



**PLEASE NOTE: No NDA meeting in August!**  
**Next NDA meeting - Wednesday, September 13th - 8.00pm**

**Dinsdale & Jane Petch are our September speakers - this promises to be a fascinating insight into their bronze foundry business, which they run from their home at East Buckland. Meeting at Broomhill Art Hotel.**

## Review

**ART  
TREK**  
Open Studios

*Total number of known visitors - 860+*

*Visitors from out of area and abroad - 30+*

*Total amount of known sales - £6,670*

*(Not all artists have put in their figures yet)*

**Sarah Gatehouse-Brewer, Peter Bright & Tim Havey**, stone carver, had over 200 visitors to their Festival marquee at Fremington Quay and would like to pass on their sincere thanks to everyone who made it possible for them to be there for the Art Trek weekend.

"Having over 200 people visit convinced us it was a great location to promote the event, one which has and will continue to generate interest in the arts in North Devon".

This site is being looked at to be enlarged for the event next year! Watch this space.

### Comments from visitors to Ros Osbourn's garden included:

"Wow! Inspirational! All the artists work very hard and are extremely talented., we loved wandering around".

"My mother is gobsmacked...Barcelona II!".

"Wonderful! Very inspiring! I covet a **LOTI** - particularly the stoneware, ceramics, tiles, birds, figures, fishes..."

"A wonderful garden... wonderful work".

"Amazing! Many thanks for the opportunity to look around your beautiful garden and artwork. So inspirational".

"Once again we've been inspired by your creativity to take greater leaps of creativity in our own environment. You, your art and garden all add joy, energy and inspiration to the world".

**Ros** felt that having three artists on one site was a definite draw, stating, "Greg's [*Ford*] sculpture looked particularly good on the lawn and Helen's [*Latham*] fabrics made a nice contrast".

"From our point of view it is very rewarding to have people taking such pleasure in our creation and gaining such enjoyment that selling becomes merely a by-product".

**Lani Shepherd**, who makes stained glass, sold some pieces and took 3 commissions, found it lots of fun and gave out - 38 cups of tea or coffee, 3 bottles of wine, 4 cakes and 3 packets of choc biscuits! Most visitors said to Lani that they would like to return, some to bring interested friends. (*Is this for the Art or the convivial atmosphere!?*).

**Gabriel Hummerstone**, a stone carver and new NDA member, gained two commissions and stated, "It was good to discuss the role of an artist in society and the issues faced by creative and often isolated people. It was interesting to hear about other peoples work as well as to promote one's own, and [*the event*] works well not just as an artist - public interface, but as a means of giving a great strength of 'esprit de corps' and identity to those of us who struggle to live by their artistic sensibilities and their sheer bloody determination".

Of course not everyone fared so well, some saying they only had a few visitors, but on the whole the event was seen as being extremely positive and one that will continue to help/promote artists across the area.

Comments on the event would be most welcome to, Stella Levy, Art Trek co-ordinator;  
stella@widgerystudios.com

## **'A Walk in the Woods' Report: by Emily Garnham Wright**

### **Number of Visitors: The public**

14<sup>th</sup> May 2006 (the first public day) 15 people approx

28<sup>th</sup> May (public day 2) 68 people

29<sup>th</sup> May (last public day at the woods) 62 people

10<sup>th</sup> June (the review at the village hall) 20 people

Visitors came from a variety of backgrounds and locations, many from all around the UK, but also from as far a field as Denmark, South Africa, Ireland, America and Spain.

Probably a third of visitors to the woods were from NDA, a third were children from Georgeham School bringing their families to show and continue with what they were working on, and a third were people in the area who followed signs or had seen the publicity.

I recognised some people visiting more than once and bringing others with them.

### **Georgeham School: Children and teachers**

About 120 pupils from Georgeham School visited, brought by 1 to 7 supervisors and teachers. They visited in class groups, consisting of approximately 25 (younger years) or 35 (older years) pupils per group. Most days different classes visited the morning and afternoon sessions. Several classes visited more than once. Ages ranged from 4 to 11 years.

The children clearly enjoyed themselves (despite the weather which was mainly wet, cold and overcast with occasional sights of the sun) and were enthusiastic to return (and many did, some in their own time).

Teachers found it interesting observing the children's behaviour taking particular pleasure in discussing the more egocentric individuals. Lucy Rinvolutri the art teacher from Georgeham School wrote "I have enjoyed the experience of working with you on the project. I am very grateful for the opportunity to see my class in another way, which has been fascinating for me. The children have all got very fond memories of the project and still talk about it now. Thank you Emily from everyone at Georgeham School."

