



Summer Newsletter 2016/2017

WELCOME

Dear friends of the Band

Here is our second edition of our newsletter and 2017 is shaping up to be the most exciting year yet!

We are currently working very hard individually and as a band in preparation for the National Contest in April for the first time ever competing in the A Grade. We will be competing against seven other top New Zealand and Australian bands in Wellington and have record entries in Solo and Party events.



WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

- ◆ NZ Secondary Schools Band
- ◆ Carols by Candlelight
- ◆ Christmas Carols under the tree (Ohope)
- ◆ 2017 NZ Youth Band (see article on page 3)
- ◆ Sell Out End of Year Concert
- ◆ Public Appearances of the EBOP Development Squad (see article on page 3)

WHAT IS HAPPENING?

- ◆ Preparations for the 2017 National Contest in Wellington as an A Grade Band
- Contest Dates—Wednesday 19th April to Saturday 22nd April
- ◆ Anzac Day
- ◆ National Trust Power Awards in Rotorua



THANK YOU TO OUR MANY BUSINESS SUPPORTERS



MEET THE BAND

Passing the Tuba Flame: Stephen Clayton and Jeshua Oram—by Lou Davey

A burning passion for tuba playing is not a particularly common emotion. Fortunately for EBOP, we have a section of tuba players with that passion. The master and the apprentice, Stephen Clayton and Jeshua Oram make up two thirds of our Eb bass section. We will catch up with Jane and her story in a future article.

Jeshua (aged 13) first saw a tuba in an encyclopedia, and knew that the biggest being the best, this was the instrument for him. Stephen (ageless) comes from a banding family and probably knew from birth that he would play brass, eventually landing on Eb Bass with EBOP. Stephen quickly became Jeshua's mentor, tutoring and supporting him through these early years of his playing.

The golden shiny tuba dream for Jeshua initially didn't quite come true. He began with the Whakatane Childrens Music School on fife, then moved onto brass where he wanted a tuba but was given a baritone. Following an accident with the baritone (in the process of sourcing a replacement) Jesh met Stephen who gave him a blow on his Eb Bass. This was about April 2015. Not quite two years later and he is now a vital member of our A grade band.



A long family tradition from the midlands of England, where brass is an important part of the culture led the young Stephen Clayton into a predestined musical career. The family immigrated to NZ in the early 1950's, settled in Rotorua and the Clayton history in NZ brass bands began. Grandfather Elgar conducted Rotorua brass from the C grade right through to the B grade and then his father Colin took up the baton and led the band to the A grade. Stephen's first contest was 1979 when Rotorua won the B grade by 30 points. Alan Spence was also a member of this band.

Stephen began as many do - playing cornet, moved to horn and after a lip accident moved to the tuba section. He loved the bigger mouthpiece and the sound of the low brass. This was 1988, and led to him being in three national bands, two on Eb and one on Bb.

Sitting beside Jane as she played was all Jeshua needed to absolutely know playing brass was what he needed to do. Jane's big open sound and the friendliness of the band on that first night inspired him. This gave him the courage he needed and he very quickly become good enough to sit on his own seat and contribute to the band sound.

Jeshua is the start of what will be a family of brass players. His younger three siblings are all in the development squad of the EBOP, Isaac on trombone, Danielle on horn and Ethan on cornet. The family quartet called the Noodles is already playing well together and will enter the National Junior Quartet competition at the Wellington contest.

Jeshua has played onstage with the band at one national competition, so only had two test pieces to choose a favorite from. Fragile Oasis, Peter Meecham and the wondrous sound of the band playing that last note on stage set the standard for Jeshua, as I think for the whole band. His heart pounded and his arm hairs stood on end! This was a real reward for the hard work he put into rehearsing that piece.

Stephen has many test pieces to think about, but one of his favourites is Journey into Freedom, Eric Ball. He played this at a Nelson contest in the 1980's and the imagined sun rising felt so real, he could see, and hear it all happening.

When talking about nightmare events on stage, Stephen remembers playing Fatherland at a solo event. The pianist stopped playing, and left the stage to get the last four pages of her music. Unable to do anything but wait, young Stephen sat waiting to complete his piece when she eventually returned. (Ironically, this is the same piece that Jeshua will be playing in Wellington.)

Jeshua's heart stopping moment was not on stage, but during one rehearsal when Stephen and Jane decided to exchange tubas and passed their instruments over Jesh's head. Being crushed by a falling tuba was not in his plan. A flying drumstick has also occasionally hit him, adding to the excitement of being in the back row.

