

18th May 2011
West Dunbartonshire Mental Health Forum
Recovery 2; Peer Support



Are You Being Served?
The staff of Buddy Beat here to serve your every musical need.



Buddy Beat were back on the road once more, this time to Barclay Street Church in Dalmuir, Clydebank for a West Dunbartonshire Mental health Forum event entitled Recovery 2: Peer Support in West Dunbartonshire 2011.

Argyll and Clyde United in Mental Health or ACUMEN as we all know it are partners to this organisation and through David Wright, we were asked to come along and give a 15 minute energiser after the lunch break. David had been liaising with Buddy Beat's Hazel about the day's event and she and Allan went down early to set up the stall.

The Buddy Beat were:-

Jane Bentley, Allan Borland, Hazel Borland, Tom Chalmers, Anne Dowie, Mary Graham, Jackie McDowall, Christine Robertson, Ian Tobin and Noreen Young.

Tom taxied Ian, Anne and Noreen and Christine brought along Mary, Eileen and Jackie and we met Jane there. Although, confusion over the address caused some consternation amongst the travellers and we were all a tad stressed by the time that we touched base. But hey! - That is one of the benefits of drumming; it helps blow away the blues!

Where it all happened...



The event itself began at 9.30am and ran through to 3.30 and was chaired by Buddy Beat friend, his lordship Richard Leckerman, National Development Officer of Breathing Space. The day was chock full of speakers and also included two theatre performances from Forum Theatre.

Anne with her two red Ninjas- Noreen and Eileen



Richard Leckerman and David Wright both welcomed us on arrival, just as the event was breaking for lunch. Allan and Hazel had set the stall up in its very own windowed room situated in the corridor connecting the main church area and the buffet area and the stall and photos boards looked terrific. On the opposite side of this corridor was another windowed room and here Acumen had their information stall, alongside several other support organisations. Jane arrived soon after and we had a quick bite from the extensive buffet and then began to set our chairs and equipment out in readiness for our approaching timeslot.



Tom with the "Host with the Most" - Lord Richard Leckerman

We took our seats at the front of the stage and while Richard Leckerman rounded up everyone, we had a quiet run through of our piece, with Tom on cymbal duty, Christine on ocean drum duty and Allan on thunder drum duty.

Richard brought things to order and said a few words to the audience, which looked to be around the 60 mark. Richard then told everyone that he had experienced Buddy Beat before and that they were “In for a treat”. Nicely put, Richard! He then handed over to Jane and she bounded to the front and introduced us, mentioning that the theme of today’s event “Peer Support” was certainly something that Buddy Beat offers in spades, and plugging away, mentioned that we had made our own film recently where we speak of our peer support. Jane then informed the audience that we would be performing “The Weather Report” and told them a little about what to expect, adding that some audience participation would follow afterwards. Some people laughed at that and Jane quipped “Everyone can make music and the doors are locked!”

So, Jane took her seat in front of us and off we went. We sounded fresh and on the mark and the audience sat attentively as we beat our way through the piece and when we finished we stood up and received a lovely and warm round of applause. From there we wasted no time and Christine, Anne, Noreen and Jackie delivered Boomwhackers to everyone in the hall, including the cartoonist sitting in the corner.



Once everyone was ready for action, Jane invited each coloured section in turn to try out their Boomwhackers, and instantly we saw smiles and heard laughter. Once all the colours had been heard, Jane then asked Buddy Beat to bring in a simple beat as background while each colour played out a beat shown by Jane. From there, Jane then asked everyone to play and let this flow for a little before lifting up a coloured tube, which signified that that particular group was only to be heard and in this way flitted between colours. Keeping this going, Jane would lift two colours at the same time, getting two groups to play simultaneously and she chopped and changed the combinations with increasing speed. We could see that the audience were really enjoying themselves and it was a joy to watch.



Play “Spot David Wright” and win a prize.....

Jane counted to four and gave the Boomwhackers a short reprieve while Buddy beat kept a beat going and then brought the Boomwhackers back into the mix, switching play between the two before then asking Buddy Beat to freestyle. While we did that, Jane instigated a series of Boomwhacker echo and response, all the time supporting the “Greens” who were small in number! After a minute or so of this, Jane then set the audience free, letting them freestyle with Buddy Beat. There was a real sense of connectiveness and the hall rocked and to bring it all to an exhilarating end, we played an almighty rumble! As soon as we finished the audience broke into a really hearty appreciation and there were several shouts of approval from around the hall.



Christine, Mary, Jackie and Eileen – The Four Drumateers

We received some great feedback and we went down very well. We are relatively unknown in Clydebank and Dunbartonshire, so perhaps this will see us break out into that area more in future. What was neat about today was how receptive the audience were to creating music together and that was seen in Jane’s extended Boomwhacker experience. We quickly moved to the back of the hall and as we did so, Richard Leckerman gave us a huge thank you and he further plugged our film. Bless.

That was a short event for us but still very enjoyable and all the gang seemed to be pleased. We congregated back at the stall, took some photos, packed the gear and chatted amongst ourselves. Allan and Hazel had made a few sales and were staying behind a little, waiting for the afternoon break hoping to make some more sales.

Another good one!

Tom and Anne



Jane and Christine



And it's good-bye from us! See you next time!

Words by Tom Chalmers and pictures taken by Tom, Allan and Jane

