



Fertile Ground

Art & Photography inspired by Cheshire's Sandstone Ridge

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If you would like any additional information about the project
please contact us using the following email address:

info@harthill.org



The Harthill Trust is an Art based, Educational charity, that has been established to create an inspiring and supportive environment, where people from all backgrounds can explore their creativity, develop their skills and grow in confidence.

The Trust, through the Harthill Creative Centre, has been established around the studio and home of Stephen Broadbent, a renowned sculptor, and is nestled below Cheshire's stunning Sandstone Ridge. This setting provides space and facilities for groups, families and individuals of varying ability and experience to get involved. The work is supported by the trustees, particularly Chris Gilbert, the Art & Soul Man, who is responsible for much of the hard work and organisation of artists and participants.

As a direct result of the funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, delivered through the Habitats and Hillforts Project, access has been opened up to, and encouraged, for many who would not normally become involved in a creative course. It has also promoted the knowledge, enjoyment and use of this beautiful This book is a record of the fruit of these partnerships and creative engagements and forms part of their legacy. It showcases some of the creative achievements and expressions of the many talented individuals, in and around Cheshire. It begins with the breathtaking results of the Photography competition, run by the trust in Summer 2012. It has been judged by International Landscape Photographer Guy Woodland. The book also shows a flavour of the variety and original talent expressed through the 22 courses, run throughout the last four years.

Our hope is that you would be encouraged to continue drawing inspiration from this beautiful part of Cheshire and explore how you might find new ways and the courage to express that inspiration creatively. environment along Cheshire's Sandstone Ridge.





Habitats and Hillforts have been fortunate to work with the Harthill Arts Trust as a key part of the training group throughout the project from 2008 to 2012.

The Trust developed some excellent and very well attended courses which captured the imagination of many people. Bringing together the local landscape, ecology and heritage with the arts was not an easy task. But the success of willow weaving, story telling and sculpture to name just a few is clear for all to see. Thank you for all your hard work and we hope the Trust will continue to flourish over the next few years.

Ellie Morris, Habitats and Hillforts Project Manager
October 2012

The Habitats and Hillforts Project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Cheshire West and Chester Council and is supported by dedicated partners including Cheshire Community Action, English Heritage, Forestry Commission, National Trust, Woodland Trust, Cheshire Landscape Trust and private landowners as well as the Mersey Forest who have all been dedicated to the overall success of the project.

OVERALL WINNER Judith Johnstone - Taff near Sandstone Trail on Bickerton Hill





The Judge for Harthill Trust's Photography competition is Guy Woodland.

Guy is an award winning British Photographer and publisher with an international portfolio. He has worked extensively in the UK and across mainland Europe, as well as Australia, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Benin, Brazil and China.

In the last ten years he has contributed to and published over 30 photography and photo-essay books. He continues to work worldwide as a photographer, specializing in urban and aerial photography.

Photographs are catalogued by photographer as listed below and are sorted into four categories; Places, People, Nature and Under-16.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Alex Mitchell | 9 Emily Swinerd | 17 Lyn Malkin |
| 2 Andrew Arditti | 10 Estella Scholes | 18 Mike Stelfox |
| 3 Anita Boardman | 11 Jackie Neilson | 19 Pat and Keith Johns |
| 4 Bethan Taylor | 12 Janet Wilson | 20 Phil Blythe |
| 5 David Millington | 13 Joe Chattell | 21 Poppy Buckley |
| 6 David Probert | 14 Judith Johnstone | 22 Richard Green |
| 7 Dick Gilpin | 15 Kath Gee | 23 Sara Wakefield |
| 8 Eleanor Leonne Bennett | 16 Kim Connolly | 24 Sarah Barlow |

PLACE WINNER: Janet Wilson - Late evening over the Cheshire Plain



Places

This section is for landscapes, landmarks, buildings or heritage, where the focus of the photograph is the place itself.





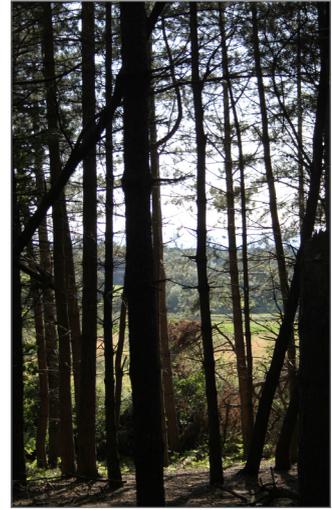
6



2



3



21



13



9



21



19



9



12



24



13



5



23

Places



6



23



24



11



6



7



5



20



1



17



4



3



10



22



22



15

Places

PEOPLE WINNER: Dick Gilpin - Family outing at Bickerton Hill



People

In this section the photographs feature people faces, portraits or groups.

