

and descriptive pieces. For Science there was a wonderful opportunity to study different sources of light and heat from candles, oil lights, gas lights for example, and the various exhibits provided a superb stock of interesting materials to study. There were also many opportunities to set up controlled experiments. We encouraged prediction, observation and recording activities in, for example, experimenting with trying to keep food fresh in the olden days. We also carried out controlled experiments to test the efficiency of an old stone hot water bottle compared with present day rubber ones.

Many of the old photographs of local scenes showed traders with horses and carts. We were able to arrange a visit from Young's Brewery dray horse and cart which still delivers beer locally. Following this visit the children made their own carts and incorporated this into a study of 'forces' (Science AT 10).

In relation to Design and Technology, there was plenty of evaluating, for example at Level 1 of AT4, describing to other children and visitors what they had done and how well they have done it and describing to others what they liked and disliked about the artefacts and the museum as a whole.

The children made Victorian toys - spinners, tops, and dolls houses with Victorian furniture and peg dolls dressed in appropriate costumes.

That our children observed spontaneously that some objects came from rich families and others from poor homes after studying the materials and decorations indicated an ability to make simple judgements about familiar artefacts including those from other times and cultures (Level 3 AT2).

Other Design and Technology work involved designing and making books and labels and art work including marbling our book covers and



Demonstrating the mangle to a visitor.

executing close observation drawings and painting.

Using the setting of our museum we held a school reunion. We welcomed ex-pupils from every decade since 1920 and the children were able to question our older visitors about their childhood memories stimulated by the presence of our old photographs, maps, documents and domestic objects. Our older guests gave us the benefit of their direct experience. We are sure that these events foster a sense of citizenship and tradition in our young children. We also welcomed Pat Astley-Cooper, our Local Museum Curator, into our school museum and she was most impressed by the children's efforts.

Local Authority Inspectors wrote: 'The provision of a museum in the infant library acts as valuable learning resource for pupils throughout the school.'

### Some Do's and Don'ts:

#### Do:

- Tell everybody who will be affected especially the caretaker and cleaners.
- Keep a note of donations and loans.
- Limit the scope.
- Consider the projects in two equally valued sections.
  - 1) Setting up
  - 2) Running and using
- Take photographs

#### Don't:

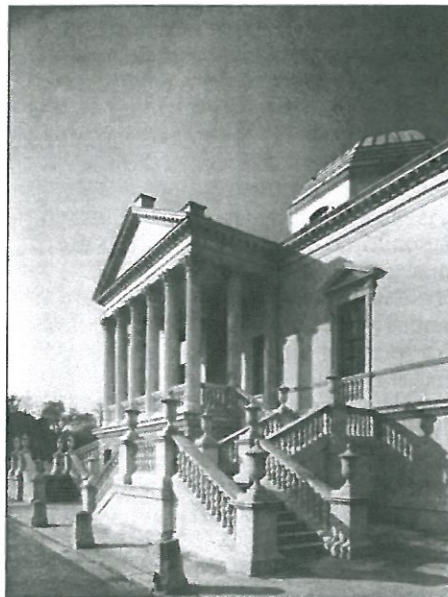
- Be afraid to say no thank you to unsuitable contributions.
- Forget the security aspect.

Paula Shaw and Janet Matthews  
Year Two Teachers  
Allfarthing Primary School  
Wandsworth  
London SW18

## Pliny and Chiswick

A multi-lingual typographic project set to final year degree students at Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication involved a study of an historic site, Chiswick House.

Recently, the Pliny Society of Great Britain was represented at an international seminar of classicists held at a country house 'somewhere in Italy', but before the wide readership



English Heritage Photo Library

of Remnants, especially classics teachers, write to the editors requesting details of Society membership, I must make a confession that to the best of my knowledge such a learned society does not exist; neither did an academic gathering take place in Italy.

The 'fiction' above was devised in order to establish a realistic backdrop to a multi-lingual typographic project carried out by graphic design students at Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication and who made use of Chiswick House which was masqueraded for their purposes as an Italian Renaissance villa.

### A letter from Pliny

The Latin text, which formed the central subject of the project, was one

of the famous letters written by the Younger Pliny (Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus).

