Catherine Brophy: Notes from the Chair...

The 2015-16 Lecture series concluded with a special evening in the Tempest Anderson Hall: Chris Shepherd showed her wonderful "Four Seasons in the Museum Gardens" photographic record. The audience watched in enthralled silence, broken only by the sound of a blackbird singing outside. Dr Peter Hogarth then gave us a glimpse of the treasures he has unearthed researching the history of Museum Gardens (find Peter’s Gardens Quiz inside!) Our thanks go to Dr Judith Glover for her excellent work as Lecture Secretary over the last three years. We are pleased to report Dr Glover will continue as Vice Chair and Trustee for the Society. Dr Roger Pinder has agreed to chair a new Lecture Programme Group for the 2017-18 Lecture series.

In May, intrepid members took part in a Field Trip to explore the chalk landscape of Flamborough Head, led by Paul Hildreth from the Yorkshire Geological Society. In June we enjoyed a day’s tour around Aysgarth with an expert presentation from Rosemary and Adrian Anderson, owners of the Aysgarth Edwardian Rock Garden, followed by a fascinating tour of Jervaulx Abbey with Ian Burden. Also in June we held our first informal get-together at the Star Inn the City, and plan to repeat this on a regular basis, possibly adding in half-day local visits (see back page for next event). Our latest ‘Behind the Scenes at The YPS’ tour, gave members a sense of the living and working conditions of past employees of the YPS, visiting Manor Cottage, St Mary’s Lodge and the basement of the Museum. Finally in late June we were rewarded with a beautiful sunlit evening for our Georgian Leeds Supper Walk, with Leeds Civic Trust.

My thanks to all the organisers and members of the Social Group who work hard to provide original and intriguing events for members. New members and/or suggestions for activities and visits are always welcomed by the Social Group.

Coming up is this year's main social event, The President’s Evening, Wednesday 19 October at the Hotel Du Vin, and we do hope many of you will be able to join us. We will have a lively talk from guest speaker Dr Charles Lane on “Rust, cankerous and warty – life and times of a Plant Doctor”, and have chosen this attractive venue for the excellent food and great ambience with the convenience of car parking at the rear.

Your invitation and details are enclosed.

We are developing our partnership with the University of York through a series of joint lectures on 'Normans in the North', starting on 8 November with Dr Matthew Townend speaking on "Blizzards of Steel: Viking Poetry and the Battles of Fulford and Stamford Bridge" - do add this to your diary as it missed the programme already circulated.

Sadly, Alan Owen has decided to resign from his role as Social Secretary due to health issues. Many of us have enjoyed his numerous well-researched and finely-tuned study tours, culminating in the truly delightful tour of Dorset in May. We offer Alan a tremendous roar of approval and vote of thanks from all YPS members as he steps down. Thanks also to Margaret Leonard who has volunteered to take over coordination of the Social Group.

With this Newsletter

♦ Your President’s Evening Invitation, RSVP by 1 OCT

LARGE PRINT COPIES OF THE NEWSLETTER ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE LODGE
Prof Jim Matthew, Retiring YPS President

As we announced at the AGM in May, Professor Jim Matthew has completed his three-year term of office from 2013-16. We will include a full appreciation of Jim’s work for YPS in the Annual Report for 2016. However this is a good moment to be reminded of the many highlights of his service to the Society. A member since 1968 and YPS Chair from 2005-10, Jim has provided us with many illuminating lectures, both his own and from academic colleagues he recruited. The lecture he gave on “Einstein: Superscientist? Superman?” was first presented in Pocklington as part of a YPS Extended Lecture Programme, then repeated in York. Café Scientifique in York was revived with Jim’s help and he gave two of the first presentations: “Ghostly Encounter with George Cayley” and “Cartoons in Science”, a thought provoking evening, repeated by popular demand. The search for the next President has begun but with both Jim’s distinguished academic record, culminating as Professor of Physics at the University of York, and his impressive record of commitment to the Society, this will not be an easy task. We send our heartfelt thanks with good wishes to Jim, and to his wife Jean.

