

The Buddy Beat
At
Montrose Care Home, Paisley



Jane had recently been booked to hold a series of six musical workshops for the Montrose Care Home in Paisley. Having held singing sessions before for this Renfrewshire Council home for the elderly and dementia patients, this was the first time that drums came into the equation.



Montrose Care Home

And so, Jane asked members of The Buddy Beat if they would be interested in coming along and so, for this inaugural drumming workshop, The Buddy Beat were-

- Jane Bentley
- Jim Brownridge
- Tom Chalmers
- Christine Robertson

We met up and set out our drums in the allocated room, in which several of the residents were sitting, eager to start. We said our hellos and you could tell from the off how friendly they were. At 2pm we were ready and a chap named George, who is the Activities Co-Ordinator for the home, introduced us to the ten ladies, two gents and three other members of staff.



One thing that struck us all was the glorious views out the windows! Inspiring!

Jane introduced us all and explained a little about The Buddy Beat. She set us off in a little impromptu jam to show everyone what we are about. From there Christine ably demonstrated the ways of the djembe and while she was doing this, we could see the fingers twitching. Jane thanked Christine and announced that it was time to “Get your drum!”

Once we were all settled, Jane said that we would learn everyone’s names by going around the room. Each person got the chance to beat out a short rhythm or beat and introduce themselves. When that had been achieved Jane said that she had heard such good rhythms during that name telling exercise that she thought we should just all jam away. And so we did for several minutes and it didn’t take the group long at all to get into the beat and it was clear that they were listening, and we fair grooved along. When it came to an end there were several satisfied faces around the circle.



There are two points of note here-

1/ Is Jane doing The Birdie Dance while drumming?

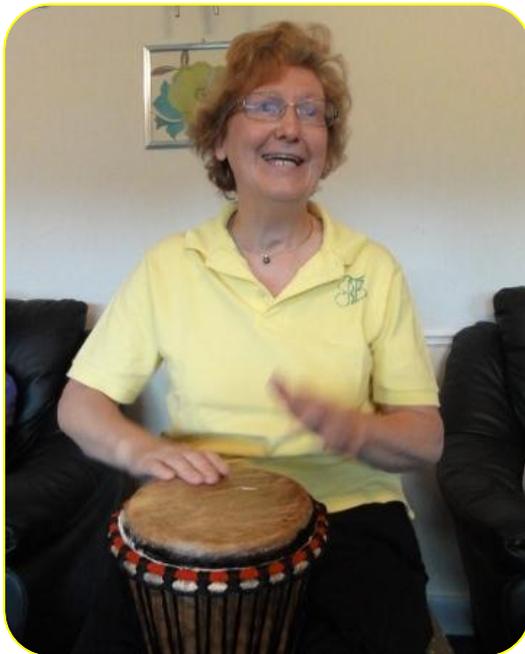
2/ Here we have Jane sporting a cool black Buddy Beat top that non-verbally says "I'm the referee!"

Then Jane suggested that everyone could play a little and then point to another person to take over. Jane demonstrated by playing and then selecting Christine. Now, this is when some of the characters came to the fore. Christine played a few beats and passed to George, an elderly chap across from her. George had one of the tall standing drums and he didn't just play a few beats, he went on for a good spell, knocking out a splendid rhythm. You could see that he was having fun and he has a certain mischievous twinkle in his eye. Beside him sat Sadie who likes to laugh and she has a peachy little sense of humour.

Across the circle Chrissie, who seems the social type, demanded to know our names and where we all came from and her chattiness had us all laughing. Each person got their chance, but some were a little bit shy and Jane knelt down and played along with them to encourage them along



George the ever so keen drummer is third on Jane's left



Next up Christine decided we should try drumming conversations & demonstrated how this would work with Tom. This involves two people communicating by beats and rhythms. Seeking someone else to converse with around the circle, Christine spied a small stool in the middle of the floor and taking that as her seat she moved around the group and had a drumming conversation with a good few. When she sat in front of George he pretended to get all excited and he raised his hands up into the air, cheering with bright open eyes. That conversation was rather protracted as he seemed to want to outpace our Christine.



Tom had a go too at conversations, firstly with Chrissie and then with one of the young carers and lastly our Jim

Time was marching on and Jane suggested that we jam once more so off we went for five minutes or so.



As that ended someone suggested a song, which turned into three, and that seemed to please everyone. Dark horse of the day was our own Jim who, after we had sang an abridged version of “We’re no awa tae bide awa”, gave us all another full and different verse. Who knew? I am sure that won’t be the last we have heard of Jim the Chanter.

Left: Tom and Christine. The smiles say it all!



Activities Co-Ordinator George ended by saying that it had been brilliant and thanked us for coming along. That was the first of six and it was a great success. Everyone seemed so pleased and happy. It was great for Buddy Beat too and a real pleasure to be there and the remaining workshops will no doubt be just as enjoyable.

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