

'Weston Now soundscape' created 2023-24

00:00:00:00 - 00:00:50:23

Participant 1

I was in First World Brownies and First World Guides. Went off to lots and lots of camps and had great fun there. My Ranger leader and guide leader, she lived near Wood Spring Priory? So, she had a big farm there and we used to do all our camping out there and fire lighting and then go out to Hope Bay around there and spend hours on our own.

And it's those sort of days that you could go off on your own with a group of young people and just go and do whatever you wanted to do. And it was all safe. We used to go up onto the Worlebury Woods and just spend hours, days and hours all over the holidays just just playing and having fun up there.

00:00:51:00 - 00:01:48:16

Participant 2

Seven years and eight months ago, I came to Weston for rehab. Badly needed. I had finally acted on my friends really telling me to go to the doctors. And when I got there, he said, take yourself straight to Southmead Hospital and I detoxed there. It's amazing that I did that, that I actually just went rather than go home and have another drink. It was an easy decision. Again, just a gift from from the universe really. So now Weston is my home. It represents freedom, safety and all possibilities.

00:01:48:18 - 00:02:37:21

Participant 3

When I was young, about 10-15 years old. This is about 80 years ago. We had to go to carry water about one mile. There is a well we take from there. And you got two vessel, big vessel and small vessel. So small vessel we put in the well and we carry the water and put six vessels in the big vessel.

Then all that vessel we carry water with us up to house, going about 4 or 5 times a day. And now we got every house, tap, and water is very easy.

00:02:37:23 - 00:02:57:09

Participant 4

Moved into Weston in 2003. Why? Because of the place, the people, the beach and the sea. 20 years of highs and lows and even the bad. But if I were to leave, it would make me sad.

00:02:57:11 - 00:04:12:24

Participant 5

Hello. My name is Linda. I was born in the 50s. I experienced life in one room until I was 14, with my family and several other families in the same building. So I know what being cold is like. I know what living with little food is like. I know what it's like to have everything you own in half a drawer. So don't feel sad for me because my life is good.

Despite coming from quite humble beginnings, mixed race, you know, mixed family, I did well. I got a good job, I worked hard, I was had my eyes on the prize. I got to a point where I'd had so much stress. I was diabetic, and I started to lose my sight.

So I landed up one day in Weston-super-Mare. Whilst here, I've blossomed. Weston is a vibrant place. It has so much going for it, but most of all, it has its people they're kind, they're generous. They won't let you fall over in the street without picking you up. I know to my own experience on many occasions. I love being in Weston. Look after it. It's a great place.

00:04:13:01 - 00:04:58:19

Participant 6

So when I was a little girl, I would walk the streets of my local council estate, which I lived on the Bourneville, and I would look at the walls and see them with their grey drabs of magnolia colours, all dirty, with remnants of the bin collection that had happened. And I would imagine myself, painting those walls, painting them using chalk or, of anything I could find actually from the local environment.

Many, many years later, I became a street artist. And I always, every time I paint a wall, now, as an adult, as a 39 year old, I look back at that moment of a small child thinking about how she could improve the environment and bring colour to it.

00:04:58:21 - 00:05:43:00

Participant 7

It's been a while since we spoke. So how are you? Are you still stealing time from innocent people? Energy. Money too. It's seemed you were my best friend. But in truth you were my fake friend, when I was stressed, all you did was chase me, trying to get me to join in. Just like an annoying bee. I trusted you, roulette. And you just made me down. Now I see you suck my blood and drain me and make me into your clown. Many nights you made me sleepless I was always depressed. Because of you Roulette I'm taking anti-depressants daily. Now you are something I do detest.

00:05:43:00 - 00:05:49:11

Participant 8

Enough is enough. And now is the time for me to say goodbye, roulette.

00:05:49:13 - 00:06:10:00

Participant 9

(singing)

00:06:10:00 - 00:07:26:05

Participant 10

Autumn had dressed herself for the coming season, donning her most vibrant hues of gold, scarlet and brown leaves were slowly floating down like multi-hued confetti, then lay as a comforting quilt on the earth. I could just let my soul soak up those scarlet maple hands and golden leaves that created such a buoyant mood.

There was a time for the dancing of spirits. As Hazel and I walked through the grounds of Ruthin Castle, the red sandstone blocks in the great walls blending with the earthly hues of autumn trees, giving the illusion that the castle was organically grown here of its own accord. As we walked and talked, little swirling eddies of dry leaves whirled about us, we passed clusters of blue, black, sloes, still covered with the morning bloom, and the bright scarlet rose hips competed for luscious redness with the hawthorn berries, whose fruit shone vibrantly in the early morning sunlight.

00:07:26:07 - 00:08:18:20

Participant 11

So my first memories of Weston-super-Mare, as a small child traveling here on the bus with my mom and my nan and grandad and my Auntie Gwen and her kids, and we went to the outdoor swimming pool on the front and it was amazing. It was amazing. We had the dive board and we just had a wonderful time running around like lunatics. We just loved it. And then after that we were all dry and we were hungry, of course. And the first place we wanted to go to was fish and chips. And it was the House of Fish, because they did crinkle cut chips, which were brilliant. They tasted better. And I always think of those places when I come to Weston and I think of my grandparents because I do miss them very much.

