



## Spanish spectacular

The highlight of our Summer was the band's visit to Spain to take part in the Torre Vieja Music Fiesta on the Costa Blanca. This was a huge success from every point of view and we felt privileged to be invited to this premier event, which also allowed us to show the flag for the Corps as the UK representative band. We flew from Southampton having despatched a road party with our instruments and uniforms (we felt we couldn't rely on European air traffic controllers and baggage handlers in late August!) and performed three concerts in four days. With rehearsals and performances spread over be in no doubt that this gig was demanding, especially for those of us who were doing this sort of thing some 30 or 40 years ago.

The programmes we presented were traditionally Royal Marine, in other words designed to entertain as well as show off our strength in depth alongside the expertise of our soloists. We were delighted that we were so well received on each occasion by the packed audience in a superb, brand new, 800-seat air-conditioned theatre, albeit we were well supported by the large expat community which included most of the Alicante RMA and RNA branches.

Also performing during our week were the local band, Sociedad Musical Ciudad de Torre Vieja 'Los Salerosos', and the Amsterdam Wind Orchestra, both far younger than ourselves – by several decades! They each performed technically demanding works for wind band, acquitted themselves superbly and received equally appreciative applause from the locals who certainly know their wind band repertoire. On the final evening we combined with these two bands to play a massed bands finale.

Incidentally, the RMA Concert Band is just that, in other words a non-marching band: we don't have the kit, never mind a corps of

drums. However, the Fiesta organisers were adamant that their tradition demands each band marches through the town to its first concert, so we reluctantly obliged. And to get us moving Ted Whealing called the following unique command: 'RMA Band, by the centre, and for the first and last time, Quick March!' Bystanders said we acquitted ourselves well. It was our training you see. Once a Marine....!

In summary it was a joy to have taken part in this memorable event and, as a team-bonding exercise, it was second to none. We have grown in stature and prospered; and additionally acquired several valuable presentation gifts for our trophy cupboard.

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*Clockwise from top left: Hotel Cabo Cervera; our unique march through the town; Ted Whealing with our trophies; Jon Yates goes walkabout with his post horn .*

The RMA Concert Band Newsletter is published occasionally for friends and sponsors of the Band. News and views for inclusion may be sent to:  
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## President's presentation

We are delighted to announce that Bob Cummins is the first recipient of the President's Award. This was presented to him by our President, Admiral Sir Jock Slater GCB LVO DL, at our social evening on 1st November. Bob, pictured left, who is one of the stalwarts of the trumpet section, has made a considerable contribution to the band in numerous ways during its first year. Additionally he drove his 4x4 and trailer all the way to Spain and back in August to ensure the safe transit of our instruments and concert equipment. Also pictured here, right, is Bob Scarrett (horn) who has taken over as band librarian. In recent months Bob has put a huge amount of work into developing our music library and in recognition of that significant effort Sir Jock presented him with a President's commendation.



*Sir Jock with the two Bobs*

## London debut

One of the band's objectives when it formed was to acquire invitations to play at premier venues and London featured prominently in our target list. We were therefore thrilled when asked to play at the Corps reception which followed the Falklands 25 commemoration event on Horse Guards Parade on 17th June. The venue was the imposing Lancaster House, the nearest building adjacent to Buckingham Palace, and here 900 former Royal Marines Falklands veterans and their families gathered for this key reunion. It was a bright, warm evening and the band played a selection of favourites on the terrace overlooking the gardens and the Mall as the guests sipped their drinks and renewed old acquaintances. We all had a special sense of occasion that evening and to be present for this significant Corps gathering provided for most of us a lasting memory. Our special thanks go to the Corps Secretary and his staff for organising this reception so magnificently.

*The Corps Reception at Lancaster House*



## Island invitation

On 20th May the band was invited to perform on the Isle of Wight at a concert sponsored by the Medina Marching Band. The delightful Medina Theatre is laid out in the manner of a lecture hall with raked audience seating which gives it an intimate feel, and it's a pleasure to play there. During the performance, which featured several items from the band's latest CD, the Medina Marching Band Corps of Drums combined with the RMA Concert Band to give some spectacular displays. Everyone was impressed with the talent of the young men and women in the Corps of Drums and the way they joined with the RMA Concert Band with little rehearsal. Among the solo items Jon Yates performed a superb post horn feature, and his circular breathing - holding a single note whilst he paraded round the theatre - left everyone thoroughly impressed, and breathless.

