

13. Creative Arts Project with Blisland School

The main aims of this element of the boundary stone project was to generate a greater sense of place between the pupils of the local school and their parish. This involved two distinct phases, one based on the written word, poetry, prose and the production of a calendar led by poet and author Victoria Field while the second was a practical project creating a boundary stone out of metal with artists and sculptors Gary and Thomas Thrushell.

13.1 Field trip to the moors

On the 1st November 2005, the children of Blisland School went on a field trip to Trehudreth Downs on Bodmin Moor, led by Victoria Field with the assistance of David Attwell and local historians Peter Davies and Andrew Langdon. Here during the morning session the children were able to visit and record a series of boundary stones, developing an understanding of why they were needed and who they represented. Furthermore, they were introduced to the geology and natural history of the moor and learned about the Commoners rights.



Fig. 44 Local Historian, Peter Davies with children from Blisland School recording the boundary stones on Trehudreth Downs.

The children had lunch at South Penquite Farm, a moorland organic farm which also specialises in education visits. Here farmer Dominic Fairman introduced the children to the farm and showed them the cattle. This was followed by a question and answer session between the children and members of the local farming community and concluded with a demonstration by award winning sheep dog trialist, John Carter, with his dog Fly.

In the afternoon, the children visited Newton Farm which featured in the 1936 autobiographical account of Margaret Leigh's life entitled *Harvest of the Moor*, eking a living on a subsistence farm. Here, Victoria Field read extracts from the book to the children, recounting the sparse lifestyle of a moorland farmer.



Fig. 45 Children from Blisland School visiting Newton Farm, the former home of author and farmer Margaret Leigh.

13.2 Storytelling and Poetry

During the following week, Victoria made four visits to the school to develop the themes of this field day. This resulted in a range of work being produced by the

children including drawings, paintings, poetry and prose. This was later exhibited at an open day in the school on Monday 12th June 2006 and in Blisland Village hall, together with the results of the boundary stone survey on Saturday 17th June.

The culmination of this work was going to be produced as a story book by the children as a celebration of the project, however such was the quality and of the material produced and the enthusiasm of the children that a suggestion was put forward that a calendar should be produced instead. With the agreement of the project sponsors, the LHI, a calendar was produced for 2007, featuring the children's work, old photographs of the parish and boundary stones. This calendar will be distributed to every family in the parish.

The production of the calendar has also given the older children the opportunity to visit the local comprehensive school, Bodmin College, at the invitation of their Arts department. Here the children were able to help digitise their images and artwork for the calendar.

13.3 Creative Boundary Stone



The second phase of the arts element of the project was for the children to design and create a new boundary stone out of metal with the help of artists and sculptors Gary and Thomas Thrushell. This involved the children creating cardboard templates depicting moorland life, that were later reproduced in galvanised mild steel plate to form the boundary stone.

Fig. 46 Completed sculptured boundary stone at Blisland School, Waterloo.

The images included moorland rights, industry, wildlife and features.

The boundary stone was set up within a small pool of water, to reflect their natural positions on the open moor, outside the school canteen, and close to the public road at Waterloo, Blisland. A light was incorporated in the base of the metal feature to illuminate it. On Monday 12th June 2006, the feature was unveiled by Lady Molesworth St Aubyn of Pencarrow whose family is still one of the principal landowners of moorland in the parish.