

DCB Weekly

Issue 9

Saturday 16th May 2020



Welcome to the ninth edition of the DCB newsletter. Remember we have our Zoom chat this morning at 10am. Looking forward to seeing you there if you can manage.

We're also planning to hold a virtual quiz on either Thursday 21st at 7pm* or Saturday 23rd May at 7.30pm. If you haven't completed the poll to let us know if you can manage, it can be found [here](#). We plan to confirm the date this weekend. Family members in the same household are welcome to join too.

*changed from 7.30pm to allow us to get through a few rounds before a short break for the clap for carers at 8pm

Welcome from the Chair

Good morning everyone, I hope you are all well. Can you believe that we are already approaching week 9 in lockdown? This week we have heard some confusing information from Politicians and I am sure many of you will have seen some amusing videos on-line. One thing that is for sure however, is that new life is happening all around us. On my daily walks with the dog, I have been watching a nest of crows high up in the trees, making lots of noise and squabbling as they grow - no social distancing going on there! As I walk further into the woods, the occasional deer can be spotted disappearing into the greenery, and as I return on the path home, new lambs gamble around in the fields. In these difficult and heart-breaking times, it is very reassuring to see that nature and new life is continuing and that some things are carrying on as normal. Why not check out the links from the newsletter in week 7? Watch the newly born chicks for the Barn Owls, Osprey and keep an eye on Mrs Kestrel sitting on 5 eggs! Oh, and I just spotted two badgers out for a play.

Have a lovely weekend and hope to see you on our Zoom chat!

Stay safe, stay well.



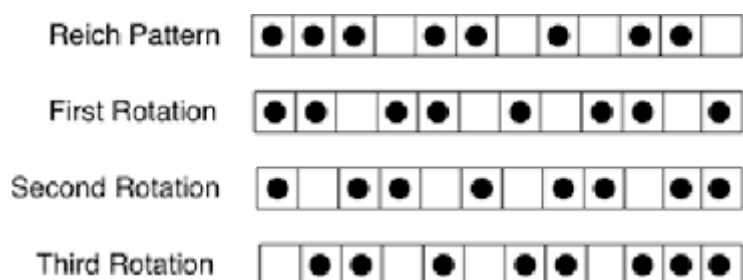
Robert's section follows overleaf...

Musical Director's update

Good morning everyone,

I really hope that the range building exercises I discussed over the past couple of weeks have been useful. I was amused by Glyn who contacted me last week to say he was struggling to achieve success on my exercises on a cow bell....ha ha! I did suggest that he could melt it down and turn it into a trumpet or something else useful but in case he hasn't or the rest of the percussion section feel neglected here are some thoughts for you and, of course, everyone else to try. Have a look at the link I've sent and see how you get on.

You could try these very slowly at first or with someone else in your house, or you could try clapping just one of the parts at a time. If you feel very brave you could try recording yourself clapping both parts separately using a click track on the Acapella app!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzkOFJMI5i8>

Good luck!

If you want to be inspired by great brass playing (with help from a contra bassoon and PERCUSSION) then have a listen to this brilliant Brass Chorale from Mahler 2 (5th movement).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8uzgmAs47w&list=RDh8uzgmAs47w&start_radio=1

Have a great week everyone and enjoy the clapping challenge.

Robert



Meet the band

This week, **David Broad** shares his story of a fascinating trip to Botswana in the 1990s.

As many of you may know I am a Civil Engineer. One Friday evening around 5.00pm, just as I was preparing to leave my office in Glasgow for the weekend, I received a phone call. The caller was from our head office in Reading and I was asked if I would be interested in going to Botswana for two weeks to help out on a project with which there were some difficulties. The opportunity sounded too good to miss and so I hesitated for only a moment before saying yes. This all took place in a November in the 1990's, just to let you know that risk assessments and health and safety were not so much of a concern as these are today.

The following day I had to make a special appointment with the doctor to receive vaccinations against infectious diseases, although I would be back home before they took effect. The doctor advised against playing rugby that afternoon but it was very much frowned upon to pull out of a team on a Saturday. I was persuaded by two doctors in my team that it was fine for me to play and in fact it would be beneficial for blood circulation. On Sunday night I left Glasgow, where it was just starting to snow. I flew to London and then travelled to Reading on Monday for a briefing meeting. The head office of Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners had a very interesting display in the reception area. It was a complete wall of postage stamps from all around the world. The stamps depicted dams, bridges, roads and buildings, all of which had been designed by the company and featured on national postage stamps. Alexander Gibb was a Scottish engineer and founded a construction company working at Rosyth Royal Dockyard before becoming Consulting Engineers.

