

## DCB Weekly

### Issue 12

**Saturday 6th June 2020**



Welcome to the twelfth edition of the DCB newsletter. The quiz is back this week, so if you'd like to take part, don't forget to send your answers to the DCB email address by 5pm today.

### Welcome from the Chair

Good morning everyone. I have to share this first, good news, my bassoon has been completely re-padded, re-felted and re-varnished and will be back with me on Tuesday. Hurray!

Well, it is now only a few weeks until we will be taking our summer break, so with that in mind, Robert and I have been chatting and thinking of ways the band could resume after the break if we are still not allowed to meet in person to rehearse. None of us know what the situation will be, so we would like to start thinking ahead. The last few months have been a learning curve for us all, and certainly involved some grappling with technology on my part. We have had some great recordings sent in over the last while, (and some amazing long notes!), but if things continue as they are, we think it would be good to explore new ways of meeting and playing together.

Read on for Robert's suggestions and please let us know your thoughts.

Have a lovely weekend.

Stay safe, stay well.



Robert's section follows overleaf...

## **Musical Director's update**

Good morning everyone and I hope that you are all well and have had another good week.

Long Note Competition..... wow, some really great playing here this week and some very close battles within the same section (oboes!).

We had some last-minute entries that came in and can I say a huge thank you to everyone who took up the challenge and recorded their long and beautiful tones! Thank you, Susan for forwarding all the recordings.

In reverse order to build anticipation, here are the results.

3<sup>rd</sup> place            Alan ....oboe 46.18

2<sup>nd</sup> place            Fiona.....horn 51.46

1<sup>st</sup> place            John....bassoon.....a staggering 1min, 19.78!!!!!!

Highly commended, Susan.....clarinet 46.03

Also, have to say that all the oboes were so close in times, well done and definitely the longest note I've ever heard on alto saxophone by Kerry.

## **What about future plans with DCB?**

Well, I had a really good chat with Harriet the other day and we thought one avenue to explore would be to start rehearsals back again but online and in small groups.

## **How would this work?**

Imagine one section, let us say the 1<sup>st</sup> clarinets. They gather online (Zoom or Teams), with me, and we work on one particular piece of band music.

## **Would they all play together?**

Probably not due to the latency online. We could discuss how we are going to phrase something and any other aspects of technique and musicianship and take turns to play to each other. I am happy to play too and we could just have a tutorial on that piece.

## **How long would it last?**

Each small section could meet for 30-40 mins. Then another group would meet, let us say the horns. We can share technical issues, support each other in playing and listen to each other.

(continued overleaf)

### **What if I am nervous about playing on my own?**

Up to a point we might all feel apprehensive but this would only be a small group, and in typical DCB ethos, it would be a positive experience and one where we aim to learn and develop. Hopefully, also to enjoy ourselves! If players didn't want to play then they could be there observing. Watching and reading the music as others played and listening to the usual suggestions that I and Michelle make most Saturdays.

Over the course of a few weeks we could meet with nearly all the band members and then when we do rehearse under normal circumstances, we can play together the music we have learnt online.

It would mean the band can continue to make music together, gives individuals a purpose to practise and share each other's company.

Please do let me know your thoughts and we can fine tune any of this and also implement any great suggestions you might have.

R



## Meet the band

This week, we hear from **Anneli**, who tells us about a significant day in Norway's history, and also about her musical experiences from a young age.

Thank you, Harriet, for asking me to write a little piece about myself and my music making for the DCB newsletter. I was particularly happy to be doing this as I was asked in the week leading up to 17<sup>th</sup> May, the most important banding day of the year for people like me, i.e. Norwegians!

17<sup>th</sup> May is Norway's National Day, or Constitution Day. Norway became independent from Denmark on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1814. It then became united with Sweden instead, but had many more "devolved powers" than under Denmark. The Norway-Sweden union was dissolved on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1905, so this weekend is also important in the history of Norway.

You can read more about how 17<sup>th</sup> May is celebrated in this piece by English journalist Luke Slater:

<http://norwegianarts.org.uk/an-outsiders-guide-to-17th-may-at-home-and-away/>

In summary: There are parades, flags, uniforms, Sunday best, national dress, school leavers in red and blue dungarees and cars (see photo later), speeches, games, hot dogs, waffles, ice cream, singing and, most importantly, wind and brass bands leading the parades and playing concerts!

Norwegians all over the world celebrate this day as best we can, but this year I spent most of the day watching live streams from Norway.

The photo below is from Kongsberg, a lovely old town, where I lived and worked before coming to Scotland in 2002. My band, Kongsberg Byorkester, are nearest to the camera.



