

The Saints



July 2014

Warm greetings from all the players and administrators of St Kilda Brass. We hope the winter treats you well. Since this year's first newsletter, we can confirm our status as the No 1 entertainment band in the province, as well as positive comments about a fine 'test' music performance in Roxburgh where we were ably conducted by our 2014 Artistic Director, Peter Adams. Our Highlands and Lowlands concert went down well with the enthusiastic audience offering due recognition of performances by euphonist Steve Miles, and singers Matthew Wilson and Georgia Grey. As one audience member offered, "Best band concert I have ever been to."

This newsletter is mostly a pre-national contest update. Players are getting their 'excuses' ready to be away from home for quite lengthy periods kicking in from the 4th of July. A number of ex-Dunedin people will join with us again including Gary Valentine, Marty Kibble, David Kempton and Amy Walsh. They certainly give the impression that they are pleased to be asked and we look forward to their contributions. Peter Adams is introducing the pieces later in the newsletter. From us,

on behalf of all of the players, serious thanks to families for their support over this busy time.

In recent weeks, we have been informally talking with schools in the South City about tuition programmes. The response to this has been positive. Our next tasks in re-establishing a training programme are to ensure that we have teachers and instruments at hand. We are hopeful of having a small tuition programme running by September. There is definitely a need to sustain the base of developing players from the wider Dunedin Brass community, either children or adult learners.

Thank you for the financial support that has already come to hand since the first newsletter. It is clear people are pleased to be involved with Saints, and the assistance is sincerely appreciated. You are more than welcome to join the group that have contributed thus far in 2014.

We know you will be supporting us, in mind at least, during the nationals in the second week of July. We are rehearsing at Tahuna Intermediate in the weekend of July 5 & 6. You are welcome to come along for a listen.

Errol Moore and Ian McCabe (Co-Chairs)

Mid-Winter Carnival

The Saints heralded the arrival of the shortest day at the recent Mid-Winter Carnival. A small group of players and singers gave a rendition of *This Little Light of Mine*. This was a fitting musical accompaniment to the procession of lanterns, stilt walkers and other performers circumnavigating the Octagon. It was an excellent opportunity to showcase St Kilda's versatility to the community.



Saints' players Matthew Smart and Max Wilkinson wrapped up warmly as they prepare to play for the Mid-Winter Carnival

The National Contest: Some thought's from Peter Adams

In July St Kilda Brass will be travelling to Invercargill to compete in the National Brass Band Contest over a five-day period from July 9 to 13. Our soloists and ensembles will be competing in their specialist events on the Wednesday and Thursday before band events take over for the last three days. The band has quite a number of individuals competing in their own instrumental classes for the solos as well as a couple of duet and ensemble entries. Our first trombonist Max Wilkinson together with Mike Cowl will be accompanying at the piano and they will have a busy few days! We wish all our soloists well: the experience of playing a solo in front of an audience is a daunting one and the opportunity it offers to overcome nerves and perform in a demanding environment is always good for the individuals and for the band as a whole.

The band events begin on the Friday with the set test piece and the sacred selection. The selected test piece this year is "On Alderley Edge" by Peter Graham who has become one of the most prolific and famous composers for brass band. This is a colourful and attractive work that is based on legends of the famous "edge" in Cheshire, England where an underground sleeping army is meant to lie waiting for the time when it will need to awake and come to England's defence. It's an older test piece compared to those selected in the last few years and one that the audience will find very easy on the ear. It's not that easy to play however, and has some very demanding passages technically along with lots of solo opportunities for all the band "corner men" (and women in our case!).

Our sacred item is a lovely reflective setting of St Clement by Philip Wilby which sets the words "The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, has ended". It starts and ends with solo euphonium and features different combinations of instruments in an intricate arrangement.

We have chosen a fairly new work as our own choice selection. Philip Wilby wrote "Red Priest"

in 2011 and we gave it an airing at the recent Provincial contest in Roxburgh. Wilby has chosen excerpts of music by Antonio Vivaldi (including some of "Winter" from "The Four Seasons") and mixed this old music with modern harmonies and special effects: many of the players need to have three different mutes on stage! The band have enjoyed working on it, and look forward to performing it in Invercargill.

