



November 2022

On 10th November SCWB was delighted to welcome Rob Wiffin OBE to direct us in our rehearsal as guest conductor. Rob rose through the ranks of the Royal Air Force Music Services, starting as a trombonist and culminating in his position of Principal Director of Music, Royal Air Force in 1998. He was recognised for his services with an OBE in 2002. After leaving the RAF he has built his reputation by conducting orchestras, wind ensembles and many of the country's finest brass bands. His compositions are widely played, and Rob has held positions of Professor of Conducting at the Royal Military School of music, and postgraduate conducting, composing and arranging at the London School of Music.

The evening has been captured by Larry Hunter of the trumpet section, below.

An evening with Rob Wiffin



Just over a year ago I was approached by SCWB and asked if I would like to join the trumpet section which was short on numbers. I turned the opportunity down. The reason being that I was already in a band that had a conflicting rehearsal schedule. Then shortly after I gave it another thought and decided to attend at least one rehearsal to see what it would be like. I have never looked back!

Having come from a predominantly big band environment I found myself being presented with all sorts of odd meter timings that I worked hard to digest and, to be fair, gradually got the hang of it. Or so I thought, until last Thursday night! Calum had invited Rob Wiffin to join SCWB for an evening of intense sight reading.

The first piece to play was *Exultate* (Samuel R. Hazo), and it took quite a while to get past the first bar! After a while Rob told us that something was not quite right and I made the mistake of nodding my head in agreement, as I was trying to work it out in my own mind. Unfortunately, that nod turned his focus of attention from the woodwind section to me, now in his line of sight. The question of what was 'not quite right' took aim at me. The answer, sadly, I was unable to give.

We spent over an hour on *Exultate* and the end product was so different from our first attempt. Rob proved to be very personable and has a very enticing sense of humour. It was encouraging to know that Kevin was able to supply the 'Band Pencil' for Rob to annotate his score, with the immediate reward of being declared a 'very good player'! Even with the observation that the horn section were 'milking it', Rob was never condescending, and he most certainly helped to reinforce a lot of the work that Calum has done, and continues to do, for SCWB.

For me, personally, as much as I have learned and enjoyed while playing with SCWB over this past year, the work with Rob helped to reinforce it hugely and I am grateful for that.

So all in all it was a very good evening indeed and judging from the enthusiastic applause Rob received at the end, I would suggest that this sentiment was felt all round.

I do wonder if Kevin did get that pencil back?

Larry Hunter
Trumpet

SCWB events to look forward to

The Chapel, Royal Victoria Country Park, Netley December 11th 3:00pm

THIS EVENT IS SOLD OUT

2023

Chandler's Ford Methodist Church March 25th 7:30pm

With guest soloist Peter Cigleris, clarinet

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