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The Musical Career and Teaching Philosophies of Euphoniumist Steven J. Mead

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THE MUSICAL CAREER AND TEACHING PHILOSOPHIES OF

EUPHONIUMIST STEVEN J. MEAD

By

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ABSTRACT

This treatise examines the musical development, professional career and teaching philosophies of British euphoniumist Steven J. Mead. Mead is perhaps most well-known for his virtuosity on the euphonium, touring over twenty countries and premièring one hundred seventy-five works. Equally important are his prolific discography and his efforts to improve euphonium education around the world. One of Mead’s significant accomplishments is his record as the first specialist euphonium teacher at the Royal Academy in London. Mead is the senior baritone-euphonium teacher at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England. In addition to teaching euphonium in the UK, Mead instructs many euphonium workshops and summer courses in countries across Europe, Asia and South America. Mead also contributes greatly to instrument and mouthpiece development working closely with the Besson Company and Denis Wick.

Having written numerous articles for journals and for his website, Mead was the primary source for this study. Many details of his life and career, however, came from interviews conducted by the author. More specific information arose from interviews from three important figures of Mead’s life: his father Rexleigh Mead, Derek Bourgeois and Howard Snell. Additionally, recollections from Mead’s current and former students were collected in a student questionnaire survey. Three aspects of their experience with him were addressed: Mead’s teaching philosophies, his influence on their lives, and memorable anecdotes.

Appendices include four repertoire lists covering the solos, etudes, brass band excerpts Mead recommends, as well as the orchestral excerpts Mead uses in his studio teaching at the Royal Northern College of Music. In addition, a discography and two of Mead’s articles are included. The result is a synopsis of information for euphoniumists regarding the life and accomplishments of this influential performer and teacher.
INTRODUCTION

Great Britain has a long, rich tradition of euphonium performance. As recently as the late 1980s, this tradition of euphonium playing consisted primarily of amateurs from the brass band movement. During the zenith of their popularity from the late nineteenth century to the Second World War, brass bands in the U.K. numbered in the thousands. Band members, however, were not viewed as equals to professional musicians. Instead they were in an “amateur tradition, amateur players, amateur teachers. In a way, it’s like they don’t belong in a professional institution.” Because of infrequent performance opportunities for non-orchestral brass instruments and the stigma of their amateur status, instruction at conservatories was thought as a study in futility. As a result, formal training and places of study for instruments like the euphonium, baritone, and the tenor horn have remained somewhat rare. The United Kingdom, nonetheless, has produced some of the greatest euphoniumists in the world.

Although mostly associated with its role as a member of the low brass section in the brass band, the tenor-bass melodic role of the euphonium has made it one of the most important voices in the ensemble. Furthermore, its full, mellifluous tone, wide range, and potential for virtuosity has helped bring the instrument out of the dark recesses of the back row to the front of the stage as a solo instrument. While the wide–ranging appeal of the euphonium owes much to its intrinsic qualities, it is the small group of dedicated players who have really cultivated the instrument as a solo voice, making it an increasingly important and viable instrument beyond the brass band realm over the past thirty years.

Several important, but relatively unknown performers come to mind during the nearly one hundred sixty year history of euphonium performance in the U.K. The careers of players such as Phineas Bower, Herbert Scott, Billy Miller, Alex Mortimer, Bert

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1 Steven Mead, interview by Robert Pendergast, 20 March 2005.
2 Ibid.
Sullivan and Trevor Groom, for example, mark important milestones in the development of the euphonium in Great Britain. These players, and others, have done much to secure the euphonium as a permanent voice in the brass band through the cultivation of what have become the euphonium’s trademark characteristics: lyricism, tone, and technical facility. In addition, these fine players helped promote the euphonium as a featured solo instrument that was frequently highlighted on band concert programs.

These developments in euphonium performance and literature, however, did not cause much impact outside the realm of the brass band movement. While the euphonium enjoyed an important role in the band, its musical development has, until recently, lagged behind the orchestral brasses partly from the lack of conservatory study. The quality and musical sophistication of much of the solo literature, and to a lesser extent, the performances of these brass band euphoniumists have fallen short of professional standards in today’s orchestras. What’s more, a vast majority of the solo euphonium performances were closely tied to the brass band, giving rise to a narrow audience.

During the 1970s, an international movement of leading euphonium players including Brian Bowman, Roger Behrend, David Werden, Robert and Nicholas Childs and Toru Miura worked to improve euphonium performance, pedagogy and repertoire development, starting with Horovitz’ Euphonium Concerto in 1972, one of the instrument’s earliest concerti. Arguably few have had as much of an international influence as the English euphoniumist Steven Mead. Born in 1962, Mead has strived to advance the euphonium equally in all areas of performance, music, and teaching; he has done much to expose the euphonium to new audiences, by premièring and commissioning new works and promoting euphonium studies in conservatories around the world.

I met Steven Mead in 1995 at the International Tuba-Euphonium Conference in Evansville, Illinois, when I, as a second year college student, boldly asked him for a lesson. To my delight, and surprise, Mead was willing to teach the lesson. Little did I realize at the time how greatly Mead would influence my modest musical career. I had

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the opportunity to study with him at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) from 1999-2000, I was well aware of many of his accomplishments, but on closer inspection, however, much of the existing information found in journal articles, my lesson notes and Mead’s website, while informative, left gaps in the story of Mead’s extraordinary career. Furthermore, I was equally surprised to discover relatively few academic papers have been written about famous euphonium players. The opportunity to increase the number of formal studies on influential euphoniumists, to reconnect with Mead’s teaching philosophies, and revisit the fond memories of studying at the RNCM were influential factor leading me to write about Mead.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to present biographical information on the professional life and career contributions of euphoniumist Steven J. Mead. The following questions are of primary concern. 1. What were Steven Mead’s musical influences during grade school, secondary school and college? 2. Who were his primary instructors and how did they mold his performance abilities and teaching philosophies? 3. What were the influence of Derek Bourgeois and others on Mead’s decision to become a professional euphoniumist? 4. What are Mead’s musical philosophies, methods and pedagogical approach? 5. What contributions has Mead made to the development of the solo euphonium literature? 6. How has Mead promoted the euphonium beyond its traditional settings? 7. How has he contributed to the design of the Besson Prestige line of euphoniums? 8. How did Mead contribute to the design of Denis Wick’s Steven Mead signature series and other brands of baritone and euphonium mouthpieces? The biographical portion of the paper is intended to bring a human perspective to the pedagogical and technical information of the study. Furthermore, the details of Mead’s professional life are meant to provide a source of inspiration for other aspiring musicians who want to pursue the euphonium as a possible career.

METHOD

Research was conducted primarily through interviews of the subject, Steven J. Mead. These interviews occurred in person, and through internet video conference. A permanent record has been made of all the interviews for future reference.
questionnaires and interviews with select students and colleagues provided additional information and vary the perspective of Mead as a performer, teacher and promoter of the euphonium. Also, materials from lessons, master classes, concerts, articles and other past interviews played a supportive role. To help define the musical setting from which Mead has developed, histories of the brass band, the euphonium, and its literature were reviewed.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

While there is growing interest in the British brass band as a serious musical organization, many of the histories of these ensembles have been written relatively recently by a small number of authors closely associated with the brass band movement. *Brass Roots: A Hundred Years of Brass Bands and Their Music, 1836-1936*, by Roy Newsome offers a view of the highlights of British brass band history, and its most significant works during what is considered by many as the genre’s golden age.⁶ Newsome also discusses the importance of the band leaders and contests, and points out the special instrumentation of the bands and the roles of each of the instruments. Trevor Herbert’s *Bands: The Brass Band Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* provides a more in-depth account of the brass band and its development in the U.K.⁷ A more up-to-date edition renamed *The British Brass Band: A Musical and Social History*, features current events and a new chapter on performance practices of the bands and influential soloists.⁸ Mamminga’s dissertation, “British Brass Bands,” provides another account of the history of the brass band. Although somewhat outdated, as it was written in 1973, it draws from Mamminga’s personal experiences in the U.K.⁹ Perhaps one of the most interesting histories of the brass band in Britain is Taylor’s *Labour and Love: An Oral History of the Brass Band Movement*. This volume contains interviews from some of the

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brass band movement’s greatest players, conductors and advocates. Its uniqueness arises from the first-hand perspective of the musicians involved in the band culture.¹⁰

There are a number of books which document the history and development of brass instruments in Western art music. Trevor Herbert and John Wallace’s The Cambridge Companion to Brass Instruments and The Brass Instruments: Their History and Development by Baines are two examples dedicated to brass instruments.¹¹ Clifford Bevan’s more specialized work, The Tuba Family, provides the most information on the euphonium.¹² Likewise, Earle Louder’s “An Historical Lineage of the Modern Baritone Horn and Euphonium” and Adam Frey’s “The Euphonium: Its History and Global Cultivation” detail the development of the euphonium.¹³ While the former provides much of the same data contained in The Tuba Family, the latter discusses the global cultivation of the euphonium, its literature, and performance practices. Having an in-depth record of the euphonium and its development provides an excellent background to document Mead’s contributions in instrument design, literature, and education.

Many who have studied abroad have later written articles documenting their experiences. Clarence Kemp’s “A Brash American Meets British Brass,” primarily speaks to the camaraderie and work ethic of the top bands.¹⁴ There is minimal discussion on the differences in playing styles of American and British brass players. The article, “A British Brass Band Experience for an American Euphoniumist,” however, addresses very specific issues of British euphonium playing.¹⁵ Frey also explores the social

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interaction of the members of these bands during their preparation for important
competitions.

Throughout music history numerous performers, composers, theorists and other
students of music have written treatises, dissertations, or methods on how to perform and
how to interpret music. Brass instruments are no exception when it comes to
instructional theory. Books by Howard Snell, Brian Frederiksen, Arthur Lehman, Harold
Brasch, and Dee Stewart cover many aspects of brass playing.\(^\text{16}\) Daniel Kohut’s research
in the field of pedagogy and learning techniques makes his *Musical Performance:
Learning Theory and Pedagogy* an invaluable resource.\(^\text{17}\) In 1976 Joseph L. Bellamah
published a survey of teaching methods of leading brass players in the United States
entitled, *A Survey of Modern Brass Teaching Philosophies of Today’s Leading Brass
Specialists . . .*\(^\text{18}\) Topics include fundamentals of brass playing, choice of method books,
mouthpieces and equipment. Bellamah does not address the special issues of solo brass
literature directly or the nuance of phrase and musicality as applied to brass performance.
The responses are also somewhat limited in the depth of information because of its
questionnaire format. Euphoniumist Robert Childs has provided his master class notes
from the Royal Northern College of Music on his website. Each is of pedagogical
interest specific to the euphonium with subjects including exams, contests and auditions,
teaching, solo performances with large ensembles and traditional and progressive
euphonium repertoire. Unfortunately these notes are no longer available from the
internet, but are available from the author’s collection of master class notes.

\(^{16}\) Howard Snell, *The Trumpet: Its Practice and Performance; A Guide for Student*, (West
Volume One*, (Eau Claire, Wisconsin: T.U.B.A. Press), 1993, and Harold Brasch. *The Euphonium and 4-
Valve Brasses: An Advanced Tutor*, (Eau Claire, Wisconsin: T.U.B.A. Press), 1997 and M. Dee Stewart,
*Arnold Jacobs: The Legacy of a Master*, (Northfield, Illinois: The Instrumentalist Publishing Company,
1987).

\(^{17}\) Daniel Kohut, *Musical Performance: Learning Theory and Pedagogy*, (Champaign: Stipes

Brass Specialists Including Trumpet, Cornet, Horn, Trombone, Euphonium and Tuba; also Including Jazz
Approaches to Brass Playing by the Leading Performers*, (San Antonio, TX: Southern Music Company
1976).
Of the many famous and influential performers throughout history, authors Richard Good, Sharon Huff, and Marcus Dickman agree that there are few biographical studies of euphonium players.\(^{19}\) At the time of his dissertation in 1996, Good states that “only two leading euphoniumists have been the subject of biographical studies, Brian Bowman and Leonard Falcone.”\(^ {20}\) However, the scope of the Falcone study emphasized his contributions to band directing, limiting his euphonium performance to a single chapter. Since Good’s study of Earl Louder, a doctoral dissertation on jazz euphoniumist, Rich Matteson, has been written by Dickman. While three doctoral dissertations on famous euphoniumists may seem small in number, none have been written on European euphoniumists.

Because of his many awards, and prominent activity in the euphonium and brass band arena, there are a number of articles written about Mead’s accomplishments. Mark Bousie wrote “The Development of Repertoire for the Euphonium with Particular Reference to the Late Twentieth Century” for his post-graduate diploma in advanced studies in performance at the Royal Northern College of Music.\(^ {21}\) While the center of his work focuses on the development of solo euphonium repertoire in the United States and Europe, he references his interviews with Mead about significant works for euphonium. There are a number of primary sources about Steven Mead available. Perhaps the most well-known is his website, www.euphonium.net. It contains many of his articles, some of which are hard to find in their original sources. The website also contains pictures, tour schedules as well as commercial pages. While there is much to be found on his webpage, many of the articles and other information, by their nature, do not explore their topics exhaustively. These sources are valued for their data, as well as their ability to


\(^{21}\) Mark Bousie, “The Development of Repertoire for the Euphonium, with Particular Reference to the Late Twentieth Century” (Post Graduate Diploma diss., The Royal Northern College of Music, 1999).
lead to further questions. There are also materials from lessons, master classes and email correspondence with several of his students that will be provided by students participating in the questionnaire survey, as well as from the author. There are also secondary sources, including Kelly O’Bryant’s article about Meads’ ground breaking work in Italy appeared in the International Tuba-Euphonium Association Journal the winter of 1999.\textsuperscript{22} Interviews by Dawn Holte and the author have also provided valuable insight into Mead’s thoughts on the euphonium, teaching and related topics.\textsuperscript{23}

A small number of article sources remain inaccessible primarily because the brass band journals and magazines in the UK are not able to offer back issues to non-members. Unfortunately subscriptions to foreigners are quite expensive. Additionally, it is with much regret the author was unable to contact Mead’s teacher, Trevor Groom, who remains interested in the development of the euphonium, but is not of the email generation.

There are four chapters in this study. The first chapter briefly gives insight to Mead’s musical background and early family life. It also traces his development as a musician from grade school to graduate school. The second chapter focuses more directly on his professional career, his many accomplishments and his contributions to the world of the euphonium. Chapter three discusses Mead’s philosophies on brass pedagogy and briefly describes his teaching methods and thoughts on several musical topics. The last chapter reflects on Mead’s accomplishments and speculates on future directions his career may lead. It also includes student responses which document there impressions of Mead as a performer, teacher, and human being.


CHAPTER 1
BIOGRAPHY

Family History

Born on February 26, 1962 in the popular south-coast resort town of Bournemouth, England, Steven Jeremy Mead comes from a musical family with a long association with the Salvation Army.¹ His maternal great-grandfather was William Walker, a noted Salvation Army bandmaster.² Walker, who was originally from Pentre, Wales, directed the Salvation Army band in Boscombe, England starting in 1933 until his son-in-law, Sylvester Henning, succeeded him as bandmaster.³ Henning, Mead’s maternal grandfather, played the euphonium before being appointed the leader of the Boscombe band. He volunteered for military service at the start of the Second World War in 1939 when Mead’s mother, Silva, was very young, and “sadly never returned.”⁴ Henning’s widow later remarried Richard Voak, who played the cornet and became an important influence in Mead’s early musical development.

Although Mead does not offer much information about the paternal side of his family, he is obviously quite proud of his father, stating that he “has been the most loyal supporter and, in the nicest way possible, an occasional critic.”⁵ From 1947 to 1981 Rexleigh Mead, Steven’s father who was a school teacher by profession, also played in the Boscombe Salvation Army band. During his thirty-four years in the band he primarily played the tenor horn, but eighteen years ago he found time to learn the trombone. As a teacher, the elder Mead offered to help the school music department, especially with the beginning students, and found “a succession of children with trombones coming for a


⁴ Rexleigh Mead, “An Email Interview with Steven Mead’s Father, Rex Mead,” 1.

Realizing that he needed to play the trombone before he could teach others, Rexleigh understood that playing in an ensemble would increase his slide proficiency more quickly than practicing alone in a practice room. Hence, the Boscombe bandmaster kindly allowed Rexleigh’s move to the trombone section. The trombone has been traditionally considered a special instrument in the brass band because of the unique mechanism of its slide; thus it usually requires extra diligence and practice for musicians who play the trombone as a secondary instrument. Rexleigh, however, found it relatively easy to learn the trombone after having a musical foundation on a valve brass instrument, citing that the slide positions correlated readily to the valve combinations. His well-developed sense of pitch allowed for fine adjustments in slide placement and, because he was primarily self-taught on trombone, he naturally accepted the use of alternate positions and the use of the F-attachment. Mead played trombone for several years with the Boscombe band and continued to play it in a retired men’s band called the Bournemouth Fellowship band. Rexleigh Mead also played the baritone toward the end of his membership with the Boscombe band. When he retired from this ensemble, Rexleigh continued to play the trombone in the Sandleheath Band at the request of the band’s leader and his wife’s cousin, Don Marlowe, but his son, Steven, finally persuaded him to practice the euphonium since 2004.

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6 Rexleigh Mead, “An Email Interview with Rex Mead,” 1.

7 Ibid.

8 Rexleigh Mead, “An Email Interview with Steven Mead’s Father, Rex Mead,” 1.

9 Ibid.

Ages Six to Early Teenage Years

In spite of his successful solo euphonium career, Steven Mead’s early musical training is much more modest than his most recent accomplishments would seem to indicate. Growing-up with his siblings Andrew and Sandra on Ropley Road in Boscombe, the Mead family was very active with the local Salvation Army where the sounds of the band and choir were always present. Although the vibrant sonorities of the brass band piqued Steven’s early interest in music, his initial musical successes were achieved as a vocalist. In addition to playing with the Young Persons Band, Steven also sang in weekly rehearsals with the “Singing Company,” the Boscombe youth choir. Rexleigh Mead remembers his son’s fine singing voice. He took four years of singing lessons and passed his Grade 8 singing exam, the highest level exam before the diploma level in the UK, with distinction as a boy soprano at the age of twelve.\(^\text{12}\) Steven Mead relates the following story about his singing at local festivals:


... my earliest music competitions were singing competitions. I don’t know if Mom and Dad mentioned this, but between the ages of seven and twelve, all I did were singing festivals. So we have what we call the Bournemouth Music Festival. There was Gosport festival which was about thirty miles away and a couple of others actually that came along every year. And so my parents used to take me to those, and I used to have to sing some old English song or some Mozart or stuff like that, you know and it was all done in age group, under eleven boys, under thirteen boys, etcetera like that. So I was doing vocal competitions long before I thought about brass competitions.¹³

Steven’s future as a singer, however, was short-lived, ending when Steven’s voice “broke” at the onset of puberty, but his vocal training laid the fountain for what would be his pedagogical approach to playing the euphonium.¹⁴

The “rich and glorious” sound of the band at Boscombe was a major influence on the young Steven Mead, who stated that “even as a child of five or so, I knew I wanted to be involved with that sound.”¹⁵ Mead started his instrumental studies with the Boscombe Salvation Army Young Peoples Band Leader, Bernard Roberts, when Mead was about six years old. Roberts gave Mead his first instrument, an old Boosey and Hawkes “Class A” cornet, on the way to a Sunday evening open-air meeting just after dinner.¹⁶ Following the meeting Steven “walked alongside the band as it marched back to the Salvation Army hall that night” full of enthusiasm and ready to begin making music.¹⁷ Mead recalls Roberts as a “lovely guy . . . who took an interest in me and what I was doing.”¹⁸ He was always encouraging and it didn’t matter that Roberts was not a virtuoso player.¹⁹ Roberts and Mead developed a good rapport during their three years of lessons

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¹⁴ Rexleigh Mead, “An Email Interview with Steven Mead’s Father,” Rex Mead, 1.


¹⁶ Ibid. and Rexleigh Mead, “An E-mail Interview with Steven Mead’s Father, Rex Mead,” 1.

¹⁷ Steven Mead, “Mead Tells His Story Behind This Recording,” accessed 3 January 2008.


¹⁹ Ibid.
together and would “laugh and joke a lot.” At that age Mead remembers the lessons being fairly informal, spending much of the lessons sitting on Roberts’ “kitchen table playing hymn tunes.”

Like many players in brass bands, Mead did not start on the instrument that ultimately became his principal voice. There are several reasons brass band musicians might switch instruments during their playing careers. Four of the most common are age or injury, musical maturity, and to fill vacant sections in the ensemble. Members of the Young People’s Band were allowed to participate until the age of fourteen at which time they either quit playing or graduated to the adult band. As a player becomes older he or she may move to a lower-pitched instrument to compensate for the loss of range or stamina. It is also common for players to move to a larger instrument as they become older, and therefore, strong enough to hold the bigger instruments. The valve brasses are based on a uniform three-valve system and players in the brass band can switch to a different instrument to meet the needs of the group with relative ease. While Steven could read music and sing quite well, it became apparent to the conductors of the Young People’s Band that the cornet was not the best fit for Mead. Remembering he “couldn’t play the high notes on the cornet,” Mead recalls that after two years of lessons on the cornet, the band directors moved him to the E-Flat tenor horn. This was the same instrument his father played and Steven enjoyed playing it for two years, but his development as a musician and the nature of the Young People’s Band inevitably lead him to leave the tenor horn section. At this point in his life Mead “just liked playing a brass instrument,” and therefore, he was happy when the director suggested he become a baritone player when a spot became vacant.

20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
23 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 10.
Mead was not as confident, however, when he was moved to the euphonium. He states: “I was playing solos with the Young People’s Band on the baritone, and I was mortified when I was given a euphonium to play.” When he was given a brass band LP on his twelfth birthday, Mead began to think differently about the euphonium. There was something about the recording that “hit the mark.” The sound of the euphonium player on that LP recording captivated Mead’s imagination and he realized “I could do that!” Indeed a series of events between the ages of twelve and thirteen came together to shift his focus from singing and general enjoyment of brass playing to a love of playing the euphonium including spending time with his grandfather, and hearing a performance of euphoniumist Barrie Perrins. After receiving his first brass band recording, Mead continued listening to recordings of the best brass bands regularly with his grandfather Voak who would visit the Mead house on Friday evenings from about half past four to seven-thirty.

I still remember on a Friday afternoon I would come home and he would have a pile of four or five records that we would sit and listen to. And then my Grandma would come in about a half past six and say; “Oh come on, come we’ve got to go!” And she would . . . he was a big bloke, a big tall bloke, but she would shuffle him out of the house. “All right, all right, boy, enjoyed it, see you next Friday!” Voak was an incredibly important figure in Mead’s teenage years and during their long “banding chats,” would guide Steven’s listening. Many of the intricate details about a band’s performance were discussed: “a player’s tone colour, the way great players make it sound easy, so natural, so much space in the music, so much control.” Euphoniumists Trevor Groom and John Clough were given particularly close attention in Mead’s evening conversations with his grandfather because of their excellent tone and

26 Steven Mead, An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne FL,” 11.
28 Ibid.
musicianship. Exposure to Barrie Perrins, a prominent euphoniumist with the Hendon band, was also a pivotal experience for the young Mead. “It was quite an earth moving experience” hearing Perrins play an arrangement of Handel’s *Harmonious Blacksmith*. The tone quality he made, the expression in the theme, and the technical facility of Perrins’ performances and recordings were all highly influential on Mead. Perrins cared about every note, even in the variations. Although Mead admits that he would probably be less impressed by the recording today, he still owns the LP and remembers how he “played it over and over again.” To listen to Perrins playing Handel’s *Harmonious Blacksmith*, click [here](#). Perhaps more important than the recording’s musical value was the fact that Perrins was a Londoner, significant “because it blew away the myth that you had to be from Yorkshire to play.” Inspired by the example of a successful euphonium soloist from southern England, Mead dedicated himself to finding as many of the best recordings of the country’s leading euphoniumists, especially Trevor Groom and John Clough. Every Saturday morning Mead would visit a small specialty music store that carried most of the important recordings of the top brass bands. From these records Mead would extract the tracks that featured euphonium soloists onto a cassette tape. This euphonium compilation cassette became his “euphonium Bible” and served as a musical role model for the young Steven Mead. The photographs in figure 2 are of three euphoniumists Mead admired in his early days of playing the euphonium.

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31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
From ages twelve to fifteen, Mead studied with cornet soloist, Glyn Bosanko. “Glyn was a very good, very good solo cornet player with the [Boscombe] band.” Bosanko frequently played in front of the band as a featured soloist or in the colloquial brass band speak, “stood on his feet.” His performances were technically stunning; he “literally blew people away.” Born to a well-known musical family in southern England with an international reputation within the Salvation Army, Bosanko guided Mead through his Level 8 exams on the euphonium. Bosanko, however, did not know much about the euphonium, but was a “very good brass player” and thus lessons with Bosanko were more thorough than the instruction from Roberts. Even as a youngster Mead was very self-motivated, possessing an innate “passion for practice.” Bosanko re-enforced his student’s work ethic with very precise instruction and modeled musical examples on the cornet.

When Mead was growing-up in 1970s southern England, there were few opportunities to compete in solo competitions specializing in the euphonium. Modern competitions for the euphonium like the Falcone International Euphonium and Tuba Festival, the Lieksa Brass Week, and the competitions at the International Tuba-

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38 Rexleigh Mead, “An Email Interview with Steven Mead’s Father, Rex Mead,” 2.
Euphonium Conferences, Mead states, “all . . . came after I was well established as a professional player.” Nevertheless, Mead won many accolades for his solo performances in his early teens in open competitions and festivals in his home town of Bournemouth. The Bournemouth Music Festival is an annual, three-week summer event featuring “everything from school bands to choirs to quartets to string orchestras and solos of every instrument.” Importantly to Mead, this festival also sponsored solo competitions. Mead had already been competing at the Bournemouth Music Festival for a number of years in the vocal division, but did not enter the brass category until he was twelve years old. When Mead was thirteen, he won his age group with a performance of Bellstedt’s *Napoli* on the euphonium. Mead remembers that the festival in Bournemouth always hired top-notch musicians to judge the competitions. Composer Eric Ball judged Mead’s performance of *Napoli*, which impressed Mead greatly. He recalls:

Well he is . . . he was a really famous, very famous brass band composer, a legend really. Well he lived in Pool which was only five miles away, and he used to come in and judge the brass classes at the Bournemouth Music Festival. It’s just incredible; I’ve still got some written comments from him . . . I played *Napoli*, and I won. I got eighty five points, and his comments were; “very impressive playing today, it would have been nice to hear you play something slow.” So, I still remember those early days, mainly the Bournemouth Music Festival.

In addition, Mead auditioned for spots in the National Youth Brass Band and a touring band called the Young Ambassadors Brass Band of Great Britain, but apart from auditioning for these bands and playing in local music festivals, he was not heavily involved with competitions. Mead states: “because I was a southern boy living in the south coast, I was immune to all those things because they were all up in Yorkshire.”

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40 Ibid., 1.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
Middle Teenage Years Through High School

By the time Mead was in his mid-teens he had become quite serious about the euphonium and was willing to travel long distances for specialized instruction. When he was sixteen, Mead began his studies with brass band euphonium legend, Trevor Groom. Mead first became aware of Groom’s teaching and playing through his article “Sound Investment” published in the *British Bandsman* in the early 1970s. Groom was the solo euphoniumist in the Salvation Army band in the Kettering area and the G.U.S. Footwear band for twenty five years. His superior tone quality and musical sensitivity was the envy of many euphoniumists in the UK. Unfortunately, Groom’s reputation does not extend far beyond the brass band world except as a footnote for his premiere of Joseph Horovitz’s *Euphonium Concerto* in 1972 at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

Groom did not have formal conservatory training, but learned to play the euphonium from renowned Scottish euphoniumist, Bert Sullivan, by oral instruction and use of solo literature, as was the tradition of brass band musicians up to the mid-twentieth century. In turn, Sullivan’s information was then passed down to Mead during his lessons with Groom.

Starting in 1978, Mead traveled over two hundred miles between Bournemouth and Kettering by train for lessons over a two and one half year period. It was a seven hour round trip, and Mead knew he “would have to go by train via London; changing trains, changing stations.” It was “quite a big thing” for a “lad who was sixteen” to travel such long distances through London. Groom arranged for the upstairs rooms of the Kettering Salvation Army hall to be available on Saturdays and he would spend two or


46 Ibid., 51.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.


50 Ibid.
more hours putting Mead through his paces.\textsuperscript{51} Tone production was the most important topic in these lessons. While there are many components to performing well on a brass instrument, such as articulation, finger technique, flexibility, etcetera, a great sound was Groom’s first priority.\textsuperscript{52} Often Groom mentioned that the quality of sound is the first impression a soloist gives his or her audience. Groom used simple melodies and the introductions and themes from the \textit{air varié} repertoire -- \textit{Weber’s Last Waltz}, \textit{Pretty Jane}, \textit{Jenny Jones} and \textit{Gypsy’s Warning} for example, for developing a rich, robust sound and sensitivity to musical phrasing. Mead recalls Groom’s teaching at its most effective when he played examples for Mead. “You know, he would talk a little bit, I’d play something and he would pick it [his euphonium] up and he would say; ‘Alright lad, that’s very good. This is how I would play it,’ and it was always quite revelatory.”\textsuperscript{53} Groom imparted a wealth of knowledge to his students, and while Mead remembers much of what was said during lessons, Groom’s playing in lessons created a greater impression on the teenaged Mead who relates: “I remember sounds and phrases and approaches.”

Although Groom was always self-deprecating about his playing, often commenting that his best performances were well in his past, Mead relished the opportunity to study with a musician of Groom’s caliber and looked to him as a mentor. Part of Groom’s appeal was his many desirable personal qualities, and to some extent, Mead saw a “little bit of his father” in Groom.\textsuperscript{54} Like his parents, Groom was an active member of the Salvation Army. Mead explains that Groom was from the older generation who was not consumed by materialism. Trevor Groom was a supremely honest man whose word was his bond; a man who lead by example. For instance, Groom would drive Mead to and from the train station. Mead explains:

\[\ldots\text{ and every single lesson I would offer him money, and every single time he refused } \ldots \text{ I must have taken twenty five lessons with him, and he never took any}\]

\textsuperscript{51} Steven Mead, “Two British Euphonium Legends,” 51.


\textsuperscript{53} Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast, 31 March 2007, An Interview with Steven Mead, transcript, Tallahassee, FL: 15.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
money, ever! And I felt a little bit uncomfortable about it and he said; “Now lad, if you’re keen enough to travel all this way to have lessons with me, I’m not going to take any money off of you.” It was absolutely bizarre. Of course you don’t hear of it these days.55

While Groom never said being a great player was directly the result of good manners, Mead’s experience with Groom taught him the importance of being a decent human being first and foremost when trying to get ahead in the music business. This simple personality trait undoubtedly helped Mead become successful in his career. In recognition of his teacher’s influence on his playing, Mead dedicated a recording of the Horovitz Euphonium Concerto, recorded thirty three years after its première, to his former teacher, Trevor Groom.

Meanwhile, Geoff Otter, conductor of the Boscombe band, rewarded Mead’s diligent practicing with an opportunity to be a featured soloist with the Boscombe Band. The sixteen-year-old Mead performed Ransomed by G. Marshall at a Sunday evening meeting in Ealing with famous composer and Salvation Army member, Eric Ball, as guest speaker. This was the first solo Mead played publicly in front of a band, but his solo appearance in Ealing was quickly followed by another performance at a large Methodist church in Bournemouth in which Mead played the solo, We’ll All Shout Hallelujah, adapted for Salvation Army use by Norman Audoire. Otter got Mead “on his feet” with the band regularly even though Mead never held the principal euphonium chair.56

While Mead found his experiences with the Boscombe Salvation Army band musically satisfying, the music program at his high school, the Bournemouth School for Boys, was poor in comparison and offered very little for him to do on the euphonium. On occasion Mead would play his euphonium in the school orchestra if there was an “interesting part” or if the director wanted the tuba part doubled. To fill this temporary gap in his musical activity, Mead began playing the trombone which allowed him to play in local youth orchestras and the school jazz band. Mead played the trombone with the Bournemouth and Dorset youth orchestras on Tuesday evenings. These youth

55 Ibid.

56 Steven Mead, “Mead Tells His Story Behind This Recording,” accessed 3 January 2008.
organizations offered a periodic joint course for a long weekend about four times a year. Mead alternatively played first trombone and “a particularly loud” bass trombone which they liked and when we had big concerts I actually borrowed . . . a Yamaha bass trombone from a friend, which added even more sound.\textsuperscript{57} Mead fondly remembers one concert shared with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Dorset Youth Orchestra with Sir Charles Groves conducting. The concert was at the Winter Gardens in Bournemouth with nearly eighteen hundred people in attendance.\textsuperscript{58}

. . . The Dorset Youth Orchestra was invited to play in the 1812 [Overture], and my bass trombone hero had always been Alwen Green. He’s still playing, actually with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and it was my mission that he would hear me! And he came up afterwards and said there were a few points in the piece where he couldn’t hear anybody else.\textsuperscript{59}

Mead continued to double on tenor and bass trombone in the local youth orchestras and his high school orchestra, but his involvement in jazz band was primarily focused on tenor trombone.

Mead’s participation with the high school jazz band started much more informally than his experiences with the youth orchestras and from an unlikely source. It was actually the school Latin teacher, Cecil Peppin, who started interest in the jazz band at Mead’s school. Mead remembers Peppin as a bit of an “odd sort of guy” who would hover around the music room during the breaks between classes and during lunch times. Peppin took time to speak with some of the music students, but they paid him little notice until he brought large plastic bags full of traditional jazz LPs.\textsuperscript{60} The students slowly gained interest in Peppin and his ideas for a school jazz band after several weeks of listening to his recordings between classes. Mead recalls the following:

So after a while of, you know, humoring him and talking to him, he came up with this idea; (in a haughty voice) “I would like to form a jazz band in the school and

\textsuperscript{57} Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography: Part Two,” 15.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
I would like you boys to be in the jazz band and we’ll meet on Friday, lunch time.”

Peppin started the jazz band program around a core of a few enthusiastic students including one of Mead’s neighborhood friends who played rudimentary jazz piano. Although no one at Mead’s high school had any practical experience with jazz improvisation, Peppin taught the “songs” he brought to rehearsal having his students learn the jazz style by listening to recordings of the selections he made available for them. “So he basically taught us songs, and I did it on trombone, and my idea of playing jazz solos was to find jazz solos that were already played and just aurally learn them.”

Mead listened to a cassette tape Peppin made for him with several Chris Barber solos on it and studied it for about two weeks. During this fourteen-day period, Mead transcribed four verses of choruses of Barber’s trombone solos which he performed on the concert as the lead trombonist.

Because Mead was reliable, hard working, and people listened to him, he eventually took leadership of the jazz band. After several successful concerts, the jazz band program gained momentum and interest for the ensemble increased among the students.

So we actually put on about four school jazz concerts to which we had about two hundred people come . . . and by which time some of the other people in the school who had a secret ability to play, a bit of jazz saxophone, a drummer came forward and another pianist; all of a sudden we had quite a good band, you know, when everyone was playing we had like fifteen or sixteen and often different trios and quartets.

Mead learned that his next door neighbor played the banjo and encouraged him to play duets for trombone and banjo. “A pal of mine who lived around the corner from my house discovered that he played the banjo! And he never ever talked about it so we did

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61 Ibid.  
62 Ibid.  
63 Ibid.  
64 Ibid.
these on the banjo and trombone, and he used to come around my house and he used to play so hard his fingers used to bleed.”  

Mead continued with the high school jazz band for two years until his “sixth form” which equates to the twelfth grade level in the American high school system. He would later gig on trombone in college in various ensembles including jazz bands. For all the fun playing in the jazz band was, the accidental beginnings of the program did not provide a real foundation in jazz theory or instruction.  

Looking back over his career, Mead admits that while he “eradicated” nearly all of his pedagogical faults on the euphonium at an early age, the ability to improvise correctly in the jazz medium stands as his only weakness, but it is an area he continues to improve.  

In addition to his trombone exploits, Mead continued to play the euphonium avidly throughout high school, and in 1980 at the age of eighteen, Mead entered in the Young Musician of the Year Competition.  

Sponsored by the BBC, this competition is a national contest which is held biannually for UK musicians eighteen years old and younger. Mead recalls that it was an important experience.

I remember the competition really focused my playing, on picking a descent program, on rehearsing carefully, and it was my first “taste” of the big-time, you know, to stand there on a stage with two or three of these super-large TV-type cameras moving around, and it was the first real pressure thing I had done outside the Salvation Army which had been my kind of private little musical world until that point.

A nationally televised event, the BBC Young Artist of the Year Competition consists of three rounds. All of the competitors auditioned according to instrumentation until the final round in which a grand winner is selected. The year Mead participated, the first round was in South Hampton, followed by a semifinal round in London, and concluded in

65 Ibid., 16.
66 Ibid.
67 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 7.
68 Ibid., 1.
69 Ibid., 2.
Manchester at the Royal Northern College of Music.\textsuperscript{70} Mead performed well, but his performance had one too many “duff” notes to win the final round.\textsuperscript{71} His friend from the National Youth Brass Band, cornetist Elaine Wolfe, won the competition for the brass section, but ultimately lost to oboist Nicholas Daniel.\textsuperscript{72} To date, no euphonium player has won the BBC Young Artist of the Year Competition.\textsuperscript{73}

Although solo euphonium repertoire was much more limited in 1980 than it is in the twenty-first century, Mead planned his program for the BBC Young Artist of the Year Competition well, scheduling diverse works from a variety of musical eras. His twenty-five minute program included Catelinet’s arrangement of Capuzzi’s \textit{Andante and Rondo}, a movement from Horovitz’s \textit{Euphonium Concerto}, a slow melody, and an old, out-of-print manuscript of \textit{Variations for Ophicleide} by G. Kummer.\textsuperscript{74} The Horovitz \textit{Concerto} and the \textit{Variations for Ophicleide} are two works from his program that have resurfaced often in Mead’s career, the latter of which he has published as a special arrangement for the euphonium.\textsuperscript{75}

\section*{College and Graduate School}

With music a major part of his life, it was inevitable that Mead would continue his music studies. While in college, Mead developed many important contacts outside of the Salvation Army. His years after high school were a definitive period in Mead’s life in which he formally decided to pursue a career as an euphonium soloist even though professional euphoniumists were rather “thin on the ground” in 1980s Britain.\textsuperscript{76} Away

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{70} Ibid.
\bibitem{71} Ibid.
\bibitem{73} Ibid.
\bibitem{74} Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography: Part One,” 4.
\bibitem{75} Ibid., 5.
\bibitem{76} Alan Jenkins, “An Interview with Steven Mead,” accessed 9 September 2008.
\end{thebibliography}
from home, Mead came in contact with two influential figures in his career: Derek Bourgeois and Howard Snell.

For many students wishing to continue music at the university level, the music conservatory is a natural course of study. Mead was offered a spot at the Royal Academy of Music in London on the condition that he quit playing the euphonium in favor of the tuba.\(^ {77}\) Despite the enormous popularity of the brass bands in the UK, the euphonium was not regularly studied in British conservatories until the late 1980s and early 1990s.\(^ {78}\) Mead’s father, who remembers Mead as extremely dedicated to the euphonium, relates that his son was “not prepared to make this concession” and decided to study elsewhere.\(^ {79}\) After careful consideration, Mead entered the Bristol University to study music.

