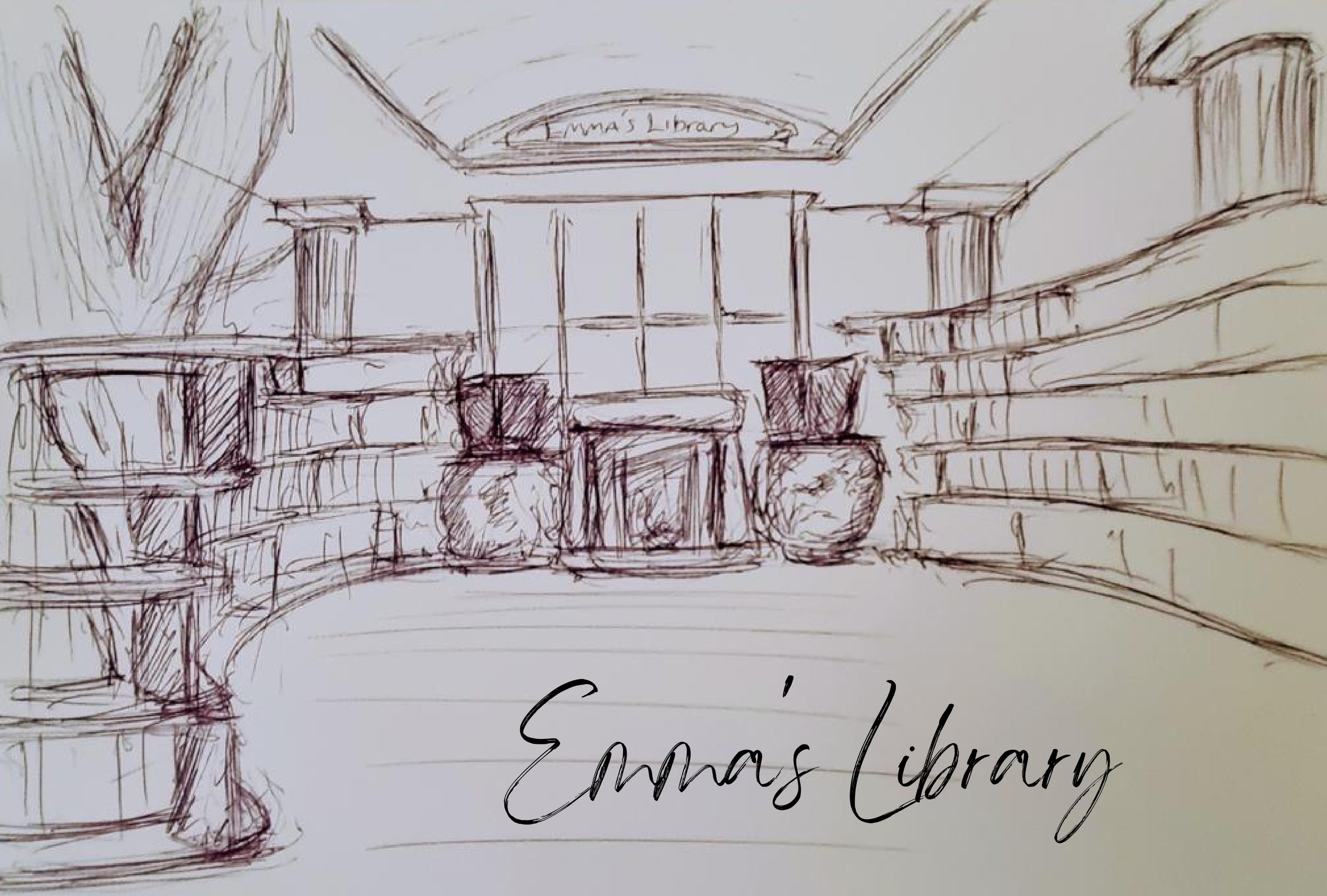
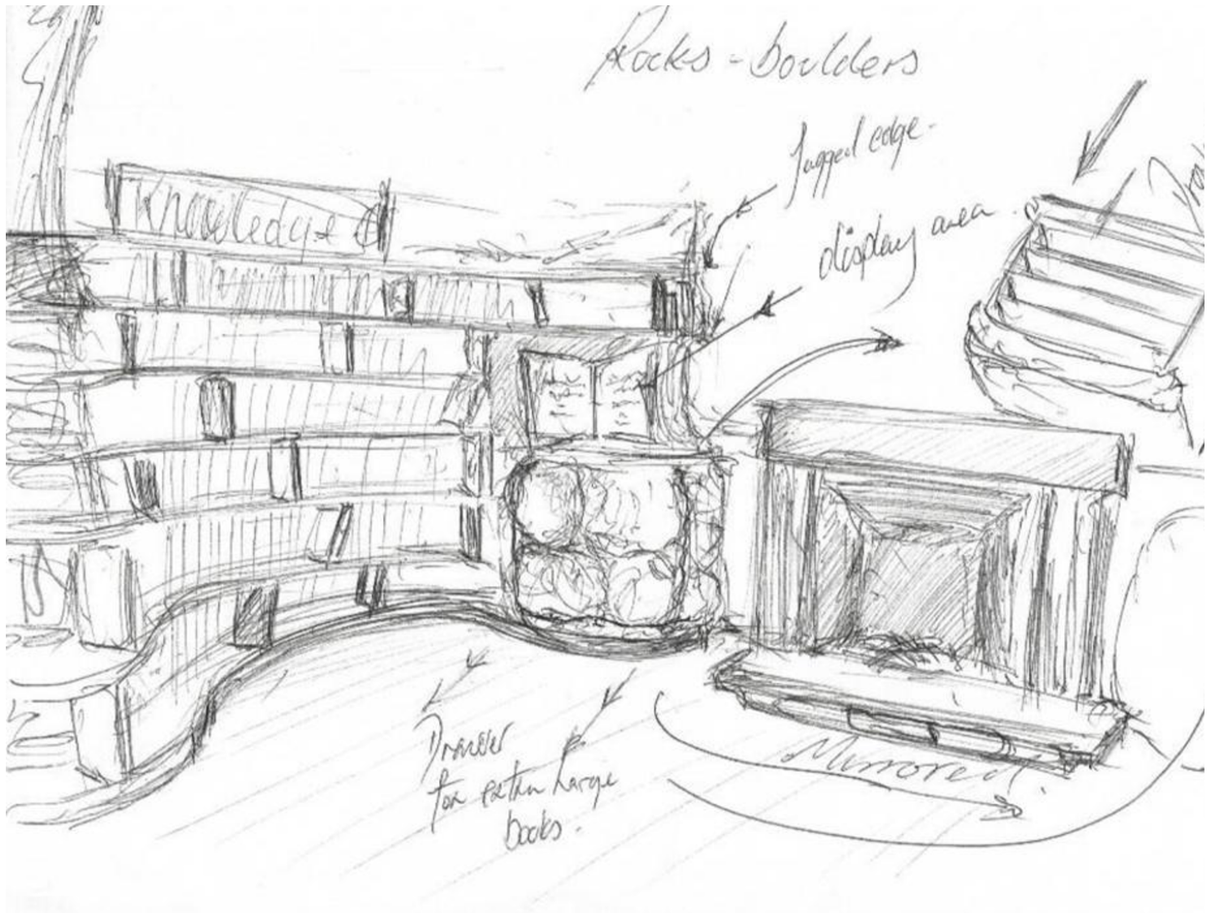