Wold Newton Roman Coin Hoard Appeal

The Yorkshire Museum has launched an appeal to save the largest Roman hoard of its type ever discovered in the north of England. The Hoard of more than 1,800 Roman coins was discovered by a detectorist, near the village of Wold Newton, East Yorkshire, in 2014. The hoard dates to 307 AD, a period of great uncertainty in the western Roman Empire. It features coins from the time of Constantius I and his son, Constantine I (the Great). York Museums Trust has four months to raise £44,200 to keep the hoard for the public in Yorkshire. A major part of the hoard along with the ceramic vessel associated with it is on display at the Yorkshire Museum until 9 October. www.yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/news-media/latest-news/

History of the Museum Gardens – A Quiz!

The History of Museum Gardens is proceeding well: with several chapters more or less completed, whilst fascinating information continues to come to light as we pursue our research. To whet your appetite, here’s a short quiz. Unusually for a quiz, we give you the answers before the questions: the answer to all questions is “The Museum Gardens”! Why that is the answer is another question ...

1) What links The Scottish Play, York Water Tower, and a corpse?
2) Where did Byron die?
3) Where did Henry VIII sleep in September 1541?
4) Where did Lieutenant Hammond play a set of tennis in 1641?
5) What is the connection between a seasonal story and the Dean of York?
6) Where would rabbits ‘be allowed to live in peace’?

Answers (Whys) on p4

Peter Hogarth, YPS Librarian

Nuffield STEM Awards & Reception

The summer holidays are beginning, and as in previous years, a number of Yorkshire Years 12 and 13 students will be starting on projects which could change their lives. They have been chosen to take part in scientific research under the guidance of professional scientists in local universities and businesses. On 4 October, at a reception held before our regular lecture, members of the YPS will be invited to view posters prepared by the students outlining their projects, and talk to the young people about their experiences. The drinks reception will take place 6.15-7pm, in the museum atrium. At 7pm members will be invited to move through into the hall for the presentation of certificates to mark the students’ achievements. Please note that members arriving for the lecture between 7 and 7.30pm will be invited to remain in the atrium until the presentation finishes. Seats will be available and the posters will still be on display to view whilst waiting.

In past years members have been inspired by the energy and commitment of the youngsters. Do make an effort to come along at 6.15pm and see for yourself!

YPS Lecture Programme 2016-17

Members will have previously received details of Part 1 of the 2016-17 Lecture Programme (September to December 2016). Since this was distributed, we have added the ‘Normans in the North’ series run in collaboration with the University of York and the first lecture of this series is on Tuesday 8 November (usual time and place). A revised programme is available from Frances Chambers at the Lodge or can be picked up at lectures. Details of Part 2 of the Lecture Programme (January to June 2017) will be available in September.

Our first lecture of the new season is on 20 September: “Merely a speculation of the mind”: William Henry Fox Talbot and mathematics” by Professor June Barrow Green, Dept. of Mathematics and Statistics, The Open University.

Café Scientifique Wednesday 7 September

“Explosives and the disarming power of plants” by Dr Liz Rylott, University of York

Not just a big bang! Explosives are toxic environmental pollutants contaminating large areas of land and threatening human health. Dr Liz Rylott will be explaining how transgenic plants are being forearmed to remediate military training reserves. Is this a realistic, applicable technology?

Do come and join us at this presentation, postponed from last January due to flooding at City Screen Basement.

Doors open at 7pm and the presentation starts at 7.30pm. Tickets are free and can be pre-booked by phone or online with City Screen, Tel. 0871 902 5726 (limited to 70 for this event). Any remaining tickets will be available on the night at the City Screen ticket desk.

Two Upcoming Social Events

The next YPS Members’ Social Gathering will be at the Star Inn, Museum Gardens, on Wednesday 28 September at 2.30pm, followed by a tour of Museum Gardens if the weather is good.

