



FABB - Australasian Contest - Coolangatta 2010

Over Labour Weekend, Woolston Brass once again travelled to Coolangatta to compete at the Federation of Australasian Brass Bands competition. Woolston were the only New Zealand band this year. There were eight bands from around Australia and also a band from Osaka in Japan.

We were very lucky to hit a fine spell of weather so everyone was able to enjoy swimming and exploring Coolangatta when we were not rehearsing or playing. The test piece, entitled *Spells of a Deep Forest* by Swiss composer Ludovic Neurohr, was commissioned for the contest.

We performed extremely well over the weekend, despite our build up being short and intensive, but unfortunately the results did not go our way this year. Woolston placed third in the Entertainment Section, coming in behind Brisbane Excelsior and Gunnedah. Gunnedah also won the test piece.

Our entertainment programme was very well received. Our theme this year was *'Legends'*. A big thanks you to Mark Vander Klei for spending hours putting together a slide-show consisting photos of various Australasian sporting and musical legends. *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* introduced the programme, which was followed by *Devil's Duel* which featured Davey Boyes on euphonium. Next up Caroline Blackmore and the band serenaded the crowd with *I Dreamed A Dream* from *Les Miserables*. Woolston then unleashed their inner Freddie Mercury (and some their inner Latino!) to perform Queen's *Innuendo*. A jazzy version of *Theme from Sesame Street* was next on the programme. Well done to Sarah Hickman for her awesome trumpet solo! Last on the programme was the final movement from our winning own choice at the National Championships in Dunedin, *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants*.

A solo competition was added this year. Congratulations to Kevin Hickman for winning the section and also to Phil Johnston for being highly commended.

Thank you to all of those who came in to help out and a big thank you must go to Graham Hickman who put in a lot of work in preparing for this contest. ~ Kate Gallaher

Editor's note: A good number of the band joined Kate and her family at her 21st Birthday celebrations recently. Happy Birthday Kate!

The Perfect, Last-Minute Christmas Gift!

Following the success of previous CD recordings, the band's latest compact disc, *Rhythm 'n' Brass*, is something of a surprise departure, but a very welcome departure!



Versatile, and by no means a stranger to jazz on the big band stand, it was perhaps inevitable that Graham Hickman would lead us on a swing-excursion sooner rather than later. Under his expert guidance, and with the establishment of an annual "Black Tie Ball" fund-raising event, we have developed a significant big band repertoire, and we have obviously become decidedly comfortable in the idiom!

Spiced with vocals, keyboards and a rhythm section, *Rhythm 'n' Brass* is a feast of favourite songs from the Black Tie playlist, topped off with big band instrumental classics. Though garnished aplenty, rest assured the big brass band sound is undiminished. It's as boisterous as ever, only with some fun thrown in, and if fun is infectious, you'd better brace yourself for a heavy dose of the good times with *Rhythm 'n' Brass*.

For only \$25 you can purchase a copy of this CD by emailing: info@woolstonbrass.org or visiting our website: www.woolstonbrass.org

The Flaxton Festival

~ A Splendid Time is Guaranteed for All!

The Flaxton Festival is an exclusive charity fund-raiser which will disperse the takings between three incredibly deserving organisations. **Woolston Brass** (50%), **The Christchurch City Mission** (35%), and **The Cambodian Children's Support Fund** (15%).

The Festival will be held at the country residence of **Hans and Carolyn Schuitman** on Sunday, February 27th, 2011. Attendees will be welcome to bring their own refreshments and rugs, or some other form of suitable ground cover. Viewing (and dancing!) will be from rolling mounds and the lawn outside the homestead. The event will be totally smoke-free.

Tickets cost \$50 and are available only through the organisers. Call either Hans (027 5684990) or John (021 324369). Tickets may also be obtained by emailing – info@woolstonbrass.org or by visiting the Flaxton Festival 2011 website at: www.flaxton.org.nz



Impressions of FABB

from a Woolston Brass Supporter - Judith Coomer

Sun, sand, surf and success... well, partial success anyway.

