

Festival Tales



Anne R and Anne D- The Cheeky Girls party on down

September 26th - 21st October 2009

As we all know by now, our rhythms have been heard far and wide across our land and with the approach of the 2009 Scottish Arts Mental Health Arts & Film Festival the call to arms went out to The Buddy Beat.

It was a very busy time for all of us and here is a reminder of all that happened- all the events, the thrills, the laughs, the things that make Buddy Beat great. With sterling contributions from some of the gang, we hope you enjoy this.

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Major Tom
Editor-in-Chief

Farmers Market 26th September 2009

The hardy Beaters today were:

Christine, Hazel, Allan, Lesley, Stephanie, (who made a valiant effort) Eileen, Noreen, Anne D, Jackie, Frances, Jane, Karen, and Jeanette, not forgetting our roadie Ken and me.

It was a warm cloudy morning with no indication as to how the weather would develop but we were very fortunate and although there was little sun, there was no rain.

The Big Day arrived, warm and dry
After lots of summer rain.
No wet drops to dampen spirits
Low sun so we wouldn't fry.



In Paisley's County Square we met
to inform and entertain
The crowd that come twice monthly
For a special shopping spree.



We came we played we conquered
Won hearts and minds and friends.
Brought fun and laughter to Paisley's heart
It beat long and loud and proud.



The Buddy Beat, that's who we are,
The beating heart of Paisley town
Roused the crowd, drumming softly and loud
As our sound wafted off afar



We arranged our circle and sorted some festival books, handing them out as folk stopped to watch what was going on, then we started to rouse Paisley to sway to the rhythm of the drums of The Buddy Beat.

Most of the Beaters were out to play
On Paisley's, Farmers' Market day.
Frances and Christine starting them young
By bringing along a beloved grandson.
Jeanette and Karen were there from the start
With boxes of books showing Renfrewshire's arts.
Eileen and Noreen, Jackie and Jane,
Played with great gusto,
They never did wane.
Stephanie and Lesley grinned ear to ear,
While Hazel and Allan drummed with real cheer.
The terrible twosome Anne one and Anne two
Showed the spectators just what to do.



Some of the visitors took part in last year's Farmers' Market session and we were delighted that they repeated their visit and joining in once again had a memorable morning.

Last time we drummed in town
Elizabeth was our star.
A lady life had given nearly eighty years.
She came and took her seat this morn,
Her request was what we played.
We sang a rousing chorus as we beat MoonRiver'
Her favourite song!
Leaving us to go and catch her train
She was humming the happy refrain

As usual at events in town, children bring their special magic and today was no exception. We had many children who brought their parents, smiles and laughter to our drum circle.

Youth and children find a way
To surprise their parents' every day.
a bright wee girl came into town,
Stood a second, sat in our circle and beamed.
She was given a drum and brought the house down.



Her sparkling eyes and sunny smile
Brought her joy to this market town,
Easing many a person's stressful frown.....
Tap Tap Taaap, like the guys from Queen,
We Will Rock You
What a scene!



She brightened the square and stirred the crowd,
Called her mum who joined in the team.
Smiling bright, of her child very proud,
Played along side of us for as long as they could
Then waved goodbye with springs on their feet.





The drum circle grew and changed as the marketeers came and went about their business. The Beaters were proud to drum to the town and wow did we play out loud.

Farmer's Market Saturday, audience assured,
Drumming with smiling faces,
All cares flying away with the beat.
We tuned into each other
And Paisley's heart began to beat to our rhythm.



Arms and hands raised to strike,
Hitting each drum with growing enthusiasm
As buddies gathered round to watch.
Listening to the sound of their town
As they stroll and browse the market stalls.



With the stirring beat rousing latent talent,
A Buddy takes a tentative step,
Joins in the circle and finds his way.
His grin widens as he finds his feet,
Feeling the pulse of The Buddy Beat.



Words and Pictures by Anne Ross

October 3rd- Family Fun Day in Renfrewshire



The Buddy Beat knows what makes a good backdrop!

Buddy Beat gathered for The Family Fun Day extravaganza in Paisley Town Hall. This was a large event where the Town Hall was taken over for festival matters. The main hall was brimming with stalls from various mental health groups, offering help and advice and with some selling candles, jewellery and gifts. Buddy Beat had their own stall and the ever creative amongst us had been hard at work, with Lesley King designing jewellery and candles. Her jewellery proved immensely popular with young girls. Anne Ross also printed some of her stunning artwork and mounted them on cards. Tom had printed a selection of favourite Buddy Beat photographs from 2009 which were put up on display boards. Upstairs in the hall were various workshops including dance, samba drums and snare drumming too. Drama was also on the menu with a performance on the main stage.