00:08:18:22 - 00:09:23:01

Participant 12

One of my first memories of Weston is at night time. I'd moved to Bristol in 1964, in September and was living in a hostel where we were doing walking local walks, and we did a nighttime walk which started in College Green at about 10:00 at night. We then walked the Weston seafront, around the bollard on the pier and then back to College Green in Bristol, 42 miles round trip.

And of course that was a night time. So as I say, my first view of Weston was at night. And another memorable occasion was in the summer, in June/July of 1976, when walking across the seafront promenade, our feet were sticking to the, molten tar that was all over the road.

00:09:23:01 - 00:09:23:03

Participant 13

I didn't choose Weston. Weston chose me, and Weston saved my life.

00:09:23:03 - 00:10:08:17

Participant 14

Significant buildings in Weston's history, which starts off with Walker and Lane. The first tapestry store was opened here in 1904. In 1936, the Walker family took over ownership at the store and have continued to be a family run business to this day. The shop is a fashionable store to buy lines and items of clothing, and very popular with locals and tourists.

In 1942, the shop and the High Street and many areas of Weston were completely destroyed by the Luftwaffe, otherwise known as the Medica Blitz of Weston. The Walker and Lane was lovingly rebuilt and was completed in 1959. The exterior of the shop was highly technical...

00:10:08:17 - 00:10:43:23

Participant 9

Walking in the graveyard, the leaves rustle under my bare feet, the wind ruffles my hair. Dark shadows behind. They hide in the trees as I turned around. (...) tombstones lead. Look back to us on their eternal bed. These buried bodies of the dead, the mournful spirits hang around watching the darkness and wondering why I'm here. Come to us, they say. Never thought an innocent walk in the graveyard would lead me to my end.

00:10:44:00 - 00:12:49:07

Participant 15

Right. I'm going to go back to the 1960s, when I was at primary school. Every year on the beach, lawns, on the seafront, we'd have a dairy show or dairy festival, as they used to call it in those days. It was basically put on by the milk marketing board. It was quite literally milk based, but obviously there was also farm things as well. So you'd have cows and livestock and other things and basically just about everything you could think of that would use milk.

I was at primary school at Uphill, which, if you're local, you'll know is only a short walk away from the seafront. And we used to walk up along the beach for an afternoon at the Dairy Festival. Once we were there, we were let loose. Now, in those days, you could still get free samples of everything, as you looked around.

So obviously for small children, or small-ish children I should say, that was perfect for loading our pockets with whatever goodies we could find. That might include milk based chocolate, sweets of all sorts of descriptions, badges, postcards, all sorts of things that are like a treasure trove for a small child. There was always plenty of ice cream there as well.

Either free samples or you could buy a full sized ice cream if you had the money. Obviously as children we never really had the money, so we'd walk around all afternoon just picking up as many samples as we could. But I remember the ice cream because I do like ice cream. And I seem to remember one year that we did have money.

We all had great big cornets and walked around the site with. It was always well attended and it was very, very popular in its day. But I'm sure it's one of the things nearly every child in Weston a few decades ago would have attended at some point or other.

00:12:49:09 - 00:15:10:23

Participant 16

So I wanted to tell you about what's happening. It's the other side of Steep Holm. Now, Steep Holm is our best island because it's ours. There's these things that live on the other side of Steep Holm. And I'll tell you what, they are so hundreds of years ago, thousands of years ago, probably, Noah was building his Ark, and he was putting all these creatures on board.

The ones that God told him to put on there. And he was a little bit particular, and he was leaving some of the creatures behind. And the reason he was leaving them behind was because they misbehaved rather badly in some cases. Anyway, he was in the pub, which is the Cabot, which is down on the seafront, and Gurt Lush was there, now Gurt Lush is a famous lady from Weston and Gurt Lush she's absolutely fabulous. And she said, well, I'm fed up with Noah, he's an old bore, I'm going to get that old ferry that the old boy doesn't want down by the pier. And I'm going to take all the creatures that he doesn't like and I'm going to save them.

And I'll tell you who the creatures were. So there was the unicorn, and the unicorn was rejected by Noah because she was always looking at her reflection, and she was just prancing about being a bit silly. The mermaid was distracting Noah's three sons and his wife and his three daughters-in-law were not happy, so she got the push. The griffin got the push because he was just all the time being Griffin-ish, as one does. Then there was a Nancy and he was a Jamaican mischief maker. He was a Spider Man sort of. And his trouble was he played tricks. So he got the push from Noah. So anyway, Gurt Lush collected them all up, got them on board the old ferry, which she renamed the Proper Job, by the way, because being a Somerset Lady, they all set sail.

They disappeared around the back of Steep Holm. They're still there now they're all living happily ever after. The end.

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