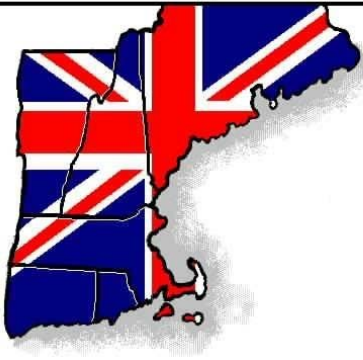


New England Brass Band



Spring 2006 Newsletter

NEBB Takes First Place in Honors Section at North American Brass Band Association Championship

In late March, the NEBB traveled to Louisville, Kentucky to take part in the 24th North American Brass Band Association Championship. This was the fourth time the NEBB has attended the NABBA contest.

Contesting is part of the lifeblood of the international brass band movement. Begun in England in the mid 19th century, brass band contests have flourished around the world as ways for bands to hone their skills and present a polished program to an audience of other dedicated brass band players. While Britain, Europe and the Antipodes have many such contests, in North America there are very few owing to the relatively small niche that brass banding holds. The NABBA contest has been going on for 24 years and has served to strengthen North American banding while helping to spread its message around the world.

The NABBA contest has bands competing in six sections: a Youth section and five adult sections (Explorer, Open, Challenge, Honors and Championship). Bands in each section are required to play a common "test piece" and then fill out a 23-30 minute program with other music of their choice. In its past trips to the NABBA Championship, the NEBB has competed in the Challenge section, taking third place in 2001 (Washington, D.C.), second place in 2003 (Little Rock, Arkansas) and first place (Charleston, West Virginia) in 2004. After winning the Challenge section, the band decided that if we attended the NABBA contest again

we would move up to the next section, the Honors section, where bands would play more difficult music and the competition would be keener.

While unable to attend in 2005, 2006 saw the NEBB traveling to Louisville, Kentucky where it competed in the Honors section for the first time. This commitment to the NABBA contest represented the band's biggest challenge to date. The test piece, Gilbert Vinter's



Doug Yeo Accepting the Honors Section First Place Trophy and Banner from NABBA President Anita Cocker Hunt

as an Honors section test piece should be. But for the band's choice piece, music director Douglas Yeo chose an even more difficult work, Philip Sparke's "The Year of the Dragon." "Dragon" had been a test piece for Championship level bands in many British contests and it featured a difficult trombone solo in its second movement as well as tremendous technical challenges for every member of the band. The NEBB first performed "Spectrum" and "The Year of the Dragon" at its concert in Melrose, Massachusetts in March and then traveled to Louisville to present them at the NABBA contest.

Once in Louisville, the NEBB traveled across the Ohio River to Indiana University Southeast where the contest was held. First up was the solo and small ensemble contest held on March 31. Five NEBB members took part

playing solos: Mark Mashburn (cornet), Terry Martin (cornet), Kevin Maloney (flugelhorn), Isabel Tappan-deFrees (horn) and Mark Fabulich (E flat bass). Terry Everson and Rob Hardy served as accompanists. Our NEBB competitors had tremendous support from other NEBB members who traveled from room to room to hear their performances.

That evening, the NEBB had a full band rehearsal at NABBA's official hotel, the Galt House in Louisville. The band's very special friend, Stephen Bulla, who had conducted a clinic for the NEBB on our NABBA program earlier in the season (and who plays trombone in the Spires Band which competed in the Challenge section) came to the rehearsal along with his wife, Randi, along with other friends including Aaron Vanderweele of the New York Staff Band of the Salvation Army. The rehearsal was an intense time and reminder of the task that faced the band at the contest the following day but the band exuded confidence and its preparation clearly was paying dividends.

April 1 dawned with NEBB members practicing and getting focused for performance as well as taking time to listen to other bands in other sections. Two concert halls at Indiana University Southeast were used to present 24 bands at the contest.

