

North Staffs Accordion Club

Club Newsletter

September/October 2016

No 466



**All clubnites
at Goldenhill
Workingmen's
Club**



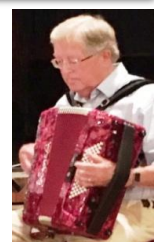
NOVEMBER CLUBNITE
English Cream Tea
Players' Night
Including Circle

November 15th 8.00pm
Entrance £2.00

HI EVERYONE, I HOPE YOU ARE ALL OK. A WARM WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER VIVIANNE COWIE WHO HAS JOINED THE MONDAY NIGHT BEGINNERS' GROUP.

AUGUST CLUBNITE

At the August clubnite there was the usual playing circle and afterwards invited players were Moira with *Amapola* and Jean de *Florette*, Paul playing *Pennies from Heaven* (above left), Tony and Scarlette Cartlidge on clarinets, Geoff Capewell with *We'll Keep a Welcome in the Hillside*, Richard with *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, Brian Shufflebotham (right) with *Minuet in G* and the evening was rounded off with the buskers (above).



OUR AGM AND SEPTEMBER CLUBNITE

This is just a brief summary of what took place at our AGM and detailed minutes have been produced by your secretary, Steve Hughes.

Our meeting started at 7.30 with 21 people present and it was chaired by your president, Brian Shufflebotham. We started with a few apologies from members who couldn't be present (holidays mainly) and went on to agree the minutes to our previous AGM (15th September 2015).

Chairman's Report

The chairman's report highlighted the fact that club membership is slightly down on the two previous years i.e. 63 this year as opposed to 66 in the previous two years. We are all getting older and we need to continue with our concerted efforts to attract new members.

Over the last club year our guest nights have featured six guest artists and three others have already been booked for the coming club year. Many thanks to Graham Hughes for all his hard work in booking these artists.

Last year:

October - John Stewart Scottish Dance Band, **December** - Barry Schmitt Bavarian Band,
January - Harry Hussey & Lily's Weepers, **March** - Malachy Cairns,
April - Richard Adey, **June** - Stefan & Denise

This year:

October - Steve Roxton, **December** - Tony Marchell
January - Harry Hussey and Lily's Weepers

Many thanks to all those very generous people who donated raffle prizes at our club nights. Our raffle is a good income source and it helps to cover our expenses.

The following groups have been active throughout the year and, on behalf of the club, your chairman expressed his appreciation for the time and effort spent by the group's organisers and participants:

Club Band, Monday Night Beginners/Improvers Group, Young Players and the Thursday Afternoon Solo/Group Session

The chairman also expressed his appreciation for the time and effort spent by Lily Lynch on our newsletter and he thanked the other committee for all their hard work. The chairman also expressed his thanks to the 29 members who completed and returned a questionnaire. These are currently being analysed and actioned by your committee.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer provided a detailed financial summary to everyone present at the AGM. If you were unable to attend the AGM but you would like a copy of this summary, please inform your treasurer. Over the course of the club year income exceeded expenditure by a nominal amount.

Election of Officers

Your existing committee members were willing to continue for the coming year, so the following people were unanimously re-elected:

Chairman – Mike Richards

Treasurer – Mike Richards in dual capacity with his role as chairman

Secretary – Steve Hughes

Committee members - Helen Brown, Tony Britton, Norman Brown, Graham Butler, Graham Hughes, Lily Lynch, Greta Moseley.

Paul Hobbs accepted his nomination to fill the one unfilled position on the committee and he was unanimously elected.

OUR SEPTEMBER CLUB NIGHT



Our AGM finished just before 8.30 pm and by this time we had about 30 people present, so we started our club night in our traditional manner, with a playing circle.

The playing circle finished at about 9.00 pm and at this juncture the audience was invited to sample my birthday cake. I'm not over pleased at reaching the grand old age of 70 but the birthday cake, cooked by Barbara, was absolutely delicious. I have to cycle every day

to keep the fat off you know!

We had an excellent raffle (lots of prizes), then a quintet from the Monday Group (Greta, Steve, Geoff, Rosie and John) (*pictured right*) played some music to start the second half. These were followed by various soloists and it wasn't long before The Buskers were rounding the evening off with some well known music.



As a general rule AGM nights aren't popular, so I was pleasantly surprised to hear several people say how much they'd enjoyed the evening - perhaps we are starting a new trend!

Soloists pictured - Tony (*left*) and Graham (*right*).

Mike.

MARK DECEMBER 20TH IN YOUR DIARY

December 20th this year is the date of our club's Christmas party. Why am I telling you so early? Because the 20th is near to Christmas and I wouldn't want you to be double booked. We have a really full house every year and we are again hoping for a great turnout and a fun night.