Gaius Plinius was born at Como in either AD 61 or 62, and died about fifty-one years later in Asia Minor while still holding Imperial office. His important letter to Gallus (*Book II, Letter 17*) describes his villa on the Laurentian shore. This was the text selected for the project set at Ravensbourne, and has excited practitioners of the visual arts since the Renaissance.

The influential Italian architect, Andrea Palladio (1508-80) is known to have read the Younger Pliny, whose collected work was printed in Italy and France during the 1530s, and to have studied the architecture of the 'ancients'. His antiquarian pursuits resulted in the publication of *La antichità di Roma* in 1554. Probably Palladio's greatest achievements in the paths of classical writers were his *I Quattro Libri dell' Architettura* (*The Four Books of Architecture*), published at Venice in 1570, and the villas he designed in the countryside around Vicenza.

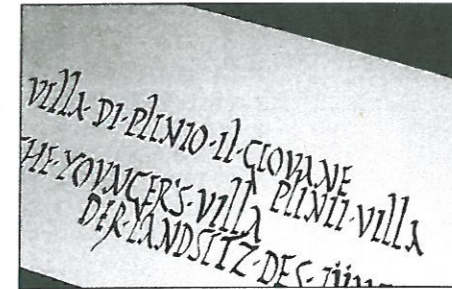
A follower of Palladio was Vincenzo Scamozzi (1552-1616), who also came under the spell of the Younger Pliny. Again it was the description of the Pliny villas at Laurentum and Tuscum which proved inspirational. Those Scamozzi sought to recreate architecturally, especially the atrium and circular colonnades surrounding a courtyard, were vividly outlined in Pliny's own words as having existed at the Villa Laurentum. Inigo Jones (1573-1651) owned a copy of Scamozzi's book *Idea della Architettura Universale*. Richard Hewlings, author of Chiswick House and Gardens (English Heritage Colour Handbook, second edition, 1991) writes,

'When Lord Burlington began to build his new house at Chiswick it was these two masters, Palladio and Jones, whom he elected as the presiding geni of the place. Their statues flank its entrance. Perhaps a closer Pliny influence on the house and gardens at Chiswick came with Robert Castell's *Villas of the Ancients Illustrated*, dedicated to Lord Burlington. This appeared in 1728, about a year after Burlington had begun designing 'Chiswick.'

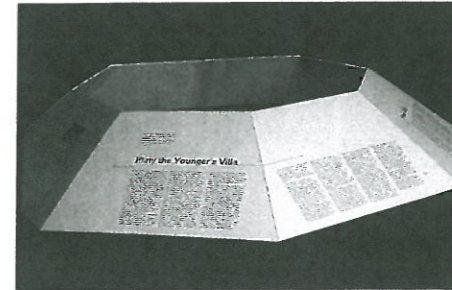
As for Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington (1694-1754), his admiration of both antique and Palladian architectural forms found perfect expression at Chiswick House, the culmination of ideas originating with the Roman writings of the Younger Pliny and Vitruvius.

### The project

So much for the main historical details and cultural connections. Multi-lingual typography forms a major component of final year graphic design studies at Ravensbourne.



ABOVE: Designed by Tania Hill for a calligraphic motor driven scroll installation. BELOW: Designed by Stephen Webb. Location floor of Lower Tribune or hall.



Students are encouraged to either learn, or improve their knowledge of foreign languages on the basis that all words are the 'bricks' which the graphic designer must build into aesthetically pleasing and efficient pieces of written communication. Furthermore, it is emphasised to them that typography is the visual manifestation of all language.

One result of the current economic recession has been the contraction of commercial graphic design activity. Therefore, and mindful of the 'real-world' requirement, it seemed the right moment to strengthen elements of cultural, heritage, environmental and museum orientated graphic design projects.

