
Bristol & Somerset: Vanishing Lives
Photographs by Reece Winstone FRPS

36,000 photographs, 150 selected plates, 15 cameras, 4 decades, 2 counties, 1 photographer

In 1959, freelance photographer Reece Winstone FRPS showed 2000 photographs of Old Bristol, many collected from the early days of photography, at the Royal West of England Academy, filling two main galleries. It was a revelation. For the first time, Bristolians saw their city clearly rather than clouded by their own personal memories, seeing what had come before and what had been lost. Winstone's *Bristol As It Was* books gave birth to a new genre of published photography, adopted across the world.

By 1966 Winstone's earlier work in creating a commercial country-wide photo-library of 'Beautiful Britain' now consisted of 36,000 of his own photographs. *Bristol & Somerset: Vanishing Lives* is an exhibition and catalogue produced by Winstone's son, John, who has selected 150 of some 7,000 photographs depicting urban and rural locations within the two counties of Bristol and Somerset.

Dr. Robert Dunning, country historian and contributor to the catalogue, describes the exhibition as: '*A remarkable selection from a remarkable archive covering three decades or so of crucial change.*'

From 1930 to the mid-1960s, life changed immeasurably for almost all, both culturally and in terms of expectations. *Bristol & Somerset: Vanishing Lives* illustrates a major shift in British life; even the practice of photography saw radical developments.

Contributor, Ian Sumner, freelance photographer, says of Reece Winstone and his work: '*He became a consummate freelance photographer... his way of working has all but disappeared today. Nobody will ever work like Reece again.*'

Bristol & Somerset: Vanishing Lives will be exhibited in the Cube gallery at the Royal West of England Academy, Queen's Road, Bristol from 7 September to 13 November (closed 18-22 September).

Entry is free; opening hours are:

Monday – Saturday, 9.30am – 5.30pm

Sundays, 11 - 5pm

Events: There will be an exhibition tour at 2pm on 28 September. **Ends**

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