

A large, light-colored wooden sculpture is the central focus. It features thick, wavy beams that curve upwards and outwards, meeting at a central vertical post. Several circular medallions are embedded in the wood, each containing a different carved design, possibly representing local history or nature. The sculpture is set outdoors on a grassy area, with trees and a building visible in the background. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

# Southam Stories



# **‘Southam Stories’**

A project devised and run by artist Will Glanfield  
working with the people of Southam  
2005 - 2007



WORS-

The holy well has three faces there  
look like a girl a boy and a bull  
which I think is old brazen face from  
the story lady Godiva.



'The Holy Well has three faces there look like  
a girl a boy and a bull which I think is old  
brazen face from the story lady Godiva.'

St Mary's Primary

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'Old Brazen Face/Gargoyle'

# Introduction

In 1995 I was selected from a number of artists to create a series of artworks for the Southam Heritage Trails. This work included seating and waymarkers for the extended trails; gates, posts and a seat to the Holy Well; and interpretation panel frames at various key points. In parallel with the heritage projects, a sculpture was to be created for outside the library in the town centre.

As a development of earlier projects I had undertaken, I wanted to explore the idea of heritage in a broader sense (our personal and collective sense of place and belonging). Heritage typically will focus on the 'main events' that have occurred - a battle here, a visit by a famous person there etc. In addition to such events I wanted to look beneath the skin of the community, and explore something of the multitude of everyday events that occur. Events that when seen together combine to create the unique character of a particular community and place.

I set about designing a sculptural structure which could incorporate a series of artworks, to be designed and carved in Oak by the local community. The project I devised incorporated a large element of oral history, where I encouraged participants to explore their own stories and memories, as well as those of friends and relatives.

## Workshops

I devised and ran a series of creative workshops which took the form of short residencies, working with all four Southam schools. On my initial visit to each school I introduced the children to my work, and took them on a trip around the trail to be. As we went along we discussed the history of the key landmark features, exploring them imaginatively back through time. We also explored the natural history and landscape, and some personal stories children could recount of events that had already happened in that setting.

On our return to the classroom we reviewed what we had discovered. I then asked the children to tell any stories they had. After sharing these, the children set about creating pictures, poems and writings based on all they had gathered that morning. At St James Primary School I asked Rene Cardall (then in her eighties) to come into the school and tell the year 4 class stories of the life of Southam, including her own memories. This session was recorded on audio tape and will become part of the Cardall Collection. At the end of the school day I gave out an invitation to all the children to take out to the wider community – family, friends and neighbours – asking them to tell their stories to the children, and then write them down. A great range of stories, histories and anecdotes were gathered this way. Back in class the children read these out, again sharing and extending the tradition of storytelling and oral history.

Stimulated by the new stories, the children entered into another phase of creating imaginative drawings and words on paper. At the end of this phase I selected a number of designs which would translate well into wood carvings.

For the carving sessions the Junior children were organized into small groups of between four to six in number. Each group worked on a particular design, and, under my instruction, learnt the rudiments of relief wood carving. The children worked one at a time, on a rotation, taking turns in developing the carving. From these carving sessions twenty one stories were carved onto the oak bosses. These carving sessions all took place within the school setting.

Unfortunately all the original stories and artworks from St James Primary School were lost, although we have do have some photos of the workshops as well as their final carvings.

The sessions at Southam College involved a group of sixth formers that underwent the same process, although at the carving stage the students worked in pairs.

The adult workshops were carried out over the course of two days at the Community College. Here some participants chose to use the symbols of their work rather than interpret a particular story. The adults worked individually or in pairs, drawing up and carving their designs.

## The sculpture

The oak sculpture is formed by a central pentagonal pile, from which five curved buttresses radiate out and anchor into the ground. Each buttress holds three bosses, carved on both sides. These can be seen as the eyes of the community looking out and reflecting their environment.

With the sculpture, entitled 'Southam Stories', I wanted to create a work which would hold a series of clues to the life of the town. Each carving would hold a story. But what was that story? This book goes some way to reveal some of the stories, and the artworks produced from them.

