

Introduce yourself!

Hello! I'm Stewart (the one with the pink hair in the trumpet section). I'm 35 years old and have been playing brass for about 24 of those.



How long have you been a member?

I'm still very much a newbie! I was welcomed into DCB in the new year.



Tell us a bit about yourself.

Music has always been a big part of my life. I played trumpet with a couple of brass and wind ensembles during school as well as the Glasgow Schools Concert Band, then joined Strathclyde University's concert band during my undergraduate years (under the baton of our very own horn extraordinaire, Prof. Colin Suckling!). After I graduated I lived in the Scottish Borders for a period and was a regular attendee of the Kelso Accordion and Fiddle Club (you got free entry and stovies if you went on stage!). I later returned to Strathclyde to complete a PhD in Pharmaceutical Science and was able to join a folk ensemble there playing accordion. For the past 7 years I've played cornet with Renfrew Burgh Band (a 2nd section brass band). Most recently (in true Flanders and Swann style) I bought myself a second hand French horn on a whim and I'm absolutely addicted! I even joined the British Horn Society - I get a magazine and everything!

Work-wise, I've had a varied career so far. I was originally a community pharmacist working in the Scottish Borders, then during my PhD years I discovered aerial acrobatics (a gravity defying circus art which includes things like flying trapeze and silks) and that took over my life. After I graduated (...again), I worked full-time as a circus artist for around 5 years, performing and teaching all over the country. I also completed a diploma in Swedish Massage and worked as a mobile massage therapist in my spare time. However, 2020 (as you may recall) put a bit of a spanner in the works for the arts, and so I returned to healthcare (and a more reliable paycheck). Since then I've been working in diagnostic laboratories within NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde - I'm presently with haematology and blood transfusion at Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

My hobbies are as varied as my careers but aside from my musical passions, I also enjoy gardening, baking, knitting/crochet, and geocaching (a sort of GPS based outdoor treasure hunting game). Oh and I love a dad joke.

2024 is to be an especially exciting year for me, as I'm getting married in the summer!



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

I played bugle with the Boys Brigade during my primary school years so trumpet seemed a logical progression when I started secondary school.

What other instruments do you play?

Piano, accordion and French horn. For roughly 19 years, 16 years and 5 months respectively.

Is there another instrument you would like to play?

I was given a shot of a church organ once during school, and I played a clavichord in the musical instruments museum in Vienna which were both fun. I'd love to have a go on a harpsichord one day.

What do you enjoy most about DCB?

Everyone has been so welcoming - it's a great atmosphere. The band has a fantastic balanced sound and such a great variety of instruments. Plus the rehearsal hall is phenomenal- when the heating works that is!



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

I've played in a couple of concert halls (Perth, Glasgow Royal etc.) for contests, which are always nice to be in. However, I remember playing in the Winter Gardens at the People's Palace with Strathclyde's Concert Band for a couple of gigs and that *was* a very nice venue - if a little humid.

Favourite musical memory?

I was honoured to be able to play one of my closest friends (Amy) down the aisle for her wedding. They had a grand piano at the venue which was an absolute treat.

Favourite piece we've played?

Early days for me really but no complaints so far - it's all been lovely! 'Highlights from Chess' has definitely been the one I've found myself singing bits of in between rehearsals the most though.

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

Oh I'm not fussy at all. I enjoy most music. That said, you can't go wrong with a bit of Holst's Planets. Or anything from Stravinsky's Firebird Suite. Or Shostakovich's Jazz Suite is fun. Or the drinking song from La Traviata is a good ear worm. Oh you know what, the City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra did a nice cover of 'Yellow' by Coldplay. I think there's a Classic FM recording on iTunes. Beautiful. If there was a concert band arrangement of that available, that would be ace.

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

Again, it's early days for me but watch this space! I'll give you a joke instead: what do you do if someone buries your trumpet? Root-it-oot!