**Local band in a bid to raise more than £18k for armed forces charity SSAFA**

Huntingdonshire Concert Band (HCB) has set their sights high in raising over £15k for the UK’s oldest armed forces charity SSAFA (the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association) with their 4th massed bands charity concert, this time with the Band of the Irish Guards, on Saturday 18th November 2017 at 7.30pm at the Hinchingbrooke Performing Arts Centre in Huntingdon.

This is the 4th time that HCB has invited a military band to join them to raised funds for SSAFA. SSAFA is the oldest military charity in the UK and does a huge amount on a national, and local level, to help former military personnel after they have left the forces. Wing Commander Bob Carr OBE of the Cambridgeshire SSAFA branch says ‘HCB has always worked so hard in making the concerts such an outstanding success by providing first class entertainment for very appreciative audiences, enabling us to raise the profile of SSAFA and the important work that SSAFA undertakes’.

SSAFA is a particularly appropriate charity for the band, given that the founder Laurie Hurst was an RAF musician for 25 years and the current Musical Director spent 9 years as a French horn player in the Army Music Services, ending his time with the Band and Orchestra of the Royal Artillery.

Over the last 6 years, HCB has raised over £14k for SSAFA from concerts with 3 different military concert bands, who have all agreed to forego their usual concert fee to raise more funds for the charity.

HCB’s Musical Director David McClintock says ‘We have developed rather a unique approach to these concerts. We invite an outstanding military band to join us, which allows us to raise even more money for SSAFA. We feel very privileged that the Band of the Irish Guards has agreed to join us again for our charity concert this year. We very much look forward to the experience of rehearsing and then performing alongside them at the concert. I know that the standard of playing will be spectacular and not-to-be-missed.’

This concert follows previously successful military massed bands Charity concerts when HCB performed alongside the Band of the Royal Artillery in 2010, The Band of the RAF Regiment in 2013 and most recently, the Band of the Irish Guards in 2015.

‘It is a pleasure to be invited back by HCB after the last hugely successful sell out concert in 2015‘ says Major Bruce Miller, Musical Director of the Band of the Irish Guards. ‘We hope to raise a significant amount for SSAFA, who continue to provide wonderful service for those in need. We really enjoyed working with the talented musicians in HCB for the last concert and are very much looking forward to this year’s event.’

HCB also regularly perform in support of with other local organisations and charities. In its 25 year history, the band has raised over £20k for other local and national charities including the Cancer Research UK, Mind, Alzheimer’s Society and The SMA Trust. This amount is in addition to the predicted £18k for SSAFA.

HCB has been rehearsing and performing in the Huntingdon area for over 25 years, having been set up by renowned local musician Laurie Hurst. It’s one of only 2 Concert bands in Cambridgeshire and as such, enjoys very good audiences at the 10 concerts each year. Concerts range in style from military marches, to musicals, to swing and jazz but also more challenging symphonic sounds, often only heard at orchestral concerts.

The concert programme will include challenging symphonic pieces and popular band favourites including *Huntingdon Celebration*, a piece commissioned for the band in 2003 to celebrate their 10th anniversary.

This unique concert is for the diary and one not to be missed! The 2015 concert was a sell out so book tickets quickly to get the best seats!

Tickets are £16 and available from 1st September from www.ticketsource.co.uk/hinchingbrookePAC or via telephone on 01480 375678.

NOTES:

Concert Venue Hinchingbrooke Performing Arts Centre, Huntingdon, PE29 3BN [www.hhpac.co.uk](http://www.hhpac.co.uk)

Tickets [www.ticketsource.co.uk/hinchingbrookepac](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/hinchingbrookepac) or 01480 375678

HCB Website [www.hcband.co.uk](http://www.hcband.co.uk)

Facebook www.facebook.co.uk/huntsconcertband

Twitter @HCBtweets

Musical Director David McClintock [md@hcband.co.uk](mailto:md@hcband.co.uk)

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SSAFA has been chosen by HCB to be the charity for this Concert not only for the fantastic work it continues to do for British Forces Families for the past 127 years but because of the Forces links with HCB. The band’s founder, Laurie Hurst, was a musician with the RAF for 25 years. The current Musical Director, David McClintock also served as an Army Musician for 9 years, finishing with the premier band of the British Army, The Royal Artillery Band and Orchestra.

Local SSAFA contact:

Wing Commander Bob Carr OBE RAF (Rtd)

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