

Chairmans Report Year-ending 28 February 2024

It is my pleasure to report on another successful year for Ballygowan Concert Flute Band. The band took part in a number of contests during the course of the year and I'm glad to report that we were successful in each contest.

Entertainment – The entertainment contest was held in the Shorts Club, Belfast where the band played well. Thanks and congratulations go to Martin Wall for his expert tuition in this contest and thanks go to Mark Douglas for his excellent arrangements for the contest.

NIBA – Armagh was once again the venue for the NIBA Championship of Ireland Bands contest. A small field saw Ballygowan pick up 2nd place in the contest. Thanks again to Martin Wall for leading us through this contest.

Londonderry – Unfortunately this contest was postponed due to lack of entrants, we hope to be able to compete in this contest next year.

Own Choice – A return to Lisburn for the own choice contest resulted in wins again for the band, picking up 1st place in the championship section. Thanks again to Martin Wall for his excellent tuition and interpretation of the piece.

Solo's and Quartets – Members of the band keenly competed in various different sections of the solo and quartet contests. Special mention must go to the under 18 members of the band who so proudly took to the stage to compete in their respective age groups. It takes dedication and courage to stand and perform as a soloist or as part of a small ensemble and I must thank the players for their dedication to rehearsals.

I'd like to congratulate Josh Gourley, Jessica Gibson, Rebecca Gourley, Harry Douglas, Matthew Gourley, The under 16 quartet of Scarlett Dowson, Jessica Gourley, George Craig and Rebecca Gourley, Harry and Mark in the duet section and the senior trio to octet. It is encouraging to see so many competitors in so many different sections doing so well and I must add that the last time we had an under 16 quartet, Victoria and I were in it. I must add a thanks to Philip Gaw for taking the learners class. It is now up to us to encourage these young musicians through to full members as this is where the future of our band lies.

The band also participated in a number of community engagements and it was great to be out playing music around Ballygowan again. A small ensemble played at Tesco Castlebawn in Newtownards over the festive period, which raised some finances and was great craic and well received by the members of the public.

A final thanks goes to the committee and members of the ensemble. The committee here works tirelessly to maintain and improve the standards of the band, none more than Sarah and Victoria. A lot of their work goes unseen but is essential to the running of the band and to them I am truly indebted. To Mark for his arrangements and to Andrew for guiding and preparing us before

our guest conductors come to prepare us for a contest. It makes my job easier when music is available and there is someone willing to conduct! To the members, we wouldn't have a band without you, I'd like to place on record my thanks to you for giving your time to the band, for rehearsing either here or at home and for being enthusiastic members of our wonderful ensemble. We are approaching our 150th anniversary only because of your dedication!
This ends the chairmans report for 2023-24

Stephen Carse

Chairperson

AGM held 12th March 2024