Emma's Library

EMMA'S LIBRARY

Leigh Primary School's library had served different purposes over the years. It was in desperate need of renovation, but budget constraints were holding things back.
Jenna Halfhide, the school's headteacher for just over a year, was determined to change that. But she didn't want to replace the library with something ordinary. She wanted a space that would not only house books, but one that would also fire the children's imaginations, encouraging them to step outside the curriculum and explore.



She shared her vision with the PTA and they began to plan their fundraising campaign. But before things moved very far, the Cartwright family came forward with an unexpected proposal. The school were offered the funds to create their new library in memory of a special young woman called Emma.

Work on Emma's Library has now begun with Dean, a passionate, artistic carpenter from Bowden Carpentry, creating a unique space for our children.

EMMA CARTWRIGHT, 1981–2007

Emma grew up locally and went to Plaxtol School. She was a big part of her community, loved travelling and had a passion for food, planning a future in hospitality. She had a talent for bringing people together and making them smile.

But Emma was taken too soon; she died of bowel cancer aged 25. When she passed away, everything she owned was put into a trust, attached to a school in Australia. That trust has done so much good there, in her name. Now her family have decided to continue that legacy a little closer to home.

"Family was everything to Emma, so we thought it would be unbelievably special to have 'Emma's Library' at the school where her niece and nephews will learn to read. To think that Emma will be a part of our children's education, as well as others, in some small way every day, is incredible. It seems right, honouring her talent for bringing people together and making them smile."
Amy Cartwright (friend and sister-in-law).

THE DESIGN

The room will be rebuilt with a combination of bespoke bookcases blending into woodland-themed shapes and colours. It will create a calm, well-organised space with fun elements to delight and inspire. A place for children to fall in love with reading.

The old ceiling has been replaced with a beautiful dome that will represent the sky, and with lighting that will transport the children 'outside". The bookshelves themselves are curved, crafted, beautifully engraved...

There will be a fireplace with flame and smoke effects to create a relaxing ambiance; one to set imaginations alight.

But the most impressive element is the huge tree, pushing through the bookshelves, with its stunning trunk and impressive branches, bringing the natural world into this beautiful space.