

## M@HoT project funding extended!

**The Music at the Heart of Teesdale project heard the fantastic news in April that our bid for an extension to the current funding from the Heart of Teesdale landscape partnership through to February 2016 has been successful!**

Neil Diment, M@HoT project co-ordinator said, "This is great news and we are really pleased, as it means we can continue to develop the project for another two years. It effectively gives us a 'stay of execution' of a further 14 months till we have to move to a fully self-sustainable footing.

We haven't been granted the full amount we had asked for however, and part of the reason for that is that the HoT want to see us making more efforts to move towards a greater degree of sustainability."

### Looking ahead

As such, the project is looking to build on its successes over its first two years by setting up a way for friends, families and its many supporters to get involved. M@HoT has already held an initial meeting at the Hub and it was great to hear everyone affirming their support for the project as well as putting forward

excellent ideas for publicity and fundraising. An inaugural 'Friends' meeting is to be held in the Witham on September 24<sup>th</sup>. If **you'd** like to get more involved, please get in touch with Neil – see his contact details on p.4.



*More of this? The first Longsword dance in Teesdale for over a century performed at the Bowes Museum on Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> May.*

## Busking in Barnard Castle

**Cream Tees have been practising their streetcraft this year with regular busking sessions held at the Dispensary Café in the Witham.**



*Cream Tees' 'Acoustic café' sessions take place at 2pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month.*

The young musicians most recently performed at the café with the Teesdale Longsword dance team in May to great acclaim. They have become very popular with both the staff and the customers, with many coming along especially to hear them play.

Katy Taylor, assistant manager at the Witham, said, "We wanted to provide live music for people to add to the experience of coming to the Witham and our first

thought was of 'Cream Tees'. It's great to support a local initiative, especially with these young musicians, as it gives them an opportunity to perform informally to a wider audience. They are so polite, lively, well behaved, and interesting; it's great!"

Café manager Wendy Withers added, "We've now agreed to sponsor Cream Tees in the future – it's our way of giving something back to them for all that they're giving us."

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*Ian and Sophy introduce themselves and share their thoughts on 'The New Composition' project*

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To mark M@HoT's third year, **Cream Tees'** young musicians have been challenged to compose their own piece of music, working with new tutors **Sophy Ball** and **Ian Stephenson**. **Claire Jacques** joined them for their first workshop...

## Cream Tees: Inspired by Teesdale

On a chilly Saturday morning in late March, the young musicians set off with Sophy and Ian from their spiritual home at The Hub in Barnard Castle for a whistle-stop tour of the highlights of the Heart of Teesdale. The aim was to experience for themselves the sights and sounds of the landscape and seek inspiration for 'TNC' – or 'The New Composition'.

### An inspirational trip out

The first stop was the terrace of Bowes Museum. Standing outside this magnificent building as the snow began to fall however, we were far more concerned about the deteriorating weather! We were to experience four seasons in one day; it should certainly make for some dramatic music!

Moving swiftly onwards, we made our way over Abbey Bridge, stopping briefly to wonder at the torrents of water cascading through the rocky chasm far below, and on to Egglestone Abbey. The children had great fun sheltering in the ruined

chimney places which centuries before had kept the white monks warm. Our next port of call was the Meeting of the Waters, where the tributary known as the River Greta meets the River Tees. At this point, Gainford photographer and musician **Paul Place** who was accompanying the trip suggested that, "If you listen closely, every place has its own music. So, listen for a few moments and tell me what you hear."

To which **Sam Wilson**, Cream Tees' young keyboard player, piped up, "I hear a coca cola advert!" Looking at the colour of the peaty water, swollen after months of rain, you had to admit he had a point; and I suppose, we adults mused, we too were trying to teach our small part of



*In the sun at Egglestone Abbey.*



*In the snow outside the Bowes Museum.*

### Editor's Corner:

I can't believe that this is my 4<sup>th</sup> issue of M@HoT News – time flies when you're having fun! Sadly though, this will be the last newsletter that I will be producing as I shall be moving on to study for an M.Sc. in Neuroscience at Kings College London this September. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with such warm and dedicated people and I would like to extend my thanks to everyone for the opportunity. The future is looking bright for M@HoT too as the project has had its funding extended until Feb 2016 (see page 1) and plans for Cream Tees' legacy are made, including the much awaited new composition.



the world to sing! Fiddler **Teddy Hart-Davis** added, "The rocks in the river look like Stonehenge has been pushed over by a bulldozer. The river must have a lot of force to be able to do that." Neolithic rock music? This was more like it!