I too enjoyed watching the children and their actions/reactions to the ever changing nature of the project. I was surprised at how possessive most of the children became about 'their bit' – I suspect this was due to the large scale of the piece – it meant that, especially at the beginning, they were able to work on distinct bits that later joined together ("I can't find a tree" was another odd cry – they couldn't find a tree unaffected by the growing sculpture). I was also interested to see how the children's behaviour changed within the different age groups, especially how the older groups split into boys and girls- the girls picked flowers and added them, while the boys made 'spiders webs' and 'traps'. I also particularly remember an Autistic boy not noticing the dirt on his trousers and shoes (remarked upon by his helper) as he was so caught up in what he was doing (he returned on one of the public days with his family).

The walk from the school to the woods is not a short one and I was impressed at the school's commitment bringing children as young as 4 through the pouring rain to take part.

I have found the drawings and writings done since by the school most illuminating and entertaining. These were displayed on the 10<sup>th</sup> June in the village hall, thanks to Lucy who gave up her time to set up a display and talk to visitors.

### **Devon Artsculture: Hugh and Frances**

As a consequence of the project a film maker (Hugh Hartford) and poet (Frances Thompson) were given funding by Devon Artsculture to respond to the project.

Frances seemed to throw herself whole heartedly into the project visiting several times, talking to school children and people involved and devoting time and resources. She spent the whole day at the review on the 10<sup>th</sup> (providing a public reading of her poem BirdsWords) as well as meeting to record her poem for use on the website on her own time.

Hugh chose to film on only one occasion, avoiding showing the evolution of the project. Sadly Hugh was unable to organise the screening of his film, as agreed, on the 10<sup>th</sup>, leaving it to me or Stella Levy to provide a means of showing it.

I intend the poem (and reading), and excerpts from the film to be accessible on the internet.

### **NDA & members**

This project would have been difficult if not impossible to have achieved without support from NDA and its members. I was pleased at how members joined in – either adding to the sculpture or responding to it. Ros Osborne provided a subtle touch with her ceramic 'fish out of water' and Tim Saunders and Joan Stribling d'Launy worked on images inspired by the sculpture.

I cannot thank Stella Levy enough. She spent hours making it possible to do this project and achieved a widespread advertising campaign and general support throughout all stages of the project.

## Emily's Report continued

John Andow, photographer, generously took the photos that were used for the publicity.

Members gave up their time to help me steward the event.

And of course, Gerry Bonnichi, the owner of Pickwell Manor Woods, and a NDA member, provided much more than just a venue, including time, food and company as well as a full buffet and opened his home to visitors on the last evening.

### Others

The finishing night was greatly enhanced by music kindly provided by M'Larkey.

### Venue

I had to change venue well into the planning of the project due to the RSPB changing the parameters after several meetings and advertising had already been put to press (we had to fund an advertising campaign to counteract this). The project they had initially agreed to had not been altered in any way. They attempted to fundamentally change the project and refused any compromise. They ignored all materials provided to them to assuage any concerns. All of this was solved by changing the venue to Pickwell Manor Woods where I received nothing but support and encouragement from Gerry. This is the only other woods within walking distance of the school and, as this was by then a constraint of the project, I was fortunate to be able to use it. Georgeham Village Hall was helpful in providing the facilities for the review.

### Disjointed observations

I gave two talks before the project started, both to NDA and to the assembly at Georgeham School. I am not sure which was more nerve-racking but both seemed to go well (with cheers from the school children in assembly when they heard what they would be doing).

One particular point of interest was when a barn owl flew through the wood in the middle of one of the public days, effortlessly slipping in and out of the project, amazing everyone on site.

The constant change of light in the wood greatly enhanced the project providing some truly breathtaking moments.

The weather regardless of sun or rain didn't seem to affect participant's enthusiasm and enhanced the changeable nature of the project.

Some visitors asked about entry fees. I was pleased not to have to charge them as I felt that they were able to enjoy the project more openly because they did not have to 'get something out of it' and hence got more.

It would be good to do this project again somewhere where it could be left up until it deteriorates and vanishes and where it is open to the public for this time. I had to explain to visitors to the review that it was held in a private wood and, due to management considerations, the sculpture had been taken down. People who were not able to come on the public days have also expressed an interest in going to see it.

I have a large collection of photographs documenting the project which will be shown on my website.

Watching people work on the piece, I became more aware of the physical and mental dimensions of it. Faces were concentrated and absorbed. The thread was fine and hard to see so while it was being worked on it appeared that many mimes were taking place. Those who wanted to move through the installation discovered an assault course.

