

## DCB Weekly

### Issue 10

**Saturday 23rd May 2020**



Welcome to the tenth edition of the DCB newsletter. Thank you to everyone who took part in our virtual quiz on Thursday evening, and congratulations to the winning team, **The Minimum Minims** (Alison McCree, Ann, Cameron, Laura and Neil), who impressed us with their knowledge of everything from Disney to ducks!

If you weren't able to join us on Thursday, we hope to organise a similar quiz evening again soon.

To avoid a quiz overload, there's no quiz in this week's newsletter, but the quiz will be back next week.

### Welcome from the Chair

Good morning everyone. It was lovely to see so many of you on our Zoom chat last weekend and at our inaugural quiz on Thursday evening - I hope you enjoyed it, and thanks to our two quiz masters, Susan and Ruth! Well done to team Minimum Minims!

This week is Mental Health Awareness Week with its message being kindness, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Being kind and compassionate has a positive effect on our own mental health, strengthening bonds and relationships both personally and in the wider community.

As we find ourselves in these ongoing strange and difficult times, it really is important that we look after ourselves, and others, both mentally and physically. Playing music is a great way to do this, and I would definitely recommend getting together, virtually of course, for face to face contact and some very interesting playing! It really is great fun and a good way stay in contact and stay well. Why not give it a go, and let us know your lockdown stories!

Stay safe, stay well.



## **Musical Director's update**

Good morning everyone and I really hope that you enjoyed the Reich clapping music last week. I also hope that you had a chance to try the different clapping patterns that were laid out on the display sheet.

Many of you here, and in other groups, have said how difficult it is to play with a click track and/or another part for recordings. With that in mind I have made up a little practise chart to help. Playing to a click is very difficult for two main reasons:

1. It shows up any little technical issues we may have as players.
2. We cannot listen to our own sound and nothing else. That click or other recorded part takes our attention away from any number of things. Add that to the slight pressure you put on yourselves to be perfect for the recording.....it all makes it rather tense if we are not careful!

To make this easier try the following routine:

Use your metronome (download the app for your phone if you haven't got one).

### **Task one!**

1. Set to crotchet = 60

Choose a middle register note and 4 semibreves.

2. Repeat but play minims for 4 bars
3. Repeat for crotchets
4. Repeat for quavers.
5. Repeat for semi-quavers

Aim to have really clear articulation right on the click each time or wherever the notes fall.

### **Task two!**

1. Try changing notes on all the above patterns. Alternate notes of pitch are good to start with.
2. Play scales on the above patterns in task one.
3. Try varying volumes and see how this changes your articulation. It may well make things more difficult in extreme dynamics.

*(continued overleaf)*

### Task three!

Crochet = 96

1. Create rhythmical patterns.

i.e. dotted crochet and quavers are good. You should try to really feel the half beat between the clicks.

Dotted quaver, semiquaver patterns are good. Only two notes on one pitch then change. Very good to get fingers moving in time.

2. Create any of your own patterns.

### Task four!

Crotchet = 120

1. Repeat all of task one.

Finally, if you want to recreate the click track feeling then play the click on headphones while you play.

If you move one side of the phones off your ear then you can hear more of your sound, but have the click in one ear only.

Just a last thought.

Try playing the Reich clapping patterns from last week to different tempos on the click. Choose one note to start and perhaps change pitch on each repeat! Good luck with that one!

Glyn.....this will all work a treat on your cowbell!!! 😊



## Meet the band

This week, **Colin** shares a fascinating story of his French horn playing journey.

### How on earth did it come to this? Colin and the horn

Music has always been around for me from my grandmother's wind-up gramophone and 78 rpm records, the wireless with my mother before I went to school, and every subsequent format. I suppose my father's rather challenged efforts at playing the oboe opened my ears to orchestral music. He had a number of oboe parts for works that he had played in the University of Liverpool orchestra, where you had to buy your own part, including Delius' La Calinda which has a fine oboe tune repeated at the end in slower tempo by the horn; it's a real long note and breathing tester. So there's a latent if artificial connection to the horn from early childhood. I first got my hands on a horn, however, in third year of secondary school when I found an old French piston horn in a dusty cupboard in the school music department and 'wanted to play it', to quote the Flanders and Swann parody of Mozart's famous concerto rondo.

