

SCOTTISH MENTAL HEALTH ARTS & FILM FESTIVAL

LUNCH TIME TALK AT PAISLEY MUSEUM

“KEEP THE BEAT....OUR JOURNEY IN RHYTHM”

5TH OCTOBER 2011



Jane, Noreen, Tom, Anne, Mary and Jeanette- it can be difficult to get Jeanette in a photo so we nailed her feet to the floor to keep her still



Gremlins may be cute to start off with but they can cause problems.....

Now, over the years ITV has broadcast many “An Audience with...” These shows starred the likes of Michael Buble, Céline Dion, Kyle Minogue, and Donny Osmond amongst many. This latest event for Buddy Beat in the Renfrewshire Festival, the fourth in six days, is the closest you will get to “An Audience with The Buddy Beat”.

From 12.30 to 1.30 this was a special event at Paisley Museum. We were not just part of a big show, nor were we half-time entertainment- this was simply an hour of what Buddy Beat is all about. The idea was that we would show our film in its entirety (tee hee! Read on to find out!) And follow that with a Question and Answer session. The event would end with some musical participation, for no-one rarely comes to see Buddy Beat and get away with not making music. Well, that was the plan.

The Buddy Beat were-

- **Jeanette Allan**
- **Jane Bentley**
- **Allan Borland**
- **Hazel Borland**
- **Tom Chalmers**
- **Anne Dowie**
- **Mary Graham**
- **Eileen McGrory**
- **Christine Robertson**
- **Noreen Young**



Paisley Museum- Buddy Beat just don't do boring buildings

*Here's
Tom and
the
Ladies.*



With everyone gathered, Buddy Beat took their place on the stage with Jane kicking the event off. Jane introduced us and briefly said what we are about before handing over to Jeanette who spoke about the festival and all that it offered. Buddy Beat began with a rendition of "The Weather Report". Jane conducted us from the floor in front of the stage and Mary started us off with the Thunder Drum and we were off! Everyone did exactly what Jane instructed and we gave a punchy and tight performance. With her back to the audience, Jane had us giggling when she pulled several funny facial expressions that would not have gone amiss on Spitting Image. We finished with Christine on the Ocean Drum and we stood for a great round of applause. Smiling, we stepped off the stage to take our seats and Jane asked Tom if he would like to say a few words about the film. Just as last week at the launch in The Arts Centre, Tom told everyone how writing helps with his mental health and that lead to writing up reports of Buddy Beat events which earned him the title of Buddy Beat Storyteller. Tom then said that through Jeanette he had hooked up with our film-maker James Cairns and that they then started a mammoth 5 month epic (James later told Tom that he had never been involved in such a lengthy shoot). Tom then ended by saying that he hoped everyone would enjoy the film and took a seat as the lights went down for the screening.....

The film began and after a few seconds we sensed that all was not well as the opening scene stuck where it was while the narrative continued. Jeanette quickly apologised and after a moments' technical delay, we began again, sitting back comfortably wondering when the girl would come round with popcorn and fizzy drinks.



This time the film got a little further before the same thing happened again! Yes, The Gremlins were truly out in force!

*As Little Britain would often utter
“Computer says no.....”*



A third attempt was made to start the film and this time all looked dandy as it started off and we got as far as Jane's talking segment when everything went pear-shaped once more! Jeanette made a quick decision and announced “Let's hold a workshop!” handing the reins over to Jane while Jeanette, the tech guy and Allan busied themselves with the laptop as Buddy Beat hustled their way back onto the stage. Jane is such a seasoned professional and she instantly turned things around with a Question and Answer session. Anne spoke about the early days when she joined four years ago and how it was small then but how it has just grown and grown, helping her in her journey of recovery. Christine then said that Buddy Beat is more than just meeting once a week to play for ourselves. She said that when she joined she found herself performing just two weeks later at an Occupational Therapy Conference in Glasgow and how that was something she had not imagined doing.

