

ABOUT

Sites of Meaning is a millennium project of Middleton and Smerrill in the Derbyshire Peak. It marks the seventeen entrances to its parish with boundary stones each inscribed with a text chosen by members of the parish. A public manifestation of private thoughts and feelings at the start of a new millennium.

Started in 1999 and finished in 2006, Sites of Meaning was run by a team of parishioners who raised funds, collected text for the inscriptions, commissioned stones from artists and masons, and installed the finished boundary markers. Over two hundred people took part in Sites of Meaning including the local community and primary school, schools and colleges throughout the region,

local and national artists and other professionals. At first funding was raised more or less on a stone to stone basis. But as the project gathered momentum and the team gained experience and confidence, larger funds were sought as projects were designed to involve more of the surrounding community. The Sculpture Residency in 2002 saw Amanda Wray carve a stone for site 8 in the village playground.

Other Stones – Other Meanings explored local history and archaeology and generated poetry through Youlgrave Primary School. InscribeNOW completed Sites of Meaning with a photographic residency and workshops, the generation of publicity, educational material and a final celebration

re-uniting all those who have worked on the project.

With seventeen boundary stones completed an eighteenth stone, to be situated in the village square, was commissioned to celebrate the achievement of all those who have taken part. It acts as a compass for the whole project. Sites of Meaning has now gone public with a website, guides, walks and cycle routes.

Sites of Meaning is, by definition, always open to the public and has already gained a considerable following. The fate of the stones lies in the future. But it is a millennium project which, at least in parts, may still be around in another thousand years.

HISTORY AND PRECEDENTS

Stones mark and define our landscape: limestone underpins the land, dry stone walls define the fields, ancient stones tell of our ancestors, quarries and mines provide employment, stone built houses create private space and shelter. Words mark and define us as individuals: speech acts reveal our personality, statements outline our ideas and thoughts, lyrics and quotations sum up our feelings and beliefs. Combined stones and words record our history, documenting previous cultures for future generations.

Ancient earthworks of Arbor Low, pre-historic rock art on Gardom's Edge, the Derbyshire Guide Stoops, the telling gravestone, biblical references at Curbar Gap and the Three Ships on Birchen Edge, form strong precedents for a mixture of text on stone within our landscape.

In marking the seventeen entrances to the parish of Middleton and Smerrill, Sites of Meaning affirms our boundary and greets our visitors. The inscribed text and lyrics develops our personal and collective identity.

FRIENDS

Sites of Meaning has received the generous support of many individuals and organisations who have given time or money to support the creation of the seventeen boundary stones around Middleton. It is hoped that these monuments stand as a tacit testament to the hard work of all involved in bringing this project to fruition.

Now that the marker stones are completed, the project is hoping to secure its future with a small fund for future maintenance and promotion of the project.

If you would like to support the work of Sites of Meaning please contact us.

ACTIVISTS

Those who have worked on Sites of Meaning:

- Chris Bentley (photographer)
- Rose Butler (artist)
- Paul Bristow (waller & builder)
- Sallyann Carlin (team member)
- Valerie Coffin-Price (artist)
- Michael Colin (team member)
- David Fine (writer)
- Heritage Stoneworks (masons)
- Celia Kilner (artist)
- Heidi Maher (team member)
- Peter Maris (artist)
- Charles Monkhouse (team leader)
- David Renwick (waller & builder)
- Michael Steel (mason)
- Alice Ullathorne (archaeologist)
- Jamie Vans (artist)
- John Warren (team member)
- Chris Webb (photographer)
- Andy Wood (team member)
- Amanda Wray (artist)
- Emma Youatt (team member)
- John Youatt (team member)

CONTACTS

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For more information about Sites of Meaning visit our website which includes full details of the projects and useful downloads for educational and recreational visitors.

www.sitesofmeaning.org.uk

AWARDS

In 2005 Sites of Meaning won first prize in Derbyshire Greenwatch Awards, Derbyshire's Heritage category, and the Tarmac Central Community Award for its project Other Stones – Other Meanings.

INSCRIPTIONS

- 0

a combination of other texts

Isaiah 30:15
- 1

In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.

Alice Marsden
(Youlgrave Primary School)

*He's beautiful,
golden, white fur,
wild, free,
ready to come and go
as he pleases.*

Youlgrave Primary School
- 3

*Still glides the stream, and shall forever glide;
The form remains, the function never dies.*

William Wordsworth
- 4

*In late May or June,
The farmers brought their sheep,
To wash their fleeces,
In this deep pool.
Burlbling, bumbling, bleating over each other like a flock of sheep it dipped.
The waters bleat like a flock of sheep it dipped.
Dip your ghosts into this hard, cold merky place.
Hear their bleat in the water's rush to escape.
The foam like wool pulsates
Damp leaves nothing behind but the trees' readiness.*

Children of Middleton by
Youlgrave
- 5

*... but when I try to imagine a faultless love
Or the life to come, what I hear is the murmur
Of underground streams, what I see is a limestone landscape.*

WH Auden
- 6

*Consult the Genius of the Place in all;
That tells the Waters or to rise or fall.*

Alexander Pope
- 7

The peace of running water to you.

Celtic Benediction
- 8

To see a world in a grain of sand and a heaven in a wild flower, hold infinity in the palm of your hand, and eternity in an hour.

William Blake
- 9

We meet to create memories and depart to cherish them.

Taken from a Tibetan Tea House Menu
- 10

The road up and the road down are one and the same.

Heraclitus
- 11

*left - right
quick - march
past - enough
earth - to spy
and beat - the bounds
breathless - death
ere - owns*

David Fine
- 12

*HVIVS VIAE CVRAM CVRATORES
VIARVM NON SVSCEPERVNT*

Anon
- 13

*Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up you caravan
Just for one day?*

Ralph Hodgson
- 14

*Bright Under Green Limestone Edges
With Queen Ann Lace and Cranesbill
in her Hedges*

Michael Dower
- 15

*The rakes and spoils of man's hard
toil has shaped this land*

Staff at Derbyshire Aggregates Limited
- 16

*A dull sky, Feel the cold.
Touch the snow, A lonely landscape.
Hear the wind, See the hills.
It's freezing cold, And empty.*

Rheanne Smith and Lucy Mead
(Youlgrave Primary School)
- 17

*Live as if you'll die tomorrow.
Farm as if you'll live forever.*

Traditional
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