Although Bristol University did not offer the size and scope of a music conservatory, it did have some unique advantages. The music department’s small setting gave rise to many opportunities for Mead to perform.

> You see, at Bristol . . . it wasn’t a music conservatory, it was a university and so everybody basically was encouraged to be good at something, be it violin, or singing, or playing the organ, or . . . you know, everybody had to have a specialty and then in their final year they would do a recital on it as a component to the final degree mark. So, I was pretty proud of what I did. It was a very small, intimate music department so everybody was encouraged to be themselves, if you know what I mean, and I was this little guy from Bournemouth with a euphonium that people have never heard and I could play it quite well, and I played in a brass band and people were interested. And because it wasn’t really part of my academic work, it was seen as . . . someone riding a three wheeled bicycle, it was just a little bit different idea. But then, the composers within the department, the staff and the students, would then realize that if they wrote something, I could play it in concerts . . .\(^ {80}\)

More importantly for Mead, however, his enrollment at the Bristol University provided contact with Derek Bourgeois. Bourgeois was Mead’s “tutor when he did his music

\(^{77}\) Rexleigh Mead, “An Email Interview with Steven Mead’s Father, Rex Mead,” 2.

\(^{78}\) Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 5.

\(^{79}\) Rexleigh Mead, “An Email Interview with Steven Mead’s Father, Rex Mead,” 2.

\(^{80}\) Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography: Part One,” 5-6.
degree” and became a mentor.\textsuperscript{81} Mead and Bourgeois worked well together, and Mead’s father recalls the two “seemed to get on famously.”\textsuperscript{82} Bourgeois used his influence to coordinate lessons for Mead with members of the London Symphony. In addition to moral support, Bourgeois also encouraged Mead to become a professional euphoniumist, creating a number of opportunities for Mead to perform his music and to play in the Sun Life brass band of which Bourgeois was the director at the time.

Remembering how Bourgeois helped arrange his lessons, Mead relates:

It was actually Derek Bourgeois, because at Bristol, there were no visiting brass teachers. So to some extent you have to take care of yourself. You would simply go to the university and say, “look, I would like to take a couple of lessons with this guy.” “OK, what does he charge? How many lessons do you want? OK, fine, go ahead and do it.” And I remember sitting with Derek Bourgeois in his office and he said, “you should take some lessons on trombone, I’ve heard you play, you sound quite good, but you need a bit of refinement, so . . . as he did when I had lessons with Fletcher, he just simply picked up the phone because he knew these people really well, and said, “look, I’ve got a guy here who would benefit from a lesson . . . sure, next Tuesday, one o’clock in London.” So I took the train to London to have the lesson.\textsuperscript{83}

Mead took trombone lessons and, for the most part, his teachers tried to persuade him to focus his studies on the trombone. Figure 3 is a picture of Mead playing trombone with the Taverners Big Band at the age of twenty one.
It seemed to be a reasonable career decision because he played the trombone since high school, but Mead knew that if he was to become a professional trombonist, he wanted to work as an orchestral player. Mead began playing second trombone in the university orchestra and later moved to the principal chair. By his second year, Mead’s experiment of concentrating on the trombone became more serious. With help from Bourgeois, he began taking lesson with John Iveson in London. On his time studying with Iveson, Mead recalls:

I used to travel to London to have trombone lessons with John Iveson. I could always play the music I had been set to learn, but John was aware I was spending more time on the euphonium than trombone. During one lesson he mentioned this and asked me to try leaving the euphonium alone for three or four weeks whilst concentrating on the trombone. I did this faithfully for three weeks, during which time I played the Gordon Jacob *Trombone Concerto*. Then, back at my digs on Friday afternoon, I was looking at my euphonium case sitting there and I knew things were not right. There and then, I made a momentous decision, euphonium or nothing. I didn’t know what I would do . . . Nevertheless, the decision was made.86

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Besides longing to practice the euphonium, Mead realized that, although he could play the trombone with moderate competence, he was about “four or five years behind in terms of technique, repertoire, [and] experience.” Furthermore, after months of intense study on his secondary instrument, Mead acknowledged he “just didn’t love the trombone.” With his decision made, Mead contacted Iveson letting him know there would be no more trombone lessons. Perhaps Iveson was not surprised by Mead’s choice, but he was unsure of how Mead would support himself financially playing the euphonium, stating: “if you’re dedicated to make it as a euphonium player, you’ll need to specialize and some way you’ll do it.” Likewise, Bourgeois was at first uncertain how Mead would earn his income, but later relates: “it was obvious that he had it in him to make a go of being a professional euphonium player and I encouraged him to the hilt.”

Part of Bourgeois’ encouragement included opening doors to performance opportunities outside of the university setting, and soon “Steven was invited to join [the] Sun Life [band] on the retirement of one of the doyens of the euphonium, Lyndon Baglin.” Bourgeois was the director of the Sun Life band at the time and asked Mead to substitute a few times in the recently vacant euphonium spot. Reminiscing on how he entered the band, Mead remembers the audition process as informal, but also states the importance of Bourgeois’ influence:

. . . he basically told the band that he thought they should accept me on solo euphonium. Lyndon Baglin had just finished, so they didn’t really have a euphonium player. So I went . . . I think I did a couple of rehearsals and a concert, but no formal (audition). In the old days you’d stand up in front of the band and play a couple of solos and you’d be asked to leave and the band would vote on it.

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88 Ibid.
90 Derek Bourgeois, “An Email interview with Derek Bourgeois,” 1.
91 Rexleigh Mead, “An Email Interview with Steven Mead’s Father, Rex Mead,” 2.
That actually happened still while I was there with a few players. They would keep all the principal players back and somebody would play for them. But no, it was Derek Bourgeois who basically said, “right, this is what I want you to do; accept this player.”

The Sun Life band was Mead’s first contesting band. The band was very successful in the 1980s, maintaining an impressive contest record that included placing in the top ten in all major brass band contests in the UK. In addition to Sun Life and his school ensembles, Mead also played in the Bristol Easton Salvation Army band. However, after a confrontational incident in 1981 before a solo performance, Mead decided to distance himself from the Salvation Army’s strict rules and regulations, which at the time included restricting its members from playing in “outside” bands. The protective musical world of the Salvation Army in which Mead had flourished so prominently was set aside for a professional musical career, but Mead has not forgotten his musical heritage and has continued to collaborate with the Salvation Army as a guest soloist.

In addition to their collaboration in the Sun Life band, Bourgeois “wrote several solo pieces as well as arrangements of other pieces for [Mead] to play.” For a young player matriculating through a music degree on the euphonium, new solo pieces and arrangements of masterworks for his then literature-deprived instrument were of vital importance because without serious solo repertoire, his study of the euphonium would have been relatively irrelevant to becoming a professional musician. Regarding his arrangements for solo euphonium, Bourgeois relates: “One that stands out in my mind was the arrangement of the second and third movements of Elgar’s Cello Concerto.” While this arrangement has been rarely played since its 1982 premiere with the Sun Life band, Bourgeois remembers fondly that Mead “played it beautifully.” Of Bourgeois’s original compositions for the euphonium, one of significance is a piece called Euphoria. Because the Euphoria score does not offer program notes of any kind, the background for this work has been relatively unknown for nearly twenty five years. The story that Mead and Bourgeois relate in interviews provides insight to the nature of their working relationship when Mead was at Bristol University. While Bourgeois states that Mead

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always exhibited the utmost professionalism when he played with the band, the two “spent a lot of time making silly jokes.” On one occasion Bourgeois asserts: “I remember him collapsing with laughter when I suggested writing a piece called Eup-Hearted.”

Mead remembers this incident well:

Exactly! Well, that was the piece that became *Euphoria*. Yeah, and Eup-Hearted, E-U-P-H-Hearted. . . . he came into the listening library at Bristol University with a piece of paper and a big smile on his face. So I knew he was up to mischief, and he just put this down next to the record I was listening to, just stood there and I just read it a few times . . . and I turned around and he had this huge ridiculous smile on his face and he said, “What do you think?” and I said, “You’ll never get away with it!” No? Oh well, Euphoria, or something like that.

Mead adds that he and Bourgeois “spent about a week trying to come up with even more ridiculous titles, you know, like *eu-phone* or *eu-phoney* and that kind of stuff.” To listen to Mead perform Bourgeois’ *Euphoria*; please refer to Mead’s compact disc *Rondo*, BMLCD002. Figures 3 through 5 are excerpts of the solo part of Bourgeois’ *Euphoria*.

![Figure 4: Opening Phrase of the Adagio Molto Espressivo Section](image)

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94 Ibid.


96 Ibid.
Figure 5: Opening Phrase of the *Allegro Molto Vivace* Section

Figure 6: Ending Section and Codetta$^{97}$

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Bourgeois, who often invited Mead into his home for dinner, remembers the following: “My chief memories of Steve at that time (Bristol years) were the jolly evenings we used to have when he came round to my house for dinner, which happened several times.”

Despite all of his hard work and the seriousness in which he took his music studies, Mead clearly maintained a healthy sense of humor. He still appreciates the humor of Bourgeois’ post-exam gathering. Indeed, Mead experienced a lesser-known side of his famous composer-teacher. Social interaction came naturally to Mead from a fairly young age and his easy manner undoubtedly helped him develop many genuine friendships with important musical figures.

Upon graduating with his Bachelors of Arts Honours degree in music from Bristol University, Mead moved south twelve miles to Bath where he studied at the scenic Newton Park College in 1983. See figure 7. Studying to be a teacher, Mead’s Post Graduate Certificate in Education qualified him to teach at the secondary school level. Remembering the beautiful woodland rolling hills, Mead adds the following:

There was a lake and after living in the center of Bristol for three years, it was really like a summer holiday camp. That’s exactly how we treated it. It was very quiet, there wasn’t a lot going on, so we made it happen.

Extra curricular activities aside, Mead earned his post-graduate degree in education within a year, and it proved “massively” beneficial to him later in his professional teaching career, both with young students and at the college level. Furthermore, his teaching certificate gave Mead the confidence to pursue professional euphonium playing without the financial worries often associated with freelance careers in music.

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98 Derek Bourgeois, “An Email interview with Derek Bourgeois,” 1.
100 Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography: Part Two,” 17.
101 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 3.
While busy completing his teacher training curriculum, Mead continued to practice the euphonium diligently and was therefore prepared for a short-notice invitation to substitute for the principal euphoniumist with the Foden’s Richardson Band (formally the Foden’s Motor Works Band). Because their conductor, Howard Snell, was unable to travel to the competition in Spennymoor, the band requested Mead play in the competition. Mead remembers James Scott conducted the performance and that they played very well.\textsuperscript{103}

The band had received a late invitation and their solo euphonium player also couldn’t make it, so I got a request from the band; would I help them out? So I said yeah, I would like to. So I went, played OK, and the following week I got a phone call at my little dormitory at Bath. I don’t how he got a hold of my number, I guess through the band. Saying, “Hello Steven, this is Howard Snell here.” Oh my God, you know? I had never spoken to the guy before and he had a pretty fearsome reputation in those days as well. So he said; “I’ve heard good things about your performance at Foden’s.” He said; “I’m sorry I don’t have any vacancies at Foden’s at the moment,” which was fine because I wasn’t interested.


\textsuperscript{103} Alan Jenkins, “An Interview with Steven Mead,” accessed 9 September 2008.
in them. I was only interested in Desford because they were the band on the up, and he said; “I think there could be a vacancy soon with Desford.”

Snell soon gave Mead a chance to play with the Desford Colliery band offering him the second euphonium chair for a recording session. Mead recalls the conversation he had with Snell:

So he said; “Look, I have to do things step-by-step. We’re doing a recording of the brass band arrangement of the Elgar *Enigma Variations* in two weeks time. Would you come up and play second euphonium? We need one.” And I said, “yep, sure no problem.” So I went to rehearsal, just keep my nose clean and I could see the band looking at me as if to say, “What’s going here? Why has Howard brought you in?” You know, has he got plans for you for the top spot kind of thing. So, anyway, we came to the recording and I think it was about the second movement of the *Enigma Variations* and there’s a little euphonium solo… It’s quite a simple three or four bar phrase, but middle range, low range with a scale up, and . . . the guy who was on solo euphonium he tried it four or five times and Howard just clapped his hands and said; “Right, Steven, could you try it please?” So here the band went very quiet. Red light, and I got it right the first time, and I think at that point everyone in the band knew that there was going to be a change and the following week. Howard called me and said, “I had a bit of a chat with Steven Archer asking him whether he would be interested in moving down to second euphonium.”

The former principal euphoniumist was displeased with Snell’s suggestion, however, and resigned from the band. While doing what amounted to firing the “incumbent” euphonium soloist seemed unfair, the choice was made for the overall improvement of the band. Snell made the following comment on the matter:

I needed a high quality solo euphonium player and Steve was a name that was rising to the top of everyone’s list as the most promising newcomer. Having heard him play and seen his character as a performer, I hired him as soon as he was available.

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105 Ibid.
After Mead played solo euphonium for a few months, the band hired a second euphonium player, but Mead’s initial few weeks with the band were incredibly tense because of the band members’ expectations after he took over the principal chair.\textsuperscript{107}

The work at Desford was always serious and directed at constantly improving how we performed. Steven represented one of the most important points of quality in the Band. He furthermore extended his discipline beyond himself to others whose standards were not as high as his. This of course occasioned conflict, but his own work was impeccable and almost always resulted in the player concerned determining to make much more effort to produce what was required. All very good brass bands need an inner dynamic quite separate from the conductor’s. The more that can be achieved by the players internally in a Band, the more they can focus on the conductor as a musical leader and less as he or she is, too often these days, as an invasive source of verbal guidance and low-grade teaching. Steven was the key provider of that inner dynamic in Desford.\textsuperscript{108}

Mead stayed with the Desford band for six years from 1983 to 1989.

When Snell was active as a conductor, he was one of the keenest musical minds within the brass band movement. Not only were his brass bands, Foden’s and Desford, among the top bands in Britain, he was an extraordinary orchestral trumpet player and teacher. Remembering Howard Snell, Mead recalls him as “the most influential figure within the band movement that I’ve looked up to; as a person, as a musician, as a conductor [and] as a brain.”\textsuperscript{109} Playing for Desford was Mead’s lucky break.\textsuperscript{110} Mead also looked to Snell as a mentor figure, but their working relationship was not a teacher-student in the traditional sense. Mead’s experiences with the Desford band were outside the auspices of school, and the band was treated as professional although technically an amateur group. Snell states the following:

\begin{quote}
As the Musical Director of Desford Band I was in total charge of all things musical, including personnel. The concept of mentor, with its overtone of managing a ‘relationship’ is a rather recent idea and didn’t apply. I assessed all
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{107} Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography: Part Two,” 18.

\textsuperscript{108} Howard Snell, “An Email interview with Howard Snell,” 2.

\textsuperscript{109} Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography: Part Two,” 18.

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., 17.
the individuals in the Band and helped them to perform better on two fronts: firstly with regard to the piece of music in hand at any one time and secondly with regard to the individual’s improvement in the long term. In the case of Steven as a naturally outstanding performer, I worked by suggesting possibilities rather than instruction, but naturally as part of the ensemble he worked within my guidelines for the ensemble. He understood this perfectly, as part of the tradition of how Bands work in the UK.\footnote{Howard Snell, “Email interview with Howard Snell,” 1.}

However much professional distance Snell maintained during rehearsal, he did offer Mead critical help during his first year with the band. Mead relates:

\ldots for those first two and one half months while I was moving to the Midlands to play in the band and to try to find a teaching job, he would let me stay at his farm house, his house in Hollington which was about thirty minutes from Burton-on-Trent which was actually the town where I ended up getting a job.\footnote{Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography Part Two,” 18.}

Mead also interviewed in Norwich and Bournemouth, but the location of Burton-on-Trent allowed him easy access to the Desford band room. He therefore bought a house in Measham because it was nearly equidistant from his place of employment and the Desford band.\footnote{Alan Jenkins, “An Interview with Steven Mead,” accessed 9 September 2008.} Mead’s father recalls that things just seemed to fall into place for his son after his post-graduate year at Bath. Mead had the “serendipitous luck” of finding a job teaching music at the Deferrers High School in Burton-on-Trent.\footnote{Rexleigh Mead, “An Email Interview with Steven Mead’s Father, Rex Mead,” 2, and Alan Jenkins, “An Interview with Steven Mead,” accessed 9 September 2008.}

**Later Competitions and Awards**

Both the Sun Life and Desford Colliery bands had great contest records. For instance during the mid-to-late 1980s the Desford band contest record included winning the European Championship, the Granada Band of the Year, BBC Best of Brass and the “hat-trick” of victories at the National Brass Band Championships at the Royal Albert Hall (1987-1989). Although Mead worked hard to fulfill his role as principal euphoniumist
during his tenure with each of these bands, he had a number of important individual achievements as well.

Mead won the solo section of the BBC Best of Brass Competition in 1983 as a member of the Sun Life band and again in 1985 with Desford. The event was televised and Mead recalls the following:

The competition . . . was a three round knock-out competition. I played… and then members of the general public were invited to vote. Nowadays it would be a text-vote or something from a mobile phone. In the old days you had to cut out a little voting form from the Radio Times, which was the TV times listing magazine, stick it in an envelope and send it in. I got the most number of votes. So I won a euphonium which was very nice, in fact I won two, one in ’83 and one in ’85.115

For the competition Mead played Langford’s arrangement of Bladen Races in 1983 and he won his second Best of Brass solo award with a transcription of Saint-Saëns’ The Swan. See figure 7. Although these solos were “two fairly easy, straight forward pieces,” Mead recalls it was a “major step . . . to win those solo competitions,” and that his success on television “undoubtedly helped his early [solo] career.”116 To listen to Mead’s winning performance of Blayden Races, please refer to Polyphonic Reproductions recording CPRL022, Highlights from the B.B.C. Television Contest 1983: Best of Brass.


Mead also has the honorable distinction of being named the Euphonium Player of the Year twice, once in 1986 and again in 1993. Mead was the first euphoniumist to win this honor more than once. Unlike many competitions and awards today, the Euphonium Player of the Year was not accompanied with a monetary award or a contract with a manager. “just a handshake plus a wooden shield.” See figure 9.

Figure 9: The Euphonium Player of the Year Shield Trophy

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117 Ibid.

118 Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography, Part Two,” 11.

Euphoniumist Barrie Perrins, the Londoner whose recordings were an early influence on Mead, was the creator of this special award for euphonium players. Mead tells how Perrins created the panel and organization:

He got some friends, which were Peter Wilson who was then the editor of the *British Bandsman*, and Trevor Austin who owned Rosehill Instruments and a few other “worthies,” and a few euphonium enthusiasts over a couple of light ales in a pub in London one summer and decided that this would be a good idea.  

Furthermore, Euphonium Player of the Year differed from other competitions and award ceremonies because there were no guidelines or requirements for winning.

. . . there was a committee of senior figures who basically got together and worked-out who contributed the most to the euphonium that year, who had done some high profile performances or recordings or commissioned some new pieces . . . or something like that.  

On its inaugural year in 1979 the Euphonium Player of the Year was awarded to its founder, Barrie Perrins. Although in its early years the panel tended to favor British players, this award has since documented “all the great and the good in the euphonium world.”  

For Mead, he recalls his recognition in 1986 was due largely to his winning the “Best of Brass” competition and performing a number of high profile concerts.

. . . it was a series of things, it was the fact that I won the “Best of Brass” solo prize in ’85 . . . for the second time; it was the fact that that evening, Saturday, I was playing as soloist in the Gala Concert at . . . the Royal Albert Hall. There were a few things just all coming together. So in a way, because of the profile I had that year, it kind of picked me I guess, but it was essentially because of the “Best of Brass” and the fact that I was playing solo in the Gala Concert.  

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120 Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography, Part Two,” 11.  
121 Ibid.  
122 Ibid., 11-2.  
123 Ibid., 12.
Mead was presented his wooden shield at a dinner held for important brass players before the National Brass band competition in London. Mead still remembers the evening and states:

There was a brass-players dinner in London the night before the Royal Albert Hall contest and . . . somebody whispered that it would be a very good idea if I attended at sometime during the evening. I was rehearsing with Desford because we had the competition the next day, and I turned up to the dinner about nine o’clock.

When Mead entered the room an announcement was made and the dinner guests took time away from their meals to recognize Mead for his achievements on the euphonium. Mead was named the Euphonium Player of the Year for the second time in 1993 for organizing the first tuba-euphonium conference in the UK in addition to his “sterling work for the euphonium.”

Mead’s early musical experiences were diverse, and laid the foundation to his professional career. Arguably the foremost influence on Mead’s professional life from childhood was his training as a vocalist. Mead’s years as a singer deeply shaped his approach to playing and teaching the euphonium. Additionally, his time with the corps, while somewhat sheltered, allowed him to succeed musically, and yet left him wanting additional challenges on a wider stage. By the time he was in college, Mead developed many important contacts outside the Salvation Army and found encouragement and professional opportunities from both Bourgeois and Snell. His success with Stanshawe/Sun Life and Desford as well as several important performances gained Mead national recognition as one of the top UK euphonium soloists of his generation. He has become one of the world’s leading euphonium soloists, recording artists, teachers and proponents of the euphonium.

124 Ibid.
CHAPTER 2
PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND CONTRIBUTIONS

For more than twenty years, Mead has enjoyed a life as a professional euphoniumist appearing as a featured soloist in twenty two countries.\(^1\) Although his performing is an important aspect to his musical career, and is perhaps the most romantic component to young and aspiring euphoniumists around the world. Mead’s path to a professional career in music included numerous related activities encompassing a wide range of musical interests beyond euphonium performance including teaching high school music, applied euphonium lessons in Britain’s leading colleges and conservatories of music, arranging music, as well as recording solo albums on compact discs and managing his own music/recording company, Bocchino Music. Mead claims that, although he knew he wanted to make a living playing the euphonium, he did not have a preconceived plan detailing all the steps needed to achieve his goals. Besides an innate business sense, he credits much of his professional success to several lucky breaks and much determination. In turn, Mead’s musical accomplishments led to other career opportunities. He has been an important proponent of developing and promoting new repertoire for the euphonium, design work and quality control with the Besson line of euphoniums and baritones, and a large range of Denis Wick mouthpieces especially designed for the euphonium and baritone.

Professional Career: Teacher

Teaching music at the Deferrer’s High School in Burton-on-Trent was Mead’s first step as a professional musician. For ten years, Mead taught students from the ages eleven to fourteen. In the UK, the high school curriculum included an hour of music a week “whether they like it, want it, need it or not.”\(^2\) This wide spectrum of students presented quite a challenge. As one would expect, many of the high school students


\(^2\) Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 3.
taking music courses lacked the interest and the talent to perform well. Mead recalls the following:

So often you imagine on a Friday afternoon, the last lesson of the day, you got thirty two fourteen-year-olds of which only four of them show any kind of real musical aptitude, and if particularly its kind of a mixed middle ability class you’ve got some ‘characters’ in there. So that taught me an awful lot about... because if you can motivate them, I mean not that you’re going to turn them into great musicians, but you can really get them to appreciate the value of music, and how they can be creative, and how they need to be disciplined, and how they need to work in a group, and how they need to listen, because a lot of people just don’t listen anymore.³

Mead mentions that the knowledge he gained during his education degree at Bath was critical. While he estimates that he used only a quarter of the material from his music degree, “even in the exam classes,” his understanding of child psychology and simple classroom maintenance was key to controlling large, thirty-two seat classes.⁴

Nevertheless, Mead’s energetic and methodical approach brought positive results to the Deferrers music program and soon gained the enthusiastic support of the school’s headmaster, Brian Hughes. During Mead’s tenure at Deferrers, Hughes “declared that music was the most important subject in the school’s syllabus.”⁵ Consequently Mead was “always given freedom to rehearse whenever necessary.”⁶ With the endorsement of the headmaster and the freedom to rehearse as he deemed necessary, Mead built the school brass band program and took them on several tours in addition to the Festival of Music for Youth at the Royal Festival Hall in London.

Mead’s responsibilities as music teacher at Deferrer’s were varied. In addition to classroom teaching and directing the brass band, Mead taught private lessons and was the conductor of the string orchestra. Mead was also responsible for an eighty-member

³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid.
⁶ Ibid.
Mead’s job also called on his ability to arrange music for his students. Of particular note were the three school shows he directed which featured music he arranged especially for each occasion.

Although proud that several of his students continued their studies in music beyond high school and became professional musicians with “superb careers.” Mead was obviously happy with the school administration, but by 1989 he began a three year phase-out of his high school teaching. The rigors of teaching high school, long hours at the Birmingham Conservatoire and the Royal Northern College, and an increasingly busy tour schedule, were too much and led Mead to teach high school. At first Mead taught only three days a week, then just once a week at Deferrers. Mead recalls severing his ties completely with the Deferrers School was a sad time, but necessary to pursue a professional playing career.

While teaching pre-pubescent children who would rather be outdoors chasing one another seems a remote and humble beginning to his eventual station of international brass soloist and teacher, Mead acknowledges the benefits his education degree and experiences gained teaching secondary school have brought him.

All of those skills, I could say that there is a parallel between working with thirty two fourteen-year-olds, and doing a class of eleven or twelve euphonium enthusiasts at the Royal Northern. You don’t have the same behavioral problems or the same desire to stand-up and throw things around the room, but the ability to try and encompass the whole group, try to understand individuals’ problems without spending an inordinate amount of time with one person, or two people, and providing information and instruction that can be grasped by a large group rather than just one or two people. I’ve learned that’s been essential for me for giving master classes where often in Europe I’ve got anywhere between fifteen and fifty people.

Mead began teaching full-time at several institutions of higher learning in 1989, The Royal Academy of Music, The Birmingham Conservatoire and the Royal Northern

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7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

College of Music. Mead was the first euphonium specialist invited to teach at the Royal Academy of Music, and he held the position in London for five years until he decided to center his musical activities further north. His next higher education appointment was at the Birmingham Conservatoire where his duties where more varied than they were at the Royal Academy. At Birmingham Mead taught euphonium for twelve years and was the Director of the Conservatoire Brass Band and Wind Orchestra for four years. In 2000, Mead again refocused his teaching northward to the city of Manchester, one of the centers of the brass band movement, at the Royal Northern College of Music. After nearly twenty years service to the college, Mead was named a fellow at the RNCM.\textsuperscript{10}

He has maintained an international studio of twelve to fourteen students per year with students from the United States, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, France and China. Many of his students from the Royal Northern have won prominent positions in high ranking brass bands, various military bands, and chamber ensembles, teaching posts in the UK and abroad, and promising solo careers.

\textbf{Summer Courses}

Mead’s desire to educate people about the euphonium, its literature and performance is neither confined within the borders of the United Kingdom nor limited to his spare time while on tour; however, the genesis of many of the special courses can be traced to trips abroad. Mead has helped organize specialist euphonium schools in Nagano, Japan, Holland, Austria and Belgium and is the founder of the euphonium course in Weinberg, Austria which he led from 2001 to 2004.\textsuperscript{11} Overall, Mead has given master classes and workshops in Holland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg, Belgium, France, Norway, Sweden, Estonia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Denmark, Finland, the United States, Canada, Japan, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. In addition, Mead directed or co-directed all six of the British National


In many of these countries and festivals, Mead’s master classes were the first formal courses for the euphonium.\textsuperscript{12} The Fanfare Week in Trakai, Lithuania, for example, is a brass festival, now in its forth year, where Mead presented the first organized euphonium course in the country.\textsuperscript{13} Mead met many friendly people during his course abroad and the Lithuanians were especially enthusiastic about music and life in general. Mead states:

\begin{quote}
I am lucky with my students who come from all over Lithuania, as well as from Slovenia and Latvia. [The class is of] mixed ability but all with a growing passion for music and a strong desire to learn.\textsuperscript{14}
\end{quote}

He also writes the following:

\begin{quote}
I have very special and emotional feelings about the country and the people in Lithuania. This was to be my fourth visit and on each of my previous visits, I'd left profoundly moved by the spirit of the people. They have strength, open-hearted spirit, and they are motivated, humorous and love the nature that is all around them. The Fanfare Week course . . . is the brainchild of Arvydas Miseikis, the godfather of wind education in this part of Lithuania, and my old friend from Holland, Bert Langeler.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

Mead’s role at the festival includes playing recitals and introducing new repertoire to the students, giving master classes, conducting ensembles and helping organize concerts.

Of particular interest, however, is his work in Italy. Mead has organized and directed courses throughout Italy for seven years, which included a course in Trento co-sponsored by the European Union called the Institute Superior Europeo Bandistico from 2000-2006. The attraction to teach in Italy was multi-faceted, ranging from the great people, beautiful scenery and not least, a long musical tradition including opera, but also

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
wind bands and brass playing. Mead’s first trip to Italy was actually in 1997 for the International Tuba Euphonium Conference held in Riva del Garda. His performances at ITEC led to other invitations almost immediately. The Buffet-Crampon salesman for Italy contacted Mead for a performance and master classes within a few months of the conference in Riva del Garda. Mead makes the following remarks:

. . . that was the first experience. I enjoyed it very much, obviously everyone’s first experience of Italy, even Riva del Garda, you think; what a beautiful place, lets come here every week. So then I started to get to know the people a little bit and they’re really great fun they’re quite artistically minded. And like every country they have their own way of doing things, you know, as soon as you get south of Austria, things tend to get a little bit wacky in terms of organization and obviously northern Italy is a bit more organized than southern Italy which is basically chaotic.

So I enjoyed different parts of Italy for different reasons so I started doing some concerts with bands in the north of Italy, even some German-speaking parts of Italy which is always very strange and then I ended up a bit later on doing some concerts as far down as Rome, and the contact with the military bands, and then the initial contact with Riva del Garda and Emily Harris led on to contacts with people around Trento and the possibility of a course. So I did a couple of one-day courses over about two years and they were every successful, a lot of people, and then I met this guy, Giovanni Lectolliev who is now responsible for the Institute Superior Europeo Bandistico, which is a flowery way of saying he founded a kind of school, although it’s not based in any one place, that provides courses at a high level for disciplines that are not normally taught in Italy. That’s why he got funding from the European Union and others and that was really, really very interesting.

So we did five years of the Trento course starting in the mountains just outside Trento, coming into the city and then moving into the mountains on the other side over the five year period which is finished.\textsuperscript{16}

The part of what drives Mead to be an innovator, his “inbuilt curiosity,” also makes it difficult for him to continue projects that lose interest and the challenge they originally posed. For his courses in Trento, after five years, Mead thought that less new ground was being covered as the students improved quickly and became musical leaders and ambassadors of the euphonium in their communities. He makes the following comments:

\textsuperscript{16} Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast, 10 April 2007 “Interview with Steven Mead: Work in Italy,” transcript, Tallahassee, FL: 2.
Basically I just felt that things were starting to get a little bit stale and when I get bored I have to look for pastures new. So it was good, good time. I did a lot of work there; a lot of the students who passed through there and have now gone on to do some really important things in Italy; teaching at music school, doing more solo playing with their bands, kind of . . . certainly being much more aware of the literature and what’s possible, as well as technique and good sound and mouthpiece choice, a general intelligence about the instrument which was really lacking.\(^\text{17}\)

It is important to note Mead musical interest in promoting the euphonium in Italy is because of the country’s tradition of great euphonium players, which has been mostly dormant for one hundred years. Mead reveals his thoughts in the following statement:

. . . my fascination with Italy was . . . because of the heritage of the euphonium, or bombardino, or flicorno players towards the end of the Nineteenth-Century it’s quite clear from about 1870 onwards right through to about 1900, by which time most of the best players in Italy had got on a boat and gone on to the US. It was quite clear that there must have been an incredible school of virtuoso players because of the literature they played, because of the music that was written for them. So to some extent I was helping them re-discover some of their great traditions they had which had laid dormant for sixty to seventy years . . .\(^\text{18}\)

While many of the country’s leading players emigrated to the United States and other countries nearly one hundred years ago, Mead points to a faulty music education system in Italy as one of the primary reasons that euphonium playing has been in a constant state of decline. In fact, he is quite critical stating the following:

. . . the music education system as a formalized structure in Italy is pretty much in chaos and still is with archaic way of doing things, teachers who teach because they can’t anything else, older teachers who protect their little situation in the conservatory where they teach by keeping all rivals and younger players very much in their place. It’s . . . you see this kind of thing everywhere, but it’s more pronounced in Italy than almost anywhere I’ve seen.\(^\text{19}\)

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 3.

\(^{18}\) Ibid.

\(^{19}\) Ibid.
Obviously, Mead cannot change some of these ingrained problems with the educational system in Italy; however, the fact that he was new to the scene and did not compete with students for local jobs allowed him to teach more freely. On the other hand, there were other problems facing euphoniumists in Italy that were within his sphere of influence. For many years the euphonium or the Italian equivalents, the bombardino and flicorno basso, were generally seen as an instrument old men played in the town band. Mead added the following:

. . . the perception, not only to the general public, who probably don’t really know it at all, but from fellow musicians, it’s like, “if you’re a good player, what the hell are you doing holding one of those?” Again, it’s true in other countries as well but particularly so in Italy. The complete absence of any specialists teaching it means that even the good players weren’t sure that what they were doing was correct. So they would come to a course where professional player such as myself and basically be pretty nervous because of the fact that I may say that every single thing they’re doing is wrong because no one has ever told them that it’s right, they’d never been studying at a conservatory, a few of them took trombone lessons, a few of the good euphonium players that I met had trombone lessons from aging trombone professors again who stand at one end of the room and bark at them, bark at the students in Italian basically to the effect of “you have to play that again, you have to practice more, see you next week.”20

The perception of the euphonium being an amateur’s instrument has kept it from being taught in conservatories and, in turn, generated an ignorance of the serious repertoire. Mead continued:

So a complete ignorance of repertoire apart from the little solos euphonium players would play in the band, you know the little operatic moments, so it was . . . ah, I found that it was quite a natural feeling for performance, quite a natural feeling of expression, but just no information. So actually to tempt good players who . . . acknowledging their enthusiasm but also their ignorance to get those people to turn-up for a weekend on a course was quite hard, but once they came and got their confidence then I could more easily entice them back into a course like we had in Trento where at the peak of it we had fourteen or fifteen really able . . . players over the years. So lack of recognition, lack of knowledge, lack of confidence, but a desire that when they see what’s possible

20 Ibid., 4.
with other players, pro players around the world, it was like “why can’t we do this as well?” it was that kind of thing.\textsuperscript{21}

With his courses, master classes and solo performances throughout Italy, Mead was able to introduce the important repertoire and specialized pedagogy for the euphonium. As a result, the good players in Italy who had a secret desire to do more with the euphonium are winning positions in newly-formed brass bands, military bands, developing solo careers and teaching the euphonium at conservatories where it was previously excluded.

**Online Private Teaching**

Always looking for innovative ways to advance euphonium education, Mead began teaching lessons from his home studio on July 1 through July 12 via internet video conferencing. The first series of lessons included nine participants from the USA, Japan, Germany and Singapore. Although initially experimental, the first Internet sessions were so successful that Mead offered online lessons again a few months later in October.

Immediately the advantages of internet lessons were clear. With the internet, people can communicate easily from nearly any location in the world ameliorating the problem of the small numbers of great euphonium players. Indeed, many countries lack any euphonium playing traditions at all. As a result, most euphoniumists travel long distances to study with a player of Mead’s qualifications.\textsuperscript{22} Mead states the following:

If you think in euphonium terms, there are no great euphonium teachers in every thirty miles in every country so . . . It [online lessons] could be the future of education for people who don’t want to sit in their cars and endless, endless hours on the motorway.\textsuperscript{23}

Mead also discounts the idea that long-distance learning is significantly less effective than teaching in person. He says:

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 5.


\textsuperscript{23} Steven Mead, “Online Lesson Preview and Mouthpiece Development,”5.
I have people who travel such ridiculous distances for lessons and apart from not being able to shake their hand, or you know, look them up and down, I could... as long as the sound and visual quality is acceptable... I mean if you were to miss a note or you were to have a bad attack or if you were to force the sound I think that I would probably hear it even now even with the fairly rudimentary stuff I’m listening to at the moment.  

Furthermore, the notation of staying home and teaching online has great appeal for Mead who has been on the road virtually non-stop for fifteen years.  

While the Internet offers many conveniences, there are unique logistical difficulties with online lessons that arise. For instance, lessons are given via Windows Live Messenger (MSN Messenger). There are many instant messaging and video conferencing programs, and in recent years computer companies have done much to make the different platforms compatible with each other. Mead, however, refuses to risk any communication errors from dissimilar programs while teaching online. In addition, payment and scheduling must be done well in advance of each lesson. The following are Mead’s instructions for scheduling an online lesson:

- Lessons will be of one hour duration, and students can book one or two hours during this period. (subsequent appointments will be offered should the trial period in July be successful) Internet connection to be made five minutes before the start of each lesson.

- Applications can be made immediately by emailing stevemead@compuserve.com.

- Prior to lessons beginning, repertoire to be played by the students should be faxed or emailed to Steve Mead

- The content of the lesson(s) can be requested by the students, i.e.,
  - Specific repertoire performance
  - Coaching on practice routines

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24 Ibid., 6.
25 Ibid., 7.
Specific techniques, such as breathing, embouchure, finger technique, and tonguing techniques, etcetera.

Or a combination of all the above.

Teaching over the internet necessitates extra time for planning, including payment, in case of unforeseen problems.

What is more, teaching lessons to students from as many as four different countries in one day, each with their own currency, would be a tedious exercise of currency conversion, fees and standing in long queues at his financial institution. Requiring the students to use paypal or credit card, Mead avoids this banking complication. The cost of an online lesson with Mead in 2007 was £70, approximately €105 or $136 USD.

To ensure students maximize the benefits of each lesson, Mead requires a high level of technology. A Broadband Internet connection is essential as well as a computer with a webcam. Mead also strongly recommends a microphone and speakers of “good quality.” Although Mead allows online students to use a headset, “quality speakers” are preferred. During his test lesson with the author, Mead used a microphone attached to his bell which provided clear, realistic sound quality to his euphonium playing, yet Mead confided that he was searching for a microphone of even higher definition than his current microphones, mentioning that a SHURE 57 would be ideal.

Understandably, Mead’s technological requirements are potentially a financial burden for many, and he is sensitive to the needs of those who do not own a computer. He states:

I would certainly invest in a really decent pair of computer speakers, and a decent microphone and then . . . to be honest, if I’m working with Japanese people, for example, and they’re having a lesson from their university or something, they will be working with top quality gear anyway.

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28 Steven Mead, “Online Lesson Preview and Mouthpiece Development,”3.

29 Ibid., 5.
Mead trusts that many state universities have the equipment needed for online lessons.

The technology available with computers and the Internet in the early twenty-first century has given rise to many new possibilities for business, information and communication, but Mead readily admits that musicians have not experimented with it “nearly enough yet.”

In addition to its immediate advantages, especially over answering the many pedagogical questions he receives by e-mail, Mead envisions many great things for the online-lesson format. He states:

> I am sure there is a big future for this kind of teaching. To be able to see, as well as, hear all the students was such an aid for my teaching. Posture, mouthpiece position, breathing, hand position, all these and more only can be assessed in conjunction with other musical elements when you can see the student. To be able to interact and demonstrate to the students myself was an exciting educational experience.

