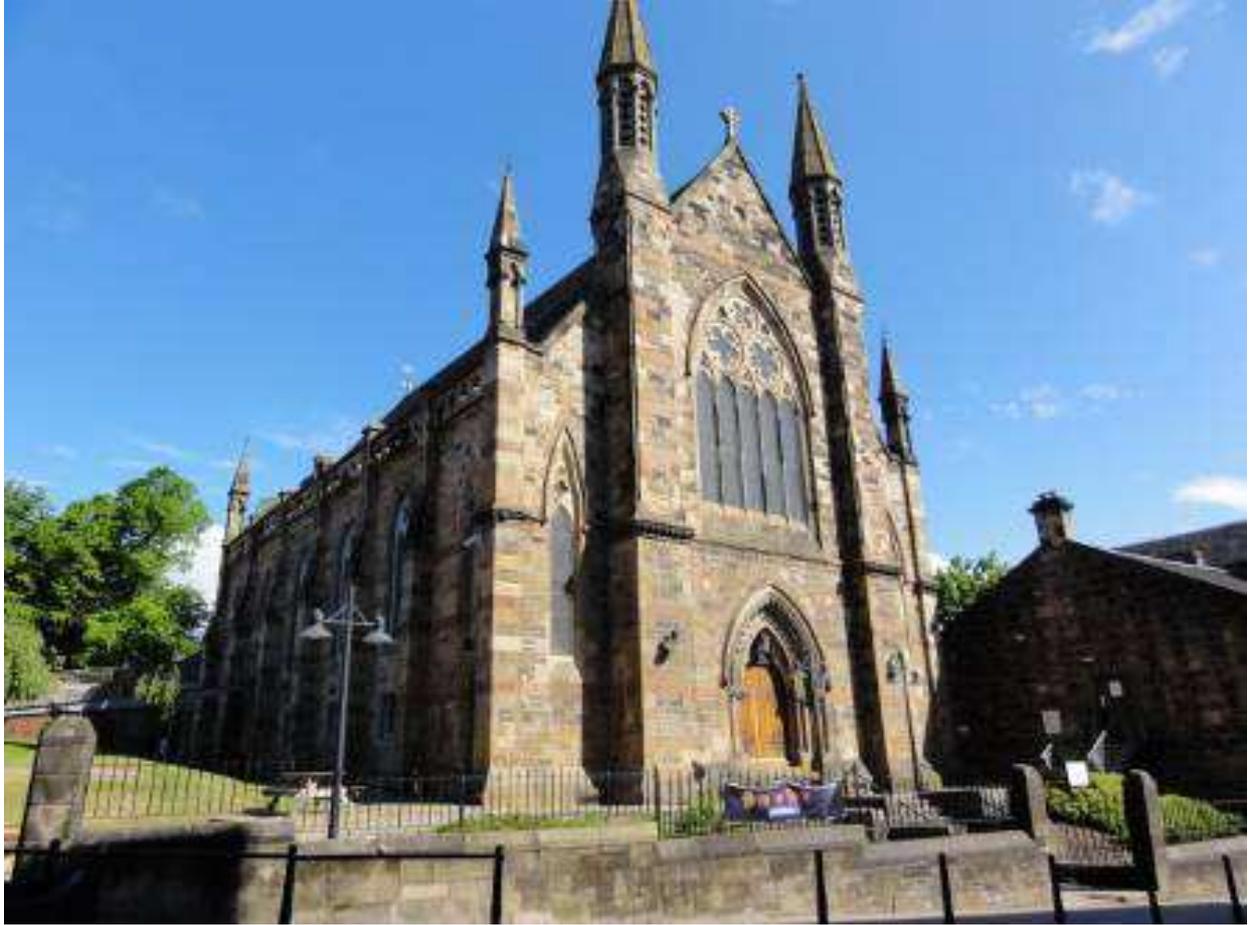


24<sup>th</sup> May 2010



**Message in a Bottle**

The launch of the Message in a Bottle scheme took place in Paisley's The Wynd Centre on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2010, a gloriously sunny day that organiser Maggi Boyd had especially requested.

Buddy Beat member Lesley King has been a key part in the steering group that brought this special idea to fruition. The idea began with Buddy Beat honorary member Maggi Boyd who took the concept forward, enlisting help from various people such as our Lesley and Ann Campbell and Shena Milroy (both from Acumen), and the funding was graciously provided by The Carers Executive Group and The Safer Renfrewshire Partnership.

Message in a Bottle is a scheme which provides emergency services with vital health information and details of someone to be contacted in an emergency. This is a voluntary scheme for use by anyone, and will be particularly useful for those who live alone, or have health conditions or caring responsibilities. Each person stores their information in a plastic bottle and place it inside the door of their fridge, placing a sticker to that effect on the outside of the fridge. In the event of the emergency service being called, they will notice the identifying sticker and access the bottle and its information. If you need emergency treatment or are admitted to hospital due to a sudden illness or accident, the Bottles can help treat you by providing immediate access to medical information which could ultimately save a life.

And so, Maggi Boyd had 13,000 bottles to be handed out in Renfrewshire and used the Wynd Centre to kick the campaign off. Never shy to ask for Buddy Beat's help, Maggi (in her own words) had said that there would be several "high heid yins" attending and that she wanted us to be there to ensure the event went with a bang! Now, who could refuse such an offer? Lesley King set about rustling up numbers and soon enough the gang were enlisted.