Will Glanfield 20.9.2007





## 'Southam Stories'

georgina B

### Southam Story's

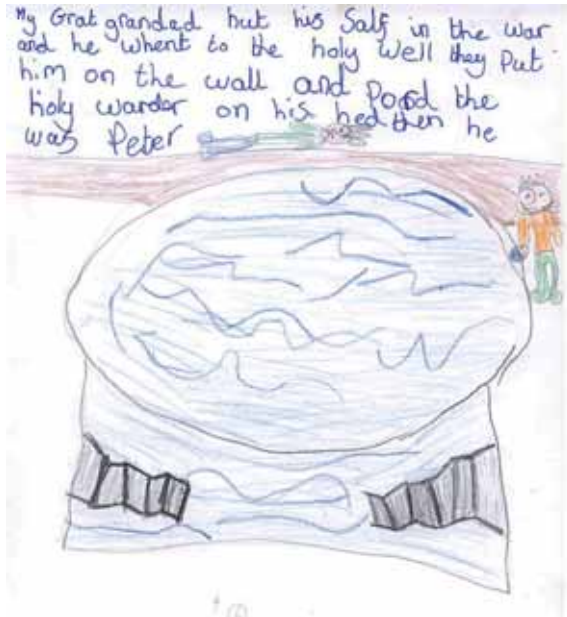
My mum Said

there was a Zoo in Southam  
as you Properly know. And in  
the Zoo there were lots of animals  
Such as monkeys, tigers, lions and lots  
more. And my mum was in  
Southam when she Suddenly saw  
the man who owned the Zoo  
walking his tigers and Lions!!!!

# 'The Miracle'

'My Great Grandad hurt himself in the war and he went to the Holy Well. They put him on the wall and poured the holy water on his head, then he was better.'

St Mary's Primary



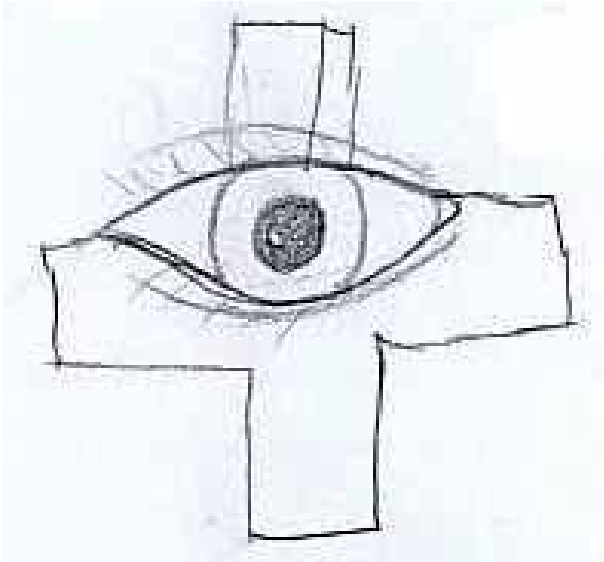
'I heard a story from Jaymee and it's about her Great Grandad. Her Grandad hurt his leg and could not walk, so some people took him to the Holy Well and layed him on the wall, got a cup of water, poured it on his head and then he could walk again.'

St Mary's Primary



'The Miracle'

# ‘The Eye Hospital’



The Eye and Ear infirmary was built by Southam born Dr. Henry Lilley-Smith. Critics referred to Doctor Smith as ‘the mad doctor of Southam,’ as they thought his idea would never work - however, it opened in Spring 1818, and was a great success. Medical advice, professional attendance and medicine were free. It was supported by voluntary subscriptions from the wealthy people of the town. Water from the Holy Well was reputedly used to heal the eyes of patients. Dr Lilley-Smith also arranged the first May day Fete with rural sports. He also built a Dispensary, which flourished during his lifetime, but ended with his death in 1859 - the format of this dispensary, which was self-funding and which made medication available to those who could not otherwise have afforded it, was subsequently copied far and wide, and has even been claimed to have been the fore-runner of the modern-day National Health Service. There is a stone monument outside the Stoneythorpe Hotel to this day, near the site of the Dispensary, to the memory of the doctor.

St. Mary's Primary

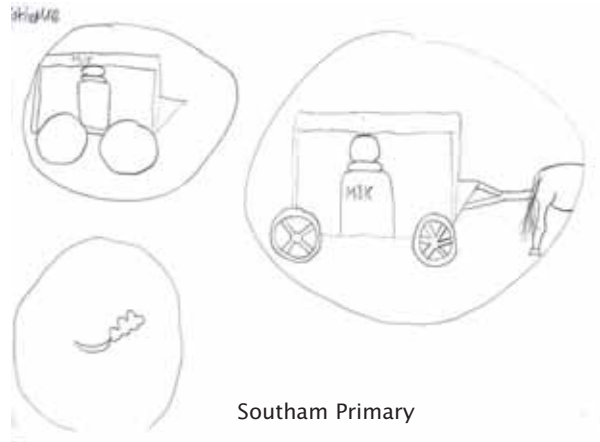


'The Eye Hospital'

