



# Taking Notes

The Newsletter of Milton Keynes Brass

Issue 2

September 2019



## Milton Keynes Festival of Urban Living

This autumn Midsummer Boulevard in central Milton Keynes will host the first ever 'A Festival of Creative Urban Living'; bringing together citizens, artists, architects, designers, urban planners, thinkers, creatives and many others to deliver a free programme of exhibitions, events, creative workshops, performances and much more.



Good Morning Milton Keynes! Oh... It's Afternoon! - A new composition for Milton Keynes will be played out in different locations within the Festival campus and along Midsummer Boulevard, in a unique collaboration between composers Spreafico Eckley and Matteo Fargion, and MK Brass.

As the sun is setting, look out for the rousing spectacle of the piece playing out to those who happen upon this unusual and remarkable performance. A changing, single sung sentence marks the end of the composition, which combines to create a poem for the city – a call to action to celebrate all that is good and positive about the future.

Address: Meeting Place, Midsummer Boulevard, (opposite The Point), MK9 3NB

[miltonkeynesbrass.org](http://miltonkeynesbrass.org)

[tracy8brown@gmail.com](mailto:tracy8brown@gmail.com)

07985 586815

### Future Performances

September

MK Festival Urban Living

October

6th Bolsover Contest

November

1st OU Graduation Ceremony

2nd Wychavon Festival of Brass

29th Newton Blossomville Lights

Supported by

INTERNATIONAL  
NEW TOWN  
INSTITUTE

raumlaborberlin

ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND

ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND

centre:mk  
MILTON KEYNES

DAVID LOCK  
ASSOCIATES

MK  
milton keynes council

Find us on  
Facebook

FOLLOW US ON  
twitter



# Festival of History - Campbell Park

Spirits were high as we waited on stage at the impressive Amphitheatre in Milton Keynes' Campbell Park to start our performance at the MK Festival of History. Glorious sunshine, a walk across the park where there was plenty going on, and Nathan Waterman kindly standing in for Jonathan, wearing a comedy cap to fit the theme. A World War II story teller kept us entertained before we opened with Blaze Away followed by a first set of traditional older music such as Marriage of Figaro, Gaudete, Florentina March and the Great Escape. We choose a more contemporary programme for our second half but clearly the gods didn't like it as the skies opened from nowhere and it hammered down with rain for the best part of our Queen trio of Fat Bottomed Girls, Don't stop me now and Bohemian Rhapsody. Understandably, the audience dispersed except for a few hardy families under golfing umbrellas and rain jackets. Blue skies won the day as we Breezed Down Broadway to the end of the programme before enjoying the rest of the events. We were quickly followed by the have a go Maypolers, there were numerous re-enactments which including clashing swords and exploding canons as well as demonstrations of traditional crafts and the opportunity to test your skills. Lots for the kids to do and the whole thing was free to the public. It was our first time at this great local event which takes place every 2 years, we hope to be back!



## Guest Conductor



4 Years after leaving the band for pastures new, it was great to see Dave Edmonds in the band room back in June to rehearse some new music. Dave brought along some of his arrangements and compositions, and also a special piece that he wrote for his parents anniversary so that he could hear how it sounded. The band played well and hopefully he achieved what he needed. We hope Dave stays in touch and will come down again soon with some more of his work and that the anniversary went well.

## Tickford Abbey

This year saw the band visit Tickford Abbey for two events. The first was for their open day. The theme of this year's event was celebrating Arts in Care. It saw one of the hottest days of the year. Fortunately the band found a shaded spot in their gardens and entertained the residents, staff and guests.



## Medbourne Pavilion



A nice local job, it was good to be back at the Shenley Parish Council Fete again this year taking place in Medbourne Pavilion. We were openers for the Fete, which was a bit of a shame as the crowds were just starting to arrive as we were finishing up!, but the band were as tight as ever under the direction of Paul Fensome. Our players were relaxed and had a lot of fun. We were soon freed up to enjoy the food stalls, many crafts and excellent entertainment for the rest of the day.

## Fairfield Primary School

Another summer job blessed by good weather. The band played on top of the hill and entertained the visitors at the school fair. There was also some surprise visitors from Toy Story - Woody and Jesse who provided the entertainment during our interval. As well as the usual table top stalls, the fair also provided a bar and a barbecue enjoyed by the band once we had finished playing.



## Walton Community Council Event



Walton Community Council invited us to play at a new summer event for them which was in the middle of one of Milton Keynes' famous roundabouts. The audience enjoyed our programme whilst having a picnic and kids played in the playground at the end of the roundabout too, so a fun event for all the family.

## Tickford Abbey

The second event at Tickford Abbey was for Mr. Everett's 91st Birthday. Unfortunately this was one of the few events when it was not sunny. However we were able to play inside. A programme of music of the birthday boy's favourites including "When I'm 64" and an RAF March was much appreciated by him and his family. Once we had finished playing the band was treated to some birthday cake – delish!



