

# *Lancashire's Learning Revolution*



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GOING UP TOWN

Are you going up town? ...

... Aye, I might do, I'll see's what the weather's like, later...

Who are the people who populate Preston? Where do they work, how do they play? What do they think about the city they live in, its identity, its people, buildings, and landscape?

Going Up Town, a participatory documentary project by Ruth Heritage for arts organisation They Eat Culture, was commissioned by Lancashire Libraries to bring together personal documentary storytelling, informal learning opportunities, archive and contemporary audio and visual recordings, to create a documentary narrative around city centre Preston – what locals call 'Up Town'. Working with the North West Sound and Film Archives and film-maker Christian Krupa, we focussed on work and play in the city centre, looking at the community's expectations of what a Lancashire city centre is, was, and will be in the future.

Part of the participatory process involved archive screenings and oral history storytelling sessions in spots across the city centre. We invited the general public to come into the indoor market, the outdoor market, the Black Horse pub, the library, the bus station, and Boots the Chemist to join us for the project. We also worked directly with the people who go to the Foxton Centre, a crisis shelter in Avenham. We showed them archive material from the North West Film Archive, including street scenes from Preston in the 1920's, the arrival of the M6 in the 1950's, and about Lancashire in the 1970's. We asked for their stories about the places and spaces they'd seen – and were amazed by some of the responses. What you can see here in print are some anonymous snippets of stories that came out of the workshops, tales of Preston past and present, and everyday goings-on 'up town'.

We chose to work in the bus station because it's where many people pass through, where they first enter the city and how they leave. We spoke to the market stall holders and the people who shop there to get an understanding of change. The library is a space where anyone can access learning, the pub is a traditional social venue, where inhibitions are broken down, and the high street is where people come to spend their money, to become consumers.

The Foxton Centre is a space run for people in crisis – so they can get healthy food at a reasonable cost in the community cafe, get advice on things like drug and alcohol issues, or housing problems, use the facilities such as showers or bag stores for homeless people, use the computers so they don't fall through what's become known as the digital divide. It's crucial that people who are excluded from everyday life of the town centres are given the opportunity to represent themselves on the same platform as people who inhabit the town centre.

Through collecting tales in these spaces across the city, we began to unpick how the fabric of the city is woven together through the diverse people who work and play here. Everybody has their own story to tell about the place they live, they rewrite it in everyday conversation. And because it is real to them doesn't mean it's real to someone else. Through placing these stories next to each other, maybe we can construct a wider story of Preston that not only tells us about the place, but also challenges preconceptions about the people who 'make up' the new city.

Participatory media projects can take many forms, from training people to engage in citizen journalism online, to handing over the video camera or audio recorder and training

participants to edit. One thing that they all have in common, though, is that they are intended to equip people from every walk of life with the ability to represent themselves, and to level the media playing field with which they can engage.

The work we have currently undertaken with Going up Town forms what we hope is the start of a widespread participatory media project which will enable communities and individuals from Preston to tell their stories of life in Preston, and to ensure it finds a home in traditional and online media spaces.

The work and play series of audio and visual documentaries will be circulated through Lancashire Libraries in 2010.

*Keep in touch with the project and see clips of everyday stories from Preston at [www.goinguptown.co.uk](http://www.goinguptown.co.uk)*

Introduction by Ruth Heritage, Director, They Eat Culture.



## MORNING AT THE MARKET

'The market was the superstore of Preston. There were no superstores then, you came to Preston market which was absolutely packed. There wasn't an indoor food department, it was all outdoors. On the whole of the market there wasn't anything you couldn't get if you came to Preston market for shopping. As a small boy, (it was) buzzing. You know, if you let go of your mum's hand for a second, you were lost, the stalls were so tightly packed together.'

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'I worked in Somic Mill making paper cheeses as they called them. Yeah, used to make carpets with them and cover it up with plastic. It were all right, you did a job. It was what we were paid to do, I mean it weren't good pay but it was all right. Dusty, dirty but it were all right. Oh the market, me and Eileen, when it came to Monday, Wednesday, Friday we used to shop with the kids and shop for whatever, because it was all bought fresh everyday.'