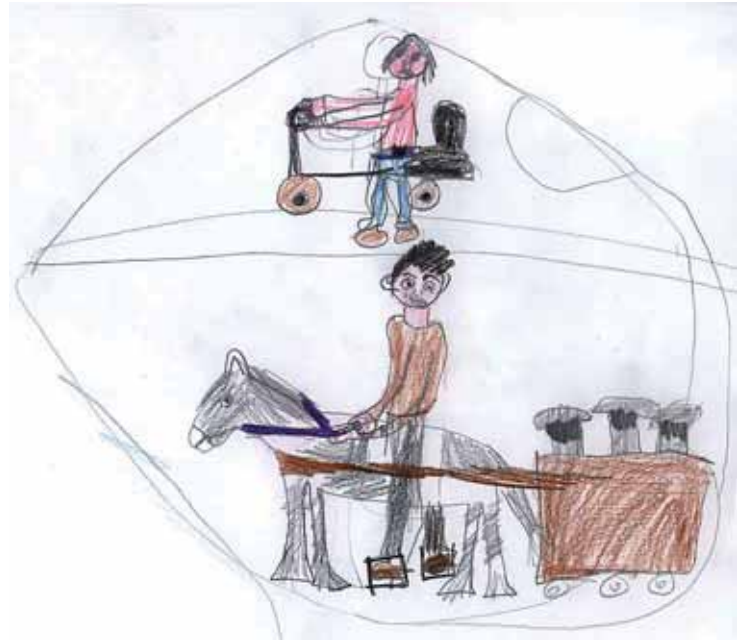
# ‘Southam Dairy’

My Great Uncle Phil used to deliver the milk in the 1930's on a milk float pulled by a shire horse called Nance. The milk churns would be on board, this was then delivered by bicycle by my Great Aunts Nelly, Betty and Gwen. They would measure the milk out to the customers so that they got what they needed for the day. Southam Dairies is still in business today delivering milk to customers all over Southam and surrounding areas. This is done by my Nanny Sylvia and Grandad Jo and Francis, although today they use vans instead of a horse!

Southam Primary



Southam Primary



Southam Primary





'Southam Dairy'

# 'Southam Zoo'

'My nan used to work at the children's home in Southam... When she took the children out for walks she would take them to see the lions. The lions would go up town to the banks and the shops with there owner on a lead. They would hear the lions roaring at night... Also there was a big bear who went into the Bull Inn and scared all the people.'

St Mary's Primary



St Mary's Primary Primary



Southam Primary



St Mary's Primary Primary





The Lion & the Boy



Lion

'Southam Zoo'

# 'The Godiva Procession'

*Old Brazen Face* led the Southam procession – a man wearing a bull's head mask, capering backwards.

*Lady Godiva* on horseback, in flesh coloured body stocking, covered from head to foot in a white veil.

*The Black lady* on horseback covered from head to foot in a black veil.

*Peeping Tom* in a large box painted to look like a house, strapped to a horse's back, with Peeping Tom looking out of the window.

*Children* sitting in pairs on richly caparisoned horses, led by men walking.

*Two Children*, a boy and a girl carrying a lamb, sitting in an open carriage bowered over with flowers.

*Tradespeople* of the town on foot, with emblems of their trade (innkeeper with signs, baker with special loaf etc).

*The Town band*, made up of different instruments according to the century, would have been part of the procession.

The Procession started at the Bowling Green Inn and went along the main streets and back. There would have been lots of side-shows, and stalls selling food and drink. It was the drink that caused the end of the procession in the mid 1950's. Men had too much to drink, and quarrels and fights started, so the Procession was discontinued in Southam.

