



**Building
Self-Belief**



North Shields Fish Quay – Children’s Research & Community Heritage Project



**Building
Self-Belief**



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The aims of the North Shields Fish Quay project

The following anthology was created by the children of Christ Church C of E Primary School throughout the summer term of 2022. It was delivered by Building Self-Belief CIO and kindly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The children developed their creative writing, musical, poetry, art, photographic, communication and historical research skills in bringing this anthology together.

Since 1225, the Fish Quay has remained the focal point of life for the people of North Shields, and it continues to play a pivotal role in the industrial and cultural development of the region. Its name came from the 'shielings' or fishermen's lodges, which built up along the riverbank at this time.

The children researched the way that the North Shields Fish Quay, and the local fishing industry, has shaped the lives of local people over hundreds of years. They met with local residents, former fishing boat crew and local historians to investigate, for themselves, how their community has been shaped by the past. The project also included a visit to the Fish Quay itself to see the morning catch and to meet members of the local fishing community. The children visited the 'Old Low Lights Heritage Centre' and used primary and secondary sources, to research local residents of note and to enable them to form their own judgements.

The children used art history, to understand the way that the local area had been documented by local artist, and former Christ Church C of E Primary student, Victor Noble Rainbird, and used their understanding of his work to make their own water colour paintings.

The students collated their findings in to this anthology of work in recognition of the importance that the fishing industry has had upon their community, both past and present.

We hope you enjoy their work.





The History of North Shields Fish Quay

We researched the origins of the North Shields Fish Quay using photographic and documentary evidence.

The origins of the Fish Quay date back to 1225, when Prior Germanus from the Tynemouth Monastery, built a village of basic huts where the Fish Quay still stands. The first fisherman then used the Fish Quay to supply the Priory.



Over time, North Shields began to compete with Newcastle as a port on the River Tyne, and by the 1700s new lights were built to guide ships to port and houses, workshops, chapels and public houses piled up the bank sides.

The Fish Quay itself was a place where local boats dealt in many types of fish, crabs and lobsters.

There were also businesses like Herring smoking, fishing net repair, engine works, and a shipyard, sawmill and even a gas works. Many men and women were employed at the Fish Quay.





Between 1914 and 1938, the banksides of the Tyne were cleared of the poor housing with many residents moved to newly built estates.



Gradually, the Fish Quay began to decline as fish stocks reduced and companies moved elsewhere.

Today, the fishing industry is a fraction of what it was, but it remains an important fishing community with a strong fishing fleet. The local community are very proud of their heritage and have also done many things to preserve the memory of those who lost their lives in the fishing industry over many years.





Historical Biographies

We carefully researched the lives of those who worked at the North Shields Fish Quay, as well as those who grew up and experienced its impact upon the life of North Shields over time, as both children and adults.

We interviewed long-time residents like Diane and Jim about their memories of North Shields, Terry, from the North Shields Fishermen's Project, who was a fisherman for many years and Nik, the managing Director of the Fish Quay today.

They told us many things about the way that the local area has changed and how the Fish Quay has always been an important part in the lives of the people in North Shields.

We found out that North Shields has had many ups and downs over the years!

This is what we discovered...





Nik's Story

Nik is 35 and was born in 1987, he is the Managing Director of the North Shields Fish Quay. In his job, he is in control of everything and watches over all the operations going on within the Fish Quay. As a manager, Nik inspects the boats, looking after the safety of the workers and lots of paperwork. Although he is the manager now, he worked as a fisherman as a career for twelve years and also worked in the Royal Navy.



He has lived in North Shields his whole life and he has helped to raise £3.2 million, which is going to help to redevelop the Fish Quay for the future. This is something that he is very proud of and that he is also very excited about. He is very optimistic about the future of the Fish Quay and thinks that the area is doing well, but he also says that the fishing industry is a difficult one to work in. There are 30 fishing boats that work out of the Fish Quay today and they mostly fish near Scotland, Iceland and Norway where the water is colder.



The hardest things he has faced in his job were Covid-19 and Brexit. Covid resulted in him losing a lot of business and many restaurants stopped ordering fish because they were closed. However, the fishing boats were still working as they were classed as 'Key' workers catching and delivering food. He also thinks Brexit has not been as good for fishing as he had hoped it would be.

Nik's favorite fish is Monkfish, sometimes called an Anglerfish and his least favourite are Whelks. Whilst he worked as a fisherman, he said the strangest thing he caught was a Basking Shark and Oar fish.



When we spent time with him at the North Shields Fish Quay, he let us hold a lobsters and other types of fish that were caught that morning. He tells us that lots of fish are caught every day, but that any pregnant fish get thrown back. During the summer, he enjoys bringing his kids to fish at the quayside which they enjoy. He thinks one of the good parts about being the manager is that you can get fresh fish every day.

Nik is a very prominent part of the North Shields community as he provides fish for the shops around town. Sometimes his job can be very stressful, and the Fishermen can sometimes get annoyed after difficult days at sea, but he really enjoys working there and has developed a thick skin to deal with it! The Fishermen often hoard things, so the Fish Quay often looks untidy. He can even remember a co-worker driving a forklift into the quay, which didn't hurt anyone but was very expensive to fix.



Fishing is at its worst when there are North winds and when the weather is bad, sadly lives can be lost in these conditions. Nik says, "the best thing about this job is the freedom to make decisions." He thinks that fishing is not just a job but 'a way of life' and although it is a difficult job he believes it can also be a very rewarding one.



Diane's Story



Diane Leggett is 66 and has lived in North Shields all of her life. Her mother was from Scotland and her father was from Sheffield. They moved to North Shields from Scotland a number of years before she was born.

Diane went to school at Monkhouse Primary School and then went on to high school at Tynemouth Grammar Technical School,

which is now called John Spence. After high school, she went to Queen Alexandra Sixth Form, which was her local college. Once she finished college, she worked at a library from the age of 17, and by the time Diane had retired at the age of 50, she had worked at three different libraries. This was a job that she loved! Her first job was in a shipbuilding library, so she got to find out all about the history of the Fish Quay.

School was very different for Diane from our school, she did not get to go on many trips and most of the work they had to do was straight out of a book. She thinks that school today is a lot better for the children. Diane did like reading though and her favourite book was called Moonfleet.

