



Journey through the Valley of Stone

... a living history



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Projects

Valley of Stone has worked with many partners to deliver a series of projects to engage with local people on many levels.

This included working with artists in different mediums, helping to design sculpture pieces, contributing to the conservation of important sites in Rossendale, collecting and recording oral histories, and telling the story of the quarrying and stone-working industry with videos and 3D models.

Here we explore some of the projects and the material which has resulted from this.

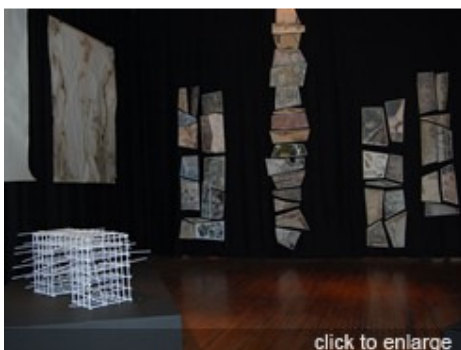
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Horse and Bamboo

Horse + Bamboo Theatre was founded in 1978. The Company is based in Rossendale, Lancashire, UK and tours nationally and internationally.

Horse + Bamboo Theatre make visual theatre in which music and story-telling is central; the company uses masks, movement, puppetry, film, lighting in their productions.

In 2008 Horse + Bamboo Theatre commissioned five artists to respond to the Valley of Stone and the related oral histories that were collected by volunteers. The artists produced a piece of creative work for exhibition at The Boo. Each artist - Ailis ni Riain, Emma Hunter, Jill Randall, Tracy Holland and the Valley Artists Studio Group also engaged with local people to produce a community based project, in their own art form which explored Rossendale's rich quarrying history and their response to it.



Valley Artists at The Boo, Valley of Stone Exhibition



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Community project, commissioned by Horse and Bamboo Theatre

The following year, 2009, Horse + Bamboo Theatre created Deep Time Cabaret, an original performance using masks, puppetry, song and film.

The play was devised and directed by Bob Frith and the central theme of the show was the short film by the artist Tracey Holland, 'Hineingrabe', one of the pieces created in 2008. It looked at Rossendale Quarries and their association with myth and folklore.

The outcome was a flexible show specially designed for community centres and schools as well as theatre spaces. It lasted an hour and the first night was held deep underground at Clearwell Caves in the Forest of Dean.



Deep Time Cabaret - Picture Courtesy of Ian Tilton



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[click to enlarge](#)

Deep Time Cabaret - Picture Courtesy of Ian Tilton

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Mid Pennine Arts

Mid Pennine Arts produced an accessible, tactile sculptural trail for Valley of Stone and commissioned metal and mixed media designer Robin Dobson to produce a major piece of public artwork for Lee Quarry. The artwork consists of tree separate but linked elements that celebrate both Rossendale's stone quarrying heritage and the dramatic natural landscape of Lee Quarry and the surrounding area.



[click to enlarge](#)

The completed Frond in situ at Lee Quarry

The first piece, **Fron**d is a landmark visible from the main route between Bacup and Stacksteads.



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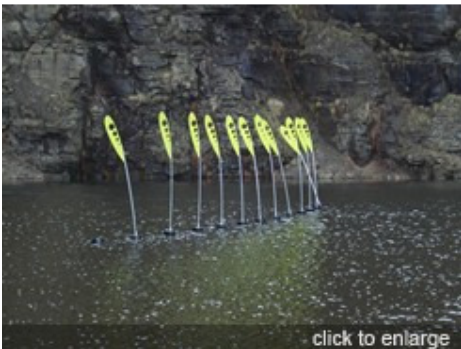


The sculpture focuses on the area's heritage and highlights the stunning views around Lee Quarry. Mid Pennine Arts worked with schoolchildren from Holy Trinity Primary School who helped to design The Frond and helped with the mosaic panelling.



Children from Britannia Primary School enjoying Ferroterrasaurus

The second piece, **Ferroterrasuaras** is inspired by industrial machinery and skeletal detailing and provides a 'drop off' obstacle for trial bikers. Mountain bike / trail riders were invited to a workshop to help design the piece. This allowed the interactive aspect of this sculpture to compliment the mountain bike trails and trails biking courses that have already been developed around the site as part of the Pennine Lancashire Adrenaline Gateway.



Echofly - situated at the rear of Lee Quarry

The final part of the commission, **Echofly**, saw Robin work with local members of the community to design an interactive piece that marks the flora and fauna that can be found in the quarry. It is positioned within the pool at the rear of Lee Quarry.

Robin produced an exhibition piece which is currently touring at key sites throughout Rossendale. [Click here to download a booklet](#) which features Robin's work.

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CAR Video Unit

CAR Video Unit became the video partner for the Valley of Stone thanks to a short film they made about Rossendale's stone industry as part of a previous project.



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CAR trained over 30 young people in video production during the project and oversaw the completion of 15 short films about various aspects of Rossendale's quarrying heritage and the activities of other project partners. These videos can be found in different sections throughout the website or via the links below.

The Work of the Valley of Stone Archaeologist

The Work of the Conservation Volunteers

Horse and Bamboo's Valley of Stone Arts Project

The Wall of History

The 19th Century Rossendale Quarrymen

The Skills of the Stonemason

Facit Quarry Incline

Facit Chimney

Healey Stone Sidings and Polishing Mill

Quarry Cranes

Swing Saw

Bacup Times

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Oral History Recording

Volunteers led by Project Officer Dominic Cooper interviewed ex-quarrymen and drivers who'd taken stone from Rossendale to all over the UK. Volunteers learned how to conduct oral interviews and received training, from Ken Howarth, Heritage Recording in interview techniques. Over 20 interviews have been captured and will be archived at the North West Sound Archive.

A selection of the interviews captured have been transferred into MP3 format so that they can be downloaded from this website.

1) Jack Mellow

A particular request from the oral history project was for wagon drivers to come forward and describe the destinations that they had actually delivered the Rossendale stone to. Jack Mellow talks specifically about delivering stone, including several journeys to London.

Jack's oral history

2) David Butterworth

Describes his family tree and quarrymen 'immigrating' from Cornwall and Norfolk. He talks about his work at Facit Quarry, Whitworth in the declining years of the 1970s.



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[Oral history 1](#) [Oral history 2](#) [Oral history 3](#) [Oral history 4](#)

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3) Roy Fitton

Roy was born in 1922 and talks about his work at Hutch bank Quarry in Haslingden and describes the cranes that they used. He mentions stone contracts from Jamestone Quarry just prior to World War II.

[Oral history 1](#) [Oral history 2](#) [Oral history 3](#) [Oral History 4](#) [Oral history 5](#)

The Valley of Stone project also worked with Northern Primary School to celebrate the school's centenary year. Pupils from Year 6 interviewed former pupils about their days at school and what the differences are between now and then. Again, these will soon be available from this website.

To find out more about the history of the area watch the Bacup Times video below produced by a group of young people as part of the [CAR Video Unit Project](#) or visit the [Bacup Times website](#).