Rene Cardall



Southam Primary



Old Brazen Face



Peeping Tom

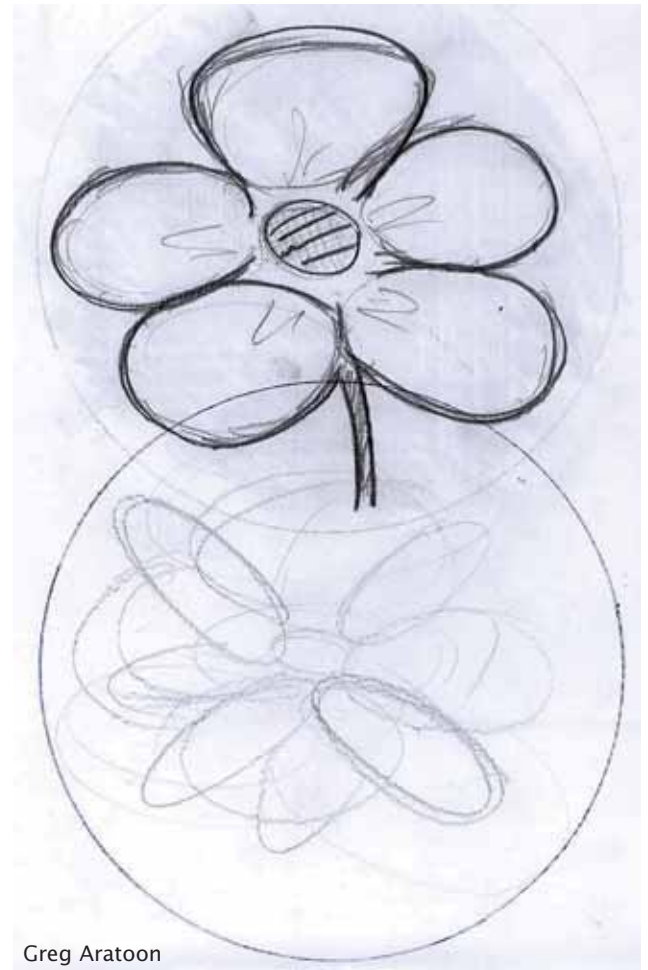
'The Godiva Procession'

# ‘Daisy’

We chose a flower to represent our family life in Southam. It seems like years since we first walked down to the Holy Well, through the Stowe Valley. What struck us was how far we felt away from the hustle and bustle of the town; suddenly we were following the meander of the river, taking in the sights of nature. We were walking on lush grass and sharing a landscape with lazy sheep. There were wildflowers and birds; it really was an idyllic day. Only the Kingfisher who shot past us was on very urgent business.

Nearly five years on, Southam has a greater meaning to us as this is where we have chosen to start our family. We chose to name our first baby daughter after a flower. Her name ‘Daisy’ means eye of the day. The carved flower you see represents our appreciation of the natural environment around us and our own little Daisy who will always have her roots in this town.

Julia and Greg Aratoon



Greg Aratoon



'Daisy'



# 'The Escapees'



St Mary's Primary

I was working at the Convent (looking after children in care) when suddenly one day a lorry driver came running into the school playground, shouting and waving his arms about. He said, 'Get the children inside as several chimps have escaped from Clews Zoo.' When the chimps arrived one of them took a bottle of milk which was in a crate outside the nursery classroom, he then climbed onto the nursery roof, took the top off the bottle, and had a good drink. Another one was walking about the playground carrying the school crossing lollipop stick. The police arrived, and I'm sorry to say the chimps were shot (by a police marksman).

Local Resident



'The Escapees'

# 'The Mop Fair'

'Southam Mop Fair in olden day, staff who were looking for work used to wear mop caps with different coloured ribbons on so people knew if they were looking for work, and what they did, i.e. red ribbon – cook, green ribbon – chamber maid and so on. So when the gentry and posh people were looking for staff they knew who they were and what they did and gave them jobs.'

Southam Primary



Southam Primary



Southam Primary



Southam Primary





'The Mop Fair'

# ‘The Old Watermill’

‘Up to about 40 years ago there was an old watermill on the River Itchin, near Stoneythorpe Hall. There had been a mill there since Norman times, every now and then being rebuilt. The last mill dated from about the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was a tall building built of red bricks, with gothic windows and doors. The mill wheel was about three metres in diameter and just over two metres wide. It had two pairs of millstones. The mill pond and the weir are still there, but the old building was burned down by vandals and had to be demolished. On the door of one building was burned in the figure of a man wearing a full-skirted coat and wearing a top hat. In 1891 a young man who worked at the mill was killed when he got caught up in the machinery.’