Additionally, Mead notes that written comments, music for sight-reading and special exercises can be sent during the lesson as a Word file. During his first series of online lessons Mead used e-mail to send contracts for students to sign which included a clause that the lesson may not be duplicated or broadcasted in any form, and his “summary report sheet” for feedback after the lesson.

He sees the file-sharing component of the MSN Messenger program as a possible tool for greater real-time interaction with an online student. In addition to the various forms, lesson materials can be shared during the lesson. Mead foresees that he can surprise students with unprepared materials. For instance, with the use of file sharing he could tell a student, “... here comes a piece of sight-reading, boom!” Sending items like sight-reading exercises via the file-share function makes it impossible for the student to practice the exercise before the lesson. Additionally, sending the documents online during the lesson lessens the danger of items being lost in the post.

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30 Ibid.


32 Ibid.

In the future, Mead imagines the online format developing into an interactive online master class, or an open practice session in which interested people can “tune-in anytime,” to watch him practice and interact with each other in an open forum.\textsuperscript{34}

**Recording Artist**

Perhaps Mead’s most impressive and certainly most tangible accomplishment is his exceptional recording career. Described as one of the most recorded brass players, Mead has recorded more solo compact discs than any other euphonium player in the instrument’s history.\textsuperscript{35} Since 1990 he has produced fifty two compact discs where he is either the feature or guest soloist. Several of Mead’s recordings have won prestigious awards including the *British Bandsman* “Solo CD of the Year,” 2006 and the *4Barsrest.com* “Solo CD of the Year,” 2006 and the *Roger Bobo International Recording Award* in 2006 and 2008.\textsuperscript{36} Mead’s reasons for recording are manifold, but in a 2003 article Mead outlines three main points; to help begin his solo career, to create an additional artistic outlet, and to provide an educational example to other musicians.

Initially the impetus to record a solo album was a matter of practicality. Mead was twenty eight and had just finished his tenure with the Desford band and embarked on his solo career in earnest. The first compact disc was, therefore, an item he could sell at concerts and also a response to those people who were saying; “Isn’t it about time you made a disc?”\textsuperscript{37} Being in top form from his years in the Desford band and free from the group’s full time schedule, it was a logical time for Mead to produce a solo recording.\textsuperscript{38}

With the benefit of hindsight, however, Mead explains that most of his recordings are repertoire driven. Because of his position as a leading euphonium soloist, Mead feels

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 6.


\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
it is his responsibility to record not only the standard works in the repertoire, giving them new life on compact disc format and fresh artistic interpretation, but to promote the best new compositions for the instrument. He states the following:

. . . when I felt I had enough really high quality new pieces or arrangements that had not been recorded, then the desire to commit them to disc grew, sometimes with brass band, sometimes with wind orchestra or piano. I always like to surprise listeners with great music that I may have stumbled across on one of my trips abroad, that someone has written for me or a work I can’t resist arranging.59

The artistic motivation behind Mead’s recordings also means that he is well aware that a great program and fine performance can bring lasting listening pleasure to music enthusiasts around the world. He also notes, however, that the rewind button lets listeners relive every moment in a performance, good or bad. Mead addresses his thoughts about the importance of producing an excellent product in the following:

That’s a special thing, knowing that at any point in time someone is listening to your music in the car, on their way home from work, relaxing after a hard day, or studying what you do to improve their own playing. With this feeling comes responsibility that once people buy your music, you mustn’t disappoint as the same people may think twice about parting with their hard-earned cash in the future. 40

Now that listening to music is easier than at any other time, the music-listening public has a greater variety of recordings from which to choose. Mead states that with minimal effort, people can access recordings of ‘virtually any artist who has ever committed his or her talents to disc . . .’41 All of Mead’s digital recordings are available on-line from retailers like iTunes. Ultimately, while easy for the listener, the recording business, even for a euphonium player, is highly competitive. Having a great program, the best performance possible and even small details like a great sleeve design are crucial for success.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.
For many years Mead had worked with Philip Sparke, Stan Kitchen and Mike Moor at Polyphonic Reproductions Ltd., and they were extremely supportive of Mead’s work as a soloist and when he was with the British Tuba Quartet. In 2007, Mead started his own recording company, Bocchino Music, to gain complete control over every step of the recording process and also allowing him to produce recordings for other artists. Having the perspective of both a recording artist and owner of a recording label, Mead cannot stress enough the importance of artistic vision, stating; “the challenge is to make people love the message and, in part, how as messenger I convey it.” He warns that making a compact disc for purely financial gains is certain to fall short of expectations, and the end product will be musically compromised.

Mead is also well aware that, while artistically motivated, many of his recordings have an innate educational value to aspiring euphonium players. He recalls his childhood when he would copy all the euphonium solos from LPs to cassette tape. Mead recounts the following:

I often think back to my time as a teenager in Bournemouth, “many miles away” from hearing my euphonium idols live when I collected hundreds of LPs and edited (I suppose illegally) all the euphonium solos from this period onto a couple of C120 cassettes. Collecting dust by the month and wearing out, these tapes were to be my inspiration and my teachers before I eventually gravitated north to experience top banding for myself.

Mead knew even at an early age that listening is one of the most important ways to develop as a musician. From many hours of listening to their recordings, Mead naturally tried to imitate his favorite players’ best features. Knowing how beneficial these early LP recordings were for his development, Mead is particularly sensitive of the effect his recordings can have on the players of tomorrow and the future of the instrument.

Mead’s numerous volumes of recordings easily lend themselves to the following groupings:

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42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.
• The World of the Euphonium Series
• The Euphonium Magic Series
• Solo with Chamber Ensemble
• Solo with Brass Band
• Solo with Wind Band
• DeHaske Educational Series Books

Begun in 1993, *The World of the Euphonium* Series contains five volumes. This recording project developed when Mead realized that much of the music written for euphonium and piano was not being recorded. While the majority of the works on these compact discs are original compositions for euphonium and piano, Mead allows for some exceptions. In addition to original euphonium music with piano, the series features selections of popular transcriptions, multi-tracked euphonium ensembles, a piece for solo euphonium and cornet nonet, harp accompaniment and a few piano reductions of solo euphonium works with large ensemble. In addition to *The World of the Euphonium* series, Mead’s discography includes other recordings with piano such as the double disc album *Audacious* that was made in 2008.

The *Euphonium Magic* series is a collection of three compact discs, *Euphonium Magic*, *Euphonium Magic*, Volume Two, “The Music of Life,” and Volume Three, “Earth Voices.” The musical selections from these discs feature multi-tracked euphonium ensembles ranging from four to twenty four parts featuring many of Maurice Bale’s, Gail Robertson’s and Patrick Stuckemeyer’s arrangements.

In addition to recording with traditional mediums of piano or large ensembles, Mead has creatively endeavored to make recordings with solo euphonium and various chamber groups. For instance, he has collaborated with brass and woodwind quintets, brass ensembles, and a trombone quartet.

Of course, Mead is very familiar soloing with brass groups, but recording with a brass quintet in 2008 was a first for him. He recorded a compact disc with the Spanish Brass quintet, widely regarded as one of the leading Brass quintets in the early twenty-first century Europe. Mead notes that finding repertoire for this combination of instruments was not an easy task and that their recently-recorded album called *Brass and
Wines, includes two new works by prominent Spanish composers, Pascual Vilaplana and Juanjo Colomer.\textsuperscript{44}

With the Trombonisti Italiana, a quartet of Italian trombonists, Mead recorded two compact discs. The second album, \textit{Colours of the World}, is what Mead describes as an original concept that sourced some previously unknown folk music from around the world. The recording features folk tunes from England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Canada, Austria, Norway, Russia, Japan, the United States, Argentina, and Mexico.\textsuperscript{45} Mead and the Trombonisti Italiana perform on stage as well, and have given over fifteen concerts in Europe.

The Sound Inn Brass is a professional twelve-piece symphonic brass ensemble from Upper Austria, and Mead recorded two solo albums with them. Several of the works recorded were première performances of original compositions and arrangements made especially for Mead and the Sound Inn Brass. In addition to working in the studio, they have toured Europe together giving over thirty concerts in the last eight years. Indeed, Mead’s working relationship with Sound Inn Brass is a mutually beneficial one and since 2007 he as been the musical director and conductor of this ensemble.\textsuperscript{46}

Perhaps most unusual of Mead’s chamber music collaborations are the two solo recordings he made with the Classic Quintet. Based in Bolzano, Italy, Mead performed over twenty concerts with the woodwind quintet. Music for euphonium and woodwinds is arguably is the weakest area of the literature. Mead states that he “is the first euphonium player to develop repertoire for euphonium and woodwind quintet,” and that several of the works he recorded with the woodwind quintet are now published.

Mead’s recordings with traditional British-style brass band accompaniment include his first solo compact disc entitled \textit{Rondo} which he recorded with the Rigid Containers Group Band in 1990. Many of the tracks on these discs with brass bands


include major solo works such as concerti, and other lengthy compositions as well as traditional show pieces and transcriptions. Also in this category of compact discs are recordings of sacred solos with various Salvation Army brass bands of which the album, *Locomotion: A Tribute to My Childhood*, is a notable example and musical autobiography with his old SA band from childhood.

Like his recordings with brass band, many of Mead’s projects with wind band are large and important works, although here, too, are found encore pieces and light concert works. In the case of *Bella Italia* album, for example, serious works are combined with many opera arias, many of which have been arranged for the euphonium for the first time. This compact disc, like many of his recordings with wind bands aboard, is the result of numerous tours and educational outreach. The *Bella Italia* disc, for example, is the culmination of nearly seven years of tours, workshops and summer courses beginning with his first visit to Italy at the *Verso Il Millennio* Tuba Euphonium Festival in Riva Del Garda in 1997. Occasionally, Mead is a guest artist on a wind band recording playing anywhere from one to three solos on the disc.

With the cooperation of the DeHaske Publications, Mead, serving as artistic advisor, has published an educational series of sixteen books – twelve etude books and four volumes of duets – by important composers for brass instruments. Each book comes with a recording of Mead as a demo compact disc of which he writes the following:

> The accompanying demo CD provides you with one interpretation of these studies. You don’t have to copy it, although if you like my version then I’m flattered, of course! Try to use your own musical experiences to shape these works, maybe slower, or faster.

Clearly intended for its educational value, Mead’s recordings of the original etudes, duets, Arban’s theme and variation solos, and arrangements of Classical solos and duets

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serve as an exemplary model for those players who may not have the benefit of studying with a professional euphonium player.

In addition to all of his solo recordings, Mead has recorded five albums on the Polyphonic label with The British Tuba Quartet, a chamber ensemble he founded in 1991. To view a compete list of Mead’s compact discs and other recordings, please see Appendix C on page 200.

Professional Concert Artist

Few euphonium soloists have traveled as often, as much or as far as Mead has, making multiple trips to countries across Europe, Asia, and North and South America. For example, in 1989, Mead was scheduled to perform forty times a year taking him to locations as far away as Japan. The number of engagements soon rose to average of seventy five performances a year in addition to traveling to Germany twice a month to play-test the new Besson euphoniums and baritones. While the life of a world traveler is certainly glamorous on paper, the reality of being constantly on the road can be very difficult and disruptive to his personal life and his teaching schedule in the UK.\textsuperscript{50} Just the physical toll on the body is considerable, with the stress of lost luggage, and missed or canceled flights. Of course not every tour is worthy of a travel horror story and, in fact, the majority of Mead’s trips are musically very rewarding. Arguably, his touring is a vitally important aspect of his career. Mead has become an ambassador for the euphonium and its education around the world. His work on tour also leads to additional performances and specialist euphonium courses. Exposure to such a wide world cultivation of the euphonium, its repertoire and performance, increases Mead’s knowledge of the instrument. Additionally, Mead finds lesser-known pieces on his trips which he then performs on his concerts, records and includes on his repertoire list for his students at the RNCM. In an interview Mead writes about introducing the sound of the euphonium to new audiences when on tour. He states the following:

\textsuperscript{50} While a student at the RNCM, Mead often rescheduled lessons around performances and tours, but he always insured that each student received the full amount of lessons and individual attention he or she required.
Being an euphoniumist means you are often playing at places where people don’t know your instrument, be it orchestral audiences, or countries in the world where the instrument is never seen. Similarly, many brass festivals concentrate on orchestral brass and so the arrival of a euphonium always has its own curiosity value! I try to make maximum advantage of the wonderful sounds and possibilities of the instrument, and the response is usually very gratifying. My first visits to Germany and Austria, for example, go back now around twenty-five years and at that time both the euphonium and brass bands were pretty much unknown, despite other strong brass traditions already existing there. Similarly in Italy and Spain, despite the many wind bands around, nobody taught euphonium and there was almost no original music available. Whilst I’m not claiming to have solved all your problems there, it’s encouraging to see improvements that have been made and to meet the next generation of talented musicians who love brass music and the euphonium who are prepared to work hard to change and improve the opportunities for players. Last year I played and conducted at the Rome Conservatory with an ensemble made up of some of the finest students and professionals in the city. It seems it was a turning point for the euphonium as I hear firm plans are being made for a new euphonium course now. Once that is established other conservatories in Italy will follow suit. 

Please see appendix B on page 196 to view a sample of Mead’s tour schedule from 2008.

Important Performances

With over seventy five solo engagements per year located across the globe, focusing solely on a few notable concerts in Mead’s career without awareness of the entirety of Mead’s considerable performance record would be an error. Indeed, Mead’s significance in the world of euphonium stems greatly from his prodigious performing career. Having saved every solo program since high school, Mead’s programs fill five four-drawer filing cabinets. Over his twenty years of professional playing Mead has been a featured soloist in twenty-two different countries, and premièred over one hundred seventy-five solo euphonium works by many international composers including Philip Sparke, Martin Ellerby, James Curnow, Tadeus Kassatti, Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen, Robert Jager, Vladimir Cosma, Rolf Wilhelm, Arthur Butterworth, John Reeman,


52 Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography Part Two,” 23.
Thomas Dos, Yasuhide Ito, Marco Putz, and Rolf Rudin. Additionally, Mead soloed as a featured guest at every major brass band, and wind band festival including several performances at the European Brass Band Championships and the National Brass Band Festivals. Furthermore, Mead has played with numerous professional ensembles which include the United States Army Band, the Dutch Marine Band, as well as French, Italian and Russian military bands in addition to symphony orchestra appearances in the United States, Norway, Finland, Poland, Germany and Japan.  It would be a large and difficult task to discuss all of Mead’s important performances. A detailed investigation of every major performance, therefore, is impractical for a study of this size and scope. This study, instead, presents a review of his performances that embody Mead’s élan for performing and his innovative approach to the euphonium. Three of his concerts, his recital at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM), his performance at the Roberta di Camerino fashion show in Milan, and the première of the Rolf Rudin Euphonium Concerto in Stuttgart, Germany, stand out as especially significant because of the quality of the repertoire and exposure of the euphonium to new settings and audiences.

**Royal Academy of Music Recital**

In the early years of Mead’s burgeoning euphonium-playing career, his solo performances at the BBC Young Musician of the Year Competition and the BBC Best of Brass were his first major steps beyond the Salvation Army and his college recitals, and indeed, these performances were instrumental in promoting his name among important figures within the brass band movement. His success in these competitions not only propelled Mead onto a wider stage as a musician but led to a Besson sponsorship and other awards such as the Euphonium Player of the Year Award. Yet while important to his career, the influence of these performances was somewhat limited. The contest performances were limited because the repercussions did not extend past the largely

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closed community of the amateur band world. Mead’s euphonium recital at the RAM in 1989, on the other hand, was significant for “what it enabled in the years to come . . .”\textsuperscript{55} Mead recalls that Harold Nash, although a “quietly spoken guy,” did much to invite Mead and arrange his recital at the Royal Academy. Nash, a trombonist at the Covent Garden Opera House and head of brass at the time, was very determined and completely behind the fact that the euphonium should be at the Royal Academy.\textsuperscript{56} Mead became the “first ever” euphonium specialist at the Royal Academy, and he states that his recital performance, the first full euphonium recital at the RAM, led to his teaching position there, and helped keep the euphonium as an area of study at the RAM after Mead left to teach euphonium at the Royal Northern College of Music and the Birmingham Conservatoire of Music. Mead sees similar processes occurring in other places like Italy where he and others have been working to reestablish the euphonium tradition in that country. Mead states, “. . . and it’s a bit like that now with the Rome Conservatory. Once things happened at the Rome Conservatory in Italy, then other conservatories will copy.”\textsuperscript{57}

**Milan Fashion Show Performance**

With an average of at least one solo appearance a week for the past fifteen years, Mead has more than his share of unusual playing engagements and numerous travel stories, but little did he realize that a solo concert at a car park in the Italian-speaking town of Lugano in southern Switzerland in 2005 would lead to the most unusual setting for a euphonium soloist. Lugano, Mead reports, is a beautiful town set near the shores of a lake and is a place in which all “the cares of the world that affect most people simply do not exist . . .”\textsuperscript{58} Mead’s hosts were very generous, and it seemed the entire town was excited to hear him play. They built a Bavarian-style marquee in the middle of town

\textsuperscript{55} Steven Mead, “Steven Mead Interview: Biography Part Two,” 27.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.

especially for his concert and planned to make a digital video disc and compact disc of the event as well. Performing with a local band comprised of professional and semi-professional musicians, on a marquee in a car-park, Mead, while impressed with the dedication of the townspeople, remembers the overall acoustics were “shocking” and “bizarre.” The photograph in figure 10 shows Mead performing with the band in the quickly-constructed marquee.

![Figures 10 and 11: Mead Playing at the Marquee with Camerino](image)

Mead, however, impressed an important member of the audience, Giuliana Camerino, the president of the La Fondazione Roberta di Camerino, and one of the leading fashion designers in the world and an iconic personality in innovative Italian fashion. Her company was the main sponsor of Mead’s concert. See figure 10 and 11.

After the performance Mead recalls Camerino enthusiastically approached him. Mead remembers the following:

... she came up on stage afterwards and thanked everybody and thanked me and she grabbed my arm and said, “We have to talk. I have an idea.” You know, so later that night she was finishing up with some very high-powered friends in a very swanky restaurant. I got an invitation to go so we spent I guess about forty five minutes to an hour talking about the fashion industry, about the role of music in it, and then she popped the question: “Do you think you’d be able to play in

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one of my fashion shows?” And . . . after five glasses of wine you are not going
to sit across the table and say, “No way.” You say, “Yes, sounds very
interesting!” You know, I don’t know how exactly it would work, but “Yes,
sure.”61

Camerino was happy to hear Mead was receptive to her plans. She told him that she had
never heard such a sound, and thought it would compliment her fashion show perfectly,
even though she repeatedly confused his euphonium with the saxophone.62 Mead still
fondly recalls her enthusiasm in her heavily accented voice, “You could do your thing.
You could do your virtuoso [thing] . . . it would be wonderful, wonderful!” After his
evening dinner with Camerino, Mead met her for coffee the following morning and it was
then he realized “what kind of big-time she was.” Mead states that the preliminary
details were discussed and recounts her impressive domicile:

[Her residence was] An incredible villa on the side of hill inside of a valley and
we exchanged contact information and in about three months, in January of last
year, I had contact formally from the company inviting me to go to Venice to
discuss the fashion show and a date was penciled in for September for the actual
show itself.63

In all, Mead traveled to Venice four times to consult with Roberta, Giuliana’s
professional name, and other Camerino employees.64 Mead recalls meeting with
Camerino on his first visit to Venice:

. . . her boatman met my by the train station and we went to the Italia where I met
Roberta for the first time [in Venice]. She showed me DVDs of the last four
shows that she had done in Milan and Rome and somewhere else and showed me
basically how the shows work. The duration was about twenty two to twenty

61 Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast, 10 April 2007 “Interview with Steven Mead:
Work in Italy,” transcript, Tallahassee, FL: 7.

62 Steven Mead, “Steven Mead to Play at Milano Fashion Show”

63 Steven Mead, “Interview with Steven Mead: Work in Italy,” 7.

64 Steven Mead, “Interview with Steven Mead: Work in Italy,” 7, and John Patner, “From Bags to
August 2008.
three minutes. She started to introduce some live music, but it was very much at the side of the catwalk.\(^{65}\)

Her idea to incorporate live musicians actually playing on stage sprang from a past show in which she employed acrobats to perform near the models on the runway. It, therefore, was not inconceivable to replace the acrobats with a musician.\(^{66}\)

Much of the music played during fashion shows are high-powered, upbeat popular charts, and the music planned for Mead’s Milan performance was no different. Camerino wanted him to play some Gershwin, particularly themes from the *Rhapsody in Blue*. During one of his visits to Venice Mead remembers the first discussion of the music:

. . . I was confronted with about fifteen employees of Roberta di Camerino who knew nothing about music, only about fashion, to see this forty-something, little English guy who with little or no hair and with this strange tuba and then Juliana just said, “Could you just play us something from *Rhapsody in Blue*?” just minutes after she sprung the idea on me. *Rhapsody in Blue* is a piece for piano and orchestra, you know, and I knew some of the tunes, and I ended up playing some other stuff, and fortunately if you trust your instinct enough you can always play things that impress.\(^{67}\)

Mead and British composer Peter Meechan began arranging portions of *Rhapsody in Blue* as a euphonium solo with a modern-sounding electronic compact disc accompaniment which included synthesized orchestra, percussion and multi-tracked euphonium sounds. Mead and Meechan were given considerable freedom in choosing the tunes and their accompaniment treatment because Camerino was not very clear with what she wanted. About a month before the performance, however, it was obvious that she preferred more contrast in the music.\(^{68}\) Mead relates the following:

\(^{65}\) Steven Mead, “Interview with Steven Mead: Work in Italy,” 7.

\(^{66}\) Ibid.

\(^{67}\) Ibid., 8.

\(^{68}\) Steven Mead, “Steven Mead to Play at Milano Fashion Show”
. . . so they substituted, with about two or three weeks to go, five out of the twelve numbers. They substituted with pieces of their own, which I had to learn just from CD, no music no score. “Can you play along with this? It would be wonderful!” Yeah … and of the whole thing had to be learned from memory.69

Furthermore, learning new music was coupled with additional complications that arose during rehearsals in Venice leading up to the performance date. In the following, Mead retells some of his concerns:

. . . I went back about five weeks later and the sound system that they had for me to play back with was absolutely rotten. It was like TV speakers, and of course, I couldn’t get any volume out of it at all and the guy spent a half-an-hour trying to get the damn thing to work and that was really uncomfortable because we’d spent five weeks nonstop and the play back thing . . . it was like playing through speakers in your laptop, whereas me, I was trying to play along with music because the damn thing had only been finished days before and that was very uncomfortable. I felt at that stage they could have very well pulled the plug on it, but they kept faith. I explained to them that they needed to have a sound engineer for the show, saying that we need to hear more of the orchestra.70

In fact, Mead explained to them that instead of filtering the accompaniment through a fifteen-watt speaker system, they needed something closer to the five-hundred-gigawatt speakers that would be used in the show. After that meeting Mead brought his own speaker system to rehearsals just to guarantee the next rehearsal would run smoothly and states, “When you’re working in the fashion industry, musically, you mustn’t take anything for granted.”71

With the performance set for September 23, 2006, everyone was finishing the last details of the show which including what Mead would wear. Usually musicians are quite careful to dress appropriately for a concert, but Mead remembers working in the fashion show required extra attention to detail and recalled the following:

. . . and when I turned up, they said, “What are you going to wear?” Because they had never discussed what I would wear, so I had nice, very modern, expensive

69 Steven Mead, “Interview with Steven Mead: Work in Italy,” 8.

70 Ibid., 8-9.

71 Ibid., 9.
shoes and I got them out of the bag and they said, “Ha-ha, you can’t wear that! They’re Versace!”\textsuperscript{72}

The people at Roberta di Camerino outfitted Mead with appropriate cloths, nice black shoes, a simple black shirt and dark blue trousers.

The show was in front of a live audience of about eight hundred to one thousand people in an amphitheater especially built for the occasion, and it was broadcast live on several TV stations from German, Italy, Japan and China. In addition to the unusual setting, Mead remembers it was one of the loudest gigs he has ever done because he had a portable microphone attached to his bell which fed into several banks of large speakers. Mead also notes the numerous distractions, from the massive budget, to the many business conversations and deals happening in the background made this performance quite different than anything he had done before then. Mead learned much from the experience and relates the following information about the performance:

\textbf{. . . there were thousands of distractions, but it was extremely well paid. I’d do again in a second. I’m much wiser now how it would work. I’m open to anybody who wants to discuss how such a thing works because I know now. But to get paid a lot of money there’s a lot of work, sure, but . . . it’s a different world, a massive budget riding on the whole thing, millions of millions of euros, you know, more than any concert I’ve ever been involved with, and of course when you’re performing, most people aren’t looking at you as they do in a concert. They’re looking at the models and the dresses and making notes and placing orders for hundreds of thousands of pounds the day after the show. So yeah, good, they were happy with it, I was happy with it.}\textsuperscript{73}

Mead feels fortunate to have had the experience, but admits it could well be a “one-off.”

Mead called his performance at the Milan fashion show one of the most unusual things he has done with his instrument, but also the biggest coup for the euphonium world.\textsuperscript{74} Besides being a personal benchmark in his solo career, his performance at the Milan fashion show exposed the sound of the euphonium to a much wider audience than

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{73} Ibid., 8.
\item \textsuperscript{74} Steven Mead, “Interview with Steven Mead: Work in Italy,” 8, and Steven Mead, “Steven Mead to Play at Milano Fashion Show” http://www.euphonium.net/articles.php, accessed 23 October 2006.
\end{itemize}
many of his recitals at music schools do, an audience who most likely had never heard of the euphonium. It is important for the development of the euphonium as a solo instrument to present it beyond its small niché within the world of classical music. Mead explains:

... well from my point of view it would be very easy just to keep doing what I’m doing in terms of run of the mill concerts because again, I know how they work. It’s fairly umm ... well I won’t say it’s easy because it’s a challenge with all the traveling and setting everything up, but I think as musicians we have to be looking for new things otherwise we get bored. Unless we do new things for the instrument it’s like well you just stand up and play with the band, that’s fine, or you just stand there and play with that nice pianist accompanying you. ... So I think to some extent I think we’ve been limited by our own imagination in the past. I was lucky that this whole opportunity fell in my lap but as sure as hell I wasn’t going to watch it slide by and I had to work very hard.\textsuperscript{75}

Mead cautions, however, that because his collaboration with the fashion industry is most likely a one-time performance, many will not appreciate the ramifications of taking the euphonium to a previously unexplored venue. While he admits that “creatively, it was a fantastic coming together of music, of visual imagery and great fashion and lighting and sound,” he relays the following:

I’ll be honest with you. It was just so far in left field, or whatever you call it in American terms, that it just remained a curiosity for the press over here, for the music, for the brass press ...\textsuperscript{76}

In spite of many skeptics, Mead thought it was quite amazing, but remains realistic about the future of the euphonium in the popular culture. In figure 12, from left to right, composer Peter Meechan, Giuliana Camerino, chief artistic designer, Giuseppe Rombola and Steven Mead pose for a picture after a meeting in Venice.

\textsuperscript{75} Steven Mead, “Interview with Steven Mead: Work in Italy,” 8.

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 9.
Mead unfortunately cannot share many photographs, and cannot release any recordings of this performance to the public because of Camerino’s strict adherence of copyright laws. Camerino allowed only very few photographs to be published on Mead’s website and they are at considerable distance. Figures 13 and 14, however, give some insight to the unusual setting in which Mead performed. Figure 13 shows Mead leading the models down the runway and the next photograph, figure 14, shows him playing near the edge of the walkway.

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When it comes to advancing the solo euphonium repertoire, there are few who have premiered as many significant works as Mead has, and although he admits that he has not chased composers with an open check-book, the list of compositions include numerous concerti, concertinos, sonatas, and other small works, such as encore pieces. Light works aside, many of the concerti and sonatas Mead premiered are now mainstays in the repertoire and euphonium students eagerly study them in music schools worldwide.

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79 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 10.
Past premières have included several important euphonium concerti within the context of the British-style brass band, not the least of which were works by Martin Ellerby and Philip Sparke. Because of their significance, these concerti have been arranged for performance with either piano or wind band and in the case of Ellerby’s concerto, arranged with orchestra. Indeed works for the euphonium with orchestra continue to be a rather small portion of the total output of the solo literature; however, they also represent its most significant works. Prominent American euphoniumist, Adam Frey, writes:

A substantial addition to this genre certainly involves the numerous arrangements of wind band and brass band accompaniments for the symphony orchestra. However, as many mature musicians will agree, the compositional concept that composers utilize very often varies depending on the type of ensemble performing the work. Thus, many of the arrangements for orchestra made from other mediums continue to sound like “band” pieces being performed with strings rather than a composition inspired with the concept, beauty, and texture of the symphony orchestra as the genesis for the ideas.\(^8^0\)

While many agree that Ellerby’s orchestral arrangement of his *Euphonium Concerto*, well crafted as it is, still lacks the variety of colors and textures and other idiomatic potentials original orchestral writing affords. Rudin’s *Concerto for Euphonium and Orchestra*, Op. 75, subtitled “The Hallows,” by contrast displays a wealth of intricate textures and colors only available to a full symphony orchestra.

What makes Mead’s first performance of this work significant is actually a combination of elements; the quality of the music, the orchestra that played with him, and the location of the performance. On November 23, 2007, Mead premièred Rudin’s *Concerto for Euphonium* with the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra at the famous Beethoven Hall in the Liederhalle, Stuttgart, Germany. Architects Gutbrod and Abel built the uniquely-shaped Liederhalle in 1956, which originally contained three auditoria, of which the Beethoven Hall is the largest, seating two thousand.\(^8^1\) The Liederhalle has


invited some of the world’s most important performers and musical ensembles including Cecilia Bartoli, Jose Carreras, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Joshua Bell, the New York Philharmonic, the London Philharmonic and the Gewandhaus Symphony Orchestra.\textsuperscript{82}

He also received great critical acclaim from the Norwegian conductor, Arrild Remmereit, Rolf Rudin, the orchestra and music critics. Furthermore, after the last notes of the twenty-five minute work ended, Mead’s performance of the concerto was awarded with a five minute standing ovation.\textsuperscript{83} Indeed, Erwin Schwarz, a Stuttgart arts critic for one of the main local newspapers, documented Mead’s concert in the following review translated from German:

\begin{quote}
“…The second night of the current concert series was Rossini’s "William Tell" Overture, Beethoven’s "Eroica" and the crowning glory of the program was the English Euphonium-Artist, Steven Mead. He had with his euphonium at least four octaves and projected clearly up to the farthest corner of the hall acoustically, and on this visually bright brass instrument performed true heroic deeds with virtuoso cadenzas and beautiful flowing melodies to perform. And the audience was indeed fortunate to be present at this world premiere of the \textit{Concerto for Euphonium and Orchestra}, Op. 75 with the title “Hallows” (shrines). The three movements were inspired by ancient Irish folk legends, and about which the composer Rolf Rudin became the storyteller. Steven Mead displayed astonishing ease with the technically breathtaking virtuoso solos, and showed a nonchalant sovereignty . . . \textsuperscript{84}"
\end{quote}

Almost from the beginning of the creative process, Mead suspected that this performance would not be just another concerto première. As champions of modern music, the Stuttgart Philharmonic have commissioned new works annually, and when they invited Rudin to compose a solo instrumental work with orchestra in 2007, he chose to write for the euphonium. Rudin’s choice was not random or for the sake of novelty, but a fulfillment of a promise he made to Mead several years prior to write a piece for the euphonium if the opportunity presented itself. A rare member of the symphony


\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
orchestra, the commissioning board in Stuttgart required proof of the instrument’s quality as a solo voice and accepted its nomination after Mead submitted several of his compact disc recordings and a formal biography.

Once Rudin was free to begin composing the new concerto he insisted on meeting Mead to learn more about the euphonium and its tonal possibilities. Mead recalls the following:

Rudin’s attitude to writing this concerto had been meticulous from the outset. We had met several times in Germany and he had driven hours to meet me after concerts or at one of my regular Besson instrument testing visits to Markneukirchen. Each time I had been impressed with Rolf’s desire for a greater understanding of writing for the euphonium, not just the obvious matters of range and dynamics etcetera but varieties of articulations, mutings, aspects of flutter tonguing, multiphonics and where things sounded best in the range.\(^{85}\)

Mead was pleased that Rudin’s compositional style avoided the traditional repertory of technical and melodic clichés of recent works for the euphonium.\(^{86}\) The composer made the following statements about the themes of his work was loosely based on ancient Ireland:

In Irish mythology it's said that a group of ancient magical people known as the Thuata de Danean came to Ireland - they were the original Irish Fairies - and they brought with them four sacred treasures, called “The Hallows of Ireland.”\(^{87}\)

Mead adds that the concerto has a “very mythical and epic” scope, and interprets the solo euphonium part as something like a narrator or an old Druid reciting epic poetry which reveals something of this ancient and unknown time.\(^{88}\) Figure 15 is a photograph of Mead and Rudin in Germany talking about the new concerto.

\(^{85}\) Ibid.  
\(^{86}\) Ibid.  
\(^{88}\) Ibid.
Mead admits, however, that in the early days of his preparation, he did not have a clear concept of how the work would sound with the orchestra. Mead was given a handwritten full score of the accompaniment which he kept with him even while on tour. He studied the score constantly along with a computerized midi file Rudin sent a number of weeks after the study score so nothing would surprise him at the only full rehearsal the day before the concert. Indeed, the timeline for this concerto, from its inception to its first performance, was short. Mead learned the entire work in six weeks.

Whatever shortcomings the midi file and study score had in conveying the magnificent sounds Mead heard on the first rehearsal, the fact that the concerto was quite lengthy and complex, and yet incredibly well written for the euphonium was readily apparent from the beginning. While idiomatically written, the concerto is very difficult. In correspondence with the author, Mead writes the following:

Hi Robert,

Sitting in my hotel in Stuttgart with the big premiere tonight, very exciting and a little daunting I must say. It is a wonderful piece, but so hard in places . . . Looking forward to it nonetheless. . .

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89 Ibid.

90 Steven Mead, personal E-Mail, 22 November 2007.
Mead makes these observations after the concert:

Some of the challenges at first seemed insurmountable, especially the 'high wire' cadenza two thirds of the way through the long and fast second movement, with its large fast leaps, fast runs and cross rhythms. Other parts were clearly going to be just wonderful to play, especially the whole of the third (final) movement, entitled “Epilogue,” where fine extended arching melodies accompanied by mainly celeste, harp and cellos would show off the true lyric beauty of the euphonium.  

Figure 16 is a photograph of the first page of “The Hallows” Concerto. Notice that the opening measures of the solo part have difficult and extended phrases.

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92 Ibid.
Mead recounts his impressions of his performance and expresses his thought on how Rudin’s music affected him in the following:

“The Hallows” Concerto was deeply satisfying to play and the performance on the night really couldn't have gone much better. There was a power and spirituality about the music that I have never encountered in the repertoire of the euphonium before and the feeling as the final long notes drifted away into silence was simply unforgettable. Having a major euphonium concerto end softly seems initially to go against the psyche of euphonium players who have been brought up on a diet of loud top C’s or, in recent years, high F’s (concert E-Flat) to finish, but the last two mesmerizing minutes of this new concerto has for me broken that superficiality for ever.  

In fact, Mead is so impressed with this work he states; “At last we have a euphonium concerto that can sit next to great orchestral literature, as this one sat next to Beethoven's third symphony in the concert.” Figure 17 is a photograph of Mead performing “The Hallows” Concerto with the Stuttgart Philharmonic.

Figure 17: Mead Performing “The Hallows” with the Stuttgart Philharmonic

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93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid.
Instrument Design

As an aspiring euphoniumist in his early teens, the young Mead never imagined he would be involved in the development and quality control of the instruments so prominently featured on the posters that covered his bedroom walls. Besson euphoniums have been Mead’s instrument of choice since his teenage years. Mead recalls that his first contact with the Besson Company as an employee was between 1986-7. At this point in his career, Mead was the euphonium soloist in the Desford Colliery Band, and the UK’s new and upcoming talent having won the BBC Best of Brass solo competition twice, and the Euphonium Player of the Year. Nevertheless, his position in the company “certainly wasn’t in a developmental role.” Mead describes early work for Besson in the following statement:

... it was more a question of ... “You seem to be doing a lot of things, we’re glad you play Besson. You know, if you do things for us, we’ll basically pay you on a per day kind of basis.” So, it started quite informally...

Much of Mead’s early role as a Besson representative certainly involved promoting the Besson brand.

Yeah, sometimes Besson would be organizing a concert and they’d want an obviously a Besson friendly soloist. Sometimes it was a request to go do something in Germany, you know for their affiliate company there, a weekend with a wind band. So they became a little bit like concert agents, I suppose, but all the time it was, bottom line, I had to promote the product.

Besson continues to sponsor many of Mead’s concerts in Germany and around the world.

In 1990, however, he was tempted away from Besson to work with another British instrument manufacturer, the Sterling Company. The prospect of designing a “world-leading” euphonium and a pay raise was especially alluring during a time in

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97 Ibid.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid., 2-3.
Mead’s life when the “financial incentive was much greater than it would have been now.” 100 By the end of 1991, after a year and a half, Mead was back with Besson, and it was at this time the Besson management and Mead discussed development work. Generally, the relationship with Mead and Besson has been a good partnership, but when the Besson Company filed for bankruptcy there was a period of several months in which the fate of the company and its employees was uncertain. While some of the Besson-sponsored artists found employment with other companies, a handful, including Mead, stayed with Besson under Buffet-Crampon ownership. It is the first time Mead has worked for a foreign company. Mead remembers the early challenges of the transition were “not only the language difficulty, but . . . the sensibility difference. They do things in a different way.” Mead’s involvement with Besson euphoniums, however, “is closer than it’s ever been,” a very favorable change for Mead. Mead states that “everything kind of filters through me which is in a way, the way I like it.” Before Buffet-Crampon acquired the Besson Company, much of the design and development was done by a team of five or six euphonium players, each with equal input. 101

**Development**

Mead readily admits that his work with Besson has not “re-invented the wheel” in terms of designing a totally new euphonium. However, the modifications, while quite small, are significant. 102 When asked what the most important contributions to the development of the Besson euphonium were, Mead stated:

> Persuading them to accept the trigger, I suppose . . . how the trigger fitted; how the stem of the valve being increased diameter at the base so you could fix the valve guide in place. I don’t think there’s any one particular thing; you know I didn’t re-invent the wheel here. I did urge them to look at a heavier mouthpiece receiver and heavier valve bottoms which they accepted. Both of those I think have made a difference. I got them to think about the freedom of the lead pipe from the bell, which they accepted, and most other people have copied now. 103

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100 Ibid., 2.
101 Ibid.
102 Ibid., 3.
103 Ibid.
Arguably each of these alterations had the potential to improve inherent flaws in design and playability of the horn, but the adoption of Mead’s suggestions were slow, especially the addition of a trigger mounted to the main tuning slide to compensate for out-of-tune notes.

