

## Band Marches Out in Style for New Season



**Luke Davies and Laura Froggatt from RAM Leisure in Wrexham pictured above, pack the new winter jacket order for Farndon & District Brass Band.**

During last season the committee decided to begin the process of ordering a new summer band jacket. The formal black and red jackets with gold braid have for many years been the main choice for formal jobs, and are still very popular, but it was felt a lighter weight jacket would be more appropriate for afternoon and less formal events. Our uniform supplier for some time has been Ram Leisure & Workwear Ltd based on the Whitegate Industrial Estate in Wrexham. Ram Leisure was established in 1995 and are dedicated to the supply of quality embroidered and screen printed clothing. They also engrave trophies and print large promotional banners and signs, so it was natural that we began our search for a newer option with them.

The committee considered a number of options before finally deciding on a very smart burgundy blazer which was a lighter weight and presented a good alternative. Ram also helped us to source a baseball cap to match the jackets for use on those rare sunny summer jobs! Designs were then agreed for a band tie, and the new look was almost complete.

The new colour proved to be very popular with organisers and band members alike. We also completed the uniform changes by finding a high quality winter jacket to match our burgundy outfit. Once again Ram found a supplier for us, and added our embroidered badge on the front to complete our new season transformation.

## Douglas Swire

It is with regret that we have to announce that a well-respected and long standing member of Farndon Band, Doug Swire, sadly passed away last month at the age of 85. He left his widow Elsie and children Kevin, Robert, Chris and the late Jacqueline. Doug made a substantial commitment to the Band for over 40 years initially as a player, but was also responsible for training the junior band as well as acting as Band Secretary for a number of years.

In 1999 he was voted Band Person of the Year by fellow Band members. As well as being a talented watercolour artist, he also trained as a painter and

decorator and taught in Nigeria for a number of years before he returned to the UK to work in the North East and eventually ran the painting and Decorating course at the Bersham Road College site in Wrexham.

Doug used his considerable artistic skills to design and create the badge Farndon & District Brass Band still use to this day which combines the local elements namely the strawberry, the corn of Cheshire and of course the famous Roman bridge that links Holt and Farndon.

It was the family's wish that the collection of £530, which was made at Pentrebychan Crematorium, should go to the funds of the Junior Section of the Farndon Band.



**Douglas Swire (pictured above) who sadly passed away last month.**



Thanks to some detective work done by David Hayns for the Band's publication called **Farndon, The Friendly Band, an Illustrated History of Farndon and District Brass Band**, produced to mark the Band's centenary in 1997 we know the exact date of the band's formation. The account David found appeared in **The Malpas Deanery Magazine of July 1898**.

An account written at the time says, "The air at the village fete should reverberate to the sounds of the cornet and the tuba. And true to type the village does have a band - Farndon & District Brass Band or Farndon Silver Band as it has been called during its long history.

The original band was formed in 1897 the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee and was given the name Farndon Jubilee Band.

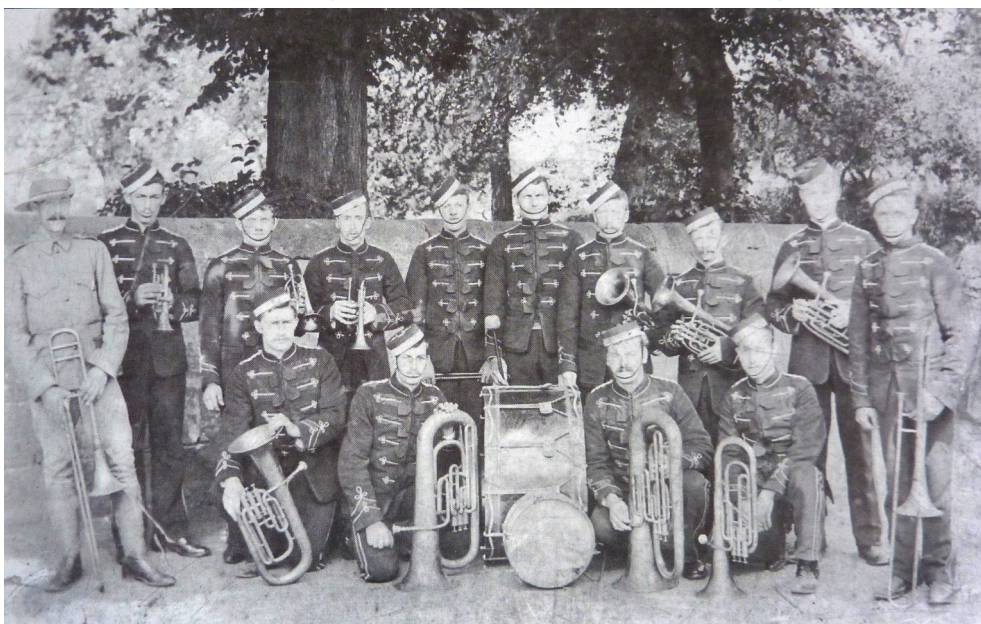
The band was established by subscription. The Malpas Deanery Parish magazine refers to "voluntary contributions of gentlemen in the neighbourhood." These gentlemen must have been very generous as the instruments had cost £60, which those days was sufficient to buy a house.