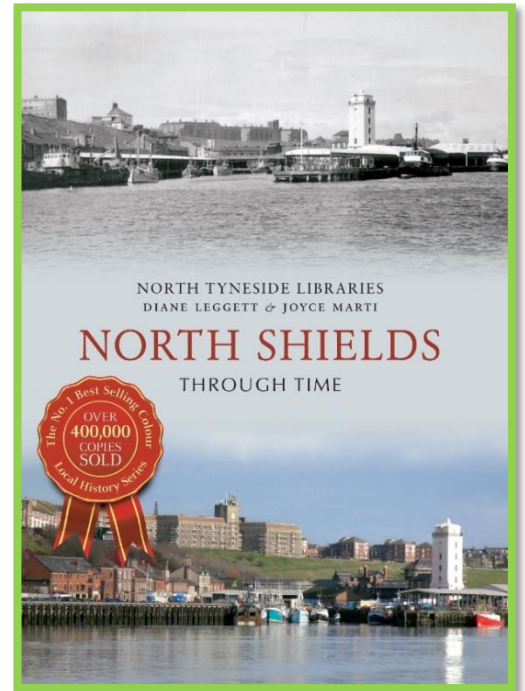
Diane loved growing up locally. She remembers that when she was young, her Nana would take her to a 'posh' restaurant as a special treat, travelling by Metro. Her favourite store was a very old record shop in North Shields. She used to like looking at the record covers and listening to the music there. Her favourite singer was Jim Reeves and she also liked Pink Floyd.

A not so nice moment she remembers from being a child was when, her dad got so frustrated with her and her mother playing the piano badly that he broke it up. This is why Diane is not very good at playing the piano today! Diane loves being close to the sea and enjoys going on walks, as there are plenty of green places around the area to explore within walking distance of her home. A few of the many places she goes are Northumberland Park, the



parks around Royal Quays' Marina and the cemetery as they are all full of greenery and are nice to walk. She dislikes the aggressive seagulls because they wake her up early in the morning and eat leftovers from her bins.

Diane remembers the Fish Quay Festivals in the past when people would dress up, there would be parades and also a Victorian market, and she is sad that it no longer exists. Diane also wrote a book with Joyce Marti called "North Shields Through Time", which is full of information and pictures about how the local area has changed over time. She loves North Shields and thinks it is a very nice place to live, but she is sad that many shops have closed in recent years.





Jim's Story

Jim Coltman has lived in North Shields all his life and has done a lot for the local community over many years. He is 66 years old and was born in 1956.

Jim is one of our school governors and does a lot to help young people from the area.

Jim loves North Shields and is happy to have lived here all of his life. When he was younger he did have the chance to go and live and work in New Zealand, but he was pleased that he stayed near his family in the end.



As a child Jim's dad sent him to school at 'Kings' which was a private school at the time. His life changed when his dad's business began to struggle but it made him determined to do his best in life in the future. Jim always wanted to have his own business as he didn't want to work for someone else.

Jim started a business in mechanics and cars which he has worked hard at and also been successful in. Jim also began Northumbria Youth Action that helps young people to get apprenticeships in motor mechanics, hair and beauty and hospitality. Jim is happy that he is able to put something back into the community that he grew up in and give people a chance of a good start in life.

He remembers going to the outdoor pool in North Shields as a child. This was lots of fun but could be very cold. He also remembers that you never needed to go to Newcastle for the shops. Instead, he could buy anything in Saville Street in North Shields. Things have changed a lot in the town in recent years and compared to the past there is barely any people there now. He misses the Fish Quay Festivals which were a lot of fun and brought everyone together.

Overall, Jim has always liked the local houses and the community in North Shields and is proud that he comes from the area.



Terry's Story



Terry McDermott grew up in North Shields and worked for over 30 years as a fisherman and also in the merchant navy. His granddad died at sea, and he always felt that it was a job that was in his blood and that he wanted to do. He often worked on trawlers with three men, but on the bigger boats there would be 11-14 men.

Sometimes, he would work for 14 days, and he would only rest for two hours. He remembers that if they didn't catch anything they would be in debt because the crew also had to pay for the petrol for the journey. Although the money could be good his earnings in the good times never covered for the bad times. There were always jobs to do on a boat and after all the hard work, the crew only made money if they caught anything, which Terry said was like a type of modern slavery. Fishing would be much better if they were paid salaries.

Terry never wanted to be a captain of his own boat because the captain is responsible for finding the fish, following all the laws, and making sure the crew got paid. It was also very expensive to own your own boat and to pay for a license to fish as well. As a Fisherman he caught Haddock, which is his favourite fish to eat, along with Cod, Monkfish, Salmon, and all sorts of other fish. His all-time favorite fish to catch is a Halibut because it's very pricy and expensive and





made good money for the crew. Terry had never been bitten by a fish but that you could tell who was inexperienced because they would get nipped by the crabs and lobsters.

Terry told us that the biggest challenge in fishing is the weather. Today most boats have shelter decks, but he sometimes worked on open decks which was very scary in bad weather because there was nowhere to shelter.

The crew had to work as a team to get through and he still enjoys meeting his crewmates today.

He does not miss how frightening it could get in bad weather and even remembers a captain telling him to 'forget weather forecasts as we work all weather'. If a member of crew says they don't get frightened at sea Terry said they must be lying! The equipment on a fishing boat could also be dangerous if you got caught up in it, as you could lose an arm or leg, or even die. Terry has been rescued twice himself and also lost some of his friends at sea.



Fishing today has changed for the better, the old Fish Quay was cobbled and full of men filleting fish and doing very physical work. Today there are modern bars and things have modernized.

Terry told us how hard the 'Herring Girls' of North Shields would work and that they would follow the crews right up to the Shetland Islands. He thinks that the women involved in the fishing industry should be recognized for their hard work gutting and packing the fish throughout history. He is now campaigning for a statue to be built in their honour and placed near the Fish Quay.



To protect themselves from the bad weather, the crew would wear oil skins, with thick jumpers underneath and wellies on their feet to keep warm. The wellies would keep your feet dry on deck but if you fell overboard, you could get pulled under by the water building up in them. After many years and one very bad trip in terrible weather, he decided that it would be his last trip and that he would retire. He stuck to this when he got back to shore, and his wife was pleased because she did not have to worry about him so much.

Terry went on to help raise thousands of pounds to build a memorial structure for North Shields Fishermen who did not return from their fishing trips. This is now a very well-known North Shields monument and is placed at 'Fiddler's Green, which is another name for Fishermen's heaven.

To Terry, fishing became part of him and his lifestyle, and it was more than just a job.





Sea Shanties & Geordie Folk Songs

From the region's coal mines to keel boats plying the mighty River Tyne and ships on the hunt for precious whale oil, shanties eased and animated working life in England's Northeast for centuries.

Sea shanties were simple songs, sung by sailors from approximately the 16th to 19th century.

