

Eaglehawk Brass Band had early troubles



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In October of this year, the Eaglehawk Band will celebrate 100 years of service to the community, with a weekend of activities.

There has been few changes over the years. The name has been changed to the Eaglehawk Citizens' Brass Band. The band now has its own well-equipped bandroom, claimed to be one of the best in Victoria, and bandmen have little fear of being asked to move again.

Following eight years occupancy of the old Library Hall, and then the old Town

Hall, the band was given permission to build a practice room on council land, where the old borough depot was located. In 1910, the old bandroom was shifted to Market Reserve, with the help of Mr Brazier's traction engine, at a cost of six pounds and 10 shillings.

In 1914, Bandmaster George Brinkman, who had held the position since the 1890s, was replaced by Mr Hugh Niven, a champion cornet player from Scotland. Mr Niven held the position only for a short time before taking control of the Brunswick Band.

Many of the early members of the Eaglehawk Band were Cornishmen, who had brought from their home land a love of "banding." Rehearsals were held at hours which permitted the greatest number of players to attend, when not working shifts in the mines around the borough.

The brass band's popularity was influenced in no small way by the relatively cheap instruments which could be bought by people on very limited incomes.

Another important factor was that the instruments could be mastered fairly easily to a stage where hymn tunes could be played. Much of the music avail-

able around the turn of the century needed little skill from any of the players apart from the soloists.

Current bandmaster, Mr Peter Shaw has researched the history of the Eaglehawk Citizen's Brass Band, and a book will be published early this year. Eaglehawk residents are being encouraged to sponsor a page in the proposed book at a cost \$10 a page.

The band's centenary activities in October will include a cabaret, thanksgiving church service and an open day at the bandroom. A large number of interstate and metropolitan visitors are expected in Eaglehawk for the celebrations.

During the year, the band will continue to appear at various functions in Eaglehawk and surrounding districts. In 1983, the band played at 25 functions. This number appears likely to be exceeded in the band's centenary year.

Further details of the Eaglehawk Citizens' Brass Band centenary celebrations are available from Mr Peter Shaw, phone 420647 (business) or 468136 (home). Mr Shaw would appreciate old photographs, programs and memorabilia concerning the band.



● Mr W. H. (Billy) Treloar a member of the band during the early days of this century.



● Bandmaster from the early 1890s to 1914, Mr George Brinkman, with cornet and baton.

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● Mr W. H. (Billy) T of this century.

Eaglehawk Borough Band

In the days when this town, was of world-wide renown,
For everything under the sun,
The old Borough Band, by the scribes of the land,
Was rated second to none,
So to uphold their claim, and the Borough's proud name,
They had challenged the best to compete,
For the honor, that goes, as everyone knows,
With the champion band at South Street.

So they practised each night, 'neath the kerosene light,
Till their backs and their bottoms were sore,
For the Band Master Porter, would give them no quarter,
Till they mastered the musical score.
With perfection complete, it was out on the street,
To practise the marching routine,
With precision they strode, up and down Peg Leg Road,
Such a sight had seldom been seen.

Now Billie Treloar, he was just five feet four,
He was plump and as wide as they come,
And when the band came in view, it's for certain you know,
He'd be thumping the borough's base drum,
And as they marched by, with their heads held on high,
As they followed the Borough's ensign,
You felt a real pride, surge through you inside,
As they marched five a breast, and in line.

Then a short sharp command, changed the course of the band,
In a trice they had wheeled and were gone,
But the drum, it was true, obstructed his view,
So Ellie marched blissfully on.

With his legions at zero, our drum-thumping hero,
Paraded his skill like a swell,
With his drum to the fore, passed Davies Store,
To Fitzpatrick's Prince Patrick Hotel.

Then the folk standing round, when they heard this strange sound,
Were almost struck with surprise,
One man in command, of a one-man band?
They couldn't believe their eyes,
Then a gutter-side lout, gave old Billie a shout,
As the gutter side louts mostly do,
Then in utter dismay, they heard Billie say,
"Ave'ee seen a brass band about, you?"
So Billie Treloar, lives on in folklore,
And when people foregather to talk,
They will laugh at the jokes, of the funny old blokes,
Who once lived in old Eaglehawk,
And some day in High Street, you may hear a drum beat,
And if you're puzzled to reckon the score,
Don't panic in fear, if no soul should appear,
It's the ghost of old Billie Treloar.

— By Lew Llewellyn



EAGLEHAWK BOROUGH BAND by Allan Llewellyn.

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For every thing under the sun,
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And some day in High Street you may hear a drum beat,
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*To Andrew McDonald
from Allan Llewellyn*

REPORT & STATEMENT TO DEC 11 1917.

To the Members of the Eaglehawk Borough Band,
Gentlemen.

I beg to submit to you a report and statement of the band. In doing so I wish to congratulate the band on its position. As you are aware the Band some fourteen months ago decided that in order to keep the band going it was necessary that something should be done to keep up the finances of the band. It was decided to start a picture show. Arrangements were made for the leasing of the Victoria Theatre for 12 months where it was decided to start. The Band had no idea as to what it was going to cost to fit the place up with machinery. I feel sure had the members known what the cost would be we would never have faced the proposition.

In the first place we had to procure motor power for the working of the plant the cost of same being just on one hundred pounds. Then it was necessary to have a Biograph Machine. The committee made arrangements for hiring one but on its first trial it proved a failure. It was then decided that an up to date machine should be secured the cost of same being ninety pounds. This together with various other things necessary for the successful running of the show brought the total expenditure for machinery close on two hundred and fifty pounds. Then more trouble faced the committee owing to the action of opponents in the same line using their influence. We were unable to secure anyone locally to run the show for us. The committee therefore had to engage the services of a first class operator from Melbourne at a cost between forty and fifty pounds. This together with the machinery bringing the total close on three hundred pounds.

Let me say here that in order to make a start provision was made with the bank for an overcraft of one hundred pounds. The committee were hopeful that this would be paid off before the end of the summer but as you know we experienced a very severe winter and our receipts fell of more than fifty per cent. Unfortunately the committee had made arrangements with one of the Melbourne firms for a supply of films for those months the cost of same being very high.

The cost of running the band and pictures at that time was over twenty pounds per week. In order to try and make ends meet the committee brought forth many proposals for reducing the cost but owing to the severe winter experienced we found it was impossible to make the shows pay for themselves. As you are all aware the band have now taken a lease of the Town Hall and I feel sure that the committee will not have the same worry this winter as the last one experienced.

Considering all things I think the members have every reason to be satisfied with the position as the statement shows the band to have assets over liabilities of four hundred and twentyseven pounds seventeen shillings.

Before concluding I wish to thank the members one and all for the valuable assistance rendered me during my seven years of secretaryship during which time we have made rapid progress and I think the Band can now claim to be the leading Public Body in the Borough.

In conclusion I wish to state although I am not Secretary I will always take a deep interest in the welfare of the band.

Yours faithfully,

T D vies.