This trip to the FABB contest in Coolangatta, Australia, began with check in at Christchurch airport on the Thursday afternoon prior to Labour Weekend. We had all been told to assemble early (don't be late!), so had plenty of time to relax in the airport lounge, eat and drink, and look forward to the days of contesting that lay ahead. There was also a sense of relief that this show was finally on the road.

On landing at Brisbane airport, we claimed our mountain of gear, and boarded the bus south to Coolangatta. We were all most impressed with our accommodation at "Outrigger Twin Towns Resort", apartment style rooms overlooking the mini golf course, swimming and spa pools, and across to the sparkling ocean waters. Stunning!

Friday was essentially a free day for Woolston supporters. There were around twenty-five of us staying at this delightful venue, so there was always someone to chat to, share a beer, coffee or a meal with, shop with, go for a walk together along the impressive "Oceanway", or swim in the pool or sea.

On Friday evening we gathered at a function room at "Twin Towns Club" for the official welcome to the contest, and the draws for the three competition events were made. This was a most enjoyable function, an opportunity to chat with bandspeople from Australia, Japan and New Zealand, and to catch up with old friends.

On Saturday, the Test competition was held. Ten bands played the commissioned work, *Spells of a Deep Forest*, written by young Swiss composer, Ludovic Neurohr. He was one of the two judges, and followed the score with enthusiasm as each band gave their rendition of his adventurous composition. I heard six of the ten bands play this piece. Woolston Brass impressed me, but to be honest, Gunnedah Shire Band (NSW) was the one to beat, in my opinion.

On Saturday evening, I was excited at the prospect of the invitation solo competition, "A Night at the Opera". I was familiar with all bar one of the operatic arias chosen by the eleven soloists. Quite frankly, some made very poor choices. This opinion was reiterated by the adjudicators who said "the instruments should imitate the human voice, so make them sing!" Our own Kevin Hickman played Caccini's *Ave Maria* from *Euridice* beautifully, and won the competition, the trophy and the prize money. Well done, Kevin! Phil Johnston (Bb Bass) gained a Highly Commended from the judges.

On Sunday, the band turned from Test mode to Entertainment. Each of the ten bands was allotted thirty minutes to entertain the large crowd. They all chose a different theme, around which they built their programme. Woolston chose "Legends". They opened with John Williams' *Olympic Fanfare*, accompanied by pictures on the big screen of Peter Snell and Cathy Freeman

(among others) winning Olympic gold medals on the track. They ended with the final movement, *Fantasia Brilliance*, from Peter Graham's *On the Shoulders of Giants*. I relished the opportunity to hear this wonderful music again, following Woolston's thrilling performance in Dunedin in July. I wasn't disappointed. This rounded off a marvellous Entertainment slot, enhanced by Eugene Puohotau's thoughtful and emotive commentary.

So we waited for the judges' comments, and placings in the two big championships. I would have liked to hear some comments from the Test judge and composer, Ludovic Neurohr, but none were forthcoming. Gunnedah Shire Band were the victors in the Test, Woolston Brass fourth. Brisbane Excelsior won the Entertainment championship, Woolston Brass third.

Yes, there was deep disappointment in the camp. I will never forget the sea of glum faces that met me later in the evening.

Expectations had been very high going into this contest, so disappointment was inevitable. As Music Director, Graham Hickman, said, as our bus departed for Brisbane airport the following day, "It just goes to show how subjective this contesting thing is". You win some, you lose some.

In summary, I really enjoyed this trip to Coolangatta. The venue was delightful, the weather superb, the support team a real joy to be part of, and as always, the music of Woolston Brass was thrilling. Thank you to all involved in making this thoroughly enjoyable trip possible.

Christmas in the Cathedral

On Sunday November 28 an appreciative audience was treated to beautiful music from New Zealand's premier brass band

Christchurch Cathedral is a fine venue for concert going, both in its magnificent setting and its musical qualities which suit particularly the wonderful choral ensemble sound of the brass band. What better band to showcase the Cathedral's qualities than Woolston, particularly with pieces like Mozart's *Ave Verum Corpus*, and Barber's *Adagio*, two works that require great control of tone and sound. The band showed its strengths in both these works, the wonderful haunting chords reverberating around the stone walls of the church.

