

Xpressions

Newsletter for the Pals of PolySteel



Band

Issue 5 Spring 2008

PolySteel Retain Yeovil Title

The PolySteel Band kick started the 2008 contest season in fine style on Saturday 2nd Feb. when they reclaimed their title of Yeovil Entertainment Champions for the second successive year, beating west country rivals Camborne Town and Mount Charles bands into 2nd and 3rd places respectively. Full report inside.



L-R Chris Howley, Vicki Reynolds, Colin Gray, Tom Davoren, Lyndon Fletcher, Mike James

Contents

Page 1 Cover story and concert dates

Page 2 PolySteel celebrate Yeovil victory, goodbyes and hellos

Page 3 PolySteel form Youth Band

Page 4 Behind the Scenes, New CD and 4 Bars Rest fame

COME FOLLOW THE BAND
(Your essential concert diary)

Saturday 19th April

Bacon Theatre Cheltenham
40th Anniversary Concert
7.30pm

Saturday 26th April

Concert – Pershore Abbey
Worcestershire

Saturday 14th June

Concert – Chipping Sodbury
Town Hall

**FOR MORE DETAILS ON THE
CONCERTS LISTED ABOVE
AND OTHERS, PLEASE VISIT
THE BAND'S WEBSITE AT:**

www.polysteelband.co.uk



Poly-Steel Yeovil Title

For the fourth time in six years, the PolySteel Band walked away from South Somerset with the Chris Palmer Shield, £2000 and the title of Yeovil Entertainment Champions.

In fact it was a one two three for the West of England with Camborne Town and Mount Charles bands finishing in second and third place. The band opened their programme with Philip Harper's 'Blue Sleeve Step', this was followed by another Harper arrangement, a beautiful slow melody entitled 'In Love For Me' which showcased the band's warm rich sound to the full. Next up it was the turn of flugel soloist Danny Winder who gave a classy rendition of George Michael's 'Faith' arr. Harper. The finale was the magnificent 'Capriccio Espagnol' by Rimsky-Korsakov before the band signed off with one of its now familiar 'encore' items. This year the audience were treated to yet another camp arrangement in the shape of the Wham! classic 'Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go' complete with choreography and vocals!

That was enough for adjudicator David Hirst to award PolySteel first place and gives the band a huge confidence boost ahead of the West of England Championships in March where the band also aim to retain their title.

Full results courtesy of 4barsrest.com:

1. PolySteel, Philip Harper, 5, 197
2. Camborne, Frank Renton, 9, 196
3. JAG Mount Charles, Andrew Duncan, 10, 195
4. SWT Woodfalls, Melvin White, 4, 194
5. Friary Guildford, Chris King, 8, 193
6. Tredegar, Ian Porthouse, 2, 192
7. Parc and Dare, Richard Evans, 11, 191
8. BTM, Graham O'Connor, 190
9. Bournemouth Concert, Chris Davies OBE, 12, 189
10. Jaguar (Coventry), Dave Lea, 1, 188
11. Sovereign Brass, Stephen Roberts, 3, 187
12. Zone One Brass, Paul Archibald, 14, 186
13. Aldbourne, Melvin White, 185

Individual Awards:

Best Soprano: Steve Barnsley, Tredegar

Best Section: Percussion, Friary Guildford

Best Soloist: John Small, Mount Charles



Mike James (Band Manager) and MD Philip Harper bid a sad farewell to outgoing trombonist Nathan Jenkins



Incoming solo trombone Nick Hudson

Goodbye Nathan And Hello Nick!

It is with sadness that the band said a fond farewell to its principle trombone of the last two years Nathan Jenkins. Nathan who is leaving due to impending fatherhood has been one of the key players in PolySteel's great run of results on the contest stage over the last couple of years and has also played no small part in the band's successful concert appearances. To cover the top trombone seat vacated by Nathan, the band has hired the services of one of the top trombonists in the brass banding world, Nick Hudson. Nick has signed with the band in time to play at Yeovil and the West of England Championships in March. Musical Director Philip Harper commented; "We are very sorry to see Nathan leave the band. He has played an important part in the band's success, not only through his performances, but also on the social side of things. We wish Nathan and his wife well, especially for the coming months ahead. We are of course delighted that a player of Nick's calibre has joined the ranks for the next couple of months to cover the top trombone seat while we search for a replacement."

Nathan is pictured receiving a farewell gift from band manager Mike James and Philip Harper during the band's latest CD recording.

Letter From The Arrhythmia Alliance (The Heart Rhythm Charity)

The December Christmas concerts given by the PolySteel Band at Cheltenham's Bacon Theatre proved to be a success not only for the band but also for the heart charity Arrhythmia Alliance based in Warwickshire where a significant amount of money was raised via collections at the door. The letter sent to Managing Director Karin Lythell and printed below confirms this.

Dear Ms Lythell,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing the Arrhythmia Alliance to hold collections during your recent concert. We are delighted with the fantastic outcome of £397.00!

This funding will go towards providing support and life saving equipment in the North Gloucestershire Area.