The word "shanty" comes from the French "Chanter" meaning "to sing." There were two types of shanties that were sung to work being done on a ship, heaving songs (for jobs that including pushing something continuously) and hauling songs (songs where ropes or cables were pulled to a rhythm).

We studied Geordie folk songs from the 19th century, such as 'When the boat comes in', 'Keep your feet still Geordie Hinney' and Cushie Butterfield'. Music and popular song often formed the backdrop to the hard-working lives of the people of North Shields.

Then we created our own sea shanties, taking inspiration from shanties like 'The Wellerman Shanty' and our historical understanding of their development. Then we recorded ourselves in song!

Doon at the Fish Quay

This ald little man that had a fat fish
Doon at the Fish Quay
He ate the fish with his pals and salmon buddy
Doon at the Fish Quay
With another little ald lad that ate the mackerel
Doon at the fish quay with fishy
Then a little lad got slapped in the heed and he
knaas the fishy
Doon at the Fish Quay – the fabulous Fish Quay

By George & Alfie

Haddock mackerel salmon me old boat
Fish quay ropes and me Geordie aye, aye
North Shields and Newcastle heaving and hauling
In the morning du du du du du du

By Lucas (in drunken sailor style)

Hauling and heaving

Hauling and heaving me Fish
Hauling and heaving me Fish
Haddock, mackerel, salmon
Bring to the lads
Bring to the lads

At the neet we gut and sell em...
BRING TO THE LAD!!!
Bring to the lads
Nee fish left
Nee fish left
Time to gan hyem to the ald Ma
and Pa.
AND MA!!!!

By Khloe & Amelia



Gutting The Salmon

I'm watching me da gut the salmon
I'm watching me da gut the salmon
I'm watching me da gut the salmon
Deein all the work. YUH!
Soon I think to mesel, al have to dee it
Soon I think mesel al have to dee it
Soon I think mesel al have to dee it
Early in the mornin

Soon may the price will come to bring us salmon and tea ad rum
One day when the neet will come I'll have to touch some guts and rum!
One day mesel will be doin all the work! YUH!
The time has come I've already started I want this to be owa ayer want to quit oh my sunny lad
glow. HUH!

By Anna

Gannin to Shields

I was gannin to Shields
To see me Geordie marra
And a giant fishy
Slapped me in the heed
It was the giant haddock of shields
It's the scariest fish
Ever found in the sea

By Kareem & Harrison

A Fishy

There once was a fishy as big as yersel
gannin doon the River Tyne
an all the ships that apposed it were soon as deed as owt
an so a young lad fought this fish,
and it finally was no more...
Farewell fishy as big as yersel

By Felix

Down by the dock there's a Geordie lad heaving and hauling so the fish
don't go bad!

Reet was there waiting at the quay his ma was there fishing out for tea
Me Da was there drinking on the dock when Ma called him, he wouldn't
move a dot.

Heaving and hauling fishing, drinking
Heaving and hauling fishing, drinking
Heaving and hauling fishing, drinking
Heaving hauling fishing drinking...OH

By Sadie Mooney & Alexis Wilkinson



Wake up ya deed farther, wake up ya deed father, wake up ya deedfarther, in the middle of the sea.

Toss the net, heaving and hauling,
toss the net, heaving and hauling,
toss the neat, heaving and hauling,
we caught a salmon!

Keep the boat steady and sturdy, keep the boat steady and sturdy, keep the boat steady and sturdy, throughout the neet.

Toss the net, heaving and hauling,
toss the net, heaving and hauling,
toss the neat, heaving and hauling,
we caught a salmon!

Now we can cook and eat, now we can cook and eat, now we can cook and eat,
oh no we ate the guts! Vile!!!

Toss the net, heaving and hauling,
toss the net, heaving and hauling,
toss the neat, heaving and hauling,
we caught a salmon!

By Skye & Mia (With the drunken sailor tune)

My Bonny Lass Calling

Standing alone on a boat,
Neet had already fallen
Nowt to see and nowt to hear
In me heed
My bonny lass calling

Gan turn reet to the Tyne
Seeing the lowlights pub
And the music thud
In me heed
My bonny lass calling

By Lacey and Lucy

Smoke and Guts

smoke the fish! When dun gutted! Work the neet, to the mornin'
In the newn lads all tha gish!
All-the-way-to-the-mornin

By Oli

A Canny Lad

I was once a canny lad me mam sent us to the shop to get some tabs.
She gave me a note I was on me way, HEY!!!

I'm a little lad ya can't stop me now, I'm gone,
You can't change me now, I'm gone
I was once a canny lad me mam sent us to the shop for some tabs.
I was once a canny lad me mam sent us to the shop to get some tabs.

I was one a canny lad but now I'm gone!!!!!!

By Luke Robson



His Name was Trigger

Me boot fell in the ocean when I was fishing on the dock

wait 2 seconds

but a lad jumped in and tried to find it *wait 2 seconds*

his name was trigger (*echo* "trigger!")

and he drove the fastest waggon in shields! *Wait 2 seconds*

but trigger didn't come oot *wait 3 seconds*

"poor trigger" (*echo* "trigger!")

and he lived a peaceful life in shields *wait 2 seconds*

trigger was only 14 he didn't want to die *wait 2 seconds*

he wanted to live is life with the fish gravy pie *wait 1 second*

so when he came out he was coughing up cod *wait 4 seconds*

poor trigger (*soft echo* "trigger..") and he sold the best gravy pie in shields

(chorus) his name was trigger (*echo* "trigger!") and he drove the fastest fish wagon in shields!!! And he was only 14!

By Emma

What do we do with a Tasty Haddock

What do we do with a tasty haddock

What do we do with a tasty haddock

What do we do with a tasty haddock

Early in the morning

We gut them and stuff them in wor faces

We gut them and stuff them in wor faces

We gut them and stuff them in wor faces

Early in the morning

By Logan C

What will we do with the gutted fish

What will we do with the gutted fish

What will we do with the gutted fish

What will we do with the gutted fish

Early in the morning

We cut them up and ate them all

We cut them up and ate them all

We cut them up and ate them all

And now there's no more fish

By Leia Silverton

Wash wor fish wash wor fish reet wash wor fish the neet fish deed
always deed.
HEE HEE!

