



## **WATER MEMORIES MAKING HISTORY**

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With Young People from Bishop Sutton Youth Centre

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In a complex modern world, where communication is instant, the speed at which we live our lives seems unmanageable and information saturates our minds it is easy to understand why it is perceived that history and heritage has no relevance to our daily lives. It is a misconception that young people do not care about heritage, history or the past. It is a misconceived idea that young people do not think about the future and only live for the present. It is a matter of relevance, when the subject of heritage is revealed in different ways, the importance discovered through actual experience, where the general and vague becomes personal and specific the spring of interest begins to run. This project has enabled many springs of thought to come to the surface, to run, to join up towards a sea of ideas and possibilities.

The project set out to see if through enabling and facilitating a range of different approaches to the subject of history and heritage combined with empowering young people to make their own decisions and choices new individual and group understandings and insight may be found.

What began as a very simple concept has grown in complexity that at first glance is bewildering. The book has a rich and diverse content from individual stories, individual experiences and shared experiences to historical contexts and insights into future sustainability.

*“.....imaginative re-interpretation or re-evaluation of the past now may be more critical to our survival than innovation”*

Dr Ian Biggs

This book represents one of the products and outcomes of a process, a process that began many years in the past, and a product that you the reader can hopefully enjoy on many levels in the present and perhaps move the process on into the future in your own ways. Like the present time this book has a history and a heritage that owes its existence to many people. By looking back into the past we begin to understand more about the present and gain some insights into the possibilities of the future. An issue for reflection, that increasingly appears more and more relevant to sustainability, localisation, rooted in our past informing our individual and group well-becoming of the future.

**Andrew Henon**



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## Introduction



This book stands as a statement of the energy, enthusiasm, commitment and dedication of the 200 young people who contributed towards and participated in the ***'Water memories, making history'*** project.

Funded by the 'Young Roots' programme from ***'Heritage Lottery Fund'*** conceived, developed and coordinated by and in partnership with nesa and delivered by a team of exceptional artists. nesa worked in partnership with Bath and North East Somerset Heritage Services Roman Baths and Costume Museum, Radstock Museum and Somerset Rural Life Museum who enabled access to archives, collections and educational resources.

The project was developed and steered by young people of Bishop Sutton Youth Club, supported by a dedicated youth work team.

The concept was to take four elements. One geographic where people live and the relationship with water, two the relationship water has with the making process of artefacts and practical objects, three the human activity of making and fourth the relationship with the past, present and future.

The geographic areas were Bishop Sutton in the Chew Valley, Keynsham, Radstock and Writhlington, Peasdown St John and Timsbury. The chapters are laid out by geographical areas and contain the art forms used.

The making process was divided into Art forms and disciplines of Stone carving, Willow weaving, Pottery and Ceramics including mosaic, Textiles and fashion with an over arching art form of Photography and Poetry.

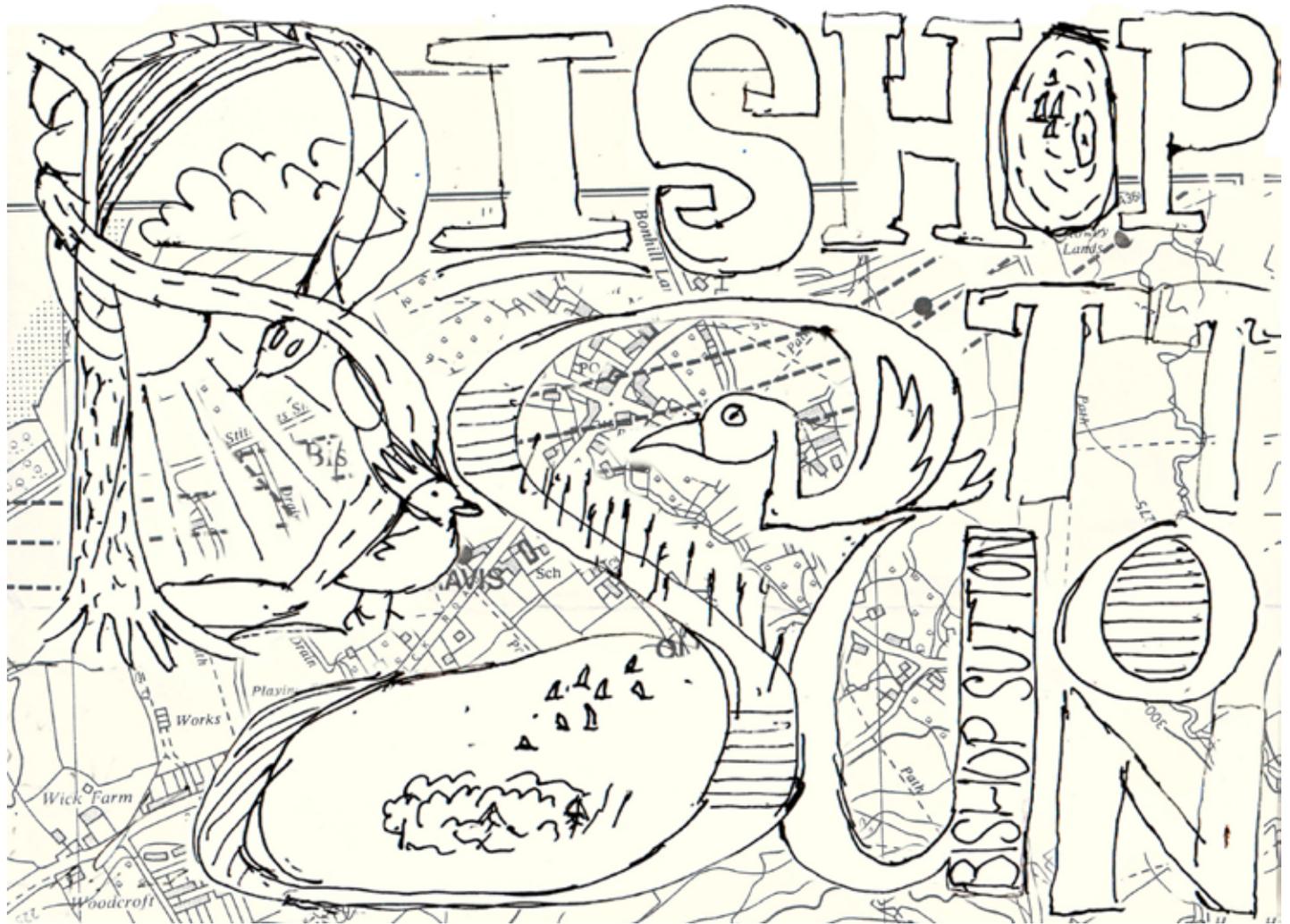


## Heritage

runs through this land  
rests in the crafts  
these hands have made  
claims remembrance of  
how we used to live  
brings a scent of yesterdays  
to the tides of tomorrow

slipping through the fingers  
stay a while for this story to survive  
keep hold  
heritage i,ve a feeling will be missed  
listenin g o ut  
for storie s your n gran would tell





## The Young People of the project steering group

Ben Bryant  
Scott Elms  
Sam Kite  
Charlotte Loomes  
Vicky Loomes  
Alce Lynett  
Rebecca Montacute  
Jack Ogborne  
Brioney Seaton-Cox  
Becca Smithers  
Mike Sweeney  
Grace Talbot-Walsh  
Charmaine Willcox



