

## 'Rooted': Inspired by Teesdale

**A year's work came to fruition on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November with the UK – and world! – première of 'Rooted: A Teesdale Suite' at a special concert at The Witham in Barnard Castle with the simultaneous release of the new composition on CD.**



A Teesdale Suite is born: Cream Tees in the recording studio at The Hub.

Inspired by the landscapes of the Heart of Teesdale and the folk music traditions they have learnt working with their tutors, this new piece of music has been written by Cream Tees band members and arranged by, and with additional material from, tutors **Ian Stephenson** and **Sophy Ball**.

Following on from a tour of the area back in March and a residential workshop at Langdon Beck youth hostel in the summer when they first got to play the whole piece, the band came together under the expert guidance of Sophy and Ian again to record the new suite at The Hub in October.

Cream Tees were joined on the stage by some very special guest appearances of folk and traditional musicians, young and old alike! **Neil Diment**, M@HoT project co-ordinator, said, "The concert has also given us an opportunity to celebrate the first three years of the M@HoT project and to say a big **THANK YOU** to our many friends, supporters, sponsors and volunteers who have helped us begin to achieve our aim - to revive the folk music, song and dance traditions of Teesdale."



## Teesdale Longsword Dancers shine in Keswick

**Our Longsword dance team excelled - and had a really good time! - at a national gathering of over 30 traditional dance groups in the Lake District. Helen Piercy-Mycock reports...**

"On the morning of Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September six Longsword dancers left Teesdale School on the school minibus to attend a 'Day of Dance' in Keswick before the Morris Federation's AGM. Neil, Milly and Mrs Bishop were also there to provide music and Patrick to help the dancers. We were the only youth Longsword group to attend the event.

We danced in four locations around Keswick, dancing a few times at each location. Our dance was met with much applause on all occasions. This was followed by lunch in Hope Park, then lunch for the ducks and geese by the lake!

In the afternoon we took part in a showcase. There were a range of different types of dances including two other sword dancing groups. After that we had very nice tea and cakes.

It was a brilliant day and we all had fun and enjoyed ourselves. What an excellent experience!"



With tutor Patrick Langdon and mighty Skiddaw looking on, the Longsword dance team end their Showcase performance with a perfect lock.



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# M@HoT is 3!

We look back at some of the achievements and highlights of the first three years of the **Music at the Heart of Teesdale project...**

## Research - leaving a legacy

We understood that there was not much of a folk tradition in the area. Oh how wrong we were. Over the last three years so much has revealed itself in song, music, dance and custom. The connection between 'Scarborough Fair' and **Mark Anderson** of Teesdale not only made news in the local papers, but was mentioned in a debate in the House of Commons. The resulting archive we have put together is a series of signposts to where you can find things, but for me the true value will be its use in the local community. It is heart-warming that we have traditional music being played, longsword dancing revived in the area and the occasional mummers play being performed. Onwards and upwards! *Mike Bettison*



Teesdale Longsword dancers perform outside The Witham.



Working with Hinny, our highlights included our end of year Cream Tees concerts and ceilidh at The Hub and, seen here, performing at the Hexham Gathering.

## Reviving the folk music traditions

Recommended to us by **David Oliver** from Folkworks at The Sage, we were very lucky that **Hinny Pawsey** agreed to be our tutor for the first two years of the project. In fact, she was much more than that – more like our 'musical director' in fact, as she led us through workshops and our first public performances. She helped lay the foundations for our youth folk band Cream Tees, with the emphasis on 'learning by ear' from the very first tune she taught us, 'Small Coals & Little Money', to the last that she composed especially for us as a farewell, 'Cream of the Crop'. *Neil Diment*

## Successful partnerships

M@HoT has formed a very successful and mutually beneficial partnership with the Folk & Traditional Music degree course at Newcastle University. The multi-talented final year students come down once a fortnight to lead a Jamming session after school at The Hub, bringing their youthful enthusiasm and energy - and providing excellent role models for our Cream Tees band members. In return, the students gain valuable experience in teaching and leading a group of young musicians, and introduce them to a wider variety of tunes which quickly become firm favourites with the band. **Alex Cumming** and **Izzy Burns** worked with us in 2012-13, and **Sam Partridge** and **Grace Smith** have been with us since September. *ND*



Alex and Izzy lead a 'Jamming' session at The Hub.

## Editor's Corner

Hello, my name is **Amanda Wilson**, I am a M@HoT volunteer and supporter of Cream Tees and wish them a very Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday! What an achievement and what a privilege it is to be involved in producing this Birthday edition. Jam packed full of news, achievements and firsts. **ENJOY!**



## Longsword Dancing returns to Teesdale

Looking to work more in the local primary schools, and following an approach from **Mike Bettison**, M@HoT was invited into Bowes Hutchinson Primary School earlier this year to teach Longsword dance to children from years 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the summer term. With Mike as musician, **Neil Diment** and me, **Patrick Langdon**, as volunteer tutor the three of us ran a series of five 1 hour afternoon sessions. The pupils were enthusiastic and learned quickly. By the end of the five weeks they had learned a dance well enough for us to consider a public performance. We went back to the school in the autumn term for another five sessions to prepare the pupils for a performance of the Bowes Longsword Dance in the village hall at the Christmas Bazaar. *PL*



An historic first: A longsword dance performed in Bowes, perhaps for the first time in 150 years, in November 2014.