**Prestige and GS Sovereign Euphoniums**

The tuning slide trigger on the Prestige model euphonium is perhaps the most visible change to the basic Besson design. Mead first encountered a tuning slide trigger device while on tour. He recalls when he had one installed on his horn:

> I went to Japan in 1992 and came back with a trigger on my euphonium which kind of was a bit of a shock to the people in London. So they [the Besson management] knew of this Japanese tuning-slide trigger because it had been around for about five or six years. They [the Japanese] put it on imported Bessons from the UK.  

The management at Besson was absolutely against incorporating aftermarket tuning-slide triggers to their instruments because it implied that the instrument had faulty intonation. See figure 18 for a diagram of tuning-slide trigger kit similar to the one used in Japan in the early 1990s. The lever arm mounts between the third valve slide tubes.

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104 Ibid., 2.
105 Ibid.
Eventually some of Mead’s suggestions were considered, but Besson remained firmly “anti-trigger.” Mead makes the following comments on the gradual steps the London-based Besson Company made in the mid-1990s:

Well, a couple of years later, they said, “look we still don’t want triggers, but we’d like you to help us with a new euphonium.” So, that’s how the GS euphonium, the *GS Sovereign* model, came into existence. So, we changed a few things made it a bit lighter, took off some metal here and there, re-vamped, re-designed the lead pipe to try to make the tuning better, but without a trigger.

The *GS Sovereign* was quite satisfactory, but it was soon apparent that other people who saw the trigger on Mead’s euphonium when he was on tour, or on his compact disc covers also thought it was a good idea. As a result, repairmen and music companies began manufacturing the tuning-slide trigger as a spare part kit to be fitted onto the Sovereigns and a few other euphonium models. Mead recalls that “to some extent, Besson was swimming against the tide by not accepting it.”

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107 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Work with the Besson Company and Instrument Design,” 2.

108 Ibid.
By September 1998, however, the corporate office at Besson was willing to consider adding the tuning-slide trigger to their euphoniums. Mead recalls a lunch time meeting with his boss:

He said, “Look, we should think about this euphonium now.” And I said, “Oh, cool!” So he took me out for lunch; he said, “Right, you can have your bloody trigger, but we need to come up with a new model.” We didn’t know what it was going to be called at the time.\textsuperscript{109}

The company decided on the title, Prestige, about three or four months after Mead’s meeting with the Besson officials. In addition to the trigger, Mead recalls they “tinkered around” with numerous aspects of the instrument, including expanding the bell diameters by a quarter inch, experimenting with the brass content of the bell metal, and the changing lead pipe design. The new model euphonium gained popularity and Mead remembers everything “ran quite nicely until Besson went belly-up in December 2005.”

\textbf{Buffet-Crampon Modifications}

When Besson went out of business in late 2005, its components were sold to two competing companies. Buffet-Crampon bought the Besson name and the York Company, a subsidiary of Schreiber & Keilwerth Musikinstrumente GmbH, the instrument parts manufacturer for the pre-Buffet-Crampon Besson, retained the old tooling and London factories. Buffet-Crampon reintroduced Besson instruments to the market on October 28, 2006 at the National Brass Band Championships held at the Royal Albert Hall.\textsuperscript{110} Mead stated it was critical for Besson to “get every detail correct from the very beginning,” and after nearly a year of manufacturing and design improvements, the new Besson brasses, especially their euphoniums, have received enthusiastic reviews. At first glance the new Besson euphoniums look nearly identical to their UK predecessors. Mead states that “they didn’t want to come-up with a Prestige euphonium that looked

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.

radically different,” but also mentioned that Buffet-Crampon did not begin their redesign plans by trying to make the old Besson better.

They say, “OK, we don’t have any plans,” there were no plans. You show us the best of what you made, and then we’ll copy every part, which is exactly how we started. They measured every part, every part of the bell shape, and the diameter of the tubing. It’s an incredibly complex job, and then they made tooling to actually make those parts. So they literally made it from zero. Here’s a euphonium, the name Besson is owned by Buffet-Crampon, so we own the name to this. To be honest there’s no real design copyright over any aspect of it, which is why York has been able to get away with copying the basic design because they have access to all the old tooling, but JA Music very quickly spotted lots of flaws in the old way the Besson instruments were made . . .

Numerous illogical progressions of the bore diameter through the valve group were corrected with immediate positive results. The new euphoniums have completely cylindrical valve tubing, which are more resistant to distortion during later stages of manufacture. In addition, most of the tubing on the old euphoniums, especially the upper and lower branches, were bent and soldered together under force, creating unnecessary tension within the instrument. Making the instruments with less tension allows the euphonium to blow more freely. Patrick Stuckemeyer, former Mead student and Besson Performing Artist, photographed the image in figure 19 which shows how the new bends on the Besson euphonium are made. Stuckemeyer states, “The part is heated and then blown up to full form with water. This process puts less stress on the metal and makes for a perfect fit each and every time.”

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111 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Work with the Besson Company and Instrument Design,” 5.


In addition to the new method of forming the main branches, Buffet-Crampon’s manufacture processes have improved the construction of the bell, of which Mead states, are the “smoothest contoured bell shapes” he has seen. Figure 20 shows the bells at their beginning stages, which are nearly flat, cut-out forms. The craftsmen work the bell on lathes and mandrels, seen in figure 21, insert the bell wire, fold it under the bell flare, and then shave away any excess brass on the inside until it is “super-smooth.” See figure 22. Stuckemeyer comments that the entire bell-making process is done by hand.

\[114\] Ibid.

Buffet-Crampon keeps much of the technology used to make the valves a closely guarded secret, but Mead mentions that the valve port holes are drilled with more precision than the old London-produced horns. Furthermore, the newly-designed valve stems improve the action of the valves. During the design process Mead suggested changing the way the valve stem and the valve guide fit together and he describes the collaboration as follows:

. . . the other problem we had was the valve guides would come loose and move up and down in the slot at an angle, causing the valve to jam and, you know, people thought they had dodgy valves, and all they had was a loose valve guide. So I asked them to come-up with a way to actually screw the valve guide in place onto the top of the valve, and they came up and said, ‘look, we’ve got this idea of . . . [a tapered valve guide diameter].

The valve guide, the black disc in figure 23, fits into a slot on the valve cylinder and valve stem locks it into place and prevents it from coming loose during a performance. Mead comments “. . . there is no danger of any black guide coming loose again; therefore, creating the impression of a rotten valve action. So we very quickly agreed that that would be on all instruments, Sovereign and Prestige.”

See figure 23.

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119 Ibid.
The tuning-slide trigger, one of Mead’s pet projects, also went through design improvements. With years of experience using the trigger, Mead was well aware of several critical flaws in its construction and he related the following to Buffet-Crampon:

While they were making the parts, I said, “look, to get the trigger on and off it’s a nightmare. You have to screw this screw, through a frame, through a level with little nylon washers either side, through the other side . . . conservatively it takes two minutes to do it.” Now if somebody wants to just quickly take their tuning slide off to lubricate it, clean it . . . if you lose one of those washers on the floor, or if it doesn’t locate or you get rough with it, you could completely knacker the tuning trigger system.121

Mead’s solution was to suggest they “come-up with some kind of push ball release . . . .” Figure 24 shows the new ball and socket configuration.

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121 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Work with the Besson Company and Instrument Design,” 5-6.
With the improved intonation on the Buffet-Crampon-produced euphoniums, Mead acknowledges the use of the trigger is significantly less than on his old instrument. Mead suggests that, even though the player will need the trigger on fewer notes, it is invaluable for specific musical situations such as altering the pitch for just intonations on chords in an ensemble, compensating for sudden large leaps, and correcting changes in pitch during crescendos and decrescendos. 123

Quality Control

In addition to advancing the Besson name through performances and media advertisements, Mead was, from the beginning of his employment with the Besson Company, involved with guaranteeing quality control. While the prospect of test-playing hundreds of new euphoniums and baritones seems exciting to many euphonium enthusiasts, this job was not always an easy one. Mead relates some of the difficulties he encountered with the London-based factory:


123 Ibid.
... often I was being asked to pass things as acceptable which clearly weren’t, and some months I stuck to my guns and made an absolute boor of myself and said; “no I’m not passing any of these,” and there may be forty five of them sitting in that room, but all of the bell seams are wrong, for example. And other months it was like, “Steve, if we don’t pass these, you know, we’re all in serious trouble.” You know, forty euphoniums are worth £80,000 to the company, so there was always an element of compromise, particularly towards the end when I could see the factory was in a pretty bad way.\textsuperscript{124}

Since the merger with Buffet-Crampon, the corporate culture has changed in a number of positive ways. Foremost are instructions from Buffet-Crampon to withhold any instrument which is not “top-quality.”\textsuperscript{125} Fortunately, JA Musik Group, the company which manufactures the parts for the new Besson Company is fantastic.\textsuperscript{126} With the redesigned euphoniums, Mead states the following:

So I haven’t found one instrument that hasn’t blown properly and in the old days, about one in six was a bit stuffy, you know? I almost feel that I don’t need to play them. It sounds ridiculous.\textsuperscript{127}

Since the euphoniums have been in production, a couple of trusted people have inspected the new instruments in Mead’s absence on three occasions and each reported similar findings: “They could literally play any of them in a concert . . .” Despite the newfound consistency in their line of euphoniums, Mead continues to play each, and at the request of Buffet-Crampon management, rate each horn on a one to ten Likert scale. Mead relates the following:

... in the beginning, they said, “would you score each one of them one out of ten?” And just out of politeness I put eight, eight and a half, nine, nine and a half, and after three or four visits, it was like; “this is absolutely ridiculous because if I’m honest, there is no difference.” “Well, could you still rate it?” So I just gave all of them a nine.\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., 4.

\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{127} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid.
Though pleased with Mead’s feedback, the managers at Buffet-Crampon wondered why he was not giving their instruments a top rating of ten, to which Mead said, “Well nothing’s ever perfect.”

Now that most of the major redesigning of the new euphoniums has been completed, Mead states that quality control is “essentially ninety percent of my work” at the Buffet-Crampon Besson factory in Germany. When inspecting a horn Mead states he is looking at the following things:

. . . all of the cosmetics, checking that everything fits, checking the ease of the valve tops, checking for any scratches, checking the bell wire’s perfect, checking that all the valves work at the same speed, checking that the trigger returns, etcetera, etcetera. And then, I like to play of course, because I hate to be in one place for a whole day with fifty euphoniums and not play! It’s like being at Willy Wonka’s Chocolate Factory and not eating Chocolate.

When Mead play-tests the new euphoniums coming off the production line, he allows for some variety in what he plays, but admits he has a set routine of fairly basic, almost warm-up-like exercises which cover as many general categories of playing as possible. For instance figure 25 is a typical pattern Mead uses to test the ease and response of the low range.

![Figure 25: Typical Exercise Mead Uses in Play-Test of Besson Euphoniums](image)

Mead states the following about examining the new instruments:

Apart from the first minute of the test, which is basically to work through the range at a good, strong dynamic, once you know the instrument is fine, and

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129 Ibid.
130 Ibid.
there’s so much consistency, once you know that they’re fine, you basically just take four or five minutes of lip time to have a workout . . .  

In addition to the simple exercises, Mead usually takes three or four of his current solos to play at the factory. Because he performs a concert approximately once a week, Mead always finds himself a couple of days away from a concert appearance, and when he is testing the new horns, Mead likes to hear how his solo repertoire sounds on different instruments. Mead mentions:

I put up on the stand pretty much whatever I’m working on because it was stuff I was doing the night before, or the day before that, in detail. And I knew exactly how my instrument was responding to it so the question then; is it the same, is it better or worse?

Mead is keenly aware of pitch and the intonation tendencies of his instrument. He mentions that intonation is an extremely important characteristic of a well-made euphonium, and part of Mead’s test is to determine how easy it is to play in-tune, listening for troublesome notes on the new horns. See figures 26 and 27

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131 Ibid., 10.
132 Ibid.
133 Ibid.
Mead admits that method in which he tests the horns is not strictly a “scientifically-planned test.” As to the types of solo Mead plays, he concludes, “... actually it doesn’t matter what you play . . .” but adds that he “wouldn’t play contemporary music, or squeaky music, or something without line and form, etcetera, because that’s not a fair test.” However, if Mead suspected an instrument had faulty pitch, for example, he would “put it on the tuning machine, check every note,” and perform an intonation test, notice the tuners, computers and other devices on the table in figure 27. In addition to tuners and other portable electronic devices, the Buffet-Crampon Company owns a complex machine which measures the resonance of their wind instruments. Mead made the following observations:

They basically have a very sophisticated German-made machine, to which they put onto the end of the lead pipe, and they basically put vibrating air through the instrument, and they are able to, scientifically, working where the nodal points of the vibrations are, they work out how an instrument is resonating. So they basically do it electronically. There is no subjectivity involved; this is a very objective measuring machine.  

After testing the first of the new Besson euphoniums to come off the assemble line at Buffet-Crampon, Mead noticed they were more resonant than his old instrument. Recalling the first time he saw the results of the resonance test, Mead made the following comments:

When I said, “this instrument is definitely much more resonant. I don’t know how much,” and they brought in this piece of paper and said, “Well, we do!” So they simply repeated the test on two instruments at different frequencies to see how the instrument responded. So there was about a twenty to thirty percent improvement in the resonance in the new ones.  

Mead, however, is quick to add that the machine, while an important tool in testing instruments, does not indicate whether the sound quality of the horn will be attractive to


136 Ibid.
musicians. It just records the efficiency the horn resonates on a given series of pitches.\textsuperscript{137} Figure 28 shows the difference in resonance between a London-produced euphonium and a Buffet-Crampon Besson.

![Figure 28: Chart Comparing the Resonance of the Old and New Besson Euphonium\textsuperscript{138}](image)

When quality-inspecting euphoniums for the Buffet-Crampon/Besson Company, Mead’s greatest strengths are his musical expertise, his concept of sound, and his intimate knowledge of the euphonium. Mead states, “. . . the machining is so perfect, you’re not going to get slides of different lengths like we used to get in the old days.”\textsuperscript{139} While excellently produced parts and consistent and careful construction are important, they are only a portion of what makes an instrument appealing to musicians. A well-designed euphonium will also have certain subjective qualities that cannot be measured by a machine. Mead states the following about what separates an ordinary instrument from a professional-grade horn:

\textldots it’s an instrument that has that “x-factor”; that it sounds like the voice; it has a nice mixture of brightness and richness of tone; it has good response; it’s an even

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{139} Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Work with the Besson Company and Instrument Design,” 10.
sound; it’s not airy, neither is it too direct. So it’s a combination of factors. I check out awkward notes like high B-natural concert that is often bad on instruments; check-out certain key notes; check-out the intonation on E-flat and F, for example. If I’m picking an instrument for a young player, what you really want is an instrument that is well in tune, not too heavy, ergonomically friendly, and can make them sound good quite quickly. . . .

Ultimately, Mead admits that excellent performances are the performer’s responsibility, but notes that finding an instrument with the ease of blowing, quality of sound, responsiveness, and fantastic machinery of the new Besson euphoniums helps improve his music making.

Mead states his perspective on the global euphonium sound aesthetic is well-rounded because of his years of traveling all over the world performing concerts, master classes and giving lessons. People’s sound preference is another important intangible factor instrument manufactures consider but have not yet discovered how to measure mechanically. He explains with the following:

. . . I mean the advantage of me and all the traveling I’ve done, is that you do develop a concept of a world sound, and so for me it’s kind of balancing two aspects, one is this instrument the very best instrument that I would like to play myself. And that’s always the challenge of doing development work is that you end up with a better instrument for yourself! That makes your job easier, that makes you sound more impressive, and then in the back of my mind also because I want the euphonium to be successful for the company is; will the Japanese appreciate this? Is this something the Americans will go for, is this okay for the brass band market, would players that play in wind band be happy with the intonation, etcetera, etcetera . . . So wearing several hats at once you try and cover all the bases. Is this an instrument an instrument you would play yourself? Is this an instrument the Japanese would buy? Umm . . . yes, probably because now it’s a bit lighter, it’s easier blowing. Will it satisfy the need of all the brass band players? Yes, absolutely. Would wind players like it? Why not? Because it’s slightly clearer, it’s more in tune, etcetera, etcetera.

Over the past two years of testing the Buffet-Crampon Besson horns, Mead has upgraded his personal Prestige euphonium with a better specimen from the factory in Germany several times. Mead’s interaction with euphonium players around the world has proven

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140 Ibid., 5.
141 Ibid., 8.
valuable to the Besson Company. Much of the feedback he gathered has made the new Besson euphoniums appealing to a wide array of players and performance settings.

**Mouthpiece Design**

A brass player’s choice of mouthpiece is a very personal decision. One has to consider many factors including dental structure, the size and shape of the lips as well as the musical purpose of the mouthpiece. With a great variety of preferences, it is not surprising that many leading brass soloists design special, or signature mouthpieces that differ in some way to the mass production models to suit their personal needs and musical tastes. Signature mouthpieces for brass instruments are not a recent concept. Extant specimens from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include mouthpieces stamped with the names of famous players such as Clarke, Levy, Innes and Pryor. While the Conn Company manufactured a specially-designed mouthpiece for Italian-American euphoniumist and trombonist, Simone Mantia, signature models for the euphonium were, until recently, not nearly as popular as artist series mouthpieces for the other brasses. Since 1996, Denis Wick has produced a line of Steven Mead mouthpieces for the euphonium and baritone which include seven models and are available in three different shank sizes which is the largest range of special mouthpieces for the euphonium to date.

Nearly every thing about the euphonium has undergone intense development in the past thirty years including technical advances in instrument design, serious solo repertoire, and pedagogy, and of course, mouthpiece design. While the physical differences between a trombone and euphonium mouthpiece may be subtle, Mead believes they are important distinctions nonetheless. He thinks “there are some mouthpieces that exaggerate the cylindrical nature of an instrument,” and Mead offers this analogy:

To some extent it’s like buying a very expensive Hi-Fi system and getting the tone control and just jamming the treble up and turning off the bass. Why have you done that for? I wanted it to sound like that. Well you’ve got these other possibilities now. 

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142 Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast, 10 April 2007, An Interview with Steven Mead: Online Lesson Preview and Mouthpiece Development, transcript, Tallahassee, FL: 14.

143 Ibid.
Choosing a mouthpiece which exaggerates the conical nature of the euphonium is, therefore, an important component to producing its unique sound. Mead further hypothesizes:

. . . generally speaking, the more metal mass you have on a mouthpiece, the more you take away a lot of the softer tones which the euphonium is good at. So this is why traditionally . . . the Vincent Bach, even the Schilke shape for me has always exaggerated the trombone characteristics of the euphonium’s color and similarly the old style Denis Wick the old cup style gave it a softer sound, but often leave the people wanting more in terms of articulated detail, and if you like, weight of tone.144

Furthermore, Mead states:

. . . Certainly a lot of metal mass at the base of the cup and a very strong rim edge at the top are going to make much more trombone characteristics. So you know some instruments have a softer personality which can benefit from having a stronger trombone mouthpiece and for other players who are already playing quite a bold style, a brassy style if you put a trombone orientated mouthpiece on there and they move well away from what most people like about the sound of the euphonium. So it might as well be a trombone with pistons. At the end of the day it’s the sound preference will decide that.145

Ease of playing and producing a tone appropriate to a large conical instrument ultimately led Mead to develop a mouthpiece especially for the euphonium and he states:

So that was my reason behind designing the SM3, something that would still bring out all the beautiful characteristics of the euphonium, but make it easier to play, more comfortable because of the new rim edge, but still preserve that kind of sonority people like about the euphonium, that’s why they choose it . . . 146

Of course there are euphoniumists who use mouthpieces which are technically conceived for a trombone, but still manage to play with a rich tone. Indeed, the idea of a specific

144 Ibid., 14.
145 Ibid., 15.
146 Ibid., 14-5.
euphonium mouthpiece is somewhat controversial and confusing, given the similarities in their outward appearances. However, rather than judge whether these players sound like authentic euphoniumists, Mead offers a simple explanation for their choice in mouthpiece:

. . . of course in different countries you have different sound preferences, so for example in Japan, you’ll find that because the players tend to be a little bit softer in attack and softer in style and less dynamic they prefer a mouthpiece that helps them more to give attack and precision and that’s why the Blackhill, the Schilke and these mouthpieces do well . . .

The characteristics of many trombone mouthpieces add elements of control, projection and clarity for players who find they cannot “handle something where they have to have more control themselves.” On the other hand, while the SM design may require more effort from some players, former Mead student, Aaron Tindall, feels the SM3 offers a greater range of tone color, flexibility and warmth of tone.

Experiences with Denis Wick

Although Mead has been long associated with the Denis Wick brand, he remembers that at the age of twelve he played on “some kind of Kosikup mouthpiece.” See figure 29. No longer produced and relatively uncommon today, the Kosikup design mouthpiece was a collaborative effort between the old Boosey & Hawkes Company and the Salvation Army. There were three Kosikup sizes available for the euphonium; 1, 1-½ and 3. British euphoniumist, teacher and antique euphonium collector, Charley Brighton, states that these mouthpieces “were extremely good . . . in their day” with “big

147 Ibid., 15.
148 Ibid.
149 Aaron Tindall, questionnaire response, 22 October 2007.
150 Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast, 10 April 2007, An Interview with Steven Mead: Online Lesson Preview and Mouthpiece Development, transcript, Tallahassee, FL: 9.
151 Ibid.
wide rims, bowl cups with the correct taper shank for the smaller bore instruments of those days.”

![Figure 29: Kosikup Mouthpiece](image)

As Mead began playing the large bore Besson euphonium with a bass trombone-sized receiver, he sought a better-suited mouthpiece and chose a Wick 4AL and later moved to the larger 3AL cup when he was seventeen. He was quite happy with this model, using the same mouthpiece for sixteen years by which time there was “absolutely no plating on it whatsoever. It was just brass!” By serendipitous luck, the opportunity to design a personal line of mouthpieces presented itself in late 1996. Mead retells his encounter with cornet soloist, Roger Webster at the Besson plant:

> I was down at the Besson factory in Edgeware and I was talking to Roger Webster, who’s a very good, astute businessman, and he said, “Look would you be interested in working on a line of mouthpieces?” and I said, “Yeah. Who is it?”

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155 Ibid.
He said, “It’s Josef Klier in Germany. I said; “Well, don’t know.” He said; “Well they’re sending me some samples for cornet, and I’ve told them you might be interested in having a Steven Mead series with JK. So I said, “Well yeah it sounds OK.” I said, “Look, what we should do, because the Denis Wick company is part of the Boosey and Hawkes group, we should mention it to Boosey & Hawkes because Josef Klier [is] a competitor, even though we have no connections with Denis Wick at all.”

Mead made an appointment the same day to see the then managing director of Boosey & Hawkes, David Humphries and told him his idea of developing his design of mouthpieces, and the possibility of working with JK. Mead remembers Humphries response: “. . . he lit a cigarette and sat back in his chair and said, “Well, I can’t stop you from doing it, but why don’t you do it with Denis?” While this seemed a simple solution, Mead had his doubts. He reminded Humphries that Wick “makes Denis Wick mouthpieces with Denis Wick written all them . . .” With a proposal for a Mead signature line, Mead wondered: “What’s he going to think about that?” This was a reasonable concern because “at that point, Denis Wick had never had anybody else involved with their name on a mouthpiece or anything like that.” Humphries simply said, “I’ll call him,” and by the end of the day he contacted Mead by telephone with good news stating:

“Denis said it’s a great idea.” And I said, “Are you serious?” “Yep you should contact [one of his employees] and organize some prototypes.” You know within a few weeks I was down at the mouthpiece factory which was in North London, it wasn’t too far from the old Besson factory actually, just a couple of miles.

Convinced that Mead’s idea would work, Mead and Wick began what would be a long and profitable working relationship.

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156 Ibid.
157 Ibid.
158 Ibid.
156 Ibid.
160 Ibid.
Design and Production

Mead worked on a prototype immediately. Because of his years of experience playing on a Denis Wick 3AL and intuition, Mead’s first prototype only took a day to design on paper. After discussing the details with Wick twenty-four hours after the meeting with Humphries in London, the process of getting Mead’s idea from paper to a workable model on the computer took place at the Wick mouthpiece factory. Mead describes the procedure:

. . . the first thing they had to do was turn the drawing into some kind of recognizable shape on the computer. So they did a series of kind of needle points and that turned into a cutting program for the CNC laser machine and then pretty much the very first one that came out was the one I’ve been playing on ever since.  

Mead’s design differed from the standard Wick mouthpiece in several ways, most visibly the outside shape. See figure 30. Mead states:

. . . on the old Denis Wick there was cut away here . . . and I said, why is that there, and he said it was purely cosmetic on the first mouthpieces. And I said could we fill that space? Yes of course. So what I basically designed for him was something that looks almost identical to the Lindberg mouthpiece now which is like an oversized French horn mouthpiece, but he wanted to get that little ridge so he could get his logo on it. So there was a compromise and the original one . . . It actually had a band around the middle like around here. There was about a quarter inch band of metal like a thickening stripe which I wanted to reinforce, but it looked weird.

With the band around the middle of the mouthpiece removed, the very first sample to come off the production line was stamped SM, Mead’s first and last initials. Mead states, “it’s basically a 3” sized cup only “a slight fraction smaller than the production 3 but almost immeasurable.” The regular production models are stamped with Mead’s initials followed by a number indicating the cup size. Medium and small shank sizes are

\[\text{\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., 12.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{162} Ibid.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., 10.}\]
notated with an extra letter after the cup size. Baritone mouthpieces are indicated with the letter B after Mead’s initials.

![Figure 30: Wick SM3M and 4AM](image)

Mead also had ideas about the contour of the rim. The new rim edge was critical on the SM mouthpieces because as Mead explains, the old 4AL and 3AL mouthpieces had quite a sharp outside edge. Mead relays a conversation he had with Wick:

. . . he said look, the very first mouthpiece he ever designed was the 4AL. He designed it for himself, and the role of the orchestral trombonist is to sit and count eighty bars rest and come in and play something quite active for minute or two and start counting again. So you don’t have the chance to warm-up the chops, you know, you can’t stick a practice mute in a play for thirty seconds before each entry and so he wanted a rim edge that was quite severe so that on a lip that had gone off a little bit, you could put it on there and feel the edge and play straight away.  

\[164\] Ibid., 16-7.
While the extreme rim edge and relatively flat shape are beneficial to the orchestral trombonist, euphonium players encounter different types of challenges in the brass band. Mead explained:

So I said to him, “Look as you know, Denis, euphonium players in the band are playing all the time, all evening at the extremes of range in quite a physical way. We need something that’s going to have a comfort built in but still be positive,” and he agreed. So I just wanted the edge of the rim to be a little bit more sloping, but going away quite quickly, but I didn’t want that right angle thing at all so that was why I had to pay one hundred twenty three quid.\(^{165}\)

The 123 quid, or £123, Mead references is the cost of the lathe he purchased to carve the new rim shape on the SM series mouthpieces. Mead recalls:

And typical Denis, when he realized I wanted a different rim edge, he said, “I’m going to have to get a new tooling for that and you’ll have to pay for it.” Oh OK fine . . . How much is this? He says, “Oh it’s worth about one hundred twenty-three pounds.” OK well fine.\(^{166}\)

Chagrinned, Mead bought the tooling which is technically still his, although the factories have changed twice.\(^{167}\) Wick, however, has never failed to send a royalty check each month for the past ten years, so Mead has let the issue of reimbursement rest, and for good reason. The SM line has proved, in fact, to be very profitable. The Wick Company sells on average two hundred forty euphonium mouthpieces a month. Therefore, after ten years, a rough figure equals about 28,800 mouthpieces. While the price of £45 is a median figure between the cost of the gold and silver plated mouthpieces, it still equates approximately to £1,296,000 or 2.5 million US dollars for the Denis Wick Company.\(^{168}\)

\(^{165}\) Ibid., 17.

\(^{166}\) Ibid., 9.

\(^{167}\) Ibid., 9-10.

\(^{168}\) Ibid., 13.
Other Dimensions

The shape of the cup on a brass wind mouthpiece usually falls in one of three general categories, a V shape, a rounded cup shape or a combination of the two. About the shape of the cup, Mead explains:

Well it’s certainly not a straight V there’s no doubt about that. I think it’s for me, a kind of a combination. It’s got that element of a barrel shape, but it’s fairly direct. No, the V [shape] wouldn’t help the sound of the euphonium at all. It needs a little bit of that kind of roundness . . . 169

Mead and Wick stayed with the sizes they thought would be most popular which included a new cup size, the SM3.5, which combines the rim diameter of a SM3 with a cup depth of a SM4. Mead makes the following comments:

. . . we kind of honed in on what we thought were going to be the popular sizes which were 3-4-5 and they came the medium shanks. So we did a 3M and a 4M for the older euphoniums as well as some of the Willsons. We just came out with a SM6 which I haven’t seen yet. We did a SM2 for doublers, people who play bass trombone and euphonium, but it has relatively small sales and then we did 3 baritone models the 4-6 and a 9 to fit the brass band baritone and of course a lot of the German-style barytons. 170

A number of mouthpiece manufacturers offer component parts for their mouthpieces, such as interchangeable rims, cups and shanks. While Mead has considered the range of options a modular mouthpiece would offer, he ultimately decided against this choice for his SM line of mouthpieces, stating:

. . . a lot of companies have done that, and to some extent, if I had have perused the development a little bit more I’d have been beating on Denis Wick’s door about five years ago for this. And certainly if I was doing trombone mouthpieces, I would have done, but euphonium players are a fairly simple breed of people really and there was a danger of just confusing the market . . . 171

169 Ibid., 15.
170 Ibid., 14.
171 Ibid.
In addition to the overwhelming amount of choices, Mead avoided what he suspects would have been thousands of questions ranging from how to match the parts properly and which combination is best, to how do the component parts affect playability or intonation. Mead’s approach to the mouthpiece market is simple and he adds rather sardonically: “Look, we’ve got a 3, 3.5, and a 4. Go figure out which one you want.”

Mead receives several e-mail questions a week concerning what size mouthpiece is best and he notes that the 3 through 4 size ranges are the most popular. With the assumption that most euphoniumists’ embouchures fall within an average size, he suggests the curious players and students try these sizes first because “the majority of people surely can’t be wrong.”

In addition to Mead’s suggestions for the rim contour and outer shape, Wick made minor changes to the internal dimensions of the mouthpiece. To the best of his knowledge, Mead does not recall any drastic changes: “we didn’t change the internal bores that much at all, a really minor tweak you almost wouldn’t really notice.”

Furthermore, the different cup sizes in the Steven Mead line all have their unique back bores, throat diameters and internal dimensions and are not based on the proportions of the SM3. On these technical matters, Mead trusted Wick’s knowledge stating:

. . . they are different and deliberately so but a lot of those internal things, I listened to Denis’ experience because he’s been successful for many years, and when I talked to him about the back bore of the SM4, he said look, because it’s a little shallower, we’ll just open that up by half a millimeter and the SM5 because it has this cup shape, this diameter, we should restrict the back bore to a certain size and to be honest, I just accepted that. I’m not going to say, I’ve got this figure in my head of 1.1 millimeters bigger. You know . . . why? I don’t know I’m just being difficult . . . So the idea was, we changed the outer shape, we changed the rim, we wouldn’t mess around with what was already a very successful combination of internal diameters and that’s really how it was.

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172 Ibid.


175 Ibid., 17.
Indeed, many of the details of the internal dimensions are proprietary, but Wick does offer a chart which lists the specifications on each of the SM mouthpieces for customers shown in figure 31.

![Figure 31: Chart of Denis Wick SM Mouthpiece Sizes](image)

**Alliance Euphonium Mouthpieces**

When Buffet-Crampon acquisitioned the Besson Company in 2005, the Besson brand technically was no longer associated with Denis Wick, and although the first several batches of euphoniums made at the Buffet-Crampon factory in Germany included two sizes of Denis Wick SM series mouthpieces as was custom before the company left England, Buffet-Crampon was interested in developing their own special mouthpiece to include with the new Prestige and Sovereign euphoniums. With his experience...

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developing a successful line of euphonium and baritone mouthpieces, it was a natural choice for Buffet-Crampon to select Mead, who was also designing their new euphoniums and baritones, to work on a new mouthpiece. Mead makes the following comment:

It’s connected with a new Buffet-Crampon one. They basically wanted a new mouthpiece they would put in the instrument, and so again, Roger Webster got this sourced in Austria. It’s very superb engineering . . .

The new mouthpiece is a “tulip shape” design and is a heavier blank than the standard Wick mouthpieces. See figure 32.

Several aspects of the Wick SM series mouthpieces were duplicated in the Alliance mouthpiece design. About the new mouthpiece Mead continues:

The rim edge is supposed to have been copied, it’s a little bit heavier, a little bit more responsive and I’m not totally convinced it’s the final version yet, but it’ll look pretty damn similar to that so my ongoing interest is obviously part musical and obviously part business oriented if I have to be honest. The difficult thing is, of course, is if and when this new one is finalized, what do I tell Denis Wick? Is

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it better than the one you’ve been promoting for ten years and which one are you playing because you can’t, you know, you can’t play both. It’s like a footballer, he’s either going to play Nike or Adidas, he’s not going to have one of each on his foot. So yeah, we’ll have to see what happens there. It’s interesting.179

Since 2007 the Alliance mouthpieces have been included with the new Besson Prestige euphoniums, and in fact, the Alliance 2, which equates to the Denis Wick SM3 in cup size and rim diameter, is marketed as the Steven Mead Signature Mouthpiece. Naturally the development and marketing of the Alliance mouthpiece caused a certain amount of tension between the Denis Wick Company and Mead. Mead admits his association with Alliance Mouthpieces was problematic and adds the following:

. . . I think Denis Wick got wind of it because shortly before the Frankfurt Trade Fair I got a message from Steven Wick, Denis’ son, saying, “We’ll be doing a lot of advertising at Frankfurt, could we have a copy of your signature for the exhibition?” And I said, “No.” didn’t tell him why, but I think he knew. I think somebody had said something, so we’ll see.180

Ironically, the massive success of the Wick SM line may have also been a contributing factor to Mead’s separation from the company. Because of its popularity, Wick was reluctant to change the design. Mead, however, was frustrated that the mouthpiece could not be updated or improved. In an email to the author, Mead writes the following:

Yes I am actually playing the Alliance mouthpiece now, and have been since the beginning of February. It looks to be a permanent change, although I still have to sort out contractual details with Roger Webster, who owns Alliance, and [with] Buffet. I think Denis Wick has some wind of this, but he had his chances to modify the current range, but I've asked him several times, but he moved too slowly. I'm using a gold plated E2, right now, but there will be a Steven Mead signature line coming very soon.181


180 Ibid., 11.

181 Steven Mead, personal Email, 15 April 2008.
In 2008, Mead formally announced his affiliation with Alliance Mouthpieces and severed his commercial ties with the Denis Wick Company.

Initially, Mead was not completely convinced that the new mouthpiece would be an improvement to the SM3 he developed with Denis Wick. During its experimental stages, the Alliance mouthpiece, while more responsive, lacked the warm sound Mead was accustomed to producing. Of concern was that the mouthpiece focused the sound too much, emphasizing the trombone-like characteristics of the euphonium timbre.\textsuperscript{182} The Alliance prototype also tended to produce a harsher, more direct attack than the SM3. Mead explains his trusted advisor’s observations:

I played it for my daughter yesterday because although she’s only eleven, she’s got incredible ears even though she spends most of her time laughing and joking. And I said . . . I did sort of a blind test on two different things and both times she preferred the old one and I asked why and she said the first one was softer and the second one was BAH! So I said yeah that’s exactly it, and there’s not a lot of difference because the diameter you know in terms of size it’s virtually identical.\textsuperscript{183}

After some alterations, however, the attack and tone became more congruent to the mellifluous qualities of the euphonium while maintaining the positive aspects of improved response, clarity, and resonance. Figure 33 lists the available Alliance euphonium mouthpiece sizes.

\textsuperscript{182} Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast, 10 April 2007, An Interview With Steven Mead and Preview of Online Lessons, transcript, Tallahassee, FL: 11.

\textsuperscript{183} Ibid.
Figure: 33 Chart of Alliance Euphonium and Baritone Mouthpiece Sizes\textsuperscript{184}

Mead is completely dedicated to his music and the advancement of the euphonium. His musical interests are not limited to his instrument, however. In addition to his time teaching, touring and recording, and developing a better instrument, Mead has conducted professional ensembles like the Grimethorpe Colliery Band, military bands in Rome and the Whitburn Band, as well as student groups. He has been also a regular contributor to brass band associations, writing articles in journals and serving as an adjudicator in several important brass band competitions. With the International Tuba-Euphonium Association Mead held the positions of Euphonium Coordinator, and Board of Directors member in addition to writing articles.

CHAPTER 3
TEACHING PHILOSOPHIES AND MUSICAL TOPICS

TEACHING CONCEPTS

While it is widely known that the role of a teacher is to impart information to
students, often times it is difficult to quantify all the elements that allow a music teacher
to communicate any number of complex pedagogical and musical concepts successfully.
Students are attracted to Mead’s studio for various reasons ranging from his reputation as
a world-renowned soloist to his record of teaching highly-qualified euphonium players.
Conversely, students of different ages, ability and career desires pose unique challenges
for Mead. Thus, he varies his approach to match the student’s personality and musical
needs. Rather than heading straight into the pitfall of boiling down a handful of musical
categories and presenting it as the Steven Mead method, this study instead attempts to
document his thoughts on the roles of both the teacher and student, his ideas about how
learning and teaching are conducted effectively, and a discussion of his interpretation of
the musical topics he feels every successful brass player should master. Furthermore,
Mead does not conceptualize the musical topics as isolated entities; however, it makes for
a much clearer presentation to discuss each separately. To hear him speak about his
general principles on teaching, please click here.¹

Music studio teachers have a unique position among college faculty in that the
majority of their contact hours with students are on a one-to-one basis. Therefore, the job
of an applied music instructor encompasses elements of instruction, motivation and
mentorship. Mead defines a teacher as the following:

The teacher, for me, is a person who facilitates the learning of a student. Now
we’re talking mostly about students who are between the ages of eighteen and
twenty five, normally. That’s the basis of which I teach these days. My role as a
teacher is to help a student to develop to their full potential, so I provide
information, knowledge and experience by which they can do that.²

¹ Steven Mead, Tuesday Recital “Steven Mead Master Class,” Dudley Recital Hall, Moores
School of Music, Houston, Texas, 30 October 2007.

² Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast 31 April 2008, “An Interview with Steven
Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,” transcript Tallahassee, FL: 3.
Certainly, Mead’s duties as a school music teacher differ from his work at the Royal Northern College of Music or even his summer courses just as maturity levels and the amount of individual contact time vary with each pupil. For example, at the college level, he does notices a slight difference in how he interacts with the undergraduates and the older students. Mead states:

Well, the older students normally come in with a very clear idea of why they want to study with me or why they want to study in Manchester or why they study in the UK because a lot of my older students tend to be what we describe as internationals. So, they come in because they want to experience some of the brass band culture, specific exposure to repertoire. Very few students come to me because they have a particular problem as they see it. The younger ones, the undergrad students, and I get UK undergrads as well as international ones, because they see their future as being with a euphonium, as I did when I was their age, but unlike my situation they have a four year course to take whereby they can study with me and get better. As I say, my role is to facilitate the learning of the student, and normal with the older students, I will be very open to what they feel they need from the course, particularly if they’re paying huge amounts of money. They’re not going to arrive in Manchester and say, “OK, you’ve come for X and Y, but in fact I’m going to give you Z because I think it’s better for you.” You’d have to be pretty strong willed to actually change that kind of thing.