It was exciting seeing how each person approached it differently.

I found it was as much a study of people and behaviours as an art project. From the way people approached the project, behaved in groups and took part you were often given an idea of how they worked and behaved normally. The teachers commented on and confirmed this as they were able to watch the children they know in a new environment. Many of the artists who visited it were more analytical of what they should do and what it should be. Nobody knew quite what to expect but were enthusiastic and concentrated joining in.

The school group provided a different dynamic from a family. They took to heart the 'partners' they had been joined up with for the walk over and worked mainly in groups. Families with children often demonstrated the differences and behaviours of the individuals within that group and their relationships with each other.

Some people went away talking about doing their own. One girl from the school had already started one in her garden.

On the first day I discovered that the wool I had intended to use would not work. It was clearly the 'easy choice' and meant that participants did not have to commit much time or attention to make a strong impact. The cotton could be worked in more ways to create many effects and I felt that the wool became a constraint while the cotton encouraged diversity and invention.

### With hindsight

I had not realised that the project would be as successful as it was and that so many threads would be used. My usual supplier was unable to provide extra threads in time for the second school week but I was able to buy some (less economically) from a store in Barnstaple to cover the shortfall until the order arrived. My final thread cost was nearer

£500 than the estimated £260 and could easily have been more.

It would have been better to have more people involved in the day dismantling the piece. I found the taking down an interesting part of the process, allowing for creativeness even then.

### Quotes from the on site sketchbook

"A fantastic display of art and imagination as well as a fabulous community project. Truly inspirational – thank you!" (Chris)

"Engaging and being an active participant in a process that involves both the body and the mind is a very freeing experience. The act of doing is what every artist has to consider when they have that blank canvas in front of them. The mind is a strange animal – sometimes philosophical sometimes blank but always active. It is where we point that beam that illuminates the world around us."

"A great piece of artwork, available to everyone. Lots of interesting detail and a perfect setting." (Caroline Hart, Co. Durham)

"Thank you for such an inspiring experience. The gossamer like texture, and dappled light and shade beneath the canopy of tree's felt like a childhood memory." (Ros Denby and family, Derbyshire)

"Not enough rabbits!" (Morris the whippet)

"What a lot of fun – Inspiring – so many forms, so many shapes, great ideas." (Nick Kidwell)

"Emily, I enjoyed seeing the development of the project and this exhibition ties it all together. The reading of Frances' 'BirdsWords' was a particular treat. The children's words were great fun too." (Karen)

"A unique experience that showed just what imagination and inspiration is all about. I have never been artistic and seeing such a display of nature, art and human interaction was something I would never thought I would see. I really enjoyed seeing the display and to know the fun the children had on the various days." (Claudia)

For more on Emily and her work, please see her website link from the members list on our own website; [www.northdevonarts.co.uk](http://www.northdevonarts.co.uk)

Please also take the opportunity to check your own page to make sure the info is up to date. Vanessa is happy to update artists pages, email; [vanessa@vanessamarston.com](mailto:vanessa@vanessamarston.com)

## Opportunity

### Life Drawing Sessions at Broomhill ?

#### Want to brush-up your life drawing skills?

Rinus is offering NDA the use of the converted stables to hold these sessions in - a lovely environment and one that ensures total privacy.

First responses from members are very positive for regular, un-tutored life drawing sessions; so, the committee are asking for people who might be interested to register by letter or Email to John Wright. (See previous exhibition entry forms).

The planning is in the early stages, but we were thinking of organising the sessions between late autumn and early spring.

Once John has a list of potential people and we know if it is a viable proposition, we can then decide on the way forward and hopefully have full details to send out to members sometime in September.

## Exhibition

### The **B I G G E R** Picture Show

Trelawney's Garden Centre, Ashford, Barnstaple. 1st September - 13th October

NDA members are invited by Trelawney's to exhibit in their restaurant area.

Please download the all details and the entry form from; <http://www.pagemonger.com/nda/bigpic.pdf>

## **Art on the Barnstaple Roundabout**

A while back I was asked by the locally based project co-ordinator, Lisa Harty, to join the selection panel to choose an artist for this important, highly visible site.

I felt it an honour to be asked and, along with a variety of people representing various bodies and professions, including highway engineers, County/District Councillors, Artists, the Theatres Trust, etc: we presided over the Artist short-listing.

