

'Hark the CCB Herald'



Rest in Peace Norman

# THE NEW HERALD

Special Commemoration Supplement

## CRUMPSALL CONCERT BAND



Volume 3 Issue 8(S)  
Supplement: April 2021

### **NORMAN DAVIES: 16/10/1925 - 29/03/2021: IN TRIBUTE & CELEBRATION:**

**Introduction:** Editorial note: Those who have managed to read our April Newsletter (Issue 8, 30<sup>th</sup> April) may note some slight duplication in this supplement, however I felt it necessary, in the interests of completeness, that this supplement include all available material with all stories available in one sitting. Therefore, any sensations of *Deja Vu* can now be easily explained 😊. Enjoy the read.

Firstly, on behalf of the Band, I formally extend and reiterate our sincere condolences to the family and close friends of Norman, who sadly passed away peacefully following a brave and thankfully relatively short battle with illness on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and was laid to rest with his parents Elizabeth (1948) and Ernest (1983), at Manchester's Southern Cemetery on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

For the past few weeks I have been compiling information, pictures and anecdotes in order to attempt to do literary justice to Norman's life, times and exploits. Having known Norman for almost 40 years, talking to family and friends and gathering aforementioned tales, I realised there was so much more to know about the man.

Thankfully, I had the privilege to hear parts of his story first hand when compiling Volume 3 Issue 2 of our Newsletter in October 2020 in which we celebrated Norman's 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday along with his part in our band heritage. I do recommend you re-read the October issue (available on our website [Crumpsall Concert Band](http://www.crumpsallconcertband.co.uk)) as a companion to what is about to follow as it will help provide a fuller picture of a long life, well lived.

Grateful thanks to all those who have contributed special memories and pictures that enrich this supplement and Norman's story. Much appreciated. Yours, Rob



### **In this Special Supplement:**

**Eulogy from Pamela & Sheila / Lockdown: Conversational Diary from St Mary's Court / Norman's Am-Dram exploits / Summer Schools at Giggleswick / Nautical Norman – 2013 / On Parade – 1963 / Guesting with Downton Band – 2019 / Crumpsall Concert Band / Methodist Church & Scouting / Eternal Rest**

### **Milgate Memories – Funeral eulogy from Pamela and Sheila, 16/04/2021:**



Pictured left: **Norman opposite Doug**, both truly surrounded by Ladies in the Ostrich Inn Beer Garden, Prestwich, during celebrations for Margaret Lynch's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday, July 2019. **Sheila Handley** (nee Milgate) nearest the camera, front right.

**Sheila:** Pamela and I are the daughters of Joan and Harold Milgate – both of whom sadly have now passed away. But it is through them that we learned to know, love, be disheartened, get cross at, yet amazed at this man called Norman Davies.

As children we just knew him as a member of the remarkable 209<sup>th</sup> Manchester Scout Group [now 434<sup>th</sup>] - a group where friendships were forged through decades, which started during the war years. The leaders of that troop were called away to war and so our Dad became the Troop Leader – Norman being one of the scouts. This group loved and supported each other through all the trials and changes in the forthcoming years.

**Pam:** Only last week, Nancy Eno (Jones – from the tripe shop on Lansdowne Rd) remembered how Norman would walk into the church hall, whilst many of the group were playing badminton, sit at the piano and play 'Marigold' - a regular annoying habit of his, and Wendy Emsley remembered fondly how Norman, with blankets, met her husband, Alan, new to conscription, at the barracks gate where they were both to be stationed – ready to support him. This group of 10 scouts, scouters, rovers and leaders met twice a year socially – usually in South Manchester up to 2018 – 75 years of friendship – all with their own nicknames – Norman's being Dagwood!

**Sheila:** It was only in 1969 (!) when we moved up to 20 Wilton Rd that Pam and I got to know Norman better – he lived at 4A Wilton Rd. He eventually decided to move away from his family home and moved into an apartment on Middleton Rd. He could not take all the possessions he wanted to take and so much was put into storage – including his piano. Mum hated this flat – so dark and cold feeling - and finally persuaded him (nearly bullied him) into moving into ‘his’ flat just off Crumpsall Lane – once again reconnected with his piano. It was then that he started to come round for Sunday lunch most weekends. Pam and I left Crumpsall to follow our career paths, knowing that Norman was always around – at first he was supported by mum and dad but in later life the roles started to reverse, especially after Dad died. They would do the skeleton crossword...