I wish I still had the genuine French horn because it blew beautifully and would be a museum piece now. Anyway, with the help and advice of my horn teacher, Michael Ogonovsky, who was then the principal horn of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, I moved on to the modern rotary valve double horn and little by little into more and more challenging playing. The first really big orchestra I played in was the Merseyside Youth Orchestra which rehearsed in the Philharmonic Hall on Sunday mornings. What a fine place for your weekly rehearsal. Almost by accident I became first horn because the incumbent principal failed to turn up on time to a concert and I had to step up to play Rimsky Korsakoff's Scheherazade. Towards the end of my stint in the MYO a 12 year old boy came to join the percussion section and stood behind me banging things. It is the fate of horn players to have things banged by their ears including in the DCB. This 12 year old was the young Simon Rattle who was getting his first experience in a large orchestra. I later played first horn in the first public concert that he conducted and didn't he do well?

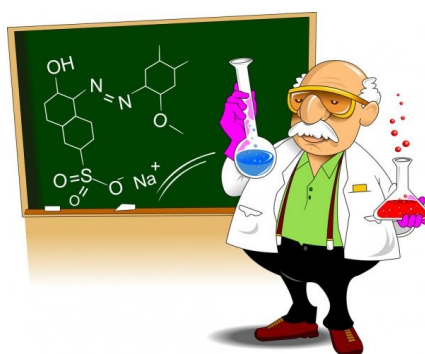


I was very lucky to be developing my horn playing in Liverpool in the late 1960s because there was a very fluid movement between the full time professionals and the competent amateurs like me. My primary tasks at that time were getting my chemistry BSc and PhD. By the time I was researching for my PhD Michael Ogonovsky had stood down from the first horn seat at the RLPO and it had been taken by a rather gruff but friendly Scotsman by the name of Andy Woodburn, whom Karen knows. Andy had no time for orchestral managers and one January 1<sup>st</sup> failed to turn up for a rehearsal for a New Year's Day concert, can't think why. Michael suggested that they call me in and so, on half a rehearsal, I did my first major professional orchestral concert. This got me on to the list of approved extra players (I was number 3 in call up sequence) and the opportunity to play in several of the big Mahler symphonies that were receiving their first performances in Liverpool. I bumped-up a lot for Andy, which was difficult because he was completely deaf in his left ear and couldn't hear when you were playing! Although my playing was up to it, I decided that horn playing was not my best career choice; I didn't think I was quite good enough in the competitive musical world.

After completing my PhD I did research in Zurich for two years and the horn was my admission card to Swiss society outside science. It has been my parallel existence ever since. I came to Glasgow and the University of Strathclyde's Department of Pure and Applied Chemistry in 1972 and have continued teaching and researching there ever since, alongside playing the horn in all sorts of orchestras and bands. For me one of the outstanding concerts was with the Glasgow Orchestral Society in the 1980s when John Sharp, Norman MacDougall, and Dougie Craig and I gave what we believe to have been the first performance of the Schumann Konzertstück for 4 horns and Orchestra in Scotland; Norman was a professional historian of Scottish History and we took his word for it. Dougie Craig, I learned many years later from Karen, was a mate of Andy Woodburn. Small world.

I suppose that my quirks in music have been not just playing, but composing and founding orchestras and bands. In 1996 when Strathclyde Region was disaggregated I was well aware that the closure of the Strathclyde Schools' Symphony Orchestra would be a major loss to young instrumentalists, including my younger son, Martin. As one of the University of Strathclyde's senior management team at the time, I was able to do something about it by creating a new charitable Trust to run what are known as the West of Scotland Schools Symphony Orchestra and Concert Band with substantial operational support from the University. I chaired the Trust for 20 years and stood down after successful tours of Italy and Austria, that sadly would not be possible now. Several thousand young musicians have now had opportunities to learn and play at a high level through 'West'.

Also at the University of Strathclyde with Alan Tavener I founded the University Concert Band which I directed also for 20 years until 2010. Neil and Sula were members of the Band during their student days. In the early years of the band we didn't have a balanced ensemble and it was necessary to add parts or, as I found preferable, to arrange music for the available players. I had arranged music for the family and for student Shakespearean productions before but the band arrangements took things to a higher level. The Stop Time Rag is one of my arrangements that the DCB has played. I taught myself to compose through arranging and A Three Course Meal is the substantial piece that the DCB has played. There's a back catalogue too including an unperformed 2-act musical entitled 'Mrs McWheedle's Rant'! After 20 years I decided it was time to hand over the University Concert Band to someone else and, to fill the musical gap, I joined the DCB, ... which is how it came to this! I still play the horn after nearly 60 years and still do my chemistry research after nearly 50 years. We're currently trying to see if we can use our compounds to treat COVID-19! Everything has its time.