Some of the members of the steering group with other members of Bishop Sutton Youth Club on a visit to Somerset Rural Life Museum in Glastonbury, photo taken by Karen Dews at the top of Glastonbury Tor

# Bishop Sutton



A rural village in the chew valley



## The Young People of the project steering group

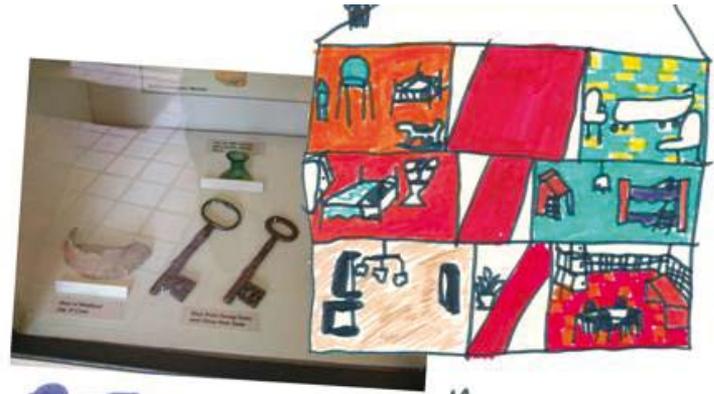
*'In 1939, after a long period of investigation, Bristol Waterworks was granted permission to build the new reservoir. This reservoir would be the biggest man-made lake in England and would flood 1200 acres of Somerset farmland. Immediate construction was planned but the outbreak of war postponed the project and building didn't start until 1951. By the mid-1950's the lake was filling well and major construction had been completed. (Whenever the lake level falls about 6 feet thousands of tree stumps from the tree felling can still be seen)' Bob Handford, Mendip Times. Life in the Hamlet of Moreton from families whose grandparents lived there, before the land was flooded to make Chew Valley Lake.*

My Dad said "By Moreton farm there used to be a cross they don't know why it was there. They ploughed the fields with horses, cut the grass and turn the hay with horses. They used to milk cows by hand and pull the mangels for cattle food. They used to haul the manure out by horse and cart put in heaps and spread it by hand."

By Amy Clarke



for those  
who grew up in those flower  
filled fields, the clock  
stopped in 1956.



My home.

*At that time, what is now Denny Island was a very steep hill.*



*"We were all born at Denny House Farm."*

MY UNCLE USED  
LIVE UNDER THE LAWS.



## The Young People of the project steering group

*'Local legend has it that a ghost of a young girl named Catherine Brown from the Hamlet of Moreton, drowned at Stratford Mill at the turn of the Twentieth Century. Her former home and grave lie in the Chew Valley beneath the surface of the reservoir that was flooded in 1956' New Sightings of 'Lady of the Lake, Ros Anstey*

There have been a number of sightings of a ghostly lady over the years and one description says *"her hair was loose, very thick, and longish to the top of her shoulders and blowing off her neck. She had a heavily embroidered Victorian style dress with leg-of-mutton sleeves. They were billowing back with the breeze and t r dress was very bright, as if electric."*



These stories inspired young people to carve the 'Lady of the lake' Young People want to have this sculpture placed at the Lake side.

*"Thinking about it it's like carving out the memories, trying to find out in the stone, trying to record it all and work it all out at the same time"*

*"I love carving stone, you don't know you can do it till you do it"*



# Ghost lady of the lake

puts in an appearance on

In the height of summer the water level drops paths to lost villages

# Hot Days

Down by the lake there is a Roman road running down into the lake



My grandmother Mrs Crocker lived at Moreton when she was a child. There were about eleven houses with no electric and no mains water. There were nine children in her family and they all had jobs to do before and after they went to school. One would clean all the shoes and the others had to clean the lamps, get stick for the fire, help milk the cows as they were farmers. It was happy times, they had friends come round and play rings, cards and darts. There was only one car in Moreton and that belonged to George Curry. At Mr Wilson's farm there was a water mill for grinding corn and that now is at Blaise Castle. Nan had to walk with her mother to West Harptree to get the groceries twice a week. They had two horses named Queenie and Bonnie and a cart to fetch the feed for the cows. Nan picked blackberries for school so it would make Dye, Rosehips to make syrup for the children.

Life was hard but happy.

By Michael Sweeney







## A Rural Life Revisited

Young people set out from Bishop Sutton with Karen Dews (photographer) Andy Southwell (Willow Sculptor) and volunteers to explore the Somerset Levels and visit the Somerset Rural Life Museum. At the museum they would meet Artist Kim Aplin, see his work and have access to the Museum collection and archives.

On the way it was time for some creative photography.



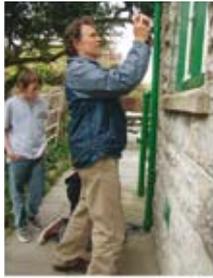
And on arrival



And later a walk up  
Glastonbury Tor to get the bigger picture







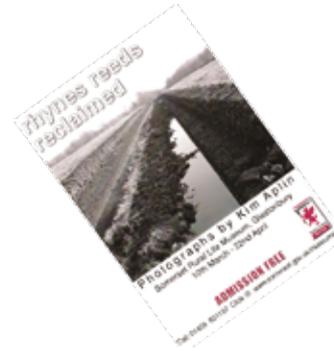
we went across the street and went into the rural life museum and climbed up on the huge hay stack, and found out about what it would be like to live and make a life centrys ago.

Old antique, aged, elderly, mature, not getting any younger, ancient, long standing, rural.





Kim Aplin gives a presentation about the exhibition of his photography work **'Rynes reeds reclaimed'**. Young people learn about the use of photography and the history and heritage of the Somerset Levels the growing of willow and reeds and the cutting of peat.



To explore the past, find inspiration, to make the future



• Centred on water with people around it.

