

# ROY WELLS' COLLAGE OF MUSIC

Occasional Newts  Letter - Vol.2 No.1 Feb 2015

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## TINGLE FACTORY NEWS

*Steve's own original music and videos* - and follow Steve on Facebook

<http://roywellscollageofmusic.org/tf.html>

Photo  
courtesy  
of

**THE VAULT**



St Peter Port, Guernsey, August 2014.

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## Live work

Steve got to play some of his own *Tingle Factory* songs at various venues/events, such as at The Vault in Guernsey (pictured above). *Southwark Art Forum's Summer Meet-up at Anise Gallery, Copleston Centre's AGM* in July, and at *East Dulwich Christmas Cracker* where passers by (including *Snowball Sprites* - pictured below) stopped passing by and stopped, kids danced, and adults offered up money. (His paid contract from *Southwark Council* prevented him from accepting money, but he did take the liberty of accepting a draft of extremely spicy mulled cider which on a cool evening propelled him on to his next gig with fire in his belly.)

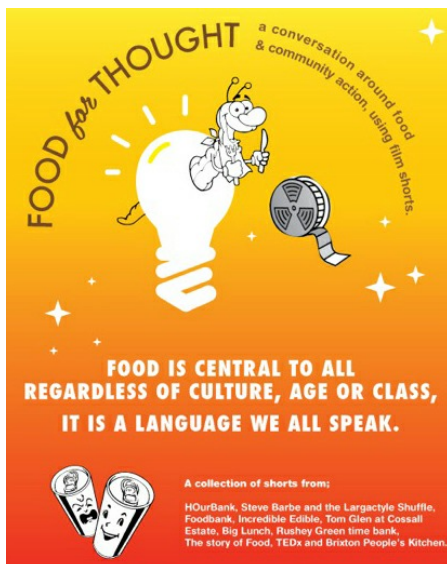
Photo courtesy of  
Circo Rum Ba Ba



## Screenings

"Toad in a Hole" (the pop video) <http://youtube.com/watch?v=q7Upt2Sdg54>

In May Steve had one of his own videos (*Toad; Environmental Pop Video*) screened at *Hourbank's Food for Thought Film Night*, which he also co-presented and co-curated with Hourbank and *TTP*. The topics were food issues, local growing, community, health and environment. Locally made films featured as far as possible, and all profit made went to *Southwark Foodbank*. The venue, "*Cinema6*" at Arcadia Missa, is a new neighbourhood cinema for Peckham. Steve thanks all who came along and made it a great evening with some good discussion.



Artwork by Matthew McGuinness

"We pretty much put the world to rights in terms of environment, health and social issues, and I expect to see a marked improvement from hereon, with institutions throughout the world taking heed and putting their practice into order on the basis of our recommendations" was Steve's hopeful assessment of the evening.

Also screened that evening were excerpts from *The Largactyl Shuffle; Innovation in Mad Culture* (Lois Acton and Richard Muzira), which featured Steve's music.

Steve's pop video was also selected for screening at the *Canned Festival* in Norwich!

**Songs, health and community**

**green candle dance company**

MAKE WAY, I'M A MUSIC PROVIDER FOR THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SECTOR!

Steve continues to provide music for creative dance projects (such as one called "*Having a Ball*") for people with dementia, through Green Candle. He will often run a music activity with participants as part of a session, while much of the rest of each session involves guided movements and improvisation using props. For example, one ice-breaking activity is where the group sits in a circle and kicks a beach ball around while Steve plays football songs. "There were occasionally some great passes, and often some driving and accurate shots at no targets in particular", Steve commented after one "game".

Another Green Candle project, "Remember to Dance" was featured on the BBC magazine program Inside Out, where Steve appeared with choreographer Fergus Early.

## Uplift

Photo by Bridget Creel



Green Candle received a medal as one of the top 3 finalists in the *North East London NHS Foundation Trust, Excellence Awards 2014*, Redbridge category for its *Uplift* project, on which Steve worked along with choreographers *Chantal Bardouille* and *Vicki Busfield*.