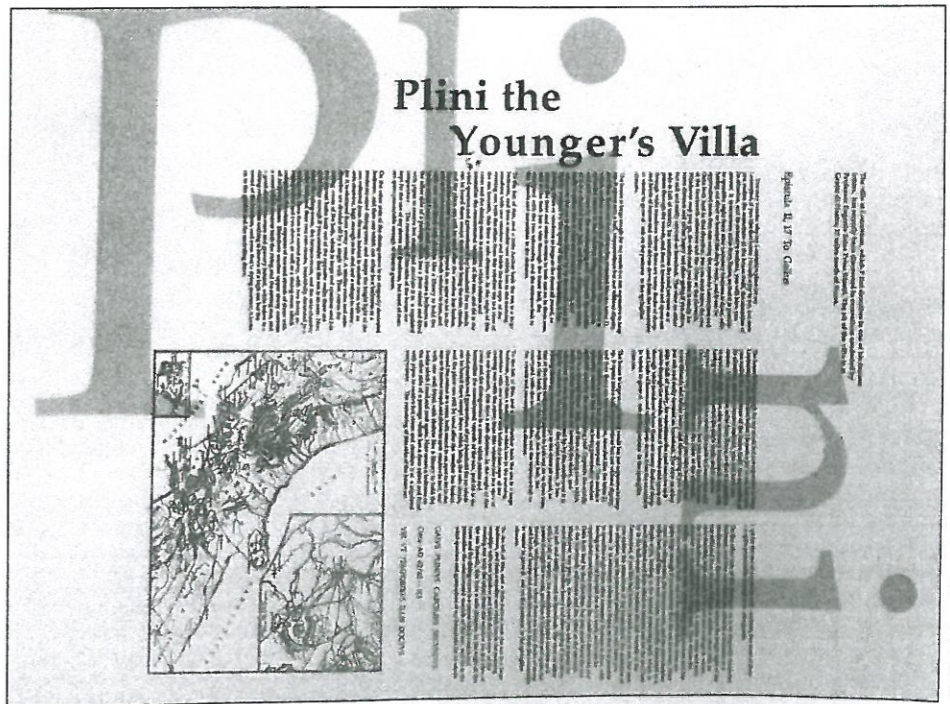
It was the possibility of combining a two-dimensional typographic subject

presented within an architectural environment that made me visit a number of museums and historic buildings during the summer of 1991. Clifford Pember's model of the Villa Laurentum in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford has long been an atmospheric, if slightly inaccurate exhibit.

It had been my earliest intention to base the Pliny project around hypothetically re-designing the Ashmolean display, but the architectural history outlined earlier brought Burlington's masterpiece at Chiswick into its aesthetic scope. In addition, being a Greater London location dispensed with lengthy travel, and yet one further advantage was that Chiswick House is an extremely well-recorded building; thus making a measured plan and elevations easily obtainable from published sources.

The decision to disguise Chiswick House as a Palladian villa 'somewhere' in Italy was taken to enhance the European nature of the project (in any case, it is not detrimental to the memory of Lord Burlington to do this as the premier architectural status of Chiswick normally ensures that it is mentioned in any substantial monograph devoted to Palladio). It was also important to act on the imagination of the students and the project brief stated that they were to create a typographic display on the theme of the Villa Laurentum as described by the Younger Pliny to Gallus. Furthermore, that this display was to be shown by the 'Pliny Society of Great Britain' at an international seminar, and therefore, had to be 'air-portable' as well as allowing erection by non-specialist staff on arrival. The Pliny brief was set on 23 September 1991, and there was some initial surprise as pages of typed

BELOW: Designed by Jabuliani Mhalangu. Location: walls around Lower Tribune or Hall.