The Buddy Beaters were- Jeanette Allan, Jane Bentley, Allan Borland, Hazel Borland, Tom Chalmers. Anne Dowie, Lesley King, Jackie McDowall, Eileen McGrory, Frances Nisbet, Anne Ross and Noreen Young.

Buddy Beat were due to perform outside the Town Hall between the hours of 1 and 2pm but Paisley's Indian Summer had by[assed and returned to Delhi, and the wind and ever threatening rain looked like putting a dampener on things. Our timings were rearranged and we ventured outside for 20 minutes. We sat in a semi circle and

although it was fresh, some of us were brave enough to perform in their Buddy Beat t-shirts and Lesley stole the show with her world famous Paddington Bear hat. Jane had us all smiling and laughing from the start and we jammed first, and then a bit of echo and response followed by splitting us in two before freestyling once more. Several members of the public, including 2 or 3 small children joined in and seemed to enjoy it immensely. We were all in good form and perhaps the fine setting between the grand Town Hall and the beautiful but listing Paisley Abbey help make it that little bit more special. Anyway, the whole thing was simply energising! Councillor Brian Lawson, a friend of Buddy Beat even appeared and enjoyed himself so much that he has invited us along to an perform at an event this coming November. The power of performance!



Buddy Beat perform outside Paisley Town Hall



“No one knows that my marmalade sandwiches are under my Paddington hat!”

So after 20 minutes of fresh air and thrashing out beats, we ventured back into the hall where the ever efficient Jeanette Allan had arranged seating for us below the main stage. Once introduced, Jane set us off with some echo and response, some beating in the middle of the drums and on the edge also, before ending on a big rumble. This seemed to get people interested and Jeanette busied herself by passing out Boomwhackers and percussion instruments and very quickly Jane, who by now was booming with the aid of a microphone, had a large ensemble playing together. There was one woman present who was entirely in the zone and she had the best time imaginable. Some of us spoke to her afterwards to tell her this and she was amazed, stating that she always thought of herself as “without rhythm”. The noise in The Town Hall was deafening and everyone seemed to really enjoy themselves. Another successful Buddy Beat Mission!



Inside The Town Hall-Buddy Beat giving it lalady!

Words and pictures by Tom Chalmers

October 4th -
Evelyn Glennie - "The Touch of Sound"



Jackie and I went up to Glasgow early on Sunday 4th October on the train as there was an old firm game on at Ibrox and we didn't want to get caught up in that. The two of us had lunch in an Italian cafe in Central Station before heading up to Sauchiehall St. We eventually found the right bus stop where a wee girl started stroking my hand - My Mehndi was still in good nick from the day at the Town hall - and she said it was very pretty!

Unfortunately, we did not know the number in the street for CCA and had to ask 2 Police persons for directions - we were practically outside it by then. Frances was waiting inside and the two of us joined her and had a soft drink. Jane eventually turned up and we threatened her that she would be put over Frances's knee for a smack as we all thought she was late.

The Cafe Improv was very busy and the 4 of us went through to the Cinema. It was a full house.

Sushil K Dade then introduced the film to much hilarity as he tore up all his notes and scattered them on the floor. Before the film 'The Touch of Sound ' started we were treated to an amazing drumming session by some Asian drummers some of whom were children. They played a piece called "Raise the Ceiling" and they did. Eventually the film started and it was narrated by Evelyn Glennie herself. It took her to Germany where she improvised a piece of music with Fred Firth in what looked like an abandoned factory and they made music with just about anything that came to

hand including a Boomwhacker played on Fred's back.

She explained that she started to go deaf at the age of 8 when she had started to enjoy music. She was told by teachers that she could never play a musical instrument but she proved that she could by touching the sound' with vibrations.

The film showed her all over the world including Japan where she played with an amazing group of musicians.

One strange part was filmed at her family home where her brother farms. This is in Aberdeenshire.

There had been no subtitles through the film up until then, but when he spoke, his words were sub-titled. This caused a bit of a laugh in the audience as he was not speaking the Doric but was very easily understood.

The farm, very sadly, was destroyed with fire the following week but thankfully no-one was hurt.

One of the most touching parts of the film, for me, was when she was teaching a deaf girl to touch the sound and the girls face just lit up when she got it. - Absolutely beautiful!

It was amazing how the sound of the traffic was also incorporated and this added to it so much.

When the film ended, we went through for another drink and just sat and blethered with folk.

A very worthwhile way to spend a Sunday and one I'll never forget

Paddington



Words by Lesley King/Paddington Bear

October 5th - Community Drum Circle

Next up and just two days after our Town Hall Gig, Buddy Beat opened their doors to the public for a night-time workshop. The venue had been booked at our normal place of practice in the Paisley Art Centre, but we only recently found that venue had been double booked so we rearranged to have it in the Lecture Theatre at Paisley Museum, a space Buddy Beat used last winter in the run up to Christmas for their weekly meetings due to the panto taking over at The Arts Centre.

