

October 15th 2009- Arts, Creativity and Recovery

The Buddy Beaters were:-

- Jane Bentley
- Anne Dowie
- Lesley King
- Anne Ross
- Noreen Young



It was strange for me to be back at Dykebar Seminar room and I have very mixed memories about the place.

When I arrived at just before 9am, the only other person there was a Catering Assistant, so I felt quite at home by then.

Jeanette had made an early start in preparing the room and must have worked like a Trojan last night making sure that all the art work and chairs were in just the right positions. It was perfect- thanks Jeanette!

Shortly after I arrived, Jeanette came in followed by her daughter. Next to arrive was Jane and drums and Boomwhackers were arranged for the audience. Very soon the two Anne's and Noreen appeared and we grabbed a quick cuppa before everyone else came in.

The audience comprised of about 25 post-grad students and psychiatrists from Dykebar and RAH. I was very pleased to see Dr Phillips from RAH as he worked in the same area that I covered when I worked there and he remembered me well.

They soon settled down and the intrepid Jane led everyone in a drumming and Boomwhackers session which went down very well- everyone participated. Jane had then to run off to go to The Arts Centre to run the Drop-In Workshop.



Jeanette gave an excellent talk about the “traffic light” system and explained how the concept of The Buddy Beat has gone all the way from red, through amber to green.



Slides were shown of some of our exploits and Anne Ross was asked to read out one of her poems which appeared on the screen.



Anne Dowie was then introduced and she told her story. It was the second time I had heard it and it is very moving. The audience was enthralled!

Jeanette then introduced Anne Ross and myself and suggested that we sat together. This helped me a great deal and I hope it helped AR as well. Anne started her talk by reading out another of her poems and went on to tell the audience about how the arts are helping in her recovery. Again, Anne Ross’s story was very moving and she explained about the bullying that goes on in schools and not just with the children. She then finished by reading another of her beautiful poems.

We both emphasised that the friendships that have been made in The Buddy Beat have also helped in that we all work together. I followed Anne’s lead and read out a couple of poems and told my story from when I lost my job.

After the talks, evaluation forms were handed out and we had a chance to talk informally to the audience, some of whom had a good look at our art work while they were having a cuppa. I really think that we gave them something to think about. Jeanette then gave Anne R and myself a lift down to The Arts Centre and she let us have a look at the evaluation forms and they were all very positive.



Paddington, 15th October 2009 (standing in for (Top Cat)



Thanks Lesley, what a great summary.

I was surprisingly nervous about today and how it would be received as it is usually a fairly formal teaching session. My anxiety was totally misplaced and it was probably a highlight of the Festival for me that the psychiatrists were so interested by our courageous and amazing ladies who shared their stories. And they definitely recognised the role of the arts in self expression at a level not previously realised and also got the importance of friendship and relationship as a significant factor in our recovery.

Words by Jeanette Allan 15th October 2009

One of the attendees at the Arts Creativity and Recovery event in Dykebar was Dykebar Hospital psychiatrist Dr Helen Anderson and she later emailed Jeanette some truly wonderful comments-

“Dear Jeanette

I was really impressed with yesterday's teaching session at Dykebar. It was fascinating to be involved in the music workshop and very moving to hear your colleagues from Buddy Beat speak so openly about their difficulties and their involvement with the organisation. I don't very often get the chance to hear how these organisations are viewed by people and I found it so positive and heart-warming. I was particularly impressed with the bravery of those who spoke, and knowing Anne of old as I do, I thought her talk was one of the bravest things I've ever seen.

Thank you for taking such a lot of time and effort to set up the services.

Helen Anderson “

This just proves that if all our events touch even just one person, then they are surely more than worthwhile!

Pictures added by Tom Chalmers