

23.08.2011

NHSScotland Event

Quality in Action -SECC Glasgow



As Buddy Beat's name continues to reach new borders, we were asked by the organisers of a prestigious 2 day National Health Service Scotland Event held at Glasgow's Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre to come along and play to the attendees. Initially we were to hold a workshop over lunch but after Jane let the organisers see our film they were bowled over and we were moved to the main stage in the centre's Lomond Auditorium.

Red Alert! Noreen and Eileen



This is one of the leading healthcare events and was the 6th annual event in succession and the theme was Quality in Action and was the first gathering of a Quality Alliance- that is everyone who has a stake in delivering consistently high quality healthcare. The event would demonstrate the progress and the successes NHS Scotland has made in improving sustainable quality healthcare in Scotland, through presentations, discussions and debates



The Buddy Beat was out in force and this was a Buddy Beat performance debut for Margaret Kinnenmont and also for new group member Patricia Fitton. We were also joined by Yvette Pauline, an Occupational Therapist from Dykebar Hospital and Kirsty Gilmour, a student nurse who had only made her first visit to Buddy Beat the previous Thursday. So, with a super squad of 15, The Buddy Beat was:-

- *Jeanette Allan*
- *Karen Auld*
- *Jane Bentley*
- *Marion Bisland*
- *Tom Chalmers*
- *Anne Dowie*
- *Patricia Fitton*
- *Kirsty Gilmour*
- *Mary Graham*
- *Margaret Kinninmont*
- *Jackie McDowall*
- *Eileen McGrory*
- *Yvette Pauline*
- *Christine Robertson*
- *Noreen Young.*



Jane arrived first and was lucky to get parked at the rear, close to the stage and unpacked before any of the gang was even there. The gang arrived by car and by bus and train and a little after twelve we were all secreted away in our own little room. Jane had us arrange the seats as though we were on stage and ran through the itinerary for our 40 minute performance. The group had chosen to perform "The Weather Report" and we ran through this twice before taking our drums and instruments to the auditorium to set ourselves up on stage. As we walked into the auditorium some of us had a real sense of déjà-vu, for this was the very same stage we performed on in March 2009 when we played to the Nurses in Practice Conference, which was the debut performance at the time for our Eileen and Hazel.



Anne ponders what Miss Jane would have us doing.....



Our “slot” was 1.10 to 1.50 and ran over the lunch period, and the hope was the people would drift in and join us after we had been given a hearty plug during the morning’s proceedings.

As the time arrived to begin we could see that we had a rather small audience, but that doesn’t stop The Buddy Beat- we would perform in a phone box if the need ever came up! Just before we started we were joined on stage by Jacqui Lunday, Chief Health Professions Officer with The Scottish Executive and she commented on our playing at The Inchyra Grange Hotel last year during the Allied Health Professionals Collaborating for Change Conference and said that that event had been a terrific success and we were one of the main reasons behind that. What a truly amazing compliment!



The Merry Band- Jacqui Lunday, Yvette, Patricia, Jeanette, Eileen, Margaret, Tom, Anne, Noreen, Christine, Mary, Marion, Jackie and Karen

Jane introduced us and gave a bit of background to our beginnings and to what we are and do. Then we launched into “The Weather Report” with Mary in charge of the Thunder Drum for the first time. Jane brought in the raindrops which swept into a downpour and then the air crackled with thunder and lightning, aided by Tom caracking on the cymbal. That eased off and Christine rolled in with the ocean drum (don’t listen to it too much or it could make you doze off!). From there we moved into



the three layered "Row your Boat" segment. We then arrived at the shoreline where we ended with our three differing rhythms that rocked along until we faded away and finally ended with Christine on the Ocean drum once more. Beautiful!

Next up we showed part of our film "Keep the Beat...Our Journey in Rhythm". The event organisers had cleverly cut our YouTube version to four minutes and they did a tremendous job to ensure that our message was still delivered. The screen was a fair size, and we certainly had not seen our film on such a big screen. As soon as the film finished we jumped straight into a small jamming session with Christine, Anne, Noreen and Tom starting everyone off. The rhythm rolled along and Jane then played each half of the group for a few turns and we ended on a crisp final note! Jane, Jeanette and Christine all gave copies of the DVD to interested people afterwards, furthering our message.

