

SCULPTURES ON THE WATERWAYS

Have you met Jim, George and Bill?

A sculpture trail of exciting temporary commissions have been unveiled across the Venetian Waterways and Boating Lake, which helps to tell the story of those who built the unique grade II listed park between 1926-1928.

Created by local artist Spadge Hopkins in partnership with regional charity Access Community Trust, who are custodians of the unique 7 acre park in Great Yarmouth, the symbolic artworks immortalise the 127 local men who originally constructed the attraction as part of a relief work scheme for the local unemployed following the First World War.

Following plans designed by SP Thompson, work began with clearing the site, excavating the boating lake by hand, followed by the canals. Over 6639 tons of soil was then brought in from nearby Caister and spread using shovels and wheelbarrows, so the park could be planted.

The vision was to create much-needed employment at the time and a lasting legacy that would benefit Great Yarmouth. Nearly a century on, the community asset and tourist attraction remains a unique free-to-access green space where people, history, flora, and fauna come together as one.

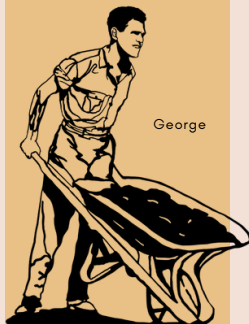
Each sculpture has been adeptly named after the most popular boys names at that time and carefully designed and cut from weathered steel which signifies strength and longevity.

For any enquiries about the sculptures or to learn more, visit www.venetianwaterways.co.uk

"When I learnt of the history of the restored Venetian Waterways I was inspired to create these men to celebrate the heritage of the project and to form the basis and focus for future art for the benefit of Great Yarmouth's community and visitors".



Jim



George



Bill

UN-EARTHING THE PAST | ENRICHING THE PRESENT



CREATED BY
SPADGE HOPKINS
GREAT YARMOUTH



THE ELEPHANT, FISH, HORSE & COW

Four iconic original figureheads reside on the Venetian Waterway's most northerly island - situated near the Island Café and Boating Lake.

Painstakingly hand carved from mahogany wood and painted in bright colours, each of these stunning depictions of animals were originally found on the prows (front) of a number of electric gondola boats that used to navigate the canals across the park in the late 1950's.

Sadly, due to a decline in visitors wishing to take to the water, the vessels became surplus to requirements and were removed in the 1980's and placed in storage (and nearly forgotten about).

Thankfully, local expert Kelvin Thatcher salvaged the decaying sculptures and lovingly restored them in 2019, so they could return to their rightful home.

Did you know?

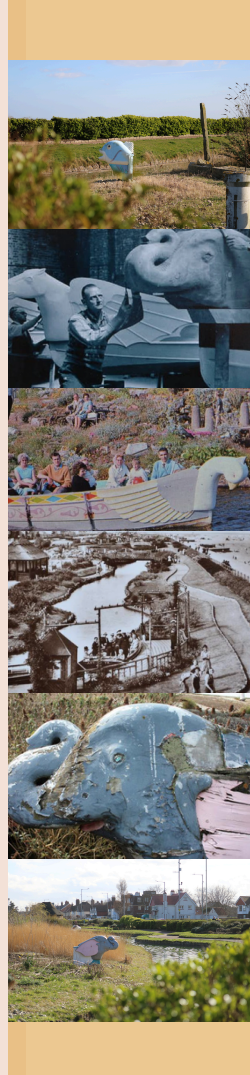
The Venetian Waterways, Island Cafe and Boating Lake are operated by regional charity Access Community Trust.

The charity champions homelessness support across East Anglia, alongside providing a range of mental health and wellbeing assistance that helps vulnerable individuals of all ages, families, and, wider communities that find themselves socially isolated.

Since 2019, Access have been the official custodians of the popular site and take great pride in upkeeping the gardens, organising community events and providing a fantastic customer experience from the Island Café & Boating Lake.

Profits raised from this cafe directly help the garden team and the maintenance of our wonderful 7 acres, as well as supporting the many projects and services Access operate across Norfolk & Suffolk.

To learn more about Access, visit [accessct.org](https://www.accessct.org).



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thewaterways



The Island at
the Waterways