The Honors section featured four bands this year, the Princeton (NJ) Brass Band, the Central Ohio Brass Band, the NEBB and the Cincinnati (OH) Brass Band. Performing in Stem Concert Hall, the three judges – Brian Bowen, James Anderson and Kevin Norbury were situated behind curtains so they could hear but not see the bands. As the NEBB took the stage, Robinson Theatre filled up with the largest crowd of the day – clearly there was a “buzz” about the NEBB and high expectations for its performance.

In an exhilarating half hour the NEBB poured out its heart and soul and the tremendous ovation from the audience told us that we had achieved our goal of giving a performance that would speak to those who were listening. Russell Morris, reviewing the performance for NABBA's “The Brass Band Bridge” newsletter, wrote:

“Beginning with a unique warm-up with first a quintet and then the full band playing, the NEBB launched into “Spectrum”. No doubt that the work of Douglas Yeo in compiling the enormous errata for the test piece proved beneficial as the band had the best grasp of the tempos, articulations, and dynamics. While not perfect, the band

conveyed a sense of excitement and intensity that enabled the listener to visualize the colors of the spectrum.

Philip Sparke's “The Year of the Dragon” was the choice piece for NEBB. A very challenging selection for even the top level bands, Mr. Yeo had his band in top form. Without a doubt for this listener, the highlight was the second movement and the stunning trombone work of Don Lucas. With a strong upper register and lyrical playing that very few trombonists can match, Mr. Lucas is to be commended. It was very evident, at the end of the frenzied third movement, that this was a performance that would be difficult to top. And indeed, the New England Brass Band took home the first place honors. One other item of note: the band's percussion section should be given medals for their work especially, on “The Year of the Dragon”. It was also amazing to see all of the percussion parts in Spectrum covered by just two players. Congratulations.”

At the gala concert and award ceremony that evening, NEBB members gathered in Louisville's Memorial Hall with a sense of anticipation. First up were the results for the solo and small ensemble contest. NEBB members were thrilled when it was announced that Kevin Maloney took third place in the Adult High Instrument Slow Melody Contest and Mark Fabulich took third place in the Adult Low Instrument Slow Melody Contest. Seeing Kevin and Mark go up on stage to receive their awards was a thrill for all of us in the NEBB.

We all knew that the other bands in the Honors section were fine groups that had performed ambitious programs so while we felt good about our performance, you can never predict what judges will think. When the Cincinnati Brass Band came up to accept the second place trophy we in the NEBB all held our breath as the contest controller turned to announce the first place winner:

“In first place, with 272.4 points, moving up from the Challenge section, the New England Brass Band.”

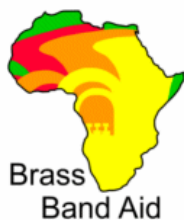
Pandemonium erupted in the NEBB section of the auditorium as Douglas Yeo ran up to the stage to accept the first place trophy and banner from NABBA President Anita Cocker Hunt. Holding them both high and facing the NEBB members, the applause and cheering was deep and gratifying. After the gala concert (presented by the Lexington Brass Band conducted by Ronald Holz with trumpet soloist Allen Vizzutti and percussionist Simone Rebello), Doug addressed the band in an emotional gathering, thanking the band for all of the hard work during the season and praising all NEBB players for their

part in this historic season in the band's history.

With this victory at the NABBA Championship the NEBB further solidifies its place as one of the premier brass bands in North America. The NEBB continues to improve each year as its members show great commitment and dedication, allowing for the performance of an ever increasingly interesting and difficult repertoire. The NABBA XXIV banner will be displayed at all NEBB concerts during 2006 and we appreciate the support of our friends and audiences who all have a part in this spectacular success by the NEBB.



