



Twin Trophies for Test Valley Brass Youth Band

08 December 2008

The gifted musicians of Test Valley Brass Youth Band are soaring high, having won not one, but **two** trophies at the Wessex Brass Band Association's annual contest – sponsored by Her Majesty's Royal Marines. Held this year at Downton, near Salisbury (on Saturday 6/12/08), the competition attracted the most talented youth bands and musicians from Wiltshire, Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. **(You can see and hear Test Valley Brass play live at their Christmas concert at the Lights in Andover, this Sunday – see below).**

The training band competition allows up to six adults to play alongside younger musicians, Test Valley Brass performed a varied programme of music from the films, including *Manhattan Skyline* (the theme music from Saturday Night Fever), a medley from *Pirates of the Caribbean*, the theme from *The Mission* and *Concerto de Aranjuez* – made famous in the movie *Brassed Off*, as well as a compulsory hymn tune. With an excellent performance, particularly from Flugel Horn soloist Izzy Rutherford, the band was good enough to overcome a strong challenge from second place Vectis Band from the Isle of Wight, to win the overall trophy.

Later on the same day, without their adult helpers, Test Valley Brass Youth Band presented a programme drawing from many genres, beginning with a lively arrangement of negro-spirituals and finishing with the uproarious *African Funk* where the players left the stage and performed wandering through the audience. In between was another excellent soloist performance, this time from Jan Walukiewicz, who gave a near faultless rendition on the euphonium of the Barbara Streisand classic *The Way We Were*. And once again, the adjudicator awarded first place and the trophy to Test Valley Brass, with local rivals Michelmersh Silver placed second.

Musical Director Steve Large said:

"There's no doubt that most musicians play best when they are playing music they enjoy. So the entertainment format of these contests gave us all the chance to enjoy ourselves while performing technically challenging but fun-to-play-and-listen-to pieces. Sure enough, the young bandsmen and bandswomen gave an excellent account of themselves and put a smile on the faces of the audience and dare I say it, the adjudicator. For some of our younger players, it was their first ever contest. I am delighted for every one of them that we were able to achieve such success together."

Test Valley Brass, adults and youth, are already full swing into their busy Christmas schedule. Look out for them playing carols at local events and on Andover's shopping streets!

The final concert of the year is the now traditional Christmas concert at the Lights Theatre, Andover, this Sunday (14th December). Expect all your favourite carols and Christmas tunes plus a few surprises – rumour has it that a man with a long white beard and wearing a red tunic has already booked his seat. Tickets are priced at £10 (reduced prices for concessions) from The Lights box office on 01264 368368.