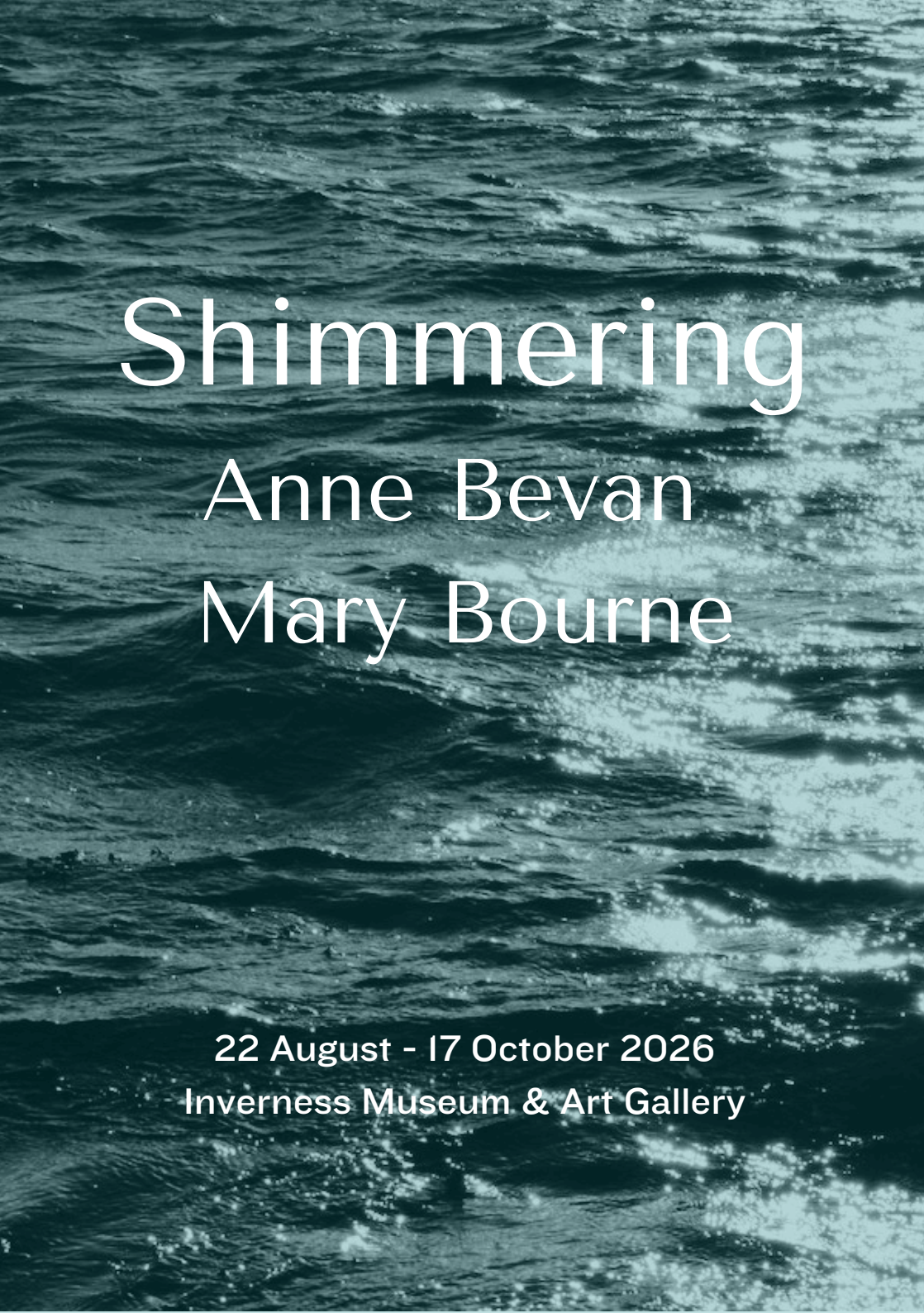


Shimmering

Anne Bevan
Mary Bourne

22 August - 17 October 2026
Inverness Museum & Art Gallery

Light

Did you say it's made of waves?
Yes, that's it.
I wonder what the waves are made of.
Oh, waves are made of waves.
Waves are what they are,
Shimmeringness,
Oscillation,
Rhythmical movement which is the inherent essence of all things.
Ultimately, there's only movement,
Nothing else.
The movement that light is
Comes out of the sun
And it's so gorgeous a thing
That nothing else is ever anything unless lit by it.