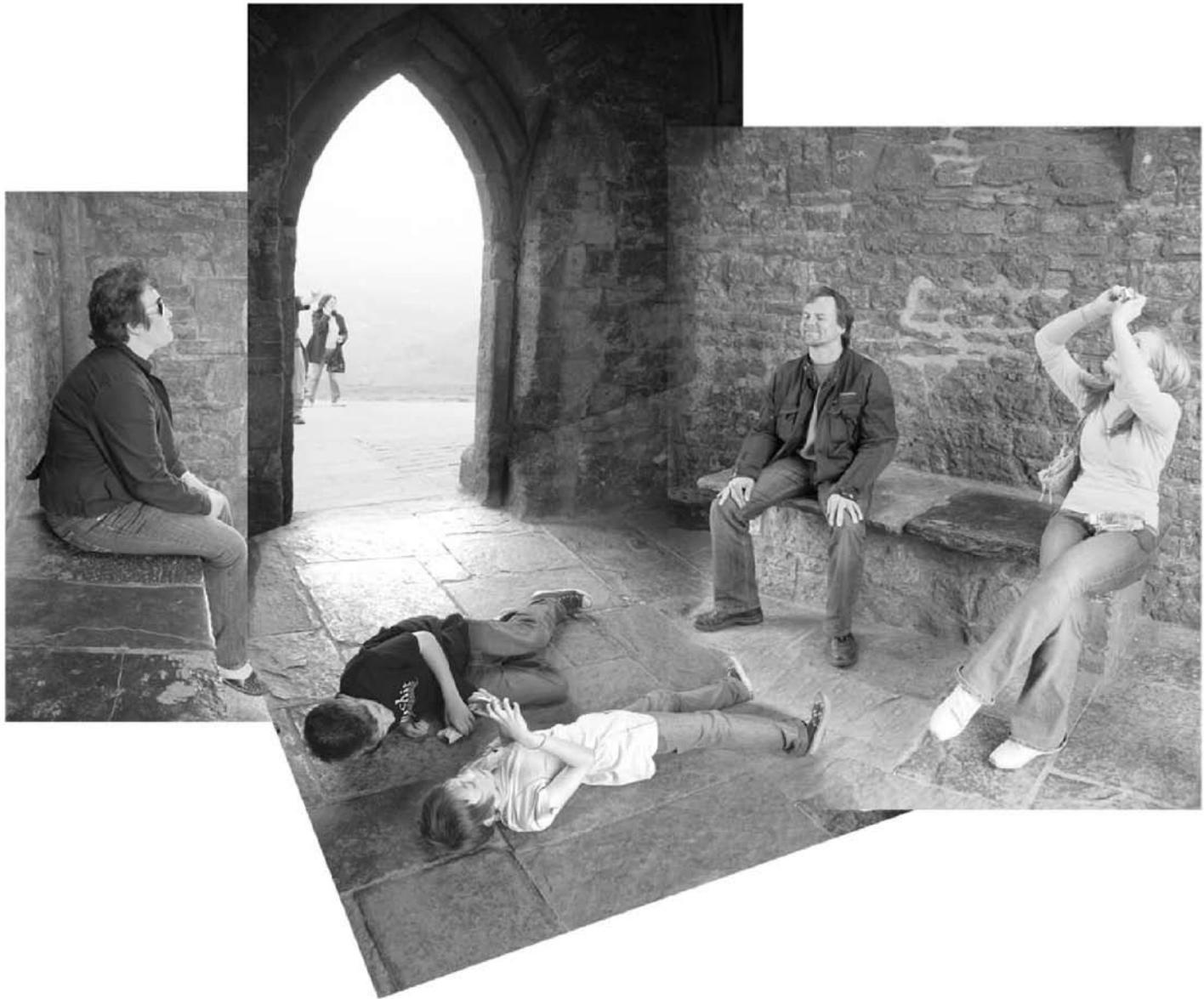


Nearby is 'Wirrall Hill' or 'Weary All Hill' near the station. A spring called the 'blood spring' near the Tor is said to mark the spot where St Joseph buried the holy grail.

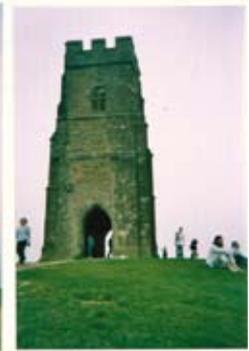
I used to go there with  
my nan and grandad.  
Now i go there it seems  
smaller.



The Tor is 500 feet above sea-level. The original chapel of St Michael, destroyed by a landslide in 1271



We didn't think it would be so busy, it was amazing.



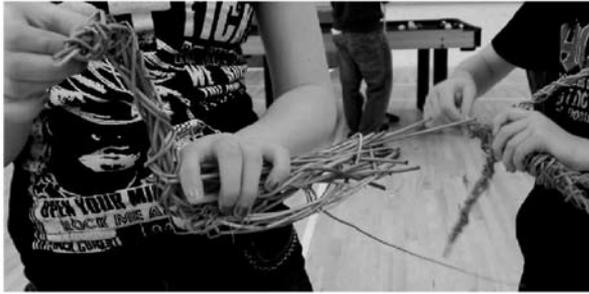
because it looks really old

good texture, mysterious

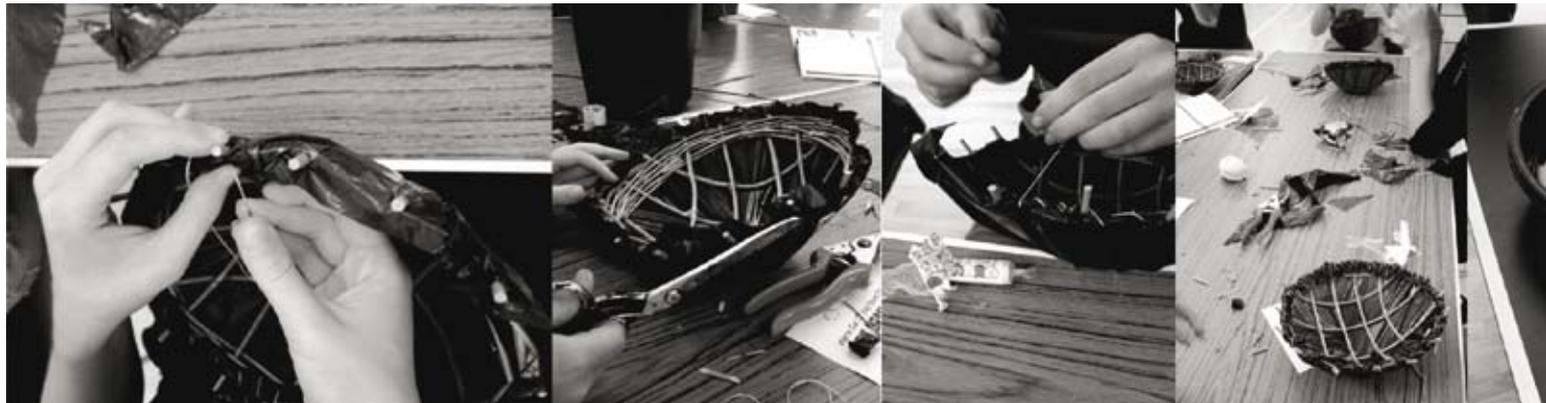
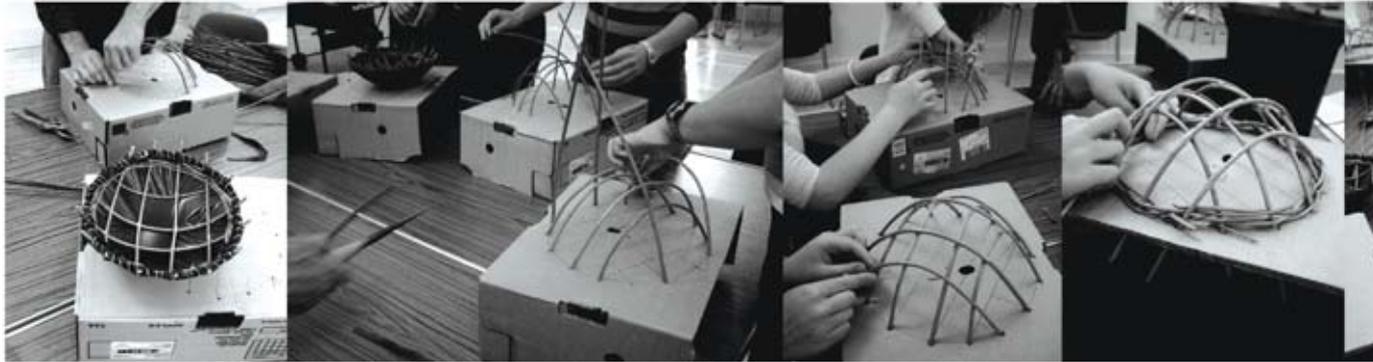


Back to the Club and working with Willow sculptor Andy Southwell the making begins





