

DCB Christmas newsletter



DUNBARTONSHIRE
CONCERT
BAND

Sunday 20th December 2020

Welcome to a special Christmas edition of the DCB newsletter. In this issue, you'll find feedback on the online rehearsals from some of our members, two festive recipes, as well as not one, but two fantastic quizzes. There's a prize on offer for one of the quizzes, so don't forget to submit your entry by 7pm tomorrow (Monday).

Welcome from the Chair

Welcome to our very special Christmas edition newsletter.

Christmas is now just a few days away and it has been a very strange and difficult year but we do at least have the good news that a vaccine has been developed and will be gradually rolled out across the country, another step in the right direction to getting back to more normal rehearsals and concerts.

For DCB it has been a whole new learning curve but one I hope we will be able to look back on and see some of the creative ways we coped, from newsletters to Zoom chats, making recordings, quizzes and to finish the year our Zoom DCB Christmas Social.

Whilst we have not been able to meet in person, we have at least, been able to get back to a degree of normality with online rehearsals every Saturday morning. It certainly seems we are all getting used to playing on screen! We have also had a number of guest conductors drop in to see what we are up to, which has hopefully helped to bring their groups together.

Robert has introduced us to 4 great new pieces including the latest one 'Bearsden Bears' written by Colin Suckling which sounds fantastic. Thank you, Colin for this epic homage to lockdown! There will also be more music coming in the new year so, if you haven't tried the online rehearsals, make it your New Year's resolution to give it a go!

Despite everything, we ended the year with the fabulous news that we had been chosen as one of the groups to be played on Classic FM as part of the Carol Competition, another great achievement. They even got our name right this year!

I would like to finish by saying to thank you to Robert for putting the online rehearsals together and for keeping the band playing. Thanks also to the committee, the quiz masters and event group and everyone who has contributed to the newsletter. None of this would have been possible without all the hard work that goes on in the background, so my thanks to you all.

Finally, I hope that you all have a lovely Christmas and wishing you all a very Happy New Year.

Best wishes

Harriet



Musical Director's update

I am so pleased that the band, its ethos and community has been maintained throughout lockdown restrictions and that it has risen to the challenges it has faced. It is without doubt the most challenging time in its history. The time-consuming efforts of everyone on the present committee has allowed so many to enjoy making music together and to give support to each other. However, all in the band have supported the ventures with great enthusiasm and brought such a sense of fun to proceedings. Thank you.



What has been achieved?

New music has been learnt, ability to play in front of one another has developed, technical online difficulties have been overcome, breathing exercises have continued (hopefully with enjoyment!), friendships maintained, DCB first ever online concert, Classic FM broadcast again as top 5 entries throughout the UK, Colin's world premiere (to be heard in early 2021).

It's not bad for a band that has not been allowed to rehearse since March.

I look forward to seeing everyone in January but till then can only hope that you all have a Merry Christmas and a safe and peaceful New Year.

Robert

*Why can't Mary and Joseph join a
conference call?
There's no Zoom at the inn.*



Online rehearsals - your feedback



Hello I'm Sam and I'm 13. I've been playing with DCB for over a year and have loved the online rehearsals as I've found them a great way to learn new repertoire and play with other people, especially when all the school orchestras aren't happening. I still really miss the normal rehearsals and David's support and encouragement.

Sam Haouchine, euphonium

Zoom rehearsals have been a really great way for the band to stay connected and productive through these times. Despite the challenges of playing together on Zoom, Robert has found a very effective way to allow you to play along with others and I have found every session very enjoyable and worthwhile.

Scott Vassie, percussion

I really like having sectional band on Zoom. It is very well organised with clear instructions and attention to detail. If you 'take the plunge' to play a few bars unmuted it is guaranteed that feedback will be encouraging, kind and helpful. Listening to other sections playing is a definitely benefit for me to see where my part fits in. All in all the way online band has been developed has been a great success.

Fiona McLean, clarinet



Continued overleaf...

Online rehearsals - more of your feedback



It's good to keep the routine of playing music with other people.

Mia Glegg, trombone

I like the online rehearsals because there is less pressure to be perfect as no one hears you...

