



# NEWSLETTER

## Yorkshire Philosophical Society

promoting the public understanding of science since 1822

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### Volunteering with YPS

YPS has a tremendous team of volunteers amongst the membership but we are always pleased to involve new people in the planning and hosting of activities, and on Council and sub-committees. For example, we are looking at developing a small logistics team to ensure the smooth-running of lecture evenings, and also wanting to recruit more volunteers to host wine receptions after lectures. Both teams will work on a rota basis and no-one is expected to attend every lecture. As trustees of the Society, Council members have a more formal role, participating in five main meetings a year as well as choosing to join one or more of the specialist groups where, together with other members, they discuss and plan the Society's activities, such as Awards, Communications, Gardens, Lecture planning, Library, Social trips and events, and Café Scientifique meetings. The procedure for nomination to Council is set out in the Laws of the Society, available from the Lodge, and nomination papers should be received at least 28 days before the AGM (31st May). If you would like to consider putting yourself forward for Council or discuss what is involved, please contact me at [chair@ypsyork.org](mailto:chair@ypsyork.org).

Volunteers and Council members are now bedecked with YPS name badges at Tuesday evening lectures and are happy to discuss opportunities for volunteering with you. Even if you are tentative about getting involved, do talk to us, or drop into the Lodge after lectures for a drink and informal chat. Many members give a great deal of time and energy to the Society and we are enormously grateful for their continuing support, feedback and enthusiasm. Indeed the YPS couldn't offer so much to its membership without their help. This is why we are always on the look-out to recruit new volunteers, with particular interests and skills, who wish to get actively involved in a practical way. And if you are relatively new to the Society, what better way to feel involved and make new acquaintances! *Catherine Brophy, Chair YPS Council*

### RSPB Birdwatch, Museum Gardens

YMT Gardens Curator, Alison Pringle and her team led bird-spotting walks in Museum Gardens over the weekend of 30-31 January, contributing to RSPB's Big Garden Bird Watch - the world's largest wildlife survey with an estimated half a million people taking part. Launched in 1979, the survey provides a wealth of data concerning the fortunes of our garden birds. Your Newsletter Editor enjoyed a highly informative tour, and was excited to count blackbirds, blue tits, coal tits, dunnocks, goldcrests, goldfinches, great tits, long-tailed tits, and robins amongst the ubiquitous feral pigeons.

### With this Newsletter

- ▶ Tour: Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Pugin's Gothic
- ▶ Tea at the Lodge: New members
- ▶ Launch Event, John & Anne Phillips Prize, Hull University
- ▶ Tour: Delightful Dorset
- ▶ Geology field trip: Yorkshire Chalk
- ▶ Sheldon Memorial Trust - A day on Eric Milner-White
- ▶ Visit to Aysgarth - advance flier
- ▶ Northumbria tour - advance flier
- ▶ 2016 Membership card/s or subscription reminder

*If any of these are missing from your pack, please contact Frances Chambers at the Lodge tel 01904 656713, email [info@ypsyork.org](mailto:info@ypsyork.org)*



## Early Members of YPS

Two indexes of early members have been prepared and put on our website: *Subscribing Members 1822-42*, and *Honorary Members 1822-45*. You can access them by going to [www.ypsYork.org/resources/yps-archive/](http://www.ypsYork.org/resources/yps-archive/). A hard copy can be consulted at the Lodge.

### YPS INDEX OF SUBSCRIBING MEMBERS 1822-1842

During the first 20 years of the YPS a total of 488 men were elected to membership. Roughly 60% lived in York or its immediate vicinity, 38% further out in the three Yorkshire ridings, and just 2% elsewhere in the country. Some 85 of the members were ordained ministers of religion, predominantly C of E, but with Unitarians strongly represented by Charles Wellbeloved and John Kenrick. The Anglicans included Archbishop Edward Vernon Harcourt, two of his sons, notably William Venables Vernon - a dynamic first president of the Society, four archdeacons, two deans and a bishop, but the best known today is perhaps the writer and wit, Sydney Smith. York's Quakers were also well represented, including Backhouses and Tukes, with John Ford at what would become Bootham School, and Joseph Rowntree establishing his shop in Pavement. We had several Lord Mayors of York, most famously George Hudson, who was also one of our 29 MPs. The legal and medical professions counted about 30 members each, with a dozen army and naval officers, and half a dozen York architects. Many titled Yorkshire families appear in the index, Fitzwilliam, Howard, Lascelles and Stourton among them, together with 18 baronetcies and numerous members of the landed gentry. Commerce and industry feature regularly in the occupations of York residents, but for almost a third of our members biographical details are lacking at this stage. Further information on them will be gratefully received. In March 1842 the membership stood at 324. An index covering 1843 onwards is in progress.