By Logan H

I divent knaa

I divent know what it is but its runnin up the river

its just past the fish quay mebees it's a wild fish, no one really knows oh

By Amelia B



Devon's Night Oot

He's an ald lad getting older
He's got dirt on his shoulder
And he's not getting any bolder

He likes to gan doon by the coast and eat
his chips and have a smoke
He like to have a pint
As its turning night
And he wants to have a good ald fight

He's an ald lad getting older
He's got dirt on his shoulder
And he's not getting any bolder

He's an ald lad getting older
He's got dirt on his shoulder
And he's not getting any bolder

He likes to gan doon by the coast and eat
his chips and have a smoke
He's gan doon to the bizzies
For somich wrong
And he wants to have a good ald fight
He's an ald lad getting older
He's got dirt on his shoulder

And he's not getting any bolder
He's an ald lad getting older
He's got dirt on his shoulder
And he's not getting any bolder

He knew he shouldn't of dunnit all along
He likes to gan doon by the coast and eat
his chips and have a smoke.
And he wants to have a good ald fight

He's an ald lad getting
older
He's got dirt on his shoulder
And he's not getting any bolder

He's an ald lad getting older
He's got dirt on his shoulder
And he's not getting any bolder

By Cosmo Theo and Joshy

Gannin Alang to St James' Park

Ooooo gannin alang to St James's Park
Scoring all these pens
Gonna win the prem
When all these Mackems lose again

Bruno has a magic hat
Gonna watch him win us the match

Ooooo gannin alang to St James's Park
Scoring all these pens
Gonna win the prem
When all these Mackems lose again

Allan with his tekkers
Gonna make the other team collapse

Ooooo gannin alang to St James's Park
Scoring all these pens
Gonna win the prem
When all these Mackems lose again

Wilson with his mighty strikes
Shooting like straight knives through the
opposition.

Ooooo gannin alang to St James' Park
Scoring all these pens
Gonna win the prem
When all these Mackems lose again!!!!

By Callum and Luca

Sailing the Water, the Bottomless Blue

Sailing the water, the bottomless blue to
uncover all glitter and gold
Stories are told in the bottomless blue on a
mighty ship made for two
The captain gives orders for us to obey to
make the sail right back home
Off we go, homeward bound, to see the
bonnie lassies and the little lads.
Sailing the water, the bottomless blue to take
home the glitter and gold

By Rosie



The Giant Salmon got my Lad

The giant salmon got my lad
The giant salmon got my lad
The giant salmon got my lad
And now he's lost as sea
It swiped him up upon the ship
It swiped him up upon the ship
It swiped him up upon the ship
And now he's lost as sea
I set my ships up to find him
I set my ships up to find him
I set my ships up to find him
Because he's lost as sea
My crew found the giant salmon
My crew found the giant salmon
My crew found the giant salmon
Because he's lost at sea
The bottle went on for a very long time
The bottle went on for a very long time
The bottle went on for a very long time
Because he's lost at sea
Because he's lost at sea
Because he's lost at sea
I finally got my lad back
I finally got my lad back
I finally got my lad back
And we're eating salmon for tea

By Harley Shaw (With the drunken sailor tune)

Watching me Mam Gut the Fish

Doon to the dock to catch wor salmon aye aye aye!
Met me lad catching his mackerel. Met me lad catching his haddock!
Watching me mam gut the fish,
watching me mam gut the fish
watching me mam gut the fish,
RIGHT AT NOON!
Aye aye aye aye. AYE AYE AYE. OY OY OY!
Eat all the older fish eat all the older fish eating all the older fish
right at noon!
AYE AYE AYE AYE AYE AYE AYE AYE OY OY OY!

By Ava Smith



Follow the TOON FOR the rest of ye Life.

All the lads, gannin doon tonight,
Lads and lasses off to start a fight!

Divvent laugh or cry coz ye will be next in line.
ye will get chucked in the big River Tyne,

Lads take your beer and get ready to cheer,
coz ye will be watching the TOON, and ye will
be up till next afternoon.

Divvent laugh or cry coz ye will be next in line.
ye will get chucked in the big River Tyne,

Ye will watch them again and again, while all
those Mackems will never get to prem
So follow the TOON FOR the rest of ye life and
be a Geordie all day all night.

Divvent laugh or cry coz ye will be next in line.
ye will get chucked in the big River Tyne,

By Oscar GC

Get It Done

I'm taking me ship doon Newcastle Way,
I divvent wanna wait, I divvent wanna play

Hey Ho off we go, on our way to NewcastIe
dee knaa it's quite far, but when we're done,
we'll gan to the bar

I'm taking me ship doon Newcastle Way,
I divvent wanna wait, I divvent wanna play

We'll stay there for the rest of the neet,
Then we'll have a meet and greet

I'm taking me ship doon Newcastle Way,
I divvent wanna wait, I divvent wanna play

There's loads of fish owa there,
Howay lads, we'll beat em there

I'm taking me ship doon Newcastle Way,
I divvent wanna wait, I divvent wanna play

Tyne bridge is right above us,
It's not a very blimmen fuss

I'm taking me ship doon Newcastle Way,
I divvent wanna wait, I divvent wanna play

Howay lads, we'll gan doon toon,
Mebbees we'll stay until the noon

Hey Ho off we go, On our way to NewcastIe

I'm taking me ship doon Newcastle Way,
I divvent wanna wait, I defintitely wanna play

By Jake MC and Ray B

Aye Aye Aye Away we Gan

I went to North Shields down to the clock to catch a haddock
Aye aye aye away we gan
Aye aye aye away we went
Met me mate catching a crab while having a tab
Aye aye aye away we went
Aye aye aye away we went
I went to the bar met me dad having a pint like one of the lads
Aye aye aye oy oy oy away we went again!

By Ava Mooney



Visiting the Fish Quay & Tynemouth

We visited the North Shields Fish Quay to see the morning catch. We found out about the types of fish that are caught today and how this has changed over time.

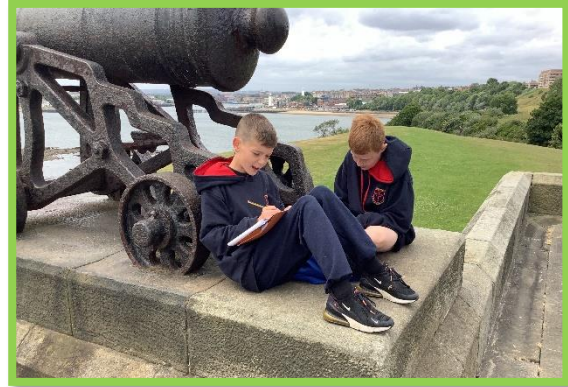


We met local volunteers like Lynne and Terry who, from the North Shields Fishermen's Project have been deeply involved in the local fishing industry over many years. We visited the 'Fiddler's Green' Fishermen's memorial to those who set out from the Fish Quay but never returned and found out about the community effort to fund its creation.



