

Musical Director's Report to the 2018 Annual General Meeting

I would like to begin my report with my heartfelt thanks to both bands, for the organisation by Rachel, Cath and the committee and to Dave Howell for the wonderful 30th anniversary present of last December's Gala Concert! It was a great occasion for everybody of course but for me it was a vindication of the work we have all put in and of the principles of the Brass Band Movement. I was further moved (and thank you Ken May for your initial approach) by the appearance of an old mentor of mine, the grand old man of brass banding, Frank Renton!

It has been a very successful year for the bands and I was particularly pleased to play (not very well!) with the Progress Band in the Beckenham Festival. Placing was, of course, foregone but it was the feedback from the principal adjudicator which was particularly relevant. It attested to the continuing improvement of the band and to Dave's skill and experience as a teacher and trainer; it was very well deserved!

The main band has likewise matured into a tight team. can produce a fine sound and has innate musicality. Some very good results have been achieved over the year since the last AGM. A promotion to 3rd Section after the 2017 Area Finals and a great result under Danny's expert guidance was achieved at the Crawley Entertainments Contest in May 2017.

A big thank you to Danny Wakefield and John Hargreaves for stepping in and conducting during my nasally enforced absences! There were two welcome returns to our schedule, Southwark and Greenwich Parks and John stepped at very late notice to do a great job at Southwark.

All this and more contributed to one of our most successful years in recent memory. Even the brief, interesting and somewhat ironic TV appearance in October about the recent performances of the 'Eagles' seemed to have an effect as they too had a big success following the broadcast!

I very much look forward to the coming year and wish all, in both bands, great success and enjoyment of our chosen art.

Mike Gray
Tuesday, 17 April 2018