

London & Southern Counties Regional Champions 2015 – 2021
Finalists, National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain 2013 – 2021, 2023 & 2024
Audience Entertainment Award, Brass In Concert 2019 & 2021
Most Entertaining Band, Butlin's Mineworkers Contest 2015, 2017 & 2019
British Open Senior Trophy Champions 2014
First Section National Champions of Great Britain 2010

FRIARY DIARY – ISSUE 126 – AUGUST 2025

Welcome to Friary Diary issue 126 - a monthly round-up of news about Friary Brass Band.

GOODBYE TO JANE: No, I don't mean the 1972 hit by Slade, that was spelt differently, anyway. Sadly, we have said goodbye to Jane Challiss, our long-serving and multi-talented musician and member of the Band's management team, most recently our treasurer.

Jane joined Friary on cornet in July 1983, just a few months after the band was formed. At the time with Bisley Band, she played for both bands for a while until four rehearsals a week became just too much, especially with the commitment needed for Friary for the contests and the engagements to fulfil the sponsorship commitment from Friary Meux. After a few years, the Band had a large number of back row cornets but lacked horns, so Jane offered to move to the horn section to fill the gap.

She was on the Management Team for more years than not, having been the Librarian, Minutes Secretary and Treasurer. Jane could also claim to be an unofficial Band Manager's assistant, helping Chris Powell with that role. During the Friary Meux sponsorship years, the Band owned a van to transport chairs to the pub jobs so by default, she could be found loading and unloading the van after engagements, often very late at night!

I asked Jane about her taste in music: "It's varied," she told me. "I still have a soft spot for 'New York New York' which was a favourite of the Band in the early years as it was so different to anything other bands were playing at the time. I am not a fan of test pieces as a rule, but a necessary evil!"

"There have been many memorable moments, including appearing on stage at Royal Albert Hall for the National Finals, on the pitch at Wembley Stadium and onboard the QE2. My proudest moments are to have been part of the Band which gained promotion through the sections in successive years, and also working hard when the Band membership was down to a dozen to keep it going and attract new faces."

"I took the decision to step away from playing horn on a regular basis a while ago, as I felt the Band was improving more quickly than I was. I'm a great believer in being asked 'Why DID you give up?' rather than 'Why DON'T you give up?' I stayed involved by helping out on tuned percussion."

Jane concluded: "I shall always have fond memories of the Band and will continue to be interested in how it progresses in years to come."

Thanking Jane for her immense and varied contribution to the Band over so many years, Chairman David Wicks presented her with a framed photo of Friary both on the steps of the Royal Albert Hall and also on stage for the National Finals. We are all hugely grateful to her.



MEMORY LANE UPDATED: Last month, our bass trombonist, Adam Gregory, produced a photograph which he thinks was taken about 35 years ago at one of the Southern Counties Amateur Bands' Association contests in Crawley. Whilst he also impressively came up with most of the names, Jane (who else!) managed to fill in some of the unknown ones, so for the sake of completeness, overleaf is the photo again with all but one of the players' names. Apologies to the unknown bass player on the left of the front row!



Back row: Jan Meagan, Nicola Yarham, Mark Yarham, Chris Powell, Glen Bacon, John Trembley, Rob Young, Tony Adie, Nigel Stevens, Sally Edney, Peter Edney, Nigel Winter

Middle row: Simon Smith, Anne Gentry, Adam Gregory, Roland Knight, Bruce Gentry, Steve Powell, Keith Maxwell, Bob Gates, Janice Davidson/Davison

Front row: Unknown, Duncan Ford, Sandra Burleigh, Matt Newberry, John Blight, Graham Rix, Dawn Culver, Kevin Cole, Brian Bretney

NEW ENGAGEMENTS: After a very quiet summer, it's going to be a busy couple of months to the end of the year. We have recently been invited back to Woking Salvation Army on 22nd November, and have decided to enter the Wessex contest the following Saturday. Next year is also shaping up well, with a return to Hartley Wintney on 1st February, as well as the Ibstock School Brass Day the following Saturday. And we have an exciting concert to look forward to in Old Alresford in July: more of that nearer the time!

RANKINGS NEWS: There has been no further update by 4barsrest.com to their world rankings table so Friary remains at 48th but still (just!) the highest ranked band in London & Southern Counties. Brassstats.com updated their table on 1st August, with a drop of two places, leaving Friary at 44th.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS & DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Wed 5th Nov	Lewes Bonfire parade	Lewes	6.00pm
Sun 9th Nov	Remembrance parade	High Street, Guildford	10.30am
Sat 22nd Nov	Evening concert	Woking Salvation Army	7.30pm
Sat 29th Nov	Wessex contest	Talbot Heath School, Bournemouth	all day
Sun 7th Dec	Carol concert	Hog's Back Brewery, Tongham	3.00pm
Sun 21st Dec	Carolling	The Meadows, Camberley	11.00am
2026			
Sun 1st Feb	Afternoon concert	Victoria Hall, Hartley Wintney	TBA
Sat 7th Feb	Ibstock School Brass Day	Ibstock School, Roehampton	all day
Sun 22nd Mch	L&SC Regional Championships	Gordon Craig Theatre, Stevenage	all day
Sat 3rd May	British Open Grand Shield contest	Town Hall, Birmingham (new venue)	all day
Sun 5th July	Entente Cordiale concert	Pinglestone Barn, Old Alresford	6.00pm

For further information, please contact Tim Straker, Public Relations Officer, Friary Brass Band e-mail: publicity@friarybrassband.com or visit www.friarybrassband.com

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Friary Brass Band is a registered charity no. 1137290