

Crystal Palace Band AGM – Wed 29th April 2020

Musical Director's Report

Firstly, may I say that I am glad that you are all safe and well in these strange and difficult times? From what I see and hear you are in good spirits in spite of all.

Our season last year was enjoyable as always, culminating at Christmas in a fine concert involving both bands and some excellent soloists. Thank you for your hard work and dedication in all departments including, not least, the practicalities of stage, catering and ancillary management.

Despite the unfortunate result, I view the Butlins contest as a success; it was very enjoyable as always, both musically and socially. A lot of hard work was put in by all and I urge you not to see the outcome in terms of the adjudication but the musical rewards of playing together and well.

I congratulate you also for your tireless work to improve in the tricky and rewarding *Endurance*. It's a composition worthy (amongst many less so) of the term 'test piece'. I am grateful for the counsel of Dave Howell and the work put in at sectionals by Ben Ward and Graham Lunn. The ill fate of the Area Finals notwithstanding, we'll find a performance outlet for *Endurance* at some point, even if not at a contest, so keep having a look at it! Condolences to Peter Forbes for whom this to be his 'virgin' contest appearance!

The support I've received from the committee has been steadfast and my particular thanks go to Richard L for keeping me informed and advised. Rachel continues to be a tower of strength and David Charlesworth has stepped very efficiently in as Acting Chairman.

I was delighted to see Tom Whittaker back at rehearsals. Having needed to step back in view of his and Natalie's sad loss, he has been very much missed both as a musician and a very fine Chairman.

Thank you to Dave Howell and the Progress Band for inviting me to assist the percussion section at the Bromley competition; I enjoyed myself very much, as I always do on these occasions.

Let's all keep our spirits up whilst weathering this enforced hiatus by listening, practising and enjoying the Wednesday night online social gatherings and contributions to the challenges being set.

My very best wishes for the future of our bands and my hopes that we'll emerge (as Dave Howell said to me recently) hitting the ground running!

Michael Gray
Musical Director

Monday, 20 April 2020