



## Move to Eastney

We have now vacated our temporary home at Whale Island and moved into the Royal Marines museum at Eastney in Southsea.

We are indebted to the museum's trustees for allowing us weekly use of the Mountbatten dining room, which we now refer to as the world's finest band room! Subject to any competing claims from bands around the globe of course, it probably is. It is extremely comfortable and a delight to play in. It has the additional bonus of being licensed as a 180 seat auditorium – musical soirées have been held there for over a century – and we will give our first public performance in it on 24th May. Obviously this will be one of the highlights of our concert season and we are particularly looking forward to it.

We could not have had a warmer welcome or a more kind reception from the museum's staff when we arrived for our first rehearsal there. We thank them most sincerely for looking after us superbly during each of our weekly visits.



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## PDM's visit

Our move into Eastney on 1st February will long be remembered by the band, not least because it was the first occasion we wore our new uniforms and, you will not be surprised to learn, we took full advantage of this early chance to have some decent photos taken. We also tested the acoustics of our new band room and generally gave it the thumbs up.

But the occasion was also significant because we had the pleasure of welcoming Lt Col Chris Davis OBE BA(Hons) MMus DMA LRAM RM, the Principal Director of Music. Accompanied by Capt Richard Long BMUS(Hons) PG Dip LRSM LLCM RM, HQ Band Service's Supply Officer (Music) and the editor of *Blue Band* magazine, PDM gave a heart-warming and inspiring address which left us feeling, not only that we are wanted, but genuinely welcome as part of the RM Band Service family. He also presented, on behalf of *Blue Band* magazine, a most generous gift of £500.



We were particularly touched by this gesture, not least because of the endorsement it represents for the tangible links between those of us who are now retired and those still serving. As PDM pointed out, the fact that it had been funded by members of the Corps family emphasises the enduring bonds and timelessness of the wider Band Service community of which we are now a small but significant part.

## Band president

We are thrilled to be able to welcome Admiral Sir Jock Slater GCB LVO DL who has kindly agreed to become our first band president. Sir Jock is a former First Sea Lord and no stranger to generations of RM musicians: he has been a keen supporter of the Band Service throughout his career and, as a competent flautist, at one time frequently rehearsed with RM bands. He has also been known to perform occasionally with them at public concerts. In 1996 he even conducted the Massed Bands at a Mountbatten Festival of Music concert in the Royal Albert Hall. We warmly welcome Sir Jock to the band and look forward to many years as our president.



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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## Our new uniforms

We were extremely pleased when they finally arrived from the tailors: our renewed thanks to R&J Handley Ltd of Leeds for the considerable work they put in to satisfy a fairly demanding timescale. The quality is superb, they're very comfortable to play in and we think our collective appearance on stage is a match for the serving bands' traditionally high standard. The total cost was a somewhat eye-watering amount but we believe we were right not to skimp on quality because inevitably comparisons will be made; and we have absolutely no wish to be found wanting as far as turnout is concerned.



Those with an eye for uniforms detail will doubtless note that as far as possible we've attempted to include the key features of the No. 1 ceremonial tunic, for example the cloth badge (in our case worn on the lapel) and the traditional 'slashed' cuff. We reiterate our thanks to Major Alastair Donald RM, Vice President of the Royal Marines Historical Society (and a former parade adjutant!) for his advice during the design stage.

Clive Painter, the RMA's official photographer, has taken a number of publicity photos for us and the results appear throughout this newsletter. Clive, incidentally, is an accomplished drummer amongst his many skills. So he was allowed to take over the sticks for the last number of the rehearsal that day. We were impressed.

## Personality profile

In future newsletters we intend to profile at least one member of the band. In this issue we begin with our music director, Capt Ted Whealing MVO BA ARAM ARCM LTCL RM.



Ted Whealing joined the Band Service in 1955 as a junior entry musician (alto sax, clarinet and violin). In the mid 1970s he attended the advanced conducting course at the Royal Academy of Music, and also studied under John Dankworth. On commissioning he served as Director of Music of the FONAC, Flag Officer Plymouth, CINCFLEET and CINNAVHOME (Royal Yacht) bands. Following his retirement from the Corps in 1991 he became the Director of Music of the Royal British Legion, an appointment he held until 2006. He is almost certainly one of the country's most experienced directors of music and his warm, enthusiastic personality has made him a firm favourite with audiences throughout the country. There is little doubt that his appointment as our first music director has been a significant factor in the band's successful start. Ted lives in Gosport and is married to Gloria, a soprano of considerable ability.

## First public concert

Every Band needs to be tested and to have its first proper public engagement. This took place at the Station Theatre, Hayling Island, on Saturday 17th February to a packed house. Many disappointed people had to be turned away for lack of seating.

Preceded by a short rehearsal, self-packed meal, numerous experiments with lighting, and a vocally-efficient stage manager, the roof-raising performance was given to a highly-delighted and enthusiastic audience. Ray Woodfield's *Once a Marine* and Ted Whealing's *Comrades in Arms* were premiered. From the rich, varied, and exciting programme, *Plymouth Hoe*, *The Hounds of Spring*, and *Slaughter on 10th Avenue*, were outstanding and we ended



with a standing ovation.

As we anticipated, our Music Director proved to be not only a highly professional conductor but the ideal compère for this significant occasion. He also has hidden talents in the art of salesmanship! Among the many guests present was Major Alastair Donald.