Tony Marchell, a popular entertainer at our club, will be our guest at the party. As in his last visit he will be playing guitar due to a shoulder injury that prevents him playing the accordion. He specialises in occasions, weddings, parties etc and his programme includes games, comedy, singing, and dancing – just the man to have at a Christmas party. We will be starting as usual with the mass carol playing, in which we hope all players will take part, with song sheets for non-players.



We have kept the price at **£8.50** again this year and this includes a great Christmas buffet. I am sending two tickets out to you. If you can't make it please return them to Steve Hughes in the envelope provided. If you need more tickets they will be available at the October and November clubnites from Steve Hughes during the breaks or as you come in. If you pay by cheque please make it payable to **The North Staffs Accordion Club** with details of any extras needed to reserve them. I can post them out with the November/December newsletter. Do try to come and help make this another night to remember.

BAND CONCERT FOR LEEK PENSIONERS

On Monday the 5th September the club band played for a Leek pensioners' organisation at Moorland House Community Centre, Leek. We have played there before and had memories of a very receptive audience. It was an enjoyable event both for the band and the audience and the acoustics of the hall were probably the best we have had for any of our previous venues, possibly something to do with the open-fronted stage.

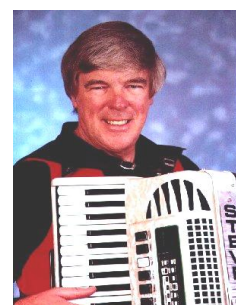
The audience joined in the sing-along with gusto and it was nice to see some of our club members, the Fernandezes and Wiltons, in the audience.

Steve

Steve Roxton Comes to Goldenhill

At the October clubnite we are welcoming **Steve Roxton** as our guest artist at Goldenhill. He has visited the club before, playing at the Holditch and also at the Audley Theatre.

Steve is a professional accordionist and the major part of his work is entertaining holiday makers in the top hotels with a three hour one man show. He is billed as an International Accordionist/Vocalist, having played in numerous countries, playing music from around the world, and singing in eight languages.



As well as performing for the general public he also appears at accordion festivals and as a guest artist at accordion clubs and societies. Having lived in the Channel Isles, he founded 'The Jersey Accordion Band' and 'Les Amis de l'Accordeon de Jersey', a social club to promote accordion music and better playing. Visitors are made welcome at the club which still meets at The Priory Hotel, St Mary, in Jersey (on the first Tuesday of every month).

Don't miss out on what promises to be a great evening's entertainment. Tickets £4.00 but members can pay at the door.

FOXFIELD

Have you ever heard Jerusalem sung as a round? Well we did on Wednesday 31st August at the WI Knotty coach/Victorian cream tea event. A few of us from the band: Tony, Wilf, Graham, Geoff Millward, Greta, Betty and myself, kitted out in our almost Victorian gear, went to play for them at the Foxfield Railway in Blythe Bridge, and a last minute request to play



Jerusalem was made.

There were 60 members of the Staffordshire W.I.s plus the general public and 7 members of the band. At times like this you need a conductor (we missed you Steve Houghton). However, the rest of the day was

brilliant. The weather was good, our playing of Music Hall songs was enthusiastic and we all enjoyed a ride on the restored Knotty coaches, reputed to be the oldest in operation in the UK, and a cream tea. The W.I. enjoyed it so much they're coming back next year. This reminds me we must practise Jerusalem.

Ann

CONCERT BY VISITING GERMAN ACCORDION ORCHESTRA

Billed as 'bringing together the unique sounds of brass and accordion' and held in the St Mary's Church, Nantwich, a concert was held on Saturday 1st October featuring **Crewe Brass** and German accordion orchestra **HHS Bischofshelm**.



Crewe and Nantwich Borough is twinned with Bischofshelm and it has been the custom over the last six years for the two bands to meet up every other year to hold a joint concert, alternating between the two countries. This was the fourth such concert, two having taken place in Bischofshelm and one, four years ago, in Crewe.

St Mary's Church was a beautiful setting for the concert. It 'is considered by some to be one of the finest medieval churches, not only in Cheshire, but in the whole of England' and the acoustics proved amazing.

Quite a few members of our club turned up and it was nice to meet Geoff Lloyd and Ken Farran of the Chester Club and Rob Howard and Marge of Stockport.

