

# WINDOW ON THE BAY

Artwork conceived and designed by David Harbott

## Making the Work.

The pictures that make up this piece of work are the result of a long conversation with the people of Torbay. Through Community Partnership meetings, consultations and street level discussions I heard how Torbay is remembered, how it has been forgotten and how people are living and working around the Bay now. In the end I had hundreds of stories about different scenes from around the Bay and the people who lived here.

Then I began to research the pictorial history of Torbay. I was offered family photographs and I visited the archive at Torquay Library and Museum. I was able to locate images of places I had been told about in the stories of Torbay I had collected. I found wonderful Victorian prints, intriguing photographs of tram and rail lines being installed, people at work and more. I then went to each location to photograph it myself.

The last part was to assemble all these elements. Working on the computer I collaged old pictures with the new and brought out personal elements with drawing.

## The Torquay Harbour Scene. Mounted on the wall.

I set out to make a picture on a grand scale that at the same time remains personal. It may seem obvious to choose to depict but for over a century artists have used the view from Wallis Hill to create pictures in order to earn a living. They needed to sell their work, so they made pictures that people would buy. My representation of this glorious view has been made to celebrate Torbay and its beauty. In the foreground is Abbey Gardens, which have been featured in many postcards. They have a strong visual presence and together with Princess Gardens have a firm place in people's hearts. To the left and right are the pines, beech trees, orchards and hills that rim the bay and complete the picture composition.



Brixham Harbour 1924 and 2007.

The fishing trawler was invented in Brixham in the 19th century. It was exported to the other fishing centres of Britain and then across the world. By 1890 there were around 300 trawlers in the Brixham fleet. The scene depicts the ships arriving from the past, bringing with them the memory that Torbay once led the world.

Special thanks need to go to the staff and volunteers at Torquay Museum. Also to the staff at Torquay Library, especially those who work in the local studies section. Thank you.



Molly Malones at Paignton Harbour.

Paignton harbour is a thriving community of friends and business people. Slightly off the beaten track, it has developed its own special character. The scene of the harbour is overlaid with a drawing of Molly Malones seafood kiosk. Until 2000 it was a Council cleaners' hut. After the Second World War it was moved to Paignton from Torquay for use as the Harbour Masters' Office. It started life as a NAAFI (Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes) hut serving food. It still has names of servicemen inscribed on the walls, now hidden under the modern boarding.



Beacon Cove 1870's, Ansteys Cove 1920's and Watcombe Bay 2007.

The coves of Torbay have featured in steel plate and lithographs since the advent of popular prints. Beacon Cove can be seen in some of the very first litho. prints from the early 19th century. At this time the English Landscape was emerging as a place of recreation and a subject for art. The coves have featured in artists' works and have been a destination for visitors ever since. They have an important place in history for their role in appreciation of the English landscape.



Marine Spa Ballroom, 1960's and Meadfoot Bay, 2007.

The Marine Spa Ballroom opened as the Bath Salons in 1857. It was part of the huge expansion of Torquay in Victorian times. During this period the town changed from a fishing village with a population of 800 to the 'Queen of Watering Places', a Victorian term for holiday resort. The Spa, which was demolished in 1971, is still remembered with affection.



Abbey Sands 1924 and 2007.

Abbey Sands is the key location for the sand and sea experience in Torquay. These sands, to be found at the West end of Torbay Road, have been busy since families first began spending leisure time at the seaside. You can see that we walk the very same footsteps that have been trodden for generations. The old photo gives us clues about their lives. One young woman is trying to find her bathing hut ticket. Another is carrying a box brownie camera. In the distance is Corbyn Head crowned with a large row of Elm trees. Some things are gone forever while others stay with us.



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