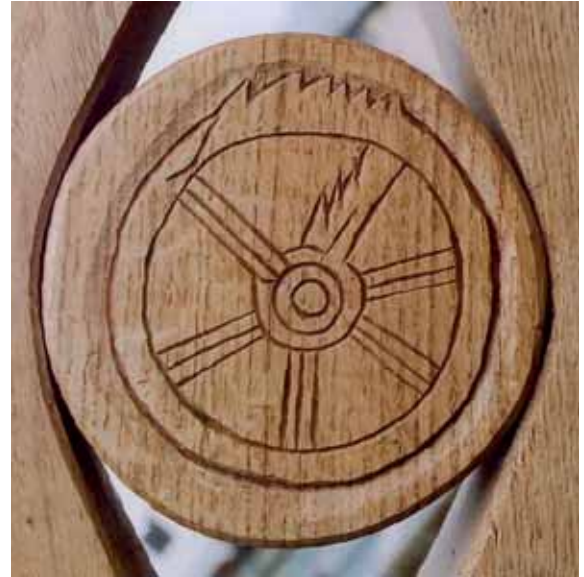
Rene Cardall

*We used to go across the fields by the Old Mill, just after the Holy Well, where the Miller lost his leg in the wheel and there was a picture etched out in one of the doors and we always ran past there as we thought it was haunted by him.*

Kathleen O’Keefe



The Burnt Figure



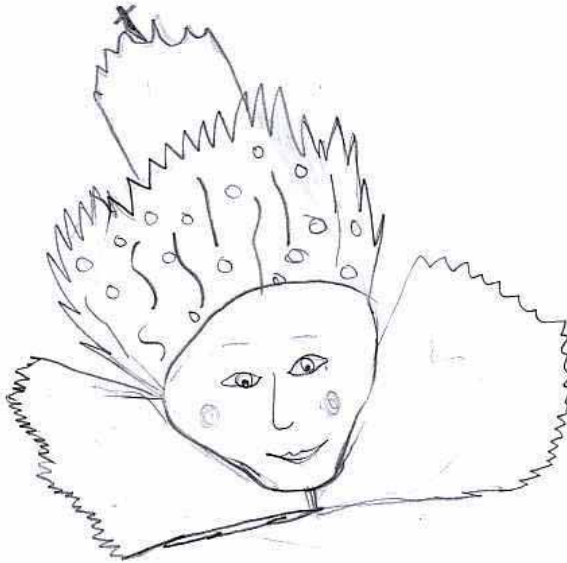
The Burning Wheel

'The Old Watermill'

# ‘Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup> Comes to Southam’

‘In the late 1500’s Stoneythorpe Hall was visited by Queen Elizabeth I and her splendid retinue. She stayed for a week. A stained glass window in Stoneythorpe Hall commemorates the visit.’

Rene Cardall



Southam Primary



'Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup> Comes to Southam'

# ‘A Southam Farthing’

‘In the 17th Century local traders would use their own tokens to encourage trade.. The Southam tokens appear to all represent halfpennies and farthings and bear various devices such as coats of arms of trades, names of trades people, and Southam veriously spelt as Southam, Sovtham, and on one Sovthnam - and sometimes dates. The Southam Farthing depicted here was dug up in Southam in the last century and bears a coat of arms, possibly “The Grocers Arms” on one side and on the reverse the Italics C.T.I. with Stars and “In Sovtham” round them. It bears no date, but is probably 17th Century. It has also been clipped at sometime as it is not completely round.’

Len Gale



Len Gale





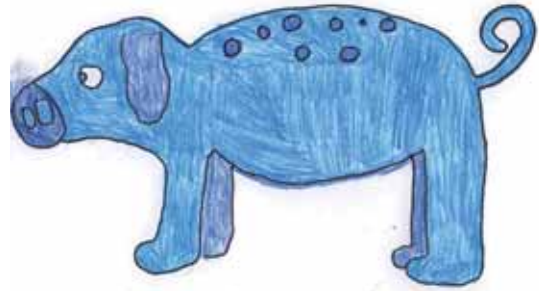


'A Southam Farthing'

# More Stories

Several stories were not developed into carvings. Some carvings were made and the source material lost. Other carvings were made without the stories being recorded. Here are some of them:

*There used to be a pub called the Blue Pig on the site where Budgens is now.*



St Mary's Primary



St Mary's Primary

## The Headless Horseman

'Our house is quite draughty and one Saturday evening while having our evening meal my dad came up with the story of the headless horseman because the dining room door creaked. He told me that as our house used to be a part of the Craven Arms Estate that the Shed used to be a forge and the headless horseman was a highwayman who had had his head chopped off and still came back to Craven Lane to get new shoes for his horse.'