Crewe Brass (*above*), conducted by its musical director, Jamie Meredith, played for the first half and gave an impressive performance playing: ***Liberty Fanfare*** (John Williams), ***Selection from Les Miserables*** (Boubil & Schonberg), ***Under the Boardwalk*** (Young & Resnick), ***Faure's Pavane***, ***Theme from Game of Thrones*** by Djwadi and finishing with ***Procession to the Minster*** (Wagner). The performance featured some soloists and interesting percussion, having three percussionists. It was compliment indeed for brass band player, Marge, to classify them as "very good".

After a coffee break the HHS Bischofshelm accordion band took to the 'stage' under musical director Stefan Finkenauer. Stefan runs an accordion school in Bischofshelm with this, the senior band, and a junior band. This band presented 25 members. The youngest, Stefan's daughter, is 8 years old and the average age of the members around 40. The bass was provided by two amplified basso accordion players; there was a single percussionist though she was supplemented on the night by the three Crewe Brass players. All other players, playing in five parts, had identical Hohner accordions and their playing was to a very high standard.

The band opened with a medley of music from the musical **Miss Saigon** (Claude-Michel Schoenberg) followed by ***Choral*** and ***Rock Out*** (Ted Huggins), ***Finlandia*** (Sibelius), ***The Lord of the Dance*** (Ronan Padraig Hardiman), ***You'll be in my Heart*** (Phil Collins), ending with a delightfully percussive arrangement of ***Chattanooga Choo Choo*** (Harry Warren).

At the end of the concert the two bands combined to play two pieces, ***Florentine March*** (J.Fucik) conducted by Stefan and ***Highland Cathedral*** (U.Rover & M Korb) directed by Jamie. Jamie explained that they had come across a problem in the afternoon's rehearsal. Having been communicating with the music by email, when they came round to rehearsing the march together it was a mess. They realised that the brass arrangement was a tone too high and Jamie and the band members had to spend the rest of the afternoon transposing the piece by hand for all instruments. It is impressive that they managed this job and played it so well in such a short time.



It was obviously a big challenge for the conductors to balance the two bands (*pictured above together*) with the brass having a much higher volume than the accordion band and on the whole they managed very well, especially in the march where the difference was used to good effect to emphasise the dynamics of the piece.

A big thank you to Crewe Brass and the Nantwich Town Council for organising this enjoyable event in such a lovely venue.

Crewe Brass www.crewebrass.co.uk

HHS Bischofsheim www.hhs-bischofsheim.de

Steve

CASTELFIDARDO TOUR

MAY 2016 – PART 2 BY JONATHAN KEMP



Following on from my accordion related article, I thought club members might be interested in getting an overview of what the 2016 Castelfidardo tour was like. It was arranged by Peter Le Geyt of PLG marketing (PLG). Flights were from Heathrow with British Airways. The standard tour flies out on a Tuesday. Coach travel is provided from Bologna to Castelfidardo and the coach stays with the group to provide transport to the various visits during the tour. Departure is on Saturday morning, travelling back through San Marino and on to Bologna for the flight home.

I travelled as part of a group of six and we were a bit late in making our booking. With no seats on the Tuesday flight available PLG marketing offered an alternative solution. We could fly to Bologna on the Monday and stay overnight in Bologna with airport transfers by taxi to our overnight hotel. This approach made little difference to the cost but extended

our holiday by a day.

On arriving in Bologna airport on the Monday we were met by our taxi driver. As you walk out of the airport it is hard to miss the two Lamborghini's they have on show. Very sleek and sporty looking, but perhaps not so easy to get out of once you've turned 60. As we stepped out of the airport the Italian sunshine greeted us and we were soon glad to board the air-conditioned taxi. By now our group had risen to seven as Rosemary from California, who was also on the tour, had joined us, having flown from the USA to London and then to Bologna.

First stop the Palace Hotel in Bologna. The Palace Hotel is an experience. Staff are friendly and helpful, but it is the hotel building that makes the real impression. The building that is now the Palace Hotel has its origins in the 13th century and has decorations dating back to the renaissance. You can forgive if your room feels a bit tired or quirky when you are surrounded by so much unique architecture. It is worth visiting their web site and taking a look at their gallery to get a real idea of the place.

Once we had dropped off our bags we set off on a walk around Bologna, armed with a street map and some tourist notes, provided free by PLG. Bologna is a large town with many historic buildings and wonderful covered walkways. You can't do justice to Bologna in one day, but it was still a bonus getting that extra day as part of our holiday.

Neither Pat nor I eat meat, Pat is also coeliac, and must follow a gluten free diet, so dining was always going to be a challenge. Many restaurants in Bologna close on Mondays, however, the Incrocio Montegrappa, which is just to the left as you exit the Palace Hotel, fortunately did not. The welcome we received and the food was excellent. They were able to provide both vegetarian and gluten free options and complementary bottles of Limoncello and Fragole cello (Strawberry) to finish off the meal. And so to bed.

