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A woman in a floral shirt is on the left, and a man is on the right, looking through a microscope. The text 'ISSAC NEWTON' is overlaid in the center.

ISSAC NEWTON



Newton's Theory of Gravity



Sir Issac Newton, famous for his work on the theory of gravity, never kept a record of what happened that day, back in 1666 or where in fact it happened!

A number of different stories still survive as to how and where Newton first thought about his theory of gravity, told by a variety of people.

Keith Moore from the Royal Society explained:

“The story was certainly true, but let’s say it got better with the telling.”

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William's Stukely's Story

William Stukely, who was a good friend of Newton's wrote about Newton's Discovery in his 'Memoirs of Issac Newton' in 1752.

He wrote:

'After dinner, the weather being warm, we went into the garden, and drank tea under the shade of some apple trees...he told me, he was just in the same situation as when formally, the notation of gravitation came to his mind. "Why should that apple always descend perpendicularly to the ground," thought he to himself.'

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The Site of Newton's Discovery



The tree mentioned in Stukely's story is still there today!
This picture shows the place where Newton is meant to have witnessed a green apple falling from the tree Outside his family home and first thought of his system of gravity.

Woolsthorpe Manor - Isaac Newton's home
Newton's Apple Tree © Nick Harrison, 2006

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You can still visit this place today, as the house and grounds are now looked after by the National Trust.

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Cambridge's Very Own Newton's Apple Tree!



The Newton Apple Tree in Trinity College

As a young man, Newton went to Trinity College in Cambridge to study.

Despite it being very unlikely that Newton actually made his discovery of gravity in the grounds of Trinity College, his college has now placed a special tree to remember him.

FACTOID!

The tree is of the Flower of Kent variety which produces green cooking apples. It was grafted from the original tree at Newton's home and was planted in 1954.

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Newton's Theory of Colour

FACTOID!

It is thought that Newton bought a prism at Stourbridge Fair which he used to discover how white light disperses into many colours!

From this discovery using a prism he made a 'Theory of Colour' which states that when light refracts that the colours that are visible are made from the white light itself rather than the object they are visible on.

Dispersion by a prism
Alfredo Louro © 2008

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Newton's Telescope



Photograph © Andrew Dunn,
5 November 2004

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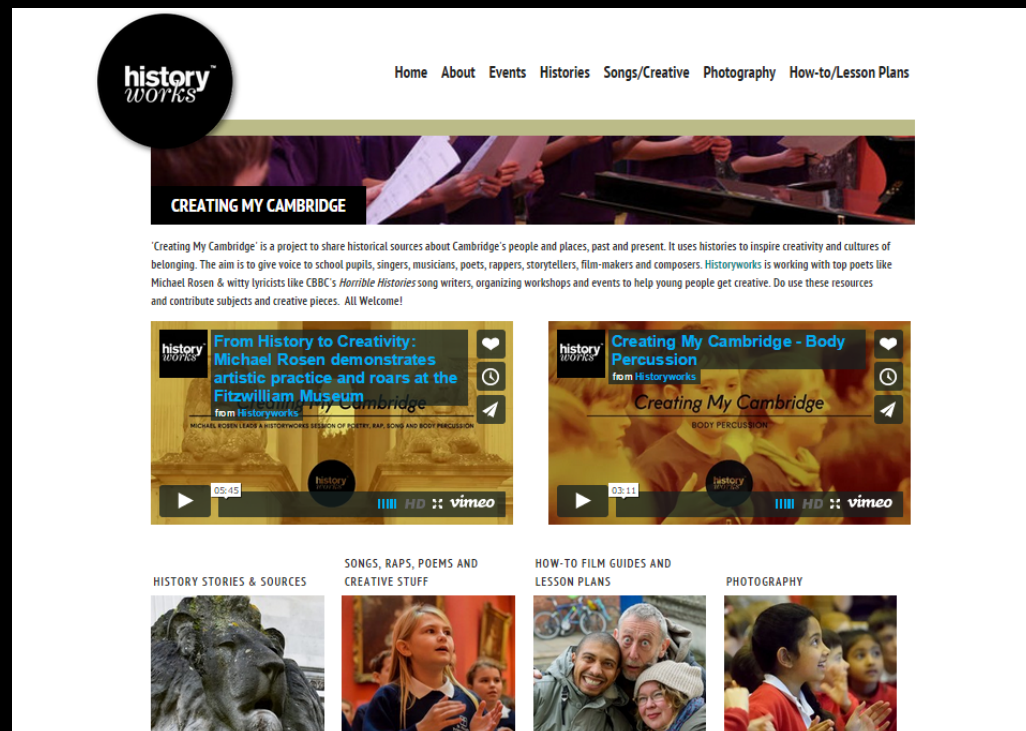
FACTOID!
Newton telescope was
10 times smaller than
the telescopes of the
time and was much
more accurate.

This picture shows a replica of
it and can be found in the
Whipple Museum in Cambridge.

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Web Resources available at:

<http://www.creatingmycambridge.com/history-stories/newtons-apple-tree/>



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A photograph showing a person's face in profile, looking through a telescope. A microphone is positioned near the telescope. The image is partially obscured by a semi-transparent black box containing text.

For further information visit:

Information and Videos

- BBC iWonder- Issac Newton: The Man Who Discovered Gravity <http://www.bbc.co.uk/timelines/zwwgcdm>

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