### YPS INDEX OF HONORARY MEMBERS 1822-1845

From its inception in December 1822 the YPS gave honorary membership to numerous already distinguished gentlemen of learning, deliberately to enhance the status of the new society. As early as February 1823 there were 30 honorary members, including university men like William Buckland and Adam Sedgwick. Our president, William Venables Vernon, used his many contacts from his Oxford days and his position as the son of the Archbishop to add to their number over the next few years. Some local men were also honoured, such as William 'Strata' Smith and the artist William Etty. By April 1831 the total throughout Great Britain and Ireland was 69, plus ten foreign members in Paris, Geneva, Berlin, Prague, Philadelphia and New York. We counted John Dalton in Manchester, Sir Humphry Davy in London and David Brewster in Edinburgh amongst them. The last-

named assisted in bringing about the crowning success of the society's early years, a gathering in late 1831 of men from all over the country and abroad at the newly opened Yorkshire Museum to establish the British Association for the Advancement of Science - the BA (now the British Science Association, or BSA). Another 18 honorary memberships followed, including William Whewell of Trinity College, Cambridge (who later coined the word 'scientist'). As the years went by and older honorary members died, membership was awarded to the younger generation replacing them; by 1845 awards had been made to 126 men, 81 of whom can be found in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. This index will be added to in the months ahead

*Bob Hale, Hon. Archivist*

## Donations to the Lodge Library

The Society's Library, housed on the first floor of the Lodge, has recently been enhanced by two generous donations. John Hampshire has donated a number of books concerned with York's history. These include Aylmer & Cant's *History of York Minster*, Wilson & Mee's *Medieval Parish Churches of York*, and several books by Hugh Murray: *This Garden of Death*, *Doctor Evelyn's York*, and *Photographs and Photographers of York*.

The second donation comprises two important volumes once owned by John Phillips, the first Keeper of the Yorkshire Museum and one of the most important figures in the Society's formative years. These are Volumes I and II of George Shaw's Zoological lectures, delivered to the Royal Institution in 1806 and 1807. This was a significant work in its day, and both volumes are well illustrated by Mrs Griffith, acknowledged as one of the best engravers of her time.

These works carry John Phillips's bookplate, inscribed "*John Phillips, F.R.S., St Mary's Lodge, York*". Phillips became a fellow of the Royal Society in 1834, and took the lease of the old Abbey gatehouse in 1838 - then the Brown Cow, a rather down-at-heel inn. He converted it into a gentleman's residence. The bookplates therefore date from after 1838, although of course Phillips may have owned the actual books before that date. Perhaps he even used them to prepare his lectures to YPS?

*Peter Hogarth, Hon. Librarian*



## Geological Map Project Update



Since the installation of the mosaic map in Museum Gardens in September, the GMP team have continued to work hard to enhance its educational value. A professional designer has worked up two leaflets, one for adults and the other for families, available at the Yorkshire Museum and at the Lodge. A more detailed leaflet for adults and a rock trail for children will be produced later. The mosaic has featured in a number of press articles, and a further excellent presentation appeared in the December issue of *Rockwatch*, a magazine for junior members of the Geological Association.

We have been gradually accumulating a set of large boulder-sized samples to illustrate the rocks represented in the map. The final sample, from the Lower Lias strata, was collected from Boggle Hole in early December by Rod and Margaret Leonard, Paul Thornley and Andrew (Bone) Jones (pictured above).

All the hard samples are now on temporary display near the mosaic, in front of the pavilion. We are planning to install them in the flower borders around the mosaic, together with pebble 'keys' (below) indicating how they are represented in the mosaic.



These were completed in December, but the wet weather set back our plans to install them in January, so March now looks a more realistic prospect. One challenge in presenting our rock samples is that two of them, Smith's very soft Red Marl, and the Boulder Clay, would not withstand weathering. We

have been fortunate to commission Lee Steele (Potterman of Holme on Spalding Moor) to fire these into creative ceramics.

