

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 136 – JUNE 2026

Welcome to Friary Diary issue 136 - a monthly round-up of news about Friary Brass Band.

COMINGS AND GOINGS: Friary has said goodbye to tuned percussionist Martin Davies and cornet player Kendall Skirving who have moved up north to take up new employment. A fond farewell has also been said to past chairman and cornet player David Wicks who is stepping back from banding to concentrate on his other musical interests.

Joining the band and further strengthening the euphonium section is Max Johnson, a British Army Band musician based at Tidworth. Max has played euphonium for 13 years, gaining extensive experience at a high level with bands including Milnrow and Oldham Lees where he performed at the British Open. He was honoured with the Best Euphonium Award at the Scottish Open in 2024.

'I am excited to join Friary and look forward to contributing to the band's success while continuing to develop as a performer,' Max commented.



A second recent Friary recruit is Ed Neeve who has joined the back row cornets. Ed has played with a number of bands in London and the South East, predominantly during spells on solo cornet with Medway and then Aveley and Newham. More recently he has been focused on Salvation Army banding as a member of Croydon Citadel Band and the South London Fellowship Band.

Ed was equally enthusiastic: 'I'm really excited to be joining Friary, a band that for me has so often set the standard in the South East. After a spell away from contesting I can't wait to get back into it and can't think of a better band with which to do so!,' he said.

Paying tribute to his predecessor, current chairman Andy Singleton commented: 'We are so sorry to see David leave Friary: he is the ultimate bandsman who has not only been such a sound player but also as a management team member and latterly chairman, has steered the band through some recent turbulent times. We wish him all the very best for the future.' 'We are also sad to see two of our younger players, Martin and Kendall, move on but are delighted to welcome Max and Ed to the Friary family,' he concluded.

Following some of these changes, Friary has vacancies for Eb bass, cornet (front row or back row) and tuned percussion, so if you know of potential applicants, please direct them to our Secretary Lauren (secretary@friarybrassband.com).

GUILDFORD ARMED FORCES DAY: As usual, Friary was involved in Guildford's marking of Armed Forces Day, with cornet player Simon Persin playing from the Guildhall balcony as part of the short service. 'It's always an honour to be part of this occasion, especially so in view of the members of the armed forces who play in the Band. We could easily take their service for granted, so to acknowledge them publicly is particularly important,' said Simon. This was Simon's last performance for Friary for a while, as he is taking a break. Many thanks Simon for all your playing, both as a soloist and with the Band, and we hope to see you back again before too long.



photo: Shirley West

RANKINGS NEWS: There has been no further update by 4barsrest.com to their world rankings table on 6th January so Friary stays at 51st. However, as hinted at in the last Friary Diary, the June update by Brassstats.com update saw Friary rise 12 places to 42nd, hopefully the start of a welcome trend!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS & DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

2026

Sun 18th Oct	Afternoon concert	St Nicolas Church, Great Bookham	3.00pm
Thu 5th Nov	Lewes Bonfire parade	Lewes	Evening
Sun 8th Nov	Remembrance parade	Guildford High Street	10.30am
Sat 28th Nov	Wessex BBA contest	TBA	All day
Sun 6th Dec	Carol concert	Hog's Back Brewery, Tongham	Pm
Sun 13th Dec	The Snowman	LVS, Ascot	11.00am, 1.00pm & 3.00pm

2027

Sun 31st Jan	Afternoon concert	Victoria Hall, Hartley Wintney	2.00pm
Sat 6th Feb	Ibstock Brass Day	Ibstock Place School, Roehampton	All day
Sun 21st Mch	L&SC Regional Championships	Gordon Craig theatre, Stevenage	All day
Sat 8th May	Br. Open Spr. Fest. Grand Shield	Town Hall, Birmingham	All day

For further information, please contact Tim Straker, Public Relations Officer, Friary Brass Band
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