It includes local people met on the trail and self-portraits.



1



8



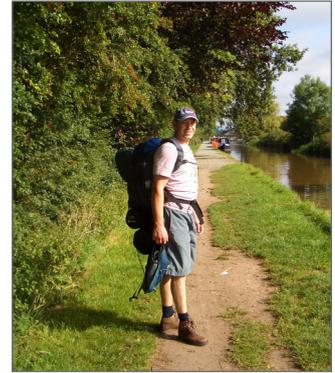
3



15



6



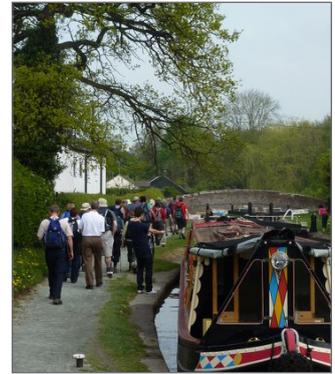
23



4



9



3



24



23



1



4



24



15

People

NATURE WINNER: Judith Johnstone - Taff near Sandstone Trail on Bickerton Hill



Nature

Photographs of the natural world; flora, fauna, animals, birds, plants, trees or fungi. Here the focus is on living, growing or natural wonders.



1



18



10



3



21



2



6



19



7



2



19



24



4



15

Nature



15



10



3



16



6



21



18



23



1



24



23



4

Nature

UNDER - 16 WINNER: Eleanor Leonne Bennett - Girl under ice in Cheshire





4



8



4

This section has an open subject category for photographs taken along the trail, but is limited to young people 16 and under.

Under - 16

The last four years have seen a range of day courses and conferences, delivered by the Harthill Trust with partner artists, designers, practitioners and training providers in the beautiful rural hamlet of Harthill, in the heart of the Cheshire countryside.

The following pages give a tiny taster of what has been a truly eventful and creative four years.

The photographs also record and celebrate a remarkable partnership of art, imagination, nature and at times hard work with the opportunity to learn new skills, meet new people and have fun.

Storytelling



Willow Sculptures



Art & Faith



Sculptural Birdboxes



Weaving



Landscape Sketching



Landscape Painting



Art & Nature



Poetry





Teachers with Johnny
on the sandstone trail

Story telling

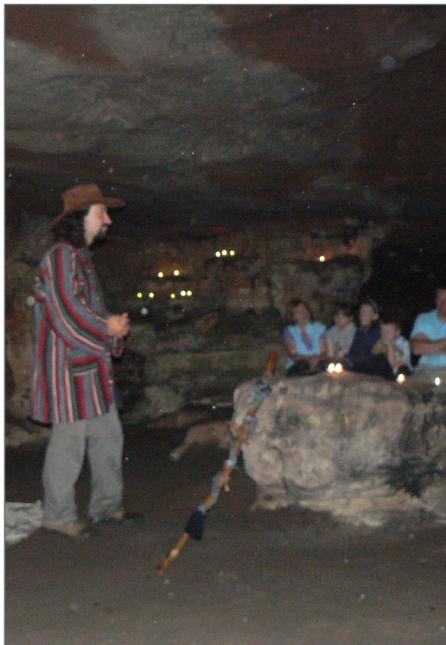
Course Leader: [Johnny Gillett](#)

Equipping teachers with skills and confidence to use and encourage storytelling.

Embedding stories and imagination in the landscape of the Sandstone Ridge.

Storytelling competition in schools, leading to an event in the Harthill caves.

“I feel I have learnt an enormous amount, that I can’t wait to share.”







Sarah and student working on Dragon's head for Beeston Castle

Willow Weaving

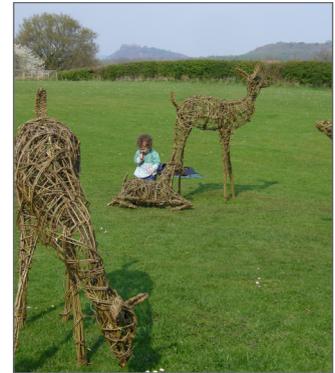
Course Leader : *Sarah Hayes*

Outdoor workshops in various venues.

Learning willow sculpture techniques, working in small groups to produce artworks to be displayed permanently on site.

Working with green and living willow.





