

# HOT TICKETS



CHRIS GIBSON

"Bridging the Atlantic" concert, Colchester, England, May 2011.

## THE BRITISH ARE COMING!

The Harwich Royal British Legion Brass Band will perform "Bridging the Atlantic," the final concert of its North American Eastern and Mid-Atlantic Seaboard tour, at 7 p.m. Saturday at the City Hall Concert Pavilion, 31 South Summit Ave., Gaithersburg. The diverse repertoire of the 35 brass and percussion players encompasses contemporary, traditional, light classical, patriotic, jazz, big band, and stage and screen themes. Admission to the City of Gaithersburg's On Stage Weekend Concert series is free. Call 301-258-6350 or visit [www.gaithersburgmd.gov/onstage](http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov/onstage).

Gaithersburg Gazette  
Maryland USA  
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# Town band win fame on TV in Harwich, US

CONCERTS, a television appearance, and even a marriage proposal were the highlights of a brass band's trip to their namesake town in America.

The Harwich Royal British Legion Band spent 16 days touring the US eastern seaboard, starting at Cape Cod, after years of fundraising for the trip.

Musical director Antony Sanders and chairman Brian Harmer were interviewed in a television programme broadcast by the local TV station Channel 18 in Harwich, Massachusetts.

The band's first concert was at Cape Cod Technical High School, alongside the Harwich Town Band.

A second was moved from a town bandstand to a community centre, because of a thunderstorm.

Hannah Rose, tenor korn youth member, said: "It was a brilliant holi-

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day. This was my first flight and first visit abroad, and I had a fantastic time."

Amanda Saywell, trombone player, got engaged on the trip, when her boyfriend, Robert Dack, proposed at the top of the Empire State building.

She said: "The trip was such a fantastic experience.

"I don't really have enough words to describe it but I have memories I will cherish forever."

Along with the 23 members of the Harwich band on the trip, there were 13 members of the Portsmouth band.

The two bands went on to play a concert in Prescott Park, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, as well as Trinity Church, in Wall Street, New York, the East River Amphitheatre, near Chinatown, and the John F Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts, where the performances were



**PERFORMANCE:** The band in action at Trinity Church, New York

streamed live on the internet. Mr Harmer said: "With a project this size, everything ran very smoothly and the trip was successful, from a musical and civic perspective.

"I believe the bond of friendship between Harwich UK and Harwich Massachusetts has definitely been strengthened by our visit".



**TIES:** Brian Harmer presents Harwich, UK, mayor and mayoress Barry and Eleanor Brown with a declaration of friendship he was given in Harwich, USA  
Picture: MARIA FOWLER

# At last, chance to thank family for post-war help

THE once-in-a-lifetime trip to America gave one woman a chance to thank the charity that helped her family after the Second World War.

Georgina Cooper-Keeble, who went along on the Royal British Legion band trip, was invited to a tea party in Harwich, Massachusetts, to meet relatives of townfolk who sent food and clothing packages to her and her brothers.

The 70-year-old was just three weeks old when her father, George, died in the Second World War, and her mum was left to bring up three children alone.

But 62 years ago, in 1949, The Women's Group in Harwich, Massachusetts, sponsored her family, as part of the US Bundles for Britain scheme.

"They sent us packages of food, clothes, soap and books," Mrs Cooper-Keeble said. "My brother William remembers the tinned chicken. We used to look forward to the arrival of the parcels. A Mrs Snow would write to our mother to let her know one was coming.

"It was wonderful to get a parcel from America."

A special tea was laid on for the meeting, which saw Mrs Cooper-Keeble present an album of photos, cuttings and other memorabilia to Mrs Snow's granddaughter, Nancy Snow.



TRIP: Georgina Cooper-Keeble with a Channel 18 presenter, above right. Above left, Nancy Snow. Top, Mrs Cooper-Keeble pictured before her holiday, with brother William Leggett

Mrs Cooper-Keeble added: "The tea party went really well. It was really lovely, I couldn't have hoped for a better time.

"I was given a bag with Cape Cod on it and my brother, who was too ill to go, was given a T-

shirt and cap with Harwich on. He said he will wear the cap when he goes golfing."