The qualities of this venue can, unfortunately, also be a drawback and when the band went to show off its undoubted virtuosity in works such as Berlioz' *The Corsair* and Curnow's *Christmas Triptych*, the detail gets a little lost. The reverb can 'hide a multitude of evils' as one conductor once said but it can also hide a great deal of stunning detail, which unfortunately was the case occasionally.

This however cannot disguise the fact the Woolston Brass is a very fine ensemble and their qualities were well displayed, not least of which in each of their soloists. Whether it was lovely flugel horn sounds of Sarah Hickman playing *Away in a Manger*, the wonderful voice of Caroline Blackmore singing *I Dreamed a Dream* or the memorable performance of Compere David Fiu singing *O Holy Night*, they were all superb.

It was another of their soloists that I think provided the highlight of the concert, Principal Cornet Kevin Hickman playing Caccini's *Ave Maria*, a performance of sublime tonal quality, which will stay long in my memory.

The audience were roused from their reverie a few times to stand and sing some Christmas carols, which helped punctuate the performance, allowing us once again to settle into another of the band's showcase works.

Congratulations to Graham Hickman and the band for a very fine performance, and I look forward to following their progress in the New Year. ~ Noah Sime

Woolston Band British Open 1975 Reunion ~ Merton Tapp



Earlier this year, I received a notice from Denis Dewe asking if I was interested in attending a reunion of the group that travelled to Belle Vue, England, to participate in the 1975 British Open Championship. Woolston Band competed very successfully (27 bands played, and Woolston achieved 5th place). Naturally enough, I was on for this, and a GREAT weekend was had by all who attended.

The proceedings started at the Band room at 11.30am on Saturday 22 August with a general welcome to the attendees by present members. Our Chairperson Gary Pinker, and Band Patron, Prof John Ritchie both made great speeches! This meeting was of course accompanied by tea, coffee and sammies.

At 1.30 that afternoon, the current band played a concert at the Opawa Baptist Church, conducted by current Musical Director, Lieutenant Graham Hickman. The band played Fireworks for Brass Band, Elgar Howarth, and Herbert Howell's Pageantry. Both were played with the utmost musicality and the soloists acquitted themselves more than admirably (Anthony Smith take a bow please).

Later that evening, the Reunion Dinner was held at the Woolston Club. Various people spoke including Alan Clemens, who advised us all of the pitfalls of the demon drink, and other generally distasteful habits. Ron Harris reminded us all of that very funny man, Jimmy Edwards, who came to the rescue in the fund-raising aspect of the Belle Vue trip. A previous leader of the band, Kevin Joughin, also entertained the dinner guests with a couple of delightfully played cornet solos, accompanied on the night by the incomparable Bev Kench.

Come Sunday, and the regulation Church Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance, held at the Christ Church Cathedral, where the band again played magnificently, and where the Cathedral Choir was serene!!

The weekend drew to a close with a magnificent repast at the Rossendale Winery, where all the final good-byes were made, and many lies probably told.

Overall, a most memorable occasion, marred for me somewhat though, by the sudden and untimely passing of the brains behind the weekend: I refer of course to the death of Denis Dewe, a great mate of many of us, and a loyal Woolstonian to the end. Our kindest regards to Lynne and Denis' family.

Letter from Another 1975 Veteran

I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the fabulous reunion weekend that Denis organised.

To see those faces again, and to hear the band was just so uplifting. That glorious Woolston sound, as heard in the Opawa Baptist Church, was an unforgettable experience and it evoked emotions not felt since I last played in that band of brothers.

Thank you Graham and the Band. Sincere regards and best wishes for the musical future.

Graham Riach

Round the Bandstand



Life Member **Chris Reside** and **Margot McInnes** were married on the 13th November at St Mark's Anglican Church in Opawa. Our congratulations and best wishes go to Chris and Margot.

Santa turned up at the band's annual Christmas BBQ which was held on the 28th November at Graham's place.

Congratulations to **Graeme Coomer** and **Kevin Hickman** who were made Life Members at this year's AGM.