## Out and about at Liphook

Another Sunday concert, this time at the Bohunt School, Liphook on 29th July. A capacity audience enjoyed the evening with much flag waving - we sell the flags! - and a standing ovation at the end. The concert was organised by a local group, the 'Out and About Social Club', and the school staff were most helpful in providing excellent stage and lighting facilities. We enjoyed this first visit to North Hampshire immensely.

## At home

Hard on the heels of our trip to the Isle of Wight the following Thursday saw the band using its normal rehearsal evening in the museum to give its first public concert there, a particular delight for us now that we have a special affection for Eastney. The Mountbatten Room is, of course, relatively small, nevertheless we had a full house of 150, the maximum allowed for this venue; and by all accounts dozens had to be turned away. The band were delighted with the enthusiastic response our performance received. Amongst the soloists Jon Yates again stepped forward, but this time with his trumpet, to play his own composition 'Adagio For Trumpet'. Unsurprisingly, he received a special round of applause for his faultless performance. The finale included Wood's 'British Sea Songs' (cue for audience participation) and Elgar's ever popular 'Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1'.



*Our first concert in the Mountbatten Room*

## Full at Fareham

A further sell out audience greeted us at Fareham and this was an especially successful concert at all levels. Ferneham Hall has a good feel about it and it is well equipped with sound and lighting. The skill of the theatre staff and the excellent playing by the band members served to provide a great afternoon's entertainment, and we received many complimentary remarks. Special instrumental features included 'Bell A'Peal', played by the trumpet section led by Jon Yates; 'Clarinet Cascade', featuring the clarinet section led by Malcolm Kennard; whilst a rendition of 'Gee Whizz' on the xylophone by Derek Vickers had the audience laughing and applauding his talent.

## Reunion return

Immediately after our return from Spain we headed once more for Lymstone to play for the RMA reunion in the drill shed which traditionally follows the annual parade and drumhead service. This is the nearest thing we have to a Category 1 engagement and, in the knowledge that the branches of the Association have largely been responsible for helping us become financially viable in our first year, it was a pleasure to play for them. And a huge number of them there were too. We were deeply sorry to learn of the death a week later of the day's Reviewing Officer, Maj Gen Sir Jeremy Moore KCB OBE MC, a distinguished Royal Marines veteran whom many of us remembered from his time as Commandant at Deal in the 1970s and as Land Commander of the Falklands Task Force.



## Future programme

In the run up to Christmas we're looking forward to playing at Hayling Island and in Street, Somerset. Both of these concerts, we're happy to say, were sold out well in advance.

For the first part of 2008 the band is so far booked to play the following concerts:

Date	Time	Venue	Box Office
Sun 3rd February	1500	Admiral Lord Nelson School, Dundas Lane, Portsmouth	02392-697372
Sun 24th February	1500	Regent Centre, Christchurch, Dorset	01202-499199
Sun 16th March	1500	Octagon Theatre, Hedford, Yeovil, Somerset	01935-422884
Thur 22nd May	1930	Royal Marines Museum, Southsea	02392-819385

Other engagements for the remainder of the year will be notified as they are confirmed.

## Superb Poole

In late September we gave a concert in Poole's acoustically superb Lighthouse theatre, the home of the Bournemouth Symphony orchestra. No, we didn't quite manage to fill it to capacity (1,400) but we nearly did – more so than the RAF managed on a recent visit there anyway! For this concert we added two West End shows favourites, 'Les Miserables' and 'Mack and Mabel'. We also included the Gershwin classic 'Girl Crazy', and Ansell's famous nautical overture 'Plymouth Hoe'.

## Our Social Evening

The band's first major social event was held at the beginning of November and we were delighted to welcome our President to it. It was an excellent evening and we danced the night away to a superb six-piece band provided by the Band of HM Royal Marines Portsmouth (Royal Band).



Derek Usher celebrates!