The Buddy Beaters were:-

[Karen Auld](#), [Jane Bentley](#), [Allan Borland](#), [Hazel Borland](#), [Tom Chalmers](#), [Anne Dowie](#), [Mary Graham](#), [Lesley King](#), [Jackie McDowall](#), [Eileen McGrory](#) and [Noreen Young](#).

As the hall filled with visitors, schoolchildren and several policemen (they didn't arrest any one of us!) Jane had Buddy Beat quietly playing along. We played freestyle for a short time, then some echo and response and finally our new signature tune "Where's My Lunch?" This all lasted approximately twenty minutes and we received a cheery applause when we finished.

Maggi gave Lesley King the nod and she joined her at the top table, alongside Councillor Eileen McCartin who was there to officially open the campaign and Colin Whiteford, Area Service Manager for the Scottish Ambulance Service. Maggi Boyd called everyone to order and spoke a little about how everything had come about and then she handed over to Councillor McCartin who spoke about the excellence of the scheme and how she hoped it would be a great success. She also informed us that the high school pupils present were from four local schools and they had been instrumental in putting all the bottles and their information sheets together. That sounds like a sore hands job!



*Left to right - Maggi Boyd, Councillor McCartin, Lesley King and Colin Whiteford*

Maggi then introduced our very own Lesley King. Lesley firstly spoke about her being proud to have been involved in Message in a Bottle and how useful it would be to not just herself but to her own family members. Earlier in the week Lesley had been interviewed by The Paisley Daily Express and in the edition issued just that morning, Lesley saw her picture and feature in pride of place but she then humorously informed us that she considered herself to be a tad old to appear on page 3 of a newspaper! That raised a giggle or two! Next, Councillor McCartin was asked to present Lesley with the very first Message in a Bottle, which received a terrific round of applause and they posed for pictures from the local paper. Finally Colin Whiteford spoke about the help these bottles will give to the emergency crews stating that in an average month 1300 emergency calls are made in Renfrewshire and many of these are to people who are unresponsive and in this situations the information in the bottles will be a vital lifeline. Bottles are free and can be obtained from Health Centres, Libraries and GP Surgeries.





The press photographer then wanted a photograph with all four from the top table and also a lot of the schoolchildren involved and once that had been taken, Maggi thanked everyone for coming along, stating that she had found the project fantastic and invigorating and wanted to keep the idea fresh, and would use two other platforms throughout 2010 to do so.

She then invited Jane to take to the floor. Jane introduced herself and Buddy Beat while Maggi handed Boomwhackers around the hall. Jane quickly had the gathering stopping and starting before instructing single colours to play together, giving them their own individual beat. Then she asked Buddy Beat to come into the mix and we all jammed before the drums were silenced and this allowed the hall to hear the different tones of the Boomwhackers playing together. Jane then brought the drums back in, going soft and building up in volume finishing with a mighty rumble and stop. This went down very well and the school kids seemed to enjoy it as did the members of our local police.

Maggi then announced it was time for Bunfight at the O.K. Corral which was another kind of music to everyone's ears and we spent the next half hour chatting and mingling.

That was another good event and certainly a worthwhile one. Now we officially have a celebrity amidst our ranks in the shape of Dame Lesley King. Next week she off Stateside after being booked to appear on Oprah!



*Anne D and Noreen -Two ripe Fyffe bananas*



# Local Celebrity Spotlight



Paisley Daily E

# MESSAGE THAT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE IS IN A BOTTLE!

## New project helps mercy crews

By **LYNN JOLLY**

**A NEW life-saving project is being launched today to help the emergency services treat sick people quicker.**

The Message In A Bottle scheme will provide hundreds of free plastic containers to Buddies where they can store information about which medication they are on, emergency contact details and a phone number for a family contact.

This is then stored in the fridge, with a sticker on the door to tell paramedics, police and doctors that the patient is signed up for the programme.

Paisley woman Lesley King, 62, is on the steering group for Message In A Bottle and said it will be a life-saver for many people.

Lesley, who is coping with depression, said: "I suffer from bad depression and I have had it for six or seven years on and off. I am also a carer for my husband Alan and a long-distance carer for my son Crawford, who has epilepsy, while my daughter Karen is bipolar.

"My secret to it all is keeping busy. I do water aerobics at The Lagoon, in Paisley, three times a week and I am involved in various support groups including Recovery Renfrewshire, The Buddie Beat and Positive Mental Attitude, based in Johnstone's Health Centre.

"At PMA, we talk to people to help reduce the stigma attached to mental health problems and, at The Buddie Beat, in Paisley Arts Centre, we use music."

The aim of Message In A Bottle is to help the emergency services treat

patients as quickly and effectively as possible.

It is a voluntary scheme that is open to anyone - from people who live alone and have health conditions to carers.

Medics will see the emergency sticker on your fridge door and can then easily find the container tucked away inside with all your information.

This means if you need emergency treatment or have to go to hospital because of sudden illness or an accident you will get treatment quickly.

Lesley, from Hawkhead, said: "This system will be very helpful for me. I first heard about a similar project from my daughter's mother-in-law, who lives in Hartlepool. Then it was suggested to me that I should go on the steering group, which was set up last year here in Renfrewshire.

**GREAT IDEA:** Lesley King is on the steering group



Words and pictures by Tom Chalmers