*17 February 2007. Our first public concert: Ted Whealing conducts at the Station Theatre, Hayling Island.*

## 'Once a Marine ...' – First CD

Since our first newsletter the promised CD recording has taken place. And what a tremendous weekend it proved to be at the end of January. We received a most generous welcome from the energetic team at Clovelly Recordings' studio in Dover. Proprietor, music director, and band members together, showed equally commendable patience in the 'laying down of tracks'. So much was achieved by the end of Saturday that Sunday proved to be a most enjoyable time – despite the hard work and consumption of large amounts of bottled water! Unfortunately WWII veteran Fred Wyllie had an unfortunate slip on the Saturday evening and cracked a bone, hospitalising himself for several days. However, he has made a fantastic recovery and will be back with his tenor sax before this newsletter is published. Surely, he exemplifies the true esprit de corps of the whole Band?

At Dover, professionalism was the mark of the day. We believe we have a real winner in our first CD and already there have been many orders for it. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the band will record a second CD this year, perhaps in time for Christmas and most likely to be titled '... Always a Marine'!



Enquiries should be directed to the RMA Concert Band, Building 32, Whale Island, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO2 8ER (tel: 02392-651519). Cheques to be made payable to the RMA Band Fund for £12.00, which includes postage and packing worldwide.

The full track listing is:

*A Life On The Ocean Wave (Russell arr. Alford), Plymouth Hoe (Ansell), The Captain General (Dunn), The Padstow Lifeboat (Arnold arr. Woodfield), Peter Rabbit and the Tales of Beatrix Potter (Lauchbery arr. Siebert), HM Jollies (Alford), Adagio for Trumpet (Yates - soloist: Jon Yates), Cockleshell Heroes (Dunn arr. Duthoit), Slaughter on Tenth Avenue (Rogers), On the Quarter Deck (Alford), Sarie Marais (Toonsetting arr. Dunn), The Shanghai Sailor (Bridger - Piccolo: Steve Tanner), Kalinka (Trad arr. Woodfield), Comrades in Arms (Whaling), The Hounds of Spring (Reed), Once A Marine .... (Woodfield)*

## Future public performances

At the time of writing the RMA Concert Band is booked to play at the following venues:

Newport, Isle of Wight (Medina Theatre)	Sun 20th May, 2.45pm
Eastney (Royal Marines Museum)	Thurs 24th May, 7.30 pm
Falklands 25th Anniversary (St James, London)	Sun 17th June, 6 pm
Liphook (Bohunt School)	Sun 29th July, 5 pm
Fareham (Ferneham Hall)	Sun 12th August, 3 pm
Torrevieja Music Festival (Alicante, Spain)	29th August – 2nd September
Lympstone, Devon (RMA Reunion weekend)	Sun 9th September, 12 pm
Poole (Lighthouse Theatre)	Sun 23rd September, 7.30 pm
Street, Somerset (Strode Theatre)	Sat 8th December, 7.30 pm

Various other concerts are currently in the melting pot: we will keep you informed.

## Finance

To pay for the band's uniforms, music stands and other essential equipment, plus the requirement to build up our own music library, a fund-raising target of £50,000 was set for the first year. To date over £30,000 has been raised, a most encouraging start. However, we need to raise the balance to cover a number of on-going expenditures such as the production and marketing costs of our first CD. As our reputation spreads we are trawling for sponsors. Obviously, setting up a major wind band, particularly a quality Royal Marines band, doesn't come cheaply and the band can only run efficiently with a sound financial base. We are most grateful to our growing army of donors who have placed their confidence in our potential and kindly invested in us.

## Other Issues

The band management committee is currently giving thought to holding an open evening during the Autumn to allow our many friends to attend one of our rehearsals, and to meet the band members informally. The committee is also considering, in response to requests, organising a 'Friends' group to develop our relationship with those who are anxious to support us.

## Royal Marines Museum, Southsea

*And finally, we make no apology for giving a little plug to our hosts and landlords, the Director and staff of the RM Museum:*

The Royal Marines Museum was established in 1958, moving to the splendid Victorian Officers' Mess in 1975, when the rooms were vacated by the Corps. The Museum has been here ever since and is continually growing by updating and improving its displays. The Museum is housed in what was one of the most stately Officers' messes in England giving the perfect venue for magnificent events and entertaining of all types. It has sumptuous rooms with priceless silver, a hall adorned with a world-famous medal collection; sweeping stairways flanked with regal portraits, and acres of landscaped gardens are available. The Museum tells the story of the Royal Marines from 1664 to the present day through dramatic and interactive displays.



## STOP PRESS

### Weymouth

The band gave a stunningly good concert to an audience of about 500 at the Pavilion Theatre on Sunday 29th April. In hindsight we consider ourselves fortunate that so many turned up because the seaside resort was buzzing with competing attractions on a perfect sunny afternoon. The two hour concert included many of the pieces from our CD and we were particularly pleased with the reception the audience gave these, and even more so at the finale when encores were demanded. A most satisfying experience and thoroughly pleasing given the work and travelling involved.

### Sir Jock Slater's visit

Sir Jock paid his first visit to us on Thursday 3rd May and specially for the occasion we dressed in our 'number 2' uniforms (white shirts, dark trousers, Corps ties) and set out our rehearsal room with the newly acquired music stands and banners. We greeted our President fittingly with the fanfare which Captain David Cole had composed for him in 1996, 'Fanfare For The First Sea Lord', and followed this with two marches, 'The Captain General' and 'Once A Marine ...'. Jon Yates then solo'd with his 'Adagio For Trumpet' composition, and we rounded off our short concert with Ray Woodfield's arrangement of 'Kalinka' and Reed's dramatic piece 'The Hounds Of Spring'. Sir Jock said how much he had enjoyed the performance, particularly the quality of the playing, and added how thrilled he was to be invited to be the band's President; at which point our intrepid librarian, Jimmy Mann, who was modelling our concert uniform (see photo), quickly stepped forward to present him with a copy of our CD! We greatly look forward to welcoming Sir Jock again to Eastney, and similarly to any of our concerts he may be able to attend in the future.



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