Mead’s studio is comprised of many students of varying ages, musical backgrounds and nationalities. As a result Mead endeavors to treat each student as an individual and addresses any noticeable problems in their playing. He states:

Well, it depends where they are; I mean it depends where the gaps are. My brief as a teacher at the Northern is to try to get everybody playing the euphonium well enough to get through all their exams, and do a good recital, and get a quality degree the M.Mus, or the PGDip, whatever they’re working on.

During an interview with Dawn Holte, Mead was asked if he taught any general concepts to all of his students and Mead responded with the following answer:

Just like every human being, every euphonium player comes to me with different strengths and weaknesses. They also sometimes are in different stages of

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3 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,” 4.
4 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 1.
development in their lives. So, I don’t have a set checklist of things that I want to do. The ultimate goal is that I want the students to be very happy, content, confident human beings who play their instrument really well. So we do whatever we need to do to achieve that.  

Having often made this statement, Mead admits that what he expressed in that interview has become the closest thing he has to a formal teaching philosophy. He has come to this point in his thinking about teaching after careful consideration of the eventual outcome of many of his students which often includes some form of music teaching. Mead makes these comments:

Realistically, I have to bear in mind that when I’m training students at the higher level, at the age eighteen plus, although I’m working with them as if they are trainee euphonium soloists, I know that in the end, probably actually less than five percent will actually earn a living from doing just that. Most of them will drift into some kind of brass teaching. This is why putting some kind of background behind what they do is essential. Show them teaching materials that exist.

Often times when Mead would offer advice he would explain why things worked pedagogically. Mead is quite deliberate in taking time to give a theoretical basis to his students playing. In the following he explains that the background he provides students is meant to help them become better teachers and to instill the ability for them to become their own teacher by the time they leave the RNCM. Mead states:

Usually, I try to explain to them what they’re doing, how brass playing works, how they are using the air, what’s the purpose of the different muscle groups, etcetera, etcetera, because they really don’t know. You know the old thing about “I want to get a bigger sound, well you need a bigger mouthpiece.” You start with these kind of old traditions of playing - the same with articulation. If I said: (to a hypothetical student) “What are you doing with your tongue?” “I have no idea.” “How did you make that vibrato?” “I don’t know; I just do it.” So, that shows they’ve improved during their career, up until when I see them, simply by imitating people rather than actually being taught . . .

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6 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 3.

7 Ibid., 1.
Mead continues with the following thoughts:

In other words, if they don’t know what they do, it’s impossible to fix it when it goes wrong. And it’s impossible to put any basis behind their own teachings.\(^8\)

For many euphonium players in the UK, and other countries, their amateur culture lacks the formalized and structured musical education found in conservatories. By the time some students enroll at the RNCM, for example, Mead has to combat many years of engrained habits, often based on questionable information.

In order to impart any relevant information to their students, however, music teachers must be able to assess the status of their students. Mead details how he assesses his students and recounts common hypothetical playing problems:

Well I think that sometimes . . . sometimes you normally hear it and sometimes you see it, or sometimes you see something that could develop into a bigger problem. Normally the student is perfectly well aware. If the student comes in and plays a piece of tuba literature, for example, and then another piece for bass trombone, my inclination would be to suggest this person has a problem with high notes and they’re doing their best to disguise that problem from me. To some extent, a lesson is a bit like a confessional. A student will come in to me and sometimes they’ll confess all, and sometimes they’ll come in and musically not tell the whole truth. Of course, what I have to make clear to them is that, as a performer, you really can’t afford to have weaknesses, whether you cover most of them up or not, because in some performance situation those weaknesses are bound to become exposed. We’ll work on them, it could be soft playing, it could be people who over articulate, it could be people who accent notes without realizing they’re accenting notes, it could be people who play a melody and would frankly put me to slept because it’s absolutely got no interest, it could be people who play their entire dynamic range from mezzo piano to mezzo forte, and that’s quite common, it could be people who don’t play runs of sixteenth notes in an organized way, but have spent a lifetime laughing and panicking their way through things technical. So it could be somebody who deliberately plays softer or plays very short phrases simply because they haven’t developed breath control of their lung capacity.

So there are so many different things that you look for . . . you can make some immediate assumptions about somebody, i.e., they’re five-foot ten, two hundred lbs., they look in quite good health. You could talk to them realize very quickly that you’re talking to a total nut-case. So, some things are obvious, some thing are more obvious when you trigger a response i.e., when they begin to play. Some

\(^8\) Ibid.
people are fine as I say. Some students are fine on certain types of music. If somebody who says, ‘I want a lesson,’ ‘What do you want to study?’ ‘Well, I really enjoy playing slow music. Well, that means that normally they’ve got no technique. That’s a symptom so I suppose, it’s like . . . I almost see myself like a family doctor who’s into a doctor’s surgery who complains of a pain in the back or constant headaches, and you know, a constant headache could be anything from a stress headache to a migraine to a tumor in the brain. So, my job as a teacher is to try work out . . . and sometimes it’s by digging into their past in extreme examples. It’s by asking a few questions like, “Who’s taught you before now?” “Have you had any really bad performance experiences you want to share with me?” - just to unlock things. Sometimes you find a student who is supremely confident, but not very able, and that’s because throughout their whole life they’ve been told that they’re fantastic with no other frames of reference to compare themselves. So in a way, that’s quite admirable. The last thing you want to do is smash somebody’s confidence to actually get at the truth, the truth i.e., they’re not very good. So . . . there are so many things as a teacher and a performer, and I kind of fuse the two together when I’m listening. I put myself in their role as a performer. When I see or listen to somebody, I’m thinking, “What are they thinking about when they’re playing?” “How comfortable do they look?” “Is there visible tension on their face?” “Are they breathing properly?” “How’s their posture?” “How do they begin phrases and when they do play, do they have anything to say as a musician or is this a well trained monkey whose learnt the art of pushing valves up and down?” and anything in between.9

Assessing a student’s playing is not an exact science. Rather, teaching and teacher assessment comes from experience. Mead relates the following:

Well you end up working actually quite instinctively . . . after a certain amount of time teaching, you do rely on intuition based on your own experiences to actually sort out problems.10

Mead admits too that the inexact nature of assessing students means that teachers don’t always diagnose problems correctly, no matter how experienced they are.

Once the teacher has some knowledge of a student, there are many ways a music teacher conveys his or her ideas to a student, but arguably the most common is either demonstration or verbal instruction. One of Mead’s most appealing qualities as a teacher is his ability to model musical examples for the students. Stuckemeyer writes:

9 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,”4.

10 Ibid., 7.
I wanted to study with Steven Mead since the first time I ever heard him. I knew that the way he sounded was the way I wanted to sound. From that time on, this has been one of the goals of my life – to study with him.\textsuperscript{11}

The author also found it quite satisfying to hear Mead play in lessons. This is an important aspect of how Mead instructs his students. Mead remembers the benefits of good musical modeling when he was young, and admits that he teaches “a little bit” like Groom. His most important teaching tool, therefore, is his instrument. Mead mentions, “I’m in a lucky position that I’m a brass teacher who can play anything that the students have got in front of them.”\textsuperscript{12} Mead says, “There are very few lessons that I’ll teach where I don’t have my instrument pretty close because I think it’s pretty important.”\textsuperscript{13} Strenuous evening concerts are one of the few situations that would cause Mead to teach with his horn in its case.

Mead also communicates well with students verbally. He states it is an important facet of teaching and he states the following:

There are a lot of great teachers who don’t play anymore, so they have to rely on much more verbal instruction and sometimes even . . . psychological games with them. They get very pictorial, and that really helps a lot of students. They’re those who are very analytical, very technical in their explanation of how it happens.\textsuperscript{14}

He continues with following:

For me the best teaching involves a combination of motivation, psychological factors, such as how well do you want to play? What are you thinking about when you do that and structure and practice routine.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item[12] Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 2.
\item[14] Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 2.
\item[15] Ibid.
\end{thebibliography}
Over the years Mead has strived to be as concise as possible when giving verbal instruction, or in other words, he jokingly says he cuts all the crap, as in K-R-A-P-P, an imaginary German word for unwanted detail.\textsuperscript{16} His students, both foreign and domestic, appreciate Mead’s ability to go straight to the important points. Mead’s teaching was clear and to the point according to former student, Adam Frey. Those qualities were an important factor influencing Frey’s decision to study with Mead.\textsuperscript{17} Mead explains the reasons for precise verbal instruction in the following:

So it’s looking to simplify things because I know for a fact that I’ve tried to do that with my own playing, and I’ve tried to do it with groups, and I’ve tried to do it with students. So you listen to a student and you can be fairly certain that you know what their problems are right away you may not know what exactly how to fix it or how long it’ll take, but you can be quite diagnostic about “this is your problem.” I mean if it’s like, you know, a problem that might offend them, like you have some kind of personality disorder, or you just have no confidence, you were probably beaten when you were younger, you know, you don’t just spurt it out. There are things that register immediately, like: you have a really nice sound, you have a great technique, but you’ve never-ever immersed yourself in quality music because your musicality is completely primitive. So you can think that, and you say what needs to be said at that point, and that becomes a kind of work in progress by you and your student.\textsuperscript{18}

Much of Mead’s verbal instruction occurs during the feedback portion of a lesson. Many of the students who responded to the written questionnaire report that the nature of their verbal interaction consisted of “very open” discussions.\textsuperscript{19} Tindall would often have conversations about his playing. He writes:

I would and do ask him where the holes are . . . in my playing. He usually advises certain things to do, gives an update of where he sees [my progress].\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 4.

\textsuperscript{17} Adam Frey, student questionnaire response, 19 August 2007.

\textsuperscript{18} Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL.,”4.

\textsuperscript{19} Anonymous student, student questionnaire response, 14 March 2007

\textsuperscript{20} Aaron Tindall, student questionnaire response, 22 October 2007.
Mead is honest with what he tells students, and while generally supportive, avoids false-positive reinforcement. Schumaker recounts some comments she receive in a lesson in this statement:

Well, he stomped his foot in annoyance and would ask me questions like, “do you have rhythm?” or he would get and jump around the room. Most of the time he would say, “Try it again,” or “good, continue.”²¹

The author also remembers receiving some poignant comments during lessons. His comments were never made to crush a student’s confidence, however. Students knew exactly what needed extra practice and most were certain to do the very best not to disappoint him at the next lesson. Frey perhaps expresses Mead’s methods best. Mead, in part, uses his verbal feedback as a motivating tool. Frey writes:

Steve gives compliments sparingly and this gets the student to strive for this praise and raise their standards. With a business that is so difficult, I think having the utmost standards is paramount to success.²²

Mead’s expectations for his students are high which is most likely the reason why compliments are sparse, but well deserved when awarded.

Music school graduates face a highly-competitive market. Students who concentrate or major in euphonium find themselves in an even more precarious position because full-time professional positions are very limited, and with the exception of military bands, the competition for the few careers playing the euphonium is worldwide. Demands on students in Mead’s studio, therefore are high. Mead always requires and expects one hundred percent effort all of the time from his regular students.²³ The student questionnaire responses reflect his high standards. Frey, however, recalls that Mead was realistic and “expected a different amount of work for each student based on

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²² Adam Frey, student questionnaire response, 19 August 2007.
their goals.”24 Mead explains how knowing the student determines what to expect from each student:

. . . when you set anybody, when you set a student who you have a reasonable knowledge about, when you set them something to do, you have expectations of what you would like to hear week by week, let’s say the average length of an assignment of a particular piece may be three or four weeks before you can say, “OK play that in performance class, or put that away for now and concentrate on another piece.” Also what you ask them to play is important because you have to be realistic in your demand. So, if I have an undergraduate who comes in to lessons and plays well for a few weeks, and I say; “Right, first movement of the Linkola Concerto by next week, please,” he would look at me as to say, “you’re joking!” And of course, I would be. But I know that another teacher, maybe not to that extreme, who won’t challenge students at all, so they’ll just aimlessly push their way through Rochut Book One and then a retched, old Herbert L. Clarke solo and then a solo melody for a whole year without saying, OK, you’re going to move up a year, this is more demanding, I’m just going to give you two weeks to get this right. But every student works at slightly different speed; everyone’s mentally different.25

For his students considering a performance career, Mead expects they learn as much literature as quickly as possible whether the next lesson was a week, or a few days later as his busy touring brings some irregularity to his teaching schedule. Schumaker makes this comment:

I would go through about a movement of a significant piece, like the Cosma Concerto, a week, or two to three easier movements, like the level of the Horovitz Concerto, when I was studying literature.26

Mead feels he can help the students best when they first have worked out as much of the details they can on their solos and assignments. Only then can he formulate a clear picture of where the student’s musical or technical faults are. Stuckemeyer offers insight to what Mead expects in lessons with the following comment: “He demands that you strive for perfection, not necessarily be perfect, but for you to recognize that perfection is


possible and to yearn for it.”27 Stuckemeyer continues with thoughts on how he viewed his lessons with Mead: “. . . you should always perform – never practice. Use your lesson time as a mini-performance.”28 Several student respondents had similar memories about lesson expectations. They write:

The most important thing is to be warmed-up before Steve’s lessons, and as long as I’ve been well prepared and concentrate during the lesson, there has never been a problem.29

He expects and demands the best of your abilities. You must be prepared well enough to perform your repertoire in lessons.30

If you ever sight read in lessons, you were dead.31

Mead’s clear and frank communication makes his expectations clear to students and his playing and high standards motivate them to excel.

Unlike the teacher who has a clear role, Mead does not see the student having a corresponding position. Mead devotes vast amounts of time and energy into his students, and for the most part, his reputation has ensured that only the most serious students are in his studio. While he very rarely has to consider the actions of irresponsible students, he has often reflected on what makes a successful student, and what qualities lead students to careers after graduation, primarily based on his own experiences. Mead shares his thoughts in the following:

They have to be in a certain frame of mind because these are critical ages between eighteen and twenty five. You have to be hungry to learn, ideally ambitious, you have to be consistent, you have to show respect to people, and you have to condition yourself to think that you are actually employable, either as a teacher, you know, or whatever sphere of music you end up. If somebody is going to pay you money every week, you got to be reliable, able to do the job and socially

28 Ibid.
31 Amy Schumaker, student questionnaire response, 12 July 2008.
fairly acceptable to others around you. So the role of the student if we go with that word, the role of the student has to be open to new ideas, they have to be willing to accept challenges, take criticism, be self-motivated, self disciplined, and create a sense of direction in their own being which will end-up hopefully for them, a career. Many students just see it as an opportunity to escape the real world for a while; put it off and eat, drink and be merry. And when reality dawns, hopefully they’ll have the ability to deliver the goods, but you see the music business is such that you have to be growing to develop a bit more all the time, developing a reputation, not only playing, but for honesty, integrity, reliability, all that kind of stuff, your ability to be organized. So some students do that quite naturally and some find it really hard. This is why some people get good jobs and some don’t. It’s called survival of the fittest, you know. If you look . . . if you said to an animal in the jungle, “What’s your role in life?” it would be not to get eaten!  

Mead’s sense of musical Darwinism stems from his early days as a musician trying to advance himself in competitions, bands and school. As a student Mead was not necessarily career minded, but naturally ambitious. He remembers a few instances from his childhood:

I was aware there were euphonium players my age that were better than me and it hurt like hell . . . and I wanted to find a way to be better than them. It was the same thing when I used to sing. I used to stand on stage and sing my song and some [other child] the same age as me would stand-up and sing it better and get more marks and win a trophy and I’d come second.  

It was these experiences that motivated Mead to “find a way around this” bad feeling of coming in second place. He developed a survival instinct or what he calls an “improvement instinct.” Mead feels this competitive nature is important for students to cultivate because otherwise they may find themselves pushed aside while others will win the jobs that they want. At the RNCM, Mead does not have to instill the competitive instinct in his studio, which might seem contrary to his competitive position, but Mead explains in the following:

I don’t because around Manchester, they’re all involved with brass bands. I don’t actually have to engender much competitive spirit that isn’t really around anyway.

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32 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,” 8.
33 Ibid., 8-9.
They know that if they do their orchestral audition exams and score higher . . . if they score higher than other students they will get better positions in band concerts and such forth. So I encourage them to be competitive, but not at the expense of good human qualities because I think in the long term, it’s more important for them to be good human beings that can play music rather than musicians who are crap human beings because there’s enough of those around unfortunately.  

While it is important for aspiring musicians to press forward in their careers, Mead often makes it known that the music business is still a people business and an out of control competitive desire to one’s personality will serve him or her poorly.

There is one aspect of Mead’s job as a teacher he does not relish. Very rarely Mead has the unpleasant task of telling students to seek a change of career goals. It is sometimes quickly apparent that some students will drift aimlessly waiting for good things to happen and would be better served if they chose music as an avocation instead of a career. Mead states:

Very occasionally, yes, very occasionally and it’s not an easy thing to do because often, they’ve, if you like, put all their eggs in one basket as we say some two or three years before. They’ve dropped certain subjects, they’ve concentrated on one or two in particular so it’s very hard, but usually when I do that it’s for their own good, simply because on their current track they stand absolutely no chance of making it in their profession and sometimes, they’ll pretend that they want to be a performer and that they hate teaching or hate the idea of teaching, and sometimes on further discussion you realize they don’t have a chance to be a performer, but they could, if they thought again, become a teacher so sometimes it’s career adjustment.

Luckily, few students are admitted to the Royal Northern who prove unable to perform well enough to matriculate through exams within their first year of enrollment. In such a case Mead would actually turn his anger towards the school for admitting them in the first place. In Mead’s experience, it is uncommon for students who lack motivation and musical talent to become extraordinary players. On the other hand, there are those who

34 Ibid., 9.
35 Ibid., 3-4.
36 Ibid,
progress perhaps five percent every six months. Mead calls these students “journeymen players” and finds that because these type of people love to keep striving; they continue to improve after graduation. Then, of course, are the few students who Mead says have what he calls “that little x-factor.” It is the combination of desire, motivation and even that natural feeling for natural playing. These students have the greatest potential of making a living playing their instrument.

MUSICAL TOPICS

Arthur Lehman, euphonium soloist of the United States “President’s Own” Marine Band once said of his famous teacher, Harold Brasch, “he taught me all I know about the euphonium, but not all that he knows!” Lehman’s comment was meant as a compliment and sign of respect, but certainly there are teachers who withhold their best information to keep a competitive edge over their students. Mead, on the other hand, does not hide any advice from students. “I always say to students, ‘I have no secrets, I’ll tell you everything,’” reports Mead. He admits, though, that it is easier and more likely to tell your better students all of your best things.

Like the majority of musicians, the content and style of Mead’s teaching draws heavily from his past experiences like his years in the Salvation Army and championship-level brass bands as well as former teachers. Additionally, his exposure to new ideas on his travels, and his natural maturation as an artist-teacher has played influential roles shaping his thoughts on teaching euphonium. Some aspects of his teaching have changed. For instance as of 2008, Mead no longer emphasizes buzzing without a mouthpiece as part of his teaching. The evolution of Mead’s thoughts on brass pedagogy may raise questions of consistency or conviction, but he dispels those suggestions with the following statement:

Yeah I think, I think . . . they say as a musician, if you’re not going forwards you’re going backwards. I seem to have that same philosophy with teaching as well. If my teaching concepts are not evolving, they’re becoming stale because

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37 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 2.
39 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 2.
our teaching concepts are based on experience, and so if I’m saying none of my musical experiences now have any part in teaching I’m just . . . I might as well be teaching from a book that somebody else has written, or something I wrote twenty years ago, and what’s my opinion? I don’t have an opinion; I just work from a book. So I think we have to be flexible and for me it’s a mixture of what works for other people when I ask them to try things and relating on how those same concepts work for myself. So I tend to base my teaching concepts on things I know work for me. When I say work for me, I see myself as a fairly typical player in the sense that I have to work on all the disciplines pretty much. Apart from maybe a vocalization thing, I think because of my background I’m lucky that I can hear something and copy it, imitate it vocally very easily, a lot of people struggle with it. But in terms of three or four quite important areas, buzzing for example, the way that we breathe, I would over time, probably over the last five-six-seven-eight years; I’ve tried to simplify things a lot. I find that where you can, if you can simplify areas of technique the result is always better. A complicated approach, it’s like a car that has a thousand computers on board, there is so much more to go wrong . . .

His vocal training as a young musician, however, has been a consistent influence to his playing and clearly has had the most penetrating effect on Mead’s pedagogy. Mead sees value in adapting vocal models for the physical and conceptual approaches to euphonium playing. Of Mead’s teaching methods, he states the following about relating singing to euphonium playing:

. . . vocalization is the most powerful one because obviously that involves air, it involves openness, it involves pitch, and it involves a free expulsion of sound, all of which are critical to playing well . . .

Furthermore the benefits of singing as a model for euphonium playing lead the student to work on concepts away from the instrument. Mead conveys his thoughts in the statement below:

I know a lot of good brass players who genuinely cannot sing terribly well. So they make up for it with a more finely-tuned inner sense of pitch rather than something that is defined by singing, but I like the idea of working away from the instrument because with the instrument there, it is quite hard to escape very

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\[\text{40} \text{ Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,” 12.}\]

\[\text{41} \text{ Ibid., 9.}\]
engrained habits, some of which go back to early childhood of fear and self-fulfillment; “I can’t play this high note; listen.”

When applying his teaching methods, Mead carefully considers how he will interact with students based on their needs and on their learning style. Nevertheless, taking time to view a playing problem from different perspectives, like working away from the instrument, increases practice efficiency and may decrease the time it takes to master various tasks. Mead comments:

Singing, whistling, all those concepts are things that I would use various different ways in various different situations depending on need. It’s not something I would do with every student because that’s my method so you’re going to do it as well. It may just be used with some students. It might be an important method, may be as much as twenty-five percent of someone’s basic approach to playing. It’s usually the better students it could be just a little approach that would just fix that remaining two or three percent of a particular concerto or a particular work that was causing them problems. And the easiest thing to say is; “go away and practice it more.” “But I’ve practiced it for five hours a day.” “Well that’s obviously not enough!” You know, I don’t think we can always revert back to if only you worked a little bit harder you’d play better. We could always say that.

Mead has developed other teaching methods as well that have proven very effective for many students. One method that some students find helpful is working away from the real instrument and singing or blowing through an “air euphonium.” Mead also incorporates visual cues when teaching. For example, visualizing the act of throwing a dart or swinging a golf club combats delays in tone production after a breath aiding in the ease of playing. Figure 34 shows Mead using a visual cue with a student from Italy. Often Mead instructs students to mime the act of throwing a dart, for instance, to reinforce the experience.

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42 Ibid., 9-10.
43 Ibid., 10.
Perhaps most unique of Mead’s observations is the connection of tension in the eyes and the throat which, according to Mead, accounts for a large number of students unexplained problems with ease of playing, whether it is the initiation of the first note of a phrase or a difficult technical passage. Tindall writes:

A . . . habit that Steve immediately got me doing was keeping my eyes open while playing. Especially when starting a phrase, or note. This cleared up a lot of . . . missed, split or chipped note entrances. He always said that there was something muscular/physical connected to the throat being more open when the eyes are open, versus the eyes being closed and the throat closing or tensing up.⁴⁶

Mead first discovered the correlation between the tension of the eyes and throat around 1997 or 1998 when a student studying at the RNCM was experiencing significant difficulty starting his etudes and solos. Once the student struggled past the first notes, the playing was fine, but Mead noticed when notes were initiated, there was considerable squinting in the eyes in an almost defensive manner. After watching in the mirror, the

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⁴⁶ Aaron Tindall, student questionnaire response 22 October 2007.
student was able to relax the face and keep the eyes open. The physical reaction stopped, and tone production became easier.47

**Tone Production**

Mead states the sound of the euphonium is the most vocal-like of all the brass instruments and its unique timbre is one of the most important elements of the instrument’s identity. In fact, its name is a derivative of the Greek word, euphonos, meaning beautiful sounding. Tone quality is also important to the identity of the performing artist. Mead writes

> When you answer the telephone one of the first thing the other persons says is, “Hi, it’s me,” the voice will be instantly recognizable. When you play one note on your instrument, it’s “you.” Your musical “DNA” is recognizable by you, fellow band members, and people who hear you practice.48

While some players produce a beautiful sound quite naturally, many euphonium students find they must consciously work to develop a desirable tone. To produce a characteristic sound on a brass instrument requires a clear concept of sound, but also mastery of several skills such as, posture, specialized breathing techniques, oral cavity and embouchure formation, and diligent practice of tone studies.

**Posture and Hand Position**

Mead has long extracted postural concepts from his experience training as a singer. He uses imagery to promote correct, straight body posture, stating students should imagine the upper body upright as if supported like a puppet on string.49 The benefits of good posture are similar for singing and brass playing. In fact, Mead postulates that nearly ninety percent of brass players’ problems of poor air use stem, in part, from

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47 Steven Mead, Tuesday Recital “Steven Mead Master Class,” Dudley Recital Hall, Moores School of Music, Houston, Texas, 30 October 2007.


negligent posture which is immediately fixable.\textsuperscript{50} To demonstrate how poor posture limits the flow of air to the breathing apparatus, Mead has his students try the following:

Stand with your back against a wall with your feet about thirty centimeters away, slouch a little and take a big breath. You can sense the air intake is “in the chest,” so if you were to exhale strongly your lower muscles simply won’t need to function. In playing terms, you will be working the facial muscles too much as the “support” muscles . . . are not being used. Repeat this a few times. Then stand completely straight with the back of your feet touching the wall, as well as the backside, shoulders and head. Now exhale and feel the air automatically entering lower, filling up like one fills a glass with liquid . . . . As you exhale strongly the full use of the muscles can be felt and you have more air.\textsuperscript{51}

To reinforce the importance of unhindered space for the lungs, Mead recommends a full body stretch to emphasize posture. He describes the exercises as follows:

Stand up straight, put your arms up, (\textit{a la} cop movie!), above your head, take a deep breath then exhale. Repeat three times, each time with your arms stretching a little more than before. Then return to a normal position and take a powerful breath and feel the difference that internal stretching has made.\textsuperscript{52}

Mead mentions he prefers playing his euphonium while standing because the body is freer, straighter and breathing is more efficient.\textsuperscript{53} The euphoniumist, however, will inevitably have to perform in a seated position as well. While Mead only knows of perhaps three professional euphoniumists who perform solos sitting-down, everyone who plays in any sort of ensemble plays sitting in a chair. Therefore, Mead feels it important to give equal emphasis to practicing standing and sitting, but warns that while in the seated position that the back should always be kept straight.\textsuperscript{54} Although counterintuitive, maintaining good posture while seated can become more complicated. Once a player


\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.


succumbs to the temptation of placing the instrument on the lap, the angle of the
mouthpiece, the height of the lead pipe and the overall position of the instrument all
change. As a result, many players conform to the new position of the euphonium than
emulate their standing posture. Mead makes the following comments about potential
problems with poor sitting posture:

The euphonium is often now twisted clockwise, as much as forty degrees to the
sitting position, and now the instrument is lower and the mouthpipe almost
certainly is angled down, causing more straining on the lips or the chin lowers to
compensate, restricting the flow of air, as exercises in “chin-lowering!”

The playing position of the upper body, from the small of the back to the top of the head,
is vital, and whether sitting or standing, Mead states this area has to be maximized in a
quasi-military style straightness to reach the full potential of the body’s lung capacity.

Former student Aaron Tindall relates posture advice from his lessons:

Steve always made sure that we stood with correct posture to ensure that our
maximum breathing capacity was going to happen so that nothing was hindered,
i.e., lungs, expansion, etcetera. He [emphasized] holding the horn in the same
position while standing or sitting. Keeping the head looking straight ahead and
not down also ensured the posture became a natural “automatic.”

To help keep the upper body straight when seated, Mead suggests the following:

A small pillow or cushion on the lap can fix the correct height that the mouthpiece
touches the face, and so long as the back is straight, this problem is sorted. As
soon as we stand the arms and body hold the euphonium is a way that feels
“normal,” or else we'd hold it in a different way and here is the root of the
problem.

Whether sitting or standing, posture is a common problem and an important issue.

57 Aaron Tindall, student questionnaire response, 22 October 2007.
Euphoniums, especially the top-action models, can be heavy and to be uncomfortable to hold, which makes standing straight or holding the instrument off the lap cumbersome, but Mead reminds students of the following:

. . . comfort/physical ease does not always mean you are in the best position to allow the air free passage through the oral cavity. And once you change the angle to which the mouthpiece addresses the lips, you are likely to get variable response from them too, with one lip working harder than the other, limiting response, range, flexibility and sound quality.\(^{59}\)

Posture can easily correct many seemingly unrelated problems, but requires diligence until it becomes habit.

Along with posture, proper position of the hands and the way the instrument is held greatly reduce tension in the body and lessen potential damage to the joints in the arms, neck and other points such as the shoulders. Mead explains potential problems with poor instrument position:

If I tilt the instrument clockwise . . . the instrument becomes heavy and I feel straining at the back of the neck and left shoulder. There are some gadgets you can buy (straps) to support the euphonium while standing, and there is a company in Germany who specialise in them I believe, aimed to the brass bands, (German-style baritones usually), who march a lot through the streets on parades. These work OK.\(^{60}\)

While there is room for personal preference, Mead suggests holding the euphonium in a more vertical fashion than most euphonium players. In addition he tilts the front of the instrument slightly to the left or counterclockwise. He states:

I prefer to hold the instrument as close to vertical as I can when I stand, with it leaning against the middle and left side of my body, with the left arm supporting about ninety percent of the weight, the rest with the right hand. It feels so normal to me, and I’m holding the damn thing for hours every day, I almost cannot feel the weight of the instrument at all.\(^{61}\)

\(^{59}\) Ibid.


\(^{61}\) Ibid.
Allowing for most of the weight to rest in the left lets the right hand manipulate the main three valves with ease. In addition, the tilt of the instrument helps keep the wrists straighter with the right hand position being very similar to the cornet right hand position.62 Please see figures 35, 36, and 37. Notice the vertical angle of the euphonium and its tilt to the left.

Figures 35, 36 and 37: Left, Front and Right Angle Views of Correct Euphonium Position

Breathing and Air Flow

The *Harvard dictionary of Music* defines a wind instrument as “a class of instruments having an enclosed mass of air, especially those sounded by means of the breath.”63 Included in this class of instruments is the brass wind family. Because the use of air causes the lips to vibrate and produce sound, the ability to control the timing, volume, and velocity of the air flow through the embouchure is vital to a brass instrumentalist. Hence, when applying the breath to a brass instrument, the consensus is that “if you don’t blow, it won’t go.”64 There are many views on what proper use of the air is, however.

62 Steven Mead, Tuesday Recital “Steven Mead Master Class,” Dudley Recital Hall, Moores School of Music, Houston, Texas, 30 October 2007.


According to Mead, effective air flow is a powerful column of air unhindered by tension in the body which is supported by the diaphragm and abdominal muscles all the time. To put into more relatable terms, Mead uses a metaphor which has been passed down to at least three generations of euphoniumists, from Bert Sullivan, to Trevor Groom and then Mead. In an interview with his old teacher, Groom recounts the old saying in the following statement:

“It's like riding a bike” Bert would say. "When it goes along on the flat you have to pedal, when you go up you have to pedal harder. You may think that when you come down a hill you can take your feet off the pedals, well that doesn't work on a euphonium; you have to pedal all the time.”

The metaphor shows the importance of actively blowing a constant stream of air while playing the euphonium as the reduction of the air will cause tone production to suffer or possibly stop. To gain better control of the exhalation, Mead conceptualizes the air column as an integral part of the instrument saying that the air is “supported on its journey through the instrument, like an extension of ourselves.” This gives the breath a spiritual component, but also lends a tangible concept to something that is, although unseen, as real and important as any part of the musician’s body. Additionally, it is quite easy to equate the breathing apparatus with the imagery of a string player. Mead states:

Using a lot of “high quality” air also necessitates support from the moving abdominal muscles, and I like to imagine this as the moving of a cello bow, and its varying speeds of movement change the sound accordingly.

Because the mechanisms of breathing are internal, it is easier to associate the abdominal muscles to a cellist’s bow arm, air to the bow, and lips to the strings.

Sustaining this kind of quality air requires deep breathing. Mead explains from before the beginning of the inhalation to the end of the respiration the body should feel

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65 Steven Mead, “Two British Euphonium Legends,” 50.


67 Ibid.
powerful and relaxed. Furthermore, a good breath starts from breathing low, filling the lungs from their base causing the body to expand. Since the amount and quality of air being expelled is dependant on how much air is in the lungs, many specialized exercises have been developed to promote proper breathing to play brass instruments effectively. Ninety percent of Mead’s current and former students’ questionnaire responses cite air flow and breathing as one of the top three most important pedagogical concepts covered in lessons. One student mentions in their questionnaire response that Mead always emphasized the importance of constant airflow as being the driving force behind brass playing. This sentiment was echoed often in the responses gathered for this study. There are many exercises to work the particular aspects of breathing, but Mead relies on just a handful of regular exercises that develop volume, control, and relaxation which include timed exercises and various resistance exercises.

Timed breathing exercises are a staple in Mead’s pedagogical repertoire because they develop a student’s sense of control and evenness of the breath much like a string player practices to increase smoothness and evenness of the full bow. Mead describes his approach to this breathing exercise in the following statement:

In all the classes and workshops I give, the basics always come first for, after the mastery of these all is possible. Try slow inhalations like a yawn with the back of the throat open, mentally counting four seconds and then blow out for four seconds, now with the lips closer together producing a “whooshing” sound. Repeat then with different combinations of 2:4, 2:6, 2:8, 4:2, 4:4, 4:6, and 4:8. Mead likes to use a wide range of timed ratios for inhaling and exhaling. This conditions the body to be efficient especially in the extreme ranges of the breath because he is well aware that music is not always metered in four counts. He also suggests ratios of 4:10,

68 Ibid.


70 Alexander Seedhouse, student questionnaire response, 2 September 2007.

6:4, 8:4 and 10:4. Students are encouraged to practice this exercise daily to gain its maximum benefit.

Perhaps more than the other breathing exercises, Mead favors breathing drills with an element of resistance to the inhalation and exhalation. To achieve external resistance to the inhalation and exhalation exercises, Mead uses a variable resistance breathing device called the Ultrabreathe. Please see figures 38 and 39.

![Figure 38 and 39: The Ultrabreathe and Mead using it in a Master Class](image)

Originally designed to help those with respiratory disorders like asthma, this device is popular now with athletes. The Ultrabreathe device allows the user to set the desired resistance of the inspiration and exhalation portions of the breath independently allowing for a number of breathing exercise work-outs. This is the only specialized breathing device Mead currently uses, although he owns several others which “collect dust” in his home studio. Mead states the following:

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I use it early morning for about three minutes, then a minute or so before I play, and sometimes in the interval in the middle of a concert. It keeps my air supply in the highest condition . . . it actually reduces stress levels and makes you feel better. Sometimes while driving too, although having the ultrabreathe in the mouth can cause a few glances when you have to stop the car . . . oh well!  

Mead explains that because the Ultrabreathe has varying levels of resistance, students can start their exercises gently and gradually increase the resistance and difficulty level. In the following, Mead relays a simple breathing routine he does with the device:

I try to inhale my full lung capacity in about three seconds then exhale, depending on the exhalation setting, in about two seconds. If the exhalation setting is set at maximum resistance you can try to exhale for up to six or eight seconds.  

Mead recommends the process be repeated about twenty times during a breathing exercise session.  

If Mead’s approach to teaching is anything, it is practical, and on his travels he quickly realized that while he could introduce the Ultrabreathe to master class students, it was unlikely anyone enrolled in the course would have one. No matter where he traveled, however, if the students had an instrument, chances were they had access to a mouthpiece. As a result Mead uses resistance breathing exercises using the mouthpiece shank. Called resistance mouthpiece inhalation, the drill employs the mouthpiece as a breathing tube. To add resistance, the user places his or her finger over a portion of the diameter of the impromptu breathing pipe. Mead explains the details of this exercise in the following directions:

- Take your mouthpiece and, ensuring the shank has been cleaned, turn it around, then put your lips around the shank ensuring the lips overlap at least two centimeters (about three quarters of an inch) from the end of the mouthpiece.

- Hold the mouthpiece with one hand and now breathe in and out slowly. Stay as relaxed and open as possible and check using the mirror there is no facial tension.

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75 Ibid.

76 Ibid.
• Now take the forefinger of the spare hand and jam it into the back bore of the mouthpiece, blocking just about all the space. Breathe in again, gently at first, sensing how the body is now trying to take in the air despite the massive resistance you’ve created. Relax more and check for facial tension.

• Now increase the velocity of the intake, trying to fill you lungs completely in about four seconds, and then exhale too for the same duration.

• You are now creating a wonderfully powerful tone chamber inside your mouth and in the throat area.

• Continue this for about a minute (stopping earlier if you become dizzy . . .)

• Re-unite mouthpiece with instrument and carry on playing. The benefits of this exercise are immediate and can be long-lasting.\textsuperscript{77}

The use of the mouthpiece as a breathing tool shows its practicality to performing musicians who may need the exercise, but do not have access to their breathing tools backstage or on tour.

In a student questionnaire response, a student mentioned another breathing exercise used during a lesson to address a particular issue of using their maximum potential lung capacity. The exercise is described as follows:

Breathing deeply then sipping in air three times to really fill the lungs . . . then exhaling, squeezing the air out and then making a snake hiss sound to get every bit out!\textsuperscript{78}

The student feels that using this exercise in addition to timed breathing exercises helps the development their breathing “to an efficient level” and comments that their breath control practice occurs “throughout the day, not just whilst practicing.”\textsuperscript{79}


\textsuperscript{78} Alexander Seedhouse, personal E-mail, 2 September 2007.

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
Oral Cavity

To produce a characteristic sound on the euphonium, air flow is important, but the shape of the oral cavity is the second essential physical element to good tone because it is a critical resonator for tone production. Mead explains:

Often our performance can be improved by utilizing more space inside the mouth and at the back of the throat. The benefits of deep breathing are often negated by a restriction in the throat area and at the back of the oral cavity. Tension makes this worse as does a lack of “vocal awareness.” The air simply cannot pass freely through the lips . . .

Poor oral cavity shape in turn leads to a restriction in tone quality, dynamic range and pitch range, as well as other areas of playing affected by encumbered air flow and a closed space in the mouth.

A round shape emphasizes the mellow tone of the euphonium. Mead states, the air from the lungs “passes around this space to achieve a rich tone quality.” To make the most of this characteristic, Mead strives to extend and heighten the oral cavity like an egg shape with plenty vertical space.

Again Mead unreservedly passes along wisdom to his students gained from Trevor Groom, who asked Mead to place a table tennis ball in his mouth to reinforce the proper oral shape. In an interview Mead recounts Groom’s memories of learning the same technique from his teacher, Bert Sullivan, in the following:

Bert once told Trevor to take a table tennis ball from the cupboard, to take it upstairs and wash it and then put it in his mouth. After a few minutes, remove it,

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81 Steven Mead, “Mouthpiece Whistling and Resistance Mouthpiece Inhalation: Two Unconventional Things to do with Your Mouthpiece that Enable You to Play with More Open, Freer Sound,” 68.