**Pam:** Both my daughters ended up in Manchester - Jenny at the Royal Northern College of Music and Becci at Media City working for the BBC and were able to live in Crumpsall with mum – AND Norman at the weekends. Jenny remembers one Saturday morning being woken at 9:30 by Norman playing his trombone for Mum – not the best way to be woken after a late concert the previous evening!! They both remember many discussions around the kitchen table and later in the back room discussing politics, religion, race and music. Although their views on most things differed – these discussions were always polite!!

**Shelia:** In the last couple of years of his life he became even more important to Mum – always checking that she had everything she needed – bringing her plaice every Thursday, taking her to church once she was not able to drive and the famous regular trips to the carvery in The Waterfold, just off the M66, on Saturdays, especially after jumble sales! After Mum’s death, Jenny and Becci tried to visit as often as possible.

**Norman had so many interests and was never scared about starting something new** – conversational French, with a very patient tutor was one of these AND at the ripe old age of 94 he decided to learn the violin. Becci organised getting the tutor book, having the violin overhauled and giving fortnightly lessons – but he did not like the idea of having to play in sharp keys. (Brass players will understand that!) So, in January of last year Norman began to learn the Euphonium and produced a very passable rendering of Moon River after only 3 weeks. He seemed to find transposing very easy.

**Pam:** Finally it was on his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday, Friday October 16<sup>th</sup> 2020, when Norman had his first heart attack. I had phoned at 9.30 to wish him well and he was on tip top form. Becci was to visit in the early afternoon when she was told that he had cancelled as he was not feeling well. Becci was concerned and phoned us - we told her to tell him to go straight to A+E. He decided to go the next day!! So Norman!

**Sheila:** Norman was a dark horse. We were quite unaware of his legendary status with the attendees of the annual M4P summer music school at Giggleswick. A few years ago I was chatting with musicians attending a music course in Hertfordshire and Giggleswick was mentioned. I said, ‘Oh ...you don’t by any chance know a trombonist called Norman?’ ‘Norman! Everyone knows Norman’ was the reply and she grabbed her phone to show me a video of him singing Misty. I have read all 57 tributes to him on their Facebook page. He was indeed a legend. Quite a lot of those attendees are watching the live stream [of the funeral] today .

**Pam:** Norman was a one off.....we shall remember his kindness, his laugh, his twinkling dancing shoes, the way he would make a hymn on a Sunday morning go with a ‘swing’, to the annoyance on our Mum, **his adoration of Don Lusher and his band**, his piano and trombone playing but most of all for his portrayal of Cinderella and other female characters in the annual Church ‘men’s’ pantomime. A life well lived!



### **Lockdown: Conversational Diary from St Mary’s Court, Crumpsall: Rob. F**



In the early days of the initial Lockdown, Norman - who, admirably for his years, had no fear of technology - was disappointed that we couldn’t rehearse via Zoom, (despite best efforts) because of the lag caused by differing internet speeds. We did attempt to get him signed up for subsequent general Zoom chats and quizzes etc, but all he really wanted to do was play.

As well as receiving the newsletter, of which he enjoyed his monthly read via email, I endeavoured to keep in regular contact with occasional socially-distanced visits to his doorstep (as pictured left with the Band’s birthday card for his 95<sup>th</sup> on 16<sup>th</sup> October last year) and fairly regular phone calls.

Our chats naturally started with me asking after his health and wellbeing, and I recorded the essence of our conversations to enable updates to be passed back to fellow bandmembers, all keen to understand how Norman was doing. Quite often the calls would then flow into wider conversational points that I now genuinely miss:

**Lunch time 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020:** *Norman on good form today and is desperate to get back to rehearsals (looks like we can rehearse outdoors from the end of September) but on medical grounds is prevented from going out at the moment. He is really positive and as soon as he is allowed out he wants to be back playing with the band and brewing up but will hold back on filling out the band questionnaire [about rehearsal preferences] for the minute. Norman went on to let me know his daily practice routines starting after breakfast: **French Language Practice 30 mins, Trombone Practice 30 mins, Euphonium Practice 30 mins**, then maybe a bit of **piano and violin** playing - not at the same time, he assured me. Not a bad workout for a near 95 year old 30 years into retirement. On the shopping front, to check he didn’t need anything, he said people from the Church and neighbours in St Mary’s Court were kindly sorting this out. Due to current circumstances he has had to postpone his 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday bash (at Cheetham Hill*

Cricket Club) but is remaining very positive and will look to reschedule next year, perhaps around May time. He really likes the newsletter, was impressed by my use of big words (?) and was delighted when I was able to tell him he'd feature extensively in the October issue.

