

May 11, 2004

Musical Director's Report

Our annual May trip to Bright was marred by poor weather this year. Despite cold, cramped conditions on the back of a truck the band settled down quickly to present a fine recital. The sound was clear and confident with a good sense of rhythm. Everyone concerned is to be congratulated.

We took delivery of a new timpani last week, a beautiful instrument made in Holland. This will make life much easier for our percussionists and more dramatic for our audiences. The purchase was possible through grants from the Ruth Whyte Foundation and Belvoir Rotary.

Our next concert is scheduled for Sunday May 23 in Corowa. We have a long association with outdoor music in the Corowa and Rutherglen area, but this will be a little different as we will perform indoors, in a more formal setting. Do you know where your bow tie is?

I would like to open the Corowa recital with the first and last movements of *Royal Fireworks* and *Beyond the Sea*. The remaining items will be chosen from the recent Bright programme.

We began some serious work on *Seven Wonders*, the test piece for Ballarat. This contains some very original and exciting music, with plenty of work for everyone in the band. It is well within the technical capabilities of Wodonga Brass and I am confident we will be able to present a very convincing performance in August.

A new set of folders has been purchased to hold smaller arrangements for five or ten players. We looked at *Hard Days Night* a few weeks ago and the scoring can be expanded easily to accommodate any number of players. I need to write new Bb bass parts, but everyone else can play existing parts. The only limiting factor in these arrangements is that at least one tenor horn is always required, so I will add new flugel parts to cover any contingency.

These folders will eventually provide us with the capacity to provide small groups at short notice. Other bands who have followed this idea through have found themselves in demand for weddings, birthday parties and many other functions where a full lineup of 30 players would be inappropriate. In some cases this has become a regular and important source of income for the band.

I want to integrate the beginner group into the main band from Wednesday night, May 26. All members will be issued with parts for a set of short pieces that they have been preparing. I hope the beginners will get the same thrill that I first experienced when I played with a full band. The special arrangements by Allan Fernie that they have studied also means that they will be able to participate confidently, without getting lost in difficult music like I did.

They have also been preparing some of the W&R hymns. This is an important part of our repertoire and one where everyone can contribute. It is vital that their first impression of the main band is a positive one for the beginners. Please make them welcome.

Best regards

Gregory Lewis