(continued overleaf)

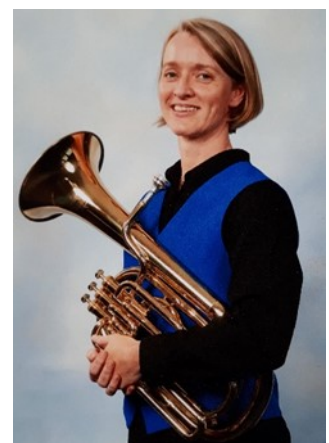
When I started playing the tenor horn in the local school band (Frydenlund Skolekorps) aged 8, after passing a “music theory” exam (my best friend failed!), the main motivation was to be able to march and play in the “syttende mai” parade. However, you didn’t get to march with your instrument the first year, and by the time it came to start marching somebody had suggested I should try the trombone. I was thrilled, and even if I was only given the trombone on 5<sup>th</sup> May, I managed to play and march with it 12 days later. That was in 1978. I was 10 years old, very keen and determined, and a fast learner! By the way, all teaching was done by the older kids in the band in those days, and the band was run by the parents on a voluntary basis.

The first photo below is from 17<sup>th</sup> May celebrations in Edinburgh last year. The second is from 1986 when I was a school leaver. In the third photo from 1977 I am a band recruit, and in the fourth a year later I’m on my first gig as a trombone player.



Since I was introduced to it, the trombone has been my favourite instrument, but I did play the Bb tuba for a couple of gigs once, and at the Norwegian National Brass Band Championships in 1989 I played the tenor horn. When I joined Kirkintilloch Kelvin Brass in 2007 I started on the baritone.

In the next photos you see me in various uniforms and attire for Slemmestad Ungdomskorps, Brass 85 (disbanded), Kongsberg Byorkester and Kirkintilloch Kelvin Brass. It’s fun to dress up!



(continued overleaf)

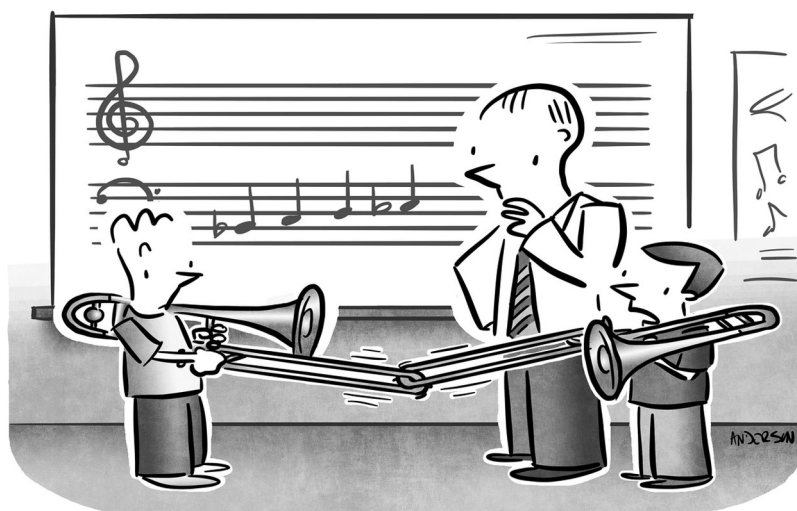


For me, music and being able to play an instrument has meant that I have found friends wherever I've lived. During my first period of studying in Glasgow, I played in a Blues Brothers inspired band called Sven and the Hybrids. If you study the left photo above (from 1993) very closely, you will see me standing next to a well-known trumpet player, and some of you might also recognise the guy furthest to the right. I once played in a student band dressed as a bunny, too!

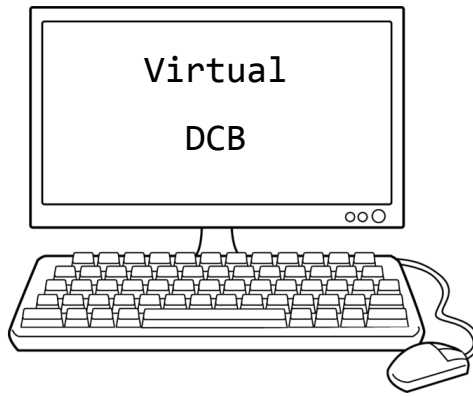
Sorry this was so long. I was enjoying it too much! Thank you and take care!

Anneli

Thank you Anneli for sharing such an interesting story, and for the wonderful photographs too!



"I told you a duet was a bad idea."