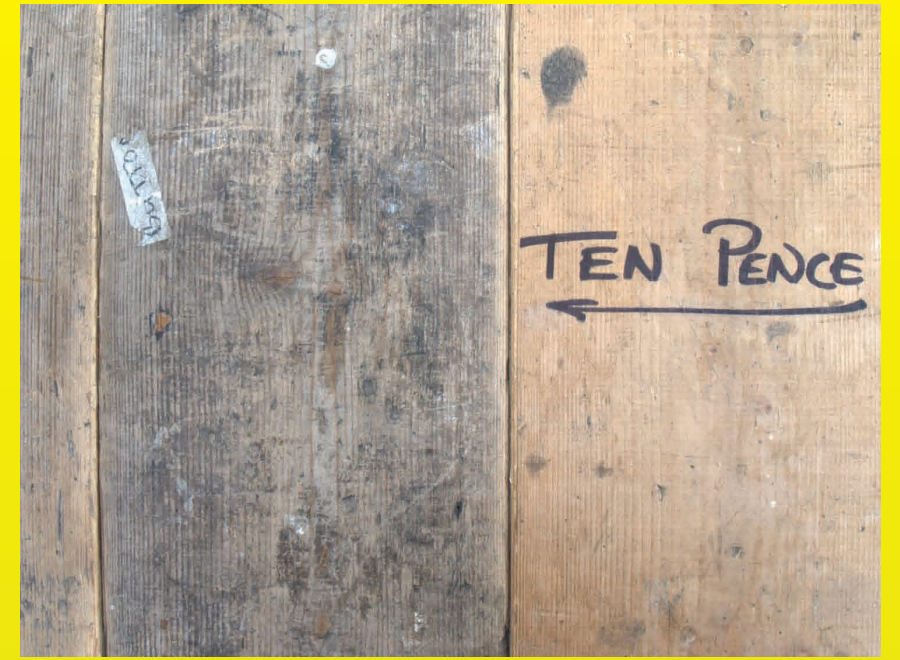
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'I've been working here for 30 years. When I first come, you didn't know if you were going to get a stall, it were that busy. Now you can walk on and get a stall at any time.'

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'We work in Preston market, we've been working here for the past 7 years. We've had a shop here for three years now, and we do what anybody else tries to do, earn a little bit of money and try to provide good service for the customers when we can, and we usually do a good job. But people come and sell their mobile phones to us, and we just buy the mobile phones in good faith. When we buy them they are working no problems. Maybe a couple of weeks later or a couple of months later the person who has either sold it to us or somebody else has reported the phone stolen and it gets blocked and we end up with the local constabulary coming and accusing us of thieving mobile phones and all sorts of other stuff.'

We went to that tsunami disaster a few years ago in Indonesia, £45000 pounds worth of aid. We left some boxes at all the grocery shops at here in Preston, Blackburn, Bolton, Manchester. We told all the mosques in all the same areas, told them that we were going on this tsunami disaster thing. And you know, everybody gave money, bits and bats here and there. And we brought 90 tonnes of aid altogether, blankets, all sorts of stuff. We took it by road through the jungle, took three and a half days, through the jungle. Oh yeah we nearly got mugged by the local mafia as well. We had to ring over here to London to the Indonesian Embassy. They

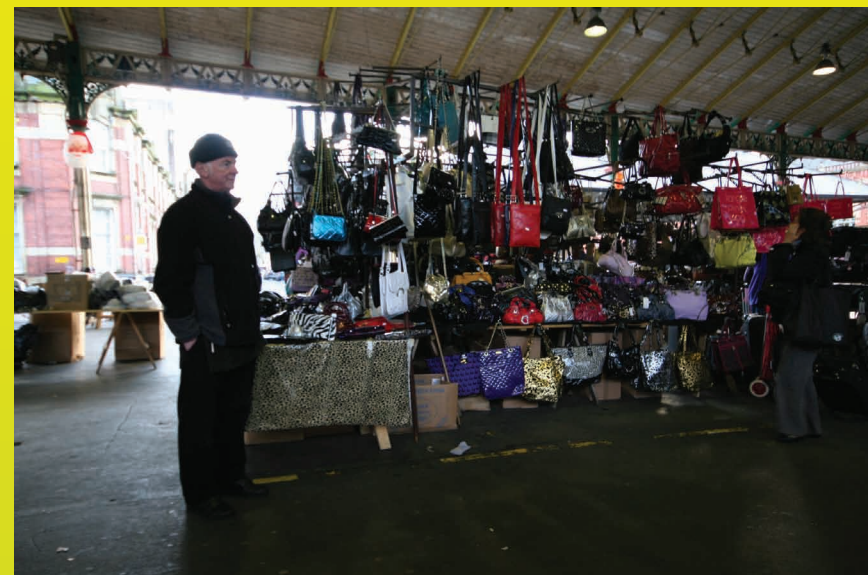




rang police in Indonesia which sent the Indonesian special forces. They came within ten minutes of us ringing from Indonesia to London back to Indonesia. Within ten minutes the whole place was surrounded by army police special forces, proper Hawaii 50 style machine guns and everything. Fantastic, oh it was fantastic.'