Rehearsal time at home is easier for Jeshua, he plays at least one hour every day, then up to three or four hours a day as contest draws near. Work, band administration and life in general means Stephen doesn't get as much time on his instrument these days as he would like to.

The standard of the instruments and the wide range of new music are the main changes Stephen has seen in the brass band world over the years, also the standard of the young players coming through, and their ability to play many instruments.

Jeshua's dream is to play in the National Secondary Schools' Band, the National Youth Band and eventually the National Band. He is well on track so far, winning every solo he has played. Stephen's dream these days is simply to help, motivate and mentor - not only Jeshua but also our other young EBOP players to have that courage and passion to achieve their dreams.

EBOP Development Squad Brass—by Lou Davey

The Development Squad Band has had a busy Christmas season, enjoying sharing carols, love and musical joy around the town.



We felt honoured to be asked to play at several occasions; the beautiful new playground the Galatea community built at Lake Aniwhenua was the first. We played a thirty minute program to a large, appreciative audience and feasted on the famous Murupara sausages at the end of the performance. (Thanks Paddy) Apart from a broken arm in the audience it was an awesome day.

Our next performance was at St Josephs School. We took part in their Christmas carol and family evening, playing carols with their school band, enjoying and supporting the choral and musical items from their enthusiastic group of musicians. (Thanks for the invite Jan)

The next audience to enjoy the DS Band was the Whakatane over 80's. Their annual morning tea hosted by the mayor and council rocked along to the fun tunes and carols that we shared. The oldies very much enjoyed the performance, as did the councilors and supporters. The mayor has become a big fan of the DS band, he even posted video clips of our performances to his Facebook page!

We continued sharing Christmas joy the following week at Golden Pond Rest home and our wonderful Whakatane Hospital. Several of our members had close encounters with various aspects of the hospital this year, and it was nice to be able to offer music as a thank you for the caring and love that our hospital gives. The Golden Pond residents sang along to familiar carols and enjoyed seeing the players and their instruments up close. Our hospital performance was in the courtyard, the solo cornet line happy to see some lip support arriving as Tania Spence came to join us for the last few carols.

Our banding year came to an end with an invitation from our senior A grade band to join them in the carols by candle light service on the river bank. Playing with the senior players was a wonderful experience for the developing musicians, and a fun and inspiring end to the year.

The DS band will start 2017 rehearsals, Tuesdays 3.30 – 4.30pm in the band room as the school year begins early February. Who knows where 2017 will lead us. We have a good solid base of young and not-so-young players. We will welcome last years beginners to the development band and of course any other ex-players who would care to join us.

2017 National Youth Band of New Zealand—by Clarke Spence

From the 21st to the 29th of January, four current and four past members of EBOP brass attended the National Youth Brass Band course held in New Plymouth. Those members were Clarke Spence, Minami Motoki, Lachlan Spence, Leo Read, Callum Mallet, Sariah Ratford, Luke Spence and Jack Bewley. The camp started with 4 days of practicing towards our concert tour around the lower North Island with concerts in New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Whanganui and Wellington.

This camp was well directed by David Bremner, his incredible ear and musical knowledge allowing him to bring the best out from all of the band, and his humor making the 5 hours of practice, on most days, enjoyable. The members of the band also had some help from top class tutors, those being our very own conductor Alan Spence (Back row Cornets), Mark Carter (Front Row Cornets), Robbie Cargill (Horns), Byron Newton (Baritones/Euphoniums), Mark Davey (Trombones), Grant Myhill (Percussion) Leigh Martin (Basses/assistant manager).



Leigh Martin and Mike Ford, the manager for this camp, helped to organize all things to do with our time in New Plymouth. This included organizing our stay at the New Plymouth Girls' youth hostel, which had great facilities and being close to town gave us plenty of places to see in the adventure style race we had in one of our longer breaks, a good (and tiring) way of getting around and seeing New Plymouth.

Our concerts featured two halves with different themes in each. Our first half was the classical side of the program with pieces written by prominent orchestral composers arranged for brass band. This half also featured the well known test piece Paganini Variations by Phillip Wilby, composed from some of Paganini's well known themes. The second half of our concert was considered more laid back, with a less strict form for the music and with many of the songs being jazz and new Orleans type music with lots of solos in them. This program featured some amazing soloists from within the band, including our Principal Euphonium player / self proclaimed table tennis king, Luke Spence.