Young people decide they would like to make miniature Coracles



To sail them in the stream



And spotted in Keynsham the full scale version



# Keynsham.



## Another young roots group is formed



**Where does the name Keynsham come from?**

**Young people discover the story of St Keyna.**

*'Many years in the past the people of the area were given some land  
But the land is infested with Snakes; St Keyna turns the snakes to stone'  
'We know them as amonites'*



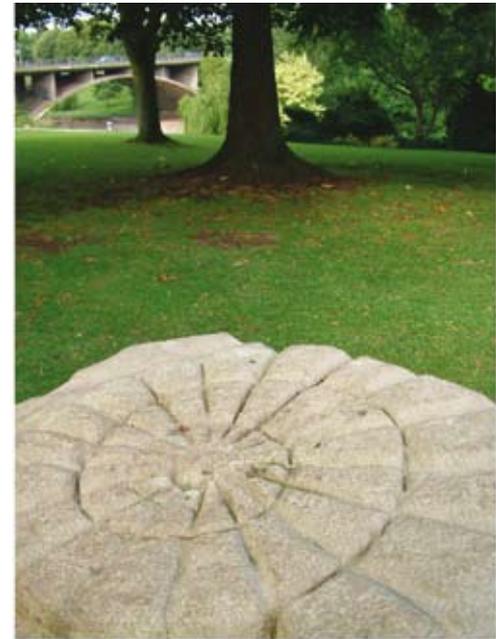
Inspired by the story young people decide to carve both St Keyna and the snakes in stone with Stone Sculptor Jeff Body



St Keyna by Young People



The Town Council support the work and some of the finished stone carvings are placed in the park



In the search for more stories, archive photographs are found



## Stories begin to unfold

In 1120 William of Gloucester founded a magnificent monastery, years later its stones were used to build the manor house, this too no longer survives, just ruins in the park, scattered through walls across the town, memories of walking to school across the fields where her daughter now lives, old mill lane.

**Wednesday 10th July, of 1968**

"The sky turned pitch black for 2 days" and then came the floods, 5 inches of rain falling in less than 24hrs

Mr Michael Burford recalls

*"At about 6:30 I went to Keynsham youth centre in park road....it was raining heavily and water was already gushing out of the manholes in Queens Road. After an hour, the rain became heavier and thunder and lightening started. I spent the next hour with several friends just watching the storm from an upstairs window in the youth centre. It was an awesome sight, the sky was a strange green/cream colour with an eerie light behind the clouds, the rain heavier than I have ever seen...dropping with great force absolutely vertically out of the sky. The lightening...after forking to the ground seemed to hang in the air before disappearing. My theory is that the sheer volume of water in the air was acting like a mirror and reflecting the flashes.*

Eye witnesses describe a "wall of water" or "tidal wave" rushing down the Chew Valley

It was this that smashed through everything in its path in the low lying areas of town

The white hart Inn now the lockkeeper on the banks of the River Avon was cut off by the storm

Mr George Ashton a council clerk noted at the emergency meeting held a week after, '24 houses and small shops substantially damaged. - A further 177 properties damaged or affected by all three road bridges over the river Chew extensively damaged or destroyed, the county bridge over the river Avon destroyed. Devastation in the memorial park, most street light were out a number of cars had been washed off the bath hill bridge'.



*County Bridge, Keynsham, shewing Seat dividing Somerset & Gloucester"*

*The bridge was washed away in the floods of 10th July 1968*

*Old postcard, Courtesy of Clare*





*The Seat,  
or 'Abbot's Chair'  
on County Bridge*

*It probably did come from the ruined Keynsham*

*In 1559 Thomas BRIDGES bequeathed as much st  
late Abbey Church as was necessary for the re  
the Bridge and causeway.*

*"Children used to sit in the 'chair' and say:  
left foot's in Gloucester and me right foot':  
Somerset and I'm in jolly good company.'*

*This is local resident Mrs. Nan BENFIELD*

*Courtesy of*

*"Keynsham in old picture postcards"*

*B.J. Lowe and Keynsham & Saltford LHS*



Image above: The former Railway inn looking towards the junction with Keynsham and Hanham roads from Bliton this public house was once used by workers on the Kingswood coal line that crossed over the main road and on to the River Avon this building was pulled down in the 1960s and a roundabout now stands in its place



Temple St is one of Keynsham's oldest streets, a continuation of High St. The east side of Temple St was demolished in the 1960s, along with many other old parts of Keynsham.



Houses in Temple St Keynsham, now demolished

oldest place you can think of in Keynsham ?

St Johns Church    Temple Primary school    CAPERS RIVER Sluice  
Lock scenes    Church ruins in park    Church.

how do you think life in keynsham has changed ?

its got bit rougher  
Modern, roads etc    A lot more damaged / more graffiti  
Got more anti-social behavior    for the worst. less posn  
to many charity shops.    loads more shops & houses  
Not as posn - full of roads    drastically - drugs



what do you think would be the hardest part of being young 100yrs ago ?

Nowhere to socialise. Living without technology  
 No cars Boredom the war dunno wasn't true  
 Work / employment. Poor and hard law  
 growing-up - poverty phones internet ect  
 working + no education No cars / mopeds

what do you think you would be doing back then for work?

Mining or baking digging up potatoes. living at home  
 (hard labour) factories  
 scrubbing floors! Working in court. chimney Sweep!  
 I wouldn't have - I would have hinner. Prostitution.  
 been in the home.

Do you have a favourite place, area ?

St John's Church end of the St  
Lock keeper for fishing  
The valley  
Skate park  
The shack  
The manor park  
Tree in bluebell wood  
Whoever I'm performing - Dance shows.  
Secret Garden  
bus stop  
Tape cut  
BHA  
COP DPC  
RIVER SHIPS

Is there anywhere you avoid, why?

Police station  
The drug houses  
Waterford

Places that are dark at night  
where I don't feel safe.

Rugby club

Tinagel estate

Park - poorly lit.

Yea the Deanside / I value  
my life



The church has 'seen it all'



## Find inspiration in words and images

*“Spring of water always...gives gladness to all around. The velvet mosses, the sword like grasses, and the feathery ferns, grow with more of that light and vigorous nature. Fullness of life, within the charmed influence of a spring of water than they do elsewhere.”*