Thank you Colin for sharing such an interesting story.

If you would like to contribute something for a future newsletter, either on your own or with members of your section, please get in touch via the usual email address - [dunbartonshireconcertband@gmail.com](mailto:dunbartonshireconcertband@gmail.com). We would be delighted to hear from you!



**Jonathan** has shared his experience of recording a 'solo' bassoon quartet. Jonathan says "With all the inspiring examples of lockdown music making from DCB members I was beginning to feel that I should be trying something new so I've embarked on multitrack recording for the first time.

I chose the first movement, Basse Danse, from Peter Warlock's Capriol Suite arranged for bassoon quartet by Lisa Portus and have spent a couple of happy evenings trying to put the parts together in a way that sounds vaguely coordinated. So far it is a 'work in progress' and there's a long way to go before it's a 'final performance' but it's been good fun.

In the bassoon quartet arrangement there are a couple of 'scrunchy' chords which are in the original version but with the notes more widely spaced and a different inversion which sound much better - amazing what you learn when you have to play all the parts! And I haven't yet worked out how to prevent sound 'bleeding' from one track to another - that's why you can hear the metronome intro even though I'd muted the click track! Perhaps one of our DCB technical wizards can help me out with this. Must oil my bassoon too although I think that the keywork will still be heard as well as the music.

For those interested in what I've used, I have a Samson Meteor studio mic which plugs straight into my laptop and I've used the 'Garageband' app to control the separate recording tracks - this comes with the MacBook operating system.

So what is it that I've learned so far?

- It's much more difficult than I thought to make a satisfying recording!
- Start by making a 'click track' - I just recorded my metronome for the number of bars in the movement plus a couple to use as an intro.
- Then play and record the part with the fewest rests first - it's quite difficult to time rest bars accurately, even with the metronome running.
- Then add the other parts - I found that recording the lower parts first and then adding the upper parts worked for me.
- I've been underusing my metronome for years!
- Listening to your own playing is not always a good experience - it turns out that all those things that Robert and Michelle say about out of tune notes, mistimings, note lengths and not enough dynamics are actually true!
- Nothing is as good as playing together with DCB friends but making this recording is much more fun than doing nothing."

If you'd like to hear Jonathan's recording, it can be found on the DCB website [here](#).



**Make Music Day** is the UK's largest single-day music event and the world's biggest celebration of music, taking place in 125 countries on 21st June annually. Although we can't meet up as a band, we can still join in with the celebrations and feel part of a community of musicians by joining in with the digital version of Make Music Day UK.

This year, Making Music has created a digital project for all members of Making Music groups to be part of, commissioning a special arrangement of the Make Music Day anthem, *Bring Me Sunshine*. Musicians are encouraged to submit a video of themselves playing their part individually. The videos will then be edited together by Making Music to create a virtual ensemble featuring players and singers from across the UK. The finished video will be broadcast on 21st June on the official Make Music Day UK channel and hopefully on a global livestream too.

### **Why not have a look at the details and give it a go?**

If you'd like to take part, you firstly need to register with Making Music using the link below:

<https://www.makingmusic.org.uk/user/register>

Once you've registered, log in and link to DCB as follows:

- Click on 'My Dashboard' at the top of the screen
- Click the plus (+) sign to expand the 'My Account' box if this is hidden
- Choose 'Link a member group to my account'
- Type 'Dunbartonshire Concert Band' into the group name box on the next screen, then click submit

Once your request has been approved (you'll receive an email confirmation), click the link below:

<https://www.makingmusic.org.uk/opportunities/make-music-day>

Then click the 'find out more' button to access full instructions, a backing track and instrumental parts.

The deadline for the submission of recordings is **9am on Monday 8th June**.



Don't forget that **John** now has his own YouTube channel where you can find his vlogs.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu3UrY4nWf\\_7Z00c\\_6lIEjw?view](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu3UrY4nWf_7Z00c_6lIEjw?view)

**John** also has another blog, *The News from Scotland*, that he began writing many years ago and has recently started again. Subjects vary from family fun, to politics, to spirituality. John moved to Scotland in July 2008 and has written a number of posts about his transition to Scottish life. An extract from one of John's blog posts is below, with a link to the remainder of the article.

#### **For Mrs. Kemp**

How could I forget Mrs. Kemp? Who could ever forget Mrs. Kemp? A figure like that looms large in the weave of characters and experiences that form a child in his first years beyond the familiar bounds of home life. Mrs. Effie Kemp taught music at my elementary school and I first fell under her tutelage at the tender age of 9 when I started the obligatory music training in the 4th grade. Everyone did math and reading and writing, art and PE, and everyone did music as well and, at A.P. Beutel Elementary they did it with Mrs. Kemp.

