set £183 — and the price quoted now for a complete set is £3,580. But rather than get into debt by replacing them all at once, they are buying new instruments as the money becomes available.

Barnet Band practise twice a week, from 8 p.m. to 9.30 p.m., on Mondays and Thursdays in Jellicoe Hall, Moxon Street, Barnet. Anyone interested in joining them will be made welcome at any practice night, or can telephone Mr. Gale at 449 7743, or Mr. Wise at Potters Bar 56533.

Around that time, the fees for band engagement seems to have varied enormously, being basically what they could get out of the promoter. Many concerts appear to have been given for under ten pounds, but for an engagement at Fulham, for the local authority, they quoted £21. For an earlier event, a service for the Friendly Society, the band received three guineas (£3-3-0, £3.15). At that time, the band was paying ten shillings (50p.) per week for its room at The Mitre.

In 1969, Rupert Gale wrote an article for *The Conductor*, a journal for brass band conductors which is reproduced overleaf.

# THE CONDUCTOR

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
BRASS BAND CONDUCTORS

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Hon. Editor

FRANK WRIGHT, M.B.E.

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## NABBC 1969 CONVENTION

A report of the 1969 Convention at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama on September 20—21 will appear in the next (January) issue.

## SIXTY YEARS ON

By RUPERT S. GALE

When I was born in 1892 my father was the Secretary of a band at Southgate in North London, and it seemed to follow a natural course that I, too, should in due time become a bandsman.

The Barnet Band was formed by Members of the Court "Pride of Barnet" Foresters on the 31st January, 1889.

I was persuaded to join this band as a beginner in September 1909, and therefore hope to complete sixty years membership this coming September. During this lengthy membership I have been its Honorary Secretary for nearly fifty-three years, and have found the work both interesting and enjoyable.

The position of a brass band today is very different from that of sixty years ago. Then, most brass bands relied on box collections for their existence. We at Barnet regularly played in the High Street, and on Hadley Green. The crowds we played to were certainly appreciative, and the collections good. As time went on the considerable general increase in traffic brought with it many difficulties, and eventually the Police informed us that it was too dangerous to continue to play in the High Street, Barnet. We immediately took their advice, and had to look elsewhere for the necessary income to enable us to continue. For many years past we have spent the greater part of our summer season by playing in the

Page 4

London Parks, first under the London County Council, which has now become the Greater London Council.

Our source of obtaining new members in the early days was through beginners classes, and the local Boys' Brigade, now in addition we also look to the schools for recruits. We have been successful with four such recruits fairly recently. We are always willing to assist the schools concerned on their special occasions, or by way of a concert for their funds.

During my membership of the Barnet Band we have had quite a number of successes in the contest field, and as a result we have been able to maintain a good standard of playing.

In our early days we were a Subscription Band, but later we carried on without any charge to our members. With the many changes in the finances of the organisation, however, the members volunteered to forgo any expenses, and, in addition to pay a weekly subscription. This arrangement is working in a very satisfactory manner—and the members are all amateurs.

The hardest moments are those when we have had to bear the loss of special friends. Amongst these were, Joseph Roads, our solo cornet player for many years, who, though a young man, had a stroke just after playing a solo—"The Lost Chord"—in the Old Court House Grounds, Barnet, and unfortunately could not be revived. There was also Mr. John Stanyon, our conductor for nineteen years—his death was a great loss. He was a splendid man, and one could always appreciate his friendship. Another special friend was Norman Wobey, our Assistant Secretary, who suddenly passed away at the early age of thirty-five. Norman was a real helper.

One stalwart who is still with us is Mr. J. D. Kenny—a very capable playing member of Barnet Band for sixty-six years, and has been a very good adviser in all times of difficulty.

I have myself been associated with five resident conductors—Mr. T. A. Check, Mr. A. R. Whitfield, Mr. J. D. Kenny, Mr. J. R. Stanyon, Mr. P. Wise, and one professional conductor, Mr. Fred Dimmock, all good fellows who worked admirably for the band and whom we shall always remember with affection.

We purchased our last set of instruments in 1911 for £183.10.0 and these have done us remarkably good service. We have now decided to purchase new instruments as the money becomes available. So far in the past year we have bought six instruments at a cost of just over £500.0.0.

I am of the opinion that whilst at times one gets despondent, the friendships that one makes as a result of being in the brass band movement certainly repays fully for any adversity which may arise.