Photographs by : Christian Krupa, Ruth Heritage.

'Unfortunately it's deteriorating, and a lot of it is caused by this future development that never came off. Consequently, lots of traders have left the market looking for other sources of income, you see.'



### LUNCHTIME IN BOOTS

'I've worked here for a year and a half now. So many different people, so many different customers. I was always interested in beauty and skincare, and I wanted to do something that wasn't just a job, something I had passion for. I like to deal with customers on a one to one basis, obviously working in a nine to five office environment you don't get that, and I wanted an interaction with people. It's a thrill when customers come in wanting genuine advice on looking after their skin. If we can help with that it's a buzz for us. A simple skincare routine is cleanse, tone, and moisturise on a daily basis. It should be done from the age of 18, and then you can introduce other special-ists products like serums and eye creams, but your basic routine is cleanse, tone, and moisturise. You feel really renewed and refreshed. You'll feel brilliant!'

'The beauty industry is a different world, you see different people. I love it. It's really nice. People who are concerned about their beauty, and some people concerned about samples. We get loads of different customers. We get customers who know what they want, know what they like and use. And we get customers who are fussy, they don't believe us, they think we are just salespersons who try to sell them things. They take the things from the counter without even asking, because they think we are going to try and sell them more. Some people live on samples, they come over here, they ask for samples, they go to another counter and ask for samples, go to another store, and ask for samples.'

'My main role in security is to protect the staff, that's the top priority, and then to protect the

stock. That's my main issues. Health and safety is another concern of mine, on my issue list, and those are my main priorities in monitoring the store. I'll do a store check of the store. I've got a top ten list of items that are being stolen most frequently from the store, I'll enquire about those and see if anything's missing. It could be staff or customers for example. It could involve tagging the items so it's harder to steal them. We might even double tag them, hide one of the tags so it looks like they're ripping the tag off, one way to catch them. I'll patrol the store most of the day, monitor the CCTV. It's not just about the way you look - just because someone looks terrible doesn't mean it's them. Could be kids, people in their teens, theft can range from one item to a whole range, an operation. I've experienced whole families doing it, using the kids as an accessory to tool them to steal. You've got your hands tied when you confront them, especially if the wife and kids are being used as an accessory while he leaves, because you need all your evidence.

The main way to catch a shoplifter is a technique called scone. S is for seeing the person, C is for concealing the item, always observing the person, N is for no method of payment, E is for Exit. When you have all those categories on your side, you will have a 100% conviction to go and detain them. If you haven't got all 5, if they drop it, it can be you in trouble at the end of the day and can result in a several thousand pounds fine for the company.

I can only say I've ever felt sorry for someone once when I've detained them, no I don't feel sorry for shoplifters. Shoplifting's shoplifting, no matter if it's a chocolate bar or you know £400 gift set, I don't care.

If I'm out and about I'm not worried about people recognis-



ing me, if anything they should be worried, it's more embarrassing for them because I'm not the one who's having to shoplift. Why should I live my life in fear, they're the ones who are in the wrong, not me.

'Memories of Preston town centre when you used to be able to drive through it. And there was always on the corner a police box and the policeman used to stand there and direct the traffic. And I even remember his name, it was a guy called Sergeant Jackson. He was like more a member of the community and everybody knew his name, which is all together different now. You don't have any contact with the police unless you've done something wrong or if you need help.'

Photographs by : Christian Krupa.





**AFTERNOON AT THE  
FOXTON CENTRE**

'The Foxton centre, I use it to meet people, come and get some food, use the internet. It's a good place to come and chill, get a brew and warm up, and meet new faces and that. The city centre's old. You go to Manchester and that and it's all new and shiny – we've got a really old town. It's not long become a city, you know what I mean, and it still looks \*\*\*\*. There's \*\*\*\* all to do for anyone. Get an ice rink in the city centre or summat. Like at Blackburn where they've got the rink, something like that or a swimming baths, something to for people to do, make it more exciting.'

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'I cut my mouth when I had a seizure, happened in Darwen yesterday. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday I come here. It's alright here. I lived in Manchester, Wythenshaw, for 8 months because I was being a bad boy, Lived with my auntie. But I'm back in Preston now, living down Broadgate in a hostel. It's my birthday, 27 on Saturday. It's just rubbish here. When I left school I was working for five years, but the seizures were getting worse and worse. I was doing poultry work, slaughtering, that was near Longridge. They had to lay me off so that was that. I can't work really. Only started going out drinking round town. The city centre's not like London or summat like that, it's just rubbish.'