The YPS President’s Evening is on Wednesday 19 October 6.30pm for 7.30pm, at Hotel du Vin. This is the Annual Dinner of the YPS, which this year will be a semi-formal evening consisting of good food, good company, a reflection on YPS and an entertaining address from our guest speaker Dr Charles Lane, Senior Scientist at FERA’s Plant Clinic. Your invitation is included in this mailing. RSVP by 1 October. Sharon Lusty, Social Committee
John & Anne Phillips Prize Presentation

At a reception held in the YPS Lodge on Friday 29 July the inaugural John & Anne Phillips Prize ‘for the best final year undergraduate geology mapping dissertation at the University of Hull’ was presented to Tom Rowe for his geological map of Kerrera, Inner Hebrides, Scotland. The YPS presented Tom with a certificate and cheque for £200. Dr Liam Herringshaw and Dr Rebecca Williams, from the Geology Department at Hull, were able to join us and marked the occasion by presenting Tom with his 1st Class Honours Degree certificate. Tom gave a short talk on making the map, and it was clear how much he had gained from the experience. His poster showing the map and some of the field notes which led to its production is currently on display in the Reading Room at the Lodge. Tom will be studying at the Camborne School of Mines for a Masters degree, and the YPS would like to wish him well in his future career.

Geological Map Report

The final stage of the William Smith Geological Map Mosaic in Museum Gardens was completed in June with the installation of the last rock samples in the surrounding flower borders. These allow the visitor to get an understanding of the variety of colour, texture and hardness of the rocks which form the bedrock of our great county. However, the three clay samples could not withstand being left outside without protection. The 'Clunch Clay' has been given a protective cover, while the 'Red Marl' and Holderness Clay have been fired into attractive and interesting ceramics. Leaflets describing the rock samples, where they were obtained from, and how they have been treated, can be obtained from the Lodge, or downloaded from the Geological Map pages on the YPS website: www.ypsyork.org/groups/gardens-group/gmp/

YMT has begun work to use one side of the pavilion for an information centre for both the Gardens and the Mosaic, and on the outside of the pavilion have installed the donors plaque.

Donation of books owned by John Phillips

The YPS has received two volumes of Zoological lectures, delivered to the Royal Institution in 1806 and 1807, by George Shaw, printed for G. Kearsley, Fleet Street in 1809. The volumes are illustrated with plates “from the first Authorities and most select specimens, engraved principally by Mrs Griffith”. They were once owned by John Phillips (first Keeper of the Yorkshire Museum) and carry his bookplate (mention of this was made in the YPS Newsletter, February 2016).

We are grateful to the donor, Mr Maurice Kirman, a former resident of York now living in New Zealand, who brought the volumes to York on a recent visit and presented them to the YPS, through the helpful offices of Darrell Buttery and Peter Addyman.

The YPS Library Volunteer team examined them and found their general condition is good, but requiring minor conservation work - this has now been carried out, for which we are particularly grateful to Jane McKeown of NADFAS for her professional oversight and skills in this process. Cataloguing information has also been collated.

A Fishy Postcard from Bay of Naples

YPS member Andrew Jones has been spending part of his summer at the Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn, Naples (SZN). Last year YPS generously added its support to the maintenance of the 19thC aquarium at the SZN, in the wake of the YPS ‘Tempest Anderson Centenary Tour’. Andrew sent this fishy postcard...

"Today we bought 23 species of Mediterranean fishes and began processing them for new research on fish bone and scale collagen, DNA and myoglobin analyses. The bones will be added to the University of York Zooarch collection."
Answers to Gardens Quiz on p2

1) Siward, Earl of Northumbria, led the army that defeated Macbeth in 1054, and in Act 5 of the play. Siward was buried in what is now St Olave’s church, more or less in the Gardens. And the Water Tower? Not the one at the foot of the Gardens: the present York Water Tower is on Siward’s Howe, next to the University campus and has no known connection with Siward. Or, indeed, the Museum Gardens.

2) Not that Byron! During the Siege of York in 1644, the Parliamentary army blew up St Mary’s Tower and broke through the Marygate wall into the King’s Manor precincts. Colonel Sir Philip Byron, leading the (successful) Royalist counter-attack, was killed as he opened the doors into the bowling green.

3) Henry VIII stayed in York for 12 days in September 1541 on a progress through the north of England. He was probably accommodated in one of the surviving cloister buildings of the former St Mary’s Abbey, close to the front of the present Yorkshire Museum. Where Queen Katherine Howard slept is, of course, another matter ...

4) Lieutenant Hammond visited the King’s Manor in 1634, and had ‘a set at Tennis there, and a cup of refreshment’. The tennis court is shown, inside the ruins of St Mary’s Abbey, in a map of 1687.