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020:** Norman answered his phone "Hello Jean" as was expecting **Jean Maffia** to phone him regarding his shopping requirements. I was momentarily deafened by his tremendous, hearty and prolonged laugh when I announced "it's me, Rob".

😊. No mention of his violin exploits this week (last week he reckoned he was close to grasping 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' with the help of his tutor, Becci, Joan's granddaughter). However, with the band starting rehearsals again, outdoors at FC United of Manchester's Stadium on 30<sup>th</sup> September, he wanted to know all about the Club; although, he seemed pretty clued up as to what FC United was all about already. He was amazed that the Club was formed 15 years ago (in protest of the Glazer Family takeover of Manchester United) in 2005 when he was a mere 79 year old and really admired what it stood for [against corporate greed, fan ownership, one member one vote, affordable family football etc]. He sadly reiterated that he is still precluded from attending rehearsals on medical grounds but is now allowed a walk round the block but no face to face conversations, even with masks on. He is also taking his car out 'for a spin' once a week to prevent a flat battery. Once again enjoyed our chat...

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020: Norman's 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday:** After confirming yesterday that I was ok to call round to wish him Happy Birthday and hand over a card with multiple member best wishes from the band and some personal cards from members that I had received, I broke off from work and walked down to Norman's abode (all of 200 yards) at the appointed time of 11am. He was happy to pose for pictures for the October newsletter and we had a good chat with him being on good form despite 'a bit of heartburn'. He was expecting more calls and best wishes and I left him to the rest of his special day with the collective best wishes of the CCB family.

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 17:45:** The call connected but he asked me to hang on whilst he quickly washed his sticky hands after eating chicken thighs and lettuce for his tea. I dutifully waited and he revealed he'd been in hospital after what he thought was heartburn on his birthday was suspected by A & E the following day of being symptoms of a mild heart attack. He also revealed other ailments that fall once again into the TMI (Too Much Information) category and in summary, wasn't too well at that time. Another Norman understatement I'd say! He went on to say how much he appreciated the cards and best wishes from the band and asked that I pass on his thanks. He also mentioned he'd like to reinstate an old tradition of using any accumulation of 20p's in the 'tea fund' to put on a table of nibbles at the break in our last rehearsal before Christmas. This was unlikely to be possible this December but going forward, why not?!? We went through some of the anecdotes and back stories from his life that were to appear in the next newsletter and, as always, he remained positive and forward looking in the face of clearly mounting problems.

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020 15:40 ahead of our final outdoor rehearsal the night before Lockdown #2 so I could update the band:** Norman was positive about at least one aspect of his health having been told a stubborn infection had now cleared up. He hadn't tried the Lakeland Teabag that had been taped inside his birthday card from the band with a 20 pence piece and the comment 'have a brew on us (or a change) Norman'. He said he hadn't heard of that brand of teabag and questioned: "it's not drugs is it, like heroin?" cue his loud hearty laugh and my phone extending to arm's length to avoid temporary deafness 😊. He laughed again when I told him we'd all chipped in towards the 20 pence and teabag 😊. He liked all the features in the October newsletter and wanted me to pass on his best wishes to band at rehearsal tonight which I duly did; in between salvos of fireworks.



**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2020:** Norman was keen to tell me about his progress on the violin and was of the opinion he had now mastered 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' and 'Happy Birthday'. He was now learning the morris dancing staple 'the Dancing Bear' and thinks it would make an excellent piece for band that one of his distant relatives would arrange with Norman playing the violin solo, of course. Encouragingly, I let him know we'd be pleased to have a look and listen when ready and would get the views of our Conductor Alan at that stage; Norman once again demonstrating it's never too late to learn and always looking ahead. Despite his problems he came up with an absolute **pearl of wisdom** in accepting the different treatments he was enduring. So inspired was I, he agreed to a photo shoot (which we did on 23<sup>rd</sup> November) with him wearing a flat cap (Norman Wisdom style) for an article in our next newsletter (29<sup>th</sup> November) **entitled 'Norman's Wisdom':**



**"If you like looking at Rainbows  
You have to put up with the rain".**

Of course we kept up a regular dialogue with our last chat, via his hospital bed phone, being Wednesday (24<sup>th</sup> March) before he passed away five days later. However, as the weeks went by, conversations became increasingly brief as Norman was constantly tired and becoming less coherent. Sadly, it became ever more noticeable to hear his positivity, joviality and general 'Normness' ebbing away call by call.