St Mary's Primary



## The Millennium in Southam

The eve of the new Millennium brought Southam people together to pray, celebrate and see in the new century. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1999, Pete, Toby, Alice and I shared the evening with many of our friends in Southam. It was raining as we walked to the party at our friend Linda's house and we hoped it would stop before midnight. As this was going to be a very late night for Alice, we let her sit in her pram so she could sleep if she needed to. This was the last time I remember her sitting in her pram.

There were lots of people we knew at the party. Everyone was very excited as we waited for midnight. At 11.30pm we set out to walk to the Recreation Ground, where everyone was gathering to see in the new Millennium. It has stopped raining but was very cold and the sky was clear. As we walked, lots of other people were walking in the same direction as us. I don't remember seeing any cars that evening.

Everyone was very jolly. As we passed our church, Our Lady and St. Wulstan's, the people from the parish who had joined together for a party were also heading for the Rec.

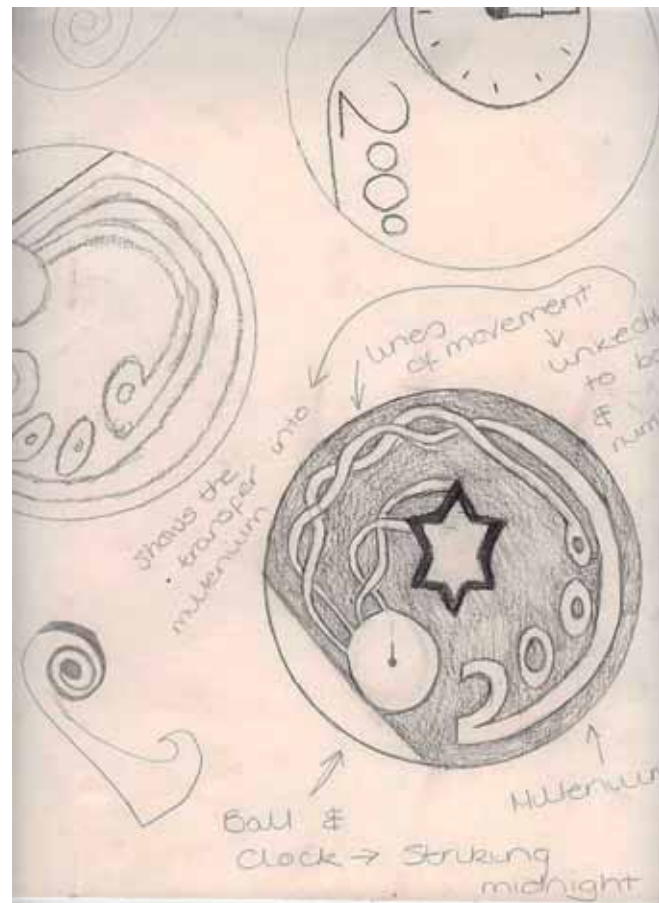
I had never seen so many people on the Rec before! It was very dark but on the flat area was a stage which was lit up with a large cross. The church leaders of Southam led the town's people in pray. We prayed for a peaceful millennium. I think we may have sung some hymns. Just before midnight everyone became quiet as we listening for the chimes which would tell us it was midnight. When midnight came, a tremendous roar filled the air as people cheered, hugged and kissed each other. And then the night sky was filled with fireworks!

They were some of the best fireworks I have ever seen. We drank the champagne we had taken with us and I think even Toby and Alice may have had a sip.

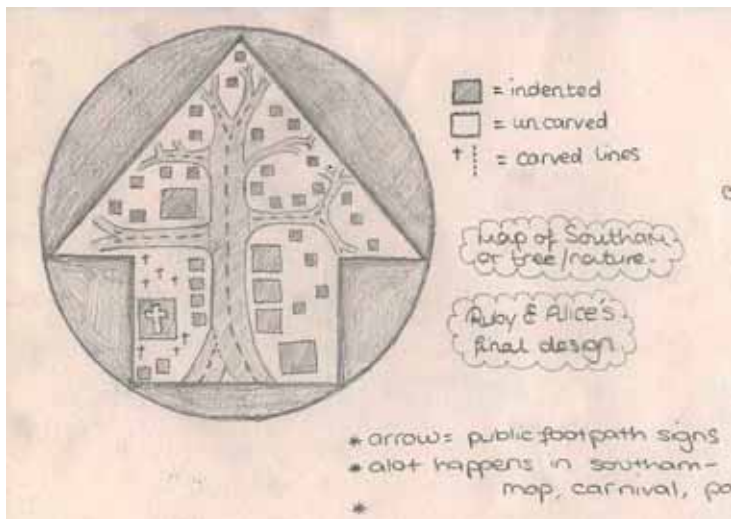
Eventually, we headed back to Linda's house for more partying.