## Wrest Park

Wrest Park has got to be one of the band's favourite summer jobs and always attracts many of our followers, families and friends of the band. The beautiful English Heritage Grade I listed country house and spectacular gardens make a perfect setting for the series of brass bands that play on a Sunday throughout the summer. Although historically we have been lucky to have gorgeous sunshine for most of our visits, this summer it was not to be and so we weren't quite looking forward to this concert as much as we normally would. This is our longest of



the summer jobs with 4 performances of 45 minutes each during the afternoon – a long hard blow. In previous years we have occasionally moved into the orangery for a boomy performance when it has rained, but this time we were moved into the library of the house. House entry usually costs extra so it was a real treat and absolutely stunning, although the room was certainly tight! We have to admit that in peak holiday season we needed a lot of deps for this one, but they played superbly and the good choice of music meant the crowd followed us in. One not to miss out on next year.

## Abington Park - Northampton



Abington Park is Northampton's oldest and most popular park and features a surround sound audience with people enjoying the music all around the bandstand. We played to a packed Abington Park bandstand of spectators enjoying their picnics and summer fun. Ice creams in the interval are a must and always a chance to run into our brass band friends supporting the band.

In the days when brass instruments were not as expensive as silver-plated ones, the term, silver band, implied a band that could afford the latter, and thus were a more successful band. Now, however, the costs are similar, and the distinction between brass and silver bands is generally not made.

## Dunstable Bandstand

The final performance of the summer saw the band play at Dunstable Bandstand. Here you can expect traditional Sunday band concerts to enjoy within the beautiful setting of Grove House Gardens. The interval refreshments were provided by a local charity and the singing began, first with the band singing along to Don't Stop Me Now, then the audience being very vocal in Hey Jude.



## Summer Programme

Standout music from the summer programme was the Queen Medley – Fat Bottomed Girl, Don't Stop Me Now, and Bohemian Rhapsody. Guaranteed to get the audience toe-tapping and clapping. There were entertaining solo and trio numbers throughout the summer from Dave Lewis, Martin Groves, Martin Wakley, Jemma Day, Martyn Potts, Matt Ball, Julia Head and Lewis Wallington

Many thanks to the banding friends of MK Brass, who helped throughout the summer season filling the missing gaps while we had members on holiday.

# Congratulations

The band would like to wish Tracy Brown (2nd Euphonium) and Martin Bay many congratulations for their wedding in March. The couple married at a wonderful country chateau in the South of France accompanied by friends and family and some musical entertainment from some members of MK Brass as well as by professional singer Emily Haig.

We would all like to wish Tracy & Martin all the best for the future and a long and happy marriage.



Brass Quintet (with help)



Right: Tracy, Martin & family

Instruments like conch shells and shofars (made of hollowed out animal horns) are still considered brass instruments because they produce sound through lip vibration.

## Matthew Ball - Principal Cornet

Matt Ball grew up in Bolton and started playing the cornet aged 10. As part of a thriving local music scene, he was a member of Thornleigh school brass band, Eagley Brass Band and the famous Besses o’th Barn Band – mainly learning “on the job”. After acquiring a trumpet he also became a member of Bolton Youth Orchestra and played in many concerts with Bolton Chamber Orchestra, Bolton Youth Brass Quintet, Harmonie ‘84 Wind Orchestra as well as Intrada and Corus; two well regarded 10-piece brass ensembles. He studied Physics at University and worked as a research scientist for Pilkington (the glass manufacturer), where he met his future wife.



Moving to Olney in 1996, Matt joined MK Brass in October 1998 (then known as Broseley Brass) after a 2 year break from playing. The rest is history, with fond memories of performances and friendships made as a member of the band over 21 years. Nowadays Matt is also involved with music in SS Peter & Paul’s Church, Olney as well as regularly playing for the Oxford Sinfonia and Oxford Proms orchestras.

Aside from music, Matt enjoys family life and is the Photonics & Instrumentation Manager for Lambda Photometrics, a well-known UK distributor of laser, optical, fibre optic, photonic, vision and instrumentation solutions (expensive techy stuff!). Juggling work, family and band is a challenge, but he just about manages to cling on to the ‘end-chair’....so far!



Left: Matt with his father Jim

### Generations of Banding



Right: Matt with his son Tim

# MK Brass Welcomes New Players

## Alan Ferguson

Brass bands are in the blood as they say. I've been playing since around 10, with at one point 8 family members in the one band. My dad, Bob, still plays (aged 77) and brother, Philip, is semi-professional cornet / trumpet (and an absolute natural talent!). We all played for Oldpark Band in Belfast before my brother quickly got snapped up to Championship bands where we both ended up with 1st Old Boys Band. There were many highlights back then winning local competitions, coming across the water to play at Blackpool and Buxton, but ultimately playing in two Europeans in Birmingham & Glasgow were amazing experiences.