So, I leave you with the calls above, happy thoughts and memories, the echoes of his infectious laugh and unfeasibly loud whisper and of the Norman we all came to know, admire, respect and treasure.

Rest in Peace Norman, thanks for the memories and countless brews; it was an honour and privilege to have known you sir and enjoy the big band in the sky (whatever instruments you choose to tackle 😊). RF

### Norman's Am-Dram exploits:

Along with several of the gentlemen from Methodist Church Crumpsall, Norman loved getting into character and he became involved with the Local Amateur Dramatics Society based in Moston. Every Christmas the Men of the Church would put on a polished production and without fail, Norman would always be cast as the leading lady. They were great shows that spanned the 1980's and I remember several ladies in the audiences commenting tongue in cheek (or maybe enviously) on how good Norman's legs looked in a skirt 😊. The man had everything clearly, and here are some pictures of those legendary productions. **See if you can spot Norman:**



Can Can Girls - 1982



Cinderella - 1986



Sleeping Beauty - 1987



Far and near left: **Desert Pong (Song)** - 1988 with Norman singing a solo.

I was privileged to be in the last ever show, the circa 1989 production of Snow White with Norman playing the leading role naturally and me, at 6'2", being one of the 7 dwarves 😊. Happy days and just another string to Norman's (violin) bow. Thanks for the pictures, Sheila. Rob

### Music for Pleasure (M4P) - Summer School at Giggleswick:

**Never one to shirk a musical challenge or adventure**, Norman became a regular at the M4P's summer school held annually in Giggleswick, near Settle. He tried his hand at anything and everything it seems from Singing, Dancing, Ukulele and even Conducting: *Wiggletick at Giggleswick*.

Indeed, keen to utilise what he had learnt at summer school, he offered his conducting services as back up to Kate and Joe for our band in the period between Rosie's departure (Oct 2019) and Alan's arrival (Jan 2020). Although his services were not required you had to admire his enthusiasm to support where he felt he could. **Where there's a challenge, there's a Norman.**



**M4P Summer School photo at Giggleswick School.**

After some intense 'Where's Norman?' searching, I think Norman can be found on the 2<sup>nd</sup> row back 6<sup>th</sup> from the right identified by what appear to be the blue straps of his school ruck sack? See if you agree?

### The website announcement from M4P on hearing of Norman's passing:

It is with deep regret I have to announce the passing of a friend and Giggleswick stalwart. Mr Norman Davies died at the age of 95.5 after a short illness. He was an amazing character, and brought his own uniqueness to Summer School; he will be missed. RIP Norman

**And just a couple of the 57 tributes on their Facebook page along with a picture of Norman singing 'Misty' - available on YouTube:**

Karen Greenhouse

I am so deeply sad to hear about Norman. What a character and beautiful person he was. I offer heartfelt sympathy to everyone who knew him because he will leave a huge gap behind. I absolutely loved seeing him every year at Giggleswick. It was a joy and a privilege and one of the highlights of my year. Sitting next to him in Chris's ukelele class and hearing Steve's lovely ever patient voice helping him find the right chords! So many giggles! Being whisked around on the dance floor by this champion ballroom dancer as his lucky partner once a year was a rare treat that I looked forward to. What a memory, what a maverick and what a man! God bless you Norman ❤️❤️❤️xxx

