

# North Staffs Accordion Club

## Newsletter

Nov/Dec 2021

No 497



**HI EVERYONE. WE'VE ALL COME A LONG WAY SINCE LAST CHRISTMAS. SHELTERING UNPROTECTED IN OUR HOUSES. MOST OF US ARE NOW TRIPLE VACINATED AND CAN LOOK FORWARD TO A RELATIVELY NORMAL CHRISTMAS (THOUGH STILL WITH A MEASURE OF CAUTION WITH OMICRON ON THE HORIZON).**

**CHEERS LILY**

## CHRISTMAS PARTY ARRANGEMENTS

We look forward to our annual mass carol playing at the Christmas party next month with a super buffet, a few special members' spots and of course our fabulous party guests, **The Fettleers**.

It takes place at our usual club night venue, Bradwell Workingmen's Club, and commences at 7.30 pm on the third Tuesday of the month, 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2021.

The tickets are going well at **£11**.

It will be wonderful to see everyone and to admire their best Christmassy attire as usual.

## OCTOBER CLUB NIGHT



## AGM AND BAND PERFORMANCE

With 28 people present, the AGM took place on Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> October, at what is now our permanent home, Bradwell Workingmen's Club, Newcastle under Lyme.

Chaired by our president, Steve Houghton, club chair/secretary, Steve Hughes, and treasurer, Tony Britton gave their reports for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. It was a year dominated by the pandemic, an active year on Zoom and with reduced

income from club night admission but also reduced costs. Zoom activity included band rehearsals, club nights and the Charity Concert Internationale. A vote of thanks was given for all of the guests who had performed on Zoom free of charge.

Resignations were accepted for two of the committee members, Helen Brown and Alan Fernandez who were thanked for their services, and we were pleased to accept the nomination of John Corden as a new member. Other than these changes the existing committee officers and members were voted in again in the same roles.

Following the AGM the club band (pictured), under the directorship of MD, Steve Houghton, gave a performance which was well received by the audience.



# NOVEMBER CLUB NIGHT

The November club night was a bit down on our pre-pandemic numbers but we had a healthy number of players giving them only six minutes each for their spots. One player is given the job of playing background music for about 15 minutes as members come in prior to the start of proceedings. That honour went to John Jones MBE for this event. John, of course, is very used to playing by ear and needed no music for this performance. Thank you John.

To get everyone warmed up we start the club night proper with a playalong using music from our chosen book, '250 All-Time Hits' for which, on this occasion, Greta Moseley played the introductions and led us through the music. Following the playalong we had the individual/duet sports, with the order chosen by random numbering. John Jones, by coincidence, landed as first player, a position that many prefer as it means that nobody will have played the piece you have practised! Following is a list of the players and music and, as can be seen, there was a high uptake of theme tunes (highlighted).



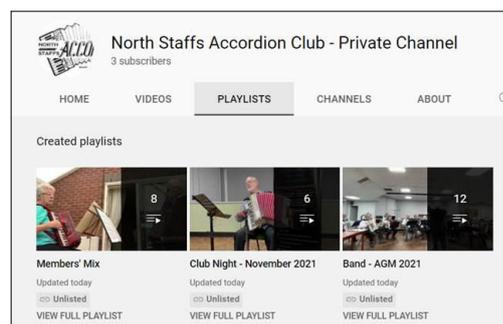
During the break we had our usual raffle for which we thank the generosity of our members in donating prizes and buying tickets. Our monthly attendant member draw saw no taker this month so the £10 prize is added to next month's draw.

