

## October 10<sup>th</sup> - BBC What Makes You Smile

It was only 2 weeks ago that Jeanette announced the possibility of being part of an event in Edinburgh hosted by the BBC to help celebrate World Mental Health Day, but felt that it was a gig too far right in the middle of our very busy Festival schedule.

The Gang seemed to be happy to sign up and soon enough there was another good squad ready for travelling. Hazel had lost her voice earlier in the week and she and Allan had to leave their travelling decision until the Saturday morning, and thankfully they made it. The event in Edinburgh, called “What Makes You Smile” is part of Headroom, a campaign created by the BBC to help people cope with the everyday stresses and strains of life and to help provide a safe place to start finding answers to more complex problems.

The Buddy Beaters were:-

Jane Bentley, Allan Borland, Hazel Borland, Tom Chalmers, Anne Dowie, Lesley King (Paddington Bear), Eileen McGrory, Jackie McDowall, Frances Nisbet, Sarah Van Der Molen, Noreen Young and our faithful Driver Ken Thompson.



*The Big Screen*

Buddy Beat had been sought out to perform workshops during a 5 hour marathon event. Also available would be the chance to sculpt with model clay, street dancing, jive dancing, storytelling and stalls with help and advice concerning mental health.

Buddy Beat obviously didn't put Anne Ross's husband Ken off and he offered to hire a minibus once again and be our driver. Jane and Frances left from Glasgow, and the rest of us met in Paisley town centre at 8.30am.

The journey was pleasant and trouble free enough although some of the gang- Anne R, Anne D, Noreen, Jackie and Paddington -seemed to have thought they were on the Glasgow- London overnight express train as they conked out on the road. While the snoozers snoozed, Chef Allan offered titbits on how to cook his favourite dishes to Eileen. We arrived at Festival Square in Edinburgh at 10.15 thanks to Ken's astute street knowledge.

At Festival Square, which is almost next door to The Filmhouse where Buddy Beat opened for the national launch of the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival on September 1<sup>st</sup>, we were met by the sight of the stage with a huge TV screen above and two marquee's alongside, one of which would be home to our workshops.



We were met by Jane and Frances who had set everything up and they must have left Glasgow before dawn as they had arrived at 8.45, set up, crossed the road to visit a farmers market and had a welcome cup of tea.

Everyone involved with the day's event were asked to gather for a Health and Safety chat and we ran through the day's timetable. We had a compare for the day, stand-up comedian Raymond Mearns and we were informed that the special guest would be Graeme Obree, twice World Cycling Champion. Buddy Beat were to perform on the hour and Jane wisely suggested that everyone sign up to whatever they felt comfortable with and if anyone wanted to miss a workshop or two and go exploring, then that would be fine. The BBC were running the same event at 5 other national cities and would link up via the large screen later in the day. The other cities participating were- Swansea, Norwich, Northampton, Walthamstow (London) and Hull.

We sat in our drum circle awaiting Frances who had gone to the nearby Sheraton Grand Hotel for a comfort break. Jane said we should start playing as soon as Frances reappeared in the square and we laughed as Frances shimmied her way back across the concourse in time to the beat! We drummed for 25 minutes with lots of free-styling and rhumbling and more than a smidgeon of echo and response, and we sounded as though we were on fire! We had no-one join us, but the other stall-holders in our marquee gave us a lovely round of applause.



*Anne D ready to dazzle*



*"And here we are, the gang are here..... born to entertain you!"*

After that we wandered to the main stage area where the song "Walking on Sunshine" by Katrina and the Waves was being played karaoke-style on the big screen and the Buddy Beat Lovelies, never likely to miss an opportunity, began dancing and it was a sight to behold! At 11.40, a street dance instructor called Allan Irvine took to the stage and abetted by 6 of his dance pupils began a dance lesson and very soon about 30 people were strutting their stuff, including Buddy Beat's energetic ladies, while Allan and Tom busied themselves eating their sandwiches. It should be said that Anne Ross, Lesley and Eileen were getting their hands dirty with the modelling clay.



*The Can-Can Girls!*



*Bombs Away*

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop got under way and we were joined by two little girls aged perhaps 3 and 5 who were with their grandmother, 5 of the female street dancers and a young boy aged around 6. We played some neat games to suit the youngsters that involved a lot of hands up in the air between rhythms' and the kids seemed to enjoy that and responded well. The camera-man for the day then joined us to film us at work and we were joined by four women. The camera man got up and personal to Jane and then Eileen and we finished the session with a crashing finale. The grandmother was absolutely delighted and informed Tom that she had been left to look after

the two girls due to their mother being in hospital and that the "What Makes You Smile" shebang was just what she needed to keep the wee ones happy. And the 4 women looked especially pleased with their input to the session.



*The Earth's Gravitational forces went offline for a second or two!*

Buddy Beat then took their next workshop out of the tent and into the square itself where the sun came out. Comedian and compare Raymond Mearns was busy on the mains stage hosting a karaoke session of uplifting songs on the big screen. Buddy Beat showed their adaptability and for the next 15 minutes drummed along to "Walking on Sunshine" (once again), James Brown's "I Feel Good" and Eric Idle's "Always Look on The Right Side of Life", which was great fun. Tom proved what a good filling he is by sitting between Anne Ross and Anne Dowie, instantly being in an Anne Sandwich.