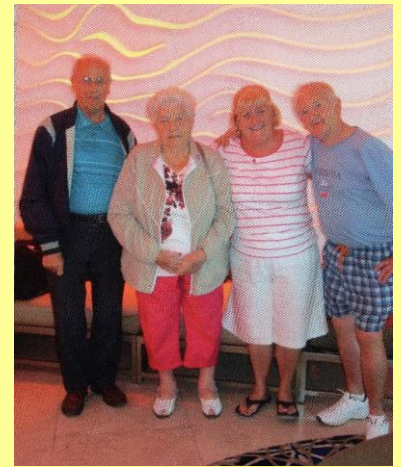
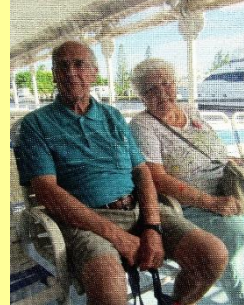
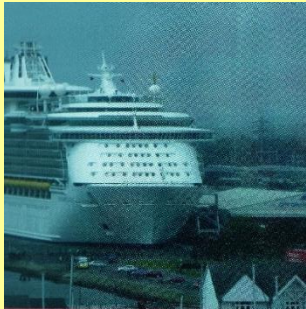


Alison Touchstone

I am very sorry to hear the news that Norman is no longer with us. I first met him 3 years ago at Giggleswick, when I was a wallflower at the evening dance. Norman came up and asked me in a very formal and gentlemanly way to partner him. I explained that I had two left feet and didn't know how. Norman said, "Don't worry about that - I'll just shove you round." Invitation accepted. Well! What an amazing experience and a privilege to be "shoved round" by this champion ballroom dancer! The first and last man I have ever allowed to shove me round. I was extremely disappointed that M4P was cancelled in 2020, in part because I was really looking forward to another dance with Norman, and it did cross my mind that, with his being so elderly, there might never be another opportunity. I will treasure the memory, along with fond memories of him in his first ukelele classes - he wanted to know absolutely EVERYTHING about the instrument, IMMEDIATELY! RIP Norman.

**Nautical Norman 2013 – At the age of 88 he at last managed to get on that cruise:**

For his many years Norman was the band's chief 'brewer uppa' during rehearsal breaks where for 20p you would get a fine brew and a biscuit (that price has remained constant since we formed the band in 1993). He often joked that the 20p's were his secret fund for a once in a lifetime cruise. Well, in 2013 **Eddie and Margaret Humphreys** and **Rosa Slater**, (*time served stalwarts of Crumpsall's Scouting, Guiding and Banding community - Eddie still plays Last Post with us each November*) invited him to join them on a cruise to Fort Lauderdale, Miami, Florida (via the Bahamas). Norman jumped at the chance, particularly as he could arrange to meet an old school friend who now lived in Florida. Thanks to Margaret for digging out the photos:



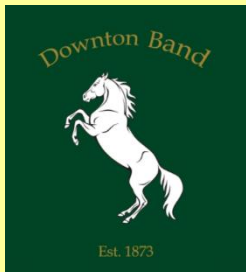
**Norman on Parade 1963:**

This rare colour photograph of the **Gravel Lane Methodist Church Brass Band** on the white walks of 7<sup>th</sup> June 1963 appeared in the Salford City Reporter at the time.

Norman can be seen on **trombone** in the centre of the front rank behind the out of step Drum Major who was clearly distracted by a shout from the press photographer 😊



**Norman guesting with the Downton Band: Summer 2019 – From Gravel Lane to Gravel Close:**



Several of Norman's relatives are involved with the Downton Band and have kindly forwarded a picture of Norman, guesting with them in the summer of 2019. He would often visit his relatives each summer, and also at Christmas when he would take in a pantomime and borrow a trombone to join them in playing carols in the village.

Norman is pictured third trombone along the line with the young gentleman nearest the camera being one of Norman's relatives who superbly played *Amazing Grace* in a duet by Norman's graveside at his funeral. The Downton Band, rehearsing from their band room on **Gravel Close**, was established in 1873 and is a village band (Downton being near Salisbury) that boasts 4 sections: **Senior Band**, that performs across the UK, **Jubilee Brass** (available for fetes and parties), **Training Band** and a **Beginners Band** (open to anyone who wants to learn an instrument for just £1 per week!). Maybe, in memory of Norman, we could arrange a joint event at some point? **Think he'd like that, and I happily extend the invitation to discuss further. RF**



## Crumpsall Concert Band:

Primarily, our band began life as a Youth Marching Band in 1993 but soon developed a parallel Concert Band dynamic which attracted the attention of more senior players, including Norman. By the turn of the century the band was exclusively a concert band and soon after, the Crumpsall Comets Concert Band was renamed to the familiar CCB used to this day.