Finally, we have made particularly good progress on three of the 'side projects' associated with the GMP:

- ▶ The YPS has agreed to sponsor a "John and Anne Phillips Prize" for the best final year Undergraduate Geology mapping dissertation at Hull University. We hope to hold a launch event in April.
- ▶ The Society is co-sponsoring, with York Civic Trust and YMT, a blue plaque for John Phillips to be placed on St Mary's Lodge where he lived for some years. The plaque has been cast, and will be installed shortly.
- ▶ We are slowly expanding and improving the GMP section on the YPS website, and this will be used as a pilot for future major projects. Please use the website for updates, news items, and educational material on the map. *Rod Leonard for GMP Team*



## Awards 2015



The Society's annual awards to students of the University of York, the Herman Ramm and Charles Wellbeloved prizes, were presented on 8 December at the start of the lecture by Dr Gill Chitty on "Heritage at Risk: Risky Heritage?" Our guests included Professor John Schofield, Head of Department of Archaeology, Dr Michelle Alexander and Dr Beatrice Demarchi (the winners' Supervisors).

The recipient of the Herman Ramm Postgraduate Prize is Samantha Presslee, MSc in Bioarchaeology (2nd from right in photo). Her dissertation on *'Using ancient proteomics tools to identify the exploitation of bird eggs in archaeological contexts'* received the highest mark of the 2014/5 cohort.

Abstract: Avian eggshell is one of the most revealing yet under-exploited materials recovered from the archaeological record, due to the difficulty of identifying eggshell fragments. An improved approach

of ancient protein analyses by mass spectrometry (ZooMS) was developed by building a reference collection of eggshell proteomes (24 taxa) and testing its ability to provide identification in 3 archaeological sites: El Mirón, Çatal Höyük and Leicester. Excellent preservation of proteins, combined with the wider archaeological evidence, allowed for inferences about egg exploitation to be explored and confirmed the potential of ZooMS as a high-throughput and minimally destructive method for archaeological eggshell identification.

The Charles Wellbeloved Undergraduate Prize was awarded to Blessing Chidimuro (2nd from left) who also received the highest mark in her cohort for her dissertation '*Assessing the effectiveness of using bone apatite in palaeodietary reconstructions: bone mineral stable isotope analysis of individuals from England, Spain and Italy*'.

**Abstract:** Stable isotope analysis of skeletal remains has become significant within the field of archaeology in investigation of diet. This dissertation employs stable isotope analysis of bone apatite using  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  measurements to reconstruct diets of past individuals from Spain, Italy and England. The study demonstrates the reliability of utilising Fourier-Transform Infrared Spectrometry-Attenuated Total Reflectant (FTIR-ATR) in assessing diagenesis. Results confirm the necessity of evaluating diagenesis before stable isotope analysis of bone mineral, and indicate that collagen alone does not provide reliable reconstructions of past diet, rather, it is essential to use both apatite and collagen  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  in order to get dependable results.

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## YAT Annual Reports Available

The Lodge Library now houses a full set of York Archaeological Trust's Annual Reports available to members to consult during Lodge opening hours. The Reports chart the history of archaeology in York and beyond, from the foundation of YAT in 1972, under the umbrella of the YPS, to its current position as one of the leading archaeological research and educational organisations in the country. These reports provide an insight into the ups and downs of once state-funded and subsequently commercial archaeology in Britain. They vividly illustrate the successes of YAT in terms of the many extraordinary archaeological finds over the years, such as the York Helmet and the Viking timbers at Coppergate. The foundation of the Jorvik Viking Centre and Archaeological Resource Centre (now DIG) and other attractions are also well documented, as are the many characters involved, from staff to the celebrities and royalty who have lent their support to YAT's huge range of activities, working together to promote York as a major cultural centre.

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## YPS & YMT - New YMT Card

Members will undoubtedly know that YPS founded the Yorkshire Museum to house members' collections in 1829 and shortly after developed the botanical gardens. In 1961 responsibility was ceded to the City of York, and in 2002 York Museums Trust (YMT) was formed, as an independent charitable trust, to take over the management of the city's museums and gallery services.

The YPS continues to have a valued and mutually beneficial relationship with YMT and all YPS members are entitled to free access to the Yorkshire Museum as part of their membership package. Members may wish to further support YMT, and get unlimited access to York Castle Museum and York Art gallery by subscribing to the recently introduced YMT Card. Card holders also benefit from a 10% discount in the attractions' gift shops and cafes, an e-newsletter and invitations to previews and events. For York residents with a valid York Card (obtainable from any York library) the YMT Card is available for £11 annually; the card is free to York Card holders in receipt of income related benefits, or aged 17-24.

In 2017 the Yorkshire Museum will be organising activities under the theme "Vikings and Hoards" and we will endeavour to organise a YPS lecture to complement this.