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'I left home from Liverpool, I'd had enough, it was too much for me, I got on a train, I was heading to Manchester, I didn't get as far as Manchester, I saw a sign for Preston, and got off with my rucksack, 16 years ago, still here! Saying that about an hour after I'd got off the train, I got myself into a hotel, DHS, I

needed that, and then I stayed in that same hotel for 7 years, became manager of it. The owner died and sold up, I had to move on again. Then I got run over, smashed my legs up and my arms, and I ended up in nursing homes for about 3 or 4 years – that was tough, that was sore. I healed up, and here I am now, making ends meet. I'm not doing anything, just living everyday as it comes. I've got money, 'cos I'm careful with it, but it's not easy.

I get up, have some breakfast, go to the shop, get some drink, come here, if this isn't on just sit and watch telly. There's only so much you can do when you're 40, standing round on corners, don't do that no more. We talk, laugh, hit each other. It happens. With drink, something starts.

Preston's quite boring. There's nowt to do. Kids can go on the park – what is there for us? We can go to Superbowl, but I can't do it, I'd throw myself down the alley. It's alright them building parks for kids, but what do we do? It's alright the Superbowl out of town, but we can't all afford it. We don't all want to go out. There should be something like this (Foxton) but bigger, something that's on every night. If it were on every day, people would come, they'd get trouble off the street. Doesn't just have to be one place, it could be bigger than that. I'd come.

5 o'clock I go home and have my tea, and then start drinking again. Sounds horrible, but there's nothing better to do.'

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'I've only lived round here 9 months, moved from (across town). I had a fall out with my parents so I had to move out of the family home and find my own place. Found one now and I like it. Foxton's 4 days a week innit – Tuesday to Thursday and Saturday. (Other times)

just get smashed. Have a couple of drinks, smoke a bit of weed.

I'm not allowed in town, I'm barred from town. Shoplifting. There's my bail conditions. It says on there I'm barred from every shopping centre and every shop. That's where I got caught shoplifting, Boots. I'm not allowed from the bottom of Church Street, you know, prison end, to Broadgate then from Avenham Lane here to the roundabout where the Adelphi is. I'm not really that bothered because the police can't police it, anyway.

I might just turn up at court in the morning, say at 9.30 or 10 o'clock or whatever, and if they say you were due yesterday I'll say I lost my letter. I'll still get arrested, but they'll take me straight into court and I'll get seen straight away then. If they have to come out and arrest me, obviously it'll go against me won't it, but if I went and handed myself in – say if I waited 2 weeks, and they'd not caught up with me, and I get lifted, that would go against me 'cos they've had to come out and catch me.'

Contact the centre at [www.thefoxtoncentre.co.uk](http://www.thefoxtoncentre.co.uk)

Photographs by : Ruth Heritage.



**HOMETIME AT THE BUS  
STATION**

'I'm going to Spain through Manchester. We're on our way home from seeing family. We've been on holiday in Preston and it's rained every day that we've been here. It's not been very nice at all. We won't come back, no intention of coming back. We're happy to be going home. It's 80 degrees.'

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'The first time I came to the bus station I was 16, I'm nearly 40 now so that's quite a while ago now. I was going to a concert at the University with my friends from Skipton. We were all big fans of this little group, The Wonderstuff, and as you do you follow them about and like you do when you're sixteen you don't think about getting home again. We came down and we had no way of getting home, so we ended up camping here, so did a few hundred other people ended up here for the night. We were in quite a bad state by then, we weren't being naughty, we were just being loud. They knew we didn't have nowhere else to go, so they let us stay 'til the buses came.'

'I've worked here for about 8 years now, and in 8 years about 4 or 5 people have threatened to throw themselves off the bus station, suicides. It's not only upsetting, it's disruptive, people don't expect it. Police come and cordon an area off. I've only ever seen 2 jump. Both survived, luckily. So it's not a good idea to try and commit suicide and not actually win the battle in the first place. It's quite upsetting. The other comical one was a car coming off the top of here, and landing at the side. No one was hurt luckily, but again the guy wanted to commit suicide and failed. It's not really any good. If you're going to do something like that, either do it, or don't do it.'

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'It's an old building itself, and we'll see what'll become of the new one. It'll be all modern and 22nd century, and I think all drivers are looking forward to it. As I say, this bus station's done it's time, it's done a good job. People like a bit of a change, something new.'

Photograph by : Christian Krupa.