**A Musical Journey**

After visiting other sites, such as the Morritt Arms where we were treated to a lively explanation of the Gilroy murals in the Dickens Bar by hotel owner **Peter Phillips**, we returned to The Hub for some very welcome soup and sandwiches. Next, Ian and Sophy headed a brainstorming session and split the children into groups to start composing some possible tunes and chord structures to accompany them. The idea is that these will be woven into a pattern that tells the story of a musical journey around the Heart of Teesdale.

When one of the band's youngest members, cellist **Helen Piercy-Mycock**, was asked which place was her favourite she replied, "I think that the Meeting of the Waters will be a good place to write a tune about because the mixing of the two rivers is interesting. We could mix tunes together to try and recreate that



*Ian and Sophy leading the brainstorming session at the Hub.*

Her friend, viola player **Holly Hughes**, said that they were both looking forward to learning the new piece at the residential workshop in June and added, "I can't wait till it's finished and we can perform it!"

**'TNC' Premier**

The young musicians will work with **Andy Yeadon** at The Hub to record the new composition in October – and hopefully give it a name! – after the summer break. The plan is then to perform it for the first time in public at a special concert towards the end of the year, on **Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> November at The Witham** in Barnard Castle. This concert will also be a celebration of the first three



*Tuning up outside the Hub.*

years of the M@HoT project, and is sure to be a special evening. Put the date in your diaries!



*The young musicians admire the murals painted in 1946 by Jack Gilroy at the Morritt Arms near Greta Bridge.*



*Cream Tees pose beneath the ruins of Bernard's castle at the end of their 'Heart of Teesdale' highlights tour.*

## Diary Dates

### June

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>**

Final 'Jammin' session with Alex and Izzy at The Hub, 5-6.30pm

**Fri 20<sup>th</sup> | Sat 21<sup>st</sup>**

'TNC' Midsummer residential Fri, 5-9pm - Sat, 9am-5pm at Langdon Beck youth hostel

### July

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>**

'The Full English in Teesdale' at the Witham, 10am-5pm

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup>**

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

### September

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

New School Year 'Meet & Play' workshop at The Hub, 5-6.30pm  
New members welcome!

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

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

**Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup>**

1<sup>st</sup> M@HoT 'Friends, Parents & Supporters' meeting at the Witham, 7-8pm

**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>**

Jamming with new tutors Grace Smith & Sam Darling at The Hub, 5-6.30pm

**Friday 26<sup>th</sup>**

Music for the Late Night Opening at the Bowes Museum, from 6pm

### October

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> - tbc**

STOP PRESS! Performing at the Allen Valleys Folk Festival

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup>**

Recording 'TNC' in The Hub, 1.30-5.30pm

### November

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup>**

'TNC' Rehearsal & Premier at the Witham, 5-9pm

## Meet the Folk: Our 'TNC' tutors

**Ian Stephenson** is a multi-instrumentalist from North Yorkshire. In 1999 he won the BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award with the band **422** (including Sophy on fiddle!). Since then he has played gigs and festivals all around the world with his bands **Kan** and **Baltic Crossing**. Ian has been passionate about folk music since he discovered it at Whitby Folk Festival, where he met Sophy and her sister Emily (now his wife!) at the tender age of 12. Years of attending Folkworks Summer Schools cemented his love for the music and since completing the Newcastle University Folk Music Degree in 2005 Ian has been performing and composing music for a living.



He said, "It's been absolutely fantastic working with Cream Tees on this brilliant project – they're so talented (understatedly so!) and have really surpassed our expectations in terms of quality of music. They have all really pulled something special out of the bag, there are some cracking tunes and ideas. I can't wait to put it all together with Sophy and create something which will have such a true, real connection to the beautiful Teesdale landscape!"

**M**usic is in **Sophy Ball's** DNA. Her parents had a ceilidh band as she was growing up; they had so much fun and shared their joy in music with her. She has come to love teaching others to express themselves through music, in much the same way as she was taught.

Speaking after our first workshop she said, "It's fantastic to find so many volunteers and supporters who make amazing things like 'Cream Tees' happen. What a fantastic opportunity for the kids and it's great that there's some extra funding now. The new music is a joy. What they have already created is really inspiring, I can't wait to get to work arranging and developing their riffs and tunes. It's fantastic to have such confident, creative young people. I was amazed and delighted at their willingness to make weird and wonderful noises together. Everyone involved in making this happen should be super proud!"



**'If you like it, play it!'**

For more information about the M@HoT project, contact: Neil Diment, M@HoT project co-ordinator, 22 Wilson Street, Barnard Castle, DL12 8JU tel. 01833 638263 email: neil@ndiment.co.uk