Trombonist Norman enjoyed a long association in our ranks and from 2012 also took on the role of 'Chief Brewer Uppa.' In all his bands and activities throughout his life, he always seemed to pick up secondary duties based around treasury and / or brewing up and he embraced them all. The preceding articles have hopefully provided a flavour of Norman - a life well lived - and his ties to our band, but I have included the selection of pictures below to underline his unique and valued presence in our midst; I reflect sadly, the likes of which we are unlikely to see again:



Summer Concert, July 2019 and what ended up being Norman's final performance with the band (this being our last full band engagement of the year although it wasn't planned to be at the time of this picture). Norman is 5<sup>th</sup> from the right on the second row.

### Pre lockdown:

One of our final physical indoor rehearsals in early 2020 under the baton of our new conductor Alan Cottrill. Norman loved the music and energy that Alan and his wife Jane brought to the band and that was cruelly curtailed



as with everything else in normal life, by the pandemic. The nine rehearsals up to lockdown in early 2020 were certainly special and the trombone section swelled from 3 to 7 almost overnight. Norman loved it. You can just see Norman's shoulders (in his famous blue jumper) and trombone and far right in brewing up mode whilst in conversation with our Electric Bass playing Treasurer, Stuart, during our mid-rehearsal break. It will take some getting used to not having Norman around anymore when we do eventually start back; especially at break time when his joviality and general chatiness was at its most ebullient.



For many years our Trombone Section comprised just two players as pictured left on the back row at a rehearsal in 2005; Norman (right) of course and Andrew Shaw, the band's longest serving member who has been with us from the very start in July 1993, with unbroken service ever since.

Andrew, more than anyone in the band, helped Norman through rehearsals: if he couldn't hear the conductor or wondered where we were up to in a particular piece or covered for any unintended mishaps that drew the attention of the Conductor.

After the first play through of a contemporary piece that Norman had clearly never heard – an arrangement of the White Stripes' 'Seven Nation Army' in 2018, Norman declared to Andrew in his famous loud whisper voice that no one else was supposed to hear but passing pedestrians could pick up, "Where's the tune?" to which Andrew rolled his eyes and declared, "Norman, that was the tune".

On our WhatsApp group, following the announcement of Norman's passing, Andrew posted a simple note that said so much: "Even now God is saying to Saint Peter "who hit that note?". God bless you Norman, I'm proud to have sat next to you for all those years"

## Norman Gets into Character one final time:

On the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December 2019, we split the band in two because of venue space constraints as the band were booked to play three sessions per day for the Tangled Dance Co magic themed Christmas Production – ‘Frosted by Magic’ at Salford’s historic Tudor period, Ordsall Hall.

On 20<sup>th</sup> November, the TDC production team paid us a visit at our rehearsal to discuss logistics for the performances and also undertake a photo shoot for their ‘Frosted By Magic’ commemorative brochure.

Although Norman was unavailable for either half of the band for the weekend itself, he was first into the dressing up bag for the photo shoot, striking his trombone pose as pictured 😊.



Norman was so well liked and respected within the band and some initial tributes can be found on the band’s Facebook page and in the main April 2021 Newsletter. Thanks

## Crumpsall Park Methodist Church 1940 – 1974 / Methodist Church Crumpsall 1976 – 2021; Church/Scouting /Banding – always a voluntary role embraced by Norman where’er he went:

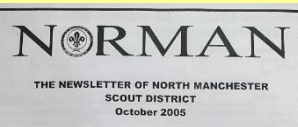
Following his move with his family from Cheetham to Wilton Road, Crumpsall in around 1940 teenaged Norman had a brief spell in St Margaret’s Scouts before joining the 191<sup>st</sup> Scouts at St Matthew’s. He didn’t settle at either and his friend, Eric Rogerson, came to see him and persuaded him to join the 209<sup>th</sup> Scout Group at **Crumpsall Park Methodist Church** where he felt instantly at home. The Scout Master at the time was a Scottish Gentleman by the name of Mr Letchnick; known to his charges as ‘Skip’. Being of an age, it wasn’t long before Norman graduated to the Rover Scouts (much later to be known as Venture Scouts and latterly Explorers) and he became **Treasurer** for the famous Rover Scout County camp base, **Cumberland Cottage**, in Wildboar Clough, Cheshire until



conscription took him into the armed forces at aged 18 for the remainder of WWII and the immediate post-war period. Pictured top right: Our Founder **Derek Farnell** along with Trombonist **Cliff Bevan**; both Rover Scouts with the **209<sup>th</sup> Scout Band** playing outside **Cumberland Cottage** for a Scout County Garden Party in June 1951 after first marching to the Cottage pictured bottom right.