Breakfast at the Palace Hotel was self service, with a range of options and an excellent spread of gluten free provisions for Pat. Then it was time to gather our bags and depart for the airport to meet the tour bus. The coach was full, with people from all over the UK as well as a small contingent from the USA. There were several very capable accordionists in the group, including Garry Blair, who would provide some of the entertainment in the evenings. PLG had arranged for several accordions to be available on loan to the group, including a C system CBA. As usual when on holiday I had my trusty Joseph Carrel Accordina with me.



The journey through the Italian countryside from Bologna to Castelfidardo took most of the morning and afternoon, with a short break for comfort and snacks. PLG had provided us with some reading material covering the history of accordion manufacture and an overview of the accordion factories in the town. On arriving at the Hotel Parco our rooms had already been allocated, so it did not take long to unload. Then it was back on the coach for the short journey to the International Accordion Museum.



The Museo della Fisarmonica, to give it its Italian name, is absolutely fascinating. There are an amazing variety of instruments on display, as well as accordion themed items (*see left*). PLG had arranged for an accordion performance at the museum, by a very talented young piano accordionist. After looking around the museum and buying some accordion themed souvenirs we had a little time to take in the view to the coast provided by the elevated position of the museum. We then returned to the Hotel Parco for the evening meal. Everyone enjoyed the food, though the vegetarian options were somewhat limited and they initially struggled to provide a gluten free meal for Pat. After the meal, those who wanted to retired to the bar for drinks and to play the loaned accordions.

Wednesday and we were off to visit the Victoria Accordions showroom and to see the largest working accordion in the world. This was a fascinating visit and one of the few locations where you could have bought an accordion and taken it home with you. Anyone wanting to buy an accordion to their personal specification could discuss their requirements with the accordionist there who could then advice on how to achieve the best result. However a custom accordion would take several months to manufacture, a manufacturing time typical of the other factories we visited.



Next was lunch and a walk around the small historic hill town of Recanati. It was a quiet walk around a pleasant historic Italian town or an opportunity to sit down at a restaurant and have a meal, snack or drink. After lunch and we were off to the Beltuna and Pigini factories. The tour group split into two with one group being left at Pigini whilst the rest of us went on to Beltuna. After a guided tour of the Beltuna factory we were taken into the reception area where there were a range of instruments we could try out.

I missed the Pigini tour, though others who went on it enjoyed it and were suitably impressed. I remained at the Beltuna factory to discuss a replacement bellows cover and the purchase of new straps for my ageing Beltuna Euro IV CBA. PLG had contacted Beltuna, on my behalf, prior to the tour, so that they were forewarned. Using my old cover as a template, Francesco at Beltuna agreed to make a replacement, if possible before we left Italy on Friday. They also sold me a new set of straps and all for a bargain price.

After the factory tours it was back to the hotel with time to walk around Castelfidardo before the evening meal. In 1860 a Piedmontese army defeated the troops of the Papal States in the battle of Castelfidardo. A walk through the park leads you to two sculptures. One commemorates this battle, the other commemorates the link between Castelfidardo and the accordion (*right*).

The evening meal was taken at the seaside resort of Sirolo, at the Della Rosa restaurant. Everyone enjoyed the meal and then those who wanted to were free to pick up any of the available loaned accordions to play and entertain the group.



Thursday was a flexible day with optional visits to the Binci Reeds factory and the Galassi Bellows factory. Both visits were very interesting. As well as manufacturing bellows Galassi also make eco friendly furniture, like the accordion themed chairs (*left*), and microfibre material products. Many of us came away the proud owner of microfibre beach towels.



Thursday evening was originally scheduled for dinner at the Hotel Parco, but PLG booked, for those who wanted it, a set meal at a local restaurant. Everyone who went to the restaurant enjoyed their meal, despite a tremendous downpour. Pat and I stayed at the Parco as we felt the set meal offered little for vegetarians.

This resulted in the best evening of the holiday for us. Pat and I shared our evening with Lynn and Jack, both from Scotland, who had also chosen to remain at the Parco. After dinner we gathered around the table to play music, Lynn with her low D whistle and later with one of the loaned piano accordions, and me with my Accordina. Lynn was very supportive of my playing, and kind enough to point out, very graciously, that I was turning my performance of 'Green Leaves of Summer' in 4/4 time into a waltz. I guess that's how I remembered it played in the film 'The Alamo'.