When moving first to the Isle of Man for work then to England in 2007, having met my now wife Joanne, I stopped playing and started back in 2017 with Woburn Band. With no contesting opportunity I moved to Bradwell last year and following a recent trip to the Europeans in Switzerland to see my old band compete, the bug was 100% back!

The ad for MK Brass appeared on my Twitter feed and I had to go for it. It'll take me a bit to get back up to scratch but I know with the great players I can hear around me and a top conductor too, I'll get there!



## Christopher Mulvaney



I started playing cornet at age 11 for Hathern Band and moved from the Training band through to the Senior band. At university I played for the university band and for Escafeld brass band. I moved to Milton Keynes for work and that's how I got to MK brass.

## Henry Damon

Started playing Eb bass when I was 10 years old. Going to an all boys school it was compulsory to play an instrument. So I have no played for 11 years. I then moved to cornet when I was 13 years old as I wanted to develop my knowledge of brass and played for 5 years. I played front row cornet for usk brass band in South Wales where we were national champions in section 4. After playing with them I stopped for a while and then got called back to them to play principle Eb bass where we competed in the national finals for two years on the trot.

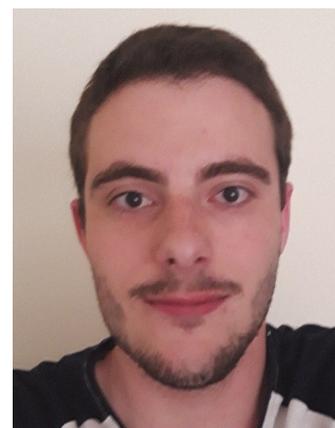
I moved to Milton Keynes and was eager to continue playing and MK brass had a vacancy for Eb bass and have loved playing with them for the last two months.



# MK Brass Welcomes New Players

## Rhodri Parker

I started playing the trumpet at 7 years old, I've played in various ensembles such as orchestras and jazz bands before finding myself loving brass bands after attending a Cory Band "taster day" playing at the City of Cardiff (Melingriffith) Brass Band Organisation and worked myself through the ranks and became the 1st cornet player to make my way all the way up from the youth band to the Championship section band. Whilst in university I played solo cornet at the University of Bristol Brass Band and in my first year we won the UniBrass Shield! I moved to MK Brass as I'm on my placement year in Milton Keynes and wanted to join an ambitious band.



requires a

## Bass Player

We are a Friendly 1st Section Band based in Milton Keynes and rehearse every Tuesday from 7:45pm – 10pm.  
Please contact: Sue Blunt on 07847 805825 or sue.blunt@ntlworld.com



requires a

## Percussionist

We are a Friendly 1st Section Band based in Milton Keynes and rehearse every Tuesday from 7:45pm – 10pm.  
Please contact: Sue Blunt on 07847 805825 or sue.blunt@ntlworld.com

## Vacancies

We currently have a vacancy for

**Bass Player**

**Percussion Player**

If you are interested in joining us  
please contact:

Sue Blunt

07847 805825

Sue.blunt@ntlworld.com

### Bradwell Silver Band

September  
1st Leighton Buzzard Bandstand

October  
12th Cosgrove Church Concert  
19th Autumn Concert - St James Church, New Bradwell

[www.bradwellband.co.uk](http://www.bradwellband.co.uk)

### Wolverton Town Band

September  
1st M.O.T.H. Parade.  
602 North Row Milton Keynes

November  
10th Remembrance Parade.  
Wolverton Square.  
23rd Wolverton Lantern Parade  
Wolverton Town Square

[www.wolvertontownband.org.uk](http://www.wolvertontownband.org.uk)

### Local Bands

#### GUS Band

September  
21st Last Night of the Proms  
Holy Trinity Church, Rothwell  
28th Concert with Northampton Male Voice Choir  
Northampton High School , Northampton

October  
12th National Brass Band Championships  
Royal Albert Hall. London

November  
10th Remembrance Concert  
Corby Cube, Corby  
30th Last Night of the Proms  
St. Dionysius Church,  
Market Harborough

[www.thegusband.com](http://www.thegusband.com)

### Towcester Studio Band

September  
14th Autumn Concert, Towcester  
21st Service of Licensing

November  
7th Xmas Opening, Bell Plantation  
10th Remembrance Service  
24th Leicester Contest

December  
18th Christmas Concert  
St Lawrence Church

[www.towcesterstudioband.co.uk](http://www.towcesterstudioband.co.uk)

### Olney Brass Band

[www.olneybrass.co.uk](http://www.olneybrass.co.uk)

## Join Our Supporters Club

Return this form to any band member or via email to [tracy8brown@gmail.com](mailto:tracy8brown@gmail.com)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



[miltonkeynesbrass.org](http://miltonkeynesbrass.org)

[tracy8brown@gmail.com](mailto:tracy8brown@gmail.com)

