

BBE SPEARHEADS BANDSTAND

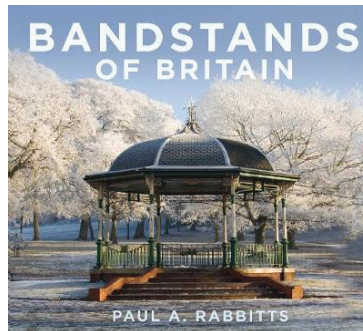
Brass Bands England (BBE) has announced a new national campaign to support the sustainability of bandstands throughout England and to provide a mechanism for increased financial support for more brass band bandstand concerts in the future.

BBE is set to work with Paul Rabbitts - an expert on the history and development of bandstand facilities in the UK, as well as a leading consultant to council authorities in the country about the renovation/rebuilding of bandstands and other open performance facilities. Paul Rabbitts has also published several books and studies on the topic. The bandstand has traditionally played a key role in profiling brass bands, but Paul Rabbitts' research shows that the number of bandstands throughout the UK has decreased dramatically since World War II, from an estimated peak of 1,200 to the 350 still standing today, many of which are in various states of repair or disrepair and no longer host musical events.

In addition, public sector budgets allocated for bandstand concerts have been eroded, but together BBE and Paul Rabbitts aim to reverse this decline by developing a 'matched-funding' commercial proposition involving a single, or group of sponsors to provide additional funding for brass band concerts on bandstand facilities throughout England and, even perhaps, the UK.

The organisation plans to launch a campaign to draw attention to the significance of the bandstand as a community-based entertainment focal point and said Andrew Coe, CEO of BBE: "It is estimated that fees paid to a brass band for performing a concert of between two - four hours range between £200 - £400. Such fees have almost certainly not kept pace with inflation over the years and would no longer allow, for example, bands to hire a coach to allow them to play in towns outside of an acceptable travel radius."

BBE plans to conduct a survey of its members to find out how many concerts occur annually and to ascertain the turnover of band concert fees annually, to assess the commercial funding that would be required. ■



IN BRIEF

Star vocalist, Matt Ford, who has featured with the John Wilson Orchestra and BBC Big Band, will be touring with Foden's Band later this year. Following the success of a number of high-profile concerts and CD recording sessions, Foden's



and Matt Ford will undertake a Christmas tour, performing tracks from their soon-to-be released CD, *Memories of Christmas*. The tracks will include classics Christmas songs by Tony Bennet, Bing Crosby, Andy Williams, Michael Bublé and Perry Como. Hits including *Let it Snow*, *White Christmas*, *Silver Bells*, *It's Beginning to look a lot like Christmas*, *O Holy Night* and *I'll be home for Christmas* will sit alongside brand new festive arrangements for brass band, specially written by Foden's solo trombone player, John Barber.

Memories of Christmas will be released later this month, together with details of the subsequent tour. ■

Radio 2 launches Young Brass Award 2018

BBC Radio 2 has launched its nationwide search for emerging young brass musicians to contend for the Young Brass Award 2018.

The Award provides performers with the chance to progress their futures in music, as well as an opportunity to showcase their musical talents. The competition is open to brass players from the ages of 16 to 21, who must be resident in the UK.

Al Booth, Specialist Music Editor, Radio 2, says: "Brass band music is such an important part of UK culture and Radio 2 is proud to support the next generation of musicians from the banding world. Over the years, we have seen some tremendously talented young people come through this competition, and the profile of the awards has gone from strength-to-strength because of this. It's so rewarding to see that a love of brass band music is still thriving amongst our young musicians and continues to remain a truly cross-generational genre."

Based upon initial entries, eight successful semi-finalists will be invited to record up to ten minutes of own-choice music with Foden's Band at the BBC Studios in Salford, on Saturday 10 February. The judges will select four players to go through to the Final, which will be broadcast live on BBC Radio 2 from the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, on Friday 20 April.

The winner will get the chance to perform on Radio 2's Listen to the Band programme, broadcast every Tuesday night at 11.30pm - midnight, and will also secure a broadcast performance with an established group.

Previous winners include trumpet player, Matilda Lloyd, who subsequently appeared at the BBC Proms; Ross Knight, who attended the Karajan Academy in Berlin and performed with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra before becoming the Principal Tuba with Orchestre de la Suisse Romande in Geneva, and Daniel Thomas, who plays with Black Dyke Band. ■

The deadline for entries is **11:59pm on Thursday 30 November 2017**.

For details on how to enter, go to the Radio 2 Home page: bbc.co.uk/radio2 or bbc.co.uk/youngbrassaward. People can also contact competition with any queries by email at: youngbrassaward@bbc.co.uk



2017 Young Brass Award winner – Isobel Daws

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