## LETSwing <http://stevebarbe.ideastap.com/Project/ebbd871b-def6-4550-9092-a22300e97647/letswing>

Much of the work Steve did with this pool of four core musicians came from *Music in Hospitals* (MiH) who sent them to care homes and hospitals to provide participatory music, often for people with dementia. Most of this work was in the Home Counties and down as far as Southampton. Residents and patients would shake and rattle their shakers and rattles along with Shake Rattle and Roll (for example), and would also do entirely appropriate things during renditions of *Great Balls of Fire*. One resident used his walking frame as a percussion instrument against the floor, and another was extremely lively and sang some very rude songs of her own while pointing at her own anatomy.



MiH Get Together in July - with staff and musicians

Occasionally residents get even more technically involved, such as when Steve and *Mark Treasure* played at *Mais House's Xmas party* (booked directly with the home.). The LETSwing duo became a trio in the 2nd half when they were joined by a resident (who also provided the sound amplification) on double bass.

The band got very busy on the run up to Xmas in fact, with lots of short notice gigs as a trio including sax player *Hugh Harris*. The musicians just about managed to reach all the venues on time, or not too late, despite the Satnav being naughty and occasionally telling them lies.

Earlier last year Steve and guitarist *Hanna Heissenbuettel* went down like two friendly bombs at two care home gigs on a day trip to Slough. The second one directly preceded a barbecue in the garden (yes it turns out Slough has those) and the LETSwing duo were invited to stay. After filling up on food and wine (halal wine the activities co-ordinator insisted) Steve returned inside to join residents and staff for karaoke. He thereby seized the opportunity to put to bed any notions that a "professional" singer, who had just performed for 150 mins. in a heat wave, would know when to quit.

They arrived at another home in Hampshire, ready to play except for Steve needing the loo, and also needing to fill his water bottle (it's thirsty work singing in those warm buildings.) The activities worker showed him to somewhere he could "do both things in one go." Steve hopes he understood her correctly, as there was potential for misinterpretation. Things became a little clearer after drinking that fine Hampshire water in any case.

On another occasion, the band drove over Steve's bag of musical instruments in the rush from one care home to another . They had finished their first of two gigs that day, and had just loaded the car; except not completely. They had accidentally left this one bag in front of the wheels. If any other musicians out there are considering driving over their musical instruments in a car, they may wish to re-consider, as the results may be disappointing. A sturdy Remo fibre-glass drum which took the worst of it and buckled, now sounds a bit peculiar.

It still just about functions well enough for drum workshops, and is now a welcome addition to Steve's junk percussion collection with its own fascinating but cautionary history. (The rest of the damage was relatively minor, luckily, and the flute survived completely.) Remo claim that all their instruments are road tested for durability. This road testing obviously does not include being run over by a Volvo estate.



Remo drum  
(before the accident)



Other work included *Rushey Green Festival*.

Steve, Hanna and Hugh at Hanna's Alanouwaly stall



You can really sense the excitement of the crowd...



Hanna had a stall at this festival for her charity *Alanouwaly* - <http://alanouwaly.com>. This is a small organisation with a big vision, which has already achieved loads. LETSwing were amongst an impressive line-up of other acts including *Wuntanara*, *Souleymane Compo*, who performed beautifully with kora and drums and who also ran a West African music and dance workshop. LETSwing also played without Steve at the charities annual fundraising bash "*Salifest*". Steve occasionally plays what are effectively LETSwing gigs without the rest of the band.



The greenhouse windows shook at this Edwardian themed event - *Horniman's Curious Tea Party* - organised with a local conservatoire of music.



He performed in what henceforth shall be known to him as "*Trinity Laban's* conservatory of music; a hot house of musical talent", where he played an entirely acoustic solo set, and where he also spent most of the rest of the afternoon. The acoustics were great, as were the other acts.