Margaret Tait, 1960





Introduction

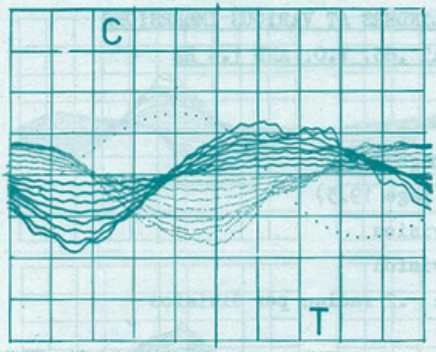
This publication accompanies an exhibition of new works by artists Anne Bevan and Mary Bourne at Inverness Museum & Art Gallery, as part of RSA200 Celebrating Together. Each artist has connections to the ecology of specific places in the north of Scotland, and their new work links to a poetic, subjective view of the sea.

Anne Bevan RSA was born in Orkney, where she now lives and works. She studied Fine Art and Sculpture at Edinburgh University and Edinburgh College of Art and has undertaken many national and international exhibitions, residencies and commissions. She develops projects through sculpture, photography, video, performative events, and socially engaged art, frequently collaborating with artists, writers, composers, scientists, archaeologists, and geologists.

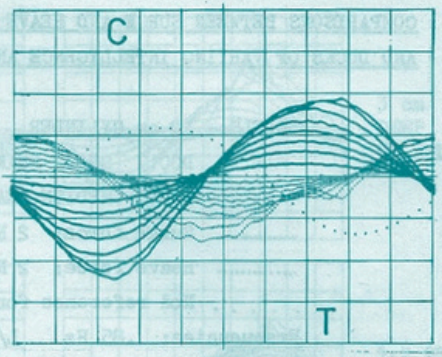
Mary Bourne RSA FRSS trained at Edinburgh College of Art and was an RSA John Kinross Scholar in 1985. Her professional practice centres on people and their connections to the places they live. This has included numerous public commissions and residencies, in recent years focusing increasingly on issues faced by small communities in the North East of Scotland where she lives.

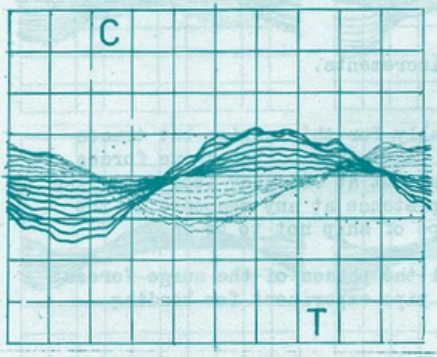
SMART

STUPID



1.2 HZ
L/D = 10.8





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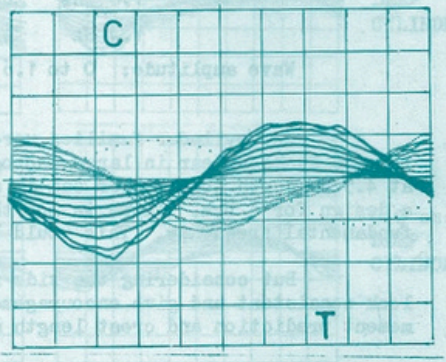
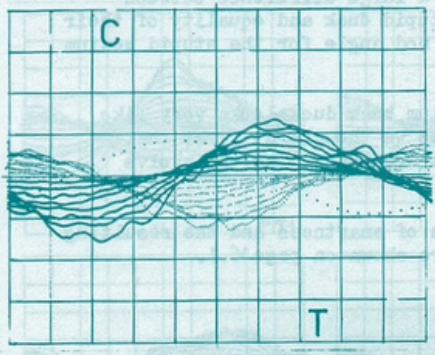
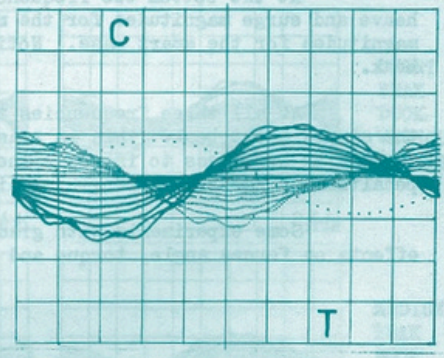
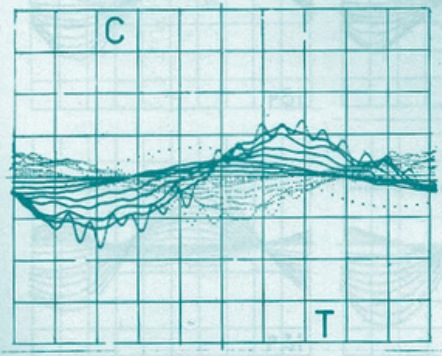


