



Yorkshire Philosophical Society, The Lodge, Museum Gardens, York, YO1 7DR
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Registered Charity No: 529709 An affiliated society of the British Science Association

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2012

You should find the following with your Newsletter. If anything is missing, please contact Frances at The Lodge.

- Visit to York University Electronics Department, 23rd February 2012
- Trip to Manchester Museums, 14th March 2012
- Visit to Hull, 21st April 2012
- Blooming Holland Tour, 14th to 19th May 2012
- Mercian Miscellany Tour, 8th to 11th June 2012
- Kennet & Avon Country Tour, 17th to 21st September 2012
- Membership card or subscription reminder

A belated Happy New Year to all our members and welcome to our first Newsletter of 2012

Sightings of early snowdrops, thanks to the lengthening days and mild weather, are already whetting our appetite for the programme of visits and excursions being planned by our hard-working team of volunteers. We hope the information below and on the enclosed sheets will prompt you to renew your subscription, if you have not already done so. To those who have – our thanks, and we look forward to seeing you at one of our events soon.

Bill Smith at home.....

We have had very sadly to accept Bill Smith's resignation as Honorary Secretary from the YPS Council. Some of you will know by now that Bill was diagnosed with a severe terminal cancer just before Christmas, and although he is defying his condition very well at home in the comfort of his bedroom overlooking his garden - and being well cared for by Anne - , he felt that his resignation was the right thing to do. We will miss his presence at Council and F & GP Meetings as he managed the preparation and minute-taking of these with a high degree of professionalism and efficiency, making sure that the Society stayed on the right track. Several members of Council are in touch with Bill regularly and we are all in awe of his courage and positive attitude. His interest in the YPS is as great as ever - and he is still full of opinions and ideas on the future of the Society.

Bill (and Anne), you are both very much in our thoughts.

Lecture news

Reaching out to Easingwold

We are delighted to announce that we are continuing our efforts to expand our activities outside York (we are the Yorkshire Philosophical Society after all) with our first ever lecture in Easingwold.

Why do good weather forecasts go bad?

How forecasts are made and what weather forecasters are doing to make them better

A lecture by Dr David Schultz,
Centre for Atmospheric Science, School for Earth, Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences,
University of Manchester

7.30 pm on Tuesday 13th March 2012
The Galtres Centre, Market Place, Easingwold, YO61 3AD

In principle, five relatively simple relationships are all that are needed to forecast the weather. If it is that easy, why do forecasts sometimes fail? This talk will present a brief history of weather prognostication, the process of modern computer weather prediction, and how meteorologists are working to improve forecasting for the future.

Please do support this outreach venture by spreading the word to friends and acquaintances in the area, putting up a notice in a local shop or public place (posters will be available shortly from Frances at The Lodge), ... or just come along yourself!

YPS prepares for the Olympics!

Paralympian at YPS family lecture

On March 11th, our traditional joint Easter lecture with York Museums Trust takes a slightly different track. Working with the Sports Science Department of York St John University, we ask the question "**Are Olympic champions made or born?**" Will this encourage those of our members who still harbour high ambitions?

The lecture is our Family Lecture and it also ties in with the theme of "Motion" - the theme of this year's national Science Week (9th-18th March). So we hope that the next generation of Olympians will be present (i.e. your children or your grandchildren) and they will be given a really challenging insight into what science can do for the athletes of the future.

A special attraction of this lecture will be the participation of a very promising young lady, Paralympic swimmer, Claire Cashmore, who will be competing in London in the summer - with sights on a medal.

Come a bit earlier than usual - we expect a good audience ...

Sunday March 11th, 2.30 p.m. - Tempest Anderson Hall

Lecture on Tuesday 17th April

Watch out for it.....!

You will have noted that our joint lecture with the Senior Common Room does not yet have a title. There are good reasons why we cannot publicize it yet. Just be aware that it will be of a political historical nature ...and could be a big one. Details will be on the website nearer the time - and there should be press coverage.