Graeme Coomer is the Vice-President of the band, the Treasurer and was a playing member for many years. Graeme works tirelessly behind the scenes organizing contests, concerts, keeping track of the money and generally ironing out the wrinkles. Thank you Graeme.

Kevin Hickman is the current Principal Cornet of the band and has been for the past 16 years. He is a fantastic player who

has enjoyed much success both within the band and as a soloist. Woolston Brass is lucky to have such an experienced leader who is happy and willing to share his 16 years worth of Woolston wisdom. Both men are very honoured to become Life Members and look forward to many more happy years within the band.

We've recently heard that trombone legend and Woolston Life Member **Barrie Aldridge** is seriously ill. Our thoughts are very much with Barrie, Janet and their family at this time.

Dave Johnstone has been appointed as the band's Marketing and Promotions Manager. Dave replaces Suzanne Coffey in this role following her relocation to the North Island. Dave has wound up his blog (www.woolstonian.wordpress.com) with a view to revamping our official site over the Christmas break.



This Writer – An Obituary

Prologue: When I was asked to write an obituary for Denis Dewe, I was immediately struck by the sad irony of the situation. Denis himself must have written dozens of obituaries over the years. His services in this capacity were freely given, and fully exploited by those organisations and individuals fortunate enough to know him. I always felt that Denis undertook these assignments with some relish, whether the subject was well-known to him or not. The obituaries he wrote obviously meant more to him than just another opportunity to flourish the pen. Apart from being carefully researched and accurate, they invariably conveyed great respect, dignity, humour and love.

Denis loved the language and he was a fierce defender of its proper use! He loved to write. Indeed, Denis is the founder of this very journal, naming the newsletter “*The Woolstonian*” and penning the first issue in September 1995.

So, not only do I set out to honour Denis here, but I hope to emulate him as well. It shouldn't be too difficult, because I can hear his voice with every word I type. I've even found myself employing a few trade-mark Dewe-isms: ...“this writer” being one, and ...“a funeral service for Denis” another, but surely, (as DBD used to say) I just had to close with, “Vale Denis”.

~ Dave Johnstone, November 2010.

Obituary: Denis Brian Dewe JP 20th October 1933 — 10th October 2010

Denis was born in Feilding to Florence and George Dewe. The second of two sons, Denis was educated in Feilding and on leaving school he started a job as a delivery boy with the NZ Post and Telegraph Office. From there, Denis joined the Royal New Zealand Air Force, firstly as a player with, and subsequently as the conductor of, the RNZAF Band.

In early 1961 Denis met Dallas Macainsh, a young woman also serving in the Air Force. Dallas and Denis were married in Auckland on the 15th of March 1961. The marriage produced two daughters, Barbara and Noeline. In April 1965 the family moved to Christchurch and Denis joined the New Zealand Army #1 RNZIR Band where he rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant and took over as Bandmaster. Denis served in Malaya between 1965 and 1967.

In 1973 Denis left the Army and became an administrator in the Public Service. He remained there until he retired in 1990. Sadly, the year of Denis' retirement was also marked by the loss of his wife, Dallas.

In his retirement Denis was able to develop his passion for writing. He completed several creative writing courses, all of which he thoroughly enjoyed. In 1994 he met his friend and partner, Lyn Turner. Throughout their 16 years together, Denis and Lyn shared an interest in the performing arts and they were often seen at concerts together. They travelled extensively — sometimes to see family in Australia, but just as frequently to visit once-in-a-lifetime destinations of personal interest.

Celebrant Keith de Dulin led a funeral service for Denis at the John Rhind Chapel, London Street, Christchurch on the 14th of October 2010 at 3.00pm. As requested by Denis, his beloved Woolston Brass played some of his favourite tunes as family, friends and colleagues arrived to pay their respects. This writer doubts if Denis would have minded one bit, but the thirty minutes or so prior to the service turned out to be rather noisy, and something of an impromptu reunion, — as a veritable who's who of brass banding in New Zealand became reacquainted.