And I like seeing people that I otherwise wouldn't get to see, even if it's just on line.

Rowan Glegg, trumpet



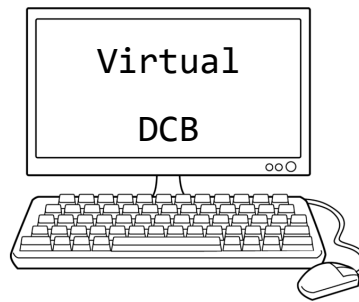
If I'm honest, the prospect of online rehearsals was a little daunting - how was this going to work? Would it feel like a rehearsal? Do I want to spend another hour in front of a computer after work? And the biggest fear - Will I be asked to play in front of everyone??

The online rehearsals have been brilliant - they are so much fun and actually help you focus on your own playing since you're not hearing 60 other players at once. Robert has pitched it at the right level, choosing pieces which can be achieved in lockdown and running sectional rehearsals. No one is pressured into doing anything they aren't comfortable with, and (let's be honest) when you're playing on mute you can get away with a lot more!

A huge thank you needs to go to Robert, Harriet and all involved in organising these rehearsals - it's a wonderful way to keep in touch and play music during this time and I have really felt the benefit of them. For anyone who hasn't tried it yet, please come along!

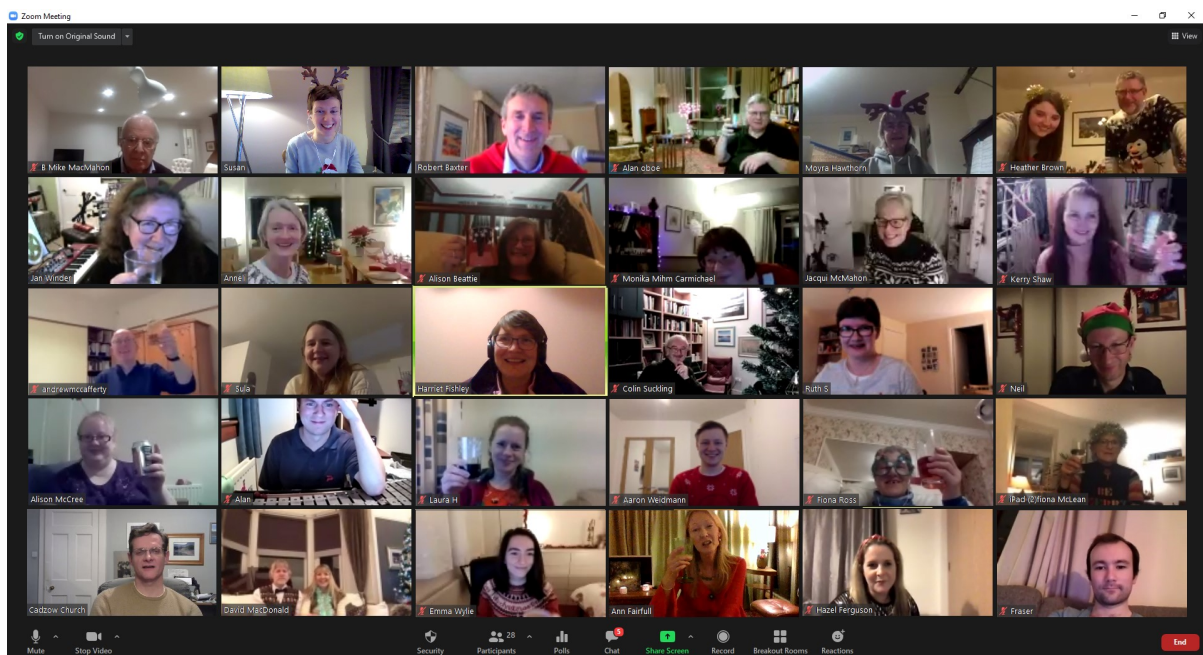
Laura Hunter, clarinet

*What do you call an elf who's just won the lottery?
Welfy.*



Last night, we enjoyed a social get-together over Zoom. We were treated to some fantastic playing from band members in our 'open mic' section. Many thanks to **Alison Beattie, David and Heather Brown, Moyra, the Virtual DCBers, Jan Winder, Anneli and Hazel, Scott, the horn section, John, Jacqui, Monika, Sharon and Robert** for taking part.