It goes on to report; The Jubilee Brass Band consists of 25 members selected from Farndon and Holt. They began their first practice in October 1897, not one of the members having played or handled a brass instrument before. Tuesday and Thursday nights there is a practice at the Assembly Rooms under the instruction of bandmaster Corrison of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

Pictured below is Churton Village Hall which is where the band now



## The History of the Friendly Band



meets. The Tuesday rehearsals have since stopped, although the Junior band and Ensemble also rehearse on Wednesdays, but the main Band meets on Thursdays.

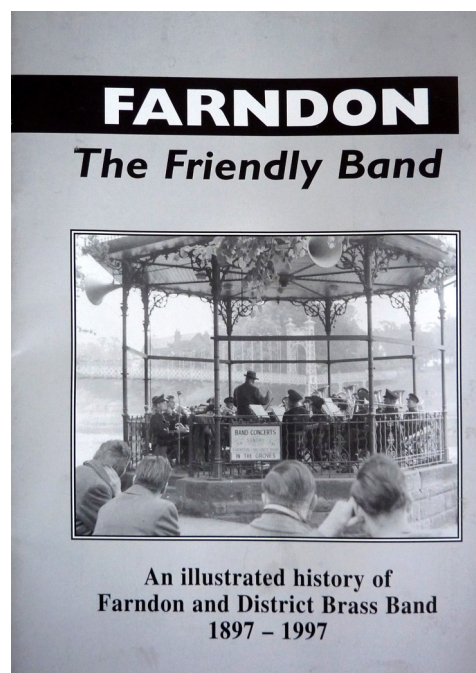
The history booklet goes on to say that at the commencement, each member was called upon to pay down a sum of money as a guarantee that he would stay in the band for 12 months. The band was managed by a committee of 8 persons composed of 4 bandsmen, 4 gentlemen from the village with an honorary secretary. However it was done, those early bandsmen learnt to play, and did so very quickly. At a promenade concert in June 1898, just eight months after the first rehearsal, £5-12s-6d, or £5.62p today, was collected, enough to buy a new cornet. These days it is perhaps difficult for us to fully appreciate the sense of privilege listening to live music gave people. In those days the only music that people ever heard was live music. A Brass Band was therefore central to any public celebration.

The Chester Chronicle records that on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1904 a fete was held in the grounds of the Rectory and that "Farndon Band played selections during the tea and afterwards for dancing which was kept up until 9-30pm. In the words of the Amateur Band Teacher's Guide & Bandsman's

### The earliest known photograph of Farndon Jubilee Band.

Adviser "it was a wonderful example of relaxation for young and old, indulging in harmless pleasure and every such event should have its band."

If you would like to have a copy of Farndon, The Friendly Band, an Illustrated History of Farndon and District Brass Band, pictured below some copies are still available. Contact details are available on our website.







## Working hard for the Band's Welfare

On the 1st June 2005 the BFBB, The British Federation Of Brass Bands, released details of policy and procedures and good practice for bands working with children. The establishment of a child protection policy was a very clear signal by the BFBB that it was determined to ensure all necessary steps were taken to protect from harm children, young people and vulnerable adults who participate in brass playing at all levels.