The work in connection with brass bands has been a great hobby to me and I hope it will continue so.

In 1979, Mr Kevin Morgan, the Band's Musical Director, formerly a cornet player with the Band of the Scots Guards, changed the band's name to The Barnet Band - its present-day name.

*A Brief History of The Barnet Band*



# Chapter 4

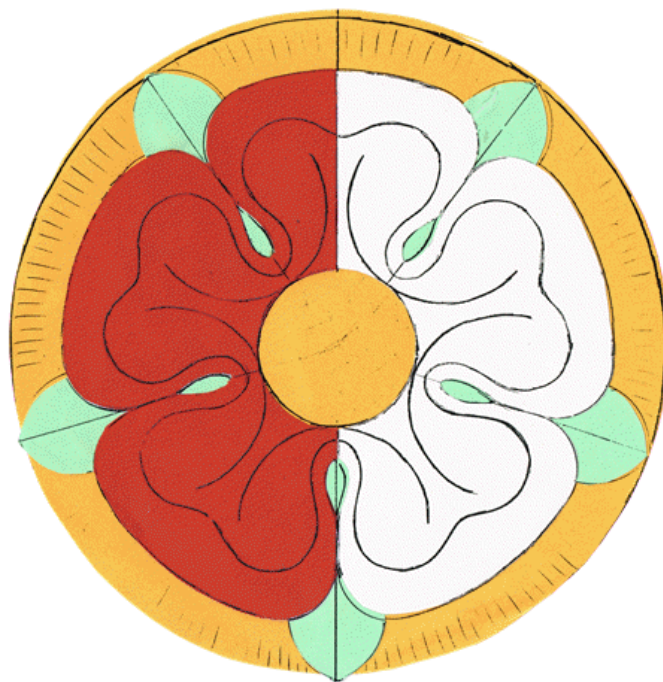
## Enter the Woodwind

**K**evin Morgan left the Band in 1983 to take up a teaching post in New Zealand and the membership of the band fell to the extent that it was not possible to stage a viable performance.

Mr Denis Collings was then appointed as its Musical Director and it was under his dedicated leadership that it transformed itself into a wind band of some 30 players. This change was much more than skin deep and the band changed from being a competition band to a community wind band.

Among the many things that Denis did was to design a logo for the band. As a heraldic artist, he was well placed to create a logo which reflected the history of the area in which the band existed. As Barnet was one of the sites of a critical battle in the English Civil War, he adopted the symbolism of the red and white roses of the houses of York and Lancaster, incorporating both of these into the centre of his design. The picture overleaf shows the prototype of the logo designed by Denis.

*A Brief History of The Barnet Band*



*The Prototype Barnet Band Logo Designed by Denis Collings*

Apart from a few slight changes made when I converted this into a digital format a few years after Denis retired, the logo remains the image of the present-day Barnet Band and a fitting tribute to Denis' efforts.



*Denis Conducting at Hadley Church in 1988*

The new band set out to entertain its audience and to enjoy doing so. Along with this change came a policy of no auditions and a willingness to accept anyone in the community who could play and was willing to learn and improve. Denis retired in 1998 when he and his wife moved to Devon.

The band celebrated its centenary in this year with a concert followed by a Centenary Dinner which was organised by Kate Worms, one of the band's members. This was attended by over 100 members and band supporters, an indication of the scale of the renaissance of the Band.

The band's new logo was incorporated into a banner to grace the player's music stands and these were created beautifully by Shirley Deed, one of the bands players and, for many years, its Secretary.



*The Present-Day Banner of the Barnet Band*

Jean Cottrell took over as Musical Director in 1998 and under her leadership, the band consolidated its strength and she oversaw the formation of a marching band to play for the annual Barnet British Legion Remembrance Day Parade. This re-instated the band's tradition of playing for this event which it had done from the end of the second world war until the late 60s.

## A Brief History of The Barnet Band

When Jean left, in 2000, the baton was taken by Chris McGinity who had joined the band in 1999 and rose rapidly from second trombone to Musical Director. Chris brought considerable insight to the role and was very ambitious on the band's behalf, entering the band in the Wind Band Competition at Kneller Hall. From three pieces played, the band gained a silver award (All in an April Evening) and a bronze award (Folk Song Suite).



The bronze award shown below serves as a reminder that competition was not to everyone's taste and, for the path to have been pursued, it would have meant a change of direction in recruitment as well as a reconsideration of the membership of some band members.