The NEBB I Competition in Louisville



NEBB joins in Support of the "Make Poverty History" initiative, Brass Band Aid

The NEBB has recently decided to embark on an historic partnership with Brass Band Aid, a global effort of brass bands who are joining together to help make poverty history. Initially sponsored and started by Britain's Stanhope Brass Band, Brass Band Aid has partnered with World Vision in the construction and equipping of a school in Adet, Ethiopia. To date, over \$35,000 (20,000 Pounds Sterling) has been raised by brass bands to support this project. Bands around the world have been contributing by giving charity concerts, conducting auctions and selling the Brass Band Aid CD (a disc that results in 100% of proceeds from sales going to Brass

Band Aid as it was recorded entirely through donated goods and services).

In keeping with its mission as an organized charity, the NEBB has decided to partner with Brass Band Aid to support the ongoing efforts to build and equip the school in Adet, Ethiopia.

In March the NEBB board of directors agreed to a tripartite support of Brass Band Aid consisting of the following:

- NEBB Music Director Douglas Yeo and his wife Patricia (who plays second baritone in the NEBB) have purchased 100 Brass Band Aid CD's for a donation of \$1000 to Brass Band Aid.

- The Yeos have donated the discs to the New England Brass Band, which will sell the CDs at its concerts for \$15.00 each, resulting in an additional donation to Brass Band Aid of \$1500.

- For its 2006-07 season, the New England Brass Band will promote Brass Band Aid through a link on its website, the Brass Band Aid logo on all of its concert programs, and the distribution of a special flyer about Brass Band Aid and the Adet, Ethiopia project which will be distributed to audience members at the band's concerts. The NEBB is also making a commitment to raise additional funds for Brass Band Aid during its 2006-07 season by donating 20% of the sales of the band's own CDs as well as additional funds that come to the band by the way of free-will offerings and other means that result in donations to the band in excess of agreed upon concert fees. The NEBB commits that these monies to be donated to Brass Band Aid will be no less than \$1500 for the 2006-07 season.

These three donations will result in a total donation to Brass Band Aid of \$4000 to be paid as follows:

We at the NEBB are all very excited to be a part of this important effort to reach out and help those in Adet, Ethiopia while raising awareness of world-wide poverty through the medium of brass banding. We would like to encourage readers to visit the Brass Band Aid website at www.brassbandaid.org and learn more about the project in Adet as well as see how other bands around the world are working to raise funds for this project. Once there you can also purchase a Brass Band Aid CD or make a donation to the effort through the convenience of PayPal.

The NEBB board has also decided to make donations to charity a regular event. With Brass Band Aid being the recipient of these donations from the NEBB during 2006-07, the band's board will decide early next year what charity the band can support during 2007-08. Reaching out to help others as we have ourselves benefited from the support of so many who attend our concerts is just another way the NEBB is continuing to be involved in helping others through the medium of brass banding.

New NEBB CD is underway

Following up on the success of its first four commercial recordings – *Christmas Joy!* (1999 – now out of print), *Honour and Glory* (2001), *The Light of the World* (2004) and *This is Christmas* (2005), the NEBB is working on its fifth CD release, an album of American music. The first recording session for this new disc, which will be released in the fall of 2007, took place in Boston's historic Symphony Hall (home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra) on May 20. The band recorded about 35 minutes of music including features for principal cornet Terry Everson (Gershwin's "Bess, You Is My Woman Now"), principal euphonium Leif Reslow ("Jeanie With The Light Brown Hair") and trombone section, Don Lucas, Al Stickland, Ken Griffin and Don Kittle ("My Shepherd."). Also recorded were audience favorites "Amazing Grace," "Simple Gifts," and "Shenandoah" as well as music from the movie "Gettysburg," and Norman Bolter's "Unity Fanfare," composed in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. As a special feature on the album, noted radio announcer Charles Osgood will narrate Abraham Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address" over the movie music by Randy Edelman. Also recorded was the march "Rhode Island" composed by Leif Reslow's father, Lloyd Reslow.

The second recording session for this new CD will take place during the 2006-07 season and will include William Schuman's "New England Triptych," John Williams' "Liberty Fanfare," and several other works. Watch for further announcements about the progress of this recording, which promises to be an exciting addition to your music library.