The band is a terrific mix of youthful energy and enthusiasm and experienced "bandits" - these wise older players being christened "fossils" by Nigel Weeks when he conducted the band last year! As always putting a contest band together is a nightmare of logistics, travel schedules, availability, non-availability and a rehearsal period that goes right through student examinations and holidays. We have to lose our students just weeks before contest as they go home briefly to catch up with their families and raid mum and dad's food stocks and raise the power bills with a week or two of home comforts. When they return at the start of July, the band goes into intensive rehearsal over six days. In this time we welcome our assisting players: Steve Bailey from the Desford band in England returns to help us again on soprano cornet and this year we welcome New Zealand's leading tenor horn player Mike Ford as a guest solo horn for the contest. You find "Saints" everywhere and some of our long-standing former players are returning to help us again for this contest: we are especially grateful to David Kempton, Gary Valentine, Martin Kibble and Lindon Weise (cornets), Steve Miles (Euphonium), Amy Walsh and Gordon Barney (tubas) for joining us once more. We can guarantee that our rehearsal may be intense but there will be a lot of laughter and a great time to be had socially with this wonderful collection of musicians.

Peter Adams

Become a Member of the Supporters' Club

St Kilda Brass always welcomes members of the public to be part of the Supporters' Club and help the band be an active part of the community. If you are interested in being part of this group please make contact using the details below.

Email supportersclub@stkildabrass.org.nz

Post

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Myths, Legends & Fairytales

I am delighted to return to the conducting podium with the Saints this year in a concert that I have entitled Myths, Legends & Fairytales. As a performer, I am always looking for character descriptions and interpretations in music, even when the music is not necessarily intended to be programmatic in nature. This concert however is entirely programmatic and every piece on the programme will transport the audience into the very scene of the Myth, Legend or Fairytale from which it came. Our guest artist for the evening is renowned actress, singer and vocal coach Kelly Hocking. Hailing from California, Kelly is no stranger

to the Dunedin public having appeared as a lead in many local productions including; *Miss Saigon*, *Full Monty*, *Avenue Q*, *Chicago*, *How I Learned to Drive* and *Boeing, Boeing*. This will be Kelly's second appearance with the band, her previous performance being in the highly acclaimed and well received Saints & Divas concert in 2010. The music will take us on a journey visiting Olympic Heroes, Spectacular Monuments, Witches, Dragons, Disney Princesses and Mystical Landscapes with compositions by Williams, Shore, Zimmer, Glinka, Mussorgsky, Anderson, Sondheim, Graham and many more. An evening not to be missed!

Steve Miles



Join us on August 23rd as conductor Steve Miles takes us on an exciting journey in to the world of Myths, Legends and Fairytales. 7:30 pm, Mayfair theatre.

Provincial Contest Results

In the weekend of 12-13 April St Kilda Brass produced some good results at the OSBBA Provincial Contest for both soloists and the full band. St Kilda received 1st in the Hymn, 1st in the Entertainment programme and 3rd for the test piece.

Solo and Ensemble results:

- 1st - Megan Gooding (Championship Air Varie)
- 1st - Errol Moore (Masters)
- 1st - Catherine Clarke (Open Percussion)
- 1st - John McAdam, Errol Moore, Harry Smith and Steve Miles (Ensemble)
- 1st - Kimberley Johnston (Novice)
- 2nd - Megan Gooding (Premiere Slow Melody)
- 2nd - Harry Smith (U19 Air Varie)
- 2nd - John McAdam and Kimberley Johnston (Open Duet)
- 2nd - Sariah Ratford and Jess Schweizer (Junior Duet)
- 3rd - Matthew Smart and Kimberley Johnston (Friends and Family)

What does it mean to be a Saint?

What does it mean to be a Saint? Perhaps it's spending evenings in the bandroom, nit-picking over rhythms in Red Priest. Or maybe it's hiding in my university dorm with a Shhh mute and hoping my neighbours really enjoy listening to lip flexibilities. Whatever it means to be a Saint, I knew I was one after the rite of passage making the acquaintance of a certain Ted Pheloung in Roxburgh. Rather more intimately than I am quite comfortable with I'll admit.

Regardless of the Saints' definition, I sure am glad that I joined. From day one in Dunedin, St Kilda Brass has made me feel welcome, important, needed. I won't go as far as loved, but you get the picture. I look forward to Thursday nights (and Mondays, and band weekends...), not just as an outlet from study, but as a chance to meet all sorts of people that I wouldn't know if it weren't for band. I feel like I'm becoming part of the St Kilda family. That, and being a guy in a band with such a

high proportion of females, is a winning combination in my book!

A highlight of my year has been the April competition in Roxburgh. It's an entirely new experience to play with an A grade band; not just blowing the notes on the page, but bringing them to life. Blasting Gaelforce, and again in the Highlands and Lowlands concert, brings a certain adrenaline rush that reminds me why I do music. It's an outlet that transports me far away from study. I must admit that I was pleased my part gave me plenty of rests (to better appreciate the rest of the band of course). Playing trombone was a great idea!

With respect to both the social and musical aspects of St Kilda Brass, I wholeheartedly look forward to the second half of the year. Getting to know these goofs more. Nationals. Concerts.

Whatever being a Saint may entail, I am up for it.

Oliver Coleman



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