Friday and we were off to the Zerosette / Bugari factory. After the factory tour we were taken upstairs into the showroom. I was amazed to recognise Sergio Scappini (*right*) sitting quietly in the corner and was able to speak briefly to him and tell him how much I enjoyed his playing. He was there to demonstrate the new Bugari Evo, a digital accordion based on much of the technology found in the Roland FR8X. The demonstration was made just using the in-built amplifier and speakers of the Evo. The sound quality was excellent and Sergio's performance amazing, providing a fine demonstration of the instruments capabilities. After the demonstration there was opportunity to discuss the Evo with the Product Manager Marco Cinaglia and to play pre-production examples of the accordion.



After lunch we set off for Loreto, a town famous as a destination for religious pilgrimage. As luck would have it the 2016 Mille Miglia Storica was passing through the town. Originally an endurance road race, the Mille Miglia was last run in 1957. Since 1977 it has been reborn as a classic and vintage car event. Everywhere was decorated with Mille Miglia flags and I snapped a classic Bugati (*left*). There was a checkpoint offering free kisses to participants and a general atmosphere of fun and

nostalgia.

On our way back from Loreto we stopped off at the Carini accordion accessory shop. This is an Aladdin's cave of accordion accessories and a few accordion related souvenirs. Here you can buy straps, gig bags, springs, gaskets, buttons, specialist tools, reeds, clips, indeed pretty much anything related to accordions. Then back to the hotel.

As we set off for the evening meal there was still no news of my new bellows cover from Beltuna. The evening's meal at the Villa Residence was a real event. The chef was marvellous both preparing a splendid variety of dishes and finding time to wave a large fish in time to the accordion music. There was plenty for vegetarians, though unfortunately it was placed next to meat dishes on the same platters. The evening finished with plenty of wine and music. A further performance from the young man who had played at the museum, was followed by impromptu playing by members of the tour. On returning to the hotel I discovered that Francesco from Beltuna had lived up to his promise, the new back cover was waiting for me.

Saturday came and we set off back to Bologna airport via the Marino Baldacci Music showroom in San Marino, for a demonstration of the Roland FR8X. Unfortunately the FR8X was played through an amplifier and speakers, with a sequencer providing a backing. This made it impossible to judge what the FR8X would sound like on its own. With no CBA version available and only one piano version, there was no opportunity to try out the instrument. The shop was just keen to give you a price. To be fair the price was very good, but I was just not convinced that Roland UK would provide any guarantee support for an accordion purchased in San Marino. Much more interesting was the time afforded walking around the old town, with its winding medieval streets. There you will find a variety of restaurants and souvenir shops and there are some wonderful views over the countryside.

All too soon, having travelled through Italy, we were back looking at those two Lamborghinis. A quiet flight home, some fond farewells at the airport, and the end of a memorable, most enjoyable and extremely informative holiday. Back at home my Beltuna now looks brand new!

Jonathan Kemp

Diary

Every Monday 5.00pm-6.00 pm

Accordion classes for young players at the Holditch
Next class on August 22nd

Every Monday 7.30 p.m.	Beginners'/Improvers' night at the Holditch
Tuesdays other than 3 rd 8.00pm	Band rehearsal at Bradwell Workingmen's Club
Every 3rd Tuesday of month 8.00pm	Clubnite at Goldenhill Workingmen's Club
2nd Thursday of month 1 p.m.	Solo Session, Bradwell Workingmen's Club
October 18 th (clubnite)	Steve Roxton (tickets) Free refreshments
November 15 th (clubnite)	Players' night with English Cream Tea
December 20th	Christmas party - Tony Marchell (tickets)
January 24 th 2017	Harry Hussey & Lily's Weepers (tickets)

Members' Adverts

Accordion Tuition.

Pauline Hardwick	Tel 01782 397248	accordion and/or piano
Stefan Andrusyschyn	Tel 07958261024	accordion and/or piano
Mike Gibson	Tel 01782 660865	piano
John Romero	Tel 01606 270148	accordion

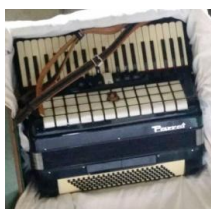
Accordions For Sale Adverts

Parrot piano accordion 120 bass, 2 bass couplers, 7 treble couplers including a wrist master coupler . It is in good condition and makes a lovely sound.

Tel: 01706 828994 or 07810513144

or shelagh.mayer80@gmail.com

Price - any reasonable offer!



President	Brian Shufflebotham	
Chairman	Mike Richards	01782 642101
Secretary	Steve Hughes	01782 787935
Treasurer	Mike Richards (acting)	01782 642101

Committee

Tony Britton, Helen Brown, Norman Brown, Graham Butler, Paul Hobbs, Graham Hughes, Lily Lynch and Greta Moseley.

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