## Compact discs

Sales of our first CD, 'Once A Marine.....', have been going well and those who have heard it appear to be very pleased with the result. All of which is a credit to the talent and dedication of the RMA Concert Band members. Our next CD will be recorded early in the new year. Consisting of at least 17 tracks it will be titled '.....Always A Marine' and is likely to include the following: *Fanfare for the First Sea Lord, Hands Across the Sea, Army and Marine, Eastney, Bell A'Peal, Harry James Medley, Timpat, Roller Coaster, Blue Band, Porgy and Bess, and The Galloping Major*. Price £12- incl p+p; advance orders welcome (make cheques payable to **RMA Band Fund**).

## Personality profile No. 2

**Michael Rice** (RMB/x 2972, clarinet, and the band's Hon Treasurer) writes: *'Join the Navy and See the World!'* said the poster at the 1951 Boys' Own Exhibition at Earls Court. As my Uncle had done just that, taking in two World Wars on the way, I thought I would apply. "Too young. Try the next table?" was the response. I was just 14. The next table offered the same travel package, with music as an added extra! It was the Royal Marines Band Service. After a little cajoling, my parents agreed, and there I was in Deal wondering what had hit me! In 1955 the travel commenced and I was sent, aged 17, to HMS *Phoenicia*, in Malta to join the C in C's Band, and enjoy the hospitality of his flagship, HMS *Surprise*. We were there for 18 months. In 1959 I was married, and a draft to HMS *Blake* in Plymouth soon followed, then back to the Med with a trip to the West Indies, for good measure. Back in UK in 1962 I was sent to Eastney for what I told my wife was a shore-based posting. However, this illusion was soon dispelled as the Royal Yacht *Britannia* set sail for New Zealand just after Christmas 1963. We got as far as Fiji and the seasickness had at last abated, then we were turned around and came back, to take the Queen Mother for convalescence around the West Indies. I was now 26 years old and a band sergeant, and concerned about the future; with the inevitability of more sea time to come, I decided



to buy myself out in 1964. I applied to all four Clearing Banks, and Lloyds took me on as a late entrant. To catch up, I did the required exams, and with the £50 gratuity, bought a reconditioned Imperial clarinet. Over the next 30 years I worked in six different branches and only went to sea on the Isle of Wight ferry, for a holiday! I finished up as a manager of a local branch and retired early in 1994. I play the clarinet (I now have five) in the local orchestra which I joined in 1985; and I joined the RMA Concert Band in 2006. I now say: "Thank you for the music..."



Clarinet Class 1953, RMSM Deal. Michael is front row 2nd left

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## Donations

Mention must be made of Sir Donald Gosling who in the Summer became one of our major benefactors. Sir Donald was delighted when told that a Royal Marines Association Concert Band had been formed and was most impressed to hear its first CD. Through the Gosling Foundation he has been very generous in helping the band in its formative year. We are indeed most grateful to him, to all of you who have generously offered your support.



## President's Christmas Message

I was delighted to be invited to become the first President of the RMA Concert Band earlier this year and have been greatly impressed by the commitment of all the members to ensure our continued success. The Band has come together admirably over the past eighteen months under Ted Whealing's splendid baton and it is good to hear an increasingly wide repertoire. I particularly enjoyed my visit to Eastney and the recent social evening and, of course, attending the excellent Concert in Poole. After the success of the first CD, 'Once a Marine...', I much look forward to the production of the second recording.

I am in no doubt that our Band has a great future.

With best wishes for a very happy Christmas and a most successful 2008.

Jock Slater



## Obituary

It's with enormous sadness that we record the death in early October of Eric John 'Jimmy' Mann, the band librarian, one of our founding members and a member of the band management committee. Jimmy served in the Band Service from 1952 to 1967 and became librarian of the Royal Yacht band as well as its solo cornet. He had many friends throughout the Band Service and was widely respected in Portsmouth as a successful



businessman. This was particularly evident at his funeral where it was standing room only. The service was conducted by a member of the band, the Rt Revd Dr J Barry Shucksmith BA MA PhD (trombone), who had joined at Deal the same year as Jimmy. Music was provided by a brass quintet comprising Roger Hammond, Bob Scarrett, David Yates, Brian Allen and led by Jon Yates. Sir Jock Slater wrote: "I am very sad to hear about Jimmy's death. He deserves so much credit for his sterling work behind and in front of the scenes in the early days of our band." It has been decided to name our music library at Eastney 'The Mann Music Library' in his memory. He will be greatly missed and we extend our deepest sympathy to Diane his widow and to Steven and Anthony his sons.

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