



Founded 1938

Where Are They Now?

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MICHAEL SHENTON

“As a less than successful potential piano player following lessons in younger years, which I hated! I first started ‘learning’ to play the cornet when I was 12 years of age. It was thanks to the considerable patience of Harold Newton who took me through that all too critical period for anyone in their early days of learning. For Harold’s wife May, it was an even more excruciating experience as these early lessons took place in their front room - she was a lovely lady.

“My early days of playing were mostly on Anniversary Band Rounds during the summer months with the highlight of the year being the Christmas rounds including Christmas Day morning. I had the privilege and pleasure of playing with some real characters, including some of the founders. I recall with fond memories the likes of Dave McClymont, Eric (Ric) Barnett, Cliff Barnett, Harold Newton, Bob Fleet, Derek Antrobus, Don Antrobus, George Tomlinson, Marc Newton, Alan Warburton, Brian Bispham, Dave Newton, Terry Jones just to name a few and, happily, the many others that followed over the years helping keep this very special band alive. To this day the band retains its unique status amongst other local bands, players and learners alike.

“Over the years that followed, my second cornet background graduated through most valve instruments and settled with the Euphonium which I loved and my interest in playing moved forward with a greater commitment. I had the good fortune of playing with Middlewich Band which later became Roberts Bakery Band whilst still always playing with Winterley.

“There came a time in my working career with Fodens that took me overseas, initially an assignment working in the diamond mines of Sierra Leone for a 3 months term. It wasn’t long after my return that I continued my travels with several stints in other parts of West Africa before I eventually moved to what became my full time base in Saudi Arabia, responsible for the Middle Eastern Region across to and including India.

“I returned to the UK in 1980 and married my wife Lyn later that year. My playing days had sadly become very numbered and whilst I did play again, I wasn’t playing enough due to increased work and family commitments hence I allowed it to fall away, with much regret.

“Happily, some years on and now retired, I still have my own instrument and have recently spent time with my granddaughter Lydia, helping teach her to play the cornet alongside tuition she has received at the Dingle School, courtesy of Kevin Birch. She’s a natural (but then I would say that!) and my hope is that she continues with it when she goes to Sandbach High School in September this year.

“I retired over 7 years ago and just don’t know where the time has gone, finding it difficult to figure out how I ever found time to work. With our two sons both living and working in Dubai, I’m kept very busy as their gofer here, but we do have the benefit of making visits out there. Otherwise, I keep myself ever busy and occupied, play some golf and enjoying other holidays abroad whenever we can afford.