Names recorded in the attendance register included those of Kevin Jarrett, Trevor and Graeme Bremner, Alan Briesman, Dave Christensen, Tom Williams, Graham Riach and many, many more from Denis' days as a Serviceman, National Bandsman, Public Servant and Rotarian.

One of those paying special tribute to Denis at the service was Dave Johnston (Blenheim) who recalled many happy encounters during Denis' life-long association with brass bands.

“... Denis won five NZ BBB Bass Championship titles and one Eb Bass Championship, and the Champion of Champions... He won his first National title in 1948 when he was just 14 years old. He was a member of three National Bands including the famous '53 band under KGL Smith...”

...Denis was fastidious. He crossed his 'Ts' and dotted his 'Is'. Always punctual and always immaculately dressed, Denis was an extraordinarily brilliant administrator; — he revelled in it, in fact... And he was so precise, — if you were lucky enough to be on his Christmas card list, you could count on a card from DB Dewe on 1st December every year, and not a day later!..

He was a prolific and excellent writer and public speaker. Denis was exemplary. He was a man with very high personal standards. He kept an immaculate home with everything in its place...

Eugene Puohotau spoke on behalf of Woolston Brass, acknowledging Denis' huge contribution to the band both as a player and as an administrator. Other speakers to pay tribute were Hugh Brown (Rotary), Graham Pearson (Probus), Jonathon Allen (SIS colleague), and Denis' daughters Barbara and Noeline.

For many years Denis was an active and valued member of Rotary. He served with the Rotary Clubs of Bishopdale, Burnside, Christchurch East, Linwood and Woolston. In later years Denis also became an active member of the Christchurch East PROBUS club.

“... Denis was busy in his community delivering 'meals on wheels' for several years, an activity he only curtailed once his own health started to fail...”

Major Gilbert Beale paid tribute on behalf of the RSA before calling on Denis' numerous Army mates to place remembrance poppies on the casket. At the conclusion of this ritual, Pte. Kevin Hickman played the *Last Post and Reveille*.

At Denis' request, the service concluded to the strains of his all-time favourite march, *Knight of the Road*. Vale Denis.



Events Calendar

Monday 31 January: First rehearsal for 2011

Friday 4 February: 7pm Annual Band Dinner
A slightly delayed farewell to 2010

Sunday 13 February: 12 noon - 1.30pm
Summertime Concert. A lovely chance for a picnic and a listen at the Band Rotunda in Hagley Park

Sunday 27 February: Flaxton Festival
See our website www.woolstonbrass.org for details

Monday 25 April: Anzac Concert
This Anzac day is shaping up to be another busy one with a service in the Anglican Cathedral in the morning and a combined concert with the Christchurch City Choir and 2nd Canterbury Nelson Marlborough West Coast Band

Woolston Brass Academy

by Emma McMorrان

Bill Vail, our extraordinary teacher, suggested that we enter a quartette in the provincial open grade competition. *We chose This Little Light of Mine* as our piece. We worked hard on our music which paid off when we came away with first prize.

In our group we had Johan, Kate, Abby and myself. The instruments were trombone, flugel horn, cornet and tenor horn. This was extremely satisfying and we really enjoyed our performance.

We are looking forward to playing again next year. Thank you Bill



Woolston Personnel Changes

Since September there have been several changes within the ranks of Woolston Brass. Sadly, we have said goodbye to a few familiar faces around the stand.

Veteran cornetist **Dave Johnstone** has decided to retire as a playing member of the band. Dave has been a valued member and has held a number of key positions over his 30 year tenure. Not only will we miss Dave's playing ability, but also his friendly manner, wise words, and important contribution to the leadership of the band. They say you can't beat experience, and we will certainly miss Dave's experience.

We have also said our farewells to **Suzanne and Garth Coffey**. Suzanne was the band's Marketing Manager and Garth a handy tenor horn player. They were called back to Wellington due to sickness in the family. We will miss their contributions to the band and send them with our best wishes.

Luckily we have added a new trombone player to our ranks. **Andrew Yorkstone** has joined the band on Principal Trombone. Andrew grew up in Invercargill and has come to Christchurch to join the New Zealand Army Band. We are thoroughly enjoying having a strengthened trombone section and Andrew's keen attitude to banding. If you think the last name sounds familiar Andrew's brother, Ross is one of the solo cornet team. Welcome Andrew.