Congratulations to **Jacqui** who was the winner of our DCB bingo, and runner up, **Fiona Ross**. Special thanks to **Sula** for being such an entertaining bingo host, and well done to **Ann Fairfull** for correctly totalling the number of outfit changes made by Sula!



Unfortunately Jan, Mia and Rowan weren't able to join us due to WiFi issues, but their dog was all ready for a festive evening.



*Why are Santa's reindeer allowed to travel during lockdown?
They have herd immunity.*

Christmas prize quiz

Our special Christmas quiz has been written by Glyn Bragg and he is kindly donating a prize for the winner. If you'd like to have a go, submit your answers by **7pm tomorrow** (Monday) to the DCB email address.

Christmas quiz

1. Who saw Mommy kissing Santa Claus underneath the mistletoe?
2. You better watch out, you better not cry, you better not pout. Why?
3. Every band person knows Leroy Anderson's *Sleigh Ride* (with its virtuoso percussion parts brilliantly performed at last year's DCB Christmas Concert), but which Bradford-born composer of German extraction (first name Fred, who died in France in 1934) also wrote a Sleigh Ride? His most popular piece is probably *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*.
4. Which British composer, also of German ancestry and who also died in 1934, wrote the beautiful carol *In the Bleak Midwinter* in 1904/05, about five or six years before two ever-popular band pieces?
5. Who saw three ships come sailing in on Christmas morning?
6. According to the well known *The Christmas Song*, what were roasting on an open fire?
7. Which oratorio, forever associated with Christmas, was actually first performed at Easter in 1742 in Dublin?
8. Which ballet, forever associated with Christmas, features a fairy in the Kingdom of sweets?
9. Who is missing from the following list of characters: Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner and Blitzen?
10. What do the following composers have in common - Bach, Corelli, Vivaldi, Schubert, Tchaikovsky, Gazunov, Rimsky-Korsakov, Prokofiev, Vaughan Williams, Mel Tormé, Glyn Bragg?
11. Where can you find 'a lowly cattle shed' at this time of the year?
12. What is the destination of the vessels in Question 5?
13. Where and when will you soon be able to find a partridge?
14. Which trio of musical instruments may appear a little later?



Saturday quiz part two - just for fun

Here's another quiz, kindly submitted by Fiona McLean. No need to submit your responses - this one's just for fun. The answers will be issued on Monday.

Can you name the places in Scotland?



1. Very small drinks
2. Stupid chips
3. Won't find hot water here
4. Two parts of your face
5. Trip outside the church
6. One of your parents is fit and healthy
7. Good looking card game
8. Murder with a garden tool
9. Not in a medal position
10. Can't live without this
11. Not staying
12. Church surrounds
13. You and I are fit and healthy
14. Use a spoon for this fish
15. Popular drink from the abbey
16. Adds up to 21



*Why does Father Christmas never
use the NHS?
He has private elf service.*

Recipe corner

Not one, but two festive recipes this week, both submitted by Harriet. Something sweet and something a little boozy! Why not have a go and let us know what you think of the results?

Gingerbread cupcakes with salted caramel icing

Ingredients

140g/5oz unsalted butter

200g/7oz golden caster sugar

60g/2½oz black treacle

60g/2¼oz golden syrup

2 free-range eggs, plus 2 free-range egg yolks

300g/10½oz plain flour

1 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp ground nutmeg

2 tsp baking powder

1 tsp salt

240ml/8½fl oz milk, warmed

For the salted caramel buttercream

125g/4½oz white caster sugar

80ml/2½fl oz double cream

½ tsp salt (or to taste)