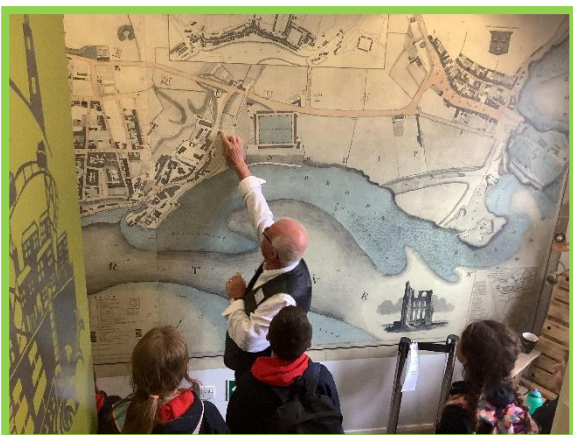
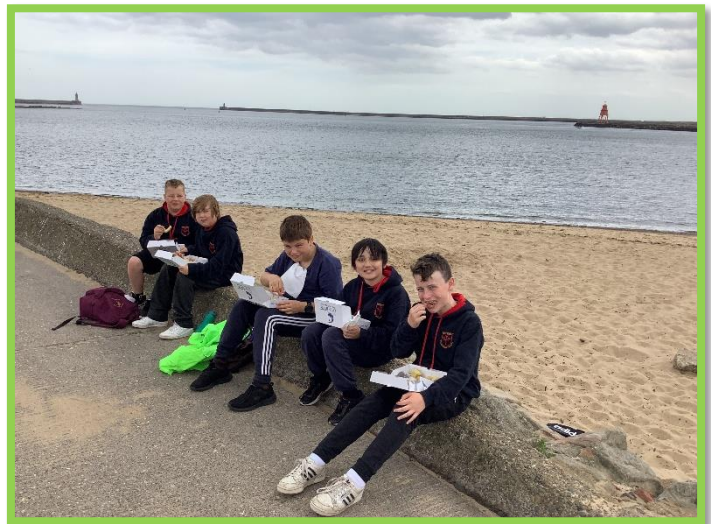


At Clifford's Fort and the Collingwood Memorial we learnt about the importance of the area in the defence of Britain over hundreds of years. We then used the vantage point of the Collingwood memorial to make initial sketches for our art work.



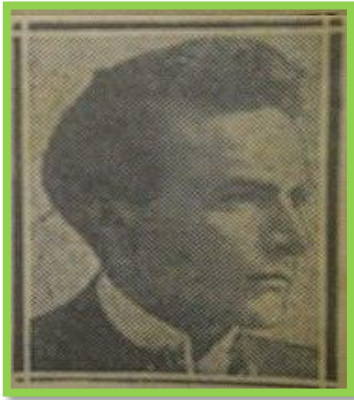
After a fish and chips at the Fish Quay, we visited the historic 'Old Low Lights Heritage Centre' and their 'Folk who shaped Shields' exhibition.

This helped us to continue our research into the changes in their local community, and the key figures within this, over time.





The Life and Work of Victor Noble Rainbird (1887-1936)



We researched the amazing life of Victor Noble Rainbird, a former student of Christ Church C of E Primary School, and North Shields artist.

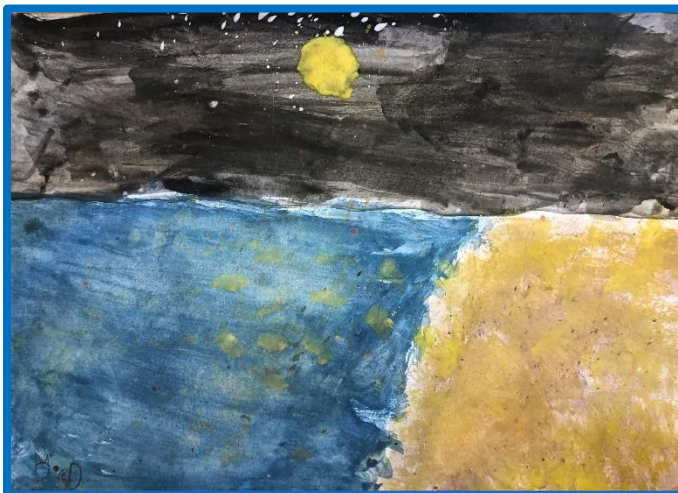
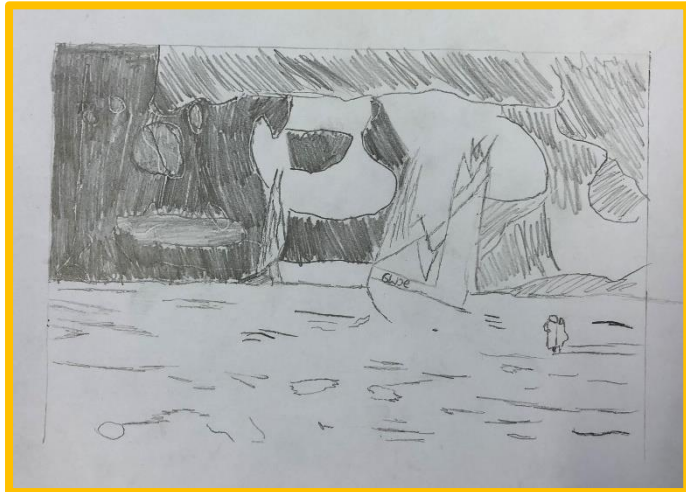
We met members of the 'North Shields Heritology Project' to study Victor's life and the way in which he portrayed North Shields, over time, in his paintings. We saw some of his original works such as 'The Waiting Women' which

captured life for those living in North Shields at the time.

