



NEWS ITEM

From the BYBA Communications Office

BYBA Festival of Fun & Music withdrawal for 2008!

Dear Friends,

Some of you would have heard already about the decision that has recently been taken to withdraw from the up and coming 2008 Festival of Fun and Music. For some this will be a surprise, and for others who have been closer to the detail of transition from Brixham to Hemsby, not so.

There are several major contributing factors that have led the Festival Committee to take the decision that it has now done. All of which have been done to ensure that the integrity of the Association, and it's Financial well being are protected as is their remit on behalf of all Members.

This initial issue being the sale of Brixham by Pontins, and the subsequent late notification of this to the Association. At very late notice, you will all be aware that Hemsby initially agreed to host the Festival for us, and to ensure that any in place contractual obligations were adhered to.

Initially, things were looking incredibly positive for this transition. However, there are additional concerns that have caused both parties concern. Hemsby were prepared to underwrite some of the shortfall in numbers, which had been projected at approximately 700 confirmed bookings as long as the Association could achieve a high enough commitment from you it's members and indeed from other organizations that were looking to join us at the event. Sadly, however, the up take has been way short of close to this commitment (which has been in place for a number of years as a target) and so no guarantees were able to be provided until 1 week prior to the Festival taking place to underwrite as was hoped. This, as I am sure you all agree, would place a huge risk on the Association should the numbers not materialize by that time. For this reason, the Committee have taken the correct step in deciding to withdraw from the Festival for 2008 in favour of concentrating on making the 2009 event the primary focus for so many of you who enjoy one of the best educational experiences that Europe has to offer.

The British Youth Band Association - Registered Educational Charity Number 277591

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We can all speculate as to why the initial commitment from everyone has not been as strong at this time of the year as it has been in the past, but it is true to say that the confusing nature of the split term breaks between counties in the UK has been an extremely major contributing factor, with many of our teachers not being available as a result, and with many of you having to consider taking time out of school in order to attend, something that we have not had to contend with to this level in the past.

Although we will be facing the disappointment of the withdrawal of the Festival of Fun and Music for 2008, the Association is still providing some extremely exciting opportunities for our members and friends to take part in during the summer that you may still want to consider with a full competitive and social calendar which is available on the BYBA Web Site for your review. One thing I would urge you to consider for 2008 is the South Coast Tour. It was piloted last year with some great success, and it would be extremely rewarding for you and your members to consider joining this venture as a highlight of the year from a social and educational perspective in lieu of the Festival of Fun and Music's withdrawal.

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the Festival process for their continued support, hard work and dedication over the past months. Their resilient nature has prepared the way for any eventuality for you all. Sadly the outcome on this occasion is one of disappointment, but I am sure that 2009 will continue to see the Festival back and stronger than ever.

For further information please direct all enquiries to bybafestival@btinternet.com

Sincerely,

Tony Patrick
Chairman
The British Youth Band Association
www.byba.org.uk

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