The Buddy Beaters were- Jeanette Allan, Jane Bentley, Allan Borland, Tom Chalmers, Stephanie Crew-Holmes, Anne Dowie, Lesley King, Sarah Van Der Molen, Jackie McDowall, Eileen McGrory and Noreen Young.



Paisley Museum

The Drum Circle was held in the room with the two tall windows to the left of the main stairs.



Madonna and Britney before showtime

The Drum Circle was set for 7-9pm and Buddy Beat members were encouraged to bring along any friends and family. As we set up the hall, we were visited by a special guest in the shape of Stephanie's son and heir, 4 year old Ozzie. During his 5 minute flying visit, he sorted out who was who and which drum belonged to whom. Tom busied himself with The Buddy Beat Board of Photos and Allan produced his excellent home-made Buddy Beat book marks which were set beside the half-time drinks and biscuits.

The doors opened at 7 and very quickly we were joined by 12 visitors. Jane made the introductions and started everyone off with simple foot stomping and then altered this by getting everyone around the group to introduce themselves between the foot beats and then the same again but this time each of us had to tell everyone their favourite food and we went from pizza to bacon sarnies.

Next Jane set us off passing a handclap around the circle, challenging everyone to see how fast we could do it. Then we altered it slightly and anyone was able to turn the handclap in the opposite direction, and you could almost taste the concentration on everyone's faces. King of this was surely Lesley's husband Alan King, who despite being corned several times by the hand clappers either side of him, magnificently managed to escape unharmed each time. Jane rounded off that exercise by telling us to fire our hand claps to anyone in the circle.

Then it was time to grab a drum and just as the eager beavers were making their choices, the door bell rang. Sarah piped up "It's a delivery!" to which Stephanie quipped "That will be the pizza!" It was in fact our last guest of the evening, George Cairns, director of The Bipolar Fellowship of Scotland, who we had met earlier at The Perth conference and who had expressed an interest in joining our night-time drum circle, and it was good to see him again.



The group getting into the swing of it

Jane showed everyone how to hold a drum and the correct way to bounce your palms off the skin before plunging the group into a ten minute and very loud jam. During this she split us into halves and sexes (never before has there been so many males at Buddy Beat Tom thought to himself, as he counted 5 other men!) and showed the ensemble shading with loud and soft, fast and slow.

Eileen had called prior to this saying she was on her way and it was only when the jamming had finished, and boy was it loud! Tom suddenly thought that we would not have heard her at the door and he dashed off to find her waiting outside in her Chitty Chitty. Eileen scooted into the hall like Penelope Pitstop on Speed and soon took her seat in the circle. What an entrance!

Next up Jane played Echo and Response which sounded great in the hall and then invited each and everyone to make up their own not once but twice and we all sounded it back, and this produced some neat rhythms from our guests. Then Jane invited anyone wishing to change instrument to come up to her preset Table of Tantalising Percussion which attracted sizable attention. Once that excitement had died down and we had bottoms back on seats, we played Percussion Tennis wherein each person would show a little of what their instrument could do before inviting anyone of their choice across the circle to do the same and then closed the first half with another almighty jam that certainly had real groove in it. Jane then announced that tea-break was now open and for twenty minutes everyone mingled and chatted.



Our very own Sarah guarding the refreshments

At 8.25 Jane reconvened the group and introduced the Boomwhackers, splitting us into small squads of 4 or 5, with each having a particular colour. We worked a short jam and it was a joy to see the faces light up as the notes from the tubes filled the air. Surely only someone as deaf as a doorknob would fail to see the appeal of Boomwhackers? Then Jane gave each group a different rhythm to play and with all the groups joining in together, the hall was filled with melody. Jane had been conducting this with a set of the colour tubes- if she lifted your colour then you played your tune until it was lowered. Jane then asked if anyone would like to conduct and Stephanie leapt at the chance. She sat in the middle of the group on the floor and took it away. It was just magic and the smile on Stephanie's face said it all. In fact, so good was she, that the BBC have already booked her for the 2010 Last Night of The proms at the Royal Albert Hall in London That inspired one of the visitors to try it also.

Jane then produced the hang and gave a short instruction on how to play it, while we beat out a quiet rhythm. Oh how we laughed at Anne Ross who sat across the circle, who almost appeared to be drooling at the prospect of playing her favourite instrument and we were sure that Anne had a fleeting thought as Jane played- "Get off my Hang, lady!"

Anyway, we played out the last ten minutes with a massive group jam during which Noreen successfully managed to wrestle the Hang off Anne. As it neared the end Jane shouted for us to find our finish and the tempo raced away and it seemed like the air was filled by a runaway train that couldn't be stopped until suddenly it quietened and wound down to something peaceful and natural, and of course Anne D did her usual with her Big Bang at the very end, forcing some knicker elastic to burst around the stunned circle.