With my briefing complete, I was given sterling, dollars and return airline tickets to Johannesburg and departed for the airport. My instruction upon arrival was to tell airport staff that I was from Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners. I must admit that at the time I did not think that this had any chance of success but went along with it.



The flight departed from Heathrow on Tuesday for a 13 hour non stop flight. Upon arrival, I did as instructed and advised airport staff which company I was with and to my great surprise they “yes sir, please come this way” and I was greeted by a driver from Gibb. We travelled to Gaborone, the capital of Botswana and diamond capital of the world. The range of houses in an estate from the very expensive looking ones to those which looked as if they were ready to fall down was very noticeable. It was explained to me that people in the cheaper houses aspired to get better houses and that there were regulations in place to prevent developers buying these houses for re-development in a way of providing affordable homes. Traffic lights were interesting in that the posts were placed within oil drums filled with concrete to prevent the posts being knocked over so frequently.

I was taken to the home of the British Commissioner for Botswana, where we entered the grounds through electrically operated gates. The impressive walled garden contained several large palm trees. His house was like a palace with the very large ceiling fans like you see in films such as Out of Africa (we played that tune at DCB) and a library where all four walls had floor to ceiling book cases and one

of those ladders which slides along to reach the top shelves. I stayed overnight and the following day the project manager, an Edinburgh man, arrived to take me to the construction site. We travelled Northwards past Molepolole, the largest traditional village in the world at the time, according to the Guinness Book of world records, consisting of thousands of circular mud huts with thatched roofs, before reaching the construction site in the Kalahari desert. On the way the car suddenly slowed as a springbok leapt gracefully across the road in front of us, a magnificent sight.

It had been arranged that I would stay in the house of the project manager and his wife. They advised me on arrival that my two week return ticket had been replaced with one for three weeks. All of the houses were built for the project and occupied by members of staff of the consultants and contractors. The gardens did not have any grass only cacti. Before going to bed that evening I was asked if I would like to take a jug of water with me, to which I replied that this was not something I did usually do but happily accepted. The jug must have contained about two litres. In the morning I woke up to find the jug nearly empty. I must have drunk it without knowing, it was important not to get dehydrated.

As we set off to work at 7.00am, it was 40 degrees centigrade. I had had a shower, which I did not expect to be able to do but was told that, before the project commenced, they had drilled down 40 metres to find water and pumped it up for domestic use. I set about my work in the Portakabins, which were the site offices. The project had Greek Architects and British Engineers. Several years earlier the project had been halted and, when the design resumed, only the Architects had been commissioned to complete their work but any alterations that were required to the engineering were to be done on site. This did not work out very well as structural steelwork was supplied from South Africa and it took 3 months for delivery. However, if extra columns or beams were required, they could be designed in concrete as there was a stockyard full of reinforcing steel bars of all sizes. Designing foundations in sand was interesting as the hot sun bakes the top strata very hard but the underlying sand is very loose. One day a sand storm blew up and the windows looked as if someone had gone around and stuck sandpaper on them all. When the storm subsided, to my amazement, there wasn't a speck of dust on the desks as the grains of sand were too large to get in.

We worked hard but when work stopped there was a short interval, sometimes only half an hour, before the start of the evening activities which were organised by the social committee and included a darts tournament, tennis tournament, squash, snooker, basketball etc. They had built their own clubhouse and courts and you could buy beer with tokens. Unfortunately, I did not see much wildlife, I would have had to travel hundreds of miles north to the Okavango Delta to see the wildlife that Botswana is famous for.



My hosts were particularly keen to exchange my sterling and dollars for Pula, the Botswanan currency. I did not object and in any event there were no shops in which to spend the money. The arrangement for evening meals was that, if there was no-one in the house where I was staying, I

should go to any house with whatever food I had and walk in. I tried it out and was greeted with a very warm welcome, an invitation to get a beer from the fridge and joined the family for dinner. I made a habit of going to different houses and the warm welcome was the same everywhere. Expats lived this way in a tried and tested method of keeping everyone happy and content in otherwise very difficult conditions in a remote location.

It was time to leave, my project had gone well, we had caught up on programme with the other buildings on site. The project manager was keen for me to stay on and work on another building but it was getting close to Christmas and I was keen to get home.

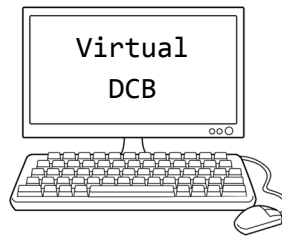
I departed for the airport with a pocketful of Pula, by which time I discovered that you are not allowed to take the currency out of the country, hence the keenness to swap it for other currencies. I went to a vast open air market in Gaborone, where most of the wares were on the floor on blankets, with not much idea of what my Pula was worth but soon discovered that it was going to be difficult to spend it all in the time I had. I bought a hand carved chess set made from ebony, several woven baskets, a picture made from butterfly wings (having died a natural death according to the blurb) - pictured below, a picture made of straw depicting native people and mud houses, jewellery, wooden salad serving utensils and a carved wooden sculpture of mother and child..... oh and a bag to put it all in.

