

SCOTTISH MENTAL HEALTH ARTS & FILM FESTIVAL

PAISLEY TOWN HALL: TEA DANCE

3RD OCTOBER 2011



*Anne never knew that drumming
Could be so uplifting!*

With the festival into its fourth day, Buddy Beat moved onto their third event. After a packed Launch on Friday 30th September at Paisley Arts Centre and then the rain soaked Big Public Launch in Paisley's County Square on October 1st, this would hopefully be a more sedate and drier experience for the gang. Also, it was a bit of a first as we had never been involved with this kind of thing before.

The Tea Dance in Paisley Town Hall ran from 1pm to 3.30pm and was billed as an afternoon of dancing, music and chat with friends. Keyboard player John Findlay was on hand to entertain everyone by playing a series of timeless tunes and Buddy Beat were asked to come along at 2.00pm and entertain everyone during the tea-break.



Paisley Town Hall-not many venues can be grander than this

Buddy Beat were-

- **Jeanette Allan**
- **Jane Bentley**
- **Tom Chalmers**
- **Anne Dowie**
- **Angie Gilmour**
- **Mary Graham**
- **Sarah Van Der Molen**
- **Jackie McDowall**
- **Eileen McGrory**
- **Christine Robertson**
- **Noreen Young**

The gang gathered before 2pm and tapped their toes to the tunes of John Findlay who surveyed all from the main stage, behind his set of keyboards and the 100 or so attendees danced some Cha Cha Cha's, Foxtrots and something that looked like a cross between the Slosh and The Alleycat. Everyone looked to be having such fun and there was a warm, joyous atmosphere in the hall, and there was evidence of glitter

and glamour amongst the ladies who had turned up to trip the light fantastic.



One, two, three, heel turn.....



We set ourselves up behind the stage curtain while John Findlay brought things to a close and Jane told us what we would be doing.

The dancing came to an end and everyone rushed the tea stall in the corner. When everyone was sitting back down and suitably sated, John Findlay announced that they were in for a treat of a different kind and introduced Buddy Beat to the stage, saying we could fill ten, fifteen, and twenty or even thirty minutes should we so wish it! We were split either side of the keyboards with Anne, Tom, Noreen, Christine and Mary on one side and on the other, Eileen, Jeanette, Angie, Jackie and Sarah with Jane in the centre, our conductor, leader and adored one. Buddy Beat had played in the Town Hall a couple of times but always on the floor. To be on the stage, which is about six feet off the floor, was a real thrill and we could not have imagined a better view of the splendour of the surroundings. Oh, the Victorians sure knew how to build things!



Jane began by telling the audience who we are and how we meet once a week to play and help our mental health. Jane asked Jeanette is she

would care to say a few words about the Festival. Jeanette took the microphone and started by saying that the festival is full of dance, singing, comedy, music and art and suggested that as everyone was there for dancing they already appreciate the therapeutic values of this and ended by saying that she hoped everyone would have a look at what the Festival had to offer, stating that there is something there for everyone.

Jane then said that we would start with a performance of "The Weather Report", informing the audience of the cycle they would hear, and telling them to listen out for the rhythm of "Row, row, row your boat" Mary started us off with the thunder drums and we soared through this great piece with ease. We really have this number to pat and it sounded so good in the large hall. Tom couldn't take his eyes off a little lady sitting directly below the stage, who stared at us, transfixed by the music. When Christine ended the number with the ocean drum we received a hearty and appreciative round of applause.



Jane sprinkling her magic

Jane then told the audience it was their turn to make some music. No Boomwhackers, no shakers, no tambourines. No, sir! Jane said that

everyone had instruments right in front of them- teacups and teaspoons! Something new for us to witness once again! Splitting the hall into sections, Jane soon had everyone tinkling the crockery in time to the music as Buddy Beat played in the background, with each section playing at different times, giving a layered effect. It sounded great and there were a lot of smiles around the hall. Jane then instructed starting and stopping on a count of four and let the play flow for a while before ending on a beat.

Then Jane got the audience to start hand clapping and at first people clapped at will and Jane then adeptly brought them together. Taking this forward, Jane began a Call & Response section, without actually saying so, and they hall was rippling with Jane's hand rhythms being imitated by everyone. Jane ended by switching between the drums and the handclappers, shortening the time between each switch. Jane brought it all to a great close and Buddy Beat ended with a punchy rhumble. The audience showed their appreciation and they even threw in a couple of whistles! Great!



The Happy Clappers



Jane and Mary all smiles after another winning performance



Here's Noreen & Anne- "That's all folks!"

That was a short but very enjoyable experience for the gang and one we will remember. The Town Hall is a terrific venue and it was great to reach out to 100 or more people.

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

