



I started playing at the age of 11 when the headmaster announced in the morning assembly that if anyone was interested in learning to play an instrument to report to the music teacher at lunchtime. For some reason (probably because my dad plays) when asked what instrument I would like to have a go on I picked out a very shiny cornet – and the rest as they say is history!!

I was very fortunate to have attended Moorside High School when the music teacher was a certain Mr Keith Millward – he was a real character, not a brass band man really, but he was so enthusiastic and just wanted children to get involved in music making, I am sure if someone had told him that they played the kitchen sink he would have arranged the music so that you become a member of the school orchestra – I consider myself so lucky to have been there during his time.

At the start of 1974 my mother changed jobs and moved to work for Royal Doulton, by coincidence starting at around the same time was Ted Grey who had just been appointed the Musical Director of the Royal Doulton Band – so it wasn't long before it came up in conversation that I was learning to play the cornet at school and was playing with my dad's band Following an invitation from Ted to attend a couple of rehearsals he kindly offered me the chance to join, which I eagerly accepted. Bar for a break of 12 months I remained with the Doulton band until the sponsorship ended when Ted retired in 1991.

During my time with Doulton Band I was fortunate to travel to places including Tennessee & Holland in particular where the band enjoyed many a standing ovation. Also closer to home we did several week long engagements in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh during the festival, Folkestone and in London during the Queens silver jubilee. We also played concerts in nearly all of the major concert halls in the UK, including the Royal Albert Hall on two occasions, both of which were recorded live.

Again I consider myself so fortunate to have been around when this band was around and to have been able to play under a wonderful musical conductor in Ted Grey.

Following the demise of the Doulton Band I joined the Greenway Selectus band for a couple of years before the opportunity came to join the BJ band based in Stockport. I accepted the invitation from the conductor John Maines only to arrive for my first rehearsal to find out that the band had just dispensed of his services!!

Once again I consider myself so fortunate as the band then appointed the vastly experienced and well respected Alan Lawton as conductor. I enjoyed a great three years with this band until I left in 1998 – my last performance with them was the Grand Shield in which we qualified for the British Open!!.

Following a couple of years off I received a call from Ken Mackintosh, the then conductor of Silk Brass asking me if I would be interested in coming along, which I did and have remained there. The band appointed Jim Cant some 3 years ago, again I consider myself fortunate to have come across Jim, a very musical conductor who has a great way of making the band play. The last three years under Jim have represented some of the most enjoyable times in my banding life. Silk Brass are a great advert for how banding should be, the ethics and morals of the band are to be greatly admired. The players work hard and support each other in a way that I have never experienced before in any band, they have achieved a lot of success under Jim and I am sure this will continue.