

# The Saints



April 2014

Ian McCabe and I have had an exhilarating ride since picking up the role of co-chairs of St Kilda Brass last November. The provincial brass championships just passed were a success for the band with good participation and results in solo and party events and for the band. Comments from the main adjudicator Nick Sharp were very encouraging as we negotiated *Red Priest: Concerto after Vivaldi*, by Philip Wilby, a demanding piece that we will take forward to the national contest. These results have come because players and the band's administration have worked hard and collaboratively.

We are having a close look at how our sense of community can be improved, including social events and longer term event planning. Another initiative includes the introduction of a player charter encouraging a fairer distribution of roles and responsibility in and around the band's operations. We hope to achieve an environment in which every player appreciates that their contribution needs to be greater than getting to rehearsals and practising their parts.

In 2014 we have restarted serious financial commitment to subsidising player training and education. The availability of Steve Miles to lead this work is already significant in lifting the standard of individuals around the band. This is extending to Georgie Watts who will lead percussion tutorials. Perhaps most significant, for the first time in some years there is focused discussion on what a learners' programme needs to look like in 2014, and how we might accelerate the development of brass players. Watch this space.

We think that the concert year is looking very promising for audiences. Sunday May 11th will be Highlands and Lowlands Concert with a touch of WW1 conducted by Errol Moore. Steve Miles will be our featured soloist along with cameos from

tenor Matt Wilson and soprano Georgia Gray. August 23rd will celebrate the return of Steve Miles as conductor with the anticipation of an evening of myths and legends. October 11th will be a first for St Kilda as nationally renowned conductor and composer Ken Young takes up the baton.

Numerous people are contributing to this newsletter so I am leaving off talking about personnel. However, one person that cannot be praised highly enough is Peter Adams, our Artistic Adviser and contesting conductor for 2014. His national networking, willingness to help people and of course reputation as the director of the New Zealand National Youth Band has meant young people recognise the advantages of being involved with Saints. I personally regard Peter as our secret weapon because of his ability to draw music from every player that he works with.

I want to assure our supporters that the band is working hard, and the committee is working even harder, to keep pace with the myriad of financial, equipment, music, uniforms and facility matters that make this A Grade band a special musical entity in the Dunedin environs. In the same breath, if you have any interest in supporting us on a voluntary basis, we would like to hear from you, and I do hope you can see your way to being part of the Supporters Group.

Saints ended 2013 with some serious thinking needing to be done about our future. However, from having read the newsletter, I hope you agree that we are in good heart, can offer a robust group of players in our performances, have a good programme in place for the year, and that players/administrators are working well towards the goal of exciting and quality performances in 2014.

We hope we see you at all of our concerts, and please know that the bandroom is always open to our friends and supporters on rehearsal nights.

Errol Moore

## A Word from the President of St Kilda Brass



When I joined the St Kilda Band as a teenager I sat alongside players who were amongst the best in New Zealand and who were fiercely proud of their St Kilda roots. I recall the people who came to visit us at rehearsal in Ravelston St. They weren't all ex-players. Some just loved Bands, and The Saints in particular. Much of a band's culture and its motivation come from a strong supporter base. Your financial support at the same time helps to keep the wheels turning. I hope you will support us in 2014. Now is a good time to become a Saint!

Best wishes

Graham Crombie.

## St Kilda Brass: An American Perspective

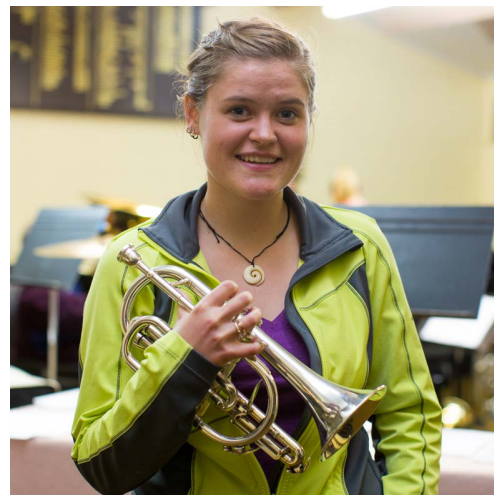
Though I'm not majoring in music at my university back in the States I play trumpet in symphonic band, orchestra, small ensembles, and private lessons. That being said, coming for an abroad semester at the University of Otago I knew I couldn't go five months without playing. Things worked in my favor and here I am spending my Monday and Thursday nights satisfying my love for the trumpet through playing the cornet in the St. Kilda Brass Band.