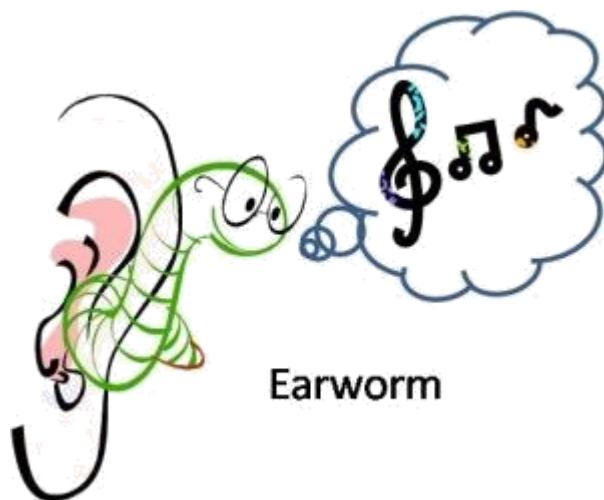
**Monika** has shared another one of her fantastic recordings. This time it's Bei Mir Bist Du Scheen for two clarinets. Monika was reminded of the piece after hearing the recording of the klezmer-style tune Flatbush Waltz, put together by a few of the band and featured in last week's newsletter.

Monika says

*"I don't know why but whenever Robert sets a long note practice task or now this challenge - I suddenly feel the urge to record something. And end up not practising the long note..."*

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

Monika calls the piece one of the most persistent of beasts: the earworm!



## A potted history of wandering pitch

**John** has kindly shared the article below, written by a French horn player, Raymond Thomson, in John's orchestra. Raymond has described the history of developing the 440 Hz A, and has given us permission to use the article in DCB Weekly.

The precise pitch of the note A has been wandering about for centuries. Different countries had different versions of the note A; even different cities in the same country had different versions of the note A. An answer seemed to occur in 1711 when the tuning fork was invented. But no-one could agree what size the legs on the tuning fork should be! For example, Handel's 1711 tuning fork (when he was in Germany) is pitched at A = 422.5 Hz, while a later one from 1740 (when he was in England) is pitched at A = 409 Hz, about a quarter-tone lower. Beethoven's tuning fork of 1800 is pitched at A = 455.4 Hz, well over a tone higher. Overall, there was a tendency towards the end of the 18th century for the frequency of the A above middle C to be in the range of 400 to 450 Hz (a gap of almost 3 semitones)!

An 1815 tuning fork from the Dresden opera house gives A = 423.2 Hz, while an 1826 fork from the same opera house gives A = 435 Hz. At the La Scala Opera House in Milan, A rose as high as A = 451 Hz. The strongest opponents of the upward tendency in pitch were, naturally, singers who complained that it was putting a strain on their voices, and violinists who complained of snapping strings. Largely due to their protests, the French government passed a law in 1859, which set the A at 435 Hz. This was the first real attempt to standardize pitch, and it became a popular pitch standard outside France as well, and was known as *French pitch*. An 1885 conference in Vienna established this value among several European countries. Germany did not accept it and, believe it or not, one of the War reparations they had to make in the 1919 Versailles Treaty was acceptance of French Pitch. A rather unlikely result of defeat in war!

The British (as we know) never believe that foreigners can get anything right, and (as we know) normally make a hash of going it alone. Attempts at standardisation in Britain in the 19th century gave rise to two pitches: the *old philharmonic pitch* (high pitch) standard of about A = 452 Hz, replaced in 1896 by the considerably lower *new philharmonic pitch* (low pitch) at A = 439 Hz. London orchestras were quick to conform to the new, low pitch, but provincial orchestras played high pitch until the 1920s, and brass bands were still using the high pitch in the mid-1960s.

Despite such historical confusion, A = 440 Hz is now the only official standard (decided in 1939) and is widely used around the world.





Don't forget that if you'd like to submit a recording of *Bring Me Sunshine* for Make Music Day, the deadline for submission is **9am this Monday, 8th June**. Full details can be found in issue 10 of DCB Weekly.

**Moyra** was horrified to read an article in her gardening magazine (Gardening News, 16th May 2020) suggesting that tubas and French horns could be used as planters in the garden. Brass players - lock up your instruments!



If you're missing the chance to get away on holiday at the moment, why not take a virtual trip?

Explore the 40,000 interlocking columns and idyllic views of the [Giant's Causeway](#) in Northern Ireland with a virtual tour.

A bit further afield, take a virtual walk along the [Great Wall of China](#) from Jinshanling to Simatai, or admire the 360 degree views of the surrounding landscape. The guide also offers information including the key highlights to look out for.

Or why not visit the [Rocky Mountain National Park](#) in California? Virtual visitors can use their ears rather than their eyes, with an online 'sound library' that features an array of birds and wildlife found in the park.

## Saturday quiz

Another quiz from **Glyn** this week. Note the special instructions!