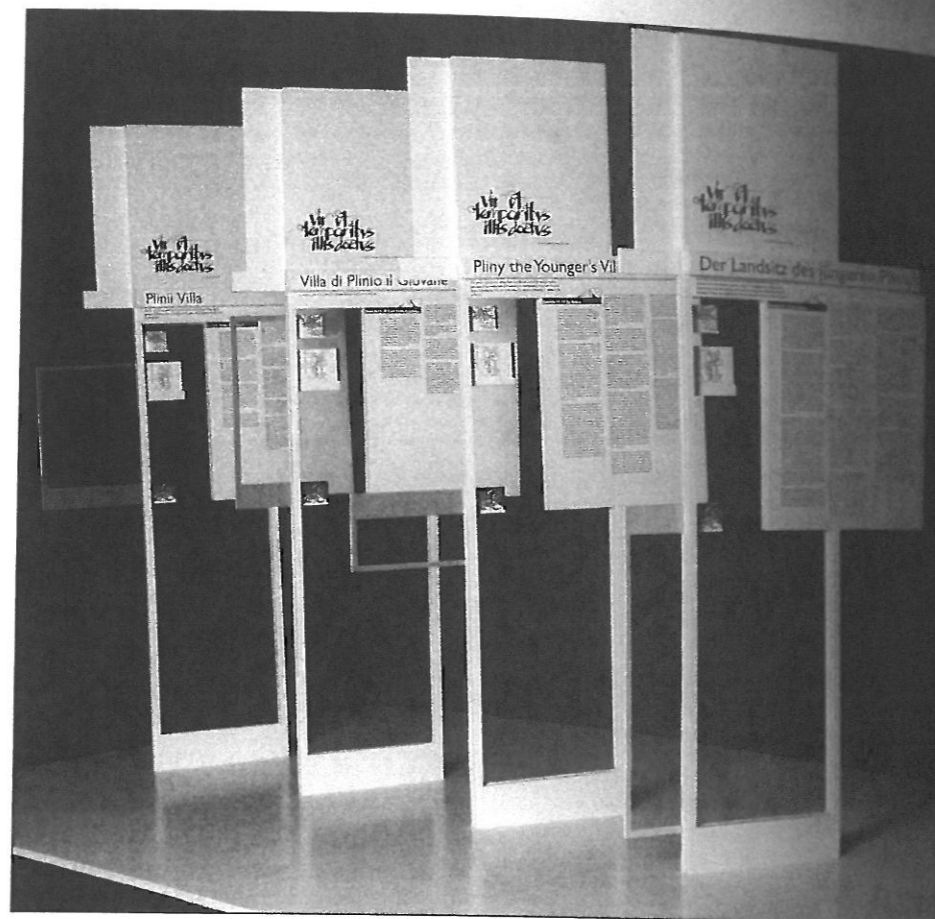




Latin, together with copious captions written by the staff in English, Italian and German were distributed! Once all the material had been analysed over the following days, students began to make their own way to Chiswick - as luck would have it, many of them caught their first ever sight of Lord Burlington's gem in the pouring rain! A film crew with actors and actresses in eighteenth-century costume was also filming in the inclement weather and could be glimpsed now and again sheltering under trees in the mist. The autumn drizzle did not spoil the Italian mood as my students started work and selected results are now shown on these pages.

Barry Kitts  
Tutor-in-Charge  
Third Year Major Projects  
BA (Hons) Degree Course in Visual Communication  
Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication

**Chiswick House**, a Palladian villa built c. 1725, is situated on Burlington Lane, London W4. To book a free educational visit Tel. 081-348 1286/7

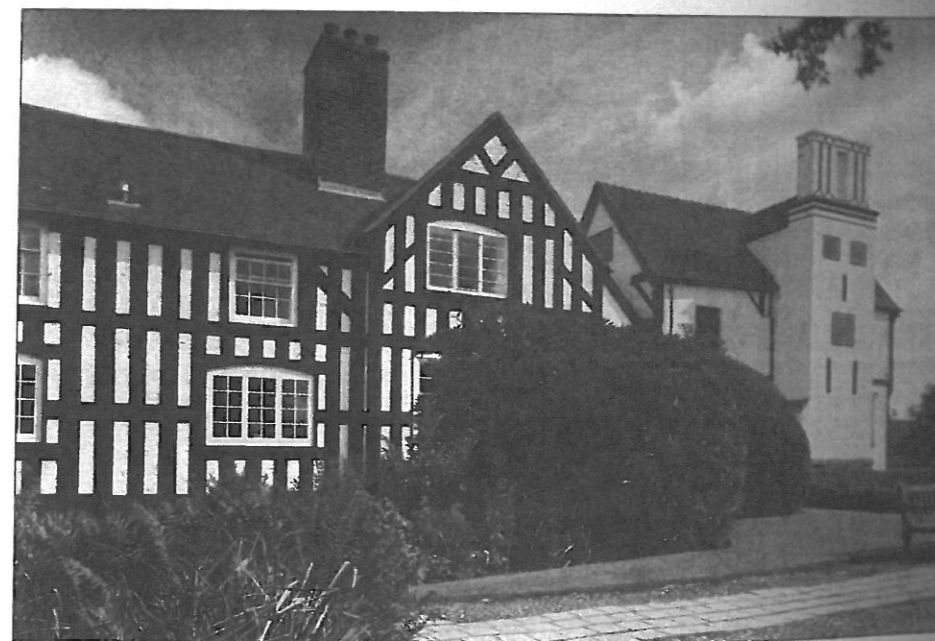


Designed by Mathew Bigg. Free-standing structure carrying typographic panels. Location: Red Velvet Room (First floor).