5) “Exit pursued by a bear”: In A Winter’s Tale, Act III, Sc. 3, Antigonus, a Sicilian nobleman, follows Shakespeare’s most famous stage direction and does just that. And the YPS, for a short time, had a small menagerie in the Gardens from which a bear escaped. John Phillips (Keeper of the Museum) and the Rev. William Vernon Harcourt (YPS President) walking in the Gardens at the time rapidly followed suit. Our bear was later sent off to London Zoo by stagecoach (traveling outside). Shakespeare’s? We don’t know.

6) “Would it not be possible to turn the Museum Gardens into a huge rabbitry for the people of York? The rabbits could live on the lawns and save the expense of mowing them”: suggested by Mr C. Place in a letter to YPS on 23rd February 1918, as a contribution to ‘The War Effect.

5) Siward’s Howe, next to the University campus and has no known connection with Siward. Or, indeed, the Museum Gardens.

DIARY

4-8 September Tour of Northumbria
Itinerary to include: Cragside (NT), Seahouses, Farne Islands, Bamburgh Castle, Grace Darling Museum, Lindisfarne Castle and Priory, Angel of the North, Beamish. Last few places available, contact Rod Leonard: email rleonardyork@gmail.com, Mob. 079868 86814

Wednesday 7 September - Café Scientifique
City Screen, Coney St. Doors open 7 for 7.30pm “Explosives and the disarming power of plants” Dr Liz Rylott, University of York
Tickets free, pre-booked from City Screen 0871 9025726 or on the night at the City Screen Ticket Desk (limited availability). Café Sci discussions are held on the first Wednesday of the month, details on the YPS website: www.ypsyork.org/events/categories/cafe-scientifique/

Tuesday 20 September 7.30pm - YPS Lecture
“Merely a speculation of the mind: William Henry Fox Talbot and mathematics” Prof June Barrow Green, Dept. of Mathematics & Statistics, The Open University.

Wednesday 28 September 2.30pm - YPS Social Meeting
At the Star Inn, Museum Gardens, Museum Street, York. This is an informal gathering - no booking, just turn up! Weather permitting, a tour of the Gardens will be included.

30 Sep - 2 Oct Charles Rennie Mackintosh Study Tour Waiting List only! Enquiries to Catherine Brophy: email chair@ypsyork.org, Tel. 01904 331273

Tuesday 4 October 6.15pm - Nuffield STEM Awards followed by YPS Lecture (7.30pm)
Nuffield STEM Awards reception and presentation, followed by “Explosives: The Past, Present and Future” Prof Jackie Akhavan, Head of the Centre for Defence Chemistry, Cranfield University.

Wednesday 19 October - YPS Presidents’ Evening
6.30 for 7.30pm, Hotel du Vin, 89 The Mount, YO24 1AX (invitation enclosed, RSVP by 1 Oct).

Tuesday 1 November 7.30pm - YPS Lecture

Tuesday 8 November 7.30pm - YPS Lecture
“Blizzards of Steel: Viking Poetry and the Battles of Fulford and Stamford Bridge” Dr Matthew Townend. Part of the series of ‘Normans in the North’ lectures with the University of York.

For up-to-date information on current and future YPS events see our website: www.ypsyork.org
Please send any relevant news stories, forthcoming activities and announcements for the website and/or newsletter to web@ypsyork.org
Website Blog: please send items for the blog to chair@ypsyork.org

York Antiquaries Public Lecture, 6 September
Dr Turi King, Reader in Genetics and Archaeology, University of Leicester
6 for 6.30pm, at the Bar Convent, Nunnery Lane, YO23 1AA
Places limited and must be booked - contact Dr Stephen Greep, sgreep@gmail.com
The search for, discovery and identification of the remains of King Richard III is one of the most startling and thought-provoking events in the history of British archaeology. The tug-of-war over Richard’s body is a stark reminder of the ethical and emotional issues raised by the excavation of human skeletal remains. At the same time, the excavations and analyses, begun in 2012, have shown the value of integrated archaeological and historical approaches to events even on the threshold of the modern historical age, and the power and fascination of archaeogenetics, as the retrieval and interpretation of ‘ancient’ DNA becomes a reality.