We got to bed very (ate and slept for a long time. My memories of the Millennium are very strong. There was strong sense of community that night. It felt good to part of Southam.

Clare Hyde



Designs to celebrate the Millennium Party in Southam  
Southam College



Southam College

## Brownies

'Brownies, Guides and Scouts were held in a house in Park Lane. Skip Warren ran the scouts and Mrs Warren ran the Brownies and Guides.'

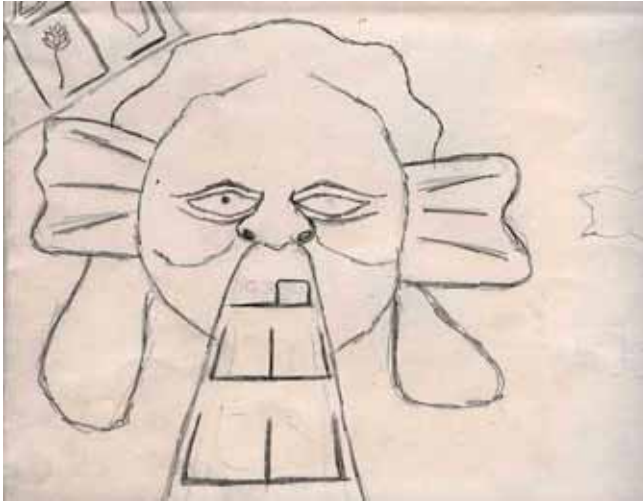
Kathleen O'Keefe



Map of Southam



Brownies



Southam College



'Holy Well Gargoyle'

## The Holy Well

'Holy Well, one of several mysterious places. Mineral spring comes up from deep layers of White Lias clay. Water was bubbling up and flowing away before Southam existed. Centuries ago some people (who?) built a stone pool for the water to flow into. It came out of the mouths of three stone heads...who or what are they supposed to be? Nobody knows.'

Rene Cardall



Southam Holy Well - Southam Primary



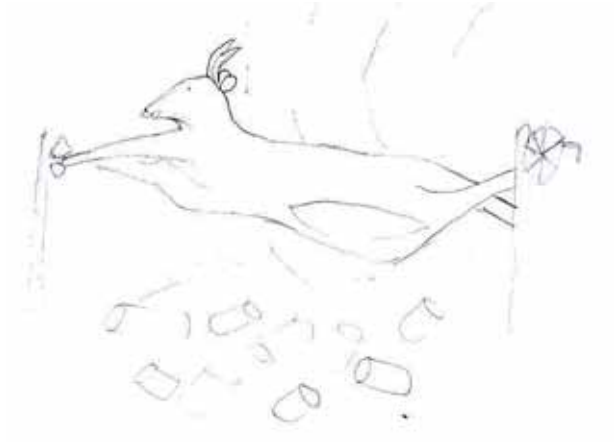


Southam Holy Well

## The Hog Roast

'In the autumn we have a Hog Roast at the local Mop. Up 'till the time of the BSE we used to roast the Ox over a log. The beast took twelve hours to cook and about two hours of selling the filled rolls. Now we roast a pig which takes less time but sell just as well, being the highlight of the day. Usually school children come to view the scene.'

Terry Grey



Southam Primary



The Hog Roast





Southam Primary



Green Man



Man & Tree



Sports & Games

## Stoneythorpe Hall

'Monks believed to have lived here in early mediaeval times, up to mid 1300's. Augustinians, wore black habits with cowls. Present building on site of possible monastery; some old stone walls a metre in thickness. Remains of a cloister uncovered in 1920's. Outbuilding containing an enormous fireplace, big enough to roast a whole ox, one of the largest hearths in the country.'

Rene Cardall



Southam Primary



Augustinian Monastery

## Southam Fire Service

'Great Grandad Pratt used to be a firefighter for Southam. In those days the fire engine was pulled by shire horses. Grandad Pratt lived on a farm and this is where the shire horses lived. When there was a fire a bell would be rung and Grandad Pratt would fetch the shire horses to pull the engine.'