Programme of events

The Social Group has been working hard to bring you an exciting program of social events, visits and short holidays. In addition to the ones whose details have been distributed with this newsletter, we have a number of provisional events in various stages of planning. As further details become available, they will be published on our website, and in our newsletters. Booking forms will be issued by the newsletters indicated.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Newsletter</i>
29 th May	Post-AGM Social	April
1 st June	Skipton – Canal and Castle - day trip by own transport	April
29 th June	Whitby - day trip	April
July	Moth Hunt	April
2 nd August	Wandering in Walmgate	April or Jul/Aug
Late Summer	Fossil hunting on the Whitby Coast	April or Jul/Aug
10 th Sept	Behind the scenes YM geology – ½ day	Jul/Aug
Sept	Holgate Mill – ½ day	Jul/Aug
Oct	President's evening	Jul/Aug
Early Oct	Ampleforth – day trip by car	Jul/Aug
Nov	Nottingham?	Jul/Aug or Oct
Fri 7 th Dec	Social	Oct

Exhibition in Yorkshire Museum Library

The current display in the Reading Room of the Yorkshire Museum is of books from the YPS Library selected and explained by some of the YPS Volunteers who are currently working on cataloguing and refurbishment. Come along and see what we've been up to!

Café Scientifique News

Café Scientifique gets off to an electric start

At its meeting in November, your YPS Council approved YPS taking on board Café Scientifique. After obtaining generous sponsorship from both Wildwood Ventures and the Institute of Physics for the coming season, we were able to ensure the survival and continuation of Café Scientifique in York.

Café Scientifique meets on the first Wednesday of every month in the basement of the City Screen Cinema, and gives free access to the public to "scientific evenings" which start with a presentation by a science specialist (specialist in any field of physics, chemistry, biology, or any combination) on his or her speciality and on its relevance to today's society. This is followed by an informal discussion in which audience members participate -usually with a glass in their hand...obtained in the interval from the City Screen Basement Bar. Café Scientifique usually embraces a different and slightly younger audience than YPS and therefore fits in well with the one of YPS's overarching missions which is to make science accessible to the public at large.

Dr Yvette Hancock, a YPS Council member, and researcher, lecturer and administrator in The University of York Physics Department is leading Café Scientifique. Yvette has a very hands-on approach - as those of us who witnessed her "Ellie the Electron" pantomime performance at the YPS Family Lecture will remember.

The first meeting of the Café under YPS leadership took place on January 4th, and despite the unfavourable after-Christmas timing, played to a full house at the City Screen. This was an action-packed presentation given by David Coulthard entitled "Surviving on the Edge of the Universe".

Keep up to date with what's on at Café Scientifique on the YPS website (www.yorksphilsoc.org.uk) by clicking on the Café Scientifique links.

Coming in March at Café Sci

Scheduled for Wednesday March 7th, the next Café Scientifique will be given by Dr David Schultz, synoptic meteorologist. David is also an avid science communicator and has written a book on science communication entitled, 'Eloquent Science'. You can find out more about David at his webpages: <http://weather.seaes.manchester.ac.uk/schultz/> and also <http://eloquentscience.com/>

David's March Café Sci presentation will be another opportunity to catch the fascinating talk he is giving for us in Easingwold (see above):

***Why Do Good Weather Forecasts Go Bad? How Forecasts are Made,
and What Scientists are Doing to Make Them Better***

Dr David M. Schultz

Centre for Atmospheric Science, School for Earth, Atmospheric and
Environmental Sciences, University of Manchester

The YPS website - take a look

We are not claiming to have the most modern website on the world wide web, but it is a website worth looking at - and we would encourage you to start visiting it. Put it on your "favourites list" making it very easy to access on your computer ...

www.yorksphilsoc.org.uk

Apart from newly imported weekly archive film showing aspects of York illustrated by old movie tracks from the Yorkshire Film Archive, there is a lively feel to the website nowadays. You can see the whole of the year's lecture programme plus details of other science-related events that are taking place elsewhere in York. Special notices/last minute changes are also shown on it - something we cannot do with the newsletter.....and there is much more.

PS And keep those photos rolling in too!

Calling all members ...!

There are some great opportunities for VOLUNTEERS to help keep the society running smoothly and to continue providing high quality lectures and events.

Any contribution of your time and skills would be welcomed, even if it is only for half an hour each month to assist in greeting members and guests at evening lectures or to help serve drinks in the Lodge after events.