## Monthly Sessions - With Steve working solo

### Three Cs

This place was set up originally to accommodate 7 people who were all on the same ward of a hospital which closed, well over ten years ago, in a drive towards "care in the community". Steve had been running monthly music sessions there for over ten years, a period which had also seen an almost complete change over of residents.

The care home has been de-registered from the NHS, a move which spelled an end to music sessions for financial reasons. At least there was a record attendance at this final one.

It was poignant that around that time residents of homes run by Three Cs exhibited artwork at an event called *"Money Distribution Machine and Other Useful Contraptions"* at Peckham Platform.



### Rob St.

Sessions continue at this care home. One of the residents once got so animated in a session he even started doing press-ups on the floor. Well they were a strange kind of press-up, involving a pelvic thrust which was reminiscent of something but we can't think what.

At this "wet house" hostel for otherwise street homeless older adults (where alcohol is controlled but tolerated), there is often singing, dancing and merriment, as well as verbal insults, damage to property and confiscation of beer. Steve vows to try and curb his behaviour from now on. On one occasion after thrashing out songs for 55 minutes, one residents asked for the "sound of silence."

Later there last year he arrived to provide a Xmas sing-song followed by a meal of quiche and vegetables. He was quite hungry so he let the meal catch up with him and he ate it before he started playing.



## Rock Gigs

The "House Band" Fronted by Steve, the band with as yet no formal name had a run of hosting jam nights at *The Bell* in Sydenham. They also continue to host jams at the *Jolly Farmers* in Purley. The flavour is mostly hard-rock/blues (including some original numbers), but jammers are free to bring along any other kind of jam they choose.

*The Star* in Dorking where the band guested once was good fun, with a nice friendly crowd who cheered. It is possible that they don't get hard rock so often there. The band told them they hadn't played in Dorking for 33 years, which was true.

They also played at a *birthday party in Reigate*, which went fab, even though the sets included songs they'd never rehearsed before, and at least one which none had even played before - with anyone - anywhere. They even got away with it after Steve started singing Honkey Tonk Woman while the rest of the band had started playing Brown Sugar.



Photo by Julia Edgington

## Early Years work

Key points in the calendar were often themes at *Tiddlers* at *Christchurch* on Barry Road. For example they celebrated both May and THE may (blossom). After a few rounds of busy bees, bouncing monkeys, jumping cows and sleepy bunnies, they tossed the blossom up in a parachute (well... actually golfing - umbrella fabric).



To accompany this Steve sang the old folk song "*Here's a branch of snowy May* (a branch the faeries gave me....)". This is probably an old maypole song, so Steve hopes that the faeries and God won't be too miffed that he appropriated it for this activity. There was also an African drumming theme at one session, including the folk tale *Spider the Drummer*.

But NO MORE MONKEYS BOUNCING ON THE BED.

The group came to a close last year, and a little toddler shaped empty space appeared in Steve's ongoing portfolio. All his little puppets and soft toys became jobless - a rainy day indeed for Incy Wincy Spider.

All the sausages were seen off with a bang at an end of term party where Steve was presented with a bottle of red wine for his efforts over the previous 7 years, while the other two leaders got flowers. Steve was very grateful for this and wonders how they knew.

Then came the glad tidings that the kitchen staff kindly supported the continuation of Tiddlers on a more self-help basis, with the occasional involvement of paid leaders, such as Steve. That was great news, but Steve hopes this does not mean he will have to give back his wine. Thankfully other early years work arose through *Seven Stars Agency*, who sent him to Letchworth Garden City for some in-school junk percussion sessions.

## Rhythm work (in and out of schools)

### Community Scrapbands (CS)

<http://stevebarbe.ideastap.com/Project/2c902f06-e5e3-4a79-9cbc-a22300e9309a/community-scrapbands>

(It's rubbish!)