Overall the 2017 national youth band camp was a real winner, the end result was a great band with a very mature sound. We made some very great memories while practicing in New Plymouth and on tour. But as the saying goes what goes on tour stays on tour....

The Midwest Clinic, Chicago: Dec 14 – 17 2016

In mid December last year I had the real privilege and pleasure to attend the Midwest Clinic in Chicago. An annual event that began in 1946 and 70 years later has now become the largest music conference in the world. 19,000 musicians, educators and people passionate about music education attended this year in the very impressive McCormick Place convention centre in Chicago.

This was an event which I (and Tania) had attended in 2013. I enjoyed and gained so much from it both musically and professionally that I have wanted to return again since then. So; I was very grateful to Eastern Bay of Plenty Brass, who covered my travel costs and to Trident High School who covered my accommodation and course related costs which enabled me to attend.

After a few travel delays because of severe storms in the mid west I arrived 24 hours late at midnight, the night before the conference started.

Day One: After a very quick look around the huge trade stand arena, I went to the first concert of the conference, a twenty five piece Trombone choir from Round Rock High School, Texas. Their performance and slick presentation really confirmed to me the reason why I was at the conference. Here was something very unique, twenty five 14 and 15 year old students, all playing trombones to an incredibly high standard, all from the same High School. Something unheard of and certainly unseen in New Zealand. They played a variety of arrangements of classics but also featured many new compositions written specifically for this group. (some by members of the choir) After their concert, I spoke to several members of the band and asked two of the bass trombonists to come and try a Trombone that EBOP Brass were intending purchasing while I was in Chicago.

The rest of the day was a bit of a blur really, I attended a clinic entitled “How to Listen to What you are Hearing” closely followed by “Mystery to Mastery – Dispelling Brass Playing Myths.” A very thought provoking, if not a little controversial, presentation by an Australian by the name of Greg Spence! I wanted to talk to him afterward but there were too many people arguing with him about some of the things he had presented during the clinic.

After confirmation that the funding had come through for the purchase of the Trombone, I arranged the instrument purchase and then went to two further clinics - Generation Next, “Teaching Rhythm Logically” and “Teach the kids and the Band takes Care of itself” (an amazing clinic in which I could draw a lot of parallels to both Trident High Big Band and EBOP Brass. This clinic had a demonstration band performing as the speaker presented her ideas on teaching kids and the future of bands once an effective teaching programme has been developed.

I managed to fit in a quick catch up with Philip Sparke a well known English composer who was the Musical Director of the band that Tania and I played in many years ago when we lived and worked in London. We have discussed the possibility of a commission for him to write our band a new composition for 2018 so watch this space for further information and funding ??? in the future.

Finally on Day One I went to a concert by “The Presidents Own” United States Marine band. I was eagerly anticipating this concert as they are world famous as arguably the best Concert Band in the World. When Tania and I were in Chicago three years ago, they were not in attendance as they were on service duty with the Army, so it was great to hear them. What a concert!!!! Music from J. S. Bach and Purcell through to John Williams and Eric Whitacre this band did it all. What a sound!! An Amazing concert.

On the evening of the first day I met up with Peter Meechan and Tom Davoren, both composers of music which EBOP brass have played and performed in recent years. Dr. Peter Meechan, an Englishman who now lives in Canada is a fascinating character who composed the work “Fragile Oasis” which EBOP brass performed and won the B grade own choice a few month earlier at the NZ brass band championships. Tom Davoren, a Welshman, wrote a work entitled Vivat which EBOP used two years ago at a provincial concert. One of our junior quartets won the National Junior Quartet championships on another composition by him entitled “Steal” Tom gave!! me several new compositions while I was there, one of which, “Embers” I am seriously considering using as our reflective item when we make our debut in the A grade in April.

So, a fascinating first day at the conference. The minus 9 temperature outside made no difference to the high I was on after such an exhilarating day of watching, listening and absorbing a huge variety of “stuff” which unfortunately we only very rarely get to experience in New Zealand.

A report on day two at the clinic will appear in the next edition of ‘upBeat’

FRIENDS OF THE BAND

*K Brown, Bewley family, Wilshier family, Wilson family, R & V Laing,
Oram family, Bob Byrne, Warner Haldane, Ian Lysaght,
H L Thomas & J C Mill, Gary Bilton*

If you would like to become a ‘friend of the band’ we would love your support.

Automatic payments can be made to the following account number: 12-3253-0043774-50