## A Feast of History

At the end of the first year of National Curriculum History many teachers have grappled with the demands of the prescribed content and perhaps wondered if indeed it is possible to meet all the requirements.

At Key Stage 2 in particular, the challenge of fitting nine study units into an already crowded twelve terms has proved a daunting task. Some LEAs have offered practical advice on condensing the nine units into a more manageable programme by linking together core and supplementary units where appropriate. Nevertheless the sheer volume of content, particularly in KS2 core units continues to pose problems. In-service courses within my own authority repeatedly picked up teachers' anxieties over balancing content coverage with long held beliefs on learning. Was it still possible, they asked, to make history exciting and meaningful through traditional 'direct experiences' when the core study units contained so much, often unfamiliar, material?



Boscobel House, Shropshire

One way to answer this question was to persuade a teacher to tackle such a unit and then analyse the planning, children's responses and outcomes, teaching strategies and resource implications. Thus it was that, during the Autumn Term 1991, a class of twenty seven Year 5 and 6 children from a school in Bridgnorth took CSU2 Tudor and Stuart times as the basis for an investigation that lasted eleven weeks.

The work was photographed as it

developed during this period and then converted into video. The study began with a visit to Boscobel House, an English Heritage site some twelve miles from the school. The class was split into five groups during the visit and each group had been specifically briefed on the nature of its task whilst on site. These tasks contained elements of evidence gathering and assessment, problem solving and artefact handling. Each group was subsequently given a work schedule

...how the evidence gleaned on site might be developed. The group called 'Hunters of the King' for example, used the future King Charles' budding and escape as the basis for a puppet play. The 'Building Development' groups mounted an exhibition showing the growth and changes in the building from Tudor times to the present day. Clearly there were elements of the core study unit, however, that could not be covered as part of these investigations. Running parallel to follow-up work from the visit were group and class activities designed to include these elements, and they were clustered under the heading of: disasters (the Plague, the Fire of London, the Gunpowder Plot); exploration (explorers, Drake and Raleigh, voyages); conflicts (Armada, Civil War) and peacetime (changes that took place during the period). These were tackled, in varying depth, through movement and drama, imaginative writing, general discussion, classroom display and a range of creative media. The culmination of the term's work was a Stuart Feast where the many and varied activities undertaken during the term were drawn together in a day of celebration.

### What were the lessons learnt from this first term of NC History?

\* A core study unit can be covered, but it requires detailed planning and

realistic targets. Teaching strategies need to be varied to include group and whole class lessons as well as attention to individual pupil's studies.

\* Not all the elements within the unit can be covered to the same depth and this will vary according to the age, previous experiences and interests of the children.

\* Resources are available to enhance the work. An audit of history reference books within the school meant a realignment of these books to appropriate year groups. The School Library Service provided extra books as part of the topic collection system currently in operation. The English Heritage materials (Boscobel handbook and video, guide, and loaned prints and slides) were invaluable.

\* Planning an outcome (the feast) provided a purpose for many of the activities, gave the study an urgency and enabled other classes and parents a chance to share the work. Bridgette Hallam, the class teacher at St. John's R.C. School, Bridgnorth, would tackle some things differently if she does this CSU again. This is encouraging. All teachers need to beware the dangers of repeating the

BELOW: School dinners will never seem the same again.

same old thing year by year. At least there is more than enough in each of the CSU's to provide variety!

Oliver Aston  
Primary Adviser Curriculum Planning  
Shropshire Local Education Authority

**Boscobel House**, Shropshire is a seventeenth century hunting lodge 8m. NW of Wolverhampton on an unclassified road between the A41 and A5. OS Map 127; Ref FJ 837083.

Copies of the video '**A Feast of History**' (VHS; 12 minutes) and the accompanying booklet showing the teacher's planning; children's work schedules; group and class activities; booklist and support materials used; and links to ATs in English, Mathematics, Science, Technology and History, are available from:  
Angie Skone  
SECRU  
Education Department, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY2 6ND  
Price £15 plus £2 handling charge.