Photo courtesy of Creative Therapies Project

**Community Scrapbands has an effective waste reduction strategy.  
It reduces waste by hitting it repeatedly with a stick.**

It's been a busy few months of "Bashing Stuff and Saving the World" with this branch of Steve's work (which "Beats Recycling" )

The sessions in Letchworth Garden City mentioned above went well, and involved reception and older primary classes as well as the nursery. This was despite the fact that due to miscommunication the teachers were expecting craft-based work (i.e. making instruments from junk), which Steve doesn't do.

**Purchasers please take note:**

as far as junk goes, Steve is not a maker, he's a shaker and a trash basher.

Young people from The Bunbury Banter Young Theatre Company had fun bashing stuff, and they videoed it and blogged about it. The video shows how rhythmically together they were by the end, and how all the hard work they put in during the workshop paid off.



Video viewable at: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=A8UQ83nKSQo&feature=youtu.be>

Blog extract: "Overall, the workshop was a completely different experience for all of us, but 'twas also extremely fun and we hope to hear from the amazing Steve again!"

Read the full blog at: <http://bunbanterytc.wordpress.com/2014/05/22/347/>

Other junk jobs included *Southwark Art Forum's Summer Art Fair* at *Hayes Galleria*, *The Great British Carnival* in the *Olympic Park* with *Open Play*, a session with *The Woodcraft Folk* on *Cossall Park*, and ongoing work with adults with learning difficulties through *Outward*. Steve appears regularly at a music club for Outward to run singing and bashing sessions and also ran a drop-in-out session for them at an open-air *Learning Disability Festival* in *Waltham Forest*.



empowering young people



The club also has a refreshments bar run by service users serving tea, biscuits and crisps. At the penultimate session of term the possibility of cake was discussed. Steve, for one, was convinced that cake does exist. At the final session there was conclusive proof of this, of the sponge variety anyway. In fact Steve broke a tooth on a piece, and you can't get more concrete evidence than that. The slice had come straight out of the fridge, so the icing had set very hard. Steve had hidden it in there because his first piece had got found and eaten by someone before he'd even touched it. Nevertheless snapping a molar on such a trifle was a little de-molar-icing., especially when those same teeth had opened beer bottles in the past. (By this we mean that in the past they have opened beer bottles. Steve's teeth have never to our knowledge travelled to the past to open beer bottles, although that would be an even better trick. But we digress..)

He also ran a junk session at another *Hourbank Bring and Fix* with sustainable transport charity *Sustrans*, where bashing stuff and saving the world was high on the list of priorities.

Younger people with special needs enjoyed a half-day of junk percussion at a holiday play-scheme near Luton run by *Families United Network*. One girl of about 8 years took immediately to a metal dustbin and bashed a slow steady gong-like pulse, which was excellent for the rest to play along to. She and her friend stayed for much of the whole 3 hours, and played almost obsessively and consistently well. This work came via Seven Stars.

Steve also attended *Kirri and Chris's 20th fab Wedding Anniversary* at their famous *Café Crema* (with garden) which included "live karaoke" where he played the bucket. (That's not an expression, he just played the bucket - and sang - whilst playing the bucket.)



Photo courtesy of Families United Network

## Drumming

Steve was hired by *Slide Dance* to provide djembe drumming for workshops/rehearsals and performances in Croydon parks. This included a performance by *Parkour Dance Company*, which was a dramatic climax to the final day, with the dancers using park furniture and play equipment as springboards for their gymnastic display.



Photos  
courtesy of  
Slide Dance



# *A Celebration of Africa*

A SHOWCASE HOSTED BY ASI MUNISI  
WITH SPECIAL GUESTS THE WESTBRIDGE CHOIR.

A BUFFET WITH AFRICAN CUISINE

SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2014

6PM–8PM

DOORS OPEN 5:30PM



FREE ENTRY

THERE WILL BE A COLLECTION FOR THE  
CONTINUED WORK OF THE PAN AFRICAN  
BOOK FOUNDATION



CHRIST CHURCH EAST DULWICH  
263 BARRY ROAD  
LONDON  
SE22 0JT

Steve also ran an African drumming workshop for "Alanouwaly" at *Holbeach School*, and also a whole day of workshops at a junior school in Dagenham for their "*African Experience*" theme day.

