Hunt for Axeheads that launched first community woodland

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Press Release

The Great Axehead Hunt

The hunt is on for the axeheads carved by artist Tim Stead which set in motion Scotland's first Community woodland.

The late Tim Stead, sculptor, furniture maker and visionary carved a wooden axehead for each day of 1986 to raise funds for the purchase of the first community woodland in the UK. This turned out to be Wooplaw Community Woodland, located in the Scottish Borders which was purchased in the autumn of 1987.

Now, 30 years later, we are hunting for those axeheads which have gone around Scotland and probably the world. If you are lucky enough to have one, or know someone who has, you can register it on the Axes for Trees website- http://timsteadtrust.org/axesfortrees/

We would like to know the date on the axehead and the wood it is made out of, both of which should be recorded underneath. How did you get it? Where has it been? Where is it now? Have you got a photograph of yourself with the axehead?

The target is to find at least 200 of the 'lost' axeheads and tell their stories. According to Tim Stead's son Sam, 'In a way it's keeping my father's name alive. Each of the three-hundred and sixty-five axeheads is unique. Each has been labelled with a day of the year and the type of hardwood from which it is made and signed by Tim. The fact that the axehead is made out of wood, not metal, appealed to my father's sense of irony and the poet in him.'

The search for the axeheads coincides with the launch of the Tim Stead Trust, formed to save his beautiful home in Blainslie, in the Borders, for the nation. The interior of the house, which is full of native wood, has the same qualities as his furniture, flowing natural lines, glowing colours and mesmerising detail. It is a very special place, the birthplace of community woodlands in Scotland, and somewhere which deserves protection to keep it and Tim Stead's archives intact. http://www.timsteadtrust.org/

The final word about the axeheads belongs to Tim Stead, 'The axe-head is something which I've always liked. It's a most beautiful shape and something which links form and function perfectly. There are so many other things in nature which correspond to that – it's aerodynamic, water-dynamic. It's very much about natural laws. The axe has been used by man for millions of years – it's a very early tool, one which is used with rhythm, rather than the chain-saw which is much more destructive.'

For immediate use.

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