St. John's R.C. School Bridgnorth

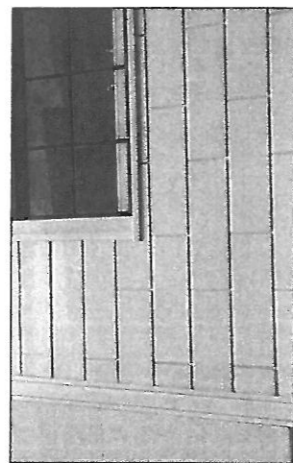


# STREETWISE

The walls of a house need to be weatherproof and, if possible, attractive to look at. Today people like to alter the appearance of their houses, modernising them and using different materials to give a variety of effects. In the past people also made changes to their houses, for similar reasons.

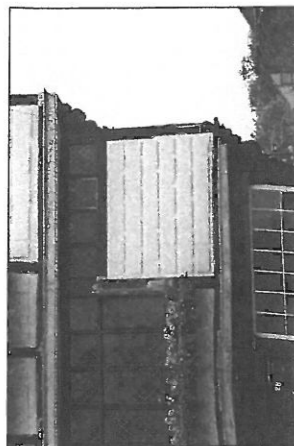


Up to the 17th century the majority of houses in English towns, including London, were of a timber-framed construction with the gaps filled with mud or plaster on wooden sticks or laths. Wood was more easily handled than stone and there was no shortage of it!



Increased wealth led to changes in fashions. Those who could afford to have their houses rebuilt in stone or brick did so. Others had their timber-framed houses refaced in a variety of materials. However appearances can be deceptive. Sometimes timber-framed boards were laid edge to edge, scored to give the impression of mortar lines and painted to look stone - not always very convincingly!

## Façades and Facings



Sometimes plaster was used to imitate stone on a timber-framed building as on this house in Canterbury. In fact the wooden beams could not possibly have supported the first and second stories had they been made entirely of genuine stone.

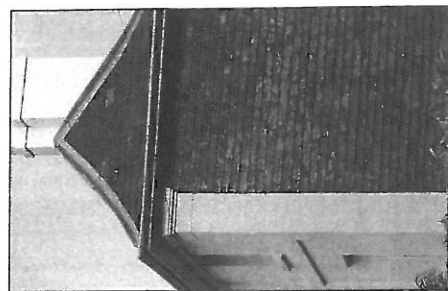


Many houses particularly in the south east, were faced with wood that made no pretence to be anything else. Weatherboarding is usually painted white or in a light colour. Originally it was often tarred to make it weatherproof.



Tiles were sometimes used to imitate stone to give a more fashionable appearance to an older building. After the brick tax in 1784 these had the advantage of being cheaper as well as lighter than genuine bricks. These imitation bricks, sometimes called 'mathematical tiles', are often less than half an inch thick yet are usually indistinguishable from the real thing. Clues to look for include shallow window surrounds or signs that only the front of a building has been refaced.

Streetwise investigates clues to the past that can often be found in the streets near your school!



Tiles were an alternative to wood, particularly in areas where local tile industries were growing. This house, built in Tunbridge Wells at the beginning of the 18th century, shows its original tiling on the side. The front was refaced with stucco, a plaster based material designed to resemble stone, probably in the late 18th or early 19th century.



In the 1980s it became popular to reface houses with concrete cladding designed to imitate stone. Many people feel that this treatment changes the whole character not only of the house but also the terrace or street of which the house is a part.

# # RESOURCES

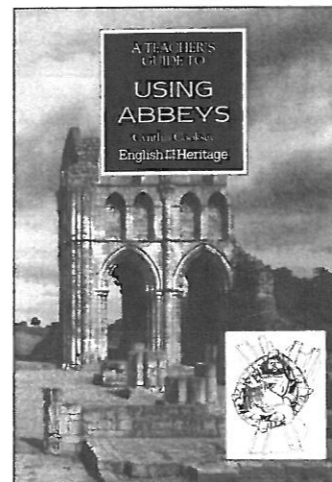
## English Heritage Education Service EDUCATIONAL CATALOGUE UPDATE

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hunter-gatherers through to the 17th century. It suggests ways to bring these historic sites alive by recreating the oral traditions of our ancestors.  
36 pages, A4, 1992.  
ISBN 1-85074-378-9  
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Cynthia Cooksey

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This book explores the kind of stories which may have been told at historic sites in Britain from the time of the

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