It became quite clear during this presentation by the various artists, that Patricia Leighton was the artist for the job. She had world-wide experience of working with architects, highway engineers, planners and of the huge undertaking of moving vast quantities of earth from and around sites. *(Some of her earlier work included moving whole hillsides and re-creating them into new, exciting landscapes, reflecting the area's past heritage).*

Amongst the short-listed artists were some local artists, who produced good and innovative ideas, but we all felt that this particular site needed a non-fashionable artwork that could become synonymous with the whole area/region and so chose this Scottish artist as she best suited the brief given.

There have been mutterings from some local artists as to why this should be and why were they not asked - well, all I can say is that there was an ad put out locally and nationally, *(I even put one in the NDA newsletter)* asking artists to submit ideas for this high profile scheme - so the opportunity was there to be seized!

At the end of the day, it's the final artwork that counts and the quality of work will certainly give Art a name in this region, bringing with it a higher profile and greater prosperity for the artists working locally and for Art related businesses and others, raising standards and importantly, ensuring artists are taken a lot more seriously by the communities/businesses they work in/with.

Some of you may have been following the 'media harassment' of this project, well it's strange that one of the panel members was a representative from the Journal! Still, Art has always been an easy target, and I suppose any headline reflecting the peoples' view of Art is going to engender this reaction, but never the less it's frustrating that it's nearly always the negative view that is put forward.

This is really an outstanding and visionary achievement by the Councils involved and should be applauded as such - not long ago I was reporting the lack of funding being put into the arts by the local councils - by them initiating and backing this project it should be recognised as a major step forward and one that can be built on for any future development in the area.

*Stella Levy.*

## **Making a grant application to Arts Council England**

**Monday 25th Sept, Riviera Centre, Torquay, 9.30am - 1.00pm**

If you are considering making an application to Grants for the arts, this free seminar will help you ensure that you make the strongest possible application.

The seminar will cover all aspects of the scheme but will concentrate on two particular parts of making an application, the creation of the proposal, and creating and setting out the budget.

Although our priority is to provide advice for individual artists, you are welcome to attend if you are a member of an organisation and the information will be equally relevant.

To register for the free seminar, call Jo Hicks on 01392 229234 or email Jo at; [joanna.hicks@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:joanna.hicks@artscouncil.org.uk)

# THE FUTURE

Some of you may already be aware that I am a director of the North Devon & Exmoor Regeneration Co, representing The Arts in North Devon. Due to this involvement I was invited to a special meeting of the North Devon Economic Partnership who were presenting three prospective major projects to key people across the area.

1. A new college for Barnstaple in the town centre, aimed for 2010. This sounds a most exciting project and one that will dramatically change the face of Barnstaple, the economics of the area and be a centre of excellence for all age groups. Some of the aims of the college are to raise the aspirations of our young people, create a good skills base for the area, ensure that the rates of pay become inline with similar areas across the country. (North Devon is shamefully the lowest in the South West, which itself is lower than the average national figure). At the moment the site is still under wraps as details are still being negotiated.
2. A 'Gateway' project is being planned for the South Molton / Northgate roundabout. The plans are to have a superb visitor centre to point people to all North Devon can offer; the biosphere; the beaches; its rivers; Exmoor; its local produce and much more. The architect, John Baulch of Devereux LHC of Exeter has drawn up preliminary ideas for the building and it will include an exciting Arts and crafts exhibition area, promoting the wealth of high quality work available from individual artists across the area. A sculpture trail and a 'beacon' sculpture at the entrance are things being talked of - so NDA will certainly be keeping an eye on any further developments and I would like to suggest that perhaps NDA have a role to play in this project.
3. Bray Leino, the Filleigh Advertising Company, are involved in creating a 'brand' for North Devon. This has led, through discussion with various local people and businesses, to them designing a logo for use on everything that passes certain quality criteria, implying a sense of; joined up thinking, that North Devon is going places, that it is a place where things happen, that North Devon is synonymous with quality, etc: The consultations are still ongoing for this, but it means at last that North Devon is taking itself seriously and intends to promote itself as an area of quality, backing up the fantastic work being created by artists and makers across the whole area.

I will be keeping members informed of any commissions arising from these projects, although it is still early days yet. You all should know that time is not standing still out there, some amazing ideas are being bandied around and taken forward, which will certainly play a role in how we as artists will work and live in the future.

*Stella*

## Stop Press

**Westward Ho! and Bideford Art Society 84th Summer Exhibition**

**The Burton Art Gallery from Saturday 29th July to Sunday 27th August.**

All NDA members are invited to the opening on **Friday July 28th 7.00pm until 9.00pm.**

Apparently there are many NDA members exhibiting this year.