



Simon Frederick Tranter

Mainly known as Fred, was born 22nd July 1920 in Lower Gormal near Dudley. At the Age of 6 Fred played the trumpet and cornet in the local Methodist Sunday school. At the age of 13 he was made principle cornet player with the band he played in, his talent and quality playing the instrument saw him playing with a number of quality bands and jazz bands.

Fred became the principle cornet player for the Gillingham Imperial Silver Band then in 1973 was appointed Musical Director.

Fred's main hobby was always brass banding, he worked relentlessly and with to uplift the standards of his local band. He embarked on training young people Mere and Gillingham Band. Their tonal qualities and playing abilities, which he seemed able to impart to every trainee, produced results at a very high levels. players swept all before them in competitions and set standards which other bands set out to emulate.

They were eventually invited to play at the presentations ceremony of the National Brass Band Championships at the Royal Albert Hall. This was without precedent for the five counties. These quality young players fed into the senior band which uplifted the band into the higher sections of brass playing in Wessex.

Fred's players were encouraged to become full time musicians. The Royal Marine Band, the Scots Guards, and the Devon and Dorset Bands were all recipients of Gillingham Band trainees. A musical College Principle is also listed amongst ex-trainees.

He held all records not only in brass banding, but football, boxing, tennis and received several awards in the fire service. Fred led the band at 43 consecutive Gillingham and Marnhull Remembrance Day Parades. The band under his baton played at Salisbury Cathedral, all the local area's carnivals, concerts and parades. He set up the long standing twinning of the band with Hille of Germany, and Le Neubourg in France which is Gillingham's twinned town.

Fred truly was a talented man in so many areas and was honoured many times for the work he had contributed towards music.

In 1996 he was made a Freeman of Gillingham, which Fred was extremely proud and honoured with.

Taken from a Memorial Concert programme in 2010 – Thanks to P Gatehouse, Gillingham Imperial Silver Band