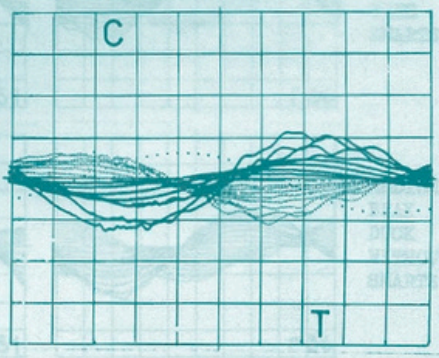


1.55 HZ
L/D = 6.50





1.8 HZ
L/D = 4.82





Anne Bevan

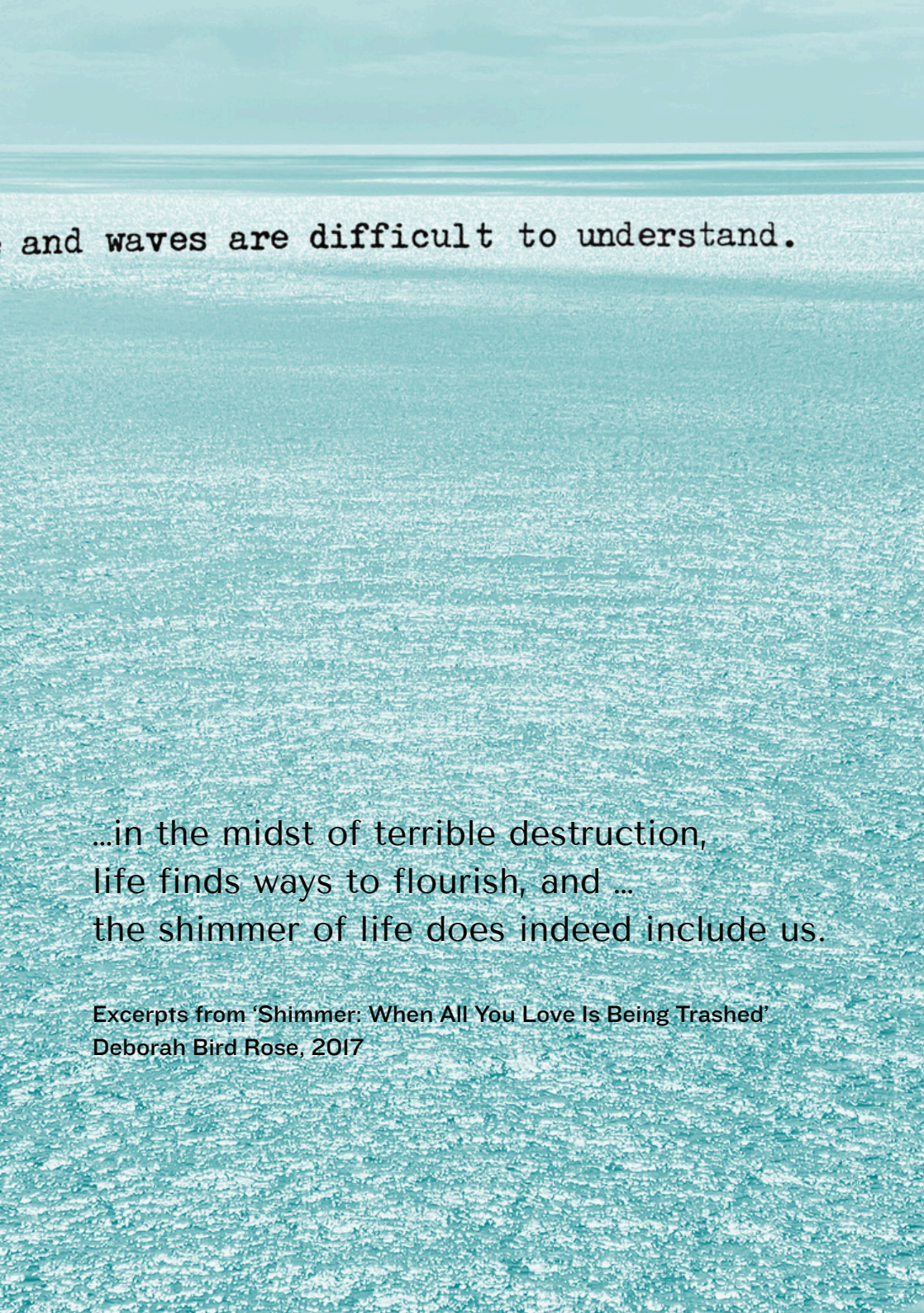
Anne Bevan's work explores the marine and geological connections between place, people, and environmental change - particularly those associated with her home in Orkney. Her research with scientists foregrounds the histories of marine energy developments and the physical properties of tide and wave formation. Simultaneously, explorations of microscopic life forms and maritime narratives speak to imperceptible and hidden elements informing life in sea-faring cultures. These diverse and interconnected phenomena are explored through casting, construction, and moving image.