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

### Part 1

#### **All answers start with the same word**

1. First movement of 'Dunbartonshire', suite by DCB Life Member Arthur Main, recorded by the band in May 2006.
2. Meeting place of long-standing soap opera with title music featuring a cornet.
3. Opera by Rossini featuring dishonest Newcastle United supporter.
4. Pub in Delius's opera A Village Romeo and Juliet.
5. Also known as Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell.
6. Approximately topical 1962 American WW2 movie starring, among many others, John Wayne and Sean Connery, with a musical score by Maurice Jarre.
7. 1954 American movie starring James Stewart (pretending to play the trombone) and Gene Krupa (really playing the drums) featuring songs In the Mood and Little Brown Jug.
8. Overture of local interest by Greenock-born composer featuring a central horn solo.
9. American radio and TV programme and film with music which would have made Rossini a lot of money in royalties had he still been alive.
10. They recorded Lovely Rita, Polythene Pam, Sexy Sadie, Michelle and Doctor Robert.

### Part 2

#### **All answers end with the same letter and are in sequence**

1. 1957 film starring Alec Guinness set in Burma and featuring a score by Malcolm Arnold.
2. 1942 Disney film, once described as 'the ultimate stag movie', with music by Frank Churchill, including the number Let's Sing a Gay Little Spring Song.
3. The time of day (in French) when Debussy's Faun appeared.
4. Italian once described as 'not the composer of five hundred concertos but one concerto five hundred times'.
5. Supermarket from the above.
6. 1958 musical movie starring Leslie Caron with music by Lerner and Loewe (first ever musical job?).
7. London-born cellist and conductor of the Halle Orchestra (and, for three years in the 1930s, of the then part-time Scottish Orchestra, now the RSNO), nickname 'Glorious John'.
8. Leading lady who didn't manage to be there at the end of very famous opera set in Paris around 1830...she suffered from tuberculosis and had one very cold hand.



## Recipe corner

**Michele Newall**, still marooned in France, has shared some delicious French recipes. Why not try out the Normandy Porc recipe below and let us know what you think of the result?

Michele tells us that the recipe has been passed down from generation to generation, so adjust to taste. It's also best treated as a stew!

---

### Normandy Porc

#### Ingredients

Olive oil for frying

1kg pork shoulder, cut into 2.5-3cm cubes

400g shallots, peeled

200g bacon lardons

1 onion, chopped

2 celery sticks, chopped (I use 2-3 apples as well as or instead of celery)

Large knob of butter for frying

300ml medium-dry cider, plus an extra 1 tbsp and a splash

400ml chicken stock

140-150g crème fraîche (can also use light version) - use a little more if you prefer not to use cornflower to thicken

2-3 sprigs tarragon

1-2 tsp of cornflour (not always necessary if using a slow cooker)

If you wish you can also add 1 tsp of mustard



#### Method

1. Heat a glug of oil in a large pan. Add the pork in 2-3 batches and brown for 6-8 minutes per batch, transferring with a slotted spoon to a plate. Add the whole shallots and cook for 2-3 minutes until browned, then transfer to a plate.
2. Meanwhile, fry the bacon in a large flameproof casserole with a splash of oil for 4-5 minutes until crisp, then scoop out with a slotted spoon and set aside. Put the onion and celery in the casserole with the butter, then cook for 6-8 minutes over a medium-high heat until softened.
3. Add the pork, bacon, 300ml cider and stock, bring to the boil, then turn down the heat. Partially cover the casserole, then simmer gently for 1 hour. Add the shallots, then cook for another 1-1½ hours until the pork is tender.
4. Mix the cornflour in a small bowl with the 1 tbsp cider, add to the casserole and cook for 5 minutes, stirring, to thicken the sauce. Stir in the crème fraîche, mustard and most of the tarragon, then season and add a splash more cider. Serve scattered with the remaining tarragon with crusty bread and potatoes or rice.

This also works well in a slow cooker, and you don't need to faff about with cornflour.



## Keeping in touch

As well as our online message board, remember that we now have a Facebook page for band members as another way of keeping in touch. This is separate from the existing public page for the band, and is a private page for current members only. The aim is to use it to post videos or audio of any music you've been recording with any groups (or solo), photos old and new, links to articles you'd like to share, details of other concerts you're playing in (when we get back to playing in concerts!) etc.

If you're already on Facebook and a friend of one of the admins, you should have received a request to join the page. Someone who is already a member of the page can invite other band members to join. These requests will be approved by the admins. If you don't have a Facebook account, you'll need to set one up if you'd like to access the page.

If you already have a Facebook account and haven't received a request to join the page, please let us know by emailing [dunbartonshireconcertband@gmail.com](mailto:dunbartonshireconcertband@gmail.com)

And if you're not keen on Facebook, we still have our 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!*