John Jones	Tulips from <b>Amsterdam</b> ; Gilly Gillen Ossenneffer Katzenellenbogen-by-the-Sea ( <i>above left</i> )
Greta Moseley & Ann Millward, duet	I Love <b>Paris</b> in the Springtime, <b>Manhattan</b> , Way Down Yonder in <b>New Orleans</b> ( <i>above right, Ann nearest the camera</i> )
Miriam Umpleby	Medley – The <b>Tour of Britain</b> with vocals
Tony Britton	Don't Cry for Me <b>Argentina</b> , Rodrigo's Concerto de <b>Aranjuez</b>
Derek Wilton (Harmonica)	Medley including Something the Matter with <b>Glasgow</b> , Goodbye Sally, Siegfried Line, Pack up Your Troubles, Keep the Home Fires Burning, <b>Tipperary</b>
Viv (acc) & Pete Cowie	Dirty Old Town ( <b>Salford</b> ), <b>California</b> Here I Come with vocals
Mike Richards	<b>Ashokan</b> Farewell, Barren Rocks of <b>Aden</b> , The <b>Atholl</b> Gathering and Lamb Skinnett
Richard Millward	The Streets of <b>Laredo</b> , <b>Carolina</b> Moon
Norman Brown	The Lights of Old <b>Aberdeen</b> , <b>Londonderry</b> Air, We'll Keep a Welcome in the Hillside
Geoff Capewell	<b>Isle of Capri</b> , White Cliffs of <b>Dover</b> , <b>Brasilia</b>
John Corden	Come Back to <b>Sorrento</b> , Streets of <b>London</b>
Betty Nixon/Ken Hall	<b>Irish</b> Lullaby, <b>Swiss</b> Miss, Vaya Con Dios
Steve Hughes	Old Bazaar in <b>Cairo</b> , <b>Istanbul</b> not Constantinople, with vocals.

This brought us to the end of a very enjoyable evening.

## CLUB YOUTUBE CHANNELS – PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

As well as our very successful Public YouTube channel 'Accordion TV – North Staffs', we now also have a private channel (*see right*). This channel will give our player members and the band invaluable performance feedback without the pressure of it being public. It contains 3 playlists, for club nights, band performances, and member submitted videos.



# THE MIDLAND ACCORDION FESTIVAL



by John Jones MBE

Arriving at the Mercure Hotel, West Bromwich, around 2 pm on Friday 12th November, I was feeling slightly apprehensive, meeting friends I had not seen since before lockdown. The hotel staff was helpful and welcoming and I had soon unpacked and gone down to where accordionists from all over the country were gathering. After two years with no festivals or band meetings we were like excited kids, everywhere people getting together in groups and exchanging news.

Barry Smith, the organiser, had arranged for complementary coffee during the afternoon and old friendships were re-kindled. The atmosphere was wonderful and after a very nice dinner we were in our seats ready for the first concert. We had concerts each afternoon and evening which were brilliant, and the standard of playing was extremely high. 'Play your Party Piece' was a very popular section and players who would normally only play in groups ventured out as soloists. Then in the evening after dinner (all meals were excellent), the professionals (*pictured above*) took over. The standard of playing was amazing – after each 'spot' it seemed it could not keep up the standard, but it always did.



In the mornings there were workshops run by volunteer conductors – Jean Hanger led the Vintage Band and Elementary Orchestra, Angie Lukins led the Scottish, and Nigel Pasby led the Intermediate Orchestra.

Each conductor led with patience and good humour, and the players loved it and worked hard towards showing off in the final afternoon concert.



Vernon in his kilt played the bagpipes, Stan read the words we have all come to know, and a 2 minute silence followed. It was very moving for the audience (*see above left*).

An interesting hour was provided by our own Steve Hughes and Tony Britton, explaining how the MuseScore programme works.

The first two days followed a pattern but on the Sunday there was a beautiful tribute for Remembrance Sunday. Stan Shakespeare and Harry Hussey (92 years old and having driven from Glasgow) were there, both wearing their medals. David

The last night concert was introduced by the Black Country Accordion Band – they gave us some rousing music and played for a good half hour. This was followed by all the guests doing a final spot and then the 'goodbye' speeches. One thing for certain, Barry Smith and his team must have spent months working on the running of the show. Nothing was left to chance, it was faultless and 'Now is the Hour' played by the pros and sung by the ecstatic audience was the lasting memory.

Barry informed us that he hopes to run the festival again next year and I for one will be looking forward to it.

*(The other picture, above right, featured John flanked by Julie Best and Marj Howard)*

## THE BAND PLAYS AT MIDDLEPORT POTTERY

On Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November, the band had its first booking for two years, the Christmas Fayre at Middleport Pottery, home of the TV Great Pottery Throw Down. The weather was atrocious, blamed on storm Anwen, and we suffered high winds and snow.