## A New Conductor Takes the Reins

*The Bronze Award  
from the Kneller Hall  
Event*

It seems fitting that the silver award was lost during a move of rehearsal room at short notice and, when changes to the band rules were proposed at the AGM in March 2001, the matter threatened to split the band. The changes were never put to the meeting, however, as the Director's saddle became empty only minutes before the meeting opened.



Although not a horseman, Dave Payne stepped into the saddle and conducted the band over the next two years. Unfortunately (only for the band), he decided to follow his heart and left for the Isle of Arran - a dramatic change of life style for a born-and-bred Londoner. Sad to see him go, the band nevertheless bade him a great farewell.

In 2002, the Band held its first day of children's workshops, having received a £1500 grant to fund this from The National Federation of Music Societies. On this day, over 200 children crowded into Grahame Park School and took part in workshops on brass, woodwind, percussion, guitar and steel drums. After the workshop, the band gave a brief performance. The challenge that day was thought to be the World Cup match but it turned out to be the guitarist who had been hired to do the guitar workshops. He sauntered in two hours late, spouting nonsense, each utterance of which ended with 'Chill out man!' Much diplomacy by band members averted a mutiny and the children appeared to leave the school happy with what they had experienced. The organisers left muttering 'That went well but never again!'

With Dave's departure, Simon Appleman took over to conduct the band and saw it through two seasons before family matters and the pressure of work forced him to resign. Simon did not leave the band totally, however, and turns up for many jobs with his tuba and keeps us all in step. Below is a picture of Simon with his tuba on the Remembrance Day March as the Band led the British Legion Parade along Barnet High Street.