Of course, we are also in need of certain skills and experience for more involved work. Currently, we are looking for people for the following roles:

- Honorary Secretary
 - Prepare/circulate agendas/incoming reports for: 4 x meetings of YPS Council; 4 x meetings of YPS Finance & General Purpose committee; 1 x Annual General Meeting (per annum)
 - Write and distribute minutes for meetings (see above)
 - Report on membership
 - Prepare Annual Meeting Schedule
 - Produce a report for the Annual Report
- Honorary Projects Officer
 - The YPS often has tasks or projects which require dedicated short term commitment/analysis e.g. analysis of our costs of membership; looking at members demand/requirements in the future
 - Future partnerships for the Society; looking at possible award partners; etc
 - We are looking for a versatile person - willing, from time to time, to take these on board and report back to the YPS Council
- Marketing / Advertising assistants
 - To assist in lecture and event publicity (weekly or monthly emails, posters, notifying other societies and interest groups)
 - To assist the Website Officer in collating lecture abstracts, lecture reports, articles and photos for posting on YPS website
 - To assist in posting information about YPS and its activities on social networking media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)
- Lecture event general assistance
 - Assistance with setting up and testing the audio-visual equipment in the lecture hall (useful knowledge of adjusting PA system and microphone required)
 - Welcoming representatives of YPS to greet people arriving at events
 - Lecture report writing (generally at least one volunteer to write a short report on the lecture for posting on the website and inclusion in the annual report)
 - assistance with serving drinks and snacks at the Lodge after evening lectures

It is generally great fun taking part in the Society's various groups, so if you have an interest in the Society, if you have skills in any of the above areas and if you want to move into a new circle of friends or activity, please tell Frances (our Clerk: tel. 01904 656713) or Stephen Lusty (our Chair: tel. 07963 791937) or e-mail info@yorksphilsoc.org.uk.

Memories of Fife

Once again Ted Keen has kindly made his latest DVD, a record of our tour of Fife in October 2011, available for members to borrow and to copy if they wish. Several people have already enjoyed reliving a very interesting trip. Please contact Frances at The Lodge if you would like to do the same.

Lost & Found

A man's ring was found in The Lodge several weeks ago and may belong to someone who visited for refreshments after a lecture. It is silver-coloured and very decorative. Please contact Frances if it belongs to you or you think you may know the owner.

Email Updates

Following our announcement in the last Newsletter we now have a small group of members who receive email notification of events of possible interest, whether arranged by the YPS or other like-minded societies.

If you would like to receive such news, please send an email to info@yorksphilsoc.org.uk, stating Email List in the title. We would be grateful if you could do this, even if you ticked the box to receive email communication on your membership application form, as this will ensure we have accurate email addresses for everybody. Please also let us know if you change your address in the future.

Clerk's Holidays

Please note that the Lodge will be closed on the following days when the Clerk will be on holiday:

- Friday 17th February
- Monday 12th to Friday 16th March
- Wednesday 18th April

If you are a regular visitor to the Lodge, please make a note in your diary.

News from other societies

The Friendship of Science & Religion

This year's March Public Physics Lecture is taking place on Wednesday March 14th 2012 at 7.00 pm in the Shepherd Hall of St Peter's School. The lecture will be given by Revd Dr John Polkinghorne, KBE, FRS, who is recognised as being one of the world authorities on Science and Religion, and the title of his lecture is *The Friendship of Science and Religion*.

Science and religion are friends because both are concerned with the search for truth attained through motivated belief. They ask different questions (science, How?; religion, Why?) but their answers must be consonance and so there is interaction between them. Science tells religion about the nature and history of the physical universe, including its evolving character, and religion can take the insights of science and set them within a deeper context of understanding, as when it sees the wonderful order of the universe as reflecting the divine Mind of its Creator.

There is expected to be great demand for tickets so it is recommended that you book early. Tickets are free and are available from:

c.cranfield@st-peters.york.sch.uk

York Astronomical Society – 40 years old

Advance news of speakers who will be coming to mark the 40th Anniversary is as follows:

Friday May 4th

Paul Money - "Images of the Space Shuttle"

Saturday May 5th

Mr Nik Syzmanek - "Astrophotography"

Dr Allan Chapman, Wadham College, Oxford

Dr Monica Grady, Open University

Dame Professor Jocelyn Bell-Burnell, co-discoverer of Pulsars and Nobel prize winner.

There will also be a short lecture about the history of the York Astronomical Society by some of their members.

On the main day there will also be a good range of astronomical companies selling books, software and astronomical hardware to suit all budgets.

Entrance fee for the weekend to be confirmed. Please keep an eye on the YAS website: yorkastro.org.uk