At the Penumbra event towards the end of June, Buddy Beat had incorporated an informal Question and Answer session and this was very successful and Jane decided that this would be a good event to do likewise. Jane had three questions to pitch to the group- the first was "How did you first get involved?" Christine took the microphone first and spoke about being invited by a friend who was part of the group. Eileen said that she had watched Buddy Beat before and never imagined being part of the group, but now she is she loves the group and performing. Tom then said that he had come to Buddy Beat after Jane had attended the final session of an eight week Assertiveness Management course he had been on more than 3 years prior and lastly Mary said that she had been coming for almost 2 years and mentioned how important the group was and made a lovely comment when she stated that Buddy Beat is like her informal family. Lastly, Marion spoke of her time at Dykebar Hospital when she had drummed outdoors with Jane, and discovered that she could make music.

Next up Jane posed the question "How has it helped your recovery?" Eileen took to the microphone and said that the group had helped her self-confidence and now she is able to speak to people who she may have shied away from before. Margaret then spoke and said that she had not taken the chance to join a few years back but was now glad that she had and that when we meet every week she cannot help but smile. Jeanette also spoke about how the group has evolved being her biggest hopes and that we are now self-governing.

Lastly Jane pitched the following question- "What works best for you about the group?" Tom added that it was the friendship that worked best while Christine



reiterated the family aspect of it and told everyone that we all care about one another and offer support when someone isn't feeling good about themselves. Anne said that she had been a member since the very beginning (Buddy Beat will be 4 years old in September 2011!) and that she hopes to still be a member right to the very end, which we all hope is in the very far and distant future!

Jane asked the audience for any questions and one lady said that she had made a study of the benefits to a mental health arts group in Glasgow and how many of our comments resonated with her findings.



Jane then told the audience it was their turn to join in and was aided by Mary and Christine who handed out Boomwhackers and we then sailed through a drum assisted segment where the audience learned little rhythms from Jane. Once everyone was playing away, three quarters of us switched our drums to the chimes and soon the air settled into a rather laid back, easy going beat. Jane stopped the Boomwhackers and gave each colour their own particular rhythm and then we were all off once more until Jane ended things with a brief Echo and response and we then ended on our traditional syncopated stop! Great!

That was our forty minutes over and we removed our gear back to our room where we packed up and had sandwiches for lunch, kindly supplied by the event organisers. Tom, Eileen and Anne wandered around the exhibition hall where Eileen showed her considerable skills at procuring freebies from stalls. Note for Buddy Beat- for the next event just make a shopping list and we can send Our Eileen trooping around the stalls to get everything!

Eileen and Anne toast Buddy Beat's success. Hic!



Quip of the day- well, as we filed out of our dressing room to move to the stage, Margaret piped up -“I feel as though I am on “It Ain’t Half Hot Mum!” Good one, Margaret!



*Breakfast T.V. legend
Anne D- Dowie, not
Diamond- welcomes
Eileen onto her sofa
for a wee chat*



Patricia said that her experience had been “lovely” while Margaret said that she had enjoyed it very much, joking that “the one to one tutorials and mentoring she had received had been invaluable!” And student nurse Kirsty Gilmour also enjoyed herself even though we pitched her in after just one weekly Buddy Beat session. Now we have three more under our Performance Umbrella!

There may not have been many people watching us, but we all had a good time and enjoyed the experience. This model we have- performance piece, film, Q & A and audience participation- would seem to be successful and one that we shall no doubt use again sometime in the future. And it had been two months since we had all been on the road, and it was great to get back out there, together!



Cheryl Cole and Dannii Minogue have just heard that they have been axed from X-Factor. Ah well, there's still Buddy Beat, ladies!



And lastly, our very own Marion announced that it had recently been her birthday one day and her partner Jimmy's the next and they



celebrated by getting engaged. Marion beamed as she told us this exciting news and we congratulated her, telling her that if she wants Buddy Beat to play at her wedding, then book us early to avoid disappointment! Congratulations, Marion!

*Words and pictures (with a little help from Jane, Eileen and Noreen) by Tom Chalmers
23rd August 2011*