(12) Water is a peculiar substance

The Stone Wave

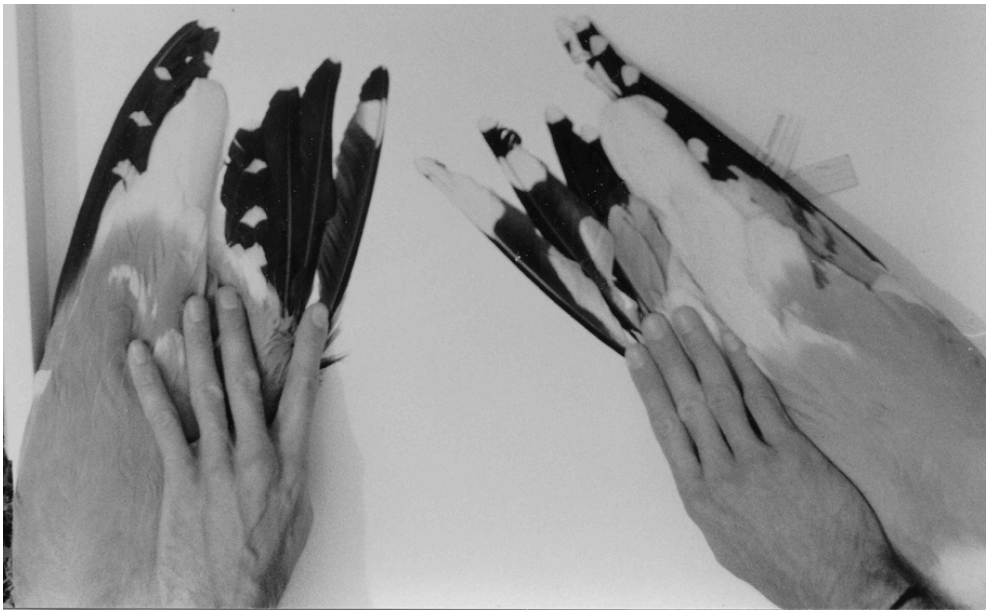
On this great beach a wild
Atlantic storm
Sculptures in stone its huge
and wavelike form.

Robert Rendall, 1957



...in the midst of terrible destruction,
life finds ways to flourish, and ...
the shimmer of life does indeed include us.

Excerpts from 'Shimmer: When All You Love Is Being Trashed'
Deborah Bird Rose, 2017