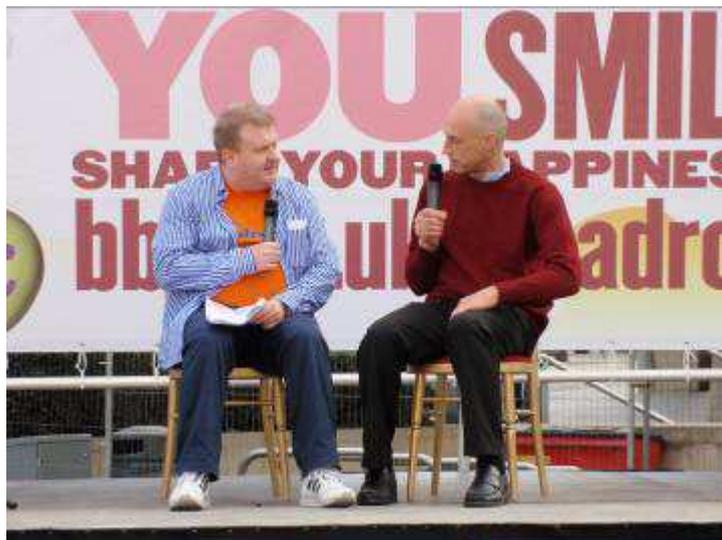
*Another great backdrop- The famous circular Usher Hall and Edinburgh Castle high on the hill*



*Jackie Collins, author of many a bodice-ripper dropped in for a coffee and chat.*

At 1.30, the guest of the day, Graeme Obree took to the stage and was interviewed by Raymond Mearns. Over the next half hour Graeme spoke about his success in the world of cycling and his struggle with depression and alcohol abuse over the years and it was both humorous and interesting.

*A spooky two-view scene!*



*Raymond Mearns (left) interviewing Graeme Obree*



*At 2.10 a Laughologist took the main stage. Her name was The Caring Clown or Margaret McCarthy under the bright outfit.*

*Some of the group stayed to take in this laughter workshop and here's the proof that Noreen did indeed take part.*



*"I'm gonna sue that hairdresser!"*

At the same time a small number of us returned to the tent for the next drum workshop. We were joined by a young woman and she clearly had drummed before and it was a pleasure to jam with her. She spoke to Jane about looking for a drum workshop facilitator in the Edinburgh area for her place of work, and Jane, not knowing of anyone in the area, gave her card. Raymond Mearns also joined us and was honoured when Frances gave him a shot of her favourite drum!



*Frances, our drummer girl visitor, Jane and Anne D*

After that, Tom and Anne went to The Filmhouse to quench their dry throats and rest their weary legs and hands while some went shopping, others found something to eat and a few made clay figures.

We reconvened at 3.00pm for what we thought was our fifth and final workshop of the day. 4 of the dancers joined us and a young boy aged about 8 also appeared with his parents and was keen to join in. Also present was Sarah's husband Gerrit, who had motored over to Edinburgh. Gerrit had also been present at Monday night's Paisley Museum Circle and is well on his way to becoming an Honorary Buddy Beat Member. We played several games including Rhumble Tennis and Pass the Rhythm and each time this young lad was selected his face beamed and everyone cottoned onto this and we picked him again and again. We ended with a great big jam session and once finished Tom stepped across the circle and shook the young boy's hand telling him "Great drumming, young man."



*Gerrit, Sarah and Jackie*

So the circle broke up and we made mutterings about clearing away but suddenly one of the organisers whispering to Jane by the wayside. Surprisingly, workshop No 6 was on the cards! So for this unexpected finale or encore if you will, we were joined by three youngsters under 5 and their mother and two older women. The youngest child was 2 years old and she sat on a chair beside Tom but didn't want to join in, and even when Tom gave up his seat to let her mother take part, she remained happy just to watch but her 2 older brothers across the circle were more than pleased to join in the games.



*The youngsters join in!*

The final event of the day was at 3.30 when two professional dancers dressed in vivid red lead a Jive Workshop and Sarah and Gerrit joined the dancers in the square and bopped to their hearts' content.



*Sarah and Gerrit-  
One two three.....one two three!*

So that was another great Buddy Beat day out. It sure was a long and busy one with no less than six workshops, which surely must be some sort of record and we must have reached out to perhaps 50 people or more, Over at the other tent several clay statues were produced- Anne R created a tree, Lesley made a

Paddington head and djembe drum as did Eileen. Lesley, Jackie and Noreen joined the Laughter Workshop and let's not forget some shopping and all that dancing! It was just a shame that more people didn't turn up on the day and perhaps the venue wasn't the most advantageous.

And a special thanks to The Sheraton Grand Hotel for allowing the repeated use of their lavvies!



*Mighty Mouse shows her true grit*



*Anne D needs to get that big boil lanced*

Whew! No one could grudge the gang taking some well earned forty winks on the way home to Paisley. Well done everyone!



*"And it's good night from me and good night from her!"*