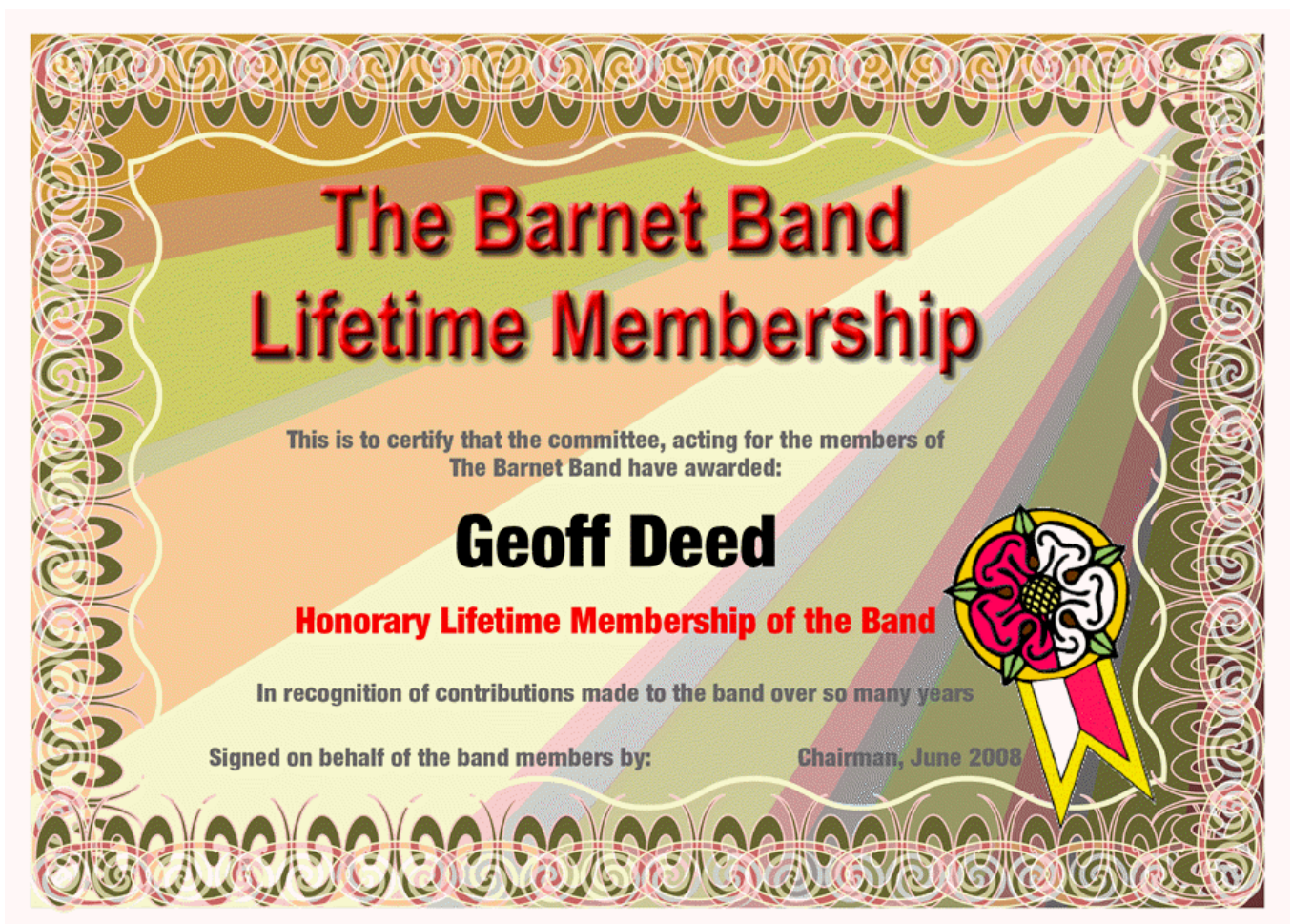


*Approaching the Church: Remembrance Day 2004*

## *A Brief History of The Barnet Band*

Following Simon on the Conductor's podium was James Wolfe who took over the reins of the band. Joining in 2004, James taught an old band new tricks. It has been reported that on one occasion, nearly half the band was reported to be watching him! He set out to widen the repertoire, while keeping the old favourites was determined, one day, to get the band to swing! The soloists, all friends of his, who give up their time to perform at our concerts, brought a new dimension to our experience and added to the variety that our concerts offer.

In 2008, the committee introduced an Honorary Lifetime Membership of the band for those members who had served many years and given good service. Among the first to receive the award was Geoff Deed, a cornet player with the band for over 50 years. Geoff is one of a family of players who have served the band well. When I joined the band, I sat between Geoff and his Brother Peter Deed while Peter's son, Michael sat behind me. Over to my left, with the clarinets sat Geoff's wife Shirley and Michael's wife, Jane.



*The Lifetime Membership Certificate*

Following James on the podium was Roger Greenwood. He knew the band well as he had acted as assistant conductor for many years and he led the band for over six years. Roger too moved on, to concentrate on his single reed activities, running, as he does, several local groups.

As we approach the 125<sup>th</sup> year of our existence, the band is conducted by Matt Smith. Matt, a professional flautist, conductor and composer has been with the band for over two years and has managed to keep his sense of humour, despite our efforts to break it. Our repertoire is even wider than it was in the past and the band enters its next 125 years as more exploratory and even wider in its membership.

Helping out local charities has always been a focus of the band's activities and numerous charities are recorded in the band's records. Among the earliest of these is the Barnet Victoria Cottage Hospital which received a donation from the band back in 1908.

Today, it's The Barnet Band but it wasn't always so, this is a little recap of the history of our names:

**1950 The Barnet Band**

**1929 The Barnet Town Band**

**1921 The Barnet Town Silver Prize Band**

**1907 The Barnet Town Prize Band**

**1890 The Barnet Town Band**

**1889 The Barnet Amalgamated Brass Band, Foresters and Oddfellows**

**1889 The High Foresters' Brass Band**

*The Barnet Band's Names Over the Years*

Although the name on the programme may have changed over the years, we hope that any of the players from the past would feel that we continue to carry on their tradition of helping charities. Recently, we have assisted The Stroke Association, The Starlight Ward of Barnet hospital, The Alzheimer's Society, DabB and, this year, our concert will be in aid of The Chipping Barnet Day Care Centre for the Elderly.

The band has also carried on the tradition of playing outdoor concerts over the summer and most of these are within the borough. One of our two most-regular commitments is at Finchley Nurseries, where we play twice a year and have done so for over twenty years. In recent years, we have added the RAF Museum to our list of regular visits and have also played there twice a year over the past few years. In 2013, we will be adding a Christmas appearance to the summer visits.

## *A Brief History of The Barnet Band*

The band has had a long history, surviving its young men going off to the Boer War, the 1914-18 conflict and the Second World War and the vicissitudes of these periods are graphically chronicled in its archive. With thousands of players passing through its ranks, many of these being actively engaged in the struggle to keep the band's tradition alive, the band feels it a duty to ensure that their endeavours were not in vain, in memory of all those players who livened up the parks and streets of Barnet over the past 125 years.



*The Band at St Marks Church, New Barnet in 2013*