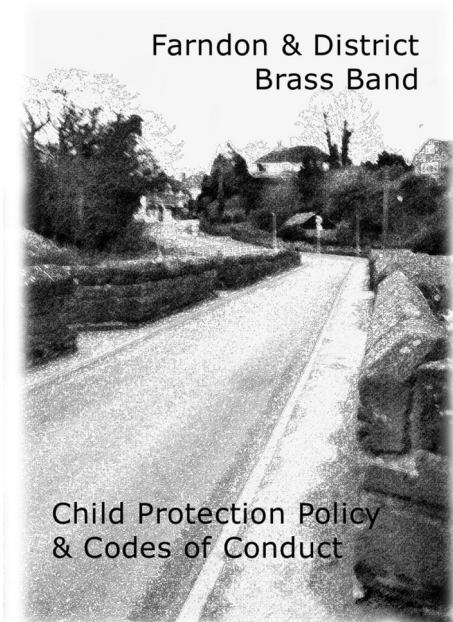
Their policy was contained in two documents, the first was entitled 'Child Protection Policy' and was a substantial document which drew attention to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults and the safeguards bands should have in place. The Child Protection Policy, and the accompanying appendices, guided bands through the action required to ensure that everyone who participates in brass banding does so in an enjoyable and safe environment. The second document recommended by the BFBB outlined the need to encourage the establishment of principles and high duty of care within bands, called the 'Code of Conduct', it was aimed at teachers, tutors, trainers and instructors of brass playing.

As soon as our band was made aware of this document a sub-committee was formed to ensure that we were working in line with these newly introduced national guidelines. The first Welfare Sub-Committee Meeting took place at Churton Village Hall on the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2005. Present at the first meeting were John Reeves, Susan Frencham and Tony Pugh. It was agreed that John Reeves should chair the first meeting and Tony Pugh offered to take minutes.

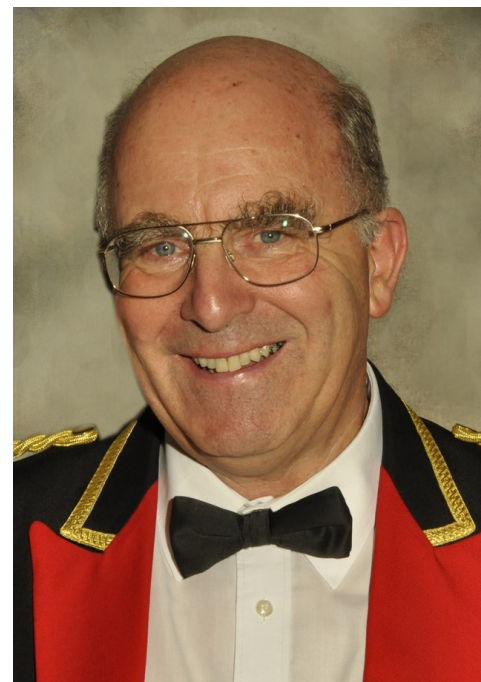
The committee discussed the aims and objectives of the Welfare Sub Committee and it was felt by those present that John Reeves was easily the best person to take the position of Welfare Officer. John also suggested a draft rota of responsible adults for the Training Band should be created. The

fact that both Susan Frencham and Tony Pugh worked in education helped in many ways as they had already gone through and had what was then known as CRB checks, Criminal Records Bureau checks, which are now called Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

The Sub Committee continued to meet on a monthly basis and feed back to the Band regularly on their progress. It was agreed by all members of the sub committee that progress was smooth and productive. There were no issues to resolve in all honesty as all three members were very committed to getting the new policy in place as soon as was possible. Working with the new BFBB guidelines as a guide, changes were made to ensure that our documents were appropriate for the Band's needs, were written in the clearest possible terms and were then re-designed in the house style of the rest of the Band's paperwork, with a suitable cover.



When the final draft of the Band's Child Protection Policy & Codes of Conduct booklet was agreed (above) by the Welfare Sub Committee, the finished publication was presented to the full committee. This final draft version was happily accepted, and all members were given their own copies



**John Reeves, pictured above, was the best person to take the new position of Band Welfare Officer**

and in addition a copy is also available in the band room at all times.

Farndon Band has an enviable reputation for being known as the 'Friendly Band' and we want to keep it that way. We want everyone, young or not so young, to enjoy their music making.

That said, with more than fifty members involved in the Band, it is inevitable that issues will arise from time to time. In this event, having named members of the Band that you know you can speak to in confidence can greatly assist in achieving a speedy resolution of the problem.