“Amazing - I achieved what I thought was impossible (for me)”



Chris encouraging discussion and appreciation of the artworks

Landscape painting

Course Leader: [Chris Gilbert](#)

Walk along Sandstone Ridge, collecting inspiration and visual information.

Tuition, encouragement and support for landscape painting in Acrylics.





“It has given me confidence to ‘have a go myself’ and the freedom to experiment and ask advice.”



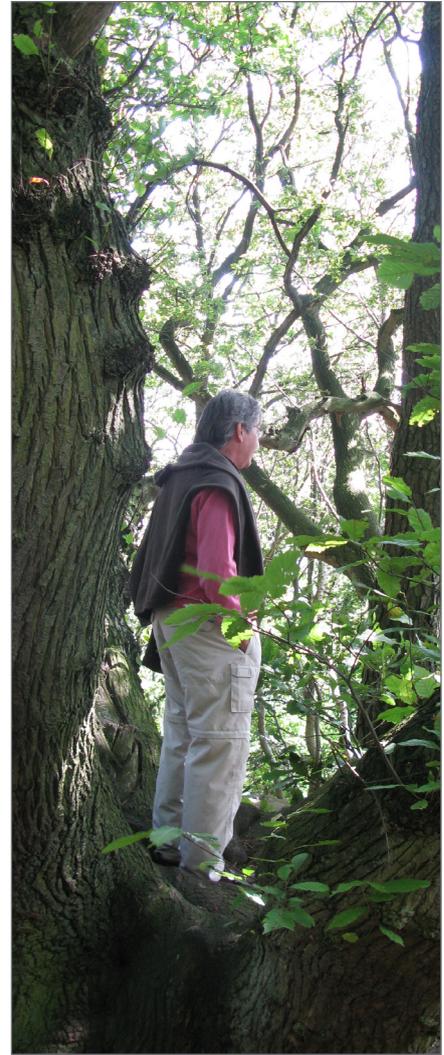
Stephen and the group with sculptures

3D Art and Faith

Leader: [Stephen Broadbent](#)

An exploration of art and faith,
responding to the natural environment.

Participation in a short contemplative
walk, period of reflection, group
discussion and a practical workshop.





“Enriching and much to think about.”



Stephen with students displaying their birdbox sculptures

Sculptural Birdboxes

Course Leader: [Stephen Broadbent](#)

Twenty-four students from Helsby High School and Bishop Heber High School, take up the challenge to design a contemporary Bird-box.

Design, research, modelling and carving individual, sculptural Bird-boxes.

Bird-boxes exhibited at Mickerloo Art Gallery







Artists using observation techniques on the Sandstone trail

Sketching

Course Leader : **Chris Gilbert**

With the main focus on landscape
and access to the Sandstone Ridge.

Direct observation, discussion,
encouragement and use of a variety
of media.



“Thank you for the opportunity to explore Art & Nature together”





Faith and student collecting materials

Nature of Art

Course Leader: [Faith Bebbington](#)

Working in the environment, using locally gathered, natural materials.

Celebrating and interpreting Cheshire's Sandstone trail with temporary artworks.







Barbara demonstrating
the skill of weaving

Weaving

Course Leader: [Barbara Garner](#)

Construct and weave on an upright loom, exploring Iron Age techniques.

Produce individual and collaborative work incorporating natural materials.







Andrew with students making individual books

Poetry

Course Leader: [Andrew & Wendy Rudd](#)

Exploring landscape, discussion, intuitive mark making and writing activities, leading to the making of a simple book.

Reflection and personal development.





“what a wonderful way to spend a day”



Acknowledgements and Thanks:

We, at the Harthill Trust, would like to acknowledge the tremendous impact of the Heritage Lottery Fund's generous funding on our Arts Training. In particular, we are extremely grateful for the invaluable support and encouragement of Habitats & Hillforts, which has been embodied in the person of Ellie Morris. Ellie has been a source of inspiration, as well as money, and we simply couldn't have achieved what we have over the last 4 years without her.

We would also like to thank all of our Course Leaders. These artists, sculptors, storytellers, poets, weavers and photographers have inspired, entertained and educated with great enthusiasm and considerable skill, making the "Harthill Experience" the joy that it is.

Speaking of which, the "Harthill Experience" would not be complete without tea, coffee and cake and we sincerely thank all our bakers, servers and bottle washers.

And, of course, we would like to thank all those brave and creative souls who attended our courses and events and gave themselves so freely to the activities offered. Your creativity and work is the true fruit of the work that we have planted in this 'Fertile Ground'.





harthill
creative centre