Although some years after Norman had been Treasurer of the Cottage base, these pictures give a flavour of Norman’s legacy and the continued use of the Cottage by the 209<sup>th</sup> Scout Group and its band.



While you're looking out your winter woollies, I shall be enjoying an equatorial Spring in Peru, as a member of a Christian Aid team. Do think of me sometimes, and note the earlier deadline for the November Norman.



The November deadline is Monday October 17. I apologise to our faithful contributors, pleading that I shall be in far-off Peru on the usual deadline. THIS PAGE IS SPONSORED BY THE F.O.N.S. FRIENDS OF NORTH SCOUTING

Back in civilian life and back in Crumpsall, Norman always had fond memories of his Scouting exploits in the 209<sup>th</sup> and the lifelong friendships he forged as a result. Later, he became an active member of **FONS (Friends Of North [Mcr] Scouting)**, who in turn sponsored the District Scouting Magazine that was around from the 1980s into the new millenium entitled ‘**The NORMAN**’; an amalgam of the **NORTH MANchester** Scout District.

Norman went onto play with many bands before settling with us in the 1990’s, including **Tottington Brass Band** (where he was almost immediately appointed **Treasurer**), **Prestwich Brass Band** and **Gravel Lane Methodist Brass Band**. Have Trombone will travel. Besides being the main ‘**Brewer Uppa**’ for our band for many years he often performed this never under appreciated role with other bands too. He also had a stint helping with the early cataloguing of our **Music Library** in the early 2010s.

Since joining the **209<sup>th</sup> Scout Group** based at **Crumpsall Park Methodist Church**, the Church naturally became his chosen place of worship. The ‘old church’ (which was actually comparatively new when Norman was born) was knocked down along with the Cheetham Hill Methodist Church in late 1974 and the two congregations merged and have worshipped hence forth at the **Methodist Church Crumpsall** built on the site of the ‘old Church’ and opened in January 1976. Churches old and new pictured right.

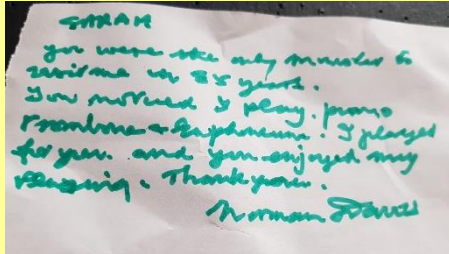


In all his years belonging to the Methodist Church in Crumpsall he has undertaken many roles, some more glamorous than others, such as **Leading Lady** in the Men’s Pantomimes (as seen earlier). He served as long time **pianist / organist** on the rota for services and undertook **treasury roles** such as taking the 20p entrance money at the door for regular **Jumble Sales** (there’s a 20p theme developing here) and most recently (pre-lockdown) he could be found in the church office after a service **counting the collection** with a trusty cup of tea close at hand.

Norman took an active role in church life, helping where needed and supporting always. Back in the 1980’s he always joined in with the festive annual carol playing around the streets of Crumpsall in aid of **National Children’s Home** (Action for Children). Only once do

I remember him playing with the small group of musicians as usually he was helping **Hartley Watts** coordinate the singers and knocking on doors to elicit donations. He would constantly request the musicians play *Ding Dong Merrily on High*, usually when we had nearly finished a three hour stint and our lips were akin to frozen rubber. Those in the know, know this is a demanding blow even when relatively fresh but we tried to oblige where we could 😊. Back at the church for welcome hot soup and crusty bread afterwards, Norman would usually be helping out on the treasury side, counting the money that would then be sent on to the charity.

