

## Member's memory

For me, the music thing started when, as a small child, I asked if I could learn the piano. Well we did have a piano that had been my mother's as a child. But the response was, "No, I had to learn and I didn't like it so I don't want that to happen to you" WELL! That silenced me for decades!

Meanwhile I decided I wanted to learn the violin, partly as it was portable. I mean, who would want to learn the piano if you couldn't carry it round with you? Did childhood music exposure play a part in my final destination? In our ex-pat community, we were left at the Scottish Country Dancing classes on Saturday mornings for years, no doubt to allow shopping to go on unencumbered, but I loved it. SCDS never asked me to perform in public tho, now THERE'S a surprise.

Fast forward to 2002, a bizarre set of circumstances led to me being GIVEN a violin. Mind, it had been rescued from a skip. The man in our local violin shop, where I took it to see if it could be fixed, said in a very surprised voice, "the tone is quite good really", but that was with him playing.

A number of violin teachers up and down the country all abandoned me, possibly rarely going and never practising didn't help? My final, and wonderful, teacher broke some kind of ice to produce a sea change and then, in the violin shop in Glasgow, a small scruffy note announced GFW. That began an ongoing love affair with traditional music, even in the face of years going infrequently, not practising much, struggling with memory and never learning even one tune. My excuse is that life otherwise had me by the coat tails. Now it is very different.

Next episode, for years friend's husband had been telling me how good the Islay Inn session was. Finally, one Jan 2nd, about, I walked in to find a gang of 6 grumpy old men(only joking!), some with beards and all with instruments, none of whom I knew from Adam. As a body, all but one advanced and greeted me in the traditional Hogmanay manner. I wonder if any of them remember the occasion as clearly as me?

Then, while Islay Inn was being renovated, in pub ignominiously recently renamed "The Dram". one of us came up behind me, a little intoxicated, and said "You have to play or you will never get any better" then to my absolute horror, put up his hand and said "she(the cat's mother?) is volunteering to play" and I had to! But he was absolutely right.

The most important thing I realised recently is YOU DO NEED TO PRACTICE EVERY DAY, believe me. But it's worth it. And if you think you know who I am, you are wrong, only I know that.