Thank you so much

Yours sincerely,

Trudie Lobban (Founder & Trustee)

PolySteel Youth Band Has Arrived

The PolySteel Band is proud to announce the birth of a new youth band for the South West of England.

The PolySteel Youth Band (PYB) aims to provide first class tuition in brass and percussion including coaching from experienced instrumentalists within the PolySteel Band itself and featuring guest tuition from prominent figures in the banding world.

PYB is directed by tuba player and composer Tom Davoren. Tom, a recent graduate of the Royal Welsh College of Music and current composition student at Cardiff University, is committed to developing a vibrant approach to music at PYB, combining traditional and well established methods with the unique sense of style and flare that can only be found at the PolySteel Band.

PYB will also enjoy strong links with the senior band, giving members a taste of what it takes to be in top flight banding through attending and performing at PolySteel concerts and sitting in on selected rehearsals.

Senior Band MD Philip Harper had this to say:

"I'm absolutely delighted that the PolySteel Band is to have a youth band. It will create wonderful links with our local community and provide first-class tuition and guidance for local children, aiming for the level of excellence associated with the PolySteel brand. I'm really excited about discovering and nurturing the fantastic young stars of the future in our local area."

In addition to this the band are proud to announce Wright and Round Publishing of Gloucester as the PYB's official music supplier, whose generosity has provided the band with a library of new and exciting music, including the music of Philip Harper.

The inaugural rehearsal of the PYB took place on Tuesday 5th February where the youngsters were introduced to some of the senior band members and presented with a PolySteel Band merchandise pack. They then ran through some music which included 'Mr Jums' from the musical 'CATS' and the theme from 'Mission Impossible'.

The PYB already has its own website which can be found via the main PolySteel Band website at www.polysteelband.co.uk..... as if you already didn't know!

Happy 40th Birthday
PolySteel Brass Band

A concert tracing the band's history since 1968 through City of Gloucester to Flowers and featuring some of the fabulous music which has been associated with it over the years.

Come along and join the party!

Bacon Theatre, Cheltenham
Tickets £12 (£10)
Saturday 19th April 2008 7.30pm
Box Office 01242 258002
www.polysteelband.co.uk

Vic And 'The Gaffer' Named In 4barsrest Band Of The Year

The popular brass band website 4barsrest.com published its annual end of year gongs at the end of December 2007. Awards for player of the year, conductor of the year and band of the year were given out. They also released the names of the players who they would include in a 'brass band celebrity band of the year' and this year the list included two PolySteelers in the shape of Vicki Reynolds (principal horn) and Steve Jones (percussion). The line up of players included the likes of Dean Morley, Bb bass from Grimethorpe and Richard Marshall, principle cornet of Black Dyke Band, so the band were incredibly proud to have two of its members bestowed with this honour. Of Vicki 4barsrest commented 'An immensely impressive talent who has fast developed into one of the best young performers in the business. Outstanding ensemble performances on the contest stage in particular, especially at the Regionals and at Preston. She has also started to deliver with maturity as a soloist too'.

There was also a glowing report for percussionist Steve (Weenie) Jones when they stated, 'All percussion teams need a 'gaffer' – the bloke who organises the exotic ephemera and makes sure his team of players are kept happy whilst also playing his part to the full too. PolySteel have long had a percussion unit every bit as good as anyone in the country and it is due mainly to this very talented bloke'.

Congratulations to them both!!

Behind the Scenes

You will no doubt have seen the wonderful collection of photographs of the band which are on display at many of the concerts we do. Most of these have been taken by our official photographer Tom Wollard, a professional who lives with his wife Ann at Beckford near Cheltenham. Tom worked for a photographer in Cheltenham's Promenade for many years and eventually opened his own business. On his retirement he continued taking photos on a professional basis. We are also lucky to have another photographer in the shape of Di Reynolds (mother of Vicki) who uses her skills for the band's website.

The work they do for the band is done at their own expense and Tom recently offered to supply photographs to all members of the band which resulted in an order of over 40 pictures which he gave to the band free of charge. Many thanks to them both for their continued support.

Band Cuts Latest Disc

The PolySteel Band recently spent a weekend in the recording studio putting together the programme for its latest CD release.

The recording, which will be available on the World of Brass label, took place at the Crypt School in Gloucester on the weekend of the 26th/27th Jan. The band and soloists were on fine form throughout the weekend, playing music from the pen of the band's musical director Philip Harper in the shape of 'Lionheart' and the 'Water of Tyne' to Philip Sparke's 'Malvern Suite'.

The cd will be released later in the year and will surely be a must have for fans of the PolySteel Band and fans of brass bands in general. The band's musical director Philip Harper commented "It's basically a typically entertaining PolySteel concert all on one disc. We have chosen the music very carefully to showcase the talents of the band. This is the first time a lot of the music has been recorded and we hope you like what you hear. I would like to pay tribute to my band who have worked incredibly hard during this recording and produced some top quality playing throughout the weekend".



The band prepare for another take