The reunion was filmed and aired on the local television station, Channel 18, and can be viewed at [youtube.com/watch?v=d45qqJkt0hY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d45qqJkt0hY)

## National final for brass band

HARWICH'S Royal British Legion Brass Band is set to compete in the National Brass Band Championships finals for the first time this weekend.

The band, which has 27 members, will travel to Cheltenham Racecourse, in Gloucestershire, for the contest tomorrow.

They qualified for the finals after finishing second in the regional competition in Stevenage in March.

Brian Harmer, chairman of the band, said: "We have only recently returned from our tour of America, so have had to concentrate all our rehearsals into a short space of time."

"We have been working hard, but we are confident and looking forward to it."

The band will be playing Henry V by composer Ralph Vaughan Williams.

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## Band not brassed off with seventh

HARWICH'S Royal British Legion Brass Band hit the right note at the National Brass Band Championships finals.

The band was competing in the national finals for the first time after coming second in the regional competition in March.

The 27 members of the band made their way to Cheltenham Racecourse, in Gloucestershire, for the contest on Saturday.

Brian Harmer, chairman of the band, said the band came a respectable seventh out of 19 teams.

He said: "The performance was fine with only one or two glitches.

"I would have loved to have come first, but realistically seventh is a good result.

"Hopefully, we will be invited back or qualify again in the future.

"Everybody enjoyed the day. There was a little bit of tension, but we were not too nervous and we knew what we were doing.

"There were 19 teams and this was our first time at a national finals, so it wasn't too bad.

"It was an absolutely brilliant weekend and we gave a great performance, so we can hold our heads high."

The band played Henry V, by composer Ralph Vaughan Williams.

# Opening is music to the ears of residents

DOVERCOURT'S newly refurbished Edwardian bandstand struck the right note with residents at its official opening.

The bandstand, in Cliff Park, which has been restored to its former glory as part of a £45,000 scheme, was opened by Harwich mayor Barry Brown on Sunday before a performance by Harwich's Royal British Legion Brass Band.

by **JAMES DWAN**  
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Vandals had caused £200 damage to an electricity meter and 25 bricks two weeks ago, but Tendring Council repaired the damage in time for the ceremony.

Julie Harmer, of the Harwich Royal British Legion Brass Band, said: "Dovercourt was drenched in warm autumn sunshine and the band put on a traditional Sunday afternoon performance to mark the official opening.

"Mr Brown spoke to the

band and audience about new possibilities for the bandstand as a focal point in local music making.

"He was especially encouraged to see musicians of all ages playing in the band and also that the Harwich Royal British Legion Apprentice Band performed the second half of the concert along with a number of young brass players from Chase Lane Primary School."

Architect John Donnelly and project manager Paul Skeet were also at the event.

Funding for the refurbishment of the bandstand,

which was carried out by Manningtree's Rose Builders, came from Essex County Council, Tendring Council, the Essex Heritage Trust, the Essex Environment Trust and Harwich Town Council.

Stephen Mayzes, Tendring Council's cabinet member for tourism and community life, said: "The old bandstand, which dates back to the early 1900s, was back to its very best and the reopening was a success.

"It is part of the town's heritage and the project has been appreciated by many

people, some of whom turned out for the concert."

The works, which were completed in August, included rebuilding a plinth wall, repairing rotted timber posts, replacing the felt roof with slates and providing new lighting and a ramp.

The Harwich Royal Legion Brass Band is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year and will also be appearing at Clacton's West Cliff Theatre, in aid of the Poppy Appeal, on November 6 at 3pm.

● To book the bandstand free of charge, call Tendring Council on 01255 686662.

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PROUD: Brian Harmer presents the cheque to John Williams

Submitted picture

## Band's poppy appeal cheque

A FUNDRAISING band has handed over a cheque for £800 to this year's Poppy Appeal. The Harwich Royal British Legion Brass Band has raised the cash at concerts and events throughout the year. Band chairman Brian Harmer presented a cheque to John Williams, chairman of the Wix branch of the Royal British Legion, at its annual meeting last week. Mr Harmer said: "I am very proud that the band is able to donate such a large sum of money to the Poppy Appeal." The band holds its weekly rehearsals at Wix's Royal British Legion Hall.

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