Robert Hunt from his 'Popular romances in the west of England





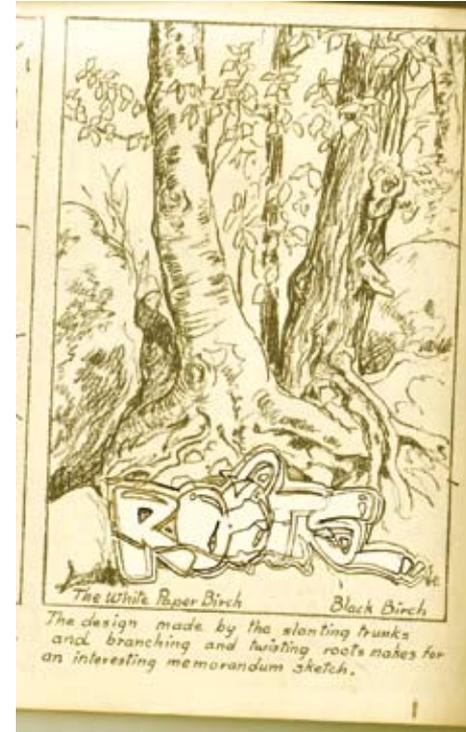
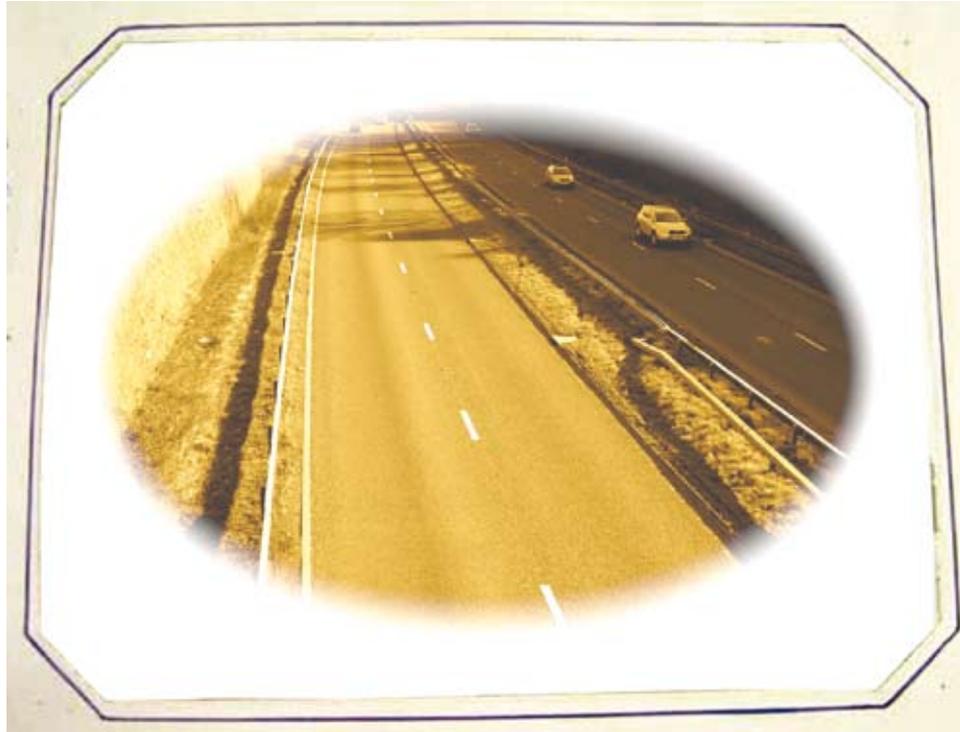


“The past becomes now, now becomes tomorrow everything changes everything stays the same”



“Things are faster now no one has time for the past anymore”

“My roots are in Keynsham”









**Hoody?**

## Carving fish and weaving willow at Broadlands School



More Young People come from the surrounding area including Devizes

### **Memories of Devizes**

The name means 'at the division point' where the dioceses of Salisbury, Gloucester, Bath and Wells meet.

The brewery and its 15 Shirehorses still deliver the barrels to this day, Bell Hill Lynam near Carne, Melksham House, Thatched cottages the Kennet and Avon Canal climbs up Caen Hill in a magnificent flight of 29 locks

### **Local legend**

In a nearby village pond of Bishops Cannings an Excise man stumbled upon a group of locals busily engaged in raking the surface of a dew pond on which the bright moon was reflected....."oh zurzomebody has been and lost a cheese and we'm a-raking of un out this thur pond" Simply amused the Excise man rode on into the night...whereupon the wiser men proceeded to rake up from the watery depths several barrels of contraband whisky which had been smuggled in from the south coast. So the name was born 'Moonrakers' for Wilshire folk

*"I can carve one fish if many people carve we can carve a shoal"*  
Jeff Body

Stone carving and stone sculpture has long been a local art and craft in the region



“We all did a bit and it was amazing to see the fish together”





“Weaving gave me time to think after a while I stopped thinking about stuff and worrying about it”



## Peasedown St John

Young People from Timsbury join Young People from Peasedown St John

Form another Young Roots group

And visit the Costume Museum and Roman Baths



"We looked at all the clothes it was great I liked the 70's stuff best"



Hazel  
Thompson  
age 14

my favourite part of  
the fashion museum  
was looking at all  
the different styles  
of cloths from all  
different times.



#### Underwear:

- What item of clothing is not underwear? Why is it here? **black**

**Silk chiffon and the dress**

#### Daywear: 'one style for the day, and a different one for the evening...'

- Which item of clothing was designed as sportswear? What date?

**1850's 13**

- What was it the forerunner to? **women wearing suits**
- What made it suitable for the sport intended?

**wide bottom so it don't show you underwear when you get off the horse.**

#### Eveningwear:

- What fabric is used a great deal for creating eveningwear?

**silk**

- Why would one use shiny or sparkling fabrics for the evening?

**they would stand out.**

#### Swimwear:

- What were men's swimming suits and trunks made from in the 20's and '30's?

**knitted**

- Why did swimming trunks come into fashion rather than the full-body suit?

**so they can get a sun tan.**

British Fashion Designers from 1970's and 80's:

- Who are the 2 main fashion designers mentioned here?  
John Bates / Janice Wainwright
- Look carefully at No.3 - black sleeveless linen-look dress:  
Describe the pattern design used.

Stripy

It is very

Summer fashion, Winter Fashion:

- Look at No.4 the cream 'mac'.  
What material is used here?  
pvc mac
- How is the pattern described?

geometric

Accessories:

- Choose either a bag, hat or shoe from the collection and sketch it here.



British Fashion Designers from 1970's and 80's:

- Who are the 2 main fashion designers mentioned here?  
John Bates & Janice Wainwright
- Look carefully at No.3 - black sleeveless linen-look dress:  
Describe the pattern design used.

Print of different shapes, patterns  
Start of styles of florals & motifs

Summer fashion, Winter Fashion:

- Look at No.4 the cream 'mac'.  
What material is used here?  
PVC
- How is the pattern described?

Grid pattern, Wet look

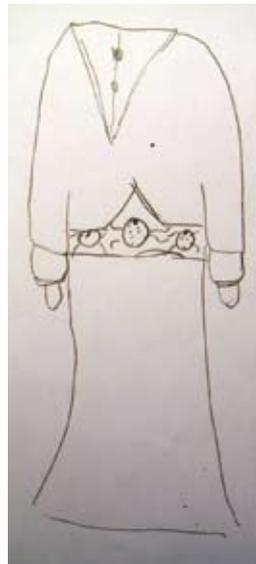
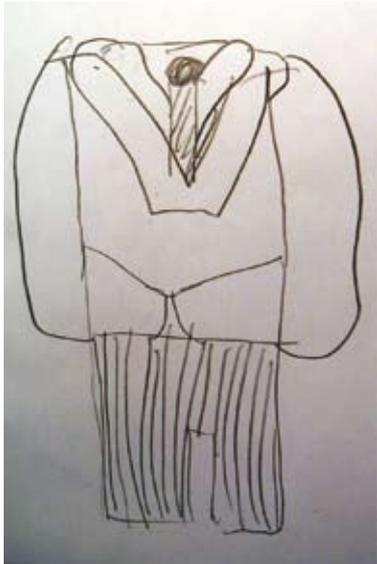
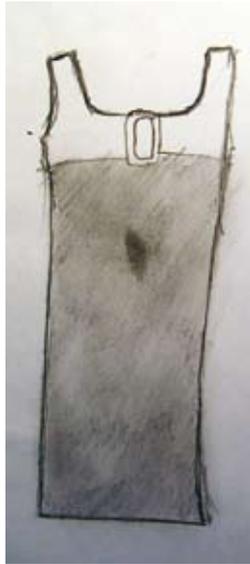
Accessories:

- Choose either a bag, hat or shoe from the collection and sketch it here.