Rosie and Mike performing 'Notes from Teesdale' in Newbiggin Hall in 2013.

## Playback: 'Notes from Teesdale'

M@HoT's **Rosie Cross** & **Mike Bettison** have given over a dozen community performances since November 2012 under the 'Notes from Teesdale' name. These have included over 70 members at a full meeting of Teesdale U3A, Teesdale Heritage Group, several Women's Institutes and day clubs. There are two programmes:

- A general presentation of music and song which hails from or which has distinct links to Teesdale, lasting between 10 minutes to one hour depending on the audience. The shorter presentation is ideal for school pupils. Rosie plays hammered dulcimer, bassoon and sings; Mike plays melodeon, guitar and also sings.
- The second presentation has a Christmas theme. It is an illustrated talk with projected images - both archive and modern - and includes readings describing local winter traditions; a local mummers play, with audience participation; and opportunities for joining in with the singing of local traditional seasonal songs and carols.

All the material for both programmes is based on Mike's research. *Rosie Cross*

## Some last words from Cream Tees...

We asked the musicians who had been with Cream Tees right from the start what would be their lasting memory: "I have enjoyed going to the interesting places we have performed and am more confident in playing to an audience." **Joseph Fitzgerald** (flute)

"Recording our new composition." **Fiona Todd** (fiddle)

We also asked what they liked best about the experience:

"It's great that we've written and performed our own piece of music inspired by where we live." **Milly Diment**

"We get the opportunity to perform so often and we learn new tunes and techniques. And we get free cake and scones!"

**Rachel Todd** (fiddle)

## Looking to the future...

With a funding extension secured as part of the Heart of Teesdale landscape partnership project, the future looks bright for the project - for the next 15 months at least! - as we move towards a more self-sustainable footing.

- A 'Friends of M@HoT' group has been established to explore ways of supporting the work of the project.
- **Sophy Ball**, who has worked with us this year on 'The New Composition' project, has agreed to be our tutor from January 2015.
- We are recruiting new members each year as our older ones leave, or move on to college or university.
- Building on the work with the Longsword programme in Bowes primary school, we are planning on doing more work in other 'feeder' primary schools with the help and continuing support of staff from the Durham Music Service. *ND*

## Diary Dates

**December 2014**

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup>**

'Jamming' session with Grace at The Hub, 5-6.30pm

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>**

'Jamming' session with Sam at The Hub, 5-6.30pm

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>**

A Christmassy 'Acoustic Café' at the Witham, 2-3.30pm

**January 2015**

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>**

First 'Jamming' session of the New Year 4.15-5.45pm, followed by new Longsword dance session 6-6.30pm both at The Hub (& both continuing every fortnight on Thursdays - **Note these new times!**)

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>**

Trip to see the Goathland 'Plough Stots' Longsword Dancers perform in North Yorkshire

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup>**

Cream Tees workshop at The Hub with Sophy Ball, 9-5pm

**New members welcome!**

**February**

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup>**

'New Generation' showcase concert by final year folk degree students – with Cream Tees 'Jamming' session at The Witham, 1.30-5pm

**May**

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Hexham Gathering - more details tba

**June**

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>**

A Day of 'Performance & Participation' at The Witham, 10am - 5pm

# Meet the Folk: Our Tutors

**Both our Jamming tutors, Grace Smith and Sam Partridge, are final year students on the Folk and Traditional music degree course at Newcastle University.**

**Grace** comes from Saltburn and plays the fiddle, as well as singing and clog dancing. She started playing at school with Tees Valley Music Service and continued playing classical music alongside folk throughout school. Being part of the Folkworks Summer Schools and Folkestra were also big influences for her. She plays with 'The Rachel Hamer Band' ([www.therachelhamerband.com](http://www.therachelhamerband.com)) and 'The Lindie Quartet' ([www.facebook.com/lindiequartet](http://www.facebook.com/lindiequartet)). While working hard towards her final recital next year, she enjoys teaches clog dancing with Folkworks at Sage Gateshead.

"I'm really enjoying working with Cream Tees and the M@HoT project so far," she told us. "I've been really impressed by the playing and composing skills of the group. It is a privilege to work with such enthusiastic young folk musicians!"

**Sam** is a flute, whistle and uilleann pipe player from Glossop in the Peak District. He, too, has a wealth of experience in both teaching and performance and plays regularly with Grace with the 'Rachel Hamer Band' in the UK. He is also involved in the Newcastle based big-band 'Pons Aelius' but still finds time to do lots of instrumental teaching at Sage Gateshead as part of Folkworks.

Sam was introduced to folk music through the vast Irish traditional scene in Manchester, his local city. He honed his playing in many sessions there, first taking up the whistle and progressing onto flute and pipes when at university. Whilst being primarily a folk musician, Sam also has a classical background having taken regular classes at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester on bassoon along with theory, composition, conducting and orchestra.

"Working with the Cream Tees is a highly enjoyable experience," he said. "Seeing the talents of all involved as they perform, compose and arrange is fantastic and a testament to their hard work and dedication."



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