In 2019, during a bit of a rough spell healthwise, he received a pastoral home visit from the church's then Minister, **Sarah Lowe**. Sarah herself was suffering a terminal illness at the time but took the time to visit Norman. Sadly, after a long and brave battle, Sarah succumbed to her illness on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020 and, at her funeral on 6<sup>th</sup> February, attendees were invited to record their fond memories of Sarah. Norman was so moved as follows:



**Sarah,**

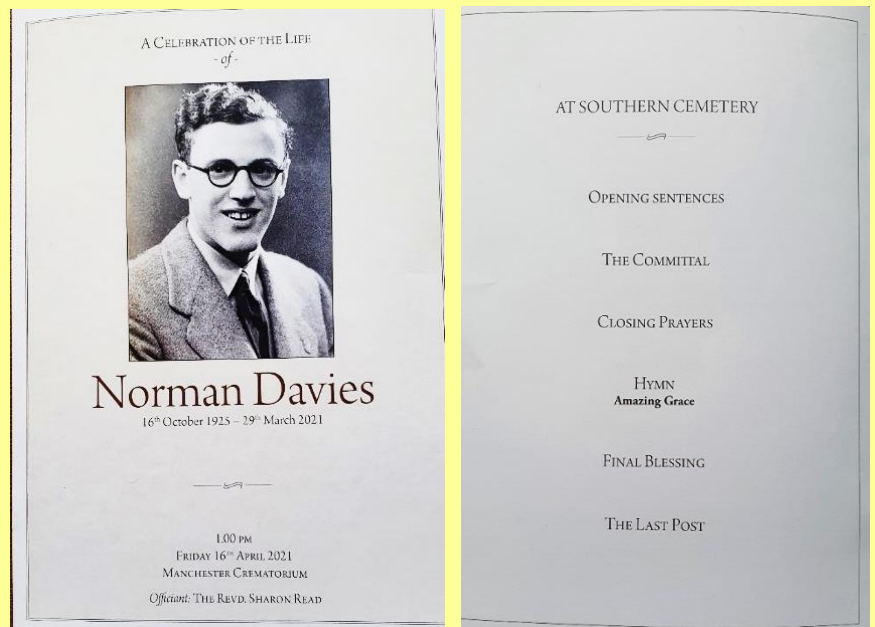
**You were the only Minister to visit me in 85 years. You mentioned I play piano, trombone and euphonium. I played for you and you enjoyed my playing. Thank you. Norman Davies**

On behalf of the church, despite her personal battles, Sarah certainly made a positive and lasting impression on Norman and he clearly appreciated her visit and genuine interest in his musical passions. After all of his support to the church over so many decades it is lovely to think he got something back on a very personal level when he himself needed support.

### **Eternal Rest:**

In a service conducted by Methodist Church Crumpsall's present minister, The Rev'd Sharon Read, in the Old Chapel at Manchester Crematorium on a lovely sunny afternoon on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April, Norman's story was told. He was laid to rest in a follow-up service in the dappled shade of a budding mature Horse Chestnut tree in the adjacent Southern Cemetery.

The simple, moving graveside committal led by Rev'd Read included two of Norman's young relatives playing a Tenor Horn / Trombone duet of *Amazing Grace* and the service was rounded off with the sounding of *Last Post*. Grateful thanks to Dave Lynch and Victoria Fullen who joined me on bugle in this final act of commemoration of Norman's earthly life which was appreciated by all concerned.



A subsequent note received from relative, Rosemary Parry, along with a generous donation to band funds read as follows:

**Dear Rob and all members of the band,**

**Here is a small donation to Crumpsall Concert Band in memory of our dear relative Norman. We hope it will help to provide for something useful / or fun! Norman would've wanted that!**

**Also, extra special thanks Rob and Victoria and David for coming to Norman's funeral and playing the 'Last Post'. It was a fitting tribute to him and echoed around the sunny cemetery, along with the birds 'singing'. It was wonderful and a perfect end. With thanks, Rosemary & Mike Parry and my Brother, Joe Dilger.**

### **THE LAST BIT: Thanks for the memories:**

**Thanks to everyone referenced in this Commemorative Supplement and all those who contributed articles and pictures.**

**We hope you enjoyed this commemoration and celebration and whilst I feel we have barely scratched the surface, I trust the summary provided does at least some small justice to Norman's life of music and service.**

**Apologies for any unintended omissions that would doubtless be enough to create a second supplement. Thanks also to everyone who has been able to make a donation to the Crumpsall Concert Band and / or 434<sup>th</sup> Manchester Scout Group in Norman's memory. Very much appreciated.**

**Thanks for reading. Rob**