*LANCASHIRE  
READING, WRITING,  
ARTS, LIBRARY,  
MUSEUM, AND  
ARCHIVE RESOURCES*

### THEY EAT CULTURE

They Eat Culture is a North West based arts & culture development organisation. We aim to ensure access to quality arts experiences from the hyperlocal to the regional. We specialise in arts programming, discussion events and other inclusive and participatory learning events. We develop project work in specific cultural areas and we match nationally recognised creative practitioners with communities to create project work of value and artistic merit. We work with associate artists and volunteers, and create opportunities for individuals, groups and business to access quality arts and development opportunities.

*Discover more at*  
[www.theyeatculture.org](http://www.theyeatculture.org)

### LANCASHIRE WRITING HUB

Lancashire Writing Hub is a writing development project. We exist to provide writers across the county opportunities to network, develop, publish and perform. Whether you are a poet or a copy writer, a novelist or a screen writer, a journo or a blogger, we've got something for you. Funded by Lancashire County Council and Preston City Council and developed by staff and volunteers at They Eat Culture, we're the brains behind Word Soup live literature events, the Northwest digital performer archive, LWH workshops and seminars, and local information portals that bring you the latest events and opportunities in your community and across the region and the country.

*Discover more at*  
[www.lancashirewritinghub.org](http://www.lancashirewritinghub.org)

### LANCASTER LITFEST

With a new permanent home and poetry bookshop based in the Storey Institute in Lancaster, Litfest organise a dynamic and eclectic range of literary events and writing projects throughout the year. The main festival itself takes place in October each year and offers a great opportunity to meet like-minded individuals and to be introduced to an eclectic range of quality writing.

*Discover more at*  
[www.litfest.org](http://www.litfest.org)

### LANCASHIRE MUSEUM SERVICES

Boasting a range of unique settings and venues, Lancashire Museum Services, has twelve sites each of

which offer insight into the county's rich heritage and culture. From rocks and fossils, dolls and toys, textile industry treasures, to stunning furniture, medals and swords and marvelous paintings, there is something amongst the 150,000 objects the service looks after to meet all interests.

*Discover more at*  
[www.lancashire.gov.uk/acs/sites/museums](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/acs/sites/museums)

### LANCASHIRE RECORD OFFICE

With documents dating back to 1150, the record office looks after historic documents relating to the county from about 1115 to the present day. Documents are made available to visitors and other enquirers through lists, catalogues and indexes. Anyone can use the Record Office. They are open to the public and records can be consulted free of charge. Staff can answer queries, some documents are able to be copied and a range of talks are given based around the work of the office.

*Discover more at*  
[http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/record\\_office/](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/record_office/)

### NORTH WEST SOUND ARCHIVE

The North West Sound Archive was founded in 1979. Its purpose is to record, collect and preserve sound recordings relevant to life in the North West of England. The North West Sound Archive contains over 110,000 sound recorded items and 2.5 tonnes of 78-rpm gramophone records ranging from George Formby to the Halle Orchestra. There are internationally important collections including the survey of English dialect and solidarity speeches from the Dockyards of Poland.

*Discover more at*  
[http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/record\\_office/about/archive.asp](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/record_office/about/archive.asp)

### NORTH WEST FILM ARCHIVE

The professionally recognised public home for the moving image heritage of the North West of England. The Archive cares for over 32,500 items from the pioneer days of film in the mid 1890s to video production of the present day. The work of both the professional and the amateur is collected. The Archive collects material on any subject illustrating life in the region - this could be

newsreel from the 1920s, home movies of local events in the 1960s or a corporate video from the 1990s.

*Discover more at*  
<http://www.nwfa.mmu.ac.uk/>

### LANCASHIRE ADULT LEARNING

The service's mission is to enable all adults in Lancashire to achieve success in learning so as to improve their skills for employment, the quality of their personal and family lives, and to enhance the social and economic well-being of their communities. To support local employers and Lancashire's economy through provision of high-quality, responsive training. From job clubs to short courses on Photoshop, Lancashire Adult Learning offers something to meet the needs and interests of everyone.

*Discover more at*  
[www.lancashire.gov.uk/acs/sites/adult-learning/](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/acs/sites/adult-learning/)

### LANCASHIRE COUNTY LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE

With 74 sites across the county, the library and information service offers access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction resources, to internet, flexible spaces for use by the community and local groups and, through its inter-library loan scheme, access to almost every book ever printed. Many libraries offer events, lectures and taster learning sessions.

*Discover more at*  
[www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries)



Booklet produced by : They Eat Culture