Returning for a second year to *Asi Munisi's Celebration of Africa*, Steve presented a participatory song story session at ChristChurch East Dulwich.

Having dunked her calabash in the river, this young child has allowed the mesmerising power of Spider the Drummer's music to distract her completely from her domestic duties, and she is about to get her freak on to the point of flaking out through exhaustion at the waters edge.



Photos by Michael Mapp courtesy of PABF

Then later last year at *CoolTan Arts Christmas Party*, a temporary glitch with the karaoke meant Steve was roped in to provide some "poly-filler" while things were being sorted. So he drum, which actually got a few people dancing.



## Bootleg BeeGees

He grew the beard which you see him sporting throughout this Newsletter in order to play "*Bootleg Barry Gibb*" in the Bootleg BeeGees. It's impossible to get the voice right without a full beard, which acts as a resonating fuzz-twanger. It may sound far-fetched but Steve has studied this and insists that it's TRUE. Some of the notes were high as a mountain, but Bootleg Barry managed to climb them all at this *The Chiswick Club Society* tribute gig in late spring.

Photos by  
Tomoko Nakahara



## Miscellaneous titbits

Photos courtesy of Hourbank

### Hourbank

As well as playing some songs as "Green Santa" at *Hourbank's Christmas Party + 15 year Anniversary celebration*, Steve also represented the organisation at various meetings, including *Time and Talents AGM* and *Age UK Lewisham & Southwark AGM*.



### HB pub evening

Testing Testing! This bijou Lego microphone I've just constructed doesn't yet pass quality control to Major Tom commencing countdown testing ignition 4...3...2...1... what have they put in this beer?



### Community Choir

Steve helped run an Hourbank stall at *Hexagon Housing Residents Day*, and thanks *Jacqueline Grant* and her *Caribbean Community Choir* for welcoming him back that afternoon, and letting him sing with them. Jacqueline has done great work transmitting traditional Caribbean songs for use in the community.

## Article

Steve covered the event "*Sing Out for Your Health!*" in *Sounding Board*. (2014, Issue 2, page 8.)

## "Vicar's Tea Party"

Steve played some songs for a barbecue in the vicarage gardens at Christchurch in Stockwell again.

## Kith and Kids

Steve ran a couple of music workshops for Kith and Kids in Tottenham.

On the first day he turned up on-time and waited outside the wrong entrance for 20 mins while everyone else was getting in through the correct one and setting up. What an impressive début.

Still, it turned out to be a great day, thanks largely to an abundance of fine staff and volunteers.

There were some hilarious moments, like when one lovely young participant came and embraced him affectionately by the throat. Steve wasn't the least bit afraid as it happens, mainly because no malice was intended, and also because he didn't squeeze hard enough to properly constrict the airway. Steve thought it was just excitement from the music. Two volunteers did a great job minding him all afternoon, as he blundered about the club in a good natured and exuberant sort of way. They also did a good job minding the participant.

## Job Interview

Steve attended an interview for similar work in bright cycling gear. The job specification said that one of the important qualities was to be reflective. (That didn't happen.)

## Birthday

- Lovely evening playing penny whistle at my friend *Juliet's* with *Miranda* and *Julia* in Dorking to mark my birthday. The whistle was a welcome gift, and the playing thereof was for both entertainment and tax purposes. It was lovely to see them again and a welcome break from London.



Photo by Julia Edgington

## Wassailing

Steve had a jolly old wassail with some friends at his local nature garden, moving on to *Bonar Road Allotments* (yes, that's Bonar!) where there was drinking, food and merriment.



NORWICH  
ONION

**WARNING!!  
RWCM MAY BE A  
FIGMENT OF ROY  
WELLS' IMAGINATION.  
BEWARE OF APPEALS.**

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