

Beginner Band Report

Everything is looking very rosy in the beginner band garden at this moment in time. It's been quite a year and, despite us raising our expectations of the band to the highest level yet, the children continue to astound us and rise to meet and surpass them!

It was a year of two main focal points. First of all, we started the year as a joined force with the Juniors. I can remember vividly sitting staring at a computer screen full of music with Ian in December 2009 as he demonstrated what he had written for the competition, and all I could think was 'that might be beyond the beginners' but I didn't dare say anything because of the time and effort he had obviously put in to preparing the music! As it was though, led by Ian and with all MD's and tutors pulling together they quickly surpassed my expectations – and put in a performance on the day that could not possibly have gone better.

After this we then topped the school year off with a wider opportunities concert. All three bands played alongside several local primary schools, all of which had spent the past academic year learning an instrument. The concert was extremely successful but I doubt anyone would have sensed just what a huge knock-on effect it was to have for the Beginners. When we started back in September we had 14 new players, all of whom had joined us having performed in the wider ops concert for their school, and took our band numbers to over 40!

These children have settled in extremely quickly and we now have a band that is improving rapidly. The way the band is going it made entering the Training Band Section of the National Finals this April seem a perfectly logical thing to do! Although I might doubt the wisdom of that decision ten minutes before we start to play on the day!

One area we would appreciate a tiny helping hand is at the end of band rehearsals. When the drinks are left out we would be very grateful if there was a willing volunteer to pour the drinks into the cups – this would save vast spillages and lots of wet clothes! If anyone could help we would be happy to hear from you.

Thanks as always go to Jane and our wonderful committee. They work extremely hard to give us what we want, when we want it and the work they do for the organisation is practically a full time job. We all really appreciate everything you do.

Thanks to Nigel, Ian, Derek and Tom. Nigel is always around if you need to pick his brain and has also taken rehearsals with the band at the last two workshops – I know the players always like to have someone different take rehearsals and to be able to ask someone of Nigel's experience is quite a bonus! Ian, Tom and Derek take our players for the Junior's and it is testament to their skills that the children settle and feel at home right away.

Finally, thank you to you, the parents. In what is a very busy life for all of us, you find time to bring children to both rehearsals and concerts. Without you supporting your child/ren with their hobby, the Lions Beginner Band would not exist. Thank you for your continued support.

Chris Thompson