Bucky, Sarah, Jacqui





Fabrics are designed and memorial cushions are made for Nikita Moore



A mosaic is also made in memory of Nikita

Andrew Edleston and Anita Andrews enable young people to make the mosaic  
Some tiles are made by hand inspired by Roman Mosaics



Andrew Edleston enables Young People to make clay figures and pots  
Exploring issues of identity heritage and making  
*"I thought about my Nans Teapot"*



To carve in stone ideas relating to the chains used in the Mining of Coal and a Green Man



A reference to an industrial past and the renewal of Nature

*"The Green Man is Wicked we're going to put it outside the club"*



The strength of a community rooted in the heritage of the past

*“Like Peasedown we’re a strong community”*



The sinking of the Braysdown Colliery in 1845 provided extra impetus to expand the village by the 2nd half of the 20th century there where at least 6 collieries within a 3km radius of Peasedown St John

Braysdown, Camerton, Dunkerton, Writhlington and Shoscombe

Evidence of the mines remains scattered around the area and many miners cottages are still in use today, many mines were closed in the period up to the 1950's

Located on one of the many hills outside Bath, the roman fosse way which the A367 used to follow through the Town was bypassed in the 1990's

Most of the village lies on a flat section of land on top of the hill but the north western side of the village does lie on the slope of the hill.

The centre of Peasedown St John is approx 15m above sea level

The Hamlet of Caldicot is known to have existed prior to 1800 but the main modern development of the area began in the 19th Century as the Somerset coalfield expanded as the industrial revolution increased demand for coal across England



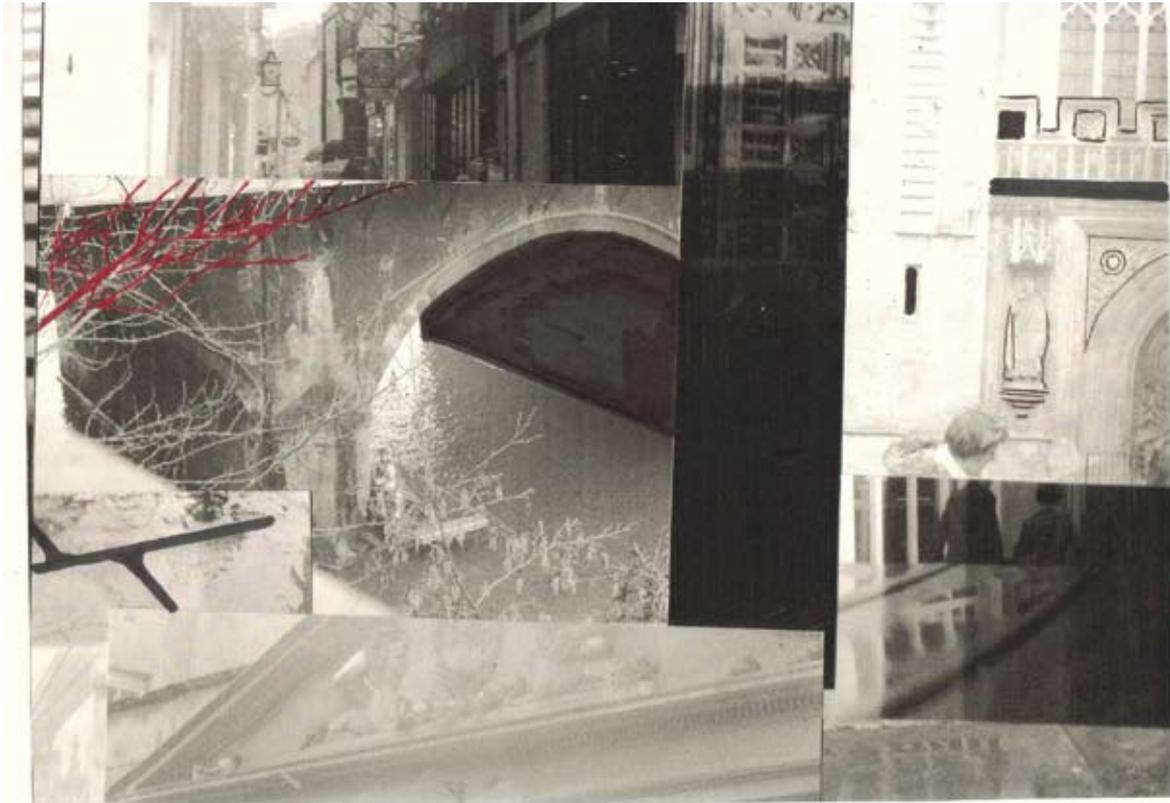
The young People of DAFBY join the project and explore the local area in photographs



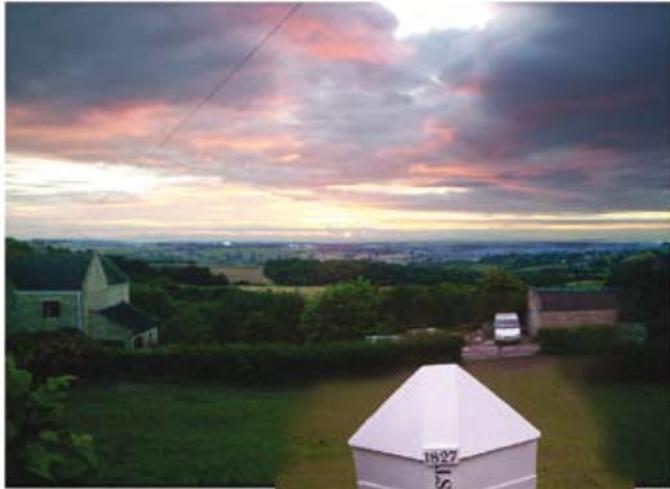


And find out that Left handed people were made to write with their right hands in Victorian times. In School their Left hands were tied behind their backs so that they could only use their right hands

*"They want us still to think in a particular way"*









## In Radstock a new Young Roots group visits the Museum



Young People have access to items on display





Young People are inspired by old labels and make their own copies enabled by Andrew Edleston

Young People explore the co-operative movement and start up there own enterprises



Mining for Coal in the North Somerset Coal was very hard. The seams of coal were very thin and miners mined them by hand with young people and children pulling trolleys behind them attached by chains



Coal mine  
cold, damp smell of dust.  
2 miles underground.



Young People discover the industrial heritage now a natural haven for wildlife inspired pottery.