Lastly we would like to welcome back our resident summer Pom - **Norm (Norman Shanks)**. When we farewelled him at the beginning of the year he said he was coming back this summer to climb Mount Cook - watch this space!

Player Profile: Andrew Yorkstone

Catherine Neal interviews Andrew Yorkstone who started playing with the band in our build up for FABB and has permanently joined since, sitting in the Principal Trombone seat. He has moved to Christchurch after joining the NZ Army Band.



When did you start playing trombone and why? Do you play any other instruments?

I started playing the trombone in 2000 at out of school music classes in Invercargill. Mainly because I went to a local brass band rehearsal one night and decided I wanted to be in there as well. I also play the piano, which I started in 1999.

Have you always been playing in brass bands? What sort of musical groups have you been involved in?

I started in brass bands, but since then I have been involved in concert bands, orchestras, jazz bands and numerous quartets and ensembles.

Why do you like being a part of Woolston Brass? What does it mean to you to be a Woolstonian?

I enjoy being in Woolston Brass because it pushes me to keep working towards the high expectation that Woolston has and I enjoy the awesome social life that is in Woolston. To me being a Woolstonian is being a part of the huge history Woolston Brass has, being a part of the successes Woolston has had in the past, and also being a part of and doing my bit for the many successes Woolston is sure to have in the future.

Favourite piece of music and why?

I don't think I have ever really had a favourite piece of music because my taste seems to change all the time when I hear different styles of music and pieces, but if I had to choose something it would probably be Rachmaninov's 2nd Piano Concerto.

What is the highlight of your musical career so far?

Winning the Junior Champion of Champions in 2009

What do you like to do in your spare time?

When I have spare I usually go into town, play X-Box, watch movies, or if there is an RFL (Army fitness test) coming up I would probably go for a run.

Where do you see yourself in five years time with life/brass bands?

I haven't really thought that far ahead, perhaps university or still in the Army Band depending on how things pan out, definitely in some sort of musical career though.

Any advice for the next generation of brass players?

The only advice I could probably give is to keep practicing new things and challenging yourself, even when it gets boring and feels like a drag to keep working at it.

Coolangatta Gallery



Clockwise: Coolangatta sunset.

*Winner of the 'Night at the Opera' solo competition
Kevin Hickman.*

*Sarah and Graham Hickman having a laugh at 30,000 feet,
– Phil Johnston's not so sure.*

When you're tired of the beach, there's always the bar.

Farina Thompson Charitable Trust

The Farina Thompson Charitable Trust was set up in 1977 with a substantial donation from Farina Thompson with further gifts being made to the charity by her family. Throughout her life, Farina Thompson worked to support a number of children's causes, both in New Zealand and internationally. Her major interests lay in the arts with a special fondness for supporting music and ballet. It was also her wish that this Charitable Trust be used to help those that are less able to help themselves, to support the arts that she loved and to provide funding to organisations that benefit the community. Farina Thompson was a philanthropist all her life and the establishment and continuation of the Trust enables her to continue giving to and helping others.

Woolston Brass has recently applied for financial assistance from the Farina Thompson Charitable Trust under the category of Cultural and Performing Arts. In October we received notice of the success of the application. Woolston will receive a \$5000 annual donation from the Trust for the next five years. This is ear-marked for buying percussion equipment and funding a part time marketing/promotions manager. Donations like this make it possible for us to continue bringing the people of Canterbury high quality brass music, compete creditably at national and international contests, and most of all continue making the music we love. We are very grateful for this donation.

Next Issue Information

The next Woolstonian will be published in March 2012. To receive your copy via email, please phone Sarah Hickman on 366 1566 or email: hickman.sarah@gmail.com

Acknowledgements:

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Seat Sponsors

Principal Cornet	Adrienne, Lady Stewart
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Third Cornet 2	J Ballantyne & Co
Solo Trombone	J Ballantyne & Co
Second Trombone	Robert and Valerie Blackmore
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