Next up we had Hazel and she spoke about the time when she joined and how she too found herself playing just a couple of weeks later at a Nursing Conference at Glasgow SECC. She said that she had never really classed herself as a musician before, but now that she can proudly call herself a drummer. Hazel added that attending Buddy Beat is always something to look forward to and that she had done

things she wouldn't have done otherwise. Christine spoke again saying that we are not just a group- we are a family that helps and supports one another through our ups and downs. Eileen said that her time in the group had helped her in many ways including her self-confidence and of the therapeutic value of drumming. Mary then described Buddy Beat as "very special" and that she had been part of the group for two years now and that in all that time she had never heard an argument or any bickering which she called an "On-going miracle"!

Jane then spoke about how perhaps cultures don't create enough music which is strange when you consider our ancestors who would gather together to create music for the general good. Jane complimented Buddy Beat for sticking together over the last four years, giving as much as they had and also for remaining welcoming to new people who come to join us. Jane then went on to speak about some of Buddy Beat's other activities and used our work with Flexi-Care as a prime example. Flexi-Care hold clubs throughout Renfrewshire for children with Autism and Asbergers and also adults with learning difficulties and Buddy Beat held a series of 8 delightful workshops last year for them, which was a wonderful experience for the members of Buddy Beat who took part. Jane asked the group if they would care to talk about any of Buddy Beat's other offshoots and Hazel spoke about fundraising through the information stall which was good for helping group funds and also that through the stall we have received lots of terrific feedback which has led to further bookings for events through word of mouth.



Jane asked if any of the gang had a special memory and Allan told everyone of his first weekly session when he had come along, assured that we just play drums and how he ended up Morris Dancing with Boomwhackers, and Jane quipped “You were a lovely mover!”

This part of the event ended when Christine added that Buddy Beat had inspired, through performance, another drumming group for adults with mental health issues to start up. That is a group from Dundee called Drumdee and we hope to one day travel through and join forces with them.

It was now time for some music. The Boomwhackers were quickly handed out by Allan and Jane began, turning the assembled novices into musicians within minutes, using Buddy Beat to show them how to start and stop and playing loudly to softly and back again. Everyone was clearly enjoying themselves and Jane showed each coloured section their rhythm and eased to everyone playing together. Echo and Response was on the menu next and it worked a treat as Jane held everyone in the palm of her hand. This was ended with a large and noisy rhumble, followed by smiles and a healthy round of applause. Lovely stuff!



Jane, Empress of Buddy Beat doing what she does best.

Then we heard that we would perhaps to be able to view the short version of the film and we all breathed a sigh of relief as the lights went back down and the film finally got under way! Buddy Beat remained on the stage while the film ran but Gremlins struck again with just two minutes of the film to go, but thankfully everyone seemed to have got the message after seeing ten minutes or so.



Again the audience showed their appreciation and Jane asked if anyone in the audience cared to say anything. There was just the one - a man at the back who said that making music had made him feel happy and cheerful and he also added that he had enjoyed music since the 1960's, particularly drummers such as Keith Moon and Jools Holland. He then said that he knows how difficult it is for everyone to maintain the same beat and that he was impressed that Buddy Beat had managed to accomplish this. That was a lovely compliment.

Jeanette thanked everyone for their patience during the technical difficulties and for coming along and as the audience gathered their coats and bags and began to drift out, Allan and Christine both urged the gang to play "Funky Lunch". Christine conducted and Allan started us off with his traditional eight beats and we were off. Now, this was unplanned and Jane was in the audience talking to a lady and she turned and beamed, and when she finished her conversation, she raced up to the front of the stage and took control and we zipped through this number. What a great way to end the show!

So that was another very different Buddy Beat event. Live shows can be full of pitfalls and this was no different. It may have been a bit back to front, but we still did everything we intended to- we played some great music, we got everyone involved as was evidenced by the smiles around the room, we heard the group say some lovely things and we eventually showed a shorter version of the short version of the full version of the film!



*Get your free assessment from Anne,
Buddy Beats' Official Dimple Checker*

*And
it's not
cheerio
it's au
revoir!*



Words and pictures (with help from Noreen and Eileen) by Tom Chalmers