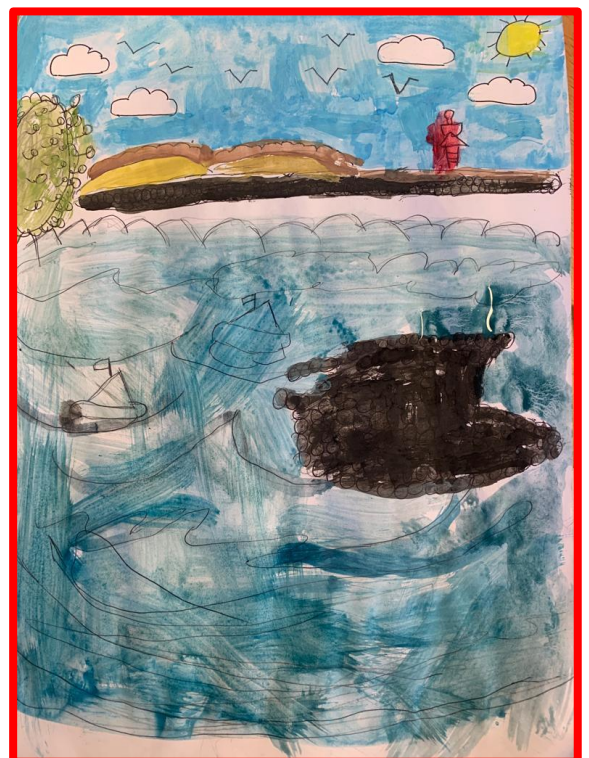
We researched the way that Victor's promise as a Royal Academy student and 'Landseer Scholarship' winner was tragically affected by his role as an artist in The Great War. The terrible experiences and 'shell shock' that he lived through, deeply affected his mental health and also his artistic career upon his return to England.



We the used inspiration from his works and completed our own initial sketches from North Shields as part of the field trip. We then created our own paintings for exhibition, which captured the spirit of the Rainbird's work and the North Shields Fish Quay today. Some of us visited his house, and also his grave to pay our respects and even made a film about it!













Creative Writing

We used our historical research to write their own stories about life in the Fish Quay over many years.

We hope you enjoy them!

The Fishermen

May 4th, 2000

I am Luke I am 22 and my friend Jeffy he's 39, he is my mate and we love nothing more than going fishing together on the boat. I love boats, my bedroom looks like a boat. My love of fish and fishing surrounds me and links to everything I do. I wake up every day, loving fish and fishing.

I think it will be a good day today! I go downstairs and eat fried shrimp for breakfast – my favourite. Then, I go fishing.

Jeffy's story. Another day at sea I am so tired of the sea tired of fishing. Can walk any more. I used to love this job. My legs ache. I do not think I can do it anymore. It is torture to me.

What will I do without Luke?

When I was younger, catching loads of amazing fish was so exciting. I loved the thrills of finding small fish, getting big fish, they were all amazing. But not now, the excitement has gone, the thrill has disappeared.

We were best friends, we did everything together –especially fishing. But that is over now – he's gone, the thrill has gone. I am so sad and never want to fish again but I have to, I fish for life whether I like it or not.

The thing that kept me going was searching for Luke. I wanted to look for him and I did, but me and the other men felt sad. Losing Luke was the worst day of my life. The only thing that made me feel better was the fisherman memorial. He had been so brave, we had to keep his memory alive. The statue was the answer. So many proud and brilliant men got lost at sea, this statue is for him, but it is really for them all. The brave fisherman who gave up their lives, so we can have our fish and not starve.

By Alfie and Kareem



Herring Girls – A Day in the Life...

When I got up in the morning at 6:00 am and I start work at seven. I work with Nora but there is a new girl starting today and we need to show her around and show her what to do. I am annoyed because I don't want to do it. What if we don't like her? We will have to work with her for twelve hours a day. The only thing that makes our job fun is being such good friends.

So, I got to work, and the new girl was five minutes late and that did not make me happy! Nora was five minutes early that made my day. Together, we had our grey, lumpy porridge. It is a good job I have been working here long enough to nearly, but not quite, forget the smell of the fish!

We had good and bad news that day. The bad news, I got told I had gut more fish because the fishermen had caught another load of fish. The fish market is in two hours and there where about 450 fish to gut. But, this is also good news – a good haul means more money for us all. We must work even harder to get everything done. I had to call in all my colleagues to help! Outside we gutted hundreds of fish, we worked. We chatted and we laughed and we worked. In the smoking room we stacked the 450 fish with my colleagues.

The new girl started to puke and Nora and I said "What is the matter with you man, I cannot even smell it?" We had stood and worked all day – she had worked hard but wasn't as used to it as us. With only 50 fish left they started getting the market ready, we carried on and carried on... We did it! Finished just in time.

We finished at 7:00 pm. I got a big surprise my family came to pick me up and they walked home with me. We all had a lovely supper altogether – Nora and the new girl joined us. After the day we'd had, we were friends for life!
We didn't eat fish!

By Amelia and Leah





SHARK FIND!

At 4:50 am, my alarm went off for my early day of fishing. I heard my wife call me for breakfast "Barney! " I was incredibly excited for breakfast until I realized it was the left over crab from yesterday! I decided not to eat it. As I got down to the Quay my friend, Geordie already had the boat out ready to get on.

We sailed about eight meters from shore, and there was millions of fish swarming the boat. This was a perfect time to get the nets in. We left them in for a long enough time to get a decent haul, then as we pulled them up, we could see, they were full to the top with Haddock, Lobster, Crab and something we have never caught before. We had never seen anything like it. "Geordie, you have never caught anything like this look what's in the Haddock net!" you will never believe what we saw...

A GREAT WHITE SHARK!

We could never believe our eyes. How could this happen? Great white's our not meant to be in this country. It was bleeding everywhere we think it may have crashed into the Black Middens. We were stressing we were a good seven miles from shore. With an injured white shark that is not even supposed to be in England what are we supposed to do?

We brought the shark on to the boat and checked him over luckily all he had was a deep cut on his back. We used strong waterproof tape to plaster it up. We chucked him back into the ocean for a second he did not move but he splashed around and then swam off. "What a fabulous day we have had." We were very proud of ourselves.

We got back to the dock "Geordie, this is something to never forget" I said excitedly cannot wait to spread the news. We got back to the gutting centre, I was going to tell my wife Annie but I thought that would take ALL DAY so I decided to wait until I had enough time to do my story justice. Will she believe me?

By Ava and Ava





DAY OF THE STORM

At home at 6am in 2016.

Hi, my name is Bobby I am 16 years old. I am a fisherman. Every day at 6am I get up, I have bread for breakfast and a large drink of water and then I get dressed in my oilskin and jumpers, to go to the Fish Quay. It is nearly time to go on a boat and go and catch fish. I have to collect over 100 fish to go home. That can take one hour, or it can take all day, no one can tell. Then I have to take out their gills and guts for people to eat them – the worst bit!

It is morning again; time to get ready, time to go. It could be the best day; it could be the worst day of my life. I will not know this until I am on the boat. The weather looks fine, but in a split second, and that can change. It should feel like it is going to be a great day, but something isn't right.