Brass Band music is different than anything I've played. Heck, I'd never played a cornet before! I've found, however, that music is music. It's an outlet and a passion that brings people from many different walks of life together. It's an art that transcends cultural boundaries and creates community. I quickly lost my nerves of being not only the newbie but the American and the strong, loving, teasing, and talented community of people that is St. Kilda swept me up and took me in as their own. It's been the perfect way to break out of the international student community, mostly composed of Americans, and spend quality time with New Zealanders!

Additionally, travelling to Roxburgh for Provincials has been one of the highlights of my time here. I've driven through the small town a couple of times in my travels thinking it only offered nearby fruit stands and a nice picnic park. Turns out, it can house many brass players and made for a

weekend of high quality playing and great bonding through beers. Playing with the purpose of a contest rather than just a concert is new to me, a different form of stress. The satisfaction and pride of playing well and placing well far exceeds the satisfaction and pride I get after I play a good concert. The goal unifies the band for a single purpose and I was honored to be a part of St. Kilda's success. Winning two of three parts? It was awesome!

I know when I look back my time in New Zealand, being a part of St. Kilda will define my experience equally to the great trips, the beautiful environment, and my dinky little university flat. We may not have a thriving brass band community up where I live in the States, but we do have cornets. Who knows, maybe I'll put down my trumpet for a bit on cornet in my next solo performance!



Ryana Holt



# St Kilda Well Represented at 2014 National Youth Band

The NYBB of New Zealand 2014 was based in the lower North Island, our camp, El Rancho in Wai-kanae. We played four concerts, our first in Palmerston North, two in Wanganui, and one in Wellington.

Peter Adams, the conductor of this year's youth band, got us all playing together as a team, creating some amazing music! This is hard when people are from all over NZ, and you are sitting in a band next to people you don't even know. Of course there was help from some great tutors: Kevin Dell, Steve Gooding, Mike Ford, Byron Newton and Bruce Jellyman who all had a section of the band to teach and provide guidance to throughout the course. This also being a competition to see who could get section of the year, which the 2nd and 3rd cornets took out this time around! And of course none of

this would have been possible without the great organising skills of Gary Brown.

We were lucky enough to have Kristy Rowe as our guest soloist, an amazing baritone player, winning many titles all over the world. Kristy took a master class, teaching us about the importance of practice routines, showing us how we can improve our solo playing significantly by paying attention to minor details, and everyone's favourite, when she taught us how to circular breathe. Kristy is a lovely person and was great to have in the band, working with everyone, sharing her knowledge and experience with us all.

Youth band is a great experience for learning and meeting new people. Those of us from Saint Kilda who were in the NYBB got to meet and get to know a few people who will be joining us in Dunedin this year, and hopefully it will make their transition into a new band much easier too.

*Georgia Sherf*



## Welcome back to Steve Miles

The band has been very pleased to welcome Steve Miles back this year. Steve was the musical director of the band for five years from 2005 and made a huge impact on the local concert scene with his innovative and successful concert series with the band. After a few years in Bermuda where he held a teaching position, Steve has returned to study for a PhD in music at the University of Otago. Steve is studying brass playing and in particular the role of all the muscles in the mouth that are used in forming a successful embouchure. He has been busy already - as well as helping wife Gina establish her boutique fitness business "Gina Miles Fitness" in the Exchange area, Steve has been tutoring a dozen of our players in individual lessons, taken sectional practices and featured as the guest soloist in the band's recent entertainment programme at the Otago Southland Contest in Roxburgh. Steve will be conducting the band in its second concert of the year in August - not to be missed! Welcome back Steve!



*Peter Adams*



On Saturday 26 April a small group of St Kilda players provided entertainment at the national final of the Mercedes Trophy golf tournament at Millbrook Golf Resort. A fun night was had by all with the porcelain alpenhorn making an appearance.



Peter Adams has chosen Phillip Wilby's Red Priest as our own choice for Invercargill 2014. No doubt influenced by this challenging EEb Bass part.