82 Ibid.


and then re-insert it. This went on a few more times. Every time picked his
instrument up he was asked to imagine the sensation of the ball and the space it
generated.\textsuperscript{85}

Mead went through the very same process when studying with Groom, but while he
mentions this technique to students, he does not require it of his students citing the
probable unsanitary nature of table tennis balls. Instead, he mentions that brass players
can grasp the concept of proper oral cavity shape by singing in a variety of ways.\textsuperscript{86}

**Embouchure**

Many brass players focus much of their time thinking how to perfect their embouchure. It
is important because the placement of the lips and use of the facial muscles provide a
stable platform for efficient lip vibration, or the buzzing of the lips, which in turn
produces sound. Mead, however, avoids the mire of minute details of embouchure
formation, and likewise, he does not force students to conform to some imagined ideal
embouchure shape. When deciding whether to make an embouchure suggestion, Mead
states the following:

> It really depends on what age you pick-up a student because I’m very loath to
> make big changes once a student’s got to the age of seventeen or eighteen. I
> know some teachers find it almost inviting to do it because then the student
> becomes hypnotically under their control because without them they won’t
> be able to play a note. I’ve only changed, I think, only two embouchures over
> working with about one hundred fifty to two hundred students . . . and that was
> an obvious thing I had to do.\textsuperscript{87}

Additionally, Mead very astutely observes the differences in each student physique.
While a round, almond-shaped position of the lips would be most advantageous, not
every person is equipped with the same facial structure, making a uniform approach to

\textsuperscript{85} Steven Mead, “Two British Euphonium Legends,” 50.


\textsuperscript{87} Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast, 16 April 2007 “An Interview with Steven
Mead: Technique,” transcript, Tallahassee, FL: 10-1.
embouchure formation nearly impossible. Mead explains his thoughts in the following statements:

... if all our mouth shapes and teeth formations were the same, I think we could come up with something that looked like an embouchure shape that you would try to get every student to copy precisely. You know it’s like saying how round would you like the wheel? Well perfectly round would be great, thanks. I can go faster, but because we have different [structures] ... peoples’ width from left to right, the thickness of the lips, the lips in relation to the teeth, and the teeth formation itself ... 88

Furthermore, Mead conceives the embouchure as one part of an integrated unit with the rest of the breathing apparatus and the application of the air flow. On more than one occasion he reminds students that the embouchure does not make sound on its own. 89 Instead, Mead takes a more vocal approach of which the formation of the lips and supporting facial muscles not only provide an effective area for the lips to vibrate, but also promote the proper shape of the oral cavity and aperture. In addition, the openness of the embouchure “is critical to the free flow of the air.” 90 Mead makes these comments on embouchure position:

... there are general principles of using high internal space, try to get the corners of the mouth down, try to use the muscles at the top side of the mouth as if they are working like a mustache, so in other words, they are down at the sides. I think that would be a general principle that gives a more vocal approach to playing rather one that’s based on pressure or smiling or squeezing or vertical pressure of the lips coming together. 91

Because each player is different, precise uniformity is unlikely, but the embouchure should promote vocal characteristics. Mead finds that if the “embouchure is stretched too wide, and if the corners of the mouth go up. It’s impossible to get a large internal

88 Ibid., 10.
89 Ibid., 11.
91 Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast “An Interview with Steven Mead: Technique,” 11.
spherical shape inside the mouth . . .”\textsuperscript{92} To help students discover their own path to correct embouchure formation, Mead developed an exercise using the mouthpiece. It involves blowing into the mouthpiece, but perhaps not in the usual way. Mead discusses his theory in the following:

Vocal concepts have always been important to me and this unites a vocal approach with whistling; not whistling with the lips, but the natural pitched sounds that emanate from the mouthpiece alone when warm “round” air is passed through it. Benefits of this are essentially: 1) A more rounded aperture 2) An awareness of the “bicycle wheel” of control muscles we have round our lips and 3) Control of the moving air from the base of the lungs.\textsuperscript{93}

Mead explains the exercise as follows:

- Hold the mouthpiece as if you are going to buzz on it. Without vibrating the lips pass a large amount of air through so you're empty your lungs in say two seconds for trombone, euphonium or tuba, maybe five seconds for trumpet and four for horn (a real \textit{fortissimo} burst of pure, warm air). Ensure the sensation in the middle of your aperture is the same as when you had the shank of the mouthpiece in your mouth [for mouthpiece resistance inhalation].

- Now take a good breath, but allow the air to pass slower, say \textit{mezzo forte} and double the exhalation time. As you do this, imagine the pure sound of your lips whistling (don't worry if you are a non-whistler) or a pure hummed tone. You might, as you near the end of this breath, hear the first signs of the elusive mouthpiece whistle.

- Now take a similar large breath but now try to make the exhaled air very warm and very slow. If you hear anything resembling a hiss there is either a snake in your practice room, or you are forcing or squeezing the air through an aperture that is too “flat.”

- Persist with this very soft air and the pure whistle will come (it's possible on a trumpet mouthpiece, but very high pitched; quite easy of a horn mouthpiece and very easy, once you do it right, on anything bigger.

- Use a keyboard or tuning machine to ascertain its pitch, and then try to increase your whistle range to three notes, then up to eight. Don't press too hard on the

\textsuperscript{92} Steven Mead, “Mouthpiece Whistling and Resistance Mouthpiece Inhalation: Two Unconventional Things to do with Your Mouthpiece that Enable You to Play with More Open, Freer Sound,” 68.

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., 69.
mouthpiece and check in the mirror that your eyes are open . . . Try to sustain
your notes for ten seconds or more. Once you get good, expand your mouthpiece
whistling range to include Clarke No.2 finger drills.  

When air passes the lips and vibration is initiated, it is important to avoid any air leaks. Keeping the aperture of the lips open in a precise and focused way helps reduce the possibility of excess air leaking around the edge of the mouthpiece. While Mead spends much thought to relating the embouchure to the vocal techniques of keeping an open, round internal space and an aperture that allows the free flow of air, mouthpiece buzzing receives less emphasis. Mead still recognizes the benefits of mouthpiece buzzing, however, and recommends mouthpiece buzzing in the low range for about five minutes a day along with two minutes of long tone studies on the mouthpiece. He does stress that evenness of lip vibration is “essential for maintaining consistent response.”

Tone Studies

Tone studies are the basis of cultivating a desirable and characteristic sound on the euphonium. There are many factors to producing a good sound on a brass instrument, but perhaps the most important is player’s mental concept of sound. It is the brain that tells the body parts what and in what proportion to do any given task. Therefore, listening to other musicians, especially vocal models, is important to broaden the euphonium player’s mental repertoire of great sounds. Mead states:

If you have something tonally to aim at before you play the art of imitating that sound can be quite easy. When I was growing up in Bournemouth that was how I learned, by training the voice and by listening and trying to imitate great euphonium artists on recordings.

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94 Ibid., 68.
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid.
Mead’s early development as a euphonium player included many hours of exercises to improve sound quality. When assigning students tone studies, he instructs them that it is essential that they listen to themselves after having first imagined the best sound possible. In addition, he recommends students work to control the pitch and develop a reliable and beautiful sound quality from the note’s beginning and especially to its much neglected ending. The use of a metronome and tuning machine are of obvious help and increase the exercise’s value. A misconception seen occasionally among young euphoniumists is equating loud playing and accented notes with good tone production. Mead is quick to remind these students that air and lip vibration produce tone and advises they place less importance on the tongue.

Mead’s favorite long tone study is shown in figure 40 and he has practiced it for over twenty years. Each note is held for twenty seconds and while a metronome is useful, Mead suggests switching it to silent mode or using a watch to count the time because it can disturb the tone’s beauty with its “ruthless clicking or beeping.” The long duration of the fermatas require the player to execute very deep and relaxed breaths between each note. Notice in the figure that a full measure of rest occurs after the exercise reaches an octave or compound octaves. Mead suggests euphonium players use these rests to let their lips recuperate from the exercise. Mead also recommends playing this exercise as a warm-up.

99 Ibid.


Mead also suggests playing long tones in the low register of the instrument. These notes require more air and greater embouchure control, and thus, benefit the practitioner with better breathing, openness of tone and better high notes. The exercise, seen in figure 41, should be played with a sustained *forte* dynamic and without any vibrato or inflection of any kind. Mead prefers to hold each note for four slow counts. Like the other exercise,
the low note routine works well as a warm-up drill. Occasionally, Mead will play this exercise using a practice mute. He argues that the added resistance a player encounters with the practice mute helps open the back of the throat. Mead does not, however, advocate the constant use of the practice mute because the resistance that is beneficial in small doses becomes harmful after sustained use because the resistance over time changes the way the lips respond when playing without the mute.

![Euphonium Sheet Music](image)

Figure 41: Low Range Long Tone Study
Mead also encourages students to study tone though the use of very slow, two octave arpeggios and scales. These simple exercises allow for study of sound throughout the range and different valve combinations. Furthermore, Mead uses vocalises to reinforce the production of tone within a musical context. Johnannes Rochut’s arrangement of the vocalises of Marco Bordogni and a collection of vocal studies by DeHaske, *Steven Mead Presents: Bel Canto for Euphonium*, featuring composers, Guiseppe Concone, Mathilde Marchesi, and Francesco Tosti, are popular books in Mead’s studio.

**Intonation**

A fine sense of pitch is crucial for the professional musician. Several student respondents mention that developing their intonation is an important concept Mead imparts in their lessons. Mead credits his sense of pitch to his early training as a vocalist. For him, singing creates the ability to see a written note, and turn that thought into sound. Mead says, “Something inside of me silently sings that note.” Although Mead does not have perfect pitch, he has developed a reliable system to recreate specific notes in his mental ear. He explains:

> So if I ever need to find a note, I’ve got a database of about twenty pieces where I could sing you that note. Something triggers it. I hear a sound, I sing it; I play it and it works.¹⁰³

Developing one’s sense of pitch obviously helps with playing in tune, but Mead states that “a lot of people who play, and due to the harmonic series, can often ‘mis-pitch’ because they can’t actually mentally put themselves in that situation where they hear the sounds.”¹⁰⁴

Occasionally, Mead assigns patterns to buzz on the mouthpiece to promote better intonation. Buzzing helps connect the inner sense of pitch in the brain to the actual frequency of the lip vibration. Figure 42 shows two patterns assigned to the author.

¹⁰³ Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,” 11.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.
Mead emphasizes that students should be aware, not only of the intonation tendencies of their instrument, but of the figuration of the music. In reference to Horovitz’s Euphonium Concerto Mead makes these comments:

...listening carefully for an even sound throughout the bigger intervals and precise tuning, particularly in the higher notes. They will usually be sharp in this movement, so adjust valve slides, lips, triggers, etcetera as necessary. Don’t blame your instrument – audiences hate excuses.105

Please see figure 43 below.

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Sometimes students exhibiting poor intonation, especially flat tendencies, do not suffer from a tin ear and are given a relatively easy, but potentially dirty solution. Mead advises students who play inexplicably flat to clean their lead pipe. He related a story of a long-time former student who loved food and the euphonium, but loved to eat especially during practice sessions. When this student’s playing suddenly became flat, Mead suggested they clean the inside of the horn. Mead remembered he almost fainted when they pulled the brush out of the lead pipe. It was worth the effort, however, because the student’s intonation improved immediately and drastically after the cleaning. Mead has retold this story often at master classes because proper maintenance is usually neglected, which in turn causes the instrument to malfunction.

TECHNIQUE
The euphonium is an instrument with great technical potential and many of its best players have pushed the repertoire to very high levels of virtuosity. The inflation of technical demands in the solo repertoire makes it important for aspiring euphoniumists to master his or her instrument. Yet with the very complex works written today, the fundamentals of technique are not much different than they were mid-twentieth century. Mead comments that while the solos continue to become more complex and difficult, his approach to technique has remains constant. He writes:

Much of my solo repertoire has gotten much more difficult in recent years, but the routine of getting the simple things right has not altered. If it has, it is the get them even more right.\textsuperscript{107}

Mead uses the \textit{Arban’s Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet}, and the \textit{Technical Studies for the Cornet} by Herbert L. Clarke which are over ninety-six years old, as well as newer technique books by Vizzutti, Sandoval, and others. Furthermore, the solo repertoire itself can be used to improve student’s technique. Mead comments in the following:

there are so many elements there [in the solo literature] that have technical
demands. The technical demands are more varied because it is real music rather
than a page of triple-tonguing, a page of lip slurs; I mean you get all of these
challenges one after the other.  

What is most important then, is not the actual studies Mead plays, but his philosophy and
approach to the various aspects of technical playing.

When asked what constitutes good technique, Mead made these comments:

Well, it is very much the result. I mean, quite how somebody gets to a particular
place is really up to them. Essentially what good technique is, is an easy
combination of successful use of the lips muscles, excellent, easy tone production,
and ally all of that to the fluency of the finger technique. Now, obviously we
would like to think that everything is done in a musical way and in a thought out
way, but to some extent, they are separate topics because you and I know that
we’ve heard people play with technique that play in a musically very
uninteresting way. So I think to take its true definition, when we talk about
technique, we talk about facility, we talk about ease of playing, the ability to
negotiate note changes, rapid articulations, etcetera, with ease. That would be
good technique.  

Ideally, according to Mead, a player’s technique should not distract from the musical
content of the piece. He expounds on this idea with the following remarks:

... [once] you get to a certain level of performance and everything becomes
subjective. You know, one man’s meat is another man’s poison, but I think there’s
a consensus that successful musical performance involves a well developed
technique that doesn’t handicap musically what you’re trying to say. So I think if
students think of it like that, you practice technique in order that you’re free rather
than practice technique so you have good technique because technique without a
consent feeling of musicianship is very dry.  

It is in the context of gaining freedom of technical limitations and thus enhancing one’s
expressive possibilities that Mead says you can never have too much technique.

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108 Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast “An Interview with Steven Mead:
Technique,” 4.

109 Ibid., 3.

110 Ibid., 5.
When practicing technical exercises, there are some steps Mead takes to maximize the benefits of the exercise and avoid injury or bad habits of excessive effort. Finger exercises and certain single tongue routines, for example, he plays at a *piano* to *mezzo piano* dynamic. He explains in the following:

> Well, it certainly protects the embouchure from over-wear and then you get a feeling of ease of playing when you’re playing at a soft dynamic because you’re not forcing anything which then has a psychological pat-on-the-back that this is a nice piece to play, it’s very comfortable which you then take with you to a performance, even when the dynamics start to come up. So I think there’s a calming effect on the body. I think all of the muscle groups work better at a softer dynamic. I know, for example, if you play something slow and soft it’s much more relaxing for the fingers than if you played the same passage louder. . . . approximately seventy-five percent of the practice should be at a softer dynamic than you actually perform with. So long as the muscle strength and air support is able to be switched to full, you know, so long as you know how different it feels when you’re playing strong, I think the physical benefits of practicing slower and softer are absolutely huge . . . ¹¹¹

Mead also uses a soft-dynamic approach with single tongue drills found in the Arban’s Book, exercises 41 through 45 on page twenty, and 47 and 48 on pages 21 and 22.

Besides the traditional instruction that accompanies technical studies, Mead offers new perspectives based on his vocal background and playing experiences in brass bands. For instance, finger dexterity is a vital component of euphonium technical playing. To help promote good valve technique, Mead impresses on his students the importance of having what he calls “positive fingers.” Tindall explains:

> Having positive fingers meant always staying ahead of the music. Knowing what was coming up, and keeping the fingers in a good flat-fingered, curled position, always on the valves. This was best practiced at the daily RNCM eight AM warm-up class doing Arban’s [exercises] and Clarke type studies with Steve. ¹¹²

Furthermore, Mead emphasizes that smooth, but quick execution of valve technique keeps from adversely affecting tone production, especially in lyrical music. Mead states:

¹¹¹ ibid., 6.

¹¹² Aaron Tindall, student question response, 22 October 2007.
A fine euphonium sound can be spoilt by a slow valve action which prohibits the flow of the music and means the fingers and tongue work in opposition to each other.¹¹³

To protect against disruptions in the sound from slow valve technique, Mead recommends the fingers be pushed down quickly and firmly. This approach should be the same regardless of the tempo of the music. Overzealous valve action, however, may make the notes jerky sounding. To help clarify, Mead writes that the “valve action must be like stroking a cat with one hand (the production) and clicking our fingers with the other hand simultaneously (the finger action).” Students can improve their valve action with technical exercises but also with maintenance and proper cleaning of the instrument. Along with the correct technique of pressing the valves, euphonium students should be aware of the fourth valve. Specialized euphonium teaching and the popularization of four valve euphoniums has reduced the need to discuss the use of the fourth valve in many venues, but as long as players from three valve instruments switch to play larger four-valve instruments, it warrants at least passing mention. In his article *The Great Fourth Valve Mystery*, Mead gives three primary benefits for the use of the fourth valve. First, as many euphonium players well know from the modern solo works, certain low notes require the use of the fourth valve. Second, employing the fourth can improve intonation. Used as a substitute fingering for (1-3) and (1-2-3) valve combinations, the fourth valve helps correct the inherent sharpness in pitch. The use of the fourth valve also helps lower the pitch of sixth partial notes, especially E-Flat, E and F. Figure 44 illustrates the use of the fourth valve to correct pitch.

Third, the fourth valve can be used in combination with other valves to create alternate fingerings to facilitate awkward technical passages. Some common alternate fingerings with the fourth valve are listed in figure 45.

\[\text{Figure 44: Use of the Fourth Valve to Improve Intonation}\]^{114}

\[\text{Figure 45: Alternate Fingers Using the Fourth Valve}\]^{115}

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\(^{114}\) Steven Mead, “The Great Fourth Valve Mystery,” 22.

\(^{115}\) Ibid.
Mead introduces elements of vocal pedagogy to flexibility studies on the euphonium. Students working on lips slurs should spend time working away from the instrument singing their lip slur patterns. Mead suggests:

. . . vocalize two note lip flexibilities, then three note, then focus the face and play them, keeping the body still. Develop four, five note, etcetera, exercises until complete freedom is achieved.\(^{116}\)

To ensure minimum movement of the mouth and jaw, Mead modifies his away-from-the horn-exercise by placing his finger over the aperture of the embouchure to raise awareness of excessive motion while blowing through the different vocal syllables. Mead calls lip slurs “sit-ups” for the face, but cautions against playing with brute force. Instead, Mead reminds studious euphonium players that more air and preservation of the aperture shape with small tongue position flexibility makes the process easier.\(^{117}\) When done correctly, students should have flexibility throughout the range without much disruption to the facial muscles and a relaxed stillness to the rest of the body. Students should strive for evenness of tone quality especially on the lower notes of the pattern.

Range

The modern euphonium repertoire, especially works composed within the last fifteen years, demands much of the euphonium soloist. The range of many concerti spans five to five and a half octaves. Students struggling to play in the upper register frequently ask Mead in lessons or by email how to improve playing the high notes in their music. Mead finds that students having difficulties with range have faults in one or more of these three general areas: embouchure, incorrect tongue position and a lack of sufficient air flow past the lips.\(^{118}\)


While it is certainly true that a poorly-formed embouchure can cause problems playing either high or low notes, the strain or malformation of the embouchure, however, points to other problems. Mead explains in the following:

I can normally detect a defect with an embouchure shape or position also by looking at the performance of the muscles on either side of the mouth when the high notes are attempted. In some cases it is not just the position of the mouthpiece on the lips that is the problem, but in fact is the “result” of other defects . . .

Excessive embouchure tension restricting the free flow of air is perhaps one of the most overlooked pitfalls to high range playing. One solution Mead offers is to reevaluate how one thinks of the high notes. He recommends students imagine high notes as wide notes to promote a greater opening and relaxation in the embouchure allowing larger amounts of air to travel past the lips. To ensure the embouchure is properly shaped, Mead suggests his mouthpiece whistling exercise can be particularly useful especially if the student produces the high whistle tones on the mouthpiece and experiences the direction of the air and how the embouchure should be formed for high notes.

From years of teaching brass player all over the world, Mead notices that many low brass players are never instructed to alter the oral cavity when playing throughout the tessitura of the instrument. A large space in the mouth relates to the lower notes on the instrument and a smaller one offers ease to high notes. To facilitate different oral shapes, Mead simply asks the student to think of changing vowel sounds. Mead states that this concept was an extension of his childhood vocal lessons, but also notes that as he matured as a brass player, he found the practice of using different vowel sounds reinforced in the teachings of Arnold Jacobs and others. There are four primary vowel sounds Mead uses. For the low notes on the euphonium Mead prefers to use the syllable, AW as in vowel sound in the word door. He uses AH, like vowel sound in the word far, for the mid-range notes. The short U vowel sound, as in the word do, Mead finds well-

119 Ibid.


suited for high notes and the extremely high notes work well using a long E vowel sound. Part of what makes the different vowel shapes useful is the ways they change the air speed. The larger the oral cavity, or more open the syllable, the slower the air steam will be. As the vowel sounds change to smaller, more closed positions, the speed of the air going through the mouth increases as according to the Bernoulli Principle.\textsuperscript{122} Students can practice using these vowel sounds away from the instrument in two ways: singing and the half whistling technique that combines pitch, air flow and vowel shape with the approximate aperture used when playing. For additional experience of using different vowel sounds while playing articulations, Mead suggests the following routine:

Practice with “D” articulations (Daw-Dah-Doo) very slow two-octave arpeggios using the right sounds for the right pitches, keeping every note the same dynamic, around \textit{mezzo forte} to start, and producing the best quality sound possible.\textsuperscript{123}

The addition of articulation will help the student master the starting the notes with the proper vowel shape for the appropriate range.

Insufficient air flow causes difficulty playing in the extreme high or low registers on the euphonium. Mead sites several possible reasons for undersupplied air flow: habitual shallow breathing, poor use of the diaphragmatic muscles to offer support to the exhalation of the breath, and a tightening somewhere between the lungs and the lips. To work on establishing greater use of the air in relation to playing high and low pitches, Mead offers the following advice:

Do more slow deep breathing exercises so that it feels as if your stomach is expanding when you breathe and as you blow the air out, slowly, feel the abdominal muscles supporting the air until there is nothing left. Then do the same on long notes, from middle G down to low G, also work on sustaining low pedal C for ten seconds with no variation in tone or dynamic.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{122} For brass players, the areas of the throat, tongue and mouth create a Bernoulli tube. The speed and pressure of the air flowing through the tube is proportional to the tube diameter; therefore, when the tube diameter decreases, the pressure and speed of the air flowing through the tube increases.

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.

Mead explains that solving problems with range not only require consistent practice, but finding a correct balance embouchure, tongue position and sufficient air flow in the correct proportion depending on what area is the most seriously defective.

MUSICIANSHIP

Musician’s ultimate goal is to communicate some level of musicianship and artistic expression to their audiences, and yet, its abstract nature makes it difficult to define and teach. Even the most untrained ear, though, can detect an absence of expression. Mead reflects on learning musicianship in the following comments:

So in many ways that’s harder to teach because you’re trying to fill in too many spaces rather than just go figure, you know, practice this a hundred times with this book and you can fix it, you can’t play that Rochut exercise a hundred times and it’s bound to become musical.125

A steady diet of studies, exercises, and general practice, while laudable, does not make a complete musician. The artistic expression comes from ones experiences and interaction with others. Mead makes this statement:

Musicality is something which life teaches you. You can’t learn it from books. If this sounds too lofty, then listen to good singers, good string players, good soloists – good anything! This learning process goes on all the time.126

Listening to other instrumentalists and vocalists is an important component and resource to any musician’s education. The study of great musicians’ phrasing and interpretation quickly takes young musicians beyond the notes and symbols on the page.127 Written symbols, however inefficiently they represent sound, are the system composers use to convey their art to the performer. This in turn, implies some amount of creativity available to the instrumentalist or vocalist. The give and take relationship between the composer, the music, and the performer has prompted Mead to ask the following:


126 Steven Mead, “Recital Preparation,” 36.

How much of the learning process involves us deciding we want to play something a bit different from what the composer has asked, or rather, how much originality or license can a soloist allow him or herself before the approach can be questioned.\(^{128}\)

A performer should use discretion when interpreting a piece of music, and the first step Mead advises them to know something about the composer. Some composers make their desires well-known and their directions are implicit. For example, Joseph Horovitz gives detailed markings in his *Euphonium Concerto*, which according to Mead, makes the job of the soloist “a little easier in a way.” Mead, having worked with Horovitz, knows his music and appreciates that the composer emphatically knows what he wants and expects from the soloist. Therefore, Mead suggests that euphoniumists working on Horovitz’s *Euphonium Concerto*, for example, should do their best to “obey the creator’s instructions . . .” Performers usually have more freedom, however, when composers do not exert as much of a presence in their scores as Horovitz does. Mead encounters music without expression marks too, and recognizes the opportunity for creativity, but finds that some euphonium players are lost without the guiding hand of the composer.\(^{129}\) He writes:

> In many cases, even quite well know works from the repertoire seem almost incomplete in terms of performer’s instructions, articulation, dynamics, etcetera, but in the hands of talented musicians, the piece is able to come to life. With others, the absence of such markings leads them to thinking of what I describe as a *mezzo forte* approach to everything – how dull!\(^{130}\)

Whether following the composer’s exact intent or not, Mead is certain there is no genuine interest in reproducing identical interpretations of any given piece of music. He suggests that performers should always put a bit of themselves in each piece, otherwise there

\(^{128}\) Ibid.


\(^{130}\) Ibid.
would be no need to attend concerts or buy recordings.\textsuperscript{131} Mead, however, cautions against being different just for the sake of being different. He states:

\begin{quote}
The temptation to exaggerate certain features, indulge oneself, show-off etcetera, are real dilemmas for the soloist and one’s musical integrity is on the line every time we perform a well known major work . . . \textsuperscript{132}
\end{quote}

Along with study and preparation of the piece, the soloist should make some sort of connection with the music and then communicate a story to the audience, whether implied in the music or by invention of the musician. Mead thinks that euphoniumists should think of brass playing as a language that you sing though your instrument, and like any language, it will have inflections. It is the inflections and variety of dynamics, articulation, vibrato, and tone color that make the musical story interesting.

To develop the language of music and learn what is appropriate style and good taste, Mead highly recommends guided listening. In a master class with students from the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston, he makes this statement:

\begin{quote}
Now the thing that I can’t teach so easily is phrase direction, climaxes of the phrase, coloring a phrase, giving a sense of purpose and direction to the line. I could play it and you could copy it, but I could give a different tune and you’d play it potentially in a blind way. So this is why you need to expose yourself to more great music. You know, find a cello sonata, find a great violin piece, find the slow movement of the Mozart Clarinet Concerto; get a recording; follow the music, and listen to what great artist do and work out what they’ve done. “Well he took his time there; that was moving; that obviously the most important note; that was a beautiful color; I loved the way that diminuendo worked. So you can actually feed music, self-feeding musicality. It doesn’t just come because you need it. It doesn’t come because you have a nice euphonium and a beautiful SM mouthpiece. It doesn’t just happen.\textsuperscript{133}
\end{quote}

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\textsuperscript{131} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{133} Steven Mead. Tuesday Recital “Steven Mead Master Class,” Dudley Recital Hall, Moores School of Music, Houston, Texas, 30 October 2007.
Guided listening, especially of other instrumentalists and repertoire, is advantageous to direct copying because the student must make their own transfers. From the study of other music, students form a musical basis on which to approach other pieces.

Vibrato

According to Mead, the issue of vibrato is one of the most debated and sensitive topics in brass pedagogy around the world. The controversy becomes more complex for euphonium players. They must decide when to follow the traditions of wind and brass band and the culture at the music conservatory where most brass musicians are trained for a life in the symphony orchestra where a straight tone is the expected norm for ninety-nine percent of the time. Nationalistic preferences also influence the way many brass players express vibrato in their sound increasing the argument of what is appropriate. Mead’s greatest criticism of misused vibrato in brass players is its lack of musical planning. He comments that the use of vibrato without a musical foundation results in a technique that is often overdone and is frequently predictable and distracting. He finds support for his criticism from Franchinus Gaffurius’ 1496 treatise, *Practica Musicae*, especially the following excerpt:

Singers should not produce musical tones with a voice gaping wide in a distorted fashion or with an absurdly powerful bellowing, especially when singing at the divine mysteries; moreover they should avoid tones having a wide and ringing vibrato, since these tones do not maintain a true pitch and because of their continuous wobble cannot form a balanced concord with other voices.

The excesses of vibrato, according to Mead, “can flatten stylistic differences and cancel out truly expressive playing . . .” Mead also warns that while vibrato can help beautify the sound of the euphonium, tone and vibrato should never be confused. Use of vibrato

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135 Ibid.


at best will only disguise certain faults in a poor sound, but it cannot substitute for ugly
tone quality. When used artistically, however, Mead says vibrato can be a potent
communicative tool and it puts the human element of warmth, beauty, as well as the
creation and resolution of tension into our music.\textsuperscript{138} For instance, those who remember
hearing Trevor Groom in at the height of his playing career comment on how his sound
was instantly recognizable and that vibrato gave his tone an extra special quality.

Over the years Mead has reduced the process of teaching vibrato to a five step
process starting with vocalizations away from the instrument and gradually adding
components such as embouchure and air flow. Mead’s instructions are as follows:

\begin{itemize}
\item Repeat the word 'Yah' (like in German), yah, yah, yah, yah.
\item Repeat again but silence the voice so only the jaw action continues.
\item Repeat again but try to keep the lips as fixed as possible so the movement is
  seemingly at the back of the jaw.
\item Repeat step three but simultaneously exhale strongly a strong stream on air
  with the lips in the “playing” position with the jaw creating the messaging
  effect which is the basis of a rich and controlled vibrato.
\item Take up instrument and play some mid range long tones using the experience
  of step four to guide you. Then listen and keep listening and refine your sound
  in the way an artist or sculptor will perfect a work of art.\textsuperscript{139}
\end{itemize}

Mead adds that for low brass instruments like the euphonium, players should keep the
space of the oral cavity round and high to free the lower jaw allowing the resonant sound
to vibrate rather than just the pitch.\textsuperscript{140}

While the mechanics of vibrato are fairly straight foreword, the question of how
and when to employ it with maximum musical effect can be a difficult and contentious
problem. Mead is quite sensitive when others conceptualize vibrato as a superficial or
flippant ornamental frill which is not fully integrated with the sound or musical context.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{140} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
He states, “I hate to the use the word application as it sounds like adding something unnaturally, like make up on a lady, or plaster on brick work.” Inevitably, as students advance through their course work, the solo repertoire they will encounter in lessons and the pieces they schedule on recitals will become increasingly diverse. With all the different kinds of music, Mead raises an important question that many euphoniumists have not, until recently, given much thought. He states, “The dilemma we have is, at the top level, whether to vary the vibrato at all for the different repertoire.” Vibrato can make one’s “stylistic playing more convincing.” Choosing how to express vibrato in their sound, therefore, depends on a number of factors including the range of the music, its period, style and the nationality of the music. For instance, for musical passages in the low range of the euphonium, Mead offers the following advice, “As a general rule, the lower the pitch the less alteration of the pitch, (I hereby redefine vibrato, temporarily!), and the need for a stable harmonic underpinning of the harmony is required . . .” Likewise, the type of vibrato used in a Paris Conservatory piece will be different than an arrangement of a Romantic-era Italian opera aria or a Baroque sonata transcription. Indeed, some transcriptions, such as works for horn or clarinet, work best with very little or no vibrato at all. To develop a stylistically appropriate vibrato and to discover what works well on the euphonium, Mead urges his students to listen to as many of the master musicians as possible. He frequently mentions singers as role models whether from the popular music world, Broadway shows, or opera. Strict imitation of singers comes with a one caveat, however. Mead cautions his students from copying the excesses of vocal vibrato. Singers vary the character of vibrato and use it in a number of ways depending on the music. Operatic vibrato, for instance, can be very wide and relatively fast which helps the voice project to the back of the hall, but when reproduced on the euphonium it is disrupts the sound, particularly the fluctuation of pitch which is more pronounced and disturbing to the listener. When listening to other important musicians, Mead also points to the great violinists and cellists. Additionally, the study of older recordings gives

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141 Ibid.
142 Ibid.
143 Ibid.
students a sense of perspective on how vibrato has changed over the decades, especially because so many early recordings have been re-released on compact disc. Mead comments:

When we listen to early brass band recordings from yesteryear we can hear how tastes in vibrato have changed; the cornet sound from the 1930s, 40s and 50s is different than what we normally hear nowadays. The same of course can be said for euphonium players and many of my archive recordings, although incredibly important in the history of our instrument, showcase examples of vibrato that would be considered “old fashioned” now. It is not to demean the wonderful artists who have gone before, but to point out there are clearly trends in vibrato that have changed over the years. The same of course is true when we listen to the great voices of the past such as Mario Lanza or Enrico Caruso whose vibrato was wider and faster than most voices we encounter today.  

To listen to Mead perform different types of vibrato, please click here to access the recording from his master class at the University of Houston.

PRACTICE METHODS AND ROUTINES

Few will argue that successful musicians possess some level of musical talent; however, these intangible abilities do not necessarily guarantee a fulfilling musical career. Examination of the world’s leading musicians will certainly find that the majority of them are not only highly talented, but work hard to hone their skills. The combination of talent, hard work and determination aptly describe a large portion of Mead’s success. Teaching his students how to practice effectively and efficiently is perhaps his most important gift Mead gives to his students. While his pedagogical ideas may be wonderful and groundbreaking idiomatic tools for euphonium players everywhere, they cannot work properly if the student is unmotivated to put them into use, or uses his or her time inefficiently. Mead’s ideas on practice include: warm-ups, efficient use of time, how to organize a well-balanced approach to practice routines and how to prepare for performances.

144 Ibid.

145 Steven Mead, Tuesday Recital “Steven Mead Master Class,” Dudley Recital Hall, Moores School of Music, Houston, Texas, 30 October 2007.
Before a performance or practice session, most brass players find playing a warm-up customary. For Mead, warming up is important. He explains in the following:

It is essential that you prepare you body and mind for a “brass workout,” just as any athlete would stretch and limber up before working hard. The lip muscles are the obvious areas where care must be taken so that they are not put into shock that will affect all your playing that day and maybe the next. If you can also get the air moving in a positive way, before you start to play use some well thought breathing exercises, as well as some general body stretches and you will find your playing at the start of the day will benefit massively. You will be more relaxed and with more air with less stress in the body. If you have time, ten to fifteen minutes breathing and stretching exercises at the start of the day and five minutes before any subsequent practice session will help you function much better as a brass musician. What’s more, five minutes of low pedal tones before you put your instrument away at the end of a practice session or concert will ensure the blood flow to your lips will increase and quicken the restoration of strength and sensitivity.\footnote{Steven Mead, “Steven Mead FAQ,” accessed 14 October 2008.}

Mead has suggests certain items to play for warming up with his students, such as the exercises in figure 46, but usually he speaks of the process in general terms. It is more important that a warm-up address fundamental areas of brass playing rather than specific exercises.
Much has been written on warm-ups and daily routines for brass players. Ideally a daily routine will cover as many musical topics as possible in a concise, easy to remember manner. In many ways, what Mead plays in his daily routine and his approach to daily practice are common. Mead notes the following:

A regular diet of long notes, scales, arpeggios and Arban studies will keep the tonguing, embouchure, tone quality, fingers, diaphragm, and stamina in a good condition; ignore any of these to your peril. I find myself adopting a very traditional approach towards practice, i.e., do it, don’t complain about it. Try to make your personal practice time interesting so you can look forward to getting the instrument out of its case the following day. There are no short cuts, no easy answers here.¹⁴⁷

Mead’s regular course of Clarke technical studies, scales and arpeggios may seem old-fashioned to many “progressive” thinkers, but he stresses their importance stating that all of his students who have mastered their scales are brilliant sight-readers and learn music

¹⁴⁷ Steven Mead, “Recital Preparation,” 36.
quickly. What is more, he argues that when properly practiced, scales promote evenness of tone throughout the range of the instrument. The author’s Royal Northern College of Music School of Wind and Percussion Handbook from September 1999, lists the following scale and arpeggio requirement to be learned by the fourth year of undergraduate study:

- All major and minor scales
- Chromatic scales, beginning on [every key center]
- Whole tone scales
- Crab scales in major and all forms of minor
- Major and minor arpeggios
- Dominant seventh arpeggios
- Diminished seventh arpeggios
- Augmented arpeggios

The patterns for the scales include ascending groups of four and eight and in thirds, and by the fourth year, the suggested range is at least three octaves. To increase mastery of the scale patterns, students were urged to play the scales with articulation, slurred, in dotted rhythms, and quadruplets. In reference to exams, including the scale exam, a special note included on the bottom page of the RNCM Handbook states:

In each examination the most important things are: a good tone, flexibility, musicality, and smoothness. Speed is important but not at the cost of any of the above.

The crab scale pattern changes chromatically every time the scale pattern changes direction, either ascending or descending. For an example of a crab scale pattern please see figure 47.

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148 Ibid.

The melodic minor version of adds the difficulty of raising the seventh scale degree in one key and lowering it in the descending pattern in a different key.

There are so many areas of brass playing to practice; trying to practice them all daily can be very difficult. Again Mead speaks metaphorically about managing his practice time, and explains the importance of keeping a well-balanced practice routine:

I’ve meet a lot of players who’ve got better fingers than I have. But I don’t really think of it like that. I think of it as: I try to play the best I can, all of the time, and you try to be totally consistent. You don’t just concentrate on any one facet of your playing. You don’t just say; “I’m the greatest lyrical player in the world. I don’t need my fingers, and look that one doesn’t even work!” It’s like spinning plates, you know, you’ve got ten plates on ten poles and you keep them all spinning and every one of those is a facet of playing.\(^{150}\)

Mead continues with the statement, “I think that if my playing has a particular strength, it’s that I’ve tried to eradicate any weaknesses.”\(^{151}\) Part of this ability to solve so-called

\(^{150}\) Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 5.

\(^{151}\) Ibid.
weaknesses comes from a methodical and organized approach to practice. Stuckemeyer makes an astute observation about Mead’s practice methods, stating “his structure on personal practice is simply to do what is necessary to move forward.” Stuckemeyer also notes that Mead’s daily practice routine breaks down into four seventy-five minute practice sessions. While practicing many hours a day is necessary for professional musicians it is not the only recipe for success. Honest evaluation of a player’s assets and faults, and the discipline to address them on a consistent basis are needed to make positive improvement. To help remedy this overwhelming task, Mead divides his practice sessions to cover the maximum number of musical topics with the use of a pie chart. During a master class on practice time management at the RNCM, Mead asked students to draw a circle on a piece of paper. The circle is then divided into three equal parts labeled tone, technique, and repertoire, although students may designate other general headings depending on their needs. Mead suggests that students make a list of items they wish to improve about their euphonium playing, and from this list they can determine the types of exercises and proportions of what they will practice per major section. Below, figure 48 is the author’s handwritten graph from a 1999 master class at the RNCM.

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Whether intentional or not, Mead’s practice pie chart alludes to a clock face, which in turn implies that all of the items scheduled for practice are timed. This is an important element of Mead’s strategy because it keeps students from disproportionately fixating on one subject, and compels focused concentration.

