

**DROP IN & DRUM**  
**PAISLEY ARTS CENTRE**  
**6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2011**



*Marion, Margaret, Mary and Karen*





*The next festival engagement for Buddy Beat saw them return to their spiritual home, Paisley Arts Centre for a “Drop in & Drum”, running from 10am to 12 noon. Buddy Beat has held this event in each of the previous three Renfrewshire Mental Health Arts & Film Festivals and they have proved popular in the past. Open to anyone, it was an opportunity for people to join an interactive workshop, with no experience required.*

*If you peer closely you may spot our Marion*

*Buddy Beat was split in two today for we were required at two different venues at the same time. If nothing else we are flexible and adaptable. So Hazel, Allan, Jeanette, Christine and Eileen were at The Tannahill Centre in Ferguslie, Paisley for a Self-Management Day and would have the Buddy Beat stall there and also have the chance to play the drums.*

## Back at the Arts Centre the Buddy Beat were-

- Karen Auld
- Jane Bentley,
- Marion Bisland
- Tom Chalmers
- Mary Graham
- Margaret Kinninmont
- Jackie McDowall
- Maureen McGill
- Alistair McIntyre

*We got things under way by showing our first visitor Maureen Ferguson the basics of the drums. Once we had that sorted Marion suggested we try something and after describing it Jane took her idea forward which was to show how quickly we can pick up a new beat. Jane played a rhythm several times over and then moved to another and repeated the system. This went on for a couple of minutes with Jane changing her beat many times, and as she had suggested, we showed that we could pick it up within seconds. This exercise moved around the circle with Jane nominating Karen next and Karen swiftly took us through a very different set of rhythms. Margaret asked Karen if she had been secretly practising and this was a sign for Karen to nominate Margaret to be next in charge and it seemed to take around ten minutes for this to happen, for chatting and blethering by everyone got in the way. But we pulled it back to point and Margaret ably sailed through half a dozen different beats before selecting Jackie to be next. Jackie gave us even more different rhythms and we grooved along with her. By this time Marion was desperate to have her go, almost jumping out her chair and saying*

*“Me! Me!” with her hand reaching for the sky and Jackie cheekily bypassed her plea and asked Tom to be next. We all laughed as Marion feigned disappointment and Tom told her that she might be lucky and be picked next. Tom sped the team through a set of rhythms and passed the reins onto a thankful Marion. Now, Marion is a lover of singing so she added her vocals to her beats and we all joined in. The last shot came to Mary and she showed her flair and style and tested our mettle. What a smashing exercise this was and it would be great to take this into the group in the future.*

### *Hat Queen Marion*





*It should also be mentioned that Margaret was in charge of the catering budget and brought along a packet of mints which she placed in the middle of the circle on top of a drum, telling everyone to dig in.*

*“Gimmee gimmee”*

*Some more chat followed. As Jane had mentioned, it was nice to not have the pressure of a performance in this festival event, and perhaps we were all just using the chance to unwind and be ourselves after a hectic week gig-wise.*

*Next up Jane spoke about linking into the music and she showed us yet another new exercise. The idea was that the first person starts off with a rhythm and after a while the next drummer joins in with the same beat. When person 1 is sure that person two has nailed the rhythm, person 1 drops out. Person 2 then changes the beat to anything they want and after a while person 3 will join in and when they are up to speed person 2 drops out. It sounded intriguing and we gave it a whirl and it was great fun. As with a lot of the exercises Jane has given us, we then migrated to level 2. This time person 1 starts a rhythm of their own choice which can be their chance to show off or play frantically or loudly etc. but they then play something*

*very simple and repetitive which is the unspoken signal to person 2 who then takes over by repeating person 1's simple beat before having their spotlight segment. Person 2 then passes on to person 3 with another simple repetitive beat of their own. This was wonderful and we all thoroughly enjoyed it.*



*Our talented girl, Mary*

*It was time for our tea-break and during this we were joined by Mary-Anne and her daughter Vharie. It was lovely to see them there as we only ever see them at our regular WRVS Café monthly sessions which is open to anyone and they have both been keen attendees for more than a year.*

*After we had whetted our whistles and fed our tums, it was time to get back to the drumming. We were just about to kick off when we had another visitor. Karen, Mary and Tom were delighted to see a chap called Stevie, for he had joined in at the rain-soaked Big Public Launch the Saturday before. Stevie must have played for half an hour or so and he had drummed with such gusto and enthusiasm and he had clearly made a real connection with the drums.*

*Jane kicked us off with a jamming session and after a while split us into two groups, with each side playing while the other rested and listened. Bringing us all back together Jane asked anyone wearing jeans to keep playing and that left Tom, Stevie, Jackie and Maureen who rocked away. Next it was for anyone wearing pink croc shoes, which just happened to be Mary-Anne and Vharie who had their duo spot before Jane switched it to black shoes which brought in Tom,*

*Maureen, Alistair, Karen, Stevie and Jackie and then we ended with a bristling rhumble!*

*From there Jane spoke about how the group has composed several pieces. The two we use regularly are of course "The Funky Lunch" and "The Weather Report". Another piece recently added to our arsenal is "Paisley Pattern" in which Buddy Beat take you back to a by-gone day in one of the town's thread mills, recreating a typical shift full of the sounds of the looms. That is three to our name but we now have a fourth we have been working on for some time called "London Bridge". We aren't at the point where we can perform this one in public for the group as a whole need to nail it down. Jane took the three main rhythms, teaching everyone each one in turn. This took us a while but it was worth it in the end. Some of the circle looked really pleased to have played something so solid and punchy. When Jane got half of us to play one rhythm while the other part played another, Stevie said "That was brilliant!" To finish, Jane then asked everyone which of the three rhythms each of us would like to play and once that was sorted, we rocked along and it was excellent!*

*We may only have had a handful of visitors, but it was another horrible weather day outside. Jane taught us two great new exercises which we can use in the future; we chatted a storm, laughed and laughed, showed people what it's like to learn one of our pieces, and generally had a good time. We left on a high, what more do you need?*



*A bonus was when Stevie expressed an interest in joining Buddy Beat which is terrific. Being out there in the pouring rain last Saturday was worth it if we can encourage new members. During the workshop Marion was on fire, cracking her stand-up routine to everyone the best of which was perhaps this- "I am a wigwam and a tepee- I am two tense!" It's the way she tells them!*

*Words and pictures (with a little help from Mary) by Tom Chalmers*