After one hour of a very calm journey, all of a sudden, the clouds turn black, and I can hear rumbles of thunder in the distance. Shall I stay and catch my fish? If I do, do I risk being in a monster storm that could tip my boat? The thunder is louder and nearer, the lightning streaks across the sky and lights up my uncertain world. The waves are too heavy, too big and too nasty; no fish can be caught in these conditions. I do not get to go home if I don't catch over 100 fish. But, if I stay, will I survive?

I survived the storm.

I barely made it, it was a terrible and long night, clinging on to a rocking boat, thinking I could die at any second, But I made it, I told myself that there was more for me to do in my life and I could not give up.

But I didn't go back for a while, I was too scared, too worried, I could die. I still visit the fish Quay. In a strange way I still love it, but just not as much as I used to.

I went to go for a check up at the hospital, it would take one month to recover physically, but I am not sure about my mind, I still worry about the power of the sea.

ONE MONTH LATER. I am finally back but I checked the weather it is supposed to be nice weather, do I dare go out on my boat? I did it, I went on my boat, caught my fish. I am better. I just do it all again the next day and the day after and the day after that too. My love of the sea is back.

By George



Sammy and the Catfish

Hello, I am Sammy and this is my story. The year is 1917 and as the 14-year-old Sammy I am ecstatic about my first day on a fishing boat. As I go downstairs, I think about my day, I am so excited! I have a slightly stale slice of toast and freshly caught white haddock. As I go outside, the smell of decaying fish hits my nose. I see my dad greasy black oilskins on an unfamiliar ship. I crossed the road and my dad said "are you ready son?" and patted me on the back.

"Yes, ready as I'll ever be."

As I boarded the ship, I felt how unstable it is, let alone in a storm. I noticed a barrel of live flopping cod. "Isn't that over your quota? I questioned. "That's because this isn't our usual boat. As we climbed onto Holly, our boat, I noticed how little dad caught. There was hungry fisherman, chewed nets and a rouge lobster snapping at their ankles.as we cast off a seagull swooped down and snatched the lobster up. Another gull planted a mine on my scalp. It felt like this was going to be our unlucky day.

After three hours, at sea dad said I could go back, use the small rowing boat to take me back to shore. However, I refused to, I wanted to stay and get the full experience. After that, I went I went to the lower deck to my hammock to try to get some shut-eye

Suddenly, I was surrounded by noise, above all of the commotion, I could hear dad shouting and thrashing, I woke with a jolt. I sprinted up to the upper deck to see my dad being pulled into sea by a giant catfish! Unbelievably, my dad got pulled in. I was crossing my fingers in my mind, please let him be safe! My dad's head popped up from the freezing sea, surely, now we can save him? But after a minute the bubbles stopped... BOOM!

A German submarine had fired a torpedo, which struck a wet rock near us throwing us, and are ship crushing it into thousands of wood chips.

I was the only survivor.

At shore, I climbed up onto my roof and saluted my hard-working father. For all of the wrong reasons, I will never forget this day at sea.



Gull Arkely's last fish..

A drop of rain, skimmed past Gull's face when he woke up. Coming face to face with the open wide window, a flash of lightning struck and he opened his eyes immediately. He was scared, he could cope with most things, but hated storms. Then he heard his stunning wife baking bread in the kitchen for his breakfast, but he slowly tip toed down the stair, trying not to wake the rest of the family. However, for some strange reason, this morning, yet again, he could not eat. His appetite has been like this for 3 days now and he feels hungry but nothing can make him eat. While getting ready to set off he did a friendly wave that he always does and then said goodbye to his three children, dog and wife.

He walked out of the door looking back at his home, thinking would this be the last time he came home, as he did every day. He walked along remembering all his happy times with his children, wondering what will come next...the storm from that morning had thankfully disappeared, but such weather always made him think - will I make it home?

He arrived at the Quay waiting for the boat (The Golden Dolly) to arrive, five minutes later The Golden Dolly arrived. At 11:38 he walked onto The Dolly, the boat looked bigger than the others but out of the blue the boat seemed to tip over a bit, but he wasn't bothered, he knew that once she was out at sea it would be stable. The journey and the day went well, he had no real reason to worry. Around 14:42, the boat turned around back to home to give the Herring Girls the sign that they have enough fish. The seagulls surrounded the boat but not for fish for Gull. The other fishermen were confused but they thought this was a sign from God to tell them Gull is bad news, so they tied a heavy rock on the rope and tied it around Gull's waist. He couldn't believe what was happening. Then to Gull's surprise his supposed best friends threw him over board out of the blue. A few seconds, later they saw dead shrimp float out of the pocket, realizing what they have done to their best fisherman.

Gasping for his last breath Gull's foot is stuck in a hard, turquoise sea fungus that will not let go, Gull starts panicking at the sight of piranhas but knowing he cannot do anything he accepts his fate and gives up. As he sees his life flashing before his eyes, he thinks about his family. His daughter, two sons, dog and his beautiful wife. He suddenly gets a burst of courage and rips his foot out of the sea fungus and the blood fills his view but he does not give up and swims through the pain, but he couldn't move. The piranhas have had enough fun from watching the play, they see Gull as the whole buffet and can't wait to tuck in. Alive...

This tragic story is not true, please do not worry. Well...

By Emma & Josh



Maggie's day as a Herring Girl

I get up so early in the morning it is surprisingly still neet. Ugh, I hate the oatmeal it tastes like mud but I am so poor that I have no syrup to garnish on top. It is still so early but I need to go get ready I put on my old petticoat and my moldy hair net that still smelt of fish from the day before. Quickly I ran oot to get me bike and money for today's lunch of battered sausage and chips. As I get on me bike, me stomach squelches feeling uncomfortable from me brecky. Zooming now I check the time on the church bell 6:50 am right on time "I'll get there early "awkwardly I said aloud. I'm there now earlier than the other girls as I was late yesterday, they punish you by docking your pay if you're late – I really can't afford any more lateness. Work was the same grimy, dirty conditions. At 7:00 am, I sat with the girls, chatting and gossiping about other girls and fishermen. I have such fantastic friends Jackie and Nora we all gut the fish, ignoring the putrid smell in the air, causing gusts of sick in our mouths. I would not do this job if I did not have to but we need the money from my income. In my big house everyone has a job, even the kids from the age of 12 – there's no choice. We need the money to survive.

The hardest part of the job, is knowing my Oliver is out on the boat, and never knowing if he will come home safe from his fishing expedition, sometimes he is away for days at a time, ir is a constant worry.

I am especially worried today, there is a storm is brewing, you can see the rain lashing down over the sea, the sky is black, I hope they will be able to see their way home. The storm is even more vicious now, making me scared for the safety of me husband, my Oliver.