1 tsp vanilla extract

160g/5½oz salted butter, softened

200g/7oz icing sugar

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5. Line two 12-hole muffin tray with 15 paper cases.
2. Beat the butter and sugar together in a bowl until light and creamy. Beat in the treacle, syrup, eggs and egg yolks until well combined.
3. Sift together the flour, ginger, nutmeg, baking powder and salt. Add half of the flour mixture to the butter mixture, then beat in half of the warm milk. Add the remaining flour mixture and the remaining milk and beat until well combined.
4. Spoon the mixture into the muffin cases and bake for 20-25 minutes, or until well risen and lightly firm to the touch. Remove the cakes from the tin and set aside to cool on a cooling rack.
5. For the salted caramel buttercream, heat the caster sugar and four tablespoons of water in a saucepan over a gentle heat until the sugar has dissolved, then increase the heat and cook the caramel for 2-3 minutes, or until golden and slightly thickened. Remove the pan from the heat immediately and stir in the cream. (CAUTION: the caramel may splutter a little when you add the cream). Stir in the salt and vanilla and set aside to cool completely.
6. Cream the butter and icing sugar together for at least 4-5 minutes, then beat in the caramel. When combined pipe or spread the icing over the cup cakes and sprinkle with a little extra sea salt.
7. Decorate the cupcakes with the buttercream.



Mulled wine by Mary Berry

You can make the mulled wine in a pan and keep it warm in a slow cooker if you're dishing up over the course of the day.

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes to 1 hour

Serves 12

Ingredients

1 large orange

3 lemons

12 cloves

2 satsumas or clementines

2 x 750ml bottles red wine

2 cinnamon sticks

150g/5½oz caster sugar (optional)

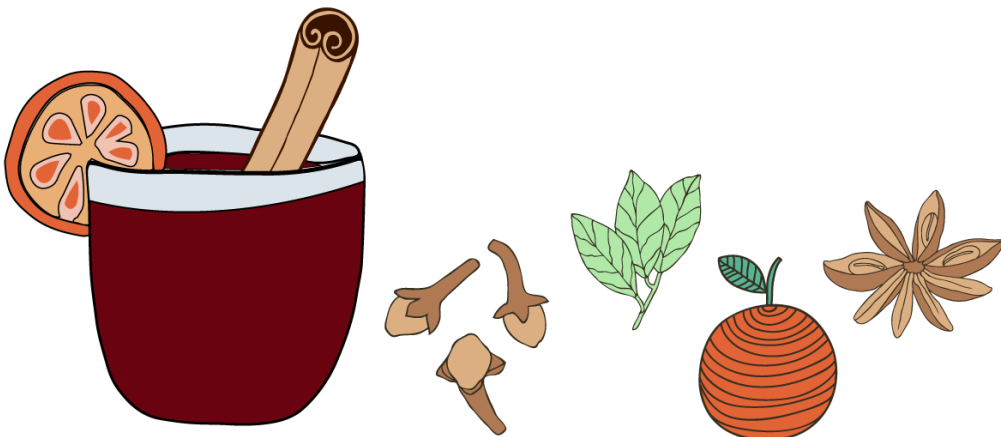
Brandy, to taste (optional)



Method

1. Carefully peel the zest very thinly from the orange and lemons using a vegetable peeler. Squeeze out the juice and reserve.
2. Stick the cloves into the satsumas.
3. Pour the wine, 1.2 litres/2 pints of cold water, and the citrus peel and juices into a large, heavy-based saucepan. Add the clove-studded satsumas and cinnamon sticks. Bring the mixture just to the boil, then reduce the heat until the mixture is simmering, cover the pan with the lid, and continue to simmer for about 1 hour. Stir in the sugar gradually during cooking, until the mulled wine is sweetened to your liking (you may not need all of the sugar).
4. Strain the mulled wine and serve hot in cups.

Source: BBC Food



Keeping in touch

Don't forget that we have a Facebook page for band members. This is separate from the existing public page for the band, and is a private page for current members only. If you get up to anything musical over the Christmas break, why not share this with other band members via the Facebook page? Anyone who is a member of the page can post photos, videos, links, or anything else that you'd like to share.

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

Christmas CDs

There are still a few Christmas CDs left, priced at £10 each. If you would like one, contact us using the email address above and we'll arrange to post a copy to you.

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
from all at DCB*



Thank you to Fiona McLean for the Christmas jokes!