



The Buddy Beat

At

ACUMEN

12th July 2013





A few weeks ago group members Hazel and Allan Borland had a conversation with one of Buddy Beat's greatest friends and champions, David Wright from ACUMEN. David enquired if The Buddy Beat would attend an upcoming EGM and entertain the troops. The rally call was sent, and soon the gang were more than happy to sign up. How could we possibly ever consider letting David down?

Buddy Beat has a long standing association with ACUMEN, having performed at two of their AGM's in the past and also at a few other mental health events along the way. David Wright is even featured in our Scottish Epic Award Winning Film "Keep the Beat....Our Journey in Rhythm".

When we premiered this film to around 100 people on April 13th 2011, at Paisley Arts Centre, David was the host for this event and at that time he was made an honorary Buddy Beat member.

ACUMEN meets on the last Thursday of every month in Paisley and several of the Buddy Beat gang have been long time members. Unfortunately Dr Jane Bentley could not make this event, but Buddy Beat members have learned much over the last six years and Jane rallied us, declaring that we were ready to go out on our own.

And what was the reason for today I hear you ask? ACUMEN had called an EGM to change their strapline from "Argyll & Clyde United in Mental Health" to "Advancing Community Understanding of Mental & Emotional Needs". The venue was the Seminar Room at Dykebar Hospital and Buddy Beat were due at 2.15pm

The Buddy Beat faithful were-

Marion Bisland, Graham Blair, Allan Borland, Tom Chalmers,

Anne Dowie, Christine Robertson, Sandy Smith with

Special guest David Wright.



David Wright and Andrea O'Brien made us very welcome. There were some familiar faces around the room including Margaret Kinninmont, former Buddy Beat member and friend. The event itself began at noon and the resolution to amend the ACUMEN strapline was voted through. A competition has been suggested for the new logo too. Check out the website- www.acumennetwork.org.

There were perhaps 30 ACUMEN members sitting waiting for Buddy Beat to begin, patiently suffering the stifling heat. David, who is as I have already said, an honorary Buddy Beat member, proudly took his seat up front, in-between Christine and Anne. David introduced Buddy Beat and asked if the attendees had experienced our brand before, and quite a few hands went up around the room. David handed over to the Buddy Beat and we performed "The Buddy Beat Mash". We have created several of our own musical pieces over the years and this is a fusion of two of our tunes, with a smattering of freestyle thrown in. With Jane absent, Anne took over the lead and guided us through this number. It punches along for three or four minutes and we sounded crisp and we could see feet tapping around the room and plenty of smiles to boot. We ended on a massive rumble and the audience showed their appreciation.



Follow the leader





It was now time for something completely different and Christine took to the floor.

Christine explained that we are a presence on Youtube for anyone to see and asked Tom to speak about what is on our website, www.thebuddybeat.com. Tom pitched the site, saying that it is full of footage and event reports of our now more than 150 gigs, adding that anyone can register online to receive future reports.

Christine then declared it was time for a sing-song, stating that we had visited our drumming brothers-in-arms Drumdee in Dundee last year and that they had introduced us to an African welcoming chant- "O Ye Narimbo". Since then, this has become a favourite for the group to sing during our weekly sessions, particularly chanteuse Marion Bisland, who needs little excuse to exercise her pipes. Christine took the lead and in this song, she sings a line and we echo it back. We firstly sang it through twice for the ACUMEN people to hear. Allan arranged for the words on a screen to help everyone along and we swept through the song a few times. At first, quite naturally, it was a little quiet as people tried to twist their tongues around the African words, but the second time around was much stronger and the third was a resounding success. Great stuff!

Christine then stated that it was time for everyone to join in, and she, Anne & Sandy handed out musical instruments. Once everyone was ready, Anne & Tom stood up and we had a Call & Response section. Anne started with half a dozen rhythms which the audience totally bought into and then Tom took over and did likewise. It switched back to Anne for another round. The room seemed to be relaxed and enjoying themselves- it may have been sweltering but it was at least musical! Andrea O'Brien very kindly took photographs on Tom's camera, and she whispered to him "This is great! I am loving it."





Action!

Tom then said that everyone was to play on a count of four but to listen for the same count to stop. Tom let the music rip along for a moment and then counted out, and the audience were very on the mark. Back into the groove, Tom stopped the drums so that we could hear the percussion and then switched that around. Taking it further, Tom began to reduce the time between the drums or percussion playing and finally brought it all to an end with a resounding rumble. Stirring stuff!



ACUMEN getting into the groove...

David stood up amid the pleasing applause and thanked Buddy Beat for coming along and entertaining everyone. It was certainly a very enjoyable twenty minutes or so. We hope that we made Jane proud, as we are sure she would be, but certainly we made ourselves proud. We are sure it will not be too long before we meet our ACUMEN friends once more.





Buddy Beat does what it says on the tin

ACUMEN: Advancing Community Understanding of Mental & Emotional Needs.

Words by Tom Chalmers

Photos by ACUMEN's Andrea O'Brien-thank you

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