In the distance, I could see the black middens the ship breaking shore of rocks there is his boat I wave oot to him "Oliver me lovey ya alreet" I loudly shouted. He stumbles off the boat and runs over to me. I scream "You're safe " .

By Khloe





Johnny boy's fishing day!

Hi, my name is Johnny I am 16 years old. Today I am so excited because it is my first ever day at sea and fishing. It has always been my ambition to fish – it is in my blood. My grandad, my dad and now it is my turn. I am so excited.

For breakfast, I had a granola bar with a banana on the side and for a drink a rich, blueberry smoothie. Then before I left the house, I squealed in excitement at the thought of my first day at sea fishing.

After I had my breakfast, I got changed into some shorts and a t-shirt and I put some sun-cream and a cap on because it looks hot and sunny outside. As soon as I stepped outside I started to sweat and I looked like a man lobster. I went back inside so put some aloe Vera deodorant roll on I don't have ANY sprays because they are bad for the environment 😊

I started to walk down early because it is a far distance to the fish quay the actual place is 20 minutes away! When I got there, I hopped on my fishing boat and sailed out to the green, cold looking sea. "I hope I don't fall in the sea, it does not look very welcoming!" I said.

A couple minutes later, I caught a flat fish this was exciting enough, but then after that I caught a monkfish, which was surprising because it was my first day fishing. I was so proud! The monkfish was brown and huge and if I am honest, one of the ugliest fish I have ever seen. His big teeth were sharp, and he had a mad smile that would have scared the life out of me, if the fish had been alive... I was so excited about catching this fabulous fish, that I lost my way. I soon realized I was lost at sea. The only company I have is the dead fish I caught...I was scared and horrified, how had I ended up in this terrible situation. I could pray to the Gods of the sea, or I could check my mobile, to see if I could actually get a reception.

I dialed my friend Billy; I hoped and hoped that he would answer. I explained how I was lost in the middle of the sea. How lucky am I, he came to save me, and I came back in one piece! "Phew I made it..." I said. As a special thank you, I cooked the monkfish for Billy, and we shared a much-needed supper together.

Thank you to my beloved friend Billy-Bob for saving me out there in the deep dark sea and a special thank you to that monkfish, who gave me great company to keep me going and for a great supper at the end of the day.
The end!

That was the story of Johnny boy

By Logan C and Anna



Hi, my name is Geordie, my age is 49 I was born in 1931.

I woke up in my room at 7:30am I do not remember anything at all, my mind is blank. When this happened last time, I blacked out for a very long time. I think it had been a day or maybe 8 or 9 hours. In this condition, I am not that confident that I will get a good catch. I hope I am wrong. I was walking down to the market Forbreakfast. I had a lovely salmon, bread and a bottle of beer. This set me up for the long day ahead.

I went to pick up Luke and Jeffy. Luke is the youngest is Luke he is 22 Jeffy is 39, Jeffy is 10 yrs older and Luke is 27 yrs younger. They're my ship mates. On the way we got our nets and headed to our ships.

One hour after we set out to sea and so far we have a rusty boat 20 tuna 60 cod 10 salmon 20 dog sharks 50 haddock we got Another 10 salmon 40 tuna 50 cod 70 haddock all in 3 hours. We were so proud!

On the way home we go 70 tuna 30 cod 15 salmon 25 haddock we made it home my other friends were gutting fish and preparing the dinner table.

It was great day and reminded me of how proud I was to be a fisherman. Even though it is touch, it is days like these that make it worthwhile.





A day in the life of Jimmy Fisher

I woke up in the restaurant after running away from the orphanage. I looked at the photo of my parents out at sea, my anger begins to burn up, I calmed down but tears started to fall down my cheeks. I love the sea because it is part of me, but I hate it because it took away my parents and left me alone.

I stole some food from the restaurant but I did not have time to eat it so I just stuffed my pockets and ran outside, I could smell the fresh, salty Fish Quay air.

I rushed outside and that seaside breeze hit me, I rented the cheapest boat I could find it was a bit dirty but it will do. I am so focused on getting out to sea that I could not even think of the danger ahead me.

Out at sea it was windy at times, it was getting stormier and stormier, waves were strong but the foist, functional boat was weaving through the waves. The sea had gone black and deep blue, I had no luck with catching any fish yet but as the day goes on, I might catch something.

My tummy was roaring like a lion so I got the food out of my pockets but I suddenly dropped it into the deep, mysterious blue waters of the sea. I reached over to grab the soggy food but I fell into the water. What would I do without food – how would I survive?

I felt a nudge underneath me, I was being lifted not the air. It was a magnificent dolphin. A dolphin lifted me back onto my boat, I thought the dolphin was gone but it came back with my mam's necklace, a necklace I thought had been lost at sea with her. I threw my net into the water and caught DOZENS of fish. It was definitely turning into my lucky day. Things are on the up.

When I got back then I realized that I was being adopted. I never knew someone would want to adopt a 16-year-old boy. I was so excited to be adopted I would never forget my parents but... YAY! I was so pleased to be part of a family once again. I can't help but think that the dolphin was my luck charm, my mother's spirit sent to help me in my darkest times. Finally, I have something to live for – I can't wait!

By Skye, Amelia S and Mia



Tilly's Day

Hello, I am Tilly, I am 29 years old I have two children, and a husband named Timmy Rhubarb. My eldest child's is 16, he is a boy named Jimmy, and his nickname is Timmy Junior because he is just like his papa. My youngest child is 14 called Elizabeth and her nickname is Lizzy Busy because she is always busy helping me gut the fish.

IN THE MORNING

At 4am, I wake up for the day. I get into my uniform. I check on the kids to see if there ready for work. We all go downstairs to the kitchen and I get a banana from the cupboard I always feel guilty for taking their food from them. But Timmy always makes me take away the guilt.

THE FISH QUAY

At the Quay, I immediately say hello to the girls and wave off Jimmy and Timmy's boat whilst rushing with Lizzy to the dock. As soon as we got our first load of fish, I could barely see their boat anymore.

PREPARING FISH

I always say to Lizzy, "I love my job!" However, in reality I hate it so much I hate the people I work with the only people I enjoy working with is Margret and Sharon. (I have known them ever since school!).

I am always worried about the weather at sea I could not bear to lose my beloved boys at the stupid sea!

Next, I walk into the fish gutting room to prepare the fish for gutting. It is never-ending. It is a good job I have my lovely friends to work with – Margaret and Sharon make all the difference, they can make the worst job the most fun.





With grateful thanks to...

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- ✓ Diane Leggett and Jim Coltman
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