Southam Primary



The Cider Orchard



Southam Fire Service



Southam Fire Service



The ATC



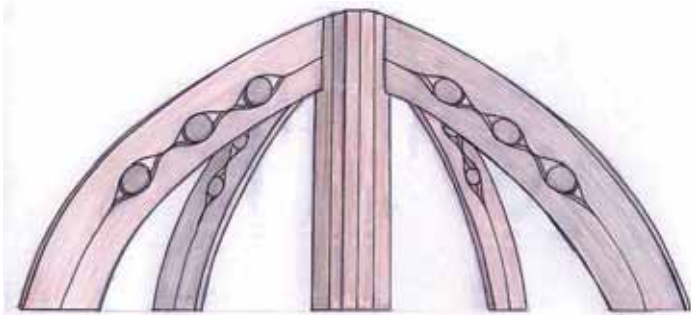
Southam Police



The Holy Well



# The Sculpture



Drawing of 'Southam Stories'



Left  
How the bosses are held  
within the buttresses

Below left  
Bosses stacked with  
loose through tenons.

Below centre  
Buttresses lined  
up after oiling.

Below right  
Installation of  
'Southam Stories'







'Southam Stories' in situ outside the library in the town centre

# Southam Holy Well Trail

A variety of functional artworks were created for the trail, including seating, gates, posts, waymarkers and interpretation panels. The pieces combine contemporary design with a strong flavour of the Saxon/Norman period, linking back to the first recording of the Holy Well in 998AD. All the timber was air dried oak, with the exception of the trail waymarkers, which was green oak.



Mill Pits Seat



Holy Well Seat



Holy Well Gatepost Carving



Southam Holy Well



# The Participants

Due to restrictions over publishing names of participants without prior consent it is, unfortunately, not possible to give names of children involved in the project. However, the name of the school, class, academic year and teacher is given.

St James Primary School  
Year 4 (2004/05).  
Teacher – Richard Bolam  
Workshops took place during  
June and July 2005

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St Mary's Primary School  
Class 5 (2005/06).  
Teacher – Paula Miller  
Workshops took place during  
November 2005

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Southam Primary School  
Class 5M (2005/06).  
Teacher – Karen Davies  
Workshops took place during  
November 2005

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Southam College  
6th Form group (2005/06)  
Teacher – Andy Valentine  
Workshops took place during  
November 2005

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Adults (January 2007)  
Workshops took place at Southam College  
January 2007

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# Acknowledgements

Thanks to:

- The children and staff of the four schools - St James C of E Primary, St Mary's Catholic Primary, Southam (Community) Primary and Southam College for their enthusiasm and support for the project.
- The Vision4Southam team, especially Janet Cox for help with the workshops, and research at the County Records Office in Warwick, and Jenny Frith.
- Stephen Newman of Stratford District Council for picking up the project midway and bringing it to a successful conclusion.
- The late Rene Cardall for coming to St James Primary to talk to the children.
- Gill White for helping with the workshops.
- Alan and Steve for all their hard work installing 'Southam Stories' and all the works for the Heritage Trail. Also Jeremy Marshall for helping install 'Southam Stories'
- Warwickshire County Council for the funding of the sculpture.
- Stratford District Council for the funding of this book.
- Heritage Lottery Fund for funding the Town Trail and Holy Well Walk

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*Cover Image: 'Southam Stories' sculpture*

Will Glanfield was born in 1957, Dartford, Kent. On leaving school he took an art foundation course at Medway College of Design (1974), and then a Fine Arts Honours degree at Canterbury College of Art (1976-79). In 1988 he achieved a City and Guilds in Carpentry & Joinery and began his career as a public artist. He has undertaken numerous commissions for public and private clients, including regional and local authorities, environmental organizations, schools and hospitals.



His ideas centre on natural forms and processes, and our sense of place and belonging within nature and culture. Will works primarily with wood, mostly using native or European Oak. His approach is to make artworks which are immediate, visceral and engaging. The pieces often hold layers of meaning, alluded to in their titles. He has organized and run many school and community workshops and residencies. Most of the work he produces is set outdoors, and more recently has included planting as a living element in the work. Through concern for the environment rainforest timber is never used, unless reclaimed or recycled. Tree planting is incorporated where possible to replace timber used.

Will is also a keen musician, playing Saxophone and Clarinet. Since 1985 he has played with the experimental band “Happy Accidents”. He is married with two children.

Visit [www.willglanfield.co.uk](http://www.willglanfield.co.uk) for more of his work.







Southam Holy Well - Southam Primary