I sneaked a few Pula out of the country to show my family. A few years ago I thought that I would take it to the bank and exchange it for euro. The teller advised me that they could exchange any currency. However, she did not recognise Pula and went to seek advice only to return to say that that she would have to arrange for Securicor to collect it. I said that it was not important and made a swift exit from the bank.



Thank you David 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. We would be delighted to hear from you!



Don't forget that we have our fortnightly Zoom meeting this morning at 10am. Why not come along and have a chat? Here's the link to the meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89395708058?pwd=dmRIWDBKZk9zVjF0ZVpmOGFibm1sQT09>

The horn section has been busy again, and would like to share their latest recording. Colin says:

"The horn section would like to offer you another audio contribution from us all. This time it is a well-known Schubert song, 'Der Lindenbaum', which is the first song in the song cycle 'Die Winterreise'. Not very seasonal but it's a good tune which Fiona is leading this time. We're considering other projects but at a gentle pace."

The recording can be found [here](#) if you'd like to have a listen. We're all looking forward to the next track from the horn album!



DCB Christmas horns photo courtesy of Steven

If you'd like to be part of the Nevis Ensemble's *World Wide Living Room Ensemble*, have a look at the details [here](#). Find your part for Auld Lang Syne [here](#), and submit a recording by **Sunday 31st May**. You'll need to use headphones to play along to the backing track provided. The recordings will then be edited together to produce a piece which will (hopefully) feature a musician from every country of the world.

You could also get together (virtually) with some DCB colleagues and record your own version of the piece just for fun!

Thank you to Anneli for sharing this.

Saturday quiz

Some more questions from **Glyn** this week.

If you'd like to take part, submit your answers by 5pm today using the form attached to the newsletter email.

Part 1

Where do they come from? Name the film/opera/operetta/musical. Bonus point for naming the composer.

1. Toreador's Song
2. Nessun Dorma
3. Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves
4. Anvil Chorus
5. Humming Chorus
6. Prisoners' Chorus
7. I've got a little list
8. Spitfire Prelude
9. Luftwaffe March
10. Waterloo

Part 2

Name the concert halls in the following locations:

1. Dunfermline and New York
2. Stirling and London
3. Dundee
4. Aberdeen
5. Musselburgh
6. Oban
7. Helensburgh
8. Edinburgh
9. Inverness

Part 3

What do the following pieces have in common?

Aria by Puccini, popular French song, popular Irish song (sometimes known as the Capital Bottom...London Derriere), German march by Lincke (in the DCB library I think), overture by Mendelssohn (*not* the HE-brides), once popular old-timer song, human character in Peter and the Wolf (*not* Peter).





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

Jonathan has shared a link to a very talented pianist in New York, who (before social distancing) wheeled an 800lb piano more than half a mile around four times a week to entertain passers by. Have a listen to his story [here](#).



If you'd like to learn something new, why not have a look at **FutureLearn**? FutureLearn offers a diverse range of courses from leading universities and cultural institutions around the world. The courses are delivered one step at a time, and can be accessed on mobile phones, tablets and computers. The courses also offer the opportunity to discuss what you're learning with others as you go. You can find more details [here](#).



Recipe corner

Something a little different this week! **Alan Cooper** has very kindly provided his recipe (and pictures) for Maryhill nettle crisps, along with the words 'share if you dare'. If you decide to have a go, we'd love to hear what you think of the result!

Maryhill nettle crisps

Ingredients

Nettles – large bunch, free range, locally-sourced, avoid areas where the neighbours empty their dogs

Olive oil, or other favourite greasy stuff

Salt, plus other spices/condiments of choice

Method

Pre-heat oven to 130 °C.

Snip leaves off the nettles (use gloves!), returning any friendly caterpillars to the wild (discard stems).

Wash and spin dry (salad spinner, not laundry).

Toss with a little oil and salt to taste (later! – still stingy at this stage).

Spread loosely on greaseproof sheet/baking tray.

Toast gently in oven, 130 °C, approx. 45 minutes (or more) until crisp (not burnt) – check and shoogles it around from time to time.

Cool and serve alongside your favourite nibbles at lockdown 10th birthday party of granddaughter – who thinks you really are a bit weird...



The finished product



Nice subtle flavour (mostly salt!)

Crispy and light, no stings

A bit like Japanese roasted seaweed

Still crispy for leftovers next day

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

Keep practising!