Mary Bourne

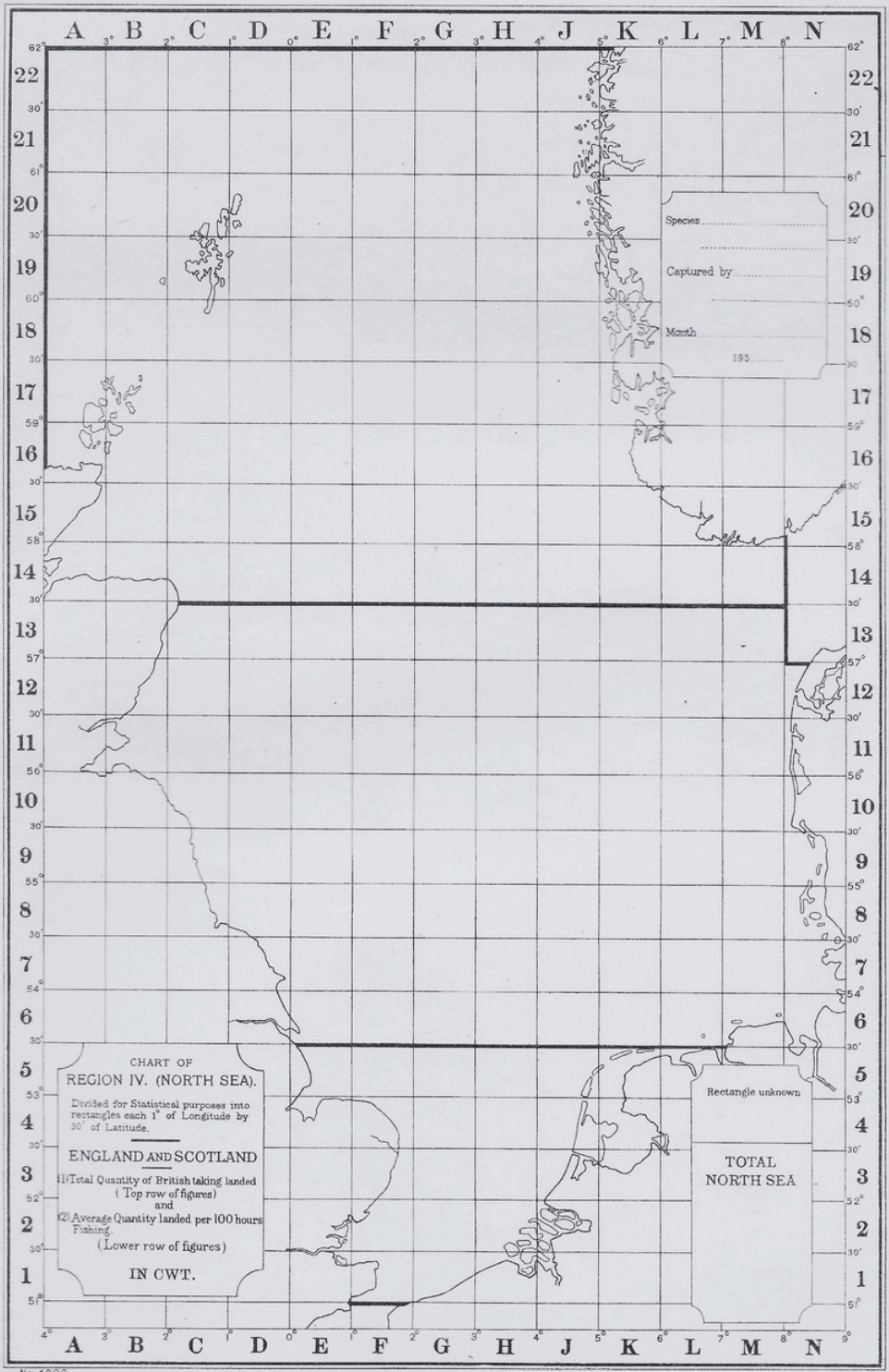
Mary Bourne's father, who died in 2021, was the ornithologist and conservationist, Dr WRP Bourne. He was the first General Secretary of The Seabird Group, and one of the driving forces behind the first recording and mapping of seabird populations around Britain – Operation Seafarer. Consequently much of Mary Bourne's childhood was spent on Scotland's coasts. She learned to see the world with a seabird's eye, nations and borders irrelevant; weather a matter of life or death.

For Shimmering she has developed a new body of sculpture inspired by her father's work. With the bird flu pandemic mirroring the COVID pandemic, all living things' vulnerabilities have been brought into sharp relief. Grief for personal loss echoes grief for ongoing ecological tragedies, and in this work she has used elements from her father's archive to explore broader contemporary issues and truths.



We saw the risk we took in doing good,
But dared not spare to do the best we could

Excerpt from 'The Exposed Nest'
Robert Frost, 1915



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Ordnance Survey 1956.

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Page 3 graph from 'Edinburgh Wave Power Report', Sept 1976
Page 4 FloWave Ocean Energy Research Facility, University of Edinburgh; photo © Anne Bevan
Page 5 - 6 photo © Mary Bourne
Page 7 photo from the archive of Dr WRP Bourne
Page 8 note book by WRP Bourne aged 18, photo © Mary Bourne
Page 9 1956 Ordnance Survey map of the North Sea from the archive of Dr WRP Bourne

Thanks to

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www.annebevan.co.uk
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