

Introduce yourself!

My name's Steven and I'm a member of the horn section.

How long have you been a member?

I joined way back in 1976 whilst still at school - just a "wee feartie". Glyn Bragg was then Musical Director (and stand-up comedian) who made it fun. I left the Band and returned my school instrument when departing for University in Dundee. 25 years of parenting and lawyering then passed before I was (emotionally) reunited with the French horn and, after a further painful period of reacquainting, I duly re-joined DCB (now as a "big feartie").



Tell us a bit about yourself.

In a parallel universe I am a solicitor in a legal practice in the Wild West of Paisley High Street (dealing with whatever comes through the door). A sometimes crazy but certainly always interesting work world. I started my brass life at school in Clydebank with an E flat Tenor horn, then "transposed" to the French horn (in F) in 4th year. My youngest son Malcolm, plays horn (properly) and we two have dragged our instruments up and down the country attending annual conventions of the British Horn Society (yes there is such an organisation!). Geeky? Absolutely! We had a near miss moment though when we were both accosted by a "Britain's Got Talent" scout at Birmingham Airport. We escaped that time but the thought of what might have been still haunts me!

What other instruments do you play?

I've dabbled with oboe and classical guitar in a past life before I saw the light and found the Horn.

Is there another instrument you would like to play?

No. The unpredictable but wonderful Horn is the only one for me.



What do you enjoy most about DCB?

Horns should hunt in packs. It is the privilege of playing as part of a good Horn Section (with lovely people) within the incredible sound world which DCB creates. I especially love those magical tutti moments when the Band is in full flight and we each become part of something truly spectacular and life affirming.

Favourite concert venue – past, present..... or future?

Not a great venue (acoustically) perhaps but certainly a wonderful place for our community band to be - Erskine Hospital.

Favourite DCB memory?

Watching Robert Baxter manfully (and professionally) battling on up front at an Erskine gig whilst a cheery resident shouted his requests: “play some Moroccan music”!?



Favourite piece we've played?

I can't choose one therefore say, historically: 'The Watermill' by Ronald Binge (Glyn's arrangement) and Hamish MacCunn's 'Land of the Mountain and the Flood'; and more recently: 'East Coast Pictures' by Nigel Hess, 'Cry of the Last Unicorn' (featuring French horns returning to their origins -signalling the hunt), 'Out of Africa' by John Barry - and Gustav Holst Suite in E flat for Military Band.

Any piece you'd like to play with the band in the future?

Perhaps a wind band arrangement of 'Finlandia' by Sibelius and, if such an arrangement exists, also 'Farewell to Stromness' by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (there is an orchestral one).

Any (family friendly!) DCB related story you'd like to share?

My sister in law Charlotte yelping with fright up in the Gallery when the Band kicked off a Cairns Concert with a high octane shock opening fortissimo (of Bizet?).



Have you done anything exciting during lockdowns (other than lots of music practice – obviously!!) – learned a new skill or decided to get back into an old hobby for example?

Some camping, canoeing, hillwalking and cycling; conversing with family and friends around a fire pit; walks in the local woods, foraging for and eating wild plants (avoiding the mushrooms!).

Looking forward to getting back to rehearsals?

Totally! Been lacking the impetus and incentive to work at the elusive instrument. The prospect of a return to communal music making and the desire to avoid wrecking the pieces for want of practice should focus the mind. Can't wait to hear the Band's Kessington Hall sound.