Fortunately the case load of the Welfare Sub-Committee has not been onerous over the years but, when we have been asked for help, we believe that our intervention has helped to make the Band a better and friendlier organisation for everyone to enjoy.

If you have joined the Band recently and would like a copy of the booklet, please don't hesitate to ask a member of the committee who will be happy to make one available.



## JUST A QUID!

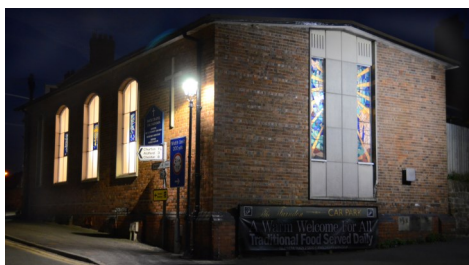
The sixth monthly draw this year of the Band's 100 Club took place at the Churton Village Hall on the 31st March. In total 85 numbers held by 53 members of the 100 Club were entered in this draw and the details of the lucky winners were announced on the Band website which can be found at <http://www.farndonband.org.uk> in the section for the 100 Club.

Roland Twydell, the promoter, for the 100 Club reported that the 100 Club is now in its seventeenth year and he was delighted to report that to date, with your support, it has generated more than £24,000 to support the Band's activities. However please bear in mind that inflation, and the credit crunch, has taken its toll during this time, significantly reducing the current buying power of what the 100 Club makes approx. half of what it would buy when it started in 1999! These essential funds are required to simply help with day to day running expenses, they also help provide equipment and new uniforms for Junior and the Main Band, music for all Bands and the provision of new and the repair of existing instruments. This in turn has helped us support many other charitable organisations and we would like to express our thanks for your continuing support. We are now back up to our highest membership ever. We would though like to be awarding prizes of £100, £50 & £20 each month. But this depends on there being a full membership of 100 members. Whilst the club membership has varied during the last couple of months, it really would be a magnificent achievement if we could run a full club, and we are getting closer!! Please don't forget inflation either, if you could possibly take an additional number or simply encourage just one person to join we would be delighted. And for just £4 per month, less than £1 per week per number - with the chance of winning substantial cash prizes too.



## Junior Rock Concert

The Farndon junior band performed at the Rock Chapel in Farndon on Wednesday 23rd March. The band played brilliantly, showcasing its newer repertoire in amongst the old favourites. We performed for the first time Mis Muchachas, this piece featured Joe Williams on cornet and Frankie Conyers on baritone as the



soloists. Our back row cornet section were also in the lime light playing percussion instruments and adding to the rhythm section. The band enjoyed performing music from the large and small screen such as Dr Who, Jurassic Park, James Bond and Pirates of the Caribbean.

The interval of our concerts are always a wonderful occasion as there was a great spread of home made cakes and we thank the parents for their support. We are looking forward to performing at The Tattenhall Park Primary Worm Fest and Hargrave Happy Days in June before returning to the Rock Chapel in July for our end of year concert.

For more information on all the Band's future engagements please look at the Band's website at <http://www.farndonband.org.uk>

## Future Diary Events

On Sat 23rd April there will be a concert with support artists, in Upton United Reformed Church, Chester starting at 7.00pm featuring the Band's Ensemble.

On Sat 21st May there will be a Picnic & Proms with Choir Event at Tarporley Baptist Church, 5.00pm to 7.00pm.

Thu 26th May will be the Band's AGM followed by a rehearsal Churton Village Hall at 7.45pm prompt.

Sat 11th June the Junior Band will be playing at Tattenhall Worm Festival which will be held at the park adjacent Tattenhall Primary School between 12.00 and 3.00pm approx. whilst at

the same time there will be a Picnic & Proms event with the Full Band plus Choir at Bellis' Garden Centre, Holt to raise funds for Nightingale House Hospice ,6.00pm to 9.00pm.

Sat 25th June the Junior Band will play at Hargrave Happy Days at St Peter's Church, Hargrave between 12.00 – 3.00pm approx.

Sat 25th June the Full Band will be at Tattenhall Village Fete, Tattenhall, adjacent to Tattenhall Primary School between 12.30 and 3.30pm.

On Wed 6th July the Junior Band will be playing again at the Rock Chapel, Farndon Village Centre at 7.00pm.

For updates on these and all future events go to the Band's website at <http://www.farndonband.org.uk>.