She was a singular character and like most artsy people she approached life from the creative side and was in consequence unlike my other teachers. Mrs. Kemp wore a lot of makeup and dressed in fancy, stylish clothes. She had a lot of jewellery and blinged her ears and fingers with a variety of accessories that sparkled in a way that made my other teachers look frumpy and dull, but it was her perfume that blew my mind.

She was one of those women who must douse themselves in the stuff, splashing it liberally and extravagantly as if she were anointing the Saviour's feet. "This perfume could have been sold for a years' wages!" "Yes," she might have answered, "and your point?" Going to music class was like entering a steam room, you ended up dripping and redolent with the stuff, eyes watering, head spinning, stomach heaving over the Spam sandwich I gulped down at lunch. I took shallow breaths, holding it as long as possible, which wasn't very long because we were there to sing and to play the recorder, which demanded a lot of breath...

To read the rest of John's article, follow the link below:

<https://thenewsfromscotland.wordpress.com/2020/05/14/for-mrs-kemp/>

Have you ever heard of a Wagner tuba? It's a brass instrument that's not often used, and combines tonal elements of both the French horn and the trombone. **Mike** has shared a link where you can see what they look like and hear them playing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNcajRV4sfc>



## Recipe corner

David Broad's Welsh cakes always go down well at band tea breaks. Why not follow the recipe below and make them yourself? We'd love to see a picture of the results!

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### Welsh cakes

#### Ingredients

500 g self-raising flour

75 g caster sugar , plus extra to go on top

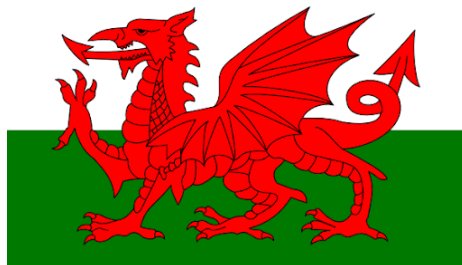
1 heaped teaspoon mixed spice (I put in a bit extra for luck)

250 g unsalted butter, cold (traditionally this was lard)

150 g mixed raisins and sultanas (traditionally this was currants)

1 large egg

A couple of splashes of milk



#### Method

1. Sieve the flour into a large mixing bowl, then add the sugar and mixed spice.
2. Press the butter into flakes and add to the bowl with a pinch of salt.
3. Use your hands to rub it all together until you get a fine breadcrumb consistency, then add the dried fruit.
4. Make a well in the centre of the mixture and crack in the egg. Add a splash of milk, then use a fork to beat and mix in the egg.
5. Squeeze the mixture firmly in your hands to compress it together.
6. Put a large heavy-bottomed non-stick frying pan on a medium heat.
7. While it's heating up, dust a clean surface and a rolling pin with flour and roll the dough out until it's about 1cm thick. Use a 5cm pastry cutter to cut out as many rounds as you can. Compress the remaining scraps of dough together, then roll out and cut out a few more.
8. Cook one Welsh cake in the pan for 3 or 4 minutes to test the temperature and adjust it if necessary to achieve a golden colour. You can move the cakes around in the pan from the middle to the edges as the temperature is unlikely to be even all over the pan.
9. As soon as they come out of the pan, put them on a wire rack to cool and sprinkle with caster sugar.
10. Try one or two that didn't work out very well as you will find that they are very crumbly and take the rest to Band on Saturday morning.



## Keeping in touch

Don't forget that we've set up an online message board where you can post comments. Why not have a look and post a message for your fellow band members? Just click the link below.

<https://xoyondo.com/mb/6myg33qLg1QpWlb>

## And finally...

Please feel free to contact us via the usual email address at any time:

[dunbartonshireconcertband@gmail.com](mailto:dunbartonshireconcertband@gmail.com)

*Keep practising!*

COVID-19 Rhythm Lesson:

Basic Rhythms:

Lockdown: ♩ ♩

Quarantine: ♩ ♩ ♩

Pandemic: ♩ ♩ ♩

Toilet Paper: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

Flattening the Curve: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

I need a hug: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

Help:  $\hat{\circ}$

Advanced Rhythms:

Shelter in place: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ <sup>3</sup>

Hand Sanitizer: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

Accents:

Social Distancing: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

Coronavirus: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

♩ 1 ♩ 2 ♩ 3 4