*Judith Glover, Vice Chair & Lecture Secretary and Catherine Brophy, Chair, YPS Council*

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## YPS Blog for the Website

[www.ypsyork.org/blog/welcome-to-the-yps-blog/](http://www.ypsyork.org/blog/welcome-to-the-yps-blog/)

A new addition to the YPS website is a blog - which the Oxford English dictionary defines as 'a regularly updated website or web page, typically run by an individual or small group, written in an informal or conversational style'. The YPS blog brings you an informal note of recent activity, publications and projects highlighting the work of Council members and volunteers, and will also be a forum for guest blogs. We intend the blog to complement the newsletter, the Annual Report and the other website resources. Do let me know your suggestions and ideas via the YPS office, or email: [chair@ypsyork.org](mailto:chair@ypsyork.org)  
*Catherine Brophy, Chair of YPS Council*

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## Café Scientifique

**NIHR NEW MEDIA COMPETITION 2016**

**Come and help us judge!**

On Wednesday 6th April we are holding a joint Café Scientifique with the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) when they will show some of the

best short films made by health professionals entered for this year's competition. Each film will last about five minutes and will be followed by a lively discussion before we (the audience) mark up our judging sheets. The event takes place in City Screen Basement from 7.30pm (finish c 9pm), all are welcome and tickets are free from the City Screen box office.

One of the previous winners was Sheffield Devices for Dignity, with their short film on "Co-designing a Sip Straw" - we heard more about this organisation from Professor Wendy Tindale, on 12th January, at her inspiring lecture for YPS on "Devices for Dignity: Innovative Medical Technologies Across the Age Range". Do come and join us in April.

#### CAFÉ SCIENTIFIQUE DIARY MARCH TO MAY 2016

- ▶ **2 March: "Engineering Light Microscopes: tools and tricks to see cellular detail" with Professor Michelle Peckham, The University of Leeds**
- ▶ **6 April: "Film shorts: Judging the NIHR New Media Competition 2016" (see above)**
- ▶ **4 May: "Roman Medicine" with Dr Nick Summerton**

All meetings are held in City Screen Basement, Coney Street, YO1 9QL, at 7.30pm - doors open at 7.

## New Members' Tea at the Lodge

**Wednesday 16 March** (booking form enclosed)

A welcome to members who have joined the YPS in the last year or two, who would like to know a bit more about the Society. There will be a brief introduction to our history and current activities, and participants will be invited to meet a number of people who make things happen, including our Chairman, Catherine Brophy, and our ever-helpful Clerk, Frances Chambers.

The main part of the event will take place in the first-floor reading room, over an informal afternoon tea, but there will also be an opportunity to peer into the nooks and crannies of the strange little building that is now the hub of our organisation.

*This event is for new and recently joined members, but more established members will not be left out, as later in the year we plan to run a similar event for everyone. Details with the next Newsletter.*



If you have renewed your subscription, you should find your 2016 membership card(s) with this newsletter. If it is missing, please contact Frances at the Lodge on 01904 656713 email [info@ypsyork.org](mailto:info@ypsyork.org)

## Newcastle Lit & Phil Visit, 19 April

# THE Lit & Phil

On Tuesday, 19th April, A group of Newcastle Lit & Phil members will be visiting York, following our visit to them in November 2014 when we were handsomely hosted - this is our chance to reciprocate.

The day will start with a welcome and talk at St Martin le Grand, Coney Street, followed by guided tours led by YPS members to include the walk-on Geological Map in Museum Gardens. We will end with a short reception followed by our YPS lecture - please note at the earlier time of 6pm - "Transpennine Enlightenment: the Lit Phils in the North, 1780-1830", by Jon Mee.

*If you would like to help host this event please leave a message at the Lodge, tel 01904 656713, or email [chair@ypsyork.org](mailto:chair@ypsyork.org)*

### THE STAFFORDSHIRE HOARD: SIX YEARS ON 6pm, Thursday 31 March, at Bar Convent, Blossom Street, York

A Public Lecture organised by the York Antiquaries, a regional Group of the Society of Antiquaries of London

Speaker: Kevin Leahy, FSA, National Adviser on Early Medieval Metalwork for the Portable Antiquities Scheme

The evening begins with refreshments and the talk starts at 6.30 ending after questions c7.45.

**Free but numbers are limited and booking is essential.**

Contact Stephen Greep, FSA,  
email [sjgreep@gmail.com](mailto:sjgreep@gmail.com).