We had used this event to announce our forthcoming Evening Drum Circles for the public in November and December, and Jane was able to collect some email address's to contact people nearer the time and several of our guests took notes in their diaries, so here's hoping that our next evening in November is a great success.

It was an excellent night and everyone, including Buddy Beat, seemed to have terrific fun and we received some welcome feedback at the end. Another great Buddy Beat event!



Guru Stephanie leading the way



Anne R on the Hang- "its mine- all mine!"

Lastly, there is a split opinion over what is happening here in this picture. Is Jane a champion Highland Dancer or is she trying to catch a falling star?



Words and pictures by Tom Chalmers

October 8th - Arts, Creativity & Recovery In Occupational Therapy

Buddy Beat was lined up as part of this event held in The Recreation Room at Dykebar Hospital in Paisley and the time was 2.30-4.30. This was a Festival event held for Occupational Therapy staff and around 30 attended.

The Buddy Beaters were- Karen Auld, Jane Bentley, Tom Chalmers, Anne Dowie, Lesley King, Jackie McDowall, Anne Ross, and Noreen Young.

The afternoon began with an introduction from Jeanette and she spoke for perhaps 10 minutes and gave a fascinating potted history of Buddy Beat. Then Anne Ross gave a reading of her poem –



“All Together “

We were together but on our own,
Thinking about how things would be.
In a strange place for them and me.
A twist in the normal run of things,
An adventure. Something new.

Waiting our turn to perform
We talked together, thinking alone.
Where was this thing taking me?
Why did I agree to put myself here?
Now's the time for us to go on....

Sitting in my place ready to start
A quiet darkness all around
The onlookers vanished from my sight
My hands at first shaking then bang!
I've started, we're on, we're going to astound

We got it together, merging, listening, feeling
A part of it all
Turning in time,
A whole of our several parts.

This was warmly received by everyone and then Jeanette introduced Anne Dowie who took to the floor and bravely read out loud her personal Recovery Story which received a terrific round of applause. Then an Occupation Therapist named Donna took over and divided the hall into smaller groups to work on exercises concerning Positive Mental Attitude.

Then it was time for the attendees to split into the 4 workshops on offer- drumming, drama, writing/poetry and lastly art. The plan was for each workshop to last 20 minutes and everyone there would experience 3 out of the 4 available.

Anne Ross had a dual role today as she was a co-facilitator on the Art Workshop and Lesley King was also a co-facilitator on the Writing/Poetry Workshop.

Buddy Beat migrated to a nearby office space for their 1st workshop of the afternoon. We were joined by 6 guests and Jane briefly introduced ourselves, showing everyone the short A-B-C of drumming before everyone began playing together. Jane then spoke some more about Buddy Beat inviting any questions and also asking ourselves if anybody wanted to add anything. Jackie said that drumming has helped her confidence while Anne D spoke about the friendships that have grown since joining drumming. Sarah also said that she found the social aspect of the group a great help. The O/T's were interested to learn if the group members had found friendship outwith their meeting on a Thursday and Tom informed them that Anne Ross had encouraged several of the group to paint with her in her home. We went back to drumming and played Rhumble Tennis, which went down well. Lastly Karen, our Buddy Beat

Occupational Therapist member spoke of the valuations she has carried out on The Buddy Beat members and how our experiences have increased confidence, esteem, creativity and belief. Some of the participants ended the session by saying how energising they had found this short drumming workshop.



The seats were so soft your bum was in the Southern Hemisphere

No sooner had they left the room when another 6 people trooped in and off we went once more. It followed much the same pattern but instead of Rhumble tennis we played Turnaround, and if anything, the visitors in this period went for it more. One of the ladies was almost breathless with excitement. Jane asked the ladies if they had any questions and one of them asked how we kept it fresh. Jane replied that it is a fine line to tread, but using simple games during our meetings helps break it up. Sarah then said that the group has really helped her during her illness and Tom added that after years of shunning friends, the group has not only allowed him to make many new friends, but shown him that it is okay to keep them also.

Just before we finished, we were informed that the planned 3rd workshop would not be going ahead due to time constraints and that we were to move back to the main hall where Jane would hold a closing jamboree. One of the O/T's stood up and dramatically declared "I can't believe I am going to perform!"

We hurried back through where both Anne R and Lesley rejoined the fold, adding that both their workshops had gone very well. Jane speedily passed around Boomwhackers and in no time at all the hall was filled by the melodic sound of the tubes and the earthly beat of the drums. Jane built it up into an almighty boosh and it ended with a smart finish! The look on some of the participants was a treat to see.



The closing session in full flow with Buddy Beat stealing the comfy seats.



Jane doing what she does best

Words and pictures by Tom Chalmers