*“Miners used to fish for Trout but the water became polluted the trout have now returned to the Wellow Brook sign of a clean river”*





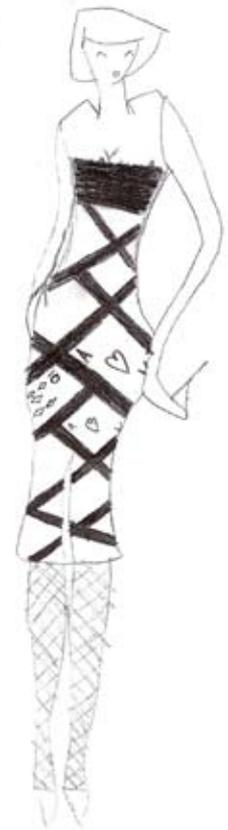
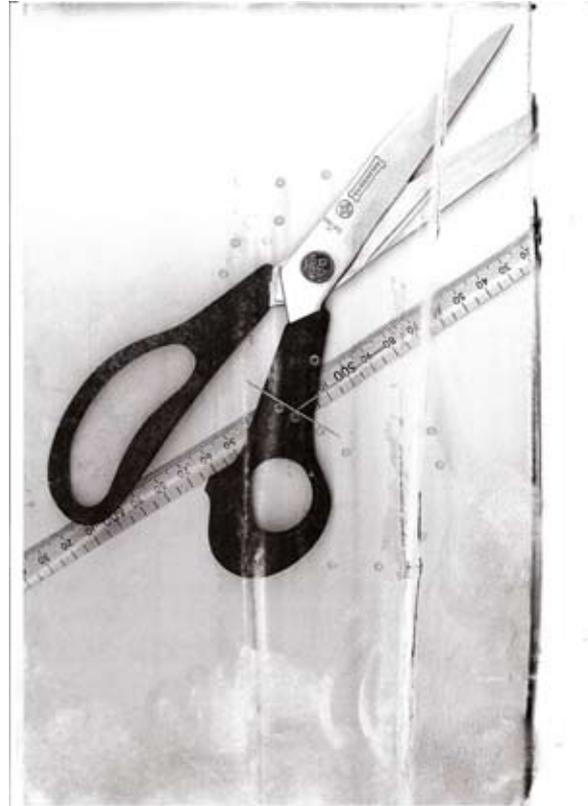
A celebration of nature made in the traditional way



Young People visit the Costume Museum in Bath, design a collection and produce a Fashion Show



A world-class collection of contemporary and historical dress





Writhlington School formed a Young Peoples Young Roots project Summer school



"The first day I came because I had to, I did not have to come the other days but I decided I wanted to it was brilliant"



“We made a wall for the school each block was different but the same”

“It was so good”



“I could not do art before I was rubbish at it but I think I can now”

“Heritage is not just about old stuff it’s more about now in a way”



Young people work go on show at the school for parents to see



Roman pottery inspired this collection of making

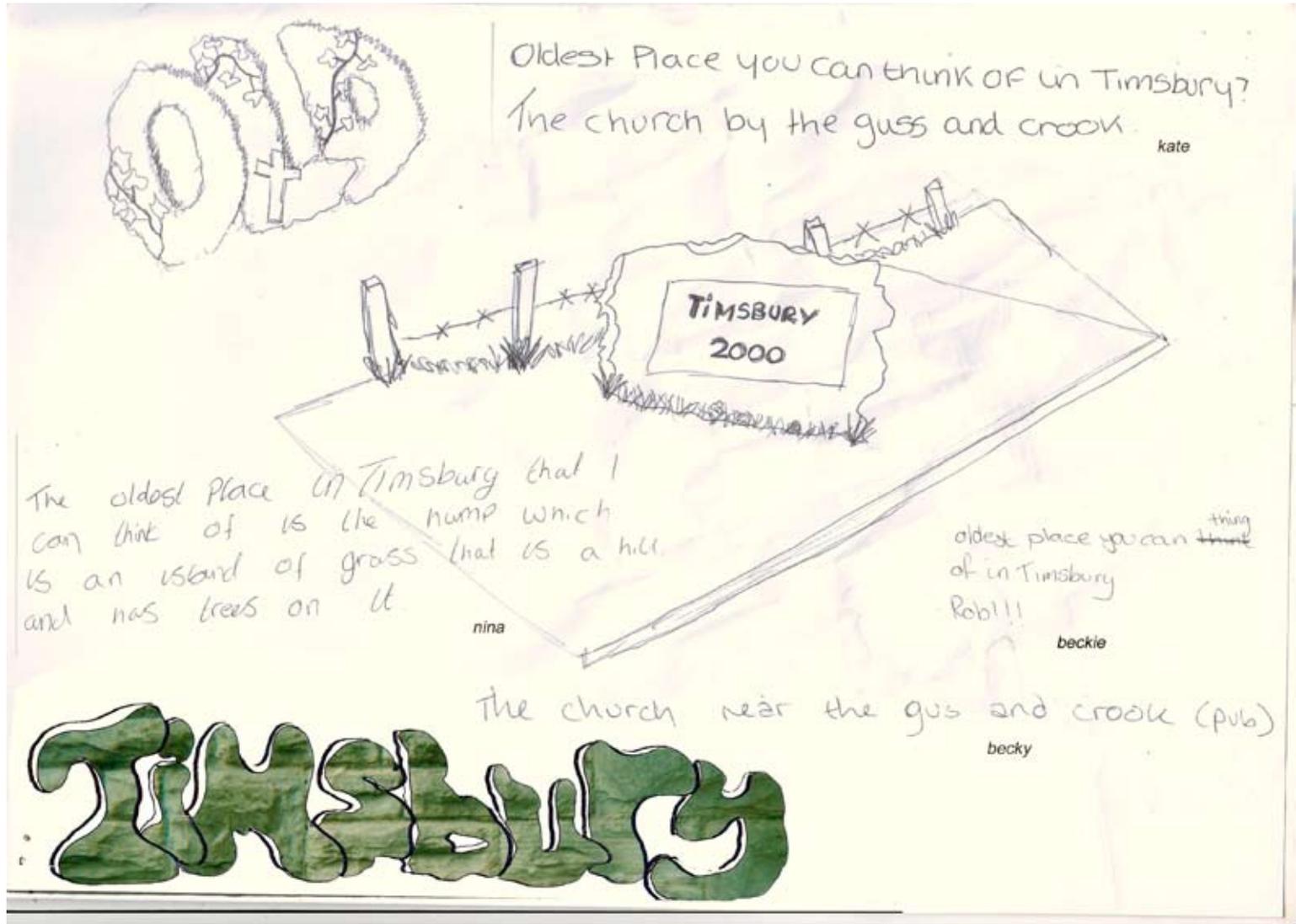


“Working with clay you can go back in time”



# The Young People of Timsbury form a Young Roots group

And find out more about their village



The church provides the inspirational sources



Young People decide to make a mosaic with a difference.

Hand made tiles and some pots for the club



My favourite place is the stream down by Mr. White's farm. It goes all the way to Priston. It's relaxing and I always used to go there when I was younger.

becky

Do you have a favourite place in Timsbury?

The place I like best in Timsbury is the handle bars down St Johns as that is where we used to play when we were little.

nina

If you could ask a question of a young person your age from any time in history, when and what would it be?

I'd ask a person from the 1800's what their life was like.

becky

If I could ask any young person from any year I would ask my Nani what she thought of Timsbury when she was my age.

nina

What do you think would be the hardest part of being young a 100yrs ago ?

I think that the hardest part of being  
Young 100 years ago would be there  
would not be as much to do.

nina

working in the farms

becki j

What would you be doing back then for work ?

working in the mines and doing other hard jobs  
farming.

becky

I think that I ~~would~~ would be ~~and~~ doing  
back then for work would be in a  
shop or a factory.

nina

working on a farm / on a ~~ed~~ old store

becki j

Can you remember a story your grandparents or older relatives have told you about growing up in timsbury ?