### FINDS FROM ROMAN YORK, BRIGANTIA AND BEYOND Fri-Sat, 1-2 April at King's Manor, York

A Conference jointly organised by the Roman Finds Group, York University and York Museums Trust. Keynote talk by Lindsey Davis, author of the Falco Novels (with an opportunity to purchase signed copies)

RFG Members £40, Non-members £48  
Day rate £25

**Booking essential**, further details:  
[www.romanfindsgroup.org.uk/meetings](http://www.romanfindsgroup.org.uk/meetings), or contact Stephen Greep, email [sjgreep@gmail.com](mailto:sjgreep@gmail.com)



### A TOUR TO STAFFORDSHIRE AND DERBYSHIRE AND INSIGHTS INTO PUGIN

11-12 MARCH 2016, 2 DAYS 1 NIGHT

(see enclosed flier and booking form)

This visit to two county towns encapsulates a wide variety of topography - from the bleak moorlands of the High Peak District to the lowlands and industrial areas of the Midlands, via beautiful rolling hills. Within this area, standing above the now peaceful Churnet valley, is located Alton Towers, well known as a theme park, but once the home of the Earls of Shrewsbury.

The architect Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852), a Roman Catholic convert, came to the area in 1832 under the patronage of John Talbot, 16th Earl of Shrewsbury, also Catholic and sympathetic to Pugin's ideas. The Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 had removed many earlier restrictions on Catholic designs and practices and Pugin set about designing buildings for the Earl, within which he sought to incorporate the principles of Gothic architecture. He also sought to reintroduce the colour and flamboyance, present in past times in the interiors of many religious buildings. Pugin believed that, over time, there had been a shift towards simplified and plain interiors, of which he disapproved. The tour will aim to give some understanding of Pugin's work and ideas - now seen as a leading figure in the Gothic Revival movement in Britain.

#### DELIGHTFUL DORSET TOUR

16-20 MAY, A 5-DAY TOUR

(see enclosed flier and booking form)

Dorset is a glorious combination of beautiful unspoiled rolling countryside containing within its hollows, settled picturesque villages of thatched cottages and small market towns, and a wonderfully varied coastline, part of which contains the same fossiliferous geological strata - the famous "Jurassic Coast" - that surfaces again on the Yorkshire coast. We shall aim to get a taste of these delights!

**Speakezee York:** Dr Katie Slocombe "Evolution of Language: what do chimpanzees have to say?"  
Friday 12 February, 7.30 doors for 8.00 pm start  
The Basement, City Screen, Coney Street, York  
Tickets £5.00 from City Screen box office

### LOST & FOUND

A bracelet was handed in after our President's Evening at Middletons, last October and is being kept at the Lodge. If it might be yours please get in touch with Frances on 01904 656713 or email [info@ypspsychology.org](mailto:info@ypspsychology.org)

## WHAT'S ON

Tuesday 23 February - YPS Lecture

Wednesday 2 March

**Café Sci** "Engineering Light Microscopes: Tools and tricks to see cellular detail" Prof Michelle Peckham

Tuesday 8 March - YPS Lecture

11-12 March - Tour of Staffordshire & Derbyshire and insights into Pugin's Gothic

Tuesday 15 March - YPS Lecture

Wednesday 16 March, 3pm

Tea at the Lodge for new members

Tuesday 22 March - YPS Lecture

Tuesday 5 April - YPS Lecture

Wednesday 6 April

**Café Sci** "Film shorts: Judging the NIHR New Media Competition 2016"

Thursday 14 April

Launch of John & Anne Phillips Prize, Hull

Tuesday 19 April

Newcastle Lit & Phil's visit to York

Tuesday 19 April, 6pm - YPS Lecture

Tuesday 26 April - YPS Lecture

Tuesday 3 May - YPS Lecture

Wednesday 4 May

**Café Sci** "Roman Medicine" Dr Nick Summerton

16-20 - May Tour of Delightful Dorset

Tuesday 17 May - YPS Lecture

Saturday 21 May

Geology field trip: Yorkshire chalk

Tuesday 31 May, 6.45 - YPS AGM

Tuesday 31 May, 7.30 - YPS Lecture

### YPS Lectures

Full details in your January to May Lecture Programme, and on the YPS Website:

[www.ypspsychology.org/events/](http://www.ypspsychology.org/events/)

Lectures held in the Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens, at 7.30pm unless shown otherwise. Following the talks, members and guests are invited to the Lodge for drinks.

### Café Scientifique

All welcome at City Screen Basement. Presentations at 7.30pm, doors and pay bar open at 7pm. Tickets free from City Screen, or on the door.

### LODGE CLOSURES

The Lodge will be closed for Staff Holidays from:

- ▶ Friday 4 March to Friday 11 March inclusive
- ▶ Monday 30 May to Monday 6 June inclusive