For the band members living in the Staffordshire Moorlands it was a case of digging the car out of the drive with its 4 to 6 inches of snow, whereas for those from Cheshire there was no snow at all (is it

because they pay higher council taxes?). Although we were to play indoors on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, the old industrial building offered little protection against the cold and we were glad of our fleece jackets.

We played under the direction of MD Steve Houghton (Cheshire), having three 45 minute slots scheduled between 10 am and 3 pm and chose to play repertoire music rather than carols. On the previous weekend, with brass band entertainment and good weather, they had about 900 visitors. The numbers were well down on that for us but we had a good audience from the stallholders in the morning and quite a few more visitors in the afternoon.



I was glad to get home to a warm house but enjoyed the experience and giving pleasure to those there, reflected in their applause and words of appreciation.

## COMMUNITY MUSIC

As well as club night music and band performances, we provide music in the community in small, medium, and larger playing groups. This can range from a solo performance, duet, quartet, through larger groups, up to the full band.



Christmas is coming, and this is a popular time to play out and about. The first picture is of us playing Christmas music on air at Radio Stoke, and the

second a small group of players at a local care home.

Soon, a larger group of us are playing at the Berryhill Village – Retirement Living, for their Christmas Fayre. Nearer to Christmas, the band will be playing carols at the Affinity shopping centre, and a smaller group at the Farmhouse care home, Red Street.

It would be good to expand our community playing, as they are such rewarding events.



And finally.....

## A Christmas Teaser for the Competitive Out There –

See if you can work out which carols or Christmas songs are represented by the clues below?

Here's one to start you off –

No. 9 ....Bantam Male Percussionist.....answer - *The Little Drummer Boy*.

1. Bleached Yule
2. Castaneous coloured Seed Vesicated in a Conflagration
3. Singular Yearning for the Twin Anterior Incisors
4. Righteous Darkness
5. Arrival Time 2400 hrs - Weather Cloudless
6. Loyal Followers Advance
7. Far Off in a Feeder
8. Array the Corridors
9. Bantam Male Percussionist
10. Monarchical Triad
11. Nocturnal Noiselessness
12. Jehovah Deactivate Bliethe Chevaliers



13. Red Man en Route to Borough
14. Frozen Precipitation Commence
15. The Quadruped with the Vermillion Proboscis
16. Delight for this Planet
17. Give Attention to the Melodious Celestial Beings
18. The dozen festive 24 hour intervals
19. Personally Obtain a Jolly Diminutive Noel
20. Yours Truly Eyeballed Mater Osculating Red Man



**I will print the answers in the next newsletter or if you can't wait I will be at the Christmas party – so good luck and I hope you all have a...**

## **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

### **Diary**

November	27th	Band at Middleport Pottery
December	18th	Band at Affinity (Freeport), Talke
December	21 <sup>st</sup>	Christmas Party Fettleers
January 2022	18 <sup>th</sup>	Players' Night
February	15 <sup>th</sup>	Theme Night (Love Songs)
March	15 <sup>th</sup>	Guest Night Gennaro Fiondella
April	19 <sup>th</sup>	Theme Night (Sea Related)
May	17 <sup>th</sup>	Players' Night
June	21 <sup>st</sup>	Guest Night (tba)

### **Accordion Tuition.**

**John Romero** John Romero jr@carillonstudios.com 01606 240148

**Tony Watterson** tony.watterson@virginmedia.co 07732 263938

**Richard Adey (Jazz)** [richard@richardadeymusic.com](mailto:richard@richardadeymusic.com)

**Ingrid Gould** 0121 458 2781

### **For Sale**

**96 Bass Hohner Bravo** accordion serviced and tuned 17th September 2021. In excellent condition with Hohner gig-bag. Collection only (Stockport). £860. (pictured right)

<https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/item/543581260208495/>

**Mike Beese** 07976 893528



**120 bass Hohner Carmen II** accordion for sale (left) in nice condition with soft case £250.

Contact **Jean Austin** 01782 866091

President	Steve Houghton	01270 768178
Chairman	Steve Hughes	07939 362294
Secretary	Steve Hughes	07939 362294
Treasurer	Tony Britton	01782 563088

John Corden, Susan Edge, Ken Hall, Barry Tunncliffe

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