Mead knows that time is valuable, and when talking about practice, he often advises not to waste a single minute. However, on occasion, even the most dedicated students may find themselves taking a short hiatus from the instrument. Returning to a
full practice routine can be difficult after a considerable break. Mead states a brass player’s axiom: the more one practices, the more they miss it when they do not find time to play. He cites the following:

. . . your muscles get accustomed to the workout and when you don't use them in that unique way that playing a brass instrument demands, they forget and lose power and co-ordination very quickly. It’s only a subtle shift, but you're out of the zone and there’s work to be done to get you right for that first rehearsal with the band or orchestra, never mind the first concert or solo gig.  

Mead’s remedy to restoring one’s playing after a holiday or injury is a methodical, well-planned approach. The seven day plan starts with gentle warm-up exercises, but progressively adds difficulty to the routine with increased work load and the eventual inclusion of etudes and solo assignments. To view the daily practice recommendations for Mead’s “recovery plan,” please see Appendix H on page 220. Mead prescribes mild physical exercise along with the practice sessions making an interesting connection to playing and player’s general health. For instance, students returning from vacation may have neglected their diet, as well as their practice routine. After time, the body will find it challenging to play the long phrases in addition to walking up a flight of stairs. Mead states:

The first symptoms are that you cannot seem to get much air in the lungs . . . you feel fat, even if the bathroom scales are only edging a little higher. The breathing machine that we become when our brass playing is in good shape is quite sophisticated, with open oral cavity, relaxed throat, flexible abdominal muscles allowing for a rapid intake of air, like a turbo-charged yawn. These “opening” muscles are the first to tense up with inactivity, you didn't practice, and you didn't exercise . . . duh!

When the mouthpiece is re-united with the face it can feel like a stranger, a borrowed mouthpiece, the rim may feel smaller and sharper. You might well play brilliantly for the first five minutes and then . . . oh dear, it all goes wrong . . . tone production, sound quality, flexibility, sustainability all, as one diminish to the point of embarrassment and you check out of the window and around the door that no-one you respect is listening.  

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154 Ibid.
The body’s poor condition may be exasperated with heavy alcohol consumption. The implications, however, are that mild exercise and drinking large amounts of water are beneficial to brass players in general, helping the body cope with the rigors of playing the euphonium. Therefore, one does not have to be rebounding from a drunken holiday to appreciate the benefits of physical conditioning and proper hydration to one’s playing. In addition to physical exercise, the brain also needs care. Mead advises his students to get plenty of rest. In an article offering fifteen career tips called *Timely Advice to Students*, Mead lists appropriate amount of sleep as one of the ingredients for success. He writes:

> Look after your body, take exercise, eat healthily, get enough sleep and drink lots of water. Saying it is easy; doing it requires massive will power . . . Your body will thank you . . .  

A good night’s sleep helps the brain function efficiently. For example, Mead states that trying to solve problems, especially related to playing the euphonium, late at night are a struggle, but the next morning, he can find a solution within five minutes.

As much as possible, Mead tells students to practice every day because it is crucial to continual improvement in a competitive world, but to avoid injury or burnout, he offers a bit of common sense. Students should be aware of the signals their bodies send them, if the lips hurt, stop playing. However, time should be well spent, Mead states that everything done in the practice sessions must have a reason, and with an effective, well-organized practice routine, students can expect improvement, and in turn, the benefits of a good routine will increase personal confidence.

**Repertoire**

Mead’s career as a touring soloist and recording artist has put him in a rarified position of knowing a wide array of euphonium literature, new and traditional, as well as international. His intimate knowledge of euphonium music is one of the extraordinary benefits Mead’s students enjoy. At the Royal Northern College of Music, students are exposed to a diverse and challenging set of recommended exercise books, etudes and

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solos. However, as anyone familiar with the plight of euphonium players’ need for quality repertoire knows, planning such an extensive list of materials is not an easy task. While the world’s leading euphoniumists over the past fifty years have made exhaustive efforts to greatly improve the condition of the instrument’s solo repertoire, the same level of dedication is only recently being focused on improving the quality and number of etudes especially written for the euphonium. Mead addresses this issue:

In terms of study books for euphonium, there are very few that are expressly written for the euphonium, but in terms of purely technical books, this is not a big problem as the technical disciplines are similar throughout valved brass instruments.  

There are many books written for trumpet, for instance, that work well on the euphonium. In addition to the *Arban’s Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet*, Mead recommends the following:

- H.L. Clarke, *Technical Studies for the Cornet*, Carl Fischer Publisher
- C. Gordon, *Daily Trumpet Routines*, Carl Fischer, Publisher
- M. Schlossberg, *Daily Drills and Technical Studies*, M. Baron, Publisher
- L. J. Vannetelbosch, *Vingt Etudes*, Alphonse Leduc, Publisher
- L. J. Vannetelbosch, *Melodiques et Techniques*, Alphonse Leduc, Publisher

For a complete list of required etudes for euphonium examinations at the Royal Northern College of Music, please see Appendix D on page 205. Mead made sure that the short list of recommended trumpet etudes and studies are different from one another, providing most euphonium students with many technical and musical challenges.

There is still a need, however, to provide euphonium players with etude music that presents idiomatic challenges for the euphoniumist, especially in terms of range and the use of the fourth valve, for example. In 2002, Mead made these statements regarding new etudes especially for the euphonium:

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157 Ibid.
I’d like to see, and there are good signs of it already, but I’d like to see publishers invest in a lot of method books for euphonium players, rather than used trombone and trumpet books. And in some areas it’s happening already. I’ve managed to persuade some publishers to do some things for euphonium.\textsuperscript{158} 

Since then, DeHaske has published sixteen volumes of etudes and duets and many are used in Mead’s studio teaching. Most of the books feature a variety of composers, of whom DeHaske has twenty-five on staff who contribute to these studies.\textsuperscript{159} Mead has balanced the remainder of the curriculum at the RNCM with contrasting etudes from the trumpet, trombone, and bassoon literature. 

Knowing that famous brass players have written many well-known books for brass instruments and given the scarcity of original study material for the euphonium, one may beg the question: why has Mead not written any etudes or method books for his instrument? He has certainly considered it, thinking to himself on a number of occasions that he could composer better than some of the etudes he has encountered, but frankly, Mead recognizes that ideas in the head are not the same as ideas on paper. Mead does not want to test his creativeness in case he should suffer from “blank manuscript disease.”\textsuperscript{160} Although he writes a few exercises, he does not plan to write his own method book, stating:

Well I keep running into really good books like the Basics Plus books, which I use now, and like so many of the methods they are exactly as I teach. And so the exercises hit the spot, so why sit down for six months and write a book that is just like this, but written by me?\textsuperscript{161} 

At the Royal Northern College of Music, etudes are used as needed and during exams. For the exams, each student is required to choose four etudes recommended for their year. At the time of the exam, Mead picks two of the four prepared etudes to be

\textsuperscript{158} Dawn Holte, “An Interview with Steven Mead,” 55. 

\textsuperscript{159} Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,”13. 

\textsuperscript{160} Ibid. 

\textsuperscript{161} Ibid.
performed. Appendix D on page 205 contains the required euphonium and baritone etude list for the RNCM.

With his overwhelming knowledge of the euphonium solo repertoire, one would naturally assume that Mead would exert a considerable amount of control on what students prepared for lessons, juries, and recitals. For the most part, students writing in student questionnaire responses mention a considerable amount of freedom in their choice of solos. One student writes:

Steve has never really imposed any repertoire or told me to learn a particular piece. He always lets me chose the pieces I want to study.162

The notion that Mead happily works with whatever solo students bring to lessons is a common theme throughout the student questionnaire responses, but this does not indicate Mead neglects fore-thought and planning for each student’s development and exposure to a well-balanced curriculum of solo works. Mead does guide people to repertoire that highlights their talents and to address specific pedagogical areas that may need improvement. For instance, Patrick Stuckemeyer mentions, “I chose my own repertoire, but was guided by Steve in my selections.”163 In her response, Amy Schumaker describes some of Mead’s strategies for directing some of her choices in euphonium music:

He wanted me to play Coleurs because he noticed I have a strength in playing aggressively. He wanted one piece to show that off.164

Mead helps students find solo works they want to play that also offer appropriate and attainable challenges. Sean Oden comments that Mead coached him on solos he wanted to play, but adds, “I had to work on them.”165 Some students mention certain repertoire was chosen to address a weakness or to develop technique in the setting of advanced

164 Amy Schumaker, student questionnaire response, 12 July 2008.
165 Sean Oden, student questionnaire response, 14 April 2007.
modern music, for example, like the unaccompanied euphonium music of Aagaard-Nilsen. Another former student points to his diverse curriculum of solo works to help develop sensitivity to nationalistic styles of euphonium playing. Sometimes the choices of solo repertoire were more practical. Adam Frey recalls that they “chose pieces that were parts of competitions . . . pieces that motivated me to practice, and in turn pushed me to higher levels.” Indeed, appropriate challenges and interesting, satisfying music are important motivating tools. The list below is a compilation of studied solo titles from the student questionnaire responses. The number in the parentheses represents the number of times a title appeared in the responses, no number after the title indicates that the work was mentioned only once.

Solo Repertory Listed in Student Responses

- Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen, *Two Insects*
- Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen, *Black Rain*
- Jan Bach, *Concert Variations*
- J. S. Bach, *Cello Suite No. 1* BWV 1007
- Michael Ball, *Concerto for Euphonium*
- Herman Bellstedt, *Belle Americain*
- Eduardo Boccolari, *Fantasia di Concerto*
- Ivor Bosanko, *Heart in Heart*
- Derek Bourgeois, *Euphoria* (3)
- Roger Boutry, *Tubacchanale* (2)
- Eugene Bozza, *Allegro et Finale*
- Arthur Butterworth, *Partita* (2)
- Vladimir Cosma, *Euphonium Concerto* (5)
- James Curnow, *Symphonic Variants*
- Sigvart Dagsland, *Michelangelo*, arranged by Frode Rydland
- Edward Elgar, *Romance*
- Martin Ellerby, *Euphonium Concerto* (4)
- Christoph Willibald Gluck, *Impromptu*
- John Golland, *Concerto No. 2* (3)
- Edward Gregson, *Symphonic Rhapsody*
- Friedrich Gulda, *Concerto for Cello*, arranged by Luc Vertommen
- Georg Friedrich Handel *Concerto in F minor*, arranged by Keith Brown
- Joseph Horovitz, *Euphonium Concerto* (2)
- Hiroshi Hoshina, *Fantasy*

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166 Anonymous student, student questionnaire response, 14 March 2007.

167 Adam Frey, student questionnaire response, 19 August 2007.
To view Mead’s recommended solo repertoire list for Royal Northern College of Music students, please see Appendix E on page 205.

Excerpts

Orchestral and brass band excerpts are studied at the RNCM and are part of the exams for all undergraduate students. Mead works little with wind band excerpts, because in general, they are much easier than the brass band repertoire, and usually, only American students preparing for a military band audition in Washington D.C. want to study them. For the list of required orchestral and brass band excerpts, please see Appendix F on page 211.

Performance Preparation

Preparing for a major performance can be a daunting task, especially if one is not accustomed to playing solos often. From the time a solo is either assigned or chosen to the day of the concert, Mead says a common question in the minds of many students is: “how do I succeed in producing the goods when it matters?” Performing presents a
number of challenges, physical and mental, as well as musical. There are some steps a student can take to make things easier and increase the chances of success. Mead’s first words of advice seem like common sense, but are worth noting because it is not uncommon to hear young soloists struggling through a program that is too difficult for them. Mead makes the following statement:

Although all should relish a challenge, I would not advise playing any piece in public which is beyond your technical level. You have nothing to gain from it. As an adjudicator at a solo contest, I would rather hear a piece of lesser difficulty played musically and sensitive rather than a brave but vain attempt at a more complex work.\(^{168}\)

When students choose an appropriate solo, it easily increases the amount of attention to detail and thoroughness of preparation to their program.

Mead states that music, especially works of stature and importance, need more of a student’s time than getting through the notes. In fact, given the fragile nature of a musician’s reputation, Mead forcefully urges students to never find contentment with any musical product which is second-rate. For Mead, performance preparation comprises two distinct, but equally important areas: physical preparation and mental preparation.\(^{169}\) When working towards a performance date, Mead never advises soloists to alter their basic practice routine to suit a particular piece because their routine should cover all the essential pedagogical areas to master even the most complicated works.\(^{170}\) Nevertheless, the physical conditioning must be an ongoing process. The student should place the target of excellence always just beyond reach, so that the soloist continuously strives to sound better than the previous day.\(^{171}\)

Once high standards and a comprehensive practice routine are reaffirmed, one naturally turns to practicing the works to be performed. Working out all of the problem areas of solo requires a creative problem-solving mind and discipline. Mead firmly


\(^{169}\) Ibid.


believes in the benefits of slow practice which has been constant learning method throughout his career. He states:

... it’s a lifetime approach which is based on musical thoroughness, and it’s also based on the principle that if you play something slow and perfectly, you stand a much greater chance of being able to play something at the correct speed and perfectly, and that goes right across musical disciplines particularly string players. If you talk to string players they’ll always say, once something is absolutely perfect, bowing-wise, articulation-wise, at a slow speed, it’s much, much easier to speed it up. Because general facility on a brass instrument is easier, and quicker than on a sting instrument, we allow ourselves very quickly to forget those basics, and therefore, we can learn something very approximately, very easily and then not have the self-discipline or somebody watching over us to advise us to go back and brush up on the thoroughness, so . . . No, I’m not saying that every fast piece you play should be played slowly all the time. You know, there’s no need for extremes, but certainly there is a place in any practice routine even with piece you’re familiar with, to go back at an absolute walking pace. You know, if I think for example, like the last section in Pantomime, I must have played that piece a hundred times over the years and I know if I just, in the week before a concert, just play through in tempo, I know the fingers are not going to quite as settled and as comfortable as when I make myself spend half and hour, you know, two days running, going through things at an absolute slow a speed as possible. There’s definitely a thoroughness it’s almost an understanding, an illogical understanding that the body has of how something works. I suppose it’s the difference between going for a run in a place and walking slowly in a place. You just take in more information.172

Sometimes certain figures in music need special attention as Mead explains:

Well I think that within any difficult phrase there is usually one particular key to unlock a phrase. Now it may be a rhythmic emphasis on a particular note. It may be focusing or concentrating on the air rather than muscular or finger use. I think over time this I suppose is one of my most successful areas of teaching because it’s something I’ve worked out for myself in performance that if I’m working on a particular piece there’s always a reason a phrase is hard, now it may be pitching thing, if it’s a pitching issue if you keep splitting a note that happens to be a tri-tone apart, then you know that unless you can actually hear note in the head you’re not actually clear signal to the lips and the mouth shape, etc. which actually put things in the right place for you. So sometimes it’s a pitch issue, sometimes it’s a rhythm issue where a particular note or notes in a phrase needs more emphasis and when you do that all of a sudden everything falls into place. It could be a question that there’s a very small element of rushing or uneven

172 Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast “An Interview with Steven Mead: Technique,”5.
playing going on and then only with slow work with a metronome . . . is that revealed as the problem. The other thing I would do, but certainly in long group phrases is actually break them down into small component parts it may be a bar or, you know, a bar and a half and you work each section until it’s totally perfect. A lot of people just tend to work on phrases over and over again and things do get better with familiarity there’s no doubt about that. But in terms of finding a way to guarantee that success, you know, you may play a phrase with some awkward intervals and get it right twice and you think right that’s sorted, but I think deep down you know whether that error is liable to reappear; there’s still some uncertainty in the head.\textsuperscript{173}

To be more specific, technical passages in modern works, for instance, often present problems to a musician’s finger coordination. One of Mead’s practice methods is to change the rhythm of an awkward sequence of difficult valve combinations to emphasize different portions of the pattern. Dotted rhythms are a popular rhythmic alteration. Another commonly overlooked fault when students prepare for recitals and exams is an over emphasis technique. Students will practice to survive technical passages without much consideration to the quality of sound they are producing. The last measures of the first movement of Horovitz’s \textit{Euphonium Concerto} are a good case in point. Mead notices students have trouble with the technical passage in the last phrase because the soloist has never really appreciated what the notes are. Measures 133 to the end of the movement are a nontraditional scalar figure, and often with the stress of an upcoming recital, students play as if tone quality is irrelevant when playing fast. Mead offers slow practice and less reliance on the tongue to play the passage smoothly without articulation helps students focus on pitch and tone quality. Once everything is in place, the correct articulation can be reincorporated with better effect, and Mead suggests a controlled flat-style double tongue for this passage to maintain proper round oral cavity shape.\textsuperscript{174} Please see figure 49.

\footnote{\textsuperscript{173} Ibid.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{174} Steven Mead, “Preparing a Major Solo Piece for Euphonium,” accessed 17 October 2008.}
How Mead tackles difficult sections of music or what he advises his students depends on a number of factors. Mead explains in the following:

I have different approaches. It really depends on circumstance. I don’t say here’s my blueprint for fixing any technical phrase that you can’t play; look up the relevant chapter because as I say, everyone has strengths and weaknesses, but there are approaches, methodological approaches which you could formalize in a flow chart: if this doesn’t work then try this at the same time you should be doing this and this and this is what you should be thinking about. You could actually do something like that because there is a logical series of approaches to musical performance. In the end of course, no matter what you do in a practice room if you don’t have the mental calmness and toughness to deliver it when it counts, then all that work in the studio is a waste of time anyway. So with this method, with these various methods also has to come a sort of resilience and confidence which means you can actually play it in an optimum way in that key moment of delivery i.e., when it matters.\textsuperscript{176}

Mental preparation is very important, but often ignored by those unaccustomed to the stage. In addition to conditioning mental focus for long periods of time and to combat performance anxiety, Mead feels students should to take time to study the accompaniment score. After all, Mead comments, “If it falls apart, who cares whether it’s the accompaniment’s fault?” In Mead’s experience as a teacher and adjudicator, it is likely that only the soloist will parse blame to extenuating circumstances for a poor performance.

\textsuperscript{175} Joseph Horovitz, \textit{Euphonium Concerto}, 5.

\textsuperscript{176} Steven Mead, interviewed by Robert Pendergast “An Interview with Steven Mead: Technique,” 8.
performance. In addition to score study, Mead gives the following advice to avoid ensemble problems:

Safeguard against this common phenomenon by ensuring as much rehearsal time as necessary with your accompaniment, be it band or piano, covering particularly the difficult corners and speeds. “It’ll be alright on the night” is an over-used and dangerous phrase.  

When preparing for a concert, Mead likes the idea of reliability and consistency rather than gambling that the performance will be acceptable “depending on what numbers come up.” Mead also states that mental preparation can be reinforced by maintaining good physical health. He relates the following:

Not unrelated to this is the need to keep oneself in good physical condition to play a major solo piece, with the need for sustained concentration and the ability to provide constant high-quality air supply both being dependent on reasonably good health; jogging, swimming, walking, sensible diet, etcetera all help greatly in the preparation for musical excellence in performance.

Planning for a performance takes a systematic approach covering multiple areas of playing and musical study. It is a disciplined and difficult process. Mead comments that leaving things to chance is “fine if you’re just going to play for fun.” However, Mead is quick to remind students that a musician’s professional reputation can be lost on a single poor performance.

Performance Anxiety

According to Mead, performance anxiety is the feeling of nervousness which is a physical reaction brought on by a psychological condition. Anxiety about performing in public is a serious and frustrating problem for many musicians of all playing levels. For those not mentally prepared, excessive nervous energy threatens to ruin a well-prepared

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177 Steven Mead, “Recital Preparation,” 36.
178 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,” 12.
180 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,” 12.
performance, but Mead states that “if you are psychologically prepared to play in front of people, you will find it one of the most thrilling experiences life has to offer.” Mead finds that students spend much time preparing the music, but neglect to invest enough time conditioning themselves to combat the strange feeling of being on stage in front of people. Mead urges these students to “plan mentally just as you have physically prepared.” He asks his students to take time to think about public performance rationally. Realizing that the audience hopes that the performer will perform well, helps reduce performance anxiety for many of his students. Mead states the following:

You are the provider of the goods - they are the receivers. You want to give; they are there because they want to receive. The audience is on your side.

Because his job as a soloist depends on producing “the goods” on every performance, Mead has sought to investigate the nature and causes of performance anxiety. One of his observations is that students feel isolated or embarrassed about their anxiety of performing in public. It is often welcoming news for student to hear that everyone experiences some level of anxiety during a performance. In fact Mead states those who do not suffer any sensation of nervousness fall into three categories: liars, lunatics, and drunks or very possibly a combination of all three.

Just as each human being is unique, seemingly so are the reasons for becoming nervous for an important performance, but Mead has noted some reoccurring factors. As one may typically expect, high notes at an end of a solo or difficult sections at a soft dynamic may trigger an anxious response during a performance. Conversely, the sudden realization of being under prepared can induce a sense of panic on stage. External distractions, such as realizing someone important is in the audience, or worrying about disappointing everyone in the band if the performance turns out to be below their standards also potentially trigger a lack of mental focus and nervous feelings. Mead has found, however, that while anxiety assumes many forms, not all of these sensations

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181 Steven Mead, “Recital Preparation,” 36.
182 Ibid.
183 Ibid.
are bad omens or even potentially harmful to a performance. Mead explains the positive effects of heightened awareness:

In fact, that “sense of occasion feel” can enable us to play better than ordinarily, with a real mental alertness organizing our body to act in an unusually well-coordinated way with strong, powerful, relaxed attitude to performance. The sense of importance created makes us think about the minutiae of performance details more than usual. The positive effect of the detailed thought can make all aspects of our preparation more detailed, and therefore, more thorough which gives us the confidence to play better.\(^{184}\)

Mead argues that it is only the negative side of performance nervousness that leads to the sometimes inexplicable decline of performance standards. The task of the aspiring performer is to channel the extra adrenaline and uncomfortable feelings for positive effect to add an inspired edge to the concert.

Mead offers rational thought and practice techniques to build confidence as remedies to the crippling effect performance anxiety have on many musicians. Mead links confidence, as well as stamina, to one’s ability to combat disruptive nervousness. Mead defines stamina as the ability to sustain something at the strength, and in realm of the performing musician, there are two important areas of stamina: mental and physical. Mead continues with the following statement:

Stamina then requires active and continually quick mental thought processes and sustained use of correct breathing, blowing technique, body posture, embouchure position and sufficient relaxation to all the body to continue to function for as long as necessary.\(^{185}\)

On the surface the symptoms of nervousness and inadequate stamina appear quite similar. Mead says that for the brass player, a breakdown of stamina could be any or all of the following:

\[
\ldots \text{the inability to sustain the pitch and quality of high notes. The more subtle deficiencies include lack of flexibility, inability to play anything less than \textit{forte},}
\]


\(^{185}\) Ibid.
lip vibration reduces due to excessive pressure and therefore tone production becomes like trying to fire a faulty rifle.186

A lack in mental stamina results in a loss of concentration during performance, which in turn, may lead to disorganized, panicked thoughts. The inability to maintain mental focus, therefore, allows anxiety to manifest itself in a physical reaction. Mead states the following:

. . . tension starts in the brain and is then distributed to the body parts that can fulfill the brain’s wishes to create tension. So if you’re a relaxed person and you have confidence in your method, then you’re much less likely to tense-up and close down those things. The idea of contraction is based on the situation . . . a way of reacting that the body’s able to create when it feels slightly under pressure.187

To sustain mental and physical stamina during a performance is critical. The length of time one needs to build stamina depends on the music, and of course, the player. Therefore, to build confidence through increased stamina, Mead suggests a well-rounded practice routine, and when students practice trouble spots in the music that may induce nervousness, they should strive for perfection nineteen times out of twenty in the practice room. Simple statistics would suggest that after playing a passage correctly ninety-nine percent of the time, minor random flaws the day before a performance will be fine on the day of the concert.188 For students preparing for a performance, Mead reminds them to breathe properly. He also adds a bit of realism; nothing worth doing is going to be easy. Mead states “it’s tough at the top,” and success does not come without effort.189 Knowing what to expect helps lessen the detrimental impact that nerves have on a prepared performance.

186 Ibid.

187 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Technique,” 12.

188 Steven Mead, “Recital Preparation,” 36.

189 Ibid.
Career Goals

Once students begin taking their first courses, it is not long before they have to decide what area of music in which they want to specialize. Many students, however, view college as an opportunity to escape the stresses of the real world spending their time to eat, drink, and be merry. Unfortunately, for these students the music business is such that they have to improve a bit more all the time. With many of his undergraduate students, Mead takes the following approach during their first years:

I see the career advice often as coincidental, if I think that somebody’s definitely on the wrong track, I will tell them. To some extent, when a student is learning and developing, unless they have a very fixed idea of what they want their career to be, to some extent, you encourage them to be a better musician, encourage their learning skills in some cases their communications skills and often then the correct avenue for them in terms of career becomes more obvious over time. So career advice, yes, but sometimes with a first or second year undergrad, career advice is probably less than actually trying to turn them into a decent musician.\textsuperscript{190}

However, according to Mead, players not only have to become better musicians, but they eventually need to develop a reputation for honesty, integrity, reliability, and prove their ability to be organized. “Some students,” Mead says, “do that quite naturally and some find it really hard.” This lack of professionalism insures that only some get good jobs and other do not.\textsuperscript{191} To address this deficiency, Mead wrote an article entitled, \textit{Timely Advice to Students}. In it, he lists what amounts to fifteen tips to help students find success during the school year. Most of these tips apply to promoting a successful career as well. This article is in Appendix H on page 219. Mead speaks of career goals more directly in one of his master classes at the RNCM. An important component of the class is an evaluation chart in which students document their career goals and other related jobs. Students record other features like whether their aspirations offer full-time or part-time employment and estimated income they envision for themselves. This handout, seen in figure 50 and 51, helps students organize their thoughts on how to make a living in music after graduation, and what steps they should take to achieve their goals. Having

\textsuperscript{190} Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,” 3.

\textsuperscript{191} Ibid., 8.
career goals are important, otherwise Mead finds that students tend to drift; they just trod
along without a map, making improvement difficult.\textsuperscript{192} Much of Mead’s career advice is
centers on being as diversified as possible, which will increase the likelihood of being
employable. This includes doubling on trombone. Remembering his early years as a
freelance musician, Mead states:

I think it’s quite important. I mean I got a lot of gigs through the university on
trombone playing with choral societies. They would often call the university, “we
need a trombone section for Mendelssohn’s this-that-or-the-other, or we’re doing
some piece and we normally have our freelance orchestra but it doesn’t have
trombones, so . . . often on a Saturday I’d go off and do a day earning some cash,
and I guess I have doubled in a couple of brass bands, even Sunlife. My first
experience with Sunlife was on trombone. So, yeah I think, generally speaking, I
think it’s really foolish for euphonium players not to have certainly a working
knowledge of the trombone, and I think they should be able to play it. You see,
the only reason I stopped playing it is that I became extremely single-minded
about being as good as I could on the euphonium, and that just didn’t allow time
for trombone practice. I just had to dedicate myself so completely to it. So in a
way I cut off my safety net. My safety net for gigs would always have been the
trombone and I just decided I wouldn’t do it. And then post-university, a series of
very lucky breaks really over the next five years pushed me down the direction
I wanted to go in - playing the euphonium.\textsuperscript{193}

Conversely, it is no surprise that Mead thinks the following:

I think that at all universities, all trombone players should be required to have
euphonium as a second instrument. They should take lessons on the euphonium
for valve experience. They should be proficient in euphonium if they are going
to teach it.\textsuperscript{194}

An added benefit of euphonium players spending time to learn to play trombone,
according to Mead, is they become accustomed to projecting their sound and using the air
correctly. As a result, when euphoniumists return to the euphonium, they resonate the

\textsuperscript{192} Dawn Holte, “An Interview with Steven Mead,” 57.

\textsuperscript{193} Steven Mead “An Interview with Steven Mead: Biography Part 2,” 16-7.

\textsuperscript{194} Dawn Holte, “An Interview with Steven Mead,” 57.
instrument more effectively and thus avoid sounding “foggy and muddy” which Mead finds the worst caricature of the euphonium sound.\textsuperscript{195}

\begin{table}[h]
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\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Activity                      & Full time/ & Career & Money & Career \\
                             & part time & Structure & 1-10 low-high & Stability & 1-10 low-high & Other features \\
\hline
Playing in a brass band       &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
Playing in a wind band        &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
Playing in an ensemble (brass/orchestra/T.Quartet) & & & & & & \\
Playing in a military band    &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
Playing as a soloist          &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
Teaching as a career a. school classroom & & & & & & \\
b. peripatetic brass         &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
c. university/higher educ.   &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
d. private teaching          &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
Composing/arranging           &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
Recording                     &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
Conducting                    &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
Adjudicating                  &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
Sound technician/Recording etc. &            &          &       &           &           &                             \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{RNCM Career Class Handout\textsuperscript{196}}
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\textsuperscript{195} Steven Mead “An Interview with Steven Mead: Biography Part 2,” 17.

\textsuperscript{196} Steven Mead, “Euphonium Careers Class Handout,” 6 March 2000.
Great advances have been made in the areas of euphonium literature, performance venues outside of the traditional brass band and military band settings, and notable figures like Mead have been making incredible gains in the area of euphonium education. More than ever, courses specializing in the euphonium are available to students and an increasing number of music schools and conservatories are offering degrees and diplomas for the instrument. Still, euphoniumists are confronted with a certain amount of prejudice. Even in the UK, where there are many accomplished players, there remains the sense the instrument belongs in the amateur musician’s realm. Mead attributes these thoughts to the fact that the euphonium is not a regular instrument of a standardized professional ensemble outside the military. He comments that “because we’re not members of professional musical organizations like a symphony orchestra, then why the hell do you need to study it full-time?”

So although many hard-fought strides have been made in the world of the euphonium, Mead warns uncontrolled numbers of euphonium players studying at institutions of higher education might out pace the market. He explains in the following statements:

... you could say that we’re going to produce more qualified euphonium and baritone players who will become teachers who’ll teach the next generation. So that cycle of making players to become teachers who’ll teach the next players to

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197 Ibid., 2.

198 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,” 7.
become teachers, I mean, you can keep doing that for a couple of more generations, but . . . 199

You know the Royal Northern could get twenty euphonium players a year for the number of applications we’ve got. Then we would be turning out more decent players who will be totally unable to get work. So we take in three undergraduates a year. Places like Huddersfield will take up to six and seven because the want to fill up their school and they’ve got teachers they need to employ. It’s a scandal because what are these kids going to do? Well they’ll give them a music degree, take up four years of their life and they’ll chuck them out in the world, and then they’ll think then about what they want to do for a living. So we don’t really want to accelerate euphonium education too fast because that professional situation isn’t there. 200

Nevertheless, Mead enjoys working with his students and because of the stable nature of a college teaching position, Mead appreciates the steady income. He makes these statements:

There are not many schools that are going to hire you and then on a whim fire you the next year which can happen in business. I think all of us who play and teach realize it is something that we need to do. The question is how conscientious are we about teaching? How much of ourselves do we really put into the other students? How are we refining our teaching techniques and our approaches, or are we just saying, “Look, you just come along and play and I’ll just tell you what I think and then, you know, you’ll leave.” There are a lot of teachers that look at teaching as a source of X amount of pounds per hour rather than something that’s important and life changing. I certainly thought it was life changing. I didn’t think of it by the hour when I was a teacher in high school because I never worked out my hourly figure anyway, it was just a job, so I was able to focus on the teaching. I think when you’re paid by the hour, it’s very easy to think by the hour and obviously with some students, you enjoy teaching them, the time goes quickly. 201

Replies in the student questionnaire forms frequently commented on Mead’s dedication to his studio, which impresses many of his students. Knowing that Mead lives several

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199 Ibid., 7.
200 Ibid.
hours away, Tindall distinctly remembers Mead always driving to the college early for a warm-up class at 8:00 AM. Schumaker comments:

We are his investment. He knows each of us. Once I complained that it was early in the morning and he was surprised because he had scheduled me as a morning lesson person because from my personality and past jobs, he gathered that I must have been a morning person. He put that much thought into when we had our lesson. He invested a lot in us and is incredibly intuitive. He caught me when I had two lessons in a day and the first one I had played differently than in the second one. He stopped and asked me what I had done. I told him that I had taken a nap and he said he knew it because I was playing like I took a nap.

In addition to the interaction and development of his teaching strategies, Mead sees a benefit of teaching to his playing.

I think because you see everything that could go wrong and you guard against with your own playing so you hear good things as a teacher and some fairly embarrassing, shocking, awful, un-worked-out things as well. So it kind of puts you on your guard to things that could happen if you don’t actually take care of business.

In a sense, lessons are similar to a laboratory classes, students are given problems to solve and they come back a week later and the teacher tests whether or not their solutions and practice have made any effect. Furthermore, lessons are somewhat sheltered situations where students can suffer small failures on assignments without adverse effects to their reputation and career. Nevertheless, the small scale consequences serve as a reminder to the competitive nature of the music business. Fortunately Mead remains as motivated as ever and still loves to practice.

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203 Amy Schumaker, student questionnaire response, 12 July 2008.
204 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead: Teaching Pedagogy,” 12.
CHAPTER 4
REFLECTIONS ON EUPHONIUMIST STEVEN J. MEAD

Working on this project was deeply satisfying, but it presented numerous challenges primarily because the distance from the RNCM students and other sources made collecting data difficult. There are still several articles and other references to Mead that remain inaccessible because of the limits of the study. Additionally, Mead is perhaps at the zenith of his career making the decision to halt the research process difficult. Invariably every week seemed to bring news of a recording debut, a breakthrough performance, and new solo première or some other important news about his life. In many ways this work parallels Sharon Huff’s study, The Life and Career Contributions of Brian L. Bowman Through 1991. While she documented much of Bowman’s career, he has done much in the seventeen years since the early 1990s. Likewise much of Mead’s career is ahead of him. He states:

... even though my career has been established, and you know, I earn fairly descent money and because I’m in fairly good health, I hopefully I do that for the next ten or fifteen years. There’s still always that element of proving to people that the euphonium ... that you can earn a living from playing the euphonium. I don’t really need to travel as much as I do. I want to, I feel that it’s important for the instrument, and there’s also that slight addiction to playing and traveling which is hard to [give up].

Indeed, it is strange to imagine Mead just giving up the euphonium and retiring to a quiet life somewhere in the south of France or some resort area in Italy. When asked how music figures in his life, Mead gave the following response:

I cannot imagine a life without music. It is my job, my hobby, my way to relax; it can be like a sporting challenge, a mental game, a memory game, a way of

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2 Steven Mead, “An Interview with Steven Mead in Melbourne, FL,”5.
communicating, and a way of expressing my emotions. What other single subject can do that for a human being?³

How Mead’s career will evolve is uncertain because his musical interests are diverse. He comments, “I think what I’ve tried to do is move things forward evenly on different fronts.” Mead mentions that he loves to conduct and has received much positive feedback having been told he is “clear and exciting.” Mead makes this comment:

When I get really fed-up with playing, which I can’t imagine, but it’ll probably come at some time, then I’ll probably jump to conducting . . .⁴

There are numerous paths Mead could potentially take as his career matures. Mead reflects on the state of commissioning new works on occasion, and makes the following statements:

I’m not as active really as I should be probably for commissioning. Simply because if you’re on the road the whole time and hopping between gigs and traveling and I’ve got a CD business now, not “seedy” a C-D business (laughs), as well as the sales side of the website . . . You know if you’re going to keep an eye on everything as well as practicing and keeping yourself in shape you just run out of hours in a day. So I could be doing more, but I think at the age of forty three I’ve probably done enough that I could take my foot off the gas for a year or two before I hit the floor with it again. I want to get a bit more space then I’ll probably commission some more pieces.⁵

Obviously Mead’s choices to supplement his career are many, and future income during his later years may depend more on his recording business. However, it is difficult to speculate that he would resign from his teaching position at the Royal Northern College of Music. In this respect it would not be impossible to imagine Mead gradually transitioning from master performer to master teacher.

A student questionnaire was sent to Mead’s former and current students via email and post. The questionnaire covered topics of pedagogy, teaching methods, anecdotal


⁴ Ibid., 12.

⁵ Ibid., 11.
stories as well as other questions about brass playing equipment. The following are selected student responses to six questions on the student questionnaire. Whether the students were British, European or American, their answers demonstrate the level of Mead’s dedication and influence to their playing and personal development.

4. Why did/do you want to study with Steven Mead?

Once I had started learning to play the Euphonium, my brass teacher at school recommended that I get hold of some of Steve’s recordings “to have a listen.” Generally intrigued, I hopped to the local library and found his World of the Euphonium Volume 1 CD, and couldn’t put it down once I’d listened to it through! Since that day, I have always seen Steve as an idol, and believe his Euphonium playing and teaching to be unparalleled in the world today. He has always been a source of enthusiasm and inspiration to me as a player, and to be able to have lessons off him is a true privilege.  

He has succeeded and made a path for many to follow and his fantastic playing.

I wanted to study with Steven Mead not only because he plays how I want to play, but he does what I want to do. He tours the world playing concerts, giving master classes and teaches at a university. He also works closely with Besson which is something I’d like to do someday as well.

Because at the time, he was the only Euphonium-soloist I’ve ever seen in a concert. Because I was fascinated by his playing and thought I could learn an awful lot of him, musically, technically and experience-wise.

I met him in 1991 at the National Youth Brass Band of Switzerland. His teaching has pushed me very well!

I practically idolized him when I was growing up. There were no euphonium teachers in my area so I would listen to him and imitate his sound and style to learn how he did things. Over time, I saw how influential he was in the field of euphonium. I wanted to push myself to be at my best and give myself the best


7 Adam Frey, student questionnaire response, 19 August 2007.

8 Sean Odem, student questionnaire response, 14 April 2007.


10 Ueli Kipfer, student questionnaire response, 1 March 2007.
opportunity to succeed. The RNCM is in the center of the banding world and has one of the greatest euphonium players out there. On a whim I applied and was accepted. It seemed like a no brainer. This and North Texas were some of the best choices out there but I wanted a cultural experience also.\textsuperscript{11}

5. What aspects of his playing or teaching methods influenced your decision to study with Steven Mead?

Steve has an innate ability to be able to play beautifully in all styles, either with expressive tone and phrasing, or lightning technique. It’s a sheer joy to hear him play, and the chance to learn from him is an honour.\textsuperscript{12}

Overall, Steve commands the instrument versus letting the instrument limit him. His teaching was clear and to the point.\textsuperscript{13}

Steve is somewhat of a perfectionist. He expects a lot from his students and he isn’t there just to collect another paycheck. He wants all of his student to succeed in everything they do including things outside of music. He is a very friendly person and my relationship with him was and still is more on a friendship level than a student/teacher relationship.\textsuperscript{14}

First of all the AIR CONTROL! then the musicality and his playing style.\textsuperscript{15}

Within five minutes of my hour audition, he knew that a tuba player had taught me how to breathe. He labels everyone’s history amazingly accurately and sets out to fix individual things like that breathing . . . .