Douglas Yeo appointed editor of "The Brass Band Bridge"

In April, North American Brass Band Association President Anita Cocker Hunt appointed NEBB music director Douglas Yeo to the position of editor of NABBA's official publication, "The Brass Band Bridge."

Recently elected to NABBA's Board of Directors, Doug accepted this position and his first issue (issue 99) of "The Bridge" was released in May. "The Bridge" details activities of North American Brass Bands and this most recent issue includes comprehensive reports of the NABBA XXIV Championship. "The Bridge" is published electronically and can be viewed free of charge by going to www.nabbabridge.org While there, be sure to view the issue 99 web based slide show with 54 photos from the NABBA Championship including several photos of the NEBB and NEBB members.

Farewell with thanks

At the end of the 2005-06 season the NEBB says farewell to two members who will be sorely missed.

E flat bass player Mark Fabulich has been a member of the NEBB for three years. During that time he gave much to the band as a player and with his positive personality. Mark was part of the band's first place victories at NABBA XXII and XXIV and was a winner at NABBA solo competitions in both of those years. Mark has moved to Chicago where he is orchestra librarian at Northwestern University's School of Music.

Don Lucas has been the band's principal trombonist for the 2005-06 season. Professor of trombone at Boston University, Don has added so much to the NEBB this year. As a role model, teacher, and friend, Don's contribution to the NEBB was in evidence all season long including his stunning performance of his solo in Philip Sparke's "The Year of the Dragon." While his duties at BU have caused him to have to scale back some other activities, we appreciate the year Don has been with us.

Please join with the NEBB in wishing Mark and Don the very best in the future as we thank them for their being part of the long line of NEBB players who have contributed to help make the NEBB what it is today.

NEBB announces auditions

The NEBB will be having auditions for a BB flat bass (tuba) and principal trombone player to fill the vacancies created by the departure of Mark Fabulich and Don Lucas. Auditions will be held in September; those interested in getting details about the audition should contact band secretary Robert Hardy at rhardy@halegroup.com

Concert Arrangements - The New England Brass Band is available for concerts throughout the New England Area.

We may be reached by mail at:

The New England Brass Band
Attn: John Bassett
P.O. Box 541462
Waltham, MA 02454

Or email us at: newsinfo@newenglandbrassband.org

A Reminder and Thank You:

This newsletter is sent to you because you have indicated you would like to be informed regularly of the New England Brass Band's activities. We appreciate very much your ongoing support of the band through your presence at concerts, purchase of our CD's and other products, and your communication and interaction with the band and its members. Without supporters like you, the NEBB would be playing concerts in empty halls!

We want to remind you that the New England Brass Band is a non-profit organization and a tax-exempt corporation. We are a volunteer group and pay no salaries to members, board members, or our conductors. All funds raised by the band through our concerts and sale of CDs and other items are used for the ongoing work of the band, allowing us to purchase instruments and music, take trips, produce recordings, and engage in other activities which help bring the unique sound of the British brass band to audiences in New England and beyond.

We welcome the tax-deductible financial support of our friends who contribute either to a specific need or project the band is undertaking, or toward assistance in promoting the general and ongoing mission of the band. If you would like to make a donation to the band, please send it to our treasurer at the address below; we will be pleased to give you a receipt for tax purposes and will be most grateful for your support. If your company or place of work participates in a matching program, your contribution could double. To all of you who continue to support the NEBB, we offer our thanks.

For more information about the NEBB's activities, or if you would like to make a donation, please write to us at:

New England Brass Band
PO Box 541462
Waltham, MA 02454-1462

CD Order Form:

To order any of the New England Brass Band's CD's, please fill out and mail this form with payment to:

New England Brass Band
PO Box 541462
Waltham, MA 02454-1462

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Sate: _____

Zip code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Quantity:

This is Christmas - \$15.00 each

The Light of the World - \$15.00 each

Honour & Glory - \$15.00 each

Shipping and Handling: Please add \$2.00 for the first CD and \$1.00 for each additional CD to your total payment.

Total Amount Due