



Founded 1938

Where Are They Now?

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I had absolutely no choice...

"You're going to learn to play a brass instrument. Ask your teacher if he has a tenor horn." Those were my mum's words when I started at Sandbach High age 11.

I suppose it was always going to be. Her dad was Harold Newton, one of the founders of the band and teacher to so many of the local brass players. Mum had always said that he refused to teach her and Aunty Aud because they were girls and it wasn't the done thing! So, I was to take up the challenge for the girls in the family.

As soon as I got my horn I started to play in the Chapel Band. Rehearsals were every Thursday night and what a mix of players they were! Where else would beginners get to practice alongside players with years of experience or others who had popped down for a blow from Foden's? Where else would you be able to have such a laugh with family and friends of all ages, and hear the stories about all the 'goings on' on band rounds and on Band Sunday? (One of my favourites - a quartet one year, playing 'Clouds and Sunshine'. Half of them did the repeat, the other half didn't, resulting in mum nearly falling off the pew laughing and Mike Shenton so hysterical he couldn't blow a note).

Mum forcing me to play was actually a great thing. I joined youth bands and travelled all over the world with them, playing in some amazing venues, making lifelong friendships and generally having a fantastic time. To anyone who is just beginning to play – keep it up, the social life is terrific! (Parents – try not to think about it...)

I left the Chapel Band when I went to do teacher training in Manchester, but always came back (as does everybody) for band rounds, particularly on Christmas morning. I started doing that one in my pram, and it feels strange not to do it so much now. Non-banding friends can't understand that, but Christmas morning with the Band is very special.

I played with a number of bands from round Manchester, but ended up playing for Glossop Old Band. They were in the Championship section and so I was lucky enough to play at the Open and the Nationals a few times. It was also at Glossop where I met my husband, Stuart. (We were two thirds of the horn section; I mentioned the social life...)

We live in Romiley near Stockport. I still teach, but I'm not playing at the minute. I keep up to date with banding as Stu plays at Fairey's. I obviously get all the Winterley news from Aunty Aud. and Rupert. I'm looking forward to the 75th celebrations. (Good grief, I remember the 50th so well. Oh no, I'm old. When did that happen?). It will be tinged with a little sadness at mum not being there as she always loved 'a band do'! Our two fabulous children Sam, 10 and Sophie, 5 are going to come with us, so the generations of our family will be well represented. They haven't started playing yet.

Maybe they will.

Maybe they'll have no choice...