

Introduce yourself!

Hello! I'm Grant Henderson, and I play the euphonium (yes, that 'wee tuba' that you'll only ever find here or in a Brass Band!) up towards the back of the band.

How long have you been a member?

To my regret, I only joined DCB relatively recently (in January 2023), but I had played alongside several other members for years before through the Strathclyde University Concert Band. Having resisted a few "enquiries" if I'd be interested in joining (remind myself that I was meant to be writing a thesis on Saturday mornings...), I was invited along to watch the Band at the end of 2022 in Kelvingrove. That same evening my application was submitted, and a first rehearsal date agreed!



Tell us a bit about yourself.

I was born and raised south of the border on the Wirral Peninsula, close to Liverpool, where my Glaswegian parents, both Strathclyde Chemists, had settled. I decided to buck the family trend, and so moved 'back' to Glasgow in 2016 to study Physics at Strathclyde! Having enjoyed that degree so much, in 2019 I embarked upon a PhD in Theoretical and Computational Physics, which I have now been awarded and will graduate from this coming summer. Since late last year, I've been working within the Department as a Research Associate, where my research looks at creating the next generation of currents made of atoms which are guided by light. Away from Physics, when not making music, I'm beginning a new journey as an elder at St. Andrew's West Parish Church, and can otherwise be found walking, cycling, and following my beloved Partick Thistle through thin and even thinner.

Why did you take up your instrument - why do you play the instrument you play?

It all goes back to a day in Primary School, aged seven, when the peripatetic brass teacher brought in four instruments and said 'right, see what one you can get a note out of'. I got closest to success with the largest option, the baritone, and thus started a happy musical journey. I moved to euphonium aged 11, and haven't looked back since. It's a wonderful instrument that I am incredibly thankful to have largely stumbled upon, and I've been fortunate to have played with (and still play with) some excellent youth and adult brass and concert bands along that journey.



What other instruments do you play?

I can't resist picking up random instruments! At one stage or another I have played the assortment of brass instruments "in anger" with various ensembles, with the notable exception of the horn. Though very much most at home in the brass section, I have also developed a deep love for the traditional music scene, dabbling

occasionally with a set of whistles or pipes, and have enjoyed singing with my church choir in recent times too. I can busk a few guitar and piano chords but I'm not selling any tickets!

Is there another instrument you would like to play?

To 'complete the set', I definitely fancy giving horn a go at some stage! There are also an accordion and a lyre in a corner of my flat – I'd love to get to more than a basic standard on them soon.

What do you enjoy most about DCB?

I enjoy so much of being in DCB, it has been a complete joy since joining last year! The ensemble standard is fantastic, and it is a genuine pleasure to play alongside so many excellent musicians. I enjoy the musicality, the friendship, and the spring in my step that I'm left with early afternoon each Saturday having spent a good couple of hours together. If only I hadn't had a thesis to write and had taken the plunge earlier!



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

The concert we held at Kelvingrove Art Gallery late in 2023 was an absolutely phenomenal experience – the numbers watching on and their response was striking. The atmosphere during the last few pieces of the second half felt electric. I was also delighted to play my very first concert with the Band close by at the Kelvingrove Bandstand, which was a venue I'd admired since moving to Glasgow. Sadly, that day is clouded by other memories – fellow Thistle fans will know – but playing there with DCB was a real venue highlight.

Favourite DCB memory?

It's tricky to pin one down, because it really has been such a delight to play with, and get to know, the excellent musicians and people of DCB since I joined. Outside of the major concerts, and the joy of a good Saturday morning rehearsal, I've also really enjoyed the more 'social' aspects of the last year. The 50th Anniversary Social was a very happy celebration all together, and the Christmas busking at Morrisons at the tail end of last year was a good laugh with a great bunch of folks.



Favourite piece we've played?

Tricky, as there have been a lot, even just in a year! I'm really enjoying both El Camino Real and the Highlights from Chess we're currently working on, and Sketches on a Tudor Psalm last year was a real highlight. At the other

end of the scale, I've really enjoyed playing pieces such as Selections from Cats and Goddess of Fire, both of which were favourites from previous ensembles that I've been in, and were enjoyable to revisit with DCB.

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

As you can probably tell, I'm a fan of the 'big hitters' (I have a playlist of ~200!) and so it'd be something of that ilk. I'm particularly fond of the work of Johan de Meij, and I'm inclined to say more by his hand. His arrangements of music from Phantom of the Opera and Riverdance are both spectacular, and I've always fancied having a stab at his (pre-film) symphony inspired by the Lord of the Rings books.

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

I hope that I'm very much still in the early stages of my time in the Band and so there will be plenty of further stories and memories to be made above and beyond the ones I've shared here. Having heard so much about previous iterations, I'm particularly excited for (hopefully) going on tour with the Band one day. But overall, I'd just like to thank everyone in DCB once again for being so welcoming and friendly since I joined – it has been a great year getting to know you all!