. . . He said that he was paying attention to whether he could teach me as much as whether I could play. He pushed me beyond my limit and then in my audition taught me that skill to see if I could pick up on it. It was a style of audition completely new to me and it really makes sense.\textsuperscript{16}

The aspects of his playing I enjoy the most are his full, robust tone, his fast, clear technique, and the way he can really sing through his instrument. Through previous lessons with Steve, I felt like the way he conveyed teaching ideas and

\textsuperscript{11} Amy Schumaker, student questionnaire response, 17 July 2008.
\textsuperscript{12} Alexander Seedhouse, student questionnaire response, 2 September 2007.
\textsuperscript{13} Adam Frey, student questionnaire response, 19 August 2007.
\textsuperscript{14} Sean Odem, student questionnaire response, 14 April 2007.
\textsuperscript{15} Ueli Kipfer, student questionnaire response, 1 March 2007.
\textsuperscript{16} Amy Schumaker, student questionnaire response, 17 July 2008.
pedagogy to me were very different than the way I had been taught – and I wanted more!  

10. What is your most memorable experience as a student of Steven Mead?

Too many to mention, but I suppose the obvious choice would always be the first time I met him. However, collectively, all of the concerts that I have seen him play live at have been the most memorable times for me. Hearing him live you can really see him in his element, which has always been a true inspiration to me. 

A few times I was lucky enough to travel to Fenny Drayton to have lessons with Steve at his house. It was great to see James and Alicia as well as the fun drive in the Rover from Nuneaton train station. We always worked hard for a time, had some lunch, played a bit more and then had to dash to the train station…always just in time (Steve knows exactly how long it takes). 

My most memorable experiences with Steve are probably our “social outings” with the studio after a long day of playing.

Going to the ITEC in Denver with the whole Euphonium studio and Steve.

In one lesson, he told me that I owned *Coleurs En Mouvements* that I made it my own more than anyone else he had heard. That really gave confidence in my musical competence. He also had me play the cadenza for the euphonium class three times from three different angles so that they could all see ability to manipulate the fourth valve. I was on cloud nine that day!

Probably the first lesson I ever had with him. I don’t much remember what went on, but was on cloud-nine the entire time. I mean, this guy is my hero, and now I am playing for him!

11. What would you consider to be Mead’s best qualities as a teacher?

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19 Adam Frey, student questionnaire response, 19 August 2007.


Steve has an infectious enthusiasm for both the Euphonium, and music making. He has patience, understanding, and a broad knowledge about all brass playing, making him an unparalleled teacher to have.  

His dedication to precision and knowledge of how to achieve greater clarity. Whether it is a little legato tongue in the middle of a slurred passage or an alternate fingering that makes the pitches center that much more helps bring the performance again to one hundred percent instead of ninety-eight or ninety-nine.

His best quality is his experience. He's played so much and been through a lot so if there is anything you would ever want or need to know, he would be able to tell you about it.

[His best qualities are his] physiological skills i.e., visualization, auralisation, breathing, focus etcetera.

World class instrumentalist, very good with musicality and he’s a very friendly teacher!

The best quality that I can think of is his desire to impart his knowledge, and the determination that he puts into his teaching. There are so many good musicians out there that are HORRIBLE teachers. Steve really cares about his students, and makes that know to them.

12. In what ways has Mead influenced your musical philosophies?

I suppose Steve has shown me to just enjoy my music making, and to enable others, whom I may teach in the future, to do so also. It’s also important not to let it get you down when things aren’t going so well, but to pick yourself up and carry on working away at it - things don’t happen overnight.


26 Sean Odem, student questionnaire response, 14 April 2007.


Play precisely as you can totally control this. Learn to master your instrument. As a teacher, I try to instill in my students the need to understand and master the many small facets of playing technique so when they get ready to put them into a piece, then they can do things without letting the instrument limit them. As far as playing, I think Steve has made me go for it!! Really push the limits of the instrument in regards to range, technique demands, and of course audience.\textsuperscript{31}

Patience, experience, excellent technical (instrumental) skills he can explain very clearly.\textsuperscript{32}

Everything! Playing, teaching, and also his musical mood go into my conducting work!\textsuperscript{33}

He gets so involved with his students and goes beyond just the classroom. I think in the future I will look at students as my personal investment into the future of euphonium because that’s what he does.\textsuperscript{34}

He has made me more aware of different ways to approach each student. Each student is different, and they don’t all learn in the same manner.\textsuperscript{35}

16. In a strictly nonmusical sense, how has your time with Steven Mead affected your outlook on life?

Being inspired by Steve has encouraged me to further pursue the musical side of my life, by applying to study music in higher education (RNCM), which is something that I am highly enjoying and will enjoy for my future years there.\textsuperscript{36}

I think it has shown me to value time with people and make the most of it. Be as efficient as possible with your time because you can do so much in so little time.\textsuperscript{37}

I’m a lot more out-going than I used to be, more assertive. And I’ve started to like beer a little bit more!\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{31} Adam Frey, student questionnaire response, 19 August 2007.

\textsuperscript{32} Philippe Schwartz, student questionnaire response, 10 April 2007.

\textsuperscript{33} Ueli Kipfer, student questionnaire response, 1 March 2007.

\textsuperscript{34} Amy Schumaker, student questionnaire response, 17 July 2008.

\textsuperscript{35} Aaron Tindall, student questionnaire response, 22 October 2007.

\textsuperscript{36} Alexander Seedhouse, student questionnaire response, 2 September 2007.

\textsuperscript{37} Adam Frey, student questionnaire response, 19 August 2007.

\textsuperscript{38} Sean Odem, student questionnaire response, 14 April 2007.
To take every opportunity and perform to the highest level, be committed one hundred percent, never quit in anything I do.\textsuperscript{39}

To enjoy every possible minute the life!\textsuperscript{40}

I hope that when I am his age, I will still be able to be learning new things and taking the euphonium to new places. Also, I see what he does and realize that there are things in this world that I want – and things that I want more than the euphonium. Certain aspects of his life put this into perspective for me.\textsuperscript{41}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item Andrew Porter, student questionnaire response, 4 May 2007.
\item Ueli Kipfer, student questionnaire response, 1 March 2007.
\item Patrick Stuckemeyer, student questionnaire response, 12 January 2007.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
APPENDIX A

HUMAN RESOURCES APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Office of the Vice President For Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32305-2142
(850) 644-8873 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 12/13/2006

To:
Robert Pendergrast
3700 Capital Circle SE, #520
Tallahassee, FL 32311

Dept.: MUSIC SCHOOL

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
The Musical Career and Teaching Philosophies of Euphonist Steven J. Mead

The forms that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be Exempt per 45 CFR § 46.101(b) 2 and has been approved by an accelerated review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If the project has not been completed by 12/12/2007 you must request renewed approval for continuation of the project.

You are advised that any change in protocol in this project must be approved by resubmission of the project to the Committee for approval. Also, the principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unexpected problems causing risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols of such investigations as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Protection from Research Risks. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Paul Ebbers
HSC# 2006.0825
INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWS AND/OR OBSERVATIONS

I freely and voluntarily and without element of force or coercion, consent to be a participant in the research project entitled "The Life and Teaching of Euphoniumist, Steven J. Mead."

This research is being conducted by Robert Pendergast, who is pursuing a Doctorate in Euphonium Performance at the Florida State University (Tallahassee, Florida). I understand that the purpose of his research project is to document the performing and teaching career of Steven Mead for future generations of euphoniumists.

I understand that I may be observed in a lesson format and/or interviewed by Robert Pendergast. This will be documented with a mini disc recorder, a video camera recorder, or both. Upon completion of this study, all recordings will not be destroyed; they will be given to Steven Mead and may be used in the future for his own benefit or educational purposes.

I realize that I am not required to participate; that if I choose to participate, my participation is totally voluntary; and I may stop participation at any time. I am aware that I do not have to answer any questions that I am uncomfortable answering. If I do not want certain responses used in the final project, I have a choice of either not answering the questions or stating during the interview that the response is to remain confidential.

If specifically requested, all information will be kept confidential and will be identified by a subject code number. I realize that unless I request otherwise, my name and information gathered from these lessons or interviews might appear in the final research paper.

Please indicate your preference by checking the appropriate box:

☐ I wish for my name to be anonymous in this study. If information is used from my interview it will be kept confidential and my name will be substituted with a subject code number.

☐ I wish for my name to be published as a reference to any material used.

I understand there is minimal risk involved if I agree to participate in this study.

I understand there are benefits for participating in this research project. First my own awareness about my education may be increased. Second, I will be providing other euphoniumists with my valuable insight into Steven J. Mead’s teaching.

I understand this consent may be withdrawn at any time without prejudice. Length of time commitment may be decided by the participant, but will not exceed one month.

I understand that I may contact Robert Pendergast at 850.893.5610 or by e-mail, stevenmeadtreantise@yahoo.com, for answers to questions about this research or my rights. Further information can be found by contacting my major professor, Paul Ebbers at 850.644.4449, pebbers@mailer.fsu.edu or the Institutional Review Board at www.research.fsu.edu/humansubjects/index.html.

I have read and understand this consent form.

(Subjects Signature) ____________________________ (Date) ____________
APPENDIX B
MEAD MASTER CLASS PERMISSION LETTER

I, Steven Mead, owner of the copyright to the work known as University of Houston, Moores School of Music Master Class hereby authorize Robert Pendergast to use the following material as part of his treatise to be submitted to the Florida State University.

Opening Remarks
Open Questions Discussion (vibrato)

I further extend this authorization to University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, for the purposes of reproducing and distributing copies of the work.

___________________________
Steven Mead
### APPENDIX C

#### STEVEN MEAD EVENTS 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Concert with Gwent Youth Brass Band, cond. Ian Porthouse. County Hall, Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran NP44 2XH</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| January 12 | Italy   | Masterclass and recital with piano, Turin.  
  - 9.30 - 12.00 and 15.00 - 17.30: masterclass  
  - 20.30: Concert at "Sala polivalente -scuole elementari via Trieste" - Volpiano (Torino)  
  Further details: fabio.pardo@buffetcrampon.fr |
| January 19 | Holland | Dutch National Tuba Euphonium Day. 10am-10pm Jac.P.Thijisse College, De Bloemen 65, Castricum.  
  Further details: www.emergo.org info@emergo.org Tel: Rene Bos (0251) 650434 or (06) 50662900 |
| January 27 | UK      | RNCM Festival Of Brass (25-27th). Soloist Sunday 27th, 7pm with Grimethorpe Colliery Band (Euphonium Concerto, V.Cosma) |
| January 28 | UK      | Workshop for RAF, Uxbridge, London |
| February 1-3 | UK  | Belfast, N.Ireland. Soloist (along with Roger Webster, cornet and Sue Blyth, vocalist).  
  Accompanied by ‘Virtuoso Brass’ cond. Jonathan Corry  
  - Sat. 2nd 7.30pm East Belfast Mission. Tickets: £6 Philip Pentland: 07931 879587  
  - Saturday (2nd) Masterclass 2-4pm Salvation Army Halls, Sydenham  
  - Sunday 3rd soloist at 10.30am and 2pm services |
| February 8-10 | Austria  | Soloist/conductor with Sound Inn Brass. Mühlvierte, close to Weinberg, Upper Austria |
| February 16-24 | Spain  | Concerts and CD recording with Spanish Brass  
  - 17 February. – rehearsal  
  - 18 February. - concert in Valencia  
  - 19 February. - concert in Granada  
  - 20 February. – more details to come  
  - 21 and 22 February. - recording in Valencia (Bocchino label) |

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 5-11</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Brass Band of Battle Creek, Spring concert in Battle Creek (8th) and tour of Florida. Schedule:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14-16</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>CD recording with Sound Inn Brass, Weinberg Castle, Upper Austria (Bocchino label).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 29-30</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Concert in Metz. The Arsenal Concert Hall in Metz. Also, masterclass and recital in &quot;Conservatoire de Musique&quot;. Further details from: Jean-Luc Didier, email: <a href="mailto:c2rbiblio@ca2m.com">c2rbiblio@ca2m.com</a>.</td>
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<td>April 4-6</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Concert.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 11-13</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Concert and masterclass in Turi, to be confirmed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 18-20</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Solo CD Recording, RNCM with Tomoko Sawano (piano) (Bocchino label).</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25-27</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Concert (26th) with band in Idar-Oberstein, in Rheinland-Pfalz. More info from: Dr.Eric Grandjean.</td>
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<td>May 1-4</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>European BB Championships.</td>
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<td>May 16-18</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Solo CD Recording with The Whitburn Band, Scotland (Bocchino label).</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 26-31</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Besson Workshops and concert for Wessex Brass Band Association, more info to come.</td>
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<td>June 2-10</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Concert with Osaka Municipal Band, world premiere Euphonium Concerto (Peter Graham). Also other workshops, more info to come.</td>
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- June 7 (Sat) 15:00 Masterclass & Mini-Concert / Miki-Gakki (Kitade Hall), Osaka.
- June 8 (Sun) 14:00 Mini-Recital / Buffet Crampon Japan, Tokyo "Salle Pavillon d'Or", Mr. Mitsuru Saito.
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<td>June 11-15</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>CD Production with Eikanger Bjorsvik BB</td>
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<td>June 22-29</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>ITEC 2008, University of Cincinnati <a href="http://www.itea.org">www.itea.org</a> World premiere of Euphonium Concerto (with symphony orchestra)</td>
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<td>July 1-2</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>July 1st, concert in Alzira, with Spanish Brass quintet at their summer festival. Concert begins 8.00 PM July 2nd, Masterclass at Spanish Brass summer festival. See Spanish Brass Alzira website for more details</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 8-19</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Tour of Japan, as soloist with the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland, Conductor : Richard Evans</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• 8th Tues - Seitoku Gakuen University, Chiba</td>
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<td>• 9th Wed - Senzoku College of Music in Yokohama</td>
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<td>• 11th Fri - Mielparque Hall, Osaka</td>
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<td>• 12th Sat - Parc Joyo Plum Hall, Kyoto</td>
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<td>• 13th Sun - Hibiki Hall, Fukuoka</td>
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<td>• 15th Tues - Act City Hamamatsu, Hamamatsu</td>
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<td>• 18th Fri - Shinjuku Bunka Centre, Tokyo</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 25</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Concert with Audi Blasephilharmonie, Reduit Tilly, part of Audi Summer Concerts AUDI AG I/GP-U 85045 Ingolstadt Tel. +49 (0)841 / 89 32 667 Fax. +49 (0)841 / 89 36 195 Mobil +49 (0)151 / 5280 4917 (BIK: 570 904) <a href="mailto:oliver.scharfenberg@audi.de">oliver.scharfenberg@audi.de</a> <a href="http://www.audi.com">www.audi.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 3-9</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Trakai Fanfare Band Festival Arvydas Miseikis, teacher, conductor . Karaimu 10 LT- 21104, Trakai Lithuania Tel. +370-686-26842 Email: <a href="mailto:amiseikis@gmail.com">amiseikis@gmail.com</a> or Bert Langeler, Email: <a href="mailto:info@blm.nl">info@blm.nl</a> or <a href="mailto:bertlangeler2003@hotmail.com">bertlangeler2003@hotmail.com</a> Website: <a href="http://www.blm.nl">www.blm.nl</a></td>
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<td>August 15-17</td>
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<td>Visit to Chicago, USA with Brass Band of Battle Creek, including concert at Millennium Park, Chicago, Sunday 17th August.</td>
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<td>August 19</td>
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<td>Chicago, possible concert with BBBC, to be confirmed</td>
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<td>August 31-September 6</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Buenos Aires . Tuba Euphonium Festival 2008 Contact : Patricio Cosentino Argentina: Esmeralda 1734 , 1834 – Temperley Buenos Aires – Argentina 0054(0)1142647845 00549(0)11(15)60481761 <a href="mailto:tuba_argentina@yahoo.com.ar">tuba_argentina@yahoo.com.ar</a> Germany: Leibnizalle 45, 99425 - Weimar Thüringen – Alemania 0049(0)3643494311 0049(0)1797642225</td>
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<td>September 13</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Symphony Hall, Birmingham British Open Bb Championships, conducting <strong>The Whitburn Band</strong></td>
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<td>September 15-21</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Three concerts in Tokyo (19th) Nagoya (20th) Osaka (21st) with Shoichiro Hokazono, Roland Szentpali, Rex Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 26</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Concert with the Wallberg Band, Hotel Wallberg, CH-8604 Volketswil, 19.30hrs contact: <a href="mailto:h.adank@bluewin.ch">h.adank@bluewin.ch</a> TEL: 0041 43 444 96 55</td>
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<td>October 2-4</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Music Fair in Reid, Austria. More details to come</td>
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<td>October 24-26</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Concert. More details to come</td>
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<td>November 16</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Brass in Concert Championships. More details to come!</td>
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<td>December 3-7</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Brass Band of Battle Creek, Xmas concerts</td>
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<td>December 29-20</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Petraces. Concert and workshops. More info to come</td>
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<td>June 7 (Sat) 15:00 Masterclass &amp; Mini-Concert / Miki-Gakki (Kitade Hall). Osaka</td>
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<td>June 8 (Sun) 14:00 Mini-Recital / Buffet Crampon Japan, Tokyo “Salle Pavillon d'Or” Mr. Mitsuru Saito - guest performer.</td>
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<td>June 9 (Mon) 16:30-18:30 Masterclass &amp; Mini-Concert / Kunitachi College of Music, Tokyo Mr. Ando, - guest performer.</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX D

DISCOGRAPHY

Alphabetical by Album Title

Featured Soloist


*Classic Quintet Volume 1*. Classic Quintet, Steven Mead, euphonium. Mayrmusic 11035, (N. D.).


*Euphony.* The Royal Northern College of Music Brass Band, Steven Mead, euphonium. Polyphonic Reproductions, Ltd. QPRL 082D, 1996.


*Four Valves Four Slides.* Steven Mead, euphonium, Trombonisti Italiani. ProCultra CD 0405, (N. D.).


*Mead In(n) Brass.* Sound Inn Brass, Steven Mead, euphonium. Weinberg Records. SW0101832, (N. D.).


Guest Soloist


Highlights from the BBC Television Brass Band Contest. Sun Life Band, Steven Mead, euphonium, Polyphonic Reproductions, Ltd., 1983.


Sing, Sing, Sing. Brass Band of Battle Creek, Steven Mead, euphonium. Brass Band of Battle Creek 1993.


Trittico. Desford Colliery Caterpillar Band, Steven Mead, euphonium. DHM 3003.3, (N. D.).


Waters of Myth. Tennessee Technological University Symphonic Band. TTU Recording Services, 1994 CD.

Chamber Music


*Fireworks.* The British Tuba Quartet, Steven Mead and Michael Howard, euphonium, Ken Ferguson and Stuart Birnie, tuba. Polyphonic Reproductions, Ltd., (N. D.).

*March to the Scaffold.* The British Tuba Quartet Steven Mead and Michael Howard, euphonium, Ken Ferguson and Stuart Birnie, tuba. Polyphonic Reproductions, Ltd. QPRZ 014D, (N. D.).
APPENDIX E

RECOMMENDED ETUDE LIST FOR THE ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC BARITONE AND EUPHONIUM STUDIOS

Studies – Euphonium/Baritone: Year 1

You must select and prepare four (as varied as possible), from which two will be selected by the examiners.

1. Arban “Grand Studies,” No. 1 (Boosey and Hawkes)
2. Arban “Grand Studies,” No. 6 (Boosey and Hawkes)
3. Rochut, Melodious Etudes Book. 1 No. 30 (Carl Fischer)
4. Rochut, Melodious Etudes Book. 1 No. 53 (Carl Fischer)
5. Trognee, 30 Etudes Melodiques No.1 (Editions BIM)
6. Trognee, 30 Etudes Melodiques No.28 (Editions BIM)
7. Blazhevich, Clef Studies, No.73 (International Music Company)
8. Blazhevich, Clef Studies, No.82 (International Music Company)
9. Reynolds 48 Etudes for Trumpet, No.4 (Schirmer)
10. Court, “Reflections” from New Concert Studies for Euphonium Volume 1 (DeHaske)
11. Curnow, “Steeplechase” from New Concert Studies for Euphonium Volume 1 (DeHaske)
12. Ellerby, “Freewheeling” from New Concert Studies for Euphonium Volume 1 (DeHaske)
13. Vizzutti, “Energy Burst” from New Concert Studies for Euphonium Volume 1 (DeHaske)
14. Van der Roost, “Arpegietto” from Advanced Concert Studies for Euphonium (DeHaske)
15. Bulla, “Facile” from New Concert Studies for Euphonium Volume 1 (DeHaske)

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Studies – Euphonium/Baritone: Year 2

You must select and prepare four (as varied as possible), from which two will be selected by the examiners.

1. Arban, “Grand Studies” No.2 (Boosey and Hawkes)
2. Arban, “Grand Studies” No.12 (Boosey and Hawkes)
3. Rochut, *Melodious Etudes* Book 2, No. 68 (Carl Fischer)
4. Rochut, *Melodious Etudes* Book 2, No. 82 (Carl Fischer)
5. Reynolds, *48 Etudes for Trumpet*, No.16 (Schirmer)
6. Reynolds, *48 Etudes for Trumpet*, No.24 (Schirmer)
8. Paudert, *24 Studies*, No.21 (Southern Music Company)
10. *Contemporary Studies*, Book 8, No. 6 (Gerard Billaudot)
11. Hadermann, “Burlesque” from *New Concert Studies for Euphonium* Volume 1 (DeHaske)
12. De Haan, “Play Time” from *New Concert Studies for Euphonium* Volume 1 (DeHaske)
13. Graham, “Cyberspace” from *Advanced Concert Studies for Euphonium* (DeHaske)
14. Swerts, “Chain” from *Advanced Concert Studies for Euphonium* (DeHaske)
15. Ellerby, “Smooth Operator” from *Advanced Concert Studies for Euphonium* (DeHaske)

Year 3

You will be required to play three (those to be played will be posted at least two weeks prior to assessment)


5. Milde, *75 Etudes for Bassoon*, No.26 (Gerard Billaudot)

6. Milde, *75 Etudes for Bassoon*, No.31 (Gerard Billaudot)

7. Reynolds, *48 Etudes for Trumpet*, No.17 (Schirmer)


9. *Contemporary Studies*, Book 8, No. 9 (Gerard Billaudot)


11. Hadermann, “El Moncayo” from *Advanced Concert Studies for Euphonium* (DeHaske)

12. Graham, “Time Zones” from *Advanced Concert Studies for Euphonium* (DeHaske)

13. Kuwahara, “Counterattack of Godzilla” from *Advanced Concert Studies for Euphonium* (DeHaske)

14. Ellerby, “False Relations” from *Advanced Concert Studies for Euphonium* (DeHaske)

15. Schoonenbeek, “The Quest” from *Advanced Concert Studies for Euphonium* (DeHaske)
APPENDIX F

RECOMMENDED SOLO REPERTOIRE
FOR THE ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC EUPHONIUM AND BARITONE STUDIOS

Legend:

P = piano  B = brass band
CO = chamber orchestra  Str. O = string orchestra
WB = wind band  SO = symphony orchestra
U = unaccompanied  V= vibraphone
Or = organ  PE = percussion

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Accompaniment</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
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<tr>
<td>Allegro et Finale</td>
<td>E. Bozza</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Alphonse Leduc</td>
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<td>Allegro Maestoso</td>
<td>J. Koetsier</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Donemus</td>
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<td>Andante and Allegro</td>
<td>J. Ed Barat</td>
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<td>CBCI</td>
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<td>Bacarolle &amp; Chanson Bachique</td>
<td>Selmer-Collery</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Alphonse Leduc</td>
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<td>Chamber Concerto No. 2</td>
<td>D. Townsend</td>
<td>CO/P</td>
<td>Mercury MC</td>
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<td>Concert Fantasie</td>
<td>G.Cords</td>
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<td>Cundy-Bettoney</td>
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<td>Concert Piece</td>
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<td>Boosey &amp; Hawkes</td>
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<td>H. Hoshina</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>P. Sparke</td>
<td>B/P</td>
<td>R. Smith</td>
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<td>Lyric Suite</td>
<td>D.H. White</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Schirmer</td>
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<td>Impromptu</td>
<td>M. Poot</td>
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<td>Andel Uit.</td>
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<td>Introduction et Danse</td>
<td>J. Ed. Barat</td>
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<td>Buffet- rampon</td>
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<td>Preludium</td>
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<td>Rhapsody for Euphonium</td>
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<td>Romanza Andaluza</td>
<td>P. Sarasate, arr. K. Karjalainen</td>
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<td>Romance, Op. 62</td>
<td>E. Galliard</td>
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<td>Romance (from Tuba Concerto)</td>
<td>T. R. George</td>
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<td>Sonata for Euphonium and Strings</td>
<td>A. Roper</td>
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<td>Sonata in F Major</td>
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### Year 2

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<td>T. Kassatti</td>
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<td>D. Gillingham</td>
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<td>M. Mailman</td>
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<td>Boosey &amp; Hawkes</td>
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<td>Concertino for Euphonium and Piano</td>
<td>R. Wilhelm</td>
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<td>Concertino</td>
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<td>WB / P</td>
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<td>Gypsy Airs</td>
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<td>Symphonic Variants for Euphonium and Band</td>
<td>J. Curnow</td>
<td>SO / W / B / P</td>
<td>Jensen / TUBA Press</td>
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APPENDIX G

REQUIRED ORCHESTRAL AND BRASS BAND EXCERPTS
FOR THE ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC EUPHONIUM AND
BARITONE STUDIOS

Excerpts: Euphonium

These lists cover the broad range of the instruments repertoire and are a mix of brass band and orchestral excerpts. The list of those excerpts required for the exam will be posted at least two weeks before the exam.

Year 1

Brass Band:
- *Belmont Variations*, Sir Arthur Bliss Arr. F. Wright
- *Dances and Arias*, E. Gregson
- *Diversions on A Bass Theme*, G. Lloyd
- *Journey into Freedom*, E. Ball
- *Kenilworth*, A. Bliss
- *Land of the Long White Cloud*, P. Sparke
- *Resurgam*, E. Ball
- *Sinfonietta*, E. Leidzen
- *Triumphant Rhapsody*, G. Vinter
- *Sovereign Heritage*, Beaver

Orchestral:
- “Bydlo” from *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Mussorgsky / Ravel
- *Third Essay for Orchestra*, S. Barber
- *The Planets*, G. Holst
- *Pines of Rome*, Respighi
- *The Bolt*, Shostakovich

Year 2

Brass Band:
- *Harmony Music*, P. Sparke
- *Odin*, A. Butterworth
- *Fireworks*, E. Howarth
- *Variations on a Ninth*, G. Vinter
- *Of Men and Mountains*, E. Gregson
- *Le Roi D’Ys*, Lalo Arr. F. Wright
- *Carnival Romain*, Berlioz
- *Variations on Shining River*, E. Rubbra
- *Land of the Long White Cloud*, P. Sparke

---

- *Benvenuto Cellini*,+ Berlioz
- *Sinfonietta,* E. Leidzen

**Orchestral:**
- *Kossuth,*~ B.Bartok
- 7th Symphony,~ G.Mahler
- *Ein Heldenleben,*~ R.Strauss
- *Fantasia on British Sea Songs,*~ H.Wood
- *Capriccio,*+ Janacek

**Year 3**

**Brass Band:**
- *Between the Moon and Mexico,*+ P. Sparke
- *Revelation,*+ P. Wilby
- *Paganini Variations,*+ P. Wilby
- *Blitz,* D. Bougeois
- *Journey into Freedom,*+ E. Ball
- *Rhapsody in Brass,* D. Goffin
- *Diadem of Gold,* G. Bailey Arr. F. Wright
- *Variations on a Ninth,*+ G. Vinter
- *Variations on an Enigma,*+ Sparke
- *New Jerusalem,* P. Wilby
- *Masquerade,* P. Wilby

**Orchestral:**
- *Don Quixote*~ R. Strauss
- *Pini di Roma* O. Respighi
- *Credendum* W. Schuman
- Symphony No.7~ R. Harris
- Symphony No.7~ G. Mahler
- *Ein Heldenleben*~ R. Strauss

* = as written in Our Heritage Vol. 2
+ = to be played from the brass band/orchestral part, with cuts as directed by S. Mead
~ = as written in Orchestral Excerpts for Euphonium and Bass Trumpet

**Baritone: Excerpts**
These lists cover the broad range of the instruments repertoire and are a mix of brass band and orchestral excerpts. The list of those excerpts required for the exam will be posted at least two weeks before the exam.

N. B. There are passages in some excerpts that require a four valve Baritone. If the student plays a three valve instrument, these passages may be omitted.

**Year 1**

**Brass Band:**
• High Peak, E. Ball
• Fantasy for Brass Band, M. Arnold
• Variations for Brass Band, R. Vaughan Williams
• Salute to Youth, G. Vinter
• Triumphant Rhapsody, G. Vinter
• Resurgam, E. Ball
• Severn Suite, E. Elgar
• Journey into Freedom, E. Ball
• Moorside Suite, G. Holst
• Comedy Overture, J. Ireland
• Cloudcatcher Fells, J. McCabe

Orchestral:
• 7th Symphony - G. Mahler
• “Bydlo” from Pictures at an Exhibition - Mussorgsky / Ravel

Year 2

Brass Band:
• Of Men and Mountains, E. Gregson
• Tristan Encounters, M. Ellerby
• Pageantry, H. Howells
• Downland Suite, J. Ireland
• Isaiah 40, R. Redhead
• Year of the Dragon, P. Sparke
• Theme and Co-operation, J. Horovitz
• Ballet for Band, J. Horovitz
• Connotations, E. Gregson
• Frontier Overture, M. Ball
• Songs for BL, E. Howarth
• Fireworks, E. Howarth

Orchestral:
• Ein Heldenleben,~ R. Strauss
• Don Quixote,~ R. Strauss

Year 3

Brass Band:
• Montage, P. Graham
• Life Divine, C. Jenkins
• Dove Descending, P. Wilby
• Variations on a 9th, G. Vinter
• Between the Moon and Mexico, P. Sparke
• Blitz, D. Bourgeois
• Cambridge Variations, P. Sparke
• Harmony Music, P. Sparke
• Variations on a Enigma, P. Sparke
•  *Lowry Sketchbook*, P. Wilby
•  *Jazz*, P. Wilby

**Orchestral:**
-  *The Planets*,~ G. Holst
-  *Capriccio*,~ Janacek

~ = as written in Orchestral Excerpts for Euphonium and Bass Trumpet.
All others to be played from the brass band first baritone part, with cuts as directed by S. Mead and B. Childs
APPENDIX H

TIME TO SHAPE-UP
ONE WEEK PRACTICE SCHEDULE

It's time to work out, so here goes my one week recovery plan

**Day 1** (Two sessions twenty minutes each)

1. Stand tall - stretch up with the arms, then down, then higher, breathing in and out each time, stretch higher and breath deeper and slower each time. Repeat for three minutes

2. Twist the body left and right keeping you head still, again increasing width of the twist and the speed, don't forget to breath . . . repeat three minutes

3. Take a deep breath and flap the lips (NOT buzz), make the lips sound like the engine of a Harley Davidson on low revs, hold sound for five seconds, then six then eight then ten. Rest for a minute and repeat

4. Timed inhalation and exhalation, four(seconds):4, 4:6, 4:8, 4:10, 4:4, 6:4, 8:4, 10:4

5. Repeat No.3


7. Rest for five minutes

8. Repeat No. 6 tonguing four crotchets (quarter notes) for each pitch, at quarter note = 88

9. Rest for five minutes

10. Slow chromatic one octave scales, up and down in one breath and be very positive with the fingers and keep the throat open all the time, add small crescendo and diminuendo, first legato then with the tongue

11. Gently play your favourite ten minutes of warm up exercises but not too fast or too loud. Limit you Day 1 session to about twenty-five minutes and if possible do it twice in the first day, finishing each session with Exercise 3

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• Walk vigorously for twenty to thirty minutes. Drink lots of water

**Day 2** (Two sessions, thirty minutes each)

All of Day 1 exercises and then:
1. Two note flexibility in descending 4th in eighth notes, starting middle and play as low as you can go. Slowly with firm corners of the mouth and good round space in the middle of the aperture and constant support from the middle of the body, repeat twice

![music notation](image)

2. Pedal tones, four minutes, quite strong but very stable in pitch, keep eyes and throat open keep posture very upright

3. Simple single tongue exercises (Arban)

4. Use *Basics Plus* (Guggenberger) or similar basic method book from the beginning to develop pitch and dynamic range.
   - Take your time, with frequent breaks, stay hydrated
   - Walk vigorously for twenty to thirty minutes. Drink lots of water

**Day 3** (Two sessions forty minutes each)

Repeat Day 1, but compact all exercises into fifteen minutes, gently increasing speed of chromatic scales, and two octaves now, tongue quicker note values of exercise eight, to include triplets and sixteenth notes.

Repeat Day 2, but add the following:

1. Two octave major and minor scales, not too quick and take very deep breaths before you start

2. Practice more extended flexibility exercises but not too fast, use a metronome if possible

3. Long tone exercises, starting middle F-Sharp, G, F, G-Sharp, E, A, E-Flat, B-Flat, D, B, D-Flat, C, C (octave below), each note twenty seconds long
4. Play three of your favourite slow melodies, with full expression and dynamics and make sure you stand up for this . . . things are starting to get “real.”

5. More Basics Plus - type exercises

6. Make sure you warm down, with the “Harley” exercise.
   • Walk vigorously for twenty to thirty minutes. Drink lots of water

**Day 4** (three sessions of twenty minutes, more if you're feeling GOOD)

You're doing fine, feel what you body is allowing you to do and try to increase the performance without “pushing” anything too hard . . . repetition, rest, repetition, rest . . . it pays off, so to be patient.

Try to get the Day 1 breathing exercises to fell much deeper now. The Ultrabreathe trainer can be used right from Day 1 but increase the power and duration of the exercises step by step, day by day. ADD:

1. Two octave arpeggios, tongued and slurred at quite a brisk tempo but always even dynamics

2. Double and triple tongue (e.g. Arban)

3. Sight-read some new exercises or a solo . . . use that “dark” side of the brain.

4. Go back to you favourite slow melodies and now transpose them higher and/or lower . . . use that musical brain of yours

5. Increase pitch range of Day 3 long tone exercise, now continue (alternately higher and lower notes) until you get to high F- Sharp and (two octaves lower F-Sharp) Rest for Three minutes after this.

6. “Rev-up” the Harley exercise, in 2s, 4s, 6s, 8s, 10s
   • Walk vigorously for twenty to thirty minutes. Drink lots of water. Don't forget to warm down each time...pedal tones will do fine.

**Day 5** (Three sessions of thirty minutes, or two of forty-five minutes)

You know you are getting better, but you aren’t there yet; you need to start to tackle more of the lengthy Arban technical exercises, a couple of the Rochut Melodious Etudes, book One or Two: Three if you're really ace!

Step up each of the exercises from the previous days, adding range to the flexibility exercises and some dynamics, Clarke finger studies, keep the dynamics on the soft side and use a metronome.
Take frequent rests now so you don't flatten the lips too much.

Keep the posture upright, eyes always open, keep drinking water.

Take time out to do some more breathing exercises, push the Ultrabreathe exercises harder.

Use the *Basics Plus* range-building exercises and scale exercises.

**Day 6 and 7**

Increase the above to your normal, (or newly elevated) practice schedule, for me its three sessions of seventy-five minutes minimum but hey, you will be as good as you wanna' be!! It's your life, but if a job's worth doing it's worth doing well.

Implement your New Year musical resolutions:

1. Learn six new solos; buy (not photocopy) some new euphonium or baritone solos.

2. Learn all the scales and arpeggios you could never be bothered to learn before

3. Improve your sight-reading, look at a new study or solo for five minutes before you play it. Imagine how it will sound, work out any difficult rhythms, watch accidentals, watch for changes of key and GO FOR IT!!

4. Keep your instrument in good condition, brush the lead pipe out, with a long bendy brush, not just water! This alone could transform your sound and intonation.

5. Don't just own a metronome, use it.

6. Set yourself a challenge, a solo in a concert, a recital, tackle a piece you never thought you'd be able to play, form a quartet, and play duets regularly with a friend in the Band.
   - We're all driven by motivation, the art of musical performance particularly. So it's time to "shape up" and enjoy another year playing your instrument...better than you've ever done before. Good luck

*Steven Mead January 2005*
APPENDIX I

TIMELY ADVICE TO STUDENTS

With students the world over back at their places of learning I always like to remind students of some basic procedures that will ensure they develop their musical skills, build a solid professional reputation and still healthy and happy in the process. I hope these 15 tips will help as the school year gets underway.

1. Keep yourself informed as to what is going on. If you are communicated to by your college, school or university
   a. by notice boards - look at them
   b. by email - check it
   c. by mobile phone - make sure you have one and it works!

2. Keep a diary with you at all times. - “I'll remember, I don't need to write it down” Who are you kidding?

3. Work as a team - The music world is a competitive business but professional colleagues can be there for you for a lifetime.

4. Healthy competition is encouraged - if there's a competition or a audition for a seat, play to win.

5. Be organized with your practice routines - absolutely crucial to your continuing improvement. If you want to be consistent on stage it has to start in the practice room.

6. Never be late for lessons or rehearsals - no excuses, ever!!!!

7. Arrive at lessons/rehearsals already warmed-up - be smart, for your physical and mental well-being turn up at rehearsal and lessons ready to play. It creates a feeling to all those around you, and your teachers, that you are serious musician, can be trusted and are employable.

8. If you have a problem: attendance/punctuality/ illness etcetera let someone know. Keep all necessary phone numbers with you. When there is a genuine problem, know what you need to do to let people know.

9. Organise and catalogue your solo/band repertoire/study music. Don’t keep your music in a rubbishy plastic bag! Keep your music collection catalogued and easy to find, carry what you need for that day or that week with you in a proper folder, you know it makes sense!

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10. If you sign for ensemble music you become totally responsible for it and will have to replace the complete set if parts are lost or damaged. Don't lose someone else's music, either that of a teacher or colleague. You can become instantly despised!

11. Think high quality all the time. Be professional in your attitude - get your 'head' right, everything else follows.

12. Promote yourself - don't be shy in telling people what you do. There are nice ways and ugly ways to do this. Be a very efficient promoter with good ways of operating.

13. Warning: Good reputations take much longer to build than to lose.

14. Look after your body - take exercise, eat healthily, get enough sleep and drink lots of water. Saying it is easy, doing it requires massive willpower. Are you up to the challenge? Your body will thank you if are.

15. Never lose your sense of humour, even in the darkest times of the school year, find a smile, have a laugh, get up and go on!!

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Robert Pendergast holds music performance degrees from the University of North Texas, Florida State University, a post-graduate diploma from the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, England where he studied with euphoniumist Steven Mead. At the University of North Texas, Pendergast studied with Donald C. Little, Marc Dickman, Peggy Heinkel-Wolfe, Jan Kagarice and briefly with Brian Bowman. Pendergast took lessons with Paul Ebbers at the Florida State University (FSU), and was the second euphonium player to earn a Doctor of Music degree from the FSU College of Music. As an international performer, Pendergast has played in Monterrey, Mexico, England and Jönköping, Sweden. He has been a semifinalist or finalist for several international competitions and military band auditions, including the “Presidents Own” Marine Band, “The Pershings Own” Army Band and the West Point Academy Band. Pendergast taught low brass at the Bethune-Cookman College department of music from 2004 to 2006.