The old house near the guss and crook was haunted. Someone died in it. And know one would go in there.

kate

- There used to be a railway line but it got closed down.

becky

a story that I can remember being ~~told~~ told was that in the shed in the church was a headless horse man in there and when I was walking past we heard a noise from there. It was scary.

nina

My grandad worked in the mines when he was 13 years old.

kate

"We made pots with out a wheel, by hand how cool is that"



Human made objects are perfectly human made



A direct line of heritage marks in the making of human touch







12.04.08

The river seems to have run its course  
 right out of sight  
 something to be bridged  
 stupor filled in with all sorts of awful things  
 destined to be thrown out  
 trickles to torrents  
 a n inconvenience  
 to be ~~ask~~- call over  
 you would have more luck burying the sky  
 this tired lane  
 car, I told her frustration  
 to it ~~falls~~ from high  
 seeking a 1 ramp motions  
 to redirect  
 concrete over her memory  
 wash our ha ras of our roots  
 those land loving cities clinging to sinking roads  
 the tides that float the seasons in  
 A noesters that saw as such more  
 down in the depths  
 the strings singing a tale of yor  
 time dancing with the waves  
 a drop  
 slips in  
 and will turn  
 and wind itself around - around itself  
 flow form our experience the  
 the lake fills over  
 like an eye ready to drop its grief  
 reflecting the skies  
 that notion of attempting to go upstream  
 floats our boats  
 our souls out to rest  
 pure gold in my alrness stroll through the images  
 as they dance into view  
 a century to hold  
 a century on  
 my life on the railway walls  
 the album surviving through the war  
 gathering dust and the boots of those who never came home  
 as time and the streams stride by  
 us to turn  
 till we return to the air and earth that bore us first

*Handwritten notes:*  
 things stop better to  
 and a q  
 edge emad q  
 all at  
 back in mind but  
 some photos not at a  
 words remain  
 half spent being paid  
 2/10/08 and 2/11/08

12.04.08

moons have ~~pe~~ strung up  
 smiling in the dark  
 don't be buried with your memories  
 explore your place in this  
 dance while you can  
 carve it ~~shape~~ it  
 weave your space *hands*  
 mould shapes  
 open & the shapes leave marks  
 the life that flows from our hands  
 carry your bucket full of branches  
 try not to drop your tree  
 or fruit still ripening and blossom still to shoot  
 in be care on your route

*Handwritten notes:*  
 our rubbish gets caught  
 up in her  
 gaps + brains replace  
 the best.  
 trees lay like soldiers  
 the  
 bed bare as bones  
 as the sun retreats and her  
 summer closer

*Handwritten notes:*  
 like being pulled through that  
 hedge backwards.

by Karen Dews

## Past Present Future



In the words of Young People

“Old stuff never interested me, heritage is ok I get it now”

“I asked my granddad, he worked down the mine”

“I found out more about my friends heritage and asked my Nan about mine”

“It’s strange to know people lived under the lake”

“I feel good when I carve the stone, like I’m doing something”

“I wasn’t good at art now my skills have increased”

“I thought weaving was for girls but it’s really hard work”

“I love the clay, its fun making pots like the Romans did”

“I saw the dresses and it was weird like walking back in time”

“It was great everyone looked amazing”

“I’ve never been in a museum before”

“We had fun at the rural life and the Tor was amazing”

“Wicked to see old photos and mess with them, they look bad”

“We are going to need old skills again, because were going to run out of oil, people made their own stuff then”



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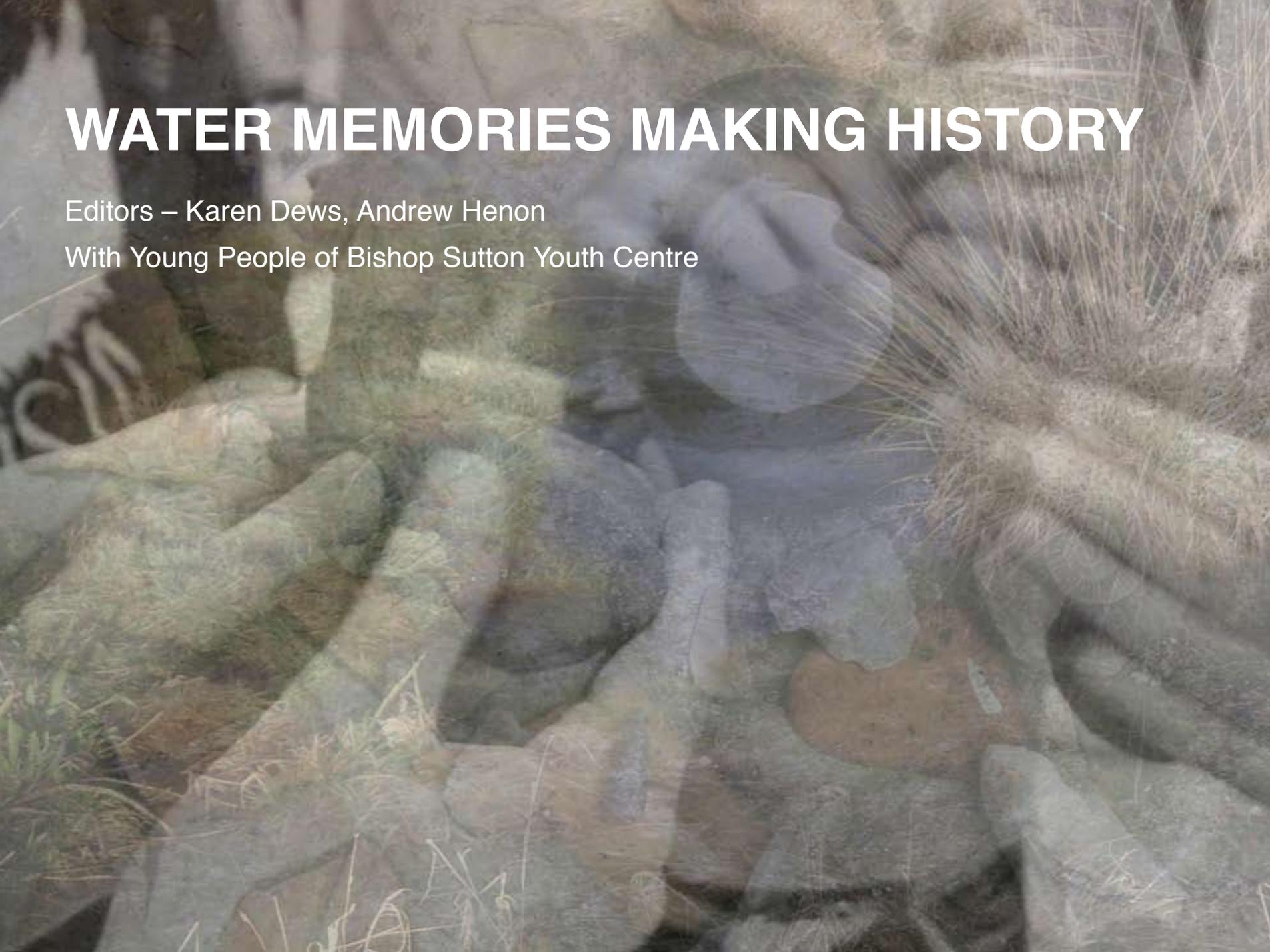
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# **WATER MEMORIES MAKING HISTORY**

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With Young People of Bishop Sutton Youth Centre





